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ENCYCLOPEDIA OF
THE
WORLD'S
NATIONS
AND
CULTURES

George Thomas Kurian

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THE WORLD'S NATIONS
AND CULTURES

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ENCYCLOPEDIA OF THE WORLD'S NATIONS AND CULTURES

George Thomas Kurian, Editor

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—George Thomas Kurian

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—Neil Schlager

Introduction

The *Encyclopedia of the World's Nations and Cultures* comprises an extensive overhaul of the *Encyclopedia of the World's Nations*, edited by George Thomas Kurian and published in 2002. As with the earlier version, this new work provides a compact, balanced, and objective description of the dominant political, economic, social, and cultural systems of the countries of the world. Each entry identifies and describes all major components and sectors of national life and presents them within a clearly defined hierarchical structure and in a consistent sequence. The 190 entries in the previous work, each corresponding to a particular country of the world, are herein joined by three new entries: Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, and East Timor. In addition, the previous entry for Yugoslavia has been replaced by a new entry on Serbia and Montenegro.

While the *Encyclopedia of the World's Nations and Cultures* retains the essential organizational structure of the previous encyclopedia, it also incorporates several new elements. Chief among these are sections devoted to the culture of each country, an addition that explains the expanded title of the encyclopedia. The new sections are: Flora and Fauna, List of Modern Rulers, Living Conditions, Work, Folklore and Mythology, Entertainment and Recreation, Etiquette, Family Life, Personal Appearance, and Sports. In addition, several categories that in the previous edition contained only statistical tables now also include descriptive prose sections. Readers will also note that the Health, Food, and Nutrition category has been split into two distinct sections, each of which now includes both prose description as well as statistical data.

The backmatter sections from the previous edition have been fully updated for this new work. The Reference Sources section catalogs relevant titles about the world's nations and cultures that readers may wish to consult for further research. The Comparative Statistics table comprises key statistics for all countries in a single chart. Finally, the Index provides a useful method for finding information about a particular topic.

NOTES

Cutoff Date

The cutoff date for this edition is April 1, 2005, although more recent significant events are occasionally included. Every attempt has been made to make the encyclopedia current as of that date. However, statistical data of earlier vintage are often used when such data are the only ones available. See the caveat on statistics below.

Dates

All years are calendar years unless noted as fiscal years, in which case a slash or virgule appears between the years. Inclusive years are noted with a hyphen, signifying the full period of the calendar years noted.

Spelling and Geographical Usage

Proper names and place-names are based on the style of *Webster's Geographical Dictionary* as well as recommendations of the United Nations and U.S. State Department.

Statistics

All statistics in the encyclopedia are derived from publications issued by principal international agencies, particularly the United Nations and its affiliated agencies, including the Food and Agriculture Organization and UNICEF; the Central Intelligence Agency; the World Bank; the U.S. Energy Administration Organization; and the International Monetary Fund. The time lag between collection of data by these agencies and their eventual publication is reflected in the tables. This time lag may be as long as three years. Further, there are a number of countries where internal civil strife or external wars may make the collection of data impossible, and these countries are ignored by the collection agencies. As a result there are discontinuities in the publication of data and other breaks in time series. Further, there is the problem of incomparability between data published by different agencies that use different definitions, techniques of collection, and tools of analysis. Statistical

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data are therefore subject to numerous qualifications and are only intended to be used as approximations and estimates. They are, however, valid within limits and may be safely used as indicators of trends.

Readers will note that certain tables and charts from the previous edition have been deleted, while others have been added. In addition, even within charts that appeared in the last edition and appear again here, certain statistical categories have been deleted, added, or changed. For instance, several categories from the United Nations Millennium Development Goal Indicators Database have been added, including the proportion of one-year-old children immunized against measles, the ratio of literate women to men (ages 15-24), and the proportion of the population with access to an improved water source.

INFORMATION CLASSIFICATION

Information on each country has been arranged according to a standard pattern. This classification system is central to this work and has been adhered to throughout. The classification system has been devised not only for ease of consultation but also to provide a framework of comparison essential in international studies.

Each country chapter has 40 sections preceded by a Basic Data Sheet that encapsulates the most important data. Some sections have both text and tables; some have only text; and some have only tables. The sections that are entirely new for this edition are marked as such below. All other sections have been updated and expanded since the previous edition.

1. Geographical Features	Text and Table
2. Population of Principal Cities	Table Only
3. Climate and Weather	Text and Table
4. Flora and Fauna (new)	Text
5. Population	Table Only

6. Ethnic Composition	Text
7. Languages	Text
8. Religions	Text and Table
9. Historical Background	Text
10. List of Modern Rulers (new)	Table Only
11. Constitution	Text
12. Parliament	Text
13. Political Parties	Text
14. Local Government	Text
15. Legal System	Text
16. Human Rights	Text
17. Foreign Policy	Text
18. Defense	Text and Table
19. Economy	Text and Tables
20. Environment	Text and Table
21. Living Conditions (new)	Text
22. Health	Text and Table
23. Food and Nutrition	Text and Table
24. Status of Women	Text and Table
25. Work (new)	Text and Table
26. Education	Text and Table
27. Science and Technology	Text and Table
28. Media	Text and Table
29. Culture	Text and Table
30. Folklore and Mythology (new)	Text
31. Entertainment and Recreation (new)	Text
32. Etiquette (new)	Text
33. Family Life (new)	Text
34. Personal Appearance (new)	Text
35. Sports (new)	Text
36. Chronology	
37. Bibliography	
38. Official Publications	
39. Contact Information	
40. Internet Resources	

Abbreviations

ADB African Development Bank	ECOSOC Economic and Social Council (United Nations)	INTELSAT International Telecommunications Satellite Organization
ADB Asian Development Bank	ECU European currency unit	INTERPOL International Criminal Police Organization
AID Agency for International Development	ESCAP Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific	Is Island(s)
AIDS acquired immunodeficiency syndrome	ESCWA Economic and Social Council for Western Asia	ISIC International Standard Classification System
AMF Arab Monetary Fund	EU European Union	kg kilogram
ANCOM Andean Common Market	FAO Food and Agriculture Organization	km kilometer(s)
ASEAN Association of South East Asian Nations	Fr franc	kWh kilowatt-hour
b/d barrels per day	GATT General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade	LAFTA Latin American Free Trade Organization
BIS Bank for International Settlements	GDP Gross domestic product	LDC least developed country
BTN Brussels Tariff Nomenclature	GNP Gross national product	LNG liquefied natural gas
CACM Central American Common Market	GRT Gross registered ton	LPG liquefied petroleum gas
CARICOM Caribbean Community and Common Market	ha hectare	m meter(s)
CFA Communauté Financière Africaine	IADB Inter-American Development Bank	MP Member of Parliament
CIS Commonwealth of Independent States	IAEA International Atomic Energy Agency	MSA most seriously affected (country)
COMECON Council for Mutual Economic Assistance	IBE International Bureau of Education	MU Metropolitan Units
CPLAN Colombo Plan	IBRD International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (World Bank)	NAFTA North American Free Trade Agreement
DF Distrito Federal	ICAO International Civil Aviation Organization	NATO North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
DM Deutsche mark	ICC International Chamber of Commerce	NMP net material product
DRC Democratic Republic of the Congo	ICJ International Court of Justice	OAPEC Organization of Arab Oil Exporting Countries
EC European Community	IDB Inter-Development Bank	OAS Organization of American States
ECA Economic Commission for Africa	IEA International Energy Agency	OAU Organization of African Unity
ECE Economic Commission for Europe	ILO International Labor Organization	OCAM Organisation Commune Africaine et Mauricienne
ECLAC Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean	IMCO Inter-Governmental Maritime Consultative Organization	OECD Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
	IMF International Monetary Fund	ONUCA UN Observer Group in Central America

xii Abbreviations

OPEC Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries

OSCE Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

PLO Palestine Liberation Organization

PRC People's Republic of China

ROK Republic of Korea

SDR special drawing rights

Sen. Senator

SPC South Pacific Commission

SUNFED Special United Nations Fund for Economic Development

TV television

UAE United Arab Emirates

UK United Kingdom

UN United Nations

UNCTAD United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

UNDP United Nations Development Program

UNEP United Nations Environment Program

UNESCO United Nations Economic, Scientific and Cultural Organization

UNFPA United Nations Fund for Population Activities

UNHCR United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

UNHHSF United Nations Habitats and Human Settlements Foundation

UNICEF United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund

UNIDO United Nations Industrial Development Organization

UNITAR United Nations Institute for Training and Research

UPU Universal Postal Union

USA United States of America

VAT value added tax

WCC World Council of Churches

WFP World Food Program

WFTU World Federation of Trade Unions

WHO World Health Organization

WMD Weapons of Mass Destruction

Entries A–Z

AFGHANISTAN

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (Jomhuri-ye Eslami-ye Afghanistan)

ABBREVIATION

AF

CAPITAL

Kabul

HEAD OF STATE & HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

President Hamid Karzai (from 2004)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Emerging democracy

POPULATION

29,928,987 (2005 estimate)

AREA

647,500 sq km (250,000 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Pashtun, Tajik, Hazara

LANGUAGES

Pashtu, Dari

RELIGION

Sunni Islam

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Afghani

NATIONAL FLAG

Three equal vertical bands of, from left to right, black, red, and green, with the national emblem centered on the red band

NATIONAL EMBLEM

The emblem features a mosque with Islamic inscriptions above and below—the *shabada*, or the Islamic creed, and the name of the nation, respectively—encircled by a garland on the left and right and by a bolder Islamic inscription above.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“So Long as There Is the Earth and the Heavens”

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

May 27 (Independence Day), July 17 (National Day, Republic Day), August 23–25 (Days of Jashn), August 31 (Pashtunistan Day), September 9 (National Assembly Foundation Day), October 15 (Ruz-e-Nejat), various Islamic festivals, including Muharram, Muhammad’s birthday, first day of Ramadan, and Id-ul-Fitr

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

August 19, 1919

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

January 4, 2004

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Afghanistan is a landlocked nation in Central Asia that covers an area of 647,500 sq km (250,000 sq mi), about the size of Texas. Afghanistan shares its total international frontier of 5,770 km with six neighbors: China (76 km), Pakistan (2,430 km), Iran (936 km), Tajikistan (1206 km), Turkmenistan (744 km), and Uzbekistan (137 km). The border with Pakistan, named the Durand Line, has been contested by Afghanistan since 1893, when it was drawn by the British Indian government. There are no other border disputes.

The capital is Kabul, with a population of 2,678,000. The other major urban centers are Kandahar (316,000), Herat (249,000), and Mazar-i-Sharif (183,000).

There are three main geographic regions. The central highlands, which are parts of the Himalayan chain

and total approximately 416,398 sq km (160,771 sq mi), fan out from the Pamir Knot. Peaks on the main ridge, the Hindu Kush, rise above 6,400 m (21,000 ft), with passes up to about 4,600 m (15,000 ft). The northern plains, approximately 103,600 sq km (40,000 sq mi) in area with elevations of about 600 m (2,000 ft), are fertile and populous. The southwestern plateau is an arid zone of approximately 155,399 sq km (60,000 sq mi) with an altitude of about 900 m (3,000 ft). Three-fourths of the country’s land area is covered by mountain ranges.

The principal rivers are the Amu Darya (1,250 km; 777 mi), which rises in the Hindu Kush and flows north-westward into the Sea of Aral; the largely unnavigable Kabul River (611 km; 380 mi), which joins the Indus at Attock in Pakistan; and the Helmand River (1,126 km; 700 mi), which flows into Hamun, an inland lake.

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Afghanistan



Geography

Area sq km: 647,500; sq mi: 250,000
 World Rank: 40th
 Land Boundaries; km: China 76; Iran 936; Pakistan 2,430;
 Tajikistan 1,206; Turkmenistan 744; Uzbekistan 137
 Coastline, km: 0
 Elevation Extremes meters
 Lowest: Amu Darya 258
 Highest: Nowshak 7,485
 Land Use %
 Arable Land: 12.13
 Permanent Crops: 0.22
 Forest: —
 Other: 87.65

Population of Principal Cities (2005 est.)

Herat	249,000
Kabul	2,678,000
Kandahar (Qandahar)	316,000
Mazar-e-Sharif	183,000

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Afghanistan has a typical continental dry climate with seasonal extremes, marked differences between day and night temperatures, and rapid transition from one season to the next. The mean temperatures are 0.0°C (32°F) in January, 20°C (68°F) in May, 22°C (72°F) in July, and 10.6°C (51°F) in November. In the plains of Jallalabad summer temperatures of -26.1°C (-15°F) have been recorded in the higher plateau areas. The country suffers from the “Wind of 120 Days,” which blows from June to September at velocities exceeding 177 kph (110 mph). Rainfall is scanty, nowhere more than 380 mm (15 in) annually. The rainy season extends from October to April.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature:
 January 32°F
 May 68°F
 July 72°F
 November 51°F
 Average Rainfall: 15 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Afghanistan is home to over 3,000 plant species, including hundreds of varieties of shrubs, vines, trees, flowers, and fungi. Medicinal plants, such as rue, wormwood, and asafetida are plentiful, and fruit and nut trees are found in many areas. The opium poppy is also heavily cultivated.

Abundant animal life includes the gerbil, flying squirrel, several varieties of bat, fox, lynx, wild dog, bear, mon-

goose, shrew, hedgehog, hyena, jerboa, hare, and wild varieties of cat, ass, mountain goat, and mountain sheep. Trout is the most common fish, and there are more than 100 species of wildfowl and birds.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 29,928,987
 World Rank: 38th
 Density per sq km: 46.2
 % of annual growth (1999–2003): 4.9
 Male %: 51.2
 Female %: 48.8
 Urban %: 23
 Age Distribution: %
 0–14: 44.7
 15–64: 52.9
 65 and over: 2.4
 Population 2020: —
 Birth Rate per 1,000: 47.27
 Death Rate per 1,000: 21.12
 % of Natural Increase: —
 Total Fertility Rate: 6.78
 Expectation of Life (years): Males 42.27
 Females 42.66
 Marriage Rate per 1,000: —
 Divorce Rate per 1,000: —
 Average Size of Households: —
 Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

The Pashtuns, who are described as true Afghans, are the dominant ethnic group. The Pashtuns are divided into two major subtribes: the Durranis and the Ghilzais, who together make up 42 percent of the population. Most Pashtuns are Sunni Muslims. The Tajiks compose 27 percent of the population and live in northern Afghanistan. The Hazara Mongols, who constitute the third-largest distinct ethnic group, live in the Bamyan region. They are believed to be descendants of the hordes of Genghis Khan and number 9 percent of the population. Other ethnic groups include Aimaks, belonging to the Firuzkuhi, Taimani, Jamshedi, and Taimuri tribes; Baluchis; Brahuis in the southwest; Turkomans; Uzbeks; Nuristanis, formerly known as Kafirs; and Qisilbashas, or Redheads. Among ethnic aliens are Hindus, Sikhs, and Jews, most of whom are merchants or traders. Westerners are mostly transients.

LANGUAGES

The official national languages are Pashtu, which is spoken by more than 11 million people, and Persian (also Dari or Farsi), spoken by the Tajiks and the Hazaras. It is the principal language of the administrative elite. More

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than 28 other languages and dialects are spoken in Afghanistan. Many of these languages are speech islands, reflecting Afghanistan's history and ethnic composition. They include Balochi, Nuristani, Kati, South Turkic, Uzbek, and Kirghiz.

Both English and French are taught in Afghan schools as second languages.

RELIGIONS

The religion of Afghanistan is Islam. About 80 percent of the Pashtuns, Tajiks, Uzbeks, and Turkomans belong to the Hanafite rite of the Sunni sect of Islam, 19 percent belong to the Shia sect, and 1 percent belong to the Ismaili sect.

Religious minorities include small communities of Hindus, Sikhs, Parsis, and Jews.

Non-Muslims are subject to legal and unwritten restrictions, and proselytizing by non-Muslims and even by the heretical Muslim sect of Ahmadiyahs is prohibited. The Taliban regime was very intolerant of all religions other than Islam. This intolerance was expressed in a number of ways, such as the wanton destruction of historic statues of the Buddha in 2000 and the institution of the law requiring Hindus to wear distinguishing dress as a mark of humiliation. With the fall of the Taliban and the creation of a new constitution and government, Islam still found a place as the state religion but within the context of social justice and tolerance. The first article of the constitution declares Afghanistan to be an Islamic republic.

Religious Affiliations

Sunni Muslim	23,943,000
Shia Muslim	5,686,000
Other	299,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The oldest elements of the present-day Afghan population are the Tajiks, Pashtuns, and Nuristanis, who came to the land during the eastward Aryan migrations in the second and first millennia B.C.E. The people who lived in the area before them were the Dravidians, as were most of the early inhabitants of the Indian subcontinent. Around 600 B.C.E. the Aryan conquerors settled in the area around the city of Balkh in the north-central province of Mazar-i-Sharif. Northern Afghanistan, later known as Aryana or Bactria, first entered recorded history around 550 B.C.E., when it was incorporated into the Achaemenid Empire by its founder, Cyrus the Great. In 331 B.C.E. this empire fell to Alexander the Great. In the north, Hellenic cultural influences left behind by Alexander lasted for centuries, but in the south these remnants had to compete with the Indian culture and Buddhist religion introduced by Mauryan rulers. Most of Afghanistan was ruled during

this period by feuding Greek satraps. From these satrapies arose the Greco-Bactrian kingdom (225–55 B.C.E.) whose greatest ruler, Demetrius, expanded its boundaries eastward into India around 187 B.C.E.

By the middle of the first century B.C.E. Greek power had waned. Five nomadic tribes from Central Asia, called Yueh-chi by the Chinese, invaded Bactria. One of these tribes, the Kushans, gained supremacy and established a dynasty that dominated the Hindu Kush for nearly four centuries. Under their most famous king, Kanishka (c. 110–162), the Kushans adopted the Mahayana form of Buddhism and took over what remained of the Greco-Bactrian culture. The Kushan Empire was destroyed around 425 by the Ephthalites, or White Huns, a Mongol people. They, in turn, were dislodged by the Persian Sassanids in the seventh century.

In the seventh century Islam reached Afghanistan, then known as Iranian Khorasan. After initial forays the Arab general Yakub ibn Layth occupied Kabul, Herat, and Balkh. By the ninth century Arabs had gained control of the region, ensuring the triumph of Islam.

In the mid-10th century Alptagin, a former Turkish slave and commander in chief of the army of the Samanid dynasty (874–999) in eastern Persia, gained control of the principality of Ghazni and founded the Ghaznavid dynasty (962–1140), the first great Islamic kingdom in Afghanistan. The most renowned of his successors was Mahmud of Ghazni (983–1030), nicknamed the “Destroyer of Idols,” who led 17 predatory expeditions to India. A patron of arts and learning, he founded a university in Ghazni with the distinguished historian al-Biruni as its head. The empire lasted for some 125 years after Mahmud's death and was supplanted by the rival principality of Ghorid, southeast of Herat, in the mountains of Ghor. The Ghorids ascended to prominence under Muizzuddin, known also as Mohammad of Ghor, who established a permanent empire in India in 1192.

In the early 13th century Mongols from the eastern plains of Central Asia swept through Afghanistan under Genghis Khan. Under the Il-Khans, as Genghis Khan's descendants were known, a local Tajik dynasty, called Karts, ruled over most of Afghanistan for two centuries, until the rise of Timur (1336–1404), known to the West as Tamarlane. Timur's descendant, Babur, went on to establish the Mughal dynasty in India. Although Babur died in India, he was buried in his beloved city of Kabul.

For the next two centuries Afghanistan was the bone of contention between the Sefavid rulers of Iran and the Mughal rulers of India. The conflict set a pattern of foreign rivalry and intervention that continued well into the 20th century. Northwest and south Afghanistan, with Herat and Kandahar as centers, lay in Iran's sphere of influence; the east, with Kabul, Ghazni, and Jalalabad as centers, lay within the Indian sphere. The Uzbeks held sway in the north outside these two spheres of influence. During this period, the Pashtun tribes, particularly the

Abdali and Ghilzai, steadily increased in numbers and influence and spread from their original mountain habitat in the Sulaiman Range into the more fertile valleys of Kandahar, Zaminawar, and the Tarnak-Arghandab. Although fiercely independent, the Pashtun tribes retained a long tradition of internecine fighting, and both the Mughals and the Iranians played one tribe against the other to advance their own interests. Thus, the Abdali tribes near Kandahar were favored by the Iranian ruler Shah Abbas the Great, who recognized Sado Khan, an Abdali, as chief. Sado's descendants, the Sadozai, rebelled against the Iranians after Shah Abbas II reconquered Kandahar in 1648. As the Sadozai lost Iranian support, the rival Ghilzai tribes became ascendant. Both the Ghilzai and the Abdalis were overpowered by Nadir Shah (1732–47), one of Iran's greatest monarchs, who captured Kabul and severed it from the Mughal Empire in 1738.

Ahmad Shah Sadozai, a chief of the Sadozai *kbeyl* (lineage group) of the Abdali tribe, was one of Nadir Shah's commanders. When the shah was assassinated in 1747, Ahmad Khan marched to Kandahar with a contingent of troops and was elected by the chieftains as the ruler of all Afghans. In 1748 he made Kandahar his capital and took the title of Dur-i-Duran (Pearl of Pearls) and the throne name of Ahmed Shah Durani. Since then the Abdalis have been called the Durani, and their leaders have held the title of emir, Arabic for chief. An able administrator, Ahmed Shah Durani forged a unified Afghan state based on the ascendancy of the Pashtuns. His son, Timur, moved his capital to Kabul, but after his death, the dynasty was weakened by the quarrels of his 23 sons over succession to the throne. The Sadozai power ended in 1818 with the revolt of the Mohammadzai *kbeyl* of the Durani. The Mohammadzai leader Dost Mohammad Khan (1793–1863) declared himself emir in 1835.

It was during Dost Mohammad's reign that the country experienced its earliest contacts with European powers. The British, now well established in India, sought to contain Russian expansion into Afghanistan. For the next century Anglo-Russian rivalry shaped Afghan history. The British invaded Afghanistan in 1838 in what became known as the First Afghan War (1838–42), the first of three wars. British troops took Kandahar and Kabul, drove Dost Mohammad north, and installed a Sadozai rival on the throne. The British occupation ended in 1842 in complete disaster as the Afghans massacred all but a few of the British troops. The British returned the same year to burn Kabul in retaliation and to restore Dost Mohammad to the throne. During the latter years of his rule, Dost Mohammad recovered Herat and Kandahar and succeeded in unifying and pacifying the Afghans.

Sher Ali succeeded Dost Mohammad in 1863, but his relations with the British soon deteriorated. Sher Ali's refusal to allow entry to a British mission led to the Second Afghan War (1878–1879), in which he was deposed in favor of his son, Yakub Khan (1879–80). Yakub Khan was

later ousted and replaced by Abdur Rahman Khan, who was forced to accept the Treaty of Gandamak of 1879, which made the country a virtual British protectorate and mandated cession of the Khyber Pass to the British. The boundaries of Afghanistan were settled at this time. The Anglo-Russian Pact of 1895 established the border with Russia along the River Amu Darya. Two years earlier Sir Mortimer Durand had demarcated the Afghan border with British India along the so-called Durand Line, which cut Pashtun tribal areas in half.

Abdur Rahman Khan was the first modern ruler of Afghanistan; he built the country's first standing army and police force and broke the independent power of the tribal chiefs. His policies were continued by his son Habibullah Khan, who introduced Western medicine and surgery, automobiles, telephones, and opened the first European school. The Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907 recognized Afghanistan as an independent buffer state. It remained neutral in World War I, although popular sympathies were with the Ottomans.

When Habibullah was assassinated in mysterious circumstances in 1919, the mantle of emir fell first on his brother, Nasrullah Khan, and later on his son, Amanullah Khan. Intensely anti-British, Amanullah Khan attacked the British forces, causing the Third Afghan War (May–August 1919). Although the British were victorious, they granted Afghanistan complete independence by the Treaty of Rawalpindi in 1919. Amanullah thereupon used his popularity as a hero who had wrested independence to launch a series of social and economic reforms, including the emancipation of women, prohibition of polygamy, compulsory education of both sexes, stipulation of Western dress as the national dress, and creation of the nation's first parliament. Outraged by the reforms, the mullahs (Muslim religious leaders) staged an open revolt and drove Amanullah out of the country. In 1929 the throne was seized by Sardar Mohammad Nadir Khan, who became emir under the name of Nadir Shah (1929–33). A pious Muslim, he abrogated the reforms of Amanullah and restored the power of the tribal chiefs.

Nadir Shah was assassinated in 1933 and was succeeded by his 19-year-old son, Mohammad Zahir Shah. He inherited a state riven by factional and tribal conflicts, but he lasted for 40 years, until 1973. Under the leadership of his cousin, Sardar Mohammad Daoud Kahn, who became prime minister in 1953, the nation began a series of economic plans for modernization with financial help from the Soviet Union. Daoud resigned in 1963 and was replaced by Mohammad Yusuf, who introduced a democratic constitution in 1964 that combined Western political ideas with traditional Islamic values. Parliamentary elections were held in 1965. Nevertheless, the king never permitted political parties to operate. In 1973 financial problems, recurrent famine, restiveness among the small middle class, and military impatience with civilian rule led to the overthrow of the monarchy. King Zahir was

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replaced by Daoud, who took office as president, prime minister, and minister of foreign affairs and defense.

The national assembly, appointed from among notable elders by provincial governors, adopted a new constitution in 1977 that called for a presidential government and one-party rule. Daoud was elected to a six-year term as president, and military rule ended. Disaffection among the military culminated in a left-wing coup in April 1978, led by the deputy air force commander, Colonel Abdul Khadir. Daoud and members of his family were killed during the coup. A Revolutionary Council installed Nur Mohammad Taraki, the imprisoned leader of the formerly banned People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA), as president of the party and prime minister. The constitution was abolished, the nation was renamed the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, and all parties except the Communist PDPA were banned. Under Taraki, Afghanistan's already close ties with the Soviet Union were strengthened. Opposition to the new regime, led by Muslim tribesmen known collectively as the mujahideen, resulted in armed insurrection throughout the country. In March 1979 party hard-liner Hafizullah Amin took over the office of prime minister, with Taraki remaining titular head of state. The Revolutionary Council designated Amin president in September. Amin's attempts to impose hard-line Communist policies were widely unpopular and led to armed rebellion. In December 1979 he was killed in a coup supported by the introduction of 80,000 Soviet troops. Former deputy prime minister Babrak Karmal, who had been in exile in Eastern Europe, was flown into the country by the Soviets and installed as president. Karmal's regime won little acceptance from the Afghan people, and his government depended on the presence of Soviet troops—estimated at 110,000 in 1982—for survival. The mujahideen continued their rebellion from rural bases and supply camps in Pakistan.

In an attempt to broaden its support, the government convened the National Assembly in 1985. It immediately ratified a new constitution and endorsed the Soviet presence. Elections were held on the local level.

Unable to stop rebel fighting or generate domestic support, Karmal stepped down as general secretary of the PDPA in May 1986 and was replaced by Mohammad Najibullah. In November Karmal asked to be relieved of his other posts, including the presidency of the Revolutionary Council. He was succeeded by Haji Mohammad Chamkani. Najibullah was made president of the Republic of Afghanistan in 1987. That year political reforms were effected along with a cease-fire extension. In November a new constitution was ratified that permitted the formation of political parties. Najibullah also announced that he was prepared to share power with the opposition in a coalition government. In April 1988 a multiparty election was held, with about one-fifth of the legislative seats left vacant in the hope of mujahideen occupation. In 1988

Afghanistan, the Soviet Union, Pakistan, and the United States came to an agreement on the withdrawal of Soviet troops, which was completed in 1989. The rebel mujahideen continued hostilities, demanding the installation of an Islamic regime in Kabul and proclaiming a "free Muslim state." Factional infighting among the mujahideen limited its military and political influence, although its military victories in 1990 and 1991 did compel Najibullah to propose a truce in May 1991, which the rebel leaders rejected.

With the fall of the Najibullah government in 1992, the seven-party alliance of Islamic groups based in Pakistan announced plans to set up an interim government, but soon the parties were embroiled in a virtual civil war. By 1992 more than 3,000 Afghans died in the fighting and over 700,000 fled Kabul. By 1994 Burhanuddin Rabbani and his defense minister, Ahmed Shah Masud, were in control of Kabul, although the rest of the country was in a state of anarchy. Disaffected theology students based in Pakistan banded together into a militant armed group, becoming the Taliban, and went on to capture Kandahar, the country's second largest city. Pakistan supported the Taliban with ammunition, fuel, and food. By 1996 the Taliban had captured Kabul after driving out Rabbani, and its members were in control of 21 out of 32 provinces. The Taliban's opponents, mainly from the Tajik, Uzbek, Hazara, and Turkoman ethnic groups, retreated to the northeastern provinces. In 1997 the Taliban entered Mazar-i-Sharif, the largest town north of the Hindu Kush and the stronghold of the Uzbek warlord Rashid Dostum. Dostum was ousted by his lieutenant, Malik Pahlawan, who managed to drive the Taliban out of Mazar. By 2000 the Taliban controlled about 75 percent of the country.

For a number of years the Taliban encouraged and offered asylum to a militant Islamic terrorist group called al-Qaeda (The Cell), led by a Saudi millionaire, Osama bin Laden. Al-Qaeda had cells and branches in more than 60 countries and was dedicated to waging a jihad against Christians and Jews, who were branded as crusaders and infidels. The group was responsible for a number of terrorist attacks against the United States in the 1990s, including the World Trade Center bombing in 1993, the bombing of the U.S. embassies in Tanzania and Kenya, and a sneak attack against the U.S. destroyer *Cole* while it was docked in Aden harbor. Emboldened by apparent U.S. failure to respond adequately to these attacks, al-Qaeda struck again on September 11, 2001. Four groups of suicide bombers, 19 in total, hijacked four U.S. passenger planes; two of them were flown into the World Trade Center in New York City, one into the Pentagon in Washington, D.C., and the fourth crashed in Pennsylvania as a result of an apparent struggle between the hijackers and the passengers. The twin towers of the World Trade Center, New York's tallest buildings, collapsed in the attack, resulting in the

deaths of nearly 3,000 persons of various nationalities; the Pentagon was severely damaged, with more than 100 persons killed. The attack was the worst on the United States since Pearl Harbor in 1941.

The United States responded quickly and decisively. The Bush administration put together an antiterrorism coalition, including Pakistan, Russia, India, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and other neighboring nations, and demanded that the Taliban government in Kabul hand over bin Laden and his top lieutenants and also destroy terrorist training camps in Afghanistan. When the Taliban government failed to comply, the coalition forces, led by the United States and Great Britain, launched a massive air assault on Afghan military installations and al-Qaeda training camps in the first week of October. The coalition also supported the Northern Alliance, still in power near the Uzbek and Tajik borders, to regroup and resume their campaign against the Taliban. The Northern Alliance managed to break Taliban resistance and recapture the northern city of Mazar-i-Sharif and also Kabul, the capital, in November. Kandahar, the last remaining Taliban stronghold, fell in December. In the same month non-Taliban Afghan factions convened in Bonn, Germany. The conference set up an interim government to take charge for the next six months, to be led by a respected Pashtun leader, Hamid Karzai. However, warlords remained in power in the various provinces, while the important ministries of defense, foreign affairs, and internal affairs were assigned to non-Pashtun Northern Alliance leaders. Although the war against the Taliban was virtually won by the end of 2001, neither Mullah Muhammad Omar, the former Taliban head of state, nor Osama bin Laden had been captured, and pockets of resistance continued to hamper the pacification of the country.

The American occupation of Afghanistan continued. A *loya jirga*, or grand council, comprising traditional leaders, was held in June 2002, as sponsored by the United States. Karzai was elected the head of state of a transitional government until popular elections could be held. On September 5, 2002, Karzai survived an assassination attempt, and another plot against him was stopped on November 22. In 2003 more than 10,000 coalition troops, led by 8,000 from the United States, were still engaged in fighting remnants of the Taliban, al-Qaeda forces, and the former mujahideen commander Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, in the eastern and southern regions of Afghanistan. There were signs that the Taliban was making a comeback in some districts, and some observers began calling Karzai the mayor of Kabul, implying that his rule did not extend beyond the capital.

Popular elections were held in October 2004, and Karzai was elected president. Despite political, military, and financial support from the United States, a number of problems remain. Warlords, previously supported by

the United States in its hunt for bin Laden, solidified their control of large sections of the country. The warlords in turn have given new life to Afghanistan's opium production: the country supplies 70 percent of the world's opium, used in the production of heroin. Critics point out that after several years the United States has failed in its major objectives of capturing bin Laden and of putting an end to the Taliban. Reconstruction efforts in the country have also been slowed as a result of the redirection of funds to the U.S.-led war in Iraq. Most crucially, many Afghans have grown impatient with the U.S. presence in their country. An estimated 20,000 deaths have occurred in Afghanistan as a result of U.S. bombing.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1992	Sibghatullah Mojaddedi (chairman of the Jihad Council)
1992–96	Burhanuddin Rabbani (president of the Islamic State)
1996–2001	Mullah Mohammad Rabbani (head of the Supreme Council)
2001	Burhanuddin Rabbani (president of the Islamic State)
2001–02	Hamid Karzai (chairman of the interim administration)
2002–04	Hamid Karzai (head of state for the transitional administration)
2004–	Hamid Karzai (president of the Islamic State)

CONSTITUTION

The former constitution of Afghanistan was promulgated in 1990 after the withdrawal of Soviet forces. The new multiparty Islamic-oriented constitution had amended the constitution of 1987, reaffirming Afghanistan's non-aligned status, strengthening the post of president, and permitting other parties to participate in government. When the Taliban took control in 1996, the constitution was suspended. Following U.S.-led military operations, a transitional government was set up by a conference held in Bonn, Germany, in December 2001. The Transitional Authority then convened a constitutional *loya jirga* from December 14, 2003, until January 4, 2004, which ended with the approval of a new constitution. That constitution was signed on January 16, 2004, and highlights a strong executive branch, a dominant role for Islam, and basic protections of human rights. The executive branch is led by the president, who is both head of state and head of government. The president has two vice presidents. The president serves a five-year term and is chosen by a majority of over 50 percent, which may not be achieved until after several rounds of voting. Presidents are not al-

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lowed to serve more than two terms. The Afghan congress is called the National Assembly and is made up of two houses: the House of the People, whose 250 members are elected for five-year terms, and the House of the Elders, whose members are both appointed and elected. One-third of the House of the Elders is appointed by the president, who is directed by the constitution to include in these appointments at least 50 percent women. The National Assembly makes the laws of the land, which cannot run counter to the tenets of Islam.

The constitution provides for a judiciary, including a nine-member Supreme Court and Courts of Appeal, and also for the institution of the *loya jirga*, made up of members of the National Assembly and heads of provincial governments. This body meets to decide on matters of extreme importance to the state, including matters of national security and impeachment. According to the constitution the state is obligated to create a prosperous and progressive society based on social justice, the protection of human dignity, the protection of human rights, and the realization of democracy and to ensure national unity and equality among all ethnic groups and tribes. The state shall abide by the UN charter, international treaties, international conventions signed by Afghanistan, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. There is universal suffrage for those 18 and older.

PARLIAMENT

The National Assembly has two houses: the House of the People and the House of the Elders. Members of the Wolesi Jirga, or House of the People (with no more than 250 seats), are directly elected for five-year terms. The Meshrano Jirga, or House of the Elders, is composed of one representative from each provincial council, one representative from each district council, and a number of presidential appointees. The presidential appointees will include two representatives of nomads and two representatives of the disabled; half of the presidential appointees will be women. On rare occasions the government may convene a *loya jirga* on issues of independence, national sovereignty, and territorial integrity; it can amend the provisions of the constitution and prosecute the president; it is made up of members of the National Assembly and chairpersons of the provincial and district councils. Parliamentary elections, the first in more than 30 years, were held in September 2005.

POLITICAL PARTIES

For much of Afghanistan's history, political parties were illegal and thus operated underground. With the fall of the Taliban, the establishment of a provisional government, and then the presidential election in 2004, numerous

political parties were established. Major political parties include Hezb-e-Congra-e-Mili Afghanistan (National Congress Party of Afghanistan), Hezb-i-Islami Afghanistan (Islamic Party of Afghanistan), Hezb-e-Nuhzhat-e-Mili Afghanistan (National Movement of Afghanistan), and Jumbish-i-Milli Islami Afghanistan (National Islamic Movement of Afghanistan).

There are numerous other smaller parties, pressure groups, and nonofficial parties representing political stances ranging from socialist to nationalist and all vying for a nugget of power in the new Afghanistan. Many of the smaller parties are not recognized by the Ministry of Justice. In the October 2004 run-off election Hamid Karzai, an independent candidate, won 55.4 percent of the vote, while his nearest contender, Yonous Qanooni of the Hezb-e-Nuhzhat-e-Mili Afghanistan, won 16.3 percent.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Afghanistan is divided into 34 provinces, each with a governor appointed by the government in Kabul. These provinces are further divided into districts or departments with various administrative heads. The *shura*, or local assemblies, wield real power, collecting taxes and seeing to local security issues. Intensely tribal, Afghanistan in fact operates more effectively in terms of government on the local than on the national level, for the highest loyalties of Afghans remain with family, village, race, ethnicity, language group, and religion—creating what is known as a “Qawm” identity. Thus, in reality much of the country is still run by regional warlords, many of whom are appointed governors. It is the job of the new government in Kabul to try to establish a sense of national identity in Afghans and thus bridge the gap between local autonomy and central authority.

LEGAL SYSTEM

Afghanistan's 2004 constitution establishes a Western-style legal system, including a nine-member Stera Mahkama, or Supreme Court—wherein nine justices are appointed for 10-year terms by the president, with approval of the Wolesi Jirga—and subordinate High Courts and Appeals Courts. There is also a Minister of Justice. A separate Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission was established by the Bonn Agreement and was charged with investigating human rights abuses and war crimes. The country's basic legal framework will consist of its 1964 constitution and existing laws and regulations, so long as these do not contradict the Bonn Agreement of 2001 and international treaties to which Afghanistan is a party. A major difficulty in this regard, however, is the fact that the Taliban burned law books while in power, such that texts of Afghan laws are in short supply. An Islamic country, Afghanistan is also subject to the tenets of Islamic law, known as sharia.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Despite major advances made by the Islamic State of Afghanistan's new government in the area of human rights, there were still widespread reports of abuse in 2003 and 2004. On the positive side the country's constitution makes special consideration for ending discrimination and protecting human rights; nevertheless, lawless warlords have been accused of human rights abuses throughout the country. International organizations have also accused U.S. forces of systematic human rights abuses in its prosecution of the war in Afghanistan and its techniques for questioning prisoners.

FOREIGN POLICY

Under the Taliban regime Afghanistan turned inward, so it may be years before the country is able to reestablish itself as a member of the international community. The government of Hamid Karzai is apparently aligned with the United States, if only because of the coalition military presence in the country and the dire need for Western financial aid. The Northern Alliance, which has strong representation in the cabinet, has strong ties with Russia. Pakistan's influence over Afghanistan is likely to diminish under the arrangements set up by the Bonn Conference. Pakistan has sent troops into remote tribal areas to control the border and stem organized terrorist and other illegal cross-border activities. Regular meetings between Pakistani and Afghans and coalition allies aim to resolve periodic claims of boundary encroachments.

DEFENSE

Military organization disintegrated after 1992 with the fall of Najibullah's government. Much of the advanced equipment, including combat aircraft and helicopters, have fallen into a state of disrepair. The Afghan National Army is being trained by the United States with the assistance of the international community. In 2003, \$61 million was spent on the military, or 1 percent of gross domestic product (GDP).

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: —
 Military Manpower Availability: 6,785,414
 Military Expenditures \$million: 61
 as % of GNP: 1
 as % of central government expenditures: —
 Arms Imports \$: 31
 Arms Exports \$: —

ECONOMY

Afghanistan is an extremely poor, landlocked country highly dependent on farming and the raising of livestock, specifically sheep and goats. Economic considerations have played second fiddle to political and military upheavals during two decades of war, including the nearly 10-year Soviet military occupation (which ended February 15, 1989). During that conflict one-third of the population fled the country, with Pakistan and Iran sheltering a combined peak of more than six million refugees. In early 2000, two million Afghan refugees remained in Pakistan and about 1.4 million in Iran. Gross domestic product has fallen substantially over the past 20 years because of the loss of labor and capital and the disruption of trade and transport. The majority of the population continues to suffer from insufficient food, clothing, housing, and medical care. Inflation remains a serious problem throughout the country. International aid can deal with only a fraction of the humanitarian problem, let alone promote economic development. The economic situation did not improve in 1998–2000, as internal civil strife hampered both domestic economic policies and international aid efforts. Numerical data are likely to be either unavailable or unreliable. Afghanistan was by far the largest producer of opium poppies in 2000, and narcotics trafficking is a major source of revenue.

With the fall of the Taliban and the infusion of over \$2 billion in international assistance in 2002 and 2003, the economic situation had somewhat improved by 2004. The end of a four-year drought also bolstered economic prospects. Yet the decades of conflict in the country damaged not only infrastructure but also individual initiative. A stable government as well as continued international assistance will be needed for the country to turn its fortunes around over the long term. One stumbling block is the opium trade, which accounts for almost one-third of GDP; the country is under renewed international pressure to curb that trade, which means finding substitute crops.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity): \$20 billion
 GDP (purchasing power parity) per capita: \$700
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: —
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: —
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %
 Agriculture: 60
 Industry: 20
 Services: 20
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %
 Private Consumption: —
 Government Consumption: —
 Gross Domestic (gross fixed) Investment: —

(continues)

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Principal Economic Indicators *(continued)*

Foreign Trade \$million: Exports: 98
Imports: 1,007

% of Income Received by Poorest 20%: —

% of Income Received by Richest 10%: —

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
—	—	—	—	—

Finance

National Currency: Afghani (AFA)

Exchange Rate: \$1 = 50 AFA

Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: —

Central Bank Discount Rate %: —

Total External Debt \$billion: 8

Debt Service Ratio %: —

Balance of Payments \$million: —

International Reserves SDRs million: —

Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 29

Official Development Assistance

Donor ODA \$billion: 4.5

per capita: \$—

Foreign Direct Investment \$million: —

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: March 21–March 20

Revenues \$million: 200

Expenditures \$million: 550

Budget Deficit \$million: 350

Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 60

Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: —

Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares: 0

Irrigation, % of Farms having: —

Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 23

Total Farm land as % of land area: 12

Livestock: Cattle 000: —

Sheep 000: —

Hogs 000: —

Chickens 000: —

Forests: Production of Roundwood (000 cubic meters): —

Fisheries: Total Catch mt: 800

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 3,600

Industrial Production Growth Rate %: —

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent 000: —

Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent 000: —

Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg: —

Net Energy Imports % of use: —

Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: —

Production kW-hr million: 334.8

Consumption kW-hr million: 511.4

Coal Reserves tons million: —

Production tons 000: —

Consumption tons 000: —

Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic meters billion: 49.98

Production cubic meters million: 220

Consumption cubic meters million: 220

Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels million: 0

Production barrels million: 0

Consumption barrels million: 3,500 bbl/day

Pipelines Length km: 387

Foreign Trade

Imports \$million: 1,007

Exports \$million: 98

Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —

Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —

Balance of Trade \$: —

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
United States %	4.5	27
France %	—	17.5
India %	—	16.6
Pakistan %	30.1	13.3
South Korea %	9.2	—
Japan %	7.6	—
Germany %	6.9	—
Turkmenistan %	5.4	—
Kenya %	4.6	—
Russia %	4	—

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 21,000

Paved %: 13

Automobiles: —

Trucks and Buses: —

Railroad; Track Length km:-

Passenger-mi million: —

Freight-mi million: —

Merchant Marine: No of Vessels: —

Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: —

Airports: 47

Traffic: Passenger-mi million: —

Length of Waterways km: 1,200

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: —
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: —
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: —

Communications

Telephones 000: 33.1
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0: —
 Cellular Telephones 000: 15
 Personal Computers 000: —
 Internet Hosts: 1
 Internet Users: 1,000

ENVIRONMENT

The long civil war and continuing political chaos in the country leave Afghanistan in a difficult situation environmentally. Even with less than 3 percent of territory covered with trees in 1993, Afghans have continued to cut forests for fuel and shelter at an alarming rate. By late 2002 between just 1 and 2 percent of Afghanistan's land area was forestland. That represented a 33 percent decrease from 1979. A four-year drought in 2002 also depleted water supplies from rivers and irrigation canals. Much of the land that was productive prior to the extended fighting has been generally devastated by the war and its aftermath, such as through the continuing presence of land mines. Over two dozen species of flora and fauna are on the endangered species lists, including the snow leopard, long-billed curlew, argali sheep, musk deer, tiger, white-headed duck, and Afghan brook salamander.

Environment

Forest Area % of Land Area: —
 Average Annual Forest Change, 1990-2000, 000 ha: —
 Nationally Protected Areas as % of Total Land Area: —
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: —

LIVING CONDITIONS

For much of Afghanistan's population, living conditions are medieval. A full two million Afghans are nomads, living in tents and following pasturage for their herds. These nomads, both Turkmen and Pashtun, are called *kochis*. For settled people living conditions are hardly better. Though one of the poorest agricultural countries in the world, Afghanistan has over 80 percent of its population engaged in farming. The land is dry, and less than 10 percent is arable. Thus, except for a very few wealthy

landowners, farmers eke out very meager livings. Irrigation is largely unheard of; what canals once existed have been destroyed by decades of war and drought.

Village life is also fairly primitive. Houses are flat roofed and built of mud and straw. Bathing and laundering depend on nearby streams and rivers. Furniture is simple, and families often sleep on the flat roofs in warmer weather. Children and women gather dung and shape it into patties for fuel. Transportation in the country is still often by horse and cart. Villagers send their wares—agricultural products or arts and crafts—to larger towns, where they are distributed to the five main cities: Kabul, Kandahar, Herat, Mazar-e-Sharif, and Kunduz.

In the major cities upper-class living conditions approximate those in the West, but the vast majority of the population, both urban and rural, lives near the poverty line. Afghanistan has an infant mortality rate among the highest in the world: 165.96 deaths per 1,000 live births, by a 2004 estimate. Life expectancy was 42.46 years.

HEALTH

Many factors combine to make Afghanistan a medical nightmare. The war and civil strife have destroyed much of the infrastructure of the country, including hospitals and clinics. Access to health facilities, trained doctors, and proper medicines were always lacking, and the situation was only exacerbated during the years of Taliban control. Poor sanitation and limited availability of potable water contribute to alarming rates of infectious diseases in the country. Malaria and typhoid remain major causes for hospital admittance. In 1990 the tuberculosis rate was 278 cases for every 100,000 Afghans. Cholera reached epidemic proportions, with 19,903 cases reported in 1995. As of 2002, 80,000 children were dying of diarrheal disease yearly.

Another factor in the Afghan health crisis is war itself. Untold thousands of land mines are still present throughout the country, causing numerous cases of death and dismemberment every year. Direct casualties of war number in the tens of thousands; close to 4,000 civilians were killed by U.S.-led air strikes between October and December 2001. Since that time, with conflict continuing, some estimates put the total number of civilians killed at upward of 20,000.

By 2004 some of these problems were being addressed by the international community, especially by the Red Cross. Kabul is the center for health care in the country. In 2002 there were four hospital beds and 1.8 doctors for every 10,000 people. The Red Cross had established hospitals in 70 percent of the provinces. Nevertheless, the death rate in 2004 was still 21.12 for every 1,000 persons.

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Health

Number of Physicians: 4,104
Number of Dentists: 630
Number of Nurses: 4,752
Number of Pharmacists: 525
Physician Density per 100,000 people: 18.58
Hospital Beds per 10,000: 4
Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 165.96
Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: —
Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 3
Health Expenditures per capita \$: 8
HIV Infected % of adults: 0.01
Child Immunization Rate % of children under 12 months:
DPT: 47
Measles: 44
Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: —
Access to Improved Water Source %: —

FOOD AND NUTRITION

The major influences on Afghan food are Iranian and Indian. The flatbread known as naan is a staple of the diet; it is cooked on an iron plate in a fire or on the inner wall of a clay oven. Bread is often dipped in a light meat stock and serves as a utensil to scoop other food, as Afghans mostly eat with their hands. Rice is eaten in some districts; cooked in a pilaf of meats and vegetables, it is a major meal. Dairy products constitute a third staple, as yogurt, cream, butter, and dried buttermilk make up a large part of the diet. Eggs are a major source of protein and can be scrambled with tomatoes and onions.

Tea is the primary beverage—black in the south and green in the north—and sugar, though expensive, is always added. As an Islamic country, Afghanistan has the major dietary prohibitions of the religion. Alcohol is not allowed, nor is pork or boar.

Women and girls do the cooking for the family. The major meals are breakfast and dinner, between which dried fruits and nuts are eaten. A cloth is spread on the floor for meals, around which the family sits. A bowl with fresh water is supplied to wash the hands before and after the food is served. This bowl is called an *afterwa-lagan*.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —
Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: —
Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: —

STATUS OF WOMEN

The establishment of a strict fundamentalist Islamic regime during the Taliban regime meant a loss of rights for women. Under prior governments women were, in

theory, equal to men in their rights to vote and to receive an education. However, these advancements ceased to exist under the Taliban. Decrees by the Taliban government in 1996 banned girls and women from attending school, work, and other places outside the home without male relatives. Reports indicated that women were regularly beaten if they attempted to work outside the home. The regime became one of the most repressive in terms of the status of women. Violating Taliban decrees could result in stoning and death. In June 2001 a ban was put in place restricting foreign women from driving in Afghanistan.

Matters changed following the fall of the Taliban. The transitional government, in place from December 2001 to December 2004, included two women. Sima Samar was elected minister of women's affairs; the independent candidate Suhaila Seddiqi, minister of public health. However, despite the fact that 40 percent of eligible women registered to vote in the 2004 election, Afghani women remain second-class citizens. Reports were made of harassment by warlords of those women who dared to run for office.

Afghanistan's new constitution makes provisions for equal rights. Article 22 guarantees men and women equal rights and duties before the law. Article 44 provides that the state must promote education for women. Approximately 25 percent of the seats in the Wolesi Jirga (House of the People) are reserved for women, and the president must appoint additional women to the Meshrano Jirga (House of the Elders).

Women

Women-headed Households: —
Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: —
Female Administrators and Managers %: —
Ratio of Literate Women to Men aged 15 to 24: —
Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-Agricultural %: —

WORK

According to a 2001 estimate Afghanistan had a labor force of 11.8 million. As of 2004, 80 percent of those were engaged in agricultural work, producing wheat, fruits, nuts, wool, mutton, sheepskins, lambskins, and, most importantly for the economy, opium. By a 2004 estimate 80 to 90 percent of the heroin consumed in Europe came from Afghanistan, and the cultivation of opium was one of the largest contributors to GDP.

In 2004, 10 percent of the workforce was involved in industry, including the small-scale production of textiles, soap, furniture, shoes, fertilizer, cement, hand-woven carpets, natural gas, coal, and copper. Of these trades, the weaving of cloths and carpets are the most important, with whole families engaged in such work, including very

young children. Another 10 percent of the workforce was employed in the service sector.

Working conditions are harsh, with few safety laws and few social welfare safety nets such as workers' compensation, retirement plans, or collective bargaining. Though there was a Central Council of Afghanistan Trade Unions formed in 1978, during the years of Soviet occupation and Taliban rule its powers eroded.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 11,800,000
 Female Labor Force Participation Rate %: 36
 Labor by Sector: %
 Agriculture: 80
 Industry: 10
 Services: 10
 Unemployment %: —

EDUCATION

Afghanistan has one of the lowest literacy rates in the world, with 2004 rates at 51 percent for males and 21 percent for women.

Until civil war broke out in 1989, schooling was free and compulsory for eight years, from ages seven to 15. Elementary education consisted of eight years and secondary school of four years. From 1981 to 1986 the enrollment in primary and secondary school dropped from 29 percent of the school-age population to less than half that number. Outside of Kabul most education was limited to the elementary years. In 1986 only 6 percent of children in the secondary-school age group were in attendance, and that figure has since dropped. In both primary and secondary schools attendance by female students was significantly below that by males.

The 20 years of war had a drastic impact on education. Most rural schools were destroyed by the resistance when the Soviet-backed regime attempted to turn them into political indoctrination centers. Many others were closed because of the danger of regime teachers. Formal education even in major cities such as Kandahar was brought to a virtual standstill as a result of daily firefights. In 1995 there were five universities in operation. The oldest and largest is the University of Kabul (Pohantoon), founded in 1932. It has nine faculties. The University of Nangargarth at Jallalabad has only a faculty of medicine.

The Taliban further eroded educational standards by barring women, who formed a majority of Afghan teachers, from work and education. With the fall of the Taliban and the installment of the transitional government in December 2001, schools reopened for girls, and female teachers returned to work, though they are still vastly outnumbered by their male colleagues. Education

is now free and compulsory for at least six years, though many children and parents in the country ignore that stricture. Attendance rates at schools remain low. In 2004 over one-half of the students of school age did not attend. Approximately 34 percent of the four million Afghan children enrolled in school were girls. In 10 provinces, fewer than one out of every four girls aged seven to 12 attended primary school. In 2002 only 32 percent of males and 11 percent of females graduating from elementary school continued into secondary education; dropout rates are high, particularly among girls. Vocational training is provided in secondary schools and senior high schools, and 6 percent of students were enrolled in the vocational system in 2002. An estimated 1,000 women throughout Afghanistan participated in university entrance examinations in 2002.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 36
 Male %: 51
 Female %: 21
 School Life Expectancy: 6
 First Level: Primary schools: —
 Teachers: 53,354
 Students: 773,623
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 61
 Net Enrollment Ratio: —
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: —
 Teachers: —
 Students: 362,415
 Student-Teacher Ratio: —
 Net Enrollment Ratio: —
 Third Level: Institutions: —
 Teachers: —
 Students: 30,112
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: —
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: —

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

During the years of conflict in Afghanistan, many professionals, including scientists and engineers, emigrated to Europe or Pakistan, disrupting scientific and technological progress in the country. With the creation of the Islamic State of Afghanistan and elections in 2004, some professionals began to return. Kabul has several institutions of higher learning, including Kabul University, founded in 1932, which has faculties of Science, Pharmacy, Veterinary Medicine, and Geo-Sciences. Kabul Polytechnic College, founded in 1951, offers postgraduate engineering courses.

Other cities also have educational facilities. The University of Balkh has about 100 faculty members, and Bayazid Roshan University of Nangarhar, founded in 1962, has faculties of Medicine and Engineering. The Af-

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Afghanistan Academy of Sciences is the principal scientific institution. As of 2002 it had about 180 members. Additionally, the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock in Afghanistan is working with international research teams to rebuild Afghan agriculture.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million persons: —
Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
High-Tech Exports \$million: —
Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

The 2004 constitution provides for free and uncensored media. There were 21 AM stations and 23 FM stations as of 2003, broadcasting news and music. Radio Free Afghanistan, based on the model of Radio Free Europe, also broadcasts throughout the country. Though on paper there is no press censorship, the media itself still demonstrates restraint after experiencing so many years of control. Many laws still in effect, such as the “insult law,” are open to interpretation and serve to keep the press subservient. Also, powerful warlords resent the truth about them being spoken openly, either on radio or in the newspapers. Threats against journalists are still common. In 2003 the Free Press Defense Foundation was established by a number of Afghan journalists in order to safeguard the freedom of the press in Afghanistan and to increase the number of journalists there.

Among the major newspapers are the Kabul weekly *Farda*, the Islamic newspaper *Payam-i-Mujahid*, and the *Kabul Press*. *Malalai* is a monthly magazine aimed primarily at women, while *Seerat*, a weekly newspaper, was the first to be published by women following the departure of the Taliban regime.

The radio is very important in Afghanistan culture. Almost 85 percent of homes have one, and with high illiteracy rates it is a primary mode of information dissemination. Radio Afghanistan is a prominent broadcast station, as is Radio Kabul, noted for its music shows. Kabul TV is the main broadcast television station, though Afghans also receive international broadcasts.

The Internet is a growing form of communication and source of news for Afghans.

Media

Newspapers and Periodicals:
Total Circulation 000: —
Circulation per 1,000: —
Books Published: —
Radio Receivers 000: —

per 1,000: —
Television sets 000: —
per 1,000: 14

CULTURE

Afghanistan culture is dominated by the two main languages of the country, Persian and Pashtu. Dari, a form of Persian, is used extensively for poetry in the Persian style. Contemporary poetry is still written in that language, while Pashtu has a more limited literary heritage. The 17th-century warrior and poet Khushal Khan Khattak almost single-handedly created Pashtu literature. With low literacy rates Afghan culture is highly oral; poetry is recited rather than read. Indeed, since the 17th century few advances have been made in Pashtu literature. The 17th century was the cultural high-water mark for Afghanistan in art and architecture as well. Continual wars and an atomized society have prevented the creation of a modern high culture in the country.

Music, on the other hand, has progressed over the centuries and is a dominant cultural form. The classical music of Afghanistan is called *klasik*, which includes both instrumental forms, such as ragas and *nagmebs*, and vocal forms, or *ghazals*. Indian artists who immigrated to the royal court in Kabul in the 1860s left a long musical tradition in the country. These players, called *ustad*, use Hindustani terminology and structures. The *rubab* is a common lute-like instrument that is sometimes considered the national instrument of Afghanistan.

Afghan folk music is traditionally played at celebrations such as weddings, and popular music arose in the 1950s when radio broadcasting became commonplace. Musicians such as Ahmad Zahir, Biltun, Mahwash, and Parwin were important pioneers in popular music.

The Taliban suppressed this musical heritage while in power, but once the regime was removed, Afghan music returned to the airwaves. The Taliban also tried to erase much of the cultural heritage of the country, destroying, for example, two famous statues of Buddha in Bamiyan province because they were symbols of another religion.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries
Number: —
Volumes: —
Registered borrowers: —
Museums
Number: —
Annual Attendance: —
Cinema
Gross Receipts: —
Number of Cinemas: —
Seating Capacity: —
Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Spirits, religion, and a warrior tradition all figure into Afghan folklore and mythology. A variant of the “wise fool” is found in the numerous tales of Mullah Nasrudin, while cautionary tales for children, such as “Bachey Ku” (The Bald Boy) both entertain and instruct. Many Afghans believe in spirits, or jinni, and wear protective amulets to ward them off. Jinni tales are similar to ghost stories in Western culture. Heroes of the past, like the warrior Habibullah Ghazi, also inform much of the oral tradition and folklore of the people of Afghanistan. Mythical love stories are also popular. One favorite is that of the doomed love of Leilah and Majnun.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Singing is a popular form of entertainment for adults, as is dancing, either in group circles or individually. At parties, dancing outside is one of the major forms of entertainment. Men also gather in teahouses and talk and listen to music;—as with many activities in the country that are still segregated by gender, these teahouses tend to be all-male enclaves. Men also enjoy so-called blood sports such as cockfighting.

Children’s toys are simple, homemade objects, such as kites or dice made from animal bones and dolls made from sheep’s wool. Television viewing is limited, but most Afghans have access to a radio and enjoy listening to musical programs. There are a few cinemas in urban centers such as Kabul, but in the countryside entertainment and recreation are rudimentary. Storytelling is very popular throughout the country, and Afghanistan’s oral tradition remains strong in the 21st century.

ETIQUETTE

Formal politesse takes many forms in Afghanistan. With the separation of the sexes, there is very little touching between genders in public. Men will shake the hands of other men, and in general men can be effusive in public and often walk arm in arm. Relatives may hug and kiss after long separations, but restrained public decorum is generally the rule. Children tend to call their elders by titles rather than by names, and men typically call their wives “mother of my son” or “mother of my daughter” rather than using given names. The sense of hospitality is strong in the country. Guests are always asked to sit and share a glass or cup of tea.

Relations between Afghans are often determined by the unwritten codes of behavior called Pashtunwali. This Pashtun code is subscribed to by most Afghans and deals mostly with honor and pride. Some examples of this un-

written code are *melmatia*, or being a good and generous host, *ghayrat*, upholding personal and family honor, and *namus*, defending women’s honor.

FAMILY LIFE

A strong sense of family and the kinship tribe is the bedrock of Afghan society. Extended families, connected patrilineally, often share the same household or are gathered in households close to each other. This is true both in the country and in cities, where such extended families and tribes form enclaves and neighborhoods within the larger urban population. Women rule the house and the child-rearing practices, while men represent the family in society.

Marriages are generally arranged, with girls marrying as of about age 16 and boys as of age 18. Men may divorce their wives simply by saying three times in public, “I divorce you.” However, women must go through a judge for relief. Divorce, however, is not common.

Children are held in high esteem but are expected to assume responsibilities at an early age. Thus, milestones such as toilet training begin early. As in many male-dominated societies, the needs of the sons come before those of the daughters. Contrary to Islamic law, daughters do not inherit household goods or property. These are divided among the sons.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Afghans are physically a blend of many Central Asian groups, and most have a characteristic Mediterranean cast, with dark hair and eyes. Men often wear beards, as is the Islamic custom, while women mostly wear pleated trousers under long dresses and cover their heads with shawls. Many urban women traditionally wear the *chadri*, an ankle-length cloth covering, like a sack over the whole body, with a mesh insert over the eyes and nose. Men will wear baggy pants, loose, long-sleeve shirts, and vests. Turbans are also worn by men, with styles varying throughout the country. For example, Pashtuns leave part of the turban dangling, while others wrap the head entirely with the material. The *pakol*, a Nuristani hat that was previously adopted as a sign of the mujahideen resistance, has become popular. It has lost its political significance and is now popular with many men.

SPORTS

The people of Afghanistan are well known as great horsemen. This skill is well demonstrated in the sport known as *buzkashi*, which is as popular there as baseball or football in the United States. This sport is also known as “goat grab-

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bing,” although in the modern game a calf is usually used. In this contest a headless calf carcass is placed in the center of a circle formed by horsemen (known as *chapandaz*). Only men participate. The object of the game—which has been known to be played by up to 1,000 contestants at a time—is to carry the carcass either clear of the other players or to a scoring circle. Meanwhile, opposing players try to take the carcass away.

Afghan running dogs originate from Afghanistan. A form of wrestling is popular, as are many typically Western sports such as soccer, tennis, and field hockey.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1946** Shah Mahmud succeeds Mohammad Hashim Khan as prime minister.
Afghanistan is admitted to the United Nations.
- 1947** Afghanistan votes against the admission of Pakistan to the United Nations.
- 1948** Border pact is concluded with the Soviet Union.
- 1949** First free elections are held.
- 1950** Border clashes with Pakistan intensify conflict over Pashtunistan issue.
- 1951** United States halts economic aid to Afghanistan.
- 1953** Afghanistan establishes diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China.
Daoud's policy leads to a crisis in diplomatic relations with Pakistan; the Soviet Union backs Afghanistan; anti-Pakistan riots occur in Kabul.
- 1956** Earthquake kills over 2,000.
Arms pacts with the USSR and Czechoslovakia are concluded.
- 1958** Transit treaty is concluded with Pakistan.
- 1959** Afghanistan signs aid pact with the USSR.
President Eisenhower visits Kabul.
- 1961** Afghanistan cuts diplomatic relations with Pakistan.
- 1962** Afghanistan reopens border with Pakistan to permit transshipment of U.S. aid materials.
- 1963** King dismisses Prime Minister Daoud; Mohammad Yusuf is appointed prime minister.
Diplomatic relations with Pakistan are resumed.
- 1964** New constitution is promulgated.
- 1965** Mohammad Hashim Maiwandwal succeeds Yusuf as prime minister.
All adults over age 21, including women, are enfranchised under new constitution.
- 1967** Supreme Court is established.
Nur Ahmad Etemadi replaces Maiwandwal as prime minister.
- 1969** Demonstrations by university and school students lead to suspension of the educational system.
- 1971** Etemadi resigns in face of growing criticism; Abdul Zahir takes over as prime minister.
- 1972** Widespread grain shortage and famine leads to deaths of tens of thousands.
Mohammad Musa Shafiq replaces Zahir as prime minister.
- 1973** An army coup d'état led by former prime minister Mohammad Daoud deposes Zahir Shah; loyal army general Abdul Ali Shah is executed; Daoud is elected president and prime minister of new Republic of Afghanistan by Central Committee; King Zahir abdicates.
- 1974** Conflict with Pakistan over Pashtunistan issue is renewed.
- 1975** Daoud announces general amnesty to plotters in 1973 conspiracy, including former prime minister Mohammad Musa Shafiq.
- 1977** Planning Minister Ahmad Khoram is assassinated in Kabul; one suspect is arrested.
- 1978** Daoud is overthrown in coup led by Khalq leader Nur Mohammad Taraki. The 1977 constitution is abolished; Afghanistan and the Soviet Union sign 20-year treaty of friendship and cooperation; heavy fighting is reported between Muslim rebels and government troops along the Pakistani border.
- 1979** U.S. ambassador Adolph Dubs is shot and killed in Kabul after being abducted by Muslim extremists. President Taraki is ousted and killed in a coup.
Revolutionary Council names Hafizullah Amin as president; Amin is ousted in a second coup and executed for crimes against the state.
Deputy Prime Minister Babrak Karmal, a pro-Moscow hard-liner, is installed as president.
Citing an invitation by the Afghan government, the Soviet Union pours 30,000 troops across the border into Afghanistan.
Open fighting is reported between Soviet forces and Afghan rebels.
- 1980** An estimated 800,000 Afghans cross into Pakistan. Heavy clashes between Soviets and rebels are reported.
Afghanistan is suspended from the Conference of Islamic States.
- 1982** The first congress of the ruling People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) calls for a purge of the Khalq dissidents and seizure of the estates of rich landowners.
- 1985** A *loya jirga* (grand council) ratifies a new constitution. Elections are held in March–April 1986 for local organs, with 60 percent of those elected not affiliated with the PDPA.
- 1986** Dr. Najibullah replaces Karmal as leader of the PDPA. The PDPA declares a unilateral cease-fire for six months, which is subsequently extended. However, the mujahideen alliances refused to honor the cease-fire or

- negotiate, demanding an unconditional Soviet withdrawal.
- 1987** The National Front (NF) becomes a separate organization from the PDPA. Other political parties are allowed to form under the auspices of the NF. Najibullah proposes sharing power with representatives of the opposition groups if a coalition is formed. A draft of a new constitution is approved by the presidium of the Revolutionary Council. Further local elections are held throughout the country, with many non-PDPA members being elected. Najibullah is unanimously reappointed president by a *loya jirga*.
- 1988** The Soviets begin withdrawal of troops based on accords signed in Geneva in April. Direct talks begin for the first time between the Soviets and mujahideen in Pakistan. The Soviet insistence on a continued role for the PDPA causes a breakdown in negotiations.
- 1989** A state of emergency is declared by Najibullah based on accusations that Pakistan and the United States have violated the Geneva accords. The mujahideen in Pakistan, known as the IUAM, form a government-in-exile but receive no recognition from rebels in Afghanistan. Factional infighting amongst mujahideen groups undermines their mutual goals.
- 1990** A coup attempt by Defense Minister Shahnawaz Tanai fails; leaders of moderate rebel groups form an alliance to counter Gulbuddin Hekmatyar's fundamentalist Muslim faction.
- 1991** Rebels seize the town of Khost; Najibullah proposes a truce that rebel leaders reject.
- 1992** The government falls to rebel troops who enter Kabul; a coalition names religious leader Sibghatullah Mojaddedi interim president. However, Hekmatyar's force continues to fight, and in June Mojaddedi resigns. Burhanuddin Rabbani is elected president by the Leadership Council. Kabul is subjected to continual fighting into 1993.
- 1993** Hekmatyar is named prime minister in the hopes of establishing peace.
- 1994** Fighting between rebel factions resumes.
- 1995** The United Nations brokers a deal to have the nine major factions share power in a council. The deal is of little use as a new force, the Taliban, a fundamentalist Islamic group, enters the fray. By the end of the year the Taliban, which consists largely of students from Islamic schools, has overrun much of the country.
- 1997** Abdul Rashid Dostum, leader of opposition forces, continues to fight and inflicts severe damage on the Taliban, forcing a stalemate for power.
- 1998** Amid rumors of Russian support for the opposition, the Taliban is able to take control of 75 percent of the country and end fighting.
- 2000** Taliban regime issues a religious edict that leads to the destruction of ancient Buddhist statues in central Afghanistan.
- 2001** Following attacks on the World Trade Center in New York City and the Pentagon in Washington, D.C., by suicide bombers linked to al-Qaeda, President Bush demands the Taliban administration in Kabul surrender Osama bin Laden and his associates. Upon the Taliban's failure to comply, the United States and its coalition allies launch massive air bombardment of military and terrorist installations in the country. The Northern Alliance forces resume their campaign against the Taliban with U.S.- and Russian-supplied arms. In November the Northern Alliance retakes Mazar-i-Sharif, Herat, and Kabul; in December, Kandahar, the last Taliban stronghold, falls. An international conference summoned by the coalition in Bonn, Germany, helps set up an interim post-Taliban government headed by Pashtun leader Hamid Karzai. The new interim government is sworn in on December 22, slotted to stay in power for six months.
- 2002** In June, Karzai becomes interim president of Afghanistan.
- 2003** On November 16 a United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) worker is killed in Ghazni City, in the province of Ghazni, while traveling in a clearly marked UNHCR vehicle. The UNHCR pulls out of Ghazni province due to the worsening security situation.
- 2004** A *loya jirga* ratifies the new constitution in January. In September Karzai attempts to control the power of the warlords by removing one of the most powerful, Ismail Khan, from the governorship of Herat. Violent protests follow Khan's ouster. Karzai is elected president in a run-off election in October, winning over 55 percent of the vote, with 10 million voters registered. Attacks on American-led forces intensify in Afghanistan as the Taliban and al-Qaeda continued to regroup.
- 2005** In September the first parliamentary and provincial elections in more than 30 years take place.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Afghanistan Today
<http://frankenstein.worldweb.net/afghan>
- Afghanistan Directory
<http://www.afghana.com/Directories/Directory.htm>
- Arthur Paul Afghanistan Collection
<http://www.unomaha.edu/-world/cas/collection.html>
- Islamic Republic of Afghanistan Web site
<http://www.af/>

ALBANIA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Albania

ABBREVIATION

AL

CAPITAL

Tiranë

HEAD OF STATE

President Alfred Moisiu (from 2002)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Sali Berisha (from 2005)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Parliamentary democracy

POPULATION

3,563,112 (2005)

AREA

28,748 sq km (11,100 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Albanian, Greek

LANGUAGE

Albanian

RELIGIONS

Muslim, Orthodox, Catholic

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Lek

NATIONAL FLAG

Red standard, at the center of which is a black double-headed eagle

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A black two-headed eagle supported on either side by golden sheaves of wheat

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Hymni i Flamurit” (Anthem of the flag)

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

November 28 (Proclamation of Independence)

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

November 28, 1912

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

November 22, 1998

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Albania, on the western coast of the Balkan Peninsula, is separated from the heel of the Italian boot on the south-west and the west by the Strait of Otranto and the Adriatic Sea, respectively. Albania's total area is 28,748 sq km (11,100 sq mi). It shares a boundary with Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro, and Greece.

Albania's boundaries were established in 1913 on the principle of nationality rather than geography: to separate Albanians from Serbians and Montenegrins and to separate Albanians from Greeks.

Nearly 70 percent of Albania is mountainous and inaccessible. The North Albanian Alps form an extension of the Dinaric alpine chain and, specifically, the Montenegro limestone plateau. A low coastal belt extends from the northern boundary southward. The foothills of the

central uplands contain fertile land. The mountains east of the serpentine zone are the highest in the country and among the most rugged in the Balkan Peninsula.

Geography

Area sq km: 28,748; sq mi: 11,100

World Rank: 139th

Land Boundaries, km: Greece 282; Macedonia 151; Serbia and Montenegro 287

Coastline, km: 362

Elevation Extremes meters

Lowest: Adriatic Sea 0

Highest: Maja e Korabit 2,764

Land Use %

Arable land: 21.09

Permanent Crops: 4.42

Forest: 36

Other: 38.49

Albania



Population of Principal Cities (2001)

Tiranë	343,078
Durrës	99,546
Elbasan	87,797
Shkodër	82,455
Vlorë	77,691
Fier	56,297
Korçë	55,130

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

For a small country, Albania has an unusually large number of climatic regions. The coastal lowlands have a typically Mediterranean climate, whereas the highlands have a Mediterranean continental climate. In both climatic zones weather changes markedly from north to south and from winter to summer. The lowlands have mild winters, averaging about 45°F; summer temperatures average 75°F. Humidity is high, and summer weather is oppressive.

Inland temperatures vary more widely with differences in elevation. Cold northerly and northeasterly winds cause frigid winters. Average precipitation is high. The central uplands receive the heaviest rainfall. There are also frequent thunderstorms accompanied by torrential downpours.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature
Lowlands: 45°F to 75°F
Highlands: -13°F to 75°F
Average Rainfall
Lowlands: 40 in to 60 in
Highlands: 70 in to 100 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Because it consists of lowland and highland regions, each with a very different climate, Albania exhibits a remarkable diversity of flora and fauna for a country of its size. At lower elevations, extensive and unspoiled forests of oak, beech, and conifer provide habitat for wolves, foxes, jackals, and ferrets. At higher elevations, Albanian flora shows more of a Mediterranean influence, with alpine forests that provide habitat for wolves, brown bears, wildcats, lynxes, and weasels. Albania has about 3,220 different kinds of plants, representing 29 percent of the species of European flora and 47 percent of the flora of the Balkan Peninsula. Deer, wild boar, and chamois, as well as 350 species of wild birds, including grouse, woodcock, snipe, and pelicans, are common throughout the country. Aquatic fauna include sardines, mullet, carp, trout, and others.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005:	3,563,112
World Rank:	126th
Density per sq mi:	48 per sq km: 125
% of annual growth (2000-04):	.54
Male %:	51
Female %:	48
Urban %:	44
Age Distribution: %	0-14: 26.4
	15-64: 65.3
	65 and over: 8.3
Population 2025:	3,944,000
Birth Rate per 1,000:	15.08
Death Rate per 1,000:	5.02
Rate of Natural Increase per 1,000:	1.0
Total Fertility Rate per woman:	2.05
Expectation of Life (years):	Males 74.37
	Females 80.02
Marriage Rate per 1,000:	7.4
Divorce Rate per 1,000:	—
Average Size of Households:	4.22
Induced Abortions:	—

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

The main cleavage in Albanian society is between two ethnic groups: Gegs and Tosks. Numerically, the Gegs are slightly in the majority.

Approximately 98 percent of the population is Albanian, with the remainder divided among Greeks, Vlachs, Bulgars, Serbs, and Gypsies.

Greeks, who constitute about 1 percent of the population, are most numerous closer to the Greek border. They have adopted Albanian customs and speak fluent Albanian. Vlachs, descendants of the Thracians of the pre-Christian era, are most numerous in the Pindus Mountains. Bulgars tend to live in the border area near Lake Prespa, and those of Serb origin live in the Shkoder area.

An estimated 2 million Albanians are believed to live outside the country. Until the Kosovo War, Yugoslavia alone had 1 million, of whom about 70 percent lived in the Kosovo area.

LANGUAGES

The national and official language is Albanian, a member of the Thracico-Illyrian group. Historically, it has been heavily influenced by Latin and Italian on the one hand and Turkish and Greek on the other. The first written document in Albanian did not appear until the 15th century, but the repressive policies of the rulers of the Turkish Ottoman Empire (1350-1918) restricted its growth until the 19th century. A standardized orthography was adopted in 1908 using a Latin-based alphabet of 36 letters approved by a

linguistic congress at Monastir. The alphabet was made official by a government directive in 1924. The two principal dialects are Geg, spoken by about two-thirds of the population, and Tosk, spoken by most of the elite.

RELIGIONS

Until the 1940s Albania was the only predominantly Islamic nation in Europe, with a legacy of five centuries of Ottoman rule. Christianity was introduced in Albania in the first century, and the country remained Christian until the 14th century, when Turkish invaders introduced Islam. During the next five centuries Islam made steady inroads. By the 17th century Muslims outnumbered Christians in the population.

At the time of independence, in 1912, Albania became a secular state. The constitution guaranteed freedom of worship for all religions. The Communist constitution of 1946 adopted the same liberal tenor. However, even before the adoption of the constitution, the first shots had been fired in the state's war against religion. The Agrarian Reform Law of 1945 confiscated all religious property. In 1967 mosques and churches were closed to worshippers. The ban was lifted in 1990.

Today, under the aegis of democracy, all religions are again tolerated. Their followings are Muslim, 70 percent; Orthodox, 20 percent; and Catholic, 10 percent.

Religious Affiliations

Muslim	2,481,000
Albanian Orthodox	709,000
Roman Catholic	354,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Until 168 B.C.E. Albania was composed of parts of the kingdom of Illyria, with its capital at Shkoder. During the succeeding nine centuries, invasions of Huns, Bulgarians, and Slavs drove the Illyrians to the mountain fastnesses on the Adriatic coast, where they are concentrated today. During the Crusades in the 12th and 13th centuries, Albania became a thoroughfare for the contending armies.

Albania's dark ages began with the defeat of the Serbs by the Ottoman Turks in 1389 at the Battle of Kosovo, after which the Turks asserted their suzerainty over the country and forced it to submit to Islam.

It was only when the Ottoman Empire was defeated in a Balkan war in 1912 that Albania became an independent nation. Virtually dismembered by the Treaty of San Stefano, Albania struggled to ward off the territorial demands of Serbia, Austria-Hungary, Italy, Russia, and Montenegro. In 1912 Albanians staged a series of revolts and proclaimed Albania's independence.

At the end of World War I, Albania was occupied by the Allied armies. On April 7, 1939, Italy invaded Albania. King Zog fled the country, never to return.

In the chaotic conditions created by the Italian occupation and World War II, the Communists created the National Liberation Movement on September 16, 1942, to coordinate the activities of various guerrilla bands. Having accomplished this goal, the National Liberation Front seized control of the whole country.

On January 11, 1946, the People's Assembly proclaimed the People's Republic of Albania and approved the first Albanian constitution.

During the following 45 years, Albania became the most reclusive (and most repressive) of the European Communist regimes. The first leader of this totalitarian state, Enver Hoxha, earned a reputation for Marxist ideological authoritarianism more rigid than that of either the Soviet Union or China.

With the collapse of the last Communist government in 1992, Albania entered a period of political instability. This was worsened by the sudden national obsession with financial schemes promising instant riches for unwary investors. The pyramid schemes failed, plunging the country into bankruptcy and severe disorder. This situation descended into chaos in 1997 when citizens distributed thousands of military weapons and armed factions divided the country into local fiefdoms. More than 10,000 Albanians fled to Italy. In time, the army reasserted a measure of control, and a central government was elected and installed.

In 1998 Serbian police and the Yugoslav army attacked Albanian separatists and civilians in Kosovo. When the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia refused to sign a peace accord, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) began air strikes against Yugoslav targets in 1999. By the time a peace agreement was signed in June 1999, an estimated 444,000 refugees had fled from Kosovo into neighboring Albania, placing an enormous burden on the country's economy.

Meanwhile, a UN peacekeeping force restored order in Albania beginning in 1997. A new constitution affirming the rule of law and protecting human rights, including freedom of religion, was enacted by popular referendum in 1998. From 1997 to 2002 Albania was ruled by a series of short-lived governments. During this period, however, democratic freedoms were strengthened, more media outlets and business associations were formed, and the nation's economy began to improve. In 2002 a "truce" was declared between the contending Socialist and Democratic Parties, with Alfred Moisiu, a consensus candidate, elected president. Nationwide municipal elections were held in 2003.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

Prime Minister

1944–54 Enver Hoxha

1954–82 Mehmet Shehu

1982–91	Adil Çarçani
1991	Fatos Nano
1991	Ylli Bufi
1991–92	Vilson Ahmeti
1992–97	Aleksander Meksi
1997	Fino Bashkim
1997–98	Fatos Nano
1998–99	Pandeli Majko
1999–2002	Ilir Meta
2002	Pandeli Majko
2002–05	Fatos Nano
2005	Sali Berisha

President

1986–92	Ramiz Alia
1992–97	Sali Berisha
1997–2002	Rexhep Meidani
2002–	Alfred Moisiu

CONSTITUTION

The Albanian constitution, approved in a national referendum in 1998, abandoned virtually all the provisions of the Communist constitution of 1976. The new basic law was a Western-style document modeled on German and Italian counterparts. It describes Albania as a democratic republic in which human rights, including religious freedom, are guaranteed. Private property rights are also protected, and emphasis is given to a market-oriented economy.

PARLIAMENT

The 1998 constitution provides for a democratic form of government. The supreme organ of government is the unicameral People's Assembly. The president is elected by the assembly but is precluded from holding party office. The powers of the president, especially those regarding his authority to govern in times of emergency, were substantially diluted. The responsibility for the administration rests with the Council of Ministers, whose head serves as prime minister. The prime minister is appointed by the president, who, upon the proposal of the prime minister, also nominates the Council of Ministers for approval by the assembly. The assembly may pass a no-confidence motion against the Council of Ministers, forcing it to resign.

POLITICAL PARTIES

The parliament that emerged from the 1997 elections was led by the Socialist Party, which took 101 of the 155 seats. The Democratic Party gained 27 seats, while the Social Democrats secured eight seats, and the Unity for Human Rights Party won four. In the elections of June 2001 the Socialist Party won 73 seats in the 140-seat as-

sembly, with the Unity for Human Rights Party winning 46. The Democratic Party declared the election results "farical" and boycotted the opening session of the People's Assembly in September 2001.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For purposes of local administration, Albania is divided into 26 districts (*rrethet*), over 200 localities, and 2,500 villages. Local councils, elected by direct suffrage for three-year terms, are the governing bodies in each subdivision.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The court system consists of a Constitutional Court, the Court of Cassation, appeals courts, and district courts. The Constitutional Court is composed of nine judges appointed by the People's Assembly for maximum nine-year terms. The Constitutional Court determines the constitutionality of laws and resolves disagreements between local and federal authorities. The remaining courts are each divided into three jurisdictions: criminal, civil, and military. The Court of Cassation is the highest court of appeal and consists of 11 members appointed by the People's Assembly and serving seven-year terms. The president of the republic chairs the High Council of Justice, which is charged with appointing and dismissing judges.

A college of three judges renders Albanian court verdicts; there is no jury trial, though the college is sometimes referred to in the Albanian media as the "jury."

HUMAN RIGHTS

Under Presidents Meidani and Moisiu, restrictions on Albanians' personal freedoms have been substantially relaxed. To a large extent, the war over Kosovo, with its huge migrations of refugees and the presence of large numbers of international aid workers and NATO military personnel, has had an influence on Albania's external and internal affairs.

Nevertheless, the improvement in the human rights situation is marginal overall, and complaints continue to occur over violations. The principal area of concern centers on conditions in the prisons, which are known to be harsh. Long-term solitary confinement, for example, is common, and cells are cramped, with rudimentary sanitary facilities and often without heat in winter or fresh air in summer.

FOREIGN POLICY

The war over Kosovo probably did more to influence Albania's foreign relations than any other single event since the end of Communist rule.

Albanian foreign policy has concentrated on maintaining good relations with its Balkan neighbors, gaining access to European-Atlantic security institutions, and securing close ties with the United States. The crisis of 1997 spurred an intensive period of international involvement in Albania—led by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). Italy hosted a series of international conferences and led a multinational force of about 7,000 troops to help stabilize the country and facilitate OSCE election monitoring. The United States has worked closely with European partners and various multilateral forces to ensure that international efforts are coordinated.

During the forced mass exodus of Albanian refugees from Kosovo, Albania threw open its borders to accept as many as wanted to come. In addition, the government gave blanket permission to NATO to make whatever military use of Albania it saw fit. These and several other such gestures have resulted in Western governments' adopting a much more positive attitude toward Albania.

In addition, bilateral relations with Greece have improved dramatically, as have Tirana's relations with Macedonia.

In 2002 the OSCE praised Albania for showing leadership toward reform in the Balkan region. The agency also asserted that the nation was on the "threshold" of beginning a Stabilization and Association Agreement with the European Union, a first step toward membership in the union. Negotiations for this agreement began in February 2003. In May of that year U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell signed a partnership agreement with Albania, as well as Croatia and Macedonia, to help them achieve membership in NATO.

DEFENSE

Albania's armed forces in 2002 comprised some 22,000 active-duty personnel. The army had about 16,000 troops, the navy about 2,500, and the air force about 3,500.

By 2003 it was estimated that Albania had just over 900,000 citizens ages 19 to 49 available for military service, with about 743,000 fit for military service. In fiscal year 2002 about \$56.5 million was expended on the military, representing about 1.49 percent of the country's gross domestic product (GDP).

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 22,000
 Military Manpower Availability: 956,107
 Military Expenditures: \$56.5 million
 as % of GDP: 1.49
 as % of central government expenditures: 4
 Arms Imports: \$3 million (in 1990 prices)
 Arms Exports: —

ECONOMY

The collapse of Communism in Albania produced an atmosphere more chaotic than that in other Eastern European countries and was marked by a mass exodus of refugees in the early 1990s. At this point, with real GDP having fallen by 50 percent, economic reforms began in earnest.

These included an ambitious program of market liberalization. Any progress that developed was halted for several years, however, because of the deleterious effects of financial pyramid schemes, all of which collapsed, leaving millions of people bankrupt.

International aid helped to defray the high cost of receiving and returning refugees from the Bosnia conflict. GDP grew by 8 percent in 1999 and 7.5 percent in 2000. By 2002 growth was estimated at 7.3 percent.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity): \$16.13 billion
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity): \$4,400
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999-2003): 7.14
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999-2003): 6.7
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %
 Agriculture: 49
 Industry: 27
 Services: 24
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %
 Private Consumption: 90
 Government Consumption: 10
 Gross Domestic Investment \$billion: 3.01
 Foreign Trade \$million:
 Exports: 425
 Imports: 1,760
 % of Income Received by Poorest 20%: 9
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 22

Consumer price index (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
181.82	181.91	187.56	202.14	203.12

Finance

National Currency: Lek (L)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = L 121.863
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 144.7
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 6.5
 Total External Debt \$million: 36
 Debt Service Ratio %: 3.42
 Balance of Payments \$million: —407.5
 International Reserves Foreign Exchange \$million: 913
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 2.4

Official Development Assistance

ODA: \$315 million
 per capita \$: 85.34
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 135

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$billion: 1.36
 Expenditures \$billion: 1.627
 Budget Deficit: \$267 million
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 47.5
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999-2002) %: 2.7
 Number of Tractors per 1,000 ha: 13.7
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 48
 Fertilizer Consumption mt: 18,700
 Total Farmland as % of land area: 4.41
 Livestock: Cattle 000: 443
 Sheep 000: 1903
 Hogs 000: 109
 Chickens 000: 5
 Forests: Production of Roundwood (000 cubic meters): 296
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 4.1

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 389
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 2.7

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of
 oil equivalent 000: 673
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of
 oil equivalent 000: 1,715
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg: 342
 Net Energy Imports % of commercial use: 60
 Electricity Installed Capacity gW: 1.68
 Production kW-hr million: 3,648
 Consumption kW-hr million: 5,093
 Coal Reserves tons million: —
 Production tons 000: 94
 Consumption tons 000: 40
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic meters billion: 1
 Production cubic meters billion: 1
 Consumption cubic meters billion: 1
 Crude Petroleum reserves barrels million: 185
 Production barrels million: 6
 Consumption barrels million: 24
 Pipelines Length km: 207

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 1.76
 Exports \$million: 425
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999-2002): 18.07
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999-2002): 8.73
 Balance of Trade \$billion: -1.16

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Italy %	33.6	74.9
Greece %	20.2	12.8
Turkey %	6.6	—
Germany %	5.7	3.4

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 18,000
 Paved %: 39
 Automobiles: 148,500
 Trucks and Buses: 73,000
 Railroad; Track Length km: 447
 Passenger-km million: 123
 Freight-km million: 20
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 22
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 62.7
 Airports: 11
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 137,600
 Length of Waterways km: 43

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 343
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 389
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 272

Communications

Telephones: 255,000
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.02
 Cellular Telephones (million): 1.1
 Personal Computers per 1000 people: 11.7
 Internet Hosts: 455
 Internet Users per 1000 people: 3.89

ENVIRONMENT

Although the continuing deleterious effects of decades of environmental neglect should not be discounted, Albania's most serious current environmental problems stem from the military conflict in Yugoslavia.

UN studies have determined that the most serious threat is caused by leakages of highly toxic chemicals into the Drin from damaged industrial plants and by the sudden and uncontrolled influx of refugees.

In the case of river pollution, the leaking of high quantities and concentrations of ammonia, chlorides, and hydroxides probably will cause sustained environmental damage for a long time to come. The unplanned construction of refugee camps has led to the destruction of protected natural habitat and the contamination of water supplies with untreated sewage. The generalized danger to precious water resources in Albania is now of heightened concern.

Environment

Forest Area % of land area: 36
 Average Annual Forest Change, 1990-2000, Rate 000 ha: —8
 Nationally Protected Areas as % of Total Land Area: 3
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 0.9

LIVING CONDITIONS

Living conditions in Albania are generally poor. Forty-six years of Communist rule left behind a legacy of poverty, poor social conditions, weak rule of law, and failed social, economic, and government institutions. Many Albanians have left their country, seeking jobs elsewhere.

After the Communist regime collapsed, up to 21,000 people illegally settled in Bathora, a suburb of the capital city of Tirana. These migrants turned a thousand acres of orchards and rolling hills into a slum with muddy streets and concrete buildings. Desperately poor, they have appealed to the government for help with social services, but the government has failed to respond, causing, in some instances, rioting in the streets.

To help solve these and other problems as Albania makes the transition from Communism to a democratic, free-market state, the European Union has been offering assistance. The union's primary goal is to train a new generation of civil servants and to help the country modernize its infrastructure: roads, electrical grids, and water systems.

HEALTH

The life expectancy at birth for Albanians as of 2002 was 74.3 years for males and 80.1 years for females. The infant mortality rate was 22 per 1,000. Health expenditures per capita were about \$48, and total health expenditures represented about 3.7% of the nation's GDP.

Health

Number of Physicians: 4,325
 Number of Dentists: 1,390
 Number of Nurses: 12,570
 Number of Pharmacists: 1,300
 Physician density per 100,000 people: 138
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: 3.3
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 22
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 55
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 3.7
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 48
 HIV Infected % of adults: less than 0.01
 Child Immunization Rate % of children under 12 months:
 DPT: 98
 Measles: 96
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 91
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 97

FOOD AND NUTRITION

As of the beginning of the 21st century, the United Nations estimated that about 14.3 percent of Albania's children ages five and under were moderately or severely underweight. The United Nations estimated that about 6 percent of the total population was undernourished. Historically, the population growth in Albania has outstripped the nation's ability to feed itself, largely because of relatively low amounts of arable land—about 21 percent of the country's land area—and poor soil conditions.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 6
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,899
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 167.3
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 303.6

STATUS OF WOMEN

Violence against women and spousal abuse are common in Albania's male-dominated society. The rights of women are not protected by any government program. There is a facility for abused women in Tirana, but it can house only a few women at a time. There is also a telephone hotline that women and girls can call for advice and help. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees reported cases of rape and sexual assault of Kosovar Albanian women in refugee camps. In the northeast the traditional code known as *kanum* prevails. Under this code women are considered chattel and may be kidnapped to be sold as brides. Trafficking in women for purposes of prostitution is a major problem. More than 30,000 Albanian women are reported to be working abroad as prostitutes.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 6.4
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men aged 15 to 24: 1.0
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-Agricultural: 40.3

WORK

As of 2003 Albania's labor force consisted of about 1.6 million workers, including about 352,000 emigrant workers. As of 2003 it was estimated that about 57 percent of the labor force was in agriculture, 20 percent in the non-agricultural private sector, and 23 percent in the public sector. The unemployment rate in Albania as of 2003 was officially estimated at 15.8 percent, but the actual percentage may have been as high as 30 percent.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 1,607,000
 Female Activity Rate %: 42.18
 Total Activity Rate %: 49.87
 Labor by Sector: %
 Agriculture: 57
 Non-Agriculture Private Sector: 20
 Public Sector: 23
 Unemployment %: 15.8

EDUCATION

Upon taking power in late 1944, the Communist regime gave high priority to reopening the schools and organizing the whole education system to reflect Communist ideology.

The 1946 Education Reform Law provided specifically that Marxist-Leninist principles would permeate all school texts. This law also made the struggle against illiteracy a primary objective of the new school system.

Illiteracy had been virtually eliminated by the late 1980s. From a total enrollment of fewer than 60,000 students at all levels in 1939, the number of people in school had grown to more than 750,000 by 1987.

A reorganization plan was announced in 1990 to extend the compulsory education program from eight to 10 years. The following year, however, a major economic and political crisis in Albania, and the ensuing breakdown of public order, plunged the school system into chaos. Widespread vandalism and extreme shortages of textbooks and supplies had a devastating effect on school operations. Many teachers fled the country. The highly structured and controlled educational environment that the Communist regime had painstakingly cultivated in the course of more than 46 years was abruptly shattered.

Since 1992 the government has focused on improving supplies and equipment and reconstructing buildings in urban centers, as well as training teachers and improving enrollment rates. New schools are being built in areas that currently have no facilities.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 86.5
 Male %: 93.3
 Female %: 79.5
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 11
 First Level: Primary schools
 Teachers: 12,607
 Students: 274,233
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 22
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 97
 Second Level: Secondary Schools
 Teachers: 22,280
 Students: 377,198
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 17
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 74

Third Level: Institutions

Teachers: —

Students: 40,859

Gross Enrollment Ratio: 15

Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: —

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Albania is one of the poorest nations in all of Europe. As a consequence, it makes few investments in research and development and lacks an infrastructure to encourage scientific and technological development. As of 1997, for example, the number of scientists, engineers, and technicians per million population was so small as to round off to zero, and the number of science and engineering students totaled a mere 19. In 2002 the country had about \$2.39 million in high-technology exports, and 111,610 patent applications were filed by Albanian residents in that year.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million persons: —

Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —

High-Tech Exports \$: 2.39 million

Patent Applications by Residents: 111,610

MEDIA

In 1999 the People's Assembly voted to protect freedom of the press and abolished a 1993 law that restricted access to information and made editors liable to heavy fines for publishing antistate material. The principal source of domestic and foreign news is the Albanian Telegraph Agency. The government-owned Radio and Television of Albania controlled all broadcasting until the late 1990s, when private broadcasters began to appear. Radio Tirana transmits in a number of languages, and television is broadcast in the four most populous districts.

In 2002 the Human Rights Watch organization alleged that Albanian media were still subject to government harassment and intimidation after one of the country's leading newspapers published reports critical of the prime minister.

Media

Newspapers and Periodicals: 9
 Total Circulation 000: 116
 Circulation per 1,000: 36
 Books Published: 133
 Radio Receivers 000: 1,000
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets 000: 700
 per 1,000: 318

CULTURE

Albania has a rich tradition of folk music dating back to ancient Illyrian times. Much of this music is polyphonic, meaning that it blends independent vocal and instrumental parts. The songs typically have epic, historical, or lyrical themes, and many are slow and somber. Many of these songs in the north focus on heroic individuals and on historical conflicts with the Turks. Those in the south focus more on communal elements. Traditional musical instruments include the flute, the drum, bagpipes, and the *labuta*, a stringed instrument similar to a lute. Albania has little in the way of cinema. One film of note, *Lamerica*, starkly portrays life in post-Communist Albania. Because Albania lacked a standardized written language until the early twentieth century, the nation has little in the way of a literary tradition. The most famous twentieth-century Albanian author is Fan Noli (1882–1965), who wrote works on religious themes and established himself as a literary critic with works on Cervantes, Shakespeare, Henrik Ibsen, and others. Ismail Kadare, who fled the country's Communist dictatorship in 1990, is Albania's best-known contemporary author, with his work published in over forty languages. His 1997 novel *The Pyramid* captured the chaos caused by the financial scandals and frauds that undermined the nation's economy in the 1990s.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries

Number: 47

Registered users: 5477

Museums

Number: 42

Annual Attendance: —

Cinema

Gross Receipts: —

Number of Cinemas: 14

Seating Capacity: 2,520

Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Among the major figures in Albanian mythology are dragons, fairies, and snakes. Folklore elements are alluded to with such words as *kuçedër*, referring to a snake or dragon with many heads; *shtrigë*, or witch; and *stubi*, or a winged creature that throws flames and guards treasures. The word *kukudh*, or goblin, is still an insult in Albanian culture. Also legendary in Albania are *zama*, or mythological female figures who help mountain dwellers in distress; the *perit*, or female mountain goddesses dressed entirely in white who punish those who ruin or waste bread by giving them a hump; and the *ore*, or fairies, who sometimes represent fate, as in the expression *i vdiq ora*, meaning “his luck ran out.” *Bolla* is a snakelike

or dragonlike figure who sleeps throughout the year but wakes up on Saint George's Day to look about and devour any human unlucky enough to encounter it.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

As a relatively poor people, Albanians rely heavily on home, family, and friends for recreation and entertainment. Albanians are great storytellers, and men often sit around in coffee shops trading comical stories about the former Communist regime or Albanian folk heroes. The nation is home to several folk dancing and song festivals each year, and classical music is widely popular; Albania has at least seven symphony orchestras. A common feature of Albanian life is the late afternoon nap, after which people stroll about in the evening to meet friends and relatives, then sit down to a late dinner. Younger people enjoy going to discos.

A common form of recreation is crafts, arts, and hobbies. Albanian women are known for their intricate embroideries, and young women who are about to be married often gather with other young women to create doilies, as well as colorful rugs and sweaters, gloves, socks, and the like. Lace making is a traditional folk art form that has been passed down through the generations. Men tend to work in metals to create plates, wall hangings, and utensils. Albanians in general enjoy bird-watching, gardening, collecting butterflies, and collecting stamps.

ETIQUETTE

Albanian children are taught to respect their elders, and in many villages young people kiss the hand of an elder in greeting. Men customarily embrace each other when they first meet, and when they greet each other, they often kiss. When they walk down the street, they often do so with their arms linked. Albania has few funeral parlors, so wakes for the deceased are typically held at home for two or three days prior to burial.

Visitors to an Albanian home maintain an elaborate ritual of greetings. The first step is for the hostess or other female family member to serve visitors a drink, often Turkish coffee, and a sweet, often made with jelly. The next step is for the visitor to inquire about the health of each family member, with the hostess then inquiring about the health of each member of the visitor's family. Only then does normal conversation begin.

Important to all Albanians is the *besa*, or “pledged word.” An agreement sealed by a handshake or an embrace is regarded as more binding than a written contract, and violating such an agreement involves the loss of personal honor.

FAMILY LIFE

Albanians tend to have small families, with the average number of children being just two. The eldest son is trained eventually to become the head of the family when the father dies. Generally, an Albanian husband is not regarded as an equal partner with the wife in the home, which is regarded as the wife's province. Traditionally, Albanian women played a secondary role to men, and from the age of ten they were taught to prepare themselves for marriage. While some Albanians adhere to this practice, it largely disappeared after World War II, when women had served as partisan fighters resisting Italian and German invaders; after the war, women were encouraged to enter professions such as medicine, education, and politics. Because of the lack of nursing homes, elderly parents are likely to live with their adult children.

The Albanian language contains no word for *pet*. Dogs are regarded as working animals, responsible for guard work or herding sheep and other livestock. Domestic cats have become common in homes in the larger cities.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Through the early 1990s, under the Communist regime, the personal appearance of Albanians, especially in the cities, tended to be drab. Because media outlets were tightly controlled, Albanians had little access to news and images regarding fashion trends in the West. Most clothing was homemade. This changed after 1991. As Albanians gained more exposure to Western media, they began to adopt Western fashion trends and continued to wear traditional clothing only on ceremonial occasions. Now most professional men in the cities wear business suits and ties. Women tend to avoid slacks in favor of dresses and skirts, often accompanied by colorful tops and shirts. Younger people prefer jeans, athletic shoes, and T-shirts. In the villages, however, people still tend to wear traditional clothing, which varies by region. In the north women favor head scarves and colorful wool skirts. Pants for men are made of wool or cotton and are worn with heavy wool or cotton shirts and caps. Throughout Albania synthetic fibers are avoided in favor of natural ones, such as cotton or wool.

SPORTS

The most popular sport in Albania is unquestionably soccer (or football). The Albanian Football Federation was formed in 1932, and this federation became part of the International Football Federation. Throughout the decades Albanian teams have won Balkan and European championships. Albanians follow not only their own teams but also teams in Italy, Germany, and England. Also popular,

among both men and women, is volleyball. Basketball is growing in popularity, and cities throughout the country sponsor teams that play in national and international competition. Also growing in popularity in recent years is tennis, which the former Communist regime had looked on with disfavor as a "capitalist" sport.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1943–44** Albania is under German rule following Italian surrender.
- 1946** Communists under Enver Hoxha proclaim a Communist republic.
- 1949** Albania joins the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (COMECON).
- 1961** Albania breaks with the Soviet Union in the wake of Nikita Khrushchev's denunciation of Stalin.
- 1978** Albania becomes a rogue state following suspension of diplomatic relations with China.
- 1982** Ramiz Alia, a protege of Hoxha, becomes head of state.
- 1985** Hoxha dies; Alia becomes head of Party of Labor.
- 1990** One-party system is abandoned as first opposition party is permitted to form.
- 1991** Communists win first multiparty elections; Alia is reelected.
- 1992** Presidential election is won by Sali Berisha of the Democratic Party; Alia and other Communist Party officials are charged with corruption and abuse of power; Totalitarian and Communist parties are banned.
- 1993** Conflict erupts between Albanians and ethnic Greeks following purge of Greeks from senior positions in civil service and army; Alia is sentenced to eight years' imprisonment.
- 1995** Alia is released from prison but is banned, along with fellow Communists, from local and national elections until 2002.
- 1997** Antigovernment riots break out following collapse of bogus investment schemes, southern Albania falls under rebel control; national election is won by former Communist Party; Rexhep Meidani is elected president and Fatos Nano prime minister.
- 1998** Prime Minister Fatos Nano resigns, and former student activist Pandeli Majko becomes new prime minister.
- 1999** NATO conducts air strikes against Yugoslav military targets. Hundreds of thousands flee from Kosovo into Albania. Prime Minister Majko resigns after losing a Socialist Party leadership vote; at age 30, Iler Meta becomes Europe's youngest prime minister.

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- 2000** Albania joins the World Trade Organization.
- 2001** Albania and Yugoslavia reestablish diplomatic ties broken off during the Kosovo crisis in 1999.
- 2002** Alfred Moisiu is elected president; Fatos Nano again becomes prime minister. The Albanian royal family, in exile since the 1930s, returns to Albania.
- 2004** Demonstrations are held, demanding the resignation of Fatos Nano and charging the government with corruption and failing to improve living standards.
- 2005** Former president Sali Berisha becomes prime minister.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Albanian Home Page
<http://albanian.com/main/>
- Albanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
<http://www.mfa.gov.al/english/>

ALGERIA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Democratic and Popular Republic of Algeria (Al-Jumhuriyya al-Jazariyya ad Dimocratiyya Ash-Sahbiyya; République Algérienne Démocratique et Populaire)

ABBREVIATION

DZ

CAPITAL

Algiers

HEAD OF STATE

President Abdelaziz Bouteflika (from 1999)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Ahmed Ouyahia (from 2003)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Democracy

POPULATION

32,531,853 (2005)

AREA

2,381,741 sq km (919,592 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Arabs, Berbers

LANGUAGE

Arabic (official)

RELIGION

Sunni Islam

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Algerian dinar

NATIONAL FLAG

Red star and crescent superimposed on the center of two equal vertical fields, one white and the other green

NATIONAL EMBLEM

The central motif is the “white hand of Fatima,” an Arab sign of blessing and happiness. This insignia is flanked by two national flags with their gold staffs joined. On the outside are branches of palm and olive trees with a larger red crescent and a star in the middle.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“We Pledge”

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year’s Day), May 1 (Labor Day), June 19 (Ben Bella’s overthrow), July 5 (Independence Day), November 1 (National Day, anniversary of the revolution), various Islamic festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

July 3, 1962

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

November 22, 1976; revised November 28, 1996

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Algeria is the second-largest country in Africa, with an area of 2,381,741 sq km (919,592 sq mi). It lies midway along the Mediterranean littoral in the Maghreb region of North Africa and extends south into the heart of the Sahara. It shares international borders with Libya, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Niger, and Tunisia.

The two parallel mountain ranges of the Tell (or Maritime) Atlas and the Saharan Atlas divide Algeria into three lateral zones: a narrow but fertile coastal plain, a high plateau, and the Sahara. The coastal plain is a narrow strip about 128 km (80 mi) wide to the east and 64

km (40 mi) to the west. The Tell Atlas consists of two distinct ranges: the Traras Mountains, the Sahel of Oran, and the Dahra Massif to the west and the Djurdjura Massif, Greater and Lesser Kabylia, and the Biban and Hodna chains to the east. The eastern end of the Hodna Mountains leads into the Aures Massif, which includes the highest peaks in northern Algeria, several exceeding 2,133 m (7,000 ft). Behind the coastal hills lie a series of relatively low plains: Oran, Chelif Valley, Algier (Mitidja), Bejaia, Skikda, and Annaba. South of the plains are the inland ranges of the Tell Atlas: Tlemcen, Djebel Ouarsenis, and Blida Atlas, whose altitude declines from west to east. They surround and isolate a series of inland

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basins and depressions, such as Sidi Bel Abbas, Tiaret, Setif, Constantine, and Guelma Plains. The second zone is the high plateau, a vast, steppelike plain that forms a depression between the Tell Atlas and the Saharan Atlas. The plateau generally narrows and falls in height eastward and ends in the Hodna Basin. The plateau is covered by salt lakes and salt marshes, of which the largest is the Shott ech Chergui. To the south of the high plateau are the five massifs of the Saharan Atlas: Ksour, Amour, Ouled Nail, Ziban, and Aures, the last of which includes the highest peak in Algeria outside the Sahara—Chelia,

2,328 m (7,537 ft). The Algerian Sahara covers 2,071,990 sq km (800,000 sq mi), over 85 percent of Algeria's land area, and is one of the driest, hottest, and most arid regions on earth. Much of the Sahara is covered by rocky platforms known as *hammadas*, and two great sand deserts, the Great Western Erg and the Great Eastern Erg. To the southeast is the high Ahaggar Massif, surrounded by desolate sandstone plateaus.

With the exception of the Chelif River, there are no permanent rivers but only wadis, rivers that have water only in the rainy season.

Geography

Area sq km: 2,381,741; sq mi 919,592
 World Rank: 11th
 Land Boundaries, km: Libya 982; Mali 1,376; Mauritania 463; Morocco 1,559; Niger 956; Tunisia 965; Western Sahara 42
 Coastline, km: 998
 Elevation Extremes
 Lowest: Chott Melrhir -40
 Highest: Tahat 3,003
 Land Use %
 Arable land: 3.22
 Permanent Crops: 0.25
 Forest: 1
 Other: 95.53

Population of Principal Cities (1998)

Algiers	1,519,570
Annaba	348,554
Batna	242,514
Béchar	131,010
Bejaïa	147,076
Biskra	170,956
Blida (el-Boulaida)	226,512
Constantine (Qacentina)	462,187
Mostaganem	124,399
Oran (Wahran)	692,516
Sétif	211,859
Sidi bel Abbés	180,260
Skikda	152,335
Tébessa	153,246
Tlemcen (Tilimsen)	155,162

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

The climate of northern Algeria, including the coastal plains and the Tell Atlas, is Mediterranean, with hot, dry summers and mild, wet winters. Typical winter temperatures range from 10°C to 12°C (50°F to 54°F) and summer temperatures from 24°C to 26°C (75°F to 79°F), although summer temperatures of over 37.8°C (100°F) are not infrequent. Rainfall increases from west to east, with an average annual rainfall of 380 mm (15 in) in Oran, 660 mm (26 in) in Algiers, and 1,520 mm (60 in) in Kabylia. In the higher elevated areas of Kabylia snow is common in the winter. Winters are colder and summers are hotter in the Tell Atlas. Mean temperatures in the winter average 4°C to 6°C (39°F to 43°F) and rise to 26°C to 28°C (70°F to 82°F) in the summer. In the high plateau region the continental climate is dominant, with greater daily temperature ranges. The mean winter temperature is 4.4°C (40°F), and the mean summer temperature is 26.7°C (80°F). Rain is scanty, less than 400 mm (15 in), with much of it falling within a brief period. The Sahara has a true desert climate, with temperatures going up to 50°C (122°F) on most days in summer. Rainfall is erratic and infrequent.

During the summer Algeria is subject to the scorching southern wind from the Sahara known as the *chebili*. It blows for 40 days a year over the high plateau and for 20

days a year near the coast. In the summer, a wind called the sirocco is accompanied by blinding swirls of dust.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature
 Coastal Region
 Winter: 50°F to 54°F
 Summer: 75°F to 79°F
 Tell Atlas
 Winter: 39°F to 43°F
 Summer: 79°F to 82°F
 High Plateau
 Winter: 40°F
 Summer: 80°F
 Sahara
 Summer: 122°F
 Average Rainfall: 15 in (Oran), 26 in (Algiers), 60 in (Kabylia)

FLORA AND FAUNA

Algeria has suffered from extensive deforestation. In the north forests have receded to the upper Tell Atlas and to the Saharan Atlas, and forests constitute only 0.9 percent of Algeria's land area. In what remains of Algeria's forests can be found pine, cedar, and several species of oak, including cork oak. On the lower slopes of the mountain ranges are juniper and other shrubs. The desolate high plateau contains esparto grass and brushwood. In the Sahara, vegetation is sparse, consisting of desert grasses, acacia, and jujube. Wildlife in the north is typical of Mediterranean regions and includes wild boar and red deer. Desert wildlife is limited but diverse and includes panthers, leopards, gazelles, jackals, hyenas, and antelope. Also found in the desert regions are snakes, monitor lizards, and vipers.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 32,531,853
 World Rank: 37th
 Density per sq km: 13
 % of annual growth (1999-2003): 1.4
 Male %: 50.5
 Female %: 49.5
 Urban %: 59
 Age Distribution: % 0-14: 34
 15-64: 62
 Population 2025: 40,255,000
 Birth Rate per 1,000: 17.76
 Death Rate per 1,000: 4.61
 Rate of Natural Increase %: 1.5
 Total Fertility Rate: 2.04
 Expectation of Life (years): Males 71.22
 Females 74.34
 Marriage Rate per 1,000: —
 Divorce Rate per 1,000: —
 Average Size of Households: —
 Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Arabs and Arabized Berbers constitute the largest ethnic community and about 80 percent of the population. Berbers make up the remainder. Because both the Arabized Berbers and the Berbers belong to the same racial stock, the dividing line between these two groups is neither rigid nor exclusive. However, the Berbers, with their weaker cultural identity, have tended to be easily assimilated into the stronger Arab group. Although Berbers do not constitute a homogeneous group in a cultural sense and do not exhibit a sense of peoplehood, they are proud of their separateness vis-à-vis the Arabs. Many Berber tribes are endogamous and have resisted the imposition of the Arabic language, preferring to learn French. Major Berber groups live in separate mountain regions: the Kabyles in Kabylia, the Chaouias in the Aures Mountains, the M'zabites in the northern Sahara, and the Tuareg in the central Sahara. Of these groups, the Kabyles, numbering over 2 million, are the most important. They also form the majority of the Algerian workers in France. The Chaouias number over 1 million, the M'zabites 80,000, and the Tuareg less than 10,000.

In 1982 the total non-Arab and non-Berber population was less than 100,000, a fraction of the 1 million Europeans and 150,000 Jews who lived in the country up to the time of independence. The once-flourishing Jewish community has been reduced to a few hundred. Most Europeans are of French (including Corsican) descent, with a sprinkling of Italians, Spaniards, and Maltese.

LANGUAGES

Arabic is the official language of Algeria and is spoken by 86 percent of the population.

During the long colonial rule French became entrenched as the language of the administrative and intellectual elite and also as the language of progress and civilization. The Algerian revolutionary movement and the governments since independence have been committed to a total replacement of French by Arabic in all areas of national life. However, as in France's other former colonies, French has proved difficult to dislodge for practical reasons, and it is likely to remain the semi-official language of Algeria for the foreseeable future.

RELIGIONS

Islam in its Sunni form is the official religion of Algeria; 99 percent of Algerians are Muslim. A vigorous program of mosque construction was undertaken in the late 1960s. Within the Muslim community the Kharadjites are the major minority. The M'zabite tribe is almost entirely Kharadjite. Frequently referred to as the "Puritans of the

Desert," they are governed by a stricter moral code than other Muslims. Friday sermons are not formally censored, but government monitoring constrains their freedom of expression. Religious travel, most notably the hajj (the Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca), is government-organized.

Except for a few converted Berbers, mostly Kabyles, the Christian population is almost entirely foreign. There is one Roman Catholic archdiocese for all of Algeria. The ancient Jewish community comprises native converts to Judaism and descendants of refugees from Roman and, later, Spanish, persecution.

Religious Affiliations

Sunni Muslim	31,808,000
Ibawdiyah Muslim	118,000
Other	21,500

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

At the beginning of recorded history Algeria was inhabited by Berber tribes. After the eighth century B.C.E. the region was controlled by Carthage and, after the fall of Carthage in 146 B.C.E., by Rome. Known as Numidia under Roman rule, the region was Christianized in the early years of the modern era. Roman influence declined, especially after the Vandal invasions of 430–31. The Arabs arrived on the scene in 637 and swept away all traces of the Roman past. The inhabitants were forcibly converted to Islam, and Arabic was introduced as the national language. Another wave of Arabs in the 11th century brought widespread destruction until the Almoravids and Almohads from Morocco unified the country and consolidated it with Morocco and Spain. Spain conquered a part of the coast in the 16th century, but the Spaniards were expelled by Barbarossa, a Turkish pirate, who made himself a sultan. His brother Khayr al-Din placed his territory under the suzerainty of the Ottoman sultan in Istanbul. From the mid-1500s Algeria was ruled by Turkish *beylerbeys*, pashas, agas, and deys. By the 1800s Turkish power had waned, and the French began to expand their control over the coastal areas.

Algeria was conquered by France in the 1830s and officially annexed to that country in 1842. In the following century white French settlers colonized the territory, became permanent residents, and assumed political and economic power, denying equal rights to the indigenous Muslim majority.

The nationalist movement under the auspices of the Front de Libération Nationale (FLN) instigated a war for independence on November 1, 1954. The eight-year conflict resulted in the deaths of 250,000 Algerians and injuries to an additional 500,000. Two million people were uprooted, and 1 million French settlers left the country.

The French government declared a cease-fire in March 1962, and Algeria became independent on July 3, 1962. In August the political bureau of the FLN took control of the government. A single list of FLN candidates was proposed for election to the National Constituent Assembly in September, and the republic was established. Ahmed Ben Bella, founder of the FLN, was made prime minister of the new government.

In September 1963 a popular referendum was held in which a constitution providing for a presidential form of government and the FLN as the sole political party was approved. Ben Bella was elected president. During his presidency economic reconstruction was initiated, and Algeria emerged as a single-party socialist state.

Col. Houari Boumédiène, the minister of defense, led the army in a bloodless coup in June 1965, taking over the government as president of the Revolutionary Council of 26 members. During the next six years Boumédiène overrode the opposition of left-wing interests in the FLN and, by 1971, had nationalized French petroleum enterprises and undertaken agricultural reforms.

In 1976, in two separate referenda, a new National Charter and a new constitution were approved. These set forth the principles of government, whereby a socialist system was to be established and Islam declared the state religion. Boumédiène, as the only candidate nominated, was elected president in December. In February 1977, in the first legislative election since 1964, the unicameral National People's Assembly was convened, and, in February, Chadli Bendjedid was elected president. Bendjedid appointed Col. Muhammad Abd al-Ghani prime minister in anticipation of constitutional changes approved later, in June, requiring the appointment of a prime minister. A legislative election was held in March 1982 for the National People's Assembly, whose membership had increased to 281. Voters were offered a choice of three candidates for each seat. Government officials were elected to 142 seats and FLN party officials to 55, with expectations that executive control of the National People's Assembly would increase.

Bendjedid was elected to a second term as president on January 12, 1984, and he appointed Abd al-Hamid Brahimi prime minister. The National Charter was revised in 1985 to provide for encouragement of the private sector and a balance of socialism and Islam as state ideologies. It was adopted in a referendum in January 1986. The number of seats in the National People's Assembly was increased to 295, its present size, and a legislative election was held in February 1987.

Discontent among students, Islamic fundamentalists, and Berbers of the Kabyle region began to be expressed publicly in 1985 in the form of criticism of the government and violent protests. In separate trials, supporters of Ben Bella and Berber activists were found guilty either of threatening state security or of membership in illegal

groups and were given prison sentences. Riots in Constantine and Setif in November 1986 led to four deaths and 186 arrests. Economic problems, particularly the sharp drop in petroleum prices in 1986, caused the government to introduce austerity measures, leading to further discontent. Administrative reforms were announced in December 1987 to increase efficiency in the government structure, but the combination of rapid population growth, government austerity measures, food shortages, high prices, and high unemployment rates led to a series of strikes beginning in July 1988, and by October riots had broken out in Algiers. Violent protests also were staged in Oran and Annaba. A state of emergency was declared by the government. The official death toll was announced as 176, but unofficial estimates ranged between 200 and 500. The state of emergency was ended after six days, with Bendjedid promising political reforms. A referendum was held on November 3, and a number of constitutional amendments were approved, including provision for the prime minister to be responsible to the National People's Assembly instead of the FLN.

Kasdi Merbah was appointed prime minister in late 1988. The new government proposed an emergency plan for reforms intended to address the problems causing discontent among youths and the unemployed. Bendjedid, as the sole candidate in the presidential election held in December, was elected to his third term in office.

In February 1989 Algerians approved a new constitution that dropped all references to socialism and cleared the way for a multiparty system. Islam remained the state religion. The new political reforms were seen in part as an effort to head off the growing influence of Muslim fundamentalist groups, especially among the young.

Bendjedid dismissed Merbah in September, citing the prime minister's failure to implement the political and economic reforms promised after the 1988 riots and the plans intended to transform Algeria from a one-party socialist state into a multiparty democracy. He was replaced by Mouloud Hamrouche, one of Bendjedid's top advisers.

The democratization process, begun by the nationwide riots in 1988, gathered speed in 1990. Municipal elections were held in June 1990, with the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) winning 54 percent of the vote. Violent protests by Islamic fundamentalists in June 1991 caused Bendjedid to declare a state of emergency and cancel the national parliamentary elections that had been scheduled for late June. In the same month, Bendjedid dismissed Prime Minister Mouloud Hamrouche and replaced him with Sid Ahmed Ghazali.

In June 1992, Mohamed Boudiaf, the head of the government, was assassinated and was replaced by Ali Kafi, who in turn was replaced by a five-member presidential High Council. In 1994 the council named Algeria's defense minister, Liamine Zérroual, as interim president of Algeria for a three-year term, allowing him to negotiate

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with the FIS. In 1994 the government met with five opposition groups to negotiate a peace settlement. Negotiations continued in Italy and led to elections in 1995.

Open elections were held in November. However, the FIS boycotted them. Liamine Zérroual was elected president. In 1996, President Zérroual signed new constitutional reforms that, among other things, banned political parties based upon religion or language. Rather than curb violence, these reforms led to increased ethnic conflict. Elections were once again held in April 1999 with Abdelaziz Bouteflika, former foreign minister, winning the vote. President Bouteflika, who was reelected by a large majority in 2004, enjoys the widespread support of the military, but he was elected amid allegations of fraud. His primary agenda was to bring stability and security to Algeria. To that end, he proposed an amnesty for those who had fought against the government in the 1990s. This policy was approved by referendum in 2000, and estimates are that 85 percent of those who fought against the regime accepted the offer of amnesty.

Nonetheless, in 2001 Berber activists from the country's Kabyle region mounted a resistance campaign, including strikes and demonstrations, against a government that they saw as repressive. Among their demands was that their language, Tamazight, be recognized as an official language. Additionally, they demanded greater Berber control over affairs in their region. In 2001 Tamazight was recognized as a "national language" but not an official language. In 2003 Algeria suffered a major earthquake that killed 2,200 people. The government met with widespread criticism for what was seen as an ineffective response to the earthquake.

In 2004 Algeria had its first presidential election since independence that was democratically contested throughout. President Bouteflika faced five opponents, who complained of voting irregularities and unfair media coverage. Bouteflika was reelected with nearly 85 percent of the vote. Security in Algeria has increased since Bouteflika's election in 1999, but terrorism has not been entirely eliminated, especially in the provinces of Boumerdes and Tizi-Ouzou and in the country's southern regions. Each month as many as 50 to 60 Algerians are killed in terrorist incidents, but this number is down markedly from the 1,200-plus during the mid-1990s.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

- 1963–65** Ahmed Ben Bella (president)
- 1965–78** Houari Boumédiène (1965–76 president of the Council of the Revolution; 1976–78 president).
- 1979–92** Chadli Bendjedid (president)
- 1992** Mohamed Boudiaf (president; January 16–June 29)

- 1992–94** Ali Hussain Kafi (president of the High Council of State)
- 1994–99** Liamine Zérroual (head of state; president 1995–99)
- 1999–** Abdelaziz Bouteflika (president)

CONSTITUTION

The basis of the government of Algeria is the constitution of 1976, ratified in 1977, amended in 1979, and further amended in 1988 and 1989. The constitution originally established Algeria as a socialist, democratic, and popular republic and guaranteed the fundamental rights of its citizens. Voting is universal at the age of 18. The FLN was recognized as the nation's sole political party and as "the leading force in society." Executive power is vested in the president of the republic as the chief executive, head of state, and president of the Political Bureau of the FLN. The constitution was suspended by the military government in January 1992, which ended the commitment to socialism embodied in the National Charter and earlier constitutions. Algeria has a political system based on strong presidential rule, which provides in theory for a multiparty system, the separation of church and state, and military subordination to civilian authority. The constitution was again revised in 1996, banning political parties based solely on ethnicity, religion, or another separatist feature and creating a new, bicameral legislature.

PARLIAMENT

The 1976 constitution described the National People's Assembly as a unicameral, elected, representative legislative body. Under the 1989 law deputies are elected for five-year terms, and all Algerians "enjoying full civil and political rights" and over the age of 25 are eligible. Elections occur by secret, direct, and universal ballot. Until the country's first multiparty elections in December 1991, all candidates were drawn from a single party list, approved by the FLN, although multiple candidates could compete for a single constituency. Some legislative functions are exercised by the National Transitional Council, created in May 1994—a 200-member body that provides for political party, trade union, professional, and civil service representation. The bicameral parliament consists of the National People's Assembly, or al-Majlis Ech-Chaabi al-Watani (389 seats; members elected by popular vote to serve four-year terms), and the Council of Nations (144 seats; one-third of the members appointed by the president, two-thirds elected by indirect vote; members serve six-year terms; created as a result of the constitutional revision of November 1996). The last multiparty elections to the parliament were held in 2003.

POLITICAL PARTIES

The number of legal parties in Algeria dropped from 60 in 1991 to about 20 in 1999 and 13 in 2004. The constitutional amendment of 1996 imposed a number of restrictions on the formation of political parties. There are three government parties: National Democratic Rally, FLN, and Movement for a Peaceful Society, formerly Movement for an Islamic Society. The principal opposition parties are Renaissance Movement, Movement for National Reform, Socialist Forces Front, and Rally for Culture and Democracy, the latter two being primarily pro-Berber groups.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The major units of local governments are the *wilayat*, or provinces; the *da'iraat*, or districts; and communes. The largest unit is the *wilaya*, headed by a *wali*, or governor, appointed by the central government. The *wilayat* are divided into *da'iraat*, each of which is headed by a deputy governor. The commune is the basic unit of local government and is linked to the central and *wilaya* governments and also to the FLN through party units, thus functioning as a means of both administrative and political control.

The organs of self-government at the local level include the commune assemblies in the communes and people's assemblies in the 48 *wilayat*. The commune's assemblies are elected for four years. Their administrative work is conducted through standing committees and an executive council.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The legal system is in transition. All legislation dating from the colonial era was reviewed and amended by a national commission, and a revised code was issued in 1975. Algerianization of the judiciary was completed in 1963. Despite these efforts, the bulk of Algerian law remains French in origin and substance.

At the apex of the legal structure is the Supreme Court. It serves as the final court of appeal and also as the body that sets standards of procedure. However, it has no right to decide on the legality of government actions. Below the Supreme Court there is one court for each of the 48 provinces; there are more than 180 courts of first instance at the district level and justices of the peace at the commune level. Three special courts have been set up in Oran, Constantine, and Algiers to deal with economic crimes against the state. There is no appeal from decisions of these courts. In 1975 the Cour de Sûreté de l'Etat, composed of magistrates and army

officers, was set up to try cases against state security. The Higher Court of the Magistrature, presided over by the president of the republic, is the constitutional body concerned with the integrity and discipline of the judiciary. Judges are appointed by the executive branch, and their appointment may be challenged only by the High Judicial Council.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Although democratic in principle, Algeria is a military state. The military establishment strongly influences domestic and foreign policy, and security forces are actively involved in counterinsurgency and counterterrorism operations, in the course of which they have committed serious human rights abuses, including extrajudicial killings, torture of detainees, and arbitrary arrest and detention. Although the constitution provides for an independent judiciary, prolonged pretrial detention, lack of due process, and absence of privacy rights are serious problems.

There is no overt censorship, but the electronic media are entirely state owned, and the print media exercise self-censorship out of fear. Freedoms of press and speech are restricted in practice.

Islamic insurgents pose the greatest threat to human rights. In the last decade of the twentieth century more than 100,000 people were killed by armed groups who targeted both security personnel and civilians, especially women. In many cases, terrorists have randomly targeted civilians in an apparent attempt to create social disorder. There are reports of disappearances involving both security forces and armed Islamic groups. Police beatings of detainees are a common practice. Muslim terrorists have committed numerous abuses, such as beheading, mutilation, disemboweling, and dismembering of their victims, including infants, children, and pregnant women. They also rape female victims and then murder them.

Freedom of assembly and association are curtailed in practice. Islam is the official faith, and the law limits sharply the practice of other faiths. Islam is taught compulsorily in schools, and the government appoints preachers in mosques, gives general guidance on sermons, and provides financial support for the promotion of Islam.

Citizens do not have the ability to change the government peacefully. The executive branch is dominated by the military and the bureaucracy. Opposition parties are harassed, and the government sometimes disconnects their phone services. The opposition has only limited access to state-controlled radio and television. Under the present state of emergency, the police operate checkpoints throughout the country and routinely stop vehicles and detain people at will.

FOREIGN POLICY

Algeria's foreign policy has undergone a sea change since the military takeover in 1992. In the immediate post-independence period foreign policy was dominated by Ben Bella's anti-imperialist ideology. It changed into a low-profile moderate policy after the 1965 coup led by Boumediène. But following the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, Boumediène became more pro-Arab, and Algeria joined the Steadfastness Front as a charter member in opposition to any rapprochement with Israel. During the 1970s and 1980s foreign policy was dominated by disputes with Morocco over Western Sahara and disputes with Libya. Relations with France were always uneasy until the military takeover. Algeria's efforts to contain the fundamentalist movement have received the support of not merely France and the United States but also Arab countries such as Morocco, Tunisia, and Egypt.

DEFENSE

The defense structure is headed by the president as supreme commander of the armed forces. He is assisted by the Higher Council of Defense and the General Staff. The Ministry of National Defense includes a Political Commissariat, an arm of the FLN charged with providing ideological indoctrination for the armed forces. Territorially, Algeria is divided into five military regions: Blida (I), Oran (II), Bechar (III), Ouargla (IV), and Constantine (V). Each is headed by a colonel who is directly subordinate to the minister of defense rather than to the General Staff.

Military manpower is provided by voluntary conscription for a period of six months at age 19.

The total strength of the armed forces in 2003 was 119,000, with about 100,000 reservists. Projected defense expenditures for fiscal year 2004 were \$2.5 billion, or 3.9 percent of the nation's gross domestic product (GDP). This constituted 12 percent of the national budget. Total arms imports in 2003 cost Algeria \$365 million.

The Algerian army is the most important and representative national institution, with both a political and a military mission. In its political role the army is designated the guardian of the revolution, and it determines the ideological direction of the nation.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 119,000
 Military Manpower Availability: 9,311,747
 Military Expenditures \$million: 2.5 billion
 as % of GDP: 3.9
 as % of central government expenditures: 12
 Arms Imports \$million: 365
 Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

The hydrocarbons sector is the backbone of the economy, accounting for roughly 60 percent of budget revenues, 30 percent of GDP, and over 95 percent of export earnings. Algeria has the seventh-largest reserves of natural gas in the world and is the second-largest gas exporter; it ranks 14th for oil reserves. Algiers' efforts to reform one of the most centrally planned economies in the Arab world stalled in 1992 as the country became embroiled in political turmoil. Burdened with a heavy foreign debt, Algiers concluded a one-year standby arrangement with the International Monetary Fund in April 1994 and, the following year, signed onto a three-year extended fund facility, which ended on April 30, 1998. Some progress on economic reform, Paris Club debt reschedulings in 1995 and 1996, and oil-and-gas sector expansion have contributed to a recovery in growth since 1995. Still, the economy remains heavily dependent on volatile oil-and-gas revenues. In 2000 Algeria's finances benefited from the spike in oil prices and the government's tight fiscal policy, leading to a large increase in the trade surplus, the near tripling of foreign-exchange reserves, and reduction in foreign debt. The government has continued efforts to diversify the economy by attracting foreign and domestic investment outside the energy sector, but it has had little success in reducing the high rate of unemployment and improving living standards. Nonetheless, Algeria's real growth rate in GDP was estimated at 7.4 percent in 2004.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity): \$196 billion
 GDP per capita \$ (purchasing power parity): 6,000
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999-2003) %: 3.8
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999-2003) %: 2.2
 Origin of GDP %:
 Agriculture: 10.2
 Industry: 56.5
 Services: 33.4
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %
 Private Consumption: 57
 Government Consumption: 14
 Gross Domestic Investment: 24.8
 Foreign Trade \$billion:
 Exports: 24.96
 Imports: 12.42
 % of Income Received by Poorest 20%: 6.9
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 26.8

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
135.17	135.63	141.37	143.37	147.07

Finance

National Currency: Algerian Dinar (DZD)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = DZD 77.395

Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 1,237
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 4.5
 Total External Debt \$billion: 22.71
 Debt Service Ratio %: —

Balance of Payments \$billion: 7.836
 International Reserves SDRs billion: 32.9
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index
 Growth Rate %: 3.5

Official Development Assistance

Donor ODA \$million: 182
 per capita \$: 12
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 1.065

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar year
 Revenues \$billion: 25.49
 Expenditures \$billion: 22.87
 Budget Surplus \$billion: 2.62
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: 32

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP: 10.2
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999-2003) %: 4.4
 Number of Tractors per 100 hectares: 1
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: —
 Fertilizer Consumption mt: 105,300
 Total Farm land as % of land area: —
 Livestock: Cattle 000: 1,560
 Sheep 000: 18,700
 Hogs 000: 5.7
 Chickens 000: 125
 Forests: Production of Roundwood
 (000 cubic meters): 7,631
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons: 100.2

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 4,203
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 6

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of
 oil equivalent 000: 140,984
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of
 oil equivalent 000: 29,484
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 959
 Net Energy Imports % of use: -390
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: 6,044
 Production kW-hr million: 24,688
 Consumption kW-hr million: 22,710
 Coal Reserves tons million: —
 Production tons 000: —
 Consumption tons 000: 911
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic meters billion: 1,605
 Production cubic meters billion: 5,668
 Consumption cubic meters billion: 721

Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: 13.1
 Production barrels 000 per day: 1,558
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 217
 Pipelines Length km: 6,496

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 12.42
 Exports \$billion: 24.96
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999-2003): 4.8
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999-2003): 5.2
 Balance of trade \$billion: 7.836

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
France %	30.9	13.6
Italy %	9.6	19.5
Spain %	6.1	11.2
Germany %	5.5	—
China %	4.6	—
Turkey %	4.1	—
Brazil %	3.4	4.9
United States %	—	18.5
Canada %	—	6.2
Belgium %	—	5.1

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 104,000
 Paved %: 69
 Automobiles: 1,708,400
 Trucks and Buses: 1,002,300
 Railroad; Track Length km: 3,973
 Passenger-km million: 981
 Freight-km million: 1,990
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 59
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 929.8
 Airports: 137
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 3.2
 Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 988
 Number of Tourists from 000: 1,257
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 133
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 193

Communications

Telephones 000: 2,119
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones 000: 1,447
 Fax Machines 000: 5.2
 Personal Computers 000: 265
 Internet Hosts: 897
 Internet Users: 500,000

ENVIRONMENT

Algeria suffers from growing desertification caused by widespread soil erosion because of overgrazing and other poor farming practices. The rivers and coastal waters of the country are being polluted by the dumping of raw sewage, petroleum-refining wastes, and other industrial effluents. The Mediterranean Sea, in particular, is becoming polluted from oil wastes, soil erosion, and fertilizer runoff. Most Algerians do not have an adequate supply of potable water.

Environment

Forest Area % of land area: 1
 Average Annual Forest Change, 1990-2000, 000 ha: 27
 Nationally Protected Areas as % of Total Land Area: 5
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 3

LIVING CONDITIONS

After French forces evacuated Algeria, the nation's health care system was virtually nonexistent. A poor educational system left behind only about 300 doctors. Since independence, Algeria has made great strides in improving health care, and since 1975 the government has provided free health care for all citizens. By 1991 the nation had 23,000 doctors. Meanwhile, Algeria has suffered from an acute shortage of housing; as the population grew, housing did not keep pace, forcing many Algerians to live with extended families in the same home. Under French rule, Algeria had but one university; today there are more than thirty institutions of higher learning. Most Algerians are poor. Arabs in the larger cities tend to be better off and look down not only on the Berbers but on other desert tribes as well.

HEALTH

Medical care in Algeria is nationalized and free. The life expectancy at birth for Algerians in 2002 was 70 years. The infant mortality rate for that year was 39 per 1,000 live births. In 2004 Algeria had 85 physicians for each 100,000 people. In 2003, 81 percent of children were immunized against measles and 86 percent against diphtheria, pertussis, and tetanus. Medical care is much more accessible in the more populous north; residents of sparsely populated areas in the south have little access to modern medical care.

Health

Number of Physicians: 23,585
 Number of Dentists: 7,862
 Number of Nurses: 83,022

Number of Pharmacists: 3,624
 Physician density per 100,000 people: 84.6
 Hospital Beds per 10,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 39
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 140
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 4
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 73
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.1
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 86
 Measles: 81
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 9
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 87

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Couscous, or steamed semolina wheat, served with lamb, chicken, or vegetables is the national dish of Algeria. It is so widely consumed that its Arabic name, *ta'am*, also means "food."

From 1998 to 2002 about 7 percent of Algerian infants were of low birth weight. During those same years, about 5 percent of Algerian children age five and under were moderately underweight; an additional 1 percent were severely underweight. About 6 percent of the total population as of 2003 was undernourished.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 5
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,960
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 217.3
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 145.9

STATUS OF WOMEN

After 1962 the status of women began improving, primarily because of the increased education of family members, broader economic and social development, and the willingness or necessity for ever-larger numbers of women to seek gainful employment. In the mid-1950s about 7,000 women were registered as wage earners; by 1977 a total of 138,234 women, or 6 percent of the active workforce, were engaged in full-time employment. Corresponding figures for the mid-1980s were about 250,000, or 7 percent of the labor force. Many women were employed in the state sector as teachers, nurses, physicians, and technicians. The number of women in the workforce, however, may be much higher than official statistics have suggested. Women in the rural workforce were not counted; only 140 were listed in official statistics. In 2004 Algeria was pressing ahead with a controversial women's rights bill that was meeting with fierce opposition from fundamentalist Islamic political parties.

Women

Women-headed Households: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 6.2
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men aged 15 to 24: .91
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-Agricultural %: 15.5

WORK

In 2003 the Algerian labor force consisted of about 9.6 million people. About 32 percent of Algerian workers work for the government, 14 percent in agriculture, 10 percent in construction and public works, 13 percent in industry, and 16 percent in other categories. The unemployment rate in 2002 was estimated at about 31 percent, though that number fell to about 26.2 percent for 2004. Unemployment for young men under the age of 30 is much higher, estimated at around 50 percent, contributing to social and political unrest in the country. The Youth Employment Program and other government-run programs attempt to provide training and jobs for younger workers, but these programs have met with mixed success. Another problem for Algeria has been the loss of skilled nonprofessional workers (such as carpenters and plumbers) to Europe, where wages are higher. The result is that these types of workers are in short supply in Algeria.

Since the 1990 Law on Trade Union Activity was passed, Algerian workers have had the right to join autonomous labor unions. Other labor legislation dating from the early 1990s gives Algerian workers the right to strike and to engage in collective bargaining.

Employment and Labor

Total Labor Force: 9.6 million
 Female Participation Rate %: 30
 Activity Rate %: 23.6
 Labor by Sector: %
 Agriculture: 14
 Industry: 13.4
 Construction and Public Works: 10
 Trade: 14.6
 Government: 32
 Other: 16
 Unemployment %: 26.2

EDUCATION

Education is, in principle, free, compulsory, and universal for nine years, from ages six to 15. Primary education lasts for six years and secondary education for four years in the technical stream and seven years in the general stream, leading to the baccalaureate.

The academic year runs from September to July. The medium of instruction is Arabic in the first two grades of

primary school, partly Arabic and partly French in the next four years in primary school, and almost entirely French from the secondary grades up. Promotion is automatic in all primary grades. In the intermediate and secondary schools promotion is determined by monthly, midyearly, and annual examinations. There are three leaving examinations: at the end of primary school, the end of elementary school, and the end of secondary school. At the primary level all the teachers are now Algerian, but about half of the secondary school teachers are recruited abroad.

Several types of vocational training are offered by different institutions. Six-year programs are available at technical schools, agricultural training programs at agricultural schools and nine regional agricultural colleges, and two- and three-year technical programs with 11 months of intensive practical training at technical institutes. Only 1.5 percent of secondary school students are enrolled in the technical and vocational stream.

Traditional religious schools known as *kuttabs* have been incorporated into the school system. Koranic study centers offer programs in Arabic, and Islamic secondary schools have developed a curriculum with a strong religious emphasis. A total of 2 percent of primary school students are enrolled in private schools.

The educational system is administered by three ministries: the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, and the Ministry of Traditional Education and Habus (religious affairs). In addition, the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs run vocational training and special education centers.

There are more than a dozen universities and campuses, including the University of Algiers, the University of Oran, the University of Annaba, and the University of Constantine.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 70
 Male %: 78.8
 Female %: 61
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 11
 First Level: Primary schools
 Teachers: 167,529
 Students: 4,691,870
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 28
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 95.1
 Second Level: Secondary Schools
 Teachers: 170,252
 Students: 3,157,134
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 20
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 62
 Third Level: Institutions
 Teachers: —
 Students: 267,142
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 15
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: —

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Algeria is home to the University of Science and Technology at Oran, as well as the Houari Boumédiène University of Science and Technology. Government ministries include the Ministry of Energy and Petrochemicals and the Ministry of Agriculture and Fishing.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million persons: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: 21
 Patent Applications by Residents: 33,650

MEDIA

All news media are government controlled. Among the major newspapers are *al-Moudjahid* (The fighter), the organ of the FLN, published in Arabic and French; the Arabic dailies *Ech-Chaab* (The people, also an FLN organ) and *al-Watan* (The nation); and the French daily *La tribune*.

Censorship of all news is implicit in state ownership. News coverage is limited largely to officially approved material. The official news agency is Algérie Presse Service.

Broadcasting is a state monopoly operated by Radio-diffusion-Télévision Algérienne (RTA), which has three radio networks broadcasting in Arabic and French. International programs consist of daily Arabic broadcasts beamed to Morocco and the Middle East and broadcasts in French beamed to Algerian workers in Europe.

RTA's television service, introduced in 1956, is available to 80 percent of the population in the region north of the Sahara through a network of transmitters. The system is connected with Eurovision and with Maghrebvision. The national programs are in French, Arabic, and Kabyle.

Media

Newspapers and Periodicals: 24
 Total Circulation 000: 796
 Circulation per 1,000: 27.2
 Books Published: 133
 Radio Receivers 000: 7,100
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets 000: 3,300
 per 1,000: 107

CULTURE

Because Algeria was a French colony, the nation's cultural life was dominated by France's influence. During the 1950s France suppressed Algerian writers, but the nation's war for independence brought about a rebirth of

interest in a national literature written in Arabic—an interest that had been growing even before the war. Since 1962 the Algerian government has officially supported the drive for a literature of Arab-Berber origins. During the twentieth century, noted Algerian writers have include Kateb Yacine, Mohammad Dib, and Malek Haddad. Albert Camus, the famous French writer and existentialist, was born and educated in Algeria.

One of the most distinctive forms of Algerian culture is its music, especially popular music known generally as *rai* (pronounced "rye"). *Rai* is a word with various meanings, including "a way of seeing," "an opinion," "a point of view," "a thought," or "a judgment." Historically Algerians went to poets known as *shikhs* for their advice, or *rai*. As a popular musical form, *rai* originated in western Algeria and was associated with the migration of people into the cities during the worldwide depression of the 1930s. Today *rai* is somewhat analogous to American jazz or rhythm and blues. It has a repetitive structure and often contains lyrics that are regarded as improper. It is a simple form of music that people enjoy dancing to. The lyrics are in local dialects and fuse elements of Spanish, French, Arabic, and rural and city dialects. It also incorporates Western musical instruments. In songs the word *rai* is often used in manner similar to "yeah yeah yeah" and comparable words in rock and roll. The word *cheb* is given to singers of *rai* music; female singers are called *chabas*.

Many *chebs* and *chabas* adopt the title to appeal to Algeria's youth culture. Many Algerians, however, believe that today's *shikhs* are the only true *rai* singers. Historically, a *shikh* was a mature, educated Muslim. Then and today the *shikh* is a poet learned in *malhum*, sung poetry in the local dialect that has existed since the sixteenth century. This poetry is very elaborate and consists of thousands of verses that treat love, heroic events, history, religion, and other topics. Among many scholars of Algerian culture, today's *rai* is a corrupted form of *malhum*. A form of music called *wahrani* adopts the *malhum* to city instruments such as the accordion, banjo, and piano. *Wahrani* tends to be more elaborate and sophisticated than the more popular *rai*.

One other musical figure is important in Algerian culture—the *maddaba*, a word that comes from a root word meaning "to praise, celebrate, sing religious poetry." *Maddabas* are women who sing both religious and secular songs, usually at ceremonies such as weddings and circumcisions. Female *rai* singers often begin their careers as *maddabas*, and many *maddabas* began their careers as poets.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
 Volumes: 121,141
 Registered users: 13,578
 Museums Number: 32
 Annual Attendance: 260,000

Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: 136
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: 600,000

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Legends in Algeria focus on the exploits of Muslim leaders who resisted the Crusaders of the Middle Ages and, later, French colonization. These religious and learned leaders were holy men called *marabouts*. They were blessed with *baraka*, or a divine grace that enabled them to perform miracles. Pilgrimages are often made to their burial sites. A great deal of folklore not only in Algeria but also in other countries is the story of *al-Isra' wa al-Mi'raj*, which recounts the Prophet Muhammad's night trip from Mecca to Jerusalem, where he mounted his horse, al-Burak, for a miraculous night flight to heaven.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

One popular form of entertainment for Algerian men is to gather at coffeehouses, where they play dominos, chess, checkers, and other games. Women are more likely to socialize with each other at home. Among the Berber population there is a popular saying: "When you come to our house, it is we who are your guests, for this is your house." Algerian men also enjoy going to public baths, called *hammam*, where they relax and enjoy a steam bath and a massage. One public bath still in use in Algiers, the Hamman Sidna, was built in the sixteenth century.

In the desert regions of Algeria, camel racing and horse racing are popular. Desert festivals often feature competitions in which horseback riders shoot at targets while galloping at full speed. Many desert dwellers take part in camel dancing, directing their camels to dance to the beat of traditional music.

The coast of Algeria, especially near Algiers, has many resorts where people can sail, water-ski, and swim. Algerians often take their summer holidays at these resorts.

ETIQUETTE

Algerians greet one another in a lengthy and involved way, inquiring into the health and well-being of each other's family members. Social interactions tend to be limited to members of the same sex. Displays of affection between men and women in public are rare, but it is not unusual to see members of the same sex kissing or holding hands. Algerians extend warm hospitality to visi-

tors, and they spend much time visiting members of their extended families.

FAMILY LIFE

Strong in Algeria is a sense of family unity and honor. Algerian men make all the major decisions; women are not encouraged to take part in public life but to stay at home—although Berber women tend to face fewer restrictions on their activities and Tuareg women participate in public affairs.

Extended families are common, especially in rural areas, where parents and children live with their grandparents, aunts, and uncles. Married couples often cook their meals separately and even have separate rooms. In urban areas young married couples are more likely to live on their own. Marriages in Algeria tend to be arranged according to Muslim law, whereby a marriage is as much a link between families as it is between the man and woman. Representatives from each family negotiate the marriage before it takes place. While the woman is expected to submit to her husband, she is not required to marry against her will, and she may obtain a divorce if her husband fails to support her or deserts her. A woman who bears a son enjoys a rise in her social status.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Traditionally, Algerian men wear a *jellaba*, a long hooded robe. Algerian women, especially older women, still adhere to Islamic tradition by wearing a *hijab*, or veil, in public. In the Souf region of eastern Algeria, women are heavily veiled such that only one eye is visible. These women wear black clothing, but in the central and western areas, women typically wear white clothing. Berber women, rather than wearing a veil, tend to dress in long skirts and floral-patterned blouses. Tuaregs are often referred to as "the blue people" because they wear a garment called the *taquelmust*, which is dyed with indigo. The dye turns their skin blue. Men in Tuareg villages traditionally wear a veil.

SPORTS

Soccer is the most popular sport in Algeria, and even adults can be found playing soccer in the cities' streets and parks. The Algerian soccer team won the African Continental Championship in 1990. Algerians have also excelled in track and field, placing third in the Africa Games in 1999. Women are not encouraged to participate in sports, but in 1992 Hassiba Boulmerka won Algeria's first Olympic gold medal in the 1,500-meter race.

Among men, Noureddine Morceli took gold in the same race in the 1996 Olympics.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1962** The Evian Agreement establishes a provisional government for Algeria; in a referendum 91 percent of the electorate vote for full independence; France proclaims independence for Algeria.
Internal struggles among Algerian leaders intensify as Muhammad Ahmed Ben Bella and Houari Boumédiène of the FLN assert opposition to the provisional government of Ben Yusuf Ben Khedda.
Ben Bella and Boumédiène march at the head of the FLN forces on Algiers and occupy the capital.
The Republic of Algeria is proclaimed, with Ferhat Abbas as president and Ben Bella as prime minister.
Hundreds of thousands of French Algerians flee the country.
- 1963** The Algerian dinar is introduced.
Vacant French estates are handed over to workers' committees.
A new constitution is promulgated, establishing a presidential form of government; Ben Bella is elected the first president.
In war with Morocco, Algerian forces are badly defeated.
- 1964** The Algiers Charter is adopted at the historic FLN Congress.
Two revolts against the regime are crushed.
- 1965** In a swift and bloodless coup, Boumédiène ousts Ben Bella and assumes power at head of Council of the Revolution.
- 1967** An armed uprising led by Colonel Tahar Zbiri, chief of army staff, is put down.
Algeria suspends diplomatic relations with the United States in the aftermath of the Arab-Israeli War.
- 1970** The Tlemcen Accord settles the border dispute with Morocco.
- 1971** Boumédiène signs into law the Charter of the Agrarian Revolution, initiating a comprehensive land reform program.
- 1974** Diplomatic ties with the United States are resumed.
- 1976** A new constitution is promulgated, restoring the National Assembly.
Boumédiène is elected president.
Mauritania and Morocco break ties with Algeria over Algeria's formal recognition of the Saharan Arab Democratic Republic in Western Sahara and support of Polisario, Western Sahara's national independence movement.
- 1977** The first legislative election since 1964 is held to form the unicameral National People's Assembly.
- 1978** President Boumédiène dies of natural causes, and Speaker of the National Assembly Rabah Bitat is named interim president.
Diplomatic relations between Algeria and Egypt are severed.
- 1979** Chadli Bendjedid is elected president; Colonel Muhammad Ben Ahmed Abdelghani is named prime minister; the constitution is amended, reducing the presidential term to five years.
Former president Ben Bella is released from prison.
Diplomatic ties with Mauritania are restored after Mauritania relinquishes claims to Western Sahara (formerly Spanish Sahara).
- 1980** In a cabinet reshuffle, influential foreign minister Abdelaziz Bouteflika is removed.
The government shifts economic priorities away from heavy industry and toward consumer goods.
The Berbers, charging discrimination and repression, break out into violence in the city of Tizi-Ouzou.
- 1983** President Chadli Bendjedid visits France. The Moroccan border is reopened.
- 1984** President Chadli Bendjedid is reelected to a second term in office.
- 1985** Algeria boycotts Arab summit meeting over the Polisario issue.
President Chadli Bendjedid visits the United States.
- 1986** In a national referendum, voters approve by a vote of 98.37 percent the Revised National Charter, which encourages the private sector and balances Islam against socialism as state ideologies. National People's Assembly seats are increased to 295.
- 1988** In a joint meeting, the heads of state of Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, and Tunisia form the Great Arab Maghreb and plan to harmonize legislation within the region and share in joint economic projects. Algeria experiences its worst riots and internal unrest since independence in 1962, and at least 500 are killed in army attacks on rioters. Full diplomatic relations with Egypt are restored.
- 1989** A new constitution is approved by a national referendum.
- 1990** The FIS earns sweeping victories in municipal elections throughout the country; the govern-

- ment formally recognizes at least 25 political parties as they prepare for the 1991 multiparty National Assembly elections.
- 1991** Islamic fundamentalists riot in Algiers; Bendjedid declares a state of emergency and postpones national elections; Prime Minister Mouloud Hamrouche and his cabinet are dismissed, and Sid Ahmed Ghazali is named prime minister.
- 1992** The head of the government, Mohamed Boudiaf, is assassinated.
- 1995** Gen. Liamine Zéroual wins the first contested presidential elections in more than 30 years.
- 1997** A multiparty parliament is elected, but the ruling military council maintains control.
- 1998** Islamic fundamentalists continue to slaughter their opponents.
- 1999** Abdelaziz Bouteflika is elected president amid allegations of fraud.
A law on civil concord, the result of negotiations with the armed wing of the FIS, is approved in a referendum.
- 2000** Attacks on civilians and security forces continue and are thought to be the work of small groups still opposed to the civil concord.
- 2001** Many demonstrators are killed in violent clashes between security forces and Berber protestors in the mainly Berber region of Kabylia following the death of a teenager in police custody. The Rally for Culture and Democracy, a pro-Berber group, withdraws from the government in protest against the authorities' handling of the riots.
- 2003** Algeria suffers a major earthquake in which 2,200 people are killed and thousands more injured.
- 2004** Abdelaziz Bouteflika is reelected to the presidency, winning nearly 85 percent of the vote in a field of six candidates.
- 2005** In a referendum Algerians approve the Draft Charter for Peace and National Reconciliation which pardons many involved in the civil war.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- "Algeria." U.S. Library of Congress.
<http://www.lcweb2.loc.gov>
- Office National des Statistiques (French)
<http://www.ons.dz>
- Permanent Mission of Algeria to the UN
<http://www.algeria-un.org/nspage.html>

ANDORRA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Principality of Andorra (Principat d'Andorra)

ABBREVIATION

AD

CAPITAL

Andorra la Vella

HEADS OF STATE

French Coprince President Jacques Chirac (from 1995);
Episcopal Coprince Monseigneur Joan Enric Vives i Sicília
(from 2003)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Albert Pintat (from 2005)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Parliamentary democracy

POPULATION

70,549 (2005)

AREA

468 sq km (180 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Spanish, Andorran, Portuguese, French

LANGUAGES

Catalan, Spanish, French

RELIGION

Roman Catholicism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Euro

NATIONAL FLAG

Tricolor of blue, yellow, and red vertical stripes, with the coat of arms on the yellow stripe

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A shield divided into four quarters—with a gold bishop's mitre on a red field in the upper left, three red vertical stripes on a gold field in the upper right, four red vertical stripes on a gold field in the lower left, and two red cows rampant on a gold field in the lower right—with ornate gold framing and the motto *Virtus unita fortior* on the bottom

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"Himne Andorra," beginning, "The great Charlemagne, my father, has delivered me from the Arabs"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

September 8 (National Festival)

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

December 6, 1288

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

May 4, 1993 (effective)

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

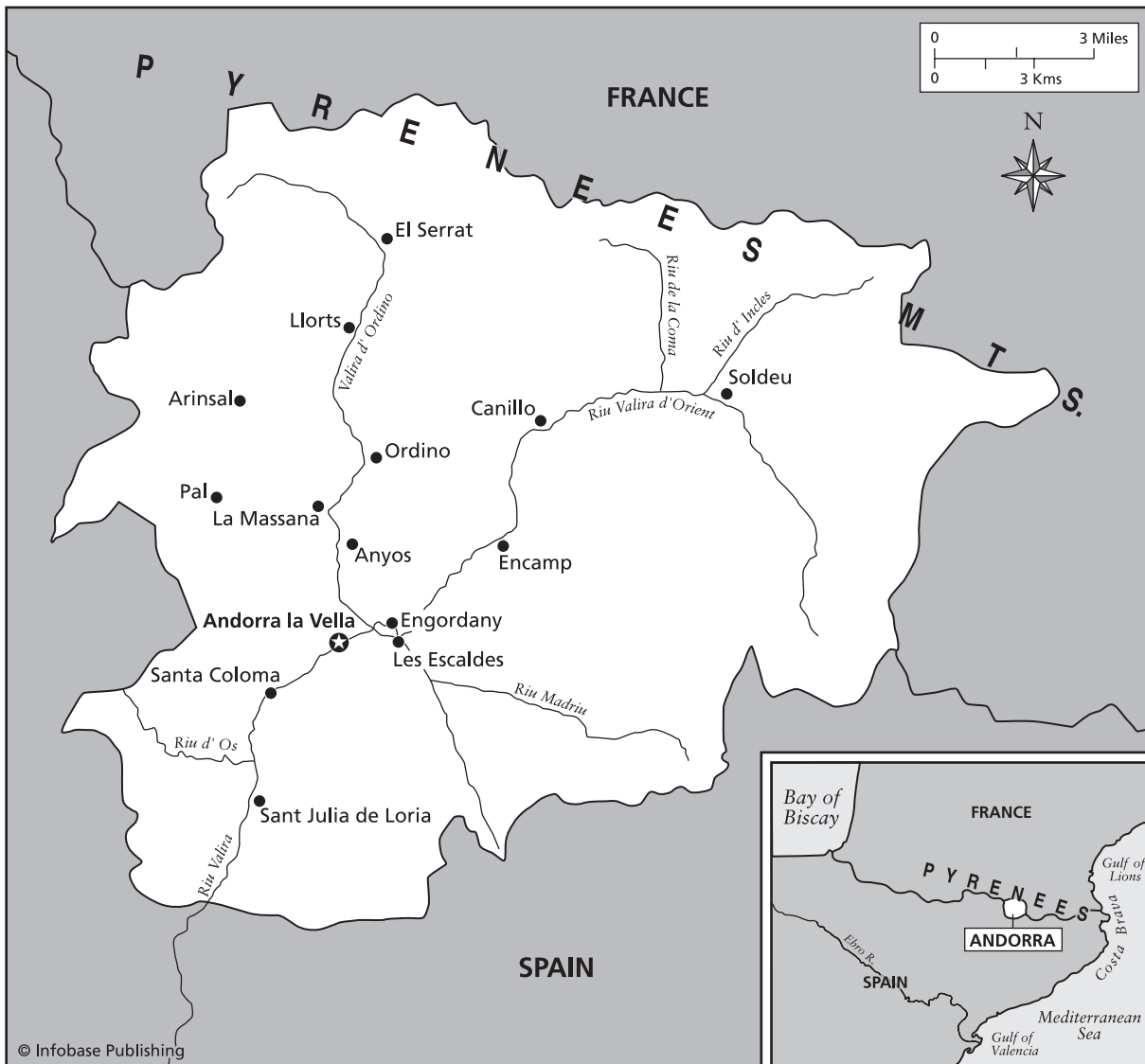
Andorra is a landlocked country on the southern slopes of the Pyrenees Mountains between the French departments of Ariège and Pyrénées-Orientales to the north and the Spanish provinces of Gerona and Lerida to the south. Andorra has a total area of 468 sq km (291 sq mi), extending 30.1 km (18.7 sq mi) east to west and 25.4 km (15.8 mi) north to south. The total boundary length of 121 km (75.1 mi) is shared with France (57 km; 35.4 mi) and Spain (64 km; 39.7 mi).

The capital is Andorra la Vella, with a population of about 23,000.

Most of Andorra's rugged terrain consists of gorges, narrow valleys, and defiles surrounded by mountain peaks rising higher than 2,900 m (9,500 ft) above sea level. All the valleys are at least 914 m (3,000 ft) high, and the mean altitude is over 1,829 m (6,000 ft). Of the several lofty peaks, the highest is Coma Pedrosa (3,100 m; 10,170 ft).

The country is drained by a single basin whose main stream, Riu Valira, has two branches and six smaller open basins; hence, the republic is described as consisting of valleys. The section of the river flowing through La Ser rat by way of Ordino and La Massana is the Valira del

Andorra



Norts; that flowing through Canilo, Encamp, and Les Escaldes is the Valira del Orien.

Geography

Area sq km: 468; sq mi: 180
 World Rank: 177th
 Land Boundaries, km: France 57; Spain 64
 Coastline, km: 0
 Elevation Extremes meters
 Lowest: Riu Runer 840 m
 Highest: Coma Pedrosa 2,946 m
 Land Use %
 Arable land: 2.22
 Permanent Crops: 0
 Forest: —
 Other: 97.78

Population of Principal Cities (2004)

Andorra la Vella	22,035
Escaldes-Engordany	16,402
Encamp	11,832

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Because of its high elevation, Andorra has an alpine climate with severe winters and mild or warm summers, depending on the altitude. The rainfall is heavy, most of it falling in April and October, which accounts for the lush mountain pastures. The northern valleys are completely snowed in for at least six months each year, and there is a thriving ski-resort industry.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature

Winter: 30°F to 40°F

Summer: 54°F to 79°F

Average Rainfall: 35 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Andorra's plant and animal life is similar to that found in the nearby regions of both Spain and France. Alpine and subalpine plants dominate, including the nondeciduous oak at lower elevations, firs and pines at higher elevations, and only grass at the highest elevations. Flowers include the gentians, carnations, violets, bellflowers, and daisies. Berries include wild blueberries, strawberries, and blackberries.

Animal life includes a species of chamois indigenous to the Pyrenees, bears, wolves, martens, and rabbits. Avian life includes eagles, ducks, geese, and vultures. The streams of the country have plentiful supplies of trout and crayfish.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 70,549

World Rank: 181st

Density per sq km: 148

% of annual growth (1999–2003): —

Male %: 52.25

Female %: 47.75

Urban %: 92

Age Distribution: %

0–14:	—
15–29:	—
30–44:	—
45–59:	—
60–74:	—
75 and over:	—

Population 2025: 77,973

Birth Rate per 1,000: 9.32

Death Rate per 1,000: 5.9

Rate of Natural Increase per 1,000: 0.5

Total Fertility Rate: 1.28

Expectation of Life (years): Males 80.59
Females 86.59

Marriage Rate per 1,000: —

Divorce Rate per 1,000: —

Average Size of Households: —

Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Native Andorrans, who make up about one-third of the population, are of Catalan stock. The majority are Spanish residents.

LANGUAGES

The official language is Catalan, a Romance language related to Provençal. Both French and especially Spanish are also spoken.

RELIGIONS

The population is almost entirely Roman Catholic. The constitution guarantees religious liberty.

Religious Affiliations

Roman Catholic	66,316
Other	3,684

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Andorra is historically associated with Charlemagne; the national anthem declares, "The great Charlemagne, my father, has delivered me from the Arabs." Charlemagne is believed to have christened the principality after the biblical town of Endor and to have granted the Andorrans a charter. Charles the Bald, grandson of Charlemagne, appointed the count of Urgel overlord of Andorra with the right to collect the imperial tribute. The same right was claimed by the bishop of Urgel. When, in 1226, the lords of the county of Foix, in present-day France, became heirs of the counts of Urgel, the contest between the two claimants became intense. In 1278 the dispute was resolved by the adoption of a *pareage*, a federal institution recognizing the equal rights of two lords to a *seigneurage*. In 1505 Germaine of Foix married Ferdinand V of Spain, thus bringing the overlordship under Spain, but it went back to France when Henry II of Navarre, also a count of Foix, ascended the French throne in 1589 as Henry IV. In 1793 the French revolutionary government refused the traditional Andorran tribute as a legacy of feudalism and renounced French suzerainty, overriding the wishes of the Andorrans. French coprincipalityship was restored in 1806 by Napoleon on the express petition of the Andorrans. With the demise of the monarchy, the president of France functions as the coprince along with the Spanish bishop of Urgel.

In 1970 suffrage was extended to women and in 1977 to all first-generation Andorrans of foreign parentage who were aged 28 and over. In 1982 an executive council of six ministers was formed in the first institutional reform in modern Andorran history. In 1993 a new constitution was promulgated, as approved by 74.2 percent of Andorrans. In 1993 Andorra was admitted to the Council of Europe and the United Nations. In the same year both France and Spain explicitly acknowledged the sovereignty of Andorra and established embassies in Andorra la Vella.

Andorra attempted to broaden its economic base in the 1990s by expanding beyond tourism into banking and finance. A law to broaden citizenship was passed in 1995. Snowmaking machines were put into use to extend the skiing season in the late 1990s. In 2000 Radio Valira, the first commercial radio station in Andorra, opened. Marc Forné Molné, of the ruling Liberal Party of Andorra (PLA), won the parliamentary elections held on March 4, 2001, with a clear majority. Also in 2001 the country witnessed a new form of smuggling, as retired people from all over Europe brought their hidden currencies—on which they had paid no taxes—into Andorra to buy goods before the change to the euro currency made their caches worthless. On May 12, 2003, having served since 1971 as bishop of Urgell and coprince of Andorra, Msgr. Joan Martí i Alanis retired and was succeeded by Mgr. Joan Enric Vives i Sicília. In October 2004 negotiations began between Andorra and the European Union on an agreement that would allow Andorra to mint its own euro coins.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

Episcopal Coprince

1942–69	Ramón Iglesias i Navarri
1969–71	Ramón Malla Call
1971–2003	Joan Martí i Alanis
2003–	Joan Enric Vives i Sicília

French Coprince

1944–46	Charles de Gaulle
1946	Félix Gouin
1946–47	George Bidault
1947–54	Vincent Auriol
1954–59	René Coty
1959–69	Charles de Gaulle
1969–74	Georges Pompidou
1974–81	Valéry Giscard d'Estaing
1981–95	François Mitterand
1995–	Jacques Chirac

Cap de Govern

1994–2005	Marc Forné Molné
2005–	Albert Pintat

CONSTITUTION

Andorra has one of the most unusual systems of government in the world. The two heads of state, or coprinces, who have equal authority in Andorran matters, are both non-Andorrans: One is the president of France and the other the bishop of Urgel. Andorra pays a biennial *questia* (tribute) to the president of France and to the bishop, who receives from each of the six parishes two capons, two hens, and four cheeses, which he then returns.

The constitution adopted in 1993 created a constitutional monarchy. A parliament is elected by universal

suffrage: The General Council of the Valleys has 28 seats, with two members elected from each of the seven parishes and 14 elected at large. The members serve for four years.

PARLIAMENT

Andorra has a unicameral legislature of which half the 28 members are elected to represent the national constituency, with the other half elected to represent each of the country's seven parishes. Each parish has two representatives.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Political parties were sanctioned under the 1993 constitution. The largest parties include the Liberal Party of Andorra, headed by Marc Forné Molné, the National Democratic Initiative, and the National Democratic Organization, which succeeded the Democratic Party of Andorra, founded in 1979. Molné won reelection in 2001, with his Liberal Union Party holding a clear majority of seats in the General Council.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For the purpose of local administration Andorra is divided into seven villages, or districts, each of which has a parish council whose members are elected by universal suffrage. Below the districts are *communs* and *corts*. The former are 10-member bodies elected by universal suffrage and headed by an elected senior consul and a junior consul. The latter are submunicipal advisory bodies that function primarily as administrators of communal property.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The legal system is based on customary Catalan law supplemented by Roman law. Traditional laws are codified in the *Namual Digest* of 1748 and the *Politar* of 1763, and legal standards are found in the Instructions to Bailiffs of 1740. Civil cases in the first instance are heard in the Court of the Bailiff (*Tribunal del Batlle*), presided over by two *bayles*, one appointed by the *viguier de franca* of France and the other by the *viguier episcopal* of Spain. Appeals are heard in the Court of Appeal, headed by a single judge appointed alternately by each of the two coprinces. Final appeals in civil cases lie with the Supreme Court of Andorra (*Tribunal Supremo*) in Perpignan, France, or the ecclesiastical court of the bishop of Urgel. Criminal cases are heard in Andorra la Vella by the *Tribunal des Corts*, consisting of the two *viguiers*, the judge of appeal, the two bailiffs, and two members of the General Council. There is a parallel system of labor and administrative courts.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Under the constitution all human and civil rights are respected and protected. All citizens are equal before the law and enjoy full liberties. Discrimination on the grounds of race, sex, religion, and national origin is prohibited. The constitution instituted the legalization of political parties and trade unions, and provision was made for an independent judiciary. Suffrage has been universal since 1970, when women received the right to vote, but the noncitizen majority cannot vote—over two-thirds of the residents of the country are noncitizens. The Association of Immigrants in Andorra (AIA) defends the rights of foreign residents. The Association of Andorran Women (AAW) focuses on women's rights. The Red Cross is present within the country.

FOREIGN POLICY

With the passage of the 1993 constitution, France and Spain recognized Andorra's independence. The country thereafter became a member of the United Nations and was also admitted to the Council of Europe. The United States maintains diplomatic ties to Andorra via the U.S. ambassador to Spain.

DEFENSE

Andorra has no defense forces. All able-bodied men who own firearms must serve without remuneration and without uniforms in the small army that presents the Andorran flag at official ceremonies. The army, which has not seen battle in 700 years, is unique in that all its men are officers.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: —
 Military Manpower Availability: —
 Military Expenditures \$: —
 as % of GDP: —
 as % of central government expenditures: —
 Arms Imports \$: —
 Arms Exports \$: —

ECONOMY

Andorra has a capitalist economy superimposed on a feudal political system. The economy is based primarily on trade and tourism and also increasingly on banking and finance. Owing to Andorra's duty-free status, its economy expanded rapidly after World War II. However, Spain's accession to the European Union in 1986 and the consequent removal of Spanish tariff barriers has threatened its lucrative trade. Failing to reach an agreement with the

EU by 1988 on a special status within the union, Andorra has requested that it be allowed to continue as a free-trade area in exchange for modifications in the coprincipality's fiscal and social policies.

With minimal company laws or regulations and little or no enforcement of laws that do exist, Andorra has also been a tax haven for foreign financiers and investors. Land speculation has led to rapid growth of the construction industry. The country's prosperity is based as much on smuggling and laundering of money as on legitimate activities.

There are no accurate estimates of Andorra's gross domestic product, but the best available one is \$1.3 billion, or \$19,000 per capita, as of 2000.

Andorra's economy, based primarily on the country's attractiveness to visitors, continued to thrive into the new millennium. In 2003 tourism made up approximately 80 percent of gross domestic product, and Andorra welcomed about 9 million visitors annually. The banking sector, the second-largest component of the economy, continued to prosper as it worked to expand its financial services.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity): \$1.3 billion
 GDP per capita \$ (purchasing power parity): 19,000
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: —
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: —
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %
 Agriculture: —
 Industry: —
 Services: —
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %
 Private Consumption: —
 Government Consumption: —
 Gross Domestic Investment: —
 Foreign Trade: Exports: \$58 million
 Imports: \$1.07 billion
 % of Income Received by Poorest 20%: —
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: —

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
—	—	—	—	—

Finance

National Currency: euro (EUR)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = 0.886 EUR (2003)
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: —
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: —
 Total External Debt \$million: —
 Debt Service Ratio %: —
 Balance of Payments \$million: —
 International Reserves SDRs million: —
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 3.8

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$: —
 per capita \$: —
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: —

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$million: 385
 Expenditures \$million: 342
 Budget Surplus \$: 43 million
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: —
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: —
 Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares: —
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: —
 Fertilizer Consumption mt: —
 Total Farm land as % of land area: —
 Livestock: Cattle 000: —
 Sheep 000: —
 Hogs 000: —
 Chickens 000: —
 Forests: Production of Roundwood
 (000 cubic meters): —
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: —

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: —
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: —

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent 000: —
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent 000: —
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg: —
 Net Energy Imports % of use: —
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: —
 Production and Consumption kW-hr million: —
 Coal Reserves tons million: —
 Production and Consumption tons 000: —
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic meters billion: —
 Production and Consumption cubic meters million: —
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels million: —
 Production barrels million: —
 Consumption barrels million: —
 Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 1.077
 Exports \$million: 58
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —
 Balance of Trade \$billion: 1.019

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Spain %	48.0	58
France %	35.0	34
United States %	2.3	—

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 269
 Paved %: —
 Automobiles: —
 Trucks and Buses: —
 Railroad; Track Length km: —
 Passenger-mi million: —
 Freight-mi million: —
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: —
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: —
 Airports: —
 Traffic: Passenger-mi million: —
 Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 3,387
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: —
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: —

Communications

Telephones 000: 35
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.00
 Cellular Telephones 000: 23.5
 Personal Computers 000: —
 Internet Hosts per million people: 4,144 (2004)
 Internet Users Total 000: 24.5

ENVIRONMENT

Andorra is subject to snow slides and avalanches. The principal environmental concern is deforestation. Also of concern is soil degradation due to the overgrazing of mountain meadows. Other environmental concerns include air pollution, wastewater treatment, and solid-waste disposal. Andorra has not signed any international environmental agreements.

Environment

Forest Area % of land area: —
 Average Annual Forest Change, 1990-2000, 000 ha: —
 Nationally Protected Areas as % of Total Land Area: —
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita-ton: —

LIVING CONDITIONS

Andorra has one of the longest life expectancies in the world, with a 2004 estimate of 83.5 years. With a total area just twice the size of Washington, D.C., Andorra is a country where building sites are at a premium and land speculation high. With 23,000 people (out of a population of about 70,000) living in the capital, Andorra le Vella, and another 28,000 living in the towns of Les Escaldes and Encamp, there is plenty of open space in Andorra, but much of it is devoted to farming or the all-season tourist trade—skiing, hiking, and other nature sports. Thus, slate-roofed, stone farmhouses stand next to high-rise apartment buildings. Both in rural and urban areas the standard of living is high.

A land cut off from the rest of Europe until the 1930s, Andorra's only transportation for millennia was pack animals. Since that time the country has been modernized, with one car for every four persons by the 1980s. A modern subway is under construction. As a result of modernization and tourism, much of the charm of the old villages has been lost, though certain resorts still maintain their rustic charm.

HEALTH

The World Health Organization (WHO) announced in June 2000 that Andorra ranked 10th in the world in the number of years a person could be expected to live. A 2004 estimate put that figure at 83.5 years. In the WHO's study of the world's health-care systems, Andorra ranked fourth. All citizens have access to safe drinking water and high quality sanitation. In 2004 the infant mortality rate was an estimated 4.05 deaths per 1,000 live births, and the death rate was 5.9 deaths per 1,000 population.

Health

Number of Physicians: —
 Number of Dentists: —
 Number of Nurses: —
 Number of Pharmacists: —
 Population per Physician: —
 Hospital Beds per 1,000 people: 3
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 4.05
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: —
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 6
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 1,233
 HIV Infected % of adults: —
 Child Immunization Rate % of children under 12 months
 DPT: 90
 Measles: 90
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 100
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 100

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Though influenced by both France and Spain, Andorra has developed its own food culture after centuries of isolation from the rest of Europe. Simple farm products and game animals make up many of the most popular national dishes. A stew is made from game such as hare or chamois cooked in its own blood, while ham, sausages, and lamb chops are also favorites, as are grilled or poached brook trout and omelets with local wild mushrooms. Boiled cabbage and potatoes, called *trinixat*, serves as a side dish for many meals. Desserts include flat cakes called *coques* and *coca de canel*, made of dried fruit simmered in wine and sugar.

Food and Nutrition

Food Supply as % of FAO Requirements: —
 Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita: —
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: —
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: —

STATUS OF WOMEN

There is no legal discrimination against women either privately or professionally. The Association of Andorran Women actively promotes women's issues.

Women

Women-headed Households: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 14.3
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men aged 15 to 24: —
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-Agricultural %: —

WORK

A 2001 estimate puts the Andorran work force at 33,000, with 1 percent in agriculture, 21 percent in industry, and 78 percent in services. Farmers grow small quantities of rye, wheat, barley, oats, and vegetables and raise cattle and sheep. By far the largest employer in the country is the tourist industry. Other industries include finance and timber. As of 1996 unemployment was estimated at 0 percent.

The 1993 constitution provides for free association in labor unions, and while 600 trade union associations registered with the government by 2002, there were no actual unions in operation. It is not clear whether the right to strike is guaranteed. The minimum work age is 18 and the maximum workweek 40 hours. As of 2002 the

minimum wage was \$3.65. The government maintains various health and safety standards for the workplace.

France and Spain still provide many employment opportunities for young citizens of Andorra.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 33,000
 Female Labor Force Participation Rate %: 45.5
 Total Activity Rate %: —
 Labor by Sector: %
 Agriculture: 1.0
 Industry: 21.0
 Services: 78.0
 Unemployment %: 0

EDUCATION

Education is provided in both French- and Spanish-language schools. Instruction in Catalan has only recently become available. French-language schools are partially subsidized by the French government and Spanish-language schools by the Roman Catholic Church.

Education

Literacy Rate %:
 Male %: —
 Female %: —
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: —
 First Level: Primary schools: 12
 Teachers: 324
 Students: 5,424
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 16.7
 Net Enrollment Ratio: —
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 6
 Teachers: 409
 Students: 2,655
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 6.49
 Net Enrollment Ratio: —
 Third Level: Institutions: —
 Teachers: —
 Students: —
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: —
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: —

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Many young people choose to go abroad for technical and scientific educations, as there is little available domestically. However, the Andorra Scientific Society was created in 1983 in Andorra la Vella.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million persons: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: 9.56
 Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

The oldest Andorran newspaper is *Poble Andorra*, a weekly that was founded in 1974 upon the demise of the daily newspaper of the same name. A private TV company, Antenna 7, transmits one hour of Andorran-interest programs from the Spanish side of the border. Andorra Television, founded in 1995, is an Andorran-owned commercial television service. Radio Andorra, a commercial public broadcasting service, replaced two stations that closed down in 1981 after the expiration of their contracts with French and Spanish companies. In 2000 Radio Valira, another commercial radio station in Andorra, began its broadcasts. As of 2001 there were 23,000 mobile phones in use and 24,500 Internet users. The Andorran constitution guarantees the rights of free speech and a free press.

Media

Newspapers and Periodicals: 3
 Total Circulation 000: 4,000
 Circulation per 1,000: 63
 Books Published: 57
 Radio Receivers 000: 10,000
 per 1,000: 5.7
 Television sets 000: 22,000
 per 1,000: 360

CULTURE

Culturally, Andorra harkens back to its Catalanian roots. This can be witnessed in old dances known as the *sardana*, which is also the national dance of Catalonia in north-eastern Spain. Old and young alike take part in this circle or line dance, with hands held high in the air. Other folk dances include the *contrapas* and *maratxa*, which survive in Saint Julia de Lona. Such dances are performed to Catalanian music.

Of more contemporary interest is the Escaldes-Engordany International Jazz Festival, held annually. Two well-known Catalan writers, Michèle Gazier and Ramon Villeró, both come from Andorra. The country boasts its Chamber Orchestra, directed by the violinist Gérard Claret.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries
 Number: —
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums
 Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Andorran folklore is a blend of Catalan and Catholic influences. The Virgin Mary figures in many myths and legends, as do other miraculous characters such as the Virgin of Meritxell, whose statue is now housed in a church of the same name. Legend has it that this statue was found on a snowy hillside surrounded by flowers. Moved to a covered location, the statue would continually disappear, reappearing again in the snow surrounded by blooming plants. After a long while it was decided to leave the statue where it was but to build a church around it.

Another revered lady—in this case secular—is depicted in the legend of the White Lady, who is often interchanged with the Virgin of Meritxell. Abused by a wicked stepmother, this young princess marries a man who rebels against her parents. The rebellious couple is referred to at all major festivals in song and dance.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Andorrans enjoy much the same sort of entertainment and recreation as the rest of western Europe. They receive both television and radio broadcasts domestically produced and from neighboring countries. With almost 100 percent literacy rates, books and newspapers also provide entertainment, as do the cinemas, museums, and concert halls of the towns and cities. Outdoor activities, including hiking and skiing, are popular in this mountainous country. There is a series of 21 uninhabited cabins in the mountains open to hikers for use as overnight shelters.

ETIQUETTE

Etiquette in Andorra stems from a mixture of French and Spanish influences. Neither as effusive as the Spaniards nor as sometimes distant as the French, the Andorrans, as a result of long isolation and sudden mixing with the world via its tourist trade, have something of a schizoid view toward strangers and outsiders. Overtly and formally polite, they are still clannish.

Men shake hands in public and sometimes hug close friends, as do women. With so much of the population coming from other nations, the country has a large admixture of styles of interaction.

FAMILY LIFE

Traditionally, marriages in Andorra were matters primarily of economic concern rather than of love and common attraction. Of course, this practice, like many other tradi-

tional practices in Andorra, has changed in modern times. Also traditionally, the eldest son would normally inherit all family property. This created wealthy estates but also led to high rates of emigration, as other sons sought opportunities in the outside world.

The family is the basic unit of Andorran society, but this too has gone through changes in the modern world. Rural family units once tended to be extended, while urban ones were usually nuclear. Domestic roles were also strictly divided, with women taking on child-rearing responsibilities, but with the increased role of women in the workforce such strict roles have broken down. No longer is the man always the dominant one in the family and the breadwinner.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Western style clothing is typical in Andorra, for both young and old, though style is somewhat more conservative in nature than in the rest of Europe. Traditional apparel is worn for special holidays and folk-dancing festivals. For these the women wear full skirts with floral patterns over white petticoats. They also wear blouses, often covered by flowered shawls, and long, black, fingerless net gloves. This costume is completed with black espadrilles, or cloth sandals with white stockings. For men the traditional costume is a white shirt, dark knee-length pants, white stockings, and black shoes. Many men also wear broad red sashes tied at the waist.

SPORTS

Skiing—both downhill and cross-country—is the national sport and pastime of Andorra. The country not only has the perfect geography but also the perfect climate for mountain sports. Snow covers the mountains for six months of the year, with largely clear skies overhead. The ski season has been lengthened since the 1990s through the use of snowmaking machines on the slopes. In other seasons the mountains provide a home for hikers, mountaineers, and rock climbers from within Andorra and from all over the world. Andorrans also enjoy competitive sports such as rugby, soccer, tennis, and golf. Fishing for trout in mountain streams is also popular.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1970** Women gain the rights to vote and to hold public office.
- 1973** The first personal meeting between the two co-princes since 1278 takes place at Cahors, France.
- 1978** Andorra celebrates the 700th anniversary of its founding.

- 1981** An executive, separate from the legislature, is established, with a head of government and an executive council.
- 1987** A meeting of Europe's six small nations is held in Andorra.
- 1993** A constitutional referendum is held and a written constitution is approved by 74 percent of the electorate.
- 1994** Don Marc Forné Molné is elected prime minister of a coalition government.
- 1997** The Liberal Union Party, headed by Molné, wins a majority of seats in the general election and ends the coalition government.
- 2001** Marc Forné Molné is reelected head of government.
- 2003** Joan Martí i Alanis retires as bishop of Urgel and is succeeded by Msgr. Joan Enric Vives i Sicília as episcopal coprince of Andorra.
- 2004** Plans begin for an "aerial" cable subway system in Andorra. Talks are initiated with the European Union to allow Andorra to mint their own euro coins.

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Morgan, Bryan. *Andorra, the Country in Between*. Nottingham, U.K., 1964.

Taylor, Barry. *Andorra*. Santa Barbara, Calif., 1993.

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Andorra. *Estadistiques* (annual); *Recull Estadistic General de la Poblacio Andorra 90*; *El Principat d'Andorra, Edicio 2000*; *Servei d'Estudis del Ministeri de Finances*

CONTACT INFORMATION

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Andorra : The Pyrenean Country
<http://www.andorra.ad/ang/home/index.htm>
- General Council Principality of Andorra
<http://www.consellgeneral.ad/micg/webconsell.nsf>

ANGOLA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Angola (República de Angola)

ABBREVIATION

AO

CAPITAL

Luanda (Huambo has been designated as the future capital)

HEAD OF STATE & GOVERNMENT

President José Eduardo dos Santos (from 1979)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Parliamentary democracy (transitional government)

POPULATION

11,190,786 (2005)

AREA

1,246,700 sq km (481,351 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Bantu

LANGUAGE

Portuguese (official)

RELIGIONS

Christianity and animism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Kwanza (AOA)

NATIONAL FLAG

Red over black horizontal stripes with an arc of cogwheel crossed by a machete and a star (all in yellow) in the center

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A machete and a spade crossed over a rising sun with a star at the top and an open book at the bottom, all enclosed by an arc of cogwheel and a stalk of grain. The legend “República Popular de Angola” appears at the bottom.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“O Fatherland, We Shall Never Forget the Heroes of the Fourth of February”

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year’s Day), February 4 (anniversary of the outbreak of struggle against Portuguese colonialism), March 27 (Victory Day), May 1 (Workers’ Day), September 17 (National Hero’s Day), November 11 (Independence Day), December 10 (anniversary of the foundation of the MPLA), December 25 (Family Day)

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

November 11, 1975

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

November 11, 1975; revised 1978, 1980, 1991, and 1992

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Angola is on the western coast of southern Africa, south of the equator, and occupies an area of 1,246,700 sq km. Angola proper, excluding the exclave of Cabinda, extends 1,758 km southeast to northwest and 1,491 km northeast to southwest. The total Atlantic coastline is 1,600 km long.

Angola proper shares its total international land boundary of 4,747 km with three countries: Democratic Republic of the Congo (Zaire) (2,511 km), Zambia (1,110 km), and Namibia (formerly South-West Africa) (1,376 km). Cabinda shares its international land boundary of 426 km with two

nations: Democratic Republic of the Congo (Zaire) (225 km) and Republic of Congo (201 km).

The sparsely watered coastal plain extends for 50 to 160 km inland. North of the mouth of the Kwanza the coast is hilly; to the south it is, for the most part, flat with occasional cliffs. The coastal plain is separated from the inland plateau by a series of irregular terraces forming a subplateau. Two-thirds of Angola is composed of the central plateau, which has an average height of 1,050 to 1,350 m. The highest point is Mount Moco (2,620 m). The Namib Desert occupies the coastal plain above Mocimedes. The Cassange Depression is a sedimentary hollow toward the Kwango Basin in Zaire. The northwestern

Angola



section of the Angolan Plateau and the Cabinda exclave are covered by equatorial jungles.

Geography

Area sq km: 1,246,700; sq mi: 481,351
 World Rank: 22nd
 Land Boundaries, km: Democratic Republic of the Congo 2,511;
 Republic of the Congo 201; Namibia 1,376; Zambia 1,110
 Coastline, km: 1,600
 Elevation Extremes meters

Lowest: Atlantic Ocean 0
 Highest: Morro de Moco 2,620
 Land Use %
 Arable land: 2.41
 Permanent Crops: 0.24
 Forest: 56
 Other: 41.35

Population of Principal Cities (2003 est.)

Luanda	1,822,000
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CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Angola has a tropical climate with two seasons: a cool season from June to September and a rainy season from October to May. There are, however, considerable regional variations. The northern region from Cabinda to Ambriz has a damp, tropical climate; the region from Luanda to Mocamedes has a moderate tropical climate; the southern strip between the plateau and Namibia has a desert climate. The interior uplands in Bie, Huambo, and Huila have a pleasant climate similar to that of Portugal. The Benguela Current along the coast reduces rainfall in the coastal regions and makes them arid or semiarid. The mean annual temperature is 22.5°C (72.5°F) in the north, 23.5°C (74.3°F) in Luanda, and 19.5°C (67.2°F) in the south. The mean annual rainfall is 203 mm (8 in) in the southwest and 2,030 mm (80 in) in the northeast. The prevailing winds are west, southwest, and south-southwest.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature
 North: 72.5°F
 Luanda: 74.3°F
 South: 67.2°F
 Average Rainfall: 8 in (the Southwest)
 80 in (the Northeast)

FLORA AND FAUNA

In the northern part of Angola and in the Cabinda enclave can be found dense tropical rain forests. Farther south these forests turn into savanna, or mixed grasses and trees, and then into grasslands in the southern and eastern regions of the country. Coastal areas feature palm trees, while south of Namibe is sparse desert vegetation. The deserts contain a unique plant called the *tumboa*, which has a deep taproot and a pair of broad, flat, 10-foot-long leaves.

Wildlife is diverse and includes large mammals, such as rhinoceroses, giraffes, elephants, hippopotamuses, antelopes, zebras, gorillas, and lions. Angola is rich in bird species and contains a wide variety of reptiles. The sable antelope, found in the south, is a species threatened with extinction.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population: 11,190,786
 World Rank: 72nd
 Density per sq km: 11
 % of annual growth (1999–2003): 3
 Male %: 50.5
 Female %: 49.5

Urban %: 36
 Age Distribution %: 0–14: 48
 15–64: 50
 65 and over: 3
 Population 2020: 14,473,000
 Birth Rate per 1,000: 45.14
 Death Rate per 1,000: 25.86
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 192.5
 Rate of Natural Increase %: 2.1
 Total Fertility Rate: 6.33
 Expectation of Life (years): Males 36.06
 Females 37.55
 Marriage Rate per 1,000: —
 Divorce Rate per 1,000: —
 Average Size of Households: —
 Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Angolans are almost entirely of Bantu stock, with numerous tribal groupings. Three-fourths of the African population is accounted for by the four most important tribes.

The largest group is the Ovimbundu, in central and southern Angola, who make up almost 33 percent of the population. The Bakongo, in the northwest, making up 25 percent of the population, also spill over into the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Zaire) and Republic of Congo. The Kimbundu (Mbundu), who occupy the terrain inland from Luanda, are culturally but not ethnically related to the Bakongo. The Kimbundu tribe is among the more detribalized groups in Angola and makes up 25 percent of the population. The Chokwe, of eastern Angola, make up 8 percent of the population; sometimes they are grouped together with the Luanda. Other prominent groups are the Nganguela, Nyaneka, Humbe, Ovambo, Luvale, Ambo, Bunda, Luchazi, Kanguela, Kwangare, Cuanhama, and Herero.

Under the Portuguese the population was officially divided until 1961 into *indígenas*, or native Africans, and *assimilados*, or those who learned Portuguese and assimilated into Portuguese culture, including *mestiços*. Under the colonial regime the European population was almost entirely Portuguese and constituted close to 6 percent of the total population. Nearly 90 percent of Portuguese settlers and *mestiços* were repatriated to Portugal just before independence. The foreign community after independence included 50,000 Cuban soldiers and advisers and an undetermined number of Soviets. These forces were withdrawn in 1991.

LANGUAGES

The official language is Portuguese. No African language extends beyond its tribal area, and few have written scripts of any kind. The principal Bantu languages and their dialects are Kikongo, Kimbundu, Umbundu, Kioko, and Nganguela.

RELIGIONS

Although the constitution guarantees the inviolability of freedom of conscience and belief and provides for separation of church and state, the Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola (MPLA), the controlling political party, publicly emphasizes the importance of propagating “atheism” and has been critical of religious activities. A large portion (around 55 percent) of the Angolan population is Christian, however, and the MPLA has not moved to close down churches. Church services are regularly held, and there is widespread attendance. Foreign and Angolan missionaries are allowed to carry out activities. Reportedly, the União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola (UNITA) allows religious liberty in the areas it controls and in which it operates, but obviously the ability of religious personnel to carry out activities in Angola has been circumscribed by the intensification of the civil war.

Over 45 percent of the population adheres to traditional African religions.

Religious Affiliations

Christian	5,818,632
Other (mostly traditional beliefs)	5,159,919

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Although the precolonial history of many parts of Africa has been carefully researched and preserved, there is relatively little information on the region that forms contemporary Angola as it was before the arrival of the Europeans in the late 1400s. The limited information that is available indicates that the original inhabitants of present-day Angola were hunters and gatherers. Their descendants, called Bushmen by the Europeans, still inhabit portions of southern Africa, and small numbers of them may still be found in southern Angola. These Khoisan speakers lost their predominance in southern Africa as a result of the southward expansion of Bantu-speaking peoples during the first century.

The Bantu settled in Angola between 1300 and 1600, and some may have arrived even earlier. The Bantu formed a number of historically important kingdoms. The earliest and perhaps most important of these was the Kongo Kingdom, which arose between the mid-1300s and the mid-1400s in an area overlapping the present-day border between Angola and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Other important kingdoms were Ndongo, located to the south of Kongo; Matamba, Kasanje, and Lunda, located east of Ndongo; Bié, Bailundu, and Ciyaka, located on the plateau east of Benguela; and Kwanhama (also spelled Kwanyama), located near what is now the border between Angola and Namibia. Although they

did not develop a strong central government, the Chokwe (also spelled Cokwe) established a significant cultural center in the northeast of present-day Angola.

Parts of Angola were exposed to Portuguese influence as early as the late 15th century. Luanda was founded as a trading settlement in 1575, and the king of Kongo, Nzinga-a-Cuum, was converted to Christianity. Meanwhile, the Portuguese, having failed to find gold and other precious metals, became deeply involved in the slave trade. Portugal's attempts to consolidate its rule over the whole interior of Angola were strongly resisted by the Angolans; the first concerted resistance to Portuguese rule lasted from 1872 to 1902, when the Ovimbundu were beaten in the Bailundo War.

Portugal's colonial policy was to bind its colonies rigidly to the mother country. The doctrine of Luso-African unity argued that what was good for Portugal was good for the colonies. Portugal also emphasized its antiracism compared with the racial practices of Britain, France, and other colonial powers. In 1951 Angola was declared to be an integral part of Portugal, and in 1952 the first of a series of planned settlement projects known as *colônatos* was begun for Portuguese immigrants.

Armed resistance to Portuguese rule began on February 4, 1961, when partisans of the MPLA, headed by a physician, Dr. António Agostinho Neto, attacked the São Paulo fortress and police headquarters in Luanda. Within six weeks the war had spread to the north. Another guerrilla organization, the Frente Nacional de Libertação de Angola (FNLA), headed by Holden Roberto, set up a government-in-exile in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in 1962. Insurgency spread to the south through the partisans of a third organization, UNITA. The drawn-out guerrilla warfare had forced Portugal to the limits of military and psychological exhaustion when the coup of April 25, 1974, brought a new and radical government into power in Lisbon, one committed to ending all Portugal's colonial wars. The transfer of sovereignty to African hands in 1975 was completed with few upsets and in a reasonable spirit of tolerance.

In the wake of the coup in Portugal, the leaders of Angola's three nationalist movements signed an agreement with Portugal calling for independence in late 1975. However, the alliance soon broke down, and the FNLA and UNITA formed an alliance in opposition to the MPLA. The conflict soon involved the cold war superpowers, as the Soviet Union and Cuba sent in troops and advisers, whereas South Africa, with the support of Western nations, backed UNITA. On independence, Dr. Agostinho Neto, whose MPLA controlled the capital, announced the formation of the People's Republic of Angola. The two other nationalist groups announced the formation of a Democratic People's Republic of Angola with the capital in Huambo. In early 1976 the MPLA launched a major offensive into UNITA territory that resulted in the withdrawal of South African troops and the

capture of major UNITA centers. UNITA continued its resistance as a guerrilla movement.

Neto established a socialist regime and in 1977 reconstituted the MPLA as a Marxist-Leninist party with a state subordinate to the party. Neto died in 1979 and was succeeded by MPLA chairman José Eduardo dos Santos. Legislative elections were held in 1980 and again in 1986, but real power continued in the hands of the MPLA hierarchy.

During the 1980s South Africa periodically invaded and occupied Angola, purportedly in pursuit of Namibian rebels. Its troops withdrew in 1988 as part of the peace process designed to bring independence to Namibia. Cuba also agreed to a gradual withdrawal of its troops. In 1988 UNITA rejected a one-year amnesty offered by dos Santos to UNITA supporters, and fighting continued despite attempts at a cease-fire. In late 1989 the UNITA leaders agreed to peace talks with the Angolan government.

During 1990 the Angolan government and UNITA met for five rounds of peace talks under the sponsorship of Portugal, the Soviet Union, and the United States. By the end of the year the parties had reached a tentative agreement on ending the civil war. Under the final accord, which was signed in May 1991, multiparty elections would take place by November 1992. In the meantime, the MPLA would continue to administer the government's daily affairs. In addition, both sides agreed to merge their ground forces into an army of no more than 50,000 members. The air force and navy would remain in MPLA hands until the elections, under close independent supervision of a commission made up of delegates from the MPLA and UNITA as well as the three mediating governments.

While negotiations were under way in 1990, the MPLA formally abandoned its Marxist-Leninist ideology and declared itself a social democratic force. It approved the establishment of a multiparty government, direct presidential elections, and a large degree of free enterprise. It also endorsed proposals for a year-long process of constitutional revision that would start after a cease-fire had been signed. UNITA was to participate in the revision process. In 1991 UNITA decided to transform its movement from a guerrilla force into a political party.

A peace settlement signed in Washington in 1991 provided for free multiparty elections in Angola in 1992 under the supervision of a joint commission with Portuguese, U.S., Russian, the renamed Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola-Partido do Trabalho (MPLA-PT), and UNITA representatives. In 1992 the MPLA-PT endorsed constitutional revisions formalizing the government's commitment to a democratic system. It also approved a united armed force, Angolan Armed Forces, drawn from both Popular Armed Forces for the Liberation of Angola and UNITA's Armed Forces for the Liberation of Angola. However, the 1992 election was marred

by widespread violence and armed clashes in the capital. In the polling, MPLA-PT gained a 2-to-1 majority and dos Santos won 49.57 percent of the vote compared with Savimbi's 40.07 percent. Savimbi, however, charged that the elections were rigged and stated that he would not accept defeat. By 1993 tens of thousands were reported killed, with Savimbi's forces on the defensive. In a pitched 55-day battle that left 12,000 dead, UNITA recaptured its headquarters in Huambo. The insurgents were now in control of over 70 percent of Angolan territory, and the UNITA guerrilla forces had become as powerful as a conventional army.

The next several years were marked by successive peace talks at Addis Ababa, Abidjan, and Lusaka, all ending in a stalemate. In response to UNITA's intransigence, the United States recognized the dos Santos government and ended its support for UNITA. Subsequently UNITA intensified its military operations, capturing oil-rich Soyo. In the Lusaka-2 agreement, the government made key concessions to UNITA, including the award of 11 government portfolios and three governorships. President dos Santos and Savimbi met in 1995, and further talks were held. Despite reported agreements, the two sides continued to drift apart on issues such as disarming of civilians and integration of UNITA forces into the army. Meanwhile both UNITA and MPLA-PT continued to launch new offensives. In 1997 the United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM), charged with monitoring and organizing elections, was replaced by UN Observer Mission at Angola (UNOMA). UNOMA's mandate expired in 1998, and the United Nations' involvement in Angola completely ended. Savimbi refused to relinquish rebel-held territory or completely disarm his troops. However, in 1997, a final resolution appeared near as the National Assembly met for the first time with a full complement of UNITA legislators and with Savimbi as "the leader of the largest opposition party." At the same time, dos Santos named a Government of Unity and National Reconciliation with Fernando Van Dúnem as prime minister and including 11 UNITA members. This government was suspended in 1998 because of reported UNITA noncompliance with the Lusaka accord. Some UNITA cabinet members are reported to have deserted Savimbi and stayed on in the government. By 2000 the government was reported to be planning a final offensive against UNITA. Fighting erupted again in 2002. Insurgent leader Savimbi was killed, and a subsequent cease-fire with UNITA boded well for the nation's near-term future. While the civil war ended, violence remained widespread.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

- 1976-79 António Agostinho Neto
 1979- José Eduardo dos Santos

CONSTITUTION

Angola is a sovereign, democratic, and independent republic according to the constitution, promulgated in 1975 and amended in 1978 and 1980. The supreme organ of state is the unicameral National People's Assembly, which is chosen by an electoral college whose members are directly elected. In 1992 the MPLA-PT approved a revised constitution that provided for a presidentially appointed prime minister to head a transitional government, the abolition of the death penalty, the removal of "People's" from the republic's formal name, and the deletion of all constitutional references to people and popular as reflecting former Marxist tendencies.

The president is head of state and government, commander in chief of the armed forces, and leader of Angola's sole political party, the MPLA. Real political power is exercised by the MPLA, which is responsible for the nation's political, economic, and social leadership. The chairman of the party is the head of state.

PARLIAMENT

In accordance with the constitution of 1975, the National People's Assembly was established in 1980 as successor to the Council of the Revolution. The unicameral legislature is indirectly elected for a term of five years. Nearly all the 220 full and 29 alternate members are directly or indirectly affiliated with the MPLA.

POLITICAL PARTIES

While Angola has a number of political parties, the two most important are the ones that have shaped much of its history since independence. The ruling party is the leftist MPLA (Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola), which has ruled the country since 1975. The second-largest party is the formerly United States-backed UNITA party (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola), which spent years of armed resistance before joining the current unity government in April 1997.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Under the MPLA regime, Angola is administratively divided into *provincias* (provinces), *concelhos* (councils), *comunas* (communes), *circulos* (circles), *bairros* (neighborhoods), and *povoados* (villages). The government is represented in the provinces by the provincial commissioner, in the district by the local commissioner, and in the commune by the commune commissioner, all of whom are appointed on the recommendation of the MPLA. The administrative bodies of the district, commune, neighborhood, and

villages are the local commission, the commune commission, the neighborhood commission, and the village commission, respectively.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The judiciary is headed by a Supreme Court and Court of Appeals in Luanda. There are also military, civil, and revolutionary people's courts. The rule of law is based upon Portuguese civil law system and customary law. In the last few years of the twentieth century attempts began to be made to accommodate political pluralism and increased use of free markets.

HUMAN RIGHTS

In terms of civil and political rights, Angola is classified as a country that is not free. There is very little reliable information on human rights practices in Angola. The United States does not maintain diplomatic relations with Angola, and of the major human rights organizations only Amnesty International has reported on this country.

The freedoms of expression, religion, assembly, and belief are qualified by the condition that they must conform to and promote "fundamental national interests and objectives." The domestic media are entirely in government hands. Entry of foreign correspondents is restricted, and those who are in the country are subject to immediate expulsion if they write articles critical of MPLA policies. The labor movement also is an MPLA organ; the right to strike is prohibited by law as a crime against the security of the state. The government has instituted a pass system for travel within Angola; foreigners are generally prohibited from traveling outside cities. The visa policy also is extremely restrictive and stringent. Applications for visas are subject to long delays, if they are not rejected outright or ignored. As in other authoritarian states, participation in the political process is limited to members of the MPLA-PT.

FOREIGN POLICY

Although battered by a long-standing civil war, Angola has been an active player in regional affairs. Its support for Kabila was a factor in the overthrow of Mobutu in Congo (Zaire), and the later withdrawal of this support contributed to the disintegration of the Kabila administration. Relations with the United States, which had opposed the Marxist basis of the Neto government, became more positive after the exit of Cuban troops from Angola in 1991. One of the major goals of Angolan foreign policy has been to isolate UNITA, the principal opposition, and to deny it any aid from abroad. In 1998 Luanda alleged

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that Burkina Faso, Rwanda, Togo, Uganda, and Zambia were either supplying UNITA rebels or providing them safe haven. Relations with Zambia especially deteriorated in 1999, to the point of armed conflict. Although the issue was later defused, Angola's aggressive involvement in the Congolese civil wars is a matter of serious concern to its neighbors.

DEFENSE

The defense structure is headed by the president. The armed forces, known as FAPLA (Forças Armadas Populares de Libertação de Angola), are integrated within the MPLA. The government has announced a universal draft for two years for all Angolans between the ages of 18 and 35. The total strength of the armed forces was reported at 110,500 in 1999. Total military expenditures for 2003 were \$265 million, about 1.9 percent of the nation's gross domestic product (GDP).

The country is divided into six military divisions: North, East, Central and West, Luanda, South, and Cabinda.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 110,500
Military Manpower Availability: 2,620,219
Military Expenditures \$: 265.1 million
as % of GDP: 1.9
as % of central government expenditures: —
Arms Imports \$: —
Arms Exports \$: —

ECONOMY

Angola is an economy in disarray because of a quarter century of nearly continuous warfare. Despite its abundant natural resources, output per capita is among the world's lowest. Subsistence agriculture provides the main livelihood for 85 percent of the population. Oil production and the supporting activities are vital to the economy, contributing about 45 percent to GDP and more than half of exports. Notwithstanding the end of civil war by 2004, violence continues, millions of land mines remain, and many farmers are reluctant to return to their fields. As a result, much of the country's food must still be imported. To take advantage of its rich resources—gold, diamonds, extensive forests, Atlantic fisheries, and large oil deposits—Angola will need to implement the peace agreement and reform government policies. Despite the increase in the pace of civil warfare in late 1998, the economy grew by an estimated 5 percent in 2000. By 2004 real GDP growth was estimated at just 1.5 percent.

The government introduced new currency denominations in 1999, including a 1 and 5 kwanza note. Expanded oil production—estimated at about 742,000 barrels per day in 2004—brightens the nation's economic prospects, but internal strife discourages investment outside the petroleum sector.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity): \$20.42 billion
GDP per capita (ppp): \$1,900
GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 5.8
GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 2.8
Origin of Gross Domestic Product %
Agriculture: 8
Industry: 67
Services: 25
Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %
Private Consumption: —
Government Consumption: —
Gross Domestic Investment: 31.7
Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 9.669
Imports \$billion: 4.08
% of Income Received by Poorest 20%: —
% of Income Received by Richest 10%: —

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
97,792	415,620	1,002,343	2,192,774	4,346,627

Finance

National Currency: Kwanza (AOA)
Exchange Rate: \$1 = AOA 74.6063
Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: —
Central Bank Discount Rate %:
Total External Debt \$billion: 9.164
Debt Service Ratio %: —
Balance of Payments \$million: —
International Reserves SDRs million: —
Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 1.5

Official Development Assistance

ODA: \$383.5 million
per capita: \$35
Foreign Direct Investment \$million: —

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
Revenues \$billion: 4.874
Expenditures \$billion: \$6.012
Budget Deficit \$billion: 1.138
Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 8
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 8.8
 Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares: —
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: —
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: —
 Total Farmland as % of land area: —
 Livestock: Cattle 000: 4,150
 Sheep 000: 340
 Hogs 000: 780
 Chickens 000: 6,800
 Forests: Production of Roundwood
 (000 cubic meters): —
 Fisheries: Total Catch mt: 252,518

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 535.5
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 1

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of
 oil equivalent 000: —
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of
 oil equivalent 000: —
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg: —
 Net Energy Imports % of use: —
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: —
 Production and consumption kW-hr million: —
 Coal Reserves tons million: —
 Production tons 000: —
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic meters billion: 79.57
 Production and consumption cubic meters million: —
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels: 5.691 billion
 Production barrels million: .742
 Consumption barrels million: —
 Pipelines Length km: 1,151

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 4.08
 Exports \$billion: 9.669
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —
 Current Account Balance \$million: -475

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
United States %	12.2	47.7
China %	0	23.4
Taiwan %	0	8
France %	6.5	7.4
Portugal %	18.2	0
South Africa %	12.4	0
Netherlands %	11.6	0
Brazil %	6.1	0
United Kingdom %	4.2	0

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 51,429
 Paved %: 10.4
 Automobiles: —
 Trucks and Buses: —
 Railroad; Track Length km: 2,761
 Passenger-mi million: —
 Freight-mi million: —
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 7
 Total Deadweight Tonnage: 42,879
 Airports: 244
 Traffic: Passenger-mi million: —
 Length of Waterways km: 1,300

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: —
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: —
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: —

Communications

Telephones: 96,300
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones: 130,000
 Personal Computers 000: —
 Internet Hosts: 17
 Internet Users: 41,000

ENVIRONMENT

Angola suffers from a number of environmental problems that have resulted from over 40 years of warfare. Deforestation claims around 124,000 hectares a year, and only small patches of natural forest remain. Poaching in woodlands and burning of trees are widespread. Water shortages are common, despite abundant rivers and wetlands. Also, many important endemic species are overhunted or receive no protection. Angola's protected area system has almost completely disintegrated owing to the civil war, although the United Nations still estimates that approximately 12 percent of the country's total land area is officially protected.

Environment

Forest Area % of land area: 56
 Average Annual Forest Change, 1990-2000, ha 000: 124
 Nationally Protected Areas as % of Total Land Area: 12
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: —

LIVING CONDITIONS

Living conditions for the vast majority of Angolans are harsh. Nutrition is poor, medical care is almost nonexis-

tent for most, nearly a quarter million people have AIDS, infectious diseases are commonplace, and the fertility rate is 6.33 children born per woman. Only about 42 percent of the total population—28 percent of women—is literate. Alcoholism is rising. Most efforts to improve the living conditions of Angolans are made by nongovernmental organizations such as the United Nations Development Program, the International Monetary Fund, the World Food Program, the World Health Organization, and others.

Houses in Angola are usually made of local materials, including mud or cinderblock walls and thatched or metal roofs. While electricity in the capital city is fairly dependable, it is not elsewhere in the country, and throughout Angola, clean water is a valuable commodity, forcing many Angolans to install reserve water tanks.

HEALTH

Angola provides little in the way of health care to all but a tiny percentage of its people. Hospitals lack personnel and even the most basic equipment. Life expectancy at birth for both sexes is only about 37 years, one in three Angolan children die before age five, and Angola is one of the few nations in the world in which maternal mortality is on the increase. People suffer from diseases related to poverty, including cholera, measles, malaria, and tuberculosis—both in crowded urban areas and in refugee camps. The incidence of AIDS is increasing. Many health problems are the result of war—particularly, amputees who lost limbs because of the nation's 10 million land mines. The trauma of warfare has led many Angolans to turn to practitioners of traditional medicine, such as herbalists.

Health

Number of Physicians: —
 Number of Dentists: —
 Number of Nurses: —
 Number of Pharmacists: —
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: —
 Hospital Beds per 1,000 people: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 140
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 1,700
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: —
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: —
 HIV Infected % of adults: 3.9
 Child Immunization Rate % of children under 12 months:
 DPT: —
 Measles: —
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: —
 Access to Improved Water Source %: —

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Because of the high unemployment rate, more than half the population—up to 70 percent of Angolans—live be-

low the poverty line. Consequently, hunger is endemic; it is a problem made worse by the amount of time Angolans must spend to gather potable water and firewood. Along the coast, of course, seafood is a major portion of the diet, while inland, herders eat dairy products and meat and farmers rely on maize, sorghum, cassava, bananas, sweet potatoes, and other crops. Few Angolans can afford to serve food on ceremonial occasions, when items as basic as a chicken, soft drinks, and bottled beer are prized—and expensive. Most people drink local beverages, such as maize beer and palm wine.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 73.7
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 54

STATUS OF WOMEN

The general economic status of women is low. Women play a role in all aspects of the political process. It has been reported that they were in the military vanguard during the war for independence. Women participate in the MPLA, not only in the Angolan Women's Organization but also at higher levels of the party. Social, cultural, and traditional factors tend to limit the involvement of women at the highest level of the party, however.

Women

Women-headed Households: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: —
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men aged 15 to 24: —
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-Agricultural %: —

WORK

Angola's economy was devastated by the loss of much of its workforce in 1975, when Portuguese settlers in the country—some 300,000—withdraw, deliberately destroying factories, farms, and transportation infrastructure. Years of civil war drove skilled Angolan workers from the country and discouraged foreign investment. Seventy percent of Angolans make their living through agriculture. Because of civil war, transporting food and other commodities was difficult, so many people turned to subsistence agriculture. Many Angolans rely on small trade to make a living; women often gather and sell firewood, and men often traffic in diamonds, weapons, and spare parts. A considerable portion of Angola's economic activity takes place in the *candonga* system, or the black market.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 5.57 million
 Female Participation Rate %: 46
 Labor by Sector: %
 Agriculture: 85
 Industry and Services: 15
 Unemployment %: over 50

EDUCATION

Education is, in principle, universal, free, and compulsory for five years between ages six and 14.

Schooling lasts for 10 years, divided into four years of primary school, four years of middle school, and two years of secondary school. The MPLA regime has announced plans to reorganize the educational structure and nationalize all educational services. Revolutionary cadres of students are being formed, and the entire educational system is being politicized.

The academic year runs from September to July. The medium of instruction is Portuguese. The shortage of teachers created by the departure of Portuguese teachers has been met by Cuban teachers. Higher education is provided by the Universidade de Luanda, founded in 1963.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 42
 Male %: 56
 Female %: 28
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: —
 First Level: Primary schools
 Teachers: —
 Students: 1,586,786
 Student-Teacher Ratio: —
 Net Enrollment Ratio: —
 Second Level: Secondary Schools
 Teachers: —
 Students: 413,695
 Student-Teacher Ratio: —
 Net Enrollment Ratio: —
 Third Level: Institutions
 Teachers: —
 Students: 12,566
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 1
 Students per 100,000: —
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: —

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The literacy rate in Angola is low, and its university remains short on teaching materials and faculty. Primarily as a result of civil war and the resultant loss of access to materials and sources, Angolans conduct little scientific research.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million persons: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$: —
 Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

Only one daily newspaper is published in Angola: the state-run *Jornal de Angola*. Under the MPLA regime, the press has been brought under Marxist ideological control and serves as an organ of government.

Rádio Nacional de Angola broadcasts in Portuguese, English, French, Spanish, and native languages. Television service began in 1975 and is provided by the Televisão Popular de Angola.

The public libraries are the National Library of Angola and the Municipal Library in Luanda.

Media

Newspapers and Periodicals: —
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: —
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets 000: —
 per 1,000: —

CULTURE

Angolan culture is closely linked with that of other Portuguese colonies. Angola is a member of "the Five," a group of former Portuguese colonies (including Mozambique, Guinea Bissau, Sao Tomé, and Cape Verde) that meet to discuss cultural issues. Many buildings in Angola show the influence of Portuguese architecture from the fifteenth century.

Written literature began in Angola in 1850 with a book of poetry written by José de Silva Maia Ferreira. In recent decades, the link between literature and political activism has been strong; even former prime minister Agostinho Neto wrote political poetry. Traditional oral literature, usually in the form of folktales, is popular in many areas of the country.

Angolan music is popular with international audiences, especially in the Caribbean and Latin America. Throughout history Angolan musicians have made their own instruments, including the *cloches* (a double bell) and marimbas. During long journeys in the nation's south, musicians pass the time by playing a bow lute called the *chilumbamba*. In the east, the *likembe*, or lamellophone, is popular. Contemporary popular music is influenced by traditional music. Young people enjoy

kizumba music, or rhythmic music from Cape Verde and the Antilles.

Angola has a rich tradition of graphic arts, and its wood carving and pottery are sold in other African countries.

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

The name *Angola* does not designate a culture; the nation is an artificial construct of diverse kingdoms, including the Kongo, the Ndongo, and the Ovimbundu. Thus, it is hard to identify a specifically “Angolan” folklore and mythology. A folk hero to the Kongo is Alfonso I, who founded a Christian kingdom in the area in the sixteenth century. Many Angolans also regard their first president, Agostinho Neto, as something of a folk hero.

Much folk belief in Angola has to do with religion. Because of the trauma of war, many people turn to traditional folk beliefs for emotional support. They exorcise evil spirits in newly created churches; children wear amulets to help them avoid forced conscription in the army; and soldiers make magic potions to protect them from bullets. Folk belief is often expressed through traditional crafts. Various ethnic groups manufacture masks and sculptures that symbolize rites of passage or that play roles in cultural rituals. These are made of wood, bronze, ivory, malachite, and ceramic. The Lunda-Chokwe in the northeast are particularly well known for their skill in folk art and crafts.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries

Number: —

Volumes: —

Registered borrowers: —

Museums

Number: —

Annual Attendance: —

Cinema

Gross Receipts: —

Number of Cinemas: —

Seating Capacity: —

Annual Attendance: —

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

A country torn by poverty and a generation of civil war offers few recreational opportunities. Television, however, has become increasingly popular with the advent of satellite dishes. These allow Angolans to receive not only the government-run station but also programming from Brazil and the United States, including movies with Portuguese subtitles. Many residents of apartment buildings

share a satellite dish. Especially in the capital, the number of video-rental stores has grown rapidly.

Chess is popular in Angola; the nation has at least a dozen international chess masters. Popular among children is a traditional game called *ware*, played by moving stones around a board that is either carved out of wood or dug out of the soil.

ETIQUETTE

Standards of dress in Angola are relaxed. Women are supposed to wear long skirts in some areas, but this norm is often ignored. In much of Angola, it is regarded as impolite to look another in the eye during conversation. Men do not eat with women and children in some Angolan communities. Kissing on the cheek is becoming more common as a form of greeting between friends, especially among younger people, though older people prefer shaking hands. Angolans consider pointing to be rude.

FAMILY LIFE

In rural Angola many women work the fields and gather firewood and water. They often raise a large number of children, and polygyny is commonplace—if the man is able to support more than one wife. In the cities, however, women tend to have fewer children. Their rate of literacy is higher, and they often compete with men for traditionally male-dominated jobs. Family life throughout Angola has been severely disrupted because of the combat deaths and dislocation caused by the civil war.

Kin relationships are important to Angolans. Most of Angola’s ethnic groups are both matrilineal and patriarchal. This means that males inherit property from their mother’s brother. Among the Mbundu, a daughter would live with her husband in the husband’s village, but a son would live in his mother’s brother’s village.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Western clothing is common in Angola’s towns and cities, especially when dressing up for parties or special occasions. In rural areas and smaller villages, women wear wraparound garments called *panos*. Younger people favor jeans and T-shirts, although they do dress more formally for special occasions. The Makubao people in the southern province of Kuando Kubango do not wear clothing.

SPORTS

As in many nations throughout the world, soccer is a popular sport, both for spectators and participants. One

of Africa's largest soccer stadiums is "the Citadel" in Luanda. Basketball also became popular after the Angolan national team won the Nairobi University Games and three straight All-African championships. Other popular sports include handball, volleyball, and track and field.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1956** Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola (MPLA) is founded.
- 1960** Dr. Agostinho Neto, chairman of the MPLA Steering Committee, is arrested. Portuguese troops fire on Neto's supporters, killing 30 and wounding 300. Neto is imprisoned in Cape Verde and later is transferred to Portugal.
- 1961** MPLA guerrillas attack São Paulo fortress and police station, killing seven Portuguese and 40 Angolans, and a plantation in Uige Province, killing 21 Portuguese.
- 1962** Neto escapes from Portuguese prison and returns to Angola via Rabat. União das Populações de Angola and Partido Democrático Angolano merge to form the Frente Nacional de Libertação de Angola (FNLA), which sets up a government-in-exile, Governo Revolucionário de Angola no Exilo (GRAE), with Holden Roberto as prime minister.
- 1963** Zaire recognizes GRAE and is followed by the Organization of African Unity (OAU). MPLA is expelled from Zaire and moves its headquarters to Brazzaville, Republic of Congo.
- 1964** Dr. Jonas Savimbi, foreign minister of GRAE, resigns after accusing Roberto of corruption.
- 1966** Savimbi organizes the União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola (UNITA).
- 1972** MPLA and FNLA form Supreme Council for the Liberation of Angola under OAU auspices, with Roberto as president and Neto as vice president.
- 1975** Portugal grants complete independence to Angola. A coalition government is formed, headed by a three-member presidential council consisting of the three rival political parties: MPLA, FNLA, and UNITA. The coalition breaks up, and FNLA and UNITA proclaim the Popular Democratic Republic of Angola, with the capital at Huambo. Agostinho Neto is inaugurated as president of the republic by MPLA. The United States, Zaire, South Africa, and China support the UNITA-FNLA government, whereas the Soviet Union and Cuba airlift arms and equipment to MPLA forces.
- 1976** MPLA captures Huambo and other key cities as FNLA-UNITA forces disintegrate. MPLA units clear the country of all opposition and foreign forces. OAU recognizes MPLA. President Neto takes over post of prime minister.
- 1977** A short-lived rebellion led by anti-Cuban and pro-Soviet dissidents is put down after severe fighting in Luanda and the provinces; three provincial administrations are suspended. UNITA forces claim minor victories. MPLA-backed forces cross into Zaire on what is described as an invasion. Andrew Young, U.S. representative to the United Nations, claims that Cuban forces are a stabilizing element in Angola. Kwanza is introduced as new national monetary unit. Cuba's Fidel Castro, visiting Angola, promises unlimited aid. MPLA, in national conference, restructures itself as a Leninist party under the name Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola-Partido do Trabalho (MPLA-PT).
- 1978** Prime Minister Lopo do Nascimento is dismissed as President Neto strengthens hold on MPLA. United States bars recognition of regime, citing Cuban influence over MPLA. Relations with Zaire are normalized, and President Neto visits Kinshasa. Three-year friendship and cooperation agreement is signed with Portugal.
- 1979** President Neto dies of cancer and is succeeded in office by José Eduardo dos Santos, minister of planning.
- 1982** President dos Santos assumes emergency powers in the face of increasing South African attacks.
- 1983** Beijing recognizes the MPLA-PT regime.
- 1985** U.S. Congress lifts ban on aid to UNITA rebels.
- 1986** The United States decides to give UNITA \$15 million in military aid.
- 1988** Angola and South Africa declare a cease-fire. South African troops withdraw from Angola. An agreement is reached for the phased withdrawal of Cuban troops. African nations push peace initiatives.
- 1989** UNITA leaders agree to peace talks with the Angolan government.
- 1990** Following five separate rounds of talks, representatives of the Angolan government and UNITA reach a tentative agreement to end the civil war. The MPLA discards its Marxist-Leninist ideology and adopts democratic socialism as its new ideology.

- 1991** The Angolan government and UNITA sign an agreement ending the civil war; UNITA decides to transform its movement from a guerrilla force into a political party.
- 1992** In Angola's first multiparty elections, neither candidate gains a majority, but the required runoff between dos Santos of the MPLA and Jonas Savimbi of UNITA is never held; dos Santos retains the presidency, and UNITA denounces the elections, resuming the civil war.
- 1993** The UN Security Council adopts an embargo on arms and fuel to UNITA.
- 1994** Successful government offenses early in the year aid in the signing of a UN-brokered peace treaty between UNITA and the government of Angola.
- 1995** The United Nations sends 7,000 peacekeeping troops to Angola.
- 1997** The 70 UNITA members elected to the National Assembly take their seats.
- 1998** UNITA leader Jonas Savimbi refuses to participate in peace talks.
- 1999** The United Nations terminates its peacekeeping mission in Angola, citing the tepid efforts of both Savimbi and dos Santos toward promoting peace.
- 2002** Fighting erupts again. In February rebel leader Jonas Savimbi of UNITA is killed in a clash between rebel forces and the Angolan army. A cease-fire is signed in April, and in August the military wing of UNITA is disbanded.
- 2003** The United States lifts economic sanctions against Angola.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Official Home Page of the Republic of Angola
<http://www.angola.org/>

ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Antigua and Barbuda

ABBREVIATION

AG

CAPITAL

St. John's

HEAD OF STATE

Queen Elizabeth II, represented by Governor-General Sir James B. Carlisle (from 1993)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Baldwin Spencer (from 2004)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Parliamentary democracy in the Commonwealth recognizing Elizabeth II as head of state

POPULATION

68,722 (2005)

AREA

442 sq km (171 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Black

LANGUAGES

English (official), English patois

RELIGION

Christianity

UNIT OF CURRENCY

East Caribbean dollar

NATIONAL FLAG

An inverted triangle centered on a red ground and divided horizontally into three bands of black, blue, and white, the black stripe bearing a symbol of the rising sun in gold

NATIONAL EMBLEM

The main elements are two antelopes flanking a shield. The shield bears a golden sun on a black-field motif with wavy bands of white and blue beneath it; there is a sugar mill in the foreground. The motto on the scroll at the bottom reads, "Each Endeavouring, All Achieving."

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"Fair Antigua and Barbuda, We Thy Sons and Daughters Stand"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

Easter; Whitmonday; Queen's Birthday; Carnival; November 1 (Independence Day); Christmas

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

November 1, 1981

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

November 1, 1981

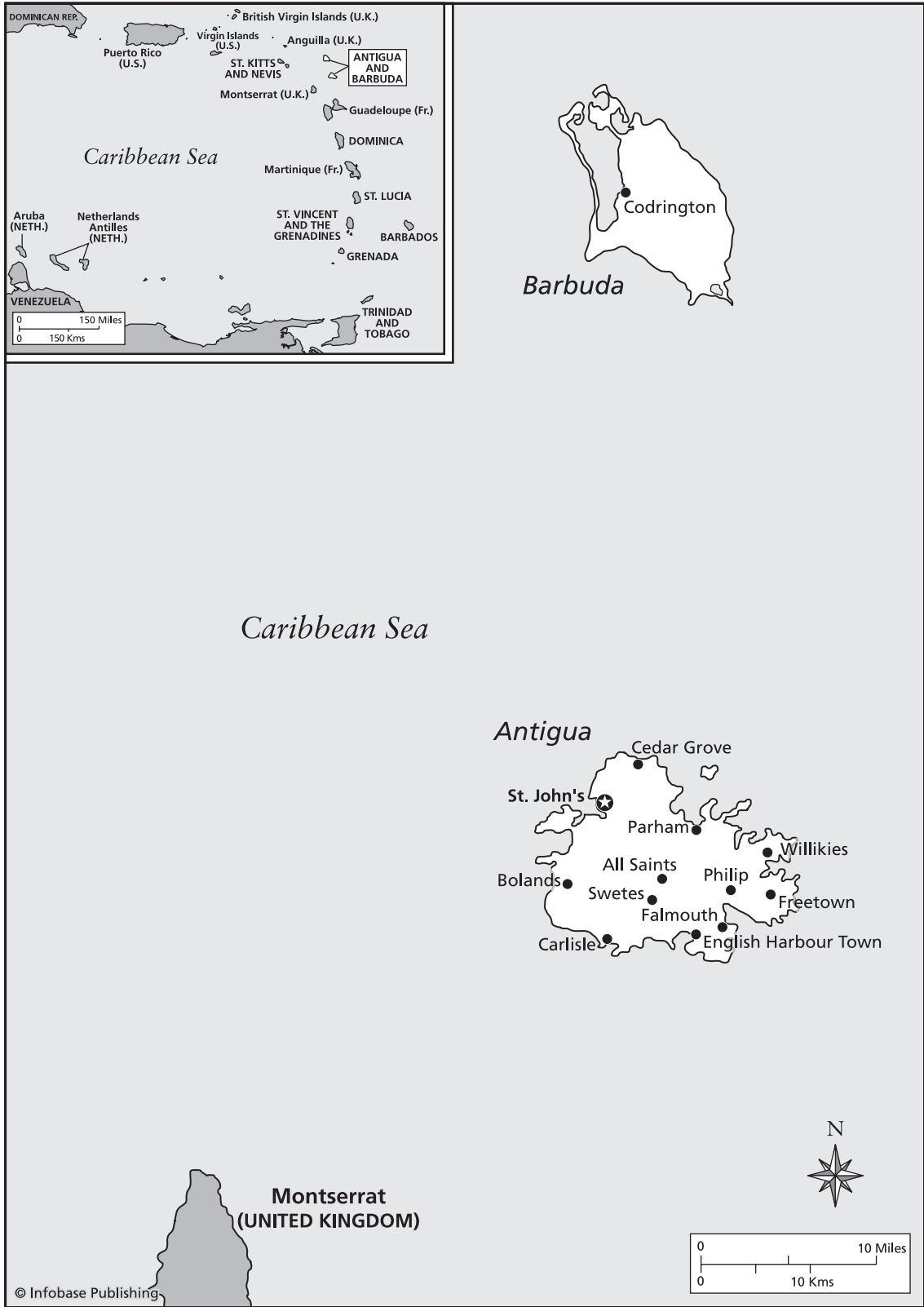
GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Antigua and Barbuda are part of the Leeward Islands chain in the eastern Caribbean and include the islands of Antigua and Barbuda as well as the uninhabited Redonda. The capital city is St. John's, on the northwestern edge of the island of Antigua. Both islands are volcanic and coral. Antigua has deeply indented shores marked by reefs and shoals. Its highest point is Boggy Peak (1,329 ft). The central part of the island is a fertile plain, and there are numerous islets dotting the eastern coastline. Barbuda is a coral island.

Geography

Area sq km: 442; sq mi 171
World Rank: 180th
Land Boundaries, km: 0
Coastline, km 153
Elevation Extremes meters
 Lowest: Caribbean Sea 0
 Highest: Boggy Peak 402
Land Use %
 Arable land: 18.18
 Permanent Crops: 4.55
 Forest: 20
 Other: 52.27

Antigua and Barbuda



Population of Principal Cities (1991)

St. John's	22,342
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CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Cooling winds from the east and the northeast moderate the temperatures, which rise to 84°F in summer and 75°F in winter. The rainfall averages 1,016 mm (40 in), with most falling between September and November.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature: 81°F to 93°F
Average Rainfall: 40 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Volcanic in geology, much of the vegetation of the islands is scrub. However, where freshwater is available many other varieties of flowers and trees are found. Plants native to the islands include the palmetto and mangrove, while over 4,000 acres of woodland have been planted, including red and white cedar, mahogany, and acacia. On Antigua, pineapple plantations are heavily cultivated. In the wooded acres of Barbuda are found deer, boar, wild duck, and guinea fowl.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 68,722
World Rank: 183rd
Density per sq km: 179
% of annual growth (1999–2003): 0
Male %: 50
Female %: 50
Urban %: —
Age Distribution: % 0–14: 28.1
15–64: 67.6
65 and over: 4.3
Population 2020: —
Birth Rate per 1,000: 17.7
Death Rate per 1,000: 5.5
% of Natural Increase per 1,000: 14.2
Total Fertility Rate: 2.27
Expectation of Life (years): Males 69.26
Females 74.07
Marriage Rate per 1,000: —
Divorce Rate per 1,000: —
Average Size of Households: —
Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Antiguans and Barbudans are almost entirely of African descent. Minorities include East Indians, Arabs, and Britons.

LANGUAGES

English is the official language and is spoken, in standard or patois form, by virtually all Antiguans.

RELIGIONS

The Anglican Church has historically enjoyed the status of the dominant denomination, claiming the membership of about 32 percent of the population. A variety of other Protestant groups make up another 42 percent. Roman Catholics are a minority at 10 percent. St. John's is the episcopal seat of both the Anglican and Roman Catholic dioceses.

Religious Affiliations

Protestant	29,000
Anglican	22,000
Roman Catholic	7,000
Other	11,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The early inhabitants of Antigua and Barbuda in pre-Columbian times were the Arawak and Carib Indians, whom Columbus met on his second voyage in 1493. Columbus named the island of Antigua after the Church of Santa Maria de la Antigua, in Seville, Spain. The first Western settlements were erected by the Spanish in 1520, the French in 1629, and the British in 1632. Antigua became a British colony in 1677 under the Treaty of Breda. In 1674 Sir Christopher Codrington established a large sugar estate on Antigua that was worked by slaves from Barbuda. In 1860 Barbuda was formally annexed to Antigua, and 11 years later both were merged into the Federation of Leeward Islands for the next 75 years, until 1956. From 1958 the name of the federation was changed to the Federation of the West Indies and a system of ministerial government was introduced. Vere Cornwall Bird, the leader of the Antigua Labour Party, became chief minister. Antigua became an associated state with full internal self-government in 1967 despite opposition from Barbudans who sought constitutional guarantees for autonomy. In 1981 Antigua and Barbuda became an independent state within the British Commonwealth.

72 Antigua and Barbuda

Since independence Antigua and Barbuda has been governed mainly by the Bird family. The senior Vere Cornwall Bird's most remarkable achievement was in ruling the country for more than four decades and in surviving a series of corruption charges that would likely have brought down the government in any other country. He was succeeded in 1994 by his son Lester Bird, whose cabinet also included other members of the Bird family. The Birds also maintained their hold over the ruling Antigua Labour Party, which won its sixth consecutive electoral victory in 1999.

In 2000 the government of Antigua and Barbuda increased efforts at international cooperation against money laundering and drug trafficking in the Caribbean by enacting new legislation and by signing on to the United Nations Offshore Forum. However, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) still included the country on its list of countries supposedly running harmful tax regimes. In 2002 the country agreed to make its tax laws more transparent. Prime Minister Lester Bird lost his Antigua Labour Party (ALP) majority in 2003 when three of his party's members of parliament resigned. Forced to call elections, Bird's party lost to the United Progressive Party in March 2004, and a new government was formed under Prime Minister Baldwin Spencer.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

Chief Minister

1960–67 Vere Cornwall Bird

Premier

1967–71 Vere Cornwall Bird

1971–76 George Herbert Walter

1976–81 Vere Cornwall Bird

Prime Minister

1981–94 Vere Cornwall Bird

1994–2004 Lester Bryant Bird

2004– Baldwin Spencer

CONSTITUTION

Under the constitution of 1981 the government is headed by the British monarch as head of state, who is represented on the island by a governor-general. The executive is headed by a prime minister, who, in the British parliamentary tradition, is the leader of the largest party in the House of Representatives. He heads a cabinet whose members are appointed by the governor-general on his recommendation.

PARLIAMENT

The bicameral legislature consists of a 17-member House of Representatives, elected from single-member constitu-

encies for five-year terms by universal adult suffrage, and a 17-member Senate, appointed by the governor-general, of whom 11 are named on the recommendation of the prime minister, four on the advice of the leader of the opposition, one on the governor-general's discretion, and one by the Barbuda Council.

POLITICAL PARTIES

As of 2004 the Antigua Labour Party had been in power since independence. The principal opposition was the United Progressive Party, which won four seats (out of 17) in the House of Representatives in 1999. In the 2004 elections the United Progressive Party won 55.3 percent of the vote and placed 12 of its members in the House of Representatives. A new government was formed under Prime Minister Baldwin Spencer.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Antigua is divided into six parishes and the two dependencies of Barbuda and Redonda. The six parishes are Saint George, Saint John's, Saint Mary, Saint Paul, Saint Peter, and Saint Philip. Local government is directed by 29 community councils, each with five elected members and four appointed members.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The court system operates on three levels. At the bottom level are three magistrates' courts dealing with summary offenses and civil cases with values of 500XCD or less. At the intermediate level is the court of summary jurisdiction, which sits without a jury and deals with civil cases. At the apex of the system is the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court, based in St. Lucia, which serves as a high court and a court of appeal. Final appeals may be made to the Queen's Privy Council in the United Kingdom. The Industrial Court arbitrates and settles trade disputes. The Antigua and Barbuda legal system is based on English common law.

The constitution prohibits arrest and detention without sufficient grounds and also provides for speedy processing. A defendant or suspect must be brought before a court within 48 hours of arrest or detention. As of 2003 Antigua and Barbuda, though not a signatory to the Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ), did indicate that it planned to use the court for appeals.

HUMAN RIGHTS

The Bird family controlled the government from 1976 to 2004. They were notoriously corrupt and managed to

amass an enormous fortune through drug dealing and arms trafficking. They managed to hold on to power by inflating electoral rolls and through intimidation of political opponents. Several of the Birds have been the target of criminal investigations, and Vere Bird was banned from public life for his association and support of Colombian drug bosses. The Bird family also controlled the media, successfully denying the opposition access to the media. The government also engaged in arson against opposing political parties. Prison conditions have been inhumane and there have been allegations of physical abuse of prisoners by guards. In 2004 the Bird family dynasty was finally voted out of office; it was replaced by the United Progressive Party.

In 2004 Freedom House, a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, rated the country on political rights with a 4 and on civil rights with a 2, both on a scale of 1 to 7 (in which 1 is the most free). Freedom House considers Antigua and Barbuda to be a partly free country.

FOREIGN POLICY

Prime Minister V. C. Bird was a strong believer in regional cooperation and played a leading role in the Caribbean Free Trade Association, its successor, the Caribbean Community and Common Market, and the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States. There is a U.S.-backed regional military training center on the main island. The government of Antigua and Barbuda has since 2000 increasingly agreed to cooperate in international antidrug and money-laundering campaigns.

DEFENSE

Antigua and Barbuda is an active member of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States. It maintains close ties to the United States, which maintains a military training base on Antigua.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: —
 Military Manpower Availability: —
 Military Expenditures \$million: —
 as % of GDP: —
 as % of central government expenditures: —
 Arms Imports \$million: —
 Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

Tourism is the mainstay of the economy, contributing about half of the gross domestic product (GDP). The number of annual tourist arrivals, mainly from the United

States, determines the health of the economy. Since 2000 weak numbers in the tourist industry have slowed the economy. The older agricultural economy is directed to the domestic market but is hobbled by a lack of water and a labor shortage. Manufacturing is primarily for export, of which the principal products are bedding, handicrafts, and electronic components.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity): \$750 million
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity): \$11,000
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 2.6
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 0.4
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %
 Agriculture: 3.9
 Industry: 19.2
 Services: 76.8
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %
 Private Consumption: —
 Government Consumption: —
 Gross Domestic Investment: 24
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 689
 Imports: 692
 % of Income Received by Poorest 20%: —
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: —
 CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)
 1999 2000 2001 2002 2003
 — — — — —

Finance

National Currency: East Caribbean Dollar (XCD)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = 2.7 XCD
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: —
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: —
 Total External Debt \$million: 231
 Debt Service Ratio %: —
 Balance of Payments \$million: —
 International Reserves SDRs million: 32
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index
 Growth Rate %: 3

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 2.3
 per capita: \$33
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: —

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: April 1–March 31
 Revenues \$million: 123.7
 Expenditures \$million: 145.9
 Budget Deficit \$million: 22.2
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

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Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 3.9
Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 1.4
Number of Tractors per 100 hectares: —
Irrigation, % of Farms having: —
Fertilizer Consumption mt: —
Total Farmland as % of land area: 18.18
Livestock: Cattle 000: 14.3
 Sheep 000: 19
 Hogs 000: 5.7
 Chickens 000: 105
Forests: Production of Roundwood (000 cubic meters): —
Fisheries: Total Catch mt: 1,583

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 14.037
Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 6

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent 000: —
Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent 000: —
Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg: 1,815
Net Energy Imports % of use: —
Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: —
 Production kW-hr million: 105.3
 Consumption kW-hr million: 97.89
Coal Reserves tons million: —
 Production tons 000: —
 Consumption tons 000: —
Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic meters billion: —
 Production cubic meters million: —
 Consumption cubic meters million: —
Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels million: —
 Production barrels: 0
 Consumption barrels per day: 3,600
Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$million: 692
Exports \$million: 689
Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): -2.2
Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): -0.8
Balance of Trade \$million: -3

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Germany %	6.1	84.9
United Kingdom %	6.1	3.8
United States %	26.5	3.3
Singapore %	10	0
Poland %	7	0
Trinidad and Tobago %	4.4	0

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 250
Paved %: —
Automobiles: —
Trucks and Buses: —
Railroad; Track Length km: —
 Passenger-mi million: —
 Freight-mi million: —
Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 867
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 683.143
Airports: 3
 Traffic: Passenger-mi million: —
Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 237
Number of Tourists from 000: —
Tourist Receipts \$million: 272
Tourist Expenditures \$million: 32

Communications

Telephones 000: 38
Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$—
Cellular Telephones 000: 38.2
Personal Computers 000: —
Internet Hosts: 1,665
Internet Users: 10,000

ENVIRONMENT

The principal ecological problem in Antigua and Barbuda is a shortage of fresh water. The islands are subject to periodic drought, and existing facilities and underground sources are contaminated by industrial pollutants. Deforestation contributes not only to soil erosion, as water quickly runs off, but also to the water shortage. Waste disposal is antiquated, and untreated sewage runs in open trenches and empties into the sea. There is an official Environmental Commission that exists mainly on paper and does little to solve these problems. There are several protected areas, including the offshore islands of North Sound and Codrington Lagoon. Endangered species include the Antiguan ground lizard and the West Indian whistling duck.

Environment

Forest Area % of land area: 20
Average Annual Forest Change, 1990-2000, 000 ha: —
Nationally Protected Areas as % of Total Land Area: —
Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 5

LIVING CONDITIONS

With a life expectancy in 2004 of 71.6 years and with most of the citizens living in wood and concrete houses with at least two bedrooms, the living conditions of the nation can be said to be adequate. In 2003 the government announced that plans were in place to build at least six affordable housing developments on private lands.

Over 17,000 motor vehicles were registered in the country in 1992, and Antigua has about 150 miles of paved roads as well as a railway line and an airport. Formerly, there was a dearth of road signs or even village markers, making traveling in the country by car somewhat problematic. Since the 1990s, however, the government has increasingly addressed this problem.

With much of the work in the country dependent on the tourist trade and service industry, there is not much demand for skilled workers. Thus, the citizens remain largely stuck in their existing socioeconomic classes.

Sanitation and adequate drinking water remain problems in the country, as does the health-care system.

HEALTH

Due to poor sanitation, dysentery and gastroenteritis were the most common illnesses and causes of death in the late 1980s, especially in children. Other causes of death include heart disease, cancer, and influenza. Hypertension is one of the most common medical conditions on Barbuda. In 1999 AIDS started to rank among the 10 leading causes of death. As of that year the annual incidence of AIDS was 209 per million people. The government took action in 1997, developing a national policy on HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases.

There is some malnutrition among the nation's children. As of 1995, 100 percent of the population was immunized against diphtheria, pertussis, and tetanus and 94 percent against measles, mumps, and rubella.

The nation has one general hospital, the Holberton Hospital. The cost of a medical insurance scheme that includes maternity benefits is shared equally between employers and employees. The infant mortality rate as of 2004 was 20.18 deaths per 1,000 live births.

Health

Number of Physicians: —
 Number of Dentists: —
 Number of Nurses: —
 Number of Pharmacists: —
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: —
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 20.18
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: —
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 6
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 531
 HIV Infected % of adults: —

Child Immunization Rate % of children under 12 months:

DPT: 98

Measles: 99

Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 95

Access to Improved Water Source %: 98

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Like many other nations of the Caribbean and West Indies, Creole cuisine holds sway. Staples such as rice and peas, pumpkin soup, and pepperpot soup are popular national dishes. Surrounded by water, the country also depends on fish and shellfish as an integral part of the national diet. Regional species and specialties include the spiny lobster and conch. Another popular dish is *fungi*, a cornmeal pudding made with boiled okra and served with salt fish. *Pasties*, or meat pies, are a typical street food, sold by vendors in villages and towns.

Fruits on the islands include breadfruit, originally from the Pacific and India, and the Antigua black pineapple.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —

Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,406

Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 87.6

Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 208.3

STATUS OF WOMEN

Antigua has an official agency, the Directorate of Women's Affairs, to monitor the status of women on the islands. Violence against women is common. In 1999 the parliament approved anti-domestic violence legislation, but in many cases women are unwilling to testify against their husbands. Progress in implementing new programs to assist women in bettering their economic opportunities is slow.

Women

Women-headed Households: —

Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: —

Female Administrators and Managers %: —

Ratio of Literate Women to Men aged 15 to 24: —

Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-Agricultural %: —

WORK

Of an estimated labor force of 30,000 in 2002, 82 percent of the country's population was engaged in the tourist industry in one way or another. However, because such work tends to be seasonal, many of these workers need to find additional off-season work in agriculture or industry. Much of the tourist industry relies on unskilled service

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workers with subsequent low pay. Agriculture employs 7 percent of the population. Agricultural products include cotton, fruits, vegetables, bananas, coconuts, cucumbers, mangoes, sugarcane, and livestock. The third major employment sector is industry, at 11 percent. Industrial operations include construction and the light manufacturing of clothing, alcohol, and household appliances. Fishing is another important source of income on Barbuda, as is government employment. The estimated unemployment rate in 2001 was 11 percent.

Workers are provided with basic rights. About 75 percent of the workforce is unionized and has the right to strike. The maximum workweek is 48 hours, and the minimum working age is 16. There is also a social security fund covering persons between 16 and 60, which provides old age, disability, and survivor benefits. In 2002 the minimum wage averaged U.S. \$93.63 per week.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 30,000
Female Labor Force Participation Rate %: —
Activity Rate %: —
Labor by Sector: %
Agriculture: 7
Industry: 11
Services: 82
Unemployment %: 11

EDUCATION

Education is compulsory between the ages of five and 16. The majority of the schools are public. There are three institutions of higher learning: the University of Health Sciences, Antigua; the University of the West Indies School of Continuing Studies, and Antigua State College. Those interested in a university education also travel to schools in the United Kingdom, the United States, Europe, and Canada. The country enjoys one of the highest literacy rates in the Eastern Caribbean.

Education

Literacy Rate%: 89
Male %: 90
Female %: 88
School Life Expectancy: —
First Level: Primary schools:
Teachers: 695
Students: 13,025
Student-Teacher Ratio: 19
Net Enrollment Ratio: —
Second Level: Secondary Schools:
Teachers: 394
Students: 5,276
Student-Teacher Ratio: 13
Net Enrollment Ratio: —

Third Level: Institutions:

Teachers: —
Students: —
Gross Enrollment Ratio: —

Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 3

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The fishing industry is one sector where technology has come to play an important role. Sundry hydraulic gear for lifting nets, as well as depth finders and global positioning systems (GPS), have proven invaluable for modern fishing. Such equipment is provided by the government. Educational institutions promoting science and technology include the extramural department of the University of the West Indies and Antigua State College, both of which offer technical courses. A school of medicine was established in 1982 at the University of Health Sciences at St. John's.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million persons: —
Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
High-Tech Exports \$000: 20.014
Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

Freedom of the press is guaranteed by the constitution. Three of the newspapers are published by political parties: the *Outlet* by the Antigua Caribbean Liberation Movement, the *Workers' Voice* by the former ruling Antigua Labor Party, and *Rappore* by the United Progressive Party. The *Daily Observer* and the *Antigua Sun* are the two major daily papers. There is no domestic news agency. Most media rely on the Caribbean News Agency. Radio ZDK is a private radio facility controlled by the former prime minister Bird's family. The government-run Antigua and Barbuda Broadcasting Service (ABBS) transmits through one radio station and television facility.

In 1997 there were about 36,000 radios and 31,000 television sets in use throughout the country. In 2002 there were 38,200 mobile phone users and 10,000 Internet users.

Media

Newspapers and Periodicals: 5
Total Circulation 000: 11.7
Circulation per 1,000: —
Books Published: —
Radio Receivers 000: 36
per 1,000: —
Television sets 000: 31
per 1,000: —

CULTURE

The cultural life of Antigua and Barbuda is a mixture of Caribbean and Creole. Music is an integral part of that mix, and the island has produced many well-known performers in styles such as reggae, calypso, soca, and zouk. Steel drum and steel band music is also very popular on the islands, especially at Christmastime, and the music of the fife band, consisting of a guitar, drum, and fife or flute, is also an important part of the islands' musical heritage. The nation's typical West Indian cultural background can also be seen in the gingerbread architecture in the capital, a holdover from colonial times.

The job of preserving the archaeological and historical heritage of the island falls to the Museum of Antigua and Barbuda, located in St. John's. The nation's most famous cultural export is the author Jamaica Kincaid, who was born and grew up on the island of Antigua. Now residing in the United States, Kincaid wrote of her native country in the 1988 book-length essay *A Small Place*. Therein she criticizes British colonialism, the excesses of the tourist industry, and government corruption. In his dramas, the well-known Antiguan playwright Dorbrene "Fats" Omarde tackles the social and political problems confronting the country.

Barbuda shares the West Indian culture of Antigua but has remained more isolated than the main island. Even today most of its small population share half a dozen surnames and can trace their lineage to a small group of slaves brought to the island in the late 1600s.

Carnival, which takes place at the end of July, is one of the nation's largest celebrations. The Antiguan Jazz Festival is held annually in October.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
Volumes: —
Registered borrowers: —
Museums Number: 1
Annual Attendance: —
Cinema Gross Receipts: —
Number of Cinemas: —
Seating Capacity: —
Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Africa, the original homeland for most of the population, provides a rich heritage of folk beliefs and myths that still inform daily life several centuries later. For example, obeah is a collection of animistic beliefs that hail from Africa. Those who practice obeah feel that it cures the sick, disposes of enemies, and can even fix traffic tickets. Integral to the belief system are the sometimes playful spirits known as *jumbies* and the use of herbal potions.

So popular are these *jumbies* that one of Antigua's main resorts was renamed Jumby Bay Island, from its original Long Island.

Another source of myth and folklore is the culture of the Arawak, the indigenous people who first settled the island. Folk medicine, a body of knowledge that has a long heritage, is also popular in the country. Maiden-blush tea is said to cure many ailments, while a preparation made from the cancanberry bush is used for thrush.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Dominoes is a favorite pastime on the islands, as it is all over the Caribbean. It is played mostly by males. A game called *warri* is also popular among men. This is one of a number of so-called pit-and-pebble strategy games, which originated in the Sudan several millennia ago as a spin-off from a form of calculation used in the ancient Kush civilization.

Music also plays an important part in the recreational life of the Antiguan people. Favorite types of music include calypso, reggae, and hymns. Sports are also popular, and cricket, soccer, and basketball are all played recreationally.

ETIQUETTE

There is a dual form of politesse in the nation: one for the tourists and one for the citizens. "Friendly but distant" best typifies Antiguan contact with tourists. Formal British etiquette is the norm in these situations. Handshakes are also normal both with tourists and for business associates.

With each other, the Antiguan and Barbudan citizenry employ more of a West Indian social interaction. Terms of respect for elders include "Aunty" and "Uncle," while "Mistress" is often used before a woman's last name.

FAMILY LIFE

The heritage of slave culture still determines some aspects of family life in the country. There are three main modes of relationships for couples in Antigua and Barbuda. Legal marriage and unmarried cohabitation are most typical. There is also a local variant called the "visiting union," in which the couple lives apart and the woman is responsible for raising the children. Such fluid unions, along with differing educational opportunities in different locations and the necessity for both parents to work, result in many children being raised by relatives and perhaps even growing up in a succession of different households as they change schools.

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Births out of wedlock are legally recognized, and inheritances are usually divided equally among legitimate and “illegitimate” children. In 2004 the country’s fertility rate was 2.27 children for each woman.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

The people of Antigua and Barbuda are almost wholly the descendants of African slaves. The residents of Barbuda are closely related and, as a result of slave-breeding experiments, tend to be quite tall.

Modern Western-style clothing is the typical dress. More colorful costumes are worn by many during the Carnival celebration in late July and August. To celebrate the country’s 11th anniversary of independence in 1992, a contest was held to create a national costume, which is now worn on October 31 and November 1, National Day. The costume is a variation on clothing worn by market vendors and cake makers in the country in the early 19th century and was designed by the native Antiguan Heather Doram.

SPORTS

The national sport is cricket, and Antigua and Barbuda has produced some top-tier international stars of the game. Sir Vivian Richards was the first breakout player from the nation, and his success inspired a subsequent generation of players, including Richie Richardson, Andy Roberts, and Curtely Ambrose. Official cricket matches tend to be played on Thursdays, Saturdays, and Sundays. The cricket season in Antigua runs from January to July. Antiguan teams compete against teams from neighboring islands, and Antiguan players play on the West Indies cricket team, which has been one of the world’s best since the 1970s. By the end of 2004 plans had been completed for the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium, which will host matches for the 2007 World Cup of Cricket in the Caribbean.

Soccer is another popular sport in the country.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1946** Antigua Labour Party (ALP) is formed by Vere Bird.
- 1958** The Leeward Islands Federation becomes the West Indies Federation.
- 1967** Antigua and Barbuda become an associated state within the Commonwealth.
- 1971** Progressive Labor Movement wins elections, with George Walter as prime minister.
- 1976** ALP regains power and remains in power for the rest of the century.
- 1981** Antigua and Barbuda becomes a sovereign state.

- 1993** Lester Bird succeeds his father as prime minister.
- 1995** Hurricane Luis damages or destroys at least 75 percent of homes (worth approximately \$300 million) in Antigua and Barbuda.
- 1996** Antigua establishes an office of the control of illicit drugs to improve its tarnished antinarcotics image.
- 1997** Antigua and Barbuda takes steps to eliminate money laundering and organized crime within its borders, closing 11 offshore banks and initiating legislation to close loopholes used by international criminal organizations.
- 1999** Lester Bird is reelected, representing the sixth term for his party, the ALP.
- 2000** The United Nations criticizes the courts’ decision to impose the death penalty in convicting two men of murdering four tourists.
- 2002** Government agrees to make its tax laws more transparent to avoid continued OECD blacklist.
- 2003** Lester Bird is forced to call elections when three of his party’s members of the House of Representatives resign.
- 2004** Elections are held in March, resulting in a 55.3 percent victory for the United Progressive Party. Baldwin Spencer is named prime minister.

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OFFICIAL PUBLICATIONS

- Antigua.** *Antigua and Barbuda—Statistical Annex* (IMF Staff Country Report), 2000; *Statistical Yearbook: 1991 Population and Housing Census*

CONTACT INFORMATION

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Antigua and Barbuda High Commission (London)
<http://antigua-barbuda.com/>
- CIA—The World Fact Book: Antigua and Barbuda
<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/ac.html/>
- Welcome to Antigua and Barbuda
<http://www.antigua-barbuda.org/>

ARGENTINA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Argentina (República Argentina)

ABBREVIATION

AR

CAPITAL

Buenos Aires

HEAD OF STATE & HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

President Néstor Kirchner (2003)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Constitutional democracy

POPULATION

39,537,943 (2005)

AREA

2,766,890 sq km (1,077,924 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Caucasian

LANGUAGE

Spanish

RELIGION

Roman Catholicism (official)

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Argentinean peso

NATIONAL FLAG

Tricolor consisting of middle white horizontal stripe between two light blue horizontal stripes emblazoned with the “Sun of May”

NATIONAL EMBLEM

An oval shield divided horizontally into two halves, light blue in the upper portion and white in the lower. In the center is a liberty pole held by clasped hands. On the top of the staff is a red liberty cap worn by 19th-century patriots in the wars of liberation. Surmounting the oval is a golden “Sun of May,” and enclosing it is a laurel wreath of victory.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Hear, O Mortals, the Sacred Cry of Liberty”

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year’s Day), May 1 (Labor Day); May 25 (Anniversary of the 1810 Revolution), June 20 (Flag Day), July 9 (Independence Day, National Day), August 17 (Death of Gen. José de San Martín), various Christian festivals and Christmas.

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

July 9, 1816

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

May 1, 1853; revised August 1994

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Argentina, located in the southern part of the South American continent, is the eighth-largest country in the world and one-quarter the size of Europe, with an area of 2,766,890 sq km. Argentina also claims a section of Antarctica of about 1,235,430 sq km. Argentina also claims the Falkland Islands as part of its territory. The total length of the Atlantic coastline is 4,989 km.

Argentina is bordered by Chile (5,150 km), Bolivia (832 km), Paraguay (1,880 km), Brazil (1,224 km), and Uruguay (579 km). These international borders generally coincide with natural features, and all have been demarcated except along certain watercourses.

Argentina is generally divided into four topographical regions: the Pampas, Patagonia, the lowland region of the northeast, and the northwest Andes (including the Piedmont).

The Pampas, extending 800 km (497 mi) north to south and east to west, is the heartland of Argentina, containing the richest agricultural land in South America. The region is an unbroken plain, which is exactly what *Pampa* means in the Quechua language. The plain is bounded by the Chaco Plain to the north, the Colorado River to the south, the Atlantic to the east, and the Sierra de Córdoba to the west. However, when Argentineans refer to *la pampa*, they more often than not are referring to the gaucho and cattle country of the Dry Pampa rather

Argentina



than to the Humid Pampa around Buenos Aires. They also distinguish three subregions within the Pampas: the Littoral, immediately to the north of Buenos Aires along the west bank of the Paraná River; the Comahue, comprising the province of La Pampa and the Patagonian provinces of Neuquén and Río Negro; and the Campo, or rural region, of the Pampa.

The second region is Patagonia, a semiarid, wind-swept land, including the barren island of Tierra del Fuego. Patagonia fans out southward from the Colorado River to the Strait of Magellan and from the Atlantic to the Chilean border. Rising from a narrow coastal plain in tiers toward the west, Patagonia reaches elevations of over 1,500 m (5,000 ft). In the north the Granbajo de Gualicho depression between the Colorado and Río Negro rivers drops to 32 m (105 ft) below sea level. In the extreme south the land is dotted with glaciers and ice fields.

The third region is the northeastern lowlands lying north of the Pampas and east of the Andes Mountains between the Paraná and Uruguay Rivers. Because of its location between two rivers, the region is sometimes known as the Argentinean Mesopotamia. It also includes the Argentinean portion of the Gran Chaco Plain, which extends northward across Paraguay into Bolivia.

The fourth region is the northwest Andes and Piedmont, extending along the western half of the country from Bolivia in the north to Patagonia in the south, and from the Chilean border to Gran Chaco and Pampa. Along the Chilean border Jujuy, Catamarca, and Tucumán Provinces have elevations of 6,100 m (20,000 ft); the province of Mendoza contains Cerro Aconcagua (6,960 m), the highest peak in the Western Hemisphere. The mountainsides are cut by broad valleys known as *quebradas*, but otherwise the land is generally inhospitable.

Geography

Area sq km:	2,766,890
World Rank:	8th
Land Boundaries, km:	Bolivia 832; Brazil 1,224; Chile 5,150; Paraguay 1,880; Uruguay 579
Coastline, km:	4,989
Elevation Extremes meters	
Lowest:	Laguna del Carbon 105
Highest:	Cerra Aconcagua 6,960
Land Use %	
Arable land:	12.31
Permanent Crops:	0.48
Forest:	12.7
Other:	74.51

Population of Principal Cities (2001)

Avellaneda	328,980
Buenos Aires	2,776,138
Córdoba	1,267,521
Corrientes	314,546
General San Martín	403,107

La Plata	563,943
Lanus	453,082
Lomas de Zamora	591,345
Mar del Plata	541,733
Morón	309,380
Quilmes	518,788
Rosario	908,163
Salta	462,051
San Miguel de Tucumán	527,150
Santa Fe	368,688

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

The climate varies from subarctic in the south to subtropical in the north. January is the warmest month, and June and July are the coolest. Summer lasts from December through February and winter from June through August. Temperatures and rainfall become progressively lower from north to south. The highest temperature recorded in the country is 49°C (120°F). The average daily temperature is about 16.7°C (62°F). The Chaco area has a mean annual temperature of 23°C (73°F), while Puna de Atacama has a temperature average of 14°C (57°F). Rainfall diminishes from east to west; Buenos Aires receives 939.8 mm (37 in); Chaco, 762 mm (30 in); and Puna de Atacama, 50 mm (2 in). Snow falls rarely. Most of the Piedmont and Patagonia are dry, and the Patagonian winters are relatively mild.

Both the Pampas and the northeast are subject to violent windstorms known as the *pamperos*, which are usually accompanied by thunder and rain.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature	
Buenos Aires:	62°F
Chaco:	73°F
Puna de Atacama:	57.2°F
Average Rainfall:	
Buenos Aires:	37 in
Chaco:	30 in
Puna de Atacama:	2 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Argentina encompasses a wide range of climates and habitats, from jungles to ice sheets. Thus, it is difficult to generalize about the country's flora and fauna. Along Argentina's over 4,700 km of ocean shoreline, for example, can be found sand dunes, sandy beaches, pampas grass, rocky cliffs, tundras, and beech forests. Each of the four major regions of Argentina features a different type of flora. The Andes to the west are largely arid, though grapes are grown in the foothills. To the north are subtropical rain forests. The central Pampas is noted for its vast expanses of fertile grassland, while Patagonia is a combination of steppes and glaciers. Argentina has

a system of 22 national parks that protect such animals as caimans, guanacos, pumas, condors, Andean llamas, flamingos, parrots, marine mammals, and rare seabirds. A thousand species of birds—10 percent of the world's total—can be found in Argentina.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population: 2005	39,537,943
World Rank:	31st
Density per sq km: 14.3% of annual growth (1999–2003):	1.02
Male %:	49.2
Female %:	50.8
Urban %:	90
Age Distribution: %	
0–14:	25.9
15–64:	63.6
65 and over:	10.5
Population 2020:	45,347,000
Birth Rate per 1,000:	17.19
Death Rate per 1,000:	7.57
% of Natural Increase per 1,000:	—
Total Fertility Rate:	2.24
Expectation of Life (years):	
Males	71.95
Females	79.65
Marriage Rate per 1,000:	—
Divorce Rate per 1,000:	—
Average Size of Households:	—
Induced Abortions:	—

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

The Argentineans are overwhelmingly Caucasian by racial origin. Of the many European national groups, Italians and Spaniards predominate, but British, Western and Eastern Europeans, Jews, and Middle Easterners are also represented in the population. Together they make up 85 percent of the population. The remaining 15 percent consists of mestizos, Indians, and others. The pure-blooded Indian population, estimated at 50,000, is concentrated in the provinces of the north, northwest, and south.

LANGUAGES

The official language is Spanish, but spoken Spanish has a distinctively Argentinean flavor and differs in pronunciation and grammar from Castilian Spanish. Among the many peculiarities of Argentinean Spanish is the trait known as *yeísmo*, in which the double *l* and *y* sounds are spoken like *z*, as in “azure.” The *porteños* (“people of the port,” as inhabitants of Buenos Aires are called) also speak Spanish with a peculiar accent, called Río Platense. Many variations are due to Italian and French influences. Italian, particularly, has contributed numerous words to the Argentinean vocabulary, and an Italianized Spanish dialect known as *lunfardo* has evolved in urban slums. English is

spoken by an increasing number of people, particularly within the business and professional communities. English, French, and German immigrants have managed to retain their own mother tongues, and all of the larger communities run their own newspapers.

Three Indian languages still survive in the country: Tehuelche in southern Patagonia, Guaraní in Misiones Province, and Quechua, a modified form of the ancient Inca language, in Jujuy and Salta Provinces. These languages receive no official encouragement and may die out in course of time.

RELIGIONS

Roman Catholicism is the state religion, adhered to by 92 percent of the population. However, less than 20 percent of the population is believed to actively practice Christianity. The government retains “national patronage” over the church, derived from the royal patronage of Spanish times. Bishops are appointed by the president of the republic from a panel of three submitted by the Senate, and papal bulls and decrees are proclaimed by the president and sometimes incorporated in acts of the Congress. The hierarchy consists of two cardinal archbishops, 11 archbishops, and 46 bishops.

Non-Catholic religious groups are small, but all creeds enjoy freedom of worship. Supervision of religious bodies is the responsibility of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship. Two percent of the population, generally members of ethnic minorities, is listed as Protestant. Interchurch cooperation is very rare despite the existence of the Argentine Federation of Evangelical Churches. Nearly one-half of Protestants belong to the Anglican, Congregationalist, Seventh-day Adventist, Lutheran, and Methodist Churches.

Argentina's constitution states that all have the right to practice their religion, but it also states that the federal government supports Roman Catholicism. The constitution requires the president and vice president to be members of the Roman Catholic Church. Religions other than Catholicism must register with the government to obtain the legal recognition required to operate freely in Argentina. In July 1984 the government granted long-pending legal recognition to the Jehovah's Witnesses.

Argentina's 260,000 Jews constitute the second-largest Jewish community in the Americas and the largest in Latin America. The bulk of the Jews are descendants of Ashkenazim who arrived from Russia in the 19th century. Anti-Semitism has been an ever-present factor in Argentinean politics, but it has been more a nuisance than a threat.

In 1978 the government required all religions other than Roman Catholicism to register with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Religious sects “injurious to public order, national security, morality and customs” are banned.

Religious Affiliations

Roman Catholic	36,374,000
Protestant	790,000
Jewish	260,000
Other	2,122,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Argentina's recorded history began with the visit of the first Spaniards in 1516. Permanent settlement began when colonists from Chile established the town of Santiago del Estero in 1553 and settlers from Peru established Tucumán (1565) and Córdoba (1573). Juan de Garay, governor of Asunción, founded Santa Fe in 1573 and Buenos Aires in 1580 on the site of an older Spanish settlement. These scattered settlements did not coalesce into a province until 1776 when a viceroy was sent to Buenos Aires to thwart Portuguese expansion to the south. In 1886 an English naval force under Gen. William Beresford captured Buenos Aires but was later driven out.

The Spanish colonies in Latin America won independence in 1810–19, and Argentines date their independence from 1816, when they wrested independence from Spain. A long period of disorder during the early and mid-century was followed by strong centralized government at the end of the century. Argentina witnessed large-scale Italian, German, and Spanish immigration after 1810. Modernization followed, and Argentina soon became the most prosperous, educated, and industrialized of the Latin American nations. Military coups prevailed during the 1930s and 1940s until the election of General Juan Perón as president. Perón with his wife, Eva Duarte (known as Evita), worked for social welfare and labor reforms but became increasingly authoritarian. As the economy worsened in the early 1950s, Perón repressed strikes, drove down wages, and harassed opposition leaders. The military overthrew Perón in 1955. After an 18-year exile (1955–73) in Spain, Perón was once again elected the president of Argentina in 1973. He died after 10 months in office, and he was succeeded by his third wife, Isabel Perón, who thus became the world's first woman president.

A military junta ousted Isabel Perón on charges of corruption in 1976. The new military government battled guerrillas and leftists, engaged in the killing of some 5,000 people, and jailed thousands of political opponents. In December 1981, Lieutenant General Leopoldo Galtieri, the commander in chief of the army, became president. During his presidency Argentina witnessed a severe worsening of economic conditions throughout the country. Largely to distract public attention from the unstable domestic situation, President Galtieri ordered the invasion of the Falkland Islands in April 1982. The islands had been a source of contention between Great Britain and Argentina. The defeat in the Falklands War brought

humiliation to the Argentinean armed forces, and President Galtieri was forced to resign on June 17.

Democratic rule returned to Argentina in 1983 when Doctor Raúl Alfonsín took office as president in December of that year. The most pressing problems facing the new administration included a need to refinance the country's \$40 billion debt, bring runaway inflation under control, and resolve thorny foreign conflicts involving the Falkland Islands and the Beagle Channel. Soon after his election, President Alfonsín announced a radical reform of the armed forces and prosecution of military officials engaged in human rights abuses during the "dirty war" between the former military regime and its opponents in the late 1970s and early 1980s. On December 9, 1985, five former junta members were found guilty of murder and human rights abuses. Alfonsín's attempts at prosecuting military personnel were limited by unrest in the army. Three army rebellions linked to discontent over prosecutions were crushed in 1988–89.

Alfonsín was unable to deal with Argentina's economic problems, which worsened during his administration. Inflation reached 100 percent in 1985, and foreign debt topped \$60 billion by the end of 1988. The government issued a new monetary unit, the *australe*, to replace the peso in 1985, but the measure was unable to curb inflation permanently, and the peso was reinstated.

In the campaign for the May 1989 elections, the Perónist presidential candidate Carlos Saúl Menem attracted popular votes with his promise of "productive revolution." The Perónists returned to power on May 14, 1989, by securing 48.5 percent of the votes and 310 of the 600 seats in the electoral college. President Alfonsín resigned from office five months earlier than scheduled, and Carlos Saúl Menem took office as president on July 8, 1989. By September, Menem's drastic economic policies had brought down the rate of inflation to 37 percent compared with the July level of 197 percent. In 1990 Menem pardoned the junta members convicted of human rights abuses, saying it was time to close a black period in Argentinean history. President Fernando de la Rúa Bruno of the Unión Cívica Radical (UCR) center-left Alliance, elected to a four-year term in 1999, promised a crack-down on corruption and tough fiscal measures to balance Argentina's budget. His austerity measures were met with protest, and, in 2001 congressional elections, the opposition Perónists took control of both houses of parliament. In December, after having declared a state of emergency to stop protests against his government's economic policies, de la Rúa Bruno resigned. Adolfo Rodríguez Saá Páez Montero, who was named interim president, stepped down after only 10 days in office and was replaced for a day by caretaker president Eduardo Camaño and, later, by Eduardo Duhalde (January 1, 2002).

Economic problems continued to beset Argentina in the early years of the twenty-first century. Share prices reached record lows in 2001, government restrictions

were placed on withdrawing bank deposits, and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) suspended over a billion dollars' worth of aid. Late that year a general strike was called to protest the government's economic policies. In 2002 banking and foreign exchange activity was suspended, and late in the year the country defaulted on a debt repayment to the World Bank. In 2003 Néstor Kirchner was sworn in as president, and late in the year the country and the IMF agreed on a debt-refinancing deal requiring Argentina to pay only the interest on its loans.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

(Note: the following list does not include acting presidents, interim presidents, military juntas, or those who served for only days or weeks before resigning or being deposed.)

1946–55	Colonel Juan Domingo Perón
1955–58	General Pedro Eugenio Aramburu
1958–62	Arturo Frondizi
1963–66	Arturo Umberto Illia
1966–70	General Juan Carlos Onganía
1970–71	General Roberto Marcelo Levingston
1971–73	General Alejandro Agustín Lanusse
1973–74	General Juan Domingo Perón
1974–75	Isabel María Estela Martínez de Perón
1976–81	General Jorge Rafael Videla
1981–82	Leopoldo Fortunato Galtieri
1982–83	Reynaldo Benito Antonio Bignone
1983–89	Raúl Ricardo Alfonsín
1989–99	Carlos Saúl Menem
1999–2001	Fernando de la Rúa
2002–03	Eduardo Alberto Duhalde
2003–	Néstor Carlos Kirchner

CONSTITUTION

With the return to civilian rule in 1983 the constitution of 1853, as amended, was reintroduced. In 1994 the constitution was amended. The amendments relate mostly to electoral details. The most important was the removal of the ban on consecutive presidential terms. Executive power was once again placed in the hands of an elected president, serving a four-year term and chosen by direct universal suffrage. The president became eligible to serve two terms. Legislative power is vested in a congress, comprising the Chamber of Deputies with 257 directly elected members and a Senate with 72 members, three members of which are chosen by each provincial legislature and three from the federal district. Each province has its own constitution.

Voting is compulsory for all citizens 18 years of age or older. Some 85 percent to 90 percent of eligible voters

vote in most elections. Elections are generally fair and honest and are administered by an electoral board headed by a federal judge called an electoral judge.

During the 20th century, Argentina has been plagued by violence, civil strife, unstable governments, and economic chaos. Since the 1930 revolution led by General José Félix Uriburu, 10 of the 14 presidents have been military officers.

The country has witnessed systematic violence, kidnappings, and bombings by both left-wing and right-wing terrorists. Left-wing terrorism is exemplified by the activities of two organizations: the Montonero guerrillas and Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo, (ERP). The government's operations against the guerrillas were marked by mass arrests and suppression of human rights.

During the 1980s terrorism no longer was the number one threat to the country. The principal subversive movements, ERP and the Montoneros, were forced to move their bases of operations abroad. The latter were unable to launch even one significant military action after 1978, except for an occasional grenade or bomb attack, whereas the former began to concentrate on propaganda efforts to isolate the military government, principally through the bulletin *Che Guevara* and the information center Centro Argentino de Información y Solidaridad set up in Paris.

PARLIAMENT

The National Congress consists of a Senate and a Chamber of Deputies. The Senate has 72 members: three from the federal capital and three from each of the 23 provinces. The senators from the provinces are elected by the provincial legislatures and the senators from the Federal District by direct vote. Their term of office is nine years, with one-third retiring every three years. The 257 representatives are elected directly (on the basis of one for every 85,000 inhabitants) for four years, with one-half retiring every two years. The two chambers meet in ordinary sessions annually from April 1 through November 30.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Argentina's political parties are noted for their vigor and ideological variety. The oldest of these parties is the UCR, which has represented the moderate left in Argentinean politics since the 19th century. For most of its existence the party has been in opposition. In the period following the deposition of Juan Perón, the party split into two factions: Unión Cívica Radical de Pueblo (UCRP), led by Arturo Illia, and Unión Cívica Radical Intransigente (UCRI), led by Arturo Frondizi. When partisan political activity was legalized in 1973, Frondizi led his followers

into the Perónist coalition, while UCR backed the candidacy of Richard Balbin.

The country's largest political movement is known by the broad name of Perónism, a label carried by a number of political parties: Partido Unión Popular, Partido Populista, Partido Laborista, Partido Justicialista, and Movimiento Nacional Justicialista. In 1983 these parties joined to form the Frente Justicialista de Liberación (FREJULI) to contest the elections.

Fragments of the traditional parties are scattered across the ideological spectrum. The conservatives are represented by the Union of Argentine People and the National Federation of Parties of the Center. The latter was known as the National Autonomist Party until 1914, the Conservative Party from 1914 until 1930, and the National Democratic Party from 1930 until 1955. The Catholic Church is represented by the Christian Democratic Party and the Federal Union Party, both nationalistic and traditionalistic in outlook. The Socialist Party, which dominated the labor movement from 1922 until the rise of Perón, has steadily lost ground to the Perónists. In 1959 the right wing of the party broke off to form the Democratic Socialist Party, and the main party itself was split into two factions. The moderate and anti-clerical Progressive Democratic Party derives its strength from the interior.

The government has formally outlawed all left-wing parties. These include the Marxist-Leninist Communist Party, the Revolutionary Communist Party, the Trotskyite Workers' Party, the Workers' Political Party, the Workers' Socialist Party, and the Authentic Peronista Party. The number of Communist Party members in the country is estimated at about 70,000, including a small nucleus of activists.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For purposes of regional administration Argentina is divided into 23 provinces and the federal capital, Buenos Aires. Under the constitution of 1853 the provinces have their own constitutions and retain all powers not explicitly delegated to the central government. The provincial governors are elected directly for four-year terms and enjoy extensive powers, including the right to issue executive decrees, prepare provincial budgets, and pardon offenders of provincial laws. The governor is also the commander in chief of the local militia. Each province has its own legislature, and those provinces with a population of more than half a million have bicameral legislatures. The powers of provincial legislatures include approval of provincial budgets and supervision of education and health-related activities. However, the federal government retains the right to intervene in provincial administrations "to guarantee the republican form of government."

LEGAL SYSTEM

The judicial system consists of federal and provincial courts. The federal court system is headed by the Supreme Court, whose members are appointed and dismissed by the president. The provincial court structure parallels the federal one, with a supreme court, courts of appeal, and courts of first instance in each province. Although the federal and provincial judiciaries are independent of each other, a degree of centralized control is exercised by the secretary of state for justice in the National Ministry of Interior. Outside both these systems are minor courts that handle petty offenses. These include juvenile courts and courts of justices of peace, or *alcaldes*.

Argentina is reported to run one of the outstanding prison systems in Latin America. The system consists of some 15 federal and 60 provincial institutions. Federal prisons are under the jurisdiction of the General Directorate of Penal Institutions. Although many of the prisons are overcrowded, the emphasis in the prison regimen is on rehabilitation. In addition, a number of prison farms, open-door institutions, and "homes" for women and minors are maintained.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Argentina continued to consolidate the dramatic improvements in its human rights record stemming from the successful 1983 transition from a military government to a freely elected civilian government. Argentina is once again a constitutional democracy with an executive branch, an independent bicameral legislature, and an autonomous judicial system. Political debate is free and open, and all parties have access to the media. There exists a high level of public participation in discussing the issues of the day.

Full respect for civil rights returned to Argentina in 1984. Press restrictions ended, and controls on the largely government-owned electronic media were the least restrictive since the 1976 military coup. Freely elected national and provincial legislatures reopened. An independent judiciary functioned normally by the end of 1984. Trade union freedom was greater than at any time since 1976; strikes occurred, including one national strike on September 3, and most unions completed leadership elections by the end of the year.

There have also been improvements in respect for individual rights. Human rights groups continue to demand a complete accounting for past disappearances and punishment for those responsible.

Alfonsín also created a special, permanent office in the Ministry of the Interior to replace the commission and to continue its work. Other steps to institutionalize human rights have included instituting new laws to strengthen the right of habeas corpus and make torture a

crime, signing and ratifying the Inter-American Human Rights Convention, and supporting the United Nations Convention on Torture. The provincial government in La Rioja began mandatory human rights courses at all schools and for all provincial policemen.

In 1984 Argentina signed and ratified the Inter-American Human Rights Convention. The Chamber of Deputies also approved the UN Convention on Civil and Political Rights and the UN Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

FOREIGN POLICY

Argentina has traditionally followed an independent foreign policy and has been frequently out of step with the United States as well as its neighbors. Despite its defeat in the 1982 war with Britain, it continues to assert its long-standing claim to the Falkland Islands (Islas Malvinas). Nevertheless, President Menem indicated that he was prepared to engage in a “civilized dialogue” with Britain if the latter abandoned its economic zone around the islands. In 1990 agreement was reached to restore full diplomatic relations. In 1998 Menem traveled to London for the first such visit by an Argentinean executive in four decades. The dispute with Chile over three islands in the Beagle Channel was resolved by an agreement in 1991 and an additional protocol in 1996. Argentina is linked to Paraguay, Uruguay, and Brazil in the Southern Cone Common Market, an ambitious economic integration effort. Brazil and Argentina also have an agreement to cooperate in the development of nuclear power, although both nations have rejected the use of nuclear weaponry.

DEFENSE

The defense structure is headed by the president, assisted by the chiefs of all three services of the armed forces and a number of advisory bodies, including the National Security Council and the Board of Commanders in Chief of the Armed Forces. Day-to-day operations are the responsibility of the Joint General Staff (Estado Mayor Conjunto).

Argentina is divided into two army areas: the first headquartered at Santa Fe and responsible for the coastal regions and the second headquartered at Mendoza and responsible for the mountains and the north. The two areas are further divided into six military regions: First (Federal Capital), Second (La Plata), Third (Paraná), Fourth (Córdoba), Fifth (Tucumán), and Sixth (Bahía Blanca). The regions are then divided into 68 military districts. The two mountain brigades are located at Mendoza and Neuquén in the foothills of the Andes. The army aviation battalion is based at Campo de Mayo.

Military manpower is provided by conscription. All Argentinean males between the ages of 20 and 45 are required to serve in the military for one or two years’ service. In actual practice, only those between 20 and 22 are inducted.

The total strength of the armed forces in 1998 was 73,000, but that number was reduced to about 31,000 at the end of 2002. The official budget for military expenditures in 2001 was about \$3.3 billion.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	31,000
Military Manpower Availability:	9,901,352
Military Expenditures \$million:	3,300
as % of GNP:	1.3
as % of central government expenditures:	—
Arms Imports \$million:	210
Arms Exports \$million:	3

ECONOMY

Argentina benefits from rich natural resources, a highly literate population, an export-oriented agricultural sector, and a diversified industrial base. However, by the time President Carlos Menem took office in 1989, the country had piled up huge external debts, inflation had reached 200 percent per month, and output was plummeting. To combat the economic crisis, the government embarked on a path of trade liberalization, deregulation, and privatization. In 1991 it implemented radical monetary reforms, which pegged the peso to the U.S. dollar and limited the growth in the monetary base by law to the growth in reserves. Inflation fell sharply in subsequent years. In 1995 the Mexican peso crisis produced capital flight, the loss of banking system deposits, and a severe, but short-lived recession; a series of reforms to bolster the domestic banking system followed. Real gross domestic product (GDP) growth recovered strongly, reaching 8 percent in 1997. In 1998 international financial turmoil caused by Russia’s problems and increasing investor anxiety over Brazil produced the highest domestic interest rates in more than three years, halving the growth rate of the economy. Conditions worsened in 1999, with GDP falling by 3 percent. President Fernando de la Rúa, who took office in December 1999, sponsored tax increases and spending cuts to reduce the deficit, which had ballooned to 2.5 percent of GDP in 1999. The new government also arranged a new \$7.4 billion standby facility with the IMF for contingency purposes—almost three times the size of the previous arrangement. Growth in 2000 was a disappointing 0.8 percent, as both domestic and foreign investors remained skeptical of the government’s ability to pay debts and maintain its fixed exchange rate with the U.S. dollar. At the end of 2001 Argentina was on

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the brink of default. Efforts to stabilize the nation's banking system and restore economic growth were proving inadequate. Finally, the pegged exchange rate between the peso and the dollar was abandoned in 2002; the exchange rate plummeted and inflation increased. By mid-2002, though, the economy stabilized, and by 2003 the peso was appreciating. That year, falling unemployment, record exports, and slower inflation (under 4 percent) led to 8 percent economic growth. Inflation and corruption produced a growing class of "new poor," or downwardly mobile members of the middle class.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity): \$435.5 billion
GDP per capita (purchasing power parity): \$11,200
GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: —
GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —
Origin of Gross Domestic Product %
Agriculture: 11.1
Industry: 34.8
Services: 54.1

Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %
Private Consumption: —
Government Consumption: —
Gross Domestic (gross fixed) Investment: 15.1
Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 32.3
Imports: 18.4

% of Income Received by Poorest 20%: 3
% of Income Received by Richest 10%: 39

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
—	—	—	—	—	—

Finance

National Currency: Argentine Peso (ARS)
Exchange Rate: \$1 = ARS 2.9003
Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: —
Central Bank Discount Rate %: —
Total External Debt \$million: 145,600
Debt Service Ratio %: —
Balance of Payments \$million: —
International Reserves SDRs million: —
Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index
Growth Rate %: 13.4

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 10,000
per capita \$: 4
Foreign Direct Investment \$million: —

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
Revenues \$million: 26,620
Expenditures \$million: 26,000
Budget Surplus \$million: 620
Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 11.1
Average Annual Rate of Growth (1965–98) %: 2
Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares: 10
Irrigation, % of Farms having: 4
Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 255
Total Farmland as % of land area: —
Livestock: Cattle 000: 50,768
Sheep 000: 12,450
Hogs 000: 3,050
Chickens 000: 95,000
Forests: Production of Roundwood (000 cubic meters): 9,307
Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 945.8

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 42,000
Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 16.2

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 82,800
Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 57,600
Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg: 1,593
Net Energy Imports % of use: –44
Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: —
Production kW-hr million: 97,170
Consumption kW-hr million: 92,120
Coal Reserves tons million: —
Production tons 000: —
Consumption tons 000: —
Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic meters billion: 768
Production cubic meters million: 37,150
Consumption cubic meters million: 31,100
Crude Petroleum reserves barrels million: 2,927
Production barrels: 828,600 bbl/day
Consumption barrels: 486,000 bbl/day
Pipelines Length km: 33,833

Foreign Trade

Imports \$million: 13,270
Exports \$million: 29,570
Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 4
Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): –8.6
Balance of Trade \$billion: 7.85

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Brazil %	34	15.8
United States %	16.4	10.6
Chile %	—	12
China %	5.2	8.4
Spain %	—	4.7
Germany %	5.6	—

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 215,471
 Paved %: 29.39
 Automobiles: —
 Trucks and Buses: —
 Railroad; Track Length km: 34,091
 Passenger-mi million: —
 Freight-mi million: —
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 45
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 212.62
 Airports: 144
 Traffic: Passenger-mi million: —
 Length of Waterways km: 11,000

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 2,800
 Number of Tourists from 000: 3,000
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 2,500
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 3,800

Communications

Telephones 000: 8,009
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones 000: 6,500
 Personal Computers 000: —
 Internet Hosts: 742,358
 Internet Users: 4.1 million

ENVIRONMENT

Argentina's current environmental issues include soil erosion resulting from inadequate flood controls and improper land use practices. The latter is also leading to growing desertification. In the large cities like Buenos Aires, air pollution from emissions and industrial activity is also a problem. The nation's rivers are becoming polluted as the result of increased pesticide and fertilizer use. The nation's system of 22 national parks to preserve habitat and wildlife function reasonably well but are under pressure by deforestation and pollution.

Environment

Forest Area % of Land Area: 12.7
 Average Annual Forest Change, 1990-2000, 000 ha: —285
 Nationally Protected Areas as % of Total Land Area: —
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: —

LIVING CONDITIONS

Many visitors to Argentina observe that its cities have a European look to them. In the cities people tend to live in tall apartment buildings. Some have small single-family

bungalows with their own gardens. For decades rural workers have flooded the cities, creating a large number of slums on the cities' outskirts where workers live in shacks. In rural areas, houses are generally made of adobe with dirt floors and straw or mud roofs.

HEALTH

Many Argentines adhere simultaneously to two health care systems—modern, Western medicine and traditional medicine. They often use one system to treat a particular illness or disorder, the other to treat another condition. In some parts of Argentina, traditional beliefs in the medical influences of hot and cold are practiced. Even in the cities, many Argentinean women treat medical ailments, especially upset stomach, by *tirar el cuerito*, or pulling on the skin on the back of a sick person. Some use sulfur and other folk medicine to treat certain conditions. In many regions of Argentina, herbal medicines are used extensively. Life expectancy is relatively high—nearly 72 years for men and nearly 80 years for women. The infant mortality rate is about 16 per 1,000 live births. Fifteen hundred Argentines died of AIDS in 2001.

Health

Number of Physicians: 108,800
 Number of Dentists: 28,900
 Number of Nurses: 86,000
 Number of Pharmacists: 15,300
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 300.9
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 15.66
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 82
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 10
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 679
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.7
 Child Immunization Rate % of children under 12 months:
 DPT: 88
 Measles: 97
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: —
 Access to Improved Water Source %: —

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Argentines are especially fond of two types of food. Given the prevalence of cattle ranching on the Pampas, it is not surprising that beef is a mainstay of the nation's diet. Especially popular is *parrillada*, a mixed grill of steak and other cuts of beef. Argentines also eat a great deal of Italian food, and it is common to buy fresh pasta for Sunday lunch—often an event that includes the extended family. French cuisine is also served on special occasions. The midday meal used to be the main meal of the day,

but that practice has been changing in modern times because of the pressures of work. Argentines also like to barbecue, serving festive dishes including Spanish paellas. Argentina is a wine-producing country, so wine is served at special events and on holidays.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 1.7
 Daily Available Calories per capita: —
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 129.1
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 142.1

STATUS OF WOMEN

Women possess the same constitutional rights as do men. Their participation in politics, business, and education is quite extensive, especially when compared with the rights of women in other countries in the region. Argentina has the distinction of having had the first elected woman president in the world.

Women

Women-headed Households: 22.3
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 30.7
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men aged 15 to 24: —
 Women's Share of Wage Employment (non-Agricultural) %: 47.6

WORK

In the eyes of many observers, Argentina has failed to live up to the potential that its natural resources and cultured, well-educated population—literacy is about 94 percent—would suggest. While its GDP is among the highest in Latin America, its economy has been in an almost constant state of disarray, with huge foreign debts, periods of runaway inflation, an eroding middle class, and a class of desperately poor. While the cities are fairly affluent, rural areas are beset by poverty, largely because much of the best land is in the hands of a few wealthy families while others scramble for a living on marginal land or work for low wages on plantations and estates. Another problem is corruption and inefficiency. Many government workers in the cities hold more than one government job, sometimes several. These workers are often jokingly referred to as *noquis*, which is a potato pasta that is traditionally served on the 29th of each month. The implication is that these people show up for work just in time to receive their paychecks. One measure of the extent of the problem is that after the government tried to lessen such corruption in 1990, the head count of government workers fell by 370,000 over the next five years.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 14,920,000
 Female Labor Force Participation Rate %: 35
 Labor by Sector: %
 Agriculture: —
 Industry: —
 Services: —
 Unemployment %: 17.3

EDUCATION

Education is universal and compulsory for seven years from the ages of six to 14. From preschool to university level, education is available free of charge.

Schooling lasts for 12 years, divided into seven years of primary school and five years of secondary school. More than 70 percent of grade 1 pupils completed primary school during 1975–82. The school curriculum is periodically reformed, but, in general, the emphasis in the primary grades is on nonacademic subjects, such as etiquette, cooperation, civics, and thrift. Secondary schools are divided into general (or academic) and technical (including agriculture) schools. The large majority of students are enrolled in courses leading to the baccalaureate (*bachillerato*) certificate, consisting of a three-year basic cycle of study and a two-year general (*común*) upper cycle of nonspecialized instruction. Other students are enrolled in specialized baccalaureate courses that last from five to seven years.

Although Argentina has the highest literacy rate in Latin America, about 97 percent, the government is actively engaged in systematic adult education. As a result of these efforts, almost all adults claim simple literacy: the ability to read and write simple sentences. Women and men have equal literacy rates. However, because of the high dropout rates in primary schools, functional illiteracy is widespread, and the principal thrust of the present adult education programs is to improve practical skills. These courses, known as *parasistemática*, are attended by over a half million adults, of whom women are in the majority.

Private schools run by ethnic groups and by the Roman Catholic Church are integrated within the school system. They adopt the curriculum prescribed by the government, are monitored by national inspectors, and, in most cases, receive public subsidies. The future of private schools is a sensitive political issue and is closely related to the fortunes of the anticlerical movement.

The national higher educational system consists of 29 state universities and 23 private universities. National universities are autonomous, but since 1966 students are excluded from their governing bodies. The rising tempo of student unrest in the late 1960s and early 1970s led to the dismissal of thousands of professors, the consequent crippling of faculties, and decline in the quality of instruction. Argentinean students are

acutely concerned about social and political issues, and many of them are active in support of leftist and Marxist causes.

Education

Literacy Rate %:	97.1
Male %:	97
Female %:	97
School Life Expectancy:	16
First Level: Primary schools:	
Teachers:	274,580
Students:	4,900,225
Student-Teacher Ratio:	20
Net Enrollment Ratio:	—
Second Level: Secondary Schools:	
Teachers:	—
Students:	3,953,677
Student-Teacher Ratio:	—
Net Enrollment Ratio:	81
Third Level: Institutions:	
Teachers:	129,871
Students:	1,918,708
Gross Enrollment Ratio:	56
Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP:	4.7

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Argentina has a large number of institutions of higher learning, including both national and private universities, that support scientific research. The chief government organization that funds research is the Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Científicas y Técnicas (CONICET). Some governmental institutions conduct research in particular fields. Examples include the Consejo Nacional de Energía Atómica for nuclear energy and the Instituto Nacional de Tecnología Agropecuaria for agriculture. The nation's unstable economy, though, has limited funding for research, and many young Argentinean scientists leave the country for better opportunities elsewhere.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million persons:	684
Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP:	0
High-Tech Exports \$million:	582.8
Patent Applications by Residents:	6,634

MEDIA

The Argentinean press is one of the largest in the Americas, with more than 200 dailies with combined circulation of approximately 3.5 million. Greater Buenos Aires alone has some 60 daily newspapers with a combined circulation of 1.5 million. The ones that have national reputations include *Clarín*, *La prensa*, and *La nación*. Dailies are

published in all the provincial capitals and 60 other towns. Buenos Aires also has a vigorous ethnic-oriented and foreign language press, including the *Buenos Aires Herald*.

Historically, the Argentinean press had been noted for its independence and its boldness in discussing politically controversial issues. The first break from this tradition took place under Perón, who used a number of methods, such as withholding newsprint and state-inspired strikes and expropriation, to bring the press under government control as an instrument to rally the masses behind his policies. The fall of Perón brought a general relaxation, but censorship was revived under President Onganía and became even more oppressive. In 1968 TELAM, the national news agency, was nationalized and given control over state-enterprise advertising as a means of bringing indirect pressure on errant media.

There are three types of radio stations: state, private, and municipal and provincial. Of the two state-owned networks, Radio Nacional Argentina is the largest. The second state system is operated by the Dirección General de Emisoras Comerciales. External broadcasting is conducted by Radio Nacional. There are more than 52 private stations grouped under Asociación de Radiodifusoras Privadas Argentinas. In addition, there are a number of university stations.

Television, introduced in 1951, is extremely popular in Argentina. Foreign programs are limited by law to 50 percent.

Media

Newspapers and Periodicals:	
Total Circulation 000:	
Circulation per 1,000:	
Books Published:	9,850
Radio Receivers 000:	—
per 1,000:	—
Television sets 000:	—
per 1,000:	326

CULTURE

The influence of French culture was strong in Buenos Aires in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, when French art, music, and especially architecture were popular. The work of many Argentinean writers, including Jorge Luís Borges, Julio Cortázar, Ernesto Sábato, Manuel Puig, Osvaldo Soriano, and Adolfo Bioy Casares, is well known throughout the world. Argentina's annual book fair regularly attracts over a million people. The Teatro Colón opera house in Buenos Aires is one of the world's leading opera houses and stages not only opera but also classical music and ballet performances. Theater is popular not only in the major cities but even in rural areas of the provinces. Argentina has a strong

tradition of graphic arts; Buenos Aires alone has 60 art galleries that support the work of internationally renowned painters. The Subterráneos de Buenos Aires, or Buenos Aires Subway, sponsors dance and theater performances and art exhibits for people waiting for trains; the organization even sponsors art exhibits on board the subway trains.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 1,166
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: 9,385,377
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: 780
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: 32.5 million

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Spiritualism is common in Argentina. Worship of the dead plays an important part in Argentines' lives. People honor national heroes such as San Martín not on the dates of their births but on the dates of their deaths. Many pilgrims regularly visit the Recoleta and Chacarita cemeteries in Buenos Aires, leaving ritual offerings on the tombs of Juan and Isabel Perón and the tango singer Carlos Gardel.

One folk hero for Argentines is the gaucho, the cowboy who represented law and order as well as free-spiritedness and resistance to authority.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

So pervasive in Argentina is the tango, both in music and dance, that it could be examined as part of the nation's culture, entertainment, and perhaps even religion. Tango became popular in the late 1800s, when it emerged from working-class neighborhoods and brothels. In form it blends the poetry of the gauchos with French and Italian music. Carlos Gardel (1890–1935) was the nation's foremost tango artist. He created the *tango canción*, or "tango song," making tango a fixture in middle- and upper-class life. The themes of tango music and dance are love, jealousy, and betrayal. For many Argentines, it captures the anxieties of life. It is marked by sadness and nostalgia.

Argentines have traditionally been great moviegoers. While many movie houses remain in Buenos Aires, many others in the smaller towns and villages have had to close because of the advent of the videocassette.

ETIQUETTE

Men and women greet each other with kisses on the cheek, although shaking hands is common in formal situations. In addressing one another, Argentines distinguish between *vos*, the singular form of "you" used with family and friends, and *usted*, the plural form of "you" used in addressing superiors and elders. In contrast to people in countries such as the United States, Argentines are comfortable with close physical proximity and often touch each other when conversing. Men still commonly use *piropos*, or flirtatious comments, when women pass by.

Argentines are gregarious and enjoy having visitors. A common ritual in Argentinean life is drinking *mate*, a tea made from holly leaves. Drinking *mate* is a complex ritual among family, friends, and colleagues. One person fills a gourd with tea leaves while water is heated (but not boiled). Water is then poured into the gourd, and the tea is sipped through a silver tube with a filter to keep the tea leaves from getting into the tube.

FAMILY LIFE

Family life in Argentina is in general similar to that of other Western nations. Social life tends to be centered on the family. Religious holidays and Catholic events such as First Communion provide opportunities for family celebrations. While the Catholic Church opposes it, divorce is becoming more common, especially after it was legalized in the 1980s. The most common family form is the nuclear family, and small families are the norm. Children remain with their family until they are in the twenties or until they marry, when they tend to find homes distant from their relatives. Extended families often gather for Sunday lunch, religious holidays and events, and for family reunions. Affluent people often rely on nannies and baby-sitters to raise their children. It is quite common for parents routinely to seek psychological counseling for their children.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

People who live in the city wear Western-style clothing. Especially popular are fashions from Italy. It is quite common to own fashionable dresses to wear while dancing the tango. Argentinean businesspeople are conservative and tend to dress formally. In rural areas, many workers on estates and plantations wear clothing that preserves the tradition of the *gaucho* costume, including a wide-brimmed hat and loose pants tucked into boots. Indians in the northwest wear ponchos, colorful skirts and bowler hats.

Many observers believe that Argentines have become obsessed with personal appearance. Diet clinics and

plastic surgery are commonplace; Argentina has become a hub for plastic surgery, including liposuction, throughout Latin America. Obsession with weight loss has caused an epidemic of eating disorders among young women—estimated as afflicting one in ten.

SPORTS

Soccer, tennis, and basketball dominate sports in Argentina. Soccer became particularly popular after Argentina won the World Cup in 1978 and 1986. In 2004 the nation won its first Olympic gold medal in soccer in 52 years. Such legends as Diego Maradona and Daniel Passarella are household names. World-famous tennis players have included Guillermo Vilas and Gabriela Sabatini. In basketball, the Argentinean national team beat the United States for the gold medal in the 1995 Pan-American Games and in 2004 beat Italy to win the Olympic gold—the nation's first-ever Olympic medal in basketball.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1945** The military arrest Vice President Juan Domingo Perón; the General Confederation of Labor calls for a general strike in support of Perón; the army is cowed, and Perón is restored to power.
- 1946** Perón is elected president, defeating a coalition of radical, socialist, and communist parties.
- 1947** Perón launches the First Five-Year Plan.
- 1952** Perón is reelected to the presidency, winning 65 percent of all votes cast.
Eva Perón dies.
- 1953** Perón antagonizes the Catholic Church by proposing to legalize divorce and prostitution and by opposing church influence in labor unions. Perón is ousted in an army coup and replaced by General Eduardo Lonardi.
Lonardi is deposed in a bloodless second coup led by General Pedro Eugenio Aramburu.
The constitution of 1949 is abrogated and the constitution of 1853 is reinstated.
- 1958** Arturo Frondizi is elected president in the first post-Perón national elections.
- 1962** Reinstated Peronist party wins 34 percent of popular vote, 11 governorships, and 42 seats in Congress in elections; the army, alarmed at the revival of Peronism, deposes and arrests Frondizi; José Mario Guido is named president.
In internal struggle the Azul (blue, or Catholic) faction purges the armed forces of the Colorado (red, or anti-constitutionalist) faction.
- 1963** Arturo Umberto Illia is elected president under new electoral laws that bar Peronists from standing as candidates.
- 1965** Illia is forced out in a coup led by Azul leader Gen. Juan Carlos Onganía; Congress is dissolved; all political parties are banned; university autonomy is abolished; provincial governors and legislatures are dismissed.
- 1970** Onganía attempts to dismiss the army's commanding general, Gen. Alejandro Agustín Lanusse, but is himself dismissed by the army. Brig. Gen. Roberto Marcelo Levingston succeeds to the presidency.
- 1971** Levingston is forced to step down, and Lanusse assumes the presidency; Lanusse announces plans for national elections and return to civilian rule.
- 1972** Perón returns to Argentina after an 18-year exile.
- 1973** Hector Campora, a candidate of the Peronist coalition, Frente Justicialista de Liberación (FREJULI), wins presidential election with almost 50 percent of the vote; FREJULI candidates win large majorities in legislative and gubernatorial elections.
Campora resigns to enable Perón to stand as candidate; Perón wins 62 percent of the vote and is inaugurated president.
- 1974** Perón dies and is succeeded in office by his wife Isabel (Maria Estela) Martínez de Perón.
- 1976** Mrs. Perón's turbulent presidency is terminated by an army coup.
Military junta suspends many of the provisions of the 1853 constitution.
Lt. Gen. Jorge Rafael Videla is named president.
- 1977** 432 political prisoners are freed out of an estimated 18,000 held in jail without trial.
Guerrillas step up kidnappings, bombings, and other acts of terrorism.
Montoneros form a political party in exile.
- 1978** The territorial dispute between Chile and Argentina over three islands at the extreme south of the continent intensifies into crisis.
Videla quits army but receives an extension of term as president until 1981.
Mrs. Perón, accused of embezzlement, is placed under house arrest.
- 1979** Unions are banned from political activities.
Diplomatic relations are resumed with the United Kingdom.
Publisher Jacobo Timerman is freed from prison and expelled from the country.
- 1980** Argentina's two largest private banks are declared bankrupt.
Roberto Eduardo Viola, a former commander-in-chief of the army, is named to succeed President Videla in March 1981.
- 1981** Roberto Eduardo Viola assumes presidency but is ousted within a few months and is replaced by Gen. Leopoldo Galtieri.

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- 1982** Argentina invades and occupies the Falkland Islands. In brief but bloody conflict, United Kingdom recovers the islands.
Galtieri resigns and is succeeded by Reynaldo Benito Antonio Bignone.
Bignone lifts ban on political parties and promises return to civilian rule.
Junta rule is reimposed.
Peso is devalued.
Government announces plan to return state companies to the private sector.
Labor protests austerity measures to curb inflation.
General strike paralyzes nation.
- 1983** Police strike in Tucumán province.
Raúl Alfonsín of the Radical Party is elected president, winning 51 percent of the national vote. Radicals also win majority in Chamber of Deputies.
The junta is dissolved as Alfonsín takes office.
The Peso Argentina is introduced to replace the old peso.
- 1984** Argentina and Chile reach accord over the Beagle Channel.
The Peronist CGT and Alfonsín reach agreement over proposed labor reforms.
Alfonsín appoints a National Commission on the Disappearance of Persons.
The Ley de Pacificación Nacional is repealed and members of the three juntas that ruled the country since 1976 are tried before military tribunal.
- 1985** Isabel Perón, former president, steps down as leader of the Peronists.
Argentina obtains bridge loan from IMF.
Radicals fare well in midterm elections.
- 1986** Three members of the military junta are found guilty and receive prison sentences.
- 1987** Divorce is legalized; gubernatorial and legislative elections are held as scheduled.
- 1988** A rebellion at the garrison town of Monte Caberos is crushed in April. The World Bank approves and unprecedented \$1.25 billion loan package in September. Annual inflation rate reaches about 390 percent.
- 1989** In January an attack on the military base at La Tablada is crushed by the army. Inflation reaches crisis level of more than 5,000 percent, sparking a week of looting and rioting in several cities. President Menem takes office on July 8. IMF guarantees a stand-by loan of \$1.5 billion. In October, Galtieri and two other senior military leaders are pardoned of war crimes.
- 1990** Menem authorizes the military to suppress civil unrest for the first time since 1983.
- In December a bloody uprising by several hundred Argentinean army troops is quashed by forces loyal to Menem.
Menem grants pardons to eight military men, including former junta members responsible for the “dirty war.”
- 1991** Argentinean workers stage wildcat strikes to protest economic austerity measures.
- 1993** The country’s 11-year debt crisis comes to an end.
- 1994** Argentina adopts several changes to its constitution including the direct election of the president.
- 1995** Though inflation is down to 4 percent, the government braces for Mexican devaluation with a new austerity plan.
- 1997** Violent protests erupt in several major cities over growing unemployment (20 percent in some areas); the governing Peronist party suffers heavy losses in midterm legislative elections; the economy pulls out of recession, posting 8 percent GDP.
- 1998** Judge Roberto Marquovich orders the arrest of former army chief Jorge Videla over the theft of babies of disappeared persons, crimes not protected by the amnesty laws passed after the end of military rule.
- 1999** Fernando de la Rúa is elected president; President de la Rúa arranges a new \$7.4 billion stand-by facility with the IMF for contingency purposes.
- 2001** President de la Rúa forms a government of national unity incorporating several parties from across Argentina’s political spectrum. He appoints three finance ministers in as many weeks. Protests greet planned austerity measures. The opposition Peronists take control of both houses of parliament in congressional elections. In December, the IMF announces it won’t disburse \$1.3 billion in aid for the month, pushing Argentina closer to the brink of default. On December 20, President de la Rúa resigns after widespread street protests and rioting leave at least 25 people dead. Within two weeks, on January 2, 2002, Eduardo Duhalde becomes the fifth Argentinean president since democratic rule returned to the country in 1983.
- 2002** Banking and foreign exchange activity is suspended in light of Argentina’s economic crisis. Argentina defaults on its debt repayment to the World Bank.
- 2003** Néstor Kirchner is sworn in as president; Argentina and the International Monetary Fund agree on a debt-repayment plan.
- 2004** Argentina wins Olympic gold medals in soccer and basketball.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- National Institute of Statistics and Censuses
<http://www.indec.mecon.ar/default.htm>

ARMENIA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Armenia (Hayastani Hanrapetutyun)

ABBREVIATION

AM

CAPITAL

Yerevan

HEAD OF STATE

President Robert Kocharian (from 1998)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Andranik Markaryan (from 2000)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Parliamentary democracy

POPULATION

2,982,904 (2005)

AREA

29,800 sq km (11,506 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Armenian

LANGUAGE

Armenian

RELIGION

Christianity

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Dram

NATIONAL FLAG

Three equal horizontal bands of red (top), blue, and gold

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A lion and an eagle hold a shield, the center portion of which represents Noah's Ark and Mount Ararat, joined by the insignias of the four Armenian dynasties. A sword pointing vertically through the center symbolically breaks the chains of foreign oppression. A sheaf of wheat represents the sacredness of the soil, and olive branches stand for goodwill and peace.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"Mer Heyrenik" (Our fatherland)

NATIONAL HOLIDAY

September 21 (Referendum Day)

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

September 21, 1991

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

July 5, 1995

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Armenia is a landlocked nation in the Caucasus region in southeastern Europe. It shares borders with Georgia on the north, Azerbaijan on the east, Iran on the south, and Turkey on the west. Its capital city is Yerevan, located near its southeastern border. The country is a high plateau region of rugged mountains and extinct volcanoes and has an average elevation of 1,800 m (5,900 ft). The perpetually snow-capped Mount Ararat is the highest point in Armenia. The chief rivers are the Aras and its tributary, the Razdan. Lake Sevan, in the northeast, supports an important fishing industry.

Land Boundaries, km: Azerbaijan 787; Georgia 164; Iran 35;

Turkey 268

Coastline, km: 0

Elevation Extremes meters:

Lowest: Debed River 400

Highest: Aragats Lerrnagat' 4,090

Land Use %

Arable Land: 17.6

Permanent Crops: 2.3

Forest: 12.5

Other: 67.6

Geography

Area sq km: 29,800; sq mi 11,506

World Rank: 138th

Population of Principal Cities (2004 est.)

Gyumri 149,500

Vanadzor 106,100

Yerevan 1,101,900

Armenia



CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Armenia's climate ranges from subtropical to alpine. The mean temperature is 77°F in August and 27°F in January. Rainfall is infrequent. Yerevan receives 13 inches of rain annually, though the surrounding mountains receive more rainfall.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature
 August: 77°F
 January: 27°F
 Average Rainfall: 13 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Armenia is home to about 3,200 species of plants. About 10 percent of the country, particularly its higher regions, is covered with forests of beech, oak, hornbeam, ash, maple, and lime trees. The valleys of Armenia have steppe vegetation, including feather grass, couch grass, and other woody, herbaceous flowering plants such as Pallas buckthorn, acantholimon, sage, and thyme. Armenia provides habitat for 450 species of vertebrates. Among them are 76 mammals (including a species of wild goat called the tur and a species of wild sheep called the mouflon), 304 birds, 44 reptiles, six amphibians, and 24 fish, as well as 1,000 species of invertebrates.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005:	2,982,904
World Rank:	133rd
Density per sq km:	108.4
% of annual growth (1999–2003):	-0.8
Male %:	47.4
Female %:	52.6
Urban %:	67.5
Age Distribution %:	
0–14:	22.7
15–64:	66.7
65 and over:	10.6
Population 2025:	3,044,000
Birth Rate per 1,000:	11.43
Death Rate per 1,000:	8.12
Rate of Natural Increase %:	0.4
Total Fertility Rate:	1.31
Expectation of Life (years):	
Males:	67.73
Females:	75.36
Marriage Rate per 1,000:	3.2
Divorce Rate per 1,000:	0.5
Average Size of Households:	4.7
Induced Abortions:	10,419

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Armenia is ethnically homogeneous, with Armenians making up more than 90 percent of the population. Major minorities are Azerbaijanis, Kurds, and Russians. Minorities include Azeris (1 percent), Kurds (4 percent), and Russians (2 percent).

LANGUAGES

Armenian is an Indo-European language. It has two main dialects: East Armenian, the official language of Armenia, and West or Turkish Armenian. The alphabet is of Greek and Persian origin. It is highly inflective, with a complex system of declensions; agglutinative; and rich in consonants. Armenian has a rich literature dating from the fifth century.

RELIGIONS

Armenia is one of the oldest Christian countries in the world, and it was the first to declare Christianity as its national religion. The Armenian Orthodox Church belongs to the Lesser Eastern Churches and is headed by a Catholicos (the head or patriarch), resident in the ancient city of Etchmiadzin.

Religious Affiliations

Armenian Apostolic	2,804,000
Other Christian	119,000
Yezidi (Zoroastrian/Animist)	60,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

According to tradition the kingdom of Armenia was founded in the region of Lake Van by Haig or Haik, a descendant of Noah. By the sixth century B.C.E. it was a homogeneous nation. Until the fourth century B.C.E. it was a Persian satrapy. It was conquered in 330 B.C.E. by Alexander the Great and, after his death, became a part of the Syrian kingdom of Seleucus I. After the defeat of the Seleucids the Armenians declared their independence under a native dynasty, the Artashesids. The imperialistic ambitions of King Tigranes led to a war with Rome and his defeat by Pompey in 67 B.C.E. Tiridates, a Parthian prince, was confirmed as king of Armenia by Nero in A.D. 66. Christianity was introduced early in the first century. In the third century Ardashir I, founder of the Sassanid dynasty, overran Armenia, and with that began the long history of persecutions that has lasted until the 20th century. Attempts at independence were short-lived, and the country found itself the constant prey of the Persians, Byzantines, White Huns, Khazars, and Arabs. During the Mongol invasions, the invaders massacred a large part of the population. After the Mongols, the Ottoman Turks invaded Armenia and, by the 16th century, occupied all of it. Possession of the eastern portion of Armenia was disputed by Turkey and Persia until 1828, when Persia ceded to Russia what is now the Republic of Armenia. Between 1894 and 1915 Armenians were subjected to a holocaust when the Turks attempted to exterminate the entire Armenian population. More than 600,000 were killed, and the rest were forcibly deported. With the collapse of the Russian and Ottoman Empires, Armenia declared its independence in 1918, and its independence was recognized by the Treaty of Sèvres in 1920. In the same year, however, Communists gained control of Armenia and proclaimed it a Soviet republic, thus ending the country's independence. With the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1990, Armenia declared its independence in 1991.

In the same year, Levon Ter-Petrosian, the incumbent Supreme Soviet chairman, was elected president of the republic, and Khosrov Haroutiunian was named prime minister. In May 1992 Armenian forces captured Azerbaijan's last major urban stronghold in Nagorno-Karabakh and proceeded to open a corridor to Armenia proper. Concurrently an attack was launched on the Azeri enclave of Nakhichevan near Armenia's border with Turkey. In 1993 Hrand Bagratian replaced Haroutiunian as prime minister. The opposition parties mounted large antigovernment demonstrations in 1993 and 1994. In Armenia's first postindependence legislative elections in 1995 Ter-Petrosian's Pan-Armenian National Movement won a substantial legislative majority while a constitutional amendment gave the president more powers. In the 1996 presidential election, Ter-Petrosian was elected with

51.75 percent vote over Vasken Manukian of the National Democratic Union. Opposition leaders alleged widespread electoral fraud, which was confirmed by outside election observers. In 1996 Prime Minister Bagratian resigned and was replaced first by Aram Sarkissian and later by Robert Kocharian, president of the self-proclaimed Republic of Nagorno-Karabakh. President Ter-Petrosian himself resigned, leaving Kocharian as president. In the presidential balloting in 1998 Kocharian was elected with 60 percent of the vote. He later named Armen Darbinian as prime minister. The May 30, 1999, parliamentary elections resulted in a convincing victory for the Unity Coalition led by Vazgen Sarkissian, who thereupon became prime minister. However, Sarkissian, two cabinet ministers, and five other parliamentary deputies were shot dead on October 27, 1999. President Kocharian named the slain prime minister's brother, Aram Sarkissian, to replace him. There was further political violence when the deputy minister of the interior and national security, Artsun Markkaryan, was found shot dead. Aram Sarkissian was fired in May 2000, and Adranik Markkaryan became prime minister. Armenia became a full member of the Council of Europe in 2001.

Kocharian won reelection in 2003 amid widespread accusations that the vote was rigged. He faced challenges from eight other contenders and criticism for his failure to reach a deal with Azerbaijan over Nagorno-Karabakh. Other issues included 30 unresolved political murders in recent years and the widening gap between rich and poor in the country. When Kocharian failed to win 50 percent of the vote, a runoff election was held, which he won with 67.5 percent of the vote. In 2004 waves of protest over continuing economic problems rocked the capital city of Yerevan.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1991–98 Levon Ter-Petrosian (president)
1998– Robert Kocharian (president)

CONSTITUTION

Armenia adopted its first post-Soviet constitution on July 5, 1995. The constitution is based largely on the French model with a strong president and a legislature elected by popular suffrage. The president is directly elected for five-year terms. His veto can be overridden by a simple majority in the house. The prime minister is the head of government. He is nominated by the president, subject to parliamentary approval. The cabinet of ministers and the chairman of the state administration are appointed by the prime minister with presidential and parliamentary approval.

PARLIAMENT

The unicameral National Assembly (Azgayin Zhaghov) is elected for a five-year term and has a membership of 131, of whom 75 are elected from national party lists on a proportional basis and 56 from constituencies on a majoritarian basis.

POLITICAL PARTIES

The major political parties represented in the National Assembly include the Republican Party of Armenia, Armenian Revolutionary Federation, Country of Law (Orinats Yerkir), People's Party of Armenia, National Accord Party, Republic Party, and United Labor Party. Other significant parties include National Democratic Union, Constitutional Rights Union, Social Democratic Hnchakian Party, Armenian National Movement, Liberal Democratic Ramkavar Party, Self-Determination Union, Communist Party, and the Christian Democratic Party. Thirty-six other political parties are registered, but many of these become active only during national campaigns.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Armenia is divided into 11 provinces headed by governors and 67 *rayons*, or districts, all centrally controlled. There are legislative bodies at the local level with some fiscal powers.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The court system consists of three levels: district courts of first instance, appellate courts, and a Supreme Court. The Supreme Court consists of three sections: criminal, civil, and appellate. The presidium of the court reviews cases first tried in the other sections of the court. The constitution provides for review courts and a court of appeals to handle cases previously sent to the Supreme Court. The courts are subject to pressure from the executive branch, and polls have shown that the populace remains skeptical about the neutrality of the courts. A new criminal code went into effect in 2000. The civil code and the criminal procedure code went into effect in 1999. The latter permits the right to an attorney, right to a public trial, right to question witnesses, and right to appeal but does not guarantee bail or trial by jury. A constitutional court has been established. It has the right to review the constitutionality of legislation and approve international treaties.

HUMAN RIGHTS

The government's human rights record is poor in several important respects. In some cases, extrajudicial killings

by security forces are reported, and some persons are arbitrarily arrested and detained without warrants. Prison conditions are harsh, and lengthy pretrial detention is common. The judiciary is subject to political pressures and does not enforce constitutional protections consistently. There are some limits on press freedoms, and many journalists practice self-censorship. Registration requirements hinder freedom of association. The law places some restrictions on religious freedom, including a prohibition against proselytizing by groups other than the Armenian Orthodox Church. International observers have found presidential and parliamentary elections to be below international standards, with detentions of opposition supporters and serious irregularities in voting procedures.

FOREIGN POLICY

Armenia is a founding member of the Commonwealth of Independent States. It is also a member of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe and the United Nations. The major foreign policy issue in the 1990s was the dispute with Azerbaijan over the Nagorno-Karabakh enclave. The 1994 cease-fire has left the Armenians in control of much of the territory.

DEFENSE

In fiscal year 2001 Armenia's military expenditures were about \$135 million, representing 6.5 percent of the nation's gross domestic product. The nation has about 650,000 males considered fit for military service.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	45,600
Military Manpower Availability:	812,140
Military Expenditures \$million:	135
as % of GDP:	6.5
as % of central government expenditures:	—
Arms Imports \$million:	—
Arms Exports \$million:	—

ECONOMY

Under the old Soviet central planning system, Armenia had developed a modern industrial sector, supplying machine tools, textiles, and other manufactured goods. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union and the independence of Armenia that followed, the economy has switched to small-scale agriculture and away from heavy industry. The privatization of industry has proceeded at a slow pace but ahead of most other former Soviet republics. Armenia is a food importer, and its mineral deposits are small. The

Nagorno-Karabakh dispute and the embargoes imposed by Turkey and Azerbaijan contributed to a severe economic decline in the early 1990s. By 1994, however, the Armenian government had launched an ambitious International Monetary Fund-sponsored economic program that has since produced positive growth rates. Armenia also managed to slash inflation and to privatize small and medium-size enterprises. The persistent energy shortages Armenia had suffered in earlier years have been partially offset by one of its nuclear plants at Metsamor; in fact, Armenia is currently a net energy exporter, although the nation is under international pressure to close the Metsamor power plant. Unemployment is high—about 20 percent in 2003—and women form a disproportionately large number of the unemployed.

In 2003 Armenia joined the World Trade Organization. It has cut inflation to 4.8 percent in 2004, stabilized its currency, and privatized most small and medium-size business as well as the electricity distribution system. Armenia maintains a severe trade imbalance, exporting about \$735 million in goods while importing about \$1.2 billion in 2004.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion:	11.79
GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$:	3,500
GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %:	9.2
GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %:	10.1
Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:	
Agriculture:	23.4
Industry:	35.1
Services:	41.5
Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:	
Private Consumption:	89
Government Consumption:	10
Gross Domestic Investment:	19.8
Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports:	0.735
Imports:	1.18
% of Income Received by Poorest 10%:	2.3
% of Income Received by Richest 10%:	46.2

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
147.9	146.7	151.3	153.0	160.3

Finance

National Currency:	Dram (AMD)
Exchange Rate: \$1 = AMD	578.763
Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion:	123.3
Central Bank Discount Rate %:	65.1
Total External Debt \$million:	905
Debt Service Ratio %:	8.68
Balance of Payments \$million:	-210
International Reserves SDRs \$million:	490.6
Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:	4.8

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 247.4
 per capita \$: 81.00
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 120.9

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$million: 425.9
 Expenditures \$million: 460.3
 Budget Deficit \$million: 34.4
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 23.4
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 3.8
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 3.7
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 50
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 22.8
 Total Farmland % of land area: 17.6
 Livestock: Cattle 000: 565.8
 Chickens million: 3.6
 Pigs 000: 85.4
 Sheep 000: 573.7
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters 000: 67
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 1.5

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 557.9
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 15

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 0.602
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 2.13
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 561
 Net Energy Imports % of use: 61.9
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 2.6
 Production kW-hr billion: 6.5
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 5.8
 Coal Reserves tons million: —
 Production tons 000: —
 Consumption tons 000: 3
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
 Production cubic feet billion: —
 Consumption cubic feet billion: 46.6
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
 Production barrels 000 per day: —
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 41.6
 Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 1.18
 Exports \$billion: 0.735
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 19.6
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 9.8
 Balance of Trade \$million: –210

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Belgium %	11.6	18.2
Russia %	11.6	12.1
Israel %	11.3	15.7
United States %	9.5	6.3
Iran %	8.8	7.9
Germany %	6.7	5.0
United Arab Emirates %	5.4	—
Italy %	4.7	—
Ukraine %	4.6	—
United Kingdom %	—	16.8

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 15,918
 Paved %: 96.3
 Automobiles: —
 Trucks and Buses: —
 Railroad: Track Length km: 845
 Passenger-km million: 48
 Freight-km million: 452
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: —
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: —
 Airports: 17
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 747
 Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 206
 Number of Tourists from 000: 169
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 90
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 97

Communications

Telephones 000: 562.6
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.02
 Cellular Telephones 000: 114.4
 Personal Computers 000: 60
 Internet Hosts per million people: 740
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 50

ENVIRONMENT

Armenia's chief environmental problems have resulted from natural disasters, pollution, and war. The disastrous 1988 earthquake, which left 55,000 dead, set envi-

ronmental cleanup progress back by a decade. Pollution was caused principally by the Chernobyl nuclear reactor meltdown, and the Metsamor nuclear power plant continues to add to the problem. Chemical pollution affects the Hrazdan and Aras rivers.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 12.5
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: 4
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 10
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 7,104
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 1.13

LIVING CONDITIONS

Living conditions in Armenia have varied widely over the past few decades. Under Soviet rule, Armenians enjoyed one of the highest standards of living in the Eastern bloc. The country was heavily industrialized, and while there were occasional shortages of goods, Armenians in general had ready access to high-quality food and other goods as well as effective public transportation, telecommunications, and utilities.

Conditions changed around the time of the collapse of the Soviet Union. While the conflict with Azerbaijan ended with a cease-fire, the Azerbaijanis imposed an energy blockade that stopped the flow of oil and gas to Armenia. Because of the severe energy shortage, 70 percent of Armenia's industry ceased functioning, the gross domestic product plummeted sharply, and Armenians' standard of living fell precipitously. Compounding the problem were the aftereffects of a massive earthquake in 1988 that killed 25,000 people and caused \$20 billion in damages. Combined with the collapse of the Soviet economy, these events led to an increase in crime, disease, and poverty. In 1997 Armenia's economy began to improve, and while severe problems remain, including a high unemployment rate, living conditions after the turn of the century were markedly better than they had been a decade earlier.

HEALTH

Medical practices in Armenia follow the Western model. Under Communism health care was provided by the state, but in recent years efforts have been made to privatize the health care sector, and a number of private clinics now operate in the country. Some of these clinics are funded by international Armenian organizations, such as the Armenian General Benevolent Union and the Armenian Relief Society. Life expectancy at birth is just over 71 years, and the infant mortality rate is just over 24 per 1,000 live births. The birth rate in 2004 was 11.43 births

per 1,000 population. In 2003 fewer than 200 Armenians died of AIDS.

Health

Number of Physicians: 10,889
 Number of Dentists: 710
 Number of Nurses: 14,632
 Number of Pharmacists: 121
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 353
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: 4.3
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 24.16
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 55
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 5.5
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 42
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.1
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 94
 Measles: 94
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 84
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 92

FOOD AND NUTRITION

As a former part of the Soviet empire, Armenians eat many foods common among Soviet peoples, including borscht (beet soup), roasted meats, potatoes, and stews. Also common are fresh trout from Lake Sevan; grapevine leaves stuffed with ground meat, rice, and herbs; flat breads; and Middle Eastern foods, such as hummus and shish kebab. Bread and salt are such important staples that Armenians are fond of saying, "We have bread and salt among us" to speak of friendship, and foreign dignitaries are welcomed with bread and salt. Unfortunately, a decline in living standards in recent years and widespread poverty—about 50 percent of the population in 2003—have led to malnutrition and stunted growth among Armenian children.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 34.2
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,040
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 164.1
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 181.6

STATUS OF WOMEN

There is no specific law banning violence against women, and only a few cases of rape, spousal abuse, or other types of violence are reported. Domestic violence cases usually are not reported to the police, and women have no specific legal recourse. At least one nongovernmental organization in the Gyumuri area provides shelter and assistance to battered women. The public prosecutor's of-

Police registers fewer than 20 cases of rape in a normal year. Prostitution is not illegal, and, according to anecdotal evidence, street walkers are simply sent to a hospital or a physician for a checkup. There are reports of trafficking in women by Middle Eastern Arabs. In the workplace women receive equal pay for equal work but are generally not afforded the same professional opportunities given to men and are often relegated to menial or low-skill jobs. Women make up 65 percent of those officially registered as unemployed. Currently there are more women than men receiving university and postgraduate education, but this may stem from the fact that more young men emigrate in search of jobs.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 5
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.0
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 47.0

WORK

Work in Armenia is little different from that in other post-Communist industrialized countries. Many Armenians are employed in shoe and clothing production, computer technology, and chemical industries. Women are a large percentage of the workforce and work as teachers, doctors, scientists, researchers, factory workers, and governmental and nongovernmental administrators—though women also constitute over 60 percent of unemployed workers and earn in general about two-thirds of what men earn. In rural areas, work is divided along traditional gender lines. Men work in the fields or care for livestock, while women take care of domestic matters.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 1,400,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 48.9
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 45
 Industry: 25
 Services: 30
 Unemployment %: 20

EDUCATION

Education is compulsory between ages six and 17 and is free at both the primary and secondary levels. The education system is based on the old Soviet system, but since independence more emphasis has been placed on Armenian history and culture. There are two universities in

Yerevan: the Yerevan State University, founded in 1919, and the State Engineering University of Armenia.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 98.6
 Male %: 99.4
 Female %: 98.0
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 10.9
 First Level: Primary schools: 1,400
 Teachers: 10,901
 Students: 134,664
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 12.4
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 94.4
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: —
 Teachers: 35,647
 Students: 362,768
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 10.2
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 83.8
 Third Level: Institutions: 14
 Teachers: 12,100
 Students: 81,851
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 28.2
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 3.2

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Throughout most of the twentieth century, dating back to the republic of Armenia and through Soviet Armenia, scientific and technological research was largely sponsored and funded by the state. Research is sponsored still by the National Academy of Sciences, but in recent years financial strain has left the state unable to support much scientific research, and many young scientists leave the country for better opportunities abroad. Appeals are regularly made to international organizations and foundations for funding, and some have been successful. A fiber optics laboratory at the State Engineering University of Armenia was established in the early 1990s with the help of the Armenian Professional Society of America. Despite these difficulties the National Academy of Sciences in October 2004 hosted the Armenian Day of Science to celebrate the accomplishment of Armenian scientists and to address issues affecting Armenian science.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 1,313
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 0.25
 High-Tech Exports \$million: 4.6
 Patent Applications by Residents: 204

MEDIA

Before independence Armenia had over 90 newspapers, but many of them have folded since then and only 80

have survived. The leading paper is *Hayastani Hanrapetutyun* (Republic of Armenia), founded in 1990. Other important newspapers include *Hayots Ashkhar*, *Hazg* (Nation), and *Hayastani Kommunist* (Armenian Communist). The domestic news agency is the Armenian Press Agency (Armenpress). The electronic media comprise Radio Yerevan and Armenian TV.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 8
 Total Circulation 000: 19
 Circulation per 1,000: 5
 Books Published: 516
 Periodicals: 83
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets 000: 850
 per 1,000: 241

CULTURE

Because more Armenians live outside the country than in Armenia, to be “Armenian” is more of a cultural identifier than a national one. Armenians take great pride in the richness and diversity of their historical traditions.

Under Soviet rule, artists and writers were supported by the state. Since the dissolution of the Soviet empire, most artistic and cultural activity in Armenia has been privatized. Armenia has a rich tradition in nearly all the arts. Both oral and written literature dates back to the fourth century with the work of Movses Khorenatsi, a historian who recorded much of the nation’s oral literature. Both church music and folk music have long traditions in Armenia, and Armenians take pride in their opera house, theaters, and concert halls. Armenian graphic arts include architecture, bas-reliefs, stone engravings, tapestry, and illuminated manuscripts.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 1,166
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: 9,358,337
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: 599
 Seating Capacity: 124,900
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Armenians have a large number of historical national heroes. A key figure in Armenian folklore is Mesrop Mashtots, a fourth-century warrior-scholar-teacher who

revived the Armenian alphabet. He is depicted in many Armenian works of art. Also important to Armenians are the fifth-century warrior Vartan Mamikonian, who defended the Armenians against the Persians, as well as modern-day guerrilla fighters. A good deal of Armenian folklore is biblical. Many people believe that Noah landed his ark on Mount Ararat, a mountain on the Turkish side of Armenia’s current-day western boundary. Gregory the Illuminator (Grigor Lusavorich) is believed to have brought Christianity to Armenia by converting King Trdat III in the year 301. Gregory is believed to have had a vision in which Christ showed him where the first Christian church in Armenia should be built, site of the present-day Cathedral of Saint Gregory the Illuminator.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Armenians enjoy movies, music and both traditional and modern dance. The Armenian symphony, as well as opera and ballet companies, performs at the Opera House in the capital and draws enormous crowds. Armenian men often gather at city parks to play backgammon and chess, and all Armenians enjoy walking in the parks and visiting outdoor cafés. In the summer Armenians relax on the beach at Lake Sevan.

ETIQUETTE

Armenians place a great deal of emphasis on showing hospitality and generosity toward guests and visitors. They take great pride in their language and historical traditions, and they manifest that pride in the sophistications of their homes and entertainment. Armenians regard it as impolite not to visit one another spontaneously and unannounced. They greet one another with kisses on the cheek or by shaking hands, and it is not uncommon to see Armenian men, as well as women, walking arm in arm on the street.

FAMILY LIFE

Armenians do not change their places of residence very often, so family life tends to be stable and close. Armenians often live with their parents for a period after marriage, with the bride moving into her husband’s parents’ house. Children tend to care for their parents in old age, so grandparents play a major role in the upbringing of their grandchildren. Cousins play together as children and typically remain close as adults. Traditional Armenian culture has been patriarchal, so the oldest male is regarded as head of the family. Marriages are often arranged in the smaller towns and villages, and throughout Armenia divorce is un-

common. Taking part in the activities of the extended family is a major part of Armenian life.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Throughout most of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first, Armenians have dressed much like the people of Europe. Men tend to wear suits, sweaters, slacks, and leather jackets. Women enjoy wearing dresses, jewelry, makeup, and high-heeled shoes. As in much of the world, younger people prefer jeans. Armenians follow fashion trends throughout the world through magazines and television. More traditional costumes are worn for drama, dance, and cultural events. Some distinctive regional items of apparel include sheepskin hats, engraved metal belts, jewelry made of coins, and, for women, braided hair.

SPORTS

Armenians have excelled in boxing, weight lifting, and wrestling, and the nation's athletes have won medals in these sports in the Olympic Games. Armenians take pride in worldwide athletes of Armenian extraction, including the tennis player Andre Agassi, the basketball coach Jerry Tarkanian, the football coach Ara Parseghian, the National Football League placekicker Garo Yepremian, and the Major League Baseball pitcher Steve Bedrosian. Chess grand master Gary Kasparov was of Armenian heritage. Soccer is popular in Armenia, and in 1973 the Armenian national team won the championship of the Soviet Union.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1920** The Allies recognize Armenia as a sovereign nation; the Turks, who refuse to recognize the independence of Armenia, seize the regions of Kars and Alexandropol and continue the forced repatriation of ethnic Armenians, a process begun in 1915 and in which 1.5 million perish; the government of Armenia, a coalition of Communists and Dashnaks, pronounces Armenia a Soviet republic.
- 1921** Communists force out of government the Dashnaks, who stage a revolt but fail to regain power.
- 1922** Armenia, Georgia, and Azerbaijan form the Transcaucasian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic and then join the Soviet Union.
- 1923** The Soviet Union assigns control of Nagorno-Karabakh, a region disputed by Armenia and Azerbaijan, to Azerbaijan.
- 1926** Joseph Stalin comes to power in Moscow and initiates both the industrialization of Armenia and the systematic suppression and murder of the country's political and intellectual elite, a campaign known as the Great Terror.
- 1936** The Soviet Union makes Armenia, Georgia, and Azerbaijan distinct republics within the union.
- 1953** Stalin dies; Nikita Khrushchev becomes the leader of the Soviet Union.
- 1974** Moscow appointee Karen Demirchian assumes control of the Communist Party of Armenia, further entrenching its notorious corruption.
- 1985** Mikhail Gorbachev becomes leader of the Soviet Union.
- 1988** A massive earthquake kills 55,000 in Armenia.
- 1989** Soviet authorities arrest members of the Karabakh Committee, a political group dedicated to regaining the Nagorno-Karabakh region from Azerbaijan; the dispute with Azerbaijan over the Nagorno-Karabakh enclave escalates into war.
- 1991** Armenia declares its independence following the collapse of the Soviet Union; Levon Ter-Petrosian is elected president; Armenia joins 10 other former Soviet countries as a member of the Commonwealth of Independent States.
- 1992** The Armenian army carves a supply route, the "Lachin corridor," through Azerbaijan and occupies Nagorno-Karabakh.
- 1994** Russia brokers a cease-fire between Armenia and Azerbaijan in which Armenia retains control over most of the Nagorno-Karabakh enclave.
- 1998** President Ter-Petrosian resigns unexpectedly; the government legalizes the Dashnak Party, which Ter-Petrosian had outlawed; Prime Minister Robert Kocharian is elected president.
- 1999** Five terrorists enter the National Assembly and open fire, killing the prime minister, speaker, and six other members of parliament.
- 2001** Armenia becomes a full member of the Council of Europe.
- 2002** Armenia and Azerbaijan agree to find a peaceful settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh issue.
- 2003** President Robert Kocharian is reelected president amid allegations of vote U.S.-based Freedom House downgrades media climate in Armenia from "partly free" to "not free," citing use of libel and security laws to shut down a private television station for criticizing the government.
- 2004** Demonstrators in the capital call for Kocharian's resignation.
- 2006** Explosions in Russia disrupt gas supply to Armenia via Georgia.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- The Embassy of the Republic of Armenia
<http://www.armeniaemb.org/>

AUSTRALIA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Commonwealth of Australia

ABBREVIATION

AU

CAPITAL

Canberra (ACT, Australian Capital Territory)

HEAD OF STATE

Queen Elizabeth II, represented by Governor-General Major General (Ret.) Michael Jeffery (from 2003)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister John Winston Howard (from 1996)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Parliamentary democracy

POPULATION

20,090,437 (2005)

AREA

7,686,850 sq km (2,967,124 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Caucasian, Aboriginal, Asian

LANGUAGE

English

RELIGION

Christianity (mainly Protestant and Roman Catholic)

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Australian dollar

NATIONAL FLAG

The red, white, and blue Union Jack in the upper left canton; in the remaining blue field a white, five-star Southern Cross (four stars with seven points and one with five points) appears in the right fly, and the white, seven-pointed federal star appears immediately below the Union Jack.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

Standing on green eucalyptus branches surrounded by the gold and blue wattle blossoms of the national flower are two native creatures: a kangaroo and an emu. Most prints show the two creatures in shades of brown, the pouched animal in lighter color than the swift, flightless bird. The base sometimes is depicted as a green, grassy mound. Between the two facing animals is an ermine-bordered shield surmounted by a seven-pointed gold Union star having one point for each Australian state and one for the Northern Territory. The star rests on a blue-and-white candy-striped wand, or heraldic wreath. Beneath the emblem the country's name appears in black letters on a white scroll. The coats of arms of the six states are displayed in equal segments on the central shield. In the top, from left to right, New South Wales is first, with a Saint George's Cross on a white field with a gold lion in the center. Each arm of the cross contains a gold, five-pointed star. Victoria's gold-and-red royal crown is placed against a blue background, which also contains the white stars of the Southern Cross. Queensland's coat of arms is a Maltese cross against a white background, "defaced," in heraldic usage, by a gold-and-red royal crown. The coat of arms of South Australia is a black-and-white crow shrike or magpie in flight against a yellow background. Also against a yellow background is the black swan of Western Australia. Tasmania is represented by a red lion on a white field.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"Advance Australia Fair"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 26 (Australia Day); the queen's birthday is celebrated in June except in Western Australia, where it is observed in November; all Christian festivals and also December 26 (Boxing Day).

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

January 1, 1901

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

July 9, 1900

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Australia is the world's smallest continent but its sixth-largest country, lying southeast of Asia between the Pa-

cific and Indian Oceans. Its total area of 2,967,124 sq mi (7,686,850 sq km) is nearly as large as that of the continental United States and half the size of Europe. Including Tasmania, the country extends 2,486 mi (4,000 km) east

to west and 2,385 mi (3,837 km) north to south. On the eastern coast the Great Barrier Reef extends for 1,243 mi (2,000 km), comprising an important ecosystem of islands and coral reefs that contain many rare forms of life.

The country is customarily divided into three principal topographical regions: the large Western Plateau, underlain by ancient rock shield; the Central Lowlands, or Central Plains, underlain by horizontal sedimentary rocks, and the Eastern Highlands, of more complex geological origin. A smaller fourth region sometimes is known as the Southern Faultlands east of the Australian Bight. These regions are popularly designated by different terms. The Outback applies generally to the interior, specifically to the arid center of the Western Plateau and its semiarid northern plains. The name Red Center is applied to an area with characteristic red, brown, and tan soils located in the heart of the continent.

Australia is one of the flattest continents, with just 6 percent of its area lying over 2,000 ft (610 m) above sea level. Only in the southern corner is there any considerable area over 5,000 ft (1,524 m), with Mount Kosciuszko rising to 7,134 ft (2,229 m). This inaptly named Australian Alps area is far from alpine, and the summit of Mount Kosciuszko is easy to reach by car. These mountains form part of an extensive area of high relief known as the Great Dividing Range, consisting of fretted margins of plateaus and cones and plugs of long-extinct volcanoes. The wetter seaward flanks of these highlands are much more desiccated than the western slopes, which fall away to the interior plains in long ridges. The coast, especially in New South Wales, often is backed by massive scarps cut by wild gorges.

The vast desert and semidesert region of the Western Plateau covers almost two-thirds of the continent. Averaging about 1,000 ft (305 m) above sea level, it is relieved by widely separated mountains. These mountains include the Hamersley Range to the west and, in the north-central rim, the irregular ranges of the Kimberley Plateau. Toward the east of the Western Plateau are three notable ranges—Macdonnell, Musgrave, and Petermann. From the western rocky ranges, the Western Plateau stretches eastward as a continuous flatland with occasional stark outcroppings of granite or sandstone. The most impressive outcropping is Ayers Rock, a massive, rounded monolith rising over 1,100 ft (335 m). There are four major deserts—Gibson, Great Sandy, Great Victoria, and Tanamy—on the Western Plateau. The plateau is also rimmed by escarpments, including the singular Nul-larbor Plain and the Darling Scarp.

The Central Eastern Lowlands extend from the Gulf of Carpentaria in the north to Western Victoria in the south. This lowland belt averages only about 500 ft (152 m) above sea level. Beneath the Central Eastern Lowlands are several artesian basins, one of which, the Great Artesian Basin, underlies approximately one-fifth of the entire continent and is the largest in the world.

The Eastern Highlands are inaccurately designated as the Great Dividing Range, though they do not form a true range and have an average altitude of 3,000 ft (914 m). They consist of a complex of tablelands, ridges, and coastal ranges. Nevertheless, they are rugged and spectacular in parts. The Eastern Highlands are low and broad in the north and rise as they progress southward. The island of Tasmania, lying about 150 mi (241 km) southeast of the continent, is geologically part of the Eastern Highlands. The island has a rugged terrain, with a large central plateau and with some mountains rising to over 5,000 ft (1,524 m)

Australia is one of the world's driest continents, with only a few permanent rivers and streams. More than 60 percent of the annual runoff is from the Tasmania, Gulf of Carpentaria, and Timor Sea drainage basins. In nearly three-quarters of the country, stream flow is intermittent or dependent on seasonal rains, and for months or even years streams and rivers dry up. The Murray-Darling river system is the most important drainage system in the country.

Geography

Area sq km:	7,686,850; sq mi 2,967,124
World Rank:	6th
Land Boundaries, km:	—
Coastline, km:	25,760
Elevation Extremes meters:	
Lowest:	Lake Eyre -15
Highest:	Mount Kosciuszko 2,229
Land Use %	
Arable Land:	6.6
Permanent Crops:	0.0
Forest:	20.1
Other:	73.3

Population of Principal Cities (2001)

Adelaide	1,002,127
Brisbane	1,508,161
Canberra	339,727
Geelong	130,194
Gold Coast	421,557
Gosford	255,429
Hobart	126,048
Melbourne	3,160,171
Newcastle	279,975
Perth	1,176,542
Sunshine Coast	169,931
Sydney	3,502,301
Townsville	119,504
Wollongong	228,846

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Australia has a warm climate with little rainfall, clear skies, and much sunshine. The temperature range is moderate, and intense winter cold is absent for the most part. Sum-

mer and winter rainfall systems tend to be weak. Toward the interior of the country rainfall not only decreases but also becomes increasingly variable. Months or years may pass without any rainfall. Droughts are common but generally affect limited areas.

Atmospheric systems influencing the climate include the prevailing southeasterly trade winds. These trade winds lose much of their moisture over the Eastern Highlands, which constitute an effective barrier to the inland spread of moisture. In the winter months the north of the continent is affected by trade winds from the southeast and the south by westerly winds that bring high rainfall over the southwestern area and the western mountain slopes of Tasmania. In the summer months easterly winds prevail over most of the continent, though the north has a wet summer through the influence of the northeastern monsoons. Australia experiences hurricanes and cyclones on both coasts, in the northeast and northwest. They occur mainly between November and March, the southern summer.

The vast interior and much of the west and south have high temperatures and very low amounts of rainfall. Summer temperatures are particularly high in the northern zone above the Tropic of Capricorn, with daytime maximums of 90°F (32°C) and higher. Encircling this arid zone to the north, east, and southwest is a large semi-arid belt with slightly higher rainfall levels and somewhat greater seasonal variations. In the north the maximum rainfall occurs in the summer and is followed by a cooler, drier period extending through August and warm weather with dusty windstorms in September and October. In the south the rainfall is somewhat more evenly distributed, with a drier summer in the west and southwest.

The monsoonal north, comprising Arnhem Land, the Cape York Peninsula, and northern parts of the eastern coast, has a hot, humid, tropical climate with rainfall concentrated in the summer months. The entire region is subject to seasonal floods. In the longer, drier winter season, only slightly cooler in temperature, rain is infrequent. Along the northern parts of the eastern coast the winter season is pleasant and mild. The eastern and southeastern coast has relatively abundant rainfall well distributed throughout the year and usually reliable. Droughts there are infrequent, and winters are mild.

The area to the west of the humid coastal zone has abundant rainfall and considerable temperature variations. Summers there are hot, and maximum temperatures of about 100°F (38°C) are common. Winters are cool, and frosts may occur between April and September. Drought is a continuing hazard, since rainfall in many places is rendered ineffective by evaporation and seepage. The southwestern corner of the country and the Southern Faultlands experience a subtropical Mediterranean climate, with sunny summers and mild winters. Tasmania has a middle latitude climate, with cold winters and warm summers. Rainfall generally is abundant.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature

Melbourne: July 49°F; January 68°F

Darwin: July 53°F; January 84°F

Interior: Summer High 100°F to 115°F

Average Rainfall

North and Northeast: 60 in

West: 30 in to 50 in

Southwest: 20 in to 45 in

Tasmania: 40 to 100 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Australia offers a wide variety of habitats, including tropical rain forest, temperate rain forest, sclerophyllous forests (sclerophylls are plants with hard leathery or spiny leaves), woodlands, savanna and steppe, alpine grasslands, and deserts. Except in the rain forests, the eucalyptus tree, with over 500 species, can be found nearly everywhere, especially in woodlands, and one species dominates in drier regions to the south. Another major Australian species is the acacia, or wattle tree, with over 600 species. Because Australia is largely a dry country, many plants have evolved that can take advantage of every rainfall, especially in the desert areas. Examples are the kangaroo paw and the Sturt Desert pea.

Australia has 230 species of native mammals, over 300 species of lizards, 140 species of snakes, and two species of crocodile. About 400 of its 800 species of birds are unique to the country, including the kookaburra (a large kingfisher) and the rainbow lorikeets. The emu, a flightless bird, has become a national symbol, along with at least four other animals: the kangaroo (whose population is about 40 million), the wombat, the koala bear, and the dingo.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 20,090,437

World Rank: 52nd

Density per sq km: 2.6

% of annual growth (1999-2003): 1.2

Male %: 49.7

Female %: 50.3

Urban %: —

Age Distribution %: 0-14: 20.1

15-64: 67.2

65 and over: 12.8

Population 2025: 23,023,000

Birth Rate per 1,000: 12.4

Death Rate per 1,000: 7.38

Rate of Natural Increase %: 0.5

Total Fertility Rate: 1.76

Expectation of Life (years): Males 77.4

Females 83.27

Marriage Rate per 1,000: 5.4

Divorce Rate per 1,000: 2.9
 Average Size of Households: 2.6
 Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Australia is perhaps the most homogeneous of former British dominions, next to New Zealand. The racial stock is overwhelmingly Caucasian and of British descent, making up 92 percent of the population. Immigrants from Southeast Asia compose a sizable part of the population, numbering 7 percent.

Aboriginals, making up 1 percent of the population, are the only true ethnic minority. In 1788, when Europeans first established a permanent settlement in Australia, there were between 250,000 and 300,000 indigenous Aborigines or Aboriginals living there. These peoples are believed to have lived on the continent for over 30,000 years, coming originally from mainland Asia. They are thought to form a distinct race known as Australoid, and generally are of short stature, with black skin and fine, straight hair that often is blond among children but later becomes black.

In the late 1700s the Aboriginals were divided into over 500 tribes, each ranging from 100 to 1,500 members. Each tribe spoke a different but related language and occupied a defined territory. The Aboriginal material culture was limited to the bare essentials. The people were nomadic and depended entirely on hunting, fishing, and gathering for subsistence. The arid climate, dearth of natural resources, and lack of plants or animals meant a constant struggle for existence in a harsh environment. There was no economic specialization, but sharing and generosity were highly prized virtues. Kinship was of paramount importance and determined all social relationships. Religion was totemistic and animistic, and totems and culture heroes governed the life cycles.

Within the first century of the arrival of the Europeans, the Aboriginals were decimated in numbers. By 1876 all the Tasmanian Aboriginals had died, and disease, loss of hunting grounds, and expulsion from hospitable coastal areas brought the mainland Aboriginals close to extinction. Most Aboriginals were segregated from the rest of Australia by the establishment of Aboriginal reserves in the 19th century. Until the end of World War II they were treated as second-class citizens and openly discriminated against. However, in the 1950s and 1960s public concern over Aboriginal rights forced the government to reverse many of the former discrimination laws. In the 1970s provisions were made to educate their children in white schools. Australia became committed to the full development of the Aboriginals, providing them with medical care and legal aid. Government boards were established to further Aboriginals' economic and social development and to preserve their cultural heritage. This

effort reached a peak during the opening ceremonies of the 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney, which celebrated the traditions of Aboriginal culture.

LANGUAGES

The official language is English. Although there are no dialects, Australian English has established itself during recent decades as a distinct branch of the Queen's English, with its own many picturesque idioms and expressions.

Many first-generation immigrants continue to use their own languages at home, and there are numerous non-English newspapers and periodicals published in the major urban centers. The Aboriginal languages and dialects are dying out despite official efforts to preserve them.

RELIGIONS

Nearly 87 percent of Australians are affiliated with some religious denomination. The major religious groups are Roman Catholics (26 percent), Anglicans (26.1 percent), and other Christians (24.3 percent).

Roman Catholics are predominantly Irish and Southern and Eastern European. This group has increased over the years as a percentage of the population, from 21 percent in 1941 to 27 percent in 1998. This increase has been due to the large number of immigrants from predominantly Catholic countries, such as Italy, Poland, and Malta. Among Aboriginals, about 26 percent are Catholics.

The oldest religious denomination is the Anglican Church. Anglican chaplains arrived with the first convict immigrants in 1781. Most Anglicans are of British origin. The highest proportion of Anglicans is in Tasmania, with 45 percent. As elsewhere, Anglicanism is the professed religion of many Australians who do not practice any religion.

Of the Protestant church groups outside Anglicanism, the largest are the Methodists and Presbyterians. The early Methodists were Welsh settlers, and the first Presbyterian church was built by Scottish settlers in 1809. Other Christian denominations include Lutherans, Congregationalists, Eastern Orthodox, and Pentecostals.

Patterns of religious practice are similar to those in the United Kingdom. The percentage of regular churchgoers is about 30 percent, of whom Catholics form the predominant majority. Attendance is lowest among Anglicans, only 10 percent of whom are active churchgoers.

Australia is a secular state, and there is little friction between church and state. Church properties and funds are exempt from taxes, and the clergy and seminary students, prior to the establishment of an all-volunteer force,

were exempted from military service. Churches receive no financial aid from the government, though they are given assistance for social services and missions to the Aborigines. Since 1974 church schools have received government subsidies under certain conditions.

Religious Affiliations	
Anglican	5,244,000
Roman Catholic	5,224,000
Other Christian	4,882,000
Non-Christian	2,210,000
Other	2,531,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

On January 26, 1988, Australia celebrated its bicentennial, commemorating the settlement of the first British penal colony of 700 convicts at Port Jackson (later Sydney). Captain Arthur Philip, the settlement's commander, was to be the first governor of the colony, later known as New South Wales. The eastern coast of Australia had been explored by Captain James Cook in 1770, only 18 years before this event, and most of the continent was still unexplored. Hobart, Tasmania, was founded in 1803, but it was not until 1813 that a way was found over the Blue Mountains for westward expansion into the continent itself. Then new settlements were established on the Brisbane River in Queensland in 1824 and on the Swan River in Western Australia in 1829. Melbourne was established on Port Phillip Bay in 1835 and Adelaide on Gulf Saint Vincent in 1836. These settlements formed a series of starting points for further exploration of the north and west.

Meanwhile, more shiploads of convicts from England arrived—161,000 in all—until the penal system itself was abolished between 1840 and 1868. Sheep raising and wheat growing became the backbone of a flourishing economy that attracted free settlers from the British Isles. This flow of immigrants increased following the Ripon Land Regulations of 1831, which provided land grants to settlers. By 1850 Australia's population had grown to 500,000 inhabitants (not including Aborigines). Within a few years the population quadrupled under the stimulus of the discovery of gold in Victoria in 1851.

Self-government became an early objective of the colonies as the population grew. The Australian Colonies Government Act, passed by the British Parliament in 1850, empowered the colonies to establish legislatures, determine voting rights, and frame their constitutions as desired. New South Wales was the first to draft a constitution, in 1855. All other colonies except Western Australia became self-governing by 1859; the latter's desire to remain a penal colony delayed its constitution until 1890.

The need for a continental federation was felt even by 1863, when the first intercolonial conference of the premiers of the six colonies began. A draft federal constitution was drawn up in 1891, and it was approved at a convention in 1897–98. On the basis of this constitution, the Commonwealth of Australia came into being on January 1, 1901. The federal parliament sat in Melbourne until 1927. In 1911 a federal capital territory was selected and established as Australian Capital Territory, and the foundation stone for the present federal capital of Canberra was laid in 1913.

Three political parties competed for power in the new commonwealth: the Conservative Free Traders, the Liberal Protectionist Party, and the Australian Labor Party (ALP). The ALP came to power in the first decade and dominated Australian politics for the next several decades, until the end of World War II. Through its extensive social legislation, it set the pattern for Australia's future development.

In the later decades of the 1900s Australia's social welfare state gradually changed as reliance on government controls decreased and private sector economics became more dominant. The need for budgetary constraints and caps on spending forced the government to impose limits on social programs and subsidies. Changes in public opinion toward a centrist view of the proper role of government also influenced the nation's political outlook. After 13 years in power, the ALP was defeated by a coalition of the more conservative Liberal Party and Nationalist Party in 1996. This coalition won a large majority in the House of Representatives under the leadership of John Howard of the Liberal Party, who became prime minister.

The Liberal administration of John Howard faced opposition for its treatment of Aborigines, especially the practice of leasing tribal lands to outsiders. Faced with the probability that the Asian financial crisis would seriously damage his electoral prospects, Howard called an early election in 1998. The Liberal-National Coalition again prevailed at the polls but with a reduced majority. In 1999, 55 percent of Australians voted against the country's becoming a republic, although a constitutional convention had recommended that course in 1998.

In 2000 Sydney hosted the summer Olympic Games, the most popular games ever. In 2001 John Howard won a third term as prime minister in the national elections. In 2002 various aid agencies and the United Nations were critical of Australia's policy of holding asylum seekers in detention camps until their visa applications were processed, leading to riots in the Woomera camp in South Australia. That year, too, 88 Australians were killed in a nightclub bombing in Bali, Indonesia, an event that many call Australia's "September 11." Australia was generally supportive of the United States-led war in Iraq and in 2003 deployed troops, while also deploying a peacekeeping force in the Solomon Islands to

restore order. Then a bomb attack outside the Australian embassy in Jakarta, Indonesia, killed nine people and injured dozens more. In 2004 Howard won a fourth term as prime minister.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1945–49	Joseph Benedict Chifley
1949–66	Robert Gordon Menzies
1966–67	Harold Edward Holt
1967–68	John McEwen
1968–71	John Grey Gorton
1971–72	William McMahon
1972–75	Edward Gough Whitlam
1975–83	John Malcolm Fraser
1983–91	Robert James Lee Hawke
1991–96	Paul John Keating
1996–	John Winston Howard

CONSTITUTION

The legal foundation of the Australian government is the Commonwealth of Australia Act of 1900. The constitution is based essentially on the British model, but it borrows heavily from the U.S. Constitution, especially in provisions regarding federal versus state powers. From the British model it adopted the parliamentary system of government, under which the cabinet is responsible to the legislature. From the U.S. model came the idea of a decentralized, federal system of government in which the powers of government are divided between the federation and the states and the states retain their constitutional and political structures.

The powers of the federal government are divided among legislative, executive, and judicial branches, though there is not a strict separation of powers. In the British tradition, the distinction between the legislative and executive branches is nominal, inasmuch as leadership of both branches belongs to the same political party or coalition of parties commanding a majority in the popularly elected lower house of parliament.

Relations between the federal and state authorities are specified in great detail. Federal powers are enumerated, and powers not constitutionally delegated to the federal government remain with the states. The constitution empowers the federal government to legislate and act on all matters relating to foreign affairs, defense, immigration, foreign trade and interstate commerce, taxation, currency, banking, weights and measures, marriage and divorce, and enforcement of the judgments of state courts.

State governments are given wide responsibilities over education, public health, housing, agriculture, transportation, law enforcement, child welfare, welfare of

the Aboriginals, tourism, and exploitation of natural resources. However, since 1900 the trend has been toward a steady enlargement of federal powers at the expense of the states, stemming principally from the unlimited federal taxation power and the relative financial weakness of the states.

Questions relating to the interpretation and application of the constitution are resolved by the High Court of Australia, which has original jurisdiction in any constitutional case as well as appellate jurisdiction in cases brought from the state supreme courts.

The terms associated with cabinet government, including prime minister and cabinet, as well as the principle of collective cabinet responsibility to the parliament, are not mentioned in the constitution, but they are the foundations of Australian government. By convention, the chief executive officer of the federal government is the prime minister, not the governor-general appointed by the British sovereign, as stated in the constitution. The prime minister works with a cabinet of a dozen or so senior ministers that initiates all major government bills in the parliament. The ministers are party loyalists less concerned with day-to-day running of their departments than with legislative and political oversight.

State governments are much older than the federal government, and each has its own constitutional framework. The term *state* refers to Australia's six political divisions: New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, South Australia, Western Australia, and Tasmania. In addition, there are two mainland territories fully dependent on the federal government: Australian Capital Territory and Jervis Bay Territory and Northern Territory, which became self-governing in 1978.

PARLIAMENT

The legislative power of government is vested in the federal parliament, with a lower house, the House of Representatives, and an upper house, the Senate, consisting of 76 seats. The constitution limits the duration of the House of Representatives to three years, subject to earlier dissolution. It provides that the House, as the national chamber, should have twice the membership of the Senate, which represents states and territories. The House's 150 members are elected directly by the people in single-member constituencies. The leader of the party or party coalition commanding the majority in the House after an election is chosen as prime minister. The second-largest party in the House is the official opposition, and its leader is known as the leader of the opposition. The government party in the House also is the government party in the Senate regardless of whether it has a majority in the upper house.

Both houses use a system of committees to oversee their work and to consider proposed legislation. The fun-

damental stages in legislation, or the enactment of a bill, are presentation and first reading, second reading, committee proceedings, and third reading. The bill is then transmitted to the other house, where it goes through the same stages in committee.

On the British model, the most effective mechanism of legislative, parliamentary control over the executive is question time, during which ministers are questioned as a demonstration of the accountability of the executive.

All state parliaments are bicameral except that of Queensland, which has a unicameral body called the Legislative Assembly. The functions of state parliaments and their procedures are almost the same as those of the federal parliament.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Like most English-speaking countries, Australia has a two-party system in which a right-wing party, the Liberal Party, has alternated in government with a left-wing party, the Australian Labor Party. There is a third group, the National Party, which generally sides with the conservatives and is part of any right-wing coalition. The Liberal Party was founded in 1944 as the successor to the United Australia Party and is actually an amalgam of traditional liberals (in the European sense) and conservatives (in the Anglo-Saxon sense) with strong ties to the business community. The Australian Labor Party is the oldest of Australian political parties, founded in the 1890s as the political arm of the trade union movement. Its traditional constituency comprises immigrants, feminists, and workers. The party has long been divided between a moderate, pragmatic wing and a dogmatic, socialist wing, but the moderates generally carry the day at election times. The National Party was founded in 1920 as the Country Party and assumed its present name in 1982 in an effort to widen its appeal. It is conservative in outlook, and its constituency includes rural residents and farmers.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Each state is subdivided into self-governing local units called cities, counties, municipalities, towns, shires, district councils, or road districts. These units are created by the state parliament and are subject to the supervision of the state department of local government. The governing councils of these local areas are popularly elected.

The principal functions of local councils include construction and maintenance of roads, bridges, and water and sewage systems and sanitation and garbage collection services. The more important functions, such as education, public housing, and law enforcement, are performed directly by the state government.

LEGAL SYSTEM

Australia's legal system is based on English common law. The two principal sources of its law are the statutes of the federal parliament and state parliaments and the decisions of the judicial committee of the Privy Council in London, the High Court of Australia, and the supreme courts of the states.

The constitution vests judicial power in the High Court of Australia and other courts created by the federal parliament. At the judicial apex the High Court has both appellate and original jurisdiction. It handles all cases arising under a treaty, those in which the federal government is a party, those involving disputes between states or residents of different states, and those involving the interpretation of the constitution. The High Court's appellate jurisdiction covers appeals from other federal courts, from state courts within federal jurisdiction, and from state supreme courts. The High Court is presided over by the chief justice and six other justices.

The superior courts include the Family Court and the Federal Court. The Federal Court handles cases involving copyright law, trade practices, bankruptcy, industrial law, and administrative review. The Family Court deals with divorce, custody of children, family maintenance, and property disputes. There is no separate system of federal courts paralleling state courts. Instead, existing state courts are vested with jurisdiction over most federal matters.

All states and the Northern Territory have their own court systems headed by the state supreme court. Capital punishment was abolished by the federal government in 1973 but is retained by some states. All Australian prisons are maintained by the states, and there are no federal prisons.

HUMAN RIGHTS

As a multiparty parliamentary democracy, Australia is a country where all basic human rights are guaranteed by law. However, not until the mid-1970s did the federal and state governments enact equal opportunity and antidiscrimination legislation. The reason for this delay lies in the historic belief that Australia was a classless society free of violent racial tensions and serious breaches of human rights. This belief masked the fact that a silent minority, the native Australian peoples, suffered disguised discrimination without any legal remedies.

The indigenous people, the Aborigines, have an average life expectancy 20 years less than that of nonindigenous Australians, higher rates of unemployment, and inferior access to medical and educational institutions. In recent years a wide variety of government initiatives have sought to improve these conditions. In 1997 the government spent over \$1.1 billion on health, welfare,

education, and regional development to assist Aboriginal people. In 1998 Prime Minister Howard declared that reconciliation with Aboriginals was one of his government's highest priorities, but in 2001 he faced criticism for failing to acknowledge the suffering of Aboriginals and to apologize to "Stolen Generations" of Aboriginals who as children were forcibly removed from their parents to live with whites.

FOREIGN POLICY

Since World War II, Australia has played an active role in world affairs. As one of the founders of the United Nations, Australia has strongly supported that body and the work of its agencies. It has taken a key role in the United Nation's peacekeeping activities, drug-control programs, and disarmament initiatives. Australia has devoted special attention to conflicts and disputes involving Asian nations. It contributed soldiers to the UN force during the Korean War, helped suppress a Communist revolt in Malaya in the 1950s, sent combat troops to fight in the Vietnam War, and took the lead in helping restore peace in East Timor after Indonesian forces tried to overturn a vote for independence in 1999.

Australia's foreign policy reflects its national interests and defense needs as well. It has signed security agreements with Britain and New Zealand to protect Singapore and Malaysia. It has given large grants of aid to Papua New Guinea, a former Australian trust territory and another neighbor to the north.

Australia also has maintained close ties with the United States in the decades since World War II. This special relationship was reflected in Australia's strong support of the United States during the Gulf War in 1991 and the war in Iraq in 2003 and the two countries' mutual belief that their national security depended on this power alliance. Foreign commerce also played a key role, with trade between the two countries totaling over \$19.5 billion in 2003.

DEFENSE

Australia's Department of Defense supervises the three services—army, navy, and air force—each a separate branch of the military forces but with joint services for operations, equipment, communications intelligence, and systems analysis. The Defense Logistics Organization operates the government aircraft factories, which produce about one-third of the nation's aircraft, and is also the principal procurer of defense equipment.

The Royal Australian Army consists of the all-volunteer Australian regular army and the citizen military force, the reserve element. Military age is 17 years of age, and military service has been based on volunteers since

1972. The Royal Australian Navy is the senior service, dating from 1910, and is the smallest of the three services. There is no separate coast guard. The Royal Australian Air Force was created in 1921.

The nation's volunteer military service offers the choice of a military career. Initial enlistment is for six years, with reenlistment at the end of another three or six years, up to age 55. Men and women may enlist at any age between 17 and 43.

Australia's military expenditures are relatively high, reaching \$14.1 billion in 2003, or 2.8 percent of the national gross domestic product (GDP). About 54,000 Australians were on active duty as of 2003.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	53,600
Military Manpower Availability:	5,061,810
Military Expenditures \$billion:	14.1
as % of GDP:	2.8
as % of central government expenditures:	—
Arms Imports \$million:	485
Arms Exports \$million:	30

ECONOMY

Australia has a prosperous capitalist economy that ranks it with the highly industrialized countries of Western Europe. Australia's GDP was growing at an annual rate of 2.4 percent in 1990–97, totaling \$382.7 billion, with a per capita GDP of \$20,650. Growth stood at 3 percent in 2004 with a GDP of \$571.4 billion and a per capita GDP of \$29,000.

Australia has abundant mineral and energy resources and is the world's leading exporter of coal as well as a major exporter of aluminum bauxite, copper, industrial diamonds, iron ore, lead, nickel, gold, and silver. It is a major exporter of agricultural products such as wheat, barley, sugarcane, cattle, and sheep. Commodities account for 57 percent of the total value of Australian exports, making its economy subject to major movements in world commodity prices. To offset such downturns in commodity prices, government policies have helped increase the share of manufactured goods in Australian exports.

Australia suffered from low economic growth and a high unemployment rate in the early 1990s, though prosperity returned by the late 1990s despite the economic slump in many Southeast Asian countries. Foreign investments have spurred the development of Australian transport, manufacturing, and ranching. The United States is the leading source of such business investments, accounting for more than \$65 billion in 1996, or 40 percent of the total. In the 1990s the government privatized the national airline, telecommunication system, and national bank, which marked

significant steps toward greater emphasis on the private sector in the nation's economy. Into the new millennium, industrial output has continued to rise, and the nation's emphasis on reforms, low inflation (2.8 percent in 2004), and improving economic ties with China have powered the economy's strength. Problems remain, however. Drought, weak foreign demand, and strong import demand have raised the nation's trade deficit of \$5 billion in 2002 to \$14 billion in 2003.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 571.4

GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 29,000

GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 3.3

GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 2.0

Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:

Agriculture: 3.5

Industry: 26.3

Services: 70.2

Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:

Private Consumption: 61

Government Consumption: 18

Gross Domestic Investment: 24.8

Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 68.67

Imports: 82.91

% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 2.0

% of Income Received by Richest 10%: 25.4

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
105.3	110.0	114.8	118.2	121.5

Finance

National Currency: Australian Dollar (AUD)

Exchange Rate: \$1 = AUD 1.5419

Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 167

Central Bank Discount Rate %: —

Total External Debt \$million: 233.5

Debt Service Ratio %: —

Balance of Payments \$billion: -30.14

International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 29.97

Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 2.8

Official Development Assistance

Donor ODA \$million: 894

per capita \$: 44.50

Foreign Direct Investment \$billion: 6.85

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: 1 July–30 June

Revenues \$billion: 185

Expenditures \$billion: 181

Budget Surplus \$billion: 4

Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 3.5

Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2002) %: -3.8

Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 0.65

Irrigation, % of Farms having: 5.24

Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 47.2

Total Farmland % of land area: 6.3

Livestock: Cattle million: 26.42

Chickens million: 90

Pigs million: 2.66

Sheep million: 94.5

Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 31.85

Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 233

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 43.9

Industrial Production Growth Rate %: -0.1

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 250.4

Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 116.5

Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 6

Net Energy Imports % of use: -126.4

Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 45.3

Production kW-hr billion: 210.3

Consumption kW-hr billion: 195.6

Coal Reserves tons billion: 90.5

Production tons million: 377.7

Consumption tons million: 159.6

Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: 90

Production cubic feet trillion: 1.3

Consumption cubic feet billion: 893

Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: 3.5

Production barrels 000 per day: 630.5

Consumption barrels 000 per day: 880

Pipelines Length km: 4,773

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 82.91

Exports \$billion: 68.67

Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2002): 3.8

Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2002): 6.8

Balance of Trade \$billion: -30.14

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
United States %	16.0	8.7
Japan %	12.5	18.1
China %	11.0	8.4
Germany %	6.1	—
United Kingdom %	4.2	6.7
South Korea %	—	7.4
New Zealand %	—	7.4

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 811,603
 Paved %: 38.7
 Automobiles: 9,835,900
 Trucks and Buses: 2,236,400
 Railroad: Track Length km: 44,015
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km billion: 134.1
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 52
 Total Deadweight Tonnage million: 2
 Airports: 444
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 86.14
 Length of Waterways km: 2,000

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 4.4
 Number of Tourists from million: 3.4
 Tourist Receipts \$billion: 14.53
 Tourist Expenditures \$billion: 10.14

Communications

Telephones million: 10.82
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones million: 14.35
 Personal Computers million: 12
 Internet Hosts per million people: 141,747
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 471

ENVIRONMENT

Australia's size and physical isolation have given it an assemblage of plants and animals found nowhere else in the world. However, many of its unique mammals, birds, fish, and plants are endangered, primarily from a loss of natural habitat. In South Australia alone nearly 80 percent of the natural vegetation has been lost in areas cleared for agricultural purposes. It is estimated that 68 percent of the 102 species of native mammals there have become extinct or are endangered.

Key environmental issues in Australia are soil erosion and soil salinity. Erosion of the continent's limited arable land continues, caused by industrial development, urbanization, poor farming practices, and overgrazing. Soil salinity often results from the use of poor-quality water. Increasing desertification and the continent's limited freshwater sources pose other environmental concerns.

The Great Barrier Reef off the northeast coast, the largest coral reef in the world, is endangered by increased shipping and its growing popularity as a tourist attraction.

Australia has joined with other nations in agreements to limit ocean pollution and protect the ozone. However, as in most of these nations, Australia's economic development as an industrial, urban nation has taken priority over environmental issues.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 20.1
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: -282
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 17
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 111,658
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 17.97

LIVING CONDITIONS

Living conditions differ for white Australians and the Aboriginal population. Most white Australians enjoy a high standard of living, with per capita gross domestic product of \$29,000. Australia does not suffer from wide extremes of income, so most white Australians are comfortably middle class—although the gap between rich and poor has widened in recent years such that the top 10 percent of wealth holders have 25 percent of the wealth. The typical Australian lives in a detached brick home with a lawn and garden, although younger Australians, in particular, are likely to live in apartments and town houses in the cities. Aborigines, on the other hand, suffer from a host of problems, including limited access to health care and a significantly lower life expectancy, reliance on government allowances, and exploitation by some white Australians, who sell food staples to Aborigines at inflated prices in the days after government checks are sent. While the government has tried to provide housing for Aborigines, many Aborigines prefer a more nomadic life and use the houses entirely for storage.

HEALTH

Health care in Australia is paid for or subsidized by the government, and public hospitals provide free services, although there has been some movement in recent years to increase the level of private health insurance available. People generally select a general practitioner in their community, who then might refer the patient to a specialist. A great deal of emphasis is placed on disease prevention, and life expectancy at birth in 2004 was over 80 years. In 2004 the infant mortality rate was under 5 deaths per 1,000 live births, and in 2003 fewer than 200 persons died of AIDS.

Health

Number of Physicians: 48,211
 Number of Dentists: 8,200
 Number of Nurses: 149,936
 Number of Pharmacists: 13,956
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 249

(continues)

Health *(continued)*

Hospital Beds per 1,000: 7.9
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 4.76
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 8
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 9.5
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 1,995
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.1
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 93
 Measles: 94
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 100
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 100

FOOD AND NUTRITION

As an island continent/nation, Australia has plentiful seafood. Australian ranchers also provide abundant meat, especially beef and lamb. Meals are similar to those in the United States: breakfasts consist of such foods as cereal and bacon and eggs; lunches include sandwiches, salads, and fruit; and dinners include meat or seafood served with vegetables. Meat pies are very common. The influx of European and Asian immigrants in recent years has made Chinese, Thai, Indian, Greek, and Italian foods more popular. As traditional hunter-gatherers, Aborigines devote little time to food preparation and have a diet consisting of game and vegetables.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 83.8
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 185.6

STATUS OF WOMEN

Women in Australia have equal status under the law, and Australia was a pioneer in women's political rights. South Australia was the first British colony to give women the vote and the right to sit in parliament. Yet in practice, historical patterns of bias against women have contributed to their underrepresentation in government and politics. Still, in 2004, 37 of 150 members of parliament were women, for a total of 25 percent—substantially more than the world average.

Although women's rights organizations, both public and private, exist at the federal, state, and local levels, discrimination is present in the workplace. In 1994 it was estimated that women received approximately 90 percent of wages paid to men for similar work. Women generally work at lower-paying jobs in most professions and also hold jobs most at risk from technological change. Numerous government programs aid women who are home-

less or who are victims of abuse. Working mothers have access to government-operated child-care facilities.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 25
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.0
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 48.9

WORK

Australia's labor force by occupation is agriculture, 5 percent; industry (primarily mining, industrial and transportation equipment, food processing, chemicals, and steel), 22 percent; and services, 73 percent. The labor force in 2004 was about 10.19 million. Unemployment in late 2004 was about 6 percent, down from 10 percent in the 1990s. In recent years a growing percentage of the labor force has been in information and high technology, accounting, engineering, and medicine, placing laborers and factory workers at greatest risk for unemployment. About 11.3 percent of Australians are regarded as living in poverty. Despite problems, Australians pride themselves on living in an egalitarian society that provides upward mobility for its citizens economically.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 10,190,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 44.3
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 5
 Industry: 22
 Services: 73
 Unemployment %: 6

EDUCATION

School attendance is compulsory from the ages of six to 15 in all states except Tasmania, where it is compulsory from ages six to 16. Completion of the final two years of secondary school, while not compulsory, is achieved by at least one-third of students.

At the primary and secondary levels, about 22 percent of Australian children attend private schools, the majority run by the Catholic Church. Approved private schools receive substantial financial assistance from federal and state governments. Most government schools are coeducational; the proportion of single-sex schools is far greater among private schools.

Higher education comprises traditional universities as well as "tertiary" educational institutions, including teachers' colleges, agricultural colleges, fine arts institutions,

and technical institutes. The three “old” universities are Sydney, Melbourne (both founded in the 1850s), and Adelaide (founded in 1874), and the three “middle” universities are Tasmania, Queensland, and Western Australia.

Until 1986 all tertiary institutions were state run and secular. Bond University of Technology was the first private university, established in 1988. It was only in 1945 that the first doctoral program was instituted, at the University of Melbourne. Since then, all universities have offered courses of higher degree and research.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 100
 Male %: 100
 Female %: 100
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 20.6
 First Level: Primary schools: 9,865
 Teachers: —
 Students: 1,933,765
 Student-Teacher Ratio: —
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 96.8
 Second Level: Secondary Schools:
 Teachers: —
 Students: 1,411,612
 Student-Teacher Ratio: —
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 88.0
 Third Level: Institutions: 95
 Teachers: —
 Students: 1,012,210
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 74.4
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 4.9

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Scientific and technological research is actively pursued in Australia, especially in such fields as astronomy, chemistry, medicine, and engineering. Funding is provided by the government and private industry. The nation has in excess of 2,500 science and technology organizations, including the Australian Academy of Science. The nation has produced six Nobel Prize winners. Perhaps the nation’s most famous scientist was Howard Florey, who discovered penicillin in 1928.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 3,439
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 1.54
 High-Tech Exports \$billion: 2.76
 Patent Applications by Residents: 10,823

MEDIA

The country’s most influential newspapers are the *Sydney Morning Herald*, the *Age*, and the *Australian*. The national press agency is the Australian Associated Press (AAP), established in 1935.

The Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) provides nationwide noncommercial radio and television service. The Australian Broadcasting Tribunal regulates commercial and public radio and the country’s 139 television stations.

Australia has an extensive book-publishing industry, with over 150 publishers, many of them British publishing houses.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 48
 Total Circulation million: 3.08
 Circulation per 1,000: 161
 Books Published: —
 Periodicals: 97
 Radio Receivers million: 40.1
 per 1,000: 1,996
 Television sets million: 13.4
 per 1,000: 716

CULTURE

In recent years Australia’s film industry has grown and gained increasing international respect. Hit movies have included *Babe*, *Crocodile Dundee*, *Mad Max*, and *Muriel’s Wedding*. Major film stars from Australia include Mel Gibson (though he was born in the United States), Nicole Kidman, Paul Hogan, Olivia Newton-John, and Russell Crowe. Australian Lucy Lawless won international fame for her depiction of the title character in the television series *Xena, the Princess Warrior*.

One of the most recognizable landmarks in Australia is the Sydney Opera House, designed by the Danish architect Jorn Utzen to look like sails on the ocean. It is home to the Australian Opera Company and attracts hundreds of thousands of visitors each year.

Much of the literature of Australia, especially since the beginning of the twentieth century, has focused on “the bush,” the nation’s wild, sparsely inhabited parts that occupy a central place in Australians’ imagination. Similarly, while earlier Australian painting and other graphic arts formerly took their cue from European traditions, more recent graphic arts have been more inspired by the nation’s wilds. Many Aboriginal artists have had their work prominently displayed, and pointillist painting of Dreamings from the Central Desert region are especially coveted. Additionally, several Aboriginal dance troupes perform in Australian cities and throughout the world.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: —

(continues)

Cultural Indicators *(continued)*

Museums Number: 15
Annual Attendance: 5,279,000
Cinema Gross Receipts national currency million: 584
Number of Cinemas: 1,422
Seating Capacity: 387,000
Annual Attendance: 80,000,000

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

The most distinctive folklore of Australia is Aboriginal and arises from a body of oral history known as the Dreaming or the Dreamtime. This body of folklore accounts for the origins of the world, explains the relationship between the person and the natural order, and establishes the rules of social relations as they were instituted by ancestral beings. It is through the Dreaming that the Aboriginal people find connection with their world and their history. One Dreamtime myth, for example, tells how the sun was made—the result of a quarrel between a crane and an emu, when the crane threw one of the emu's eggs into the sky, where it shattered and its yolk burst into flame, illuminating the world. The Dreamtime also allows Aborigines to establish ownership claims to land by showing intimate knowledge of it and its inhabitants. Cultural heroes often stand at the center of myths of the Dreaming.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

In the cities Australians enjoy theaters, pubs, discos, and dining out in the many restaurants that feature both Australian cuisine and that from other countries. Also important to Australians is the water. The country's beaches are typically packed with surfers, and boating is a common form of recreation. Vacationers travel within the country by car; favorite foreign destinations are New Zealand, Fiji, and Bali.

Barbecue is an institution in Australia, with friends and family gathering at midafternoon on Sundays for steaks and seafood cooked on the grill. So, too, is gambling, especially on horse races. On the first Tuesday of November, at exactly three in the afternoon, the nation comes to a virtual standstill as the Melbourne Cup is run and people watch or listen, often on loudspeakers set up in offices.

ETIQUETTE

Australians are generally regarded as easygoing, friendly, and casual in their relationships with others. Efforts to appear superior in dress or manners are discouraged.

People typically greet each other with a handshake or, possibly, a kiss on the cheek. The essential Australian greeting is "g'day," that is, "good day." Australians respect one another's privacy, and staring is considered impolite, although eye contact is not avoided. Among the Aborigines, turning the eyes away during conversation is a sign of respect.

The rules of Aboriginal culture are likely to be entirely foreign to a westerner. For instance, interpersonal relationships are defined by kin groups. In some groups a son-in-law must avoid at all costs any contact with his mother-in-law and will often go far out of his way to avoid such contact. In other groups a son-in-law may converse with his mother-in-law, but he must use a special language, called "mother-in-law talk." In general, Aborigines are puzzled by Westerners' use of the phrase "thank you." In Aboriginal culture, society is organized by reciprocal obligations that are well understood and that do not require thanks. It is expected, for example, that food is shared in social or kinship groups, making thanks unnecessary.

FAMILY LIFE

Family life in Australia is similar to that in other Western nations. The norm is the nuclear family, with a husband, wife, and children. As divorce and remarriage have become more common, more and more Australian families consist of a single parent with children and "blended" families consisting of children from the former marriage of each of the partners.

Aboriginal family life follows traditional patterns. In many Aboriginal societies, first marriages are arranged, with husbands often much older than their brides. In some societies female infants are betrothed at birth. This practice appears to stem from the belief that spirits make females pregnant. Because this can happen at any time, it is important for the infant to have at the ready a "social father," the woman's husband.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

The climate in Australia is mild and often hot, so lightweight, casual clothing is the norm, and shorts are even accepted in the workplace. Clothing is typically a blend of European and American fashions. Dress is more stylish in the cities than in the Outback, where cowboy attire is common. Because of the fierce sun, though, Australians have one of the highest skin cancer rates in the world, so many people wear clothing that provides protection from the sun. Traditionally, Aborigines wore no clothing at all, but that has changed, and most Aborigines wear modern clothing. Aborigines in rural areas, like whites, often wear cowboy attire, while those on the southeastern coast fa-

vor large blankets made from the hides of kangaroos to protect them from winter weather.

SPORTS

Australians are sports lovers. The most popular sports are football, including rugby and Australian rules football. During the summer, cricket is a popular sport with players and spectators, and teams compete to win Sheffield's Shield as national champions. Australians have also enjoyed considerable success as Olympians. In the 2004 summer games in Athens, Australia won 17 gold, 16 silver, and 16 bronze medals, for a total of 49. Many of these medals were in swimming, diving, and cycling, but the men's baseball team and the women's basketball team each won a silver medal.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1939** Australia begins participation in World War II operations against Germany and Japan; the United States provides military aid.
- 1944** Robert Menzies founds the Liberal Party.
- 1945** World War II ends; Prime Minister John Curtin dies; Joseph B. Chifley and the Labor Party come to power and strengthen relations with the United States; Australia takes part in the founding of the United Nations.
- 1946** An influx of postwar immigration begins, bringing 800,000 non-British Europeans to Australia by 1968.
- 1949** Robert Menzies becomes prime minister, a post he will hold for the next 17 years.
- 1950** Australia contributes troops to the United Nation's Korean War effort.
- 1951** Australia joins the United States and New Zealand in a regional security arrangement known as ANZUS; the Colombo Plan, which provides aid for Australia's neighbor countries in Southeast Asia, goes into effect, spurring immigration of Asian students to Australia.
- 1953** The Korean War ends, and Australian troops return home.
- 1954** Australians enthusiastically receive the visit of Queen Elizabeth II; Australia helps to found the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO).
- 1956** Television is introduced in Australia, with the Melbourne-hosted Olympics as its first broadcast.
- 1965** Australia sends troops to fight Communism in the Vietnam War.
- 1966** Prime Minister Menzies steps down; his protégé Harold Holt becomes prime minister.
- 1967** Prime Minister Holt drowns; John McEwen acts as caretaker prime minister until John Gorton, also of the Liberal Party, becomes prime minister; a referendum gives Australian Aborigines full citizenship rights; Australia becomes a full member of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN); Japan replaces Britain as Australia's main trading partner.
- 1971** William McMahon of the Liberal Party becomes prime minister.
- 1972** Edward Gough Whitlam of the Labor Party becomes prime minister; Australia formally recognizes the People's Republic of China; troops are withdrawn from Vietnam.
- 1974** The Immigration Restriction Bill of 1901, known as the "White Australia" policy, is repealed, ending the racially based process for allowing entrance to Australia.
- 1975** A constitutional crisis erupts when the Senate blocks the financial legislation necessary to implement the programs of Prime Minister Gough Whitlam; Governor General John Kerr dismisses Whitlam and appoints Malcolm Fraser, the leader of the opposition, as interim prime minister; elections confirm Fraser, with a Liberal-Country coalition, as prime minister; Papua New Guinea becomes independent.
- 1976** The Aboriginal Land Rights Act awards historic lands in Northern Territory to Aboriginal claimants.
- 1977** SEATO dissolves.
- 1978** Northern Territory achieves self-government.
- 1983** The Labor Party returns to power under Bob Hawke.
- 1984** Japan surpasses the United States as the largest provider of imports to Australia.
- 1986** The British Parliament passes the Australia Act, eliminating the last vestiges of British authority in Australia.
- 1988** Australia signs a free trade agreement with New Zealand.
- 1990** Carmen Lawrence and Joan Kirner become Australia's first female leaders of governments.
- 1992** Parliament passes the Citizenship Act, which removes the oath of allegiance to the British Crown from the requirements for Australian citizenship.
- 1993** The Labor Party wins record fifth election victory.
- 1996** A coalition of the Liberal and National (formerly Country) parties under John Howard ousts Labor.
- 1999** Australians vote against cutting the links with the British monarchy and the establishment of a republic.

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- 2000** Australia hosts the Olympic Games in Sydney.
- 2001** National elections are held on 10 November. Howard wins third term as prime minister.
- 2002** Aid agencies, civil rights groups, and the United Nations criticize Australia's policy of holding asylum seekers in detention camps until the visa applications are processed, leading to riots in the Woomera camp in South Australia. Eighty-eight Australians are killed in a nightclub bombing in Bali, Indonesia.
- 2003** Australia deploys troops in Iraq, sparking public protests and a no-confidence vote in the Senate against Prime Minister Howard. Australia deploys a peacekeeping force to restore order in the Solomon Islands.
- 2004** Bomb attack outside Australian embassy in Jakarta, Indonesia, kills nine; John Howard wins fourth term as prime minister.
- 2006** Australia signs treaty with East Timor to share revenue from oil and gas deposits in the Timor Sea.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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Washington, D.C. 20036
Phone: (202) 797-3000 Fax: (202) 797-3168

INTERNET RESOURCES

- Australian Bureau of Statistics
<http://www.abs.gov.au>

AUSTRIA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Austria (Republik Österreich)

ABBREVIATION

AT

CAPITAL

Vienna

HEAD OF STATE

President Heinz Fischer (from 2004)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Chancellor Wolfgang Schüssel (from 2000)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Federal parliamentary democracy

POPULATION

8,184,691 (2005)

AREA

83,870 sq km (32,382 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

German

LANGUAGE

German

RELIGION

Christian, predominantly Roman Catholic

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Euro

NATIONAL FLAG

White horizontal stripe between two red stripes

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A black eagle with a golden beak and long red tongue, a three-merlon mural crown on its head, a hammer in its left hand and a sickle in its right hand, a severed silver chain hanging from each of its wrists, and a shield on its breast with the national colors of red and white on bars

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Land der Burge, Land am Strome” (Land of the mountains, land on the river)

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

October 26 (National Day); all major Christian holidays

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

October 30, 1918

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

October 1, 1920

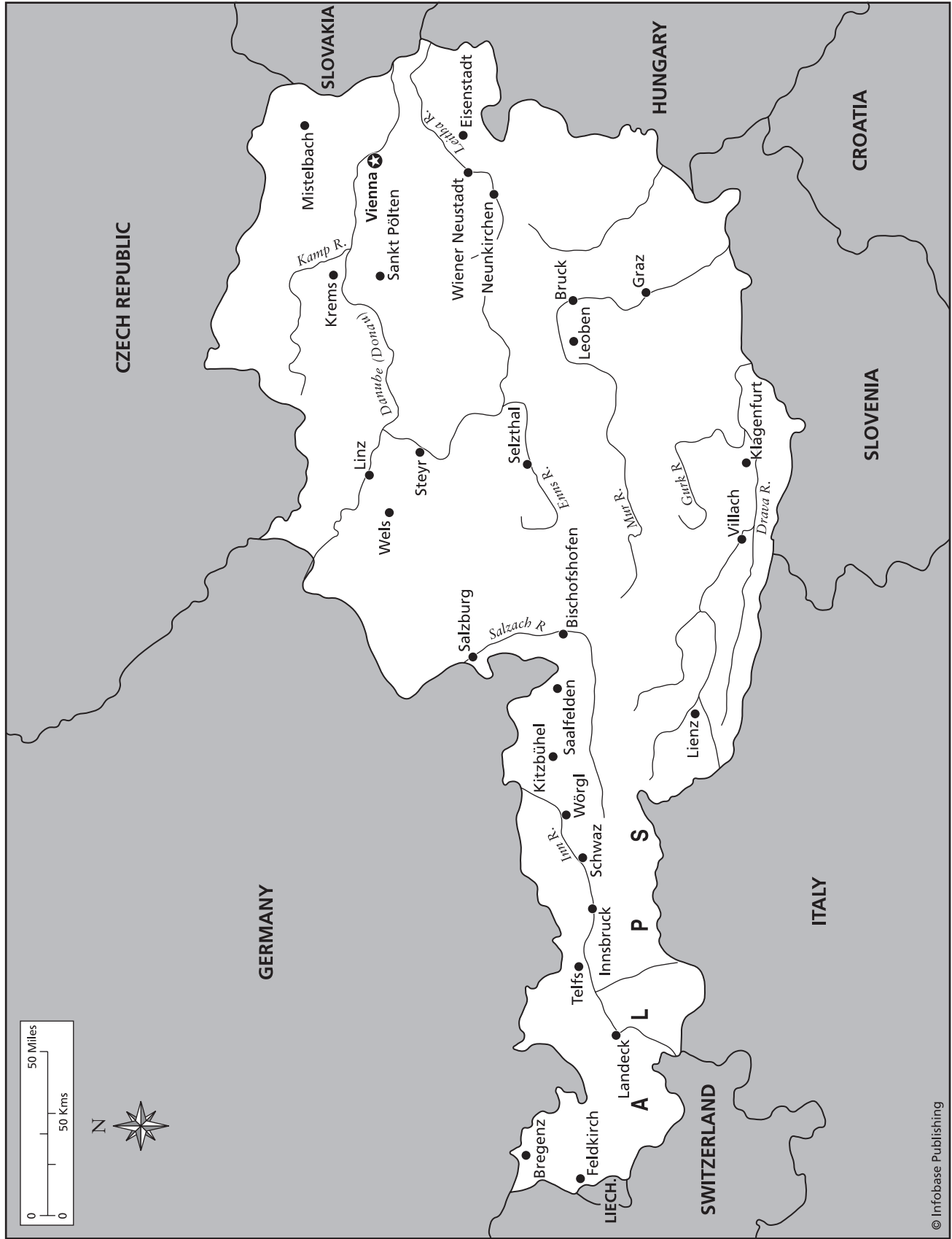
GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Austria is a small, landlocked alpine country in south-central Europe with an area of 83,870 sq km (32,382 sq mi). Austria's geographical importance lies as the crossroads of Europe. Austrians place the country in the exact center rather than in the south-central part of Europe. The Hahneckogel, a peak in the province of Salzburg, not only is claimed to be the highest wooded mountain in Europe but also is said to mark the geographic center of the continent. Austria shares international borders with the Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Liechtenstein, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Switzerland.

Austria generally is divided topographically into the eastern Alps, the northern alpine forelands, the Bohemian Plateau, the Vienna Basin, and the eastern and southeastern lowland. Although nearly three-quarters of the country is mountainous, 17 percent is arable and 47 percent is forest; a little more than 1.6 percent is vineyards, orchards, and small garden plots, and about 14.5 percent consists of built-up areas and wasteland.

The eastern Alps consist of a group of mountains that begin at the Swiss border and become three ranges that fan out as they cross the country. The central range is the largest, containing the highest elevations in Austria, topped by the Grossglockner, at 3,798 m (12,461 ft).

Austria



The northern and central ranges separate near Landeck, where the Inn River takes up its generally eastward course. Much of the northern range consists of either limestone or dolomite, like the southern range.

The northern alpine forelands are foothills of the Alps that extend between the mountains and the Danube River from the country's border north of the city of Salzburg to the Vienna Basin. Nearly all of the highlands northwest of Vienna and north of the Danube River form part of the Bohemian massif rather than the alpine system. They are referred to as the Bohemian Plateau, as they form a ring around the Bohemian portion of the Czech Republic. The northern alpine forelands ultimately terminate in the foothills bordering the Vienna Basin. The basin itself is not completely flat, but the terrain is gentle. The basin extends into the Leitha River valley in a southeasterly direction toward the Semmering Pass and is separated from the Neusiedler See by the Leitha Mountains.

Because Austria contains a greater part of the eastern Alps, precipitation drains in all directions, with all except a minute fraction of it eventually reaching the Danube River.

The Danube is Austria's grand river. The major alpine tributaries of the Danube—including the Inn River, which joins the Danube near the German border—flow eastward, through central Austria. To the east of the Inn are the Salzach and the Enns. The Danube bisects Lower Austria and receives a large number of lesser streams. To the south, the Leitha flows northeast, draining the area from the Semmering Pass to the Hungarian border. From the other side of the Semmering Pass the Murz drains to the south, joining the Danube farther downstream.

Geography

Area sq km: 83,870 sq mi 32,382

World Rank: 112th

Land Boundaries, km: Czech Republic 362; Germany 784; Hungary 366; Italy 430; Liechtenstein 35; Slovakia 91; Slovenia 330; Switzerland 164

Coastline, km: 0

Elevation Extremes meters:

Lowest: Neusiedler See 115

Highest: Grossglockner 3,798

Land Use %

Arable Land: 16.9

Permanent Crops: 0.9

Forest: 47.0

Other: 35.2

Population of Principal Cities (2001)

Graz	226,244
Innsbruck	113,392
Linz	183,504
Salzburg	142,662
Vienna	1,550,123

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Austria's weather is determined by three systems—the North Atlantic maritime, the Mediterranean, and the continental—but each dominates in a particular section of the country. The weather of the Danube valley and the northern alpine forelands is mostly from the North Atlantic maritime system. The low-pressure air masses that move with relative rapidity eastward across northern Europe affect climatic activity in a broad way, but weather is determined largely by local factors in the valleys and basins. In deep valleys without air circulation, temperature inversions occur, while sunbathed mountaintops enjoy clean, crisp air and warmer temperatures. The phenomenon known as foehn (warm winds) is common, especially in the valleys on the northern slopes of the mountain ranges. On the southern slopes foehn occur more frequently in winter and spring, while on the northern slopes they occur more frequently in spring and autumn. These strong, hot, dry, and dusty winds cause much discomfort to people and also cause avalanches.

Vienna has an average annual temperature of just under 10°C (50°F). In January, the coldest month, the average is about 22°C (28°F) and in July, the warmest month, 20°C (68°F). Vienna's temperatures are slightly higher than the country's average, but mean annual temperatures vary surprisingly little in low-elevation areas all over the country—less than 4°F in a typical year. At about 2,743 m (9,000 ft), average annual temperatures drop to the freezing point, but clear air and bright sunshine make life tolerable at these elevations.

Precipitation varies considerably more than average temperatures—from about 457 mm (18 in) annually in easternmost Burgenland to 2,032 mm (80 in) or more in mountain spots. Vienna receives about 610 mm (24 in) annually, the southeastern alpine foothills about 1,016 mm (40 in), and Salzburg and the northern alpine forelands about 889 to 1,016 mm (35 to 40 in). Much winter precipitation occurs as snow. Annual snowfalls average from 508 to 1,016 mm (20 to 40 in) in the east, 2,032 mm (80 in) in the low Alps, and 10,160 mm (400 in) or more at high elevations.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature

Vienna: 50°F (January 28°F, July 68°F)

Average Rainfall

Burgenland: 80 in

Vienna: 24 in

Southeastern Alpine Foothills: 40 in

Salzburg and the Northern Alpine Foothills: 35 to 40 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Austria is heavily forested, with nearly 40 percent of the country covered with oak and beech at the lower altitudes and primarily conifers at higher elevations and stone pines in the mountainous regions. The forests give way to alpine meadows at an elevation of about 2,000 m (6,652 ft), where edelweiss, heather, alpine rose, poppies, and blue gentian are common. Ibex (a mountain goat with large curved horns), chamois (horned antelope), and marmots live at higher elevations, while red deer, roe deer, foxes, hares, and badgers can be found throughout the country. Bears inhabit the southern forested regions. The Neusiedler See provides habitat for hundreds of bird species. Austria's national parks make up about 3 percent of the country's land area, and protected areas cover over 28 percent of the nation's land area.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005:	8,184,691
World Rank:	89th
Density per sq km:	97.8
% of annual growth (1999-2003):	0.3
Male %:	48.7
Female %:	51.3
Urban %:	—
Age Distribution %:	
0-14:	15.9
15-64:	68.1
65 and over:	16.0
Population 2025:	8,190,000
Birth Rate per 1,000:	8.9
Death Rate per 1,000:	9.56
Rate of Natural Increase %:	-0.1
Total Fertility Rate:	1.35
Expectation of Life (years):	Males 76.0
	Females 81.89
Marriage Rate per 1,000:	4.5
Divorce Rate per 1,000:	2.4
Average Size of Households:	2.5
Induced Abortions:	—

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Virtually all Austrians consider themselves German. Minority groups, excluding the more than 200,000 guest workers, account for only 2 percent of the total population and are made up of Croatians, Slovenians, Hungarians, Czechs, and Slovaks. The rights of the Slovene and Croatian minorities are guaranteed by the Austrian State Treaty of 1955. They are entitled to complete equality as Austrian citizens, education in their own language, their own cultural and social organizations, and bilingual signs.

LANGUAGES

Austrians are 92 percent German speaking. All are literate and, by law, receive at least nine years of formal education.

Austria's apparent linguistic unity belies its actual diversity. The standard German, sometimes called "school German," is the same as that of Germany, although the Austrian speech is softer. The majority of Austrians use a Bavarian dialect at home. Alemannic German is spoken in Vorarlberg, Frankish German in Lower Austria, and polyglot German in Vienna. In Tirol, German is mixed with Latin words and in eastern areas with Slavic words.

The different dialects also are associated with class distinctions. The Viennese speak a Slavicized dialect that was spoken in the days of the Hapsburg empire. The varieties of Austrian German reflect the country's mixed ethnic heritage, drawn from diverse elements such as the Avars, Illyrians, Romans, Teutons, Huns, Bayuvarians, and Franks. Dialectal differences are the sole vestiges of the various groups that held sway at different times over what is present-day Austria.

RELIGIONS

Austria is a largely Roman Catholic country, with an estimated 74 percent of its citizens professing the Catholic faith. Throughout the country Catholicism is evident in cathedrals and churches; crucifixes at crossroads; and monasteries, convents, and wayside shrines. Throughout the year the many religious holidays are marked by festivals, processions, pageants, and ceremonies.

The real influence of the Catholic Church on the lives of Austrians has been steadily decreasing in this century. More than 20,000 Austrians withdraw annually from church membership, and only one-third of baptized Catholics (15 percent in Vienna) participate in Sunday Mass. Only 10 percent belong to Catholic organizations, such as Katholische Aktion. The number of young people following a calling to the priesthood or a religious order also has been decreasing.

The Protestant percentage of the population has doubled since the end of World War II to just under 5 percent, primarily as a result of immigration. The principal Protestant body is the Evangelical Church, which is a loose union of the Helvetic Reformed and Augsburg Lutheran churches. Protestants are strongest in the alpine regions and in Burgenland. Only two other Protestant groups are officially recognized: the Moravians and the Methodists. The Old Catholic Church, founded in 1871 as a protest movement against the doctrine of papal infallibility, was given legal recognition in 1877. Eastern Orthodoxy is represented by Armenian, Bulgarian, Greek, Romanian, Russian, and Serbian Orthodox churches.

Of the non-Christian religions, Judaism is the oldest. On the other hand, adherents to Islam have grown in

numbers, most of them guest workers from Turkey and parts of the former Yugoslavia.

Religious Affiliations

Roman Catholic	6,024,000
Protestant	385,000
Muslim	344,000
Other	8,000
None	1,424,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

At the beginning of the Christian era, the Romans organized the region that is present-day Austria into a number of provinces, including Noricum, Pannonia, and Ilyria, and founded its major urban settlements: Vindobona (Vienna), Juvavum (Salzburg), Oenipons (Innsbruck), and Brigantium (Bregenz). After the fall of the Roman Empire, Austria in the ninth century became a province of Charlemagne's empire; two centuries later, under the name *Österreich*, or Kingdom of the East, it was joined to the Holy Roman Empire.

Austria's rise to greatness began in 1282 when Rudolf von Hapsburg (Rudolf I, German emperor) gave Austria (Upper and Lower Austria, Styria, Carinthia, and Carniola) to his sons Albert and Rudolf, launching a dynastic rule that lasted until 1918. The zenith of Hapsburg power came in the 1500s under Charles V (Charles I of Spain, the grandson of Emperor Maximilian I on the agnate side and King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Spain on the enate side), whose dominions included Austria, Spain, the Netherlands, and Spanish America. Charles gave Austria to his brother Ferdinand, who had already been elected king of Hungary and Bohemia in 1526. When the last Hapsburg king of Spain died in 1700, France and Austria both claimed the throne. In the ensuing War of the Spanish Succession (1701–14), Austria lost Spain but retained control of the Spanish Netherlands, Naples, Milan, and Sardinia. In the War of the Polish Succession (1733–35) Austria lost Naples and Sicily. The death of Charles VI in 1740 led to the War of the Austrian Succession (1740–48), at the end of which Maria Theresa was recognized as ruler. Both she and her son Joseph II (1780–90) instituted a number of major reforms, including the abolition of serfdom and the extension of religious freedom, and their reigns spanned the golden age of the Austrian cultural renaissance.

The rise of Napoleon signaled the end of Austria's power and the slow dismemberment of its empire. In 1797 France took Belgium and Milan, and in 1805 Austria lost Venice, the Tyrol, and land in Dalmatia to Napoleon. The Congress of Vienna (1814–15) awarded Lombardy, Venetia, Istria, and Dalmatia to Austria but denied the return of former Austrian possessions in Baden and the Netherlands.

From 1815 to 1848 Austria was dominated by Prince Klemens von Metternich, one of the most famous European statesmen of the age. His extremely repressive rule was ended by revolutions that broke out in 1848 in Hungary, Bohemia, and Vienna itself. Metternich resigned and fled to London. Emperor Ferdinand I abdicated the Austrian crown in favor of Francis Joseph I, his 18-year-old nephew, who held the throne for the next 68 years, until his death in 1916. Although Francis Joseph I set up a strong central government, the Hapsburg empire continued to shrink. In 1859 French and Sardinian troops defeated the Austrians in Italy, thus ending their rule in the peninsula. In 1866 Austria lost its influence in Germany after being defeated in the Seven Weeks' War. In 1867 the Magyars revolted and forced the Hapsburgs to concede a separate Kingdom of Hungary under the Austrian crown. Enfeebled by these losses, the empire was ripe for the coup de grace, which came on June 28, 1914, when Archduke Francis Ferdinand, heir to the Austrian throne, was assassinated in Sarajevo by Serbian nationalists. The event set off World War I, in which Austria was joined by Germany, an ally since 1879.

Austria emerged from World War I defeated and impoverished, with neither the empire nor the Hapsburg dynasty. In 1918 Austria was proclaimed a republic, confined to its German-speaking provinces. Like Germany, Austria faced both political and economic chaos for the next 20 years. The two major parties, the Christian Socialist Party and the Social Democratic Party, were almost equal in strength, and both had private armies. A third group, the Austrian Nazi Party, advocated union with Germany; such a union was prohibited by the Treaty of Versailles and the Treaty of Saint-Germain. The democratic constitution of 1920 was suspended in 1933 when Chancellor Engelbert Dollfuss dissolved the Austrian parliament and began to rule by decree. In 1934, following civil strife, Dollfuss established Austria as a corporate state along fascist lines. A few months later Dollfuss was assassinated by the Nazis in a coup, and Kurt von Schuschnigg succeeded to the leadership. Schuschnigg struggled for the next four years to keep Austria independent, but in 1938 German troops entered the country and annexed it to the Third Reich. Eighteen months later Austria entered World War II as part of the Axis powers.

Allied troops entered Vienna in 1945, and the country was divided, like Germany, into U.S., British, French, and Soviet zones. Although the Austrians were permitted to set up a provisional central government, the exercise of Austrian sovereignty was limited to the four occupying powers under a 1946 agreement.

The provisional government was established under the Social Democrat Karl Renner. Following a general election in November 1945, Leopold Figl became chancellor of a coalition government with the Austrian People's Party (*Österreichische Volkspartei*, or *ÖVP*) and the Austrian Social Democratic Party (*Sozialistische Partei Österreichs*, or

SPÖ) as partners. In 1955 the Austrian State Treaty formally ended the occupation and declared Austria's independence. During the same year Austria joined the United Nations.

The postwar coalition government endured until 1966, when the ÖVP won a legislative majority. Thereafter a succession of ÖVP and SPÖ governments held power. The 1970s were dominated by SPÖ chancellor Bruno Kreisky. The 1980s saw the rise of the far-right Freedom Party of Austria (Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs, or FPÖ) under Jörg Haider. To keep the FPÖ out of office, ÖVP and SPÖ agreed to a coalition under Franz Vranitzky. Austria became an EU member in 1995. In the first direct election for the European parliament in 1995, the SPÖ finished second to the ÖVP, while the FPÖ secured a high 27.6 percent of the vote. This led to Vranitzky's resignation in 1997 and the election of Viktor Klima as chancellor. In legislative elections in 1999 the FPÖ won 27 percent of the vote, securing an equal number of parliamentary seats as the ÖVP. This time, however, talks between the ÖVP and the SPÖ were unsuccessful, prompting the ÖVP to form a coalition government with the FPÖ, with Wolfgang Schüssel as chancellor. Following international protest, Haider resigned as leader of the FPÖ in 2000. Schüssel was reelected in 2002. He tried to form a working coalition with the Social Democrats and the Greens, but his efforts failed, so he turned once again to the FPÖ, moving the government to the right. In 2003 the coalition passed a set of asylum and immigration laws regarded as the most restrictive in Europe. In 2004 Heinz Fischer was elected president; just days before he was to take office, his predecessor, Thomas Klestil, died.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

Chancellor

1945	Karl Renner
1945–53	Leopold Figl
1953–61	Julius Raab
1961–64	Alfons Gorbach
1964–70	Jesef Klaus
1970–83	Bruno Kreisky
1983–86	Fred Sinowatz
1986–97	Franz Vranitzky
1997–2000	Viktor Klima
2000–	Wolfgang Schüssel

President

1945–50	Karl Renner
1951–57	Theodor Körner
1957–65	Adolf Schärf
1965–74	Franz Jonas
1974–86	Rudolf Kirchschläger
1986–92	Kurt Waldheim
1992–2004	Thomas Klestil
2004–	Heinz Fischer

CONSTITUTION

Austrian constitutional development has undergone many changes. After the demise of the Hapsburg monarchy in 1918, a new constitution was proclaimed in 1920, establishing a federal democratic republic. The so-called First Republic collapsed in the face of fascism in 1934. The Second Republic was recreated on an identical basis in 1945.

The constitution of 1920 provides for three separate branches of government: executive, legislative, and judicial. The federal president, as the head of state, is directly elected by the people. He in turn appoints the chancellor, who is the head of government. The president names the cabinet, which usually includes the vice chancellor, on the recommendation of the chancellor. These officials, plus state secretaries, constitute the executive branch.

The constitution of 1920 delegates powers not specifically assigned to the federal government to the nine provinces (*Länder*). Each of the provinces has a constitution and an elected provincial diet (*Landtag*). Below the provinces are local communities (*Gemeinden*).

The constitution of 1920 has been amended several times. In 1929 the federal president's powers were enhanced by granting him the formal power to appoint and dismiss the chancellor and, on the chancellor's recommendation, the cabinet. It also provided for the popular election of the president.

According to the constitution, federal and provincial legislative and administrative authority is apportioned four ways. Such matters as foreign affairs, justice, finance, civil and criminal law, public peace and order, and security are federal concerns. Some laws are enacted at the federal level but are administered by provincial authorities, including those on elections, highway, police, and housing. Other laws are made and administered at the provincial level but under federal guidelines, such as social welfare and land reform. Matters not specifically assigned to federal control are reserved for the provinces, including municipal affairs, buildings, theaters, fire control, and tourism.

The constitution does not include a bill of rights as such, but it does guarantee equality before the law and prohibits discrimination of any kind.

Constitutional amendments may be made through laws designated constitutional laws or through constitutional provisions if the amendment is part of another law. They require a two-thirds majority vote in the Nationalrat, with at least half of the members present. Constitutional laws or provisions are accompanied by a national referendum only if requested by one-third of the deputies of either the Nationalrat or the Bundesrat.

In addition to the constitution, two laws—a constitutional law and a treaty—are particularly important in Austria's constitutional development. The first is the Fed-

eral Constitutional Law on the Neutrality of Austria of 1955; the second is the Austrian State Treaty, signed by the four occupying powers and Austria in 1955.

Since 1951 the president of Austria has been elected by popular vote for a six-year term, limited to two consecutive terms. Members of reigning or formerly reigning dynasties are barred from running for election. Presidential candidates are nominated by parties, and the winner must poll over 50 percent of the vote. If no candidate succeeds on the first ballot, a runoff election is held between the two candidates receiving the highest number of votes.

Presidential duties include convoking, proroguing, and dissolving the Nationalrat; appointing the chancellor and, on his recommendation, the cabinet; signing treaties; and granting reprieves and pardons. Although the president cannot veto legislation, he is empowered to reject a cabinet proposal or delay enactment of a bill. The official acts of the president generally require the countersignature of the chancellor or the concerned minister. During national emergencies when the Nationalrat is not in session, the president may issue ordinances countersigned by the cabinet. The president may be recalled or dismissed from office by popular referendum and by a two-thirds vote of the Bundesversammlung (Federal Assembly). There is no office of vice president; hence new elections are held if the presidency is vacated for any reason.

The chancellor is appointed or dismissed by the federal president but is responsible to the Nationalrat and is the leader of the majority party. Cabinet ministers, also appointed by the president, are generally but not necessarily members of the Nationalrat. Ministers can participate in sessions of either house. Committee meetings also are open to ministers, with the exception of the Main Committee, where they must be specifically invited.

State secretaries are appointed and leave office in the same manner as ministers. They aid ministers in parliamentary business and are nonvoting participants in cabinet sessions.

The basic features of the Austrian constitution are those of Western democracies: separation of powers, federalism, local autonomy, and liberalism. All the institutions of representative parliamentary democracy are present and place basic human rights over those of the state. However, there are countervailing tendencies within the political process, especially from the entrenched bureaucracy, corporatist interest groups, powerful political parties, and the growing power of the interventionist welfare state.

In addition to the parliamentary opposition, there are a number of constitutional checks on federal authority. These include the Constitutional Court and the administrative courts (which are more fully described in the Legal System section); the Central Auditing Authority; and the people's lawyer, the Austrian equivalent of the Ombudsman.

PARLIAMENT

The Austrian Bundesversammlung, or parliament, comprises two chambers: the upper house (Bundesrat) and the lower house (Nationalrat).

The Bundesrat consists of 62 delegates elected by the provincial legislatures for terms varying from four to six years. Representation reflects party strength in the provincial legislatures. At least one seat must be given to the second-largest party in each legislature.

The Bundesrat, like the upper houses in many other countries, is the less powerful of the two chambers. Its authority is only that of a delaying veto, which can be overridden by the Nationalrat.

The Nationalrat consists of 183 members elected by universal suffrage from nine electoral districts for minimum terms of four years. Two sessions are convoked annually by the federal president, in spring and autumn. Special sessions may be called if requested by the cabinet, by one-third of the Nationalrat or by one-third of the Bundesrat. Deputies elect a president and second and third presidents from among their members. The president and the third president usually belong to the majority party, while the second president usually belongs to the opposition party. The three presidents preside over plenary sessions in two-hour shifts and join with the chairmen of the parliamentary groups to form a conference that directs Nationalrat activities and decides the time and agenda of plenary sessions and committees.

Universal male suffrage has been in force in Austria since 1907, but women did not gain full voting rights until after 1917. Voting is compulsory for citizens 21 or older. All elections are supervised by electoral boards on which political parties are represented on the basis of their performance in the previous elections.

Party lists are submitted for the Nationalrat elections. Each voter can list as a preferred choice, thereby increasing his chances for election. Turnout usually is heavy; it has not fallen below 92 percent since 1945.

POLITICAL PARTIES

The Austrian political party system has been described as the "two-and-a-half system," with two major parties, the ÖVP and the SPÖ, and a third party in the FPÖ. The primary characteristics of the system are continuity and concentration: continuity reflecting the historical roots of the major groups in the 19th century and concentration reflecting the limited ideological spectrum covered by these parties.

The ÖVP was founded in 1945 as the successor to the pre-World War II Christian Social Party. Its overall policies support a free-market economy with some government intervention, low taxes, a balanced budget, and low wage increases. Although it advocates free enterprise, it favors some nationalization programs and workers' profit sharing.

The SPÖ was founded in 1945 as the successor to the Social Democratic Party, established in 1888. The SPÖ retains very little of its predecessor's dogmatic Marxism; after the end of World War II it became pragmatic and reformist, as evidenced by its Grand Coalition government alliance with the ÖVP from 1945 to 1966.

Led by moderates such as Karl Renner and Adolf Scharf, each of whom eventually served as federal president, the SPÖ program stressed humane and liberal policies such as full employment, a reduced work week, electoral reform, lower food prices, and increased government spending on social welfare. The party also softened its former anticlerical position to become acceptable to Catholics and even supported state subsidies to Catholic schools. A new party program adopted in 1958 claimed the SPÖ was the party of "all those who work for a living" and stated the party's opposition to both communism and fascism.

The FPÖ was founded in 1955 by a former Nazi, Anton Reinthaller, and represents the nationalist-liberal camp in Austrian politics. It is an offshoot of the League of Independents, a postwar party that broke up in 1955 over internal disagreements. The party is composed of right-wing nationalists and moderate liberals, between whom there are frequent factional disputes. It contested the presidential election for the first time in 1980, when it won 17 percent of the vote. Although a weak opposition party, it was able to parlay its Nationalrat votes as a power broker and participate in the government in 1983.

The FPÖ is a defender of pan-German interests and opposes all forms of non-German, especially Slavic, influences. It is antagonistic to guest workers, who are seen as threats to Austria's Germanness. It is an advocate of free enterprise but has supported social reforms, including granting workers a voice in management. It has endorsed cooperation with Western European countries, particularly the European Union. It is strongly anticlerical, opposing Catholicism as a constraint on individual liberty.

The United Greens of Austria (Vereinte Grüne Österreichs), a conservative ecological party, was founded in 1982 by Professor Alexander Tollman and Alois Engländer. Another ecological party, the more progressive Alternative List of Austria (Alternative Liste Österreichs), was founded in 1983. These two parties won 19 percent and 1.2 percent, respectively, of the Nationalrat vote in 1983. In 1986 these two parties merged to form the Green Alternative (Grüne Alternative) for that year's election. The merged party is now called the Greens/Green Alternative (Die Grünen–Die Grüne Alternative).

The National Democratic Party, founded in 1966, is a radical right-wing group that advocates reintroduction of the death penalty, abolition of abortion, and withdrawal of civil rights from conscientious objectors. It is violently anti-Communist and anti-Slav and opposed to the presence of guest workers.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Each of the nine provinces has its own constitution and an elected Landtag (provincial legislature). The number of delegates in the Landtag varies according to the population. A Landtag may be dissolved by the president with the consent of the Bundesrat.

A Landtag elects an executive composed of a governor (*Landeshauptmann*) and councillors (*Landesräte*). If there is no federal agency in the province, the governor also acts as the federal representative. Article 15(1) of the constitution states that all matters not expressly designated as falling under federal authority lie within provincial jurisdiction. These include primary education, housing, health, and conservation. In cases where there is a dispute regarding jurisdiction, the Constitutional Court has ultimate authority. Interprovincial policies are coordinated by compacts and treaties.

Provinces are divided into districts (*Bezirke*) and local communities (*Gemeinden*). Each district is headed by a district commissioner (*Bezirkshauptmann*), usually a career civil servant who is appointed by the provincial governor. Local communities are self-governing, each with a popularly elected community council (*Gemeinderat*) chosen by proportional representation on the basis of political party strength. Members serve a five-year or six-year term. Community council meetings are presided over by a mayor (*Bürgermeister*) elected by the council. Local communities with a population of 20,000 or more have a charter. Each local community has a board whose members are elected on the basis of proportional representation by the community council. The actual authority of these bodies is quite limited because federal and provincial regulations are so pervasive and their supervision and controls so extensive.

LEGAL SYSTEM

Austrian law belongs to the system of European continental law, which has its basis in Roman law. In this system, legal codes play an important role. Austrian civil law is based largely on an 1812 civil code and its amendments, especially those introduced by the Socialist government from 1970 to 1980. The most important of these amendments relate to family law, consumer law, and legal procedure.

The court system is independent of the executive and the legislature. Judges, although administratively subject to the Ministry of Justice, are not bound by instructions from the executive, and they cannot be dismissed or transferred except in accordance with procedures established by law. Judges are chosen by the federal president or the cabinet from lists submitted by the judiciary.

The judicial hierarchy consists of the following courts: Constitutional Court (*Verfassungsgerichtshof*), Administrative Court (*Verwaltungsgerichtshof*), Supreme Court (*Oberster Gerichtshof*), appeals courts (*Oberlandesgerichte*), provincial courts (*Kreisgericht* or *Landesgerichte*).

cht), and district courts (*Bezirksgericht*). Cases outside the jurisdiction of these courts are heard in special courts.

The Constitutional Court decides the constitutionality of laws and decrees that are passed at the federal, provincial, and local levels and hears cases involving jurisdictional conflicts between the federal government and the provinces and between or among provinces. Individuals can present cases to the court if they believe that the decision of an administrative agency violated their constitutional rights. Monetary claims against the state as well as cases regarding disputed elections are also brought before this court. In addition, the court decides impeachment of the federal president and charges of illegality against members of the federal government and provincial governments.

The highest ordinary court (distinct from military or other special courts) is the Supreme Court, which is the court of last resort for all civil and criminal cases. Justices hear cases in five-person panels. Four appellate courts, in Vienna, Graz, Linz, and Innsbruck, are courts of second instance for civil and criminal cases and final appellate courts for district court cases. Usually a three-judge panel hears cases. On the lower level are 18 provincial and district courts. Provincial courts serve as courts of first instance for civil and criminal cases carrying penalties of up to 10 years' imprisonment and as appellate courts for some cases from district courts.

District courts hear minor cases, such as misdemeanors and guardianship, adoption, paternity, probate, registry of lands, and boundary disputes. Juries, usually consisting of eight persons, are employed in criminal cases. Certain criminal cases are subject to a hearing by two lay assessors and a judge.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Austria is a constitutional parliamentary democracy in which most basic human rights are guaranteed and respected in practice.

Although arbitrary detention is constitutionally prohibited, the law provides for investigative, pretrial, or preventive detention for up to 48 hours. The investigative judge may authorize continued detention before trial for up to two years.

The human rights of Austria's minorities are fully respected. However, the Slovenes are concerned about government efforts to end teaching of the Slovenian language in the local elementary schools they attend.

Austria plays a major role in monitoring human rights issues in Eastern Europe. Both Amnesty International and the Bruno Kreisky Foundation are active in this regard.

FOREIGN POLICY

The Austrian State Treaty of 1955 ended the four-power occupation of Austria, reestablished the country as a sov-

ereign republic, and prohibited any union with Germany. During the same year the Federal Assembly approved a constitutional amendment declaring Austria's permanent neutrality, rejecting military alliances, and banning the establishment of foreign military bases on national soil. Austria formally submitted an application to join the European Community in 1989, and accession to the European Union was endorsed by the voters in a referendum by 66.4 percent. In 1995 Austria joined the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation's Partnership for Peace and signed the Schengen Accord providing for free movement between EU states.

DEFENSE

The Austrian military establishment is relatively small—about 35,000 active-duty personnel in 2003—and its forces are lightly armed and organized into small basic units. The Austrian State Treaty of 1955 placed limitations on armaments. For example, it prohibited weapons of mass destruction and guided missiles. Also in 1955 the Nationalrat enacted a constitutional law on Austrian neutrality that prohibits membership in military alliances but permits participation in peacekeeping efforts outside the country, such as in Cyprus. There are no foreign military bases in Austria.

Legislation in 1962 separated national defense into regular military, civil defense, economic, and psychological sectors. The president is the supreme commander of the Bundesheer (Defense Forces), but operational control is vested in the minister of defense. The four sectors are responsible to the National Defense Council, presided over by the minister of defense.

Conscription is compulsory under the Armed Forces Law of 1955. The period of service is six months under a revised law of 1971.

Austria has only a limited armaments industry, and most of the military hardware is imported. The country does not receive military aid.

Observers rate the conditions of military service and the morale as reasonably good, even though military pay is low by Western European standards and a lack of mission and the poor quality of material reduce the sense of purpose among all ranks. The military budget is relatively austere—just under \$1.5 billion in fiscal year 2001–02, 0.85 percent of the nation's gross domestic product (GDP)—allowing little room for sophisticated weaponry. Austrian troops have not engaged in military action since World War II.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 34,600

Military Manpower Availability: 2,066,467

(continues)

Military Indicators *(continued)*

Military Expenditures \$billion: 1.5
 as % of GDP: 0.85
 as % of central government expenditures: 2.06
 Arms Imports \$million: 55
 Arms Exports \$million: 2

ECONOMY

Austria has a well-developed market economy and high standard of living, with just 3.9 percent of its population living below the poverty line. It is closely tied to other EU economies, especially that of Germany. Through its membership in the European Union, Austria has attracted foreign investment because of its access both to the Western European market and nearby countries in Eastern Europe. Economic growth, though, has been slow in recent years—just 0.7 percent in 2001, 1.4 percent in 2002, and less than 1 percent in 2003 and 2004. Planned for 2004 was a tax cut of 500 billion euros, with another 2.5 billion planned for 2005. The stimulating effects of these tax cuts, however, are likely to be offset by higher health insurance contributions and higher energy taxes. Austria faces intense competition from other EU countries; to meet that competition, Austria is trying to emphasize knowledge-based economic sectors, deregulate its service sector, continue to lower taxes, and encourage labor force participation by its aging population. It also is making efforts to reduce its public debt, which stood at 67.6 percent of gross domestic product as of 2004. On the plus side, both inflation (1.4 percent) and unemployment (4.4 percent) were low in 2004.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 245.3
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 30,000
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 1.8
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 1.5
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 3.5
 Industry: 25.7
 Services: 70.8
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 55
 Government Consumption: 19
 Gross Domestic Investment: 22.5
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 83.45
 Imports: 81.59
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 2.5
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 22.5
 CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
104.7	107.2	110.0	112.0	113.5

Finance

National Currency: Euro (EUR)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = EUR 0.886
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: —
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 2.5
 Total External Debt \$billion: 15.5
 Debt Service Ratio %: —
 Balance of Payments \$billion: –1.353
 International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 7.14
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 1.4

Official Development Assistance

Donor ODA \$million: 520
 per capita \$: 63.50
 Foreign Direct Investment \$billion: 7.28

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$billion: 67
 Expenditures \$billion: 70
 Budget Deficit \$million: 3
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 3.5
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: –0.5
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 23.7
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 0.27
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 149.7
 Total Farmland % of land area: 16.8
 Livestock: Cattle million: 2.05
 Chickens million: 11
 Pigs million: 3.2
 Sheep 000: 305
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 17
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 2.7

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 39.7
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 1.9

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 6.8
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 26.7
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 3.3
 Net Energy Imports % of use: 67.4
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 14.1
 Production kW-hr billion: 58.5
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 55.1

Coal Reserves tons million: 28
 Production tons million: 1.56
 Consumption tons million: 7.19
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet billion: 500
 Production cubic feet billion: 66.4
 Consumption cubic feet billion: 282.7
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels million: 62
 Production barrels 000 per day: 26.4
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 264.9
 Pipelines Length km: 663

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 81.59
 Exports \$billion: 83.45
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 6.8
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 6.1
 Balance of Trade \$million: -1.353

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Germany %	43.2	31.9
Italy %	6.7	9.6
Hungary %	5.4	—
Switzerland %	5.0	5.2
Netherlands %	4.2	—
United States %	—	4.9
France %	—	4.8
United Kingdom %	—	4.7

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 200,000
 Paved %: 100
 Automobiles: 3,987,100
 Trucks and Buses: 765,600
 Railroad: Track Length km: 6,021
 Passenger-km billion: 8.2
 Freight-km billion: 17.1
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 6
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 37.4
 Airports: 55
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 13.8
 Length of Waterways km: 358

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 19
 Number of Tourists from million: 5
 Tourist Receipts \$billion: 16.25
 Tourist Expenditures \$billion: 12.65

Communications

Telephones million: 3.881
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones million: 7.09

Personal Computers million: 3.013
 Internet Hosts per million people: 47,284
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 456

ENVIRONMENT

Austria is actively engaged in the protection of the national environment. Forests cover about 47 percent of the territory, and there are 129 protected areas or nature reserves covering 28.3 percent of the country; 302 plant species and 108 animal species are protected by law. Along with Hungary and the Czech Republic, Austria is planning a trinational park along the floodplain areas of the Danube, Thaya, and March rivers.

Forest damage is caused by a combination of air and soil pollution. It is estimated that some 25 percent of the country's forests have suffered some damage. Like many postindustrial nations, Austria is taking an active role in reducing pollutants, including those that contribute to the greenhouse effect. Legislation was passed to reduce emission by more than 20 percent over a five-year period, and greater care is being taken of the country's remaining undeveloped lands.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 47.0
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: 8
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 28.3
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 80,789
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 7.59

LIVING CONDITIONS

Living conditions in Austria are generally high, with a per capita GDP in 2004 of \$30,000 and less than 4 percent of the population living in poverty. The crime rate is among the lowest in Western Europe, and violent crime is rare—though the rate of white-collar crime is relatively high, and violence and intimidation of ethnic immigrants continue to be problems. Income is distributed relatively evenly, with the richest 10 percent having about 22.5 percent of the nation's income. Health care is almost universally covered by insurance. The transportation system is modern and efficient, with over 6,000 miles of railroads and 1,600 miles of expressways. In the cities, people generally live in one- or two-room apartments; only about one-quarter of Austrian city dwellers live in apartments or homes with four or more rooms. One-third of Austrians live in the five largest cities. Property in the rural areas is relatively inexpensive. There, people tend to live in wood or stone farmhouses, many of which have been in a family for hundreds of years. In the western part of the country, Swiss-type chalets predominate; farmhouses

and other buildings in the east reflect more of a Slavic influence.

HEALTH

Austria has a well-developed health-care system. Fully 99 percent of the population is covered by health insurance, paid for by workers, employers, and government at all levels. This insurance entitles Austrians to free outpatient and inpatient care. Patients are free to go to the doctor of their choice. Life expectancy at birth in 2004 is nearly 79 years, and the infant mortality rate is fewer than 5 deaths per 1,000 live births. Fewer than 100 Austrians died of AIDS in 2003.

Health

Number of Physicians: 26,286
 Number of Dentists: 4,029
 Number of Nurses: 47,767
 Number of Pharmacists: 4,581
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 324
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: 8.6
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 4.68
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 4
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 7.7
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 1,969
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.3
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 83
 Measles: 78
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 100
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 100

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Austria has always been a crossroad between Eastern and Western Europe, so its cuisine reflects the influences of German, Hungarian, Czech, and northern Italian cooking. Austrians begin the day with a light breakfast of rolls and coffee. The midday meal is often the main meal of the day—Austrians call it *Essen warm*, or the “hot meal”—and consists of soup, a main dish (often the essential Austrian dish, *Wiener schnitzel*, or breaded veal), vegetables, as well as noodles. The evening meal is lighter, consisting typically of such items as cheese, sliced tomatoes, and slices of cold meat; the meal is referred to as *Essen kalt*, or a “cold meal.” Coffeehouses are an important part of Austrian culture, and many Austrians, especially in the cities, take a midafternoon break to visit one. The quintessential Austrian dessert is *Sachertorte*, a rich chocolate cake; like many such desserts in Austria, it is not overly sweet. When a fire breaks out, neighbors typically gather to put out beer and a buffet meal for volunteer firefighters.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 108.4
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 225.1

STATUS OF WOMEN

The position of Austrian women is not markedly different from that of women in other Western European countries. Legal and other barriers to their full participation in public life are disappearing, although vestiges remain. Violence against women is a problem, and it is reported that more than 300,000 women are abused annually and that one-fifth of the country's 1.5 million women have suffered from violence at some time. The 1997 Law on Protection against Violence in the Family provides special protection to women. Although prostitution is legal in Austria, the country is a transit point for women sold into sexual slavery from the former Soviet republics to Western Europe and North America. There is a Women's Affairs Ministry that oversees the condition of women. In addition there is a Federal Equality Commission and a Federal Commissioner for Equal Treatment. About 70 percent of the women between 15 and 60 are in the labor force, but they typically earn 30 percent less than men. About 66 percent of mothers work outside the home. Since 1998 women have been allowed to serve in the military. Sexual harassment is punishable by law, and women may be awarded compensation of up to four months' salary if discriminated against because of their sex.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 34
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.0
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 44.5

WORK

Austria's labor force in 2004 was about 3.4 million, with about 4 percent in agriculture and forestry, 29 percent in industry and crafts, and 67 percent in services. Laborers are represented by trade unions, while management has its own management association, and farmers are represented by a farmers' federation. Eighty-five percent of Austrians work for wages, while 10 percent are professionals who work on a fee-for-service arrangement, and 5 percent are self-sufficient through agriculture. Some 50 percent of wage earners are white-collar workers. Austria's social legislation provides generous benefits for retirees

and mandates five weeks of paid vacation a year, even for young and inexperienced workers. Additionally, workers receive an extra month's salary before Christmas and an extra month's salary before the vacation season. Much of Austria's unskilled labor is provided by immigrants, a continuing source of friction in Austrian society.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 3,425,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 41.7
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture and Forestry: 4
 Industry and Crafts: 29
 Services: 67
 Unemployment %: 4.4

EDUCATION

Since 1962 compulsory education has lasted for nine years (ages six to 15 and grades one through nine). The elementary school consists of a four-year lower school and a four-year *Hauptschule* (high school). The latter also functions as the lower level of the eight-year secondary school (grades five through 12), leading to the certificate of maturity (*Matura* or *Reifezeugnis*), which qualifies students for university admission. Children who complete the eight-year elementary school may complete their ninth year of compulsory education in a polytechnical (prevocational) course. There are three types of vocational education: apprenticeships; middle-level technical or vocational full-time schooling, one to four years in length; and upper-level vocational or technical schools, with a five-year program leading to the *Matura*. The educational system is rounded out by an extensive adult education program.

The School Organization Act of 1962 divided the secondary schools into special and regular categories. The upper five-year curricula vary widely. The regular category usually offers six different curricula, three of which are in the classical arts, two in science and mathematics, and one in home economics for female students.

The Private Schools Act of 1962 regulates the establishment and operation of private schools and private student boardinghouses. It also provides for accreditation, subsidies, and inspection. Private schools exist at every level of the educational system except universities. Private-school enrollment in compulsory general education is about 3 percent, but it increases to 12 percent in upper-level academic secondary schools, 20 percent in vocational schools, and 59 percent in middle-level vocational schools. In teacher training 36 percent of the students at the secondary level and about 29 percent of the students at the postsecondary level are in private schools.

The language of instruction is German in 99 percent of the schools, but the rights of the Croats, Slovenes, Hungarians, Czechs, and Slovaks are respected, and elementary schools for minority groups are conducted in their native language. Croatian and Slovenian are offered as electives in academic secondary schools.

Higher education comprises universities (*Universitäten*) and colleges of fine arts (*Kunsthochschulen*), which have equivalent status. The general German term for a higher-education institution is *Hochschule*, which includes universities and all other institutions of university rank. There are 12 universities and six colleges of fine arts.

The federal government has complete financial responsibility for academic secondary schools, medium- and upper-level vocational schools, and higher education. For other schools, the federal government pays the majority of the personnel costs, while the province and district pay the rest. Districts are primarily responsible for preschool and compulsory general education and the provinces for compulsory vocational schools. On average, federal funds provide about two-thirds of total public expenditures on education at all levels. About 60 percent of the costs of private schools are reimbursed by the federal government.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 98.0
 Male %: 98.0
 Female %: 98.0
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 14.8
 First Level: Primary schools: 4,557
 Teachers: 29,129
 Students: 386,484
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 13.3
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 89.9
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 693
 Teachers: 72,392
 Students: 489,936
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 10.4
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 88.5
 Third Level: Institutions: 44
 Teachers: 26,511
 Students: 223,735
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 48.3
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 5.8

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Science and technology are well supported in Austria. Scientific research is carried out mainly at the universities, and Austria participates in the European Space Agency, the European Council for Nuclear Research, the European Molecular Biology Laboratory, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, and the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural

Organization. It is also the headquarters for the International Atomic Energy Agency. Famous Austrian scientists include the Viennese psychiatrist Sigmund Freud and Nobel Prize winners Julius Wagner-Jauregg (1927), Erwin Schrödinger (1933), Wolfgang Pauli (1945), and Konrad Lorenz and Karl von Frisch (1973).

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 2,313
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 2.19
 High-Tech Exports \$billion: 9.28
 Patent Applications by Residents: 3,313

MEDIA

Austrian newspapers can be divided into three distinct groups: the big, popular, mass-appeal dailies, all in Vienna; the provincial press; and a small group of independent quality papers, of which Vienna's *Die Presse* and Salzburg's *Salzburger Nachrichten* are the best known. Strong political party leanings, if not actual affiliations, characterize most newspapers.

Newspaper readership is highest in Vienna, whereas in rural areas broadcasting is a more important medium.

The press exhibits three types of ownership: private, political party, and government. None is directly tied to any commercial enterprise, although there is some cross interest. Austria has not been spared the trend toward press concentration that most advanced countries have experienced since the 1950s, although it has tended to take the form of increased concentration in the hands of political parties rather than chains. The disappearance of a number of papers, such as *Express*, a mass-appeal daily, and the ÖVP's paper *Volksblatt* in the 1970s reflected the fragile economic base of the Austrian press. The Press Promotion Law of 1975 was designed to give the government power to help ailing newspapers.

Freedom of the press is guaranteed by the constitution, which states, "Every person has the right of free expression of opinion in speech, writing, print and visual media within the limits of legal regulations. The press must not be subjected to censorship or restricted by rule of the licensing system." Because the space devoted to advertising is not high—about 25 percent—advertisers do not exert much influence on editorial policies.

The national news agency is the Austria Presse Agentur, a cooperative jointly owned by all newspapers (except *Neue Kronen Zeitung*) and the Austrian Broadcasting Corporation (Österreichischer Rundfunk), a public corporation whose shares are held by the provincial governments. It does not have foreign bureaus but has a number of part-time correspondents in major cities abroad. It also

has contracts for the supply of news with Reuters, AFP, AP, and dpa.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 16
 Total Circulation million: 2.5
 Circulation per 1,000: 309
 Books Published: 8,056
 Periodicals: 120
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets million: 4.3
 per 1,000: 526

CULTURE

Austria is virtually synonymous with classical music. Emperor Maximilian I founded the Vienna Boys' Choir in 1498, and Salzburg is the birthplace of Mozart, who first played for Empress Maria Theresa in 1762. Other classical musicians who were born in Austria or otherwise called it home include Franz Joseph Haydn, Beethoven, Franz Schubert, Johannes Brahms, and Gustav Mahler. Viennese waltzes, principally those by Johann Strauss (for example, "Tales from the Vienna Woods") are part of the standard classical repertoire throughout the world. The Salzburg music festival draws thousands of visitors each summer, and Vienna remains home to the Boys' Choir, a philharmonic orchestra, and the state opera. Virtually every town and village in Austria, even the smallest, has its own *Musikverein*, or local musical group with its own community band or orchestra.

Austria also has a rich literary tradition. As a German-speaking country, part of its cultural heritage includes the great German epics of the Middle Ages. In the twentieth century a strong tradition in drama, fiction, and poetry developed with such writers as Arthur Schnitzler, Hugo von Hofmannsthal, and Stefan Zweig.

The Albertina museum in Vienna is world class, housing works by such artists as Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci, Peter Paul Rubens, Paul Cézanne, Édouard Manet, and Amedeo Modigliani.

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Because of their isolation, the alpine regions of Austria are particularly rich in pagan folklore and mythology. A good example of such a folklore tradition is the *Krampus*, which derives from the Old High German word for "claw." The *Krampus* is a male incubus who accompanies Saint Nicholas. During the first two weeks of December, young men traditionally dress up as *Krampus* and roam the streets, where they frighten children and adults with bells and chains. Today, *Krampus* costumes include finely

crafted red masks, horns, and a black sheep's skin. Youth in some communities engage in competitive *Krampus* events.

Perhaps the most widely known text in Austrian mythology is the epic poem *Das Niebelungenlied*, written in Austria around the year 1250. The poem blends stories of Teutonic warrior gods and goddesses with tales of court life in the Middle Ages and treats themes such as the tragedy of fate, retribution for wrongdoing, and the struggle between good and evil, light and darkness.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number:	973
Volumes:	9,341,615
Registered borrowers:	908,034
Museums Number:	209
Annual Attendance:	8,943,000
Cinema Gross Receipts national currency billion:	1.025
Number of Cinemas:	441
Seating Capacity:	73,200
Annual Attendance:	15,000,000

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Austrians, particularly the Viennese, display a zest for life and culture. A favorite saying is "In Berlin [Germany], the situation is serious but not hopeless. In Vienna, the situation is hopeless but not serious." For recreation Austrians are fond of such alpine sports as skiing, and they enthusiastically support culture and the arts. Much Austrian social life centers on coffeehouses and *Konditoreien*, or pastry shops, where people gather not only for good food but also for conversation, relaxing, and reading. In rural areas Austrians turn out in traditional costumes to devote considerable attention to folk and religious festivals and holidays, complete with parades and local marching bands.

ETIQUETTE

Austrians tend to formality in their interpersonal relations, a legacy of the Austrian empire, when people were defined by their position in society, either as aristocrats or as members of the complex civil service. Professionals are typically addressed by their titles, and women are often addressed as *gnädige Frau* (literally, "honored woman," the equivalent of "madame"). The most common greeting in Austria is *Griiss Gott*, or "God's greetings." People shake hands when they meet; an Austrian handshake consists not of lingering shaking but of a single firm "pump" of the hands. It is still common for older men to kiss the hands of women and click their heels together when they

are introduced. At mealtimes everyone joins in a toast ("*Prost*" or "*Guten Appetit*") before eating.

FAMILY LIFE

The basic unit of family life in Austria is the *Familie*, or nuclear family, consisting of husband, wife, and children. It is common for a widowed grandparent or unmarried aunt or uncle to live with an Austrian *Familie*. Austrians regularly visit their extended family, or *Grossfamilie*, consisting of grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins. Children tend to maintain a close relationship with their godparents.

Although Austria has had one of the highest labor force participation rates among women in Europe and the nation makes strong efforts to ensure that women are treated equally, they continue to take on most of the responsibilities for the household and for child rearing. To many Austrian men, who are brought up with traditional attitudes, the proper sphere for women is still "*Kinder, Kirche, und Küche*" ("Children, church, and kitchen").

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Austrians tend to dress on the formal side. It is common for men to wear suits, even when they are just strolling the streets or visiting a park, and women frequently wear dresses. Austria is well known, though, for its traditional costumes. For men, these consist of lederhosen, or short leather pants, along with short jackets and brimmed hats decorated with feathers. For women, the traditional costume is the dirndl, a kind of skirt, and an Austrian woman will generally invest heavily in at least one high-quality, custom-made dirndl that will last her for many years (and that can cost the equivalent of many hundreds of dollars). Although these costumes tend to be reserved for holidays and festivals, it is not uncommon to see Austrians wearing them for everyday occasions.

SPORTS

As an alpine country, Austria, not surprisingly, fosters winter sports, especially skiing but also tobogganing and ice skating. Austrian Olympians won a total of 11 medals in the 2002 Winter Games in Salt Lake City, Utah. Popular summer sports include bicycling, canoeing, hiking, and mountain climbing.

CHRONOLOGY

1945 A provisional government is established under Socialist leader Karl Renner; following general elections in November, Chancellor Leop-

- old Figl forms a coalition government with the ÖVP and the SPÖ as partners.
- 1946** Government nationalizes major industrial firms to prevent Soviet confiscation; de-Nazification laws are enacted; Salzburg festival is revived.
- 1947** Austria joins UNESCO, but its application to join the United Nations is vetoed; the United States begins to pay its own occupation costs.
- 1948** Austria qualifies for aid under the Marshall Plan.
- 1949** Former Nazis are allowed to participate in national elections in parties free of Nazi ideology, including the Union of Independents (later renamed the Freedom Party); a new coalition cabinet is formed.
- 1950** President Renner dies, and Theodor Körner of the Socialist Party is elected president; Reds lose Soviet Zone elections; the death penalty is abolished.
- 1951** Theodor Körner takes office as president.
- 1953** Julius Raab is named chancellor, and he pursues a modified free-market economy for Austria; the Soviet Union begins to pay its own occupation costs, and France and Britain follow suit.
- 1955** Four-power occupation of Austria ends as the Austrian State Treaty proclaims an independent Austria; Nationalrat votes for permanent neutrality; Austria joins the United Nations; Austrian defense forces are established.
- 1956** Austria becomes a member of the Council of Europe.
- 1957** Adolf Schärf of the Socialist Party becomes president.
- 1958** Austria joins the European Free Trade Association.
- 1961** Raab resigns and is succeeded as chancellor by Alfons Gorbach.
- 1962** Austria applies to join the European Economic Community (EEC).
- 1964** Josef Klaus is named chancellor.
- 1965** Franz Jonas of the Socialist Party is elected president.
- 1966** People's Party wins elections and forms a minority government under Josef Klaus.
- 1969** Austria and Italy agree on a policy guaranteeing the rights of the German-speaking population of South Tirol.
- 1970** Socialists win a plurality and form the first all-Socialist government under Chancellor Bruno Kreisky; *Volksblatt* ceases publication.
- 1971** New civil code liberalizes divorce and marriage laws; Socialists win a clear majority in snap elections.
- 1972** Austria joins the EEC.
- 1974** President Jonas dies; Rudolf Kirchschläger is elected president on the Socialist ticket.
- 1975** Socialists sustain their Nationalrat majority in elections as the economy continues its upward trend.
- 1978** In a national referendum, voters reject a program for nuclear power.
- 1979** Socialists increase their Nationalrat majority in elections.
- 1983** Socialists lose parliamentary majority in national elections; Bruno Kreisky steps down as chancellor and is succeeded by Fred Sinowatz heading a Socialist Party–Freedom Party coalition government.
- 1986** Jörg Haider becomes the leader of the Freedom Party; despite charges that he was an active Nazi military officer, Austrian People's Party candidate Kurt Waldheim is elected president; Sinowatz resigns as chancellor, and Socialist leader Franz Vranitzky calls for new elections, in which the Green Party participates for the first time; following elections, the Socialist and People's parties form a grand coalition.
- 1990** The government revokes some of the neutrality provisions of the 1955 State Treaty.
- 1991** Austria supports UN forces in the Persian Gulf War by permitting air and land transportation through Austrian territory; President Waldheim announces that he will not run for reelection; the Socialist Party is renamed the Social Democratic Party.
- 1992** Thomas Klestil of the People's Party, a proponent of EU membership for Austria, is elected president.
- 1994** In October legislative elections, the anti-immigrant, anti-EU Freedom Party wins 42 seats at the expense of the Social Democratic and People's parties.
- 1995** Austria enters the European Union.
- 1997** Chancellor Vranitzky resigns and is succeeded by Socialist finance minister Viktor Klima; Austria implements the Schengen Accord, lifting all customs and immigration controls with the eight other member countries.
- 1998** Klestil is elected to a second six-year term as president.
- 1999** The Freedom Party wins 27 percent of the vote in legislative elections for a total of 52 seats, equaling the People's Party's number of seats.
- 2000** After talks with the Social Democrats break down, the People's Party forms a coalition government with the Freedom Party, with Wolfgang Schüssel of the People's Party as chancellor; foreign and domestic groups protest the Freedom Party's participation in the government; the European Union imposes diplomatic sanctions on

- Austria; Haider resigns as leader of the Freedom Party and is replaced by Susanne Reiss-Passer; the European Union lifts sanctions.
- 2002** Schüssel is reelected as chancellor and tries to form a moderate coalition with the Social Democrats and the Green Parties, but his efforts fail.
- 2003** Schüssel forms a coalition with the Freedom Party, moving the government to the right; the coalition passes restrictive asylum and immigration laws.
- 2004** Heinz Fischer is elected president; just days before he is to take office, his predecessor, Thomas Klestil, dies.
- 2005** Parliament ratifies the EU constitution.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Statistics Austria.
http://www.statistik.at/index_englisch.shtml
- Austrian Press and Information Service (Washington, D.C.)
<http://www.austria.org/>

AZERBAIJAN

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Azerbaijani Republic (Azərbaycan Respublikası)

ABBREVIATION

AZ

CAPITAL

Baku

HEAD OF STATE

President Ilham Aliyev (from 2003)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Artur Rasizade (from 2003)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Republic

POPULATION

7,911,974 (2005)

AREA

86,600 sq km (33,400 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Azerbaijani

LANGUAGE

Azerbaijani

RELIGION

Shiite Islam

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Manat

NATIONAL FLAG

Three equal horizontal bands of blue (top), red, and green. A crescent and eight-pointed star in white are centered in the red band.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Azerbaijani March”

NATIONAL EMBLEM

An eight-pointed white star fimbriated in gold, symbolizing the eight branches of the Turkish people, is superimposed on three circles: the inner one is green, the middle one is red, and the outer one is blue. Between each star point and over the blue circle are smaller eight-pointed white stars, also fimbriated in gold. Inside the main central star is a fire, recalling the name of the country (*Land of fire* or *Land of the fire*) and symbolizing freedom. The shield stands on a golden ear of corn.

NATIONAL HOLIDAY

May 28 (Independence Day)

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

August 30, 1991

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

November 12, 1995; amended August 24, 2002

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Azerbaijan is situated in southwestern Asia in Transcaucasia. It has a total area of 86,600 sq km (33,440 sq mi), including the exclave of the Naxcivan Autonomous Republic and the disputed Nagorno-Karabakh region. Naxcivan is separated from the rest of Azerbaijan by Armenia. Azerbaijan shares land borders with five countries: 787 km (489 mi) with Armenia, including 221 km (137 mi) between Armenia and the Naxcivan enclave; 323 km (200 mi) with Georgia; 284 km (176 mi) with Russia; 9 km (5.5 mi) with Turkey; and 611 km (379 mi) with Iran. The

country also has an 800 km (500 mi) coastline on the Caspian Sea.

Nearly half of the country is covered by mountains, and the three main relief features of the Transcaucasian region—the Greater Caucasus Mountains in the northeast, the Lesser Caucasus in the southwest, and the Kura River depression in between—converge within the country. Of the more than 1,000 rivers in Azerbaijan, only 21 are longer than 97 km (60 mi). The capital, Baku, and its surrounding metropolitan region had an estimated population of 1,817,900 in 2001. Only two other cities have populations over 200,000, namely, Ganca (301,400) and Sumqayit (288,400).

Azerbaijan



Geography

Area sq km: 86,600 sq mi 33,400
 World Rank: 111th
 Land Boundaries, km: Armenia 787; Georgia 322; Iran 611; Russia 284;
 Turkey 9
 Coastline, km: 0
 Elevation Extremes meters
 Lowest: Caspian Sea 28
 Highest: Bazarduzu Dagi 4,485
 Land Use %
 Arable land: 19.63
 Permanent Crops: 2.71
 Forest and Woodland: 12.6
 Other: 75.06

Population of Principal Cities (1997 est.)

Baku (Baky)	1,066,800
Ganca (Gyandzha)	291,900
Sumqayit (Sumgait)	248,500

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Azerbaijan has a wide range of climates and weather zones considering its relatively small size. The climate zones range from the arid subtropical to the mountainous tundra. In the lowlands near the Caspian Sea coast, the mean annual temperature is 15°C (59°F), while in the mountains the mean is 0°C (32°F). During July, the hottest month, the mean lowland temperature is 26°C (79°F) and the mean mountain temperature 5°C (41°F). Rainfall distribution is also uneven, with the lowlands receiving between 300 and 900 mm (8 to 12 in) of rain on an annual basis and the southern slopes of the Greater Caucasus Mountains getting 1,200 to 1,400 mm (47 to 55 in). Winter is the rainy season in the lowlands; in the highlands and mountains as well most of the precipitation falls in winter, much of it in the form of snow.

In the beginning of the 16th century Azerbaijan was under the rule of the Safavid dynasty, which by then had also assumed leadership in neighboring Persia. Wars between the Turkish Ottoman Empire and the Safavid in Persia led to Ottoman occupation of Azerbaijan between 1578 and 1603. As Safavid authority began to wane in the region, the Russians and the Ottomans fought for control. With the breakup of the Safavid dynasty in the middle of the 18th century, the remains of the empire in the Caucasus, including Azerbaijan, fell to a number of independent khanates, or fiefdoms.

Catherine the Great sought to extend the Russian empire into the region, and as a result two Russo-Iranian wars were fought from 1804–13 and from 1826–28. The first war ended with the Treaty of Gulistan, which ceded the majority of the northern khanates to Russia. The Treaty of Turkmanchi in 1828, ending the second war, extended Russian influence into present-day Armenia and southwestern Azerbaijan. The net effect of the two treaties saw Azerbaijan divided in half, with the north under Russian colonial rule and the south governed by Iran.

In 1918 the end of World War I saw Azerbaijan change hands from Russian to Ottoman Turkish and finally to British control. With Britain's blessing Azerbaijan declared its independence from Russia. The first independent Republic of Azerbaijan existed for just 23 months, between May 28, 1918, and April 28, 1920. That first Azerbaijan Republic is considered by historians to be the first truly secular state in the Orient with the first European-like parliament and the first cabinet of ministers. In April 1920 units of the Russian Bolshevik 11th army invaded Azerbaijan and overthrew the government. Under Red Army occupation, Azerbaijan was incorporated into the Soviet Union with the signing of the Treaty of Formation of the USSR on December 30, 1922. For the next 70 years the country remained a republic within the Soviet empire.

In 1945, with both Armenia and Azerbaijan members of the Soviet Union, Moscow, by fiat, tried to settle control over Nagorno-Karabakh—a mostly ethnic Armenian enclave within Azerbaijan's borders. The Soviet Bureau of Caucasian Affairs awarded the territory to Armenia, but the Soviet leader Josef Stalin reversed the decision, declaring the region an autonomous oblast, or county, within Azerbaijan.

The Azerbaijani political reawakening began in 1988, sparked by an outbreak of ethnic violence between Azerbaijanis and Armenians over Armenian claims to the Nagorno-Karabakh region and the refusal of Moscow to heed Armenian demands to cede the territory to Soviet Armenia. Moscow sent 5,000 troops to the region to quell the violence that left hundreds dead.

In 1991 Azerbaijan again declared its independence from Russia under the presidency of the former communist Ayaz Mutalibov, who won a hastily called election

that many believed was rigged by the former Communist Party. The country immediately became embroiled in an armed conflict with now-independent Armenia over Nagorno-Karabakh. The failure to hold back Armenian advances in the region led to the replacement of Mutalibov by Abulfaz Elchibey of the Popular Front of Azerbaijan through a multiparty general election in 1992. However, continued military defeats led to more internal dissent.

In June 1993 rebel army units seized Baku, the capital, in a bloodless revolt. A national referendum of no confidence was held in August on Elchibey's rule, with 97.5 percent of the electorate voting against him. The National Assembly endorsed the result and called for another election in June. This time Heydar Aliyev, a former member of the Soviet KGB secret police and the leader of the New Azerbaijan Party, was declared the winner with 98.9 percent of the votes cast.

In December 1993 Azerbaijani forces launched a counteroffensive into Nagorno-Karabakh and recaptured some of the territory that it had lost to the Armenians. In May 1994 the Bishkek Protocol was signed, which led to a cease-fire between Azerbaijan and Armenia. Russian troops arrived as peacekeepers in the disputed territory.

In 1997 and 1998 the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe brokered a settlement between Armenia and Azerbaijan, but both sides have refused to sign, claiming reservations about territorial division and home-rule issues. The May 1994 cease-fire has generally remained in effect with only minor violations occurring into the twenty-first century. In 1998 Heydar Aliyev was reinstated as president, but international watchdog groups reported irregularities with the election. In 2000 the New Azerbaijan Party won a majority of seats in the legislature, again amid allegations of improprieties. Despite the nation's questionable human rights record, it was admitted to the Council of Europe in 2001, while the United States brokered failed talks to resolve the Nagorno-Karabakh issue. U.S. aid to Azerbaijan was restored when the nation provided airspace and intelligence after the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. In 2002 construction began on a multibillion-dollar pipeline to carry oil from Azerbaijan through Georgia to Turkey. In October 2003 Heydar Aliyev's son, Ilham Aliyev, won a landslide victory to become president, once again amid allegations of improprieties. Heydar Aliyev died in a U.S. hospital in December of that year.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1991–92	Ayaz Mutalibov
1992–93	Abulfaz Elchibey
1993–2003	Heydar Aliyev
2003–	Ilham Aliyev

CONSTITUTION

In a national referendum in 1995, 91.9 percent of voters gave approval to a new constitution, which mandated a strong presidency and an independent legislature based on a division of powers. However, in reality both parliament and the judiciary are subservient to the president's office. Under the 1995 constitution, which replaced the Soviet constitution of 1978, the president is head of state and commander in chief of the armed forces. The president, who is elected by popular vote for a five-year term, holds supreme executive authority in conjunction with a Council of Ministers appointed by the president. The council is headed by a prime minister. President Heydar Aliyev of the New Azerbaijan Party won the October 1998 presidential election, gaining 77.61 percent of the vote, compared to Etibar Mamedov of the National Independence Party, who came second with 11.83 percent. In 2003 Aliyev's son, Ilham, succeeded his father as president, leading the New Azerbaijan Party to victory in disputed parliamentary elections and claiming the position of speaker of parliament. Both men and women over the age of 18 have the right to vote.

PARLIAMENT

The unicameral National Assembly, or Milli Mejlis, is comprised of 125 seats, with 25 seats filled by proportional representation according to party lists and 100 elected in single-member constituencies. Members serve five-year terms. As a result of a 2002 change in the constitution, all 125 seats in all future parliamentary elections will be filled from single-member constituencies.

POLITICAL PARTIES

The New Azerbaijan Party is the dominant force in the government and is headed by President Aliyev. Other key political parties include the Popular Front of Azerbaijan, which once controlled the government but was unable to deliver victory over Armenia, currently headed by Ali Karimli and Mirmahmud Mirali-Oglu; the National Independence Party, an anticorruption party headed by Etibar Mammadli; and the Communist Party of Azerbaijan, which is eager to return to the previous form of government and achieve closer ties with Russia, as headed by Ramiz Ahmadov.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The country is divided into 59 rayons, which are Soviet-era administrative districts, 11 cities with locally elected officials, and one autonomous republic.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The legal system is based on a code of civil law. The president appoints Supreme and Constitutional Court judges subject to confirmation by the National Assembly. The president directly appoints lower-level judges, and there is no independent confirmation required—a fact that gives the judiciary little independence from the executive branch. Lower-level courts are considered corrupt and open to outside influences. Cases at the district, or rayon, level are tried by a judge and two civilian assessors. The constitution provides for a presumption of innocence and a defendant's right to legal counsel. The death penalty is enforced.

HUMAN RIGHTS

The government's human rights record improved considerably toward the end of the 1990s as a semblance of political stability returned to the country. In 1998, for example, there were no reports of political or extrajudicial killings by security forces or of politically motivated disappearances. Torture is illegal, but international human rights organizations have accused police of routinely using coercion to win confessions from suspects. Prison conditions are harsh. Security forces continue to arbitrarily arrest and detain suspects despite constitutional guarantees against such practices.

The constitution provides for freedom of speech and the press, but in reality these freedoms have often been ignored by the government. As a result of intimidation and threats, many journalists exercise self-censorship. The government, keen to control the flow of international opinion, has also limited internet access, though the number of internet providers has increased in recent years.

The government requires political parties to register and has on occasion forbidden opposition political rallies. The government also requires religious organizations and congregations to register, and there have been credible claims of harassment of non-Islamic religious groups. International human rights organizations are generally granted free access to monitor and investigate abuse claims.

FOREIGN POLICY

Since gaining independence in 1991, Azerbaijan has had a difficult relationship with Russia. Although a charter member of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), the Azerbaijani parliament refused to ratify the treaty in 1992 and instead voted to leave the grouping of former Soviet republics. However, with the accession to power of Aliyev, that course was reversed, and in 1993

Azerbaijan formally rejoined the group. Relations with Russia have since been rather one-sided. In 1996 Russia sealed its border with Azerbaijan to prevent arms shipments from reaching rebels in Chechnya. Russian companies remain closely involved in the country's oil and gas industry, especially in the transportation sector. Russia is eager to see Azeri oil flow through its territory in order to reach world markets. Russian troops continued to monitor the cease-fire in Nagorno-Karabakh at the end of the 1990s.

In the early 1990s the primary criterion governing Azerbaijan's relations with foreign countries was their stance on Azerbaijani sovereignty in Nagorno-Karabakh. The strengthening of relations with Turkey since independence has been a cornerstone of this policy. Turkey helped to enforce Azerbaijan's economic blockade of Armenia during the war.

Iran has also played an increasing role in Azerbaijani foreign policy. With a large number of Azerbaijanis living and working in Iran, that country is now one of Azerbaijan's leading trading partners. After the U.S. Congress placed restrictions on aid to Azerbaijan pending the lifting of its economic blockade against Armenia, relations between the two countries were strained. However, once the blockade was lifted, relations between Azerbaijan and the United States improved significantly. In 1997 Aliyev paid an official visit to Washington and signed a military cooperation agreement. The state oil company also signed agreements with major U.S. oil companies to help in the exploration of the Caspian oil fields.

Azerbaijan was admitted to the United Nations in 1992, and in 1996, along with Georgia and Armenia, the country signed an economic cooperation pact with the European Union. Into the 21st century the conflict with Armenia over Nagorno-Karabakh remained unresolved, while Azerbaijan was involved in various disputes with its neighbors over oilfield rights in the Caspian Sea.

DEFENSE

Prior to independence in 1991, Azerbaijan had no national defense force, relying instead on the Soviet army for border protection. Military service is compulsory for males over the age of 18, and individuals serve 17 months. The army makes up the largest sector of the national defense forces, followed by the navy. Naval units operate under Russian command as part of the Commonwealth of Independent States protocols. In 1994 Azerbaijan joined NATO's Partnership for Peace, a program of military aid and cooperation. Iranian, Turkish, and Russian officers have all assisted with the training of the national defense forces. In fiscal 1999 the nation spent about \$121 million on defense, representing 2.6 percent of its gross domestic product (GDP). The number of active-duty personnel was about 75,000.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 75,000
 Military Manpower Availability: 2,187,847
 Military Expenditures \$million: 121
 as % of GDP: 2.6
 as % of central government expenditures: 10.2
 Arms Imports \$: 3,000,000
 Arms Exports \$: —

ECONOMY

The first years following independence in 1991 were an economic nightmare for Azerbaijan, which was far less developed industrially than the neighboring Caucasian states of Armenia and Georgia. The collapse of trade between the former Soviet republics as well as Azerbaijan's war with Armenia led to a drastic decline in economic activity for the newly independent nation. Gross domestic product (GDP) had declined every year since 1988 and by 1994 stood at just 37 percent of 1988 levels. Agricultural output was off by 43 percent and industrial output had fallen about 60 percent. The oil and gas sectors were particularly hard hit, with production falling to 9.6 million metric tons, from 13.8 million metric tons.

By the latter half of the 1990s there were signs of improvement following a general political stabilization, a cease-fire in the war with Armenia, and the launching of government structural reforms, including a limited privatization program, sanctioned by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Inflation, which hit 1,664 percent in 1994, fell to less than 1 percent in 1997 and was negative in both 1998 and 1999. GDP growth was 10 percent in 1998, reversing years of double-digit decline. Despite low world oil prices at the end of the decade, there were signs of a revival in Azerbaijan's oil sector after the state-run oil company signed a 30-year production-sharing agreement with an international consortium of oil companies to develop the oil fields of Chirag, Azeri, and Gunashli in the Caspian Sea. The country has also switched its trading focus away from the former Soviet states toward Turkey, Iran, the European Union, and the Middle East. Into the new millennium these strategies appeared to be working, as oil production increased every year, and trade with Turkey and European nations increased, while trade with Russia and the other former Soviet republics declined. Real GDP growth in 2004 was estimated at 11.2 percent, and inflation remained low at 2.1 percent. Public debt was just 6 percent of GDP in 2004.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (Purchasing Power Parity) \$billion: 26.65
 GDP per capita (Purchasing Power Parity) \$: 3,400

(continues)

Principal Economic Indicators *(continued)*

GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 11
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 11
 Origin of GDP %:
 Agriculture: 14.1
 Industry: 45.7
 Services: 40.2
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %
 Private Consumption: 42
 Government Consumption: 14
 Gross Domestic Investment: 50.4
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 2.605
 Imports: 2.498
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 7.4
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 27.8
 CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1993 = 100)
 1995 1996 1997 1998
 10,182 10,365 10,526 10,817

Finance

National Currency: Azerbaijani Manat (AZM)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = AZM 4,911
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 2,499
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 7
 Total External Debt \$billion: 1.575
 Debt Service Ratio %: 6.5
 Balance of Payments \$billion: -2.021
 International Reserves SDRs \$million: 803
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index
 Growth Rate %: 2.1

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 349.36
 per capita \$: 42
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 2,351

**Central Government Revenues
and Expenditures**

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$million: 2,063
 Expenditures \$million: 2,202
 Budget Deficit \$million: 139
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: 16.6

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 14.1
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 8.6
 Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares: 18
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 75.2
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 7
 Total Farmland as % of land area: 19.6
 Livestock: Cattle 000: 1,909
 Sheep 000: 6,676
 Hogs 000: 20
 Chickens 000: 16,878
 Forests: Production of Roundwood (000 cubic meters): 13.5
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 11.5

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 1.339
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 6.1

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of
 oil equivalent 000: 20,033
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of
 oil equivalent 000: 11,397
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 1,405
 Net Energy Imports % of use: -69.1
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: 5,200
 Production kW-hr billion: 18.7
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 17.4
 Coal Reserves tons million: —
 Production tons 000: 0
 Consumption tons 000: —
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic meters billion: 849
 Production cubic meters billion: 4.95
 Consumption cubic meters million: 9.34
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: 7
 Production barrels 000 per day: 328
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 114
 Pipelines Length km: 1,518

Foreign Trade

Imports \$million: 2,498
 Exports \$million: 2,605
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 8.1
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 39.2
 Balance of Trade \$billion: -2.021

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Russia %	15.5	—
Turkey %	12.0	—
United Kingdom %	8.7	—
Germany %	8.1	10.5
China %	7.8	—
Ukraine %	5.4	—
Italy %	4.6	34.1
United States %	4.6	—
Kazakhstan %	4.3	—
Czech Republic %	—	11.4
France %	—	8.2
Turkey %	—	5.9
Georgia %	—	4.5
Russia %	—	4.5

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 24,981
 Paved %: 92
 Automobiles: 350,600
 Trucks and Buses: 120,400
 Railroad; Track Length km: 2,957
 Passenger-km million: 584
 Freight-km million: 6,980

Merchant Marine: No of Vessels: 56
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 318.9
 Airports: 67
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 579
 Length of Waterways km: 5,300

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 767
 Number of Tourists from 000: 1,130
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 51
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 106

Communications

Telephones 000: 923.8
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.10
 Cellular Telephones 000: 870
 Personal Computers 000: —
 Internet Hosts: 586
 Internet Users: 300,000

ENVIRONMENT

The Apsheron Peninsula, which includes the cities of Baku and Sumqayit, is considered to be one of the world's gravest ecological disaster areas. Soviet-era water, air, and soil pollution, caused by unregulated industry and uncontrolled use of toxic fertilizers and DDT in the agricultural sector, especially in the cotton industry, has led to a shortage of potable water and unsafe toxin levels in the soil.

Environment

Forest Area % of land area: 12.6
 Average Annual Forest Change, 1990-2000, 000 ha: 13
 Nationally Protected Areas sq km: 5,151
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 3.6

LIVING CONDITIONS

Azerbaijan remains a poor country, with 2004 per capita GDP totaling \$3,400 and 49 percent of the population living below the poverty line. Seven hundred villages in the country still do not have phone service. Lack of modern medical equipment and drugs has led to a low life expectancy, yet Azerbaijan is known for the many people in the Caucasus Mountains who lead extremely long lives—often well over 100 years. These people attribute their longevity to hard work and a diet of yogurt and vegetables as well as to heredity. One person who died in 1973 was believed to have been the oldest person on earth; while reputed to be 168, he was actually some 120 years old, with living descendants to the fifth generation.

Contributing to Azerbaijan's problems is the ongoing dispute with Armenia over Nagorno-Karabakh. As a result of the conflict, there were still some 571,000 displaced Azerbaijanis in 2004.

HEALTH

Medical care in Azerbaijan follows a Western model, although many people use herbal remedies and visit psychics and traditional healers. Azerbaijanis continue to suffer from the legacy of the Soviet system, which ignored health care at the local level in favor of specialized care for those at the top of the hierarchy. In recent years some successful efforts have been made to restore the dilapidated health-care system at the local level and provide primary care, including prenatal care, in villages and rural areas throughout the country. Nonetheless, the rate of infant mortality remains high—just over 76 per 1,000 live births in 2004—and life expectancy overall remains relatively low at just over 63 years (except in the Caucasus Mountain regions, where a disproportionate number of people over age 100 live). Fewer than 100 Azerbaijanis died of AIDS in 2001. Access to clean drinking water and adequate sanitation facilities remains low, particularly in rural areas.

Health

Number of Physicians: 29,084
 Number of Dentists: 2,116
 Number of Nurses: 59,872
 Number of Pharmacists: 2,143
 Physician density per 100,000 people: 354
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: 8.5
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 76
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 94
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 0.9
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 8
 HIV Infected % of adults: < 0.01
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12–23 months:
 DPT: 97
 Measles: 97
 Access to Improves Sanitation Facilities %: 55
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 77

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Staples in Azerbaijan include rice, bread, grains, fruits, and vegetables, supplemented by lamb, chicken, and fish. Cuisine varies by region, depending on the availability of foodstuffs and ethnic preferences. Common dishes include white bread, meat and potatoes, soups, and salads; pork is rarely eaten because of Islamic dietary laws. Some Soviet-era dishes remain, including borscht, or beet soup. Steamed rice with apricots and raisins is served at ritual celebrations, and households are traditionally supposed

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to maintain a tray with seven different kinds of nuts. While the percentage of low-birth-weight infants from 1998 to 2003 was relatively high at 11 percent, only about 6 percent of children five and under suffer from being underweight, with just 1 percent severely underweight.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 15
Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,330
Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 202.1
Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 179

STATUS OF WOMEN

Perhaps as a result of the country's Soviet legacy, women nominally enjoy the same legal protections as men and participate in all aspects of economic, social, and political life—though women are generally underrepresented in higher political offices as well as executive business positions. Despite traditional Muslim views of the place of women in society, females do have opportunities for work and education. There are several active women's political and social organizations in the country. However, in rural areas women who appear in public unaccompanied, smoke in public, or drive cars are still subject to harassment.

Women

Women-headed Households: —
Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 10.5
Female Administrators and Managers %: —
Ratio of Literate Women to Men Aged 15 to 24: 1.0
Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-Agricultural %: 48.5

WORK

Azerbaijan's labor force consisted of 4.99 million people as of 2004. Unemployment is extremely low, at just 1.1 percent. As of 2001 about 41 percent worked in agriculture and forestry, 7 percent in industry, and 52 percent in services. A large number of these people are employed in the nation's emerging oil industry. While laws provide for pensions and a guaranteed minimum wage, the level of these benefits is low, and despite the high rate of employment 49 percent of Azerbaijanis lived below the poverty line in 2002.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 4,990,000
Female Participation Rate %: 44.7
Total Activity Rate %: 36.2

Labor by Sector %:
Agriculture and Forestry: 41
Industry: 7
Services: 52
Unemployment %: 1.1

EDUCATION

Education is free and compulsory for children from ages six to 17. Primary education covers a period of four years, while secondary education consists of two phases of five and two years, respectively. The country has 17 institutes of higher learning. In 1994 two-thirds of all people between the ages of six and 23 were enrolled in school. The education level of the general population is relatively high for the region, with a mean education of nine years for both males and females. A total of 97 percent of the adult population is considered to be literate.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 97
Male %: 99
Female %: 96
School Life Expectancy Years of Formal Schooling: 11
First Level: Primary schools: 4,502
Teachers: 41,328
Students: 668,902
Student-Teacher Ratio: 15
Net Enrollment Ratio: 79.8
Second Level: Secondary Schools: —
Teachers: 123,816
Students: 1,040,175
Student-Teacher Ratio: 9
Net Enrollment Ratio: 76
Third Level: Institutions: 23
Teachers: —
Students: 121,156
Gross Enrollment Ratio: 16
Students per 100,000: 15,312
Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 3.5

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Scientific and technological research is carried out by public universities from the Soviet era, but in recent years these have been joined by private universities. The Academy of Science carries out research in many fields. Research in oil-related subjects is given priority. Limited funding—the nation has spent about 1.3 percent of its budget on science—has required institutions and individuals to seek funding internationally.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million persons: 2,707
Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
High-Tech Exports \$million: 9.97
Patent Applications by Residents: 58,076

MEDIA

Azerbaijan has a lively and healthy mix of government-run and independently owned media in print and broadcast, but the government continues to intimidate independent journalists through unofficial means. In 1998 the government officially ended censorship of the press, creating a boom in independent newspapers and magazines despite attempts at unofficial intimidation. By 2001 there were more than 372 registered newspapers in the country (but only about 100 actually published). There are eight television stations, including the government-run Azerbaijan National Television and seven independently owned stations, including BM-TI TV. However, the government refuses to grant licenses to about a dozen independent television stations wishing to broadcast. Radio Baku, the state-run radio network, broadcasts in Azerbaijani, Arabic, English, and Turkish.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 6
 Total Circulation 000: 214
 Circulation per 1,000: 27
 Books Published: 542
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets 000: 1,980
 per 1,000: 257

CULTURE

The cultural heritage of Azerbaijan includes the book of *Dede Korkut* (or *Dede Gorgud*), the Zoroastrian *Avesta*, and the Köroglu *dastan* (a recitation of historical events in highly poetic language). Also important is the poetry of such writers as Shirvani, Gancavi, Nasimi, Shah Ismail Savafi, and Fuzuli in the 12th through the 16th centuries. Major 20th-century writers include Elchin, Yusif Samedoglu, and Anar. Some novelists in the 20th century also wrote in Russian.

The architecture of Azerbaijan, especially in Baku, uniquely blends Eastern and Western styles. During an oil boom in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, oil barons commissioned prominent Western and Russian architects to build public buildings, which have a wide range of styles: Classical, German, Italian Renaissance, Venetian Gothic Revival, and others.

Music is central to life for Azerbaijanis. A highly disproportionate number have been trained in music and perform it on either Western or traditional instruments, including stringed instruments such as the *tar* or *kamancha* or wind instruments such as the *zurna* or *balaban*. Most homes have pianos. Azerbaijani music blends Eastern and Western styles, including symphonies, ballet, and opera. Major composers include Gara Garayev, Fikrat Amirov, Uzeyir Hajibeyov, and Muslim Magomayev.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 4,382
 Volumes: 37,177,000
 Registered borrowers: 2,899
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts national currency million: 1,307
 Number of Cinemas: 222
 Seating Capacity: 34,800
 Annual Attendance: 200,000

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Azerbaijan has a rich tradition of oral folklore, including songs, stories, and sayings, much of which has been passed down for hundreds of years. Prominent is the *Dede Korkut*, which was written down in the 15th century. Its stories closely resemble those in Homer's *Odyssey*. Legends in the country include that of the Maiden's Tower, which still stands today in Baku. The story, which involves a young girl who locked herself in the tower and threw herself from it when her father wanted to marry her, is a common theme in the work of artists and poets. Azerbaijanis also enjoy the folk wisdom of the region's hundreds of "Molla Nasreddin" stories, many of which are set in the 13th century. These stories could be considered analogous to Aesop's Fables because of their homespun wisdom.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Virtually all homes in Azerbaijan now have a television, and other forms of technology, such as DVDs, computers, and CD players, are beginning to gain prominence. Western television programs, as well as those from Turkey and Russia, are popular. Azerbaijanis have a deep love of music; many homes have pianos, and it is common for family and guests to gather after dinner for music. Also popular is chess; the world champion Garry Kasparov played chess in Baku when he was growing up.

ETIQUETTE

Azerbaijanis are generally very expressive, often holding hands and otherwise touching one another. When they meet someone they exchange kisses on the cheek. Girls often walk down the street holding hands. They also show great kindness and hospitality to foreign visitors, often inviting them to their homes for dinner. Nonetheless, Azerbaijanis can be extremely reticent about some matters. Any matters involving sex or the body are not discussed in public; many men do not use the word *pregnant* without first apologizing, and a person who needs to

use the bathroom typically asks a member of the same sex or a child where it is. While touching by members of the same sex is common, men and women tend to be more reserved in their relations with one another; they maintain space, for example, when standing in line in public. Great respect is accorded to elders; it would be highly inappropriate, for example, to smoke in front of an elder. In the Azerbaijani mind, drinking, smoking, and associating with men in public are more characteristic of “looser” Russian women than of Azerbaijani women.

FAMILY LIFE

Azerbaijani families are either nuclear or include two generations. For economic reasons many newlyweds live with the husband’s family or, if necessary, the wife’s family. For a woman to marry a westerner who is not a Muslim is frowned upon, but men have more freedom to marry Armenian or Russian women. The eldest man is generally regarded as the head of the family, but elderly women are also influential in making decisions. In rural Azerbaijan extended families often live together in family compounds. Older persons are highly esteemed, and close bonds with extended family reduce the stress of aging.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Azerbaijanis wear Western-style clothing. Personal appearance is important, especially to women, who tend to try to make themselves look as presentable as possible when they go out in public. Although Azerbaijan is a Muslim country, women have not been required to wear the chador, or veil, since 1928, an event that is actually commemorated by statues in Baku.

SPORTS

Soccer is extremely popular, and Azerbaijanis have always excelled at wrestling. The nation had five medal winners at the 2004 Summer Olympics, including a gold medal by Farid Mansurov in the 66 kg weight class in Greco-Roman wrestling.

CHRONOLOGY

1945 With both Armenia and Azerbaijan members of the Soviet Union, Moscow’s Bureau of Caucasian Affairs awards the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh to Armenia, but Soviet leader Josef Stalin reverses the decision, declaring Nagorno-Karabakh an autonomous region.

- 1988** The Azerbaijani political reawakening begins, sparked by an outbreak of ethnic violence between Azerbaijanis and Armenians over Armenian claims to the Nagorno-Karabakh region in which hundreds die; Moscow sends 5,000 troops to the region to quell the violence.
- 1991** Azerbaijan declares its independence from Russia; Ayaz Mutalibov wins a hastily called election that many believed was rigged by the former Communist Party; the conflict with Armenia over the disputed Nagorno-Karabakh region intensifies.
- 1992** Azerbaijan joins the United Nations and signs a friendship treaty with Russia; Mutalibov’s failure to hold back Armenian advances in Nagorno-Karabakh leads to his replacement by Abulfaz Elchibey of the Popular Front of Azerbaijan in a multiparty general election; Armenian forces seize much of the Nagorno-Karabakh region, equivalent to 20 percent of Azerbaijan’s total territory.
- 1993** Reydar Aliyev ousts Elchibey in a bloodless coup; Azerbaijan forces launch a counteroffensive in Nagorno-Karabakh.
- 1994** In May Azerbaijan signs the Bishkek Protocol, a cease-fire agreement regarding Nagorno-Karabakh, which remains in force through the 1990s.
- 1995** Internal Affairs Ministry militia stage an unsuccessful coup attempt in Baku.
- 1996** Azerbaijan signs an economic cooperation pact with the European Union.
- 1997** Aliyev becomes the first Azerbaijani leader to make an official visit to Washington; Azerbaijan’s state-owned oil company signs agreements on oil exploration with U.S. and international companies; the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe brokers a draft peace proposal between Armenia and Azerbaijan.
- 1998** President Heydar Aliyev of the New Azerbaijan Party wins the presidential election with 77.61 percent of the vote.
- 1999** The government’s privatization policy shows signs of success, with the IMF noting in June that consumer prices had fallen by 11 percent in the 12 months ending in April 1999.
- 2000** In November, Aliyev’s son, Ilham, leads the New Azerbaijan Party to victory in disputed parliamentary elections to claim the speaker of parliament position.
- 2001** Azerbaijan becomes a full member of the Council of Europe; United States brokers failed talks to resolve the Nagorno-Karabakh crisis; Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Turkey reach agreement on oil and gas pipelines linking Caspian fields and

- Turkey; United States lifts aid bans after Azerbaijan provides airspace and intelligence after September 11 terrorist attacks.
- 2002** Construction begins on Caspian–Turkey oil and gas pipelines.
- 2003** Aliyev appoints his son, Ilham Aliyev, prime minister; Ilham Aliyev wins the presidency in a landslide in October; Heydar Aliyev dies in December.
- 2005** Construction of Caspian–Turkey oil pipeline is completed.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Statistical Committee of Azerbaijan Republic
<http://www.azstat.org>
- Azerbaijan Republic
<http://www.president.az/index.html>

BAHAMAS

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Commonwealth of the Bahamas

ABBREVIATION

BS

CAPITAL

Nassau

HEAD OF STATE

Queen Elizabeth II, represented by Governor-General Ivy Dumont (from 2002)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Perry Christie (from 2002)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Parliamentary democracy within the British Commonwealth

POPULATION

301,790 (2005)

AREA

13,940 sq km (5,382 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Blacks

LANGUAGE

English

RELIGION

Christianity

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Bahamian dollar

NATIONAL FLAG

Three horizontal stripes of blue, gold, and blue, with a black triangle at the hoist

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A shield on which appears Christopher Columbus's flagship, the Santa Maria, with a shining sun at the top. The shield is supported by a flamingo and a leaping silver-blue marlin. At the crest appears a conch shell with a mantling of palm fronds. The shield rests on the ground, on which a ribbon carries the national motto: "Forward, Upward, Onward, Together."

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"March On, Bahamaland"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day); June 7 (Labor Day); July 10 (National Day, Independence Day); August 5 (Emancipation Day); October 12 (Discovery Day); Christian festivals, including Christmas, Boxing Day, Good Friday, Easter Monday, and Whitmonday

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

July 10, 1973

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

July 10, 1973

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

The Bahamas make up an archipelago of 700 islands (of which 29 are inhabited) between southeastern Florida and northern Hispaniola. From the north of the chain, which lies 96 km (60 mi) off the Florida coast, the archipelago extends 950 km (590 mi) southeast to northwest and 298 km (185 mi) northeast to southwest, with a total land area of 13,940 sq km (5,382 sq mi). The most populous island is New Providence (150 sq km; 58 sq mi). Of the other islands or island groups, known as the Family of Islands, the 15 largest are Grand Bahama, the Biminis, the Berry Islands, the Abacos group, Andros, Eleuthera, the Exu-

mas, Cat Island, Rum Cay, San Salvador (also known as Watling Island), Long Island, Acklins Island, Mayaguana, the Ragged Island Range, and the Inaguas. In addition, more than 2,000 small cays and rocks protrude from the shallow seas (the name Bahamas is derived from the Spanish *bajamar*, or "shallow sea"). The total length of the coastline is 3,542 km (2,201 mi).

The capital, Nassau, on New Providence Island, had an estimated population of 226,100 in 2004. The only other major urban center is Freeport (50,400), on the island of Grand Bahama. The islands are for the most part low and flat, with the terrain only occasionally broken by small lakes and mangrove swamps. The shoreline is

The Bahamas



marked by coral reefs. There are no navigable rivers, and the islands lack sufficient freshwater.

Geography

Area sq km: 13,940; sq mi 5,382
 World Rank: 155th
 Land Boundaries, km: 0

Coastline, km: 3,542
 Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Atlantic Ocean 0
 Highest: Mount Alvernia, on Cat Island 63
 Land Use %
 Arable Land: 0.8
 Permanent Crops: 0.4
 Forest: 84.1
 Other: 14.7

Population of Principal Cities (2004 est.)

Freeport	50,400
Nassau	226,100

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

The Bahamas enjoy a semitropical climate and have only two seasons: Winter extends from December through April, and summer extends from May through November. The warm waters of the Gulf Stream keep temperatures comfortably high during the winter months, and the sea breezes temper even the warmest summer day. Temperatures range from 21.1°C (70°F) to 34.4°C (94°F) in summer and from 15.6°C (60°F) to 23.9°C (75°F) in winter. Relative humidity in summer varies from 60 percent to 100 percent. Annual rainfall averages 1,320 mm (52 in), concentrated from May to June and from September to October. Gales are uncommon except during the hurricane season, which lasts from June to November.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature
Summer: 70°F to 94°F
Winter: 60°F to 75°F
Average Rainfall: 52 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

The warm tropical islands of the Bahamas yield a rich variety of plant life, including orchids, hibiscus, aloe vera, palm trees, Bahamian pine, mahogany, lignum vitae, plum trees, rubber vine, yams and cassava, mangroves, and sea grapes. Much of the fauna is indigenous, but many species were introduced to the islands by settlers. There is an abundance of invertebrates and 13 species of indigenous mammals, including bats and the hutia, a rodent-like mammal found only in the Bahamas. There are 44 species of reptiles, 10 species of snakes, and 29 species of lizards. Additionally, 120 species of birds either live in or migrate to the Bahamas, including the frigate bird, the Bahamian parrot, West Indian flamingos, the roseate spoonbill, and egrets, as well as hummingbirds, herons, barn owls, and falcons.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 301,790
World Rank: 167th
Density per sq km: 31.7
% of annual growth (1999-2003): 1.5
Male %: 49.0

Female %: 51.0	
Urban %: —	
Age Distribution %:	0–14: 28.3
	15–64: 65.7
	65 and over: 6.0
Population 2025: 327,300	
Birth Rate per 1,000: 18.22	
Death Rate per 1,000: 8.82	
Rate of Natural Increase %: 0.9	
Total Fertility Rate: 2.23	
Expectation of Life (years):	Males 62.21
	Females 69.11
Marriage Rate per 1,000: 5.8	
Divorce Rate per 1,000: 1.7	
Average Size of Households: 3.7	
Induced Abortions: —	

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

The population is predominantly black, constituting close to 85 percent of Bahamians. Many of their ancestors arrived in the islands when it was a major staging area for the slave trade or were brought over by British loyalists during the American Revolution. The remainder of the population is divided evenly between whites and persons of mixed descent.

LANGUAGE

The official language is English—still British English, despite the creeping American influences.

RELIGIONS

The chief Christian denominations represented in the islands are Baptist (32 percent), Anglican (20 percent), and Roman Catholic (19 percent). The remainder is divided among other Protestant groups and Greek Orthodox and Jewish groups. Freedom of religion is guaranteed by the constitution.

Religious Affiliations

Baptist	96,600
Anglican	60,400
Roman Catholic	57,300
Methodist	18,100
Church of God	18,100
Other Protestant	36,200
None or Unknown	9,100
Other	6,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The earliest inhabitants of the Bahamas were a group of Arawak Indians known as Lucayan. Christopher Colum-

bus discovered the islands for the Europeans in 1492. The Spanish made no permanent settlement but conducted slave raids on the peaceful Arawak that depopulated the islands. By the time the British arrived in the 17th century, the islands of the Bahamas were uninhabited. In 1717 the Bahamas became a crown colony. Its parliamentary system dates from 1729. Internal self-government was implemented in 1964.

In 1973 the Bahamas became an independent nation within the Commonwealth. Lynden Oscar Pindling, leader of the Progressive Liberal Party (PLP), which had won pre-independence elections, became prime minister. Pindling remained head of government throughout the 1980s.

During the 1980s illegal drug trading and government corruption became the dominant issues in Bahamian politics. Responding to allegations of drug-related corruption among government officials, Pindling appointed a commission in 1983 to investigate the problem. Within two years 51 suspects, including the assistant police commissioner, had been indicted. Following revelations that Pindling had accepted several million dollars' worth of gifts and loans from businessmen, Deputy Prime Minister Arthur Hanna called for Pindling's resignation. Hanna resigned his post when the prime minister refused to step down.

An early general election was held in June 1987. Despite the continuing prominence of the drug issue, the PLP won a fifth consecutive term. In 1988, in the wake of violent drug-related crimes, allegations of bribery again were leveled at Pindling. However, the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council rejected the claims.

In 1992 a quarter of a century of PLP rule under Pindling came to end when Hubert Alexander Ingraham of the Free National Movement (FNM) was sworn in as prime minister. The FNM retained control by an even wider margin in the 1997 elections.

In 2002 the PLP, however, won 29 seats in the legislature, and Perry Christie became the nation's third prime minister.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1973–92	Lynden Oscar Pindling
1992–2002	Hubert Alexander Ingraham
2002–	Perry Christie

CONSTITUTION

The constitution of 1973, under which the Bahamas became independent, establishes a parliamentary form of government on the British model. The head of state is the British sovereign, represented in the islands by the governor-general. The governor-general appoints the

prime minister (who also is the leader of the majority party in the House), the cabinet, and the leader of the opposition.

The bicameral parliament, composed of the nominated Senate and the elected House of Assembly, is the national legislative body.

The Bahamas' judicial system is made up of the following main courts: the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council (which sits in London), the Bahamas Court of Appeal, the Supreme Court, and magistrates' courts. All courts have jurisdiction over both civil and criminal cases.

Suffrage is universal over age 18. Elections are held at least every five years.

The Bahamas has enjoyed stable government since independence, and the country has been relatively free of violent racial strife that has afflicted many other West Indian states.

PARLIAMENT

The bicameral parliament consists of the Senate and the House of Assembly. The Senate consists of 16 members appointed by the governor-general, of whom nine are appointed on the advice of the prime minister, four on the advice of the opposition leader, and three on the advice of the prime minister after consultation with the opposition leader. The House of Assembly consists of 40 members elected on the basis of universal suffrage over age 18. Following the 2002 elections the party position in the House of Assembly was as follows: PLP, 29 seats; FNM, seven seats; and independents, four seats.

The normal term of the House is five years, but elections may be called and the House dissolved at any time. The House performs all legislative duties, and the majority leader serves as the prime minister.

POLITICAL PARTIES

There are four major political organizations in the Bahamas. For the most part, the politics of the islands are centrist in nature. The PLP is a centrist party and is headed by the current prime minister, Perry Christie. The FNM, the only other party with seats in Parliament, is headed by Tommy Turnquest and was founded in 1970. The Vanguard Nationalist and Socialist Party was founded in 1971. The most recent political party to be formed is the Bahamian Freedom Alliance.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The Family Islands (islands other than New Providence) are administered by district commissioners, who also ex-

ercise limited legal jurisdiction. There are senior commissioners in Grand Bahama, Andros, Abaco, Exuma, and Ragged Island; commissioners in Harbour Island, Grand Bahama, Eleuthera, Berry Islands, Andros, Inagua, Abaco, the Biminis, Cat Island, and Long Island; and assistant commissioners in Abaco, Crooked Island, Exuma, Grand Bahama, Mayaguana, and San Salvatore.

LEGAL SYSTEM

Bahamian jurisprudence is based on British common law. The highest court is the Court of Appeal, composed of three nonresident judges. Appeals from this court go in certain instances to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in the United Kingdom. The Supreme Court is composed of a chief justice, one senior justice, and two other justices. Appointments to the Supreme Court and the Court of Appeal are made by the governor-general. Magistrates' courts in New Providence and Grand Bahama are presided over by professionally qualified magistrates. Magisterial powers on other islands are exercised by the district commissioners.

The main prison is at Fox Hill in New Providence, but there are smaller lockups in the larger settlements in each district.

HUMAN RIGHTS

In terms of civil and political rights the Bahamas is classified as a free country. A British-style democracy, the Bahamas is noted for unqualified observance of all human as well as political rights. Notwithstanding the transfer of power from the white elite to the black majority, whites continue to play an active role in the political process, both elective and appointive. Similarly, women hold key judicial, civil service, and elective positions. While being seriously tested by the continued influx of Haitians—in 2001 the government estimated that 30,000 to 60,000 Haitians were in the Bahamas illegally—the government has for the most part maintained a humane approach to the issue.

FOREIGN POLICY

Bahamian foreign relations are determined in part by the islands' proximity to Cuba, Haiti, and the United States. Haitian illegal immigration has been described as the greatest threat to the national security of the islands. Disputes over fishing rights with Cuba have been settled and there are no outstanding issues. Relations with the United States are generally cordial, although there are periodic strains over accusations that high-level Bahamian officials, including the prime minister, are involved in drug

trafficking. In 1997 Bahamas opened its first embassy in Beijing and withdrew its ambassador in Taipei. By 2004 the Bahamas was still unable to negotiate an agreed-on maritime boundary for the nation, and Haitian refugees continued to be a pressing issue.

DEFENSE

The Bahamas has no standing army. The Commonwealth has the 900-man Royal Bahamian Defense Force, which is a paramilitary coast guard. In addition, there is the 2,300-man Royal Bahamas Police Force.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	900
Military Manpower Availability:	—
Military Expenditures \$million:	—
as % of GDP:	—
as % of central government expenditures:	—
Arms Imports \$million:	—
Arms Exports \$million:	—

ECONOMY

The Bahamas is a middle-income country with a free-market economy in which the dominant sector is private. Its 2004 per capita gross domestic product (GDP) of \$16,700 was the highest among Caribbean nations. The two main economic sectors are tourism and offshore banking. Moderate growth in tourism receipts and a boom in construction of new hotels, resorts, and residences led to an increase in the country's GDP by an estimated 3 percent in 1998, 6 percent in 1999, and 4.5 percent in 2000, although growth had slowed to 0 percent in 2004, largely as a result of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in the United States. Tourism in 2004 accounted for more than 60 percent of GDP and employed half of the country's labor force.

As one of the first and largest offshore "tax havens," the Bahamas is an important financial center and, in the late 1990s, had about 425 financial institutions and over 100 Eurocurrency branches of foreign banks; that number has declined since 2000, as the government imposed new regulations on the financial sector. With no current corporate, capital gains, or personal income taxes, it is an attractive location for offshore banking activities, which account for about 15 percent of GDP. Operating fees paid to banks are a significant revenue source.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion:	5.049
GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$:	16,700

GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2002) %: 2.4
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2002) %: 0.7
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:

Agriculture: 3
 Industry: 7
 Services: 90

Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:

Private Consumption: 67
 Government Consumption: 17
 Gross Domestic Investment: —

Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 0.617

Imports: 1.614

% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: —

% of Income Received by Richest 10%: —

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
104.6	106.3	108.4	110.8	114.2

Finance

National Currency: Bahamian Dollar (BSD)

Exchange Rate: \$1 = BSD 1

Money Supply Stock in National Currency million: 884

Central Bank Discount Rate %: 5.75

Total External Debt \$million: 308.5

Debt Service Ratio %: —

Balance of Payments \$million: —

International Reserves SDRs \$million: 481.8

Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 1.7

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 3.9

per capita \$: 12.30

Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 146.64

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: 1 July–30 June

Revenues \$billion: 0.9185

Expenditures \$billion: 0.9565

Budget Deficit \$million: 38

Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 3

Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: —

Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 1.5

Irrigation, % of Farms having: 8.3

Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 100

Total Farmland % of land area: 0.8

Livestock: Cattle: 750

Chickens million: 3

Pigs 000: 5

Sheep 000: 6.5

Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters 000: 17

Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 9.3

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: —

Industrial Production Growth Rate %: —

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of

oil equivalent million: —

Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of

oil equivalent million: 0.595

Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 1.94

Net Energy Imports % of use: —

Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 0.4

Production kW-hr billion: 1.626

Consumption kW-hr billion: 1.512

Coal Reserves tons billion: —

Production tons million: —

Consumption tons million: —

Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —

Production cubic feet billion: —

Consumption cubic feet billion: —

Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —

Production barrels 000 per day: —

Consumption barrels 000 per day: 20.4

Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 1.614

Exports \$billion: 0.617

Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —

Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —

Balance of Trade \$million: —

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
United States %	20.8	35.0
South Korea %	17.4	—
Italy %	11.4	—
France %	9.1	7.6
Brazil %	7.5	—
Japan %	5.6	—
Venezuela %	5.3	—
Spain %	—	9.6
Germany %	—	7.8
Poland %	—	5.3
Switzerland %	—	4.8
Peru %	—	4.2
Paraguay %	—	4.2

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 2,693

Paved %: 57.4

Automobiles: 80,000

Trucks and Buses: 25,000

Railroad: Track Length km: —

Passenger-km million: —

Freight-km million: —

(continues)

Transportation *(continued)*

Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 1,035
 Total Deadweight Tonnage million: 43
 Airports: 63
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 369
 Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 1.51
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$billion: 1.8
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 404

Communications

Telephones 000: 131.7
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones 000: 121.8
 Personal Computers 000: —
 Internet Hosts per million people: 1,001
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 278

ENVIRONMENT

While the Bahamas has long recognized the need to protect its natural resources—it created a flamingo habitat and marine nursery park in 1959—growing population and increased tourism have caused concern over soil and coastal erosion. The government continues its long tradition of aggressively protecting the environment and finding creative ways to reward good usage of natural resources.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 84.1
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: —
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 1
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 888
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 5.89

LIVING CONDITIONS

The Bahamian archipelago offers a wide range of living conditions. Cities such as Nassau and Freeport are modern and bustling, while many of the smaller islands, called the Family Islands or “out islands,” are much more primitive. On the out islands, which generally have little in the way of roads, people tend to live in primitive wooden homes, often without electricity or water, in coastal settlements, where boats are the preferred means of transportation. The cities face a housing shortage as more and more people move there in search of economic

opportunity. Housing has not kept pace with demand, and the government estimates that as many as two out of five homes are in poor to average condition. The cost of living is relatively high because so many of the goods Bahamians buy have to be imported so that freight costs constitute a kind of tax. About 96 percent of the population is literate.

HEALTH

The Bahamas has one central hospital, Princess Margaret Hospital in Nassau. Additionally, over a hundred small clinics are scattered throughout the country, where nurses are often primary caregivers; patients who need more extensive treatment are often airlifted to Nassau. The islands have made considerable progress in health care in recent years, with life expectancy reaching 62 years for men and 69 years for women. The infant mortality rate remains relatively high, at nearly 26 for every 1,000 live births. About 3 percent of the adult population lives with AIDS, though fewer than 200 died of the disease in 2003. In the out islands, many people still practice traditional forms of medicine, including herbal remedies.

Health

Number of Physicians: 312
 Number of Dentists: 21
 Number of Nurses: 1,323
 Number of Pharmacists: —
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 106
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 25.7
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 60
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 6.9
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 1,127
 HIV Infected % of adults: 3.0
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 98
 Measles: 94
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 100
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 97

FOOD AND NUTRITION

In a nation of 700 islands, it is no surprise that seafood is a mainstay of the Bahamian diet. Especially popular is conch shellfish, but also popular are grouper, snapper, crayfish, and shark. Dried pigeon peas with rice, cooked with spices, is also a staple. Another popular food item is the souse, a dish made with pickled meats that is a legacy of the days before refrigeration. Souses are made with various meats, including lamb and mutton, or conch and stewed with lime juice and spices. Bahamians face problems with both obesity and nutritional deficiencies. From

1995 to 2003 figures show that among children four to nine years old, 6.6 percent were underweight, 12.9 percent were stunted (a greater proportion of boys than girls), and 5.7 percent were wasting. In contrast, though, nearly 15 percent were overweight. Among adults 15–64 years old, 21.3 percent were obese, while another 27.3 percent were overweight.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 92.7
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 376.0

STATUS OF WOMEN

Like most modern democracies, women legally share in all rights equally with their male counterparts. While most political rights and access to education are secure, real economic inequalities do exist.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 20
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: —
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 50.1

WORK

Among a labor force of 156,000 (1999 estimate), 5 percent make their living in agriculture, 5 percent in industry, 50 percent in tourism, and 40 percent in other services. The unemployment rate in 2001 was 6.9 percent. Much of the population makes its living through subsistence farming, fishing, or production and sale of crafts. Many others are employed seasonally in the tourist trade. Because there are so few salaried jobs in the out islands, many residents move to cities such as Nassau and Freeport seeking employment.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 156,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 47.2
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 5
 Industry: 5
 Tourism: 50
 Other Services: 40
 Unemployment %: 6.9

EDUCATION

Education is compulsory, free, and universal for 10 years, from ages five to 14. Schooling lasts for 12 years, divided into six years of primary school, three years of lower secondary school, and three years of upper secondary school. The academic year runs from September to June. The medium of instruction is English.

There are two teacher-training colleges. Technical education is provided by C. R. Walker Technical College. Higher education is provided by the University of the West Indies in Jamaica. The university opened a branch in the Bahamas in 1979.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 95.6
 Male %: 94.7
 Female %: 96.5
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: —
 First Level: Primary schools: 115
 Teachers: 2,029
 Students: 34,079
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 16.8
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 86.4
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: —
 Teachers: 2,135
 Students: 31,975
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 15.0
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 75.9
 Third Level: Institutions: 1
 Teachers: —
 Students: —
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: —
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: —

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The bulk of the limited amount of scientific and technological research carried out by Bahamians is done by the faculty at the College of the Bahamas. More important is the research done by foreign investigators in such areas as marine biology.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: 0.59
 Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

The *Nassau Guardian* is the nation's oldest newspaper; it was founded in 1844 by the Englishman Edwin Charles Mosely. Its major competitor is the *Tribune*, which was

founded in 1903 by the Bahamian Leon Dupuch. A twice-weekly tabloid, *Punch*, was founded in 1990, and the *Bahama Journal* began as a weekly in 1987 but now publishes daily. The *Freeport News* is also in circulation. The press enjoys substantial freedom, including the right to oppose the government on national issues.

Media

Daily Newspapers: —
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: —
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets 000: 73
 per 1,000: 243

CULTURE

Artists in the Bahamas tend to be self-supporting with a great deal of emphasis on folk arts and crafts, which include wood carving, basketry, quilting, and shellwork. Palm fronds are often used to make hats, purses, baskets, and other items. Bahamian folk music derives from Africa's Junkanoo festival. This festival originally featured a goat-skin drum called a *goombay*, a term used today to refer to calypso music with satirical lyrics as well as to music festivals. In the out islands, many local bands featuring the *goombay*, along with guitars, perform at weddings and dances.

The best-known poet of the Bahamas is Susan Wallace, who has also most recently written a play entitled *Single Seven*, and Winston Saunders's play *You Can Lead a Horse to Water* has been performed worldwide. The Dundas Theatre performs plays written by other Bahamian playwrights. Alton Lowe is an artist well known for his realistic paintings of Bahamian life.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 9
 Volumes: 83,262
 Registered borrowers: 1,233
 Museums Number: 7
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

The islands of the Bahamas are the source of many myths and legends. For example, a woman named Pretty Molly

Bay is said to haunt Little Exuma Island. In one legend she is a former slave and roams the beaches at night; in another she is a white woman who was transformed into a mermaid. Bahamians tell stories about chickcharnies, which are three-toed spirits with red eyes. The Fountain of Youth is traditionally associated with Bimini and the lost island of Atlantis with North Bimini. The American playwright Eugene O'Neill based one of his plays, *The Emperor Jones*, on the legend of the nineteenth-century revolutionary leader Henri Christophe (1767–1820), who aided in the liberation of Haiti and later settled in the Bahamas, reputedly as the first black king in the Western Hemisphere in a reign noted for its cruelty and lavishness.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Music is an important source of entertainment for Bahamians. In addition to *goombay*, Bahamians enjoy calypso and reggae as well as gospel music, which is performed not only in churches but also during outdoor concerts. On television Bahamians watch American situation comedies and sports and British Broadcasting Corporation programming. Water sports such as windsurfing are popular, as are boating and sailing.

ETIQUETTE

Except for the bustling cities of Freeport and Nassau, it is customary for people to exchange relatively formal greetings. Bahamians generally prefer to ease into conversations with greetings and friendly remarks before getting down to business. Business relationships are fairly formal, with exchanges of business cards and handshakes. It is recommended that tourists cover up when leaving the beaches. Bahamians also dress rather formally for church services. It is considered extremely rude to photograph a person in the Bahamas without his or her permission.

FAMILY LIFE

The model family in the Bahamas is the two-parent nuclear family. That norm has changed in recent years with the migration of many out islanders to the larger cities, leaving families headed by grandparents and single parents. Children are cared for primarily by mothers or grandmothers, and adult children often provide their mothers with financial help. In white-dominated settlements in the out islands, interracial marriages are stigmatized. While marriage with kin is frowned upon, in fact, many marriages take place between those who are more distantly related than first cousins. Divorce is available,

but many married couples simply drift apart without going through the formality of divorce. Second marriages are frowned upon, and women suffer from a sexual double standard: They are expected to remain chaste until marriage, while it is expected that men will have premarital (and extramarital) affairs.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Most Bahamians wear modern Western-style clothing, although traditional costumes can be seen at festivals such as Junkanoo, even in the cities.

SPORTS

Softball is an extremely popular sport in the Bahamas. The nation's teams regularly compete in the World Softball Conference. Bahamians also enjoy basketball, volleyball, and track and field, and many Bahamians attend college in the United States on scholarships given for participating in these sports. One of the most accomplished in recent years has been the sprinter Debbie Ferguson, who won a silver medal in the 400-meter relay in the 1996 Olympics and set numerous track-and-field records while attending the University of Georgia. Also popular are water sports, including fishing, windsurfing, and sailing. Islanders race in the Family Islands regatta every April.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1953** Bahamians of African descent form the PLP.
- 1961** Men who do not own property and all women win the right to vote.
- 1964** The United Kingdom grants the Bahamas self-government.
- 1973** The Bahamas is granted full independence by the United Kingdom and is admitted as the 33rd member of the Commonwealth.
- 1976** Chester Whitfield is elected leader of the opposition FNM.
Gerald C. Cash succeeds Milo B. Butler as governor-general.
- 1977** Lynden O. Pindling's PLP wins 30 of 38 seats in the House of Assembly in national elections.
- 1978** An economic commission is created to promote investment and review economic policies of the government.
- 1979** Legislation restricting land sales to foreigners is approved.
- 1982** In national elections Pindling's PLP wins 32 of 43 seats.
- 1984** Royal Commission of Inquiry is appointed to investigate charges of corruption in government and extensive influence peddling by drug dealers. The commission finds no direct evidence of Pindling's association with drug traffic but releases damaging data of unaccounted wealth in the prime minister's account. Deputy Prime Minister Arthur D. Hanna resigns, and two other cabinet ministers are dismissed following publication of the report.
- 1985** Howard Smith, assistant police commissioner, is indicted along with 50 others for involvement in illegal drug trade and is dismissed from the force.
- 1986** A joint U.S.-Bahamian task force on drug interdiction is created following a two-year inquiry into the cocaine-smuggling problem.
- 1987** Pindling's PLP wins 31 of the 49 House Assembly seats despite the issue of drug-related corruption. Statistics for the year reveal unprecedented levels of violence and drug-related crimes.
- 1988** The Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in the United Kingdom rejects opposition accusations that Pindling's financial affairs had not been adequately investigated.
- 1989** The Bahamas ratifies the 1988 Vienna Convention on Narcotics Trafficking; a Bahamian member of Parliament, his wife, an associate of Prime Minister Pindling, and five others are indicted in two separate U.S. drug-related cases.
- 1990** Sir Cecil Wallace-Whitfield, leader of the opposition FNM, dies and is replaced by Hubert Ingraham; Minister of Agriculture, Trade, and Industry Ervin Knowles resigns after accusations of nepotism and misuse of public funds.
- 1992** After 25 years in power, Pindling's PLP is defeated by the FNM, and Hubert Ingraham becomes prime minister.
- 1995** Sir Orville Turnquist is appointed governor-general.
- 1997** The FNM wins 34 of 40 House Assembly Seats.
- 2000** Pindling dies at age 70.
- 2002** The Progressive Liberal Party wins 29 seats in the legislature, and Perry Christie becomes the nation's third prime minister.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Latin American Information Network, University of Texas. Bahamas: Reference Desk.
http://www.sat.lib.tx.us/html/geobaha_braz.htm#BAHAMAS
- Governments on the WWW.
<http://www.gksoft.com/govt/en/bs.html>

BAHRAIN

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Kingdom of Bahrain (Mamlakah al-Bahrain)

ABBREVIATION

BH

CAPITAL

Manama

HEAD OF STATE

Emir Sheikh Hamad ibn Isa al-Khalifa (from 1999)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Khalifa ibn Salman al-Khalifa (from 1971)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Constitutional monarchy

POPULATION

688,345 (2005)

AREA

665 sq km (256 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Arab

LANGUAGES

Arabic (official), English

RELIGION

Islam

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Bahraini dinar

NATIONAL FLAG

Red field covering three-fourths of the flag separated by a vertical serrated line from a white vertical stripe on the hoist

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A red shield with a serrated white upper border surrounded by a red and white mantling

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Our Bahrain, Country of Security, Nation of Hospitality, Protected by Our Courageous Emir”

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year’s Day), December 16 (National Day), various Islamic festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

December 16, 1971

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

June 1973; revised February 14, 2002

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

The Bahrain archipelago covers a total area of 622 sq km (240 sq mi) and lies at the entrance of the Gulf of Salwa between Saudi Arabia’s Hausa Province and the Qatar Peninsula. The group includes six principal islands—Bahrain, Muharraq, Sitrah, Umm al-Nassan (the personal property and private game preserve of the emir), Jidda, and Nabi Salih—as well as 27 minor islands, including the Muhammadiyah and the Hwar groups. The total length of the coastline is 161 km (100 mi).

In 1986 the King Fahd Causeway was opened, linking Bahrain and Saudi Arabia. Except for a narrow strip of land along the northern coast, Bahrain is a desert. Toward the interior the land rises gradually toward a central range of hills, which reaches its highest elevation at Jebel Dukhan (122 m, 400 ft). Most of the smaller islands are flat and sandy.

Bahrain is blessed with a number of freshwater springs, or artesian wells, whose sources are still a mystery. These springs are most numerous along the northern coast of Bahrain Island, and they make permanent cultivation possible on a narrow strip of land.

Bahrain



Geography

Area sq km: 665; sq mi 256
 World Rank: 175th
 Land Boundaries, km: 0
 Coastline, km: 161
 Elevation Extremes meters
 Lowest: Persian Gulf 0
 Highest: Jabal ad Dukhan 122
 Land Use %
 Arable land: 2.82
 Permanent Crops: 5.63
 Forest: 0
 Other: 91.55

Population of Principal Cities (2001)

Manama	135,000
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CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Bahrain has an arid, desert climate, with maximum summer temperatures in July reaching 44°C (111°F). Winters are cooler, with temperatures in December ranging between 10°C and 20°C (50°F and 68°F). Average annual rainfall is only 76 mm (3 in). A dry, southwestern wind known locally as the *qaws* periodically raises dust storms.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature
 Summer High: 111°F
 Winter: 50° to 68°F
 Average Rainfall: 3 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Although Bahrain is largely a desert nation, it provides a surprising variety of habitats, including not only the desert but also salt marshes, mudflats, rocky shores, and sea grass beds. Desert plants such as the bean caper adapt to the arid climate by synchronizing their life cycle with the brief rainy season. Animals such as the spiny-tailed lizard hide in burrows, while the Arabian wild hare camouflages itself to hide in the brown landscape. Agricultural drainage ditches have rushes and reeds that provide habitats for species such as the marsh frog and the Caspian terrapin. The rocky shores provide nesting sites for bird such as the sooty falcon and the osprey. The mudflats supply algae for polychaetes, gastropods, bivalves, and crabs, which in turn support migratory birds such as the flamingo and the black-winged stilt. Sea grass beds support sea cows and green turtles as well as commercial marine species such as prawns and pearl oysters.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 688,345
 World Rank: 157th
 Density per sq km: 1,003
 % of annual growth (1999–2003): 2.0
 Male %: 55.9
 Female %: 44.1
 Urban %: 90.0
 Age Distribution %: 0–14: 27.1
 15–65: 70.1
 65 and over: 2.8
 Population 2025: 865,890
 Birth Rate per 1,000: 18.5
 Death Rate per 1,000: 4.0
 Rate of Natural Increase %: 1.7
 Total Fertility Rate: 2.67
 Expectation of Life (years): Males 71.5
 Females 76.5
 Marriage Rate per 1,000: 7.1
 Divorce Rate per 1,000: 1.2
 Average Size of Households: 6.5
 Induced Abortions: 1,749

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Indigenous Arabs constitute the majority of the population, though their percentage has decreased. Indigenous Bahrainis include blacks who have intermarried with local Arabs and the Bahanrah, descendants of the original inhabitants of the islands who sought refuge there from Nebuchadnezzar's persecution.

Ethnic diversity among the minority groups is a pronounced feature of Bahrain's population. Among the groups represented are Saudi Arabians, Omanis, Iranians, Asians (including Baluchis, Pakistanis, and Indians) and British or continental Europeans. The ethnic mix continues to change as a steady flow of immigration brings more aliens into the country.

LANGUAGES

The official language is Arabic, which is universally spoken in its Gulf dialect. English is widely understood and taught in secondary schools. English also dominates the media. Other languages are spoken by immigrants to Bahrain, principally from southern and eastern Asia.

RELIGIONS

The national religion is Islam, and a majority of Bahrainis are Shiite Muslims. The Shiites constitute 70 percent of the Muslim population; the Sunnis, 30 percent. Further, a number of Iranian Shiites were naturalized in the early 1970s. Sunni-Shiite conflicts have been common.

The emirs of Bahrain have shown remarkable toleration for the Christian denominations. There are Catholic and Anglican churches as well as a Catholic school and a Dutch Reformed mission in Manama. There are also substantial Hindu and Christian populations, including a fair number of Arab Christians.

Religious Affiliations

Muslim	558,936
Christian	61,951
Other	67,458

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The earliest recorded reference to Bahrain dates back to the third millennium B.C.E., when it was known as Dilmun. The era has been chronicled in the Epic of Gilgamesh, who called Dilmun the land of immortality when he visited it in his quest for eternal life. With its lush vegetation and abundant freshwater springs, not to speak of its ideal location between Mesopotamia and the Indian Subcontinent, Dilmun became a popular haven on the sea trade route. As trade between Mesopotamia and the Indus Valley civilizations in the subcontinent continued to flourish, Dilmun also grew in prosperity. A city, Qalat Al Bahrain, began to spring up at the site where the Bahrain Fort now exists.

The good times were not to last; between 1800 and 1600 B.C.E. Aryan forces invaded and destroyed the cities of the Indus Valley, bringing trade to a halt. For a long period thereafter Bahrain remained isolated, forced to depend on its own resources. Not until the early first millennium B.C.E. would Bahrain flourish again, as part of the Assyrian empire. Bahrain became an important pearling and fishing port, but the high quality and abundance of pearls in its waters attracted some unwelcome attention.

By 600 B.C.E. Bahrain was drawn into the expanding Babylonian empire. The Greeks, who called the island Tylos, soon began settling in Bahrain. Trade began to play an important part after the fall of Babylonia to the Persians—who now controlled much of the region between India and the Mediterranean—and by 323 B.C.E. Bahrain regained its independence.

There followed a period of relative calm, up until the 15th century when the Europeans began exploring new sea trade routes. Bahrain was also known as *Awal* during that pre-Islamic era, a name associated with a pagan idol worshipped by the Wael tribe.

The islands first became known as Bahrain in the early Islamic era, when the name was used for the entire region stretching from Basra, Iraq, in the north to Oman in the south. By the early 1500s the Portuguese viewed Bahrain as a key point to protect their trade routes between India, Africa, and Europe. They invaded

the island and set up a military base at the Bahrain Fort. The fort, which ironically had been used by the people of Bahrain to defend themselves against the Portuguese, was strengthened and new stone towers erected. The Bahrain Fort remains widely known as the Portuguese Fort.

The Portuguese were, however, unable to protect the islands, which fell to the Persians in 1603. Then came a long period of turmoil, with Bahrain changing hands between the warring Persians and Arabs until it was finally conquered in 1783 by Shaikh Ahmed bin Mohammed al-Khalifa, better known as Ahmed bin Mohamed al-Fateh, the conqueror.

The British gained a foothold in Bahrain by offering naval protection from the Ottoman Empire in the 1830s. Conflict between Bahrain and Britain was rare. However, there was conflict between the two nations when the British sought to install their choice for emir in 1869. Oil was discovered in Bahrain in 1902, but large-scale drilling did not begin until the 1930s; the production of oil brought wealth to the country as well as the increased presence of the British. Growing anti-British sentiment in the 1950s led to the British announcing their plans to depart the Persian Gulf in 15 years. On August 14, 1971, Bahrain declared itself independent from Britain.

As the price of oil continued to rise in the 1970s and 1980s, the country's wealth and infrastructure improved. The opening of the King Fahd Causeway between Bahrain and Saudi Arabia in 1986 both increased tourism and improved the economy. During the Gulf War Saddam Hussein ordered Scud missile attacks on the country. However, the missiles largely missed targets and landed harmlessly in the sea. Bahrain cooperated with the United Nations' attempt to monitor Iraq after the Gulf War, but U.S. troop buildups in 1998 strained relations between Bahrain and the United States.

In 1999 Emir Isa bin Sulman al-Khalifa was succeeded by his son Hamad ibn Isa al-Khalifa, who commissioned the drafting of a new national charter and pardoned more than 800 political prisoners. In a national referendum in February 2001 voters overwhelmingly endorsed the political reforms stipulated in the national charter, which called for a European-style constitutional monarchy. Emir Hamad abolished the State Security Law and the State Security Court, which had been set up in 1995 after unrest by Shiite Muslims demanding reform. On February 14, 2002, he declared Bahrain a constitutional monarchy and offered a package of reforms, one of which was to allow women to run for office. In May of that year local elections were held for the first time in 32 years, and in October parliamentary elections were held for the first time in nearly the same number of years. In 2003 thousands of torture victims petitioned the king to annul a law that prevented them from suing suspected torturers. In 2004 Nada Haffadh was appointed health minister, be-

coming the first woman to head a government ministry. In May 2004, after protestors demonstrated against the U.S.-led war in Iraq, the king dismissed his interior minister for trying to prevent the protest.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1961–99 Isa bin Sulman al-Khalifa
1999– Hamad ibn Isa al-Khalifa

CONSTITUTION

Bahrain has been ruled since the 18th century by the Khalifa family. The only restraint on the absolute power of the emir, until the state became independent in 1971, was the British political agent. Political unrest inspired by the Arab Nationalist Movement and the pro-Iraqi Baath Party in the late 1960s led to the convening of a Constituent Assembly in 1972 and to the ratification of the constitution of 1973, which provides for a National Assembly composed of elected members and cabinet ministers. The constitution created the post of financial comptroller, responsible to the National Assembly and not to the emir, and guarantees freedom of the press, speech, conscience, and religious belief. In theory it also permits national labor unions to be organized “on peaceful lines.” None of these provisions served, in practice, to reduce the power of the emir, who remains as absolute a ruler as ever. The Assembly was dissolved in 1975, and the emir rules through the cabinet alone.

Bahrain’s leadership has been torn between two aims: its desire to foster the open social and commercial environment needed to attract international business and its urges to protect the ruling family’s preeminence, prevent potential sectarian violence, and thwart efforts by Iran and other revolutionary states to destabilize Bahrain.

The government is administered by a cabinet appointed by the emir, the head of state, and presided over by the prime minister, the head of government.

Until recently Bahrain had held only one popular election in its history—in 1973—on the basis of the new constitution. Suffrage was restricted to men over 21. Upon the dissolution of the National Assembly in 1975, the emir promised a revised electoral law providing for a more representative body.

Beginning in the mid-1990s pressure on the government to restore a liberal constitution increased. In 1999 Emir Isa bin Sulman al-Khalifa was succeeded by his son Hamad ibn Isa al-Khalifa, who began to release political prisoners and noticeably declined the use of the state security courts. In 2001 his National Action Charter for a European-style constitutional monarchy was put to a referendum and won overwhelming approval from the populace. The charter called for a partially elected legisla-

ture and an independent judiciary. Both men and women over the age of 20 vote. Local and parliamentary elections were held in 2002. The principal threat to the state comes from the Iran-oriented Shiite community, which forms the numerical majority but has been excluded from power.

PARLIAMENT

The National Assembly formerly consisted of 30 members elected for four-year terms, cabinet ministers, and ministers of state. According to the constitution the financial comptroller is responsible to the National Assembly. The first election to the National Assembly was held in 1973, when 30,000 electors chose 30 members from 114 candidates, all of whom ran as independents because political parties were not allowed. The membership of the 1973 National Assembly was almost equally divided between conservatives and radicals. Its powers were few and insubstantial, and even its rights of debate were subject to government control. Nevertheless, it was dissolved in 1975 “for being dominated by ideas alien to the society and values of Bahrain.” For this act Bahrain was expelled from the International Parliamentary Union in 1976. In 1977 Bahrain was cited by Amnesty International as one of the countries in which legislators had been jailed without trial.

The National Action Charter, approved in a national referendum on February 12 and 15, 2001, stipulated the creation of a bicameral legislature and called for suffrage for men and women over the age of 20. The first parliamentary elections were held in October 2002. Currently, the Shura Council consists of 40 members appointed by the king, and the House of Deputies consists of 40 members elected to four-year terms.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Officially, political parties are prohibited in Bahrain. However, politically oriented societies are allowed. Examples are the Islamic National Al Wafaq Society, National Democratic Action, the Progressive Democratic Forum, the Islamic National Forum, and the Islamic Arab Democratic Wassat Society.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The country’s six towns are administered by municipal councils. Half the councilmen are elected, and the other half are appointed by the emir. Council presidents are invariably members of the Khalifa family. Villages are administered by *mukhtars*, or “headmen,” appointed by the emir.

On May 9, 2002, the first elections in 32 years for municipal council members took place. For the first time Bahrain women voted and ran for office.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The legal system is based on the sharia, Islamic law, but has been influenced by British traditions and codes. The emir and the Ministry of Justice constitute the apex of the judicial system. Local sharia courts dispense justice at lower levels. Equality before the law is guaranteed by the constitution. A number of judges and lawyers are non-Bahraini Arabs. The main penal settlement is on the rocky islet of Jidda.

HUMAN RIGHTS

There continue to be serious problems in Bahrain's human rights record. However, the situation has improved measurably in the last few years. The government continues to deny citizens the right to change their government; however, the political situation improved and political and civil unrest decreased following an effort by the new emir to develop relations with the Shia community. In the 1990s there were no extrajudicial killings by security forces, but security forces continued to torture, beat, and otherwise abuse prisoners. Impunity of security-force personnel remains a problem; there are no known instances of any such personnel being punished for human rights abuses. The government continued to use arbitrary arrest and detention, incommunicado and prolonged detention, and involuntary exile. In November and December 1999 the new emir pardoned a total of approximately 800 prisoners and detainees, some of whom had been detained for political reasons. The judiciary remains subject to government pressure, and there are limits on the right to a fair, public trial, especially in the security court. The government continues to infringe on citizens' privacy rights. The government has also imposed some restrictions on the freedoms of speech, the press, religion, movement, assembly, and association. Violence against women and discrimination based on sex, religion, and ethnicity remain problems. The government restricts worker rights, and there have been instances of forced labor. The 2001 National Action Charter offered hope for the government's liberalization program, with its reconstitution of the National Assembly.

FOREIGN POLICY

Since gaining independence, Bahrain has followed Saudi Arabia's lead in foreign policy, but the country has proven more moderate than most Arab states on the Palestin-

ian question. It has a running dispute with Qatar over the small uninhabited island of Fasht al-Dibal, which had been reclaimed from a coral reef. Bahrain and the United States have a defense cooperation agreement that provides for a U.S. airbase in Bahrain.

DEFENSE

The defense command is headed by the emir, and the line of command runs through the defense minister to the chief of staff. Both the defense minister and the chief of staff are members of the ruling Khalifa family. Military manpower is provided by voluntary enlistment. The total strength of the armed forces was 9,000 in 1999, including army and air force personnel, or about 13.0 per 1,000 inhabitants. Military expenditures in 2003 were \$618 million, about 7.5 percent of gross domestic product (GDP).

The Bahrain military is designed for internal peace-keeping only; for defense against possible external attack, Bahrain depends on Saudi forces. Bahrain has permitted Saudi Arabia to establish a major air base south of the Awali-Zalaq road. It is Saudi Arabia's first military establishment outside its own borders.

Most of Bahrain's defense equipment is of British origin. Britain also provides training for defense personnel. The U.S. Navy's base in Bahrain was closed in 1977. The United States is currently assisting in the construction of a major air base.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	9,000
Military Manpower Availability:	221,661
Military Expenditures \$million:	618.1
as % of GDP:	7.5
as % of central government expenditures:	14.9
Arms Imports \$million:	51
Arms Exports \$million:	2

ECONOMY

Bahrain has a free-market economy in which the private sector is dominant. In Bahrain, petroleum production and processing account for about 60 percent of export receipts, 60 percent of government revenues, and 30 percent of GDP. Economic conditions have fluctuated with the changing fortunes of oil since 1985, such as during and following the Gulf crisis of 1990-91. With its highly developed communication and transport facilities, Bahrain is home to numerous multinational firms with business in the Persian Gulf region. A large share of exports consists of petroleum products made from imported crude. Construction proceeds on several

major industrial projects. Unemployment, especially among the young, and the depletion of both oil and underground water resources are major long-term economic problems.

Gross domestic product in 2002 was \$11.29 billion, with GDP growth at 4.9 percent. Per capita GDP was \$16,900.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (Purchasing Power Parity) \$billion: 11.29
 GDP per capita (Purchasing Power Parity) \$: 16,900
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2002) %: 3.7
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2002) %: 2.6

Origin of GDP %:

Agriculture: 0.7

Industry: 42.1

Services: 57.2

Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %

Private Consumption: 45

Government Consumption: 18

Gross Domestic Investment: 11.9

Foreign Trade \$billion:

Exports: 6.492

Imports: 5.126

% of Income Received by Poorest 20%: —

% of Income Received by Richest 10%: —

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002
100.28	99.57	99.82	101.03

Finance

National Currency: Bahraini Dinar (BHD)

Exchange Rate: \$1 = BHD 0.376

Money Supply Stock in National Currency million: 821

Central Bank Discount Rate %: —

Total External Debt \$billion: 4.682

Debt Service Ratio %: —

Balance of Payments \$million: 53

International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 1.673

Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index

Growth Rate %: -0.2

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 70.58

per capita: \$101

Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 40.25

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year

Revenues \$billion: 2.981

Expenditures \$billion: 3.019

Budget Deficit \$million: 38

Tax Revenues as % of GDP: 7.2

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 0.7

Average Annual Rate of Growth (1965–98) %: —

Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares: 0.09

Irrigation, % of Farms having: 66.7

Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 150

Total Farmland as % of land area: 2.8

Livestock: Cattle 000: 15

Sheep 000: 17.5

Hogs 000: —

Chickens 000: 470

Forests: Production of Roundwood (000 cubic meters): —

Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 11.2

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: —

Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 2.0

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of

oil equivalent million: 10.56

Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons

of oil equivalent million: 9.15

Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 13.97

Net Energy Imports % of use: -16.0

Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: 1,400

Production kW-hr billion: 6.9

Consumption kW-hr billion: 5.8

Coal Reserves tons million: —

Production tons 000: —

Consumption tons 000: —

Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: 3.5

Production cubic feet billion: 327

Consumption cubic feet billion: 327

Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels million: 125

Production barrels 000 per day: 44

Consumption barrels 000 per day: 40

Pipelines Length km: 53

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 5.126

Exports \$billion: 6.492

Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —

Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —

Balance of Trade \$million: 53

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Saudi Arabia %	30.7	—
United States %	11.4	3.5
Japan %	7.8	—
United Kingdom %	5.7	—
Germany %	5.4	—
India %	—	3.3
South Korea %	—	2.2

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 3,261
 Paved %: 77.6
 Automobiles: 187,000
 Trucks and Buses: 38,400
 Railroad; Track Length km: —
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: —
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 6
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 312.6
 Airports: 4
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 2.9
 Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 3,167
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 741
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 378

Communications

Telephones 000: 185.8
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.10
 Cellular Telephones 000: 443.1
 Personal Computers 000: 107
 Internet Hosts per million people: 1,939
 Internet Users: 195,700

ENVIRONMENT

A desert country, Bahrain's limited arable lands have been subject to drought, dust storms, and other forms of degradation that have intensified desertification of the country. Habitat surrounding the nation's natural springs has largely disappeared. The oil industry has also caused some environmental concern, as oil spills and discharge from tankers, refineries, and distribution centers have caused coastal pollution and disturbed mudflat habitats for migratory birds.

Environment

Forest Area % of land area: —
 Average Annual Forest Change, 1990-2000, 000 ha: —
 Nationally Protected Areas as % of Total Land Area: 1.3
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 29.1

LIVING CONDITIONS

The standard of living in Bahrain rose rapidly with the oil boom of the 1970s and 1980s. Although a rapidly increasing population led to housing shortages, as well as shortages of medical care, new construction of homes and

medical facilities has alleviated some of those shortages. In connection with the UN Development Programme, the government's goal is to reduce poverty by half by 2015. The nation has a modern telephone system, five radio stations, four television stations, two space satellites, and over 2,500 km of paved roads. It has a state-of-the-art international airport, and Mina Salman is a modern and efficient port.

Traditional Bahraini homes were made of palm fronds, but modern homes are constructed of cement and lime brick. Bahrainis build their homes vertically to take advantage of breezes higher from the ground, and many homes and public buildings have wind towers to channel breezes down to lower floors.

HEALTH

Medical care improved greatly after independence and is currently free and comprehensive. Bahrain has almost entirely eliminated tropical diseases. When appropriate medical care cannot be provided at the capital's large, modern hospital, the government pays for the patient to be airlifted abroad. Life expectancy is over 71 years for males and over 76 years for females; the infant mortality rate is 13 deaths per 1,000 live births. In 2001 about 0.3 percent of the adult population was living with AIDS. In rural areas some Bahrainis practice traditional medicine, relying on herbal cures made from vegetation such as palm tree flowers.

Health

Number of Physicians: 1,106
 Number of Dentists: 144
 Number of Nurses: 2,861
 Number of Pharmacists: 151
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 160
 Hospital Beds per 1,000 people: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 13.0
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 28
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 4.1
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 500
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.3
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12–23 months:
 DPT: 98
 Measles: 99
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 100
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 100

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Common foods in Bahrain include vegetables and meats such as fish, chicken, lamb, and beef. Muslims in Bahrain (and elsewhere) do not consume pork. Basmati rice is served at nearly every meal. Breads include *khoubz*, a flatbread, and *samouli*, a white bread. One common dish

is *ghouzi*, a Bedouin dish made with lamb cooked on a spit. Bananas, citrus fruits, mangoes, and pomegranates are grown in orchards along the northern coast.

Among the adult population, Bahrain's health ministry found in 2002 a high incidence of overweight (36.7 percent of men, 28.3 percent of women) and obesity (23.3 percent of men, 34.1 percent of women). The ministry also found a high incidence of anemia (21 percent of men, 37 percent of women), suggesting shortages of iron and folic acid as well as generally unhealthful dietary habits.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: —
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: —

STATUS OF WOMEN

Bahraini women have traditionally constituted a "separate society," in keeping with the nation's Islamic heritage. Integration of male and female societies began with the development of a modern economy, and women have increasingly taken on roles previously reserved for men. The government has encouraged the trend toward equality, has enacted special labor laws to encourage female entry into the workforce, and is itself a leading employer of women. Most of these positions are clerical, but a small number of senior positions are held by women. Labor law grants women 60 days paid maternity leave and nursing periods during the working day. Women may not be discharged for marriage or pregnancy. However, women generally do not enjoy equal access to many government benefits. In 1984 complaints were aired in the press that women were discriminated against in the awarding of scholarships for study abroad. The responsible government official defended the discrimination and indicated that it would continue. Many legal rights of concern to women are subject to sharia law: women have rights to their own property but daughters receive less inheritance than sons, and widows must share their husbands' estates with their children. Although a wife may divorce, she must specify grounds for the plea, whereas a man may divorce without cause. In the case of a male child, custody remains with the mother until he reaches age 12; a girl stays with her mother until the daughter marries. Women are allowed to drive and appear in public without a male escort. However, permission from a male family member is sometimes required if a woman wishes to leave the country.

Bahrain had no birth-control programs or policies prior to the mid-1970s; however, since then the government has supported the Family Planning Association,

with commercial access to modern contraceptives and health and welfare services.

In September 2000 the emir appointed women (and non-Muslims) to the Consultative Council for the first time; one of these women was a Christian. In 2002 women were allowed to run for office for the first time, and in elections that year women voted and ran for office, although no women candidates won. In April 2004 a woman became the first ever to head a government ministry (health).

Women

Women-headed Households: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 0
 Female Administrators and Managers %: 6
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men aged 15 to 24: 1.01
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-Agricultural %: 13.4

WORK

Bahrain's labor force in 2004 consisted of about 350,000 workers, although 44 percent of these were not Bahraini nationals. Just 1 percent work in agriculture, while 79 percent work in industry, commerce, and services and 20 percent are employed by the government. Oil and natural-gas production provides employment for most Bahrainis, although the government is attempting to diversify into petrochemicals, oil refining, plastics, and aluminum production in anticipation of the depletion of the nation's oil and gas reserves. Other occupations that have a long tradition in Bahrain include fishing and shipbuilding. Shipbuilding skills have been passed down through many generations and are exercised in the construction of everything from huge oil tankers to small wooden dhows.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 350,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 22.0
 Total Activity Rate %: 44.6
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 1
 Industry, Commerce, and Services: 79
 Government: 20
 Unemployment %: 15

EDUCATION

Education is free and universal, but not compulsory, for nine years, between ages six and 15. Schooling consists of six years of primary school, three years of intermediate school, and three years of secondary school, for a total of 12 years. The literacy rate for males is almost 92 percent; for females, 85 percent.

The academic year runs from October to June. The medium of instruction is Arabic, but English is taught as a second language from the intermediate grades on.

The state system is supplemented by an independent program sponsored by the Bahrain Petroleum Company, which runs vocational centers for workers, provides education for the children of working families, and finances overseas training for Bahraini students. Private schools account for 100 percent of preprimary enrollment, 19.7 percent of primary enrollment, and 15.8 percent of secondary enrollment. In addition, boys can be enrolled at *kuttabs*, or Muslim schools attached to mosques. Educational administration is centralized in the Ministry of Education.

There are four higher-education institutions: the Arabian Gulf University, the University of Bahrain, the Men's Teacher Training College, and the Gulf Technical College.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 89.1
Male %: 91.9
Female %: 85.0
School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 13.5
First Level: Primary schools: 124
Teachers: 4,953
Students: 81,057
Student-Teacher Ratio: 16.4
Net Enrollment Ratio: 91.0
Second Level: Secondary Schools: —
Teachers: 5,198
Students: 64,439
Student-Teacher Ratio: 12.4
Net Enrollment Ratio: 81.4
Third Level: Institutions: —
Teachers: —
Students: 19,079
Gross Enrollment Ratio: 33.2
Students per 100,000: —
Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 3.2

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Scientific research in Bahrain has concentrated on the oil industry, although research efforts have expanded in petrochemicals and oil refining. The Bahrain Society of Engineers was formed in 1972. In 2002 Bahrain voiced its support for an international science fund to promote scientific research in the Muslim world.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million persons: —
Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
High-Tech Exports \$000: 61
Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

The Bahraini press consists of three local daily newspapers in Arabic and two in English, eight nondailies, and 11 other periodicals. The media are subject to the supervision of the Ministry of Information, but there is no active censorship. Bahrain has a small book publishing industry, but it does not adhere to any copyright convention.

Television broadcasting was begun in 1975 by a private station, which was taken over by the government in 1983. The Ministry of Information runs two land-based television stations, one in Arabic, the other in English. The Bahrain Radio and Television Corporation runs a 24-hour television satellite service and has an agreement with the British Broadcasting Corporation to use one of its channels. Additionally, it runs a subscription satellite service that provides a great deal of Western as well as Arabic programming. It provides 27 channels, but satellite-dish owners in Bahrain can receive up to 300 channels.

There are 11 public libraries in the urban centers of Manama and Muharraq.

Media

Newspapers and Periodicals: 24
Total Circulation 000: —
Circulation per 1,000: —
Books Published: —
Radio Receivers 000: 53.8
per 1,000: 78.1
Television sets 000: 270
per 1,000: 446

CULTURE

Much of Bahrain's literature is written in a classical Arabic style, featuring romance and depictions of heroes. Ibrahim al-'Urayyid and Ahmad Muhammad al-Khalifah are modern poets who write in this style. Many younger poets, though, write in Western-influenced free verse about personal and political issues. One prominent contemporary poet who writes in this style is Qasim Haddad. Hamdah Khamis is a journalist and poet; her collection *An Apology for Childhood* was published in 1976.

Islam forbids the depiction of the human form, so Bahraini graphic arts focus on abstract designs. The graphic arts also find expression in calligraphy, architecture, embroidery, and fabric weaving as well as in the construction of wooden boats called dhows. Music follows the traditional repetitive and elaborated Arabic style. Much of it is played on the *oud*, a type of lute, and a one-stringed instrument called the *rebaba*. The *ardha* is a traditional sword dance performed by men, accompanied by a drummer and a poet who recites lyrics.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number:	
Volumes: —	
Registered borrowers: —	
Museums Number:	
Annual Attendance: —	
Cinema Gross Receipts: —	
Number of Cinemas: —	
Seating Capacity: —	
Annual Attendance million: —	

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Bahrain's freshwater springs have provided a rich source of folklore tales. One story tells that falling stars made holes in the ground. Allah then turned the holes into "cups" from which his people could drink. Another story says that the submarine sea was ruled by a god named Abyss, and since Abyss provided the springs, it was important for people to please him. The word *abyss* in English is used to refer to any bottomless depth.

Historically, pearls were a source of wealth for the people of Bahrain, and they are also a source of folklore. Parents tell children that pearls are made when the tears of a mermaid fall into the shell of an oyster. Magic pearls have the power to help people find lost objects, and if a woman rubs pearls on her eyes, she can turn a man into her slave simply by looking at him.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

A favored form of family recreation in Bahrain is camping. People also enjoy relaxing and having conversations in coffeehouses, and the nation is known for the craftsmanship of its elaborate, beautiful coffee servers. Television has become a more popular form of recreation since new satellite stations, especially those carrying Western programming, have become available. As an island nation, Bahrain is home to many boaters and scuba divers. Birdwatchers are drawn to Bahrain's mudflats, where unique species of birds can be found feeding. The Bahrain Bowling Association has 300 members who play at six bowling centers in the capital.

ETIQUETTE

As in most Muslim countries, hospitality rules, and greetings are formal and elaborate, with parties inquiring about each other's health and family, though a man would not ask another about his wife. When someone enters a room, everyone else stands, and the newcomer proceeds around the room shaking hands. Bahrainis touch each other when they converse much more than Westerners do, and it is not uncommon for members of the same sex to hold hands while conversing. In public, however,

members of the opposite sex never touch, even if they are married. Visitors to home and even to shops and offices are offered coffee or tea, and it is considered rude either to fail to make the offer or to decline it.

FAMILY LIFE

Family life in Bahrain has changed in recent years as more and more women have become active in public life and work outside the home. Consequently, arranged marriages are not as common as they once were, and the payment of a dowry is no longer common. These changes, however, have taken place primarily among upper- and middle-class families that have the money to educate daughters and to pay for child care while the woman is working. Lower-class Bahrainis remain much more traditional.

The concept of "tribe," referring to family lineage, is important to Bahrainis, who are extremely loyal to their extended family. Children move away from home only upon marriage, and often not even then. Legally, a man may have up to four wives, but few do. While divorce is available, few Bahrainis are divorced.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Western clothing has become more popular in Bahrain, especially in the cities. Many men, however, still wear clothing suitable for a hot, desert climate. The *thobe* is a long robe made of white cotton. The *ghutra* is a piece of material draped over the head and held in place with a thick woven band called an *agal*. These clothes help men keep cool in the heat, and the *ghutra* provides protection for the face in sandstorms. Women do not dress as conservatively as women in some other Arab nations. Many no longer veil their faces, although most wear head coverings and long sleeves.

SPORTS

Expatriate communities support rugby and cricket. Wealthier Bahrainis take part in snorkeling and scuba diving, horse breeding and horse racing (though according to Muslim law, no betting is allowed), camel racing, and falconry. Others play tennis and enjoy racing dune buggies. The national sport of Bahrain is soccer. The national team plays internationally, and a league plays throughout Bahrain. Soccer matches at the National Stadium in Isa Town are well attended.

CHRONOLOGY

1970 A 12-member Council of State is established as Bahrain's supreme executive authority; only

- four of the 12 directors are of royal descent, but all are Bahrainis.
- Iran's claims over Bahrain are referred to the United Nations; UN representatives report popular opinion as overwhelmingly in favor of independence; Iran accepts UN report.
- 1971** The United Kingdom withdraws from the Persian Gulf region and ends its treaty obligations to the Trucial States; Bahrain declares its independence.
- The sheikh of Bahrain assumes the title emir.
- 1972** In response to popular demand, the emir convenes a Constituent Assembly to draft a new constitution for Bahrain.
- 1973** New constitution is ratified; elections are held for the newly created National Assembly; the radical Popular Bloc of the Left gains 10 of the 30 elected seats.
- The Bahrain Monetary Agency is established.
- 1975** The National Assembly is dissolved by the emir, who promises new elections and a new electoral apparatus.
- Television is introduced.
- 1976** International Parliamentary Union expels Bahrain for its autocratic dissolution of the National Assembly.
- 1977** Bahrain terminates a six-year agreement permitting U.S. naval ships to be based in Bahrain.
- 1981** Bahrain joins the Gulf Cooperation Council.
- 1984** The emirate bans the Shiite Islamic Enlightenment Society, charging it with pro-Iranian subversive plots.
- 1988** Bahrain holds its first official talks with the USSR.
- 1989** Bahrain establishes diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China.
- 1990** Iraq invades Kuwait; Bahrain supports UN economic sanctions against Iraq and permits the stationing of U.S. combat aircraft in Bahrain; Bahrain establishes diplomatic relations with the USSR.
- 1991** Bahrain sends troops and air support to Saudi Arabia; Bahrain fights alongside international troops against Iraq; Bahrain joins seven moderate Arab states in agreeing to a U.S.-backed postwar plan for collective security in the Persian Gulf region.
- 1992** The emir establishes an advisory council as a replacement for the National Assembly, which was dissolved in 1975.
- 1995** Uneven economic and social conditions lead to rioting against the government of Bahrain; the State Security Law is established to suppress unrest.
- 1996** The government cracks down on antigovernment protests, arresting over 600 dissenters.
- 1999** Emir Isa bin Salman al-Khalifa dies and is succeeded by his son Hamad bin Isa al-Khalifa;

Bahrain begins negotiations with Qatar over the disputed Hawar Islands.

- 2000** The emir promises to restore a democratically elected parliament.
- 2001** The emir pardons more than 800 political prisoners and exiles; in a national referendum 98 percent of voters support a proposal for a new national charter providing for free elections and restoration of the National Assembly; the emir abolishes the State Security Law.
- 2002** First elections in 32 years are held on May 9 to decide municipal representatives. Women vote and run for office for the first time. In October the first parliamentary election in 32 years are held.
- 2003** The United States and the United Kingdom warn of terrorist attacks against Western targets.
- 2004** Nada Haffadh becomes the first-ever woman to head a government ministry (health). Protestors demonstrate against the U.S.-led war in Iraq; the emir dismisses the interior minister after police try to prevent the protest.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- The World Factbook
<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/bf.html>

BANGLADESH

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

People's Republic of Bangladesh (Gano Projātontrī Bānglādesh)

ABBREVIATION

BD

CAPITAL

Dhaka

HEAD OF STATE

President Iajuddin Ahmed (from 2002)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia (from 2002)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Republic

POPULATION

144,319,628 (2005)

AREA

144,000 sq km (55,598 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Bangladeshi

LANGUAGE

Bangla (official)

RELIGION

Islam

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Taka

NATIONAL FLAG

A bright red circle on a dark green field

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A seven-petaled stylized water lily rising from a series of five wavy lines representing the Ganges and Brahmaputra rivers enclosed within wreaths of rice and jute. The design is created by a sprig of tea flanked by four stars.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"My Golden Bengal"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day), March 26 (Independence Day), December 16 (National Day), various Christian, Hindu, Muslim, and Buddhist festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

March 26, 1971

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

November 4, 1972 (amended 1973, 1974, 1975, 1977, 1979, 1981, 1988, 1989, 2004)

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Bangladesh, at the eastern end of the Indo-Gangetic Plain in South Asia, extends 767 km (477 mi) south-southeast to north-northwest and 429 km (267 mi) east-northeast to west-southwest. It has a total land area of 144,000 sq km (55,598 sq mi). The highly irregular deltaic coastline runs 580 km (360 mi).

Bangladesh's total international land boundary of 4,246 km (2,638 mi) is shared with two countries: India (4,053 km; 2,517 mi) and Myanmar (193 km; 120 mi).

Topographically, Bangladesh may be divided into the vast alluvial plain comprising most of the country

and the small Chittagong Hill Tracts in the extreme southeast. The Bengal Plain, also known as the Lower Indo-Gangetic Plain, is the largest delta in the world. The Chittagong Hill Tracts constitute roughly one-sixth of the country. They form a minor hill system, with its greatest elevation at Keokradong (1,230 m; 4,034 ft). Toward the east they form a series of parallel hill chains, while toward the west they slope gradually into a small coastal plain.

Bangladesh has one of the most complex river systems in the world, forming an interlacing grid. The three principal rivers of this network are the Ganges (known as Padma in Bangladesh), the Brahmaputra (known as Jamuna in Bangladesh), and the Meghna.

Bangladesh



From the junction of the three rivers below Dhaka to the Bay of Bengal is the stem of the river system. The triangular estuary contains a number of temporary islands known as *chars* as well as permanent islands. The largest of the permanent islands are Shahbazpur, North Hatia, South Hatia, and Sandwip. The tides from the Bay of Bengal are felt as far inland as Kalipur, 270 km (168 mi) away. These tidal waves, called bores, often cause disastrous floods.

Geography

Area sq km: 144,000; sq mi 55,598
 World Rank: 91st
 Land Boundaries, km: Myanmar 193; India 4,053
 Coastline, km: 580
 Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Indian Ocean 0
 Highest: Keokradong 1,230
 Land Use %
 Arable Land: 62.1
 Permanent Crops: 3.1
 Forest: 10.3
 Other: 24.5

Population of Principal Cities (1991)

Barisal	202,746
Bogra	161,155
Chittagong	1,392,860
Comilla	225,259
Dhaka	3,612,850
Jessore	163,626
Khulna	663,340
Mymensingh	273,350
Narayanganj	276,549
Rajshahi	294,056
Rangpur	208,294
Sylhet	225,541
Tongi	168,702

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Bangladesh has a tropical climate governed by the monsoons. Though it is comparatively temperate and equable, there are marked seasonal variations. The three main seasons are a hot summer from March to June, a cooler but still warm and humid monsoon season from June to September, and a cool, dry winter season from October to February.

The average temperatures range from 7°C (45°F) in January to 31°C (90°F) in May. Temperatures up to 40.6°C (105°F) have occasionally been recorded. Daily temperature changes are moderate.

Nearly 80 percent of the annual rain falls from June through September, when the moisture-laden monsoon blows from the south and the southwest. The average annual rainfall varies between 1,270 and 1,520 mm (50 to 60 in) in the west to over 2,540 mm (100 in) elsewhere. The

Sylhet district, in the northeast, is believed to receive the highest rainfall in the world.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature
 January: 45°F
 May: 90°F
 August: 88°F
 Average Rainfall
 50 in to 60 in the west
 100 in the north and east

FLORA AND FAUNA

Bangladesh is divided into four climatic zones, including the low eastern hills with jungles and bamboo, the central zone with swamps and lakes, the plains of the northwest and southwest with cultivated crops and orchards—with the plant named *babyu* being the most common—and the southern region of mangrove forests with harvestable trees such as the *sundri* and the softwood *gengwa*, used for making newsprint. Flowers include the water lily, the country's national flower, the marigold, jasmine, and China rose.

There are about 200 species of mammal in Bangladesh, the same number of freshwater fish and marine life, over seven species of birds, and 150 species of snakes and reptiles. Best known of the larger mammals are the Bengal tiger, the elephant, the sambar deer, the sloth bear, and the clouded leopard. Several of these animals are on the world's endangered species list. Among birds, crows are common, and the eagle is represented by the crested serpent eagle and the ring-tailed fishing eagle.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 144,319,628
 World Rank: 7th
 Density per sq km: 1,061
 % of annual growth (1999-2003): 1.7
 Male %: 51.2
 Female %: 48.8
 Urban %: —
 Age Distribution %: 0-14: 33.1
 15-64: 63.5
 65 and over: 3.4
 Population 2025: 204,539,000
 Birth Rate per 1,000: 30.01
 Death Rate per 1,000: 8.4
 Rate of Natural Increase %: 2.2
 Total Fertility Rate: 3.13
 Expectation of Life (years): Males 62.13
 Females 62.02
 Marriage Rate per 1,000: —
 Divorce Rate per 1,000: —
 Average Size of Households: 5.6
 Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Bangladesh is noted for the remarkable ethnic homogeneity of its population. Over 97 percent of its people are Bengali. Of the remainder, almost 2 percent are Biharis and tribals. The term Bihari designates non-Bengali, Urdu-speaking Muslims who fled to Bangladesh from eastern India in 1947. The tribals, racially distinct from the Bengali, have facial features and language closer to those of the Burmese.

In the coastal areas there are scattered communities of Arab, Dutch, and Portuguese settlers. Apart from these groups there are no numerically significant foreign communities.

LANGUAGES

Bangla, or Bengali, is the official language of Bangladesh. Bangladeshis identify themselves with their national language very closely. Bengali has a rich literature; at least two Bengali writers are well known in the West: the Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore and Kazi Nazrul Islam. English remains the language of the modern sector, but its cultural use seems to be declining.

RELIGIONS

Bangladesh is also remarkably homogeneous in religious affiliations. Approximately 83 percent of the people are Muslim, mainly of the Sunni sect, making Bangladesh the second largest Islamic country in the world, after Indonesia. Although loyalty to Islam is deep rooted, the content and social structure of Islam have been influenced by Hinduism. Although Islam does not recognize caste, Bangladeshi Muslim society is divided into three groups: *ashraf* (better class), *ajlaf* (lower class), and *arzal* (lowest class). Each group is subdivided into smaller groups.

The percentage of Hindus, the largest religious minority, has been steadily decreasing since 1947. Hindus are concentrated in areas bordering India, such as Khulna, Jessore, Sylhet, and Dinajpur, where they constitute nearly 25 percent of the population. The bulk of the Hindus belong to one of the lowest castes, the Namashudra, and they occupy low social and economic positions and generally follow the more inferior professions.

Smaller minorities include Zoroastrians (also known as Parsis) and tribal animists. There is a Roman Catholic archbishopric at Dhaka. The secular constitution guarantees the religious rights of all minorities.

Religious Affiliations

Muslim	119,785,000
Hindu	23,091,000
Other	1,443,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Prior to 1971 Bangladesh was one of five Pakistani provinces formed when the British Indian empire was partitioned in August 1947. Initially called East Bengal, the province was separated from the four western provinces of Pakistan by about 1,600 km (1,000 mi) of Indian territory. By 1952 tensions within the province flared not only because East Bengal was more populous, with the central government nevertheless situated in distant West Pakistan, but also because Urdu was declared the official language of Pakistan, an affront to the Bengali-speaking East Bengalis. Bengali was made a joint official language in 1954, and in 1955 the country was officially divided into two sections, East Bengal becoming East Pakistan, with each equally represented in the central legislative body.

The Awami League, under the leadership of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman (Sheikh Mujib), won an overwhelming victory in the general elections of December 1970, thus giving the east a majority in the nation's legislative assembly. The election results meant that Sheikh Mujib should have become the prime minister, but the president, General Yahya Khan, prevented the succession, and the newly elected assembly was not convened. Violent protests ensued in the east, and when the Awami League decided that the province should secede, Mujib declared the independence of the People's Republic of Bangladesh (literally, Bengal nation) on March 26, 1971.

Civil war followed, with President Yahya Khan blaming the Awami League and the Pakistani army taking over the eastern province and committing genocide in the process, eventually killing perhaps well upward of one million Bangladeshis. India came to Bangladesh's aid, providing both refugee camps and substantial military assistance. By December 16, 1971, Pakistan had surrendered to India, and Bangladesh was independent. In January 1972 Sheikh Mujib, who had been imprisoned in West Pakistan, was freed by Pakistan's president, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, and assumed the position of prime minister of Bangladesh. The new country was rapidly recognized by the international community, leading Pakistan to withdraw from the Commonwealth and Bangladesh to join the Commonwealth in April. The Bangladesh Constituent Assembly was made up of those members who had been elected in December 1970 to the Pakistan National Assembly, and a new constitution was approved by that body in November, taking effect in December. The first general election to the country's Jatiya Sangsad (Parliament) was held in March 1973. The Awami League won 292 of the 300 directly elected seats. Terrorism by both right- and left-wing opposition groups led to the declaration of a state of emergency and a suspension of constitutional rights in December; President Mujib assumed complete power as president, and the country became a one-party state in February 1975.

In August 1975 a right-wing coup led by a number of Islamic army officers assassinated Sheikh Mujib and his family. The former minister of commerce, Khandakar Mushtaq Ahmed, assumed the presidency, declaring martial law and outlawing all political parties. On November 3 a second coup led to the appointment of Brigadier Khalid Musharaf as army chief of staff. Major General Ziaur Rahman (General Zia) was reinstated as chief of army staff and became the leader of the neutral nonparty government. In July 1976 political parties were legalized.

General Zia gradually assumed increased power, taking on the role of chief martial law administrator and taking over the presidency by April 1, 1977. He made Islam the first basic principle of the constitution and in June 1978 was overwhelmingly elected president in the nation's first direct presidential election. In parliamentary elections held in February 1979, Zia's Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) won 207 of the directly elected seats in the Jatiya Sangsad. A new prime minister was named in April, and martial law was lifted. In November the state of emergency was ended.

The assassination of General Zia on May 30, 1981, during an attempted military coup resulted in the promotion of Justice Abdus Sattar to acting president. He was later overwhelmingly elected to the position of president in November but was unable to maintain civilian control, and on March 24, 1982, Lieutenant General Hossain Mohammad Ershad came to power in a bloodless coup. Martial law was declared once again, and Ershad became chief martial law administrator. In October Ershad took the position of prime minister and named Justice Abul Chowdhury to the presidency.

Two major opposition groups emerged in the aftermath, a 15-party coalition led by Sheikh Hasina Wajed (daughter of the late Sheikh Mujib) and a seven-party alliance under the leadership of Begum Khaleda Zia (widow of General Zia). The two groups joined forces in September 1983 to form the Movement for the Restoration of Democracy (MRD). On December 11, President Chowdhury resigned his position in favor of Ershad, and a new party, Jana Dal, was established in support of the regime. Subsequent struggles between progovernment and opposition parties led to the cancellation of presidential and parliamentary elections scheduled for April 1, 1985, and martial law was once again imposed on March 1. Three weeks later Ershad was again elected president in a referendum.

On March 2, 1986, President Ershad scheduled parliamentary elections for late April. Opposition parties refused to participate unless martial law was completely lifted. However, the Awami League coalition and the fundamentalist Jama'at-i-Islam later agreed to participate in an election scheduled for May 7, although the BNP alliance led by Begum Khaleda Zia refused to take part. The Jatiya Dal, the successor to the Jana Dal, won a narrow majority of the directly elected seats and also filled the 30

seats reserved for women. Extensive fraud, which characterized the parliamentary elections, was also operative in the presidential election of October in which Ershad won an overwhelming victory over his 11 opponents. In November Ershad lifted martial law and restored the 1972 constitution. In order to quiet growing unrest, Ershad reshuffled the Council of Ministers in December, adding four new ministers from the Awami League.

The Jatiya Sangsad was dissolved by Ershad on December 6, 1987, following the resignation of 12 opposition members and 73 Awami League members. Ershad scheduled a general election for February 28, 1988, but continued opposition threats to boycott the election forced a postponement to March 3. Widespread violence disrupted the general election, and participation by voters was estimated at less than 50 percent. The Jatiya Dal took a large majority of the seats.

A further reshuffling of the cabinet in March included the naming of a new prime minister, Moudud Ahmed. Ershad repealed the state of emergency in April because of a lessening of the opposition antigovernment demonstrations. In June a majority of the Jatiya Sangsad approved a constitutional amendment making Islam Bangladesh's state religion, even though the opposition strongly opposed the measure.

Disastrous monsoon floods in August once again overshadowed political troubles, and further severe flooding in December 1988 and January 1989 resulted in at least 2,100 casualties.

In July 1989 the Jatiya Sangsad acted to limit the term of the president to two electoral terms of five years each and also established the position of a directly elected vice president. Moudud Ahmed, who had been prime minister, was appointed vice president by Ershad in August, and Kazi Zafar Ahmed was named prime minister.

Following eight weeks of violent protests against his government, Ershad resigned in December 1990. Shortly thereafter he and his wife were arrested on charges of theft of public funds, nepotism, and gold smuggling. An interim president, Shahabuddin Ahmed, headed a caretaker government until elections in 1991. The general elections were won by the conservative Bangladesh National Party (BNP), whose leader, Khaleda Zia, became prime minister.

While many hoped that the election of Zia would bring democratic stability to Bangladesh, it has not happened. After a few years, the people grew tired of the Zia government. The government did not repeal the 1974 Special Powers Act that allows for the detention of individuals for 120 days without charges. Elections were finally held in February 1996, but they were boycotted by opposition parties and only 5 percent of the population turned out to vote. Zia was reelected but was forced to resign under protests in March. Elections were once again held in June and a coalition government headed by Sheikh Hasina Wajed of the Awami League was elected.

Political stability has still not been achieved and the country has been racked by natural disasters, including widespread flooding in 1998. In 2001 the BNP won a majority of seats in parliamentary elections, and Zia became prime minister a second time.

Elections in 2002 brought Iajuddin Ahmed to power as president and retained Zia as prime minister. The government has since pushed through some reforms, such as making acid attacks on women punishable by death and promising speedy trials for accused prisoners. Extremist Islamic groups have been responsible for a series of bombings that have left both main political parties accusing each other. The Indemnity Law of 2003 was a highly criticized measure that provided immunity from prosecution for military and police who were involved in the anticrime push called Operation Clean Heart; some 40 suspects had died in custody under police interrogation.

In 2004 general strikes were called as relations worsened between opposition parties and the conservative ruling party. More monsoons and flooding affected more than 25 percent of the country's population.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

President

1971–72	Syed Nazrul Islam (acting)
1972	Sheikh Mujibur Rahman
1972–73	Abu Sayeed Chowdhury
1973–75	Mohammad Ullah (acting 1973–74)
1975	Sheikh Mujibur Rahman
1975	Khandakar Mushtaq Ahmed
1975–77	Abu Sadat Mohammad Sayem (acting)
1977–81	Ziaur Rahman
1981–82	Abdus Sattar
1982–83	A. F. M. Ahsanuddin Chowdhury
1983–90	Hossain Mohammad Ershad
1990–91	Shahabuddin Ahmed (acting)
1991–96	Abdur Rahman Biswas
1996–2001	Shahabuddin Ahmed
2001–02	A. Q. M. Badruddoza Chowdhury
2002	Jamiruddin Sircar (acting)
2002–	Iajuddin Ahmed

Head of Government

1971–72	Tajuddin Ahmed
1972–75	Sheikh Mujibur Rahman
1975	Mohammad Mansoor Ali
1975–76	Abu Sadat Mohammad Sayem
1976–77	Ziaur Rahman
1978–79	Mushiur Rahman
1979–82	Shah Azizur Rahman
1982–84	Hossain Mohammad Ershad
1984–86	Ataur Rahman Khan
1986–88	Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury

1988–89	Moudud Ahmed
1989–90	Kazi Zafar Ahmed
1991–96	Khaleda Zia
1996	Mohammad Habibur Rahman
1996–2001	Sheikh Hasina Wajed
2001	Latifur Rahman
2001–	Khaleda Zia

CONSTITUTION

Bangladesh is governed by the constitution of 1972 (as amended in 1973, 1974, 1975, 1977, 1979, 1981, 1988, 1989, and 2004), which established a parliamentary democracy. The constitution was suspended after the military coup of March 24, 1982, but revived following the repeal of martial law on November 10, 1986. The constitution incorporates four basic principles of state policy: nationalism, Islam, socialism, and democracy.

The president and vice president are elected by universal adult suffrage for five-year terms and may each be elected to a single additional five-year term. In addition to the president and vice president, the executive branch of the government includes a prime minister appointed by the president and council of ministers, all of whom are appointed by the president and may be dismissed by him. The prime minister is the true holder of power in the executive branch.

The Jatiya Sangsad is a unicameral legislature. It is made up of 300 members who are directly elected by universal suffrage for five-year terms, unless the president chooses to dissolve parliament sooner. Additionally, 30 female members of the Jatiya Sangsad are elected by the other members of the Jatiya Sangsad in order to ensure some representation therein by women. The approval of the Jatiya Sangsad is required for any declaration of war.

PARLIAMENT

The national legislature is the unicameral Jatiya Sangsad, with a membership of 300 elected members and—to ensure that their sex has some representation—45 women elected by the other members. Members of the Jatiya Sangsad are elected from single-member constituencies on the basis of universal adult suffrage over age 18. Their legislative term lasts five years unless the Jatiya Sangsad is dissolved sooner by the president. The Jatiya Sangsad was dissolved in 1982 following the seizure of power by the army and the imposition of martial law. Constitutional government was revived in November 1986 when martial law ended.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Bangladesh is a multiparty country in which two parties control most of the elected seats in the parliament. The

Awami League is a nationalistic secular party that arose in opposition to the National Party, which ruled Bangladesh for most of the 1970s and 1980s. The Bangladesh Nationalist Party has an Islamic orientation to its membership. In addition to these two major parties, there are more than a dozen smaller ones. The Bangladesh Islamic Assembly is the nation's ultrareligious right-wing Islamic party, which secured three seats of the 330 available in 1996. The Jatiya Party helped form a recent government by building a coalition with the Awami League. The Jatiya is a centrist party that seeks national consensus for governing.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The basic units of regional administration are, in descending order, division, district, and *thana*. The divisions number five, each headed by a commissioner. The districts number 64, each of which is headed by a deputy commissioner. The deputy commissioner is the linchpin of the regional administration and also the most important government representative at the local level.

The districts are divided into 64 *zillas*, or subdistricts, each headed by a subdistrict officer. These subdistricts are further divided into 490 *thanas*, union *parishads*, and villages.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The judicial system inherited from Pakistan and Britain has been retained almost unchanged by independent Bangladesh. The chief court of the land is the Supreme Court, which is composed of the Appellate Division and the High Court Division. The Supreme Court consists of the chief justice and 11 other judges, all appointed by the president. The subordinate courts consist of district and sessions courts in every district and three lower levels of magistrate courts.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Institutional weakness, political instability, and unchecked police brutality appear to be the major factors in continued widespread human rights violations. Despite election promises made by the Zia government, the 1974 Special Powers Act, allowing detention without charge for 120 days, has never been repealed. There have been claims that the government has rigged by-elections, and military and police repression of dissenters appear to be on the rise. According to Amnesty International, hundreds of people were injured and dozens killed, some as a result of police action, in nationwide strikes (*hartals*) called by opposition parties during 1999. Political-party activists and

student groups with links to the ruling and opposition parties continue to perpetrate acts of violence, including beating political opponents to death. Journalists continued to be the focus of attacks in Bangladesh in 2004, with over 200 attacks perpetrated on domestic and foreign journalists covering human rights in the country.

FOREIGN POLICY

Bangladesh's foreign policy reflects the twin realities of geography and religion. Soon after independence the nation signed a 25-year treaty of friendship, cooperation, and peace with India, but within a few years the two nations were embroiled in disputes over water from the Ganges and Teesta rivers and rights of transit from Nepal. Relations with Pakistan, initially characterized by mutual hatred and suspicion born out of the war of independence, slowly improved. The question of the repatriation of pro-Pakistani Biharis from Bangladesh to Pakistan was settled in the early 1990s but has not been fully resolved. There are also repatriation issues with Myanmar over the Rohingya Muslims who were being persecuted and forced to flee from Myanmar.

DEFENSE

The defense structure is headed by the president, who is the minister of defense and chief of the army staff and who thus dominates the defense establishment. Military manpower is provided by voluntary enlistment. In 2003 Bangladesh had armed forces personnel totaling over 188,000.

The combat worthiness of the Bangladesh armed forces is limited by a number of factors, including severe budgetary restrictions and the small number of professionals with field experience. The operational effectiveness of both the army and the air force is inhibited by lack of spare parts. The armed forces are plagued by factionalism and lack of discipline.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	188,700
Military Manpower Availability:	35,170,019
Military Expenditures \$million:	995.3
as % of GDP:	1.8
as % of central government expenditures:	—
Arms Imports \$million:	21
Arms Exports \$million:	—

ECONOMY

Despite sustained domestic and international efforts to improve economic and demographic prospects, Ban-

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gladesh remains one of the world's poorest, most densely populated, and least developed nations. The economy is largely agricultural, with the cultivation of rice the single most important activity in the economy. Major impediments to growth include frequent cyclones and floods, the inefficiency of state-owned enterprises, a rapidly growing labor force that cannot be absorbed by agriculture, delays in exploiting energy resources (natural gas), inadequate power supplies, and slow implementation of economic reforms. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina Wajed's Awami League government made some headway improving the climate for foreign investors and liberalizing the capital markets; it negotiated with foreign firms for oil-and-gas exploration, better countrywide distribution of cooking gas, and the construction of natural gas pipelines and power plants. Progress on other economic reforms has been halting because of opposition from the bureaucracy, public sector unions, and other vested interest groups. The especially severe floods of 1998 increased the country's reliance on large-scale international aid. Economic reform has not gone forward because of political infighting and corruption at all levels of government. There has been opposition to such reform from the bureaucracy, public sector unions, and others. The BNP government, led by Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, has the voting power in parliament to go forward with reforms, but to date they have not happened.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 275.7
GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 2,000
GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 5.2
GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 3.3
Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
Agriculture: 21.2
Industry: 27.1
Services: 51.7
Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
Private Consumption: 77
Government Consumption: 5
Gross Domestic Investment: 23.5
Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 7.478
Imports: 10.03
% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 3.9
% of Income Received by Richest 10%: 28.6

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
118.6	125.9	128.9	131.4	135.9

Finance

National Currency: Taka (BDT)
Exchange Rate: \$1 = BDT 59.7903
Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 274
Central Bank Discount Rate %: 5
Total External Debt \$billion: 19.97

Debt Service Ratio %: 8.27
Balance of Payments \$million: 216.6
International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 2.57
Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 6

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$billion: 1.39
per capita \$: 10.10
Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 102.5

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: 1 July–30 June
Revenues \$billion: 5.921
Expenditures \$billion: 8.262
Budget Deficit \$billion: 2.341
Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 21.2
Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 3.7
Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 0.07
Irrigation, % of Farms having: 54.5
Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 177.5
Total Farmland % of land area: 61.6
Livestock: Cattle million: 24.5
Chickens million: 140
Pigs 000: —
Sheep million: 1.26
Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 28.3
Fisheries: Total Catch tons million: 1.89

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 7.9
Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 6.5

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 9.8
Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 13.2
Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 94
Net Energy Imports % of use: 20.3
Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 3.6
Production kW-hr billion: 15.3
Consumption kW-hr billion: 14.3
Coal Reserves tons billion: —
Production tons million: —
Consumption tons million: 0.33
Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: 15.3
Production cubic feet billion: 384.9
Consumption cubic feet billion: 384.9
Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels million: 56
Production barrels 000 per day: 7
Consumption barrels 000 per day: 90
Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 10.03
 Exports \$billion: 7.478
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 7.2
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 4.0
 Balance of Trade \$million: 216.6

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
India %	15.6	—
China %	13.6	—
Singapore %	9.5	—
Japan %	6.0	—
Hong Kong %	4.9	—
United States %	—	23.8
Germany %	—	13.7
United Kingdom %	—	10.0
France %	—	5.8

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 207,486
 Paved %: 9.5
 Automobiles: 65,000
 Trucks and Buses: 145,900
 Railroad: Track Length km: 2,706
 Passenger-km billion: 3.86
 Freight-km million: 804
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 41
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 440.6
 Airports: 16
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 4.58
 Length of Waterways km: 8,372

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 207
 Number of Tourists from million: 1.08
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 59
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 341

Communications

Telephones 000: 740
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones million: 1.365
 Personal Computers million: 1.05
 Internet Hosts per million people: 0.007
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 1.7

ENVIRONMENT

High population density is a major factor contributing to extensive overuse of the country's forests, fisheries, and even soil and water resources. These problems are especially serious given that most Bangladeshis are still

directly economically dependent on natural resources. Already a majority of households are without sufficient land to produce their food needs, and wood stocks have been depleted to the point where most domestic energy requirements must be met by crop residues and dung. Floods and storms also inflict severe socioeconomic and environmental damage on the country.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 10.3
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: 17
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 1
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 0.22

LIVING CONDITIONS

Bangladesh is a poor country, with all the problems attendant on such poverty. Largely rural, Bangladesh has almost 80 percent of its population in the countryside. People live in houses built from simple products, including reeds, brush wood, bamboo, palm leaves, and corrugated iron, and live with large extended families. Per capita income is only \$2,000 per year, and life expectancy was 62 in 2004, with a birthrate of over three children for each woman of childbearing age. Thus, life for most of the population is hard and close to subsistence. However, in urban centers such as the capital, Dhaka, the middle class enjoys a life-style similar to that of the rest of South Asia.

HEALTH

As a result of widespread malnutrition and dislocations caused by natural disasters, basic diseases such as malaria and tuberculosis are a major problem in Bangladesh. High infant mortality rates also indicate a health-care system that has much progress to make, despite its being nationally run and including free hospital service. Many nontraditional healers, such as homeopaths and Aryurvedic practitioners, are consulted in the countryside. While HIV accounted for only 650 deaths in 2001, an estimated 13,000 people carry the disease. Cholera has also been an intermittent problem for the population, as has the popularity of smoking. Life expectancy in 2005 was estimated at 62 years.

Health

Number of Physicians: 32,498
 Number of Dentists: —
 Number of Nurses: 18,135
 Number of Pharmacists: —
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 23

(continues)

Health (continued)

Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 62.6
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 380
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 3.1
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 11
 HIV Infected % of adults: < 0.1
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 85
 Measles: 77
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 48
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 75

FOOD AND NUTRITION

The staples of the Bangladeshi diet are rice, fish, vegetables, milk, and meat. The choices of these foods vary from group to group depending on religious affiliation; though beef is a popular food for Muslims, it is forbidden for the Hindu population. Rice dishes such as *biryani*, with meat and vegetables, kebabs, or barbecued chunks of meat, and kormas, or meat with spicy sauces, are often served for more festive occasions. The clarified butter known as ghee is used in cooking. Hands, instead of utensils, are generally used for eating.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 30.2
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,100
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 187.1
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 22.0

STATUS OF WOMEN

By custom and Muslim-influenced tradition, women occupy a subordinate, dependent place in society and receive unequal treatment before the law on a widespread basis. The ability of a family to seclude its women is a key symbol of social status. The daily press testifies to patterns of domestic violence (murder, rape, and torture), breach of matrimonial contract, denial of inheritance rights, and desertion, with poor women particularly victimized. The rate of suicide among women is reportedly almost three times higher than that among men. In October 1983 the government promulgated a stringent ordinance aimed at deterring cruelty to women. To check murder, kidnapping, abduction, and trafficking (including international trafficking) in women, the ordinance brings together the various statutes applicable to women and stiffens the penalties for abuse. It provides the death penalty for those directly responsible for a "dowry killing" or for the killing of a woman in the course of rape, although it does not address the abuse of a woman that stops short of murder or rape or that takes place within the family or home.

"Dowry killings," as reported in the press, usually share a common theme: the bride's family has not made full payment of a supposedly promised dowry, so the husband or his family attacks and often murders the bride.

Women

Women-headed Households %: 9.3
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 2
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 0.71
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 24.2

WORK

Primarily an agrarian land, Bangladesh has 63 percent of its 65-million-strong workforce involved in farming and cultivation. These workers produce rice for local consumption and jute as an export cash crop. With few industries, the country does not offer a large array of nonagricultural work; the industrial sector employs 11 percent of the workforce. The garment industry became more important in the final decades of the 20th century, producing ready-to-wear goods for the West. Many of the workers in this industry are women, and the garment industry amounts to 60 percent of export revenues earned annually. Exports of shrimp and fish are also important, so fishing and processing are other strong employment sectors. Service accounts for another 26 percent of employment. However, one of the biggest sources of foreign currency is the money sent back to relatives by Bangladeshis employed abroad, especially in the Persian Gulf. The government is another large employer, but cutbacks in 2002 and 2003 led to the losses of 45,000 public-sector jobs in state-owned enterprises. As of 2004 the country had an unemployment/underemployment rate of 40 percent.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 65,490,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 43.2
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 63
 Industry: 11
 Services: 26
 Unemployment %: 40

EDUCATION

Education is free but not compulsory for the five years from ages five to 10. Schooling consists of five years of primary education, five years of lower-secondary education, and two years of higher education, for a total of 12

years. There is a high dropout rate at all levels. Although primary education is free, fees are charged by secondary schools.

The academic year is the calendar year. The medium of instruction is Bangla in the primary grades and Bangla and English in the secondary grades.

Educational standards have been steadily declining since 1947, partly because of the lack of trained teachers. Only 30 percent of the teachers in primary schools are believed to possess minimum professional training.

Private secondary institutions and colleges vastly outnumber government institutions. In 1996 government high schools constituted only 29 percent of the total, and government colleges constituted only 5 percent of the total. In addition, Muslim religious schools are maintained by both private and public funds. Separate schools are also run by Hindus and Buddhists. Vocational education has received little emphasis.

As of 1996, affiliated with Bangladesh's seven universities were 636 colleges, of which seven were medical colleges and nine were law colleges.

Despite this education infrastructure, the literacy rate in 2003 was still only 43 percent.

Education

Literacy Rate %:	43.1
Male %:	53.9
Female %:	31.8
School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling:	8.4
First Level: Primary schools:	66,168
Teachers:	315,055
Students:	17,561,828
Student-Teacher Ratio:	55.7
Net Enrollment Ratio:	85.1
Second Level: Secondary Schools:	11,019
Teachers:	320,779
Students:	10,897,971
Student-Teacher Ratio:	34.4
Net Enrollment Ratio:	44.5
Third Level: Institutions:	1,268
Teachers:	61,321
Students:	877,335
Gross Enrollment Ratio:	6.2
Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP:	2.4

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Unlike other regions of South Asia, Bangladesh does not have a large body of trained scientists and engineers who could catapult the country into intensified technological development. Throughout the 1990s there were just over 50 scientists pursuing research and development projects per every one million people in Bangladesh. Dhaka is the home to several scientific and technical institutes as well as universities that train engineers and scientists. Among the leading universities are Bangladesh Agricultural Uni-

versity in Mymensingh, the University of Chittagong, the University of Dhaka, Jahangirnagar University in Dhaka, Khulna University, and the University of Rajshahi. The Bangladesh Council for Scientific and Industrial Research has seven research institutes, and the Bangladesh Atomic Energy commission runs two others.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people:	—
Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP:	—
High-Tech Exports \$million:	1.5
Patent Applications by Residents:	—

MEDIA

Bangladesh has a flourishing newspaper industry. The largest-selling dailies are the *Dainik ittefaq* in Bengali and the *Bangladesh Observer* and *Bangladesh Daily Star* in English.

The national news agency is Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (Bangladesh News Agency), with headquarters at Dhaka. The other agency is Eastern News Agency.

The official broadcasting organization is the National Broadcasting Authority, which was formed in 1984 through the merger of Radio Bangladesh and Bangladesh Television. It operates seven medium-wave transmitters, four shortwave transmitters, and five FM transmitters. Bangladesh Television (BTV), founded in 1971, has a transmitter at Dhaka and relay stations.

As of 2003 there were only 740,000 land-based telephones in operation in Bangladesh, but cell-phone usage had grown exponentially to a total of 1.365 million subscribers. The country had an estimated 243,000 internet users in 2003.

Media

Daily Newspapers:	—
Total Circulation 000:	—
Circulation per 1,000:	—
Books Published:	—
Periodicals:	—
Radio Receivers 000:	—
per 1,000:	—
Television sets 000:	940
per 1,000:	7

CULTURE

Bengali culture is strong in the areas of dance, music, and literature. Though traditional and devotional forms of these exist in both the Muslim and Hindu communities, there are also strong regional forms, such as the songs called *bhatiali*, which deal with life and work on the rivers,

or the *baul* verses, which have a mystical sense. Dances include the snake dance and local forms such as the *dhali*, *manipuri*, and *baul*.

Artists throughout Bangladesh are largely self-supporting, but the Bangla Academy in Dhaka does offer some aid. Poetry is part of the daily life of Bangladeshis; even if illiterate, most people can recite at least one poem. The most famous writer from the country is Rabindranath Tagore, who won the Nobel Prize in 1913. More contemporary is Kazi Nazrul Islam who is a poet and playwright of Bengali nationalism. The treatment of women in Islam is the subject of one of the most celebrated writers in exile, Taslima Nasreen.

Performance art includes theater, which consists of plays developed in villages or brought to them by traveling troops as well as dramas on the stages of Dhaka. Bangladeshi cinema is also a growing industry.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number:	63
Volumes:	384,000
Registered borrowers:	—
Museums Number:	—
Annual Attendance:	—
Cinema Gross Receipts:	—
Number of Cinemas:	—
Seating Capacity:	—
Annual Attendance:	—

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

The folklore and mythology of Bangladesh are strongly influenced by the folk traditions of Bengali culture and the belief in shamanistic powers. Several examples of contemporary shamans are still found in the country. These include the religious wandering musicians known as *bauls*, the healing shamans, or *ojhas*, and the Muslim faith healers called fakirs. Religion plays a significant part in the country's folklore, with Sufi saints such as Shah Jalal and Khan Jahan Ali among the most popular. Imams, or local religious leaders, are also sometimes thought to have supernatural powers. Both Hindus and Muslims have rich folklore inspired by their respective religions.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Much of village entertainment and recreation is centered on religious holy days, when festivals or fairs may be held. Operas written about local myths, or *jatras*, are another form of entertainment, as are dances and many types of song. With an abundance of water, the Bangladeshis also participate in boat races.

Urban forms of entertainment are more in line with those in the West. Attending the cinema is one of the most popular activities. Radio and television also provide entertainment. Newspapers and libraries are a further outlet, but with Bangladesh's high rate of illiteracy, these do not reach the broader masses of people.

ETIQUETTE

Bangladeshis conform to the usual traditions of South Asia in terms of etiquette and especially hospitality. Visitors are always offered some refreshment and are asked to sit. A bamboo mat is provided if chairs are not available. Greetings are the typical "peace be with you," answered by "and with you." Men shake hands if of equal status; men and women do not shake hands. Generally, social distance is less than in the West, and in crowded situations, such as at train stations or post offices, there may be a lot of pushing and shoving because forming a line is not always practical. Also, it is not considered impolite to stare. Age is venerated, as is higher social status, and is recognized by the use of titles rather than names.

FAMILY LIFE

The extended family is the basic social unit in Bangladesh. Called a *paribar* or *gushti*, this unit shares one household and consists of one or more nuclear families related by blood. The extended family is also the basic economic unit for much of the country, especially the rural areas, with patrilineal successions; married sons and their families live in the father's house.

Marriages are arranged by the parents in Bangladesh, with spouses chosen from similar social classes and social standings. Dowries, or bride prices, are paid in many areas, and the female remains subservient in the relationship, with *purdah*, or the seclusion of women, widely practiced.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Most of the residents of Bangladesh are of Bengali ethnicity and thus have features in common with South Asians such as Indians and Pakistanis. Only about 1 percent of the population is tribal, with Mongoloid features. In rural areas more traditional clothing is worn. For men this includes the *lungi*, or wrap-around sarong, and a vest and shirt. Others wear the loose cotton trousers called pajamas and the long shirt known as a *punjabi*. Turbans are worn for more formal occasions. Women traditionally wear a blouse and sari or tunic and pants. In cities, dress is more international, with shirts and ties worn by men.

SPORTS

Soccer is the most popular sport in Bangladesh, overtaking all traditional games. Also popular are cricket, field hockey, tennis, table tennis, wrestling, and badminton. One of the best-known traditional games is *ba-do-do*, a game somewhat like tag. For children, kite flying is a popular activity, as are spinning tops and playing hide-and-seek.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1970** In legislative elections, Awami League candidates win 167 of East Pakistan's 169 seats in the 313-seat Pakistan National Assembly; President Yahya Khan postpones opening the assembly; the Awami League launches provincewide agitation.
- 1971** Sheikh Mujibur Rahman is imprisoned in West Pakistan on treason charges; the government outlaws the Awami League, declares martial law in East Pakistan, and begins a reign of terror, attempting to suppress the Bengali nationalist movement; millions of Bengalis seek refuge in India as war breaks out; the combined armies of India and East Pakistan compel West Pakistani forces to surrender; East Pakistan becomes the independent state of Bangladesh.
- 1972** Mujibur Rahman is released from prison in Pakistan and sworn in as interim prime minister of Bangladesh; a treaty of friendship and cooperation is signed with India; Bangladesh joins the British Commonwealth; Bangladesh nationalizes all banks and Pakistani-owned industries and introduces the taka as the national currency; the Jatiya Sangsad ratifies a new constitution.
- 1973** In the first nationwide elections the Awami League wins 308 of 315 seats in the Jatiya Sangsad.
- 1974** As protests become violent, Mujibur Rahman declares a state of emergency; Pakistan recognizes Bangladesh; Bangladesh joins the United Nations.
- 1975** Mujibur Rahman has the constitution amended to make himself a virtual dictator; Mujibur Rahman is killed in a pro-Pakistani coup; Brigadier Khalid Musharraf stages a pro-Indian coup and names Abu Sadat Mohammad Sayem as president; Colonel Abu Taher leads a third coup in which Musharraf is killed.
- 1977** Sayem steps down as president and is replaced by army chief of staff General Zia Rahman; President Zia Rahman's martial law policies win approval in a nationwide referendum; 92 soldiers are executed for their role in an attempted coup against Zia Rahman; opposition parties are banned.
- 1978** Zia Rahman is elected president for a five-year term; a refugee pact is reached with Burma.
- 1979** The Bangladesh Nationalist Party, led by President Zia Rahman, wins in elections to the Jatiya Sangsad; martial law is lifted.
- 1981** President Zia Rahman is assassinated by dissident army officers at Chittagong; Vice President Abdus Sattar is installed as acting president.
- 1982** Lieutenant General Hossain Mohammad Ershad ousts the Sattar government, installs Ahsanuddin Chowdhury as president and himself as martial law administrator, dissolves the Jatiya Sangsad, and suspends the constitution.
- 1983** Ershad dissolves the cabinet and names himself president.
- 1985** Ershad enforces the ban on political parties, jailing opposition leaders; a cyclone described as "the worst in the country's history" strikes Bangladesh, killing 10,000.
- 1986** Ershad lifts the ban on political activity; the five parties of the National Front unite to form the pro-government Jatiya Dal (National Party); in May legislative elections the Jatiya Dal wins 153 of the 300 elected seats and all 30 of the seats reserved for women, and Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury becomes prime minister; Ershad wins the October presidential election by an overwhelming majority; President Ershad repeals martial law and restores the 1972 constitution.
- 1987** Violent opposition to a bill allowing army representation in the 64 district councils forces President Ershad to withdraw it; the worst floods in 40 years bring widespread devastation; in November Ershad declares a 120-day state of emergency, banning antigovernment protests; in December Ershad dissolves the Jatiya Sangsad.
- 1988** Monsoon rains leave 30 million homeless and cause nearly \$2 billion in damage; the Jatiya Dal wins 250 of the 300 seats in the Jatiya Sangsad; President Ershad repeals the state of emergency; a constitutional amendment establishes Islam as the state religion of Bangladesh; Buddhist Chakma rebels seeking autonomy for the Chittagong Hill region kill 200 people.
- 1989** Jatiya Sangsad legislation limits the tenure of presidency to two five-year terms and makes the vice presidency a directly elected position; Moudud Ahmed assumes vice presidency and Kazi Zafar Ahmed becomes prime minister.
- 1990** After violent protests against his government, President Ershad declares a national state of emergency in November; in December Ershad dissolves the legislature and resigns; Chief Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed heads a caretaker

government; Ershad and his wife are convicted of theft of public funds, nepotism, and gold smuggling.

- 1991** The conservative Bangladesh National Party wins the February general elections and BNP leader Khaleda Zia Rahman, widow of former president Zia Rahman, becomes prime minister; the constitution is changed to make the position of president merely ceremonial, with the prime minister holding primary executive power; a cyclone kills over 100,000 and causes billions of dollars in damage.
- 1994** Nearly 150 members of the opposition resign their seats in parliament hoping to force new elections.
- 1996** Under the leadership of Sheik Hasina Wajed, daughter of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the Awami League wins control of the government for the first time since 1975.
- 1997** The opposition BNP organizes a series of strikes to protest the government.
- 1998** Monsoons cause severe flooding, killing over 1,000 and leaving millions homeless; 15 military officers involved in the assassination of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman are sentenced to death.
- 2001** In parliamentary elections the BNP wins a majority of seats. Khaleda Zia becomes prime minister for a second time.
- 2002** Iajuddin Ahmed is elected president; Khaleda Zia is retained as prime minister.
- 2003** The controversial Indemnity Law, protecting law enforcement officers and military from prosecution, is passed in parliament. A further deterioration of relationship between the ruling party and opposition parties leads to general strikes.
- 2004** More than 200 journalists are the target of violence from political activists, criminal gangs, or religious extremists. Flooding in late June affects 36 million people nationwide.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
<http://bangladeshonline.com/gob>
- Virtual Bangladesh
<http://www.virtualbangladesh.com/>

BARBADOS

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Barbados

ABBREVIATION

BB

CAPITAL

Bridgetown

HEAD OF STATE

Queen Elizabeth II, represented by Governor-General Clifford Husbands (from 1995)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Owen Seymour Arthur (from 1994)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Parliamentary democracy within the Commonwealth, recognizing Elizabeth II as head of state

POPULATION

279,254 (2005)

AREA

431 sq km (166 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Black

LANGUAGE

English

RELIGION

Christianity

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Barbadian dollar

NATIONAL FLAG

Vertical tricolor of ultramarine blue stripes on the hoist and the fly sides and a gold stripe in the middle. A broken trident in black appears on the center stripe.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A shield in which red orchids flank the fig tree *Ficus barbata*, from which the name of the island is derived. Above the shield, from a silver helmet decorated with a red and ornamental wreath, rises a powerful black forearm grasping two crossed stalks of sugarcane. On either side of the shield are a red-finned dolphin and a pelican with one webbed foot supporting the shield. Beneath the device a golden scroll proclaims the motto "Peace and Industry."

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"In Plenty and in Time of Need, When This Fair Land Was Young"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day), May 1 (May Day), first Monday in July (Caribbean Day), first Monday in October (UN Day), November 30 (National Day, Independence Day), various Christian festivals, including Good Friday, Easter Monday, Whitmonday, Christmas, and Boxing Day.

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

November 30, 1966

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

November 30, 1966

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Barbados is the most easterly of the Caribbean islands, lying in the Lesser Antilles east of the Windward Islands about 322 km (200 mi) north-northeast of Trinidad and 161 km (100 mi) east-southeast of Saint Lucia. Barbados is the second-smallest country in the Western Hemisphere, with an area of 431 sq km (166 sq mi), extending 34 km (21 mi) north to south and 23 km (14 mi) east to west. Its total coastline stretches 97 km (60 mi).

From the south and west the island presents a flat appearance, rising in a series of ridges up to about 100 m (325 ft) and then falling steeply toward the sea. The highest point is Mount Hillaby (336 m; 1,105 ft), near the center of the island. The coast is encircled with coral reefs.

There are no rivers in the conventional sense but only gullies, watercourses, and underground channels. The best-known underground channel is Cole's Cave, in the middle of the island. Two rivulets known as Indian River and Joes River are no use for either fishing or navigation.

Barbados



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Geography

Area sq km: 431; sq mi 166
 World Rank: 181st

Land Boundaries, km: 0
 Coastline, km: 97
 Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Atlantic Ocean 0
 Highest: Mount Hillaby 336

Land Use %
Arable Land: 37.2
Permanent Crops: 2.3
Forest: 4.7
Other: 55.8

Population of Principal Cities (2004 est.)

Bridgetown	98,500
------------	--------

Population 2025: 293,700
Birth Rate per 1,000: 12.83
Death Rate per 1,000: 9.17
Rate of Natural Increase %: 0.4
Total Fertility Rate: 1.65
Expectation of Life (years): Males 69.46
Females 73.39
Marriage Rate per 1,000: 13.1
Divorce Rate per 1,000: —
Average Size of Households: 3.5
Induced Abortions: —

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Barbados enjoys tropical temperatures tempered by the northeasterly trade winds. The average annual temperature is 25°C (77°F); daily temperatures rarely rise above 32.2°C (90°F). The dry season is relatively cool, while the wet season is a little warmer. The rains fall from July to November. Annual rainfall varies from 1,016 mm (40 in) in coastal areas to 2,286 mm (90 in) in the central ridge area.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature: 77°F
Average Rainfall: 40 in to 90 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Sugarcane has taken over much of the native vegetation of the island, giving Barbados its characteristic green shading. Tropical trees such as poinciana, mahogany, frangi-pani, and cabbage palm are still found, while flowers and flowering shrubs include wild roses, carnations, cacti, and lilies. The variety of animal life is narrow, and many of these animals, including monkeys, mongooses, and hares, are considered pests by farmers. Finches, hummingbirds, egrets, and sparrows are among the avian life on the island, and marine life includes mackerel, barracuda, kingfish, flying fish, sprat, and the green dolphin.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 279,254	
World Rank: 170th	
Density per sq km:	
% of annual growth (1999-2003): 0.4	
Male %: 48.2	
Female %: 51.8	
Urban %: —	
Age Distribution %:	0-14: 20.6
	15-64: 70.6
	65 and over: 8.8

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

The ethnic configuration of Barbados consists of 80 percent blacks, 5 percent whites, and 15 percent mulattoes and East Indians.

LANGUAGES

The official language is English, spoken with a variety of accents and a vocabulary replete with Barbadianisms.

RELIGIONS

About 40 percent of the population is Anglican. The remainder belong to a number of denominations, of which the Moravian, Methodist, and Roman Catholic churches claim the largest numbers of adherents.

Religious Affiliations

Protestant	187,100
Roman Catholic	11,200
None	47,500
Other	33,500

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The original inhabitants of Barbados were the Arawak Indians. They were subsequently replaced by invading Carib Indians in the 13th century. By the time the Portuguese explorer Pedro a Campos stopped in Barbados in 1536 en route to Brazil, the Carib Indians were also gone. Some historians have suggested that earlier contact with the Spanish led the Caribs to flee because some of them were taken as slaves by the Spanish.

Barbados was under the British Crown as of 1624, although it was briefly the personal fief of the dukes of Marlborough and Lord Carlisle and Lord Pembroke. Its House of Assembly, which began meeting in 1639, is the third-oldest legislative body in the New World, following Bermuda's legislature and Virginia's House

of Burgesses. By the time the British left, after 342 years, in 1966, the island had become completely English in culture.

When Barbados became independent, the government was dominated by the Democratic Labour Party (DLP), whose leader, Errol W. Barrow, was premier. Upon the country's independence he became prime minister. The DLP maintained power until 1976, when it was defeated in the general elections by the Barbados Labour Party (BLP), under the leadership of J. M. G. ("Tom") Adams, who became prime minister. Very few issues divided the rival parties; the campaign centered on alleged government corruption. The BLP maintained its majority in close voting during the 1981 elections. Adams died in 1985 and was succeeded by H. Bernard St. John. St. John was unable to maintain party unity, and the BLP lost the elections in 1986. Barrow was returned to office. Following the sudden death of Barrow in 1987, Lloyd Erskine Sandiford succeeded as prime minister. He led the DLP to victory in 1991, although with a reduced margin. However, in the 1994 elections the DLP suffered an overwhelming defeat and Owen Seymour Arthur of the BLP was swept into power. Arthur won reelection in 1999.

In 2003 Arthur won a third term and promised to replace the country's monarchical system with a republican model in which the governor-general would be substituted by a new office of president.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

Premier

- 1954–58** Grantley Herbert Adams
1958–61 Hugh Gordon Cummins
1961–66 Errol Barrow

Prime Minister

- 1966–76** Errol Barrow
1976–85 J. M. G. Adams
1985–86 Bernard St. John
1986–87 Errol Barrow
1987–94 Erskine Sandford
1994– Owen Arthur

CONSTITUTION

The constitution of 1966 provides for a governmental structure modeled on the British parliamentary system. The queen remains the titular head of state and is represented on the island by a governor-general, who appoints an advisory privy council. Executive authority is vested in the prime minister—the head of government—and his cabinet, who are collectively responsible to a bicameral legislature. The cabinet is required to consist of not fewer than five ministers in addition to

the prime minister. The constitution also provides for a judiciary and legal service and service commissions for judicial, public, and police services. These commissions are exempt from executive interference. The leader of the opposition is a salaried servant of the Crown. Legislative power is vested in the bicameral parliament, composed of the appointed Senate and the elected House of Assembly. Following adoption of a Canters Commission report in 1965, the island was divided into 24 single-member constituencies. House of Assembly elections are held every five years. The judicial system is headed by the Supreme Court of Judicature, which sits as both a high court and a court of appeal.

PARLIAMENT

The bicameral parliament consists of the appointed Senate and the elected House of Assembly. The Senate consists of 21 members, of whom 12 are drawn from the majority party; two are from the opposition; and seven are appointed to represent social, religious, and economic interests. The House of Assembly consists of 27 members elected by direct popular vote for five-year terms from the 11 parishes and the city of Bridgetown.

The electoral system is based on adult suffrage over age 18. In the 1986 elections the DLP won 24 seats and the BLP three seats. The DLP held on to their majority until 1994, when the BLP, led by Owen Arthur, came to power. Arthur won his third election as prime minister in 2003.

POLITICAL PARTIES

There are five active political parties in Barbados. The largest and oldest is the Barbados Labour Party, founded in 1938 as a moderate social democratic party. The second oldest and second largest is the Democratic Labour Party, founded in 1955. A splinter group from the DLP formed the National Democratic Party in 1989. Two small left-wing organizations, the People's Progressive Movement and the Workers' Party of Barbados, were founded in 1979 and 1985, respectively.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For the purpose of local government the island is divided into 11 parishes, which, until 1969, physically corresponded to ecclesiastical parishes and were administered by rectors and church wardens.

In 1969 all local government services were taken over by the central government, and statutory bodies were established to administer some of these services.

LEGAL SYSTEM

Barbadian jurisprudence is based on English common law. However, the courts have no power of judicial review.

The highest court of the land is the Supreme Court of Judicature, with a chief justice and three puisne judges appointed by the governor-general on the recommendation of the prime minister and after consultation with the leader of the opposition. The Supreme Court sits as both a high court and a court of appeal. Appeals from the Supreme Court go to the Privy Council in the United Kingdom.

The country is divided into 11 magisterial districts, with 11 magistrate courts. Magistrates are appointed by the governor-general on the recommendation of the Judicial and Legal Service Commission, a constitutional body.

The Prisons Department is administered by a superintendent of prisons and consists of a penitentiary at Glendairy and two reformatories.

HUMAN RIGHTS

In terms of civil and political rights Barbados is ranked as a free country. Barbados is a free and democratic state of the British model. The government respects all the freedoms and rights granted to Barbadians in the constitution. There have been no complaints of human rights violations in recent years.

FOREIGN POLICY

Barbados has pursued an active but nonaligned posture in the Caribbean. Nevertheless, it has maintained close relations with the United States and was designated in early 1985 as the center of the Washington-funded Regional Security System. In 1998 the government announced that henceforth the primary focus of its relations would be with Asia and the Pacific.

DEFENSE

The island has no standing army. A citizens' militia, the Barbados Regiment, is composed of two companies with a combined strength of 600 volunteers. The Barbados Coast Guard began operations in 1974. It has two armed patrol boats. In the event of an emergency the United Kingdom is under contractual obligation to provide for the defense of the island, but such an emergency has not arisen.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 600
Military Manpower Availability: 71,330

Military Expenditures \$million: —
as % of GDP: —
as % of central government expenditures: —
Arms Imports \$million: —
Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

Barbados has a free-market economy in which the dominant sector is private. It has achieved the highest standard of living of all the small island states of the eastern Caribbean. Historically, the Barbadian economy had been dependent on sugarcane cultivation and related activities, but production in recent years has diversified into manufacturing and tourism. The start of the Port Charles Marina project in Speightstown helped the tourism industry continue to expand in 1996–2000. Offshore finance and informatics are important foreign exchange earners, and there is also a light manufacturing sector. The government continues its efforts to reduce the unacceptably high unemployment rate, encourage direct foreign investment, and privatize remaining state-owned enterprises.

An attempt at discovering offshore oil deposits ended in failure in 2002. Also that year Barbados was removed from the list of countries offering "harmful tax competition" when it agreed to tax reforms with the members of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 4.569
GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 16,400
GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 0.6
GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 0.0
Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
Agriculture: 6
Industry: 16
Services: 78
Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
Private Consumption: 66
Government Consumption: 23
Gross Domestic Investment: —
Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 0.206
Imports: 1.039
% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: —
% of Income Received by Richest 10%: —

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
108.9	110.6	113.3	116.2	116.4

Finance

National Currency: Barbadian Dollar (BBD)
Exchange Rate: \$1 = BBD 2
Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 1.54
Central Bank Discount Rate %: 7.5

(continues)

Finance *(continued)*

Total External Debt \$million: 668
 Debt Service Ratio %: 5.56
 Balance of Payments \$million: —
 International Reserves SDRs \$million: 729.5
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: -0.5

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 19.89
 per capita \$: 73.50
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 58.3

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: 1 April–30 March
 Revenues \$billion: 0.847
 Expenditures \$billion: 0.886
 Budget Deficit \$million: 39
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 6
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2002) %: 0.6
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 3.66
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 5.88
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 50.7
 Total Farmland % of land area: 37.2
 Livestock: Cattle 000: 14.3
 Chickens million: 3.5
 Pigs 000: 16.6
 Sheep 000: 27
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters 000: 5
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 2.5

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 184.6
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: -3.2

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 93
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 372
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 1.39
 Net Energy Imports % of use: —
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: 166
 Production kW-hr million: 780
 Consumption kW-hr million: 725
 Coal Reserves tons billion: —
 Production tons million: —
 Consumption tons million: —

Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
 Production cubic feet billion: 1.03
 Consumption cubic feet billion: 1.03
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
 Production barrels 000 per day: 1.3
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 10.4
 Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 1.039
 Exports \$billion: 0.206
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): -0.5
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): -0.1
 Balance of Trade \$million: —

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
United States %	37.7	18.7
Trinidad and Tobago %	19.6	14.5
United Kingdom %	6.2	14.0
Japan %	4.4	—
Jamaica %	—	7.8
Saint Lucia %	—	6.2
Saint Vincent and Grenadines %	—	4.7

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 1,600
 Paved %: 98.6
 Automobiles: 62,100
 Trucks and Buses: 9,400
 Railroad: Track Length km: —
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: —
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 58
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 668
 Airports: 1
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: —
 Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 531
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 767
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 154

Communications

Telephones 000: 134
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones 000: 140
 Personal Computers 000: 28
 Internet Hosts per million people: 731
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 358

ENVIRONMENT

The single greatest environmental concern for Barbados is waste disposal. Its coastal waters are often at risk from the waste of ships and its aquifers are threatened by solid-waste dumping. Barbados is one of the world's most densely populated countries, and coastal erosion is a growing concern at many of the built-up resort areas.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 4.7
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: —
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 0
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 4.41

LIVING CONDITIONS

Barbados has one of the highest standards of living in the Caribbean. Per capita income was \$16,400 in 2003, and the United Nations placed the island at the top of its quality-of-life list for developing countries for several years running in the 1990s. That rating takes into account earning power, education, and health. A full 75 percent of Barbadians own their own homes, usually wooden so-called chattel houses that can be taken apart and easily moved. A third of the population own their own cars and refrigerators, while two-thirds have land-based telephones. Life expectancy is accordingly higher in Barbados than most other developing countries, with a 2004 estimate of almost 72 years. The birth rate in 2004 was estimated at 1.65 per woman. Overpopulation is a problem in the countryside and cities alike; overcrowding can be found in the capital, Bridgetown, but without the squatter camps or shantytowns found in other developing countries.

HEALTH

Barbados has a national health-care system that provides free care to its citizens. However, as of 2004 there were still over 850 people per doctor, so Barbadians also rely on native medicine, with home remedies and herbal cures remaining popular. The infant mortality rate in 2005 was 12.5 deaths per 1,000 live births.

The national health system has managed to control high rates of infectious diseases. Currently, health issues are twofold. With an aging population, Barbados faces a problem in dealing with geriatric patients. Also, among the younger population, substance abuse and HIV have become new areas of concern. In 2003 there were an estimated 2,500 people living with HIV/AIDS.

Health

Number of Physicians: 322
 Number of Dentists: 63
 Number of Nurses: 988
 Number of Pharmacists: —
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 121
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 12.5
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 95
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 6.9
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 669
 HIV Infected % of adults: 1.5
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 86
 Measles: 90
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 99
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 100

FOOD AND NUTRITION

The Barbadian diet relies on a limited selection of food-stuffs but draws on a rich culinary tradition that is a mixture of West African, English, Spanish, and French cuisine. The island's African roots can be seen in the popular dish known as *cou-cou*, a pudding made of corn-meal and okra that is similar to the *foo-foo* of Africa. Salt cod is another staple food and often accompanies *cou-cou*. Marine life supplies much of the protein in the diet, and flying fish are abundant; this is served in a variety of ways, such as fried, steamed, or baked, and is highly spiced. Pork is another popular food, and the Barbadians have managed to find a use for almost all parts of the animal.

As in many developing countries of the world, rice is one of the cornerstones of the diet. Peas of all sorts are a favorite vegetable. Yams and sweet potatoes are also common, and drinks include fruit juices made from native fruits such as mangoes, guavas, tamarinds, and passion fruit. *Maubry* is a popular drink brewed from tree bark with sugar and spices. Coconuts provide not only juice but also a favorite sweet.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 105.8
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 194.4

STATUS OF WOMEN

The 1992 Domestic Violence Law affords protection to women suffering violence and abuse. It applies equally to married persons and those in common-law relationships, the latter being in the vast majority. However, criminal law penalties for incest are less than those for rape or sexual

assault on nonfamily members. Women's rights are monitored by the National Organization of Women, which is affiliated with the Caribbean Women's Association.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 13
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.0
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 48.4

WORK

With a labor force of 128,500, according to a 2001 estimate, Barbados has a strong middle class that includes workers in both blue-collar jobs and in managerial and professional positions. Women and men are about equally represented in the labor force, which is divided into three main elements: agriculture with 10 percent, industry with 15 percent, and the service sector with 75 percent of the workforce, according to a 1996 estimate. The unemployment rate in 2003 was 10.7 percent.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 128,500
 Female Participation Rate %: 46.1
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 10
 Industry: 15
 Services: 75
 Unemployment %: 10.7

EDUCATION

The national literacy rate is 97.4 percent. Education is free, universal, and compulsory for nine years, from ages five to 14. Schooling lasts 12 years, divided into six years of primary school, three years of lower secondary school, and three years of upper secondary school. The curriculum is based on the British model. No tuition fees are charged in secondary schools.

The academic year runs from September to July. The medium of instruction is English at all levels.

Vocational training is provided at the Barbados Technical Institute and the Samuel Jackson Prescod Polytechnic. Private schools account for 14 percent of total primary and secondary enrollment. Higher education is provided at the University of the West Indies.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 97.4
 Male %: 98.0
 Female %: 96.8
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 14.3

First Level: Primary schools: 106
 Teachers: 1,429
 Students: 23,074
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 16.2
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 100
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 33
 Teachers: 1,381
 Students: 20,838
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 15.2
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 89.8
 Third Level: Institutions: 1
 Teachers: 592
 Students: 7,979
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 38.2
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 7.6

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Technology is not highly developed in Barbados, although the country does have several learned societies and research centers. Bellairs Research Institute, which is associated with McGill University in Montreal, focuses on the study of the tropical environment. The Cave Hill Campus of the University of the West Indies, in Bridgetown, has faculties in medicine and the social sciences. The Barbados Community College also offers training in science and technology. The Barbados Astronomical Society was founded in 1956.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: 12.36
 Patent Applications by Residents: 5

MEDIA

The island's two main daily newspapers are the *Barbados Advocate* and the *Nation*. The press is free and unfettered. A vigorous opposition press flourishes in the absence of government controls.

There is no national news service. Reuters' Caribbean desk is in Bridgetown.

Barbados has a small book-publishing industry.

The Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation (CBC), a statutory body, operates two medium-wave transmitters and one FM transmitter. A privately owned commercial service, the Barbados Rediffusion Service, wires programs for 120 hours weekly to its nearly 26,000 subscribers. CBC's television service was introduced in 1964.

In 2003 there were an estimated 100,000 Internet users and 140,000 mobile-phone subscribers.

Media

Daily Newspapers: —
 Total Circulation 000: —

Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: —
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers 000: 201
 per 1,000: 749
 Television sets 000: 78
 per 1,000: 290

CULTURE

With a high literacy rate, Barbadians have a long literary history, both written and oral. In the 1940s and 1950s the Barbadian literary magazine *Bim* introduced the works of Caribbean writers such as Derek Wolcott. Writers from the island include the novelist George Lamming and the poet Kamau Braithwaite.

In the visual arts Barbados has a thriving community of painters and muralists whose African roots are evident in their choices of themes and colors. These artists find support from the heavy tourist trade as well as from the Barbados National Arts Council, which has helped to finance the arts since the 1950s.

Music on the island is influenced by Caribbean trends such as calypso, reggae, and steel band music. The *tuk* band is a local product and provides dance music for celebrations.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 10
 Volumes: 173,000
 Registered borrowers: 59,484
 Museums Number: 1
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Barbadian folklore is rich in the island's African roots. Folk beliefs include precautions against the return of a *duppy*, or ghost. Such preventive rituals include walking backwards into the house, hanging protective herbs in the windows and doorways, and sprinkling the ground with rum. Other folk beliefs deal with spirits of various sorts. The *bacoo* is a man in a bottle who decides a person's fate, "heartmen" offer up the hearts of children to the devil, and "Conrad" is a vengeful spirit who possesses people.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Television provides a major source of entertainment for Barbadians, with 80 percent of households owning one. For

men, a visit to the rum shop is a daily fixture. There is an estimated one rum shop per every 150 adults in Barbados.

With miles of fine beaches and mild temperatures year round, marine activities provide an ample source of recreation for Barbadians as well as tourists.

ETIQUETTE

Partly as a result of its British heritage, Barbados is noted for its politeness. With its dense population, the island's inhabitants have developed a sense of order but also of *laissez-faire* with respect to a neighbor's rights and activities.

FAMILY LIFE

As with so much else in Barbadian life, the family has been largely determined by history, in this case the legacy of slavery. Thus, family life and households are not necessarily based on the nuclear family of a legally married couple and their children. Another factor in this phenomenon is that many Barbadian men emigrate to find better employment, leaving a majority of women behind on the island.

Common-law marriages are typical and are legally recognized after five years; women tend to be the center of the household. Traditionally, a woman's security against old age was the children she raised; extended families would include a grandmother who helped care for the children when the mother went out to work. This traditional arrangement has changed somewhat along with the advent of better education and employment opportunities for women as well as better legal status for women *vis-à-vis* their relationships with males.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Those of African descent make up the vast majority of the population. People of mixed African and European descent as well as whites and East Indians are also present, but in very small numbers. Clothing is mainly Western in style and customarily casual. For business occasions suits and ties are typical. The members of the Apostolic Spiritual Baptist sect have their own dress: turbans and colorful robes.

SPORTS

Cricket is the national sport, and the country's great cricket players, such as Sir Frank Worrell, Sir Everton Weekes, Sir Clyde Walcott, and Sir Garfield Sobers, have become national heroes. A picture of Worrell is found on the country's five-dollar bill.

Other popular sports include rugby, softball, soccer, and an indigenous game called "road tennis," played with homemade equipment and a piece of wood serving for the net.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1966** Barbados gains independence, with Errol W. Barrow as prime minister.
- 1969** National government takes over all local parish administration.
- 1971** Barrow's Democratic Labour Party (DLP) wins in national elections.
- 1973** The Barbadian dollar is introduced, replacing the East Caribbean dollar.
- 1976** The Barbados Labour Party (BLP) wins an upset victory in national elections, gaining 17 seats in the House of Assembly; J. M. G. Adams is named prime minister; Frederick Smith is elected president of the DLP.
- 1978** Mercenary army led by Robert Denard is reported preparing for an invasion of the island.
- 1979** Britain announces formation of a special force to counter Cuban influence in the Barbados region.
- 1983** Barbados supports the U.S. invasion of Grenada.
- 1984** Governor-General Sir Deighton Lisle Ward dies and is succeeded in office by Sir Hugh Springer.
- 1985** Prime Minister Adams dies and is succeeded in office by H. Bernard St. John.
- 1986** The BLP loses the 1986 elections; Barrow returns as prime minister.
- 1987** Barrow dies and is succeeded as prime minister by Lloyd Erskine Sandiford.
- 1989** The National Democratic Party (NDP) is formed by members of the DLP.
- 1990** Dame Nita Barrow is named governor-general.
- 1991** General elections are held; Sandiford is elected to a five-year term as prime minister; the DLP wins 18 of 28 seats in the House of Assembly; the BLP wins the remaining 10.
- 1994** The BLP wins the general election and 19 of the 28 seats in the House of Assembly; Owen Arthur becomes prime minister.
- 1996** Sir Clifford Husbands is appointed governor-general.
- 1998** A constitutional commission undertaken by former foreign minister Sir Henry Fords recommends that Barbados should remain within the British Commonwealth, replace the British monarch with a Barbadian president as head of state, and establish a Caribbean or Barbadian court of appeals.
- 2000** The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) threatens trade sanctions on Barbados and 34 other territories for acting as tax havens.
- 2001** The 12 Caribbean Community (CariCom) countries, including Barbados, sever legal ties be-

tween the region and Britain and establish their own regional supreme court.

- 2002** Explorative drilling for offshore oil reserves is halted after limited deposits are found. OECD removes the country from its "harmful tax competition" list.
- 2003** Owen Arthur wins a third consecutive term as prime minister and promises to convert the country's monarchical system to a republican one.
- 2004** Severe flooding affects much of the island in November after three days of torrential rains.

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- Barbados.** *Barbados Economic Report* (annual); *Monthly Digest of Statistics*; *1993-2000 Development Plan*; *Economic and Financial Policies of the Government of Barbados*, 2004

CONTACT INFORMATION

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Central Bank of Barbados
<http://www.centralbank.org.bb>
- Government of Barbados Information Network
<http://www.barbados.gov.bb>

BELARUS

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Belarus (Respublika Bielaruś)

ABBREVIATION

BY

CAPITAL

Minsk

HEAD OF STATE

President Aleksandr Lukashenko (from 1994)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Syarhey Sidorski (from 2003)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Authoritarian regime

POPULATION

10,300,483 (2005)

AREA

207,600 sq km (80,154 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Byelorussian, Russian

LANGUAGE

Belarusian

RELIGION

Eastern Orthodoxy

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Belarusian rubel

NATIONAL FLAG

Red horizontal band (top) and green horizontal band one-half of the width of the red band; a vertical stripe of white on the hoist side bears in red the Belarusian national ornament

NATIONAL EMBLEM

Long sun rays extend from a sun rising over the northern hemisphere of a globe; behind the sun rays is the outline of Belarus. Encircling these elements are grain and flowers wrapped together by a banner that resembles the national flag and at the top a red star.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"We, the Belarusians"

NATIONAL HOLIDAY

July 3 (Independence Day)

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

August 25, 1991

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

November 17, 1996

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Situated along the Western Dvina and Dniepr rivers, Belarus is the smallest of the three Slavic successor states of the former Soviet Union. Completely landlocked, the country shares borders with Latvia, 141 km (87 mi); Lithuania, 502 km (312 mi); Poland, 407 km (253 mi); Russia, 959 km (595 mi), and Ukraine, 891 km (553 mi). Its geography consists largely of flat lowlands, with a ridge of higher ground running from the northeast to the southwest bisecting the country. This ridge contains the country's highest point, a hill named Dzerzhinskaya Gora (346 m, or 1,135 ft, above sea level.) While the northern part of the country is covered in forests, the southern portion is a combination of marshes, swamps, and forests including a large forested swamp called the Pripyat

Marshes. Along the southwestern border with Poland, the two countries jointly administer a nature preserve in the Belovezha Forest (Bialowieza in Polish).

Geography

Area sq km: 207,600; sq mi 80,154

World Rank: 83rd

Land Boundaries, km: Latvia 141; Lithuania 502; Poland 407; Russia 959; Ukraine 891

Elevation Extremes meters:

Lowest: Nyoman River 90

Highest: Dzyarzhynskaya Hara 346

Land Use %

Arable Land: 29.6

Permanent Crops: 0.6

Forest: 45.3

Other: 24.5

Belarus



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Population of Principal Cities (2004)

Baranovichi	168,553
Babruysk	220,823
Barysaw	150,375
Brëst	298,329
Homyel'	481,197
Hrodna	314,833
Minsk	1,741,372
Mahilyow	365,102
Vitsyebsk	342,381

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

The relatively monolithic geography gives the entire country a similar climate. Belarus has cold winters and warm summers, with temperatures ranging from about 22°F (-6°C) in January, the coldest month, to about 65°F (18°C) in July, the hottest. Annual precipitation ranges from 20 to 26 in (50 to 66 cm).

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature
 July: 65°F
 January: 22°F
 Average Rainfall: 20.5 in to 26.6 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Mixed-growth forests of pine, spruce, oak, birch, alder, and ash trees cover one-third of Belarus. Here can be found some 70 species of mammals, including squirrels, deer, rabbits, wild pigs, wolves, brown bears, and various snakes and vipers. The forests are also home to 280 species of birds, including doves, kestrels, wrens, bullfinches, and woodpeckers.

In the south of the country there is a vast tract of marsh and swamp, the Pripyat Marshes, which is the last virgin marsh landscape in Europe. This is the habitat of an abundant array of animals, including mink, muskrats, turtles, ducks, frogs, and breeding birds, such as the reed warbler. The marshland has steadily been drained, however, over the past three decades, to make way for agricultural land, thus threatening this delicate ecosystem. The country has a sanctuary called the Belovezhskaya Pushcha Reserve for the virtually extinct European bison.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 10,300,483
 World Rank: 78th
 Density per sq km: 47.6
 % of annual growth (1999-2003): -0.4
 Male %: 46.8
 Female %: 53.2
 Urban %: 69.9
 Age Distribution %: 0-14: 16.0
 15-64: 69.4
 65 and over: 14.6
 Population 2025: 10,135,000
 Birth Rate per 1,000: 10.83
 Death Rate per 1,000: 14.15
 Rate of Natural Increase %: -0.3
 Total Fertility Rate: 1.39
 Expectation of Life (years): Males 63.03
 Females 74.69
 Marriage Rate per 1,000: 6.7
 Divorce Rate per 1,000: 3.8
 Average Size of Households: 3.2
 Induced Abortions: 89,895

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

The most dominant ethnic group in the country is the Belarusians, a Slavic people who can trace their inhabitation of the area back nearly 1,500 years. Belarusians make up

nearly 78 percent of the population. Slightly more than 13 percent of the population is Russian by nationality. The country also has small numbers of Poles (4 percent) and Ukrainians (3 percent).

LANGUAGES

The native and official language of the country is Belarusian, a Slavic language that closely resembles both Russian and Ukrainian. Like these two languages, Belarusian uses the Cyrillic alphabet. In addition to Belarusian, Russian is also an official language.

RELIGIONS

Most Belarusians are Eastern Orthodox Christians who belong to either the Russian Orthodox Church or the Belarusian Autocephalous Orthodox Church, a self-governing Orthodox church. Because the Belarusian Autocephalous Orthodox Church encouraged independence from the Soviet Union, it was banned from 1920 until 1990, except for a brief time in the 1940s. The second-largest religious group is the Belarusian Catholic Church. These followers are also called Greek Catholics or Uniates because they follow the rituals of the Eastern Orthodox Church but accept the authority of the Roman pontiff. These two groups account for more than 80 percent of the population. In addition to these two groups there are small numbers of Roman Catholics, Protestants, Jews, and Muslims. A 2002 law restricted religious freedom in the country.

Religious Affiliations

Eastern Orthodox	8,240,000
Other	2,060,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The history of the Belarus people begins when Slavic tribes moved into the area during the 500s. Belarusians, like the Ukrainians and Russians, constituted a portion of the Kievan Rus state that was formed during the 800s. For two centuries Belarus formed the northwestern limits of the state that flourished as a major European political, economic, and military power. By the 13th century the Kievan Rus state was falling apart owing to invasions from the east by Mongol hordes and to threats from the growing Germanic tribes to the west. Belarus sought protection by forming a military alliance with its western neighbor, Lithuania. Eventually, the alliance led to Belarus's becoming part of Lithuania. In 1386, when the grand duke of Lithuania married the queen of Poland, those

two countries began a process of merging into one country; in 1569 Lithuania and its protectorate, Belarus, were subsumed by Poland. For more than 200 years Belarus remained part of the Polish empire, until the empire was divided among Russia, Prussia, and Austria at the end of the 18th century. Russia received eastern Poland, which included Belarus. For nearly two centuries the Russians practiced a policy of Russification that promoted Russian culture and language over the native cultures present in its empire.

When the Bolsheviks overthrew the Russian czar in 1917, the Belarusians used the opportunity to set up an independent state called the Belarusian National Republic in 1918. However, the Communists invaded later that same year and established a state they named Byelorussia (meaning White Russia). In January 1919 the Communists officially declared the state the Belarusian Soviet Socialist Republic. The Communists continued the policy of Russification begun under the czar. In 1939 the Soviets also gained control of western Belarus, which had been under the control of the Polish state since 1919. During World War II much of Belarus was occupied by Nazi Germany and formed part of the famed eastern front. The toll on the country was great, with the city of Minsk meeting with near-complete destruction. With the defeat of Nazi Germany by Russian and Allied forces, Belarus returned to the control of the Soviet Union, where it remained until 1990. Under Soviet rule Belarus was converted from a largely agricultural republic to an industrial one, although Stalin's collectivization activities were resisted by the Belarusians. The Soviets also encouraged the migration of Russians into Belarus. Belarusian was replaced by Russian as the official language of the republic. The relative prosperity of Belarus under the Soviet system made it a somewhat passive player in the disintegration of the USSR.

In 1990 the Belarusian parliament declared that the laws of the republic took precedence over those passed by the Soviet Union. In August 1991, still as a part of the Soviet Union, the country failed to overthrow Mikhail Gorbachev. Nevertheless, along with several other republics Belarus declared its independence from the Soviet Union. In September it officially changed its name from Byelorussia to Belarus. In December it joined the Commonwealth of Independent States.

Independence did not prove to be what many had hoped for. The country's leaders were inexperienced in dealing with economic issues, and their conversion to a market-driven economy was not nearly as fast as anticipated by both Belarusians and Westerners. As international aid began to dry up, Belarus sought to form closer ties with the former Soviet republics, especially Russia. Aleksandr Lukashenko, who became president in 1994, worked for the new constitution that was adopted in 1996 and that increased his powers. In addition to adopting the new constitution, the people approved an extension of

Lukashenko's term to 2001. In 1997 Lukashenko signed a charter with Russia's Boris Yeltsin calling for the merger of the two nations. In protest to the growing authoritarian power of Lukashenko, the United States cut off aid to Belarus. Lukashenko was again reelected president in 2001. However, the elections were called undemocratic by both opposition leaders and international observers.

Lukashenko has continued to hold an iron grip on Belarus, arresting opposition politicians and closing down newspapers that publish stories contrary to the rules of the country's repressive press laws. In 2002 the government passed a new law containing repressive and restrictive elements with respect to the practice of religion. In 2003 the government suppressed trade-union activity, and the International Labor Organization included Belarus's actions on its list of union violations for the second straight year. In 2004 Lukashenko won a referendum allowing him to run for a third term. International observers decried the election as far from fair. Opposition leaders protesting the vote were arrested in October 2004 in Minsk.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

- 1991–94** Stanislav Stanislavovich Shushkevich (chairman of the Supreme Council)
- 1994** Vyachaslau Mikalayevich Kuznyatsou (deputy, acting chairman of the Supreme Council)
- 1994** Myechyslau Ivanavich Hryb (chairman of the Supreme Council)
- 1994–** Aleksandr Grigoryevich Lukashenko (president)

CONSTITUTION

Under the constitution of Belarus, which became effective in 1996, the president is head of state and has broad powers over the government. The president appoints a prime minister, who heads the Council of Ministers. Since the election of Lukashenko, the country has been largely subservient to his will. He has sought closer ties with Russia and has gone so far as to agree in principle to a merger of the two countries, though as of 2004 negotiations for the proposed union remained stalled. The country's legislature consists of two houses, an upper house called the Council of the Republic and a lower house called the House of Representatives. The Council of the Republic has 64 members, the House of Representatives 110.

PARLIAMENT

The Belarusian parliament—the National Assembly—comprises two houses: the House of Representatives, composed of 110 deputies, and the Supreme House, the

Council of the Republic, composed of 64 representatives. The deputies are elected to the House of Representatives directly by the voters. Any citizen of the Republic of Belarus who has reached the age of 21 may become a deputy of the House of Representatives. The Council of the Republic is the house of territorial representation. Any citizen of the Republic of Belarus who has reached the age of 30 and who has been a resident in a given region (oblast) or the city of Minsk for no less than five years may become a member of the Council of the Republic from that region. Eight members of the council are appointed by the president of the Republic of Belarus, while the rest are elected at the sittings of the deputies of the local Soviets of Deputies: eight from each of the six regions of the Republic and the city of Minsk.

POLITICAL PARTIES

There are nearly a dozen political parties in Belarus. The United Civic Party of Belarus was formed when the Democratic and Civil parties merged. It has strong support among intellectuals and is committed to democracy while downplaying nationalism. The Belarusian Social Democratic Party is modeled after the German Social Democratic Party. The Belarusian Peasant Party is an agrarian party that favors private farming. The Belarusian Popular Front is an umbrella group that contains members who generally support democracy and nationalism.

Despite the plethora of political parties, Belarus continues to be very much a one-party state. The Lukashenko government has consistently dealt with its critics through force and arrests.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Belarus is divided into six provinces, each named for its capital: Brest, Gomel, Grodno, Minsk, Mahilyow, and Vitebsk. A council elected by the voters governs each province. The president, however, appoints regional executives, who supervise and appoint local executives. The appointed executives control the regional and local councils.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The government of Belarus has established an independent judicial system that goes to great lengths to protect the appearance of propriety. The courts administer justice on the basis of the constitution, the laws, and other enforceable enactments such as presidential declarations. The trials of cases in all courts are stipulated to be open. The hearing of cases in closed-court sessions are permitted only in the instances specified by the law and in ac-

cordance with all the rules of legal procedure. Justice is administered on the basis of the adversarial proceedings and the equality of the parties involved in the trial. The rulings of courts are legally binding for all citizens and officials. Parties have the right to appeal rulings, sentences, and other judicial decisions. The Constitutional Court of the Republic of Belarus consists of 12 judges from among highly qualified specialists in the field of law, who as a rule have scientific degrees.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Belarus has not had an easy transition to the Western principles of freedom and human rights. Lukashenko's government continues to use Soviet-style repression in violations of a broad spectrum of basic civil and political rights. The government has censored the press and closed the only remaining independent press. There have been threats made against government critics. Restrictions on political freedoms have been codified. Demonstrators have been arrested. Academic freedom is nonexistent, as discussion and research of controversial topics are forbidden. The government has hounded or disbanded opposition political parties and nongovernmental organizations and has stripped independent lawyers of their accreditation. State university authorities issue reprimands and warnings to politically active lecturers, independent historians, and other academics.

FOREIGN POLICY

Belarus is among the most pro-Russian of the former republics of the Soviet Union. In 1995 Belarus and Russia signed a friendship and cooperation treaty providing for bilateral reintegration. Among other stipulations, the pact provided for the eventual creation of an economic and monetary union. The process was continued in 1996 through the far-reaching Treaty on the Formation of the Community of Sovereign Republics (CSR), which called for military and political cooperation as well as economic union and the establishment of a CSR Supreme Council and a CSR parliamentary assembly consisting of an equal number of Belarusian and Russian representatives. The Charter of the Union was ratified in 1997, and citizens of both nations were declared CSR citizens. However, as of 2003 there had been no recent progress in implementing the provisions of the charter, beyond the writing of a draft Constitutional Act for the Russian-Belarus Union. Differences over tax policy, customs codes, foreign trade, terms for a common currency, and constitutional issues make such a union increasingly unlikely and have partially soured relations between the two countries.

DEFENSE

Belarusian military activities are coordinated with Russia under a 1993 treaty. The entire nuclear arsenal of the country was transferred to Russia in 1996. Belarusian males who have reached the age of 18 are subject to conscription, which lasts 18 months. The army has ground forces that number approximately 50,000 members and are organized under the ministry of defense. The air force has about 25,000 members and 200 combat aircraft of Soviet design. Being a landlocked country, Belarus has no navy. In 2004 Belarus began to downsize its military by about 30 percent.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 182,900
 Military Manpower Availability: 2,520,644
 Military Expenditures \$million: 176.1
 as % of GDP: 1.4
 as % of central government expenditures: 5.7
 Arms Imports \$million: 41
 Arms Exports \$million: 481

ECONOMY

Belarus has seen little structural reform since 1995, when President Lukashenko launched the country on the path of "market socialism." In keeping with this policy, Lukashenko reimposed administrative controls over prices and currency exchange rates and expanded the state's right to intervene in the management of private enterprise. In addition to the burdens imposed by high inflation, businesses have been subject to pressure on the part of central and local governments, including arbitrary changes in regulations, numerous rigorous inspections, and retroactive application of new business regulations prohibiting practices that had been legal. Additional economic problems include consecutive bad harvests in 1998 and 1999 and persistent trade deficits. Close relations with Russia, possibly leading to reunion, color the pattern of economic developments. For the time being Belarus remains self-isolated from the West and its open-market economies, though the United States and some European countries encourage investment in the country.

Belarus's economy in 2004 posted 6.4 percent growth. The country remains hampered by 17.4 percent inflation, persistent trade deficits, and ongoing rocky relations with Russia.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 70.5
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 6,800
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 5.1

GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 5.5
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 11.0
 Industry: 36.4
 Services: 52.6
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 58
 Government Consumption: 21
 Gross Domestic Investment: 21.8
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 11.47
 Imports: 13.57
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 5.1
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 20.0

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1990 = 100)
 1998 1999 2000 2001 2002
 10,490 41,305 110,945 178,777 254,901

Finance

National Currency: Belarusian Ruble (BYR)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = BYR 2,170
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency trillion: 2.24
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 28.0
 Total External Debt \$million: 600
 Debt Service Ratio %: 1.71
 Balance of Payments \$billion: -1.12
 International Reserves SDRs \$million: 594.8
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
 17.4

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 31.94
 per capita \$: 3.20
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 171.8

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$billion: 3.326
 Expenditures \$billion: 3.564
 Budget Deficit \$million: 238
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: 14.2

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 11.0
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 2.8
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 1.11
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 2.3
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 133.4
 Total Farmland % of land area: 27.0
 Livestock: Cattle million: 3.92
 Chickens million: 30
 Pigs million: 3.29
 Sheep 000: 63
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 7.54
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 12.4

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 3.42
Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 4.0

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 2.55
Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 22.16
Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 2.22
Net Energy Imports % of use: 85.5
Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 7.84
 Production kW-hr billion: 23.5
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 29.1
Coal Reserves tons billion: —
 Production tons million: —
 Consumption tons million: 0.58
Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
 Production cubic feet billion: 7.1
 Consumption cubic feet billion: 635.7
Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
 Production barrels 000 per day: 35.4
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 237.6
Pipelines Length km: 2,443

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 13.57
Exports \$billion: 11.47
Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 9.3
Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 7.1
Balance of Trade \$billion: -1.12

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Russia %	68.8	57.2
Germany %	8.6	4.7
Poland %	2.9	—
France %	—	3.9

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 79,990
 Paved %: 86.7
Automobiles: 1,548,500
Trucks and Buses: —
Railroad: Track Length km: 5,523
 Passenger-km billion: 14.35
 Freight-km billion: 34.17
Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: —
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: —
Airports: 135
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 308
Length of Waterways km: 2,500

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 61
Number of Tourists from million: 1.39
Tourist Receipts \$million: 232
Tourist Expenditures \$million: 533

Communications

Telephones million: 3.07
Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.01
Cellular Telephones million: 1.12
Personal Computers 000: —
Internet Hosts per million people: 515
Internet Users per 1,000 people: 135

ENVIRONMENT

The biggest ongoing environmental problem facing Belarus is continuing contamination from the fallout from the 1986 nuclear reactor at Chernobyl in northern Ukraine. About 70 percent of the nuclear fallout from the plant landed on Belarusian territory, and about 20 percent of the land remains contaminated. However, government restrictions on residence and the use of contaminated land are not strictly enforced, and the government itself announced plans in 2004 to increase agricultural production in the contaminated regions. Additionally, as an industrial state Belarus suffers from air- and water-quality issues, as much of the economic industrialization in the country was done when environmental factors were not taken into consideration.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 45.3
Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: 256
Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 6
Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 5.91

LIVING CONDITIONS

Many of the current problems with respect to living conditions in Belarus are a result of its 20th-century history. During World War II almost three-quarters of the housing in cities and villages was destroyed. After the war, and with Soviet occupation, there were massive and hasty rebuilding projects. Huge housing estates were thrown up, most of which are now in serious disrepair. The housing situation was exacerbated by the Chernobyl disaster of 1986, when tens of thousands were displaced from the contaminated regions. Small apartments are the rule, for those lucky enough not to have to share accommodations. Buildings tend to be several stories high and are built of

prefabricated materials. Another holdover of the Soviet era is the reliance on public sector building. Privatization of the housing industry is still underway. In 1993 about half of such housing was in private hands.

Another indication of the living conditions in the country is the life expectancy. For 2004 it was 68.6 years, low for a developed country. Despite independence from the Soviets, the country functions in many ways along Soviet lines because of the repressive nature of the Lukashenko regime. Scarcity in consumer goods, for example, is still typical.

With its flat terrain, Belarus is well suited for mass transit. The country has an extensive railroad system, with Minsk as an important railroad junction connecting the Baltic states with Ukraine and Moscow with Warsaw. Cars are very much a secondary mode of transportation for Belarusians, and highway infrastructure outside of urban areas tends to be in disrepair. This compounds the problem of shortages, as small farmers have difficulties getting their goods to market.

HEALTH

Like most services in Belarus, the health-care system is in need of repair and an infusion of funds. A four-tier system cares for the people, which includes a combination of hospitals, polyclinics, smaller regional care centers, and walk-in clinics. Two decades after the fact, the incident at Chernobyl still overwhelms the health-care system. An estimated 2.2 million Belarusians were directly contaminated by the radioactive fallout of that disaster, a legacy that has brought about high rates of cancer, birth defects, and other long-term problems. Exposure to the radiation damaged the immune systems of many, causing a condition known as "Chernobyl AIDS," wherein individuals are more susceptible to diseases. Other leading causes of death are cardiovascular disease and respiratory disease. In 2001 there were an estimated 1,000 HIV/AIDS deaths and 15,000 people living with HIV/AIDS.

The infant mortality rate in Belarus is high, at 13.4 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2005, with a birth rate of 10.8 per 1,000 in the same year. Immunization rates for measles, polio, tuberculosis, diphtheria, pertussis, and tetanus are over 99 percent for children. As of 2004 there were an estimated 4.5 doctors and 12.6 hospital beds per 1,000 people. Public health expenditure as a fraction of gross domestic product (GDP) was 4.7 percent in 2002, while private expenditure was 1.7 percent of GDP.

Health

Number of Physicians: 44,902
 Number of Dentists: 4,393
 Number of Nurses: 123,192
 Number of Pharmacists: 3,001

Physician Density per 100,000 people: 450

Hospital Beds per 1,000: 12.6

Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 13.37

Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 35

Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 6.4

Health Expenditures per capita \$: 93

HIV Infected % of adults: 0.3

Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:

DPT: 99

Measles: 99

Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: —

Access to Improved Water Source %: 100

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Like Eskimos with their plethora of names for varieties of snow, Belarusians boast of being able to prepare the common potato in over 100 different ways. They may be baked in the embers of a fire, then sprinkled with salt and eaten with butter. They may be grated and made into dumplings, which are stuffed with mushrooms or vegetables and baked in the oven. They may be formed into pancakes called *dranniki*, which are fried with mushrooms and served with sour cream.

Other staples of the Belarusian diet include beets, cabbage, and pork; fowl and venison are also popular meats. As cooking was traditionally done on hot clay stoves, many dishes are still baked or stewed. A traditional dish is *kotleta po krestyansky*: pork cutlets served in mushroom sauce. *Machanka* is a sauce served with various meat and pancake dishes. Freshwater fish such as perch and crayfish are plentiful and served in many restaurants. A common soup in Belarus is *shtchi*. Made from sauerkraut, potatoes, and fried onions, it is usually served with sour cream. *Kaubasy* (sausages), pork chops, and other meats are often smoked.

Favorite fruits include plums, pears, and apples. *Byarozovy sok*, or birch juice, is a popular drink. Other common drinks are *kvas*, which is made from malt, flour, sugar, mint, and fruit, and *compot*, made from boiling dried fruit with sugar. Though white bread is eaten, rye bread tends to be the favorite.

Breakfast is a light meal, with lunch, at midday, and dinner, at about eight, much larger meals.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 2.4

Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 3,050

Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 126.9

Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 160.0

STATUS OF WOMEN

Belarus made a considerable step in the 1990s to improve the status of women. The government adopted

the Women of the Republic of Belarus program and the National Plan of Action to Improve the Status of Women for 1996–2000 and established the Gender Information and Policy Center. Parliament passed laws aimed at defending women's rights. Women are almost completely unrepresented in the government and parliament. In Lukashenko's administration there is only one female minister along with 10 deputy ministers. By 2000 women accounted for only about 5 percent of members of the House of Representatives of the Belarusian National Assembly. On the other hand, women made up 31 percent of members of the Council of the Republic, the upper house of the National Assembly. In 2004 women constituted 29 percent of both houses in Belarus, placing it well above average worldwide in terms of equal gender empowerment.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 29
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.0
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 55.9

WORK

An estimate of the labor force in 2003 put the number of workers at 4.3 million. Of these, approximately 14 percent were engaged in agriculture, producing grain, potatoes, vegetables, sugar beets, flax, beef, and milk. The service sector accounted for about 51 percent of employment, while industry accounted for the remaining 35 percent. Workers engaged in industry manufactured metal-cutting machine tools, tractors, trucks, earthmovers, motorcycles, television sets, chemical fibers, fertilizer, textiles, radios, and refrigerators.

While the official government unemployment rate in 2004 was 2 percent, underemployment remains a serious problem in the country. Instead of reducing the workforce, business and industry tend to shorten workweeks or reduce wages. The government still provides for social benefits, such as medical insurance, day care, and housing, which makes workers reluctant to leave jobs with benefits even if they are underpaid.

The Belarus constitution provides for the rights of workers to unionize. However, the Lukashenko government has not only discouraged but in some cases has even banned such union activities, including strikes. The minimum working age is 16, and the workweek is 40 hours. A minimum wage is in effect; in 2003, despite depressed business conditions, the government raised the minimum wage to \$100 per month.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 4,305,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 49.0
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 14
 Industry: 34.7
 Services: 51.3
 Unemployment %: 2.0

EDUCATION

The national educational system of Belarus consists of preschool upbringing and different levels of subsequent education (general, secondary, out-of-school, professional and technical, special secondary, higher education, training of scientists and lecturers, and self-education for grown-ups). Primary and secondary education is compulsory. Children from the ages of seven to 16 are provided with free public education.

The state maintains a number of universities and vocational centers. There were 55 higher educational institutions in Belarus as of 1998, 13 private ones among them. The largest state higher educational institutions are the Belarusian University, the University of Informatics and Radio-Electronics, and economic, technological, agricultural, technological, and pedagogical universities. All of them are located in Minsk.

In the 1990s two-thirds of schools were using Belarusian as the language of instruction. When Belarus was part of the Soviet Union, education was free of charge. Since independence private institutions, as well as paid programs within state institutions, have been established. In 1999 about 83 percent of students were studying at public-financed institutions, whereas 16.7 percent were paying tuition fees. There were 15 nonstate institutions with a total of 36,500 students. The literacy rate was 99.6 percent as of 2003.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 99.6
 Male %: 99.8
 Female %: 99.5
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 14.2
 First Level: Primary schools: 4,900
 Teachers: 27,418
 Students: 437,005
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 15.9
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 94.3
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: —
 Teachers: 105,863
 Students: 993,016
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 9.4
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 84.8
 Third Level: Institutions: 55
 Teachers: 43,200
 Students: 488,650
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 61.6
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 6.0

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

In 2002 research and development (R&D) expenditure as a percentage of GDP was 0.62 percent. That year there were 88 patents granted and 1,865 persons involved in R&D per million people; over 70 percent of researchers had a higher education. The greatest proportion of R&D was in the fields of health—responding to the continuing consequences of the Chernobyl nuclear disaster—environmental protection, agricultural research, engineering, and information technology.

Minsk is the home of several scientific institutions. The Academy of Sciences of Belarus has departments of physics, mathematics, informatics, engineering, chemical science, geological science, biological science, and medical-biological science and operates almost 300 research institutes. Minsk is also home to the Belarusian State University, with faculties of applied mathematics, biology, chemistry, geography, mechanics and mathematics, physics, and radiophysics and electronics, and the Belarusian State Technological University, with chemistry technology and engineering, forestry, and organic substances technology studies.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 1,865
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 0.62
 High-Tech Exports \$million: 223.2
 Patent Applications by Residents: 908

MEDIA

There used to be an active newspaper industry in Belarus, with more than 220 papers in print in 1989. This number declined as the government of Lukashenko cracked down on the independent and opposition presses. Despite this crackdown, there exists a circulation of more than 1.5 million papers daily in both Belarusian and other languages, largely Russian. One of the banned independent newspapers is the popular daily *Belorusskaya delovaya gazeta*.

Both radio and television are controlled by the government. Belarus Radio broadcasts two national programs. It also shares a relay with Radio Moscow. Belarus Television broadcasts a single color channel.

There are fair numbers of public libraries, theaters, clubs, and museums, including the National Arts Museum, the Belarusian State Museum of the Great Patriotic War History, the Museum of the Brest Hero-Fortress, and the museums of famous writers (including Y. Kolas, Y. Kupala, and M. Bogdanovich).

The media remain under the thumb of the government, which passed a new press law in secret in 2003 that aims to further curtail press freedom.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 20
 Total Circulation million: 1.56
 Circulation per 1,000: 154
 Books Published: 6,073
 Periodicals: 600
 Radio Receivers million: 2.05
 per 1,000: 199
 Television sets million: 3.4
 per 1,000: 331

CULTURE

Belarus has a long and rich cultural history. In literature, language, and writing a cultural high-water mark was reached in the 16th century with what is known as the Belarusian Renaissance, when the country was part of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Scholars, philosophers, and poets were all responsible for helping to create the modern Belarusian language. The earliest and one of the most important instigators of this renaissance was Francishak Skaryna, who printed the first book in Belarusian in 1517. Skaryna's Bible established the first printing press in the region. Vasil' Cyapinski was another scholar and philosopher whose translation and publication of the New Testament in 1570 was one of the cornerstones of Belarusian language development. The philosopher, teacher, publisher, writer, and social activist Symon Budny was yet another central figure of the Belarusian Renaissance. Much of the intellectual activity of the time was centered on Polacak, Turau, and Smolensk. Belarusian became the official language of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, whose codes of law were written in that language. Many historical, legal, and literary documents in Belarusian are still extant from the 16th and 17th centuries. Among well-known writers of the 19th and 20th centuries are Maksim Bahdanovich, Janka Kupala, Jakub Kolas, Alojza Pashkevich (Ciotka), Ryhor Baradulin, Janka Bryl, and Vasil Bykau.

Music is another rich cultural Belarusian institution, with roots back to the 15th century for chants, called *znamenny*, which found their way into liturgical use. By the 17th century, part-singing was popular both for religious purposes and for folksongs. Folk instruments include the horn, made from actual cattle or ox horn without holes, drums, pipes, the *duda*, or bagpipe, and the *cymbaly*, or hammer dulcimer. Folk music was often used to celebrate seasonal and life rhythms, such as the coming of spring, the gathering of crops, the coming of winter, religious holidays, lullabies, and laments.

Folk dancing also expresses the rhythm of the seasons and life. Of over 100 identified dances some of the most popular are the *bulba*, *lanok*, and *ruchniki*, which are work-related; the *miacelica* and *charot*, which deal with nature; and the *liavonicha*, *mikita*, and *yurachka*, which tell stories or express emotion.

The cultural life of contemporary Belarus is no less rich. The country is famous for its opera and ballet, with theaters such as the Opera and Ballet Theater in Minsk. Belarus is also well known for musical comedy, which is held at the Theater of Musical Comedy Minsk. Many orchestral groups perform in the cities and towns. Drama is another high art form in Belarus. Minsk is home to the Janka Kupala Belarusian State Academic Theater. Other major theaters include the Gorky Russian Theater in Babruysk and the Jakub Kolas Belarusian State Academic Theater in Minsk. Numerous museums and concert halls are found in the major urban settings.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 52
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: 37,200
 Museums Number: 149
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Pagan myths and folklore have retained their strength through millennia of Christianization. Strong remnants of this ancient belief system are found in the festivals Kolyady and Kupalie. Kolyady is a winter solstice festival, celebrating the New Year according to the old calendar (prior to 1917) on the night of January 13–14. Traditionally, some people dress as animals or fictional creatures and then visit house-to-house singing Kolyady songs. Kupalie is a midsummer festival, celebrated on the night of July 6. Eternal youth is granted to the lucky one who finds an unfolding fern at midnight.

From Christian times comes the tragic myth of Rahnieda, the daughter of a Belarusian prince whose fate became bound up in dynastic pursuits. Captured and forced to become the wife of Prince Vladimir, she loved instead his brother, Yaropolk. But Vladimir needed her to consolidate his Kievan empire. Vladimir got his wish and his bride, killing his own brother in the process. When Rahnieda attempted to take revenge on him, she was banished, became a nun, and lived until age 100. Numerous tales exist of this heartbroken princess who still roams her native land, helping those in trouble.

Fairy tales are also a feature of Belarusian folklore, many of which have characters similar to other Slavic countries. Some popular characters, common to many Slavic countries, are Koschey Besmyarotny, an immortal, Zmei Garynych, a three-headed dragon, and Baba Yaga, a witch.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Communal singing has long been a favorite recreational activity for the Belarusians. Up until the 19th century youths would congregate during the long nights of summer to sing; during the winter the hearth became the seat of such sing-fests. These traditional ways have, of course, long been displaced by the more modern cinemas and dance clubs. The first Belarusian movie was produced in 1926, and the movie industry still provides a major source of entertainment, as do concert halls and theaters in the main cities. Contemporary Belarusians partake of many of the same forms of entertainment and recreation as their European neighbors.

Belarusians traditionally enjoyed the recreational facilities that their waterways afforded. However irrigation projects and high levels of pollution during the Soviet era destroyed much of the sport fishing in the country. Rowing is still a popular activity, as are amateur sports such as soccer and hockey.

ETIQUETTE

Much of the etiquette system of Belarus is similar to that of Russia and Lithuania, though Belarusians do not use patronymics. A handshake is usual as a greeting; hugs are typical for close friends and relatives. Table manners are relatively loose. It is customary to eat in the continental manner, with both fork and knife. Punctuality is important. Guests are often asked to remove their shoes when entering someone's home. Maintaining eye contact is not considered rude, and in fact an old tradition about helping the less fortunate prevents Belarusians from avoiding eye contact with those who appear destitute.

FAMILY LIFE

Though once agricultural, Belarus is now a distinctly urban country, with 70 percent of the population living in towns and cities and in small apartments. Thus, small families are the norm in Belarus, yet connections between the generations are still strong. Some married couples must live with their parents while they wait for their own apartments. When space permits, grandparents often live with their children and help to take care of their grandchildren.

Weddings are important celebrations. Many take two days—one for the official wedding at the registry office and another for a religious service and party. During the Soviet era it was typical for both parents in the family to work. Since independence, and with the scarcity of jobs in Belarus's troubled economy, some men have been encouraging women to stay at home. This situation worries

women's groups, who feel a new system of inequality is developing. Many in Belarus are also concerned about the country's falling birth rate. According to a 2004 estimate the fertility rate was 1.4 children per woman.

With all the stresses of modern Belarus society, the divorce rate is rising. Because custody of the children is usually awarded to the mother, there has been an increase in the number of households headed by single mothers.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Most Belarusians are ethnically Slavic. Dress is modern, though more conservative than in Western Europe. Traditional folk costumes are worn mainly for festivals or special occasions. However, in the south of the country the national dress is still popular for everyday use.

Embroidery plays a dominant role in both male and female folk attire. Men wear embroidered white shirts with matching white linen pants. A wide and colorfully embroidered sash may be worn at the waist. Black boots or sandals are also part of the outfit, with a wide straw hat for summers or a sheepskin coat or vest in winter. Similarly, women wear loose white dresses or embroidered blouses over flounced skirts. Both outfits are accompanied by embroidered aprons and kerchiefs.

SPORTS

Competitive sports include soccer and ice hockey. Belarusians enjoy both watching and participating in these on the amateur level. Participation in the Olympics has become increasingly important over the years, with Belarusians excelling in gymnastics and acrobatics. Rowing is another popular sport in the country, as is basketball.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1944** The Soviet Red Army drives Nazi forces out of Belarus.
- 1945** Belarus is reunited with the Soviet Union and admitted as a founding member of the United Nations.
- 1960s–70s** The Soviet government closes Belarusian language schools and emphasizes the Russian language.
- 1986** An explosion at the nuclear power station at Chernobyl, in the neighboring Soviet state of Ukraine, contaminates 20 percent of Belarus's territory and a large portion of its population with high-radiation fallout; Mikhail Gorbachev initiates his programs of glasnost and perestroika.
- 1988** The Belarusian Popular Front (BPS) is formed with the goals of restoring Belar-

- 1990** The Byelorussia parliament declares that the laws of the republic take precedence over those passed by the Soviet Union.
- 1991** On August 19 the BSSR is renamed the Republic of Belarus; seven days later the Supreme Soviet of the BSSR suspends the Communist Party of Belarus.
- 1994** In March the Supreme Soviet adopts a constitution that declares Belarus a unitary, democratic, social-oriented, legal state. In July Aleksandr Lukashenko is elected as the first president of Belarus.
- 1996** The 1994 constitution is amended to extend Lukashenko's term until 2001.
- 1997** The Treaty on Union of Belarus and Russia, calling for the merger of Belarus with Russia, is signed; the United States cuts off aid to Belarus because of the authoritarian nature of the government.
- 1998** The United States and all 15 European Union countries ban officials from Belarus.
- 2000** Parliamentary elections are criticized by election observers as undemocratic. Turnout in some constituencies is so low that new elections will be necessary.
- 2001** Lukashenko is reelected to a second term. Opposition leaders and international electoral observers allege irregularities.
- 2002** Russian President Vladimir Putin and Lukashenko hold several unsuccessful talks on a proposed Russian-Belarus Union.
- 2003** Over one hundred journalists stage a Day of Closed Newspapers on September 19 to protest government suppression of a free media and to stress their rights. The government further clamps down on human rights groups and opposition groups such as For a Better Life. The business newspaper *Belorusskaya delovaya gazeta* is closed on May 28 for breaking government press laws.
- 2004** In an October 17 referendum Lukashenko wins the right to run for a third term, contrary to the country's constitution. European Union leaders decry the questionable election results as a "deplorable return to the methods of the Soviet Union." Belarus opposition leaders protesting the referendum are arrested on October 21 in Minsk. Their brutal treatment draws further protests from abroad.

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OFFICIAL PUBLICATIONS

Belarus. Ministry of Statistics and Analysis, *Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Belarus, 2003; The Republic of Belarus in Figures, 2004; Population of the Republic of Belarus, 2004*

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- CIA World Fact Book: Belarus
<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/bo.htm/>
- Ministry of Statistics and Analysis
<http://www.president.gov.by/Minstat/en/main.html>
- The Native Byelorussian WWW Server for Businessmen
<http://www.belarus.net/>
- President of the Republic of Belarus
<http://president.gov.by/minstat/en/main.html/>

BELGIUM

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Kingdom of Belgium (Koninkrijk België; Royaume de Belgique; Königreich Belgien)

ABBREVIATION

BE

CAPITAL

Brussels

HEAD OF STATE

King Albert II (from 1993)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Guy Verhofstadt (from 1999)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Constitutional monarchy

POPULATION

10,364,388 (2005)

AREA

30,528 sq km (11,787 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Flemings, Walloons

LANGUAGES

Dutch, French, German

RELIGION

Roman Catholicism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Euro

NATIONAL FLAG

Tricolor of black, yellow, and red vertical stripes

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A lion rampant on a shield forms the central design of the coat of arms. The lion is in gold emblazoned on a black field. Encircling the shield is the ornate collar of the Order of Leopold. Behind it, golden scepters form a saltire or diagonal cross. A royal gold and red crown tops the design, and a gold and white ribbon decorates it. The national motto in gold letters on a red ribbon at the base appears in both French and Dutch, the English translation of which is "Union provides strength."

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"La Brabançonne" (The song of Brabant)

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day), July 21 (National Independence Day), November 15 (National Dynasty Day), Labor Day, all major Catholic festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

July 21, 1831

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

February 7, 1831; last revised June 10, 2004

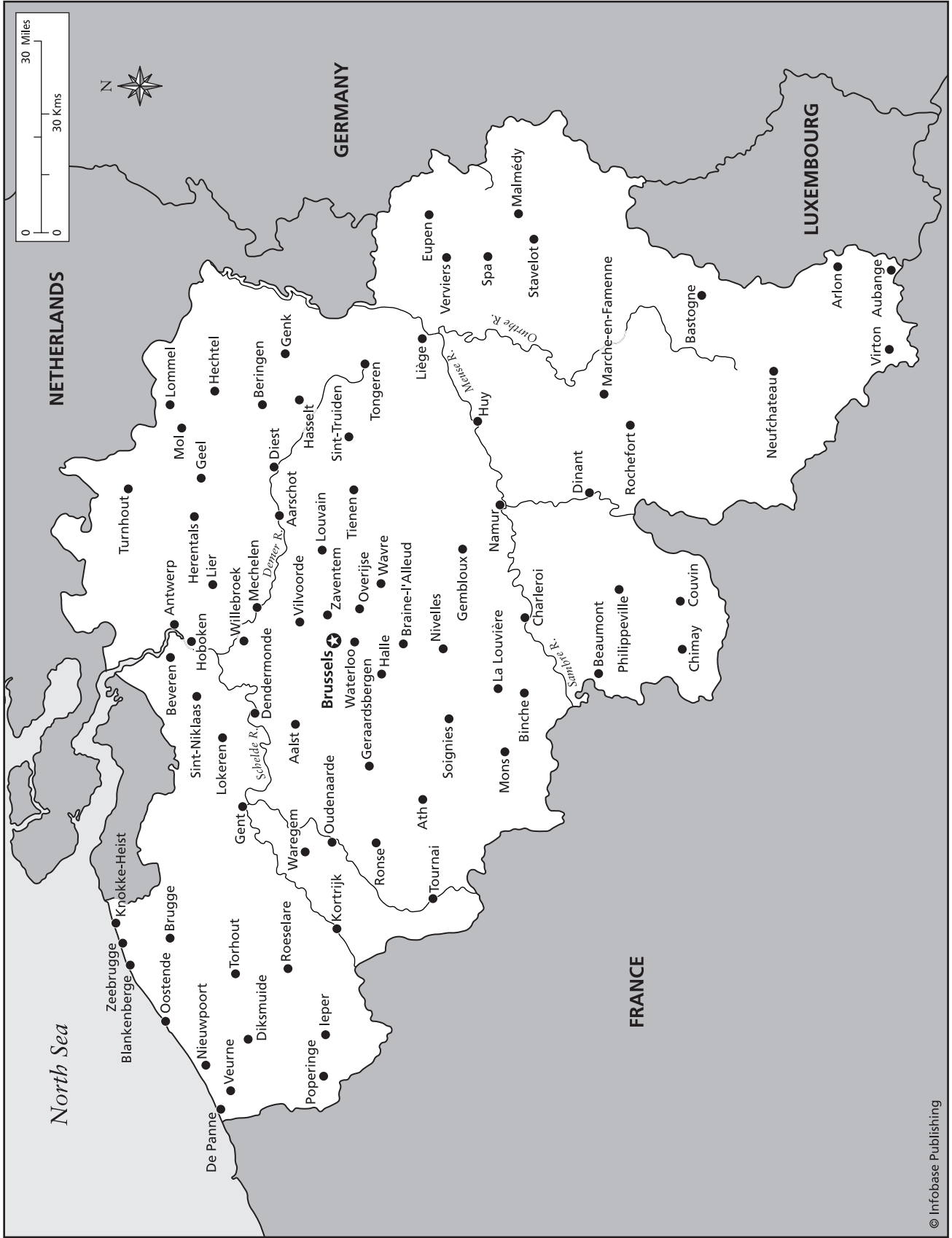
GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Belgium occupies an area of 30,528 sq km (11,787 sq mi). Its borders are formed by the North Sea and the neighboring states of France, Germany, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg. Almost one-fifth of the country was reclaimed from the North Sea between the eighth and 13th centuries. Salt marshes became rich plow land behind a legendary barrier of dikes. A coastal strip 48 km (30 mi) wide was thus added to the country; at the same time rivers like the Schelde, which had spread out in broad, shallow deltas, were made navigable.

Geography

Area sq km: 30,528; sq mi 11,787
World Rank: 136th
Land Boundaries, km: France 620; Germany 167; Luxembourg 148; Netherlands 450
Coastline, km: 66.5
Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: North Sea 0
 Highest: Signal de Botrange 694
Land Use %
 Arable Land: 23.3
 Permanent Crops: 0.4
 Forest: —
 Other: 76.3

Belgium



Population of Principal Cities (2004)

Antwerp	455,148
Bruges	117,025
Brussels	141,312
Charleroi	200,608
Ghent	229,344
Liège	185,488

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Lowland Belgium has a climate similar to that of Britain because of the passage of air depressions, which result from a combination of tropical and polar air masses. They cause characteristic weather features such as changing winds, summer thunderstorms, winter drizzle, and overcast skies. The Flemish oceanic region has a mild climate because of the warm waters of the North Atlantic Drift, which is responsible for fogs. The interior has more extreme summers and winters, while the uplands have more severe frost and more cold and rain.

Climate and Weather
Temperature Range

Brussels:	30.6°F to 76.5°F
Bruges:	30.0°F to 73.9°F
Kempenland:	26.6°F to 75.9°F
Ardennes:	24.4°F to 74.8°F

Average Rainfall

North of the Sambre and Meuse Rivers:	20 in to 30 in
Southern Foothills:	47 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

With its temperate climate, Belgium is home to a wealth of plant life. Major tree species include the beech and oak, while among other wildflowers and plants are foxglove, goldenrod, hyacinth, and lily of the valley. Interestingly, much of this biodiversity can be witnessed in the country's capital city; about 730 species of wild plants can be found in Brussels, representing half of the wild fauna of Belgium.

Long habitation by man has reduced the animal population, especially mammals. Wild boar are still found in the copses and wooded areas, as are fox, badger, bat, squirrel, European hamster, weasel, marten, and hedgehog. Avian life includes various birds of passage as well as swallows, pigeons, and partridge. Aquatic life is particularly plentiful and varied. Fish and shellfish from both inland waters and along the Atlantic coast include pike, carp, trout, eel, perch, smelt, chub, roach, bream, shad, sole, mussels, crayfish, and shrimp.

A 2004 survey by the Belgian Institute for Natural Sciences indicated that half of the country's flora and fauna was under threat because of encroachment by hu-

mans. A 2001 endangered species list included six species of mammals and three species of birds as well as the Atlantic sturgeon and the black right whale.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005:	10,364,388
World Rank:	77th
Density per sq km:	343.2
% of annual growth (1999-2003):	0.3
Male %:	49.0
Female %:	51.0
Urban %:	—
Age Distribution %:	0-14: 16.9
	15-64: 65.7
	65 and over: 17.4
Population 2025:	10,453,000
Birth Rate per 1,000:	10.48
Death Rate per 1,000:	10.22
Rate of Natural Increase %:	0.0
Total Fertility Rate:	1.64
Expectation of Life (years):	Males 75.44
	Females 81.94
Marriage Rate per 1,000:	3.9
Divorce Rate per 1,000:	3.0
Average Size of Households:	2.7
Induced Abortions:	14,775

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

The original population of Belgium, which was of Celtic stock, was almost entirely wiped out during the Norse invasions of the early Christian era. During the fourth century the area was settled by the Salian Franks, who also constitute the basic racial stock of France. It is generally agreed that there are no ethnic differences between the Dutch and French language groups.

After the end of World War II immigration into Belgium increased significantly, and immigrants now account for approximately 10 percent of the total population.

LANGUAGES

Belgium's three official languages are Dutch, French, and German. German is spoken in the eastern part of the country bordering Germany, Dutch in the northern area bordering the Netherlands, and French in the southern and western areas bordering France. The provinces of West Flanders, East Flanders, Antwerp, Limburg, and northern Brabant constitute Dutch-speaking Flanders, while those of Liège, Luxembourg, Hainaut, Namur, and southern Brabant constitute French-speaking Wallonia. The German speakers, using Low German and Franco-

Mosellan dialects, live in the eastern cantons of Eupen and Malmedy and account for less than 1 percent of the population; in fact, the number of Italian and Arabic speakers has surpassed the number of German speakers. In Brussels linguistic minorities are given special status in bilingual contexts.

Walloon is also spoken by about 600,000 Belgians in Wallonia. It is a variant Romance language very close to French and is sometimes considered a French dialect. However, it is distinct from Belgian French, which differs from the French of France in vocabulary and pronunciation. Similarly, while Belgian Dutch closely resembles the Dutch spoken in the Netherlands, Flemish, a Dutch dialect, is also spoken. While there are over six million Dutch speakers, only a very small minority speak one of the Flemish dialects.

RELIGIONS

Belgium has no state church, and the constitution grants state aid to officially recognized religions. These include primarily Roman Catholicism (75 percent of the population) and also Anglicanism, Protestantism, Judaism, Islam, and Greek and Russian Orthodoxy. These religions receive state subsidies for maintenance of the clergy and upkeep of buildings as well as for the cost of providing teachers for religious instruction in schools. The second-largest group for religious affiliation is actually "Other," which includes those with no religious affiliation. The third-largest religious group is Muslim, many of whom emigrated from Turkey and North Africa. In 1974 Islam was recognized as an official religion. However, not until 1998 did Muslims hold nationwide elections to choose representatives for their dealings with the Belgian government.

In 1997 a parliamentary commission issued a report on the dangers and problems of harmful religious sects or cults, defined as religious groups that would harm individuals or society, especially children. A clearinghouse is being established that will undertake to collect information on many religious groups as well as provide information regarding a Belgian citizen's right to freely choose his or her religion and associate with like-minded people.

Religious Affiliations	
Roman Catholic	7,773,000
Other	2,591,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Belgae were a Celtic people whose land was conquered by Julius Caesar in 57 B.C.E. and constituted Gal-

lia Belgica, a province of the Roman Empire. In the fifth century it was overrun by the Franks, and in the eighth century it became a part of the Carolingian Empire. When the empire fell apart upon the death of Charlemagne, several independent principalities emerged, including Flanders, Hainaut, Namur, Brabant, and Liège. During the following three centuries the towns of Flanders became prosperous through trade. In the 15th century all of the present Benelux countries came under the rule of the Dukes of Burgundy and, later, under the Hapsburg crown. When Emperor Charles V divided his empire, the Benelux territories were united with Spain under Philip II, whose energies were devoted to the suppression of Protestantism. This led to a Protestant revolt ended only by the Treaty of Westphalia (1648), which granted independence to the northern Protestant provinces. The southern half remained Catholic and under Spanish rule.

For the next 150 years, the southern Low Countries became pawns in Franco-Austrian rivalries. French armies invaded Belgium in 1792 for the third time in a century and annexed it by the 1797 Treaty of Campo Formio. Belgium was reunited with the Netherlands by the Congress of Vienna, which led to widespread discontent and uprisings. The Dutch were compelled to retreat, and on October 4, 1830, Belgium was declared independent. However, William I, king of the United Netherlands, invaded Belgium and was repulsed by the French army. In 1839 he was forced to accept the Treaty of XXIV Articles, by which Belgian independence was guaranteed under a system of constitutional monarchy, with Leopold of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha as king. His successor, Leopold II, financed the exploration and settlement of the Congo basin, thereby laying the foundations of Belgium's colonial empire, which eventually extended to Rwanda and Burundi.

Belgium was invaded by Germany during World Wars I and II, even though it had maintained neutrality before both invasions. After the capitulation of Germany in 1945 a constitutional crisis rose over the return of King Leopold III amidst questions about his wartime conduct. A rash of strikes, riots, and demonstrations led to his abdication, and in 1951 his son, Baudouin I, was formally proclaimed king.

The country successfully balanced the recognition of its diverse linguistic and cultural communities through four constitutional reforms in the second half of the 20th century (in 1970, 1981, 1988–89, and 1993–94). The reforms led to the creation of three linguistic communities (French, Flemish, and German) as well as three cultural regions (Flanders, Wallonia, and Brussels). Under the 1993–94 reforms the central government retains responsibility for defense, taxation, foreign policy, and social welfare policies. The regional governments oversee transport, environmental, and economic development matters. The community governments are

empowered to deal with cultural concerns, including education.

On July 31, 1993, a reign that had spanned four decades came to an end with the death of King Baudouin, who was childless. His brother, Albert, prince of Liège, ascended the throne as Albert II. In 1994 the government was rocked by the Agusta scandal, in which Socialist parties were alleged to have received huge kickbacks from government contractors. In the 1995 general elections the coalition headed by Jean-Luc Dehaene retained power despite the scandals. However, in the 1999 general elections, the Dehaene coalition was ousted, ending decades of dominance by Christian Democrats. Dehaene was replaced by the first Liberal prime minister in half a century, the Flemish Liberal leader Guy Verhofstadt. He presided over a six-party rainbow coalition representing Socialists, Liberals, and Greens.

Since 1993 and the passage of the Maastricht treaty, Brussels has become a focal point of European politics. Home to the European Commission and to the Council of Ministers of the European Union, as well as the headquarters of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), it has become the de facto capital of Europe and as such bases much of its economy around those involved in the governing and bureaucratic apparatus.

Verhofstadt's center-left coalition liberalized social policy, legalizing euthanasia and the private use of cannabis in 2002; in 2003 same-sex unions were legalized. In May 2003 Verhofstadt's coalition returned to power, and he was appointed for a second term as prime minister in a two-party coalition of Liberals and Socialists that pledged to create 200,000 new jobs.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

King

1934–51 Leopold III

1951–93 Baudouin I

1993– Albert II

Prime Minister

1939–45 Hubert Pierlot

1945–46 Achille van Acker

1946 Paul-Henri Spaak

1946 Achille van Acker

1946–47 Camille Huysmans

1947–49 Paul-Henri Spaak

1949–50 Gaston Eyskens

1950 Jean Pierre Duvieusart

1950–52 Louis Marie Joseph Pholien

1952–54 Jean van Houtte

1954–58 Achille van Acker

1958–61 Gaston Eyskens

1961–65 Théodore Lefèvre

1965–66 Pierre Charles Harmel
1966–68 Paul van den Boeynants
1968–73 Gaston Eyskens
1973–74 Edmond Jules Leburton
1974–78 Léo Tindemans
1978–79 Paul van den Boeynants
1979–81 Wilfried Martens
1981 Mark Eyskens
1981–92 Wilfried Martens
1992–99 Jean-Luc Dehaene
1999– Guy Verhofstadt

CONSTITUTION

Belgium is a constitutional monarchy. The original constitution was written in 1831 and has been amended several times, usually to address voting rights or cultural differences. The king is the head of state and commander in chief of the armed forces. Executive power lies with the crown but is practiced by the cabinet. The king appoints and dismisses ministers, but the prime minister countersigns his successor's appointment. The king's role has grown somewhat since World War II, as coalition governments and cultural differences have called for an honest broker to conduct negotiations. The king does not have veto power and cannot act against the advice of the cabinet. The post of prime minister has a variable amount of power, depending on the actual coalition of the government, and the post was not mentioned in the constitution until 1970.

With the 1993 constitutional revision, a federal state was created with three levels of government: federal, regional, and linguistic community. Each of these has a complex division of responsibilities.

PARLIAMENT

The Belgian parliament is made up of two houses: the Senate (upper house) and the House of Representatives (lower house). Members of both houses are elected to their positions. However, the king's children in the line of succession are senators by right at age 18. They are not allowed to speak in chambers until they are 25.

Members of the upper house serve four-year terms. There are 71 members, of whom 40 are directly elected (25 from Flanders and 15 from Wallonia), 21 are indirectly elected (10 each by the Flemish Council and the French Council and 1 by the German Council), and 10 are appointed (six Flemish and four Walloon) by the elected senators. Members of the lower house also serve four-year terms. There are 150 deputies, directly elected by proportional representation from multimember electoral districts whose complement of deputies is proportional to the population size.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Belgian political parties are historically divided into Dutch- and French-speaking divisions that subscribe to common programs during general elections. Beginning in the 1960s cleavages became more pronounced, leading to formal separation as the country moved toward the creation of a federal structure. At the same time the dominance of the three principal groupings (Christian Democratic, Liberal, and Socialist) has eroded somewhat as numerous smaller ethnic and special interest groups have made gains. Niche parties such as the environmental Greens and far-right Vlaams-Blok have also recently come into play in the country.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Local government consists of several layers, in order to deal with the cultural and linguistic variations in the country. There are three linguistic communities (French, Flemish, and German) and three cultural regions (Wallonia, Flanders, and Brussels). The communities have no geographic boundaries but include all people who speak each language as their native tongue. Within the regions are nine provinces (four Flemish, four Walloon, one bilingual). These provinces are further divided into 43 arrondissements. Within the arrondissements are numerous communes, municipalities, and boroughs. Disputes between the communities and regions are handled by a court of arbitration, and they can also be handled by the Council of State and Court of Cassation.

LEGAL SYSTEM

Belgium's legal system is based on the Napoleonic Code and patterned on the French judicial model. The country is divided into nine judicial provinces (with assize courts), 26 districts (each with a tribunal of first instance), and 222 cantons (with justices of the peace and police tribunals). Judges are appointed for life and cannot be removed except through due process. The highest court is the Court of Cassation, which takes appeals from lower courts.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Belgium's constitution guarantees respect for human rights. Belgium's key human rights challenges concern its prison system, police procedures, and handling of immigrants. There is no limit as to how long a defendant may be held prior to trial. Human rights groups claim that this is abusive, as many defendants are held for extended periods of time. Some prisons remain in substandard condition. In the late 1990s Belgian soldiers came to trial for the torture and unlawful killing of Somali citizens while they were

part of a UN peacekeeping mission in 1993. A sergeant was charged with crimes associated with the incident. In 1998 a Nigerian woman was killed while being forcibly repatriated by Belgian authorities. This led to further investigations and reforms (some proposed, some implemented) regarding police conduct and restraint procedures.

The primary goal of human rights organizations has been to eliminate two previously standard procedures, hog-tying and the covering of the mouth, which have led to injury and death in some cases. The new government, which took power in 1999, has adopted most of these recommendations. However, reports of inappropriate handling and police abuse continue. In addition, reports of racially based mistreatment by police have been reported throughout the late 1990s.

In 2003, under pressure from the United States, Belgium repealed its pioneering 1993 antiatrocities law, which made it possible to try a person or persons in Belgium for atrocities committed abroad.

FOREIGN POLICY

The cornerstone of Belgian foreign policy is active participation in the European Union and support for NATO. Belgium was a prime mover of the Schengen Accord, providing for the abolition of border controls, which has been in effect since 1995. Former Belgian colonies in Africa—the Congo, Rwanda, and Burundi—were the scenes of considerable violence in the 1960s and 1990s. Belgian troops were sent to the Congo and Rwanda in an effort to evacuate Belgian nationals.

DEFENSE

Men aged 18 and 19 are subject to the draft and serve part of their time with NATO forces. Military officers and senior officials must be bilingual in French and Flemish. The Belgian navy is larger than would be expected, as Belgium's shallow waters make Belgian ports vulnerable to mine and submarine attacks. Historically, Belgium has been a major exporter of arms, and today those weapons find their way to the Middle East, Africa, and other regions in conflict. As of 2003 defense accounted for 1.3 percent of gross domestic product (GDP); the country's military budget for that same year was \$4 billion.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	40,800
Military Manpower Availability:	2,436,736
Military Expenditures \$billion:	4.0
as % of GDP:	1.3
as % of central government expenditures:	3.0
Arms Imports \$million:	27
Arms Exports \$million:	6

ECONOMY

Belgium's highly developed private enterprise economy has capitalized on its central geographical location, highly developed transport network, and diversified industrial and commercial base. Industry is concentrated mainly in the populous Flemish area in the north. With few natural resources Belgium must import substantial quantities of raw materials and export a large volume of manufactures, making its economy unusually dependent on world markets. This accounts for Belgium's keen support of free trade and European integration. The major problems of the Belgian economy stem from its antiquated industrial structure and high labor costs. The constitutional process of regionalization has also placed additional strains on the economy.

In one sense Belgium is trying to adjust to the dislocations caused by the demise of its industrial power based on coal mining and heavy industry around Sambre-Meuse and Wallonia, one of the most prosperous regions on the continent in the late 19th century. However, a virtual revolution took place in industrial geography after World War II. With the replacement of coal by petroleum, the Walloon areas lost much of their prominence and the Brussels-Antwerp axis became the country's economic core. The rise of the modern service sector also favored the Flemish region, as Flanders benefited from state support and foreign investment. Thus, the industrial sector now consists of a modern sector in Flanders and a traditional sector in Wallonia. Official economic policy is complicated by linguistic and regional rivalries. As industrial loci shifted to Flanders, coalition governments were forced to balance regional interests and to dole out public funds for nonviable projects in the Walloon region. Although the Belgian economy is based on free enterprise, the state is an active partner in economic development. State intervention, however, remains discreet and is felt primarily only in the weak sectors, with the exception of transportation and communications, which are traditional state domains. The government's role in the economy is overseen by the Economic Planning Bureau within the Ministry of Economic Affairs. The financial arm of the government's industrial policy is the National Investment Company, created in 1962 to provide venture capital. A key element in national economic policy is regionalization, which has led to the establishment of separate ministerial departments, regional economic councils, and regional development corporations.

Economic power was further divided among the three regions of Belgium—Flanders, Wallonia, and Brussels—after the 1993 federal reforms. Now, a large degree of autonomy is enjoyed in each region in the areas of industrial development, promotion of trade, research, and regulation of environmental safeguards. While a 2004 UN study placed the country sixth in

the world in standard of living, many business groups complain of high taxation. In 2003 the government balanced the budget for the first time in half a century. Economic growth in 2002 and 2003 slowed, as in the rest of the world; there was a slight recovery in 2004. Belgium's economy is very much influenced by, and in fact dependent on, those of the European Union and the United States.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 316.2
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 30,600
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 1.9
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 1.6
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 1.3
 Industry: 25.7
 Services: 73.0
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 53
 Government Consumption: 22
 Gross Domestic Investment: 19.1
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 255.7
 Imports: 235.0
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 3.2
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 23.0

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
105.9	108.6	111.3	113.1	114.9

Finance

National Currency: Euro (EUR)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = EUR 0.886
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: —
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 2.75
 Total External Debt \$billion: 28.3
 Debt Service Ratio %: —
 Balance of Payments \$billion: 11.4
 International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 7.65
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
 1.9

Official Development Assistance

Donor ODA \$billion: 1.072
 per capita \$: 103.40
 Foreign Direct Investment \$billion: 32.3

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$billion: 173.7
 Expenditures \$billion: 174.8
 Budget Deficit \$billion: 1.1
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 1.3
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 2.0
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: —
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: —
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: —
 Total Farmland % of land area: —
 Livestock: Cattle million: 2.68
 Chickens million: 34
 Pigs million: 6.37
 Sheep 000: 150
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters 000: —
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 30.6

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 42.1
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 3.5

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 12.38
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 53.2
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 5.17
 Net Energy Imports % of use: 76.9
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 14.2
 Production kW-hr billion: 76.6
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 78.8
 Coal Reserves tons billion: —
 Production tons million: 0.22
 Consumption tons million: 13.75
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
 Production cubic feet billion: —
 Consumption cubic feet billion: 539.8
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
 Production barrels 000 per day: 13.1
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 602.7
 Pipelines Length km: 158

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 235.0
 Exports \$billion: 255.7
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 3.6
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 3.8
 Balance of Trade \$billion: 11.4

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Germany %	17.7	19.5
Netherlands %	16.5	11.7
France %	13.2	17.4
United Kingdom %	7.5	9.0
United States %	5.9	6.7
Ireland %	5.7	—
Italy %	—	5.4

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 149,028
 Paved %: 78.2
 Automobiles: 4,784,100
 Trucks and Buses: 602,100
 Railroad: Track Length km: 3,518
 Passenger-km billion: 8.04
 Freight-km billion: 7.08
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 53
 Total Deadweight Tonnage million: 1.6
 Airports: 43
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 2.6
 Length of Waterways km: 2,043

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 6.69
 Number of Tourists from million: 7.27
 Tourist Receipts \$billion: 8.76
 Tourist Expenditures \$billion: 13.2

Communications

Telephones million: 5.12
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones million: 8.14
 Personal Computers million: 3.3
 Internet Hosts per million people: 16,093
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 328

ENVIRONMENT

Water protection laws in effect since 1971 have not stopped factories in steelmaking areas from releasing wastes into the Meuse River. The Meuse supplies drinking water to six million people, yet it is highly polluted. Pollution from agricultural sources—especially excess fertilizers and animal manures—has increased algal growth in surface waters. Belgium is home to some smokestack industry, which contributes to Europe's air pollution. However, there has been significant cleanup progress as a result of environmentally minded legislation. In Brussels, for example, average concentrations of sulfur dioxide have declined to about one-fifth of 1975 levels. However, as a result of the shared powers of Flanders, Wallonia, and Brussels, there has been some confusion over federal versus regional authority in environmental issues, making some problems more difficult to tackle.

In December 2002 the Belgian government decided to phase out the country's seven nuclear reactors, which provided almost two-thirds of the country's electrical power. The phaseout would span several decades and would convert energy production to cleaner technologies such as wind and solar power.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: —
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: -1
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 3
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 102,460
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 9.97

LIVING CONDITIONS

In 2004 the United Nations ranked Belgium sixth in living conditions in the world. Income per capita, safety, and access to services such as education, health care, and public transportation are among the aspects of quality of life that have earned the country its high marks. Life expectancy in 2004 was 78.44 years; the fertility rate was 1.64 children per woman. Cities like Brussels enjoy relatively little crime and a high degree of public safety, despite some high-profile criminal activity.

Though one of the most densely populated countries in Europe, Belgium has no housing shortage and relatively few slums. Over 80 percent of the population resides in urban areas, with buildings generally no more than three to five stories in height. Neighborhoods are often built around or lead into church squares. Many urban apartment houses as well as single-family dwellings are built of red brick. The stepped gable look from the 16th century is still often seen in the centers of cities, and some modern buildings incorporate the look as well. In the southern part of the country a family business is often built on the same site as the family dwelling.

Extensive and comprehensive public transport, linking bus, subway, and rail systems, unites the country.

Among the social problems faced by Belgians are relatively high rates of unemployment and the need to integrate new immigrants—especially Arabs—into the fabric of society.

HEALTH

Belgium has a well-maintained public health-care system, with 95 percent of the people covered by national health insurance. Like some of the Scandinavian countries, Belgium has a cradle-to-grave approach to health care as supported by a mix of public and private hospitals and clinics. Much of the organization of the nation's health-care system originates at the local level; each town has a committee elected by the city council in charge of hospital and medical services. Over 60 percent of the hospitals in Belgium are nonprofit. In 2003 expenditures on health services represented 9.1 percent of GDP. That year there were an estimated 4.2 physicians per 1,000 people.

Immunization rates are high in Belgium, and the 2004 infant mortality rate was below 5 deaths per 1,000

live births. In 2003 there were an estimated 10,000 people in Belgium living with HIV/AIDS. Cigarette smoking is another leading cause of death and serious disease in the country. As of 2004 the government estimated there were 20,000 deaths annually as a direct result of smoking. Several measures have been passed to control smoking, including price hikes, the requirement of nonsmoking areas in bars and restaurants, a ban on the sale of tobacco to those under 16, and the elimination of smoking on trains and in the workplace.

Health

Number of Physicians: 42,978
 Number of Dentists: 7,106
 Number of Nurses: 109,195
 Number of Pharmacists: 14,772
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 418
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 4.68
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 10
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 9.1
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 2,159
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.2
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 90
 Measles: 75
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: —
 Access to Improved Water Source %: —

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Belgium is known for seafood, French fries, chocolate, waffles, and beer. Mussels are a typical dish in the country and are often served with *frites*, the fried plank potatoes of Belgian origin that have become known as French fries. Beer, or more particularly fine ale, has also become world famous; the country has 450 different varieties of beer. Trappist ale, made by monks, is produced at six different breweries, including Chimay and Orval abbeys. Belgian chocolate is also considered among the best in the world. The most renowned brand names are Neuhaus, Godiva, Côte d'Or, and Leonidas. Praline was invented in Belgium.

Regional specialties are numerous. A Flemish meat-and-vegetable stew is called *hochepot*. Fish and shellfish are Flemish staples, with favorites including mussels, her-ring, lobster, shrimp, and oysters. Rabbit is a specialty and is often served cooked in brown beer with stewed prunes. *Waterzooi* is soup or chowder made from vegetables and either chicken or fish.

Walloon cuisine largely comes from France but overall is richer and more caloric than its French counterpart. Popular meats are pork and local Ardennes hams. Local specialties in Wallonia range from venison chops to

stuffed goose. A favorite dish in south Belgium is ragout of lamb with chicory.

The main meal of the day is eaten at midday in all regions of the country, with lighter meals at breakfast and supper.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —

Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —

Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 107.4

Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 192.0

STATUS OF WOMEN

Women received full voting rights in 1948, and as of 1999 Belgian law requires one-third of all political candidates to be women. Domestic violence against women is still underreported. In 1998 the Belgian government passed a law that both defines and provides stiff penalties for domestic violence. The law, which covers both married and unmarried partners, allows organizations to represent women. It also requires the government to keep statistics on domestic violence.

All forms of gender discrimination are illegal, as is sexual harassment. Equal treatment of men and women is provided for by the constitution, federal law, and treaties incorporated into law. The Division of Equal Opportunity, a part of the Ministry of Labor, focuses specifically on issues affecting women, including violence against women, sexual harassment, and the participation of women in the political process.

In spite of such efforts on paper, however, a gulf still exists between the sexes. The female unemployment rate of 10.9 percent at the end of 1998 significantly exceeded the male unemployment rate of 6.7 percent. The net average salary for a woman is only 84 percent of the national average salary.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —

Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 35

Female Administrators and Managers %: —

Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.0

Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 44.4

WORK

Belgium had a workforce of 4.75 million in 2004, with an unemployment rate the same year of 12 percent. A 2003 survey showed that agriculture employed 1.3 percent of the labor force, industry 24.5 percent, and services

the vast majority, 74.2 percent. Agricultural products include sugar beets, fresh vegetables, fruits, grain, tobacco, beef, veal, pork, and milk. Industrial output included engineering and metal products, motor-vehicle assembly, processed food and beverages, chemicals, basic metals, textiles, glass, and petroleum.

Belgians typically have a strong work ethic. The right to unionize is protected by law; 60 percent of the Belgian workforce is unionized. Strikes are only illegal in essential industries such as defense. The country has a five-day, 39-hour workweek, and the minimum age for working is 15. In 2001 the national minimum wage was \$1,050 per month.

The demographics of work in Belgium have changed drastically in the past several decades. Small, family-run businesses were once typical in Flanders, while industry was traditionally located in the south, especially in the Liège area. In recent years, however, with the demise of coal, the north has experienced increased industrialization, and the service and tourist sectors have also grown. Belgium was once a major producer of coal; the Belgian coal mining industry dated back to the 12th century. The last coal mines, however, closed in 1992, and the only active mining left in the country is quarrying for sand and gravel

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 4,750,000

Female Participation Rate %: 41.3

Labor by Sector %:

Agriculture: 1.3

Industry: 24.5

Services: 74.2

Unemployment %: 12

EDUCATION

Education is required for nine years, from ages six to 15; another three years of part-time education are required from ages 15 through 18. The school year runs from September through June. There are numerous universities and vocational and technical schools for postsecondary education. Institutions of higher education include the state universities of Ghent, Liège, Antwerp, and Mons; the two branches of the Free University of Brussels, one Dutch and one French; the Catholic University of Brussels; and the Catholic University of Louvain, which also has a Dutch and a French branch.

In 2001 there were an estimated 12 students per teacher in primary schools, and public expenditure on education in 1999 totaled 11.6 percent of total government spending. Among those 15 and over, the literacy rate for 2004 was 98 percent.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 98.0
 Male %: 98.0
 Female %: 98.0
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 18.9
 First Level: Primary schools: 4,453
 Teachers: 64,288
 Students: 767,787
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 11.9
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 100.0
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 1,950
 Teachers: —
 Students: 486,581
 Student-Teacher Ratio: —
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 95.4
 Third Level: Institutions: 21
 Teachers: 23,321
 Students: 366,982
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 59.8
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 5.9

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

In 1999 there were 2,953 scientists and technicians engaged in research for every million people, while in the same period spending on research and development (R&D) was 2.24 percent of GDP. The primary jurisdiction for science, research, technological development, and innovation policy is conferred to the regions and communities within their areas of competency, though the federal government does maintain jurisdiction over limited areas such as space and national defense.

The Flanders government started to substantially increase its public investments in R&D activities in the early 1990s, particularly in the areas of microelectronics, biotechnology, and industrial processes, establishing a microelectronics interuniversity R&D center (IMEC), a biotechnology institute (VIB), and an institute for multidisciplinary applied industrial research (IWT). Brussels and Wallonia are following suit. The country has a score of universities and colleges offering degrees in science and technology.

The long tradition of scientific research in Belgium is attested to by the fact that the Royal Academy of Sciences, Letters, and Fine Arts was founded in Brussels in 1772. Since that time it has separated into French and Flemish branches, and it has sections for mathematics, physical sciences, and the natural sciences. Also, numerous specialized societies exist in Belgium for the study of medicine, biology, zoology, anthropology, astronomy, chemistry, mathematics, geology, and engineering. The National Scientific Research Fund promotes scientific research by providing subsidies and grants to scientists and students.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 2,953
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 2.24

High-Tech Exports \$billion: 17.27
 Patent Applications by Residents: 2,122

MEDIA

The Belgian press dates back to 1649, when *Courrier véritable des Pays Bas* was published. It was the only Belgian newspaper until 1791. The country went through a “golden period” of newspapers in the 1800s and early 1900s. During the 1970s and 1980s many newspapers folded, and ownership concentration grew. By 2000 there were fewer than 30 regional and national newspapers. Of the 29 newspapers currently in print in Belgium, only 10 or so are autonomous; the remainder are parallel editions of the main papers and differ only slightly from their counterparts. In 2000 the overall circulation of the Belgian press amounted to 1.57 million copies. The Flemish-language press accounted for roughly two-thirds of sales, the French-language press roughly one-third. The constitution provides for freedom of the press.

As of 2002 there were over 8.1 million mobile telephone users and 3.4 million Internet users. Television and radio are also strong in the country. In 1999 there were 5 AM and 77 FM radio stations and 24 television broadcast stations. Belgians can also subscribe to cable and receive broadcasts from all over Europe.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 29
 Total Circulation million: 1.57
 Circulation per 1,000: 153
 Books Published: —
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets million: 5.4
 per 1,000: 532

CULTURE

Culture is not monolithic in Belgium; rather it is made up of two cultural-linguistic strains: French-speaking Walloons and Dutch-speaking Flemings. From the Middle Ages, Belgium has been home to a high level of cultural achievement, as can be seen in the country’s major towns and cities, including Brussels, Antwerp, Bruges, and Ghent. Remnants of Gothic and Renaissance art and architecture attest to a long tradition of high art and culture. The renowned Flemish tapestries are priceless reminders of the arts and crafts of earlier times.

Sometimes cultural contributions can be neatly affixed to one linguistic group or the other, and sometimes there is a true fusion of influences. In the visual arts the Flemish take earliest pride of place in painters such as Jan

van Eyck and similar masters of 15th-century painting. These painters pioneered domestic rather than purely religious art, filling their canvasses with details of everyday life of the time. Well-known Flemish painters of the Renaissance include the fabulist Hieronymus Bosch, Pieter Breughel the Elder, Pieter Breughel the Younger, Peter Paul Rubens, and Anthony van Dyck. Flemish contribution to the visual arts did not stop with Renaissance art: Felicien Rops and Fernand Knopff were famous 19th-century artists, known for their odd romanticism and eroticism. Later came the work of James Ensor. Walloons have also become world famous in the visual arts, including the surrealists René Magritte and Paul Delvaux.

Literature has a long and strong tradition in both language groups. Among the French-speaking Belgians of international renown are Maurice Maeterlink and Georges Simenon. Maeterlink, a playwright and sometimes poet, was known for his use of symbolism; he won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1911. The mystery writer Simenon is the creator of the fictional police commissioner Maigret. Flemish literature began in the Middle Ages with the works of Heinrich von Veldeke, Jacob van Maerlant, and Hadewijch, a Brabant nun. For several centuries, as Belgium was ruled by one great power or another, Flemish national literature went into a period of hibernation, reviving in the mid-19th century with the Flemish movement, which advocated political autonomy and the advancement of the Flemish culture and language. Prominent 19th-century Flemish writers include Hendrik Conscience and the lyrical poet Guido Gezelle. Well-known modern Flemish authors include the novelists Louis Paul Boon and Hugo Claus.

Mixing art and literature are comic artists, of whom Belgian has had several. Best known perhaps is Hergé—a pseudonym derived from Georges Remi's initials in reverse—the creator of the highly popular comic character Tintin. Many consider this famous French-speaking Belgian artist to be the most influential European comic artist ever.

Belgians of both linguistic branches have also excelled in music. In the 16th century the works of Orlando di Lasso blended musical traditions of the Netherlands and Italy. Wallonia's most famous composer was César Franck. More contemporary is the violin virtuoso Eugène Ysaye. A Belgian, Adolphe Sax, was the creator the saxophone.

In architecture the name Victor Horta is synonymous with art nouveau. Brussels has many examples of this innovator's buildings.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 860
 Volumes: 30,531,000
 Registered borrowers: 2,310,000
 Museums Number: 200
 Annual Attendance: —

Cinema Gross Receipts national currency billion: 4.33
 Number of Cinemas: 463
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: 21,900,000

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Much of the folklore of Belgium is regional and deals with tall tales involving formative events in various cities. One exception to this is the water spirit that roams the Flemish countryside. This creature, called Kludde, hides just before dawn and sunset and attacks innocent travelers. Travelers are warned to listen for the rattling of the chains in which the Kludde is wrapped. The Kludde can take the form of a black dog, cat, or crow.

Myths and legends dealing with cities include the origin of Antwerp, supposedly named after a Roman hero who defeated a grotesque giant and then cut off its hand. The symbol of Antwerp to this day is a red hand. Ypres is also defined by folklore. During the Middle Ages cats were employed to keep the rat population down, a situation still honored by the annual Cat Festival. Other festivals with origins in folklore include the pageant of the Golden Tree in Bruges and the Ommegang in Brussels. Brussels also lays claim to Mannekin Pis, a boy in Belgian folklore who saved the city of Brussels in the 1600's by peeing on a fire.

Devils populate many Walloon myths, and some rural people still believe in folk healers who employ touch to cure the sick. The First of November, the traditional All Soul's Day of the Catholic Church, is still a time-honored holiday on which Belgians visit the graves of deceased loved ones.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Belgium has all the forms of entertainment and recreation available in other modern developed countries. Television is popular, as it is throughout Europe and the rest of the world. Belgians are avid sports fans, and in Belgium "sports" means soccer. The country supports 60 teams in the national league, and Belgians enjoy watching their favorite teams in action on television or in person at one of the numerous stadiums around the country.

The more culturally minded take advantage of the 200 museums in the country's cities and towns or go to opera or ballet performances. Puppet theaters have also made a comeback, with their wooden marionettes and simple legends and tales.

Favorite hobbies of Belgians, both Flemish and Walloons, include stamp collecting and gardening. Festivals, either religious in nature or more secular and historical, are also popular and plentiful. Examples of these are the

Shrove Tuesday Carnival at Binche, with its March of the Gilles, Brussels's Ommegang, and the Cat Festival of Ypres.

ETIQUETTE

As in most of the rest of northern Europe, Belgian manners tend to be formal and polite. While the younger, more well-traveled generation is generally freer in the instant use of first names or the familiar "you" form of address, most Belgians, both Flemish and Walloons, tend to use the formal form of address until a person has become a good friend. Belgians tend to be private persons; an invitation to a Belgian home is therefore a sign of both respect and friendship.

Handshakes are a typical greeting for men and increasingly for women, though women will also typically exchange a kiss on the cheek with female friends or with male friends.

Eating is done in the European fashion, with both fork and knife held at the same time. In fact, it is considered bad manners to continually shift the fork to the dominant hand in the American style. It is also considered bad manners to hold one's hands in the lap during mealtime.

FAMILY LIFE

Family life in Belgium is essentially nuclear, with larger families in the south than in the north. However, that statistic is changing as two incomes are increasingly needed to support a family. Traditionally, the family in Belgium has been seen as an economic unit; this was true when the country was primarily rural and large families were needed to run farms, and it is still true in parts of the country where families run shops attached to their homes.

It is traditional for a Belgian bride to carry a special handkerchief, embroidered with her name, on her marriage day. After the wedding the handkerchief is framed and hung on the wall until the next wedding by a sister, daughter, granddaughter, et cetera, at which time it is passed on to the next bride. Unmarried children have typically lived with their parents until they married, but this has changed in recent years, with more independence demanded by youth. Cohabitation without marriage has also become more popular. Divorce rates in Belgium are among the highest in Europe, and marriage rates have fallen since the early 1990s. In 2002 Belgium had the highest divorce rate in the European Union at 3 per 1,000 married people. In 2004, 56 percent of marriages ended in divorce. A rise in single-parent families has also occurred. In 2003 a new wrinkle was added to the concept of marriage when same-sex marriages were legalized.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Modern clothing is the standard dress for all Belgians. Business attire is of the typical Western style: suit and tie for men, jacket and skirt or sometimes slacks for women. Casual dress is also common, and in Brussels, unlike in other capital European cities, clothing tends to be more informal.

Only for festivals is the old style of clothing worn: wooden clogs, dark-colored baggy pants, long shirts, and peaked caps for men, flounced skirts, aprons, and white fluffed caps for women.

SPORTS

As in most of the rest of Europe, soccer, called football, is one of the most popular sports in Belgium. The national football team, the Red Devils, were ranked 45th in 2003 by the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA), the international governing body for soccer. Cycling is something of a national obsession. Belgians use the bicycle not only as a mode of transport but also for sport. Eddy Merckx was one of the greatest Belgian cyclists, winning the Tour de France five times.

Tennis has become increasingly popular in Belgium, with two Belgians at the top of the women's professional tour. Justine Henin-Hardenne has won several major titles, including the French Open, the U.S. Open, and the Australian Open, and took an Olympic gold in 2004. Her countrywoman and competitor since youth, Kim Clijsters, has also won significant WTA tour events.

A unique regional sport is Wallonian pigeon racing.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1940** Germany invades Belgium and Holland. While the Belgian government escapes to London, Leopold III remains and surrenders to the Germans.
- 1944** Allied forces liberate Belgium.
- 1949** NATO is founded, with Belgium as a founding member. G. Eyskens is named prime minister.
- 1950** Second School Conflict begins. J. Duvieusart is elected prime minister but resigns after two months in favor of J. Pholien.
- 1951** Leopold III abdicates in favor of his son, Baudouin.
- 1951** The Queen Elizabeth Contest, named after Albert's widow, Elizabeth, is founded, offering support to up-and-coming musicians.
- 1952** Jean van Houtte is sworn in as prime minister.
- 1954** Achille van Acker returns as prime minister.

- 1957** The Benelux Union is formed with Luxembourg and the Netherlands
- 1958** School Pact ends Second School Conflict. European Economic Community is established. Gaston Eyskens returns as prime minister.
- 1960** Austerity budget is announced following general strike in Wallonia.
- 1961** Théodore Lefèvre takes office as prime minister.
- 1962** Belgium's African colonies—Congo, Rwanda, and Burundi—become independent. Linguistic boundaries are delimited.
- 1965** Pierre Harmel is sworn in as prime minister.
- 1966** Paul van den Boeynants is named prime minister.
- 1968** Gaston Eyskens begins new term as prime minister. Violence erupts at the University of Louvain as Flemish students call for the removal of French as medium of instruction. Social Christians split into French and Flemish sections.
- 1971** Third reform of the constitution establishes four linguistic regions and three cultural communities.
- 1972** Liberals split into Flemish, Walloon, and Brussels wings.
- 1974** Léo Tindemans is elected prime minister.
- 1977** The Egmont Pact is signed by Social Christians, Socialists, and Liberals but collapses following persisting party differences. The country is divided into three regions: Wallonia, Flanders, and Brussels.
- 1978** Paul van den Boeynants returns as prime minister. Socialists split into Flemish and Walloon wings.
- 1979** Wilfried Martens forms his first cabinet as prime minister.
- 1980** Regionalization takes effect, as major national powers are devolved to regional and communal councils. The Belgian constitution is changed accordingly.
- 1981** Mark Eyskens is prime minister for nine months, but Wilfried Martens returns to office as head of a coalition government following general elections.
- 1982** Martens coalition government is granted special power to establish an austerity regime.
- 1985** In new elections the Martens center-right coalition retains majority.
- 1986** Former prime minister Boeynants is convicted of tax evasion and fraud.
- 1988–89** Further linguistic and cultural reforms are enacted.
- 1993** King Baudouin dies. His brother, Albert, becomes king.
- 1993–94** Another round of linguistic and cultural reforms are passed.
- 1995** Belgium creates Flemish Brabant and Walloon Brabant from the former Brabant province.
- 1998** Belgium agrees to adopt the euro currency, effective January 1, 1999, for electronic transactions and January 1, 2002, for coin and paper money. The judiciary comes under heavy fire after a notorious pedophile escapes.
- 1999** A contamination scandal prompts Belgium's trading partners to ban Belgian food imports; Prime Minister Jean-Luc Dehaene's center-left coalition resigns; a new center-right coalition comes to power led by Guy Verhofstadt of the Liberal Party.
- 2000** General amnesty is announced for illegal immigrants who have been in Belgium for six years. Over 50,000 take advantage of the amnesty.
- 2001** Belgium assumes rotating presidency of the European Union in the second half of the year. In March eight die in head-on train crash, Belgium's worst rail accident in 25 years.
- 2002** Belgium becomes the second nation in the world, after the Netherlands, to legalize euthanasia; it also decriminalizes the private use of cannabis. In January the euro replaces the Belgian franc as the country's currency.
- 2003** Verhofstadt is reelected to a second term on May 18, in a coalition of Liberals and Socialists that pledges to create 200,000 new jobs. Same-sex unions are legalized. The Belgian government and its foreign minister, Louis Michel, strongly oppose the U.S.-led war in Iraq, leading to strained relations between the two countries.
- 2004** A gas explosion southwest of Brussels in July takes 18 lives and injures over 100. In November, Belgium's high court finds the far-right Vlaams-Blok to be racist; it is stripped of funding and rights to TV access and compelled to disband.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Belgian Federal Government Online
<http://belgium.fgov.be>
- CIA World Fact Book: Belgium
<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/be.html/>
- Statistics Belgium
<http://www.statbel.fgov.be/>

BELIZE

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Belize

ABBREVIATION

BZ

CAPITAL

Belmopan

HEAD OF STATE

Queen Elizabeth II, represented by Governor-General Colville Young (from 1993)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Said Musa (from 1998)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Parliamentary democracy

POPULATION

279,457 (2005)

AREA

22,966 sq km (8,867 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Black, mestizo, Amerindian

LANGUAGES

English (official), Spanish

RELIGIONS

Roman Catholicism, Protestantism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Belize dollar

NATIONAL FLAG

Dark blue with narrow horizontal red stripes at the upper and lower edges; at the center is a white disk containing the state coat of arms bordered by a wreath of leaves.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

The shield of the coat of arms is divided into three sections by a vertical line and an inverted V. The base represents a ship in full sail. The two upper sections show the tools of the timber industry, a paddle and a squaring ax to the left and a saw and a beating ax to the right. Supporting the shield are two woodcutters; the light-skinned one to the left holds a beating ax, and the dark-skinned one to the right holds a paddle. Above the shield rises a mahogany tree, and beneath it on a scroll is the motto *Sub umbra floreo* (Under the shade I flourish).

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“O the Land of the Free by the Carib Sea”

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

Second Monday in March (Commonwealth Day), March 9 (Baron Bliss Day), Easter, May 1 (Labour Day), September 10 (St. George’s Caye Day), September 21 (Independence Day), October 13 (Pan American Day), November 19 (Garufa Settlement Day), Christmas

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

September 21, 1981

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

September 21, 1981

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Belize, on the eastern coast of Central America just below the Yucatán Peninsula, is bounded on the north and west by Mexico and on the south and west by Guatemala, with a total boundary length of 516 km (321 mi). Belize extends 288 km (179 mi) north-northeast to south-southwest and 109 km (68 mi) west-northwest to east-southeast. The waters immediately offshore are shallow; they are sheltered by the second longest barrier reef in the world, dotted with a large number of islands known as cays. The

total land area of the mainland and the cays is 22,966 sq km (8,867 sq mi).

The most notable topographical feature is the Maya Mountains, rising to heights of 1,000 to 1,100 m (3,400 to 3,700 ft) and running northeast to southwest across the central and southern parts of the country. The highest point is Victoria Peak (1,160 m; 3,805 ft). The country north of Belize City is mostly level, interrupted only by the Manatee Hills. The coast is flat and swampy and indented by many lagoons. The land is drained by over 17 rivers.

Belize



ated by churches. Church leaders have close ties to the political establishment.

Religious Affiliations	
Roman Catholic	167,000
Protestant	111,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Numerous ruins indicate that for hundreds of years Belize was heavily populated by the Mayas, whose relatively advanced civilization reached its height between 250 and 900 c.e. The civilization eventually declined, leaving behind small groups whose offspring still exist in Belize, contributing positively to the culturally diverse population.

The first recorded European settlements were made by shipwrecked English seamen in 1638. Over the next 150 years more English settlements were established. Although a series of agreements permitted British settlers to engage in the logwood industry, Spain claimed sovereignty and occasionally supported the claim through military action. The decisive victory of the settlers over the Spanish in the Battle of St. George's Caye in 1798 firmly established British control, although not until 1862 was the colony of British Honduras formally declared. Initially, the colony came under the jurisdiction of the governor of Jamaica, but in 1884 a separate post of governor of British Honduras was created. Broad-based suffrage was introduced in 1935 and universal adult suffrage in 1954. As of 1961 the system of government was a ministerial one, supported by an elected majority in the National Assembly. In June 1974 the country's name was changed from British Honduras to Belize. Belize became independent within the British Commonwealth on September 21, 1981. George Cadle Price, head of the People's United Party (PUP), which was first organized in 1951, became prime minister.

Territorial disputes with Guatemala, which had been particularly heated prior to independence, remained Belize's most important issue. The inability of the PUP to secure any treaty agreements with Guatemala, along with internal disputes, culminated in a change of government. In December 1984 the United Democratic Party (UDP) received 53 percent of the general election vote, and the UDP leader, Manuel Esquivel, became prime minister. By 1988, however, the government was weakened because of a controversy over the legislative creation of the Security and Intelligence Service (SIS). Although the SIS was mandated to fight large-scale drug activity and deal with illegal immigrants, the UDP was accused by its opponents of creating a "police state." The PUP won the general elections held in 1989 by a slight margin.

In the snap assembly elections held in 1993 the opposition United Democratic Party was returned to power under Manuel Esquivel. In 1998 the PUP won a decisive victory by gaining 26 of the 29 assembly seats. Shortly thereafter Said Musa was named to succeed Esquivel as prime minister.

The country was hit hard by hurricanes in both 2000 and 2001. Hurricane Keith struck in October 2000, causing more than \$200 million in damage and devastating sections of Belize City. In October 2001 Hurricane Iris landed in the southern part of the country, forcing the evacuation of Belize City and leaving 13,000 homeless.

Despite allegations of abuse of power in 2002 that necessitated some cabinet shifts, Said Musa has maintained power since 1998. He won another election on March 5, 2003, in which the PUP took 53.2 percent of the vote, retaining 22 seats in the House of Representatives. The border dispute between Guatemala and Belize remains unresolved, with occasional shootings and unlawful arrests on both sides that have exacerbated the problem. In 2004 Musa's Finance Minister, Ralph Fonseca, was relieved of his duties as a result of fiscal mismanagement.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

Prime Minister

1961–84	George Cadle Price
1984–89	Manuel Esquivel
1989–93	George Cadle Price
1993–98	Manuel Esquivel
1998–	Said Wilbert Musa

Governor-General

1981–93	Minita Gordon
1993–	Colville Young

CONSTITUTION

Under the constitution of 1981 Belize is a constitutional monarchy, with the British sovereign represented by the governor-general as the head of state. The sovereign appoints the governor-general, who must be a Belizean national, on the advice of the Belizean prime minister, the head of government. In turn, the governor-general appoints the prime minister and, on the latter's recommendation, other ministers; the governor-general also appoints the leader of the opposition. There are a number of parastatal bodies, such as the Belize Advisory Council, an advisory body of no less than six members who advise the governor-general, the Election and Boundaries Commission, and the Public Services Commission.

PARLIAMENT

The National Assembly is a bicameral body consisting of an appointed Senate and a directly elected House of Representatives, members of both of which serve five-year terms. The Senate has eight members, five of whom are appointed on the advice of the prime minister, two on the advice of the leader of the opposition, and one on the advice of the Belize Advisory Council. The House of Representatives has 29 members. The prime minister comes from the majority party or coalition of parties in the House of Representatives.

POLITICAL PARTIES

There are three active political organizations in Belize. The People's United Party was formed in 1951 by organized labor and merged with the Christian Democratic Party in 1988. The conservative United Democratic Party was formed by the merger of several smaller organizations, including the People's Development Movement, the Liberal Party, and the National Independence Party. The National Alliance for Belizean Rights is a small organization formed in 1992 that opposes any territorial compromise with Guatemala over land disputes.

Since 1998 the PUP has held the majority of seats in the House of Representatives.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For purposes of local government Belize is divided into six districts and eight municipal councils. The six districts are Belize, Cayo, Corozal, Orange Walk, Stann Creek, and Toledo.

Local government at the village level is conducted through village councils.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The judicial system includes the Supreme Court, whose chief justice is appointed on the advice of the prime minister after consultation with the leader of the opposition, and the Court of Appeal, from which final appeal may in certain cases be made to the Judicial Committee of the U.K. Privy Council. There are also courts of summary jurisdiction and civil courts in each of the six districts.

The constitution guarantees the right of habeas corpus and prohibits arbitrary imprisonment. Release on bail is allowed for all but the most serious criminal offenses. The constitution also guarantees due process and the rights of accused persons, such as the presumption of innocence, protection against self-incrimination, the right to counsel, and public trial. Trial by jury is mandatory

in criminal cases. The judiciary is independent in theory and in fact. Its major shortcoming is an insufficient number of trained personnel at all levels.

The major flaw of the Belizean penal system is overcrowding. The Penal System Reform Bill (Alternative Sentences) was passed in 2001 and partly addresses this problem, allowing for community service instead of imprisonment for some crimes.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Belize's overall record in human rights is good. Belize has a parliamentary form of government with a competitive political system and regular local and national elections. Elections are open, peaceful, and honest. Constitutional protections for fundamental rights and freedoms of the individual are upheld by an independent judiciary and monitored by a free press. There have been no incidents of political violence since independence.

There have been isolated rather than systematic reports of human rights abuses in the country. In 2002 these included alleged unlawful killings, brutality, and excessive use of force by some members of the police and prison guards; poor prison conditions; allegations of arbitrary arrest and detention; and lengthy pretrial detention, but the overall number of complaints of human rights abuse had decreased from 2001. Violence and discrimination against women, the abuse of children, and employer mistreatment of undocumented foreign workers were also problems. Additionally, there were reports of trafficking in persons.

FOREIGN POLICY

Belize's long-standing dispute with Guatemala over territorial rights has never been settled, and bilateral talks continue to be held. In 1991 Belize was admitted to the Organization of American States (OAS) over Guatemala's objections. In 1993 the Guatemalan president José Serrano Elias committed himself to a resolution of the "sterile dispute" and extended diplomatic recognition to Belmopan. In 1993 the two countries reached agreement on a nonaggression pact, and the United Kingdom withdrew its army garrison from Belize. A rapprochement of sorts appeared to have come after Belize agreed to limit its southern territorial limit to three miles in addition to granting its neighbor access to the sea from the northern department of Petén and the use of the port facilities at Stann Creek. But the accord remains unpopular in both countries, and in February 2000 Guatemala announced that it would pursue its claim to half of Belize through international courts. In 2002 the OAS helped to negotiate a peace proposal between the two sides; however, as of 2004 the proposal was still awaiting ratification by referenda in the two countries.

DEFENSE

The Belize Defense Force was formed in 1978 with the merger of the Police Special Forces and the Belize Volunteer Guard. Military service is voluntary. As of 2000 members of the regular armed services numbered 1,050, with an additional 700 reservists. Military spending as of 2003 was \$18 million, or 2 percent of gross domestic product (GDP).

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 1,050
 Military Manpower Availability: 68,518
 Military Expenditures \$million: 18
 as % of GNP: 2.0
 as % of central government expenditures: —
 Arms Imports \$: —
 Arms Exports \$: —

ECONOMY

Belize has a mixed economy in which the government cooperates with the private sector. Because of its open nature and the fixed relationship between the Belize and U.S. dollars, movements in domestic prices reflect external rather than domestic trends.

The economy is an open one, with agriculture accounting for almost one-quarter of GDP and three-quarters of exports.

There is a comparatively high level of investment in Belize, with gross domestic investment accounting for an average of 20 percent of GDP in recent years. The sectoral contributions to GDP have also remained fairly stable.

In 2002 the government was forced to stop borrowing from external sources and to reduce spending in order to control its budget deficits, trade deficits, and foreign debt and thereby secure the value of its currency. Such measures led to a sharp drop in GDP growth, from 12 percent in 2000 to an estimated 3.7 percent in 2003. A poorly managed tax system also played a part in these difficulties. By 2004 such measures had yet to cure the country's flagging international credit rating. With poor economic growth throughout the developed world from 2001 to 2004, the economy of Belize also suffered; tourism—the country's main industry—was significantly down during this period.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 1.28
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 4,900
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2002) %: 7.5
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2002) %: 4.3
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %
 Agriculture: 22.7
 Industry: 24.5
 Services: 52.8

Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %

Private Consumption: 69
 Government Consumption: 16
 Gross Domestic Investment: 33
 Foreign Trade \$million: Exports: 207.8
 Imports: 500.6

% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: —

% of Income Received by Richest 10%: —

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
105.3	105.9	107.2	109.5	112.4

Finance

National Currency: Belizean Dollar (BZD)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = BZD 2.0
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 402.2
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 12.0
 Total External Debt \$million: 475
 Debt Service Ratio %: 24.9
 Balance of Payments \$million: –142
 International Reserves SDRs \$million: 76.07
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index
 Growth Rate %: 2.6

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 22.21
 per capita \$: 88
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 25

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: 1 April–31 March
 Revenues \$million: 222
 Expenditures \$million: 300
 Budget Deficit/Surplus \$million: 78
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 22.7
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 5.8
 Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares: 18
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 2.9
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 72.3
 Total Farmland as % of land area: 2.9
 Livestock: Cattle 000: 59
 Sheep 000: 5.2
 Hogs 000: 22
 Chickens 000: 1,600
 Forests: Production of Roundwood (000 cubic meters): 187.6
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 29.2

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 77.6
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 4.6

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 8
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 267
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 1,040
 Net Energy Imports % of use: —
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: 100
 Production kW-hr million: 199.5
 Consumption kW-hr million: 185.5
 Coal Reserves tons million: —
 Production tons 000: —
 Consumption tons 000: —
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic meters billion: —
 Production cubic meters million: —
 Consumption cubic meters million: —
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels million: —
 Production barrels per day: —
 Consumption barrels per day: 5,000
 Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$million: 500.6
 Exports \$million: 207.8
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2002): 7.6
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2002): 12.6
 Balance of Trade \$million: –142

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
United States %	41.9	39.1
Mexico %	12.4	—
United Kingdom %	5.9	25.0
Cuba %	5.5	—
France %	—	4.0

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 2,872
 Paved %: 17
 Automobiles: 32,600
 Trucks and Buses: 7,800
 Railroad; Track Length km: —
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: —
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 336
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 1,337
 Airports: 43
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: —
 Length of Waterways km: 825

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 200
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 133
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 43

Communications

Telephones 000: 33.3
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.15
 Cellular Telephones 000: 60.4
 Personal Computers 000: 35
 Internet Hosts per million people: 9,350
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 107

ENVIRONMENT

Compared with other Central American countries Belize is in relatively good shape in terms of the environment. However, the growing population and its environmentally based economy pose certain threats, including increased solid and liquid waste, the overfishing of its waters, and deforestation due to development. Of particular concern is the state of the country's water supply, which in its major city is often mixed with sewage. Also of concern are the endangered species in rain forests, which currently number more than 50. The government of Belize has committed to considering environmental impact in ongoing planning, including through the review of the status of land usage and the protection of certain habitats.

Belize is party to numerous international environmental treaties, including the Kyoto Protocol on Climate Change and the Convention on Biological Diversity.

Environment

Forest Area % of land area: 59.1
 Average Annual Forest Change, 1990-2000, 000 ha: –36
 Nationally Protected Areas as % of Total Land Area: 26
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 3.3

LIVING CONDITIONS

According to the United Nations' Human Development Report for 2004, Belize ranked 99 out of 177 countries in the human development index, which takes into account factors such as life expectancy and health issues, education, and standard of living. Life expectancy in 2004 was 67.43 years. Fertility rates, meanwhile were high, with 3.77 children born per woman. Per capita income in 2002 was just under \$5,000, putting Belize in the middle of Caribbean countries economically.

Lifestyle varies widely depending on socioeconomic class. Accommodations range from exclusive oceanfront villas in Belize City to two-room, palm-thatched wood shacks for the Garifuna minority. Half the population of Belize live in the countryside, while one-quarter live in Belize City. Poor sanitary conditions, malnutrition, and limited access to health-care professionals are also common. Urban crime, especially violent crime involving firearms, has reached record levels. High unemployment

rates have also become a major social problem. Hurricane damage in 2000 and 2001 exacerbated an ongoing housing shortage in the country.

HEALTH

Cardiovascular disease remains one of the major health problems in Belize, and HIV/AIDS presents another major health risk. As of 2003 there were 3,600 people living with HIV/AIDS, and the incidence of the disease that year was the highest in Central America and sixth in the Caribbean. In 2000, while 92 percent of the population had access to safe drinking water, only 50 percent had access to adequate sanitation facilities. As a result, malaria and cholera remain persistent problems. In 1996 there were 25 reported cases of cholera, and in 1995 there were 9,413 diagnosed cases of malaria. In 2002 there were 55 cases of tuberculosis per 100,000 people.

Progress has been made on some fronts. In 2004 the infant mortality rate was 26.37 per 1,000 live births, down from the 1970 high of 56. The mortality rate in 2004 was 6.04 per 1,000 population. Public expenditure on health care as a percent of GDP has also grown, reaching 5.2 percent in 2001. Eight public hospitals serve the population, with an estimated 1 physician and 1.26 nurses per 1,000 population. An experimental national health-insurance system failed in 2003.

Health

Number of Physicians: 251
 Number of Dentists: 32
 Number of Nurses: 303
 Number of Pharmacists: —
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 105
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 26.37
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 140
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 5.2
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 167
 HIV Infected % of adults: 2.4
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12–23 months:
 DPT: 89
 Measles: 89
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 47
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 91

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Belize has a variety of culinary traditions and cultures, largely dependent on ethnic background. Maya and rural mestizos eat large amounts of corn, while Garifuna consume large quantities of fish. The national dish consists of rice and beans. Belizean foods are also influenced by the Spanish and Mexicans, with dishes typical to those coun-

tries present. Seafood is a local favorite, including lobster, conch, squid, mussel, scallop, and shark.

Coconut milk and hot spices are often used in Belizean cooking, and tropical fruits are abundant; these include guava, banana, and mangoes. Local specialties include roast armadillo from the Yucatán region, a fish, coconut milk, and plantain stew called *budut* from the Garifuna culture, and *escabech*, an onion broth and chicken soup originally from Mexico. Fruit drinks, mixed with coconut milk, are also typical, as is locally distilled rum and *nanche*, a liqueur.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita: —
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 126.7
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 348

STATUS OF WOMEN

There are no legal barriers to equality in Belize. The government actively supports the educational and economic empowerment of women through special programs. Women hold positions of leadership in the government and in industry.

However, by 2004 Belize still failed to meet standards set by the United Nations for gender equality. These include women having a 30 percent share in parliamentary power and having access to the same quality of employment. While women in Belize represent 52 percent of technical and professional workers, they have only 3 percent of parliamentary seats.

Women

Women-headed Households: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 3
 Female Administrators and Managers %: 36.6
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men age 15 to 24: 1.01
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-Agricultural %: 41.3

WORK

Belize had a workforce of 90,000 in 2001. Although the country experiences high unemployment—it ran in double digits in the 1990s and was 9.1 percent in 2002—there is still a shortage of skilled workers and technical personnel. The service sector was the largest employer in 2001, accounting for 55 percent of the labor force. Agriculture constituted 27 percent of the labor force, industry 18 percent. Agricultural products include bananas, coca, citrus, sugar, fish, cultured shrimp, and lumber, while industrial and manufactured products include garments and pro-

cessed food. By far the largest number of persons involved in the service sector are employed in tourism-related jobs, the country's single largest resource. The Garifuna minority traditionally made livings as fishermen and subsistence farmers. As the oceans have become overfished, however, more and more Garifuna have gone to work in the banana fields. Many have also emigrated.

Legislation deals with workers' issues such as minimum wage and work age. It is illegal to employ children under 12; those between 12 and 14 cannot be employed during school hours. The right to unionize is recognized by the government, and as of 2002 there were eight independent unions that had organized about 11 percent of the labor force. However, unskilled workers, such as those on the banana plantations, are rarely unionized.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 90,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 24.4
 Labor by Sector: %
 Agriculture: 27
 Industry: 18
 Services: 55
 Unemployment %: 9.1

EDUCATION

Education is compulsory for children aged between six and 14. Primary and secondary education is free. In 2002 there were 47,187 pupils enrolled in 280 primary schools, 26,810 in 30 secondary schools, and 527 in 11 postsecondary institutions. In 2002 the pupil-teacher ratio in primary schools was 21 to 1. The net primary school enrollment was 99 percent, while net secondary enrollment was only 68 percent. Some 81 percent of children reached grade five in 2000–2001 as compared to 67 percent a decade earlier. In 2002 government expenditures on education represented 5.2 percent of GDP. The government runs some of the schools, but most are run by churches. The government maintains one special school for mentally disabled children and another for children with physical disabilities. Adult literacy was estimated at 94.1 percent in 2003.

A Centre for Employment Training (CET) was established in Belize City to reach the student population that has not had the advantage of completing secondary school. The Belize Technical College offers craft and technical courses, and the Belize Teachers College runs a two-year diploma course leading to trained-teacher status.

The Belize Vocational Training Centre in Belize City provides courses for primary-school dropouts, while the Belize Youth Development Centre and the Belize Col-

lege of Agriculture offer training for those interested in entering the field of agro-industry. Advanced training is provided to Belizeans in the professional and technical fields at Belize's first university, the University College of Belize, which opened in 1986. The University of the West Indies maintains a School of Continuing Education (SCE) in Belize City.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 94.1
 Male %: 94.1
 Female %: 94.1
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 12.4
 First Level: Primary schools: 280
 Teachers: 2,274
 Students: 47,187
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 20.8
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 99.2
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 30
 Teachers: 1,220
 Students: 26,810
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 22.8
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 67.6
 Third Level: Institutions: 11
 Teachers: 74
 Students: 527
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 2.0
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 5.2

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Belize is known for its shortage of trained technical workers and also for its brain drain to more developed countries, a situation the government is trying to reverse with education incentives.

Much of the research that goes on in the country revolves around agriculture and fisheries. The Central Farm Agricultural Research Station focuses on studies of vegetables, rice, root crops, cattle, and pigs, while the Research Centre for Sugar Cane deals with sugarcane propagation and processing, and the Fisheries Resource Assessment and Management Program is attempting to revitalize the flagging fishing industry. All are government run.

Educational institutions offering some training in the sciences and technology include the University College of Belize and Wesley College, both in Belize City. For advanced degrees, however, Belizeans need to attend institutions in other countries.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million persons: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$: —
 Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

No dailies are published in Belize, but several weekly newspapers are published, including the pro-PUP *Belize Times*, the pro-UDP *Guardian*, and the independent *Amandala*. Aggregate circulation of the nondaily press is 35,000, or 301 per 1,000 inhabitants.

Freedom of speech and the press are guaranteed by the constitution and assured in practice. However, there are certain limits to press freedom, including a law that restricts private individuals from questioning financial statements that public officials submit and an unofficial sanction against impugning the integrity of members of the Supreme Court. The government controls the country's only radio station and thus often makes use of free political ads in the guise of news, but there are 14 privately owned and operated television stations. Following the enactment of a broadcasting law in 1983, the six-member Belize Broadcasting Authority was appointed to license existing stations.

Book publishing is undeveloped in the country, and title output is negligible.

There is no national news agency. Only EFE is represented in the capital.

Television was introduced in 1985, and several commercial stations now operate.

The National Library of Belize contains over 100,000 volumes.

In 2002 there were 30,000 Internet users, and the following year saw 60,400 people using mobile phones.

Media

Newspapers and Periodicals: —
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: —
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets 000: 43
 per 1,000: 183

CULTURE

Belizean culture is a mixture of the country's ethnic roots. The indigenous Maya have left behind remnants of their high civilization in temple complexes, which are aligned to the movement of celestial bodies. In spite of the fact that the Maya were essentially a Stone Age culture, they developed sophisticated mathematics, astronomy, and calendars. Spanish influence in the country is felt in the plain stone churches in towns and cities, but the modern architecture is predominantly British Caribbean in style.

A major component of Belizean culture is music. Marimba music is popular among the majority mestizo population, with ensembles made up of six or so members

hammering on the xylophone-like instrument. Mariachi music from Mexico is also popular.

Creoles tend to listen to a musical form called *bruk-down*, satirical songs accompanied by banjo, accordion, guitar, steel drums, and the jawbone of an ass, which is played by running a stick up and down the teeth. Calypso is also popular among Creoles, as is *cungo*, a spin-off of reggae.

The Garifuna, with their African and indigenous roots, have developed a musical form known as *punta*, an outgrowth of courtship dances—which explains the sometimes overtly erotic moves of the dancers. The old music that accompanies such dances was transformed in the 1970s into *punta* rock, with electrical accompaniment. The Garifuna also have a rich tradition of call-and-response songs, for daily tasks such as bread making, and numerous ballads and lullabies. *Chumba* and *hungubungu* are other dance and musical forms of the Garifuna. *Punta* was declared an “intangible heritage of humanity” by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization in 2001.

Belizean painters include Manuel Carrero and Manuel Villamer. Sculptors such as George Gabb and Frank Lizama have also made names for themselves outside of the country, while well-known writers include Zee Edgell, Felicia Hernandez, and Simone Waight.

The Baron Bliss Institute in Belize City promotes the arts and houses a small archaeological museum, and the National Library Service has branches in the districts and operates mobile libraries throughout the country. The national archives are in Belmopan.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 1
 Volumes: 120,000
 Registered borrowers: 25,000
 Museums Number: 1
 Annual Attendance (000): 1
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

The earliest myth system of the region comes from the Maya; many of their myths and legends remain in contemporary Belize. Prominent among these is that of the Duende, a small, dwarf-like man with a straw hat who can cause disease or wreak havoc in other ways. When meeting a Duende in the jungle, a person must give a four-finger salute to ward off his evil power. Duende myths are not unique to Belize but have been traced as far south as Brazil and as far north as Canada. Duende stories are often paired with those of the Sisemite, a hairy, ape-like

creature that supposedly drags women off to the jungle to mate. In fact, these myths may bear relation to reality; some researchers believe the Duende and Sisemite to be examples of elusive Bigfoot-like primates, and expeditions have been mounted in the Belizean forests for signs of them. Other Mayan myths talk of the beautiful maiden Xtabay and of the creation of the world, and they declare the lucky days of the week to be Mondays and Saturdays, with the unlucky ones being Tuesdays and Fridays.

The ancient shamanistic belief system of obeah, a type of witchcraft, is practiced by some Garifunas and Creoles. Also known as voodoo, this occult system originated in Africa. Obeah incorporates some fetish objects, such as the *puchinga*, a stuffed black doll that, if buried under a person's doorstep, can do that person harm. A type of black butterfly can supposedly bring early death to anyone unlucky enough to see it. Various procedures can ward off the evil eye. The Garifuna, for example, paint crosses on babies' foreheads; others employ dead animals.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Dancing is a major form of recreation and entertainment for several Belizean ethnic groups. Creoles tend to celebrate holidays with an outdoor dancing festival called "jump-up," which is accompanied by Afro-Caribbean music. The Garifuna, too, have a traditional dance used for parties and celebrations. *Punta*, the old courtship dance from Africa, has been updated with rock and Caribbean rhythms and more modern lyrics.

As movie theaters are few in number, television plays an important role in entertainment. Belizeans of all groups watch satellite television, picking up English-language programs from the United States and Spanish-language ones from Mexico. Especially popular are sports programs and soap operas from both countries.

Belizeans also play sports, especially soccer, recreationally.

ETIQUETTE

The use of a handshake is a typical form of greeting in Belize; close friends and relatives often embrace and kiss one another on the cheek. Formal titles are used in society, and first names are reserved for close friends and relatives. As in much of Latin America, extreme punctuality is not considered a virtue. In other matters the Belizeans are less relaxed, although having elbows on the table while eating is considered inappropriate behavior. Dining is performed continental style, with the knife and fork used simultaneously.

FAMILY LIFE

Belizean families tend to be large; by a 2004 estimate, Belizean women give birth to an average of 3.77 children each. This figure has declined in recent years but is still high, especially considering that the average household income is only about \$6,000 per year. Marriage is optional among lower socioeconomic groups and also some ethnic groups, especially the Garifuna, among whom legal marriages constitute a minority of unions. Many urban households are increasingly single-parent households, with women generally being the sole parent.

While legal marriage is not always required, strong kinship ties nevertheless remain. Grandparents, aunts, and uncles are all considered close family, sometimes sharing communal housing. Among the Garifuna three generations typically shared the same dwelling. This is no longer the case, however, as many women emigrate in search of better income to send home to their families. A large degree of independence is fostered in Garifuna children, and violent behavior is frowned upon.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Belize has a wide mixture of races and ethnic groups represented in its population. From the indigenous Mayan and European mestizos to the African and Carib Garifuna and the African and Afro-European Creole, the country is a true melting pot.

As the country is tropical, dress is generally informal: in business situations men wear short-sleeved shirts and slacks; women, simple dresses. Ties are worn, but not usually.

The Garifuna once wore ethnic costumes that were trimmed with shells. However, this practice is seen less often in modern times. Women still wear brightly patterned skirts with kerchiefs, but by and large contemporary Western dress is seen throughout the country: jeans and T-shirts. In Belize City more contemporary fashion from New York and London might also be seen.

SPORTS

Like much of Latin America, Belize is a country devoted to soccer. Semiprofessional teams compete with each other throughout the season. Cricket is another British import, though it is not as popular in Belize as in other Caribbean nations. American imports include baseball, basketball, and softball. Boxing, polo, cycling, track and field, volleyball, and tennis are also popular both at the recreational and semiprofessional levels.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1950** In response to the devaluation of the Belize dollar, the People's United Party (PUP) is formed, led by Leigh Richardson, George Price, and Philip Goldson.
- 1952** The General Workers Union (GWU) and the PUP call the first national strike.
- 1954** Universal adult suffrage is established; the PUP wins eight of the nine elected seats and 67 percent of the vote.
- 1964** Belize is granted internal self-government; Guatemala continues to assert its claim to the territory.
- 1971** Belmopan becomes the capital of Belize; the government initiates decade-long redistribution of land from large landowners to tenants.
- 1973** The country's name is legally changed from British Honduras to Belize; the Alien Landholding Ordinance is passed, limiting foreign purchase and development of land.
- 1981** Belize becomes independent, with George Price, the People's United Party (PUP) leader, as prime minister. Guatemala refuses to recognize Belize's independence as legal and presses territorial claims.
- 1984** The PUP is unseated in the National Assembly elections, as the opposition United Democratic Party (UDP) wins a landslide victory. UDP leader Manuel Esquivel is sworn in as prime minister.
- 1988** The UDP is weakened by PUP accusations about the government-created Security and Intelligence Service and about suppression of the PUP newspaper. The Joint Commission is established to examine territorial dispute issues. This is an unofficial recognition by Guatemala of Belize sovereignty.
- 1989** In general elections the PUP wins out over the UDP, and Price regains the prime ministry.
- 1990** Belize holds official talks with Guatemala in an effort to settle their long-standing border dispute.
- 1991** Belize becomes a member of the Organization of American States (OAS).
- 1992** Guatemala formally recognizes Belize.
- 1993** The UDP once again defeats the PUP in general elections and Manuel Esquivel becomes prime minister. Sir Colville Norbert Young is appointed governor-general.
- 1994** The last remaining British forces are withdrawn from the country. Guatemala reasserts its territorial claims.
- 1995** The Violent Crime/Counternarcotics Intelligence Unit (VIU) is formed to reduce drug trafficking across Belize's borders.
- 1998** The PUP wins a landslide victory in the general elections, and Said Musa becomes prime minister.
- 2000** Guatemala announces that it will pursue its claim to half of Belize through international courts. Border disputes continue with the killing of a Guatemalan farmer by Belizean security forces and the arrest of several Belizean soldiers by Guatemalan authorities. In October, Hurricane Keith causes \$200 million in damages.
- 2001** In September Belize celebrates 20 years of independence. Hurricane Iris leaves 13,000 homeless in October.
- 2002** The OAS helps to broker a proposal that could settle the border dispute between Belize and Guatemala.
- 2003** Said Musa and the ruling PUP party remain in power following March elections.
- 2004** Musa relieves Finance Minister Ralph Fonseca of his position following fiscal mismanagement.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Belize.net
<http://www.belizenet.com>

- CIA World Factbook: Belize
<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/bh.html>
- Electronic Resource Library for Belize Development
<http://www.ambergriscaye.com/BzLibrary/government.html>
- Government of Belize
<http://www.belize.gov.bz>

BENIN

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Benin (République du Bénin) (formerly Dahomey)

ABBREVIATION

BJ

CAPITAL

Porto-Novo (official), Cotonou (de facto)

HEAD OF STATE & HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

President Mathieu Kérékou (from 1996)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Parliamentary democracy

POPULATION

7,460,025 (2005)

AREA

112,620 sq km (43,483 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Fon, Adja, Bariba, Yoruba

LANGUAGE

French (official)

RELIGIONS

Animism, Christianity, Islam

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Communauté financière d'Afrique franc

NATIONAL FLAG

Green vertical stripe on the left third and two horizontal stripes, yellow above red, on the right two-thirds

NATIONAL EMBLEM

Two panthers passant flank a quartered shield depicting, clockwise from the upper left, a Somba fortress, the Star of Benin, a sailing ship, and a palm tree. Above the shield are two horns filled with sand and corn, and below is the national motto, *Fraternité, justice, travail* (Fellowship, justice, work).

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"The New Dawn"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

May 1 (Labor Day), August 1 (Independence Day, National Day), December 4 (Proclamation of the Republic Day), various Christian holidays, including Assumption, All Saints' Day, Christmas, Ascension, Easter Monday, and Pentecost Monday, various Islamic festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

August 1, 1960

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

December 11, 1990

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Benin, in southern West Africa, has an area of 112,620 sq km (43,483 sq mi), extending 665 km (413 mi) north to south and 333 km (207 mi) east to west. Its coastline, on the Bight of Benin, runs for 121 km (75 mi). Benin shares an international boundary of 1,989 km (1,236 mi) with four countries: Togo (644 km; 400 mi), Burkina Faso (306 km; 190 mi), Niger (266 km; 165 mi), and Nigeria (773 km; 483 mi).

Benin has four natural topographical regions. The first is the coastal belt and, behind, a lagoon region with four lagoons (Cotonou or Nadoue, Ouidah, Grand Popo, and Porto-Novo), all of which join the sea at Grand Popo. Farther north is the *terre de barre*, a fertile clay plateau di-

vided by a wide, marshy depression known as the Lama. The third region, in the northwest, is composed of the Atakora Mountains, with elevations around 654 m (2,146 ft). Mont Sokbaro (658 m) is the highest peak. Last, there are the eastern plains, the Borgu and the Plain of Kandi, which slope toward the Niger Basin.

Geography

Area sq km: 112,620; sq mi 43,483

World Rank: 99th

Land Boundaries, km: Burkina Faso 306; Niger 266; Nigeria 773;

Togo 644

Coastline, km: 121

(continues)

Benin



Geography *(continued)*

Elevation Extremes meters
Lowest: Atlantic Ocean 0
Highest: Mont Sokbaro 658
Land Use %
Arable land: 18.08
Permanent Crops: 2.4
Forest: 24.04
Other: 55.48

Population of Principal Cities (2002)

Abomey 59,672
Bohicon 65,974
Cotonou 665,100
Parakou 149,819
Porto-Novo 223,552

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

The coastal region of Benin has an equatorial climate with four seasons: the long rainy season between March and July, the short dry season from August through mid-September, the short rainy season from October through mid-November, and the long dry season from November through March. Away from the coast the length of the dry season increases. In the north there are two seasons, with the rains falling between May and September. The maximum midday temperature in January often reaches 43.3°C (110°F) in the north, but the coastal region has a steady temperature of 22°C to 34°C (72°F to 93°F) throughout the year. Rainfall varies between 965 mm (38 in) in the north and 1345 mm (93 in) in the south.

The prevailing wind is the harmattan, the hot and searing wind that drives down from the Sahara between December and March.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature
Coastal Region: 72°F to 93°F
Average Rainfall: 38 in to 93 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Tropical rain forests have almost totally disappeared in Benin. With their loss, depredation to the monkey population, which had found homes there, followed. Three species of monkey in particular—the red-bellied quonon, Geoffrey's pied colobus, and the olive colobus—have become endangered.

Along the coast are found coconut plantations, and farther north are palm groves. Farther north still is savanna woodland, which eventually gives way to arid savanna. Trees include mahogany, palm, ebony, coconut,

and kapok. The natural flora is estimated to comprise around 3,000 species, which is relatively few in comparison with neighboring countries.

The hippopotamus is still found in Benin, though human encroachment has reduced its numbers. Other large mammals include the giraffe, elephant, lion, panther, and several types of antelope; their numbers are largest in the north of the country. The python, puff adder, and mamba are among the most common snakes, while crocodiles populate the rivers. Coastal species include the humpback whale, dolphins, manatees, and four species of endangered turtle.

Game birds include wild duck, partridge, and guinea fowl, while insects include the tsetse fly, responsible for the spread of several diseases.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 7,460,025
World Rank: 93rd
Density per sq km: 60.8
% of annual growth (1999–2003): 2.6
Male %: 49.5
Female %: 50.5
Urban %: 44.6
Age Distribution: %
0–14: 46.8
15–64: 51.0
65 and over: 2.3
Population 2025: 11,781,000
Birth Rate per 1,000: 42.57
Death Rate per 1,000: 13.69
Rate of Natural Increase %: 3.1
Total Fertility Rate: 5.95
Expectation of Life (years): Males 50.25
Females 51.39
Marriage Rate per 1,000: —
Divorce Rate per 1,000: —
Average Size of Households: 5.9
Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Benin is an ethnic mosaic of 42 groups, of whom the four largest—the Fon, Adja, Bariba, and Yoruba—constitute 54 percent of the population. These groups may be broadly divided into five clusters: Voltaic, Sudanese, Fulani, Ewe, and Yoruba.

The foreign community in Benin is estimated at more than 5,500, of whom the French constitute the largest group.

Interethnic relations are characterized by the carry-over of historic animosities. This has led to shifting and uneasy alliances between groups, often directed against other similar alliances. The northern groups have invariably suffered as the southern tribes have sought to advance their regional interests through national political institutions.

LANGUAGES

The official language of Benin is French. Fon and Yoruba are used as *lingua francas* in the south, and Bariba and Fulani are used in the North.

RELIGIONS

In statistical terms, over 62 percent of Beninese follow traditional African, or animist, religions, about 21 percent are Christian (mostly in the south), and 12 percent are Muslim. Catholic missionary activities began in the middle of the 19th century, when the apostolic vicariate of Benin and Dahomey was set up. Benin was the scene of intense missionary efforts as of 1860, when the *Pères des Missions Africaines de Lyon* began their activities. Since 1975 spiritualist cults have been discouraged.

Muslim influence in the country is disproportionately higher than the number of its adherents. Most Muslims belong to the Fulani, Bariba, and Dendi tribes.

Religious Affiliation	
Traditional beliefs	4,625,000
Christian	1,566,000
Muslim	895,000
Other	375,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The recorded history of Benin begins in the 17th century, when Onegbajda (c. 1645–85), chief of the Fon people, moved to Abomey after fighting with his brother and then conquered the Kingdom of Dan, which became Dahomey. Successful rulers pledged to continue to expand the territory of Benin, which led to constant war and conflict, especially with the powerful Yoruba of Nigeria. Dahomey became an integral part of the slave trade in that the nation's prisoners of war were sold to Europeans, largely the Portuguese, in exchange for weapons. Southern Benin became known as "The Slave Coast."

The first French trading post in what is now Benin was established in 1851, but a French protectorate was firmly established only after the defeat of King Behanzin of Abomey in 1892. Dahomey, as it was known until 1975, became a component colony of French West Africa in 1902. French rule ended in 1958, when the territory accepted the French-drafted constitution proposed by Charles de Gaulle and opted for the status of autonomous republic within the French Community. It achieved independence in 1960 and did not remain part of the French Community.

Benin is one of the most politically unstable nations in West Africa. Since independence it has seen four suc-

cessful coups (in 1963, 1967, 1969, and 1972) and two unsuccessful coup attempts (in 1974 and 1988) and a total of 11 presidents (one of whom was in power for only one month). The instability and vulnerability of the governments has been due in part to the fragility of political alliances and the constant intervention of ethnic interests in politics. None of the Beninese leaders has attempted to build a broad popular base.

The leader of the *Parti Dahoméen de l'Unité*, Hubert Maga, was elected the country's first president late in 1960. President Maga's term was interrupted by a military coup in 1963 following worker and student riots. The vice president under Maga, Sourou-Migan Apithy, was elected president in January 1964. Unrest in the northern part of Benin over this southern-born president spurred the military leader General Christophe Soglo to set up an interim government, which he eventually headed, in November 1965. This was followed by another coup carried out by young officers led by Maj. (later Lt.-Col.) Maurice Kouandété, who took over as prime minister.

Attempts were made to reestablish civilian rule in 1968, but because former presidents and leading politicians were excluded from taking part in the presidential poll, a boycott of the election was called. With only a quarter of the population voting, the election was voided, and a military appointee, Dr. Émile Derlin Zinsou, formerly the minister of foreign affairs, was sworn in as president in July 1968. In little over a year, Zinsou was deposed by Lt.-Col. Kouandété, and civilian rule was replaced by a military directorate.

Inconclusive results in the presidential election of March 1970 led to a compromise. The Presidential Council was organized, and power was shared by the three main candidates. In 1972, however, civilian rule was once again overturned, this time by a military coup led by Maj. (later Brig.-Gen.) Mathieu Kérékou, who abolished the constitution and established a military regime in which all the country's regions would be equally represented in the newly formed National Council of the Revolution (CNR).

In November 1974 Kérékou moved the country toward Marxism-Leninism, with the state taking over all major economic sectors. An unsuccessful military coup in January 1975 led to the merging of the army and the gendarmerie to form the National Defense Force.

In that same month the *Parti de la Révolution Populaire de Benin* (PRPB) was organized as the "highest expression of the political will of the people of Benin"; there followed a change in the country's name to the People's Republic of Benin, after an ancient African kingdom.

In January 1977 an airborne attack led by the French mercenary Col. Robert Denard was repelled. In May a *Loi Fondamentale* (Fundamental Law) was announced by the PRPB in preparation for the "people's democratic

revolution.” In August the *Loi Fondamentale* was approved by the CNR, which was replaced by the National Revolutionary Assembly (ANR). In February 1980 the ANR unanimously elected Kérékou as president. In that same year Kérékou reportedly converted to Islam, taking the first name of Ahmed. Official documents, however, still refer to him as Mathieu.

In February 1984 the *Loi Fondamentale* was amended to extend the terms of the president and ANR members as well as to reduce the number of members in the ANR. In July, Kérékou, as the sole candidate, was reelected president.

School riots in May led to the closing of all educational establishments. In November, 100 people, including teachers, engineers, and high-ranking officials, were arrested for belonging to the banned *Parti Communiste Dahoméen* (PCD).

In January 1987 Kérékou resigned from the army so that he could become the civilian head of state. Dissatisfaction within the military over government corruption led to one coup attempt in March 1988 and another in June.

A lessening of popular support for the official candidates in the 1989 ANR elections was probably caused by the country’s persistent economic problems. Nonetheless, Kérékou was reelected president by the ANR in August.

In 1989, though suggestions were made within Kérékou’s ministry to create a multiparty system, Kérékou maintained that such a change would lead to a resurgence of tribalism and regionalism.

Economic problems and austerity programs led to strikes in early 1989 by public-sector workers, including teachers and civil servants. Classes were boycotted by students demanding disbursements of promised grants and scholarships. Pressure by the military gave way to a payment of back salaries. Yet, despite agreements with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, strikes by civil servants continued. Classes resumed in October but were disrupted again in December when the government did not fulfill its promises.

Faced with widespread public disillusionment with his government and mounting street protests, Kérékou announced in December 1989 that Benin would abandon its Marxist-Leninist ideology and that a national conference would be held early in 1990 to draft a new constitution. The conference, convened in February, voted to abolish the *Loi Fondamentale* and appoint a High Council of the Republic to assume the functions of the National Revolutionary Assembly, which was abolished. Nicéphore Soglo, a former official of the World Bank, was designated prime minister. The conference also voted to change the country’s name to the Republic of Benin. A political organization, the *Union des Forces du Progrès* (UFP) was established in May to replace the former PRPB. In December the nation approved a new con-

stitution that provided for the separation of the powers of the executive, legislature, and judiciary in the context of a multiparty state.

In March 1990 Soglo defeated Kérékou in the final round of elections—the country’s first free presidential elections in nearly 30 years and the first time an incumbent president was defeated in a reelection bid in Africa. He assumed office in April. However, Soglo’s term was plagued by legislative infighting, and his opponents captured the majority of the seats in parliamentary elections in 1995. In the 1996 presidential elections Kérékou staged a comeback, winning 52.5 percent of the vote. In 1999 Soglo’s Benin Renaissance Party and its allies captured a one-seat majority in the Assembly. Kérékou was reelected in 2001. Elections in December 2002 and March 2003 gave Kérékou’s party an absolute majority in the National Assembly, the first time such a situation had occurred since the reestablishment of the multiparty democracy in 1990.

Since 2003 the government has had to deal with international crime and the trafficking of humans. Nigeria closed its border with Benin in 2003 as a protest against a rise in cross-border robberies and smuggling. Cracking down on his own administration, Kérékou fired 10 top security officials, including his son. Corruption in the judiciary and among civil servants led to both arrests and trials in 2003 and 2004.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

- 1960–63 Coutoucou Hubert Maga (president of the Republic)
- 1963–64 Christophe Soglo (head of provisional government)
- 1964–65 Sourou-Migan Apithy (president of the Republic)
- 1965 Justin Ahomadegbé-Tomêtin (president of the Republic)
- 1965 Tahirou Congacou (president of the Republic)
- 1965–64 Christophe Soglo (president of the Republic)
- 1967 Jean-Baptiste Hachème (chairman of the Revolutionary Committee)
- 1967 Iropa Maurice Kouandété (head of state)
- 1967–68 Alphonse Amadou Alley (head of state)
- 1968–69 Émile Derlin Henri Zinsou (president of the Republic)
- 1969 Iropa Maurice Kouandété (army chief of staff)
- 1969–70 Paul-Émile de Souza (chair of directory)
- 1970–72 Coutoucou Hubert Maga (chairman of the Presidential Council)
- 1972 Justin Ahomadegbé-Tomêtin (chairman of the Presidential Council)
- 1972–91 Mathieu Kérékou (president of the Republic)

- 1991–96 Nicéphore Dieudonné Soglo (president of the Republic)
 1996– Mathieu Kérékou (president of the Republic)

CONSTITUTION

Benin has had six constitutions since independence. In 1990 Benin adopted its newest constitution. It provides for an executive directly elected for a five-year term. The president is limited to two terms and must be between 40 and 70 years old. He is advised by a council composed of former heads of state. Legislative power is vested in a unicameral National Assembly, which is directly elected. The constitution established the principle of an independent judiciary.

PARLIAMENT

The 1990 constitution provided for a unicameral National Assembly composed of 83 deputies chosen by direct election. Deputies serve four-year terms and may be reelected indefinitely. There are two ordinary sessions, starting within the first fortnight of April and the second fortnight of October, respectively. Each session cannot exceed three months. Decisions are made by a simple majority.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Benin had throughout its history been a single-party state. That changed in 1990 when the parliament provided for a multiparty system, and there are currently more than 100 active political parties in the country. The largest include the Benin Renaissance Party, the Democratic Renewal Party, the Front for Renewal and Development, and the Alliance of the Social Democratic Party.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For purposes of regional administration, Benin is divided into six provinces, within which there are 78 districts.

Each province is headed by a civilian prefect. In addition, the country has five urban constituencies: Abomey, Cotonou, Ouidah, Parakou, and Porto-Novo.

At the lower levels, rural and urban communes and villages are run by elected committees.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The legal system is based on French civil and customary law. The constitution of 1990 established an independent judiciary. It provides for a Supreme Court, which is the

highest court in the nation, and a High Court of Justice, with the power to impeach government officials. The High Court is composed of six members of the legislature and the president of the Supreme Court.

Conditions in the country's penal system are generally harsh, with overcrowding and lack of proper sanitation and health care the norm. New prisons were built in 1999 and 2000 but did not significantly deal with problems. Many prisoners convicted of minor crimes have been released early to ease crowding. Prisoners are allowed regular visits by family and lawyers, and human rights groups have access to penal facilities.

HUMAN RIGHTS

For a country that had a poor record with regard to human rights for most of the 1960s through the 1980s, Benin has made remarkable progress. The country has successfully made the transition from a single-party, authoritarian, Marxist-Leninist state to a democratic one. The constitution provides for a number of protections of citizens from abuse, and these have largely been respected. Benin's constitutional court has direct jurisdiction over human rights abuses and has been diligent in prosecution. In practice the court has taken a more proactive role in addressing human rights abuses than the Benin Human Rights Commission, established especially for that purpose.

Areas in which Benin has been faulted internationally are human trafficking, especially of children, and the protection of women's rights.

FOREIGN POLICY

Throughout the cold war era Benin followed nonaligned policies, although military and economic ties with France remained strong. Relations with neighboring Nigeria are occasionally strained by frequent expulsions of Beninese workers. Border disputes continue between Benin and its neighbors over inaccurately demarcated territorial limits.

Benin is a strong supporter of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and has initiated bilateral ventures with Ghana, Mauritania, and Togo.

DEFENSE

The defense structure is headed by the president, who is also the defense minister and commander in chief. Military manpower is provided by voluntary enlistment for a period of 18 months. The army headquarters is at Parakou.

Benin's armed forces have no offensive capability, and their combat worthiness is largely untried in the field.

The major role of the military in the history of modern Benin has been as a political arbiter and as a power base for ambitious colonels.

The bulk of military aid has been received from France. Token assistance has been received from the United States and Israel. Benin has no domestic defense production. In 2003 the government spent \$98.3 million, or 2.7 percent of gross domestic product (GDP), on defense.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 8,000
 Military Manpower Availability: 1,638,010
 Military Expenditures \$million: 98.3
 as % GDP: 2.7
 as % of central government expenditures: —
 Arms Imports \$: —
 Arms Exports \$: —

ECONOMY

The economy of Benin remains underdeveloped and dependent on subsistence agriculture, cotton production, and regional trade. Growth in real output averaged a sound 4 percent in 1990–95 and 5 percent in 1996–2003. Rapid population growth, however, has offset much of this increase in output. Inflation has subsided over the past several years. Commercial and transport activities, which make up a large part of GDP, are vulnerable to developments in Nigeria, particularly fuel shortages. The Paris Club and bilateral creditors have eased the external debt situation in recent years. While high fuel prices constrained growth in 2000, increased cotton production—enabled by a major restructuring program—and an expansion of the Cotonou port were hoped to lead to increased growth in 2001. Even with the downturn in the world economy that year, about 5 percent growth occurred. However, at least one-third of the population continued to live below the poverty line, and the country's low income per capita made it one of the poorest countries in the world. There was 6 percent growth in GDP in 2002, mostly as a result of a bumper cotton crop.

The GDP per capita had grown to \$1,100 by 2004, taking into account purchasing power parity; overall, GDP grew 5.5 percent that year. Growth in real output has averaged a stable 5 percent in the past several years, but the rapid rise in population has offset much of this growth. Inflation has also subsided. A 2001 privatization policy is planned to extend to the telecommunications, water, electricity, and agriculture industries, leading, it is hoped, to more foreign investment.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 7.742
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 1,100

GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 5.4
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 2.7
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %
 Agriculture: 36.4
 Industry: 14.5
 Services: 49.1

Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %

Private Consumption: 81
 Government Consumption: 8
 Gross Domestic Investment: 19.3

Foreign Trade \$million: Exports: 485

Imports: 726

% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: —

% of Income Received by Richest 10%: —

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
115.2	120.0	124.7	127.9	129.8

Finance

National Currency: CFA Franc (XOF)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = XOF 581.2
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 367.35
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 4.5
 Total External Debt \$billion: 1.6
 Debt Service Ratio %: 6.32
 Balance of Payments \$million: –112
 International Reserves SDRs \$million: 612.6
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
 1.5

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 220.3
 per capita \$: 34
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 41

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$million: 698.9
 Expenditures \$million: 613.2
 Budget Surplus \$million: 85.7
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 33
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 5.2
 Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares: 0.1
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 0.5
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 15.6
 Total Cropland as % of Farmland: 18.1
 Livestock: Cattle 000: 1,744
 Sheep 000: 700
 Hogs 000: 309
 Chickens 000: 13,000
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 6.33
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons: 40,670

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 314
Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 8.3

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 40
Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 555
Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 86
Net Energy Imports % of use: 27
Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: 94
Production kW-hr million: 270
 Consumption kW-hr million: 630
Coal Reserves tons million: —
Production tons 000: —
 Consumption tons 000: —
Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet billion: 43
Production cubic feet million: —
 Consumption cubic feet million: —
Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels million: 8.2
 Production barrels per day 000: 1
 Consumption barrels per day 000: 13
Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$million: 726
Exports \$million: 485
Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 1.9
Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 4.9
Balance of Trade \$million: -112

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
China %	29.5	21.1
France %	14.9	—
United Kingdom %	4.7	—
Côte d'Ivoire %	4.7	—
Thailand %	4.6	16.8
India %	—	18.0
Ghana %	—	5.8
Niger %	—	4.4
Indonesia %	—	4.1

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 6,787
Paved %: 20.0
Automobiles: 7,300
Trucks and Buses: 6,200
Railroad; Track Length km: 578
 Passenger-km million: 100
 Freight-km million: 89
Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 0
 Total Deadweight Tonnage: —
Airports: 5
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 130
Length of Waterways km: 150

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 72
Number of Tourists from 000: —
Tourist Receipts \$million: 60
Tourist Expenditures \$million: 7

Communications

Telephones 000: 66.5
Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.28
Cellular Telephones 000: 236.2
Personal Computers 000: 26
Internet Hosts per million people: 118
Internet Users per 1,000 people: 9

ENVIRONMENT

Benin's environmental problems are ones common to Africa. The country suffers from increasing deforestation and desertification. Severe droughts in the north have further marginalized archaic agricultural activities. Overfishing has threatened many species along Benin's coast. Finally, the country lacks adequate supplies of potable water.

The government has set aside tracts of land for reforestation, and two national parks as well as several game preserves give sanctuary to wild game, several species of which—including the chimpanzee—have already become extinct in the nation. A total of 23 percent of Benin's natural areas were protected as of 2000.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 24.0
Average Annual Forest Change, 1990-2000, 000 ha: -70
Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 23
Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 0.26

LIVING CONDITIONS

In 2004 Benin was ranked 161st in the world on the Human Development Index, which focuses on three aspects of human development: life expectancy, education, and standard of living. Life expectancy in 2004 was 50.81 years, one of the lowest in the world, while the fertility rate was 5.95 children per woman. Benin is thus subject to overpopulation pressures. The country's total school enrollment in 2002 ranked the country 144th out of 176 countries worldwide, and its 2002 per capita GDP of \$1,070 ranked it 155th. With more than one-third of its population living below the poverty line, Benin was 80th among 90 developing nations in terms of poverty in 2002. Growth in urban areas has been significant since 1990, and overcrowding and high unemployment rates have resulted.

Architecture in the cities is a mixture of colonial and hastily built modern buildings, with shantytowns on the outskirts. In the northern rural areas round mud huts with palm thatching are typical, while in the south rectangular huts are the norm. In coastal areas simple homes are often built on stilts. Access to clean drinking water and proper sanitation remain glaringly inadequate throughout the country.

HEALTH

Though health care in Benin has been steadily, if slowly, improving, there are still many problems. Foremost among these is a lack of doctors: as of 2004 there were only 6 doctors per 100,000 people. As of 2002 public expenditures on health amounted to 4.4 percent of GDP. Malnutrition affects large portions of the population, especially infants. As of 1999 one-quarter of children under five were malnourished; malnourishment, malaria, diarrhea, and measles together kill 105 out of every 1,000 children before the age of one. Home birthing is still prevalent. It is estimated that more than half of Beninese women give birth without any professional help; consequently, the infant mortality rate in 2004 was 86 deaths per 1,000 live births.

Some progress has been made. Benin is part of the Bamako Health Initiative, which brings medicine to over 400 rural villages. Immunization rates are increasing: 94 percent of one-year-olds were immunized for tuberculosis in 2001 and 78 percent for measles. By 2002, 68 percent of the population had access to improved water sources; a decade earlier, only 20 percent had such access.

Mobile health units have helped to bring some of the epidemic diseases, such as yaws, sleeping sickness, yellow fever, meningitis, and tuberculosis, under control. HIV/AIDS, however, is a major health risk in Benin, as it is throughout much of sub-Saharan Africa. As of 2003 there were 68,000 Beninese living with HIV/AIDS; that year there were an estimated 5,800 deaths from the disease.

Health

Number of Physicians: 315
 Number of Dentists: 16
 Number of Nurses: 1,116
 Number of Pharmacists: 154
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 6
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 85.88
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 850
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 4.4
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 16
 HIV Infected % of adults: 1.9
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 79
 Measles: 78
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 32
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 68

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Benin's staple food is *pâte* ("paste" in French), a concoction of millet, cassava, sorghum flour, and corn all boiled together. This is served with a variety of sauces—a favorite is peanut—and stews, which are generally very spicy. Eaten without utensils, the *pâte* is dipped into sauce using the right hand only. Grains and root crops constitute much of what is eaten for the lighter breakfast. A type of porridge is made from manioc, yams, corn, and millet.

Manioc is also the main ingredient of *gari*, a kind of tapioca or grits, and bananas or beans are beaten and pounded to make deep-fried dumplings. Rice and beans, fried plantains, okra, and fried or boiled cassava are also staples.

Palm wine is a popular drink, as is a gin made from millet, local beer, and fruit drinks made with limes or lemons.

With a large Muslim population, Benin has many of Islam's nutritional taboos. Additionally, there are other various local food restrictions that forbid the consumption of everything from beef to fish.

Malnutrition affected 25 percent of children under age five in 1999.

Food and Nutrition

Food Supply as % of FAO Requirements: 105
 Undernourished % of total population: 14.6
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,570
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 112.5
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 87.4

STATUS OF WOMEN

Although the constitution provides for equality for women in the political, economic, and social spheres, women experience extensive societal discrimination, especially in rural areas, where they occupy subordinate roles and are responsible for much of the hard labor on subsistence farms. In urban areas women dominate the trading sector in open-air markets. By law women have equal inheritance and property rights, but local custom in some areas prevents them from inheriting real property. Women do not enjoy the same educational opportunities as men, and female literacy is only 26 percent, as compared with 55 percent for males. Nevertheless, elementary school pass rates in recent years have highlighted significant progress by girls in literacy and scholastic achievement. Violence and the abuse of women are considered family matters. Female genital mutilation is practiced in the northern provinces of the country.

The Family and Personal Code was passed by the National Assembly in 2004, ensuring more rights for women. While polygamous marriages are allowed, they no longer

enjoy the same legal protections as monogamous ones, particularly with respect to the rights of inheritance for widows. Additionally, the law outlaws traditional practices such as forced marriage and wife inheritance, the practice whereby a widow must marry one of her dead husband's brothers or other relatives.

Women

Women-headed Households %: 17.5
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 7
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men age 15 to 24: 0.53
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-Agricultural %: —

WORK

Few reliable statistics exist regarding the actual size of Benin's labor force or unemployment rate. In 2003 the labor force was estimated to be made up of about three million people. Of these, about half were employed in agriculture, producing cotton, corn, cassava, yams, beans, palm oil, peanuts, and various livestock. Industry accounted for only about one-tenth of employment. Industrial products include textiles, processed food, chemicals, and construction materials.

The overwhelming problem for most Beninese is simply finding work. With 37 percent of the population living below the poverty line in 2002, unemployment and underemployment are endemic. An estimated three-fourths of urban workers are employed informally as peddlers or pushcart vendors. Unskilled labor remains the major source of employment. Life is particularly difficult for women in this respect: almost 60 percent of women are employed in agriculture.

Workers have the right to unionize and strike. In 2002 about 75 percent of Beninese workers were unionized. The workweek is set at 40 to 46 hours, but many engage in domestic work and agriculture and put in much longer workweeks. Legislation guarantees annual leave and other benefits, but as this legislation covers only salaried employees, and just 2 percent of the population is salaried, such labor laws are essentially meaningless. Child labor also remains a problem despite a law prohibiting the hiring of children under 14. Per capita nominal GDP in 2003 was \$450, making Benin one of the poorest countries in the world.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 3,057,600
 Female Participation Rate %: 48.2
 Labor by Sector: %
 Agriculture: —
 Industry: —
 Services: —
 Unemployment %: —

EDUCATION

Education is free, universal, and compulsory, in principle, from ages five to 11. Schooling consists of 13 years, as divided into six years of primary school, four years of lower secondary school, and three years of upper secondary school. The curricula are modeled on those of France, but changes are gradually being introduced to adapt to local needs and traditions.

The academic year runs from November to July. The medium of instruction is French, but the government has proposed a gradual shift to regional vernaculars as part of its de-westernization policy.

One of the more significant changes made by the Kérékou government has been the introduction of technical education at the secondary level. Benin's sole institution of higher learning, the University of Benin, is 70 percent supported by France. The national literacy rate in 2002 was estimated to be 39.8 percent. In 2000–01 Benin was 155th in the world in terms of total school enrollment numbers; public expenditures on education amounted to 3.3 percent of GDP in 2002.

Improvements have been made in the area of student retention. While in 1990–91 only 55 percent of children remained in school until the fifth grade, by 2000–01 that number had risen to 84 percent—despite the fact that the pupil-teacher ratio for primary education was over 50 to 1.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 39.8
 Male %: 54.8
 Female %: 25.5
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 7.1
 First Level: Primary schools: 2,889
 Teachers: 19,836
 Students: 1,233,214
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 62.2
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 71.3
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 145
 Teachers: 11,887
 Students: 233,177
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 21.6
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 20.1
 Third Level: Institutions: 16
 Teachers: 638
 Students: 18,753
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 3.6
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 3.3

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Benin is in the process of establishing a scientific community. The National University of Benin in Cotonou has faculties of scientific and technical studies, health sciences, and agriculture, while the University of Benin in Benin City also offers technical and science degrees. In 2004 the University of Benin revamped its sciences into

two faculties, of physical sciences and biological sciences, in an attempt to produce more graduates in agriculture and engineering. That same year the Department of Environmental Sciences was established. It is estimated that in 1987–97 science and engineering students accounted for 18 percent of college and university enrollments.

In 2001 there were 174 researchers engaged in research and development activities, primarily agricultural in nature, per million people. Several institutes promote industrial research, including the Benin Office of Mines in Cotonou and the Institute of Applied Research in Porto-Novo.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million persons: 174

Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —

High-Tech Exports \$: 15,000

Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

In 1999 there were a total of 13 dailies published in Benin, with a combined circulation of 33,000.

The national news agency is Agence Béninoise de Presse, which is located in a section of the Ministry of Information. AFP has a regional bureau in Cotonou. Reuters, UPI, DPA, and AP have correspondents.

The official broadcasting organization is the Office de Radiodiffusion et Télévision du Bénin (RTB). In 2003 the government authorized the startup of 35 new radio stations and four television channels, all privately owned and operated. That year there were an estimated 70,000 Internet users and 236,200 cellular phone users.

Freedom of speech and of the press is guaranteed by the constitution, and the government generally respects these rights. Broadcasters are supposed to submit weekly lists of programs to the High Authority for Audio-Visual Media, but the media largely ignore this rule. Criticism of the government is common in the press; however, because of the concentration of media in urban areas and high levels of illiteracy, such criticism does not reach the vast majority of the population.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 13

Total Circulation 000: 33

Circulation per 1,000: 5.3

Books Published: —

Periodicals: —

Radio Receivers million: 2.84

per 1,000: 445

Television sets 000: 263

per 1,000: 44

CULTURE

Beninese culture is a mixture of many influences: the high civilization of the ancient kingdom of Dahomey, the various indigenous peoples, the French, and Muslims.

Abomey is one of the country's main cultural attractions, with painted voodoo fetish temples and the remnants of royal palaces from the Dahomey past. The Royal Palace was constructed in 1645 and expanded by each new king, such that by the 19th century the compound was enormous, with a 30-foot wall encircling nearly 1,000 acres. Only part of the palace remains standing, as the French destroyed much of it in 1892, but this part includes the bas-relief carvings that constitute some of the most impressive art in West Africa. Part of this former palace compound has been converted into a museum displaying artifacts from the kingdom.

Animism plays an important role in Beninese society. It is believed that vodoun, or voodoo as it is popularly called, originated in Benin and was later introduced to Brazil, the islands of the Caribbean, and even parts of North America by slaves taken from the region. As the indigenous religion of Benin, animism or vodoun is practiced by between 60 and 70 percent of the population. The government tried to eradicate the cult but has found trying to coopt it to be a better strategy. Since 1992 vodoun has been recognized as one of Benin's official religions, and National Vodoun Holiday is celebrated on January 10.

This religious tradition gives rise to the long history of ritual, dance, and music for which Benin is widely known. Among the Fon people of southern Benin, for example, ecstatic dances for the *vada* vodoun ritual have found their way into the modern world, as accompanied by drums and even electric guitars. Such dances can be seen on National Vodoun Holiday in Ouidah, which is known as the cradle of vodoun.

Craft traditions are rich in Benin, a holdover from the days of the Dahomey kingdom. Some of these art forms, like the bronze heads sculpted centuries ago by Ife artists, are no longer produced. Other forms, such as appliqué tapestries, are still extant. These were originally made to celebrate momentous events in the kingdom.

Benin is home to many well-known writers, including Colette Senami Agossou Houeto, Florent Couao-Zotti, Adelaide Fassinou, Gisele Hountondji, Jose Pliva, and Richard Dogbeh. In the contemporary musical scene Angelique Kidjo was a major recording artist in the 1960s and 1970s. Musical exports of later decades include Afro-*akpala*-funk from the performer Nel Oliver. Benin has a number of libraries, museums, and archives. Porto-Novo is home to the National Archives, National Library, and the library of the National University of Benin. In addition to the historical museum in Abomey, there is one in Ouidah, ethnological museums in Porto-Novo and

Cotonou, and a museum of natural history and ethnography in Parakou.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 31
 Volumes: 148,000
 Registered borrowers: 2,730
 Museums Number: 28
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts national currency million: 58
 Number of Cinemas: 3
 Seating Capacity: 2,500
 Annual Attendance: 300,000

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

With literally thousands of deities, the animist religions of Benin are rich in folklore and mythology. Yoruba and Fon folklore are particularly wealthy oral literatures. Prominent among the Fon pantheon are Mawu, the supreme deity, Gu, the god of war, and Lisa, the god of the sun, sky, and power and Mawu's twin. The Yoruba, who also live in Nigeria and Togo, use their myth system, called *itan*, not just for rituals but also to settle disputes. Their supreme creative force is Oloddumare, the creator is Obatala, and their pantheon of gods and goddesses numbers—according to various accounts—201, 401, or 601.

The kings of Dahomey also provide material for legends and folktales in Benin. In particular, the 19th-century ruler Behanzin is venerated as a national hero.

Animal trickster tales are popular in Benin, as they are all over Africa. In Benin, the trickster generally takes the form of a spider or a tortoise. One story tells of how wisdom became widespread when a tortoise stole a gourd from the gods containing all the wisdom of the world. On his way home, the tortoise, frustrated that the gourd has gotten in his way at a narrow part of the path, breaks it and releases wisdom.

A variation on the trickster story is the escape tale, in which humans use intelligence and cleverness to get out of difficult situations, as in the Benin tale of the cruel king who commands his subjects to construct a palace from the top down. If they fail, they will die. A wise man saves the population by going to the king and asking him to lay the foundation stone.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Dancing is a popular pastime throughout the country; it is, in fact, something of a national passion. With their rich tradition of folk dances, Beninese are never at a loss for recreation during festivals or religious occasions. Other simple pleasures, such as eating, drinking, and conversing

with friends, are popular throughout the country, as are activities such as playing soccer or games such as cards, checkers, and *adji*, a mathematical, probability-based board game. Such games are typically played outdoors. Wrestling is also common in the north and in Yoruba land. Village and rural populations generally rely on traditional forms of recreation; festivals, holidays, and baptisms are particularly important for villagers.

In urban areas Beninese enjoy going to the movies or watching television. The latter activity, with the addition of new and private channels in 2004, has become increasingly popular. Satellite television also provides programming from abroad.

ETIQUETTE

The Beninese demonstrate a great deal of respect for their elders, sometimes even kneeling in front of them. It is not considered polite to make eye contact with those of greater age.

On the street it is typical for people to greet one another even if they are strangers. For friends and new acquaintances, a handshake is typical, though for a long time, especially in the north of the country, people did not shake hands. It is considered common courtesy that if you greet someone in a group, you must greet all the others.

As water is considered precious, a visitor is generally offered a glass. In many parts of the country time telling is a matter of observing the position of the sun; therefore, punctuality is not necessarily a sign of good manners. Also, property is considered communal in some parts of the country, such that a neighbor might ask to use an implement belonging to another in a manner that might seem rude to a Westerner.

FAMILY LIFE

Monogamous relationships are the rule in Benin, though polygamy exists among Muslims and other groups and is a legally recognized form of marriage. The extended family is the basic unit, and divorce is uncommon, for those who break up their families are considered cursed. Family size has been shrinking in the last few decades, but families are still large by the standards of developed countries, with between four to six children per family.

Patriarchy is the norm, though the traditional roles of men and women are also breaking down. Traditionally, women ran the house and took care of the children while men earned the income. However, with high unemployment and with financial pressures forcing women into the workforce in whatever positions they might find, changes in the family structure have come about. Men may have to travel to distant locations to find work, living outside

the home for long periods of time; women then do double duty as both breadwinner and homemaker.

Many urban children are homeless, living on the street.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Beninese wear all types of clothing, from Western-style shirts, blouses, trousers, and skirts to the more colorful traditional apparel of sub-Saharan Africa.

Typical traditional dress for men is a loose-fitting pair of trousers accompanied by a long shirt, down to the knees. More formal wear includes the caftan-like boubou, popular throughout much of West Africa, often decorated with dense embroidery. The more heavily embroidered boubous can be very expensive and are thus reserved for special occasions. Men also wear the colorful, long-sleeve, pullover, V-neck dashiki shirts

Women wear the boubou as well, and along the coast they wear bright, vibrant swaths of fabric wrapped around the waist or sometimes around the whole body. These are called *pagnes* and are often accompanied with matching headscarves. Women also wear the loose-fitting top called the *boumba*.

Muslim dress codes vary somewhat. A head covering is required for women, while Muslim men often wear the abbreviated caftan-style cotton shirt over trousers.

SPORTS

Benin's national sport is soccer; Beninese of all ages both play and follow their favorite semiprofessional teams. The Beninese national team takes part in the African qualifiers for the World Cup. As of 2003 the team was ranked 128th in the world.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1960** Republic of Dahomey is proclaimed, with Hubert Maga as president.
- 1963** Col. Christophe Soglo leads the first of the country's six coups; Maga is placed under house arrest.
- 1964** The constitution of the Second Republic is approved by referendum. Following presidential and legislative elections, a two-headed executive emerges, with Sourou-Migan Apithy as president and Justin Tometin Ahomadegbé as virtual copresident.
- 1965** The completed port of Cotonou is inaugurated. Soglo leads his second coup; Apithy and Ahomadegbé are dismissed, and the government is entrusted to Tahirou Congacou, president of

the National Assembly. Within a month Soglo leads his third coup, assumes full power, and sets up his own administration.

- 1967** Soglo is toppled in a coup led by Maurice Kouandété, and an interim military administration is formed under the dual leadership of Kouandété and Colonel Alphonse Amadou Alley, who is the official president.
- 1968** A new constitution—the country's fourth—is approved by referendum; after 74 percent of eligible voters abstain, the election of President Moumouni Adjou is annulled; the military appoints Émile Derlin Zinsou as president, and his appointment is confirmed in a plebiscite.
- 1969** Kouandété unseats Zinsou in a coup but is himself ousted in an interfactional struggle in the army; an interim three-man military directorate is formed under the chairmanship of Paul-Émile de Souza. A new provisional constitution is adopted. A new presidential election is held but is later suspended; a presidential triumvirate is set up with Maga, Apithy, and Ahomadegbé as members, with rotating terms of office.
- 1970** Maga is inaugurated as first president of the presidential council. A new constitution is promulgated.
- 1972** Maga transfers power to Ahomadegbé. Within five months Major Mathieu Kérékou seizes power in the nation's sixth coup.
- 1973** A new decree decentralizes local administrative structures.
- 1974** Kérékou proclaims a Marxist-Leninist state and nationalizes banks and major industries.
- 1975** Dahomey is renamed the People's Republic of Benin, and the Parti de la Révolution Populaire de Bénin (PRPB) is founded as the country's sole political party and the supreme organ of state. The key junta officer Major Michel Aikpe is killed. The government is rocked by two serious coup attempts.
- 1977** Government troops reportedly foil a coup attempt by "mercenaries in the pay of international imperialism"; a curfew is imposed throughout the country, and borders and airports are closed. The National Council of Revolution approves the Loi Fondamentale, which replaces the council with a National Revolutionary Assembly (ANR).
- 1978** Gabon expels Beninese workers.
- 1979** Single-party balloting is held for electing members of the National Revolutionary Assembly.
- 1982** Pope John Paul II visits Benin.
- 1983** Nigeria expels illegal Beninese immigrants.
- 1984** Kérékou is reelected to a new term in office.

- 1985** Nigeria expels further Beninese immigrants, souring relations between the two countries. In April and May students boycott classes, and riots at the University of Benin follow. The government closes schools. Ministerial reshuffling occurs. In November, 100 people are arrested under suspicion of belonging to the banned Parti Communiste Dahoméen.
- 1986** Benin reschedules external debt in meetings with the IMF and World Bank.
- 1987** Kérékou resigns from the army to become a civilian leader of government.
- 1988** After an abortive military coup, nearly 150 officers are arrested.
- 1989** The ANR reelects Kérékou president. Public-sector workers strike to protest economic problems and austerity programs. Kérékou announces that Benin is abandoning its Marxist-Leninist ideology.
- 1990** The Loi Fondamentale is abolished, and a High Council of the Republic replaces the National Revolutionary Assembly. The PRPB is abolished and replaced with a new political organization, the Union des Forces de Progrès. The nation approves a new constitution.
- 1991** Nicéphore Soglo defeats Kérékou in the first free presidential election in nearly 30 years.
- 1996** Kérékou is reelected president in the country's second free election.
- 1998** Civil servants seeking back pay and wage increases stage a four-day strike.
- 1999** The IMF extends an additional \$14 million to Benin.
- 2001** Kérékou is reelected president.
- 2002** Civil servants paralyze the government with strikes protesting the introduction of merit pay.
- 2003** Kérékou wins an absolute majority in the National Assembly. Nigeria temporarily closes its border with Benin in August in protest of an increase in cross-border crime. The IMF forgives \$460 million of Benin's external debt.
- 2004** A general strike for higher wages shuts the country down for three days in October. The

government sets up an anti-child-trafficking commission in March to combat the growing problem. Kérékou denies that he is considering trying to change the constitution in order to allow him to run for a third term.

- 2005** In January, Benin and Nigeria launch a joint border patrol in order to stem cross-border smuggling and robberies. The International Court of Justice awards most of the river islands along the disputed border with Niger to Niger.

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- Malaquais, Dominique. *The Kingdom of Benin*. New York, 1998.

OFFICIAL PUBLICATIONS

- Benin.** *Annuaire statistique; Recensement général de la population et de l'habitation, 2002*

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Phone: (202) 232-6656 Fax: (202) 265-1996

INTERNET RESOURCES

- CIA World Factbook: Benin
<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/bn.html>
- Découvrez la République du Bénin
<http://www.fil-info-france.com/7benin.htm>

BHUTAN

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Kingdom of Bhutan (Druk-Yul)

ABBREVIATION

BT

CAPITAL

Thimphu (Tashi Chho Dzong)

HEAD OF STATE

King Jigme Singye Wangchuk (from 1972)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Sangay Ngedup (2005)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Absolute monarchy

POPULATION

2,232,291 (2005)

AREA

47,000 sq km (18,147 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Bhotes

LANGUAGE

Dzongkha (official)

RELIGION

Druk Kargue sect of Buddhism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Ngultrum; the Indian rupee is used in external transaction

NATIONAL FLAG

Two triangles, one orange-yellow and the other maroon, divided diagonally with a white dragon superimposed in the center

NATIONAL EMBLEM

The *khorlo*, or Buddhist Wheel of Law, also symbolic of the monarchy, is flanked in a circular pattern by two dragons at the sides, representing spiritual and secular authority; by the Jewel Umbrella at the top; and by a lotus flower at the bottom. Lattice-like designs appear at each corner of the square outer portion of the emblem.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"In the Thunder Dragon Kingdom"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

November 11 (*Druk Gyalpo's* Birthday), December 17 (National Day), various Buddhist festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

Never under direct foreign rule in modern times

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

None

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

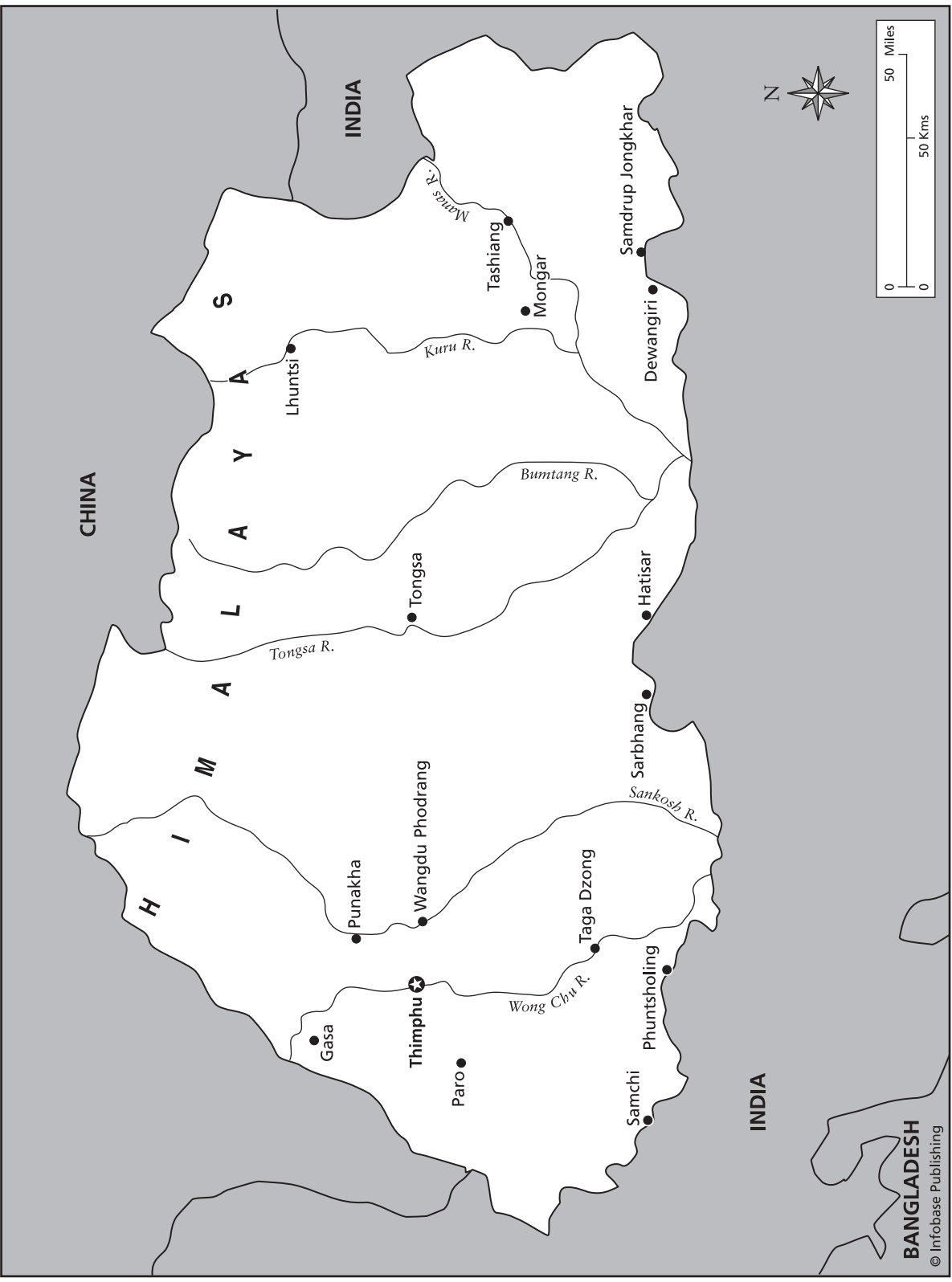
Bhutan, a landlocked country in the Himalayas, has a total land area of 47,000 sq km (18,147 sq mi) extending 306 km (190 mi) east to west and 145 km (90 mi) north to south.

Bhutan's total international boundary of 1,075 km (668 mi) is shared with two countries: India (605 km; 376 mi) and China (470 km; 292 mi). The border with India was established by the British in the 18th and 19th centuries. The border with China, running along the crest of the main Himalayan range, has never been surveyed and has been the subject of repeated disputes since 1947.

Bhutan is entirely mountainous except for the southern Duars Plain, which extends into the Himalayan foothills in India. The country is almost equally divided in two by the Black Mountain range, a spur of the Himalayas jutting southward. In the north is a series of north-to-south ranges, with four peaks over 6,100 m (20,000 ft). The loftiest of these peaks are Kangri (7,553 m; 24,774 ft) and Chomo Lhari (7,314 m; 23,997 ft).

Bhutan is drained by a series of parallel rivers flowing south through narrow valleys and gorges into the Brahmaputra River. From west to east these are the Amo, Raidak (with its tributaries the Paro, Wong, and Ha), Sankosh, Ai, Tongsa, Bumtang, Kuru, and Dangma. None of these rivers is navigable.

Bhutan



Geography

Area sq km: 47,000; sq mi 18,147
 World Rank: 128th
 Land Boundaries, km: China 470; India 605
 Coastline, km: 0
 Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Drangme Chhu 97
 Highest: Kula Kangri 7,553
 Land Use %
 Arable land: 3.09
 Permanent Crops: 0.43
 Forest: 64.2
 Other: 32.28

Population of Principal Cities (1997)

Phuntsholing	45,000
Thimphu	45,000

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Bhutan has three climatic zones. The Duars Plain in the outer foothills has a subtropical climate with high humidity and heavy rainfall, averaging 5,080 to 6,290 mm (200 to 250 in.) a year. The central belt of flat valleys has cool winters and hot summers with moderate rainfall. The uplands and high valleys over 3,650 m (12,000 ft) have cold winters and cool summers with an annual average rainfall of 1,020 to 1,520 mm (40 to 60 in). Over 5,000 m (15,000 ft), the land is permanently covered with snow and glaciers. A major feature of the climate is the frequency of violent thunderstorms, from which Bhutan gets its name. (In the Dzongkha language Bhutan means "Land of the thunder dragon.") Temperatures vary widely because of the enormous range of elevation; no specific temperature information is available.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature: 40°F to 50°F
 Average Rainfall
 Duars Plain: 200 in to 250 in
 High Valleys: 40 to 60 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

A Buddhist country with the accordant restrictions on taking life, Bhutan is rich in animal life. In the forests of central and eastern Bhutan are found elephant, rhinoceros, cheetah, sambar, bear, and other wild animals. Game birds include pheasants, quail, and partridges.

Vegetation is dependent on elevation in this mountainous country. Forests of pine and oak are found at elevations between 3,000 and 6,000 ft, while at higher elevations these forests include walnut, poplar, willow, rhododendron, and magnolia. Above 9,000 ft cypress, fir,

and juniper are added to the mix, and these give way to birch and fir, which grow up to the timberline of 14,000 ft. Various alpine shrubs and flowers are also found on the mountain slopes.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 2,232,291
 World Rank: 139th
 Density per sq km: 18.6
 % of annual growth (1999–2003): 2.8
 Male %: 51.7
 Female %: 48.3
 Urban %: 8.5
 Age Distribution: % 0–14: 39.3
 15–64: 56.6
 65 and over: 4.1

Population 2025: 3,295,000
 Birth Rate per 1,000: 34.41
 Death Rate per 1,000: 13.2
 Rate of Natural Increase %: 2.2
 Total Fertility Rate: 4.87
 Expectation of Life (years): Males 54.27
 Females 53.68
 Marriage Rate per 1,000: —
 Divorce Rate per 1,000: —
 Average Size of Households: 5.4
 Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

The largest homogeneous ethnic group in Bhutan is the Bhotes (known in the Dzongkha language as Sharchops), who constitute 54 percent of the population and who are concentrated in the eastern regions. Direct descendants of Tibetan immigrants live west of the Sankosh River and make up about 32 percent of the population. The largest ethnic minority is the Nepali community, made up largely of the Rai, Gurung, and Limbu castes. They have resisted assimilation and have maintained their own settlements. They are prohibited from moving into the northern regions, where the Bhotes predominate. Smaller ethnic groups include Lepcha immigrants from Sikkim as well as Santals and Paharias from India.

While the CIA's estimate of Bhutan's population is over two million, other estimates range as low as 800,000.

LANGUAGES

The official language is Dzongkha (also spelled Denjongke), whose written form is identical to Tibetan. Three other languages are spoken in the country: Bumthangka in the central region, Sarachapkha in the eastern region, and Nepalese in the southern region.

Indian influence is reflected in the use of Hindi and Bengali near the southern border. English is taught in

schools, and many educated Bhutanese are fluent in Hindi and English as well as in their native dialects.

RELIGIONS

The official religion is a Tibetan form of Buddhism of the Mahayana branch, known as Lamaism, which is followed by the dominant Bhotes. The monks and clerics belong to the Druk Kargue branch of the Kagyutpa, one of the “red hat” orders of Tibetan Buddhism. Monasteries are numerous, and the number of monks is estimated at 4,000 to 5,000. By custom each family devotes at least one offspring to a monastery.

Though the monarch—the *druk gyalpo* (dragon king)—is the secular as well as spiritual head of Bhutan, the head of the monastic order—the *je y khampo*—is a dominant force in national life and is a member of the Royal Advisory Council. Monks in the lower echelons also serve as the social, cultural, and religious leaders in their respective *dzongs* in addition to functioning as physicians and astrologers.

The Nepali minority follows a form of Hinduism with Buddhist overtones.

Religious Affiliations

Lamaistic Buddhist	1,675,000
Hindu	558,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Little is known of the history of Bhutan before the modern era. The Bhotes probably came from Tibet in the ninth century when the Tibetans overran the area that was inhabited by the native Tephu tribe. Bhutan first appears in history when the British repelled a Bhutanese invasion of the Indian princely state of Cooch Behar and later concluded a peace treaty with Bhutan. But the Bhutanese continued their inroads into the Duars, the low-lying areas of north Assam and Bengal. In 1866 the British finally defeated the Bhutanese and forced them to withdraw in return for an annual payment. In 1907 the Bhutanese leader Ugyen Dorji was installed as king, with British blessings. Under the Punakha Treaty of 1910 the United Kingdom agreed not to interfere in Bhutanese affairs but took over the management of Bhutan’s external relations. When India became independent in 1949 the treaty was replaced by the Indo-Bhutan Treaty of Friendship. King Jigme Dorji Wangchuk, installed in 1952, established the National Assembly in 1953 and a Royal Advisory Council in 1965. He died in 1972 and was succeeded by the Western-educated 16-year-old crown prince Jigme Singye Wangchuk. During the last 40 years Bhutan has had to deal with illegal immigra-

tion from Tibet on the one hand and from Nepal on the other. A Citizenship Act was passed in 1985 that set stringent conditions for citizenship, including linguistic and other tests of commitment to the Bhutanese community. Many formerly legal Nepali Bhutanese then became illegal, and 100,000 were expelled to Nepal, where they still live in refugee camps. This situation has created ongoing tension between the two countries. Other Nepali immigrants have tried to organize themselves into a political party to secure civil rights and legal citizenship. Violence continued in southern Bhutan during the 1990s, leading to further strained relations with Nepal. In 1993 the government was still unable to resolve the uprising by its Nepalese minority, who claimed that 53 percent of Bhutan’s residents were Nepalese, while the government claimed that less than one-third were resident and the remainder were illegal aliens. In April 1993 a meeting between the Nepalese Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala and King Wangchuk to discuss the refugee situation ended in failure. In the new millennia this refugee situation continued to be a major problem for the country. More talks were held in 2000 and 2002, without resolution.

Bhutan’s plans for modernization of its institutions are supported and financially underwritten by India. Considered a liberal leader, King Wangchuk in 1999 allowed his country limited access to television and the Internet. In 2001 the king commissioned a constitution, which is scheduled to come into effect in 2005. As another sign of Bhutan attempting to open to the world, negotiations began in 2003 for entrance into the World Trade Organization (WTO). A prime minister is allowed to share some power with the king; he is chosen on a revolving basis from among the council of ministers. In 2005 Sangay Ngedup began his tenure in that office.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

King	
1907–26	Ugyen Wangchuk
1926–52	Jigme Wangchuk
1952–72	Jugme Dorji Wangchuk
1972–	Jigme Singye Wangchuk
Prime Minister	
1952–64	Jigme Palden Dorji
1964	Lhendup Dorji
1998–99	Lyonpo Jigme Thinley
1999–2000	Lyonpo Sangay Ngedup
2000–01	Lyonpo Yeshey Zimba
2001–02	Lyonpo Khandu Wangchuk
2002–03	Lyonpo Kinzang Dorji
2003–04	Lyonpo Jigme Yoser Thinley
2004–05	Lyonpo Yeshey Zimba
2005–	Lyonpo Sangay Ngedup

CONSTITUTION

Though Bhutan yet has no constitution and is an absolute monarchy, the nation has taken some hesitant steps toward constitutionalism by introducing certain features of representative government. These include the T̄songdu, or National Assembly, created in 1953; the Royal Advisory Council, created in 1965; and the Council of Ministers, or cabinet, formed in 1968. At the same time the monarch voluntarily surrendered some of his traditional powers to strengthen the T̄songdu. Specifically, the right to veto by the king was removed, full freedom of parliamentary speech was guaranteed, and the king was required to seek a vote of confidence from the T̄songdu every three years. In the event of a vote of no confidence by a two-thirds majority, the king is to abdicate, but the crown is to remain in the Wangchuk dynasty in order of succession. The T̄songdu subsequently abrogated the right to remove the monarch but then reinstated the right in 1998. The impact of these measures has been minimal.

The most powerful organ of government after the *druk gyalpo* is the Royal Advisory Council, whose eight members are appointed by the king. Five of its members represent the people, two the Buddhist hierarchy, and one is the personal representative of the king. The council only submits recommendations to the king, who either accepts or rejects them as he sees fit. Next in authority is the five-member Council of Ministers, selected, in principle, from the T̄songdu. The prime minister is chosen on a rotating basis from this Council.

Popular elections are held at the village level every three years. Each family is granted one vote. In 2001 King Wangchuk established a commission to draft a constitution that would grant more power to the people. Having gone through several drafts, the constitution—calling for separation of powers—was due to come into effect in 2005. However, a referendum on the constitution has been postponed to 2008.

The Wangchuk dynasty seems to be confronted with no serious or visible opposition. Almost all of the changes initiated during the past 30 years have come from the monarch himself. The intention behind these reforms has been to create a semblance of popular participation in the political process without actually diluting royal power. Feudal and theocratic forces remain in control of the country, and a possible internal threat to the monarchy would likely arise only from conservative forces who may feel that the pace of modernization is too fast. The nearest Bhutan came to a political crisis in recent times was in 1964, when Prime Minister Jigme Polden Dorji was assassinated and his successor and younger brother Prime Minister Lhendup Dorji was involved in a power struggle with the king and was forced to flee to Nepal. Although there has been occasional Chinese-inspired guerrilla activity, it is not a serious problem.

PARLIAMENT

The national assembly, known as the T̄songdu and established in 1953, seats members on the basis of a three-year term and meets twice yearly, in spring and autumn, for sessions that last no more than two weeks each. The T̄songdu comprises 150 members, of whom 105 are indirectly elected by village headmen, 10 represent the Buddhist clergy and monks, and the remaining seats are occupied by officials, ministers, deputy ministers, and judicial officers. The T̄songdu claims broad powers, comparable in theory to those of the best representative institutions abroad. It debates freely all important issues and advises the king on political and constitutional matters. Both the Royal Advisory Council and the Council of Ministers are responsible to it. Bills passed by the T̄songdu may not be vetoed by the king. The T̄songdu also has the right to force the abdication of the king through a no-confidence motion. Because most of its members are illiterate, however, the T̄songdu remains largely an otiose and ineffective organ.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Political parties are banned in Bhutan. However, there are a number of antigovernment organizations that are based in Nepal.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For purposes of local administration Bhutan is divided into 20 districts known as *dzongs*, each headed by a *dzongda* (in charge of administration and law and order) and a commissioner known as a *trimpong* (in charge of judicial matters). The *trimpongs* are assisted by tax collectors known as *nyer-chens*.

Each village has a council consisting of one member from each family. The council elects a village headman, who also dispenses justice. Elections are held at the village level at three-year intervals.

LEGAL SYSTEM

Bhutan's court systems dates from 1968, when the king established the first High Court (Thimkhang Gongma). At the same time judges were appointed for each of the country's administrative districts. The High Court was empowered to review the decisions of the king.

Below the High Court local headmen and magistrates hear cases in the first instance. At this level justice is dispensed according to customary and religious laws. No information is available on correctional facilities.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Although information is not readily available on political conditions in the nation, Bhutanese society has a reputation for nonviolence and tolerance. However, civil and political liberties have no constitutional basis, and the role of the state is that of a benign patriarch. The basic freedoms have not been guaranteed on paper but are enjoyed in practice. However, the plight of Nepalese refugees has brought a great deal of international attention to Bhutan. Charges of human rights violations were leveled against the Bhutanese security forces for their handling of peace marches sponsored by the Bhutan People's Party in 1996.

FOREIGN POLICY

Although bound by treaty with India, Bhutan has established direct relations with China, India's arch-enemy. It has negotiated with the People's Republic of China over the Bhutan-China border. The ninth round of these border talks was held in 1993. Demarcation of the southern border has been agreed upon with India. Tensions have arisen between Bhutan and India's northeastern state of Assam. Two separatist groups from Assam—the United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA) and the National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB)—have bases in Bhutan, and a third, the Kamatapur Liberation Organization (KLO), from West Bengal, also maintains bases in the country. In late 2002 Bhutan moved against these bases, a move welcomed by the Assam government. Bhutan became a member of the United Nations in 1971 and has diplomatic relations with 19 nations and with the European Union. It is a founding member of the South Asian Regional Cooperation (SARC) organization.

DEFENSE

The defense structure is headed by the *druk gyalpo*, who is also the commander in chief. Military manpower is provided by conscription.

The strength of the armed forces is estimated at 8,000. Military expenditures totaled \$11.2 million, or 1.9 percent of gross domestic product (GDP), in 2003.

The capability of the army is limited to internal security missions, the manning of border posts, and the suppression of any opposition movements or guerrilla activities inspired by Chinese Communists. Bhutanese soldiers are noted for their stamina and fighting qualities, which partially offset their weakness in equipment and supplies.

Though the defense of Bhutan is the responsibility of the Indian army, there is no agreement to station Indian

troops in Bhutanese territory. India provides military training to Bhutanese officers and men.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 8,000
 Military Manpower Availability: 544,560
 Military Expenditures \$million: 11.2
 as % of GDP: 1.9
 as % of central government expenditures: —
 Arms Imports \$: —
 Arms Exports \$: —

ECONOMY

Bhutan is one of the lowest-income and least-developed countries in the world. Because the economy is incompletely monetized, few statistical indicators can be constructed from existing data.

Bhutan has a free-market economy in which the dominant sector is private. The economy is based on agriculture and forestry, which employ 93 percent of the population and account for about 51 percent of GDP.

Balance of payments statistics are limited to imports and exports. Trade deficits are made up through credits from the Indian government.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 2.7
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 1,300
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 7.1
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 4.1
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %
 Agriculture: 45
 Industry: 10
 Services: 45
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %
 Private Consumption: 53
 Government Consumption: 22
 Gross Domestic Investment: —
 Foreign Trade \$million: Exports: 154
 Imports: 196
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: —
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: —
 CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
128.1	136.8	142.3	147.2	150.8

Finance

National Currency: Ngultrum (BTN)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = BTN 46.5806
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 6.971
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: —
 Total External Debt \$million: 245
 Debt Service Ratio %: 4.65
 Balance of Payments \$million: —
 International Reserves SDRs \$million: 319
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 3.0

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 73.5
 per capita \$: 33
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 2.1

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: July 1–June 30
 Revenues \$million: 146
 Expenditures \$million: 152
 Budget Deficit \$million: 6
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: 7.7

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 45
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2002) %: 3.9
 Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares: —
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 24.2
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: —
 Total Farm land as % of land area: 3.1
 Livestock: Cattle 000: 372
 Sheep 000: 20
 Hogs 000: 41
 Chickens 000: 230
 Forests: Production of Roundwood (000 cubic meters): 4,547
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 300

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 46.175
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 9.3

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 198
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 259
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 122
 Net Energy Imports % of use: —
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: 400
 Production kW-hr billion: 1.9
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 0.38
 Coal Reserves tons million: —
 Production tons 000: 60
 Consumption tons 000: —
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic meters billion: —
 Production cubic meters million: —
 Consumption cubic meters million: —
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels million: —
 Production barrels per day: —
 Consumption barrels per day: 1,020
 Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$million: 196
 Exports \$million: 154

Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —
 Balance of Trade \$: —

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Japan %	36.6	—
Austria %	14.2	—
Sweden %	8.3	—
China %	7.5	—
Thailand %	6.0	—
Bangladesh %	6.0	60.5
Germany %	5.5	—
Italy %	4.0	—
United States %	—	11.7
Malaysia %	—	5.7

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 3,690
 Paved %: 60.7
 Automobiles: —
 Trucks and Buses: —
 Railroad; Track Length km: —
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: —
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: —
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: —
 Airports: 2
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 61
 Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 6
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 10
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: —

Communications

Telephones 000: 25.2
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.02
 Cellular Telephones 000: 8
 Personal Computers 000: 10
 Internet Hosts: 985
 Internet Users: 15,000

ENVIRONMENT

Like those of most other developing nations, Bhutan's fertile valleys suffer from continuing soil erosion as antiquated agricultural techniques are employed. Another environmental concern is the country's limited amount of potable water.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 64.2
 Average Annual Forest Change, 1990-2000, 000 ha: —
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 26
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 0.5

LIVING CONDITIONS

Bhutan is still very much cut off from the rest of the world, and though overtures have been made toward modernization, the country remains on the lowest rungs of development in South Asia. The 2004 infant mortality rate per 1,000 live births was 103, population growth was 2 percent, and life expectancy was 54 years. Dysentery and malaria are still leading causes of death in the country. Fertility rates are high in the country, with almost 5 children born per woman according to a 2004 estimate.

The economy is also one of the world's smallest and least developed, and 90 percent of the population lives in rural areas and villages. The capital, Thimphu, and Phuntsholing are the only sizable cities, each with an estimated 45,000 inhabitants. In the north of the country architectural styles are influenced by Tibet, while in the south the Indian influence is felt. With no railroads, transportation is problematic across the mountainous terrain. Villages are cut off from one another, just as the entire country is cut off from much of the rest of the world.

HEALTH

As with many other features of Bhutanese life, the health-care system is still in a stage of development. Though the government provides free medical care to workers, the population-to-doctor ratio is still over 10,000 to 1. This acute shortage of medical personnel results in a life expectancy of only 54 years, with a full 38 percent of children less than five underweight in 1994. Immunization rates for children have been growing in recent years, with between 75 and 85 percent rates for measles, pertussis, diphtheria, polio, and tuberculosis vaccinations. Despite these efforts, diphtheria and tuberculosis are still major causes of death, especially among Bhutanese refugees. Cholera outbreaks are still common due to limited supplies of potable water. There were fewer than 100 people living with AIDS or HIV in the country according to a 1999 estimate.

Health

Number of Physicians: 103
 Number of Dentists: —
 Number of Nurses: 467
 Number of Pharmacists: —

Physician Density per 100,000 population: 5
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 102.56
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 420
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 3.9
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 9
 HIV Infected % of adults: < 0.1
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 86
 Measles: 78
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 70
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 62

FOOD AND NUTRITION

The main food in Bhutan is rice. However, at higher altitudes, where rice cultivation is impossible, it is substituted with other grains such as barley or buckwheat. Fried corn powder is a popular dish, and a type of beer, *chang*, is brewed from grains. Though cow milk is not readily available, yak milk is and provides not only a beverage but also the raw material for a type of cheese. Tea, brewed with salt and butter, is another favorite.

Despite the fact that most Bhutanese are Buddhists, they are not vegetarians. Meats such as beef, pork, chicken, and goat are consumed when available. A stew of meat, rice, and herbs called *thugpa* is a typical dish, as are curries and omelets.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: —
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: —

STATUS OF WOMEN

Although the government has officially encouraged greater participation on behalf of women in political and administrative life, male members of the traditional aristocracy dominate the social system. By 2001, 9 percent of members of parliament were women. The government founded the National Women's Association of Bhutan in 1981 primarily to improve the socioeconomic status of women, particularly those in rural areas. Starting in 1985 the association became a line item in the government budget.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 9
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men age 15 to 24: —
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-Agricultural %: —

WORK

Agriculture and forestry occupy 93 percent of the working population of Bhutan. Another 2 percent of the population is employed in industry and commerce and 5 percent in the service sector. Industrial products include cement, wood products, processed fruits, alcoholic beverages, and calcium carbide, while agricultural production is concentrated on rice, corn, root crops, citrus, grains, dairy products, and eggs. A shortage of skilled laborers is endemic in Bhutan; the government sector is the largest employer of salaried workers. In 2002 the government established a living minimum wage of \$2.50 per day, and although the minimum work age is 18 for citizens, international groups have noted local industries employing preteens. Tourism is restricted in Bhutan, providing only about 2 percent of GDP, but in the future the country's tourist industry could hold promise.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: —
 Female Participation Rate %: 40.0
 Labor by Sector: %
 Agriculture: 93
 Industry and Commerce: 2
 Services: 5
 Unemployment %: —

EDUCATION

Though education is neither universal nor compulsory, it is free for the first 10 years. Of those 10 years of schooling, primary school lasts for five years, lower secondary school for three years, and upper secondary school for two years. There are no mission or private schools; all schools are subsidized by the government. A few schools are coeducational and are run on the lines of American private schools but using a British syllabus. Two vocational institutes function as teacher-training schools: the Kharbandi Technical School and the Royal Bhutan Polytechnic. Several other colleges also exist.

The academic year is the calendar year. The medium of instruction is Dzongkha, but English is taught in selected schools.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 42.2
 Male %: 56.2
 Female %: 28.1
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: —
 First Level: Primary schools: 235
 Teachers: 2,234
 Students: 88,204
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 39.5
 Net Enrollment Ratio: —

Second Level: Secondary Schools: 31
 Teachers: 812
 Students: 25,867
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 32.3
 Net Enrollment Ratio: —
 Third Level: Institutions: 2
 Teachers: 164
 Students: 1,893
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: —
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 5.2

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Several colleges in Bhutan offer courses in the sciences and technology. The Bhutan Polytechnic College, in Deothang, trains students in engineering, while the Royal Technical Institute, in Phuntsholing, has courses in electronics, mechanics, and motor mechanics. Sherubtse Degree College, in Tashigang, also provides science courses.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million persons: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$: —
 Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

The only newspaper in the country is the weekly *Kuensel*, published by the government in English, Dzongkha, and Nepalese, with a total circulation of about 12,500 copies.

Bhutan has no national news agency. There are no foreign news bureaus in the capital.

Bhutan has 52 radio stations. The Bhutan Broadcasting Service airs programs in English, Sharchopkha, Dzongkha, and Nepali on a daily basis. Television and the Internet were permitted by the king in 1999. The state television station broadcasts a daily news program in two languages. Wealthier Bhutanese use satellite dishes or cable to get international broadcasts. Druknet is the only Internet service provider in the country, offering limited access to customers of the few Internet cafés in the country. There were an estimated 15,000 Internet users in Bhutan in 2003.

There is a public library in the capital, Thimphu, and most monasteries have collections of Buddhist manuscripts.

Media

Newspapers and Periodicals: —
 Total Circulation: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: —
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets 000: 13
 per 1,000: 6

CULTURE

Tibetan Buddhism provides a backdrop for much of the country's cultural heritage. Protected from outside influences by its geographical location, Bhutan has maintained this cultural heritage into the 21st century. Lamas still maintain a high degree of influence on not only religious but also cultural, political, social, and economic affairs. Their fort-like monasteries, called *dzongs*, are the center of religious and cultural life in the country. Religious objects such as the painted religious scroll, or *thangka*, and the "wheel of life," or *mandala*, are not only sacred objects but are also regarded as art.

The music of Bhutan includes such traditional genres as *rigsar*, *zhungdra*, and *boedra*. Television and radio are largely used for the dissemination of information rather than entertainment, but the country does have a nascent film industry, as witnessed by the 2000 production of the nation's first feature-length film, *The Cup*, which depicts a burgeoning soccer craze among Buddhist monks.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
Volumes: —
Registered borrowers: —
Museums Number: —
Annual Attendance: —
Cinema Gross Receipts: —
Number of Cinemas: —
Seating Capacity: —
Annual Attendance: —

FOKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Folklore and mythology in Bhutan harken back to the country's religious roots and to events and people in its history. Many tales relate the wondrous workings of the Tibetan guru Rimpoche, who was invited into the country in the eighth century by an Indian prince. Also known as Padmasambhava, Rimpoche introduced Buddhism into Bhutan. More stories deal with the wisdom and exploits of the reincarnation of Rimpoche, a 15th-century lama named Pemalingma. Religious dances choreographed by him are still popular. A third historical person who figures in Bhutanese folklore is the 17th-century lama Dharma Raja, who helped create the state of Bhutan.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Religious festivals, or *tsechu*, are a major form of entertainment for the villagers in Bhutan. These are held at local monasteries and involve dancing and singing and may last for several days. Since 1999 Bhutanese have been able

to watch television, albeit on a limited basis. There is also the government newspaper, *Kuensel*, but Bhutan's low literacy rate ensures a small circulation for the paper. The largest library in Bhutan is the National Library at Thimphu. In 2002 it contained 105,000 volumes. Internet cafés have also become popular in the country.

ETIQUETTE

Unlike in other parts of South Asia, men and women mix freely with each other in Bhutanese society. When greeting a guest, the Bhutanese will bow with hands extended and palms facing the visitor. Hospitality is important, and guests are always offered some refreshment, such as tea or beer.

FAMILY LIFE

Bhutanese of various ethnic groups tend to marry within their own community. Historically, weddings have been arranged by parents. More and more frequently, however, marriage has become a matter of individual choice. Divorce is permitted but not common; compensation is required from the person wanting the divorce. The legal age for marriage is 21 for men and 16 for women. Lamas usually conduct the simple wedding ceremonies, and offerings are made to spirits with beer. The husband traditionally moves into the family home of the bride, but couples can also set up their own households, depending on their economic circumstances.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Mainly of Tibetan stock, Bhutanese share the physical appearance of that people. Dress is controlled by government decree and all citizens are required to abide by this dress code, or *driglam namzha*, during daylight hours. The *gho*, or knee-length robe tied at the waist, is worn by men, while women wear an ankle-length dress called a *kira*, made of a large rectangular piece of cloth folded and clasped. Over this they may also wear a silk jacket known as a *toego*. Shoes are not typical for men or women, but sandals are sometimes worn. Women's hair is cut short and men might wrap scarves around their heads. When visiting a monastery or temple, a special sash is worn by members of both sexes.

SPORTS

Archery is the national sport, but soccer is also very popular. Archery competitions often make up parts of the Bhutanese religious festivals.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1949** India and Bhutan sign Treaty of Perpetual Peace and Friendship.
- 1952** Maharaja Jigme Dorji Wangchuk ascends to the throne.
- 1958** The maharaja abolishes slavery.
- 1961** Bhutan's first five-year plan is launched.
- 1962** Bhutan joins the Colombo Plan.
- 1963** The ruler of Bhutan adopts the title of *druk gyalpo*.
- 1964** Prime Minister Jigme Polden Dorji is assassinated; Brigadier Bahadur Namgyal, deputy commander in chief, is implicated and arrested along with 40 other members of the military. Namgyal is executed. Lhendup Dorji is named prime minister but becomes involved in a power struggle with the *druk gyalpo* and flees to Nepal with the army commander, Brigadier Ugyen Tyangbi. The *druk gyalpo* names himself prime minister.
- 1965** The Royal Advisory Council is established, along with the Council of Ministers, in an effort to broaden the political decision-making process.
- 1968** Bhutan's first High Court is established. In a major governmental reform, the *druk gyalpo* renounces his royal prerogative to veto bills passed by the Tsongdu and also declares that he would step down if two-thirds of its members demanded his abdication through a vote of no confidence. The Bank of Bhutan is established.
- 1969** Bhutan holds its first census.
- 1971** Bhutan is admitted to the United Nations.
- 1972** King Jigme Dorji Wangchuk dies; his son, 17-year-old Jigme Singhye Wangchuk, ascends the throne.
- 1974** The ngultrum is introduced as the national currency. Jigme Singye Wangchuk is crowned king.
- 1979** Following the breakdown of talks with the dalai lama, the Tsongdu passes a directive requiring Tibetan settlers to become citizens or face repatriation to Tibet.
- 1983** Bhutan becomes a founding member of South Asian Regional Cooperation (SARC) along with Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka.
- 1985** Bhutan hosts the first meeting of ministers of foreign affairs from SARC member countries; SARC is renamed the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC).
- 1989** King Wangchuk issues the "Driglam Manzha," an edict that lays down strict rules pertaining to dress and social codes.
- 1990** Alarmed by the restoration of democracy in Nepal, King Wangchuk bans the viewing of foreign television and orders strict enforcement of the Driglam Manzha, subjecting violators to fines and imprisonment; demonstrations are held.
- 1991** Through 1993, thousands of illegal immigrants, mostly Nepali-speaking Hindus, are expelled.
- 1997** Nearly 80,000 Bhutanese refugees in UN camps in Nepal claim they were forced out of their homeland.
- 1998** King Wangchuk agrees to some constitutional governmental reforms, including the election of a cabinet. China also recognizes Bhutan's international status.
- 1999** Bhutan releases 200 prisoners whom human rights groups had identified as political detainees
- 2001** King Wangchuk establishes a commission to draw up a constitution.
- 2004** In December government troops carry out a widespread offensive against the separatist camps of the United Liberation Front of Assam in the south of the country. The United Nations High Commission on Refugees (UNHCR) seeks to solve the Nepalese refugee problem through resettlement in Western countries.
- 2005** King Wangchuk announces he will abdicate in 2008, when parliamentary elections are to be held.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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- The Library of Congress Country Studies: Bhutan
<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/bttoc.html>
- National Institute of Statistics
<http://www.ine.es/>

INTERNET RESOURCES

- CIA—The World Fact Book: Bhutan
<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/bt.html>

BOLIVIA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Bolivia (República de Bolivia)

ABBREVIATION

BO

CAPITAL

Sucre (de jure); La Paz (administrative and de facto)

HEAD OF STATE & HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

President Evo Morales (from 2005)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Parliamentary democracy

POPULATION

8,857,870 (2005)

AREA

1,098,580 sq km (424,162 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Indian

LANGUAGES

Spanish, Aymara, Quechua

RELIGION

Roman Catholicism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Boliviano

NATIONAL FLAG

Tricolor of horizontal red, gold and green stripes with the national emblem at the center

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A condor of the Andes, with wings outstretched, perches on a blue and gold oval shield flanked by branches of olive and laurel. In the upper rim of the shield is the word *Bolivia* and in the lower rim nine stars appear. The upper half of the inner shield shows Mount Potosí illuminated by a rising sun. In the foreground are a breadfruit tree, a sheaf of corn, a farm house, and an alpaca. In the background of the emblem are an array of crossed cannon, bayonet-armed rifles, Inca war axe, red cap and pike, and six national flags, three on either side.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“O Bolivia, Now a Kindly Fate Has Crowned Our Long-Felt Hopes”

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year’s Day), August 5 to 7 (National Festival), August 6 (Independence Day, National Day), May 1 (Labor Day), July 21 (Martyrs’ Day), October 12 (Discovery of Americas Day), various Christian festivals, including All Saints’ Day, All Souls’ Day, Christmas, Good Friday, Holy Saturday, and Corpus Christi

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

August 6, 1825

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

February 2, 1967; last amended April 2004

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Bolivia is located in the heart of South America. It is the fifth-largest country in the continent, with an area of 1,098,580 sq km (424,162 sq mi), extending 1,529 km (950 mi) north to south and 1,448 km (900 mi) east to west. Because of its landlocked position, it is sometimes described as the “Tibet of South America.”

Bolivia shares its total international land border of 6,743 km (4,190 mi) with five countries: Brazil (3,400 km; 2,113 mi); Paraguay (750 km; 466 mi); Argentina (832 km;

517 mi); Chile (861 km; 535 mi); and Peru (900 km; 559 mi). Bolivia has served throughout its history as a buffer state amid these five neighbors but in the process has lost more than half of the national territory it originally claimed to all of these neighbors except Argentina.

Bolivia is divided into three topographical regions by most geographers, four regions by others. The three commonly cited regions are the high plateau region known as the altiplano; an intermediary region comprising semi-tropical rain forests on the eastern slopes, or *yungas*, of the Andean mountain system; and the drier valleys and

Bolivia



the llanos, or the Amazon-Chaco lowlands. The intermediate region south of Cochabamba is sometimes identified as a separate region under the name of Valles.

The altiplano, which crosses the country in a northwest to southeast direction, parallels and splits the Andes into two mountain chains, or cordilleras, straddling the country on its eastern and western sides. The western

mountain chain, the Cordillera Occidental, forms the border with Chile and has crests and peaks that often rise to 4,900 m (16,000 ft), the highest peak being Sajama (6,542 m; 21,458 ft). On the other flank of the altiplano is the higher Cordillera Real, or Cordillera Oriental, an impressive array of peaks with an average elevation of over 5,500 m (18,000 ft). The most majestic of these mountains

are those around Lake Titicaca, especially Illimani and Illampu, both of which rise to over 6,400 m (21,000 ft), overlooking the city of La Paz. The altiplano itself is 800 km (500 mi) long and 130 km (80 mi) wide, with an average altitude of 3,650 m (11,975 ft) above sea level. This region cradles the famed Lake Titicaca, 222 km (138 mi) long and 113 km (70 mi) wide, with a surface elevation of 3,657 m (12,000 ft), making it the highest navigable lake in the world. It is also South America's largest lake.

The second region, the *yungas* ("warm lands" in Aymara), is made up of sharply tilted mountain valleys with an altitude of between 490 m (1,608 ft) and 2,750 m (9,022 ft). The *yungas* consists of three zones, of which the highest, called *ceja* (eyebrow) is similar to the altiplano, while the intermediate zone consists of fertile river valleys. The valleys and basins of the Valles region, which is often treated as part of the *yungas*, are broader and more densely populated.

The lowland plain, or llano, region consists of tropical rain forests and the Plains of Moxos with alternating savannas and cultivated areas. Because the drainage is poor, much of this region is converted periodically to swamp. Farther south, the llano merges with the La Plata River basin, constituting a northward extension of the pampas of Argentina.

The altiplano is an inland drainage basin drained by the Desaguadero River, which flows into Lake Poopó. The *yungas* and the Valles regions are drained by the Pilcomayo River, which flows south to join the Paraguay, and the Chaparé, Ichilo, and Río Grande, which join to form the Mamoré, a tributary of the Amazon. The Guaporé, Beni, and Madre de Dios rivers also converge in the northeast to form the Madeira in Brazil.

Geography

Area sq km: 1,098,580; sq mi 424,162

World Rank: 27th

Land Boundaries, km: Argentina 832; Brazil 3,400; Chile 861; Paraguay 750; Peru 900

Coastline, km: 0

Elevation Extremes meters:

Lowest: Río Paraguay 90

Highest: Nevado Sajama 6,542

Land Use %

Arable land: 2.67

Permanent Crops: 0.19

Forest: 48.9

Other: 48.24

Population of Principal Cities (2001)

Cochabamba	516,683
El Alto	647,350
La Paz	789,585
Oruro	201,230
Potosí	132,966
Santa Cruz	1,116,059
Sucre	193,873
Tarija	135,783

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Bolivia is entirely within the tropics, but extreme differences in elevation produce a variety of climatic conditions. In general, temperatures and rainfall increase from west to east. During most of the year the altiplano is parched and inhospitable. The valleys of the Cordillera Oriental have a warmer, semiarid Mediterranean climate. The *yungas* have a semitropical and moist climate, and the lowlands become drier to the south near the Argentina border. The mean annual temperature at La Paz is about 8°C (47°F); at Trinidad in the eastern lowlands, it is 26°C (79°F). In the altiplano the nights are cold even in summer, and freezing temperatures are recorded during most winter nights. The thinness of the air in the altiplano and the intense sunlight combine to produce a kind of luminosity in the atmosphere that has a stimulating visual quality.

The rainy season lasts from December to February, but the amount of rainfall varies seasonally as well as annually. Rainfall is heaviest in the Cordillera Oriental and lightest in the altiplano; it also tends to decrease from north to south. Lake Titicaca receives around 1,010 mm (40 in), the *yungas* 1,520 mm (60 in), the Valles 760 mm (30 in), the Santa Cruz Plains 1,020 mm to 1,520 mm (40 in to 60 in), and the Chaco 890 mm to 1,020 mm (35 in to 40 in). Because of seasonal variations, both floods and droughts are common. The Chaco particularly becomes a swamp during the rainy season and a parched desert during the summer.

The rain-bearing winds are easterlies from the Amazon basin. Dust-laden winds called the *surazos* blow from Paraguay across the Santa Cruz plains.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature

La Paz: 47°F

Trinidad: 79°F

Average Rainfall

Lake Titicaca: 40 in

Yungas: 60 in

Valles: 30 in

Santa Cruz Plains: 40 in to 60 in

Chaco: 35 in to 40 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

With its immense range of geographical features—from arctic-like conditions in the high mountains to the forests of the Amazon—Bolivia offers a wide range of both plant and animal life. The Lake Titicaca region is said to be the original home of the potato, and it is also home to the *totoro* reed, used for making small fishing boats. In the same region, fuel is provided by a moss-like plant, the *yareta*, and from the *tola* bush. At these high elevations the grass

ichu provides material for everything from woven mats to house thatching.

The tropical forest provides a home to a wide variety of flora, from the quinine-producing *quina* tree to the *Pará* rubber tree. Hardwoods are plentiful in these forests, with over 2,000 species. This is also home to vanilla, sarsaparilla, and saffron plants. Other native plants include palms, sweet potatoes, manioc, peanuts, and a wide variety of fruits. In the Chaco region are found the prickly scrubs called *monte*. The tannin-producing *quebracho* trees are also plentiful there.

Animal life is equally varied, from the llama and alpaca of the altiplano to the puma, armadillo, tapir, sloth, peccary, and ant bear of the Amazon. Lake Titicaca has several varieties of edible fish, and bird life is rich and varied. Reptiles and a wide variety of insects are found below 3,050 m (10,000 ft).

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005:	8,857,870
World Rank:	86th
Density per sq km:	8.3
% of annual growth (1999–2003):	2.1
Male %:	49.5
Female %:	50.5
Urban %:	57.5
Age Distribution: %	
0–14:	36.4
15–64:	59.1
65 and over:	4.5
Population 2025:	11,370,000
Birth Rate per 1,000:	24.65
Death Rate per 1,000:	7.77
Rate of Natural Increase %:	2.0
Total Fertility Rate:	3.08
Expectation of Life (years):	Males 62.54
	Females 67.86
Marriage Rate per 1,000:	—
Divorce Rate per 1,000:	—
Average Size of Households:	3.8
Induced Abortions:	—

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Indians constitute the ethnic majority in Bolivia, with an estimated 52 to 70 percent of the population. *Cholos*, or mestizos, make up 32 percent, whites from 5 to 15 percent, blacks 2 percent, and others 1 percent. These disparate ethnic groups have never quite melded together into one people, and cultural, racial, and linguistic differences persist in most areas of national life.

The Indians of Bolivia are broadly divided into Highland and Lowland Indians. The two largest highland groups are the Aymara and the Quechua, the former the oldest and the latter the largest among all

Indian tribes in the country. The Quechua are predominantly rural and are noted for their industriousness and friendliness.

The lowland tribes are characterized by extreme diversity, and many tribes remain unknown to ethnographers. They are generally classified into four linguistic groups: Panoan, Tacanan, Mojoan (or Arawakan), and Guaranian. These, in turn, are divided into 30 extant tribes of from 10 to 20,000 members. The largest of these groups is the Guaranian, with six subgroups.

Mestizos are a transitional group between whites and Indians. Although they make up almost one-third of the population and are widely distributed, they occupy an equivocal position in Bolivian society. The terms “mestizo” and *cholo* were applied formerly only to persons of mixed Indian and Spanish descent, but over the years the terms have been applied indiscriminately to any upwardly mobile Indian who has attained a certain economic and cultural status. Both terms are now defined by criteria such as the ability to speak Spanish, urban orientation, occupation, manners, and dress. Nevertheless, most *cholos* maintain certain Indian traditions and practice certain rituals associated with Indian folk religion, magic, and festivals.

Although they represent less than 15 percent of the population, whites (also known as *gente decente* or *gente buena*, “decent” or “good people”), dominate the political and economic life of the country. The white elite remains socially and culturally homogeneous and jealously protective of their Spanish heritage. The 1952 revolution, which altered the political equation in favor of the Indians, also mitigated some of the rigidity of the Bolivian social system.

Ethnic aliens include Brazilians, Germans (some of whom are members of a 500-family Mennonite agricultural colony), Jews who fled Nazi Germany in the 1930s, Lebanese, Canadians, Italians, and Poles. Relatively prominent among foreign communities are 700 Japanese and Okinawan families who immigrated to Bolivia after World War II and settled in the Santa Cruz area. Almost all aliens live in urban centers.

LANGUAGES

The official languages are Spanish, Aymara, and Quechua. Spanish is spoken as a first language by only a little more than one-third of the population. Bolivian Spanish conforms to standard Castilian and is purer than that spoken in most parts of South America. An estimated 40 percent of Indians cannot speak or read Spanish.

Quechua was the royal language of the Incas and is still the most widespread of the Indian languages. Guaraní is also a principal Indian language. Many isolated Indian groups speak languages so distinctive that they do not fit into conventional classifications and are therefore described by linguists as unrelated.

RELIGIONS

Over 88 percent of the population is estimated to be nominally Roman Catholic, but the church's influence on national life is marginal. The 1961 constitution formally separated church and state. The government relinquished the right to mediate in church affairs, to approve the appointment of major church officials, and to control the issuance of conciliar decrees. However, the church continues to receive financial support through the national budget.

The Roman Catholic Church, though claiming 2.1 million members in 1998, admits that only about 15 percent of the population actually practices the faith.

Protestants constitute only 9 percent of the population, but the Protestant growth rate has tended in recent years to exceed the population growth. During the last 30 or 40 years Protestant churches have seen increased social acceptance. The Aymaras, for example, have shown great receptivity to the Protestant missions, and nearly 3 percent of them are professing Protestants.

Some Indians practice a mixture of Catholic and traditional beliefs based upon the pantheism of pre-Columbian religion.

Religious Affiliations

Roman Catholic	7,795,000
Protestant	797,000
other	265,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Bolivia's earliest inhabitants were Aymara-speaking Colla Indians who settled around the southern end of Lake Titicaca around 600 c.e. They developed the Tiahuanaco civilization, which flourished until 900. Around 1300 the Quechua-speaking Incas conquered the region. In 1527 the Inca emperor Huayna Capac divided his empire between his two sons, and the southern part with its capital of Cuzco became a distinct region. The civil war between the two sons gave an opportunity for the Spaniards under Pizarro to overrun the land. In 1539 Pedro de Anzures established La Plata, now Sucre. The discovery of a rich silver mine called Cerro Rico de Potosí in 1545 brought the Spaniards to Upper Peru (as Bolivia was known during the colonial period). In 1548 La Paz was founded on the main silver transport route between Potosí and the coast. In 1559 Upper Peru became the Audiencia of Charcas under the Viceroyalty of Lima, but in 1776 it was transferred to the Viceroyalty of Rio de la Plata.

The major event in the colonial period was the insurrection of Tupac Amaru, heir to the Inca throne, which was put down brutally. Bolivia was one of the first Spanish American countries to revolt against Spain in 1809; 15 years later, Antonio José de Sucre, Simón Bolívar's young general, defeated the royalists in Upper Peru and con-

vened a congress, which in 1825 formally proclaimed the Republic of Bolívar, later changed to Bolivia. In 1826 Bolívar gave the new nation its first constitution. Sucre was chosen as the first president and Chuquisaca was renamed Sucre in his honor. Sucre was ousted in 1828 by General Andrés de Santa Cruz, who formed the short-lived Peruvian-Bolivian Confederation, dissolved in 1839. For most of the 19th century Bolivia was racked by civil and foreign wars as a result of which it lost much of its original land to Brazil and Chile. Between 1899 and 1920 Bolivia's rich tin deposits were extensively mined, leading to the construction of its fabled mountain railroads. During this period the Liberals were in power and moved the capital from Sucre to La Paz, a Liberal stronghold. In a war with Paraguay between 1932 and 1935 over the Chaco Boreal region Bolivia lost its outlet on the Paraguay River. The unrest following the war led to the rise of the left-wing governments of David Toro and German Busch, who nationalized the large oil industry and three large tin-mining interests. One of Busch's major accomplishments was the liberal constitution of 1938.

In 1952 the Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario (MNR) seized power and, in a coalition with the Labor Party, began a program of extensive social reform. Under the leadership of the presidents Victor Paz Estenssoro and Hernán Siles Zuazo the government nationalized the tin mines, introduced land reform, and established universal suffrage. As a result of opposition from powerful trade unions and growing social disorder, Estenssoro was overthrown by Vice President René Barrientos Ortuño with the support of the army. Barrientos shared the presidency with General Alfredo Ovando Candia until January 1966 when he resigned to run alone for president. Barrientos won election in July 1966 but was killed in a helicopter crash in April 1969. Victor Paz Estenssoro, a runner-up in that race, dropped out of the next contest, thus virtually ensuring Siles the necessary majority in congress. At this point the military again seized control of the government, ordered the disbanding of the congress and declaring the country a military zone. The coup was led by General Luis García Meza, the commander of the army, who then proceeded to establish a military government. The junta immediately moved to consolidate power and to eliminate opposition within the army as well as among the labor force. The new regime was promptly recognized by the other military dictatorships in the so-called Southern Cone of South America—Argentina, Chile, Paraguay, and Uruguay. Argentina was reported to have been actively involved in the coup, masterminding the takeover strategy as well as supplying the coup leaders with 200 military and intelligence personnel.

In May 1981 President García Meza resigned, naming General Humberto Coyoja Riart as his successor. A month later General Coyoja was arrested for his involvement in the plot to remove García Meza from the presidency, and Brigadier General Celso Torrelio Villa was

named president. Torrelío himself resigned on August 4 in favor of General Waldo Bernal Pereira but was restored to office on September 4. On July 19, 1982, General Torrelío was ousted and replaced by General Guido Vildoso Calderón, who announced on September 17 the restoration of civilian rule. The congress elected in 1980 was reconvened and elected Hernán Siles Zuazo as president. During the two ensuing years numerous government changes only worsened economic conditions, and in December 1984 Siles Zuazo announced his early retirement from the presidency following general elections on June 16, 1985. These elections brought Siles's old rival, Victor Paz Estenssoro, back to the presidential office.

Upon taking office Paz Estenssoro attacked the staggering inflation rate, estimated at 11,750 percent. His program was rejected by the trade unions, which called for a countrywide strike that was banned by the government and followed by the arrest and banishment of union leaders. Thousands of strikers were also arrested. The strike was called off in October and was to be followed by talks. In the same month the right-wing Acción Democrática Nacionalista (ADN) aligned with the governing party, the MNR.

A joint campaign by Bolivia and the U.S. military to eradicate illegal coca growing was actively protested by trade unions and opposition groups. Despite \$100 million in U.S. aid, coca operations continued unchecked.

In 1986 the government's economic austerity programs led to further strikes and the imposition of a 90-day state of siege. Unrest continued in 1987, with several ministers being replaced. Strikes were later banned, in November 1989.

Displeasure with the MNR programs was reflected in ADN and Leftist Revolutionary Movement (MIR) victories in the December 1987 municipal elections. Nevertheless, the pact between the ruling MNR and ADN kept the ADN in power. Further economic troubles, fired by rising oil prices early in 1988, led to a national hunger strike in April instigated by the COB trade union. Following this the cabinet resigned, though all but four members were reappointed.

The presidential elections in May 1989 resulted in defeat for each of the three candidates—General Hugo Banzer Suárez (ADN), Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada (MNR), and Jaime Paz Zamora (MIR). All candidates agreed on MNR policy: economic austerity programs, a campaign against coca production, and the finding of alternative employment and crops for coca growers. Despite the fact that Paz Zamora received the least votes of the three presidential candidates, support from Banzer (who was initially aligned with Sánchez) assured a majority vote for Paz Zamora in the newly elected congress. A coalition government was set up in which ADN members occupied strategic ministries. General Banzer held on to a certain amount of power through his leadership of a newly established joint political council.

Harsher measures had been taken in 1988 to fight Bolivia's drug trafficking. In April an antinarcotic agency and drug-control troops were established and empowered by a coca limitation law restricting the allowable acreage for traditional legal coca growing. At the same time Roberto Suárez, Bolivia's foremost drug trafficker, was arrested. This was followed by the exposure of leading ADN members' involvement in drug trading.

In 1989 an inability to make inroads against the powerful coca growers culminated in a cutoff of U.S. aid and a meeting in October of the presidents of the three major coca-growing countries—Bolivia, Colombia, and Peru—to discuss a common strategy. In 1993 Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada won the presidential election. During his tenure he implemented a number of reforms in favor of Bolivia's indigenous majority. His government's plan to privatize the oil industry led to heavy protests in 1995 and 1996. In response the government declared a state of siege and suspended civil rights. Presidential elections in 1997 brought the former dictator Hugo Banzer Suárez to office as a candidate of the ADN. In a program largely funded by the United States, the government announced plans to eradicate the coca plant by 2002, leading to angry protests by coca producers. Suffering from cancer, Banzer stepped down as president in 2001 and was replaced by Jorge Quiroga Ramírez, who in turn was replaced by Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada in 2002.

In February 2003 rioting took place in protest against a proposed income tax as well as the eradication program for coca. In October, Sánchez resigned after two months of rioting and strikes over a gas-exporting project that protesters believed would benefit foreign companies more than Bolivians. He was replaced by his vice president, Carlos Diego Mesa Gisbert, or simply Carlos Mesa, best known as a journalist and historian with little experience in government.

Mesa managed to remain popular despite continued social unrest. In a July 2004 referendum on the future of the country's significant natural gas reserves—the second largest in South America—Bolivians overwhelmingly supported Mesa's plan to exert more control over foreign gas companies. However, rising energy prices led to widespread protests in 2005 and Mesa ultimately resigned. Evo Morales became the first Indian to be elected president.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1982	Guido Vildoso Calderón
1982–85	Hernán Siles Zuazo
1985–89	Ángel Víctor Paz Estenssoro
1989–93	Jaime Paz Zamora
1993–97	Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada
1997–2001	Hugo Banzer Suárez
2001–02	Jorge Fernando Quiroga Ramírez
2002–03	Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada
2003–05	Carlos Diego Mesa Gisbert
2005–	Evo Morales

CONSTITUTION

Bolivia is governed by the constitution of 1967 (the nation's 16th constitution since independence), which provides for a democratic centralist republic. Although the constitution calls for elected governments, elected governments have frequently not been allowed by the military to take office. Furthermore, the separation of governmental powers and the equal status of the three branches of government have become legal fictions, as presidents have gained power through coups and maintained it by decree. Suffrage is given at 18 years of age for married individuals and 21 for those unmarried.

The constitution of 1967 provides for a president elected for a four-year term by direct suffrage and by simple majority. A vice president is elected with the president on the same party ticket. Neither the president nor the vice president can be reelected for a succeeding term. The constitution was amended in 1995 to provide for a five-year term of office. Although an effort is made in the constitution to blend the presidential and cabinet forms of government, presidential powers are virtually unrestricted. The president commands the armed forces, controls the local governments, appoints all major public servants, administers the national taxes, disburses state revenues, and negotiates treaties. He may also, under certain conditions and for a limited period of time, declare a state of siege and suspend the constitution. As head of the cabinet he appoints and dismisses cabinet members whose number is fixed by law at 12.

The political system is dominated by persons of largely European origin. Those following a traditional Indian lifestyle and speaking Aymara or Quechua as a primary language, who make up an estimated 60 percent of the population, have little opportunity to advance to top positions because of economic disadvantages and cultural isolation. However, Indians have served in cabinet-level positions, and there are several Indian congressmen.

PARLIAMENT

The National Congress is a bicameral body consisting of a Senate and a Chamber of Deputies. The Senate consists of 27 members, the Chamber of Deputies 130 members. According to the constitution each of the country's nine departments, or states, is represented by three senators. Members of both houses are elected for four-year terms. The regular session of congress lasts for 90 days, beginning every year on August 6. The constitution also provides for a legislative committee composed of nine deputies and five senators to function when the congress is not in session.

Minority representation in the congress is ensured by a proportional system under which the party winning the most seats in each department is awarded two seats and the party with the second-highest vote total is awarded

the third. Candidates who fail to win the elections to the Chamber of Deputies serve as alternates and fill in vacancies as they occur.

Suffrage is universal, with no property or literacy qualifications for married persons over 18 and single persons over 21. All electoral procedures, including the registration of candidates and political parties, are supervised by the National Electoral Court. Below the National Electoral Court are departmental electoral courts, electoral judges, electoral notaries, and juries. Electoral juries consist of five persons chosen by lot from among the literate voters registered in each polling place. Each ballot has a distinctive color and symbol to make voting easier for illiterates. Voters cast their ballots for parties instead of candidates.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Bolivia's five major political parties are the Acción Democrática Nacionalista (ADN), the Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario (Histórico) (MNR), the Movimiento de la Izquierda Revolucionaria (MIR), the Conciencia de Patria (Condepa), and Izquierda Unida (IU). The ADN is a right-wing party founded in 1979 by Hugo Banzer Suárez under the slogan "Peace, order, and work." The MNR is a center-right party founded in 1942 and led by Victor Paz Estenssoro. The MIR is a noncommunist Marxist party founded in 1971. It is led by the former vice president Jaime Paz Zamora. Condepa, founded in 1988, is a populist party formed by a popular La Paz broadcast personality. The IU is an eight-party coalition formed for the 1989 campaign. Among the parties included were the left-wing Alianza Patriótica, the left-wing Movimiento Bolivia Libre, the communist Partido Comunista de Bolivia, and the left-wing Partido Socialista-Uno.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Bolivia is divided into nine departments, each headed by a prefect who is appointed by the president for a term of four-years. The departments are subdivided into provinces headed by appointed officials called subprefects. The 94 provinces are further divided into about 1,000 cantons, led by officials known as *corregidores*. Three underpopulated and remote areas are designated as *delegations* and administered by officials whose duties include promoting the welfare of Indian tribes in the area and the fostering of colonization.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The legal system is based on Spanish law and the Napoleonic Code. The judiciary comprises the Supreme Court, superior district courts, and local courts.

The Supreme Court, which sits at Sucre, is divided into four sections of three justices each. Its 12 judges, called *ministros*, and the chief justice are chosen for 10-year terms by a two-thirds vote of the Chamber of Deputies from a list of three names submitted for each vacancy by the Senate. They may be reelected indefinitely. District court judges are elected by the Senate for six-year terms from a list of three names submitted for each vacancy by the Supreme Court. The jurisdiction of the nine district courts is chiefly appellate. All major towns and cities have territorial courts whose judges are chosen by the Supreme Court from lists submitted by the district courts. At the bottom of the judicial system are small claims courts and mayor's courts in every parish.

HUMAN RIGHTS

In terms of political and civil rights, Bolivia is classified as a free country. Bolivia's most notable progress since the end of military government in 1982 has been in the area of human rights. Political parties are now free to organize and criticize the government. Both congress and the court system function independently and fulfill an active monitoring function. After several delays municipal elections were held in June 1985. The excesses of the former security police apparatus are a thing of the past. No political prisoners are being held. However, in 2003 the military was responsible for scores of deaths during the rioting that toppled the Sánchez government. In 2004 the Constitutional Court upheld civilian court jurisdiction over military personnel accused of crimes against civilians.

The press operates largely without government restriction. The government has dealt with general strikes, road blockades, and labor protests with some restraint. It has been less effective in protecting property rights and providing guarantees for private-sector activities. There have also been charges of corruption and intimidation in the judicial system.

FOREIGN POLICY

The central issue in Bolivian foreign policy for the last 100 years has been the question of a corridor to the Pacific, which had been lost to Chile in the War of the Pacific (1879–84). In 1975 relations with Chile were resumed after a 12-year lapse, and Santiago announced an agreement in principle to grant Bolivia an outlet to the sea in exchange for territory elsewhere. However, the agreement had yet to take effect by 2004, and a territorial corridor to the sea has eluded Bolivia. Bolivia is a member of both the Andean Pact and the Southern Cone Common Market. Relations with the United States are complicated by Bolivia's involvement in the cocaine trade. Bolivia is a major producer of cocaine and has resisted U.S. attempts

to eliminate its trade, though a coca-eradication policy was initiated in 2002 and 2003, leading to widespread protests.

DEFENSE

The defense structure is headed by the president. He also presides over the Supreme Council of National Defense, the highest policy-making body in military affairs. The line of command runs through the minister of national defense to the commanders of the three services. The Ministry of Defense does not exercise any operational command. The country is divided into nine military regions corresponding to the administrative departments. The army is divided into 10 divisions, with one based in each of these regions and an additional division at Viacha. The main bases are at Miraflores barracks in La Paz and at Cochabamba.

Military manpower is provided by selective conscription at age 18. However, in practice few registered youths are called for service. The conscript service period is 12 months. As of 2002 the country's armed forces comprised 31,500 personnel, with 25,000 in the army, 3,500 in the navy, and 3,000 in the air force. The 2003 military budget reached \$127 million.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	31,500
Military Manpower Availability:	2,175,384
Military Expenditures \$million:	127
as % of GDP:	1.6
as % of central government expenditures:	6.1
Arms Imports \$million:	1
Arms Exports \$million:	—

ECONOMY

Bolivia, long one of the poorest and least-developed Latin American countries, has made considerable progress toward the development of a market-oriented economy. Successes under President Sánchez de Lozada (1993–97) included the signing of a free trade agreement with Mexico and the Southern Cone Common Market (Mercosur) as well as the privatization of the state airline, telephone company, railroad, electric power company, and oil company. Sánchez's successor, Hugo Banzer Suárez has tried to further improve the country's investment climate with an anticorruption campaign. Growth slowed in 1999, in part due to tight government budget policies, which limited needed appropriations for antipoverty programs, and the fallout from the Asian financial crisis. In 2000 violent protests in April, September, and October held down overall growth to 2.5 percent. Since 2004 the government of Carlos Mesa has attempted to regain control

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of the country's valuable natural gas supplies from foreign-dominated gas firms.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 21.01
GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 2,400
GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 1.9
GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: -0.6
Origin of Gross Domestic Product %
Agriculture: 15.0
Industry: 33.2
Services: 51.8
Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %
Private Consumption: 75
Government Consumption: 15
Gross Domestic Investment: 12.4
Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 1.495
Imports: 1.505
% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 1.3
% of Income Received by Richest 10%: 32.0
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)
1999 2000 2001 2002 2003
129.5 135.5 137.6 138.9 143.5

Finance

National Currency: Boliviano (BOB)
Exchange Rate: \$1 = BOB 7.6592
Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 5.636
Central Bank Discount Rate %: 7.5
Total External Debt \$billion: 5.332
Debt Service Ratio %: 20.07
Balance of Payments \$million: 50
International Reserves SDRs \$million: 663.3
Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 3.3

Official Development Assistance

Donor ODA \$million: 681
per capita \$: 77
Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 674

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
Revenues \$billion: 2.346
Expenditures \$billion: 2.957
Budget Deficit \$million: 611
Tax Revenues as % of GDP: 13.8

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 15.0
Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 2.5
Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares: 2.1
Irrigation, % of Farms having: 4.3
Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 4.2
Total Farmland as % of land area: 2.7

Livestock: Cattle 000: 6,822
Sheep 000: 8,550
Hogs 000: 2,984
Chickens 000: 75,000

Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 10.26
Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 6.22

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 997
Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 3.9

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 6,638
Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 2,873
Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 339
Net Energy Imports % of use: -62.4
Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 1.2
Production kW-hr billion: 4.1
Consumption kW-hr billion: 3.8
Coal Reserves tons million: —
Production tons 000: —
Consumption tons 000: —
Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: 27.6
Production cubic feet billion: 205
Consumption cubic feet billion: 36
Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels million: 441
Production barrels per day 000: 39.3
Consumption barrels per day 000: 53
Pipelines Length km: 2,457

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 1.505
Exports \$billion: 1.495
Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 6.7
Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): -3.0
Balance of Trade \$million: 50

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Brazil %	25.2	37.0
Argentina %	22.3	—
United States %	12.0	11.5
Chile %	9.3	—
Peru %	5.8	5.1
Venezuela %	—	12.9
Colombia %	—	11.9

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 53,790
Paved %: 6.5
Automobiles: 316,300
Trucks and Buses: 155,500
Railroad: Track Length km: 3,519
Passenger-km million: 267
Freight-km million: 750

Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 56
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 699.9
 Airports: 1,067
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 1.432
 Length of Waterways km: 10,000

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 308
 Number of Tourists from 000: 240
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 156
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 118

Communications

Telephones 000: 600.1
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.09
 Cellular Telephones million: 1.4
 Personal Computers 000: 190
 Internet Hosts per million people: 800
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 30

ENVIRONMENT

Bolivia suffers from a number of environmental problems. Perhaps the most important is the clearing of land for agricultural purposes and the international demand for tropical timber, which contributes to deforestation. The use of slash-and-burn agriculture combined with overgrazing is causing soil erosion and desertification. The cutting of lumber and the clearing of land is also bearing an impact on the biodiversity of the country. Industrial pollution has contaminated water supplies used for drinking and irrigation.

Environment

Forest Area % of land area: 48.9
 Average Annual Forest Change, 1990-2000, 000 ha: —161
 Nationally Protected Areas as % of Total Land Area: 19
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 12,759
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 1.3

LIVING CONDITIONS

One of the poorest countries in South America, with 70 percent of its population living below the poverty line in 1999, Bolivia has a large sector of its population that thrives on a barter economy. This is particularly true in rural areas populated largely by indigenous people. Their lifestyle is subsistent, and also sustainable, dependent on small agricultural holdings and fishing. At the same time, in major urban areas such as La Paz a more Western style life is the norm. Housing in rural areas is usually quite simple: adobe huts with thatched roofs. Brick and cement

and more modern architectural methods are found in the urban areas and larger towns.

With so much of the population living below the poverty level, health is a major concern. Still, life expectancy in 2004 was 65 years. Chagas' disease, carried by a beetle, is a significant health hazard for much of the population, with estimates of as many as one-fourth of the population affected.

HEALTH

Especially in rural areas of Bolivia, access to doctors, clinics, and hospitals is limited, with a doctor-to-population ratio of 1 to 1,370. However, with the 1997–2002 Strategic Health Plan the government attempted to ensure universal access to primary care. Limitations on potable water, adequate sanitation, and vaccines cause other health problems, including cholera: 2,293 cases were reported in 1995. In addition to Chagas' disease, which is carried by the vinchuca beetle and affects the heart, other major health issues include malaria and tuberculosis. There were 618 cases of malaria per 100,000 people in 1996, and in 1999 there were 238 cases of tuberculosis per 100,000 people.

Malnutrition is also a growing problem in the country, especially among the young. In 2000 an estimated 27 percent of children under five were diagnosed as malnourished. The birthrate in 2004 per 1,000 was 25, with an infant mortality rate of 55 per 1,000 live births. According to a 2003 estimate, there were 4,900 people living with HIV/AIDS.

Health

Number of Physicians: 6,220
 Number of Dentists: 692
 Number of Nurses: 9,068
 Number of Pharmacists: —
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 73
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 54.58
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 420
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 5.3
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 49
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.1
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 81
 Measles: 79
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 45
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 85

FOOD AND NUTRITION

First cultivated in the highlands of the Andes, the potato is still a staple of the Bolivian altiplano diet. Rice is also a popular starch in the highlands and throughout the

country and is often served along with potatoes. People close to the poverty line tend to eat a carbohydrate-heavy diet; meat is less common in many rural areas. In the Amazon there are exotic specialties such as alligator and armadillo, while Lake Titicaca supplies abundant trout.

Popular dishes include the empanada, a kind of fried turnover that is widely eaten throughout Latin America, and the *saltena*, a meat or vegetable pie. Barbecued skewered beef, called *anticuchos*, is especially popular in La Paz and is often served with the spicy sauce *llajua*. Deep fried pork and guinea pig are delicacies often consumed on special occasions. Lunch is the major meal, with breakfast usually consisting only of coffee, tea, or a maize drink, *api*, and bread; dinner is also a lighter meal. A popular and ancient drink in the Andean region is *chicha*, made from fermented corn.

Food and Nutrition

Food Supply as % of FAO Requirements: 92
 Undernourished % of total population: 21.1
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,210
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 121.5
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 176.7

STATUS OF WOMEN

Despite traditional Bolivian and Andean beliefs in the crucial, though somewhat opposite, roles of both men and women in social production, women do not enjoy societal status equal to that of men. The main obstacles to advancement are cultural traditions, social conditions, and a lack of political power. In rural families women contribute significantly to economic activities but are considered subordinate and rarely participate in cooperatives, community meetings, or training programs. In Hispanic urban families women are more likely to stay at home and are not economically active. However, women are slowly achieving a greater role in Bolivian business life.

Although Bolivian laws generally do not discriminate against women, under the agrarian reform law land titles cannot pass to women even if they are widowed or divorced. Also, agricultural credit to women is restricted by most banks and lending institutions. Although female workers have the right to three months maternity leave by law, in practice most are unaware of this right or are concerned that they will lose their salaries or jobs if they take such a leave.

Even though there is no overt political discrimination against women, they are rarely named to high-ranking positions in the government. The most notable exception was Lidia Gueiler, who served as interim president from November 1979 to July 1980.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 19
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men age 15 to 24: 0.98
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 36.5

WORK

With a labor force of 4.1 million, according to a 2004 estimate, Bolivia had an unemployment rate of 11.7 percent. Mining and the natural gas industry are two major employments sectors. However, when tin mining suffered setbacks in the 1980s, thousands of the miners entered agriculture, but in the illegal production of coca, the leaves of which are used to make cocaine. In rural areas farming is a typical occupation, with small landholdings the norm. Coca fits this same profile, but the government has made great efforts to encourage the growth of other exportable crops.

A professional middle class exists in the cities, where engineers and technicians have formed a new class of employment. In 2002 the minimum wage was \$59 per month, and it is negotiated annually. The official workday is eight hours, with a maximum workweek of 48 hours. Child labor is forbidden; those under 14 cannot be legally employed. However, as with other labor laws, this is often breached. In 2002 it was estimated that 25 percent of children between seven and 14 were employed in some manner.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 4,100,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 38.1
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: —
 Industry: —
 Services: —
 Unemployment %: 11.7

EDUCATION

In theory education is universal, free, and compulsory for eight years, from the ages of six to 14. The entire educational system is under the control of the Ministry of Education and Culture.

Schooling lasts for 12 years, as divided into eight years of primary school and four years of secondary school. The rural primary schools are nuclear schools, each consisting of a core, full-program central school surrounded by 15 to 30 outlying units in which all the classes are taught by a single teacher. The primary curriculum is designed to make the student a more useful member of the rural community rather than to train him or her for further studies. Attrition rates are high, and in urban classrooms grade

repeaters exceed the number of regularly paced students. Secondary schools for boys are known as *colegios* and those for girls are known as *liceos*. Almost all secondary-school curriculum is adapted to prepare the students for university studies.

Literacy and adult education programs are directed by the National Office for Literacy and Adult Education, established in 1956. A number of educational broadcasts are being transmitted for new literates, the most successful of which is one conducted by the Maryknolls (a Catholic order), combining broadcasts with short training programs in which both Indian languages and Spanish are used. At the secondary level centers of intermediate adult education offer courses of study leading to a "bachelor by maturity" certificate in three years.

Vocational training is provided in commercial schools, industrial schools, agricultural schools, and labor secondary schools.

Private education plays a significant role in the school system. About 17 percent of primary-school and 25 percent of secondary-school students are in private institutions, most of which are run by Roman Catholic orders as well as large business enterprises, which are required by law to maintain their own schools. The quality of education in private secondary schools is reportedly higher than that in public schools. In order to qualify for state subsidies, private schools are required to provide scholarships to at least 10 percent of their enrollments.

The entire school system is under the centralized control of the Ministry of Education and Culture. Rural schools are administered by a school assistance board headed by a school mayor. All public educational expenditures are met by the central government. Higher education is provided in ten state universities and twenty-three private universities. The University of San Francisco Xavier in Sucre, founded in 1624, is one of the oldest universities in Latin America.

Education

Literacy Rate %:	87.2
Male %:	93.1
Female %:	81.6
School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling:	14.2
First Level: Primary schools: —	
Teachers:	62,254
Students:	1,544,430
Student-Teacher Ratio:	23.7
Net Enrollment Ratio:	95.1
Second Level: Secondary Schools: —	
Teachers:	40,983
Students:	956,547
Student-Teacher Ratio:	24.3
Net Enrollment Ratio:	71.2
Third Level: Institutions: —	
Teachers:	16,262
Students:	311,015
Gross Enrollment Ratio:	39.4
Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP:	6.3

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Bolivia has both a National University Council of Science and Engineering and a National Academy of Sciences. Eight of Bolivia's universities offer degrees in basic and applied science. In the decade between 1987 and 1997 science and engineering students made up 30 percent of university enrollment. However, as of 2002 doctoral degrees were not offered in any field.

Various institutes and ministries, including the Bolivian Institute for Agriculture and Livestock Technology, are engaged in horticultural research, an essential field for the country, as only 2 percent of the land is arable, with 49 percent covered in woodland and forests. With the failure of the tin-mining industry in the 1980s such research has become vital for the country to increase its per-acre yield of crops and to redirect agriculture away from cultivation of the coca leaf.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million persons:	68
Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP:	0.3
High-Tech Exports \$million:	14.63
Patent Applications by Residents:	—

MEDIA

La Paz has three morning and three evening dailies; other towns with daily newspapers are Cochabamba, Santa Cruz, Potosí, and Oruro. The principal dailies are *El diario*, *Los tiempos*, *La razon*, and *El deber*.

In television there are numerous private television stations, including Bolivisión and Unitel.

In 1996 there were 235 radio stations, the majority of which were commercial. Most broadcast in Spanish, but a few offer programs in Quechua, Aymara, German, and English. Of the many networks and stations belonging to religious organizations, the largest is La Cruz del Sur, owned and operated by the Canadian Baptist Foreign Mission Board, which is on the air for 120 hours per week. Many universities conduct their own radio schools.

The government does not exercise formal censorship, and freedom of the press is formally guaranteed by the constitution. There are no government restrictions on free speech or the press. The views of opposition parties, leaders, and organizations—often harshly critical of the government—are given free play in the press and on the radio and most television stations. Some extremist political and labor groups, taking exception to these liberties, have called for the closing or takeover of certain newspapers and radio stations.

In 2000 Bolivia had 676 radios and 119 television sets for every 1,000 people. In 2002 there were an es-

estimated 270,000 Internet users in the country, and in 2003 there were 1,401,500 mobile phone customers.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 29
 Total Circulation 000: 420
 Circulation per 1,000: 55
 Books Published: 350
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers million: 5.988
 per 1,000: 676
 Television sets million: 1.054
 per 1,000: 119

CULTURE

Bolivian culture is a mixture of the indigenous culture of the region and the Mediterranean culture imported by the Spanish colonists. This mix is seen on religious feast days, when natives still celebrate pagan traditions and the Catholics of Spanish descent participate in church festivities. Many of the native festivities are attempts to depict the European through the eyes of innocents. Thus there is a satiric dance, the *wakatokoris*, which takes a humorous look at the bullfight. Such dances are also accompanied by traditional music, played on the *quena*, a type of flute, and on the panpipe. The *charango* is a stringed instrument developed from the guitar, with five double strings. Its soundbox is made from the shell of an armadillo.

The life of Bolivian Indians was depicted in the writings of Alcides Arguedas, whose novels include *Raza de bronce*, *Vida criolla*, *Pisagua*, and *Wata-wara*. The mining barons were likewise depicted in the work of another writer, Augusto Cespedes, especially in his novel, *El metal del diablo*. Well-known poets include Julio de la Vega, Jaime Saenz, Oscar Cerruto, Pedro Shimose, and Ricardo Jaimes Freire. The Quechua language has also produced a rich tradition of both poetry and song.

With a relatively high literacy rate, Bolivians are avid readers. There is also a small film industry in the country.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 99
 Volumes: 125,000
 Registered borrowers: 119,618
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts national currency million: 11.0
 Number of Cinemas: 27
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance million: 1.4

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

The folklore of Bolivia is heavily influenced by its indigenous past. One Indian myth with disastrous consequences for the natives was that of Viracocha, the Creator God, depicted as a white, bearded teacher. Legend had it that Viracocha would one day return to help the Indians. Thus, when the light-skinned Spanish arrived in the sixteenth century, the local population thought them the embodiment of their myth of Viracocha and put up no defenses against the Spanish conquerors.

Other folklore tends to be wrapped up in the Catholic Church, to which most Bolivians belong. Thus the Virgin Mary cult is strong in the country. Miners are devoted to a deity known as the “uncle,” who guarantees work and protection from accident.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Cinemas are a favorite form of entertainment for Bolivians living in towns and cities, and live theater is also found in larger cities. The Teatro Municipal in La Paz produces both classical and modern plays. Discos are also found in major towns. Like in much of Latin America, festivals and religious holidays provide significant forms of recreation in both urban and rural areas. One of the most popular of these is Carnival, with costumes, music, and dancing all dependent on local taste and custom.

Sporting events are also popular in Bolivia, with soccer matches and other Western sports found in the big cities. Occasionally, there are also bullfights.

ETIQUETTE

Politesse in Bolivia is similar to that in other Latin American countries, with age, gender, and class all coming into play. When talking to an elderly person, it is important to use the formal “you” form of address, *usted*, instead of the informal, *tu*. Titles are also important and used: *don* for men, *doña* for women.

Handshakes are customary between men, while women generally greet each other with a kiss. Social distance is also important; in Bolivia people stand close to the person with whom they are talking. A typical greeting is “*Mucho gusto*,” meaning “Pleased to meet you.” Less formal is “*Que tal?*” or “How are you?”

FAMILY LIFE

While women have a position inferior to that of males in the business and social worlds, they have real power in the home. Many rural communities follow matrilineal in-

heritance. While the male might represent the family in public matters, the female is definitively the controller of household matters such as budget, child rearing, and diet. The family, either nuclear or extended, is the basic unit of domestic society in both urban and rural areas. The Bolivian extended family generally includes members from both the husband's and wife's side.

As with much of the rest of the world, family size is shrinking in Bolivia. From families of six or seven children, now three or fewer is more common. Marriage rituals and customs in urban centers are much like those in the rest of the developed world. In the Andean regions, however, marriage is usually preceded by cohabitation of up to three years, during which time the couple sets up house and begins having children. Thereafter a civil and religious wedding are held, followed by a three-day celebration. Polygamy is not common but does exist; monogamous marriages are the norm. People avoid mates with the same surname or who are closer than third cousins. Divorce is legal but rare, especially in rural communities.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

A blend of Spanish and indigenous peoples, modern Bolivians have the characteristic darkness and size of such a mixture. Clothing varies depending on location and on ethnic group. The daily dress of highland Indian women in both urban centers and in the country is still very much traditional: full skirts, or *polleras*, with brightly colored shawls. The women use these shawls to carry everything from food to babies. Hats are also a typical part of the traditional female dress, with the shapes of the hats different in different regions.

Men in the countryside wear ponchos and hats. In the cities, however, they tend to wear the more Western-style clothing of trousers and shirts.

SPORTS

Soccer is the national sport, but basketball and volleyball are also popular. All major towns have soccer stadiums, and these are filled with fans when the home team is playing.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1946** President Gualberto Villarroel is murdered by a rioting mob; a civilian junta headed by Nestor Guillén names Tomás Manje Gutiérrez provisional president.
- 1947** A constitutionally elected government under President Enrique Hertzog takes office.
- 1949** The arrest and exile of leftist leader Juan Lechín Oquendo provoke a nationwide strike; in widespread civil war the Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario (MNR) gains control of Oruro, Potosí, Cochabamba, Sucre, and Santa Cruz until the army intervenes.
- 1950** Hertzog resigns in the wake of a general strike, and Vice President Mamerto Urriolagoitia assumes power; MNR candidate Victor Paz Estenssoro wins a 43 percent plurality in the presidential election; to forestall a Paz presidency, a military junta led by Hugo Ballivián assumes power.
- 1952** Tin miners and Paz supporters overthrow the government after several days of bloody fighting in which nearly 3,000 are killed; Paz is inaugurated president; in a series of reforms tin mines are nationalized, universal adult suffrage is proclaimed, and a program of land reform is begun.
- 1956** Hernán Siles Zuazo, the MNR candidate, is elected to the presidency, succeeding Paz.
- 1960** Paz is reelected president.
- 1962** Bolivia breaks diplomatic relations with Chile over the Lauca River hydroelectric project.
- 1963** Using the army, Paz breaks a violent strike by the tin miners; the peso replaces the boliviano as the national currency.
- 1964** Paz is reelected to a second consecutive term with the help of the army and police; workers and students rise against Paz, joined by Vice President René Barrientos Ortuño; the army intervenes in favor of the dissidents and Paz flees to Lima; Barrientos is sworn in as president, with General Alfredo Ovando Candía as copresident.
- 1965** Lechín is exiled.
- 1966** Barrientos resigns his copresidency and is elected president.
- 1967** Bolivia adopts a new constitution; Che Guevara dies after a battle between his guerrillas and government units.
- 1969** Barrientos dies in a helicopter crash; Vice President Siles Salinas is named president; four months later Siles is dismissed by Ovando.
- 1970** Ovando is overthrown in a rightist army coup led by General Rogelio Miranda, who is in turn replaced by leftist-backed General Juan José Torres Gonzalez; Torres weathers attempts by rightist General Hugo Banzer Suárez to unseat him; Banzer is exiled.
- 1971** Banzer returns to La Paz and leads successful coup in which over 200 persons are killed; Banzer forms the Nationalist Popular Front, which incorporates Paz's MNR.
- 1972** Andres Selich, head of the Rangers, unleashes a reign of terror; Selich is dismissed and transferred to Paraguay as ambassador.

- 1973** Selich is murdered as he returns to La Paz.
- 1974** Paz leaves the coalition and is exiled.
- 1977** Banzer announces that elections will take place in 1978.
- 1978** Banzer declares a state of siege after discovering "subversive plots" but declares a general amnesty and lifts the ban on trade unions; in general elections General Pereda Asbun wins a clear lead, but elections are invalidated due to claims of fraud; General Pereda ousts General Banzer in a coup and is installed as president; in a second coup General Pereda is overthrown and General Padilla Arancibia is named president; diplomatic relations with Chile are broken over the issue of a Bolivian corridor to the sea.
- 1979** After no candidate wins a clear victory, congress installs the president of the Senate, Walter Guevara Arze, as president of Bolivia for one year; army forces led by Colonel Alberto Natusch Busch depose Guevara, occupy the capital, and dissolve congress; more than 200 people are killed in street fighting in the capital; Natusch steps down in the face of opposition from the military; civilian government is restored with Bolivia's first woman president, Lidia Gueiler; army commander Luis García Meza defies a presidential order to resign.
- 1980** In national elections the leftist Siles wins a plurality, but the military intervenes again and takes over the government; General Luis García Meza establishes a junta and receives prompt support from other military regimes in the Southern Cone region of South America; the United States withdraws all but humanitarian aid.
- 1981** President García Meza resigns under duress and General Humberto Cayoja Riart assumes the presidency; within a month Cayoja is arrested and charged with involvement in the plot that ousted García Meza; Brigadier General Celso Torrelio Villa is designated president.
- 1982** General Torrelio is forced to step down in favor of General Guido Vildoso Calderón, who reconvenes the congress elected in 1980 to name a civilian government; congress elects Hernán Siles Zuazo.
- 1983** Near bankruptcy, intracabinet power struggles, military mutinies, and labor strikes plague Siles's administration; Siles is kidnapped by an army faction but later released unharmed; the peso is devalued and external debt rescheduled.
- 1984** The government sets austerity measures; Bolivia defaults on external debt repayments but obtains a moratorium; fuel and food subsidies are removed; the peso is devalued by 75 percent;
- congress approves a wage increase of 130 percent while food prices rise 450 percent.
- 1985** Siles retires and Victor Paz Estenssoro is elected president; President Paz Estenssoro allows the peso to float; following a general strike by the trade union organization COB, the government calls a state of siege for 90 days and arrests thousands; the strike is called off; the world tin market collapses.
- 1986** Protests throughout the country over the government's austerity plans continue through 1987; opposition groups and trade unions protest a joint military campaign with the United States, ultimately unsuccessful, to fight illegal coca production.
- 1988** COB calls a nationwide hunger strike over plans to decentralize social services; Bolivia establishes an antinarcotics department; Roberto Suárez, Bolivia's foremost drug trafficker, is captured.
- 1989** No clear winner emerges from the presidential elections; congress awards the presidency to Paz Zamora, the third-place candidate.
- 1990** The presidents of Bolivia, Peru, Colombia, and the United States pledge to cooperate in the fight against illegal narcotics trafficking; the Chamber of Deputies impeaches eight of the nation's 12 Supreme Court justices for declaring a law unconstitutional for purely political reasons.
- 1991** Officials from across Latin America combine efforts to fight the region's cholera epidemic.
- 1993** MNR candidate Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada wins the presidential election and successfully fights the country's hyperinflation.
- 1995** The country's continuing movement toward a free market sparks a general strike by leftists; the government declares a state of siege and suspends civil rights; in December, Bolivia joins the free trade region of South America's Southern Common Market (Mercosur).
- 1997** Presidential elections bring to office former leader Hugo Banzer Suárez, who promises to continue free-market reforms while protecting Bolivia's poor.
- 1998** Torrential rains induce disastrous mudslides near the Peru border in February; in May a series of earthquakes strikes central Bolivia; supported by the United States, the government destroys a record 11,000 hectares of coca leaf; coca-leaf producers march on La Paz in protest.
- 1999** Bolivia and Brazil inaugurate a natural gas pipeline stretching 3,000 miles from Santa Cruz, Bolivia, to Porto Alegre, Brazil.
- 2000** After violent protests break out over the price of water, the government imposes a state of emergency for two weeks; President Banzer meets

- with President Ricardo Lagos Escobar of Chile to discuss the two countries' century-old territorial dispute; storms result in severe flooding and the declaration of half the country as a disaster area.
- 2001** President Banzer, who is suffering from cancer, resigns and is replaced by Vice President Jorge Quiroga Ramírez. Electoral Code Reform Law is passed.
- 2003** Rioting breaks out in protest of tax policies and a coca-eradication program. President Ramírez is forced to resign, and his vice president, Carlos Mesa, assumes power.
- 2004** A July referendum establishes countrywide support for President Mesa's plan to exert more control over the country's natural gas reserves.
- 2005** Mesa resigns amid protests; Socialist Evo Morales is elected president.

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- Bolivia.** *Anuario estadístico; Censo nacional de población y vivienda, 2001; Compendio estadístico* (annual); *Estadísticas socioeconómicas* (annual); *Resumen estadístico* (annual)

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Bolivia Web
<http://www.boliviaweb.com/gov.htm>
- CIA World Fact Book: Bolivia
<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/bl.html>
- Instituto Nacional de Estadística—Bolivia
<http://www.ine.gov.bo/>
- PNUD Bolivia
<http://www.pnud.bo/webportal/>

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Bosnia and Herzegovina (Bosna i Hercegovina)

ABBREVIATION

BA

CAPITAL

Sarajevo

HEADS OF STATE

Chairman and Croatian Member of the Presidency Ivo Miro Jović (from 2005), Serb Member of the Presidency Borislav Paravać (from 2003), Bosniak Member of the Presidency Sulejman Tihić (from 2002)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Chairman of the Council of Ministers Adnan Terzić (from 2002)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Emerging democracy

POPULATION

4,025,476 (2005)

AREA

51,129 sq km (19,741 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Bosniaks, Serbs, Croats

LANGUAGE

Bosnian (Serbo-Croatian)

RELIGIONS

Muslim, Orthodox, Catholic

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Convertible mark

NATIONAL FLAG

A wide medium blue vertical band on the fly side with the identical sides of a yellow right isosceles triangle abutting the band and the top of the flag; the remainder of the flag is medium blue with seven full five-pointed white stars and two half stars at top and bottom along the hypotenuse of the triangle.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A blue shield with the triangular upper-right third yellow and five full five-pointed white stars and two half stars at the upper left and lower right crossing the shield diagonally

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Intermeco”

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 9 (Serb Republic Day), November 25 (National Day), all major Christian festivals, various Islamic festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

April 5, 1992

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

December 14, 1995

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

The modern country of Bosnia and Herzegovina consists of a landmass of approximately 19,741 sq mi (51,129 sq km). The nearly completely landlocked country is carved out of the former Yugoslavia. It is bordered on the east by the modern state of Yugoslavia, which consists of Serbia and Montenegro, and is otherwise surrounded by Croatia. A narrow corridor gives Herzegovina outlet to the sea at Neum, on the Neretva Channel of the Adriatic Sea; the corridor splits Croatia along the Dalmatian coast about 25 mi (40 km) northwest of Dubrovnik. The country consists of two distinct land areas. The northern

portion, Bosnia, is mountainous and covered with thick forests. The southern part, Herzegovina, is largely rocky hills and farmland.

Geography

Area sq km: 51,129; sq mi 19,741

World Rank: 124th

Land Boundaries, km: Croatia 932, Serbia 527

Coastline, km: 20

Elevation Extremes meters:

Lowest: Adriatic Sea 0

Highest: Maglic 2,386

Bosnia-Herzegovina



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Land Use %

- Arable land: 13.6
- Permanent Crops: 2.96
- Forest: 44.8
- Other: 38.64

Population of Principal Cities (2003 est.)

Banja Luka	170,000
Sarajevo	380,000

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Bosnia-Herzegovina's climate is marked by its exceptionally cold and snowy winters. The summers are warm in the mountain valleys but cooler at higher elevations. There is a period of heavy rainfall in early summer. The far northern part of Bosnia has cold winters and dry, hot summers. The average January temperature in Sarajevo is 30°F (-1°C). The average July temperature is 68°F (20°C).

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature
 July: 72.5 in
 January: 32°F
 Average Rainfall: 24.6 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

The floral ranges known as Euro-Siberian and Mediterranean come together in Bosnia and Herzegovina, creating a diverse ecosystem. Over half the total number of flowering plants on the Balkan Peninsula can be found here; in terms of richness of flora, Bosnia and Herzegovina is comparable to tropical and subtropical regions. There are over 3,700 identified species of flowering plants, as well as ferns, mosses, and common trees such as beech, oak, evergreen, chestnut, spruce, and dozens more.

Among the wide assortment of wild animals are mammals such as deer, brown bears, foxes, hares, lynxes, weasels, otters, wildcats, wolves, gray bears, chamois, wild sheep, and wild boars. Avian life includes eagles, vultures, and hawks.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 4,025,476
 World Rank: 120th
 Density per sq km: 81.6
 % of annual growth (1999–2003): 1.9
 Male %: 50.2
 Female %: 49.8
 Urban %: 44.4
 Age Distribution: % 0–14: 18.9
 15–64: 70.6
 65 and over: 10.5
 Population 2025: 4,180,000
 Birth Rate per 1,000: 12.56
 Death Rate per 1,000: 8.33
 Rate of Natural Increase %: 0.5
 Total Fertility Rate: 1.71
 Expectation of Life (years): Males 69.82
 Females 75.51
 Marriage Rate per 1,000: 6.1
 Divorce Rate per 1,000: 0.5
 Average Size of Households: 3.6
 Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

While Bosnia and Herzegovina is home to many people of differing ethnic backgrounds, there are three major groups that make up more than 90 percent of the popula-

tion. The largest single group comprises Bosniaks (formerly called Muslims), who constitute nearly 44 percent of the population. The Bosniaks are descended from Slavic people who converted to Islam at some point during the lengthy period of Ottoman rule. The second-largest group is made up of the Serbs, who form nearly 31 percent of the population. Many of these people relocated to Bosnia and Herzegovina during the period of Josip Broz Tito's rule. The Serbs are largely Orthodox Christians. The third-largest ethnic group, constituting 17 percent of the population, is made up of Croats, who are generally Roman Catholic. These three groups have often intermingled with one another, and it is often difficult to distinguish ethnicity except on the basis of religious affiliation. In addition to these three major groups, there are small numbers of Albanians, Gypsies, and Ukrainians who live in Bosnia.

LANGUAGES

The principal language of the country is Serbo-Croatian (though it is now known as Serbian, Croatian, or Bosnian, depending on the speaker's ethnic and political affiliation). The most distinctive aspect of language is that the Serbs use the Cyrillic alphabet, and the Bosniaks and Croats use the Roman alphabet when writing.

RELIGIONS

Sitting at the crossroads of the East and the West, the religious traditions of Bosnia and Herzegovina are reflective of the nation's geopolitical location. The vast majority of the country's population adhere to one of the three major religious groups in the region. Most Croats are Roman Catholic, while the Serbians are Orthodox Christian. The largest ethnic group, the Bosniaks, also represent the largest religious group, Muslims. Many Bosniaks were converted to Islam during the occupation of Bosnia by the Ottoman Empire. All three religions have a deep heritage in the country. Catholic Croats, for example, observe religious holidays and make pilgrimages to sites like the village of Medjugorje, near Mostar in southern Bosnia, where in 1981 six Croat children reported that the Virgin Mary had appeared to them. The country's religious diversity has often led to violent conflict between the groups.

Religious Affiliations

Sunni Muslim	1,610,000
Serbian Orthodox	1,247,000
Roman Catholic	603,000
Other	563,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The area of modern-day Bosnia and Herzegovina came under Roman rule in the second century B.C.E., ending the rival territorial ambitions of the Thracians, Illyrians, Celts, and Greeks. The division of the Roman Empire in 395 C.E. brought the region under the control of the Byzantine emperor in Constantinople. In the fifth century Slavic tribes from the Carpathian Mountains began regularly settling in the Balkan Peninsula, establishing a firm Slavic presence in the area.

As Catholicism dominated the western area of Croatia in the ninth century, the eastern region of Serbia adopted Eastern Orthodox Christianity, leaving the Bosnian area as a buffer between the two religious groups. In the 11th century the Bosnian principality of Rama struggled to create its own regional identity. Despite the efforts of Byzantium to control the Bosnian region, Bosnian rulers of the 14th century temporarily established a powerful Bosnian state. In 1389 the Ottoman Empire thwarted the efforts of Tvrtko Kotromanić, the self-proclaimed czar of the Bosnians and Serbs, to unify Bosnian and Serb lands. Bosnia finally succumbed to Ottoman rule in 1463. Some 20 years later, the Ottoman Turks gained control of Herzegovina (an Austrian border duchy since 1448) and confirmed their domination over the region. From the 15th to the 19th centuries the Ottoman Empire ruled Bosnia and Herzegovina through a system that allocated responsibility for religious groups to the leader of each group. Many Bosnians converted to Islam to maintain control over their property and acquire membership in the Muslim ruling class. Persecution of Christians through heavy taxation, a Koran-based legal system, forced conversion to Islam, and, for girls, servitude in harems contributed to hostile uprisings and violent repression.

Also during the 15th through the 19th centuries the Hapsburg Empire encouraged Serb settlement of the bordering Krajina region to prevent the expansion of the Turks. As the Ottoman Empire began to crumble, the 1878 Congress of Berlin gave the Hapsburg Empire administrative rights in the six regions of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Sarajevo, Travnik, Bihać, Dinja Tuzia, Banja Luka, and Mostar).

In 1908 Austria-Hungary officially annexed Bosnia and Herzegovina as a province to counter the threat of Serbian expansion. The empire reversed the Ottoman policy of Muslim privilege. Political organizations were banned and the nationalistic tendencies of Serbs and Croats were suppressed. The Austro-Hungarian Empire attempted to insulate Bosnia and Herzegovina from the influence of its increasingly disgruntled neighbor—Serbia—while trying to prevent the creation of a Muslim state. Tensions in the area erupted when a student member of the Serb nationalist Black Hand organization, Gavrilo Princip, assassinated Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the Hapsburg monarchy, and his wife, Sophie, during a visit to Sarajevo.

Austria-Hungary, supported by Germany, subsequently declared war on Serbia, igniting World War I.

Despite having sided with the losing Austrians during World War I, Bosnia and Herzegovina joined the newly formed Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes in 1918. The kingdom lasted until 1929, when King Alexander established a royal monarchy. The area of Bosnia and Herzegovina, no longer recognized as a political region, was divided into four administrative units. Agrarian reforms freed peasants from the Muslim-led feudal hierarchy, but the centralized, Serb-dominated government dissatisfied many Muslims, Croats, and Slovenes.

A coalition government of Serbs, Muslims, and Slovenes took control in 1939 after the assassination of King Alexander in France. Tensions between the Serbs and the Croats steadily increased until the outbreak of World War II. Croats collaborated with German and Italian fascists and formed the independent state of Croatia, forcing the Serbs to vacate the region in order to create a “Greater Croatia.” The Serbs countered with aggression by both the nationalist Chetnik organization, led by Draža Mihailović, and the Communist Partisan movement, led by Josip Broz Tito. At the end of the war Tito’s partisans brought about the formation of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, comprising Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, Macedonia, Montenegro, and the reunited region of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Throughout the period of Communist rule Tito and his League of Communists of Yugoslavia suppressed nationalist sentiments and forcibly promoted an ideology of “unity and brotherhood.” The 1974 constitution increased the autonomy of each member republic. The death of Tito in 1980 brought a powerful resurgence of long-suppressed nationalistic sentiments. Unlike the five other more ethnically homogeneous constituent republics, Bosnia and Herzegovina had significant numbers of Muslims, Serbs, Croats, and people of mixed ethnicity. In attempts to increase their ranks, the Serbs and Croats claimed Bosnian Muslims to be converted Serbs or converted Croats, respectively. The Muslims resisted being identified with either group and claimed the right to a Muslim state within Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Because of its relative strength within the federal republic, Serbia sought to reassert the dominance of the federal government over the individual republics through legal, economic, communication, and voting reforms. Serbia also campaigned to reunify the decentralized League of Communists. By 1990 ethnic Serbs in Croatia and Bosnia had begun planning for a “Greater Serbia.” Relations between the member republics rapidly disintegrated, culminating in the secession of Slovenia and Croatia in 1991.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, dissatisfied Serb delegates in the regional assembly deserted the coalition government and walked out during initial discussions of the region’s independence. Following the example set by

Slovenia and Croatia, the Muslim-dominated assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina declared independence in December 1991. A referendum held two months later, boycotted by Serbs, confirmed the country's independence. In April and May the United States, the European Union, and the United Nations joined in recognizing the independence of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Following the declaration of sovereignty by the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bosnian Serbs declared the formation of the Serbian Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, or the Republic of Srpska. Initially, Bosnian Croats remained united with the Bosnian Muslims in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina against the rebel Serbs, despite proposals to Croatia from Serbian leader Radovan Karadžić to partition Bosnia. Bosnian government forces joined with Bosnian Croats to recapture the southern city of Mostar from the Bosnian Serbs. President Franjo Tuđman of Croatia, acting in support of Bosnian Croats, signed a cooperation treaty with the president of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Alija Izetbegović, and formed a joint defense committee against the Bosnian Serbs. However, the cooperation did not last long, and the Bosnian Croats declared independence for the Croatian Union of Herzeg-Bosna (a year later renamed the Croatian Republic of Herzeg-Bosna) in the area west of Mostar.

Relations between Bosnian government and Bosnian Croat forces broke down in October 1992, as Bosnian Croats, backed by Croatian army troops, took over Mostar and other towns in Croatian-held areas of Bosnia. The Bosnian government battled both the rebel Serbs and rebel Croats for almost a year before the Bosnian Muslim government and the Bosnian Croats renewed their military cooperation against the Bosnian Serbs. In March 1994, under international pressure, Prime Minister Haris Silajdžić of Bosnia and Krešimir Žubak, leader of the Bosnian Croats, met in the United States to sign an agreement creating the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Bosnian president Izetbegović and the Croatian president Tuđman then signed a second agreement that established a loose confederation. The new federation, approved by the Bosnian Assembly on March 31, 1994, was designed to replace the governance structure of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Bosnian Federation held together, albeit precariously, despite political and military tensions between Bosnian Muslims (Bosniaks) and Bosnian Croats.

In December 1995 the Dayton Accords were signed by the governments of Serbia, Croatia, and Bosnia-Herzegovina, bringing a formal end to the war in Bosnia—which had claimed over 200,000 lives. The agreement called for the continuance of a single Bosnia-Herzegovina state based on a new constitution. The agreement in essence retained Bosnia and Herzegovina's international boundaries and created a joint multiethnic, democratic government. This national government was charged with

conducting foreign, economic, and fiscal policy. Also recognized was a second level of government comprised of two entities roughly equal in size: the Bosniak/Croat Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Bosnian Serb-led Republika Srpska. The agreement also created the Office of the High Representative to implement the terms of the peace agreement. The High Representative represents the international community and has extensive political powers in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Approximately 34,000 North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) troops were stationed in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and a large international civilian presence worked to rebuild the country. More than 80 political parties registered for the September 1997 municipal elections, and more than 25 suspected war criminals have been arrested and are to stand trial before the International Court of Justice at The Hague.

In the early 2000s, however, the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina had not considerably improved. While NATO forces were reduced and then finally replaced in 2004 by 7,000 troops from the European Union, the enactment of all the provisions of the Dayton Accords had not been accomplished. The power of nationalist parties had thwarted efforts at creating a strong sense of unity in the country; Croats and Serbs continued to seek unification with Croatia and Serbia, respectively. In the presidential elections of 2002 the nationalist parties won, securing all three seats of the three-member presidency and representing a significant defeat for moderates and reformers. In 2003 the High Representative abolished the Supreme Defense Council of the Bosnian Serb Republic and saw to the redrafting of the Bosnian Serb constitution to place the army under full civilian control and remove all references to statehood and sovereignty. With the resignation of President Mirko Šarović, Borislav Paravać, a hard-line nationalist member of the ruling Serbian Democratic Party, was elected in 2003 to represent the Bosnian Serbs in the three-party presidency. In 2004 the High Representative again intervened directly in the country's affairs, dismissing several high-ranking Bosnian Serb officials for shielding wanted war criminals.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

Chairman of the Presidency	
1990–98	Alija Izetbegović
1998–99	Živko Radišić
1999–2000	Ante Jelavić
2000	Alija Izetbegović
2000–01	Živko Radišić
2001–02	Jozo Križanović
2002	Beriz Belkić
2002–03	Mirko Šarović
2003	Borislav Paravać
2003–04	Dragan Čović

2004	Sulejman Tihić
2004–05	Borislav Paravać
2005–	Ivo Miro Jović

Prime Minister

1990–92	Jure Pelivan
1992–93	Mile Akmadžić
1993–96	Haris Silajdžić
1996–97	Hasan Muratović
1997–99	Boro Bosić
1997–2000	Haris Silajdžić
1999–2000	Svetozar Mihailović

Chairman of the Council of Ministers

2000	Spasoje Tuševljak
2000–01	Martin Raguž
2001	Božidar Matić
2001–02	Zlatko Lagumdžija
2002	Dragan Mikerević
2002–	Adnan Terzić

CONSTITUTION

Bosnia and Herzegovina comprises two autonomous entities: the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Republic of Srpska. As such, there are three constitutions in force in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The 1994 constitution of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina established the Federation government and eight cantonal governments. The 1992 constitution of the Republic of Srpska set forth the legal principles, rights, and duties upon which the Republic is based and the powers of the respective bodies within it. The 1995 constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina governs the two entities within the state.

The 1995 constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina was written up as part of the Dayton Accords. It replaced the previous constitution of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina and governs the relations between the two constituent entities—the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Republic of Srpska. The constitutions of the Federation and of the Republic of Srpska, adopted earlier, were subsequently amended to bring them into compliance with the collective 1995 constitution. The Srpska constitution was amended in 2003 to bring the military totally under civilian control and to excise any mention of statehood or sovereignty for the Republic.

The government of Bosnia and Herzegovina is headed by a three-person presidency, which comprises one representative for each of the Bosnians, the Croats, and the Republic of Srpska. The presidents are elected for four-year terms, with chairmanship rotating every eight months. Bosnia and Herzegovina has a parliamentary assembly comprising two chambers: a House of Representatives and a House of Peoples.

PARLIAMENT

The House of Peoples is made up of 15 delegates. Five of the delegates are selected from the Republic of Srpska and ten—five Croats and five Bosniaks—from the Federation. The delegates from the Federation are selected by the Croat and Bosniak delegates, respectively, to the Federation's House of Peoples. Delegates from the Republic of Srpska are selected by the National Assembly of the Republic of Srpska.

There are 42 members in the House of Representatives. As with the House of Peoples, one-third of the delegates to the House of Representatives come from the Republic of Srpska, and two-thirds are elected from the Federation. Each chamber of the parliamentary assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina must convene in Sarajevo no more than 30 days after the selection or election of members. Although the first elections were held in September 1996, parliament's first session was not held until January 1997.

The parliamentary assembly has the responsibility to enact the legislation necessary to implement the decisions of the presidency, establish and approve a budget for the operations of the institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and consent to the ratification of all international treaties. Other duties may be assigned to the parliamentary assembly by mutual agreement of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Republic of Srpska.

Each chamber adopts its internal rules by the majority vote of its members. In 1997 each chamber adopted provisional rules of procedure; there are also provisions in the constitution that regulate some important aspects of the legislative process. Each chamber selects from among its members one Serb, one Bosniak, and one Croat to serve as its chair and deputy chairs. The position of chair automatically rotates among the three selected persons every eight months. At no time can the chair of both chambers represent the same constituent people. In each chamber the chair and deputy chairs constitute the Collegium of Chair and Deputy Chairs. The collegia have the responsibility to prepare the proposed legislative agenda, provide the delegates at least seven days' notice of each session sitting, and ensure that draft legislative proposals are presented to the appropriate committees of the respective chambers. In case of undue delays in the legislative process, either chamber may call for a joint meeting. Both collegia are expected to make their best effort to overcome deadlocks.

All legislation requires the approval of both chambers. Unless otherwise proposed by the initiator of the draft legislation, a bill is first introduced in the House of Representatives. However, laws may be initiated in either chamber. Laws may be proposed by any member of parliament, by one or more committees, by any member of the presidency, or by the Council of Ministers. Upon approval by one chamber, the draft law is transferred within

seven days to the other chamber, which may approve the legislation or return it to the originating chamber with suggested amendments.

POLITICAL PARTIES

In 1990 the Communist Party in Yugoslavia had given way to the smaller nationalist parties of the republics, including the Croatian Democratic Union of Bosnia and Herzegovina (HDZBiH), named after Franjo Tuđman's party in Croatia; the Muslim Party of Democratic Action (SDA), led by Alija Izetbegović; and Radovan Karadžić's Serbian Democratic Party of Bosnia and Herzegovina (SDS-BiH), modeled after the SDS in the Croatian region of Krajina. Although there are more than 55 political parties in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the HDZBiH, SDA, and SDS-BiH continue to play the most important roles, dominating the September 1996 elections. In the 2002 presidential elections the three nationalist parties—the Muslim Party of Democratic Action, the Serbian Democratic Party, and the Croatian Democratic Union—regained some lost territory from earlier parliamentary elections, electing each of the three members of the joint presidency.

The SDA, led by Izetbegović, was founded on two main principles. The party chose religion as the vehicle to implement its first goal of strengthening Muslim nationalism. By appealing to the feature certain to distinguish the SDA from other parties, the SDA was able to rally the majority of Muslims behind the banner of Islam. The second goal was to promote the preservation of a multi-national and multireligious state.

The HDZBiH was initially founded on the principle of keeping the borders of Bosnia and Herzegovina inviolate. However, as Bosnian Croats cooperated with Bosnian Serbs, inviolate borders appeared to be merely a step in creating a "Greater Croatia." The HDZBiH has not given up on the idea of an independent Herzeg-Bosna. The president of Croatia, Franjo Tuđman, initially controlled the party. The SDS-BiH was initially created in Croatia by Croatian Serbs to combat rising Croat nationalism.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina is divided into 10 cantons, or autonomous regions. Republika Srpska has only one canton. The basic unit of local government is the commune (*opština*), each of which is governed by a commune assembly. The commune assemblies elect executive bodies with administrative responsibilities.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The Bosnian legal system is based on the civil law system. The highest court in the country is the Constitutional

Court, which consists of nine members: four are selected by the Bosniak/Croat Federation's House of Representatives, two by the Republika Srpska's National Assembly, and three non-Bosnians by the president of the European Court of Human Rights.

HUMAN RIGHTS

There were significant improvements in several areas of concern with regard to human rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1999, the fourth year of implementation of the Dayton Accords. The arrest and prosecution of war criminals increased, as six persons indicted for war crimes were arrested, including several high-ranking officials, and one extradited to The Hague. The return of those who were displaced during the fighting that rocked the area began to accelerate with the support of international efforts. The Federation enacted legislation that abolished the death penalty and also called for its abolishment in the Republic of Srpska. Despite these improvements, there are still lingering hostilities between the ethnic-religious groups. Much of the resentment is not acted upon because of the deployment of international forces and continuing international pressure to keep the peace.

Since 2000 there have been several more high-profile arrests and convictions for war crimes. One of the most important was the 2003 conviction of the former Bosnian Serb general Radislav Krstić for genocide at Srebrenica. He was sentenced to 46 years in prison.

There are still many reported incidents of ethnic discrimination and harassment throughout the country as well as widespread reports of police brutality and corruption.

FOREIGN POLICY

Bosnia's independence is secured by the 1995 Dayton Accords. The Office of the High Representative oversees the implementation of the Dayton Accords. Hostility toward Serbia is the cornerstone of Bosnian foreign policy, although the two countries have diplomatic relations. Bosnia has extensive trade and other agreements with Croatia.

In 2002 the Bosnian presidency met with Serbian and Croatian counterparts and signed a joint declaration agreeing to respect international borders and the implementation of the 1995 Dayton Accords.

DEFENSE

The strength of the Bosnian army in 2001 was approximately 34,000 soldiers, who were organized into five corps headquarters. This number includes the army of the Re-

public of Srpska, about 10,000 strong, and the army of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, numbering about 24,000. The equipment of the army is largely Soviet-made and includes tanks, aircraft, and missiles.

In 2002 government expenditures on the military amounted to \$234.3 million, or 4.5 percent of gross domestic product (GDP).

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 34,000
 Military Manpower Availability: 1,133,847
 Military Expenditures \$million: 234.3
 as % of GDP: 4.5
 as % of central government expenditures:
 Arms Imports \$million: 25
 Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

Bosnia and Herzegovina ranked next to the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia as the poorest republics in the old Yugoslav federation. With agriculture almost exclusively in private hands, farms have been small and inefficient, and the republic has traditionally been a net importer of food. Industry has been greatly overstaffed, one reflection of the socialist economic structure of Yugoslavia. Tito had pushed the development of military industries in the republic, with the result that Bosnia hosted a large share of Yugoslavia's defense plants. The bitter interethnic warfare in Bosnia caused production to plummet by 80 percent from 1990 to 1995, unemployment to soar, and human misery to multiply. With an uneasy peace in place, output recovered in 1996–98 at high percentage rates on a low base, but output growth slowed appreciably in 1999 and 2000, and GDP remained far below the 1990 level. Economic data are of limited use and official data often do not capture the large share of activity that occurs on the black market. In 1999 the convertible mark—the national currency introduced in 1998—gained wider acceptance, and the Central Bank of Bosnia and Herzegovina dramatically increased its reserve holdings. Implementation of privatization, however, was slower than anticipated. Banking reform accelerated in early 2001 as all Communist-era payments bureaus were shut down. In 2005 the country still received substantial amounts of reconstruction assistance and humanitarian aid from the international community but had to prepare for an era of declining assistance.

As a result of expanding consumer credit with banking privatization, and with postwar spending on reconstruction high, there was improvement in the economy from 2000 to 2002. However, 2003 saw a sharp downturn from 5.5 percent GDP growth in 2002 to 3.5 percent

growth in 2003. This was a result of the winding down of reconstruction spending, the tightening of credit, and a drought that reduced agricultural production by 20 percent. Real growth in GDP for 2004 was again 3.5 percent, with no prospects for an immediate turnaround. A narrow tax base and a great deal of corruption in the tax system continued to undermine reconstruction efforts. Unemployment remained endemic, nearing 40 percent in 2004.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 24.31
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 6,100
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 5.4
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 3.4
 Origin of GDP %:
 Agriculture: 13.0
 Industry: 40.9
 Services: 46.1
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %
 Private Consumption: 89
 Government Consumption: 23
 Gross Domestic Investment: —
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 1.28
 Imports: 4.7
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 3.9
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 21.4

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
—	—	—	—	—

Finance

National Currency: Marka (BAM)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = BAM 1.7329
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 3.3
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: —
 Total External Debt \$billion: 3.5
 Debt Service Ratio %: 6.38
 Balance of Payments \$billion: –2.195
 International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 1.8
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
 0.9

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 587
 as % of GDP: 143
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 382

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$billion: 3.271
 Expenditures \$billion: 3.242
 Budget Surplus \$million: 29
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP: 13.0
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2000) %: 5.8
 Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares: 42
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 0.4
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 47.2
 Total Farmland as % of land area: 13.6
 Livestock: Cattle 000: 440
 Sheep 000: 670
 Hogs 000: 300
 Chickens 000: 4,700
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 4.1
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons: 7,185

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 1.17
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 5.5

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 4,587
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 5,705
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 1,403
 Net Energy Imports % of use: 24.8
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 3.94
 Production kW-hr billion: 9.98
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 8.12
 Coal Reserves tons million: —
 Production tons million: 10
 Consumption tons million: 10
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet billion: —
 Production cubic feet billion: —
 Consumption cubic feet billion: 11
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels million: —
 Production barrels per day 000: —
 Consumption barrels per day 000: 20
 Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 4.7
 Exports \$billion: 1.28
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 3.6
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): -0.2
 Balance of Trade \$billion: -2.195

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Croatia %	24.5	18.3
Slovenia %	14.7	7.1
Germany %	13.7	17.1
Italy %	12.2	28.7
Hungary %	7.8	—
Austria %	6.7	9.2

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 21,846
 Paved %: 52.3
 Automobiles: —
 Trucks and Buses: —
 Railroad: Track Length km: 1,021
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: —
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 0
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: —
 Airports: 27
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 43
 Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 160
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 112
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 49

Communications

Telephones 000: 938
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.03
 Cellular Telephones million: 1.05
 Personal Computers 000: —
 Internet Hosts per million people: 1,737
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 25

ENVIRONMENT

The environment of Bosnia and Herzegovina has suffered greatly because of the civil strife. The infrastructure for the removal of waste in urban areas, including landfill sites, and drinking-water facilities were largely destroyed, though access to clean water had greatly improved by 2004. Pollution is growing as the result of discharges from metallurgical plants. It is estimated that over one million land mines were still present in the country in the early 2000s, making vast tracts of farmland unusable.

Environment protection is scant. In 2001 only 0.5 percent of the total land area was protected. Some 10 of the country's mammal species were threatened in 2001, as were six species of freshwater fish. The Danube salmon, field adder, and slender-billed curlew are examples of endangered species.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 44.8
 Average Annual Forest Change, 1990-2000, 000 ha: —
 Nationally Protected Areas as % of Total Land Area: 0.5
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 4.8

LIVING CONDITIONS

The fabric of everyday life was torn apart during the civil war of 1992–95. Hundreds of thousands were killed or displaced, and homes and infrastructure were destroyed. Over two million people were forced from their homes during that time. Even with the help of international assistance programs, only about half of the nation's refugees and displaced residents were able to return to their homes by 2003.

Another major problem confronting the country is a chronic housing shortage, with an abundance of homes, and a few entire towns, destroyed during the civil war. Of the existing homes, many are in serious need of repair. Among the greatest casualties of the war were the once friendly relations between the three main cultural groups, Bosniaks, Serbs, and Croats, which were poisoned by ethnic cleansing and genocide. In the early 2000s an estimated one million land mines remained scattered over approximately 30,000 minefields throughout the country, including around schools and in areas where children play. They continued to kill and maim both children and adults and posed serious problems for displaced people wanting to return to their communities; they also hindered the country's farming and economic recovery.

As the country struggles to come to terms with its past and forge a new future through its two-state entity, some progress has been made in living conditions. The Human Development Index (HDI), compiled annually since 1990 by the United Nations Development Programme, situated Bosnia and Herzegovina 66th among 175 countries in 2003. The HDI measures countries in three main arenas of human development: longevity, education, and economic standard of living. The average life expectancy in 2004 was 73 years, and the fertility rate was 1.71 children per woman. Access to safe drinking water was a major concern following the civil war. By 2002, 100 percent of urban populations and 96 percent of rural populations had access to improved water sources. The per capita GDP was \$6,100 in 2003.

In 2001, 44 percent of the population lived in cities, and population density in 2003 was 82 people per square kilometer.

HEALTH

As with much of the rest of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the health-care system was hugely affected by the 1992–95 civil war. In 1992 alone there were 120,000 deaths from the war; there were over 200,000 in all. Additionally, thousands were permanently disabled and the health-care infrastructure badly damaged, with hospitals and clinics destroyed in the fighting.

Bosnia and Herzegovina has since made some progress in health care. The infant mortality rate was 22

deaths per 1,000 live births in 2004. The average annual rate of reduction in the mortality rate for children under five between 1990 and 2003 was 2.0 percent. In 2003, 94 percent of one-year-olds were immunized for tuberculosis; 80 percent for diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis; 86 percent for polio; and 89 percent for measles. As of 2003 an estimated 900 people were living with HIV/AIDS, and 65 cases of tuberculosis per 100,000 people were reported in 2002.

Health-care providers are not paid well and have to function with outmoded equipment. As of 2004 there were 134 physicians for every 100,000 people, providing service in regional health centers and local outpatient clinics. In 2001 public health expenditures were 7.5 percent of GDP.

Health

Number of Physicians:	5,443
Number of Dentists:	679
Number of Nurses:	16,708
Number of Pharmacists:	350
Physician Density per 100,000 people:	134
Hospital Beds per 1,000:	3.2
Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births:	21.88
Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births:	31
Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP:	7.5
Health Expenditures per capita \$:	85
HIV Infected % of adults:	< 0.1
Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:	
DPT:	80
Measles:	89
Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %:	93
Access to Improved Water Source %:	98

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Bosnia and Herzegovina displays its mixture of cultures through its food, with influences from the Balkans, the Middle East, and Central Europe.

Grilling is a favorite form of preparation for meats, including lamb, beef, and pork. *Cevapcici* are rolled mincemeat, usually lamb and pork, grilled and served with diced onions. *Pleskavica* is a patty of beef also grilled with onions. Both can be served with various pickled peppers and put on a type of pita bread known locally as *somun*. Other grilled specialties include Turkish-influenced kebabs, served on skewers. Also from Turkey is the meat pie called *burek*. Pastry pies filled with cheese are called *sirnica*, while those filled with spinach are called *zeljanica*. One of the most popular and best-known Bosnian dishes is *bosnaki lonac*, a stew of meat and vegetables layered and slowly cooked in a ceramic pot.

Sweets and desserts include baklava, made of almond and walnut paste and honey in a fluffy pastry, and *tufahije*, an apple cake topped with walnuts and whipped cream. A regional specialty is the plum brandy known locally as

rakija or *slivovitz*. Turkish coffee is also popular, as are yogurt and sour milk drinks.

Despite the severe dislocations caused by the civil war and the ensuing difficult economic times, food is generally plentiful. UNICEF reported only 1 percent of children under five suffering from being severely underweight between 1995 and 2003.

Food and Nutrition

Food Supply as % of FAO Requirements: —
 Undernourished % of total population: 7.6
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,810
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 168.7
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 204

STATUS OF WOMEN

Legally, women have the same rights as do men. The imposition of peace in 1995 by international forces brought to an end one of the most horrific tragedies of the war: mass rape. The country is still dealing with the emotional and cultural scars of the conflict.

Social and economic discrimination against women exists throughout the country; its extent varies from region to region. While women in urban areas have access to professional careers, rural women are often relegated to agricultural labor. Domestic violence continues to be a problem and is not always dealt with properly by the police. By law, women have rights to maternity leave; however, companies often fire women once they become pregnant in order to avoid such payments. Muslim women must deal with restrictions imposed by religion.

Since 2000 a major problem has become trafficking in women and young girls for work in the sex industry. This problem has been exacerbated by corrupt officials who facilitate the trafficking by accepting bribes to falsify documents and provide protection for traffickers.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 17
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men age 15 to 24: 1.0
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-Agricultural %: —

WORK

The workforce of Bosnia and Herzegovina was estimated at 1.026 million in 2002, with unemployment at 40 percent. No figures exist regarding the distribution of work-

ers across occupation, but before the civil war about 40 percent of Bosnians worked in industry, producing steel, coal, iron ore, lead, zinc, manganese, bauxite, vehicle assemblies, textiles, tobacco products, wooden furniture, tank and aircraft assembly, domestic appliances, and refined oil. Before the Communist era the vast majority of the population worked in agriculture. Though three decades of collectivization and industrialization have altered the nature of the labor force, the majority of the population still live in rural areas. Thus, agriculture accounts for a large portion of the employment sector; wheat, corn, fruits, vegetables, and livestock are raised. A service sector of professionals and merchants exists primarily in urban areas.

The right to form unions and to strike is guaranteed. However, with extremely high unemployment the bargaining power of unions is not great; strikes are the instrument of last resort. Nevertheless, they have become increasingly regular in 2001–04 to protest unpaid wages and salaries. Similarly, basic laws regarding work are often disregarded in the country's current high-unemployment environment. Nominally, the minimum working age is 15 and the legal workweek 40 hours, but both of these regulations are routinely ignored, especially in agriculture. Safety and health standards in the workplace also often go unobserved.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 1,026,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 38.2
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: —
 Industry: —
 Services: —
 Unemployment %: 40

EDUCATION

Prior to the outbreak of civil war in Bosnia, education was universal and free from the ages of seven to 18. More than 700,000 students were enrolled, mostly in elementary schools. There are four universities in the country. Since the Dayton Accords, schools have been reestablished where possible; however, the educational structure that predated the war is largely gone. There are nearly 600,000 school-age children in the country.

Free access to primary education is guaranteed by law to all children in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The adult literacy rate in 2002 was 94.6 percent, and the gross enrollment ratio in 2001–02 for primary, secondary, and tertiary educational systems was 64 percent, placing the nation 121st in the world. The net primary school enrollment for the period of 1996–2003 was 86 percent.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 94.6
Male %: 98.4
Female %: 91.1
School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: —
First Level: Primary schools: 2,205
Teachers: —
Students: —
Student-Teacher Ratio: —
Net Enrollment Ratio: 86.0
Second Level: Secondary Schools: 238
Teachers: —
Students: —
Student-Teacher Ratio: —
Net Enrollment Ratio: —
Third Level: Institutions: 44
Teachers: —
Students: —
Gross Enrollment Ratio: —
Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: —

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

There are no figures for government sponsorship of research and development in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Research into increasing crop yields and into measures to further protect and clean up the environment are performed through the Bosnian Ministry of Agriculture, Water Management, and Forestry. The Bosnian Ministry of Education has worked with European partners to upgrade education at the nation's agricultural colleges.

Various institutions provide scientific and engineering education, including the University of Sarajevo, the University of Banja Luka, and the University of Tuzla. Sarajevo is also home to the Institute for Thermal and Nuclear Technology, founded in 1961. Despite the dislocations of war, several professional groups still operate in Sarajevo, including the Society of Mathematicians, Physicists, and Astronomers, the Union of Engineers and Technicians, and the Medical Society of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million persons: —
Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
High-Tech Exports \$million: —
Patent Applications by Residents: 52

MEDIA

The Federation constitution guarantees the freedom of the media and press, and with the exception of the government press center media agencies operate freely and independently. The award-winning Sarajevo daily *Oslobodjenje* continued operations into the early 2000s, despite

the production difficulties imposed by the war. The Federation constitution also lists freedom of the press as a fundamental national freedom.

The Bosnia and Herzegovina constitution also provides for freedom of expression. While the constitution of the Republic of Srpska sets forth this freedom and guarantees freedom of communication, the latter may be limited by a court order if it is deemed crucial for criminal proceedings or for the Republic of Srpska's security.

The Office of the High Representative in Bosnia (OHR), a body created by the Dayton Accords and approved by the United Nations Security Council and other international bodies, has been active in promoting an independent media. The OHR, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and the European Monitoring Commission have been working toward the establishment of an independent and self-sufficient publishing house in the Republic of Srpska.

In 1995 there were 33 television stations in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The nation's first independent television station, the Open Broadcast Network, began broadcasting on September 7, 1996. TV-IN, a joint-venture company that represents independent journalists in Bosnia and Herzegovina and five commercial television stations, was launched in late 1996; MTV began broadcasting to the region in 2004. In 1998 there were eight AM radio stations and 16 FM stations in operation in Bosnia. In 1999 there were 243 radios and 112 television sets per 1,000 people. Most broadcasts are in Serbo-Croatian. In 2002 there were 100,000 Internet users and over one million cellular phone users.

Media

Newspapers and Periodicals: —
Total Circulation 000: —
Circulation per 1,000: —
Books Published: —
Radio Receivers 000: 978
per 1,000: 243
Television sets 000: 430
per 1,000: 112

CULTURE

The trio of cultures that make up Bosnia and Herzegovina have assured the country a rich cultural heritage, as did occupation of the country at various times by the Ottoman Turks and the Austrians. From Ottoman times, and as a result of the Muslim influence, come the minarets that ornament the skyline of many of the country's cities and towns. From the Orthodox Serbs come the distinctive onion-dome churches, and from the Catholic Croats come churches and cathedrals. The Habsburg influence is seen in the distinctive Central European urban architecture from the 19th century.

Muslim tradition has left a handcraft tradition of metalworking and calligraphy. Textile arts, such as silk embroidery and the weaving of the famous *kilim* carpets also flourished.

Folk dancing is another cultural heritage. Such dances can be done to music or simply to the clapping of hands or the stamping of feet, and the sexes are often separated, as in line dances. One popular dance accompanied only by the rhythm of stamping feet is the *kolo*. While still extant in rural areas and popular for festivals, such dances are becoming less popular among a younger generation influenced by trends from the West.

The music of Bosnia and Herzegovina is a blend of all its cultures. The most common traditional form of music in all areas was the love song tradition called *sevdalinka*. In the country, traditional song forms include the flat song, or *ravne pesme*, and the more polyphonic *ganga*. Such simple music was often accompanied by a wooden flute, a bagpipe, or *diple*, and a lute-like instrument called the *öargija*. More Turkish influence is shown in the traditional music of urban areas, with its heavy concentration of notes per syllable of song. However, as with traditional dance, this musical tradition is giving way to Western influence, particularly rock. The hip-hop scene in Bosnia and Herzegovina is particularly strong.

Among modern writers are Ivo Andrić, the Nobel Laureate for 1961, Miljenko Jergović, a contemporary best-selling author, and Mak Dizdar, a major poet. The country's emerging film industry received a boost with 2001's *No Man's Land*, directed by Danis Tanović. The film is a darkly comic antiwar parable that won numerous international prizes, including both the Academy Award and Golden Globe for Best Foreign Language Film.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers:
 Museums Number:
 Annual Attendance:
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Mythology and folklore in Bosnia and Herzegovina is strongly influenced by the Bosniak, or Bosnian Muslim, tradition. Many of the tales in this tradition are over 500 years old and are reminiscent of tales in other Slavic and Oriental folk traditions.

As with many folk traditions, favorite characters include the hero and the trickster. The former are represented in Bosnian folktales largely by historical figures

from Bosnia's long history. Thus, such national figures as Gazi Husrev-beg and Gerz Eljaz Đerzelez Alija, have become mythic characters, as has Ban Kulin.

The most famous example of the trickster, and one that is found in many folk traditions, is Nasrudin Hodža. Transplanted to Bosnia, Nasrudin takes part in humorous episodes with Bosnia settings in many folktales. Another trickster, the wise old man, is found in a legend about the old Sarajevo Orthodox Church. Supposedly, a finicky official demanded that a church be built on land no bigger than an animal hide. The wise old man used cunning to trick the official: He cut the hide into thin strips and laid them end to end to create the boundaries of a large church.

Legends and folktales have grown up around many other manmade structures such as bridges and fountains, in towns from Sarajevo to Mostar.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

With the addition of new television channels and access to cable and satellite television, Bosnians have, like other Europeans and Westerners in general, turned to the television for much of their entertainment. Movies are also quite popular, and with a high literacy rate and ready access to newspapers and books, reading is another pastime for many.

Recreational sports such as soccer and basketball are popular, as are hiking, swimming, and fishing. The country provides a variety of landscapes for such outdoor activities.

More Mediterranean in influence is the tradition of the evening stroll, or *korzo*. People can be seen milling about after dinner or work on the streets of villages, town, and cities, greeting one another and sharing coffee.

ETIQUETTE

Handshakes are used for greetings, and titles are often used with people's names, especially in formal or business settings. In light of the recent bitter divisions in the country, politics and religion are not the best topics for conversation. With cultures as diverse as those of Muslims and Christians living virtually side by side, there are many local forms of etiquette. For example, removing one's shoes is customary in Muslim households.

FAMILY LIFE

The extended-family traditions of Slavic culture, called *zadruga*, have largely given way to the nuclear family, as such traditions have all over the world. The pressures of

finance and size of homes dictate such changes. However, in rural areas a holdover of such traditions can be seen in grandparents who live with adult children and provide childcare. Families tend to be small, with no more than three children.

In Muslim families polygamy is sometimes practiced, but most marriages are monogamous, and weddings are occasions for lengthy and elaborate celebrations. While previously arranged, most marriages are now matters of personal choice. Divorce is not as common in Bosnia and Herzegovina as in western Europe, but the rate is increasing. However, with the acute housing shortage in the country, divorced couples are often forced to continue to share apartments.

Traditionally, the woman's role is still in the home, despite legal protections for full equality. Men are less likely to become involved in the domestic duties of child rearing and housework, which means that women often work both outside and at the home.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Though Bosnia and Herzegovina is divided along ethnic and religious lines, the inhabitants—Muslim Bosniaks, Orthodox Serbs, and Catholic Croats—are all of South Slav extraction and have a similar physical appearance.

Unlike in many other countries, the traditional dress of Bosnia and Herzegovina lasted into the late 20th century. However, this rich assortment of costumes is hardly seen anymore outside of certain mountain villages or during special festivals and folk performances. Colorful and unique to each region, costumes were made of local fabrics and reflected local, ethnic, and religious affiliations. For example, in the Dinaric Mountains, where sheep breeding was a major source of income, folk costumes tended to be made of wool and embroidered with yarn. In other regions, elaborate head wear existed for Muslim women.

Urban Bosnians now dress in the Western style, with blue jeans the new "costume." A Muslim men might still be seen wearing breeches, cummerbund, striped shirt, vest, and fez, but largely all ethnic and religious groups favor Western-style clothing. It is rare for Muslim women to wear the head covering called the *chadri*; they instead use scarves.

SPORTS

Two main sports are popular: basketball and soccer. Both men's and women's basketball leagues exist throughout the country, and Bosnian players are members of teams throughout Europe as well. The country has three leagues: the Bosnian League, the Croatian League, and the Serbian League. Soccer matches also draw spectators

from all over the country, and, like basketball, the sport is played recreationally.

The mountains of Bosnia and Herzegovina provide hiking and mountain climbing opportunities in the summer months and skiing in the winter. The 1984 Winter Olympics were held in Sarajevo.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1941** Axis powers incorporate Bosnia into the independent state of Croatia, a puppet state run by the Ustase, a Croat Fascist group; the Ustase attempts to exterminate the region's two million Serbs; civil war breaks out, with the multiethnic Communist Partisans led by Josip Broz Tito fighting both the Ustase and the Serb royalist Chetniks.
- 1943** The Partisans proclaim a federation of South Slav peoples, known as Yugoslavia, with Tito as marshal and prime minister.
- 1945** World War II ends; Tito organizes the Yugoslavia Socialist Federation as six republics: Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia, Slovenia, Montenegro, and Macedonia; political representation within Bosnia-Herzegovina is strictly apportioned among the state's three constituent peoples, Croats, Serbs, and Muslims.
- 1948** Tito breaks relations with the Soviet Union's Joseph Stalin and begins a gradual process of decentralization of Yugoslavia.
- 1968** Muslims are officially recognized as one of Yugoslavia's six national groups.
- 1980** Tito dies; Yugoslavia's economy takes a turn for the worse.
- 1985** Yugoslavia's economic crisis hits its nadir, with production and living standards at 1965 levels.
- 1988** Slobodan Milošević, the president of Serbia, embarks on a campaign to recentralize Yugoslavia.
- 1989** Croatia and Slovenia resist centralization and call for multiparty elections.
- 1990** In the first multiparty national elections since World War II, Communist candidates are easily defeated by new parties representing the three national communities of Bosnia-Herzegovina, which gain seats roughly in proportion to their populations; Alija Izetbegović, a Bosniak (Muslim), leads the resulting tripartite government and joint presidency.
- 1991** The Serbian Democratic Party of Bosnia-Herzegovina, led by Radovan Karadžić, boycotts joint presidential meetings and declares a Serb National Assembly in Banja Luka; Slovenia and Croatia declare their independence and are recognized by the European Union.
- 1992** In a referendum boycotted by Serbs, 97 percent of voters endorse independence for Bosnia-

- Herzegovina; in April the United States and the European Union recognize Bosnia-Herzegovina; within a week the combined Serb forces of the Yugoslavian army, Serb paramilitary groups, and Bosnian Serbs begin bombarding Sarajevo; Serbia and Montenegro declare themselves the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY); Serb forces begin a process of "ethnic cleansing" to clear non-Serbs from Serb-claimed areas; by mid-May Serb forces control two-thirds of Bosnia-Herzegovina.
- 1993** The United Nations imposes economic sanctions on the FRY; war breaks out between Croats and Bosniaks, formerly allied against the Serbs, over control of central Bosnia-Herzegovina; Serb ethnic cleansing is nearly complete by mid-year.
- 1994** Bosniaks and Croats agree to form a Bosniak-Croat federation in Bosnia-Herzegovina; a cease-fire with Serb forces is negotiated in December.
- 1995** Serbian forces massacre some 6,000 Muslim men in the UN-declared "safe haven" at Srebrenica; NATO carries out major air strikes on Serb positions; the United States brokers a peace agreement, the Dayton Accords, retaining Bosnia-Herzegovina's prewar boundaries but distinguishing two separate entities within it: one Serb, the other Croat-Bosniak.
- 1996** Voters choose candidates on essentially ethnic lines in national elections observed by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.
- 1998** NATO extends indefinitely its peacekeeping operations in Bosnia-Herzegovina, which were scheduled to expire in June.
- 1997** Candidates are selected on essentially ethnic lines in municipal elections.
- 2000** Non-nationalist parties gain a slim majority in national elections; however, many Serbs and Croats remain attached to their nationalist parties. The worst drought in half a century exacerbates economic difficulties.
- 2001** In January the reformist Alliance for Change, a coalition of 10 parties, succeeds in getting its members appointed speaker, deputy speaker, and parliamentary secretary of the legislative assembly in a tight vote over the two dominant Croat and Muslim nationalist parties. The former general Radislav Krstić receives a 46-year prison sentence for crimes against humanity at Srebrenica.
- 2002** Nationalist parties make a comeback in October elections. Reform in the country appears stalled.
- 2003** Polls show that a vast majority of Croats want either their own republic or union with Croatia, while the majority of Bosnian Serbs still desire union with Serbia. In September the Muslim-Croat Federation and the Republika Srpska sign an agreement that establishes a new locally administered Human Rights Commission.
- 2004** In December the Bosnian Serb prime minister Dragan Mikerević, resigns in protest over the firing of Bosnian officials accused of aiding war crimes suspects. That same month the European Union formally takes over peacekeeping from NATO with a force of 7,000. The European Union pledges 65 million euros to aid in the reform and modernization efforts in Bosnia and Herzegovina.
- 2005** In January, Vidoje Blagojević and Dragan Jokić, former Serb officers, are convicted of war crimes for the 1995 Srebrenica massacre.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina
<http://www.bhas.ba/eng/>
- Central Bank of Bosnia and Herzegovina
<http://www.cbbh.gov.ba/en/>
- CIA World Factbook: Bosnia and Herzegovina
<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/bk.html/>
- Embassy of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Washington, D.C.)
<http://www.bhembassy.org/>
- Federal Ministry of Finance
<http://www.fmf.gov.ba/eng/index2.htm/>
- Office of the High Representative in Bosnia and Herzegovina
<http://www.ohr.int/>

BOTSWANA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Botswana (Lefatshe la Botswana) (formerly Bechuanaland)

ABBREVIATION

BW

CAPITAL

Gaborone

HEAD OF STATE & HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

President Festus Mogae (from 1998)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Parliamentary democracy

POPULATION

1,640,115 (2005)

AREA

600,370 sq km (231,803 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Tswana

LANGUAGES

English (official), Setswana

RELIGIONS

Christianity, animism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Pula

NATIONAL FLAG

Five horizontal stripes: wide light blue top and bottom stripes separated from a smaller black middle stripe by thin white stripes

NATIONAL EMBLEM

The main elements of the national coat of arms are a white oval shield flanked by a zebra rampant and an elephant tusk on the left and zebra rampant and a stem of millet with red crown and green stalk on the right; on the shield are three wavy black stripes, three cogwheels, and a reddish-brown ox head with long silver horns; beneath is the legend *Pula*, meaning rain.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Blessed Country”

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

May 24 (President’s Day), first Monday in August (Commonwealth Day), September 30 (Botswana Day, National Day), various Christian festivals, including Good Friday, Holy Saturday, Holy Monday, Ascension Day, Whitmonday, and Christmas

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

September 30, 1966

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

Effective 1966

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Botswana, a landlocked country in southern Africa, occupies an area of 600,370 sq km (231,803 sq mi), extending 1,115 km (693 mi) north-northeast to south-southwest and 951 km (591 mi) east-southeast to west-northwest.

Botswana shares its total international boundary of 4,013 km (2,494 mi) with South Africa (1,840 km; 1,142 mi), Namibia (1,360 km; 844 mi), and Zimbabwe (813 km; 505 mi). Botswana touches Zambia at the confluence of the Zambezi and Chobe rivers in the extreme north. This segment of the border is a source of controversy with South Africa.

The capital is Gaborone, with a 2001 population of 186,007. Gaborone is a comparatively new city and until 1975 had a much smaller population than Serowe (42,444) or Francistown (83,023). Other population centers are Lobatse (29,689), Selebi-Phikwe (49,849), Kanye (40,628, including seasonal migrants), Maun (43,776), Molepolole (54,561), and Mochudi (36,962).

Botswana is a vast tableland at a mean altitude of 1,000 m (3,300 ft). A gently undulating plateau running from the South African border near Lobatse to a point west of Kanye and from there northward to Bulawayo on the Zimbabwean border forms the watershed between the two main natural divisions of Botswana. The fertile

Botswana



land to the south of this plateau is hilly bush country and grassland, or veld. To the west of the country plateau, stretching over the border into Namibia, is the Kalahari (or Kgaladi) Desert. The Kalahari Desert is more accurately a semidesert, or sandy tract covered with thorn bush and grass. In the extreme northwest lies the area known as Ngamiland, dominated by the Okavango Swamps, a

great inland delta of some 16,835 sq km (6,500 sq mi), and the Makgadikgadi Salt Pans. Around the swamps and along the northeastern border from Kasane to Francistown there is forest and dense bush.

Most of Botswana is without surface drainage, and apart from the Limpopo and Chobe rivers the country's waterways never reach the sea. The major interior river

system is the Okavango, which flows into Botswana from the Angolan Highlands in the northwest to form the Okavango Swamps, a delta covering about 3 percent of the total land area of the country. About half of this area is perennially flooded; the rest is seasonally flooded. From this marsh there is a seasonal flow of water into the seasonal Lake Ngami and, along the Botletle River, into Lake Dow and the Makgadikgadi Salt Pans. Much of the water is, however, lost through evaporation. The Chobe River, in the north, flows into the Zambezi after marking the border of the Caprivi Strip for part of its course.

Geography

Area sq km: 600,370; sq mi: 231,803
 World Rank: 44th
 Land Boundaries, km: Namibia 1,360; South Africa 1,840; Zimbabwe 813
 Coastline, km: 0
 Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Limpopo and Shashe rivers 513
 Highest: Tsodilo Hills 1,489
 Land Use %
 Arable land: 0.65
 Permanent Crops: 0.01
 Forest: 21.9
 Other: 77.44

Population of Principal Cities (2001)

Francistown	83,023
Gaborone	186,007

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

The climate is generally subtropical, although the northern part of the country lies within the tropics. The dry season lasts from September to April, the hottest month being January, with mean maximum temperatures ranging from 30°C (86°F) to 34.4°C (94°F). Winters are cool, with frost common in the desert. In July, the coldest month, mean minimum temperatures range from 0.5°C (33°F) in the Kalahari to 8.3°C (47°F) in the far north. The rains usually begin in late October and continue until the end of April. Average rainfall is about 460 mm (18 in) but most of the Kalahari receives only 230 mm (9 in). The country often suffers long periods of drought, sometimes lasting up to five years.

In the winter the prevailing wind system is a dry wind from the Atlantic, sweeping across the Kalahari and bringing sandstorms.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature
 Summer: 86°F to 94°F
 Winter: 33°F to 47°F

Average Rainfall: 18 in
 Kalahari Desert: 9 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Savanna, or grassland, covers much of the country. While in the southwest this savanna is dotted with shrub acacia, in the north and east of the country there is denser woodland and also forest. In addition to several types of acacia, the shrub savanna is also home to *tsamma* melons and *moselesele*, commonly called the Kalahari Christmas tree. In the woodland, African ironwood, or mopane, can be found, as well as the *mowana*, or baobab, which may live up to 4,000 years, and *morula*, or wild plum. The dry deciduous forest of the extreme northeast consists of *mukwa* (blood wood) and *mu-kusi* (Zimbabwean teak), which are harvested for timber.

Other sorts of trees are found near water, including palm trees in northern aquatic grasslands and African ebony along rivers.

Animal life is equally varied, with more than 150 mammal species, 30 of which are large mammals such as the giraffe, elephant, lion, and buffalo—which are, in modern Botswana, mostly confined to game preserves and parks. About 20 percent of the country's land is set aside for such purposes. Crocodiles and hippos are found in wet areas, and avian life is rich, with 460 species present, including eagles, vultures, ostriches, and bustards. Catfish and tilapia are found in the rivers and streams, and 200 species of reptiles and amphibians have been identified. Richest of all is insect life, with over 80,000 identified species in the region, though this may only represent a fraction of the total.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 1,640,115
 World Rank: 144th
 Density per sq km: 3.0
 % of annual growth (1999–2003): 1.3
 Male %: 49.0
 Female %: 51.0
 Urban %: 51.6
 Age Distribution: % 0–14: 39.2
 15–64: 56.2
 65 and over: 4.6
 Population 2025: 1,583,000
 Birth Rate per 1,000: 24.71
 Death Rate per 1,000: 33.63
 Rate of Natural Increase %: 0.4
 Total Fertility Rate: 3.17
 Expectation of Life (years): Males 30.99
 Females 30.53
 Marriage Rate per 1,000: —
 Divorce Rate per 1,000: —
 Average Size of Households: 5.7
 Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Botswana is one of the most ethnically homogeneous states in Africa. About 90 percent of the population are Tswana, of Setswana-speaking descent; most of the rest are Kalanga-speaking in origin, which links them with their counterparts in neighboring Zimbabwe. The remainder are Basarwa (San); Herero, who are linked to the larger Herero community in Namibia; whites, consisting mainly of Afrikaner farmers in the northeast of the country; and Asians.

LANGUAGES

While Setswana is the mother tongue of the majority of the population, English is the official language and as such is used in business and higher education and is widely spoken. In South Africa's North West Province there are about three million Setswana-speaking people, representing some 66 percent of the province's population (which includes the former Tswana homeland of Bophuthatswana) and 7 percent of South Africa's population.

RELIGIONS

The majority of the Tswana are nominally Christian, although less than 20 to 30 percent are practicing. The rest combine some form of traditional beliefs with Christian elements. Most Christians are affiliated with the United Congregational Church. There is a Roman Catholic diocese at Gaborone with 18,000 members.

Religious Affiliations

Christian	245,000
Other (mostly traditional beliefs)	1,394,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The earliest inhabitants of what is now Botswana were almost certainly the nomadic San (commonly known as the Basarwa or Bushmen). During the 17th and 18th centuries the area was settled by Tswana-speaking peoples whose communities overlapped into what are now South Africa's northern provinces as well as Zimbabwe. Europeans began to venture into the region in the early 19th century. In 1872 King Khama III emerged as the most prominent indigenous leader and built up a powerful army. As expansionary pressures from Afrikaners in South Africa increased, as intensified by the discovery of gold near Francistown, Khama III sought protection from the British. In 1885 Britain declared a protectorate, Brit-

ish Bechuanaland, over Khama's people, while annexing Tswana-inhabited territory in the northern Cape region to its own Cape Colony. After the Cape Colony became part of the South African Union in 1910, white South African leaders pushed for the incorporation of Bechuanaland into the union.

Khama III retained control of local administration, law, and justice. He also resisted pressure to grant mining concessions to the British South Africa Company and successfully prevented unification with South Africa. Economically, however, the protectorate remained neglected and became little more than a labor reservoir for South African mines and farms. Cattle ownership remained at the core of Botswana society.

A grandson of Khama III, Seretse Khama, founded the Botswana Democratic Party (BDP), which won most of the elected seats in the preindependence poll of 1965. Upon independence in September 1966 Khama became the country's first president. He was a conservative and favored the creation of a multiracial democratic society, in which traditional laws would retain their due place. His policies included the transfer of tribal land rights to elected district committees for white leasehold farmers, the encouragement of foreign investment, and a neutral stance toward racist regimes in South Africa and Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), reflecting Botswana's strategic vulnerability. He did, however, refuse to open diplomatic relations with apartheid South Africa, despite strong commercial links. His leadership and statesmanship in the British Commonwealth earned him a knighthood from the British government, after which he was referred to as Sir Seretse Khama. He held office until his death in 1980. His deputy, Vice President Quett Ketumile Masire, a cofounder of the BDP, succeeded him. In March 1998 Sir Quett Ketumile Masire retired and his vice president, Festus Mogae, took over as president. Mogae chose Ian Khama, Seretse's son and the previous head of the army, as his vice president. BDP policy has remained fairly constant throughout leadership transitions.

As president, Mogae has had to deal with difficult problems, including environmental degradation, diversification of the economy, and political power struggles within his own ruling party. In the 2004 elections Mogae won another five-year term as president, as his BDP party took 44 seats in parliament, which now has 57 members. Major issues in this election included accessibility to water, education and health systems, corruption, assistance for farmers, the need to improve the country's public service system, unemployment, privatization of state businesses, illegal land acquisition, and the eviction of the San from the Kalahari Game Reserve.

However, these political and economic concerns have been largely overshadowed by the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Botswana has the highest infection rate in the world: 37.3 percent of the adult population was infected in 2003, and

there were 33,000 deaths that year from the disease. AIDS has drastically shortened the average life expectancy, decimated the population, and caused enormous dislocations and pressures on the nation's economy and health-care system. The government has worked hard to meet this challenge, earning commendations as the first nation in Africa to widely distribute antiretroviral drugs.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1966–80 Seretse Khama
1980–98 Quett Ketumile Joni Masire
1998– Festus Gontebanye Mogae

CONSTITUTION

Botswana is a presidential democracy. The constitution adopted at independence in 1966 vests legislative power in the National Assembly, with 57 members, including the president, the speaker, the attorney general, and four members nominated by the president. The remainder of the assembly is elected every five years on the basis of universal adult suffrage, with full freedom to organize political parties. A 15-member House of Chiefs has advisory power only. Executive power lies with the president, who is elected by parliament. The constitution may be amended in minor ways on a simple parliamentary majority vote. More substantive amendments require a two-thirds majority, while major alterations have to be put to a national referendum. Under a local government system introduced at independence, there are nine district councils and four town councils. Local elections coincide with national elections and are also conducted on a party basis.

Full protection of the fundamental rights and freedoms of the individual is provided under the constitution, although criticisms about the treatment of minority San have emerged. An independent judiciary interprets and administers the constitution and other laws. Roman-Dutch law is the common law, while criminal law is largely based on English law. Customary law cases in rural areas are heard by tribal courts associated with the village *kgotla*, or assembly of elders, with traditional chiefs acting as court presidents.

The Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) has a secure hold on power. In the 1999 general election it won 33 of the 40 elected seats that existed at the time. Although this was an improvement on the 27 it had won in 1994, it was largely a reflection of opposition weakness rather than strong BDP support. The BDP's urban support is especially weak, as rising unemployment and poverty are major issues, and it is the BDP's rural base that ensures its continued success. Internally, traditional BDP factions appear to have lost ground in recent years, although

the party's conservative policies and constituency remain unchanged. Sir Quett Masire selected Festus Mogae, a former bureaucrat, as his successor in a bid to neutralize internal factions. Mogae's subsequent choice of the former army commander Ian Khama as his vice president was made for similar reasons. BDP faction leaders have thus taken more of a back seat, but they remain powerful. The main opposition, the Botswana National Front, is led by the aging Kenneth Koma, who has promised to step down soon. However, the future of the party in the absence of its long-standing leader, especially as there is no obvious successor, remains in doubt. Other political parties, including those that fought the 1999 elections grouped in a coalition, are in a very weak position, and their prospects for gaining political power will rest heavily on their ability to forge successful alliances, probably with the BNF.

In the 2004 elections Mogae won another five-year term as president, as his BDP took 44 seats in parliament. Meanwhile, the BNF joined forces with the Botswana People's Party (BPP) under Knight Maripe and the Botswana Alliance Movement (BAM) under Ephraim Lepetu Setshwaelo to win 12 seats in the National Assembly, while the Botswana Congress Party under Mokgweetsi Kgosipula took one seat.

PARLIAMENT

The national legislature is a partially bicameral parliament, consisting of an elected National Assembly and a consultative House of Chiefs.

The National Assembly consists of the president of the republic, the speaker, and the attorney general serving *ex officio* and comprises 57 members in all. The term of the National Assembly is five years. The president may withhold his assent to a bill passed by the National Assembly, but if it is again presented to him after six months he is required to assent unless he dissolves parliament within 21 days.

The House of Chiefs is a 15-member advisory body consisting of the chiefs of the eight principal tribes serving *ex officio*, four members elected by the subchiefs from among their own number, and three members elected by the other 12 members of the House. Bills affecting tribal interests and chieftaincy matters must be referred to the House. Under the constitution, suffrage is universal over age 18.

POLITICAL PARTIES

The ruling party is the Botswana Democratic Party (BDP), founded in 1962 by Sir Seretse Khama and currently led by Quett Masire. The BDP favors parliamentary democracy, multiracialism, racial moderation, and

close relations with Great Britain. It had supported a dialogue with white-dominated South Africa prior to the end of apartheid.

The Botswana National Front is a leftist party formed in 1965 by Kenneth Koma. It has been categorized as pro-Communist, but Koma has termed its members social democrats who are not Marxist. Its supporters are primarily the urban working class. The Botswana People's Party (BPP), led by Knight Maripe, was once the dominant opposition party but it retained only one seat in the 1984 election. Its main planks are Africanization of the administration, an end to rule by the chiefs, and nationalization of foreign companies. Its primary strength is among minorities in northeast Botswana. The Botswana Independence Party was formed in 1964 by dissidents from the BPP. The party's main platforms are similar to those of the BPP. The Botswana Progressive Union was formed in 1982. The Botswana Liberal Party, which does not align itself with other opposition parties, was founded in 1984 to combat what the founders declared was economic stagnation since independence. A number of minor parties joined together in 1999 to form the Botswana Alliance Movement (BAM), including the United Action Party, the Independence Freedom Party, and the Botswana Progressive Union. The Botswana Congress Party, or BCP, is one of the major opposition parties and is led by Mokgweetsi Kgosipula.

In the 2004 elections the BDP took 51.73 percent of the vote, gaining 44 seats; the Botswana National Front (in a coalition with other parties) took 26.05 percent, gaining 12 seats; and the Botswana Congress Party took 16.62 percent, gaining one seat.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For purposes of regional administration Botswana is divided into nine districts, whose boundaries follow tribal divisions very closely. Five of the district councils are headed by chiefs and four by elected leaders. The district councils vary in size from 12 to 38 members; each council has an elected majority. Chiefs and tribal authorities are ex officio members of the council. The chief official on the district level is the district commissioner, a civil servant appointed by the central government. Each district also has a district development committee.

There are also four townships—Francistown, Gaborone, Lobatse, and Selebi-Pikwe—with town councils. Each town council consists of eight elected members and varying numbers of nominated members.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The legal system is headed by the High Court of Botswana, whose chief justice is also the chairman of the

Judicial Service Commission, which advises the president on matters relating to the appointment, discipline, and removal of judges. The Botswana Court of Appeal has jurisdiction over civil and criminal appeals emanating from the High Court. In certain circumstances further appeals lie with the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in London. There are subordinate first-, second-, and third-class courts with limited jurisdiction in each district. Under the African Courts Proclamation Act of 1961, tribal law and custom are dispensed in native and customary courts, but their jurisdiction is limited to Africans.

The judiciary is independent, and its separation from the executive has been upheld even in controversial and sensitive cases. There are no special courts to deal with security or political offenses. No information is available on the correctional facilities in the penal system in Botswana.

HUMAN RIGHTS

In terms of civil and political rights, Botswana is ranked as a free nation. The country has conformed to the fundamental principles of rule of law, political democracy, and respect for human rights since independence. The constitution provides for a bill of rights, and the courts have consistently upheld these rights in practice. There are no political prisoners, and preventive detention is illegal. The right to a fair trial is honored in practice. Defendants are entitled to counsel, and consultation may be held in private. All trials are public.

While all of Botswana's information media are owned by the government, editorial staffs enjoy considerable independence. Articles strongly critical of the government are frequently published, and activities of and statements by the political opposition are adequately covered. There is no censorship. Labor unions have a limited right to strike, organize, bargain collectively, and lobby.

While ethnic discrimination is officially banned, critics of the government call its policy of relocation of the San people from the Kalahari Game Reserve a form of implicit discrimination. Poverty and disease is more chronic among the San than among other groups in the country, but the government assumes a color-blind stance where everyone is equal, refusing to see the San minority as the original indigenous people of the region. They are called Basarwa (those who don't raise cattle, in Setswana), a term the San feel is demeaning.

FOREIGN POLICY

In the past Botswana maintained a delicate balance between its natural affinity to black liberation movements in southern Africa and the economic realities of its geographical location as a landlocked nation bordering and

economically heavily dependent on white-dominated South Africa. While rejecting apartheid, Botswana made a special effort to maintain good relations with South Africa, both as a trading partner and as a source of employment for Tswana. Botswana cooperates with South Africa in the South African Customs Union but has pulled out of the rand currency area and established its own monetary unit, the pula. Botswana established diplomatic relations with South Africa following the establishment of the new regime in that country after 1994. Sir Seretse Khama also spoke out vigorously against the Ian Smith regime in Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), apartheid in Rhodesia, and the sale of arms to South Africa. Botswana continues to give conditional asylum to political refugees from Namibia guerrillas, illustrating its commitment to the peaceful resolution of racial problems.

Relations between South Africa and Botswana were extremely strained through the 1980s because of Botswana's asylum policy. The South African government alleged that Botswana had aided South African guerrilla insurgents, a charge Botswana denied. Border fire was exchanged between the two countries, and during 1985, 1986, and 1987 South Africa sent troops to attack alleged African National Congress (ANC) bases in Botswana. In 1987 Botswana established diplomatic relations with Zimbabwe.

Botswana's main contacts farther afield are with Tanzania and Zambia. Botswana and Zambia established a permanent consultative committee in 1973. A joint commission was also established with Lesotho and Swaziland in 1974. While retaining very close links with the United Kingdom and other Western powers, Botswana, following independence, demonstrated its nonalignment by establishing full diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union, China, North Korea, Romania, Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia.

Botswana joined the United Nations in 1966. It is a member of nine UN organizations and also the Commonwealth and the Organization of African Unity (OAU). Botswana and the United States are parties to three agreements and treaties covering economic and technical operation, investment guarantees, and the Peace Corps.

Beginning in 1992 Botswana was involved in a border dispute with Namibia, which was referred to the International Court of Justice in 1995 and decided in Botswana's favor in 1999. In 2003 relations between South Africa and Botswana were normalized with a joint cooperation treaty. Relations with Zimbabwe that same year worsened over the construction by Botswana of new border fencing to keep out cattle that might have foot-and-mouth disease.

DEFENSE

Botswana established its first permanent defense force in 1977, and by 2002 the military consisted of about 9,000

men, with 8,500 in the army and the remaining 500 in the Air Wing. In addition, there were about 1,500 paramilitary police. Military spending in 2003 was \$298.9 million, or 3.6 percent of gross domestic product (GDP).

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	9,000
Military Manpower Availability:	381,801
Military Expenditures \$million:	298.9
as % of GDP:	3.6
as % of central government expenditures:	—
Arms Imports:	\$0
Arms Exports:	\$0

ECONOMY

Botswana is one of the lowest-income countries of the world and is also considered by the United Nations to be one of the least developed countries in the world. Since independence, however, Botswana has combined an impressive record of economic growth and political stability. Its 15 percent annual growth during the 1973–78 development plan period surpassed the growth rate of many other countries more generously endowed with natural resources.

Botswana has a free-market economy in which the dominant sector is private. Traditionally, Botswana's economy has been based on cattle raising and crops. Agriculture employs over four-fifths of the population but contributes less than 5 percent of GDP and satisfies only about half of domestic food requirements. This sector is limited by overgrazing, poor soil, and limited water resources as well as periodic droughts and plagues of locusts. Botswana achieved dramatic economic growth during the 1970s and 1980s primarily as a result of the growth in mining (principally diamonds). Mining's contribution to GDP grew from 25 percent in 1980 to over 35 percent in 1997. Diamond mining continues to fuel much of the country's expansion and in 2003 accounted for more than one-third of GDP and 90 percent of export earnings. Despite rapid growth, unemployment remains high—about 40 percent—and a very limited resource base hampers diversification into labor-intensive industries.

Almost half of the Botswana government's revenues are from mineral royalties and dividends. Customs and excise taxes account for another 15 percent. Almost 16 percent of expenditures go to recurrent expenditures. Development expenditures account for over 40 percent, of which almost one-quarter go to economic services.

The first National Development Plan (1968–73) called for increased state intervention in economic development, the creation of new job opportunities in the private sector, budgetary self-sufficiency, and equitable distribution of income. The plan exceeded its 15 percent per annum rate of

growth in real terms, achieved budgetary self-sufficiency in 1972–73, and reached the 1975 employment target in 1972. Encouraged by the results, the government launched still more ambitious development plans designed to develop the infrastructure and expand social services. The 1997–2003 development plan aimed at diversifying the economy in order to create jobs, especially for unskilled workers. It also focused on further developing infrastructure and improving the quality of education. More diversification is called for in the 2004–09 National Development Plan, encouraging foreign investment in tourism, pharmaceuticals, and light manufacturing.

The most important sources of foreign aid have been the United Kingdom, Sweden, Denmark, the Netherlands, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the International Development Association, and the United States. Until 1972 budgetary deficits were met by the United Kingdom. In 2002 Botswana received \$37 million in international aid.

HIV/AIDS has had a drastic impact on the economy, taxing its health system and debilitating the working sector. Rates of infection are pushing 40 percent among the sexually active and are expected to force a greater percentage of the population into poverty. It is estimated that the Botswana economy will be one-third smaller over the next decade as a result of the virus. As of 2003, long-term prospects for the country were also threatened by the expected leveling off of diamond mining production.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 14.2
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 9,000
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 5.4
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 4.0
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %

Agriculture: 3.0
 Industry: 46.5
 Services: 50.5

Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %

Private Consumption: 27
 Government Consumption: 32
 Gross Domestic Investment: 23.9

Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 2.544
 Imports: 1.753

% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: —

% of Income Received by Richest 10%: —

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
137.5	149.4	159.2	172.0	187.8

Finance

National Currency: Pula (BWP)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = BWP 4.9499
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 2.5
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 14.25
 Total External Debt \$million: 392
 Debt Service Ratio %: 1.31

Balance of Payments \$million: 539

International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 5.4

Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index

Growth Rate %: 9.2

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 37.56

per capita \$: 22

Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 36.8

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: April 1–March 31

Revenues \$billion: 3.263

Expenditures \$billion: 3.283

Budget Deficit \$million: 20

Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 3.0

Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: –0.5

Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares: 16.2

Irrigation, % of Farms having: 0.27

Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 12.4

Total Farmland as % of land area: 0.65

Livestock: Cattle 000: 1,700

Sheep 000: 400

Hogs 000: 8

Chickens 000: 4,000

Forests: Production of Roundwood (000 cubic meters): 754.6

Fisheries: Total Catch tons: 139

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 326

Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 7.3

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of

oil equivalent 000: —

Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of

oil equivalent 000: —

Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg: —

Net Energy Imports % of use: —

Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: 217

Production kW-hr million: 410

Consumption kW-hr million: 1,560

Coal Reserves tons billion: 4.74

Production tons million: 1.06

Consumption tons million: 1.09

Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic meters billion: —

Production cubic meters million: —

Consumption cubic meters million: —

Crude Petroleum reserves barrels million: —

Production barrels per day 000: —

Consumption barrels per day 000: 21

Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 1.753
 Exports \$billion: 2.544
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 4.9
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 1.0
 Balance of Trade \$million: 539

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Southern African Customs Union %	74.0	7.0
European Free Trade Association %	17.0	87.0
Zimbabwe %	4.0	4.0

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 10,217
 Paved %: 55.0
 Automobiles: 44,500
 Trucks and Buses: 67,900
 Railroad: Track Length km: 888
 Passenger-km million: 75
 Freight-km million: 1,037
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: —
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: —
 Airports: 10
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 80
 Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 1,037
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 309
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 150

Communications

Telephones 000: 142.4
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.02
 Cellular Telephones 000: 435
 Personal Computers 000: 70
 Internet Hosts per million people: 1,171
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 37

ENVIRONMENT

Landsat imagery reveals devegetated areas throughout Botswana as a result of overgrazing. Based on recent trends, more than half of Botswana's land area could be degraded and its productivity permanently impaired within 25 years. Rapid expansion of livestock farming has meant the opening up of new areas in the west and north, reducing the habitats available for wildlife. Especially damaging is the expanding network of cor-

don fences established by ranchers that block wildlife migration paths. Up to 50,000 wildebeest died along cordon fences in one recent year alone. The country also faces serious water shortages.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 21.9
 Average Annual Forest Change, 1990-2000, 000 ha: -118
 Nationally Protected Areas as % of Total Land Area: 30
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 2.3

LIVING CONDITIONS

The population of the country is equally distributed between urban and rural areas, and the living conditions in each are very different. Families in rural villages tend to live in traditional compounds, usually with two or three small houses. Traditionally, these simple houses have cylindrical clay walls and conical thatch roofs and are set around an open fireplace. This traditional building style is giving way to square houses with metal roofs. In the northwest many houses are made of reeds. Most cooking in villages is done on open wood fires, though coal fires have become typical in poorer urban households without electricity, and lighting is by candle and kerosene lantern.

Access to water and adequate fuel supplies are definite problems in the villages, and women often have to walk great distances to fetch either or both. Subsistence farming and herding provides a poverty-line income for most rural people. Among many groups, the possession or nonpossession of cattle still distinguishes between relative richness and poverty. Traditional beliefs in the cycle of life in which even the dead are "present" tend to perpetuate such difficult living conditions.

In the cities rapid growth has led to overcrowding. Here, traditional lifestyles have given way to more Western ones. In the cities as well as in much of rural Botswana the social class system of old has broken down, as replaced by one based on commerce and a cash economy.

In 2002 Botswana ranked 126th out of 177 countries in the Human Development Index, which combines measures of life expectancy, school enrollment, literacy, and income. The country had scored higher in previous years, but as a result of the lowering of life expectancy because of the AIDS epidemic, its listing declined. In 2002 life expectancy was 41 years; in 2004 it had plummeted to 31 years. The fertility rate was 3.17 children per woman in 2004. Poverty is endemic: between 1990 and 2002 over half the population lived on less than two dollars per day. Malnutrition is also chronic among about one-quarter of the population.

HEALTH

The government-run health-care system, set up in the 1970s, provides health care to citizens for a nominal fee. Every village with a population over 500 has some sort of health service, though access can be restricted by the availability of trained staff. As of 1999 there were only an estimated 3 physicians and 16 hospital beds per 10,000 people.

The warm, dry climate of Botswana has traditionally been favorable to health; the tropical diseases such as malaria that plague the rest of sub-Saharan Africa are not as prevalent there. In 2000 there were about 49 cases of malaria per 100,000 population. Until the 1990s respiratory and intestinal diseases had been the major fatal diseases, along with tuberculosis. In 2002 there were 338 cases of tuberculosis per 100,000 people. In 2000, 95 percent of the population had access to safe water, and 41 percent of the population had access to sanitation, numbers which have been steadily improving over the years. Malnutrition also poses a health risk; 32 percent of the population was undernourished in 2000–2002. Additionally, with changing diets the people of Botswana have become prone to high blood pressure, heart attack, and stroke. Immunization rates are improving in the country. As of 2003, 97 percent of one-year-olds were immunized for polio and 99 percent for tuberculosis.

The single largest health problem in Botswana as of 2004 is HIV/AIDS. The country has the highest infection rate in the world, with 37.3 percent of adults infected in 2003, another 350,000 living with HIV/AIDS, and 33,000 deaths in 2003 alone. Antiretroviral drugs are distributed through the nation's health-care system, but the pandemic has not slowed. AIDS orphans are a growing problem in the country, and the disease affects men, women, and children, many of whom are born with AIDS. In 2001, 39 percent of children under five were suffering from AIDS-related illnesses. Life expectancy in 2004 was 31 years; the death rate was 34 per 1,000 people, and the infant mortality rate was 70 deaths for every 1,000 live births.

In addition to traditional Western medicine, Botswana also has over 2,000 registered herbalists. Public expenditures on health care in 2001 totaled 6.6 percent of GDP.

Health

Number of Physicians: 488
 Number of Dentists: 38
 Number of Nurses: 4,090
 Number of Pharmacists: 142
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 29
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: 1.6
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 69.98
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 100
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 6.6
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 190

HIV Infected % of adults: 37.3
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 97
 Measles: 90
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 41
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 95

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Traditional foods of Botswana include a porridge made of corn and sorghum, beans, okra, melons, and spinach. In most rural areas these are homegrown, while other staples such as tomatoes, potatoes, onions, and various types of cabbage are generally store bought. Milk is also common, either freshly bottled or canned. The latter is more typical where electricity, and therefore refrigeration, is unavailable. Meats include goat and wildlife, and in more recent years beef has also become popular.

Other beverages include palm wine and *kgadi*, made from distilled brown sugar. Legal home brews include *bo-jakwa*, an inexpensive sorghum beer, and there are also canned soft drinks and sour milk drinks. Specialty foods include caterpillars that are found in the woodland and the wild plum known as *morula*.

Malnutrition continues to be a problem. From 2000 to 2002, 32 percent of the population was undernourished; 13 percent of children under five were undernourished between 1995 and 2002.

Food and Nutrition

Food Supply as % of FAO Requirements: 93
 Undernourished % of total population: 31.6
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,240
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 111.4
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 64.4

STATUS OF WOMEN

Women hold more than one-third of paid employment positions. An estimated 41 percent of central government employees are women, many of them in high-level positions. While there is little overt discrimination, statistics suggest that social customs still elevate the rights and privileges of men above those of women. Some 40 percent of rural households are headed by women, but in general their economic situations—access to capital, seeds, labor, and draft animals—are significantly worse than those of households headed by men. Women about to marry may choose civil marriage, in which all property is held in common, or customary marriage, which recognizes individual property brought into the marriage. Most women are not aware, however, of the implications of these alternatives. A married woman is often

unable to obtain a bank loan without the signature of her husband or father. The government has participated in the preparation of a handbook outlining women's rights in Botswana and has established preference points for women who seek government-sponsored development loans. The political rights of women and minority groups are generally observed.

Some critics complain that, despite advances on the employment and political representation fronts, there has been little advance for the vast majority of women in areas of domestic violence, marital rape, unfair inheritance practices, and women's equal access to their own resources.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 11
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men age 15 to 24: 1.09
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-Agricultural %: 47.0

WORK

The official size of the labor force for formal-sector employment in 2000 was 264,000. An unemployment rate of 40 percent was estimated for 2001, though official government figures put the number at 21 percent. The formal sector includes workers in industry, agriculture, and the services. Industrial products include diamonds, copper, nickel, salt, soda ash, potash, processed livestock, and textiles, while agricultural products are primarily livestock, sorghum, maize, millet, beans, sunflowers, and groundnuts.

Employment figures do not take into account the extremely large number of people engaged in subsistence farming and livestock raising. In 1998 estimates saw almost one million people involved in such occupations, a figure reflected in the high number of people living below the poverty line: 47 percent in 2002.

Some occupations are well organized and represented by unions. These include the railway, mining, banking, and public sectors. However, the right to strike is strongly curtailed by government employment laws, which also control contracts and wages. In 2002 the government established a minimum wage of \$3.15 per day and a 48-hour maximum workweek. Safety regulations on the job are also established by law though not often enforced.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 264,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 44.9
 Labor by Sector: %

Agriculture: —
 Industry: —
 Services: —
 Unemployment %: 40

EDUCATION

Compulsory, universal, and free education is the eventual goal of the government, but its introduction has been delayed for economic reasons. Schooling consists of seven years of primary grades, three years of middle grades, and two years of secondary grades, for a total of 12 years. Radical changes have taken place in both primary and secondary school curricula to make them more relevant to Botswana. Greater emphasis is being placed on agricultural subjects.

The academic year runs from January to December. The medium of instruction is English, though Setswana is used in some locales for the first four years. The school system continues to depend heavily on Western expatriate teachers in secondary schools.

Vocational training is provided by the Botswana Training Centre. A unique feature of vocational education is brigade training, a system of job training whereby expenses are met by the sale of products.

Mission schools maintained by the Dutch Reformed and Catholic churches are integrated with the school system.

All schools are controlled by the Department of Education. Botswana is divided into 10 educational circuits. Statutory responsibility for the maintenance and construction of primary schools lies with elected local authorities.

Higher education is provided by the University of Botswana and Swaziland, formerly the University of Botswana, Lesotho, and Swaziland, from which Lesotho withdrew in 1975. In 1997 universities and other institutions of higher education enrolled 8,850 pupils and had 765 teaching staff members.

As of 2003 the literacy rate for those over 15 was 79.8 percent, higher among women than men. Public expenditures on education from 1999 to 2001 were 25.6 percent of total government expenditures, up from 17 percent in 1990. During the 2001–02 school year, 81 percent of primary-school-age children were in school, and 54 percent of eligible secondary students were enrolled. In 2000–01, 89 percent of children reached grade five, whereas a decade earlier the figure had been higher, at 97 percent.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 79.8
 Male %: 76.9
 Female %: 82.4
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 11.3
 First Level: Primary schools: 669

Teachers: 12,443
 Students: 331,393
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 26.6
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 80.9
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 188
 Teachers: —
 Students: 153,336
 Student-Teacher Ratio: —
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 53.6
 Third Level: Institutions: 1
 Teachers: —
 Students: 9,161
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 4.7
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 2.2

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The Ministry of Agriculture administers the Department of Agricultural Research, whose research thrusts are in the areas of crop and livestock improvement, sustainable utilization of range resources, soil and water management, optimal utilization of locally available animal feed resources, crop pest and disease management, and pasture and forage crop improvement. The Botswana Technology Centre (BOTEC) in Gaborone carries out research in maximizing the use of the country's resources, specializing in energy efficiency, electronic systems, information technology, water, building materials, and design. One BOTEC project is developing a technology that will enable the use of sand from the Kalahari Desert and other areas for building; in its natural state, this abundant resource lacks bonding agents and is not suitable for molding bricks and building blocks. Other projects include research on passive solar energy, another untapped natural resource.

The University of Botswana, the Botswana Agricultural College, and Botswana Polytechnic, all in Gaborone, have degree programs in science, agriculture, and engineering. The university also houses the Office of Research and Development and the Harry Oppenheimer Okavango Research Centre (HOORC), which focuses its research around the Okavango Delta, which has a combination of hydrological, geological, and biological features making it a wholly unique environment. The HOORC further specializes in natural-resource management research in the Okavango River basin, and its aim is to support the development of sustainable resource use by local communities throughout the basin so as to promote long-term conservation.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million persons: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: 5.64
 Patent Applications by Residents: 2

MEDIA

The *Botswana Daily News*, is published by the government in English and Setswana. In 2002 it had a circulation of 50,000. Also in 2002, four independent weekly newspapers were publishing, with a total circulation of over 50,000. One of these, *Mmegi*, or the *Reporter*, is published in both Setswana and English and had a 2002 weekly circulation of 24,000. The major political parties also publish monthly journals.

There is no official censorship and there is a vigorous opposition press. The Botswana Press Agency, the nation's first news agency, and Italy's Interpress Service have bureaus in the capital.

Botswana has a small book-publishing industry; the country does not adhere to any copyright conventions.

The official broadcasting organization, Radio Botswana, which has three transmitters, is on the air for 102 hours a week, with programs in English and Setswana. All programs are of national origin. Television service is provided by Botswana TV as well as the private Gaborone Television and the pay service MultiChoice Botswana.

The Botswana National Library Services is the national library. The Gaborone Library is the central library for southern Botswana, and the Francistown Library is the central library for northern Botswana.

In 2002 there were 435,000 cellular phones in use and 60,000 Internet users.

Media

Newspapers and Periodicals: —
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: —
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets 000: 33
 per 1,000: 21

CULTURE

Like much else in the country, Botswana's culture is a reflection of its two main influences: Tswana and English. This is true not only in terms of language but also in the palpable artifacts of culture, including architecture and art.

Botswana has a long musical tradition, based largely on stringed instruments such as the *setinkana* (hand piano), *katara* (guitar), and *segaba* (violin). There is also an older form of music known as *dikoma*. This is still sometimes performed by old men with the backing of various traditional instruments made from the horn of a kudu, called *lepatata*, and various bones. The voice has also been used as an instrument, and drums have not been as prevalent in Botswana as in other African cultures. All of this tra-

ditional music and traditional dance was nearly lost during the years of British occupation. After independence, however, there was an upsurge of interest in traditional Tswana culture, including music and dance. This renaissance was short-lived, as Western soul music and music from black South Africa made inroads via the radio and recordings.

One of modern-day Botswana's largest cultural exports is the traditional craft of basketry, much of it from the northwestern part of the country. Woodcarving is another craft with a long tradition. The local mopane wood is very hard and is used for bowls and other household items as well as for figurines of humans and animals. A soft wood called *mokomoto* is used for toys. The mythical *tokoloshi*, a half-man, half-hare creature that, according to legend, is normally invisible to humans is carved by local artisans in great detail. Ironmongery, beadwork, leatherwork, pottery, and weaving are other local crafts.

Botswana doesn't have a long written literary tradition. What survives of the ancient myths and praise poetry of the native peoples has been handed down orally and only recently transcribed. In more modern times, some writers have gained relative international renown, such as the author Bessie Head (1937–86), who wrote novels in English that reflect the contemporary realities and history of Serowe. The publishing of fiction in Setswana was revived in the 1980s.

The 1980 film *The Gods Must Be Crazy* was supposedly about Botswana, as were its two sequels. It was actually filmed in northern Transvaal, South Africa, and starred a South African actor.

There is a national museum and art gallery in Gaborone and a national learned and scientific society, the Botswana Society, which holds public lecture series and publishes an annual journal and books.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number:	17
Volumes:	108,000
Registered borrowers:	30,000
Museums Number:	2
Annual Attendance:	52,000
Cinema Gross Receipts:	—
Number of Cinemas:	—
Seating Capacity:	—
Annual Attendance:	—

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

The oral tradition is strong in Botswana, and myths, folktales, proverbs, and poems have been handed down from generation to generation. The folk poetry, known as *maboko*, deals with topics from love to war to the value of cattle. Proverbs, called *diane*, have also become folkloric in tradition and content and teach moral lessons in Afri-

can settings. One common proverb in Setswana is *O se tshege yo o oleng, mareledi a sale pele*, which translates, "Do not laugh at someone who has fallen; there are slippery slopes ahead."

Folktales and folklore, called *mainane*, deal with mythical animals such as the *kgomodumo*, a mythical bird, or *maruana*, a whale. Ethnologists have found such whale stories interesting in light of the fact that Botswana is landlocked. Researchers speculate that these tales might harken back to a time when Botswana had a sea. The trickster fox and the wise rabbit are also stock figures in folk stories.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

With parts of the country lacking electricity, modern forms of entertainment such as television and movie theaters are generally urban pastimes. In 2000 there were only 21 television sets for every 1,000 people. Music and dance are popular forms of entertainment; in large urban centers such as Gaborone, nightclubs and discos attract the young.

Generally speaking, rural forms of entertainment and recreation are more basic in nature. Radios are accessible to a large segment of the population, and listening to music—mostly modern rock and soul—is a favorite pastime. Outdoor recreation is more typical in rural areas, but with much of the rural population making a subsistence living, there is little time left for recreational activities. Celebrations around births and weddings form an integral part of the people's entertainment.

ETIQUETTE

Much of the etiquette system of Botswana is found in other parts of Africa, as well. This includes the use of the right hand only for shaking, offering and receiving, and eating. Handshakes should be gentle rather than the typical firm American type. Modesty in dress and demeanor is appreciated. Women cover their shoulders and knees, while men cover their chest. Respect for elders is shown in social situations by waiting for the older person to initiate introductions. An interesting food restriction demands that one not stand over prepared food or food in the process of preparation to smell it. This could offend the cook.

FAMILY LIFE

Traditional roles still exist in most Botswana families, with patriarchy the norm. Men are allowed by law to physically punish their wives. Polygamy is legal but not widespread.

With the birthrate at 3.17 children per woman in 2004, the size of families is decreasing.

Family structure ranges from the African extended family of the Tswana to the nuclear family of the minority white population. Women often lose access to the resources or wealth they bring with them into a marriage. Though in many cases, especially in the towns, both men and women work outside the home, the woman is generally also the homemaker and responsible for the children.

AIDS has greatly affected family life, as it has so many other aspects of life in Botswana. Over 10 percent of all children in the country are AIDS orphans; that figure is expected to reach 35 or 40 percent by 2010. The traditional family structure, which has over the years proven able to cope with societal challenges such as droughts and other disasters, has become overburdened and unable to support these children. There are also insufficient public institutions and orphanages to care for such high numbers.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Traditional dress generally consisted of some form of leather or fur clothing for the cooler winters and sandals or soft shoes made of leather. However, such traditional clothing has for over a century been a thing of the past. Now, Western dress is typical among all strata of the population except for the very poorest.

SPORTS

Soccer is the national sport and is played both recreationally and professionally. The national team is the Zebras, and there are over a dozen teams in the local league.

In urban areas sports such as tennis, golf, and softball are also popular.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1966** Republic of Botswana is proclaimed, with Seretse Khama as first president.
- 1969** New customs agreement is signed with South Africa granting Botswana, Lesotho, and Swaziland more favorable terms as members of the Southern African Customs Union.
Khama's Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) is returned to power in election.
Botswana declines to subscribe to international sanctions against Rhodesia.
- 1971** Botswana holds first national population census.
- 1974** Khama and BDP win another term in office at the polls.
- 1976** The pula is introduced as the new national currency, replacing the South African rand at par.
- 1977** Relations with Rhodesia worsen as the two countries accuse each other of armed attacks across the borders.
- 1979** President Khama is reelected in national elections, with an increased majority for his Botswana Democratic Party.
- 1980** President Khama dies of cancer and is succeeded in office by Vice President Quett K. J. Masire.
- 1983** Martin Chakaliso launches a new political party, the Botswana Liberal Party.
- 1984** In national elections the ruling Botswana Democratic Party retains a commanding legislative majority, but the incumbent foreign affairs and home ministers are defeated.
- 1989** The ruling Botswana Democratic Party wins national elections by a landslide.
- 1990** Following the release of ANC leader Nelson Mandela from prison in South Africa, the government frees 16 members of South African liberation movements who had been held in detention.
- 1991** Leaders of Botswana join hundreds of American and African leaders at the first-ever summit of Africans and African Americans in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire.
- 1995** The informal Botswana stock market is converted into a formal stock exchange.
- 1997** The Eighth National Development Plan is presented to the National Assembly. The first referendum on constitutional reform lowers the voting age to 18, limits presidential terms to two, and provides for the automatic succession of the vice president.
- 1998** President Quett Masire retires and is replaced by Festus Mogae, the vice president. Mogae selects Ian Khama as vice president. The main opposition, BNF, officially splits following factional infighting. The majority of its MPs join the Botswana Congress Party (BCP), which becomes the official opposition.
- 1999** The BDP easily wins the legislative election, and Festus is confirmed as president. The BCP loses most of its seats and the BNF regains its position as the official parliamentary opposition. In a cabinet reshuffle Mogae moves a key BDP faction leader, Pontashego Kedikilwe, from the finance ministry to education. Baledzi Gaolathe, who, like Mogae, is a former bureaucrat from outside the BDP inner circle, replaces Kedikilwe. Southern Africa's first female central bank governor, Linah Mohohlo, takes over for Geolathe. The International Court of Justice finds in Botswana's favor in a long-standing border disagreement with Namibia.
- 2000** The vice president, Ian Khama, takes a year's sabbatical leave, leading to rumors, vigorously

denied, of a rift with the president. Botswana's flagship manufacturing enterprise, the Hyundai car assembly plant, closes down owing to the liquidation of its South African parent. The project to double diamond production at Orapa, Botswana's single largest private investment, is completed.

- 2001** In March a commission headed by a former cabinet minister recommends more representation for ethnic minorities in the National Assembly, thus setting off a debate about national integration policies.
- 2002** In an effort to relocate the San minority, the government stops trucking in water supplies for people living in the Central Kalahari Game Reserve in February.
- 2003** Botswana and South Africa sign the joint Permanent Commission for Co-operation, establishing interactions between the governments, businesses, NGOs, and academic institutions.
- 2004** In parliamentary elections held in October the BDP wins 51.73 percent of the vote, or 44 seats. Mogae is thus reelected as president, with the next elections scheduled for 2009.

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Botswana. *Summary of the Estimated Revenue for the Development Fund, 2003/2004; Financial Statements, Tables and Estimates of the Consolidated and Development Fund Revenues; National Development Plan, 2004–2009; 2001 Population and Housing Census*

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- CIA World Factbook: Botswana
<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/bc.html>
- Republic of Botswana Central Statistics Office
<http://www.cso.gov.bw/>
- Republic of Botswana: The Government of Botswana Web Site
<http://www.gov.bw/home.html>

BRAZIL

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Federative Republic of Brazil (República Federativa do Brasil)

ABBREVIATION

BR

CAPITAL

Brasilia

HEAD OF STATE & HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (from 2002)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Constitutional democracy

POPULATION

186,112,794 (2005)

AREA

8,511,965 sq km (3,286,470 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Luso-Brazilians

LANGUAGE

Portuguese (official)

RELIGION

Roman Catholic (80 percent)

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Real

NATIONAL FLAG

A large yellow diamond, twice as wide as high, in the center of a green field. In the center of the diamond is a blue globe

showing the constellations of the southern sky, with 27 stars representing the 26 states and the capital. Encircling the globe is a white banner bearing the national motto, *Ordem e progresso* (Order and progress).

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A gold five-pointed star in the center of which is a blue orb representing the five white stars of the Southern Cross. The encircling blue rim of the orb carries 27 stars, one for each state and one for the capital. Concealed partly by the gold star is a silver sword and blue cross-hilt bearing in a red panel another white star. Sheaves of coffee and tobacco leaves wreath the design, with the sun shining behind the emblem. A blue ribbon bears the name of the country and the date, "15 de Novembro de 1889," when the republic of Brazil was proclaimed.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"Listen to the Cry of Iparanga"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day), May 1 (Labor Day), April 21 (Tiradentes or Toothpuller Day), September 7 (Independence Day), November 15 (Proclamation of the Republic), various Catholic festivals, including Christmas

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

September 7, 1822

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

October 5, 1988

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Brazil is in eastern-central South America, occupying nearly half of the South American continent. It is the largest country in Latin America and ranks as the fifth largest in the world in continuous area, after Russia, Canada, China, and the United States. The total land area is 8,511,965 sq km (3,286,470 sq mi), extending 4,328 km (2,689 mi) north to south and 4,320 km (2,684 mi)

east to west. The total length of the Atlantic coastline is 7,491 km (4,652 mi). It shares international borders with Argentina, Bolivia, Colombia, French Guiana, Guyana, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, Uruguay, and Venezuela.

The only offshore territory is the island of Fernando de Noronha in the Atlantic Ocean.

Although 59 percent of the land area is classified as highlands over 200 m (656 ft), only 0.5 percent is above 1,200 m (3,937 ft). The Central Highlands is a vast terri-

Brazil



tory covering all of Brazil south of the Amazon basin, with the exception of a narrow coastal belt and the swamps of Mato Grosso State. The northern and western halves of this zone comprise broad rolling terrain relieved by only low, rounded hills. Southward the terrain becomes more mountainous, and three mountain ranges stand out: the Serra do Mar, with a mean crest of 1,525 m (5,003 ft), the Serra da Mantiqueira, and the Serra do Espinhaço. From the city of Salvador south to Porto Alegre, the highlands meet the Atlantic in a steep, wall-like slope called the Great Escarpment. The only elevated territory in the

north is the Guiana Highlands, which extend into Venezuela and Guyana. It contains Brazil's highest mountain, the Pico da Neblina (3,014 m; 9,888 ft).

Northern Brazil is dominated by the Amazon River basin, which occupies two-fifths of the national territory. Although stretches of swampy land along the course of the river are subject to flooding, swampland is limited and most of the region is known as terra firma, or high ground. The lowlands constitute the world's largest rain forest, supplying 15 percent of the planet's oxygen. There are three smaller lowland areas: between the Xingu and Tapajós riv-

ers, the Pantanal in western Mato Grosso, and the narrow strip of coastal plain extending along the Atlantic seaboard from Guyana to Uruguay. At some places the plain disappears entirely, and there are few large level areas except at the mouths of the Amazon, Doce, and Paraíba rivers.

Brazil's river system is dominated by the Amazon, the world's second-largest river in terms of length (6,275 km; 3,900 mi) and the world's largest in terms of water flow. Together with its tributaries it drains a vast basin equal to three-fifths of the national territory. The Amazon is one of the least polluted rivers in the world, and its water has a chemical purity superior to tap water in many countries. However, with increased mining as well as deforestation in the region, the pollution levels in the Amazon grew significantly in the final years of the 20th century. The river is navigable by oceangoing vessels as far as Iquitos in Peru, and smaller craft can reach Porto Velho near the Bolivian frontier. It has 18 major tributaries, including 10 larger than the Mississippi River. Altogether the 200 rivers of the Amazon system cover a basin of 6,993,000 sq km (2,700,000 sq mi).

The second-largest river and the largest entirely within Brazil is the São Francisco, which is navigable for about 1,600 km (1,000 mi) of its total length of 1,900 km (1,180 mi). The Central Highlands are drained by two smaller rivers, the Paraíba and the Doce. The Paraná and the Uruguay rivers rise in Brazil and flow south to form part of the Rio de la Plata basin.

Geography

Area sq km: 8,511,965; sq mi 3,286,470

World Rank: 5th

Land Boundaries, km: Argentina 1,224; Bolivia 3,400; Columbia 1,643; French Guiana 673; Guyana 1,119; Paraguay 1,290; Peru 1,560; Suriname 597; Uruguay 985; Venezuela 2,200

Coastline, km: 7,491

Elevation Extremes meters:

Lowest: Atlantic Ocean 0

Highest: Pico da Neblina 3,014

Land Use %

Arable land: 6.96

Permanent Crops: 0.9

Forest: 63

Other: 29.14

Population of Principal Cities (2003 est.)

Ananindeua	436,100
Anápolis	290,000
Aparecida de Goiânia	384,100
Aracaju	479,800
Barueri	232,200
Bauru	327,100
Belém	1,333,500
Belford Roxo	457,200
Belo Horizonte	2,305,800
Betim	338,900

Blumenau	256,100
Boa Vista	217,200
Brasília	2,094,100
Campina Grande	347,200
Campinas	990,100
Campo Grande	697,800
Campos dos Goytacazes	372,600
Canoas	317,400
Carapicuíba	363,400
Cariacica	327,800
Caruaru	228,000
Cascavel	243,700
Caucaia	249,800
Caxias do Sul	353,300
Contagem	560,300
Cuiabá	501,000
Curitiba	1,671,200
Diadema	373,000
Duque de Caxias	805,400
Embu	223,600
Feira de Santana	452,300
Florianópolis	358,200
Fortaleza	2,256,200
Foz do Iguaçu	277,400
Franca	298,700
Goiânia	1,138,600
Governador Valadares	241,000
Gravataí	226,600
Guarujá	281,500
Guarulhos	1,135,500
Imperatriz	219,500
Ipatinga	220,800
Itaquaquecetuba	306,200
Jaboatão	596,900
João Pessoa	628,800
Joinville	445,900
Juazeiro do Norte	213,600
Juiz de Fora	474,600
Jundiá	310,000
Limeira	250,500
Londrina	453,000
Macapá	304,500
Maceió	847,700
Magé	206,100
Manaus	1,517,500
Marília	200,400
Maringá	298,600
Mauá	384,500
Moji das Cruzes	318,200
Montes Claros	305,700
Mossoró	205,300
Natal	744,800
Niterói	466,600
Nova Iguaçu	792,200
Novo Hamburgo	241,200
Olinda	368,600
Osasco	678,600
Paulista	277,900
Pelotas	308,700
Petrópolis	279,700
Piracicaba	332,400
Ponta Grossa	279,400
Pôrto Alegre	1,353,300
Pôrto Velho	289,500
Presidente Prudente	157,618

(continues)

Population of Principal Cities (*continued*)

Praia Grande	215,200
Recife	1,461,300
Ribeirão das Neves	276,900
Ribeirão Preto	525,500
Rio Branco	245,500
Rio de Janeiro	5,974,100
Salvador	2,555,400
Santa Maria	241,100
Santo André	659,300
Santos	415,900
São Bernardo do Campo	732,200
São Gonçalo	925,400
São João de Meriti	456,800
São José do Rio Preto	359,600
São José dos Campos	562,200
São José dos Pinhais	204,600
São Leopoldo	200,800
São Luís	889,100
São Paulo	10,041,500
São Vicente	314,200
Serra	315,000
Sorocaba	521,500
Sumaré	210,900
Suzano	242,300
Taboão da Serra	209,200
Taubaté	240,600
Teresina	711,700
Uberaba	257,500
Uberlândia	529,300
Várzea Grande	227,400
Viamão	225,000
Vila Velha	369,300
Vitória	302,600
Vitória da Conquista	235,400
Volta Redonda	248,700

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Brazil has a tropical and equatorial climate characterized by high temperatures and moderate to high rainfall. There are three major climatic zones: the tropical north, the subtropical southeast, and the temperate southeast uplands.

The coolest period is from May to September, the hottest period from December to March. The rainy season lasts from October to May. Frost and snowfall occur in the south.

Except in the south, the country is subject to little temperature variation. The highest temperatures are recorded on the northern coast. The mountainous areas of the Central Highlands, the Amazon basin, and the coastal belt have relatively cool nights. The average maximum temperature in Rio de Janeiro in February is 29.4°C (85°F), and the average low in July is 17°C (63°F).

Rainfall is fairly evenly distributed throughout the year, and the average annual precipitation nationwide is between 1,016 and 2,032 mm (40 and 80 in). The upper limit is common in the Amazon basin and the lower in the central-west highlands. The northeast region experiences

periodic droughts caused by erratic rainfall. More than 30 serious droughts have been recorded in this region, known as the *sertão*, including one that caused the death of 500,000 people in 1877–79.

The coastal areas receive the trade winds.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature

Summer: 85°F

Winter: 63°F

Average Rainfall: 40 in to 80 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Home to numerous ecosystems, Brazil has a plethora of plant and animal life; the country contains 25 percent of the known plant species in the world. The Amazon basin in particular holds the greatest variety of plant life on Earth as well as a rich variety of animal life. This region includes rain forest, grasslands, and mangrove swamps. In just one acre there may be 250 different tree species, from brazilwood to Brazil nut trees and rubber trees. It is also home to water lilies and orchids as well as a virtual medicine chest of curative herbs. Several hundred bird species are also found in the Amazon region, as well as alligators, boa constrictors and other tropical snakes, tree sloths, tapirs, monkeys, and capybaras. Freshwater dolphins, manatees and 1,500 species of fish are found in the waters of the Amazon, including numerous types of eels, piranhas, and 450 species of catfish. This is also the home of the large freshwater turtle.

Other regions are less plentiful in flora and fauna. The highlands and coastal regions, for example, were once home to hardwoods, monkeys, and parrots, but human incursion has largely destroyed these habitats. Along the coast mango, guava, coconut, and jack-fruit trees can be found, as well as cultivated sugarcane and cotton. Likewise the Brazilian savannas, once home to jaguars and ocelots, have been hunted so thoroughly by ranchers that these animals are seen only in zoos. Brazil's southern states are home to exotic flowers, such as *papagaias*; flowering trees, such as the *quaresma*; and the *ipê* tree, which can be seen on the streets of São Paulo.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 186,112,794

World Rank: 5th

Density per sq km: 20.9

% of annual growth (1999-2003): 1.2

Male %: 49.5

Female %: 50.5

Urban %: 83.0

Age Distribution: %	0–14:	26.6
	15–64:	67.6
	65 and over:	5.8

Population 2025: 217,825,000

Birth Rate per 1,000: 17.25

Death Rate per 1,000: 6.14

Rate of Natural Increase %: 1.3

Total Fertility Rate: 1.97

Expectation of Life (years): Males 67.45

Females 75.57

Marriage Rate per 1,000: 4.0

Divorce Rate per 1,000: 0.7

Average Size of Households: 3.7

Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Brazilians have a complex racial background yet are considered as a distinct and integrated people with few unassimilated minority groups. The racial elements present in the population are diverse and heterogeneous in origin. The main ingredient in the melting pot is what is generally described as Luso-Brazilian, representing descendants of original Portuguese settlers. Others of Caucasian stock include Italians, Spaniards, Germans, Russians, and Lebanese. Together the Caucasians make up about 60 percent of the population. Arabs, mostly of Lebanese descent, are estimated to constitute about 2 percent of the Caucasian population.

Portuguese settlers have historically been free of racial prejudice and have intermingled freely with the indigenous Amerindians and imported black slaves. Centuries of large-scale intermarriage have created a large mulatto population, and about one-third of the population is believed to have some Amerindian ancestry. Brazil's genetic mix is reflected in the rich ethnic terminology used to describe the various racial blends. Censuses until 1950 (when ethnic origin was deleted from the questionnaire) divided the population into *branco* (white), *pardo* (brown), *preto* (black), *indio* (Amerindian) and *amarelo* (yellow). Those of partial Amerindian ancestry can be further subdivided into *mamelucos* (white father and Amerindian mother), *caboclos* (acculturated Amerindians), and *cafusos*, or *curibacos* (Amerindian and African descent).

The proportion of blacks is estimated at about 7 percent and is concentrated in the state of Bahia. Blacks are also found in great numbers in Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, Minas Gerais, and Espírito Santo. They are the descendants of between four to 18 million slaves imported into the colony from the 17th through the 19th centuries.

Brazilian society has minimal racial prejudice, and racial violence is unknown. Blacks occupy many positions of importance. Nevertheless, discrimination does exist, especially in the business and social worlds.

The Japanese form the largest unassimilated minority group. Three-quarters of the Japanese live in the state

of São Paulo, where they constitute an impressive economic and political force. Although they number only about 700,000, they at one time had two members in the national cabinet, and they make up 10 percent of university enrollment in São Paulo. The younger generation of Japanese, the Nissei, is succumbing to the pressures of assimilation, and their sense of separate identity has been declining. All of them speak Portuguese, and most have been baptized as Roman Catholics and bear Brazilian names.

Amerindians form the second-largest unassimilated group, and their number is estimated at about 200,000. There are approximately 150 tribes, speaking over 90 languages and 300 dialects. Most of them live in isolated traditional communities in the interior, national reservations or in religious missions. Amerindians who remain in their traditional villages are under the protection of the National Indian Foundation (Fundação Nacional dos Índios), the successor to the Indian Protection Service. Many Amerindian tribes are faced with extinction, as the interior is being gradually opened to road builders, ranchers, and miners.

LANGUAGES

The official and national language is Portuguese, which is spoken by virtually all Brazilians except Amerindians. The principal Amerindian languages are Tupi, Ge, Garib, Arawak, and Nambicuara.

Although literary Portuguese differs only slightly from the language as used in Portugal, spoken Portuguese differs markedly in vocabulary and pronunciation. There are also regional variations, and the speech of *cariocas* (natives of Rio de Janeiro) exhibits the most differences from traditional Portuguese.

Tupi, the main Amerindian language, belongs to the Tupi-Guaraní family. It was the lingua franca of Brazil until the end of the 17th century.

English competes with French as the second language of educated Brazilians.

RELIGIONS

Brazil is the largest Roman Catholic nation in the world. At the time of the 1970 census 85.4 million Brazilians, of a total population of 93.1 million (92 percent) professed themselves to be Roman Catholic; in 2004, 80 percent of the population was listed as Catholic.

The constitution provides for complete religious freedom. However, the church, though not established as official, exerts a strong influence on national affairs. With the military takeover in 1964 there was increasing friction between church and state. A growing number of priests, headed by Dom Helder Camara, the archbishop of Rec-

ife and Olinda, became outspoken critics of the government's social and political policies and have denounced the continuing violations of human rights in the country. The liberal clergy have defined the church's involvement in social problems as a "leavening role for the construction of a better world." The church has actively aligned itself with the poor and the disadvantaged and has tried to act as a vanguard of reform in the creation of labor unions, the elimination of illiteracy, improved treatment of Amerindians and prisoners, and the reduction of economic disparities. The National Conference of Bishops of Brazil has become increasingly concerned with agrarian reform, mass education, and freedom of expression. Priests have been arrested for alleged subversive activities and subjected to torture, and confrontations between the military and the clergy are common. The government's displeasure is particularly directed toward Popular Action, the most radical Catholic group, which has advocated a revolution led by peasants and workers.

Protestants constitute the second-largest religious group, numbering more than 19 million in 1998, or 12 percent of the population. Protestant denominations, particularly the Pentecostal churches, have achieved a rapid rate of growth. The largest denomination, the Assemblies of God, had in excess of 8 million members at the end of the 20th century. Fringe religious groups include nearly half a million Spiritualists, who follow the philosophy of spiritualism developed by the Frenchman Allen Kardec, Afro-Brazilian cults, such as Candomblé-Umbanda and Gege-Nago, and Buddhists. The number of Jews was estimated at close to 130,000 in 1998, concentrated in urban areas. Antisemitism is not a significant factor in national life.

Religious Affiliations

Roman Catholic	148,890,000
Other	37,522,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

About two million Amerindians inhabited the area that is now Brazil when the Portuguese first discovered the region in 1500. Chief among them were the Tupi, inhabitants of the tropical forest region along the coast. The Portuguese claim to Brazil was established by the papal bull of Alexander VI in 1493 and by the Treaty of Tordesillas (1494), which divided the New World between Spain and Portugal and awarded the latter all territory 370 leagues west of Cape Verde. On Easter Sunday 1500 the Portuguese admiral Pedro Alvares Cabral formally claimed the land for the Portuguese Crown. In 1532 the first Portuguese settlers arrived along with slaves from Africa. In 1549 the city of San Salvador was founded and

the Jesuits began their work among the Amerindians. In 1640 Portugal appointed its first viceroy with his seat first in Bahia and after 1763 in Rio de Janeiro. The first effort to secure independence was the failed conspiracy of Joaquim José de Silva Xavier, better known as Tiradentes or Toothpuller, in Ouro Preto in 1789. In 1807 the invading armies of Napoleon forced the royal family to flee to Brazil. After the fall of Napoleon the king returned to Portugal in 1821, leaving his son Pedro to rule Brazil. In 1822 Pedro proclaimed Brazil's independence, established the Braganza dynasty, and assumed the title of Pedro I, constitutional emperor of Brazil. The constitution of 1824, Brazil's first, was drawn up early in his reign. In 1831 a military revolt forced him to abdicate, and the throne passed to his five-year-old son, who in 1840 was crowned Emperor Pedro II. Under Pedro II, Brazil enjoyed half a century of peace, prosperity, and progress. New frontiers were opened, new cities such as Belem and Manaus were founded, new immigrants arrived from Europe, slavery was abolished in 1888, and railways were built. However, an economic crisis in 1889 led to a bloodless military coup, organized by the republican opposition and former slave owners angered by abolition, in which Pedro II was deposed and the Republic of the United States of Brazil was established. In 1891 a new constitution, based on the U.S. federal model, was promulgated.

The first republic (1889–1930) was organized in a weak federal system dominated by southern coffee interests. It drafted a federal structure of 20 self-governing states, which had complete jurisdiction in internal affairs; the central government was primarily responsible for trade and national security.

Severe economic problems followed World War I, and the growth of a broad movement opposed to the oligarchies that controlled government led to a coup that brought Getúlio Vargas to power in 1930. Vargas initially encouraged democratic participation. However, unable to balance irreconcilable interest groups, he became increasingly authoritarian, and in 1935, in response to an abortive leftist uprising, he established a fascist-modeled new state. Vargas's dictatorship lasted until 1945, when he was forced to resign by the armed forces. During his dictatorship he propagated a policy of modernization and industrialization, with a strong emphasis on development through foreign aid.

In 1946 General Eurico Dutra was elected president, and a new constitution was adopted. Vargas was re-elected in 1950. He committed suicide in 1954 and was succeeded by Juscelino Kubitschek de Oliveira and then Jânio Quadros. Kubitschek continued his policy of modernization through massive foreign—particularly U.S.—loans, which ultimately crippled the country. Quadros attempted to lessen dependence on support by the U.S. government.

The military, first under General Humberto Castelo Branco (1964–67) and then under Marshal Artur da Costa e Silva (1967–69), General Emílio Garrastazú Médici (1969–74), and General Ernesto Geisel (1974–78), banned unapproved political parties and all union activities. Political activities were limited to two authorized parties, the pro-government Aliança Renovadora Nacional (ARENA) and the opposition Movimento Democrático Brasileiro (MDB). During the 1960s increasing political dissent was countered by increasing authoritarianism, and in 1969 the president assumed virtually unlimited powers.

The country's economic growth failed during the 1970s as its burden of foreign debt grew. Discontent, fueled by a deep recession, prompted President João Baptista de Oliveira Figueiredo (1979–85) to dissolve the ARENA and the MDB in 1979 and permit a broad-based political participation and party formation. The January 1985 presidential election was won by a civilian, Tancredo Neves, for the first time in 21 years. The new president died soon after his inauguration, and his vice president, José Sarney, took office in April. The following month a constitutional amendment restored direct elections by universal suffrage. (Previously, the president had been elected by an electoral college.) A new constitution, which prepared the way for a return to full democracy in 1990, was promulgated in 1988.

Sarney inherited an economy crippled by ruinous inflation and staggering foreign debt. His attempts to curb inflation through devaluation, wage and price freezes, dismissal of up to 60,000 civil servants, and privatization of state-run industry met with failure. He was also unable to deal with gross inequities in interior land ownership and environmental concerns over the development of the rain forest.

The nation's first direct-vote presidential elections were held in December 1989. The winner was Fernando Collor de Mello, head of the conservative National Reconstruction Party, who promised to renegotiate the massive foreign debt and privatize state industries. During 1990–91 he instituted a series of economic austerity programs designed to reduce the annual inflation rate of almost 2,000 percent and curb the debt. His plans were unsuccessful, and the economy continued to decline. He was forced to resign in December 1992, as the economy continued to slide into recession.

Vice President Itamar Franco became president in December 1992, upon Collor's resignation. He served only until November 1994, when Fernando Cardoso was elected president. Cardoso reduced the inflation rate significantly. However, nearly two million jobs were lost between 1989 and 1996 and problems persisted with regard to agrarian reform. Cardoso easily won a second four-year term in 1998. In June 1999 the military was placed under direct civilian control for the first time.

Economic conditions in the country continued to deteriorate in the new millennium. By 2002 Brazil's debt exceeded \$260 billion. After twice running unsuccessfully for president, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva was elected in late 2002 and took over power in 2003. The founder of the left-leaning Workers Party, Lula surprised international investors by pursuing a middle-of-the-road economic policy. Austerity measures, such as an 11 percent reduction in government pensions and devaluation of the currency, cost him some of his popular backing, but polls in 2004 showed that a majority of Brazilians supported his tough reform measures, which were beginning to turn the economy around. In 2004 there were over 50 seizures of property by landless peasants. Meanwhile President Lula, a champion of the landless peasant movement, promised to relocate 100,000 landless workers.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1930–45	Getúlio Dornelles Vargas
1945–46	José Linhares
1946–51	Eurico Gaspar Dutra
1951–54	Getúlio Dornelles Vargas
1954–55	João Fernandes Café Filho
1955	Carlos Coimbra da Luz
1955–56	Nereu de Oliveira Ramos
1956–61	Juscelino Kubitschek de Oliveira
1961	Jânio da Silva Quadros
1961	Pascoal Ranieri Mazzilli
1961–64	João Belchior Marques Goulart
1964	Pascoal Ranieri Mazzilli
1964–67	Humberto de Alencar Castelo Branco
1967–69	Artur da Costa e Silva
1969	Augusto Hamann Rademaker Grünewald
	Aurélio de Lyra Tavares
	Márcio de Souza e Mello
1969–74	Emílio Garrastazú Médici
1974–79	Ernesto (Beckmann) Geisel
1979–85	João Baptista de Oliveira Figueiredo
1985–90	José Sarney
1990–92	Fernando Affonso Collor de Mello
1992–95	Itamar Augusto Cautiero Franco
1995–2003	Fernando Henrique Cardoso
2003–	Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva

CONSTITUTION

In October 1988 a new constitution, Brazil's eighth, was promulgated, with several major changes from the previous constitution of 1969. Significant among its 245 articles, the new constitution assured the National Congress certain presidential powers, abolished censorship, freed political dissidents with the ending of the National Security Law, included universal suffrage by direct secret

ballot, lowered the minimum voting age to 16 years, and incorporated the principle of habeas corpus. The presidential term is limited to four years, and the incumbent can be reelected to a second term.

Legislative powers are contained in the National Congress, which is made up of the Chamber of Deputies and the federal Senate. Membership in the first branch is determined by a system of proportional representation, and the second branch consists of three representatives of each state and the Federal District.

The president presides over the cabinet as well as the National Defense Council, whose other members are the vice president, the presidents of the Chamber of Deputies and federal Senate, the ministers of justice, foreign affairs, and planning, and the military ministers. This council advises the president on national sovereignty and defense.

PARLIAMENT

The National Congress consists of the Senate (Senado) and the Chamber of Deputies (Câmara dos Deputados). Members of the National Congress are elected by universal suffrage. A literacy qualification for voters was removed in 1977. Elections for the National Congress occur every four years.

The Senate has 81 members, three from each state and the Federal District, elected for eight-year terms, with one-third retiring after four years and the remaining two-thirds retiring after another four years. Two alternates, or *suplente*, are elected along with each senator as replacements in the event of resignation or death. Each party runs three candidates for each seat and the party with the largest total wins the seat.

The Chamber of Deputies consists of 513 members elected on the basis of one for every 300,000 inhabitants, with a minimum of seven and a maximum of 70 for each state. The term of office is four years. Alternates are elected with each member.

The legislature meets in ordinary session from March 15 to December 15. The National Congress is responsible for fiscal and budgetary concerns and all levels of planning. It also is responsible for resolutions authorizing the president to declare war.

Suffrage is universal, and elections are conducted by direct secret ballot. Those between 18 and 69 are required to vote, and those who are illiterate, over 70 years of age, or age 16 or 17 are given the option to vote.

POLITICAL PARTIES

In November 1979 Congress passed a bill disbanding both ARENA and the opposition MDB as a prelude to the formation of popular democratic parties. To gain legal recognition new parties were required to swear alle-

giance to the democratic system, give six months notice prior to congressional elections, and win 5 percent of the vote in at least nine states or have the support of 10 members of each house of congress. On these bases, however, none of the existing parties achieved legal recognition. In May 1985 the National Congress passed a constitutional amendment that allowed for the open participation of political parties.

Partido do Movimento Democrático Brasileiro (PMDB) was formed by moderate elements in the MDB. The MDB was a token opposition, and its members were nationalistic, statist, or socialistic, depending on the issues. In 1982 the MDB merged with Partido Popular. The PMDB is a left-of-center party. Partido Democrático Social (PDS) was formed in 1980 as a pro-government party, succeeding ARENA. ARENA was designed as a government party, deeply conservative, and pro-United States in outlook. Partido da Frente Liberal was founded in 1984 by moderate members of the PDS and PMDB. It is slightly right of center in its philosophy. Partido Democrático Trabalhista was founded in 1980 under the title Partido Trabalhista Brasileiro (PTB). It was a successor to the pre-1965 Brazilian Labor Party. The PTB was awarded its name by judicial proceedings. Partido dos Trabalhadores was founded in 1980 and was the first independent labor party. It has 350,000 members.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Local government in Brazil is divided into 26 states and a federal district. The framework of the state and local governments closely parallels that of the federal government. Governors, directly elected for four-year terms, have broad powers analogous to those of the president. All powers not explicitly or implicitly forbidden them by the constitution are reserved to the states, and each state has its own constitution and court system. The states may also contract foreign loans within a federal system in which only the wealthiest states have a measure of real autonomy. Intervention in the affairs of the states by the central government has been permitted on certain grounds, such as for the suppression of civil war, reorganization of state finances, execution of judicial orders, maintenance of national integrity, and corruption of public state power, and then only after referring to the National Congress. The growing financial weakness of states and municipalities has resulted in the strengthening of the federal government.

The unicameral state assemblies have powers comparable to those of the national congress. Their members are elected for four-year terms on the basis of proportional representation. State legislation may supplement federal legislation but not conflict with it.

The chief administrative subdivision of a state is the *município*, corresponding to a U.S. county. Each of

the 5,507 *municípios* is headed by a *prefeito*, or mayor. The mayors of small *municípios* are elected by popular vote for four-year terms, and the executives of larger municipalities, or *câmara de vereadores*, consist of five to 50 members elected directly for four-year terms. Municipal authorities are responsible for the construction of roads, creation and upkeep of public parks and museums, and provision of primary education. Municipal revenues are derived from local taxes, fines, and federal grants-in-aid and subsidies. The Federal District is under an appointed governor, but there is a legislative council of 20 councilmen elected for four-year terms, which is in session for four months every year.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The legal system is based on Latin codes. The judicial branch is composed of federal, state, and municipal courts. By 1995 small claims courts augmented some municipal courts. Only appointments to the superior courts are political and therefore subject to approval by the legislature. The minimum and maximum ages for appointment to the superior courts are 35 and 65; mandatory retirement is at age 70. These federal courts have no chief justice or judge. The two-year presidency of each court is by rotation and is based on respecting seniority.

The 1988 constitution produced five significant modifications in Brazil's judicial system. First, it converted the old Federal Court of Appeals (Tribunal Federal de Recursos) into the Superior Court of Justice (Superior Tribunal de Justiça). Second, it created an intermediate-level Regional Federal Court (Tribunal Regional Federal) system. Third, the federal general prosecutor was given a two-year renewable term, subject to confirmation by the Senate, without the possibility of removal by the president. Fourth, the Federal Supreme Court can issue a warrant of injunction (*mandado de injunção*) to ensure rights guaranteed by the constitution but not regulated by ordinary legislation. Fifth, the Federal Supreme Court can decide on matters of constitutionality without waiting for appeals to come through the federal courts.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Improvements in Brazil's human rights situation are most visible in the fields of speech, press, and assembly. There is a broad acceptance on the part of the administration of public protest and dissent. Opposition viewpoints are freely ventilated. The constitution of 1988 abolished the National Security Law, used to detain political dissidents. In the so-called alternative, or leftist, press, criticism is often scathing and highly personal. Although no censorship exists, the print media are legally accountable for what they publish. The administration took action several

times during the early 1980s against what it considered unacceptably blatant attacks, confiscating one edition of a leftist weekly and bringing lawsuits in a half dozen other instances. In 2004 a *New York Times* journalist was expelled from the country for writing an article commenting on President Lula's alleged drinking problem. Labor unions have the right to organize, negotiate, and strike. However, strikes are not permitted in essential industries (which are broadly defined), and union rights are generally circumscribed by a ban on partisan political activity.

Perhaps the greatest human rights threat comes from violence and abuse by police. For the past several years cases of police abuse have been well documented in the media. Massive public outcry has led to the approval of a national public security package loaded with crime-fighting measures but lacking in reforms to control police abuse or professionalize the security forces. Street children in Rio de Janeiro and elsewhere became a particular target of abuse in the last decades of the 20th century, with many disappearances occurring. As of 2004 there were still reported cases of beatings and abuse of children in state juvenile detention centers in Rio de Janeiro and northern Brazil.

FOREIGN POLICY

Brazil is generally regarded as the bellwether of Latin America, but its leadership is more symbolic than real. Its general external policies are aligned with those of the United States, except when they conflict with the interests of Brazil or Latin America as a whole. Brazil's arms industry is one of the largest sectors of its economy and is sensitive to U.S. restrictions on sales. Brazil is linked to its neighbors through the Amazon Pact. Relations with Argentina, its main rival on the continent, have improved after the establishment of the Southern Cone Common Market (Mercosur), which also includes Paraguay and Uruguay. In 1994 Brazil signed a nuclear accord with Argentina proscribing the use of nuclear weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean. Diplomatic relations were restored with Cuba after a 22-year lapse. There is still a dispute with Uruguay over certain islands in the Quaraí/Cuareim and Invernada boundary streams. Also, since 2000 Brazil has had to contend with a lawless zone at the convergence of the Argentina-Brazil-Paraguay borders, which has become the center of money laundering, smuggling, and arms and drug trafficking and a safe haven for Islamist militants.

DEFENSE

The defense structure is headed by the president. In June 1999, the military was placed under direct civilian control. The separate army, navy, and air force ministries,

which had been led by military men, were combined into one Defense Ministry headed by a civilian cabinet minister appointed by the president.

The army minister heads the high command of the army, which includes the chief of staff, department heads, and the commanding generals of the other fields of the army. The navy, the senior service, is commanded by the navy minister, who is assisted by the chief of navy staff, the commander of naval operations, the commandant of the marine corps, and the commanders of the seven naval districts. The air force minister is assisted by an air cabinet as well as the air chief of staff and the air general staff.

The territorial organization of the armed forces is based on the strategic needs of the country. The army is divided into four numbered armies, the first with headquarters at Rio de Janeiro, the second at São Paulo, the third at Porto Alegre, and the fourth at Recife. These armies are further divided into military regions, of which there are 11. The underpopulated north and northwest are controlled by the Amazon Military Command, and the capital falls under the Brasilia Military Command. The navy is divided into three operations districts, with Brasilia as a separate naval command. The fleet air arm has its headquarters at São Pedro de Aldeia Naval Air Station. The air force consists of six regional air commands and three specialized commands: Air Defense Command, Tactical Air Command, and Coastal Command.

Military manpower is provided by compulsory military service for men between the ages of 19 and 45; men between the ages of 17 and 18 and women between the ages of 19 and 45 may volunteer. The period of service is one year.

The Brazilian armed forces are the largest and best equipped in Latin America. The military have not been involved in combat operations in the 20th century other than in World War I and World War II and as contingents in various international peacekeeping missions, but they are maintained in a high state of combat readiness. About 85 percent of the army, including the powerful Third Army, is located on the southern border with Argentina and Uruguay. Operational capability around the River Plate basin is one of the two strategic priorities of the Brazilian high command, the other being a defensive shield around the Rio–São Paulo–Brasilia complex.

Defense production capability has expanded since the 1960s and now includes small arms and armaments, ammunition, naval craft and aerospace main systems, and components and engines. At least 40 percent of Brazilian arms and equipment are now manufactured internally. Brazil is the largest and technically the most advanced arms producer to the Third World. The country is capable of producing such advanced and sophisticated military hardware as antitank missiles, armored personnel carriers, combat aircraft, rockets, and jet engines. A substantial portion of the arms industry is controlled by

the military, but the two giants are the private firms Embraer and Engesa. In the new millennium the military continued to be an important part of the country's overall expenditures, with a budget of over \$10 billion, or 2.1 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) in 2003.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	300,000
Military Manpower Availability:	52,100,042
Military Expenditures \$billion:	10.44
as % of GDP:	2.1
as % of central government expenditures:	—
Arms Imports \$million:	154
Arms Exports \$million:	18

ECONOMY

Possessing large and well-developed agricultural, mining, manufacturing, and service sectors, Brazil's economy outweighs that of all other South American countries and is expanding its presence in world markets. In the late 1980s and early 1990s high inflation hindered economic activity and investment. The Real Plan, instituted in the spring of 1994, sought to break inflationary expectations by pegging the real to the U.S. dollar. Inflation was brought down to single-digit annual figures, but not quickly enough to avoid substantial real exchange-rate appreciation during the transition phase of the plan. This appreciation meant that Brazilian goods became more expensive relative to goods from other countries, which contributed to large current-account deficits. However, no shortage of foreign currency ensued because of the financial community's renewed interest in Brazilian markets as inflation rates stabilized and the debt crisis of the 1980s faded from memory. The maintenance of large current-account deficits via capital-account surpluses became problematic as investors became more risk averse to emerging market exposure as a consequence of the Asian financial crisis in 1997 and the Russian bond default in August 1998. After crafting a fiscal adjustment program and pledging progress on structural reform, Brazil received a \$41.5 billion international support program, led by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), in November 1998 and received another \$30 billion loan in August 2002. In January 1999 the Brazilian Central Bank announced that the real would no longer be pegged to the U.S. dollar. This devaluation helped moderate the downturn in economic growth in 1999 about which investors had expressed concerns over the summer of 1998. Brazil's debt-to-GDP ratio of 48 percent for 1999 beat the IMF target and helped reassure investors that Brazil would maintain tight fiscal and monetary policy even with a floating currency. The economy continued to recover in 2000, but inflation had reached double digits by 2004.

Foreign direct investment set a record of more than \$30 billion in 2000. The three parts of the economic programs of both President Cardoso and President Lula have been the floating exchange rate, inflation reduction, and tight fiscal policy. The real depreciated sharply in 2001 and 2002, leading to a record trade surplus. As a result, Brazil recorded its first current-account surplus since 1992. The Lula government continues to run a budget deficit, but by 2004 there were signs of a mild economic recovery.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$trillion: 1.375
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 7,600
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 1.6
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 0.3
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %
 Agriculture: 10.2
 Industry: 38.7
 Services: 51.1
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %
 Private Consumption: 58
 Government Consumption: 20
 Gross Domestic Investment: 18.0
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 73.28
 Imports: 48.25
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 0.7
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 48.0

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
134.0	143.4	153.2	166.1	190.6

Finance

National Currency: Real (BRL)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = BRL 3.0771
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 111.5
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 25.49
 Total External Debt \$billion: 214.9
 Debt Service Ratio %: 38.3
 Balance of Payments \$billion: 3.52
 International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 49.1
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 14.7

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 376
 per capita \$: 2
 Foreign Direct Investment \$billion: 14

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$billion: 147.2
 Expenditures \$billion: 172.4
 Budget Deficit \$billion: 25.2
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 10.2
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2002) %: 5.3
 Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares: 13.7
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 4.4
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 115
 Total Farmland as % of land area: 7.0
 Livestock: Cattle 000: 192,000
 Sheep 000: 14,182
 Hogs 000: 33,000
 Chickens 000: 1,100,000
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 238.5
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons million: 1.07

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 51.3
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 0.4

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 105
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 122.6
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 711
 Net Energy Imports % of use: 21.2
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 76.2
 Production kW-hr billion: 339.1
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 351.9
 Coal Reserves tons billion: 13.1
 Production tons million: 4.6
 Consumption tons million: 22.1
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: 8.5
 Production cubic feet million: 287
 Consumption cubic feet million: 472
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: 8.5
 Production barrels million per day: 1.88
 Consumption barrels million per day: 2.12
 Pipelines Length km: 5,212

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 48.25
 Exports \$billion: 73.28
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2002): 9.7
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2002): –3.8
 Balance of Trade \$billion: 3.52

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
United States %	20.0	23.0
Argentina %	9.8	6.1
Germany %	8.7	4.2
Japan %	5.2	—
China %	4.4	6.0
Netherlands %	—	5.8

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 1,724,929
 Paved %: 5.5
 Automobiles: 15,210,000
 Trucks and Buses: 4,256,700
 Railroad: Track Length km: 29,412
 Passenger-km billion: 5.85
 Freight-km billion: 154.87
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 151
 Total Deadweight Tonnage million: 4.725
 Airports: 3,803
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 46.1
 Length of Waterways km: 50,000

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 3.78
 Number of Tourists from million: 1.86
 Tourist Receipts \$billion: 3.12
 Tourist Expenditures \$billion: 2.38

Communications

Telephones million: 38.81
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.03
 Cellular Telephones million: 46.37
 Personal Computers million: 13
 Internet Hosts per million people: 17,000
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 77

ENVIRONMENT

Continuing deforestation in the Amazon basin destroys the habitat and endangers the existence of a multitude of plant and animal species indigenous to the area. Hundreds of Brazilian species of animals and plants are now on the endangered lists. From 1990 to 1995 the average annual rate of deforestation was 0.46 percent. Despite international and domestic measures to slow down such deforestation, only 4.4 percent of Brazil's wild areas were protected by 2001. The air and water pollution in Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, and several other large cities is a serious problem posing public health problems. Sanitation is also an issue in large urban areas where the poor generally do not have access to modern sewage systems. The exploitation of natural resources through activities like mining is also having adverse effects on land and water quality.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 63
 Average Annual Forest Change, 1990-2000, 000 ha: -2,309
 Nationally Protected Areas as % of Total Land Area: 18
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 690,876
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 1.7

LIVING CONDITIONS

With its population nearing 200 million and with a mixture of European, African, and Amerindian peoples, Brazil presents a true tapestry of living conditions. Cities such as Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo have modern apartment buildings and skyscrapers in harsh juxtaposition with the slums, called *favelas*, that house 25 million of the poorer members of the country's population, who are largely black. Many of the older shacks in these informal settlements have gained electricity and running water, but far more lack such amenities and the resulting poor sanitation poses enormous health risks. Crime is one way out of such poverty, and *favela* youth often avail themselves of that option. Only minutes away in the suburbs or in the finer quarters of the cities, the middle and upper-middle classes live modern lives with all corresponding conveniences.

In rural areas the living conditions depend largely on class and ethnic background. For those of European or mulatto background, small houses of adobe, wood, or stone are typical, either in villages or on ranches. Brazil's Amerindians, however, numbering only about 200,000, attempt to maintain much of their traditional way of life. For example, the Kayapo of the Amazon region live in thatched-roof huts with open floor plans. Hammocks are used instead of beds. The Xavante of Mato Grosso State favor a so-called beehive house, a round structure made of sticks and cane and covered in palm leaves and shared by up to three families. All the Amerindian tribes have suffered from contact with the outside world and its diseases. As of 2004 the life expectancy was 71.4 years for Brazilians, but for native tribes the average is much lower, at about 63.2.

HEALTH

A government-run health-care system called Prevsauúde was established in 1981, but by 1993 it had been disbanded due to corruption. A combination of public- and private-sector services combined to reach about 75 percent of the population by 2000. Health-care expenditure was 7.6 percent of GDP as of 2001. Additionally, Amerindians have many traditional curative methods involving herbs, shamans, and ritual dances. Many Amazonian plants have attracted international attention for their curative powers.

Malnourishment, poor sanitation, and endemic diseases account for most of Brazil's health problems. Malaria, yellow fever, dengue, amoebic dysentery, tuberculosis, and Chagas' disease are the main endemic diseases of the country. As of 2003 there were an estimated 660,000 Brazilians living with HIV/AIDS. In the *favelas* in and around major cities the government has instituted new systems of sewage and potable water in order to bring

sickness rates down among the poor. By 2002, 89 percent of the population had access to safe drinking water and 75 percent had adequate sanitation. Rio de Janeiro is home to a major tropical disease research center, the Oswaldo Cruz Foundation.

Health

Number of Physicians: 357,888
 Number of Dentists: 165,599
 Number of Nurses: 89,710
 Number of Pharmacists: 66,727
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 206
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 30.66
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 260
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 7.6
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 222
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.7
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 96
 Measles: 93
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 75
 Access of Improved Water Source %: 89

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Basic foods for Brazilians include rice, beans, and manioc, a root crop that is usually consumed in flour form. The national dish of Brazil is *feijoada*, a stew of pork and black beans served with rice and vegetables that was created by African slaves. While a good *feijoada* needs at least five kinds of pork (such as sausage, salt pork, or bacon), the *feijoada completa* mixes up to 20 varieties of salted, dried, or smoked meats with the black beans. African influences are also noted in Bahian foods such as *vatapa*, which is made of rice flour, coconut oil, fish, shrimps, red peppers, and spices.

Brazil's European heritage can be identified in numerous Italian and Portuguese dishes. Steak is a popular dish for the more well to do. Additionally, fish, tropical fruit, and corn make up a large part of the Brazilian diet. The typical Brazilian meal is followed by a dessert of fruit or a sweet and small cups of strong coffee called *cafezinho*.

Food and Nutrition

Food Supply as % of FAO Requirements: 119
 Undernourished % of total population: 9.0
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,960
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 107.1
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 151.5

STATUS OF WOMEN

Under the constitution of 1988 women became entirely equal to men for all legal purposes. Despite persistent gen-

der inequality the status of women in Brazil is improving. Generally, females stay in school longer than their male counterparts, thus achieving educational advances in law and medicine. The attitudes and practices of young people are generally not as sexist as those of their parents, at least among youths of families with higher income and education. Nevertheless, there are still relatively few women in positions of power. They have a limited presence in high levels of federal government, though they have better representation at the state and municipal levels. Since the government of João Baptista do Oliveira Figueiredo of 1979–85, several female ministers have been in the cabinet, and in 1994 two women were candidates for vice president. By 2005 women made up 9 percent of the National Congress.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 9
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men age 15-24: 1.02
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-Agricultural %: 46.9

WORK

In 2004 Brazil had a labor force of 82.59 million; 53 percent were employed in services, 24 percent in industry, and 23 percent in agriculture. Those employed in industry manufactured goods such as textiles, shoes, chemicals, cement, lumber, iron ore, tin, steel, aircraft, motor vehicles and parts, and other machinery and equipment, while those engaged in the agricultural sector grew coffee, soybeans, wheat, rice, corn, sugarcane, cocoa, and citrus and raised beef. As of 2003 Brazil had an unemployment rate of 12.3 percent.

Unions are not strong in Brazil; they have been not only discouraged but also supplanted by the government. The right to strike, however, was restored in 1984. Workers' rights include a 44-hour workweek with provisions for overtime pay, a paid annual vacation, equal pay provisions, and severance pay. The government established a minimum wage roughly equivalent to 20 percent of the cost of supporting a family of four. In 2002 this wage was \$75 per month, and nearly two-thirds of the population earns two minimum-wage salaries or less. The poorest workers reside in the northeast, where one-half earn less than minimum wage. The wealthiest region is in the south and southeast, where 80 percent of workers earn more than five minimum-wage salaries. Brazil has a sizable social gap between the very small privileged class at the top of the economic ladder and the large number of people living in or near poverty. There is a relatively large middle class.

Unsafe working conditions are common throughout the country, and despite a minimum work age of 16 there

were an estimated three million children employed in 1999. For indigenous people a subsistence economy of farming or hunting and gathering is still practiced where possible.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 82,590,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 35.5
 Labor by Sector: %
 Agriculture: 23
 Industry: 24
 Services: 53
 Unemployment %: 12.3

EDUCATION

Education is free, universal, and compulsory for eight years, from the ages of seven to 14. Schooling lasts for 11 years, as divided into eight years of primary school (technically known as first grade) and three to four years of second grade, or middle school. The term secondary school is applied to university-level institutions. The course of study is divided into hours rather than years, permitting students to proceed at a pace suited to their capabilities after completing the mandatory first grade. There are three types of primary schools: *escolas isoladas*, or one-room rural schools; *escolas reunidas*, or collective schools in small towns; and *grupos escolares* in larger towns and cities. Of the population over the age of 25, more than 40 percent have no schooling. More than 25 percent have attended school but have not completed the first level, with only a very small percent completing university-level education. As of 2001, 97 percent of primary-school-age children were enrolled, and 72 percent of those eligible attended secondary school.

The academic year runs from March to the middle of December. The medium of instruction is Portuguese throughout.

Private schools are operated by Roman Catholic orders, Protestant denominations, and commercial organizations. Private primary schools offer a higher quality of schooling than public ones, but their record at the middle level is mixed.

Under the educational reforms introduced in 1971, the second grade is vocation-oriented, and general studies are supplemented by vocational courses designed to meet the requirements of the labor market in the region. Students are required to enroll in specialized technical programs and to undergo supervised apprenticeship in a specific vocation. Upper grades of primary schools have been converted into work-oriented institutions with shop courses in industrial arts, commercial arts, agriculture, and home economics.

Responsibility for public education is divided between federal, state, and municipal governments. Pri-

mary and middle schools, or the first and second grades, are controlled by the states and municipal governments, whereas higher education is the responsibility of the federal government. The formulation and implementation of educational policies rest with the Federal Council of Education, whose members are appointed by the president. There are also state councils of education with comparable functions.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 86.4
 Male %: 86.1
 Female %: 86.6
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 14.5
 First Level: Primary schools: 195,545
 Teachers: 858,813
 Students: 19,727,684
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 22.3
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 96.5
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 13,449
 Teachers: 1,367,545
 Students: 25,126,886
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 19.3
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 71.6
 Third Level: Institutions: 851
 Teachers: 203,406
 Students: 3,125,745
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 18.2
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 4.3

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Brazil is not known for high technology; rather, it has pioneered in the study of tropical medicine. The Oswaldo Cruz Foundation for biological research in Rio de Janeiro is a major tropical disease research center, while the Butantan Institute in São Paulo produces snake serum. Brazil leads the world in the latter research. Approximately 100 Brazilian universities and colleges offered courses in basic and applied science in 1996, and between 1987 and 1997 science and engineering students made up 27 percent of college and university enrollments.

Government-sponsored research and development was a 12-billion-real investment in 1994, much of it directed at Brazil's fledgling space program, begun in 1973 with the launch of the Sonda II rocket to study electron density in the ionosphere. After an optimistic and well-funded start, the country's nuclear energy program stalled in the 1980s.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million persons: 296
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 0.77
 High-Tech Exports \$billion: 6
 Patent Applications by Residents: 6,706

MEDIA

Most Brazilian newspapers have small circulations because of distribution problems. There are five national newspapers: *O estado de São Paulo*, *Folha de São Paulo*, *Gazeta mercantil*, *O globo*, and *Jornal do Brasil*. All dailies except two are published in Portuguese. About 95 towns and cities have their own newspapers, and the larger ones have several morning and evening papers. One of the most striking features of the Brazilian press is the dominance of chains and media dynasties, such as Chateaubriand's Associated Daily Newspapers, the Mesquita Brothers, and the Octavio Frias de Oliveira group.

There are a number of domestic news agencies: Agência Nacional, Agência Meridional, Agência J. B. Servicos de Imprensa, Transpress, Argus Press, Asapress, Brastele, and Agência Noticiosa. Agência Nacional is the official news agency.

Broadcasting is conducted by three types of organizations: government stations, commercial stations, and religious foundations. All broadcasting stations are required to be licensed by the state and come under the control of Departamento Nacional de Telecomunicações. The government station, Radio Nacional, broadcasts an international short-wave program in six languages on the Voice of America model. In 1999 there were 1,365 AM, 296 FM, and 161 short-wave stations.

Television was first introduced in 1950. In 1998 there were 237 stations, of which 118 were in state capitals, six in Brasilia. There are now hundreds of television channels. There are educational stations in Recife, Caceio, and São Paulo.

As of 2003 there were over 46.3 million mobile-phone users and about 14.3 million Internet users in the country.

Media

Daily Newspapers:	372
Total Circulation million:	7.163
Circulation per 1,000:	43.1
Books Published:	—
Periodicals:	—
Radio Receivers 000:	—
per 1,000:	—
Television sets million:	56
per 1,000:	333

CULTURE

Brazil's modern culture is a result of its melting-pot origins. The mixture of Portuguese, Africans, and indigenous Amerindians has created a rich tapestry of dance and music. Perhaps best known internationally is the musical tradition of the samba, which was later fused with American jazz to create bossa nova, a musical form made internationally popular by artists such as Sergio Mendes.

Other fusion rhythms from Brazil include the *lambada* and the *carimbo*. Many of these rhythms are strongly influenced by Brazil's African heritage. More classical in training was the composer Heitor Villa-Lobos.

The country is also rich in cultural institutions. The Brazilian Academy of Arts and Letters is housed in Rio de Janeiro, as is the National Library and numerous museums and concert houses. Brazil boasts a long and distinguished literary tradition. Joaquim Machado de Assis was the son of a freed slave who wrote novels in the 19th century; 20th-century writers include Gilberto Freyre, Graciliano Ramos, and Jorge Amado, among others. In the visual arts the landscape architect Roberto Burle Marx has achieved an international reputation, as has the Brazilian architect Oscar Niemeyer. In painting, Brazilian artists have created a distinctly Brazilian style: a blend of European abstract techniques and realism.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number:	3,600
Volumes:	18,106,000
Registered borrowers:	2,919,155
Museums Number:	778
Annual Attendance:	26,652
Cinema Gross Receipts:	—
Number of Cinemas:	1,400
Seating Capacity:	—
Annual Attendance million:	70

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

The folklore of Brazil reflects its slave and Amerindian origins. Afro-Brazilians hold the figure of Zumbi, a rebel slave leader who died escaping the militia, high in their pantheon of mythological beings. The day of his death, November 20, is celebrated by many Afro-Brazilians.

Each of the country's indigenous groups has its own set of myths. The Xavante have numerous legends detailing both their history and the workings of the world. For them, the stars are the eyes of people who watch over those on Earth. The bee has a prominent place in Kayapos folklore; they believe that their ancestors learned to live communally from the bees. The Guaranis have several stories dealing with origin myths featuring the creator Nande Ru. For the Tenetehara the creator is embodied in Tupan. When the missionaries came, they told the Tenetehara that Tupan was the Christian God.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Brazilians partake of the usual forms of entertainment found in developed countries. Television—especially the

soap operas, or *telenovelas*—is popular, as are movies. In urban areas live theater and concerts are abundant and libraries and bookshops plentiful. Nightlife in urban areas offers restaurants, music, dance clubs, and discos. Shopping malls are built on the North American model, complete with food courts, movie theaters, and video arcades in addition to retail outlets; these provide a social outlet for Brazilians. Among outdoor activities, a visit to the beach is popular as are outings to nature preserves or scenic areas.

More unique to Brazil is Carnival, the four-day mass party that precedes Lent. Though held in Catholic countries around the world, Brazilian Carnival, with its mix of Roman Catholic tradition and African exuberance, has become world famous. People dance in the street in costumes that they spend all year preparing. Dancing is also a popular form of recreation in Brazil. Samba schools and competitions attract people of all ages.

ETIQUETTE

Brazil is Mediterranean in its attitude toward social space and touching: A sense of personal space is less pronounced than in North America, and touching is a sign of friendship rather than a sexual overture. A greeting of a hug is not uncommon between men, while women traditionally kiss each other on the cheek. This informal and outward nature extends to deportment and to a relaxed attitude toward nudity. This can be seen on the beaches, with the scanty bathing costumes, or at Carnival.

On the other hand, Brazilians also have a stricter sense of decorum when it comes to titles and signs of respect. Titles of teachers, doctors, and professionals in general are used along with the person's first name as a form of address. Likewise, the formal "you" is used for strangers and for elder or higher-class individuals.

FAMILY LIFE

The family is at the heart of Brazilian society, whether nuclear or extended; much of the social life is based around interaction between family members, both closely and distantly related. Families usually live in close proximity to one another and see each other weekly. Family size can include five to seven children, though birthrates are declining.

Both civil and religious marriages exist in the country, as does common-law marriage. Divorce was legalized in Brazil in 1977; extramarital affairs are common, and men may take mistresses on long-term bases. Especially among the poor, cohabitation without marriage, or *amasiado*, is common and socially acceptable.

With the indigenous people of Brazil the sense of kinship and the extended family is even stronger; several

generations will live together in one dwelling and work together. Large families are the norm.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Physically, Brazilians have many appearances. There are those of European heritage, those of African heritage, those of mixed or mulatto heritage, and the Amerindians.

In urban areas the dress is modern and is similar to that seen in the cities of North America and Europe. Jeans are popular among the youth, and suits and ties are the norm for business people.

There are various styles of dress outside of urban areas. A cowboy style, or gaucho look, is popular near the border with Argentina, while the Afro-Brazilians of Bahia wear brightly colored clothes. For the women this includes long skirts and embroidered blouses, with colorful turbans wrapped around the hair. Colored beads are also part of the costume for both men and women of this region. Peasant farmers and some of the indigenous groups wear ponchos. Other Amerindians wear body paint and limited clothing.

SPORTS

Soccer is the main sport in Brazil as in the rest of Latin America. The Brazilians are very enthusiastic fans of the sport and have produced a number of world-class players, the best known being Pelé. More contemporary are players such as Rivaldo and Ronaldo, who compete in professional leagues outside of Brazil. The country is usually in contention for World Cup titles.

The second most popular sport in Brazil is volleyball, in part inspired by the gold medal won by the Brazilian women's team in the 1988 Olympics. Beach volleyball has also become very common. Tennis has found a new place in Brazilian life, especially after the success of Gustavo Kuerten, who took the French Open title in 1997, 2000, and 2001. Auto racing and horse racing also draw large crowds. Popular among the younger generation are surfing and other ocean- and beach-related activities.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1945** The armed forces compel President Getúlio Vargas, the virtual dictator of Brazil since 1930, to step down; Chief Justice José Linhares becomes caretaker.
- 1946** General Eurico Dutra is elected president; a new constitution is promulgated.
- 1948** Brazilian Communist Party is proscribed.
- 1951** Vargas is reelected president as the candidate of the Labor Party.

- 1954** The armed forces and the cabinet demand Vargas's resignation; Vargas commits suicide and is succeeded in office by Vice President João Café Filho.
- 1955** In national elections Juscelino Kubitschek de Oliveira is elected president on the plank "Power, Transportation, Food."
- 1960** Brasília, the new capital of Brazil, is inaugurated.
- 1961** Jânio Quadros is elected president with the largest plurality in the country's history.
Quadros resigns seven months later, citing unnamed threats; João Goulart succeeds to the office of the president, with reduced powers and in the face of wide opposition to his leftist policies.
- 1963** Full presidential powers are restored to Goulart through a national plebiscite.
- 1964** The armed forces depose Goulart, who flees to Uruguay; the army chief of staff marshal Humberto de Alencar Castelo Branco is elected by a purged Chamber of Deputies to serve until 1966, a term subsequently extended to 1967.
Through a series of institutional acts, Castelo Branco gains virtually absolute powers.
- 1965** All existing political parties are banned.
- 1967** The military regime promulgates a new constitution. President Castelo Branco steps down and is succeeded in office by Arturo da Costa e Silva.
U.S. Ambassador C. Burke Elbrick is kidnapped by extremists and is released only after the government meets their demands, which include the release of certain political prisoners.
- 1969** President Costa e Silva suffers a stroke and dies; High Command of the Armed Forces selects General Emílio Garrastazú Médici as president. The ARENA and MDB parties are permitted to function as the country's political parties.
- 1970** Work begins on the controversial Trans-Amazon Highway.
- 1974** General Ernesto Geisel is elected president by the electoral college.
- 1977** Brazil rejects U.S. military aid, reacting to U.S. criticisms of the regime's violations of human rights and nuclear development policies; Geisel suspends National Congress and decrees judicial and constitutional reforms.
Divorce is legalized. Amnesty International cites Brazil for torture and illegal detention of political prisoners.
- 1978** U.S. President Jimmy Carter visits Brazil.
General João Baptista de Oliveira Figueiredo, the official nominee, is elected president to succeed Geisel in 1979. Institutional Act 5 is suspended as the regime initiates a process of moderate constitutional reform; press censorship is ended but broadcast curbs remain.
- ARENA, the official party, retains control of Congress in parliamentary elections.
The Amazon Pact is concluded with Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Peru, Suriname, and Venezuela.
- 1979** The two existing political parties, ARENA and MDB, are dissolved to make way for new parties. General Figueiredo is inaugurated as president.
As inflation tops annual rate of 70 percent the finance minister, Delfim Netto, outlines new anti-inflation plan, including a maxidevaluation of the cruzeiro by 30 percent.
Tripartite accord is reached with Argentina and Paraguay over the Paraná River dispute.
- 1980** The pope visits Brazil and calls for social justice but warns against the social gospel.
- 1982** In national elections the opposition wins 10 states.
- 1983** Social Democrats regain control of the House of Representatives.
- 1984** The Itaipá Dam is inaugurated.
- 1985** Brazil's electoral college elects Tancredo de Almeida Neves as president.
Neves dies before taking office.
Vice President José Sarney is installed as the first civilian president in 20 years.
Angra I nuclear plant goes on stream. Approval is passed by Congress for a constitutional amendment that restores direct elections by universal suffrage.
- 1986** The Cruzado Plan is announced to fight inflation.
- 1987** A Constitutional Assembly is installed and is dominated by debate over the presidential mandate. A moratorium is announced on debts to commercial banks.
- 1988** Various strikes, some violent, occur throughout the country over recent economic policies. A new constitution is approved by the National Congress. Censorship is abolished, and the voting age is lowered to 16. Francisco (Chico) Mendes, the leader of the rubber-tappers' union, is killed.
- 1989** The Brazilian stock exchange experiences a serious setback, suspending business for four months. In the latter part of the year Brazil is unable to make payments on its foreign debt. A meeting of the Amazon Pact nations denounces outside interference in the Amazon region. The Declaration of Manaus is signed by the Amazon Pact stating their rights over Amazonian environmental issues. The "Our Nation" environmental program is announced. The Summer Plan is abandoned.
The nation's inflation rate climbs to 1,765 percent.

- 1990** Fernando Collor de Mello is sworn in as president, marking the beginning of the first democratically elected regime in Brazil in three decades. Amnesty International reports widespread human rights abuses by Brazilian law enforcement authorities between 1985 and 1990. Collor introduces an economic austerity program aimed at cutting government spending and reducing inflation. The inflation rate rises to 1,795 percent. The Group of Seven pledges to help Brazil preserve its rain forests. The Collor government says it will consider agreeing to preserve parts of its rain forest in return for forgiveness of some of its foreign debt.
- 1991** The government announces a new anti-inflation program as the economic situation worsens. Union leaders in the Amazon area are targeted in death plots.
- 1992** President Collor is impeached, and Vice President Itamar Franco serves the remainder of the term as president.
- 1993** The former finance minister Fernando Henrique Cardoso wins the presidency on an anti-inflation platform.
- 1997** Congress passes a constitutional amendment allowing Cardoso to run for a second consecutive term; prisoners mutiny at the São Paulo jail, taking 600 hostages.
- 1998** A severe drought causes food shortages in northeastern Brazil; the Brazilian economy collapses in the wake of the Asian fiscal crisis of 1997; Brazil receives an IMF-led international support program of \$41.5 billion.
- 1999** Brazilian Central Bank announces that the real, which had tracked the value of the U.S. dollar, will be allowed to float; the government places the military under direct civilian control.
- 2000** Brazil celebrates its 500th anniversary amid protests by the indigenous population, who say that racial genocide, forced labor, and disease have dramatically cut their population from an estimated 5 million before the Europeans arrived in 1500 to the current 350,000.
- 2001** A new civil code guaranteeing legal equality for women is enacted in August.
- 2002** The IMF approves a \$30 billion loan to Brazil in August. At that time Brazil's debt exceeds \$260 billion. Elections are held in October; Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, founder of the Workers Party, wins the presidency.

2003 President Lula is inaugurated in January. His moderate economic policies reassure international investors.

2004 Brazil launches its first space rocket.

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Brazil. *Anuario Estatístico do Brasil; Contagem da População 2000*

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Brasil.gov
<http://www.brasil.gov.br>
- CIA World Fact Book: Brazil
<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/br.html>
- IBGE: Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística
<http://www.ibge.gov.br/>
- Central Bank of Brazil: Economic Data
<http://www.bcb.gov.br/ingles/economic.shtm>

BRUNEI

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Brunei Darussalam (Negara Brunei Darussalam)

ABBREVIATION

BN

CAPITAL

Bandar Seri Begawan

HEAD OF STATE & HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Sultan Muda Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah (sultan from 1967; prime minister from 1984)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Absolute monarchy

POPULATION

372,361 (2005)

AREA

5,770 sq km (2,228 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Malay

LANGUAGES

Malay (official), English (lingua franca)

RELIGION

Islam (official)

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Brunei dollar

NATIONAL FLAG

Yellow with two diagonal stripes of white and black running from the upper hoist to the lower fly; the national emblem, in red with yellow Arabic inscription, is superimposed in the center.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

The crest consists of four elements: the *payong ubor-ubor* (royal umbrella), *sayap* (wings), *tangan* or *kimbap* (hands), and the *bulan* (crescent). On the crescent is inscribed in Arabic the national motto, "Always in service with God's guidance." The scroll beneath the crest reads, "Brunei Darussalam, Brunei, the abode of peace."

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"Allah Peliharakan Sultan" (O God, long live our majesty, the sultan)

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day), February 23 (National Day), Chinese New Year's Day, May 31 (Anniversary of the Royal Brunei Malay Regiment), Sultan's Birthday, Christmas, all major Islamic festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

January 1, 1984

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

September 29, 1959 (suspended since 1962)

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

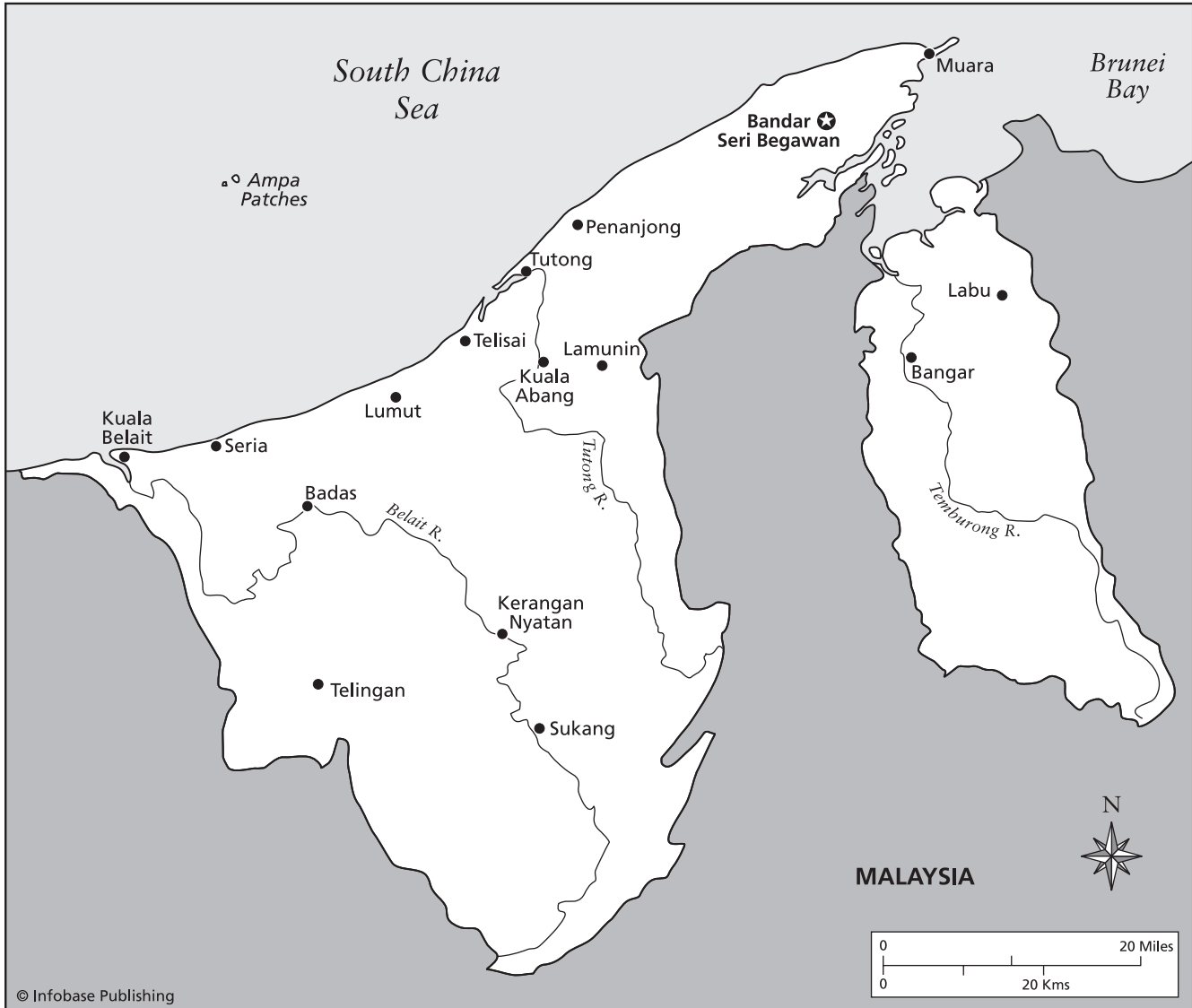
Brunei, on the northwestern coast of the island of Borneo (Kalimantan), has a total land area of 5,770 sq km (2,228 sq mi). It is composed of two enclaves separated by the Limbang River valley, a salient of the Malaysian state of Sarawak. Brunei's total boundary length is 542 km (337 mi).

Apart from the heavily populated narrow coastal strip to the west, the land is primarily tropical rain forest.

Geography

Area sq km: 5,770; sq mi 2,228
World Rank: 162nd
Land Boundaries, km: Malaysia 381
Coastline, km: 161
Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: South China Sea 0
 Highest: Bukit Pagon 1,850
Land Use %
 Arable land: 0.57
 Permanent Crops: 0.76
 Forest: 83.9
 Other: 14.77

Brunei



Population of Principal Cities (2001)

Bandar Seri Begawan	27,285
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Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature: 81°F to 90°F
 Average Rainfall: 95 in (lowlands) 158 (Interior)

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Brunei has a tropical climate, with uniform temperatures ranging from 27°C to 32°C (81°F to 90°F). Humidity is constantly high, about 80 percent year-round. Rainfall is heaviest during the northeasterly monsoon season (*landas*), especially in November and December. Average annual rainfall ranges from 2,400 mm (95 in) in lowland areas to 4,000 mm (158 in) in the interior.

FLORA AND FAUNA

Virgin tropical rain forest covers almost 60 percent of the country, while another 20 percent is covered in second-growth forest. There are also mangrove and peat swamps. Hardwoods of the Dipterocarpaceae family, harvested for timber, find a home in the rain forest, as do flora such as lianas, palms, shrubs, herbs, bamboo, epiphytes, creepers, and mosses.

Animal life includes an incredible array of reptiles and birds. Mammals include both wild and domesticated buffalo, honey bear, deer, and monkeys, while insects include the malarial mosquito and biting midge.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005:	372,361
World Rank:	166th
Density per sq km:	67.6
% of annual growth (1999–2003):	2.0
Male %:	52.4
Female %:	47.6
Urban %:	76
Age Distribution: %	
0–14:	29.1
15–64:	68.0
64 and over:	2.9
Population 2025:	505,644
Birth Rate per 1,000:	19.33
Death Rate per 1,000:	3.4
Rate of Natural Increase %:	1.7
Total Fertility Rate:	2.33
Expectation of Life (years):	Males 72.13
	Females 77.09
Marriage Rate per 1,000:	6.5
Divorce Rate per 1,000:	0.9
Average Size of Households:	5.8
Induced Abortions:	—

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Brunei is officially described as a Malay nation; Malays form about 67 percent of the population. The greatest minority—at about 15 percent of the population—are the Chinese, who are officially “stateless noncitizens,” although they have been in Brunei for many decades. Formerly they were “British-protected persons,” but they lost that status on independence. Nevertheless, the Chinese community has prospered, and most commercial activity is in their hands.

Other minorities include about 6 percent Ibans, Dayak, and Kelabit and about 12 percent other indigenous groups. There is a substantial Caucasian community, including temporary workers of English, U.S., Dutch, and Australian nationality.

LANGUAGES

Malay is the official language, but English is the effective lingua franca and the language of commerce. The principal Chinese dialect is Hokkien.

RELIGIONS

Islam is the official religion and is extensively promoted with government funds. The proportion of Muslims is the

same as that of Malays, about 67 percent, but the government acts as if the nation were 100 percent Muslim for all practical purposes. The Department of Religious Affairs is heavily funded and is in charge of building mosques and Koranic schools. There are monetary and other incentives for conversion to Islam.

The 31 percent religious minority comprises mostly Buddhists and tribal folk religionists; less than 10 percent are Christian. The constitution guarantees freedom of worship to non-Muslims, and this right is widely exercised.

Religious Affiliations

Muslim	249,000
Other	115,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

From the 14th to the 16th centuries Brunei was the seat of a powerful sultanate extending over Sabah, Sarawak, and the lower Philippines. Thus the current sultan represents one of the oldest continuously ruling dynasties in the world. By the 19th century the Brunei Empire had been whittled away by wars, piracy, and the colonial expansion of European powers.

In 1847 the sultan concluded a treaty with Great Britain, and in 1881 Brunei officially became a British protectorate. A 1959 agreement recognized Brunei as fully self-governing, subject to Great Britain only for the conduct of its foreign affairs and defense. Great Britain exercised this right in helping to put down an Indonesian-backed nationalist coup against the sultan in 1962. At that time the constitution of 1959 was effectively suspended, and ever since the sultan has ruled by decree. In 1967 Sultan Omar abdicated in favor of his son Muda Hassan al-Bolkiah. On January 1, 1984, Brunei attained full independence, and the sultan took office as prime minister, presiding over a cabinet of six (three of whom were close relatives).

Although the sultan's state of emergency remained in effect into 1985 and 1986, Brunei thereafter moved toward a more progressive government. In October 1986 the cabinet was expanded to 11 members and included commoners for the first time. In 1988, on the other hand, the Brunei National Democratic Party (BNDP), which had been formed three years earlier, was dissolved by the state when it called for the sultan to drop his post as prime minister, end the 26-year state of emergency, and hold democratic elections. As of 1988 Brunei adopted the name and style of an Islamic state, and the sultan has emerged as a defender of Islam. In 1991 he undertook the great hajj, or pilgrimage to Mecca. The importation of alcohol and the public celebration of Christmas were banned, the

female members of the royal family adopted Islamic headdress, and the name Islamic was added to the names of major public institutions.

In 1993 Brunei established diplomatic relations with China, Vietnam, and Laos. The country was hit with a financial downturn in 1998 when oil prices declined, a situation exacerbated by a financial scandal in which the sultan's brother, Prince Jefri Bolkiah, was involved. The prince was removed from his post as finance minister, fled to London for a time, and returned in 2000, when he was sued for misuse of public funds.

Talks began in 1999 between Brunei and the nine other members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to create a free-trade zone, which would be the world's largest, with 1.7 billion people. These talks progressed from 2000 to 2004.

The sultan has increasingly relied on two means to solidify his power: consolidation and Islamization. The sultan has become not only prime minister but also minister of defense and minister of finance. Besides this concentration of responsibilities, the sultan has been attempting to secure his own legitimacy by claiming a divine right to rule. The campaign to win allegiance to the national philosophy of Malay Islam Monarchy began in 1990. Since that time there have been further measures passed to resist modernity and the encroachment of Western values.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

- 1924–50 Ahmad Taju'ddin Akadzul Khairi Waddin
 1950–67 Omar Ali Saifu'ddin Wasa'dul Khairi Waddin
 1967– Muda Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzu'ddin Waddaulah

CONSTITUTION

The constitution of 1959 was effectively suspended in 1962, and since then the sultan has ruled by continually invoking two-year states of emergency. The constitution provides for a number of constitutional bodies, including a Privy Council, Council of Ministers, Legislative Council, Religious Council, and Council of Succession. The present sultan, the head of state, is also the prime minister, the head of government. The sultanate is one of the most autocratic regimes outside the Middle East.

PARLIAMENT

The Legislative Council is a unicameral body of 21 members, all of whom are appointed by the sultan. This council is merely ceremonial, however, with no powers either

in theory or in practice. No elections have been held in the sultanate since the 1965 general elections. Disbanded in 1983, the Legislative Council was reinstated in 2004.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Political parties have not fared well in Brunei. The government has dissolved parties when they have appeared to be causing too much trouble. The Brunei National Unity Party was founded in 1986; it was forced out of existence in 1988. The Brunei Solidarity National Party, PPKB in Malay, also became inactive in 1988 but was again registered in 1995 and 1998, though it had fewer than 200 members. As of 2004 the PPKB's president was Mohd Hatta bin Haji Zainal Abidin.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For purposes of local government Brunei is divided into four districts. Each district is headed by a district officer reporting directly to the sultan. District councils, in which small numbers of members are elected by the people, advise district officials, as do village headmen. A district consists of several *mukims*, each headed by a *penghulu* (subdistrict officer). A mukim is made up of several kampongs, or villages, and each of these in turn is headed by a *ketua* (village officer), who is elected by the people of the village.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The Bruneian legal system is an amalgam of Anglo-Saxon and Islamic traditions and institutions. Islamic courts deal with religious matters, and appeal goes to the Religious Council. The secular system is headed by the High Court and the Court of Appeals, both headed by justices and commissioners appointed by the sultan. Together these two courts constitute the Supreme Court. Minor civil and criminal cases are tried in magistrates' courts.

Until 1995 there was a right of appeal to the Privy Council in London. However, in 1995 that right was rescinded for criminal cases.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Freedom House rates Brunei as partly free. Since 1962 there have been no political disturbances in the sultanate, as a state of emergency, suspending the constitution, has remained in effect. Economic well-being has made the relative absence of political freedom tolerable for Bruneians. In its 1985 report Amnesty International expressed concern about the continued detention with-

out trial of eight persons allegedly involved in the armed uprising of 1962 and of 20 others arrested for political reasons between 1975 and 1978. In 1990 the government released the detainees from 1962. Press censorship and growing unemployment in the new millennium have created dissatisfaction among larger segments of the populace.

Brunei has drawn international criticism for its treatment of guest workers, who make up about 40 percent of the workforce.

FOREIGN POLICY

Brunei became a member of the Commonwealth upon independence and joined ASEAN in 1984. Soon after it was admitted to the Organization of Islamic States, and Brunei has since moved closer to Muslim nations. Relations with the United Kingdom are cordial, and there is a 1983 agreement providing for a British army battalion to be stationed in the country. Relations with Malaysia and Indonesia were long marred by territorial claims, but talks in 1995 yielded an agreement for a bilateral approach to the resolution of territorial issues. In 1995 Brunei hosted the ASEAN meeting that was attended by all countries in the region.

Brunei, along with the People's Republic of China, Vietnam, Malaysia, Taiwan, and the Philippines, is engaged in a regional dispute over claims to the Spratly Islands, situated in the South China Sea, which are strategically important and may have large oil and gas reserves. In November 2002 ASEAN leaders and China signed a declaration of conduct, agreeing not to attempt to occupy the Spratly Islands.

DEFENSE

With independence, Brunei established its own defense force for the first time since 1881, when Brunei became a British protectorate. The defense portfolio is in royal hands, with the sultan as minister of defense. There is no conscription, and enlistment is voluntary.

The Royal Brunei Malay Regiment consisted of 4,750 men and 250 women in 1998. Its navy had 1,000 personnel in 2002; its air force, 1,100. Britain provides some officer corps, and a Gurkha battalion, which numbers 750 men, is stationed in Brunei. Agreements have been made with the British government for the purchase of military equipment totaling 250 million pounds sterling. In mid-1987 Brunei expressed some interest in joining the Five Power Defense Agreement linking the United Kingdom, Malaysia, Singapore, Australia, and New Zealand.

In 2003 the defense budget totaled \$339.5 million, or 6 percent of gross domestic product (GDP).

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	5,000
Military Manpower Availability:	112,630
Military Expenditures \$million:	339.5
as % of GDP:	5.9
as % of central government expenditures:	—
Arms Imports \$million:	3
Arms Exports \$million:	—

ECONOMY

Brunei's small, wealthy economy is a mixture of foreign and domestic entrepreneurship, government regulation and welfare measures, and village tradition. It is almost totally supported by exports of crude oil and natural gas, with revenues from the petroleum sector accounting for over half of GDP. Per capita GDP is far above most other developing countries, and substantial income from overseas investment supplements income from domestic production. The government provides for all medical services and subsidizes food and housing. The government has shown progress in its basic policy of diversifying the economy away from oil and gas. Brunei's leaders are concerned that steadily increased integration in the world economy will undermine internal social cohesion, although it has taken steps to become a more prominent player by serving as chair for the 2000 Asian Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum.

With flagging GDP growth, the government initiated a stimulus package in 2001 aimed at increasing the natural gas sector and attracting more foreign investment. The stimulus programs were well received and seem to have taken hold. Brunei's GDP grew 3 percent in 2002 and posted similar development in 2003, due largely to higher oil prices. Brunei had low inflation of 1.8 percent in 2002. However, the high unemployment rate of 10 percent was unaffected. More alarming was a 25 percent unemployment rate among those leaving school in 2003.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion:	6.5
GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$:	18,600
GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %:	—
GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %:	—
Origin of Gross Domestic Product %	
Agriculture:	5
Industry:	45
Services:	50
Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %	
Private Consumption:	11
Government Consumption:	11
Gross Domestic Investment:	—
Foreign Trade \$billion:	Exports: 3.439
	Imports: 1.63

(continues)

Principal Economic Indicators *(continued)*

% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: —

% of Income Received by Richest 10%: —

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1977 = 100)

1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
190.1	189.9	192.3	193.4	189.0

Finance

National Currency: Bruneian Dollar (BND)

Exchange Rate: \$1 = BND 1.7422

Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: —

Central Bank Discount Rate %: —

Total External Debt \$million: 0

Debt Service Ratio %: —

Balance of Payments \$million: —

International Reserves SDRs \$million: —

Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index

Growth Rate %: -2.0

Official Development Assistance

Donor ODA \$million: 1.74

per capita \$: 5

Foreign Direct Investment \$million: —

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year

Revenues \$billion: 2.5

Expenditures \$billion: 2.6

Budget Deficit \$million: 100

Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 5

Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: —

Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares: 24

Irrigation, % of Farms having: 14.3

Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: —

Total Farmland as % of land area: 0.6

Livestock: Cattle 000: 2.2

Sheep 000: 4

Hogs 000: 6.8

Chickens 000: 13,000

Forests: Production of Roundwood (000 cubic meters): 228.6

Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 2.215

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: —

Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 5.0

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 21

Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 2.36

Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 6,858

Net Energy Imports % of use: -807

Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: 480

Production kW-hr billion: 2.5

Consumption kW-hr billion: 2.3

Coal Reserves tons million: —

Production tons 000: —

Consumption tons 000: —

Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: 13.8

Production cubic feet billion: 366

Consumption cubic feet billion: 59

Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: 1.35

Production barrels 000 per day: 196

Consumption barrels 000 per day: 12

Pipelines Length km: 439

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 1.63

Exports \$billion: 3.439

Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —

Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —

Balance of Trade \$: —

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Singapore %	19.9	4.5
Malaysia %	19.8	—
United States %	11.4	7.8
Japan %	9.9	41.0
Hong Kong %	6.5	—
China %	4.8	6.7
Australia %	4.3	8.4
Thailand %	4.0	9.4
South Korea %	—	11.2

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 2,525

Paved %: 100

Automobiles: 200,100

Trucks and Buses: 20,300

Railroad: Track Length km: —

Passenger-mi million: —

Freight-mi million: —

Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 8

Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 413.4

Airports: 2

Traffic: Passenger-km million: 3.7

Length of Waterways km: 209

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 984

Number of Tourists from 000: —

Tourist Receipts \$million: —

Tourist Expenditures \$million: —

Communications

Telephones 000: 90

Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.00

Cellular Telephones 000: 137

Personal Computers 000: 27
 Internet Hosts per million people: 17,200
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 94

ENVIRONMENT

Brunei's main environmental problem is external to the country: It suffers from seasonal air pollution caused by forest fires in Indonesia.

Forests, which cover four-fifths of the country, are strictly protected by the government.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 83.9
 Average Annual Forest Change, 1990-2000, 000 ha: -1
 Nationally Protected Areas as % of Total Land Area: 38
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 14.2

LIVING CONDITIONS

According to the United Nations Human Development Index—a measure of life expectancy, school enrollment, literacy, and income—Brunei ranked 33rd out of 177 countries in 2002.

The standard of living in Brunei is one of the highest in the developing world, with GDP per capita in 2002 of \$18,600. The absence of an income tax makes economic life easier for citizens easier. The average life expectancy in 2004 was 75 years.

The life of the average Bruneian revolves around the state religion, Islam, with certain things being forbidden (*baram*), certain things tolerated but not encouraged (*makrub*), and certain things embraced by Islam (*balal*). Pork, alcohol, meat not slaughtered under Islamic guidance, casual touching, adultery, and contact with the wet nose or hair of a dog are *baram*. Smoking and eating shellfish are considered *makrub*. With the increased Islamization of society, Bruneians are becoming more and more restricted by such religious codes, nor do they have a voice in the government.

In 2003, 76 percent of the population lived in urban areas. The government has supported a building program for three decades through the National Development Plan to encourage and support homeownership for all citizens. Zero-interest loans are available. The country has an extensive social welfare system and a very low crime rate.

HEALTH

Public spending on health was 3.1 percent of GDP in 2001. These expenditures finance a state-run medical plan that provides free health care to all citizens, even those in remote areas—these citizens are served by flying doctors and mobile clinics. Tropical diseases such as

malaria have largely been eradicated in Brunei, although there were 58 cases of tuberculosis per 100,000 people in 2002. HIV/AIDS, of epidemic dimensions elsewhere in the world, has not made an impact in Brunei due in large part to social restrictions. In 2003 there were fewer than 200 people living with HIV/AIDS. With almost 99 percent of births attended by physicians, the infant mortality rate in 2004 was 13 deaths per 1,000 live births. Immunization rates are also high for infants: 99 percent of one-year-old children were immunized for measles and tuberculosis. As of 2004 there was 1 physician for every 1,000 people.

Health

Number of Physicians: 336
 Number of Dentists: 48
 Number of Nurses: 892
 Number of Pharmacists: 90
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 101
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 13.05
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 37
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 3.1
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 453
 HIV Infected % of adults: < 0.1
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 99
 Measles: 99
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: —
 Access to Improved Water Source %: —

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Brunei cuisine is influenced by the nation's ethnic makeup; Malaysian and Chinese are the main fare. Food stalls offer Malay favorites, such as *satay* (barbecued meat on a skewer) and local dishes prepared with curry or coconut milk. Whole roasted chicken and grilled fish are also popular. Food on the whole tends to be spicy. Rice or noodles are eaten with most meals. *Ambuyat*, a starchy substitute for rice made from sago flour and served with hot sauce, is a local specialty.

Various Islamic food restrictions, such as the prohibition on pork, influence the diet. Alcohol is not consumed; typical drinks include tea and fruit juices.

In general in Brunei, food is plentiful and malnutrition uncommon.

Food and Nutrition

Food Supply as % of FAO Requirements: 127
 Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 147.2
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg:
 166.3

STATUS OF WOMEN

In accordance with Koranic precepts, women are denied equal status with men in a number of important areas, such as divorce, inheritance, and custody of children. Under the Brunei Nationality Act, citizenship was transmitted through males only. Female citizens who were married to foreigners or bore children by foreign fathers could not transmit citizenship to their children, even when their children were born in Brunei.

Such laws are changing, however. In 1999 the government passed the Emergency (Married Women) Order, which elevates women's rights, putting them on a more equal footing with men. According to the legislation, the husband and wife shall separately have the rights to engage in any trade or profession or in social activities, and the wife shall also have the right to use her own surname. In October 2002 a nationality reform law was passed allowing women to pass on their nationality to their children.

The Council of Women of Brunei Darussalam attempts to enhance the status of women in all fields, especially in education, economy, welfare, and social culture.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: —
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men age 15-24: 1.0
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 41.7

WORK

As of 1999 there were an estimated 143,400 workers in the Brunei labor force. This figure included members of the military and foreign workers, who make up an estimated 40 percent of the workforce. Guest workers include skilled technicians from the West employed in the oil and natural gas industry as well as a large number of unskilled laborers who do the work Bruneians do not want to perform, such as domestic service and heavy labor. Many guest workers are illegal aliens from neighboring countries. In 2003 the government began a crackdown on undocumented workers.

The biggest proportion of workers, 48 percent, was employed by the government in 1999. That same year the oil and natural gas industries, construction, and service sector employed 42 percent of workers. Fishing, forestry, and agriculture accounted for the remaining 10 percent.

In 2001 the estimated unemployment rate was 10 percent; rates of 25 percent have been recorded for those leaving school, however.

Unions, though legal, are not a factor in Brunei; they are neither part of the cultural life of the nation nor

encouraged by the government. Only 5 percent of the oil industry, for example, is unionized. Child labor laws prohibit employment for those under 16. The five-day workweek is limited to 48 hours. Guest workers are not covered by such labor laws, however, and are thus often exposed to employer exploitation.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 143,400
 Female Participation Rate %: 36.6
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishing: 10
 Production of Oil, Natural Gas, Services, and Construction: 42
 Government: 48
 Unemployment %: 10

EDUCATION

Schooling is free, universal, and compulsory for 11 years, from ages five to 16, covering six years of primary school and five years of lower secondary school. All children enter the government school system at age five at the kindergarten or preschool level. Government primary schools use Malay up to the fourth year and become bilingual (English and Malay) thereafter for three years. There is a national promotion examination at the end of the last year of primary school. Those who fail this examination are automatically promoted after a repeat year. At the end of the third secondary year, students take a junior certificate of education examination that qualifies them to pursue a further two-year course leading to the Brunei Cambridge General Certificate of Education (GCE, O level). Those who pass this examination proceed to the sixth form center to follow another two-year course leading to the Brunei Cambridge Advanced General Certificate of Education (GCE, A level), which qualifies them for university entrance.

Schools operate over five-day weeks, with Fridays and Sundays off. The school year is divided into three terms, with a total of 202 school days. The longest break is during the month of Ramadan.

Islamic religious education is part of the curriculum in all educational institutions, including private schools, and religious knowledge is a subject in public examinations up to the GCE, A level. In 1966 the first Arabic secondary school was established; it was followed by the Religious Teachers' Training College. In May 1985 the University of Brunei Darussalam was founded, with two faculties, arts and education, and an enrollment of 200. Most of the staff are Western expatriates.

In general, the educational profile of the country is healthy. The literacy rate for 2002 was 93.9 percent. Between 1999 and 2001 public expenditures on education made up 9.1 percent of total government expenditures. In

2000–01, 93 percent of children reached grade five. That same year 95 percent of children made the transition from primary to secondary school. The pupil to teacher ratio in primary school is a very low 13 to 1.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 93.9
 Male %: 96.3
 Female %: 91.4
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 13.4
 First Level: Primary schools: 170
 Teachers: 3,515
 Students: 44,882
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 12.8
 Net Enrollment Ratio: —
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 37
 Teachers: 3,464
 Students: 36,631
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 11.2
 Net Enrollment Ratio: —
 Third Level: Institutions: 4
 Teachers: 485
 Students: 4,418
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 13.0
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: —

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The Brunei Association for Science Education was begun in 1997 to improve science education by holding professional meetings, seminars, symposia, conferences, and scientific visits. Computer courses are organized for science educators. The Ministry of Industry and Primary Resources, through its Department of Agriculture and the Agricultural Research and Development Division, conducts agricultural research. Foreign technicians are generally relied upon for oil industry technology.

The University of Brunei Darussalam has a faculty of science, and the Technological Institute of Brunei, located in Bandar Seri Begawan, and the Jefri Bolkiah College of Engineering in Kuala Belair, offer engineering courses. Between 1994 and 1997, 6 percent of all college and higher education students were enrolled in science, math, and engineering courses.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million persons: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: 16.17
 Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

A main daily newspaper is *Borneo Bulletin*, which is published in English. *Media Permata* is a Malay-language

daily. With the rise of the Internet, several online news sites have developed, including *Brunei Direct*. Additionally, Singapore's *Straits Times* is widely distributed in the country.

The government occasionally suspends the issue of offending foreign newspapers or periodicals and expels nonresident correspondents. More serious regarding press freedom was legislation in 2001 requiring newspapers to register with the government and providing prison terms for editors or journalists who publish what the government deems to be "false news." Magazine articles with Christian themes have been censored. Radio Television Brunei broadcasts radio programs in English, Malay, Gurkha, and Chinese and television programs in Malay and English. Educational television was introduced in 1978 and color television in 1975.

In 2002 there were 35,000 Internet users, though the primary server is state owned. There were also 137,000 cellular telephone users in 2002.

Media

Newspapers and Periodicals: —
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: —
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets 000: 205
 per 1,000: 637

CULTURE

Brunei culture is in part a product of its history, in part an outgrowth of its contemporary politico-religious stance. Its Malaysian roots include influences from animism, Hinduism, and Islam. The country's long association with England is evident in language. Historical artifacts can be seen at the country's Arts and Handicraft Centre, with examples of boat making, silversmithing, bronze tooling, cloth weaving, and mat and basket weaving. The Brunei Museum and the Malay Technology Museum house further examples of craftsmanship, including Malay weaponry, wood carvings, traditional games, traditional musical instruments, artifacts dealing with *silat*, the traditional art of self defense, and decorative items for women.

Malaysian musical and dance traditions were also strong and were used during special religious and social occasions. These traditions are similar to those found among the Malays of Indonesia and Malaysia and include the *gamelan*, with its orchestra of drums, gongs, bamboo flutes, and xylophone, as well as music that demonstrates closer ties to the Middle East and Islamic South Asia. Dance would accompany such classic forms of music; dances included those used during courtship or to en-

tain the sultan, trance dances, and dance dramas. Examples of folk music and dance are the *jipin*, performed by six men and women and accompanied by instruments that include the *dombak*, or hand drum, and the *rebana*, or tambourine; the *adai-adai*, sung by fishermen while they fished; and the *benari*, or *joget baju putih*, danced during various festivals and performed by three men and three women.

Old Malay society is described in literature such as *Sejarah Melayu* (The Malay chronicle), a history of the kingdoms of the Malay Peninsula, *Hikayat Hang Tuah* (Hang Tuah's life story), and *Hikayat Abdullah* (Abdullah's life story). While not specifically Bruneian, this literature is indicative of Malay civilization in general.

These folkloric traditions have largely been lost in modern Brunei, which is dominated by Islam, both as a way of life and as the state's ideology and philosophy. The festivals of that religion determine much of the contemporary culture of the country as well as the architecture.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 1
Volumes: 97,000
Registered borrowers: 1,853
Museums Number: 3
Annual Attendance: 112,000
Cinema Gross Receipts: —
Number of Cinemas: —
Seating Capacity: —
Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Animistic beliefs informed early Malay society before Islam became a dominant influence. Prominent among the folklore was a belief in spirits. Locations had hosts of spirits, from the guardian spirit, or *penunggu*, to the gnome, or *jembalong*. A tigers with one leg shorter than the other might be a *penunggu*. Other animals were the manifestations of river or ocean spirits. A person coming into a new locale would ask permission of that spirit for such entry or even bring a basket of offerings. Amulets are still worn by some villagers to ward off evil spirits; these range from hairpins to wristbands. Such belief systems have largely been lost in modern Brunei.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Television and video are popular in Brunei, and most households have home entertainment centers. Concerts are generally organized by private companies or embassies of foreign countries. The nightlife in Brunei's cities is very low-key in comparison to other countries. Alcohol

consumption is banned, though non-Muslims coming into the country are allowed a limited amount. Cinemas are also popular, though the selection of films, as with the content of the state-run television, is controlled by the government.

For the wealthy, there are numerous private recreational clubs for yachting, golf, horseback riding, and tennis. Bowling is a popular form of recreation in cities, and jogging has also grown in popularity.

ETIQUETTE

Bruneians shake by only lightly touching the other's hand and then bringing the hand back to the chest. It is generally not customary to shake hands with members of the opposite sex. Pointing with a finger is considered impolite; the thumb of the right hand (with the four fingers folded beneath it) is used to indicate something. To attract someone's attention, the whole hand is waved with the palm facing downward. Other hand gestures often have vastly different meanings from those in Western countries. For example, smacking the fist of one's right hand into the left palm is a very rude gesture in Brunei. Gifts and particularly food should only be passed with the right hand, although it is acceptable to use the left hand under the right wrist for support.

When visiting a mosque, it is necessary to remove one's shoes. One should not pass in front of a person at prayer or touch the Koran. Shoes should also be taken off when entering homes. Public displays of affection between people of the opposite sex are discouraged, even between husbands and wives.

FAMILY LIFE

Family is at the heart of life in Brunei, for both the Malay majority and the Chinese minority. While families tend to be nuclear among Malays, the extended family is more common in the Chinese community.

In the Malay community women in public have subservient roles, sitting apart from men at the mosque and not mixing socially with men. However, at home the men often take part in raising the children.

In the Chinese community women also play a key role in domestic life, taking care of the house and of older relatives. In contemporary society, though, more and more Chinese women in Brunei have professions and hire foreign workers to take care of household chores.

Very different traditions are in effect in the two communities regarding household pets. Chinese keep dogs, cats, and birds as pets; dogs in particular serve a useful purpose as watchdogs. Muslim Malays keep cats and birds, but dogs are considered "unclean."

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Brunei's population is made up mostly of Malaysians of South Asian descent and Chinese. Dress is a mixture of both these cultures and of Western influences.

Traditional Chinese clothing included the tight-fitting, slit-skirted dress, called the *cheongsam*, for women, while for men the *yi fu* was traditional. However, contemporary Chinese wear Western clothing on a daily basis, saving such traditional wear for weddings and other festive occasions. Red is a lucky color; black is reserved for funerals. Older Chinese men often wear baggy shorts and T-shirts or tank tops for the warm weather.

Muslim Malays in Brunei tend to wear more traditional clothing. Men typically wear pants and a long-sleeved shirt called the *baju kurung*. This sometimes has a high collar, and then it is called the *cekak musang* or *teluk belanga*. This shirt is tucked in, left loose down to the knee, or sometimes tied at the waist. Men also typically wear a *peci* cap and sandals. A sarong and a long veil is typical for Muslim women. Some Malays in Brunei wear Western clothing, but not shorts, skirts, or sleeveless tops.

SPORTS

Soccer is the most popular fan sport in the country. The national team took the Malaysia Cup in 1999. The local martial arts variant, *silat*, is also popular. National teams traditionally take medals in this sport. Also popular are *sepak takraw*, a game played with a rattan ball, *gasing*, played with highly polished large metal tops, and competitive kite flying. Badminton is another popular sport; Brunei has hosted several world championship tournaments. The country also hosts a major golfing event each year, the Brunei Open, not to be confused with the annual chess tournament of the same name.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1984** Brunei becomes an independent nation in accordance with its 1979 treaty with the United Kingdom. The Legislative Council is suspended.
- 1985** The Brunei National Democratic Party (BNDP) is formed.
- 1986** The Brunei National Unity Party (BNUP) is formed after splitting with the BNDP.
- 1988** The BNDP is dissolved after asking for political reforms.
- 1990** The outlawed Brunei People's Party writes to Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah from Malaysia demanding democracy for the kingdom; the sultan promptly issues warnings against criticism of the government, religion, or himself.

- 1991** As a result of pressure from the British government, the sultan releases six political prisoners who had been detained since the failed coup attempt in 1962.
- 1996** Brunei has successfully limited its economic dependence on oil revenue, with nearly two-thirds of GNP coming from other diversified sources.
- 1998** Sultan Bolkiah's eldest son, Prince al-Muhtadee Billah, becomes heir apparent. The sultan's brother, Prince Jefri Bolkiah, is involved in a financial scandal involving the collapse of the multibillion dollar conglomerate Amedeo. The prince goes into exile in England.
- 1999** Oil prices climb, helping ease the financial crunch brought on by the overall Asian downturn and the collapse of Amedeo.
- 2000** Prince Jefri Bolkiah returns from exile to face charges stemming from the misuse of \$15 billion of state funds. Oil prices reach their highest levels in 10 years.
- 2001** New press laws go into effect requiring newspapers to obtain publishing licenses each year from the government. Under the new legislation, editors and journalists also face jail terms if they are found guilty of publishing "false news." The sultan is listed by *Forbes* magazine as one of the 15 wealthiest individuals in the world, with \$16 billion.
- 2002** Two new cabinet ministers, one for development and the other for health, are chosen by the sultan.
- 2003** In February Sultan Bolkiah divorces his second wife.
- 2004** In September the sultan reinstates the Legislative Council, two decades after it was disbanded. Its 21 members are all chosen by the sultan. The December 26 tsunami, which takes over 250,000 lives in South Asia, does little damage in Brunei.
- 2005** In January, the government pledges \$6 million for tsunami relief.

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Brunei. *Brunei Statistical Yearbook; Summary Tables of the Population Census 2001; Brunei Darussalam Population and Housing Census 2001*

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- CIA World Factbook: Brunei
<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/bx.html>
- Government of Brunei Darussalam Official Web site
<http://www.brunei.gov.bn/>

BULGARIA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Bulgaria (Republika Bulgariya)

ABBREVIATION

BG

CAPITAL

Sofia

HEAD OF STATE

President Georgi Purvanov (from 2002)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Sergey Stanishev (from 2005)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Democracy

POPULATION

7,450,349 (2005)

AREA

110,910 sq km (42,823 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Bulgars

LANGUAGE

Bulgarian

RELIGION

Bulgarian Orthodox

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Lev

NATIONAL FLAG

Tricolor of white, green, and red horizontal stripes, from top to bottom

NATIONAL EMBLEM

Two lions rampant supporting a shield with another lion rampant on it; the shield is topped by a crown. At the bottom is the national motto, "Unity makes power," in Bulgarian.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"Proudly Rise the Balkan Peaks"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day), March 3 (Liberation Day); May 1–2 (Labor Days), May 24 (Education and Culture Day), December 24–25 (Christmas)

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

October 5, 1908

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

July 12, 1991

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Located in the Balkan Peninsula, Bulgaria occupies an area of 110,910 sq km (42,823 sq mi). Lying on the Black Sea, the country shares borders with Romania, Turkey, Greece, and Yugoslavia.

First called Serdica by the Thracians when it was founded 2,000 years ago, Sofia, the capital, stands on the direct trading route from Belgrade to Istanbul. Other important cities include Plovdiv, Varna, and Burgas, which are Bulgaria's principal Black Sea links with international maritime commerce.

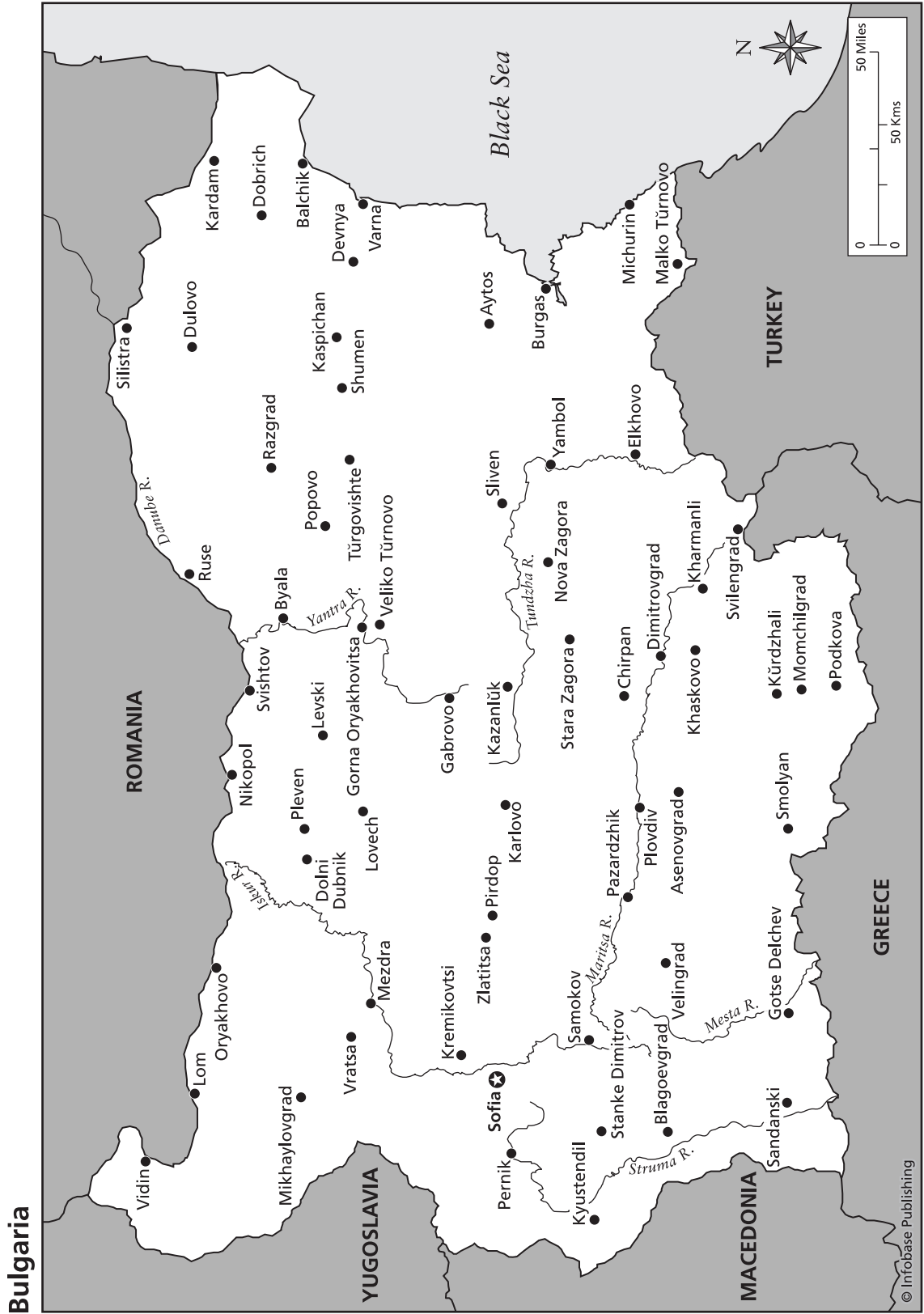
Bulgaria contains four principal land regions: the Rodopi (the Rhodope Mountains), the Balkan Mountains, the Danubian Plateau, and the Central Thracian Plain.

The Rodopi, in southernmost Bulgaria, contain the country's tallest peak, Mount Musala, 2,925 m (9,596 ft), and topographically dominate the entire Balkan Peninsula.

Extending 595 km (370 mi) west to east, the Stara Planina (Balkan Mountains) enclose the Sredna Gora range—including the Shipka Pass (famous as the site of the battle between Russians and Turks that led to Bulgarian emancipation). The Stara Planina are also the location of the Valley of the Roses, which produces the attar used in perfumes.

The Danubian Plateau contains Bulgaria's most fertile farmland and extends from the Yugoslav border to the Black Sea.

The southern slopes of the Stara Planina and the Sredna Gora give way to the Thracian Plain. Roughly triangular in shape, the plain originates at a point east of



the mountains ringing the Sofia basin and broadens as it fans eastward to the Black Sea.

Geography

Area sq km: 110,910; sq mi 42,823
World Rank: 102nd
Land Boundaries, km: Greece 494; Macedonia 148; Romania 608; Serbia and Montenegro 318; Turkey 240
Coastline, km: 354
Elevation Extremes meters:
Lowest: Black Sea 0
Highest: Musala 2,925
Land Use %
Arable land: 40.02
Permanent Crops: 1.92
Forest: 33.4
Other: 24.66

Population of Principal Cities (2001)

Burgas	193,316
Dobrich	100,379
Pleven	122,149
Plovdiv	340,638
Ruse	162,128
Sliven	100,695
Sofia	1,096,389
Stara Zagora	143,989
Varna	314,539

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

For a small country, Bulgaria has an unusually varied and complex climate, with six or more climatic zones. The north is characterized by hot summers and cold winters, with rainfall well distributed throughout the year. The Stara Planina represents the southern limits of this zone. The Rodopi mark the northern limits of Bulgaria's Mediterranean climate, with mild, damp winters and hot, dry summers.

The area lying between these zones, including the Thracian Plain, has a climate characterized by long summers and high humidity. Average temperatures and precipitation are erratic. For Bulgaria as a whole, rainfall averages about 635 mm (25 in), with higher elevations receiving 1,016 mm (40 in) or more.

Throughout the uplands the many valley basins frequently experience temperature inversions, resulting in stagnant air. During winter there are many windy days and violent local storms, particularly along the Danube. The hard-blowing, hot, dry Black Wind wreaks havoc on crops. It gets its name from the quantities of dust it carries, which often darken the skies.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature
January: 32°F to 36°F
July: 72°F to 75°F
Average Rainfall: 25 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

The animal and plant life in Bulgaria is a mixture of that of much of central Europe and of the steppe, or plains, especially in the northeast and the southeast of the country.

The forests and broadleaf woods of the flatlands have been mostly cleared for farmland, but wooded areas are found in the Balkan mountains—both deciduous forests at lower elevations and evergreens higher up. Wild fruits, blueberries, raspberries, briars, strawberries and mushrooms are found in the forests. Altogether the flora of Bulgaria includes about 12,360 species, of which about 250 are native to the country and are found nowhere else in the world. These include the Rila primrose, Balkan violet, Bulgarian blackberry, and Rhodopean tulip.

Bulgaria's fauna comprises 13,000 species, which is 14 percent of the total number of listed animal species in Europe. With the clearing of forestland, many of the wild species of larger mammals were greatly reduced in number. However, wildcats, elk, bears, and foxes are still found in remote areas, and squirrels and small rodents are plentiful. Pelicans, deer, wild goats, quails, and pheasants inhabit reserves and hunting grounds. Overfishing and pollution have reduced the number and variety of fish in the Danube and the Black Sea.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 7,450,349	
World Rank: 94th	
Density per sq km: 70.8	
% of annual growth (1999–2003): –0.8	
Male %: 48.2	
Female %: 51.8	
Urban %: 67.2	
Age Distribution: %	0–14: 14.4
	15–64: 68.5
	65 and over: 17.1
Population 2025: 6,258,000	
Birth Rate per 1,000: 9.65	
Death Rate per 1,000: 14.25	
Rate of Natural Increase %: –0.5	
Total Fertility Rate: 1.37	
Expectation of Life (years): Males 68.14	
	Females 75.59
Marriage Rate per 1,000: 3.7	
Divorce Rate per 1,000: 1.3	
Average Size of Households: 3.0	
Induced Abortions: 50,824	

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Bulgaria is characterized by a remarkable ethnic, linguistic, and religious homogeneity. Some 85 percent of the population is Bulgarian. The most significant ethnic mi-

norities are Turks, constituting 8.5 percent; Roma (Gypsies), 2.5 percent; and Macedonians, 2.5 percent. The remainder is made up of Greeks, Romanians, Armenians, and others.

The Turks and the Pomaks (as the Islamized Bulgarians are known) represent the surviving elements of four centuries of Turkish rule, and their numbers have been steadily reduced by emigration to Turkey. In 1950–51 alone 150,000 were expelled from Bulgaria. An effort by the Zhivkov regime in the late 1980s to Bulgarianize the Turks resulted in protests by Turkey and the mass emigration of Turks to Turkey. But many of the migrants later returned, as they found living conditions in Turkey more intolerable than at home. The Turks pose no serious problem to the Bulgarian government, and the Turks' cultural and other rights are guaranteed by the constitution.

Macedonians also are not recognized as a separate entity. They are considered to be ethnic Bulgarians and their language a dialect of Bulgarian. They live predominantly in the southwest. Romanians fall into two groups: the Romanian-speaking Vlachs of the northwest and the Greek-speaking Karakatchans—nomadic mountain shepherds of Romanian descent. Another hybrid community is the Gagauzi of the northeast, who are of Turkish origin but follow the Orthodox faith.

LANGUAGES

Bulgarian, the national language, is classified as a Slavonic language of the southern group, which also includes Macedonian, Serbo-Croatian, and Slovenian. Old Bulgarian, also known as Old Church Slavonic, was the first Slavic language to acquire an alphabet, in the ninth century. The alphabet, created by Sts. Cyril and Methodius, two Greek missionaries, was based partly on Greek and was accordingly named Cyrillic. Both the grammar and the vocabulary of modern Bulgarian show the influence of non-Slavonic languages. The minorities also speak their respective languages.

RELIGIONS

By the second century Christianity had become established in the area that is now Bulgaria. The Bulgars, who conquered the land in about 670, were converted when Boris, their king, was baptized by the Greek clergy. The introduction of the Cyrillic alphabet was a landmark in ecclesiastical history, enabling language, culture, and religion to converge. In 889 Boris abdicated to enter a monastery, while his son Simeon left a monastery to ascend the throne. Slavonic was substituted for Greek in the Bulgar liturgy. The Bulgar church was declared autocephalous, with its own patriarch. In 1018 the Bulgarian kingdom fell to Byzantine rulers, who suppressed the Bulgarian

patriarchate. Bulgaria regained its independence in 1186, and the patriarchate was reestablished in 1235. In 1396 Bulgaria fell before a third wave of Muslim invaders, the Ottoman Turks. For the next 500 years the Bulgarian church was effectively silenced.

Prior to World War II and the Communist takeover the Bulgarian Orthodox Church claimed a membership of 85 percent of the national population, but in the ensuing years this percentage dropped to below 20 percent. However, with the fall of Communism and the establishment of the republic, Orthodoxy made a comeback in the country. According to a 2001 estimate about 83 percent of the population belonged at least nominally to the Bulgarian (Eastern) Orthodox Church, which is now considered the traditional religion of the state.

The Armenian Apostolic Church has 12 congregations in the country. Protestantism was introduced by American Congregationalist missionaries in 1856, American Methodists in 1857, and Russian Baptists in 1865. From the ninth to the 14th centuries the Roman Catholic Church made repeated efforts to bring Bulgaria into its fold, but except for a brief 30-year union these efforts were not fruitful. The majority of Bulgarian Catholics are descendants of the Bogomils, converted to Catholicism by the Franciscans in the 17th century. In 1926 an exarchate of Sofia was created for Catholics of the Byzantine rite, who number a few thousand and who are found in Sofia, Plovdiv, and along the Greek border. Immediately following World War II the church lost all its property, as it became the target of the new Communist regime's hostility. All foreign religious personnel and priests were expelled, and many were arrested, sentenced to life imprisonment, or killed.

Religious Affiliations

Bulgarian Orthodox	6,154,000
Muslim (mostly Sunni)	909,000
Other	387,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Bulgarian history begins when the Bulgars, a central Asian Turkish tribe, overran what is present-day Bulgaria in the seventh century. They mixed with the Slavs, who had settled in the region earlier, and created a common polity. From this amalgam came the First Bulgarian Kingdom. In the ninth century Bulgaria was powerful enough to challenge Constantinople. Twice in this period Bulgars controlled areas of Greece, Turkey, Yugoslavia, Romania, and even Russia. In 924, after Serbia fell under Bulgarian rule, Simeon (893–927) claimed the title of czar. With territorial expansion came a resurgence of arts and letters, making Simeon's reign the Golden Age of Bulgaria. Toward the end of the 10th century the First Bulgarian

Kingdom vanished. From 1018 to 1185 all of Bulgaria was under Byzantine rule.

By the 13th century Bulgaria had become the largest state in the Balkans. Again, as in the time of Simeon, arts and culture flourished and reached a state of excellence.

Meanwhile the Turks, the nemesis of Christian Europe, had begun to cross the Bosphorus and advance on Thrace, Macedonia, and parts of Bulgaria. In 1371 they captured Sofia and in 1388 beat the Serbs. By 1396 all of Bulgaria was under Turkish rule.

The 482 years of Turkish rule were the darkest in Bulgarian history. Turkish rule was characterized by an enormous capacity for brutality and sustained by a religious and political system that institutionalized such aggression.

It was not until the 19th century that organized resistance to Turkish oppression began to show results. By then Ottoman power was in full retreat, and large parts of eastern Europe had already been liberated. In 1872 the Bulgarian Revolutionary Central Committee was formed in Bucharest. As revolutionary fervor grew, the Bulgarians turned to Russia for help.

The precursor to Bulgaria's liberation in 1878 was an unsuccessful uprising in 1876. Thousands of Bulgarians were killed in April that year. The savagery of these reprisals induced the Russians to invade Bulgaria soon after the Russo-Turkish War of 1877 and liquidate the Turkish army. In these battles for Bulgaria's liberation, the Russians lost over 200,000 soldiers.

Following the Russian intervention, Bulgaria was granted the status of an autonomous principality; complete independence was not established until 1908. However, the Congress of Berlin in 1878 took away from Bulgaria parts of Macedonia and Thrace that it had been granted by the Treaty of San Stefano. This set the tone for an irredentist foreign policy that led to Bulgaria's disastrous alliances with Germany in both world wars.

The postindependence leaders established a democratic government and a constitutional monarchy. Within four years, in 1912, Bulgaria was once again embroiled in war, this time essentially over Macedonia.

Macedonia remained a site of contention for Bulgaria, which was determined to regain the land that had so often escaped its grasp. Of all the Balkan states, Bulgaria was the only one to join the Central Powers in World War I, ironically siding with its former oppressor Turkey against its friend and benefactor Russia. It emerged from the war defeated and in a worse political position.

The interwar period was one of political unrest and Macedonian terrorism.

Bulgaria entered World War II on the Axis side and again suffered defeat. The war ended for Bulgaria when on September 4, 1944, Soviet troops entered Sofia. On October 28, 1944, an armistice was signed between Bulgaria and the Soviet Union by which the former surrendered all territories gained since 1941.

In 1944 the monarchy was rejected by the majority of Bulgarians, and a People's Republic was formally established in 1947 under the premiership of Georgi Dimitrov, the "Father of Bulgarian Communism." Dimitrov died in 1949 and Communist rule was consolidated under the successive regimes of Vŭlko Chervenkov and Anton Yugov until 1954 and thereafter until 1989 by Todor Zhivkov. The collapse of Eastern European Communism did not bear an impact on Bulgaria until November 3, 1989, when demonstrators marched in Sofia in the country's first prodemocracy rally. One week later Zhivkov was replaced as party general secretary by Petŭr Mladenov who later succeeded as head of state. In the first multiparty elections held in 1990, however, Bulgaria bucked the trend by reelecting the Communist Party to power. Nevertheless, Mladenov resigned and was succeeded in office by Zhelyu Zhelev. In 1991 a new democratic constitution was adopted. In 1996 Petŭr Stoyanov, the opposition candidate, won the presidency. In 1997 a deepening economic crisis led to mass protests and the demand for early elections. In general elections held on April 19 the United Democratic Forces (ODC) won 137 out of 240 seats, and its leader, Ivan Kostov, became prime minister. He promised to fight organized crime and corruption and implement rigorous economic reforms. His pro-Western government supported North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) action against Serbia, marking a departure from earlier pro-Serb policies.

In 2001 the National Movement for Simeon II (NSDV), the party of Bulgaria's former king, Simeon II, won a majority of seats in general elections. Simeon II, also known in Bulgaria as Simeon Borisov Saksokoburg-gotski, or abroad as Simeon of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, became prime minister in a coalition government with the Movement for Rights and Freedoms, a party primarily representing Bulgaria's ethnic Turkish minority. In so doing Bulgaria became the first country in history to elect its former king to head of government. The former king promised to restore the country's flagging economy in a little over two years with a mixed policy of privatization, easing of the business tax burden, and restriction of government involvement in the economy. He also promised to eradicate organized crime and corruption, stumbling blocks to economic recovery. The Socialist Party candidate Georgi Purvanov won the presidential elections in November and was sworn into office in 2002.

The government pursued reformist policies in 2002. By 2003, however, there were signs that the public had begun to lose faith in Simeon. In local elections held in October and November, Simeon's party won only 7 percent of the votes (down from the 40 percent it had won in 2001). Despite the weak showing of the NSDV, however, no other party was able to win a clear majority, and Simeon's government held on to power until the regularly scheduled general elections in 2005 in which Socialist Party leader Sergey Stanishev was elected prime minister.

In 2003, with a seat on the UN Security Council, Bulgaria proved to be in a pivotal position regarding the U.S.-led war against Iraq. The Bulgarians supported the war and sent a contingent of 500 peacekeepers. Organized crime has continued to be a major domestic problem, despite government promises to eradicate it. In 2004 the nation became a part of NATO. Membership in the European Union is expected in 2007.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

Head of State

1946–47	Vasil Petrov Kolarov (chairman of the provisional presidency)
1947–50	Mincho Kolev Neychev (chairman of the Presidium of the National Assembly)
1950–58	Georgi Pûrvanov Damyanov (chairman)
1958	Nikolay Georgiev Ivanov (chairman)
1958–64	Dimitûr Ganev Vûrbanov (chairman)
1964	Nikolay Georgiev Ivanov (chairman)
1964–71	Georgi Traykov Girovski (chairman)
1971–89	Todor Khristov Zhivkov (chairman of the State Council)
1989–90	Petûr Toshev Mladenov (chairman)
1990	Petûr Toshev Mladenov (president)
1990	Stanko Todorov Georgiev (president)
1990	Nikolay Todorov Todorov (president)
1990–97	Zhelyu Mitev Zhelev (president)
1997–2002	Petûr Stefanov Stoyanov (president)
2002–	Georgi Sedefchov Purvanov (president)

Prime Minister

1944–46	Kimon Gheorgiev Stoyanov
1946–49	Georgi Mihaylov Dimitrov
1949–50	Vasil Petrov Kolarov
1950–56	Vûlko Velov Chervenkov
1956–62	Anton Tanev Yugov
1962–71	Todor Khristov Zhivkov
1971–81	Stanko Todorov Georgiev
1981–86	Grisha Stanchev Filipov
1986–90	Georgi Ivanov Atanasov
1990	Andrey Karlov Lukanov
1990–91	Dimitûr Popov
1991–92	Filip Dimitrov Dimitrov
1992–94	Lyuben Borisov Berov
1994–95	Reneta Ivanova Indzhova
1995–97	Zhan Vasilev Videnov
1997	Stefan Antonov Sofiyanski
1997–2001	Ivan Yordanov Kostov
2001–2005	Simeon Borisov Sakskoburgotski
2005–	Sergey Stanishev

CONSTITUTION

The theoretical foundation of the state is the 1991 constitution. The constitution established the basic institutions

of government: the National Assembly and the Council of Ministers at the national level and the municipal councils at the local level.

The 1991 constitution is a far cry from Bulgaria's first constitution, the Turnovo Constitution of 1879, which was considered by its contemporaries one of the most liberal in the world. The parliament was supreme, and the king was bound by its laws. Even after the Communist takeover the Turnovo Constitution remained the charter of government until a new constitution was adopted in 1947.

Known as the Dimitrov Constitution, after Georgi Dimitrov, who helped to draft it, the constitution of 1947 remained in force for 24 years. It established the National Assembly as the supreme organ of state power and the Council of Ministers as the supreme executive power. However, in actual practice the Presidium of the National Assembly was empowered with legislative, executive, and judicial authority. Following the Soviet model, the first secretary of the Bulgarska Komunisticheska Partiya (BKP, Bulgarian Communist Party) was also chairman of the Council of Ministers and, as such, the country's prime minister.

With the 1971 constitution the State Council became a more powerful body than the Presidium of the National Assembly, such that it replaced and overshadowed the Council of Ministers as well.

Following the collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe in 1989–90, Bulgaria began to dismantle the constitutional structures of the authoritarian state. First, the Communist Party was stripped of its monopoly of power, called "the dominant role" in the constitution; the Communist Party lost its control over the police and the military, and the State Council was dissolved. Finally, multiple parties were permitted to stand for free national and local elections.

The 1991 constitution defines Bulgaria as a parliamentary republic. The supreme legislative body is the National Assembly (the parliament). The president is the head of state, elected through direct and secret ballot for a five-year term of office. The prime minister was made the most important government official. The Council of Ministers is the supreme executive body for home and foreign affairs.

PARLIAMENT

The National Assembly (Narodno Sobraniye) is a 240-member unicameral legislature, with members elected for terms of four years. Convened at least three times a year, its sessions are brief. The National Assembly has permanent commissions, the functions of some of which overlap those of the ministries.

The basic election law was adopted in 1953 and has been amended many times since then. The constitution

extends the right to vote to every Bulgarian citizen who has reached 18. Members of both national and local representative bodies are elected by direct and secret ballot on the basis of universal, equal, and direct suffrage.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Until 1989 the only authorized political parties were the Bulgarian Communist Party and the Bulgarian Agrarian National Union, which formed the core of the Fatherland Front. The political landscape changed in the 1990s with the formation of numerous political parties on both the left and right. The government at that time consisted of a loose coalition of democratic parties, known as United Democratic Forces, which consisted of three parties: the Union of Democratic Forces, the People's Union (itself an alliance of the Bulgarian Agrarian National Union and the Democratic Party), and the Bulgarian Socialist Party (BSP). The main opposition bloc was the Democratic Left, a coalition of the Bulgarian Socialist Party (formerly the Bulgarian Communist Party), the Ecoglasnost Political Club, the Bulgarian Agrarian National Union, the Alliance for National Salvation (an alliance of several smaller groups, including the Movement for Rights and Freedoms, representing the Turkish minority), the New Choice Liberal Union, and the Green Party. There are hundreds of smaller parties, most of them having the name Democratic in their title, such as the Liberal Democratic Union, Democratic Alternative for the Republic, the Christian Democratic Union, and the Turkish Democratic Party. The National Movement for Simeon II, which elected the former king as prime minister in 2001, officially became a political party in 2002 as the NSDV, with Simeon II as its leader.

As of 2004 the strongest parties were the BSP, the Democrats for a Strong Bulgaria, the NSDV, the Movement for Rights and Freedom, the Union of Democratic Forces, and the Union of Free Democrats. Some of these parties work in coalition.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Bulgaria is divided into nine administrative regions and smaller municipalities. The municipality is the primary territorial administrative unit, being a legal entity where local self-government is exercised through a municipal council wherein members are elected for four-year terms.

LEGAL SYSTEM

Bulgarian civil and criminal law is based on Roman law. The highest judicial organ is the Supreme Court. It is a

court of original as well as appellate jurisdiction and is organized into civil, criminal, and military divisions. The chairman is appointed for a seven-year term by the president.

Below the Supreme Court are 28 regional and district courts. Lower court judges are elected by their respective municipal councils for five-year terms and are subject to recall by the voters.

The prosecutor general and senior judges are elected by the Supreme Judicial Council, established in 1992. There is also a Constitutional Court to review the constitutionality of laws, with 12 justices appointed or elected for nine-year terms.

The maximum term of imprisonment is 20 years, but the death penalty may be allowed for exceptionally dangerous crimes. In 1996, 13,097 crimes were reported, of which 227 were murders. In 2003 out of about 33,000 criminal cases, 171 were homicides. In that same year the prison population was about 20,000.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Although Bulgaria is now a parliamentary democracy, some vestiges of former human rights abuses have survived. These include excessive use of force by the police. The judiciary continues to struggle with problems of antiquated procedures, corruption, and a heavy backlog of cases. Organized crime has some influence on the prosecutors' offices. Print journalism is generally free, but the government exerts unduly heavy influence on the electronic media. Eastern Orthodox Christianity is designated as the "traditional religion," and other religions and sects, like Jehovah's Witnesses, face some intolerance. Although the constitution guarantees protection against all forms of discrimination, Roma (Gypsies) are also often discriminated against. The lot of the Gypsies has been a cause for concern internationally. They mostly live in substandard housing on the outskirts of cities and have very high unemployment rates and relatively short life expectancies. Interethnic tensions also exist between Bulgarians and the minority Turks, and there are reports that ethnic Macedonians have been denied the right to hold public gatherings.

Religious freedom is guaranteed, but the government has made it difficult for what are called "nontraditional" religions to get registration permits allowing them to be active. Religions considered "traditional" in Bulgaria are the Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Islamic, and Jewish faiths.

FOREIGN POLICY

Between 1945 and 1990 Bulgaria's foreign policy was completely subordinate to that of the Soviet Union. Todor

Zhivkov once acknowledged that Bulgaria was bound “to the Soviet Union in life and death.”

Since the end of the cold war Bulgaria has sought to maintain a markedly Western foreign policy, joining the European Union as an associate member, making its presence better known in the United Nations, and seeking membership in NATO, which it gained in 2004. Bulgaria is also on track to gain membership in the European Union in 2007.

DEFENSE

The military forces of Bulgaria are composed of the following services: army, navy, air and air defense forces, border troops, and internal security troops. In 2002 the army numbered 31,000, the navy 4,400 and the air force 17,800. There were 34,000 members of the paramilitary, including border guards, security police, and railway and construction troops. Reserves numbered 303,000. Defense expenditures were \$356 million in 2002 or 2.6 percent of GDP.

Manpower availability (conscription was reduced in 1992 from 18 to 12 months) in 2004 was over 1.8 million. Military equipment such as vessels, aircraft, artillery, and missiles are generally ex-Soviet or Soviet built, though much is relatively up-to-date.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 53,000
 Military Manpower Availability: 1,829,203
 Military Expenditures \$million: 356
 as % of GDP: 2.6
 as % of central government expenditures: 7.9
 Arms Imports \$million: 6
 Arms Exports \$million: 20

ECONOMY

In January 1992 almost the entire economy was still firmly under state control, despite the fact that the government had stated that its ultimate goal was privatization. By the end of that year 5 percent of state firms had been transferred to the private sector, along with another 500 by the end of 1993.

Privatization remains the stated objective of the present government, and if not for the war in Kosovo the privatization process would have been dramatically accelerated in 1999.

In 1996 GDP declined by 4 percent, and in 1998 it stood at \$11.7 billion, or about \$1,200 per capita. After several years of tumult, Bulgaria's economy has stabilized. Its better-than-expected economic performance in 1999—as overcoming the impact of the Kosovo conflict, the 1998 Russian financial crisis, and structural reforms—

and strong growth in 2000 portended solid growth over the next few years.

Following the 2001 elections, which brought Simeon II to office as prime minister, the stock market soared 100 percent, but the government in 2002 was unable to live up to its pledge to improve living standards. Foreign direct investment rose somewhat in 2002, and although economic growth slowed that year from its 5.8 percent high in 2000, it was higher than that of many other European countries. Taxes were lowered, and there is a zero percent capital gains tax on stock market investments. Small businesses are increasingly receiving credit. Corruption remains a stumbling block to Bulgaria's economic success.

In 2003 the country officially posted 4.3 percent growth in GDP but still had double-digit unemployment, of about 14 percent.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 57.13
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 7,600
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 4.2
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 5.3
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %
 Agriculture: 11.4
 Industry: 30.0
 Services: 58.6
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %
 Private Consumption: 70
 Government Consumption: 17
 Gross Domestic Investment: 19.6
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 7.337
 Imports: 9.723
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 4.5
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 22.8

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
3124.8	3447.1	3700.9	3915.9	4000.3

Finance

National Currency: Lev (BGL)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = BGL 1.7327
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 6.8
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 2.83
 Total External Debt \$billion: 12.05
 Debt Service Ratio %: 7.55
 Balance of Payments \$billion: -1.666
 International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 6.175
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 2.3

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 381
 per capita \$: 48
 Foreign Direct Investment \$billion: 1.34

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$billion: 8.121
 Expenditures \$billion: 8.121
 Budget Deficit \$million: 0
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: 25.2

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 11.4
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 0.6
 Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares: 5.7
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 17.3
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 35.4
 Total Farmland as % of land area: 40.0
 Livestock: Cattle 000: 668
 Sheep 000: 2,074
 Hogs 000: 1,031
 Chickens 000: 18,000
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 4.8
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 17.3

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 2.93
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 6.3

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 9.75
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 18.85
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 2.8
 Net Energy Imports % of use: 47.1
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 11.8
 Production kW-hr billion: 43.1
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 32.7
 Coal Reserves tons billion: 3
 Production tons million: 28.4
 Consumption tons million: 32.4
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet billion: 200
 Production cubic feet billion: 0.1
 Consumption cubic feet billion: 174
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels million: 15
 Production barrels 000 per day: 1
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 86
 Pipelines Length km: 339

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 9.723
 Exports \$billion: 7.337
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 8.4
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 13.7
 Balance of Trade \$billion: -1.666

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Germany %	14.4	10.9
Russia %	12.6	—
Italy %	10.3	14.1
Greece %	6.7	10.5
Turkey %	6.2	9.2
France %	5.7	5.1
United States %	—	4.5

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 37,286
 Paved %: 94.0
 Automobiles: 2,174,100
 Trucks and Buses: 323,000
 Railroad: Track Length km: 4,294
 Passenger-km billion: 2.6
 Freight-km billion: 4.6
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 60
 Total Deadweight Tonnage million: 1.12
 Airports: 212
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 57
 Length of Waterways km: 470

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 3.433
 Number of Tourists from million: 3.188
 Tourist Receipts \$billion: 1.344
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 616

Communications

Telephones million: 2.87
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.02
 Cellular Telephones million: 2.6
 Personal Computers 000: 405
 Internet Hosts per million people: 7,170
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 85

ENVIRONMENT

As a signatory to several international environmental initiatives, Bulgaria has shown serious intent to participate in ecological efforts and improve its own environment.

In 1995 reports to the United Nations, Bulgaria drew attention to its worsening air and water quality and to a measurable decrease in arable land. There were also concerns about the disposal of solid industrial and household waste. In addition, there remain health consequences from the Chernobyl nuclear disaster of April 1986.

The World Bank is currently financing a long-term project to enable Bulgaria to phase out ozone-depleting substances (thereby helping to improve air quality), and serious planning is under way to upgrade the safety of the country's Soviet-era nuclear reactors.

Major ecological projects in the country include the prevention of further contamination of the Danube River and the Black Sea and the reduction of emissions and waste. Much progress has been made in waste disposal, with generated solid waste reduced from 236,576 thousand tons in 1997 to 88,855 thousand tons in 2003, mostly as a result of reductions in industrial waste products. Emissions also decreased during the same time-frame.

Environment

Forest Area % of land area: 33.4
 Average Annual Forest Change, 1990-2000, 000 ha: 20
 Nationally Protected Areas as % of Total Land Area: 10
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 5.2

LIVING CONDITIONS

Bulgaria ranked 57th out of 177 nations in the United Nations' Human Development Index (HDI) for 2002. The HDI is a measure of three factors: life expectancy, education, and standard of living. In 2004 the life expectancy was 72 years, with a fertility rate of only 1.37 children per woman and a mortality rate of 14 deaths per 1,000 people. A national health-care system provides free medical care. The overall population in the country declined by 0.92 percent in 2004. The literacy rate for the country was 98.6 percent in 2003, and the combined gross enrollment in primary, secondary, and tertiary schools in 2001-02 was 76 percent of eligible students. Per capita GDP was \$7,600 in 2003.

Under the Soviets the country became rapidly urbanized. Almost 70 percent of the population live in urban areas, and housing shortages have been endemic in the country for several decades. Large public investments have been made in public housing as well as in individual housing construction with low-interest loans. It is estimated that between 75 and 80 percent of Bulgarians now own their own homes. These are often two-story brick houses with plaster facades in rural areas and towns. Apartment blocks are the norm in cities, though many Bulgarians own small country houses where they spend summers.

HEALTH

Though private health care was reestablished in 1991, Bulgaria still maintains a public health-care system that provides free medical care for its citizens. The Ministry of Health oversees the system, and in 2002 about 4.8 percent of GDP was spent on health issues. However, the country suffers from infrastructure problems; old fa-

cilities, antiquated equipment, and low-paying positions keep likely candidates out of the public health sector. In 2004 there was 1 physician for every 296 people and 1 dentist for every 1,150 people. In 1999 Bulgaria had 98 municipal hospitals with an average of 227 beds apiece, and 32 general district hospitals with an average of 874 beds. In addition there were 12 university hospitals in Sofia. Mortality rates have gone up in recent decades. In 2004 the death rate was 14.25 per 1,000 people; in 1999 the figure was 13, while in 1960 it was 8.1.

With a high intake of fats in the diet and with heavy smoking (almost half the male population smoked as of 2000), Bulgarians suffer from high blood pressure, affecting about 12 percent of the population. Circulatory diseases account for half of all deaths, while the country's stroke mortality is one of the highest in Europe.

The infant mortality rate, on the other hand, has improved, going from 108.2 deaths per 1,000 population in 1950 to 28 in 1970, and to 21 in 2002. In 2002 there were only 60 cases of tuberculosis per 100,000 people, and child immunization rates have also improved. In 2002, 98 percent of children under one were immunized for tuberculosis, 90 percent for measles, and 94 percent for diphtheria, pertussis, and tetanus. In 2001 the adult HIV/AIDS prevalence rate was less than 0.1 percent, and there were only an estimated 350 Bulgarians living with HIV/AIDS and fewer than 100 deaths from the virus.

Health

Number of Physicians: 27,186
 Number of Dentists: 6,482
 Number of Nurses: 35,621
 Number of Pharmacists: 1,020
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 338
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: 7.2
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 21.31
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 32
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 4.8
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 81
 HIV Infected % of adults: < 0.1
 Child Immunization Rate % of children age 12-23 months:
 DPT: 94
 Measles: 90
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 100
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 100

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Cuisine is influenced by the nation's cultural roots and its geographical location at the crossroads of southern and central Europe. Greek, Turkish, and Slavic food is blended in Bulgaria.

Breakfast is a light meal of either yogurt and bread with strong espresso or Turkish coffee, or cheese pastries called *banitsi*. Dinner is also a light meal, served late at night.

Lunch is the main meal, with pork or lamb as the meat and plenty of potatoes, beans, cheese, and salad. From the Greeks and Turks comes *moussaka*, a casserole of lamb, potatoes, and tomatoes with a béchamel topping. Also popular are *sarmi*, stuffed peppers or cabbage, and *kufteta*, a fried patty made with meat and bread crumbs. Salads include *shopska*, made from cucumbers, tomatoes and a local type of feta or goat cheese. *Tarator* is a soup served cold, made from the omnipresent yogurt, cucumbers, garlic, dill, and walnuts. Deserts include *baklava* and other pastries influenced by southern European traditions.

Drinks include beer, heavy red wine, and the plumb brandy locally known as *rakia*. A nonalcoholic drink is the warm millet concoction called *boza*.

Malnutrition is not a problem in the country, but heavy intake of fats, sugar, and salt leads to high rates of strokes and other circulatory problems.

Food and Nutrition

Food Supply as % of FAO Requirements: 116
 Undernourished % of total population: 10.6
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,640
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 149.1
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 173.7

STATUS OF WOMEN

Bulgarian attitudes toward women's aspirations remain complex, though improvements have been noted. The legal position is irreproachable, as equal rights are enshrined in the constitution. However, legal fact is not completely translated into reality.

Within the bureaucracy, women have made progress in securing jobs—so much so that in certain ministries they now outnumber men. As of 2005 women held 63 of the 240 seats in parliament, having doubled their membership since the last general elections.

Nevertheless, widespread gender discrimination is pernicious, especially when, in the context of deteriorating economic conditions, preference for scarce jobs is given to men or young women rather than to women supporting families. A survey conducted in 2002 showed that 40 percent of women had complained of harassment in the workplace.

A corollary of this is systemic rural poverty, the effects of which are felt particularly strongly among women. Domestic violence is still not recognized as a human rights issue, though parliament is attempting to draft laws criminalizing domestic abuse. One local nongovernmental organization published a survey showing that one in five Bulgarian women is the victim of some form of spousal abuse.

There is also concern that induced abortion is being used as a method of family planning. Another concern is

the unceasing traffic in females and kidnapping for forced prostitution in Western countries and Israel.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 26
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men age 15-24: 1.0
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 52.2

WORK

In 2003 the estimated labor force for Bulgaria was 3.333 million, with 43 percent in the service sector, 31 percent in industry, and 26 percent in agriculture. Industrial products include electricity, gas and water, food, beverages, tobacco, machinery and equipment, base metals, chemical products, coke, refined petroleum, and nuclear fuel, while agricultural products include vegetables, fruits, tobacco, livestock, wine, wheat, barley, sunflowers, and sugar beets. Unemployment has been high in the country but improving: from 18 percent in 2002 to 14 percent in 2003, to just under 12 percent in the last quarter of 2004.

The right to unionize and strike is guaranteed by the constitution. The two main unions are the Podkrepa and the Confederation of Independent Trade Unions. Labor laws provide for a minimum working age of 16 and a 40-hour workweek. In 2002 the minimum monthly wage was equivalent to \$47. Though workplace health and safety standards are a matter of law, these are often ignored in private industry. The country has a state pension system.

Throughout the 1990s and into the new millennium the country has suffered from the emigration of its educated and professional workers to the West in search of higher-paying jobs; over half a million left for better opportunities in western Europe and North America. As of 2004 the country still had a negative net immigration rate of 4.58 emigrants per 1,000 people.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 3,333,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 48.0
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 26
 Industry: 31
 Services: 43
 Unemployment %: 14.3

EDUCATION

Education (including university) is free and compulsory up to the age of 16. As of 2001 there were a total of 6,648 educational institutions in Bulgaria, from kindergarten

through university, of which only 128 were private, with a total enrollment of just over one million. Public expenditures on education in 2001–02 totaled 3.5 percent of GDP. In 2001, 91 percent of eligible children attended primary school; of those, 95 percent finished at least the fifth grade. In 2001–02, 96 percent of primary school students went on to secondary school. As of 2003 the adult literacy rate was 98.6 percent.

For higher education, Bulgaria offers about 50 different institutions, including nine independent colleges. The most important of these are the University of Sofia, founded in 1888, the University of Plovdiv, founded in 1961, the University of Veliko Tarnovo, founded in 1971, and the American University in Bulgaria, founded in 1991. All higher-level institutions had a total of 228,394 students in 2001.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 98.6
Male %: 99.1
Female %: 98.2
School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 12.5
First Level: Primary schools
Teachers: 20,789
Students: 349,616
Student-Teacher Ratio: 16.8
Net Enrollment Ratio: 90.4
Second Level: Secondary Schools
Teachers: 57,405
Students: 505,533
Student-Teacher Ratio: 12.1
Net Enrollment Ratio: 86.7
Third Level: Institutions
Teachers: 22,283
Students: 228,394
Gross Enrollment Ratio: 37.7
Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 3.5

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The Bulgarian Academy of Sciences is the country's main research organization, running scores of research and development projects, from biotechnology to communications. It is also involved in numerous joint research ventures with other European countries.

Other research institutes include the Academy of Medicine, with five higher medical institutes. In total there are over 100 research institutes in the country in the fields of agriculture, technology, and medicine.

In 2000 there were 1.42 researchers per 1,000 population; expenditure on research and development that year was 0.5 percent of GDP.

Many colleges and universities offer degree programs in science and applied science. In the period 1987–97 science and engineering students accounted for 27 percent of university enrollment. As of 2003–04 there were almost 5,000 students pursuing advanced science degrees.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million persons: 1,420
Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 0.52
High-Tech Exports \$million: 85.1
Patent Applications by Residents: 291

MEDIA

From folk dancing to new developments in film, Bulgaria has shaken off its Soviet-era inferiority complex and begun to explore new cultural paths. In literature, music, and political expression Bulgarians are seeking to identify both historic and untried avenues for national media and cultural expression.

In 1996 there were 1,053 newspapers, with a total annual circulation of 454 million. By 2003 the numbers had shrunk to about 400 newspapers with annual circulation of less than 300 million. Some 23 million copies of 5,000 book titles were published during 1996; a total of 403 cinemas were registered. In 1999 there were 4,971 books published, but the number of copies printed had greatly declined, to about 4.5 million. The number of cinemas had also declined, to 191. Television, however, showed an increase in production and audience during the same timeframe. From 30 licensed television stations in 1997, the number grew to 98 in 2003, with combined hours of programming totaling almost 500,000, as compared with a little over 250,000 in 1997. National television and radio broadcasting remain under the supervision of the National Council for Radio and Television (NCRT), a quasi-governmental body that oversees national media and regulates private broadcasters.

Some of the major newspapers in Sofia as of 2002 included *24 chasa*; *Bulgarska armiya*, published by the Ministry of Defense; *Demokratiya*; *Duma*, published by the Socialist Party; *Trud*, published by the Confederation of Independent Trade Unions; *Zemedelsko zname*, from the Agrarian People's Union; and *Zemya*, also published by the Socialist Party.

In 2004 Bulgaria was rated 36th out of 167 countries by Reporters without Borders (RWB) in its annual world press freedom index, based on surveys sent to over a hundred journalists that are members of partner organizations of the RWB as well as to related specialists such as researchers, jurists, and human rights activists. Survey questions deal with direct attacks on journalists and the media as well as other indirect sources of pressure against the free press.

In 2002 there were 630,000 Internet users and 2,597,500 cell phone users.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 52
Total Circulation 000: 936
Circulation per 1,000: 116

Books Published: 4,971
 Magazines: 745
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets million: 3.55
 per 1,000: 429

CULTURE

Greek, Turkish, Bulgar, and Slavic influences all come together to create a unique cultural fusion in Bulgaria. These influences can be seen in music, dance, the visual arts, and literature. Though many of the cultural artifacts of the once-great Bulgar Empire were destroyed during the centuries of Ottoman rule, other less palpable artifacts still exist.

Complex harmonies and irregular rhythms make Bulgarian music unique. Also, the throat style involved in vocal music makes Bulgarian folk song at once recognizable. Vocal music includes both Orthodox religious chants and folk songs with strong Turkish influences. In the late 20th century international interest in Bulgarian vocal music was inspired by the female choir *Le Mystère des Voix Bulgaires*, which introduced Bulgaria's polyphonic singing to a world audience, while Bulgarian folk music influenced contemporary Western musicians such as George Harrison and Kate Bush. The first performances of Bulgarian classical music date from the 1890s, and the earliest Bulgarian opera, by Emanuil Manolov, was performed in 1900. Since that time Bulgarian composers have continued to experiment in tonality with both vocal and orchestral works.

Folk instruments include the *gaida*, or bagpipe, *kaval*, or flute, the guitar-like *tambura*, violin-like *gadulka*, and the two-sided drum called the *tapan*. Traditional dances include the *horó*, a line dance, and *rachenitsa*.

Visual arts and literature were revived after the end of Ottoman rule with the nationalistic resurgence of the late 19th century. The painters Zahari Zograph and Hristo Tsokev were both important in this resurgence. Poets and writers include Hristo Botev, a rebel folk poet of the late 19th century, Dimcho Debelyanov, a lyric poet killed in World War II, and Geo Milev, a poet of the interwar period. Kidnapped and murdered by police, Ivan Vazov was one of the most prominent of Bulgarian writers. His 1893 novel *Under the Yoke* depicts the Ottoman oppression of Bulgaria and is the most famous piece of classic Bulgarian literature. In drama, the works of Georgi Karaslavov depict the Bulgarian countryside and life under Communism.

Bulgaria has a thriving film industry; 86 films were produced in 2003, many of them at the Cinema Center near Sofia.

Libraries and museums are also part of the fabric of Bulgarian life. In 2002 there were 220 museums and

49 major libraries. Museum visits totaled 3,554,515 that year, and library readers numbered 319,403. Two of the major museums in Sofia are the National Archaeological Museum and the National Ethnographic Museum. The major state libraries include the Cyril and Methodius National Library and the Central Library of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, both in Sofia.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 4,044
 Volumes: 52,671,678
 Registered borrowers: 956,235
 Museums Number: 220
 Annual Attendance: 3,554,515
 Cinema Gross Receipts national currency billion: 8
 Number of Cinemas: 191
 Seating Capacity: 83,000
 Annual Attendance: 1,900,000

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Bulgarian folklore is a mixture of Thracian, Bulgar, and Slavic traditions. From Thracian mythology come the mysterious Thracian Horseman (probably a god of nature and vegetation), the wine-loving Dionysus (usually called Zagreus), and Bendis, the great mother goddess, sometimes depicted riding a doe, bow in hand, with a quiver of arrows slung across her back.

After the 6th century the Thracians were absorbed into the Slavic and Bulgarian peoples who settled in the area. The most important historical person from this time to cross over into folktales was Krali Marko, who lived in the 14th century. His legend joined that of the earlier Thracian Horseman god, who was sometimes simply called Hero. There are many heroic songs—which were the traditional way of telling these epic tales—about Krali Marko's adventures with his magical horse Sharkoliya. There are also many tales about the *samodiva*, wild female nymphs of the waters, woodlands, and mountains, renowned for their exquisite singing and dancing. From the Bulgars also comes Baba Marta, the female personification of the month of March. The first of March is still a festival day in Bulgaria.

The Slavs believed in many deities, spirits of nature, and demons. Trees and animals were revered as man's ancestors. Rivers were also worshipped. Their main god was Perun, the god of thunder, who gave his name to the Pirin Mountains in southern Bulgaria. Volos, or Veles, was the god of horned animals. Female deities were less significant and included Lada and Lyulya, the goddesses of love and awakening nature. Vampires and werewolves also form a part of Slave folklore. According to Slav mythology the Morava is a race of giant vampire moths that live in the Carpathian Mountains.

A favorite folk character for hundreds of years has been Sly Peter, with his many ways of outwitting others. Other popular folk figures include the freedom fighters known as *hajduks*, who resemble the English folk hero Robin Hood.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Many forms of entertainment customary in Western Europe are also popular in Bulgaria. Television has become an increasingly popular medium, with 98 licensed stations in 2003 and combined hours of programming numbering almost 500,000. Reading is another popular pastime. The country has a literacy rate of 98.6 percent, 49 libraries with over 300,000 users, and a publishing industry that turned out over 4,900 titles in 1999.

Urban areas have Western-style nightlife with bars, nightclubs and discos, while in the rural areas free-time activities are of a simpler variety. Women often sew or knit while they socialize; the *sedenka* is a tradition whereby village women gather for an evening of socializing while engaged in sewing, embroidery, or other handicrafts. Men in rural areas enjoy winemaking and gardening or chatting with friends in local coffee shops.

Recreational sports such as soccer, skiing, and hiking are also popular.

ETIQUETTE

Male Bulgarians greet each other with firm handshakes, while women often exchange kisses on the cheek. Punctuality is important, especially in business settings, and titles are generally used with people's names until closer relationships have been established. Similarly, shows of affections such as backslapping are not common unless the people know one another well. However, personal space is smaller in Bulgaria, as it is throughout Europe, and people tend to sit and stand more closely together in public than North Americans are accustomed to.

Physical gestures are also unique. In the Greek and Turkish style, a "yes" in Bulgaria is signified by shaking one's head, while "no" is shown with a nod or two and a clicking of the tongue. Pointing with the index finger is considered rude, as is crossing the ankle over the knee for men. When dining, both wrists should be on the table, and it is considered polite to finish everything on one's plate.

FAMILY LIFE

Traditionally the family unit of Bulgaria was the *zadruga*, an extended family composed of 10 to 20 small families, related by blood, who lived and worked together, owned

property jointly, and recognized the authority of a single patriarch. This agrarian tradition broke up with the beginning of the 20th century as the country adopted more Western ways, such as inheritance rights for females. However, the patriarchal family format and the three-generation extended family survived into the 20th century and even beyond the years of Soviet rule. Many households today consist of an extended family comprising parents and one of their married sons—usually the youngest—or daughters. This is very often the case in the countryside. Economic pressures, however, have scaled back the family unit in urban areas to the nuclear family. Children tend to be close to their grandparents in either case, for they are often cared for by these elders while both parents work. Despite the fact that both men and women work outside the family, domestic chores still generally remain the duty of women.

In both urban and rural settings marriage is at the center of family life: more than 90 percent of all Bulgarians are married. Marriage rates, however, have been dropping, with 29,218 marriages registered in 2002 as compared to 59,874 in 1990. In 1985, because of high divorce rates, especially in cities, the government made divorce more difficult by charging a fee to apply for divorce that was equal to three months' wages. This has had little effect, however; as of 1996, 28 percent of all marriages in Bulgaria ended in divorce. In 2002 there were 10,203 divorces, which represent 349 divorces per 1,000 marriages, or 1.3 divorces per 1,000 inhabitants.

Families also tend to be small, with two or fewer children per family in the cities and a slightly higher average in the country. According to the 2001 census the average family size was 2.8 persons. Bulgaria had a low birth-rate of 9.65 per 1,000 people in 2004 and a fertility rate of 1.37 children per woman. Overall population in the country declined by 0.92 percent in 2004.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Though Bulgarians wear Western-style clothing now, they have a wealth of traditional dress that was worn in some parts of the country into the middle of the 20th century and can still be seen today for special ceremonies and festivals. Styles vary from region to region and also between genders. Typical to all are the richly embroidered white shirts or blouses worn with elaborately embroidered vests, always with some red or black in the background.

Women may wear colorful aprons over their skirts, and different regions wear different numbers of aprons. The main parts of the two-apron outfit are a blouse, the two aprons, and a belt. The back apron is variously called the *brachnik*, *zaveska*, *valnenik*, *peshtimal*, or *karlyanka* and features different ornamental patterns. It is widespread in northern Bulgaria. The *sukman* female costume con-

sists of a blouse, a pinafore, an apron, and a belt. The ornamentation is concentrated on the skirts and lapels of the bodice of the *sukman*. This costume is widespread in the mountainous regions and in southeastern Thrace. The *saya* attire consists of a multicolored trapeze-shaped *saya*, or blouse, an apron, and a belt. The decorative patterns on the *saya* are on the front of the bodice and on the sleeves. People wore this until the middle of the 20th century in southern Bulgaria and Macedonia. The one-apron female costume consists of a blouse and an apron. It was widespread among the Muslim Bulgarian population.

Male wear is divided into white and black costumes. The white consists of a tunic-like shirt, tight or loose trousers, called *benevretsi* or *dimii*, respectively, a belt or cummerbund, and a white vest or cloak. This clothing is decorated with linear embroidered patterns and colored braiding on the breast, the sleeves, and the trousers. The black male costume consists of a shirt, baggy trousers, a belt, and a sleeveless jacket, padded jacket, or cloak made of black woolen frieze. The trousers have a rich decoration of black braiding. The male wear in western Bulgaria is a combination of the two types: white *benevretsi* with dark blue top garments.

Examples of the variety of costumes can be seen at Bulgaria's National Ethnographic Museum in Sofia.

SPORTS

Soccer and basketball are the most popular team sports in Bulgaria. When the national team defeated the Germans in a 1994 competition for the World Cup, there were nationwide celebrations. Players and coaches such as Georgi Asparuhov, Krasimir Balakov, Hristo Bonev, Trifon Ivanov, Emil Kostadinov, Yordan Letchkov, Dimitar Penev, and Hristo Stoichkov are treated as celebrities in the country, playing for the national team and also filling the lineups of international teams.

Basketball, though not as omnipresent as soccer, is particularly popular in urban areas. The country boasts two professional leagues.

With plentiful mountains, Bulgaria is also home to skiing enthusiasts. Bulgarians also compete internationally in volleyball, track, rowing, wrestling, gymnastics, and weightlifting.

The major sporting event in the country is the National Spartakiad, with mass participation of teams, clubs, and individuals in a variety of sporting events.

CHRONOLOGY

1946 The monarchy is abolished and Bulgaria is declared a people's republic; Georgi Dimitrov is named head of government; agriculture is collectivized.

- 1947** New constitution is promulgated.
- 1948** Banks, industries, and mines are nationalized.
- 1949** Dimitrov dies; Vasil Kolarov takes over as prime minister.
- 1950** Dimitrov's brother-in-law Vûlko Chervenkov is named prime minister.
- 1954** Chervenkov yields post of first secretary of the Bulgarian Communist Party (BKP) to Todor Zhivkov, a Khrushchev protégé.
- 1956** Chervenkov loses post of prime minister to Anton Yugov.
- 1962** Yugov and Chervenkov fall from favor and Zhivkov takes over as prime minister.
- 1965** On Khrushchev's ouster in the Soviet Union, coup against Zhivkov is mounted by dissidents; coup is put down and is followed by a purge.
- 1971** Zhivkov is elevated to president and Stanko Todorov becomes prime minister. New constitution is promulgated.
- 1981** Grisha Filipov replaces Todorov as prime minister.
- 1985** Official Bulgarianization drive is launched and is directed against ethnic Turks.
- 1986** Georgi Ivanov Atanasov replaces Filipov as prime minister.
- 1987** BKP Congress approves extensive administrative reforms, including redrawing of local government jurisdictions.
- 1989** Zhivkov is ousted as regime yields to Soviet and popular pressures for reform; Petûr Mladenov is named president.
- 1990** Grand National Assembly revokes the Communist Party's monopoly of power; the State Council is abolished; an executive presidency is created; the secret police is disbanded; the Bulgarian Communist Party (BKP) renames itself the Bulgarian Socialist Party; in free elections to the National Assembly the Bulgarian Socialist Party gains absolute majority by winning 211 out of 400 seats; President Mladenov steps down in the face of allegations that he ordered the shooting of protesters during anti-Communist demonstrations in 1989; Zhelyu Zhelev, leader of the opposition Union of Democratic Forces, is elected president; Andrey Lukanov replaces Atanasov as prime minister.
- 1991** New constitution is adopted, and the Grand National Assembly is renamed National Assembly. The prime minister is made the most important government official.
- 1992** Zhelyu Zhelev becomes president and Zhan Videnov prime minister.
Some of the Bulgarian Orthodox bishops set up a rival synod.
Former Communist Party leader Todor Zhivkov is convicted of corruption and abuse of power, and imprisoned.

- 1996** An economic austerity program is launched in order to attract Western (primarily International Monetary Fund) investments.
Former prime minister and Communist leader Andrey Lukanov is assassinated.
Petûr Stoyanov is elected president.
- 1997** Despite attempts to stabilize the economy, deteriorating conditions lead to nationwide strikes and demonstrations.
The Union of Democratic Forces (UDF) wins parliamentary elections, and Ivan Kostov becomes prime minister.
Bulgaria shows eagerness to join NATO and, meanwhile, signs an association agreement with the European Union.
- 1998** Todor Zhivkov dies in August.
The Turkish minority is allowed to broadcast in Turkish for the first time in 50 years.
- 1999** During the war in Kosovo, Bulgaria allows NATO jet fighters to fly over the country on their way to bomb Serbia.
The pro-Western government seeks international aid to offset economic disruption caused by the war.
The IMF and other Western donors promise \$750 million to support Bulgaria's economy.
- 2001** The former king Simeon II's political party, National Movement for Simeon II, wins a majority of seats in parliamentary elections, and Simeon becomes prime minister.
- 2002** Stock market goes up 100 percent on strength of Simeon II victory, but his party is unable to carry through on promises for speedy economic recovery and an end to corruption and organized crime.
- 2003** October elections demonstrate growing dissatisfaction among voters with Simeon II and his policies; his party wins only 7 percent of the vote, down from 40 percent in 2001.
- 2004** Bulgaria joins NATO.
- 2005** After general elections, Socialist Party leader Sergey Stanishev becomes prime minister and leads a coalition government.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Bulgaria Online
http://www.online.bg/BOL_ENG.ASP?dID=28&lang=2&dMode=1
- CIA World Factbook: Bulgaria
<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/bu.html>
- National Statistics Institute of the Republic of Bulgaria
http://www.nsi.bg/Index_e.htm

BURKINA FASO

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Burkina Faso (formerly Upper Volta)

ABBREVIATION

BF

CAPITAL

Ouagadougou

HEAD OF STATE

President Blaise Compaoré (from 1987)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Paramanga Ernest Yonli (from 2000)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Partial democracy

POPULATION

13,925,313 (2005)

AREA

274,200 sq km (105,870 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Mossi

LANGUAGE

French (official)

RELIGIONS

Animism, Islam, Christianity

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Communauté financière d'Afrique franc

NATIONAL FLAG

Two equal horizontal stripes, of red and green, with a five-pointed gold star in the center.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A shield with black, white, and red horizontal bars representing the three main branches of the Volta River: the Black Volta, White Volta, and Red Volta. Behind the shield, silver-tipped spears are crossed in saltire. On the ground is a stalk of green sorghum flanked by the two native hoes. Black-hooved white stallions rear up to paw the shield. The design is crested by a banner proclaiming the national motto: *Unité, travail, justice* (Unity, work, justice).

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Proud Volta of My Ancestors”

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day), January 3 (1966 Revolution Day), May 1 (Labor Day), August 8 (Independence Day), December 11 (Proclamation of the Republic), various Christian festivals, including Assumption, All Saints' Day, Easter Monday, Pentecost Monday, Ascension, and Christmas, various Islamic festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

August 5, 1960

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

June 11, 1991

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Burkina Faso, a landlocked nation located in West Africa, has an area of 274,200 sq km (105,870 sq mi), extending 873 km (542 mi) east-northeast to west-southwest and 474 km (295 mi) south-southeast to north-northwest.

Burkina Faso shares its international border of 3,193 km (1,986 mi) with six neighbors: Niger (628 km; 390 mi), Benin (306 km; 190 mi), Togo (126 km; 78 mi), Ghana (549 km; 341 mi), Côte d'Ivoire (584 km; 362 mi), and Mali (1,000 km; 621 mi).

The country is one vast plateau tilted toward the south. The average altitude is 400 m (1,312 ft), reaching the highest point at Tena Kourou (749 m; 2,457 ft).

The plateau is carved by the valleys of the three Voltas—the Black Volta, the White Volta, and the Red Volta—and their main tributaries, the Sourou and the Pendjari. The Volta, so named by the Portuguese because of its winding course, is a slow, meandering river, with water so unhealthy that people who live near its banks are highly susceptible to a variety of diseases. The most important river of the Volta system is the Black Volta, which

Burkina Faso



originates not far from Bobo-Dioulasso as two streams called the Plandi and the Dienkoa. Before it reaches the border with Ghana at Ouessa it receives a number of tributaries, such as the Kou, the Sourou, the Tui, and the Bougouriba. The Pendjari, rising in Benin, forms the border between Benin and Burkina Faso for 170 km (110 mi). Burkina Faso has one of the few permanent lakes in West Africa, the Bama, on the White Volta.

Geography

Area sq km: 274,200; 105,870 sq mi
 World Rank: 72nd
 Land Boundaries, km: Benin 306; Ghana 549; Côte d'Ivoire 584; Mali 1,000; Niger 628; Togo 126
 Coastline, km: 0
 Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Mouhoun River 200
 Highest: Tena Kourou 749
 Land Use %
 Arable land: 14.43
 Permanent Crops: 0.19
 Forest: 25.9
 Other: 59.48

Population of Principal Cities (1996)

Bobo-Dioulasso	309,711
Koudougou	72,490
Ouagadougou	709,736

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Burkina Faso is within the tropical savanna zone, with two alternating seasons: a rainy season from June to October and a dry season from November to May. Temperatures are high in the north, especially at the end of the dry season. In March the mean temperature in Ouagadougou is 41°C (106°F); the heat is stoked by the dry east wind from the Sahara, called the harmattan, which blows from March to May. The climate is hot and wet from May to October and pleasant and dry from November to March. The lowest average temperature is recorded between December and January, when the mercury falls to 25°C (77°F).

The rainy season lasts a maximum of five months, from May to October. Annual rainfall progressively decreases from the high of 130 cm (51 in) in the southwest to 50 cm (20 in) in the northeast.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature
 Summer: 106°F
 Winter: 77°F
 Average Rainfall: 51 in (southwest); 20 in (northeast)

FLORA AND FAUNA

Most of the land area of Burkina Faso consists of savanna or bush country, with a blend of grass and smaller trees such as the baobab and *kirate*, also known as the shea tree. There are 186 species of aquatic plants and 627 species of herbaceous plants, with about 3,800 recorded species of flora in all. Of the 1,100 recorded species of higher plants, two were threatened as of 2002.

An estimated 4,000 animal species have been observed in the country, including higher mammals such as the antelope, elephant, giraffe, hippopotamus, buffalo, and monkey, and amphibians and reptiles such as the crocodile. Many of these are now found only on game preserves. As of 2002, out of 147 mammal species, seven were threatened, and of 148 breeding bird species, two were threatened. The country is home to over 1,500 species of insects.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 13,925,313
 World Rank: 63rd
 Density per sq km: 44.3
 % of annual growth (1999–2003): 2.4
 Male %: 49.2
 Female %: 50.8
 Urban %: 17.8
 Age Distribution: %
 0–14: 46.0
 15–64: 51.1
 65 and over: 2.9
 Population 2025: 22,459,000
 Birth Rate per 1,000: 44.46
 Death Rate per 1,000: 18.79
 Rate of Natural Increase %: 2.7
 Total Fertility Rate: 6.28
 Expectation of Life (years): Males 42.62
 Females 45.83
 Marriage Rate per 1,000: —
 Divorce Rate per 1,000: —
 Average Size of Households: 6.2
 Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

The principal ethnic group is the Mossi, who are estimated to make up as much as two-thirds of the total population. Other dominant tribes are the Bobo in the southwest and the Gourma in the east. The Mossi (singular: Moaga) are classified by anthropologists as a Voltaic people belonging to the Mole cluster. The Bobo, who called themselves Bwaba, are closely related to the Mande. The Gourounsi (singular: Gourounga) is a general name for those people who live between the Black Volta on the west and the Red Volta on the east, and Koudougou to the north and Ghana to the south.

Some 2,500 Europeans, mostly French, reside in the country. Together all the citizens and diverse ethnic groups of Burkina Faso are called Burkinabe.

LANGUAGES

The official language is French, but its use is restricted to the elite. The dominant Mossi speak Mooré, a language of the Voltaic or Gur subfamily of the Niger-Congo family of languages. These and other native African languages belonging to the Sudanic family are spoken by 90 percent of the population.

RELIGIONS

Burkina Faso is one of the few countries in the world in which animism is widely prevalent, as practiced by nearly 40 percent of the population. Historically, the Burkinabe have resisted the influence of Islam, but the religion now claims some 50 percent of the population as believers. The remaining 10 percent are Christian.

Roman Catholicism was introduced into Burkina Faso in 1896 by the White Fathers, who founded their first mission in 1890. Abbé Yougbare became the first West African Catholic bishop in 1956, and in 1960 Abbé Paul Zoungrana was made an archbishop and later a cardinal, the first West African to be so appointed. There are 90 parishes, with 137 African priests and 256 non-African priests. American fundamentalist missionary groups have worked in the country since 1926, and Protestant denominations claim over 25,000 members. The Sudan Interior Mission and the Christian Missionary Alliance are also active.

Religious Affiliations

Muslim	6,962,000
Traditional beliefs	5,570,000
Christian	1,392,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Burkina Faso was founded by the descendants of the Mossi Empire who ruled the area in the 15th century. The empire was successful in resisting the Muslims, who took control of much of West Africa. The country was relatively stable and developed a mature administrative apparatus to manage the empire.

French expansion into Burkina Faso began around 1890 and was completed by Paul Gustave Lucien Voulet, who took Ouagadougou in 1896 and subjugated the entire territory. The Mossi accepted French domination as the best form of protection against their hostile neigh-

bors. The French divided the country into administrative circles but retained chiefs in their traditional roles. At first attached to the French Sudan (or Upper Senegal-Niger, as it was called from 1904 to 1920), the country was organized as a separate colony in 1919. It was partitioned again among French Sudan, Côte d'Ivoire, and Niger between 1932 and 1947, but it was reestablished as an overseas territory in 1947, with a territorial assembly of its own. It became an autonomous republic within the French Community in 1958 and achieved full independence within two years as Upper Volta.

In its years of independence, Burkina Faso has completed two full circles from authoritarian rule to democracy and back to authoritarian rule. Under the new constitution of 1991, the country seems to be moving toward democracy once again. The nation's first government, formed by Maurice Yaméogo, a political disciple of Félix Houphouët-Boigny of Côte d'Ivoire, was incapable of handling economic problems and dealing with powerful trade unions. All parties in opposition to Yaméogo's Voltaic Democratic Union (VDU) were banned shortly after independence. Yaméogo was reelected in a one-party election in 1965, but in the wake of growing student and labor dissatisfaction, he was compelled to resign in 1966. The military, under Sangoulé Lamizana, took over, suspending the constitution and dissolving the National Assembly. In 1969, in preparation for a return to civilian rule, Lamizana removed all political restrictions. The nation adopted a new constitution the following year. Under the constitution Lamizana was to retain his position as head of state, with an elected assembly and a civilian prime minister governing the country. In the first elections following the constitution's adoption, the VDU won a legislative majority, and Gerard Ouédraogo became prime minister.

Ouédraogo's tenure was marked by corruption and conflict between government and opposition parties. Government came to a standstill and was unable to respond to a severe drought in the Sahel region. In 1974 Lamizana and the army again seized control of the government. He suspended the constitution and dissolved the assembly. All political parties were banned, but trade unions were permitted to operate. Lamizana allowed political parties to resume activities in 1977, during which period a new constitution was prepared. He was reelected in elections held in 1978. The following year Lamizana banned all political parties except the Democratic Voltaic Union, the National Union for the Defense of Democracy, and the Voltaic Progressive Union.

In November 1980 the Military Committee of Recovery for National Progress (CMRPN), under Colonel Saye Zerbo, seized power in a bloodless coup. The coup leaders abolished the constitution of 1977, banned all political parties, and dissolved the National Assembly.

In November 1982 Colonel Zerbo was ousted in another military coup led by noncommissioned army officers, in which five people were killed. Maj. Jean-Baptiste Ouédraogo, who had not previously been involved in politics, emerged as the leader of the new military regime, setting up the Conseil de Salut du Peuple (CSP). The CMRPN was dissolved, and a predominantly civilian government was formed. In February 1983 several soldiers and opposition figures were arrested following the discovery of an alleged plot to reinstate the Zerbo regime. A power struggle within the CSP became apparent with the arrest in May 1983 of radical left-wing elements within the government, including the prime minister, Capt. Thomas Sankara. Major Ouédraogo announced the withdrawal of the armed forces from political life and disbanded the CSP, leaving the post of prime minister empty.

In August 1983 Sankara seized power in a coup in which an estimated 15 people were killed. Opposition politicians were placed under house arrest, a strict curfew was imposed, and the Conseil Nationale Révolutionnaire (CNR) was set up. Citizens were called to join local committees, *Comités pour la Défense de la Révolution* (CDRs), in attempts to mobilize popular support for the regime.

Sankara's regime consolidated its power through the local CDRs and brought extensive reforms to the administrative, judicial, education, and military systems. He celebrated the first anniversary of his regime by changing the country's name to Burkina Faso (loosely, "the land of upright people"). Sankara was killed in a bloody coup in 1987 led by Capt. Blaise Compaoré, Sankara's closest friend, who established control through his Popular Front. In 1989 elements of the army staged an unsuccessful coup against Compaoré.

Under political pressure in 1990 Compaoré announced plans for a new constitution as well as multiparty elections to be held at the end of 1991. The new constitution, which called for democratization, was approved by a national referendum and put into effect in June 1991. Compaoré was reelected without opposition in December 1991 for a seven-year term, and his party, the Organization of People's Democracy-Labor Movement, won a legislative majority in multiparty elections in May 1992. Youssouf Ouédraogo was appointed prime minister. However, the transition to a fuller democratic system has been slowed, and the Compaoré administration has become a virtual one-party state. In 1997 the assembly approved constitutional amendments abolishing constitutional provisions limiting the number of presidential terms to two. In 1998 Compaoré, facing opposition candidates for the first time, easily won the presidential election with 87.5 percent of the vote.

The December 1998 killing of the journalist Norbert Zongo, who was investigating a murder in which the

president's brother was possibly involved, led to months of demonstrations and strikes in the spring and summer of 1999. Compaoré finally called for an independent investigation, leading to the arrest of several members of his own Presidential Guard. Fallout from the Zongo affair was still being felt in 2000, leading to strikes by students and demands for election reform. In the municipal elections held in September the ruling Congress for Democracy and Progress won 802 of the 1,100 seats available. In order to help facilitate election reforms, the prime minister, Kadré Désiré Ouédraogo, resigned and was replaced by Ernest Paramanga Yonli. The World Bank announced in 2000 that Burkina Faso, as the third-poorest country in the world, would receive \$700 million in debt relief.

Relations with neighboring Côte d'Ivoire worsened as thousands of Burkinabes returned home from that country in 2001, protesting harassment and persecution by Ivorian officials. AIDS has become a significant health problem in the country, with an estimated 4 percent of the population infected with the virus. Parliamentary elections held in 2002 demonstrated a weakening of Compaoré's hold on power. His Congress for Democracy and Progress won 57 of 111 seats, barely maintaining its majority. In 2003 over 350,000 Burkinabes fled the civil war in Côte d'Ivoire, and in October that year 16 people—including an opposition political leader—were arrested for allegedly plotting a coup against Compaoré. In 2004 locusts hit the north of the country, destroying 90 percent of crops and creating extreme food shortages.

Presidential elections for 2005 were to be held under a new constitutional provision from 2000 decreeing a five-year term and a maximum of two terms. It was unclear whether the law would apply to Compaoré, who had already held office twice.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

Head of State

1959–66	Maurice Yaméogo (president)
1966–80	Abubakar Sangoulé Lamizana (president)
1980–82	Saye Zerbo (chairman of the Military Committee of Recovery for National Progress)
1982–83	Jean-Baptiste Ouédraogo (chairman of the Committee of Popular Salvation)
1983–87	Thomas Sankara (chairman of the National Revolutionary Council)
1987–91	Blaise Compaoré (chairman of the Popular Front)
1991–	Blaise Compaoré (president)

Prime Minister

1971–74	Gérard Kango Ouédraogo
1974–78	Sangoulé Lamizana

1978–80	Joseph Conombo
1980–82	Saye Zerbo
1983	Thomas Sankara
1992–94	Youssouf Ouédraogo
1994–96	Roch Marc Christian Kaboré
1996–2000	Kadré Désiré Ouédraogo
2000–	Paramanga Ernest Yonli

CONSTITUTION

The constitution that was put into effect on June 11, 1991, provides for separate executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government, aiming to reduce the president's powers. It also calls for presidential elections to be held every seven years. In a separate decree on June 11, Capt. Blaise Compaoré dissolved the country's government, leaving the administration of ministerial affairs in the hands of permanent secretaries until new appointments could be made. The president appoints the prime minister.

In 2000 the constitution was amended to limit the president to a five-year term, renewable once, beginning with the 2005 presidential election.

PARLIAMENT

Burkina Faso has a bicameral legislature. The lower house, the National Assembly, consists of 111 members elected by popular vote in 30 multimember districts. Members serve five years. The upper house, the House of Representatives, was created by the constitutional reforms of 1991 but was not formed until 1995. The House of Representatives consists of 178 members elected or appointed to represent particular societal constituencies.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Political parties were legalized in 1992. While the country has numerous political parties, the Organization for People's Democracy–Labor Movement—an amalgam of former Communist parties—controls the majority of seats in the National Assembly. In the 1997 elections the Organization for People's Democracy ran as the Popular Front. The second largest party is the National Convention of Progressive Patriots–Social Democrats. In the 2002 parliamentary elections, the Congress for Democracy and Progress (CDP), the party of President Compaoré, won a slim majority of seats, with the African Democratic Rally–Alliance for Democracy and Federation (RDA-ADF) in second place, the Party for Democracy and Progress (PDP/PS) in third, and the Democratic Convention for Federation (CDF) and the Party for African Independence (PAI) tied for fourth.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Burkina Faso is divided into 45 provinces, which are further divided into 300 departments and over 7,000 villages. Municipal elections are held regularly to choose local officials.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The Burkinabe legal system is an amalgam of French civil law and African customary law.

Before 1984 the apex of the judiciary was the Supreme Court at Ouagadougou, with four chambers: constitutional, judicial, administrative, and fiscal. It was abolished in 1984 and replaced by two high appeals courts for public and private criminal and civil cases, in accordance with French judicial practice. There are four courts of first instance, at Ouagadougou, Bobo-Dioulasso, Ouahigouya, and Fada Ngourma, with competence in criminal, commercial, and civil law. For cases involving common law there are several magistrate courts in the separate departments and a court at Ouagadougou.

The government's oft-stated aim is to ensure that European-imposed judicial procedures do not deny fair access to justice for an overwhelmingly illiterate, impoverished population. The 1991 constitution provides the rights to public trial, access to counsel, and appeal. In 1995 the office of ombudsman, or *médiateur du faso*, was set up to resolve disagreements between the state and private citizens. The judiciary has continued to function for criminal and civil cases. Nominally independent, the judiciary is appointed by the president, who thus has considerable influence over its decisions.

HUMAN RIGHTS

In terms of political and civil rights Burkina Faso is classified as a country that is not free. Under the Third Republic, established with the 1977 constitution, Burkina Faso made considerable progress toward securing basic human rights for its people. Until the 1980 coup there were no political prisoners, the right to a fair trial was guaranteed, the judiciary was independent of the executive, there were no political or security courts, arbitrary arrests and imprisonment were relatively uncommon, and searches of private homes could not take place at night and were permitted only with search warrants during the day. The media, although government owned, could comment freely and critically on government policies and actions, and labor unions often exercised their right to strike without fear of reprisal. Any group or organization could hold public meetings. Participation in the political process was open to all citizens. The 1980 and subsequent coups curtailed most, though not all, of

these significant gains. Compaoré was widely criticized for the summary executions of those implicated in the 1989 coup.

The 1998 murder of the investigative journalist Norbert Zongo, who was investigating a death that may have implicated the entire Compaoré family, highlighted the lack of basic human rights in the country and led to mass demonstrations and strikes, some of which were brutally put down by security forces.

In 2001 human rights campaigners accused the government of carrying out extrajudicial killings in its campaign against a recent upsurge of armed robberies. Despite the government's denial of the allegations, Amnesty International called for an official investigation. Later in the year the government announced that it would allocate \$7.75 million to compensate victims and families of victims of past human rights abuses.

Illegal detention still persists in the country. In 2003 authorities arrested Norbert Tiendrebeogo, the leader of the opposition Social Forces Front party, along with 15 others in connection with an alleged coup plot. The 16 were held without charge for far longer than the constitution allows.

FOREIGN POLICY

Burkina Faso's foreign relations have undergone two transformations in the last 17 years. After the 1983 coup Sankara changed a moderately pro-French and pro-Western foreign policy into a radical, Libyan-influenced one. Sankara tried to rid the country of all vestiges of its colonial past (such as by changing the country's name from Upper Volta to Burkina Faso) and carried out widespread arrests of pro-French officials. Relations with neighbors were also strained, especially with Mali over Agacher Strip and with Togo over Burkinabe complicity in a coup attempt against President Eyadema.

The assassination of Sankara in 1987 led to an about-face in the nation's foreign relations. The new president, Compaoré, was a francophile who was a friend of Côte d'Ivoire's President Houphouët-Boigny. Relations with Ghana and Mali also improved, although the presence of Malian refugees in Burkina proved a continual irritant. Regional cooperation efforts have been the focus of Compaoré's foreign initiatives. He hosted the first summit of the West African Economic and Monetary Union in 1996.

Relations with Côte d'Ivoire grew strained in 2002 and 2003 as a result of unfair treatment of Burkinabe citizens living in the neighboring country and the fallout of the Ivorian civil war. Côte d'Ivoire accused Burkina Faso of providing a staging ground for Ivorian rebels. Also, relations with neighboring Benin became strained over boundary disputes.

DEFENSE

Burkina Faso's defense structure is headed by the president as commander in chief; the chain of command runs through the minister of defense. Military service is compulsory for able-bodied men over the age of 18 and lasts for 18 months. The total strength of the armed forces in 2002 was 5,800. There is no navy.

Burkinabe armed forces have no offensive capability. The bulk of military aid is received from France. In 2003 the country spent \$52.7 million, or 1.6 percent of gross domestic product (GDP), on defense.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	5,800
Military Manpower Availability:	3,047,306
Military Expenditures \$million:	52.7
as % of GDP:	1.6
as % of central government expenditures:	—
Arms Imports \$:	—
Arms Exports \$:	—

ECONOMY

One of the poorest countries in the world, landlocked Burkina Faso has a high population density, few natural resources, and fragile soil. About 90 percent of the population is engaged in (mainly subsistence) agriculture, which is highly vulnerable to variations in rainfall. Industry remains dominated by unprofitable government-controlled corporations. Following the African franc currency devaluation in January 1994 the government updated its development program in conjunction with international agencies, and exports and economic growth have increased. Maintenance of its macroeconomic progress in 2001–02 depended on continued low inflation, reductions in the trade deficit, and reforms designed to encourage private investment.

Part of this plan was also dependent on cotton, the sale of which accounted for 60 percent of the country's exports in 2001. Unfortunately, although the country experienced a 35 percent increase in cotton production in 2002, the world cotton market plummeted that year, destroying any production gains through reductions in sale prices. In the spring and summer of 2002 the country was hit with strikes, as thousands of workers demonstrated against low wages and plans for continued privatization. In 2004 an infestation of locusts destroyed 90 percent of the agricultural production in the north of the country, further worsening the economic situation and creating an acute food shortage.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 14.55
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 1,100
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 5.0
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 2.5
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %
 Agriculture: 39.8
 Industry: 19.6
 Services: 40.6
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %
 Private Consumption: 73
 Government Consumption: 17
 Gross Domestic Investment: 29
 Foreign Trade \$million: Exports: 293
 Imports: 633.6
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 2.0
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 46.8

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
112.9	112.5	118.2	120.8	123.0

Finance

National Currency: CFA Franc (XOF)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = XOF 581.2
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 244
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 4.5
 Total External Debt \$billion: 1.3
 Debt Service Ratio %: 12.53
 Balance of Payments \$million: –341
 International Reserves SDRs \$million: 303
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index
 Growth Rate %: 1.9

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 473
 per capita \$: 40
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 8.2

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$million: 599.8
 Expenditures \$million: 748.8
 Budget Deficit \$million: 149
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 39.8
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 2.4
 Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares: 0.5
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 0.63
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 8.2
 Total Cropland as % of Farmland: 14.4
 Livestock: Cattle 000: 5,200
 Sheep 000: 7,000
 Hogs 000: 674
 Chickens 000: 24,000

Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 12
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 8.5

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 539
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 14

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 11
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 357
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 29
 Net Energy Imports % of use: —
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: 121
 Production kW-hr million: 280
 Consumption kW-hr million: 260
 Coal Reserves tons: —
 Production tons: —
 Consumption tons: —
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic meters: —
 Production cubic meters: —
 Consumption cubic meters: —
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels: —
 Production barrels 000 per day: —
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 8.87
 Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$million: 633.6
 Exports \$million: 293
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 0.7
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 5.2
 Balance of Trade \$million: –341

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
France %	31.2	4.8
Côte d'Ivoire %	14.6	—
Togo %	9.0	—
Belgium %	5.0	—
Singapore %	—	12.8
China %	—	11.6
Thailand %	—	8.0
Italy %	—	6.4
India %	—	6.0
Colombia %	—	5.2
Ghana %	—	5.2
Niger %	—	4.0

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 12,506
 Paved %: 16.0
 Automobiles: 26,500
 Trucks and Buses: 22,600

Railroad: Track Length km: 622
 Passenger-km: —
 Freight-km: —
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: —
 Total Deadweight Tonnage: —
 Airports: 33
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 29
 Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 149
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 34
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: —

Communications

Telephones 000: 65.4
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.10
 Cellular Telephones 000: 227
 Personal Computers 000: 26
 Internet Hosts per million people: 32
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 3

ENVIRONMENT

The environment of Burkina Faso has suffered in recent years because of drought that has rapidly increased the rate of desertification and soil erosion. The country's growing population and uneven population distribution have also put a strain on natural resources. The capital, Ouagadougou, is surrounded by a dead zone over 40 miles wide in which all trees have been stripped for use as fuel.

National parks and game preserves are the only places that large mammals such as elephants and buffalo can be found.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 25.9
 Average Annual Forest Change, 1990-2000, 000 ha: -15
 Nationally Protected Areas as % of Total Land Area: 15
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 0.09

LIVING CONDITIONS

Burkina Faso ranks among the bottom of countries worldwide in measures of quality of life. With 90 percent of the population living on subsistence farming, large numbers are in poverty and lead precarious lives subject to droughts and other natural disasters.

On the United Nations Human Development Index (HDI), Burkina Faso ranked 175th out of 177 countries in

the world in 2002. The HDI focuses on three measurable dimensions of human development: length and healthiness of life, education, and standard of living. Estimated life expectancy in 2004 was 44.2 years. Combined gross enrollment (not counting grade repeaters) in primary, secondary, and tertiary schools for 2001-02 was just 22 percent of eligible students. In terms of multiple measures of poverty, Burkina Faso was ranked the poorest in the world in 2002.

Almost half the population is under 15, and only 17 percent live in urban areas. For the vast majority of Burkinabes who live in villages, little has changed in their lives for hundreds of years. Round adobe huts with thatched roofs are still the norm, though corrugated aluminum roofs have become modern status symbols. The lack of proper sanitation and access to adequate and safe water is problematic. Village women often have to walk miles each day to search for fuel and water, though the construction of wells has made life easier for some. Modern conveniences such as electricity are scarce. Radios are powered by batteries and kerosene-lit lamps are typical.

In the cities architecture is generally French in inspiration. With rapid urbanization has come a housing shortage; most houses are quickly constructed with mud or brick and plaster. Even in urban areas, access to proper sanitation and drinking water is limited. As a result of all of these conditions, disease and malnutrition are widespread.

HEALTH

Health care in Burkina Faso is in a state of disarray. The country is plagued by a high incidence of malaria, gastrointestinal diseases, and HIV/AIDS, yet the medical delivery system is ill equipped to deal with such crises.

Periodic droughts and even plagues of locusts, as in 2004, have devastated crop production, leading to acute malnutrition and sometimes outright starvation. As of 2000, 19 percent of the population was undernourished. Only 51 percent of the population in 2001 had access to improved water sources. In addition to malaria, onchocerciasis (river blindness), sleeping sickness, leprosy, yellow fever, and bilharzia are endemic. HIV/AIDS has grown to near epidemic proportions, as it has in other sub-Saharan African nations. As of 2001, 4 percent of the population was infected by the virus. In 2003 there were 29,000 HIV/AIDS deaths and 300,000 people living with HIV/AIDS. By 2003 there were already 260,000 AIDS orphans. Antiretroviral drugs were not readily available.

Infants traditionally experienced low immunization rates, but a government-funded immunization program has helped to alleviate this inadequacy. In 2002, only 46 percent of one-year-olds were immunized for measles and 41 percent for diphtheria, pertussis, and tetanus. The infant mortality rate was 98.67 deaths per 1,000 live

births. The death rate in 2004 was 18.79 deaths per 1,000 people.

Hospitals exist only in the leading towns, but the government has improved primary health care by raising the number of village clinics to 7,000. As of 2004 there were only 4 doctors for every 100,000 people. Government expenditures on health care in 2001 totaled 1.8 percent of GDP.

In 2003 international donors agreed to provide \$123 million to fund the first phase of Burkina Faso's National Health Development Plan, modernizing the medical delivery system. Although a meningitis epidemic took more than 900 lives in 2003 and malaria remains a major cause of death in the country, with 5,000 dying annually, the plan particularly focuses on the rising incidence of HIV/AIDS.

In rural areas many still use traditional health-care methods; villages usually have someone who knows how to treat simple bone fractures, for example. Traditional cures are mixed with beliefs about magic, with fetishes and incantations used. Some herbal remedies are also employed.

Health

Number of Physicians: 490
 Number of Dentists: 36
 Number of Nurses: 3,190
 Number of Pharmacists: 60
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 4
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 98.67
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 1,000
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 1.8
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: —
 HIV Infected % of adults: 4.2
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 41
 Measles: 46
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 12
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 51

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Grains such as millet and sorghum are the dietary staples of Burkinabes. A porridge made from millet is eaten at most meals. Boiled until firm, the porridge can be broken off like bread and then dipped into sauces, which also make up a part of almost every meal. These sauces include sauce with rice, *riz sauce*, vegetable sauce with rice, *riz gras*, a fish-based sauce, *sauce de poisson*, sauce with beef and eggplant *boeuf sauce aubergine*, and sauce with mutton and tomatoes, *mouton sauce tomate*, though meat is usually considered a luxury item. In rural areas, bush rat is considered a delicacy.

Corn and rice are also grown and consumed, though not in the same quantities as millet. Sorghum is used to brew a local beer.

Malnutrition is a chronic problem in the country. As of 2000, 19 percent of the population was undernourished. Children breastfeed longer than elsewhere because of general food supply difficulties. In 2003, 87 percent of children 20 to 23 months were still breastfeeding. In the same year 12 percent of children under five were severely underweight.

Food and Nutrition

Food Supply as % of FAO Requirements: 95
 Undernourished % of total population: 18.8
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,320
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 217.8
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 24.2

STATUS OF WOMEN

The role of women in Burkina Faso is still limited by the cultural orientation of a rural society. The current government has emphasized its commitment to expanding opportunities for women, including educational opportunities. The Ministry of Family Progress, for example, works to promote greater participation by women in the nation's economic, social, and political life.

The few constitutional and legal protections for women's rights are poorly enforced. Discrimination against women is traditional. Female genital mutilation is still widely practiced, even though it is illegal and a government campaign has been mounted against it. Almost 70 percent of all women undergo female genital mutation; in 1994, 3.5 million women and girls were affected. Burkina Faso is used as a transit point for the trafficking of women and children for purposes of forced labor and prostitution; the government has made an effort to stop this criminal activity.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 12
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men age 15-24: 0.55
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 15.2

WORK

In 2003 there were an estimated 5 million in the labor force, with many also gaining seasonal employment in neighboring countries. About 90 percent of workers were engaged in agriculture, most at the subsistence level. There are no statistics on unemployment. Agricultural products, which made up 39.8 percent of GDP in 2003, include cotton, peanuts, shea nuts, sesame, sorghum, millet, corn, rice, and livestock. The remainder

of the workforce was divided between industry and the service sector. Industry, which accounted for 19.6 percent of GDP in 2003, produces cotton lint, beverages, agricultural processing, soap, cigarettes, textiles, and gold. The service sector accounted for 40.6 percent of GDP in 2003.

The right to form unions is recognized for all except police officers. The right to strike is also guaranteed. There were 12 trade unions and four labor confederations operating in the country in 2002. Labor laws include a minimum working age of 14, a maximum workweek of 40 hours, and a minimum monthly wage in 2002 of \$40. However, as agriculture is the primary industry, and as most agriculture is done at the subsistence level and thus not covered by legislation, such employment regulation figures are virtually meaningless—nor are health and safety regulations enforced.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 5,000,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 46.4
 Labor by Sector: %
 Agriculture: 90
 Other: 10
 Unemployment %: —

EDUCATION

Education is free, compulsory, and universal between the ages of seven and 13.

Schooling lasts for 13 years, as divided into six years of primary school, four years of lower secondary school, and three years of upper secondary school, culminating in the baccalaureate. Nearly 7 percent of primary-school students and 43 percent of secondary-school students are enrolled in private schools. School enrollment figures in the country are among the worst in Africa. In the 2000–01 school year, 36 percent of eligible children attended primary school, 64 percent of whom reached the fifth grade. The school year runs from October to July. The language of instruction is French throughout. Higher education is primarily provided by the University of Ouagadougou, with an enrollment of about 3,086 students.

Improvements have been made in the country's educational system, as witnessed by trends in adult literacy. From an adult literacy rate of about 13 percent in 1995–99, the estimated 2003 adult literacy rate had risen to 26.6 percent. Public expenditures on education amounted to about 3 percent of GDP in 1999, and by 2003 more than 100,000 children who may have never had access to primary school had benefited from 230 new satellite schools being built across the country, largely with the help of international funds.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 26.6
 Male %: 36.9
 Female %: 16.6
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 3.7
 First Level: Primary schools: 2,971
 Teachers: 22,664
 Students: 1,012,150
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 44.7
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 36.2
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 173
 Teachers: 7,559
 Students: 218,493
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 31.3
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 9
 Third Level: Institutions: 9
 Teachers: —
 Students: 16,054
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 1.4
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 3.0

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Research and development in Burkina Faso is primarily limited to agriculture and medicine. With government funding of research and development at less than 0.2 percent of GDP, the four major research institutes in the nation need to look for funding from abroad—primarily from France. France maintains two additional research institutes in the country, focusing on medicine and geology. Also, the International Development Research Center has been active in the country since 1974, focusing its research on different aspects of the country's major subsistence crops, including resistance to drought and pests, storage, and productivity.

Many Burkinabes go abroad to attain science educations, though the University of Ouagadougou has institutes of mathematics and physics, chemistry, natural science, technology, and health sciences. The University of Ouagadougou is also the center for nuclear research in the country. A 14-nation school of engineering and rural equipment is also located in Ouagadougou. In 1987–97 science and engineering students accounted for 37 percent of college and university enrollments.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million persons: 13
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 0.17
 High-Tech Exports \$million: 2.43
 Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

Three daily newspapers are published in the country, including the government-funded daily *Sidwaya*. Aggregate

daily circulation is 15,000. The press is characterized by active government participation and ownership but no overt censorship.

The national news agency is Agence Burkinabe de Presse (ABP). AFB, Reuters, UPI, and Tass maintain bureaus in the capital.

The state-owned Radiodiffusion-Télévision Burkina, founded in 1963, operates a television and radio service. Additionally Radio Bobo is a regional service. There are about a dozen private radio stations, including Radio Pulsar and Radio Horizon, and a private television channel.

In 2004 the country ranked 64th in the world out of 167 countries by the Reporters without Borders (RWB) in its annual world press freedom index, based on surveys sent to over 100 journalists who are members of RWB partner organizations as well as related specialists such as researchers, jurists, and human rights activists. Survey questions deal with direct attacks on journalists and the media as well as other indirect sources of pressure against the press. The killing of the journalist Norbert Zongo in 1998 had a chilling effect on the media, leading in some cases to increased self-censorship.

In 2003 there were 48,000 Internet users and 227,000 cellular telephone users.

Media

Newspapers and Periodicals: —
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: 12
 Radio Receivers million: 6
 per 1,000: 433
 Television sets 000: 130
 per 1,000: 11

CULTURE

With the more than 60 different ethnic groups that make up the population, Burkina Faso cannot be said to have one culture. The culture of the country is determined by those ethnic groups—most prominent among them the Mossi—and by the French colonial holdovers, as seen in some of the architecture of the capital, Ouagadougou.

Native tribes such as the Mossi and Bobo are known for the artwork of the masks they create for certain rites of passage, such as funerals and weddings. The Mossi antelope masks, some of which are over seven feet in height, are painted red and white and used for funerals. Butterfly masks come from the Bobo; they are painted in red, black, and white and used for fertility ceremonies.

The Mossi professional praise singers, or *djeli*, perform at funerals and social gatherings, reciting the names and histories of past rulers. Mossi song, dance, and drumming are also well known and are used during special rites as well as to celebrate such everyday activities as work.

One clan makes drums that can be played by hand or with sticks and whose pitch can be altered by tightening or loosening the drumhead. The Mossi also play flutes and stringed instruments. Some other typical traditional instruments are the *djembe*, a drum of Malinke origin, the wooden xylophone known as the *balafon*, the *bende*, a halved gourd covered with a goat skin, and the *kora*, a stringed instrument used by the *djeli* singers.

More contemporary culture deals with film and crafts. Ouagadougou draws large numbers of visitors to the biennial Pan-African Film Festival (FESPACO), which over the years has become a showcase for African independent cinema. Burkinabe filmmakers such as Gaston Kaboré and Idrissa Ouédraogo produce feature-length films in the Mooré language; such films are thus accessible to at least half the Burkinabe population and have also been exported to other African countries and Europe. The International Crafts Fair, which is held in alternate years, celebrates the rich and diverse craft production of the nation's artisans. It is the largest such fair on the African continent.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
 Volumes: 8,972
 Registered borrowers: 98
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts national currency million: 870
 Number of Cinemas: 35
 Seating Capacity: 55,000
 Annual Attendance: 4,900,000

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

The folklore and mythology of Burkina Faso is particularly rich, again thanks to the number of ethnic groups in the country. The Mossi, the dominant ethnic group, are descendants of a complex empire with intricate court rituals. The Mossi have a subsequent wealth of oral tradition that not only details the history of the golden age of the Mossi Empire but also lays out a creation myth and has a treasury of proverbs by which wisdom and learning were passed on from generation to generation. One common Mossi proverb is “Words are spoken with their shells, let the wise man come to shuck them.”

Mossi professional praise singers, or *djeli*, perform at funerals and social gatherings, reciting names and histories of past rulers, but the society as a whole also partakes in this oral tradition. The origins of the Mossi people are detailed in the story of Princess Nyennega, who married against her father's wishes, and whose son, Ouédraogo, ultimately united the two tribes that became the Mossi.

Many of the other ethnic groups of the country were converted to Islam from their native animism; hence their

original folklore tends to be overlaid with stories from the Koran as well as from the Old Testament.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

While major urban areas have nightclubs and cinemas as in the West, most of the country does not even have access to electricity. Therefore, entertainment and recreational activities are of the traditional sort, revolving around festivals or important rites of passage. Storytelling and singing are important traditions among all ethnic groups. The Mossi's professional class of praise singers, the *djeli*, perform at funerals and social gatherings, reciting the names and histories of past rulers. The West African game of *warri* was once popular, especially among the Mossi, though its popularity has faded in recent years.

Radio is a popular source of entertainment in the countryside and in villages, as radios can run on batteries; television, meanwhile, is all but nonexistent in the villages. In 1999 there were only 11 televisions for every 1,000 people, and the country's television stations broadcast on a limited schedule. While the country boasts a new movie industry and holds the influential Pan-African Film Festival, this form of entertainment is limited to urban areas. As of 1997 there were only 0.45 movie attendances per person per year and 5.04 seats for every 1,000 people. With high illiteracy rates, reading is not popular outside of urban areas. In 1997 there were only five books published in the country.

ETIQUETTE

As throughout Africa, the right hand is used for greetings, offerings, and eating. The left hand is taboo. Failing to greet or show respect to elders is considered a grave infraction of the etiquette code. Respect is demonstrated in numerous ways, including prostration. The Mossi in particular are known for their kindness and generosity toward strangers.

FAMILY LIFE

As most of the population farms on a subsistence level, and as property is not individually owned but rather allocated on a kinship basis, the family is the most important domestic unit for all Burkinabe. Even those in cities generally have some connection to rural areas, as social welfare programs and pensions are not common. Thus, city dwellers ultimately rely on the land they can farm by right of kinship privileges.

Polygamy is common in the patriarchal family structure, even in non-Muslim groups. Each wife has her own

hut for herself and her children in the family compound. Among the Mossi and other ethnic groups, marriages have been traditionally arranged by parents when their children are usually around 10 to 12—or in some cases even before the child has been born. The family of the female child to be married will often receive gifts from the family of the groom, with the gifts increasing in value as the marriage approaches. This is known as the “bride price” and is something like a reverse dowry. Also, to show respect to the family of the bride, the groom will often do some work or other favors for the family. After the marriage, the couple generally moves in with the husband's family. If a husband dies, the children remain with the father's family, and his wife will marry his brother. In most ethnic groups, the bride is brought in from outside the patrilineal family, though among the Dyula, for example, cousins were at one time chosen as wives—a custom that is dying out. Also, though most ethnic groups transfer goods and property rights patrilineally, some do so matrilineally.

Some of these traditions are breaking down in the modern world, and even in traditional settings not all marriages are arranged. Nevertheless, roles are strictly established so that families can survive. Men traditionally work the fields, while women take care of domestic chores. Children help to gather fuel and water and to watch over the family's animals. Family size is decreasing, though in 2004 the fertility rate was still a prolific 6.28 births per woman. However, with the death rate at 18.79 deaths per 1,000 population, the infant mortality rate at 98.67 deaths per 1,000 live births, and a life expectancy of only 44.2 years, the population growth rate was just 2.57 percent in 2004.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Western-style clothing is fast becoming the norm in Burkina Faso, as elsewhere in the world. Used cut-off jeans and T-shirts or locally made cotton shirts are typical for men and youths working in the fields, while women buy cotton fabric from stores to wrap around their waists. In both the cities and the countryside most women now also wear tops or blouses.

Cotton was an important precolonial crop, as it has once again become. The men traditionally wove the cotton into cloth, while the women processed it, making loose trousers for the men, with long shirts and robes, and colorful rectangular cotton strips for themselves, which they could wrap around their waists as skirts. For special occasions people had embroidered clothing.

Muslim men have adapted this traditional look to the modern world, wearing the cotton pants and long shirt. Some older men still wear traditional ethnic robes.

Whether Western or traditional, the dress of the Burkinabe tends to be conservative.

SPORTS

Soccer is the national sport of Burkina Faso, as it is throughout most of Africa. Bicycle racing is also immensely popular. Though the country has a national basketball team, its importance is small outside of urban areas.

In track and field, Idrissa Sanou is a Burkinabe runner who took a bronze medal in the 400-meter race at the 2002 Athletics World Cup. In the 2004 Summer Olympics he took fourth place in his heat for the 100-meter race and thus did not make it into the second round.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1960** Burkina Faso (under the name Upper Volta) achieves independence, with Maurice Yaméogo as president. A new constitution is approved.
- 1965** Yaméogo is reelected president, earning 99.98 percent of the votes cast.
- 1966** Following a general strike, mobs attack the National Assembly and other public buildings in the capital; the army chief of staff Sangoulé Lamizana assumes supreme power and compels Yaméogo to resign; the constitution is dissolved; a consultative committee of 41 members replaces the National Assembly.
- 1969** Former president Yaméogo is sentenced to five years at hard labor.
- 1970** Lamizana announces a new constitution and renewal of political activities. In the first elections since 1965, the Union Démocratique Voltaïque (UDV) wins 37 of 57 seats.
- 1971** Gerard Kango Ouédraogo, head of the UDV, is elected premier by the National Assembly. Drought of unprecedented severity hits the Sahel.
- 1974** Military dismisses Premier Ouédraogo, suspends the constitution, and dissolves the National Assembly; Lamizana assumes the post of premier; all political parties are abolished; National Consultative Committee for Renewal is set up with 65 appointed members. Border dispute between Mali and Burkina Faso erupts into border clashes; four West African heads of state, meeting in Lomé, order a truce in the border war; under the auspices of a mediation commission, Mali and Burkina Faso reach agreement.
- 1977** New constitution and a return to civilian rule are approved in popular referendum.
- 1978** In national elections, the UDV gains a clear majority in the restored National Assembly; Joseph Conombo is elected premier by the National Assembly; Lamizana is elected president for five-year term.
- 1980** President Lamizana is overthrown in an army coup led by Saye Zerbo; Zerbo abolishes the constitution of 1977, dissolves the National Assembly, and bans all political parties.
- 1982** Zerbo is ousted in an army coup led by Jean-Baptiste Ouédraogo, who sets up the Conseil de Salut du Peuple (CSP).
- 1983** Premier Thomas Sankara is arrested but later released. The armed forces withdraw from politics and the CSP is disbanded. Sankara ousts Ouédraogo and sets up a left-leaning regime called the Conseil National Révolutionnaire (CNR).
- 1984** Upper Volta is renamed Burkina Faso, meaning “the land of upright men.”
- 1987** Sankara is overthrown in a bloody coup led by Blaise Compaoré.
- 1989** Seven men, including the minister of defense, are executed for attempting to overthrow Compaoré.
- 1990** Under pressure, Compaoré announces plans for a new constitution calling for democratization as well as plans for multiparty elections to be held at the end of 1991.
- 1991** A national referendum approves the new constitution, which immediately goes into effect.
- 1994** The World Bank reports that the country has made significant strides in economic progress.
- 1997** A constitutional amendment permits an unlimited number of presidential terms.
- 1998** Compaoré, facing opposition candidates for the first time, easily wins the presidential elections.
- 2000** Ernest Yonli is appointed prime minister. The World Bank announces in July that Burkina Faso will receive \$700 million in debt relief. The constitution is amended to limit the president to a 5-year term, renewable once, beginning with the 2005 presidential election.
- 2001** Thousands of Burkinabes return home from Côte d’Ivoire, protesting harassment and persecution by officials there. Tensions increase between the two countries. An outbreak of 7,000 cases of meningitis begins in April. HIV/AIDS reaches record levels: 7 percent of the population is reported infected.
- 2002** In parliamentary elections Compaoré’s Congress for Democracy and Progress party barely maintains its majority, winning 57 of 111 seats.
- 2003** Over 350,000 Burkinabes flee violence brought about by the civil war in Côte d’Ivoire. The meningitis outbreak takes 900 lives. In October, 16 people—including an opposition politi-

- cal leader—are arrested for allegedly plotting a coup against Compaoré.
- 2004** Swarms of locusts appear in the north in August, devastating crop production by as much as 90 percent.
- 2005** President Compaoré wins a third term in office.

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- Burkina Faso.** *Annuaire Statistique; Selected Issues and Statistical Annex* (IMF Staff Country Report), 2002; *Recensement général de la population du 10 au 20 décembre 1985*

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- CIA World Factbook: Burkina Faso
<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/uv.html>
- Embassy of Burkina Faso
<http://burkinaembassy-usa.org>
- Premier Ministère Burkina Faso
<http://www.primature.gov.bf/>

BURUNDI

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Burundi (République de Burundi, Republika y'u Burundi)

ABBREVIATION

BD

CAPITAL

Bujumbura

HEAD OF STATE & GOVERNMENT

President Pierre Nkurunziza (from 2005)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Republic

POPULATION

6,370,609 (2005)

AREA

27,830 sq km (10,745 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Hutu and Tutsi

LANGUAGES

Kirundi and French

RELIGIONS

Christianity and animism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Burundi franc

NATIONAL FLAG

A white saltire extending from a central circle containing three green-bordered red stars. The upper and lower fields divided by the saltire are red, while the left and right fields are green.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A yellow-bordered red shield displaying the gold head of an African lion; the shield is set against a backdrop of white native spears in the form of a tripod. Beneath is a white scroll with the national motto in black: "Unity, Work, Progress."

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"Beloved Burundi"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day); May 1 (Labor Day); July 1 (Independence Day, National Day); September 18 (UPRONA Day); October 13 (Hero of the Nation, Prince Louis Rwagasore Day); November 28 (Republic Day); Christian festivals, including All Saints' Day, Ascension, Pentecost, Assumption, and Christmas

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

July 1, 1962

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

November 1, 2004

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Burundi, a landlocked country in the heart of Africa, has an area of 27,830 sq km (10,745 sq mi), extending 263 km (163 mi) north-northeast to south-southwest and 194 km (121 mi) east-southeast to west-northwest.

Burundi's total international border of 974 km (605 mi) is shared with three countries: Rwanda (290 km; 180 mi), Tanzania (451 km; 280 mi), and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (233 km; 145 mi).

Burundi is part of the Great East African Plateau, forming the divide between two watersheds: the Nile and the Zaire River basins. The western slopes of the Zaire-

Nile ridgeline abruptly merge into the Great East African Rift Valley toward the Rusizi Plain and Lake Tanganyika, while the eastern slopes shelve toward the central uplands. There are three natural regions within this configuration: the Rift Valley, known as the Imbo, along the western border; the eastern zone, known as Kumoso; and the central mountain region.

Burundi's rivers are connected to two major river basins: those of the Zaire and the Nile rivers. The most important river flowing into the Democratic Republic of the Congo system is the Rusizi, which has its source in Lake Kivu and forms the border between that country and Burundi.

Burundi



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Geography

Area sq km: 27,830; sq mi 10,745
 World Rank: 142nd
 Land Boundaries, km: Democratic Republic of the Congo 233;
 Rwanda 290; Tanzania 451
 Coastline, km: 0
 Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Lake Tanganyika 772
 Highest: Mount Heha 2,670
 Land Use %
 Arable Land: 35.1

Permanent Crops: 14.0
 Forest: 3.7
 Other: 47.2

Population of Principal Cities (1999)

Bujumbura	319,098
Gitega	23,500

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Despite its location within 5° of the equator, no region of Burundi is uncomfortably hot. The central plateau enjoys pleasant weather, with an average temperature of 20°C (68°F). The Imbo is warmer, averaging 23°C (73°F). The capital, Bujumbura, has an average annual temperature of 25°C (77°F). The upper elevations of the eastern plateau generally are cool, with temperatures below 19°C (66°F), but the easternmost savannas are hotter, with temperatures up to 23°C (73°F).

Although some rain falls every month, two wet seasons alternate with two dry seasons. June, July, August, January, and February are considered dry months, while the first wet season lasts from March to May and the second wet season from September to December. Rainfall is irregular, falling most heavily in the northwest. In the plateaus the average rainfall is 119.4 cm (47 in), but in the lower regions it declines to 76.2 cm (30 in) per year. Violent rainstorms are common at the higher elevations.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature
Central Plateau: 68°F
Imbo and Savanna: 73°F
Bujumbura: 77°F
Eastern Plateau: 66°F
Average Rainfall: 30 in to 47 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Severe deforestation has denuded most of the country, leaving savannah grassland in most locales. Wooded areas are found only at plateaus of higher elevations and on mountain slopes. Remaining trees include fig, acacia, eucalyptus, and oil palm. There are 2,500 recorded species of higher plants.

With deforestation and also with widespread poaching has come a corresponding loss of wildlife. Large mammals, such as lions, wild boar, warthogs, baboons, antelope, and hippopotamus are endangered and seen mostly in the country's game preserves, while the elephant has become almost extinct. In total, there are 107 known species of mammals, six of which were endangered as of 2002. More than 450 species of breeding birds have been identified, as well as game birds, including quail, duck, geese, and guinea fowl. In the waters of Lake Tanganyika along the country's southwestern border are found over 100 fish species unique to Burundi. The lake also has freshwater sardines, Nile perch, and numerous tropical fish. Burundi is also home to 79 species of reptile (including crocodiles) and 18 amphibian species.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005:	6,370,609
World Rank:	98th
Density per sq km:	228.9
% of annual growth (1999-2003):	1.9
Male %:	49.7
Female %:	50.3
Urban %:	10.0
Age Distribution %:	
0-14:	46.4
15-64:	50.9
65 and over:	2.7
Population 2025:	13,913,000
Birth Rate per 1,000:	39.68
Death Rate per 1,000:	17.61
Rate of Natural Increase %:	2.9
Total Fertility Rate:	5.9
Expectation of Life (years):	
Males:	42.73
Females:	44.0
Marriage Rate per 1,000:	—
Divorce Rate per 1,000:	—
Average Size of Households:	4.6
Induced Abortions:	—

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

The ethnic composition of Burundi is relatively simple, especially in comparison with neighboring countries. The population is made up mainly of Hutu (properly Bahutu) and Tutsi (also known as Watutsi, Watusi, or Batutsi) peoples, who constitute 83 percent and 15 percent of the inhabitants, respectively. The Twa, a pygmoid group, and small numbers of Europeans and Asians account for the remaining 2 percent.

Burundi had, until quite recently, a feudal social system in which the Hutu, though numerically dominant, functioned as serfs and the Tutsi as masters. As a consequence, the Hutu have adopted a number of Tutsi cultural traits and social values. The two tribes differ markedly in physical appearance. The average Hutu is short and stocky, while the Tutsi are tall, slender, angular, and relatively light-skinned.

LANGUAGES

The two official languages of Burundi are Kirundi and French. Swahili is spoken as a lingua franca throughout the country.

Kirundi is closely related to Kinyarwanda, an official language of Rwanda. All Burundians speak Kirundi, but there are dialectical variations.

RELIGIONS

Burundi has no official religion. In terms of numbers, Christianity claims over 63 percent of the population, in-

digenous religions 23 percent, and Islam 10 percent. Of the Christians, nearly 93 percent are Roman Catholics, and 7 percent are adherents of various Protestant denominations. Though Christian missions have been successful in proselytizing and in educational, medical, and social work, adherence to Christian beliefs among converts does not preclude retention of elements of traditional religions. The first Roman Catholic East African diocese was established at Kivu in 1912. The Anglicans form the largest Protestant denomination.

Burundi is a secular state, and religious freedoms are restricted by the government. All religious associations must receive approval from the government, and government authorities must be informed in advance of religious gatherings. Such gatherings are strictly limited to recognized places of worship (churches, mosques, or temples), and religious services are authorized only after midday on Saturday and Sunday. (In spite of this order, the government does not interfere with Muslim worship on Friday.)

The Jehovah's Witnesses sect is banned because its doctrines challenge certain precepts of civil authority. Seventh-Day Adventists' activities in Burundi were banned in 1986. Other churches have suffered various harassments. Though the constitution guarantees freedom of religion, the government has made it clear that churches are to confine their activities to religion and social work and to stay out of political matters, which include Hutu/Tutsi relations.

Religious Affiliations	
Roman Catholic	3,950,000
Protestant	318,500
Indigenous Beliefs	1,465,000
Muslim	637,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Burundi was settled by three waves of peoples: first the Twa, a pygmy tribe of hunters; then the Hutu, a Bantu group, who probably arrived around the 14th century; and finally the Tutsi, a group of tall pastoral nomads who arrived between the 15th and 16th centuries. The Tutsi introduced a caste system to keep the original Hutu and Twa in subjection. The land was ruled by the Tutsi king, known as the *mwami*, who was always chosen from the elite Tutsi tribe, Ganwa. Prior to its colonial rulers, little is known of the history of Burundi. However, according to legend, Ntare Rushatsi, the founder of the original dynasty, came from Rwanda or Buha in the 17th century.

Burundi was under colonial rule for 77 years—from 1885, when the country, then known as Urundi, was designated a German sphere of interest at the Berlin Conference, to 1962, when Belgium formally granted it

independence. However, it was not until the mid-1890s that German rule was officially extended over the whole country. In 1914 Germans in Burundi numbered only 190, of whom 130 were missionaries, 40 were soldiers, six were officials, and the rest were traders. Burundi was occupied by Belgium during World War I and in 1923 became a mandated territory of the League of Nations under Belgian supervision. Although under the terms of the mandate Burundi and Rwanda were to be maintained as a separate territory, Belgium was permitted to administer it as part of the Belgian Congo under a vice governor-general. The chief administrative officer in Rwanda and Burundi was the resident general. Belgium retained the traditional political organization under which the territory was divided into 36 chiefdoms under a *mwami*.

Belgian rule in Burundi was successful and intensive on all levels. The social structure was unalterably changed by the work of Christian missions, while the legal and administrative structures were rebuilt entirely on Belgian lines. The other major Belgian legacy was the French language, which supplanted existing Bantu languages in administration and education. The departure of the Belgians was peaceful, and there are no widespread anti-European feelings apparent in the country.

At independence Burundi retained its monarchical form of government under the traditional Tutsi rulers. Elections held in 1961, prior to independence, were won by the Union for National Progress party (UPRONA), which had been formed in 1958 by the king's son, Ganwa (Prince Rwagasore). Prince Rwagasore became prime minister but was assassinated after two weeks in office. He was succeeded by his brother-in-law, André Muhirwa.

Burundi politics are shaped by rivalry between the Hutu and the Tutsi. During the early years of independence, political stability was maintained by the monarchy, but in 1966 Mwambutsa IV was deposed by his son Charles, who reigned as Ntare V. Charles, in turn, was deposed a few months later by the prime minister, Michel Micombero, who declared a republic and took over the presidency of UPRONA, which was given monopoly status. Two alleged plots against the government in 1969 and 1972 culminated in an unsuccessful coup in 1972 in which Ntare V was killed. Micombero's Tutsi supporters held the Hutu responsible for the former king's death and initiated reprisals, during which tens of thousands of Hutu, including all of the group's literate members, were killed.

Micombero was overthrown in 1976 in a bloodless coup that brought Jean-Baptiste Bagaza, another southern Tutsi, to power. He suspended the constitution, declared the second republic, and became president of the military Supreme Revolutionary Council. The council was abolished effective January 1980, and its functions given to the Central Committee of UPRONA, which ad-

opted legislation that established a national assembly to be elected by universal adult suffrage. Elections held in 1982 and 1984 were mere formalities. Bagaza and UP-RONA candidates ran unopposed. The president, in an effort to maintain stability, appointed several Hutu to important positions, but tension between the Hutu and Tutsi persisted.

Bagaza's second term was marked by increasingly strained relations with the Roman Catholic Church, which the president saw as a rival power aligned with the Hutu. Priests were detained without trial, missionaries expelled, and parish councils abolished. The government also nationalized some of the seminaries, closed catechism classes, and banned the use of religious texts in education.

In 1987 Bagaza was overthrown in a coup led by Major Pierre Buyoya. He suspended the constitution, dissolved the National Assembly, and set up a Military Committee for National Salvation to exercise power. The following year, a tribal dispute between the Hutu and the Tutsi resulted in the slaughter of tens of thousands of Hutu, including children. In response, Buyoya named a 23-member cabinet that, for the first time, had a Hutu majority. A Hutu was also appointed to the newly restored post of prime minister.

In 1992 Buyoya's government adopted a new constitution, which among its other provisions banned political organizations based upon ethnicity. In June of that same year free elections were held. Melchior Ndadaye, a Hutu, was elected president.

Ndadaye was assassinated in a military coup in October 1993. This coup marked the beginning of another period of ethnic fighting, with as many as 150,000 Tutsi being killed. Cyprien Ntaryamira, a Hutu, was eventually chosen president, and he took office in February of the following year. However, he was killed in a plane crash two months later. Fighting intensified until September, when a new government was formed by Sylvestre Ntibantunganya, a Hutu.

In July 1996 the Tutsi-controlled army staged a coup and reinstated Pierre Buyoya as president. The president was successful in having economic sanctions eased in 1997 and lifted in 1999. However, the civil war continued despite a ceasefire in 2000 and an arrangement for a transitional government brokered by Nelson Mandela in 2001. Under the terms of the agreement, Buyoya remained president until 2003, when his vice president, Domitien Ndayizeye, a Hutu, took over the remaining term of transitional presidency. Fighting continued in 2004 between government forces and rebel factions that refused to take part in a power-sharing deal. Though nominally over, the conflict in Burundi was still alive in 2005, creating a precarious situation for the government and country as a whole. In March voters backed a post-transition power-sharing constitution and in August the

parliament elected Pierre Nkurunziza, a Hutu, as president.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS (PRESIDENTS)

1966–76	Michel Micombero
1976–87	Jean-Baptiste Bagaza
1987–93	Pierre Buyoya
1993	Melchior Ndadaye
1994	Cyprien Ntaryamira
1994–96	Sylvestre Ntibantunganya
1996–2003	Pierre Buyoya
2003–05	Domitien Ndayizeye
2005–	Pierre Nkurunziza

CONSTITUTION

Burundi was a monarchy until 1966, when it was proclaimed a republic. The first republican constitution was promulgated in 1974, but it was suspended within two years, following the military coup led by Jean-Baptiste Bagaza in 1976. A new constitution was approved by the National Assembly.

Following the 1987 coup, executive and legislative powers were assumed by the Military Committee for National Salvation, which elected its chairman president of the republic.

In 1991 the government proposed a new constitution, which was adopted in 1992. The new constitution called for a national assembly with 81 members elected from 16 constituencies by proportional representation. The government is overseen by a 10-member national security council. The president is elected by universal suffrage. In 1998 the size of the legislature was enlarged to 121 seats. In 2001 the National Assembly was expanded from 121 to approximately 140 seats under the transitional government. A new, post-transition constitution was approved by referendum in 2005. One controversial stipulation was that the president not be elected by popular vote, but rather by a vote of parliament.

PARLIAMENT

The National Assembly is a unicameral legislature that is elected by universal suffrage and whose members serve five-year terms. The assembly has not been a very strong body. While it does have the right to propose legislation, it ceded its power to hold a vote of confidence in the government in 1994. The body was suspended by presidential decree in 1996. A new Transitional National Assembly was inaugurated in 1998, consisting of 121 members. This number was again increased in 2001 to 140 seats.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Burundi legalized multiple parties in 1992. Among the most important are Union for National Progress, or UPRONA, the Tutsi party; the Burundi Democratic Front, or FRODEBU, the Hutu party; the Socialist Party of Burundi, or PSB; and the People's Reconciliation Party, or PRP. Opposition parties include Burundi African Alliance for the Salvation, or ABASA; Rally for Democracy and Economic and Social Development, or RADDES; the Party for National Redress, or PARENA; and, more recently, the National Council for Defense of Democracy and the Party for the Liberation of the Hutu People/National Liberation Forces. FRODEBU and UPRONA continue to be the majority parties.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For purposes of regional administration Burundi is divided into 16 provinces. Each province is headed by an appointed governor. The provinces are subdivided into 114 communes headed by elected councils.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The judicial structure and the legal codes are based on the Belgian model. The judiciary is not entirely independent. In addition to appointing judges, the president can dismiss them. The judiciary is expected to adhere to the guidance and recommendations of the government. Nevertheless, there is a high degree of autonomy in the day-to-day administration of justice through the courts, and due process is largely observed. Court decisions cannot be overturned by the executive branch. The president can reduce sentences and can issue pardons.

The judicial system is overburdened by a lack of resources and a backlog of cases, many of which are political in nature. Thus, many crimes go unreported in the country.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Burundi is faced with classic problems of an emerging nation: an ethnic imbalance where Tutsi, with 15 percent of the population, monopolize power; a history of genocide; limited natural resources; lack of access to the sea; and weak democratic traditions.

Torture and physical abuse occur occasionally during interrogation of violent prisoners or those who resist arrest. Preventive detention exists but is not commonly used. Legally, a person may be held for only five days before being charged. The separation of the judiciary and the executive is only a fiction, but trials are reasonably fair.

The government controls all domestic media. There is no television station, and in November 1980 the govern-

ment seized all television sets used for watching telecasts from the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Freedom of religion is observed in principle. However, the involvement of many foreign missionaries in social work with the poor Hutu has aroused government suspicions and prompted the government to ask the missionaries to leave the country.

Arbitrary violence, both from the government and from guerilla groups, still affects large segments of the population. Specific figures on the number of dead or injured are difficult to obtain, though widespread violence continued in parts of the country after the 2000 cease-fire and installation of a transitional, power-sharing government. A Truth and Reconciliation Commission was set up in 2005 to investigate cases of genocide during the protracted civil war.

FOREIGN POLICY

Burundi is the epicenter of one of the most violent ethnic conflicts in Central Africa, and this has influenced Burundi's foreign policy both toward its immediate neighbor, Rwanda and toward other African nations. The 1993 presidential assassination set off a chain of events that led to the massacre of millions of Hutu and Tutsi, and it also had reverberations in Congo (then Zaire), where the two communities carried their struggle. International efforts to contain ethnic violence were frustrated by the intransigence of the combatants as well as the Tutsi military leadership's opposition to a foreign military presence. However, when Tutsi power was restored in Rwanda, cooperative security arrangements were restored between Burundi and Rwanda. Burundi is a member, along with Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda, of the Organization for the Management and Development of the Kagera River Basin and also the Economic Community of the Central African States. Repatriation of the thousands of Burundian refugees in Tanzania has helped normalize relations with that country as well.

DEFENSE

The defense structure is headed by the president, who is a professional military officer and commander in chief of the armed forces. Operational command is exercised through the commander of the armed forces. Military manpower is provided by voluntary enlistment. The officer corps is almost entirely Tutsi.

The total strength of the armed forces in 2003 was 56,000. There are also 5,500 men in paramilitary units.

The army is organized into two infantry battalions, one parachute company, one commando company, and one armored car company. The navy has three patrol boats, and the air force has three combat aircraft.

The army was trained by Belgian advisers, and most of the equipment is of Belgian origin. The army has no offensive capability and is weakened by traditional rivalry between Hutu enlisted men and Tutsi officers.

The defense budget in 2003 was \$33.3 million, or 6.0 percent of GDP.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 56,000
 Military Manpower Availability: 1,419,755
 Military Expenditures \$million: 33.3
 as % of GDP: 6.0
 as % of central government expenditures:
 Arms Imports \$million: —
 Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

Burundi is a landlocked, resource-poor country with an underdeveloped manufacturing sector. The economy is predominantly agricultural, with roughly 90 percent of the population dependent on subsistence agriculture. Its economic health depends on the coffee crop, which accounts for 80 percent of foreign-exchange earnings. The ability to pay for imports therefore rests largely on the vagaries of the climate and the international coffee market. Since October 1993 the nation has suffered from massive ethnic-based violence, which has resulted in the death of perhaps 250,000 persons and the displacement of about 800,000 others. Foods, medicines, and electricity remain in short supply. Doubts about the prospects for sustainable peace continue to slow development. Only about 50 percent of children go to school, about two-thirds of the population lives in poverty, and approximately 6 percent of adults have HIV/AIDS. All of these factors have a harsh impact on the economy.

In 2003 Burundi's real gross domestic product (GDP) declined by 0.5 percent, owing to the negative impact of poor weather on the agricultural sector. The nonfarm economy, however, performed well. In the third quarter of 2002 the exchange rate depreciated by 20 percent, and food prices increased because of low agricultural output. As a result, inflation increased substantially in 2003, to 12 percent from 1.7 percent in 2002. Figures from 2003 also demonstrated poor performance, with a -1.3 percent real growth rate in GDP and an inflation rate of 10.7 percent.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 3.78
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 600
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 0.9
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: -1.0

Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:

Agriculture: 47.4
 Industry: 19.3
 Services: 33.3

Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:

Private Consumption: 92
 Government Consumption: 10
 Gross Domestic Investment: 9.8

Foreign Trade \$Million: Exports: 40

Imports: 128

% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 1.8

% of Income Received by Richest 10%: 32.9

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
192.8	239.7	261.8	246.6	286.0

Finance

National Currency: Burundi Franc (BIF)

Exchange Rate: \$1 = BIF 1,082.62

Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 119.6

Central Bank Discount Rate %: 15.5

Total External Debt \$billion: 1.133

Debt Service Ratio %: 63.59

Balance of Payments \$million: -35

International Reserves SDRs \$million: 66.3

Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
10.7

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 224.2

per capita \$: 31.10

Foreign Direct Investment \$000: 5

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year

Revenues \$million: 179.4

Expenditures \$million: 209

Budget Deficit \$million: 29.6

Tax Revenues as % of GDP: 15.4

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 47.4

Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 1.5

Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 0.02

Irrigation, % of Farms having: 5.5

Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 2.58

Total Farmland % of land area: 38.4

Livestock: Cattle 000: 325

Chickens million: 4.3

Pigs 000: 70

Sheep 000: 230

Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 8.57

Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 9.1

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 59.8
Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 18.0

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 14
Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 87
Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 14
Net Energy Imports % of use: —
Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: 39
 Production kW-hr million: 155
 Consumption kW-hr million: 170
Coal Reserves tons billion: —
 Production tons million: —
 Consumption tons million: —
Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
 Production cubic feet billion: —
 Consumption cubic feet billion: —
Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
 Production barrels 000 per day: —
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 3
Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$million: 128
Exports \$million: 40
Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 20.8
Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2002): 17.5
Balance of Trade \$million: –35

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Kenya %	14.6	—
Tanzania %	11.5	—
Uganda %	5.7	—
France %	5.1	—
Zambia %	5.1	—
China %	4.5	—
India %	4.5	—
Japan %	4.5	—
Switzerland %	—	31.6
United Kingdom %	—	15.8
Netherlands %	—	5.3
Rwanda %	—	5.3

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 14,480
 Paved %: 7.1
Automobiles: 7,000
Trucks and Buses: 9,300
Railroad: Track Length km: —
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: —

Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: —
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: —
Airports: 8
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 8
Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 36
Number of Tourists from 000: 35
Tourist Receipts \$million: 0.9
Tourist Expenditures \$million: —

Communications

Telephones 000: 23.9
Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.07
Cellular Telephones 000: 64
Personal Computers 000: 13
Internet Hosts per million people: 3.5
Internet Users per 1,000 people: 2.2

ENVIRONMENT

Burundi's environmental problems include soil erosion as a result of overgrazing and the expansion of agriculture into marginal lands. The country also suffers from deforestation; little forested land remains because of uncontrolled cutting of trees for fuel. Finally, the loss of forests has also meant a loss of habitat that threatens wildlife populations.

Because of the political and civil strife in the country, Burundi's environmental situation is further complicated, as there are a corresponding lack of institutional will, infrastructure, and resources to tackle these difficult ecological problems.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 3.7
Forest Change (1990–2000) hectares 000: –15
Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 6
Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 0.04

LIVING CONDITIONS

Life is harsh and short for most Burundians. As of 2002, 68 percent of the population lived below the poverty line; per capita GDP was only \$600 in 2003. Malnutrition is widespread: almost 70 percent of the population was undernourished in 2001. Life expectancy in 2004 was 43 years, and the infant mortality rate was 70 deaths per 1,000 live births. Estimates put the number of Burundians living with HIV/AIDS at around 6 percent. Education is a

luxury; only half the population is able to read and write. In a ranking of 175 countries in 2003, the United Nations' Human Development Index (HDI) placed Burundi in the low human development category, at 171st place. The HDI is a composite of several indicators, which measure a country's achievements in three main arenas of human development: longevity, knowledge and education, as well as economic standard of living.

The ethnic strife, genocide, destruction of homes and infrastructure, and economic destabilization of the decade-long civil war have exacerbated an already desperate situation. Despite a cease-fire and institution of a power-sharing transitional government, there was still fighting in the countryside and sometimes in the capital, Bujumbura, as of 2005. Despite these difficulties, 79 percent of the population had access to improved water sources in 2002.

The country has one of the highest population densities in Africa, yet 90 percent of the people live in the countryside in family or tribal units rather than villages. Family compounds, called *rugos*, are spread throughout the countryside, surrounded by a high hedge or reed wall. Inside, beehive-shaped huts are made of mud or woven bits of wood and covered with thatch or tin. Roads are largely unpaved, so travel and communication are difficult. Bicycles and scooters are used for transport and to ship farm products. Electricity is generally not found outside the urban areas. The hunt for fuel occupies much of the woman's day, for such domestic chores generally fall to females.

The civil war displaced about 800,000 Burundians, sending some as refugees to other countries and others inside Burundi, surviving in camps.

HEALTH

Burundians suffer from a host of health-related issues, including epidemic proportions of HIV/AIDS incidence (estimated at 6 percent in 2003), malaria, typhus, meningitis, sleeping sickness, tuberculosis, cholera, influenza, diarrhea, and measles. These conditions are worsened by widespread malnutrition: as of 2001, almost 70 percent of the population was undernourished. The effects of the civil war, which began in 1993 and was still fitfully going on in 2005, have also been enormous. An estimated 260,000 people lost their lives in the conflict, hundreds of thousands were injured and maimed, and 800,000 were displaced, putting a strain on an already overtaxed health care system. As of 2003 there were an estimated five physicians per 100,000 people. Total health care expenditures as of 1999 were estimated at 3 percent of GDP. The 2004 mortality rate in Burundi was 17.61 deaths per 1,000 population.

Some improvements have been made. The percentage of the population with access to safe drinking water,

for example, has increased from 58 percent in 1995 to 79 percent in 2002. Immunization rates have risen. In 2003, 69 percent of one-year-old children were immunized for polio, 74 percent for measles, 75 percent for DPT, and 84 percent for tuberculosis. However, children are especially prone to the ravages of HIV/AIDS. In 2003, 13 percent of children under age five were affected with AIDS-related illnesses, and only 40 percent of these children received medical attention. AIDS orphans are also an increasing problem in the country. In 2003 there were an estimated 200,000 children orphaned by the disease, which afflicts from 170,000 to 370,000 Burundians. In 2003 there were 24,000 HIV/AIDS deaths.

Health

Number of Physicians:	323
Number of Dentists:	—
Number of Nurses:	1,783
Number of Pharmacists:	62
Physician Density per 100,000 people:	5.2
Hospital Beds per 1,000:	—
Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births:	70.4
Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births:	1,000
Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP:	3.0
Health Expenditures per capita \$:	3
HIV Infected % of adults:	6.0
Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:	
DPT:	74
Measles:	75
Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %:	36
Access to Improved Water Source %:	79

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Nutrition is a grave problem in Burundi, as is evidenced in numerous statistics: 70 percent of the population were undernourished in 1999–2001, 45 percent of children under age five were moderately to severely underweight between 1995 and 2003, and 85 percent of children were still breast-fed at 20 to 23 months in 2003. Drought, poor land quality as a result of overuse, and competing needs of the coffee industry versus production of locally consumed crops for arable farm land all led to food shortages. Additionally, the civil war, which began in 1993, had a large negative impact on agricultural production.

Staple foods for Burundians are tubers, beans, and plantains. Sweet potatoes and cassava are particular favorites, often served with beans and cabbage. From cassava flour boiled in water, a thick, pastelike food, *ugali*, is made. This is also sometimes made from corn flour. Peas, peanuts, and dairy products, including milk and butter, are also typical, as is porridge made from sorghum or millet. Meat is not an everyday foodstuff. As cattle are kept largely for their milk, beef is eaten only rarely. Dried fish from Lake Tanganyika provides protein in the diet.

From bananas comes a kind of beer called *urwarwa*. Sorghum is also used to make beer, though in the cities lager-type beers are preferred. Lunch is the big meal of the day in the countryside. Breakfast is often skipped altogether or is a simple affair of milk and porridge. The evening meal is also small.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 67.8
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 1,620
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 29.4
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 140.3

STATUS OF WOMEN

Women in society hold a secondary position, although their status is undergoing considerable change from traditional patterns. The constitution provides for legal equality, and significant improvement in the legal status of women came in 1980 with the issuance of a new legal code on families. This code prohibits polygamy and the use of a dowry and allows women control of family matters in the absence of the husband. However, women still cannot inherit land and cannot work if forbidden to do so by their husbands. Only 5 percent of females are enrolled in secondary schools; although fewer women than men attain an education, once it is attained, women generally can find suitable employment. Even so, women still have far fewer possibilities for advancement than do their male counterparts. On paper, the government does not discriminate against women in hiring or with respect to the jobs open to them. Women are represented at all levels in the political life of the country. Still, their main vehicle of political expression is the women's movement affiliated with the ruling UPRONA, which remains dominated by males.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 18
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 0.92
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: —

WORK

One of the world's poorest countries, Burundi had a labor force of 2.99 million in 2002. Though no unemployment statistics exist, most of these workers are in agriculture, which in 2002 accounted for 93.6 percent of employment. The vast majority of such agricultural work was subsistence farming. Agricultural products include cof-

fee, cotton, tea, corn, sorghum, sweet potatoes, bananas, manioc (tapioca); beef, milk, and hides. Ethnic tradition comes into play in such occupational breakdowns, for the majority Hutu were traditionally agricultural laborers and herders, whereas farming, as opposed to owning cattle, was looked down upon by the Tutsi. Only 2.3 percent of the population were employed in industry in 2002, producing light consumer goods such as blankets, shoes, and soap, or involved in the assembly of imported components, public works construction, and food processing. The remaining 4.1 percent were in the service sector. In 2002, 68 percent of Burundians were living below the poverty level; GDP per capita was \$600 in 2003.

Constitutional protections for unionization are in place, and the right to strike is protected by the labor code. The Organization of Free Unions of Burundi is the sole labor confederation and has been independent since the rise of the multiparty system in 1992. Most union members are civil servants and have bargained collectively with the government. Child labor is restricted by legislation, though international agencies report that almost half the children between ages 10 and 14 work. There are also numerous instances of the use of children as soldiers.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 2,990,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 48.6
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 93.6
 Industry: 2.3
 Services: 4.1
 Unemployment %: —

EDUCATION

Education is free and compulsory for six years, between ages seven and 13. The academic year runs from September through July. Schooling consists of 13 years, with six years of primary education, after which students enter a seventh year called the preparatory year and then six years of secondary education in two three-year cycles. Kirundi is the language of instruction in primary schools, although French is used in secondary schools.

Public schools directly administered by the government account for only 7 percent of the primary-school enrollment. The other 93 percent is provided by approved schools run by Roman Catholic and Protestant organizations. Approved schools must conform to government regulations regarding curriculum and qualifications of the teaching staff.

Vocational and technical training is provided at the Technical School at Kamenge and at craft schools.

Such are the facts on paper. In reality, however, the provision of education in Burundi is among the worst in the world. Only 51.6 percent of the population was literate by a 2003 estimate; other estimates are even lower. Only 53 percent of eligible students attended primary school in 2002; less than two-thirds of these students reached grade 5. Secondary school enrollment was a mere 8 percent of eligible students. Less than 1 percent of the population receives any tertiary education. The University of Burundi, in Bujumbura, is the country's main institution of higher learning.

In 2001–02 there were 50 students for every teacher in Burundian primary schools. Nevertheless, public expenditure on education represents a large part of spending. As of 2002 it was 4.0 percent of GDP, or around 20 percent of all government expenditures.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 51.6
Male %: 58.5
Female %: 45.2
School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 5.6
First Level: Primary schools: 1,418
Teachers: 17,931
Students: 894,859
Student-Teacher Ratio: 49.9
Net Enrollment Ratio: 57.4
Second Level: Secondary Schools: 113
Teachers: 6,855
Students: 119,107
Student-Teacher Ratio: 19.2
Net Enrollment Ratio: 8.6
Third Level: Institutions: 8
Teachers: 782
Students: 11,915
Gross Enrollment Ratio: 2.0
Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 4.0

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Lacking a scientific professional class, Burundi must import its technology. This comes largely from Europe, though China and the United States have also contributed toward research in agriculture, hydrology, and mining. Bujumbura is home to several research centers and institutes, including the Ministry of Geology and Mines, the Institute of Agronomical Sciences of Burundi, and the National Center of Hydrometeorology. The Institut des Sciences Agronomiques du Burundi is a crop, livestock, and forestry research facility, while the Institut de Recherche Agronomique et Zootechnique is another government agency involved in research in crops and natural resources. Bujumbura is also home to the University of Burundi, with schools of medicine, science, agriculture, and applied science. Research at the university's agricultural school focuses on crops, livestock, forestry, fisher-

ies, and natural resources. Gitega is home to the Higher Institute of Agriculture.

In 1987–97, total expenditures for research and development totaled 0.3 percent of GNP; 32 technicians and 33 scientists and engineers per million people were engaged in research and development. In 2000 there were about 80 full-time researchers in agriculture alone.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
High-Tech Exports \$000: 98
Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

The only daily publication in Burundi is the government bulletin *Le renouveau de Burundi*, issued in French. The national news agency is Agence Burundaise de Presse (ABP). There was also a weekly newspaper, *Ubumwe*, published in Kirundi, with a 1999 circulation of 20,000, and *Burundi chrétien*, another weekly published in French. The government controls all domestic media. Before the mid-1980s, there was no television station, and in November 1980 the government seized all television sets used for watching telecasts from the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The official broadcasting organization, La Voix de la Révolution, broadcasts radio programs in Kirundi, French, and Swahili, with a shortwave transmitter at Bujumbura. Télévision Nationale du Burundi, was established in 1984. In 2001 there was only one television station, which was owned by the government, and four FM stations. As of 2000 there were 220 radios and 15 television sets for every 1,000 people.

Though there is no official press censorship and some different viewpoints are expressed in the media, media outlets operate under significant self-censorship, and the opposition press functions only sporadically. The government-operated radio station allows a measure of diversity. The European Union has funded a radio station. The press group Reporters sans Frontiers placed Burundi 92 out of 116 countries in its 2003 press-freedom rankings.

In 2003 there were 64,000 mobile cellular telephone users and 14,000 Internet users.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 1
Total Circulation 000: 15
Circulation per 1,000: 2.5
Books Published: —
Periodicals: 5

Radio Receivers million: 1.4
 per 1,000: 220
 Television sets 000: 100
 per 1,000: 15

CULTURE

The cultural heritage of Burundi is rich in music and dance. Originally such forms were used to celebrate royal power. The king kept musical ensembles and elite corps of dancers, called *intore*, who were trained in movement that included dramatic leaps, hand and arm gesticulations, and stomping. The sacred drum, *karyenda*, was traditionally carved from tree trunks and stood about three feet high. Drummers, or *tambourinaires*, used sticks to beat their drums, grouped in a large circle. Such festive occasions for drumming and dancing included the annual sorghum festival. Vocal music also has a long tradition in Burundi, performed solo or in groups. Such folk songs include lullabies, work, and hunting songs. One group of songs, *ibicuba*, is in praise of the near-holy cattle. Minstrels once traveled from area to area singing the news.

The musical and dance heritage has survived the days of monarchy; the government is encouraging such heritage, hoping that it will help to unite warring Hutu and Tutsi. Burundian craft workers still manufacture many of the instruments used in the traditional music. In addition to the drums, there is the thumb piano, *ikembe*, and the traditional stringed instrument, *indingiti*, which can be strummed or plucked like a banjo or bowed like a violin.

Weaving is another cultural heritage that is undergoing resurgence in the modern world. Tutsi women were noted for intricately woven screens with geometric designs. These were used by the well off as room dividers and household decorations. The Twa are also noted for their pottery. Arts and crafts, including basketry and beadwork, are displayed at the Living Museum in Bujumbura.

Major libraries are at the University of Burundi, the American Cultural Center, and the French Cultural Center in Bujumbura and the Burundi Literature Center in Gitega. Also in Gitega is the National Museum..

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 2
 Volumes: 11,000
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: 4
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Burundian society has a long and rich oral tradition. In both Hutu and Tutsi society such a tradition includes folktales, creation myths, proverbs, riddles and poetry. So-called “praise poetry,” lauds a person—usually the king—by a recitation of his feats. Praise poetry about cattle was also common. Epic poetry, especially among the Tutsi, deals with dynastic history mixed with mythology. For example, the travels and deeds of the god Imana are favorite Burundian themes. Not only are these tales and poems spoken, they are also sung, especially in the form called “whispered singing,” in which the men half-speak, half-sing, accompanied by traditional instruments.

Favorite tales for the Hutu involve the trickster Samadari. For the Tutsi, greedy Sebbugugu is at the center of other tales. With the 1972 genocide of educated classes of Hutu, the process of committing such tales (many of which are in Kirundi) to paper was set back severely.

Both Hutu and Tutsi believe in a common founder, Gilhanga, descendant of a clan of gods. The Tutsi elaborate on this myth, claiming that it was Gilhanga who led the Tutsi into Rwanda and Burundi and that therefore the gods had chosen the Tutsi to rule.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

In urban centers, where electricity is available, entertainment includes television, cinema, and dance clubs. In the rural areas, where the bulk of the population lives, such activities are not available or are available only on a limited basis. Here more traditional forms of entertainment exist, including storytelling and dancing at various festivals and holidays. Such activities were largely curtailed, even in the cities, as the result of the civil war. With a cease-fire and transitional government in place, the fighting is not as widespread, and Burundians are slowly returning to their old ways.

A checkers-like game, called locally *igisoro* and known as *mancala* in other parts of Africa, is popular, especially among Tutsi.

ETIQUETTE

As is the case throughout Africa, using the left hand is taboo in Burundi. It is impolite to give, take, or eat with the left hand. A handshake is a typical greeting, though between women or between men and women touching cheek to cheek three times is also common. Pointing is considered rude. Rather, to gesture toward something, Burundians use the entire arm with hand open and palm up. A similar gesture is used to beckon someone, though in this case the palm is down and the fingers are flexed

inward. Respect is shown toward elders and to those of a higher social class. Kneeling was typical in Hutu society, though such a show of respect or subservience is now dying out.

FAMILY LIFE

As with most pastoralists and farmers, Burundian life centers on the family. It is the family compound, for example, that is the basic social unit rather than the village. In traditional Burundian society marriages were arranged between members of the same caste. Although this is still the case among many, more Western ideas of romantic love and dating are becoming the norm, especially in the cities.

Families of both Hutu and Tutsi are organized patrilineally, and therefore children belong to the father's line or clan. Patriarchy holds in domestic affairs as well. The man goes to work herding or in the fields, while the woman takes care of the home and children. With firewood scarce in the country, and water also often in short supply, such household chores can be very demanding and time-consuming. Girls help out with such domestic chores.

Polygamy, once typical in Burundi, is dying out. As one's wealth was in part reckoned by how many children one had, polygamy made a certain economic sense in traditional society. However, in the modern world, scarcity, bride price and maintenance, as well as discouragement by the Christian church have largely put an end to the tradition. Typically also, Hutu marries Hutu and Tutsi marries Tutsi, though there have been marriages between the ethnic groups. Far less intermarriage occurs between either Hutu or Tutsi and Twa, however.

Although family size has been shrinking, fertility rates are still quite high by Western standards. In 2004 the rate of birth was 5.9 children per woman, with almost 40 births per 1,000 people. The infant mortality rate that same year was 70 deaths per 1,000 live births.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Physically, the two ethnic groups that make up most of the population look very different from each other. The average Hutu is short and stocky, while the Tutsi are tall, slender, and lighter-skinned than Hutu.

Clothing for Burundians includes the *pagnes*, or cloth wraparounds. Although *pagnes* are still the main form of dress in some rural areas, women now tend to accompany them with a blouse and a headscarf. Men often wear two cloths, one on each shoulder, tied at the waist and stretching down to the knees. Shoes are not common in rural areas. Dresses for women in the East African or Western style and shirts and pants for men are also increasingly

worn in rural areas. The older forms of traditional clothing—bark-cloth shirts and leather cloaks for Hutu and elaborate gowns and robes for the Tutsi—have virtually disappeared. For women, handmade necklaces and bracelets are still worn.

In Bujumbura, Western fashions, including suits and ties as well as jeans, are the norm. Whether traditional or modern, dress in Burundi is usually conservative and modest.

SPORTS

Soccer is the national sport, played both recreationally on makeshift fields and through a national league. The country has competed in several African Nations Cup championships. Burundians are also strong in international track-and-field competitions. Dieudonne Kwizera and Vénuste Niyongabo both competed in the 1996 Olympic Games. Niyongabo won the gold medal in the 5,000 meters, the first Olympic medal for Burundi. Burundian Joachim Nshimirimana took part in the 2004 Olympics.

Basketball, handball, and volleyball are also becoming popular sports, played mostly at schools. The Ministry of Youth, Culture, and Sports promotes both traditional and modern sports in Burundi.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1961** UPRONA wins 58 of 62 seats in UN-sponsored legislative elections; Prince Rwagasore forms a new government; Rwagasore is assassinated.
- 1962** Burundi achieves independence, and the Belgian resident general leaves; Rwanda and Burundi agree on economic union; André Muhirwa is named the first prime minister of independent Burundi.
- 1963** Pierre Ngendandumwe replaces Muhirwa as prime minister.
- 1964** Rwanda withdraws from the Rwanda-Burundi currency union; fighting breaks out in the interior between Hutu and Tutsi, with the government supporting the Tutsi.
- 1965** In legislative elections Hutu win a majority in both houses, but the king refuses to appoint a Hutu prime minister, dissolving the National Assembly and declaring an absolute monarchy; both Tutsi and Hutu groups attempt coups.
- 1966** Prince Charles deposes his father and is enthroned as Ntare V but is deposed after 89 days; Prime Minister Micombero becomes president of the newly proclaimed Republic of Burundi, with UPRONA as the sole official party.
- 1970** A new UPRONA charter assigns Burundi's presidency to the party secretary-general.

- 1971** A Supreme Military Council of 27 military officers is established.
- 1972** Former *mwami* Ntare V is arrested; Hutu-Tutsi hostilities are revived over the government's alleged discovery of monarchist plots; Ntare V is executed; fighting escalates into civil war between the poorly armed Hutu and government forces; an estimated 100,000 to 250,000 Hutu are killed, and approximately 400,000 refugees flee; Albin Nyamoya, a Tutsi, is named prime minister;.
- 1973** Hutu-Tutsi strife breaks out in neighboring Rwanda; Hutu begin guerrilla warfare against the Burundian army; Burundi receives aid from Libya; relations with Tanzania are strained as Burundian troops cross the border to attack Hutu camps there.
- 1974** Burundi compensates Tanzania for the 1973 attacks; a new constitution is adopted; President Micombero is granted a second seven-year term.
- 1976** Micombero is overthrown in a coup led by Lt. Col. Jean-Baptiste Bagaza, who suspends the constitution of 1974, dissolves the National Assembly, and vests executive and legislative powers in a Supreme Revolutionary Council.
- 1978** The post of prime minister is abolished; a national recovery program is launched.
- 1979** UPRONA holds the first National Congress under Bagaza and replaces the Supreme Revolutionary Council with a Central Committee; Protestant and Catholic missionaries are expelled from the country.
- 1981** A new constitution is approved in a popular referendum.
- 1982** A new National Assembly is elected in which all members belong to UPRONA.
- 1987** President Bagaza is overthrown in a coup led by Pierre Buyoya.
- 1988** Renewed tribal disputes lead to the death of over 1,000 Tutsi and 100,000 Hutu.
- 1990** The government issues a Charter of National Unity, according equal rights to the country's three ethnic groups, the Hutu, Tutsi, and Twa.
- 1992** A new constitution is adopted.
- 1993** Melchior Ndadaye is elected the country's first Hutu president; a failed coup kills several ministers, and violence erupts between Tutsi and Hutu factions.
- 1996** The army seizes power in an attempt to restore peace; Major Pierre Buyoya is installed as president; the civil war between the Tutsi and Hutu continues.
- 2000** The government of Burundi and three Tutsi groups agree to a cease-fire, but the two major Hutu groups refuse to cooperate.
- 2001** Talks brokered by Nelson Mandela lead to the installation of a transitional, power-sharing government backed by a South African peace-keeping force carrying a UN mandate. In November it is decided that under the transition plan President Pierre Buyoya, a Tutsi, will serve as transitional president for 18 months, to be replaced by a Hutu until presidential elections are held.
- 2002** Repatriation of refugees from Tanzania begins in March. More than 60,000 are scheduled to return.
- 2003** Domitien Ndayizeye takes over as interim transition president until presidential elections, scheduled for late 2004. Fighting between government forces and rebel groups continues despite a cease-fire, as the country enters its tenth year of civil war. In December, Burundi's largest rebel group joined the transitional government in return for several key government positions.
- 2004** In October it is decided to postpone presidential elections—scheduled for the end of the month—until April of 2005. In December UN troops take over the peacekeeping mission.
- 2005** President Domitien Ndayizeye establishes a Truth and Reconciliation Commission to investigate atrocities committed during the country's civil war. Voters support a new power-sharing constitution. Pierre Nkurunziza is elected president.

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- Burundi Page
http://www.sas.upenn.edu/African_Studies/Country_Specific/Burundi.html
- *CIA World Factbook: Burundi*
<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/by.html>

INTERNET RESOURCES

- Burundi Information
<http://www.burundi-sites.com/>

CAMBODIA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Kingdom of Cambodia

ABBREVIATION

KH

CAPITAL

Phnom Penh

HEAD OF STATE

King Norodom Sihamoni (from 2004)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Chairman of the Council of Ministers Hun Sen (from 1998)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Multiparty democracy under a constitutional monarch

POPULATION

13,607,069 (2005)

AREA

181,040 sq km (69,900 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Khmer

LANGUAGE

Khmer

RELIGION

Theravada Buddhism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Riel

NATIONAL FLAG

A horizontal red stripe centered between two horizontal blue stripes, with a yellow silhouette of the temple of Angkor Wat in the center of the red stripe

NATIONAL EMBLEM

The main elements of the coat of arms are two golden cups stacked on top of each other with a sacred sword placed horizontally above. Above the sword is shown the symbol representing “om,” the sound of creation. The cups are framed by two laurel branches united at the bottom by the star of the Royal Order of Cambodia.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Heaven Protects Our King”

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 7 (National Day), April 17 (Victory over American Imperialism Day), May 1 (Labor Day), May 20 (Day of Hatred), September 22 (Feast of the Ancestors)

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

November 9, 1953

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

September 21, 1993

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Cambodia, in the southwestern Indochinese peninsula, is an irregularly shaped country with an area of 181,040 sq km (69,900 sq mi). It is bounded on the northeast by Laos, on the east and southeast by Vietnam, on the southwest by the Gulf of Thailand, and on the west and northwest by Thailand.

The capital city, also the largest, is Phnom Penh (1998 pop. 570,155). Other major cities are Bătdămbâng and Kâmpóng Saôm, the major port on the Gulf of Thailand.

The central three-fourths of the country is a level basin. The Mekong River, at 4,344 km (2,700 m) one of the longest in the world, flows north to south through

the plain. In the center of the plain is the Tonle Sap, an inland lake that acts as a reservoir for the Mekong River. The lake floods during the rainy season; as it recedes, it leaves behind a rich sediment of alluvial soil. The area southwest of the basin is mountainous; peaks in the Cardamom Range exceed 1,500 m (5,741 ft); in the Elephant Range, 900 m (3,000 ft).

Geography

Area sq km: 181,040; sq mi 69,900

World Rank: 87th

Land Boundaries, km: Laos 541; Thailand 803; Vietnam 1,228

(continues)

Cambodia



Geography *(continued)*

Coastline, km: 443
 Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Gulf of Thailand 0
 Highest: Phnum Aoral 1,810
 Land Use %
 Arable land: 20.96
 Permanent Crops: 0.61
 Forest: 52.9
 Other: 25.53

Population of Principal Cities (1998)

Phnom Penh 570,155

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Cambodia has a tropical climate with two distinct seasons. The rainy southwesterly monsoon season lasts from May through October; the dry northeasterly monsoon season lasts from November through April. Average temperatures range from 20°C to 35°C (68°F to 97°F), but in general the climate is more moderate than in other countries located at the same latitude. Average annual temperature is 26.7°C (80°F). Rainfall from April to September averages 1,270 mm (50 in) to 1,990 mm (75 in) annually and is heaviest over the mountainous areas of the southwest.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature
 Summer: 97°F
 Winter: 68°F
 Average Rainfall: 60 in to 75 in
 Southwest Mountains: 200 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Forests once covered much of Cambodia. In the eastern highlands these were deciduous, while in mountainous areas of the north and the southwestern highlands, evergreen forests predominated. In the north these forests were also home to vines, bamboo, palms, and rattan. Virgin rain forests covered the western slopes of the southwestern highlands. Mangrove and evergreen forest grew along the coast. The forest covering was greatly depleted by indiscriminate logging in the 1970s, which laid waste to about 75 percent of the forest. Further depletion has occurred since then. The rapid deforestation has led to soil erosion. The central lowland region hosts both savanna and vast fields of crops such as rice, corn, and tobacco.

With the loss of the forest covering came a subsequent loss in habitat for the large variety of animal life that once lived in the country. Large populations of elephants, wild oxen, rhinoceroses, and several species of deer at one time inhabited Cambodia, but their numbers have severely decreased as a result of deforestation and the years of conflict experienced by the country. Small numbers of tigers, leopards, and bears are still found, and many small mammals exist. Common birds include herons, cranes, grouse, pheasant, peafowl, pelicans, cormorants, egrets, and wild ducks. Reptilian life is abundant, including poisonous snakes such as the Indian and king cobras, the banded krait, and Russell's viper.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 13,607,069
 World Rank: 64th
 Density per sq km: 75.9
 % of annual growth (1999-2003): 2.0
 Male %: 48.5
 Female %: 51.5
 Urban %: 18.6
 Age Distribution: % 0-14: 38.3
 15-64: 58.6
 65 and over: 3.1
 Population 2025: 19,324,000
 Birth Rate per 1,000: 27.13
 Death Rate per 1,000: 9.1
 Rate of Natural Increase %: 1.8
 Total Fertility Rate: 3.51
 Expectation of Life (years): Males 55.71
 Females 61.23

Marriage Rate per 1,000: —
 Divorce Rate per 1,000: —
 Average Size of Households: 5.6
 Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Most of the population of Cambodia (approximately 90 percent) is Khmer. Most of the rest of the people are Vietnamese and Chinese, with a smattering of Laotians, Thai, and Cham-Malays, who live in the rural mountainous regions.

LANGUAGES

Khmer, or Cambodian, is the official language. French was the official language until 1975, but its use has been discouraged by the government. Among the Chinese minority, a number of Chinese dialects are spoken.

RELIGIONS

Approximately 90 percent of Cambodians practice Theravada Buddhism. Other religions followed in the country are Roman Catholicism, Islam, and Nahayana Buddhism; some Cambodians living in the mountainous regions practice animism.

Religious Affiliations

Buddhist	12,926,000
Other	681,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

There is archaeological evidence that Cambodia was inhabited as far back as the second millennium B.C.E. and that stable societies flourished there 2,000 years ago. Funan was the first Hindu-Buddhist kingdom to dominate in what is now Cambodia and is considered the first Khmer kingdom. The kingdom of Chenla conquered Funan in the sixth and seventh centuries but was itself later split in two, with its southern half, in the area of what is now Cambodia, under Javanese rule.

It was the reign of Jayavarman II in the 800s that began the glorious Angkor era in Khmer history, and it was his successors who built the great temples at Angkor Wat. The kings of Angkor ruled over Cambodia and much of the rest of Southeast Asia until 1432, in what is known as the classical era in Khmer history. That civilization reached its peak in the 12th and early 13th centuries, then began to weaken, threatened by the overextension of

its irrigation system, epidemics, and popular resentment against the well-entrenched bureaucracy as well as by the spread of Buddhism.

Over the next 400 years Siam (now Thailand) and Vietnam vied for control over Cambodia by the use of military occupations and puppet regimes. In 1863 France intervened, and Cambodia became a French colony under the Franco-Cambodian Treaty, which gave France exclusive control of foreign affairs and defense. A French *résident supérieur* was installed in Phnom Penh, and control of the country was exercised through a hierarchy of *résidents*, with the king as a powerless figurehead. The protectorate was not unopposed; minor revolts in the 1860s and 1870s were put down with ease. After 1887 Cambodia became part of the Indochina Union, which included Annam, Tonkin, Cochin China, Laos, and Chan-chiang.

France's primary interest in Cambodia was strategic; occupation there allowed for the protection of French interests in Southeast Asia. Traditional political and social structures were left largely intact, although the French attempted a few economic reforms and introduced some cultural changes, especially with regard to social customs, education, and architecture. Debt slavery was abolished in 1884. From the 1920s secular education was entirely French in character and structure. At the same time, the French exhibited little interest in providing Cambodians with education beyond the primary level and did little to train Cambodians for administrative positions of responsibility. Although modern judicial and police systems were introduced, the French relied on the Vietnamese to staff them. Only after 1936 were Cambodians admitted to senior administrative positions.

France granted total independence to Cambodia in 1953. At that time the nation was led by King Norodom Sihanouk, who had been the reigning monarch since April 1941, when at the age of 18 he succeeded his grandfather. Eight years later he personally negotiated independence. In order to increase his political role, Sihanouk abdicated in 1955 in favor of his father, Norodom Suramarit, and resumed his title of prince. Sihanouk established a mass political movement, Sangkum Reastr Niyum (People's Socialist Community), which won all National Assembly seats in elections held in 1955, 1958, 1962, and 1966. Sihanouk's government established close ties with North Vietnam and the People's Republic of China and opposed U.S. intervention in Asia. In June 1960 the parliament elected Sihanouk head of state following the death of King Suramarit.

Beginning in 1964 the Khmer Rouge, a pro-Communist insurgency movement, threatened the stability of Sihanouk's government. However, it was a conservative group led by prime minister Lon Nol that deposed Sihanouk in March 1970 and abolished the monarchy. In exile, Sihanouk established the Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia (GRUNC), which

was supported by the Khmer Rouge. Together the two groups, with the aid of North Vietnamese troops and South Vietnam's National Liberation Front, posed a serious threat to Lon Nol's government. Nevertheless, Lon Nol proclaimed the Khmer Republic in 1970. He was elected the first president of the republic in 1972, with U.S. and South Vietnamese support.

The GRUNC government of Sihanouk was recognized as the official government of Cambodia by several foreign nations in 1973, and its forces, along with those of the Khmer Rouge, prevented Lon Nol's government from controlling more than a few urban areas. By April 1975 the Khmer Rouge had taken control of Phnom Penh, and a regime headed by Pol Pot took power. The country was renamed Democratic Kampuchea in January 1976. The Khmer Rouge administered a radical and brutal program of social change, evacuating many of the towns and forcibly relocating residents to rural areas. Millions of Cambodians were tortured and murdered by the Khmer regime, and millions of others died from mistreatment, hunger, and disease as the Khmer Rouge tried to eradicate all Western influence from the country and to create a totally rural society.

In December 1978 Vietnam invaded Kampuchea with the assistance of the pro-Communist Kampuchean National United Front for National Salvation (KNUFNS), using the murderous nature of the Khmer regime as its excuse. Within weeks Vietnamese troops had taken control of Phnom Penh, and in January 1979 the People's Republic of Kampuchea (PRK) was proclaimed under a puppet regime headed by Heng Samrin. However, pockets of Khmer resistance remained until the organization finally surrendered in 1998.

The Vietnamese occupied Cambodia for most of the 1980s, pulling out only in 1989. They restored much of Cambodian life, including Buddhism, but the country remained desperately poor and underdeveloped.

In 1991 all the parties involved signed a treaty calling for the United Nations and a Supreme National Council to govern the country temporarily, and Sihanouk temporarily assumed the office of president. In May 1993 the first democratic elections in Cambodia since 1972 were held, and Sihanouk's royalist faction formed a coalition government with Hun Sen's Khmer People's National Liberation Front. A new constitution was approved in September 1993; the country was renamed the Kingdom of Cambodia, and Sihanouk once again took the throne. The new government was opposed by the Khmer Rouge, which continued to use armed violence in its struggle to regain power. A splinter faction within the Khmer Rouge announced its support for the monarch in 1996, however, and the Khmer Rouge rapidly lost public support afterward, although it continued its armed opposition to the government until the last known unit surrendered to the government in December 1998.

In 1997 Hun Sen, co–prime minister in the Sihanouk government, staged a violent coup, ousting his rival, Prince Norodom Ranariddh, the king’s son. Hun Sen’s party, the Cambodian People’s Party (CPP), won the parliamentary elections held in July 1998, and he was sworn in as prime minister in November 1998. Pol Pot was arrested and convicted in a show trial in 1997; he died while under house arrest in 1998. Sihanouk, except for a brief abdication in 1997, remained king, although he had little power.

In the 2003 parliamentary elections, no parties were able to muster the two-thirds majority needed to establish independent leadership. Hun Sen’s CPP won 47.3 percent of the vote and Ranariddh’s royalist party, the FUNCINPEC, took 20.8 percent. A third party also appeared on the scene, with the Pak Sam Rainsy (PSR) winning 21.9 percent. Initially Ranariddh refused to form a coalition with Hun Sen. Negotiations lasted almost a year, until a new coalition was finally formed in June 2004 between the CPP and the FUNCINPEC, with Hun Sen remaining prime minister.

King Norodom Sihanouk abdicated in October 2004, naming his son Prince Norodom Sihamoni as his successor. In early 2005 the opposition party leader Sam Rainsy was forced to flee the country after libel charges were leveled against him for accusing Prince Norodom Ranariddh of taking bribes to enter the coalition government. The National Assembly stripped Rainsy of immunity and banned his opposition party, the PSR. International criticism was quick to call this action a blow to Cambodia’s fledgling democracy.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

Head of State

1941–55	Norodom Sihanouk (king)
1955–60	Norodom Suramarit (king)
1960	Chuop Hell (head of state)
1960	Prince Sisovath Monireth (head of state)
1960	Chuop Hell (head of state)
1960–70	Prince Norodom Sihanouk (head of state)
1970–72	Cheng Heng (head of state)
1972	Lon Nol (head of state)
1972–75	Lon Nol (president)
1975	Saukham Khoy (president)
1975	Sak Suthsakan (president)
1975–76	Prince Norodom Sihanouk (head of state)
1976–79	Khieu Samphan (president of the State Presidium)
1979–81	Heng Samrin (president of the People’s Revolutionary Council)
1981–92	Heng Samrin (chairman of the Council of State)
1992–93	Chea Sim (chairman of the Council of State)

1991–93	Prince Norodom Sihanouk (chairman of the Supreme National Council)
1993–2004	Norodom Sihanouk (king)
2004	Chea Sim (chairman of the senate)
2004–	Norodom Sihamoni (king)

Head of Government

1945	Norodom Sihanouk (prime minister)
1945	Son Ngoc Thanh (prime minister)
1945–46	Prince Sisovath Monireth (prime minister)
1946–47	Prince Sisovath Youtevong (prime minister)
1947–48	Prince Sisovath Vatchayavong (prime minister)
1948	Chean Vam (prime minister)
1948–49	Penn Nouth (prime minister)
1949	Yem Sambaur (prime minister)
1949	Ieu Koeus (prime minister)
1949–50	Yem Sambaur (prime minister)
1950	Prince Norodom Sihanouk (prime minister)
1950–51	Prince Sisovath Monipong (prime minister)
1951	Oum Cheang Sun (prime minister)
1951–52	Huy Kanthoul (prime minister)
1952–53	Prince Norodom Sihanouk (prime minister)
1953	Penn Nouth (prime minister)
1953–54	Chan Nak (prime minister)
1954	Prince Norodom Sihanouk (prime minister)
1954–55	Penn Nouth (prime minister)
1955	Leng Ngeth (prime minister)
1955–56	Prince Norodom Sihanouk (prime minister)
1956	Oum Cheang Sun (prime minister)
1956	Prince Norodom Sihanouk (prime minister)
1956	Khim Tit (prime minister)
1956	Prince Norodom Sihanouk (prime minister)
1956–57	Sam Yun (prime minister)
1957	Prince Norodom Sihanouk (prime minister)
1957–58	Sim Var (prime minister)
1958	Ek Yi Oun (prime minister)
1958	Penn Nouth (prime minister)
1958	Sim Var (prime minister)
1958–60	Prince Norodom Sihanouk (prime minister)
1960–61	Pho Proeung (prime minister)
1961	Penn Nouth (prime minister)
1961–62	Prince Norodom Sihanouk (prime minister)
1962	Nhiek Tioulong (prime minister)
1962	Chau Sen Cocsal Chum (prime minister)
1962–66	Prince Norodom Kanthoul (prime minister)
1966–67	Lon Nol (prime minister)
1967–68	Son Sann (prime minister)
1968–69	Penn Nouth (prime minister)
1969–71	Lon Nol (prime minister)
1971–72	Prince Sisovath Sirik Matak (prime minister)
1972	Son Ngoc Thanh (prime minister)
1972	Lon Nol (prime minister)
1972–73	Hang Thun Hak (prime minister)
1973	In Tam (prime minister)
1973–75	Long Boreth (prime minister)

1975–76	Penn Nouth (prime minister)
1976	Khieu Samphan (prime minister)
1976–79	Pol Pot (prime minister)
1979–81	Heng Samrin (president of the People's Revolutionary Council)
1981	Pen Sovan (chairman of the Council of Ministers)
1981–84	Chan Sy (chairman of the Council of Ministers)
1985–93	Hun Sen (chairman of the Council of Ministers)
1993	Prince Norodom Ranariddh (co–prime minister of the provisional government) Hun Sen (co–prime minister of the provisional government)
1993–97	Prince Norodom Ranariddh (prime minister)
1997–98	Ung Huot (prime minister)
1998–	Hun Sen (prime minister)

CONSTITUTION

Under the constitution approved in 1993, Cambodia is a multiparty liberal democracy under a constitutional monarchy. The monarch is advised by a Council of Ministers, which he appoints, but in practice he has little power, and the first and second prime ministers are the true heads of state. There is universal suffrage for those age 18 and up.

A 1999 amendment to the constitution provides for a Senate of 61 members, none of whom are chosen by popular vote. Four are appointees, and the remainder are elected by “functional constituencies” and serve five-year terms.

PARLIAMENT

Legislative power is vested in the bicameral parliament (Sepiacheat), consisting of a Senate (Pritsepia) made up of 61 members and a National Assembly (Radspeha Ney Preah Recheanachakr) of 123 members, all elected for five-year terms. The parliament meets in ordinary sessions at least twice a year, each session lasting at least two months. Extraordinary sessions may be convoked by the king at the request of the prime minister or by a majority in the National Assembly. Laws passed by parliament are subject to review by the Constitutional Council, which also has the right to interpret the constitution and settle electoral disputes. The National Assembly may not be dissolved unless the royal government has been dismissed twice within 12 months. The National Assembly may dismiss cabinet ministers or remove the royal government from office through a censure motion passed by a two-thirds majority vote.

POLITICAL PARTIES

The dominant political parties are the National United Front for an Independent, Neutral, Peaceful, and Co-operative Cambodia (FUNCINPEC), the royalist party; the leftist Cambodian People's Party (CPP); and the Pak Sam Rainsy (PSR), previously the Khmer Nation Party, now named for a former finance minister who is the party head and leader of the opposition. In the 2003 parliamentary elections, Rainsy's PSR finished just ahead of the FUNCINPEC in percentage of popular votes, with the CPP taking almost half the seats. In 2005 Rainsy had to flee the country after accusing Prince Norodom Ranariddh of taking bribes, and his party was banned.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Cambodia is divided for administrative purposes into five levels of government: 20 provinces (*khet*), each headed by a *chavaykhet*; seven subprovinces (*anoukhet*); 147 districts (*srok*), each headed by a *chavausrok*; 1,621 townships (*sangkat* or *khum*), each headed by a *mekhum*; and villages (*phoumi*). There are also four municipalities (*krong*): Keb, Pailin, Phnom Penh, and Preah Sihanouk (formerly Kompong Som).

The first local elections in 23 years were held in 2002, with the Cambodian People's Party winning in almost all of the country's townships. In the weeks before the election 20 opposition political activists were killed.

LEGAL SYSTEM

Due process and presumption of innocence are provided for by the 1993 constitution. The Supreme Court of the Magistracy, Cambodia's highest court, was created in 1997. Another Supreme Court and lower courts handle cases at lower levels. The constitution also set up the Supreme Council of Magistrates, which appoints and disciplines judges. A lack of trained judges and a high crime rate have led to the court system being seriously overburdened. As a result, many crimes go unreported. Many political murders in particular remain unsolved, and police corruption as well as abuse and overcrowding in the country's prisons remain serious problems.

HUMAN RIGHTS

During the years of Khmer Rouge domination, Cambodians suffered under one of the most brutal, murderous, and totalitarian of governments. When the Vietnamese ousted Pol Pot, despite some liberalization, violations of human rights remained commonplace, with the provisions of the 1981 constitution ignored and police-state policies the rule.

The administration of justice in Cambodia is still problematic. Two human rights activists who were monitoring demonstrations in 1998 that developed in the wake of a revelation about the dumping of toxic waste at a site in Sihanoukville were arrested and accused of inciting a riot. After international protests, the charges were dropped in July 1999. Other concerns about Cambodia's commitment to the balanced administration of justice have been raised in connection with efforts to bring to justice former members of the Khmer Rouge and those responsible for the murders of many associates of Prince Norodom Ranariddh in the months after the 1997 coup by Son Sann.

Over 30 political activists were murdered in the run-up to the 2003 parliamentary elections; only a few of those responsible for the killings have been prosecuted. Torture is often used in the legal system to gain confessions. The political power of the prime minister goes largely unchecked, with parliament acting as a debating society rather than as part of a system of checks and balances. In 2005 the National Assembly stripped the opposition leader, Sam Rainsy, of immunity, and he subsequently fled the country. His party, the third strongest in the country, was banned. In 2004 Amnesty International complained of widespread abuse of power by police and the military. Also, the estimated 200,000 to 500,000 ethnic Vietnamese in Cambodia face widespread discrimination.

FOREIGN POLICY

Cambodia is a member of the United Nations. Its seat at the United Nations was left vacant by the General Assembly after the 1997 coup but is now occupied by a representative of the coalition government that took office in November 1998. In 1999 Cambodia became a member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

Cambodia is embroiled in border disputes with both Vietnam and Thailand. It is also under international pressure for money laundering and its role as a major producer of marijuana for the international market.

Land mine clearing operations have been under way in Cambodia since 1993, but land mines continue to be a major problem; an estimated 3,600 sq km (1,440 sq mi) of the country are believed to be mined, and several hundred people are maimed by mines each month. The United Nations estimates that there are still six million land mines buried in Cambodia.

DEFENSE

As of 2002 the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces consisted of about 100,000 active personnel, with most of those serving in the army. The Cambodian navy and air force have between 1,000 and 2,000 troops, and the provincial

forces make up from one-third to one-half of the military personnel. Military service is compulsory for those between 18 and 30. According to a 2004 conscription law, compulsory service lasts 18 months. In 2001 defense spending amounted to \$112 million, which was 3 percent of gross domestic product (GDP).

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	100,000
Military Manpower Availability:	3,402,703
Military Expenditures \$million:	112
as % of GDP:	3.0
as % of central government expenditures:	—
Arms Imports \$million:	—
Arms Exports \$million:	—

ECONOMY

Cambodia's economy is based on agriculture, with rice the major crop. The national budget for 1995 was estimated to be \$496 million. Although both the agricultural and the small manufacturing sectors began to recover from the disastrous years of warfare and social dislocation, the country has remained among the world's poorest; GDP in 1996 was estimated at \$7.7 billion, and per capita GDP was estimated to be approximately \$710. Approximately 80 percent of the labor force was employed in agriculture.

Exports in 1996 were valued at \$466 million; imports were \$1.4 billion. Most foreign trade is with Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam. The unit of currency is the riel.

In 1999, the first full year of peace in 30 years, progress was made on economic reforms, and growth resumed at 4 percent. GDP growth for 2000 had been projected to reach 5.5 percent, but the worst flooding in 70 years severely damaged agricultural crops, and high oil prices hurt industrial production. Growth for the year was estimated at only 4 percent. Tourism is Cambodia's fastest-growing industry, with arrivals up 34 percent in 2000. The long-term development of the economy after decades of war remains a daunting challenge. The population lacks education and productive skills, particularly in the poverty-ridden countryside, which suffers from an almost total lack of basic infrastructure. Fear of renewed political instability and corruption within the government discourage foreign investment and delay foreign aid. On the brighter side, the government is addressing these issues with assistance from bilateral and multilateral donors. One of the greatest challenges facing the economic sector in the new millennium is providing sufficient employment to meet the needs of the country's imbalanced population. More than 60 percent of the population is under 20 and will be entering the workforce in large numbers.

Cambodia's entry into the World Trade Organization in 2004 proved a double-edged sword. More foreign investment resulted, but also lower tariffs mean Cambodia will import cheaper agricultural goods, thereby hurting domestic agriculture, already in a precarious position. The country's garment industry, which accounted for 23 percent of exports in 2002, could also be seriously damaged with the expiration of U.S. quotas in 2005.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 25.02
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 1,900
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 7.3
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 5.3
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 35
 Industry: 30
 Services: 35
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 78
 Government Consumption: 6
 Gross Domestic Investment: 15.9
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 1.616
 Imports: 2.124
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 2.9
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 33.8

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)				
1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
135.6	134.5	133.7	138.0	139.7

Finance

National Currency: Riel (KHR)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = KHR 3,973.33
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 936
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: —
 Total External Debt \$billion: 2.4
 Debt Service Ratio %: 0.94
 Balance of Payments \$million: –218.1
 International Reserves SDRs \$million: 815
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 1.7

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 487
 per capita \$: 37
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 53.8

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$million: 476.5
 Expenditures \$million: 734.8
 Budget Deficit \$million: 258.3
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 35
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2002) %: 0.4
 Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares: 0.5
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 7.1
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: —
 Total Farmland as % of land area: 21.0
 Livestock: Cattle 000: 3,000
 Sheep 000: —
 Hogs 000: 2,180
 Chickens 000: 14,500
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 9.7
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 421

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 759
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 22

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 7
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 185
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 14
 Net Energy Imports % of use: —
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: —
 Production kW-hr million: 119
 Consumption kW-hr million: 110.6
 Coal Reserves tons million: —
 Production tons 000: —
 Consumption tons 000: —
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic meters billion: —
 Production cubic meters million: —
 Consumption cubic meters million: —
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels million: —
 Production barrels per day: —
 Consumption barrels per day: 3,600
 Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 2.124
 Exports \$billion: 1.616
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2002): 29.3
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2002): 22.2
 Balance of Trade \$million: –218.1

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Thailand %	26.4	—
Hong Kong %	14.4	—
Singapore %	11.8	—
China %	11.3	—
Vietnam %	8.3	—
Taiwan %	8.0	—
South Korea %	4.1	—
United States %	—	58.4
Germany %	—	10.3
United Kingdom %	—	7.2

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 12,323
 Paved %: 16.2
 Automobiles: 8,300
 Trucks and Buses: 3,100
 Railroad: Track Length km: 602
 Passenger-km million: 15
 Freight-km million: 91
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 467
 Total Deadweight Tonnage million: 2.7
 Airports: 20
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 61
 Length of Waterways km: 2,400

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 787
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 379
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 38

Communications

Telephones 000: 35.4
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.03
 Cellular Telephones 000: 380
 Personal Computers 000: 32
 Internet Hosts per million people: 30
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 2

ENVIRONMENT

The deforestation of Cambodia through illegal logging became an issue in the 1990s as the remnants of the Khmer Rouge sought profits from lumbering to support their operations. By the end of the decade, however, the Khmer Rouge no longer existed. Other environmental issues include the practice of strip mining for gems in the western region along the Thai border, soil erosion, and the lack of safe drinking water in rural areas. Fish stocks are also declining as a result of overfishing and soil erosion into rivers, which destroys spawning beds. Additional environmental issues include poor sanitation and waste management and the destabilization of land and soil due to industrial activities. In 2002, 89 animal species were listed as threatened in Cambodia, including 24 species of mammals.

Environment

Forest Area % of land area: 52.9
 Average Annual Forest Change, 1990-2000, 000 ha: -56
 Nationally Protected Areas as % of Total Land Area: 22
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 0.04

LIVING CONDITIONS

Cambodian population density is among the highest in the world, and the urban growth rate is increasing rapidly, yet the overwhelming majority of Cambodians still live in rural areas. As of 2003, 18.6 percent of Cambodians lived in cities, while the rest were in the countryside, mostly in small villages of a few hundred people. These villages are typically built around Buddhist temples and along transport lines, such as rivers, canals, or roads. Houses are constructed on stilts to keep them dry during the floods of the rainy season. The poorer segment of the population—by a 1997 estimate, 36 percent of people were living below the poverty line—live in simple one-room huts with thatched roofs. For those with a bit more money, houses are built of wood and have windows. Roofs are of tile or corrugated metal. Furniture is simple: beds are thatch mats that are rolled up during the day. Other furnishings, such as chairs, desks, and tables, are scant. As most families are Buddhist, there is generally a small shrine in one corner. The space under the house provides a shaded living area during the hot months. Here people eat, sit, or nap during the heat of the day.

Life in urban areas offers more conveniences. While wealthy Cambodians live in villas or houses with electricity and all amenities, most city dwellers live in small apartments with many family members. Urban poverty is widespread. More than 10,000 children live on the streets of Phnom Penh.

Few people, either in the city or country, can afford a car, let alone a motorbike. Transport is usually confined to the family bicycle.

The United Nations Human Development Index (HDI) placed Cambodia 130th in 2002 out of 177 countries. HDI focuses on three measurable dimensions of human development: living a long and healthy life, being educated, and having a decent standard of living. In 2004 the life expectancy in Cambodia was 58 years, and the mortality rate was 9.1 deaths per 1,000 people. The 2004 literacy rate was 69.4 percent, and more than one-third of the population was living below the poverty line in 1997. The 2003 GDP per capita was \$1,900.

HEALTH

What was already a health-care system that barely served the needs of the population was put into a state of crisis with the civil wars of 1970 to 1975, subsequent deprivations at the hands of the Khmer Rouge regime, and the further fighting that took place after the invasion by Vietnam. Hundreds of thousands were killed and maimed by the fighting and by land mines, still a major problem in the country, and hundreds of thousands more were displaced. Traditionally endemic diseases such as malaria, hepatitis, diarrhea, dysentery, yaws, trachoma, respiratory infections

and dengue fever all became even more severe as the result of malnutrition brought on by the years of conflict.

Since 1995 the government has attempted to rehabilitate the health-care system, but there is still much work to be done. As of 2001, 33 percent of the population was undernourished, a slight improvement from 1992, when 43 percent were undernourished. However, only 34 percent of the population in 2002 had access to improved water sources and only 16 percent to proper sanitation. As of 2004 there were just 16 physicians for every 100,000 people; as of 1999 there were 2.1 hospital beds for every 1,000 people. Infant mortality in 2004 was high, with 74 deaths for every 1,000 live births, though this was down from 2000, when it was 88 deaths per 1,000 live births. Immunization rates among one-year-old children have improved; while the 1999 immunization rates for children up to one year old for measles was 55 percent, in 2003 it was 65 percent. The polio immunization rate in 2003 was 65 percent, diphtheria, pertussis, and tetanus 69 percent, and tuberculosis 75 percent.

HIV/AIDS has also had an impact on the medical delivery system. The HIV/AIDS prevalence rate rose from 0.1 percent in 1991 to 4 percent in 1999, then decreased to 2.6 percent in 2003. As of 2003 the number of people living with HIV/AIDS was estimated at 170,000, and deaths from AIDS that year were estimated at 15,000.

Many Cambodians still use traditional healers and herbs rather than Western medicine.

Health

Number of Physicians: 2,047
 Number of Dentists: 209
 Number of Nurses: 8,085
 Number of Pharmacists: 564
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 16
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: 2.1
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 73.67
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 450
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 11.8
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 30
 HIV Infected % of adults: 2.6
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 65
 Measles: 69
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 16
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 34

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Rice and fish form the center of Cambodian or Khmer diet. The food in Cambodia is somewhat similar to that of Thailand, though in general fewer spices are used. Meals usually include a soup as well as a fish dish. Fish are grilled, poached, or fried as well as eaten dried or salted. *Prabok*, fermented fish, is a traditional dish and is also served as a condiment with other dishes.

Herbs and spices used in a typical Khmer salad are mint, lemongrass, and coriander. These three ingredients, along with chili, onions, garlic, and ginger, are used in many Cambodian specialties. The years of French occupation are evidenced by the bread that is baked fresh daily in many regions. Sweet dishes include sticky rice cakes and a pudding made from the jackfruit. Tea and beer are typical drinks, as are Western-style soft drinks.

Cambodians usually eat with spoons but also sometimes with spoons and forks or with chopsticks. When at home, they traditionally sit on the floor around the table.

Malnutrition has been a problem in the country. In 2001, 33 percent of the population was still undernourished. Of infants under five between 1995 and 2003, 45 percent suffered from being moderately to severely underweight.

Food and Nutrition

Food Supply as % of FAO Requirements: 91
 Undernourished % of total population: 32.9
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 1,990
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 162.1
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 53.5

STATUS OF WOMEN

In Khmer society men have traditionally held positions of higher status than women. Although traditional Cambodian culture calls for women to assume the vast bulk of child-rearing and other domestic responsibilities, women are gradually moving into mainstream Cambodian economic life. The Cambodian Women Development Agency, a nongovernment organization, is among those working to educate women about health, economic, and social issues and to help them improve their standing in society. Methods of birth control are generally well known and are available to many women in the population. Divorce is legal and fairly easy to obtain but not common.

In general, Cambodian women have the same access to educational opportunities as men; however, they continue to play relatively limited roles in government and business management. They also hold a majority of the low-paying farming, factory, and service-sector jobs. Human rights groups report that rape and domestic violence are common, and the trafficking of women and girls for prostitution is widespread.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 10
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men age 15-24: 0.9
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 52.6

WORK

By a 2003 estimate Cambodia's labor force numbered 7 million, 75 percent of which is involved in agriculture, producing rice, rubber, corn, vegetables, cashews, and tapioca. Of these agricultural workers, it is further estimated that 80 percent are involved in subsistence farming. Major industries and services in the country include tourism, garments, rice milling, fishing, wood and wood products, rubber, cement, gem mining, and textiles. The 2000 unemployment rate was 2.5 percent. The labor force is due to swell in the early 2000s, as 60 percent of the country's population is still under 20. Also, almost half of the labor force is female, a result of the genocide committed by the Khmer Rouge.

Labor laws provide for the right to unionize, and Cambodia's few independent trade unions are active, especially in the garment industry, but small. They also have limited resources and experience and generally have little influence in negotiating with management. Factory workers frequently strike in Phnom Penh to protest low wages, forced overtime, and poor and dangerous working conditions, but there are reprisals by management. Union leaders face dismissal and other harassment at some factories, and union workers are routinely intimidated or even physically attacked, according to the U.S. State Department's human rights report for 2002. With most Cambodians relying on subsistence farming, union membership is estimated at less than 1 percent of the workforce. The minimum work age is 15, and the maximum workweek is 48 hours. These and other labor regulations are regularly ignored. Many children and teenagers work on small farms.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 7,000,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 51.3
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 75
 Other: 25
 Unemployment %: 2.5

EDUCATION

Education is free and compulsory for children ages six to 12. Six years of secondary education follow, the first three of which are also compulsory.

With a literacy rate of 69.4 percent in 2002, the country has a long way to go in reestablishing its educational system after the disaster of the Pol Pot regime. During those years education was abolished, except for party indoctrination. Children were sent to work in agriculture, and the educated class was virtually wiped out; only a fraction of instructors and teachers survived those years.

Progress has been made on many fronts, The number of teachers in both primary and secondary schools has dramatically increased, though the student-teacher ratio in primary schools as of 2000–01 was still 56 to 1. In that same time-frame education accounted for 15.3 percent of total government spending, or 1.8 percent of GDP. In 2002, 93 percent of eligible students were enrolled in primary schools, with over 60 percent of those reaching grade 5. The transition rate from primary to secondary was 83 percent.

Higher education still suffers from a shortage of professors and instructors. In 2002 there were about 43,000 students enrolled in postsecondary education in Cambodia and 2,500 instructors. Most students seeking higher education go abroad to foreign universities and colleges.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 69.4
 Male %: 80.8
 Female %: 59.3
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 9.3
 First Level: Primary schools: 4,539
 Teachers: 49,293
 Students: 2,772,113
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 56.2
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 93.3
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 440
 Teachers: 23,749
 Students: 545,660
 Student-Teacher-Ratio: 23.6
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 17.7
 Third Level: Institutions: 9
 Teachers: 2,479
 Students: 43,210
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 3.4
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 1.8

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The educated classes, including scientists, technicians, and researchers, were largely persecuted and killed during the Pol Pot regime. Since 1979 the country has relied primarily on international researchers and technicians. The Cambodian Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI), under the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, focuses on plant breeding, soil and water research, agricultural engineering, plant protection, agronomy, and farming systems. There is also a school of medicine and pharmacy. From 1994 to 1997, 23 percent of all students in higher education were enrolled in science, math, and engineering courses.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million persons: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$: —
 Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

The Cambodian print media includes the following newspapers: *Cambodia Daily* in Khmer, Japanese, and English; *Cambodia Times*, weekly in English; *Phnom Penh Post*, daily in English; *Kampuchea*, weekly; *Pracheachon*, semi-weekly; and *Rasmei Kampuchea*, daily. The Cambodian News Agency started functioning in 1978. The government-controlled National Radio of Cambodia, formerly the Voice of the Cambodian People, transmits over 11 stations. The *Cambodia Post* and the *Cambodia Journal* are online English-language newspapers. TV-Kampuchea began color transmission in 1986. As of 2003 there were 2 AM and 17 FM radio stations and 7 government-owned television stations. In 2000 there were 119 radios and 8 television sets for every 1,000 people.

Though the constitution provides for freedom of speech and the press, such is not always the case in practice. Radio and television journalists often practice self-censorship, and broadcast news coverage favors the CPP, the ruling party. Opposition parties do not have the same access to the airwaves that the government does; opposition journalists are harassed and in some cases killed. Cambodia's print journalists are freer than their broadcast counterparts. They routinely criticize government policies and senior officials, including Hun Sen. Authorities, however, have recently used the country's press law to suspend several newspapers for 30-day periods for criticizing the government or monarchy. Reporters without Borders ranked the country 109th among 167 countries worldwide in its 2004 press freedom ranking.

In 2002 there were an estimated 30,000 Internet users and 380,000 cellular telephone users.

Media

Newspapers and Periodicals: —
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: —
 Radio Receivers million: 1.6
 per 1,000: 119
 Television sets 000: 109
 per 1,000: 8

CULTURE

Ancient Khmer culture was derived from several sources, including indigenous animistic beliefs, Hinduism and Buddhism as imported from India, and the introduction of Sanskrit. The Khmer kingdom of Angkor flourished from the ninth to the 15th centuries, dominating the life of Southeast Asia. Though the literary and court language was Sanskrit, Khmer was the spoken language. Angkor Wat and Angkor Thum, huge palace complexes from the height of Khmer power, remain, giving the modern

world a hint of the heights that that ancient civilization attained.

Music and dance occupy a central position in traditional culture. Classical Khmer dance, as captured on murals and friezes on Angkor temples, was developed from Indian dance and often featured a lone female in ceremonial clothing dancing slowly, with stylized movements, to the music of a *pinpeat* ensemble, which includes drums, gongs, and bamboo xylophones. The Royal Ballet in Phnom Penh adapted this classical dance to modern times. Until recently the ballet performed only for the court, but now it is open to the public. Shadow plays and puppet plays are also typical forms of classical entertainment. These often tell stories from the life of Buddha or are adapted from the *Reamker*, the most important work of Cambodian literature, a Khmer-language adaptation of the Indian myth of the *Ramayana*.

Literature in the country has a long and rich tradition, beginning in the seventh century with temple inscriptions and continuing to the more classical works of the 16th century. Intensely oral, Cambodian literature was often memorized by professional storytellers who would travel about the country reciting their tales. This literary tradition includes stories of the Buddha's life, poem-proverbs called *chhap*, and folktales.

All these classical traditions were banned during the years of Khmer Rouge dictatorship, and there was an attempt to eradicate all cultural signposts from the country. Fortunately, much of the heritage survived those years. Folk arts and crafts have also made a comeback, including weaving, silversmithing, and woodcarving. Popular woven artifacts include the *krama*, a rectangular scarf made in colorful checks and stripes, and the *sampot*, a silk skirt.

The National Museum of Cambodia in Phnom Penh displays examples of Khmer sculpture as well as traditional arts and crafts.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Much of ancient Khmer mythology is related to Indian mythology. Preas Eyn, for example, is the Khmer thunder-god of ancient Cambodia; he rides on a three-headed elephant and casts bolts of lightning and bears similarities to the Indian god Indra. Preas Eyssaur is the god of death

but also brings life. He shows some similarities to the Indian god Shiva. Preas Prohm is the primeval god and infinite being and is similar with the Indian god Brahma. Reahu is the dark demon that pursues the sun and the moon through the heavens, trying to swallow them.

Many myths and legends passed down orally through the generations are based on the great epics of ancient India, the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana*, and on the stories about the previous lives of the Buddha. In folklore and legend the primary hero is Kaundinya, the first Cambodian, from whom Khmer trace their lineage. It was he who tamed a dragon princess and inspired the princess's father to drink the water that had been covering all the land of Cambodia. Modern heroes of legendary status include, for many Cambodians, the former king, Norodom Sihanouk.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

The tradition of the itinerant storyteller has been replaced in both urban and rural settings by the incursion of radio, television, videos, and movies. Hong Kong martial arts movies are particularly popular among young Cambodians, who form the majority of the population. Using batteries, even villages with no electricity have access to television and radio broadcasts. In villages, some of the bars and cafés will also play popular videos for their customers. Chess is popular with older men, and shadow and puppet plays also provide entertainment to villagers.

Another favorite bar pastime is karaoke, which is found not only in cities but also in the smallest villages. Festivals also fill entertainment needs for villagers. These are times for dancing, eating, and drinking. Village children, who spend much of their time with chores, make up games to play in their free time. Some entertainment activities and sports revolve around schools.

In Phnom Penh there is more Western-style entertainment and recreation, including clubs, discos, spas, cinemas, and theaters.

ETIQUETTE

Cambodian society is formal, and great importance is placed on displays of respect and the recognition of the social hierarchy. Men of status and age are at the top of this social order; women must show respect to men, children demonstrate respect for elders, and people in general show respect for those in superior social and economic classes. Bows are used to for greetings; the deeper the bow, the more respect shown. In addition to the bow, greetings are made with hands together palm to palm and fingers pointed upward. This *sampeah*, as it is called, can also be a sign of respect. The higher the hands, the more respect.

There are many taboos in Cambodian society that would not be considered so in Western societies. For example, the soles of the feet are considered the dirtiest part of the body, and therefore it is considered extremely rude to expose the sole of the shoe to a Cambodian, as in putting one's feet up. Shoes should also be taken off before entering a Cambodian's home or temple. Also, as the head is the most valued part of the body, it is considered very impolite to touch or pat someone's—even a baby's—head. White is considered an unlucky color, as it is associated with death, and is inappropriate as the color of, for example, wrapping paper.

FAMILY LIFE

Courtship rituals in Cambodia follow very prescribed lines. Traditionally, dating is not typical; rather, marriages are arranged between families, with matchmakers setting the terms. Though this practice is changing in urban areas, it is still common among the 84 percent of the people who live in rural areas. Premarital sex is also more common in the cities than in the countryside. Once families agree on a match, gifts are exchanged, and the couple lives with the bride's family before or after the wedding to display the stability of the union. Weddings could be very lengthy and complicated affairs, lasting several days. However, in the modern world and with economic conditions severe in the country, these have been scaled back to daylong ceremonies.

After the probation period of living with the parents, or perhaps after the birth of the first child, the young couple moves into a house of their own. Men typically marry between 19 and 25, women between 16 and 22. The husband is the patriarch and in charge of earning an income, while the wife is in charge of domestic duties. Many women, especially in the cities, also work outside of the home.

Family size is in flux in Cambodia. The fertility rate in 2004 was 3.4 children per woman, which is much smaller than families once were, as the average used to be about five children per woman. Divorce is also becoming easier; once the right only of the wealthy, now middle-class and working-class families also experience divorce. Many of the precepts of marriage are breaking down; for example, it is more common now for men to take a mistress or other partner outside of marriage than it was before. Increasing domestic violence is also a sign of changing times in Cambodian family life.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Traditional dress is still popular in Cambodia. The *krama* is typical for both men and women. This long piece of cloth works as a head covering, loincloth, baby sling, blouse, or

purse and is often checkered in design. More elegant ones are made of silk in an array of colors. Men typically wear sarongs, while women wear the *sampot*; both are basically waist wraparounds that go down to the knees. Women will wear a blouse on top, while men often go bare-chested. In rural areas it is typical for children to go barefoot and for the adults to wear rubber sandals or thongs.

Especially in urban areas, Western clothing has become increasingly popular. Men wear trousers and short-sleeved shirts against the heat, while women wear skirts and blouses. Western styles are more popular with men than with women.

SPORTS

Soccer is the nation's most popular spectator sport, with the national team competing regularly in Asia's Tiger Cup. The national soccer league teams play at numerous locations during the season, drawing large crowds. Cambodians living in the capital also go to see basketball games, volleyball tournaments, and exhibitions of tae kwon do at Phnom Penh's Olympic Stadium. Kickboxing is another Cambodian favorite, with large crowds watching local heroes. Kickboxing is thought to be a Khmer invention.

Swimming is a favorite participation sport among the populace, both at beaches and at swimming pools, as are kite flying and canoe racing. *Heoung*, a sort of variant of baseball played with sticks instead of a bat and ball, is a popular sport for young boys.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1953** Cambodia gains independence from the French.
- 1955** King Norodom Sihanouk becomes prime minister.
- 1970** Defense minister and premier Lon Nol leads a coup to oust Sihanouk; the U.S. military, at war with neighboring Vietnam, enters Cambodia in pursuit of Vietnamese Communist guerrillas.
- 1975** The Khmer Rouge take over Cambodia, name Pol Pot the country's leader, and begin a forced evacuation of cities as part of a state experiment in agrarian communism.
- 1979** Vietnamese troops invade Cambodia, under the guise of opposing the Khmer Rouge regime.
- 1989** Vietnamese troops pull out of Cambodia.
- 1993** Elections are held for a new government; Prince Sihanouk resumes the throne at the head of a coalition government.
- 1997** Co-prime minister Hun Sen ousts his rival, Prince Norodom Ranariddh, in a coup.
- 1998** The last of the Khmer Rouge holdouts surrender to the government; Pol Pot dies while under house arrest, Hun Sen wins parliamentary elections and is sworn in as prime minister.

- 2001** The Senate passes a law requiring the creation of a tribunal to bring genocide charges against Khmer Rouge leaders.
- 2002** In February the United Nations temporarily abandons efforts to establish an international tribunal to investigate crimes against humanity by the Khmer Rouge. UN officials blame intransigence on the part of the Hun Sen government.
- 2003** Elections in July result in a stalemate, with none of the parties winning the two-thirds majority required to govern alone. An international tribunal to investigate Khmer Rouge atrocities is finally established.
- 2004** Prince Norodom Ranariddh and Hun Sen agree in June to form a coalition, with Hun Sen remaining prime minister. In August, Cambodia's parliament ratifies the country's entry into the World Trade Organization. King Norodom Sihanouk abdicates in October and names his son, Prince Norodom Sihamoni, his successor.
- 2005** The leader of Cambodia's opposition party, Sam Rainsy, flees to Thailand after parliament strips him of immunity from prosecution for defamation; Rainsy had accused Prince Norodom Ranariddh of taking bribes. He is later convicted of defaming the prime minister.
- 2006** Rainsy returns from exile after receiving a royal pardon.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Cambodian Information Center
<http://www.cambodia.org>
- CIA World Factbook: Cambodia
<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/cb.html>
- Cambodian Women Development Agency Website
<http://www.bigpond.com/kh/users/cwda>

CAMEROON

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Cameroon (République du Cameroun)

ABBREVIATION

CM

CAPITAL

Yaoundé

HEAD OF STATE

President Paul Biya (from 1982)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Ephraïm Inoni (from 2004)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Republic

POPULATION

16,380,005 (2005)

AREA

475,440 sq km (183,568 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Approximately 200 ethnic groups

LANGUAGES

French, English

RELIGIONS

Christianity, Islam, animism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Coopération financière en Afrique centrale franc

NATIONAL FLAG

Three vertical stripes, from left to right green, red, and yellow, with a yellow star in the middle of the red stripe

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A shield on which the principal element is a red triangle representing Mount Cameroon flanked by two inverted green triangles, each displaying a gold star. Within the red triangle is a golden map of Cameroon with a black upright sword balancing a pair of scales superimposed on it. Behind the shield are crossed golden fasces. On a scroll beneath appears the national motto *Paix, travail, patrie* (Peace, work, fatherland).

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“O Cameroon, Thou Cradle of Our Fathers”

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (Independence Day), February 1 (Youth Day), May 1 (Labor Day), May 20 (National Day, Anniversary of the United Republic of Cameroon), October 1 (Reunification Day), December 10 (Rights of Man Day), Good Friday, Easter Monday, Whitmonday, Christmas, Boxing Day, various Islamic festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

January 1, 1960

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

May 20, 1972; revised January 1996

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Cameroon, known as the hinge of Africa, is in western-central Africa and extends like an irregular wedge north-eastward from the Gulf of Guinea to Lake Chad. The total land area is 475,440 sq km (183,568 sq mi). The total length of international land borders is 4,591 km (2,853 mi), of which the longest is that with Nigeria (1,690 km; 1,050 mi). The other borders are with Chad (1,094 km; 679 mi), Central African Republic (797 km; 495 mi), Republic of the Congo (523 km; 324 mi), Gabon (298 km; 185 mi), and Equatorial Guinea (189 km; 117 mi).

Cameroon is divided into four distinct topographical regions. In the south is a low coastal plain with equatorial rain forests and flat swamplands along its seaward edges. In the center of the country is an extensive savanna-covered plateau, known as the Adamaoua Plateau, extending from the eastern to the western border, with an average elevation of 1,370 m (4,500 ft). The western region is an area of mountainous forests and the site of Mount Cameroon, a volcano that has been active on four occasions in this century and whose height of 4,095 m (13,431 ft) marks it as the highest peak in West Africa. Elsewhere in this region the elevations range from 1,524 m (5,000 ft) to 2,440 m (8,000

Cameroon



ft). The northern part of the country consists of a rolling subarid savanna sloping into a shallow inland basin.

Geography

Area sq km: 475,440; sq mi 183,568
 World Rank: 52nd
 Land Boundaries, km: Central African Republic 797; Chad 1,094; Republic of the Congo 523; Equatorial Guinea 189; Gabon 298; Nigeria 1,690

Coastline, km: 402
 Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Atlantic Ocean 0
 Highest: Fako 4,095
 Land Use %
 Arable land: 12.81
 Permanent Crops: 2.53
 Forest: 51.3
 Other: 33.36

Population of Principal Cities (2001 est.)

Bafoussam	242,000
Bamenda	316,100
Douala	1,494,700
Garoua	356,900
Maroua	271,700
Yaoundé	1,248,200

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

The country exhibits a complete sequence of tropical climates, from equatorial in the south to Sahelian in the north. In the southern coastal region a wet equatorial climate prevails. There is no dry season and little daily variation in temperature or humidity. Temperatures range from an average daily low of 22°C (72°F) to 29°C (84°F), and the average humidity is 85 percent to 90 percent. Average annual rainfall ranges from 2,540 mm (100 in) to 4,010 mm (158 in). The western slopes of Mount Cameroon are among the wettest places in the world, receiving 6,096 mm (240 in) to 9,144 mm (360 in) of rainfall annually.

East and south of Yaoundé annual rainfall ranges from 1,524 mm (60 in) to 2,540 mm (100 in). Fluctuations in temperature and humidity are within narrower ranges, the average daily maximum temperature being 27.8°C (82°F) and the average daily minimum being 22.2°C (72°F).

In the transition zone of the high central plateau, elevation tends to moderate temperatures. At Ngaoundéré daily maximums range from 27.8°C (82°F) in June during the rainy season to 35°C (95°F) in March at the end of the dry season, while the daily average is about 15.6°C (60°F) in the rainy season. Annual rainfall is about 1,524 mm (60 in), and the rainy season extends from April to October.

The northern plains are tropical, hot, and dry, with the rainfall dropping to 600 mm (24 in) annually toward Lake Chad. The dry season becomes longer and increasingly severe, with the temperature rising to 47°C (116°F) at Maroua in the extreme north. The daily variations in temperature may be as much as 10°C (50°F). Most of the rain falls during the five months from May to September; for the rest of the year the region is under the influence of the dry winds of the Sahara.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature

Southern Coastal Region: 72°F to 84°F
 East and South of Yaoundé: 72°F to 82°F
 High Central Plateau: 82°F to 95°F
 Northern Plains: Up to 116°F

Average Rainfall

Southern Coastal Region: 100 in to 158 in
 Western Slope of Mount Cameroon: 240 in to 360 in
 East and South of Yaoundé: 60 in to 100 in
 High Central Plateau: 60 in
 Northern Plains: 24 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

The flora and fauna of Cameroon are similar to those throughout West Africa. The swampy coastal areas support mangrove forests as well as palms, ferns, shrubs, and various species of swamp grasses. In the lowlands, tropical rain forests are dominated by broad-leaved trees that can be up to 200 feet tall. Some of the species are harvested commercially: *obeche*, *utile*, *iroko*, African walnut, *guarea*, and various species of mahogany. At higher elevations are found savanna woodlands. In the more northern regions the savannas are dominated by shorter grasses. The Sahelian landscape is more desert-like and contains low deciduous thorn trees and shrubs, grasses, and succulents.

Many of Cameroon's larger mammal species—including lions, cheetahs, crocodiles, rhinoceroses, leopards, giraffes, elephants, and antelopes—have largely disappeared from the wild and can be found only in nature preserves. Smaller fauna, such as iguanas, lizards, hogs, duikers, wildcats, monkeys, chimpanzees, and baboons, can still be found in the wild, along with numerous species of birds.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005:	16,380,005	
World Rank:	59th	
Density per sq km:	34.6	
% of annual growth (1999-2003):	2.1	
Male %:	50.2	
Female %:	49.8	
Urban %:	51.4	
Age Distribution: %	0-14:	42.0
	15-64:	54.8
	65 and over:	3.2
Population 2025:	22,440,000	
Birth Rate per 1,000:	35.08	
Death Rate per 1,000:	15.34	
Rate of Natural Increase %:	2.2	
Total Fertility Rate:	4.55	
Expectation of Life (years):	Males	47.1
	Females	48.83
Marriage Rate per 1,000:	—	
Divorce Rate per 1,000:	—	
Average Size of Households:	5.2	
Induced Abortions:	—	

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

The ethnic composition of Cameroon is bewilderingly diverse. The country straddles the so-called Bantu Line, the northern limit of the Bantu peoples. In the south the Bantu stock dominates, with semi-Bantus prevailing to the north. Hamitic, Fulani, Arab Choas, and Sudanese Negroes predominate in the northern regions. Classification of the country's approximately 200 ethnic groups is

extremely difficult, and in many cases ethnic affiliations and names have not been established.

Although numerically in the minority, the Fulani, descendants of Muslim conquerors of the 19th century, are the dominant group in the north and have retained their own political structure, composed of 21 *lamidats* (chiefdoms). The non-Muslim *kiridi* (pagan) peoples of the north have generally sided with the Fulani on political issues because of their long tradition of subservience to the latter. The Bamileke, also known as Grasslanders, dominate the cultural and economic life of the country. They hold 70 percent of professional jobs and constitute 60 percent of the merchant class. The Doualas, after whom the country's principal port is named, are the most educated people in Cameroon and form the traditional elite in the coastal regions. The two other major ethnic groups are the Bassa and the Pahouin. Relations among all these groups are characterized by rivalry, suspicion, and hostility accentuated by regional, religious, and linguistic differences and memories of historic conflicts.

Ethnic aliens include more than 50,000 Africans, including Hausa and Ibo from Nigeria; Ewe from Ghana; and citizens of Benin, Central African Republic, Gabon, and Mauritania. There also are about 20,000 Europeans and North Americans in the country, including U.S., British, and French citizens, besides Canadians, Germans, Greeks, Cypriots, Syrians, and Lebanese. The Levantines control trade in the bush, and Europeans and North Americans control the major industries. Anti-Western feelings are not strong in the country.

LANGUAGES

The official languages of Cameroon are French and English. French is the dominant language, reflecting the French background of the ruling elite, drawn from the former East Cameroon. English is more widely spoken in the former West Cameroon.

A number of local languages, such as Ful, or Fulfulde, in the north and Pahouin languages in the south, serve as lingua francas. Intergroup and interregional communication is through Wes Cos, a pidgin English that was developed during the slave trade and was popularized by missionaries.

Most of the peoples of the northern savanna speak Chadic languages, while the Moundang, Baya, and Douri speak Adamawa. Peoples of the south speak Bantu languages, of which Bamileke is the most important.

RELIGIONS

Cameroon has no official religion. Animists constitute 40 percent of the population, Christians 40 percent, and Muslims 20 percent. In general, Christianity dominates

in the south and Islam in the north. The main Christian tribes are the Pahouin, Douala, and Bamileke, while the main Muslim tribes are the Fulani, Koloko, Mousgoum, Mandara, and Bamoun. The Roman Catholic Church has an archbishopric at Yaoundé.

Religious Affiliations

Christian	6,552,000
Traditional beliefs	6,552,000
Muslim	2,276,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Little is known of Cameroon prior to the arrival of the Portuguese in 1472. Bantu-speaking people arrived in the south in the first millennium B.C.E. Fulani pastoralists migrated to the north in the 16th century. Like most of the Atlantic seaboard of Africa, Cameroon served as an important stop on the slave trade. Today it is estimated that 200 distinct ethnic groups live in Cameroon, although most did not settle in the region until the late 18th and early 19th centuries. When the Germans arrived in the late 19th century, the northern portion of the country was under the control of the Islamic Fulani Empire.

Cameroon was under three Western colonial powers after 1884. All of Cameroon, or Kamerun, as it was then known, was a German protectorate until 1916. In 1919 the country was divided between the French and the English, with the larger eastern sector going to France. French Cameroon achieved independence in 1960 as the Republic of Cameroon. The British held a plebiscite in West Cameroon in 1961 under U.S. auspices, as a result of which the northern half opted to join Nigeria and the southern half voted to unite with the Republic of Cameroon as the Federal Republic of Cameroon.

Cameroon then established a federal form of government, with Ahmadou Ahidjo as president; he had served as prime minister before independence. Under his direction, regional political parties were merged into the Cameroon National Union (UNC), formed in 1966. The federal structure, originally developed to meet the problems created by the nation's tribal, religious, and ethnic diversity, was also phased out and abandoned in 1972 when a new constitution created a unitary state. Ahidjo was reelected in 1965, 1970, 1975, and 1980. He stepped down unexpectedly in 1982 and was succeeded by Prime Minister Paul Biya. Biya was reelected without opposition in 1984 and 1988.

In an effort to promote national unity, the UNC was restructured in 1985. At that time it was also renamed the Cameroon People's Democratic Movement (RDPC). Independents were permitted to run in that year's elections, but a return to multiple parties was not envisioned. Biya survived two coup attempts by the military in 1983 and

1984. By 1990 the people of Cameroon seemed to have had enough of Biya. More than 30 new political parties formed and strikes were called when Biya refused to call elections in 1991.

Giving into political pressure, Biya called for elections and several opposition parties were able to garner enough of the vote to form a government with Simon Achidi Achu as prime minister. Nevertheless, later in 1992 Biya won reelection as the country's president. In 1997 and again in 2004 Biya won reelection under the newly expanded seven-year presidential term. The 1997 election was boycotted by main opposition parties. In 2004 Ephraïm Inoni was named prime minister.

Meanwhile, Cameroon continued to face both internal and external problems. In 1998 the business monitoring agency Transparency International ranked Cameroon the most corrupt country in the world. Further, environmental problems plagued the country. In 2000 the World Bank approved funding for an oil and pipeline project over opposition from human rights activists and environmentalists. In 2001 Global Forest Watch noted that 80 percent of the nation's forests had been earmarked for logging. After the International Court of Justice awarded the oil-rich Bakassi Peninsula to Cameroon rather than Nigeria in 2002, tensions between the two countries remained high.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1960–82 Ahmadou Ahidjo

1982– Paul Biya

CONSTITUTION

The constitution of 1972, as amended in 1975 and 1996, is the country's third basic document since 1960. It established a democratic and secular republic and radically altered the structure of power and government. It provides for a unitary state headed by a strong executive. The National Assembly replaced the former Federal Assembly and the regional assemblies. It reaffirmed Cameroon's adherence to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and specifically guaranteed freedom of religion, speech, press, movement, assembly, and association as well as freedom from arbitrary arrest and discrimination and the right to hold private property. Finally, it barred any amendment to the constitution that would impair its democratic character or the unity and territorial integrity of the state.

National executive authority is vested in the president. He is elected by direct popular vote and may seek reelection for any number of terms. He serves as head of the armed forces and can negotiate and ratify treaties without the concurrence of the National Assembly. He

can also declare states of emergency and states of siege, when he may temporarily suspend civil rights and assume absolute powers. The members of the cabinet are appointed, and they are assigned duties by the president and are responsible only to him.

Although the office was not specifically provided for in the constitution, a prime minister was appointed in 1975 as head of a reorganized cabinet. In 1979 a constitutional amendment was passed incorporating the office of the prime minister and defining his status. The office of the prime minister was abolished in 1983 and reinstated in 1996. Cabinet members are not members of the legislature but of the civil service.

Since the creation of a single party in 1966, elections have been held on the basis of a single slate personally selected by the president. They serve only as occasions to demonstrate popular support for the government without offering real political choices to the electorate. Suffrage is universal over age 21.

PARLIAMENT

The National Assembly is a unicameral body consisting of 180 members elected by universal suffrage of those over age 21, for five-year terms. Nearly all of the members of the National Assembly belong to the Cameroon People's Democratic Movement (RDPC). Under the constitution specific areas of legislation are reserved to the National Assembly. These include civil rights; labor laws; civil, commercial, and property laws; civil and criminal codes; judicial organization; local government; national defense; currency; taxation and budgeting; education; and elections. Bills may be introduced either by the president of the republic or by any member of the National Assembly, which may override the president's veto. The National Assembly may appoint commissions of inquiry on specific issues. The president of the republic may, after consultation with the National Assembly, submit certain propositions to national referenda. The National Assembly may empower the president of the republic to legislate by ordinance for a limited period.

The National Assembly meets twice a year; the duration of each session is limited to 30 days. However, the National Assembly may be recalled for an extraordinary session limited to 15 days.

The 1996 constitution calls for an upper chamber for the legislature, to be called a Senate, but it has yet to be established.

POLITICAL PARTIES

In the elections held in 1997, 45 parties were represented by 3,000 candidates. Despite the large number of parties, the dominant Cameroon People's Democratic Move-

ment, which from 1966 until 1990 was the only legal political party, under the leadership of Biya, won an outright majority of the seats. The leading opposition party, the Social Democratic Front, won only 43 of 180 seats. Several other parties, including the Union Nationale pour la Démocratie et le Progrès (UNDP), won 13 seats, and the Union Démocratique du Cameroun (UDC) won five seats. In the most recent elections in 2004, the People's Democratic Movement won 133 seats, the Social Democratic Front 21, and the UDC five, with the 21 remaining seats won by various other smaller parties.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For purposes of local government, Cameroon is divided into provinces, departments, departmental subdivisions, and districts. The provinces are supervised by governors, departments by commissioners, subdivisions by subcommissioners, and districts by chiefs. All administrative officials are national civil servants responsible to the Ministry of the Interior.

At each level a chief administrative officer is also responsible for coordinating the work of the technical ministries within his territory. Development programs are coordinated by the Service for Rural Activation through provincial, departmental, and district development councils. The entire structure of regional government is supervised by the General Inspectorate of Administration.

Popular participation in regional government is channeled through elected communal councils, officially referred to as municipal councils, each representing a town, a rural area, or a mixed urban-rural area. A total of 126 municipal councils constitute the broadest local self-government structure in Francophone Africa. The councils levy taxes on produce and personal income and also receive back a portion of the national income taxes collected within their territories by the central government. The central government exercises close supervision over the councils through the mayors and the treasurers, both of whom are appointees of the Ministry of the Interior.

The primary areas of concern of the councils are education, health, and roads.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The law of Cameroon is based primarily on the French Civil Code, with elements derived from British and local customary law. The court system consists of the Supreme Court, appeals courts, regional courts, and magistrates' courts. The duties of the Supreme Court are divided into two major parts, and its composition varies accordingly. The regular Supreme Court gives final judgment on appeals from decisions of appeals courts, while the expanded

Supreme Court decides on the constitutionality of laws at the request of the president of the republic. The constitution also provides for a court of impeachment to try state officials for conspiracy against national security. The independence of the judiciary and its integrity are monitored by the Higher Judicial Council, whose concurrence is mandatory for appointments to the bench, which are made by the president.

HUMAN RIGHTS

In terms of civil and political rights Cameroon is ranked as a nation that is not free. Cameroon is an authoritarian state where political liberties are circumscribed. At the same time, Cameroon has managed to enjoy political stability and economic and social progress despite the ever-present threat of ethnic factionalism. As the only African state to fuse British and French traditions, Cameroon promotes national unity as its primary objective. To this end it has subordinated regional interests to the development of national institutions. As the threat of internal divisions has receded, some measure of civil liberties has been introduced into the political system.

Amnesty International has reported allegations of harsh prison conditions, ill treatment of detainees, and the unnecessary use of force and even torture by the police, especially during the apprehension and interrogation of suspects. Although habeas corpus is in effect, persons may be held in "administrative detention" under legislation relating to subversion. Cameroonian law guarantees criminal defendants a fair public trial, including legal representation at state expense. Courts are independent of executive and military control.

Except for independent weeklies in Douala, Limbe, and Bamenda, the Cameroonian radio and press is government owned and government controlled. Criticism of the government is discouraged, and the media are used as mouthpieces of the government. News reporters are often harassed and intimidated by the constant threat of censorship.

Freedoms of assembly and association are restricted by law and in practice.

Freedom of movement within the country is hampered by frequent police checkpoints, where travelers must produce identity cards and tax receipts.

FOREIGN POLICY

Cameroon, like Senegal, is one of the more Francophile states in Africa, and ties with France are especially strong. On the other hand, Cameroon has disputes with almost all of its neighbors. The civil war in Chad resulted in the influx of some 100,000 refugees into Cameroon's north-

ern provinces. Cameroon was forced to evacuate 10,000 of its nationals from Gabon following a sports-related riot. Border conflicts with Nigeria have been more serious; in 1981 such conflicts led to a seven-month suspension of diplomatic relations. In 1993 armed conflict came about, and enmity flared up again in 1994 as the two nations fought over the oil-rich Bakassi Peninsula. The matter was adjudicated by the International Court of Justice and the Organization of African Unity. In 1995 Cameroon was granted membership in the Commonwealth, reflecting the status of the western region as a former British colony.

DEFENSE

The defense structure is headed by the president; the line of command runs through the minister of defense to the commanders of the four military zones—central, north, west, and coastal—with regional headquarters at Yaoundé, Kutuba, Douala, and Battoussam, respectively.

Manpower is provided by volunteers, but all men are required to be registered for military service at age 18. Enlistment is for seven years, after which veterans are placed in on-call reserve status for 20 years. The armed forces have a high rate of literacy—60 percent—and are indoctrinated in the national ideology. In addition to the regular army, there are 4,000 paramilitary troops.

Cameroon faces no external threat from its neighbors; therefore, its armed forces are designed for internal peacekeeping only. The armed forces have no offensive capability and have limited equipment and firepower. The air force is dependent on French personnel and supplies. The army has not yet seen field combat, but it was employed until 1970 in quelling internal dissident movements. In 2003 the nation spent \$189.2 million, or about 1.4 percent of its gross domestic product (GDP), on defense.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 15,000
 Military Manpower Availability: 3,898,944
 Military Expenditures \$million: 189.2
 as % of GDP: 1.4
 as % of central government expenditures: 10.4
 Arms Imports \$million: 1
 Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

Because of its oil resources and favorable agricultural conditions, Cameroon has one of the best-endowed primary commodity economies in sub-Saharan Africa. Still, it faces many of the serious problems facing other un-

derdeveloped countries, such as a top-heavy civil service and a generally unfavorable climate for business enterprise. Since 1990 the government has embarked on various International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank programs designed to spur business investment, increase efficiency in agriculture, improve trade, and recapitalize the nation's banks. In June 2000 the government completed an IMF-sponsored three-year structural adjustment program; however, the IMF is pressing for more reforms, including increased budget transparency and privatization. Higher oil prices in 2000 helped offset the country's lower cocoa export revenues. By 2003 the nation's real growth rate was 4.2 percent, but the nation remained poor, with per capita GDP at just \$1,800 and nearly half of the population living below the poverty line.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 27.75
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 1,800
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 4.5
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 1.9
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 42.6
 Industry: 19.8
 Services: 37.6
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %
 Private Consumption: 64
 Government Consumption: 9
 Gross Domestic Investment: 19.4
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 1.873
 Imports: 1.959
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 1.9
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 36.6

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
112.4	114.1	111.7	116.8	120.0

Finance

National Currency: CFA Franc (XAF)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = XAF 581.2
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 771
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 6.0
 Total External Debt \$billion: 7.236
 Debt Service Ratio %: 8.74
 Balance of Payments \$million: –564
 International Reserves SDRs \$million: 637
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 2.3

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 631.9
 per capita \$: 40
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 86.2

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: 1 July–30 June
 Revenues \$billion: 2.442
 Expenditures \$billion: 1.941
 Budget Surplus \$million: 501
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 42.6
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 6.0
 Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares: 0.1
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 0.5
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 8.8
 Total Cropland as % of Farmland: 12.8
 Livestock: Cattle 000: 5,950
 Sheep 000: 3,800
 Hogs 000: 1,350
 Chickens 000: 31,000
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 10.6
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 120.5

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 1.318
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 4.2

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 7.3
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 1.3
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 84
 Net Energy Imports % of use: -94
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: 810
 Production kW-hr billion: 3.613
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 3.36
 Coal Reserves tons: —
 Production tons: —
 Consumption tons: —
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet billion: 3.9
 Production cubic meters: —
 Consumption cubic meters: —
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels million: 400
 Production barrels 000 per day: 77
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 22
 Pipelines Length km: 1,120

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 1.959
 Exports \$billion: 1.873
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 2.5
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 7.5
 Balance of Trade \$million: -564

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
France %	21.9	10.8
Nigeria %	9.5	—
Japan %	6.8	—
United States %	5.7	7.5
China %	4.9	4.4
Germany %	4.3	—
Spain %	—	21.9
Italy %	—	13.4
Netherlands %	—	10.6

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 34,300
 Paved %: 12.5
 Automobiles: 115,900
 Trucks and Buses: 47,400
 Railroad: Track Length km: 1,008
 Passenger-km million: 303
 Freight-km million: 1,159
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 1
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 357
 Airports: 47
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 646
 Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 221
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 39
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: —

Communications

Telephones 000: 110.9
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.06
 Cellular Telephones million: 1.077
 Personal Computers 000: 90
 Internet Hosts per million people: 29
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 4

ENVIRONMENT

Cameroon's major environmental problems are divided regionally. In the north of the country, extensive desertification threatens the livelihood of nearly 25 percent of the population. On the coast and in the central areas, deforestation is a growing problem. In urban and industrial areas, there is growing concern over water purity and firewood supplies. In the mountainous zones of the west and northwest, overfarming of the soil in conjunction with soil erosion threatens food supplies. The country is largely unequipped to deal with these matters administratively.

Environment

Forest Area % of land area: 51.3
 Average Annual Forest Change, 1990-2000, 000 ha: —222
 Nationally Protected Areas as % of Total Land Area: 9
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg 000 per day: 10.7
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 0.4

LIVING CONDITIONS

Living conditions in much of Cameroon are poor, with a high infant mortality rate, low life expectancy, and high rate of infectious disease. In many villages, mud and thatch are used in home construction, although the number of homes with concrete blocks and metal roofs is increasing. The larger cities have squatter areas and shantytowns, where refugees subsist without the most basic amenities. Many people bathe and wash their clothes in rivers. While the major roads are paved and train service from the major cities to the ports is available, many people travel by crowded bus and bush taxis. Travel is especially difficult off the main roads, where rains can make dirt roads impassable.

HEALTH

Health care is generally poor. In 2004 the infant mortality rate was high, at over 69 per 1,000 live births. Life expectancy, in turn, was low, at 48 years. AIDS is a major problem, with an estimated 6.9 percent of the adult population living with the disease. With only about 63 percent of the nation's population having access to clean drinking water, the death rate from infectious diseases such as dysentery is high; the death rate from intestinal disease, for example, was nearly 35 percent. Waterborne diseases are also common, and there were 2,900 cases of malaria per 100,000 people. While Western medicine is available from government and private Christian facilities, much of the population continues to rely on herbal practitioners as well as ritual healing.

Health

Number of Physicians: 1,019
 Number of Dentists: 55
 Number of Nurses: 5,052
 Number of Pharmacists: —
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 7
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 69.18
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 730
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 3.3
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 20
 HIV Infected % of adults: 6.9
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 48
 Measles: 62
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 48
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 63

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Food preferences vary widely among the many ethnic groups in Cameroon. Some generalizations, though, are possible. Staple ingredients include yams, plantains, nuts, cassava, millet, sorghum, and corn. These are sometimes made into a paste called *fufu*, which is then made into balls and included in stews. Fruits are widely consumed, including citrus, bananas, mangoes, papayas, and pineapples. Common vegetables include greens, squashes, and okra. Sometimes dried fish or meat is included in stews, but such meats as chicken, goat, sheep, or beef are more likely to be reserved for honored guests or for special occasions such as weddings.

Food and Nutrition

Food Supply as % of FAO Requirements: 95
 Undernourished % of total population: 25.5
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,270
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 102.9
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 158.4

STATUS OF WOMEN

Women enjoy equal rights with men under the constitution and are politically active in political parties and labor unions. The women's wing of the Cameroon People's Democratic Movement has created social and educational programs aimed at encouraging the economic and social productivity of Cameroonian women. Women are represented in the modern sector, although not proportionately in the upper levels of administration and in the professions.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 9
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men age 15-24: —
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: —

WORK

In 2003 Cameroon's labor force consisted of about 6.5 million people. The country is heavily dependent on agriculture, with 70 percent of the population earning a living through farming, including herding and plantation work; this 70 percent, however, contributes only about 43 percent of GDP. Industry and commerce employ 13 percent, and other fields employ the remaining 17 percent. Agricultural products include coffee, cocoa, cotton, rubber, bananas, oilseed, grains, root starches, livestock, and timber. Major industries include petroleum produc-

tion and refining, mining and aluminum processing, food processing, textiles, and lumber.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 6,490,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 38.3
 Labor by Sector: %
 Agriculture: 70
 Industry and Commerce: 13
 Other: 17
 Unemployment %: 30

EDUCATION

Education is, in theory, universal, free, and compulsory from ages six to 11.

The academic year runs from September to June in the east and from October to June in the west. The medium of instruction is French in the east and English in the west. Pupils in the north and east spend one year longer at school than those in the central, coastal, and western provinces.

Schooling consists of a 13-year cycle, including six years of primary school divided into preparatory (two years), elementary (two years), and intermediate (two years), and seven years of secondary education in a lycée that offers a baccalaureate on the French model. The curriculum at all levels has been reoriented to reflect an African, particularly Cameroonian, point of view.

The Cameroonian school system has a high dropout rate, partly attributable to a shortage of qualified teachers. Of every 1,000 pupils entering the first grade of the primary cycle, only 560 complete the sixth grade; of every 1,000 students entering the secondary cycle, only 312 earn the baccalaureate.

Nearly 27 percent of school enrollment is in the vocational stream. Vocational and technical education is provided in two types of institutions: lower technical secondary schools and technical lycées. The former offer a four-year course, and the latter provide a three-year upper secondary course. The *École des Cadres* at Douala provides training in development work to civil servants, and two colleges organized by the Pan-African Institute of Development (PAID) train middle-level executives in rural development.

Private schools of missionary origin continue to play a dominant role in secondary and primary education. Private-school enrollments constitute 40 percent of the total in eastern Cameroon, while the vast majority of primary and secondary schools and primary-school teacher training institutions are in private hands in western Cameroon. Approved private schools receive grants-in-aid and conform to official curricula and regulations. In the northern provinces Koranic schools provide traditional instruction to Muslims.

Educational administration is centralized in the Ministry of Education.

The country has five universities, all part of the Cameroon University system, located in Buea, Douala, Dschang, Yaoundé (called Yaoundé I), and Soa (called Yaoundé II). Until fairly recently the nation's only university was the University of Yaoundé, founded in 1962 and financed until 1973 by the French government. The national literacy rate is 79 percent.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 79.0
 Male %: 84.7
 Female %: 73.4
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 9.2
 First Level: Primary schools: 6,801
 Teachers: 49,042
 Students: 2,798,523
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 57.1
 Net Enrollment Ratio: —
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: —
 Teachers: 38,816
 Students: 669,129
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 21.1
 Net Enrollment Ratio: —
 Third Level: Institutions: —
 Teachers: 3,166
 Students: 81,318
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 5.5
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 3.8

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Scientific research is funded both through the university system and by various private institutions that are funded by donor countries, nongovernmental organizations, and the United Nations. Scientific research emphasizes crops, livestock, forestry, and fisheries; the medical use of plants; food processing; and biotechnology.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million persons: 3
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: 0.976
 Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

The Cameroonian press consists of one daily, the *Cameroon Tribune*, published by the government in French daily and in English weekly from Yaoundé, with a circulation of 66,000. In 2000 there were some 1,300 legally existing newspapers, but only about 30 were ever published, and only about 20 were published regularly.

In recent years the circulation of newspapers has been rapidly declining, largely as a result of poverty, which puts even a newspaper outside the reach of many Cameroonians. Over 50 periodicals are also published, almost all in French.

The national news agency is the Société de Presse et d'Édition de Cameroun (SOPECAM), with four permanent bureaus. Foreign news agencies in Yaoundé include Tass, Agence France-Presse, Reuters, and China Nouvelle.

There are nine publishers, all but one in Yaoundé. Cameroon adheres to the Berne, UCC, and Florence copyright conventions.

The state-owned Radiodiffusion-Télévision Camerounaise operates four radio stations, at Yaoundé, Douala, Garoua, and Buea. The main services are in French and English, with some broadcasts in regional languages and Arabic. Television was introduced in 1985. In 2001 TV Max, Cameroon's first private television station, began operation. Another station, Canal 2, was launched in 2002 to broadcast cultural programming. After the country's telecommunications laws were liberalized in 2000, dozens of new radio stations began operation.

Media

Newspapers and Periodicals: —
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: 13
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets 000: 500
 per 1,000: 34

CULTURE

Most Cameroonian artists are self-supporting, although in 1974 the government organized a cultural festival to help protect a cultural past that is rich and diverse. Particularly known for their oral literature are the Fulani, who pass along riddles, magic formulas, proverbs, poetry, stories, legends, and history through oral traditions. Writers from the southern Ewondo and Douala ethnic groups have made major contributions to modern African literature. Graphic arts are common as well, including sculpture, textiles, and pottery. The Bamoun, for example, produce bronze sculptures, while the Fulani produce graphic arts that reflect the predominance of cattle herding among them. Many groups in Cameroon use music, dance, statues, and masks to perform ancient rituals, and music is often linked with the cycles of the farming seasons.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 29
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: 42
 Annual Attendance:
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

The diverse cultural groups of Cameroon have produced a wide array of myths and legends. Among the Bamoun, for example, dirge music is played at night to level accusations of serious crime; the people play on buffalo-skin bags and iron bells as they march along slowly, singing in monotone voices. The Fang narrate heroic events from their history, as well as legends as fables, while playing the *mvvet*, a kind of harp or sitar. A prominent hero to Cameroonians is Douala Manga Bell, who had been chosen to protect the area from Germans. In violation of an 1884 treaty, German colonizers were trying to take over the city of Douala and its surroundings. Douala Manga Bell led the resistance until he was captured and hanged in 1914. Songs and dramatic performances, passed down through the generations, celebrate his bravery and martyrdom.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Perhaps the most dominant form of recreation in Cameroon is *makossa* music, a kind of fast-paced, hard-hitting, rhythmic music. *Makossa* is played virtually everywhere—not just in nightclubs but in taxis, in bars and restaurants, at truck stops, and on nearly everyone's small radio. The *makossa* musicians Sam Fan Thomas and Manu Dibango have become celebrities throughout the nation, and a blind singer named André-Marie Tala has been nicknamed "Ray Charles." Folk arts and crafts, especially graphic arts such as sculpture and also wood carving, basket making, mask carving, and the like, are also forms of entertainment, especially for traditional peoples. Soccer is a national pastime, and many men play checkers and chess.

ETIQUETTE

In many regions of Cameroon, standards of proper etiquette dictate the use of elaborate greetings, a person's proper name, and praise names. In French-speaking regions the common greeting is "*Bonjour, comment ça va?*"

(Hello, how are you?), while the pidgin English greeting is typically “How na?” When people meet, they commonly shake hands, though kissing on the cheek has become more common in the cities. In Cameroon it is considered rude to point. In the presence of a person of higher status or authority, it is rude to cross the legs at the knees. Among traditional cultural groups that are hierarchically organized, including the Grasslanders, the Bamoun, the Fulani, and the Bamiléké, an elaborate protocol has evolved for sitting during an audience with the chief.

FAMILY LIFE

Some cultural groups, especially in rural areas, are polygynous, with the family comprising a male head of household and two or more wives, their children, and often an extended family that includes grandparents. Families tend to be large, often with six or more children, and young children are often given chores, including looking after their younger siblings. In such cultures, where children have economic value, the birth of a child is a major event, and infants are given a great deal of attention. Men make the important decisions for the family, and women often not only care for children but also gather firewood, tend fields, care for the home, and haul water. In the north, most ethnic groups, including the Fulani, are patrilineal. The Bamoun, the Grasslanders, and the Bamiléké are variously patrilineal or dual descent, but one exception among the Grasslanders is the Kom tribe, which is a matrilineal culture.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

As in many countries where modern cities coexist with traditional cultures, wide variations in dress can be seen. In the cities people generally wear Western-style clothing, and younger people favor T-shirts and jeans, often purchased from used-clothing vendors who ship them in from the United States and Europe. While traditional clothing is sometimes seen in the cities, it is most common in rural areas and villages. Northern Muslim men wear long robes, and women cover their heads in public. Among women, the *pagne*, a type of sarong, is common in the north but especially popular in the southern provinces. The *pagne* serves as a wraparound skirt that can also provide protection from the sun and hold a baby. Much of the clothing in Cameroon is made of high-quality cotton and is imprinted with traditional African designs and patterns.

SPORTS

While Cameroonians play tennis, handball, and basketball, soccer is wildly popular. From an early age boys play

soccer anywhere they can find a ball and open space, and the national soccer team is highly respected, having advanced to the quarterfinals in World Cup play in 1982, 1990, and 1994. Most recently, the 2003 team was the African champion and advanced to the World Cup semifinals. Also that year, Cameroon stunned World Cup champion Brazil at the Confederations Cup tournament.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1960** Cameroon becomes an independent nation, with Ahmad Ahidjo as first president. Ahidjo's group wins an absolute majority in National Assembly elections; new constitution is approved in national referendum.
- 1961** In UN-supervised plebiscite, the southern Cameroonian region of the British Trust Territories votes to join the Republic of Cameroon, while northern Cameroon votes to join Nigeria. The Federal Republic of Cameroon is formed with two states: West Cameroon and East Cameroon. Ahidjo continues as president of the Federal Republic.
- 1964** First elections to the federal National Assembly are held.
- 1965** First federal presidential election is held, and Ahidjo is reelected.
- 1966** Cameroon joins the five-nation UDEAC (Union Douanière et Economique d'Afrique Centrale). Union Nationale Camerounaise (UNC) is formed as the country's sole political party.
- 1968** Tandeng Muna is named premier.
- 1970** Ernest Ouandie, the last of the leaders of the UPC (Union des Populations de Cameroun) rebellion, is arrested along with Albert Ndongmo, the Roman Catholic bishop of Nkongsamba; Ouandie and Ndongmo are sentenced to death, but Ndongmo's sentence is commuted to life imprisonment following an appeal by Pope Paul VI and by Secretary General U Thant of the United Nations.
- 1972** Federal Republic is replaced by the United Republic of Cameroon, with new unitary constitution providing for a strong presidential form of government; new constitution is approved overwhelmingly by the electorate.
- 1973** National Assembly elections are held. Cameroon suspends ties with Israel. Second stage of the Trans-Cameroon Railway, from Belabo to Ngaoundéré, is opened.
- 1975** Ahidjo is elected president for his fourth term. Border treaty is signed with Nigeria. Paul Biya is named prime minister.
- 1976** Border treaty is concluded with Gabon.

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- 1978** In national elections UNC wins all seats.
- 1979** Constitutional amendment officially creates the post of prime minister.
- 1982** Ahidjo steps down as president and nominates Prime Minister Biya as his successor, but remains UNC leader.
- 1983** Biya rids the cabinet of Ahidjo supporters. In bitter power struggle, Ahidjo is forced to leave the country. Ahidjo and lieutenants are charged with plotting to overthrow Biya. Ahidjo is tried in absentia along with military officers Ibrahim Oumarou and Adamou Salatou by a military tribunal. More than 45 persons are executed in connection with the coup. Members of the presidential security force loyal to Ahidjo stage a coup that is foiled by loyal army and paratroop regiments. As many as 1,000 civilians and soldiers are killed before the government regains control. The government deletes the word "United" from the name of the republic. Three more provinces are added to the territorial administration. The office of prime minister is abolished.
- 1984** Paul Biya is elected president in nationwide balloting, indicating strong popular support for his liberalization programs.
- 1985** Nigeria expels illegal Cameroonian residents. The Cameroon National Union is renamed the Cameroon People's Democratic Movement (RDPC).
- 1986** At least 1,700 people die as they sleep in a natural disaster when toxic gas from volcanic Lake Nyos engulfs lakeside villages.
- 1987** Electoral reforms allow legally constituted parties to contest elections, although the RDPC remains the only authorized party. Biya announces an austerity budget to deal with the country's growing economic crisis.
- 1988** Multiple candidates run for seats in the assembly. Biya is reelected unopposed.
- 1992** Biya is elected president in the first multiparty elections.
- 1994** Nigerian troops claim the petroleum-rich Bakassi Peninsula of Cameroon.
- 1996** Border skirmishes break out with Nigeria over the Bakassi Peninsula territorial dispute; Nigeria and Cameroon agree to adjudication by the International Court of Justice.
- 1997** In elections boycotted by most of the opposition, Biya's party, the Cameroon People's Democratic Movement (formerly the National Cam-

eroonian Union), wins 60 percent of seats and Biya is reelected.

- 1998** Transparency International ranks Cameroon the world's most corrupt country.
- 2000** World Bank approves funding for an oil pipeline project despite environmental and human rights criticism.
- 2001** Global Forest Watch reports that 80 percent of the country's indigenous forests have been allocated for logging. IMF offers debt relief worth \$2 billion on the condition that corruption is checked and social services are improved.
- 2002** The International Court of Justice awards the oil-rich Bakassi Peninsula to Cameroon rather than Nigeria, sparking further tension between the two nations.
- 2004** Biya is elected to a third seven-year term as president.

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- Cameroon.** *Cameroon—Selected Issues and Statistical Appendix* (IMF Staff Country Report), 2000; *Recensement général de la population et de l'habitat*, 1987

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Presidency of the Republic of Cameroon
<http://www.camnet.cm/celcom/anglais/homepr.htm>

CANADA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Canada

ABBREVIATION

CA

CAPITAL

Ottawa

HEAD OF STATE

Queen Elizabeth II, represented by Governor-General Michaëlle Jean (from 2005)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Stephen Harper (from 2006)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Parliamentary democracy

POPULATION

32,805,041 (2005)

AREA

9,984,670 sq km (3,855,081 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Anglo-Canadians, French Canadians, Amerindians, Inuits

LANGUAGES

English, French

RELIGIONS

Roman Catholicism, Protestantism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Canadian dollar

NATIONAL FLAG

A white field flanked by vertical red fields on either end, with a red maple leaf on the white field

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A heraldic shield divided into five parts: three crouching lions on a red field in top left representing Britain; the erect red Scottish royal lion on gold surrounded by a decorated frame called a “double tressure” on the top right; a gold harp on blue for Ireland in the left center; three fleurs-de-lis for France in the right center; and at the bottom, with twice the width as the others, a cluster of three red maple leaves on white, representing Canada. A gold lion holding the red, white, and blue Union Jack and a silver unicorn with the flag of old France bearing three silver fleurs-de-lis support the shield. A gold helmet mantled in red and white rests on the upper part of the shield, with a crowned lion on its top holding a red maple leaf in its forepaw. Above all is displayed St. Edward’s jeweled gold crown. Underneath the emblem a blue scroll rests upon a design of Irish shamrocks and French lilies. In gold letters it carries the national motto, *A mari usque ad mare* (From sea to sea).

NATIONAL ANTHEMS

Canada has no official national anthem. Both “God Save the Queen” and “O Canada” have semiofficial status, with the latter more commonly used.

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year’s Day), Monday preceding May 25 (Victoria Day), July 1 (Canada Day), first Monday in September (Labour Day), second Monday in October (Thanksgiving Day), November 11 (Remembrance Day), Good Friday, Easter, Christmas, Boxing Day

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

July 1, 1867

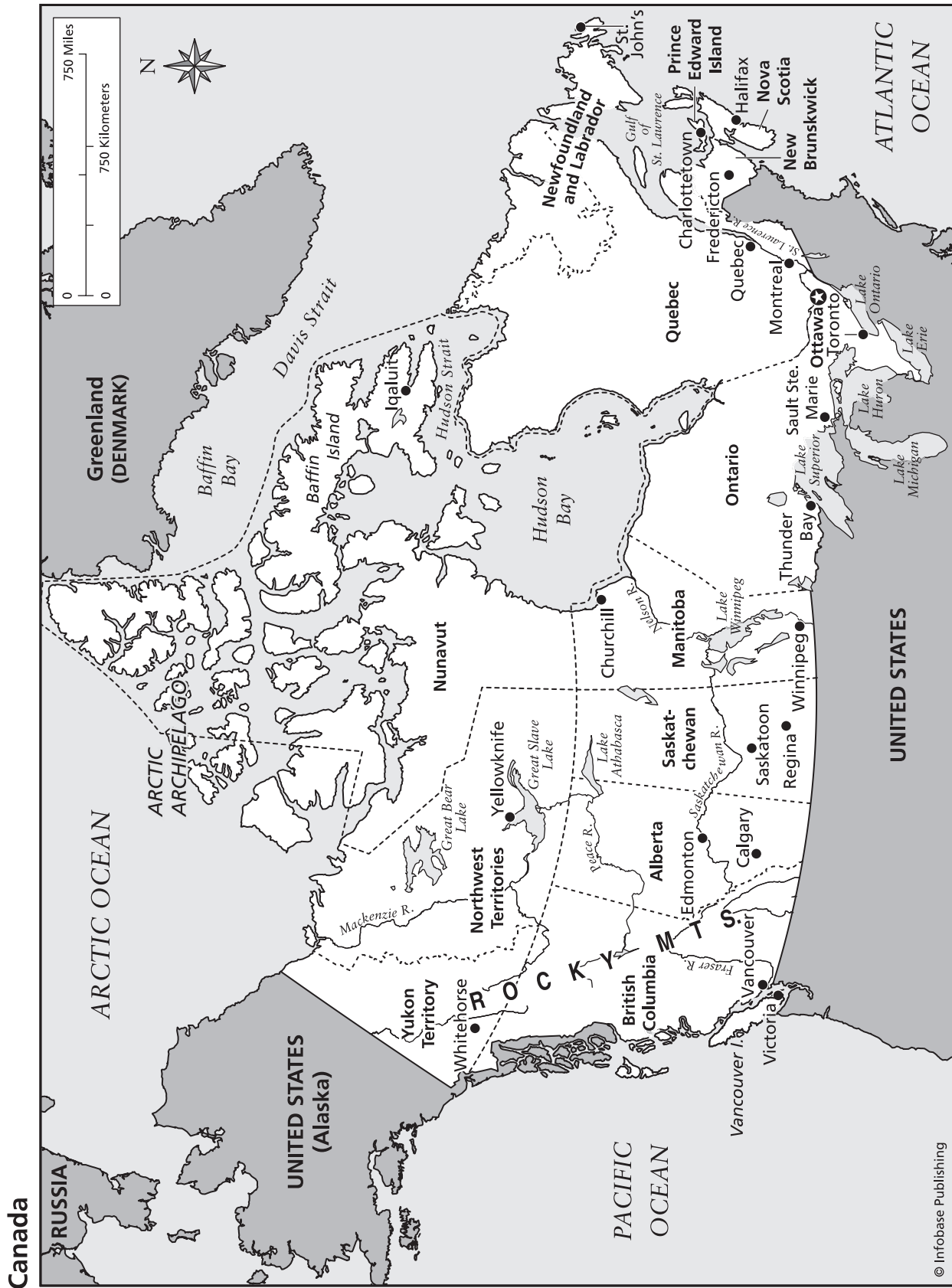
DATE OF CONSTITUTION

April 17, 1982

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Canada occupies all of the North American continent north of the United States except Alaska and the small French islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon. The most striking geographical characteristic of Canada is its immense size. With a recorded area of 9,984,670 sq km (3,855,081 sq mi) for land and freshwater, it is the largest

country in the Western Hemisphere and the second largest in the world, next to Russia. Canada’s size is about the same as that of the continent of Europe. The border with the United States, the longest undefended border in the world, is 8,893 km (5,526 mi). The total coastline is divided into four segments: Arctic Ocean (9,286 km; 5,770 mi); Atlantic Ocean, including Baffin Bay and Davis Strait (9,833 km; 6,110 mi); Pacific Ocean (2,543 km;



1,580 mi); and Hudson Bay and Hudson Strait (7,081 km; 4,400 mi).

Topographically, Canada is divided into the Atlantic provinces, the Great Lakes–St. Lawrence Lowlands, the Canadian Shield, the Interior Plains, the Western Cordillera, the Northwest Territories, and the Arctic Archipelago.

The foundation of Canadian geology is the Canadian Shield (sometimes called the Precambrian Shield or the Laurentian Plateau), which takes up almost half of Canada's total area. It extends beyond the Canadian boundary into the United States in two limited areas: at the head of Lake Superior and in the Adirondack Mountains. Structurally, the shield may be thought of as a huge saucer, the center of which is occupied by Hudson and James Bays. Most of the shield is relatively level and less than 610 km (2,000 ft) above sea level. Only along the dissected rim of the saucer are there major hills and mountains: the Torngat Mountains in northeastern Labrador, the Laurentian Highlands, and those along the northern shores of Lake Superior. Except for the plains, the rest of the shield is composed of undulating terrain with rocky, knoblike hills and lakes interconnected by rapid streams.

The Canadian Shield is surrounded by a series of lowlands, the Atlantic region and the Great Lakes–St. Lawrence Lowlands to the east, the Interior Plains to the west, and the Arctic Lowlands to the north.

In the Far West is the Western Cordillera, composed of relatively young folded and faulted mountains and plateaus. It is only some 805 km (500 mi) wide in Canada, much narrower than in the United States, with less extensive interior plateaus. Generally, the mountains are much higher in Canada and contain some of the most beautiful alpine scenery in the world. The only other parts of Canada with comparable spectacular mountains are Baffin and Ellesmere islands in the northeastern Arctic.

Between the Western Cordillera and the Canadian Shield is the region broadly known as the West, including the Manitoba and Mackenzie lowlands. The Manitoba Lowland (leading to the Saskatchewan and Alberta plains) is the only part of Canada that is as flat as a tabletop. The boundary between the Manitoba Lowland and the Saskatchewan Plain is marked by the Manitoba Escarpment. The Saskatchewan and Alberta plains are divided in the south by the Missouri Couteau. The landscape of the two plains is similar to that of the U.S. Great Plains, with rolling plains, deeply incised rivers, water-filled depressions called sloughs, dry streambeds called coulees, and, in the drier areas, mesas, buttes, and badlands.

The Northwest Territories is a political rather than a geographical term; it covers the region east of the Western Cordillera and north of the Interior Plains and the Canadian Shield. Within this large area there are two distinct subregions: the subarctic Mackenzie River valley

to the west and the arctic area of the islands and north-central mainland.

The Arctic Archipelago lies on a submerged plateau whose floor varies from flat to gently undulating. From the Alaskan border eastward to the mouth of the Mackenzie River the shelf is shallow and continuous. The deeply submerged continental shelf runs along the entire western coast of the Arctic Archipelago from Banks Island to Greenland.

The largest islands are those in the Arctic Archipelago, extending from St. James Bay to Ellesmere. The largest on the western coast are Vancouver Island and the Queen Charlotte Islands. The largest on the eastern coast are Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island, Cape Breton Island, the Grand Manan and Campello islands of New Brunswick, and Anticosti Island and the Îles de la Madeleine of Quebec.

Geography

Area sq km: 9,984,670; sq mi 3,855,081
World Rank: 2nd
Land Boundaries, km: United States 8,893
Coastline, km: 202,080
Elevation Extremes meters:
Lowest: Atlantic Ocean 0
Highest: Mount Logan 5,959
Land Use %
Arable land: 4.96
Permanent Crops: 0.02
Forest: 26.5
Other: 68.52

Population of Principal Cities (2001)

Abbotsford	129,475
Barrie	129,963
Calgary	879,277
Edmonton	782,101
Guelph	106,920
Halifax	276,221
Hamilton	618,820
Kelowna	108,330
Kingston	108,158
Kitchener	387,319
London	337,318
Montréal	3,215,665
Oshawa	234,779
Ottawa	827,854
Québec	635,184
Regina	178,225
Saguenay	108,409
St. Catharines	299,935
St. John's	122,709
Saskatoon	196,816
Sherbrooke	127,354
Sudbury	103,879
Thunder Bay	103,215
Toronto	4,366,508
Trois-Rivières	117,758
Vancouver	1,829,854
Victoria	288,346
Windsor	263,204
Winnipeg	626,685

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Canada has a great variety of climates. British Columbia has moderate winter and summer temperatures, similar to those of England. The central and southern parts of the Western Plains, on the other hand, have great winter and summer temperature extremes and about as much precipitation as the Gobi Desert in Mongolia. In the north, winter temperatures plunge as low as -51°C (-60°F), but the summers are as hot as in the tropics in southern Ontario.

The conflict of the air masses that pour in from three directions east of the Rockies leads to continual cyclonic storms, producing much rain and snow. The Northwest Territories and the Prairies, having fewer and weaker storms, are the driest areas. The windward mountain slopes are exceptionally wet, and the protected slopes are very dry. Thus the western coast gets 1,524 to 3,048 mm (60 to 120 in) of precipitation annually; the central Prairies area, less than 506 mm (20 in); the flat area east of Winnipeg, 508 to 1,016 mm (20 to 40 in); and the Maritime Provinces, 1,143 to 1,524 mm (45 to 60 in). The average annual number of rainy days ranges from 252 along coastal British Columbia to 70 in the interior of the province. About 30 percent of the annual mean precipitation is snow.

In the province of Newfoundland, on the Atlantic coast, Labrador has a rigorous climate and is covered by snow for more than half the year. On the island of Newfoundland, however, summers are cool and winters are relatively mild.

On Prince Edward Island the climate is quite moderate except for occasional extreme lows in the winter.

In Nova Scotia summer and winter temperatures are more moderate than in the interior. Winters are stormy on the coast, and fog is prevalent throughout the year.

In New Brunswick the seasons are somewhat delayed, and temperatures in the interior are more extreme than on the coast.

In Quebec the frost-free season extends from early May to late September. Northward and eastward, winter temperatures become more extreme and summers cool.

Ontario bears the brunt of severe winter cold waves moving east from the Prairies or south from the Arctic across Hudson Bay. Summers, though warm, are short. Peninsular Ontario has a much milder climate than the northern districts. Since Ontario lies in a major storm track, wide variations occur in weather, especially in winter, but extreme conditions are not prolonged.

Manitoba and Saskatchewan have typically prairie continental climates, with long, cold winters and warm summers. The frost-free period in the fertile lowland areas ranges from 80 to 100 days.

The south of Alberta is subject in the winter to cold, dry air masses of continental polar air, occasionally moderated by chinook winds. Summers are warm with abun-

dant sunshine, but rainfall is meager and highly variable, particularly in the southwest.

British Columbia has the most moderate climate in Canada, with mild, wet winters, warm summers, and the maximum number of frost-free days. Semiarid conditions sometimes occur in the interior.

Yukon is subject to wide temperature variations, but winters are remarkably mild for the latitude, and periods of intense cold are of short duration.

In the southern areas of the Northwest Territories summers last for about three months, with temperatures above 10°C (50°F). North of the tree line, freezing temperatures may occur during any month, and winters are long and bitterly cold. The climate is moderated by the sea in the Arctic Archipelago, so that extremes are not as severe as in a continental region of the same latitude. Temperatures in the Arctic Archipelago are generally below -18°C (0°F) for six months or more. Occasional mild periods occur, particularly in the western Arctic. Summers are short and cool. Winter nights and summer days are long, reaching a maximum of 24 hours above the arctic circle. Precipitation is extremely light and falls mostly in late summer.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature

Newfoundland: Jan 6°F to 22°F July 49°F to 61°F
Maritime Provinces: Jan 9°F to 27°F July 47°F to 70°F
Ontario: Jan 11°F to 25°F July 61°F to 72°F
Prairie Provinces: Jan 8°F to 11°F July 63°F to 67°F
British Columbia: Jan 12°F to 40°F July 54°F to 63°F
Yukon: Jan 22°F to 25°F Jul 58°F to 60°F
Northwest Territories: Jan 22°F to 21°F July 38°F to 61°F

Average Rainfall

Western Coast: 60 in to 120 in
Prairies: 20 in
Winnipeg: 20 to 40 in
Maritime Provinces: 45 to 60 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

The wide variety of landform and climate regions in Canada determine the flora and fauna of the country. These regions include tundra, forests, grasslands, and alpine areas. Plant life in the east, in the Great Lakes–St. Lawrence region, includes a wide assortment of trees, including maple, birch, beech, hemlock, white pine, and spruce. Animals in this region include black bears, deer, squirrels, skunks, beavers, and otters. Avian life in the same re-

gion includes the robin, red-winged blackbird, bluebird, woodpecker, oriole, bobolink, hawk, loon, and heron.

In the grasslands, or prairies, stretching north to the tundra are found aspen, cottonwood, balsam, birch, bur oak, and numerous varieties of conifer. In these forested areas corresponding animal life includes moose, caribou, black bear, timber wolf, marten, beaver, porcupine, snowshoe rabbit, and chipmunk, while in the plains are found rabbits, gophers, prairie birds, ducks, and geese.

Along the west coast, a much wetter region, are hemlock, cedar, Sitka spruce, Douglas fir, and white pine. Animal life on the west coast includes deer, mountain goat, mountain beaver, and the striped skunk. Also found are common birds, such as the pygmy owl, band-tailed pigeon, black swift, northern flicker, crow, and black brant.

In the alpine environment of the Rocky Mountains are aspen, lodgepole pine, hemlock, fir, and spruce. Typical mammals of this area are the grizzly bear, mountain goat, moose, cougar, and alpine flying squirrel.

Mosses and low grass and bush cover much of the far northern Arctic region, while animal life includes the musk ox, reindeer, polar bear, caribou, white and blue fox, arctic hare, and lemming. Arctic birds include the snowy owl, ptarmigan, snow bunting, and arctic tern. Canada's coastal waters are home to walrus, seals, and whales.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005:	32,805,041
World Rank:	35th
Density per sq km:	3.4
% of annual growth (1999–2003):	0.9
Male %:	49.5
Female %:	50.5
Urban %:	80.4
Age Distribution: %	
0–14:	18.2
15–64:	68.7
65 and over:	13.0
Population 2025:	38,165,000
Birth Rate per 1,000:	10.91
Death Rate per 1,000:	7.67
Rate of Natural Increase %:	0.4
Total Fertility Rate:	1.61
Expectation of Life (years):	
Males:	76.59
Females:	83.5
Marriage Rate per 1,000:	4.7
Divorce Rate per 1,000:	2.3
Average Size of Households:	2.7
Induced Abortions:	106,418

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Canada is a country with two founding peoples with distinct cultural and linguistic traditions: Anglo-Canadian and French Canadian. The existence of the two societies belies the belief of the fathers of the confederation

that they were creating a British (including Anglo-Celtic or Irish) nation in North America. In the 1870s more than 60 percent of the population was of British origin, almost double the size of the French. Further, the Anglo-Canadians were the ruling class economically and politically. The French constituted an enclave that simply would not disappear as well as a vulnerable but tenacious minority who resisted all efforts at integration. Anglo-Canadian dominance has suffered erosion during the past century. When the immigration of peoples from the British Isles did not reach the hoped-for proportions, immigration from eastern Europe, including the Ukraine, was encouraged. As a result, the prime farmlands of western Canada were settled by eastern Europeans. Having very little contact with Canadian government representatives or settled communities, immigrants were forced to develop their own resources. They did not assimilate into a Canadian way of life because there were no social or institutional pressures to do so.

Many Amerindians bear a striking resemblance to East Asians. Their physical similarities and differences suggest that while related to Asians, Amerindians separated from Asians before many of the later physical traits developed. Further, no clear relationship exists between Amerindian tongues and Asian languages except for in the Inuit or Eskimo language, which bears a striking resemblance to some northeastern Asian tongues, such as Kamchadal and Chukchi.

Anthropologists distinguish seven distinct cultural groups among Canadian Indians: the Algonquin tribes of the northern woodlands, the agricultural tribes of the eastern woodlands, the Plains tribes, the tribes of the Pacific coast, the tribes of the Western Cordillera, the tribes of the basins of the Mackenzie and Yukon Rivers, and the Inuit along the Arctic coast.

The Amerindians of the eastern woodlands include the Beothuk, Micmac, Nasakapi, Cree, Montagnais, Algonquin, and Ojibwa. The Iroquois are related groups and include the Huron, Neutral, and Tobacco. The Indians of the Plains are the Assiniboine, Plains Cree, Blackfoot, Sarsce, Gros-Ventre, and Sioux, all of whom are migratory hunters. The Indians of the northwestern coast include the Tsimshian, Haida, Kwakiutl (or Kwakwaka'waku), Bella Coola, and Nuu Chah-nulth ("People along the islands," Nootka). The Athabaskans of the Mackenzie and Yukon basins include the Chipewyan, Beaver, Slave, Yellowknife, Hare, Sekani, Dogrib, Nahani, and Kutchin. The Inuit live entirely north of the timberline; the most important Inuit groups are the Mackenzie, Copper, Central, and Labrador.

The one-third of the Canadian population who are neither French nor English in origin are scattered into a number of groups, principally Italians, central and eastern Europeans, Chinese, Japanese, East Indians, blacks, and religious groups such as Hutterites, Men-

nonites, Doukhobors, and Jews. The immigration of these groups has had a profound impact on the nature of Canadian society. Cities such as Toronto became less British with a variety of languages and cultures enlivening its streets. At the same time, there remain pockets of racism and discrimination against non-British groups. Pressures to conform are more subtle than formerly but just as real. The degree of prejudice is in direct proportion to the cultural distance from the Anglo-Saxon center and is more persistent in the case of Asians and blacks and less in the case of more easily assimilable whites, such as Italians.

The most recent population breakdown according to ethnicity puts those of British Isles origin at 28 percent, French origin 23 percent, other Europeans 15 percent, Amerindians 2 percent, others, mostly Asian, African, and Arab, 6 percent, and mixed background 26 percent.

LANGUAGES

Canada has two official languages with coequal status: French and English, representing the dual origins of the nation. In the 1996 midterm census 63 percent of the population reported English as their only mother tongue and 11 percent a language other than English and French as their only mother tongue. Nearly 1 million persons, or 4 percent of the population, reported having more than one mother tongue.

Language is a sensitive issue in Canada, and bilingualism is protected by legislation, particularly the Official Languages Act of 1969. The basic principles of the Official Languages Act are further buttressed in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms in the 1982 Constitution Act. It affirms that all public communications must be in both English and French and encourages bilingualism in nonofficial communications as well. The purpose of the official language policy is not to make all Canadians bilingual but to ensure that wherever there is a Francophone concentration, French speakers, who constitute 45 percent of all officially bilingual Canadians, may deal with the federal government in their own language. There is a commissioner of official languages to ensure the implementation of bilingualism in official practice. The result of this policy has been a modest increase in the overall number of persons who can speak both English and French with reasonable fluency.

RELIGIONS

From the time of the British victory on the Plains of Abraham until the beginning of the 1960s, the Catholic Church was the pillar of French Canadian society and made a profound contribution to the development of its identity. Beginning in about 1960 a rapid deconfessional-

ization of Catholic institutions gained force and contributed to a disintegration of Catholic influence.

The largest Protestant denomination is the United Church of Canada (UCC), formed in 1925 through the merger of Methodist, Congregational, and nearly half the Presbyterian churches. The second-largest Protestant body is the Presbyterian Church, consisting of those Presbyterian congregations that refused union with the UCC in 1925. Lutherans and Baptists have widespread membership. Most of the 15 distinct Pentecostal churches are small offshoots of similar bodies in the United States. Mennonites are dispersed across Canada, with 15 distinct bodies. The Anglican Church is organized into 28 dioceses in four provinces. Immigration has helped to create a wide variety of Orthodox churches, of which the largest is the Greek.

In 1991 Catholics formed 48.2 percent of the population and Protestants 40.1 percent. Two provinces were predominately Catholic: Quebec, with 88.2 percent of its population, and New Brunswick, with 53.9 percent. Of the 296,400 Jews, one-half lived in Ontario and one-third in Quebec. Of Christian denominations, the fastest growing were the Pentecostal, who grew by 54 percent between 1971 and 1981, compared with 13 percent for Catholics and 3 percent for Anglicans. The nearly 1.8 million people with no religious preferences were nearly double the number in this category in 1971. They were found mostly in the west, particularly in British Columbia (where they made up 20.5 percent of the population), Yukon (20.3 percent), and Alberta (11.7 percent). According to the 2001 census, of 29,639,035 Canadians who listed a religion, 12,921,285 were Catholic and 8,654,845 were Protestant.

Religious Affiliations

Roman Catholic	12,921,000
Protestant	8,654,000
Other	11,230,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The first inhabitants of North America came from Asia during the last Ice Age, around 20,000 to 35,000 years ago. Archaeological evidence and oral traditions indicate that some of the peoples who settled along the west coast and in the eastern woodlands, such as the Huron and Iroquois, created sophisticated political organizations as well as extensive trade systems.

At the end of the 10th century, Norse peoples from Europe, known as Vikings, created permanent settlements on the northern tip of Newfoundland and, after initial conflict, began trade relations with the local peoples. The settlements were abandoned around the mid-14th century.

The first European to set foot in Newfoundland, Canada, was the Venetian John Cabot (Giovanni Caboto), commissioned by England's Henry VIII to look for a short route to Asia. But his voyage was actually financed by Bristol merchants who were more interested in fisheries than in overseas colonies. Cabot reached the shores of Newfoundland in 1497, and his reports of codfish off the coast of Newfoundland brought fishing fleets from England, France, Spain, and Portugal.

In 1534 the French made their first stake in the New World when Jacques Cartier planted a cross on the tip of the Gaspé Peninsula and, the following year, discovered and ascended the St. Lawrence River.

Another 70 years passed before Sieur de Monts and Samuel de Champlain founded the first permanent French settlement, at Port Royal in Nova Scotia. In 1608 Champlain established the town of Quebec. By 1756 the French flag flew over a territory larger than France, and French settlers numbered more than 10,000. However, they suffered great depredations when their allies the Huron Indians were destroyed by the Iroquois.

In the 17th century the English began to press their claims to the French-held lands, and they conquered Quebec in 1629. Restored to France in 1632, Quebec, together with the rest of New France, as the territory was by then known, was placed under the control of a chartered company, the Company of One Hundred Associates, whose mandate was to exploit the fur trade and establish settlements. In 1663 the French Crown took over the territory and established a feudal system of government under which large grants of land were made to seigneurs who, in turn, made grants to settlers in return for specified dues. Meanwhile, explorers and missionaries such as Jacques Marquette, Louis Jolliet, and René-Robert Cavalier, sieur de La Salle expanded the royal domain, so that by the end of the 17th century it stretched north to the shores of the Hudson Bay, west to the Great Lakes, and south to the Gulf of Mexico. French dominance was complete except for the British Hudson's Bay Company, founded in 1670 to compete for the fur trade.

In the middle of the 18th century French-British rivalry culminated in the historic defeat of the French general Montcalm on the Plains of Abraham by British forces led by James Wolfe in 1759. The French army surrendered in Montreal in 1760, and the 1763 Treaty of Paris ceded New France to Britain. The Quebec Act of 1774 established British rule and a system of government very favorable to the ruling seigneurs and the Roman Catholic Church. Concessions to the Quebecois paid off in the loyalty of the French aristocracy and the church during the American Revolution. However, the influx of 40,000 Loyalists from the American colonies changed the political character of the country permanently, as they took over the direction of the new government set up under the Constitutional Act of 1791. The act divided

the British territories into Upper Canada (now southern Ontario) and Lower Canada (southern Quebec), each of which gained elected assemblies with limited powers.

The last decades of the 18th century witnessed another period of geographical expansion, which extended the borders to the Pacific coast. Between 1789 and 1793 Alexander Mackenzie undertook his journey to the northern reaches of the continent and the Pacific Ocean. British mariners, notably George Vancouver, secured for Britain a firm hold on what is now British Columbia. After amalgamating with the rival North West Company in 1821, Hudson's Bay Company held undisputed sway over most of the north and west. Eastern border problems with the United States were settled by the Webster-Ashburton Treaty of 1842, and in the west the border was settled at 49°N in the face of considerable American public opposition.

The road to self-government began with two rebellions, one led by Louis J. Papineau in Lower Canada and the other by William Lyon Mackenzie in Upper Canada in 1838. The earl of Durham was sent to Canada in 1838 to recommend political reform. The Durham Report recommended the grant of some form of self-government and also the immediate union of the two Canadas for the purpose of anglicizing the French Canadians. The union of the two provinces was approved in 1840, and responsible government became effective in 1849.

Movement for a Canadian confederation gained strength in the 1860s. George A. MacDonald and George Brown, rival party leaders, agreed to merge Upper Canada and Lower Canada under a common dominion government. Later the Atlantic provinces were brought in, and a confederation was established in 1867 through the British North America Act. The name Canada was chosen for the entire country, and Lower Canada and Upper Canada became the provinces of Quebec and Ontario, respectively. Prince Edward Island joined in 1873. In 1869 Hudson's Bay Company relinquished its territorial rights to Rupert's Land and the Northwest Territories. In 1870 the province of Manitoba was established and admitted to the confederation, and the Northwest Territories were transferred to the central government. In 1871 British Columbia joined the confederation, thus spanning the continent. The formation of the federation was followed by an equally permanent link, the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR), which helped to open up the west to new settlers. The two rebellions led by Louis Riel, in 1879–80 and 1885, provided a footnote to the creation of the second-largest nation in the world in the space of just under 25 years.

The long administration of the Liberal prime minister Sir Wilfrid Laurier (1896–1911) witnessed the settlement of the Prairies and large-scale economic growth. Alberta and Saskatchewan were made provinces in 1905. In 1911 Manitoba, Ontario, and Quebec were greatly

enlarged through the allotment of all territory west of Hudson Bay and south of 60°N and all territory east of the bay, formerly known as Ungava. In 1931 Norway formally recognized Canadian title to the Sverdrup group of Arctic islands, giving Canada full sovereignty over the entire Arctic region north of the mainland.

The interwar years were marked by growth in self-government and the rise of radical political parties, such as the Social Credit Party. A major constitutional crisis arose in 1926 with the so-called King-Byng Affair. The governor-general, Lord Byng, tried to interfere in the government operations of Mackenzie King, the prime minister. Mackenzie King called for a new election; Lord Byng refused. The voters later voted for Mackenzie King, and the power of the governor-general to interfere in Canadian politics was reduced. The Statute of Westminster of 1931 gave all dominions equal status, with virtually complete legislative and executive independence.

Canada played an important part in World War II. It declared war three days after Great Britain. For a country of such a small population, Canada played a critical role in supplying Great Britain and in the liberation of Holland. After the war the movement toward more independence from Great Britain continued, as the Supreme Court of Canada replaced the House of Lords as Canada's highest court. Also in 1949 Newfoundlanders decided to join Canada as the 10th province.

Liberal governments successively headed by W. L. Mackenzie King and Louis St. Laurent were in office from 1935 to 1957 when the Conservatives returned to power under John Diefenbaker, prime minister until 1963. Liberals swept back under Lester Pearson (1963–68) and Pierre Trudeau. The Trudeau era lasted for 16 years, until 1984 (except for a year's break in 1979), when the Conservatives won an overwhelming majority in the House of Commons and a new cabinet took office under Brian Mulroney.

In 1989 the United States and Canada signed a free-trade agreement that ultimately led to the formation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (which included Mexico) to create the world's single largest market. Canada has benefited greatly from this agreement. Its high-tech service economy has been a strong international player. Despite widespread opposition to its fiscal and defense policies and the embarrassment of a series of scandals, the Conservative government survived for nine years, until 1993, when the pendulum swung again and the Liberals returned to power under Jean Chrétien. The principal event in the Mulroney administration was the Meech Lake Accord, which granted Quebec special privileges within the Canadian federation and which was opposed by most of the anglophone provinces. In 1994 Quebec voters turned down a referendum on separation from Canada by a narrow margin, 50.6 to 49.4 percent. In 1998 the Supreme Court of Canada held that Quebec could secede but only with

the agreement of the federal government and the other provinces on such questions as the settlement of the national debt and the use of a common currency. In April 1999 the Northwest Territories were officially divided to create a new territory in the east to be governed by the Inuits, who constitute 85 percent of the area's population of 25,000. The new territory, Nunavut, has its capital at Iqaluit. In the 2000 elections Jean Chrétien won a substantial victory with the help of large Liberal electorates in the eastern provinces.

Chrétien, whose tasks as prime minister included the overhaul of the national health-care system and education reform, retired in 2003 and was succeeded by Paul Martin, who is somewhat more conservative than Chrétien. Martin's first task upon becoming prime minister in 2004 was to attempt to repair damaged relationships with the United States. Ties had become strained over trade issues and Canada's refusal to participate in the U.S.-led war in Iraq. However, in November 2005 Martin's government was brought down in a vote of no confidence over a financial scandal. After general elections conservative Stephen Harper became prime minister.

Same-sex marriage became a heated topic in 2003. By the following year the nation's Supreme Court ruled that such marriages were legal, and in February 2005 the Liberal Party put forth a bill in Parliament legalizing such marriages countrywide. Also in 2003 the Liberal Party defeated the separatist Parti Québécois for control of the provincial government of Quebec. The victory ceased for the time being debate over the status of Quebec.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

Prime Minister

1935–48	William Lyon Mackenzie King
1948–57	Louis Stephen Saint Laurent
1957–63	John George Diefenbaker
1963–68	Lester Bowles Pearson
1968–79	Pierre Elliott Trudeau
1979–80	Charles Joseph Clark
1980–84	Pierre Elliott Trudeau
1984	John Napier Turner
1984–93	Martin Brian Mulroney
1993	Avril Phaedra Campbell
1993–2004	Joseph Jacques Jean Chrétien
2004–2006	Paul Joseph Martin
2006–	Stephen Harper

CONSTITUTION

The foundation of the Canadian government is the British North America Act of 1867, renamed the Constitution Act of 1867, which established the federal form of government as it exists today. It established the powers

of the three branches of government and delimited the division of power between the federal government and the provinces.

The key phrase in the constitution is that Canada was to have a form of government “similar in principle to that of the United Kingdom.” Yet, because Canada is a federal government, unlike the United Kingdom, the Canadian system of government has developed differently from that intended by the authors of the constitution. For instance, the existence of two Canadas, one French and the other British, required an elaborate system of protective clauses that have no parallel in Britain.

Federal constitutions lead to weak central governments, but Canada has been spared this development because the Constitution Act of 1867 clearly gives more powers to the federal Parliament than to the provincial legislatures. The most efficient parts of the constitution are those that deal with the doctrine of “supremacy of Parliament,” the principal British constitutional legacy to Canada. The doctrine holds that Parliament can make or repeal any law it wishes on matters of federal jurisdiction. The courts have no right to declare illegal any statute passed by the federal Parliament. The main restraints on this supremacy are cultural and customary. One is that neither the federal nor any provincial government has the right to delegate its legislative authority to the other. The second is that parliamentary acts must be in harmony with the Canadian Bill of Rights. Third, the courts have built up rules of statutory interpretation that provide guidelines for legislators. However, the effect of judicial interpretation is quite limited because it is only in the event of lack of clarity in the wording of an act that the courts have the right to interpret the intention.

In addition to the Constitution Act of 1867, documents that contribute to the Canadian constitution include some statutes of the British Parliament (including the Statute of Westminster, which radically altered the relationship of the dominions to the mother country); some statutes of the Canadian Parliament, such as the Supreme Court Act and the Official Languages Act; the constitutions of the provinces; and some provincial statutes that establish provincial government institutions.

The Constitution Act of 1867 could be amended only by the British Parliament. Efforts to “patriate” the 1867 Constitution—that is, to make it an authentically Canadian document—bore fruit in 1982, when the British Parliament approved a bill ending Canada’s constitutional dependence on the United Kingdom for amendments. On the basis of this provision, the constitution of 1982 came into being. It included a charter of rights and freedoms and a provision for mechanisms to amend the constitution in the future. The first 15 clauses deal with fundamental freedoms, democratic rights, mobility rights, legal rights, and equality rights; clauses 15 through 24 deal with the status of English and French as co-official languages, clauses 25 through 34 with gen-

eral principles governing application of the charter and the removal of regional disparities. Clauses 38 through 51 deal with procedures for amending the 1867 and 1982 constitutions. Amendments require resolutions of the Senate and House of Commons and at least two-thirds of the provincial legislatures that represent, in aggregate, at least 50 percent of the population of all the provinces.

As in the United Kingdom, there is a fusion of executive and legislative powers. Formal executive power is vested in the sovereign of Britain, who is head of state. The Crown is represented in Canada by a governor-general.

Even more so than in normal constitutional monarchies, the monarch is an entity with only a titular role in government. Such powers as the monarch has in theory—summoning, proroguing, and dissolving Parliament; inviting the leader of the majority in Parliament to form the government; and signing orders-in-council and other state documents—are done in her name by the governor-general, who is bound by constitutional convention to carry out these tasks in accordance with the advice of responsible ministers.

The 1867 constitution created an advisory body called the Queen’s Privy Council for Canada, which includes, but is much larger than, the cabinet. Membership in the council is for life and includes cabinet ministers, former cabinet ministers, the chief justice, former chief justices, former speakers of the Senate and the House of Commons, and occasionally other distinguished persons, including members of the royal family, past and present Commonwealth prime ministers, and premiers of provinces. The Queen’s Privy Council has met in plenary session only a few times, because its constitutional responsibilities to advise the Crown are discharged exclusively by the cabinet.

The linchpin of the governmental system is the prime minister, the head of government. By convention, the position is one of exceptional authority and influence. The prime minister presides over cabinet meetings, sets its agenda, and recommends to the governor-general the dissolution of Parliament. The prime minister recommends the appointment of a new governor-general, privy councilors, cabinet ministers, lieutenant governors, provincial administrators, speakers of the Senate, chief justices of all courts, senators, and certain senior executives in public service.

The most important federal institution is the cabinet, most of whose members are chosen by the prime minister from among the members of the House of Commons, with a few chosen from the Senate. One of the most important considerations in putting together a viable cabinet is balance; although there is no requirement to give proportional representation to every group, every cabinet is expected to include Catholics as well as Protestants, Anglophones as well as Francophones, and, as far as possible, at least one representative from each of the provinces.

A typical cabinet consists of about 30 ministers whose work is carried out through a committee system. The prime minister determines the number, tasks, membership, and terms of reference of these committees. Legislative proposals first surface in the relevant committee, then move to the Justice Department, from where they go to the cabinet committee on legislation before reaching the cabinet, with the approval of which they are introduced as bills on the floor of the House or the Senate. The most important committees are Treasury Board, Priorities and Planning, Federal-Provincial Relations, Legislation and House Planning, External Policy and Defense, Economic Policy, Social Policy, Government Operations, and Science, Culture, and Information.

The cabinet secretariat is the Queen's Privy Council Office, considered a government department under the prime minister. The Parliamentary Secretaries Act of 1959, as amended by the Government Organization Act of 1970, provides for one parliamentary secretary for each departmental minister. Parliamentary secretaries are appointed by the prime minister.

In each of the provinces the Crown is represented by a lieutenant governor appointed by the governor-general in council. The executive council is the provincial counterpart of the federal cabinet. The Legislative Assembly is known by that name in all provinces except Quebec, where it is known as the National Assembly, and Newfoundland and Nova Scotia, where it is the House of Assembly. In the Yukon and Northwest territories, the central government is represented by the commissioner, who shares legislative power with the Legislative Assembly and has to approve all bills. In those two territories there are executive councils or cabinets with limited powers, consisting of four members in the Yukon Territory and eight members in the Northwest Territories and headed by the leaders of the majority parties in the respective assemblies.

Recent amendments to the constitution include one from 1999 creating the territory of Nunavut and one from 2001 changing the name of the Province of Newfoundland to the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador.

PARLIAMENT

The Canadian Parliament is a bicameral legislature consisting of a lower chamber, the elected House of Commons, and an appointed upper chamber, the Senate. The House of Commons consists of 308 members as of 2004 and the Senate of 105. Prior to 1965 the senators were appointed for life, but since then they have been required to retire at 75. The importance of the Commons relative to the Senate is enhanced not only by its elected character but also by its role in the formation of the government and the latter's dependence on the House's confidence for its survival.

Representation in the Commons is roughly proportionate to population, but special provisions in the distribution of seats among the provinces as well as allowed variations in constituency size may create disparities. For example, no province may have fewer seats in the Commons than the fixed number of Senate seats to which it is entitled. Moreover, when the redistribution of seats occurs, normally after each decennial census, no province may be assigned 15 percent fewer seats than it had previously. All constituencies elect a single member to the Commons.

Except in cases of war or other national emergency, the life of a Parliament term may not extend beyond five years. However, Parliament terms have frequently been shorter because prime ministers have generally sought dissolutions of the government, which follow when the cabinet loses the confidence of the House. Parliament must meet at least once each year, but there is no requirement as to the length of each session. As the business of government has increased in recent years, it has become normal for sessions of Parliament to run for the entire year, with breaks in late summer and at Christmas and Easter.

Like its Westminster model and progenitor, the Canadian House of Commons is legally sovereign. However, this sovereignty is tempered by a number of factors, such as party discipline, the right of the prime minister to seek a dissolution, and control by the executive of the legislative agenda.

All bills go through five stages in the Commons and the same five stages in the Senate before they are passed on to the governor-general for royal assent. The first stage is a motion for leave to introduce the bill together with a first reading. Debate at the second reading concerns only the principle of legislation, and no amendments are permitted. When the bill has passed second reading, it is referred to one of the standing committees of the House for clause-by-clause examination. At this third stage the members are free to suggest amendments for the government to accept or reject, but since all committees have a government majority, few bills suffer anything more than minor changes. The bill is then reported back to the House for the fourth stage of clause-by-clause scrutiny and debate, when further amendments may be proposed. The fifth and final stage is the third reading, and debate is generally very brief at this stage. If the government does not feel confident that it can secure the passage of a bill at any stage it will probably withdraw the legislation rather than face defeat.

Of all the second chambers in Western democracies, the Canadian Senate is universally regarded as the most anachronistic and obsolete. Initially, the Senate was a forum for the propertied classes, and senators were required to own real estate in the province they represented. In practice, however, Senate seats are not allocated by the

prime minister as political plums for those who have done special service to the party or, less frequently, the nation; mostly, they are given to people who are near the end of their careers. When one party has been in power for a long period, as the Liberal Party has for most of this century, the Senate becomes lopsided in favor of that party. Further, few third-party members are ever nominated to the Senate, even though vacancies go begging many times.

Theoretically, Senate representation is based on the principle of equal regional representation. Accordingly, its 104 seats are distributed on a regional basis as follows: Ontario, 24; Quebec, 24; Atlantic provinces, 24 (Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, 10 each, and Prince Edward Island, four); Newfoundland, six; western provinces, 24 (six each from Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, and British Columbia); and one each from the Yukon North-west, and Nunavut territories.

The Senate performs three basic functions. In its legislative role its major work is the revision of major government bills, either those passed by the House of Commons or those introduced in the Senate. In its deliberative role the Senate provides a national forum for the discussion of public issues. On two days' notice, a senator can start any debate, with no time limits, on any subject. In its investigative role, the Senate standing and special committees conduct thorough inquiries into social and economic issues, and their reports are considered authoritative.

The Senate's legislative powers are identical to those of the House, with two exceptions: Money bills must originate in the House and constitutional amendments may be passed by the House without the concurrence of the Senate after 180 days.

The Senate has no right, unlike the House of Lords, to delay legislation, but it has an absolute veto on non-money bills—that is, it may reject or refuse to act on a bill passed by the House. Actually, the Senate does most of its useful work in tidying up legislation, and it seldom defeats a bill or amends it on matters of substance. It is a long-standing practice in the Senate when major government bills are introduced in the House to refer the “subject matter” of such bills to Senate committees in advance of their formal introduction later on. Although Liberals have dominated the chamber for most of this century, it operates with less partisanship and is less in a hurry than the lower chamber. Its lower political temperature no doubt helps it to do its tasks of legislative draftsmanship and investigation quite well.

Elections are governed by the Canada Elections Act of 1920, which also created the office of chief electoral officer. Elections to the House of Commons and provincial legislatures are direct. The age of suffrage is 18. Voter turnout ranges from 60 percent to 85 percent. All constituencies are single-member districts, and one is elected by a simple plurality. The system distorts actual voting

support for the dominant party by giving it more seats than warranted by the votes and depressing the number of seats obtained by minority parties.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Canada has an effective two-party system at the federal level but multiple local parties at the provincial levels, reflecting the mosaic nature of Canadian political culture. Local parties are essentially parochial groups with little ideological content. As a result, the network of affiliated and subsidiary organizations that characterizes parties in other countries is absent in Canada. The organizational strength of federal parties rests on the local or constituent level, where the constituency associations are electoral clubs of volunteers who are active at election times. At the top, each party is dominated by a handful of politicians with high visibility. Generally, constituency groups are responsible for nominating candidates, raising funds, and canvassing the electors. However, these groups exercise little influence at the national level, where the parliamentary party dominates, or at the provincial level, where the provincial legislative party dominates. One of the consequences of personal leadership in Canadian politics is that the more popular leaders are rarely displaced.

The Liberal Party (LP) emerged as the Canadian counterpart of the British Liberal Party soon after Canada gained dominion status in 1867. Its ideological bases were anticlericalism (in Quebec), free trade, and strong self-government.

The Progressive Conservative Party (PCP) governed Canada for the first three decades of dominion status (1867–97) as the Conservative Party. Its constituency comprised the staunchly pro-British and anti-American British Canadians on the one hand and the devoutly religious French Canadians on the other. The Conservatives were pro-tariff, favoring trade restrictions as a means of building up national industrial power. Its rebirth began in 1942 when, following its merger with the Progressive Party of Manitoba, it became the Progressive Conservative Party and was able to build up a strong following in the prairie provinces.

The Conservative Party of Canada (CPP) was created in 2003 by a merger of the Canadian Reform Conservative Alliance/Alliance Réformiste Conservatrice Canadien and the Progressive Conservative Party/Parti Progressiste-Conservateur.

The New Democratic Party (NDP), known until 1961 as the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation, developed in 1933 out of the merger of the United Farmers Party, the Socialist Party, and a number of smaller political groups of European immigrants. It is a committed socialist party and a member of the Socialist International. Its twin political bases are in disparate areas: the prairie farmers and the Ontario and British Columbia working

classes. It has held political power in Saskatchewan and British Columbia under radical premiers.

The Reform Party is a right-wing populist group based in Alberta attracting broad western support. Its leader was Preston Manning, who deplored the commitment to bilingualism and opposed the dominance of Ontario and Quebec in Canadian politics.

Of the provincial parties, the most important is the Parti Québécois (PQ), which achieved power in Quebec in 1976, eight years after its founding. The party's success is closely tied to its dynamic leader, René Lévesque, who helped to create the PQ from three organizations that had nothing in common except a commitment to Quebec's independence: Mouvement Souveraineté, Ralliement National, and Rassemblement pour l'Indépendance Nationale.

The Bloc Québécois (BQ) was created in 1990 and now represents the major political voice for Quebec separatism. In 2005 it was led by Gilles Duceppe.

Other minor parties include the Parti Nationaliste de Québec, the Western Canada Concept Party, the Social Credit Party (which has been in power in Alberta and British Columbia), the Union Nationale, the Confederation of Regions Western Party, the Libertarian Party, and the Communist Party.

In June 2004 parliamentary elections, the LP won 135 seats, the CPP 99 seats, the BQ 54 seats, and the NDP 19 seats, and one seat went nonpartisan.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Under the Constitution Act of 1867, local government is the responsibility of the provincial legislatures, a responsibility later extended to territories. The unit of local government, apart from the school boards, is the municipality whose boundaries, powers, and responsibilities are assigned to them by provincial statutes. An increasing number of special agencies, joint boards, or commissions provide certain common services for groups of smaller municipalities. Certain other functions traditionally assigned to municipalities have reverted in whole or in part to the provinces. Some provinces, such as Ontario and British Columbia, have also established new intermediate or second-tier levels of regional government. In Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Ontario, and Quebec, the first order of municipalities consists of counties, which are further subdivided into cities, towns, villages, and townships. In Newfoundland and the four western provinces there are no counties; municipalities are either rural or urban, the latter being made up of cities, towns, and villages. Municipalities are usually administered by an elected council headed by a mayor, overseer, reeve, or warden.

Canada is made up of 10 provinces and three territories, each with its own premier and unicameral legisla-

ture. In each province the sovereign is represented by a lieutenant governor appointed by the governor-general. The territories have become more autonomous since the 1980s.

LEGAL SYSTEM

Canada has two legal systems representing two great legal traditions: the common law derived from Anglo-Saxon traditions, and the *droit civil* (civil law), which has its roots in the legal code of the Roman emperor Justinian and later that of Napoleon Bonaparte. Criminal law is uniform throughout the country, and most of it is contained in the Criminal Code, which is derived almost exclusively from English sources.

Responsibility for the administration of the courts is divided between the federal and the provincial governments. The Constitution Act of 1867 gives each province exclusive powers over the administration of justice. Under this authority provincial legislatures have established courts of appeal, supreme courts, county courts, and provincial courts. The governments of Quebec and Nova Scotia have delegated some authority to the municipalities, and thus these provinces have, in addition, municipal courts.

The Supreme Court of Canada was created in 1875 by an act of Parliament, and the Supreme Court Act of 1949 firmly established it as the ultimate court of appeal. The act also increased the number of judges from seven to nine, of whom three are to be Quebecois. The Supreme Court is a general court of appeal for both criminal and civil cases, with jurisdiction over both the *droit civil* of Quebec and the common law of the rest of Canada. The court sits in Ottawa. The quorum is five, but a full court of nine sits for most cases.

The Federal Court of Canada was established in 1971 as a court of law, equity, and admiralty and as a superior court of record, having both civil and criminal jurisdiction. It replaced the Exchequer Court of Canada, which had been in operation since 1875. The Federal Court of Canada has two divisions: an appeal division and a trial division. The former consists of the chief justice and nine other judges, and the latter of the associate chief justice and 13 other judges. Every judge is an *ex officio* member of the division of which he is not a regular member. The court may sit anywhere in Canada.

HUMAN RIGHTS

The bulwark of civil rights in Canada is the 1982 constitution, which incorporates a charter of rights and freedoms. A major problem area in human rights is the influx of illegal immigrants from Asia without proper documentation. The government has found it necessary

to move against these immigrants with measures considered harsh by civil rights activists. The government possesses exceptional powers to override constitutional guarantees in the event of war or national emergencies. These include the War Measures Act of 1914, augmented by a 1981 federal cabinet order permitting the federal government to declare a state of national emergency with suspension of certain basic civil liberties, as well as the Official Secrets Act of 1939. In 1987 civil rights groups and opposition parties complained that the Canadian Security and Intelligence Service (CSIS) maintained files on and performed unwarranted investigations into the activities of an unacceptably large group of Canadians who were members of peace organizations and also used false and misleading information to obtain authorization to perform a wiretap on suspected Sikh terrorists.

As a result of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks in the United States, Canada passed several antiterrorism measures that have drawn criticism from human rights and political rights groups. The 2002 Public Safety Act allows for, among other things, preventive arrests and retention and the sharing of private data on individuals between government agencies. Civil liberties groups complain that this system is ripe for abuse. Canada has taken important steps to protect the rights of native groups, although some complain that indigenous peoples remain subject to discrimination. During 2003 the federal government reached an agreement ceding control of a large tract of land to the Tlicho First Nation.

The freedoms of speech and of the press are generally respected except for provincial film censorship and legislation that specifically protects ethnic minorities against hate literature and guarantees them cultural and language rights. Although the freedoms of assembly and association are acknowledged, the CSIS is charged with having paid informers within labor unions.

FOREIGN POLICY

Although a member of the Commonwealth, Canada's external relations are dominated by its geographical proximity to the United States. Both geography and economics as well as historical European legacies shape the common interests of the two countries. However, Canada has made strong efforts to carve a separate niche in foreign affairs and to give the impression that it is not tied to U.S. apron strings; thus, on a number of issues it has taken a contrary position. In addition, anti-American sentiments are openly expressed by Canadian policymakers in connection with the extensive U.S. ownership and control of Canadian economic enterprises and pervasive U.S. cultural and intellectual influences. There are also disputes with the United States centered on

fishing rights, the delimitation of maritime boundaries in the Gulf of Maine, and the effects of acid rain from U.S. industries on Canadian forests. The two powers (as well as Mexico) are linked by the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), which entered into force in 1994. Canada has been one of the most active of the middle powers in the post-World War II period, and it enjoys an international influence far beyond what its population or economic wealth would suggest. It took the initiative in the successful completion of the international landmine treaty signed in 1997. Canadian peacekeepers serve in most UN peacekeeping forces around the world. U.S.-Canadian relations were strained as a result of Canada's refusal to back the U.S.-led war in Iraq in 2003.

DEFENSE

Canada is one of the major members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) alliance, and its defense forces are fully integrated into the Western system. Defense services are governed by the 1950 National Defense Act and the 1968 Canadian Forces Reorganization Act. The line of command runs from the Crown through the governor-general to the Department of National Defense and the Defense Staff. Within the unified structure there are no chiefs of individual services.

There are five functional commands, of which the first three are called environmental commands and correspond roughly to the traditional branches of navy, army, and air force: (1) Maritime Command, (2) Mobile Command, (3) Air Command, (4) Canadian Forces Europe, and (5) Communications Command. The Mobile Command consists of two brigade groups, each composed of one light artillery regiment, one light armored regiment, one combat engineer regiment, two or three infantry battalions, and supporting units. The command is headquartered at St. Hubert in Quebec, but units are stationed nationwide at Calgary, Alberta; Gagetown, New Brunswick; London, Ontario; Montreal, Quebec; Petawawa, Quebec; Shilo, Manitoba; Suffield, Alberta; and Valcartier, Quebec.

The Maritime Command is headquartered in Halifax, Nova Scotia. The commander of the Pacific maritime forces, with headquarters at Esquimalt, British Columbia, exercises operational control over maritime forces in the Pacific.

The Air Command, with headquarters at Winnipeg, Manitoba, consists of several functional groups, such as the Fighter Group, the Air Transport Group, the Maritime Air Group, the Tactical Air Group, the Training Group, and the Air Reserve Group.

There is no conscription, and services, both regular and reserve, are voluntary. The minimum age for volunteers is 16.

There are two training facilities: one for English-speaking trainees and the other for French-speaking trainees. Officer recruits enter the forces through several programs, the most important of which is the Regular Officer Training Plan. The principal training institutions are the Forces Staff School for junior officers, the Land Forces Command and Staff College, the Forces Staff College, and the National Defense College.

Canadian armed forces numbered 52,300 active and 35,400 reserve personnel in 2002, and Canadian troops took part in peacekeeping missions in Bosnia and Afghanistan. Paramilitary forces, such as the Canadian Coast Guard, consisted of 9,350 members. Military expenditures in 2003 were \$9.8 billion, or 1.1 percent of gross domestic product (GDP).

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 52,300
 Military Manpower Availability: 8,417,314
 Military Expenditures \$billion: 9.8
 as % of GDP: 1.1
 as % of central government expenditures: 6.2
 Arms Imports \$million: 359
 Arms Exports \$million: 318

ECONOMY

As an affluent, high-tech industrial society, Canada today closely resembles the United States in its market-oriented economic system, pattern of production, and high living standards. Since World War II the impressive growth of the manufacturing, mining, and service sectors has transformed the nation from a largely rural economy into one primarily industrial and urban. Real rates of growth have averaged nearly 3 percent since 1993. Unemployment is falling, and government budget surpluses are being partially devoted to reducing the large public sector debt. The 1989 U.S.-Canada Free Trade Agreement and 1994's North American Free Trade Agreement (which included Mexico) have touched off a dramatic increase in trade and economic integration with the United States. With its great natural resources, skilled labor force, and modern capital plant Canada enjoys solid economic prospects. Two shadows loom, however, the first being the continuing constitutional impasse between English- and French-speaking areas, which has been raising the possibility of a split in the federation. Another long-term concern is the flow south to the United States of professional persons lured by higher pay, lower taxes, and the immense high-tech infrastructure.

With over 80 percent of the population living within 100 miles of the U.S. border, Canada maintains close ties with its southern neighbor. These close economic ties meant, however, that the country was adversely affected

by the economic downturn in the United States during 2001–02. Real growth in Canada averaged nearly 3 percent during 1993–2000 but declined in 2001. There was a modest recovery in 2002–03, but at the end of 2003 unemployment was still 8 percent. Nevertheless, economic ties to the United States have advantages; a key strength in the Canadian economy is the substantial trade surplus, much of which is created by trade with the United States.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 958.7
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 29,800
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 3.3
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 2.4
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 2.2
 Industry: 29.2
 Services: 68.6
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 55
 Government Consumption: 19
 Gross Domestic Investment: 19.5
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 279.3
 Imports: 240.4
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 2.8
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 23.8

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
106.0	108.9	111.7	114.2	117.4

Finance

National Currency: Canadian Dollar (CAD)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = CAD 1.4011
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 284.4
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 3.0
 Total External Debt \$billion: 1.9
 Debt Service Ratio %: —
 Balance of Payments \$billion: 18.63
 International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 31.54
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 2.8

Official Development Assistance

Donor ODA \$billion: 1.3
 per capita \$: 40
 Foreign Direct Investment \$billion: 5.57

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: 1 April–31 March
 Revenues \$billion: 348.2
 Expenditures \$billion: 342.7
 Budget Surplus \$billion: 5.5
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: 19.3

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 2.2
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2001) %: 0.6
 Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares: 16
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 1.6
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 52.2
 Total Farmland as % of land area: 5.0
 Livestock: Cattle 000: 14,672
 Sheep 000: 1,005
 Hogs 000: 14,843
 Chickens 000: 160,000
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 194.7
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons million: 1.19

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 117.24
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 0.2

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 391.5
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 248.5
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 8.0
 Net Energy Imports % of use: -52.8
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 111
 Production kW-hr billion: 548.9
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 487.3
 Coal Reserves tons billion: 7.3
 Production tons million: 73.2
 Consumption tons million: 72.2
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: 56.6
 Production cubic feet trillion: 6.6
 Consumption cubic feet trillion: 3.0
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: 178.8
 Production barrels million per day: 3.1
 Consumption barrels million per day: 2.3
 Pipelines Length km: 23,564

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 240.4
 Exports \$billion: 279.3
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2001): -0.6
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2001): 3.4
 Balance of Trade \$billion: 18.63

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
United States %	60.6	86.6
China %	5.6	—
Japan %	4.1	2.1
United Kingdom %	—	1.4

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 1,408,800
 Paved %: 35.3
 Automobiles: 17,543,600

Trucks and Buses: 644,300
 Railroad: Track Length km: 48,909
 Passenger-km billion: 1.6
 Freight-km billion: 298.8
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 119
 Total Deadweight Tonnage million: 2.657
 Airports: 1,357
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 80.4
 Length of Waterways km: 4,400

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 20.1
 Number of Tourists from million: 17.7
 Tourist Receipts \$billion: 9.7
 Tourist Expenditures \$billion: 9.93

Communications

Telephones million: 19.95
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0
 Cellular Telephones million: 13.22
 Personal Computers million: 15.3
 Internet Hosts per million people: 97,853
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 491

ENVIRONMENT

The country's greatest environmental concern is growing air pollution and the resulting acid rain severely affecting lakes and damaging forests. The origins of the pollutants that cause the acid rain have been a point of contention between Canadian and U.S. officials. In addition to acid rain, metal smelting, coal-burning utilities, and vehicle emissions affect agricultural and forest productivity. Ocean waters are becoming contaminated due to agricultural, industrial, mining, and forestry activities.

Canada is a party to the Kyoto Protocol, among other international environmental treaties.

Environment

Forest Area % of land area: 26.5
 Average Annual Forest Change, 1990-2000, 000 ha: —
 Nationally Protected Areas as % of Total Land Area: 7
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 307,325
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 14.2

LIVING CONDITIONS

Canada over the past decades has ranked high in the United Nations Human Development Report's quality-of-life index, based on life expectancy, education, and income. In 1992 and 1994 the country ranked first among 160 nations, and in 2004 it ranked fourth among 177 countries. Life expectancy in 2004 was 80 years. The lit-

eracy rate is almost 100 percent, and the GDP per capita in 2003 was \$29,800. Canada also enjoys a low crime rate; the entire country's annual homicide rate is lower than that of many of the world's cities.

Canadians primarily live in urban settings; as of 2003, 80 percent of the population lived in urban areas. The concentration of population depends on the region. The Northwest Territories have just .045 persons per square mile, while Prince Edward Island, for example, in the east, has 59 people per square mile. Western and prairie provinces have more of their population living in rural areas than do the eastern provinces. Architecture also depends on region: from wooden structures in the west to brick and mortar in the east. Two out of every three Canadians own their own homes. Single homes are the most common type of dwelling although multifamily apartment houses and condominiums are the trend of the future, especially in cities.

Second in geographical size only to Russia, Canada is a country that demands a well-developed transport system. In addition to trains, ships, and planes, the country also relies heavily on the automobile. Canada is second only to the United States in per capita use of cars. Private cars account for 80 percent of urban transport; there is one car for every two Canadians.

HEALTH

Canada's National Health Program, created in 1971, is administered by each province, to which the federal government contributes about 40 percent of costs. Impressively, the system cares for all Canadians from cradle to grave. Virtually the entire population has access to almost free health care and affordable drugs, paid for out of tax dollars. Such a system is not cheap. In 2001 public expenditures on health were 6.8 percent of GDP, and private expenditures were 2.8 percent of GDP, for a total of \$2,792 per capita.

As a result of this system, health care is excellent, and in 2002 Canadians enjoyed the fifth-longest average life expectancy in the world, at over 79 years. Immunization rates for children are high: 88 percent of one-year-olds were immunized for polio in 2003, 97 percent for diphtheria, pertussis, and tetanus, and 96 percent for measles. The infant mortality rate in 2004 was a low 4.8 deaths per 1,000 live births, while the death rate the same year was 7.67 deaths per 1,000 population. The entire population has access to adequate sanitation and safe drinking water. Canada is, however, experiencing a shortage of doctors. As of 2004 there were 209 physicians for every 100,000 Canadians. Yet in 2003 there were 3.6 million people who did not have a regular doctor; with 3,800 physicians scheduled to retire in 2005 and 2006, this situation will only worsen. Also, as a result of the rising cost of medical treatment, there is some rationing in the Canadian system.

Canadians suffer from a variety of illness. Partly as a result of diet, diseases of the heart and arteries account for nearly 40 percent of all deaths, while cancer accounts for about 28 percent. Accidents are the leading cause of death in childhood and among young adult males. HIV/AIDS has also made an impact in Canada. In 2003 there were 1,500 deaths from the virus. That year it was estimated that 56,000 Canadians were living with HIV/AIDS.

Acadians and some indigenous groups still retain some of their traditional beliefs in folk medicine, including herbal cures and consultation with traditional healers.

Health

Number of Physicians:	64,454
Number of Dentists:	17,287
Number of Nurses:	310,733
Number of Pharmacists:	24,518
Physician Density per 100,000 people:	209
Hospital Beds per 1,000:	3.9
Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births:	4.82
Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births:	6
Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP:	9.5
Health Expenditures per capita \$:	2,163
HIV Infected % of adults:	0.3
Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:	
DPT:	97
Measles:	96
Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %:	100
Access to Improved Water Facilities %:	100

FOOD AND NUTRITION

With a country as diverse geographically and ethnically as Canada, there is no one predominant food culture. Seafood is a particular favorite in the Maritime Provinces as well as in the west, where the catches from the Pacific provide abundant salmon and crab. In the east, seafood such as lobster, clams, oysters, Atlantic salmon, mackerel, and cod are all eaten.

French-speaking Quebec is influenced by French cuisine. Among a variety of popular dishes from that province are *ragoût de boulettes et de pattes de cochon*, a stew made from meatballs and pigs' feet, and the pork meat pie called *tourtière*. Quebec is also one of the major Canadian homes of maple syrup, and the Canadians have thought up a variety of ways in which to use the sweet liquid, including in cookies and candies as well as over pancakes. *Tourquettes* are a natural candy made by pouring boiling maple syrup onto fresh snow.

The middle of the country also provides its own distinctive flavor. Cheese in many forms comes from Ontario; roast pheasant is another specialty of that province. Out in the prairie provinces, grain-fed beef is prized and meals are large, as befits an agricultural way of life. From Manitoba comes wild rice, while moose meat is a near staple in the Northwest Territories.

Fast food has also made large inroads in the country, with hamburger and pizza franchises found in most towns.

Good food is well appreciated in Canada—perhaps too well, as many Canadians suffer from heart disease as a result of a rich diet, heavy in meat content. Only 6 percent of babies suffered from low birth weight between 1998 and 2003; undernourishment is not an issue in the country, other than by the overconsumption of less nutritious foods.

Food and Nutrition

Food Supply as % of FAO Requirements: 116

Undernourished % of total population: —

Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —

Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 118.6

Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 250.5

STATUS OF WOMEN

Over the past decade the government has demonstrated that improving the social and economic status of women is a top priority. The Ministry of Women's Equality was established in 1991 with a mandate to work in partnership with all government ministries, Crown corporations and agencies, community groups, and the private sector to build a society where women experience equality in all aspects of their lives. It is the only freestanding ministry for women in Canada, acting as an advocate for numerous economic, health, and safety matters and social justice issues of importance to women.

Women made up 45 percent of the labor force in 1992, compared to 31 percent in 1966. However, they earned only two-thirds as much as men. In 1990 the average income for full-time employment was \$22,799 for women, compared with \$34,921 for men. Little has changed in over a decade; the estimated earned income for females in 2002 was \$22,964, while that for males was \$36,299. By 2002 women held 20.6 percent of seats in Parliament and constituted 34 percent of legislators, senior officials, and managers and 54 percent of professional and technical workers.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —

Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 20.6

Female Administrators and Managers %: —

Ratio of Literate Women to Men age 15-24: 1.0

Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 49.2

WORK

Canada's labor force numbered over 17 million workers in 2003. Of these, 74 percent were employed in the ser-

vice sector, working for the government or in the tourism industry. Construction and industry accounted for 20 percent of employment, agriculture for 3 percent, and 3 percent were engaged in other occupations. Agricultural workers produced wheat, barley, oilseed, tobacco, fruits, vegetables, and dairy products. Industrial products include forest products, fish transportation equipment, chemicals, processed and unprocessed minerals, food products, wood and paper products, fish products, and petroleum and natural gas. As of 2003 the unemployment rate was 8 percent, down from the 1990s, which saw double-digit unemployment.

Geography and natural resources play their parts in occupational choice. The fisheries are strong on the east and west coasts, while ranching, farming, and mining are traditional occupations in the prairie provinces. Timber is a big part of the local economy in British Columbia.

Unionization is a guaranteed right, as is the right to strike, except for those employed in essential services such as law enforcement. There were 235 national unions and 60 international ones operating in the country in 2002, with approximately 30 percent of the labor force as members. Most of these union members were from public-sector service jobs, one of the biggest employers in the nation. Union issues include wage parity and shorter work hours. With downsizing a dominant corporate theme throughout the industrialized world, Canadian workers have found themselves working harder and longer for less in real wages.

Individual provinces set labor laws, though in most of the country 15 is the minimum work age. The workweek is set at between 40 and 48 hours, and the minimum wage in 2005 was between \$5.90 and \$8.50.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 17,040,000

Female Participation Rate %: 46.1

Labor by Sector %:

Agriculture: 3

Manufacturing: 15

Construction: 5

Services: 74

Other: 3

Unemployment %: 7.8

EDUCATION

Schools were introduced into Canada by missionaries, both Catholic and Protestant (Anglican), in the French and British possessions, respectively. Even Hudson's Bay Company encouraged missionary activity in its territory and subsidized denominational schools. It was only in the 19th century that the nondenominational public school system began to make headway, and soon it became well established in all provinces except Quebec and

Newfoundland. The principle of public support for denominational schools was, nevertheless, accorded some recognition.

The constitutional basis of the educational system is found in the Constitution Act of 1867, which states that “in and for each province the legislature may exclusively make laws in relation to education.” At the same time the act guaranteed denominational rights to education. The Charter of Rights and Freedoms of 1982 acknowledges the language rights of both French and English speakers.

The evolution of the educational system has contributed to the gradual blurring of boundaries between elementary and secondary education in Canada. Among the developments that have brought about this integration are the unification of the once-separate elementary and secondary school boards, the consolidation of all teacher training in the universities, the membership of both elementary and secondary teachers in the same professional associations, the shift in emphasis from subject-centered to child-centered curricula, and the insertion of an intermediate stage between the elementary and the secondary levels. The intermediate level retains some of the characteristics of elementary schooling, such as the homeroom, where the whole class studies together as a social unit for much of the day, and some features of the secondary school, such as a rotating schedule of instruction by a succession of subject specialists. Similarly, the traditional gap between secondary and vocational education has been bridged.

The point of transition to secondary school now varies among provinces and even among school districts. In some places there are six grades of elementary school followed by three middle grades known as junior high and three upper grades known as senior high. In other places the pattern is six, three, four. Although elementary education is compulsory throughout Canada, the starting age is six in Alberta, Nova Scotia, Ontario, and Quebec and seven elsewhere.

Secondary grades typically cover grades nine to 11 or nine to 12, while some secondary schools begin at grade seven or eight. At least part of secondary education is compulsory everywhere except in the Northwest Territories, where children may leave school at age 12. Pupils must stay in school up to age 15 in British Columbia, Newfoundland, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Quebec, and the Yukon Territory and up to age 16 in Alberta, Manitoba, Nova Scotia, Ontario, and Saskatchewan. In Quebec five years of secondary education (grades seven to 11) are followed by two or three years at a *collège d'enseignement général et professionnel*.

The higher education sector comprises universities and community colleges. In 1998 there were 69 public universities, of which the five largest were the universities of Toronto, British Columbia, Alberta, Montreal, and

McGill. Most are anglophone. In addition, there are bilingual universities such as the University of Ottawa and Laurentian University, Sudbury. Private or religious universities affiliate with a public university while retaining their religious identity.

Three or four years of full-time study are required for a bachelor's degree in arts or science at general or honors levels. Community colleges offer the first two years of university study, after which students may transfer to a university. Community colleges have flexible admission policies, and their scale of tuition fees is much below that of universities.

Canadian literacy rates approach 100 percent, and nearly 100 percent of eligible students were enrolled in the nation's nearly 13,000 primary schools in 2002, while the student-teacher ratio in these schools was 17 to 1. In the 2001–02 academic year, 98 percent of eligible secondary students were enrolled, and 58 percent of those eligible were enrolled in institutions of higher education. In 2000 public expenditures on education were estimated at 5.3 percent of GDP.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 100
Male %: 100
Female %: 100
School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 16
First Level: Primary schools: 12,700
Teachers: 142,531
Students: 2,482,315
Student-Teacher Ratio: 17.4
Net Enrollment Ratio: 99.6
Second Level: Secondary Schools: 3,324
Teachers: 147,953
Students: 2,520,348
Student-Teacher Ratio: 17.7
Net Enrollment Ratio: 97.6
Third Level: Institutions: 265
Teachers: 131,320
Students: 1,192,570
Gross Enrollment Ratio: 57.7
Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 5.3

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Canada has a thriving scientific community. In 1998 there were 2,945 researchers working in research and development (R&D) per million population. Funding for R&D in 2002 equaled 1.7 percent of GDP, with half coming from businesses involved in industries such as telecommunications and aircraft design. Other research areas cover a wide spectrum of commercial and theoretical topics, from plant propagation to bioengineering to astrophysics and medical research.

The government agency responsibility for federal funding of such projects is the Ministry of State for Sci-

ence and Technology, advised by the National Advisory Board for Science and Technology. Learned societies include the Royal Society of Canada and the National Research Council of Canada. The latter helps to coordinate R&D throughout the country, following the guidelines of the National Science and Technology Policy. In 1987–97 science and engineering students accounted for 16 percent of college and university enrollments.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million persons: 2,945

Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 1.7

High-Tech Exports \$billion: 22.66

Patent Applications by Residents: 5,737

MEDIA

The first Canadian newspaper, published in Halifax in 1752, predated confederation by over a century. The press played an important role in the evolution of Canada's peculiar geographical and historical characteristics. The large physical size and small population dictated that the Canadian press would remain scattered and few in number and that the circulations of individual newspapers would be much smaller than those in Europe or the United States. Of the 99 communities with dailies, only 14 have more than one, and half the dailies have circulations under 25,000. Nonetheless, in terms of quality, Canada has at least half a dozen newspapers of world class, including the *Toronto Star*, *Le devoir*, *Le journal de Montreal*, Toronto's *Globe and Mail*, and the *Winnipeg Free Press*, the last of which is included among the World's Great Dailies.

Three factors peculiar to Canada have influenced the evolution of the Canadian press. The first is the bilingual imperative, which means that although French speakers constitute less than 30 percent of the population, both French and English receive equal treatment in all public communications, as backed up by constitutional provisions. French- and English-language media in Canada view the world in quite different ways. Francophone dailies and broadcast media have a much more insular outlook because of a preoccupation with Quebec's regional and provincial affairs. Even when the same stories are covered by the two language media, the French journalist is more likely to adopt a guiding rather than an informing function, following the continental European tradition of giving more analysis and comment than factual reportage.

The second major influence is that of the United States, a consequence of physical proximity. Over 80 percent of Canadians live within 161 km (100 mi) of the U.S. border and are constantly exposed to U.S. electronic media. Hollywood films virtually dominate Canadian

cinemas. American magazines outsell Canadian ones, and U.S. book imports make up two-thirds of total book sales. Even in dailies, some one-fifth of all news is about the United States, representing up to half of all foreign news printed, and most of the other foreign news originates from U.S. wire services.

The third factor is regionalism in the context of Canada's strict federalism. The lack of a strong national identity or self-image has helped regionalist tendencies to flourish. The media are among the strongholds of regionalism, and complaints of inequalities and disparities are articulated and magnified by newsmen. Some regional newspapers resent the domination of the Toronto and Montreal elite press in the same way that third-world media resent the hegemony of the Western media.

The Canadian press is as free as that of the United States, even though no First Amendment infuses the Canadian media with the positive spirit of liberty that manifests itself in the no-malice libel defense, shield laws, and the Freedom of Information Act. The Canadian Bill of Rights, however, does include a reference to freedom of the press as "a fundamental freedom." But it is rather in the due process of law that Canadian freedom of the press finds its strongest safeguard. This protection is invoked in regard to laws that apply to the press, such as contempt of court, civil defamation, criminal libel, obscenity, copyright, privacy, and government secrecy. Canada has no shield laws to protect journalists from having to disclose sources of information to courts or parliamentary bodies. Reporters without Borders ranked Canada as 18th in the world out of 167 countries in its 2004 rating of press freedom.

Canada's leading news agency, Canadian Press, has traditionally enjoyed a near monopoly and has been challenged only feebly by competitors, such as United Press Canada. Only a handful of foreign newspapers and magazines are represented in Ottawa.

The broadcast media are regulated by the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission, set up by the federal Broadcasting Act of 1968. The act established the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) as the national, publicly owned broadcasting service, as financed mainly by public funds supplemented by advertising revenues. Services are operated in both English and French.

CBC operates 10 AM and two FM networks, one each in English and in French. CBC's Northern Service provides both national network programming in English and French and special local and shortwave programs, some of which are broadcast in the language of the Amerindian and Inuit peoples. CBC radio is virtually free of commercials. Radio Canada International is CBC's overseas shortwave service.

CBC operates two television networks, one in English and one in French. The Northern Service, created

in 1958, reaches northern Quebec, the Northwest Territories, and the Yukon, 60 percent of whose inhabitants are native Canadians, and programming is provided in Inuktitut languages as well as in English and French. Broadcast time is also made available to native groups who produce their own programs. Many privately owned stations have affiliation agreements with CBC. The major private television networks are CTV, TVA (which serves Quebec), and Global (which serves Ontario). Canadian Satellite Communications (CanCom) was licensed in 1981 to operate a multichannel radio and television production via Anik satellite. There are five educational services: TV-Ontario, Radio Quebec, Access (in Alberta), Knowledge Network (in British Columbia), and Saskatchewan (in Saskatchewan).

In 2003 the country had 13,221,800 cellular telephone users and 3,210,081 Internet hosts. Internet users numbered 16.11 million in 2002.

Media

Newspapers and Periodicals: —
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: 22,941
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets million: 21.45
 per 1,000: 709

CULTURE

Canadian culture is an amalgam of the country's British and French as well as Native American roots. On top of this there is a further hodgepodge of European and Asian ethnic groups that have impressed their cultures on different parts of the country.

Painting in Canada reveals the country's European ancestry, with the artists Paul Kane and Cornelius Krieghoff of the 19th century painting scenes of Canada in the making with strong European influences. Homer Watson, from the early 20th century, is credited with being the first truly Canadian painter. The Group of Seven, a painting group from the 1920s, further developed the Canadian idiom in painting. The National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa displays the work of Canadian artists.

Early literature comes in the form of journals and histories by missionaries and explorers. Some early works include Marc Lescarbot's *Histoire de la Nouvelle France*, from 1609, and Thomas Haliburton's *The Clockmaker; or, The Sayings and Doings of Samuel Slick of Slickville*, from 1836. Canadians have continued to make inroads in international literature, from Lucy Maud Montgomery, creator of *Ann of Green Gables*, to modern writers such as Alice Munro, Robertson Davies, Mordecai Richler, and Margaret Atwood.

In music Canadians have also made their mark. Traditional music varies from the Breton-inspired folk music of Acadia to English ballads. In the late 20th century opera grew throughout the nation, as did choral music. Canadian film is supported by the National Film Board.

Perhaps Canada's greatest cultural contribution is a silent one. Many native sons and daughters have made international reputations in the performing arts and literature—but often with most people thinking they were from the United States. Prominent actors include Walter Huston, Mary Pickford, Walter Pidgeon, Raymond Burr, William Shatner, Donald Sutherland, and Christopher Plummer. The prominent social and communications theorist Marshall McLuhan, who famously said “the medium is the message,” was Canadian. Popular names in music include Guy Lombardo, Paul Anka, Gordon Lightfoot, Joni Mitchell, Neil Young, and Celine Dion.

Arts and crafts are also alive in Canada; Amerindian artists produce jewelry, beaded moccasins, baskets, and leather goods. The Inuit in particular are known for their soapstone, ivory, and serpentine carvings. Traditional crafts among the Acadians include knitting and weaving. Colorful hooked rugs are another Acadian specialty.

Museums abound in the country; most locales have a local history museum or art gallery. The nation's largest museum, the Royal Ontario Museum, receives more than one million visitors annually.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 2,739
 Volumes: 75,032,608
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: 661
 Annual Attendance: 16,165,000
 Cinema Gross Receipts national currency million: 857
 Number of Cinemas: 692
 Seating Capacity 000: 646.7
 Annual Attendance million: 112.8

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Canada has a rich folkloric tradition, emblematic of its equally rich and diverse ethnic makeup. From indigenous peoples come a wealth of creation myths as well as trickster and hero stories. There are the trickster tales of Raven from natives of the Pacific Coast; from Algonquian tribes come the Nanabozo trickster tales. Nanabozo was the trickster-hero in Ojibwa legends, who usually appeared as a strong young brave but could change into an animal or a rock or tree if he wanted to do so. One popular Nanabozo story tells how he brought fire to his people, stealing it from an old magician. Other tricksters include Frog in the Columbian Plateau and Coyote from the Blackfoot. From Pacific Coast natives comes Thun-

derbird, a supernatural creature that produces thunder by flapping its wings and lightning by opening and closing its eyes.

French Canadians have a particularly strong oral tradition, partly as a result of laws in colonial times against establishing printing presses. Perhaps the most important figure in French Canadian folklore is the hero Ti-Jean, a short form of *Petit-Jean* or Little John, a popular hero. Ti-Jean tales include one in which he becomes king by passing three tests using cunning and intellect. Another figure in French Canadian lore is Dalbec the hunter. His exploits include tying ducks to his waist so that he can fly.

Folktales from the British tradition as well as from ethnic groups such as the Yiddish, Ukrainians, eastern Europeans, and Asians all inform Canadian folklore and mythology.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Canadians, like much of the rest of the world, use television as a major source of entertainment. In all, 98 percent of Canadian homes have at least one television. In 1997 Canadians spent on average some 22.7 hours a week, almost 3 hours a day, in front of their sets. With almost 100 percent literacy, Canadians are also avid readers, both in English and in French. In 2000 the average daily newspaper circulation per 1,000 population was 167.9. In 1999 there were 22,941 books published. Cinemas are also popular. In 1998 there were 21.39 cinema seats per 1,000 population and 3.73 annual attendances per inhabitant. In urban centers, theater and concerts also draw large audiences.

Canada has a wealth of natural scenery, and Canadians avail themselves of it on weekend trips and vacations. Many families in the east have weekend cabins or cottages in the woods or on lakes. Hiking, fishing, hunting, swimming, canoeing, skiing, snowboarding, and ice-skating are recreational activities enjoyed by a large segment of Canadian society.

ETIQUETTE

Canada has a reputation for its courtesy and relaxed way of life. In terms of formality, the country lies midway, perhaps, between the reserved British and the very outgoing Americans. Handshakes are a common form of greeting. In francophone Canada it is typical for men and women to exchange kisses on the cheek, French style. Use of the first name is typical, though not done so readily as in the United States. With French-speakers, the informal *tu* is used only with persons one knows.

Table manners are a blend of North American and European. Francophone Canada, for example, tends to eat in the continental manner, using fork and knife simultaneously, while much of English-speaking Canada puts the knife down before eating with the fork alone. For French Canadians it is good manners to have both hands above the table while eating.

Some physical gestures have variant meanings in Canada. For example, the “thumbs down” sign of disapproval in the United States is a rude gesture in Canada.

FAMILY LIFE

Like many Western countries, Canada has become a country of small nuclear families. As women enter more and more into the workforce in myriad occupations, birthrates have gone down and the age at which people marry has been rising. For example, in 1951 the extended family was found in 7 percent of Canadian households, but half a century later it was found in fewer than 1 percent. While in 1971 there were 3.2 children per family, this number had sunk to 1.7 in the 1980s; by 2004 the fertility rate was just 1.6 children per woman, and the birthrate that same year was 10.9 births per 1,000 population. Over half of Canadian children were in some form of child care by 2000–01, and one-quarter of them were in day-care centers.

The modern Canadian family is also shaped by liberal divorce laws. Even within the Catholic community, the divorce rate is high: 45 percent of all marriages in Canada end in divorce.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Modern, Western-style clothing is worn by Canadians of all ethnic groups and regions. Canadians tend to dress a bit more formally than their neighbors to the south in the United States, and regionally, dress tends to be more casual in the west of the country as compared with the east.

Ethnic groups from various parts of the world may wear their traditional costumes for festivals and other special occasions. This can be seen with the Acadians of the Maritime Provinces; for festivals, women there wear white bonnets and blouses with black skirts and white aprons. Men wear black trousers to the knees with white stockings, white shirts, and dark vests. Canada’s western traditions can be seen at the annual Calgary rodeo, at which cowboy clothes are the norm.

SPORTS

Ice hockey is Canada’s national sport. Notable stars of the sport include Bobby Orr, Bobby Hull, and Wayne

Gretzky. Canadian athletes play on teams in both Canada and the United States. The original teams of the National Hockey League, established in 1917, were all Canadian. Hockey broadcasts are popular with millions of Canadians. The Canadian national team won the World Hockey Championships in 2003 and 2004.

Another popular national sport is lacrosse, adopted as Canada's national game at the time of confederation. This sport was played by Amerindians in all parts of the country and was later adopted by immigrants. Other team sports show more direct influence from the United States, such as in the Canadian Football League and with the Canadian teams that have belonged to Major League Baseball and the National Basketball Association in the United States. Tennis, golf, and badminton are also gaining in popularity. Winter sports provide opportunities for both participation and spectatorship. These include curling, ice skating, and downhill and cross-country skiing.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1957** Long Liberal rule ends with Progressive Conservatives gaining power under John Diefenbaker as prime minister.
- 1963** Lester B. Pearson leads Liberals back into office.
- 1968** Pearson steps down and is succeeded by Pierre Trudeau as prime minister.
- 1970** The War Measures Act is promulgated to deal with francophone terrorist activity in Quebec.
- 1974** Quebec declares French to be its official language.
- 1976** The Parti Québécois, a separatist party, gains power in Quebec under René Lévesque as premier.
- 1979** A Progressive Conservative minority government under Joseph Clark displaces the Trudeau government.
- 1980** Progressive Conservatives lose elections, and Liberals return to power.
- 1982** The Constitution Act of 1867 is "patriated," and the Constitution Act of 1982 is passed along with the Charter of Rights and Freedoms:
- 1984** Trudeau yields office to John Turner, who is elected Liberal leader. Turner calls a snap election in which the Liberals suffer a decisive defeat; the Progressive Conservatives are elected to office with the largest majority in parliamentary history, under Brian Mulroney as prime minister.
- 1986** Canada proclaims sovereignty over the Arctic region, including interisland channels, despite opposition from the United States.
- 1987** A proposed division of the Northwest Territories into two regions, Nunavut and Denendah, is passed by the territorial assembly.
- 1989** The Canada–United States free-trade agreement comes into force.
- 1993** Liberal party candidate Jean Chrétien wins the prime ministry.
- 1994** Canada, the United States, and Mexico sign the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) creating the world's largest single market.
- 1999** Adrienne Clarkson is appointed governor-general. A large region of the Northwest Territories officially becomes the separate territory of Nunavut, the only Canadian territory or province with a majority indigenous population. Paul Okalik becomes Nunavut's first territorial premier.
- 2000** Chrétien's Liberal Party wins the parliamentary election.
- 2001** Health-care providers protest the federal government's declining share of health-care costs. A trade dispute over softwood lumber imports from Canada puts a dent in Canadian-U.S. relations. In December the federal government passes a constitutional amendment that officially changes the name of the province of Newfoundland to Newfoundland and Labrador.
- 2002** Stephen Harper of the Western-based Canadian Alliance becomes leader of the parliamentary opposition in May. Chrétien announces he will retire from party leadership in 2004. Canada ratifies the Kyoto Protocol to reduce the emission of greenhouse gases.
- 2003** Toronto is hit by SARS (severe acute respiratory syndrome), imported from Asia, which causes over 40 deaths. An outbreak of "mad cow" disease (bovine spongiform encephalopathy, BSE) in Alberta closes international markets to Canadian beef. Paul Martin, former minister of finance, is chosen to head the Liberal Party. The Progressive Conservative Party and the Canadian Alliance merge to form the Conservative Party of Canada. Relations with the United States are further strained by Canada's refusal to join in the American-led war in Iraq.
- 2004** Parliamentary elections give the Liberal Party a reduced majority—down from 161 seats to 138—and Paul Martin becomes prime minister.
- 2005** Over 3,800 doctors were expected to retire in the year, worsening the critical shortage of family doctors. The Liberal Party introduces a same-sex marriage legalization bill to Parliament in February that is approved by the Senate in July.
- 2006** The government loses a no confidence vote. Martin is replaced by Stephen Harper as prime minister following general elections.

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Canada. *Canada Year Book* (biennial); *Census Canada 2001; Population*

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Canadian Encyclopedia Online
<http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com>
- CIA World Factbook: Canada
<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/ca.html>
- Statistics Canada
<http://www.statcan.ca>

CAPE VERDE

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Cape Verde (República de Cabo Verde)

ABBREVIATION

CV

CAPITAL

Praia

HEAD OF STATE

President Pedro Verona Rodrigues Pires (from 2001)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister José Maria Neves (from 2001)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Republic

POPULATION

418,224 (2005)

AREA

4,033 sq km (1,557 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Mulattos

LANGUAGES

Portuguese (official), Crioulo (national)

RELIGION

Roman Catholicism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Cape Verde escudo

NATIONAL FLAG

Three horizontal bands of (from top) blue (double width), white (with a horizontal red stripe in its middle), and blue; a circle of 10 yellow five-pointed stars is centered on the hoist end of the middle band, extending into the upper and lower blue bands.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

The main elements of the coat of arms are a blue equilateral triangle with a white torch in its center; the words *República de Cabo Verde* are inscribed in a semicircle from the bottom left angle up to the vertex and down to the bottom right angle of the triangle; three blue-colored line segments are parallel to the base of the triangle; a blue circle encloses these elements, with a yellow plummet aligned with the vertex of the equilateral triangle; outside the circle are three yellow links placed on the composition base, followed by two green palms and 10 yellow five-pointed stars placed symmetrically in two groups of five.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"This Is Our Beloved Country"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day), January 20 (National Heroes' Day), March 8 (Women's Day) May 1 (Labor Day), June 1 (Children's Day), July 5 (National Day, Independence Day), September 12 (Day of the Nation), , various Christian festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

July 5, 1975

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

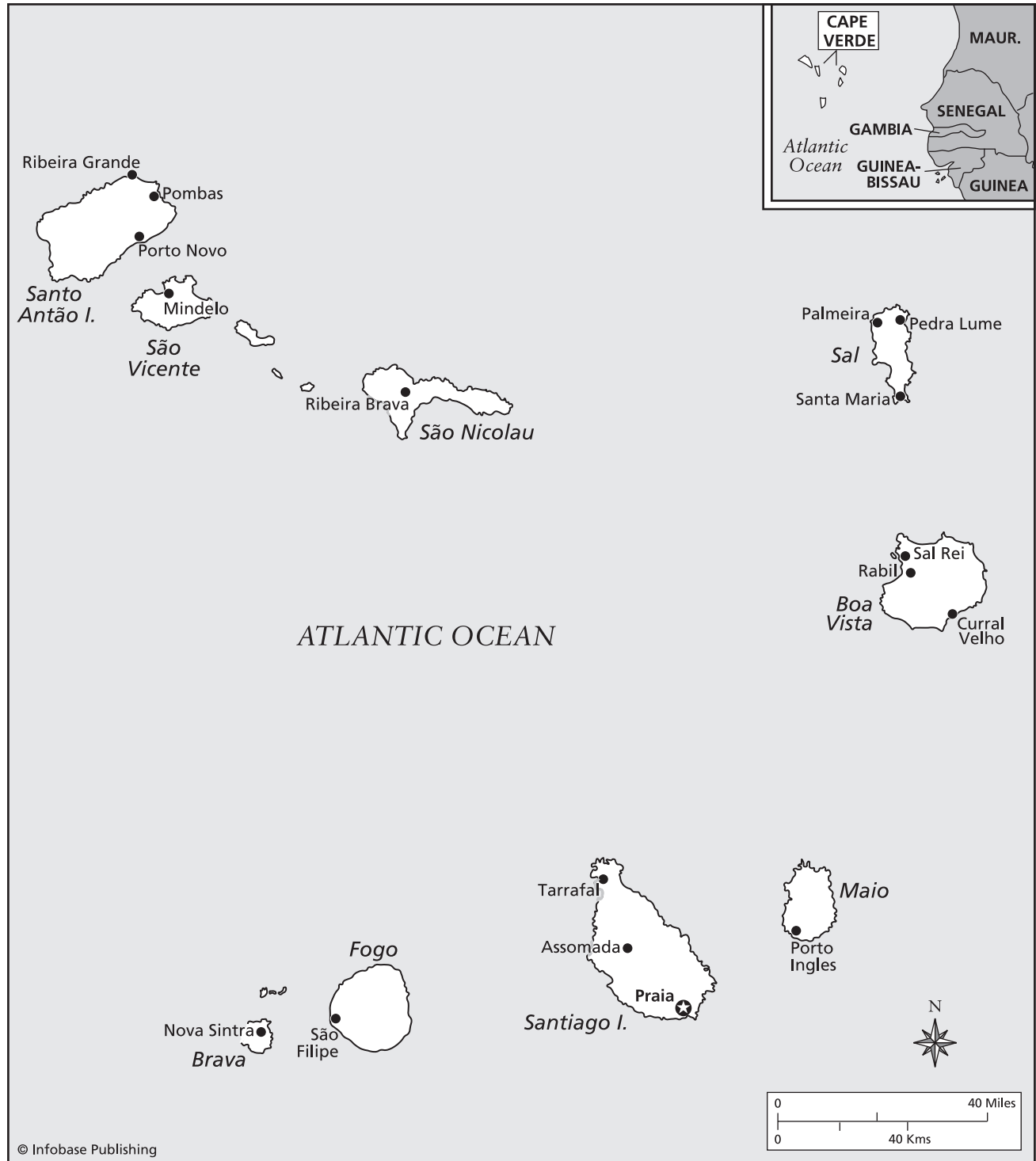
September 25, 1992 (revised in 1995 and 1999)

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Cape Verde consists of an archipelago of 10 islands and five islets in the Atlantic Ocean about 595 km (370 mi) west of Dakar, Senegal, with a total land area of 4,033 sq km (1,557 sq mi). The greatest distance across the archipelago southeast to northwest is 332 km (206 mi), and that northeast to southwest is 299 km (186 mi). The total length of the coastline is 965 km (600 mi).

The archipelago is divided into two districts: Barlavento, or Windward Islands, and Sotavento, or Leeward Islands, named according to the direction of the prevailing northeasterly wind. Except for the low-lying islands of Sal, Boa Vista, and Maio, Cape Verde is mountainous, with rugged cliffs and deep ravines. The highest peaks are Pico da Cano, an active volcano reaching 2,829 m (9,278 ft), and two peaks reaching 1,935 m (6,348 ft) and 1,320 m (4,298 ft) on Santo Antão and São Tiago, respectively.

Cape Verde



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Geography

Area sq km: 4,033; sq mi 1,557
 World Rank: 164th
 Land Boundaries, km: 0
 Coastline, km: 965
 Elevation Extremes meters

Lowest: Atlantic Ocean 0
 Highest: Pico 2,829
 Land Use %
 Arable land: 9.68
 Permanent Crops: 0.5
 Forest 21.1
 Other: 68.72

Population of Principal Cities (2000)

Mindelo	62,497
Praia	95,200

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Cape Verde has an arid climate, with two seasons: a cool, dry season from December to June, with temperatures averaging 21°C (70°F), and a warm season from July to November, with temperatures averaging 26.6°C (80°F). Rainfall is sparse and rarely exceeds 127 mm (5 in) in the northern islands and 305 mm (12 in) in the southern islands. The islands suffer from chronic and severe shortages of water and rainfall, which periodically cause catastrophic droughts. São Vicente depends on a desalination plant for its drinking water.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature	
Summer: 80°F	
Winter: 70°F	
Average Rainfall	
Northern Islands: 5 in	
Southern Islands: 12 in	

FLORA AND FAUNA

Since the islands' settlement, native species of flora and fauna have been severely compromised by drought, unwise agricultural practices, and the introduction of nonnative species, especially livestock, such that they can be found only on small patches of the island, particularly those areas inaccessible to farming. The islands are home to four endemic species of land birds, including the Cape Verde sparrow, the Cape Verde swift, the Raso lark, and the Cape Verde warbler. Seabirds include the Cape Verde petrel, the frigate bird, and the red-tailed tropic bird. Of 15 species of lizards, twelve are endemic to the islands, as are 92 species of plants, including the marmulan and the dragon tree.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005:	418,224
World Rank:	164th
Density per sq km:	116.6
% of annual growth (1999-2003):	2.6
Male %:	48.5
Female %:	51.5
Urban %:	56
Age Distribution: %	
0-14:	40.0
15-64:	53.3
65 and over:	6.7

Population 2025:	451,021
Birth Rate per 1,000:	26.13
Death Rate per 1,000:	6.72
Rate of Natural Increase %:	2.2
Total Fertility Rate:	3.62
Expectation of Life (years):	Males 66.83
	Females 73.54
Marriage Rate per 1,000:	—
Divorce Rate per 1,000:	—
Average Size of Households:	5.1
Induced Abortions:	—

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

About 71 percent of the Cape Verde population is of mixed descent, except on São Tiago, where the population is of African Wolof stock. Mulattos, or Creoles, as persons of such mixed descent are sometimes called, are a majority on all other islands. They are the descendants of Portuguese settlers and the African slaves who were brought to work on plantations. Whites represented 2 percent of the population until independence; the European population is currently about 1 percent.

LANGUAGES

The official language is Portuguese. The national language is a creole Portuguese known as Crioulo, in which the vocabulary, syntax, and pronunciation have been Africanized. Crioulo is spoken by 70 percent of the population. Portuguese is the language of the officials and educated elite.

RELIGIONS

Almost all mulattos and the majority of Africans adhere to the Roman Catholic faith. The Roman Catholic suffragan see of São Tiago de Cabo Verde is attached to the metropolitan see of Lisbon.

Religious Affiliations

Roman Catholic	397,313
Protestant	14,638

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Prior to the arrival of Europeans, there were no inhabitants of Cape Verde. Cape Verde was one of the earliest European colonies in Africa and one of the last to achieve independence. The archipelago was declared part of the Portuguese royal dominion in 1495. From 1591 until independence in 1975 the islands formed an overseas province of Portugal and were administered by a governor.

However, the country lost much of its importance as a strategic gateway to the Atlantic with the abolition of the slave trade in 1876.

Cape Verde achieved independence after a long and costly struggle, in the course of which Amílcar Cabral, the independence forces leader, was assassinated. There was little actual fighting in the islands; most open conflict occurred in Guinea-Bissau. Cape Verde's right to self-determination and independence was acknowledged by the new regime that was set up by the Armed Forces' Movement in Portugal in 1974. When independence was finally granted in 1975, relations between Portugal and its former colony became more cordial than ever before. At independence, the government was controlled by the Cape Verdean wing of the African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (PAIGC). Its leader, Aristides Pereira, became the first president. The PAIGC became the sole legal party and was given supremacy over government structures. This was confirmed by the constitution of 1980. Since its founding, the PAIGC had been a binational party that had the unification of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde as one of its principal objectives. However, in 1980 a coup in Guinea-Bissau against a president who was Cape Verdean shattered party unity. The following year the Cape Verdean wing of the party changed its name to the African Party for Independence of Cape Verde (PAICV) and abandoned the goal of unification. Relations between the two countries returned to normal in 1982.

In 1986 Aristides Pereira, who had been president since independence, was reelected to another five-year term by the National People's Assembly. Demonstrations for greater political freedom were held in 1988, and the following year a commission was established to consider proposals for constitutional change. As pressure from church and academic circles increased, the PAICV announced the convening of a special congress to abolish the constitutional provisions that gave it a monopoly of power. In September 1990 Cape Verde officially became a multiparty state, and the *Movimento para a Democracia* (MPD), which had advocated a return to a multiparty system, received official recognition as a political party.

The MPD won 56 out of 79 seats in the 1991 legislative elections, the first since independence. The MPD candidate, Antonio Mascarenhas Monteiro, won the country's first free presidential elections in a contest that pitted him against Pereira. A new constitution endorsing the multiparty system was adopted in 1992. The early 1990s were difficult for the country economically in large part due to devastating droughts. However, the MPD was successful in its 1995 reelection bids. In 1997 the country again suffered a drought that wiped out over 80 percent of the country's grain. In 2001 elections the PAICV retook the majority of seats in the National Assembly, and the PAICV candidate Pedro Pires was elected president

by just 17 votes. Pires appointed José Maria Neves prime minister. Pires's major concerns have been with the nation's economy. In 2002 the nation secured a \$7.91 million loan from the African Development Fund in response to a poor harvest that year. In 2003 the nation's National Institute of Statistics released a report showing that despite strong economic growth, poverty rates were increasing. That year, too, the World Bank loaned Cape Verde \$11.5 million to help develop its private-sector economy.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1975–91	Aristides Pereira
1991–2001	Antonio Mascarenhas Monteiro
2001–	Pedro Pires

CONSTITUTION

Cape Verde's newest constitution was adopted on September 25, 1992, and underwent revisions in 1995 and 1999. The president, who is the head of state, and the prime minister, who is the head of government, serve five-year terms. Deputies of the National People's Assembly are elected by universal suffrage from a multiparty ballot.

Legislative power is vested in the National People's Assembly, the 72 members of which are elected by universal suffrage for five-year terms. The president is elected by universal suffrage and must win two-thirds of the vote to secure election. If he does not, a runoff is scheduled within 21 days between the two candidates with the highest number of votes. The prime minister, who is head of government, is elected by the National People's Assembly and appointed by the president.

Suffrage is universal over age 18.

PARLIAMENT

The national legislature is the *Assembleia Nacional Popular* (National People's Assembly), a unicameral body last elected in 2001. In that election the *Partido Africano da Independência de Cabo Verde* (PAICV), which had been the sole legitimate party until 1990, won 40 seats; the *Movimento para a Democracia* (MPD) won 30 seats; and the *Democratic Alliance for Change* (ADM) won two seats.

Deputies of the National People's Assembly are elected by universal suffrage of those over age 18.

POLITICAL PARTIES

The four major political parties are, the *Movimento para a Democracia*, founded in 1991, which advocates

administrative decentralization; the Partido Africano da Independência de Capo Verde, which was the only authorized party from 1975–90; the Partido da Convergencia Democrática, founded in 1994 from splinter members of the Movimento para a Democracia; and the Democratic Alliance for Change (ADM). In addition to these three major parties, there are a number of smaller ones that in the last general election attracted just 6.9 percent of the total vote as a group.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For purposes of local administration, Cape Verde is divided into 17 *concelhos* (districts) and 31 *freguesias* (parishes). Representative institutions are being gradually introduced at the regional level.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The highest judicial body in the land is the National Council of Justice, composed of three judges appointed by the government and six assessors designated by the legislature. The council has original jurisdiction and also hears appeals from elected courts of first instance in each of the country's 224 administrative districts.

Trials are conducted by one judge; a public prosecutor presents the case against an accused, who is defended by counsel. There is no jury system. Appeal is possible, and trials appear to be handled expeditiously. There is also a system of popular tribunals to adjudicate minor disputes at the neighborhood or local level in rural areas. The "judges" are usually prominent local citizens without legal training who are appointees of the Ministry of Justice. Their decisions can be appealed within the regular court system.

The judiciary does not have the authority to determine the constitutionality of legislation. Although, according to the constitution, judges are independent, one former judge now living outside the country has claimed that one-party rule in practice has hampered the functioning of a truly independent judiciary. Most evidence suggests, however, that the courts protect individual rights in criminal cases.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Despite the potential for human rights abuses, Cape Verde has a good track record in both civil and political rights. There are no political prisoners, no torture or physical abuse of prisoners has been reported, and no political opponents have "disappeared." Trials, both civil and criminal, are open to the public, and defendants are afforded legal counsel, at state expense if need be. There

have never been any allegations of forced entry into private homes by police officials. The news media are government monopolies and are used to reinforce support for the government programs.

FOREIGN POLICY

As a former Portuguese colony, Cape Verde's closest relations have been with other lusophone countries, especially Guinea-Bissau, Angola, Mozambique, and São Tomé and Príncipe. Relations with Guinea-Bissau, once close, have been frayed over the years. The 1980 constitution provides for the eventual merger of the two countries, but all island influences have been purged from the mainland party. However, diplomatic relations were resumed in 1982.

DEFENSE

The defense structure is headed by the president, who is the commander in chief of the Citizens' Army, a token force that replaced Portuguese troops upon independence. The strength of the armed forces was 1,000 in 1999, including a small coast guard. In 2003 the nation spent \$12.3 million, or 1.5 percent of its gross domestic product (GDP), on the military.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	1,000
Military Manpower Availability:	98,394
Military Expenditures \$million:	12.3
as % of GDP:	1.5
as % of central government expenditures:	—
Arms Imports \$million:	1
Arms Exports \$million:	—

ECONOMY

Cape Verde's low per capita GDP reflects a poor natural resource base, including serious water shortages exacerbated by cycles of long-term drought. The economy is service oriented, with commerce, transport, and public services accounting for 72 percent of GDP. Although nearly 44 percent of the population lives in rural areas, the share of agriculture in GDP in 2003 was only 10 percent, of which fishing accounts for 1.5 percent. About 82 percent of food must be imported. The fishing potential, mostly of lobster and tuna, is not fully exploited. Cape Verde annually runs a high trade deficit, as financed by foreign aid and remittances from emigrants; remittances constitute a supplement to GDP of more than 20 percent. Economic reforms, launched by the new democratic government in 1991, are aimed at

developing the private sector and attracting foreign investment to diversify the economy. Prospects for 2004 and beyond depended heavily on the maintenance of aid flows, remittances, and the momentum of the government's development program.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$million:	600
GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$:	1,400
GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %:	5.9
GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %:	3.2
Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:	
Agriculture:	10.0
Industry:	16.5
Services:	62.8
Other:	10.7
Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:	
Private Consumption:	97
Government Consumption:	19
Gross Domestic Investment:	16.5
Foreign Trade \$million:	
Exports:	50.68
Imports:	315.5
% of Income Received by Poorest 10%:	—
% of Income Received by Richest 10%:	—
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)	
1998	120.1
1999	125.4
2000	122.3
2001	126.4
2002	128.8

Finance

National Currency:	Cape Verdean Escudo (CVE)
Exchange Rate:	\$1 = CVE 97.703
Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion:	23.09
Central Bank Discount Rate %:	—
Total External Debt \$million:	325
Debt Service Ratio %:	7.21
Balance of Payments \$million:	-106.3
International Reserves SDRs \$million:	93.6
Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:	3.0

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million:	92.19
per capita \$:	201
Foreign Direct Investment \$million:	14.8

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year:	Calendar Year
Revenues \$million:	252.9
Expenditures \$million:	269.9
Budget Deficit \$million:	17
Tax Revenues as % of GDP:	—

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %:	10.0
Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %:	4.0
Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares:	0.4
Irrigation, % of Farms having:	7.3
Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare:	2.6
Total Farmland as % of land area:	9.7
Livestock:	
Cattle 000:	22.5
Sheep 000:	9.5
Hogs 000:	205
Chickens 000:	450
Forests: Production of Roundwood (000 cubic meters):	—
Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000:	8

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million:	63.46
Industrial Production Growth Rate %:	—

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent 000:	—
Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent 000:	50
Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000:	112
Net Energy Imports % of use:	—
Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000:	7
Production kW-hr million:	40
Consumption kW-hr million:	40
Coal Reserves tons million:	—
Production tons 000:	—
Consumption tons 000:	—
Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic meters billion:	—
Production cubic meters million:	—
Consumption cubic meters million:	—
Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels million:	—
Production barrels 000 per day:	—
Consumption barrels 000 per day:	2.34
Pipelines Length km:	—

Foreign Trade

Imports \$million:	315.5
Exports \$million:	50.68
Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003):	17.1
Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003):	10.2
Balance of Trade \$million:	-106.3

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Portugal %	46.7	31.0
Netherlands %	9.1	—
Belgium %	3.8	—
France %	—	27.6
United Kingdom %	—	17.2
United States %	—	17.2

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 1,100
 Paved %: 78
 Automobiles: 13,500
 Trucks and Buses: 3,100
 Railroad: Track Length km: —
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: —
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 4
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 6.6
 Airports: 4
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 279
 Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 126
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 66
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 56

Communications

Telephones 000: 71.7
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.04
 Cellular Telephones 000: 53.3
 Personal Computers 000: 35
 Internet Hosts per million people: 282
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 48.8

ENVIRONMENT

Like many other developing nations, Cape Verde suffers from poor agricultural techniques, which have led to overgrazing and soil erosion and have severely compounded the nation's chronic shortage of water. Additionally, the country suffers from growing deforestation as a result of a need for wood as a fuel and building material.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 21.1
 Average Annual Forest Change, 1990-2000, 000 ha: 5
 Nationally Protected Areas as % of Total Land Area: —
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 0.3

LIVING CONDITIONS

Despite being a relatively poor country, with a per capita GDP of just \$1,400 in 2002 and some 30 percent of the population living below the poverty line, living conditions in Cape Verde are good compared to other West African nations. The population is fairly well educated, with over three-quarters considered literate. Because of the influence

of Portuguese culture, the larger towns are similar to those of coastal Brazil. In the major towns, electricity (much of it wind powered) and piped water (much of it from desalination plants) are common, and although the nation's many cobblestone roads are narrow, traffic is able to move. As a group of islands the nation depends on inter-island transportation, including ferryboats and airplane service. Cape Verdeans who live in the United States and Europe and return to their native country, perhaps for the first time, note problems with high prices for some goods, trash and litter in the streets, vagrants digging through trash containers, and rising rates of crime, particularly theft.

HEALTH

Life expectancy at birth is just over 70 years. The infant mortality rate is relatively high, at just over 49 per 1,000 live births. Health care is provided by the government in hospitals on each of the nation's islands. Although facilities are substandard, they are better than many such facilities in other West African nations. Poor sanitation and nutrition lead to high incidences of infectious and parasitic diseases, especially bronchitis, gastrointestinal problems, pneumonia, and tuberculosis.

Health

Number of Physicians: 68
 Number of Dentists: 6
 Number of Nurses: 222
 Number of Pharmacists: —
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 17.1
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 49.14
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 10,000 live births: 150
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 4.5
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 57
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.04
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 94
 Measles: 85
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 42
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 80

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Largely because of drought, Cape Verde is not self-sufficient in food production and has to import much of its food. The main staple is corn, though rice and couscous are also used as starches. Common dishes include *cachupa*, a stew made with beans, hominy, and vegetables or meat; soups, called *conj*; and *djagacida*, or chicken and rice. Meats include chicken and pork, and tuna is also widely consumed. Tropical fruits include bananas and mangoes. The nation is known for its rum, called *grog*, made from distilled sugarcane.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 175.3
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 93.2

STATUS OF WOMEN

Sex discrimination exists socially, although banned by the constitution. Many of the traditional male-oriented values of the Portuguese and African ancestors of today's Cape Verdeans are still part of the country's culture. Women have been customarily excluded from certain types of work and are often paid less than men for comparable work. The government has included women in labor-intensive economic development projects financed by foreign grants. Both the government and the current ruling party, PAICV, are making efforts to bring women into the various economic and social activities where they have been traditionally absent. The Organization of Cape Verdean Women was founded in 1980, with PAICV encouragement, to sensitize the government and Cape Verdeans on issues affecting women. The Code of the Family, enacted in October 1981, prescribes full legal equality of men and women, including equal pay for equal work.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 11
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men age 15 to 24: 0.94
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: —

WORK

Because 70 percent of the nation's population is involved in farming, much of it subsistence, it is difficult to calculate a meaningful size for the nation's labor force. Further, many Cape Verdeans work overseas as contract laborers, and remittances by these workers are a major source of income for the nation. It is known that agriculture is the source of only 10 percent of the nation's GDP, while industry accounts for 16.5 percent and services 62.8 percent. Major agricultural products include bananas, corn, beans, sweet potatoes, sugarcane, coffee, peanuts, and fish. Major industries include food processing, fishing, garment production, salt mining, and ship repair. The nation offers few opportunities for people with college degrees, who tend to remain abroad to work rather than returning to the country.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: —
 Female Participation Rate %: 38.8

Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: —
 Industry: —
 Services: —
 Unemployment %: 21

EDUCATION

In principle, education is free, universal, and compulsory for six years, from ages seven to 13. However, compulsory education is not enforced.

Schooling consists of six years of primary school (*instrução primaria*), three years of middle school (*escola preparatoria*), and either a three-year general course or a two-year preuniversity course, for a total of 11 or 12 years. The curriculum follows the Portuguese model. The academic year runs from October to July. The medium of instruction is Portuguese.

The building of new schools and improvements in teacher training are the two official priorities in educational planning.

In the absence of a local university, Cape Verdean students who wish to pursue higher studies go to Portugal.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 76.6
 Male %: 85.8
 Female %: 69.2
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 11.8
 First Level: Primary schools: 370
 Teachers: 3,145
 Students: 87,841
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 27.9
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 99.2
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: —
 Teachers: 2,091
 Students: 47,666
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 23.7
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 58.0
 Third Level: Institutions: —
 Teachers: 290
 Students: 2,215
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 4.6
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 7.9

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

As a small and relatively poor country, Cape Verde supports no scientific research facilities or laboratories.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million persons: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$000: 86.6
 Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

Publications include *Boletim informativo*, *Boletim oficial*, *Novo journal Cabo Verde*, and *A semana*, all in Portuguese. The only daily is the state-run *Horizonte*. Cape Verde has no official news agency.

The only television station is the state-run Televisão Nacional de Cabo Verde. The state-run radio station is Radio Nacional de Cabo Verde. There are two additional radio stations, Radio Nova on São Vicente and Radio Comercial in Praia.

Media

Newspapers and Periodicals: —
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: —
 Radio Receivers 000: 76
 per 1,000: 182
 Television sets 000: 2
 per 1,000: 5

CULTURE

The culture of Cape Verde was and still is heavily influenced by its position as a crossroads in the Atlantic. The influences of the Portuguese, Moors, African people, and Azorean peoples in particular are evident. The nation's Creole culture is a blend of Portuguese and African culture stemming from the nation's role in the slave trade.

Today's cultural institutions include the Cape Verdean Cultural Center in Praia. Most Cape Verdean literature has been written in Portuguese, though in recent years efforts have been made to develop and standardize Crioulo, and some books have been published in that language. Much of the nation's written literature has evolved from oral storytelling traditions. A common theme is *saudade*, defined as a sense of homesickness or longing, brought about by the large number of Cape Verdeans who live overseas. Graphic arts include clay pottery from the island of Boavista and carvings from lava on Fogo. Dance and music are important in Cape Verdean culture. Traditional musical forms include the *morna*, or Portuguese ballads; *batuque*, a rhythmic type of music and dance performed by circles of women; and *funana*, accordion music accompanied by percussion on iron bars.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number:
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number:
 Annual Attendance: —

Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Cape Verdean folklore is a blend of Portuguese and African traditions. Tales continue to be told about Nho Lobo, a wolf who provides valuable life lessons through his folksy and clever wisdom.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Cape Verdeans enjoy a variety of sports. Because it is an island nation, water sports such as swimming and scuba diving are popular, and horseback riding and golf have grown in popularity. Music is an important source of entertainment, with European forms such as mazurkas and waltzes as well as more indigenous forms popular. Many forms of music are imported to the country from diasporic communities. One popular board game is *ouri*, a game whose origins can be traced back to ancient Egypt. The home is the center of entertainment, with parties and dances common.

ETIQUETTE

Visitors to Cape Verde are struck by the warmth of the people, who are gracious entertainers and who would not think of eating, for example, without sharing their meal with others. For this reason, eating in public, such as on the street, is generally considered ill mannered. Greetings tend to be long and elaborate, with men shaking hands and women kissing, and people inquire about one another's health and that of the family even if they have already met before during the day. Cape Verdeans value a strong social network of family and friends, and many take part in civic, club, and volunteer activities.

FAMILY LIFE

Most husbands and wives are not married in legal or church ceremonies. More typically, a woman leaves her home and moves in with a man, often when she has become pregnant. Such unions are recognized as common-law marriages after four years. Several generations of family members cohabit, with all taking responsibility for the upbringing of children, who from an early age are given a great deal of responsibility for chores or helping with the family trade. Family relations are very close, and children are treated strictly but with great attention and affection.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Cape Verdeans tend to take pride in their appearance and dress. American brand-name clothing is highly valued and often serves as an indicator of class, although even poorer people wear such clothing, which they receive as gifts from friends and family members in the United States. Used clothing from New England, where there is a large diasporic community, and Europe is also widely worn. While men and children generally wear Western clothing, some women wear the *panos*, a woven African cloth that serves both as a sash and as a wrap for carrying babies.

SPORTS

In addition to basketball and water sports, such as swimming, scuba diving, sailing, fishing, surfing, and windsurfing, Cape Verdeans have shown ability in track and field and long-distance running. Soccer is immensely popular, with soccer clubs scattered throughout the islands. Many Cape Verdeans who show athletic promise, however, emigrate to other countries such as Portugal where opportunities are greater.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1975** Cape Verde is granted independence by Portugal and is proclaimed a republic, with Aristides Pereira as president.
In national election 92 percent of the voters favor ultimate union with Guinea-Bissau.
- 1976** Cape Verde signs a judiciary protocol with Guinea-Bissau, merging the judicial systems of the two countries.
- 1980** Cape Verde's first constitution is approved in nationwide balloting.
New National People's Assembly is elected.
- 1981** Constitution is amended to revoke provisions designed to facilitate union with Guinea-Bissau.
- 1982** Cape Verde joins other lusophone African nations in a summit at Praia and in setting up a joint committee to promote cooperation.
- 1984** The first distribution of land to landless peasants under the Land Reform Law of 1982 takes place, on São Tiago.
- 1985** National People's Assembly elections are held.
Over 94 percent of the vote goes to candidates approved by the PAICV.
- 1986** President Pereira is reelected for another five-year term.
- 1988** Pereira is reelected secretary-general of the PAICV.
- 1989** A commission is established to consider constitutional changes.

- 1990** Pereira announces that the next presidential election will be based on universal suffrage. The nation officially becomes multiparty. The Movimento para a Democracia (MPD) is given official recognition.
- 1991** MPD candidate Antonio Mascarenhas Monteiro defeats Pereira in the presidential election.
- 1994** The new constitution is adopted by 82 percent of the votes cast.
- 1995** MPD candidates capture 50 of the 72 seats in the parliament.
- 2001** In January legislative elections PAICV candidates win 37 of the 72 seats; Pedro Pires of the PAICV wins the presidency by a margin of 17 votes.
- 2002** The nation secures a \$7.91 million loan from the African Development Fund in response to a poor harvest.
- 2003** The National Institute of Statistics releases a report showing that despite strong economic growth, poverty rates were increasing.
World Bank loans Cape Verde \$11.5 million to help develop its private-sector economy.
- 2006** The PAICV wins another term in parliamentary elections.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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3415 Massachusetts Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20007
Phone: (202) 965-6820 Fax: (202) 965-1207

INTERNET RESOURCES

- Cape Verde Home Page (unofficial)
<http://www.umassd.edu/SpecialPrograms/capverdean.html>
- Embassy of Cape Verde
<http://www.capeverdeusaembassy.org>

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Central African Republic (République Centrafricaine)
(formerly Ubangi-Shari)

ABBREVIATION

CF

CAPITAL

Bangui

HEAD OF STATE

President François Bozizé (from 2003)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Elie Dote (from 2005)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Republic

POPULATION

3,799,897 (2005)

AREA

622,984 sq km (240,534 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Banda, Baya-Mandjia

LANGUAGES

French (official), Sango (national)

RELIGIONS

Christianity, animism, Islam

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Coopération financière en Afrique centrale franc

NATIONAL FLAG

Four horizontal stripes—top to bottom, blue, white, green, and yellow—divided at the center by a vertical red stripe. In the upper left corner is a yellow five-pointed star.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A central shield having four equal quarters with a white disk within a square red border at its center. Inside the white disk is a five-pointed gold star on a black map of Africa. The four quarters of the shield contain a white-tusked elephant on green; a green tree on a white background; a raised black hand, the symbol of Bokassa's Movement for the Social Evolution of Black Africa; and three diamonds against a gold field. The shield is flanked by two national flags, and the crest is illuminated by a blazing yellow sun marked with the date December 1, 1958 (the date on which Ubangi-Chari was granted self-governing status). Above the sun appears the legend *Zo kwe kox* (All men are equal) in Sango. Under the shield is a Maltese cross and a scroll containing the national motto, *Unité, dignité, travail* (Unity, dignity, labor).

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"O Central Africa, O Cradle of the Bantus"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

March 29 (anniversary of Barthélémy Boganda's death), May 14 (anniversary of the First Republic), August 13 (Independence Day), December 1 (Republic Day, National Day), various Christian festivals, including Christmas

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

August 13, 1960

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

December 5, 2004

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

The Central African Republic, a landlocked country in the heart of Africa, has an area of 622,984 sq km (240,534 sq mi), extending 1,437 km (893 mi) north to south and 772 km (480 mi) east to west. Its total international boundary of 5,232 km (3,251 mi) is shared with five countries: Cameroon (797 km; 511 mi), Republic of the Congo (467 km; 290 mi), Democratic Republic of

the Congo (1,577 km; 495 mi), Sudan (1,165 km; 724 mi), and Chad (1,197 km; 741 mi).

The country consists of a plateau with an average altitude of 600 to 700 m (1,969 to 2,297 ft). The most prominent topographical features are the Bongo Massif (1,370 m; 4,495 ft) in the northeast, the Yade Massif (1,400 m; 4,593 ft) in the northwest, and the Fertit Hills (1,280 m; 4,200 ft).

The Central African Republic is drained by two river systems, one flowing south, the other flowing

Central African Republic



north. Of those rivers flowing south, the Chinko, Mbari, Kotto, Ouaka, and Lobaye are tributaries of the Ubangi River, and the Mambere and Kadei are tributaries of the Zaire. Two northern rivers, the Ouham and the Bamingui, are tributaries of the Chari River, which drains into Lake Chad.

Geography

Area sq km: 622,984; sq mi 240,534
 World Rank: 42nd
 Land Boundaries, km: Cameroon 797; Chad 1,197; Democratic Republic of the Congo 1,577; Republic of the Congo 467; Sudan 1,165
 Coastline, km: —
 Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Oubangui River 335
 Highest: Mont Ngaoui 1,420
 Land Use %
 Arable land: 3.1
 Permanent Crops: 0.14
 Forest: 36.8
 Other: 59.96

Population of Principal Cities (2003)

Bangui	531,763
Bimbo	114,086

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Most of the country has a tropical climate, with alternate rainy seasons from May to June and October to November and dry seasons from November to May and June to October. The climate becomes Sahelian in the north, with a long, dry season lasting eight to nine months and slight and irregular rainfall. In the western highlands the climate is occasionally cool. Average temperatures at Bangui range from 21°C (70°F) to 32°C (90°F). Annual rainfall in the south is about 1,780 mm (70 in). In summer the heat is most oppressive when the country is subject to the harmattan, the hot, dry wind blowing from the Sahara.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature: 70°F to 90°F
 Average Rainfall: 70 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

The moist tropical forests in the southwestern part of the country are home to 20 primate species, including chimpanzees, the western lowland gorilla, and both the red and the black and white colobus monkeys. Additionally, the area provides habitat for elephants, bush pigs, forest hogs, buffalo, and six species of duiker. To the north the country

is largely treeless and consists of savanna with low, scrubby bushes, although forests can be found along rivers. These areas are home to numerous species of antelope as well as baboons, buffalo, elephants, and the increasingly rare black rhinoceros. Rivers provide habitat for many species of fish as well as crocodiles and hippopotamuses.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 3,799,897
 World Rank: 124th
 Density per sq km: 6.2
 % of annual growth (1999-2003): 1.4
 Male %: 49.5
 Female %: 50.5
 Urban %: 42.7
 Age Distribution: % 0-14: 42.8
 15-64: 53.8
 65 and over: 3.4
 Population 2025: 4,782,000
 Birth Rate per 1,000: 35.55
 Death Rate per 1,000: 19.99
 Rate of Natural Increase %: 1.8
 Total Fertility Rate: 4.59
 Expectation of Life (years): Males 39.7
 Females 43.08
 Marriage Rate per 1,000: —
 Divorce Rate per 1,000: —
 Average Size of Households: 4.7
 Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Central Africans belong to more than 80 ethnic groups, but three major groups account for 68 percent of the population. The largest group is Baya-Mandjia (46 percent), followed by Banda (27 percent), Sara (10 percent), Mboum (7 percent) and Mbaka (4 percent). There are three ethnic zones in the country, each with its own dominant groups. The Bantu groups Mbaka, Lissongo, and Mbimu and the Babinga live in the forest region; the Sango, Yakoma, Baniri, and Buraka live along the rivers; and the Banda, Zande, Sara, Ndle, and Bizao live in the savanna region.

The Western community in the country is estimated at 6,500, of whom 6,000 are French; the majority of the remainder are Portuguese.

LANGUAGES

French is the official language of the country, while Sango is the national language; Sango is the language of an ethnic group of the same name living in the south, and it is also used as a trade language and lingua franca for intertribal communication. French is spoken by 26 percent of the population.

RELIGIONS

Religious statistics are generally unreliable, but it is estimated that 35 percent of the population follow traditional animist beliefs, 50 percent are Christian (divided evenly between Catholicism and Protestantism), and 15 percent are Muslim.

The Roman Catholic Church, which claims some 18 percent of the population as adherents, is organized under the Archbishopric of Bangui, with eight suffragan dioceses, 25 parishes, 1,452 mission stations, and 70 clergy. There are more than 1,000 Protestant mission centers, with nearly 2,000 missionaries and pastors.

Religious Affiliations

Protestant	950,000
Traditional beliefs	1,330,000
Roman Catholic	950,000
Muslim	570,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Archaeological evidence suggests that the Central African Republic (CAR) was inhabited by a complex civilization before the rise of Egypt. However, little is known about the region and the first inhabitants, the Babinga. In the ninth and 10th centuries there was widespread immigration from Sudan and Chad. However, by the 17th century the slave trade was depopulating entire towns in the north. Slave markets in Cairo were filled with slaves from the region now known as the CAR until the late 19th century. The result of the voracious slave trade is that the area making up the CAR is one of the most lightly populated regions in Africa.

The Central African Republic was under French rule as a province of French Equatorial Africa (Afrique Equatoriale Française, AEF) from 1908 and previously as a province of the French Congo from 1901. Economic development of the country, then known as Ubangi-Shari, was modeled on the policy adopted by the Belgians in the Congo. The country was parceled out among 40 concessionaires, who were granted rights of tenure and exploitation in return for a fixed annual payment and 15 percent of the profits. This system was abandoned in the 1920s following scandals exposed by René Maran in *Batouala* and André Gide in *Voyage au Congo*. Though AEF made considerable progress in health and education during the interwar years, much of the benefits were limited to Gabon and Middle Congo. Ubangi-Shari became independent about the same time as the other constituent units of AEF in 1960.

Prior to independence, the country experienced two years of self-government under Barthélémy Boganda, founder of the Social Evolution Movement of Black

Africa (MESAN), and his nephew David Dacko, who became the nation's first president in 1960. Dacko established a one-party state in 1962. He was overthrown in 1966 by his cousin, Jean-Bédél Bokassa, commander in chief of the armed forces. Bokassa abrogated the constitution and assumed all executive power. In 1976 he announced that the republic was becoming an empire, and the following year he crowned himself emperor in a ceremony that consumed one-fourth of his poor country's income. The Bokassa regime was supported by substantial financial and military aid, particularly from France. His brutal regime was widely condemned, particularly after the role that he played in the massacre of almost 100 schoolchildren.

With the aid of the French, Dacko deposed Bokassa in 1979. Dacko, however, was unable to deal with the nation's economic problems or the political discontent they generated. He was ousted by the military under the leadership of Gen. André Kolingba in 1981. Kolingba suspended the constitution and proscribed all political parties, although political leaders retained their freedom. He ruled through a Military Committee for National Recovery (CMRN). Kolingba promised to restore civilian rule as soon as conditions were favorable. When no action was forthcoming, opposition to his regime grew. In 1984 his opponents formed a government-in-exile and in 1986 promised a return to democracy. Kolingba responded to these actions by forming a new government in 1985 in which civilians held the majority of cabinet posts.

Kolingba dissolved the CMRN in 1985 and assumed the offices of president and prime minister. He was granted a six-year term under the constitution of 1986. The new constitution established a single-party state in which the Central African Democratic Assembly was the sole legitimate party. Legislative elections were held in 1987, but turnout was low because the opposition boycotted the polls.

In October 1993, Kolingba finally held elections and was defeated by Ange-Félix Patassé. Patassé, a civilian, did not bring calm to the country. Instead he built a government stacked with his own henchmen. Violence broke out in 1996 when some elements of the armed forces challenged the government on at least four occasions.

In July 1997 the mutineers agreed to a truce, receiving amnesty and reintegration into the army in return. Soon thereafter France began withdrawing its military forces from the country, completing the process in 1998. Patassé was reelected president in the 1999 election, which the opposition claimed was rigged. In 2001 Kolingba led an abortive coup attempt, and clashes broke out later that year when the former army chief of staff François Bozizé was accused of taking part in the coup. Despite efforts in 2002 by Libyan-backed forces to subdue General Bozizé, he proceeded to seize Bangui, dissolve parliament, and

declare himself president. In 2004 a new constitution was approved in a national referendum.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1960–65	David Dacko
1965–79	Jean-Bédél Bokassa
1979–81	David Dacko
1981–93	André Kolingba
1993–2003	Ange-Félix Patassé
2003–	François Bozizé

CONSTITUTION

The constitution adopted in November 1986 was a revised version of the constitution that was suspended in 1981. A new constitution was promulgated on December 29, 1994, and adopted on January 7, 1995. Yet another constitution was approved by national referendum in 2004. Under the constitution, executive power is vested in a president elected for a six-year term. The prime minister is appointed by the president. Legislative power is in the hands of a unicameral national assembly, whose 109 members are elected by popular vote to serve five-year terms. Although the constitution provides for separation of powers, the legislature is vulnerable to manipulation by the president, who dominates the government. The president can veto legislation, although two-thirds of the unicameral legislature can override his veto, and can rule by decree under special conditions. The constitution provides for an independent judiciary.

PARLIAMENT

Legislative power is vested in a unicameral parliament. The 109-member National Assembly is elected by direct universal suffrage for a five-year term. The National Assembly meets twice a year at the summons of the president. The National Assembly is advised by the Economic and Regional Council, an appointed body serving a five-year term. One-half of its members are elected by the National Assembly, and the other half are appointed by the president. When the two bodies sit together they are called the Congress.

POLITICAL PARTIES

A total of 11 different political parties hold seats in the current National Assembly. The range of political ideology runs the gamut from left to right; parties also have a tendency to take on a political cult of personality. The strongest parties include the Movement for the Libera-

tion of the Central African People (MLPC—the party of the deposed president Patassé), the Central African Democratic Assembly (RDC), and the Movement for Democracy and Development (MDD).

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For purposes of local administration the republic is divided into 16 prefectures, 69 subprefectures, and 167 rural communes.

There are popular representative institutions at each level: prefectural councils, subprefectural councils, and municipal councils. Eight urban communes have full powers, and there are elected municipal councils at Bangui, Berberati, Bossangoa, Bambari, Bangassou, Bouar, and M'Baiki. Bangui also has a nominated mayor.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The highest judicial organ in the land is the Supreme Court, with three chambers: judicial, administrative, and accounts. It acts as a court of cassation in civil and penal cases and as a court of appeal in administrative cases. Subordinate courts include a criminal court in Bangui, seven civil courts (one in Bangui and six in other population centers), and justices of the peace in smaller population centers. The judiciary, like other branches of the government, is subject to the whims and dictates of the president.

Under local law political detainees can be held without charge for as long as two months, but at that point they must either be formally charged or released. If a suspect is charged, local judicial procedures (which are modeled on French procedures) allow for open-ended preventive detention while the public prosecutor prepares the state's case against the accused.

In most common criminal cases, the government permits the French-modeled legal procedures to be applied fairly and openly and the laws to be executed properly. Within this framework Kolingba granted amnesty to about 100 petty criminals in September 1984. The courts are clearly dependent on the president.

A second tribunal comprising civilian magistrates and military advisers adjudicates political crimes. The special tribunal differs from ordinary courts in that there is no appeal except for the possibility of presidential clemency, and it can try a case only after being authorized by the president.

HUMAN RIGHTS

In terms of civil and political rights, the Central African Republic is classified as a country that is not free. The Central African Republic is still recovering

from the 13 years of Bokassa's dictatorship. General Kolingba's efforts to reconstitute the country's political and judicial institutions were generally cautious and tentative, while General Bozizé has held reconciliation conferences to try to quell dissent and rebellion in the country. Several individuals closely connected with the Bokassa regime were imprisoned for over a year after the coup that overthrew him, but they were later tried and either sentenced or freed. Some of the verdicts were overturned by the Supreme Court because of judicial irregularities or errors in the initial proceedings. Mass media are extremely limited, and broadcast media are controlled by the government. There is no evidence of censorship.

FOREIGN POLICY

As a member of the French Community, CAR has retained close ties with France. A defense pact between the two states permits French intervention in times of crisis, and this clause was invoked against Bokassa and again in 1996 in defense of the government of Patassé. The civil war in neighboring Chad was the principal concern in foreign relations for two decades, and it prompted a rupture of diplomatic relations with Libya, which lasted until 1995. Similarly, the civil war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo spilled over into CAR, and fighting was reported along the border. In 1998 the two countries signed a defense pact, and CAR was reported to be supporting the Kabila regime. In 2004 CAR continued to deal with large numbers of refugees fleeing violence in Sudan, Chad, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

DEFENSE

The defense structure is headed by the president, who is also the supreme commander of the armed forces. The line of command runs through the minister of defense to the unit commanders.

Military manpower is provided by voluntary enlistment. The total strength of the armed forces as of 2001 was estimated at 3,000. Additional troops are members of paramilitary units.

The Central African Republic has no military capability other than for internal peacekeeping. Defense of the realm is guaranteed by a 1960 agreement with France, which also provides for military assistance in quelling internal revolts, base rights, and transit and overflight privileges. French officers are temporarily assigned as instructors and advisers, and French garrisons, numbering 1,100 troops, are stationed in Bangui and Bouar. In 2003 the country spent \$14.5 million, or about 1.1 percent of gross domestic product (GDP), on defense.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 3,000
 Military Manpower Availability: 878,980
 Military Expenditures \$million: 14.5
 as % of GDP: 1.1
 as % of central government expenditures: —
 Arms Imports \$: —
 Arms Exports \$: —

ECONOMY

Subsistence agriculture, together with forestry, remains the backbone of the economy of the Central African Republic (CAR), with more than 70 percent of the population living in outlying areas. The agricultural sector generates half of GDP. Timber has accounted for about 16 percent of export earnings and the diamond industry for nearly 54 percent. Important constraints to economic development include the CAR's landlocked position, a poor transportation system, a largely unskilled workforce, and a legacy of misdirected macroeconomic policies. The 50 percent devaluation of the currencies of 14 francophone African nations on January 12, 1994, had mixed effects on the CAR's economy. Diamond, timber, coffee, and cotton exports increased, leading to estimated rises in GDP of 7 percent in 1994 and nearly 5 percent in 1995. Military rebellions and social unrest in 1996, on the other hand, were accompanied by widespread destruction of property and a drop in GDP of 2 percent. Ongoing violence between the government and rebel military groups over pay issues, living conditions, and political representation has destroyed many businesses in the capital and reduced tax revenues for the government. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) approved an Extended Structure Adjustment Facility in 1998, and the World Bank extended further credits in 1999 and approved a \$10 million loan in early 2001. As of January 2001 many civil servants were owed as much as 30 months' pay, leading them to go on strike, which further damaged the economy. The government set targets of 3.5 percent GDP growth in 2001 and 2002, but in 2003 the economy actually contracted by 7 percent, and it was predicted to contract even further in 2004.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 4.183
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 1,100
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: –0.1
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: –1.6
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 55
 Industry: 20
 Services: 25

Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:

Private Consumption: 89
 Government Consumption: 4
 Gross Domestic Investment: —

Foreign Trade \$million: Exports: 172

Imports: 136

% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 0.7

% of Income Received by Richest 10%: 47.7

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
103.4	101.9	105.2	108.8	112.4

Finance

National Currency: CFA Franc (XAF)

Exchange Rate: \$1 = XAF 581.2

Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 85.44

Central Bank Discount Rate %: 6.0

Total External Debt \$million: 881.4

Debt Service Ratio %: —

Balance of Payments \$million: —

International Reserves SDRs \$million: 132

Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
3.6

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 59.8

per capita \$: 16

Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 4.3

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year

Revenues \$million: —

Expenditures \$million: —

Budget Deficit \$million: —

Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 55

Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 4.5

Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares: —

Irrigation, % of Farms having: —

Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 0.3

Total Farmland as % of land area: 3.1

Livestock: Cattle 000: 3,423

Sheep 000: 259

Hogs 000: 805

Chickens 000: 4,769

Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 3.06

Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 15

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 81.34

Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 3.0

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of

oil equivalent 000: 7

Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of

oil equivalent 000: 98

Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 26

Net Energy Imports % of use: —

Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: 43

Production kW-hr million: 106

Consumption kW-hr million: 98.63

Coal Reserves tons: —

Production tons: —

Consumption tons: —

Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic meters: —

Production cubic meters: —

Consumption cubic meters: —

Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels: —

Production barrels 000 per day: —

Consumption barrels 000 per day: 2.4

Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$million: 136

Exports \$million: 172

Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (2003): 16.2

Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (2003): 4.7

Balance of Trade \$: —

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
France %	27.0	7.4
Cameroon %	9.2	—
United States %	5.3	—
Belgium %	—	41.8
Italy %	—	10.7
Spain %	—	9.8
Indonesia %	—	6.6

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 23,810

Paved %: 2.7

Automobiles: 5,300

Trucks and Buses: 6,300

Railroad: Track Length km: —

Passenger-km: —

Freight-km: —

Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: —

Total Deadweight Tonnage: —

Airports: 50

Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 130

Length of Waterways km: 2,800

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 10

Number of Tourists from 000: —

Tourist Receipts \$million: —

Tourist Expenditures \$million: —

Communications

Telephones 000: 9
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.43
 Cellular Telephones 000: 13
 Personal Computers 000: 8
 Internet Hosts per million people: 2
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 1

ENVIRONMENT

The environmental status of the Central African Republic is a case study in problems and potentials. The problems are exacerbated by gaps in legislation, poaching (illegal wildlife traders and armed gangs from the Sudan), agricultural practices that impoverish the soil and cause erosion, a forestry code that does not provide for rational forest management, and a lack of environmental legislation. On the other hand, the country has considerable agricultural potential and mineral resources (especially diamonds and gold), along with an extensive protected areas system and strong potential for sustainable forest production.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 36.8
 Average Annual Forest Change, 1990-2000, 000 ha: -30
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 17
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 0.07

LIVING CONDITIONS

Among the poorest countries of Africa, the CAR has a low standard of living. Most people live in huts constructed of mud bricks and thatched roofs, and they do without electricity and clean running water, with latrines frequently placed too close to streams or wells. Many people sleep on mats laid on dirt floors. Houses often have to be rebuilt because of termite damage. In urban centers, which are more like collections of villages, homes made of cement blocks with cement floors and metal roofs are more common. During much of the year people essentially live outdoors, cooking food on a hearth in front of the dwelling. The nation has only about 640 km of paved road; the remaining 23,000 kilometers of road are unpaved, and during the rainy seasons they often become impassable. Few people own cars, so most rely on overcrowded and unreliable bush taxis for transportation—on which they often meet with highway bandits who blockade the road and demand payment for passage.

HEALTH

Health conditions in the CAR, where per capita spending on health care is just \$12 per year, are generally poor.

Life expectancy at birth is only about 41 years, and the infant mortality rate is a high 92 per 1,000 live births. In 2003, 23,000 people died of AIDS, and 13.5 percent of the adult population lives with the disease. Poor sanitation contributes to a high death rate from such diseases as malaria (about 2,200 cases per 100,000 population) and meningitis. Many children go barefoot, contracting parasites from animal waste, especially that of pigs. The only hospital is in Bangui, though small mission-operated clinics can be found throughout the country. Many people rely on traditional medicine and sorcery to deal with health problems.

Health

Number of Physicians: 117
 Number of Dentists: 7
 Number of Nurses: 295
 Number of Pharmacists: 26
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 3.5
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 92.15
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 1,100
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 4.5
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 12
 HIV Infected % of adults: 13.5
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 40
 Measles: 35
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 27
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 75

FOOD AND NUTRITION

The primary staple of the CAR is cassava, which has to be soaked for up to three days to leach out naturally occurring cyanide. After the root has been soaked, it is cut in pieces, dried, ground into a flour, and finally mixed with boiling water to make a paste called *gozo*. The *gozo* is served with a sauce that contains vegetable, fish, or meat and is often thickened with peanut butter. Mushrooms, tomatoes, garlic, and onions are common ingredients. In rural areas, major food items also include bananas, plantains, and various wild plants. Bush meat, including monkey and elephant, is also eaten, as are chicken and goat. Fruits include mangoes, pineapples, guava, bananas, and oranges. Typically, there is only one main meal eaten, at midday, with leftovers eaten in the evening and the next morning.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 42.6
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 1,950
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 56.1
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 70.7

STATUS OF WOMEN

Women are generally accorded a lower status than men in the Central African Republic. Women's work at home and in the fields prevents many of them from receiving an education. Polygamy is common, but the legal system and traditional practice support the rights of wives and all children of such marriages. A national women's organization is supported by the government. Only 6 of the 96 members of Bozize's National Transitional Council were women. Civil strife has left many women, especially displaced women, vulnerable to abduction and rape.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 6.3
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 0.67
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: —

WORK

No meaningful figures exist for the size of the CAR's labor force, for the vast majority of people scratch out livings as subsistence farmers, often growing only enough for their own needs and to sell a small surplus at markets, providing money to buy such necessities as cloth and soap. A few farmers grow and sell cash crops, including cotton, coffee, tobacco, yams, millet, corn, bananas, and timber. Agriculture contributes about 55 percent of the nation's GDP; about 20 percent comes from industry, including diamond mining, logging, brewing, textiles, footwear, and bicycle and motorcycle assembly. Per capita GDP in 2003 was about \$1,100.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: —
 Female Participation Rate %: —
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: —
 Industry: —
 Services: —
 Unemployment %: 8

EDUCATION

Education is free, universal, and compulsory, in principle, for eight years, from ages six to 14.

Schooling consists of six years of primary school, four years of middle school, and three years of secondary school, for a total of 13 years. Upon completion of the secondary-school program, students are awarded a baccalaureate. The curricula are based on those of France,

and Africanization has received a low priority. A few mission schools run by religious groups continue to operate within the school system.

The academic year runs from October to June. The medium of instruction is French, but the national language, Sango, is taught at all levels. The literacy rate is only 51 percent for adults. Adult education is provided by mobile teams.

The country's sole university is the National University. Specialized institutions include a national administration college, technical and agricultural colleges, and schools of nursing and forestry.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 51.0
 Male %: 63.3
 Female %: 39.9
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: —
 First Level: Primary schools: 930
 Teachers: —
 Students: 414,537
 Student-Teacher Ratio: —
 Net Enrollment Ratio: —
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 46
 Teachers: —
 Students: 66,492
 Student-Teacher Ratio: —
 Net Enrollment Ratio: —
 Third Level: Institutions: 1
 Teachers: 325
 Students: 6,323
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 1.9
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: —

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

As a poor nation, the CAR supports little scientific research and technological development. There are three government agencies that support limited research in agriculture, including cotton, fruit crops, soil conditions, and forestry. The university in Bangui, too, supports some agricultural research, but the number of people employed, both at the university and in government, is quite small.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million persons: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$: —
 Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

The CAR has six privately owned newspapers and a government-run biweekly, the *Centrafrique-Presse*. Circu-

lations are very small, with few people able to afford a newspaper and literacy rates low. None of the periodicals published in the country enjoys a circulation of more than a few hundred. The media are under the control and supervision of the state, though the private newspapers criticize the government.

The national news agency is Agence Centrafricaine de Presse (ACAP), founded in 1974 through the nationalization of the French news agency AFP. Only Tass maintains a bureau in Bangui.

The official broadcasting organizations, Télévision Centrafricaine (TVCA) and Radio Centrafrique, broadcast home services in both French and Sango. Additional radio broadcasting is supported by the United Nations, the Catholic Church, and one private radio station.

Television broadcasts began in 1974.

Media

Newspapers and Periodicals: —
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: —
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets 000: 20
 per 1,000: 6

CULTURE

The most prominent forms of cultural expression in the CAR are music and dance, much of it reflecting traditional cultural beliefs. Through music and dance, people remain in contact with the world of the spirits, and certain songs and dances are performed only in connection with certain events, such as funerals or religious holidays. Much of this music has been incorporated into Christian worship. The most common instrument is the conga drum, which is made of a hollowed-out log with leather stretched across it; some are quite large and can be heard over long distances. In premodern times these drums were used as a form of communication from village to village. Today, modern Western-influenced music can be heard throughout the country, including rap, hip-hop, and reggae.

Other forms of cultural expression are folk arts and crafts, including weaving, pottery, ebony carving, and even hair braiding, which can become quite elaborate and take many hours to complete. In the savanna, where grasses grow to great lengths, basket and mat weaving are common.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 6
 Volumes: 51,000
 Registered borrowers: 1,500

Museums Number: 7
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

The Central African Republic is a nation consisting of some 40 ethnic groups, and each group has its own tradition of oral folklore. Nevertheless, as the CAR forged a national identity and Sango became the lingua franca, a body of national folklore has emerged. One of the main figures is Tere, a trickster who outwits his adversaries with cunning and supernatural powers. Traditionally, oral folklore was transmitted by the older generation around a fire, but today many of these stories are broadcast on television and radio, and they serve to educate the young in moral and social lessons, often to the accompaniment of songs.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Despite the lack of electricity in some areas, television watching has grown in popularity. Often, a person who is fortunate enough to own a television set will place it outdoors so that friends and neighbors can gather round and watch American and Chinese action movies. In rural areas televisions are powered by generators, and people watch videos. Singing and dancing are also popular forms of entertainment. Even in small villages, people find cement dance floors and dance to music played over the radio or cassette tapes. Sports also provide entertainment, as people attend not only to watch soccer games but also to socialize as their children play nearby. Many of these games take on the air of festivals, as local dignitaries attend and street vendors sell food. Another common form of entertainment is the spontaneous visiting of friends and family, particularly on Sunday afternoons and holidays.

ETIQUETTE

Of central importance in Central African society are rituals associated with greetings and leave takings. In the morning it is customary to shake the hand of each family member and inquire how he or she slept. A person approaching a group is expected to greet and shake hands with the person in the group who enjoys the highest status (for example, the oldest person, or a dignitary), then greet each other member of the group. At leave taking, again a handshake is customary, and among friends the

handshake is followed by a finger snap. In the CAR, hand gestures often have particular meanings. For example, different hand gestures are used to indicate the height of an animal versus that of a person, and to use the animal gesture when referring to a person would be regarded as ill mannered.

FAMILY LIFE

A household unit consists not only of the husband, wife, and their children, but often of one of the parents' siblings, such as a younger sister of the wife and possibly her children. Accordingly, children are raised by an extended family, and cousins who live together are treated as siblings. Many "marriages" in the CAR are never formalized, and even the number of Christian unions has fallen. An arrangement is worked out between the parties' families, usually involving a bride-price ranging from a few head of livestock to larger amounts of money, and the man is often expected to work for the bride's family for a period of years. Divorce involves the man moving the wife's belongings outside and locking the door.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Clothing is a blend of Western-style and traditional dress. It can be a symbol of wealth, and many people covet clothing from England and Holland, particularly for more formal occasions. Men avoid wearing shorts, which they associate not only with children but also with European colonists. Poorer people can buy European or American secondhand garments in street markets. Traditional clothing in the CAR was made of bark from rainforest trees, which was pounded until it became soft. More recently, most people wear garments made of cotton, usually dyed or embroidered with colorful African patterns. Many women wear the *pagne*, a piece of fabric tied around the waist, along with a matching blouse made of the same material.

SPORTS

Central Africans are passionate about two sports: basketball and soccer. Many people play basketball on courts that were built in the 1970s by Peace Corps workers, and talented players can attend a training center in Bangui. In 1988 the nation shocked the sports world by winning the African championship. Nearly every town in the CAR supports a soccer team, and back-to-back Sunday afternoon soccer games are common festive events.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1958** Ubangi-Shari votes to become an autonomous republic within the French Community under the name Central African Republic. Barthélémy Boganda is selected as the first prime minister.
- 1959** Boganda dies in an air crash and is succeeded in office by his nephew David Dacko.
- 1960** Central African Republic achieves full independence with Dacko as president. Republic's first constitution is promulgated.
- 1962** The constitution is amended to establish Social Evolution Movement of Black Africa as the sole legal political party in the country.
- 1966** In a swift and bloodless coup Dacko is ousted by the army's commander in chief, Jean-Bédel Bokassa. National Assembly and constitution are suspended. Relations with People's Republic of China are broken.
- 1968** The Central African Republic leaves Union Douanière et Economique de l'Afrique Centrale (UDEAC) and joins with Chad and Zaire in a new grouping called Union des États de l'Afrique Centrale but later returns to the UDEAC fold.
- 1969** Col. Alexandre Banza, a presidential associate, is implicated in an anti-Bokassa plot and is arrested and executed.
- 1972** Bokassa names himself president for life and marshal of the republic.
- 1973** The Central African Republic begins dialogue with South Africa.
- 1974** Bokassa begins a campaign against French influence; sale of French newspapers is forbidden; French consulate general is closed down; French businesses are nationalized.
- 1975** Following the visit of French president Valéry Giscard d'Estaing for a Franco-African summit, good relations are restored with France. Elisabeth Domitien is named as the Bokassa regime's first prime minister.
- 1976** Domitien is replaced by Ange Patassé as prime minister. Bokassa survives attempt on his life at Bangui airport. Bokassa renames the country the Central African Empire and proclaims himself emperor.
- 1977** Jonathan Randal and Michael Goldsmith, correspondents for the Washington Post and the Associated Press, respectively, are arrested and detained on charges of espionage and defamation of the emperor; Goldsmith is beaten un-

- conscious by the emperor and his courtiers and is imprisoned for a month.
- Bokassa holds coronation with pomp and circumstance, demonstrating his absolute hold over the country.
- 1978** Henri Maldou is named prime minister in place of Ange Patassé.
- 1979** Students riot in Bangui; Central African Empire ambassador to France resigns in the wake of mounting allegations of cruelty and brutality against the Bokassa regime; Bokassa is charged with the massacre of students; Bokassa is overthrown in a swift coup in which French troops play a prominent role; David Dacko is installed as president as the republic is reestablished; Bokassa, denied asylum in France, is granted such in Côte d'Ivoire.
- 1980** Central African Republic breaks diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union and Libya. A new constitution for a multiparty system is approved by referendum. Dacko wins presidential election and is sworn in for a six-year term. Following accusations of electoral malpractice, rioting breaks out in Bangui and three people are killed in a bomb attack on a Bangui cinema; state of siege is declared. In a bloodless coup, President Dacko is ousted by an army group under General André Dieudonné Kolingba, who sets up the Military Committee for National Recovery (CMRN) as the supreme organ of government.
- 1982** Ange Patassé, leader of the banned Movement for the Liberation of the Central African People (Mouvement pour la Libération du Peuple Centrafricain), is implicated in an unsuccessful coup attempt. Patassé seeks asylum in the French embassy in Bangui, from where he is exiled.
- 1983** The three main opposition parties form a united opposition movement.
- 1984** President Kolingba announces amnesty for the leaders of banned political parties who had been under house arrest. Opposition leaders form a government-in-exile.
- 1985** President Kolingba gives civilians a majority of the portfolios in a new government formed in September.
- 1986** A new constitution provides for the establishment of the Rassemblement Démocratique Centrafricain as the sole political party and confers strong executive powers on the president. Bokassa returns from exile and is immediately arrested.
- 1987** The nation holds its first legislative elections in 20 years. Bokassa is convicted on charges of murder, illegal detention of prisoners, and embezzlement and is sentenced to death.
- 1988** Diplomatic relations with the USSR, suspended since 1980, are resumed. President Kolingba commutes Bokassa's sentence to one of life imprisonment at hard labor.
- 1989** The Central African Republic recognizes the Palestine Liberation Organization's declaration of an independent state of Palestine and reestablishes diplomatic relations with Israel.
- 1991** Political parties are legalized.
- 1993** Ange Félix Patassé is elected president and begins reforms to lessen the army's control of the country.
- 1996** Mutiny in the army leads to a French-brokered settlement between mutineers and President Patassé. The French twice send troops in an attempt to keep peace.
- 1997** United Nations sends peacekeeping troops to the country to stem further violence by army mutineers.
- 1999** Patassé is reelected.
- 2000** Civil servants strike over back pay; the coordinated protest of 15 opposition groups deteriorates into riots.
- 2001** Kolingba leads an abortive coup attempt; armed clashes break out when former army chief of staff François Bozizé is accused of taking part in the coup.
- 2002** Libyan-backed forces try to subdue Bozizé, who seizes Bangui, dissolves parliament, and declares himself president.
- 2004** A new constitution is approved in a national referendum.
- 2005** Bozizé is declared president after run-off elections.

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- Central African Republic.** *Annuaire statistique; Central African Republic—Recent Economic Developments* (IMF Staff Country Report), 2004; *Recensement général de la population, 1991*

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- African Studies Center, University of Pennsylvania
http://www.sas.upenn.edu/African_Studies/Country_Specific/CAR.html

CHAD

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Chad (République du Tchad; Jumhuriyat Tashad)

ABBREVIATION

TD

CAPITAL

N'Djamena

HEAD OF STATE

President Idriss Déby (from 1990)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Pascal Yoadimnadj (from 2005)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Republic

POPULATION

9,826,419 (2005)

AREA

1,284,000 sq km (495,752 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Arabs, Sara

LANGUAGES

Arabic, French

RELIGIONS

Islam, animism, Christianity

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Coopération financière en Afrique centrale franc

NATIONAL FLAG

A tricolor of blue, yellow, and red bands, from left to right

NATIONAL EMBLEM

The main elements of the national emblem are a mountain goat and a lion rampant holding a shield with serrated bands of yellow and black, with the national motto underneath in French: *Unité, travail, progrès* (Unity, work, progress)

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Chadians, Up and to Work”

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day), May 1 (Labor Day), May 25 (Liberation of Africa Day), August 11 (Independence Day), November 28 (Proclamation of the Republic), various Christian festivals, including Ascension, Whitmonday, Easter Monday, Assumption, All Saints' Day, and Christmas, various Islamic festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

August 11, 1960

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

March 31, 1995 (adopted 1996)

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Chad, a landlocked country in north-central Africa, extends 1,765 km (1,097 mi) north to south and 1,030 km (640 mi) east to west. It covers an area of 1,284,000 sq km (495,752 sq mi).

Chad's total international border of 5,968 km (3,708 mi) is shared with six countries: Libya (1,055 km; 655 mi), Sudan (1,360 km; 845 mi), Central African Republic (1,197 km; 745 mi), Cameroon (1,094 km; 679 mi), Nigeria (87 km; 55 mi), and Niger (1,175 km; 730 mi).

The main feature of Chad is the broad, shallow central bowl of Lake Chad in the southern and southwestern half of the country. From the lake area and the central plains the land gradually rises to plateaus to the south, of which the Guera Massif (1,500 m; 4,900 ft) represents the highest point. To the north the basin rises to the clay plateau of the Ennedi and the volcanic Tibesti Range, whose highest point, Emi Koussi, rises to 3,415 m (11,204 ft). To the east the Ouaddai Range divides Chad from the Nile River drainage system. In the basin itself there are a few low mountains, such as Madjer El Hamis and Fianga-Moita.

Chad



Geography

Area sq km: 1,284,000; sq mi 495,752
 World Rank: 20th
 Land Boundaries, km: Cameroon 1,094; Central African Republic 1,197; Libya 1,055; Niger 1,175; Nigeria 87; Sudan 1,360
 Coastline, km: 0
 Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Djourab Depression 160
 Highest: Emi Koussi 3,415
 Land Use %
 Arable land: 2.9
 Permanent Crops: 0.0
 Forest: 10.1
 Other: 87.0

Population of Principal Cities (1993)

Moundou	99,530
N'Djamena	530,965

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Chad has three climatic zones: the Guinean or subtropical zone within the equatorial rain belt, the Sahelian central zone, and the northern Saharan zone. The subtropical zone has a long rainy season, from May to November, with annual rainfall between 900 and 1,200 mm (35 and 47 in), and a dry season lasting the other five to six months. The Sahelian zone has a longer dry season, of seven to eight months, and rainfall of 500 to 900 mm (20 to 35 in). The Saharan zone has a dry season of at least nine months and erratic rainfall, between 200 and 500 mm (8 and 20 in). The northernmost areas have a true desert climate, with rainfall below 200 mm (8 in) and temperatures of up to 40°C (104°F). The minimum temperature drops to 0°C (32°F) in December.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature
 Summer: 104°F
 Winter: 32°F
 Average Rainfall
 Subtropical Zone: 35 in to 47 in
 Sahelian Zone: 20 in to 35 in
 Saharan Zone: 8 in to 20 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Chad has three vegetation zones, each associated with the amount of rainfall received. In the tropical zone to the south can be found tall grasses, shrubs, and some broad-leaved deciduous trees. The middle third of the country is a semiarid tropical zone in which savanna grasses gradually merge into an open steppe area with extensive

thorn bushes. The northern region of the country is hot and arid desert, with little vegetation other than the occasional cluster of palms. The nation's most abundant wildlife is found in the savanna zone, which is home to cheetahs, leopards, lions, warthogs, giraffes, antelopes, rhinoceroses, elephants, and hippopotamuses as well as an abundance of birds and reptiles.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 9,826,419
 World Rank: 82nd
 Density per sq km: 6.8
 % of annual growth (1999-2003): 3.0
 Male %: 48.7
 Female %: 51.3
 Urban %: 25.0
 Age Distribution %: 0-14: 47.9
 15-64: 49.3
 65 and over: 2.8
 Population 2025: 16,659,000
 Birth Rate per 1,000: 46.5
 Death Rate per 1,000: 16.38
 Rate of Natural Increase %: 3.2
 Total Fertility Rate: 6.38
 Expectation of Life (years): Males 46.91
 Females 49.63
 Marriage Rate per 1,000: —
 Divorce Rate per 1,000: —
 Average Size of Households: 3.9
 Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

The people of Chad are broadly divided into the Arab and Arabized northern groups and the pagan, or *kirdi*, groups of the south. The Arabs and Arabized people form a relatively homogeneous cultural, religious, linguistic, and geographic group. The indigenous inhabitants of the south form a mosaic of extensive variety and number, consisting of some 200 distinct ethnic groups. No single group forms a majority in any region, with the largest group, the Sara, constituting only 24 percent of the population. The ethnic composition has been altered over the years through invasions, migrations, warfare, intermarriage, slave raids, and epidemics.

An estimated 1,000 French live in Chad, constituting the major foreign community. There is no overt hostility toward foreigners in the south, but few Westerners venture into the north.

LANGUAGES

Arabic and French are Chad's official languages, though French is understood and spoken by only 30 percent of

literate Chadians. No one language is spoken or understood by all Chadians. The language of northern and central Chad is Turku, a form of pidgin Arabic sometimes called Chadian Arabic. Sara is widely spoken in the south. The smaller dialects and languages are becoming extinct as the need for intertribal communication increases.

RELIGIONS

About 51 percent of the people are Muslims, mostly the northern and central tribes. Another 7 percent adhere to traditional African religions, generally referred to as animism. Christianity, followed by about 35 percent of Chadians, is strongest among the Sara. There is a Roman Catholic archdiocese at N'Djamena, with three suffragan dioceses. Christian churches came into conflict with former president N'garta Tombalbaye's authenticity campaign in the early 1970s.

Islam, Christianity, and animism are all freely practiced. The country has remained multireligious despite domestic and foreign pressures in favor of Islam.

Religious Affiliations

Muslim	5,011,500
Christian	3,439,200
Animist	687,900
Other	687,900

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

More than 2,500 years ago the region had abundant water from Lake Chad. That resource has dwindled over the years. However, in the eighth and ninth centuries people were migrating from the Nile River valley, and the state of Kanem was founded. The kingdom lasted more than 1,000 years and was marked by its extensive trade in salt, copper, gold, and slaves. By the 13th century inhabitants of the region had adopted Islam. In 1812 the kingdom collapsed when the capital was attacked by the Fulani people.

Chad came under French rule in 1900 as part of French Equatorial Africa. The pacification of various Chadian areas, however, was not completed until 1915, and it was not until 1920 that an effective administrative system was established. The degree of French control was greatest in the south and nominal in the north. The extension of the French legal and administrative system was slow and halting because of the lack of French administrators willing to serve in Chad. The main legacy of French rule was the transfer of effective political power from the Muslim north to the animist and Christian south. The southerners, who were deeply influenced by French institutions and who readily availed themselves of the new opportunities for advancement that French cul-

ture offered, have retained the French political and economic system almost intact since gaining independence on August 11, 1960.

Chad's political history has been marked by divisions based on ethnic, religious, and geographic lines, with the Arabic Muslims in the north traditionally in conflict with the black animists and Christians of the south. The governing elite have traditionally been drawn from the south, with the northern groups excluded. Unable to gain a role in national political life, in 1958 northerners launched a struggle that resulted in an ongoing civil war. Although nominally a republic, Chad has operated throughout most of its independent nationhood as a dictatorship.

Chad was made an autonomous state within the French community in November 1958. The following year François (later N'garta) Tombalbaye, a Christian from the south and the leader of the majority Parti Progressiste Tchadien (PPT), assumed the position of prime minister. With the exception of the northern province of Bourkou-Ennedi-Tibesti (BET), which remained under French control, the nation became independent in 1960, with Tombalbaye as president. Chad became a one-party state prior to the adoption of the constitution in 1962.

Tombalbaye's government faced civil disturbances in 1963 and outright rebellion in 1965 when the French ended their administration of BET. The Front de Libération Nationale de Tchad (FROLINAT), with covert support from Libya, which had historic ties to the northern region, led the rebellion. French military intervention in 1968 put a temporary end to the revolt, but despite Tombalbaye's attempts at reconciliation, disturbances continued. Resistance culminated in an attempted coup by FROLINAT in 1971, reportedly with Libya's backing. In another effort to consolidate his political power, Tombalbaye, in 1973, formed a new political party, the Mouvement National pour la Révolution Culturelle et Sociale (MNRCS), which replaced the PPT.

Tombalbaye was killed during an army coup in 1975 that brought the former army chief of staff, Félix Malloum, to power. Malloum dissolved the MNRCS and ruled through a newly instituted Supreme Military Council. FROLINAT, with support from Libya, occupied the Aozou Strip in the north and continued to oppose the government.

Temporary infighting in FROLINAT between the People's Armed Forces (FAP), led by Goukouni Oueddei, and the Armed Forces of the North (FAN), loyal to Hissène Habré, temporarily weakened the party. However, by 1977 forces under Oueddei had captured much of the BET. In an effort to curb the rebellion by including factions from FROLINAT in government, Malloum appointed Habré, a Muslim from the BET, as prime minister. Nevertheless, Oueddei continued his advance on the capital, and French intervention was necessary to prevent a takeover.

In 1978 a serious rift between Habré and Malloum led to a breakdown in central authority. A three-way civil war erupted between supporters of Habré, Malloum, and Oueddei, and rebellion also broke out in the south. French troops intervened in 1978 and 1979. External attempts by the French, Libyans, Nigerians, and Algerians to find a solution failed. A series of shaky coalition governments were formed, but the government was dominated by rivalry between Oueddei and Habré. Initially, Oueddei, with Libyan support, controlled the capital, but by 1982 N'Djamena was under Habré's control. Oueddei reestablished his forces in the north and the following year led a major offensive against Habré. In 1983 France intervened in the armed conflict and declared the 15th parallel a line of interdiction between the warring factions. Further fighting forced the French to move the line to the 16th parallel.

The military situation eased in 1984, although there were reports of continued fighting in the south. In an effort to win over the region, Habré formed the Union Nationale pour l'Indépendance et la Révolution (UNIR) and carried out a major government reorganization in which a number of leading southerners were included. At the same time he carried out a major offensive that pushed many of the rebels into the Central African Republic.

In September 1987 a cease-fire was established, bringing the war to an end. The following year Chad and Libya agreed to reestablish diplomatic relations broken off in 1982 and to settle the Aozou question peacefully. Habré was overthrown in a military coup on December 1, 1990. The rebel leader Idriss Déby, a renegade general and former aide of Habré, declared himself president on December 4 and promised a multiparty democracy. Habré fled to Senegal, where he now remains in exile, but in early 1992 he made a foray back into Chad, capturing two towns near Lake Chad before government troops and French paratroopers drove him back. The years 1992–93 saw five attempted coups and numerous government crackdowns. President Déby brought some order to the country but at a high cost in terms of civil rights and government-sanctioned killing.

The Higher Transitional Council approved a new electoral code and draft constitution in 1995. A constitutional referendum was conducted in March 1996. A new constitution was approved by 63.5 percent of voters. Not surprisingly the no vote was heaviest in the south, which had preferred a federal status that gave the region substantial autonomy. As provided in the new constitution, presidential and legislative elections were held the following year. With 15 candidates contesting the first round of presidential voting, Déby obtained 43.9 percent of the vote. In the runoff Déby was reelected to another term with 69.1 percent of the vote. Nassour Ouaidou Guelenouksia was named prime minister, succeeding veteran politician Djimasta Koibla.

In 1998 the Movement for Democracy and Justice in Chad (MDJT), led by the former defense minister Youssouf Togoimi, began an armed rebellion against the government, in 2000 claiming that it had captured the garrison town of Bardai in the north. Déby was reelected in May 2001. In early 2002 Libya brokered a peace agreement between the government and the MDJT, but just months later fighting broke out in the far north. In 2003 the government signed a peace agreement with National Resistance Army rebels in the east, as well as another agreement with MDJT, but hard-liners maintained opposition. The nation's problems worsened in early 2004 as thousands of Sudanese refugees fleeing the fighting in the Darfur region of Sudan arrived in Chad, and border fighting broke out between Chad and pro-Sudanese militias. In 2005 Pascal Yoadimnadjé was appointed prime minister.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1960–75	N'garta Tombalbaye
1975–79	Félix Malloum
1979–82	Goukouni Oueddei
1982–90	Hissène Habré
1990–	Idriss Déby

CONSTITUTION

The Constitution of 1962 was suspended in 1975. In March 1991 Idriss Déby declared himself president and ruled the country almost single-handedly. A new constitution was adopted in 1996 that declared Chad a unitary state to be headed by a president. It also provided for a National Assembly consisting of 125—now 155—members elected for four-year terms. In 2004 the constitution was amended to allow Déby to run for a third term in 2006.

PARLIAMENT

The National Assembly was dissolved in 1975 following the coup. Traditionally, it had enjoyed little power. A 30-member Conseil National Consultatif was formed in 1982. It was made up of two representatives from each of Chad's prefectures plus two representatives from the capital, N'Djamena. The president appointed all members of the council. The National Assembly was reinstated in 1997 after the new constitution was formed.

POLITICAL PARTIES

By mid-1996 Chad had about 60 political parties. The following are the most prominent in the new National

Assembly: the Patriotic Salvation Movement (MPS), which was originally in opposition but is now in power, with 110 seats and the presidency; the National Union for Development and Renewal (UNDR), with 3 seats; Rally for Democracy and Progress (RDP), with 12 seats; Union for Renewal and Democracy (URD), with 5 seats; and the Federation Action for the Republic (FAR), with 9 seats.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Chad's territorial organization, devised by the French, combines traditional and modern units. The largest regional division is the prefecture, headed by a prefect appointed by the president. There are 14 prefectures.

The prefectures are divided into 54 subprefectures, each under a subprefect. N'Djamena is a separate prefecture known as a *délégation-générale*. Regions where traditional administrations were taken over as a unit are called administrative posts, of which there are 27. Their heads can be either civil servants or traditional chiefs or sultans.

In early 2005 plans were being made to convert to a new administrative structure consisting of 28 departments.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The Chadian legal system is marked by the continued co-existence of customary law, largely uncodified, and French law. In cases of conflict between the two, the French law prevails.

The court structure was extensively reorganized in 1967. The customary courts were replaced by justices of the peace, who were advised by two assessors on customary law. The Supreme Court, which functioned as the top judicial authority since 1963, was abolished in 1975 after the coup. In 1976 the permanent Court of State Security was established, comprising eight civilian and military members.

The judicial structure is controlled by the High Council of the Judiciary, which advises the president on judicial appointments and ensures the independence and integrity of the judges. Almost all the judges on the superior courts are French; there is a continuing shortage of qualified Chadian judges and magistrates.

HUMAN RIGHTS

In terms of civil and political rights, Chad is classified as a country that is not free. In fact, because of unsettled political conditions, it is difficult to speak of civil rights at all. The judicial system no longer functions, and there are no trials in the normal sense of the term. There are reports that all jails have been closed and civilian prisoners

released. There is widespread looting of homes by armed combatants of all factions. Despite movement toward greater democracy, power continues to reside largely in the hands of a northern ethnic oligarchy.

FOREIGN POLICY

Libya was one of the major players in the Chadian civil war, which was provoked by Libya's annexation of the Aozou Strip in northern Chad in 1978. Despite a 1989 agreement calling for mutual withdrawal from the disputed territory, Libya provided haven and support for Chadian rebels operating out of Sudan and Libya. Relations between the two countries improved after the 1990 victory of the Libyan-supported rebels in the civil war. Shortly thereafter the two countries signed a treaty of friendship and cooperation, and in 2002 Libya brokered a peace agreement between the Chadian government and rebels. Relations with France have been complicated by France's involvement in the civil war. French forces aided government troops until 1990, when the pro-Libyan MPS (Mouvement Patriotique du Salut) gained control. In 1991 the Chadian president invited French troops to remain in the country. In 1998 Chad sent more than 2,000 troops to support Kabila in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, but the force was withdrawn in 1999. In the new century, relations with Sudan became strained as the Sudanese civil war spilled over into Chad, and border patrols in the two nations were stepped up.

DEFENSE

The defense structure is headed by the president and chairman of the Supreme Military Council. The line of command runs through the chief of staff and the National Defense Commission to the head of the Tactical Bureau and the army and gendarmerie commanders. Military manpower is provided by voluntary enlistment.

Chad's army, deprived of French crutches, is small and neither staffed nor equipped to repel a concerted offensive by a foreign power. As of 2001 the nation's total military personnel numbered about 30,000. In 2003 the nation spent \$55.4 million, or about 2.1 percent of gross domestic product (GDP), on defense.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	30,000
Military Manpower Availability:	2,008,825
Military Expenditures \$million:	55.4
as % of GDP:	2.1
as % of central government expenditures:	—
Arms Imports \$million:	15
Arms Exports \$million:	—

ECONOMY

Landlocked Chad's economic development suffers from its geographic remoteness, drought, lack of infrastructure, political turmoil, widespread corruption, and the presence of a large informal black-market economy. Over 80 percent of the population depends on subsistence agriculture, including the herding of livestock. Of Africa's francophone countries, Chad benefited least from the 50 percent devaluation of the CFA franc in January 1994. Financial aid from the World Bank, the African Development Fund, and other sources is directed largely at the improvement of agriculture, especially livestock production. Due to lack of financing, the development of the Doba Basin oil fields, originally due to finish in 2000, was substantially delayed. At length, a consortium of two U.S. oil companies invested \$3.7 billion to develop the nation's oilfields, beginning production in 2003. Exports of oil began in 2004, contributing heavily to a 15 percent real growth rate in Chad's economy.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 10.67

GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 1,200

GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 5.6

GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 2.2

Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:

Agriculture: 32.4

Industry: 18.8

Services: 48.8

Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:

Private Consumption: 81

Government Consumption: 16

Gross Domestic Investment: 40.3

Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 0.365

Imports: 0.76

% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: —

% of Income Received by Richest 10%: —

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
133.1	124.1	128.8	144.8	152.3

Finance

National Currency: CFA Franc (XAF)

Exchange Rate: \$1 = XAF 581.2

Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 171.2

Central Bank Discount Rate %: 6.0

Total External Debt \$billion: 1.1

Debt Service Ratio %: 5.36

Balance of Payments \$million: -474

International Reserves SDRs \$million: 186.7

Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 6

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 233

per capita \$: 28.00

Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 900.7

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year

Revenues \$million: 591.2

Expenditures \$million: 680.9

Budget Deficit \$million: 89.7

Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 32.4

Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 1.4

Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares: —

Irrigation, % of Farms having: 0.55

Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 4.9

Total Farmland % of land area: 2.9

Livestock: Cattle million: 6.4

Chickens million: 5.2

Pigs 000: 25

Sheep million: 2.57

Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 7

Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 84

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 378.6

Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 5

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: —

Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 44

Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 5

Net Energy Imports % of use: —

Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: 30

Production kW-hr million: 94

Consumption kW-hr million: 87.5

Coal Reserves tons billion: —

Production tons million: —

Consumption tons million: —

Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —

Production cubic feet billion: —

Consumption cubic feet billion: —

Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels million: 900

Production barrels 000 per day: 36

Consumption barrels 000 per day: 1.5

Pipelines Length km: 205

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 0.365

Exports \$billion: 0.76

Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 10.4

Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 37.6

Balance of Trade \$million: -474

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
France %	28.6	6.8
United States %	20.7	25.0
Cameroon %	14.6	—
Netherlands %	4.7	—
Germany %	—	17.0
Portugal %	—	15.9
Morocco %	—	4.5

Transportation

Roads Total Length km:	33,400
Paved %:	0.8
Automobiles:	—
Trucks and Buses:	—
Railroad: Track Length km:	—
Passenger-km million:	—
Freight-km million:	—
Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels:	—
Total Deadweight Tonnage 000:	—
Airports:	50
Traffic: Passenger-km 000:	130
Length of Waterways km:	—

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000:	57
Number of Tourists from 000:	39
Tourist Receipts \$million:	—
Tourist Expenditures \$million:	—

Communications

Telephones 000:	11.8
Cost of Local Calls 3 mins:	\$0.11
Cellular Telephones 000:	65
Personal Computers 000:	13
Internet Hosts per million people:	0.8
Internet Users per 1,000 people:	1.5

ENVIRONMENT

The environment of Chad has suffered from both environmental and political factors. For more than 40 years, fighting has prevented any meaningful management of the environment to ensure the long-term sustainability of the agricultural lands. Severe droughts have also taken their toll on the land, particularly between 1972 and 1983. The country suffers from growing desertification and poor agricultural practices.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area:	10.1
Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000:	-82

Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 9
Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 0.02

LIVING CONDITIONS

More than a generation of rebellion and civil war have made living conditions in Chad unsettled at best. Medical care is spotty, water is in short supply, and transportation is difficult. In an area three times the size of California, the nation has only 267 km of paved roads, as well as 33,000 km of unpaved roads, many of which become impassable in rainy seasons. Because so much of the nation is remote and almost inaccessible, it is difficult to transport goods. Life is particularly harsh in Sahelian towns. There, people live in walled compounds constructed of bricks made of straw and camel dung. In the hot, dry seasons people live and sleep largely outdoors. Latrines are found in the corners of compounds. Those who do not live in compounds occupy huts made of sticks and thatched roofs, often with tarps thrown over them. For water, people rely on communal wells, using ropes and buckets to draw water, then transporting water to compounds with donkeys. Because of the recent history of armed rebellion, many people own small weapons and live with great insecurity, and banditry and road robbery are commonplace, as young men from rural areas who took part in rebellions have difficulty adapting to "civilian" life.

HEALTH

Health care in Chad is generally poor, with annual per capita spending on health care just \$5. Life expectancy at birth is only about 48 years, and the infant mortality rate is nearly 95 per 1,000 live births—nearly 105 for males. In 2003 about 4.8 percent of the adult population was living with AIDS, and that year 18,000 Chadians died of the disease. A major problem is untreated drinking water, which contributes to disease and parasites; only 34 percent of the population has access to improved drinking-water sources. Many people suffer from tropical diseases such as malaria, schistosomiasis, and river blindness. Drought and famine also contribute to poor health conditions. While hospitals exist in the major towns, the facilities are substandard, and most people have to rely on remote clinics, which can themselves be barely accessible because of great distances and poor roads.

Health

Number of Physicians:	205
Number of Dentists:	2
Number of Nurses:	1,220
Number of Pharmacists:	38
Physician Density per 100,000 people:	2.5

(continues)

Health (continued)

Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 94.78
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 1,100
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 2.6
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 5
 HIV Infected % of adults: 4.8
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 40
 Measles: 55
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 8
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 34

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Contributing to health problems in Chad is poor nutrition, with an estimated 10 percent of Chadian children underweight. Major staples include rice, potatoes, maize, sorghum, and especially millet, which is ground into a flour and mixed with boiling water to form a paste; this is served with various sauces made with meat or fish, tomatoes, onions, and spices. The diet in the south consists of little fish, with people instead relying on forest products, fruits, root vegetables, and fruits such as guavas, bananas, and mangoes. In the north more fish and dairy products are consumed, and favored fruits include limes and dates. Truck stops often serve grilled goat meat, seasoned with lime and hot peppers and served with French bread.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 33.9
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,180
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 125.4
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 22.3

STATUS OF WOMEN

Women are generally subordinate to men in Chadian society. Females do attend school at all levels of the educational system. A few women participate in the political life of the country; by 2005, 10 members of the legislature were women. Some women serve voluntarily in the armed forces, and some figure prominently in the labor movement. Although figures are not known, many women and their children have been left homeless and without adequate means of support, with their husbands missing or dead as a result of civil strife. Widows and orphans are often taken care of by extended family members.

Women

Women-headed Households %: 22
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 7
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —

Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 0.42
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: —

WORK

Some 80 percent of Chadians live by subsistence farming, but their efforts contribute only 32.4 percent of GDP. The remainder of GDP is provided by industry, at 18.8 percent, and services, at 48.8 percent. In agriculture, the major crops are cotton, sorghum, millet, and rice as well as livestock such as sheep, goats, and camels. Industry includes a growing oil sector, as well as cotton textiles, meatpacking, soap production, and beer brewing. Fully 80 percent of Chadians live below the poverty line, with per capita GDP in 2003 at just \$1,200.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: —
 Female Participation Rate %: 44.9
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 80
 Other: 20
 Unemployment %: —

EDUCATION

Education is free, universal, and compulsory, in principle, for six years, from ages eight to 14. However, actual school enrollment rates are abysmally low.

Schooling consists of six years of primary school, four years of middle school at a *collège d'enseignement* or *lycée*, and three years of secondary school at a *lycée*, for a total of 13 years. The curriculum in both primary and secondary schools is based on the French model and is standardized for both private and public schools.

The academic year runs from October to mid-June. The medium of instruction is French throughout, although Arabic is encouraged in areas with Muslim majorities.

About 72 percent of primary-level students attend public schools; the rest are in private schools, primarily Roman Catholic mission schools. At the secondary level, 85 percent attend state schools and 15 percent private schools. Koranic schools offer limited primary education for northern Muslims. There also are a few Islamic secondary-education centers.

Chad's first university, the University of Chad, opened in N'Djamena in 1971 and graduated its first class in 1974.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 47.5
 Male %: 56.0
 Female %: 39.3

School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 5.3

First Level: Primary schools: 2,447

Teachers: 16,471

Students: 1,119,242

Student-Teacher Ratio: 68.0

Net Enrollment Ratio: 62.8

Second Level: Secondary Schools: 66

Teachers: 4,408

Students: 138,608

Student-Teacher Ratio: 32.2

Net Enrollment Ratio: 10.4

Third Level: Institutions: 4

Teachers: 409

Students: 5,901

Gross Enrollment Ratio: 0.9

Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 2.0

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Civil war, poverty, and a lack of infrastructure have severely inhibited scientific and technological progress in Chad. The University of Chad is small and has little in the way of resources and research materials. A veterinary research center and a cotton research center conduct some research and development activities in those fields, and the Ministry of Rural Development conducts some research in food crops.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —

Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —

High-Tech Exports \$million: —

Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

A few news bulletins are issued by various government agencies, particularly *Info-Tchad*, a mimeographed daily with a circulation of 1,600 copies. All printing facilities are owned by the government. Additionally, there are a handful of privately owned newspapers, which openly criticize the government but have little impact because of illiteracy, poverty, and the inability to reach people in rural areas. The national news agency is Agence Tchadienne de Presse (ATP). Both AFB and Reuters have offices in N'Djamena.

Radiodiffusion National Tchadienne, until 1973 Radio Chad, operates transmitters in N'Djamena, Sarh, and Abeche. Additionally, FM Liberté is a privately owned station funded by human rights organizations, and the Catholic Church operates a radio station called La Voix du Paysan. Chad's television service broadcasts over 800 hours annually, the majority of which is devoted to entertainment.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 2

Total Circulation 000: 2

Circulation per 1,000: 0.2

Books Published: —

Periodicals: —

Radio Receivers 000: —

per 1,000: —

Television sets 000: 11

per 1,000: 1

CULTURE

The government provides virtually no funding for the arts. Chad has not produced a national literature, largely the result of illiteracy, but various cultures have long oral storytelling traditions. What written literature has been produced by Chadians is in French, especially in the diasporic community in France. Two major forms of cultural expression are the graphic arts, especially folk arts and crafts, and performance. Various ethnic groups have artistic traditions that include artifacts, leatherwork, and the decoration of houses and clothing. Chadian craftsmen are known for their production of musical instruments, including horns, whistles, flutes, pottery drums, and tam-tams as well as five-stringed harps and *balafons*, which are similar to xylophones, with wooden bars and gourds used to amplify the sound. Performance arts include the song and dance that are part of religious rituals.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 4

Volumes: 11,000

Registered borrowers: 300

Museums Number: 5

Annual Attendance: —

Cinema Gross Receipts: —

Number of Cinemas: —

Seating Capacity: —

Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Because of its wide range of ethnic groups, Chad has no common folklore or mythological tradition, though each ethnic group has its own traditions. One common tradition, however, focuses on Félix Eboué, the nation's lieutenant-governor who supported the Free French in World War II and whose memory is preserved through a monument in N'Djamena. A national myth concerns the Sao, the first people who lived in the area around N'Djamena. The Sao were reputed to have been giants capable of remarkable physical feats; women, for example, were able to lift a granary holding an entire year's harvest with one hand. Much Chadian folklore is religious, particularly

among those who practice animism. In societies such as the Moundang, for example, rulers are believed to have supernatural powers, and the Mbaye believe spirits occupy such natural forces as the sun, water, and lightning. Communicating between people and the spirit world is the role of sorcerers and diviners.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Poverty and civil unrest have afforded Chadians few opportunities for recreation and entertainment. The nation has few contacts with Western popular culture. Television sets are rare, and only a privileged few have ever seen a movie. Such activities as fishing are practiced out of necessity, and water sports are virtually nonexistent. What little recreation exists is associated with religious events and festivals and consists of music and dancing.

ETIQUETTE

Chad shares with many other African nations an emphasis on proper greetings and leave-taking. Among Muslims, it is customary to exchange greetings by asking about the well-being and health of the other person and his or her family. Visitors to homes in desert communities are offered at least water and often something to eat. Water is also offered for washing the face, hands, and feet. In general Muslims and Christians live in mutual tolerance; very little of Chad's recent internal conflicts have been motivated or driven by religious differences. While Christian missionaries make efforts to win converts, using pressure to do so is frowned upon. Civil war, communal conflict, and violence have led to a breakdown in conventional etiquette, especially among younger people.

FAMILY LIFE

In the towns, nuclear families are relatively common, but throughout much of Chad people live with extended families and clans. Among Saharan nomadic groups such as the Toubou and Daza, for example, people live with clans that tend to break up and re-form seasonally. The clan, which might consist of up to one hundred members, includes males as heads of households, each with one or possibly two wives, and other relatives. Wives take part in decision making and often run household matters in their husband's absence. The domestic unit of the Arabs of the Sahel is the *kashimbet*, a clan of men, wives, descendants, and other relatives that remains fixed throughout the year. In general, children are raised not only by parents but by the extended family and clan.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Clothing in Chad tends to differ depending on the region. In the north, the heat, sun, wind, and blowing sand require people to cover their entire bodies except for the face. Men typically wear cotton pants, white robes, and a turban wrapped around the head. Women wear robes. Most people wear sandals or go barefoot. Dress in the south tends to be more colorful, with print shirts and pants for men and wraparound skirts for women. Among women, jewelry is a form of ethnic expression. Arab women favor wrist and ankle bracelets made of copper or bronze; Toubou women are frequently seen with silver nose rings. Tattoos are associated with ethnicity, and amulets to ward off evil spirits are common. In the south, older Massa and Toupouri women wear wooden or metal lip plugs to indicate their marital status.

SPORTS

As with recreation and entertainment, Chadians have had few opportunities to engage in sport. In the Sahel, horse racing is common, particularly among Arab riders. In the towns, soccer clubs compete with one another.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1960** Chad becomes an independent member of the French Community, with François Tombalbaye as president.
- 1961** Tombalbaye's Parti Progressiste Tchadien (PPT) merges with the main opposition party, Parti Nationale Africaine (PNA).
- 1962** New constitution is promulgated. All political parties except the PPT are banned. Northern insurgent organization Front de Libération Nationale de Chad (FROLINAT) is founded.
- 1963** Five prominent northern politicians are arrested. National emergency is declared in the wake of bloody riots in which 500 are killed.
- 1964** National Assembly passes resolution empowering the Political Bureau of the PPT to direct and control the actions of government and to choose all candidates for political office.
- 1965** Open revolt breaks out in the northern prefectures as secessionist movement gathers strength among Muslims.
- 1968** Tombalbaye invokes Franco-Chadian agreement of 1960 for military assistance against the rebels; French troops join in campaign against the insurgents. Zaire, Chad, and Central African Republic join in a new union known as Union des Etats d'Afrique Centrale (UEAC).

- 1969** Tombalbaye is reelected president.
- 1972** Tombalbaye unleashes a new authenticity campaign calling for a return to “Tchaditude,” or authentic Chadian traditions and values; he changes his name to N’garta Tombalbaye, the name of the capital to N’Djamena, and the name of the PPT to Mouvement Nationale pour la Révolution Culturelle et Sociale (MNRCS); Chad declares a drought emergency and appeals for international aid; nearly 20 percent of the national cattle herd is wiped out as a result of the drought that had affected all of the Sahel since 1968.
- 1974** François and Pierre Claustre, French archaeologists, are kidnapped by rebels led by Hissène Habré.
- 1975** Tombalbaye is overthrown in a swift coup; Félix Malloum is named the new president and chairman of the Supreme Military Council; the National Assembly is dissolved.
- 1976** New defense treaty is concluded with France.
- 1977** Attempted coup against the government is reported crushed.
Chad charges Libya with border violations; François Claustre is released.
- 1978** Chad breaks diplomatic relations with Libya after accusing its northern neighbor of occupying a 78,000 sq km (30,000 sq mi) territory in the Tibesti region believed to hold uranium deposits.
FROLINAT launches major attack against government forces at Faya-Largeau; government concludes cease-fire with the Armed Forces of the North (FAN), led by Hissène Habré, and later appoints Habré prime minister; the Malloum regime and Habré engage in a bloody but inconclusive confrontation.
- 1979** French forces are flown into N’Djamena as Malloum flees the country; a cease-fire is agreed on under Sudanese mediation; an agreement among the four main factions (FROLINAT, Malloum, Third Army, and Armed Forces of the North) breaks down when Libya attacks the Aozou Strip; an agreement among the 11 principal factions leads to formation of an interim government of national unity, with Goukouni Oueddei, leader of FROLINAT, as president and Wadal Abdel Kader Kamougue, a former Malloum supporter, as vice president; N’Djamena is demilitarized, and a neutral peacekeeping force from Benin, Congo, and Gabon is created to replace the departing French forces.
- 1980** Fighting resumes, and over 700 die as violence escalates; Congo withdraws its troops; factional fighting breaks out between FAN and other FROLINAT rebel groups.
Libya moves into northern Chad and concludes defense treaty with President Oueddei.
Libyan offensive forces FAN to withdraw to Cameroon and Sudan border areas.
- 1981** Libya invades Chad, and Libyan troops occupy the capital; Libya and Chad announce a decision to “achieve full unity”; after Organization of African Unity (OAU) condemns the merger plan and sends a peacekeeping force, President Oueddei repudiates the merger plan; FAN takes N’Djamena and eventually controls most of the country; Oueddei flees the capital and sets up a rival government in the town of Bardai, near the Libyan border.
- 1982** Habré is sworn in as president; Oueddei forces regroup and advance to the south, taking strategic cities; France intervenes and stations its troops along the “Red Line” of the 16th parallel, which marks the division between the Habré-controlled south and the Oueddei-controlled north.
- 1984** Libya and France reach a mutual accord for withdrawal of troops from Chad; French troops evacuate the country, but Libya maintains a clandestine presence.
- 1985** Seven major antigovernment factions loyal to Goukouni unite to form the Conseil Suprême de la Révolution (CSR).
- 1986** Habré announces release of 122 political prisoners; Libyan forces resume hostilities by attacking government positions; at Habré’s request France again intervenes.
- 1987** OAU mediation culminates in cease-fire between Chad and Libya on September 11; fighting breaks out again in November, and the UN General Assembly declares OAU responsible for resolving the dispute.
- 1988** Diplomatic relations between Chad and Libya, severed in 1982, are restored in October; in December military clashes resume near the Sudanese border.
- 1989** Libya and Chad sign an accord on August 31 agreeing to submit their border dispute over the Aozou Strip to the International Court of Justice.
- 1990** Habré is overthrown in a military coup on December 1; rebel leader Idriss Déby, a former Habré aide, declares himself president and promises a multiparty democracy.
- 1992** The government suppresses two attempted coups; opposition parties are legalized.
- 1996** Déby wins the nation’s first multiparty presidential election.
- 1997** Déby’s party, the Patriotic Salvation Movement, wins 63 of the 125 seats in legislative elections.

- 1998 The Movement for Democracy and Justice in Chad (MDJC), led by Déby's former defense minister, Youssouf Togoimi, begins an armed rebellion against the government.
- 2000 In July, MDJC rebels capture the strategic town of Bardai in the north.
- 2002 Libya brokers a peace agreement between the government and the MDJT; months later, fighting breaks out in the far north.
- 2003 The government signs a peace agreement with National Resistance Army rebels in the east, as well as another agreement with MDJT, but hard-liners maintain opposition.
- 2004 Thousands of Sudanese refugees fleeing the fighting in the Darfur region of Sudan arrive in Chad; border fighting breaks out between Chad and pro-Sudanese militias.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- CIA World Factbook: Chad
<http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/cd.html>
- Chad—A Country Study
<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/tdtoc.html>

CHILE

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Chile (República de Chile)

ABBREVIATION

CL

CAPITAL

Santiago

HEAD OF STATE & HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

President Michelle Bachelet (from 2006)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Constitutional republic

POPULATION

15,980,912 (2005)

AREA

756,950 sq km (292,259 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Mestizo

LANGUAGE

Spanish

RELIGION

Roman Catholicism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Peso

NATIONAL FLAG

Divided horizontally, the upper left blue with a white star and the remaining upper half white, the lower half red

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A gold-edged shield with its upper half red and the lower blue displaying a large white five-pointed star in the center. Three plumes in red, white, and blue form the crest of the design. On either side of the shield is a typical Chilean animal: the *buemal*, an Andean deer, to the right of the shield and the condor of the Andes to its left. Beneath the device is a white scroll with the legend in black letters, *Por la razón o la fuerza* (By right and by might).

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Pure Chile, Thy Skies Spread Above Thee”

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year’s Day), May 1 (Labor Day), May 21 (Navy Day, Battle of Iquique Day), September 18 (Independence Day), September 19 (Armed Forces Day), October 12 (Columbus Day), various Christian festivals, including Day of Sts. Peter and Paul, Assumption, All Saints’ Day, Immaculate Conception, Good Friday, Holy Saturday, Ascension, Corpus Christi, and Christmas

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

September 18, 1810

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

September 11, 1980; last amended 2005

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Chile is situated on the extreme southwestern coast of South America, and the name itself is believed to be a corruption of an Aymará Indian word meaning “where the land ends.” It extends like a long ribbon between the Pacific and the towering Andes for 4,270 km (2,653 mi), with a median width of only 175 km (109 mi). The total land area of 756,950 sq km (292,259 sq mi) includes six dependencies: Easter Island (Isla de Pascua), a volcanic island famed for its massive monolithic stone heads of unknown origin; the Diego Ramírez Islands; the Juan Fernández Islands, famed as the scene of the shipwreck of Alexander

Selkirk, the model for Daniel Defoe’s Robinson Crusoe; Sale y Gomez Island; San Ambrosio Island; and San Félix Island. Chile also claims the section of Antarctica lying between 53°W and 90°W, the Palmer or O’Higgins Peninsula, parts of which are also claimed by Argentina and the United Kingdom. The Pacific coastline extends 6,435 km (3,999 mi).

Chile shares its international border of 6,171 km (3,834 mi) with three neighbors: Bolivia (861 km; 535 mi), Argentina (5,150 km; 3,200 mi), and Peru (160 km; 99 mi).

The capital is Santiago, with a population of over four and one-half million. Other large urban centers in-

Chile



clude Viña del Mar, Valparaíso, and Concepción, all with populations under a half million.

Chile may be divided longitudinally into three regions and latitudinally into six regions. The three longitudinal regions are the Andean cordillera on the east, the low coastal mountains of the west, and the central valley in between. The Andes, occupying from one-third to the entire width of the country, rise to 7,034 m (23,077 ft) at Mt. Aconcagua (in Argentina), the highest peak in the Western Hemisphere. The coastal range, 300 to 2,100 m (1,000 to 7,000 ft) in height, joins the Andean spurs to form a series of plateaus separated by deep valleys. In the south these valleys and ranges plunge into the sea to form a series of archipelagos. The central valley begins below the Atacama Desert in the north and ends at Puerto Montt in the south. The six latitudinal divisions are the Great North, north of the Copiapó River; the Little North, also known as the Andean Fringe, a transitional zone made up of short transverse valleys; Central Chile, also known as the Vale of Chile, north of the Bío-Bío River; South-Central Chile, between the Bío-Bío River and the Gulf of Reloncavi; the Far South, also known as Archipelagic Chile, dominated by fjords; and Patagonian or Atlantic Chile, an undulating plain at the tip of the continent.

Chile lies in an area of geologic instability and frequently suffers from earthquakes, tidal waves, volcanic eruptions, floods, avalanches, landslides, and violent storms. More than 100 major earthquakes have occurred since 1575. Valparaíso and Concepción were leveled or shaken by earthquakes several times in the twentieth century.

Some 30 rivers flow from the Andes, including the Loa in the Great North; the Huasco, Coquimba, and Limari in the Little North; the Mapoche, Maule, and Maipo in Central Chile; and the Bío-Bío in South-Central Chile. Few, if any, of these rivers can be used for commercial navigation. Of the 12 lakes in the Lake District in South-Central Chile, Lake Llanquihue is the largest and Lake Todos los Santos the most beautiful.

Geography

Area sq km:	756,950; sq mi 292,259
World Rank:	37th
Land Boundaries, km:	Argentina 5,150; Bolivia 861; Peru 160
Coastline, km:	6,435
Elevation Extremes meters:	
Lowest:	Pacific Ocean 0
Highest:	Nevado Ojos del Salado 6,880
Land Use %	
Arable land:	2.7
Permanent Crops:	0.4
Forest:	20.8
Other:	76.1

Population of Principal Cities (2002 est.)

Antofagasta	293,800
Concepción	373,400
Iquique	206,700
Puente Alto	492,600
Rancagua	207,000
San Bernardo	237,700
Santiago	4,655,800
Talcahuano	247,000
Temuco	266,200
Valparaíso	267,800
Viña del Mar	318,500

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Because of its great length, Chile has a variety of climatic zones, ranging from subtropical to temperate and near polar. The variety is increased by the proximity of the Andean cordillera and the Humboldt, or Peru, Current, which flows along the coast northward. Generally, Chile is divided into three climatic zones: the north, including the Atacama Desert, one of the driest regions of the world; the middle, with a Mediterranean climate characterized by mild, wet winters and long, dry summers; and the south, with heavy winds and cyclones.

Rainfall increases from virtually nothing in the Atacama Desert to 5,080 mm (200 in) in the south. Santiago, in the middle, has an annual precipitation of only 350 mm (14 in). Southward, the average rainfall rises to 1,270 mm (50 in) at Concepción and 2,540 mm (100 in) at Valdivia but falls to 510 mm (20 in) in Chilean Patagonia. South of the Bío-Bío River, rain falls almost year-round. Chiloé Island is perpetually shrouded in mists, giving rise to the legend that it is inhabited by disembodied spirits. Winds of gale force intensity are common in the south.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature

Arica on the Peruvian Border:	66°F
La Serena in the Little North and Santiago:	57°F
Valdivia:	53°F
Patagonia:	43°F
Tierra del Fuego:	20°F

Average Rainfall

Atacama Desert:	0 in
South:	200 in
Concepción:	50 in
Valdivia:	100 in
Patagonia:	20 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Chile's geographical and climatic diversity give rise to a wide range of ecosystems. In the northern coastal des-

ert region flora are virtually nonexistent, with the exception of large cacti. The central part of the country, which is more humid, is covered by shrubbery and deciduous trees, including the *lun*, *litre*, *peumo*, and guayacan, among others. More to the south are forests of oak, evergreens, larch, hazelnut, araucaria, and *camelo*.

Fauna, too, are diverse. Mammals unique to the mountain regions include the puma, a camel-like species called the guanaco, the huemul, the viscacha, and the pudu. The coast is home to sea lions, otters, dolphins, whales, and seals. Chile provides habitat for 439 species of birds, 296 of them endemic.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005:	15,980,912
World Rank:	60th
Density per sq km:	21.1
% of annual growth (1999-2003):	1.2
Male %:	49.5
Female %:	50.5
Urban %:	87.0
Age Distribution %:	
0-14:	25.8
15-64:	66.3
65 and over:	7.8
Population 2025:	18,521,000
Birth Rate per 1,000:	15.77
Death Rate per 1,000:	5.71
Rate of Natural Increase %:	1.2
Total Fertility Rate:	2.06
Expectation of Life (years):	
Males:	73.09
Females:	79.82
Marriage Rate per 1,000:	3.9
Divorce Rate per 1,000:	—
Average Size of Households:	3.8
Induced Abortions:	—

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Chile has an uncomplicated ethnic mix, with whites and mestizos, of mixed European and Amerindian heritage, constituting 95 percent of the population, Amerindians 3 percent, and other, mainly unmixed European, 2 percent. Early settlers intermarried with the Amerindians, notably the Araucanian, and European immigration was of less importance than elsewhere in Latin America. Of those Europeans who did come, the earliest non-Spanish settlers were from Britain, followed after 1845 by Germans, Italians, French, Austrians, Swiss, and Yugoslavs. Non-European settlers included the Lebanese and Jews. National enclaves exist in several cities, including the English in Valparaíso and Iquique; the Germans in Puerto Montt, Valdivia, Osorno, and Puerto Varas; and the Lebanese in Recoleta, a section of Santiago.

The largest Native American group in the country is known to ethnographers as Araucanian, but members of this group refer to themselves as Mapuche, which means “people of the land” in their language; they are around one million strong. After the Indian wars of the 19th century the Mapuche were settled in more than 2,000 reservations in Cautin, Maleco, Valdivia, Arauco, Bío-Bío, and Llanquihue, which has isolated them from Western influences. Their customs and cultural heritage are protected by the Indigenous Peoples Law, which has also permitted their lands to be demarcated and preserved. However, the spread of education and transportation has meant that many Mapuche are succumbing to the pressures of assimilation. Other indigenous groups include the Aymara (35,000), Rapa Nui (3,000), Atacameños (about 4,000), Quechua, Colla, Alacalufe, and Yagán. Because of Chile’s ethnic homogeneity, race by itself is not a divisive factor in politics or society, and there is little evidence of a race or color bar in the country. Class divisions do exist, though, and are sharp, with only the gradual eroding of dividing lines.

LANGUAGES

The official language is Spanish, which is spoken by almost everyone except a few Native Americans in the reservations. Chilean Spanish is corrupted by accretions of Native American and foreign words and is also characterized by wide variations in pronunciation and usage. The Mapuche speak the Araucan language, itself a family of languages with seven surviving dialects.

RELIGIONS

Chile is predominantly Roman Catholic, with 89 percent of the population, although the church was disestablished in 1925. Protestants make up most of the remaining 11 percent of the population, along with very small Jewish, traditional Native American, or nonreligious groups.

While the religious influence of the church varies among social classes and between the urban and rural populations, the church has played an important role as a catalyst of social progress and as a defender of human rights when all other forms of opposition have been silenced.

Protestantism has experienced rapid growth since the 1940s, and Chile is considered one of the most successful examples of Protestant missionary activity in Latin America.

Religious Affiliations	
Roman Catholic	14,223,000
Protestant	1,757,900

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Chile’s earliest inhabitants were the Araucanians in the south of the region and subjects of the Inca Empire in the north. In 1536 the first Spanish expedition, led by Diego de Almagro, traveled across the Andes and into the central lowlands but failed to establish a settlement. A subsequent attempt, led by Pedro de Valdivia, overcame Araucanian resistance and founded the cities of Santiago in 1541 and later La Serena, Concepción, and Valdivia. A lack of precious metals meant Chile remained peripheral to Spanish interests, and development was focused on ranching and farming. Until 1778 Chile was a captaincy general ruled by the Viceroyalty of Peru, at which time it became a separate division virtually independent of Peru. Territorially, Chile’s boundaries were ill defined and were the cause of many border disputes with Argentina, Peru, and Bolivia following independence. Chile declared its independence from Spain in 1810, but it was not until 1818 that it achieved true independence. The country’s geographic isolation has helped it to preserve its Spanish heritage virtually intact. This isolation has also helped the nation maintain its independence.

Since independence, Chile has experienced alternating periods of authoritarian and parliamentary rule. From 1891 to 1924 the country was a parliamentary republic. But political corruption, the fragmentation of political parties, and increasing political chaos led to a military takeover in September 1924. The military strongman General Carlos Ibáñez del Campo ruled from 1927 to 1931, when a general strike precipitated by the effects of the Great Depression forced him to flee. From 1931 to 1973 the country was governed by a multiparty democratic system. In 1964 Eduardo Frei became president and implemented a series of social and economic changes that included the partial nationalization of some industries and land reform. Frei was unable to control the inflation that was endemic to the nation, and his reforms alienated the right. Salvador Allende Gossens, a Marxist, won the three-way 1970 presidential election with the largest share of the vote, 30 percent. The Allende government imposed an extensive nationalization program, froze prices, and raised wages. The program initially succeeded in improving economic conditions, but by 1972 the economy had again begun to lag. Middle- and upper-class resentment against the government seizure of property grew, and, amid strikes and civil discontent (covertly promoted by the CIA acting to support U.S. interests), Allende’s government was overthrown by the military in 1973. Depending on sources, Allende either committed suicide or was murdered in an attack by the military on the presidential palace.

Between 1973 and 1990, a military junta headed by General Augusto Pinochet Ugarte ruled Chile, suspending the constitution, dissolving congress, and banning political parties. Left-wing activists were arrested,

tortured, and exiled in the thousands, in a campaign of terror that reached outside the country: the secret police, or DINA, was linked to the 1976 murder in Washington, D.C., of Orlando Letelier, a former Chilean ambassador to the United States.

Under Pinochet the government initiated a program of privatization that drastically reduced government; although Pinochet's measures did not immediately ameliorate the situation, by the end of the 1980s the economy had begun to improve.

The Pinochet regime never faced a sustained revolutionary challenge. The great majority of its opponents were abroad in exile or sent underground. In September 1988 the government announced that all Chileans in political exile, about 430, were permitted to return to Chile. At this time Hortensia Bussi de Allende (President Allende's widow) and her daughter María Isabel Allende also returned to Chile from exile.

Pinochet faced constant criticism of his regime from political parties, trade unions, and the Catholic Church. In 1980 the electorate endorsed a new constitution designed to prepare the nation for a return to democracy in 1989. Pinochet expected this to reconfirm his hold over power, but opposition groups successfully united and campaigned against him. In a plebiscite in 1988 Chileans voted against a new eight-year term for Pinochet. Elections were held in 1989 that resulted in the victory of Patricio Aylwin Azócar, leader of the Christian Democratic Party and candidate of a 17-party Coalition for Democracy. He was inaugurated in March 1990. Pinochet was forced to accept the decision, as the military had committed itself to recognizing the legitimacy of the ballot, and attempts to disrupt the election failed. Pinochet did maintain command of the armed forces until 1997, when he became a senator for life.

Fresh elections in 1993 brought the Christian Democrat Eduardo Frei Ruiz-Tagle to the presidency and continued the country's move toward civilian-controlled democracy. Investigations into the 1976 assassination of the opposition leader Orlando Letelier in Washington, D.C., resulted in the convictions of the former head of the secret police and his deputy in November 1993. After a standoff between Pinochet and the government, the men were arrested in June 1995. The same year, investigations into disappearances during the Pinochet regime were begun.

In October 1998 General Pinochet was arrested in London on a warrant from Spain requesting his extradition on murder charges. For the next 18 months the case moved from appeal to appeal, with British home secretary Jack Straw permitting extradition proceedings to begin following a Law Lords' decision in November. The British courts determined that Pinochet's immunity did not cover the charges against him. In January 2000 Pinochet was declared medically unfit to stand trial, and

despite considerable pressure from domestic and international sources, Jack Straw released the general on March 1, when he returned to Chile. In June the Chilean Appeals Court stripped Pinochet of his immunity, opening the way for criminal proceedings within Chile. He was subsequently indicted on charges of kidnapping and murder and placed under house arrest. In 2001 the Santiago Court of Appeals reduced the charges against Pinochet to accessory in the crimes by having covered them up. Pinochet was released from house arrest on bail while awaiting a possible trial. Later that year charges against him were suspended when he was again found unfit to stand trial, and in 2002 the Supreme Court ruled that the charges were to be dropped because he was mentally unfit. In 2004, however, the Supreme Court stripped Pinochet of his immunity from prosecution, and in January 2005 he was placed under house arrest.

In January 2000 Ricardo Lagos Escobar narrowly defeated his opponent in presidential elections, becoming the first socialist to be elected president since Salvador Allende. One of his most controversial moves was to sign a law in 2004 giving Chileans the right to divorce. In 2006 Socialist Michelle Bachelet was elected the first woman president in run-off elections.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1970–73	Salvador Allende
1973–90	Augusto Pinochet
1990–95	Patricio Aylwin Azócar
1995–2000	Eduardo Frei Ruiz-Tagle
2000–06	Ricardo Lagos Escobar
2006–	Michelle Bachelet

CONSTITUTION

Chile has had only two constitutions since 1833, and although the continuity of democratic rule was interrupted from 1924 to 1931, until Pinochet's regime Chile had a notable record of adherence to parliamentary democracy, free elections, and separation of powers. While the balance of power favored the executive, the multiparty system made it virtually impossible for the executive to dominate the legislature.

After seizing power in 1973, Pinochet's military junta suspended the 1925 constitution and ruled by three constitutional acts passed in 1976. A new constitution was adopted in 1980 giving executive and legislative power to the president and the junta. It also provided for what was described as a transition to democracy after a minimum period of eight years. It provided for presidential elections in 1989 and the reestablishment of a bicameral legislature. The constitution, which took effect in 1981, was approved and amended in 1989, when 54 reforms were passed.

Among the provisions was a reduction in the term of office for the president from eight to four years. The president's right to dismiss congress and sentence to internal exile was also eliminated. In 2005 the legislature eliminated the possibility of immediate reelection at the end of a president's term.

Voting is universal and compulsory over age 18. Political parties, banned in 1977, were legalized again in 1987.

PARLIAMENT

The 1980 constitution had provided for a 120-member Chamber of Deputies and a 34-member Senate, 26 elected and eight appointed. Reforms in 1989 increased the number of elected senators to 38 and the total number of senators to 46. Senators serve eight-year terms, while deputies serve four. The Chamber of Deputies carries out its duties by means of 13 permanent commissions, each of which is composed of 13 deputies. The Senate has 18 commissions, each with five members.

Congress approves and rejects international treaties and states of siege or emergency imposed by the president; Congress also selects a president if the office becomes vacant with less than two years until a scheduled election. The Chamber of Deputies can initiate constitutional accusations by majority vote. The Senate, in turn, acts as a jury and finds the accused either innocent or guilty as charged. Further, the Senate can declare the physical or mental incapacity of the president or president-elect, once the Constitutional Tribunal has pronounced itself on the matter.

Congressional power was limited under the 1980 constitution, but many restrictions were removed through the 1989 amendments. The document's role is limited in other areas, however, such as financial and budgetary administration, introduction of spending, public administration, and collective bargaining legislation. The president needs the approval of the majority of Congress to establish states of siege, but the president may declare a state of assembly, emergency, or catastrophe solely with the approval of the National Security Council.

POLITICAL PARTIES

The Communist Party of Chile (Partido Comunista de Chile, PCC), founded in 1922, is the oldest and largest Communist party in Latin America and one of the most important in the West. Initially close to the Soviet Union and outlawed for a decade after 1948, the party helped elect Salvador Allende in 1970 and acted as a moderating influence in the move toward a communist society. By the 1990s, however, it enjoyed less than 5 percent support.

The Socialist Party (Partido Socialista, PS), founded in 1933, has drawn its support from blue-collar workers

as well as intellectuals and members of the middle class. It also helped elect Salvador Allende and suffered under the military repression of the 1970s. Following numerous splits and schisms, the party formed a coalition with the Christian Democrats to oppose Pinochet in the 1988 referendum. As part of the ruling coalition since 1989, the party has moved more toward democratic socialism.

The Party for Democracy (Partido por la Democracia, PPD) was formed in 1988 to unite opposition to Pinochet. Subsequently becoming a party in its own right, it has sought a distinct position as a center-left secular force in Chilean society.

The Christian Democratic Party (Partido Demócrata Cristiano, PDC), founded in 1957, was heavily influenced by the progressive social doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church and the works of the French Catholic philosopher Jacques Maritain. The PDC proclaimed a "third way" between Marxism and capitalism, a form of communitarian socialism of cooperatives and self-managed worker enterprises. After the military regime, the PDC emerged as Chile's largest party, retaining a commitment to social justice issues while embracing the free-market policies instituted by the military government.

The National Party (Partido Nacional, PN) was formed in 1965 from the merging of the Liberal and Conservative Parties. In 1987 it became the National Renewal Party, a combination of three rightist organizations: the National Unity Movement, National Labor Front, and Independent Democratic Union.

Other parties include the Social Democrat Radical Party (Partido Radical Social-Demócrata, PRSD) and the Union of the Centrist Center (Unión de Centro Centro, UCC).

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Chile is divided for purposes of local government into 12 numbered regions and the Santiago Metropolitan Region. Each numbered region is headed by an *intendente*, while Santiago is headed by a mayor. The regions are subdivided into 51 provinces, each headed by a governor, and further divided into 300 municipalities, headed by a mayor. The lowest subdivision is the *comuna*, or commune.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The Chilean legal system is based on the Code of 1857 derived from Spanish jurisprudence. Subsequent codes have been influenced by French and Austrian laws.

The highest court of the land is the Supreme Court, which consists of 21 members, who select a president from their number for a three-year term. Members and prosecutors are appointed by the president from a list of five persons proposed by the court itself.

Chile has 16 appellate courts, each with jurisdiction over one or more provinces. The president is chosen from a slate of three candidates submitted by the Supreme Court, which also appoints the justices and prosecutors of each appellate court. Below this are major claims courts and various local courts (*juzgados de letras*). There is also a series of special courts, such as the juvenile courts, labor courts, and military courts. The local courts consist of one or more tribunals specifically assigned to each of the country's communes, Chile's smallest administrative units. In larger jurisdictions, the local courts may specialize in criminal cases or civil cases, as defined by law.

The courts faced few difficulties in dealing with the military regime, which left the court system virtually intact. Once the legitimacy of the military junta had been accepted, the courts adjudicated matters in conformity with the new decree laws, even when they violated the constitution. Since the return to democracy, attempts have been made to restore the courts' reputation and to address the deficiencies of the Pinochet years.

The correctional system is composed of around 140 prisons. The system is administered by the judicial police of Chile, or gendarmerie, reporting to the Ministry of Justice.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Many human rights groups consider Pinochet's regime to have been one of the most brutal in South American history. Immediately following the 1973 coup the military government embarked on a campaign of extensive repression, including mass arrests, torture, exile, disappearances, and summary executions of prisoners. During this period the number of people who were detained so exceeded the capacities of the existing penal institutions that for a time, stadiums, military grounds, and naval vessels were used as short-term prisons.

For the first four and a half years of military rule, Chile was officially in a state of siege and functioned under martial law. At the end of this period the state of siege was replaced by a state of emergency, which restored a larger degree of authority to the civilian courts, although military tribunals continued to deal with cases involving public security. A state of siege was once again imposed after an attempt on Pinochet's life in 1984, and the level of repression increased once more.

Following the return to civilian government, judicial competence was returned to civilian courts. This opened the way for these courts to reexamine cases of human rights violations. The Aylwin government also established the National Commission on Truth and Reconciliation, or Rettig Commission, to inquire into human rights abuses during the 1973–90 period of military rule. The commission produced a report holding the security forces responsible for 2,115 deaths.

An amnesty law has protected military officers involved in human rights abuses committed between 1973 and 1978. However, by 1993 as many as 600 officers, mainly from the army, had been cited in 230 cases involving rights abuses.

In 1998 General Pinochet was arrested in England on a Spanish warrant, issued by a judge investigating the disappearance of Spanish citizens in Chile in the 1970s and 1980s. For a period of time it has seemed unlikely that Pinochet would be tried in Chile, due to health as well as legal obstacles, though he was placed under house arrest in early 2005. The case has challenged existing views on international human rights prosecutions. Despite fears of a right-wing backlash, democracy in Chile has remained stable throughout the Pinochet case, a fact that bodes well for the future protection of human rights in the country.

FOREIGN POLICY

Since successfully reintegrating itself into the world political community after 1990, Chile's foreign policy has focused on deepening its international economic involvement and capitalizing on its trade and political ties with Latin and North America, Europe, and the Asia Pacific region. In December 1994 Chile was invited by Canada, Mexico, and the United States to join the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), although entrance was subsequently delayed. In June 1996 Chile became an associate of the Southern Common Market (Mercosur) and signed a framework agreement on cooperation with the European Union.

Chile is a founding member of the United Nations, belongs to the Organization of American States (OAS), and has provided forces for UN peacekeeping efforts in Cambodia, El Salvador, Israel, and along the Iraq-Kuwait border, among other missions. Chile is also a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Forum, and President Lagos has signed a free-trade agreement with the United States.

The guiding principle of Chilean foreign economic policy is open regionalism. No other Latin American nation is so tightly integrated into the region's system of trade.

A dispute with Bolivia over the Atacama corridor continues. Bolivia ceded the corridor to Chile in 1884 but has reactivated its claim to it, which Chile disputes, to secure maritime access for natural gas shipments.

DEFENSE

Despite 17 years of military rule, Chile's armed forces are still exceptionally professional and generally free of fac-

tionalism or partisan politics. Their reputation, however, has suffered from the widespread human rights abuses that took place under the military junta, and credibility was badly damaged by allegations of financial wrongdoing by Pinochet's son, the discovery of mass graves containing the corpses of individuals who died while in military hands, and the illegal export of arms to Croatia.

Chile was the first country in Latin America to organize a regular army, and the Chilean military takes great pride in its heritage. Within the Chilean state, the armed forces constitute an essentially autonomous power, with status comparable to that of Congress and the courts. Military service of one year in the army or two years in the navy or air force is compulsory in Chile for all able-bodied 18- or 19-year-old men. In 2003 the nation spent \$2.84 billion, or about 4 percent of gross domestic product (GDP), on defense.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 88,000
 Military Manpower Availability: 4,207,066
 Military Expenditures \$billion: 2.84
 as % of GDP: 4.0
 as % of central government expenditures: —
 Arms Imports \$million: 56
 Arms Exports \$million: 1

ECONOMY

Chile's economy has been dominated by the production of copper since the early 20th century, accounting for up to 50 percent of export revenues. Industry expanded through the 1940s in attempts to diversify the economy, and Chile is currently one of the leading industrial nations in Latin America. Agriculture has played only a limited role in the economy, although efforts to increase production met with some success in the 1970s. After the Marxist experiments of Allende's government were ended by the military coup of 1973, the government began to play a less dominant role in the economy, with privatization a key policy. The financial market has become particularly strong, due largely to the effective reform of the pension system.

Under the Pinochet regime, as influenced by U.S. economists, government expenditure was cut, regulatory functions and price controls ended, free trade promoted, and many state-owned companies privatized. The subsequent democratic governments of Aylwin and Frei strayed little from this free-market economic policy, but they also increased social spending on education, health, housing, and social security. The governments have pursued bilateral and multilateral free-trade agreements throughout the world and have continued to privatize state enterprises and promote foreign investment.

In the 1990s Chile was one of the strongest economies in South America. In 1999 the country experienced negative economic growth, but the economy rebounded in 2000 and has since experienced steady, if modest, 2 to 4 percent growth. One of the major challenges facing the Escobar administration has been reducing poverty and unemployment, the latter of which has remained stubbornly high, at over 8 percent. Economic growth was expected to accelerate in 2004 due to rising copper prices, more foreign investment, and increased export earnings.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 154.7
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 9,900
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 2.3
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 1.0
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 6.4
 Industry: 38.6
 Services: 55.1
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 63
 Government Consumption: 13
 Gross Domestic Investment: 21.2
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 20.44
 Imports: 17.4
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 3.7
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 41.0

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
123.8	128.5	133.1	136.4	140.3

Finance

National Currency: Chilean Peso (CLP)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = CLP 691.433
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency trillion: 4.94
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 2.45
 Total External Debt \$billion: 43.15
 Debt Service Ratio %: 5.49
 Balance of Payments \$million: –594
 International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 15.2
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 2.8

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 57.55
 per capita \$: 3.70
 Foreign Direct Investment \$billion: 1.7

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$billion: 15.44
 Expenditures \$billion: 16.02
 Budget Deficit \$million: 580
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: 18.7

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 6.4
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 3.6
 Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares: 27.2
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 82.6
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 242.7
 Total Farmland % of land area: 2.7
 Livestock: Cattle million: 3.99
 Chickens million: 82
 Pigs million: 3.45
 Sheep million: 4.17
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 38.2
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons million: 4.8

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 9.57
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 1.5

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 4.73
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 21.2
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 1.38
 Net Energy Imports % of use: 63.6
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 10.3
 Production kW-hr billion: 43
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 41.8
 Coal Reserves tons billion: 1.3
 Production tons million: 0.4
 Consumption tons million: 4.1
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: 3.5
 Production cubic feet billion: 41.7
 Consumption cubic feet billion: 230.3
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels million: 150
 Production barrels 000 per day: 18.5
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 240
 Pipelines Length km: 1,003

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 17.4
 Exports \$billion: 20.44
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 7.1
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 1.3
 Balance of Trade \$million: –594

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Argentina %	19.4	—
United States %	13.0	16.2
Brazil %	10.4	—
China %	6.6	8.6
Japan %	—	10.5
South Korea %	—	4.7
Mexico %	—	4.3
Italy %	—	4.2

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 79,814
 Paved %: 19.4
 Automobiles: 1,373,100
 Trucks and Buses: 734,000
 Railroad: Track Length km: 6,585
 Passenger-km million: 781
 Freight-km billion: 3.356
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 47
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 954.5
 Airports: 363
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 11.1
 Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 1.41
 Number of Tourists from million: 1.94
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 845
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 793

Communications

Telephones million: 3.467
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.10
 Cellular Telephones million: 6.446
 Personal Computers million: 1.8
 Internet Hosts per million people: 12,667
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 224

ENVIRONMENT

Chile faces several environmental problems, not all of which are man-made. The country is affected by the socioeconomic consequences of climate variability, on a seasonal and annual scale, and particularly by the El Niño southern oscillation. Agricultural production is based on extensive natural ecosystems in the region, and climate variability, both natural and influenced by development, bears an impact on natural resources. The country's most dynamic export sectors are natural resource-based, and the expanded and intensified use of these resources—in forestry and agriculture particularly—has been accompanied by costly environmental degradation (such as the loss of soil and native forests) and environmental contamination (such as the use of chemicals in agriculture and chemical wastes in mining).

Water pollution is also a problem, particularly in the river basins of the Elqui, Aconcagua, Maipo, Mapocho, Rapel, Maule, Bío-Bío, and Valdivia, where the largest demographic changes have occurred. Industrial waste discharges to lakes and rivers import excessive nutrients and heavy metals, although the majority of lakes in the south of Chile are transparent and clean.

The National Environmental Commission coordinates the government's environmental management

efforts. From 1990 through March 1996 a total of 147 investment projects worth almost \$16.6 billion (almost one-third of GDP) submitted to an environmental assessment system.

Air pollution has remained a stubborn problem, especially in cities such as Santiago. Chile's current president, Ricardo Lagos, has shown concern for the environment and has demonstrated support for conservation efforts and fuel diversification. In March 2001 Lagos announced the Atmospheric Decontamination and Prevention Plan, which restricts overall bus travel on Santiago's city streets as well as the ability of vehicles to use leaded gas. Government support for the controversial Ralco hydroelectric project, however, has worried some environmentalists.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 20.8
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: -20
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 14
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 72,850
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 3.91

LIVING CONDITIONS

With per capita GDP in 2003 at \$9,900, Chile enjoys a relatively high standard of living. The problem is that income is unevenly distributed, with 20.6 percent of the population living below the poverty line. The lowest 10 percent earn only about 3.7 percent of the nation's income, while the highest 10 percent earn 41 percent. This upper 10 percent lives in large, elegant houses in the cities, wields considerable social, political, and economic influence, and owns a disproportionate share of the nation's ranch land. Many have become wealthy in industry. Roughly 30 percent of the population is considered middle class. The remaining people are *campesinos*, or peasants, and *pobladores*, who survive in crowded squatters' villages around the major cities and live in shacks made of whatever material they can find.

HEALTH

The quality of health care in Chile is overall quite good. Life expectancy at birth is over 76 years, and the infant mortality rate is a relatively low 9 per 1,000 live births. Access to sanitation is high, at 96 percent of the population, and the incidence of such diseases as AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria, and intestinal diseases is fairly low. The nation spends roughly 7 percent of GDP on health care, and over 90 percent of the population is covered by public or private health insurance. Access to health care, however, is unevenly distributed. The wealthy and even the middle class have access to private hospitals and

doctors equipped with the latest medical technology, but poor people use publicly funded clinics, many of which are poorly equipped. Many Chileans continue to rely on herbal remedies, and groups such as the Mapuche Indians often turn to female shamans.

Health

Number of Physicians: 17,250
 Number of Dentists: 6,750
 Number of Nurses: 10,000
 Number of Pharmacists: —
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 109
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 9.05
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 31
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 7.0
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 303
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.3
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 94
 Measles: 95
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 92
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 95

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Chileans typically eat four meals: a light breakfast, a main meal early in the afternoon consisting of a salad and a beef or chicken dish with vegetables, a "tea" with bread and cheeses at around five o'clock, and a supper at around nine o'clock in the evening. Cuisine shows the influences of both Europeans and Amerindians. In a nation with such a long coastline, it is no surprise that fish and seafood, especially shrimp—which is often eaten raw—are mainstays of the diet. A national dish is *porotos granados*, a hearty white bean soup that includes squash, corn, peppers, and pumpkin. Also popular are empanadas, wraps made with wheat flour and containing various fillings, such as minced meat, seafood, cheeses, and vegetables. Wine from the nation's central valley is commonly served with the late supper.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 4.0
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,850
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 143.5
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 152.2

STATUS OF WOMEN

Traditional definitions of gender roles in Chile have been considerably challenged as women have won access to more education and have entered the labor force in larger numbers. By 1990 about half the students in the nation's primary and secondary schools were female; in

higher education the proportion was lower, at about 44 percent. A 1988 survey of workers found that 70 percent of men and 92 percent of women accepted the notion that "men should participate more actively in housework so that women are able to work." Women can frequently be found in the professions, even outside such traditionally female-dominated areas as primary and secondary education, nursing, and social work. Chilean women today constitute 27 percent of physicians, 48 percent of judges, and over 50 percent of journalists. These percentages are increasing; over 37 percent of physicians under the age of 35 were women. The Lagos administration appointed an unprecedented four women as ministers.

Despite these advancements, considerable pressures on women to have children remain. The proportion of the population favoring legal abortions remains small in Chile, except in cases of rape, danger to the mother, or malformations. Although illegal, abortions are commonly performed. Contraception is broadly accepted, even among practicing Catholics, and the distribution and use of birth control is facilitated by national health programs.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 13
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.0
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 37.3

WORK

In 2003 Chile's labor force numbered about six million, with an unemployment rate of 8.5 percent. About 13.6 percent of workers were employed in agriculture, 23.4 percent in industry, and 63 percent in industry. Major agricultural products include fruit (especially grapes, apples, pears, and peaches), onions, wheat, corn, oats, garlic, asparagus, beans, beef, poultry, wool, fish, and timber. The agricultural sector has done well since the mid-1980s, and Chile exports a considerable amount of its agricultural production, especially fruits and wine. Major industries include copper and minerals, food processing, iron and steel, wood and wood products, transport equipment, cement, and textiles. Chile's major labor problem is acute underemployment. With a per capita GDP of \$9,900 in 2003, many Chileans earn comfortable incomes, while many others, especially the *pobladores* who live in squatter villages, eke out livings performing odd jobs and temporary work.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 6,000,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 35.0

Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 13.6
 Industry: 23.4
 Services: 63.0
 Unemployment %: 8.5

EDUCATION

Education is free, universal, and compulsory for children between the ages of six and 14. Primary education lasts for eight years, secondary for four. Attendance is more than 85 percent at the primary level, more than 75 percent at the secondary level. The literacy rate is over 96 percent for both males and females.

Before the education reforms of 1980, Chile had eight universities. In 1980 the military regime split up the two state universities and fostered the development of new private universities, a policy that by 1990 had increased the number of universities to 60, along with 80 professional training institutes and 168 technical training centers. Few of these institutions received state support. These changes led to greater competition but also to greater disparities in standards and a decline in overall quality. The top specialists in many fields moved to research institutes, depriving the university sector of innovative thinkers and writers. In the 1990s the top schools included the University of Chile (founded 1738), the University of Concepción (1919), the Catholic University of Chile (1888), and the Catholic University of Valparaíso (1928). Chilean universities are now widely recognized as being among the best in Latin America.

Preschool programs were introduced into Chile at the beginning of the 20th century by German advisers and were increased greatly during the Pinochet years. The school system is administered by the national government under the Ministry of Education.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 96.2
 Male %: 96.4
 Female %: 96.1
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 13.5
 First Level: Primary schools: 8,323
 Teachers: 53,267
 Students: 1,753,952
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 32.9
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 86.5
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: —
 Teachers: 45,981
 Students: 1,101,380
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 32.6
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 78.6
 Third Level: Institutions: —
 Teachers: —
 Students: 521,609
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 42.4
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 4.2

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The chief source of public funding for scientific research in Chile is the National Fund for Scientific and Technological Development, which was founded in 1992 and since then has funded thousands of research projects at a cost of billions of dollars. The National Commission for Scientific and Technological Research, founded in 1967, not only advises the government on scientific matters but also has funded hundreds of individuals earning master's degrees and doctorates. Otherwise, most of the scientific research carried out in Chile is done at the major universities, especially the University of Chile and Pontificia Universidad Católica.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 352
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 0.58
 High-Tech Exports \$million: 107.5
 Patent Applications by Residents: 241

MEDIA

Before 1973 most major political groups published their own daily or weekly journals, but when political parties were banned during the Pinochet years the journals were also restricted, except for those that did not criticize the government. Although freedom of expression and of the press were guaranteed under the 1980 constitution and the courts constantly challenged government edicts concerning censorship, in practice the regime exercised considerable control over the media and simply blocked legal dissent. During the 1980s control was relaxed slightly, and opposition groups were permitted a voice once more.

Since that return to democracy, modern press and communications have spread. By 1996 there were 52 daily newspapers, up from 33 in 1967, and *El mercurio* (a conservative daily), *La nación* (a government-owned daily), and *La tercera de la hora*, all published in Santiago, have considerable influence. Television was introduced in 1958 and is operated by a national government network (started in 1967) and several independent stations. Many of the television and radio stations are operated by universities on a commercial basis. National Television of Chile is owned by the state but is not under direct government control. The country has more than 375 radio stations and 63 television broadcast stations.

In 2002 the number of people connected to the Internet in Chile was estimated to be 3.575 million, or over 20 percent of the population. Usage has grown rapidly thanks to a good telecommunications infrastructure and the desire of Chileans to keep up with the latest technological developments.

Media

Daily Newspapers: —
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: 1,443
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers million: 12.13
 per 1,000: 759
 Television sets million: 3.6
 per 1,000: 240

CULTURE

Only since 1992, when the Chilean Ministry of Education established a fund for art and culture, have artists received any public funding for their work. In its first decade the Fondart fund financed over 4,000 projects at a total cost of over \$30 million. Fondart is now the chief source of funding for cultural undertakings in Chile.

The first major literary work in Chile was *La araucana*, a 16th-century epic poem by Alonso de Ercilla. Two 20th-century Chilean poets won the Nobel Prize for Literature: Lucila Godoy Alcayaga (who wrote under the name Gabriela Mistral) in 1945 and Pablo Neruda in 1971. Prominent Chilean novelists in recent years have included Antonio Skarmeta, Francisco Coloane, Ariel Dorfman, and Isabel Allende.

The Museum of Fine Arts and the Museum of Contemporary Art in Santiago house collections of paintings by Chilean artists such as Pedro Lira, Juan Francisco González, Nemesio Antunez, Claudio Bravo, and Roberto Matta. Folk music has also made an important contribution to Chilean culture. The most prominent such musician was Violeta Parra, who collected Chilean folk music in the 1950s and 1960s, and her performances gave rise to a movement called Nueva Canción Chilena, or Chilean New Song. In classical music, the pianist Claudio Arrau was the most famous Chilean performer of the 20th century.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 269
 Volumes: 940,000
 Registered borrowers: 23,153
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: 198
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: 6,800,000

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

A Mapuche Indian named Lautaro is an important folk hero in Chile. Lautaro learned Spanish and was a servant of the Spanish conqueror Pedro de Valdivia. Since he knew Spanish ways, he was chosen to lead the resistance

to the Spanish. He developed combat tactics and taught others to ride horses, but he was killed just as his forces were about to enter Santiago. He remains a symbol of resistance to assimilation. In a similar vein, Chile's most famous military hero is Captain Arturo Prat Chacón, who fought in an 1879 war against Bolivia and Peru that expanded Chile's boundaries and left Bolivia landlocked. The date of his death aboard the battleship *Esmeralda* on May 21, 1879, is a national holiday.

Many myths surround the fog-bound island of Chiloé. Legend has it that the island is home to a lost city whose streets are paved with gold and silver, but the fog always hides the city from sight. The lost city, which will be seen only once when the world ends, is a source of immense wealth.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Chileans enjoy taking advantage of the nation's natural wonders, visiting beaches and seaside resorts in the north, the lake district and farmlands further inland, and the glaciers and mountains in the south, including the nation's 2,000 volcanoes. Many of the nation's natural parks have geysers that attract substantial audiences. Water sports are popular, as are skiing, fishing, boating, and visits to thermal baths. In the cities Chile has a lively tradition of film and theater, and in many small theaters singers, poets, and actors gather to perform. Musicians, comedians, and dancers perform outdoors in Santiago's Plaza de Armas to the delight of people out for a stroll or enjoying a late-evening meal or snack. Family and friends often get together for barbecues around open charcoal fires in yards as well as in public parks or gardens.

ETIQUETTE

Chileans are generally a bit on the formal side in their social relations. They tend to use the formal "you" form, *usted*, in addressing others and will address even waiters in a restaurant as "Señor." The informal "you" is used only by younger people and those who know each other well; it is rarely used when a person is talking to an elder. When meeting, people shake hands in a reserved fashion, and talking loudly in public is frowned upon. It is also considered rude to converse about the horrors of the Pinochet regime. While Chileans tend to be punctual for business appointments, it is expected that people arrive from 20 minutes up to an hour late to social functions.

FAMILY LIFE

Because of the influence of the Catholic Church, Chileans place extreme value on marriage and on church

weddings. People tend to marry and begin having children at a young age. Views concerning premarital sex are fairly conventional, and cohabitation before marriage is rare. Only very recently has divorce, rather than church annulment, been available. The principal household unit is the nuclear family, with a father, mother, and a number of children that has been decreasing in recent years to an average of about 2.5. Chile has the lowest fertility rate in Latin America. While the nuclear family dominates, it is not unusual for a widowed grandparent to live with a married son or daughter, and grandparents wield considerable influence in the upbringing of children. Adult children tend to remain close to their parents, visiting frequently and talking on the phone as often as daily.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Common dress among Chilean cowboys in the countryside includes ponchos, broad-brimmed hats, boots, and often spurs. In the cities Western-style dress is the norm, including suits for men and dresses for women, although slacks are accepted as well. Much emphasis is placed on good grooming, including hair and, for women, makeup.

SPORTS

In 2003 Chile was ranked 69th by the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) in soccer, the nation's most popular sport. Also popular in the countryside, as well as in Santiago, is horse racing, and Chilean cowboys are accomplished rodeo riders. Water sports, boating, and fishing are widely enjoyed along Chile's long coastline.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1946** Gabriel Gonzalez Videla of the Radical Party becomes president.
- 1948** Communist Party is outlawed.
- 1964** Eduardo Frei Montalva, Christian Democratic Party candidate, is elected to presidency.
- 1970** Salvador Allende Gossens, of the left-wing Popular Unity Party, wins presidential election.
- 1971** Copper industry is nationalized.
- 1973** Civil disorder, strikes, and civil war sweep the country. Army overthrows Allende, who dies in the process. Military junta under General Augusto Pinochet Ugarte assumes power. Congress is dissolved and political parties banned.
- 1974** Mass arrests, torture, and suppression of civil rights mark the junta's attempts to consolidate control.

- 1976** Former defense minister Orlando Letelier is killed in bomb explosion in Washington, D.C.
- 1978** Plebiscite supports Pinochet's policies; state of siege is lifted.
- 1980** New constitution is introduced.
- 1984** Increased opposition to Pinochet results in state of emergency being declared.
- 1986** Pinochet survives assassination attempt.
- 1988** Presidential and congressional plebiscites are held.
- 1989** National referendum is held in July. Presidential and congressional elections are held in December.
- 1990** New president Patricio Aylwin Azócar takes office. Pinochet remains as head of army and life senator.
- 1991** President Aylwin accuses Pinochet regime of murdering 1,068 people during its rule.
- 1993** Christian Democrat Eduardo Frei Ruiz-Tagle, son of Eduardo Frei Montalva, is elected president. In November the former head of the secret police and his deputy are sentenced to seven- and six-year sentences for the Letelier assassination in 1976.
- 1994** Canada, Mexico, and the United States invite Chile to join NAFTA.
- 1995** The convictions in the Letelier case are upheld by the Supreme Court, and Pinochet denounces the decision, challenging the court's authority. After a tense standoff, the two men are arrested in June 1995. In August legislation is introduced to reopen investigations into 542 cases of disappearance under the Pinochet regime.
- 1996** Chile becomes an associate member of Mercosur, the Southern Cone free-trade market, and concludes a free-trade agreement with Canada.
- 1998** Pinochet is arrested in London on a Spanish murder warrant. Chile cuts contact with the United Kingdom following a legal decision to allow extradition proceedings to begin.
- 1999** The Law Lords in the United Kingdom rule that Pinochet's immunity does not extend to the charges against him. A U.K. court rules that Pinochet can be extradited to Spain to stand trial for torture and human rights charges. In presidential elections in December, neither of the two main candidates, Ricardo Lagos and Joaquín Lavín, secure an overall majority.
- 2000** On January 16 Ricardo Lagos narrowly wins the second round of the presidential elections. Pinochet undergoes medical tests and is later declared unfit to stand trial and returns to Chile. The Chilean appeals court strips Pinochet of his immunity from prosecution. The Chilean army announces it will help to locate the bodies of some 1,200 people missing since the 1970s.
- 2001** Pinochet is indicted on charges of kidnapping and murder and placed under house arrest. The

Santiago Court of Appeals reduces the charges against Pinochet to acting as an accessory in the crimes. Pinochet is released from house arrest on bail. Later that year he is found unfit to stand trial

- 2002** Supreme Court drops charges against Pinochet, ruling that he is mentally unfit.
- 2004** Supreme Court strips Pinochet of immunity from prosecution. President Lagos signs a controversial law making divorce available for the first time.
- 2005** Pinochet is placed under house arrest.
- 2006** Socialist Michelle Bachelet becomes Chile's first woman president.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Ministry General Secretariat of the Government; Communication and Culture Secretariat
<http://www.segegob.cl/seg-ingl/index2i.html>

CHINA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

People's Republic of China (Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo)

ABBREVIATION

CN

CAPITAL

Beijing

HEAD OF STATE

President Hu Jintao (from 2003)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Premier of the State Council Wen Jiabao (from 2003)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Communist dictatorship

POPULATION

1,306,313,812 (2005)

AREA

9,596,960 sq km (3,705,386 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Han Chinese

LANGUAGE

Putonghua (Mandarin)

RELIGIONS

Folk religion, Buddhism, Islam, Christianity, Taoism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Yuan

NATIONAL FLAG

Red flag with five yellow stars in the upper left quadrant—one large star near the hoist and four smaller ones arranged in an arc to the right.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A large golden star above a semicircle of four smaller stars, also in gold, against a circular red background, above a golden replica of Tiananmen Square. A gold decorative frame of ears of wheat and rice surrounds the emblem. At the base of the emblem is a gold cogwheel partially covered by red drapery.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Yi Yong Ju Jin Xing Qu” (March of the volunteers)

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day), May 1 (Labor Day), May 4 (Youth Day), July 1 (Communist Party of China Founding Day), August 1 (Army Day), October 1 (National Day), various festivals based on the Chinese calendar

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

1523 B.C.E.

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

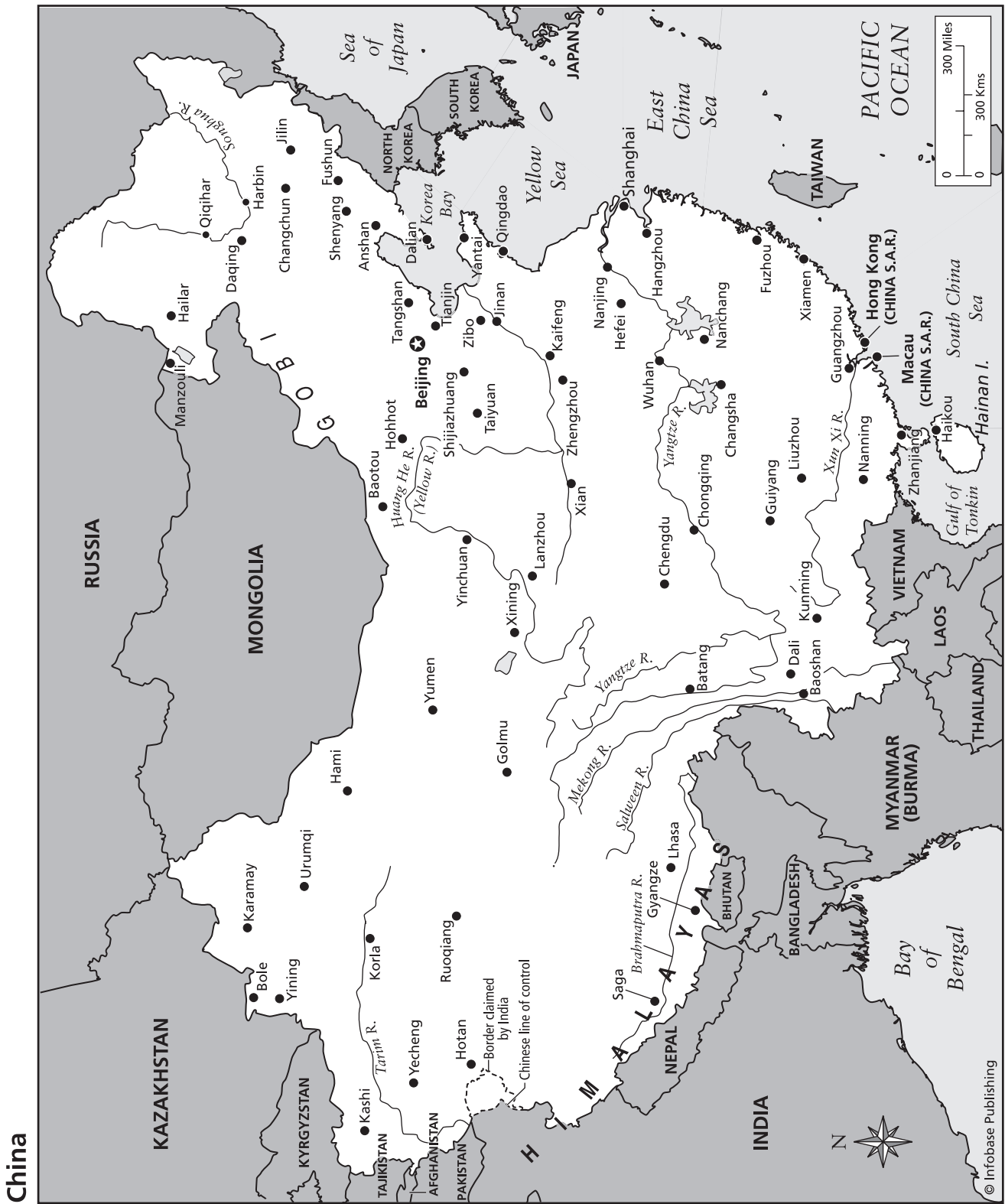
December 4, 1982

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

The People's Republic of China is the fourth-largest country in the world and the largest Asian country. The national territory includes approximately 5,000 islands, of which the largest is Hainan, off the southwestern coast; others are grouped among the Dongsha (Pratas), Xisha (Paracels), Nansha (Spratly), and Zhongsha archipelagoes. Mainland China's coastline extends from the mouth of the Yalu River in the northeast to the Gulf of Tonkin in the south in a sweeping arc, as broken in the south by the Leizhou Peninsula, projecting into the South China Sea, and in the north by the Liadong and Shandong peninsulas, projecting into the Yellow Sea.

The capital is Beijing, formerly known in English as Peking (or also as Peiping or Shuntien-fu), which was founded by Khitan Tartars in the 10th century and has been the capital of China from the 15th century. There are 56 other cities with populations of one million or more, of which Shanghai is the largest, with a population of more than 10 million in 2005. It is by far the largest port serving the vast hinterland of the Yangzi River valley.

China is geographically one of the most diverse regions of the world, encompassing vast areas of rugged, inhospitable terrain, broad plains, deserts, lofty mountain ranges, and steppe. Geographers have identified a number of topographical regions based on terrain and relief,



as divided broadly into plateaus and basins, the Great Plains, and the Southeast.

The four great plains of China are the Huang He, Yangzi, Xi, and Northeast, or Manchurian, plains. Mountains make up more than two-thirds of the land area of China. They fall into three groups according to the direction in which they run: east-west, northeast-southwest, and north-south.

Since the general lie of the land slopes toward the east, all the great national rivers flow toward the Pacific. In the northeast, the Amur (Heilongjiang) drains a great part of the Manchurian basin as it winds along its 4,023 km (2,500 mi) course. The main river in northern China and the second-largest in the country is the Huang He (Yellow River), which acquired its name from the yellowish color of its muddy waters—the result of its passage through the yellow loess plateau of Gansu. From Gansu it winds 4,795 km (2,980 mi) through the northern provinces eastward to Shandong, where it empties into the Bohai Sea. Central China is drained by China's longest river, the Yangzi, more properly called the Chang Jiang (as local people use the name Yangzi to refer to the lower reaches of the river alone). From its source about 80 km (50 mi) from that of the Huang He, it wends 5,208 km (3,237 mi) to the East China Sea. Important rivers that drain the southwestern coastal regions are the Min Jiang and the Zhu Jiang (Pearl River). The Zhu Jiang, the fourth-largest river in China, is a network of three waterways that meet south of the city of Guangzhou to form a large estuary consisting of many channels separated by islets. The main eastern channel, Hu Men (Boca Tigris), enters the sea near Hong Kong, while the main western channel flows close to Macao. Farther south are two independent rivers, the Mekong, or Lancang, and the Yuan Jiang (Red River), of which only the upper courses are in China.

Changchun	2,223,200
Changsha	1,489,300
Chengdu	2,341,100
Chongqing	3,934,200
Dalian	2,118,100
Fushun	1,244,100
Fuzhou	1,172,200
Guangzhou	4,154,800
Guiyang	1,341,200
Handan	1,069,100
Hangzhou	1,932,600
Harbin	2,672,100
Hefei	1,107,100
Jilin	1,244,700
Jinan	1,917,200
Kunming	1,549,600
Lanzhou	1,527,400
Luoyang	1,043,200
Nanchang	1,386,500
Nanjing	2,822,100
Nanning	1,016,100
Qingdao	1,867,400
Qiqihar	1,125,900
Shanghai	9,838,400
Shenyang	3,981,000
Shenzhen	1,061,200
Shijiazhuang	1,632,300
Suzhou	1,170,600
Taiyuan	1,906,500
Tangshan	1,279,200
Tianjin	5,095,900
Urumqi	1,359,000
Wuhan	4,488,900
Wuxi	1,265,700
Xian	2,589,000
Xuzhou	1,120,500
Zhengzhou	1,692,400
Zibo	1,514,000

Geography

Area sq km: 9,596,960; sq mi 3,705,386

World Rank: 4th

Land Boundaries, km: Afghanistan 76; Bhutan 470; Burma 2,185; Hong Kong 30; India 3,380; Kazakhstan 1,533; North Korea 1,416; Kyrgyzstan 858; Laos 423; Macau 0.34; Mongolia 4,677; Nepal 1,236; Pakistan 523; Russia 3,645; Tajikistan 414; Vietnam 1,281

Coastline, km: 14,500

Elevation Extremes meters:

Lowest: Turpan Pendi -154

Highest: Mount Everest 8,850

Land Use %

Arable land: 15.4

Permanent Crops: 1.3

Forest: 17.0

Other: 66.3

Population of Principal Cities (2001 est.)

Anshan	1,287,100
Baotou	1,146,500
Beijing	7,441,000

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

The diversity of China's terrain is matched only by the diversity of its climate. In a vast subcontinent such as China with tremendous differences in latitude and longitude as well as altitude—from peaks 8 km (5 mi) in height to basins below sea level—there are sharp variations in climatic features. Leizhou Peninsula, Hainan Island, the South China Sea islands of Guangdong Province, and the southern part of Yunnan Province have tropical climates, where summer reigns year-round. Heilongjiang Province, in the northeast, has a short and cool summer and a severe winter. The area around the Yangzi and Huai river valleys in the east is warm and humid, with four distinct seasons. The Inner Mongolia–Xinjiang area, in the northwest, can experience extremes of weather over the course of a single day, giving rise to the saying “Fur coats in the morning and gossamer at noon.” Some areas of the Yunnan–Guizhou Plateau, in the southwest, have mild winters and cool summers, as does Kunming, justly named the “City of Spring.” The Tibet Plateau has a cold, dry climate and a strong sun; in some of its areas pronounced

differences in climate are found between high and low altitudes.

In spite of these differences, the one constant that characterizes the Chinese climate is the monsoon rhythm arising from the continental nature of the Asian landmass. The monsoon denotes a wind system whose origin, in China, changes from southeast in summer to north and northeast in winter. The cold air mass established in the autumn in Siberia and Mongolia forms an anticyclone, or center of high pressure, and spreads southward until it meets the warm air mass of the North Pacific trades, along a front to the south of the China coast known as the West Pacific Polar Front. From this great anticyclone there is an outflow of dry northerly and northeasterly winds over China, bringing prolonged and bitter winters to the northern part of the country and cold weather as far south as the central and lower Yangzi River basins. In spring the movements are reversed. The cold air mass over the heart of the continent warms up, giving place to a continental low, while a high-pressure center is established over the eastern Pacific. Northerly and northwesterly winds give way to those from the south and southeast, and a great current of warm, humid air moves in from the south. Between May and July the summer monsoon extends over the Yangzi and the North China Plain. The characteristic weather of the summer monsoon over much of China involves hot, calm days of high relative humidity, which are very oppressive. Inland the winds are light, but coastal regions in the south and southeast experience disastrous typhoons. The duration of the summer monsoon season varies between the north and the south, being shorter in the north because of the lateness of the onset.

Temperature patterns are determined by altitude, latitude, and landmass. There is a difference of 9,144 m (30,000 ft) between Mount Everest and the Turfan Basin and a difference of nearly 40° in latitude between Hainan and Moho on the Amur. In winter there is a large and steady fall in temperature from the south to the north. There is a remarkable unity of temperature in summer, the maximum differences being only 15°F, compared to 60°F in winter; every place is hot and humid. In the desert and semidesert regions of Xinjiang, Mongolia, and Dzungaria, annual temperature ranges are very great—up to 76°F, compared to 22°F in Hong Kong.

Except for the small southwestern corner of Xizang, or Tibet, which shares the phenomenal rainfall of Assam across the border, rainfall in China shows a general decrease from southeast to northwest, ranging from 2,159 mm (85 in) in Hong Kong to 102 mm (4 in) in Kashgar.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature

Hainan, South Guanxi, South Guangdong: 55°F
 South and Central China: 80°F
 Northern Manchuria: January -17°F to July 70°F
 Hong Kong: Summer 60°F

Average Rainfall

National: 60 in
 North China and Manchuria: 25 in
 Pearl River: 80 in
 Hong Kong: 85 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

China consists of two major zoogeographic regions. The northern part of the country lies in the Palearctic region and is home to such mammal species as horses, camels, tapirs, river foxes, mouse hares, hamsters, moose, Asiatic black bears, and jerboas. The southern part of the country lies in the Oriental geographic region and is home to such species as gibbons and various species of monkeys and apes, the civet cat, the tree shrew, and the Chinese pangolin. Deer, antelope, pigs, wolves, and rodents can be found throughout the country. The giant panda is found only along the Chang Jiang.

China has an immense diversity of flora: about 146,000 species, one-eighth of the world's total. By comparison, the United States and Canada combined have about 17,000 species. About half of the nation consists of desert and grasslands. There are some 7,500 species of shrubs and trees and some 8,000 species of flora that have economic value, including medicinal uses. Species of plants of Chinese origin that are grown the world over include, among agricultural products, anise, apricots, cucumber, ginger, ginseng, lemons, oranges, peaches, short-grain rice, soybeans, and tea. Flowers include camellias, forsythias, gardenias, jasmines, magnolias, primroses, rhododendrons, and viburnums.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 1,306,313,812
 World Rank: 1st
 Density per sq km: 138.1
 % of annual growth (1999-2003): 0.8
 Male %: 51.5
 Female %: 48.5
 Urban %: 38.6
 Age Distribution %: 0-14: 22.3
 15-64: 70.2
 65 and over: 7.5
 Population 2025: 1,453,124,000
 Birth Rate per 1,000: 12.98
 Death Rate per 1,000: 6.92
 Rate of Natural Increase %: 0.7
 Total Fertility Rate: 1.69
 Expectation of Life (years): Males 70.4
 Females 73.72
 Marriage Rate per 1,000: 7.1
 Divorce Rate per 1,000: 1.0
 Average Size of Households: 4.1
 Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

According to official data, 91.9 percent of the population is Han Chinese; the term *Han* refers to the ancient dynasty that ruled China from 206 B.C.E. to 220 C.E. Although there are sharp regional and cultural differences among the Han, who are a mingling of many races, they share a common language, social organization, and cultural characteristics universally recognized as the core of Chinese civilization.

Han is only one of 56 nationalities that officially make up the Chinese population; the other 55 are called minority nationalities. While accounting for only 8.1 percent of the population, these minority nationalities are distributed over 50 percent of the national territory, mostly along the inland borders. The distinction between Han and some of the minorities is unclear because many have been totally or partially assimilated over time. Some are found only in a single region, while others are spread over many regions. In general, Xinjiang, Inner Mongolia, and Tibet contain heavy concentrations of minorities, whereas minority groups in Yunnan and Guizhou provinces and the Guangxi-Zhuang Autonomous Region are more fragmented and inhabit smaller areas. There are special minority autonomous administrative regions on the Soviet model. They include five provincial-level units: Xizang (Tibet), Xinjiang, Guangxi, Nei Mongol, and Ningxia (named for Tibetan, Uighur, Zhuang, Mongol, and Hui nationalities, respectively). In addition, there are over 29 autonomous prefectures and 73 autonomous counties.

With the exception of the Koreans, few ethnic nationalities have been able to preserve their identity in the face of the preponderance of the Han Chinese culture. Conflicts have been frequent between the majority and minority cultures, and the degree of Sinicization reflects the outcome of these conflicts. The most Sinicized groups are in the southeastern area and among the T'umet of former Suiyuan Province. There are no foreign communities as such in China.

LANGUAGES

The Chinese language is spoken by more people in the world than any other language, including English. Chinese is a much older language that has nevertheless undergone few changes in the course of its history; one of the most important changes—the introduction of the pinyin romanized script—is of recent date. Chinese is one of the most difficult languages in the world to learn. As a result, illiteracy has always been high in the country, with literacy among the privileges of the elite.

During the course of its evolution, the spoken language has undergone more modifications than the written one, particularly in pronunciation and modes of expression. A number of dialects have developed as a result of

these changes. The spoken language is also more receptive to foreign influences. As a result, speech communities intermingle and overlap. Of the numerous dialects, the most important in terms of the number of speakers is Mandarin, locally known as Putonghua, followed by Wu, Xiang, Hui, Gan, Hakka, Min, and Yue. Although derived from a common core language, different pronunciation and linguistic structure make most of them mutually unintelligible. Even within Mandarin, there are three groups of subdialects: Northern Mandarin, spoken in Beijing and the entire Huang He basin; Southwestern Mandarin, spoken in the southwestern hinterland, including the Sichuan Red River basin, the Yunnan-Kweichow Plateau, and the central Yangzi River plains; and Southern Mandarin, spoken in the lower Chang Jiang valley eastward to Nanjing.

The cultural bond of language has led Mandarin to become one of the rallying standards of Chinese nationalism, as embodied in the cry “One State, One People, One Language.” Seeking to foster unity through language, each regime since 1911 has sought to adopt Mandarin as a national language, popularize Chinese among the non-Han minorities, simplify the written words, compile a list of basic Chinese characters and words, and alphabetize the Chinese language.

A more serious need was that for the introduction of a phonetic alphabet to replace the system of Chinese characters. In the absence of an alphabet, scholarly tools such as dictionaries, indexes, bibliographies, and catalogs have traditionally been arranged on the basis of a complex system of fundamental characters (radicals), or the number of strokes in each character. Chinese characters also create special problems in other areas. Telegraphic messages have to be sent in numerical codes. Typesetting machines and typewriters are vastly more complicated than those using an alphabet. In the 20th century many alphabetic systems have been devised to overcome these deficiencies, ranging from romanizations to the kana-like symbols used by the Japanese, shorthand systems, and picture scripts. In 1956 a committee of linguistic experts appointed by the Maoist regime recommended the adoption of a 26-letter Latin alphabet for the Chinese written language. The new system, known as pinyin, was formally approved by the National People's Congress in 1958; another 21 years passed before the government decided to adopt it officially. In 1979 and the following years the government issued a number of word lists and lists of places and persons with standard spellings. The transition to pinyin posed problems not only for Chinese—particularly nationalists for whom language is a highly emotional issue—but also for Western readers accustomed to the Wade-Giles romanization system. Because it is based on the Beijing dialect, much education had to follow its introduction in all parts of China. As part of romanization, Chinese writing switched to left to

right, horizontally, rather than in vertical lines from right to left, as in traditional Chinese. Pens and pencils have also replaced the time-honored writing brushes. Another part of the reform concerned punctuation. There were no punctuations in Chinese writing until a set of marks was introduced in the late 1910s. The new system was copied from the West, with the exception that the period is not a point but a small circle.

The introduction of a romanized script has been a mixed blessing. It has made classical Chinese virtually a foreign language for most Chinese and therefore constitutes a serious diminution of China's literary heritage. As it will be impossible to transcribe all the classic texts into the romanized form, most will be available only to scholars.

RELIGIONS

In China, organized religion is subordinated to a complex of folk beliefs and practices that provide the ritual setting to daily lives. They include ancestor worship, reverence for family altars and institutions, and more distinctly occult elements such as magic, sorcery, and divination. Over this substratum of core beliefs and practices lies a thin veneer of ethical rules of conduct established by some of the greatest of classical masters, Confucius in particular. Some elements of theology and cosmogony were added from Buddhism, which was the first of the organized religions to reach China and which ranks with Confucianism and Taoism as one of the three main indigenous religious traditions. At the fringe of this religious landscape are the two major religions of the non-Chinese world—Islam and Christianity—neither of which was grafted onto the national consciousness and thus never properly took roots in the country. To complicate the picture even further is the hovering and brooding presence of Marxism, which negates religious belief and has waged a relentless campaign to uproot all established religions.

The most pervasive and the oldest of all Chinese religious practices—the distinction between religious practice and religion being quite important in the Chinese setting—is ancestor worship. Although ancestor worship is found in a variety of other cultures, nowhere else has it been so interwoven into the social fabric as to constitute an inseparable part of daily life. The personal and familial nature of ancestor worship precluded the suprafamilial aspect of most religions from taking roots in China; formal religions such as Christianity were rejected because they could not be reconciled with ancestor worship and because their theological aspects overshadowed their social aspects.

Folk religious systems antedate formal religious systems and coexist with them everywhere, even in the 20th century, but in China such folk systems flourish aboveground and have fewer linkages with organized religion. The world of folk religion is a kaleidoscope of dragons,

demons, ghosts, gods, animals, and spirits jumbled together. In addition to folk deities, every family had its own tutelary deity, the kitchen god who kept an account of the good and bad deeds of the family and reported annually to the Tien. The kitchen god's periodical ascent to heaven was made easier by the burning of incense.

Folk religions did not concern themselves with theology, philosophy, or ethics other than in a rudimentary way. The philosophical and ethical bases were provided by Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism, and other systems, none of which was organized in terms of doctrine, clergy, or believers. Although Confucianism is primarily a politico-intellectual tradition of statecraft (*ju-chia*), it was transformed by its followers into a religion with all the trappings of a cult, including temples, sacrifices, and priests. Yet its inherent religious neutrality made Confucianism too impersonal to fill the emotional needs of the common people. In the 20th century Confucianism, closely identified with the imperial power, collapsed along with the monarchy. Sacrifices in Confucian temples were discontinued in 1928. Reduced to a philosophical system, it was supplanted by Western philosophical and ethical traditions and even more so by dialectical materialism.

Taoism is also both a philosophy and a religion. Its conversion into a religion took place in the early centuries of the common era. Originally based on Persian Mazdaism, Taoism involved the confession of sins, healing, prayers to the spirits, and an elaborate angelology. Later, as a rival to Buddhism, it adopted an order of clergy and monks. Its philosophical character was gradually diluted as it became identified with folk religion. The organization and rituals of Taoism are blatant imitations of Buddhism. Strong Buddhist influences also permeated the architecture of Taoist temples, called *kuan* and *kung*, as well as liturgy and music. The Taoist pantheon was peopled by folk deities such as the Jade Emperor and lower gods and guardian spirits. The cult also embraced the rich reservoir of native superstitions such as geomancy, divination, witchcraft, astrology, communication with the dead, and, most important, alchemy, particularly the transmutation of base metals into gold and the manufacture of elixirs of immortality. From Indian cultures Taoism borrowed Yogic practices such as breathing controls and special diets designed to prolong life. Taoism also quickly disintegrated in the early part of the 20th century. The official end came when the last hereditary *tien-shih*, presiding over Taoist headquarters at Dragon and Tiger Mountain in Jiangxi, was expelled by the Nationalist government in 1927.

Although Buddhism originated in India and only spread into China after many centuries, it is considered a native religion for all practical purposes. Chinese Buddhism is of the Mahayana (Great Vehicle) school, which is more properly a religion than the Hinayana (Lesser Vehicle) school. In the Mahayana version, Buddha is a

god whose image is worshipped and to whom sacrifices are offered. Buddhist temples and ceremonies are replicas of imperial palaces and court ceremonies. Nirvana is replaced by the Western Heaven, ruled over by Amida Buddha (Amitabha). Hells and purgatories have been added as countervailing concepts. The Indian bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara, originally a male deity, became the goddess of mercy, Guanyin. Although persecuted at times by Taoist and Confucianist emperors, Buddhism was a useful political tool for China's rulers in their efforts to control the Mongol and Tibetan peoples who adhered to Lamaism, a form of Mahayana Buddhism corrupted by native shamanism. Suffering serious setbacks in the early 20th century, Buddhism enjoyed a brief revival in the 1930s and 1940s through the efforts of many abbots, such as Yin Guang and Dai Xu.

Islam is considered a foreign religion and is known as *Hui Hui jiao*, which means "religion of the Uighur," the Turkic tribe of Xinjiang. About half of Chinese Muslims speak a Turkic language. Though distributed in most inland provinces, their most important traditional centers are in Yunnan, Gansu, Xinjiang, Ningxia, and Inner Mongolia. The Muslim community has avoided identifying itself with Chinese culture except for the sake of political expediency. Islam flourished under the Nationalist government when Muslims reestablished contacts with Arab countries, resulting in strong movements toward orthodoxy. The same period opened the way to political and military power for many Muslims. Even after the advent of Communism, Islam fared better than other religions. The Chinese Islamic Association operates under government aegis and disseminates Communist propaganda in the Middle East. Muslim schools have been established as instruments of Communist indoctrination. Islam is also taught in the Central Academy of Nationalities and the Chinese Muslim College in Beijing.

There is no accepted term for Christianity in Chinese. Catholicism and Protestantism, which were introduced separately, are called respectively *tien chu jiao* (doctrine of the Heavenly Lord) and *chi tu jiao* (doctrine of Christ). Both groups evolved in isolation and operate as two different religions.

Religious Affiliations

Taoist, Buddhist, Muslim	13,000,000–26,000,000
Christian	39,000,000–52,000,000
Other	1,228,000,000–1,254,000,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Although earlier civilizations flourished elsewhere, they became extinct, and China is the world's oldest nation, with a continual history that goes back to the second millennium B.C.E. The Chinese have a strong sense of history

and have kept voluminous records since very early times. An inward-looking people, the Chinese have constructed a Sinocentric view of the world reflected in the Chinese name for their own country—Zhonghua, literally the Middle Kingdom or the Central Nation.

The Chinese count time not in centuries, as in the West, but in dynasties. From the first dynasty until 1911, when the first republic was established, there were 17 dynasties, many of them with subdivisions and periods.

The origins of Chinese civilization are shrouded in the mists of time. The first prehistoric dynasty is said to be the Xia, which ruled for about 500 years (2200–1700 B.C.E.). The first historical dynasty about which archaeological evidence exists is the Shang (or Yin), which ruled from 1700 to 1027 B.C.E. Two important Shang developments were the invention of writing and the use of bronze. The last Shang ruler was overthrown by a chieftain of a frontier tribe called Zhou, settled along the banks of the Wei River valley in modern Shanxi Province. The Zhou dynasty had its capital at Hao, near the modern city of Xian. The Zhou dynasty ruled China for a longer period than any other. However, in 771 B.C.E. the Zhou court was sacked and its king killed, forcing the transfer of its capital eastward to Luoyang, in the modern province of Henan. Because of this shift the Zhou period is divided into Western and Eastern eras. The latter is further subdivided into the Spring and Autumn period (722–481 B.C.E.) and the Warring States period (403–221 B.C.E.). The Eastern Zhou period was a time of the flowering of Chinese culture, represented by such philosophers as Kongfuzi, or Master Kung (551–470 B.C.E.), known to the West as Confucius; Mengzi, or Mencius (372–289 B.C.E.); Xunzi (c. 300–237 B.C.E.), the Legalist whose ideas were developed by Hanfeizi (d. 233 B.C.E.) and Li Si (d. 208 B.C.E.); and Lao Zi, Old Master, the founder of Taoism, and his disciple Chuan Chu (369–286 B.C.E.).

The history of China as a united nation begins properly in 221 B.C.E. In that year the western frontier state of Qin (or Ch'in, from which the name China is derived) subjugated the other warring states, and the king of Qin took on the grandiloquent title of *Qin shi huangdi*, or "first emperor of the Chin." He set in motion a process of centralization and imperial expansion. To fend off barbarian invasions from the north, the various fortification walls built previously by the warring states were connected to make the 3,300 km (2,051 mi) Great Wall. The Qin dynasty did not outlast the death of its founder and lasted only 15 years—the shortest dynastic period in Chinese history.

The dynasty that replaced it was the Han—after whom the major nationality of China is named—with its capital at Xian. The Han period is noted for the invention of paper and porcelain, the establishment of the Silk Route to the Roman imperial possessions in Asia Minor, and the introduction of Buddhism.

The collapse of the Han dynasty was followed by nearly four centuries of rule by warlords. This period began with the Three Kingdoms (220 B.C.E.–80 C.E.), followed by the Jin dynasty, which through its western and eastern branches ruled until 420 C.E. From that time until the sixth century power was shared by four southern and five northern dynasties. This period was noted for the spread of Buddhism, the invention of gunpowder and the wheelbarrow, and numerous advances in medicine, astronomy, and cartography.

China was reunified by the short-lived Sui dynasty, which ruled from 581 to 618. Their principal legacy was the Grand Canal, a monumental engineering feat. The Sui was supplanted by the Tang dynasty in 618. Most historians regard the Tang period as the high point in Chinese civilization, distinguished not only by the military exploits of its early rulers but also by the flowering of creativity in many fields. Block printing was invented, making the written word accessible to a larger audience. The Tang period was also the golden age of literature and art. The Tang rulers were the first to establish a cadre of civil servants selected through competitive examinations.

Tang power ebbed by the mid-eighth century, and the dynasty ended in 907. The next half century is known as the Five Dynasties and 10 Kingdoms period. This age of fragmentation gave way to a new power, the Song (960–1279), notable for the development of cities and the mercantile class. At the same time there was a progressive revival of interest in Confucian ideals, coinciding with the decline of Buddhism. The Confucian revival was spearheaded by Zhu Xi (1130–1200), whose teachings became the official imperial ideology until the end of the Manchu dynasty. A rigid and unyielding creed, it stressed the one-sided obligations of obedience and compliance by subject to ruler, child to parents, and wife to husband. Before or during the Song period three other dynasties held power in various other parts of China: the Liao (Kitan) dynasty (907–1125), the Western Xia dynasty (1032–1227), and the Jin (Nurche) dynasty (1032–1227).

At the beginning of the 13th century the Mongols were already ascendant in northern China. Genghis Khan and his successors had established an empire that stretched from the Sea of Japan to the Black Sea and beyond. Kublai Khan, the grandson of Genghis Khan, began a drive against the Song, and even before the latter's extinction established the first alien dynasty to rule all China, the Yuan (1279–1368). As in other parts of their empire, Mongol rule was brief and culturally barren. The period was notable only for the visit of the Venetian Marco Polo, whose account of his trip to Kublai Khan's court was the first Western glimpse into the fabulous land of Cathay. The Mongol rule was resented by the Han Chinese, who were discriminated against socially and politically.

Rivalry among the heirs to the Mongol khanate, natural disasters, and numerous peasant uprisings led to the

collapse of the Yuan dynasty. It was supplanted in 1368 by the Ming dynasty, founded by a Han Chinese peasant and former Buddhist priest. With its capital first at Nanjing and later at Beijing, its power reached its zenith during the first quarter of the 15th century. Chinese armies reconquered Annam in Southeast Asia, and the Chinese fleet ranged the China seas and the Indian Ocean as far as the eastern coast of Africa. Many Chinese historians consider the Ming period as the most stable and prosperous of Chinese eras. However, by the first half of the 17th century Ming power had weakened enough to allow invaders from the north to grasp the throne once again. In 1644 the Manchus took Beijing and became masters of northern China, thus establishing China's second and last alien dynasty. Known as the Qing, it survived until 1911.

Although non-Han, the Manchus were Sinicized to a great degree, and they adopted Chinese customs and retained most of the Ming institutions. They continued the Confucian cult rituals over which they traditionally presided. In a series of bloody and costly campaigns, the Manchus gained control over most border and other outlying areas, including Xinjiang, Yunnan, Tibet, and Taiwan. A combination of military prowess and bureaucratic skills contributed to the early successes of the Manchus.

The Qing were suspicious of the Han, and Qing policy was directed toward preserving Manchu superiority. Han Chinese were prohibited from migrating to Manchuria. The Manchus were forbidden to engage in manual labor and trade, and no agriculture was permitted in northern Manchuria. Intermarriage between the two groups was forbidden. In many government positions a system of dual appointments was used, with Chinese officials being supervised by Manchus.

Even as the Manchu empire grew to include a larger area than ever before or since, it was sapped by new threats from within and without. The process of disintegration occurred throughout the 19th century through a series of incidents that cumulatively drained the empire's resources and eventually toppled it. Beginning in the early 19th century localized revolts erupted in various parts of the empire. Secret societies, such as the White Lotus sect in the north and the Hung Society in the south, gained ground, combining anti-Manchu subversion with banditry. Peace and stability had caused an explosion of population, but with no industry or trade of sufficient scope to absorb the surplus, there was widespread rural discontent and urban pauperism, as aided by the weakening of the Manchu bureaucratic and military systems through corruption. These problems were compounded by natural calamities of unprecedented proportions, including droughts, famines, and floods. These disasters were exacerbated by misgovernment and the neglect of public works. This was especially the case in southern China, the last area to yield to the Qing conquerors and the first region to be exposed to Western influence. It was

the site of the most famous rebellion in Chinese history: the Taiping Rebellion, which was led by a misguided former Protestant convert, Hong Xiuquan, who proclaimed himself the “Heavenly King of the Heavenly Kingdom of Great Peace” in 1851. Over 25 million people were killed before the rebellion was finally crushed in 1864.

As the empire reeled under this revolt, the Western powers trying to get a foothold in the East grew bolder. First the Portuguese gained Macao, where they monopolized the foreign trade at Guangzhou (Canton). Soon the “Celestial Empire” was humiliated by Great Britain in the Opium War (1839–42), provoked by the illegal British trade in opium, which was prohibited by imperial decree. When the Chinese government confiscated and burned 20,000 chests of opium, the British retaliated with a punitive expedition in which the imperial army was disastrously defeated. The resulting Treaty of Nanking (1842) was the first of a series of agreements with Western trading nations that the Chinese call “unequal treaties.” Under its terms the Chinese ceded Hong Kong, abolished the licensed monopoly system of trade, opened five ports to foreign trade, limited the tariff on trade to 5 percent ad valorem, granted British nationals extraterritoriality, and paid a large indemnity.

The treaty triggered a scramble among Western powers to carve up the vast empire. In the 1850s the Russians invaded the Amur watershed of Manchuria in violation of the Treaty of Nerchinsk (1689) and in 1860 forced the emperor to grant them all of Manchuria north of the Amur River and east of the Ussuri River. Foreign encroachments intensified after 1860 through a series of treaties imposed on China under one pretext or another. The catalog of concessions lengthened, and the foreign stranglehold on the economy deepened. The treaty ports became virtual foreign enclaves.

The official response of the tottering Manchu court to these humiliations was a series of half-hearted reforms designed to avert further decline. The first phase of the reforms was championed in the 1860s by such generals as Zeng Huofan, Zuo Zongtang, and Li Hong Zhang. They attempted to reform the bureaucracy, modernize the army, expand public education, create an industrial base, and build railroads, telegraph lines, and new harbors. These efforts petered out, sabotaged by the Confucian bureaucrats, who saw in them only a threat to their own entrenched powers.

As the reforms failed to take hold, the foreign powers continued to dismember the empire. France, victorious in a war with China in 1883, took Annam; the British took Burma; Russia took Turkestan; and Japan, emerging from its centuries-long seclusion, took Taiwan, Korea, and the Liuqiu (Ryukyu) Islands. In 1898 the British acquired a 99-year lease over the New Territories of Kowloon.

In 1898 the second phase of the reform movement proved even briefer than the first; it lasted for just 102

days, from June 11 to September 21. Like the first, it was a self-strengthening movement, aimed at sweeping social and institutional changes. Opposition to the reform was intense among the Manchu ruling elite. Supported by the ultraconservatives, Empress Dowager Cixi engineered a coup forcing the young, reform-minded Emperor Guangxu into seclusion and took over the government as regent. The reform ended with the execution of six of its principal advocates and the flight of two to Japan.

The ultraconservatives then retaliated by backing an antiforeign and anti-Christian organization known to the West as the Boxers. In 1900 this group rampaged around northern China in what became known as the Boxer Rebellion. The uprising was crushed by the expeditionary forces of the foreign powers, and under the Boxer Protocol of 1901 the court was forced to pay the Western powers a large indemnity and consent to the stationing of foreign troops on Chinese soil.

The failure of the reform and the fiasco of the Boxer Rebellion set the stage for the Republican Revolution of 1911. The leader of the revolutionaries was Sun Zhongshan (Sun Yat-sen, 1866–1925), who as an exile in Japan had founded in 1905 the Tong Meng Hui (the United League or Brotherhood Society), a forerunner of the Guomindang (GMD, or the Nationalist Party). His followers included overseas Chinese and also military officers, among them a young cadet named Chiang Kai-shek. Sun’s political philosophy centered on the Three Principles of the People: nationalism, democracy, and socialism.

The Manchu dynasty fell on October 10, 1911, after remaining in power for 267 years. Its anticlimactic exit was the result not of a massive popular uprising but of a minor mutiny by the imperial garrison at Wuchang, where 3,000 soldiers rose in revolt. The city fell without resistance, and the relatively bloodless revolution spread quickly. Sun was inaugurated on January 1, 1912, in Nanjing as the provisional president of the new Chinese Republic. But power in Beijing had already passed to Yuan Shikai, the strongest warlord and commander in chief of the imperial army. To prevent possible bloodshed, Sun agreed to a united national government in Beijing under Yuan Shikai. On February 12, 1912, the last Manchu emperor, Puyi, abdicated, and on March 12 Yuan Shikai was inaugurated as provisional president of the republic.

Within two years Yuan Shikai became a virtual dictator by arranging the assassination of his political opponents and forcing Sun to flee to Japan. Yuan Shikai suspended parliament (in which the Guomindang had a majority of seats) and proceeded to establish a monarchy, and when that attempt failed, he proclaimed himself president for life in 1915. He died a year later.

Yuan Shikai’s death was followed by a scramble among the regional warlords for control of the Beijing government. In addition to internal chaos, the nation was

threatened from without by Japan, who claimed Shandong and also sought to establish its protectorate over all of China through the Twenty-one Demands. In 1917 the Beijing government conceded in a secret deal the Japanese claim to Shandong. When this sellout became public, there were massive student protest demonstrations, culminating in a national movement known as the May Fourth Movement or, in intellectual circles, as the New Culture Movement, which helped rekindle the fading cause of the republican revolution. In October 1919 Sun Zhongshan, who in 1917 had set up a rival government in Guangzhou in collaboration with southern warlords, re-established the Guomindang. In 1922 a new alliance was forged under Soviet auspices between the Guomindang and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), founded in 1921. Chiang Kai-shek, who became Sun's successor as Guomindang leader upon Sun's death in 1925, staged a coup in 1926, ousting the left-wing CCP elements in the party, but the Soviets nevertheless continued to support him. By 1928 Chiang was in control of most of China, receiving prompt international recognition as the head of the sole legitimate government of China. The decade of 1928 to 1937 was an era of consolidation and accomplishment by the Nationalists.

But even as the nation was beginning to experience a strong, stable central government for the first time in a century, two forces were at work that would eventually undermine Chiang's regime: the rise of the CCP and Japanese aggression.

By mid-1927 CCP fortunes were at their lowest ebb in a decade. The CCP gave up its former policy of passivity and cooperation with Chiang in favor of armed insurrection in both urban and rural areas. Without waiting for the sanction of the CCP Center, then in Shanghai, a former librarian of Beijing University, Mao Zedong began to establish peasant-based soviets, or governmental councils, along the border between the Hunan and Jiangxi provinces. By the winter of 1927–28 Mao's People's Liberation Army (PLA) had some 10,000 men. By 1932 Mao's control of the CCP was complete. Surviving a series of encirclement and extermination attacks mounted by the Guomindang forces, Mao, along with 100,000 to 190,000 supporters, began his epic retreat, celebrated in Communist legend as the Long March, for some 10,000 km (6,215 mi) through southwestern China to the northern province of Shanxi, where some 20,000 survivors arrived in 1935. The Communists then set up their headquarters in Yan'an, in southern Shanxi. The Yan'an era (1936–45) was one of rapid growth for the CCP, owing to a combination of internal and external circumstances, of which World War II was the most significant.

The Japanese had initiated a policy of conquering China piecemeal as early as 1917 and had pursued that policy relentlessly by seizing Manchuria in 1931 and then pushing beyond the Great Wall into northern China and

along the coastal provinces. In the first half of the 1930s the Guomindang was more preoccupied with campaigns to exterminate the Communists than resisting the Japanese invaders. Open hostilities between the two governments began only on July 7, 1937, when a clash, carefully engineered by the Japanese, occurred between Chinese troops and the invaders at the Marco Polo Bridge near Beijing. The Guomindang and the CCP patched up their differences to face the common enemy, but the uneasy alliance crumbled after 1938. By 1940 the Japanese controlled most of coastal and northern China and the rich Yangzi River valley. The Guomindang government moved its capital to Chongqing. The Guomindang reverses greatly benefited Mao. The Communists increased their party membership from 100,000 in 1937 to 1.2 million by 1945. The PLA troops became skilled guerrilla fighters able to wear down the enemy by alternating offensive and defensive actions.

China emerged from the war greatly enfeebled, economically prostrate, and politically divided. Despite massive economic aid from the United States, the economy was shattered by inflation and sabotaged by the Communists. Famines and floods left millions homeless and destitute. The civil war between the Communists and the Guomindang began in earnest within a year of the end of World War II. In 1947 the U.S. mission, headed by George C. Marshall, was withdrawn from Beijing, as the United States decided not to intervene militarily in the conflict. Thereafter the Guomindang collapse was swift. In 1949 the PLA entered Beijing without a fight, and within months all the major cities passed into Communist hands. In December 1949 Chiang, with a few hundred thousand of his troops, fled from the mainland to Taiwan, proclaiming Taipei the capital of his republic.

The People's Republic of China (PRC) was proclaimed on October 1, 1949, with its capital at Beijing. A year later China entered the Korean War and pushed back UN and U.S. troops to the South Korean border. It was the first successful military operation of the new republic. In 1950 China invaded Tibet, which had asserted its independence after the overthrow of the Manchus. Along the coast of Fujian Province hostilities continued between the PRC and the Nationalists. In the early 1960s the Chinese fought intermittently with India over territorial claims along the Himalayan region. Growing discord between China and the Soviet Union continued throughout the 1960s and early 1970s, and the two powers competed for support among the world's Communist parties. Hostilities flared briefly along the Ussuri River.

In domestic affairs, a rapid program of industrialization and socialization was followed in 1958–59 by the Great Leap Forward, a crash program of collectivization. The program ended in three bitter years of economic crisis in 1960–62. Mao tried again to steer the country into a revolutionary path with the Cultural Revolution,

1966–69, the most convulsive period in modern Chinese history. In 1967 the Red Army intervened on the side of Mao and the CCP, and government organs were replaced by revolutionary committees and the Red Guard. Liu Shaoqi was dismissed from his position in the Chinese hierarchy as chairman of the People's Republic, and it was claimed that he died in suspicious circumstances in a plane crash while trying to flee to the Soviet Union.

The first half of the 1970s witnessed dramatic shifts in the course of Chinese diplomacy, particularly after the People's Republic of China ousted Nationalist China (Taiwan) at the United Nations in 1971. Henry Kissinger and President Richard Nixon journeyed to Beijing as the first step toward normalization of relations between the United States and China after a hiatus of 23 years.

The death of Mao and Prime Minister Zhou Enlai in 1976 was followed by a power struggle in which the Maoists were dislodged by the moderates led by Deng Xiaoping. During the next decade Deng consolidated his hold over the party and government by naming his allies to key posts in the CCP. Along with personnel changes, there was sweeping reform in agricultural and economic policies, euphemistically termed rectification and consolidation. The Maoist commune system was nullified, and family farms were restored. Leftist factionalism among party cadres was eliminated, and an unprecedented program to reform the economic structure called for the adoption of many features of a "capitalistic" market system. These liberalization moves were set back in 1989 by a massive student demonstration in Tiananmen Square in Beijing in which several protesters died. This incident was followed by a hardening of the ideological positions within the CCP. At the 14th Party Congress in 1992 Jiang Zemin was named PRC president and the successor to the ailing Deng. Deng himself died in 1997, but no major policy changes ensued, partly because the succession issue had long been settled. In the same year Hong Kong was returned to China by the British government. In 1999 Macau was returned to China by Portugal. China agreed to trade reforms designed to open its economy to international competition and investment. In recognition of these reforms, China was admitted to the World Trade Organization on December 11, 2001.

In 2002 Hu Jintao was named head of the Communist Party, and in 2003 the National People's Congress elected him president. The first crisis he had to deal with was an outbreak of SARS, a pneumonia-like virus, which led to quarantine measures and travel restrictions. That year, too, China and India reached an agreement over the status of Tibet and signed a trade agreement. Further positive news came later in 2003 when China launched its first manned spacecraft. In 2004 China signed a landmark trade agreement with 10 Asian countries, a move that could unite 25 percent of the world's population in a free-trade zone.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1949–76	Mao Zedong
1976–93	Deng Xiaoping
1993–2003	Jiang Zemin
2003–	Hu Jintao

CONSTITUTION

The People's Republic of China was established on October 1, 1949. For the first five years of its existence it had no constitution since, according to the regime, the revolution had not been consummated and the economy had not been completely socialized. In the place of a constitution, the state was governed by the Organic Law of the People's Political Consultative Conference. That document and the constitution that would follow both reflected Mao's ideas on "new democracy," or a "people's democratic dictatorship," a contradiction in terms that was justified as appropriate for a transition from a semi-feudal and semicolonial stage to socialism. The first constitution was promulgated in 1954, and it was followed by three others, in 1975, 1978, and 1982.

The constitution of 1982, still in effect in 2005, is essentially a Deng constitution, though it is often compared rather than contrasted with the constitution of 1954. The longest of the four constitutions, with 138 articles, it is more structural than programmatic, marking a radical departure from the heavily political preoccupations of its predecessors. Under that constitution, the presidency was restored. China is defined as a "socialist state under people's democratic dictatorship." No reference is made to the preeminent role of the Communist Party, although it states that the state is "led by the working class." Moreover, article 5 states, "All state organs, the armed forces, all political parties and public organizations . . . must abide by the Constitution and the law." All civil liberties were restored, with the significant exception of the right to strike. The new constitution reflects the post-Mao state in that it diminished the political and governmental role of the people's communes by transferring their power to the townships.

Of the state organs specified in the constitution, the weakest is the presidency, which is largely ceremonial. The president is the head of state. The truly efficient part of the national government is the State Council (Guo Wu Yuan), which, according to the constitution, is the executive body of the National People's Congress and the "highest organ of state administration." It is chaired by the premier, nominated by the Central Committee, and approved by the National People's Congress, and it includes a number of vice premiers, ministers in charge of ministries, and ministers heading commissions. The premier of the State Council is the head of government. The functions of the State Council are defined as exer-

cising “unified leadership” over the entire administration, including local governments. Most if not all of the ministries, commissions, bureaus, and agencies attached to the State Council are represented in provincial-level administrative units and in some cases county- and commune-level units.

Although the functions and powers of the State Council are exceptionally broad, policy is largely determined by the Central Committee and the Political Bureau, to both of which the State Council is closely linked by concurrent memberships. This linkage facilitates the party’s control over the state but at the same time obliterates the distinction between party and government.

The membership of the State Council has varied over the years, but the general trend has been toward a high degree of compartmentalization of jurisdictions, a top-heavy hierarchical structure, and a multiplicity of units. The council is divided into ministries, commissions, bureaus, agencies, and departments. With the growing number of units it has become necessary to create intermediate offices between the State Council and these units. Known as staff offices, they have supervisory responsibility over groups of related units. According to a high-ranking party leader, from 1950 to 1981 the number of ministries and commissions grew from 34 to 100, the number of ministries and deputy ministries to 1,000, and the number of departments to 5,000. Under Deng this number was cut back, but government still remains unwieldy.

The State Council rarely meets as a whole. The long-standing practice is for major decisions to be made by an inner cabinet known as the Standing Conference of the State Council, which generally consists of 15 members, including the premier and four vice premiers.

Directly attached to the State Council is the General Office, which appears to be a housekeeping organ corresponding to the Secretariat of the Central Committee. In addition, a number of specialized offices, directly subordinate to the State Council, deal with diverse matters such as science, environmental protection, and family planning.

PARLIAMENT

The National People’s Congress (NPC) is defined in the 1982 constitution as “the highest organ of state power,” without being identified, as in the constitution of 1975, as “under the leadership of the Communist Party of China.” Among its 15 powers enumerated in article 62 are those to amend the constitution; supervise the enforcement of the constitution and the law; choose the premier, on the recommendation of the CCP Central Committee; elect or remove the president of the Supreme People’s Court and the chief procurator of the Supreme People’s Procuratorate; examine and approve the national economic

plan, the state budget, and the final state accounts; decide on questions of war and peace; and approve administrative boundaries.

The NPC holds one session a year. Its deputies are elected by secret ballot for terms of five years by the people’s congresses at the provincial-level administrative divisions. The provincial-level delegates themselves are indirectly elected. In 2005 the NPC had 2,985 members. Members of the National Committee of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), a revolutionary united front organization led by the Communist Party, may be invited to attend the NPC as observers.

POLITICAL PARTIES

With a membership of 66 million in 2002—exceeding the population of all but 15 countries in the world—the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) is the largest political party in the world. It is the pivot of the Chinese political system, eclipsing even the government, and despite the debacle of the Cultural Revolution appears to be more firmly entrenched than at any time since 1949.

Despite apparent structural similarities with Communist parties in other countries, the CCP is unique in several respects. First, the distinction between party and state is considerably blurred, to the point where the two systems are identical. The post-Mao leadership has attempted with some success to re-create the distinction between party and state, but so pervasive is the party’s power that the latter appears only as a shadow of the former. Another important distinction is the role of the military in the political system, a role that had been reduced in the Soviet Union to a purely professional one. At the top in China, many leaders hold concurrent civilian and military posts; the military also plays a large part in CCP activities at all subnational levels.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

On the whole, the Communist regime has adopted without substantial change the previous local government divisions; except for territorial adjustments, most of the provinces, municipalities, and counties remain as they were before 1949. There are, however, two important innovations: the organization of the people’s communes at or below the county level and the establishment of minority nationality areas, consisting of autonomous regions, districts, and counties.

The present system of local government is described in the constitution of 1982 and in local government laws. Article 30 of the constitution provides for the administrative division of the country into provinces, autonomous regions, and municipalities directly under the central

government; provinces and autonomous regions into prefectures, counties, and cities; and counties into townships, nationality townships, and towns.

The 29 administrative units at the provincial level include 23 provinces (*sheng*); the four municipalities, or centrally administered cities (*zhixiashi*), of Shanghai, Beijing, Tianjin, and Chongqing; and the five autonomous regions (*zizhiqu*) of Xinjiang Uygur, Xizang, Ningxia Hui, Guangxi Zhuang, and Nei Mongol, the homes of the Uighurs, Tibetans, Hui, Zhuang, and Mongols, respectively. China considers Taiwan its 23rd province.

Between the provincial and the county (*xian*) levels, administrative entities without congresses have been established. There are 208 of these units: one administrative area (*tebiexingzhengqu*) on Hainan Island, eight leagues (*meng*) in Inner Mongolia, 29 autonomous areas (*zizhizhou*), and 170 areas (*diqu*).

On the local administrative level there are 2,772 units, including three autonomous banners (*zizhiqu*), 53 banners (*qi*), 71 autonomous counties (*zizhixian*), 431 city districts (*qu*), 214 provincially or area-administered cities (*shi*), and 2,000 regular counties (*xian*). On this level as well as on the township (*xiang*) level, the party wields tight control.

The structure of local government is based on that of the national government. As presently constituted, the local people's congresses suffer from the same problems as the National People's Congress. The number of deputies is too large, ranging up to 1,000, and the standing committees also are large, with an average membership of 50 to 60, most far advanced in age. Local government organs are fifth wheels without any real power and are hence burdened with a sense of superfluity. "The party has already made its decisions. Why should we go through the motions of debating them?" is a common complaint at local assemblies.

A noteworthy development, which took place in 1980–81, is the direct election by rural residents of deputies to county people's congresses. Before that only deputies to township (or commune) people's congresses were directly elected, and township deputies, in turn, elected deputies to county people's congresses from their own members. Although hailed as a measure to enhance democratic processes at the county level, these elections, like the others, are orchestrated by local Communist Party branches, with predictable results.

Official efforts to improve governmental performance at the local level have included strengthening standing committees of local people's congresses at and above the county level; the institution of multiple candidacies in elections to local people's congresses; and the reactivation of "basic-level mass autonomous organizations" such as urban neighborhood committees, people's mediation committees, and public security committees.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The State Constitution of 1982 and the Organic Law of the People's Courts provide for a four-tier court system. At the apex is the Supreme People's Court, which is not only the highest appellate forum of the land but also the supervisor of the administration of justice by subordinate courts. Local people's courts—the courts of first instance—handle civil and criminal cases. They consist of three types of units: higher people's courts at the level of provinces, autonomous regions, and municipalities directly under the central government; intermediate people's courts at the level of prefectures, autonomous prefectures, municipalities under the central government, provinces, and autonomous regions; and basic people's courts at the level of autonomous counties, towns, and municipal districts. Special courts adjudicate military, railway transportation, water transportation, forest, and economic cases. The president and judges of the Supreme People's Court are elected by the National People's Congress and serve no more than two consecutive five-year terms. Local people's courts are similarly elected by the local state organs at their level.

China is perhaps the only major society without a written criminal or civil code; although there are selected statutes, there is no comprehensive, universally recognized code. Law plays the dual role of resolving disputes between people and suppressing "enemies of the people." The definition of "enemies" varies with the times but has always included rightists, counterrevolutionaries, "bad elements," and revisionists. Although the constitution guarantees the independence of the judiciary, such independence is only a political fiction, and interference by party organs in judicial organs is common. The conception of equality before the law is seen as violating the Marxist theory of class struggle.

The court system is complemented by a structure of people's procuratorates, from the Supreme People's Procuratorate at the top to lower procuratorates established at the corresponding levels of the courts. The procuratorates represent the state in criminal proceedings and ensure that the judicial process of the courts and the execution of judgments and orders in criminal matters conform to the law.

Prisons were separated from the Ministry of Public Security and placed under the Ministry of Justice in 1983. The majority of prisoners are sentenced to hard labor, of which there are two kinds: criminal and administrative. The former is for a fixed number of years, whereas the latter is for an indeterminate period, usually three or four years. Both categories may be found at state farms, mines, and factory prisons. Prisoners are required to work eight hours a day, six days a week. They are forbidden to read anything not provided by the prison; to speak dialects not understood by the guards; or to keep cash, gold, or jewelry. Mail is censored, and generally

only one visitor is allowed per month. Sentences may be reduced for up to half the original sentence; at least 10 years of a life sentence have to be served. Both probation and parole are granted when certain conditions are met.

No detailed information is available on the criminal justice system.

HUMAN RIGHTS

The major event affecting human rights in China since 1949 was the bloodbath in Tiananmen Square in Beijing in early 1989, which set the country back some 20 years in its evolution toward a less totalitarian government. The power struggle that preceded and followed this event witnessed a leftward and more doctrinaire shift at the very apex of the power structure. The gradual relaxation of the political atmosphere that began with the ascent of Deng in the early 1980s consequently slowed, and some of the gains made in this period were lost.

This setback illustrates the fundamental weakness in China's so-called political modernization program. There is an entrenched intolerance of any criticism of the CCP and its aging leadership. Change can only be initiated at the top, then trickling down to the bottom, rather than vice versa. The rigidity of institutional structures is as old as Chinese society, and it has been reinforced by the harshness of Marxist dogma.

The Code of Criminal Procedure specifically prohibits the use of torture. In 1986 China signed the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment, and the National People's Congress ratified the convention in 1988. But news reports of the use of torture by officials persist.

The law notwithstanding, persons accused of political crimes are often held for periods much longer than those sanctioned by the code. The provision requiring immediate notification of families or work units is also frequently ignored, and suspects are held incommunicado for long periods.

Under "labor education" provisions, those who commit minor theft or fraud or who have been expelled from their work units may be deprived of their civil liberties and subjected to one to four years of reform without trial. "Reform through labor" is a more severe sentence, similar to Soviet "internal exile" and imposed on those accused of more serious crimes.

The regime denies that there are any political prisoners, but this is only a semantic subterfuge, since "counterrevolutionaries" are classified as common criminals. Counterrevolutionary activity is defined as "inciting the overthrow of the socialist system." The total prison population is estimated at two to five million, and of this total 1 to 3 percent are political prisoners according to Western standards.

Contacts between Chinese and foreigners had become free of official interference until the Tiananmen Square demonstrations brought about a deterioration in the political climate. "English corners," where Chinese and foreigners can meet to talk in English, attract large numbers of people.

The Code of Criminal Procedure allows officials wide latitude in emergency situations to enter and search living premises without warrants or notifications, use electronic eavesdropping, and seize mail or telegrams, although these powers are used sparingly.

After the excesses of the Cultural Revolution, freedom of religion was one of the major freedoms to be resuscitated. Although atheism is part of the official ideology, its enforcement and propagation have met with much resistance in a culture historically permeated with religious mores. The only major requirement is that religious bodies must not be subject to foreign domination, a proviso often used against Buddhism in Tibet as well as against the Catholic Church. Religious freedom, however, is still not a right but a gift of the state, and it may be withdrawn at any time. The regime does not tolerate unsanctioned religious activity, defined as "counterrevolutionary sabotage perpetrated in the name of religion." In 1983 the death penalty was authorized for secret sects that spread "feudal and superstitious ideas," a broad rubric aimed at curbing any kind of religious zeal. Since the late 1990s the persecution of Fulan Gong, an indigenous religious sect, has intensified, leading to the incarceration of thousands of its followers. In 2005 China still regarded the Fulan Gong as an "evil cult," and its persecution of the sect has been part of a widespread effort to clamp down on ethnic minorities.

Travel within China is restricted through various formal and informal regulations. Chinese citizens may not freely change their locality of residence or workplace. They are registered as residents of a particular jurisdiction, and permission to move to another locality is granted only for a change in employment. Because of the unwillingness of work units to lose employees, such permission is rarely granted.

Controls on foreign travel and emigration have been relaxed since the 1970s and were further liberalized under the Citizens' Exit and Entry Control Law of 1985. The law authorizes exit for personal reasons but denies exit to those in criminal or civil cases or those whose exit may harm China's national security interests. Permission to travel may also be denied to the more vocal critics of the regime and to known dissidents. Restrictions on internal travel by foreigners have also been relaxed.

In 2005 China's rule over Tibet remained controversial. Many human rights groups accuse China of the systematic persecution of Tibetan Buddhist culture.

FOREIGN POLICY

Chinese foreign policy history exhibits a number of dichotomies and contradictions. China is a superpower without formal superpower status, a socialist country that does not belong to the socialist camp, and a developing country that does not belong to the third world proper. Reflecting the factional struggles within the party's inner leadership, Chinese foreign policy also suffers from sudden shifts and breaks, as a result of which it lacks the consistency, coherence, and predictability of the foreign policies of other major powers. Such fluctuations reflect the fact that China has no urgent goals to achieve in foreign affairs, and foreign policy is merely an extension of internal political developments.

Chinese foreign policy is thus a product of three decades of trial and error, more failure than success, perhaps, but nevertheless remarkable for snatching stability from the jaws of chaos. By 1990 Chinese foreign policy had reached a new threshold of maturity, flexibility, balance, and moderation. For the first time China was able to deal on a normal basis with both superpowers and had learned the art and wisdom of isolating troublesome issues and irritations so that they did not impede the major thrust of policy. Given the historical ambivalence of China about the external world, this was a major achievement.

Relations between China and the United States deteriorated sharply in the late 1990s. The major irritants were the alleged Chinese efforts to influence U.S. presidential elections and attempts to obtain U.S. nuclear secrets. The incoming administration of George W. Bush was faced with a crisis when a U.S. spy plane was forced to land on Hainan Island after a midair collision with a Chinese fighter plane. The crew of the spy plane was detained for 11 days before release, and the two nations were embroiled in mutual recriminations following the reluctance of Chinese authorities to permit the return of the plane. Meanwhile, China carries on a number of border disputes with its neighbors, including India, Japan, and North Korea.

DEFENSE

The Chinese Communist Party came to power not through an election or revolution but through the successful military mission of the People's Liberation Army (PLA). The PLA is the world's largest standing army and has the world's third-largest air and naval forces. It provides China with a credible conventional defense-in-depth on land, at sea, and in the air but lacks offensive capability for more than a short distance beyond its borders. The nation is vulnerable to nuclear, biological, and chemical attack, as was the case particularly during the cold war period with respect to its then superior neigh-

bor, the Soviet Union. The small but effective nuclear deterrent is based on the policy of "no first use."

Deterrence is enhanced by a huge and well-organized population that can be mobilized at short notice, including nearly 380 million males ages 15 to 49. Coastal defense consists of successive rings of submarines, missile destroyers, and frigates supported by smaller missiles and torpedo boats. There are no military bases in foreign countries. The air force is strong in numbers but weak in equipment. In 2003 the nation spent \$60 billion, or between 3.5 and 5 percent of gross domestic product (GDP), on defense.

The PLA is organized as the armed forces of the party and remains under CCP control. The Common Program, the precursor to the constitution, placed control of the armed forces in the hands of the 22-member People's Revolutionary Military Council. Later constitutions confirmed this precedent, and the State Constitution of 1978 designated the party chairman as commander in chief of the armed forces. Until his resignation in 1989, Deng, although the virtual leader of the party, had no other official position than as chairman of the Military Affairs Committee. That chairmanship is currently vacant.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	2,400,000
Military Manpower Availability:	379,524,688
Military Expenditures \$billion:	60
as % of GDP:	3.5-5.0
as % of central government expenditures:	—
Arms Imports \$billion:	2.307
Arms Exports \$million:	818

ECONOMY

Beginning in late 1978, the Chinese leadership has been trying to move from a sluggish Soviet-style centrally planned economy to a more market-oriented economy, but still within a rigid political framework of Communist Party control. To this end the authorities switched to a system of household responsibility in agriculture in place of the old collectivization, increased the authority of local officials and plant managers in industry, permitted a wide variety of small-scale enterprise in services and light manufacturing, and opened the economy to increased foreign trade and investment. The result has been a quadrupling of GDP since 1978; by 2003 China had the world's second-largest economy, with a GDP of \$6.5 trillion, and an overall growth rate of 9.1 percent—30.4 percent in the industrial sector. On the darker side, the leadership has often experienced in its hybrid system the worst products of both socialism (bureaucracy, lassitude, and corruption) and capitalism (windfall gains and stepped-up inflation). Beijing has thus periodically backtracked, retightening central controls at intervals.

Popular resistance, changes in central policy, and the loss of authority by rural cadres have weakened China's population control program, which is essential to China's maintaining growth in living standards. Another long-term threat to continued rapid economic growth is the deterioration in the environment, notably air pollution, soil erosion, and the steady fall of the water table, especially in the north. China continues to lose arable land because of erosion and economic development; furthermore, the Communist regime gives insufficient priority to agricultural research. The next few years may witness increasing tensions between a highly centralized political system and an increasingly decentralized economic system. Hong Kong's reversion on July 1, 1997, to Chinese administration strengthened the already close ties between the two economies. China became the 143rd member of the World Trade Organization (WTO) on December 11, 2001, and in 2004 China signed a trade agreement with 10 Asian countries that would potentially create a free-trade zone comprising one-quarter of the world's population.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$trillion: 6.449
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 5,000
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 7.9
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 7.2
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 14.8
 Industry: 52.9
 Services: 32.3
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 46
 Government Consumption: 13
 Gross Domestic Investment: 43.4
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 436.1
 Imports: 397.4
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 2.4
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 30.4

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1990 = 100)

1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
213.7	210.7	210.9	212.4	209.3

Finance

National Currency: Yuan (CNY)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = CNY 8.277
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency trillion: 8.645
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 2.1
 Total External Debt \$billion: 197.8
 Debt Service Ratio %: 2.8
 Balance of Payments \$billion: 31.17
 International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 403.3
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
 1.2

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$billion: 1.48
 per capita \$: 1.20
 Foreign Direct Investment \$billion: 49.3

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$billion: 265.8
 Expenditures \$billion: 300.2
 Budget Deficit \$billion: 34.4
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: 6.8

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 14.8
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 2.7
 Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares: 7.7
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 35.3
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 246.3
 Total Farmland % of land area: 15.4
 Livestock: Cattle million: 106.54
 Chickens billion: 3.97
 Pigs million: 472.9
 Sheep million: 157.3
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 284
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons million: 44.3

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 614.5
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 30.4

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 807.2
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 770.5
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 599
 Net Energy Imports % of use: 0.07
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 338
 Production kW-hr trillion: 1.42
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 1.312
 Coal Reserves tons billion: 126.2
 Production tons billion: 1.52
 Consumption tons billion: 1.42
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: 53.3
 Production cubic feet trillion: 1.15
 Consumption cubic feet trillion: 1.15
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: 18.3
 Production barrels million per day: 3.54
 Consumption barrels million per day: 5.56
 Pipelines Length km: 14,478

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 397.4
 Exports \$billion: 436.1
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 21.5
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 23.3
 Balance of Trade \$billion: 31.17

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Japan %	18.0	13.6
Taiwan %	11.9	—
South Korea %	10.4	4.6
United States %	8.2	21.1
Germany %	5.9	4.0
Hong Kong %	—	17.4

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 1,402,698
 Paved %: 22.4
 Automobiles: 6,548,300
 Trucks and Buses: 6,278,900
 Railroad: Track Length km: 70,058
 Passenger-km billion: 476.7
 Freight-km trillion: 1.46
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 1,850
 Total Deadweight Tonnage million: 27.75
 Airports: 507
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 123.9
 Length of Waterways km: 121,557

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 36.8
 Number of Tourists from million: 16.6
 Tourist Receipts \$billion: 20.4
 Tourist Expenditures \$billion: 15.4

Communications

Telephones million: 263
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.03
 Cellular Telephones million: 269
 Personal Computers million: 35.5
 Internet Hosts per million people: 123
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 72

ENVIRONMENT

Between 1957 and 1973 China lost one-fifth of its agricultural land from soil erosion as well as urban development. Since 1973 and the end of the Cultural Revolution, there have been efforts to reverse environmental damage. Reforestation efforts have included the construction of shelter belts and the restoration of ero-

sion-prone loess-covered lands in the middle reaches of the Yellow River. The National People's Congress adopted environmental protection and forestry laws in 1979 and launched a reforestation program called the Great Green Wall 10 years later. Water pollution is also serious. Nearly 436 of the 532 rivers are polluted, and improved drinking-water sources are unavailable to one-quarter of the population. The use of high-sulfur coal as the main energy source causes air pollution and contributes to acid rain. In the 1990s China had the world's second-highest level of industrial carbon dioxide emissions at a per capita level of 2.27 metric tons. However, the nation has begun to impose more stringent environmental controls. Investment in pollution-reducing technology is required of all industrial enterprises, penalties are imposed for noncompliance, and incentives and tax reductions are offered for those enterprises that meet environmental standards. To protect the nation's flora and fauna, nature reserves have grown exponentially, with hundreds of reserves constituting 15 percent of China's landmass.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 17.0
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: 1,806
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 15
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 6,204,236
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 2.21

LIVING CONDITIONS

Although China has 57 cities with more than one million people, in a country with well over one billion people, most live in rural areas, often without electricity or other modern amenities. Cities such as Shanghai are extremely crowded, with less than eight square meters per person; Shanghai is a city of skyscrapers and large business enterprises, where extreme wealth and extreme poverty coexist and housing is in short supply. The capital, Beijing, has a 3,000-year history and is home to many of the nation's most visited historical monuments in the Inner City, which contains the Forbidden City. In all of China's cities, bicycles are the most common form of transportation. Poverty and the search for economic opportunity has lured many people from the countryside to the larger cities on the coast.

An ongoing social problem in China is ethnic relations. Historically, the dominant Han culture has looked down upon the nation's ethnic minorities, who were forced to live on China's harshest lands; relations have been so strained that until recently, the ideograms that represented the names of these minorities contained the symbol for "dog."

HEALTH

In 2004 life expectancy at birth was nearly 72 years. The infant mortality rate was just over 25 per 1,000 live births, though the rate is much higher in the poorer western part of the country than it is in the cities. An indication of the value placed on male children is suggested by the fact that infant mortality rate for males is just under 22, while that for females is just over 29; in most nations of the world, the infant mortality rate for males is higher than it is for females. In the cities, government-run Western medicine is available, but the vast majority of Chinese continue to rely on traditional medical practices. These are based on the belief that health problems are the result of an imbalance between yin and yang, which make up the body's life force, called *qi*. Many people use such substances as rhinoceros horns, herbs, powdered deer antlers, and snake gallbladders to correct an imbalance in the *qi*. Others rely on acupuncture. Although the nation spends only about \$49 per capita per year on health care, as of 2001, health conditions in China are relatively good, with low incidences of such diseases as malaria, cholera, and typhus as well as intestinal diseases caused by parasites.

Health

Number of Physicians: 2,122,019
 Number of Dentists: —
 Number of Nurses: 1,345,706
 Number of Pharmacists: 368,852
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 164
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: 2.5
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 25.28
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 56
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 5.5
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 49
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.1
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 79
 Measles: 65
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 44
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 77

FOOD AND NUTRITION

In most of China rice is the dietary staple, although in the drier north and west wheat is the primary staple. Supplementing these staples are fish and seafood, eggs, vegetables, and pork, although meat tends to be expensive and is not used extensively. The Chinese food with which people throughout the world are familiar is principally Han food, and its varieties reflect the preferences of four regions. One is the region around Beijing, where duck, sweet-and-sour dishes, and bird's nest soup are popular. Two others are the Hunan and Sichuan provinces, where food tends to be spicy and shrimp is a popular dish. Finally, the people of the southern regions of Canton and Chao-

zhou prefer lighter food, including vegetables, seafood, fried rice, steamed fish, and roast pork and chicken.

Nutritional standards are high in the cities, where there are few underweight children and obesity is actually becoming more of a problem. The poorer rural regions accounted for most of the 10 percent of children under age five who were underweight and the 14 percent who were stunted in 1995–2003. An ongoing problem is vitamin D deficiency; the United Nations Children's Fund estimates that over 25 percent of the nation's children have some degree of rickets.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 11.0
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 3,030
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 166.6
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 301.4

STATUS OF WOMEN

Violence against women is a problem in China because there is no national spousal abuse law. Anecdotal evidence suggests that domestic abuse is on the rise, particularly in urban areas. Informal surveys indicate that 20 percent of wives may have been beaten by their husbands. Actual figures may be higher because many cases go unreported.

Trafficking in women and the kidnapping of women for sale into prostitution are other major problems. According to reliable reports there are up to 10 million commercial sex workers in the country. There are 70,000 prostitutes in Beijing alone working in saunas, clubs, and hostess bars, and over 80 percent of them have hepatitis and AIDS. Xinhua News Agency reports that one in five massage parlors is involved in prostitution. In 1998 the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women highlighted the dangers women faced through forced prostitution. Actions to crack down on this lucrative business, involving organized crime, local officials, police, and the military, have been largely ineffective.

A third problem is a high female suicide rate. Some 56 percent of the world's female suicides occur in China, at the rate of 500 per day. This rate is five times the global average.

The Chinese government has made gender equality a policy objective since 1949. The constitution states that "women enjoy equal rights with men in all walks of life." The 1992 Law on the Protection of Women's Rights and Interests provides for equality in ownership of property, inheritance rights, and access to education. However, since 1990 the pursuit of gender equality has become a low priority with the government, which has concentrated on political stability and economic reform. The law notwithstanding, discrimination, sexual harassment, and wage discrepancies are significant problems. Although

women are aware of their rights, they are encountering serious obstacles in getting the rights enforced. There are no statutes that outlaw sexual harassment in the workplace, and the problem remains unaddressed in the legal system.

Women have borne the brunt of the workforce reduction in state enterprises. About 70 to 80 percent of workers displaced as a result of downsizing have been women, although they made up only 45 percent of the workforce in 1999. Women between the ages of 35 and 50 are the most affected and the least likely to be rehired. Gender-discriminatory hiring practices have been on the rise as unemployment has risen. Many employers prefer to hire men to avoid the expense of maternity leave and child care. On average, Chinese women earn between 80 and 90 percent of the salaries of their male counterparts, but they generally work in lower-skilled and lower-paid jobs. The gap between the educational level of men and women is narrowing. At the end of 1997 women made up 36 percent of all university students and 30 percent of all graduate students. In some departments women are beginning to outnumber men. Women make up 70 percent of the 145 million illiterate Chinese. About 13 percent of all Chinese women are illiterate, as compared to 5 percent of men.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 20
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 0.99
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 39.5

WORK

As of 2003 the labor force in China was 778 million strong. As of 2001, 50 percent were employed in agriculture—although this 50 percent, which continues to use centuries-old farming practices, contributed only about 15 percent to the nation's GDP—22 percent in industry, and 28 percent in services. The official unemployment rate in 2003 was just over 10 percent, but this measures urban unemployment and does not accurately reflect unemployment and underemployment in rural areas. Primary agricultural products include rice, wheat, potatoes, sorghum, peanuts, tea, millet, barley, cotton, oilseed, pork, and fish. Primary industrial products include iron, steel, coal, machines, armaments, textiles, clothing, petroleum, cement, chemical fertilizers, footwear, toys, processed food, automobiles, consumer electronics, and telecommunications equipment. While the real growth rate in China in 2003 was officially estimated at just over 9 percent overall, industrial growth that same year was over 30 percent.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 778,100,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 45.2
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 50
 Industry: 22
 Services: 28
 Unemployment %: 10.1

EDUCATION

Three articles in the constitution of 1982 relate to education. Article 19 places on the state the responsibility of “developing socialist educational undertakings in order to raise the scientific cultural level of the whole nation.” Article 46 states that citizens “have the duty as well as the right to receive education.” Article 4 makes Putonghua, or Mandarin, the national language but guarantees minorities the right to employ their own languages under certain conditions.

Compulsory education covers in principle all of primary school, but in rural areas the goal of universal primary education has yet to be attained; as of 2001 about 95 percent of children were enrolled in primary school. Each academic year is divided into two parts: spring and fall semesters. Classes are held six days a week, with half a day on Saturday, nine months per year.

Since the end of the Cultural Revolution, private schools have reappeared, but they still maintain low profiles. Most of them teach foreign languages, but a few prepare students for examinations at various levels. They are funded mostly by private individuals, particularly overseas Chinese.

Kindergartens are available for children aged three to six. They function under the auspices of government authorities, army units, factories, agricultural production units, neighborhood communities, communes, or production brigades. Kindergartens are available from four to eight or 10 hours per day.

Primary education expanded rapidly after 1949. The net enrollment rate is close to those of advanced countries and 30 percent above the average rate for the developing world. Generally, primary schools are easily accessible, even in rural areas. The average commune has 15 primary schools, usually within walking distance. Access is difficult only in the remote areas of the north and west, which are partially inhabited by nomads. A common primary-school curriculum has been developed, but local authorities may adjust the basic curriculum somewhat to meet their specific needs.

Students are expected to meet a portion of the costs for their schooling. Tuition fees are modest, but supplementary fees for books, transportation, food, and heating are collected. In fact, it is suggested that modest fees encourage parents to treat schooling seriously and to be certain that their children attend.

Secondary education has developed even more rapidly than primary education. The secondary enrollment rate has risen from 2 percent in 1949 to the current 37 percent. The rate compares favorably with the 26 percent enrollment ratio for 92 other developing countries but is lower than the 60 percent in China's East Asian neighbors or the 86 percent in countries belonging to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). Secondary education is biased toward general training. Less than 5 percent of the schools are vocational or technical, and they enroll 12 percent of the secondary-school population. The neglect of technical and vocational education is a fallout of the Cultural Revolution, during which 62,000 vocational and technical schools were dismantled.

China has 633 universities and other institutions of higher learning; the Ministry of Education directly manages 35, municipalities and provinces run 392, and 12 ministries run 206. Responsibility for research is shared between the Ministry of Education and the Chinese Academy of Sciences. Only 24 percent of college enrollees are women, a lower proportion than the 33 percent in the rest of the developing world. In technical fields the more prestigious institutions play critical roles. They enroll 45 percent and 60 percent of students in science and engineering, respectively, and graduate 56 percent and 70 percent of all scientists and engineers, respectively.

Graduate education began only in the 1950s and was one of the casualties of the Cultural Revolution. Graduate institutions reopened in 1978, but the curriculum pattern was not fully defined for many years. Enrollment in graduate courses is low not only in agriculture but also in finance, law, business, trade, economics, and administration. Overall enrollment in higher education is very low by international standards.

The key universities recruit their students nationwide. Many other universities also recruit from outside their provinces. Until recently universities provided boarding for all students. Some day students have been accepted in the past decade, but the percentage is low and restricted by the lack of transportation in many university towns.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 90.9
 Male %: 95.1
 Female %: 86.5
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 10.4
 First Level: Primary schools: 849,123
 Teachers: 6,430,774
 Students: 125,756,888
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 19.6
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 94.6
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 81,020
 Teachers: 4,572,065
 Students: 67,661,240
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 18.9
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 37.0

Third Level: Institutions: 1,054
 Teachers: 679,888
 Students: 12,143,723
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 12.7
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 2.1

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The world owes a number of scientific and technological innovations to China, including the development of the seismoscope, the mechanical clock, the compass, gunpowder, paper, woodblock printing, and movable type. In modern times Chinese science has fallen behind, though by the end of the 20th century schools and colleges were placing greater emphasis on science in an effort to catch up. Much stress is placed on practical projects, such as the development of a high-yield hybrid rice. Other recent developments include supercomputers, satellite technology, and nuclear weaponry.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 584
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 1.1
 High-Tech Exports \$billion: 68.18
 Patent Applications by Residents: 30,324

MEDIA

The gap between law and practice is nowhere wider than in relation to the freedom of communication. Prohibition in the constitutional preamble of criticism of the CCP or socialism takes precedence over the clause in the same constitution providing for the freedoms of speech and press. As a result of this contradiction, official policy is punctuated by periodical campaigns against so-called press excesses. In such a climate, press freedom has not been able to take root. The bolder editors and authors who cross the bounds of officially permitted criticism are labeled as bourgeois and expelled from the party or jailed. Foreign periodicals are not available in newsstands, though they are available to subscribers in educational institutions. Coverage of foreign news in the open media is quite extensive and professional. Chinese citizens may freely listen to foreign broadcasts and receive Internet communication—the number of Internet users in 2004 was officially estimated at 94 million—and millions turn to the Voice of America and even Christian shortwave stations to learn or brush up on English. Here, again, official policy appears erratic; foreign correspondents are invited at times and ordered out at other times.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 909
 Total Circulation million: 75.6
 Circulation per 1,000: 59.3

Books Published: —
 Periodicals: 1,098
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets million: 370
 per 1,000: 291

CULTURE

Chinese culture, particularly Han culture, extends back continuously for over 3,000 years. The quantity of Chinese literary output—including novels, plays, poetry, religious works, history, philosophy, and short stories—has been immense, and only a small fraction has been translated into other languages. One of the most famous works of Chinese literature is Confucius's *Analects*, written in the fifth century B.C.E. The earliest anthology of poetry, *The Book of Songs*, dates to 600 B.C.E. Major poets from the Tang dynasty (618–907) included Du Fu and Li Bai. The Ming dynasty (1368–1644) saw the production of major prose epics, including *The Water Margin*, *Golden Lotus*, *Pilgrim to the West*, and *Dream of the Red Chamber*. In the 20th century literature came to be seen as a way to disseminate the state's Communist ideology. One of the best-known contemporary writers is Zhang Xianliang, whose *Blood Red Dusk* examines events during the Cultural Revolution.

The graphic arts include landscape paintings, which are often accompanied by text such as a poem, dedication, or commentary. China also has a long tradition of sculpture and pottery, including work in ceramics and bronze. Calligraphic writing is a highly developed art form. In the performance arts, opera is prevalent, with at least 300 different forms from the nation's different geographical regions. These performances are highly stylized, with conventional characters and archaic language but also with intricate costuming and makeup and acrobatic stage movements.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 2,600
 Volumes: 336,858,000
 Registered borrowers: 5,291,000
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Each ethnic group in China has its own tradition of folklore and mythology. These traditions have been handed down orally, although the Han preserved their myths in

writing. The number of stories is legion, but a few are prominent, including the stories of Pangu, a heroic figure who gave birth to the world, and Yu the Great, who harnessed the rivers and made the land productive. A major myth has to do with the creation of the world, especially the principles of yin and yang. According to this tradition, the gods were living in harmony until they quarreled and flooded the earth. The only survivors were a brother and sister in a huge pumpkin floating on the water. They were faced with a quandary: they were the only survivors who could repopulate the world, but if they did so, they would violate the taboo against incest. To learn the will of heaven, the brother devised a test: he and his sister would roll a stone down a hill. If they rolled down separate paths, that meant the gods wanted them to respect the incest taboo; if they stopped rolling one on top of the other, the gods wanted them to marry. The brother, though, hid two stones, one atop the other, and after he and his sister rolled their stones down the hill, the brother took his sister to the stones he had hidden, and the two married. After the sister gave birth to a formless creature, the brother cut it into 12 pieces and scattered them in different directions, giving birth to the 12 peoples of ancient China. This myth originated with the Miao sometime around 1000 B.C.E. In about 200 C.E., the Han recorded the myth, but with changes. The brother and sister were named Fuxi and Nuwa, and each was given a human body but the tail of a reptile. At this point they came to be regarded as symbols of yin, the male principle, and yang, the female principle.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Among Chinese who do not have access to modern technology, storytelling is a popular form of entertainment. In the cities younger people enjoy dancing, rock music, and karaoke. The older generation attends musical and theatrical performances and plays games such as mah-jongg and cards. A five-day workweek was introduced in 1995, giving people more leisure time to travel. Television watching has grown in popularity, and a growing number of people have videocassette recorders, enabling them to watch movies. While movie theaters are a source of entertainment, there are not many and they are small, so only a small percentage of Chinese are able to enjoy them.

ETIQUETTE

The Chinese place great emphasis on *guanxi*, or strong interpersonal relations with family, friends, schoolmates, and business associates. Much deference and respect are accorded those of higher status, including older people.

Privacy is limited, a situation worsened by crowded living conditions, and emphasis is placed on the welfare of the group rather than that of the individual. The Chinese place great stress on saving face and avoiding confrontation. It is regarded as ill mannered to refuse a request, and not performing a duty brings shame not only to the individual but to his or her family and community as well.

FAMILY LIFE

Traditionally, marriages were arranged by families, and even today many people continue to use the services of matchmakers, as well as networks of friends and family, to find mates. In large part because of housing shortages, it is common to find three or more generations living in the same home. When a woman marries, she often leaves her family to become part of her husband's family in a household run by the husband's mother. Many adult children continue to live with their parents, again in part because of housing shortages but also because of a tradition of caring for parents in their old age.

Perhaps the most noteworthy feature of Chinese family life is the "one child per family" policy, instituted to limit population growth. (Some of the nation's ethnic groups are exempt from the policy.) This policy has been largely successful, especially in urban areas, though it often leads to forced abortions and even infanticide. Because male children are more highly valued, many female infants are given up for adoption internationally.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

For many years, the plain, drab "Mao suit" was worn by nearly everyone throughout the country, and many peasants continue to wear this style of clothing. Today, clothing is more varied and colorful, especially in the warmer southern parts of the country, where people greatly favor modern, stylish Western dress from brand-name clothing makers.

SPORTS

Traditionally, sports were conducted primarily in connection with festivals, but in recent decades the Chinese government has supported athletes who compete internationally, especially in the Olympics. Chinese Olympians have done particularly well in swimming, diving, gymnastics, volleyball, and the nation's traditional sport, table tennis, and in the 2004 Summer Olympics in Athens, Chinese athletes won 63 medals, including 32 gold medals, ranking second in both respects among all nations. The 2008 Summer Olympics will be held in Beijing.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1945** Japan surrenders, bringing World War II to a close.
- 1946** CCP-GMD representatives meet with Marshall mission; CCP-GMD civil war resumes.
- 1947** Marshall mission ends.
- 1948** CCP forces defeat GMD in many areas.
- 1949** CCP forces seize most major cities; People's Republic of China is established in Beijing; Chiang Kai-shek flees to Taiwan along with remaining GMD forces and sets up Republic of China, with seat at Taipei.
- 1950** North Korea invades South Korea; Chinese "people's volunteers" enter the fighting and push UN troops back into South Korea. China invades Xizang (Tibet).
- 1951** China announces completion of the occupation of Xizang.
- 1952** Land reforms conclude. The Three Anti and the Five Anti campaigns begin.
- 1953** Korean armistice is signed.
- 1954** Soviet-style collective farms are established.
- 1957** The Hundred Flowers campaign is launched.
- 1958** Mao launches Great Leap Forward campaign. Communes are established. PRC forces shell Quemoy and Matsu. Tibetan revolt against PRC rule is crushed, and Dalai Lama flees to India.
- 1960** PRC breaks with the Soviet Union; Soviet and Chinese troops clash on the Xinjiang border.
- 1962** Sino-Indian War erupts over Chinese occupation of areas in northern Kashmir.
- 1964** China conducts its first atomic test.
- 1965** Cultural Revolution begins; many Chinese leaders, including Liu Shaoqi, Zhu De, and Deng Xiaoping, are disgraced.
- 1967** China explodes its first hydrogen bomb.
- 1969** Chinese and Soviet troops clash on the Wusuli Jiang border.
- 1971** PRC is seated in the Chinese seat at the United Nations, and the Republic of China is expelled. Vice Chairman Lin Biao dies under mysterious circumstances in a plane crash, following an abortive coup attempt.
- 1972** President Richard Nixon visits Beijing.
- 1975** Chiang Kai-shek dies.
- 1976** Zhou Enlai dies; Mao Zedong dies. The Gang of Four is arrested. Tangshan is devastated by an earthquake. Hua Guofeng is sworn in as premier.
- 1978** China ends aid to Vietnam.
- 1979** United States recognizes PRC and breaks relations with Republic of China (Taiwan); China invades Vietnam in a brief war.

- 1981** The Gang of Four is convicted.
- 1982** Deng Xiaoping emerges as paramount ruler.
- 1983** China adopts new economic policy and strengthens relations with the West.
- 1984** U.S. President Reagan visits China.
Sino-British agreement is signed on reversion of Hong Kong to China in 1997.
- 1986** China launches "anticorruption" campaign.
- 1987** Hu Yaobang resigns as CCP general secretary and is replaced by Zhao Ziyang.
At the 13th National Congress reformists led by Zhao gain the upper hand, as only 90 of the 209 members of the outgoing Central Committee are reelected; Deng retires from the Central Committee but retains influential post of chairman of the Military Affairs Committee; Li Peng is named acting premier in place of Zhao Ziyang.
- 1988** Violent anti-Chinese demonstrations in Xizang are suppressed by force.
- 1989** Soviet president Gorbachev visits Beijing.
Prodemocracy demonstrators, numbering several thousands, gather in Tiananmen Square in Beijing and press for reforms; after initial vacillation, regime sends in the army and crushes the protest; China faces mounting international criticism for using force to quell the prodemocracy movement; antireform faction within the Politburo and the Central Committee gains strength; Zhao Ziyang is ousted and replaced by Jiang Zemin as party general secretary.
Deng resigns as chairman of the Military Affairs Committee.
- 1990** Martial law is lifted.
Dissident scientist Fang Lizhui is allowed into exile in the United Kingdom.
- 1991** China and Russia reach agreement over border dispute.
- 1996** Reunification of Taiwan is declared a priority.
- 1997** Deng Xiaoping dies at age 92.
Collective leadership assumes power headed by Jiang Zemin as president.
Hong Kong is returned to Chinese sovereignty.
President Clinton visits China and Jiang Zemin visits the United States.
- 1998** Macau is returned to China.
- 1999** Chinese attack U.S. embassy in Beijing in retaliation for bombing of Chinese embassy in Belgrade.
- 2001** U.S. Navy reconnaissance plane collides with Chinese fighter jet sent to intercept it, forcing emergency landing on Hainan Island.
China becomes a member of the World Trade Organization.
- 2002** Hu Jintao is named head of the Communist Party.
- 2003** Hu Jintao is elected president by the National People's Congress.
An outbreak of SARS leads to quarantine measures and travel restrictions.
China and India reach an agreement over the status of Tibet and sign a trade agreement.
China launches its first manned spacecraft.
- 2004** China signs a landmark trade agreement with 10 Asian countries, a move that could unite 25 percent of the world's population in a free-trade zone.
- 2005** For the first time since 1949 the leaders of Taiwan's National Party and China's Communist Party meet.

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OFFICIAL PUBLICATIONS

- People's Republic of China.** *People's Republic of China Year-Book; Statistical Yearbook of China; Tabulation on the 2000 Population Census of the People's Republic of China*

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Embassy of the People's Republic of China
<http://www.china-embassy.org>
- China Politics Links
<http://www.wellesley.edu/Polisci/wj/China/chinalinks.html>

COLOMBIA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Colombia (República de Colombia)

ABBREVIATION

CO

CAPITAL

Bogotá

HEAD OF STATE & HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

President Álvaro Uribe Vélez (from 2002)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Parliamentary democracy

POPULATION

42,954,279 (2005)

AREA

1,138,910 sq km (439,736 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Mestizos, whites, mulattoes

LANGUAGE

Spanish

RELIGION

Roman Catholicism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Peso

NATIONAL FLAG

Three horizontal stripes, with the upper yellow stripe twice as wide as each of the lower blue and red stripes

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A silver-gray condor of the Andes holds in its golden beak a green laurel wreath from which a gold-rimmed shield is surrounded. The shield contains three panels, the first showing an open yellow pomegranate, with two golden cornucopias on either side, the second the red Phrygian cap of liberty, and the third two white-sailed schooners separated by a narrow green strip of land. Beneath the talons of the eagle is a gold ribbon bearing the national motto: *Libertad y orden* (Liberty and order). The shield is flanked by two flags on either side.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“O Unwithering Glory, Immortal Joy”

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year’s Day), May 1 (Labor Day), July 20 (Independence Day), August 7 (Battle of Boyaca), October 12 (Columbus Day), November 11 (Independence of Cartagena Day), all major Christian festivals, including Epiphany, St. Joseph’s Day, Day of Sts. Peter and Paul, Ascension, All Saints’ Day, Immaculate Conception, Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter, Assumption, Sacred Heart, Corpus Christi, and Christmas

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

July 20, 1810

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

July 5, 1991

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Located on the northwest corner of the South American continent, Colombia has a total area of 1,138,910 sq km (439,736 sq mi), extending 1,700 km (1,056 mi) north-northwest to south-southeast and 1,210 km (752 mi) north-northeast to south-southwest. The land area includes the islands of San Andrés and Providencia in the Caribbean Sea and the islands of Malpelo, Gorgona, and Gorgonilla in the Pacific Ocean. The country fronts both

those bodies of water, with a 1,760 km (1,094 mi) Caribbean coastline and a 1,448 km (900 mi) Pacific coastline.

Colombia shares its total international boundary of 6,004 km (3,731 mi) with five countries: Venezuela (2,050 km; 1,271 mi), Brazil (1,643 km; 1,019 mi), Peru (1,496 km; 930 mi), Ecuador (590 km; 366 mi), and Panama (225 km; 140 mi). Colombia is involved in a maritime boundary dispute with Venezuela in the Gulf of Venezuela and a territorial dispute with Nicaragua over the Colombian islands of Providencia and San Andrés. Colombia also

Colombia



has a territorial dispute with Honduras over cays in the San Andrés and Providencia archipelago.

The capital of Colombia is Santa Fe de Bogotá; Bogotá is one of the most spectacular cities in South America, entirely enclosed by lofty mountain ranges. It occupies about 77 sq km (30 sq mi) in the autonomous Special District, established in 1955. There are some two dozen other cities with populations of more than 200,000.

Topographically, Colombia is divided into four regions: the central highlands, the Atlantic lowlands, the Pacific lowlands, and eastern Colombia, to the east of the Andes.

Near the Ecuadorean border the Andes Mountains fan out into three distinct ranges, known as cordilleras, which run through the country from the south on a northeasterly axis. The three principal chains are the Cordillera Occidental, the Cordillera Central, and the Cordillera Oriental. The western and central cordilleras run parallel with the Pacific coast. The highest peak of the central system is Nevado del Huila (5,750 m; 18,865 ft). The third chain runs northeastward, bifurcating into an eastern branch, the Sierra de los Andes, and a northern branch, the Sierra Perija, which terminates south of the Guajira Peninsula. The highest point of this range, Sierra Nevada de Cucuy, rises to 5,580 m (18,307 ft) above sea level. This cordillera also contains the Sabana de Bogotá, the massive plateau on which the capital is built. The Atlantic lowlands consist of the plains north of the highlands and is connected with the highlands through the Cauca and Magdalena river valleys. The region includes the semiarid Guajira Peninsula and the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, an isolated mountain system with peaks over 5,700 m (18,700 ft). The Pacific lowlands consist of jungles and swamps and the low Serranía de Baudó, which is geologically separate from the Andean chain. Adjoining the Panama frontier is the Atrato Swamp, a bottomless muck that has defied engineers trying to build the Pan-American Highway across it. The sparsely populated eastern three-fifths of the country comprise vast llanos, or plains, in the north and *selvas*, or jungle forests, in the south.

The river system includes the Magdalena, with a length of 1,549 km (963 mi), of which 1,300 km (808 mi) are navigable; the Cauca, with a length of 1,015 km (631 mi), of which 249 km (155 mi) are navigable; the Caquetá, a tributary of the Amazon with a length of 2,200 km (1,367 mi); the Meta, a tributary of the Orinoco with a length of 1,000 km (621 mi); and the Putumayo, a tributary of the Amazon with a length of 1,800 km (1,119 mi). Shorter rivers include the Guaviare, Baudó, Atrato, San Juan, and Patía. There are a number of lakes in the Atlantic lowlands, including Ciénaga de Zapotosa, Ciénaga Sapayan, Ciénaga de Oro, Ciénaga de Tadia, and Ciénaga Chilloa.

Geography

Area sq km:	1,138,910; sq mi 439,736
World Rank:	25th
Land Boundaries, km:	Brazil 1,643; Ecuador 590; Panama 225; Peru 1,496; Venezuela 2,050
Coastline, km:	3,208
Elevation Extremes meters:	
	Lowest: Pacific Ocean 0
	Highest: Pico Cristobal Colon 5,775
Land Use %	
	Arable land: 2.4
	Permanent Crops: 1.7
	Forest: 47.8
	Other: 48.1

Population of Principal Cities (2003)

Armenia	303,939
Barranquilla	1,329,579
Bello	372,857
Bogotá (Santa Fe de)	6,850,205
Bucaramanga	553,046
Buenaventura	235,054
Cali	2,287,819
Cartagena	902,688
Cúcuta	682,671
Floridablanca	242,016
Ibagué	412,820
Itagüí	263,808
Manizales	351,878
Medellín	1,955,753
Montería	264,252
Neiva	335,248
Palmira	241,113
Pasto	365,121
Pereira	420,415
Popayán	212,359
Santa Marta	406,231
Sincelejo	247,211
Soacha	298,138
Soledad	326,067
Valledupar	292,760
Villavicencio	305,476

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Colombia is located within a few degrees of the equator, but temperatures and climatic variations are governed by altitude. There are four main seasons: two wet seasons lasting from March to May and from September to November and two dry seasons lasting from December to February and from June to August, except in the northern plains where there is one long wet season from May through October.

The country is divided climatically into three zones. The hot zone (*tierra caliente*) constituting 90 percent of the land area, is generally below 915 m (3,000 ft). Here the mean annual temperature is 23.8°C (75°F) to 26.6°C (80°F), the mean maximum is 37.7°C (100°F), and the minimum is 18°C (65°F).

The temperate zone (*tierra templada*) has elevations between 915 and 1,980 m (3,000 and 6,500 ft), covering about 8 percent of the country, particularly the intermontane valleys. Here the mean annual temperature varies between 18°C (65°F) and 23.9°C (75°F).

The cool zone (*tierra fría*) comprises regions over 1,980 m (6,500 ft), particularly the plateaus and terraces of the Colombian Andes. Here the temperature varies between 10°C and 19°C (50°F and 66°F). The annual mean temperature at the capital, Bogotá, with an elevation of 2,598 m (8,524 ft), is 13.8°C (57°F).

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature
 Hot Zone: 75°F to 80°F
 Temperate Zone: 65°F to 75°F
 Cool Zone: 55°F to 1.4°F
 Average Rainfall: 14 in to 35 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

The indigenous flora of Colombia are highly varied, depending on topography. Along the Caribbean coast, mangroves and coconut palms grow in abundance. Forested regions, constituting about half the country, contain such trees as balsam, cedar, pine, walnut, oak, mahogany, and *lignum vitae*, as well as tropical plants such as castor and tonka beans, ipecac, ginger, sarsaparilla, vanilla, sapodilla, and rubber. The savannas are marked by low-lying grasslands and shrublands and are home to spider monkeys, numerous species of birds, and giant anacondas. Common mammals in Colombia include monkeys of various species, red deer, jaguars, pumas, armadillos, sloths, anteaters, peccaries, and tapirs. Colombia is rich in bird species, including hummingbirds, cranes, storks, cockatoos, toucans, parrots, vultures, and condors. It has more species of birds (1,776) and amphibians (620) than any other country on earth.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 42,954,279
 World Rank: 27th
 Density per sq km: 42.8
 % of annual growth (1999-2003): 1.7
 Male %: 49.0
 Female %: 51.0
 Urban %: 76.4
 Age Distribution %: 0-14: 31.0
 15-64: 64.0
 65 and over: 5.0
 Population 2025: 55,065,000
 Birth Rate per 1,000: 21.19
 Death Rate per 1,000: 5.61

Rate of Natural Increase %: 1.7
 Total Fertility Rate: 2.59
 Expectation of Life (years): Males 67.58
 Females 75.41
 Marriage Rate per 1,000: —
 Divorce Rate per 1,000: —
 Average Size of Households: 5.4
 Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Colombia is one of the most Spanish of all South American nations, although persons of pure Spanish descent constitute only about 20 percent of the population. The proportion of white ancestry is an important measure of the status of mixed groups such as mestizos, who constitute more than half the population, and mulattoes, who constitute 14 percent. Blacks make up 4 percent, Amerindians 1 percent, and *zambos*, or persons of mixed black and Indian ancestry, 3 percent. Perceptions of ethnicity are determined not only by color but also by geography. Persons residing in Popayán and Antioquía are considered to have white backgrounds, while Chocoano usually connotes black ancestry because of the black preponderance in Chocó. The importance of color in Colombian society is reflected in the complex racial nomenclature and the number of words used to classify and describe racial groups.

Spanish values dominate Colombian society, and the ideal for the nonwhite groups is to approximate and adopt all possible Spanish traits. Because of their longer exposure to Spanish culture, blacks have been more successfully Hispanicized than Amerindians. Racial minorities have remained without sustaining any shared identity or cultural cohesion. Economic disparities between the wealthy and upper-class whites and the poorer blacks and Amerindians have also tended to institutionalize the notion of white superiority. Perhaps because of this reason, mestizos, who exhibit more white characteristics than mulattoes, have found it easier to achieve upward mobility. There are an estimated 60 Amerindian tribes scattered throughout the country. Some of these tribes have remained very primitive nomadic groups, although all tribes have had some contact with outsiders. Indian affairs are administered by the National Indian Institute.

Ethnic minorities include Jews, Germans, Lebanese, Italians, and North Americans.

LANGUAGES

The official language is Spanish; Colombian Spanish is generally considered to be the purest in Latin America. The Colombian Language Academy has maintained close ties with its counterpart in Spain. There are, however, a number of words and expressions not found elsewhere that give Colombian Spanish a distinctive character. Co-

Colombia's diversity is reflected in the fact that some regions use *tú* as the familiar form of address while others use *vos*. Most of the innumerable Indian dialects are dying out, although those such as Aymara, Arawak, Chilacha, Carib, Quechua, Tupi-Guaraní, and Yurumangi still survive. Missionary work by the Spanish colonizers guaranteed that, unlike in Peru or Bolivia, all but the most isolated highlands or forest populations of Native Americans came to speak Spanish as their primary tongue.

RELIGIONS

Colombia is considered one of the most strongly Roman Catholic countries in Latin America, not only in the proportion of its population claiming adherence to the faith but also in terms of the depth of conviction of common believers and the influence of the hierarchy in social and political affairs. More than 92 percent of Colombians have been baptized in the church, and most Colombians regularly attend Mass, observe holy days, and receive sacraments. The ratio of priests to believers is also one of the highest in Latin America.

The relations between church and state are governed by the Concordat of 1973, which replaced the Concordat of 1887. Unlike the 1887 concordat, the 1973 concordat did not define Roman Catholicism as the official religion but as "the religion of the great majority of the Colombians." It recognized the pope's right to name bishops but removed tax-exempt status for church properties. The latter concordat also altered the church's role in three major areas. The jurisdiction of the church over so-called mission territories with Indian populations was restricted, and educational and social services provided by the church were to be transferred to the state. Mandatory teaching of the catechism in schools and the ecclesiastical right to censor university texts were taken away, and the church was expected to conform to state regulations even in its own schools. Lastly, the right of Colombians to contract civil marriages was recognized.

The church's ecclesiastical organization reflects its strength and penetration. The primate is the archbishop of Bogotá, who is invariably a cardinal. He presides over eight archdioceses and 27 dioceses. The clergy number over 5,000, almost all of whom are native Colombians, serving 1,600 parishes and growing by 30 a year.

Religious minorities include 300,000 Protestants and 12,000 Jews. Protestant membership has grown since 1968, but evangelical churches have not gained the kind of firm foothold that they have in some other Latin American countries.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

There is great uncertainty as to when the first human settlement of South America took place; it was possibly more than 20,000 years ago. Two waves of Mesoamerican migration, crossing the Isthmus of Panama, occurred around 1500 B.C.E. and 500 B.C.E. The fourth century B.C.E. brought a further wave of migration: the Chibcha, or Muisca, from Central America, dispersing the Arawaks living along the Caribbean coast. Another tribe from the islands, the Caribs, mounted periodic raids on the Chibcha from the end of the first millennium C.E. onward, forcing them to resettle at higher elevations. At the time of Spanish exploration and conquest, the tribes with the most advanced and influential culture were the Chibcha and the Tairona.

Colombia, known as New Granada, was under Spanish rule from 1538, as a colony until 1717 and as a vice-royalty until 1819. It was part of the Republic of Gran Colombia until 1830, when Venezuela and Ecuador seceded from the united republic.

Colombia has a long liberal, democratic history centered on competition between the Liberal and Conservative parties. The Liberals have been associated with anticlericalism, federalism, and free trade, while the Conservatives have advocated a strong central government, supported protectionism, and allied themselves with the Roman Catholic Church. Although some governments have been authoritarian, Colombia has experienced dictatorship only five times in its history: in 1830–31, 1854, 1884–94, 1904–09, and 1953–57.

Colombia's recent history has been marked by three key elements: the dominance of the two parties, political violence, and the National Front coalition. Disputes between the two parties have often engendered violence. The greatest bloodshed came in the War of a Thousand Days (1899–1902) and La Violencia (1948–58), in which 100,000 and between 100,000 and 200,000, respectively, died. Colombia is currently plagued by violence from several leftist guerrilla groups and by high levels of criminal violence involving both street criminals and drug lords.

In response to La Violencia and a period of dictatorship under Gustavo Rojas Pinilla from 1953–57, the two parties formed the National Front coalition, in which the Liberals and Conservatives alternated the presidency and evenly split the congressional seats and the bureaucracy for the 16 years from 1958 to 1974. Since the end of the National Front, the Liberal Party has dominated politics, capturing the presidency in 1974, 1978, 1986, 1990, and 1994. Conservatives regained the highest office in 1998.

Since the late 1970s Colombia has been a battleground between the government and left-wing guerrillas. The guerrillas have failed to dislodge the government but have caused major national disruption, as has the growing power of the drug cartels and the death squads formed to protect the cartels. During the late 1980s

Religious Affiliations

Roman Catholic	38,659,000
Other	4,295,000

several prominent politicians were kidnapped or assassinated by drug dealers in efforts to stop the government's tough antidrug campaign. In 1989, following the assassination of Liberal Party leader Carlos Galán, President Virgilio Barco Vargas declared a "war" against the drug cartels. One of his most controversial measures was to extradite drug traffickers wanted in the United States. Drug-related violence increased during the 1989–90 presidential campaign, and three presidential candidates were murdered.

Under the administration of César Gaviria Trujillo (1990–94), the country developed a new constitution to replace the one that had been serving, with many amendments, since 1886. This, it was somewhat vainly hoped, would diversify political participation away from Liberal/Conservative dominance. The government succeeded in getting several guerrilla groups to lay down arms and form parties, but the two largest, the Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces (FARC) and the National Liberation Army (ELN), remained in the bush. Colombia's political crisis and instability deepened when 1994's victorious presidential candidate, Ernesto Samper Pizano of the Liberals, was accused of taking cash from the Cali drug cartel and other illegitimate sources to finance his campaign. Despite many calls for his resignation at home and abroad, he served out the duration of his term. During this term the national economy took a steep turn for the worse, the United States suspended aid and cooperation because of the accusations against Samper, and guerrilla activity increased to the point where many feared for the survival of the state. Right-wing paramilitaries sprang up to combat the guerrillas on their own terms—which all too frequently involved vigilante justice and other human rights abuses—often tacitly working with units of the army.

When Andrés Pastrana Arango came to power in 1998 as the first Conservative president since 1986, he promised a major peace overture, controversially raising the stakes by effectively ceding a tract of land in southern Colombia about the size of El Salvador to the FARC, declaring it a demilitarized zone. The guerrillas, however, were reluctant to be drawn into formal talks. The ELN and the paramilitaries responded by demanding zones of their own and places at the peace conference, but FARC leaders regarded the idea of the paramilitary chief Carlos Castaño sitting as an equal at the negotiating table as a nonstarter. In 2000 Pastrana succeeded in getting his \$7.5 billion "Plan Colombia" approved; this included a considerable boost in military capacities, as helped by U.S. and European aid, as well as rural development schemes to try to wean peasants away from growing coca. The ultimate aim was to force the guerrillas into negotiations. But the FARC responded by warning of an escalation in violence in the far south and by mounting cross-border raids, to the consternation of Ecuador, Brazil, and Ven-

ezuela. From 2000 through 2002 peace talks were on again, off again, and they finally collapsed when Pastrana accused the rebels of hijacking an airplane and launched attacks against rebels in the south. In May 2002 Alvaro Uribe won a first-round presidential victory, but his inauguration was marked by FARC violence, and a state of emergency was declared. Steps toward peace were taken in 2003, when members of the right-wing guerrilla group United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC) disarmed, and in 2004 the AUC and the government began peace talks.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1958–62	Alberto Lleras Camargo
1962–66	Guillermo León Valencia
1966–70	Carlos Lleras Restrepo
1970–74	Misael Pastrana Borrero
1974–78	Alfonso López Michelsen
1978–82	Julio César Turbay Ayala
1982–86	Belisario Betancur Cuartas
1986–90	Virgilio Barco Vargas
1990–94	César Gaviria Trujillo
1994–98	Ernesto Samper Pizano
1998–2002	Andrés Pastrana Arango
2002–	Álvaro Uribe Vélez

CONSTITUTION

In spite of its internal instability, Colombia has a firm tradition of constitutional democracy and has been ruled by elected governments for all but four years (1953–57) of the present century. The nation had 10 constitutions from 1811 until 1886. The constitution of 1886 was amended many times (in 1910, 1936, 1945, 1957, 1959, and 1968) before giving way to a completely new constitution in 1991.

The new constitution halted the centralizing tendencies produced by the accretion of amendments to the old constitution and attempted to break the dual-party stranglehold on politics. The idea was to open up the political process to new voices and tendencies and perhaps in this way marginalize the leftist guerrilla movements in the countryside and deny them popular legitimacy. This worked better in theory than in practice: the Liberals and Conservatives still dominate politics, and the guerrillas are in a stronger position than ever. Other provisions of the 1991 constitution limited the executive's use of emergency decrees, bolstered the rights of the individual, revamped the judicial system, liberalized criminal procedure, and pruned the legislature. The Chamber of Representatives was shrunk from 199 members to 161, with each department electing at least two representatives. The Senate went from 114 seats to 102, and senators now

have nationwide rather than departmental constituencies. Up to five additional seats in the lower house could be awarded to ethnic minorities, and indigenous peoples soon after seated their first representatives. The changes to the justice system most notably shifted the conduct of trials from a system based on the Napoleonic Code to something more closely resembling U.S. practice and set up a constitutional court for the first time.

Executive power is vested in the president of the republic, who is elected by popular suffrage for a four-year term. He is constitutionally prohibited from seeking reelection for a consecutive term. In addition, the president is the commander in chief of the armed forces and the head of the national police. The country has no vice president, and currently the rules of succession are unclear.

Suffrage is universal, and the voting age was reduced from 21 to 18 in 1977. Women were enfranchised in 1957. There are strict residency requirements for voter registration. Elections are held in the springs of even-numbered years, with municipal and departmental assembly elections alternating with presidential and congressional elections. Voters vote for party lists rather than for individual candidates. Electoral practices are regulated by the Electoral Guarantees Court. Despite the relatively free character of the elections, voter abstention is widespread (up to 70 percent in the early 1990s, as much because of political violence as because of voter apathy).

PARLIAMENT

The Congress (Congreso) is a bicameral legislature consisting of a Senate and a Chamber of Representatives, each elected for four-year terms coinciding with the presidential term. Members of Congress are elected on a proportional basis, with every department guaranteed at least two seats in each house. Each house also makes special provision for members appointed from minority groups; the Senate's elected membership of 100 is joined by two members of the indigenous community, and the Chamber's membership, allowing for up to five such appointees, currently numbers 166, of which two are indigenous and two are from other recognized minorities.

Bills are introduced in either chamber by congressmen or by ministers. Most legislation is referred to one of eight standing committees whose approval is necessary for further consideration. Party discipline is strict in both houses, and members tend to vote in blocs. Among the functions of Congress are the election of the presidential designate, the election of the members of the Supreme Court, and the adoption of amendments to the constitution. Among the powers specifically granted to the Senate are the trial of officials impeached by the Chamber of Representatives and the authorization to declare war. The Chamber elects the comptroller general and originates all legislation dealing with taxation.

In the 2002 legislative election the Liberal Party lost its paper-thin majorities in both the Chamber of Representatives and the Senate.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Colombia has a two-party system dominated by the Liberal and Conservative parties, two of the oldest political parties in Latin America, dating back to 1848. Despite the intensity of party loyalties, few ideological differences exist between the two, particularly since the formation of the National Front power-sharing agreement in 1957. Both parties follow middle-of-the-road, free-market policies at home and pro-U.S. policies abroad, and both are strongly tied to the elite strata of society. If there is a difference, it is in the Liberal Party's orientation toward urban groups, the commercial and industrial sector, and moderate social and agrarian reform, versus the Conservative Party's orientation toward the rural aristocracy, the Roman Catholic Church, and the military. Even in internal organization the two parties are dominated by their leadership, whose policy decisions the rank and file have no choice but to follow. Ideological labels are also misleading in terms of the membership on whom the parties depend for their support. Labor is allied with the Conservative Party because of its ties with the church.

Since 1957, when the two parties agreed to share power, political dynamics have been characterized by the growth of factions within each party. Local organizations of both the Conservative and Liberal parties are headed by local party bosses, whose principal function is to trade votes as power brokers. The system perhaps reached a pinnacle of corruption under the presidency of Ernesto Samper, when not only the president but also a substantial percentage of the legislators were suspected of ties to drug traffickers.

The main challenge to the two-party system in the 1970s came from Alianza Nacional Popular (ANAPO, National Popular Alliance), founded in 1961 by the former dictator Rojas Pinilla. ANAPO's main planks were designed to appeal to the lower classes and constituted a blend of populism, Catholicism, and nationalism. ANAPO splintered and lost influence in the late 1970s, and no viable third party took its place in the 1980s, leading to increasing political expression through terrorism and violence. The 1991 constitution was designed in part to bring these groups into the mainstream and was briefly successful in doing so. The Democratic Alliance—April 19 Movement, formed by leaders of the former terrorist group M-19, headed by Antonio Navarro Wolff, won 10 percent of the votes in the 1991 legislative elections. However, the alliance could not build on that success and is today one of a number of fairly inconsequential minor parties.

The Patriotic Union, formed in May 1985, was purportedly the political arm of the Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces, but it became increasingly detached from FARC, which continued fighting, and has suffered severe losses to its leadership through assassination. The Christian Democratic Party has been small and fairly weak for years.

A number of guerrilla groups have appeared on the scene since the 1970s, and two are significant enough to be reckoned with: the National Liberation Army (Ejército de Liberación Nacional, ELN) and the Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia, FARC). The paramilitary groups that have garnered increasing influence in reaction against the guerrillas have their own political face: the National Restoration Movement.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For purposes of local government Colombia is divided into 32 departments, the federal district of Bogotá, four *intendencias*, and five *comisarias*. The *intendencias* and *comisarias* are together known as national territories.

The departments have directly elected assemblies and, since the new constitution came into effect, elected governors as well. The territories are controlled directly by the central government. Although the territories make up 46 percent of the land area, they support only 1.9 percent of the population.

Departments are further subdivided into municipalities, which are either administrative and commercial centers or municipal seats known as *cabaceras* surrounded by rural localities known as *veredas*. The municipalities are administered by *alcaldes*, or mayors, who served as gubernatorial agents until March 1988, when the country's first mayoral elections were held. Municipalities are divided, though not officially, into zones or wards called *corregimientos*, each headed by an official known as a *corregidor*. The Indian reservations form a separate administrative category. They are administered by their own authorities, known as *cabildos*, which are popularly elected councils.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The legal system was historically based on Spanish law. It has undergone major modifications as a result of the 1991 constitution. Criminal trials have shifted the burden of proof from the accused to the accuser. Two new offices have been mandated: the general prosecutor, to investigate and pursue cases against suspected offenders through the courts, and the public defender, charged with monitoring the general prosecutor's work and safeguarding the human rights of ordinary citizens in the legal

process. The constitution also mandated the creation of a Judicial Council to review judges' professional qualifications and a Constitutional Court.

The Colombian judicature is headed by the Supreme Court. The 24 judges of the Supreme Court are elected by existing members of the court. The term of office is five years, and the magistrates may be reelected indefinitely until they attain the age of 65. The president of the court is elected by the members annually. The court enjoys broad powers, including the right to veto decrees and review legislation. Under a constitutional provision known as popular action, any citizen may file a case before the Supreme Court challenging the constitutionality of a law.

On the next lower level, the country is divided into 61 judicial districts, each of which has a superior court of three or more judges elected by members of the Supreme Court. These judges, in turn, elect judges of the lower courts, such as municipal courts and circuit courts. A parallel system of administrative courts headed by the Council of State also exists. There is one administrative court for each department charged with hearing complaints against the government.

The judiciary is overburdened, and there are backlogs of up to five years resulting from a morass of red tape. The judiciary is also the target of charges of political patronage, extortion, and corruption. Reforms to the civilian penal code in 1993 were thought to be heavily influenced by drug dealers, and a military penal code reform similarly fell short of international expectations that crimes involving human rights violations would be tried in civilian courts. Colombia is trying to do away with courts composed of "faceless" participants—judges, prosecutors, and witnesses whose identities are shielded—in security-related cases, which frequently violate due process. There is no capital punishment.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Colombia is statutorily free and yet everywhere in chains owing to the unrelenting violence of its society. A constitutionally authorized state of siege, which permits the curtailment of some civil and political liberties, was increasingly imposed during the 1970s and 1980s. The Colombian government justified this and other measures infringing on civil liberties as necessary to contain the terrorism of the drug cartels and the politically inspired violence that threatens the security of the state.

The human rights situation worsened during the late 1980s and 1990s as a result of the government's war against the drug cartels and the continuing guerrilla warfare against the central government. Many of the government's units charged with conducting operations against the drug cartels kidnapped, attacked, or murdered civilians whom they suspected of involvement in drugs.

Although torture was illegal under the 1981 penal code, suspects were indeed tortured or disappeared. The drug cartels carried on a systematic campaign of terror against the police, the press, and high government officials. The drug lords were also responsible for terrorist attacks against public facilities and a systematic campaign against judges and public prosecutors. Successive administrations broke the Medellín cartel and jailed the leaders of the Cali cartel; nonetheless, smaller narcotics traffickers continue to function, and the problem remains beyond the control of law enforcement or the military.

The government campaign against leftist guerrillas continued to yield frequent accusations of human rights abuses. Before President Pastrana offered the Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces (FARC) a “sanctuary” in southern Colombia in an attempt to coax the group into negotiations, the military would raid suspected guerrilla positions without regard for civilian casualties. The guerrillas, in turn, would take hostages in an effort to collect “war taxes” and would murder civilians thought to be spies. Efforts to investigate paramilitary crimes were successful in only a few cases. Human Rights Watch has offered evidence that a number of military units have worked hand in glove with paramilitary forces.

Whereas under the old constitutional regime there was controversy over trying civilians accused of certain crimes in military courts, the present regime is feeling international pressure to try more cases involving human rights abuses by the military in civilian courts. Thus far the army and its intelligence service have largely managed to escape prosecution in the ordinary court system.

The Colombian Constitution specifically proscribes the death penalty. Indemnities have been awarded by the Council of State for wrongful death at the hands of government forces.

The rights of the public to a fair trial and due process are guaranteed by the constitution and generally honored in practice, with some glaring exceptions in the case of special courts in which “faceless” judicial officials have manipulated testimony and violated defendants’ rights. These courts were phased out in 1999.

Freedoms of the press, speech, religion, and assembly are constitutionally guaranteed and have been generally respected to the extent that the government is capable of guaranteeing them. Public meetings, marches, and demonstrations are normally held without police interference. But with guerrillas controlling more than 40 percent of the country’s territory (and paramilitary groups staking their own claims), and with approximately 90 percent of violent crimes going unsolved, to call the state’s capacities for order and justice severely inadequate is to understate the case.

Prisons in Colombia are starkly overcrowded, at 40 percent beyond capacity. Because of violence, Colombia has one of the world’s largest internally displaced popu-

lations—between 2.7 and 3.1 million in 2005—and the government has rarely honored its own promises and obligations to assist this segment of the population in meeting basic needs.

A number of Colombian organizations are involved in monitoring the human rights situation in the country. These include the Permanent Committee for the Defense of Human Rights, the Political Prisoners’ Solidarity Committee, and the Colombian Commission of Jurists. Colombia was also one of the first nations to ratify the American Convention on Human Rights, the Lima Declaration, and the Riobamba Code of Conduct.

FOREIGN POLICY

Colombia has only a limited diplomatic tradition, and often the country has been too consumed by its internal problems to give much interest to foreign affairs. As the largest Spanish-speaking nation in South America, Colombia naturally aspires to being a regional power among the Andean nations and in the Caribbean. This has at times produced friction with its large neighbor Venezuela, which has always had similar aspirations, and the two countries nearly came to blows in 1979 over a marine boundary dispute in the Gulf of Venezuela, or Guajira, as Colombians refer to it. However, foreign policy is still primarily governed by economic determinants such as the need to gain expanded markets.

In global affairs Colombia prefers the low-key approach and has usually opted for multilateral initiatives to solve international disputes. This, along with a continuing commitment to collective security, has led Colombia to follow a generally conservative line on most foreign policy issues. It has shown a readiness to follow the lead of the United States in inter-American affairs. Relations with the United States have always been a central concern. During the 1960s Colombia was the showcase of the Alliance for Progress. The United States for several years “decertified” Colombia as a nation cooperating against the narcotics trade; Colombia responded that the decision to suspend assistance was politically motivated. Colombians have always been critical about Washington’s single-minded focus on drug smuggling. But as Colombia’s security situation deteriorates, the nation has become more dependent than ever on U.S. assistance. Having mended fences, President Andrés Pastrana asked the United States, as well as Europe, for sizable contributions of military aid to finance a several-billion-dollar campaign against the traffickers, although many Americans are wary of being drawn into Colombia’s civil war.

Although Colombia looks to the United States for leadership in hemispheric economic and security relations, its basic commitment is to its South American neighbors to whom it is bound by historic and cultural ties. Colombia was the prime mover in such regional al-

liances as the Andean Common Market, which is now the Andean Community of Nations. In the early 1990s Colombia joined Mexico and Venezuela in a “Group of Three” to discuss energy and infrastructure issues, and in 1994 the trio signed a 10-year trade-liberalization pact. Colombia views this as an intermediate step toward the proposed Free Trade Area of the Americas encompassing the entire Western Hemisphere. Beyond trade issues, Colombia was an active supporter of Panama’s efforts to win a new treaty with the United States over the Panama Canal.

Colombia joined the United Nations in 1945. It is a member of 14 UN organizations and 34 other international organizations.

DEFENSE

The defense structure is headed by the president as commander in chief. The line of command runs through the minister of war, who is always a senior military officer, to the commanding general of the armed forces and the chief of staff of the armed forces. Military policy is formulated on the advice of the Superior Council of National Defense and the Advisory Council of Military Forces.

Military manpower is provided by compulsory military service under which all males between the ages of 18 and 50 are technically subject to the draft. However, this provision of the law is not strictly enforced, and only a small percentage of those eligible are drafted for a period of two years. In 2001 the nation spent \$3.3 billion, or about 3.4 percent of its gross domestic product (GDP), on defense.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 155,000
 Military Manpower Availability: 11,252,027
 Military Expenditures \$billion: 3.3
 as % of GDP: 3.4
 as % of central government expenditures: 18.8
 Arms Imports \$million: 119
 Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

Colombia’s economy was historically primarily agricultural, with coffee and sugar the largest contributors to GDP. Because of wildly fluctuating world market conditions, Colombia has been trying to reduce its dependency on coffee by expanding the manufacturing and mining sectors. The rapid development of oil, coal, and other nontraditional industries has helped the country to greatly reduce its dependence on coffee.

The most significant growth has come in the oil industry, which was insignificant at the start of the 1980s. By the end of the 1990s it had surpassed coffee as the country’s most valuable (legal) export. Oil and gas contributed 35 percent of Colombian export earnings in 1996, even though the minerals sector of the economy represented just 5.3 percent of national output at the time. By 2005, however, Colombia’s reliance on oil was uncertain because of declining reserves and the need for new exploration. Beyond fossil fuels, Colombia’s rivers contain tremendous and largely untapped hydroelectric potential, and the country has large coal deposits, significant gold and nickel reserves, and the vast bulk of the world’s extraction of emeralds.

Colombia’s diversification into manufacturing has happened at a much slower rate than in the energy sector. The industrial sector constituted only 13 percent of GDP in 1970 and 17 percent in 1996, but that figure had risen to 32 percent by 2003. About a quarter of this was in food processing, much of which involved the milling of coffee. Other major manufacturing categories were textiles, leather goods, chemicals and pharmaceuticals, car assembly, and electrical-engineering products. Manufacturing is concentrated in cities, primarily in the four most populous urban centers.

The telecommunications sector was deregulated in the 1990s, with cellular services growing at a rapid pace. This industry represented 2.7 percent of GDP in 1999 and was expected to continue increasing its share. The privatization and deregulation policies pursued by Gaviria and his successors also benefited the financial industry, bringing investment and the modernization of services from abroad, mainly Spanish banking firms, though the recession the country entered in 1998 called attention to flaws in the balance sheets of quite a few. The small stock exchanges of Bogotá, Medellín, and Cali also enjoyed unprecedented growth in the years prior to the recession.

Colombia’s more open trade policies brought substantially improved access to U.S. and European markets, but the country ran a worsening trade deficit as the 1990s proceeded. Continued dependence on primary product exports left Colombia at the mercy of world markets when the terms of trade for commodities turned downward, as was the case for the greater part of that decade. The trade situation was counterbalanced by a surge in foreign investment—until political instability caused many investors to have second thoughts. The pervasive violence and drug-related corruption that helped bring on the downturn of the late 1990s bear considerable relation to the social inequities of the country: a population that is severely stratified, a widening gap in wealth brought on in part precisely by the policies that revolutionized production, and a workforce largely lacking in education beyond grade-school

level. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) pressed for budget cuts and tax reforms from the Pastrana administration, but there was considerable opposition from the Liberal opposition in the legislature and the public-sector workers who would be directly affected by any cutbacks. Colombia was able to tolerate incredibly high levels of domestic strife and chaos without serious consequences in terms of growth or debt accumulation for a long time before its fortunes turned downward. More than anything, the nation needs to settle internal conflicts in order to restore confidence and resume development. International financial institutions credited the Uribe administration for efforts to reduce the deficit below 2.4 percent of GDP in 2004. GDP growth of 3.7 percent in 2003 was the highest in Latin America, but inflation (7.1 percent), poverty (55 percent), and unemployment (14.2 percent) remained problems.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 263.2
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 6,300
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 1.1
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: –0.7
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 13.7
 Industry: 32.1
 Services: 54.2
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 65
 Government Consumption: 21
 Gross Domestic Investment: 15.9
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 12.96
 Imports: 13.06
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 1
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 44

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
187.4	204.7	221.0	235.0	251.8

Finance

National Currency: Colombia Peso (COP)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = COP 2,877.65
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency trillion: 21.6
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 12.95
 Total External Debt \$billion: 38.26
 Debt Service Ratio %: 34.58
 Balance of Payments \$billion: –1.417
 International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 10.2
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
 7.1

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 441
 per capita \$: 10.10
 Foreign Direct Investment \$billion: 2.023

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$billion: 24
 Expenditures \$billion: 25.6
 Budget Deficit \$billion: 1.6
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: 10.6

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 13.7
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 1.6
 Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares: 8.3
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 21.2
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 254.5
 Total Farmland % of land area: 2.4
 Livestock: Cattle million: 25.25|
 Chickens million: 120
 Pigs million: 2.31
 Sheep million: 2.15
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 9.9
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 200

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 11.3
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 3.5

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 69.2
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 20.8
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 483
 Net Energy Imports % of use: –152.8
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 13.1
 Production kW-hr billion: 44.9
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 41.1
 Coal Reserves tons billion: 7.3
 Production tons million: 48.3
 Consumption tons million: 5.1
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: 4.5
 Production cubic feet billion: 218
 Consumption cubic feet billion: 218
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: 1.84
 Production barrels 000 per day: 560.2
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 261
 Pipelines Length km: 6,134

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 13.06
 Exports \$billion: 12.96
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 3.2
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): –0.7
 Balance of Trade \$billion: –1.417

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
United States %	29.6	47.1
Brazil %	5.5	—
Mexico %	5.4	—
Venezuela %	5.2	5.3
China %	5.0	—
Japan %	4.6	—
Germany %	4.4	—
Ecuador %	—	6.0

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 110,000
 Paved %: 23.6
 Automobiles: 812,100
 Trucks and Buses: 402,900
 Railroad: Track Length km: 3,304
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: 373
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 13
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 46.3
 Airports: 980
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 8.3
 Length of Waterways km: 9,187

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 541
 Number of Tourists from million: 1.24
 Tourist Receipts \$billion: 0.962
 Tourist Expenditures \$billion: 1.07

Communications

Telephones million: 8.77
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.03
 Cellular Telephones million: 6.19
 Personal Computers million: 2.133
 Internet Hosts per million people: 2,681
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 64

ENVIRONMENT

Colombia's 1992 constitution is considered by those knowledgeable about ecology to be one of the "greenest" ever devised. It elevated environmental affairs to a stand-alone ministry and added five new institutes dealing with conservation-related issues. It also redistributed some decision-making powers downward, giving a greater say over nature and resource management to local communities, in particular Afro-Colombian and indigenous communities. The country has had framework laws on the environment since 1974—earlier than just about any other Latin American state. Enforcement is spotty, however, first of all because the government does not exercise control over its entire territory. It has made a priority of obtaining for-

eign investment in order to exploit the land's energy potential, particularly in the llanos in the eastern portion of the state, but the consequences have been habitat destruction, as exploration areas are denuded of vegetation, and problems regarding waste disposal, as compounded by frequent guerrilla attacks on pipelines, creating oil spills. The new ministry has a deficiency in terms of the expert staff needed to carry out directives. International and local nongovernmental organizations have helped fill in gaps in order to implement conservation plans in partnership with private industry, and they have assisted in education outreach programs to change popular attitudes toward the natural world and raise awareness of how certain activities harm the environment.

The primary environmental issues in Colombia today are deforestation, soil contamination by pesticides, and air pollution from vehicular exhaust in cities, Bogotá most of all. Deforestation is claiming some 200,000 hectares a year. The pace of deforestation slowed slightly in the early 1990s; by the middle of the decade forests still accounted for 48 percent of the country's territory.

The nation has 32 percent of its area protected as national reserves; of these, 3.3 million hectares are classified as international biosphere reserves. Colombia ranks among the top 10 countries in the UN Environmental Program's "megadiversity" ratings, accounting for an incredible 10 percent of the world's biological diversity.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 47.8
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: -190
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 32
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 93,878
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 1.38

LIVING CONDITIONS

Rebellion and the active drug trade create many uncertainties for Colombians. Domestic terrorists target government buildings, police stations, energy and telecommunications facilities, and military bases in efforts to disrupt the country and its economy. Assassinations, kidnapping, and extortion are commonplace. In many areas the police are unable to protect people. Many judges wear masks to hide their identities because they fear reprisals from the nation's criminal elements. Citizens often take the law into their own hands through paramilitary groups, and wealthier citizens rely heavily on security guards.

Living conditions vary widely depending on people's class. Perhaps 20 percent of the population constitutes the upper class, but even within that class is a small elite that holds a disproportionate share of the nation's social, political, and economic power. The upper class is primarily white, while the middle class consists primarily

of mestizos and some mulattoes; the lower class consists of mulattoes, blacks, and Amerindians. For these people, living conditions are poor, as marked by poverty, malnutrition, lack of opportunity, disease, and illiteracy.

HEALTH

Health care in Colombia has improved markedly over the past several decades. In 2004 life expectancy at birth was over 71 years—over 75 years for females. The infant mortality rate was 21.72 deaths per 1,000 live births. According to the World Bank, per capita spending per year on health care was \$105. Health care, however, is much more widely available in the cities than in rural areas, where women continue to die from forced abortions and where parasites and tropical diseases such as malaria, dengue fever, and yellow fever are more common. While people in the cities, especially those who can afford it, rely on Western medicine, those in rural areas rely more on traditional medicine, practiced by healers called *curanderos*, including herbal and plant remedies.

Health

Number of Physicians: 58,761
 Number of Dentists: 33,951
 Number of Nurses: 103,158
 Number of Pharmacists: —
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 135
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 21.72
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 130
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 5.5
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 105
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.7
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 85
 Measles: 89
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 86
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 92

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Colombians generally eat a light breakfast, a main meal at midday, and a light meal in the evening. The main meal generally consists of fruit, soup, a meat or fish dish with potatoes or rice, and vegetables. There are regional dietary differences. In the nation's interior, breakfasts tend to be heartier and include pork, plantains, steak, eggs, and rice or beans, and dinners tend to be similar. Along the seacoast, fish and shrimp are common dinnertime items. Because of the enormous variety of vegetables grown in Colombia, a vegetable stew called *cocido*, which can include up to 20 different vegetables and three kinds of potatoes, is a common dish.

The state of nutrition in Colombia has generally improved in recent decades. One indicator is the proportion of children under the age of five who are underweight. In 1966, 21 percent of such children were underweight. That percentage improved to 17 percent in 1980, 10 percent in 1989, 8 percent in 1995, and 7 percent in 2000. Meanwhile, obesity, especially among women, has become a problem, with 41 percent of women considered overweight or obese in 2000.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 13.4
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,570
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 99.9
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 136.3

STATUS OF WOMEN

Colombia's deep Catholic traditions tended to restrict the ambitions of women until fairly recent times. In the 1970s and 1980s the country experienced social modernization on a broad scale, even as bouts of violence threatened to unmoor society. The percentage of women working expanded, such that by 1985 one-third of the labor force was female. Some 43 percent of women are now part of the paid workforce. This has had several effects: the old-time subservience to men was extensively undermined once women experienced a degree of financial independence; for poorer families, which had always been more reliant on female labor, women's earnings proved a vital supplement; and the birthrate dropped sharply. Upper-class women have long had the benefit of higher education, and it became customary for them to contribute their energies to social welfare, education, and the arts; some—a larger number than is typical for Latin America—have even gone far in politics. The Samper administration had a woman foreign minister, María Emma Mejía, and one of Samper's former ambassadors, Noemi Sanín, ran a strong third in the presidential election of 1998. Six ministries in the Álvaro Uribe government are headed by women. It is still the case, however, that women who achieve are regarded as something of a novelty.

Women have equal civil and property rights by law. Their economic situation, though improving, is inferior; especially in rural areas, they are concentrated in low-productivity, low-income sectors. Although Colombian women are legally entitled to pay equal to that of their male counterparts and are normally paid equal salaries when employed by the government, this is not generally the case in private industry. A growing number are receiving higher education; they currently constitute more than 40 percent of the university population and more than 50 percent of graduates, allowing them a much wider range of career options.

Colombia is one of the original signatories to the UN Declaration on Population. It is also one of the few Latin American countries to adopt family planning as an official policy and to integrate it into development plans. In 1968 the Colombian Congress enacted legislation supporting planned parenthood and established the Institute of Family Welfare as an official agency. Private efforts in this field have been coordinated since 1985 by the Colombian Family Welfare Association (Asociación Pro-Bienestar de la Familia Colombiana), a member of the International Planned Parenthood Federation. The hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church has voiced only moderate opposition to these programs.

About 77 percent of married women of childbearing age use birth control. The fertility rate has dropped steadily since the mid-1960s; overall, the 2004 fertility rate was 2.59 children per woman, though the figure for rural areas is higher.

A divorce law came into force only in the mid-1970s and is valid only for civil marriages, not Catholic ones.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 12
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.01
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 48.8

WORK

In 2003 Colombia's labor force consisted of 20.34 million people, with a per capita GDP of \$6,300. About 30 percent made their living through agriculture, 24 percent through industry, and 46 percent through services. The unemployment rate was a high 14.2 percent, though this figure does not include the many people who are underemployed, scratching out livings as street vendors or servants or through odd jobs in construction and the like. Likewise, the unemployment figure does not take into account wide disparities in income, in a country where the richest 10 percent make 44 percent of gross income and the poorest 10 percent make a scant 1 percent of gross income. Agricultural products include coffee, flowers, bananas, rice, tobacco, corn, sugarcane, cocoa beans, oilseed, vegetables, forest products, and shrimp. In much of Colombia children work with their parents in the fields. Industrial products include textiles, processed food, petroleum, clothing and shoes, beverages, chemicals, cement, gold, coal, and emeralds.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 20,340,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 39.3

Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 30
 Industry: 24
 Services: 46
 Unemployment %: 14.2

EDUCATION

Schooling is universal, free, and obligatory for five years, from the ages of seven to 12, but in practice, 30 percent or more of rural children do not attend.

Schooling lasts 11 years, as divided into five years of primary school, four years of lower secondary or middle school, and two years of upper secondary school. On the completion of secondary school, students are awarded the *bachillerato* (baccalaureate). There are high failure, dropout, and grade repetition rates because of the rigidity of the examination system and the generally low quality of education. By 1987, 90 percent of children between the ages of seven and 11 attended primary school, more than doubling enrollment in a single generation. But enrollment rates at secondary schools are far lower, even after increasing sixfold since the early 1960s. In 1998 there were 46,707 primary schools and 8,161 secondary schools.

The academic year runs from February to November. The medium of instruction is Spanish throughout.

The public school system comprises national, departmental, and municipal schools. The private sector is made up of schools run by the Roman Catholic Church and a few other religious organizations, schools run by nonreligious private organizations, and cooperative schools run by communities. All private schools are required to be licensed, must conform to state curricula models, and are subject to supervision by public authorities.

Primary teachers are trained in secondary-level normal schools and secondary teachers in university institutes of pedagogy. By 1990 about 55 percent of secondary-school teachers had university degrees. Unqualified teachers are not nearly as prevalent as they were in the 1960s, prior to a burst of public investment in education. Nonetheless, teacher training is sorely inadequate to meet growing needs. Schools faced with shortages of qualified teachers often employ part-time personnel informally known as "taxicab teachers."

Although the national literacy rate is impressive, at 92.5 percent in 2003, well over the Latin American average, it is much lower in the countryside, where even those who have acquired literacy soon lapse into functional illiteracy. In an unusual departure from the norm in Latin America, women have a slightly higher overall rate of literacy than men. Adult education and literacy programs are conducted by a number of organizations, such as the armed forces, business organizations, and religious and welfare institutions.

The primary responsibility for public education is divided between the central government and the departments. About 55 percent of primary-school costs are met by the national Ministry of Education, 22 percent by the departments, and 23 percent by private schools, although the actual proportion varies widely from region to region. The central government has greatly increased financial support for public secondary education. In the past, tuition was charged at the secondary level; even though the government granted scholarships to students in both private and public institutions, the effect was to confine secondary education to the elite, reinforcing social stratification. Since the government assumed primary financial responsibility for secondary schools in 1975, the rate of attendance has greatly increased.

By law the government is required to spend at least 10 percent of its annual budget on education. Total expenditures on education in the early 2000s were equivalent to 5 percent of GDP.

Higher education is provided by 20 general public universities, one open university (recently established to expand educational opportunities for Colombians by offering distance learning), one technical university, and universities of education, education technology, and industry. Additionally, there are two public colleges of administration, one school of police studies, one institute of fine art, one polytechnic, and one conservatory. The private sector has 25 secular universities, four Roman Catholic universities, one college of education, and one school of public administration. The mushrooming of higher education, though it has democratized university studies to a limited degree, has come at the expense of quality instruction. The largest and oldest university is the National University of Bogotá, founded in 1572. Other major universities are the University of Antioquia in Medellín, Universidad Javeriana, Fundación Universidad of Bogotá, Xavier University, Gran Colombia University, and Universidad de los Andes. By 2001 the total number of students enrolled in tertiary institutions was almost one million.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 92.5
Male %: 92.4
Female %: 92.6
School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 11.0
First Level: Primary schools: 46,707
Teachers: 193,627
Students: 5,193,055
Student-Teacher Ratio: 26.8
Net Enrollment Ratio: 87.4
Second Level: Secondary Schools: 8,161
Teachers: 177,940
Students: 3,437,426
Student-Teacher Ratio: 20.9
Net Enrollment Ratio: 53.5

Third Level: Institutions: —

Teachers: 83,342

Students: 989,745

Gross Enrollment Ratio: 24.3

Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 5.2

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Colombians have produced important work in fields as diverse as anthropology, psychology, genetics, mathematics, physics, medicine, and biology. Geologists have led the way in such fields as seismology and volcanology. Medical researchers, among the best in Latin America, have included noteworthy figures such as Manuel Patarroyo, Rodolfo R. Llinás, and Ignacio Barraquer. Although private organizations contribute to scientific research in Colombia, most is funded by the government.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 99

Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 0.3

High-Tech Exports \$million: 318.5

Patent Applications by Residents: 63

MEDIA

As of 1999, 24 daily newspapers were being published in Colombia, with a total circulation of 1.1 million. The largest-selling daily is *El espectador*, one of the most influential newspapers in the Spanish-speaking world, followed by the liberal *El tiempo*. Daily newspaper readership is about 63 per 1,000 people, ranking Colombia 59th among the world's nations.

Both these papers tend to support the Liberal Party line. Bogotá has three other dailies. Others are published in Barranquilla (three), Bucaramanga (two), Cali (three), Cartagena, Cúcuta (two), Manizales, Medellín (two), Montería, Neiva, Pasto, Pereira (three), Popayán, Santa Marta, Tunja, and Villavicencio. The periodical press numbers more than one thousand titles, with a combined circulation of 850,000 copies.

Relations between the press and the state have been characterized by frequent government attempts to restrict a free press, most recently during the presidency of Ernesto Samper. Generally, however, freedom of the press has been preserved and abuses have been infrequent. All newspapers are privately owned and function as official or unofficial organs for the various political factions. At least a dozen Colombian presidents have been journalists, and a close alliance exists between the media and the political system. Journalism is of a very high quality, and newspapers are major organs of political debate. Journalists perform their duties under conditions scarcely imaginable: only Algeria saw more reporters and editors killed during the 1990s.

The domestic news agencies are Colprensa and CIEP–El País. Foreign news bureaus in Bogotá include AP, UPI, AFP, ANSA, IPS, DPA, Efe, Reuters, and TASS.

Television, introduced in 1954, is administered by the National Institute of Radio and Television (INRAVISON). There are two services: a national service, with three channels (two commercial, one educational) and a network of 17 powerful transmitters and repeater stations, and Telebogotá, an official commercial service that can be received only in Bogotá, and two other regional channels. The national service is on the air all the time. Two privately run stations began operations in the late 1990s.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 24
 Total Circulation million: 1.1
 Circulation per 1,000: 26.4
 Books Published: 5,302
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers million: 23.6
 per 1,000: 549
 Television sets million: 12
 per 1,000: 279

CULTURE

The arts flourish in Colombia, largely through a combination of grants from private individuals, foundations, and corporations and from government agencies, especially the Ministries of Education and the Interior. These organizations support such enterprises as the Colombian Institute of Culture and the National Museum of Colombia.

Colombia's literary history began with the arrival of the Spanish, and the nation's literature in earlier decades reflected European traditions. More modern writers, such as Jorge Isaacs and José Eustacio Rivera, have explored themes closer to home. Colombia's most famous writer is Gabriel Garcia Márquez, who won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1982. Graphic arts include not only folk art from the Andes mountains but also the work of internationally known artists such as the painter Fernando Botero, the sculptor Edgar Negret, and the muralist Pedro Nel Gómez. The performance arts reflect the traditions of different regions, such as the Caribbean coast, which gave rise to *vallenato*, a form of dance and music, and the Pacific coast, which gave rise to *currulao*, music played primarily on wooden instruments.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 974
 Volumes: 2,381,000
 Registered borrowers: 5,064

Museums Number: 74

Annual Attendance: 1,542,000

Cinema Gross Receipts national currency million: 43.5

Number of Cinemas: 277

Seating Capacity: 43,000

Annual Attendance: 18,400,000

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Colombian folklore is a blend of Spanish, African, and Amerindian traditions, and much of it is connected with the nation's Catholicism. For example, people in the Chocó region celebrate the Feast of St. Francis, adopted by the largely black population as the patron saint of miners. Along the rivers that flow through this region, many other saint-day festivals are celebrated with music, dance, and singing, and small statues of the saints are floated on river rafts. Other parts of the country celebrate Carnival, often with flutes and African drums, elaborate masks and costumes, all blending African, Amerindian, and European traditions.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

In addition to sports, Colombians take part in the nation's many religious holidays and festivals. Examples include the flower fair in Medellín, the Festival of the Devil in Rio Sucio, the International Caribbean Music Festival in Cartagena, and the Carnaval of Barranquilla. Folk music and folk dancing play large parts in these festivals. A major event is the crowning of Miss Colombia in November each year, and many regions crown beauty queens such as the Queen of Sugar or Queen of Coffee. Another popular form of entertainment for city dwellers is driving or taking a bus to a town or village in the countryside, where family and friends can relax, enjoy picnic lunches, play the guitar, and take in the scenery. In the Andes region, people play a form of horseshoes, often wagering crates of beer on the outcome.

ETIQUETTE

Colombians tend to be rather formal, although individual regions and even communities can exhibit more or less familiarity than neighboring regions or communities. The coastal regions tend to more informality than the interior. In the capital, as well as other cities, people pride themselves on their correct Spanish—even among the lower classes—while on the coast a type of Spanish that is less “textbook” correct is common. In the more formal parts of Colombia, people use the formal form of you, *usted*, rather than the informal *tú*, even, oftentimes, with family members. Personal space is valued, and conversation takes

place at arm's length, even in crowded places when possible, and intruding on another's personal space is regarded as rude and even hostile. In general, greetings tend to be formal, with men shaking hands, although women who are acquainted will often greet with kisses on the cheek. In business settings it is considered rude to launch into formalities at once without first inquiring about the welfare of the other person and his or her family.

FAMILY LIFE

Upper-class Colombians are generally encouraged to marry someone from the same class. Courtship is generally long, lasting for a year, and the couple are chaperoned. Middle- and lower-class people often strive to raise their well-being by marrying someone of a higher class. Among the upper classes, weddings are elaborate affairs, designed to cement family relationships and social and economic bonds. The nuclear family is the norm, but extended kin groups, especially among the lower classes, provide important buffers against hunger and poverty in the absence of government social systems. Because large numbers of destitute children are abandoned in the streets, the government has funded programs whereby women are appointed as foster mothers for entire streets and try to provide food and shelter for the children there.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

In the cities, Western-style clothing is preferred, and dark suits are worn by whites, mestizos, and mulattoes alike. In rural regions, clothing often differs based on climate. Along the warmer coasts, people tend to wear light, colorful clothing made of cotton, in contrast to people in the cooler mountain regions, who wear woolen *ruanas*, a type of Spanish cape. Women in the cooler regions often wear *pañolones*, or large fringed shawls.

SPORTS

Soccer is the most popular sport in Colombia, and in early 2005 the Colombian national team was undefeated in America's Cup soccer play, but other sports, including basketball, golf, tennis, swimming, and volleyball, have also grown in popularity. Colombian cyclists enjoy international success thanks in part to their training in mountainous terrain.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1944** Discontent with government of Alfonso López Pumarejo leads to violence in Bogotá; Conservative rival Laureano Gómez Castro is imprisoned.
- 1946** Presidential elections are held; Conservative Mariano Ospina Pérez wins over two Liberal candidates: Gabriel Turbay and leftist Jorge Eliécer Gaitán.
- 1948** The assassination of Gaitán, Bogotá's mayor, provokes mass riot, known as *bogotazo*, in which 2,000 are killed; undeclared civil war, called La Violencia, breaks out.
- 1949** Repression and violence escalates; Ospina Pérez fires all Liberal governors; Laureano Gómez is elected president on the Conservative ticket in an election boycotted by the opposition.
- 1952** Colombia relinquishes rights over Monjes Archipelago to Venezuela.
- 1953** A civilian-military coalition led by General Gustavo Rojas Pinilla deposes Gómez; Rojas is named president.
- 1954** Violence is renewed as Rojas becomes a virtual dictator.
- 1957** Rojas is reelected by a puppet assembly; arrest of Conservative leader Guillermo León Valencia is followed by the "Days of May" riots and demonstrations; Rojas is forced to hand over power to a five-man junta headed by General Gabriel Paris and go into exile; Liberal and Conservative parties issue Declaration of Sitges, creating the National Front and agreeing to share power and alternate in presidency.
- 1958** Alberto Lleras Camargo is elected president unopposed on the Liberal ticket; Colombian Institute of Agrarian Reform created to undertake country's first serious land reform program; Colombia joins Latin American Free Trade Area.
- 1959** Rojas is tried for illegal use of power and stripped of political rights.
- 1961** Rojas forms the National Popular Alliance Party (ANAPO).
- 1962** State of siege is raised; Valencia is elected president.
- 1965** State of siege is reimposed following continuing political violence.
- 1966** Carlos Lleras Restrepo, a Liberal, is elected president.
- 1969** Colombia joins the Andean Group.
- 1970** Misael Pastrana Borrero is elected president on a Conservative ticket.
- 1971** Supporters of the ANAPO form an armed wing known as the Movimiento 19 de Abril (M-19).
- 1973** A new concordat is signed with the Vatican.
- 1974** National Front pact relating to the rotation of the presidency ends; Liberal Alfonso López Michelsen is elected president.
- 1975** López imposes state of siege as guerrilla groups escalate violence in urban and rural areas.
- 1976** Colombia forgoes further U.S. aid as a demonstration of its own self-sufficiency.

- 1978** Julio César Turbay Ayala, the Liberal candidate, is elected president; Colombia signs eight-nation Amazon Pact.
- 1980** M-19 guerrillas seize Dominican Republic embassy in Bogotá, taking U.S. ambassador and 24 other diplomatic personnel as hostages; seizure ends with the kidnappers being flown to Cuba.
- 1982** Belisario Betancur Cuartas, the Conservative candidate, is elected; state of siege lifted once more; amnesty law passed under which 350 rebels are freed.
- 1984** Justice Minister Rodrigo Lara Bonilla slain; Betancur declares state of siege; two rebel groups sign truce.
- 1985** M-19 rebels take the Palace of Justice but government troops recapture it; Nevado del Ruiz volcano erupts, killing 25,000; state of economic and social emergency declared.
- 1986** Liberal candidate Virgilio Barco Vargas elected president; six guerrilla groups form joint front called the Coordinadora Guerrillera Simón Bolívar (CGSB).
- 1987** Supreme Court declares extradition treaty with the United States unconstitutional.
- 1988** Attorney general is assassinated; first direct elections to the mayoralties are disrupted by violence, and more than 30 candidates are killed.
- 1989** Drug trafficking cartels are blamed for the deaths of several leading politicians; Barco reinstates by decree a treaty that allows Colombian drug traffickers to be summarily extradited to the United States; guerrilla groups under the CGSB agree to government's peace initiative; M-19 formally announces that peace treaty has been reached and is formally constituted as a political party.
- 1990** César Gaviria Trujillo is elected president and in his victory speech vows to bring terrorism to its knees, later issuing decree pledging that drug traffickers who surrender to the central government will not be extradited.
- 1991** More than 50 die in attacks launched by rebels protesting their exclusion from assembly elected to reform Colombia's constitution; Popular Liberation Army (ELP) ends its 23-year war against the government; the new constitution, promising stronger judicial protections for the individual and restricting emergency decree powers of the executive, is ratified.
- 1992** Strikes by telecommunications workers protesting impending privatization and by those in the electric power industry disrupt economy; Medellín drug cartel kingpin Pablo Escobar escapes from prison.
- 1993** Police gun down Escobar after attempting for months to negotiate his surrender; his death brings the demise of the Medellín cartel.
- 1994** "Group of Three" (Mexico, Venezuela, Colombia) sign 10-year trade liberalization pact; Amnesty International calls Colombia one of the world's worst human rights violators; Liberals win elections; new president Ernesto Samper Pizano is shortly afterward accused of taking drug money in his campaign, provoking political crisis.
- 1996** Congress exonerates Samper in drug scandal; United States removes Colombia from its list of countries cooperating in narcotics control, blocking its access to aid from multilateral lending institutions.
- 1998** Liberals hold the majority in parliamentary elections, but barely so in each house; Andrés Pastrana Arango wins presidential election for Conservatives, makes bid for talks with Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces (FARC) by offering to demilitarize 15,000 square miles in Caquetá and Meta departments, essentially ceding territorial control to the guerrillas.
- 1999** Military opposition to Pastrana's peace strategy leads to resignation of defense minister and more than 200 army officers; United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC), the leading paramilitary group, demands inclusion in peace negotiations; United States recertifies Colombian cooperation against drug smuggling.
- 2000** United States offers \$1.3 billion, mostly in military aid, to support Pastrana's \$7.5 billion "Plan Colombia" to fight drug trafficking and promote legal forms of development.
- 2002** Right-wing candidate Álvaro Uribe Vélez wins landslide victory in presidential election, marking the first time a winner is chosen in the first round of voting.
- 2003** Members of the right-wing guerrilla group United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC) disarm.
- 2004** The AUC and the government begin peace talks.
- 2005** Columbia and Venezuela resolve tensions over the arrest of a Colombian rebel in Venezuela.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- National Administration Department of Statistics
<http://www.dane.gov.co>

COMOROS

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Union of the Comoros (Union des Comores)

ABBREVIATION

KM

CAPITAL

Moroni

HEAD OF STATE & HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

President Azali Assoumani (from 1999)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Republic

POPULATION

671,247 (2005)

AREA

2,170 sq km (838 sq mi) (excluding the island of Mayotte)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Antalote, Cafre, Makoa, Oimatsaha, Sakalava

LANGUAGES

Arabic, French, Comorian

RELIGION

Islam

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Comorian franc

NATIONAL FLAG

A green triangular field based on the hoist, with a white crescent in the center of the field, the convex side facing the hoist; there are four white five-pointed stars placed in a line between the points of the crescent. Outside the triangle are four equal horizontal bands, from top to bottom, of yellow, white, red, and blue.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

The coat of arms has the crescent and stars from the national flag in the center, with the crescent pointing upward instead of to the right. A sun with rays extended is behind the crescent. Around the focal point, the name of the nation is written in both French and Arabic. The border is composed of two olive branches, with the national motto at the bottom: *Unité, justice, progrès* (Unity, justice, progress).

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“The Flag Is Flying”

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

July 6 (Independence Day, National Day), various Islamic festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

July 6, 1975

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

December 23, 2001

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

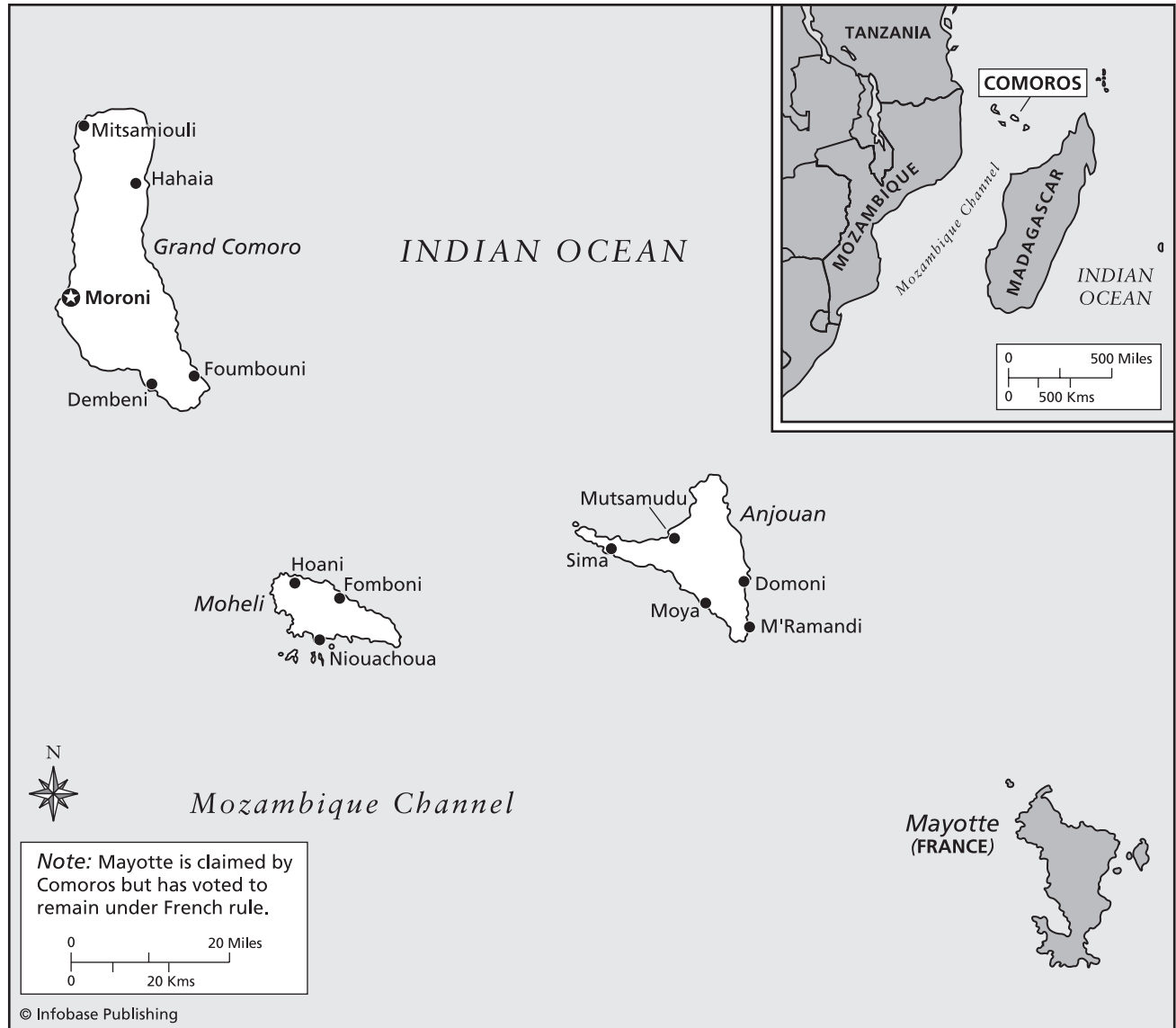
In 1978 the Islamic regime adopted new names for the islands of Comoros as part of the nation's de-Westernization drive: Njazidja for Grande Comore; Nzwani for Anjouan; Mwali for Mohéli; and Mahoré for Mayotte.

Comoros is in the northern entrance of the Mozambique Channel, about halfway between the northern tip of Madagascar and the mainland coast of Mozambique. Comoros includes three main islands—Grande Comore, Anjouan, and Mohéli—and several islets, with a total land area of 2,170 sq km (838 sq mi). Grande Comore, the largest of the islands, comprises 1,148 sq km (443 sq mi); Mohéli, 290 sq km (112 sq mi); and Anjouan, 357 sq km (138 sq

mi). The archipelago extends 177 km (110 mi) east-southeast to west-northwest and 97 km (60 mi) north-northeast to south-southwest. The total length of the coastline is 340 km (211 mi). Comoros also claims de jure sovereignty over the island of Mayotte (374 sq km; 144 sq mi), but the republic's jurisdiction is not accepted by the Mahorais, as inhabitants of Mayotte are known, who have voted for union with France as an overseas department.

The Comoros are volcanic in origin, and Mount Kar-tala on Grande Comore (2,360 m; 7,741 ft) is an active volcano. The center of Grande Comore is a desert lava field. The black basalt relief rises 1,200 to 1,600 m (3,950 to 5,250 ft) on Anjouan and 500 to 800 m (1,650 to 2,600 ft) on Mohéli. Mayotte has a lagoon fringed with coral reefs.

Comoros



Geography

Area sq km: 2,170; sq mi 838
 World Rank: 167th
 Land Boundaries, km: 0
 Coastline, km: 340
 Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Indian Ocean 0
 Highest: Le Kartala 2,360
 Land Use %
 Arable land: 35.9
 Permanent Crops: 23.3
 Forest: 3.6
 Other: 37.2

Population of Principal Cities

Moroni	40,275
Mutsamudu	21,558

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

The islands have a tropical climate, with a dry season from May to October and a wet season from November to April. Temperatures average 28°C (82°F) in the wet season and 20°C (68°F) in the dry season. Rainfall varies between 1,100 and 5,500 mm (43 and 217 in). The prevailing winds are the Indian monsoons from the north in the wet season and the continental southeast winds in the dry season.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature: 68°F to 82°F
 Average Rainfall: 43 in to 217 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Grande Comore and Anjouan have lowland and montane rainforests. Sparse vegetation can be found along the coasts, where lava flows have left behind little soil. At higher elevations can be found stands of giant heath. The islands contain approximately 2,000 native plant species, including 175 different ferns and 33 species of orchids; 33 percent of these species are endemic. The islands are home to only eight species of endemic mammals: six species of bats and two species of lemurs. Additionally, the islands support 25 species of reptiles and two species of sea turtles. A total of 21 species of birds are endemic, including the Comoro blue pigeon, the Comoro olive pigeon, the Anjouan brush warbler, and the Anjouan sunbird.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005:	671,247
World Rank:	158th
Density per sq km:	269.1
% of annual growth (1999-2003):	2.5
Male %:	49.7
Female %:	50.3
Urban %:	35.0
Age Distribution %:	
0-14:	42.8
15-64:	54.2
65 and over:	3.0
Population 2025:	1,127,200
Birth Rate per 1,000:	38.0
Death Rate per 1,000:	8.63
Rate of Natural Increase %:	3.0
Total Fertility Rate:	5.15
Expectation of Life (years):	Males 59.29
	Females 63.91
Marriage Rate per 1,000:	—
Divorce Rate per 1,000:	—
Average Size of Households:	5.6
Induced Abortions:	—

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

The islands have a mixed population, consisting of persons of African, Arab, and Malagasy descent. The racial composition also shows Malay, Indian, Chinese, and Persian influences. The principal ethnic group, known as the Antalote, is of mixed origin. Other ethnic groups include the Cafre, Makoa, Oimatsaha, and Sakalava.

The original inhabitants of the islands were Idumians from the Red Sea region. During the Middle Ages, Arabs invaded the islands, arriving in successive waves, and set up small sultanates. Because these sultanates were constantly engaged in internecine warfare, the archipelago came to be known as the Islands of the Quarreling Sul-

tanates. The islands were also visited by Indian, Malay, and Chinese traders, adding to the racial variety.

At the time of independence there were nearly 1,500 Europeans, mainly French, living in the archipelago. Most of the French departed following the expropriation of French property in 1976.

LANGUAGES

The national language is Comorian, also known as Shikomor, a hybrid language related to Swahili, with borrowed Arabic words. The other official languages are French and Arabic. Swahili is generally understood by the majority of the inhabitants, and Malagasy is also spoken.

RELIGIONS

Islam in its Sunni form is the religion of the vast majority of Comorians. Christianity is the majority religion on the island of Mayotte, and the Christian-Muslim conflict is one of the factors that influenced Mahorais to reject union with Comoros.

According to the constitution, Islam is the “well-spring of the principles and rules that guide the state and its institutions.” However, most aspects of freedom of religion and the right to practice openly non-Islamic faiths are guaranteed and respected in practice. There are established churches for Protestants and Catholics. Although Christian missionaries work in local hospitals and schools, they are not allowed to proselytize openly.

Religious Affiliations

Sunni Muslim	657,800
Roman Catholic	13,400

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The archipelago has served in past centuries as a stepping stone between the African continent and Madagascar, as a southern outpost for Arab traders operating along the East African coast, and as a center of Islamic culture. The name Comoros is derived from the Arabic *kamar* or *kumr*, meaning “moon,” although this name was first applied by Arab geographers to Madagascar. According to one local legend, King Husain ibn Ali established a settlement on Comoros at the beginning of the 11th century. He undoubtedly found Bantu peoples, who had apparently migrated to the island earlier. The Bantus were greeted by an earlier group of inhabitants, a Malayo-Indonesian people.

In the 15th and 16th centuries Shirazi Arabs established settlements on the northwest coast of Madagascar

and on Njazidja and Nzwani. The Shirazi, who divided Njazidja into 11 sultanates and Nzwani into two, extended their rule to Mahoré and Mwali, although the latter in the 19th century came under the control of Malagasy rulers. The Shirazi built mosques and established Islam as the religion of the islands. By the end of the 16th century the Comoros had become a center of regional trade, exporting rice, ambergris, spices, and slaves to ports in East Africa and the Middle East in exchange for opium, cotton cloth, and other items.

Comoros was exposed to European contacts following visits by Portuguese and British navigators in the 16th century. French rule dates from 1841, when the king of Mahoré, or Mayotte, was persuaded to cede his island to France. The rulers of the other three main islands followed his example one by one between 1886 and 1909, and in 1912 Les Comores was proclaimed a French colony. In 1914 the islands were joined administratively to Madagascar. As the minor appendage of a larger and culturally different country, Comoros was neglected and remained in a precolonial condition until independence. Whatever economic and political reforms were instituted were designed to benefit the French ruling class and foreign companies. The traditional social structure remained undisturbed, and the old ruling class was absorbed into the bureaucracy as minor officials. The economy was entirely dependent on French subsidies, and the country had neither the local resources nor the infrastructure necessary to stand on its own feet.

In 1973 growing demands for self-government resulted in an agreement with France to obtain independence in five years. The agreement provided for France to retain responsibility for defense, foreign affairs, and currency during the transition period. In July 1975 the Comorian legislature passed a resolution unilaterally declaring independence. The deputies from Mayotte abstained, and that island remained a French protectorate.

After the declaration of independence, Ahmed Abdallah, leader of the preindependence government and head of the Democratic Union of the Comoros, was designated president. He was deposed in August 1975 in a coup engineered by the Front National Unie (FNU), a coalition of opposition parties. Ali Soilih, a leader of the People's Party who took part in the coup, was elected president by the FNU in January 1976.

Soilih envisaged a socialist revolution as the answer to the country's political and economic problems. He implemented a series of reforms that included a drastic reduction in the bureaucracy, a reconstruction of the administrative structure, and a new system of land distribution. He destroyed old government records and gave considerable authority to popular committees of young people. In an effort to curb the power of Islamic religious leaders, he banned the veil and the fivefold daily prayer. Reforms were accompanied by reports of the govern-

ment's brutality toward citizens. Unrest grew, and at least three unsuccessful coups were attempted between April 1976 and January 1978.

Soilih was finally ousted in a coup led by French mercenaries in May 1978. He was placed under house arrest and was killed, allegedly while trying to escape. His predecessor, Abdallah, was restored as president.

Abdallah dominated the Comorian government from his return to power in 1978 until his assassination in November 1989. Daunted by reprisals that accompanied the return, political opposition reemerged only in 1982. Unopposed, Abdallah was overwhelmingly reelected to a second term as president in September 1984. A member of the French-based opposition reportedly attempted to get his name on the ballot but was disqualified on technical grounds. There were also unverified charges of electoral fraud during the presidential election, and non-Comorian observers stated that the announced percentage of eligible voters participating conflicted with their own observations of low turnout in some areas. However, most observers of the Comorian political scene believe that Abdallah would have won the election under any circumstances, though with somewhat less than the 99 percent he purportedly received.

Following the election, Abdallah gained passage of constitutional amendments abolishing the position of prime minister and reducing the powers of the Federal Assembly. In the 1987 legislative elections all of Abdallah's candidates were declared elected in balloting termed "a grotesque masquerade" by opponents.

During the 1980s there were at least three unsuccessful coup attempts against the regime. Abdallah was finally assassinated in November 1989 in an attack on his palace by a group of rebels led by the disgruntled former army commander Ahmed Muhammad. Said Muhammad Djohar, the head of the Supreme Court, became president of the interim government and won election to the office in March 1990.

In 1991 the new president of the Supreme Court led an unsuccessful coup to oust President Said Muhammad Djohar. Thereupon opposition leaders led by Mohamed Taki Abdoukarim met in Paris to plot seizure of the government. In 1992 army officers mounted another coup that was put down, but not before serious clashes with progovernment troops. A period of instability followed, with President Djohar naming and firing nine prime ministers as well as members of the Election Commission. In 1995 Colonel Bob Denard, who had led an earlier coup in 1978, reappeared and seized President Djohar and established a military committee of transition headed by a little-known army captain, Ayouba Combo. Within a day French paratroopers landed and quickly rounded up Denard and his mercenaries. Prime Minister Mohamed Caabi el Yachroutu named himself president, while a former prime minister, Said Ali Mohamed, set up

a rival government. Following French-inspired negotiations, elections were held in 1996 in which Taki won with 64.3 percent of the vote. Antigovernment strikes and riots erupted in 1997 in support of civil servants who had not been paid for years. Faced with open rebellion, the president dismissed the governor of Anjouan, whereupon the latter declared Anjouan's independence; the island of Mohéli also declared independence. Meanwhile, Anjouan itself faced a civil war by rival factions. In 1998 Taki, wearied by these troubles, died of a heart attack and was succeeded as president by Tadjidine Ben Said Massonde, a former prime minister. His authority, however, was limited to Grande Comore. Within a year he was overthrown by a military coup led by Col. Azali Assoumani, who pledged a return to civilian rule in 2002.

Nevertheless, problems continued. In August 2001 a military committee seized power in Anjouan with the goal of rejoining the Comoros. Successive coup attempts were made on Anjouan in September and November. In December that year voters backed a new constitution that would keep the islands as one country but grant each island greater autonomy. In April 2002 Colonel Mohamed Bacar was elected leader of Anjouan, Mohamed Said Fazul was elected leader of Mohéli, and Assoumani was named president of a united Comoros; in May 2002 Abdou Soule Elbak was elected president of Grande Comore. In 2003 the leaders signed a power-sharing agreement, leading to 2004 elections for assemblies on the semi-autonomous islands and for the national assembly, which opened in June of that year.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1975	Ahmed Abdallah
1976–78	Ali Soilih
1978–89	Ahmed Abdallah
1989–95	Said Muhammad Djohar
1995–96	Mohamed Caabi el Yachrouti
1996–98	Mohamed Taki Abdoukarim
1998–99	Tadjidine Ben Said Massonde
1999–	Azali Assoumani

CONSTITUTION

Under the constitution approved by popular referendum in 1996, Comoros is a federal Islamic republic. The constitutional head of state is the president, elected by universal suffrage for a five-year term; reelection is permitted only once. The president is assisted by an appointed council of ministers, and he appoints a prime minister as head of government from the majority party in the assembly. Each island elects a governor and island assembly. The governors enjoy considerable administrative autonomy, and the assemblies have some legislative freedom. The

constitution also prescribes the rough division of government revenues between the federation and the individual islands.

Legislative power was vested in a bicameral legislature, consisting at the time of the 42-member Federal Assembly, elected by universal suffrage for four-year terms, and the 15-member Senate, selected by an electoral college for six-year terms.

In 2001 a 77 percent majority approved a new constitution that changed the name of the country from Islamic Federal Republic of the Comoros to Union of the Comoros. The key provision of the constitution was the specification that the nation comprised the autonomous islands of Anjouan, Grande Comore, Mayotte, and Mohéli. Since 1976 Mayotte has been a territory of France, but before then it had been part of the Comoro Islands protectorate. Under the new constitution, Mayotte would be allowed to rejoin the country on the same footing as the other islands.

PARLIAMENT

The former Federal Assembly was dissolved following the coup of April 30, 1999. The unicameral parliament now consists of the 33-member Assembly of the Union, with 15 members selected by the assemblies of the islands and 18 by universal suffrage, all for five-year terms. Matters covered by federal legislation included defense; mail and telecommunications; external and interisland transportation; civil, penal, and industrial law; external trade; federal taxation; long-term economic planning; education; and health.

The council of each island is directly elected for six years. Each electoral ward, of which there may not be fewer than 10 or more than 35 per island, elects one councillor. Each council meets for not more than 15 days at a time, in March and December, and if necessary in extraordinary sessions. The councils are responsible for nonfederal legislation, including local taxation, and must be consulted on federal matters that affect the island, such as economic development.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Until 1989 the only authorized political party was the Comorian Union for Progress (Union Comoriène pour le Progrès, or Udzima). With the new constitution adopted in 1996, parties that showed a certain amount of electoral strength were permitted to continue in existence, while all others were to disband. The largest party in the country was National Assembly for Development (Rassemblement National pour le Développement). The National Front for Justice (Front National pour la Justice) was an Islamic fundamentalist organization that held three seats

in the Federal Assembly. In addition to these two parties there were more than a dozen political organizations active in Comoros.

After the turn of the century the political situation in the Comoros became more unsettled. Currently there is only one national political party, the president's Convention for the Renewal of the Comoros (Convention pour le Renouveau des Comores, CRC). The only opposition to the current president in the 2004 legislative elections was the Camp of the Autonomous Islands (Camp des Îles Autonomes), which is not a formal party. Rather, the camp is a coalition of opposition groups organized by the presidents of the three federated islands. In those elections, a total of 27 seats were won by Assoumani's opponents.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For purposes of local administration, Comoros is divided into three prefectures coterminous with the three main islands and their surrounding islets. These islands are further organized into seven regions and 55 to 60 *moudirias*, or regional council centers. *Moudirias* are broken down into *bavous* (districts), the basic units of local government. District government is conducted by district assemblies, or councils, elected by universal suffrage.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The judicial system is headed by the Supreme Court in Moroni. Subordinate courts of first instance are in each *moudiria*. There are 16 religious courts, or *qadi* courts, which apply the sharia, or Muslim personal law. Juries are employed in criminal trials.

No information is available on correctional facilities or the penal system.

HUMAN RIGHTS

In terms of political and civil rights, Comoros is classified as a partly free country. Feudal rule and the dominance of Islam have long been the two main characteristics of Comorian society. This tradition, reinforced during the French period, survived the brief, brutal rule of Ali Soilih, who strove to modernize institutions, collectivize society, and reduce the role of Islam. In the 1978 coup that overthrew him, this experiment came to an end, as Ahmed Abdallah and his band of French mercenaries put the islands back on their traditional course. They ruled with a far lighter hand but did not shrink from suppressing opposition and resorting to censorship.

Under President Assoumani the government has generally respected the human rights of its citizens; however, there have been problems in some areas. Prison

conditions remain poor. Unlike in previous years, security forces and the separatist authorities on Anjouan have not used arbitrary arrest and detention. The government has restricted freedom of religion, and security forces reportedly continue to threaten Christians. Further, societal discrimination against both Christians and women continues to be serious problems. There have been some instances of forced child labor.

FOREIGN POLICY

Comorian relations with France, the only foreign country with any interest in the troubled islands, have been soured by the issue of Mayotte, which seceded from Comoros in 1975. The Organization of African Unity (OAU), now the African Union (AU), has tried to reconcile the warring factions on the islands but has met with little success.

DEFENSE

The national army, the Forces Armées Comoriennes, has 700 to 800 soldiers under about 20 French officers. In 2003 the country spent \$6 million, or about 3 percent of gross domestic product (GDP), on defense.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	750
Military Manpower Availability:	154,843
Military Expenditures \$million:	6
as % of GDP:	3
as % of central government expenditures:	—
Arms Imports \$million:	—
Arms Exports \$million:	—

ECONOMY

Comoros is one of the world's poorest countries. Its islands have inadequate transportation links, a young and rapidly increasing population, and few natural resources. The low educational level of the labor force contributes to a subsistence level of economic activity, high unemployment (20 percent in 1996), and a heavy dependence on foreign grants and technical assistance. Agriculture, including fishing, hunting, and forestry, contributes 40 percent to GDP, employs 80 percent of the labor force, and provides most of the exports. However, the country is not self-sufficient in food production; rice, the main staple, accounts for the bulk of imports. The government—which is hampered by internal political disputes—is struggling to upgrade education and technical training, privatize commercial and industrial enterprises, improve

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health services, diversify exports, promote tourism, and reduce the high population growth rate. Increased foreign support is essential if the goal of 4 percent annual GDP growth is to be met, a rate that would double 2002's 2 percent. Remittances from 150,000 Comorians abroad help supplement GDP.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$million: 441
GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 700
GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 1.5
GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: -0.9
Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
Agriculture: 40
Industry: 4
Services: 56
Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
Private Consumption: 82
Government Consumption: 20
Gross Domestic Investment: —
Foreign Trade \$million: Exports: 28
Imports: 88
% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: —
% of Income Received by Richest 10%: —
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)
1999 2000 2001 2002 2003
— — — — —

Finance

National Currency: Comoran Franc (KMF)
Exchange Rate: \$1 = KMF 435.9
Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 24.8
Central Bank Discount Rate %: —
Total External Debt \$million: 232
Debt Service Ratio %: —
Balance of Payments \$million: —
International Reserves SDRs \$million: 93.5
Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
3.5

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 24.5
per capita \$: 40.80
Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 1

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
Revenues \$billion: 27.6
Expenditures \$billion: —
Budget Deficit \$million: —
Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 40

Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 8.0
Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares: —
Irrigation, % of Farms having: —
Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 3.75
Total Farmland % of land area: 35.9
Livestock: Cattle 000: 50
Chickens 000: 510
Pigs 000: —
Sheep 000: 21
Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters 000: 8.65
Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 12.2

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 13.43
Industrial Production Growth Rate %: -2

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: —
Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 28
Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 38
Net Energy Imports % of use: —
Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: 5
Production kW-hr million: 20
Consumption kW-hr million: 20
Coal Reserves tons billion: —
Production tons million: —
Consumption tons million: —
Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
Production cubic feet billion: —
Consumption cubic feet billion: —
Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
Production barrels 000 per day: —
Consumption barrels 000 per day: 1
Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$million: 88
Exports \$million: 28
Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 9.9
Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 1.1
Balance of Trade \$million: —

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
France %	31.6	46.9
Japan %	13.7	—
South Africa %	10.3	—
Kenya %	5.1	—
United Arab Emirates %	5.1	—
Thailand %	4.3	—
Germany %	—	18.8
United States %	—	12.5

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 880
 Paved %: 76.5
 Automobiles: —
 Trucks and Buses: —
 Railroad: Track Length km: —
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: —
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 62
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 681
 Airports: 4
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 3
 Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 19
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 11
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: —

Communications

Telephones 000: 13.2
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.17
 Cellular Telephones 000: 2
 Personal Computers 000: 4.6
 Internet Hosts per million people: 16
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 7

ENVIRONMENT

One of the most densely populated countries in the world, with one of the highest birthrates, Comoros faces many environmental challenges, including soil erosion, poor water quality, deforestation, poor farming techniques, and lack of protected lands. In addition, the major urban areas suffer from poor waste removal and growing air and water pollution. The government of Comoros has identified some of the problems it faces but is challenged by the lack of resources to effectively address them.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 3.6
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: —
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 3
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 0.14

LIVING CONDITIONS

The Comoros islands are frequently described as being like picture postcards, with great natural beauty. However, life for the typical Comorian is pure struggle. For

decades the islands have been rocked by political instability and frequent coups and coup attempts. In 2002 an estimated 60 percent of the population lived below the poverty line. Over the last quarter of the 20th century the population doubled, leading to overcrowding, deforestation, and soil erosion. Life expectancy is low, sanitation is poor, diseases such as malaria, tuberculosis, and leprosy are commonplace, literacy is low (about 57 percent in 2003), many roads are impassable during the rainy season, and housing for many people consists of straw huts, although homes in more developed areas are made of basalt stone.

HEALTH

In 2004 life expectancy at birth was just under 62 years. The infant mortality rate that year was a high 77 deaths per 1,000 live births—not surprising in a nation where only 62 percent of births are attended by a health professional. Malaria is a significant problem, with the United Nations in the early 2000s estimating about 1,930 cases per 100,000 population per year. The public health-care system has generally been a failure, so those who can do so turn to private clinics in the cities. Most Comorians rely on traditional practitioners, who typically prescribe herbal remedies, amulets, Koranic verses, and the like.

Health

Number of Physicians: 48
 Number of Dentists: 90
 Number of Nurses: 220
 Number of Pharmacists: —
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 7.4
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 77.22
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 480
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 2.9
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 10
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.12
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 75
 Measles: 63
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 23
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 94

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Current information about nutrition in Comoros paints a bleak picture. Among children ages three and under, 33.8 percent were stunted, 25.8 percent were moderately underweight, and 7.9 percent were severely underweight. Such figures are not surprising for a country that has to import most of its food.

The Comorian diet reflects Arab, African, Indian, and European influences. The main staple is rice imported from Asia. Other dietary staples include root vegetables, plantains, cassava, breadfruit, bananas, fish (fresh and dried), and coconut milk. Fruit is abundant and includes papayas, oranges, mangoes, and pineapples. On ceremonial occasions, castrated goat is often served.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 75.2
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 88.9

STATUS OF WOMEN

Women do not have equal rights in Comoros. While the 1992 constitution recognized their right to suffrage, women otherwise play a limited role in politics. Islamic law prevents most women from owning property. Polygamy is often practiced, with a man establishing two or more households. Divorce is relatively easy for men, but the wife retains the family home. While schooling is free and universal, girls are less likely to be enrolled in school than their male counterparts. While some 64 percent of males were literate in 2003, only 49 percent of females were literate. While women have little formal or institutional power, much of Comoros is matrilineal, and women retain considerable informal power through association with other local women.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 3
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 0.79
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: —

WORK

The Comorian labor force was 144,000 strong in 1996. Only about 10,000 of those employed earned wages, however, most of them working for the government; approximately 80 percent of the population makes its living through subsistence agriculture and fishing, and per capita GDP in 2002 was only about \$700. Agricultural products primarily include vanilla, cloves, perfume essences, copra, coconuts, bananas, and cassava (tapioca). The small amount of industry, contributing just 4 percent to GDP, consisted primarily of perfume distillation—Comoros is often referred to as the “Perfume Isles”—and tourism.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 144,500
 Female Participation Rate %: 43.1
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 80
 Other: 20
 Unemployment %: 20

EDUCATION

In principle, education is free, universal, and compulsory for eight years, from the ages of seven to 15. Enrollments have risen sharply in recent years; still, while enrollments doubled at the secondary level between 1970 and 1980, only 25 percent of children were entering secondary school as of 2000.

All children attend Koranic schools until they are able to read (but not necessarily understand) classical Arabic. Schooling lasts 13 years, as divided into six years of primary school, four years of middle school, and three years of secondary school. Since independence in 1975, all French teachers have left. Consequently, the lycées, or secondary schools, had to be closed in 1975. Primary education, however, continued to function.

The academic year runs from October to July. The medium of instruction is French.

There is a severe shortage of teachers in the school system. Although the student-teacher ratio is high without being unacceptable (about 37 students per teacher at the primary level in 2000), variations are considerable among schools. However, 58 percent of the teachers did not have even a junior secondary school certificate (BEPC), and only two held the baccalaureate. The shortage of classrooms has been a problem for a number of years and is met by a double-shift system. The secondary-school system is almost entirely dependent on expatriate teachers, formerly from France and now from other French-speaking countries in Africa.

Little vocational training took place until 1974, when the International Labor Organization (ILO) helped establish a center for artisan training on Anjouan.

Comoros has no institutions of higher education.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 56.5
 Male %: 63.6
 Female %: 49.3
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 6.7
 First Level: Primary schools: 275
 Teachers: 2,908
 Students: 106,972
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 36.8
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 54.7
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: —
 Teachers: 3,399
 Students: 38,203

Student-Teacher Ratio: 11.3
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 25.0
 Third Level: Institutions: —
 Teachers: 125
 Students: 1,707
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 2.3
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 3.9

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The only scientific activity on the islands is conducted at the National Center for Research and Scientific Documentation at Moroni.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$000: 3
 Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

The press consists of two weekly papers, *al-Watwan*, published on Grande-Comore, and *Kwezi*, published on Mayotte, as well as the monthly *L'archipel*. In the absence of a local daily press, newspapers from Madagascar circulate throughout the islands.

Radio service is provided by the government-owned Radio Comoros, which operates one shortwave station and one FM station and broadcasts in French and Comorian. Additionally, Grande Comore, Mayotte, and Anjouan each have their own radio stations.

There are two libraries.

Media

Daily Newspapers: —
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: —
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets 000: 3
 per 1,000: 4

CULTURE

There is little public support for the arts; cultural expression in Comoros takes place primarily in the form of festivals and folk art. Singing, dancing, and violin playing are common at religious festivals. Many artisans produce sculptures (often out of coconuts), wood carvings, dolls, baskets, pottery, embroidery (especially of Muslim hats for

men), and jewelry. Written literature consists primarily of French novels. Another form of cultural expression is national monuments. Many of the towns and villages are fortified, and palaces, mosques, tombs, and public squares are often decorated with domes, sculptures, floral or geometric patterns, and calligraphy, usually texts from the Koran.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 2
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Comorian folklore reflects both African and Muslim traditions. As in other Muslim countries, it is believed that events occur according to the will of Allah and that people have little control over them or their own fates. On Grande Comore the story is told that on the site of Lac Sale used to stand a village that Allah flooded when its people refused to give water to a descendant of Mohammed, the founder of Islam. Other beliefs reflect the influence of African divinities. Many Comorians consult *mrwalim* (diviners) or spirits called jinn before undertaking any important activity, and these consultations may require them to engage in animal sacrifice or other special rituals. It is widely believed that Mount Khartala on Grande Comore was formed when King Solomon dropped a ring as he was being pursued by jinn from Ethiopia.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

In a nation that is among the poorest in the world, recreation is not a priority. Nonetheless, a common form of recreation among men is to gather in the village *bangwe* in the afternoons and evenings for conversation with others of their own generation and background. Dominoes, card playing, and a board game called *mraba* are also popular. On Anjouan and Mayotte, a form of boxing/wrestling called *mrenge* is still practiced. Younger people enjoy barbecues and picnics on the beach and attending the nightclubs that can be found in the cities.

ETIQUETTE

Age and maleness give social status. Women wear veils in public and eat separately with children in the kitchen,

while men join friends or family members in the living room or at the dining table for meals. Greetings are formal and elaborate and include inquiries about family members, neighbors, and even pets and livestock. In addressing an older person, it is customary to use the word *kwezi*, a term of respect. All older people are addressed as uncle, father, or mother, along with the name of that person's nephew or niece or child; thus, a man who has a son named Ali would be addressed as *mbada* (father of) Ali.

FAMILY LIFE

Technically, dating is contrary to Islamic law, which forbids relationships between unmarried couples. Men and women tend to marry often, as many as two to four times. Weddings are celebrated only when it is the woman's first, and celebrations have to be conducted in a couple's home community to ensure that the wealth exchanged remains in the community. The residency of a family tends to be matrilineal, with affairs run by the wife's relatives, and often includes children from her earlier marriage as well as other relatives for whom she bears responsibility. Every woman at marriage is given a piece of arable land with a house. On Grande Comore land is owned matrilineally and is inherited by women, and one belongs to one's mother's lineage.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Younger people wear Western clothing, and women wear slacks only in the cities. Otherwise, older men tend to wear the *ikoi*, a cloth that covers the lower body, a *kandu*, a long white robe, and a *kofia*, or embroidered hat. Older women dress colorfully, either in long dresses covered with a *lesso* or *shirromani* (or shawls), or in a chador, a traditional Islamic shawl, veil, and head covering. Younger women who wear Western clothing still tend to wear a *lesso*.

SPORTS

In Atlanta in 1996 Comoros took part for the first time in the Summer Olympics.

The most popular sport among men in Comoros, where every village is likely to have at least two teams, is soccer. Women are regulated to the role of spectators. In the cities, volleyball and basketball have grown in popularity, and some women participate.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1946** Comoros is granted administrative autonomy as an overseas territory of France.
- 1961** Comoros achieves internal autonomy under a special statute.
- 1968** Comoros gains greater internal autonomy.
- 1973** An agreement for independence within five years is signed in Paris.
- 1974** In a special referendum, all islands except Mayotte vote for independence; French parliament decides that each island should vote separately on a new constitution.
- 1975** Chamber of Deputies votes for a unilateral declaration of independence and proclaims Republic of the Comoros, with Ahmed Abdallah as president. Chamber of Deputies establishes itself as a constituent assembly to draft a constitution. Abdallah is overthrown in coup led by Ali Soilih, leader of a four-party coalition known as National United Front (NUF). National Assembly is dissolved. Armed supporters of Ali Soilih land on Anjouan, arrest Abdallah and his supporters, and crush an Anjouan secessionist movement. The newly established National Revolutionary Council transfers most of its powers to the 12-member National Executive Council, headed by the president, Prince Said Mohamed Jaffar. Comoros is admitted to the United Nations. Ali Soilih and unarmed followers land on Mayotte in an effort to persuade the Mahorais to join the union.
- 1976** Soilih is elected president, replacing Jaffar. National Revolutionary Council is reconstituted as the National Institutional Council. Island of Mayotte rejects union with Comoros in two referendums. French estates in Comoros are nationalized and French officials are repatriated.
- 1977** Comoros seeks repatriation of its citizens from Madagascar following racial riots.
- 1978** President Soilih is ousted in coup led by the French mercenary Bob Denard and is killed as he tries to flee the country; former president Ahmed Abdallah and former vice president Mohammed Ahmed are installed as coleaders of the new government. The 50 mercenaries, headed by Denard, remain to run vital services, but their presence infuriates other African nations, and Comoros is expelled from the OAU meeting in July. New constitution is drafted and approved by 99.31 percent of the votes. Diplomatic relations with France are resumed, and the two countries sign agreements on economic and military cooperation. Abdallah is elected president.
- 1979** The newly elected Federal Assembly approves the formation of a one-party state.

- OAU readmits Comoros as the mercenaries leave.
- 1982** Prime Minister Salim Ben Ali is dismissed and replaced by Ali M'Roudjae.
- 1983** Anti-Abdallah plot is thwarted in Canberra, Australia, and three plotters are convicted.
- 1984** Abdallah is reelected for a second six-year term. The office of prime minister is abolished through a constitutional amendment.
- 1985** Comoros joins the Indian Ocean Commission.
- 1987** Legislative elections return the entire slate of candidates presented by Abdallah.
- 1989** Abdallah is assassinated. Said Muhammad Djohar is named interim president.
- 1990** Djohar is elected president.
- 1992** Another new constitution is approved restoring the prime ministership, and the country holds its first democratic elections.
- 1995** Mercenaries under the command of Bob Denard attempt to overthrow Djohar's government. Djohar is taken prisoner. French forces suppress the coup attempt and free Djohar but do not reinstate him as president.
- 1996** In elections, Mohamed Taki Abdoukarim is elected president in a contest of 15 candidates.
- 1997** The OAU must come to the aid of the Comoros to put down an armed insurrection on the island of Anjouan; the rebels seek reunification with France.
- 1998** President Mohamed Taki Abdoukarim is reelected head of state and Ahmed Abdou is elected prime minister; in November, Abdoukarim dies and Tadjidine Ben Said Massonde assumes presidency.
- 1999** Anjouan representatives refuse to sign OAU agreement proposing central administration of the three islands; Colonel Azali Assoumani takes control of the government in a bloodless coup.
- 2001** In August a "military committee" seizes power in the breakaway island of Anjouan with aim of rejoining the Comoros.
In Anjouan a takeover by Major Combo Ayouba is put down by Major Mohamad Bacar, the leader of the military government set up in August. In November another failed coup attempt is launched by Colonel Said Abeid, who opposes reunification efforts.
In December voters back a new constitution that will keep the three islands as one country but will grant each one greater autonomy.
- 2002** Bacar is elected leader of Anjouan, and Mohamed Said Fazul is elected leader of Mohéli. Azali Assoumani is named president of reunited Comoros.
Abdou Soule Elbak is elected island president of Grande Comore.
- 2003** Security forces foil a coup plot against President Assoumani.
A power-sharing deal is signed by the leaders of the semiautonomous islands.
- 2004** Local elections are held for assemblies on the three semiautonomous islands in March. Supporters of President Assoumani win only 12 of 55 seats. Elections are held for the national assembly in April, which opens in June.

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- Gorse, Jean. *Territoire des Comores*. Paris, 1964.
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- Ottenheimer, M., and H.J. Ottenheimer. *Historical Dictionary of the Comoro Islands*. Metuchen, N.J., 1994.
- World Bank. *The Comoros: Problems and Prospects of a Small Island Economy*. Washington, D.C., 1979.

OFFICIAL PUBLICATIONS

- Comoros.** *Comoros—Recent Economic Developments* (IMF Staff Country Report), 1996; *Recensement général de la population et de l'habitat 15 September 1980*

CONTACT INFORMATION

Permanent Mission of the Union of the Comoros to the United Nations
420 East 50th Street
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Phone: (212) 972-8010, (212) 223-2711
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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Comoro Islands (unofficial)
<http://www.ksu.edu/sasw/comoros/comoros.html>
- Presidency of the Comoros Union
<http://presidence-uniondescomores.com/v3/us/>

CONGO, DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Democratic Republic of the Congo (République Démocratique du Congo) (formerly Zaïre)

ABBREVIATION

CD

CAPITAL

Kinshasa

HEAD OF STATE & HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Joseph Kabila (from 2001)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

One-party dictatorship

POPULATION

58,317,930 (2005)

AREA

2,345,410 sq km (905,568 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Mongo, Luba, Kongo, Mangbetu-Azande

LANGUAGES

French (official), Lingala, Kikongo, Tshiluba, Swahili

RELIGIONS

Roman Catholicism, Protestantism, animism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Congolese franc

NATIONAL FLAG

Light blue with a large yellow five-pointed star in the center and a column of six small yellow five-pointed stars along the hoist side.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

Light blue shield with a large yellow five-pointed star in the center and a row of six small yellow five-pointed stars along the top.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Arise, Congolese, United by Fate”

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year’s Day), January 4 (Martyrs of Independence Day), Easter Monday, May 1 (Labor Day), Ascension Day, Whitmonday, May 20 (Mouvement Populaire de la Révolution Day), June 24 (Zaire Day), June 30 (Independence Day), August 1 (Parents’ Day), Assumption Day, All Saints’ Day, October 27 (Three Z Day), November 24 (National Day), December 25 (Christmas)

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

June 30, 1960

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

May 13, 2005

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is a rectangular-shaped nearly landlocked nation in the south-central part of the African continent, with a narrow strip of land on the northern bank of the Zaïre estuary as the only outlet to the Atlantic. The nation includes the greater part of the Congo River basin and lies on the equator, with one-third of the country to the north and two-thirds to the south. It is the third-largest nation in Africa, with a land area of 2,345,410 sq km (905,568 sq mi). The length of the coastline is 40 km (25 mi). The greatest distance both north-south and east-west is about 2,250 km (1,400 mi). Congo shares its international bor-

der of about 10,730 km (6,667 mi) with eight neighbors: Central African Republic (1,577 km; 980 mi), Sudan (628 km; 390 mi), Uganda (765 km; 475 mi), Rwanda (217 km; 135 mi), Burundi (233 km; 145 mi), Tanzania (459 km; 285 mi), Zambia (1,930 km; 1,198 mi), Angola (2,511 km; 1,560 mi), and the Republic of the Congo (2,410 km; 1,496 mi).

The Democratic Republic of the Congo is divided into four physical regions. The vast, low-lying central area is a basin-shaped plateau sloping toward the west with an average elevation of 400 m (1,310 ft). This area is surrounded by mountainous terraces in the west, plateaus merging into savannas in the south and southeast, and dense grasslands in the northwest, with elevations in the

Democratic Republic of the Congo (Zaire)



south of 1,000 to 2,000 m (3,280 to 6,560 ft) and in the north of 600 to 800 m (1,970 to 2,625 ft). High mountain ranges enclose the country in the north, including the Ngoma, Virunga, Ruwenzori, Blue, Kundelunga, and Marungu mountains, with altitudes rising to 5,000 m (16,400 ft). The coastline of Congo is bordered by a small plain 100 km (62 mi) wide.

The country is almost entirely drained by the 4,505 km (2,800 mi) Congo River and its many tributaries. The lower Congo is not navigable, but the upper and middle Congo are navigable for 2,575 km (1,600 mi). The Congo

is the world's second-largest river, after the Amazon, in terms of volume of water (339,600 cu m per sec; 12 million cu ft per sec).

Geography

Area sq km: 2,345,410; sq mi 905,568

World Rank: 12th

Land Boundaries, km: Angola 2,511; Burundi 233; Central African Republic 1,577; Republic of the Congo 2,410; Rwanda 217; Sudan 628; Uganda 765; Zambia 1,930; Tanzania 459

(continues)

Geography *(continued)*

Coastline, km: 37
Elevation Extremes meters:
Lowest: Atlantic Ocean 0
Highest: Mont Ngaliema, Pic Marguerite 5,110
Land Use %
Arable land: 3.0
Permanent Crops: 0.5
Forest: 59.6
Other: 36.9

Population of Principal Cities (1994)

Bukavu	201,569
Kananga	393,030
Kinshasa	4,655,313
Kisangani	417,517
Kolwezi	417,810
Likasi	299,118
Lubumbashi	851,381
Mbuji-Mayi	806,475

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

The seasons in the DRC are opposite north and south of the equator. Both regions have one long wet and one long dry season. North of the equator the rainy season lasts from early April to late October and the dry season from early November to March. The hours of daylight remain practically unchanged throughout the year. On the southern plateau—farthest from the equator—there is a characteristic tropical climate as influenced by the trade winds. Eastern Congo and upper Shaba, in the southeast, have mountainous climates, with lower temperatures sometimes falling to 0°C (32°F) at night. The average rainfall for the entire country is about 1,070 mm (42 in), and rain falls more or less regularly every year. The central region receives at least 1,520 to 2,030 mm (60 to 80 in) per year, and the rainy season extends to 130 days. Storms are violent but seldom last for more than a few hours. At the equator temperatures vary from 15.6°C to 37.8°C (60°F to 100°F), with a mean maximum of about 32.2°C (90°F). The hottest month is February. Humidity is always high, ranging upward from 65 percent. Temperatures drop on the edges of the Congo River basin to about 25°C (77°F), with cooler nights.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature
On the Equator: 90°F to 100°F
Zaire River Basin: 77°F
Average Rainfall: 42 in
Central Region: 60 in to 80 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

The DRC's rain forests have an abundance of diverse flora, including such economically valuable tree species as teak, African cedar, mahogany, and ebony as well as rubber plants and oil palms. Mammals include chimpanzees, hyenas, jackals, leopards, lions, zebras, okapis (short-necked giraffes), giraffes, red buffalo, rhinoceroses, hippopotamuses, and elephants as well as the endangered gorilla. Reptiles include crocodiles, pythons, and mambas. Bird life is abundant, with plovers, herons, cuckoos, flamingos, and parrots.

POPULATION**Population Indicators**

Total Population 2005: 58,317,930
World Rank: 22nd
Density per sq km: 23.5
% of annual growth (1999-2003): 2.2
Male %: 49.5
Female %: 50.5
Urban %: —
Age Distribution %:
0–14: 48.2
15–64: 49.3
65 and over: 2.5
Population 2025: 104,863,000
Birth Rate per 1,000: 44.73
Death Rate per 1,000: 14.64
Rate of Natural Increase %: 3.1
Total Fertility Rate: 6.62
Expectation of Life (years): Males 47.06
Females 51.28
Marriage Rate per 1,000: —
Divorce Rate per 1,000: —
Average Size of Households: 5.6
Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

More than 99 percent of the Congolese are of African descent, and the population is divided into more than 200 tribes. No single ethnic group can claim a majority on the national level, but each has its own territory where it is predominant.

Based on cultural and historical criteria, three ethnic zones exist in the Congo: northern and southern savanna, central rain forest, and eastern highlands. Each has its own tribes or tribal clusters.

The most important of the ethnic groups are the Kongo, Luba, Mongo, Azande, and Lunda. None of these groups numbers more than three million. The primary feelings of identity among these groups are ethnic rather than national, but the pressure of the events of the independence period has created a rudimentary consciousness of common interests.

The resident alien population numbers roughly 900,000, including Angolans, Sudanese, Zambians, and West Africans. Since 1970 the non-African alien population has declined, and their number is estimated at 50,000, half the preindependence figure. Belgians still constitute the majority, followed by Portuguese, Italians, Greeks, Arabs, Lebanese, Pakistanis, and Indians; most are civil servants, missionaries, traders, teachers, or planters.

LANGUAGES

French is the official language and the medium of instruction in secondary and higher education, but only a small percentage of the population have a working knowledge of the language, and efforts to introduce French into the primary schools have failed. Nearly all Congolese speak languages of the Bantu subgroup of the central branch of the Niger-Congo family. The eastern branch of the Niger-Congo family and the central Sudanic family are also represented. The principal language is Bantu, with its 14 clusters of languages spoken by over 17 million people. The Kongo, Luba, Mongo, and Lunda belong to this language family. Azande is the most important of the eastern branch of the Niger-Congo family and Moru-Mangbetu that of the central Sudanic family. The total number of languages and dialects is estimated at 700.

RELIGIONS

It is estimated that about 70 percent of the Congolese are, at least nominally, Christians; 50 percent are Roman Catholic, and 20 percent are Protestant. Most of the non-Christian population is composed of adherents of traditional religions or syncretic sects. The traditional religions are not formalized but embody some common concepts, such as animism, belief in spirits, and ancestor worship. The syncretic sects are a mixture of Christianity and traditional beliefs centered around new prophets. One of these sects, Kimbanguism, accounts for about 10 percent of the population and in 1969 became the first independent African church to be admitted to the World Council of Churches. An additional 10 percent of people are Muslims.

The DRC has been the scene of among the most intense Christian missionary efforts, and both Catholic and Protestant organizations have had a profound impact on the development of the nation, particularly in the fields of education and health.

Kimbanguist	5,830,000
Muslim	5,830,000
Other syncretic sects and indigenous beliefs	5,830,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Little archaeological evidence exists of the people that long ago inhabited the region that is today the Congo. However, it is known that people have been in the area since the Stone Age. The first and most obvious distinction to be made between the various peoples who first populated the area of the Democratic Republic of the Congo is between the small-scale, segmentary societies of the rain forest zone and the state systems of the savanna. Most of the peoples of the rain forest area were organized into village communities, under the leadership of chiefs or of dominant clans or lineages. Some of these communities were able to absorb or conquer neighboring villages and thus develop into sizable chiefdoms. In specific instances, as among the Mangbetu, these expanding societies provided the basis for a common sense of identity among otherwise unrelated peoples. Elsewhere, however, social fragmentation remained one of the most salient characteristics of the rain forest peoples.

From the history of the southern savanna, the traditional habitat of several large-scale societies with centralized political systems, variously described as kingdoms, empires, and chiefdoms, emerged between 1200 and 1500 c.e. These include the Kongo, Lunda, Luba, and Kuba state systems, all of which shared certain common features, such as a centralized structure of authority identified with a single ruler, who more often than not enjoyed the attributes of divine kingship.

Therefore, to a far greater extent than many other African nations, the Democratic Republic of the Congo is a European/colonial creation that has little antecedent history.

By masterful diplomacy King Leopold II of Belgium induced the Berlin Conference of 1884–85 to recognize his personal claim over the Congo, which officially became a Belgian colony in 1908. Belgian rule was harsh, and the development of the colony was driven primarily with a view to economic profit. Belgium failed to prepare the Congo for independence, and consequently bears partial responsibility for the upheavals that followed soon after independence.

Controversy erupted before independence regarding the issue of federalism versus centralism. Most political organizations, which were ethnically based, favored decentralization; only Patrice Lumumba supported a unitary state. The question was not settled by the time the nation became independent. At independence in 1960 Patrice Lumumba became prime minister and Joseph Kasavubu president. Belgian administrators were to stay to train the new executives, and the army was to remain

Religious Affiliations

Roman Catholic	29,160,000
Protestant	11,660,000

under Belgian control. Five days after independence the armed forces mutinied. The appointment of Joseph-Désiré Mobutu as chief of staff helped to defuse the rebellion. Nevertheless, a political crisis developed as Belgians fled and Belgian troops took measures to protect Belgian nationals. Katanga and South Kasai provinces seceded, and Lumumba called in UN troops to intervene.

Disagreements between Kasavubu and Lumumba over the handling of the secession resulted in Lumumba's dismissal. He was subsequently murdered by his enemies in Katanga. Mobutu temporarily took control of the government but returned power to Kasavubu in February 1961. Parliament reconvened in August 1961, with most rival groups forming a government of national unity. Only Moïse Tshombe and his secessionist followers refused to join. Their rebellion was finally suppressed in 1963.

In 1964 a new constitution was promulgated that placed greater emphasis on federalism. It created new provinces and established a federalist, presidential system with a bicameral national assembly. Despite the changes, rebellion continued while Tshombe and Kasavubu struggled to assume power. In November 1965 Mobutu intervened and took over the presidency. A new constitution was promulgated in 1967, but the army held power; political activity ended. Mobutu established the *Mouvement Populaire de la Révolution* (MPR), which became the sole party in the country. He consolidated power in the central government and in an increasingly powerful presidency. He ruled with the assistance of a presidential bureau. The legislature, which was not frequently convened, had little influence. All opposition was suppressed.

The official philosophy of Congo became Mobutism, which was more a personal cult than a strict ideology. Mobutu was publicly referred to as "the guide" and "the father of the nation." Mobutism included a campaign for authenticity and national identity under which colonial place names and Christian names were Africanized by mandate. In 1971 he renamed himself Mobutu Sese Seko and the country Zaïre. Much of the thrust of the militant Africanization programs generated by the ideology of Mobutism was blunted by the economic and military failures of the Mobutu regime in the late 1970s. This forced Mobutu to depend more and more on Western powers and generally to retrace his steps toward a more pragmatic stance in political and social matters.

After almost a decade of prosperity, Zaïre relapsed into near civil war following the invasion of Shaba Province in 1977 and 1978 by the National Front for the Liberation of the Congo. The Mobutu regime was rescued solely by the intervention of French forces, although some assistance was received from a number of other states, such as Uganda, Morocco, Central African Republic, and Saudi Arabia, as well as Belgium.

Opposition to Mobutu's regime again manifested itself in 1984. In January and March a number of bombs exploded in Kinshasa, causing loss of life, and a rebel force occupied the town of Moba, in Shaba Province, for two days in November before it was recaptured by Zaïrean troops. Zaïre accused Belgium of harboring the groups responsible for such violent opposition and claimed that the rebels had crossed into Zaïre from neighboring Tanzania. However, the main opposition groups in Belgium did not acknowledge involvement in the occupation of Moba, suggesting instead that rebellious Zaïrean troops had been responsible. It was widely believed that the violent opposition in Zaïre had been orchestrated to disrupt the presidential election, which Mobutu, as the sole candidate, won easily.

Although Mobutu remained entrenched in power as the 1990s began, he was being challenged on a number of fronts. His third seven-year term as president expired in 1991, but he continued to rule without any constitutional sanction, appointing a succession of front men as prime ministers and making vague gestures of ending his one-party rule. The struggle between the president and the opposition forces reached an impasse when the country was invaded in 1996 by some 700,000 to one million Hutus, who were soon opposed by some 400,000 Banyamulenga Tutsis, in what would become known as the First Congo War. The Tutsis, organized into an army called Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaïre (AFDL), were led by anti-Mobutu guerrilla leader Laurent-Désiré Kabila, who easily overran most of eastern Zaïre. Within a year AFDL was at the gates of Kinshasa, having driven the Zaïrean army as well as the Hutus out of the rest of the country. Mobutu fled the country, and, after a murderous rampage by Mobutu loyalists, AFDL forces entered the capital. Kabila named himself president of the renamed Democratic Republic of the Congo in 1997. Soon after seizing power, Kabila himself faced a series of civil wars with a number of foreign mercenary armies, including Tutsi, Ugandan, and Angolan forces, carving up the country. Altogether, conflict starting in 1998 became known as the Second Congo War.

On January 16, 2001, Kabila was assassinated by a disaffected bodyguard. His son, Joseph Kabila, was immediately sworn in as the new president. In February he met with the Rwandan president, and Rwanda, Uganda, and the rebels agreed to a UN peace plan calling for the withdrawal of foreign troops. The search for peace continued in 2002, as the DRC and Rwanda signed an agreement calling for the withdrawal of Rwandan troops, while the DRC would disarm and arrest the Rwandan Hutus responsible for the genocide of Tutsis in Rwanda in 1994. Later that year the DRC signed a similar agreement with Uganda and also signed a peace agreement with the rebel groups that would give opposition members seats in an interim government. In 2003 Kabila signed a new con-

stitution that established a two-year interim government, with leaders of the rebel groups sworn in as vice presidents, and in August an interim parliament was launched. Fighting, however, continued. In 2004 rebels attacked military bases around Kinshasa, rebels occupied the town of Bukavu for a week, and fighting erupted between the army and rebel soldiers from a pro-Rwanda group.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1960–65	Joseph Kasavubu
1965–97	Mobutu Sese Seko
1997–2001	Laurent-Désiré Kabila
2001–	Joseph Kabila

CONSTITUTION

Numerous constitutional changes took place during the rule of Mobutu Sese Seko; all were undertaken to further consolidate Mobutu's power. In the constitution of February 1978, what was then Zaïre was described as a united, democratic, secular state. The constitution accorded equal rights and the freedom of expression, conscience, and religion to all citizens, who were also all declared members of the Mouvement Populaire de la Révolution (MPR) and from the age of 18 would have the right to vote. The MPR, founded in 1967, was established by the constitution as the nation's only political party in 1970.

The head of state is the president, who is elected for a seven-year term and who earlier served concurrently as the president of the MPR. He appointed and dismissed the National Executive Council, a cabinet of state commissioners. In addition he presided over the MPR political bureau, the MPR congress, and legislative and judicial councils. He held the power to legislate with the consent of the legislative council and was accountable to the people by means of an annual policy statement. The president was also the commander in chief of the armed forces and gendarmerie.

The legislative body was the National Legislative Council and was composed of people's commissioners in a single chamber. As per the constitution members were elected by universal and secret suffrage to five-year terms and were chosen from a slate of candidates approved by the MPR.

Mobutu had been making some movement toward a more democratic form of government, including scheduling elections for the legislature in 1997. However, following the successful rebellion led by General Laurent-Désiré Kabila, in May 1997 the new government announced a program of constitutional reform, and in November 1998 a draft constitution was approved by President Kabila. Under the new constitution the presi-

dent is still the head of government and chief of state. In August 2000 Kabila established the Transitional Constituent Assembly, appointing all 300 members. In 2003 the new constitution was finally signed, creating a two-year interim government that would include former rebel leaders as vice presidents. In 2005 voters approved a new constitution, paving the way for elections in 2006.

PARLIAMENT

The Transitional Constituent Assembly was established in August 2000 by former president Laurent Kabila. It is a unicameral body of 300 members appointed by Kabila. The assembly was reconvened in 2003, and elections were scheduled for 2005.

POLITICAL PARTIES

President Laurent Kabila led the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaïre (AFDL) and banned all other political party activity indefinitely. The sole legal political party until 1991 was the Popular Movement of the Revolution (MPR). While the government allowed the formation of other political parties after 1991, since the coup of 1997 the AFDL has been the only political party to hold office.

President Joseph Kabila lifted the ban on political parties in May 2001. Other parties now include: Union for Democracy and Social Progress (UDPS), Democratic Social Christian Party (PDSC), Union of Federalists and Independent Republicans (UFERI), Popular Movement of the Revolution (MPR), Forces for Renovation for Union and Solidarity (FONUS), and Unified Lumumbast Party (PALU).

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

There are 10 regions, each with its own regional commissioner and six councillors who are appointed by the president. The regions are subdivided into 41 subregions. The capital city of Kinshasa constitutes a separate unit under a governor and urban commissioners appointed by the president of the republic.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The basis of Congolese law is the Belgian penal code, with certain modifications to provide for African traditions.

The court system consists of the Supreme Court of Justice; three courts of appeal, at Kinshasa, Kisangani, and Lubumbashi; first-degree tribunals in each region and the city of Kinshasa; district tribunals in each district and city; and peace tribunals in each city and territory.

The constitution also provides for a Constitutional Court to rule on the constitutionality of laws. Judges and public prosecutors are appointed by the president of the republic on the advice of the Superior Council of the Magistrate. They cannot be removed but may be transferred.

HUMAN RIGHTS

The two Kabila governments' human rights records have been poor, as the nation has been embroiled in conflict, the two Congo wars, almost continuously since 1996. Citizens have not had the right to change their government peacefully. Security forces have been responsible for numerous extrajudicial killings, disappearances, torture, beatings, rape, and other abuses. In general, security forces have committed these abuses with impunity, although a special military tribunal tried and executed some security force members for various human rights abuses. Prison conditions have remained harsh and life threatening. Security forces have increasingly used arbitrary arrest and detention. Prolonged pretrial detention has remained a problem, and citizens have often been denied fair public trials. The special military tribunal has tried civilians for political offenses and executed civilians, frequently with total disregard for process protections. The judiciary has remained subject to executive influence and has continued to suffer from a lack of resources, inefficiency, and corruption. It has been largely ineffective as either a deterrent to human rights abuses or a corrective force. Security forces have violated citizens' rights to privacy. The forcible conscription of adults and children has continued, although children have recently been conscripted to a lesser extent.

Government security forces have continued to use excessive force and have committed violations of international law in the Second Congo War, which started in August 1998. On at least three occasions, government aircraft bombed civilian populated areas in rebel-held territory. Although a large number of private newspapers have often published criticism of the government, authorities continued to restrict freedom of speech and of the press by harassing and arresting newspaper editors and journalists and seizing individual issues of publications, as well as by continuing to increase restrictions on private radio broadcasting. The government has severely restricted freedom of assembly and association. The government has continued to restrict freedom of movement; it has required exit visas and imposed curfews even in cities not immediately threatened by the war. The government has continued to ban political party activity and has used security services to stop political demonstrations, resulting in numerous arrests and detentions. It has harassed and imprisoned members of opposition parties and has also harassed nongovernmental human rights organizations. Violence against women is a problem and has rarely been punished.

Female genital mutilation persists among isolated populations in the north. Discrimination against indigenous pygmies and ethnic minorities has been a problem. Serious governmental and societal violence and discrimination against members of the Tutsi ethnic minority have continued; however, the government has protected many Tutsis who were at risk and has permitted over 1,000 to leave the country. The government has arrested labor leaders during public sector strikes and has allowed private employers to refuse to recognize unions. Child labor, including the use of child soldiers has remained a common problem. There have been credible reports of beatings, rapes, and extrajudicial killings of Tutsis; however, societal abuses of Tutsis in government-controlled areas have been far fewer than in 1998, because by the start of that year surviving Tutsis generally either had left the government-controlled part of the country or were in hiding, places of refuge, or government custody.

There have been numerous credible reports that Mai Mai groups fighting on the side of the government have committed serious abuses, including many extrajudicial killings and the torture of civilians.

FOREIGN POLICY

During his long rule, Mobutu generally enjoyed the support of Western powers who used him as a pawn in the cold war and also exploited his corrupt administration to secure favorable mining leases. But this support evaporated by the early 1990s. In 1993 the United States, Belgium, and France issued a statement describing Mobutu as the "architect of Zaire's ruin" and calling for his resignation. The onset of the civil war and the collapse of the Zairean army before the swift march of Kabila-led Tutsi forces posed a dilemma for Western powers who did not know whether to shore up the tottering and corrupt Mobutu or support an unknown guerrilla leader. When Kabila emerged triumphant, most of the world's nations immediately recognized him, but the continuing civil anarchy in the country and the involvement of Angolan, Ugandan, and Tutsi militias has further complicated the situation. A multinational effort to end the conflict led to the Lusaka Award, which was disregarded by Kabila. The assassination of Laurent Kabila raised the specter that Congo may eventually disintegrate in the face of its internal troubles, which have continued under his son, Joseph Kabila, with Uganda, Rwanda, and Burundi continuing to be drawn into war and rebel insurgencies.

DEFENSE

The defense structure is headed by the president of the republic, who is also the defense minister. Control is exercised through the military high command.

The main source of military manpower is voluntary enlistment, but the government attempts to achieve an ethnic balance through controlled recruitment. The former Zaïrean armed forces disbanded in 1997, and subsequently some 20,000 to 40,000 personnel of the Congo Liberation Army constituted the national armed forces. In 2003 the nation spent about \$116 million, or 1.4 percent of gross domestic product (GDP), on the military. Despite heavy military aid and arms transfers from the West, the Congolese army has a poor track record. The armed forces are heavily concentrated on the southern border and in Shaba.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 97,800
 Military Manpower Availability: 12,706,971
 Military Expenditures \$million: 115.5
 as % of GDP: 1.4
 as % of central government expenditures: —
 Arms Imports \$million: 57
 Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

The economy of the Democratic Republic of the Congo—a nation endowed with vast potential wealth—has declined drastically since the mid-1980s. The government instituted a tight fiscal policy that initially curbed inflation and currency depreciation, but these small gains were quickly reversed when the foreign-backed rebellion in the eastern part of the country began in August 1998. The Second Congo War has dramatically reduced government revenue and increased external debt. Foreign businesses have curtailed operations due to uncertainty about the outcome of the conflict and because of increased government harassment and restrictions. Poor infrastructure, an uncertain legal framework, corruption, and lack of openness in government economic policy and financial operations remain a brake on investment and growth. A number of International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank missions have met with the government to help develop a coherent economic plan, but associated reforms are on hold. In late 2002 conditions improved with the withdrawal of foreign troops, and President Joseph Kabila has begun instituting reforms. Economic stability, with the help of international donors, improved in 2003. New mining contracts have been approved, and these, combined with high mineral and metal prices, could improve GDP growth, which was estimated to be 6.5 percent for 2003.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 40.05
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 700
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: –0.9

GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: –3.0

Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:

Agriculture: 55

Industry: 11

Services: 34

Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:

Private Consumption: 90

Government Consumption: 6

Gross Domestic Investment: —

Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 1.417

Imports: 0.933

% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: —

% of Income Received by Richest 10%: —

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
2,284	8,791	53,970	248,226	326,473

Finance

National Currency: Congolese Franc (CDF)

Exchange Rate: \$1 = CDF 346.485

Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 72.11

Central Bank Discount Rate %: 8.0

Total External Debt \$billion: 11.6

Debt Service Ratio %: 8.87

Balance of Payments \$million: —

International Reserves SDRs \$million: 82.5

Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
14

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$billion: 5.38

per capita \$: 101.20

Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 158

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year

Revenues \$million: 269

Expenditures \$million: 244

Budget Deficit \$million: 25

Tax Revenues as % of GDP: 6.3

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 55

Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2002) %: –2.6

Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares: 40

Irrigation, % of Farms having: 0.14

Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 1.6

Total Farmland % of land area: 3.0

Livestock: Cattle 000: 765

Chickens million: 19.6

Pigs 000: 953

Sheep 000: 897

Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 72.17

Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 223

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 220.4
Industrial Production Growth Rate %: —

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 1.8
Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 1.27
Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 25
Net Energy Imports % of use: -4.8
Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 2.473
 Production kW-hr billion: 5.24
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 3.84
Coal Reserves tons million: 97
 Production tons 000: 110
 Consumption tons 000: 260
Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet billion: 35
 Production cubic feet billion: —
 Consumption cubic feet billion: —
Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels million: 187
 Production barrels 000 per day: 22
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 12
Pipelines Length km: 71

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 0.933
Exports \$billion: 1.417
Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2002): 14.0
Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2002): 31.0
Balance of Trade \$million: —

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
South Africa %	17.0	—
Belgium %	14.9	54.9
France %	12.6	—
Germany %	6.8	—
Kenya %	5.4	—
Netherlands %	4.0	—
United States %	—	15.4
Zimbabwe %	—	11.1
Finland %	—	4.8

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 157,000
 Paved %: —
Automobiles: 172,600
Trucks and Buses: 34,600
Railroad: Track Length km: 5,138
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: —
Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: —
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: —
Airports: 230
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: —
Length of Waterways km: 15,000

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 35
Number of Tourists from 000: —
Tourist Receipts \$million: —
Tourist Expenditures \$million: —

Communications

Telephones 000: 10
Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
Cellular Telephones million: 1
Personal Computers 000: —
Internet Hosts per million people: 2.6
Internet Users per 1,000 people: 0.85

ENVIRONMENT

The DRC's most significant environmental problem is widespread poaching, which threatens the viability of a number of species, especially the gorilla and elephant populations. The country also suffers from growing water pollution and deforestation. Refugees who arrived in mid-1994 were responsible for significant deforestation, soil erosion, and wildlife poaching in the eastern part of the country.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 59.6
Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: -532
Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 8
Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 0.06

LIVING CONDITIONS

Living conditions are harsh in the DRC. Mobutu essentially sacked the nation of its wealth—with his personal fortune at the time of his flight in 1997 estimated at \$5 billion—and ruled through terror and brutality; at one point his guards murdered 50 university students in their beds for speaking out against the regime. Poverty, hunger, and disease are rife, life expectancy is low, and medical care is often unavailable. Ethnic tensions are a fact of life, as rebel fighting continued into 2005, with an estimated 3.8 million people killed thus far in the course of the Second Congo War. In 2004 there were an astounding 2.33 million internally displaced persons surviving under the most primitive conditions. Housing in rural areas consists primarily of mud huts with grass roofs; around the cities, shantytowns have developed, as people in the rural areas try to flee from violence. The corrugated metal homes in the cities are unbearably hot during much of the year.

HEALTH

In 2002 spending on health care amounted to just \$4 per person per year, contributing to the poor living conditions in the DRC. In 2003 life expectancy at birth was just under 49 years. The infant mortality rate was just over 94 deaths per 1,000 live births. AIDS is a major problem, with 4.2 percent of the adult population living with the disease in 2001 and 120,000 people dying of the disease that year. In 2001 only 46 percent of the nation's population had access to clean drinking water, and diseases such as malaria (affecting 5,880 per 100,000 population) and intestinal diseases (accounting for 8.34 percent of deaths in 1997–99) are commonplace. Only just over half of children are immunized against measles by the age of two, and in 1997–99 the death rate from childhood respiratory diseases was 109 per 100,000 people.

Health

Number of Physicians: 3,129
 Number of Dentists: 499
 Number of Nurses: 20,046
 Number of Pharmacists: 907
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 6.9
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 94.69
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 990
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 4.0
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 4
 HIV Infected % of adults: 4.2
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 49
 Measles: 54
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 29
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 46

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Nutrition is poor in the DRC. The United Nations estimates that 16 million people in the nation are hungry on a daily basis and in 2001 determined that 31 percent of children under age five were underweight. The primary staple is *fufu*, a paste made from manioc roots. This is sometimes supplemented by plantains, bananas, sweet potatoes, and occasionally fish, depending on proximity to streams and rivers; some people are able to construct their own fish ponds, where they harvest fish for consumption. Meat for most people is a luxury served only on ceremonial occasions. Palm trees provide nuts, fruits, oil, and wine. Social customs contribute to child malnutrition in some areas, where the father eats first, getting the best of the food, and mothers and children eat what remains after the father is done.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 71.2
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 1,590
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 38.0
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 38.4

STATUS OF WOMEN

The role of women in Congolese society was given great emphasis in the doctrine of the once-ruling MPR. Women's rights to own property and participate in the political and economic sectors are protected by law, and a growing number of women work in the professions, government, service, and the universities. Nevertheless, custom, tradition, and existing law continue to constrain women from attaining complete equality in society. Women generally earn less than their male counterparts in the same jobs. In addition, married women must obtain their husband's authorization before opening a bank account, accepting a job, or renting or selling real estate.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 12
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 0.8
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: —

WORK

Ongoing civil unrest has made it difficult to estimate the size of the labor force. The most recent estimate of 14.51 million is from 1993. The problem of arriving at an accurate count is compounded by the prevalence of subsistence agriculture and the black market as ways of making a living. As of 2000 agriculture contributed about 55 percent of the nation's GDP. Products include coffee, sugar, palm oil, rubber, tea, quinine, cassava, bananas, root crops, corn, fruits, and wood products. Industry, which contributes just 11 percent of GDP, includes mining (of diamonds, copper, and zinc), mineral processing, textiles, foods and beverages, and cement.

The term *work* is relative, for people in the DRC take whatever steps they need to in order to survive. Some estimates show the black market economy to be three times the size of the "official" economy. Because official prices of goods are high, many people cross the border into neighboring countries, often on bicycles, and bring back goods to sell at lower prices. Many people try to take salaried jobs as, for example, teachers or police officers—not for the salary, which frequently goes unpaid, but for the contacts the job opens on the black

market, where goods are cheaper and more plentiful. Many entrepreneurs have opened businesses in refugee camps, including hair salons, shops that sell basic goods, and even discos.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 14,510,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 43.3
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: —
 Industry: —
 Services: —
 Unemployment %: —

School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: —
 First Level: Primary schools: 14,885
 Teachers: —
 Students: —
 Student-Teacher Ratio: —
 Net Enrollment Ratio: —
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 4,276
 Teachers: —
 Students: —
 Student-Teacher Ratio: —
 Net Enrollment Ratio: —
 Third Level: Institutions: —
 Teachers: —
 Students: —
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: —
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: —

EDUCATION

The state theoretically provides free, universal, and compulsory education for six years, from ages six to 12. Secondary education, from ages 12 to 17, is not compulsory. Education and literacy among females is greatest among primary age groups, with a sharp decline during secondary and university levels of education. In 1998–99 the estimated “life expectancy” in school for students was just 4.3 years. In 2000 it was estimated that 41.7 percent of the population had no schooling, 42.2 percent had primary schooling, and just 15.4 percent had secondary schooling. Only 0.7 percent of the population had schooling beyond secondary school.

The academic year runs from September to July. The mediums of instruction are Kikongo, Tshiluba, Lingala, or Swahili in the primary grades and French in the secondary and university levels. Primary education is divided into three two-year sections: elementary, middle, and terminal. Students are not divided into formal grades at the first level. There are a few unsubsidized private schools. Over 92 percent of the primary- and secondary-school population attend subsidized schools, over 70 percent of which are run by the Roman Catholic Church.

There is a critical shortage of trained teachers. Less than one-fourth of primary-school teachers have university diplomas. The Compulsory Civic Service was instituted in 1966 to create a pool of trained personnel by making a two-year teaching stint mandatory for all students who received a license after 1966.

All universities in the DRC were reorganized and nationalized in 1971 as the National University, with four campuses, at Kisangani, Kananga, Kinshasa, and Lubumbashi.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 65.5
 Male %: 76.2
 Female %: 55.1

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The state is unable to extend even the most basic social services to its people, so little scientific and technological research is conducted. During the 1990s the World Bank estimated that the DRC had about 34 research scientists per million people, ranking the nation second to last among the 81 countries for which data were compiled. (The leading country, Iceland, had 5,686 per million.) What research is conducted tends to be under the auspices of nongovernmental organizations such as the United Nations and various international agricultural research groups.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: —
 Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

Some 15 newspapers appear regularly in the capital, with a combined circulation of 112,000. There are also more than 12 weekly, monthly, and quarterly periodicals.

The official news agency is Agence Congolaise de Presse (ACP), based in Kinshasa, with regional correspondents in the Republic of the Congo and a foreign bureau in Brussels. A second agency—Documentation and Information for and about Africa (DIA)—founded by the Catholic Church in 1956, functions as an independent private company.

The state-owned La Voix du Congo operates in Kinshasa and in provincial stations. An international service, the Voice of the Brotherhood, is broadcast from Lubumbashi. In 2002 the UN mission in the DRC, along with a Swiss-based organization, Foundation Hironnelle, launched Radio Okapi, which attempts to broadcast news to encourage political dialogue.

Television was introduced in 1966. There are two stations, one in Kinshasa and the other in Lubumbashi.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 9
 Total Circulation 000: 124
 Circulation per 1,000: 2.7
 Books Published: 112
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets 000: 100
 per 1,000: 2

CULTURE

Few Congolese artists can support themselves through their art. Some government funding has been available for artists, but only for those who express views that support the government. Many artists pursue other jobs as a way to generate income. The DRC has produced a number of novelists, playwrights, and poets who write about the nation's colonial past and the conflicts between traditional and modern life. These include Mwilambwe Kibawa, Lisembe Elebe, Paul Lomami-Tshibamba, and Valérin Mutombo-Diba. The nation has a long graphic arts tradition. Especially prominent have been metalworkers who avail themselves of the nation's rich supply of copper. Popular arts also include the production of masks, jewelry, paintings, baskets, wood carvings, and mats. A popular form of dance music is *kwasa-kwasa*, and Congolese jazz can be heard throughout the world. Also renowned for their music are the Mbuti people, who have developed a style in which different people simultaneously sing different melodic lines.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

It is difficult to separate folklore from traditional religious beliefs in the DRC. Animism posits the belief that the divine can be found in any object, such as a rock or a tree. Many people believe in a creator but believe that the best way to make contact with the creator is through ancestor

worship, and many people carry on daily dialogues with their ancestors or appease angry ancestors with gifts and sacrifices. Misfortune, including illness, poor harvests, and the like, are attributed to spirits, angry ancestors, and especially witches, whom many Congolese, especially the Azande in the rain forests, fear. Diviners are often paid to determine the source of a misfortune and the best way to overcome it. Similarly, spiritual healers called *ngangas* use herbal remedies and various rituals, including animal sacrifice, to help people restore their health, become pregnant, or ensure a good harvest.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

In a country torn by civil war, entertainment and recreation often take a distant second place to matters of survival. Recreation and entertainment take different forms among the nation's many ethnic groups, but especially in regions that lack electrical power, music, singing, and dancing as well as conversation are primary forms of recreation. Jazz and soukous, which is played on a guitar, are popular forms of dance music. Among the Tutsi, a popular board game is *igisoro*, which is played on a wooden board. The board has rows that hold beads and stones used as counters. The object is for one player to capture as many of his opponent's counters as possible.

ETIQUETTE

Great respect is accorded elders, especially those who might be headmen in villages. Among the Bakongo respect for authority is shown by grasping one's right wrist with the left hand when shaking hands, and children are always to accept gifts with both hands. Among some Tutsis it is customary to kneel in the presence of a superior. Greetings are formal and include inquiries about a person's well-being and that of his or her family. Some Tutsis have extremely elaborate greetings that consist of song, embraces, and formal gestures.

FAMILY LIFE

Family patterns differ with ethnic groups. In rural areas many men have two or more wives, with the goal of producing enough offspring who will survive until they can contribute to the family's well-being. Women tend to carry the burden of family life, performing many chores such as gathering and cutting firewood, hauling water, cooking, washing clothes, harvesting, rearing children, and making handicrafts for sale in markets. Life in many villages revolves around the authority of the elders, respected men who make decisions for the community.

In many respects, there is no “childhood” in the DRC, as children often assume adult responsibilities at a very young age.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Women in the DRC almost never wear slacks, instead favoring long skirts. Despite the nation’s poverty, people generally place great emphasis on wearing neat, pressed, colorful clothing; failure to do so is regarded as extremely discourteous. The Bakongo adopted Western dress early on, and throughout the nation they are still regarded as the most stylish and fashionable dressers. The Tutsis, too, wear Western dress, reserving gowns and robes for ceremonial occasions.

SPORTS

As in most of the nations of Africa, soccer is the most popular spectator and participant sport. Many people in the DRC do not play “sports” in the traditional Western sense but engage in activities that reflect their way of life. The Azande, for example, like to spar, enabling men to practice fighting skills. Similarly, the Baganda enjoy wrestling. Among the Efe and Mbuti, children have play areas where they develop skills in group cooperation and hunting, and adults play a game similar to tug-of-war in which men and women compete against one another, and one side ridicules the other in mock male voices (if the men are losing) or female voices (if the women are losing).

CHRONOLOGY

- 1960** Congo gains independence, with Patrice Lumumba of the Mouvement National Congolaise (MNC) as prime minister and Joseph Kasavubu of the Alliance des Bakongo as president; opposed to a centralized rather than federal government, Katanga, the country’s richest province, declares independence under Moïse Tshombe; Congolese soldiers mutiny; Belgian forces withdraw and Belgian civilians flee the country; at the government’s request, the UN Security Council dispatches troops; Lumumba requests Soviet aid; Lumumba and Kasavubu dismiss one another; Albert Kalondji proclaims the independence of South Kasai; Joseph Mobutu, chief of staff of the Congolese National Army (ANC) seizes power; Lumumbists under Antoine Gizenga organize a counter-government at Stanleyville; Lumumba is arrested.
- 1961** Lumumba is executed; Joseph Ileo forms a provisional government; a tentative agreement between the Leopoldville government and the secessionist governments of Katanga and Kasai establishes a centralized government; under UN protection, the National Legislative Council reopens and approves a coalition government headed by Cyrille Adoula as prime minister; diplomatic relations with Belgium are reestablished; UN troops move against Katanga.
- 1962** The Kitona agreement resolves the Katanga secession; the Stanleyville government is dissolved; Gizenga and Kalondji are arrested.
- 1963** President Kasavubu declares a state of emergency and dissolves the National Legislative Council; Tshombe is appointed prime minister.
- 1964** A commission headed by Joseph Ileo drafts a constitution; the country’s name is changed from the Republic of Congo to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC); rebels capture Stanleyville; the Katangan gendarmerie and white mercenaries attack rebel strongholds; rebels under Christophe Gbenye use white hostages to halt government forces; UN forces withdraw.
- 1965** Prime Minister Tshombe and President Kasavubu engage in a power struggle; General Mobutu seizes power for a second time and names a government of national unity, with Leonard Mulamba as prime minister.
- 1966** Mobutu abolishes the National Legislative Council and assumes legislative powers; Prime Minister Mulamba is dismissed and one-time prime minister Évariste Kimba is executed; another mutiny breaks out in Katanga.
- 1967** The new constitution is promulgated, naming the Mouvement Populaire de la Révolution (MPR) the country’s sole political party; after a plane carrying Tshombe is hijacked over Algeria, mercenaries launch a rebellion in the east; the rebellion collapses and rebels flee to Rwanda; the MPR issues the Manifesto of Nsele.
- 1969** Patrice Lumumba is declared a national hero.
- 1970** Running unopposed, Mobutu is elected president in the DRC’s first presidential election.
- 1971** As part of a sweeping program of Africanization, the country is renamed the Republic of Zaïre.
- 1972** A National Executive Council is formed to replace the cabinet.
- 1973** All foreign-owned firms, plantations, and mining companies are nationalized.
- 1974** The constitution is revised to make the MPR synonymous with the state.
- 1976** Congo defaults on foreign loans; currency is devalued.
- 1977** Guerrillas of the Cuban-backed Congolese National Liberation Front, based in Angola, in-

- vade the Zaïrean region of Shaba (formerly called Katanga), straining relations with the Soviet Union; Congo receives aid from Morocco, Sudan, Uganda, and Western nations to fight against the rebels.
- 1978** Guerrillas of the Congolese National Liberation Front (reportedly backed by Angola, Cuba, and the Soviet Union) invade Shaba again through Zambia and occupy Kolwezi and Mutshalaha; French and Belgian troops launch successful rescue operations.
- 1979** President Agostinho Neto of Angola reaches an agreement with Mobutu regarding the creation of a supervisory body to prevent guerrilla operations across the common border.
- 1983** Amnesty International publishes a report harshly critical of the human rights record in Zaïre; Mobutu grants amnesty to all political exiles who return by June 30; some exiles return, but a strong opposition movement remains in Belgium.
- 1984** Despite continued resistance against his regime within Zaïre, Mobutu is reelected president.
- 1985** The MPR is restructured, strengthening Mobutu's position; Nguza Karl-I-Bond returns from exile; restrictions on seven members of outlawed UDPS are ended.
- 1989** Zaïrean students in Belgium are ordered to return to Zaïre by year's end; Mobutu announces termination of two friendship and cooperation treaties between Zaïre and Belgium.
- 1990** In response to growing public discontent, Mobutu vows to end the ban on multiparty politics; nevertheless, the government continues to use violence to suppress political opposition.
- 1993** Western nations, including France and Belgium, send troops in order to protect their citizens living in Zaïre from the growing violence.
- 1994** Mobutu names as prime minister Kengo Wa Dondo, a proponent of austerity and free-market reforms.
- 1997** Rebel forces led by General Laurent Kabila take control of the government after more than a year of fighting; Kabila immediately changes the name of the country from Zaïre to the Democratic Republic of the Congo; Mobutu flees to Morocco, where he dies of cancer in September.
- 1998** Anti-Kabila rebel forces attempt to take the capital but are defeated.
- 2000** Ethnic fighting erupts in the rebel-held east; UN peacekeepers monitor the cease-fire.
- 2001** Kabila is assassinated in January, and his son Joseph Kabila is named president; Ugandan, Rwandan, and Zimbabwean troops begin withdrawing from the country, and UN troops are deployed in the rebel-held town of Kisangani. Kabila lifts the ban on all parties that were in operation under former president Mobutu Sese Seko.
- 2002** Mount Nyiragongo, among Africa's most active volcanoes, erupts, destroying the town of Goma.
- In peace talks in South Africa, DRC signs a power-sharing deal with Ugandan-backed rebels, but Rwandan-backed rebels reject the deal; presidents of DRC and Rwanda sign a peace deal under which Rwanda will withdraw troops and DRC will disarm and arrest Rwandan Hutus responsible for the killing of the Tutsis in Rwanda in 1994; presidents of DRC and Uganda sign peace accord under which Ugandan troops will leave DRC; DRC and rebel groups sign a peace agreement under which opposition members are to be given positions in an interim government.
- 2003** President Kabila signs a new constitution in April, under which an interim government will rule for two years, pending elections. In June Kabila names a transitional government, and in August parliament is inaugurated.
- 2004** Gunmen attack military bases in Kinshasa in an apparent coup attempt. Rebel soldiers occupy town of Bukavu for a week. Fighting erupts between the Congolese army and renegade soldiers from a former pro-Rwanda rebel group.
- 2005** Voters approve a new constitution paving the way for elections in 2006.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Permanent Mission of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to the United Nations
<http://www.un.int/drcongo/>

CONGO, REPUBLIC OF THE

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of the Congo (République du Congo)

ABBREVIATION

CG

CAPITAL

Brazzaville

HEAD OF STATE & HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

President Denis Sassou-Nguesso (from 1997)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Republic

POPULATION

2,998,040 (2005)

AREA

342,000 sq km (132,046 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Kongo, Teke, Mbochi, Sangha

LANGUAGES

French (official), Lingala, Monokutuba, Kikongo

RELIGIONS

Christianity, animism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Coopération financière en Afrique centrale franc

NATIONAL FLAG

Divided diagonally from the lower hoist side by a yellow band; the upper triangle (hoist side) is green and the lower triangle is red, using the popular Pan-African colors of Ethiopia.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A shield with a red lion rampant bearing a torch of freedom on a yellow field split by a green wavy bar representing the Congo River. The shield is flanked by two elephants standing on a red log draped with a gold ribbon carrying the motto *Unité, travail, progrès* (Unity, work, progress). On the crest are seven staves rising from a band inscribed with the name of the country, "République du Congo."

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"On This Day the Sun Rises"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day), May 1 (Labor Day), June 22 (Anniversary of the People's Army), August 13–15 (Anniversary of the Three Glorious Days), August 15 (National Day, Independence Day), December 25 (Christmas), December 31 (Birth of the Parti Congolaise du Travail)

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

August 15, 1960

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

July 8, 1979; draft constitution adopted by transitional parliament in September 2001, approved in a national referendum on January 20, 2002

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

The Republic of the Congo, in West Africa, has an irregularly shaped area of 342,000 sq km (132,046 sq mi), extending 1,006 km (625 mi) north-northeast to south-southwest and 402 km (250 mi) east-southeast to west-northwest. Its total international land boundaries of 5,504 km (3,420 mi) are artificial ones drawn by former colonial powers. The bordering nations and lengths of borders are as follows: Cameroon (523 km; 325 mi), Central African Republic (467 km; 290 mi), the Democratic Republic of the Congo (2,410

km; 1,497 mi), Angola (201 km; 125 mi), and Gabon (1,903 km; 1,181 mi). The length of the Atlantic coastline is 169 km (105 mi).

The country is divided into four topographical regions. The coastal region is a treeless plain stretching about 161 km (100 mi) along the Atlantic coast and extending about 64 km (40 mi) inland to the Mayombe escarpment and to the foothills of the Crystal Mountains. The area is marked by extensive swamps, lakes, and rivers. Inland the sharp ridges of the Mayombe escarpment run parallel to the coast, reaching elevations of 488 to 610 m (1,600 to 2,000 ft). The Niari Valley, lying be-

Republic of the Congo



tween the Chaillu and Mayombe mountains and extending for about 322 km (200 mi) in the south-central area, contains the most fertile soil in the country. The central highlands, known as the Bateke Plateau, form the watershed between the Niari and the Ogowe river systems. Much of this region, encompassing an area of 130,000 sq km (50,000 sq mi), is covered by dense forests. The northeastern section of the country lies within the

Congo River basin and is composed of largely impassable floodplains in the lower portion and a dry savanna in the upper portion.

Geography

Area sq km: 342,000; sq mi 132,046
World Rank: 62nd

Land Boundaries, km: Angola 201; Cameroon 523; Central African Republic 467; Democratic Republic of the Congo 2,410; Gabon 1,903
Coastline, km: 169

Elevation Extremes meters:

Lowest: Atlantic Ocean 0

Highest: Mount Berongou 903

Land Use %

Arable land: 0.6

Permanent Crops: 0.1

Forest: 64.6

Other: 34.7

Population of Principal Cities (2005 est.)

Brazzaville	1,174,000
Loubomo	106,300
Pointe-Noire	663,400

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

The Republic of the Congo has a tropical climate characterized by high temperatures, high rainfall, and high humidity, with little seasonal variation. The seasons are reversed north and south of the equator. North of the equator the rainy season lasts from April until late October and the dry season from early November until late March. Temperatures range from 26.6°C to 32°C (80°F to 90°F) on average, although lower temperatures have been recorded nearer the coast under the influence of the Benguela (Antarctic) current. Humidity is consistently high throughout the year, with average daily readings of 80 percent.

Rainfall varies regionally, with higher precipitation in the north. The annual average is about 1,520 mm (60 in), while parts of the Congo basin may receive up to twice that amount. Violent winds and squalls are common in the wet season.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature: 80°F to 90°F

Average Rainfall: 60 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

The most noteworthy feature of the Republic of Congo is the rain forest in the Congo basin, which is shared with the neighboring nations of Cameroon, Gabon, and the Central African Republic. Plant species are numerous, with approximately 6,000 in Congo. Particularly noteworthy is the density of species; in many places over 200 distinct species of plants can be found in plots of less than one-20th of an acre. The Congo rain for-

ests are home to some of the world's most spectacular wildlife and at least 198 species of mammals, the highest concentration in Africa. Included among these are the forest elephant and three subspecies of gorilla: the mountain gorilla, the eastern lowland gorilla, and the western lowland gorilla. Also found there are okapi (forest giraffes), forest buffaloes, bongos, chimpanzees, and bonobos (pygmy chimpanzees), regarded as humans' closest relative. One national park in Congo contains at least 428 species of birds.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 2,998,040

World Rank: 132nd

Density per sq km: 11.0

% of annual growth (1999-2003): 3.0

Male %: 49.5

Female %: 50.5

Urban %: 67.3

Age Distribution %: 0-14: 37.9

15-64: 58.5

65 and over: 3.6

Population 2025: 3,567,000

Birth Rate per 1,000: 28.66

Death Rate per 1,000: 14.49

Rate of Natural Increase %: 1.8

Total Fertility Rate: 3.54

Expectation of Life years: Males 48.51

Females 50.55

Marriage Rate per 1,000: —

Divorce Rate per 1,000: —

Average Size of Households: 4.7

Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

All the Congolese are Bantus except for small, isolated groups of Negrillos and Sudanese immigrants. Of the 15 main ethnic groups, divided into 75 tribes, four stand out. The most important is the Kongo, or Bakongo, whose tribes live in the south, between Brazzaville and the coast, and account for 48 percent of the population. The second ethnic family is the Mbochi, also called Boubangui, who currently inhabit the Cuvette and Likoula regions and constitute about 12 percent of the population. The third important group is the Bateke, or Teke, who live in the plateau country north of Brazzaville and constitute about 17 percent of the population. Finally, the Sangha family of tribes inhabit the northern forest zone, which they share with the Binga, or Babinga, Pygmies, whose ancestors are believed to be the original inhabitants of the land.

There is a great deal of interethnic rivalry, particularly in the political sphere. Intertribal riots are common and, despite misleading labels, political groups are based

largely on ethnic loyalties. In the urban areas each ethnic group tends to isolate itself in its own residential quarter.

LANGUAGES

The official language is French, which is used extensively in government and in the schools. Only a small proportion of the African population use French as a working language.

Each ethnic group has its own traditional language. Kikongo is the most widely used local dialect. Two trade languages are used as lingua francas for intertribal communication: Lingala in the north and Monokutuba in the south. All African languages belong to the Bantu family.

RELIGIONS

About 50 percent of the Congolese are nominally Christian, with Catholics composing the majority of this group. There is a small Muslim community of approximately 2 percent of the population. The remaining 48 percent of the Congolese are either animists or members of unorthodox sects.

In theory, freedom of religion is guaranteed by law. In practice, members of the ruling Parti Congolais du Travail are prohibited from practicing religion. Jehovah's Witnesses had not been allowed to exercise their right to worship, allegedly because they do not recognize the authority of the state. In February 1978 the government banned all religious groups except Roman Catholics, certain Protestant denominations, Muslims, and followers of regional sects.

Religious Affiliations

Christian	1,500,000
Animist	1,440,000
Muslim	60,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The first settlers to the region that is now the Republic of the Congo came 40,000 to 100,000 years ago. The first large-scale societies were formed only 500 to 1,000 years ago. Three kingdoms emerged from the numerous peoples and villages: Loango on the Atlantic coast, Kongo in the southwest, and Tio on the northern plains. Political power was marked by control over the spirit cults and trade.

The first Europeans arrived in 1483 in Kongo. The Portuguese were welcomed to the region. However, this positive reception came to an end when the Portuguese began to trade slaves in the early 16th century. The 17th through 19th centuries were marked by an increase in the slave trade from the Republic of the Congo and the continued influence of Western cultures on the country. In

order to bring an end to colonial fighting over territory, the Republic of the Congo came under the administration of the French.

From 1910 until 1958 the Republic of the Congo, then known as Moyen-Congo, was an administrative unit of the Federation of French Equatorial Africa, which also included Gabon, Chad (Tchad), and Oubangui-Chari (Central African Republic). Brazzaville was the headquarters of the federation. French colonial rule suffered from a lack of well-defined policy. In the aftermath of World War II a series of administrative and social reforms were initiated, providing for increased Congolese participation in the governing process.

Congo has had five governments since independence, all of them unstable and four of them terminated by violence. The army has dominated the government since 1968. Interethnic rivalries have added to the instability, and each regime has been associated with the ascendancy of a particular tribe and the exclusion of the others.

Congo achieved full independence in August 1958 under a strong, centralized government led by Abbé Fulbert Youlou, a radical former Roman Catholic priest from the south. Youlou's attempts to establish one-party rule resulted in trade union strikes and mass demonstrations, which led to his resignation in 1963.

Alphonse Massamba-Débat took over leadership of a provisional government that was formed by the military with the support of the trade unions. Massamba-Débat adopted Marxist-Leninist policy and attempted unsuccessfully to develop a socialist economic system. The Communist-inspired Mouvement National de la Révolution (MNR) was made the nation's sole political party, and its role became increasingly important during Massamba-Débat's tenure. His radical approach alienated the army, which staged a successful coup in August 1968. The leader of the coup, Captain Marien Ngouabi, became president and drew up a new constitution, approved in 1969, under which his Parti Congolais du Travail (PCT) became the sole party. The constitution proclaimed the nation the People's Republic of the Congo. The regime called itself Marxist but maintained close economic ties with France.

Opposition to one-party rule, particularly in the south, resulted in Ngouabi's assassination in 1977. Former president Massamba-Débat was implicated in the plot and later executed, although his complicity was never proved. The PCT military committee appointed Joachim Yhombi-Opango president. However, his antileft feelings and his failure to deal with a worsening economic crisis led to his resignation in 1979. He was replaced by his chief rival, Col. Denis Sassou-Nguesso. The Military Council was abolished, and amnesty was given to political exiles. A socialist constitution was approved by referendum. Although nominally Marxist, the government became increasingly liberal and pro-Western in order to placate the right and deal with the country's

serious economic problems. Sassou-Nguesso was reelected president in 1984. His position was strengthened at the expense of the prime minister through constitutional amendments approved that year. Ongoing ethnic rivalries and worsening economic problems led to a coup attempt in July 1987, which resulted in the arrest of 20 army officers and the eventual arrest and imprisonment of Yhombi-Opango. Sassou-Nguesso was reelected again for a five-year term in 1989. The Congolese Workers' Party officially dropped its Marxist ideology in 1990.

President Sassou-Nguesso introduced a multiparty system in 1991 and convened an all-party National Conference to chart the future course of the country. The National Conference approved the draft of a new democratic constitution, which dropped "People's" from the country's name, transferred most of the presidential powers to the prime minister, and scheduled a referendum. The referendum, held in 1992, secured 96 percent approval. In the presidential balloting, Pascal Lissouba of the Pan-African Union for Social Democracy emerged as the winner. Lissouba faced a stormy legislature. Waves of civil unrest paralyzed the country. For a time the military occupied Brazzaville and forced the president to appoint a unity government under Claude Antoine Dacosta as prime minister. Dacosta was followed by Gen. Yhombi-Opango, but the state of armed rebellion continued. Regional and ethnic rivalries continued to fan the flames of discontent as the Lissouba administration sought to end the pro-Sassou-Nguesso northerners' dominance of the military as well as to disarm the numerous militias. In 1996 there was a short-lived mutiny, which was ended only on terms imposed by the rebels. Preparations for the 1997 presidential elections soon escalated into a virtual civil war between the two major contenders, Lissouba and Sassou-Nguesso. With the help of mercenaries and regular troops from Angola, Sassou-Nguesso captured Brazzaville, while Lissouba fled the capital. Sassou-Nguesso named a new broadly representative government but abolished the post of prime minister. Militias loyal to Lissouba continued to resist throughout 1998 and early 1999. In 1999 the government and militias signed a peace agreement in the Zambian capital, Lusaka, and in 2001 some 15,000 militia gave up their weapons. In September a new constitution was adopted by the transitional parliament. In December of 2001 Lissouba was convicted in absentia on charges of corruption and treason and given a 30-year sentence.

In January 2002 a constitutional referendum that consolidated the powers of the president was approved by 80 percent of voters. In March that year Sassou-Nguesso won the presidential election unopposed after his rivals were barred from the election. In March 2002 fighting broke out in the Pool region between the government and "Ninja" rebels loyal to the former prime minister Bernard Kolelas. In June the fighting spread to Brazzaville, where 100 people were killed. In March 2003 the

government signed agreements with the rebels, who agreed to end hostilities but as of early 2005 had yet to disarm; many turned to banditry.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1960–63	Fulbert Youlou
1963–68	Alphonse Massamba-Débat
1968–77	Marien Ngouabi
1977–79	Joachim Yhombi-Opango
1979–92	Denis Sassou-Nguesso
1992–97	Pascal Lissouba
1997–	Denis Sassou-Nguesso

CONSTITUTION

The constitution of the People's Republic of the Congo, approved by popular referendum in 1979, the country's fifth since gaining independence, was abolished in 1991 at a national conference. It was replaced with a basic law that established a presidency, a bicameral legislature, and a prime ministership. This basic law was adopted in 1992 by referendum. This constitution was suspended in 1997. In September 2001 a draft constitution was adopted by the transitional parliament and was approved in a national referendum on January 2, 2002.

PARLIAMENT

Until 1997 the parliament of the Republic of the Congo was bicameral. The lower house, the National Assembly, consisted of 125 members elected directly from single-member districts for terms of five years. If a candidate did not win a majority of the votes, then a second round of voting was required between the top two finishers. The upper house, the Senate, consisted of 60 members who were elected indirectly from local and regional councils for periods of six years. One-third of the Senate was elected every two years. The parliament was suspended in 1997, and in 1999 the unicameral 75-member Transitional Council was established in its place. In 2002 elections were held, restoring the parliament, with 137 seats in the National Assembly and 66 seats in the Senate and all lengths of term five years.

POLITICAL PARTIES

The Republic of the Congo is a multiparty state. Among the most important parties is the Congolese Labor Party (PCT), which is the party of the president and the ruling party from when Congo was a one-party state. In addition to the PCT, there is the Pan-African Union for Social Development (UPADS), which lost control in

a no-confidence vote in 1992. Most parties other than the PCT have aligned to form three major groupings. The first is the Presidential Tendency, which includes the UPADS and other minor parties. The second is the Union for Democratic Renewal, which includes the Congolese Movement for Democracy and the Rally for Democracy and Social Progress. The final group, the United Democratic Forces, consists of the Congolese Labor Party and several minor parties. This alliance won a strong majority in both the Senate and the National Assembly in the 2002 elections.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

In conformity with a 1995 law, the country was divided into 10 regions and one commune, which were then divided into 76 districts. In addition to these 76 districts, there are six urban councils.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The legal system is inherited from the French but has been modified by successive regimes. The court system consists of the Supreme Court, the Court of Appeals, the Criminal Court, *tribunaux de grande instance* (country courts), *tribunaux d'instance* (magistrates' courts), and labor courts. The Revolutionary Court of Justice, created in 1969, deals with cases involving state security. Its nine judges are appointed by the Central Committee of the PCT. Customary courts were abolished under the constitution of 1973.

The Supreme Court is in practice an arm of the government rather than an independent body.

Whereas the constitution guarantees protection against arbitrary indictment, arrest, and detention, in practice a warrant is not required to make arrests. There is a habeas corpus provision, but in cases involving the security of the state, arrested persons can be held without court hearings. Individuals detained for nonpolitical offenses are entitled to attorneys and are judged by generally impartial judiciaries. By law the right to a fair and public trial exists in all cases.

HUMAN RIGHTS

The government's human rights record has been poor, and there have continued to be numerous serious abuses. Citizens do not have the right to change their government peacefully. Security forces, which have included many undisciplined and poorly controlled former members of nongovernmental militias, have been responsible for extrajudicial killings, including summary executions, disappearances, rapes, beatings and the physical abuse of detainees and civilians, arbitrary arrest and detention, and arbitrary searches and the widespread looting of pri-

vate homes. Prison conditions remain life threatening. The judiciary has been overburdened, underfinanced, and subject to corruption and political influence, and as such has been unable to ensure fair and expeditious trials. The government has infringed on citizens' privacy rights. The government has continued to monopolize domestic broadcast media, although private newspapers circulate freely and are sometimes critical of the authorities.

The government has permitted opposition political parties and nongovernmental organizations, including human rights organizations, to function, and there has been relatively open dialog regarding public policy issues. The government has sent mixed signals regarding political participation by opposition figures, however. While many former cabinet ministers and other officials of the Lissouba government returned to Brazzaville and were permitted to resume political activities, the government also repeatedly stated that the most senior figures—including former President Lissouba and Prime Minister Kolelas—would be subject to trial for war crimes. Security forces have restricted freedom of movement within the country. Violence and societal discrimination against women are serious problems, and incidents of rape increased during the renewal of civil unrest. Some minority indigenous San peoples face severe exploitation and are “inherited” by Bantu patrons. Societal discrimination on the basis of ethnicity has remained widespread. Ethnic and regional tensions have continued to contribute to large-scale organized civil violence. Child labor, reportedly including forced labor, persists, and there have been reports of the forced conscription of children for the military. Citizens sometimes resort to vigilante justice, killing those presumed to be criminals.

FOREIGN POLICY

The Republic of the Congo withdrew from the French Community in 1973 but remained economically linked to France. Until the 1980s Brazzaville maintained close ties to Communist countries and adopted a generally leftist stance on foreign policy issues. The overthrow of the Lissouba government in 1997 reportedly involved a number of foreign powers and Hutu militiamen. The Kabila government in the Democratic Republic of the Congo supported Lissouba, while Angola supported the victorious Sassou-Nguesso. In 1998 the European Union declared that Congo had abandoned the rule of law and was in a state of anarchy. In 2004 an international watchdog group removed Congo from its list of legitimate diamond producers.

DEFENSE

The defense structure is headed by the president, who also exercises direct control over the Ministry of Defense. The line of command runs through the chief of staff to

the general staff on the pattern of the French military structure.

Manpower is provided by voluntary enlistment, although a compulsory military service system is provided for by law. Males between the ages of 15 and 49 are eligible for military service. On release from active duty, servicemen are placed in reserve for 15 years.

The total strength of the armed forces was 12,000 in 2003. The nation spent \$68.6 million, or about 2.8 percent of gross domestic product (GDP), on defense.

The combat-worthiness of the Congolese army is limited by the persistence of ethnic conflicts within units, poor logistics, and total dependence on foreign-supplied material, including combat boots and uniforms. Traditionally, the army has largely been recruited from the northern peoples, notably the Mbochi Kouyou, but many of the officers are southerners of the Kongo tribe. There is no defense production in the country.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 12,000
 Military Manpower Availability: 773,790
 Military Expenditures \$million: 68.6
 as % of GDP: 2.8
 as % of central government expenditures: —
 Arms Imports \$million: —
 Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

The economy is a mixture of village agriculture and handicrafts, an industrial sector based largely on oil, support services, and a government characterized by budget problems and overstaffing. Oil has supplanted forestry as the mainstay of the economy, providing a major share of government revenues and exports. In the early 1980s rapidly rising oil revenues enabled the government to finance large-scale development projects, with GDP growth averaging 5 percent annually, one of the highest rates in Africa. However, the government has mortgaged a substantial portion of its oil earnings, contributing to the government's shortage of revenues. The January 12, 1994, devaluation of the CFA franc by 50 percent resulted in inflation of 61 percent in 1994, but inflation has subsided since and in 2003 was just 2.4 percent. Economic reform efforts have continued with the support of international organizations, notably the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

The reform program came to a halt in June 1997 when civil war erupted. Denis Sassou-Nguesso, who returned to power when the war ended in October 1997, publicly expressed interest in moving forward on economic reforms and privatization and in renewing cooperation with international financial institutions. However, economic

progress was badly hurt by slumping oil prices in 1998 and the resumption of armed conflict in December 1998, both of which worsened Congo's budget deficit. Even with the IMF's renewed confidence and high world oil prices, Congo's real growth rate in 2003 was just 1.2 percent, and growth in the industrial sector was negligible. With the country's return to a fragile peace, the IMF approved a \$14 million credit in November 2000 to aid postconflict reconstruction, but the Sassou-Nguesso regime continues to struggle to improve the economy and reduce poverty.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 2.148
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 700
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 4.4
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: –0.1
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 6.9
 Industry: 53.9
 Services: 39.2
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 38
 Government Consumption: 15
 Gross Domestic Investment: 31.3
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 2.293
 Imports: 0.667
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: —
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: —

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
130.8	129.7	129.8	135.7	134.6

Finance

National Currency: CFA Franc (XAF)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = XAF 581.2
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 235
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 6.0
 Total External Debt \$billion: 5
 Debt Service Ratio %: 3.84
 Balance of Payments \$million: 139.2
 International Reserves SDRs \$million: 33.36
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
 2.4

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 69.8
 per capita \$: 18.60
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 200.7

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$billion: 1.025
 Expenditures \$billion: 0.9468
 Budget Deficit \$million: 78.2
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: 8.4

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 6.9
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 2.9
 Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares: 370
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 0.42
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 25
 Total Farmland % of land area: 0.6
 Livestock: Cattle 000: 122.5
 Chickens million: 2
 Pigs 000: 46.3
 Sheep 000: 97
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 2.45
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 43

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 226.9
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 0

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 12.3
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 525
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 148
 Net Energy Imports % of use: -1,330
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: 118
 Production kW-hr million: 358
 Consumption kW-hr million: 570
 Coal Reserves tons billion: —
 Production tons million: —
 Consumption tons million: —
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: 3.2
 Production cubic feet billion: 124
 Consumption cubic feet billion: —
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: 1.5
 Production barrels 000 per day: 247
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 6
 Pipelines Length km: 646

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 0.667
 Exports \$billion: 2.293
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): -1.2
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 14.2
 Balance of Trade \$million: 139.2

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
France %	22.2	—
United States %	6.8	16.0
Italy %	6.2	—
China %	5.1	28.6
Belgium %	4.6	—
India %	4.4	—
Taiwan %	—	19.3
South Korea %	—	12.9

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 12,800
 Paved %: 9.7
 Automobiles: 29,700
 Trucks and Buses: 23,100
 Railroad: Track Length km: 894
 Passenger-km million: 76
 Freight-km million: 307
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: —
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: —
 Airports: 32
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 27
 Length of Waterways km: 4,385

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 28
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 22.6
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 82

Communications

Telephones 000: 7
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones 000: 330
 Personal Computers 000: 15
 Internet Hosts per million people: 15
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 5

ENVIRONMENT

Some of the major environmental problems facing the Republic of the Congo today include chaotic urbanization, which has led to the accumulation of solid wastes, lack of sanitation facilities and adequate drinking water, pollution, and environmentally related sickness. In addition to the human health factors, deforestation, disappearance of fauna, and erosion of urban and coastal areas are of growing concern.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 64.6
 Forest Change (1990–2000) hectares 000: -17
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 14
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 0.53

LIVING CONDITIONS

In 2003 the United Nations Human Development Index, which encompasses such indicators as income, literacy, and life expectancy, ranked Congo 20th among the nations of Africa and 140th among the 175 of the world's nations ranked. By any standards, Congo is a poor country,

with per capita GDP of just \$700 in 2003. It is one of the most heavily urbanized countries in Africa, with the Brazzaville to Pointe-Noire megalopolis home to two-thirds of the population. In the cities, houses are typically made of cement block, but the Congolese take pride in their living spaces, and most homes have well-tended gardens. Cities are relatively clean, and most people have access to electricity and clean water. In the villages homes are typically constructed of mud brick with metal or thatched roofs, and power is supplied by a communal gas-powered generator. Life is especially difficult for the nation's Teke (Pygmies), who are generally paid lower wages, are not represented in government, and are often turned away from hospitals.

HEALTH

Life expectancy at birth was just 49.5 years in 2004, a figure that was actually down slightly from the year before. The infant mortality rate was almost 94 per 1,000 live births, a slight improvement over the figure of 98 in 2003. AIDS has been a serious problem; in 2003 the adult prevalence rate was 4.9 percent—an improvement over the 2001 rate of 7.2 percent—with 9,700 deaths from the disease. Only about half of the population has access to safe water, and about the same proportion is immunized against diphtheria, pertussis, and tetanus as well as measles. Just 9 percent of the population has access to improved sanitation facilities.

Health

Number of Physicians: 737
 Number of Dentists: —
 Number of Nurses: 5,434
 Number of Pharmacists: —
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 25
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 93.86
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 510
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 2.2
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 18
 HIV Infected % of adults: 4.9
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 50
 Measles: 50
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 9
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 46

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Although most Congolese engage in some form of subsistence farming, the quality of the soil is poor, and under 1 percent of the land is adequately arable. Over 90 percent of the country's meat is imported, and as such it is quite expensive. Staples in the diet include rice, bread, cassava,

peanuts, taro, pineapples, bananas, and manioc, which in some areas provides as much as 84 percent of the people's energy requirements. There are many food taboos, with the primary taboo against eating an animal that is a family's totem. Malnutrition has been a particular problem for thousands of displaced persons in camps near Brazzaville, with 11 percent of people severely malnourished.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 37.5
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,170
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 76.9
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 75.2

STATUS OF WOMEN

Under the constitution, women have the same rights as men in the private, political, and social domains, and for equal work women are entitled to the same social welfare rights as men. There is a disparity, however, between salaries for men and women, and women are relegated to a secondary role in society. Women have played an important role in the government, and most recently one occupied a high-level position as minister of basic education and literacy. In secondary schools increasing numbers of young women are enrolled in technical courses, and university attendance among women continues to rise. Women suffered heavily during Congo's recent civil war, with widespread incidence of rape; over 1,300 women were treated for rape at Brazzaville's hospital, but the true number of victims was undoubtedly much higher.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 9
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 0.99
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: —

WORK

Congolese overwhelmingly engage in subsistence farming; the size of the labor force is officially estimated at around 1.5 million. Agriculture contributed about 6.9 percent of GDP in 2003. Products include cassava (tapioca), sugar, rice, corn, peanuts, vegetables, coffee, cocoa, and forest products. Industry contributed about 53.9 percent of GDP and includes oil production, cement, lumber, brewing, sugar refining, diamond mining, and the production of palm oil, soap, flour, and cigarettes. Many Congolese make a living by selling goods and produce in

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informal street markets. The remainder of GDP is supplied by services, including the government bureaucracy.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 1,530,000
Female Participation Rate %: 43.2
Labor by Sector %:
Agriculture: —
Industry: —
Services: —
Unemployment %: —

EDUCATION

Education is free, compulsory, and universal in theory for children between ages six and 16. The academic year runs from October to June. The medium of instruction is French.

Schooling consists of 13 years, as divided into primary, intermediate, and secondary schooling. The primary program is divided into three levels of two years each: preparatory, elementary, and middle. Intermediate and secondary education consist of three types of programs: postprimary training courses in practical skills, a seven-year, or long, academic course, and a four-year, or short, general education course. The long course is divided into two cycles, the first cycle including grades six through three (grades being numbered in descending order) and the second cycle including grades two and one and the final, or *terminale*, class. The curriculum in the secondary grades is almost identical to that used in France, but those in primary grades are adapted to African and Congolese environments.

A national center for adult education was opened in 1965 with assistance from the UN's Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and Development Programme (UNDP). Under the "Roll Up Your Sleeves" campaign, instructors were required to teach illiterate people for two hours a day without pay in the countryside.

Vocational education is provided by 36 technical schools, including a technical lycée at Brazzaville.

All schools are under the Ministry of Education. Policy is formulated by the Higher Council of Education. There are 10 regional directorates, and at every level there are school commissions. An inspectorate is responsible for supervision and standardization.

Higher education is provided by the Université Nationale de Congo.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 83.8
Male %: 89.6
Female %: 78.4

School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 7.7
First Level: Primary schools: 1,612
Teachers: 7,818
Students: 509,507
Student-Teacher Ratio: 65.2
Net Enrollment Ratio: 54.0
Second Level: Secondary Schools: —
Teachers: 7,668
Students: 164,237
Student-Teacher Ratio: 25.7
Net Enrollment Ratio: —
Third Level: Institutions: —
Teachers: 685
Students: 13,456
Gross Enrollment Ratio: 4.1
Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 3.2

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Years of civil war have disrupted scientific and technological development in Congo. Nonetheless, the nation is home to a number of research agencies. The Panafrican Union for Science and Technology is headquartered in Brazzaville, as are AgriCongo and the Institut Nationale de la Recherche Agronomique, both agricultural research agencies. Additionally, Congo is home to the Institut de Recherche pour le Développement and the Centre de Recherche Forestiere du Littoral.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 34
Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
High-Tech Exports \$million: —
Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

The Congolese press consists of six dailies and 21 periodicals, of which the most widely circulated is *La semaine africaine*, a weekly out of Brazzaville that is privately owned by the Catholic Church, with 8,000 readers. Each of the five other dailies is privately owned.

The national news agency is Agence Congolaise d'Information, established in 1962. Foreign press correspondents are required to employ government information services exclusively as the sources of their reports. Foreign news bureaus in Brazzaville include Tass and AFP.

The government-owned Radiodiffusion Télévision Nationale Congolaise operates one medium-wave, four shortwave, and five FM transmitters and broadcasts in French, Lingala, and Kikongo under the call sign Voice of the Congolese Revolution. A second service, Radio Brazzaville, operated by the Office de Radiodiffusion Télévision Française, relays broadcasts from Paris. Radio Liberté is a privately owned radio station.

Television, introduced in 1962, is limited to Brazzaville and its environs. Programs are imported from France. Most are in French, but some are in Lingala and Kikongo.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 6
 Total Circulation 000: 20.6
 Circulation per 1,000: 6.4
 Books Published: —
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets 000: 35
 per 1,000: 13

CULTURE

A tradition of folk arts and crafts, including pottery, weaving, masks, and ironwork, has been disappearing, although the government and a Brazzaville museum are working to preserve the artifacts and traditions. A major form of cultural expression is singing, and there are songs associated with pounding manioc, rowing canoes, fishing, and other forms of labor. The *sanzi* is a wooden box that has metal teeth plucked by the thumbs to produce music. Congo has a rich tradition of oral storytelling, but in modern times the French influence has produced a number of novelists and playwrights, including Guy Menga, Marie Léontine Tsibinda, Soni Labou Tansi, Henri Lopes, and Jean Malonga.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 4
 Volumes: 103,000
 Registered borrowers: 27,670
 Museums Number: 10
 Annual Attendance: 113,000
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: 30
 Seating Capacity: 4,400
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Congo comprises a number of distinct ethnic groups, so it has no national folklore or mythology per se. One common feature, though, is the totem, taken by a clan or entire village. A totem is typically an animal and represents a group's unity through its spirit and behavior. Heroic stories are told about the totem/animal, which are passed down through the generations; the totem is responsible for the formation of the clan or community and is revered through rituals and taboos, such as the taboo against eating the totem animal. People who retain animist religious beliefs believe in the god Nzambi, who created the world

when he was ill; at the time the earth was covered by water, but Nzambi coughed up the moon, sun, and stars.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

The primary forms of entertainment in Congo are storytelling, singing, dancing, listening to music, fishing, and visiting friends and relatives. Movie theaters and nightclubs/discos can be found in some cities, as can the occasional theatrical production. Board games such as chess and checkers, as well as a game called *ngola*, which uses dried peas, are widely played. Spectator sports are popular, and people often gather around a television set powered by a generator, even deep in the jungle, to watch a favorite sporting event.

ETIQUETTE

The Congolese tend to be formal in their interpersonal relations. When people meet, even in business settings, it is customary to inquire about the person's well-being and that of his or her family and to indicate that the other's presence is an honor. Younger people are to avoid frankness or directness toward elders, instead showing respect, agreement, and acknowledgment that the elder stands at a higher position in the social hierarchy. The Congolese take pride in their personal appearance, and etiquette demands that clothing be pressed and clean.

FAMILY LIFE

Especially in rural areas, many marriages are arranged, and the groom must pay a dowry, or bride-price to the bride's family. The marriage can be annulled and the bride-price returned if, on the morning after the wedding night, there is no evidence that the bride was a virgin. The Western concept of the nuclear family is not the norm in much of the country. Many ethnic groups are matrilineal; the mother's oldest brother is considered head of the family, and he is often responsible for the education and welfare of his nephews and nieces. A family is likely to consist not only of parents and as many as six or more children but also of aunts and uncles, cousins, and grandparents, all of whom assume responsibility for one another's welfare in the absence of state safety nets. The elderly are rarely institutionalized but rather are cared for by the entire extended family.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

The Congolese take pride in their personal appearance, and even poor people take care to wear clothing that is

clean and pressed. In business and office settings, Western dress is common. Otherwise, a common sight are *bous-bous*, or colorful strips of cotton cloth that, on women, are often used as turbans or head wraps.

SPORTS

While volleyball, basketball, handball, and karate are popular, as in most African nations soccer is the most popular sport, both for players and spectators. In 1968, 1974, and 1994 Congo won the African championship, and in 1974 the nation made it to the World Cup playoffs.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1960** The Republic of the Congo becomes an independent republic under President Fulbert Youlou.
- 1961** Independent Congo's first constitution is approved in a popular referendum.
- 1963** Youlou resigns in the wake of mass demonstration and riots; Alphonse Massamba-Débat is named president.
New constitution is promulgated and approved by referendum.
Pascal Lissouba is appointed prime minister.
- 1964** Mouvement National de la Révolution (MNR) is organized as the sole political party in the Congo, with its youth wing, Jeunesse de Mouvement National de la Révolution (JMNR), as a paramilitary force.
- 1966** Attempted military coup is suppressed.
Congo joins UDEAC, a customs union with Chad, Gabon, Cameroon, and Central African Republic.
- 1968** Army seizes power following army-JMNR confrontation; Marien Ngouabi, the army commander in chief, replaces Massamba-Débat as president.
- 1969** Parti Congolais du Travail (PCT) replaces the MNR as the sole political party of the country; Republic of the Congo is renamed People's Republic of the Congo as the nation continues its leftward course.
- 1970** Ngouabi promulgates new constitution based on Soviet and East European models.
- 1971** Student riots erupt in Brazzaville.
In major government reshuffle, Ngouabi dismisses four members of the Political Bureau of the PCT and 50 members of the PCT's Central Committee.
- 1973** New constitution, independent Congo's fourth, is approved in nationwide referendum; elected National Assembly is revived.
Congo withdraws from French Community.
Henri Lopes is named prime minister.
- 1975** Political Bureau of the PCT is replaced by the Special Revolutionary General Staff.
Major Louis Sylvain Ngoma forms a new cabinet.
Congoese government nationalizes the oil industry.
- 1977** President Ngouabi is assassinated by a four-man commando squad.
Joachim Yhombi-Opango assumes the presidency as head of an 11-member military committee.
Constitution is suspended, and the National Assembly is dissolved.
Former president Massamba-Débat is executed for plotting assassination. Diplomatic relations are reestablished with the United States.
- 1979** President Yhombi-Opango steps down and is replaced by Denis Sassou-Nguesso. The constitution of 1973 is readopted and is overwhelmingly approved in a national referendum; the National Assembly is reestablished.
- 1984** President Sassou-Nguesso is reelected with expanded powers.
Former president Yhombi-Opango is released from prison.
- 1987** The government suppresses a coup by military officers. Yhombi-Opango is imprisoned for complicity with the rebels.
- 1988** Discovery of toxic waste dumping into the Congo leads to the dismissal of the minister of environments and scientific research and the minister of information. Amnesty is extended to most political prisoners.
- 1989** Sassou-Nguesso is reelected to a third term.
- 1990** The Congoese Workers' Party officially drops its Marxist ideology.
- 1991** Congo officially becomes a multiparty state.
- 1992** In free presidential elections, Pascal Lissouba defeats Gen. Sassou-Nguesso.
- 1993** CFA franc is devalued by 50 percent, spurring 61 percent inflation in Congo; bloody fighting erupts between Lissouba government forces and supporters of Sassou-Nguesso over disputed parliamentary elections.
- 1994** A cease-fire is established between government and opposition forces.
- 1997** Following outbreak of a civil war, Gen. Sassou-Nguesso proclaims himself president, with the support of the military; Lissouba goes into hiding in Burkina Faso.
- 1998** Warfare resumes in December.
- 1999** Sassou-Nguesso and Lissouba sign a peace treaty providing for integrated military forces and demilitarized political parties.
- 2001** Transitional parliament adopts a draft constitution. Some 15,000 militia are disarmed in a cash-for-arms deal.

Former President Pascal Lissouba is convicted in absentia on treason and corruption charges and sentenced to 30 years hard labor by the high court in Brazzaville.

- 2002** Some 80 percent of voters in constitutional referendum approve amendments to consolidate presidential powers.
Sassou-Nguesso wins presidential elections unopposed.
Intense fighting between government and “Ninja” rebels loyal to former prime minister Bernard Kolelas drives thousands of civilians from their homes in the Pool region; government troops battle Ninja rebels in Brazzaville.
- 2003** Government signs peace agreements with Ninja rebels.
- 2004** World diamond trade monitoring groups removes Congo from list of countries that deal legitimately in diamonds.

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Republic of the Congo. *Annuaire statistique; Recensement général de la population et de l'habitat de 1984*

CONTACT INFORMATION

Embassy of the Republic of the Congo
4891 Colorado Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20011
Phone: (202) 726-5500 Fax: (202) 726-1860

INTERNET RESOURCES

- République du Congo
<http://www.congo-site.cg/>

COSTA RICA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Costa Rica (República de Costa Rica)

ABBREVIATION

CR

CAPITAL

San José

HEAD OF STATE & HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

President Abel Pacheco de la Espriella (from 2002)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Constitutional democracy

POPULATION

4,016,173 (2005)

AREA

51,100 sq km (19,730 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Caucasians, mestizos

LANGUAGES

Spanish (official), English

RELIGION

Roman Catholicism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Colon

NATIONAL FLAG

Five horizontal stripes: two blue stripes at the top and bottom, two white inner stripes, and a wide red center band with the country's coat of arms

NATIONAL EMBLEM

Three towering volcanic peaks between two seas, the Caribbean Sea in the foreground and the Pacific Ocean in the background. The other elements of the national emblem are two white-sailed black schooners, a representation in yellow of the Meseta Central, an orange sun, five white stars, a white scroll bearing the legend *República de Costa Rica* decorated with myrtle branches, a deep blue ribbon tied like a corona bearing in white letters the legend *América Central*, red and gold ears of corn at the sides, and a conquistador's cross at the base.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"Noble Native Land, Your Beautiful Flag"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day), April 11 (Anniversary of the Battle of Rivas), May 1 (Labor Day), July 25 (Anniversary of the Annexation of Guanacaste Province), September 15 (Independence Day), October 12 (Columbus Day), various Christian festivals, including Christmas and the Day of St. Joseph, Costa Rica's patron saint

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

September 15, 1821

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

November 7, 1949

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Costa Rica is in the Central American isthmus. It occupies an area of 51,100 sq km (19,730 sq mi). It has two coastlines; that on the Caribbean stretches 212 km (132 mi), that on the Pacific 1,016 km (631 mi). Costa Rica shares its international land boundary of 639 km (397 mi) with two countries: Panama (363 km; 226 mi) and Nicaragua (309 km; 192 mi).

Costa Rica has three main topographical regions. The largest is the Central Highlands, which reach elevations of more than 3,657 m (12,000 ft). Nestled in the Central Highlands is the Meseta Central, which consists of two upland basins separated by low volcanic hills. The eastern basin is known as Cartago, the western basin San José. The only other upland valley of importance is the General Valley, which lies to the south of the Cordillera de Talamanca, extending to the Panamanian border. The

Costa Rica



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cordillera has 10 peaks over 2,987 m (9,800 ft), the highest of them being Chirripó Grande (3,810 m; 12,500 ft), the highest point in the country. The Pacific coastal region consists of the Palmar lowland complex, the Guanacaste Plain, the Cordillera de Guanacaste, the valley of the Tempisque River, and the three peninsulas of Burica, Osa, and Nicoya. The Atlantic coastal plain is low, swampy, and heavily forested.

The country is drained by 18 small rivers, of which the Tempisque River is navigable for 35 km (22 mi), while the San Juan is navigable from its mouth to Lake Nicara-

gua. The other major rivers are the General, Sixaola, San José, and Grande de Tarcoles.

Geography

Area sq km: 51,100; sq mi 19,730

World Rank: 125th

Land Boundaries, km: Nicaragua 309; Panama 330

Coastline, km: 1,290

Elevation Extremes meters:

Lowest: Pacific Ocean 0

Highest: Cerro Chirripó 3,810

(continues)

Geography *(continued)*

Land Use %

Arable land:	4.41
Permanent Crops:	5.88
Forest:	38.5
Other:	51.217

Population of Principal Cities (2004)

Limón	61,200
San José	336,829

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Costa Rica has two seasons: a wet season from May through November and a dry season from December to April. The country has three climatic zones: a torrid zone, which includes the two coastal plains up to about 450 m (1,500 ft), with a temperature range of 29.4°C to 32.2°C (85°F to 95°F); a temperate zone, which includes the Meseta Central and other regions between 450 m and 1,500 m (1,500 ft and 5,000 ft), with a temperature range of 23.9° to 26.7° (75°F to 80°F); and a cold zone, comprising areas over 1,524 m (5,000 ft), with a temperature range of 5°C to 15°C (41°F to 59°F). On the Pacific coast most of the rain falls between May and October, but on the Caribbean coast the rainfall is less seasonal. The average rainfall is 2,540 mm (100 in).

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature

Torrid Zone:	85°F to 90°F
Temperate Zone:	75°F to 80°F
Cold Zone:	41°F to 59°F

Average Rainfall: 100 in

Pacific Area:	28 to 50 in
Central Highlands:	70 in
Caribbean Coast:	196 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Costa Rica has a huge diversity of plant and animal species, including species from both North and South America; along with Panama, it serves as the intersection between the two continents. There are over 10,000 species of plants in Costa Rica, including 1,000 kinds of orchids. There are mangroves, tropical rain forests, and evergreens on the mountain slopes, cloud forests on the hills, and barren moors at high elevations. In the northwest there are deciduous forests and savannas. There are a number of epiphytes, or plants that obtain nutrients and moisture from the air. Many plant species are endangered; these include some species of insect-eating plants, orchids, ferns, palms, and cacti.

Costa Rica also has over 1,000 species of animals, not including the profusion of insects. South American species include howler monkeys, squirrel monkeys, capuchin monkeys, spider monkeys, anteaters, armadillos, sloths, jaguars, pumas, ocelots, and tapirs. There are over 800 species of birds, including the spectacular quetzals and toucans. Sea turtles visit Costa Rica's beaches to lay their eggs. Snakes, crocodiles, alligators, caimans, various lizards, and many kinds of frogs live on land. Over 200 of these animal species are endangered.

Costa Rica divides the Atlantic Ocean from the Caribbean Sea. It is home to two completely different marine ecosystems: those of the cold Pacific and the warm Caribbean. Marine animals of all types can be found on both sides.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005:	4,016,173
World Rank:	121st
Density per sq km:	78.4
% of annual growth (1999-2003):	1.8
Male %:	50.5
Female %:	49.5
Urban %:	60.6
Age Distribution %:	
0-14:	29.5
15-64:	65.0
65 and over:	5.5

Population 2025: 5,074,000

Birth Rate per 1,000: 18.99

Death Rate per 1,000: 4.32

Rate of Natural Increase %: 1.6

Total Fertility Rate: 2.33

Expectation of Life (years): Males 74.07

Females 79.33

Marriage Rate per 1,000: 6.1

Divorce Rate per 1,000: 2.2

Average Size of Households: 4.1

Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Some 94 percent of the population is white or mestizo, 3 percent is black, 1 percent is Amerindian, and 1 percent is Chinese. The European population is descended from the early Spanish settlers. Costa Rica has been called the most homogeneous nation in Central America. The mestizo population is technically the second-largest ethnic group, but the line between mestizo and white is largely undefined.

The primary minority group in Costa Rica thus consists of blacks who are the descendants of slaves. They are concentrated on the Atlantic coast, around Puerto Limón. They retain their attachment to Caribbean culture and seem more British West Indian than Central American.

There are three main Amerindian groups in the country, but none with more than 5,000 members. The government has pursued a policy of integration of the tribes, although efforts have been made to maintain elements of their cultures.

LANGUAGES

Spanish is the national tongue and is spoken by the vast majority of people. English is the second-most-common language and is widely spoken among the black population on the Atlantic Coast, although they speak a version of the Jamaican dialect.

RELIGIONS

Roman Catholicism is the state religion, but the constitution guarantees religious freedom. Some 76 percent of the people are Catholic, and Catholic festivals dominate the calendar. The government provides 1 percent of its budget to support the Catholic Church through the Ministry of Foreign Relations and Worship. There are approximately 40,000 Protestants in the country, mostly blacks on the Caribbean coast. Other religious minorities include Chinese Buddhists, Jehovah's Witnesses, Quakers, Mennonites, and Jews.

Religious Affiliations

Roman Catholic	3,052,000
Evangelical	522,000
Jehovah's Witness	52,000
Other	390,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Human habitation in Costa Rica can be traced back at least 10,000 years. Between 1000 and 1400 C.E., a civilization emerged near Guayabo that developed pottery techniques that were among the most advanced in Central America. However, when Christopher Columbus landed in 1502, the Spanish found the region sparsely populated.

Following an unsuccessful attempt to colonize the region in 1506, an expedition was dispatched from Panama in 1522. The second effort proved more successful after the discovery of gold, and the leader of this effort, Gil González Dávila, dubbed the land Costa Rica or "rich coast." By the 1560s disease had decimated most of the native population, and in 1562 Juan Vásquez de Coronado was appointed governor; he laid the foundation for the eventual complete settlement of Costa Rica. For most of the colonial period the nation was left in obscurity, al-

though Spain forced the closure of its ports in 1665 in response to piracy.

Costa Rica won its independence from Spain in 1821. Four months later it was absorbed into the short-lived Mexican empire of Agustín Iturbide. After the fall of Iturbide, Costa Rica became a member of the United Provinces of Central America in 1823. It declared itself a sovereign republic in 1848, and its independence was formally recognized by Spain in 1850.

Costa Rica has had a long history of stable democratic government, with only two periods of unrest. The first occurred in 1917 when Federico Tinoco seized the presidency. He was forced to relinquish the office in 1919. In 1948 civil war erupted over the results of the presidential election. The antigovernment forces of the Social Democratic Party (later the National Liberation Party) proved successful, and a provisional government headed by José Figueres Ferrer was formed. Figueres abolished the army in 1948. Under his leadership a new constitution was prepared and democratic elections held.

In 1955 antigovernment forces from Cuba, Nicaragua, Venezuela, Dominican Republic, and Colombia invaded the nation, but with aid from the Organization of American States the invaders were defeated. In 1963 Costa Rica joined the Central American Common Market.

During the Sandinista Revolution in Nicaragua, Costa Rica extended substantial support to the rebels. However, after the overthrow of the Somoza regime, anti-Sandinista contras established bases in Costa Rica. The continued presence of the contras increased tensions between the two nations for the remainder of the decade. Costa Rica turned to international bodies to end the Nicaraguan conflict, and in 1987 President Oscar Arias Sánchez won the Nobel Peace prize for his efforts to bring about peace.

Meanwhile, foreign debt constrained the nation's economy. By 1982 Costa Rica's foreign reserves were exhausted, and debt repayment was halted. This led to debt rescheduling the following year. Efforts at structural readjustment led to a massive strike against the government in 1989. The nation's problems were exacerbated in 1990 when an earthquake left 14,000 homeless. In 1991 Costa Rica, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua agreed to integrate their economies over a six-year period. Economic reforms continued with the election in 1998 of the conservative candidate Miguel Ángel Rodríguez. In 2000 Rodríguez and the president of Nicaragua resolved an ongoing dispute over their shared border, the San Juan River.

In 2002 a candidate running for president with the Citizen Action Party (PAC) earned a substantial percentage of the vote, necessitating a runoff election in April; before this every election had been a two-way contest between

the conservative Social Christian Unity Party (PUSC) and the liberal National Liberation Party (PLN). The PUSC candidate, Abel Pacheco, won 58 percent of the vote in the runoff and became president. He had promised to privatize the country's utilities and make other economic reforms, but when he attempted to implement his plans in May 2003, workers and teachers went on strike in protest. At the end of 2004 the national government was coming under scrutiny as three former presidents—Rodríguez, Calderón, and Figueres—were accused of corruption and illegal payments to contractors.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1948–49	José Figueres Ferrer
1949–53	Luis Rafael Otilio Ulate Blanco
1953–58	José Figueres Ferrer
1958–62	Mario Echandi Jiménez
1962–66	Francisco Orlich Bolmarcich
1966–70	José Joaquín Trejos Fernández
1970–74	José Figueres Ferrer
1974–78	Daniel Oduber Quirós
1978–82	Rodrigo Alberto Carazo Odio
1982–86	Luis Alberto Monge Álvarez
1986–90	Óscar Arias Sánchez
1990–94	Rafael Ángel Calderón Fournier
1994–98	José María Figueres Olsen
1998–2002	Miguel Ángel Rodríguez Echeverría
2002–	Abel Pacheco de la Espriella

CONSTITUTION

The constitution of 1949 made Costa Rica a democratic and unitary republic. The government is divided into three branches: executive, legislative, and judicial. An elaborate system of checks and balances assigned by the constitution somewhat limits the power of the presidency, especially by Latin American standards. The legislature can override presidential vetoes, and the Supreme Court has the right of judicial review over legislative and administrative acts. All members of the executive branch are barred from participating in election campaigns.

The executive consists of the president, two vice presidents, and the Consejo de Gobierno (Council of Government), a cabinet of 15 members. The election process is under the control of the Tribunal Supremo Electoral (TSE, Supreme Electoral Tribunal), an autonomous institution. Elections are held every four years on the first Sunday in February. The president and the two vice presidents must receive at least 40 percent of the vote, or a runoff election is held. Deputies to the National Assembly and municipal councils are elected by a system of proportional representation. In April 2003 the Constitutional Court annulled a 1969 amendment bar-

ring presidents from running for reelection; policy reverted to the original 1949 constitution, which states that presidents may run for reelection after they have been out of office for two terms.

PARLIAMENT

The National Assembly is a unicameral body; members are elected by direct popular vote for four-year terms. Deputies may not be reelected for successive terms. The National Assembly's 57 members are elected according to a system of proportional representation.

The assembly meets in a regular session twice per year, and special sessions may be convened by the president. The legislature wields substantive power, including the right to override a presidential veto by a two-thirds majority. Its functions include the enacting of laws, declaration of war, approval of the national budget, and impeachment of the president.

Suffrage is universal for all citizens over the age of 20 and for all married men and teachers over the age of 18. Voting is compulsory for all qualified citizens under 70.

POLITICAL PARTIES

The ruling political party is the Social Christian Unity Party (PUSC), a loose alliance of conservative parties, including the Calderónist Republican, Christian Democratic, and Popular Union parties as well as the former Democratic Renovation Party. The principal opposition party is the National Liberation Party (PLN), founded by former president José Figueres Ferrer in the aftermath of the 1948 revolution. The PLN is the largest and best organized of Costa Rican parties and represents the best of the Latin American left. It is affiliated with the Socialist International. Costa Rica essentially had a two-party system until the elections of February 2002, when the Citizen Action Party (PAC) won a large percentage of votes, which meant that no candidate won at least 40 percent of the vote, forcing a runoff that April. The PUSC presidential candidate, Abel Pacheco, won the runoff. The PUSC gained a 19-seat plurality in the legislature, which was not enough to give it a decisive majority, and legislation is consequently slow.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The principal units of local government are seven provinces. The provinces are divided into 81 counties (*cantones*), which are in turn subdivided into 344 districts (*distritos*). The provinces have no self-government, and governors are appointed by the president. Local authority in each canton is vested in the municipal council. The executive

officer of the council, the jefe politico, is appointed by the president and has veto power over any ordinance passed by the council. In 2002 Costa Rica introduced the office of mayor, and mayors are now directly elected.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The legal system is headed by the Supreme Court of Justice, composed of 22 magistrates elected by the National Assembly for renewable eight-year terms. The high court has five chambers and appoints all lower-court justices. Subordinate courts are organized at three levels: provincial, cantonal, and district. Directly below the Supreme Court are two civil courts of appeal and two criminal courts of appeal. There is an original criminal court in all seven of the provinces, and there are 61 municipal courts. The lowest courts are the police courts, which are presided over by magistrates. In 1989 Costa Rica established a Constitutional Chamber of the Supreme Court, which reviews the constitutionality of executive decrees, legislation, and habeas corpus warrants.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Costa Rica is one of the most democratic nations in Central and South America and has a history of tolerance and individual liberty. Habeas corpus is a constitutional right, and arraignment is required within 24 hours of arrest. Freedom of the press, speech, religion, and assembly have not been curtailed or abridged in recent history. The labor movement is weak, but it is free to strike, organize, and bargain collectively. Not only are domestic and foreign travel and emigration unhindered but Costa Rica also provides asylum for many political refugees.

Costa Rica has had a few instances of human rights abuses. Police and prison guards have abused prisoners, and prisons are overcrowded. The criminal trial system progresses very slowly. Domestic violence against women and child abuse have occurred frequently. Child prostitution is still a problem, though it has been declining. Human trafficking has occurred.

FOREIGN POLICY

Costa Rica has taken an active role in promoting regional peace and stability. The government has worked to increase trade between Central American states and to attract foreign investment. It has also sought to develop a regional trade organization to stabilize coffee products and to expand the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) to Central America. Costa Rica is a member of 14 UN organizations and 29 other international organizations. Instability in Nicaragua has led to

heavy immigration from that nation through the 1980s and 1990s, and the Costa Rican government has sought to both limit refugee flows and to gain international aid to deal with the resultant social problems.

In 1993 Costa Rica declared itself a neutral nation. It has participated actively in international politics, campaigning for human rights and dispute settlements. The nation has participated in peace negotiations in Nicaragua and El Salvador and has supported regional arms limitation agreements. It has worked to develop the economies in other Central American nations, particularly Panama, and has tried to make economic ties with its neighbors. Costa Rica broke relations with Cuba in 1961, and though it has not renewed formal diplomatic ties, it does maintain a consular office in Havana.

Costa Rica has a close relationship with the United States, its most important trading partner. The United States has worked to preserve Costa Rica's environmental resources and has furnished the nation with over \$1 billion in development assistance funds. Costa Rica and the United States signed the Maritime Counter-Drug Agreement in 1999 in an effort to stop drug trafficking and illegal fishing in Costa Rican waters.

DEFENSE

The constitution outlaws a national army; Costa Rica has no military. National security functions are provided by the police and the Civil Guard. In 1996 the guard was eliminated as a separate entity and now operates on an equal basis with the rural guard and border patrol. The Civil Guard has a strength of 10,000; service in the guard is voluntary. The president is the commander in chief of the guard, but control of the force is directed through the minister of public safety. A civilian director is in charge of the force's day-to-day operations, while the budget is under the control of the minister of government. Most of the Civil Guard's weapons and equipment have been furnished by the United States. Additionally, Costa Rica established a Coast Guard in 2000.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	10,000
Military Manpower Availability:	1,101,877
Military Expenditures \$million:	64
as % of GDP:	0.4
as % of central government expenditures:	—
Arms Imports \$million:	—
Arms Exports \$million:	—

ECONOMY

Costa Rica has a free-market economy dominated by the private sector. The economy is based on agriculture and

manufacturing. The nation's major trade partners include the United States, Germany, and Italy. About one-fourth of the working population is engaged in farming or agriculture. The principal crops are bananas and coffee. Other important crops include sugarcane, rice, and corn. Manufacturing employs some 20 percent of the workforce, mainly in textiles, fertilizers, and construction materials. Fishing is increasingly important along both coasts. The economy grew at a rate of 5.6 percent in 2003.

Foreign investors like Costa Rica because it is politically stable and has a highly educated populace. Costa Rica is contemplating joining the U.S.–Central American Free Trade Agreement, which would make foreign investment easier. The Intel microchip plant that opened in 1998 has brought in sizable income, and other U.S. companies have been welcomed into the country. Trade with the United States totaled over \$6 billion in 2003.

Though tourism and electronics continue to bring in foreign currency, the agricultural sector has been suffering. The country has a large deficit and internal debt, and inflation is rising; it reached 9.4 percent in 2004. Controlling the budget deficit is the country's biggest problem. In 2003, 18.9 percent of the budget came from public borrowing, making it difficult for the government to invest in infrastructure, which badly needs maintenance.

The government has made protecting the environment a top priority. President Pacheco decided not to drill for oil in the Atlantic for environmental reasons. Hydroelectric power generates much of the nation's electricity.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 35.34
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 9,100
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 3.9
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 2.1
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:

Agriculture: 8.5
 Industry: 29.4
 Services: 62.1

Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:

Private Consumption: 67
 Government Consumption: 15
 Gross Domestic Investment: 20.2

Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 6.176
 Imports: 7.057

% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 1.1

% of Income Received by Richest 10%: 36.8

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
163.5	181.5	201.9	220.4	241.2

Finance

National Currency: Costa Rican Colon (CRC)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = CRC 398.663
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 970

Central Bank Discount Rate %: 26.0
 Total External Debt \$billion: 5.366
 Debt Service Ratio %: 8.94
 Balance of Payments \$million: –970
 International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 1.8
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 9.4

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 5.27
 per capita \$: 1
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 661.9

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$billion: 2.313
 Expenditures \$billion: 2.851
 Budget Deficit \$million: 538
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: 20.1

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 8.5
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 1.6
 Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares: 30
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 20.6
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 569
 Total Farmland % of land area: 4.4
 Livestock: Cattle 000: 1,080
 Sheep 000: 2.7
 Hogs 000: 500
 Chickens 000: 18,500
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 5.14
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 50.8

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 3.39
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 8.0

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 1.35
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 3.09
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 796
 Net Energy Imports % of use: 50.2
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 1.7
 Production kW-hr billion: 6.84
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 6.11
 Coal Reserves tons billion: —
 Production tons million: —
 Consumption tons million: —
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic meters billion: —
 Production cubic meters million: —
 Consumption cubic meters million: —

Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
 Production barrels 000 per day: —
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 37
 Pipelines Length km: 242

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 7.057
 Exports \$billion: 6.176
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 5.1
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 1.8
 Balance of Trade \$million: –970

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
United States %	23.2	14.2
Mexico %	4.7	—
Venezuela %	3.2	—
Guatemala %	—	3.0
Nicaragua %	—	2.7

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 35,892
 Paved %: 22.0
 Automobiles: 367,800
 Trucks and Buses: 191,300
 Railroad: Track Length km: 950
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: —
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 1
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 1.7
 Airports: 149
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 1.78
 Length of Waterways km: 730

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 1.113
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$billion: 1.078
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 367

Communications

Telephones million: 1.132
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.03
 Cellular Telephones 000: 528
 Personal Computers 000: 910
 Internet Hosts per million people: 2,700
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 199

ENVIRONMENT

Partially in response to the economic potential of eco-tourism and partially as a result of the nation's relative

economic prosperity, Costa Rica has undertaken wide-scale efforts to preserve its environment. The country has protected about 23 percent of its land in national parks and refuges, more than any other country. There are 30 national parks and wildlife refuges, which range from small islands off the coast to the huge and essentially pristine La Amistad International Park on the border with Panama. The entire country was once covered with trees, and now forest covers only one-fourth of the land, but the government has taken steps to protect the remaining resources because they are so valuable to the tourism industry. Costa Rica is the only nation in Latin America in which the rate of reforestation exceeds the rate of the loss of rain forests.

Many of Costa Rica's plants and animals are endangered; some are close to extinction. Endangered species include monkeys, anteaters, manatees, tapirs, harpy eagles, macaws, several cats and turtles, golden toads, and the boa constrictor.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 38.5
 Average Annual Forest Change, 1990-2000, 000 ha: –16
 Nationally Protected Areas as % of Total Land Area: 23
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 32,914
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 1.4

LIVING CONDITIONS

Costa Rica has some of the best living conditions in Central America. San José is a major city with over one million inhabitants. There are elegant residential areas, shopping malls, supermarkets, nightclubs, and restaurants. The climate is very pleasant—not too hot and never cold. The National Theater and other venues present live events year-round.

HEALTH

Costa Rica is for the most part a healthy place; life expectancy is over 76 years, and the infant mortality rate is about 10 deaths per 1,000 live births. Hospitals and hygienic standards are some of the best in Central America. There is public health coverage for over 90 percent of the population. Tropical diseases such as typhoid, cholera, hepatitis, dengue fever and malaria do remain a problem.

Health

Number of Physicians: 6,600
 Number of Dentists: 1,594
 Number of Nurses: 9,425
 Number of Pharmacists: 1,289

(continues)

Health *(continued)*

Physician Density per 100,000 people: 172
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 10.26
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 43
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 7.2
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 293
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.6
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 94
 Measles: 94
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 92
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 97

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Rice and black beans are the mainstays of the Costa Rican diet. The people eat these staples fried, in soup, or with meat, noodles, plantains, and salad and such a combination can appear at any meal of the day. People also eat tamales, *chicharrones* (deep-fried pork rinds), empanadas (turnovers stuffed with meat), chicken, and a Carib stew of meat and vegetables cooked in coconut milk. The local cuisine is not especially spicy. Most savory foods are served with a sauce called *salsa lizano*. Costa Rica has a great variety of fresh fruit, including papayas, bananas, and pineapples as well as a variety of more exotic fruits. People eat these fruits fresh or drink their juice mixed with sugar and water. Coffee and fresh coconut milk are popular drinks. Alcoholic beverages include *guaro*, a local grain alcohol, and Imperial beer.

When people go out to eat, they either go to *sodas*, small inexpensive diners that serve home-style cooking, or more formal *restaurantes*.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 4.2
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,780
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 109.1
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 236.2

STATUS OF WOMEN

Women make up one-half of the population in Costa Rica, outnumbering men in some urban areas. Approximately one-quarter of the workforce is female, and that number has been growing since the 1960s. Although Costa Rica is a conservative, Catholic nation, the government supports birth control, and some 69 percent of women use contraception. There is universal suffrage and women participate in politics; as of 2005, 35 percent of the legislature was female. Women still earn less than men, and domestic violence continues to be a problem. Women are slightly better educated than men.

The Bill for Women's True Equality, passed in 1990, created reforms with respect to social and economic rights, sexist content in educational materials, inheritance laws, protection of women during sexual assault trials, and reforms of existing laws. Women now receive legal protection from domestic violence. Mothers receive free hospitalization for childbirth, and employers are required to give maternity leave.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 35
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.01
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 39.5

WORK

Costa Rica has an unemployment rate of 6.7 percent. Per capita gross domestic product (GDP) in 2004 was \$9,100. Poverty has declined in the last 15 years, and a strong social safety net prevents most people from falling into destitution. A total of 58 percent of employees work in services, 20 percent in agriculture, and 22 percent in industry. Tourism is the most important service industry, while electronics is the most important facet of manufacturing.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 1,758,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 31.9
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 20
 Industry: 22
 Services: 58
 Unemployment %: 6.7

EDUCATION

In Costa Rica education is free, universal, and compulsory for nine years, from ages six to 15. The language of instruction is Spanish. San José has excellent English, French, and German private schools. Schooling lasts for 11 years, as divided into six years of primary school, three years of lower-secondary education, and two years in the higher-secondary system. Vocational training is provided in three-year industrial schools. The school year runs from March through November. Some 96 percent of the population is literate.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 96.0
 Male %: 95.9
 Female %: 96.1

School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 10.8
 First Level: Primary schools: 3,544
 Teachers: 24,142
 Students: 545,509
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 22.6
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 90.4
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 285
 Teachers: 15,410
 Students: 235,156
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 18.8
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 49.9
 Third Level: Institutions: 29
 Teachers: 3,874
 Students: 77,283
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 19.9
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 5.1

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Costa Rica has a great deal of modern technology. Its cellular-telephone network is compatible with many other countries' networks, and Internet use is widespread. The country has a substantial computer hardware and software industry. In 1998 Intel opened a microchip-processing plant in Belén, which was the largest foreign investment in Costa Rica's history. The plant brings in sizable income.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million persons: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 0.2
 High-Tech Exports \$billion: 1.146
 Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

The press is totally free of official control or manipulation and often criticizes the government openly and vigorously, although libel laws somewhat constrain media freedom. Costa Rica has no official news agency. The largest daily newspapers—*La nación*, *La prensa libre*, and *La república*—are published in Spanish. *La nación* and *La república* espouse the respective viewpoints of the two main political parties. The *Tico Times* is an English-language weekly that reports on current events, cultural activities, and restaurants. There are over 35 radio stations, all of which are privately owned: most are commercial, while a few are owned by religious or cultural organizations. There are also at least 18 television stations. There are several independent book publishers.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 8
 Total Circulation 000: —

Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: —
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers million: 3.28
 per 1,000: 816
 Television sets 000: 900
 per 1,000: 229

CULTURE

The Native Americans who lived in Costa Rica before the arrival of Europeans were skilled artisans who worked in metal and stone. Pre-Colombian artifacts include statues made of stone, jade, and gold. Amerindians also constructed the mysterious perfectly round Diquis stones that were arranged in geometric patterns pointing to magnetic north. After years of ignoring their ancient culture, modern Costa Ricans have taken a renewed interest in their nation's prehistory.

Costa Rica's 19th-century literature was typified by a movement called *costumbrismo*, which took stories from folk traditions and colloquial expressions. The author Joaquín García Monge told stories of working people in his books *El moto* and *Las hijas del campo*. Writers of the 20th century focused their energies on criticizing the government and society.

Modern popular culture embraces all things North American. Teenagers especially like to watch American television shows dubbed in Spanish, and American pop music is played widely on the radio. At nightclubs people like to dance to traditional salsa and merengue music.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 60
 Volumes: 448,519
 Registered borrowers: 501,034
 Museums Number: 32
 Annual Attendance: 948,000
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

The Amerindians who lived in Costa Rica before the arrival of Europeans all had their own mythologies. Visitors today can see artifacts and learn myths at museums. Costa Rica's folk traditions come from other Central American nations, such as Nicaragua, Panama, Guatemala, and Mexico. Folklore has become popular in recent years, as the tourism industry tries to attract visitors with traditional culture, such as dance performances in traditional costumes done to marimba music.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Costa Rica has encouraged tourism by developing many outdoor activities. There are recreational activities for every taste, including scuba diving, snorkeling, kayaking, mountain biking, white-water rafting, and golf. Many tourists come to Costa Rica specifically for the sportfishing; possible catches include tuna, snapper, wahoo, Atlantic sailfish, marlin, barracuda, and grouper. Surfing is good on both coasts of the country. Costa Rica also offers a full array of less athletic recreational opportunities; it has good restaurants, nightclubs, discos, and shopping facilities.

ETIQUETTE

Courtesy and expressions of gratitude are very important; guests are supposed to thank their hosts profusely. At meals people wait until everyone is served before beginning to eat. Costa Ricans are very careful about using appropriate forms of the second-person pronoun when speaking Spanish; they use *usted* with strangers and older people to show respect and *vos* with friends and in casual settings. Young people always address older people with the titles *don* or *doña*, for men and women, respectively, before the person's name.

Costa Ricans are a friendly and affectionate people. People greet one another with a kiss on the cheek and sometimes a hug. Physical displays of affection are common, whether between family members or among couples out in public. Very close dancing is perfectly acceptable, although premarital sex is not. Homosexuality, on the other hand, is generally taboo, although it is gradually becoming more accepted. Men usually act chivalrously toward women, opening doors and carrying bags for them.

FAMILY LIFE

Costa Ricans value family highly. Children live with their parents until they marry. Extended families are often close to one another. Many middle-class families employ a maid who lives in the house and helps with chores.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Looking presentable is very important to Costa Ricans. Women try to dress elegantly, especially in the city, where they wear long pants or dresses. Men usually wear long pants with nice casual shirts. Jeans are popular. People occasionally wear shorts but prefer to save such casual attire for the beach. People dress very stylishly when they go out at night, but fashions are not flashy.

SPORTS

Costa Rica has some professional athletes. There is a national soccer team (ranked 27 by the international soccer organization FIFA in 2005). The nation won two bronze medals at the 2000 Sydney Olympics. One of the country's main attractions to tourists is the wide variety of adventure and water sports.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1948** The bloodiest civil war in Costa Rican history erupts when elections are annulled; the Costa Rican army is disbanded and outlawed; a new National Assembly promulgates new constitution.
- 1955** Antigovernment forces invade Costa Rica with support from Cuba, Nicaragua, Venezuela, Dominican Republic, and Colombia; Figueres appeals for aid from Organization of American States; the invading forces are dispersed.
- 1963** Costa Rica joins the Central American Common Market.
- 1979** Costa Rica extends substantial support to the Sandinista revolution in Nicaragua.
- 1982** Debt repayment is halted as foreign reserves are exhausted.
- 1983** The presence of Nicaragua contras on Costa Rican territory increases tension between the two neighbors; external debt is rescheduled with the IMF.
- 1984** Costa Rica seeks hike in military aid. Costa Rica calls on Contadora nations to supervise the Costa Rican–Nicaraguan border.
- 1985** United Brands sells its banana plantations in the country.
- 1987** Arias wins Nobel Peace Prize for efforts to end Nicaraguan Civil War.
- 1989** Trade unions and civic groups strike in protest against the government's policies on structural adjustment.
- 1990** An earthquake leaves 14,000 homeless.
- 1991** The presidents of Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica agree to integrate their countries' economies over a six-year period.
- 1998** Conservative Miguel Ángel Rodríguez is elected president.
- 2000** Rodríguez and Nicaragua resolve a border dispute.
- 2002** Abel Pacheco wins the presidency. Teachers and utilities workers strike over Pacheco's plans to privatize their industries and salary complaints.
- 2004** Three former presidents are investigated for possible corruption.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Central Bank of Costa Rica: Economic Indicators
<http://websiec.bccr.fi.cr/indicadores/indice.web>

CÔTE D'IVOIRE

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Ivory Coast (République de Côte d'Ivoire)

ABBREVIATION

CI

CAPITAL

Yamoussoukro (since 1983; Abidjan remains the administrative center)

HEAD OF STATE

President Laurent Gbagbo (from 2000)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Charles Konan Banny (from 2005)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Multiparty parliamentary system; republic

POPULATION

17,298,040 (2005)

AREA

322,460 sq km (124,502 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Akan, Voltaiques or Gur, Northern Mandes, Krous, Southern Mandes

LANGUAGES

French (official), Agni, Baoulé, Senoufo, Malinke-Bambara-Dioula

RELIGIONS

Animism, indigenous beliefs, Islam, Christianity

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Communauté financière d'Afrique franc

NATIONAL FLAG

Tricolor of orange, white, and green vertical stripes

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A shield displaying an elephant's head in profile, flanked by two palm trees, with the rising sun above and a scroll bearing the legend "République de Côte D'Ivoire" beneath

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"Hail, Hospitable Land of Hope"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day), May 1 (Labor Day), August 7 (Independence Day, National Day), August 15 (Victory Day), November 15 (Day of Peace), various Christian festivals, including Assumption, All Saints' Day, Good Friday, Easter Monday, Ascension, Pentecostal Monday, and Christmas, various Islamic festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

August 7, 1960

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

August 4, 2000

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Côte d'Ivoire, on the southern coast of West Africa, is roughly square in shape, with an area of 124,502 sq mi (322,460 sq km). Its coastline along the Gulf of Guinea extends for 320 mi (515 km). It is bounded by Liberia and Guinea to the west, Mali and Burkina Faso to the north, and Ghana to the east. The de facto capital is Abidjan (1998 est. pop., 2,877,948); the official capital is Yamoussoukro (1998 est. pop., 299,243).

The coast of Côte d'Ivoire is fringed by a parallel line of sandbars and deep lagoons. Woodlands cover the continental shore and extend 165 mi (265 km) inland from the Gulf of Guinea in the east and west and 60 mi (100 km)

in the center. The western part of the country is mountainous. In the north lies a savanna covered with grass and trees. Côte d'Ivoire is drained by four major rivers that run roughly parallel from north to south. They are the Comoé, the Bandama, the Sassandra, and the Cavally. Each is navigable for only about 30 mi (48 km), except for the Sassandra, which is navigable for about 50 mi (80 km).

Geography

Area sq km: 322,460; sq mi 124,502

World Rank: 67th

Land Boundaries, km: Burkina Faso 584; Ghana 668; Guinea 610; Liberia 716; Mali 532

Côte d'Ivoire



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Coastline, km 515

Elevation Extremes meters

Lowest: Gulf of Guinea 0

Highest: Mount Nimba 1,752

Land Use %

Arable land: 9.75

Permanent Crops: 13.8

Forest: 22.4

Other: 54.01

Population of Principal Cities (1998 est.)

Abidjan (de facto; legislative)	2,877,948
Bouaké	461,618
Daloa	173,107
Korhogo	142,093
Yamoussoukro (de jure; administrative)	299,243

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Côte d'Ivoire has a tropical climate. The average annual temperature is 79°F (26.1°C). Average annual rainfall ranges from 75 in (1,905 mm) along the coast to 45 in (1,145 mm) in the savanna. The coastal region receives an average annual rainfall of 80 to 230 in (2,030 to 3,040 mm). The prevailing wind systems are the southwestern monsoons and the northeastern Harmattan, a dry, scorching wind from the Sahara.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature

Coastal Region: 73°F to 80°F

Northern Areas: 90°F to 94°F

Average Rainfall: 80 in to 120 in

Central Forest Region: 53 in to 100 in

Northern Region: 20 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Côte d'Ivoire has tremendous diversity of animal and plant species, some of the greatest in West Africa. A total of 4,700 plant species grow there, and the country is home to more than 1,000 species of animals, including 232 different mammal species. Most of the animals inhabit the forests in the interior, which contain numerous types of hardwoods, such as mahogany and anigre, a tropical hardwood with a pink tinge that is sought after by guitar makers. In the virgin rain forest, trees grow over 165 feet high, hung with vines, and wild animals abound. The Parc National de la Comoé is the largest game park in West Africa; it is full of animals such as lions, leopards, elephants, hippopotamuses, baboons, colobus monkeys, green monkeys, waterbucks, antelopes, and 21 kinds of pigs.

Deforestation is a substantial problem. Some 80 percent of the country's original forests have been cut down to make room for agriculture and to be sold for timber, usually illegally. The export of tropical hardwoods was once one of the Côte d'Ivoire's main sources of income, but the supply of trees has dwindled to almost nothing, and the export business collapsed in the 1990s. The government has tried to stop deforestation by declaring about 16 percent of the nation to be protected, but there is no money to pay for enforcement and rangers are not well trained. As a result, people are able to continue to cut trees and poach animals within the parks. In 1995 the government banned the export of most hardwoods, and in 1996 it banned the cutting of trees in the savanna zone and tried to enforce prohibitions against illegal logging. In 1998 the government began trying to oust immigrants from Burkina who were putting heavy pressure on the remaining forests.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 17,298,040

World Rank: 57th

Density per sq km: 52.9

% of annual growth (1999–2003): 2.2

Male %: 50.2

Female %: 49.8

Urban %: 39

Age Distribution %: 0–14: 41.4

15–65: 55.8

75 and over: 2.8

Population 2025: 24,382,000

Birth Rate per 1,000: 39.64

Death Rate per 1,000: 18.48

Rate of Natural Increase %: 2.2

Total Fertility Rate: 5.42

Expectation of Life (years): Males 40.27

Females 44.76

Marriage Rate per 1,000: —

Divorce Rate per 1,000: —

Average Size of Households: 5.4

% of Illegitimate Children: —

Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

There are more than 60 ethnic groups in Côte d'Ivoire, with some dominant in particular regions. The five principal ethnic divisions are the Akan (in the east and center, including the Lagoon people and the Baoule subgroup), the Krou (in the southwest), the Southern Mande (west), the Northern Mande (in the northwest), and the Senoufo/Lobi (in the northeast and north center). Political affiliations tend to fall along ethnic and religious lines. Approximately 44 percent of the population is urban.

Côte d'Ivoire does not impose significant restrictions on immigration, and about 20 percent of workers come from neighboring countries. Many of these foreign workers eventually return home after working in Côte d'Ivoire for several years. The country also has a significant non-African population, including 100,000 Lebanese, 37,000 French nationals, and many Syrians and Indians. In the 1990s the country became a destination for other Africans fleeing violence in their homelands. Ethnic tensions are a constant problem; immigrants from Burkina Faso, Mali, Liberia, Nigeria, Benin, Senegal, Mauritania, and Guinea are particular targets of ethnic hatred. In 2004 some of the migratory trends had reversed, with thousands of people fleeing civil war in Côte d'Ivoire.

LANGUAGES

The official language is French, which is the language of the media, educational system, and government. Approxi-

mately 60 African languages are also spoken, among them Agni, Baoulé, Senoufo, and Malinke-Bambara-Dioula.

RELIGIONS

Côte d'Ivoire is a secular state, and the constitution provides for religious freedom. The 1998 national census found that Muslims made up the largest religious group, with approximately 38.6 percent of the country's population. Catholics constituted 19.4 percent, practitioners of traditional indigenous religions 11.9 percent, Protestants 6.6 percent, other Christians 3.1 percent, practitioners of other religions 1.7 percent, Harrists 1.3 percent, and persons without religious preference or affiliation 16.7 percent. Of the many migratory workers who enter the country, about 70 percent are Muslim and most of the rest are Christian. Côte d'Ivoire is home to the Basilica of Our Lady of Peace in Yamoussoukro, the largest Christian church in the world, consecrated by Pope John Paul II in 1990. The number of practitioners of traditional religions is declining as missionaries spread their religions and more people move to urban areas.

Religious Affiliations

Muslim	6,677,000
Roman Catholic	3,355,000
Traditional beliefs	2,058,000
Nonreligious	2,888,000
Protestant	1,141,000
Other	1,179,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The first recorded history of Côte d'Ivoire comes from North African traders who traversed the Sahara, and the first important cities in the region were established to serve commercial interests. Islam was introduced to the region by Arab traders and spread rapidly within Côte d'Ivoire after the 11th century. Unification of the country was hindered by the dense rain forests that covered the southern half of the country, and the area that now constitutes Côte d'Ivoire was ruled by various ethnic and religious groups; people lived in small, isolated villages, and their only contact with the larger world was through passing traders. A Muslim state was established in the north in the early 18th century, with four other states ruling independently over other parts of the country; independence movements resisted French subjugation and persisted into the late 20th century.

The first French posts were established in Côte d'Ivoire in 1843. In 1893 the territory was formally named Ivory Coast and placed under a French governor. On December 4, 1958, Ivory Coast accepted a new French

constitution and opted for the status of an autonomous republic within the French Community. On August 7, 1960, the Republic of Ivory Coast proclaimed its complete independence. It changed its name officially to Côte d'Ivoire in 1985.

Côte d'Ivoire gained independence with hardly a murmur, let alone bloodshed. The peaceful departure of the French was, in part, a reflection of the deep pro-French sentiments of the people. Over 40 years after independence, Côte d'Ivoire remains the most Francophone of West African states. French economic conservatism—not African nationalism—dominates the country's economic and foreign policies. Both capital and management of industry are largely in the hands of private French citizens. The French educational, administrative, and judicial systems have been retained with little change. A significant portion of Côte d'Ivoire's foreign trade is with France. Daily newspapers from Paris are more widely read than local newspapers in Abidjan. French is the country's sole official language.

Côte d'Ivoire's French connection, which is perhaps the key to its political stability, is determined by two factors. One is the almost mystical Francophilia of the Ivorian leadership. The second is the pragmatic benefit of French association for the country's economic development. Côte d'Ivoire's phenomenal economic progress through the mid-1980s was in no small part due to France's role.

Félix Houphouët-Boigny was the main political leader beginning in the 1940s, when he organized an international political party to fight colonialism. He became president of the autonomous republic in 1959 and remained president until his death in 1993, having won the right to retain his post in the nation's first multiparty presidential election in October 1990. Houphouët-Boigny's administration was characterized by moderation and a constant search for consensus and dialogue instead of political confrontation. Most potential opposition was defused, with opposition members even being absorbed into the ruling party. The government did not show undue concern for its internal security, nor did it enact extraordinary legislation directed against the opposition. Largely as a result of the president's skillful management, until 1990 the stability of the central government was the most striking feature of Côte d'Ivoire.

Political unrest was sporadic and hampered by weak leadership. In 1963 two coup plots were uncovered. One was conceived by a young group of radicals and the other by northerners resentful of control of the government by southern Ivorians. The president responded by cutting the size of the army to reduce the chance of intervention by the armed forces, introducing a regional development plan, and setting up more management of businesses by indigenes.

The government has at various times faced charges of corruption. In 1977, to deal with those allegations, Houphouët-Boigny removed ministers from three key departments—Finance, Economic Planning, and Foreign Affairs—and passed legislation designed to prevent high-level corruption. Additional anticorruption measures were approved in 1984, and former housing officials were imprisoned for misconduct.

In the 1980s economic austerity led to more unrest as well as political liberalization. Strikes and demonstrations, staged mostly by students and professionals, occurred frequently from late 1980 to mid-1983. The longest was held in the spring of 1983 by teachers protesting the withdrawal of free housing rights. The strike was aided by sympathetic doctors. It was ended through a presidential back-to-work edict. A degree of political openness was introduced in 1980 with the first free elections for seats in the National Assembly, which was expanded from 80 to 147 members. More than 600 people ran for office, and only 27 of the previous 80 incumbents were returned to the chamber. The National Assembly was later expanded to 175 members and today comprises 225 members.

Massive protests by students, teachers, farmers, and professionals flared again in 1990 in response to the government's decision to cut salaries and increase taxes. Growing political pressure forced Houphouët-Boigny to legalize opposition parties and run in the country's first contested election since independence. Amid charges of electoral fraud, Houphouët-Boigny won with 85 percent of the vote. The ruling Democratic Party (PDCI) won 165 seats in the 175-member parliament in the nation's first multi-party parliamentary elections. The Ivorian Popular Front (IPI) won nine seats, and the Ivorian Worker's Party won one seat.

On December 7, 1993, President Houphouët-Boigny died. The National Assembly selected its president, Henri Konan Bédié, to succeed him as the nation's president. On October 22, 1995, Bédié won reelection to the presidency, receiving 96 percent of the vote; however, the election was boycotted by the major opposition parties. In 1998 several constitutional changes were approved that strengthened the president's powers, including a provision to lengthen his term of office from five to seven years.

On December 24, 1999, President Bédié was overthrown in a largely nonviolent military coup, and General Robert Guei, a former armed forces chief of staff, was installed as president. It was the country's first coup since Côte d'Ivoire achieved independence in 1960. The new president promised a democratic government and elections. He suspended the constitution, the parliament, and the courts and in their place created a nine-man National Committee of Public Salvation, which was to rule until elections could be held. Guei gave as the reasons for the coup the preceding government's ethnic intolerance and its practice of holding political prisoners.

During July 23–24, 2000, voters approved a new constitution, with more than 86 percent of the votes cast in favor of the new government. The constitution set the qualifications for candidates for president, lowered the voting age from 21 to 18, reduced the presidential term from seven years to five, and eliminated the death penalty. It also granted amnesty to those who had participated in the December coup.

Presidential elections in October were boycotted by the PDCI and Islamic leaders, who were barred from running in the elections. Guei declared himself the winner of the election even though early voting results showed Laurent Gbagbo, the FPI candidate, leading the vote. A popular uprising then brought Gbagbo to power. Gbagbo assembled a new government that included FPI and PDCI members but excluded the Rally of Republicans (RDR). Fighting erupted between the mostly Muslim followers of Alassane Ouattara, the leader of the RDR, and the Christian followers of President Gbagbo. The two leaders met in 2001 and pledged to work toward reconciliation; however, a National Reconciliation Forum, set up by Gbagbo in October, was boycotted by General Guei. The UN insisted on reconciliation before resuming aid.

Gbagbo spent the first two years of his presidency trying to consolidate his power, but his opponents were not to be placated and finally launched a civil war. Rebels attempted to overthrow his government in September 2002; they were unsuccessful but did manage to take control of the northern portion of the country. In January 2003 the government granted the rebel leaders ministerial positions in a united government, under the Linas-Marcoussis Peace Accord. French and West African troops entered the country to help disarm the troops and implement the agreement. After a three-month stalemate in the autumn of 2003, Gbagbo and the rebels once again tried to implement the peace accord in December 2003. In 2004 Gbagbo's government still had not regained control of the north, and the ethnic and land-use disputes that sparked the civil war were still unresolved.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1960–93	Félix Houphouët-Boigny
1993–99	Henri Konan Bédié
1999–2000	Robert Guei
2000–	Laurent Gbagbo

CONSTITUTION

The constitution of 2000 created a secular, democratic, and social republic with a strong president and a National Assembly, whose powers are restricted to specific subjects. All other matters of state are left to the executive and are dealt with by decrees. The executive can also propose leg-

isolation. The president is the head of state, commander in chief, and guarantor of judicial independence. He appoints his own cabinet. He is chosen for a five-year term of office in direct national elections.

Suffrage is universal for all citizens 18 years of age or older. Voters choose a complete slate rather than vote for individuals.

PARLIAMENT

Côte d'Ivoire has a unicameral legislature, the National Assembly, a 225-member legislative body whose members are elected by direct and universal suffrage to serve for five-year terms. The Assembly holds two sessions each year, during which it enacts legislation in the two areas of policy under its jurisdiction. The first category comprises nationality, the criminal and judicial systems, taxation, currency, the electoral system, and public administration. The second category includes areas in which the Assembly sets policy; these include defense, education, labor, transportation, and communications.

POLITICAL PARTIES

From the time Côte d'Ivoire became independent in 1960 until recently, the Parti Démocratique de la Côte d'Ivoire (PDCI) was the only political party in the nation. This situation evolved as a result of the party's control of the electoral process rather than of an official prohibition against opposition parties. In 1990, however, under pressure from political opponents, President Houphouët-Boigny allowed other parties to field slates of candidates in the nation's first multiparty elections. In the balloting the PDCI retained 165 seats in the National Assembly; two opposition parties, the Ivorian Popular Front (FPI) and the Ivorian Workers' Party (PIT), won nine seats and one seat, respectively. Other parties operating in Côte d'Ivoire are Rally of the Republicans (RDR), the Union for Democracy and Peace (UDPCI), and the Ivorian Socialist Party, as well as more than 20 smaller parties. In the 2000 elections the FPI and the coalition between the PDCI and the African Democratic Rally took almost the same number of seats in the legislature.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Côte d'Ivoire is divided into 19 regions, 58 departments, and 196 communes. Each department and region is governed by a prefect appointed by the national government. Each commune is headed by an elected mayor. The city of Abidjan has 10 mayors. In 2002 Côte d'Ivoire held elections in order to create departmental councils to handle local administrative matters, such as

infrastructure development and maintenance and social services.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The Ivorian court system is based on French civil law. It has two levels: the higher courts and the lower courts. Lower courts, where individuals initially bring disputes, include the courts of first instance, the courts of assize, the justice of peace courts, and the courts of first degree. Higher courts, or courts of appeal, include the Supreme Court, the High Court of Justice, and the State Security Court. The High Court of Justice, composed of deputies chosen by the National Assembly from among its own members, has the power to impeach the president for high treason.

Although Ivorian law guarantees the right to a fair public trial, this provision is not always honored in rural areas, where justice is administered through traditional institutions. Defendants have the right to legal counsel, and, in theory if not always in practice, attorneys are appointed to represent indigent defendants.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Côte d'Ivoire is classified as a partly free nation. A strongly Francophile country, it has based its human rights structure on that of France. Citizens enjoy a large measure of free speech and complete freedom of religion. Nevertheless, Côte d'Ivoire has a bad record when it comes to human rights, especially since the beginning of the civil war. The government army regularly recruits Liberian children as soldiers. Government troops have been accused of raping women and children, looting civilian property, and committing summary executions. Racial hatred has led to torture, rape, and arbitrary detention.

FOREIGN POLICY

Côte d'Ivoire is a staunch ally of France, on which it depends for its economic and military well-being, and has maintained good relations with the United States and other Western countries. Its national currency is tied to the euro. It favored Western countries throughout the cold war and joined the United Nations in 1960. Côte d'Ivoire has participated in diplomatic negotiations with a number of countries, especially other African nations. It encouraged South Africa to end apartheid. In 1986 it reestablished diplomatic relations with Israel. President Bédié was instrumental in achieving a cease-fire between the Sierra Leone government and rebel forces in 1996; the cease-fire itself was signed in Abidjan. The country

participated in peacekeeping in Liberia in 1996–1997. In 2004 Côte d'Ivoire joined CEN-SAD, the Community of Sahel-Saharan States, and it hopes to resume its status as a peacekeeper as soon as its own civil war is ended.

France remains Côte d'Ivoire's most important foreign partner. The civil war that began in 2002, however, put a strain on relations between the two nations when France refused to help the government recapture the northern areas that had been taken over by rebels. France did send troops to secure the cease-fire in 2003, and though there was some anti-French rioting in Abidjan in January and February of that year, relations with France have remained fairly good.

The United States and Côte d'Ivoire have also had friendly relations. The United States has been providing monetary assistance to end the civil war and to combat AIDS.

DEFENSE

The president is charged with responsibility for the nation's defense. He is assisted by the Ministerial Defense Council and the Military Defense Council. Service commanders report to the Minister of Defense. Military forces are recruited by conscription. Conscripts' obligations last 25 years, of which two entail active duty and the remainder participation as reserves. French soldiers help with military training.

Côte d'Ivoire has reorganized its military since the rebellion of 2002. Before then the nation's military was divided into five military regions, but that system has been abandoned. In 1999 the national armed forces were 15,000 strong, including an army, navy, air force, and gendarmerie, the last of which is a national police force entrusted with security in rural areas. The navy handles coastal security and controls immigration and shipping within the lagoons. The air force defends local airspace and provides transportation to the other services.

Since 1961 France has stationed troops in Côte d'Ivoire. After September 2002 France increased its troops from 500 to 4,000 soldiers. In January 2003 the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) stationed another 1,500 peacekeeping troops from other African nations alongside the French soldiers. These troops became part of the UN operation authorized by the Security Council in April 2004.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 15,000
 Military Manpower Availability: 4,135,309
 Military Expenditures \$million: 173.6
 as % of GDP: 1.2
 as % of central government expenditures: —
 Arms Imports \$million: 7
 Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

The basis of the Ivorian economy is agriculture; around 68 percent of Ivorians are involved in some form of agriculture. The agricultural sector is largely private, although the government does operate some large farms. Land ownership is restricted to Ivorian nationals. The main cash crops are coffee, cocoa, bananas, timber, sugarcane, plantains, cotton, and pineapples. Other crops are raised primarily for domestic consumption; these include rice, corn, millet, yams, cassava, and peanuts. The country is a leading producer of cocoa and coffee. The small manufacturing sector emphasizes the processing of agricultural goods.

Although the nation was once an economic powerhouse by African standards, the economy of Côte d'Ivoire has been suffering since the 1980s, and the standard of living has fallen. The annual per capita gross domestic product (GDP) was \$1,400 in 2003. The nation depends on direct foreign investment, which accounts for nearly half of total capital. France is by far the biggest investor nation. The country received a number of loans from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) during the 1990s and devalued its currency in 1994, which helped the economy rebound from a long slump.

Agriculture, forestry, and fishing account for two-thirds of exports. A total of 40 percent of the world's cocoa comes from Côte d'Ivoire, as do many of the world's bananas, coffee, cotton, tuna, palm oil, rubber, and tropical wood, though tropical wood exports have fallen precipitously with deforestation. The country must import many products for modern life, such as paper, fuel, and food. Total exports in 2003 were \$5.3 billion, primarily to France and the Netherlands; total imports were \$2.8 billion, primarily from France and Nigeria. Côte d'Ivoire is vulnerable to price swings in its main export products, and the government has been encouraging diversification to protect its markets from these fluctuations.

Côte d'Ivoire has an excellent infrastructure for a developing nation. It has 3,000 miles of paved roads, two large ports, a telecommunications service that includes internet access, air service within Africa and to and from Europe, and a thriving real-estate market. The government has planned numerous investment projects, but these have been delayed by the civil war. The country suffered negative growth in 2004 and has a massive burden of foreign debt estimated at nearly \$12 billion. Hopes are now invested in a possible rebound in economic growth after the 2005 presidential elections.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (Purchasing Power Parity) \$billion: 24.51
 GDP per capita (Purchasing Power Parity) \$: 1,400
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: –1.2
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: –3.4

Origin of GDP %:

Agriculture: 36.6
 Industry: 19.9
 Services: 43.5

Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %

Private Consumption: 65
 Government Consumption: 16
 Gross Domestic Investment: 8.7

Foreign Trade \$billion:

Exports: 5.299

Imports: 2.781

% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 3.1

% of Income Received by Richest 10%: 28.8

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
112.5	115.2	120.2	123.9	128.1

Finance

National Currency: CFA Franc (XOF)

Exchange Rate: \$1 = XOF 581.2

Money Supply Stock in National Currency trillion: 1.75

Central Bank Discount Rate %: 4.5

Total External Debt \$billion: 11.85

Debt Service Ratio %: 14.1

Balance of Payments \$million: 501

International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 1.862

Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index

Growth Rate %: 3.4

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$billion: 1.068

per capita \$: 65

Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 230

**Central Government Revenues
and Expenditures**

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year

Revenues \$billion: 2.339

Expenditures \$billion: 2.749

Budget Deficit \$million: 410

Tax Revenues as % of GDP: 16.4

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 36.6

Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 1.9

Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares: 1.2

Irrigation, % of Farms having: 1.0

Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 20.2

Total Farmland as % of land area: 9.8

Livestock: Cattle 000: 1,111

Sheep 000: 1,523

Hogs 000: 342

Chickens 000: 33,000

Forests: Production of Roundwood (million cubic meters): 11.6

Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 80.5

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 1.716

Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 15

Energy
Commercial Energy Production metric tons of
oil equivalent million: 2.01Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of
oil equivalent million: 2.46

Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 153

Net Energy Imports % of use: 4.9

Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: 890

Production kW-hr billion: 4.6

Consumption kW-hr billion: 2.98

Coal Reserves tons million: —

Production tons 000: —

Consumption tons 000: —

Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: 1.05

Production cubic feet billion: 47.7

Consumption cubic feet billion: 47.7

Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels million: 100

Production barrels per day: 32,970

Consumption barrels per day: 32,000

Pipelines Length km: 104

Foreign Trade

Imports \$million: 2.781

Exports \$million: 5.299

Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 3.3

Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 5.1

Balance of Trade \$million: 501

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
France %	32.7	19.1
Nigeria %	14.4	—
United Kingdom %	7.0	—
Netherlands %	—	17.7
United States %	—	7.1
Spain %	—	5.6

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 50,400

Paved %: 9.7

Automobiles: 113,900

Trucks and Buses: 54,900

Railroad; Track Length km: 660

Passenger-km million: —

Freight-km million: —

Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: —

Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: —

Airports: 37

Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 130

Length of Waterways km: 980

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: —
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 50
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 290

Communications

Telephones 000: 28
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.22
 Cellular Telephones million: 1.236
 Personal Computers 000: 154
 Internet Hosts per million people: 219
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 5

ENVIRONMENT

Côte d'Ivoire's most serious environmental problem is the loss of nearly all of its forests. During the first half of the 20th century much of the country was covered by forest, but nearly all the trees have been cut down either for sale to foreign markets or to make room for agriculture. The nation's biodiversity is endangered and the situation is unlikely to improve, given the political climate of the early 2000s. The only remaining virgin rain forest is in the Taï National Park, where about 1,400 square miles of trees survive. The nation is trying to protect its remaining trees from its own residents, but the civil war has made it impossible to enforce environmental laws, and loggers have cut down many of the last 300- or 400-year-old trees. On the plus side, because Côte d'Ivoire is so heavily dependent on agriculture, it has not suffered serious problems of industrial pollution. In the 1990s the country instituted measures to reverse the soil depletion caused by overuse of the land and to combat the deforestation that resulted from growth in the nation's timber industry. Modern methods of agriculture are being introduced, along with mechanization, to replace the labor-intensive practices of the past.

Côte d'Ivoire is a signatory to a number of international environmental protection treaties, including treaties on biodiversity, climate change, hazardous waste, marine dumping, ozone layer protection, and ship pollution.

Environment

Forest Area % of land area: 22.4
 Average Annual Forest Change, 1990-2000, 000 ha: -265
 Nationally Protected Areas % of land area: 16
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 0.66

LIVING CONDITIONS

As developing nations go, Côte d'Ivoire has a reasonably high standard of living. Businessmen looking for an African

base of operations often choose to locate there because of the country's convenient location and reliable connections to neighboring countries. Abidjan is a modern city and is considered quite livable. Transportation and telecommunications are good, and housing is modern. The government had planned various improvement projects before the civil war began in 2002, but these have been delayed. It is expected that the private sector will begin improving facilities such as electricity, telecommunications, and water.

HEALTH

Côte d'Ivoire is plagued with health problems. It has few doctors or dentists to serve its population, and rural areas are especially lacking in medical facilities. Tropical diseases and AIDS are major problems and are affecting population growth and life expectancy. In 2003, 570,000 people were estimated to be infected with HIV, or about 7 percent of adults. The infant mortality rate is high; about 97 babies out of 1,000 die soon after birth. In 2004 the average fertility rate was 5.42 children per woman. Life expectancy is only about 43 years.

Health

Number of Physicians: 1,322
 Number of Dentists: 219
 Number of Nurses: 4,582
 Number of Pharmacists: 135
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 9
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 97
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 690
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 6.2
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 41
 HIV Infected % of adults: 7
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 54
 Measles: 56
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 40
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 84

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Ivorian food consumption is centered around vegetables with small amounts of meat. The traditional African style of eating is done with the hands, not utensils. The typical Ivorian dish is *attiéké*, a starch made from grated cassava that is similar to couscous. This starch is topped with vegetables and chicken or fish cooked with onions and tomatoes. A popular dish is *kedjenou*, a chicken stew with vegetables. On the street, people like to snack on *aloco*, banana cooked in palm oil with steamed onions and chili, sometimes served with grilled fish. *Bangu*, or palm wine, is a common drink. When people go out, they sometimes visit open-air restaurants called *maquis*.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 14
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,590
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 116.1
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 112.1

STATUS OF WOMEN

Ivorian women have traditionally been held subordinate to men in all practical ways. As late as the 1960s women were prohibited from establishing bank accounts in their own names and could not control their own property. Access to divorce was severely limited, and property descended patrilineally. (A man's nephews rather than his sons inherited his property.) In 1973 the government established the Ministry of Women's Affairs to combat discrimination against women, and legislation improved women's legal position. Although women continued to receive unfavorable treatment compared with men, the number of women attending university and entering professional fields previously closed to them grew steadily during the 1980s and subsequent years. Women still have not achieved anything approaching equality with men. In the civil war women have been particularly victimized. There have been large numbers of rapes reported, and officials believe the true number is much higher because of the stigma attached to being a rape victim. Ethnicity plays a role in victimization, with Burkinabe women being particular targets of rape by rebels. (Burkinabe men are simply shot.) Ivorian rebels have kidnapped women and girls to be sexual slaves and servants; the soldiers threaten to shoot the women if they try to escape.

Women

Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 9
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Aged 15 to 24: 0.74
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 20.2

WORK

Most Ivorians work in agriculture, many of them growing crops for export. Other jobs include mining for gold or diamonds, drilling for oil, or producing textiles and foodstuffs. The unemployment rate in urban areas was 13 percent in 1998. Per capita income in 2003 was \$732; almost 40 percent of the population lived below the poverty line.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 6,640,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 33.8
 Total Activity Rate %: —

Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 68
 Other: 32
 Unemployment %: 13 (urban)

EDUCATION

Côte d'Ivoire provides free education to its citizens, and elementary education for children between the ages of seven and 13 is compulsory. There were more than 2 million elementary students in 2002, and over 600,000 students were attending secondary and vocational schools. Abidjan has a good school system, including several French-based schools and an international school that teaches an American curriculum. Enrollment dropped sharply when the civil war began in 2002. The National University of Côte d'Ivoire, in Abidjan, enrolls approximately 21,000 students; a number of Ivorians attend university abroad.

Despite the efforts of educators, many children never attend school. Only about half of all Ivorians can read; the numbers are worse for women, of whom about 44 percent are literate.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 50.9
 Male %: 57.9
 Female %: 43.6
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 6
 First Level: Primary schools: 7,185
 Teachers: 48,308
 Students: 2,046,165
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 42.4
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 60.6
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: —
 Teachers: —
 Students: 619,969
 Student-Teacher Ratio: —
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 20.9
 Third Level: Institutions: —
 Teachers: —
 Students: —
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: —
 Students per 100,000: —
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 4.6

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Côte d'Ivoire has been the site of scientific research into mining and forest biodiversity. Abidjan has a major university and several technical colleges that teach scientific and technological disciplines.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million persons: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: 26.68
 Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

The Ministry of Information publishes two daily newspapers. In addition, there are many periodicals, all published in French. Newspapers and magazines are also imported from France. The official broadcasting organization is Radiodiffusion Télévision Ivoirienne (RTI), and there are numerous other television and radio stations. Radio is the most popular means of news transmission; there are about 30 low-power radio stations in Côte d'Ivoire. Although there is no official press censorship, those who publish material critical of the government or deleterious to public morality are subject to fine, imprisonment, or expulsion. Most news media are government owned and support government policies; however, foreign publications are widely available.

During the civil war the government used the media, especially RTI, to increase support for the national government against the rebels. Opposition publications were raided and shut down, and broadcasts of foreign radio programs were disrupted. Rebels have been using government-owned television and radio facilities in Bouaké to broadcast their own viewpoints. In 2004 UN peacekeepers created their own radio station in Abidjan.

Media

Newspapers and Periodicals: —
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: —
 Magazines: —
 Radio Receivers million: 3
 per 1,000: 185
 Television sets 000: 944
 per 1,000: 65

CULTURE

Artists from Côte d'Ivoire produce some of the best art in West Africa. Each ethnic group produces its own art forms, but most of them specialize in wood carving. Masks and spoons are popular subjects. Ivorian music is characterized by a series of rhythms and melodies that overlap one another without any one dominating the others. Music has traditionally been performed by griots, or bards, who accompany their singing on instruments they make themselves. Côte d'Ivoire is home to several well-known novelists, including Bernard Dadié, Aké Loba, and Ahmadou Kourouma.

Côte d'Ivoire celebrates several traditional festivals every year. The Fêtes des Masques (Festivals of Masks) take place in rural villages in February. Bouaké has a famous carnival every March. In Gomon during the Fête du Dipri, women and children go around the village at night naked, performing rites to get rid of evil spirits. Ramadan is a sacred month of fasting for Muslims.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 1
 Volumes: 25,000
 Registered borrowers: 2,120
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Most Ivorians still practice traditional religions. They believe that their dead ancestors come back as spirits who interact with living people, and the living conduct rituals to help them communicate with the dead. Many people believe in magic, visiting medicine men and juju priests to learn their fortunes or buy charms to keep away evil. Some people wear gris-gris, which are necklaces believed to ward off evil spirits and misfortunes. The Senoufo people have been especially diligent in maintaining their traditional beliefs, instructing their children in and initiating them into the rituals.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Abidjan is a prosperous cosmopolitan city with all the entertainment opportunities one would expect to find in such a place, including fine dining, dancing, musical performances, and shopping. In the countryside people entertain themselves in traditional ways, such as by listening to the singing of griots.

ETIQUETTE

French is the official language, but visitors can usually find English speakers in offices and hotels. Ivorians make appointments well ahead of time and arrive on time, though it is acceptable to keep a visitor waiting for a few minutes. When meeting a business contact, Ivorians present business cards and shake hands. People appreciate small gifts and souvenirs. Smoking is perfectly acceptable in most places. Service charges are usually added to restaurant bills, but if not, it is appropriate to tip 15 percent.

FAMILY LIFE

The organization of an Ivorian family is different from that of a Western family. People trace lineage separately through male and female lines. Most Ivorians put greater stake in the paternal line, though some groups in the east

trace ancestry through the maternal line as well. While each line will include people of both sexes, the connecting relatives are of one sex only. In this kind of kinship organization, the children of one's brother or sister can be seen as closer relatives than one's own children. Relatives within a given lineage take care of running the entire family, teaching the young and making sure everyone follows social rules. Elders settle disputes, determine etiquette, arrange marriages, and discipline offenders. Lineage ties also emphasize the connections between the living and the dead and allow people to clearly see their position in society.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

People in Côte d'Ivoire tend to dress on the conservative side—men in long pants and women in dresses. Men wear ties only on formal occasions. Casual clothing is appropriate in most settings. It is important for women to keep their legs covered because bare legs are considered offensive, although breasts are not.

SPORTS

Ivorians participate in a range of sports, including soccer, track and field, basketball, baseball, tennis, and swimming. The country sends participants to the Olympics and the Special Olympics.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1944 Félix Houphouët-Boigny founds the interterritorial African Democratic Rally, the first major political party in Africa.
- 1948 Protesters demand self-rule in mass demonstrations in Abidjan.
- 1949 Protests turn to violence.
- 1950 Houphouët-Boigny changes his approach, cooperating with the French.
- 1958 Côte d'Ivoire is proclaimed a republic within the French Community.
- 1959 Côte d'Ivoire forms a customs union in 1959 with Dahomey (Benin), Niger, and Burkina Faso.
- 1960 Côte d'Ivoire gains independence from France; Félix Houphouët-Boigny becomes president.
- 1961 The Ivorian military is nationalized.
- 1965 Houphouët-Boigny is reelected for a second five-year term.
- 1969 Some 1,600 unemployed Ivorians are arrested for demonstrating against proforeign hiring policies for government jobs; in response to demands by the prosocialist Movement of Ivorian Primary and Secondary School Students for government

reform of Abidjan University, the government arrests 150 protesters, deports foreign students, and closes the university for two weeks.

- 1973 A military coup is averted.
- 1980 Houphouët-Boigny survives an assassination attempt.
- 1982 Government closes Abidjan University in response to student unrest.
- 1990 Houphouët-Boigny is reelected for a sixth five-year term.
- 1993 President Houphouët-Boigny dies and is replaced by Henri Konan Bédié.
- 1994 Côte d'Ivoire devalues its currency and institutes economic reforms.
- 1995 President Bédié is reelected to office, receiving 96 percent of the vote.
- 1996 United Nations Industrial Development Organization, meeting in Abidjan, announces plan to spur industrial development in Africa.
- 1999 A military coup takes place, and General Robert Guei is installed as president.
- 2000 Voters approve a new constitution in general elections. Laurent Gbagbo, believed to be the real winner in presidential elections, is proclaimed president after a popular uprising against the perceived rigging of the election forces Guei to flee the country. Fighting erupts between Gbagbo's mainly southern Christian supporters and followers of Alassane Ouattara, mostly Muslims from the north.
- 2001 President Gbagbo and opposition leader Ouattara agree to work toward reconciliation. Calls for presidential and legislative elections are renewed after Ouattara's party gains a majority at local polls. Gbagbo sets up a National Reconciliation Forum that General Guei refuses to attend.
- 2002 Rebels attempt to oust Gbagbo on September 19. Soldiers seize power in the north. Fighting begins.
- 2003 Gbagbo agrees to a peace accord. Fighting continues sporadically through much of the year, but in December rebels once again attempt to create a unified government with Gbagbo.
- 2004 UN peacekeeping troops arrive. Fighting continues. The economy suffers negative growth.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

Embassy of Côte d'Ivoire
2424 Massachusetts Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20008
Phone: (202) 797-0300

INTERNET RESOURCES

- Côte d'Ivoire—A Country Study
<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/citoc.html>
- U.S. Department of State—Côte d'Ivoire
<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2846.htm#econ>

CROATIA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Croatia (Republika Hrvatska)

ABBREVIATION

HR

CAPITAL

Zagreb

HEAD OF STATE

President Stjepan Mesić (from 2000)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Ivo Sanader (from 2003)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Presidential parliamentary democracy

POPULATION

4,495,904 (2005)

AREA

56,542 sq km (21,831 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Croats, Serbs

LANGUAGE

Croatian

RELIGIONS

Roman Catholicism, Orthodox, Muslim

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Kuna

NATIONAL FLAG

Red, white, and blue horizontal bands with Croatian coat of arms (red and white checkered)

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A red-and-white checkered field, with a crown that shows the oldest-known Croatian coat of arms (a golden six-pointed star and a silver crescent on a blue shield) and the coats of arms of the Republic of Dubrovnik (two red bars on a dark blue field), Dalmatia (three yellow lion heads on a light blue shield), Istria (a yellow ibex on a dark blue shield), and Slavonia (a golden six-pointed star and a black marten between the rivers Drava and Sava).

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Our Beautiful Homeland”

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year’s Day); May 1 (May Day); May 30 (Independence Day/Statehood Day); June 25 (Antifascist Struggle Day); August 5 (National Thanksgiving Day); December 25 (Christmas Day); December 26 (Boxing Day); Roman Catholic holidays, including Epiphany, Easter Sunday and Monday, Assumption, and All Saints’ Day

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

June 25, 1991

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

December 22, 1990; revised 2000, 2001

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Croatia is part of Central Europe and has a wishbone shape, with one leg following the Adriatic seacoast and the other, roughly parallel leg surrounding Bosnia-Herzegovina. Croatia’s northern neighbor is Slovenia. To the northeast lies Hungary; to the east lies Serbia and Montenegro; to the south lies Bosnia-Herzegovina, with the southernmost tip bordered by Serbia and Montenegro. The Adriatic Sea provides the western boundary. Croatia is situated at 45°10’ N, 15°30’ E. The total

area is 56,542 sq km (21,831 sq mi), with 56,414 sq km (21,781 sq mi) of land and 128 sq km (50 sq mi) of water. The land area is larger than Denmark and slightly smaller than West Virginia.

The three major geographic areas of Croatia are the Pannonian, the Peri-Pannonian, and the coastal regions. The coastal belt is primarily karst with dry summers. The highest mountains in Croatia are Biokova in Dalmatia, rising 1,762 m abruptly from the narrow sea coast, and Dinara, which is 1,830 m high. The hills and mountains separate Pannonian Croatia from the coastal area. While

Croatia



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much of Croatia is above 500 m, there are mainly lowlands in the eastern and northwestern parts of the republic. The lowlands are primarily used to raise livestock and for farming, with forested regions lying in the northwestern hills and valleys.

Much of Croatia's appeal to visitors lies in its 1,185 islands and inlets, providing 5,835 km of coastline, with 1,777 m of the coastline on the mainland, including several large peninsulas.

Hydrotrade routes utilize the Adriatic Sea as well as the Sava and Drava Rivers. The inland countries of Austria and Hungary transverse Croatia for coastal access.

Geography

Area sq km:	56,542; sq mi 21,831
World Rank:	123rd
Land Boundaries, km:	Bosnia and Herzegovina 932; Hungary 329; Serbia and Montenegro 266; Slovenia 670
Coastline, km:	5,835
Elevation Extremes meters:	
Lowest:	Adriatic Sea 0
Highest:	Dinara 1,830
Land Use %	
Arable Land:	26.1
Permanent Crops:	2.3
Forest:	31.9
Other:	39.7

Population of Principal Cities (2001)

Rijeka	143,800
Split	188,694
Zagreb	691,724

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Croatia has a continental climate in the north and a Mediterranean climate in the central and coastal regions. Croatia's prevailing winds are the *bura*, *jugo*, and *maestrale*. Daily and annual temperature ranges are moderate. The average January temperature is 32°F in Zagreb, 42°F in Dubrovnik, and 37°F in Rijeka. In July the average temperatures in Zagreb, Dubrovnik, and Rijeka are 72°F, 83°F, and 82°F, respectively. The Adriatic keeps the coastal region temperate year-round, while cold and snow cover the central, mountainous, and northern regions in the winter. Annual precipitation is 35 in, 48 in, and 60.4 in in Zagreb, Dubrovnik, and Rijeka, respectively.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature
January: 27°F to 37°F
July: 61°F to 84°F
Average Rainfall: 24.6 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Croatia's native flora and fauna are found mainly in its seven national parks. Paklenica National Park protects dense native forests and many reptiles, birds, and insects; the endangered griffon vulture can be found there. Plitvice Lakes National Park is home to large mammals such as wolves, bears, and deer. Lynx live in the mountains of Risnjak National Park. Mediterranean holm oak forests are found in Brijuni, near the city of Pula.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005:	4,495,904
World Rank:	116th
Density per sq km:	79.5
% of annual growth (1999-2003):	-0.3
Male %:	47.9
Female %:	52.1
Urban %:	—
Age Distribution %:	
0-14:	16.6
15-64:	67.0
65 and over:	16.4
Population 2025:	4,374,000
Birth Rate per 1,000:	9.51
Death Rate per 1,000:	11.3
Rate of Natural Increase %:	-0.2

Total Fertility Rate:	1.39
Expectation of Life (years):	Males 70.21
	Females 78.29
Marriage Rate per 1,000:	5.1
Divorce Rate per 1,000:	1.0
Average Size of Households:	3.1
Induced Abortions:	6,574

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Croatia is one of the most ethnically homogeneous countries in the world, mainly owing to the virtual ethnic cleansing conducted during recent wars. As of 2001, Croats constituted 89.6 percent of the population, with Serbs, the next-largest ethnic group, constituting 4.5 percent. The rest of the population is made up of small groups of Bosnians, Hungarians, Slovenes, Czechs, Roma, Albanians, Montenegrins, and a few others.

LANGUAGES

Croatian, a Slavic language, became the official language in 1847. Some 96 percent of the population speaks Serbo-Croatian; the remaining 4 percent speak their own ethnic languages, including Hungarian, Italian, Czech, Slovak, and German. The Serbian and Croatian languages differ by only about 20,000 words and by the fact that Croatian uses Latin letters while Serbian is written with Cyrillic letters.

RELIGIONS

Religious denomination goes with ethnic identity; virtually all Croats are Roman Catholic, and nearly all Serbs are Eastern Orthodox. There are a few Muslims, Protestants, and Jews. Religion was suppressed during the Communist period when Croatia belonged to Yugoslavia, but it has resurged since independence, and most churches are well attended every week.

Religious Affiliations

Roman Catholic	3,947,000
Orthodox	198,000
Muslim	58,500
Protestant	13,500
Others and Unknown	279,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The area now known as Croatia has had a long, tumultuous, and rarely independent history. Greek colonists first populated the Adriatic islands around 400 B.C.E. The Romans began their rule of the eastern Adriatic coast around

100 B.C.E. Croats did not start to arrive until around the year 600. The name Croatia is mentioned for the first time in official documents in 852. Croats point to Tomislav, in 925, as the first Croatian king, who unified the areas of Pannonia and Dalmatia. The last Croatian king, Petar Svačić, died in 1102, and Croatia was subsumed into the Hungarian Kingdom for the next 800 years, with Turkish occupation beginning in 1433. Croatia was ruled as part of the Hungarian Kingdom, including the period the Hapsburgs ruled Hungary. The Croatian Assembly voted to accept the Austrian Hapsburgs as its ruling dynasty in 1527, ignoring the Hungarian Kingdom's territorial claims, and by 1699 the Turks had largely been driven out of Croatia. Croatia was divided into three territories at this time, with the islands and main coastal areas falling under Venetian rule, mainland Croatia remaining under Hapsburg rule, and the Dubrovnik Republic constituting the only independent portion.

By 1815 the brief French rule had been terminated, and the former Venetian territory and the Dubrovnik Republic, which had been united with mainland Croatia by Napoleon, were now, like Hungary, under Hapsburg rule. In 1848 Croatia expelled the occupying Hungarians while the Hungarians were busy fighting Hapsburg domination. All the Croatian provinces were united at this point in history, and the Croats aided the Austrians in defeating the Hungarians. As part of Austro-Hungarian punishment for its involvement in World War I, the Treaty of Trianon reallocated the Croatian territory to the artificially created "Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes," which was renamed Yugoslavia in 1929.

During World War II Croatian antifascists were led by Josip Broz Tito. Ante Pavelić was the leader of the virtual Nazi puppet state, under the influence of the German and Italian occupation of Yugoslavia. Non-Croats were killed en masse. In 1945 the individual components making up Yugoslavia forced the territory to be renamed the Democratic Federal Yugoslavia (later renamed twice, finally becoming the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in 1963), with Croatia recognized as one of the republics. Forty-five years later, in 1990, Croatia held its first post-World War II multiparty elections and proclaimed Franjo Tuđman its president.

The first decade of Croatian independence (1991–2000) was marked by one of the most violent civil conflicts ever in the region, in which Croatia and Serbia were locked in a bitter struggle to control areas populated by both Serbs and Croats. On June 25, 1991, Croatia declared its independence from Yugoslavia, and war with the Serbs of the Yugoslav National Army erupted. Croatia was internationally recognized as an independent nation and joined the United Nations in 1992. In the initial stages of the war a third of Croatian territory had come under Serb control in the 1991–92 fighting. Croatia launched a major military offensive, and its troops quickly overran Serb positions in western Slavonia. Serb forces retaliated by shelling

Zagreb. In a new offensive, Croatian forces overran Serb positions in western Krajina, capturing the capital, Knin, and prompting the mass flight of ethnic Serbs from the region. In the wake of Croatian military successes, Croatia was a key participant in the Dayton talks that yielded a Bosnian peace agreement in 1995. Croatia is estimated to have suffered 13,583 deaths (and nearly 40,000 people injured) as well as material damages estimated at \$27 billion. Buoyed by military successes, the Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ) won the 1995 lower house elections easily. Tuđman died in 1999. The absence of major world figures at his funeral reflected international frustration with Croatia's failure to progress on democratic reforms at home. Vlatko Pavletić served as interim president until elections were held in February 2000, which were won by Stjepan Mesić, leader of the Croatian People's Party. In parliamentary elections held the following January, Tuđman's HDZ was defeated by a center-left coalition of six parties, including the Social Democratic Party and the Social Liberal Party. Ivica Račan of the Social Democratic Party was named prime minister.

Since 2000 the Croatian government has joined the World Trade Organization, worked on joining the European Union, and mostly cooperated with war crimes investigations in the Hague. In 2003 Ivo Sanader, leader of the right-wing HDZ, won 66 of the 152 seats in parliament, and President Mesić invited him to be prime minister. Sanader claims to be committed to democracy and a free market economy and has pledged to get Croatia into both the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO). Sanader's policies, if implemented, could result in Croatia's joining the EU in 2007.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1990–99	Franjo Tuđman
1999–2000	Vlatko Pavletić (acting president)
2000	Zlatko Tomčić (acting president)
2000–	Stjepan Mesić

CONSTITUTION

Croatia's constitution is dated December 22, 1990. It promotes many basic civil rights and human rights as well as an organizational structure for the government. Croatia has a presidential/parliamentary form of government. The government of the Republic of Croatia consists of a prime minister, deputy prime ministers, ministers, and other members. According to the Croatian constitution, a vote of no confidence in the prime minister or individual government members or the government as a whole requires the approval of at least one-tenth of the House of Representatives. A vote of no confidence in the government may also be requested by the prime minister.

The executive branch consists of the president, who is the head of state. Presidential elections are held every five years for a five-year term of office. Croatia has universal suffrage guarantees in its constitution. The president selects the prime minister and deputy prime ministers based on the balance of power in the legislature. The prime minister is subject to a vote of confidence.

The legislative branch is composed of a unicameral assembly called the Sabor, which consists of the House of Representatives. The 152 representatives are all elected for four-year terms. Some of the seats in the assembly represent Croats living outside the country, which is controversial. Until 2001 there was another legislative body called the House of Counties, but it has been abolished.

In the judicial branch the Supreme Court and the Constitutional Court both have judges appointed by the Judicial Council of the Republic for eight-year terms. The Judicial Council is elected by the House of Representatives.

PARLIAMENT

The Croatian parliament consists of the House of Representatives. The House of Representatives has 152 deputies directly elected by secret ballot.

The representatives serve four-year terms. The assembly can be dissolved by majority votes of its members. The president can also dissolve the House of Representatives. The assembly has regular sessions twice each year, first between January 15th and June 30th and then between September 15th and December 15th. Emergency sessions may be called either by the president or a majority of the members of both houses. The House of Representatives amends the constitution, passes laws, adopts state budgets, declares war and peace, decides on national boundary alterations, calls referenda, carries out elections, supervises the government's work, and grants clemency.

Prior to taking effect, laws are published in Croatia's official gazette, the *Narodine Novine*. Laws are normally promulgated by the president within eight days of passage by the House of Representatives. There must be a justifiable reason to have a different effective date.

The Sabor commissions an ombudsman to protect the constitutional and legal rights of citizens in proceedings before the government and bodies vested with public powers. The House of Representatives elects the ombudsman for an eight-year term.

POLITICAL PARTIES

From the end of World War II to 1990 there was only one authorized political party in Croatia, the Croatian

Communist Party, which was designated the League of Communists of Yugoslavia. At the time of the collapse of Communism, the HDZ, led by Franjo Tuđman, won a decisive majority in each of the national assembly chambers. After leading the nation to independence, HDZ retained power even after the death of Tuđman in 1999. The principal opposition is the Joint List Bloc, formed by a number of smaller parties, including Croatian Peasant Party, Croatian National Party, Croatian Christian Democratic Union, Istrian Democratic Assembly, Croatian Social Liberal Party, and Social Democratic Party of Croatia.

In the 2003 elections the HDZ won 66 seats in the assembly. The Social Democratic Party took 34 seats. Many of the small parties also won seats, so the assembly is filled with representatives from a variety of parties.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Local government exists in the form of municipalities and districts or towns, as determined by law. The local self-governments are subordinate to the state administration.

Local administration and self-government territories are called counties. There are 20 administrative counties as well as two self-governing districts, *kotari*, known as Glina and Knin, with these last two being under local Serb control. National minorities with 8 percent share or more in the total population have had the right to self-government in special districts, but as of May 2000 a new constitutional amendment was passed that abolishes this special privilege. Only after a new census is taken will this provision apply.

Although regional and local governments were granted considerable authority by the Croatian constitution over management of their cities, Franjo Tuđman's HDZ became more and more autocratic during his tenure from 1990 to 1999. Fighting the Serbs caused strengthening of the central government while completely overpowering some local governments with war death tolls, refugees, and other social services problems. This led organizations such as George Soros's Open Society Institute to create facilities like the Croatian Law Center (CLC) in 1994 to promote the rule of law in Croatia through the establishment of legal principles in accord with international standards. The CLC promotes governmental decentralization by helping to revise legislation, leading to the reform of local self-government.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The Croatian legal system is based upon civil law but has some characteristics similar to the American legal system. The Croatian constitution guarantees a presumption of innocence and court trial. Once arrested, persons are en-

titled to be informed of the charges within the shortest time possible, to be informed of their rights, to assistance of counsel and, like the Fifth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, to not be forced to testify against themselves or to admit guilt. There is also a “double jeopardy” clause preventing someone from being tried twice for the same crime after a sentence has been rendered.

The Supreme Court is the highest court of the land. Under the Supreme Court fall the State Judicial Council, the High Commercial Court, the Administrative Court, the Public Prosecutor’s Office, the Public Attorney’s Office (Ombudsman), the Magistrates Court, the County Courts, the Commercial Courts, the County Prosecutors’ Offices, and the County Public Attorneys’ Offices. Completely separate is the Constitutional Court, which hears cases concerning the legality and constitutionality of elections as well as other constitutional issues. Judges for both the Supreme Court and the Constitutional Court are appointed to office by the Judicial Council of the Republic, which is elected by the assembly. They serve eight-year terms.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Croatia’s human rights violations are not new, despite the fact that Croatia adopted the Constitutional Law of Human Rights and Freedoms and the Rights of Ethnic and National Communities or Minorities in December 1991 and amended it in April 1992. This law gives effect to the UN treaty obligations on human rights. On November 6, 1992, the United Nations reiterated its concern that since Croatia’s declaration of independence, the ongoing territorial disputes had massively violated human rights with significant loss of life, disappearances, summary executions, and torture, resulting in the destruction of entire towns and displacement of entire minority populations. The United Nations also voiced concern over the pervading Croatian military presence, including military members’ wearing fascist emblems, the constant discrimination and harassment of ethnic Serbs and other minorities within Croatia, and other signs of the ultraright nationalism sweeping through Croatia. In 1998 Croats continued to deny Serbs access to their homes in Croatia, persecuted Serbs and other minorities, and held protest rallies against Serbs. The anti-Serbian protest rally held in Borovo Selo by the ultranationalist Croatian Party of Rights (Hrvatska Stranka Prava) resulted in a governmental ban on all public demonstrations in eastern Slavonia. In 1998 freedom of the press in Croatia was effectively denied by the lack of an independent newspaper and electronic media and the governmental prosecution of hundreds of newspaper journalists.

In 2004 the Croatian government had a reasonably good human rights record with some problems. Ethnic

Serbs continued to be the victims of arrests and imprisonment, and many of their trials were clearly political and had intimidated witnesses who gave unreliable testimony. External observers doubt Croatia’s ability to conduct fair and impartial war crimes trials. The government interfered with electronic media. Religious communities had difficulty recovering confiscated property from the government. There was violence against women and trafficking in women, and ethnic and religious minorities were still the victims of violence and harassment.

FOREIGN POLICY

The end of Croatia’s so-called Homeland War with Serbia and the death of Tuđman represent the close of an era in Croatian history. With more or less secure borders guaranteed by United Nations–mandated accords, Croatia’s goal in foreign relations has changed to gaining international recognition, particularly with Western nations. It has gained admission to the Council of Europe and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and it is now working to join NATO and the European Union. Croatia presented its formal application for EU membership in 2003, and in 2004 the European Commission began negotiations to admit the nation. In 2002 Croatia joined NATO’s Membership Action Program, a first step on the road to NATO membership. Croatia has belonged to the United Nations since 1992 and has contributed troops to peacekeeping operations in Africa and the Middle East.

Croatia has a friendly relationship with the Muslim-dominated Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The government is working to resolve border disputes with most of the former Yugoslav republics, as well as dealing with the residue of the 1991–95 war.

The United States has had an embassy in Zagreb since 1992 and has contributed aid to Croatia to help it create a free market democracy, especially through the Southeastern European Economic Development Program. In particular, the United States has contributed \$13.4 million to remove land mines from Croatia’s soil, a job that Croatia hopes to complete by 2010.

DEFENSE

Croatia’s military branches include the include Ground Forces, Naval Forces, Air and Air Defense Forces, Frontier Guard, and Home Guard. Males must perform six months of compulsory military service when they reach the age of 18. They can enlist voluntarily at 16. In 2003 there were an estimated 31,000 members of the armed forces. In 2002 Croatia spent about \$520 million on the military, or 2.4 percent of gross domestic product (GDP).

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 30,800
 Military Manpower Availability: 1,100,132
 Military Expenditures \$million: 520
 as % of GDP: 2.39
 as % of central government expenditures: —
 Arms Imports \$million: 2
 Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

Croatia had just begun developing a market economy, including a tourism industry, when war broke out in 1991. The economic infrastructure was badly damaged, and GDP fell by 40.5 percent in four years' time. When the war ended in 1995 tourism resumed, and the economy appeared to have recovered. In 1998 Croatia was the second-most-prosperous area of the former Republic of Yugoslavia.

A recession began in 1999, and inflation and unemployment rose. Now Croatia is struggling with economic problems caused by long-term Communist mismanagement; infrastructure damage suffered during recent wars; huge displaced populations of refugees, both entering and exiting Croatia; and the dissolution of some Western funding. While the government under Franjo Tuđman partially stabilized some of the economy on a macroeconomic level and normalized creditor relations, privatization is not progressing as rapidly as it should since independence roughly a decade ago. Tuđman's government placed four commercial banks under its control, and others are threatened by bankruptcy. In 1997 Croatia's account deficit accounted for about 12 percent of the GDP, with that figure being reduced to 8 percent the following year.

The economy emerged from its mild recession in 2000, with tourism the main income generator. Massive unemployment remains a key negative element, although the problem is gradually resolving. State-financed enterprises continue to struggle. Croatia is relying on more Western aid to help restore the economy, and, with the election of the first post-Tuđman government, efforts to secure large-scale Western finance have begun. The country also hopes that privatizing more industries will increase competition and encourage foreign investors.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 47.05
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 10,600
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 3.2
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 3.5
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 7.9
 Industry: 30.0

Services: 62.1

Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:

 Private Consumption: 61

 Government Consumption: 20

 Gross Domestic Investment: 27.7

Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 6.355

Imports: 12.86

% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 3.7

% of Income Received by Richest 10%: 23.3

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
119.6	125.9	131.9	134.1	134.3

Finance

National Currency: Kuna (HRK)

Exchange Rate: \$ 1 = HRK 6.7035

Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 33.9

Central Bank Discount Rate %: 4.5

Total External Debt \$billion: 23.56

Debt Service Ratio %: 7.93

Balance of Payments \$billion: –2.04

International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 8.2

Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 1.8

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 120.6

 per capita \$: 27.10

Foreign Direct Investment \$billion: 2.0

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year

Revenues \$billion: 12.76

Expenditures \$billion: 14.31

Budget Deficit \$billion: 1.55

Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 7.9

Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: –0.5

Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 0.29

Irrigation, % of Farms having: 0.31

Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 117.6

Total Farmland % of land area: 26.1

Livestock: Cattle 000: 438

 Chickens million: 10.8

 Pigs million: 1.3

 Sheep 000: 528

Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 3.85

Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 29.65

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 4.56

Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 3.9

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 3.74
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 7.4
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 1.67
 Net Energy Imports % of use: 54.9
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 3.82
 Production kW-hr billion: 12.12
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 14.27
 Coal Reserves tons million: 43
 Production tons million: —
 Consumption tons million: 0.88
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: 0.87
 Production cubic feet billion: 62
 Consumption cubic feet billion: 100
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels million: 75
 Production barrels 000 per day: 22
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 91
 Pipelines Length km: 583

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 12.86
 Exports \$billion: 6.355
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 6.4
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 6.0
 Balance of Trade \$billion: –2.04

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Italy %	17.9	26.1
Germany %	15.7	12.0
Slovenia %	7.4	8.3
Austria %	6.6	7.9
France %	5.3	—
Russia %	4.7	—
Bosnia and Herzegovina %	—	14.6

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 28,123
 Paved %: 84.6
 Automobiles: 1,244,300
 Trucks and Buses: 143,500
 Railroad: Track Length km: 2,726
 Passenger-km billion: 1.2
 Freight-km billion: 2.2
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 51
 Total Deadweight Tonnage million: 1.18
 Airports: 68
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 783
 Length of Waterways km: 785

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 7.4
 Number of Tourists from 000: —

Tourist Receipts \$billion: 6.6
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 709

Communications

Telephones million: 1.825
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones million: 2.553
 Personal Computers million: 0.76
 Internet Hosts per million people: 6,594
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 226

ENVIRONMENT

Solid waste disposal is currently the country's biggest concern. The volume of waste is increasing, and the country does not have adequate facilities for disposing of it. Mortality rates from respiratory diseases are twice as high in large cities as in small ones and three times higher in larger cities than in rural areas. Air pollution has also damaged the country's forests, and nearly one-quarter of the trees are moderately to severely defoliated. Air pollution is compounded by the country's heavy reliance under Tito on brown coal and lignite. Thermal power plants are among the biggest contributors to air and water pollution. As a result the country's monuments are showing signs of irreversible deterioration. Over one-half of the country's soil is subject to erosion because of improper cultivation on steep lands.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 31.9
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: 2
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 6
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 43,086
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 4.47

LIVING CONDITIONS

Since 1991 Croats have been able to purchase apartments that were formerly government owned. Serbs are often not allowed to purchase these properties, leading to charges of discrimination that have yet to be resolved. With the resurgence of tourism, many foreigners have decided to purchase property in Croatia, so property in popular areas along the coast has become quite expensive. The country has a good public transportation system, paved roads, and many airports. It is easy to get into and leave the country. Damage still remains from the war in the mid-1990s, which affects housing and other aspects of infrastructure. Some remote areas still have land mines planted in the ground, and it is unsafe to venture off defined paths.

HEALTH

Health in Croatia is good. The health care system is modern, and doctors and nurses are well trained. Life expectancy is about 74 years, and infant mortality is about seven deaths per 1,000 live births. Each woman has, on average, 1.4 children. The HIV infection rate is very low.

Health

Number of Physicians: 10,552
 Number of Dentists: 3,021
 Number of Nurses: 22,185
 Number of Pharmacists: 2,235
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 237
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: 6.0
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 6.96
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 8
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 7.3
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 369
 HIV Infected % of adults: < 0.1
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 94
 Measles: 95
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: —
 Access to Improved Water Source %: —

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Most people in Croatia have enough to eat. Croatian food tends to be heavy and oily, featuring cheese and pastry. Along the Adriatic coasts people eat seafood, especially shrimp; a typical dish from the Dalmatian region is *brudet*, a stew of fish and rice. Other popular dishes include soup made of beans and corn, baked cheese dumplings, a cheese donut called *piroska*, and a pie filled with cheese or meat called *burek*. Croatia has many good alcoholic beverages, including beer and locally made wines. Zagreb is famous for Tuborg beer. Dalmatia is known for red wines, such as Faros and Dingac. Brandy is popular; *sljivovica* is made from plums, and *travarica* is flavored with herbs.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 7.1
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,480
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 116.7
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 210.4

STATUS OF WOMEN

Although the government collects only limited statistics on the problem, informed observers believe that violence against women, including spousal abuse, remains com-

mon. One nongovernmental organization (NGO) that operates a hotline and support services for women assessed that spousal abuse continues to be a large and unrecognized problem. Alcohol abuse and poor economic circumstances for veterans of the military conflict are cited as contributing factors. A government commission on equality indicated to NGOs that it would recommend that the government track statistics on violence against women; however, this has not been done. One major problem is human trafficking in women who are forced to work as sex slaves.

Amendments to the penal code that went into effect in 1998 removed violence perpetrated within the family (except against children) from the categories of crimes to be prosecuted automatically by the state attorney. The victim now must file a request to prosecute, thereby severely curtailing efforts by health care workers and police to act on suspected cases of violence in the home. The Constitutional Court upheld the constitutionality of this procedure. The nonpartisan Parliamentary Women's Caucus promised to seek amendments of these laws but has not yet done so.

Sexual harassment is a violation of the penal code section on abuse of position but is not specifically included in the employment law. NGOs reported that, in practice, women generally do not resort to the penal code for relief for fear of losing their jobs. In a positive development, the labor union of the Pliva pharmaceutical company signed a collective agreement that specifically forbids sexual harassment.

The law does not discriminate by gender. However, women typically hold lower-paying positions in the workforce. Government statistics from previous years showed that while women constitute roughly 50 percent of the workforce, they occupy few jobs at senior levels, even in areas such as education and administration, where they are a clear majority of the workers. Considerable anecdotal evidence has suggested that women hold by far the preponderance of low-level clerical and shopkeeping positions, as well as primary and secondary schoolteaching jobs. Women reportedly are often among the first to be fired or laid off. NGOs and labor organizations report a practice in which women received short-term work contracts renewable every three to six months, creating a climate of job insecurity for them. While men occasionally suffer from this practice, it is disproportionately used against women to dissuade them from taking maternity leave. Legislation was passed in 1998 limiting the use of short-term work contracts to a maximum of three years.

While there is no national organization devoted solely to the protection of women's rights, many small, independent groups are active in the capital and larger cities. One of the most active was BaBe (Be active, Be emancipated).

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 22
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.0
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 46.3

WORK

Croatia's per capita GDP has been growing steadily for the past few years, and in 2004 it was about \$10,600. The unemployment rate, on the other hand, was quite high at almost 20 percent. Some 46 percent of Croatians work in services. Tourism is a growing service industry. Some 13 percent of the workforce was employed in agriculture, growing such crops as wheat, corn, sugar beets, olives, grapes, and potatoes and raising livestock for meat and milk. Industry accounted for one-quarter of employment. Croatian products include plastics, electronics, metal products, textiles, ships, and petroleum.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 1,690,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 44.7
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 13.2
 Industry: 25.4
 Services: 46.4
 Unemployment %: 19.5

EDUCATION

Croatia is thought to have an excellent educational system. There is universal public education for all children, and the quality is uniform throughout the country, regardless of the urban, suburban, or rural environment. Children are required to attend school between the ages of six and 15. Part of the proof of the success of Croatia's educational system is in the nation's literacy rate of almost 99 percent. Croatians determine their career paths by their high school selection of either trade school or college preparatory school (*gimnazija*). The trade schools prepare students for technical and practical careers, such as nursing, machine construction, and tourism, while those in the *gimnazija* prepare for university; there are also specialized arts schools.

Students must pass an entrance exam in order to pursue higher education. Croatia has universities in Split, Rijeka, Osijek, and Zagreb. Zagreb University was founded in 1669. Croatia also has colleges in Zadar and Pula. Colleges are considered less specialized than universities and offer degrees in subjects like teaching rather than subjects like languages, law, or medicine. Croatian universities tend not to have attendance-based courses, and many

Croatian university students work full time, going to their universities to take final examinations (traditionally oral) at the end of each semester.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 98.5
 Male %: 99.4
 Female %: 97.8
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 13.1
 First Level: Primary schools: 1,928
 Teachers: 10,832
 Students: 192,004
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 17.7
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 89.3
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 482
 Teachers: 36,806
 Students: 254,335
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 10.9
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 86.6
 Third Level: Institutions: 61
 Teachers: 8,132
 Students: 121,722
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 39.4
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 4.5

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Croatia has the technological amenities of a modern nation. Internet facilities and cellular telephones are ubiquitous. The Croatian Ministry of Science and Technology sponsors research in a variety of fields, and Croatian scientists often collaborate with colleagues from other nations. In September 2004 Croatia and the United States signed an agreement on scientific and technological cooperation, which will fund joint research projects and scientific workshops and facilitate the exchange of scientists and scientific information between the two countries. Research priorities include environmental protection, HIV/AIDS and other health problems, marine science, scientific education, and sustainable development.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 1,187
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 1.12
 High-Tech Exports \$million: 432.3
 Patent Applications by Residents: 444

MEDIA

Compared with the Tuđman era, Croatia's media operates in relative freedom. The constitution guarantees freedom of the press and bans censorship. Most Croatians get their news from public television. The national state-owned station, Croatian Radio-Television, is financed by

license fees and advertising. There are two other national commercial networks and many private local television stations. Several newspapers appear daily. The national news agency is HINA.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 12
 Total Circulation 000: 595
 Circulation per 1,000: 134
 Books Published: 2,309
 Periodicals: 229
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets million: 1.28
 per 1,000: 286

CULTURE

Croatia has a great deal of art in museums. One of its most famous artists is the modern sculptor Ivan Meštrović, whose work adorns many Croatian town squares; he also designed the Croatian History Museum in Zagreb and several other public buildings. Croatia has produced many great writers, including Marin Držić, who wrote plays in the 16th century, and Miroslav Krleža, a 20th-century poet, playwright, and novelist. His best-known work is *Banners*, which depicts Croatian life at the beginning of the 1900s. Croatian folk music combines Slavic, Roma, and Italian styles.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 243
 Volumes: 5,604,947
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: 143
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts national currency million: 42.2
 Number of Cinemas: 141
 Seating Capacity: 52,000
 Annual Attendance: 2,300,000

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Croatia is dedicated to preserving its folklore and musical traditions. The Institute for Ethnology and Folklore research was founded in 1948, and it has brought together ethnologists, historians, art historians, musicologists, scholars of comparative literature, and other researchers who take an interest in traditional culture. The institute's programs include performances of traditional music and theater, preservation of folktales, and research in themes that have appeared in vernacular culture since the Communist period. Zagreb hosts an international folklore festival every July. Almost every village has its own annual cultural celebrations.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Croatia celebrates numerous festivals every year. Zagreb holds a springtime jazz festival in March and April and an international jazz festival every October, as well as a summer festival that features classical music. Split and Dubrovnik also have music festivals in the summer. Zagreb also holds an international animation festival, an international folklore festival, and a theater festival called EUROKAZ.

Croatia's coastline and landscape offer a variety of options for outdoor recreation, one of the reasons the country is becoming so popular with tourists. The coast is good for yachting and sea kayaking, scuba diving and other water sports. The national parks attract rock climbers and hikers. Many Croatians enjoy hunting in the nation's forests.

ETIQUETTE

For the most part, Croatians follow typical European standards of behavior. Croatians are very proud and do not appreciate being patronized by people who look down on their comparative poverty or lack of development. Croatians do not always reply immediately to letters or faxes, but that is not necessarily a sign of disinterest; speaking on the telephone or meeting face to face will often get better responses. Customers at restaurants or bars should round up their bill when paying, though occasionally a service charge is explicitly added. Tour guides expect tips.

FAMILY LIFE

The number of people getting married has decreased since 1970. In 2000 the rate of marriage was five per 1,000 inhabitants. The average age at first marriage has been increasing; in 2000 the average was 25.3 years for women and 28.6 years for men. The divorce rate has risen slightly since 1996; the average marriage ending in divorce lasted 14 years. The birth rate has been dropping, and currently women have, on average, 1.4 children, below replacement level. Women are waiting longer to have children; the average age at which a woman has her first child was 25.6 in 2000. Some 91 percent of all children are born to married mothers.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Croatians dress in typical European style. People engaged in business dress up more than people engaged in casual activities.

SPORTS

Croatians enjoy sports. Zagreb is the country's center of organized sports, and various sports clubs are based there; they include the Mountaineering Society, the Marksman's Club, and the Gymnastics Club, among many others. People play basketball, tennis, handball, and water polo and sail and climb mountains. Croatian athletes have won many international honors, including numerous Olympic medals in sport such as swimming, skiing, and kayaking. Tennis player Goran Ivanisevic won the 2001 Wimbledon title. One of Croatia's basketball players, Krešimir Ćosić, has been elected to the Basketball Hall of Fame. A monument was erected to the basketball player Drazen Petrovic at the Olympic Park in Lausanne, Switzerland, in commemoration of his leading his team to a silver medal in the 1992 Olympics.

Soccer is by far the most popular spectator sport. Croatia has had a national team since 1907. They won third place in the 1998 World Cup.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1941** Germany and Italy set up the so-called Independent State of Croatia, run by the Croatian Ustase regime of Ante Pavelić; the Ustase begin the expulsion and extermination of Serbs, Jews, Gypsies, and antifascist Croats, killing more than 500,000; the Communist Partisans, led by ethnic Croatian Josip Broz Tito, organize resistance against the Ustase and their Axis supporters.
- 1944** Partisan control of Croatian territory, except for the major cities, is nearly complete; Partisans retaliate against anti-Partisan Croats, slaughtering tens of thousands.
- 1945** Both World War II and the Croatian civil war end; the Yugoslavia Socialist Federation is formed, led by Marshall Tito and consisting of six republics: Croatia, Slovenia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, and Macedonia.
- 1948** Tito breaks relations with the Soviet Union; Tito replaces Croatian nationalist members of the Croatian Communist Party with centralist officials of his own choosing.
- 1969** Efforts at decentralization by the Yugoslav federal government fuel a cultural flowering in Croatia known as the "Croatian Spring," a movement that gained nationalist momentum under the reformist leadership of Miko Tripalo and Savka Dabčević-Kučar.
- 1971** Tito responds to calls for greater Croatian autonomy by dismissing or imprisoning numerous intellectual and cultural leaders, including Tripalo, Dabčević-Kučar, and members of the cultural organization *Matiča Hrvatska*.
- 1974** Yugoslavia adopts a new republican constitution but undermines the autonomy nominally granted to Croatia by continuing to exercise centralized control of the Croatian Communist Party.
- 1980** Tito dies; Yugoslavia's economy takes a turn for the worse.
- 1985** Yugoslavia's economic crisis hits its nadir, with production and living standards at 1965 levels.
- 1988** Slobodan Milošević, the president of Serbia, embarks on a campaign to recentralize Yugoslavia.
- 1989** Croatia, along with Slovenia, resists centralization and calls for its own multiparty elections.
- 1990** In the first multiparty national elections since World War II, the Communist Party is defeated by the HDZ, a conservative nationalist party led by Franjo Tuđman; President Tuđman's administration begins to purge Serbs from positions of authority, prompting fear among Serbs of a reprise of the ethnic cleansing campaigns of the 1940s.
- 1991** Serb-dominated Krajina in the southwest secedes from Croatia to join with Serbia; Croatia declares independence; civil war breaks out in Krajina between ethnic Serbs and ethnic Croats; the government of Yugoslavia declares war on Croatia, bombs the cities of Vukovar and Dubrovnik, and occupies about one-third of Croatian territory.
- 1992** The United Nations dispatches 14,000 peacekeeping troops to Croatia; the European Community and the United States recognize Croatia's independence; Croatia supports Croats against Serbs and Muslims in the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina; Tuđman is reelected to a five-year term as president of Croatia.
- 1995** Tuđman, Milošević, and President Alija Izetbegović of Bosnia-Herzegovina sign a peace accord in Dayton, Ohio, ending the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina; Croatia reasserts control over Krajina, leading to a mass exodus of Croatian Serbs; the HDZ dominates legislative elections but loses seats.
- 1997** Tuđman is reelected, but independent election monitors criticize his control over the media and curtailed minority suffrage.
- 1998** After two years under UN supervision, Eastern Slavonia and Baranja are returned to Croatian control.
- 1999** Tuđman dies and is succeeded by Vlatko Pavletić as acting president.
- 2000** Stjepan Mesić, leader of the Croatian People's Party, is elected president, ending HDZ rule; war crimes prosecutions continue.
- 2001** The war crimes tribunal at the Hague indicts former Yugoslav President Slobodan Milošević for

- war crimes and crimes against humanity during the war in Croatia; Yugoslavia returns stolen Orthodox icons to the city of Vukovar.
- 2002** Croatia begins negotiations with Belgrade; infighting within HDZ hampers economic reform; Croatia refuses to hand over war criminal Janko Bobetko.
- 2003** Croatia applies for EU membership; Mirko Norac is sentenced to prison for killing Serb civilians in 1991; Ivo Sanader of HDZ becomes prime minister.
- 2004** War crimes prosecutions continue; the European Union agrees to begin considering Croatia's application for accession in March 2005.
- 2005** Mesić wins second five-year term in runoff election.
General Ante Gotovina, sought by the war crimes tribunal in the Hague, is arrested in Spain.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Central Bureau of Statistics
<http://www.dzs.hr/defaulte.htm>
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs
<http://www.mfa.hr/MVP.asp?pcpid=1612>

CUBA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Cuba (República de Cuba)

ABBREVIATION

CU

CAPITAL

Havana

HEAD OF STATE & HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

President of the State Council, Chairman of the Council of Ministers, and First Secretary of the Communist Party of Cuba Fidel Castro Ruz (president from 1976; prime minister from 1959)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

One-party Communist dictatorship

POPULATION

11,346,670 (2005)

AREA

110,860 sq km (42,803 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Mulatto

LANGUAGE

Spanish

RELIGION

Roman Catholicism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Peso

NATIONAL FLAG

Three blue and two white horizontal stripes on which a red equilateral triangle containing a white five-pointed star is superimposed on the hoist side

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A shield flanked by branches of oak and laurel. The upper portion of the shield is a seascape containing a blue-green channel between two rocky promontories with a sun on the horizon. Suspended between the two headlands is a key memorializing the designation "Key to the Gulf of Mexico," applied to Cuba by the Spanish monarchs. The lower half of the shield is divided between a blue-and-white-striped design and a royal palm between two conical mountains. The shield is crested by a red wool cap on a liberty pole rising from a fasces of bound rods.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"March to the Battle, People of Bayamo"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day), January 2 (Day of the Revolution), February 24 (Proclamation of Baire), May 1 (Labor Day), May 20 (Independence Day), July 26 (Rebellion Day), October 10 (Proclamation of Yara), December 7 (Day of National Mourning), December 10 (Independence Day), December 24 and 25 (Christmas), Holy Thursday, Good Friday

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

May 20, 1902

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

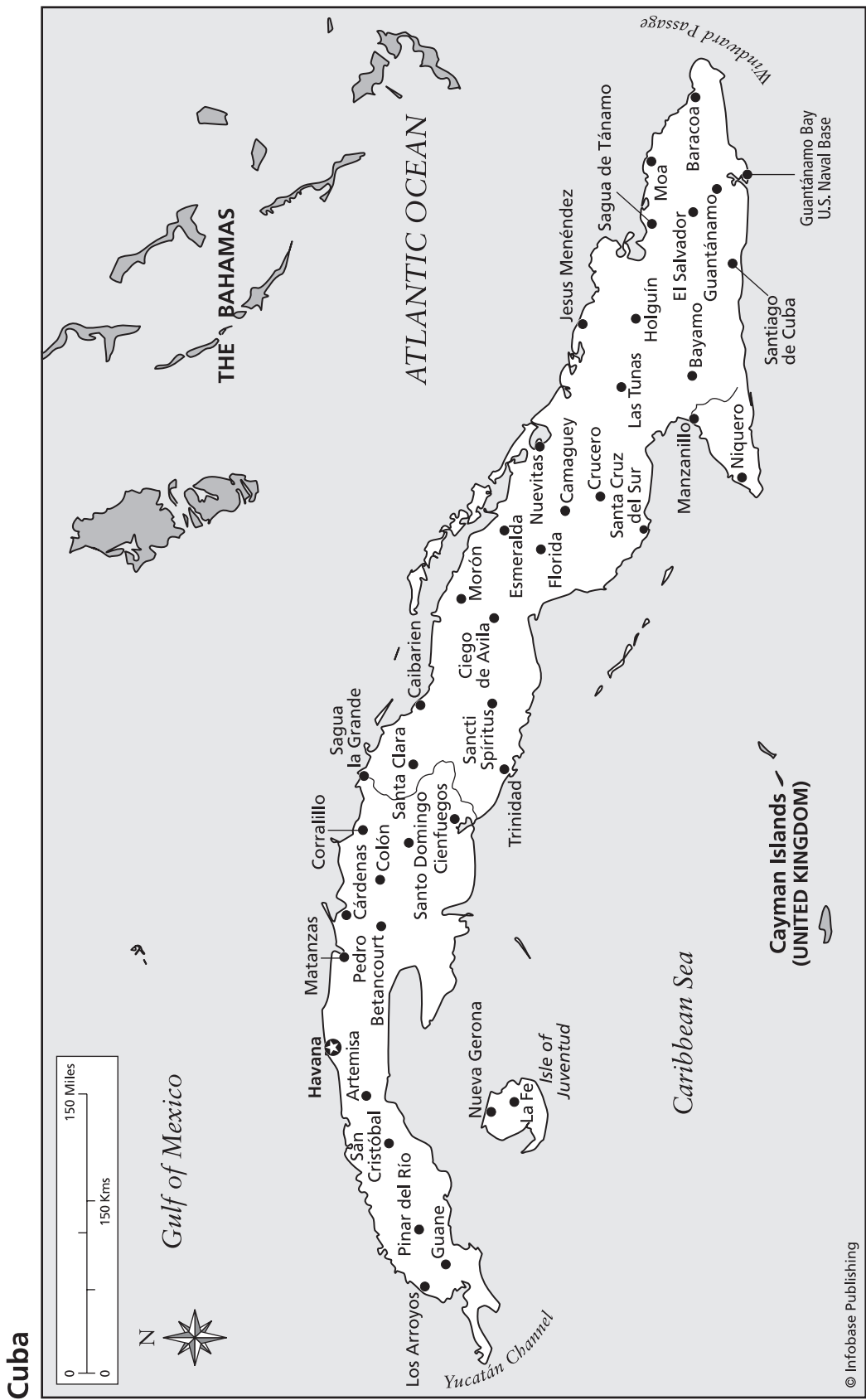
February 14, 1976, amended July 1992, June 2002

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

The island of Cuba is located on the northern rim of the Caribbean Sea about 150 km (90 mi) south of Key West. It is the largest of the West Indian islands, with one-half of the total land area of the West Indies. In addition to the main island, the archipelago includes the Isla de la Juventud (formerly the Isle of Pines), near the south coast in the Gulf of Batabano, and some 1,600 coastal cays and islets. The main island, which occupies 94.7 percent of the national territory, extends 1,223 km (760 mi) east to

west and 89 km (55 mi) north to south. The total coastline stretches 3,735 km (2,320 mi).

Topographically, two-thirds of Cuba consists of flatlands and rolling, with three mountain systems making up the remainder. The largest of the mountain ranges is the Sierra Maestra, including Cuba's highest peak, Pico Turquino (2,005 m, 6,576 ft), and there are also minor ranges, such as Sierra Cristal and Cuchillas de Toa. The central mountain system includes the Escambray Mountains, Sierra de Trinidad, and Sierra de Sancti Spíritus. The third mountain system consists of the western high-



lands, Sierra del Rosario and Sierra de los Organos. The lowlands include valleys, such as the Central Valley, and swamps, such as the Zapata Swamp.

Cuba has more than 200 rivers as well as small streams and arroyos that are dry during the summer. The longest river is the Cauto, which flows into the Gulf of Guacanayabo after flowing about 370 km (230 mi) from the Sierra Maestra.

Geography

Area sq km: 110,860; sq mi 42,803
World Rank: 103rd
Land Boundaries, km: US Naval Base Guantanamo 29
Coastline, km: 3,735
Elevation Extremes meters:
Lowest: Caribbean Sea 0
Highest: Pico Turquino 2,005
Land Use %
Arable land: 33.05
Permanent Crops: 7.6
Forest: 21.4
Other: 37.95

Population of Principal Cities (1999 est.)

Bayamo	152,000
Camagüey	304,500
Ciego de Avila	114,600
Cienfuegos	153,300
Guantánamo	222,300
Havana	2,190,300
Holguín	263,300
Las Tunas	141,300
Manzanillo	109,300
Matanzas	128,600
Pinar del Río	146,100
Santa Clara	216,000
Santiago de Cuba	411,100

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Although situated entirely in the tropics, the moderating influence of trade winds gives Cuba a temperate, semitropical climate. There are two seasons: the dry one, lasting from November to April, and the wet season, from May through October. The country's moderate rainfall is generally well distributed, but about 75 percent of the precipitation occurs in the wet season, when there are heavy downpours of short duration. Pinar del Río receives the most rainfall, with the amount diminishing progressively toward the east. Cuba lies in the southern track of maximum frequency of the tropical hurricane belt, and the island experiences at least one hurricane every other year.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature: 70°F to 81°F
Havana: 77°F

Average Rainfall
Mountains 70 in
Lowlands: 35 in to 55 in
Easternmost areas: 25 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Cuba is home to numerous species of animals, particularly reptiles, including iguanas, salamanders, lizards, turtles, crocodiles, and 15 species of snakes. The largest indigenous mammal living on the island is the *jutía*, a large tree rat. Cuba is home to the world's smallest species of bird, the two-gram bee hummingbird. Cuba's national bird is the *tocororo*, which has red, white and blue feathers to match the Cuban flag.

Cuba has over 6,000 plant species. Mangrove swamps thrive on the southern coast. The royal palm grows all over the island, and there are said to be 20 million royal palm trees. The national flower is the butterfly jasmine. Other interesting plants include the silk-cotton tree, the big belly palm, the *jagüey*, a fig that grows in the air, and the cork palm, which dates back to the Cretaceous period.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 11,346,670
World Rank: 70th
Density per sq km: 102.9
% of annual growth (1999-2003): 0.3
Male %: 50.0
Female %: 50.0
Urban %: 75.7
Age Distribution %:
0-14: 20.0
15-64: 69.8
65 and over: 10.2
Population 2025: 11,669,000
Birth Rate per 1,000: 12.18
Death Rate per 1,000: 7.17
Rate of Natural Increase %: 0.6
Total Fertility Rate: 1.66
Expectation of Life (years): Males 74.77
Females 79.44
Marriage Rate per 1,000: 5.1
Divorce Rate per 1,000: 3.2
Average Size of Households: 3.7
Induced Abortions: 76,293

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

In 2004 the ethnic composition of Cuba was estimated to be 51 percent mixed race, 37 percent white, 11 percent black, and 1 percent other (mostly Chinese). Ethnic data is no longer reported in census figures, and these percentages are extrapolated from 1950s data.

The basic racial stock of the mestizos or mulattos (these terms are interchangeable in Cuba, although more

strictly mestizo refers to a person of Spanish and Native American parentage and mulatto to a person of Spanish and black parentage) and the whites (known as criollos) is Spanish. For over 400 years Spanish immigrants from all regions of Spain, especially Andalusia, formed the dominant social, economic, and political class, imposing Spanish standards on all walks of life. Even mestizos were oriented toward criollo society and upward mobility was associated with white physical and cultural traits.

The blacks are descendants of slaves imported into Cuba from 1517 to 1865 (when the slave trade was officially abolished) from all parts of West Africa but particularly from Yoruba (Lucumi) and Calabar (Carabalies), both in what is now Nigeria. The black population, now known as Afro-Cubans, also includes some Haitians and Jamaicans. The African impact on Cuban life is most evident in music, literature, and religious cults.

The two other ethnic minorities are the Chinese (known as *amarillos* or Orientals) and eastern Mediterranean and German Jews, the former referred to as *turcos*, because they came from provinces of the Ottoman Empire. Large expatriate communities existed in Havana and the larger cities before the revolution, including those of Haitians, French, Irish, Japanese, British, Canadians, and Americans. Few of these remained on the island after the revolution. The majority of the inhabitants of Isla de la Juventud once spoke English.

Traditionally, racial origin and ethnicity have been considered important in Cuba, and society was divided along lines of class and color, with the blacks forming the disadvantaged and poorest class. Racial tensions continued to exist as long as the blacks remained in the majority, and there were race riots as late as 1912, when over 3,000 blacks were killed. Interpersonal relations were based on stereotyped perceptions of blacks as lazy, ignorant, and uncouth. There were also fears on the part of whites of absorption by blacks, and these fears were only dispelled in the 1940s through stepped-up immigration of white Europeans. Another positive factor in race relations was the rise in influence of the mestizos, who represented the national integration of races. Nationalist Cubans upheld the virtues of mestizos against the upper-class white supremacists, and Castro has declared that all Cubans are mestizo in spirit. After the revolution Castro tried to deliberately build a fluid and de-ethnicized society by stressing “Cubanness” and racial blends as opposed to rigid categorization. Increased homogenization also resulted from the fact that most of the refugees from Cuba during this period belonged to upper-class white communities. Discrimination on the basis of race has been eliminated by law and, to a large extent, moderated in practice. The government’s economic and agrarian reforms and the campaign against illiteracy have helped to bridge the gap between the races. However, these efforts have drawn fire from both blacks and whites. The blacks

have claimed that the trend is not toward a true integration of races but toward the assimilation of blacks into the white culture, and the whites have resented the loss in jobs and prestige through competition with blacks. Racial inequalities have not been entirely eradicated and still survive not only in interpersonal attitudes and relations but also in more crucial areas of public life. There are few blacks in the higher echelons of government, the Communist Party, or the media.

LANGUAGES

Spanish is the official language and is spoken by virtually the entire population. Cuban Spanish has been described as “disfigured Castillian” and is generally spoken with a slurred accent associated with Andalusian speech. The vocabulary includes many words of Indian, African, and English origins. Under Castro all names of public places and institutions have been Cubanized, particularly those that were associated with U.S. interests.

RELIGIONS

Afro-Cuban religions—blends of native African religions and Roman Catholicism—are widely practiced in Cuba. Officially, Cuba has been an atheist state for most of the Castro era. Prior to the revolution Roman Catholicism was predominant, although it was permeated by Santería (a native African religion) and rather weak in rural areas. In the early 1960s church and state confronted one another with open hostility, the church seeing the revolutionary government as antireligious and the government seeing the church as a potential source of counterrevolution. In 1962 the government seized and shut down more than 400 Catholic schools and expelled many clergy. The 1976 constitution proclaimed scientific materialism as the base of the state and education but recognized and guaranteed religious freedom, though with restrictions. By the 1980s both the church and the government had made some concessions and had entered a period of rapprochement. In 1992 the constitution was amended to characterize the state as secular instead of atheist. The Catholic Church is the largest independent institution in Cuba today but continues to operate under significant pressure. The Cuban government continues to refuse to allow the church to have independent printing press capabilities, to have full access to the media, or to establish institutions, such as local schools.

In November 1996 President Castro invited Pope John Paul II to visit Cuba after an agreement was reached allowing the church to carry out its religious activities in preparation for the visit. In 1997 Christmas was officially recognized as a holiday for the first time since 1969 and the following year was permanently reinstated as a na-

tional holiday. During the pope's visit the Cuban government permitted four open-air masses, provided media coverage, and assisted with transportation of the public to the masses. While on the island, during January 21–25, 1998, Pope John Paul II spoke of broadening the space and freedom of action of the Catholic Church and asked Fidel Castro to grant a prisoner amnesty. The Cuban government responded by freeing at least 300 prisoners, some 70 of which were being held on political charges. Other Cuban religious groups have also benefited from increased openness toward religion. Small Jewish congregations survive in Havana, Santiago, Camagüey, and other parts of the island.

Religious Affiliations

Roman Catholic	4,845,000
Other	6,501,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Prior to Christopher Columbus's visit in 1492, Cuba was inhabited by various indigenous groups, who were unable to resist the Spanish invaders. The conquest began in 1511, as led by Diego de Velázquez, and Cuba then served as the staging post for expeditions to the rest of the Americas. British and French buccaneers targeted the Spanish fleets regularly during this period. The native population declined rapidly under Spanish rule, through violence and disease, and was replaced by African slaves. In 1762 Cuba was briefly taken by a British force led by George Pocock but returned to Spanish rule in 1763. While the rest of Latin America sought independence during the early 19th century, Cuba remained in Spanish hands and uprisings were brutally suppressed. By 1868 popular unrest spilled over into the Ten Years' War, ended by truce in 1878 with reforms promised by Spain. Failure to deliver on these promises prompted another revolt in 1895, led by José Martí. The United States sympathized with the rebels, and when the USS *Maine* was sunk in Havana harbor the Spanish-American War broke out.

When the war ended in 1898 the United States established a military government on the island, and although occupation and direct rule ended in 1902, bad feelings developed early between Americans and Cuban patriots and were exacerbated by the reported arrogance and racism of U.S. troops and war correspondents. The United States also imposed humiliating conditions on Cuba as it worked toward independence. These conditions provided that Cuba permit no foreign bases (except those of the United States), lease in perpetuity to the United States the naval base at Guantánamo, accept the acts of the military government as legitimate, omit Isla de la Juventud from national boundaries, and give the United

States the right to intervene in Cuba for any of various reasons, including the protection of life, property, and individual liberty. These conditions, known as the Platt Amendment (after the U.S. senator Orville Platt), were in force until they were revoked in 1934. During this period of semi-independence as an American protectorate, U.S. economic hegemony over the island was firmly established. By 1928 U.S. investments in Cuba constituted 17.7 percent of all U.S. investments in Latin America. The United States controlled 75 percent of the sugar crop, public utilities, ranching, and mining. U.S. economic exploitation became the principal target of Cuban nationalists. Anti-Americanism has been the one consistent theme of Cuban history in the 20th century.

During the mid-20th century Cuban politics was dominated by Fulgencio Batista Zaldívar, who ruled the country directly or indirectly from 1933 to 1944 and from 1952 to 1959. Batista's last years in power were characterized by increasing repression and corruption that generated popular support for his overthrow. Weakened by disaffection from the military and Cuba's large middle class, the regime crumbled and Batista fled the country. A revolutionary movement under the leadership of Fidel Castro Ruz, who had been waging a guerrilla campaign against the central government since 1954, overthrew his regime.

After a brief period of moderation Castro moved to the left, purportedly adapting Marxist ideas to Latin American conditions. He consolidated power through the use of the Communist Party as the governing vehicle and instituted a program of widespread reform that included land reform and the nationalization of all foreign-owned land and businesses. The United States responded by terminating diplomatic relations and sponsoring an invasion of anti-Castro exiles, which was defeated at the Bay of Pigs in April 1961. Castro declared Cuba a Communist state in December 1961. The following year the Organization of American States (OAS) voted to exclude Cuba. Castro's isolation in the Western Hemisphere pushed him into closer relations with the Soviet Union, which offered him massive amounts of military and economic aid. The Soviet Union's placement of missiles in Cuba precipitated a confrontation with the United States in 1962.

In 1965 Castro established the Communist Party of Cuba (PCC) as the sole legal party. A new constitution, establishing Cuba as a socialist state, was adopted in 1976. The first congress of the PCC was held in 1975, establishing a National Assembly, which chose Castro as head of state and government the following year.

During the 1960s and 1970s Castro attempted to export his revolution to other Latin American countries and aid leftist insurgents in several third-world countries. Cuban troops were sent to Angola in 1976 and to Ethiopia in 1977. Military aid was sent to the Sandinista government in Nicaragua in 1979. Diplomatic isolation gradually improved during the late 1970s, with the OAS lifting

its sanctions in 1975 and relations with the United States improving slightly. In 1979 Cuba hosted the meeting of Non-Aligned Nations, and Castro was elected head of the group for three years.

In 1980 exit restrictions were lifted temporarily and some 125,000 refugees fled to the United States, including large numbers of prisoners and the mentally ill. This placed renewed strain on U.S.-Cuban relations, as did Cuban assistance for the left-wing regimes and rebels in Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Grenada. Despite a meeting with the Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev in Havana in 1989, Castro rejected the possibility of any Soviet-style political or economic reforms. The collapse of the USSR in the early 1990s hit the Cuban economy hard, as aid and trade subsidies were ended, and an economic crisis in 1993–94 created another wave of refugees to the United States, ending only when the Americans agreed to allow 20,000 Cuban immigrants each year. In 1996 the United States signed the Helms-Burton Act, aimed at tightening the economic embargo by making foreign investors liable to penalties in U.S. courts. At the end of the 20th century Castro outlasted his ninth U.S. president, with threats to the revolution growing but by no means certain to cause changes.

Despite American appeals to open its economy and conduct free elections, in 2003 Cuba once again held elections in which 609 government candidates ran for 609 seats and then cracked down on dissident citizens. In 2004 the United States announced severe limitations on visits to Cuba and transfers of American cash to the island. In response, Cuba announced that U.S. dollars would no longer be legal tender.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1959–76 Osvaldo Dorticós Torrado
1976– Fidel Castro

CONSTITUTION

Cuba's constitution, first published in 1975 and approved in the same year by the first congress of the Cuban Communist Party, was ratified by a 97.7 percent vote in a special referendum on February 16, 1976, and made effective eight days later on the anniversary of the 1898 war of independence. The constitution replaced the Fundamental Law of the Republic, instituted on February 7, 1959, which modified and largely replaced the constitution of 1940, Cuba's second since independence. Minor modifications to the constitution in 1992 attempted to make foreign investment easier and also changed the religious nature of the state from atheist to secular.

The constitution established Cuba as a socialist state in which all power belongs to the working people. The

state guarantees work, medical care, education, food, clothing, and housing. The Republic of Cuba is defined as part of the world socialist community, which included the USSR. Cuba also states its hopes to establish one large (socialist) community of nations within Latin America and the Caribbean. The state is charged with the direction of the economic life of the nation in accordance with socialist doctrines. The state guarantees freedom of the press, assembly, religion, speech, demonstration, and association within the confines of the law and in accordance with the goals of socialist society. Freedoms, according to the constitution, are dependent on obligations to the society and state and may not be exercised in opposition to the existence and purposes of the socialist state. The state recognizes the right of small farmers to own, inherit, and sell land and other means of production, but this right, again, is not unequivocal. In general the constitution is a Marxist document that marks another stage in the institutionalization of the Cuban revolution.

The president of the Council of State is the head of state and of government. He presides over the Council of State and the Council of Ministers, signs the decree-laws and other resolutions of the Council of State, and commands the Revolutionary Armed Forces. Executive authority is concentrated in two institutions: a Council of State, elected from among members of the National Assembly, and a Council of Ministers, whose chairman serves as the head of government. The Council of State comprises a president, five vice presidents, a secretary, and 23 other members. It represents the National Assembly between sessions. Among the functions of the council are the calling of special sessions of the National Assembly, setting the date for elections to a new Assembly, issuance of decree-laws between sessions of the National Assembly, mobilization in the event of war, and revocation of acts of the Council of Ministers and executive committees of local organs of people's power that are contrary to the constitution. The Council of Ministers is the highest administrative organ. It is composed of the head of state and government, the first vice president, vice presidents, ministers, and the president of the Central Planning Board. It has an executive committee composed of the president, the first vice president, and vice presidents of the Council of Ministers. The Council of Ministers conducts general administration, prepares the budget, draws up bills, implements laws, issues decrees, prepares development plans, and supervises national security. Policy making is a function of the Council; administration is the function of each ministry.

Outside the Council of Ministers there are powerful state bodies, such as the Central Planning Board (Junta Central de Planificación, JUCEPLAN), the National Institute of Agrarian Reform (Instituto Nacional de Reforma Agraria, INRA), and the National Bank. There are also independent agencies whose chiefs have the rank of

ministers but are not members of the Council of Ministers. These agencies include the Cuban Petroleum Institute, the Cuban Academy of Sciences, the Book Institute, the Tobacco Enterprise, and the Cuban Broadcasting Institute. Members of the Council of Ministers and the Council of State are, with few exceptions, drawn from the ranks of Castro's associates during the Sierra Maestra days.

Together with the state, the Cuban Communist Party dominates all aspects of daily life, controlling the means of production and the distribution of goods as well as internal security, public communication, health, and education. Internal security is under the direction of the Ministry of Interior, which operates border guards and several other police forces, regulates immigration, and maintains a system of neighborhood informers and block wardens known as the Committees for the Defense of the Revolution.

Between 1959 and 1976 the Cuban government was a charismatic revolutionary regime based on the preeminence of Fidel Castro as "the Maximum Leader of the Revolution." Administration was enigmatic, paternalist, and personalistic and was further complicated by the overlapping relationships between the "Fidelistas," or followers of Fidel Castro, the Communist Party, the military, and other loci of power. Despite a growing emphasis on mass participation, power remains concentrated in the hands of a few selected on the basis of their loyalty to Castro. Although some authority has been dispersed and the government has become more structured, Castro retains control of the executive branch, the legislature, the military, and the Communist Party. Bureaucracy suffers from a lack of clear-cut and well-defined lines of authority and an overemphasis on party loyalty. Decisions are still made at the top, and there is little input from either the bureaucrats or the rank-and-file party members.

Castro's regime has achieved a reasonable degree not only of stability but also of respectability. There appears to be no serious threat to the government from within or without. Fidelism has become entrenched as the official ideology of the nation, and the more than 50 percent of the population born after the revolution have been so thoroughly indoctrinated in it that they may sustain it even after the original Fidelistas have disappeared from the scene. The older opponents of the revolution are either in prison or in exile. The government has been eminently successful in its mass mobilization programs, in the total destruction of the old order, in the neutralization of the church, and in the development of social and cultural spheres, such as universal literacy and free health care. At least until the economic crises of the 1990s, other achievements included the liberation of women, the expansion of child care centers, the introduction of one of the most comprehensive social-security systems in Latin America, and the clearing of the urban slums that disfigured prerevolutionary Cuba.

PARLIAMENT

The unicameral National Assembly of People's Power (Asamblea Nacional del Poder Popular), with 609 members, is elected for five-year terms by direct universal voting. According to the constitution the assembly is the supreme state organ. It holds two ordinary sessions per year and special sessions when requested by one-third of the deputies or by the Council of State.

The functions of the National Assembly include amendment of the constitution, approval of laws, supervision of all organs of state, revocation of unconstitutional decree-laws passed by the Council of State, approval of the state budgets and development plans, ratification of treaties and declaration of war, election of the president, the first vice president, vice presidents, and members of the Council of Ministers, and election of the president, vice president, and other judges of the People's Supreme Court. Under the 1976 constitution suffrage is universal over age 16.

POLITICAL PARTIES

According to the 1976 constitution the Communist Party of Cuba is the leading force of society and the state. It is also the only legally recognized party in Cuba. Its structure and policies are those of a traditional Marxist-Leninist party, with adjustments for regional realities. There is no separation between party echelons and public officials, and most national leaders have dual functions in the party and government. The party owes as much loyalty to Fidelism as it does to Marxism-Leninism.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The local government structure was entirely remodeled under the 1976 constitution. The country is divided into 14 provinces and 169 municipalities, simplifying the original division into six provinces, 55 regions, and 344 municipal administrations.

The 14 provinces are, from west to east, Pinar del Río, Habana, Ciudad de la Habana, Matanzas, Villa Clara, Cienfuegos, Sancti Spíritus, Ciego de Ávila, Camagüey, Las Tunas, Holguín, Granma, Santiago de Cuba, and Guantánamo. In addition, Isla de la Juventud is defined as a special municipality.

There are popular assemblies at the provincial and municipal levels. Members of the local Assemblies of the People's Power are elected for two-and-one-half-year terms. The members of municipal assemblies are elected directly, and an executive committee elected from among its own members heads each municipal assembly. The members of these executive committees form provincial assemblies, also headed by provincial executive commit-

tees. A commission of Communist Party members and youth and trade-union representatives proposes membership in provincial executive committees.

Municipal assemblies are responsible for schools, hospitals, stores, hotels, cinemas, public utilities, and municipal transport. They also elect magistrates to preside over the municipal people's courts. The provincial assemblies regulate intercity transport and provincial trade and elect judges to the provincial courts.

Supplementing and paralleling the local administration apparatus is a mass organization known as the Committees for the Defense of the Revolution (Comités de Defensa de la Revolución, CDR). These neighborhood committees enroll most of the adult population and act as a surveillance organization, with over 73,000 local committees.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The Cuban legal system is based on Spanish and U.S. law and modified by Marxist jurisprudence. The judiciary, known as the Judicial Power, is headed by the People's Supreme Court. The Supreme Court is charged with transmitting to the rest of the judicial system instructions received from the leadership of the revolution. The judiciary is governed by the Law of the Organization of the Judicial System drafted by the Commission of Judicial Studies of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba. The law eliminated military tribunals and extended popular participation throughout the judicial system. Lay judges sit along with professional judges in all courts and are selected for three-year terms of two one-month sessions per year.

The Supreme Court is divided into five chambers—criminal, civil and administrative, state security, labor, and military—with each chamber being composed of three professional and two lay judges. The National Assembly of People's Power elects all judges. Professional judges are appointed for five-year terms and the chief justice for a seven-year term. Through its governing council the court proposes laws, issues regulations, and directs the entire court system.

The 14 provincial courts at the next level are divided into three chambers: criminal, civil, and state security. Each chamber has three lay and professional judges, the latter serving five-year terms. Communist Party commissions select judges.

Popular participation in judicial activities is strongest in neighborhood people's courts, known as *Tribunales Populares de Base*. These courts are composed of worker judges selected by the local Communist Party units and serve on the bench in addition to their regular jobs.

There are two types of correctional institutes under the Ministry of Justice: penitentiaries (including maximum-security prisons) and state work farms. Work farms,

or *granjas*, are minimum-security prisons intended for those being rehabilitated through productive labor.

Conditions in Cuban prisons have been cited by the Inter-American Human Rights Commission, Amnesty International, and the International Commission of Jurists as among the most inhumane in the world. Political prisoners suffer torture, deprivation of food, abuse, and severe psychological pressures. Cuba does not accept the compulsory jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice.

HUMAN RIGHTS

In terms of political and civil rights, Cuba is ranked as a country that is not free. Castro's Cuba has had one of the worst human rights records in the Western Hemisphere. The fundamental human rights of expression, association, assembly, movement, and press are severely restricted by Cuban law. The creation of such crimes as "dangerousness," spreading enemy propaganda or unauthorized news, and insulting dead war heroes provides authorities with the power to imprison or keep under surveillance any individuals considered a threat to the regime regardless of actual criminal activities or intent. Harassment and prosecution of dissidents is common, and the state continues to imprison hundreds of political prisoners despite signs of an apparent opening following the papal visit in 1998.

Individuals can be held for "illegal exit" if caught leaving the country, and those who successfully do so are now banned from returning. Free trials are undermined by the restriction of defense rights and by the political oversight exercised by the Council of State. Courts frequently ignore the due process rights that do exist under the constitution. Harsh penalties for supporting the U.S. embargo on Cuba were introduced in 1999. Dissidents are frequently arrested and sentenced to considerable prison sentences for "acts against the security of the state" and other offenses; in 2005 numerous dissidents were still in prison after a crackdown in 2003. Any organized opposition to the regime is dealt with in like fashion.

Independent journalism is similarly restricted and persecuted. Journalists are frequently harassed by police and held in detention as a warning against covering such events as International Human Rights Day. Independent labor unions are banned, and individuals attempting to establish or participate in illegal groups are harassed and detained. To attract foreign investment Cuba has tightened labor controls and employees' rights. Prison labor is still used for agricultural camps, clothing assembly, and other factories, and prisoners work without pay in severe conditions violating international labor and prison standards.

Opposition is silenced through the persistent use of surveillance, phone tapping, and intimidation. Threats of

criminal prosecution and house arrests were used in October and November 1999 while Cuba played host to the Ibero-American Summit in Havana. International human rights and humanitarian monitors are routinely denied access to the country. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has not been allowed to conduct prison visits since 1989.

Severe conditions exist in Cuba's prisons. Prisoners suffer from malnourishment and overcrowding and from a lack of appropriate medical attention. Reports of physical and sexual abuse are common and solitary confinement is frequently used for long periods. All detainees are subject to political reeducation sessions—refusal leads to further punishment and mistreatment. Pretrial detainees are often not separated from convicted prisoners, or minors from adults. Complaints or appeals against harsh treatment and poor conditions lead to solitary confinement, restricted visits, or denial of medical treatment. Political prisoners are treated particularly poorly and are routinely not released at the end of their sentences, instead relying on presidential decrees.

Cuba maintains the death penalty for over 100 crimes, which in March 1999 were expanded to include drug trafficking and the corruption of minors. Procedural failings and a lack of judicial independence facilitate miscarriages of justice, and appeals are minimal. Reports of arbitrary disappearance and execution among prisoners were common throughout the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s and likely continue to this day. At least 12 prisoners sentenced to death were reportedly executed in 1999.

International reaction to Cuba's lack of regard for human rights increased slightly in the late 1990s as relations with Havana generally improved and nations sought signs of political relaxation. The United Nations passed a resolution in April 1999 expressing concern for Cuban human rights practices. The European Union condemned Cuba's continued use of the death penalty. Canada, long voicing its support for ending the trade embargo with Cuba, reassessed its policy in 1999 and suspended programs that did not further the protection of human rights in Cuba. The U.S. government remains committed to the embargo and uses it to express its concern over the human rights situation in Cuba. In 1999 several U.S. lawmakers visited Castro and urged political and economic reforms, including greater respect for human rights. They were denied access to political prisoners during their visit.

Cuba is the closest model of a Soviet-style totalitarian system in the Western Hemisphere.

FOREIGN POLICY

Due to economic hardship and the end of the cold war, Cuban foreign policy, once one of the most ambitious in Latin America, has been redirected and scaled down. Priorities today are finding new sources of trade, aid, and

foreign investment and promoting international opposition to the U.S. trade embargo and the Helms-Burton Act. Cuba maintains relations with over 160 nations and has civilian assistance workers, mainly medical staff, in more than 20 of these. Support for Latin American and African guerrilla movements, including through the deployment of over 75,000 troops, seems largely to have been abandoned. In the past such support, along with Cuba's Marxist-Leninist government and its alignment with the USSR, had contributed to its isolation in the Western Hemisphere, in particular its suspension from the Organization of American States (OAS) in January 1962. Since relaxing its foreign policy, Cuba has reestablished relations with most countries in Latin America and the Caribbean.

In the 1970s and 1980s Cuba spent millions of dollars exporting revolution to Latin America and Africa. Cuban forces played key roles in Angola, Ethiopia, and Nicaragua and served as advisers in the Congo and Mozambique. By the late 1980s such deployments were ending: Cuban forces left Angola by 1991, Nicaragua after 1990, and Ethiopia around the same period. After the 1992 peace accord in El Salvador, Castro stated that support for guerrillas was no longer central to Cuban foreign policy.

Cuba's relationship with Venezuela keeps the country's economy stable. In October 2000 Castro and Hugo Chavez signed an agreement to exchange Venezuelan oil for Cuban goods and services, which has proven very beneficial to Cuba. Cuba exported more than \$150 million in goods and services to Venezuela in 2003.

Relations with the United States, viewed by many Cubans as a colonial power due to its involvement in Cuban politics for much of the 20th century, have always dominated foreign policy. Cuba sought to counteract the effect of U.S. policy by moving closer to the Soviet Union and since 1990 by seeking wider international support for its trade and investment needs. U.S. policy has focused on maintaining the trade embargo while providing humanitarian assistance for ordinary Cubans and is heavily criticized by the Cuban government. The Helms-Burton, or Libertad, Act of 1996 aroused further international support for the Cuban position and condemnation of the U.S. approach. Relations with the United States are also affected by alleged Cuban involvement with the drug trade in the Caribbean and by mass migration from Cuba. A long-running dispute between the two countries has taken place over the status of the U.S. naval base at Guantánamo Bay, in southern Cuba.

In 2002 President Bush called on the Cuban government to reform itself by conducting free elections and opening its economy in exchange for an easing of the trade and travel restrictions imposed by the United States. The Cuban government refused. In 2003 Bush created a Commission for Assistance to a Free Cuba to help Cuba

achieve reforms and promised \$59 million over two years to help build democracy.

Cuba is a founding member of the United Nations and participates in many of its organizations. Other international organizations of which Cuba is a member include the International Atomic Energy Agency, the International Labor Organization, Interpol, the World Health Organization, and the Group of 77.

DEFENSE

The president, as commander in chief, heads the defense structure. The line of command runs through the defense minister (Raúl Castro, brother of Fidel Castro) to the joint general staff. The Revolutionary Armed Forces (FAR) is divided geographically into three field armies: western, central, and eastern. Within these armies there are six independent army corps and independent groups that can function even if the higher echelons are destroyed.

In practice the Central Committee of the Cuban Communist Party wields military power, which is two-thirds military in composition, and Castro and his brother Raúl deal directly with the commanders. As in other Communist armies, the commissar system is an important element in the indoctrination of the armed forces. Communist Party cells work in each formation and unit down to company level.

There are three paramilitary organizations: the Frontier Guards, the Youth Labor Army, and the Defensa Civil, or the territorial militia.

Military manpower is provided by compulsory military service requiring the enlistment of all males between 16 and 49. The term of service is three years. Most of the persons drafted are inducted into the Youth Labor Army rather than the regular forces. All enlisted men and officers undergo indoctrination in Marxism and Cuban socialism.

The FAR is one of the largest armed forces in Latin America, with large numbers of reserves ready for mobilization in 24 to 48 hours. The force is intensely disciplined and loyal to Fidel Castro personally. Until the 1990s Cuba received the latest military hardware from the USSR, and the army was extremely well equipped. The army leadership, particularly the old-line Fidelistas, is proud of its guerrilla traditions, which extend back to the Sierra Maestra days. FAR is maintained in a state of constant preparedness because the regime has always felt threatened by the United States. FAR's credentials were enhanced by its string of successes in Angola and Ethiopia, where Cuban soldiers showed themselves to be capable of striking hard and fast and of solving logistical transport problems successfully. In the late 1980s and 1990s Cuba withdrew its forces from overseas in light of peace agreements in Africa and the termination of Soviet support. The situation throughout the 1990s was one of

stagnation and decline, although the armed forces still have preferential status in Cuban economy and society. The last Soviet troops based in Cuba were withdrawn by 1993, from a maximum strength of 2,000 plus.

Cuba spent \$572.3 million on defense in 2003.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	50,000
Military Manpower Availability:	3,134,622
Military Expenditures \$million:	572.3
as % of GDP:	1.8
as % of central government expenditures:	—
Arms Imports \$million:	—
Arms Exports \$million:	—

ECONOMY

Cuba's economy remains organized on socialist principles of state control. Most of the means of production are owned and operated by the government, and about three-quarters of the workforce are employed by the state. Already in stagnation and depression since commodity price slumps in the 1980s, the economy in the 1990s suffered extensively from the collapse of the Soviet Union and the withdrawal of trade and aid subsidies. The government sought to alleviate the crisis by opening up small sectors of the economy to private enterprise, legalizing the dollar, and authorizing self-employment. The measures were aimed at the tourist sector, which by the late 1990s surpassed the sugar industry as the primary source of foreign currency. Significant resources are now being diverted to improving Cuba's tourist infrastructure and measures such as dollar shops introduced to keep tourist revenues in the country. Most tourists come from Canada, Italy, Germany, Spain, and Mexico.

Agriculture is still essential to Cuba's economy. Cuba exports a large portion of the world's sugar. The sugar industry has suffered from poor management and bad harvests and is in need of substantial reform despite extensive mechanization in the 1970s. Recent fuel shortages have forced farmers to return to old-fashioned labor-intensive harvesting by hand. Tobacco, used to make Cuba's famous cigars, is the second-most valuable crop.

Foreign investment in joint ventures has been actively sought, although U.S. restrictions on dealings with Cuba have affected investors from most interested nations. There is a widening gap in the economy between those who have access to dollars, or employment which provides such access, and those restricted to dealing in Cuban pesos. Many Cubans are forced to turn to the flourishing black market to secure essentials as well as luxuries, and government crackdowns are limited to organized groups in recognition of the importance of the black market to the survival of the economy. Due to defaults on interna-

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tional debt, Cuba is denied access to funding from international institutions such as the World Bank and must rely on high-interest-rate short-term loans to finance imports such as fuel and food.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 32.13
GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 2,900
GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2002) %: 4.0
GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2002) %: 3.7
Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
Agriculture: 5.5
Industry: 26.9
Services: 67.6
Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
Private Consumption: 41
Government Consumption: 35
Gross Domestic Investment: 10.1
Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 1.467
Imports: 4.531
% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: —
% of Income Received by Richest 10%: —
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)
1999 2000 2001 2002 2003
— — — — —

Finance

National Currency: Cuban Peso (CUP)
Exchange Rate: \$1 = CUP 1.0
Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: —
Central Bank Discount Rate %: —
Total External Debt \$billion: 12.52
Debt Service Ratio %: —
Balance of Payments \$million: –273
International Reserves SDRs \$million: —
Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 4.1

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 61.02
per capita \$: 5.40
Foreign Direct Investment \$million: —

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
Revenues \$billion: 17.21
Expenditures \$billion: 18.28
Budget Deficit \$billion: 1.07
Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 5.5
Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2002) %: 3.1
Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares: 21.5

Irrigation, % of Farms having: 19.5
Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 55.3
Total Farmland % of land area: 33.1
Livestock: Cattle 000: 4,050
Sheep 000: 3,200
Hogs 000: 1,700
Chickens 000: 23,500
Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 3.6
Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 59.6

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: —
Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 2.4

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 3.44
Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 7.95
Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 708
Net Energy Imports % of use: 51.2
Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 4.41
Production kW-hr billion: 14.38
Consumption kW-hr billion: 13.38
Coal Reserves tons billion: —
Production tons million: —
Consumption tons million: —
Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: 2.5
Production cubic feet billion: 12.4
Consumption cubic feet billion: 12.4
Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels million: 750
Production barrels 000 per day: 55.6
Consumption barrels 000 per day: 163
Pipelines Length km: 230

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 4.531
Exports \$billion: 1.467
Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2001): 7.1
Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2001): 2.2
Balance of Trade \$million: –273

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Spain %	16.6	8.7
Venezuela %	12.5	—
Italy %	8.6	—
United States %	8.5	—
China %	7.7	7.3
Canada %	5.4	16.2
Mexico %	5.3	—
France %	4.9	—
Netherlands %	—	21.8
Russia %	—	10.7

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 60,858
 Paved %: 49.0
 Automobiles: —
 Trucks and Buses: 10,100
 Railroad: Track Length km: 4,226
 Passenger-km billion: 1.7
 Freight-km million: 814
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 13
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 81.85
 Airports: 170
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 1.89
 Length of Waterways km: 240

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 1,656
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$billion: 1.633
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: —

Communications

Telephones 000: 574.4
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.09
 Cellular Telephones 000: 17.9
 Personal Computers 000: 270
 Internet Hosts per million people: 135
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 11

ENVIRONMENT

The main problems facing Cuba's environment are the pollution of Havana Bay and other heavily populated areas, deforestation and land pollution, and tourist development. Operating under standard socialist methods of industrialization and economic development, Cuba for many years paid little regard to the environmental damage caused by such a path. Recently, with economic crises and a crumbling infrastructure, the level of pollution into such areas as the Havana Bay has increased, as existing safeguards have fallen. Efforts to increase sugarcane and other agricultural production have also harmed the environment, with large quantities of fertilizers and pesticides entering the ecosystem. The ability of Cuba's limited resources to maintain a program of reforestation means that the area of land cleared each year for fuel, lumber, or farming purposes exceeds the area replanted.

Cuban policy makers have been heavily promoting tourism in an attempt to boost the struggling economy. The development of infrastructure to support and promote tourists and the numbers of tourists themselves pose significant new threats to the environment. New beachfront hotels are being constructed in prime habitats for rare species, and attempts by ecologically minded scientists to stop the developments are countered by the

pressing need for hard currency. Increased numbers of tourists will further damage the coral reefs around the island, which constitute an ecosystem second in complexity and diversity only to rain forests. The experiences of neighboring islands, such as Bermuda and Jamaica, show just how serious the impact of tourism can be, ranging from damage to coral reefs to depletion of water tables.

Cuba is a signatory to several international agreements concerning the environment, including the Antarctic, Biodiversity, Climate Change, Desertification, Endangered Species, Environmental Modification, Hazardous Wastes, Law of the Sea, Marine Dumping, Ozone Layer Protection, and Ship Pollution treaties.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 21.4
 Average Annual Forest Change, 1990-2000, 000 ha: 28
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 15
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 2.76

LIVING CONDITIONS

Cuba is crowded; little new housing has been built since the 1960s, and several generations must often share a house or apartment. Rural people still live in huts made of palm wood with roofs made of palm leaves. Water is generally unsafe to drink, although many Cubans drink it. Basic toiletries such as shampoo and other consumer goods such as film and batteries are very expensive. Transportation is barely adequate. Very few people own cars, and those who do run the risk of being imprisoned as criminals if they get into traffic accidents. Buses are extremely crowded, trains are more than 100 years old, and some people still use horse-drawn carriages. Air Canada flies between Cuba and Canada; Cuba's airline, Cubana, flies to Canada, sometimes in old Russian airplanes.

HEALTH

Cuba has plenty of doctors, but its hospital facilities lack supplies and equipment. Life expectancy is 77 years. The infant mortality rate is low, at 6.45 deaths per 1,000 live births. Waterborne illnesses are common. Hepatitis of all varieties is a major problem. Hepatitis A and E are transmitted through contaminated food and water, while the other types are transmitted through the exchange of bodily fluids.

Health

Number of Physicians: 66,567
 Number of Dentists: 9,841

(continues)

Health *(continued)*

Number of Nurses: 83,880
 Number of Pharmacists: —
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 591
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 6.45
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 33
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 7.2
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 185
 HIV Infected % of adults: < 0.1
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 99
 Measles: 98
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 98
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 91

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Cuba suffers from frequent food shortages. Even for those who can afford to buy food, a shortage can mean waiting for long periods of time to eat at restaurants. Cuban food is a mix of Spanish and African cuisine adapted to local ingredients. Beans and rice are ubiquitous, as are plantains. Common dishes include *arroz con pollo* (chicken and rice), *Moros y Cristianos* (Moors and Christians, i.e. black beans and rice), and *picadillio* (beef and rice). Cubans love to drink beer and cocktails.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 3.2
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,560
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 130.6
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 404.4

STATUS OF WOMEN

The position of women in Cuba has been both positively and negatively affected by the 40 years of revolutionary government. Equality, both racially and sexually, was a major goal of the revolution, and women were encouraged to enter into employment and education to participate in creating the socialist society. The government takes a generally liberal position toward contraception and abortion, and birth-control clinics provide all adults with access to contraceptives and abortion. Universal access to child care and summer youth camps has facilitated the employment of working mothers.

Educationally, women have benefited greatly from expansion at all levels of schooling and technical training, and from this base have come many other benefits. Women now make up 40 percent of the workforce. Many women carry out work in sectors traditionally dominated by men, such as agriculture and livestock raising, and also run cooperatives and local, regional, and national committees. A total of 48 percent of doctors are now women.

There are women on the Central Committee of the Communist Party and in positions as departmental ministers in the government, though men outnumber them by a large margin.

Women are also still expected to run the home, shouldering the burden of most, if not all, domestic tasks. Some men resent their wives going out to work, feeling that the women are abandoning their homes. Economic crisis has worsened the situation, with women the first to be expelled to informal sectors of the labor market, including child care, street vending, and prostitution. A rise in violence in society has also disproportionately affected women, not least through the increase in sexual assault. Shortages of medicines and a decline in health care also affect women, with decreased availability of contraception and access to abortion and reproductive health care.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 36
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.0
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 37.7

WORK

The government controls most of Cuba's economy, and many people have state jobs. Self-employment is legal and some people own their own businesses or enter into joint ventures with foreign countries. Most people still work in agriculture. In 2004 per capita gross domestic product (GDP) was \$2,900. An income gap has been growing between those people who have poorly paid state jobs and those who work in tourism, own their own businesses, or have relatives in other countries who send them money. Jobs in tourism are highly desirable because such employees receive tips from foreign visitors.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 4,580,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 40.1
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 24
 Industry: 25
 Services: 51
 Unemployment %: 2.6

EDUCATION

Education is free, universal, and compulsory from the ages of six to 12, with subsequent schooling also free. After the revolution the eradication of illiteracy was a high priority

for the government, and all private schools were nationalized in 1961. During the late 1960s around 10,000 new classrooms were provided in rural areas, along with traveling libraries and 270,000 teachers who led the literacy campaign. The organization of a network of adult schools followed the campaign, and a parallel system of education began to develop.

The education system introduced after the revolution comprises general education—12 or 13 grades preceded by a preschool stage—higher or university education, teacher-training education, adult education directed toward the eradication of residual illiteracy and continued study by working people, technical education in parallel with secondary education, language instruction, and specialized education. All levels are free, with supplemental scholarships available to cover living expenses and medical assistance. Education receives a high priority, and the numbers of students enrolled has increased sharply from prerevolution days. The largest university is the University of Havana, opened in 1728. Other universities include the University of the Orient, the Universidad Central de la Villas, and the Universidad Ignacio Agramonte.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 97.0
Male %: 97.2
Female %: 96.9
School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 13.3
First Level: Primary schools: 9,864
Teachers: 86,641
Students: 925,335
Student-Teacher Ratio: 10.7
Net Enrollment Ratio: 93.5
Second Level: Secondary Schools: 2,175
Teachers: 80,372
Students: 666,156
Student-Teacher Ratio: 11.7
Net Enrollment Ratio: 86.2
Third Level: Institutions: 35
Teachers: 44,669
Students: 235,997
Gross Enrollment Ratio: 33.7
Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 9.0

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Cuba is relatively undeveloped technologically. Less than 1 percent of the population owns automobiles, and most people travel by bicycle, motorcycle, or various kinds of taxis or buses. People who do own automobiles usually own extremely old American vehicles dating from the 1950s or 1960s.

Castro's government has recently decided that they must modernize telecommunication and computer networks so that Cuba can compete in the modern world.

The tourism and biochemistry industries especially need modern telecommunications capabilities, despite what the government sees as political risks.

Since the 1980s Cuba has been developing its pharmaceutical and biochemical industries. The country built the multimillion-dollar Center for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology in 1986. Cuba manufactures vaccines against hepatitis B and meningitis, insulin, and anti-cholesterol drugs, most of which are sold to third-world countries.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 474
Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 0.4
High-Tech Exports \$million: 47.8
Patent Applications by Residents: 4

MEDIA

The government is the sole owner of the media and the sole purveyor of the news. The purpose of the media is defined in Leninist terms as political indoctrination and mass mobilization and integration. No criticism of the government is permitted. Journalists who break this law can spend three years in prison. No foreign journalists are permitted; foreign news agencies may only hire journalists through government offices. Cuba's government claims that this repression is necessary to prevent a U.S. invasion.

The three main newspapers are the Communist Party daily, *Granma*; *Juventud rebelde*, the paper of the Communist Youth; and *Los trabajadores*, published by the Cuban Federation of Workers. Provincial newspapers include the *Tribuna de la Habana* and *Sierra Maestra* in Santiago de Cuba, which focus on local issues. Magazines include the weekly *Bohemia*, which covers all aspects of the news and is the oldest periodical in Cuba; the monthly *Opina*, aimed at a younger audience, with information on available consumer goods; and *Mujeres*, published by the Federation of Cuban Women. A number of specialized cultural magazines and newspapers also have wide readerships.

Television was introduced in 1950 and is operated by two national networks, Televisión Cubana and Tele-Rebelde, with 58 broadcast stations in 1998. There are several national radio networks and one international one, all of which are administered by the Cuban Institute of Radio and Television. In 1999 there were 150 AM broadcast stations, five FM, and one shortwave. As of 2000 there were approximately 2.1 million radios and 2.75 million televisions.

In March 1997 Cable News Network (CNN) became the first American news bureau to operate in Cuba since 1969, following a loosening of restrictions by both the Cuban and U.S. governments. Radio-TV Marti provides

U.S. news to Cubans from transmitters in the Florida Keys. News agencies from elsewhere in the world have not faced such restrictions, and those with offices in Cuba include ITAR-TASS, BTA, AFP, and Reuters. Prensa Latina, the Cuban news agency, has offices in Moscow, Prague, Sofia, Paris, and Mexico City.

Media

Newspapers and Periodicals: —
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: 953
 Radio Receivers million: 2.1
 per 1,000: 185
 Television sets million: 2.75
 per 1,000: 248

CULTURE

Cuba has made notable contributions to the world's music. African slaves and Spanish guitar players combined their respective musical traditions to create musical styles that became wildly popular in Cuba and in the United States. Rhumba, salsa, mambo, bolero, and cha-cha all came from Cuba, where they originated in the rural musical style called *son*. Conga-line dancing emerged from slaves dancing while shackled together. Cuban music continues to evolve today.

The Communist government has actively supported the arts. After the revolution the government built art schools, museums, and theaters, created a national film industry, and guaranteed musicians a salary. Famous Cuban painters include Wilfredo Lam, Marianao Rodríguez, and Manuel Mendive. In an effort to counteract the influence of U.S. culture, the government funds Afro-Cuban artistic endeavors. Cubans enjoy going out to cultural events such as concerts and exhibits.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 388
 Volumes: 5,772,298
 Registered borrowers: 229,093
 Museums Number: 241
 Annual Attendance: 8,159,000
 Cinema Gross Receipts national currency million: 6.4
 Number of Cinemas: 782
 Seating Capacity 000: 172.5
 Annual Attendance million: 9.2

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Cuban culture combines African and European traditions. Many of its folktales have African roots and are similar to tales in other Caribbean countries and the

American South. For example, a popular folk character is the trickster called Tortoise, similar to a character found among the Yoruba, Edo, and Ibo tribes of Nigeria. The government actively encourages artistic groups to rediscover old traditions, such as dance that combines aspects of folklore and popular and religious music. "Folklore" is actually the name of a style of music and dance that incorporates religious elements and traditional drumming and dance moves.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Havana is the center of Cuban entertainment. It has many nightclubs and restaurants, holdovers from the 1950s and 1960s when it was a major destination for American tourists. Cubans enjoy dressing up and going out to events such as concerts, ballets, or art openings. Cuban citizens are not allowed to visit some recreational areas that are open to tourists. Cubans like to watch television, listen to the radio, play games, or go to baseball games and boxing matches.

Several festivals occur annually. The Havana Carnival takes place in late February or early March and features parades and parties. The Havana International Jazz Festival happens every other February. Carnival in Santiago de Cuba happens in late July, coinciding with the end of the sugar harvest; it was originally a time when slaves could relax and celebrate.

ETIQUETTE

Cubans value hospitality and courtesy. Any relationship begins with personal touches, such as small talk and light refreshments; business negotiations begin with coffee drinking and chatting. Cuban businesspeople exchange business cards when they meet; they expect prompt responses to letters and telephone calls. Many Cubans rely on tips for their income, and tips are expected in virtually any situation where they might be appropriate. Cubans are not allowed to beg; beggars who accept money or gifts can be arrested and imprisoned.

FAMILY LIFE

Before Communism Cuban families were very close, as is typical in Latin American countries. The Communist government, however, has removed some of the authority that parents have over children by requiring students to participate in activities that replace familial loyalty with loyalty to the state. After a couple marries, they usually must move into the bride's family's house because it is difficult to find new housing. The government guaran-

tees maternity benefits and child care, which has allowed many women to go to work. The 1974 Family Code requires men and women to take equal responsibility for family obligations. Divorce has grown common, partly because of housing pressure and the changing roles of women.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

For the most part Cuba is a casual place. People wear shorts, pants, dresses, and shirts made of light materials during the day, especially when they are working outdoors. Cultural events, on the other hand, are very formal. People dress very well for elegant evenings out, such as at concerts, restaurants, and art exhibits.

SPORTS

Cubans take sports very seriously. Cuban athletes won numerous medals at the 2004 Olympics as well as in other international competitions. Every year Cuba holds the School Sports Games to select the best athletes ages 11 to 16 to attend the School for Sports, possibly continuing to one of the Schools of Higher Athletic Performance. Baseball has been Cuba's favorite national sport since it was imported from North America in the late 1800s. Initially Cuban dock workers would play baseball with American sailors; the Spanish government banned the game in 1895 because players were using ticket sales to raise money for José Martí's independence movement. The ban was removed after independence. Many of Cuba's best players have moved to other countries to play for foreign teams. Cockfighting is another popular spectator sport, though it is illegal.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1934** Platt Amendment revoked.
- 1952** Batista retakes power in a military coup.
- 1953** A revolt by Fidel Castro is quickly subdued.
- 1956** Castro and rebels land in Cuba and take to the Sierra Maestra, aided by Ernesto "Che" Guevara. Guerrilla war commences.
- 1959** Batista flees Cuba, and Castro enters Havana; Fulgencio Batista y Zaldívar takes power.
- 1960** Cuba is declared a socialist country.
- 1961** A total of 1,500 Cuban exiles, trained and financed by the CIA, invade Cuba at the Bay of Pigs. Castro's forces defeat the invaders.
- 1962** OAS excludes Cuba. The Soviet Union installs long-range missiles in Cuba. The United States imposes a naval blockade and the two superpowers go "eyeball to eyeball." The Cuban missile

- crisis is resolved, with the Soviet Union removing the missiles and the United States agreeing not to launch further attacks on Cuba.
- 1965** The Communist Party of Cuba is established as the sole legal party.
- 1967** Che Guevara is killed in Bolivia leading a revolutionary group.
- 1974** The OAS votes to normalize relations with Cuba.
- 1976** Cuban troops help the Soviet-backed Angolan government in civil war.
- 1977** Cuban troops are sent to Ethiopia.
- 1980** A sum of 100,000 refugees are allowed to flee to United States.
- 1983** U.S. troops invade Grenada and expel Cuban forces.
- 1988** Cuban forces are removed from Angola.
- 1992** In July the constitution is modified to attract foreign investment and to designate the government as secular and not atheist. In October the U.S. Congress passes the Cuban Democracy Act, prohibiting foreign subsidiaries of U.S. companies from trading with Cuba and tightening travel restrictions.
- 1993** The last Soviet troops leave Cuba. The sugar harvest falls to a 30-year low.
- 1994** Antigovernment demonstrations bring the easing of export restrictions; 30,000 Cubans leave for the United States, many on rafts and small boats.
- 1995** Some 20,000 refugees are admitted to the U.S. base at Guantánamo Bay.
- 1996** Two planes from the Miami-based anti-Castro group Brothers to the Rescue are shot down over Cuban airspace. A human rights organization, Concilio Cubano, formed in 1995, is persecuted by the government, and over 200 members are arrested and harassed. Clinton signs the Helms-Burton, or Libertad, Act, imposing penalties on foreign companies trading with Cuba who also operate in the United States. Castro visits the Vatican and invites the pope to visit Cuba.
- 1997** In July and September a series of bombings targets tourist hotels in Havana and are blamed on exile groups. CNN is permitted to operate in Cuba. On July 12 there is a ceremonial homecoming for the remains of the revolutionary leader Che Guevara and six Cuban guerrillas who were killed in Bolivia on October 9, 1967. The leader of the powerful Miami-based Cuban American National Foundation, Jorge Más Canosa, dies.
- 1998** Pope John Paul II visits Cuba and holds mass in Havana. He calls for greater freedom within Cuba and a lifting of the U.S. embargo.

- 1999** The head of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Thomas Donahue, visits Cuba to look at potential business ties, the first such visit in 40 years. George Ryan of Illinois, a Republican, visits Cuba and meets with Castro for seven hours—the first sitting American governor for 40 years to visit the island. Castro hosts the Ibero-American Summit in Havana. Cuba demands the return of Elián González, a refugee who lost his mother and other companions after the boat on which they were traveling to Florida sank. Relatives in Miami were caring for the boy, but his father remains in Cuba.
- 2000** The United States demands the withdrawal of a Cuban diplomat linked to a Miami immigration official accused of spying for the Cuban government. U.S. federal agents snatch Elián González from his relatives' home in Miami and return him to his father. Castro cancels trade talks with the EU after it condemns Cuba's human rights record. U.S. courts uphold the custody rights of Elián's father, and father and son return to Cuba to a rapturous welcome. Cuba wins 11 gold medals at the Sydney Olympics.
- 2001** The United States exports food to Cuba to help the government feed victims of Hurricane Michelle.
- 2002** The United States sends prisoners from Afghanistan suspected of association with al-Qaeda to Guantánamo Bay for interrogation. Russia's last military base in Cuba closes. Jimmy Carter visits Cuba. The constitution is amended to make the socialist form of government permanent.
- 2004** The United Nations criticizes Cuba for its human rights violations. The United States limits visits and cash transfers to Cuba. Castro bans the U.S. dollar.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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 Washington, D.C. 20009
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INTERNET RESOURCES

- CubaNet
<http://www.cubanet.org/>

CYPRUS

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Cyprus

ABBREVIATION

CY

CAPITAL

Nicosia

HEAD OF STATE & HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

President Tassos Papadopoulos (from 2003)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Parliamentary democracy; republic

POPULATION

780,133 (2005)

AREA

9,250 sq km (3,571 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Greeks, Turks

LANGUAGES

Greek, Turkish, English

RELIGIONS

Greek Orthodox, Islam

UNITS OF CURRENCY

Cyprus pound, Turkish lira

NATIONAL FLAG

Map of Cyprus in gold set above two olive branches in green on a white field

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A gracefully shaped gold shield displaying a white dove holding in its bill an olive branch. Surrounding the emblem is a decorative garland made up of large olive branches.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Ethnikos Hymnos” (Hymn to liberty)

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year’s Day), March 25 (Greek Independence Day), May 1 (Labor Day), October 1 (Cyprus Independence Day), October 28 (Greek National Day), all major Christian festivals, including Easter, Pentecost, Assumption, and Christmas

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

October 1, 1960

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

August 16, 1960

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

The third-largest island in the Mediterranean, Cyprus lies off the southern coast of Turkey and the western shore of Syria, north of Egypt. Including the small island outposts of Cape Andreas, Cyprus has an area of 9,250 sq km (3,571 sq mi), extending 227 km (141 mi) northeast to southwest and 97 km (60 mi) southeast to northwest. The length of the coastline is 648 km (403 mi). The northern part of Cyprus, north of the so-called Attila Line, or Green Line, is under Turkish occupation, with control formally recognized only by Turkey.

The capital is Nicosia, partly under Turkish occupation. Other major cities in the Greek sector are Limassol, Larnaca, and Paphos. Famagusta and Kyrenia are the major population centers in the Turkish sector.

The Troodos Mountains cover most of the southern and western portions of the country, while the Kyrenia range extends in a narrow band along the northern coastline. Coastal lowlands surround the island. The highest peak is Mount Olympus (1,951 m; 6,401 ft), in the Troodos range.

The Mesaoria Plain is the agricultural heartland of the country, and in its middle lies Nicosia, the divided capital of the island. A network of rivers rises in the Troodos, most becoming dry courses in summer.

Geography

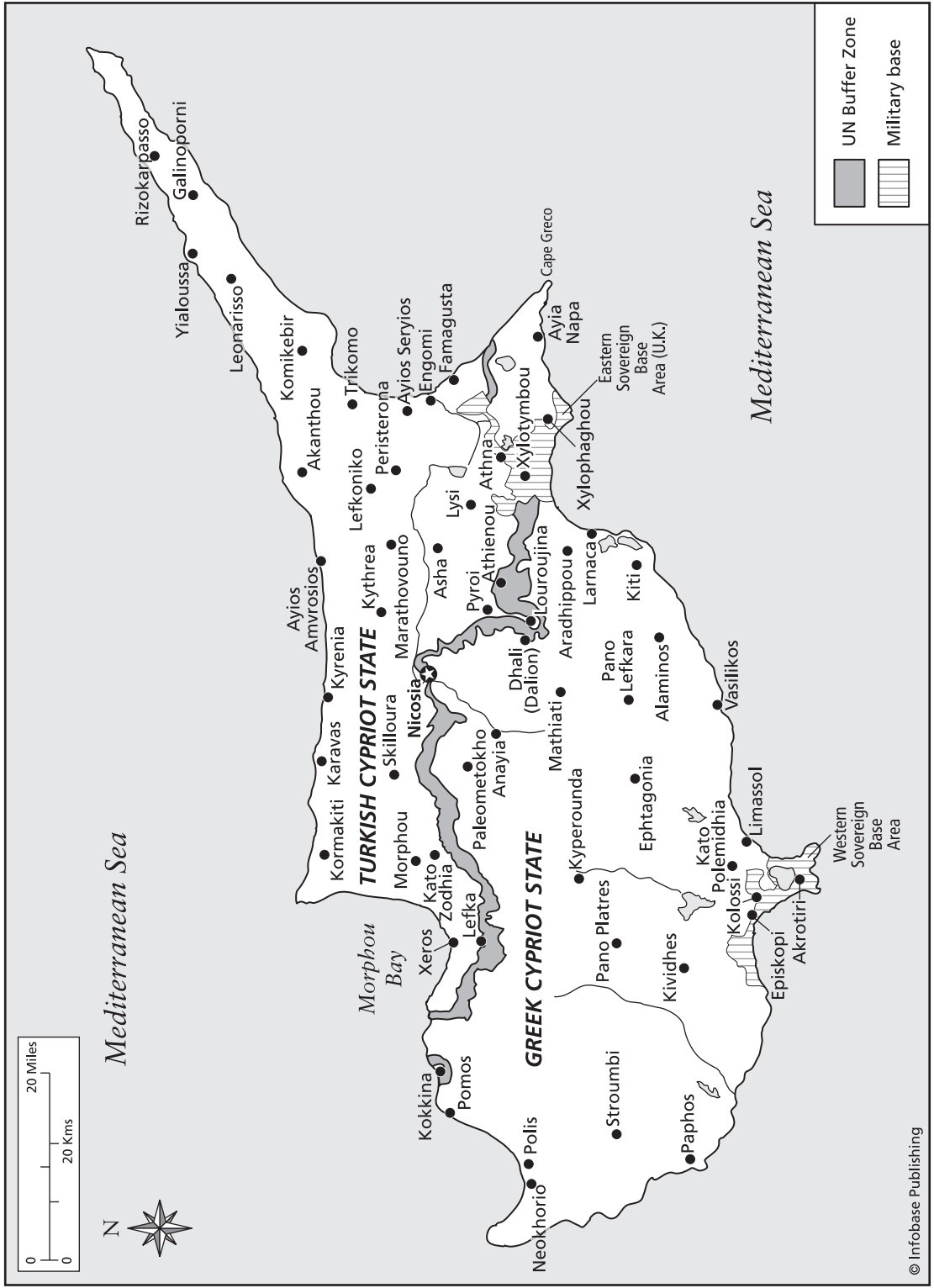
Area sq km: 9,250; sq mi 3,571

World Rank: 161st

Land Boundaries, km: —

(continues)

Cyprus



Geography (continued)

Coastline, km:	648
Elevation Extremes meters:	
Lowest: Mediterranean Sea	0
Highest: Mount Olympus	1,951
Land Use %	
Arable land:	7.79
Permanent Crops:	4.44
Forest:	12.7
Other:	75.07

Population of Principal Cities (2001)

Limassol	94,250
Nicosia	47,832
Strovolos	58,525

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

The warm Mediterranean climate is rather dry, with winter rainfall mainly between November and March. In general the island experiences mild, wet winters succeeded by hot, dry summers. The higher mountain areas are comparatively cooler and more moist than the rest of the island and receive the highest annual rainfall, up to 1,000 mm (39.4 in). The least rainfall occurs in the Mesaoria. Droughts are frequent and sometimes severe. Summer temperatures are high in the lowlands even near the sea and can reach particularly uncomfortable readings in the Mesaoria. The mean annual temperature of the country is 20°C (68°F), and there is a high degree of sunshine, even during the winter.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature:	68°F
Average Rainfall	
Mesaoria and Karpasian Peninsula:	15.7 in to 17.7 in
Higher Mountains:	39.4 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Cyprus has over 1,800 species of flowering plants. It combines the isolation of an island with proximity to larger land masses to allow for variety with uniqueness. The island has a range of habitats and elevations along with differing microclimates, which has contributed to the large number of endemic species of both plants and animals.

The first animals to arrive on Cyprus were probably swimming elephants and hippopotamuses, who arrived 1.5 million years ago; until humans arrived 9,000 years

ago, they were the only land mammals on Cyprus, with the exception of mice. Cyprus now has 7 species of land mammals, 26 species of amphibians and reptiles, 357 species of birds, and plenty of insects. The waters are home to 197 species of fish and various other sea creatures, including seals and turtles. The largest land mammal currently living on the island is the Cyprus mouflon, a kind of sheep.

Migratory birds use Cyprus as a stopover on their travels between Europe and Africa. Falcons and eagles live on Cyprus year-round. Partridges are the most popular game bird.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005:	780,133
World Rank:	155th
Density per sq km:	83.3
% of annual growth (1999-2003):	0.6
Male %:	50.0
Female %:	50.0
Urban %:	69.2
Age Distribution %:	
0-14:	21.4
15-64:	67.4
65 and over:	11.2
Population 2025:	851,733
Birth Rate per 1,000:	12.66
Death Rate per 1,000:	7.63
Rate of Natural Increase %:	0.6
Total Fertility Rate:	1.85
Expectation of Life (years):	
Males:	75.11
Females:	79.92
Marriage Rate per 1,000:	12.9
Divorce Rate per 1,000:	1.7
Average Size of Households:	3.5
Induced Abortions:	—

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Cyprus consists not merely of two ethnic groups but of two ethnic nations. Neither group considers themselves as primarily Cypriots; one considers itself Greek and the other Turkish, and the ties that bind them to these larger nationalities have determined the course of Cypriot history in recent years. This ethnic self-identification is of comparatively recent origin; before the 1800s few in Cyprus called themselves either Greeks or Turks, having been united to those countries only as districts of their empires.

There is a small British minority of a few thousand in the country, dating to British rule and the more recent peacekeeping-force involvement in Cyprus. There are a few Latin families in the southern port towns, remnants of the Venetian and Lusignan upper classes of pre-Ottoman times.

LANGUAGES

Three major languages are used in Cyprus: Greek in the Republic of Cyprus, Turkish in the Turkish sector, and English in both. English has become the principal language of the media, commerce, and education.

Cypriot Greek actually comprises three forms of Greek, all common to mainland Greece as well. The liturgical language of the Orthodox church is Koine, the lingua franca of the Mediterranean world at the beginning of the Christian era. The standard Greek is known as demotic. The third significant form is known as Katharvousa, the literary Greek on the Attic model.

Cypriot Turkish is the standard Turkish of modern Turkey, as modified by Kemal Atatürk.

RELIGIONS

Religion is important in Cyprus primarily because it follows and reinforces ethnic and linguistic identity. The Church of Cyprus is in the Greek Orthodox tradition. It dates back to the introduction of Christianity on the island in 45 c.e., and the autonomy of the church was affirmed by the Byzantine emperor Zeno in the fifth century. The constitution of the Church of Cyprus was drawn up in 1909 and states that the church is governed by the Holy Synod.

Monasteries have always played an important role in the life of the Church of Cyprus, and they are the source of bishops, who are required to be celibate following Orthodox practices. Clergy are generally married, however, and traditionally chosen by their fellow villagers and sent for training before ordination. Religious observances vary widely, but Greek Cypriots are generally more religious than Greek mainlanders.

Other Christian denominations are represented on the island in smaller groups. In the Turkish sector Islam is the dominant faith—primarily as practiced by Sunni Muslims—although religion plays a more muted role in the north than in the south and serves more as a political tool.

Religious Affiliations

Greek Orthodox	608,000
Muslim (mostly Sunni)	140,000
Other	32,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

One of the oldest cultures in the Mediterranean, Cyprus has long been a crossroads between East and West. Despite many turnovers it has always been closest to Greece, sharing ethnic origins, language, religion, and social mo-

res. Cyprus was the center of a Neolithic settlement as early as 3700 B.C.E. It was famous in the ancient world for its copper (*kyprios* in Greek), and it is believed that either its name is derived from the name of the mineral or vice versa. A far outpost of the Hellenic world by the second century B.C.E., the Greeks were followed soon after by the Phoenicians, and thereafter Cyprus was conquered successively by Egyptians, Persians, Greeks under Alexander the Great, Romans, and the Byzantines. Its Christian history began with Paul the Apostle, who was accompanied by Barnabas and Mark the Evangelist in the second half of the first century. Although the island experienced a series of Arab invasions in the seventh century, it was spared Arab domination. In 1191 the island was wrested by the English prince Richard I from its Byzantine ruler, Isaac Comnenus, and later sold to the Knights Templar and transferred by that order to Guy de Lusignan. Lusignan lived only two years after assuming control in 1192, but the dynasty that he founded ruled Cyprus as an independent Norman kingdom for more than three centuries. Conquered by Venice in 1489, Cyprus fell to the Turks in 1562.

Ottoman rule ended in 1878, when under a convention with Turkey initiated by Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli at the Congress of Berlin, Britain took over the administration of the island. Upon the entry of the Ottoman Empire in World War I on the side of the Central Powers, Cyprus was annexed to the British Crown and later placed under a governor.

British rule was marred by the enosis movement—the agitation for self-determination and reunion with Greece—which erupted into violence on a number of occasions between the two world wars. The agitation for union with Greece gained force after World War II and pitted Greece against Turkey and threatened the unity of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, of which both were members. As a compromise Greece and Turkey accepted proposals for an independent republic, and the formula was accepted by the British government and the Greek ethnarch, Archbishop Makarios III. The settlement provided for a number of instruments defining the island's political status and also guaranteeing the continuation of British military installations. Independence was officially declared on August 16, 1960, with Britain, Greece, and Turkey as guarantor powers.

In 1974 Makarios III was overthrown by a military coup led by the Cypriot National Guard. Turkey invaded Cyprus by sea and air on July 20, asserting its right to protect the Turkish Cypriot minority. Turks gained control of 40 percent of the island, and many Greek Cypriots were displaced. The separate Turkish state proclaimed on November 15, 1983, was declared invalid by the UN Security Council; Turkey, meanwhile, does not recognize the government of the Republic of Cyprus.

The island remains divided today, and except for some escalated tensions in 1996 there has been little movement

toward resolution of the stalemate. Efforts at reunification continue under the auspices of the United Nations. Indeed, the United Nations offered a reunification plan in 2002, before Cyprus joined the European Union in May 2004; the Turkish Cypriots voted to approve EU membership, although the Greek Cypriots voted against it, such that Cyprus officially joined the European Union but as a divided nation.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1960–74	Makarios III
1974	Nikos Sampson
1974	Glafkos Clerides
1974–77	Makarios III
1977–88	Spyros Kyprianou
1988–93	George Vassiliou
1993–2003	Glafkos Clerides
2003–	Tassos Papadopoulos

CONSTITUTION

Since 1974 Cyprus has been divided de facto into the government-controlled southern two-thirds of the island and the Turkish-controlled northern one-third. The government of the Republic of Cyprus continues to be the internationally recognized authority, but in practice its power extends only throughout the Greek Cypriot-controlled areas.

The Greek Cypriot constitution went into effect on August 16, 1960, the day Cyprus became independent. It was not subjected to popular referendum, although many of its provisions were modified in 1964. The constitution was drafted by British, Greek, and Turkish experts, specifically prohibiting union with any other country or the partition of the island and setting forth civil and political rights for both ethnic groups. The president of the republic is both head of state and head of government; there is no prime minister. There is technically an office of vice president, but no elections have been held for it since 1973. The president is elected by universal suffrage for a five-year term and may be reelected. Executive powers are exercised by the president through the Council of Ministers.

This constitution was breached when the Turkish Cypriots declared the independent Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus in 1983. Only Turkey recognizes this republic. In 1985 the Turkish Republic adopted its own constitution, which provides for a president, prime minister, and cabinet. The president is elected by universal suffrage for seven-year renewable terms. Executive functions are entrusted to a prime minister and a 10-member cabinet.

PARLIAMENT

The legislative power of the Republic of Cyprus is exercised by the House of Representatives. Electoral law provides for proportional representation from each of six constituencies, and parliamentary seats are then distributed according to the electoral strength of each party. Members are elected by universal suffrage of adults over the age of 18. By a 1985 resolution 56 members are to be elected by the Greek Cypriot community and 24 by the Turkish Cypriot community; Turkish Cypriot members have not attended the House since 1963, but the House has kept those seats vacant in accordance with the constitution.

The House is in quorum when at least one-third of the members are present. Legislation is the first order of business, and bills are referred to appropriate committees. Political parties are represented on committees in proportion to the total number of their seats in the House.

The president of the Republic of Cyprus and the vice president have the right of final veto on any law passed by the House that concerns certain issues of foreign affairs, defense, and security. Other types of legislation may be delayed and returned to the House but must be promulgated into law if the House reaffirms its decision.

In the Turkish sector the 1985 constitutional declaration has resulted in elections for parliament and a prime minister, although they are not officially recognized outside of the sector. The Turkish sector has a 50-seat parliament and elects representatives by popular vote.

POLITICAL PARTIES

The political parties in the Republic of Cyprus are the right-wing Democratic Rally, which advocates a pro-Western, free enterprise policy; the center-right Democratic Party, a moderate party following the policies of former president Makarios III; the left-wing Progressive Party of the Working People, with a pro-Marxist bent; the Social Democrats Movement, a small socialist party favoring nonalignment; the Fighting Democratic Movement; the Green Party of Cyprus; the New Horizons; the communist Restorative Party of the Working People; and the center-left United Democrats, a moderate group. In the Turkish Cypriot community the parties include the right-wing National Unity Party (NUP), founded by Rauf Denktaş; the center-right Democratic Party, the other main conservative group, usually aligned with the NUP; the left-wing Republican Turkish Party; the center-left Communal Liberation Party; the center-right National Revival Party, which represents the interests of settlers from mainland Turkey; the left-wing Patriotic Unity Movement; the National Birth Party; Our Party; the Peace and Democratic Movement; and the ultranationalist National Justice Party.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Cyprus is divided into six administrative districts: Nicosia, Paphos, Larnaca, Limassol, Famagusta, and Kyrenia, the last two of which are in the Turkish sector. Each district is administered by a district officer appointed by the Ministry of the Interior. Mayors and councils for the municipalities are appointed by the central government. Village commissions have also been appointed by the Ministry of the Interior, although recent legislation provides for their popular election.

LEGAL SYSTEM

In 1964 the Supreme Constitutional Court and the High Court of Justice were merged into the Supreme Court. The president appoints judges. The Supreme Council of Judicature performs the judicatory functions of the former High Court. Below the Supreme Court are the assize courts and the district courts. District courts perform as the courts of first instance for all but the most serious of crimes. Assize courts have unlimited criminal jurisdiction in the first instance. The Supreme Court hears all criminal appeals but has no original jurisdiction in criminal matters.

Trial procedures are based on English common law. There are no juries, and all trials are public. Punishments allowed by law include death by hanging, life imprisonment, and whipping. However, in practice these harsher punishments are rarely meted out, and pardons and parole procedures have been expanded in recent years.

The basic structure of the Turkish Cypriot legal system follows that of the Greek Cypriot sector.

HUMAN RIGHTS

The Republic of Cyprus generally respects human rights norms and practices. However, human rights groups report continued instances of police brutality. In the Turkish sector police abuse of the rights of suspects and detainees is considered a problem. Civilians have been tried in military courts. Suspects are often not permitted to have their lawyers present when questioned, although this right is provided for under basic Turkish Cypriot law. Authorities in the sector also exert some restrictions over general freedom of movement.

Violence against women continues to be of concern in both areas, particularly domestic abuse. Trafficking in prostitutes is also a problem.

FOREIGN POLICY

The government of Cyprus has historically followed a nonaligned foreign policy, although it increasingly iden-

tifies with the West. It maintains close relations with Greece and in recent years has expanded its relations with Russia, Israel, and Syria, from which it purchases most of its oil. Cyprus is a member of the United Nations and has signed the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade and the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency agreement.

The northern part of the island calls itself the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus but is not recognized by any country except Turkey. Turkey, meanwhile, does not recognize the government of Cyprus. The Republic of Cyprus's 1990 application for full EU membership sparked protest when Turkey argued that the move required its consent. Negotiations began in 1998 following an EU enlargement summit. In 1999 Turkey was again angered when the Republic of Cyprus announced plans to deploy missiles capable of reaching Turkey's coast.

In 2004 Cypriots from both sides crossed their island's dividing line for the first time in 30 years. Cyprus joined the European Union on May 1, 2004, but as a divided nation, having rejected the UN reunification plan. The government of Cyprus has long identified with Europe, especially Greece. It has sought the withdrawal of Turkish forces since 1974.

DEFENSE

The National Guard is the primary defense force in the Greek Cypriot sector and is responsible to the president of the republic through the minister of the interior and defense. Manpower is supplied through conscription of males when they reach age 18, and recruits serve for 26 months, after which they join the reserve. There is very little formal military tradition in Cyprus, and most training is conducted by Greeks from the mainland.

Besides these indigenous forces there are four other military powers with armed forces on the island: Great Britain, Greece, Turkey, and the United Nations, which has peacekeeping forces. Turkey is the most powerful military presence on the island; its forces report to the Ministry of National Defense in Ankara. The Turkish Cypriot Security Force is officered by members of the Turkish army on temporary assignment, who are responsible to the president of the Turkish sector. Britain retains sovereignty over two bases on the southern coast, Akrotiri and Dhekelia. Greece maintains forces under the direction of the Ministry of National Defense in Athens. The UN troops have been present in Cyprus since 1964 and operate in the buffer zone of the Turkish and Greek Cypriot cease-fire lines.

Both sectors have police forces. The police in government-controlled regions are under civilian control. The Turkish police are controlled by the Turkish military.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 14,000
 Military Manpower Availability: 202,966
 Military Expenditures \$million: 384
 as % of GDP: 3.8
 as % of central government expenditures: —
 Arms Imports \$million: —
 Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

Cyprus is one of the most prosperous nations in the Mediterranean and hopes to improve its prosperity as a full member of the European Union. Its free-market economy offers entrepreneurs many freedoms. Cyprus has positioned itself as a bridge between East and West, working to attract international businesses with its educated population, numerous English speakers, low costs, and good telecommunications and airline connections.

Since 1980 the economy in the Greek sector has shifted rapidly from agriculture to services and light manufacturing. Agriculture and mining now account for only 4.1 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) and employ 5 percent of the labor force. The service sector, particularly the tourism industry, employs 76 percent of the labor force and contributes 76 percent of GDP. The economy grew at a rate of 4.4 percent in the 1990s, with growth in 2003 at 1.9 percent. The economy is susceptible to outside factors, such as fluctuations in tourism.

The Turkish sector is much less prosperous than the Greek sector, with about one-third of the per capita GDP of the south. It still relies on agriculture and government jobs. Turkey is the only foreign nation to recognize the north and is therefore the only nation willing to provide grants and loans for economic development.

Cyprus reformed its tax structure in 2003 to comply with EU requirements, which has resulted in fiscal deficits. The island has few natural resources and must import its food, fuel, raw materials, heavy machinery, and transportation equipment. It purchases most of these items from Europe, especially the United Kingdom. Cyprus's trade deficit in 2003 was \$3 billion, a decrease of 9.2 percent from the previous year.

Economic figures in the tables below are given for the Greek Republic of Cyprus.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 14.82
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 19,200
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 3.9
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 3.4
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 4.1
 Industry: 20.3
 Services: 75.6

Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:

Private Consumption: 68
 Government Consumption: 19
 Gross Domestic Investment: 19.9

Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 1.054
 Imports: 4.637

% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: —
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: —

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
110.9	115.4	117.7	121.0	126.0

Finance

National Currency: Cypriot Pound (CYP)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = CYP 0.5174
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 1.33
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 4.5
 Total External Debt \$billion: 8.85
 Debt Service Ratio %: —
 Balance of Payments \$million: –545
 International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 3.15
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 4.1

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 49.58
 per capita \$: 65
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 838

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$billion: 3.971
 Expenditures \$billion: 4.746
 Budget Deficit \$million: 775
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 4.1
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: —
 Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares: 238
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 35.4
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 315
 Total Farmland % of land area: 7.8
 Livestock: Cattle 000: 58
 Sheep 000: 295
 Hogs 000: 491
 Chickens 000: 3,600
 Forests: Production of Roundwood (000 cubic meters): 12
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 3.8

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: —
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: –0.6

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: —
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 1.88
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 2.5
 Net Energy Imports % of use: 98.2
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: 700
 Production kW-hr billion: 3.4
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 3.16
 Coal Reserves tons billion: —
 Production tons million: —
 Consumption tons million: —
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic meters billion: —
 Production cubic meters million: —
 Consumption cubic meters million: —
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
 Production barrels 000 per day: —
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 49
 Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 4.637
 Exports \$billion: 1.054
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —
 Balance of Trade \$million: –545

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Greece %	11.9	9.2
Italy %	9.8	32.1
United Kingdom %	8.3	—
Germany %	7.5	—
Japan %	5.6	—
France %	5.1	—
China %	4.9	—
United States %	4.2	—
Spain %	4.0	—
Lebanon %	—	3.5

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 13,491
 Paved %: 57.8
 Automobiles: 287,600
 Trucks and Buses: 123,300
 Railroad: Track Length km: —
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: —
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 1,066
 Total Deadweight Tonnage million: 35.76
 Airports: 17
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 3.44
 Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 2.42
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$billion: 1.86
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 424

Communications

Telephones 000: 513.6
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.03
 Cellular Telephones 000: 561
 Personal Computers 000: 193
 Internet Hosts per million people: 7,564
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 269

ENVIRONMENT

There are two major pressing environmental issues faced by Cyprus: water resource problems (including the lack of reservoirs, seasonal disparity in precipitation, increased salination, water pollution from sewage and industrial wastes, and coastal degradation) and the loss of wildlife and wildlife habitats due to increasing urbanization. The British planted forests on Cyprus in the late 19th century, but since their departure there have been several large forest fires, which have contributed to deforestation. Cyprus is party to various international environmental agreements, including those concerned with biodiversity, endangered species, hazardous wastes, nuclear test bans, ozone-layer protection, and ship pollution.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 12.7
 Average Annual Forest Change, 1990–2000, 000 ha: 5
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 4
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 7,166
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 8.5

LIVING CONDITIONS

Traditional Cypriot villages had houses built close to one another, with multiple relatives living in the area. Now more Cypriots live in cities, further away from their families. Housing is modern and of high quality; all the modern amenities are available, including telephones, televisions, transportation, and a reliable supply of water and electricity. The road system is good. Water shortages remain a problem, however, and rainfall is irregular. Cyprus now has several desalination plants to purify saltwater.

HEALTH

Cypriot health is good. Life expectancy is over 77 years, and the infant mortality rate is only 7 deaths per 1,000 live

births. Very few people are infected with HIV. Fertility is low, with an average of 1.85 children born per woman.

Health

Number of Physicians: 2,336
 Number of Dentists: 803
 Number of Nurses: 3,803
 Number of Pharmacists: 758
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 298
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 7.36
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 47
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 8.1
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 932
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.1
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 98
 Measles: 86
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 100
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 100

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Cyprus has ample food. It is famous for its fresh fruit, including melons, prickly pears, oranges, lemons, grapes, strawberries, and stone fruit; the government bans imported fruits in order to protect local growers. Cypriots in the north tend to cook in Turkish fashion, while those in the south prefer Greek food. Baked lamb and mezes (appetizers, dips, and salads) are popular everywhere. Common ingredients are bulgur, yogurt, lentils, chickpeas, eggplants, feta cheese, olives, greens, and pita bread. Lamb and chicken are the most popular meats. Stuffed leaves and vegetables are popular. Cypriots enjoy pastries and puddings made from phyllo dough, cream, and sugar syrup or honey.

Cypriots have been making wine for 4,000 years, and their wines are excellent. Greek Cypriots drink wine with most meals. Muslims, on the other hand, do not drink alcohol.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 102.3
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 285.8

STATUS OF WOMEN

Throughout Cyprus women generally have the same legal status as men. During the 1990s laws in both the Greek and Turkish sectors were updated to reflect a broadening of rights for women, particularly concerning marriage,

divorce, child custody, and citizenship. In the workforce legal provisions in both communities require equal pay for men and women performing the same job. This is enforced effectively at the professional level, but women in agricultural and textile positions are still routinely paid less than their male counterparts. In fact, Cyprus is the second-worst country in Europe, after Portugal, in pay discrimination against women. Women also suffer more unemployment than men. Women hold only 10 percent of managerial positions. There is no infrastructure to support working mothers.

Women face no legal obstacles to their participation in the political process. They are clearly underrepresented in government but do hold some cabinet, judicial, and other senior jobs. In the most recently elected parliament, women held nine of the 56 seats.

Domestic abuse continues to be a problem in Cyprus. In the Greek Cypriot community it is an issue receiving increased attention, and in 1994 a law was passed making abuse easier to report and prosecute. To date the law has had little effect, however, largely because of family pressure and the fact that most women are still economically dependent upon their male family members. In the Turkish sector domestic abuse is also estimated to be high but is less openly discussed and more often considered a “family matter” outside of the legal system.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 16
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.0
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 46.3

WORK

Cyprus has nearly full employment. The vast majority of Cypriots work in the service sector, particularly in tourism. Nominal per capita income in 2003 was \$17,644 for Greek Cypriots and \$5,949 for Turks. The Turkish sector still has more agricultural jobs and fewer skilled ones, whereas increasing numbers of Greeks are working as professionals. About 20 percent of Cypriots work in industry or construction.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 306,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 38.9
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 75.6
 Industry: 19.4
 Services: 4.9
 Unemployment %: 3.4

EDUCATION

There are two educational systems in the country, in each of the Greek and Turkish sectors. Attendance is nearly 100 percent in both sectors, and the literacy rate of the entire island is quite high, at 97.6 percent.

The Republic of Cyprus offers education at the preprimary, primary, secondary, and postsecondary levels. Attendance is compulsory at the primary and secondary levels, where most schooling is free, although there are also private schools. The basic language of instruction is Greek, and English is widely taught as well. Overall standards are high, with continual assessment performed, and specialization begins at the secondary level in gymnasiums and lyceums. The University of Cyprus provides instruction in a variety of subjects, and there are several other public institutions of higher education, including the Pedagogical Academy, the Higher Technical Institute, the Forestry College, the School of Nursing and Midwifery, the Hotel and Catering Institute, and the Psychiatric School of Nursing. Some students elect to pursue higher education at universities in Greece.

In the Turkish sector education became compulsory for children up to ages 15 or 16 in 1975. The language of instruction is Turkish, and textbooks are obtained from the mainland. The curriculum is similar to that of the Greek schools, although there are few provisions for preprimary education. There are no universities in the northern sector, but the Teacher Training College in Kyrenia and the Higher Technical Institute in Famagusta serve the needs of higher education.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 97.6
Male %: 98.9
Female %: 96.3
School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 13.0
First Level: Primary schools: 383
Teachers: 3,349
Students: 63,717
Student-Teacher Ratio: 19.0
Net Enrollment Ratio: 95.9
Second Level: Secondary Schools: 107
Teachers: 5,258
Students: 59,581
Student-Teacher Ratio: 12.2
Net Enrollment Ratio: 91.7
Third Level: Institutions: 32
Teachers: 1,142
Students: 13,927
Gross Enrollment Ratio: 25.6
Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 5.8

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Cyprus is a modern Western nation with a variety of technological facilities. Telecommunications and Inter-

net facilities are readily available. Cypriots work in web design and other technical fields. Cyprus created the Cyprus Institute of Technology in 1992, as a joint project by the Ministry of Commerce, Industry, and Tourism, the Cyprus Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and the Employers' and Industrialists' Federation. The scientists at the institute participate in research and symposia all over Europe.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 356
Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 0.26
High-Tech Exports \$million: 5.2
Patent Applications by Residents: 4

MEDIA

Cyprus has several daily newspapers; the *Cyprus Mail* and *Cyprus News* are published in English, *Simerini* is published in Greek, and *Kibris gazete* is published in Turkish. Most papers represent a particular political viewpoint, and the media do not hesitate to criticize the government. Weekly papers and magazines are published on both sides of the divide. Private ownership is the norm in both the Greek and Turkish sectors. There is no censorship, but publication permits are required.

The national news agency is the Cyprus News Agency in the Greek sector and the Turk Ajansi Kibris in the Turkish sector. Foreign news agencies are represented in Nicosia. The Cyprus Broadcasting Corporation, a semi-governmental body modeled on the BBC, operates both radio and television services. Turkish radio and television are operated by Bayrak Radio and Television Corporation. In addition, the British Forces Broadcasting Service is in operation.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 8
Total Circulation 000: 87
Circulation per 1,000: 111
Books Published: 931
Periodicals: 37
Radio Receivers 000: 410
per 1,000: 526
Television sets 000: 120
per 1,000: 154

CULTURE

Cyprus has a very ancient culture that has been influenced by Europe, especially Greece and Rome, Turkey, the Middle East, and North Africa. Situated at a strategic crossroads in the Mediterranean, it has been invaded

by various cultures for the past 9,000 years. The island is covered with archaeological remains, including Greek temples, Roman mosaics, medieval monasteries, and castles built by crusaders on their way to the Holy Land. This past influences modern art forms. Many villages specialize in particular arts or crafts, such as basketry, tapestry, lace, pottery, and metalwork.

Modern culture is split between the Turkish side and the Greek side. The people in the north consider themselves Turkish and emulate Turkish practices. They are mostly Sunni Muslims; they eat Turkish food and celebrate Muslim holidays. In the south, people are Greek Orthodox; they eat Greek food and celebrate Greek holidays. Easter is the most important festival in the south, Ramadan the most important in the north. A holiday unique to the north is the Proclamation of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, celebrated on November 15.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 148
Volumes: 578,600
Registered borrowers: 6,700
Museums Number: 26
Annual Attendance: 96,000
Cinema Gross Receipts national currency million: 2.6
Number of Cinemas: 28
Seating Capacity: 9,600
Annual Attendance: 800,000

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

In ancient times residents of Cyprus revered many of the gods of Greece. The goddess Aphrodite was believed to have been born from the sea foam in Cyprus. Medieval Christian saints are also the subject of many stories.

Cypriot folklore has concocted stories around native birds. Villagers believe that if children swallow partridge eggs they will have good singing voices. The partridge is also featured in a story about the Turks—the villains in this case—searching for and killing St. Jacob. In another tale a young woman with a wicked mother-in-law turns into a frankolin, another kind of bird, when her mother-in-law throws her into an oven. Ever since then, tells the story, the frankolin's call has sounded like the young woman wailing.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Cypriots enjoy going out to restaurants or taverns to eat and drink. The island has a developed tourist industry, and a variety of water sports are available to tourists and locals. Windsurfing, sailing, and diving are all popular.

The hills of the interior offer excellent hiking and mountain biking; there is even a ski resort. Golf is popular. There are nightclubs and casinos and plenty of shopping opportunities.

ETIQUETTE

Hospitality is extremely important to Cypriot people. Anyone who is invited to a home in Cyprus can expect to be served Greek coffee and snacks; it is impolite to refuse. A guest should bring chocolates or flowers as a gift. People in urban areas tend to be more culturally liberal than those in the interior, especially Muslims. Certain practices are considered impolite, such as pointing a finger or the soles of the feet at a person, blowing one's nose in public, picking one's teeth at the table, and hugging or kissing publicly. Modesty is especially important when visiting a mosque or church.

FAMILY LIFE

Before the Second World War, the family was the most important social institution in Cyprus; people thought of themselves first and foremost as members of a family and gave little importance to nationality. A household consisted of a man, a woman, and their unmarried children. A matchmaker would arrange marriages, often between partners who hardly knew one another. People became adults upon marriage, not before. Unions were made on the basis of family ties and property, not love. When a daughter married, the parents gave her household items; a son received land and a house. This transfer of property is called the dowry. Divorce was almost unheard of because the social consequences of leaving a marriage were too great.

Modern Greek Cypriots have different attitudes toward marriage. Young people make their own decisions, although economics still enter into the picture. Wealthier parents are usually more flexible about their children's romantic behavior than poorer ones, who still consider a daughter's good reputation valuable for finding a good husband. Parents consider it their duty to provide their children everything they need for success in life, including education and a house. Marriage is still strong in Cyprus; many adults marry, though the divorce rate has been increasing rapidly, and very few children are born out of wedlock.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Most Cypriots dress in casual and fashionable Western-style clothes. More formal attire is expected in business settings, but in 2005 women lawyers won the right to

wear trousers to court instead of the dark jackets and skirts they were formerly required to wear. A few elderly rural people still wear the traditional clothing that was common in the early 1900s.

SPORTS

Cyprus has many sports and recreational facilities, many of them for tourists. People ride bikes, hike, enjoy water sports, and play soccer, tennis, and other sports. The Sport Academy of the Cyprus Sport Organization, founded in Nicosia in 1989, promotes sports education for all people, helping coaches, athletes, physicians, and physical education teachers in schools. It also publishes information on sports and helps athletic bodies organize courses and seminars. Many northern European soccer teams travel to Cyprus for winter training.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1959** Under the London-Zurich Agreement, guaranteed by the United Kingdom, Greece, and Turkey, Cyprus is granted independence as a republic; Archbishop Makarios III is elected president and Fazil Kucuk vice president.
- 1960** The constitution of Cyprus takes effect; the first elections to the House of Representatives are held.
- 1963** Archbishop Makarios III issues 13 proposals to amend the constitution in an effort to assure Greek ascendancy in government.
- 1964** The Cypriot National Guard is formed. The UN peacekeeping force reaches Cyprus.
- 1967** Kucuk declares the Turkish Provisional Administration.
- 1968** Makarios III is reelected president by an overwhelming majority.
- 1974** General George Grivas, the Eoka leader, dies. Makarios is overthrown by right-wing National Guard troops, who name Nicos Sampson as head of state; Makarios flees the country. Turkish army invades Cyprus and after heavy fighting occupies the northern third of the country, including the cities of Famagusta and Kyrenia and part of Nicosia. Makarios returns from Greece and is reinstated as president.
- 1975** The Turkish-held northern sector proclaims itself as the Turkish Federated State of Cyprus, with Rauf Denktash as president.
- 1977** Makarios dies and is succeeded in office by Spyros Kyprianou, who is elected president.
- 1983** The northern sector proclaims independence as the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC). Kyprianou is reelected president.
- 1988** George Vassiliou is elected president.
- 1990** The republic submits a formal application for full EU membership, sparking a storm of debate from the Turkish Cypriot community.
- 1993** Glafkos Clerides is elected president. Turkish Cypriots hold multiparty parliamentary elections.
- 1994** The republic begins a five-year development plan, greatly expanding computerization and telecommunications.
- 1995** TRNC President Rauf Denktash wins reelection.
- 1996** For the first time since 1974, violent clashes between Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot forces result in the death of two demonstrators and escalated tensions.
- 1997** The Republic of Cyprus purchases missiles capable of reaching the Turkish coast, evoking threats of retaliation from Turkey. President Clerides and TRNC President Denktash engage in a series of face-to-face meetings to discuss settlement.
- 1998** Glafkos Clerides is reelected president by a narrow margin. Accession negotiations begin in March.
- 1999** The republic's plan to deploy additional missiles again provokes Turkey's ire.
- 2002** Clerides and Denktash hold their first face-to-face meeting in four years in December. This meeting is followed by a second one, for which Denktash crosses to the south for the first time since the Turkish invasion of 1974.
- 2003** Tassos Papadopoulos defeats Clerides in presidential election. Turkish and Greek Cypriots cross the line dividing the island for the first time in 30 years.
- 2004** Both halves of the island vote on referendum to accept UN reunification plan; Turks vote for it, but Greeks reject it. Cyprus joins the European Union as a divided nation.

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OFFICIAL PUBLICATIONS

Cyprus. *Census of Industrial Production* (annual); *Census of Population, 2001*; *Economic Report* (annual); *Statistical Abstract* (annual)

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Cyprus Government
<http://www.pio.gov.cy/>

CZECH REPUBLIC

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Czech Republic (Česká Republika)

ABBREVIATION

CZ

CAPITAL

Prague

HEAD OF STATE

President Vaclav Klaus (from 2003)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Jiri Paroubek (from 2005)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Parliamentary democracy

POPULATION

10,241,138 (2005)

AREA

78,866 sq km (30,450 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Czechs, Moravians, Slovaks

LANGUAGE

Czech

RELIGIONS

Roman Catholic, Protestant, Orthodox

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Koruna

NATIONAL FLAG

A white stripe above a red stripe with a blue triangle extending from hoist to midpoint

NATIONAL EMBLEM

The ornate white lion of the royal house of Bohemia. On the lion's shoulder is displayed a small red and blue shield featuring a flaming grenade against a stylized outline of Mount Krivak. The large red shield is of unusual heraldic shape—square at the bottom and triangular at the top.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Kde Domov Muj?” (“Where is My Native Land?”)

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (Establishment Day), May 1 (Labor Day), Easter Monday, May 8 (Anniversary of the Liberation), July 5 (Constantin and Methodius Day), July 6 (Jan Hus Day), September 28 (St. Wenceslas Day), October 28 (Nationalization Day), November 17 (Freedom and Democracy Day), December 25 (Christmas), December 26 (St. Stephen's Day)

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

January 1, 1993

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

December 16, 1992 (ratified); effective January 1, 1993

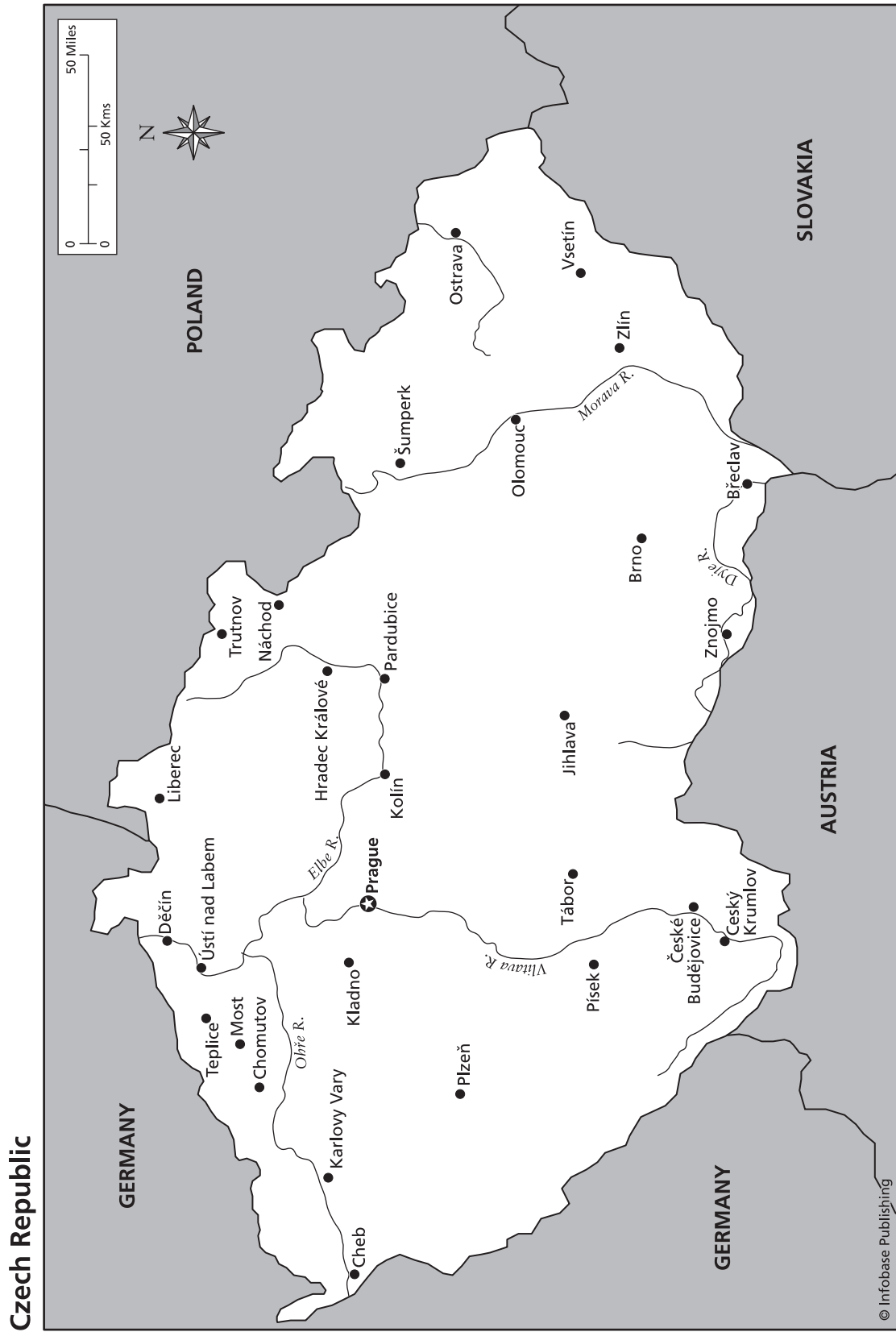
GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

The Czech Republic is a landlocked nation in the center of Europe, southeast of Germany. Its total area is 78,866 sq km (30,450 sq mi). The nation borders Austria, Poland, Germany, and Slovakia. There are two broad regions: Bohemia in the west and Moravia in the east. Bohemia consists of rolling plains, hills, and plateaus, surrounded by low mountains. Moravia is much more hilly and mountainous.

Europe's major watershed runs through the Czech Republic and separates the basins of the North, Baltic, and Black seas. The nation's principal rivers include the

Labe (Elbe), Vltava, Morava, Odra (Oder), and Dyje. There are 455 natural lakes in the republic, including a complex of five limestone lakes of glacial origin in the region of Bohemia. In addition, there are some 21,800 artificial lakes which have been created for farm fishing. The nation possesses a number of natural springs renowned for their therapeutic value. The warmest of these is the thermal spring at Karlovy Vary, with a temperature of 72°C (162°F).

The Czech Republic lies on the borderline of two major mountain systems: the Hercynian and the Alpine-Himalayan. The Krkonoše (Giant Mountains) mountain range stretches into Bohemia and creates a



natural border with Poland. The range is the highest in the republic. The Hruby Jeseník (Ash Mountains) are the second tallest mountains in the country and are located in northern Moravia. The third highest range in the Czech Republic is the Šumava (Bohemian Forest). These hilly ranges are known as the Český Les. The fourth major range in the nation is the Morava-Silesian Beskydy Mountains, which lie in the eastern part of the Czech Republic and in northern Moravia. They are a frontier range that runs north to south and borders Poland and the Slovak Republic.

The capital is Prague, situated on both sides of the Vltava River, near the center of Bohemia. Although one of the newest national capitals of Europe, it is one of the continent's oldest and most picturesque cities.

Geography

Area sq km: 78,866; sq mi: 30,450
 World Rank: 114th
 Land Boundaries, km: Austria 362; Germany 646; Poland 658; Slovakia 215
 Coastline, km: 0
 Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Elbe River 115
 Highest: Snezka 1,602
 Land Use %
 Arable land: 39.8
 Permanent Crops: 3.05
 Forest: 34.1
 Other: 23.05

Population of Principal Cities (2004)

Brno	369,559
Olomouc	101,268
Ostrava	313,088
Plzeň	164,180
Prague	1,165,581

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

The Czech Republic is in Europe's temperate zone, and as such has relatively mild winters and summers, with only moderate precipitation. The mean annual temperature nationwide ranges from 6°C to 10°C (43°F to 50°F), although elevation greatly affects temperature. In the continental eastern regions, temperature variants are greater in the spring than in the fall.

Rainfall is influenced by elevation, the direction of exposure, shelter from winds, and situation on the windward or leeward side of mountains. Generally, rainfall increases toward the east. In the lowlands precipitation occurs mainly in the summer. The more hilly regions and piedmont areas receive up to 1,372 mm (54 in) of rainfall per year, the mountains up to 1,397 mm (55 in).

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature: 43°F to 50°F
 Summer: 86°F/Winter 5°F
 Average Rainfall: 54 in to 55 in
 Bohemia: 22 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

About one-third of the Czech Republic is covered in forests. Virgin forests remain in mountain areas whose unsuitability for cultivation has enabled them to escape centuries of clear-cutting. There are high-altitude forests in Bohemia and Moravia, but they have been damaged by acid rain. The highest areas (above 1,400 m; 4,592 ft) are covered with grasses, shrubs, and lichens. The Czech Republic is still home to numerous mammals, including wildcats such as lynx, marten, mink, otters, and marmots, as well as the occasional bears or wolves crossing the Carpathians into Moravia. Common birds include ducks, geese, partridges, pheasants, and other game birds that inhabit forests and marshes. Other birds are grouse, osprey, storks, bustards, eagles, and vultures.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 10,241,138
 World Rank: 79th
 Density per sq km: 132
 % of annual growth (1999-2003): -0.2
 Male %: 48.7
 Female %: 51.3
 Urban %: 74.4
 Age Distribution %: 0-14: 15.0
 15-64: 70.9
 65 and over: 14.1
 Population 2025: 9,844,000
 Birth Rate per 1,000: 9.1
 Death Rate per 1,000: 10.54
 Rate of Natural Increase %: -0.2
 Total Fertility Rate: 1.18
 Expectation of Life (years): Males 72.52
 Females 79.24
 Marriage Rate per 1,000: 5.2
 Divorce Rate per 1,000: 3.1
 Average Size of Households: 2.9
 Induced Abortions: 31,142

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

The breakup of Czechoslovakia resulted in the dissolution of a multiethnic state and the emergence of a relatively homogeneous population in the Czech Republic, where ethnic Czechs now make up some 94.4 percent of the total population. Other ethnic groups include Slovaks

(3 percent), Poles (0.6 percent), Germans (0.5 percent), Gypsies (0.3 percent), and Hungarians (0.2 percent). There are also small Jewish and Russian populations. Following the 1994 breakup some 300,000 Slovaks declared themselves Czech citizens; the border between Slovakia and the Czech Republic is open for citizens of the former Czechoslovakia.

LANGUAGES

Both Czech and Slovak are spoken in the Czech Republic. Many Czechs speak German as well as English, which has become the most desired foreign language in the universities. During the Communist era Russian was taught in school, but the language is little used today. The major ethnic groups, including the Poles, Germans, and Hungarians, speak their own languages. In addition, the Jews and Gypsies speak the languages of their communities for general communication but use Yiddish or their own languages in private conversation.

RELIGIONS

Moravia was Christianized in the ninth and 10th centuries by Cyril and Methodius. The Kingdom of Bohemia became Catholic under King Wenceslas. Roman Catholicism is the majority religion, though a deeply persecuted one from 1947 to 1990. In 1989 the Czech Republic passed laws establishing freedom of religion and lifting the regulations used by the Communist regime to repress religion.

Roman Catholics now account for 39.2 percent of the population. The Czechoslovak Hussite Church is a reformed Catholic sect that split with Rome after World War I and is the second largest Christian denomination. Protestants make up only 4.6 percent of the Czech population; Lutheranism is the dominant Protestant denomination. Other Protestant churches include the Evangelical Church of the Czech Brethren and the Reformed Christian Church. A large percentage of Czechs describe themselves as either atheists (39.4 percent) or uncertain about religion (13.4 percent).

Of the 300,000 Jews in Czechoslovakia before World War II, only about 40,000 survived. Due to continued emigration only about 5,000 to 6,000 remain.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The earliest inhabitants of the present-day Czech lands were Celtic tribes who settled in Bohemia as early as 500 B.C.E. The Celts were displaced by seminomadic German tribes. In the fourth century C.E. the Germans began to move westward, and by the fifth century the region was a Slavic domain. The sixth century witnessed the onslaught of the Avars, a pastoral people speaking a Ural-Altai language. They were repelled by Samo, who unified the Slavic tribes and in 625 established the Samo Empire, which lasted until 658 as the first Czech polity. Early in the ninth century the Moravian Empire emerged, and German missionaries began to spread Christianity within the empire. The Moravians allied themselves with the Germans, and Moravia was permanently drawn to the West.

The Moravian Empire disintegrated with the Magyar invasions. The Czech tribes broke away and swore allegiance to the Franks, while the Slovaks remained under Magyar rule for successive centuries. The political center of gravity shifted as a result of the demise of the Moravian Empire, and a new empire emerged in Bohemia in the 10th century. This empire was controlled by chiefs of the Cechove, from which Czech is derived. The third ruler of this dynasty was King Wenceslas, who became the national saint. The Bohemian Kingdom eventually became a fiefdom of the Holy Roman Empire. After the royal line came to an end in 1306, a new royal family was started by John of Luxembourg, who was the son of the Holy Roman Emperor.

The reign of the second Luxembourg king, Charles IV (1347–78), is known as the Golden Age of Czech history. During his reign Prague became an archbishopric, and a supreme court and university were established. Following his election as Holy Roman Emperor in 1355 Prague became the imperial city, and extensive building projects were undertaken, including the Charles Bridge across the Vltava.

In the aftermath of the Golden Age the Hussite movement emerged and dominated Czech history for the next 100 years. Jan Hus, rector of the University of Prague, rejected the corruption, wealth, and hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church and espoused the teachings of John Wycliffe. Hus was condemned as a heretic and burned at the stake in 1415. His death sparked generations of religious warfare, pitting Catholics against reformers and Czechs against Germans. This conflict was exacerbated by dynastic squabbles, which were finally ended in 1526 when Ferdinand united the crowns of St. Stephen and St. Wenceslas under Austrian control. Austria would rule the Czechs for 392 years, until 1918.

The early years of Austrian rule were marked by efforts to suppress Czech nationalism and the Hussites. On November 8, 1620, the Czechs were decisively defeated

Religious Affiliations

Roman Catholic	4,014,000
Protestant	471,000
Orthodox	307,000
Atheist	4,075,000
Other	1,372,000

at the Battle of White Mountain. From then on Austrian rule was secure.

Concurrent with this period of Austrian hegemony, the Czech lands were devastated by the Thirty Years War (1618–48) between the Catholic and Protestant powers of Europe. The Treaty of Westphalia (1648) ended the war and incorporated the Bohemian Kingdom into the Hapsburg imperial system. German became the official language.

During the Enlightenment reforms were enacted that limited the power of the Roman Catholic Church, and Josef II (1780–90) abolished serfdom and, through the Edict of Toleration in 1781, extended religious freedom of worship to Lutherans and Calvinists.

The first half of the 19th century witnessed a rebirth of Czech nationalism. However, the Revolution of 1848 was crushed by the imperial Austrian forces and absolutism was restored under the Hapsburg emperor Franz Josef (1848–1916).

The establishment of the Dual Monarchy and the reconfiguration of the empire into the Austro-Hungarian Empire did not bring any concessions to the Czechs. When World War I began, the Czechs intensified their efforts to break away from the empire. Czech and Slovak leaders joined together to establish the Czech National Council and set up centers of resistance in Vienna, Prague, Budapest, and Bratislava. In the fall of 1918 the Allies recognized the council as the government of an independent republic. At the Paris Peace Conference the Allies approved the establishment of the Czechoslovak Republic, which included Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia, Slovakia, and Ruthenia.

Czechoslovakia was officially founded on October 28, 1918. A new constitution was adopted and a national assembly and president were elected. Czech and Slovak were recognized as the national languages and special protections were granted to minorities. In an effort to defuse potential separatist movements, the national government was highly centralized and provincial assemblies had only nominal powers.

Between 1918 and 1938 Czechoslovakia had relatively stable governments, but there soon emerged a struggle between the national government and the Sudeten Germans. A strong sense of German nationalism among this minority fueled the rise of the Sudeten Nazi Party, which supported Adolf Hitler's Pan-Germanism.

After Hitler's annexation of Austria on March 13, 1938, Czechoslovakia became the next target. Hitler wished to use the Sudetenland as a bridgehead for further expansion into eastern Europe. Neither Great Britain nor France desired war and capitulated to Hitler's demands at the Munich Conference for the swift return of Sudetenland to Germany. The Munich Agreement stripped Czechoslovakia of 38 percent of Bohemia and Moravia. It also yielded 11,882 sq km (4,586 sq mi) to Hungary and part of the region of southern Tesin to Poland. Mean-

while, encouraged by Hitler, both Slovakia and Ruthenia asserted their independence. In November 1938 a new republic was established that consisted of three autonomous units: Bohemia-Moravia, Slovakia, and Carpatho-Ukraine, as sub-Carpathian Ruthenia was renamed. Hitler completed his conquest of the republic on March 15, 1938, when he forced the Czech government to capitulate and become a German protectorate.

German rule was moderate at first but, following student demonstrations in November 1939, became brutal under the direction of the notorious Reinhard Heydrich and, after his assassination, General Kurt Daluege. A government-in-exile was established in London and Czech and Slovak resistance was active throughout the war.

The postwar settlement resulted in numerous boundary and population changes. Ruthenia was ceded to the Soviet Union. All Sudeten Germans were expelled under harsh conditions. Territory that had been ceded to Poland was returned, and the nation engaged in a population exchange with Hungary.

In 1946 a Communist-led coalition government assumed power following elections in which the Communists pulled 38 percent of the vote. In 1948 the Communists staged a coup and charged the non-Communist political parties with subversion. All non-Communists were purged from the government, which began nationalizing private industry. A new constitution was enacted, and the provinces of Bohemia, Moravia, and Slovakia were replaced by 19 administrative provinces. Numerous arrests, confiscations, and executions occurred as the Communists sought to enhance their power. There were also restrictions placed on churches, and church property was confiscated.

In 1950 the government banned all books published in Czechoslovakia before 1948. That same year all monastic houses were seized and a new criminal code was adopted. A year later there were mass purges. In 1960 a new constitution was adopted, and the nation's name changed to the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic.

However, in 1968 proreform Communists gained power and Alexander Dubček was named the first secretary. The so-called Prague Spring initiated a series of reforms, but the Soviet Union responded by organizing an invasion of the nation by its Warsaw Pact allies. Thousands were executed or exiled and Dubček was replaced by Gustav Husak.

The reform spirit remained strong, and in 1977 a group of dissidents and reform-minded intellectuals issued Charter 77. These efforts culminated in 1989 when Husak resigned and the "Velvet Revolution" led to the demise of the Communist Party. Playwright Vaclav Havel became president and a non-Communist cabinet took power. The following year the Communists were defeated in national elections. Havel was reelected president.

In 1992 a leftist government came to power in Slovakia; the new government pressed for a dissolution of Czechoslovakia. The result was the breakup of the nation in what became known as the “Velvet Divorce.” New constitutions were established. The next year Hável was elected president of the new Czech Republic.

By 1997 privatization efforts had begun to yield positive results, and the Czech economy reoriented itself to the West more quickly than any of the other former Eastern bloc nations. This aided the republic’s negotiations with the European Union for admittance to the organization. In 1998 Hável was again elected president. The Czech Republic became one of three former Warsaw Pact nations to join the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) in 1999. Hável continued to work on getting the nation admitted to the European Union, and in December 2002 he received an invitation to join the organization.

Hável stepped down as president in February 2003. His successor, Vaclav Klaus, who had many disagreements with Hável during his tenure as prime minister from 1992 to 1997, accepted the European Union’s formal invitation to membership following a referendum in which voters approved the plan. The Czech Republic officially joined the European Union on May 1, 2004, along with nine other nations. Klaus is a member of the conservative Civic Democratic Party. He has made full integration into the European Union his top priority. In July 2004 he named Stanislav Gross, leader of the Social Democrats, as prime minister, who resigned in 2005 amid corruption allegations and was replaced by Jiri Paroubek.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1992–2003 Vaclav Hável
2003– Vaclav Klaus

CONSTITUTION

The new constitution of the Czech Republic, which became effective following the breakup of Czechoslovakia, detailed the relationship between the executive and legislative branches and established an independent judiciary. It also defined the civil rights of the new nation. Under the constitution the nation is a democratic, unitary republic. There is universal suffrage for those 18 years and older.

The chief executive is the president, who is elected by the parliament for a five-year term. The president may serve a maximum of two consecutive terms. The president is the commander in chief of the armed forces, but power is limited to the right to veto bills passed by the legislature, with the exception of constitutional acts. The president appoints the cabinet, following recommendations by the prime minister.

The legislature consists of two bodies: the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate. The legislature approves all bills and ratifies international treaties.

The government consists of the prime minister, the deputy prime minister, and cabinet ministers. The government manages the administration and has legislative initiative for the state budget. Because of the presence of a number of political parties (16 different parties in the 1996 elections), governments are usually coalitions of different parties. Management of the state budget and control of state property is the domain of the Supreme Audit Office. The office is an independent controlling agency that also audits the government. Many aspects of the economy are overseen by the Czech National Bank. The president and executives of the bank are appointed by the nation’s president. The bank is independent of the cabinet, and its main goal is to maintain the stability of the currency.

The judiciary is divided between the Constitutional Court and the Supreme Court. The Constitutional Court consists of 15 judges who are appointed by the president and approved by the Senate. Judges serve for 10 years. The court oversees constitutional issues. The Supreme Court is the highest judicial body in all legal matters except constitutional ones.

PARLIAMENT

The Czech parliament is a bicameral legislature. The lower house is the Chamber of Deputies and is based on a system of proportional representation. Political parties must gain at least 5 percent of the vote in order to obtain seats in the Chamber. Deputies in the Chamber must be at least 21 years old. The lower house consists of 200 representatives who are elected for a four-year term. The Chamber can be dissolved by the president under certain guidelines provided by the constitution. Such a dissolution occurred in 1997 following the collapse of the center-right coalition because of longstanding disputes among the members.

The upper house of the legislature is the Senate. The Senate is made up of 81 senators elected for six-year terms. The minimum age for election to the Senate is 40 years, and senators are elected by majority vote. Every two years one-third of the Senate is reelected. The Senate cannot be dissolved.

A bill is passed by the Chamber of Deputies and then sent to the senate, which can approve it, veto it, or send it back with amendments. Constitutional amendments and international treaties must be approved by a 60 percent majority.

POLITICAL PARTIES

The Assembly for the Republic—Republican Party of Czechoslovakia (SPR-RSE) is a right-wing, nationalist

party. The Czech Social Democratic Party (CSSD) is a center-left party that was founded in 1878 but banned during Communist rule. The CSSD won 70 seats in the 2002 election and formed a centrist alliance with the Christian Democrats and the Freedom Union. The Christian Democratic Union–Czechoslovak People's Party (KDU-CSL) is a conservative Christian party that is the successor to the Catholic People's Party. The Civic Democratic Party (ODS) is a center-right party that supports privatization and strong ties with the West. The Communist Party is leftist and has splintered into factions, including the Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia (KSCM). The Communist Party won 41 seats in 2002. The Freedom Union (US) is a conservative party formed by defectors from the ODS, and the Green Party is a left-of-center environmental party.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The Czech Republic is divided into two regions (Bohemia and Moravia), 13 self-governing administrative districts, and Prague. There are also about 80 municipalities, or districts, ranging in size from over one million (Prague) to about 50,000 residents. Municipalities receive funding from the state and are not allowed to raise money themselves. Most municipal decisions are made by the national government. There is no regional tier of government.

LEGAL SYSTEM

Civil law is based on Austro-Hungarian codes, and there has been an effort to bring the nation's legal system into line with the obligations of the Organization on Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) by eliminating the vestiges of Marxist-Leninist legal theory. The judiciary is an independent branch of the government that is divided into two broad courts, the Constitutional Court and the Supreme Court. The Constitutional Court consists of 15 judges who are appointed by the president and approved by the Senate. Judges serve for 10 years. The court oversees constitutional issues. The Supreme Court is the highest judicial body in all legal matters except constitutional ones. It has three councils, one each for civil, penal, and military cases.

There is a system of upper courts, which are located in the capitals of the various regions. In addition, each district has a lower court known as a district court made up of three judges, one professional and two chosen by the community.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Human and civil rights are guaranteed by the Bill of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms. Czechs enjoy freedom of speech, religion, and press.

Following the breakup of Czechoslovakia the Czech Republic enacted a restrictive citizenship law that limited the number of residents who could become citizens. Those former Czechoslovakians who did not become Czech citizens were not permitted to vote, serve in the government, or participate in privatization programs. In addition, citizenship had to be established before persons could petition for redress of past official actions or the wrongful confiscation of property. Amendments added in 1996 made it possible for those with criminal records to gain citizenship.

Certain minority groups within the Czech Republic face varying forms of discrimination. The Gypsy or Roma population remains the target of the most significant discrimination. The nation has been criticized for the Romas' disproportionately high rates of poverty, unemployment, and illiteracy.

FOREIGN POLICY

Since 1989 Czech foreign policy has been characterized by a pro-Western orientation. Successive governments have worked to join Western governmental organizations. The main goals were membership in the European Union and NATO. An agreement between the Czech Republic and the European Union was signed in 1992 that covered various aspects of trade liberalization.

In its efforts to join NATO the Czech Republic became a member of the Partnership for Peace (PfP) program, which was perceived as a precursor to full membership in the alliance. As a PfP member the Czech Republic participated in NATO peacekeeping operations in Bosnia. In December 1997 the nation was invited to join the alliance, formally joining in March 1999.

Czech foreign policy has also promoted regional cooperation. In 1992 the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland signed a free trade agreement known as the Central European Free Trade Area (CEFTA). This initiative called for the elimination of trade restrictions among member-states and the eventual removal of trade barriers between CEFTA and the European Union. CEFTA was also seen as a means to promote individual entry into the European Union by demonstrating the capability to remove trade restrictions and encourage free trade. The country gained EU membership in 2004.

In 2000 the Czech Republic opened the Temelin nuclear power plant, which sparked a serious disagreement with Austria. In 2001 the two nations resolved the dispute by agreeing to stringent safety measures. The government has also generated conflict with Germany and Hungary by expelling 2.5 million ethnic Germans and Hungarians under the postwar Benes decree; the government was put under pressure to revoke this decree but refused.

DEFENSE

Since the end of the cold war the Czech military has adopted a number of Western-style reforms to strengthen civilian control of the armed forces and has cut personnel by some 25,000. The army includes ground forces, air forces, and special forces. Czech have been obligated to spend 12 months in compulsory military service, but conscription is scheduled to end in 2005. The president is the commander in chief of the military. The government has also initiated a variety of cooperative programs with Western militaries, such as joining the PfP. The goal of these efforts was Czech entry into NATO, which occurred in 1999. In fiscal year 2001 the Czech Republic spent \$1.19 billion on the armed forces, which was about 2.1 percent of gross domestic product (GDP).

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 54,000
 Military Manpower Availability: 2,623,386
 Military Expenditures \$billion: 1.19
 as % of GDP: 2.1
 as % of central government expenditures: 5.4
 Arms Imports \$million: 53
 Arms Exports \$million: 85

ECONOMY

The Czech Republic was initially regarded as the most prosperous and advanced of the post-Communist central European states. A series of problems undercut the country's transformation during the 1990s, but since 2000 the republic has pulled its way out of recession and the economy has been growing steadily. In 2004 the economy grew at a rate of 2.9 percent. The country has been exporting goods to the European Union, especially to Germany, and foreign investment has nearly doubled since 2000. Interest rates have dropped and credit cards and mortgage loans have become readily available, spurring Czechs to consume more. Inflation is under control, at 0.1 percent in 2004. The deficit has averaged around 5 percent of GDP, which could cause problems in the future.

The major exports of the country are machinery and manufactured goods, and one-third of the workers remain in the industrial sector. Mining is also a major industry, and coal provides the nation's major energy source. The service industry employs the majority of workers. The major trading partners of the nation are the European Union states and Slovakia. Increased investment in the banking, telecommunications, and energy industries should attract future foreign investment. Privatization of more businesses is one of the country's keys to future economic growth.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 161.1
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 15,700
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 2.3
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 2.5
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 3.1
 Industry: 35.5
 Services: 61.4
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 51
 Government Consumption: 22
 Gross Domestic Investment: 26.0
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 46.77
 Imports: 50.4
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 4.3
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 22.4

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
133.5	138.7	145.2	147.8	147.9

Finance

National Currency: Czech Koruna (CZK)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = CZK 28.209
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 964
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 2.0
 Total External Debt \$billion: 28
 Debt Service Ratio %: 2.98
 Balance of Payments \$million: –5.57
 International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 26.3
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 0.1

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 393
 per capita \$: 39
 Foreign Direct Investment \$billion: 9.323

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$billion: 33.25
 Expenditures \$billion: 38.88
 Budget Deficit \$billion: 5.63
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: 32.1

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 3.1
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2002) %: 4.4
 Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares: 30.8
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 0.7
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 128
 Total Farmland % of land area: 39.8
 Livestock: Cattle 000: 1,427
 Sheep 000: 115
 Hogs 000: 3,309
 Chickens 000: 12,440
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 14.5
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 24.2

650 Czech Republic

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: —
Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 3.3

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 28.5
Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 39.94
Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 3.9
Net Energy Imports % of use: 26.4
Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 14
 Production kW-hr billion: 71.8
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 55
Coal Reserves tons billion: 6.26
 Production tons million: 70.4
 Consumption tons million: 65
Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet billion: 140
 Production cubic feet billion: 5.4
 Consumption cubic feet billion: 337
Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels million: 15
 Production barrels 000 per day: 13.2
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 186
Pipelines Length km: 547

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 50.4
Exports \$billion: 46.77
Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2002): 9.4
Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2002): 10.1
Balance of Trade \$billion: –5.57

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Germany %	32.6	37.1
Italy %	5.3	4.5
China %	5.2	—
Slovakia %	5.2	8.0
France %	4.9	4.7
Russia %	4.6	—
Austria %	4.3	6.3
Poland %	4.2	4.8
United Kingdom %	—	5.4
Netherlands %	—	4.1

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 55,408
 Paved %: 100
Automobiles: 3,647,100
Trucks and Buses: 397,600
Railroad: Track Length km: 9,520
 Passenger-km billion: 6.6
 Freight-km billion: 15.8
Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: —
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: —

Airports: 120
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 3.86
Length of Waterways km: 664

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 4.58
Number of Tourists from million: —
Tourist Receipts \$billion: 2.94
Tourist Expenditures \$billion: 1.58

Communications

Telephones million: 3.63
Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.13
Cellular Telephones million: 9.7
Personal Computers million: 1.8
Internet Hosts per million people: 28,870
Internet Users per 1,000 people: 264

ENVIRONMENT

There are 1,246 protected areas or national parks in the Czech Republic. The largest of these areas is the Krkonoše National Park. The major environmental concerns of the nation involve lasting damage from industrial output during the post–World War II era. The use of coal and other fossil fuels has led to significant levels of acid rain, which have damaged forests; acid rain is especially troublesome in the north and at higher altitudes. In addition, industrial runoff from mining and manufacturing has led to air and water pollution in areas of northwestern Bohemia and northern Moravia, especially around Ostrava. Deforestation is another major problem.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 34.1
Average Annual Forest Change, 1990–2000, 000 ha: 1
Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 16
Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 11.6

LIVING CONDITIONS

Most cities are built around a central square that usually has a church built on one end. Most people live in apartments or multiplex housing instead of stand-alone houses, as affordable housing is in short supply. Few people own cars, and those who do own them do not always drive them because of the difficulty involved in parking and the terrible reputation of Czech drivers. Instead, people use public transportation, such as subways, buses, and trams. Transportation in and out of the country is fairly easy, especially by train. Driving a car into the country means

entering at a particular checkpoint and buying a permit to drive on the highways. The internal road system is good. People have traditionally done their shopping at small specialty shops such as butcheries and bakeries, but larger supermarkets are starting to appear. Many cities have been refurbishing their buildings and infrastructure as the economy has improved. Crime rates are growing, and air pollution is a continuing problem.

HEALTH

The health-care system is supervised by the Ministry of Health and Parliament and financed by various health-insurance companies. Most hospitals are owned either by the state or by municipalities. The state guarantees the entire health-care system. The health-care system has deteriorated in recent years, and decentralizing the system has caused some adjustment difficulties. Health-care workers are struggling to develop necessary services, such as hospice or palliative care.

Despite these difficulties the Czechs are among the healthiest people in the world, as is typical of relatively wealthy Western nations. Life expectancy is high and infant mortality is low, though both numbers are slightly worse than those in western Europe. Heart disease is the most common serious illness in both men and women. Lyme disease is endemic in some areas.

Health

Number of Physicians: 35,222
 Number of Dentists: 6,698
 Number of Nurses: 97,077
 Number of Pharmacists: 5,199
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 343
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: 8.8
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 3.97
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 9
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 7.4
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 407
 HIV Infected % of adults: < 0.1
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 98
 Measles: 97
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: —
 Access to Improved Water Source %: —

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Czechs usually have their largest meal in the middle of the day and a light meal in the evening. They may eat big meals on weekends. Czech cuisine is typical of central European cooking, as influenced by practices in Germany, Hungary, and Poland. A typical meal features roasted beef or pork with potatoes, dumplings, and sauerkraut topped

with sauce, often flavored with caraway seed, bacon, and salt. Dessert may be pastries such as crepes, tarts, or fruit-filled dumplings. The Czech Republic is famous worldwide for its beer. Moravian wine is also well known.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 2.0
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 3,170
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 113.3
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 142

STATUS OF WOMEN

The Czech Republic has universal suffrage for all citizens over 18 years of age, and women are given the same civil rights as men. However, there is no government agency to oversee enforcement of equal rights, and discrimination occurs in both the home and society in general. Politics also continues to be dominated by men, although the newer independent parties have placed women in leadership positions. In 1998 the government promulgated a resolution called Priorities and Procedure of the Government in Promoting the Equality of Men and Women, in which the state promised to equalize the position of women in the government and in society. Of particular note was the tendency of employers to discriminate against women with children. The state also pledged to combat violence against women, which is a continuing problem.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 17
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: —
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 45.8

WORK

The Czech Republic has become a better place to work in recent years, and the population seems to have successfully made the transition from Communism to a free-market system. Unemployment in 2004 was 9.9 percent. Per capita GDP was \$15,700. About 60 percent of workers are employed in services; tourism is one of the growing service industries. The government continues to be a major employer. A total of 35 percent of employees worked in industry, construction, or commerce, producing machinery and motor vehicles, weapons, glass, metal products, and other things. Only 5 percent of the workforce still works in agriculture; main agricultural products are wheat, potatoes, sugar beets, and hops, as well as pigs and chickens.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 5,250,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 47.2
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 5
 Industry: 35
 Services: 60
 Unemployment %: 9.9

EDUCATION

The Czechs are a highly educated people; essentially everyone in the country is literate. Many children attend preschool and kindergarten, but formal education begins at age six. Children remain in common schools for nine years, after which they can choose between vocational or apprenticeship schools and secondary schools (high schools). Entrance into universities is determined by students' scores on the *maturita* (school exit) exam. Universities are quite competitive, and students are now expected to help pay for their college education. The largest and most prestigious university is Charles University in Prague, which was founded in 1348. There are also increasing numbers of private schools.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 99.9
 Male %: —
 Female %: —
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 14.7
 First Level: Primary schools: 4,212
 Teachers: 34,795
 Students: 603,843
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 17.4
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 88.5
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 361
 Teachers: 70,756
 Students: 610,443
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 13.5
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 89.5
 Third Level: Institutions: 23
 Teachers: 21,024
 Students: 284,485
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 33.7
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 4.2

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The Academy of Sciences (ACSR) was established by the state in 1992 as a successor to the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences. ACSR is the leading nonuniversity research institution in the republic. It has three divisions: mathematics, physics, and earth sciences; chemical and life sciences; and humanities and social sciences. It manages 60 research institutes and five supporting units; over half of its employees are university-

trained scientists. The academy advises the government on scientific policy and runs national and international research programs.

The Association of Research Organizations (AVO) is the Czech Republic's scientific-research community within the business sector. Member organizations come from private industry and the construction and architecture fields; the AVO has 8,000 members. The association exists to promote research and development and apply the results to industry and agriculture. The AVO cooperates with the republic's Academy of Sciences and the research universities and also with international partners. The AVO is itself a partner to the state administration and assists the government in making laws to support scientific research and development.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 1,353
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 1.0
 High-Tech Exports \$billion: 4.5
 Patent Applications by Residents: 605

MEDIA

The end of Communist rule in 1989 resulted in the establishment of numerous new journals and media outlets. By 1996 there were approximately 1,168 journals and periodicals published in the republic as well as numerous daily newspapers. The largest is *Mladá fronta dnes*, which was a youth paper under the Communist regime but is now a modern, Western-style daily. The press is guaranteed freedom but most journalists do not believe that they are allowed to voice their true opinions.

The same accusations have been leveled at the government by broadcast journalists. In 2000 journalists and the government had an angry dispute over control of the national public television station, in which the media accused the government of political interference in broadcasts. The Czech Republic has a dual public-private broadcasting system. Czech Radio and Czech Television are state owned. The public television operation, Česká Televize, runs two channels. The public radio station, Český Rozhlas, broadcasts over three national networks and supplies services to many local networks. There are also numerous private television and radio stations competing for audiences with the public stations.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 103
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: 12,551
 Periodicals: —

Radio Receivers million: —
per 1,000: —
Television sets million: 5
per 1,000: 487

CULTURE

The Czech Republic has long been a bastion of high culture. The architecture has been famous for centuries and features castles, town squares, churches, and other buildings of note. Architectural styles run the gamut from Baroque to Art Nouveau and Cubist; the Czech Renaissance style is especially noteworthy. The visual arts have thrived, albeit with a brief downturn during the Communist era, and there are many excellent examples of religious sculpture and illuminated manuscripts. Czech puppet theatre is among the best in the world.

Literature is a national passion; Czechs love to read. Some famous authors include Franz Kafka, Josef Škvorecký, Ivan Klima, Jaroslav Siefert, Bohumil Hrabal, and Milan Kundera as well as the former Czech president Vaclav Hável. Czechs also love music. Street musicians often play in town squares, and Czechs will listen to nearly any musical genre. Antonín Dvořák is perhaps the most famous classical Czech composer. Czech musicians have been at the forefront of the jazz movement in Europe since the end of World War II. The keyboardist Jan Hammer composed the theme music for the U.S. television program *Miami Vice*.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 6,076
Volumes: 53,984,620
Registered borrowers: 1,461,693
Museums Number: 676
Annual Attendance: 17,666,000
Cinema Gross Receipts national currency million: 496
Number of Cinemas: 823
Seating Capacity: 292,000
Annual Attendance: 8,300,000

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Czechs are very proud of their folklore. Many people own colorful, lace-trimmed costumes that they wear to folklore festivals to perform traditional dances and songs; polkas and waltzes are typical dances. Many folklore events occur around Easter. Traditional Czech crafts include hand-painted eggs, lace, straw figurines, pottery, and sculptures made of hardened dough. The Good King Wenceslas of English Christmas carol fame was a Czech; he is the nation's patron saint.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Czechs love to spend weekends and evenings in local bars and pubs drinking their local beer and wine. They also enjoy hobbies such as gardening, hiking, taking day trips, reading, music, and the arts. Many people go to cultural events such as the opera, the symphony, plays, and art exhibits.

Festivals play an important part in Czech recreation. Nearly every day has its patron saint, and festivals and public holidays occur frequently. On April 30 Prague holds a witch-burning festival called Pálení Čarodějnic; nowadays people burn plain bonfires without witches in them, but the festival dates to pre-Christian times. The Prague Spring International Music Festival takes place in May and June, the International Book Fair occurs in May, and the Mozart Festival follows in September. Prague is usually overwhelmed with visitors who come to celebrate the Christmas holiday season.

ETIQUETTE

Czechs are usually even tempered and polite and willing to discuss a wide variety of political viewpoints. Tipping 5 to 10 percent has become standard practice at restaurants; the local custom is for the diner to tell the waiter how much he or she is paying when handing over money, including the tip in that amount. Long lunches are a typical business practice. Many Czechs speak German or English; older people tend to speak German, younger ones English.

FAMILY LIFE

Czech families are typically small, with only one or two children. National fertility rates are quite low, with only 1.18 children born per woman in 2004. Parents continue to help their children after they grow up and move out, babysitting their grandchildren and helping with shopping. The mean age of marriage is fairly young, in the early to mid-20s. Divorces are fairly easy to obtain, but courts will insist that the arrangements not go against the interests of any minor children.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Czechs dress in typical Western clothing, similar to that in the rest of Europe or in the United States. Traditional Czech costumes are readily available in stores, but Czechs only wear them for special festivals.

SPORTS

The most popular sports in the Czech Republic include soccer, tennis, ice hockey, skiing, volleyball, cycling, table

tennis, hiking, horseback riding, and swimming. Czechs have won numerous awards at international sports competitions in track, skiing, and cycling. The tennis player Martina Navratilova is a Czech. The most popular spectator sports are soccer and ice hockey. The Czech soccer team won the World Championship in 1934 and 1962 and the European Championship in 1976. The Czech national hockey team has won the World Hockey Championship eight times and won the gold medal in the 1998 Olympics.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1945** The post–World War II peace settlements result in the expulsion of Sudeten Germans, Hungarians, and territorial losses to Russia and the acquisition of land from Poland.
- 1946** After elections in which they received 38 percent of the vote the Communists establish a coalition government.
- 1948** A Communist coup results in the purge of all non-Communists from the government and numerous arrests and executions; the government begins to nationalize private land and industry.
- 1949** Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) is formed; government places restrictions on churches and confiscates church property; thousands are arrested in purges.
- 1950** Government bans all books published in Czechoslovakia before 1948; most monastic houses are confiscated; new criminal code is passed.
- 1951** In mass purges members of Central Committee are arrested, tried, and executed.
- 1960** New constitution is promulgated; the official name of the state is changed to Czechoslovak Socialist Republic.
- 1968** Proreform Communists gain power; Alexander Dubček named first secretary; the “Prague Spring” initiates a series of reforms, which end the more ruthless aspects of the Communist regime; in response, the Soviet Union organizes an invasion of Czechoslovakia by its Warsaw Pact allies. Thousands are arrested, executed, or exiled. Dubček is replaced by Gustav Husak.
- 1977** A group of dissidents and intellectuals issues Charter 77.
- 1989** Husak resigns and the Communists give up power in what is known as the Velvet Revolution; human rights activist and playwright Vaclav Hável becomes president, and a new, non-Communist controlled cabinet is sworn in.
- 1990** In general elections the Communists are soundly defeated and Hável’s party, Civic Forum, captures 170 seats in the National Assembly, compared to the 47 of the Communists; Hável is reelected president.
- 1992** Czechoslovakia dissolves into two nations, the Czech Republic and Slovakia, in the so-called Velvet Divorce; a new constitution is established.
- 1993** Hável is elected president of the Czech Republic.
- 1997** Privatization efforts yield significant results, and the Czech economy reorients itself to the West faster than any of the other former Soviet satellites; the nation enters into the Accession Partnership agreement as negotiations with the European Union proceed for admission to the union.
- 1998** Hável is reelected president.
- 1999** The Czech Republic is one of three former Warsaw Pact nations to join the organization’s cold war nemesis, NATO.
- 2002** Prague and towns across the country suffer terrible flooding; EU summit in Copenhagen invites Czech Republic to join.
- 2003** Vaclav Klaus elected president. Czech people vote to join European Union in 2004.
- 2004** Czech Republic joins European Union on May 1. Stanislav Gross becomes prime minister.
- 2005** Gross resigns and is replaced by Jiri Paroubek.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Czech Statistical Office
<http://www.czso.cz/eng/redakce.nsf/i/home>

DENMARK

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Kingdom of Denmark (Kongeriget Danmark)

ABBREVIATION

DK

CAPITAL

Copenhagen

HEAD OF STATE

Queen Margrethe II (from 1972)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen (from 2001)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Parliamentary democracy/constitutional monarchy

POPULATION

5,432,335 (2005)

AREA

43,094 sq km (16,639 sq mi) (excluding Greenland and the Faeroe Islands)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Scandinavian

LANGUAGE

Danish

RELIGION

Lutheran

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Krone

NATIONAL FLAG

The Dannebrog, or “Danish cloth,” the oldest national symbol in continuous use in the Western world: a white cross, off center toward the hoist, on a field of red

NATIONAL EMBLEM

Denmark has a simple state emblem—three lions on a gold

shield with nine red hearts—and a much older royal arms. In the royal arms three shields are imposed upon one another. The Heart Shield contains the ancestral arms of the ruling family, two red bars on gold (Oldenburg), and a gold cross on blue (Delmenhorst). On the medium shield are devices against red backgrounds representing duchies absorbed by the realm: a silver nettle shield (Holstein), a silver swan (Stormarn), a mounted knight in gold armor (Ditmarsh), and a gold horse head (Lauenburg). The chief escutcheon is quartered by a large Dannebrog cross. One quadrant bears the 12th-century royal state emblem. In another, two blue lions on gold signify Schleswig. Below the arm of the silver cross, four devices in blue appear on one side, displaying three gold crowns, commemorating the union of Denmark, Norway, and Sweden in 1397, and three silver figures representing Danish dependencies: a falcon for Iceland, a ram for the Faeroe Islands, and a polar bear for Greenland. A blue lion on a gold background surrounded by red hearts marks the royal title as the ruler of the ancient tribe of the Wends; underneath is a gold wyvern, a fabled winged creature with a dragon’s head, representing dominion over the Goths. Two Norse giants stand beside the arms. Gold chains of Danish orders circle the shield with pendants dangling. A red ermine-lined gold-fringed cape topped with a bejeweled royal crown frames the ornate emblem.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Kong Kristian Stod Ved Hojen Mast” (King Christian stood by the lofty mast) and “Der er et Yndigt Land” (There is a lovely land)

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year’s Day), April 16 (Queen’s Birthday), June 5 (Constitution Day), all major Christian festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

800

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

June 5, 1849; revised June 5, 1953

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Located in southern Scandinavia, the Kingdom of Denmark consists of Denmark proper, the Faeroe Islands, and

Greenland. Denmark itself comprises the peninsula of Jutland (Jylland) and some 406 islands with a total land area of 43,094 sq km (16,639 sq mi), extending 402 km (250 mi) north to south and 354 km (220 mi) east to west. The only

Denmark



land boundary, with Germany, is 68 km (42 mi) long. The country is surrounded by water on the other three sides: the Skaggeak on the north; the Kattegat, the Øresund, and the Baltic Sea on the east; and the North Sea on the west. The total length of the coastline is 7,314 km (4,545 mi). There are no border or other territorial disputes.

The precise size of Denmark proper is subject to constant variation owing to marine erosion and deposit and reclamation work. Not included in the land area are inlets or fjords directly connected with the sea. The country's 406 islands (of which only 97 are inhabited) account for more than one-third of the land area. The largest are Zealand (Sjælland, 7,015 sq km; 2,709 sq mi), Fünen (Fyn, 2,984 sq km; 1,152 sq mi), Lolland (1,234 sq km; 480 sq mi), Bornholm (588 sq km; 227 sq mi), and Falster (514 sq km; 198 sq mi).

The capital is Copenhagen (København), on the island of Zealand (Sjælland) and the adjoining island of Amager on the western shore of the Øresund.

Denmark is a low-lying country, with its highest point, Yding Skovhøj in East Jutland, only 173 m (568 ft) above sea level. The surface relief is characterized by glacial moraine deposits, which form undulating plains with gently rolling hills interspersed with lakes. The largest lake is Arreso (40.6 sq km; 15.7 sq mi). Between the hills are extensive level outwash plains of the meltwater formed from stratified sand and gravel outside the ice limit. These heathland plains are the site of the country's densest settlements.

The boundary line between the sandy West Jutland and the loam plains of East and North Denmark is the most important geographical dividing line in the country. West of the line is a region of scattered farms; to the east, villages and towns.

Valleys furrow the moraine landscape. The East Jutland inlets were created by the intruding sea in the lowest part of the valleys, to which glacial erosion also contributed. The inlets form natural harbors, making maritime activities easy means of livelihood. The Gudenå River, the longest river in Denmark (158 km; 98 mi), follows the intersecting valley systems.

Flat sand and gravel tracts make up one-tenth of the total land area, particularly prevalent in the northern part of the country, such as in the Limfjorden area. These low-lying regions are often swampy. Along the coast of South Jutland, where there is a strong tidal variation, there are salt marshes. Dune landscapes form an almost unbroken belt along the entire coast of Jutland.

Denmark is in the north temperate zone, where the natural type of vegetation is the deciduous forest, but as it borders on the coniferous belt, spruce and fir thrive in plantations. About 11 percent of the land area is forest. Beech, oak, elm, and lime thrive in a few locations. Natural plant communities also include dune vegetation and heathland plants, which occur chiefly on the sandy heaths of West Jutland.

Greenland, the largest island in the world, has a total land area of 2,173,600 sq km (840,000 sq mi). Of this area, 1,833,900 sq km (708,100 sq mi) lie under its icecap. The greatest north-to-south distance is 2,670 km (1,660 mi), the greatest east-to-west distance 1,290 km (800 mi). The coastline runs 39,090 km (24,289 mi).

Greenland is mountainous, with lofty fringes, the highest point of which is Gunnbjørn Fjeld, 7,700 m (25,260 ft). The average thickness of the ice field is 1,515 m (4,971 ft).

The Faeroe Islands are in the Atlantic, northwest of Denmark. The Faeroes' 19 islands, of which 18 are inhabited, cover an area of 1,399 sq km (540 sq mi). The islands range 120 km (70 mi) north to south and 79 km (49 mi) northeast to southwest.

The Faeroe landscape is characterized by a stratified series of basalt sheets, with intervening thinner layers of solidified volcanic ash (tufa). The highest peak is Slaetartindur (882 m; 2,894 ft) on Østerø.

Geography

Area sq km:	43,094; sq mi 16,639
World Rank:	130th
Land Boundaries, km:	Germany 68
Coastline, km:	7,314
Elevation Extremes meters	
Lowest:	Lammeljord -7
Highest:	Yding Shovhøj 173
Land Use %	
Arable land:	54.02
Permanent Crops:	0.19
Forest:	10.7
Other:	35.09

Population of Principal Cities (2003)

Ålborg	162,521
Århus	291,258
Copenhagen	501,285
Odense	184,308

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Denmark lies on the northwestern fringe of continental Europe, where the Gulf Stream brings warmth to the northern regions. The westerly winds temper the winter climate. The mean temperature in the coldest month is 12°C (22°F) higher than the average for Denmark's latitude. The waters of the Baltic isolate Denmark from the continental climate of eastern Europe. However, in exceptional winters, when ice closes the Baltic, cold air streams from the east can spread over the country. The lowest temperature ever recorded in Denmark was -31°C (-23.8°F). Conversely, easterly air streams during periods of high pressure in summer may hold off the westerly sea

winds. With the sun shining for a longer period then, there is a heat wave. The highest temperature ever recorded was 35.8°C (96.4°F).

Generally, however, the climate is in the intermediate range. The mean temperature of the coldest month, February, is 0.4°C (31°F), that of the warmest, July, 16.6°C (61.5°F), but there are great variations from the norm, especially in winter. The number of annual frost days ranges from 70 on the coasts to 120 in the interior.

The weather is significantly variable. As the fronts swing over the Danish region throughout the year, the weather is constantly changing. Westerly winds predominate, especially in gales. Gale damage is most common in West Jutland, particularly in spring.

The mean annual precipitation is 60 cm (23.6 in), ranging from about 80 cm (31.3 in) in southwest Jutland to about 40 cm (15.8 in) in the area of the Storebaelt (Great Belt). The number of days with precipitation fluctuates between 120 and 200. Snow falls from January through March, six to nine days a month. Rain is heaviest during August and October and lightest during the spring and winter months.

Climate and Weather

Mean temperature
February: 31°F
July: 61.5°F
Average Rainfall: 23.6 in
Jutland: 31.3 in
Great Belt: 15.8 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Denmark has been inhabited for centuries, and the environment has been well used for fuel, building materials, grazing, and hunting. Virgin forest is very rare, though about 12 percent of the land is covered with trees. The largest continuous patch of forest is the 77-square-kilometer Rold Skov, a public forest that also contains Rebild Bakker, Denmark's only national park. Most trees are deciduous; the most common are oak and beech, but there are also chestnut, linden, aspen, birch, pine, maple, hazel, and elm. Denmark has several species of deer, including the large red deer, the roe deer, and the fallow deer. Other mammals include badgers, hedgehogs, hare, foxes, and squirrels. The nearly 400 species of birds include many pigeons, magpies, geese, ducks, and coots.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 5,432,335
World Rank: 108th
Density per sq km: 127

% of annual growth (1999–2003): 0.3	
Male %: 49.5	
Female %: 50.5	
Urban %: 85.4	
Age Distribution: %	0–14: 18.6
	15–65: 66.5
	65 and over: 14.9
Population 2025: 5,698,000	
Birth Rate per 1,000: 11.59	
Death Rate per 1,000: 10.53	
Rate of Natural Increase %: 0.2	
Total Fertility Rate: 1.74	
Expectation of Life (years): Males 75.17	
	Females 79.83
Marriage Rate per 1,000: 6.9	
Divorce Rate per 1,000: 2.9	
Average Size of Households: 2.2	
% of Illegitimate Children: 46.5	
Induced Abortions: 14,967	

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Denmark was traditionally one of the most ethnically homogeneous nations in the world. Recent decades have seen an influx of guest workers and asylum seekers, particularly from Turkey, the Middle East, and South Asia. Racially, there is no special Danish type. The present population is based on a racial mixture of descendants from the New Stone Age and the various groups that have immigrated since. The Nordic group is, nevertheless, most prominent, being characterized by blond, curling hair and blue eyes.

The only non-Scandinavian minority other than recent immigrant arrivals is a German community in South Jutland numbering about 40,000, or less than 0.8 percent of the population.

The population of Greenland is partly Eskimo but consists chiefly of Greenlanders, a Mongoloid-Caucasian mixture of Eskimos and Danes.

LANGUAGES

The official language is Danish, a branch of the East Scandinavian group of the Gothonic (Germanic-Teutonic) family of languages derived from Primitive Norse. In about the 12th century Danish began to evolve separately from Swedish. With Christianity came the Latin script. Another cultural influence was German, which filtered through the Hanseatic merchants and brought in its wake hundreds of new words for products and merchandise and also abstract words.

The period of early modern Danish (1500–1700) saw the written language become fixed in more or less the form it has today. Until 1700 the written and spoken languages varied considerably, and dialects dominated spoken Danish. However, with the growing centralization of the kingdom a standard spoken language began to take shape, called Rigsmalet. From the end of the 17th century Romance loan

words began to be adopted, such as musical and banking terms from Italian, cooking and fashion words from French, and scientific terminology from classical languages. Maritime words were also adopted from Dutch. More recently Danish has borrowed heavily from English.

Danish is spoken by about 5.3 million people, five million of them in metropolitan Denmark itself, with much smaller clusters in Germany, Norway, Greenland, and the New World. Faeroe Island inhabitants speak a distinct language, Faeroese.

RELIGIONS

The national church (*folkekirken*) of Denmark, under paragraph 4 of the constitution, is Evangelical Lutheran.

Christianity was introduced in 826 by the Benedictine monk Ansgar, from northern France. However, it was not nationally adopted until about 960, when, according to the Saxon chronicler Widukind, the monk Poppo converted King Harald Bluetooth after miraculously carrying a red-hot iron in his hands. The story of the Danish church in the Middle Ages reflects the continental struggle between the crown and the church. From about 1520 a reform movement gathered strength and resulted in the smooth adoption of Lutheranism in 1536 under the leadership of Johan Bugenhagen, Peder Palladius, and Hans Tausen. From 1660 the Lutheran State Church was headed by the king, ruling as an absolute monarch.

Religious life in the 19th century was influenced by three outstanding personalities: Bishop J. P. Mynster, Søren Kierkegaard, and N. F. S. Grundtvig, who renewed the hymn tradition.

As absolutism gave way to constitutionalism in 1849, religious freedom was introduced. The state supports the church as a national institution and as part of the Danish heritage. Financially, the church is maintained by a state tax, which is levied on church members along with an ordinary income tax. In addition, the state extends grants for the maintenance of old churches as national monuments. At the same time all other religious groups enjoy full freedom of association and worship.

Spiritually, the Danish church has no single authority. Clergy are trained in the theological faculties of the universities of Copenhagen and Århus. Numbers of new ordinations have been steadily declining in recent years. To make up for the lag, laymen and laywomen are being ordained in greater numbers.

The Danish Church Abroad was founded in 1919 to care for Danish communities outside the kingdom, the largest of which is in South Schleswig. Although weekly church attendance is estimated at less than 5 percent of the population, the national church exercises a strong influence on many aspects of social and cultural life.

The vast majority of Danes (95 percent in 2004) belong, at least nominally, to the established church. Other

Protestant sects (Danish Baptists, Methodists, Seventh-Day Adventists, Pentecostals, Reformed Church, Anglicans, and Mormons), as well as Russian Orthodox, number no more than a few thousand each. The German minority has its own independent Lutheran churches in addition to parishes within the main Danish church.

The Roman Catholic Church has maintained a presence in Denmark since 1849. Most of the 33,000 Catholics live in or around Copenhagen. Some 25 percent of the Catholics are descendants of immigrant Slavs. The majority of the guest workers of the 1970s are Muslims, creating a Muslim community currently estimated at 84,000. There are about 3,400 Jews and small concentrations of Baha'is and Buddhists.

Religious Affiliations

Evangelical Lutheran	5,160,000
Other	271,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Little is known of Denmark's early history. Harald Bluetooth (d. 985), the first Christian king of Denmark, conquered Norway, and his son Sweyn conquered England. Under Canute (1018–35), Norway, England, and Denmark were united, but shortly after his death the union with England came to an end and Norway seceded. Danish hegemony was reestablished over Norway and Sweden by the Union of Kalmar in 1397. In 1523 Sweden broke free, but the union with Norway remained until 1814. The Reformation was established in Denmark during the reign of Christian III (1534–59). A series of wars with Sweden resulted in the loss of southern Sweden as well as Danish control of the Øresund. Meanwhile, under Frederick III (1648–70) and Christian V (1670–99) absolute monarchy was reestablished and remained in force until 1849. Denmark was on the losing side in the Napoleonic Wars and as a result lost Norway by the Peace of Kiel (1814). Within the next half century Denmark had lost to Prussia the southern provinces of Schleswig, Holstein, and Lauenburg. North Schleswig was returned to Denmark through a plebiscite after World War I. The Virgin Islands were ceded to the United States in 1917. A democratic constitution was introduced in 1849 and a revised one adopted in 1915. Denmark was invaded by the Germans in 1940 and served as a springboard for the invasion of Norway.

Greenland, discovered by Eric the Red, entered a formal union with Denmark in 1397. However, Denmark exercised no actual sovereignty until Hans Egede reached the island in 1721. Iceland came under Danish control along with Norway in 1381 and remained so after Norway was separated from Denmark in 1814.

Iceland became an independent republic in 1944, with Denmark officially recognizing its independence the

following year, when World War II ended. In 1948 the Faeroe Islands were granted home rule, and Greenland won the same status in 1979. When the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) was formed in 1949, Denmark became a charter member of the alliance. However, it remained outside of the European Economic Community until 1973, and even after its admission the Danish populace remained vigilant against undue encroachment by Brussels on national sovereignty.

Denmark has had many short-lived and unstable coalition governments since the 1950s. The period from 1975 to 1982 was dominated by the Social Democratic prime minister Anker Jørgensen, who led a succession of governments and grappled with an increasingly unfavorable economic climate that featured swelling unemployment and budget deficits. The tough decisions needed in such circumstances caused the government's support to collapse in September 1982, and fresh elections brought in a coalition headed by a Conservative, Poul Schlüter.

Schlüter managed to navigate the shoals of unsteady support in the Folketing, Denmark's national parliament, for a decade. During that time he shepherded the European Community's Single European Treaty (removing trade barriers between member states) through a referendum (1987), but voters rejected the more sweeping Treaty on European Union (Maastricht Treaty) in 1992. Opposition parties were also able to force through the Folketing a measure obligating the government to inform visiting foreign warships that nuclear weapons were banned in Denmark, creating friction with NATO allies. Each of these crises was resolved, the NATO dispute through the use of diplomatically ambiguous language, the rejection of Maastricht through the creation of several exemptions from the treaty's obligations in order to reassure Danes that national prerogatives would not be overridden. The treaty was ratified in May 1993. By then Schlüter had been compelled to resign (January 1993) owing to a cabinet scandal involving the handling of refugee visas. The Social Democrats reclaimed the prime minister's seat for their leader, Poul Nyrup Rasmussen, who held on through periods of minority government and narrow coalition majorities in parliament. In the late 1990s the sharp rise of the anti-immigrant People's Party reflected popular discomfort that Denmark was becoming a more multicultural society and led to national debate about the need for and treatment of refugees and immigrant labor.

In 2000 the Danes rejected adoption of the euro as their national currency by 53 percent. In parliamentary elections held in November 2001 the center-right Liberal Party became Denmark's majority party. The far-right Danish People's Party took 22 seats, becoming the third-largest party in parliament. The Liberal Party formed a coalition government with the Conservative People's Party, and Anders Fogh Rasmussen was named prime minister. Rasmussen pledged to reduce taxes and tighten immigration laws, in 2002 proposing some anti-immigration laws that sparked controversy.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

Monarch

1848–63	Frederik VII
1863–1906	Christian IX
1906–12	Frederik VIII
1912–47	Christian X
1947–72	Frederik IX
1972–	Margrethe II

Prime Minister

1945	Vilhelm Buhl
1945–47	Knud Kristensen
1947–50	Hans Christian Hedtoft-Hansen
1950–53	Erik Eriksen
1953–55	Hans Christian Hedtoft-Hansen
1955–60	Hans Christian Svane Hansen
1960–62	Viggo Kampmann
1962–68	Jens Otto Krag
1968–71	Hilmar Baunsgaard
1971–72	Jens Otto Krag
1972–73	Anker Jørgensen
1973–75	Poul Hartling
1975–82	Anker Jørgensen
1982–93	Poul Schlüter
1993–2001	Poul Nyrup Rasmussen
2001–	Anders Fogh Rasmussen

CONSTITUTION

Denmark is one of the oldest monarchies in Europe, completing its first millennium in 1985. Upon the adoption of the nation's first written constitution in 1849 absolute monarchy gave way to representative democracy. The so-called June Constitution (*Junigrundloven*) established three seminal principles: judicial authority should reside in independent courts; legislative authority should rest jointly with king and parliament; and executive authority should be vested in the king, but he would not perform any act of state except on the authority of a minister.

The June Constitution was for its time one of the most liberal in Europe. The two chambers of the Folketing were elected under universal suffrage by all independent men over 30. But not until 1901 did King Christian IX sign "the change of system" (*systemskifte*) and appoint a ministry based on the majority only in the lower chamber. This principle was written into the constitution in 1953.

A constitutional amendment in 1915 gave women and servants the vote.

After World War II a new constitution was spearheaded by the Social Democrats and Radical Liberals and became law on June 5, 1953. It abolished the upper chamber. The voting age was reduced from 25 to 23. Later amendments, confirmed by referendums, further reduced the voting age, ultimately to 18. In order to safeguard

minorities, a provision was included for referendums on parliamentary bills when demanded by one-third of the members. Together with the new constitution, the new Act of Succession was passed, permitting female succession to the throne. It was under this act that Queen Margrethe II succeeded her father, King Frederik IX, as head of state in 1972.

The executive is the cabinet, headed by the prime minister, who is the head of government. Ministers are the administrative heads of their respective ministries. Cabinet decisions are based on consensus, not vote.

All government bills and administrative measures come before the Council of State (Statsradet), which consists of the cabinet under the presidency of the monarch. In addition to Folketing bills, the Council of State also ratifies international treaties and agreements and reprieves certain long-term prison sentences.

Since the turn of the century no Danish government has commanded a majority in the Folketing. Governments as a rule are minority governments made up of a number of parties.

The constitution of 1953, following a Swedish precedent, provided that the Folketing appoint one or two persons as ombudsman, and this office was established in 1955. The ombudsman is directed to see that no one in public service pursues unlawful activities, makes arbitrary or unjust decisions, or is guilty of error or neglect.

Up to 1953 Greenland was governed as a colony. The 1953 constitution accorded Greenland the status of a fully integrated part of the Kingdom of Denmark. Greenland sends two members to the Folketing. Greenland affairs are the responsibility of the minister for Greenland, while local affairs are handled in part by a democratically elected Provincial Council (Landsradet) and in part by a Danish governor (*landshovding*). The two correspond to the Danish County Council and county prefect, respectively. Special legislation applies to Greenland in certain areas.

The Faeroe Islands were a Danish county until 1948, when self-government was introduced. The democratically elected assembly (Lagting) has legislative powers in all local affairs; the local government (Landsstyre) handles all local affairs. The Danish government is represented on the islands by a commissioner (*rigsombudsmand*). Recently there has been a groundswell in the Faeroes for greater local sovereignty.

PARLIAMENT

The Danish electoral system is one of the most complex in the world. It has undergone few changes in the past 60 years. The older parties have sought to raise the 2 percent threshold limit for seats distributed by proportional representation to reduce the proliferation of new parties, while the smaller ones have called for the elimination of the threshold altogether. While the proportional system has added to the instability of Danish governments,

Danes cherish this principle as making their democracy more democratic.

Suffrage is equal and universal for all adults over 18. The 175 seats (excluding those of Greenland and the Faeroe Islands, each of which have 2 seats) in the national legislature, constituting the unicameral Folketing, are distributed in advance among the three election areas (*amrader*) into which the country is divided—metropolitan Copenhagen, the islands, and Jutland—and these are subdivided into 14 county constituencies and three metropolitan constituencies in Copenhagen. A total of 135 representatives are elected in 17 districts, with 40 additional seats divided among those parties that have secured at least 2 percent of the vote but whose district representation does not accord with their overall strength.

The distribution in the Folketing is mostly determined by population totals and density and as such is subject to constant adjustment. Normal voter turnout ranges from 80 to 90 percent, with invalid or blank votes amounting to less than 0.6 percent.

Danish elections are dominated by the presence of political parties. Only a few people run as independents, and only one independent candidate was elected in recent years. Typically, 12 to 13 parties put up candidates in the elections. Parties already represented in the Folketing are automatically entitled to nominate candidates and participate in the election campaign, which is partly financed by public funds. Parties that are new or not represented are accorded these privileges only if they collect signatures totaling 1/175th of the votes cast in the previous election. There are no by-elections, as vacancies are filled by candidates of the same party who have received the next-largest number of votes. Party strength in the Folketing thus remains fixed from one election to the next unless a member breaks away from a party.

Much of the work of parliament is done in 19 standing committees, whose authority corresponds to that of the ministries. There also are committees on standing orders, proof of elections, scientific research, and other issues of concern.

Under the constitution, no taxes may be levied until the finance bill or interim measures have been approved by the Folketing. Similarly, no expenditures may be incurred without such authority. However, because the finance bill is drafted some months before the fiscal year, it is impossible to foresee income or expenditures. Consequently, the practice has developed whereby the government requests the Folketing's Finance Committee (Finansudvalget) to approve unforeseen items. This practice makes this committee one of the most powerful parliamentary organs.

With the abolition of the upper chamber, the Landsting, in 1953, provision was made in the constitution for the holding of referendums. Within three working days of the passage of a bill one-third of the Folketing members may apply to the speaker for a referendum to be held on the proposed measure. The prime minister is responsible

for initiating the referendum, which must take place not earlier than 12 and not later than 18 working days after it has been announced. The bill is annulled if it is opposed by a majority of the Folketing electors and at least 30 percent of those entitled to vote. Certain types of bills, such as money bills, are excluded from this provision. The first referendum took place in 1963.

POLITICAL PARTIES

The four “old” parties in Danish politics are the Social Democrat, the Radical Liberal, the Liberal, and the Conservative People’s parties, covering the ideological spectrum from left to right. They have dominated government coalitions during most of the 20th century. The Justice Party, Center Democrats, and the Christian People’s Party have been coopted into coalitions mainly as supporting parties. The 1973 elections marked an end to this quadrumvirate. The Communist Party, the Left Socialists (who split from the Socialist People’s Party), and the Justice Party (unrepresented in the Folketing since 1960) were returned to the Folketing, and three new parties gained representation for the first time: the Center Democrats, the Christian People’s Party, and the Progress Party, all at the expense of the traditional parties. This fragmentation has meant more power sharing and greater instability, which continued well into the 1990s, even though there were Social Democrat–led governments throughout most of the 1970s and again after 1993, while Conservative People’s–led coalitions dominated from 1982 to 1993.

The Liberal Party (Venstre, Danmarks Liberale Parti, V) is the oldest Danish political party, founded in 1870 in opposition to the ruling conservative elite. It spearheaded the struggle against the monarchy to secure the principle of parliamentary government. It hews to classic liberal positions in its platform, upholding individual freedoms in a pluralistic society. In its economic policy it stands for a free-market economy with a strong private sector, deregulation, and restraints on trade-union power. It advocates trimming social welfare provisions in the interest of budgetary stringency. In foreign policy it is pro-NATO and pro-EU and advocates closer Nordic cooperation.

The Social Democrats (Socialdemokratiet, SD) were founded in 1871 as a Marxist party. In its early years it concentrated on trade-union organization and won its first parliamentary seat in 1884. From 1920 it began to attract voters from outside the ranks of labor and became the largest political party in the Folketing in 1924—a position it has primarily maintained since, although it has never won an outright majority. The Social Democrats laid the foundations of the modern Danish welfare state while in office with the Radical Liberals from 1929 to 1943. Ideologically, the SD long ago shed its Marxist tenets and may best be described as democratic socialism, supporting full-employment policies and an exten-

sive array of welfare-state benefits. In foreign policy it is slightly left of center, supporting NATO and the European Union while opposing the more federalist aspects of European unity.

The Conservative People’s Party (Det Konservative Folkeparti, KF) was formed in 1876 as the United Right, a group of landowners and upper-class supporters of monarchical rule. It regrouped to form the KF in 1915. When in alliance with the Liberals from 1950 to 1953, it carried out a major reform of the constitution. The KF is a pro-free enterprise group that advocates low taxes, low wages, and low inflation. It supports both NATO and the European Union more strongly than do other parties. The KF has adopted some of the classic Liberal stances on domestic freedoms.

The Radical Liberals (Det Radicale Venstre, RV) split from the Liberals in 1905. Wedged between socialists and nonsocialists, the RV has had a moderating influence on both. In foreign policy the RV’s policies are more in line with those of the socialists, opposing excessive military expenditures.

The Center Democrats (Centrum-Demokraterne, CD) are a splinter party that broke away from the Social Democrats in 1973 in protest against the latter’s drift to the left.

The Progress Party (Fremskridtspartiet, FP) was founded in 1972 as a populist movement protesting excessive taxation and “paper-shuffling bureaucracy.” In the 1973 elections the FP gained 16 percent of the vote to become the second largest party in the Folketing, but its support sharply declined afterward, reviving briefly in the late 1980s before it fractured in 1994 and hived off the Danish People’s Party, which has similar positions but is better organized and has captured most of the protest vote.

Other Danish parties include the Socialist People’s Party, the Christian People’s Party, the Danish Communist Party, the Justice Party (also called the Single Tax Party), and the Left Socialists.

In the 2001 elections the votes were cast as follows: Liberal Party, 31 percent; Social Democrats, 29 percent; Danish People’s Party, 12 percent; Conservative Party, 9 percent; Socialist People’s Party, 6 percent; Social Liberal Party, 5 percent; Christian People’s Party (now Christian Democrats), 2 percent; and Unity List, 2 percent.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Danish local government was thoroughly reorganized in 1970. Local government boundaries in many cases had been untouched for more than 800 years. Previously, the country was divided into 89 boroughs (*kobstaeder*) and 23 county authorities (*amstkommuner*), the latter being subdivided into more than 1,500 urban and rural districts (*sogne kommuner*). The distinction between urban and rural boroughs was abolished, the number of primary local governments (*primaerkommuner*) was reduced to 277, and the number of county authorities was reduced

to 14. The primary local governments are chosen by the Elected Council (Kommunalbestyrelse) chaired by a mayor, or burgomaster (*borgmester*). The reform did not affect the national capital, which continues to be governed by the elected city council (*borgerrepraesentation*) of 55 members and an executive consisting of a chief burgomaster (*overborgmester*), five burgomasters, and five aldermen (*radmaend*).

Counties are governed by the elected county council (*amtsrad*) chaired by the county mayor (*amtsborgmester*). Central government functions at the county level are discharged by a prefect as chairman of a special council consisting of four members appointed by the County Council.

Greenland is divided administratively into the sub-provinces (*landsdele*) of West Greenland, East Greenland, and North Greenland. There are 16 provincial districts (*tandsradaskredse*), each of which elects one member of the Greenland Provincial Council by direct vote every four years. The 159 habitations are grouped into 19 local districts (*kommuner*), each with a local council (*kommunalbestyrelse*) varying in size.

The Faeroe Islands are divided into seven regions (*sysler*), each under a sheriff (*syssemand*), who constitutes the local authority with some judicial functions. There are 50 local districts with 120 settlements (*bygder*), some with as few as 30 inhabitants.

LEGAL SYSTEM

Denmark has a civil law system that goes back to about 1200. After the introduction of absolute rule in 1660 the king decreed in 1683 a general code applicable to the whole country, the Danish Code of Christian V.

The text of the Danish Code has never been altered, nor did new laws appear as amendments in the initial period after 1683. All legislation since then has been in the form of separate statutes. Few of the provisions of the Danish Code are still in force, but no attempt has been made to codify the mass of legislation in a comprehensive code, so it may be said that Denmark does not possess a general civil code.

Judges are constitutionally independent, although appointed by the Crown on the recommendation of the minister of justice. Judges can be dismissed only by the Special Court of Indictment.

The highest court is the Supreme Court (Højesteret), with 19 judges, which also functions as a court of appeals. The court usually sits in two divisions of at least five judges each. All matters not specifically assigned to a lower court fall within the purview of one of the two high courts (Landsretter) under the Supreme Court, the eastern wing sitting in Copenhagen with jurisdiction over the islands and the western sitting in Viborg with jurisdiction over Jutland. On the next level are the lower courts (Underret), of which there are 84. Each lower court has only one judge, except in Copenhagen and Århus.

There is a special high court for Greenland. There are also special courts, such as the Tax Tribunal, the Maritime and Commercial Court, and the Labor Court.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Human rights are well protected in Denmark and enforced by the office of the ombudsman. Arrested persons must be brought before a judge within 24 hours of detention. In serious crimes the accused is placed in solitary confinement. All trials are public except in divorce and paternity trials or rape and child molestation cases. The rights of aliens are protected by the 1983 Alien Act, and Danish media have engaged in public education campaigns to prevent the rise of racism toward immigrants and refugees from Asia, North Africa, and the Middle East. Natives of Greenland and the Faeroe Islands enjoy all the rights and privileges of Danish citizens.

In 1987 the Human Rights Center, mandated by the Folketing, was established with state funding to conduct research and provide information on a broad range of human rights issues. The Equal Rights Council deals with sex discrimination. Women hold strong representation in both the cabinet and the Folketing. The rights of homosexuals are safeguarded by the state; in 1989 Denmark became the first country to recognize same-sex civil marriage.

If anything, human rights groups occasionally criticize Denmark for being too tolerant, in the sense of allowing neo-Nazi groups space to operate. However, in 1995 the Danish National Socialist Movement was prevented from starting its own radio station.

FOREIGN POLICY

Danish foreign policy is thoroughly pro-Western and is based on close links with four organizations: the United Nations, NATO, the Nordic Council, and the European Union. Denmark also belongs to the World Trade Organization (WTO), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the Council of Europe, the Baltic Council, and the Barents Council.

Although committed to collective security, Denmark has consistently resisted pressures by NATO to increase defense spending. In 1984 the Social Democrats and their allies secured legislation making Denmark the first NATO nation to withdraw completely from missile deployment. In 1988 there was great controversy over NATO's policy of not declaring which ships carried nuclear weapons; many Danes on the left wanted to ban all such ships from Danish ports, but a compromise was worked out. Danish troops have participated in NATO peacekeeping operations in Kosovo and elsewhere.

Denmark was admitted to the European Community (now the European Union) in 1973, but Greenland withdrew from membership in 1985. Copenhagen has always, with an eye to popular suspicion of Brussels, guarded its sovereignty more tightly against EU supranational encroachment than most members. It demonstrated this in 1992, when a referendum went against the European Union's Maastricht Treaty on closer integration, forcing the government to renegotiate some of its terms regarding common defense, policing, citizenship, and currency. Denmark opted not to participate in Europe's Economic and Monetary Union; the Social Democrat-led government promised to hold off deciding on the matter until after elections in 2002. Strain on the Danish krone, however, caused the country to have second thoughts and to schedule another referendum on joining the Economic and Monetary Union for the fall of 2000. Denmark did join the EU Schengen Agreement on freeing internal border controls.

Denmark places great emphasis on relations with developing countries and is one of the few nations to meet the UN goal of contributing 0.7 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) as developmental assistance. It is especially interested in coordinating assistance to the Baltic states. As a member of the Nordic Council, Denmark maintains close relations with the other members of the council: Norway, Iceland, Sweden, and Finland. In 1982 Denmark joined Norway and Sweden in resuming diplomatic relations with the Vatican, ending a four-century rupture. Denmark is deeply involved in international peacekeeping, particularly in eastern Europe and the Middle East, including in Iraq.

DEFENSE

The sovereign is the constitutional head of the armed services, while operational command is vested in the Ministry of Defense. The chief of defense, the head of the Defense Command, is a serving officer whose deputy is the chief of the defense staff. Both are members of the Defense Council, along with the chiefs of the army, navy, and air force and the commander of the Danish operational forces.

Conscription is authorized by the constitution. Conscripts serve between four and 12 months depending on specialty and are then assigned to reserve units. The right of conscientious objection is recognized, and about 15 percent of eligible Danes invoke the right annually. Defense legislation is extensive and includes acts from 1950, 1960, 1969, and 1973 and the Royal Decree of 1952, amended in 1961.

Defense personnel are trained at specialized schools: artillery personnel at the Army Fire Support School at Varde and infantry personnel at the Army Combat School at Oxboel, both in West Jutland. Regular officers are trained at the Defense College, Copenhagen, a triservice institution that also serves as the staff college.

The army is organized into supply troops, signal corps, engineers, artillery, army aviation, infantry, and armored troops. The latter include old regiments of infantry and cavalry. Operationally, the kingdom is divided into the Western Land Command, the Eastern Land Command, and the Bornholm Region. The Eastern Land Command has two standing force brigades; the Western Land Command, three. For territorial defense Denmark is divided into seven regions: three in Jutland, one in Fünen, two in Zealand, and one in Bornholm.

Although a member of NATO, Denmark does not permit the stationing of foreign troops on its soil (except in Greenland, where it has allowed the United States to shoulder most of the responsibility for the island's defense) or NATO troop exercises in Bornholm. Denmark does not allow the stationing of nuclear weapons on its territory, but it will tacitly allow nuclear-armed NATO ships in port.

The principal naval bases are at Copenhagen, Kørsør, and Frederikshavn. The navy is charged with guard duties off the Faeroe Islands and Greenland. The air force consists of a tactical air command.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	27,000
Military Manpower Availability:	1,276,087
Military Expenditures \$billion:	3.27
as % of GDP:	1.6
as % of central government expenditures:	4.3
Arms Imports \$million:	7
Arms Exports \$million:	9

ECONOMY

The Danish economy today is characterized by very high rates of taxation, high levels of government spending (equivalent to 56 percent of GDP in 1998, up from 25 percent in 1960), but only a modest degree of public ownership of industry. The service sector, especially public services, is correspondingly high, accounting for 79 percent of the workforce and 76 percent of GDP (not counting financial services) in 2003. Private services have grown vigorously in the 1990s and early 2000s, primarily in retailing, hotels and restaurants, and commerce- and business-related services and communications. The state has liberalized the telecommunication sector bit by bit since consolidating all companies into a single, state-owned firm, Teledanmark—now private—in 1991.

The finance system (commercial banks, mortgage lenders, insurance companies, and pension funds) has been consolidating and increasingly trying to compete on a Europe-wide scale. The Copenhagen Stock Exchange joined with its Stockholm counterpart to create Nordic Exchanges (NOREX), in 1999. The financial sector occupied 2.6 percent of the labor force in 1998 and generated 6.4 percent of gross domestic product.

Manufacturing jobs were 17 percent of the total in 1998, and manufacturing activity accounted for just 18.2 percent of GDP. Since the 1960s Denmark has lost footwear, textile, and clothing-related jobs to lower-wage countries, while the chemical and pharmaceutical industries have increased employment. The food-processing industry remains important, given Denmark's prominence in dairying and meat production. All told, the country has lost about 20 percent of the industrial employment it had in the mid-1960s. Even the declining sectors, however, have demonstrated impressive productivity improvements, and the country has managed to retain many of the high-skill jobs associated with manufacturing, such as design and marketing, even as factory jobs move "offshore." The Danish industrial landscape is still predominantly one of small and midsized concerns, with many firms still controlled by individual families. Construction provided employment for about 6 percent of the workforce in 1998 and was responsible for 5.3 percent of national output; the building industry is cyclical in nature and does not export its services.

Denmark currently extracts enough oil and gas from its North Sea wells to take care of its own energy needs. It has also been active in seeking out nonpolluting sources of power, such as wind farms, and renewable energy sources provided 10 percent of the country's electricity in 1998. The fossil fuel and electricity industries, state owned, were allowed private investment in 1998 for the first time to stimulate competition.

Denmark emerged from World War II with most of its economy intact, though considerably depleted. The devaluation of the krone in 1949 helped to boost exports, while the Marshall Plan helped to stimulate the weaker sectors. At the beginning of the 1950s Danish exports were primarily farm products. As a result, the farmers favored liberalization of trade and the removal of import restrictions. Industry, however, was more protectionist. Faced with growing competition from abroad, Danish industry nonetheless surged in the 1950s, increasing production, employment, and share of exports. By the end of the 1950s Denmark had established itself as a significant industrial exporter, helping to swing the balance of payments in Denmark's favor.

The year 1973 was a watershed in Danish economic history. In that year Denmark joined the Common Market, along with Great Britain, and the first oil crisis hit. During 1973–75 inflation climbed by 20 percent annually; unemployment was at an all-time high; and the balance of payments deficit increased from Kr3 billion in 1975 to Kr12 billion in 1976, equal to 5 percent of GDP. The problem was exacerbated by the second oil crisis, of 1978–80. Government efforts to keep the lid on inflation and improve the balance of payments produced unpleasant side effects: lower wages, higher interest rates, high unemployment, deteriorating public finances, and higher taxes.

The Schlüter government passed a tax reform in 1986, and subsequent changes in the tax code took place under its successor in 1994 and 1998. While lowering top marginal rates was certainly one aim, the net effect has been to draw more earnings into the revenue system through greater transparency, fewer loopholes, and a broader tax base, and this has created a more equitable income distribution. Another emphasis has been a shift toward "green" taxation based on resource consumption, adoption of energy-efficient technologies, and reduced emission of greenhouse gases.

A series of conservative-leaning governments in the 1980s and early 1990s also attempted to put the brakes on the growth of public spending and public-sector employment and prepare the ground for the heightened competition that would come with the signing of the Single European Act, removing many of the European Community's internal trade barriers and protections. The government retains control over postal services, public transportation, and, for the most part, utilities, and of course the welfare state continues to provide generous health, education, pension, and unemployment benefits and other transfer payments. With revenues on the increase, though, the socialist team that took the reins of power from 1993 managed to turn around the nation's string of deficits to record a slight budgetary surplus in 1998, even as unemployment fell sharply, to about 5 percent from 10.1 percent when Rasmussen became prime minister, and government expenditure as a percentage of GDP fell off from 64.2 percent to 55.8 percent over the same time period.

Denmark has always been very trade dependent, with imports and exports each equivalent to about one-third of GDP. Manufactures make up 76 percent of exports, agricultural products 15 percent. Most of the country's exports (leading sectors: machines and instruments, chemicals and pharmaceuticals, textiles, clothing, and furniture) go to other EU countries (68 percent), with Germany the largest single export market. The country ran current account deficits steadily for almost three decades until 1990; since then it has had a surplus. Although Denmark meets the criteria for participating in the European Union's Economic and Monetary Union, phase three, popular sentiment has been running against giving monetary sovereignty to Brussels, and in 2000, 53 percent of the population rejected adoption of the euro as the national currency.

Danish growth and investment have been slightly below average for industrial countries since 1960. Savings rates have been correspondingly lower as well, and this has caused Denmark to slip down the rankings of income by country, but it has taken steps to enhance savings and capital formation through the tax code, and it remains one of the world's most prosperous nations. Growth averaged around 2 percent in the early 2000s, though it was flat in 2004, and there is a surplus in public financing. The gov-

ernment has lowered income tax rates but also increased environmental taxes, reduced deductions, and added user fees to make up for any shortfalls in revenue. Currency policy has been stable since the 1980s, when the krone was linked to the deutschmark; since January 1, 1999, it has been linked to the euro. Denmark has not yet adopted the euro, but public support for doing so has been increasing.

The Danish social safety net has been growing more economically burdensome. Health care and care for the elderly and children have been losing funding.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 167.2
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 31,100
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 1.9
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 1.6
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %

Agriculture: 2
 Industry: 22.1
 Services: 75.9

Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %
 Private Consumption: 47
 Government Consumption: 26
 Gross Domestic Investment: 19.9

Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 64.16
 Imports: 54.47

% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 2
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 24

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
108.9	112.1	114.7	117.5	120.0

Finance

National Currency: Danish Krone (DKK)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = DKK 6.5877
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 469
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 2.0
 Total External Debt \$billion: 21.7
 Debt Service Ratio %: —
 Balance of Payments \$billion: 6.397
 International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 36
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index
 Growth Rate %: 2.1

Official Development Assistance

Donor ODA \$billion: 1.63
 per capita \$: 300
 Foreign Direct Investment \$billion: 1.26

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$billion: 118.5
 Expenditures \$billion: 116
 Budget Surplus \$million: 2.5
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: 32.3

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 2
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2002) %: 1.2
 Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares: 53.7
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 19.4
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 138.3
 Total Farmland as % of land area: 54
 Livestock: Cattle 000: 1,672
 Sheep 000: 140
 Hogs 000: 13,257
 Chickens 000: 17,000
 Forests: Production of Roundwood (000 cubic meters): 1,446
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 1,474

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 23.69
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 0.3

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of
 oil equivalent million: 25.7
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of
 oil equivalent million: 16.3
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 3.045
 Net Energy Imports % of use: –37.35
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: —
 Production kW-hr billion: 35.47
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 32.41
 Coal Reserves tons million: —
 Production tons: —
 Consumption tons: —
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic meters billion: 81.98
 Production cubic meters billion: 8.38
 Consumption cubic meters billion: 5.28
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: 1.23
 Production barrels per day 000: 346
 Consumption barrels per day 000: 218
 Pipelines Length km: 455

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 54.47
 Exports \$billion: 64.16
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2002): 8.5
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2002): 5.7
 Balance of Trade \$billion: 6.397

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Germany %	23.1	18.7
Sweden %	13.0	12.6
United Kingdom %	7.0	8.5
Netherlands %	6.9	4.7
France %	4.9	5.1
Norway %	4.5	5.7
Italy %	4.1	—
United States %	—	6.2

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 71,591
 Paved %: 100
 Automobiles: 1,888,300
 Trucks and Buses: 415,700
 Railroad; Track Length km: 3,002
 Passenger-km billion: 5.55
 Freight-km billion: 1.96
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 276
 Total Deadweight Tonnage million: 9.03
 Airports: 99
 Traffic: Passenger-mi million: 7.45
 Length of Waterways km: 417

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 2.01
 Number of Tourists from million: 4.841
 Tourist Receipts \$billion: 5.785
 Tourist Expenditures \$billion: 6.856

Communications

Telephones million: 3.61
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.08
 Cellular Telephones million: 4.785
 Personal Computers million: 3.133
 Internet Hosts per million people: 224,567
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 507

ENVIRONMENT

The importance Denmark places on the environment is underscored by the decision of the European Environment Agency to situate its headquarters in Copenhagen. The nation's own environment ministry dates to 1971; in 1994 it was consolidated with the Ministry of Energy. The revamped ministry has worked to realign the tax system to put a price on resource consumption. Denmark has had a carbon dioxide emissions tax since 1993, with a part of the proceeds earmarked for energy conservation programs and research and development to increase efficiencies in energy supply. With nuclear energy widely unpopular in Scandinavia these days, the government has worked to develop wind power and biogas facilities drawing on fertilizer and slaughterhouse wastes.

Most of Denmark's forests have been heavily exploited for a long time. Denmark's Forest Act prevents most woodlands from being plowed under for agricultural, commercial, or residential activity, but it fails to protect old-growth forests from being harvested for timber. The Worldwide Fund for Nature has assessed the country's forests as "eroded" from a standpoint of genetic diversity and in poor health.

Flooding threatens certain parts of the coastline (parts of Jutland and the south shore of Lolland Island),

and these have a series of dikes to keep the seas at bay. The lower areas have been made into arable farmland by draining the marshes with pumps, and nearly one-fifth of Denmark's farmland is at or near sea level; much of this area is environmentally sensitive wetlands. Very few of Denmark's natural streams and waterways exist, most of them having been artificially straightened.

The Environmental Protection Agency requires impact statements before permitting new industrial plants or expansions to get under way. Similarly, government-sponsored projects and transportation investments have to be vetted by the agency for possible ecological effects. The National Environmental Research Institute monitors the nation's soil and air quality; purity of streams, lakes, and fjords; and ecology of the countryside, and it also gives policy advice. Denmark's special concerns are smog and particulates from vehicle emissions, nitrogen and phosphorus contamination of the North Sea and surface freshwater from fertilizer runoff, and contamination caused by animal wastes. Marine pollution is one area where the government has cooperated with both nongovernmental groups and other Nordic nations.

Environment

Forest Area % of land area: 10.7
 Average Annual Forest Change, 1990-2000, 000 ha: 1
 Nationally Protected Areas as % of Total Land Area: 7
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 8.35

LIVING CONDITIONS

Denmark is quite expensive and has all the modern Western amenities. The standard of living is very high. Roads and public transportation are excellent. Houses and apartments are of high quality and spacious; children usually have their own rooms. A wide variety of foods are readily available.

HEALTH

Danes are extremely healthy people. Life expectancy is over 77 years, and infant mortality is fewer than five deaths for every 1,000 births. The national health-care system provides for free hospitalization. Caregivers of ill family members receive government stipends to compensate them for lost earnings. Municipalities handle the distribution of benefits.

Health

Number of Physicians: 19,600
 Number of Dentists: 4,834

Number of Nurses: 51,990
 Number of Pharmacists: 2,638
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 366
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 4.6
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 5
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 8.4
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 2,545
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.2
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12–23 months:
 DPT: 98
 Measles: 99
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: —
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 100

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Living so near the North Sea, Danes eat a large amount of fish, especially cured or salted salmon. They also eat a great deal of meat in general, especially pork, and potatoes. The most typical snack is *smørrebrød*, or “buttered bread,” an open-faced sandwich topped with any number of toppings. Bakeries are ubiquitous, nearly all of them selling a pastry called *wienerbrød*, better-known to English speakers as Danish pastry. Danes drink a large amount of alcohol, and most restaurants and groceries sell various alcoholic beverages. Danish beer is excellent; the Carlsberg brewery produces some of the best. The most popular drink is aquavit.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 139.5
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 250.7

STATUS OF WOMEN

In perhaps no other part of the world do women enjoy the degree of equality that Scandinavia affords, and Denmark places itself firmly in the Scandinavian tradition. A 1997 survey of European women found more Danish women (two-thirds) saying they were “very satisfied” with their lives than those of any other country. Even here, however, women earn significantly less than men, in spite of laws mandating equal pay going back to 1973. “Women’s work” remains concentrated in poorly compensated occupations like teaching, clerical work, and other low-skilled or unskilled services. Many married women are in the workforce (more than 80 percent), but quite a few of these work part time. Still, with more women today graduating with advanced degrees, higher-paying fields such as science, engineering, and management are open to women as never before. Women represented about 47 percent of the paid labor force in 2003.

Women were granted the vote in 1915 and won the right to run for office at the same time. They typically hold between 20 and 30 percent of seats in the Folketing, and from the late 1940s onward there has been at least one female minister in every cabinet formed. After a 1921 law passed, women were guaranteed equal opportunity in and access to official positions, excepting only the clergy and the military—and even these exceptions eventually fell by the wayside. Military training became an option for women in 1971. The Nordic countries have since 1974 cooperated to advance the equal rights agenda in tandem.

Family planning is integrated into the national health service, with service delivery delegated to county level. Abortion is available on request for the first trimester and is covered by national insurance. The country’s social policies consciously steer toward equalization of opportunity through family allowances, special aid for single mothers, public provision of day care, and the like. Divorce became no-fault in 1970, and the divorce rate is high. A substantial proportion of couples live together without marrying; only in Sweden is the frequency of unmarried cohabiting couples higher.

Women

Women-headed Households: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 38
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men aged 15 to 24: 1.0
 Women’s Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 48.3

WORK

Some 79 percent of Danish workers are employed by service industries. More than one-fourth of the Danish workforce is employed by the government, many of them to administer the complex system of public welfare. About 17 percent of the workforce was involved in industry, producing food, machinery, furniture, textiles, electronics, ships, and other products. Only 4 percent of the workforce still works in agriculture. Danes are on average quite wealthy by world standards; per capita GDP in 2004 was \$31,100. The unemployment rate was 6.1 percent.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 2,863,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 46.5
 Total Activity Rate %: 53.4
 Labor by Sector: %
 Agriculture: 4
 Industry: 17
 Services: 79
 Unemployment %: 6.1

EDUCATION

The earliest Danish schools were established from the 10th to the 12th centuries. The University of Copenhagen was established in 1479 through a papal bull of Sixtus IV. In 1536 the state took over the grammar schools from the Catholic Church, and the history of national education may be said to begin from that date. From the 15th to the 19th centuries the most decisive influence on education was the national Lutheran Church. The state, for its part, acknowledged its obligation to provide the physical facilities for such schooling. In 1689 a high commission reorganized the entire school system, requiring townships to pay for primary schools, maintain evening classes for adults, and make school attendance compulsory for children between ages seven and 14. It also created the first normal schools.

The Enlightenment and the rise of the merchant class, who needed a more practical type of school, led to dissatisfaction with the church's role in education. The Free School Movement sought to emphasize freedom of choice in education. These schools had no entrance or leaving examinations, instruction was confined to the lectures, and the curriculum was unstructured.

Section 76 of the Danish constitution specifies that education shall be compulsory. In 1976 a new education act came into effect, introducing nine years of comprehensive primary and lower secondary education for all, a noncompulsory 10th year, and an optional preschool year. There is a noncompulsory leaving examination after ninth grade (taken by 90–95 percent of students), and a similar advanced leaving examination after 10th grade (for which about 85 percent sit). About one-quarter of Danish youths go no further than the basic course of education. A refinement in 1994 aimed to tailor instruction more individually to students' needs and talents.

Danish education is characterized by a rich variety of options for the schoolgoer. Although compulsory education begins at age seven, most children attend one of four types of preschools: *vuggestuer* (day nurseries) for children up to three, *bornehaver* (kindergartens) for three- to six-year-olds, *bornehaveklasser* (preschool classes) for five- to six-year-olds, and *integrerede institutioner* (integrated schools).

Education at the upper secondary level is divided into four main types: general upper secondary education (Gymnasium), which prepares students over a three-year course for higher education; Hojere Forbeledelseksamen (HF), the two-year higher preparatory examination course; the Hojere Handelseksamen (HHX), the higher commercial examination, a three-year course of study; and Hojere Teknisk Eksamen (HTX), the higher technical examination course, a three-year vocational and educational program. Each

of these courses leads to an examination that governs admission to higher education. There are separate schools that provide an apprenticeship-type vocational training course that prepares students for work in trade and industry.

There are about 80 residential folk high schools. For 14- to 18-year-olds there are continuation schools (*efterskoler*) and youth schools (*ungdomskoler*). The former have the flavor of folk high schools and teach young people practical subjects for a year beyond their compulsory schooling. Youth schools are designed for school leavers who lack particular aptitudes. The agricultural *landbrugsskoler* accept students for agricultural training.

About 12 percent of all Danish students are educated privately. All private schools are entitled to receive state subsidies that in principle match what is spent to educate pupils in municipal schools, minus the fees charged to parents of private school students, provided they meet a minimum enrollment standard and their instructional standards are comparable to those of the state schools.

For centuries the country's only university was the University of Copenhagen, which celebrated its 500th anniversary in 1979. The second was established at Århus in 1928. Odense followed in 1964, Roskilde in 1972, and Ålborg in 1974. Ålborg is a congeries of schools and colleges. Roskilde is an experimental university based on student participation and innovative instruction. On the whole, universities are fairly autonomous, with the general control of the Ministry of Education limited to examinations, degrees, enrollment, and staffing.

The country has recently restructured its university setup to match the model used in the English-speaking world.

Aside from the traditional universities, there are institutions to provide short-cycle nonuniversity higher education in technical, commercial, and agricultural disciplines and medium-cycle nonuniversity education in a wide range of fields. The specialized universities are the Technical University (engineering), the Royal Danish School of Pharmacy, the Royal Danish Veterinary and Agricultural University (these three having been founded in the 19th century), the Royal Danish School of Educational Studies, and three business schools (Copenhagen, Århus, and South Jutland).

Education is a state responsibility, shared by the central government, counties, and municipalities. Primary and lower secondary schools are under local government control, while Gymnasia and HF courses are run by the counties.

General adult education is offered on a nonformal basis to all who are over 18 years of age. There is also vocational training tailored to specific job market requirements and open education presented at vocational schools and universities.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 100
Male %: 100
Female%: 100
School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 16.6
First Level: Primary schools: 2,536
Teachers: 39,854
Students: 395,870
Student-Teacher Ratio: 9.9
Net Enrollment Ratio: 99.9
Second Level: Secondary Schools: 153
Teachers: 44,587
Students: 426,149
Student-Teacher Ratio: 9.56
Net Enrollment Ratio: 92.89
Third Level: Institutions: 158
Teachers: —
Students: 196,204
Gross Enrollment Ratio: 62.6
Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 8.3

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Denmark is very technologically advanced. Cellular telephones and computers with Internet access are ubiquitous. The Ministry of Science, Technology, and Innovation is the government's main organization handling research and scientific development. The ministry was created in 2001 as an extension of the former Ministry of Information Technology Research. Its goal is to promote interaction of industry and business, coordinate scientific research and policy, and promote education, especially at Denmark's universities.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million persons: 3,394
Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 1.85
High-Tech Exports \$billion: 8.09
Patent Applications by Residents: 3,770

MEDIA

The Danish press dates back to 1666, when the first Danish paper, *Den danske mercurius*, was published by the Crown as an official bulletin. Press censorship existed until 1849, but since then the Danish press has been one of the freest. Article 77 of the Constitutional Act also bans any kind of censorship. Even military information can be published, unless the government prohibits it.

Four papers founded in the 18th century still publish today: *Berlingske tidende* (1749, Copenhagen), *Ålborg stiftstidende* (1767), *Fyens stiftstidende* (1772), and *Århus stiftstidende* (1794).

There is no truly national press. Most of the dailies are concentrated in Copenhagen, which claims about half of

the total daily newspaper circulation. Although the number of newspapers has been falling, circulation has remained stable enough to make per capita circulation one of the world's highest. The typical newspaper avoids sensationalism; the nearest approaches to it are found in the midday tabloids *BT* and *Ekstra bladet*, representing the Conservative and Radical Liberal party lines, respectively.

Ownership of the Danish press has traditionally been in the hands of local private families or limited-liability companies, but since 1945 there has been increasing concentration of ownership in the hands of a few publishing houses or chains. Some 25 percent of total circulation of all dailies plus two large weeklies, numerous district papers, a book-publishing business, and a print shop are controlled by the Berlingske Group. Another large newspaper chain is owned by the Berg Group, which publishes six dailies.

Special interest and political party affiliations are other old traditions in the Danish press. Only the Communist *Land og folk* is directly owned by a party, but beginning in 1849 newspapers began to be tied to or strongly espouse various parties. The rivalry among political party papers has continued to the present day. In Copenhagen, for example, *Berlingske tidende* is the Conservative voice, while *Politiken* supports the Radical Liberals and *Det fri aktuelt* the Social Democrats. The national Lutheran Church is represented by *Kristeligt dagblad*. The church also runs a news bureau called Kristeligt Pressebureau. With the weakening of the political press in recent years, the independents have grown stronger.

The country's most influential newspapers are *Berlingske tidende*, *Det fri aktuelt*, and *Politiken*, and the first is well regarded abroad. Among serious newspapers, *Information* has a place of its own. Among provincial papers, *Morgenavisen Jyllands-Posten* is the best known.

The national news agency is the Ritzaus Bureau, cooperatively owned by the Danish press. It has a working relationship with multinational agencies such as Reuters, AFP, and DPA, which have bureaus in Denmark.

Broadcasting used to be a monopoly of the Danish State Television and Radio Service (Danmarks Radio), which began operating in 1925. Although technically under the Ministry of Cultural Affairs, it is an independent institution governed by the Radio Council of 27 members elected by the Folketing. About half of the telecasts are imports. Revenues are derived solely from licenses, as there is no advertising. In 1986 the Folketing allowed private broadcasting for the first time, starting with independent local radio stations. The first commercial television channel started up in 1988, and a satellite channel first began beaming programs to viewers in 1991. Denmark had about 7.6 million radio receivers and a little over half as many television sets in 2000. Faeroese Radio and Greenland Radio are independent. Greenland Television is cable only.

Denmark has numerous publishing houses spread throughout the country but concentrated in Copenhagen.

Danish law guarantees freedom of expression to the press, and Danish media feel free to espouse a variety of political viewpoints. Journalists do not hesitate to criticize the government.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 33
 Total Circulation 000: 1,507
 Circulation per 1,000: 283
 Books Published: 14,455
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers million: 7.6
 per 1,000: 1,399
 Television sets million: 4.1
 per 1,000: 776

CULTURE

Denmark is world famous for its literature. Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tales are extremely well known; only the Bible has been translated into more different languages. Søren Kierkegaard was a philosopher whose ideas predated existentialism. Karen Blixen wrote the novels *Out of Africa* and *Babette's Feast*, both of which were made into successful movies. The most famous contemporary author is Peter Høeg, who wrote *Smilla's Sense of Snow*.

Danish fashion and design is also famous, especially the clean lines of Danish modern furniture. Danish cinema has been growing in popularity, with the film of *Babette's Feast* and Bille August's film of *Pelle the Conqueror* recent successes in the world. Lars von Trier is an up-and-coming new director; his film *Dancer in the Dark* won the 2000 Palme d'Or. Carl Nielsen is Denmark's best-known composer of classical music. The Royal Danish Ballet is regarded by many as the best dance troupe in Europe.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 252
 Volumes: 29,044,153
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: 280
 Annual Attendance: 8,548,000
 Cinema Gross Receipts in National Currency million: 428
 Number of Cinemas: 169
 Seating Capacity: 52,000
 Annual Attendance: 10.9

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Ancient Danish mythology drew on aspects of Germanic and Norse mythos. Medieval and early modern

Denmark was full of folktales featuring fairies and giants. Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tales, written in the mid-1800s, combine traditional folktales and motifs rewritten in Andersen's own style. Andersen published 168 stories in his lifetime and was immensely popular. Modern Danes do not care to incorporate folk elements into their lives, preferring to be as modern as possible.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Danes like to spend much of their free time indoors, cozy and snug and out of the rain and darkness of winter. Pubs and clubs are popular destinations for people going out in the winter; they drink beer, listen to music, and admire one another's clothes and appearance.

During long summer days, though, Danes love to go outdoors. Denmark has thousands of kilometers of cycling routes. People enjoy swimming and windsurfing in the sea and inland fjords. Yachting is popular among the many islands that surround the coastline. Fishing is another popular activity. Freshwater fish include pike, perch, and trout; common saltwater fish are mackerel, plaice, cod, and sea trout.

ETIQUETTE

Danes consider *hygge*, or coziness, to be a high ideal; they try to create warmth and intimacy and to shut out cold and strife from the outside. Praising an evening or a place as cozy is considered highly complimentary. Danes value punctuality and advance planning and appreciate telephone calls or explanations if someone is going to be late for an appointment. They shake hands when greeting one another. They are casual people. They are usually relaxed and tolerant of different viewpoints or lifestyles and forgiving of the occasional cultural misunderstandings.

FAMILY LIFE

Marriage is declining in Denmark, as in the rest of Scandinavia. Increasing numbers of couples choose to live together without marrying. The divorce rate has decreased since the early 1990s, but many experts attribute that to fewer couples marrying in the first place. People who live together without marrying are said to have an uncertified marriage and have the same legal obligations toward one another and their children as they would if they were formally married. Fertility is fairly low, at 1.74 births per woman in 2004. Abortion is free up to the 12th week of pregnancy. A form of same-sex marriage has been legal since 1989.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

The typical Danish physical type is tall, blond, and blue-eyed, though not all Danes bear that appearance. Danes consider themselves extremely modern. They love high style and modern fashion. They do not like to wear the traditional folk costumes that are popular in other parts of central Europe, even at festivals. Generally people dress well but not ostentatiously; flashy clothing is not popular, especially among businesspeople.

SPORTS

Denmark has an excellent professional sports infrastructure. The government's National Olympic Committee (NOC) selects its Olympic athletes very carefully, usually insisting on stricter standards for participation than the international body. Officials are meticulous about testing for performance enhancing drugs. The NOC handles planning and logistics of competition. Denmark sent 92 athletes to the 2004 Athens Olympics.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1945** Denmark is liberated from German occupation; Vilhelm Buhl takes office at head of coalition government.
- 1948** Faeroe Islands granted home rule.
- 1949** Denmark joins NATO.
- 1953** New constitution promulgated along with new Act of Succession permitting female succession to throne; Greenland integrated into the Kingdom of Denmark.
- 1955** Parliament approves appointment of a national ombudsman on Swedish model.
- 1958** Education Act passed incorporating far-reaching reforms.
- 1960** Agricultural Commission initiates reform of land tenure.
- 1962** Helsinki Agreement on Nordic Cooperation is signed, with Denmark as a founding member.
- 1966** Odense University founded.
- 1968** Radical Liberal/Conservative/Liberal governing coalition courts controversy by attempting to outlaw pornography.
- 1970** Local government reform reduces number of local administrative units and rationalizes their finances.
- 1971** Helsinki Agreement is revised.
- 1972** King Frederik IX dies; his daughter succeeds to the throne as Queen Margrethe II; Roskilde University founded; New Primary Education Act is passed.
- 1973** Denmark joins European Community; abortion legalized.
- 1975** Social Democrat Anker Jørgensen returns to office, remains in power until 1982 as head of four cabinets.
- 1976** Social Assistance Act is passed; government razes "Free City" zone of counterculturists in Copenhagen.
- 1982** Jørgensen quits; Poul Schlüter heads a Conservative/Liberal coalition; Greenland decides in referendum to leave European Community, becomes overseas territory in association with the community in 1985.
- 1984** General election confirms Schlüter in power with fresh coalition of center-right parties.
- 1986** Folketing fails to approve European Community's Single European Act for harmonizing trade; Schlüter gains act approval through referendum.
- 1988** Controversy stirred by proposal to ban NATO warships that might be carrying nuclear warheads from Danish ports; compromise allows NATO to continue with its policy of secrecy.
- 1989** Denmark is first nation to allow same-sex civil marriages.
- 1990** Increase in popularity of antitax, anti-immigrant Progress Party; ruling coalition responds by putting cuts in social welfare on agenda.
- 1992** Referendum rejects Maastricht Treaty on European Union after it has gained Folketing approval; negotiations allow Denmark to opt out of European plans for a common defense, common citizenship, border controls, and common currency; longest suspension bridge in Europe is completed to link Zealand with Jutland.
- 1993** Scandal over an immigration case causes resignation of Schlüter and formation of a Social Democrat-led government under Poul Nyrup Rasmussen; fresh referendum approves Maastricht Treaty with the opt-out provisions.
- 1994** Parliamentary elections confirm Rasmussen team in office with a coalition of Social Democrats, Social Liberals, and Center Democrats.
- 1995** Danish National Socialist (neo-Nazi) Movement is barred from launching radio station.
- 1998** Referendum backs Treaty of Amsterdam designed to further integration of European Union; Denmark endorses EU Schengen Agreement allowing for "borderless" community by participants but defers decision on joining Economic and Monetary Union; new governing bloc in Faeroe Islands seeks greater degree of sovereignty.
- 2000** Danes reject adoption of the euro as their national currency by 53 percent. A new bridge and tun-

- nel open up rail and automobile traffic between Denmark and Sweden.
- 2001** The Liberal Party wins a majority of seats in parliamentary elections and forms a minority government with the Conservative People's Party. Anders Fogh Rasmussen becomes prime minister.
- 2002** Government proposes laws to limit immigration, sparking protests.
- 2004** United States and Denmark sign agreement to modernize air base in Thule, Greenland.
- 2005** Anders Fogh Rasmussen and his coalition government win second term.
- 2006** Cartoon depiction of Prophet Mohammad published in a Danish newspaper causes worldwide protests by Muslims.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Statistics Denmark
<http://www2.dst.dk/internet/startuk.htm>

DJIBOUTI

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Djibouti (Jumhuriyaa Jibuti; République de Djibouti)

ABBREVIATION

DJ

CAPITAL

Djibouti

HEAD OF STATE

President Ismail Omar Guelleh (from 1999)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Dileita Mohamed Dileita (from 2001)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Parliamentary democracy

POPULATION

476,703 (2005)

AREA

23,000 sq km (8,880 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Issas (Somalis), Afars (Danakils)

LANGUAGES

French (official), Arabic (official), Somali, Afar

RELIGION

Islam

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Djibouti franc

NATIONAL FLAG

Blue and green horizontal stripes on the fly and white triangle on the hoist with a five-point star

NATIONAL EMBLEM

None

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Arise with Strength”

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

June 27 (Independence Day, National Day), various Islamic festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

June 27, 1977

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

September 4, 1992

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Djibouti (formerly known as French Somaliland and later as the French Territory of the Afars and the Issas) is in northeastern Africa and occupies an area of 23,000 sq km (8,880 sq mi). The coastline on the Gulf of Aden and the Gulf of Tadjoura runs 314 km (196 mi). Djibouti shares its total international land boundary of 516 km (321 mi) with three countries: Ethiopia (349 km; 217 mi), Eritrea (109 km; 68 mi), and Somalia (58 km; 36 mi).

The entire country is mostly a sand and stone desert broken in places by lava streams and salt lakes. The three principal geographic regions are the coastal plain, less than 200 m (650 ft) in elevation; the mountains backing the plains with lofty peaks, such as Moussa Ali (2,101 m; 6,894 ft); and behind the mountains, the plateau rising

from 300 to 1,500 m (1,000 to 5,000 ft). The coastline is deeply indented by the Gulf of Tadjoura, which is 45 km (28 mi) across at its entrance and penetrates 58 km (36 mi) inland.

Few streams flow above the surface except following rains. The drainage is partly eastward to the coast and partly inland to Lakes Assal and Abbe.

Djibouti is essentially a city-state; two-thirds of the population lives in the capital, avoiding the arid interior.

Geography

Area sq km: 23,000; sq mi 8,880

World Rank: 146th

Land Boundaries, km: Eritrea 109; Ethiopia 349; Somalia 58

Coastline, km: 316

(continues)

Djibouti



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Geography *(continued)*

Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Assal -155
 Highest: Moussa Ali 2,028
 Land Use %
 Arable land: 0.04
 Permanent Crops: 0
 Forest: 0.26
 Other: 99.7

Population of Principal Cities

Djibouti 383,000

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

The climate is torrid and dry. There are two seasons: a hot summer from May to October and a relatively cool

season from November to April. In the summer, temperatures in Djibouti reach 40°C (104°F) on most days, with occasional readings of 45°C (113°F). The rainfall is sparse and erratic, with a national average of 127 mm (5 in) annually.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature: 85°F to 104°F
Average Rainfall: 5 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Because of Djibouti's desert climate, vegetation is sparse. Plant growth depends on rainfall. The driest areas have scanty growth of succulents and thorny bushes, with some annual grass cover. Areas with a rainy season have lush plant growth. Animals include ostriches, antelopes, gazelles, jackals, and hyenas as well as a huge variety of insect species and smaller mammals and birds. Many of these species are endangered. Herders in rural areas raise sheep and goats, and traders transport goods on camels. The oceans off the coast are full of sea life, including plentiful grouper, barracuda, and tuna.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 476,703
World Rank: 161st
Density per sq km: 30.4
% of annual growth (1999–2003): 2.1
Male %: 51.5
Female %: 48.5
Urban %: 83.6
Age Distribution: % 0–14: 43.2
15–65: 53.7
65 and over: 3.1
Population 2025: 681,030
Birth Rate per 1,000: 40.39
Death Rate per 1,000: 19.42
Rate of Natural Increase %: 2.2
Total Fertility Rate: 5.48
Expectation of Life (years): Males 41.83
Females 44.44
Marriage Rate per 1,000: 8.9
Divorce Rate per 1,000: 2.8
Average Size of Households: 5.6
% of Illegitimate Children: 3.2
Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

The indigenous population is divided almost equally between two Hamitic groups: the Somalis (also known as Issas or Ishak) and the Afars (also known as Danakils).

The Issas live in the south and the Afars in the north and west.

Djibouti's foreign community makes up an estimated 10 percent of the population. Arabs and French make up the majority; other foreigners include Greeks, Indians, and Italians.

LANGUAGES

The official languages are French and Arabic, but both Somali and Afar are commonly used in daily life. Neither Afar nor Somali has a script, although attempts are being made to devise a Somali script.

RELIGIONS

Islam is the religion of virtually the entire native population. There is a Roman Catholic bishopric in Djibouti with about 7,500 communicants, mostly French. Djibouti also has Protestant and Greek Orthodox churches.

Religious Affiliations

Muslim	448,000
Christian	28,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The region that makes up modern day Djibouti was once grazing lands used by several tribes, including the Afars of Ethiopia and the Issas of Somalia. By A.D. 825 the tribes that settled there had converted to Islam. For more than seven centuries the region was under the control of Arab traders, who were replaced in the 16th century by sultans from the Afar tribe. Although both the British and French vied for control of the region, Djibouti (formerly known as French Somaliland) was under French rule from 1859 to 1977. At the time of independence it was France's last overseas territory on the African mainland. One of the most inhospitable and arid regions in the world, Djibouti's only attraction to its French rulers lay in the port of Djibouti, which was, until the closure of the Suez Canal, France's third largest port. The only major French presence outside the capital was the rail link to Ethiopia owned by the Compagnie du Chemin de Fer Franco-Ethiopien. The French departure was peaceful, and current relations between France and Djibouti are good.

Djibouti's political stability is balanced precariously on the relations between its two major communities—Afars (of Ethiopian origin) and Issas (of Somali origin)—as well as the military inclinations of its two neighbors, Somalia and Ethiopia. The politically dominant Issas

supported independence, while the Afars wanted continued connection to France. Preindependence fighting between the two communities was marked by bombing, kidnappings, and terrorism on behalf of the Somalis. After independence the Afars were more actively involved in acts of violence. At independence Hassan Gouled Aptidon, the leader of the Ligue Populaire Africaine pour l'Indépendance (LPAI), became president. He chose Ahmed Dini, an Afar, to be prime minister in a cabinet in which Issas dominated almost two to one. Since independence, all prime ministers have been Afars, but the government has essentially been a one-party state dominated by Issas.

Racial riots led to Dini's resignation in 1977 and the appointment of a special Commission of Afars; the president agreed to its demands for more Afar representation in the civil service and the military. In February 1978 a new cabinet was announced, with Abdullah Kamil, an Afar and the head of the Commission of Afars, as prime minister. That same year there was yet another reshuffle, with Kamil being replaced by Barkat Gourad Hamadou, who launched a policy of rapid detribalization.

In 1981 President Gouled was reelected for a six-year term in a single-man race. That same year a constitutional amendment established a single-party state, with the Popular Rally for Progress (Rassemblement Populaire pour le Progrès, RPP), which had replaced the LPAI, as the sole legal party. The Afar opposition went underground.

Gouled achieved a measure of stability during the 1980s and was reelected unopposed in 1987. All candidates for the legislature were also elected unopposed that year. Ethnic tensions remained and seemed to increase during the last years of the decade.

In 1990 the two main underground groups opposed to President Gouled met in Brussels and decided to form a common front. The Democratic Front for the Liberation of Djibouti, supported mainly by the Afars, and the National Djibouti Movement for the Installation of Democracy, supported mainly by the Issas, joined forces under the name of the Union of the Democratic Movement. In late 1991 rebels from the Afar Front for the Restoration of Unity and Democracy (FRUD) sought to take control of the traditional northern territory. Civil war erupted and the fighting lasted nearly four months.

In 1992 Gouled's government, pressured by France, agreed to create a limited multiparty system and a new constitution. The FRUD representatives were not allowed to participate in the elections, however, and Gouled's RPP won all legislative seats. The war continued until 1994, when a power-sharing arrangement gave the FRUD some say in governmental affairs.

Entering the 1997 general elections there was renewed conflict between a remaining faction of Afar separatists and the Issa-dominated government. Hassan Gouled used force this time to crush the rebels and af-

ter the election also crushed the Issa-Somali rebels who sought their own republic of Somaliland. In 2000 Ismail Omar Guelleh, who helped Gouled defeat the Issa-Somalis, became president of Djibouti and sought to strengthen its ties with France. In February he signed a peace agreement with the rebels, finally putting an end to the civil war. In March of that year Ahmed Dini, the former prime minister and leader of the FRUD, returned to Djibouti after nine years living abroad in exile. In December 2000 the former police chief General Yacin Yabeh Galab attempted a coup and was accused of conspiracy.

In January 2002 Western soldiers began arriving in Djibouti to take advantage of its strategic location with regard to the war on terror. German warships arrived to patrol the shipping lanes in the Red Sea while the United States entered Afghanistan. That September Djibouti declared that it did not want to be used as a base for attacks on Islamic countries in the Middle East; nevertheless, U.S. soldiers set up a presence there.

Djibouti politics changed in 2002 when a 1992 law limiting the number of parties in elections expired, allowing multiple parties to compete against the ruling party. In January 2003 Guelleh once again won the presidential election, this time in a multiparty election; he was supported by a coalition, the Union for Presidential Majority. That autumn the government began cracking down on illegal immigrants, who comprised 15 percent of the population.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1977–2000 Hassan Gouled Aptidon
2000– Ismail Omar Guelleh

CONSTITUTION

Djibouti held a constitutional referendum in 1992 in which the single political party rule of the country ended. The referendum (approved by 96.6 percent of the voters) authorizes the existence of up to four political parties, which must maintain ethnic balances. The nation has a presidential form of government, with a prime minister and cabinet drawn from the Chamber of Deputies. The president is the head of state and is elected for a six-year term. All adults over the age of 18 are allowed to vote. Legislative power is in the hands of a 65-member Chamber of Deputies.

PARLIAMENT

The national legislature is the Chamber of Deputies, a 65-member unicameral body. Members are elected for five-year terms; although elections were formerly lim-

ited to the ruling party, RPP, since 2002 Djibouti has had multiparty elections. The list of candidates is claimed to reflect the traditional balance between different ethnic groups.

In the elections held on January 10, 2003, the RPP took 62.2 percent of the vote, while the FRUD took 36.9 percent, and the RPP took all 65 legislative seats. The opposition claimed massive fraud by the ruling party, but the legislature is weak and the president strong, so the legislators and voters were powerless to demand change.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Between 1992 and 2002 Djibouti recognized only four political parties: Front Pour la Restauration de l'Unité et de la Démocratie (FRUD), which was founded in 1991 through the merger of militant Afar groups that sought ethnic representation in the government and which engaged in armed conflict in order to advance its cause; Parti National Démocratique (PND), a centrist party that sought democratic reforms; the Parti du Renouveau Démocratique (Party of Democratic Renewal, PRD), which was founded in 1992 and sought the formation of a parliamentary system of democracy; and the Rassemblement Populaire pour le Progrès (RPP), the only legal party in the country from 1979 to 1992. Since 2002 several more parties have appeared, including the Djibouti Development Party (PDD), the People's Social Democratic Party (PPSD), the Republican Alliance for Democracy (ARD), and the Union for Democracy and Justice (UDJ). These parties have formed into coalitions to give themselves more political power in elections. The Union for Presidential Majority (UMP) includes the RPP, the FRUD, the PPSD, and the PND. The Union for Democratic Changeover (UAD) includes the ARD, the UDJ, and the PDD.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For purposes of local administration Djibouti is divided into five *cercles*, or administrative areas: Djibouti, Dikhil, Ali-Sabieh, Tadjourah, and Obock.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The judicial system is based on Islamic law and the French civil law system. The system consists of two types of courts: Tribunaux de Première Instance, which hear only civil cases; and Tribunaux Supérieur d'Appel, which hear criminal cases. Cases involving Muslim personal law and customary law are heard by the *qadi* and by tribunals of the first and second degree. The judiciary has remained

largely independent of military and executive pressures. However, there were several allegations in 1984 of corruption within the judiciary, including one that individuals could arrange favorable judgments in commercial disputes through bribery.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Djibouti has a dismal human rights record. Citizens have not yet been allowed to exercise the right to change their government; despite the multiparty elections in 2002 and a sizable minority of votes cast for the opposition, the ruling party managed to win all legislative seats, probably through fraud. Members of the security forces committed at least one extrajudicial killing. There are credible reports that some members of the security forces beat and otherwise abuse, and at times torture, detainees and sexually assault female inmates. There are credible reports that soldiers rape women in rural districts. Prison conditions are harsh. The government continues to harass, intimidate, and imprison political opponents and union leaders and to arrest and detain persons arbitrarily. It also infringes on citizens' privacy rights.

The government at times restricts freedom of speech and the press. Police occasionally jail or intimidate journalists. The government has limited freedom of assembly and restricted freedom of association. The government discourages proselytizing. There are some limits on freedom of movement. Discrimination against women continues, and the practice of female genital mutilation is still widespread. Discrimination on the basis of ethnic or clan background and nationality persists. The government imposes some limits on unions and their leaders, and there are reports of instances of forced labor as well as child labor.

FOREIGN POLICY

Djibouti is in one of the most vulnerable regions in Africa and is faced with three hostile neighbors, Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Somalia. Its population is mixed, containing both Ethiopian-oriented Afars and Somali-oriented Issas. Somalia has long viewed Djibouti as part of Greater Somalia, while Ethiopia, without an outlet to the sea, has coveted the country's fine port; indeed, Djibouti has been Ethiopia's only port since the port of Eritrea was closed due to war. The Somali civil war ignited the ethnic tensions in Djibouti, resulting in a deterioration of the relations between the two countries. A territorial dispute with Eritrea flared in 1996, leading to a severance of diplomatic relations.

Djibouti's location on the Horn of Africa makes it strategically valuable to Western nations on humanitarian and peacekeeping missions. Germany based troops there

during its mission to Somalia in 1993–1994 and during the 1998 Ethiopian–Eritrean war. The United States has a military base in Djibouti at Camp Lemonnier, and since 2002 the country has been the U.S. base for Operation Enduring Freedom, the name given to the war on terror. The country's security depends on a French garrison of over 2,000 troops, and France remains the guarantor of Djibouti's independence.

Djibouti participates as a moderate member of international organizations, including the United Nations, the Arab League, the African Union, and the Non-Aligned Movement. The regional organization Intergovernmental Authority on Development, (IGAD) is based in Djibouti.

DEFENSE

Djibouti maintains its own armed forces, which grew when civil war began in 1991 but has been downsizing in recent years. The total strength of the armed forces was 8,000 (including some 1,500 gendarmerie) in 1999. This number is expected to decrease as part of the peace accord made by the government with the FRUD party in 2001. The army is deployed along the Somali and Ethiopian borders. France also maintains a military base in Djibouti with over 2,000 soldiers.

Almost all members of the armed forces come from the Issa ethnic group, which has dominated the government since independence. Afar demands for parity have been resisted by the government and continue to plague efforts toward intertribal harmony.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 8,000
 Military Manpower Availability: 108,771
 Military Expenditures \$million: 26.5
 as % of GDP: 4.4
 as % of central government expenditures: —
 Arms Imports \$million: 1
 Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

The economy is based on service activities connected with the country's strategic location and status as a free-trade zone in northeast Africa. Two-thirds of the inhabitants live in the capital city, the remainder being mostly nomadic herders. Scanty rainfall limits crop production to fruits and vegetables, and most food must be imported. Djibouti's most valuable economic asset is its strategic location at the intersection of shipping routes between the Indian Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea. Djibouti provides services as both a transit port for the

region and an international transshipment and refueling center. It has few natural resources and little industry. The nation is, therefore, heavily dependent on foreign assistance to help support its balance of payments and to finance development projects. An unemployment rate of 50 percent continues to be a major problem. Inflation is not a concern, however, because of the fixed tie of the franc to the U.S. dollar. Per capita consumption dropped an estimated 35 percent through the 1990s because of recession, civil war, and a high population growth rate (including immigrants and refugees). Also, renewed fighting between Ethiopia and Eritrea disturbed normal external channels of commerce. Faced with a multitude of economic difficulties, the government fell in arrears on long-term external debt and has been struggling to meet the stipulations of foreign aid donors.

Poverty is Djibouti's most serious obstacle to development. Per capita gross domestic product (GDP) was \$1,300 in 2002, which was relatively high for sub-Saharan Africa, but 50 percent of the population is poor, and 10 percent is poor enough to be unable to buy sufficient food for minimal caloric intake. Refugees from other countries burden Djibouti's social-services system. Indeed, poverty has increased noticeably in the last few years and is hurting Djibouti's ability to improve its economic situation. Children of poor parents are unable to attend school and as a result cannot find skilled jobs, so they in turn become poor parents. The World Bank has made its first goal in Djibouti the reduction of poverty, including through the expansion of education and the improvement of the health-care system and social safety net. If poverty comes under control, Djibouti will then be able to devote more of its resources to infrastructure and to improve efficiency through privatization.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$million: 619
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 1,300
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 2.2
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 0.03
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %
 Agriculture: 3.5
 Industry: 15.8
 Services: 80.7
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %
 Private Consumption: 76
 Government Consumption: 27
 Gross Domestic Investment: —
 Foreign Trade \$million: Exports: 155
 Imports: 665
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: —
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: —

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
—	—	—	—	—

Finance

National Currency: Djiboutian Franc (DJF)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = DJF 177.721
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 42.85
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: —
 Total External Debt \$million: 366
 Debt Service Ratio %: —
 Balance of Payments \$million: —
 International Reserves SDRs million: 98.36
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index
 Growth Rate %: 2.0

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 36
 per capita \$: 112.25
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: —

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$million: 135
 Expenditures \$million: 182
 Budget Deficit \$million: 47
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 3.5
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2000) %: 1.1
 Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares: 6
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: —
 Artificial Fertilizer kg/hectare: 0
 Total Farmland as % of land area: 0.04
 Livestock: Cattle 000: 297
 Sheep 000: 466
 Hogs 000: —
 Chickens 000: —
 Forests: Production of Roundwood (000 cubic meters): 0
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 350

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 13.17
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 3.0

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of
 oil equivalent 000: —
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of
 oil equivalent 000: 129
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 190
 Net Energy Imports % of use: —
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: 90
 Production kW-hr million: 180
 Consumption kW-hr million: 167.4
 Coal Reserves tons million: —
 Production tons 000: —
 Consumption tons 000: —

Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic meters billion: —
 Production cubic meters million: —
 Consumption cubic million: —
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels million: —
 Production barrels million: 0
 Consumption barrels per day: 11,300
 Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$million: 665
 Exports \$million: 155
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —
 Balance of Trade \$million: —

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Saudi Arabia %	19.7	—
Ethiopia %	10.9	4.7
China %	9.2	—
France %	6.5	—
United Kingdom %	5.1	—
United States %	4.9	—
Somalia %	—	63.9
Yemen %	—	22.5

Transportation

Roads Total Length mi: 1,796 km 2,890
 Paved %: 12.6
 Automobiles: —
 Trucks and Buses: —
 Railroad; Track Length mi: 62 km 100
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: —
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 1
 Total Deadweight Tonnage: 3,030
 Airports: 13
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: —
 Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: —
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: —
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: —

Communications

Telephones 000: 9.5
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.20
 Cellular Telephones 000: 23
 Personal Computers: 14,500
 Internet Hosts per million people: 1,472
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 13

ENVIRONMENT

The desert climate is Djibouti's greatest environmental problem, as the desert continues to encroach. Also of concern is the lack of potable water for the country's rapidly growing population. Rainfall is unpredictable and makes life difficult for rural people; when rain does not fall, famine results, and livestock die. Djibouti lies on the convergence of the African and Arabian tectonic plates and experiences frequent earthquakes and the occasional volcanic eruption.

Environment

Forest Area % of land area: 0.26
 Average Annual Forest Change, 1990-2000, 000 ha: —
 Nationally Protected Areas as % of Total Land Area: 0
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 0.58

LIVING CONDITIONS

Djibouti is a very poor country. Half of the population lives below the poverty line. About one-third of Djibouti's people, particularly nomads in the interior, live without access to potable water or any kind of sanitary plumbing. Approximately 60 percent of the population do not have water in their homes. This problem is especially bad for those who are already poor, as they often find themselves paying twice as much for water from trucks as they would if they were connected to a municipal water system.

Two-thirds of Djibouti's population lives in the city of Djibouti. The city has a decent telephone system and rudimentary Internet access but is also polluted with sewage and garbage. The nation as a whole has fewer than 3,000 kilometers of roads, only 13 percent of which are paved. There is one stretch of railroad track 100 km long; it runs to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Djibouti has 13 rudimentary airports, three of which have paved runways.

HEALTH

Djibouti has serious health problems; important health indicators are below standards for the region, to say nothing of the world. Life expectancy is just over 43 years, a decrease from 50 years in 1997. The infant mortality rate is high, with 106 children dying for every 1,000 born. Malnutrition is a problem for many people, especially women and children under five. On average women have 5.5 children. Many mothers die in childbirth—about 730 per 100,000 live births. Anemia caused by malnutrition and rapid childbearing causes additional problems, as does female genital mutilation. Infectious diseases are very common, especially tuberculosis. About 3 percent of adults are HIV-positive.

Health

Number of Physicians: 86
 Number of Dentists: 10
 Number of Nurses: 424
 Number of Pharmacists: 12
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 13
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 106
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 730
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 7
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 58
 HIV Infected % of adults: 2.9
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12–23 months:
 DPT: 62
 Measles: 62
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 50
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 80

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Djibouti does not have enough food to feed its people, and malnutrition is a major problem. The climate is dry and the soil is rocky, which makes it difficult to nurture crops or livestock. Djibouti imports almost all of its food, including rice, flour, sugar, fruits, and vegetables. The pastoral areas in the southeast and northwest suffer periodic famines from lack of rainfall. Pastoral herders depend on milk from their goats and camels, and famines decrease milk production as the animals themselves become malnourished. In the city food is generally available but expensive; thus, the poor in Djibouti City suffer from famines in the form of higher food prices, which force them to choose between food and other expenses such as education.

People must take precautions with all their food in order to prevent diarrhea, washing fresh fruits and vegetables, boiling water, and making sure all meat is thoroughly cooked. Street food is of the North African variety, featuring flat bread, lentils, chicken, fish, and fried meat. Grilled or barbecued Red Sea fish is especially popular. Restaurant food is French-influenced. Fresh fruits and vegetables can be purchased at an open-air market but must be carefully washed before consumption. Alcohol is not readily available.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 138.1
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 62.1

STATUS OF WOMEN

Women legally possess full civil rights, but in practice, due to custom and traditional societal discrimination in

education, they play a secondary role in public life and have fewer employment opportunities than men. Few women work in managerial and professional positions; women are largely confined to trade and secretarial fields. Customary law, which is based on Islamic sharia law, discriminates against women in such areas as inheritance, divorce, and travel. The vast majority of women are still circumcised as children in an extreme form of female genital mutilation known as infibulation. Though activists have begun speaking out against this practice, which is extremely painful and causes numerous health problems, most girls still undergo the procedure.

Women

Women-headed Households: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 11
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men aged 15 to 24: —
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: —

WORK

Most adults in Djibouti do not have jobs. The unemployment rate was officially estimated at 50 percent in 2004, but some experts believe the rate is much higher. About 80 percent of youths between 15 and 20 are unemployed. Women have more difficulty finding jobs than do men. Income distribution is very uneven, with one-fifth of the population earning two-thirds of the income. The largest employer is the government, which runs the port, the airport, and the electrical and telecommunications systems. The U.S. government, through the military and the embassy, is the second-largest employer.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 282,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 40.8
 Total Activity Rate %: 61.5
 Labor by Sector: %
 Agriculture: —
 Industry: —
 Services: —
 Unemployment %: 50

EDUCATION

Djibouti has not yet introduced compulsory, universal, free education. Schooling lasts 13 years, as divided into six years of primary school, four years of middle school, and three years of secondary school. The academic year runs from September to May. The medium of instruction is French. There is a general lack of qualified teachers and funding for facilities. France sends aid; it has also

sent teachers, helped coordinate policy, and sponsored a teacher-training center.

In 2001 about 34 percent of children were attending primary school; only 30 percent of all girls were attending. The number of students drops during famines, when families must use their money to buy food instead of school supplies. The nationwide literacy rate is about 68 percent; 78 percent of men and 58 percent of women can read.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 67.9
 Male %: 78
 Female %: 58.4
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 4.2
 First Level: Primary schools: 81
 Teachers: 1,288
 Students: 44,321
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 34.4
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 34.0
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 26
 Teachers: 736
 Students: 20,516
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 27.9
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 17.1
 Third Level: Institutions: 1
 Teachers: —
 Students: 742
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 1.21
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: —

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Djibouti concentrates much of its technological expertise on the development of its port. The port is the main port for Ethiopia, and imports and exports have increased drastically in recent years, particularly of petroleum products destined for Ethiopia. As of 2004 the government was in the midst of a \$15 million expansion of the port's terminal, including \$2 million for computerizing the facilities. The Dubai Port Authority has agreed to invest in and administer Djibouti's port for 20 years.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million persons: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$: —
 Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

The state news agency is the Agence Djiboutienne d'Information. Four newspapers are published (all in French) in Djibouti. The government owns the principal one, *La nation de Djibouti*. *Le renouveau* is run by the op-

position Party for Democratic Renewal, and *La république* by the opposition Parti National Démocratique. Book publishing does not exist.

The government controls all electronic media, and most journalists refrain from criticizing government policies. The official radio and television service, the government-owned Radiodiffusion-Télévision de Djibouti (RTD), operates one shortwave and two medium-wave transmitters and one television station. Radio programs are broadcast in French, Afar, Issa, and Arabic. The BBC and Radio France Internationale broadcast in Djibouti. Voice of America is available over a local FM relay. The television station, with one transmitter, can reach 80 percent of the population.

There are two public libraries. The Public Library of Djibouti has 11,000 volumes.

Media

Newspapers and Periodicals: —
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: —
 Radio Receivers 000: 39.4
 per 1,000: 82.6
 Television sets 000: 30
 per 1,000: 48

CULTURE

Djibouti's traditional culture comes from its history of nomads, warriors, merchants, and caravans, combining Arab, Somali, and Afar customs. These traditions have evolved into songs, poems, folktales and legends, dances, games, and costumes. The Issa people share an oral tradition with the Somali that encompasses proverbs, aphorisms, and the lives of Sufi saints; this tradition has been written down in Somali, Arabic, and French. The Afar people's oral tradition revolves around songs, such as love songs, songs for weddings or markets, war songs, and boasting songs.

Djibouti's ancient port city of Tadjourah was once the site of a wealthy sultanate. The white domes of its seven mosques formed a landmark for sea traders and caravans coming from the desert. The city of Djibouti itself was built in the 1890s of coral blocks decorated with French art deco plasterwork and Islamic patterns and calligraphy.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 2
 Volumes: 11,000
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —

Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Djibouti's folklore mixes stories from Somalia, Ethiopia, and ancient Abyssinia with Islamic traditions. The ancient Egyptians knew Djibouti as the land of spices and incense, the destination of nomadic camel traders traversing the area between Egypt and the Middle Eastern countries across the Red Sea. The modern state of Djibouti is quite young as a nation. It has attempted to create cultural unity and national pride by encouraging artists, musicians, and performers to create works that express the character of their ancient homeland. The government has sent performers abroad to present original works at arts festivals in an effort to show the world Djibouti's culture. Their works idealize traditional cultural moments, such as weddings, circumcisions, and the induction of sultans or tribal chiefs, and romanticize the nomadic desert culture—which most modern residents of Djibouti eschew.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Djibouti has limited recreational facilities and the climate can make outdoor entertainment unappealing. The Red Sea beaches offer swimming and diving, though sharks present a minor threat. People can take four-wheel-drive vehicles on expeditions into the countryside, where there are black lava fields, some hills, and an extinct volcano. It is possible to windsurf on wheels on Petit Bara, a salty, sandy field. Lake Asal is an attractive lake with flamingos and a popular excursion site.

Djibouti does have a nightclub scene, but the young people who frequent such establishments also tend to have a very high rate of HIV infection as well as tuberculosis. Alcohol is difficult to find, but most people spend the afternoon chewing khat, or qat, a mild stimulant grown in the hills of Ethiopia; in many places work stops all afternoon while people chew khat.

ETIQUETTE

The people of Djibouti are relatively tolerant but conservative. Provocative clothes, especially on women, are considered improper. Verbal excesses are frowned upon. Most people do not like to be photographed, and photographers must ask permission before taking someone's picture.

FAMILY LIFE

Family life in Djibouti is governed by a hierarchy in which people are ranked by age, sex, and clan. Historically, men have been the heads of families and the breadwinners. Women take care of cooking, collecting firewood and water, and handling other domestic activities. In many cases women control their family's finances. Boys are usually more highly valued than girls and are more likely to go to school. The advent of AIDS is transforming family dynamics, creating orphans as parents die.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

The climate is hot and the culture is Muslim, which means people dress modestly but lightly. Local men wear long pants or a *futa*, which is a kind of sarong. Women wear long skirts or dresses covered with a colorful gauzy drape called a *shalma*. French expatriates occasionally wear shorts, but the local people do not.

SPORTS

Djibouti does not have much of a sports scene. One of its noted athletes is the marathon runner Hussein Ahmed Salah.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1946** French Somaliland becomes a French overseas territory.
- 1957** The territory is granted limited autonomy.
- 1958** The first territorial assembly is elected.
- 1967** The territory, now renamed Territory of the Afars and the Issas, is granted a semi-autonomous executive headed by a president and a council of eight members, elected by a Chamber of Deputies.
- 1968** Ali Arif Bourhan, Afar leader, is elected president, and his party gains 26 of 32 seats in the Chamber of Deputies.
- 1973** The territory reaffirms ties with France.
- 1975** France announces decision to grant full and unlimited autonomy to the territory but with a French military presence; Somali-inspired violence erupts against the decision.
- 1976** Ali Arif Bourhan resigns the presidency.
- 1977** The Territory of the Afars and the Issas gains independence under the name of Djibouti. Issa leader Hassan Gouled Aptidon is elected as the nation's first president; Gouled names the first cabinet, with Ahmed Dini Ahmed as prime minister.
- Djibouti joins the United Nations, Organization of African Unity (OAU), and Arab League; Ahmed Dini Ahmed resigns along with four cabinet members following Afar-Issa strife.
- 1978** Foreign Minister Abdallah Muhammad Kamil is named prime minister but later is replaced by Barkat Gourad Hamadou, another Afar.
- 1979** Afar guerillas attack military barracks with Ethiopian help. President Gouled announces formation of a new political party, Popular Rally for Progress (Rassemblement Populaire pour le Progrès, RPP). Landlocked East African nations draw up initial agreements to airlift goods to Djibouti for transshipment through the Suez Canal.
- 1981** Djibouti is declared a free port. The constitutional law is approved.
- 1982** In new elections to the Chamber of Deputies, RPP wins all seats, with a reported 91 percent of the eligible voters approving the party's single list. Legislation is enacted making RPP the country's only legal political party.
- 1983** Refugees from Ethiopia cross into Djibouti.
- 1987** Gouled is reelected unopposed.
- 1989** Somali refugees escaping their country's civil war flee to neighboring Djibouti.
- 1990** The two main underground opposition groups form a common front, the Union of the Democratic Movement.
- 1992** A new constitution is approved that allows up to four political parties. RPP wins all of the seats in the assembly.
- 1994** Rebels in the northern part of the country who make up the Front for the Restoration of Unity and Democracy (FRUD) join the ruling party in a coalition government.
- 1997** In parliamentary elections, the RPP-FRUD coalition wins all 65 seats. Hassan Gouled Aptidon celebrates 20 years as president of Djibouti.
- 1998** Barkat Gourad Hamadou begins his 20th year as prime minister.
- 1999** Ismail Omar Guelleh is elected president.
- 2000** The government and the radical faction of FRUD sign a peace agreement, putting an end to the civil war. Soon thereafter, Ahmed Dini, the former prime minister and leader of the radical faction of FRUD, returns to Djibouti after nine years in exile.
- 2001** Dileita Mohammed Dileita becomes prime minister.
- 2002** Law limiting elections to four parties expires. German and U.S. soldiers arrive in Djibouti to conduct war on terror.
- 2003** Guelleh reelected president.

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OFFICIAL PUBLICATIONS

Djibouti. *Annuaire Statistique de Djibouti*

CONTACT INFORMATION

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1156 15th Street NW, Suite 515
Washington, D.C. 20005
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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Ambassade de la République de Djibouti en France
<http://www.ambafrance-dj.org/>

DOMINICA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Commonwealth of Dominica

ABBREVIATION

DM

CAPITAL

Roseau

HEAD OF STATE

President Nicholas J. O. Liverpool (from 2003)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Roosevelt Skerrit (from 2004)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Parliamentary democracy

POPULATION

69,029 (2005)

AREA

754 sq km (291 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

African Black

LANGUAGES

English (official), French patois

RELIGION

Christianity

UNIT OF CURRENCY

East Caribbean dollar

NATIONAL FLAG

Three crosses—of yellow, black, and white, representing the Trinity—span the flag and are centered in a field of green. Ten green, five-pointed stars, representing the 10 parishes of Dominica, lay within a red disk representing socialism at the center of the flag and surround a green parrot at the disk's center.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A shield with four quarters—the first showing a coconut tree, the second a *crapaud*, the third a Carib canoe, and the fourth a banana tree—is crested by a silver and azure wreath mounted by a lion passant guardant; on either side is a beaked Sisserou parrot; and on a scroll underneath is the Creole motto *Apré bondie c'est la ter* (After God we love the soil).

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"Isle of Beauty, Isle of Splendor"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day), March 1 and 2 (Carnival), Easter, May 5 (Labor Day), Whitmonday, July 2 (CariCom Day), August 4 (Bank Holiday), November 3 (Independence Day), November 4 (Community Service Day), December 25 and 26 (Christmas)

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

November 3, 1978

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

November 3, 1978

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

The largest of the Windward Islands, Dominica is at the northern end of the Windward chain of the Lesser Antilles, between Guadeloupe and Martinique. Dominica is roughly rectangular in shape, 47 km (29 mi) long and 26 km (16 mi) wide, with a total land area of 754 sq km (291 sq mi). The total length of the coastline is 148 km (92 mi). The island is dominated by a high mountain range running like a spine with lateral spurs on either side. The highest peak is Morne Diablatins (1,447 m; 4,746 ft). None of the many rivers is navigable, but they give limited access to the interior.

Geography

Area sq km: 754; sq mi 291

World Rank: 171st

Land Boundaries, km: 0

Coastline, km: 148

Elevation Extremes meters

Lowest: Caribbean Sea 0

Highest: Morne Diablatins 1,447

Land Use %

Arable land: 6.67

Permanent Crops: 20

Permanent Pastures: 3

Forest and Woodland: 61.3

Other: 12.03

Dominica



Population of Principal Cities

Roseau 15,853

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

The climate is tropical, with extremes of heat and humidity tempered by constant sea breezes, which sometimes reach hurricane force during the hurricane season from July to September. The temperature range is 21.1°C to 32.2°C (70°F to 90°F). Rainfall varies, with the eastern coast receiving 5,000 to 7,600 mm (200 to 300 in), whereas the drier western coast receives 1,000 to 1,800 mm (40 to 72 in). The wettest season is normally June to October, although January sometimes has more rain.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature: 70°F to 90°F

Average Rainfall

East Coast: 200 in to 300 in

West Coast: 40 in to 72 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Dominica has a great profusion of plant and animal life. Its Morne Trois Pitons National Park was designated a World Heritage Site by the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in recognition of its unique natural beauty and biodiversity. Two species of parrot are unique to Dominica: the Imperial, or Sisserou, Dominica's national bird, and the Jaco, a smaller parrot with a red neck. Dominica is also home to several species of hummingbird, the broad-winged hawk, the magnificent frigate bird, the *siffleur montagne*, the rufous-throated solitaire, and the barn owl. Some tour operators specialize in bird-watching trips. Dominica has two species of large mammal, the agouti and the *manicou* (similar to an opossum), as well as many bats. Numerous species of reptile live there, including iguanas and several kinds of snake. A large frog known as the *crapaud* or "mountain chicken" is a popular meat. The seas around Dominica teem with fish and marine mammals, including many types of whales and dolphins, and its coral reefs are spectacular, making the island a popular destination for scuba divers.

Dominica's plant life is also lush. The island is covered with orchids and ferns, and its national flower is the Bwa Carib. Banana trees and cashew nut trees grow abundantly.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 69,029

World Rank: 182nd

Density per sq km: 94.8

% of annual growth (1999–2003): 0.0

Male %: 50.2

Female %: 49.8

Urban %: 72.0

Age Distribution: % 0–14: 27.3

15–65: 64.8

65 and over: 7.9

Population 2025: 77,936

Birth Rate per 1,000: 16.25

Death Rate per 1,000: 6.9

Rate of Natural Increase %: 1.1

Total Fertility Rate: 1.98

Expectation of Life (years): Males 71.48

Females 77.43

Marriage Rate per 1,000: 4.7

Divorce Rate per 1,000: 0.8

Average Size of Households: 3.6

% of Illegitimate Children: —

Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

The island was once occupied by the Arawaks, who were exterminated by the Caribs, a warrior tribe. Only some 1,200 members of this tribe survive, at the Carib Reserve at Salybia. Most of Dominica's modern inhabitants are descended from West African slaves imported as plantation laborers in the 17th and 18th centuries; many of them are the products of unions between blacks and whites. The white colonial class was historically privileged over the black majority and resisted any attempts to change the social structure well into the 20th century.

LANGUAGES

English is the official language, but most of the people speak a French patois of uncertain origin.

RELIGIONS

Roman Catholics constitute about 70 percent of the population, but there are long-established Anglican and Methodist Churches. The 1979 "Dread Act" bans the Rastafarian sect, but this law is not enforced.

Religious Affiliations

Roman Catholic	53,000
Protestant	10,000
Other	6,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Dominica was originally inhabited by first the Arawaks and then the Carib Indians, who named the island

Wai'tukubuli, or "Tall Is Her Body." The Kalinago or "Island Caribs" had paddled northward up the chain of the Antilles, and the Arawakan-speaking Igneri are thought to have settled in Dominica around c.e. 400.

The first known Europeans to sight the island were led by Christopher Columbus, who sailed past on a Sunday in 1493 (hence the name Dominica). Dominica was claimed by both France and England in the 17th century, but in 1748 it was stipulated that the island should be left in the hands of the Caribs. In 1763 Dominica was assigned to Great Britain under the Treaty of Paris but was captured by the French in 1778, then restored to Great Britain in 1783. In 1795 the French made an abortive attempt to seize the island and burned the capital in a later attempt in 1805. Finally, the French were induced to abandon their claims upon the payment of 8,000 pounds. Dominica joined the Federation of the West Indies as an independent member in 1958 and remained so until the dissolution of the federation in 1962. In 1967 Dominica became one of the West Indies Associated States, with full autonomy in internal affairs. Following a decision in 1975 by the Associated States to seek independence, Dominica became an independent republic within the Commonwealth in 1978.

Dominica experienced a great deal of political instability related to race in the 1960s, 1970s, and early 1980s. The white ruling class refused to abandon their position of power, despite increasingly stringent protests from the black majority. The resulting political unrest hampered Dominica's efforts to establish a tourist industry. After the independence constitution took effect the political scene grew much more stable and Dominica was finally able to develop its reputation as a Caribbean resort destination; the delay may well have benefited Dominica, which was then able to market itself as pristine and unspoiled by development, unlike other Caribbean islands.

Upon independence Patrick Roland John, the leader of the Dominica Labour Party (DLP), became prime minister. In 1979 John was forced to step down as a result of unrest following government attempts to introduce legislation restricting trade unions and the press. James Oliver Seraphine was designated his successor. Both John and Seraphine were denied reelection in July 1980. The Dominica Freedom Party (DFP) won those general elections decisively, and its leader, Mary Eugenia Charles, became the first woman to become a prime minister in the Caribbean.

Security issues dominated Charles's first years in office. In January 1981 the government disarmed the Defense Force because of reported trading of weapons for marijuana. Later that year it instituted a state of emergency following two coup attempts by John's supporters. John was implicated in the plots and imprisoned. He was initially tried and acquitted on the charges, but

in 1985 he was retried and sentenced to 12 years' imprisonment.

In January 1985 the DLP joined ranks with two other opposition parties—the Dominica Liberation Movement and the United Dominica Labour Party—to form the Labour Party of Dominica (LPD). In the July 1985 general elections the DFP was returned to power, winning 15 of the 21 seats in the House of Assembly. By 1987 the DFP had gained two more seats in the House of Assembly, with the remaining four belonging to the LPD.

In the May 1990 general elections Charles and the DFP were returned for a third five-year term, but with a sharply reduced majority. The DFP retained only 11 seats in the House of Assembly, the LPD won four, and the two-year-old United Worker's Party (UWP) won six. In 1995 Charles stepped down as leader of the DFP, and Brian Alleyne took her place.

In 1995 the United Workers Party was swept into power, with Edison James becoming the new prime minister. In 2000 the LPD won 10 seats in the House of Assembly, and Roosevelt "Rosie" Douglas became prime minister. In October of that year Douglas died unexpectedly, and Pierre Charles became prime minister. That year parliament passed a law allowing the state-owned National Commercial Bank to provide offshore financial services, part of Dominica's plan to provide financial services to the world. In 2002 Charles confessed that Dominica was facing an economic crisis; he cited globalization and the decline in tourism as the causes.

Charles died in January 2004 at the age of 46. The education minister, Roosevelt Skerrit of the Labour Party, succeeded him as prime minister. He pledged to bring Dominica's ailing economy back up to a healthy state. In November 2004 Dominica suffered an earthquake that caused millions of dollars worth of damage.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1978–79	Patrick Roland John
1979–80	James Oliver Seraphine
1980–95	Mary Eugenia Charles
1995–2000	Edison James
2000	Roosevelt Douglas
2000–04	Pierre Charles
2004–	Roosevelt Skerrit

CONSTITUTION

Under its constitution, Dominica is a sovereign democratic republic with an elected president and a parliamentary form of government. The president is elected by the House of Assembly for a term of five years and may not hold office for more than two terms. A presidential candidate is nominated jointly by the prime min-

ister and the leader of the opposition, and automatically elected upon such nomination. In case of disagreement the choice is made by secret ballot in the House of Assembly. Executive authority is vested in the president, the head of state, who appoints as prime minister that member of the House of Assembly who commands the support of the majority of other elected members. Other ministers, who together with the prime minister constitute the cabinet, are appointed on the advice of the prime minister, who is head of government. Not more than three ministers may be chosen from among appointed senators. The president can remove a prime minister from office if a resolution of no confidence is passed by the House of Assembly and the prime minister does not either resign within three days or advise the president to dissolve the House of Assembly.

PARLIAMENT

The unicameral House of Assembly consists of 21 elected representatives and nine senators. Depending on the wishes of the House of Assembly, the senators may be elected or appointed by the president: five on the advice of the prime minister and four on the advice of the leader of the opposition. The life of the House of Assembly is five years, and it can amend the constitution. The leader of the opposition is appointed by the president and wields considerable influence. Every citizen over age 18 is eligible to vote.

POLITICAL PARTIES

There are three major political parties in Dominica. In 2004 the United Workers' Party (UWP) held nine of the 21 seats in the House. The Dominica Freedom Party (DFP) held two seats. The Labour Party of Dominica (LPD), the left-wing party founded in 1985, held 10. There was also a small leftist party called the Dominica Liberation Movement (DLM).

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The administration of the towns of Roseau, Portsmouth, and Canefield is entrusted to town councils. There are 37 village councils. The Carib Council administers Carib affairs. All councils exist to give local people a say in government affairs, to provide social services, and to allow people to govern themselves at the local level. Councils handle matters such as acquisition of public land, maintenance of parks and recreational facilities, local sanitation, road maintenance, collection of property taxes, regulation of markets and slaughterhouses, and control of the water supply.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The legal system is based on English common law and statute law and is administered by the East Caribbean Supreme Court in St. Lucia, consisting of the Court of Appeal and the High Court. One of the six puisne judges of the High Court is resident in Dominica and presides over the Court of Summary Jurisdiction. Four magistrates or district courts deal with summary offenses and civil offenses involving not more than \$500. The attorney general is the principal legal adviser to the government as well as the director of public prosecutions. The island's only prison is Goodwill Prison at Roseau.

HUMAN RIGHTS

In terms of civil and political rights Dominica is a free country. The government generally respects human rights. The principal human rights problems are the occasional use of excessive force by the police, poor prison conditions, societal violence against women and children, and discrimination against indigenous Carib Indians.

FOREIGN POLICY

Dominica is a member of the Commonwealth, the Organization of American States (OAS), and the United Nations, and its diplomatic contacts outside of these groupings are negligible. It maintains only a token presence in Washington, and the United States, likewise, has no immediate representation in Roseau. However, Dominica receives and is dependent on U.S. foreign aid and generally sides with the United States on regional issues. In March 2004 Dominica ended diplomatic relations with Taiwan in order to accept an offer of \$100 million in aid from mainland China.

DEFENSE

The Dominican defense force was officially disbanded in April 1981. There is no ministry of defense. The only military organization is the Commonwealth of Dominica Police Force, which includes a coast guard.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: —
 Military Manpower Availability: —
 Military Expenditures \$million: —
 as % of GNP: —
 as % of central government expenditures: —
 Arms Imports \$million: —
 Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

Dominica is one of the lower-middle-income countries of the world, with a free-market economy in which the private sector is dominant.

The economy is dependent on agriculture, primarily the production of bananas, coconuts, citrus fruits, and root crops. Low production in 2003 hurt the banana industry badly enough to cause a 1 percent decline in gross domestic product (GDP). A small manufacturing sector is based on the soap and garment industries.

Despite its location Dominica is not a major tourist destination; the industry remains undeveloped because of rocky beaches and a lack of transportation facilities. The lack of an international airport is a major drawback, though tourists who venture to Dominica usually appreciate its great beauty. The government wants to encourage tourists to come and has tried to promote the island as an ecotourism destination, unspoiled by development. Tourism increased in 2003 and 2004 after a decline in 2002.

In 2003 the government began restructuring the economy, eliminating price controls, privatizing the banana industry, and increasing taxes. It is trying to develop financial services for businesses in need of offshore financial help and wants to build an oil refinery on the eastern side of the island.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$million: 380
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 5,400
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: –1.7
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: –1.4
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %
 Agriculture: 18
 Industry: 24
 Services: 58
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %
 Private Consumption: 70
 Government Consumption: 21
 Gross Domestic Investment: —
 Foreign Trade \$million: Exports: 39
 Imports: 98.2
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: —
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: —

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
	106.4	107.4	109.0	109.2	110.9

Finance

National Currency: East Caribbean Dollar (XCD)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = XCD 2.7
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency million: 131.5
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 6.5
 Total External Debt \$million: 161.5
 Debt Service Ratio %: 7.9

Balance of Payments \$million: —
 International Reserves SDRs \$million: 47.7
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index
 Growth Rate %: 1.0

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 22.8
 per capita: \$421
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 11.9

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: July 1–June 30
 Revenues \$million: 73.9
 Expenditures \$million: 84.4
 Budget Deficit \$million: 10.5
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 18
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2002) %: –2.6
 Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares: 18
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: —
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 600
 Total Farmland as % of land area: 6.7
 Livestock: Cattle 000: 13
 Sheep 000: 7
 Hogs 000: 5
 Chickens 000: 190
 Forests: Production of Roundwood (000 cubic meters): —
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons: 1220

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 16.7
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: –10

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 2
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 40
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 509
 Net Energy Imports % of use: —
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW: —
 Production kW-hr million: 72.41
 Consumption kW-hr million: 67.35
 Coal Reserves tons million: —
 Production tons 000: —
 Consumption tons 000: —
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic meters billion: —
 Production cubic meters million: —
 Consumption cubic meters million: —
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels million: —
 Production barrels million: —
 Consumption barrels per day: 600
 Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$million: 98.2
 Exports \$million: 39
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2002): –3.1
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2002): –3.1
 Balance of Trade: —

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
United States %	18.5	7.7
China %	18.0	—
Trinidad and Tobago %	14.6	4.6
Japan %	6.3	6.2
South Korea %	5.4	—
United Kingdom %	5.4	20.0
Jamaica %	—	18.5
Antigua and Barbuda %	—	7.7
Guyana %	—	6.2

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 780
 Paved %: 50.4
 Automobiles: —
 Trucks and Buses: —
 Railroad; Track Length mi: —
 Passenger-mi million: —
 Freight-mi million: —
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 6
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 19.7
 Airports: 2
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: —
 Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to: 67,000
 Number of Tourists from: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 36
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 9

Communications

Telephones 000: 23.7
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.10
 Cellular Telephones 000: 9.4
 Personal Computers 000: 7
 Internet Hosts per million people: 9,865
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 181

ENVIRONMENT

The island of Dominica has made a conscious effort to protect its lush tropical resources, in large measure to protect its growing tourist industry. The government has been working for many years to ensure that the country

continues to be one of the most beautiful and pristine nations in the world while at the same time allowing for economic development. In some places rain forests have been cut down for timber and fuel, resulting in soil erosion and habitat destruction, but for the most part this is not a major problem. The sea around the island is still in excellent shape, though sewage runoff from the city of Roseau harms the waters in the immediate vicinity.

Environment

Forest Area % of land area: 61.3
 Average Annual Forest Change, 1990-2000, 000 ha: —
 Nationally Protected Areas as % of Total Land Area: 4
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 1.4

LIVING CONDITIONS

Dominica is a relatively poor country—30 percent of the people live below the poverty line—and living conditions could improve. Roseau, the capital city, is seriously overcrowded, with shanty houses sharing space with concrete government housing. Most people build their own houses privately, taking out personal loans to buy land and build structures. Because their incomes are so low, building homes and paying off loans can take many years. The city's sewage system, built in 1932, is now inadequate to treat the waste it receives, which is causing damage to the sea around Roseau. Hurricanes hit the island every few years, causing massive property destruction. In 1979 Hurricane David left 75 percent of Dominica's population homeless; some of these people still had no homes five years later. The island has no real disaster response schemes. Roseau gets its electricity from hydropower, mostly from a dam on Freshwater Lake, and from diesel fuel. Freshwater Lake is also Roseau's water source. Water is abundant and of good quality, and Dominica is able to export some of its water to other Caribbean islands.

HEALTH

Dominica has a long life expectancy, of over 74 years, and a fairly low infant mortality rate—fewer than 15 babies die for every 1,000 births. Fertility is low, and women have on average slightly less than two children. Births have outpaced deaths, but emigration more than offsets this growth, such that the population is actually declining.

Hospital facilities are adequate for basic needs, but seriously ill patients must travel to other countries for specialized medical care. Dominica's hospitals are gradually adding advanced equipment and beginning to perform more specialized surgeries. Mental health care is

seriously underfunded and neglected. The Infirmary of Roseau is a nursing facility that can house about 95 elderly people.

Health

Number of Physicians: 38
 Number of Dentists: 4
 Number of Nurses: 317
 Number of Pharmacists: —
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 49
 Hospital Beds per 10,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 14.75
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: —
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 6.0
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 203
 HIV Infected % of adults: —
 Child Immunization Rate % of children age 12–23 months:
 DPT: 98
 Measles: 98
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 83
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 97

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Dominica's food consists mostly of fresh vegetables, fruits, meat, and fish. Most people cook their food Creole style and use natural seasonings, preferring those to the expensive store-bought versions. Local foods include yam, fig, plantain, breadfruit, mountain chicken (frogs called *crapaud*), agouti and *manicou* (indigenous mammals), chicken, goat, fish, and crab. Tap water is highly chlorinated and safe to drink. Fresh mountain water is usually safe as well. There are some restaurants in towns; there is very little fast food.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 85.5
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 399.7

STATUS OF WOMEN

Beyond the general protection of the constitution, women do not benefit from any specific civil rights legislation. There is little open discrimination against women, yet sexual harassment and domestic violence cases are common. Property ownership continues to be deeded to "heads of households," who are usually males. When the male head of household dies without a will, the wife cannot inherit the property or sell it, although she can live in it and pass it to her children. The Dominica National Council of Women, a nongovernmental organization, has

developed local adult education and small business training programs for women. Girls attend school at the same rate as boys. Women hold fewer than one-fifth of the seats in parliament. There are no women at higher levels of government. Women constitute by far the majority of Dominicans employed in the service sector, while men dominate in agriculture and industry.

Women

Women-headed Households: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 19
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men aged 15 to 24: —
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: —

WORK

Dominica's unemployment rate in 2000 was 23 percent. Of those who are employed, 40 percent work in agriculture, 32 percent in industry and commerce, and 28 percent in services. Agricultural workers grow bananas, citrus, coconuts, cocoa, mangoes, and root crops. Agriculture no longer brings in the income it formerly did—the banana export market dropped precipitously in 2003—and many workers are now trying to earn money from tourists. The tourist industry employs many service workers in hotels and restaurants and as guides. The government is trying to develop its financial-services industry and offshore oil drilling, but so far these enterprises do not employ many Dominicans. A few people work in factories producing soap, garments, and furniture.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 25,000
 Female Participation Rate %: —
 Total Activity Rate %: 38
 Labor by Sector: %
 Agriculture: 40
 Industry and Commerce: 32
 Services: 28
 Unemployment %: 23

EDUCATION

Education is free and compulsory for 10 years, from ages five to 15. Schooling lasts for 14 years, divided into seven years of primary school, five years of secondary school, and two years of postsecondary courses. All schools are taught in English. The school year runs from September to July. Administrative responsibility for education rests with the Board of Education, headed by a chief education officer. Higher education is available at the University of the West Indies, but students must travel to Trinidad,

Barbados, or Jamaica to attend; future teachers attend the Teacher Training Institute in Roseau.

Before the 1960s lack of transportation put education out of many people's reach, but between the 1960s and 1980s Dominica built a substantial public school system. Since the 1970s there has been an islandwide day-care and preschool system run by the Social League, a Roman Catholic women's organization, and funded by the government. There is strong social pressure to get an education, so most families send their children to school, and Dominica's literacy rate is correspondingly high.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 94
 Male %: 94
 Female %: 94
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: —
 First Level: Primary schools: 64
 Teachers: 550
 Students: 10,460
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 19.0
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 81.3
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 13
 Teachers: 443
 Students: 7,500
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 16.93
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 91.1
 Third Level: Institutions: —
 Teachers: —
 Students: —
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: —
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 5.0

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Dominica hopes to increase its technological expertise in order to transform its economy from dependence on agriculture to a knowledge-based system that would keep the most educated Dominicans at home. Proposed projects include the creation of a Dominica Institute of Technology, where Dominicans could conduct projects such as a wind-energy program or develop products such as banana-based food items. Dominicans who have emigrated want the government to concentrate on sustainable energy projects and ecotourism; so far the government has not embraced these ideas.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million persons: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: 1.3
 Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

Three nondaily newspapers are published in the capital: the *Chronicle*, the *Sun*, and the *Tropical Star*. The press is

vigorous, and its attack on government corruption was a major factor in the success of the opposition Dominica Freedom Party in 1980. The government does not interfere with the media, and the media is sometimes outspokenly critical of governmental policies.

Dominica does not have a national television service. Private cable television is available on part of the island. There are several radio stations, both public and private.

Media

Newspapers and Periodicals: —
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: —
 Radio Receivers 000: 65
 per 1,000: 875
 Television sets 000: 17
 per 1,000: 232

CULTURE

Dominica has a Creole culture that combines African, West Indian, and Carib traditions in language, customs, art, and food. People still use Carib-style dugout canoes and build their houses on stilts. Clothing often displays African styles and colors. Reggae is popular, and Rastafarian dreadlocks are a common hairstyle. Calypso and zouk are other popular music styles. The French had a more lasting effect on Dominica's culture than the British, which is why the local patois is French instead of English, most people are Roman Catholic, and French names are widespread.

Dominica's main contribution to literature is in the person of Jean Rhys, born in Roseau in 1890. Her books *Voyage in the Dark* and *Smile Please* draw upon her childhood in Dominica.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number:
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Dominicans love to tell folktales at night. Many of the tales are dark and frightening, featuring *soukoyant* (female witches), *lougarwoo* (male witches), dogs turning into people, and people making pacts with the devil. One story

says that if someone were to put an egg in his armpit and make a pact with the devil, the egg would then hatch into a creature called Moose; Moose would furnish money as long as the individual kept his faith with the devil.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Dominicans love Caribbean music, such as reggae and calypso. Aside from music, most of Dominica's entertainment options are found outdoors. Dominica's natural beauty offers a wealth of recreational possibilities. Diving and snorkeling are excellent, and hiking, mountain biking, and camping are likewise good. Cabrits National Park has both natural beauty and an 18th century British garrison. The government wants to encourage the development of more entertainment options to attract tourists who want to do more than sightsee and dive.

ETIQUETTE

Dominica is a very casual island. Dominicans are friendly and are comfortable being quite close to other people; they do not have the same ideas about personal space as many North Americans. People are not shy about trying to sell goods and services, especially to tourists. Tipping for services is customary.

FAMILY LIFE

Dominicans may legally marry at the age of 16. Most women use contraception, which has reduced the birthrate to less than two children per women. If parents are legally married they share practical custody of their children, that is, the children live with and are cared for by both parents, but legal custody lies with the father. If the parents are not married, the mother usually has legal custody. Fathers can obtain custody by proving that the mother is dead, mentally unbalanced, or otherwise unfit. Many households are headed by women, and in the Caribbean mothers exercise a great deal of moral authority over their families. Households headed by women are more likely to be poor than households headed by men, but this income gap is narrowing as more women find work outside the home.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Dominica's year-round temperatures are tropical, and half of the year is quite rainy; most people wear light cotton clothing. Casual dress is the norm. In the city most women wear dresses or skirts, and men wear long pants instead of shorts.

SPORTS

Cricket and soccer are the most popular sports in Dominica. In 2002 Dominica placed a player on the prestigious West Indies Cricket Team for the first time in 20 years.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1978** Dominica achieves full independence within the Commonwealth, with Patrick Roland John as prime minister and incumbent governor Sir Louis Cools-Lartique as head of state. Fred E. Degazon, Speaker of the House of Assembly, is elected and sworn in as president.
- 1979** Following a general strike President Degazon retires, and his successor, Sir Louis Cools-Lartique, resigns after only 24 hours in office; Jenner Armor is named interim president and James Oliver Seraphine interim prime minister pending general elections.
- 1980** In general elections the opposition Dominica Freedom Party wins 17 of the 21 elective seats in the House of Assembly; the party's leader, Mary Eugenia Charles, is appointed prime minister, with Aurelius Marie as president. Hurricane David and Hurricane Allen hit the island and virtually wipe out the plantations and fishing industry.
- 1983** As a member of the Organization of East Caribbean States, Dominica takes part in the U.S.-led invasion of Grenada.
- 1985** The Dominica Labour Party joins with the Dominica Liberation Movement and the United Dominica Labour Party to form the Labour Party of Dominica. The Dominica Freedom Party wins the general elections.
- 1989** Hurricane Hugo causes severe damage to the island and its banana industry.
- 1990** Charles is reelected prime minister; the Dominica Freedom Party wins 11 seats in the House of Assembly, the Labour Party of Dominica four, and the Dominica United Worker's Party six.
- 1992** The government begins a policy that grants citizenship to foreigners who invest in the Dominican economy.
- 1993** Sir Crispin Anselm Sorhaindo is elected president in October.
- 1995** After 15 years in office, Prime Minister Charles resigns. The United Worker's Party wins 11 of 21 seats in the House of Assembly; its leader, Edison James, becomes prime minister. Hurricane Luis devastates Dominica's banana crop.

- 1998** Vernon Lorden Shaw of the United Worker's Party is elected president.
- 2000** In January popular elections the Labour Party of Dominica wins 10 seats, making Roosevelt Douglas prime minister; in October, Douglas unexpectedly dies.
Pierre Charles becomes prime minister.
- 2004** Pierre Charles dies. Roosevelt Skerrit becomes prime minister. An earthquake damages the northern part of the island.
- 2005** Skerrit wins general elections.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Dominica (official web site)
<http://www.dominica.dm/index.htm>

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Dominican Republic (República Dominicana)

ABBREVIATION

DO

CAPITAL

Santo Domingo

HEAD OF STATE & HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

President Leonel Fernández Reyna (from 2004)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Representative democracy

POPULATION

8,950,034 (2005)

AREA

48,730 sq km (18,815 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Mulatto

LANGUAGE

Spanish

RELIGION

Roman Catholicism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Dominican peso

NATIONAL FLAG

A white cross superimposed on a field of four rectangles with the upper left and lower right in blue and the upper right and

lower left in red. At the center of the cross is the national emblem.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A shield divided by a white cross into alternating blue and red quarters. In the foreground is a white Bible opened to the first chapter of the Gospel of St. John, resting on six national flags in saltire, three to a side. Above the Bible is a gold pulpit cross, and above the shield, on a blue riband, is the national motto, *Dios, patria, libertad*, (God, country, liberty). The shield is flanked by green branches of laurel and palm tied at the bottom with a white, red, and blue ribbon. On a red scroll at the base is the country's name in black letters.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"Dominicans, Let Us Raise Our Song."

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day), January 6 (Epiphany), January 21 (Altagracia Day), January 26 (Duarte Day), February 27 (Independence Day, National Day), April 14 (Pan American Day), May 1 (Labor Day), July 16 (Foundation of Sociedad la Trinitaria), August 15 (Crowning of Our Lady of Altagracia), August 16 (Restoration of Independence), September 24 (Day of Our Lady of Las Mercedes), October 12 (Columbus Day), October 24 (United Nations Day), November 1 (All Saints' Day), December 25 (Christmas), various Christian festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

February 27, 1844

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

November 28, 1966

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

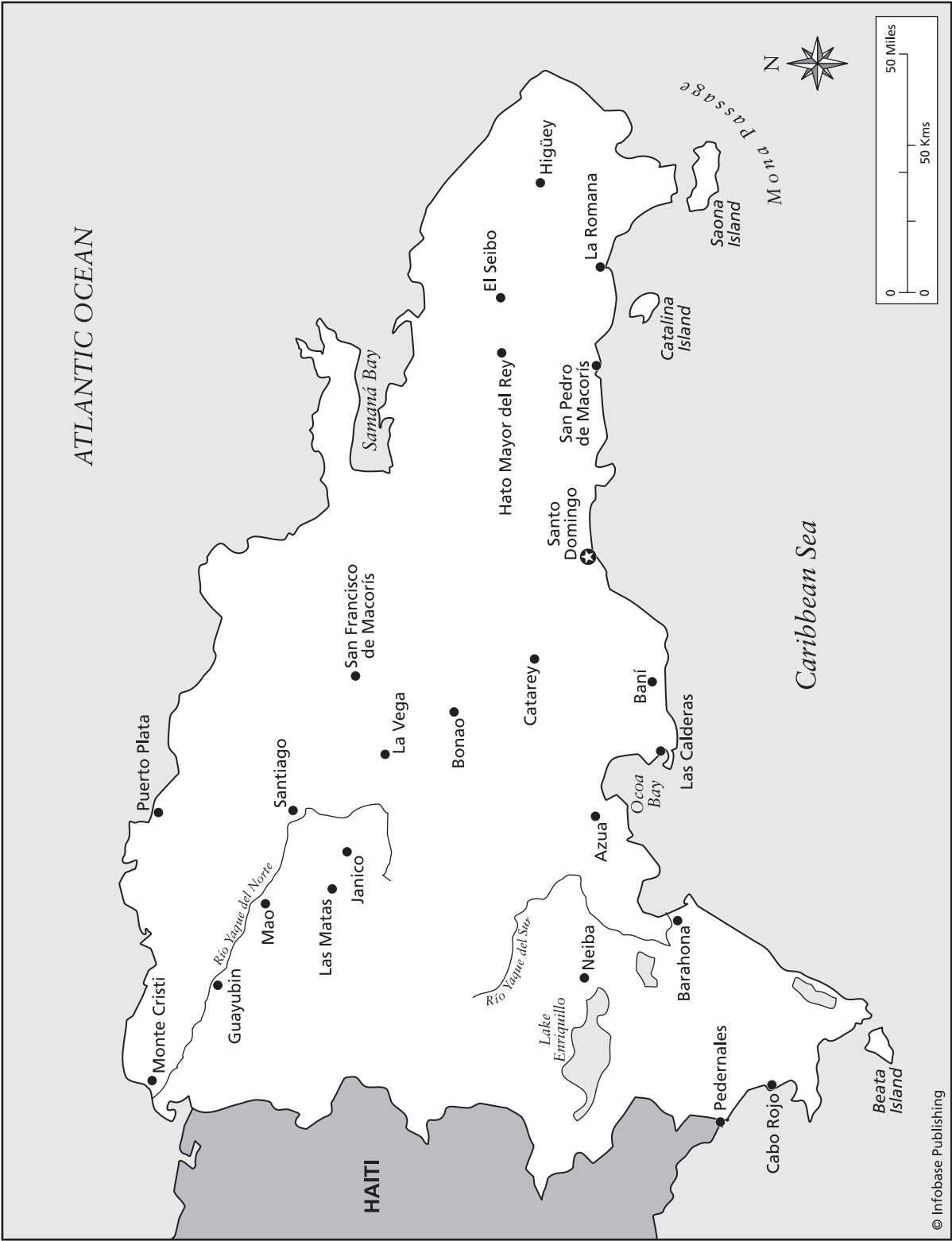
The Dominican Republic occupies the eastern two-thirds of the island of Hispaniola and includes the islands of Beata, Catalina, Saona, Alto Velo, and Catalinita in the Caribbean Sea, with a total land area of 48,730 sq km (18,815 sq mi). The country extends 386 km (240 mi) east to west and 261 km (162 mi) north to south. The coastline on the Atlantic Ocean and the Caribbean Sea stretches 1,288 km (800 mi). The Dominican Republic

shares its total international boundary of 360 km (224 mi) with Haiti.

The capital is Santo Domingo, founded in 1493, the oldest European settlement in the New World and the site of the oldest cathedral and the oldest university in the Western Hemisphere. The city's population in 2003 was 2,851,300, which made Santo Domingo by far the most populous city in the nation.

The Dominican Republic is divided geographically into more than 20 regions, but the main topographical di-

Dominican Republic



700 Dominican Republic

visions are the highlands and the lowlands. The highlands consist of four parallel mountain ranges in the west—the Cordillera Central, Cordillera Septentrional, Sierra de Neiba, and Sierra de Baoruco (Bahoruco)—and the Cordillera Oriental in the east. The Cordillera Central, which divides the country into two parts, contains Pico Duarte, the highest peak in the West Indies, with an elevation of 3,175 m (10,417 ft). The lowlands consist of long parallel valleys lying for the most part in a northwest-to-southeast direction. The most extensive of these valleys, the Cibao, is drained on its western flank by the Yaque del Norte, the country's longest river, and on its eastern flank by the Yuna River. The San Juan Valley is drained by a tributary of the Artibonito River and by the Yaque del Sur and its tributary, the San Juan. The Caribbean coastal plain is drained by the Ozama River and the Macorís River. All these rivers are for the most part shallow and subject to seasonal changes in flow. Both the Ozama and the Macorís are navigable for short distances.

Geography

Area sq km: 48,730; sq mi 18,815
World Rank: 127th
Land Boundaries, km: Haiti 360
Coastline, km: 1,288
Elevation Extremes meters
 Lowest: Lago Enriquillo -46
 Highest: Pico Duarte 3,175
Land Use %
 Arable land: 22.65
 Permanent Crops: 10.33
 Forest: 28.4
 Other: 38.62

Population of Principal Cities (2003)

Santo Domingo	2,851,300
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CLIMATE AND WEATHER

The country has a tropical maritime climate, but the heat of the tropics is moderated by the ocean currents and year-round trade winds as well as by the general elevation. The temperature averages between 22.2°C (72°F) and 28.3°C (83°F). It rarely falls below 15.6°C (60°F) or rises above 32.2°C (90°F). The coastal plain has an annual mean temperature of 25.5°C (78°F), but the Cordillera Central has a more temperate climate, with a mean of 20°C (68°F). Frosts are common at higher elevations.

The rainy season extends from May to November, with the maximum precipitation in the late spring and fall. In general, rainfall is heaviest in the north and east and diminishes toward the rain-shadow regions of the south and west. The highest annual precipitation recorded in

the country is 2,790 mm (110 in) on the northeastern slopes of the Cordillera Oriental. The Samaná Peninsula, La Vega, El Seibo, and the Puerto Plata region receive moderately heavy rainfall, although Santiago de los Caballeros, Monte Cristi, and the Neiba Valley receive scant rains. Nationwide the mean rainfall is between 1,390 mm and 1,520 mm (55 in to 60 in).

The Dominican Republic is exposed to Caribbean hurricanes from June through November, although it lies out of the two tracks of maximum intensity, which pass to the east and west.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature: 72°F to 83°F
 Coastal Plain: 78°F
 Central Cordillera: 68°F
Average Rainfall: 55 in to 60 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

The Dominican Republic, with its tropical climate and range of elevations, is home to a rich variety of plants and animals. More than 5,600 species of plants have been identified on the island of Hispaniola. The lowlands are home to mangroves, sweet acacia, wild frangipani, West Indian boxwood, poisonwood, and Monte Christi sage. Plants that favor higher elevations include bamboo, tree ferns, West Indian cedar, sierra palms, pasture fiddlewood, and Krug wild avocado. Almost one-third of the plants in the Dominican Republic grow there and nowhere else.

The Dominican Republic also contains many animal species, though it does not have the variety of birds or large mammals found in mainland Central America; in particular, it has never had any large cats. Large lizards and tarantulas, however, are abundant. The seas around the island teem with fish and other sea creatures, such as manatees and sea turtles. Humpback whales mate just off the northern coast. Many of the island's species are endangered, including the humpback whale, the Pacific pilot whale, the Caribbean monk seal, the Atlantic spotted dolphin, the Caribbean manatee, the Antillean manatee, the American crocodile, the rhinoceros iguana, the Hispaniola ground iguana, the loggerhead turtle, the green turtle, the leatherback turtle, the hawksbill turtle, the *jutia* (a large rodent), the *coterra* (a parrot), and many others. The Dominican Republic has passed laws attempting to protect these species but for the most part does not enforce them.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005 : 8,950,034
World Rank: 85th
Density per sq km: 180.6

% of annual growth (1999–2003): 1.6
 Male %: 50.7
 Female %: 49.3
 Urban %: 59.4
 Age Distribution: % 0–14: 33.3
 15–65: 61.4
 65 and over: 5.3
 Population 2025: 11,148,000
 Birth Rate per 1,000: 23.6
 Death Rate per 1,000: 7.1
 Rate of Natural Increase %: 1.9
 Total Fertility Rate: 2.89
 Expectation of Life (years): Males 65.98
 Females 69.35
 Marriage Rate per 1,000: 2.9
 Divorce Rate per 1,000: 1.0
 Average Size of Households: 3.9
 % of Illegitimate Children: 67.2
 Induced Abortions: 31,068

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Mulattoes, considered a separate race in official censuses, form the largest group in the Dominican Republic, accounting for 73 percent of the population, followed by whites, accounting for 16 percent, and blacks, 11 percent.

Haitians constitute the bulk of the black population; a smaller portion of blacks is made up of descendants of former American slaves who immigrated to Haiti in the 19th century. The white population includes those of pure Spanish descent, Lebanese, and German Jews. The heaviest concentration of whites is in Santiago de los Caballeros because only those of pure Spanish blood were once allowed to settle there. Other ethnic groups include Chinese, Japanese (a small colony of Japanese farms the Constanza Valley), and other Asians.

Although race is an important determinant of social status, there is no overt racial discrimination in the Dominican Republic other than a general prejudice against Haitians. Mulattoes have dominated the government and the armed forces since the rise of Trujillo, himself a mulatto of middle-class origin.

LANGUAGES

Spanish is the official language and is spoken by about 98 percent of the people. The remaining 2 percent speak Haitian Creole, especially along the Haitian border.

The use of English is growing, and the Dominican vocabulary includes many American words as a result of cultural connections with the United States.

RELIGIONS

By the Concordat of 1954, Roman Catholicism is the state religion of the Dominican Republic. More than 90

percent of the population consider themselves Catholics, at least nominally, although very few attend mass regularly.

Religious minorities include Protestants, Haitian voodoo (vodou) cultists, Baha'is, and Jews. Religious freedom for these communities is protected by law, though most practitioners of voodoo keep their beliefs secret because the majority of people consider voodoo a pagan practice

Religious Affiliations

Roman Catholic	8,502,000
Other	448,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The first inhabitants of the island of Hispaniola were a branch of the Arawak nation known as Taino. The people were largely wiped out within a century of Spanish colonization, but vestiges of their language, culture, and agricultural practices survive. European settlement began with the first voyage of Columbus in 1492–93. After the Spaniards claimed most of Central and South America, however, they neglected their Caribbean colonies, allowing the French to seize and settle the western half of Hispaniola in the late 17th century. Misgovernance by Spain in the restoration period following the Napoleonic Wars led the colony of Santo Domingo to proclaim its independence in 1821, but a year later the new country was invaded and occupied by Haitians led by President Jean-Pierre Boyer. The Haitians abolished slavery; nonetheless, their overlordship was deeply resented. The Dominican Republic achieved independence from Haiti in 1844, under Juan Pablo Duarte.

The period from 1844 to 1864 was dominated by two strongmen: Pedro Santana and Buenaventura Báez. Both tried repeatedly to make the Dominican Republic a protectorate of a foreign power to guard against incursions from Haiti; this led to reannexation by Spain in 1861. But popular revolt put an end to Spanish rule in 1865. The departure of the Spanish left groups in several regions and factions contesting power; chaos prevailed until the late 1870s. The 1880s and 1890s saw the country ruled over by Ulises Heureaux, first as president, then as dictator, growing gradually more despotic and extravagant until his assassination in 1899. Another era of prolonged instability followed, with rival factions taking up arms; this culminated in the assassination of President Ramón Cáceres in 1911. A military coup in 1916 prompted direct intervention by U.S. Marines, who remained until 1924, when a civilian government led by Horacio Vásquez assumed control.

Rafael Leonidas Trujillo, a marine-trained sergeant, overthrew Vásquez in 1930 and began a three-decade-

long dictatorship in which he ruled at times directly (1930–38, 1942–52) and at other times through surrogates, including his own brother and protégé, Joaquín Balaguer. Trujillo expanded industry and public works and liquidated the country's debt; he also set up state monopolies over all main economic activities, which enriched his family and associates. But no form of popular representation was permitted, and power was maintained through blackmail, torture, and murder. In 1937 the regime slaughtered between 10,000 and 20,000 Haitian immigrants in a retaliatory strike against Haiti's uncovering of covert Dominican agents in Port-au-Prince. In 1960 Trujillo's agents tried to assassinate the Venezuelan president Rómulo Betancourt, leading the United States to downgrade its relations with Santo Domingo.

Trujillo's assassination in 1961 ushered in another period of political turmoil. The left-of-center democrat Juan Bosch Gaviño won the 1962 presidential election, the country's first free elections since the 1920s, but was overthrown by a military coup in 1963 and replaced by a three-man civilian junta. The junta, in turn, was overthrown by Bosch supporters in 1965. A civil war ensued, during which U.S. troops briefly intervened to prevent the pro-Bosch forces from regaining control. The war ended inconclusively, with an agreement to hold new elections. Balaguer, the candidate of the conservative Partido Reformista Social Cristiano (PRSC), won the 1966 election, defeating Bosch, the candidate of the left-wing Partido Revolucionario Dominicano (PRD). The political situation remained volatile, however, with both the left and the right mounting unsuccessful coups.

The period from 1966 to 1996 was the era of Balaguer, who served as president for all except an interlude from 1978 to 1986 when the PRD won two elections. Balaguer's early rule witnessed rapid growth, though many did not share in the prosperity, and persecution of political opponents. Under the PRD president Antonio Guzmán Fernández there was considerable political liberalization, which included the replacement of military officers not inclined to support civilian rule. Guzmán's economic reform efforts were hampered by opposition control of the Senate; rising oil prices and declining sugar prices forced him to implement unpopular belt-tightening measures. Guzmán committed suicide just before his term ended in 1982, for reasons that remain unclear. His successor, Salvador Jorge Blanco, could not cope with low export prices for sugar, rising inflation, diminished U.S. aid, hurricanes, and growing corruption. In 1985 there were violent confrontations between protesters and police over price rises for staple goods and austerity measures demanded by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in return for loans. The aged Balaguer's return to power was characterized by profligate spending on public works and grandiose prestige projects as well as Machiavellian machinations to retain political control.

The 1996 election was a three-way contest that saw the PRSC candidate eliminated in the first round of voting, leading Balaguer to throw his party's support behind the centrist Partido de la Liberación Dominicana (PLD) candidate and ultimate victor, Leonel Fernández Reyna. Fernández was praised for ending the country's relative isolation and improving relations with other Caribbean countries, but he was also attacked for tolerating continued administrative corruption and for failing to translate renewed economic growth into the alleviation of poverty. Hipólito Mejía, the leftist PRD candidate, won the 2000 presidential election by promising to fight corruption and improve social programs.

During the early 2000s the Dominican Republic suffered from economic woes, including high unemployment, climbing inflation, and a steadily declining currency, and Mejía lost popularity almost as soon as he was inaugurated. Thousands of people lost their jobs in 2000 and 2001, and thousands more took to the streets to protest the government's policies. Fernández campaigned for president again by promising to reduce inflation, stabilize the currency, and improve the investment climate, and won a second nonconsecutive term in 2004. He announced numerous cuts in state spending when he took office in August 2004.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1966–78	Joaquín Balaguer
1978–82	Antonio Guzmán Fernández
1982	Jacobo Majluta Azar
1982–86	Salvador Jorge Blanco
1986–96	Joaquín Balaguer
1996–2000	Leonel Fernández Reyna
2000–04	Hipólito Mejía
2004–	Leonel Fernández Reyna

CONSTITUTION

The Dominican Republic is currently on its 25th constitution, which was promulgated in 1966 and reformed in 1994. All of the Dominican Republic's previous constitutions guaranteed the rights of citizens and set up governments based on fine checks and balances, yet few of their provisions were ever observed in practice.

The constitution of 1966 set up a civil, republican, democratic, and representative government. Among the many freedoms that it guarantees are the right to own private property, freedom of worship, freedom of speech, freedom of association, freedom of movement, and the right to strike. It also charges the state to provide free, universal, and compulsory education, redistribute land and eliminate the large estates (known as *latifundios*), introduce Social Security services, and promote family life.

Executive authority is vested in the president, elected to four-year terms by direct popular vote. A vice president is elected on the same ticket. The president is the head of the public administration and the supreme chief of the armed forces. The president also appoints cabinet ministers called secretaries of state. As of 1994, no president is allowed to serve consecutive terms.

Legislative power is vested in a bicameral legislature. The highest court is the Supreme Court, manned by at least nine judges elected by the senate.

Suffrage is universal and compulsory by law for all citizens over the age of 18 and all who are or have been married, even if they are not yet 18.

PARLIAMENT

The National Congress (Congreso Nacional) consists of a 30-member Senate (Senado) and a 149-member Chamber of Deputies (Cámara de Diputados). Members of the Congress are elected for four-year terms.

Both houses normally meet each year on February 27 and August 16 for sessions of 90 days, extendable for periods of 60 days. Bills may be introduced by the president of the republic, senators, deputies, the Supreme Court (in judicial matters), and the Central Electoral Board (in electoral matters) and must be approved by both chambers before being submitted to the president. A presidential veto may be overridden by a two-thirds vote in both chambers.

The Congress has broad legislative powers and is empowered to approve or reject treaties, levy taxes and approve expenditures, regulate the national debt, and grant authorization to the president to leave the country for more than 15 days. It can proclaim a state of siege or national emergency.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Since the end of the 1965 civil war Dominican politics has been dominated by the Christian Social Reformist Party (Partido Reformista Social Cristiano, PRSC), a conservative party that draws its support mainly from the church, the peasantry, and the middle class.

In 1978 the Dominican Revolutionary Party (Partido Revolucionario Dominicano, PRD), having moderated its political philosophy, won the presidency for the first time, promising greater personal liberties along with a more populist (and less U.S. oriented) economic program. The party's founder, Juan Bosch, broke away in 1974 to start a new party, the Dominican Liberation Party (Partido de la Liberación Dominicana, PLD).

The PLD later metamorphosed into a centrist party, and in 1996 its presidential candidate, Leonel Fernández, won; however, it remained a distinct minority in Con-

gress. The PRD won a majority in both legislative houses in the 2002 election, with the PLD second and the PRSC third.

There are a dozen or so minor parties. The Dominican Communist Party was outlawed from 1962 until 1977.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The country is divided for the purposes of local government into 31 provinces, each headed by a governor, and one district, the Distrito Nacional.

The provinces are subdivided into 154 municipalities and municipal districts. The Distrito Nacional is governed as a municipality. Each municipality is governed by a mayor assisted by a municipal council, consisting of no fewer than five members. Both the mayors and the members of the municipal council are popularly elected for four-year terms. There are 868 rural townships directly administered by the central government.

Local governments have only the slightest of revenue-raising capabilities, and their budgets have been kept meager by the central government; moreover, the state has recently privatized a number of basic local administrative responsibilities such as water, sanitation, and transport.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The legal system is based on French civil codes. The Dominican judicature is headed by the Supreme Court of Justice, consisting of at least nine justices appointed by the National Judicial Council (whose own membership is nominated jointly by the three leading parties) and an attorney general appointed by the executive. The Supreme Court has the power to rule on constitutional questions and has jurisdiction in all cases involving the president, vice president, cabinet members, members of Congress, and members of the judiciary.

Immediately below the Supreme Court are five courts of appeal. Each court of appeal has five judges, including the president. Judges are independent of the executive branch. Their terms of office correspond to that of the president and other elected officials.

Each of the 29 provinces and the Distrito Nacional form judicial districts with courts of first instances. These judicial districts are further divided into municipal districts, each with one or more local justices of the peace. Judges of the lower courts are appointed by the Supreme Court and are subject to the high court's discipline.

The national penitentiary is La Victoria in Santo Domingo. There are some 20 other prisons, of which the largest are located at La Vega, Puerto Plata, San Francisco de Macorís, Moca, San Juan, San Cristóbal, and

Barahona. There is no provision for capital punishment in the Dominican legal system.

In 2004 the government was beginning to modify the legal system to move away from the French civil code and toward an accusatory system.

HUMAN RIGHTS

The Dominican Republic has made great strides toward political freedom since the assassination of the dictator Trujillo, the civil war of 1965, and the period of instability that followed. The peaceful transfer of power in 1978, the first to occur from one civilian party to another in this century, was a landmark in this process of democratization. Dominicans now enjoy the broad range of human rights guaranteed in the 1966 constitution, aside from significant but episodic lapses.

The country's biggest human rights problem remains mistreatment of and racism toward Haitian immigrants. Aliens have virtually no legal recourse against deportation, and even those legally present are routinely discriminated against in employment and other areas of life; on some plantations the working conditions of Haitians approach indentured servitude. Women also suffer from domestic violence, sexual harassment and abuse, and circumscribed economic opportunities.

There are problems of extrajudicial killings by uniformed personnel—at times by the military or civil defense forces but mainly by the police—abuse of suspects, and arbitrary detention.

Trials are fair and open, and court-appointed lawyers are assigned free of charge for the indigent. No special political or security courts exist, and civilians may not be tried in a military court. A residence may not be searched without due process, and this means in the presence of a prosecutor or assistant prosecutor.

Unions are generally allowed political space to organize, with the notable exception of the free-trade zones, an issue to which international human rights groups have called attention.

Many political exiles returned after the 1979 amnesty, but a ban remained in effect for certain members of the Trujillo family. Political parties are allowed to exist and campaign freely. However, parties that do not register with the Central Electoral Board are considered illegal.

FOREIGN POLICY

The Dominican Republic joined the United Nations in 1945. It is a member of 16 UN organizations and various other international organizations, including the Organization of American States, the Ibero-American Community of Nations, and the Africa-Caribbean-Pacific (also

known as the Lomé Convention) group of the European Union.

Much recent Dominican diplomacy has been oriented toward facilitating trade and tourism. Concerns that the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), signed in 1993, would cause the United States to shift a considerable portion of investments in manufacturing from the Dominican Republic to Mexico led the Dominican government to support the eventual expansion of NAFTA into a Free Trade Area of the Americas. In 1997 President Fernández signed a free-trade pact with five Central American countries. The following year he upgraded relations with Cuba to consular level.

One of the Dominican Republic's biggest concerns is illegal immigration by destitute Haitians, who sneak across the border on foot and take up residence in their comparatively prosperous neighbor. Since the departure of Balaguer, relations with Haiti have improved, though tensions remain over border issues, illegal immigration, and treatment of Haitians in the Dominican Republic; many Haitians work essentially as indentured servants on Dominican plantations. Many Haitians manage to live peacefully in the Dominican Republic, though the country occasionally cracks down and sends many of them back to their country of origin.

The United States and the Dominican Republic have several shared areas of concern. The Dominican Republic wants more access to U.S. markets and more U.S. investment. The Dominican government maintains an ongoing interest in the welfare of its large expatriate community in the New York area and elsewhere. A growing concern in 2004 was the increasing number of Dominicans and Haitians migrating illegally across the Mona Passage to Puerto Rico. One of the Dominican Republic's most pressing problems is illicit drugs; it has become a transshipment point for a variety of drugs traveling from South America to the United States, Canada, and Europe as well as ecstasy being shipped from the Netherlands and Belgium to North America, and it is also a favored site for money laundering by Colombian drug traffickers.

DEFENSE

The defense structure is headed by the president of the republic as supreme commander. The line of command runs through the secretary of state for the armed forces and the deputy secretaries of state for the army, navy, and air force to the chief of staff and general staff of each branch.

Military manpower is provided through voluntary service, though the constitution states that each Dominican has the duty to provide whatever civil or military service the state requires.

Annual military expenditures in 1998 totaled \$180 million, representing 1.1 percent of gross domestic product (GDP).

The armed forces of the Dominican Republic have only limited offensive capability and are designed to provide primarily symbolic protection. Most of the hardware is supplied by the United States, which intervened twice in the 20th century.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 30,000
 Military Manpower Availability: 2,354,800
 Military Expenditures \$million: 180
 as % of GDP: 1.1
 as % of central government expenditures: —
 Arms Imports \$million: 13
 Arms Exports \$million: 0

ECONOMY

Until the 1980s sugar was the Dominican Republic's chief commodity. With sugar and other commodity export (coffee, cocoa, and tobacco) prices in a slump through most of the 1980s and early 1990s, the Dominican Republic resolved to diversify its economic base. By the end of the 1980s mining was an important industry, and exports of ferronickel, bauxite, gold, and silver constituted 38 percent of GDP. The promotion of special export processing free-trade zones helped boost the manufacturing sector to 17 percent of GDP by 1996, eclipsing agriculture (including fishing, livestock, and forestry, making up 12.9 percent of GDP) in value, though not in number of jobs. Tourism became the country's leading source of foreign exchange by the mid-1990s; hotels were built rapidly to attract foreign tourists, who come to enjoy the island's beautiful beaches and salubrious climate, as well as its favorable exchange rate. This increase in tourism has created abundant jobs in the service sector, but most of these pay less than \$10 a day.

In 1991 an agreement with the IMF and a debt-rescheduling deal with the "Paris Club" of creditor nations helped bring about macroeconomic stability, but overspending on public works continued to feed inflation. The growth of the free trade zones and tourism reduced the state's share of the economy, as those industries are largely tax exempt.

Under President Fernández the country enjoyed several years of healthy growth, yet important constraints remain: the ongoing, severe "brain drain" to the United States (somewhat offset by the remittances sent back home), a poor education system, lack of retraining for those whose jobs are lost as a result of more open trade, the inefficiencies of the state-owned electricity industry, and the limits on the willingness of the United States to absorb the country's textile exports. In December 2000 the new Mejía administration passed

broad tax legislation, which it hoped would provide enough revenue to offset rising oil prices and to service foreign debt.

Despite these efforts the Dominican economy suffered in the early 2000s. Unemployment was rampant and inflation raged out of control. In 2004 the unemployment rate was 16.5 percent, and 25 percent of the people lived below the poverty line. Income distribution is a major problem; about 5 percent of people are wealthy and perhaps 60 percent are poor, leaving only about 35 percent in the middle class. For this reason many Dominicans try to emigrate to other nations, especially the United States, often in the area around New York City. These expatriates have become an important source of cash for their family members still in the Dominican Republic.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 52.71
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 6,000
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003)%: 4.2
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 2.6
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %
 Agriculture: 10.7
 Industry: 31.5
 Services: 57.8
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %
 Private Consumption: 70
 Government Consumption: 9
 Gross Domestic Investment: 19.9
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 5.524
 Imports: 7.911
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 2.1
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 37.9

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002
127.4	137.2	149.4	157.2

Finance

National Currency: Dominican Peso (DOP)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 ∇ DOP 30.8307
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 43.8
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: —
 Total External Debt \$billion: 6.567
 Debt Service Ratio %: 6.4
 Balance of Payments \$million: 867
 International Reserves SDRs \$million: 253
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 27.5

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 239.6
 per capita \$: 18
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 961

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$billion: 2.601
 Expenditures \$billion: 3.353
 Budget Deficit \$million: 752
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: 15.6

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 10.7
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 3.0
 Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares: 1.7
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 17.2
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 89.5
 Total Farmland as % of land area: 22.7
 Livestock: Cattle 000: 2,165
 Sheep 000: 123
 Hogs 000: 578
 Chickens 000: 47,000
 Forests: Production of Roundwood (000 cubic meters): 562.3
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 21.9

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 2.43
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 2.0

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 66
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 5,835
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 684
 Net Energy Imports % of use: 81.0
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW: —
 Production kW-hr billion: 9.186
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 8.543
 Coal Reserves tons million: —
 Production tons 000: —
 Consumption tons 000: —
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic meters billion: —
 Production cubic meters million: —
 Consumption cubic meters million: —
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels million: —
 Production barrels million: —
 Consumption barrels per day 000: 129
 Pipelines Length km: 104

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 7.911
 Exports \$billion: 5.524
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 5.6
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 2.5
 Balance of Trade \$million: 867

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
United States %	52.1	83.8
Venezuela %	11.9	—
Mexico %	4.7	—
Colombia %	4.2	—
Canada %	—	1.5
Haiti %	—	1.5

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 12,600
 Paved %: 49.4
 Automobiles: 561,300
 Trucks and Buses: 284,700
 Railroad; Track Length km: 1,743
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: —
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 3
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 17
 Airports: 31
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 5
 Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 2.8
 Number of Tourists from 000: 364
 Tourist Receipts \$billion: 2.736
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 295

Communications

Telephones 000: 902
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.06
 Cellular Telephones million: 2.12
 Personal Computers 000: —
 Internet Hosts per million persons: 7,172
 Internet Users per 1,000 persons: 56

ENVIRONMENT

Owing to its variety of microclimates, the Dominican Republic's biodiversity is impressive; one passes from deserts of giant cacti to mountain pine forests to palm-fringed shores and sugarcane plantations. The natural scenery, which includes mountain forests and pristine beaches, is one of the country's major resources. Nevertheless, the republic does not have the financial resources to protect its natural assets, and environmental degradation is proceeding at an alarming rate. The seas around the island have been overfished to the point that some areas are no longer attractive to scuba divers. The development of tourist facilities, especially along the northern coast, has brought with it pollution and destruction of habitat. Freshwater on the island is often polluted with microbes, and both tap water and water in streams are unsafe to drink.

Deforestation has been the Dominican Republic's most serious environmental problem. Despite the government's ban, tree cutting goes on throughout rural areas as the poor, having no access to gas or electricity, collect wood for cooking fuel. About 28 percent of the land remains covered by forest and woodland. The strip-ping of trees has caused extensive erosion in many areas and increased destructive flooding following tropical storms, damaging not only soil quality but also marine reefs and the aquatic life they support due to runoff.

The Dominican Republic knows that protecting the environment is important and to that end has created 10 national parks to protect plant and animal life; the largest is the Parque Nacional Jaragua. Unfortunately, the country cannot afford to police those national parks, so poaching and the illegal cutting of trees occur there as everywhere.

One of the Dominican Republic's environmental marvels is amber, fossilized tree resin. Experts consider Dominican amber the finest in the world, for both its color and its inclusions, animals and plant fragments that are trapped inside the stone.

Environment

Forest Area % of land area: 28.4
 Average Annual Forest Change, 1990-2000, 000 ha: —
 Nationally Protected Areas as % of Total Land Area: 33
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 3.0

LIVING CONDITIONS

The Dominican Republic is a poor country, and the vast majority of its people live in fairly primitive conditions. The supply of electricity is unsteady, and power outages lasting anywhere from a few hours to a few days occur frequently. The water supply is contaminated and most households buy bottles of water for drinking. Indoor toilets with plumbing are uncommon. Garbage collection does not happen frequently, so the streets of the cities are often covered with litter; many households burn their garbage, which contributes to pollution.

The nation has a decent highway system between major cities, but paved roads are the exception in the countryside. There is a good public bus system, and many people use inexpensive public taxis to get from place to place. Traffic is terrible, especially in the cities, and traffic accidents are common.

Haitian immigrants live in especially woeful conditions, in shantytowns filled with houses made of corrugated metal and plywood.

HEALTH

The health-care system in the Dominican Republic is adequate but nowhere near the standard of developed Western nations. There is a short supply of bandages and

medicines, so patients are often expected to buy their own pharmaceutical supplies. Families of patients in hospitals often bring in their own sheets, electric fans, and food. Hospitals are plagued by the same power outages as the rest of the country, so refrigeration for drugs and ice is not guaranteed. On the other hand, a visit to a doctor is inexpensive by U.S. standards.

The Dominican Republic is plagued by various tropical diseases. Malaria, dengue fever, hepatitis, schistosomiasis, intestinal parasites, and various gastrointestinal ailments are all fairly common. In addition, Dominicans suffer a fair number of traumatic injuries, particularly from motorbike accidents and domestic violence.

Health

Number of Physicians: 15,670
 Number of Dentists: 7,000
 Number of Nurses: 15,352
 Number of Pharmacists: 3,330
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 188
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 33.3
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 150
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 6.1
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 153
 HIV Infected % of adults: 1.7
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 72
 Measles: 92
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 57
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 93

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Food in the Dominican Republic is inexpensive and nutritionally adequate for those who can afford it, although malnutrition does occur among the poorest people. Cooking traditions come from the indigenous Taínos people, the African slave ancestors of the majority of the population, and the Spanish colonialists. The typical Dominican meal is called *la bandera*, or "the flag," after the three colors of the Dominican flag; it consists of white rice, red beans, fried green plantains, salad, and stewed meat. Goat meat and pork are common, as are a variety of vegetables. Dominicans love snacks, such as *pastelitos* or empanadas (turnovers filled with meat or cheese), fried plantains, and pork rinds. Desserts made from milk or fruits are very popular. Fresh fruit juices are common. The most popular alcoholic beverages are rum and beer, especially the Presidente brand.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 25
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,310
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 77.9
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 156.1

STATUS OF WOMEN

Although sexual discrimination is prohibited by law, women have not traditionally shared equal social and economic status with men. Dominican men are extremely aggressive toward women. Domestic violence, sexual harassment, and sexual exploitation are persistent and large-scale problems. The government has an Office of Women's Rights to help women assert their legal rights and combat spousal abuse, but there are no shelters for battered women. Prostitution and trafficking in women and girls are rife, and HIV infections are increasing.

Women made considerable economic and social progress in the 1980s and 1990s. Women are increasingly participating in nongovernmental organizations, cooperatives, and community-based organizations to circumvent barriers that have largely excluded them from traditional politics. Women now represent well more than half of all university students; finding ways to keep these highly educated women productively engaged in the country rather than abroad remains a challenge. Divorce is easily attainable by either party, and women can hold property in their own names apart from their husbands. Among urban households, around one-quarter are headed by women. The employment rate for women, once the lowest in Latin America, has grown at more than double the rate for men. Industrial processing jobs in the free-trade zones in particular have opened up new opportunities for women in apparel and electronics assembly; some 70 percent of workers in these zones are female. However, with labor organizing actively discouraged in the free-trade zones, hours are long, conditions substandard, and wages average 20 percent below the legal minimum for the country.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 17
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men aged 15 to 24: 1.02
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 34.9

WORK

Work is not easy to find in the Dominican Republic. Most jobs do not pay well, and opportunities for educated Dominicans are especially rare. Although tourism has created a large number of jobs and brought the country an influx of foreign cash, the majority of tourist workers perform low-paying service jobs. Many people have to work several jobs to support their families. For this reason thousands of Dominicans emigrate to work abroad. More than one million Dominicans live in the United States, many in or around New York City, where they find work

that allows them to support their families back home in high style by Dominican standards.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 2,450,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 31.8
 Total Activity Rate %: 33.9
 Labor by Sector: %
 Agriculture: 17
 Industry: 24.3
 Services and Government: 58.7
 Unemployment %: 16.5

EDUCATION

The national educational system is directed by the Ministry of Education and the National Council for Education, and the cost of public education is borne by the central government. Education is free, universal, and compulsory for eight years from the ages of six to 14. Schooling lasts for 12 years, as divided into six years of primary, two years of lower secondary, and four years of upper secondary school. Secondary education is divided into a two-year cycle for all students and a four-year upper-secondary cycle for students preparing for university entrance. Upon completion of secondary school students receive the baccalaureate (*bachillerato*). Classes are taught in Spanish, while students can also study English or Portuguese in secondary school. Higher education is provided by eight universities and various other institutions, such as the Institute of Higher Studies and the Higher Institute of Agriculture. The universities enrolled over 280,000 students in 2002. Adult educational programs include literacy, vocational training, and teacher training. Agricultural education is provided in four agricultural schools, industrial education in polytechnic institutes and schools of arts and crafts, and business and commercial education in private commercial schools.

Compulsory primary education notwithstanding, many children do not receive much of an education. Academic standards are low, and grade repetitions and dropouts are common. Only 17 percent of rural primary schools contain all six grades, which makes a complete primary education an impossibility for many students. Schools do not supply textbooks, so parents must buy books for their children, which causes many parents to decide not to send their children to school at all. Less than half of Dominicans ever enter secondary school. Private school enrollment is increasing at a faster pace than public school enrollment. Nearly all of the private schools are located in urban centers, and most are church operated.

Despite these difficulties many Dominicans are devoted to the idea of education. The national literacy rate was 85 percent in 2003. Many adults attend university

classes simply out of a love of learning and interest in a subject, even though they know that a university education will not necessarily help them find better-paying jobs.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 84.7
 Male %: 84.6
 Female %: 84.8
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 12.7
 First Level: Primary schools: 4,001
 Teachers: 35,867
 Students: 1,399,844
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 39.0
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 92.4
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: —
 Teachers: 24,723
 Students: 756,240
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 30.6
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 35.5
 Third Level: Institutions: 7
 Teachers: —
 Students: 286,954
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 34.5
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 2.4

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The Dominican Republic has not been at the forefront of scientific research and development, but the government is attempting to rectify this. In 2005 the country will open a new institute next to the Institute of Technology for the Americas in Santo Domingo. This institute will focus on the development of technologies for business growth and industrial job creation. President Fernández has created a new position, Presidential Advisor for Science, Technology, and Innovation, in the hopes of making the nation into a center for advanced engineering, computer and telecommunications technology, pharmaceuticals, and biotechnology. The nation's hope is that its energetic young population will embrace technological opportunities if given the proper education and that the republic will then be able to compete in the global marketplace.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million persons: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: —
 Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

Although it is regulated by the government, the Dominican press is reasonably free of political controls. All of the Dominican Republic's television channels, radio

stations, and newspapers are owned by a few wealthy and politically powerful companies. The government rarely interferes with radio or television programming, although most broadcasters are careful to avoid touchy subjects, such as the military or the Catholic Church, or issues that affect the interests of the companies owning the papers. The government occasionally affects publication of news stories through taxes and denial of advertising. In 2003 one of the main media companies was charged with fraud, which led to the seizure of several print and broadcast publications and the cancellation of two daily newspapers.

There is no Dominican national news agency. UPI, EFE, ANSA, and IPS have permanent bureaus in Santo Domingo. The Dominican Republic has several daily newspapers and numerous nondaily newspapers and magazines. The Dominican Republic has had television since 1952. It has several land-based television channels and approximately 30 cable television operators. There are more than 200 commercially operated radio stations, two of which are operated by the government. Radio stations from Miami can reach the Dominican Republic, where they are quite popular. Favorite programs include baseball and American films and soap operas. Internet is available in some places, though it is dependent on the unreliable electrical system and telephone lines.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 9
 Total Circulation 000: 230
 Circulation per 1,000: 27.5
 Books Published: —
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets 000: —
 per 1,000: —

CULTURE

The Dominican Republic has several rich cultural traditions. Dominican painting is world famous, partly thanks to Rafael Trujillo's sponsorship of creative arts and his creation of the National School of Fine Arts. Dominican painting has a distinctly Spanish look to it, a result of the large number of Spanish painters who fled to the Dominican Republic during the Spanish civil war in the 1930s. Primitive art is also common, both in the traditional "Caribbean" style and in the style of the indigenous Taíno people.

Dominicans have been writers since the Spanish colonial days; two famous early works, *History of the Indies* and *General History of the Order of Mercy*, were written by Spanish priests helping to colonize the island. In the 19th

710 Dominican Republic

century Dominican literature took on a French flavor, followed by a movement toward indigenous and populist styles. Nowadays most popular Dominican writers actually live in New York, where they write of the hardships of life back home.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
Volumes: —
Registered borrowers: —
Museums Number: —
Annual Attendance: —
Cinema Gross Receipts: —
Number of Cinemas: —
Seating Capacity: —
Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Much of Dominican folklore comes from the Taíno people, the indigenous people who lived on Hispaniola when Columbus arrived. The Taíno believed in two main deities, Atabey, the goddess of freshwater and fertility, and her son Yúcahu, the lord of cassava and the ocean. They also worshipped their ancestors and a host of other spirits in natural objects. Taíno myth describes a disease that seems to be syphilis, and it is believed that the Spanish acquired Europe's first venereal disease from the Taíno.

Postcolonial folklore developed as a combination of Taíno mythology, African folklore, and Spanish traditions. There are now numerous stories about the exploits of Columbus and his men and the settlers of the colonial period, which have assumed the status of folklore because they cannot be historically verified.

The Dominican Republic values its folk traditions as an important part of the nation's culture and also as an attraction to tourists. The large cities now have museums devoted to the Taíno and to Dominican folklore.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Dancing is a favorite pastime in the Dominican Republic. Merengue, salsa, and indigenous *bachata* music are all extremely popular. Many Dominicans love to spend their evenings at dance clubs, dancing and drinking rum and coke. Other popular activities include swimming at the beach or in streams and rivers, watching baseball, betting on baseball, and watching television or listening to the radio. Dominicans also enjoy spending evenings sitting at outdoor restaurant tables, watching people go by and greeting friends. Prostitution is legal, and some men like to spend their free time visiting bordellos, or *casas de chi-*

cas; most male guests are in fact simply visiting to talk to the women, bring them gifts, and buy drinks.

ETIQUETTE

Dominicans are very friendly and open, but they are also very proud. They consider it important to always maintain their dignity in the face of suffering and look down on those who lose their temper or complain about difficulties. Politeness is very important. Dominicans always greet one another and preface conversations with pleasantries and smiles. Dominican men are quite aggressive when speaking to women, and women must be careful not to encourage their advances unless they want them; women in particular must be careful about how they dress and act so as not to be considered sexually provocative.

FAMILY LIFE

Dominicans value family solidarity. The extended family is still very important to most Dominicans; families often own businesses, eat and play together, and look to one another for support. Three generations of a family will often share a home, with the oldest man acting as head of the household. People also form pseudo-blood relationships, such as that of godparents to godchildren.

Many Dominicans do not marry, and single mothers are fairly common. Couples often live together because they cannot afford the cost of a wedding. Weddings can be either civil or religious; divorce from a civil union is quite easy to get, such that couples from other countries occasionally visit the Dominican Republic to obtain divorces. Fathers often do not provide child support after leaving their families, and the law only requires child support for children who have been formally recognized by their fathers.

Traditional gender roles are the rule. Men are expected to be strong, adhering to the ideal of machismo, or exaggerated masculinity. They find nothing wrong with having relationships and children with multiple women, though the societal ideal would have a man supporting all of his dependents. Women are supposed to be submissive and take care of the home. Economic necessity, however, often dictates that women must go out to work, especially when a father does not support his children. Households headed by mothers or grandmothers are quite common.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Dominicans are very careful to dress neatly and attend to their personal grooming. They dress somewhat conservatively and find it odd that foreign tourists choose to go out in public dressed in sloppy shorts or even bathing

suits. Women often wear shirts over their bathing suits at the beach. Many women wear dresses or skirts that fall below the knee. When going out for a formal evening, people dress very well.

SPORTS

Baseball is by far the most popular national sport. Dominicans pay attention to both Dominican and American teams; the Dominican season runs from November through February, and the American season from April through October, which means Dominicans watch, listen to, and bet on baseball year-round. The best Dominican players play on both Dominican and American teams and are considered national heroes. Dominican baseball games sell out quickly.

Cockfighting is the other Dominican national sport, particularly in rural areas. Men raise and train roosters to fight one another in small round rings; roosters often die, whereupon they are skinned and eaten by their owners. The betting on cockfights is nearly as intense as the betting on baseball.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1930** Rafael Leonidas Trujillo overthrows Horacio Vásquez and begins a three-decade-long dictatorship.
- 1937** Following Haiti's discovery of Dominican spies on its soil, Trujillo orders slaughter of 10,000 to 20,000 Haitian immigrants.
- 1947** Trujillo outlaws Dominican Communist Party.
- 1959** Invasion attempted by dissident Dominicans supported by Cuba's Fidel Castro fails.
- 1960** Agents of Trujillo injure Venezuelan president Rómulo Betancourt in assassination attempt.
- 1961** Trujillo assassinated; Joaquín Balaguer, already serving as president, continues in office.
- 1962** Juan Bosch of leftist Dominican Revolutionary Party (PRD) elected president.
- 1963** Bosch overthrown in military coup; new regime led by Donald Reid Cabral.
- 1965** Uprising by Bosch supporters succeeds temporarily; civil war ensues with rightist military officers; United States intervenes decisively in support of rightists.
- 1966** Balaguer, leading right-wing Reformist Party, wins election.
- 1978** PRD wins power under Silvestre Antonio Guzmán Fernández.
- 1982** Guzmán commits suicide; PRD retains presidency as Salvador Jorge Blanco is elected.
- 1985** Strikes and violence against government and IMF-imposed austerity measures occur.
- 1986** Balaguer returned to presidency at head of Christian Social Reformist Party (PRSC).
- 1988–89** Further violent protests take place against high prices of staples and utilities.
- 1990** Balaguer reelected by slim margin over Bosch; government initiates, then relaxes (after a general strike leads to the death of 12 people) austerity program aimed at securing an IMF agreement.
- 1991** Balaguer government rounds up and deports thousands of Haitian workers in response to international concern about near serfdom on sugar plantations; IMF standby loan agreement and debt-rescheduling agreement with the "Paris Club" of nations are both signed.
- 1992** Country commemorates 500th anniversary of Columbus's arrival with the dedication of a monumental mausoleum to the explorer and a giant lighthouse in the shape of a cross.
- 1994** Balaguer wins sixth term as president amid widespread fraud charges and a campaign branding his chief opponent, José Francisco Peña Gómez, a "Haitian"; Balaguer accedes to certain constitutional changes, including a law barring presidents from succeeding themselves.
- 1996** Leonel Fernández Reyna elected president with barely 51 percent of vote in runoff.
- 1997** Partial privatization of certain state-owned companies signed into law by President Fernández.
- 1998** Fernández government criticized for poor preparedness and slow response in the wake of severe damage done by Hurricane Georges.
- 2000** Hipólito Mejía of PRD elected president.
- 2001–03** Economic downturn occurs, with high inflation and unemployment.
- 2004** Leonel Fernández Reyna elected president
- 2005** Congress approves the proposed Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA).

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Banco Central de la República Dominicana
<http://www.bancentral.gov.do/>
- Oficina Nacional de Estadística
<http://www.one.gov.do/>

EAST TIMOR

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste (República Demokrátika Timor Lorosa'e; República Democrática de Timor-Leste)

ABBREVIATION

TL

CAPITAL

Dili

HEAD OF STATE

President Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão (from 2002)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Marí Bin Amude Alkatiri (from 2002)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Parliamentary democracy; republic

POPULATION

1,040,880 (2005)

AREA

15,007 sq km (5,794 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Austronesian (Malayo-Polynesian), Papuan, Chinese

LANGUAGES

Tetum (official), Portuguese (official), Indonesian, English

RELIGION

Roman Catholicism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

U.S. dollar

NATIONAL FLAG

Red, with a black isosceles triangle based on the hoist side superimposed on a slightly longer yellow arrowhead that extends to the center of the flag; there is a white star in the center of the black triangle.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

Crossed swords on a red shield superimposed on a black shield from which yellow rays radiate, surrounded by a light blue ring with the words "República Democrática de Timor-Leste" above and the letters "RDTL" below. In a red banner at the base is the national motto, *Honra, patria, e povo* (Honor, homeland, and people).

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"Pátria, Pátria, Timor-Leste, Nossa Nação"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day), August 30 (Consultation Day), September 20 (Liberation Day), November 12 (Santa Cruz Day), November 28 (Indonesian Independence Day), December 25 (Christmas), various Christian festivals, including Good Friday, Assumption

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

May 20, 2002

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

March 22, 2002

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Timor-Leste is located on the eastern half of the island of Timor (such that it is also referred to as East Timor), in the easternmost part of the Indonesian archipelago, southwest of Irian Jaya and southeast of Flores. It includes an area in the western part of Timor called Oecussi, or Ambeno, which is on the north coast and entirely surrounded by Indonesian territory. Dili, the capital city, is located on the northern coast.

The island of Timor is mostly rugged limestone hills and mountains. The highest point is Foho Tatamailau, at 2,963 m (9,719 ft). The soil is rocky, and there are no major rivers.

Geography

Area sq km: 15,007; sq mi 5,794

World Rank: 154th

Land Boundaries, km: Indonesia 228

Coastline, km: 706

Elevation Extremes meters:

Lowest: Timor, Savu, and Banda seas 0

Highest: Foho Tatamailau 2,963

Land Use %

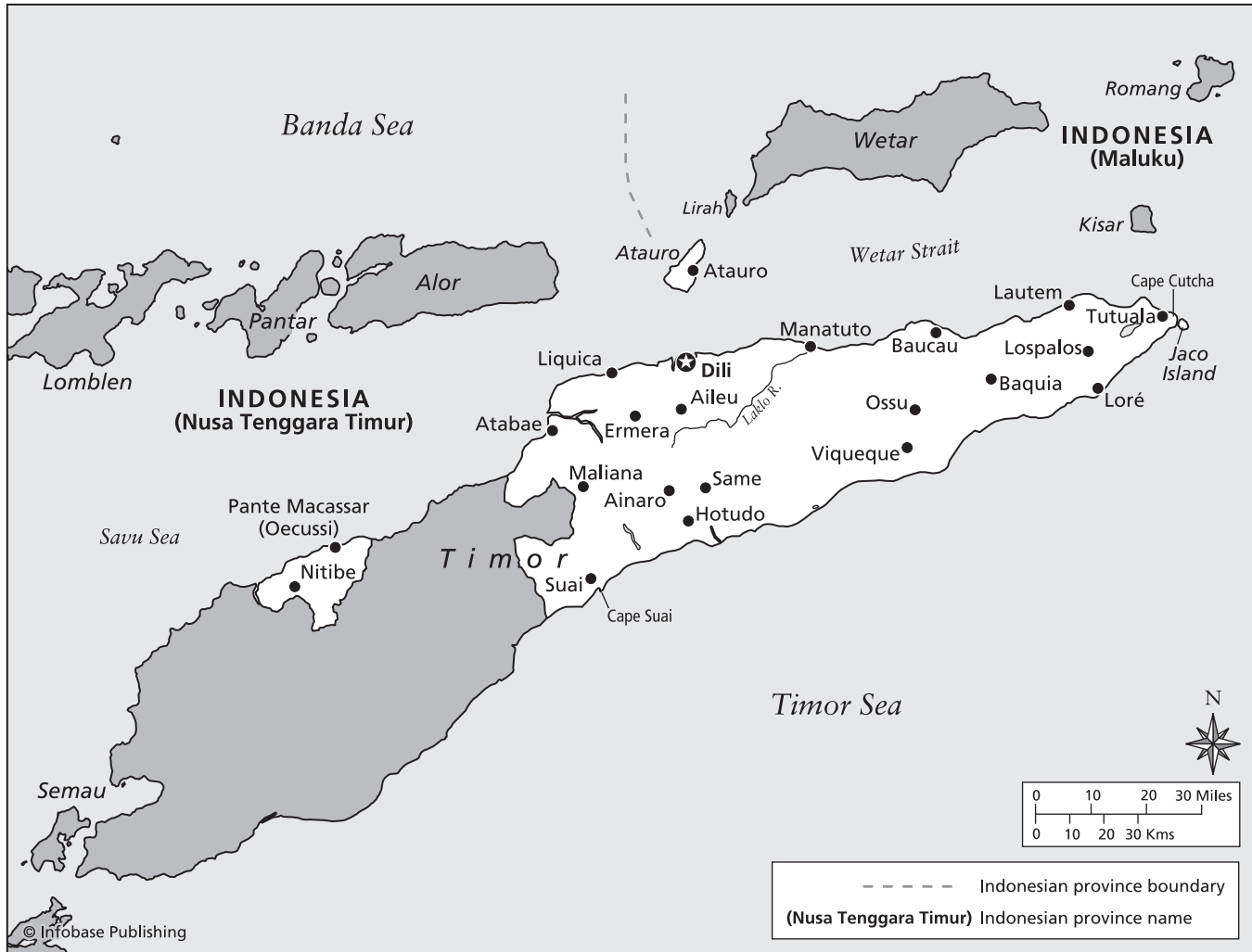
Arable Land: 4.7

Permanent Crops: 0.7

Forest: 34.1

Other: 60.5

East Timor



Population of Principal Cities (2002 est.)

Dili	49,900
------	--------

November to May, bringing extreme thunderstorms and flooding.

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Timor-Leste has three main climatic zones. The northern area has almost no rain between May and November, about 1,020 mm (40 in) of rain the rest of the year, and a year-round average temperature of 24°C (75.2°F), though summer temperatures can be much hotter. The central mountains have a slightly cooler average temperature, slightly more rainfall, and a four-month dry season. Nighttime temperatures in the mountains can be quite cool. The southern coast is exposed to winds from Australia and so receives much more rain than the rest of the country, though the coast still has a three-month dry season. Rains throughout the country are governed by the monsoons, which blow from the northeast from

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature: 75.2°F
Average Rainfall: 40 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Timor-Leste is located in the Australasian ecological zone and shares common flora and fauna with Australia, New Guinea, and other neighboring islands. Some of the native mammals are marsupials, such as the phalanger and the wallaby. Deforestation from slash-and-burn agriculture and loss of biodiversity are serious problems. The United Nations has declared several local species endangered, including sea turtles, sea turtles, marine

mammals such as bottlenose dolphins, whales, dugongs, wallabies, and crocodiles.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005:	1,040,880
World Rank:	152nd
Density per sq km:	59.0
% of annual growth (1999-2003):	1.0
Male %:	51.0
Female %:	49.0
Urban %:	7.5
Age Distribution %:	
0-14:	37.1
15-64:	59.9
65 and over:	3.0
Population 2025:	1,494,000
Birth Rate per 1,000:	27.19
Death Rate per 1,000:	6.3
Rate of Natural Increase %:	2.1
Total Fertility Rate:	3.61
Expectation of Life (years):	
Males:	63.63
Females:	68.29
Marriage Rate per 1,000:	—
Divorce Rate per 1,000:	—
Average Size of Households:	—
Induced Abortions:	—

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

The majority of Timor-Leste's population is Austronesian, of Malayo-Polynesian descent, or Papuan, from Papua New Guinea. There is a small Chinese minority.

LANGUAGES

The constitution designates Portuguese and the local language Tetum as the official languages, while Indonesian, also referred to as Bahasa Indonesia, and English are working languages. About 91 percent of the population speaks Tetum, 17 percent Portuguese, and 63 percent Indonesian. About 16 indigenous languages are spoken, including, most widely, Galole, Mambae, Kemak, and Fataluku.

RELIGIONS

About 90 percent of Timor-Leste's population is Roman Catholic, as a result of years of Portuguese colonization and missionary work. The remaining 10 percent are Muslim, Protestant, Hindu, or Buddhist. The majority of Timor-Leste's people also maintain certain animist beliefs, especially worshipping spirits of the dead. A few Timorese still consider animism their main religion.

Religious Affiliations

Roman Catholic	936,800
Muslim	41,600
Protestant	31,200
Hindu	5,200
Buddhist, Animist, Other	26,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Timor-Leste was originally settled several thousand years ago by immigrants from Southeast Asia. Europeans discovered the island of Timor in the 1500s, and Portuguese and Dutch traders found it a good source for sandalwood and spices. Portugal tried to take over the island in 1642, wrangling with the Netherlands until the two nations agreed to split the island in 1749. Portuguese missionaries converted many of the local people to Catholicism and taught them the Portuguese language.

The Japanese invaded Timor in 1942, fighting Australian troops and killing some 65,000 Timorese in the process. The Japanese left in 1945, and Portugal resumed control.

In 1974 an anti-Fascist revolution in Portugal led the nation to promise to free its colonies, much to the delight of activists in Timor-Leste. The following year Portugal withdrew its administration to the island of Atauro, various factions in Dili fought a short civil war, and, in November, the Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor (Frente Revolucionária de Timor-Leste Independente, FRETILIN) declared the nation independent. That December Indonesia invaded from West Timor, claiming that Timor-Leste might become Communist and should be stopped, and annexed Timor-Leste as a province. The United Nations did not recognize this claim and ordered Indonesia to withdraw its troops. Some Western nations, however, were willing to listen to Indonesia's claims that FRETILIN was Communist and refused to confront Indonesia.

For the next 20 years Indonesia oppressed the Timorese. Between 100,000 and 250,000 East Timorese died of violence or hunger during the occupation. In 1991 Indonesian troops killed about 100 East Timorese at a funeral, an event dubbed the Santa Cruz massacre. East Timorese activists continued to agitate for freedom. Xanana Gusmão, the leader of the guerilla unit Falintil, the armed branch of FRETILIN, was imprisoned by Indonesia between 1992 and 1999.

In 1999 Indonesian President Jusuf Habibie announced that the East Timorese should vote on independence in a referendum. On August 30 about 99 percent of eligible voters cast votes, with 78 percent voting for independence. Unable to accept this conclusion, the Indonesian military organized Timorese militias and launched a terrorist campaign. They killed over 1,000 East Timorese and forced between 250,000 and 300,000 people out of the

country into West Timor, where they spent the next three years or so living as refugees. The nation's infrastructure was almost completely destroyed. Australian peacekeeping troops arrived on September 20 and ended the violence, but damage was too extensive to be repaired quickly.

The United Nations then sent a diplomatic team to set up a provisional government and help Timor-Leste put itself back together. In 2001 the people elected a constituent assembly, which wrote a constitution and then took office as the first National Parliament in 2002. The country officially became an independent republic on May 20, 2002. The former guerilla leader Xanana Gusmão was elected president, and FRETILIN leader Marí Alkatiri became prime minister. The United Nations kept its personnel in Timor-Leste for another two years, gradually reducing the size of the force. The two national leaders have somewhat different styles: Gusmão has favored reconciliation with Indonesia and anti-independence East Timorese and has sought a unified national government; Alkatiri has a reputation for being more authoritarian. The national leadership must face many difficulties and years of hard work to fully rebuild the country.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

Prime Minister

2002– Marí Alkatiri

CONSTITUTION

The constitution, which went into effect on March 22, 2002, is based on the Portuguese model. The president, elected by popular vote to a five-year term, serves as the head of state. His role is largely symbolic, though he does have the right to veto some legislation. The prime minister functions as the head of government. The first prime minister was the leader of the party that won a majority in the first legislative election, which may have set a precedent for future regimes. The president is assisted by a 29-member Council of Ministers, which functions as his cabinet.

The UN Transitional Administration in East Timor oversaw Timorese government between 2000 and 2002. It was replaced by the UN Mission for the Support of East Timor in May 2002, which has continued to provide support to the government, assisting in creating laws and running local elections. By May 2004 the United Nations had reduced its peacekeeping force from 3,000 to 700 people, with plans to end support entirely by May 2005.

PARLIAMENT

There is a single National Parliament. According to the constitution the Parliament should have between 52 and 65 members, elected by popular vote to five-year terms.

The first Parliament, however, was not elected and had 88 members. Instead of holding elections, delegates who had been elected to the national convention in 2001 named themselves legislators in 2002, with plans to hold official elections for the first time in 2006.

POLITICAL PARTIES

The Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor (FRETILIN) won a majority in the 2001 election of convention representatives and as such claimed a majority of parliamentary seats in 2002. Prime minister Marí Alkatiri is the secretary-general of FRETILIN, and most of the members of the cabinet are also FRETILIN members.

Other parties include the Associação Social-Democrata Timorese (ASDT), the Christian Democratic Party of Timor (PDC), the Christian Democratic Union of Timor (UDC), the Democratic Party (PD), the Liberal Party (PL), the Maubere Democratic Party (PDM), the People's Party of Timor (PPT), the Social Democrat Party of East Timor (PSD), the Socialist Party of Timor (PST), the Sons of the Mountain Warriors (KOTA), the Timor Democratic Union (UDT), the Timor Labor Party (PTT), the Timorese Nationalist Party (PNT), and the Timorese Popular Democratic Association (APODETI).

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Timor-Leste is divided into 13 administrative districts: Aileu, Ainaro, Baucau, Bobonaro, Cova-Lima, Dili, Ermera, Lautem, Liquica, Manatuto, Manufahi, Oecussi-Ambeno, and Viqueque. The national government has been working to develop local authorities and infrastructure to allow for a certain degree of local government.

LEGAL SYSTEM

Timor-Leste has been working since independence to create a fully functioning legal system. The constitution calls for a Supreme Court of Justice, with one judge appointed by the National Parliament and the rest appointed by a Superior Council for the Judiciary. Until the Supreme Court is established the Court of Appeals functions as the highest court. There are severe shortages of trained legal personnel and court-system resources, which has hampered the country's efforts to grant speedy trials to those accused of crimes. Prolonged pretrial detention occurs frequently.

HUMAN RIGHTS

The Timorese government has done a reasonably good job protecting the human rights of its citizens. Problems

include police brutality and the use of excessive force, poor prison conditions, lack of due process, and long waits for trials. There have been reports of abuses by government officials. Numerous refugees fled the country during the years of fighting; some citizens reportedly feel that they cannot leave the country without facing reprisal from militias in Indonesian West Timor or in Timor-Leste.

Domestic violence, child labor, and human trafficking are all problems.

FOREIGN POLICY

Timor-Leste joined the United Nations in 2002 and immediately applied for observer status in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and membership in the ASEAN Regional Forum. The republic has been cultivating relations with its neighbors, including Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore, and with donors such as the United States, the European Union, Australia, Japan, and Portugal. Timor-Leste has opened an embassy in Washington, D.C., and receives millions of dollars in aid from the United States annually. The U.S. Peace Corps sends numerous volunteers to the nation.

DEFENSE

The Timor-Leste Defense Force includes an army and a navy. Citizens may volunteer for service at the age of 18. The defense force gradually assumed responsibility for national security as the UN peacekeeping forces left. The military is responsible to the civilian secretary of state for defense. There is also a police force, the Policia Nacional de Timor-Leste, responsible to the civilian minister of internal administration.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: —
 Military Manpower Availability: —
 Military Expenditures \$million: 4.4
 as % of GDP: —
 as % of central government expenditures: —
 Arms Imports \$million: —
 Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

As of late 2004 Timor-Leste's economy was in shambles, and the nation was the poorest in Asia. By 1999 it had lost almost all of its economic infrastructure in the war with Indonesia, and about 260,000 citizens had fled to West Timor. The refugees have gradually returned, but the country faces terrible economic conditions. Rural areas still lack infrastruc-

ture and the resources needed to reconstruct facilities. The entire country still lacks electricity. There are not enough jobs, and there are not enough educated people to fill all the newly established government positions. A drought in 2003 and the gradual departure of UN peacekeeping forces have held back initial attempts at growth.

Because it cannot provide for itself, Timor-Leste receives a large amount of foreign aid, but that aid is scheduled to taper off as the economy improves. The nation is working on rebuilding its infrastructure and has plans to develop oil and gas reserves, which could bring in substantial revenue.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$million: 370
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 400
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (19–99–2003) %: –0.1
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: –2.0
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 25.4
 Industry: 17.2
 Services: 57.4
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 95
 Government Consumption: 49
 Gross Domestic Investment: —
 Foreign Trade \$million: Exports: 8
 Imports: 167
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: —
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: —

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)
 1999 2000 2001 2002 2003
 — — — — —

Finance

National Currency: U.S. Dollar
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: —
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: —
 Total External Debt \$billion: —
 Debt Service Ratio %: —
 Balance of Payments \$million: —
 International Reserves SDRs \$million: —
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 4.0

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 150.8
 per capita \$: 171.90
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: —

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: 1 July–30 June
 Revenues \$million: 107.7
 Expenditures \$million: 73
 Budget Surplus \$million: 34.7
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 25.4
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2001) %: -0.9
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 0.16
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: —
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: —
 Total Farmland % of land area: 4.7
 Livestock: Cattle 000: 170
 Chickens million: 2.1
 Pigs 000: 346
 Sheep 000: 25
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters 000: —
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons: 350

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 9.6
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 8.5

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: —
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: —
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: —
 Net Energy Imports % of use: —
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: —
 Production kW-hr billion: —
 Consumption kW-hr billion: —
 Coal Reserves tons million: —
 Production tons million: —
 Consumption tons million: —
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
 Production cubic feet billion: —
 Consumption cubic feet billion: —
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
 Production barrels 000 per day: —
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: —
 Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$million: 167
 Exports \$million: 8
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —
 Balance of Trade \$million: —

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Indonesia %	—	—
Australia %	—	—
Singapore %	—	—
Vietnam %	—	—
Portugal %	—	—

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 3,800
 Paved %: 11.3
 Automobiles: —
 Trucks and Buses: —
 Railroad: Track Length km: —
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: —
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: —
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: —
 Airports: 8
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: —
 Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: —
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: —
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: —

Communications

Telephones 000: —
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones 000: —
 Personal Computers 000: —
 Internet Hosts per million people: —
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: —

ENVIRONMENT

Timor-Leste suffers from some major environmental problems. Slash-and-burn agriculture has caused deforestation and soil erosion, which make it that much more difficult for people to gather fuel and grow crops. Floods and landslides are common during the rainy season. The island is subject to occasional earthquakes, tsunamis, and cyclones.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 34.1
 Forest Change (1990–2000) hectares 000: -3
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: —
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: —

LIVING CONDITIONS

Most Timorese are desperately poor. Both cities and rural areas lack electricity and reliable drinking-water supplies, though these problems are much worse in rural areas. Some of the main cities and numerous towns were largely destroyed during the 1990s, forcing inhabitants

to fend for themselves in the countryside, and most infrastructure has not yet been rebuilt. Public transportation is by bus, taxi, and bicycle taxi. Most roads are unpaved and become impassible during the wet season. The cost of living is disproportionately high for the region due to shortages in basic foods and consumer goods.

HEALTH

Numerous health problems plague Timor-Leste. Diseases such as dengue fever, malaria, Japanese B encephalitis, tuberculosis, and rabies are common and have been exacerbated by poor living conditions. Australian and other foreign experts have been assisting the Timorese with their efforts to improve the health-care system. Life expectancy in 2005 was 65.9 years. Fertility was still somewhat high, at 3.6 children per women, and a population growth rate of over 2 percent is not helping the nation solve its problems.

The United Nations has attempted to supply vaccines to all Timorese children, but the lacks of refrigeration, transportation, and understanding of the reasons for vaccinations have kept many parents from bringing their children in. As a result, perhaps 30 percent of young children have received no vaccines against communicable diseases; only 5 percent of one-year-olds have been fully vaccinated by Western standards.

Health

Number of Physicians: —
 Number of Dentists: —
 Number of Nurses: —
 Number of Pharmacists: —
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: —
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 47.41
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 660
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 9.7
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 47
 HIV Infected % of adults: —
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 70
 Measles: 60
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 33
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 52

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Food shortages have always been common on the island of Timor due to weather patterns, which make it difficult to grow crops consistently. The fighting of 1999 created acute food shortages on both halves of Timor, as refugees fled from the east to the west. This put pressure on the forests in which people have tra-

ditionally foraged for food, as refugees cut down trees for fuel and to clear land for crops. Various nations have provided food aid to prevent thousands of people from starving to death.

The staple food for most people is rice, as served with condiments and side dishes that may contain meat, fish, vegetables, eggs, or bean curd enlivened with various local spices. The custom for many families is to cook food early in the day and leave it out for family members to help themselves when they are hungry. The midday meal is the largest, and the evening meal often consists of leftovers from lunch. Most people cook over oil burners or wood fires.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 220.9
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 48.8

STATUS OF WOMEN

Domestic violence and sexual abuse are common problems, and the police do not usually take any action against perpetrators. Men typically get jobs ahead of women, often because women themselves have traditionally deferred to men. In some areas local laws prevent women from inheriting or owning property. The UN transitional team created a Gender Affairs Unit to train women entering public services and to ensure women a voice in the new society. The East Timorese Women's Forum and East Timor Women against Violence are groups that support women's rights and aid victims of domestic violence. Some nongovernmental organizations have been providing microcredit loans to women who want to open small businesses.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 25
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: —
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: —

WORK

There are no reliable figures for unemployment rates, but the figure was estimated to be 50 percent in 1992, including underemployment, and was similarly high in 2004. The labor force is expanding rapidly as the country's many children grow up, and there are not nearly enough jobs for the population. Conversely, the government cannot find enough educated and trained workers to fill certain jobs. Possible areas

of development include petroleum extraction; agriculture, such as the growing of coffee, sandalwood, and vanilla; and the production of handicrafts and woven cloth.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: —
 Female Participation Rate %: 45.4
 Labor by Sector %: —
 Unemployment %: —

EDUCATION

The constitution calls for free compulsory education for all children, but the nation has yet to establish a minimum level of required education or a workable school system. About 75 percent of the nation's children do attend primary school, although attendance is much lower in rural areas. Only about 20 percent of children attend secondary school, and about 10 percent never attend school at all. Attendance figures are the same for both boys and girls.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 58.6
 Male %: —
 Female %: —
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 11.5
 First Level: Primary schools: —
 Teachers: 3,612
 Students: 183,626
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 50.8
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 75.0
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: —
 Teachers: 1,646
 Students: 46,680
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 28.4
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 20.3
 Third Level: Institutions: —
 Teachers: 123
 Students: 6,349
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 12.0
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: —

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The technological infrastructure was largely destroyed during the fighting in 1999 and has yet to be rebuilt. Electricity is in short supply, as is education, making the pursuit of scientific or technological projects difficult.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: —
 Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

The United Nations handled media broadcasting between 1999 and May 2002, but since that time Timor-Leste has taken charge of national public radio and television broadcasting. Almost the entire population can receive radio broadcasts, while television reception is much sparser. International agencies fund and provide equipment and assistance to community radio stations, which spend much of their airtime assisting in the process of reconstruction. There are two daily newspapers and numerous weekly publications.

The new constitution guarantees the freedom of the press, and the government respects those rights for the most part, though on occasion government officials have suggested that journalists be disciplined for criticizing politicians. Generally, journalists criticize the government with impunity.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 2
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: —
 Periodicals: 1
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets 000: —
 per 1,000: —

CULTURE

East Timorese culture has been heavily influenced by centuries of Portuguese domination, which has left the nation largely Catholic. People hold celebrations for Catholic festivals such as Assumption and Christmas. They also hold local festivals at the end of the wet season.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

The Portuguese who first colonized Timor-Leste noted the beliefs of the native people, such as a belief in demons living among the sandalwood trees in the forest. The majority of Timorese still maintain ancient animist beliefs,

frequently combining traditional practices with Christianity. They worship the spirits of the dead, called *luliks*, which live in stones, animals, streams, wells, and other objects. *Luliks* can be both good and evil and have magical powers that allow them to affect the lives of the living.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

The lack of infrastructure has hampered recreational possibilities in Timor-Leste. There are some restaurants and bars in Dili and the other cities. The nation has beautiful beaches with excellent swimming, diving, and snorkeling possibilities. The interior is a good place for hiking and mountain climbing.

ETIQUETTE

Timorese shake hands when greeting people of the same sex but not of the opposite sex, though men may shake hands with foreign women. When dining, a guest should not sit down until invited to do so by the host. It is impolite to fill one's plate at the beginning of a meal, and eating a variety of foods is considered more important than eating a large quantity.

FAMILY LIFE

Timorese families have faced many difficulties in recent years, with some families split as a result of fleeing or choosing different sides in the struggle with Indonesia. The constitution has enshrined the principles that both men and women have the same rights in the family and that children are entitled to special protection from abandonment, abuse, and exploitation. Within families, there are often strict divisions along gender lines. Men take responsibility for cooking and cutting up coconuts, while women do smaller, more repetitive cooking tasks. Women are still considered subservient to men in some regions.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Timorese are for the most part conservatively Catholic and dress modestly, though in light clothing due to the warm climate. The traditional article of clothing is called the *tai*, a handwoven length of cloth decorated with ikat dyeing. Men wear a version called the *mane*, while women wear a version called the *feto*; men tie theirs around their waists, and women wear theirs like dresses. Western clothing is popular for both sexes, but clothing is generally in short supply, and most people are too poor to have extensive wardrobes.

SPORTS

Timor-Leste has a young population, many of whom love sports. Popular sports include soccer, basketball, volleyball, cycling, karate, tae kwon do, boxing, weightlifting, tennis, and track and field. All the nation's sports facilities were destroyed during the years of Indonesian occupation and the fighting of 1999, so the nation's athletes had to begin from scratch in 2000. Despite these difficulties, Timor-Leste was determined to send a team to the 2004 Olympics; the nation ended up sending two athletes: the female marathoner Agueda Fatima Amaral and the male runner Gil da Cruz Trindade.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1749 Portugal and the Netherlands split Timor, with Portugal taking the eastern half.
- 1942 The Japanese invade and take control of Timor until 1945.
- 1974 Portugal promises to free its colonies after an anti-Fascist revolution.
- 1975 The Portuguese administration leaves Timor-Leste. FRETILIN declares Timor-Leste independent. Indonesia invades Timor-Leste, annexes it as a 27th province, and begins years of repression resisted by the East Timorese.
- 1981 Xanana Gusmão becomes leader of the guerrilla wing of FRETILIN.
- 1991 Indonesian troops kill more than 100 people at a funeral for a FRETILIN supporter in the Santa Cruz cemetery massacre.
- 1992 Xanana Gusmão is arrested by Indonesian troops and sentenced to life in prison.
- 1993 East Timorese enter foreign embassies in Jakarta to ask for political asylum.
- 1995 East Timorese at the Dutch and Russian embassies in Jakarta protest the 20th anniversary of the Indonesian invasion.
- 1996 Carlos Belo, the bishop of Dili, and José Ramos Horta, a resistance leader, win the Nobel Peace Prize.
- 1998 Indonesian President Suharto resigns; his successor, Jusuf Habibie, proposes giving Timor-Leste special status within Indonesia.
- 1999 Indonesia offers to make Timor-Leste independent but without autonomy. Xanana Gusmão moves from prison to house arrest and orders his troops to resume the fight for independence. Portugal and Indonesia agree to let the East Timorese vote on independence; 78 percent of voters favor independence in the September referendum. An anti-independence militia and the Indonesian army launch a campaign of terror, killing 1,000 people and forcing per-

haps 260,000 to flee to West Timor. Australian peacekeepers arrive and restore order. UN Transitional Administration in East Timor is established. International donors promise aid to rebuild the nation.

- 2000** Anti-independence militias murder three refugee agency workers in West Timor, prompting the United Nations to evacuate its staff. Indonesia sentences the culprits to 20 months in prison.
- 2001** Timor-Leste and Australia sign an agreement to share future oil and gas revenues from the Timor Sea. A constituent assembly is elected, with a FRETILIN majority.
- 2002** A truth and reconciliation commission opens in an attempt to resolve differences between Timor-Leste and Indonesia. The constituent assembly creates a constitution calling for a parliamentary government. Xanana Gusmão wins the presidency. The United Nations sets up a mission of support to help the new government establish order. Timor-Leste gains UN membership.
- 2003** The United Nations extends the mandate of its mission for another year.
- 2004** Portugal promises \$63 million in aid. Production begins at the Bayu Undan offshore gas field. The United Nations reduces its peacekeeping force to 700 personnel.
- 2005** Indonesian President Susilo Yudhoyono visits Dili. Timor-Leste and Indonesia sign a border agreement.

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Timor-Leste. None.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Government of Timor-Leste
<http://www.gov.east-timor.org/>
- East Timor News
<http://www.timor.com>

ECUADOR

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Ecuador (República del Ecuador)

ABBREVIATION

EC

CAPITAL

Quito

HEAD OF STATE & HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

President Alfredo Palacio (from 2005)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Constitutional democracy; republic

POPULATION

13,363,593 (2005)

AREA

283,560 sq km (109,482 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Mestizos, Amerindians

LANGUAGES

Spanish (official), Quechua

RELIGION

Roman Catholicism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

U.S. dollar

NATIONAL FLAG

Tricolor, with the top yellow stripe being equal to the combined height of the blue center stripe and the red lower stripe, with the coat of arms superimposed at the center

NATIONAL EMBLEM

An oval shield on which Mt. Chimborazo is shown against a light blue sky; a river flows down the mountain slopes to the deep blue waters in the foreground, sailing on which is a steamboat, with the caduceus, the symbol of Mercury, the god of commerce, as the mast; above the mountain is a white band with a golden Mayan sun and four zodiac signs; the shield is crested by the condor of the Andes, flanked by a panoply of flags on either side and branches of laurel joined at the base by the Roman fasces.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Hail, O Fatherland”

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day), May 1 (Labor Day), May 24 (Battle of Pichincha), July 24 (Birth of Simón Bolívar), August 10 (Independence of Quito), October 9 (Independence of Guayaquil), October 12 (Discovery of America), November 3 (Independence of Cuenca), December 6 (Foundation of Quito), Christian festivals, including Good Friday, Easter, All Souls' Day, All Saints' Day, and Christmas

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

May 24, 1822

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

August 10, 1998

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Ecuador straddles the equator on the northwest coast of South America, occupying an area of 283,560 sq km (109,482 sq mi), extending 714 km (444 mi) north to south and 658 km (409 mi) east to west. The length of the Pacific coastline is 2,237 km (1,390 mi). The national territory includes the Galápagos Islands, an archipelago scattered over 59,570 sq km (23,000 sq mi) of ocean with a total land area of 7,770 sq km (3,000 sq mi).

Ecuador shares its total land boundary of 2,010 km (1,249 mi) with Colombia (590 km, 366 mi) and Peru (1,420 km, 881 mi).

The Andes split the country into three distinct topographical regions: the Costa, or coastal plain; Sierra, or highlands; and Oriente, or Amazon region.

The Costa makes up 16.5 percent of the national territory and forms a rich agricultural belt stretching from the Pacific to the Sierra. Its width varies from 25 km (15 mi) to 200 km (125 mi).

Ecuador



The Sierra, constituting 24.3 percent of the national territory, is a plateau 2,500 m (8,200 ft) to 3,000 m (9,850 ft) above sea level between two parallel spines of the Andes, the Cordillera Occidental and the Cordillera Central. The Sierra is studded with 22 massive volcanoes, the highest of which are Chimborazo (6,271

m; 20,574 ft) and Cotopaxi (5,896 m; 19,344 ft). The Sierra is subject to occasional severe earthquakes and landslides.

The Oriente, constituting 57.4 percent of the national territory, is a flat and gently undulating expanse of rain forest east of the Andes.

The Costa is drained by the Guayas, Esmeraldas, Daule, and Vinces rivers. The rivers of the Oriente, such as the Pastaza, Paute, Nape, and Zamora, eventually flow into the Atlantic through the Amazon.

Geography

Area sq km: 283,560; sq mi 109,482
 World Rank: 71st
 Land Boundaries, km: Colombia 590; Peru 1,420
 Coastline, km: 2,237
 Elevation Extremes meters
 Lowest: Pacific Ocean 0
 Highest: Chimborazo 6,267
 Land Use %
 Arable Land: 5.85
 Permanent Crops: 4.93
 Forest: 38.1
 Other: 52.12

Population of Principal Cities (2001)

Ambato	154,095
Cuenca	277,374
Eloy Alfaro	174,531
Guayaquil	1,985,379
Ibarra	108,535
Loja	118,532
Machala	204,578
Manta	183,105
Milagro	113,440
Portoviejo	171,847
Quevedo	120,379
Quito	1,399,378
Riobamba	124,807
Santo Domingo	199,827

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Ecuador has a tropical climate in the Costa and the Oriente, where monthly temperatures average 26.7°C (80°F). There are two seasons: a hot, rainy period from January to May and a cool, dry season the rest of the year.

In the Sierra the annual mean temperature varies between 10°C (50°F) and 15.6°C (60°F). There is virtually no seasonal change, and days and nights are of equal duration throughout the year. However, temperatures may vary by as much as 22.2°C (40°F) in a single day.

Rainfall is heavy throughout the Amazon Basin and in the Costa but scanty in the Andean plateau. Precipitation ranges from 355 mm (14 in) at Ancon on the dry Santa Elena Peninsula to 1,140 mm (45 in) in Guayaquil, 1,470 mm (58 in) in Quito, 2,540 mm (100 in) on the lower Andean slopes and 5,080 mm (200 in) in the Oriente.

The prevailing winds blow from the east across the Amazon Basin and from the west across the warm Equatorial Current in the rainy season and the cold Humboldt Current in the dry season.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature
 Costa 80°F
 Sierra 50°F to 60°F
 Quito 55°F
 Average Rainfall
 Santa Elena Peninsula: 14 in
 Guayaquil: 45 in
 Quito: 58 in
 Lower Andean Slopes: 100 in
 Oriente: 200 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Ecuador has some of the world's greatest biodiversity in its relatively small area. The Galapagos Islands are particularly valuable for their unique species. There are about 20,000 species of plants in Ecuador, including 4,500 orchids. There are over 300 species of mammals, including alpacas, llamas, sloths, and 17 types of monkeys. Bird life is especially rich; over 1,500 types of birds live in Ecuador, including the Andean condor and 58 endemic Galapagos species. There are also a great many freshwater fish, including stingrays, electric eels, tiny candirú catfish, and the ravenous piranha.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 13,363,593
 World Rank: 65th
 Density per sq km: 47.1
 % of annual growth (1999-2003): 1.6
 Male %: 50.0
 Female %: 50.0
 Urban %: 61.8
 Age Distribution %: 0-14: 33.9
 15-64: 61.2
 65 and over: 4.9

Population 2025: 17,099,000
 Birth Rate per 1,000: 23.18
 Death Rate per 1,000: 4.26
 Rate of Natural Increase %: 2.1
 Total Fertility Rate: 2.78
 Expectation of Life (years): Males 73.15
 Females 79
 Marriage Rate per 1,000: 5.1
 Divorce Rate per 1,000: 0.9
 Average Size of Households: 4.1
 Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Ecuador does not include ethnicity in its census. Unofficial data ranks mestizos as Ecuador's majority group, with 65 percent, followed by Indians at 25 percent, Spanish and other whites at 7 percent, and blacks at 3 percent.

Blacks occupy a social position slightly higher than that of Amerindians but lower than that of mestizos. The percentage of unmixed blacks is small.

There are as many as 700 separate Amerindian groups. In the Sierra the most distinctive are the Otavalos, the Salasacas, and the Saraguros. There are only two groups of unassimilated Amerindians on the Costa: the Colorados and the Cayapas. The three most primitive tribes live in the Oriente: the Jívaros, Aucas, and Yumbos. The Amazon basin is also the home of the Zaparos, Cofán, and other tribes.

The largest alien ethnic group are Lebanese, who are concentrated in Guayaquil. The most famous members of this group are former presidents Mahuad and Jamil Abdalá Bucaram. Chinese are found throughout Ecuador but are centered primarily on the coast in the town of Quevedo. Small expatriate English, Irish, French, and German communities are found in the major cities.

LANGUAGES

Spanish is spoken by about 93 percent of the population. Almost all Indians speak the Ecuadorian variant of Quechua. In the western Costa, the Cayapa and Colorado languages are still spoken. The most widespread Amerindian language in the Oriente is Jívaro. Zaparo, Tetete, Cofán, Aushiria, and Siona are also spoken.

RELIGIONS

Ecuador has no state religion, but 95 percent of the population are at least nominally Roman Catholic. The constitution guarantees freedom of worship.

The Catholic Church in Ecuador takes bold stands on social issues, advocating tax and land reforms and, in some cases, family planning and rejection of the capitalist order.

Non-Catholic religious groups account for 5 percent of the population. They include Protestants, who maintain about 12 schools. Jews number about 2,000. Amerindians in the Oriente profess tribal religions, but little information is available about these religions.

Religious Affiliations

Roman Catholic	12,695,000
Other	668,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Pre-Hispanic Ecuador was inhabited by a number of diverse Amerindian tribes. By 1000 these groups formed a loose confederation called the Kingdom of Quito, which

became a part of the Inca Empire just before the arrival of the Spaniards. The Inca armies under Huayna Capac (r. 1493–1525) conquered Quito and made it a major administrative and military outpost. Before he died, Capac divided his empire between his eldest son, Atahualpa, born to a Quito princess, and his legitimate heir, Huascar. War broke out between Atahualpa and Huascar, in which the latter was defeated and slain in the Battle of Cajamarca.

The first Spanish conquistador to sight Ecuador was Bartolomé Ruiz, Francisco Pizarro's pilot in 1526, who was on his way to Peru. His first landing place was Esmeraldas, so named from the emeralds obtained by the Spaniards from the Amerindians. Arriving in Cajamarca in 1532, Pizarro invited Atahualpa to a meeting and then had him assassinated. One of Pizarro's lieutenants, Sebastián de Benalcazar, found the old Indian capital of Quito left in ashes by the retreating Incas and on that site founded in 1534 San Francisco de Quito. He became the first Spanish governor of Quito. In 1542 the Spanish Crown promulgated the so-called New Laws in an attempt to impose its authority. Opposition from the conquistadores to the New Laws led to the assassination of the Spanish viceroy as well as the governor, Gonzalo Pizarro. The Audiencia of Quito, as Ecuador was known before the War of Independence, was established by royal decree in 1563. The 16th and 17th centuries were relatively quiet periods in Ecuadorian history. By the beginning of the early 18th century the Spanish monarchy fell into a state of increasing weakness. The firm grip that had been maintained on colonial economic life was relaxed.

The struggle for independence took place in two phases. The first was precipitated by the Napoleonic invasion of Spain in 1808. A governing junta was established, composed of criollos, under the leadership of the president of the Audiencia. A congress in 1811 declared complete independence and established the state of Quito. Opposed by the Viceroyalty of Peru and the rest of the Audiencia, the junta launched a military offensive against the Spanish forces in which they were crushed in 1812. The second phase of the independence movement was launched in Guayaquil, where another rebel junta was formed. It sought the help of leaders of the independence movement in other parts of the continent, especially the Venezuelan Simón Bolívar and his lieutenant Antonio José de Sucre in the north and the Argentinean José de San Martín in the south. At the decisive Battle of Pichincha in 1822 the rebel forces won a great victory, thus ending the Spanish era.

The rebel leaders met in Guayaquil in 1822 to consider the future of the liberated provinces. For the next eight years, Ecuador was part of Gran Colombia, which included Venezuela, Colombia, Panama, and Ecuador. When this union collapsed in 1830, the Republic of Ecuador was established, with Juan José Flores as its first

president. Flores dominated Ecuadorian politics for the first 15 years of independence. Flores was ousted after a popular uprising, which produced bloody street fighting.

Although civilian rule was established, the influence of the military was paramount during the next 15 years, in which the chief figure was General José María Urbina. Between 1845 and 1860 Ecuador experienced a new period of political turbulence. The country was ruled by 11 presidents or juntas, in most cases members of the Liberals Party; there were frequent civil wars and three constitutions. General García Moreno, a pro-Catholic conservative, seized power during this anarchy and retained it for the next 15 years. Under his authoritarian rule, conservatism and the Conservative Party reached new heights, and church-state relations were closer than they have ever been since.

The conservative era lasted until 1895, when the Revolution of 1895 brought the Liberal Flavio Eloy Alfaro to power. He and his liberal successors reversed Moreno's policies. Church and state were separated, and freedoms of the press and worship were established. Eloy Alfaro was overthrown in 1911 by a military uprising. His successor, General Leonidas Plaza Gutiérrez, who had served as president once before from 1901 to 1905, faced a deepening economic crisis, which led to his ouster by a junta in 1925. The junta named Isidro Ayora as president, but pressured by the deteriorating economic climate and opposition from the military, he was forced to resign in 1931.

The 1930s were a period of anarchy in Ecuador. The decade marked the rise of one of Ecuador's stormy petrels, José María Velasco Ibarra, who, with a large following among the lower classes, was president five times (1934–35, 1944–47, 1952–56, 1960–61, and 1968–72). The border dispute between Ecuador and Peru came to a head in 1942 when Peru invaded Ecuador's Southern and Oriente provinces. The Río Protocol awarded to Peru the greater part of the Amazon territory claimed by Ecuador. During his second term as president, Velasco Ibarra formally suspended the 1945 Liberal constitution and promulgated a new constitution in 1946 that granted more power to the president. This marked the end of the Liberal era in Ecuadorian politics. The election of Galo Plaza Lasso in 1948 ushered in a period of relative stability. He was the first chief executive since 1924 to complete his term of office. He was followed by a series of interrupted presidencies punctuated by juntas. Velasco's three terms as well as the term of his 1961 successor, Carlos Julio Arosemena Monroy, ended prematurely in coups.

In 1972 the military under Gen. Guillermo Rodríguez Lara canceled the election and restored the Liberal constitution of 1945. The junta ruled until 1979 when Jaime Roldós Aguilera was elected president. Roldós was killed in a plane crash in 1981 and was succeeded by his Christian Democratic vice president, Osvaldo Hurtado Larrea. The conservative León Febres Cordero won the

1984 presidential election. In the 1988 presidential election Borja Cevallos of the Democratic Left won a comfortable majority. In 1992 Sixto Durán-Ballén Córdovez of the Republican Unity Party swept the polls by winning 19 of the 21 provinces. In 1996 the populist Abdalá Bucaram achieved his longtime goal of becoming president. But his administration was cut short in 1997 when the Chamber of Representatives ousted him for "mental incapacity," and designated its presiding officer Fabián Alarcón Rivera as his successor. In 1998 Jamil Mahuad Witt of Popular Democracy, a Christian Democrat, secured 51.3 percent of the vote to become president. Mahuad settled the long-standing border dispute (dating from the 16th century) involving a 125,000 sq mi tract of land between the Putumayo and Marañón Rivers with Peru. The agreement awarded the disputed territory to Peru, but control (although not sovereignty) of the town of Tiwintzá and a corridor from the border was assigned to Ecuador, which was also granted free navigation rights along the Amazon and the right to establish two port facilities within Peruvian territory.

In response to a faltering economy, Mahuad announced austerity measures in 1997, which were met with strikes and public protest. In 1999 the government defaulted on external loans. Seeking to stabilize the economy, Mahuad announced his plan to replace the national currency with the U.S. dollar. In January 2000 he was forced from power by the army and indigenous protesters, and Vice President Gustavo Noboa Bejarano became president. Noboa adopted the U.S. dollar as Ecuador's national currency in March 2000.

In 2001 Luis Maldonado became the first Amerindian to take a cabinet post not specifically associated with indigenous affairs when he was appointed minister for social welfare. The following November, the leftist candidate Lucio Gutiérrez won the presidency. In August 2003 former president Noboa fled to the Dominican Republic after facing charges of corruption. Gutiérrez did not trust the Supreme Court, claiming that it was biased against his party, so in December 2004 Congress dismissed most of the court and appointed new members to the bench. In April it ousted President Gutiérrez and Vice-President Alfredo Palacio took his place.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1948–52	Galo Plaza Lasso
1952–56	José María Velasco Ibarra
1956–60	Camilo Ponce Enríquez
1960–61	José María Velasco Ibarra
1961–63	Carlos Julio Arosemena Monroy
1963–66	Ramón Castro Jijón
1966	Clemente Yerovi
1966–68	Otto Arosemena Gomez
1968–72	José María Velasco Ibarra

1972–76	Guillermo Rodríguez
1976–79	Alfredo Poveda Burbano
1979–81	Jaime Roldós Aguilera
1981–84	Oswaldo Hurtado
1984–88	León Febres Cordero Rivadeneira
1988–92	Rodrigo Borja Cevallos
1992–96	Sixto Durán-Ballén
1996–97	Abdalá Bucaram Ortíz
1997–98	Fabián Alarcón Rivera
1998–2000	Jamil Mahuad Witt
2000–03	Gustavo Noboa Bejarano
2003–05	Lucio Gutiérrez Borbúa
2005–	Alfredo Palacio

CONSTITUTION

Under its 18th constitution, passed in 1998, Ecuador has a president, who acts as head of state and head of government, and a 100-member unicameral legislature, known as the National Chamber of Representatives.

The president appoints the cabinet, provincial governors, and diplomatic representatives and directs international relations. He can declare a state of emergency upon notice to the Chamber. The president serves a four-year term and is ineligible for reelection.

Voting is by free, secret, direct ballot for all Ecuadorians 18 years and older and compulsory for literate Ecuadorians under age 65.

The constitution of 1998 establishes the autonomy of the Central Bank in setting monetary policy, mandates that the state maintain economic balances, and eliminates state monopolies over strategic areas of the economy.

PARLIAMENT

Legislative power is vested in the National Chamber of Representatives, whose 100 members are elected for four-year terms from lists of candidates drawn up by legally recognized parties. Representatives are eligible for reelection.

The National Chamber ratifies treaties, elects members of the Superior and Supreme Courts, and appoints the comptroller general, the attorney general, and the superintendent of banks. Congress can override the president's amendment of a bill and may reconsider a rejected bill after one year. It can request a referendum and revoke a state of emergency.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Political parties have typically been loosely organized groups with charismatic leaders but without any overarching ideology. The groups are highly factionalized, but the trend has been for groups with similar viewpoints to form

alliances. Administrations have alternated center-left and center-right positions. Indigenous people have been participating in politics more often since the 1996 election. Political parties include the moderate, center-right Social Christian Party (Partido Social Cristiano, PSC), with main strength in the Costa; the far-right Conservative Party (Partido Conservativo Ecuatoriano, PCE), centered in Quito; the socialist, left-center Democratic Left (Izquierda Democrática, ID), strong among government workers and professionals in the Sierra; the progressive, Christian-democratic Popular Democracy (Democracia Popular, DP), strong in Quito; the socialist, populist, left-of-center Radical Alfarista Front (Frente Radical Alfarista, FRA), whose main strength is in the Costa; the populist, centrist Roldosist Party (Partido Roldosista Ecuatoriano, PRE), which is strong in the Costa; the populist, left-of-center Concentration of Popular Forces (Concentración de Fuerzas Populares, CFP), strong in Costa; and the far-left, populist Pachakutik–New Country (Pachakutik–Nueva Patria, P-NP), which represents the indigenous movement and is strong in northern and central Sierra.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Ecuador is divided into 22 provinces, each administered by a governor appointed by the president. Provinces are subdivided into 115 cantons or municipalities. A canton is administered by a *jefe político*, or political chief, appointed by the president. Cantons are subdivided into *parroquias* (parishes), each administered by a *teniente político*, a political lieutenant.

LEGAL SYSTEM

In 1861 Ecuador adopted the Civil Code of Chile, which is based on the Napoleonic and Spanish codes.

The judiciary consists of a Supreme Court of Justice, higher divisional courts, provincial courts, cantonal courts, and parochial judges.

The Supreme Court consists of 15 judges and two prosecutors, elected by Congress for six-year terms. The president of the court is elected annually by the membership. The court usually sits in five chambers of three judges each.

Preventive detention is illegal, and the criminal code forbids isolated confinement for more than 24 hours. Mayors and municipal council presidents are constitutionally empowered to grant bail and habeas corpus.

Defendants have the right to counsel, to face their accusers, to refrain from testifying against themselves, and to appeal their sentences to intermediate courts and to the Supreme Court.

Judges play a central role in investigations as well as in deciding guilt or innocence. There is no trial by jury.

Legal investigations as well as prosecutions are carried out by the attorney general, solicitor general, and provincial prosecutors, who defend state interests in criminal and civil cases.

Military courts are empowered to try only those cases involving acts against military installations and infractions of military regulations.

The correctional system is operated by the National Directorate of Prisons under the Ministry of Government. The two largest institutions are the García Moreno prison in Quito and the Penitenciarío del Litoral in Guayaquil.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Ecuador has extensive human rights abuses stemming from corruption in the legal and judicial systems. Persons are subject to arbitrary arrest and, unless they pay bribes, may wait years before being tried. More than half the prisoners in jail have not been formally sentenced. Discrimination and violence against women and ethnic minorities has been an ongoing problem. Child labor is prevalent and increasing.

FOREIGN POLICY

The border dispute with Peru has been Ecuador's principal foreign policy issue. Ecuador asserted that the Río Protocol, which set a border between Ecuador and Peru following full-scale war in 1942, does not accurately describe the area of the Upper Cenepa River valley in the Cordillera, rendering demarcation "inexecutable."

In January–February 1995, soldiers fought an intense but localized war in the disputed territory. Peace was brokered by the four guarantors of the Río Protocol (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and the United States), and in March 1999 Presidents Mahuad of Ecuador and Fujimori of Peru signed a treaty demarcating a definitive boundary.

The border with Colombia is an important consideration in Ecuadorian foreign policy. The Colombian border areas are unstable, and guerillas have ventured into Ecuador, where they endanger local people and the oil fields of the north. Ecuador has deployed more troops to the area to protect it.

The United States and Ecuador maintain close ties, cooperating to combat narcotics trafficking, build trade and investment, and foster Ecuador's economic development. About one million Ecuadorians live in the United States, and over 100 U.S. companies do business in Ecuador. Ecuador is a signatory to the United Nations and the Organization of American States. It belongs to the Río Group, the Latin American Integration Association, and the Andean Pact.

DEFENSE

The defense structure is headed by the president, who acts as commander in chief and is advised by the National Defense Council. The line of command runs from the president through the minister of national defense to the joint command of the armed forces and the commanders of the three services. The country is divided into six military zones (Quito, Guayaquil, Cuenca, Machala, and Loja, and a sixth zone encompassing the Oriente), three naval districts (Guayaquil, Quito, and the Oriente) and two air force districts (Quito and Guayaquil). All three services are independent.

Military manpower is provided by a compulsory one-year conscription law under which all able-bodied men are liable for service at the age of 20. In February 1999 President Jamil Mahuad announced that he would cut the draft by 60 percent and reassign one-quarter of the army to the police force. Domestic terrorism is a smaller problem in Ecuador than it is in Peru and Colombia, but the security of the northern frontier area against drug traffickers and insurgent Colombian groups is a continuing concern. In 2003 the country spent 2.4 percent of gross domestic product (GDP), or \$650 million, on the military.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	58,000
Military Manpower Availability:	3,440,371
Military Expenditures \$million:	650
as % of GDP:	2.4
as % of central government expenditures:	—
Arms Imports \$million:	1
Arms Exports \$million:	—

ECONOMY

Ecuador is ranked as a lower-middle-income country with a mixed public-private economy. Despite increasing numbers of exports and a profitable oil industry, 70 percent of the population still lives in poverty. The nation is deeply indebted to foreign nations.

The country's economy is heavily dependent on petroleum exports and moves in lockstep with the price of oil in the world market. The country has opened the Oriente region to oil extraction, despite the economic devastation the industry wreaks. Other key exports are bananas, coffee, cocoa, and shrimp. Nontraditional exports such as flowers and canned fish have become more important in recent years. The forestry industry produces balsa wood and rubber.

Economic growth has been uneven in recent years due to the on-again, off-again application of fiscal stabilization reforms. In 1996 Abdalá Bucaram proposed a schedule for privatizing some government-owned industries, but popular discontent led to his dismissal

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in February 1997. Confronting an economy racked by mismanagement, damage from El Niño, and low world oil prices, President Jamil Mahuad announced a fiscal austerity package in January 1999 that also provoked violent protests. The beginning of 1999 saw the banking sector collapse, which helped precipitate an unprecedented default on external loans later that year. Continued economic instability drove a 70 percent depreciation of the currency throughout 1999, which eventually led the government to adopt the U.S. dollar as the national currency in 2000. Shortly thereafter the International Monetary Fund (IMF) approved \$2 billion in aid for Ecuador.

Ecuador has established free-trade areas with Colombia, Chile, and within the Andean Community, and it belongs to the World Trade Organization (WTO) and Asociación Latinoamericana de Integración (ALADI).

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 45.65
GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 3,300
GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 1.5
GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: -0.1
Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
Agriculture: 8.7
Industry: 29.7
Services: 61.6
Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
Private Consumption: 69
Government Consumption: 10
Gross Domestic Investment: 21.7
Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 6.073
Imports: 6.22
% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 2.2
% of Income Received by Richest 10%: 33.8

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
336.7	660.2	908.9	1022.4	1103.5

Finance

National Currency: U.S. Dollar (USD)
Exchange Rate: —
Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 1.93
Central Bank Discount Rate %: 11.19
Total External Debt \$billion: 15.69
Debt Service Ratio %: 19.7
Balance of Payments \$million: -117
International Reserves SDRs \$million: 786
Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
7.9

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 216
per capita \$: 17
Foreign Direct Investment \$billion: 1.275

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
Revenues \$billion: 6.908
Expenditures \$billion: 6.594
Budget Surplus \$million: 314
Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 8.7
Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 3.9
Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares: 9.1
Irrigation, % of Farms having: 29.0
Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 142
Total Farmland % of land area: 5.9
Livestock: Cattle 000: 5,125
Sheep 000: 2,880
Hogs 000: 3,063
Chickens 000: 147,000
Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 6.26
Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 389

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 2.97
Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 5.3

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 22.1
Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 7
Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 549
Net Energy Imports % of use: -162
Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 3.3
Production kW-hr billion: 11.5
Consumption kW-hr billion: 10.8
Coal Reserves tons million: 26
Production tons million: —
Consumption tons million: —
Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet billion: 345
Production cubic feet billion: 3.5
Consumption cubic feet billion: 3.5
Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: 4.6
Production barrels 000 per day: 534.8
Consumption barrels 000 per day: 144
Pipelines Length km: 1,386

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 6.22
Exports \$billion: 6.073
Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 1.6
Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 4.5
Balance of Trade \$million: -117

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
United States %	23.9	42.4
Colombia %	12.8	5.7
Venezuela %	7.1	—
Brazil %	6.1	—
Chile %	4.8	—
Japan %	4.2	—
Germany %	—	5.6

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 43,197
 Paved %: 18.9
 Automobiles: 326,200
 Trucks and Buses: 268,200
 Railroad: Track Length km: 966
 Passenger-km million: 33
 Freight-km million: —
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 34
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 391.9
 Airports: 205
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 626
 Length of Waterways km: 1,500

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 654
 Number of Tourists from 000: 598
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 447
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 364

Communications

Telephones million: 1.55
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.03
 Cellular Telephones million: 2.4
 Personal Computers 000: 400
 Internet Hosts per million people: 239
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 43

ENVIRONMENT

Ecuador's constitution states that all citizens have the right to live in a pure environment. Yet Ecuador is under siege from a host of ecological stresses, including rapid urbanization and large-scale petroleum exploration and processing in the Oriente. Current environmental problems include soil and water pollution, deforestation, desertification, and soil erosion; pollution is an especially big problem in the delicate ecosystems of the Galapagos and the Amazon basin. In 1996 the Ministry of Environment was created to systematize ecological management and concentrate efforts to protect Ecuador's natural resources. Other efforts to confront ecological problems have been undertaken by groups representing peasant and indigenous communities and organizations such as

Fundación Natura, specializing in education in schools, and Ecociencia, primarily concerned with research.

Much domestic and international attention has been focused on the exploitation of the Oriente by the petroleum industry. In November 1993 five Amazon Indian tribes filed suit against Texaco to claim compensation totaling \$1.5 billion for the company's spilling some 17 million barrels of oil in its 25 years of operation in the region.

Ecuador has ratified the Biodiversity Convention, the Climatic Changes Treaty, and the Forest Declaration and abides by the principles of the Río Declaration. The Law of Forestry and Conservation of Natural Areas and Wildlife of 1981 established the national patrimony of natural areas and created 17 protected areas, including the Galápagos. A 2001 oil spill in the Galapagos Islands alarmed the government, which declared a state of emergency; eventually, major damage was avoided.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 38.1
 Average Annual Forest Change, 1990-2000, 000 ha: —137
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 53
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 32,265
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 2.05

LIVING CONDITIONS

Housing conditions depend on socioeconomic status. Wealthy people live in comfortable, modern houses and apartments, while poor people live in shacks without running water or electricity. Poorly designed latrines in rural areas contribute to the spread of disease. Ecuador is a relatively safe place, though there is some street crime in Quito and Guayaquil. Traffic accidents are a common cause of death. Most people use public transportation, especially buses, trucks, and taxis. Passengers are allowed to ride on top of trains. The domestic airline system is efficient and inexpensive.

HEALTH

Ecuador has a national health-care system that provides medical care to all citizens at a nominal cost. The public system suffers from the lack of supplies, staff, and space, so those who can afford to pay for medical care usually choose to go to the excellent private hospitals and clinics. Two-thirds of Ecuador's medical professionals and hospitals are located in Guayaquil, which also happens to be where most of the money is located. Money for public health has been decreasing, and infectious diseases such as cholera, polio, typhoid, yellow fever, and malaria still occur, especially in rural areas.

Rural people often choose to visit traditional healers instead of doctors. These healers use Ecuador's many plants and herbs to concoct medicines that can be very effective in treating diseases. The antimalarial drug quinine comes from the bark of the Ecuadorian *Cinchona* trees and was discovered by an Ecuadorian Indian in 1630. Today, knowledge of the medicinal properties of plants has been dying out, and the trees themselves are endangered—just when Western researchers have discovered the potential of Ecuador for the discovery of new drugs.

Health

Number of Physicians: 18,335
 Number of Dentists: 2,062
 Number of Nurses: 19,549
 Number of Pharmacists: —
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 148
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 24.49
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 130
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 4.5
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 76
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.3
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 89
 Measles: 80
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 72
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 86

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Common Ecuadorian ingredients are corn, rice, eggs, beans, vegetables, fruit, and fish. People eat many stews and soups. Fried plantains are a popular snack or side dish, as is popcorn. Fish is available throughout the country, and many people eat it raw as *ceviche*—marinated in lemon juice and garnished with tomatoes, cilantro, chili, and onion). There are numerous regional specialties, including roasted guinea pig, suckling pig, goat stew, and a soup made of boiled cattle hooves. Most people eat their largest meal in the middle of the day. Drinks include very strong coffee and *api*, a hot drink made of cornmeal.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 4.4
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,680
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 94.4
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 189.2

STATUS OF WOMEN

Ecuador was the first country in Latin America to grant women suffrage (in 1929), and its constitution establishes complete legal equality for both sexes.

Because of the economic need to maintain more than one income per household, women are entering the workforce earlier and staying longer. Women filled three of 16 cabinet positions in 1999 and one party, the Independent Movement for an Authentic Republic (MIRA), is headed by a woman, Rosalía Arteaga Serrano, who served as Ecuador's interim president in 1997 (February 9–11) and as the first female vice president.

The Center for Women's Action, a nongovernmental organization, organizes and educates women about discriminatory labor practices, family law, and domestic violence. Largely due to its efforts, Ecuador in 1995 passed the Law against Violence Affecting Women and Children, which criminalized spousal abuse and created family courts. Some communities have established their own centers to counsel abused women, and the government began to address this question seriously with the formation of the *Comisaria de la Mujer*, or Women's Bureau, in 1994.

Abortion is illegal. Family-planning support is provided by the Ministry of Health, most universities, and two private organizations, *Asociación pro Familia Ecuatoriana* (APROFE) and the Ecuadorian Center of Family Education.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 16
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.0
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 41.1

WORK

About one-third of the Ecuadorian workforce is employed in agriculture, most as laborers for landowners who grow cash crops such as coffee, cocoa, bananas, potatoes, and rice. The demand for laborers has declined in recent years, and many men have been forced to move to the cities to work menial jobs, leaving their families behind in the country. In the cities people are employed in services, commerce, and manufacturing. Many people work in family-owned businesses. Tourism employs a growing number of Ecuadorians. It has also allowed people who know traditional crafts to make a living selling their creations, such as weavings, carvings, sisal bags, and panama hats. Children work in the cities selling sundries such as chewing gum or cigarettes.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 4,360,000 (urban)
 Female Participation Rate %: 29.1
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 30
 Industry: 25
 Services: 45
 Unemployment %: 9.8

EDUCATION

Education is free, universal, and compulsory for eight years, from the ages of six to 14. Schooling lasts for 12 years, as divided into six years of primary school, three years of middle school, and three years of secondary school. Special programs have been developed to make primary educational facilities accessible to rural youths, an estimated 15 percent of whom are illiterate, but poor rural families still often cannot afford to send their children to school. Students attend schools in shifts, either in the morning or in the afternoon, in order to make the most of limited facilities and teachers.

The academic year runs from October to July in the Sierra and from April or May to January in the Costa. The medium of instruction is Spanish, although Quechua and other indigenous languages are sometimes used. Not all children speak Spanish, so the government has actively recruited teachers who speak indigenous languages.

Private schools account for about 22 percent of secondary-school enrollment and 18 percent of primary-school enrollment and are judged to be better than public schools. Private schools also account for more than half of the enrollment of technical schools. The Catholic Church runs about 800 schools, Protestant denominations about 12.

Public schools are run by the state or by the municipalities; in the latter case they are under the direction of the mayors or the municipal councils. Municipalities are obligated to allocate 30 percent of their budgets to education, although the actual figure rarely reaches 18 percent.

Ecuador has 20 universities (16 state and four private) and three technical colleges. Chief among the public universities are the Central University (the country's oldest), University of Cuenca, University of Loja, University of Guayaquil, and the Technical University of Portoviejo. The largest private universities are Catholic University of Quito, Catholic University of Guayaquil, and the Lay University Vicente Rocafuerte.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 92.5
 Male %: 94.0
 Female %: 91.0
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: —
 First Level: Primary schools: —
 Teachers: 83,736
 Students: 1,987,465
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 23.7
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 99.5
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: —
 Teachers: 73,284
 Students: 756,844
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 13.3
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 50.4

Third Level: Institutions: 23

Teachers: 15,271

Students: —

Gross Enrollment Ratio: —

Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 1.0

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Ecuador's Foundation for Science and Technology coordinates research into scientific matters and is involved with the development of technology and the sciences throughout the Americas. The nation's telephone and computer facilities are currently basic, but they are gradually expanding.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 84

Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 0.1

High-Tech Exports \$million: 34.5

Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

Ecuador's press is free and vigorous. Ownership of the media is broad-based, although foreign investment in broadcast organs is restricted. A law requires the media to give free air time to the government. Journalists are free to report as they wish, though they generally avoid excessive criticism of the government or the armed forces.

The daily newspapers of Quito and Guayaquil account for the bulk of newspaper circulation and readership. Foreign news bureaus represented include UPI, Reuters, Agencia EFE, AP, DPA, and ANSA.

There are eight major book publishers, with a modest annual output. Ecuador adheres to the Universal Copyright and Buenos Aires conventions.

Ecuador boasts more than 300 commercial radio stations, 14 of which are on the air for 24 hours. All stations are required by law to broadcast 15 minutes of adult education programs daily.

Television, introduced in 1959, now reaches more than one million inhabitants in five cities.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 36
 Total Circulation million: 1.22
 Circulation per 1,000: 96.5
 Books Published: 1,870
 Periodicals: -
 Radio Receivers million: 5.64
 per 1,000: 422
 Television sets million: 2.64
 per 1,000: 213

CULTURE

Ecuadorian Indians are known for their haunting music, which they play on panpipes, bamboo flutes, drums, violins, and ukuleles; one of the most famous folk songs is “El condor pasa.” The visual arts have long been popular, starting with pre-Colombian art, which can be seen in the museums in Quito. Many pre-Colombian figurines depict women, and modern sculptors have been imitating that form in their work. Simón Bolívar opened the first school of fine arts in 1822, under the direction of the sculptor Gaspar Sangurima. Ecclesiastical art combines both Spanish and native motifs. Well-known artists include Oswaldo Guayasamin, Manuel Rendon, and Camilo Egas. Graffiti is an important part of Quito’s urban culture; artists cover walls with poetry or political ideas, and journalists and politicians are known to quote their words in their speeches. Ecuador’s novelists include Jorge Enrique Adoum and Jorge Icaza.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 1
 Volumes: 700,000
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Indigenous people in rural areas have kept up folk traditions, such as the anaconda dance. In this dance the village shaman drinks an intoxicating beverage and is led into the spirit world, while other villagers dance in the shape of an anaconda. People maintain folkloric practices in their arts and crafts, some of which are identical to pre-Colombian products.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

There are many possibilities for outdoor recreation in Ecuador. There are many beaches with warm water, though the undertow at Atacames kills swimmers every year. Scuba diving and snorkeling are beautiful both on the mainland and in the Galapagos. There is excellent climbing and hiking available in Parque Nacional Cotopaxi and the Area Nacional de Recreación las Cajas. Jungle hikes and bird watching are popular with tourists. Most national parks and reserves have designated camp-

ing areas and mountain shelters. Ecuadorians enjoy fishing for giant catfish in the rivers.

Ecuadorian children play many games, including hopscotch, marbles, and jump rope. They also play singing and guessing games. Adults like to play darts and cards during family gatherings.

ETIQUETTE

Ecuadorians consider friendly relationships very important, and they value the personal touch. A person at a social gathering should greet every person in the room individually, and should do the same thing when departing. Ecuadorians are comfortable simply dropping by the homes of friends and family, and people at home are always prepared to receive visitors and usually offer them a meal. When guests leave, their hosts frequently give them gifts.

FAMILY LIFE

Ecuadorians consider family ties very important; extended family members commonly live together. Older people are treated with great respect. Most Ecuadorians have godparents, who play important roles in their lives and may help them with finances.

Young people do not date in pairs very often, instead going out in groups. Girls receive special parties when they turn 15. Women marry young, usually in their early 20s, though most parents encourage their children to finish school before marrying. Many Ecuadorians have two marriage ceremonies, a religious one and a civil one. Living together before a Catholic wedding is frowned upon by religious families. On the other hand, common-law marriages are common.

A typical household includes a married couple and their unmarried children. The youngest son usually stays in his parents’ home even after he marries, on the understanding that he will care for his parents as they age. Women handle most of the housework and child-care duties, though this pattern has been changing as more women have entered the workforce.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

In urban areas, most people dress in the modern Western style. People in the countryside wear hats and colorful shawls. People within an ethnic group tend to dress similarly. The highlands are cooler than the lower areas, and people in the hills cover their bodies fully. Shorts are more acceptable at lower elevations. Ecuadorians take pride in their appearance and dress with care.

SPORTS

Soccer is Ecuador's most popular sport, followed by volleyball and track. Ecuador's first Olympic gold medal came from a track athlete, the race-walker Jefferson Prez, who won the gold medal in 1996. Most players of organized sports are male, though some girls and women also participate. *Pelota* is a popular casual sport, played by people in city parks; two teams hit a ball back and forth and another team tries to stop the ball. Bullfighting is a popular spectator sport; every December, Quito holds a festival at which bullfighting takes place.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1945** Ecuador becomes a charter member of the United Nations; a new constitution is promulgated in December.
- 1947** President José María Velasco Ibarra is deposed in a military coup, whose leaders are in turn ousted by counterrevolutionaries; a provisional government is established.
- 1948** Galo Plaza Lasso wins presidential elections; Ecuador becomes a charter member of the Organization of American States (OAS).
- 1952** Former president Velasco is elected president.
- 1956** Conservative candidate Camilo Ponce Enríquez wins a narrow victory.
- 1960** Velasco is returned to the presidency by a wide margin.
- 1961** President Velasco signs the Alliance for Progress, a 10-year economic treaty with the United States; Velasco is forced to resign and Vice President Carlos Arosemena Monroy is sworn in as president.
- 1963** Arosemena is ousted and replaced by a military junta; the junta initiates liberal economic and social programs, including land reform.
- 1966** Violent demonstrations erupt across the country; the opposition forces the junta out of power; Otto Arosemena Gomez is named president.
- 1967** A new constitution is promulgated.
- 1968** Velasco is elected to the presidency a fifth time.
- 1970** Velasco assumes dictatorial powers.
- 1972** The military ousts Velasco and coup leader General Guillermo Rodríguez Lara assumes the office of president; Rodríguez's government announces a five-year economic plan emphasizing agriculture, housing, and industry; Ecuador begins exporting petroleum.
- 1976** Admiral Alfredo Poveda Burbano takes over government leadership at the head of a three-man junta.
- 1978** Jaime Roldós Aguilera is elected president.
- 1979** Roldós is sworn in; the new constitution takes effect; clashes with Peru erupt over the ongoing border dispute.
- 1981** International arbitration resolves the border conflict; President Roldós dies in a plane crash, and Vice President Osvaldo Hurtado Larrea is sworn in as president.
- 1983** Floods devastate Ecuador.
- 1984** León Febres Cordero Rivadeneira of the conservative Social Christian Party is elected president.
- 1986** World oil prices continue to decline, depressing Ecuador's economy; the Social Christian Party loses seats in legislative elections.
- 1987** President Cordero is captured and beaten in one of several unsuccessful military uprisings; a major earthquake causes widespread damage; its fiscal crisis deepening, Ecuador indefinitely suspends payments on foreign debt, which exceeds \$9 billion.
- 1988** Democratic Left candidate Rodrigo Borja Cevallos is elected president.
- 1992** Sixto Durán-Ballén Córdovez assumes the presidency.
- 1993** In the nation's worst-ever natural disaster, a landslide in Azuay province kills several hundred and causes more than \$100 million in damage; a wave of strikes protests President Ballén's privatization scheme.
- 1994** In midterm elections Social Christians gain a majority in Congress; massive roadblocks by Amerindian groups impede the government's plans to reclaim communal lands.
- 1995** Crossfire in the Cenepa frontier escalates into war with Peru; Vice President Alberto Dahik, accused of embezzlement of reserve funds, flees to Costa Rica.
- 1996** Abdalá Bucaram Ortíz of the Roldosist party becomes president, and Rosalía Arteaga Serrano, an independent, becomes the first woman vice president.
- 1997** About two million workers participate in a general strike in February; days later, as 10,000 mostly indigenous protesters lay siege to the capitol building, Congress dismisses Bucaram for "mental incapacity"; Vice President Arteaga proclaims herself president but steps aside when Congress elects Fabián Alarcón interim president; in July Congress votes to dismiss the entire Supreme Court; the El Niño weather pattern damages crops and leaves over 20,000 people homeless; numerous Ecuadorian banks collapse in the wake of the Asian fiscal crisis.
- 1998** Jamil Mahuad Witt of the Popular Democracy Party wins the presidency; a new constitution

is promulgated; in October President Mahuad and President Alberto Fujimori of Peru sign a treaty accepting border limits along a 78 km line of disputed territory.

- 1999** Annual inflation reaches 60 percent; banks close for five days; Ecuador defers payments on \$6 billion in debt.
- 2000** In January 10,000 protesters march on Quito to demand the resignation of President Mahuad, and 1,500 protesters take over the capitol building; a military junta briefly takes power in a coup; in the face of opposition from the United States, the United Nations, and the OAS, the junta relinquishes control, and Vice President Gustavo Noboa Bejarano is sworn in as president; the World Trade Organization allows Ecuador to impose \$200 million in economic sanctions on the European Union over the banana trade dispute; President Noboa replaces the sucre with the U.S. dollar as the official national currency; the International Monetary Fund approves \$2 billion in aid for Ecuador.
- 2001** An oil spill in the Galapagos Islands threatens the environment. Luis Maldonado becomes minister for social welfare, the first Amerindian to hold an ordinary cabinet post.
- 2002** Indigenous people protest that oil revenues should be invested in their communities. Lucio Gutiérrez wins the presidential election.
- 2003** Noboa goes into exile in the Dominican Republic after being charged with corruption.
- 2004** Prisoners take hostages to demand better conditions and shorter sentences. Congress dismisses the Supreme Court and appoints new members.
- 2005** Congress removes President Gutiérrez from office. Vice-President Alfredo Palacio takes his place.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Censos (in Spanish)
<http://www.inec.gov.ec/>

EGYPT

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Arab Republic of Egypt (Gomhuriyet Miṣr al-Arabiyyah)

ABBREVIATION

EG

CAPITAL

Cairo

HEAD OF STATE

President Muhammad Hosni Mubarak (from 1981)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Ahmed Nazif (from 2004)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Republic

POPULATION

77,505,756 (2005)

AREA

1,001,450 sq km (386,660 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Egyptians

LANGUAGE

Arabic (official)

RELIGION

Islam (official)

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Egyptian pound

NATIONAL FLAG

Tricolor of three equal horizontal stripes—red, white, and black—with the national emblem in the central white stripe

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A stylized, upright eagle, gold and white in color, facing forward with wings partly raised and its beak turned to its own right. On its chest the stripes of the flag are vertically displayed, and in its claws is a scroll with the words in Arabic script, “Arab Republic of Egypt.”

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“To Thee, to Thee, My Country, I Give My Love and My Heart”

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

June 8 (Evacuation Day), July 23 (National Day, Revolution Day), December 27 (Victory Day), various Islamic festivals, the Coptic festival Sham-al-Nasim. The Nile Food Festival, June 17, is an unofficial holiday.

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

February 28, 1922

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

September 11, 1971

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Egypt is at the northeastern corner of Africa and forms a rough quadrangle covering 386,660 sq mi (1,001,450 sq km) and extending 976 mi (1,571 km) southeast to northwest and 743 mi (1,196 km) northeast to southwest. It is bordered on the south by Sudan and on the west by Libya. The Sinai Peninsula, found at the northern end of the Red Sea, is also a part of Egypt.

The capital is Cairo, one of the world's largest cities, with an urban population of 6,789,479 as of 1996. The other major urban centers are Alexandria (3,328,196), Giza (2,221,868), Shubrā al-Khaymah (870,716), and Port Said (469,533).

The country is divided into two regions: Lower Egypt, or Wagh al-Bahari, and Upper Egypt, or al-Said. Lower Egypt is the broad, alluvial Nile Delta, while Upper Egypt is a tableland rising to 1,500 ft (457 m).

The two main topographical divisions are the Western Desert and the Eastern Desert. The Western Desert, which covers 68 percent of the land area, is an arid region covered by vast, rolling plains of sand and large depressions, many of which lie below sea level. The Eastern Desert, also called the Arabian Desert, is an elevated plateau broken by deep valleys that covers 22 percent of the land area. Human settlements are limited to the Nile River valley and Nile Delta, which cover 4 percent of the land area.

Egypt



The Nile River is not only the longest river in Africa but also the lifeline of Egypt. It flows through Egypt for nearly 1,000 m (1,609 km) after entering the country at Wadi Halfa. Throughout the length of Egypt there are no significant tributaries entering the Nile. For centuries the annual flooding of the Nile has governed the agricultural life of the country. The day traditionally celebrated for the entry of the floodwaters is June 17. The water then continuously rises until, at full flood in September, 17.6 billion cu ft (500 million cu m) of water flows by Cairo daily. At Cairo the Nile spreads out over a broad estuary to form a fertile delta of 8,494 sq mi (22,000 sq km), through which flow the two main distributary branches:

the eastern Damietta and the western Rosetta. These are supplemented by a network of irrigation canals and four main shallow lakes. Below Aswan is a region of cascades known as the first cataract, which serves as a barrier to upstream navigation and isolates Egypt from Sudan.

The largest lake is the man-made Lake Nasser, a reservoir behind the Aswan High Dam.

Geography

Area sq km: 1,001,450; sq mi 386,660

World Rank: 29th

Land Boundaries, km: Gaza Strip 11; Israel 266; Libya 1,115; Sudan 1,273

Coastline, km: 2,450
Elevation Extremes meters:
Lowest: Qathara Depression -133
Highest: Mount Catherine 2,629
Land Use %
Arable Land: 2.87
Permanent Crops: 0.48
Forest: 0.07
Other: 96.6

Population of Principal Cities (1996)

Alexandria	3,328,196
Aswan	219,017
Asyut	343,498
Cairo	6,789,479
Damanhur	212,203
El Faiyum	260,964
Giza	2,221,868
Ismailia	254,477
Kafr ad Dawwar	231,978
El Mahalla el Kubra	395,402
El Mansura	369,621
El Minya	201,360
Port Said	469,533
Shubra el Khayma	870,716
Suez	417,610
Tanta	371,010
Zagazig	267,351

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Egypt has a warm, arid climate with two seasons: a cool winter from November to April and a hot summer from May to October. Prevailing northerly winds temper the climate along the Mediterranean coast, where temperatures in the summer rarely exceed 91°F (33°C). The interior has a true desert climate, with temperatures usually rising to 100°F to 110°F (38°C to 43°C). The desert temperatures are subject to wide variations. During the winter there may be occasional cold spells, and light frosts and light snow are not unknown.

Rainfall is almost entirely limited to the coastal area, where it averages 8 in (200 mm) a year. Cairo receives 1 in (25 mm) a year. In the interior it may rain only once in several years.

The climate is made oppressive in early summer by the dust-laden khamsin, a sandstorm from the south that blows intermittently and may continue for days, with accompanying winds of up to 90 mph (145 kph).

Climate & Weather

Mean Temperature
Cairo January 45°F to 85°F
Cairo July 71°F to 96°F
Interior 100°F to 110°F
Average Rainfall: Coastal Areas 8 in
Cairo: 1 in
Interior: 0 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Camels and donkeys are the most common large animals. There are many rats and bats, 34 kinds of snakes (including cobra), and about 430 species of migratory birds; some two million birds stop in Egypt every year on their migrations north and south. Scorpions are plentiful. In the Red Sea there are turtles, dolphins, stingrays, and sharks as well as coral reef ecosystems. The vast majority of Egypt's original animal species are extinct within the nation's borders; these include cheetahs, leopards, hyenas, oryx, and most gazelles.

Most of Egypt's plant species are domestic. Palms and papyrus grow there. Farmers grow crops such as cotton, rice, corn, and sorghum.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 77,505,756
World Rank: 15th
Density per sq km: 67.9
% of annual growth (1999-2003): 1.9
Male %: 50.5
Female %: 49.5
Urban %: 42.2
Age Distribution %:
0-14: 33.4
15-64: 62.2
65 and over: 4.3
Population 2025: 103,353,000
Birth Rate per 1,000: 23.84
Death Rate per 1,000: 5.3
Rate of Natural Increase %: 2.0
Total Fertility Rate: 2.95
Expectation of Life (years): Males 68.22
Females 73.31
Marriage Rate per 1,000: 7.6
Divorce Rate per 1,000: 1.1
Average Size of Households: 4.9
Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Egypt has remained ethnically homogeneous, with native Egyptians constituting over 90 percent of the population. This distinct ethnicity has been one of the strengths of the Egyptian nation.

The major ethnic minorities, who form about 10 percent of the population, are Bedouin Arabs, Nubians, Greeks, Italians, and Maltese, though none of these communities are numerically significant. Of these, the Bedouins and Nubians are being gradually assimilated into the native population.

LANGUAGES

Arabic is the official language and the language universally spoken by Egyptians. Though the government officially

favors modern Arabic, colloquial Arabic in its Egyptian form is widely used in the media and in many universities. The most important minority languages are Coptic and Nubian. Coptic, the ancient language of pharaonic Egypt, ceased to be a spoken language after the Arab invasion of the seventh century, but it survives in the liturgy of the Copts. A few thousand Berber tribespeople speak Berber, while the Arabic-speaking Nubians still retain Nubian as their mother tongue.

Both the English and French languages declined during the Nasser era (1954–70), when all Western influences became anathema. However, both English and French have remained popular, particularly among educated Egyptians.

RELIGIONS

Islam in its Sunni form is the official religion of Egypt and the religion of approximately 94 percent of the population. The power of Islam in Egypt is symbolized by the mosque and the University of al-Azhar, considered the oldest existing university and the most influential center of Islamic learning. Because of Islam's hold on the people, the government often seeks to enlist the aid of religion in furthering its programs and exercises considerable control over religious affairs. Public expressions of piety and participation in Friday communal prayers by public leaders are accepted means of eliciting popular support. However, presidents Nasser, Sadat, and Mubarak found themselves opposed by the fundamentalist Muslim Brotherhood, which continues to be the most serious threat to the regime.

The largest religious minority is the Coptic Christian community, constituting about 4 percent of the population. The Copts are descendants of ancient Egyptians who were Christianized in the early centuries of the Christian era. In the fifth century the Coptic Church seceded from the main body of orthodoxy at Constantinople and joined the Monophysite faith. The position of Coptic Christians in Egyptian society has become more difficult in recent decades. The Copts claim that they are persecuted by Muslim extremists bent on exterminating all non-Muslims in the Arab world. President Mubarak has publicly emphasized the full equality of Copts and other religious minorities with Muslims. The government also has made clear that Egypt, its Islamic character notwithstanding, remains a secular state governed by civil law based on the Napoleonic Code. Nevertheless, the Copts consider themselves victims of discrimination as well as overt persecution. As evidence they cite that all top civil service posts are held by Muslims, as are nearly all senior diplomatic positions and heads of universities.

Religious Affiliations

Sunni Muslim	72,855,000
Other	4,650,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Egypt has the oldest recorded history of any country outside China and India. It was ruled from around 3400 B.C.E. by many dynasties of pharaohs who presided over a great civilization and erected majestic monuments. As the power of the pharaohs waned, the country was periodically conquered by invaders, including the Assyrians and the Persians. In 332 B.C.E. Alexander the Great of Macedonia invaded Egypt and established the dynasty of the Ptolemies, who ruled Egypt from 323 B.C.E. to 30 B.C.E. The best known ruler of this dynasty was Queen Cleopatra, who was defeated along with her lover Marc Antony at the Battle of Actium in 31 B.C.E. by Octavius, later Emperor Augustus. Egypt became fully Christian around the third century C.E. After the official division of the Roman Empire under Constantine II around 340, Egypt became part of the Eastern or Byzantium Empire. In 639–42 Muslim hordes from Arabia conquered Egypt and during the next several centuries completely Arabized and Islamized the region.

The British, who came in 1882 and departed in 1922, were the last of many foreign rulers. The British were never really interested in colonizing Egypt but only in securing their passage through the Suez Canal. British control was nominal and indirect, though it remained until the end of World War II, with a true ending not written until Britain's debacle in the Suez invasion of 1956. French legal and educational traditions proved more durable in Egypt than those of Britain, and Western culture is even now filtered into Egypt through the medium of French.

Egypt's modern history began with a military coup in July 1952, which toppled King Farouk. The revolt of young officers was led by Maj. Gen. Muhammad Naguib. Farouk officially abdicated in June 1953. A republic was established under Col. Gamal Abdel Nasser, who was made prime minister in 1954 and president in June 1956. Nasser heralded Arab nationalism and unity as well as ardent opposition to Israel. Internally, he fostered social and economic change and strove to end British influence.

Unable to obtain satisfactory assistance from the West, in 1955 Nasser accepted military and other forms of aid from the Soviet Union. The next year Egypt nationalized the Suez Canal. As a result, Britain, France, and Israel invaded Egypt in October but withdrew under pressure from the superpowers and the United Nations. On February 1, 1958, Egypt and Syria formed the United Arab Republic (UAR) under Nasser's leadership, although Syria reasserted its independence in 1961.

Egypt suffered heavy losses in the Six-Day War with Israel in June 1967, including the occupation by Israel of the Sinai Peninsula. This defeat led to greater Egyptian reliance on the Soviet Union and the overhaul of both state machinery and the ruling Arab Socialist Union Party.

The death of Nasser in September 1970 was a turning point in recent Egyptian history. Power was transferred to Vice President Anwar al-Sadat, who eventually made peace with Israel and moved Egypt into the Western orbit. Yet Sadat was forced to reach for Soviet aid in preparation for renewed warfare with Israel. Egypt and Syria fought Israel for 18 days in October 1973. After initial Egyptian advances, Israel was gaining ground when the U.S. secretary of state Henry Kissinger arranged a cease-fire. Forces on both sides were disengaged east of the Suez Canal. Sadat was designated for a second six-year term as president in 1976 and the following year made a dramatic visit to Jerusalem seeking a settlement with Israel.

In March 1979 Egypt's new cabinet approved the peace treaty with Israel, which called for the gradual return of the Sinai Peninsula to Egypt and which was ratified in a public referendum. By 1981 Egypt relied heavily on the United States for military and economic support. In September 1981, facing growing domestic unrest, the government jailed about 1,000 dissidents, including Muslim fundamentalists, journalists, and Nasserites. On October 6, 1981, Sadat was assassinated by Muslim militants. The People's Assembly immediately nominated Vice President Muhammad Hosni Mubarak as Egypt's new president.

The years following 1981 were marked by growing domestic instability due to economic problems and the emerging strength of Muslim fundamentalism. Despite these challenges, Mubarak remained firmly in control. Egypt also reestablished relations with other Arab states following its isolation and condemnation over the treaty with Israel. Mubarak's diplomatic skill led to the ultimate return of the Sinai Peninsula to Egypt in 1982. President Mubarak was reelected to a second term as president in October 1987 and to a third term in 1993.

Egypt's new ties with the United States were strengthened during the Persian Gulf War in 1991. Although Mubarak first tried to bring about an Arab diplomatic solution, he later sent 40,000 Egyptian troops as part of a multinational force led by the United States in defense of Saudi Arabia.

In the 1990s several Muslim extremist groups carried out bombings and attacks on tourists to weaken the Mubarak government, seeking a government and society in Egypt ruled strictly according to Islamic doctrine. Mubarak himself narrowly escaped assassination by Muslim fundamentalists during a visit to Ethiopia in 1995. Egyptian security forces carried out raids against Islamic militants, but the challenge of Muslim fundamentalism remained.

In 1996 Kamal Ahmed al-Ganzouri was named prime minister, and he launched what was widely perceived as economic liberalization. His new cabinet emphasized Egypt's role as an advocate for stability and peace in the Middle East. In 2000 Mubarak again tried to broker peace between Israel and the Palestinians, but escalating violence toward the end of the year found him espous-

ing increasingly hostile positions toward Israel. In 2001 he condemned U.S. air raids against Iraq. Later that year Mubarak supported the U.S. campaign against terrorism that was prompted by terrorist attacks in New York City and Washington, D.C., on September 11, 2001.

Mubarak has maintained an ambivalent attitude toward Muslim extremism and violence. Egypt downgraded its relations with Israel in April 2002 as a result of Israel's efforts to oust Yasser Arafat. In late 2004 a series of bomb attacks aimed at Israelis killed more than 30 people on the Sinai Peninsula. Yasser Arafat died in November 2004, and his funeral was held in Cairo. In parliamentary elections in 2005 supporters of the Muslim Brotherhood, who ran as independents, won 20 percent of the seats.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1953–54	Muhammad Naguib
1954–70	Gamal Abdel Nasser
1970–81	Anwar al-Sadat
1981–	Muhammad Hosni Mubarak

CONSTITUTION

Egypt's government is based on the constitution of 1971, which proclaims Egypt as an Arab republic with a democratic and socialist system derived from the country's historical heritage and the spirit of Islam. The constitution provides for a strong executive. Executive authority is vested in the president, the head of state, who is nominated by at least one-third of the members of the People's Assembly, approved by at least two-thirds, and elected by popular referendum. The president serves a six-year term and may be reelected for subsequent terms. The president may take emergency measures in the interests of the state and can call a national referendum on "matters of supreme interest." The president also appoints the prime minister and other ministers.

Under the constitution of 1971 suffrage is universal over age 18. Voting is specified as a national duty, and failure to vote entails a fine. Presidential elections occur every six years, in the form of a plebiscite of approval in which only one candidate is presented to the electorate.

The Council of Ministers, described as "the government" in the constitution, is the supreme executive organ of the state. It consists of the prime minister, the head of government, deputy prime ministers, ministers, and deputy ministers. The principle of ministerial responsibility to the legislature is constitutionally established, and the assembly may pass a no-confidence vote against the prime minister.

After President Sadat's assassination in October 1981, a state of emergency was proclaimed. It was extended by presidential decree in successive years and renewed by

President Mubarak in 1992. Under these emergency laws designed to combat civil unrest and terrorism, certain constitutional safeguards that protect civil and political liberties can be suspended.

PARLIAMENT

The national legislative is called the People's Assembly (Majlis al-Shaa'ab), a unicameral body elected for five-year terms. It consists of 454 members, 444 elected by popular vote and 10 appointed by the president. Half the seats are reserved for "workers and peasants." The Assembly's legislative powers are circumscribed by the fact that the president has the right to rule by decree and to veto a bill passed by the Assembly. The Assembly functions primarily as a policy-approving rather than as a policy-initiating body.

There is also the Advisory Council, or Majlis al-Shura, which serves only in a consultative role. Its 264 members serve for six-year terms; 176 are elected by popular vote, 88 are appointed by the president.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Egypt has been a virtual one-party state since the 1952 revolution and has become increasingly intolerant of opposition under the Mubarak administration. The ruling party is the National Democratic Party (NDP), founded by President Sadat in 1978. Few of the opposition parties have significant legislative representation and most have no legal standing either. The elections of 2000 resulted in 34 seats in the Assembly going to members of opposition parties. Opposition parties generally tend to boycott elections because of electoral laws and practices designed to work against them. There are a number of clandestine Muslim fundamentalist groups working outside the political system. The most important of these groups is the Muslim Brotherhood, which wants to establish Egypt as a fundamentalist Islamic state.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Local government consists of three levels of jurisdiction: governorates, towns, and villages. In 1999 there were 26 governorates: Ad-Daqahliyah, Al-Bahr al-Ahmar, Al-Buhayrah, Al-Gharbiyah, Al-Iskandariyah, Al-Jizah, Al-Minufiyah, Al-Minya, Al-Qahirah, Al-Qalyubiyah, Al-Wadi al-Jadid, Ash-Sharqiyah, As-Suways (Suez), Aswan, Asyut, Bani Suwayf, Bur Sa'id, Dumyat, Janub Sina', Kafr ash-Shaykh, Matruh, Qina, Shamal Sina', and Suhaj.

Each governorate is administered by a governor, who is both the chief regional executive and the representative of the central government. Local self-government con-

sists of governorate councils, town councils, and village councils. An appointed chief executive is the head of the council at every level. All councils are also subject to national executive guidance and control. Local councils are composed of three types of members: nominated members (usually technical or professional persons), elected members chosen and designated by the National Democratic Party, and ex officio members assigned by appropriate ministries. All elected and nominated members have terms of four years. The financial resources of the local councils include local property and land taxes, subsidies from the central government, and revenues from a joint fund.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The legal system of Egypt is based on Islamic law, the Napoleonic Code, and English common law. Religious courts were abolished in 1956 and the entire court system was secularized and unified. Article 2 of the constitution states that Islamic jurisprudence is the principal source of law. However, the application of Islamic law is limited to the so-called family status courts, which have jurisdiction over such matters as divorce and inheritance for Muslims. Under President Mubarak the judiciary has enjoyed a relatively large measure of independence.

Courts are divided into four levels of jurisdiction. There are summary tribunals in each district, primary tribunals in each governorate, six courts of appeal, and the Supreme Court of Appeals in Cairo, with a chief justice, four deputy justices, and 36 justices. The Supreme Judicial Council guarantees the independence and integrity of the courts and supervises the whole judicial system.

Arrested persons have the right of habeas corpus, and there is a system of bail. Constitutional and legal safeguards of due process in the arrest and pretrial custody stages are generally observed. Arrests occur openly and with warrants, and the accused are brought before an independent judiciary. Exceptions to these procedures have sometimes occurred during the state of emergency laws enacted in the 1980s and 1990s following President Sadat's assassination.

Egyptian law provides for public trial and equal treatment before the law. Persons accused of espionage, plotting to overthrow the government, or similar crimes, however, are tried in state security courts, often in closed proceedings. Defendants are permitted to be present during these proceedings and are represented by lawyers conducting an active defense.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Egypt is a republic with a strong authoritarian presidency, and the country's political and economic structures have

been shaped largely by the ideological bent of the president. President Mubarak tends to use his power and influence with caution. However, in 1994 he extended the state of emergency decreed following Sadat's assassination in 1981 in order to counter "the regrettable terrorist acts in the country, including the attacks on tourists, assassination of officials, bombing of banks, and the treacherous killing of innocent civilians, police officers, and police commanders." The most significant political opposition to Mubarak's regime has been the powerful Muslim Brotherhood, which he allowed to engage in limited political activity in his first two terms but moved against more aggressively in the latter 1990s.

During the 1990s Egyptian security forces and terrorist groups continued violent exchanges, and the government's crackdown against Islamic terrorism restricted many basic rights. Security forces have arbitrarily detained people and have abused prisoners in their custody. The government has restricted freedom of the press and freedom of movement as well as some practice of religion. Police persecute homosexuals. Domestic violence against women and female genital mutilation continued. Child labor is widespread, and employers are known for abusing employees.

FOREIGN POLICY

Egypt has strengthened its ties with the Arab world, at the same time forging a closer relationship with the West, particularly the United States. Egypt was readmitted to the Arab League in 1989, and league headquarters returned to Cairo from Tunis. Mubarak served as the head of the Organization of African Unity (OAU, now the African Union) in 1989 and 1993, consolidating his country's position in that key group. Egypt also took a prominent role in the Persian Gulf War of 1991, firmly supporting the United States by sending 40,000 Egyptian troops against Iraq, constituting the second-largest army in the coalition forces.

Egypt continued to play a leading role in Middle East affairs during the 1990s, working actively in the peace process negotiations. It supported the 1994 Jordan-Israel peace treaty and other initiatives. Mubarak has met with Israeli leaders and worked with the United States to improve relationships between the countries of the Middle East. In the 2000s Egypt hosted several summits to resume the Camp David negotiations suspended in 2000, and the government has been working with Israel and Palestine to come to a stable resolution to an Israeli withdrawal from Gaza.

Egypt has also contributed to numerous peacekeeping missions in the Middle East and Africa, including in Sierra Leone, Liberia, and Sudan. Since 2001 Egypt has been assisting the United States in its war against terrorism. The United States in turn has donated a great deal of economic and military assistance to Egypt.

DEFENSE

Egypt's defense structure is headed by the president of the republic, who is also the military governor-general and supreme commander. In addition, the president presides over the National Defense Council, the senior policy body of the government in military affairs. Under the president are the minister of war and a deputy commander in chief, who also functions as the chief of staff and the commander of the army.

Military manpower is provided by compulsory conscription of adult males between the ages of 18 and 30 for up to 36 months of service. Egypt has one of the largest armed forces in the region. The military owns equipment from the United States, France, the United Kingdom, Italy, China, and the former Soviet Union. Egypt is committed to providing stability in the region, and its military has worked with the armies of several other Arab and African states. Egypt's defense spending in 2003 was \$2.44 billion, or about 3.6 percent of the country's gross domestic product (GDP).

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	430,000
Military Manpower Availability:	20,340,716
Military Expenditures \$billion:	2.44
as % of GDP:	3.6
as % of central government expenditures:	—
Arms Imports \$million:	638
Arms Exports \$million:	25

ECONOMY

Egypt's economy is one of state capitalism, with increasing emphasis on the private sector. Agriculture remains the largest sector of the economy, involving 32 percent of Egypt's labor force, though it accounts for only 17 percent of the country's GDP. Industry, including manufacturing, mining, construction, and power, is the second-largest sector and accounts for 33 percent of GDP. Services bring in the remaining half of total GDP. The Suez Canal in particular has been a reliable source of income for many years.

By the late 1980s Egypt faced serious population pressure on its limited resources. Only 2.9 percent of its land is arable, the birth rate of 23.8 per 1,000 is among the highest in the world, 17 percent of the population lives in poverty, and Egypt must import three-fifths of its food. The collapse of world oil prices in the 1980s and the cost of the Persian Gulf War posed a crisis for the Egyptian economy, as its balance of payments deficit expanded rapidly.

To meet the economic crisis, Egypt began large-scale economic reforms, with the support of the International Monetary Fund (IMF). By the mid-1990s the government

had reduced budget deficits, curtailed inflation, ended many government subsidies, and built up foreign reserves. New business legislation marked the government's new policy toward privatizing industry and liberalizing trade and investment. This shift toward a more market-oriented economy brought increased foreign investment.

The massacre of tourists at Luxor in 1997 by Muslim extremists marked a significant setback, given tourism's key role in the economy. However, government action to counter terrorism and ensure public safety led to a revival of foreign visitors within a short period.

By mid-1998, however, the pace of structural reform slackened, and lower combined hard-currency earnings resulted in pressure on the Egyptian pound and sporadic U.S. dollar shortages. Monetary pressures have since eased, thanks to the 1999–2000 higher oil prices, a rebound in tourism, and a series of minidevaluations of the pound. The development of a gas export market is a major positive factor in future growth. In 2001 the aftereffects of the attacks of September 11 in New York City and Washington, D.C., and the ensuing war in Afghanistan dealt a heavy blow to Egypt's tourist industry.

The government is still working to transform its economy from state controlled to free market, and state-owned businesses still predominate in many areas. Agriculture is entirely privately owned. Tourism fared well in 2003–04, and the Suez Canal brought in substantial income. After the currency dropped in 2003, the government offered food subsidies, which worsened the deficit. In 2004 GDP grew at a rate of 3.1 percent.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion:	295.2			
GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$:	4,000			
GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %:	4.3			
GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %:	2.3			
Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:				
Agriculture:	17			
Industry:	33			
Services:	50			
Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:				
Private Consumption:	73			
Government Consumption:	13			
Gross Domestic Investment:	16.7			
Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports:	8.759			
Imports:	14.75			
% of Income Received by Poorest 10%:	3.7			
% of Income Received by Richest 10%:	29.5			
Consumer price index (1995 = 100)				
1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
116.8	120.4	123.7	126.5	129.9

Finance

National Currency: Egyptian Pound (EGP)
Exchange Rate: \$1 = EGP 5.8509
Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 93.5

Central Bank Discount Rate %:	10.0
Total External Debt \$billion:	30.34
Debt Service Ratio %:	—
Balance of Payments \$billion:	3.874
International Reserves SDRs \$billion:	13.4
Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:	4.3

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$billion:	1.286
per capita \$:	19
Foreign Direct Investment \$million:	647

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year:	July 1–June 30
Revenues \$billion:	14.69
Expenditures \$billion:	19.03
Budget Deficit \$billion:	4.34
Tax Revenues as % of GDP:	—

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %:	17
Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %:	3.3
Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares:	31.3
Irrigation, % of Farms having:	100
Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare:	457
Total Farmland % of land area:	2.9
Livestock: Cattle 000:	3,900
Sheep 000:	4,672
Hogs 000:	30
Chickens 000:	92,000
Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million:	16.9
Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000:	801.5

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion:	14.58
Industrial Production Growth Rate %:	1.5

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million:	56.9
Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million:	46.76
Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000:	689
Net Energy Imports % of use:	–23.5
Electricity Installed Capacity kW million:	17.7
Production kW-hr billion:	75.2
Consumption kW-hr billion:	70.0
Coal Reserves tons million:	24
Production tons million:	—
Consumption tons million:	1.2
Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion:	62
Production cubic feet billion:	749
Consumption cubic feet billion:	749

Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: 3.7
 Production barrels 000 per day: 752
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 558
 Pipelines Length km: 5,032

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 14.75
 Exports \$billion: 8.759
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 4.0
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): –2.4
 Balance of Trade \$billion: 3.874

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
United States %	13.6	13.3
Germany %	7.4	4.7
Italy %	7.0	12.3
France %	6.6	4.7
China %	4.8	—
Saudi Arabia %	4.3	—
United Kingdom %	—	7.9
India %	—	4.2

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 64,000
 Paved %: 78.1
 Automobiles: 1,847,000
 Trucks and Buses: 650,000
 Railroad: Track Length km: 5,063
 Passenger-km billion: 55.8
 Freight-km billion: 4.2
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 159
 Total Deadweight Tonnage million: 1.75
 Airports: 89
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 9
 Length of Waterways km: 3,500

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 4.9
 Number of Tourists from million: 3
 Tourist Receipts \$billion: 3.764
 Tourist Expenditures \$billion: 1.278

Communications

Telephones million: 8.74
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.02
 Cellular Telephones million: 5.8
 Personal Computers million: 2
 Internet Hosts per million people: 44
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 35

ENVIRONMENT

Although Egypt has passed laws to protect its unique ecosystems, plants, and animals, environmental issues are secondary to the needs of a growing population and pressure for increased food production. Irrigating farmland has caused increasing soil salinization, estimated to affect 28 percent of all agricultural areas. In addition, urban sprawl and windblown sand continue to exclude arable soil from possible use.

Water pollution is a growing environmental threat, brought about by the runoff of salinized drainage water from irrigated areas, the use of farm pesticides, and a lack of adequate sewage disposal. Industrial and mining wastes also contribute to the problem. Oil pollution from offshore oil rigs and pipelines and coastal shipping is a significant threat to Egypt's coral reefs, fisheries, and tourist beaches. The Aswan Dam has stopped the floods that plagued the Nile valley for millennia, but it is also allowing the Sahara desert to encroach.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 0.07
 Average Annual Forest Change, 1990-2000, 000 ha: 2
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 13
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 2.22

LIVING CONDITIONS

Egypt's public transportation system is widespread and inexpensive. There are trains, buses, boats on the Nile, minibuses, airplanes, camels, donkeys, and horses. Public transport is often crowded.

Rural people in small villages live in close-knit communities, often near extended family. They spend their time growing crops and raising livestock such as sheep, buffalo, goats, and chickens. They live in small brick houses. Villagers now have access to health care and clean water, as well as electricity, which makes television and radio possible. Many rural people, such as the nomadic Bedouin, have begun moving to the cities to find work.

Urban Egyptians live in more modern conditions, although cities have become very crowded. People depend on mosques and churches to supplement the social services provided by the government. Most urban dwellers live in apartments and like ornaments such as elaborate furniture and colorful tapestries and wall hangings.

HEALTH

Basic health care is free to all citizens, including those in rural areas. More elaborate care is available to those able

to pay for it. The health-care system has been feeling economic strain as the population grows rapidly. Population growth is the result of several factors, including an increasing life expectancy, decreasing infant mortality rate, and a moderate fertility rate of almost three children per women. The government has sponsored family-planning programs in an effort to help control the size of families. Egypt has done a great deal toward improving children's health, vaccinating children against polio, diphtheria, and measles.

The medical profession is held in high esteem, and the best students compete to enter medical school; the number of female doctors is steadily increasing. Many of Egypt's doctors, however, decide to move to other countries.

Health

Number of Physicians: 143,555
 Number of Dentists: 18,438
 Number of Nurses: 187,017
 Number of Pharmacists: 46,096
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 212
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 33.9
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 84
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 3.9
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 46
 HIV Infected % of adults: < 0.1
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 97
 Measles: 97
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 68
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 98

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Most Egyptians eat three meals a day plus snacks. The basis of most meals is round, flat pita bread, which can serve as a pocket to fill with ingredients or to dip into sauces. At breakfast people drink tea and eat bread with beans, cheese, eggs, or jam; they also eat pastries such as baklava. Other meals feature meats such as lamb, chicken, or beef, fish, salad, pickles, yogurt, fruit, and many vegetables, which can include greens, eggplant, and okra. On the street people buy snacks such as falafel, fried balls of ground fava beans or chickpeas. The main meal is eaten around 3:00, and the evening meal is usually light. Mint tea, coffee, and a drink made of hibiscus leaves are popular drinks. Although Islam forbids the consumption of alcohol, alcoholic drinks are readily available at grocery stores and restaurants, except during Ramadan. Muslims do not eat pork.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 3.5
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 3,320
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 235.2
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 266.8

STATUS OF WOMEN

By law and in many respects in practice, women are granted equality. Women work outside the home and serve in the military. They are represented in the professions, including medicine, law, and education, and they serve in the People's Assembly and the cabinet. Labor laws guarantee women equal pay for equal work in the public sector, and women constitute 17 percent of business owners. Women are free to travel internally and abroad, though a married woman must have her husband's permission to obtain a passport.

In general, social pressures and the resurgent Islamic fundamentalist trend restrict women's rights in many ways. Moreover, in rural areas prevailing cultural values curtail many freedoms, and women often occupy subordinate roles in society there. Egyptian women are financially independent in most matters. In matters of inheritance, a woman is considered equal to half a man. Women's legal rights are limited in other ways. Few women currently attend university, though the number is gradually increasing. Domestic violence is common, and many women still undergo genital mutilation.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 3
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 0.85
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 21.6

WORK

One-third of the Egyptian workforce is employed in agriculture. Some of these laborers, in rural areas, are subsistence farmers, growing food and raising animals to support their families. Most other adults work in the government, in industry, in tourism, or drilling for oil. Many children must work to supplement their families' incomes. In urban areas it is not uncommon for people to work two or three jobs. The government employs a large number of women.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 20,190,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 31.3
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 32
 Industry: 17
 Services: 51
 Unemployment %: 9.9

EDUCATION

Education is, in principle, universal, free, and compulsory for six years, between the ages of six and 13. School-

ing consists of six years of primary school, three years of preparatory school, and three years of secondary school. Secondary schools teach either academic or technical subjects. Because the population has grown so quickly, class sizes in some locations have grown to 60 or 80 students. There is a shortage of classroom buildings, especially in rural areas, where literacy is very low. Private schools offer a higher quality of education and are therefore becoming more popular.

Higher education is provided by 14 state universities and technical colleges. Al-Azhar University, founded in 970 at Cairo, enrolls about 90,000 students. It is very difficult to get into a university. The government sets public examinations that students must pass in order to enter. There are also specialized arts colleges.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 57.7
 Male %: 68.3
 Female %: 46.9
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: —
 First Level: Primary schools: 16,188
 Teachers: 349,182
 Students: 7,855,433
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 22.5
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 90.3
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 7,307
 Teachers: 497,028
 Students: 6,111,699
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 17.4
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 80.8
 Third Level: Institutions: 125
 Teachers: —
 Students: —
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: —
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: —

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The ancient Egyptians had extremely advanced science and technology; they used irrigation techniques, understood astronomy, and proved able to build enormous pyramids. Modern Egypt funds many scientists as well. The United States and Egypt issue joint grants every year to further research into biotechnology, manufacturing techniques, environmental issues, energy, geology, and other areas. The Arab Academy for Science and Technology and Maritime Transport trains students to take technological jobs all over the world.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 0.21
 High-Tech Exports \$million: 12.6
 Patent Applications by Residents: 464

MEDIA

Cairo is the largest publishing center in the Middle East and the media capital of the Arab world. The television and film industries there aspire to become the Hollywood of the Middle East. The press often criticizes the government, though with some restraint in light of the laws allowing prison sentences for “insults.”

Al-Abram is the country’s leading newspaper, and several other newspapers are published daily or weekly. There are two state-run national television stations and six regional ones. There are now several private stations that broadcast via satellite. Egyptian television has viewers throughout the Middle East. The state radio station is Egypt Radio Television Union; two private commercial stations opened in 2003. Egyptians also use the Internet; in 2003 about 2.7 million users were logging on.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 16
 Total Circulation million: 2.08
 Circulation per 1,000: 31.2
 Books Published: 1,410
 Periodicals: -
 Radio Receivers million: -
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets million: 11.4
 per 1,000: 170

CULTURE

Since ancient times, Egypt has produced excellent artists. Poetry has long been popular, and today in rural areas people still memorize and recite folk poems. People like all kinds of music. In the countryside people sing folk songs and dance traditional dances to mark the seasons or special events such as weddings. Men and women usually dance separately. Egypt today is the center of the Arab film and publishing industries. The author Naguib Mahfouz won the 1988 Nobel Prize for Literature.

Muslims celebrate two major holidays, Eid-al-Fitr at the end of Ramadan and Eid-al-Adha to commemorate Abraham’s willingness to sacrifice his son Isaac to God. The Muslim calendar is lunar. Coptic Christians have their own calendar, the Julian calendar, which has 12 30-day months and one 5- or 6-day month. Many folk festivals are celebrated by both Muslims and Christians.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 307
 Volumes: 2,738,700
 Registered borrowers: 1,674,000
 Museums Number: 34
 Annual Attendance: 2,076,000

(continues)

Cultural Indicators *(continued)*

Cinema Gross Receipts national currency million: 46
 Number of Cinemas: 122
 Seating Capacity: 96,100
 Annual Attendance: 10,600,000

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Egyptians have an elaborate ancient mythology, which dates from thousands of years before Christ. Ancient Egyptians believed in a number of gods, many of which had the shapes of animals. They believed that their kings, or pharaohs, were gods themselves, and they built elaborate tombs for their rulers to inhabit after death, erecting pyramids and filling the tombs with riches. The archaeological remnants of this time are still present in Egypt today.

Modern Egyptians still hold some superstitions. They fear the evil eye, which brings bad luck. Bedouins have their own set of beliefs and folklore.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

All Egyptians enjoy socializing with family and friends, relaxing at home with tea or coffee or sitting in cafés to drink coffee and smoke water pipes. Arguing vigorously is part of the fun. In rural areas people spend relaxation time singing folk songs or reciting poetry; in the cities they may watch soap operas. People of all ages enjoy going to the cinema, restaurants, and clubs. The bazaar is a popular destination for shopping and visiting with friends.

ETIQUETTE

Egyptians have a good sense of humor and enjoy jokes. In coffeehouses discussions may become very loud and appear to be arguments, but Egyptians do not take such discussions too seriously and readily forgive one another and resume friendships afterward. They consider it rude to openly admire another person's possessions. Modesty is highly valued, especially among women.

FAMILY LIFE

Egyptians value their extended families very highly, and consider uncles, aunts, cousins, and other relatives to be part of the family. People are allowed to marry their cousins. Arranged marriages still occur, though in urban areas young people often choose their own partners. A bride joins her husband's family and initially has a very low status, below her husband and his mother. She keeps her

own family name. She gains status when she become a mother; sons are especially valued. Egyptians like to have large families and enjoy indulging their children. Muslim men are allowed to have up to four wives, as long as they can support them and treat them fairly.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Most urban Egyptians dress in typical western clothing. Women dress modestly for the most part. The half of the population still living in rural areas dress in more traditional clothes; the men wear long shirts called *gal-abiyah* over pants, and women wear brightly-colored long gowns.

SPORTS

Soccer is the most popular sport in Egypt. Wealthy people also like to play tennis and squash.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1946** British troops withdraw except from the Suez Canal Zone.
- 1952** Farouk is overthrown by the army in a bloodless coup and is exiled.
- 1953** Egypt is declared a republic under General Naguib as president.
- 1956** Naguib is replaced by General Gamal Abdel Nasser. Nasser announces nationalization of the Suez Canal. France, Britain, and Israel attack Egypt but are forced to withdraw following U.S. intervention.
- 1958** Egypt and Syria agree to a short-lived union as the United Arab Republic.
- 1967** Six-Day War with Israel ends in Arab defeat and Israeli occupation of Sinai and Gaza Strip.
- 1970** Nasser dies and is succeeded as president by Anwar Sadat.
- 1973** In the Yom Kippur War, Egypt attempts unsuccessfully to retake territory lost to Israel in Six-Day War.
- 1978–79** Camp David talks under the mediation of U.S. President Jimmy Carter result in historic peace treaty with Israel, which is immediately denounced by the Arab League. Egypt is expelled from the Arab League.
- 1981** Sadat is assassinated by Islamic Fundamentalists. Hosni Mubarak, vice president, assumes presidency.
- 1987** Mubarak is reelected president.
- 1989** Egypt rejoins the Arab League.

- 1993** Mubarak is reelected president.
- 1995** Mubarak is the target of an assassination attempt in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.
- 1997** A total of 58 tourists are killed by gunmen, allegedly from Egypt's Islamic Group, in front of the Temple of Hatshepsut near Luxor.
- 1999** Mubarak begins his fourth term in office.
- 2000** The High Court brings to a legal end the common practice of men preventing their wives from traveling abroad. Egypt, Lebanon, and Syria sign an agreement to build a gas pipeline that will transport Egyptian natural gas to Tripoli, Lebanon, and Syria. Another pipeline would carry gas to Turkey and on to European markets. Mubarak recalls Egypt's ambassador to Israel in protest of the deaths of Palestinians at the hands of Israeli police.
- 2002** Egypt downgrades its relationship with Israel in response to Israel's attacks on Arafat. Hundreds of passengers die in a train fire south of Cairo.
- 2004** Terrorists detonate bombs on Sinai peninsula; more than 30 people die. Yasser Arafat dies and is buried in Cairo in November.
- 2005** In parliamentary elections candidates supporting the Muslim Brotherhood win an unprecedented 20 percent of the seats.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Egypt State Information Service
<http://www.sis.gov.eg>
- Egypt's Information Highway
<http://www.idsc.gov.eg>

EL SALVADOR

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of El Salvador (República de El Salvador)

ABBREVIATION

SV

CAPITAL

San Salvador

HEAD OF STATE & HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

President Elías Antonio Saca (from 2004)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Partial democracy; republic

POPULATION

6,704,932 (2005)

AREA

21,040 sq km (8,124 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Mestizos

LANGUAGE

Spanish

RELIGION

Roman Catholicism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

U.S. dollar

NATIONAL FLAG

Tricolor consisting of a white stripe between two horizontal blue stripes. The national emblem appears in the center of the white stripe.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

An equilateral triangle in which a red Phrygian liberty cap, crowned by a radiant rainbow, rises from a range of five volcanic peaks bathed by two oceans. A golden nimbus around the cap carries the date 15 September 1821, the date of independence. The triangle is superimposed on a panoply of five national flags, two on either side and one at the apex. The emblem is framed in a circular laurel wreath of seven clusters on each side, both sides ending at the topmost lateral flags, and in an outer ring of golden letters bearing the name of the republic: *República de El Salvador en la América Central*. Beneath the triangle is the national motto: *Dios, union, libertad* (God, union, liberty).

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Let Us Proudly Hail the Fatherland”

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year’s Day), May 1 (Labor Day), September 15 (National Day, Independence Day), October 12 (Day of the Race), November 5 (First Call for Independence), December 31 (New Year’s Eve), Christian festivals, including Holy Week, Christmas, All Souls’ Day, and Feast of El Salvador del Mundo

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

September 15, 1821

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

December 23, 1983

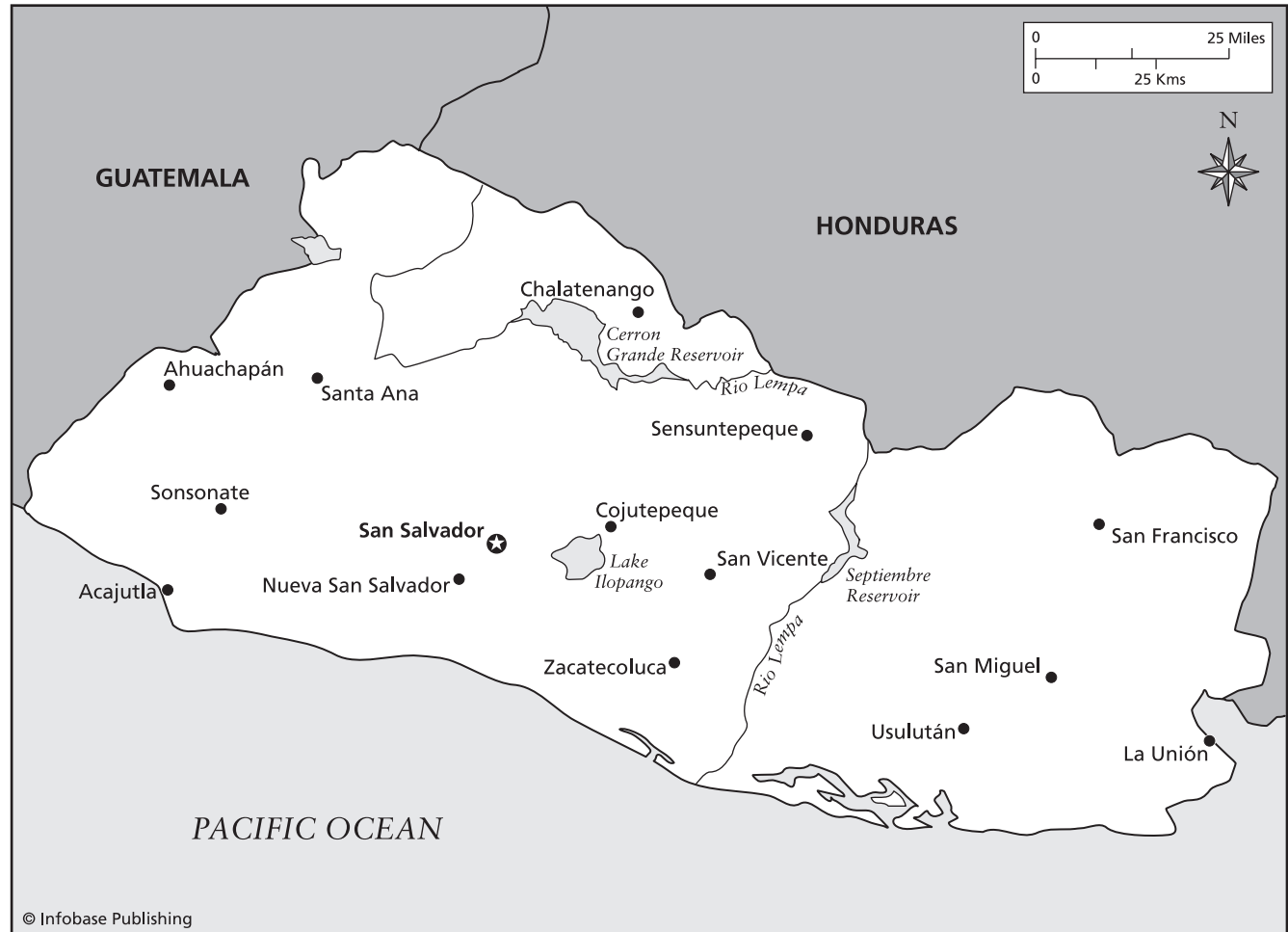
GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

El Salvador is the smallest mainland nation in the Western Hemisphere and the only Central American country with no Caribbean coast. It has an area of 21,040 sq km (8,124 sq mi). El Salvador shares its international border of 545 km (339 mi) with two countries: Honduras (342 km; 212 mi) and Guatemala (203 km; 126 mi). The border with Guatemala was established in 1938. The border with Honduras has never been demarcated or surveyed;

in 1992 the International Court of Justice settled the boundary dispute between Honduras and El Salvador, but the border is not yet marked. El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua must still resolve a dispute regarding several islands and maritime rights in the Gulf of Fonseca.

The topography is very mountainous, and El Salvador is also known as the “Land of Volcanoes.” Earthquakes are common, the last severe one having occurred in 1986. The country has a Pacific coastline of 307 km and a plateau region in the central part of the country. San Salvador, the

El Salvador



capital, is divided by two east to west mountain ranges, the Coastal Range and the Cordillera Apeneca, and the country as a whole consists of three topographical regions: the southern coastal plain, the northern lowlands, and the central highlands plateau. The southern coastal plain is a narrow, relatively flat belt extending the length of the country from the Guatemalan border to the Gulf of Fonseca. El Salvador also includes the islands of Meanguera, Conehaguita, Martin Perez, Punta Zacate, and Meanguerita. The northern lowlands are formed by the valley of the Lempa River and the Sierra Madre. The central plateau, which runs between the two mountain ranges, is interspersed with mountains and volcanoes, the largest of which is Cerro El Pital (2,730 m; 8,950 ft). Other volcanoes include Santa Ana, or Lamatapec; San Vicente, or Chichoutepec; San Miguel, or Chaparrastique; San Salvador; and Izalco, which is known as the lighthouse of the Pacific because of its brilliant flares, visible for hundreds of miles at sea.

El Salvador is located in a very unstable geological zone and is subject to frequent earthquakes. San Salvador was completely destroyed by an earthquake in 1854

and was struck again in 1919, 1965, and 1986, causing destruction and loss of life.

Nearly 150 rivers flow across the country into the Pacific Ocean, but only the Lempa is navigable (260 km, 162 mi). There are three lakes, all noted for their scenic beauty and popular with tourists: Lake Guija, near the Guatemalan border; Lake Coatepeque; and Lake Ilopango, near San Salvador. The latter is in the crater of an old volcano.

Geography

Area sq km:	21,040; sq mi 8,124
World Rank:	148th
Land Boundaries, km:	Guatemala 203; Honduras 342
Coastline, km:	307
Elevation Extremes meters	
Lowest:	Pacific Ocean 0
Highest:	Cerro El Pital 2,730
Land Use %	
Arable Land:	31.9
Permanent Crops:	12.1
Forest:	5.8
Other:	50.2

Population of Principal Cities (2000 est.)

Apopa	139,800
Ilopango	115,400
Mejicanos	172,500
Nueva San Salvador	136,900
San Miguel	159,700
San Salvador	479,600
Santa Ana	164,500
Soyapango	285,300

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

El Salvador is located just within the tropic of Cancer, at latitude 14° north. The climate is warm rather than hot, and nights are cool, except on the coastal plain. There are two distinct seasons: a dry season from November to April and a rainy season from May to November. The annual average temperature ranges from 18°C to 32°C (64°F to 90°F). During the rainy season, rainfall averages 260 mm (10.2 in) per month. Although the country is not prone to hurricanes, in 1998 Hurricane Mitch damaged certain areas.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature: 64°F to 90°F
Average Rainfall: 10 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

El Salvador is covered with lush green vegetation and is full of animal species, but the vast majority of its native flora and fauna are severely endangered. Almost all of the country's forests have been cut down to make room for coffee, sugar, and cotton plantations. El Salvador's native vegetation includes over 200 species of orchids, pine, oak, cedar, mahogany, coconut, tamarind, orange, melon, and mango trees. On the coast there are swamps and estuaries. The animal population includes butterflies, hummingbirds, ducks, herons, vultures, quetzals, toucans, many other species of birds, turtles, alligators, iguanas, boa constrictors, armadillos, monkeys, jaguars, coyotes and white-tailed deer. Habitat loss and human encroachment have put many of these populations in danger of extinction.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 6,704,932
World Rank: 97th
Density per sq km: 315.3
% of annual growth (1999-2003): 1.7
Male %: 48.7

Female %: 51.3
Urban %: 59.4
Age Distribution %: 0-14: 36.8
15-64: 58.1
65 and over: 5.1
Population 2025: 9,108,000
Birth Rate per 1,000: 27.48
Death Rate per 1,000: 5.93
Rate of Natural Increase %: 2.3
Total Fertility Rate: 3.2
Expectation of Life (years): Males 67.31
Females 74.7
Marriage Rate per 1,000: 4.0
Divorce Rate per 1,000: 0.7
Average Size of Households: 5.6
Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

El Salvador's population consists of 90 percent mestizo, or mixed indigenous and European ancestry, 1 percent indigenous ancestry, and 9 percent European ancestry. The two major indigenous groups are descendants of the Pipil, a Nahuatl-speaking Toltec people from Mexico, who arrived during the 11th century, and the Lenca, who are believed to be an offshoot of the early Mayans. Most European ancestry derives from the Spanish conquerors who came during the 16th through the 18th centuries.

LANGUAGES

The official language is Spanish, which is spoken by virtually the entire population. A few indigenous people speak Nahuatl, the language of the Pipil people, but for the most part indigenous languages are extinct.

RELIGIONS

Approximately 78 percent of the population is Roman Catholic. The patron of the country is El Salvador del Mundo (The Savior of the World), whose fiesta in August is a national holiday. Evangelical Protestant churches have grown significantly since 1992 (when the signing of the peace accords encouraged more missionary efforts from abroad), and now account for 17 percent of the population. The Catholic Church has been an active voice for social justice, and many members of the clergy were killed during El Salvador's civil war for their outspoken views on key issues, such as agrarian reform.

Religious Affiliations

Roman Catholic	5,229,000
Protestant	1,139,000
Other	337,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The land that is now El Salvador was home to early indigenous cultures. The Olmec culture, which was situated near present-day Chalchuapa, is believed to have existed around 2000 B.C.E., while other cultures existed from around 3000 B.C.E. The Mayan culture was prominent in the area, and archaeological ruins in present-day Joya de Cerén show evidence of a large civilization at about 600 C.E. The Payu culture, centered around present-day Tazumal, flourished from about 300–1200 C.E., especially after the descent and disappearance of the Mayan culture around 900.

At the time of Spanish arrival, the Pipil culture (descended from the Toltecs and Aztecs) was dominant in the area. Don Pedro de Alvarado arrived at the Port of Acajutla in 1524, and present-day San Salvador was founded in 1525. The Spanish controlled the area soon thereafter. It remained under Spanish rule as part of New Spain until the 19th century. El Salvador gained its independence from Spain in 1821, 10 years after Father José Matías Delgado made the first call for national independence from his church pulpit at La Merced. In 1824 El Salvador joined the United Provinces of Central America, remaining in that federation until 1841.

Abolition of communal land in the 1880s placed about 75 percent of land and 90 percent of wealth in the hands of the infamous 14 families. This set the stage for a ruling class of wealthy landowners, influencing much of Salvadoran politics and constituting a major factor in the civil war of the late 20th century.

During the 1930s demand for social change grew. In 1932 the army, led by Gen. Maximiliano Hernández Martínez, crushed a popular insurrection, murdering over 30,000 civilians. His highly autocratic and repressive regime lasted until 1944, when he was ousted following a general strike. The army continued to control politics through a series of civilian and military juntas. None of the governments were able to improve conditions for the majority of Salvadorans, who lived in extreme poverty. As El Salvador became more crowded, Salvadorans moved into the border area with Honduras. This small safety valve was eliminated when war broke out with Honduras in 1969 following a soccer match in San Salvador. While the government became more oppressive and paramilitary groups and death squads became more prominent, U.S. military support for the country grew.

Disillusionment with the government's inability to initiate social reform led to the formation of guerrilla groups in the 1970s. In 1979 a group of army officers overthrew the government of Gen. Carlos Humberto Romero. José Napoleón Duarte, a member of the junta, was sworn in as president in December 1980. The junta was unable to control violence by guerrilla groups or sec-

tions of the army and right-wing death squads, frequently hired by landowners to suppress opposition. Archbishop Oscar Romero was killed while saying mass in 1980, which incited further armed rebellion, led by the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN). By December 1981 over 300,000 Salvadorans were refugees, and large areas of some northern provinces were almost completely depopulated. U.S. support continued, even while many Americans protested U.S. involvement in El Salvador, and the American government continued to deny that any American soldiers were stationed in El Salvador. (Over 30 American casualties laid to rest in 1986 disprove that denial.)

Discussions in 1987 led to an agreement on forming a committee to negotiate a cease-fire and amnesty for the rebels, but following the murder of the president of the Human Rights Commission, the guerrillas withdrew from the talks. In 1989 Alfredo Cristiani won election. Violence continued, however, highlighted by the murder by military forces of six Jesuits that same year. In April 1990 the United Nations began mediation between the government and the FMLN. On January 16, 1992, a cease-fire took effect. In 1994 the National Republican Alliance (ARENA) member Dr. Armando Calderón Sol was elected president. While representing a conservative agenda, the ARENA has, as it has stayed in power, learned to balance its conservative views with the pressing needs of most Salvadorans. The land transfer program, which was agreed to in the cease-fire, has been carried out, but other poverty-related problems remain, although quality of life is improving. The country is still recuperating from the 12 years of civil war and rebuilding a gutted infrastructure. In March 1999 Francisco Flores, also of the ARENA party, became president.

The early 2000s were relatively peaceful for El Salvador, although the country suffered from major earthquakes in 2001 that left over one million people homeless. George Bush visited in 2002 and praised the country, leading up to an agreement with the United States and other Central American countries in 2003 as well as to El Salvador's sending soldiers to Iraq to assist the U.S. effort there. The ARENA once again won the presidential elections in March 2004, placing Antonio Saca in the presidency.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1962–67	Julio Adalberto Rivera Carballo
1967–72	Fidel Sánchez Hernández
1972–77	Arturo Armando Molina
1977–79	Carlos Humberto Romero
1979–82	Revolutionary Government Junta
1982–84	Álvaro Alfredo Magaña Borja
1984–89	José Napoleón Duarte

1989–94	Alfredo Cristiani Burkard
1994–99	Armando Calderón Sol
1999–2004	Francisco Flores
2004–	Antonio Saca

CONSTITUTION

El Salvador has had numerous constitutions since independence. The one that is currently in force was promulgated in 1983 and has been amended since then. It establishes a republican, democratic, and representative form of government. Executive power is vested in the president, who is elected for a five-year term by absolute majority vote and is ineligible for reelection. If no candidate receives 50 percent of the vote, there must be a runoff election. Suffrage is universal for adults over the age of 18. The president is also commander in chief of the armed forces and appoints cabinet ministers.

PARLIAMENT

The parliament is called the Legislative Assembly (Asamblea Legislativa). Its 84 members are elected for three-year terms by popular vote. It meets twice a year, beginning June 1 and December 1. Additional sessions may be called by the president or the Permanent Committee of the Assembly. The Permanent Committee also conducts business between legislative sessions.

POLITICAL PARTIES

El Salvador has two major political parties and several smaller ones. The conservative National Republican Alliance (ARENA) is the political party of the current president. Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) is a former guerilla organization that now has a voice in the political process. The smaller parties, including the centrist Christian Democratic Party (PDC), the United Democratic Center (CDU) and the right-wing National Conciliation Party (PCN), all received very few votes in the 2004 elections and thus face dissolution or reorganization.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

El Salvador is divided into 14 departments, which are further divided into 39 districts and 262 municipalities. Departments are run by governors who are appointed by the president. Municipalities are run by municipal councils, each composed of a mayor, a legal representative, and from two to 12 councilmen, who are elected for four-year terms.

LEGAL SYSTEM

Salvadoran law is based on Spanish law, as influenced by Roman law and the Napoleonic Code, and has been modified by recent political changes. The legal system is headed by the Supreme Court. Below the Supreme Court are eight courts of second instance, composed of two magistrates and two substitutes each. On the third level are courts of first instance, located in each departmental capital and other major cities and towns. The lowest courts are justices of the peace, located in all towns. There are also special courts, such as the “peace courts,” which often rule on crimes committed during El Salvador’s civil war.

El Salvador continues to work on its judiciary. It replaced the entire Supreme Court in 1994, but replacing other incompetent judges has been difficult.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Human rights violations were rampant during the civil war, and El Salvador has been working to rectify these problems since then. The country created a Truth Commission after the cease-fire to investigate the worst offenses; the commission recommended numerous judicial and political reforms. In meeting the terms of the cease-fire, the government has reduced the military by over 70 percent. The military is no longer permitted to act with regard to internal security except in extraordinary circumstances; the state has withdrawn policing duties from the military and turned them over to a civilian police force. The former rebels have been integrated into political life (as the party known as FMLN), and they received almost 30 percent of the vote in the 1999 presidential elections. Problems still exist in the use of excessive force by police in some instances.

Violence against women and homosexuals is still widespread. Domestic violence is still a largely unresolved issue, as exacerbated by machismo attitudes and at times contributed to by ultraorthodox church doctrine. Homosexual prostitutes especially are at extremely high risk of violence, while gay nightclubs often have difficulty remaining open, both because of the nightclubs’ tendency to be a target of right-wing/homophobic groups and their patrons’ need to be anonymous for personal safety reasons. The Supreme Court stepped up efforts in 1998 to discipline judges for incompetence and corruption. However, those who have fought for human rights have often become the targets of violence themselves.

FOREIGN POLICY

The end of the civil war brought about a more peaceful foreign policy. Relations with Honduras have been more

civil, and there is a more concerted effort to maintain good relations with all other Central American countries.

El Salvador maintains something of a love/hate relationship with the United States. Although it maintains good relations and does extensive trade with the United States, many Salvadorans still resent U.S. involvement in the civil war. Many Salvadorans now live in the United States and Canada as a result of the civil war, sending home an estimated \$1 billion in aid (in the form of money, clothing, and other items) annually.

Beyond the Western Hemisphere, El Salvador has welcomed investment in the country in order to help it rebuild. The European Union has focused more on Central America in general, El Salvador in particular in 1999 and 2000.

DEFENSE

El Salvador's military has been drastically reduced since the early 1990s. By 1999 the military had 15,000 personnel, down from 63,000 at the height of the war. The government abolished the national police, national guard, and treasury police and placed military intelligence under civilian control. The nation has purged the military officers who committed the worst human rights violations.

Males between 18 and 30 years of age are conscripted for a 12-month obligation. Those who do not serve full-time perform 18 months' military service by participating in weekly training sessions. Defense spending accounts for about 1 percent of gross domestic product (GDP).

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 15,000
 Military Manpower Availability: 1,571,299
 Military Expenditures \$million: 157
 as % of GDP: 1.1
 as % of central government expenditures: —
 Arms Imports \$million: —
 Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

El Salvador is one of the lower-middle-income countries of the world, but its once thriving economy was devastated by civil war in the 1980s as well as by a series of earthquakes. Per capita GDP was about \$4,800 in 2004, approximately half that of each of Argentina, Brazil, and Chile. There is great income imbalance, with a few people wealthy and a large number destitute. In 1998 the government emphasized conservative economic and fiscal policies to promote foreign investment. Inflation fell

to an unprecedented low of 2 percent. Exports reached a record level and were the main engine of growth. Productivity in other sectors remained weaker, however. For the last few years El Salvador has experienced sizable deficits in both its trade and fiscal accounts. The three earthquakes in 2000 and 2001 wreaked havoc in the economy. The government has stepped up privatization efforts, targeting the state telephone company as well as pension funds.

The U.S. dollar became the official currency in September 2001, and as a result the nation can no longer control its own monetary policy. The numerous El Salvadorans living abroad send almost \$2 billion a year back to their homeland, offsetting the country's trade deficit. The government is working to stimulate the economy by encouraging foreign investment and opening new export markets.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 30.99
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 4,800
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 2.3
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 0.7
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 9.4
 Industry: 31.2
 Services: 59.3
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 90
 Government Consumption: 9
 Gross Domestic Investment: 16.2
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 3.162
 Imports: 5.466
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 1.4
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 39.3

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
118.2	120.9	125.5	127.8	130.5

Finance

National Currency: U.S. Dollar (USD)
 Exchange Rate: —
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 1.09
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: —
 Total External Debt \$billion: 6.575
 Debt Service Ratio %: 11.69
 Balance of Payments \$million: –734
 International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 1.9
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 2.1

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 233.5
 per capita \$: 36
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 233.6

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$billion: 2.434
 Expenditures \$billion: 2.625
 Budget Deficit \$million: 191
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: 1.6

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 9.4
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 1.5
 Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares: 5.2
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 5.0
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 111
 Total Farmland % of land area: 31.9
 Livestock: Cattle 000: 1,000
 Sheep 000: 5
 Hogs 000: 153
 Chickens 000: 8,100
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 4.83
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 35.2

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 3.53
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 1.6

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 0.931
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 2.7
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 425
 Net Energy Imports % of use: 45.4
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 1.1
 Production kW-hr billion: 3.729
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 3.777
 Coal Reserves tons billion: —
 Production tons million: —
 Consumption tons million: —
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
 Production cubic feet billion: —
 Consumption cubic feet billion: —
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
 Production barrels 000 per day: —
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 39
 Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 5.466
 Exports \$billion: 3.162
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 6.5
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 5.5
 Balance of Trade \$million: -734

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
United States %	50.0	67.8
Guatemala %	8.1	11.5
Mexico %	5.5	—
Honduras %	—	5.9

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 10,029
 Paved %: 19.8
 Automobiles: 148,000
 Trucks and Buses: 250,800
 Railroad: Track Length km: 283
 Passenger-km million: 8
 Freight-km million: 19
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: —
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: —
 Airports: 73
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 3.3
 Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 951
 Number of Tourists from million: 1
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 342
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 229

Communications

Telephones 000: 752.6
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.07
 Cellular Telephones million: 1.15
 Personal Computers 000: 220
 Internet Hosts per million people: 609
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 82

ENVIRONMENT

El Salvador has an extremely high level of environmental damage. El Salvador's two main environmental problems are the overuse of land (due to its population density) and pollution from manufacturing and energy production. The government has not passed environmental protection laws and allows industrial development to continue unfettered. Most of the country's rivers are polluted, and the nation faces the loss of much of its drinking water if pollution does not stop. People dump garbage wherever they like, often on the side of the road. The construction of hotels and industrial development are destroying natural beauty and resources. Almost all the country's original forests have been cut down for agriculture and houses. Many of the native plants and animals are in imminent danger of extinction.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 5.8
 Average Annual Forest Change, 1990-2000, 000 ha: —7
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 1
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 1.07

LIVING CONDITIONS

Buses are the most common form of public transportation. They are inexpensive and run frequently, though they are often crowded. Most of the nation's roads are unpaved, driving habits are unpredictable, and livestock often wanders onto roadways, making driving dangerous. Drivers often lose their automobiles to theft or carjackings. Incomes are extremely polarized. Half the population lives in poverty, and there is not much of a middle class. Wealthy people live in gated estates with luxurious houses and security systems. Poor people live in shacks made of cardboard and tin or rent small apartments that share kitchens and bathrooms with other apartments. Before 2001 most rural houses were made of branches and mud, with thatched roofs; most of these fell down in the earthquake and are being rebuilt with concrete blocks.

HEALTH

El Salvador's Ministry of Health operates hospitals and clinics throughout the country, though most of them are concentrated in urban areas. Health care has improved in the past decade, but the country still suffers from numerous problems. Chronic malnutrition and concomitant illnesses are common. The infant mortality rate is high. Lack of sanitation results in human waste being washed into drinking water, causing numerous cases of cholera, dysentery, and diarrhea, which is deadly to children under the age of five.

Health

Number of Physicians: 8,171
 Number of Dentists: 3,573
 Number of Nurses: 11,777
 Number of Pharmacists: 1,990
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 127
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 25.93
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 150
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 8
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 174
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.7
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 81
 Measles: 93
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 63
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 82

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Dietary staples are rice, corn, and beans. People eat tortillas and tamales on a daily basis. Other common foods are eggs, fried plantains, *chicharrón* (fried pork rinds), cheese, cream, chicken, and occasionally beef or fish. People also eat many tropical fruits, including watermelon and mangoes. Drinks include fruit juices, soft drinks, coffee, hot chocolate, and *tic-tac*, an alcoholic beverage made from sugarcane. Lunch is the largest meal of the day. Most Salvadorans shop for groceries every day at open-air markets, though supermarkets exist in the larger towns. On the street, people buy snacks such as *pupusas*, which are tortillas stuffed with fillings and garnished with hot sauce and pickled cabbage, and *pastels*, or dough stuffed with meat, then deep-fried.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 10.8
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,460
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 141.7
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 115.6

STATUS OF WOMEN

Although women have the right to vote, they are not as prevalent in high-ranking corporate and government positions and earn considerably less than their male counterparts. Domestic and other types of violence against women are widespread. Salvadoran men are known for their machismo, and it is considered unmanly for them to act too gently toward their families or to help care for the home and children. Women are expected to behave modestly and to care for both children and the home. Many women begin having children as teenagers. Single mothers have grown more common recently. Fertility rates have dropped but are still relatively high, at more than three children per woman.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 11
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 0.98
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 31.1

WORK

Salvadorans consider work a family affair; all family members work to support everyone else. Further, all family members feel that they have a right to decide when and how other members will work. Children often must begin working at a young age.

About 30 percent of Salvadorans work in agriculture. Most work on commercial plantations, earning low wages for growing cash crops such as coffee, sugarcane, and cotton. Rural families may have gardens to grow food for personal consumption; women often tend these gardens while men work for pay. Many people work in factories, making clothing, furniture, pharmaceuticals, and rubber goods. Factories called *maquilas* employ a large number of women who assemble goods for North American markets; these factories have a reputation for abusive treatment of workers, but the government has been working on improving conditions.

A minority of people in the cities work as teachers, engineers, or doctors or in other professions. Many more work as street vendors, selling various items to passersby or performing services such as guarding cars or shining shoes.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 2,620,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 37.7
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 30
 Industry: 15
 Services: 55
 Unemployment %: 6.5

EDUCATION

Education is free and lasts for 12 years, although many students have traditionally dropped out after primary school. Salvadorans respect teachers highly. Literacy in 2003 was about 80 percent. Funding has long been inadequate, and schools lack teachers and supplies. Families must pay for school supplies and uniforms, which effectively prices education out of range of some people. Many families need their children to work, caring for younger children at home, working the fields, or selling goods on the streets, and so there is strong pressure on children to leave school early.

El Salvador has several universities and technical colleges. The most respected are the University of El Salvador, founded in 1841, and Central American University, established by Jesuits in 1966. The military runs a military college and a nursing school. Wealthy parents often send their children abroad for college. The faculty at both major universities were outspoken during the war, and many professors were forced to leave after being accused of subversive activities. Teachers were occasionally killed for belonging to teachers' unions.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 80.2
 Male %: 82.8
 Female %: 77.7
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 11.3

First Level: Primary schools: 3,961
 Teachers: 37,231
 Students: 967,748
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 26.0
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 90.4

Second Level: Secondary Schools: —
 Teachers: —
 Students: 371,051
 Student-Teacher Ratio: —
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 48.6

Third Level: Institutions: —
 Teachers: 7,331
 Students: 113,366
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 17.4

Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 2.9

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The government is encouraging the development of science and technology as a means of improving the economy and living conditions. One-fifth of Salvadorans live abroad, where they encounter advanced technologies, and their families learn about technology from them. The Ministry of the Economy has a National Council of Science and Technology that works to implement scientific progress.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 48
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: 43.97
 Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

El Salvador's constitution guarantees freedom of the press, and this is generally observed; the media feel free to criticize the government and to cover the activities of opposition parties. Newspapers include the dailies *La prensa grafica*, *El mundo*, and *El diario de hoy*. Most television and radio broadcasting is done by private stations. Radio and television are widely available across the country, and people watch numerous international stations through cable. Television is a very popular form of entertainment; even in rural areas most families own a television and a cellular telephone.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 4
 Total Circulation 000: 171
 Circulation per 1,000: 28.3
 Books Published: —
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers million: 3.2
 per 1,000: 480
 Television sets million: 1.2
 per 1,000: 191

CULTURE

Traditional Salvadoran music sounds like that of other Central American nations and employs instruments such as flutes, drums, and wooden xylophones. There is a small community of musicians who continue to play folk music as a form of political commentary. Radio stations commonly play merengue, salsa, ranchero, or American rock. Salvadorans love poetry and literature; popular writers include Francisco Rodríguez, Salvador Salazar Arrué, Claudia Lars, Roque Dalton, and Manlio Argueta. Visual arts include ceramics, such as the Nativity figurines produced by the town of Ilobasco and painting in the style popularized by Fernando Llorca. Traditional crafts include wicker, pottery, masks, and weavings.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: 20
 Annual Attendance: 1,333,000
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Folktales have long been popular, and people still tell them, especially in rural areas. Many of these stories come from the legends of Amerindians who lived in El Salvador centuries ago, such as the Mayans and the Pipil, and focus on the fight between good and evil. The predecessors of the Mayan Indians lived in El Salvador around 7,000 years ago, and they left traces of themselves in the archaeological site of El Tazumal, a pyramid built between 500 and 900 c.e.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

People enjoy gathering in town plazas to meet friends and relatives; Sunday is an especially popular day for this, and people will walk to town from the countryside to visit their friends. Families enjoy outings to the beach, lakes, or national parks. Churches provide some organized social activities. Cities have nightclubs where people can dance to salsa music. Outdoor activities include hiking, rafting or kayaking on the rivers, surfing, boating, and camping. Facilities called *turicentros* offer amenities near lakes and beaches.

ETIQUETTE

Salvadorans are quite formal with one another and always use the formal form of address with others until they are invited to use the informal form. Pointing at a person with a finger or foot is considered rude. Guests at hotels or restaurants are expected to tip 10 percent, though taxi drivers do not expect tips.

FAMILY LIFE

El Salvadorans traditionally live in extended families including two or three generations. Older people receive a great deal of respect, and children are expected to obey all the adults in the family. In the countryside men usually work the fields and tend livestock, while women care for the home and children. Since the war rural men have had to venture to the cities or other countries to find work, leaving their families behind. In some cases the entire family moves to the city and both parents work. Many men died during the war, so about 25 percent of households are now headed by women.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Businesspeople are very formal; men always dress in suits and ties and women in suits or businesslike dresses. People dress very well for going out at night. In casual settings clothing is still fairly conservative.

SPORTS

Soccer, called *fútbol*, is by far El Salvador's most popular sport. Almost all males play, and every village has a playing field. Increasing numbers of girls are participating both as children and at the university level. The national men's team is a contender on the international level, and its best players are national heroes. Other sports include baseball, softball, basketball, and running; women often engage in these sports before they marry. Participation in sports is a function of family income; the poorest people have no opportunities to play sports aside from in make-shift games on their poor village facilities.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1943** Maximiliano Hernández Martínez raises the export tax, garnering widespread criticism from landed families.
- 1944** An attempted coup to oust Martínez fails; national strikes and civil unrest result; Martínez resigns.

- 1945** January elections are corrupted to ensure the election of President Salvador Castaneda Castro.
- 1948** Castaneda is ousted from power by the Juventud Militar (Military Youth); a junta, led by Maj. Óscar Osorio, takes over the country's rule.
- 1960** Lieutenant Colonel José María Lemus is overthrown; a military junta, led by Lieutenant Colonel Julio Adalberto Rivera, takes over; the Christian Democratic Party (PDC) is formed.
- 1961** A right-wing military faction overthrows the junta but retains Rivera as leader.
- 1962** Rivera is elected president, buoyed by the Partido de la Conciliación Nacional (PCN); the PCN continues to support national leaders and directly or indirectly rule the country.
- 1964** In a revised electoral process the PDC wins many assembly and mayoral seats, with José Napoleón Duarte Fuentes becoming mayor of San Salvador.
- 1967** The leftist PAR party is accused of Communism and suppressed; PCN candidate Colonel Fidel Sánchez Hernández becomes president.
- 1969** Honduras evicts Salvadoran people from Honduran border lands, spurring violent clashes between Salvadorans and the Honduran military; tension explodes into war after a soccer match in San Salvador between the two countries.
- 1972** Colonel Molina of the PCN suspends vote counting and has the assembly declare him president; Duarte, the apparent winner, is tracked down, arrested, beaten, and exiled.
- 1976** Molina attempts land reform but capitulates to the demands of the landed elite; death squads appear in large numbers, targeting Fuerzas Populares de Liberación Farabundo Martí (FPL) members and Catholic clergy of the Christian Base Communities.
- 1977** PCN candidate Carlos Humberto Romero is elected president in a corrupt election; hundreds of protesters are killed in postelection clashes.
- 1979** As violence sweeps the nation, Romero is deposed in an army-led coup; a state of siege is imposed; the new military, calling itself the Revolutionary Government Junta, invites two prominent Social Democratic civilians to join it.
- 1980** Another military coup establishes a new junta, which includes two Christian Democrats, Morales and Dada; the Revolutionary Coordinator of the Masses, a coalition of reform groups, calls for open insurrection; protests in January and February are violently put down by police, and dozens are killed; Archbishop Oscar Arnulfo Romero y Galdamez, one of the most respected figures in the country and an outspoken critic of the government, is murdered while saying mass; Dada resigns from the junta and is replaced by Duarte.
- 1981** Leftist guerrillas launch a "final offensive"; an electoral law is passed calling for a legislative assembly; Mexico and France recognize FDR-FMLN guerrillas as a legitimate political force.
- 1982** Five right-wing parties win 60 percent of the vote in national elections and form the Government of National Unity, with Alvaro Magana Borja as interim president; delegates sign the Pact of Apaneca, a peace treaty.
- 1983** An antigovernment army faction stages a mutiny at Sensuntepeque; Marianela García Villas, president of the Human Rights Commission, is assassinated; the Assembly ratifies a new constitution.
- 1984** Rebels and the army engage in numerous clashes; the PDC's José Napoleón Duarte wins presidential elections.
- 1985** Mexico resumes diplomatic ties with the Duarte regime; Duarte's daughter is kidnapped and released in exchange for captive guerrillas.
- 1986** In August, government-rebel peace talks take place in Lima, Peru; in October a severe earthquake causes extensive damage to San Salvador, killing 1,500 people and injuring more than 10,000.
- 1987** El Salvador is one of five Central American nations to sign a preliminary peace agreement calling for regional cease-fires; Herbert Anaya Sanabria, president of the Human Rights Commission, is murdered.
- 1989** National Republican Alliance (ARENA) candidate Alfredo Cristiani Burkard wins the March presidential election; following the breakdown of peace talks between the government and leftist rebels, Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) launches a major offensive in November.
- 1990** Cristiani suspends relations with Nicaragua over the issue of Sandinistas supplying arms to the FMLN; soldiers stand trial on charges of murder and terrorism in the 1989 slaying of six Jesuits.
- 1992** A UN-mediated cease-fire takes effect on January 16, ending the civil war, in which an estimated 75,000 to 150,000 were killed; FMLN becomes an opposition party.
- 1994** ARENA member Dr. Armando Calderón Sol is elected president.
- 1997** In March, FMLN wins elections in six of the 14 departments.
- 1998** Hurricane Mitch strikes El Salvador and other Central American countries.

- 1999** ARENA candidate Francisco Flores becomes president of El Salvador.
- 2001** Massive earthquakes kill 1,200 people and destroy tens of thousands of homes, leaving over one million homeless.
- 2002** George W. Bush visits El Salvador and praises the nation. A U.S. court finds two retired Salvadoran generals liable for atrocities during the civil war.
- 2003** El Salvador sends troops to Iraq. El Salvador signs a free-trade agreement with the United States.
- 2004** Antonio Saca of the ARENA party wins the presidency.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Banco Central de Reserva de El Salvador
<http://www.bcr.gob.sv/>

EQUATORIAL GUINEA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Equatorial Guinea (República de Guinea Ecuatorial, République de la Guinée Équatoriale)

ABBREVIATION

GQ

CAPITAL

Malabo (formerly Santa Isabel)

HEAD OF STATE

President Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo (from 1979)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Miguel Abia Biteo Borico (from 2004)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Emerging democracy; republic

POPULATION

535,881 (2005)

AREA

28,051 sq km (10,830 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Fang, Bubi

LANGUAGES

Spanish (official), French (official), pidgin English, Fang

RELIGIONS

Roman Catholicism, animism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Coopération financière en Afrique centrale franc

NATIONAL FLAG

Tricolor of green, white, and red horizontal stripes with a blue triangle on the hoist side and the national emblem in the center of the white stripe

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A “God Tree” with six stars above and the national motto—*Unidad, paz, justicia* (Unity, peace, justice)—beneath

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Let’s Walk through the Arbor of Our Immense Happiness”

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year’s Day), May 1 (Labor Day), May 25 (Organization of African Unity Day), October 12 (Independence Day), December 10 (Human Rights Day), December 25 (Christmas), various Christian festivals, including Epiphany, Good Friday, Good Saturday, Easter, Day of St. Joseph the Worker, Ascension Day, Corpus Christi, Assumption, and All Saints’ Day

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

October 12, 1968

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

November 17, 1991 (amended January 1995)

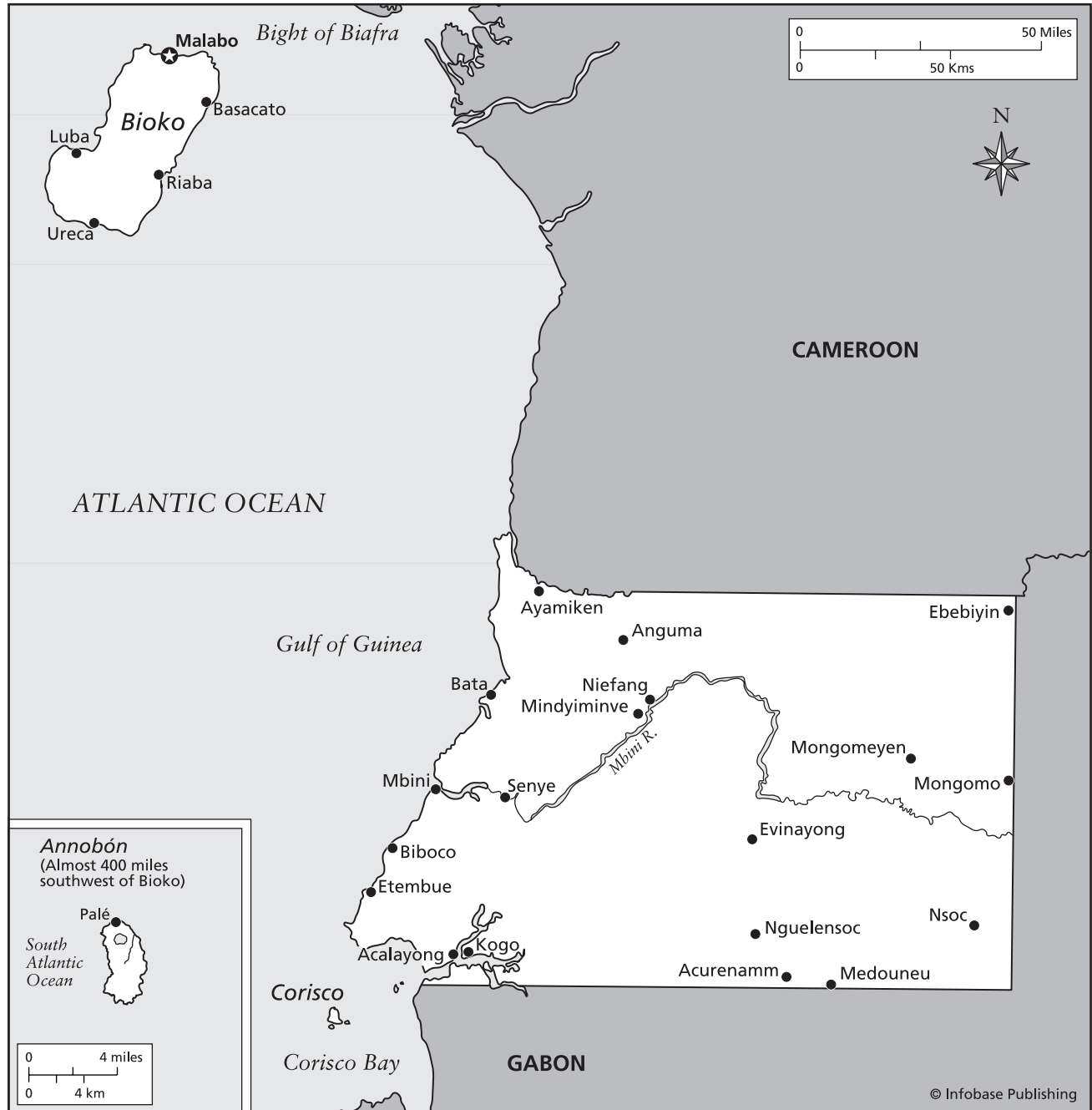
GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Equatorial Guinea is on the western coast of west-central Africa and consists of a mainland province and five islands: Bioko (formerly Macias Nguema Biyogo and Fernando Po), Annabón (formerly Pagalu), Elobey Grande, Elobey Chico, and Corisco. Bioko is 32 km (20 mi) from the coast of Cameroon, and Pagalu is about 350 km (220 mi) from mainland Gabon. Corisco and the Elobey Islands are off the southwestern coast of Bioko and close to the Gabonese coast. The total land area of Equatorial Guinea is 28,051 sq km (10,830 sq mi), of which mainland Río Muni along with Corisco and the Elobey Islands cover

approximately 26,000 sq km (10,040 sq mi), while Bioko and Pagalu cover the remainder. Río Muni extends 248 km (154 mi) east-northeast to west-southwest and 167 km (104 mi) south-southeast to north-northwest. Bioko extends 74 km (46 mi) northeast to southwest and 37 km (23 mi) southeast to northwest. The total coastline is 296 km (184 mi) long.

Bioko is the largest island in the Gulf of Guinea and has two large volcanic formations separated by a valley that bisects the island. The coastline is high and rugged in the south but lower and more accessible in the north. In the north of the island is Mount Malabo, with Pico Basile reaching 3,008 m (9,866 ft). In the center is Pico de

Equatorial Guinea



Moka, with an alpine environment. In the south is Gran Caldera. Río Muni, on the African mainland, is a jungle enclave with a coastal plain rising steeply toward the Gabon border. In the interior the plain gives way to a succession of valleys separated by low hills and spurs of the Crystal Mountains. The highest peaks are Monte Chocolate (1,100 m; 3,609 ft), the Piedra de Nzás, Monte Mitra, and Monte Chime (1,200 m; 3,937 ft). Corisco, covering

15 sq km (6 sq mi), and Elobey Grande and Elobey Chico, each about 2.5 sq km (1 sq mi), are volcanic islands.

Geography

Area sq km: 28,051; sq mi 10,830
 World Rank: 141st
 Land Boundaries, km: Cameroon 189; Gabon 350

(continues)

Geography *(continued)*

Coastline, km	296
Elevation Extremes meters	
Lowest: Atlantic Ocean	0
Highest: Pico Basile	3,008
Land Use %	
Arable Land	4.6
Permanent Crops	3.6
Forest	62.5
Other	29.3

Population of Principal Cities (1994)

Bata	60,065
Malabo	50,023

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Equatorial Guinea has an equatorial climate, with average temperatures at Malabo exceeding 25°C (77°F) and average annual rainfall exceeding 2,000 mm (78 in). Wet and dry seasons alternate; from June to August Río Muni is dry, while from December to February it is wet, whereas the reverse is true in Bioko. March to May and September to December are transitional months.

Annual rainfall varies from 1,930 mm (76 in) at Malabo to 10,973 mm (432 in) at Ureka, Bioko. Rain falls almost daily on Pagalu Island. Malabo has an inhospitable climate, with average temperatures reaching 33.4°C (92°F), but in the southern Moka Plateau the average temperature is 20.6°C (69°F). On mainland Río Muni the average temperature range is 15°C to 21.6°C (59°F to 71°F).

Tornadoes and violent windstorms are frequent occurrences in the country.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature	
Malabo	77°F
Mainland	59°F to 71°F
Average Rainfall	
Malabo	76 in
Ureka, Bioko	432 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

A wide variety of plants and animals flourish in Equatorial Guinea's tropical climate. Trees include rosewood, mahogany, teak, walnut, oak, and okoume. The area around Bioko has very rich volcanic soil, and plants grow there very successfully, often encroaching on cocoa farms. Río Muni also has very rich soil and thick vegetation. The forests are home to many animal species, including lions, gazelles, and elephants. Agricultural pressure is destroying forests, with corresponding deleterious effects on the fauna that live in them.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005:	535,881
World Rank:	160th
Density per sq km:	17.6
% of annual growth (1999-2003):	2.5
Male %:	48.7
Female %:	51.3
Urban %:	48.1
Age Distribution %:	
0-14:	42.0
15-64:	54.3
65 and over:	3.7
Population 2025:	835,122
Birth Rate per 1,000:	36.56
Death Rate per 1,000:	12.27
Rate of Natural Increase %:	2.5
Total Fertility Rate:	4.68
Expectation of Life (years):	
Males	53.0
Females	57.36
Marriage Rate per 1,000:	—
Divorce Rate per 1,000:	—
Average Size of Households:	4.5
Induced Abortions:	—

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

The ethnic composition of Equatorial Guinea is notable for its complexity and variety. The dominant group is the Fang (also known as Fon and, in Spanish, Pamue), who make up 80 to 90 percent of the population of Río Muni. The Fang dominate business and politics. Earlier settlers, such as the Kombe, Balengue, Bujebas, and Bengas, have been pushed toward the coast by Fang expansion. All Río Munians are of Bantu stock, as are the Bubi, who were the original inhabitants of Bioko. The Bubi are now estimated to number 50,000 on Bioko, but they are outnumbered by Fang migrants from the mainland and by a few thousand Fernandinos, descendants of slaves liberated by the British navy in the 19th century. Pygmies have long been integrated into the local population. There are about 3,000 Annobonese on the island of Annobon. On the coast of Río Muni there are about 3,000 Ndowe, 3,000 Kombe, and 2,000 Bujeda. There are fewer than 1,000 Europeans in the country, most of whom are Spanish.

Until recently the majority of the inhabitants of Bioko were Hausa, Ibo, Ibibo, and Efik contract workers on the plantations. Their numbers have been depleted by repatriation and voluntary emigration.

LANGUAGES

Spanish is the official language of the republic and the effective cultural and administrative medium of communication, although it is spoken by only 4 to 5 percent of the population. French is another official language. British sway over Bioko in the first half of the 19th century is reflected in the

use of pidgin English (known locally as Pichinglis). Fang is the main vernacular and the only indigenous language with a national status. A rare pidgin form of Bantu speech known as fa d'Ambo survives as an isolated language found on Pagalu. Some people speak Bubi and Ibo.

RELIGIONS

The constitution guarantees freedom of religion, and religious persecution is not a major problem in Equatorial Guinea. At least 90 percent of the population is believed to be nominally affiliated with the Roman Catholic Church. There are influential Protestant groups in Río Muni and on the islands. Church and state entered on a collision course in 1973, and Spanish priests and nuns of the Immaculate Conception were expelled from the country. Most Catholic schools were either closed or placed under the control of the single political party, Partido Unico Nacional de Trabajadores (PUNT, United National Workers' Party). All Catholic priests and nuns were arrested as the official campaign against the church intensified. Churches were closed and used to store agricultural produce. Macias Nguema Biyogo, described as a militant atheist, dropped his Christian name Francisco in 1975 to rid himself of Christian "trappings." President Obiang ordered the reopening of all Catholic churches following the 1979 coup.

The Fang people still hold to their traditional religious practices, as do most other ethnic groups.

Religious Affiliations

Roman Catholic	482,000
Other	53,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

During the 12th and 13th centuries the Bantu people moved to what is today Equatorial Guinea. The land was already inhabited by Pygmies and the Ndowe. In the end, however, the warlike Fang dominated the region. Eventually, the region came under the influence of the Portuguese, and the Fang were forced inland to avoid being part of the growing slave trade.

Equatorial Guinea was under the rule of Portugal from 1494 to 1778, Spain from 1778 to 1781, Great Britain from 1781 to 1843, and Spain from 1858 to 1968. From 1904 the country was ruled by the Spanish through an institution known as *patronato de indígenas* (patronage of the natives), under which the natives were classified as legal minors and *encomendado* (entrusted) to the Claretian missionaries. Natives were not allowed to dispose of their land freely or transact any business involving more than 2,000 pesetas. They were subjected to a system of forced

labor by contract. They were represented in courts by the *curadoria*, the Spanish legal representative of minors. In 1938 the colony was redesignated Spanish Territories of the Gulf of Guinea, and educated natives were permitted to claim Spanish citizenship as *emancipados*. Spanish Guinea became a province of Spain in 1959, and in 1964 Río Muni and Fernando Po (Bioko) were created as two provinces under an autonomous regional government. Full independence was granted in 1968. Power passed into the hands of a militantly anti-Western and anti-Christian Fang group led by Macias Nguema Biyogo who became the nation's first president. The following year Macias seized emergency powers during an international crisis and subsequently instituted a highly centralized, single-party state. The constitution adopted in 1973 gave the president virtually unlimited powers. During his 11-year rule Macias turned his country into the "Auschwitz of Africa": Throwing off all constitutional and civilized restraints he cut off his country from all contact with the outside world (except for a few hundred Cuban military advisers). As the economy disintegrated, he embarked on an orgy of mass executions and religious persecution that claimed thousands of lives.

In 1979 Macias was overthrown in a coup led by his nephew, Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, who assumed the presidency of a Supreme Military Council. (Macias was subsequently arrested; put on trial; found guilty of treason, genocide, embezzlement, and violation of human rights; and executed by a firing squad.) In 1982 President Obiang Nguema was appointed president for another seven years immediately prior to the publication of a new constitution providing for the eventual return to civilian government.

President Obiang has proven himself to be one of the most durable of African dictators and also one of the most brutal. Although widely condemned both at home and abroad for his suppression of human rights, he has managed to keep himself in power by rigging elections and by imprisoning, torturing, and intimidating his opponents. Political parties were banned following Obiang's coup, and legislative elections were held in 1983 and 1988 that returned unopposed candidates nominated by the president. Obiang announced the formation of a government party, the Democratic Party of Equatorial Guinea, in 1987 as a step toward democratization and the possible legalization of other groups. However, no other parties have been permitted, and opponents are repressed. The Obiang regime survived four coup attempts, in 1981, 1983, 1986, and 1988, mainly with the help of the 500-man Moroccan mercenary palace guard. A new constitution was approved in 1991, and multiparty elections took place in November 1993 but were internationally condemned as undemocratic.

Obiang's regime continues to function essentially as a dictatorship. Obiang chooses his advisers from his family and ethnic group. He appoints governors, ratifies treaties, leads the armed forces, and generally has authority over ev-

everything. The opposition parties have no real opportunity to speak or act in government. In the 1996 election, the nation's first actual multiparty election, Obiang claimed victory with 99.6 percent of the votes. International monitors called this election as well as those held in 1999 a sham. In December 2002 Obiang once again won the election with almost all of the votes.

In 2001 one exiled opposition leader, Florentino Ecomo Nsogo, head of the Party of Reconstruction and Social Well-Being, returned home in response to an appeal by Obiang for parties to register for the election. Other opposition leaders declined, forming their own government-in-exile in Spain in 2003. There have been numerous coup attempts on Obiang, including one in 2004 that involved Sir Mark Thatcher, the son of the former British prime minister Margaret Thatcher; Obiang claimed that this attempt was engineered by foreign powers that wanted to overthrow him.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1968–79 Francisco Macias Nguema Biyogo
1979– Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo

CONSTITUTION

The current constitution, approved by referendum in 1982, provides for a president who is head of state, head of government, and commander in chief. He is empowered to appoint and dismiss ministers, determine and direct national policy, ratify treaties, appoint provincial governors, and, under Obiang's interpretation, do anything else he wants to do. The constitution also provides for a State Council of 11 members (including the chairman of the House of Representatives, the president of the Supreme Tribunal, and the minister of defense), which also acts as an electoral college. The national legislature is the House of Representatives, which is elected for a term of five years; its members must be 45 to 60 years of age. It sits twice a year, in March and September, for two-month sessions. The National Council for Social and Economic Development serves the administration in an advisory capacity. The constitution was modified in 1991 to allow for multiple political parties.

The government of Equatorial Guinea is entirely in the hands of its president. There is no effective rule of law.

PARLIAMENT

Under the constitution the national legislature is the Chamber of Representatives, a 100-member unicameral assembly whose members must be 45 to 60 years of age and are directly elected for five-year terms. It sits twice a

year, in March and September, for two-month sessions. The Chamber does the president's bidding and will not act without presidential approval. Of the 100 members elected in April 2004, only two come from genuine opposition parties.

POLITICAL PARTIES

While in theory (and to some extent in practice) Equatorial Guinea is a multiparty state, the country is ruled by its president and his party, the Democratic Party for Equatorial Guinea (PDGE), which holds 84 of the 100 seats in parliament. Other parties with some minimal influence include the Convergence Party for Social Democracy (CPDS), the Democratic Social Union (UDS), and the Liberal Democratic Convention (CLD). Additionally, there are more than a dozen political parties that have no representation in the national assembly.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For purposes of local administration Equatorial Guinea is divided into seven provinces, four mainland and two insular. Each province is subdivided into two to seven districts and several municipalities, which are administered by local councils. Regional and provincial administrations were abolished in 1973. The president appoints all governors. The Ministry of Territorial Administration handles internal affairs.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The judicial system is headed by the Supreme Tribunal at Malabo, which hears appeals from civil and military courts in the administrative divisions. All judges are appointed by the president and serve at his pleasure. Below the Supreme Court are the appeals courts, chief judges for the divisions, and local magistrates.

The current court system is a combination of traditional, civil, and military justice, which often operates in an ad hoc manner for lack of established procedures and experienced judicial personnel. Most trials are speedy. In cases of petty theft or civil dispute, all parties are brought before the judge, who listens, questions, and then most often sets a fine to be paid by one party or the other. Fines may also be levied in lieu of imprisonment in cases against the state. Judges will acknowledge tribal customs and laws when they do not conflict with national law.

HUMAN RIGHTS

In terms of civil and political rights Equatorial Guinea is classified as a country that is not free. The regime of dic-

tator Macias Nguema Biyogo was so repressive and brutal that any subsequent regime appears civilized in comparison, but Obiang's government is not known for its respect for human rights. The government has concentrated all its efforts on undoing the harm done by the former dictator but has stated that because of the destruction of the country's economy and social services under Macias, it may be years before the country enjoys political and civil rights. In the meantime, Obiang and his followers feel free to abuse the rights of the citizenry.

Security forces have abused and killed civilians and prisoners and imprisoned people without cause, though reports of torture and abuse have been declining. Prison conditions are so bad as to be life threatening. Soldiers used torture to get confessions from prisoners. Security forces have felt free to act with impunity, as the government has never stepped in to correct their abuses. The judicial system has not been a reliable source of due process of law. Rights to privacy and freedom of speech have all been limited, as have rights of assembly, association, movement, and occasionally religion. Human trafficking, child labor, forced prison labor, and abuse of women all continue to be problems. Discrimination against ethnic minorities, especially Bubi, has been rife.

FOREIGN POLICY

Because of continuing Spanish opposition to the Obiang regime, diplomatic relations between Spain and Equatorial Guinea were suspended in 1997. The opposition government-in-exile is based in Spain, which has caused relations between the countries to become increasingly strained. France is the only country still maintaining reciprocal diplomatic relations with Equatorial Guinea, which is the only nonfrancophone member of the Central African Customs and Economic Union (UDEAC). As the only Spanish-speaking African country, Equatorial Guinea is anxious to develop links with Latin America and has been accorded permanent observer status with OAS. It has tried to establish diplomatic ties with many European countries in an effort to acquire solid national status.

Equatorial Guinea has good relations with most African nations in the region, though it is involved in border disputes with both its neighbors, Cameroon and Gabon. English-speaking workers have migrated to Equatorial Guinea from Cameroon, Nigeria, and Ghana to take jobs with U.S. oil companies, but the government expelled many of them following the 2004 coup attempt.

The United States suspended diplomatic relations with Equatorial Guinea in 1995 but reopened a limited embassy in Malabo in 2003. The United States is the largest foreign investor in the country, and U.S. citizens are allowed to visit the country without a visa. Obiang visits the United States regularly to maintain political and business ties.

DEFENSE

The president is head of the armed forces, which consist of a 1,400-member army, a 200-member navy, a 120-member air force, and a police force of 400. There is also a gendarmerie entrusted with internal security; its membership numbers are unknown. All soldiers are poorly trained and ill equipped. The government is purchasing equipment from China and Ukraine in an effort to improve its forces. The president determines promotions based on family and ethnic ties and makes all military decisions. Between 1984 and 1992 the United States hosted members of the armed forces for training programs, after which period it cut funding for the program; since 1997 there has been no military exchange between the two countries.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	1,720
Military Manpower Availability:	120,463
Military Expenditures \$million:	75.1
as % of GDP:	2.5
as % of central government expenditures:	—
Arms Imports \$million:	8
Arms Exports \$million:	—

ECONOMY

The discovery and exploitation of large oil reserves have contributed to dramatic economic growth in recent years. The economy grew at the rate of 15 percent in 2003. Oil companies have paved roads, upgraded the electrical system, and contributed money to health care and the environment, but it appears that most of this money is not benefiting most of the people. Oil wealth stays concentrated in the hands of a few people closely tied to the president. Foreign donors continue to withhold aid because of what is seen as governmental corruption.

Forestry, farming, and fishing are also major components of gross domestic product (GDP). Although pre-independence Equatorial Guinea counted on cocoa production for hard currency earnings, the deterioration of the rural economy under successive brutal regimes has diminished the potential for agriculture-led growth. A number of aid programs sponsored by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) have been cut off since 1993 because of the government's gross corruption and mismanagement. Businesses, for the most part, are owned by government officials and their family members. Undeveloped natural resources include titanium, iron ore, manganese, uranium, and alluvial gold. The country responded favorably to the devaluation of the CFA franc in January 1994. Boosts in production, along with high world oil prices, stimulated growth in 2000, with oil accounting for 90 percent of greatly increased exports.

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Despite the economic growth offered by the oil industry, the vast majority of people still support themselves through subsistence agriculture, hunting, and fishing. Although per capita GDP is estimated to be \$2,700, that figure comes from oil revenues, and most of the population never sees any of the money. Unemployment was high, as exacerbated by illiteracy and a general lack of resources. People get what they need through barter.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion:	1.27			
GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$:	2,700			
GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %:	25.9			
GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %:	22.7			
Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:				
Agriculture:	20			
Industry:	60			
Services:	2.4			
Other:	17.6			
Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:				
Private Consumption:	16			
Government Consumption:	6			
Gross Domestic Investment:	63.6			
Foreign Trade \$billion:	Exports: 2.1			
Imports:	1.371			
% of Income Received by Poorest 10%:	—			
% of Income Received by Richest 10%:	—			
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)				
1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
—	—	—	—	—

Finance

National Currency:	CFA Franc (XAF)
Exchange Rate:	\$1 = XAF 581.2
Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion:	114.45
Central Bank Discount Rate %:	6.0
Total External Debt \$million:	248
Debt Service Ratio %:	2.5
Balance of Payments \$billion:	-1.168
International Reserves SDRs \$million:	238
Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:	6.0

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million:	20.23
per capita \$:	42
Foreign Direct Investment \$million:	323.4

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year:	April 1–March 31
Revenues \$million:	708.5
Expenditures \$million:	317.6
Budget Surplus \$million:	390.9
Tax Revenues as % of GDP:	—

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %:	20
Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %:	3.7
Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares:	1.3
Irrigation, % of Farms having:	—
Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare:	—
Total Farmland % of land area:	4.6
Livestock:	Cattle 000: 5
	Sheep 000: 37
	Hogs 000: 6
	Chickens 000: 320
Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters 000:	811
Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000:	3.5

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million:	—
Industrial Production Growth Rate %:	30.0

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million:	9.8
Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million:	54
Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000:	116
Net Energy Imports % of use:	—
Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000:	15.4
	Production kW-hr million: 23.6
	Consumption kW-hr billion: 21.9
Coal Reserves tons billion:	—
	Production tons million: —
	Consumption tons million: —
Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion:	1.3
	Production cubic feet billion: —
	Consumption cubic feet billion: 45
Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion:	1.1
	Production barrels 000 per day: 237.5
	Consumption barrels 000 per day: 2
Pipelines Length km:	24

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion:	1.371
Exports \$billion:	2.1
Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999):	15.8
Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999):	28.6
Balance of Trade \$billion:	-1.168

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
United States %	30.6	33.6
United Kingdom %	16.0	—
France %	15.1	—
Côte d'Ivoire %	11.9	—
Spain %	8.1	25.8
Norway %	5.9	—
Italy %	5.3	6.4
China %	—	14.4
Canada %	—	11.8

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 2,880
 Paved %: —
 Automobiles: —
 Trucks and Buses: —
 Railroad: Track Length km: —
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: —
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 3
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 9.7
 Airports: 3
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 4
 Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: —
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: —
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: —

Communications

Telephones 000: 9.6
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones 000: 41.5
 Personal Computers 000: 3.5
 Internet Hosts per million people: 6
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 3

ENVIRONMENT

One legacy of colonial Spanish rule was the preservation of much of Equatorial Guinea's biodiversity. Spanish rule helped preserve rain forests and animal life that might have otherwise been destroyed by overly rapid development. However, since the end of colonial rule the country's resources have been poorly managed and are now threatened. The country suffers from problems common to developing countries, including deforestation, shortages of potable water, and contamination of water resources. While the government has adopted a number of plans to curb deforestation and protect the biodiversity of the country, little has actually been achieved. With a stagnant economy and growing demand for agricultural land to feed a booming population, the exploitation of natural resources as a source of money and food is likely to continue.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 62.5
 Average Annual Forest Change, 1990-2000, 000 ha: —11
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 14
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 0.45

LIVING CONDITIONS

Most people in Equatorial Guinea live in very primitive conditions. There is little electricity outside the cities, most roads are not paved, and housing is substandard. Almost no one owns an automobile, traveling instead by bus, minibus, bush taxi, or on foot. People grow, gather, hunt, and catch their own food and supply their own fuel to cook it. Most people do not have access to safe drinking water. There is some chance that increased income from oil revenues will modernize facilities throughout the country, but as yet that has not happened.

HEALTH

The people in Equatorial Guinea suffer from many health problems. There are not enough doctors or nurses, and hospitals are ill-equipped; 65 percent of the population has no access to medical care. Life expectancy is 55 years, which is better than many African nations but not good by Western standards. The infant mortality rate is 87 deaths per 1,000 live births. Tropical diseases are endemic; malaria, dengue fever, hepatitis, tuberculosis, diphtheria, rabies, and typhus are all common. In 2001, 3.4 percent of the population was infected with HIV; the majority of those infected are women.

Health

Number of Physicians: 101
 Number of Dentists: 4
 Number of Nurses: 162
 Number of Pharmacists: 8
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 25
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 87.08
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 880
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 2.0
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 76
 HIV Infected % of adults: 3.4
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 33
 Measles: 51
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 53
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 44

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Most people consume a subsistence diet consisting of cassava or rice supplemented with vegetables, sauce, and perhaps meat. Many people do not get enough to eat; women and children are most likely to be malnourished. People grow their own food or trade for it in the market. There are restaurants in the cities that serve a range of food. Imported beer is expensive, but locally brewed beer is cheap. Safe water is in short supply.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: —
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: —

STATUS OF WOMEN

The law states that both sexes, and all tribal groups, are equal and entitled to the same rights and privileges. In practice, women are accorded a lower status than are men and have a correspondingly lower status and influence in the society and government. Men often take several wives, but women are never permitted multiple husbands. Social tradition and the fact that women produce most of the basic food items keep most women engaged in agriculture or domestic work. Five times as many males as females enter secondary school, and eight times as many graduate at that level. Because of the severe need for skilled people of all types, however, women can have professional careers and do hold important jobs in the health sector and in other socially oriented ministries. There are almost no women in the government.

Legally, families are not allowed to discriminate against women in matters of inheritance or in divorce, but in practice such discrimination occurs and is exacerbated by the fact that tribal customs take precedence over national laws for most people. When a woman divorces, she usually must return the dowry she received from her husband when they married; the husband automatically takes custody of all children born after the marriage, though the mother can keep those born before the marriage. Women become members of their husbands' families when they marry. Women have the right to buy and sell goods, but most men refuse to give women access to funds needed to develop a business beyond small-scale market trading or to buy substantial property.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 18
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: —
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: —

WORK

Most people work in subsistence agriculture, growing and hunting food for their own families. Some make a small income by trading in markets. The unemployment rate is extremely high, at about 30 percent. Some people work in forestry, commercial farming, or fishing. The oil industry employs some natives, but many oil company

employees are English-speaking Africans from neighboring countries.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 200,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 35.7
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: —
 Industry: —
 Services: —
 Unemployment %: 30

EDUCATION

Education is, in principle, free, universal, and compulsory for eight years, from ages six to 14. Schooling is a 12- or 14-year program and consists of six or eight years of primary-level education, four years of middle-level education, and two years of secondary-level education. The academic year runs from October to June. Classes are taught in Spanish. Far more boys than girls attend school.

There is a teacher-training school at Malabo. Two other higher educational centers, at Malabo and Bata, are administered by the Spanish Universidad Nacional de Educacion a Distancia. Adult literacy rates increased from 20 percent in 1978 to 78 percent in 1998–99. In 2003, 85.7 percent of the population was literate.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 85.7
 Male %: 93.3
 Female %: 78.4
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 9.0
 First Level: Primary schools: 781
 Teachers: 1,810
 Students: 78,477
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 43.4
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 84.6
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: —
 Teachers: 1,388
 Students: 39,998
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 29.9
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 36.5
 Third Level: Institutions: —
 Teachers: 206
 Students: 1,003
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 2.7
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 0.6

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Equatorial Guinea does not have a developed technological infrastructure. There are few telephone lines and cellular telephones. The electrical supply is uneven and does not

reach many areas. In 2004 there were only three Internet hosts in the entire nation and only a few thousand users.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: —
 Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

The state controls all media. It allows very mild criticism of government institutions but absolutely no criticism of the president, and most journalists and broadcasters censor themselves. There is one television station in the nation, the state-run Television Nacional. Radio Nacional de Guinea Ecuatorial is run by the state. Radio Asonga is privately owned, but the owner happens to be the president's son. Radio France Internationale broadcasts in Malabo. *Ebano* is the state-owned daily newspaper. *La opinion*, *La nacion*, and *La gaceta* are all privately owned and publish weekly or monthly. There are also a few underground pamphlets that appear from time to time.

Media

Newspapers and Periodicals: —
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: —
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets 000: 50
 per 1,000: 116

CULTURE

Equatorial Guinea has a mix of cultures from its many indigenous ethnic groups, with some Spanish and French influence. People still observe traditional rituals. People play music on homemade instruments such as wooden xylophones, drums, zithers, *sanzas* (a thumb harp made of bamboo), and bow harps. Bands of three or four men will play local music for festivals, and people will dance traditional dances such as the passionate *balélé* or the suggestive *ibanga*, which is popular in coastal areas. The *balelé* is also performed on Bioko, where it is used to celebrate holidays or Christmas.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: —

Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

There is a bewildering array of traditional cultures present in Equatorial Guinea. Ethnic groups have their own gods and myths and practice rituals to ask for favors, prevent evil, and celebrate occasions such as marriages. The Fang people practice black magic, and their sorcerers are revered. They use song and dance to communicate with the deities. They use the ceremony called *abira* to ask the gods to get rid of evil in villages.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

There are many celebrations and festivals in Equatorial Guinea; major Christian festivals are observed at the national level, but regions and villages also have their own unique celebrations that occur throughout the year. October 12 is Independence Day and an occasion for festivals and events.

The cities have bars, restaurants, nightclubs, and outdoor markets. Malabo is the most exciting city. There are no luxury accommodations or restaurants anywhere. There are some beautiful beaches on the coast. Hiking is possible in the interior and on Bioko.

ETIQUETTE

Bargaining is expected in the markets. People who look wealthy are expected to tip about 10 percent in more expensive restaurants and facilities; otherwise tipping is not customary.

FAMILY LIFE

Women are usually subordinate to their husbands, who are allowed to have more than one wife. Women marry quite young, especially in rural areas. Every woman on average bears almost five children; contraception is uncommon.

The naming system is very complicated. People have two first names, one Spanish and one African. For a surname, they use their father's first name followed by their mother's first name. Surnames change as each generation uses its parents' first names.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Many people dress in cotton robes dyed in brightly colored patterns. Men and boys often dress in pants or shorts with Western-style shirts.

SPORTS

Equatorial Guinea has a Ministry of Sports and a thriving national sports scene. Soccer is extremely popular. The country has a national soccer team that competes on the international level as well as a national women's team. Governmental corruption reaches sports as well, and in 2004 many sports journalists were suspended by the Ministry of Sports for failing to praise the government's efforts adequately, for criticizing referees, or for suggesting that teams were not properly prepared for competition.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1968** Equatorial Guinea formally proclaims its independence, with Macias Nguema Biyogo as president and Atanasio Ndong as foreign minister.
- 1969** New agreements covering economic and educational programs are signed with Spain. Conflict erupts between Fang and Bubi on Fernando Po Island (Bioko). Relations with Spain are strained as ethnic strife widens. Spanish troops withdraw from the country, and Spanish civilians are repatriated. Foreign Minister Ndong is accused of fomenting unrest and is arrested and reportedly killed; mass purge of Macias Nguema Biyogo's political enemies follows.
- 1970** PUNT is formed and declared the sole legal political party in the country.
- 1972** Macias Nguema Biyogo is proclaimed president for life. New agreement is signed with Spain.
- 1973** PUNT's Third Party Congress approves new constitution, and provincial autonomy is abolished. Under a program of Africanizing geographical names, Fernando Po is renamed Macias Nguema Biyogo, Santa Isabel is renamed Malabo, Annabon is renamed Pagalu, and Río Benito is renamed Mbini.
- 1974** Government launches a campaign of terror, causing nearly 100,000 citizens to seek asylum in neighboring countries. In a parallel campaign against the Catholic Church, Spanish bishops and nuns are expelled, Catholic schools and churches are closed, African nuns and priests are arrested, and Equatorial Guineans are compelled by decree to drop their Christian names. A minor dispute with Gabon is resolved as Gabon withdraws claim.
- 1975** The ekuele is introduced as the national currency, replacing the Guinean peseta. Nigerian government charges Equatorial Guinea with inhuman treatment of Nigerian workers; Nigerian workers are evacuated.
- 1976** United States suspends diplomatic relations with Equatorial Guinea.
- 1979** President Macias is overthrown in a coup led by his nephew Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, who sets up the Supreme Military Council with himself as president; Macias is arrested, tried on a number of charges—including treason, embezzlement, genocide, and other atrocities—found guilty, and shot by a firing squad. King Juan Carlos of Spain visits the country and receives a warm welcome, signifying the pro-Spanish and pro-Western tilt of the new regime. Relations with the United States are restored.
- 1980** Fishing accord with the Soviet Union is revoked.
- 1982** Obiang is appointed president for a second term of seven years. New constitution is approved by 95 percent of the voters. Cristino Seriche Bioko is named prime minister.
- 1983** Equatorial Guinea joins the Customs and Economic Union of Central Africa and the Central African Economic Community.
- 1985** Equatorial Guinea adopts the CFA franc as its national currency.
- 1987** Obiang announces the formation of a government party, the Partido Democrático de Guinea Ecuatorial.
- 1989** Obiang is elected president in a contest in which he is the only candidate.
- 1990** Amnesty International accuses Equatorial Guinean authorities of torturing political prisoners.
- 1992** A 1991 law allowing for a multiparty democracy goes into effect.
- 1996** Obiang is reelected with 99 percent of the votes cast.
- 1999** Legislative elections dominated by the ruling Democratic Party of Equatorial Guinea are widely condemned as fraudulent.
- 2001** Oil industry brings in rapid economic growth. Eight opposition leaders living in exile in Spain form a coalition against Obiang. Opposition leader Florentino Ecomo Nsogo, head of Party of Reconstruction and Social Well-Being (PRBS), returns to Equatorial Guinea after appeal by Obiang.

- 2002** A total of 68 people are jailed for supposedly plotting a coup. Amnesty International accuses government of torturing them to obtain confessions. Obiang is reelected with 100 percent of the vote.
- 2003** The exiled opposition leaders form their own government in Spain. The government releases some of the coup suspects.
- 2004** Another suspected coup attempt leads to the arrest of mercenaries. Many immigrants are deported. Obiang's party wins 98 of 100 seats in parliamentary elections.
- 2005** Sir Mark Thatcher pleads guilty to participating in 2004 coup attempt.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Official Home Page of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea Government in Exile
<http://www.guinea-ecuatorial.org/>
- U.S. Department of State: Equatorial Guinea
<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/7221.htm>

ERITREA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

State of Eritrea (Hagere Ertra)

ABBREVIATION

ER

CAPITAL

Asmara

HEAD OF STATE & HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

President Isaias Afewerki (from 1993)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Transitional government

POPULATION

4,561,599 (2005)

AREA

121,320 sq km (46,842 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Tigrinya, Tigre, Kunama

LANGUAGES

Tigrigna, Arabic, English

RELIGIONS

Islam, Eritrean Orthodox

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Nakfa

NATIONAL FLAG

Red isosceles triangle (based on the hoist side) dividing the flag into two right triangles; the upper triangle is green, the lower one is light blue; a gold wreath encircling a gold olive branch is centered on the hoist side of the red triangle.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

In a circle is a camel standing on a desert; around the circle are a gold wreath and, on a banner beneath, the name of the country, "The State of Eritrea," in both English and Arabic.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"Eritrea, Eritrea, Eritrea"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day), March 8 (Women's Day), May 24 (Independence Day), June 20 (Martyr's Day), September 1 (Start of the Armed Struggles)

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

May 24, 1993

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

Transitional constitution decreed May 24, 1993; replacement constitution adopted May 23, 1997 but not yet implemented

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Eritrea, a relatively new country, is located in the northern part of the Horn of Africa, with its eastern section bordering the Red Sea. Its size is 121,320 sq km (46,842 sq mi). On the western border lies Sudan, while to the south and southeast Eritrea borders Ethiopia and Djibouti, respectively. The country's geographical features provide a rich diversity of topography and climate within short distances of each other. The geographical features can be classified into four categories.

The first category is the Kebesa Plateau of central Eritrea, at 6,000–8,000 ft (1,830–2,440 m) above sea level. It features an elevated plain dotted with hills. Deep canyons, valleys, and fertile plains also mark the plateau. On the eastern part of the plateau, the area is covered with shrub, juniper, and olive trees. The Hazemo Plains,

a flat and fertile agricultural land, spreads to the south in the Akele Guzai districts, with ancient villages, archaeological sites, monasteries, and wildernesses of an eclectic mix. Here also is found Eritrea's highest mountain, Eimba Soira, a towering edifice with foreboding majesty. On the northern section of the plateau, the terrain breaks into an uneven descent of fertile valleys and rises to high mountains and intermediate plateaus called *roras*. The vegetation contains some wooded areas on the eastern slopes of the plateau, known as *babri*, with lush scenery in the summer. Some of the main rivers emptying their waters into the Red Sea include Komaile, Haddas, and Algede. About 30 miles west of Asmara, the terrain breaks into a steep descent to the Barka lowlands. The Mereb and Anseba rivers originate from the Kebessa Plateau and drain their waters into the Barka plains and Sudan. The MayBella River, which originates from the center of As-

Eritrea



mara, is one of the major tributaries of the Mereb. The Nefhee River originates just outside Asmara and is important for cultivation on the Gergar and Mensura Plains in the upper Barka.

The breadbasket of Eritrea is the Barka lowland, with elevations between 3,000 and 5,000 ft (915 and 1,830 m). It is a mixture of desert plains, arid prairies, palm trees, and fertile soil in the Gash valley, where wild animals such as lions, elephants, and a host of assorted game are abundant. The cities of Barentu, Tessenei, Tecombia, and Ali Ghider are important trading centers supporting the dynamic agricultural activity that was resurrected in the postliberation period of the 1990s. Some 70 miles due south, where the lowlands touch the highlands, is the spectacular Laito Canyon.

The Red Sea Plains on the eastern seaboard, at elevations between 1,000 and 3,000 ft (305 and 915 m), contain a strip of sandy soil running north to south paralleling the Red Sea itself. In the north the region is sandy and covered with sparse grass and shrubs. On the southern seacoast lies the Dankel (Danakil) Depression, featuring inhospitable terrain consisting of dark volcanic soil and extremely hot temperatures year-round.

The northern highlands feature bare and stark mountains with intervals of fertile valleys at 6,000 to 8,000 ft (1,830 to 2,440 m) above sea level. The rivers Lebka, Laba, and Falat originate from this area and drain their waters into the Red Sea. The small towns of Nakfa, Af Abet, Karora, and SheEb are closely identified with Eritrea's struggle for independence as military bases and sites of Eritrean wars of liberation.

Geography

Area sq km: 121,320; sq mi 46,842
 World Rank: 96th
 Land Boundaries, km: Djibouti 109; Ethiopia 912; Sudan 605
 Coastline, km: 2,234
 Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Kobar Sink -75
 Highest: Soira 3,018
 Land Use %
 Arable Land: 5
 Permanent Crops: 0
 Forest: 15.7
 Other: 79.3

Population of Principal Cities (2002 est.)

Asmara	500,600
Keren	74,800

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Eritrea's seasons are classified into annual quarters as KewEy (fall), Ayet (winter), Hagay/Tsidiaya (autumn),

and Keremty (summer). These seasons correspond to seasonal rains for planting and harvesting crops. Traditionally, the year starts on September 1, when the annual Udet, a type of harvest festivity, is celebrated.

On the Kebessa Plateau the climate is moderate, with a year-round temperature of 60–65°F (16–19°C) around Asmara, the capital city. The northern plateau shares an identical climate to the Kebessa. The vast stretch of the seacoast, north to south, is hot and humid. Massawa, with an average temperature of 77°F (25°C), and Assab, slightly higher at 78°F (26°C), are the main coastal cities. In July the temperature for Massawa and Assab averages 95°F (35°C). Annual precipitation for Massawa is 7.6 in (193 mm). For Assab, the rainfall rarely comes above 1.2 in (30.5 mm). The rainfall in the south and west is similar to that of the western slopes, resulting in the lush forests and grasslands that support animals such as lions and elephants.

Climate and Weather

Temperature Range
 Summer: 90°F to 120°F
 Winter: 76°F to 82°
 Average Rainfall: 5.6 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Eritrea's land is harsh and dry. In the central highlands near Sudan, the only plants that grow are those that can live with little water in sandy soil, such as desert grasses, juniper, and wild olives. Jackals, warthogs, gazelles, Abyssinian hares, and wild cats live there. The mostly uninhabited islands of the Dahlak Archipelago are home to many birds, such as the osprey and the Arabian bustard, and to the dugong, or sea cow. There is tropical forest northeast of Asmara. There are a few mangrove swamps in the east. The Red Sea has excellent coral reefs and sea turtles. Nearly all of Eritrea's plants and animals are endangered due to war, overgrazing, and bad agricultural practices.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 4,561,599
 World Rank: 115th
 Density per sq km: 43.5
 % of annual growth (1999-2003): 2.5
 Male %: 49.7
 Female %: 50.3
 Urban %: 20.0
 Age Distribution %: 0–14: 44.8
 15–64: 51.9
 65 and over: 3.3
 Population 2025: 6,954,000

Birth Rate per 1,000: 39.03
 Death Rate per 1,000: 13.36
 Rate of Natural Increase %: 2.8
 Total Fertility Rate: 5.67
 Expectation of Life (years): Males 51.32
 Females 54.12
 Marriage Rate per 1,000: —
 Divorce Rate per 1,000: —
 Average Size of Households: —
 Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Eritrea's population is composed of four major ethnic groups. The first group is the Nilotic extract consisting of the Baza/Kunama, Mogolo, and Nara, who speak Hamitic languages. They rely on sedentary agriculture, herding, and hunting. They occupy the southwestern part of the country along the Gash and Setit river banks. The Baza are considered the earliest inhabitants of the area.

The second group is the Baja and the Beniamir. They occupy the northwestern and northern stretch of the Barka and Anseba rivers, extending as far north as the Nakfa and Karora districts. They both use the Tigre and Hidareb languages. Their ancestry is variously attributed to the Beja from southern Egypt or to Sabea or Himyaritic groups from South Arabia.

On the southeastern seacoasts are found the third ethnic group, the Saho/Asawrta and Afar peoples, both of Hamitic origin and languages. They share a nomadic life of harsh existence in an inhospitable physical environment. The Afar make their nomadic tours in the Danakil areas. The Sahos migrate to the western lowlands from their habitat in the southeastern part of the Kebessa Plateau.

The fourth, and dominant, ethnic group, the Tigrigna-speaking population, is located at the Kebessa Plateau. They identify themselves as Agaazian, which means "onward marching warriors." The Arabs changed the nomenclature to Habash, meaning of mixed blood/race. The spoken language by the Agaazian people was Ge'ez, a Semitic language from which Tigre and Tigrigna were derived. They share a common heritage and ancestry with the Aksumite Kingdom of Tigray, in Ethiopia. The manner of their arrival in Eritrea is traced to South Arabia, from where they crossed the Red Sea and settled on the plateau. They intermingled with the local inhabitants to form the Habasha community, who have since dominated political and cultural life in the highlands of modern Eritrea and northern Ethiopia.

LANGUAGES

A variety of Cushitic, Nilotic, and Semitic languages are spoken in Eritrea, with Tigrigna, Arabic, and English all counted as official languages.

RELIGIONS

The Eritrean population is evenly divided between Muslims and Christians. Christianity entered Eritrea and Ethiopia at the same time in the fourth century c.e., when Syrian missionaries from Tyre succeeded in converting the Aksumite ruler, King Ezana, to Christianity. In the 15th century the first rift on doctrinal matters emerged between the Eritrean and Ethiopian churches. The theological rift led to protracted civil wars involving the northern and southern churches. Gradually, the violence subsided as the church in general lost its evangelical zeal and focused on administrative issues. Meanwhile, the church's relation with Alexandria, Egypt, continued until the 1940s, when the Ethiopian Church declared its autonomy from Alexandria. The war with Ethiopia in 1998 caused some politicization of the Eritrean Orthodox Church. In late 1998 the church separated itself from the Ethiopian diocese and established its own synod.

Islam was introduced in Eritrea sometime in the seventh century c.e., when the followers of the prophet Muhammad sought refuge in the region from their Jewish persecutors in Arabia. It gained its ascendancy when the Arabs overran Egypt, seriously crippling Egyptian and Nubian Christianity. Islamic warriors and merchants, mixing commerce with religious fervor, pushed southward to northeastern Sudan and penetrated the northern and western lowlands of Eritrea. Islamic mosques replaced churches and monasteries. On the seacoast they occupied the Eritrean islands of Dahlak, off Massawa, and marched on the eastern highlands. From there they edged upward to western and northern Eritrea in the mid-19th century.

Catholicism and Protestantism arrived late in the 1840s. Their evangelizing mission was thwarted due to the xenophobic impulses of the Orthodox Church. Today, the Eritrean government has enforced rights of worship on an equal basis and the dominance once enjoyed by the Orthodox Church has been severely curtailed.

Religious Affiliations

Eastern Orthodox	1,825,000
Muslim	2,326,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Paleontologists have identified areas in Eritrea, as well as some on the Denakil Depression in Ethiopia, as sites of the origin of the human species. Whereas the Eritrean plateau was an integral part of the Aksumite Kingdom, which flourished from the fourth century b.c.e. until the sixth century c.e., the lowlands were independent principalities and dominions as far as eastern Sudan on the west and Massawa on the eastern part of the Eritrean coast.

However, the modern history of Eritrea is strongly affected by colonialism. From the 16th century the area was occupied by the Ottoman Turks. In the 17th century the Funj Kingdom of Sinar, modern Sudan, controlled the Gash-Barka lowlands and attempted to subjugate the Beniamir and Beja population. After the decline of the Funj, Egypt ruled over much of Eritrea from 1819 to 1886. Egyptian influence over Eritrean territories was precarious and costly. It gave way to European colonialism in the 19th century.

With the opening of the Suez Canal, the Red Sea became an important waterway for trade and commerce. The opening of the canal and its impact on the Red Sea also coincided with the colonial scramble for Africa. Italy gradually took initial steps in acquiring a foothold on the Red Sea coast. In 1869 an Italian company, in the name of the Italian government, bought the port of Assab from the local chief. Very quickly, Italian rulers invested energy and resources to develop Eritrea as an extension of Italy itself, and on January 1, 1890, Eritrea was declared Italy's first colony in Africa. Eritrea's political identity was to be forged anew through the political instruments that Italian colonialism brought to bear from 1890 to 1940 as well as during the 10 years of British military administration, 1941–51.

Italy mixed a brutal policy of racism with industrial ingenuity to rule Eritrea. The colony, with its ideal Mediterranean climate and sufficient space for immigration, was a valuable asset for Italy. To facilitate effective exploitation of the colony, Italian engineers built roads, railways, and tunnels and developed agriculture, making Eritrea an extension of the Italian model. In order to prevent local rebellion by the Eritrean peoples, the colonial rulers strictly enforced official segregation in all areas of life. When Italy joined the Axis during World War II, it unwittingly initiated its own demise as a colonial power in Eritrea. Britain targeted Italy as a threat to its interests in East Africa. In successive battles waged between 1939 and 1941, British forces crushed the Italian Fascists and dislodged them first from Eritrea and then from Ethiopia.

Between 1941 and 1951 Eritrea, still under colonial status, was administered by Britain as an occupied enemy territory. The British found that under Italian colonialism Eritreans endured horrendous oppression. Eritreans had yearned for freedom from Italian colonialism but were too alienated to be united with Ethiopia. Ethiopia's failure to contest the territory during Italian colonialism and its willingness to renounce its claim to Eritrea reinforced Eritrean alienation from Ethiopia. During the Italian rule of their land Eritreans solidified their sense of separate identity based on their colonial experiences.

The British Military Administration (BMA) was mandated by the United Nations to see Eritrea through a transitional phase leading either to independence or to a political union with Ethiopia. The BMA thus ruled

Eritrea as an occupied "enemy territory." As a result of Italy's belligerence during World War II, Britain decided to expropriate those economic resources established by Italy in Eritrea. With respect to industrial and economic capital, what the Italians built in Eritrea, the British uprooted and destroyed.

However, with regard to matters of political development, the British embarked on a liberal democratic restructuring of Eritrean politics. They expanded the educational sector, allowed for freedom of expression through free speech, and permitted freedom of assembly through political parties and labor unions.

When the British mandate over Eritrea ended in 1951, the United Nations decided to federate Eritrea with Ethiopia for 10 years, after which the Eritreans would be given a chance for self-determination—either for union with Ethiopia or independence. Federation allowed Eritrea to have its own parliament with complete control of domestic affairs. Eritrea's seaports, its currency, and its foreign affairs were delegated to the Ethiopian emperor, Haile Selassie. In 1961 Haile Selassie arbitrarily dissolved the Eritrean parliament over the objection of its independent-minded parliamentarians. He declared Eritrea an Ethiopian province in 1962. The same year, an independence movement calling itself Mahber Show-Ate (a company of seven) was formed as a clandestine movement for the liberation of Eritrea. Mahber Show-Ate evolved into the Eritrean Liberation Movement (ELM), later to be known as the Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF), with the declared goal of armed insurrection against the Ethiopian rulers.

The ELF demonstrated formidable military skills against the Ethiopian army. However, its political capacity lagged behind its military successes. As it evolved in military strength and organizational complexity, its key figures in the leadership failed to ameliorate simmering ethnic and religious conflicts. A splinter group, under the leadership of Isaias Afewerki, calling itself the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF), was formed in 1970.

EPLF took a stand against internal dissension, imposing rigid military discipline combined with economic and political development in the areas it controlled. It thoroughly politicized the populace as a base of support for its military operations against the Ethiopians. Meanwhile, ELF was sidetracked from its military mission against the Ethiopians and waged war against the EPLF. A civil war pitting the two liberation fronts erupted and continued between 1970 and 1980. In 1980 ELF forces were defeated and fled to Sudan, where they were disarmed by the Sudanese and allowed to live there as refugees.

Between 1980 and 1991 the EPLF faced successive military campaigns by Ethiopian troops equipped with Soviet weapons and military advisers from East Germany, Cuba, and South Yemen. After prolonged guerrilla attacks and ambushes, the Ethiopian army and its advisers were exhausted. Finally, in 1987 EPLF forces demolished one-

third of the Ethiopian army in the Battle of Af Abet. In 1990 EPLF liberated the port of Massawa and was poised to take over Asmara. The liberation war ended on May 24, 1991, when the EPLF liberated all of Eritrea.

On May 25, 1991, guerrilla forces led by the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) marched into Addis Ababa and replaced the military regime that had ruled Ethiopia since 1974. The EPLF and the EPRDF, having agreed to cooperate in solving Ethiopian and Eritrean disagreements, peacefully subscribed to a two-year waiting period before formally declaring Eritrean independence. At the end of the two years, Eritrea would conduct a referendum under international supervision for Eritreans to vote for independence or a federal union with Ethiopia. In 1993 the referendum was conducted, and Eritreans overwhelmingly voted for Eritrean independence. On May 24, 1993, the country was declared a free and independent state. Ethiopia, Sudan, the United States, and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) extended recognition of Eritrea's independence.

After 30 years of liberation struggle, Eritrea focused on the tasks of reconstruction and rehabilitation. The government of Eritrea adopted a policy of self-reliance, vowing to use its manpower to carry out economic development. However, disagreements over contested borders with Yemen and Ethiopia led to open military clashes. The war with Yemen broke out in 1995 and was quickly settled by international arbitration. The dispute with Ethiopia proved to be more lasting.

In 1997 Eritrea abandoned the Ethiopian currency, the birr, as legal tender, and issued its own currency, the nakfa. Tensions on both sides of the border grew fast, with economic transactions becoming sources of conflict as a result of the different instruments of trade, the nakfa and the birr. The tension grew into a crisis when, early in 1997, Ethiopian militias destroyed border towns inhabited by Eritreans in the Badime district. Both countries established border commissions to deal with the crisis. Before the commission could begin its task, a border skirmish in June 1998 involving Eritrean regulars and Ethiopian militias grew into an open war when Ethiopia declared war on Eritrea. After two years of bloody war that claimed thousands of lives on both sides and resulted in the displacement of one-third of Eritrean civilians, the two countries signed an Agreement of Cessation of Hostilities on June 18, 2000. In December, Eritrea and Ethiopia signed a peace agreement that formally ended the war and established a commission to demarcate their border. By mid-2001 both Ethiopia and Eritrea had completed their troop withdrawal from the border zone. The United Nations continued to monitor the peace process. Between 2001 and 2003 Ethiopia and Eritrea continued to dispute the placement of their shared border, both claiming the town of Badme. The UN commission ruled in 2003 that Badme belonged to Eritrea; Ethiopia

grudgingly accepted this judgment in November 2004. However, border tensions continued and in 2005 Eritrea restricted the movements of the UN peacekeepers monitoring the border. Eritrea has also had some disagreements with Sudan, which claims that Eritreans have assisted Sudanese rebels.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1993– Isaias Afewerki

CONSTITUTION

The government of the State of Eritrea was a “provisional” government until the inauguration of the constitution. Since the referendum of 1993, the government had operated informally, lacking the ground rules established by constitutional provisions. Its organizational and operational directives were announced on May 19, 1993, in Proclamation No. 37/1993. In February 1994 the EPLF was disbanded and replaced by the People's Front for Democracy and Justice (PFDJ). The PFDJ divided the country into governorates and subgovernorates to be administered by officials handpicked from the ranks of the PFDJ and with experiences in EPLF political and military history.

The current governing body is the National Assembly, consisting of 75 members of the PFDJ and 75 elected from the provinces by popular vote. The president is the head of the Assembly and of the State Council, or cabinet. As a “transitional” regime, the government enjoyed enormous popularity among the people. However, the tentative nature of its structure handicapped the regime and prevented it from claiming formal legitimacy.

The constitution was written in 1996 and submitted to the National Assembly. After a lengthy debate the National Assembly accepted the constitution in 1997. On May 23, 1997, the Constituent Assembly, consisting of Eritreans from abroad and from the newly reconstituted electoral districts, ratified the Eritrean constitution.

The constitution emphasizes individual rights and liberties with particular attention to women's suffrage. Female soldiers made up more than 35 percent of both the Eritrean guerrilla forces before independence and the defense forces after independence. The voting age is set at 18 years.

PARLIAMENT

Eritrea's unicameral National Assembly has 150 members, 75 from the PFDJ and 75 who are popularly elected. The country's plan is to elect the entire Assembly, but the elections scheduled in 2001 were postponed indefinitely. Until the nation establishes a fully democratic govern-

ment, the National Assembly serves as the highest legal power, electing the president, approving the budget, and setting governmental policies.

POLITICAL PARTIES

The only existing party in Eritrea is the People's Front for Democracy and Justice (PFDJ). The constitution envisions a multiparty system based on secular party programs and platforms. Parties based on religious or ethnic affiliations are forbidden by the constitution. The government has recently announced that plans are under way to conduct elections based on specific election rules. The announcement anticipates spontaneous party formation of autonomous groups outside the party in government, the PFDJ. The National Assembly drafted a law on political parties in 2001 but has yet to vote on it.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Eritrea is divided into six regions: Anseba, Debub, Debubawi K'eyih Bahri, Gash Barka, Ma'akel, and Semenawi Keyih Bahri. Local government and administration resembles the ward system of city politics in Western societies like the United States, the difference being that there is a high level of authoritarian discipline and accountability strictly enforced by the PFDJ on provincial and local councils.

The PFDJ directs electoral activities and the grassroots recruitment of candidates, arguing that the population needs electoral education. Locally elected governing councils govern villages, towns, and cities. However, there is visible influence of the PFDJ in nominating and electing council members and village administrators as there is in the determination of district and province governors. The PFDJ has not shied away from exhibiting paternalistic authoritarianism throughout Eritrea, claiming that authority is indispensable for steady political and economic development.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The constitution, temporarily inactive due to the emergency situations declared as a result of the war with Ethiopia, provides for an independent court based on the Ethiopian legal code of 1957. The government has thus far used it as an ad hoc tool to activate the legal process. The judiciary branch consists of 29 district courts, 10 provincial courts, and the Supreme Court. District courts have mandates to try civil, criminal, and tort cases. Provincial courts serve as appellate courts and review the procedural and constitutional standards used at the lower court level. The Supreme Court is the court of last resort,

reviewing the appellate courts' decisions and calling for their standing or reversal. The judiciary is not independent of the government; in 2001 the president of the Supreme Court was detained for criticizing the government for interfering with the courts.

HUMAN RIGHTS

The written constitution guarantees personal and civil liberties, with provisions for due process of law. There are explicit guarantees for the free exercise of religion, assembly, and the press. Universal suffrage for those 18 years and over is guaranteed, and women enjoy equal rights in inheritance, property ownership, marriages, and child rearing. Due to the delay in the implementation of the constitution resulting from the war with Ethiopia in 1998, the government's credibility in abiding by the constitutional provisions has not yet been tested.

Eritrea's human rights record has been poor. Amnesty International, in its 1998 and 1999 reports, has declared that some political prisoners were detained in violation of their human rights and due process. The government has countered by claiming that the detainees belonged to elements of the Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF) who were engaged in attempts at violent overthrow of the government and in the murder of innocent civilians. The nation's security forces have made some people disappear, tortured prisoners, and abused army deserters. No international observers have been allowed to visit prisons. The court system does not in practice provide due process. Freedom of religion and of movement have been curtailed. Discrimination against women and against the Kunama ethnic group are continuing problems. Child labor occurs frequently.

FOREIGN POLICY

Eritrea is a member of the African Union (AU) and the Intergovernmental Agency for Democracy and Development (IGADD). It has good relations with most of Europe and the United States, which provide aid; those relations have been strained, however, by the government's crack-down on political dissidents in 2001. Eritrea's relations with its close neighbors are tense. In addition to the border war with Ethiopia, Eritrea has fought with Yemen over the Haynish Islands and with Sudan over Islamic extremists. Djibouti is its only nearby friend.

DEFENSE

The armed forces consist of the army, militia ground forces, navy, and air force. Armament expenditure is a closely guarded secret, though it was estimated to ap-

proach 12 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) in 2003. During the war for independence the military population grew to 110,000, about 30 percent of it female. In 1995 the government demobilized 45 percent of the armed forces. Many of these demobilized soldiers had never worked anywhere but the military, and the country assisted them in their transition to civilian life with extra compensation and training. By 1998 the army had only 47,000 soldiers.

This trend suddenly reversed itself when war broke out with Ethiopia; between 1998 and 2000 the armed forces ballooned to almost 300,000—nearly 10 percent of Eritrea's population. This was very expensive for the nation, and GDP fell during the war.

When the war ended in 2000, a UN peacekeeping force arrived to monitor the Security Zone separating Ethiopia and Eritrea. The government has gradually demobilized its enlarged army, though it has needed funding from external sources. The United States resumed limited military cooperation with Eritrea after the war ended.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 215,000
 Military Manpower Availability: —
 Military Expenditures \$million: 77.9
 as % of GDP: 11.8
 as % of central government expenditures: —
 Arms Imports \$million: 180
 Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

The capital base left by the Italians at the end of World War II was squandered when the British dismantled factories, stripped harbors, and destroyed government buildings. The Ethiopians repeated the plunder when they took down cable highways, telecommunication poles, and industrial machinery during the independence drive. Some 30 years of armed struggle further ravaged the roads, bridges, and overall infrastructure, leaving the country poor and bankrupt. The recent war with Ethiopia made it difficult for expatriate Eritreans to send money home.

Eritreans have since been struggling to put their country back together. Growth was zero in 1999 and -12 percent in 2000 but went back up to 2 percent in 2004. The truce with Ethiopia may help the economy recover further. The country has been working to develop the Red Sea coast to accommodate tourism and international trade and has been rebuilding Assab and Massawa, the main port cities.

Some 80 percent of the population practices subsistence agriculture, which does not contribute much to

GDP. The drought of 2004 hurt most rural people; both crops and livestock suffered, and the country must find food to support those affected. Salt derived from Red Sea water is one of Eritrea's major exports. The country has some industry, including food processing and textiles, which account for one-quarter of national revenue. There is a petroleum refinery in Assab.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 3.3
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 700
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 0.8
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: -1.7
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 12.4
 Industry: 25.3
 Services: 62.4
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 79
 Government Consumption: 48
 Gross Domestic Investment: 26.3
 Foreign Trade \$million: Exports: 56
 Imports: 600
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: —
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: —

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
—	—	—	—	—

Finance

National Currency: Nakfa (ERN)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = ERN 13.9582
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 6.9
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: —
 Total External Debt \$million: 311
 Debt Service Ratio %: 13.01
 Balance of Payments \$million: -159
 International Reserves SDRs \$million: 24.7
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 12.3

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 230
 per capita \$: 54
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 21

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$million: 235.7
 Expenditures \$million: 375
 Budget Deficit \$million: 139.3
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 12.4
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: -3.8
 Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares: 0.9
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 4.2
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 20.0
 Total Farmland % of land area: 5.0
 Livestock: Cattle 000: 1,930
 Sheep 000: 2,100
 Hogs 000: —
 Chickens 000: 1,370
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 2.37
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 7.8

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 71.9
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: —

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent 000: —
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 232
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 60
 Net Energy Imports % of use: —
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: 60
 Production kW-hr million: 220.5
 Consumption kW-hr million: 205.1
 Coal Reserves tons billion: —
 Production tons million: —
 Consumption tons million: —
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
 Production cubic feet billion: —
 Consumption cubic feet billion: —
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
 Production barrels 000 per day: —
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 6
 Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$million: 600
 Exports \$million: 56
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 15.9
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 0.6
 Balance of Trade \$million: -159

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
United States %	39.7	—
Italy %	19.1	10.4
Turkey %	6.8	—
Russia %	5.4	—
France %	4.7	4.4
Malaysia %	—	65.1

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 4,010
 Paved %: 21.8
 Automobiles: —
 Trucks and Buses: —
 Railroad: Track Length km: 306
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: —
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 5
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 19.55
 Airports: 18
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: —
 Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 101
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 73
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: —

Communications

Telephones 000: 38.1
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.03
 Cellular Telephones 000: —
 Personal Computers 000: 12
 Internet Hosts per million people: 230
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 2

ENVIRONMENT

In recent years drought has caused massive destruction of the Eritrean ecosystem. Deforestation, overgrazing, and topsoil erosion have occurred. The desert has been encroaching on the country, making agriculture increasingly difficult. Since 1991, under the banner of "every raindrop must be caught," the government has conducted environmental rejuvenation programs. Unfortunately, outdated technology, war, and numerous refugees have made it difficult to make any effective environmental changes.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 15.7
 Average Annual Forest Change, 1990-2000, 000 ha: —5
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 3
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 0.15

LIVING CONDITIONS

In cities, houses are small; apartments are beginning to appear in Asmara. Many rural homes are made of clay or wood. Nomads make houses out of portable materials that they can pick up and transport on camels. The

Tigrinya live in houses called *hidmos*, which are made of sticks and clay.

Many Eritreans have no homes at all. Refugees from Sudan have returned to the country and are living in camps in desperate poverty.

Infrastructure is not good. In 1999 the entire country had only about 4,000 km (2,480 mi) of roads, mostly unpaved, and many roads were damaged during the war. Bus service is sporadic. The railroad has been in disrepair for some years. The only open border is with Djibouti.

HEALTH

Eritrea's health-care system is in shambles after years of war and droughts. Asmara has a few underequipped hospitals, and the rest of the country has almost nothing in the way of modern medical facilities. The government is trying to build medical facilities in the rural areas but does not have the resources to do very much. Private health care exists but is too expensive for the majority of people. The huge number of displaced people who have returned from Sudan after the war is causing additional problems; these refugees have no homes or money and have a high incidence of many diseases and malnutrition.

Malaria and dengue fever are both big problems. In 2003, 2.7 percent of the population, or about 60,000 people, were infected with HIV. The government has begun a grass-roots effort to educate the populace about HIV/AIDS.

Many Eritreans go to traditional healers when they get sick, using herbs and home remedies to treat themselves. Patients pay for their services with food, clothing, or other items.

Health

Number of Physicians: 98
 Number of Dentists: 3
 Number of Nurses: 523
 Number of Pharmacists: 16
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 3
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 75.59
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 630
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 5.7
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 10
 HIV Infected % of adults: 2.7
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 83
 Measles: 84
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 9
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 57

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Eritrean food is much like that of its neighbor, Ethiopia. The staple food is *injera*, a kind of bread or pancake. Peo-

ple eat this with every meal. They may eat it with *silsi*, a sauce made of tomatoes and onions, with a peppery sauce called *tsebhi*, or with vegetables and meat, such as goat. Local alcoholic beverages include beer, gin, and a honeyed wine called *mies*. People drink tea and coffee several times a day.

Both Eritrea and Ethiopia have experienced severe food shortages many times in recent years. As of early 2005 both nations were suffering famines as a result of the drought in 2004. Monocropping, unpredictable rainfall, and an inability to store rainwater have resulted in Eritrea being unable to produce enough food for its people. Thus, Eritrea relies on international food aid to feed its people; malnutrition is common despite contributions.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 72.8
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 1,710
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 122.4
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 8.8

STATUS OF WOMEN

The role of women in all sectors of society is highly visible. During the armed struggle women made up 35 percent of the Eritrean Defense Forces. The government encourages women's rights with a heightened zeal, making sure there is proportional and fair recruitment of women in education, employment, and the military services. Recently, however, the role of women in the military services has been reduced.

Despite the government's lip service to women's rights, women continue to suffer discrimination because of the nation's traditional, conservative culture. Some Muslim women have been imprisoned for refusing to join the armed forces, though they insist that they are forbidden to fight by their religion.

Female genital mutilation is extremely common; 90 percent of females have undergone the procedure, either during infancy or during childhood before the age of 7. The government has decided not to outlaw the procedure for fear of driving its practice underground; many people believe that it is required by religion and will have it performed on their daughters regardless of the law. The government has decided to focus on education and prevention as a means of reducing the practice.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 22
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: —
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 35.0

WORK

The vast majority of Eritreans depend on agriculture, growing their own food and trading anything left over. People grow a grain called teff, which they use to make bread, wheat, barley, sorghum, millet, corn, and fruits and vegetables. Nomads keep herds of goats or camels. In the cities people work in the civil service, run their own businesses, or engage in professions; women are increasingly going to work in urban areas, though in rural areas they continue to grow food and raise the children. A large number of people work for the military, though the government has been demobilizing troops since ending the war with Ethiopia.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 2,200,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 47.4
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 80
 Industry and Services: 20
 Unemployment %: —

EDUCATION

Eritrea has been working to improve its educational system and has brought literacy rates up from 20 percent at independence to almost 60 percent in 2003. Education is free for all citizens. Public schools teach in two shifts; younger children attend in the morning, older ones in the afternoon. Primary school lasts for five years, middle school for two, and secondary school for four years. Enrollment drops steadily at each level. More boys attend than girls because girls are needed to work at home. There are no schools in many parts of the country, so no children attend at all. Many Muslim children attend separate Islamic preschools where they study the Koran before beginning public school.

Primary schools teach in local dialects, part of the government's effort to preserve its indigenous cultures. Students in higher grades study Arabic and English, and much of the instruction of older students is in English.

There is only one university, the University of Asmara. Admissions standards are lower for girls than for boys, as part of an effort to increase female enrollment.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 58.6
 Male %: 69.9
 Female %: 47.6
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 5.0

First Level: Primary schools: 537
 Teachers: 7,691
 Students: 359,299
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 46.7
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 45.2
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 86
 Teachers: 3,014
 Students: 159,456
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 53.5
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 21.6
 Third Level: Institutions: 1
 Teachers: 255
 Students: 5,507
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 1.5
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 4.1

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Eritrea wants to develop its technological abilities in order to attract foreign investment. The Ministry of Education has developed the Eritrea Science Project to reform the nation's math and science curricula. As of 2004 technological facilities were severely limited.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: —
 Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

There is no privately owned news media of any kind in Eritrea. The state closed the private press in 2001, claiming that it endangered national security. Many journalists published views dissenting with this claim and were arrested for their trouble.

There were several weekly private newspapers before the 2001 crackdown. Currently, the main newspapers are all government owned; they include *Hadas Eritrea*, published three times a week; *Eritrea Profile*, published weekly in English; *Tirigta*, a weekly aimed at young people and owned by the ruling party; and *Geled*, another weekly aimed at young people.

All television and radio is state run. The television station is Eri TV. Radio stations include Voice of the Broad Masses of Eritrea, which broadcasts programs in 11 languages, and Radio Zara, an FM network. The government's news agency is Erina.

The film and theater industry is in its infancy. There is eagerness and enthusiasm to demonstrate unique Eritrean cultural content in literature, film, and theater, but the level of creativity and development is seriously impaired by the absence of cultural organizations to shepherd the process.

Media

Newspapers and Periodicals: —
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: -
 Radio Receivers million: 2.1
 per 1,000: 464
 Television sets 000: 73
 per 1,000: 16

CULTURE

Eritreans celebrate a number of festivals throughout the year. The most exciting are those for Orthodox holidays, especially Epiphany and Meskel. Music and dancing are popular at all festive occasions, such as weddings, births, and religious celebrations. Nationally famous singers include Berekhet Mengisteab and Atewebrhan Segid. Each ethnic group has its own unique rhythms and dancing styles. Many people can play traditional instruments similar to those used in Ethiopia, such as the *krar* and the *wata*, similar to a violin. Drumming is very important because the drummer sets the pace of dancing. The Kunama people dance as couples, performing sensual, emotional movements. The Tigre and Blin women perform a dance called the *sheleel* in which they swing their braids across their faces. Since the end of the war, the government has asked artists to paint pictures of landscapes and cultural heritage. Tirhas Iyassu is one of the most famous artists; she depicts people in situations contrary to gender stereotypes, such as men caring for children. Each ethnic group makes its own crafts, which are often vibrantly colorful. The Beni-Amer tribe makes daggers with curved blades and ebony hilts. The Nara make baskets and saddles.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Eritrea's many ethnic groups all have their own folklore and cultural legends, many of which play a role in rituals. These stories are all passed down orally. The government is now encouraging people to learn to write native languages, and there is some possibility that the various ethnic folklores will be written down when this happens.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Eritrea's towns have only recently been rebuilt, so there are not a huge number of facilities for entertainment. Nevertheless, the people love music, dancing, and drinking gin, and there are always occasions for engaging in these activities. The Red Sea is beautiful; scuba diving and snorkeling in the Dahlak Archipelago are becoming popular because of the pristine coral reefs and the many sunken ships there. Fishing and water skiing are also possible. Some people enjoy hiking in the hills and mountains or in the tropical forests in the Filfil region, but landmines present a hazard for people walking in unfamiliar areas. There are also camels available to ride.

ETIQUETTE

Eritreans are hospitable and friendly. They greet one another with handshakes, kisses on the cheek, and numerous inquiries about the health of families. They do not typically thank one another for small favors, considering assistance to friends a duty.

At meals the hostess places a large tray on a low table, covers it with *injera* (flatbread), and also puts out spicy stews. The head of the family will say a prayer, and then everyone begins to eat. The proper technique is to break off sections of the bread, dip it into the stews, and put the food in the mouth without letting the fingers touch the lips or tongue. People eat with their right hands only. A sign of affection is to scoop up a portion of food and feed it directly to another person. Coffee is an important part of the diet, and people like to serve it as part of an elaborate ceremony.

Eritreans love the musicians who perform during festivals; people show their appreciation by hugging and kissing singers or by placing banknotes on singers' foreheads or in their hands.

FAMILY LIFE

Eritreans generally still live in large extended families. All adults are responsible for all children, and all children acknowledge the authority of all adults. The elderly are highly respected, and family members typically consult their elders before making any major decision. Old people are especially good at settling family disputes. Marriages are traditionally arranged by families, with the man's family proposing marriage to the woman's family, although in cities young people have begun selecting their own spouses. After a wedding, the bride stays home for two weeks and is pampered by her family and friends.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Good personal appearance is very important, and Eritreans like to dress well nearly all the time. Suits are standard in offices. Women dress modestly and do not wear shorts or bathing suits anywhere but at pools and beaches.

SPORTS

The most popular sports are soccer and cycling, which was imported from Italy. The country has about 200 official soccer clubs, and children play on the streets with homemade balls. Women have recently begun participating in the numerous cycling clubs. Camel racing is popular among the Tigre and Rashaida. The government runs youth clubs to provide athletic opportunities to young people.

Children still play traditional games, such as *fii fii*, a hopping and singing game; *bandai*, a game similar to jacks; and *gebetta* (mandala), a game that involves putting peas in cups.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1941** Britain wrests Eritrea from Italy and rules over the country as an occupied enemy territory under a UN mandate.
- 1950** United Nations calls for Eritrean federation with Ethiopia.
- 1952** Eritrea is federated with Ethiopia for a period of 10 years, after which complete union or independence is to be determined by Eritrean referendum.
- 1961** The Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF) launches armed resistance against Ethiopian subversion of the federal provisions.
- 1962** Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia arbitrarily dissolves the Eritrean parliament and declares Eritrea an Ethiopian province.
- 1970** Eritrean nationals within the ELF split and form the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF).
- 1974** Emperor Haile Selassie is overthrown in a military coup, to be replaced by the Derg, a pro-Soviet military junta, whose hard stand on Eritrea escalates the war, precluding a mediated settlement.
- 1988** In the Battle of Afabet, Ethiopian troops suffer a serious defeat, in which EPLF fighters demolish one-third of the Ethiopian army.
- 1991** EPLF liberates Eritrea on May 24.
- 1992** Eritrea conducts a national referendum for independence or union with Ethiopia. Outcome confirms overwhelming vote for independence.
- 1993** Eritrea declares its independence on April 24.
- 1997** Eritrea issues its own currency, abandoning its use of the Ethiopian birr.

- 1998** War breaks out between Eritrea and Ethiopia.
- 2000** Eritrea and Ethiopia sign a peace agreement.
- 2001** Ethiopia and Eritrea complete their troop withdrawal from the border zone; the United Nations continues to monitor the peace process.
- 2002** Eritrea's National Assembly decides not to allow the creation of any political parties. Sudan threatens military action in retaliation for alleged attacks by Eritrea.
- 2003** UN boundary commission rules that Badme, a town in dispute, is in Eritrea. Ethiopia protests.
- 2004** Ethiopia claims to accept boundary determination.

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- Eritrea.** *Eritrea—Recent Economic Developments* (IMF Staff Country Report), 1996; *Ethiopia and Eritrea: A Documentary Study*, 1993

CONTACT INFORMATION

Embassy of Eritrea
1708 New Hampshire Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20009
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INTERNET RESOURCES

- U.S. Department of State: Eritrea
<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2854.htm>

ESTONIA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Estonia (Eesti Vabariik)

ABBREVIATION

EE

CAPITAL

Tallinn

HEAD OF STATE

President Arnold Rüütel (from 2001)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Andrus Ansip

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Emerging parliamentary democracy

POPULATION

1,332,893 (2005)

AREA

45,226 sq km (17,462 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Estonian, Russian

LANGUAGES

Estonian, Russian, English

RELIGIONS

Evangelical Lutheran, Eastern Orthodox

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Estonian kroon

NATIONAL FLAG

Three equal horizontal bands of blue (top), black, and white

NATIONAL EMBLEM

The coat of arms consists of three blue lions with silver eyes and red tongues facing left on a golden baroque shield. Except for at the top, the shield is surrounded by a garland of two intertwined golden oak branches.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“My Native Land, My Joy”

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day), February 24 (Independence Day), May 1 (Spring Day), June 23 (Victory Day), June 24 (Midsummer's Day), August 20 (Independence Restoration Day), December 25 (Christmas), December 26 (Boxing Day); Good Friday, Easter, Pentecost

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

August 20, 1991

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

June 28, 1992

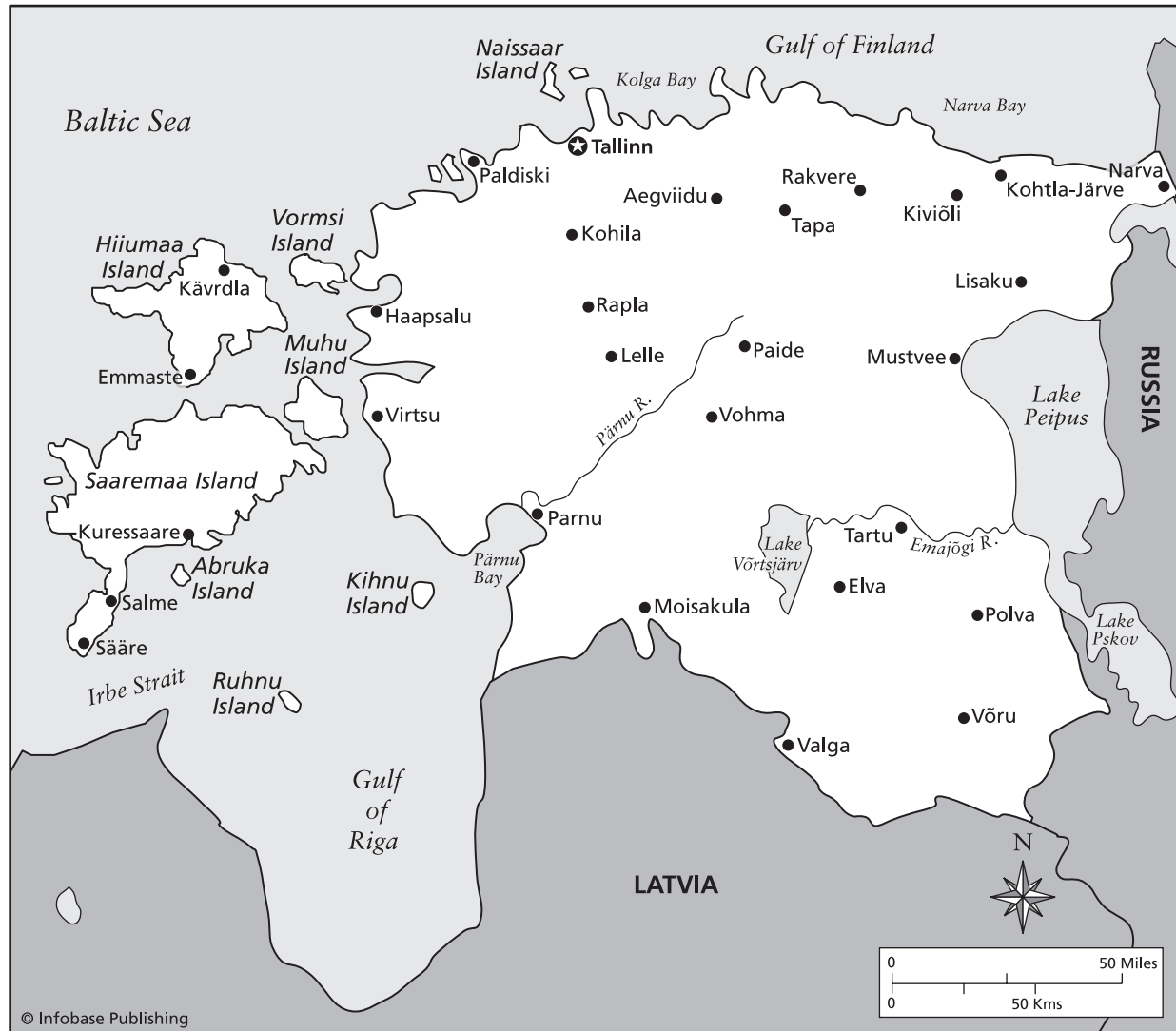
GEOGRAPHIC FEATURES

Estonia is located in northeastern Europe and borders both the Baltic Sea and the Gulf of Finland. The nation also borders Russia to the east and Latvia to the south. There is an ongoing border dispute with Russia over some 2,000 sq km (772 sq mi) in the Narva and Pechory regions of Russia, which Estonia claims on the basis of the 1920 Peace Treaty of Tartu. Along with Latvia and Lithuania, Estonia is one of the countries collectively known as the Baltic states. Its total area is 45,226 sq km (17,462 sq mi), although only 43,211 sq km (16,684 sq mi) are land; the other 5 percent of Estonian territory is water. There are nearly 1,200 lakes in the nation. The principal

lakes are Lake Peipus, which partially lies in Russia, and Lake Võrtsjärv. The longest rivers in the country are the Pärnu, the Kasari, and the Emajõgi. In total, there are over 7,000 rivers, streams, and drainage canals. Estonian territory includes 1,521 islands in the Baltic Sea, the largest of which are Saaremaa, at 2,922 sq km (1,128 sq mi), and Hiiumaa, at 1,023 sq km (395 sq mi).

The maritime location exerts a significant influence on the nation. It has 3,794 km (2,371 mi) of coastline, but its land border extends only 633 km (396 mi). The coast varies from limestone cliffs to sandy beaches in the west. The water of the Baltic Sea is brackish but contains abundant quantities of some fish species. Because of the distance from the Atlantic Ocean, tides have little variation.

Estonia



Estonia is comparatively flat, and two-thirds of the country is less than 50 m (163 ft) above sea level. Most of the terrain consists of marshy lowlands, and floods are common in the spring. The nation is rich in wetlands, with over 165,000 marshes. The highest point in both the nation and the Baltic region as a whole is Suur Munamägi (“Great Egg Hill”), which rises 318 m (1,043 ft). Much of the western mainland of the nation has emerged as the result of the gradual uplifting of Europe: the northwestern areas are rising at a rate of 2.5 mm per year. The central regions of Estonia are marked by the Pandivere Upland, which at its highest point rises 166 m (544 ft) above sea level. There is also a broad, flat limestone plateau that forms a coastal cliff along the south of the Gulf of Finland.

Tallinn is the nation’s capital and largest city; almost one-third of the population lives there. Other major cities

include Tartu and Narva. Some 48.7 percent of Estonian territory remains forested woodlands.

Geography

Area sq km:	45,226; sq mi 17,462
World Rank:	129th
Land Boundaries, km:	Latvia 339; Russia 294
Coastline, km:	3,794
Elevation Extremes meters:	
Lowest:	Baltic Sea 0
Highest:	Suur Munamägi 318
Land Use %	
Arable Land:	16
Permanent Crops:	0.5
Permanent Pastures:	11
Forest and Woodland:	48.7
Other:	23.8

Population of Principal Cities (2003)

Tallinn	397,150
Tartu	101,190

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Although Estonia is a northern country, the influence of the Gulf Stream keeps its climate relatively mild; the maritime influences dominate the nation's weather. There are moderate winters and cool summers. The warmest month is July, with the average temperature during the month ranging from 16 to 18°C (60 to 64°F). February is the coldest month, with temperatures as low as -12°C (10°F). Areas of Estonia are so far north that in the winter they receive daylight for a maximum of six hours per day. On the other hand, in the summer the north coast receives over 18 hours of sunshine daily. From December onward for approximately 100 days, most of the nation is permanently covered in snow. Average precipitation is 550–650 mm (21–26 in), with rainfall heaviest at the end of the summer and lightest during the spring.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature
West: 42.8°F
East: 36°F to 40°F
Average Rainfall: 21 in to 26 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Estonia is home to 1,470 different species of plants. Nearly half the country is covered in northern forests. About 25 percent of the land is wetland, especially peat bogs, some of which are 20 feet deep. The forests are home to a variety of animals, notably large mammals such as elk and roe deer. Flying squirrels are also indigent. Estonia has protected its large raptors, which include the white-tailed eagle, the spotted eagle, the eagle owl, and the extremely rare and endangered golden eagle. The wetlands harbor 10 species of unusual amphibians, which are also protected.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 1,332,893
World Rank: 148th
Density per sq km: 31.9
% of annual growth (1999-2003): -0.5
Male %: 45.9
Female %: 54.1
Urban %: 69.5

Age Distribution %:	0–14:	16.0
	15–64:	67.5
	65 and over:	16.5

Population 2025: 1,149,000	
Birth Rate per 1,000: 9.79	
Death Rate per 1,000: 13.27	
Rate of Natural Increase %: -0.4	
Total Fertility Rate: 1.39	
Expectation of Life (years): Males 65.78	
	Females 77.33
Marriage Rate per 1,000: 4.3	
Divorce Rate per 1,000: 3.0	
Average Size of Households: 4.1	
Induced Abortions: 10,834	

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Estonians constitute 65.1 percent of the population, which makes Estonia the most homogeneous of the Baltic states. Estonians are descended from the Finno-Ugric peoples and have ethnic and linguistic ties to both the Finns and the Hungarians. The Setu people of southeastern Estonia are ethnically distinct from the rest of the population. They number approximately 13,000 and speak a distinct dialect. The largest minority group in the nation is the Russians, who make up some 28.7 percent of the population. In addition, there are small groups of Ukrainians, Belarusians, and Finns.

Under a 1993 law on ethnicity, all minority groups with populations more than 3,000 have a right to cultural autonomy. However, the government has pursued a policy designed to integrate these groups into the larger society through education and social programs. Some 80,000–100,000 nonethnic Estonians, including Russians, Jews, Finns, Poles, Gypsies, and so forth, are recognized as Estonian through proficiency in language and because of historical ties.

LANGUAGES

Estonian is the official language. Estonian belongs to the Finno-Ugric family of languages spoken in Finland, Hungary, and Lapland. There are several dialects of Estonian, however, and some groups, such as the Setu, speak very distinct forms of the language. In addition, Russian and Ukrainian are spoken among minority groups. English and Russian are widely spoken and understood as second languages.

RELIGIONS

Christianity is the dominant religion in Estonia. There is no state church, and the constitution guarantees freedom of religion, conscience, and thought. Lutheranism is the main Christian denomination among native Estonians.

The Estonian Orthodox Church, under the leadership of the Patriarch in Moscow, and the Estonian Apostolic Orthodox Church, which follows the rule of Constantinople, also have a large number of members. There is a growing number of other churches, including Baptist, Seventh-Day Adventist, Pentecostal, and Roman Catholic. Religious activities are regulated by the Ministry of Internal Affairs in accordance with the Churches and Congregations Act (1993).

Religious Affiliations

Christian	609,200
Nonreligious	476,800

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In 3000 B.C.E. the first Finno-Ugrian settlements were established in Estonia. Between 1030 and 1050 Tartu and Tallinn were founded. Beginning in the 12th century Germanic knights invaded Estonia, and efforts were made to convert the native peoples to Christianity. In 1219 the Danish king Valdemar II conquered northern Estonia, including Tallinn. In 1248 Tallinn became part of the German Hanseatic League. In the 1300s an Estonian uprising prompted the Danes to sell the remainder of Estonia to the Germans, and feudalism and serfdom were established in the nation by the German Livonian Order (a branch of the Teutonic Order).

The Reformation swept through Estonia in the 1520s. The Livonian War led to the collapse of the Livonian Order, and Estonia was split, with the northern half under Swedish control and the southern territories under Polish-Lithuanian rule. In 1629 the Altmark armistice left Sweden in control of the Estonian mainland and northern Latvia. In 1645 the Swedes also took control of Saaremaa. While under Swedish control, Estonia became a Protestant country.

Russia gained control of Estonia as a result of the Great Nordic War (1700–21). However, the Estonian provinces retained a special status within the Russian Empire. It was not until 1819 that feudalism and serfdom were abolished in Estonia.

In the 1860s there was an awakening of Estonian nationalism, but the Russification efforts of Czar Alexander III resulted in Russian being designated the official language, and efforts were made to convert the population to Orthodox Christianity. Nonetheless, groups such as Noor Eesti (Young Estonia) continued to work toward Estonian independence.

In 1918 Estonia declared its independence and launched a war of liberation against both the Soviets and German occupation forces. On February 2, 1920, the Tartu-Dorpat Treaty granted Estonia full indepen-

dence. The 1919 constitution was promulgated, and Estonia became a parliamentary democracy. The nation oriented itself toward the West, and by the 1930s the standard of living of Estonia equaled that of most Western nations. In 1939 the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact divided Europe between Adolf Hitler and Josef Stalin, and Estonia was placed in the Soviet sphere of influence. The Soviets occupied Estonia in 1940 and annexed the nation as part of the greater Soviet Union. Prominent Estonians were executed or sent to Siberia (some 11,000 in all). In response the Estonians began an armed resistance movement against the Russians and welcomed the German invasion of 1941. However, the German occupation proved just as harsh. The Soviets reoccupied Estonia in 1944 and annexed some 1,946 sq km (751 sq mi) of territory to the Russian federation. Resistance to Russian rule continued, and some 15,000 Estonians were killed in the fighting against the occupying forces. In an effort to suppress the rebellion and prevent flight from the nation, the Soviets closed the coastline to native Estonians and in 1949 began the collectivization of agriculture.

After Stalin's death those Estonians who were exiled to labor camps were allowed to return, beginning in 1956. However, tensions between the Estonians and the Soviets continued, and by the 1960s there were widespread protests against the occupation. These protests were given impetus by the "Letter of the Forty" and culminated in a protest movement led by intellectuals and students in 1979–80 against Russification.

Popular resistance reemerged in the 1980s. In 1988 the "Singing Revolution," which was marked by mass protests characterized by singing, led to the reintroduction of the Estonian flag. These events prompted the Estonian Supreme Soviet to assert Estonian sovereignty. Estonia was spared the harsh military crackdown imposed on the other Baltic republics in their struggles for independence, and in 1991 it declared independence in the wake of the failed coup against Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev.

Following the promulgation of a new constitution in 1992 and subsequent elections, Estonia became a member of the Council of Europe and NATO's Partnership for Peace Program and an associate member of the Western European Union. The last Russian troops withdrew from the nation in 1994, and in 1998 Estonia began accession discussions with the European Union.

In 1992 Lennart Meri became president, and Mart Laar, a member of the reform-minded Fatherland Union, became prime minister. After 1995 parliamentary elections a coalition of center-left parties formed the government, and Meri was reelected president in 1996. The Estonian Coalition Party won a majority of votes in 1999 parliamentary elections; however, Laar formed a governing coalition of center-right parties and became prime minister a second time.

Estonia continued to have disagreements with Russia. In 2000 Estonia and Russia expelled one another's diplomats, each accusing the other of spying. In October 2001 Arnold Rüütel became president. He immediately signed a law abandoning the requirement that candidates for public office speak Estonian. Prime Minister Mart Laar resigned in January 2002 after disagreements with the government's ruling coalition, and Siim Kallas of the Reform Party took his place; this created a coalition government between the Center Party and the Reform Party. In elections the following March the newly created pro-business party Union for the Republic Res Publica and the Center Party each won 28 parliamentary seats, leading to a coalition between the two parties, which entailed Res Publica's leader Juhan Parts assuming the position of prime minister. His government resigned in 2005 after a vote of no-confidence. Reform party leader Andrus Ansip became prime minister.

In the spring of 2004 Estonia made a major step toward equality in the modern Western global economy when it joined both the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and the European Union.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

Prime Minister

1991–92	Edgar Savisaar
1992	Tiit Vähi
1992–94	Mart Laar
1994–95	Adres Tarand
1995–97	Tiit Vähi
1997–99	Mart Siimann
1999–2002	Mart Laar
2002–03	Siim Kallas
2003–05	Juhan Parts
2005–	Andrus Ansip

President

1992–2001	Lennart Georg Meri
2001–	Arnold Rüütel

CONSTITUTION

Estonia is a parliamentary democracy. The head of state is the president; one must be a minimum of 40 years old to run for the office. The president is chosen every five years by the parliament. In the election, if no single candidate gains a two-thirds majority, there is a runoff election in which the president is chosen by an electoral assembly made up of the parliament and members of local governments (for a total of 374 members). In order to nominate a presidential candidate a party must have at least one-fifth of the seats in parliament. The head of the government is the prime minister, who is nominated by the president and confirmed by the parliament. The

president also appoints the Council of Ministers, which also must be confirmed by the parliament.

The voting age is 18, and suffrage is universal. In addition, resident noncitizens are allowed to vote in local elections.

PARLIAMENT

The Riigikogu is a unicameral body with 101 members elected by direct popular vote to serve four-year terms. The duties of the Riigikogu include considering legislation and overseeing the executive branch. In addition to passing legislation and controlling the budget, the Riigikogu appoints the chairman of the National Court, the president of the Bank of Estonia, the legal chancellor, and the commander in chief of the defense forces. The body must also approve international treaties and any government loans.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Estonia has several political parties and new ones are constantly forming. Prime Minister Juhan Parts comes from the newly formed Union for the Republic Res Publica, a business-oriented party. Other significant parties include the Center Party, the Estonian People's Union, the Estonian Reform Party, the Estonian United Russian People's Party (EUVRP), the conservative Pro Patria Union, the Russian Baltic Party, and the social Democratic Party (formerly the People's Party Moodukad). There are numerous minor parties as well.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The Local Government Organization Act of 1993 establishes the functions and organization of the subnational branches of government. Estonian local government is divided into two levels: counties and municipalities or rural towns. There are 15 administrative divisions, or counties, in Estonia. In addition, there are 254 towns and municipalities that have a high degree of local control over issues such as taxation and administration. Localities also have control over their budgets. Two-thirds of the local governments represent communities with populations of less than 3,000. Local government is usually made up of a council (*volikogu*) whose members are elected for three-year terms. The executive of the council is the government (*valitsus*), which is headed by a mayor elected for a three-year term. In most areas, noncitizen residents are allowed to vote in local elections.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The Estonian legal system is based on civil law. The court system is divided into three levels. At the local level there

are city, county, and administrative courts. Next, there are circuit courts that have appellate functions. The highest legal body is the Supreme Court.

The Supreme Court has administrative, civil, and criminal chambers. Each chamber has a chairman who oversees the caseload and conduct of cases. The chairman may also call upon members of other chambers to participate in cases. The Appeals Selection Committee, made up of members of each of the chambers, decides which appeals will be heard. Constitutional questions are examined by the Constitutional Review Chamber, whose members are elected by the Supreme Court. Members of the chamber may not serve more than two five-year terms.

Judges at all levels are appointed by the parliament and serve for life. They may be removed from office only by a court judgment. In addition, they are not allowed to hold any other elected or appointed position.

The Estonian constitution forbids the establishment of emergency or summary courts.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Universal suffrage is guaranteed by the constitution. In addition, Estonian law does not allow discrimination on the basis of race, nationality, gender, occupation, religion, or culture. The Estonian government has worked to preserve the rights of ethnic minorities in the nation. The National Minorities Cultural Autonomy Act of 1993 grants minority groups with at least 3,000 members special status and the right to establish local authorities in order to preserve cultural, religious, or linguistic identity.

Despite these protections, there have been some human rights violations, including the unlawful detention of prisoners and discrimination against people who did not speak Estonian. Violence against women has been a problem, and there have been many reports of sex trafficking.

FOREIGN POLICY

Since independence from the Soviet Union in 1991, Estonia has pursued closer ties with the West in both the economic and defense spheres. In the initial period after independence Estonia worked to quicken the pace of the Soviet troop withdrawal, which was not completed until 1994. Estonia also sought to resolve border disputes with Russia, including that over territory in the Russian areas of Narva and Pechory. Although a technical border agreement was reached in 1996, the accord has not been ratified. The nation has supported broad, collective security initiatives among the Baltic nations and regional integration in general. Estonia is a member of the Baltic Assembly and the Baltic Council of Ministers and belongs to the Baltic free-trade area.

Along with its other neighbors, Estonia sought entry into NATO, and in 1994 the republic entered the alli-

ance's Partnership for Peace program; it joined NATO as a full member in 2004. Estonia joined the European Union in 2004 and is also a member of almost 200 international treaty organizations. Estonia and the United States have a strong relationship based on aid and trade. In 1998 the United States, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania all signed the U.S.-Baltic Charter, designed to help integrate the Baltic states into European and international diplomatic and economic structures.

DEFENSE

The president is the commander in chief of the Estonian military. The nation has conscription for all men and women age 18. The length of service is 11 months. The armed forces are divided between an army, air force, and navy. The army has three battalions, and the navy consists of nine patrol and coastal defense vessels (several of which were donated to Estonia by Germany and Denmark). There is also a special company of troops used for peacekeeping missions under the auspices of the Baltic Peacekeeping Battalion (BaltBat) that participates in missions by international organizations such as NATO or the United Nations. Estonia has contributed troops to peacekeeping missions in the former Yugoslavia. In addition, there is the Kaitseliit, a volunteer paramilitary force. The unit serves as an auxiliary force for civil defense and emergency response. The Ministry of the Interior has some 2,000 border patrol troops under its command, and these include a small maritime force that functions as a coast guard. The country spent 2 percent of its gross domestic product (GDP) on defense in 2003.

As a small country bordering Russia, Estonia has attempted to enhance its security through integration with the West, including participation in NATO through the Partnership for Peace program and in the Western European Union as an observer. The nation officially joined both NATO and the European Union in 2004.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	7,000
Military Manpower Availability:	326,803
Military Expenditures \$million:	155
as % of GDP:	2.0
as % of central government expenditures:	5.6
Arms Imports \$million:	1
Arms Exports \$million:	—

ECONOMY

After independence Estonia embarked on extensive efforts to foster free and open trade and orient its economy toward the West. The nation also pursued disciplined fiscal and monetary policies that contained inflation and unemployment, tying its currency to the German deutsche

mark at a fixed rate of 8 to 1 and entering into formal accession talks with the European Union in 1998. The government set a flat-rate income tax, balanced the budget, and made the country attractive to foreign investors in an effort to function as a gateway between East and West. Almost all formerly state-owned firms are now private. The banking system is extremely efficient, and foreigners are allowed to buy shares in Estonian banks. The nation supplies almost all of its own electricity and imports petroleum from western Europe and Russia.

Service industries make up the bulk of the nation's economy, although manufacturing and forest products are also significant. Industry and construction employ the largest number of Estonians among the major industries. The major manufacturing sectors are oil shale, shipbuilding, chemical products, textiles, electronics, and transportation. The nation's main exports are textiles, food products, machinery, and metals. Its most significant imports include machinery, food products, minerals, textiles, and metals. Estonia's main trade partners are Finland, Russia, Sweden, Germany, and Latvia. The nation has created a unique foreign trade environment with very few tariffs, which makes it attractive to foreign trading partners.

There are still some problems for the government to solve. Agriculture has been privatized, which hurts farmers. Income disparities are increasing; rural people and old people on fixed incomes are being especially hard hit. Industrial plants have been closing in the northeast, creating a depression in that area.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 17.35
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 12,300
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 4.8
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 5.3
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 4.9
 Industry: 30.3
 Services: 64.8
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 56
 Government Consumption: 20
 Gross Domestic Investment: 30.2
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 4.075
 Imports: 5.535
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 3.0
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 29.8

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
152.1	158.2	167.3	173.3	175.6

Finance

National Currency: Estonian Kroon (EEK)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = EEK 13.8564
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 30.8
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: —
 Total External Debt \$billion: 7

Debt Service Ratio %: 0.85
 Balance of Payments \$billion: -1.15
 International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 1.37
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 1.3

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 68.91
 per capita \$: 51
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 285

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Revenues \$billion: 3.806
 Expenditures \$billion: 3.648
 Budget Surplus \$million: 158
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: 27.2

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 4.9
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: -1.0
 Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares: 82
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 0.6
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 62.3
 Total Farmland % of land area: 16
 Livestock: Cattle 000: 257
 Sheep 000: 29.9
 Hogs 000: 344
 Chickens 000: 1,945
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 10.2
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 101.7

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 1.42
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 5.0

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 2.75
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 4.68
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 3.44
 Net Energy Imports % of use: 36.4
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 3.3
 Production kW-hr billion: 8.9
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 6.4
 Coal Reserves tons billion: —
 Production tons million: —
 Consumption tons million: 1
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
 Production cubic feet billion: —
 Consumption cubic feet billion: 50
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
 Production barrels 000 per day: 6
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 60
 Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 5.535
 Exports \$billion: 4.075
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 7.7
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 8.5
 Balance of Trade \$billion: –1.15

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Finland %	15.9	21.9
Germany %	11.1	8.4
Russia %	10.2	11.4
Sweden %	7.7	12.5
Ukraine %	4.3	—
China %	4.2	—
Japan %	4.1	—
Latvia %	—	7.4
Lithuania %	—	4.0

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 51,411
 Paved %: 20.1
 Automobiles: 400,700
 Trucks and Buses: 80,200
 Railroad: Track Length km: 958
 Passenger-km million: 177
 Freight-km billion: 9.7
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 32
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 177.5
 Airports: 29
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 283
 Length of Waterways km: 500

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 1.32
 Number of Tourists from million: 1.66
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 507
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 192

Communications

Telephones 000: 475
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.09
 Cellular Telephones 000: 881
 Personal Computers 000: 595
 Internet Hosts per million people: 61,627
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 333

ENVIRONMENT

Estonia inherited several environmental catastrophes from the Soviet Union but has made tremendous improvements in the past decade. Power plants in the northeast of Estonia polluted the region by burning oil shale, such that the air has contained large concentrations of sulfur diox-

ide, producing acid rain. This problem has been improving steadily since the 1980s; emissions have been reduced by 80 percent in the past 25 years. Ground and water pollution from unpurified wastewater and industrial discharge have also improved tremendously, partly due to the construction of several new water purification plants; in 2000 the pollution level was 5 percent of that of 1980. Pollution from livestock and fertilizer remains a problem, however, and coastal seawater is still polluted in some places.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 48.7
 Average Annual Forest Change, 1990-2000, 000 ha: 13
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 15
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 11.68

LIVING CONDITIONS

Estonia is a modern nation with a good standard of living. Transportation is easy; there are good bus and train systems, and the roads are excellent for either driving or bicycling. It is easy to get in and out of the country on airplanes, trains, or ferries across the Baltic.

Winters are cold, dark, and long. Housing has been improving since the Soviet days, when many apartment buildings fell into disrepair. People live in either apartment buildings or stand-alone houses, which can have small gardens even in the cities.

HEALTH

Since the early 1990s Estonia has been restructuring the public health system inherited from the Soviets. Historically, there has been a shortage of nurses, hospital beds, and medical supplies, though aid from the West has abated this problem somewhat. Life expectancy has gradually increased to its 2004 level of over 71 years. The infant mortality rate is quite low, at about 8 deaths per 1000 live births. About 1 percent of the population is infected with HIV.

Health

Number of Physicians: 4,275
 Number of Dentists: 1,094
 Number of Nurses: 8,503
 Number of Pharmacists: 813
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 316
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: 6.7
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 8.08
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 63
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 5.5
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 226
 HIV Infected % of adults: 1.0
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 97
 Measles: 95

Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: —
 Access to Improved Water Source %: —

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Estonian food is fairly heavy, with emphases on fish and meat and without much in the way of vegetables. A wide variety of sausages appear on Estonian tables; a Christmas specialty is blood sausage and blood pancakes, made from pig blood. Smoked fish is a local specialty; trout is one of the most common smoked fish. People drink a great deal of beer, including the local specialties Saku and Saare. Some people like warm mulled wine called *bõõgvein*. The main hard liquor is the sweet Vana Tallinn, which people drink with milk or coffee.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 4.7
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 3,250
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 136.5
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 150

STATUS OF WOMEN

The constitution of Estonia guarantees equal protection under the law. However, women continue to face disparities in opportunity in the economic and political spheres. Women earn only about two-thirds what men do; economists attribute some of this to women's work habits, but most of it appears to be the result of discrimination. Many Estonian women work in the sex industry, as "brides seeking foreign marriage" or as sex slaves. Sex traffickers exploit Estonian women and girls both within Estonia and internationally.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 19
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.0
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 51.5

WORK

Nearly 70 percent of Estonians work in services. Another 20 percent are employed in industry, the remainder in agriculture. Telecommunications, information technology, and electronics are especially important employers. Per capita GDP rose to \$12,300 in 2004. The unemployment rate is about 10 percent. Older women have the hardest time finding jobs.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 654,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 48.9

Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 11
 Industry: 20
 Services: 69
 Unemployment %: 10.1

EDUCATION

Estonia completely reorganized its educational system in the early 1990s. Education is compulsory up through the ninth grade, with 12 years of education available in total. High schools offer specialized training in particular subjects, and there are numerous vocational schools. The majority of schools teach in Estonian, though many teach in Russian, and there are a few schools teaching in minority languages such as Swedish, Ukrainian, and Hebrew. Estonia has nearly 100 percent literacy.

The nation has six major universities, including Tartu University, which was founded in 1632. The system of higher education was reorganized in the 1990s, and the degree path is now similar to that in much of the West.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 99.8
 Male %: 99.8
 Female %: 99.8
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 15.6
 First Level: Primary schools: 741
 Teachers: 7,702
 Students: 108,637
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 14.1
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 95.8
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: —
 Teachers: 12,259
 Students: 105,137
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 10.1
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 86.8
 Third Level: Institutions: 22
 Teachers: 6,863
 Students: 60,648
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 63.9
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 5.5

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Estonia makes a sizable portion of its GDP from the telecommunications, electronics, and information technology industries. It has one of the highest percentages of Internet users in Europe.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 2,252
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 0.57
 High-Tech Exports \$million: 375
 Patent Applications by Residents: 25

MEDIA

Before independence, the Estonian press was controlled by the Communist Party. During the early 1990s a host of newspapers were created. One of the first private papers to be created was *Eesti ekspres*, a general interest and entertainment weekly. The first private daily was *Postimees*. In 1997 there were seven national dailies, two of which were published in Russian. There were also numerous weeklies and regional papers, several of which are published in Russian as well as Estonian. Many of these newspapers failed to survive, however, and there are fewer titles in print now than there were in the mid-1990s.

Radio and television broadcasting also mushroomed in the early 1990s. The first private licenses for television stations were issued in 1992. Eesti Televisioon is the public television station; the two principal privately owned stations are TV3 and Kanal 2, which are owned by Norwegian and Swedish businesses. There are also numerous foreign stations available through cable. In 1993 Estonia stopped transmission of Russian broadcasts from Moscow and St. Petersburg, but Eesti Televisioon airs Russian-language programs and news.

Eesti Raadio is the nation's public radio station and broadcasts on four different channels, including a Russian-language channel. There are several private stations. Estonia's news service is the privately owned Baltic News Service (BNS).

Media

Daily Newspapers: 13
 Total Circulation 000: 262
 Circulation per 1,000: 191.6
 Books Published: 3,265
 Periodicals: 956
 Radio Receivers 000: 1,010
 per 1,000: 718
 Television sets 000: 605
 per 1,000: 430

CULTURE

Estonians take literature seriously. The 19th-century poet Kristjan Jaak Peterson wrote Estonia's first modern poetry. Friedrich Reinhold wrote *Kalevipoeg*, a national epic poem, in the mid-1800s. The modern authors Jan Kross, Jaan Kaplinski, and Anton Hansen Tammsaare are world famous.

Estonia's culture is visible everywhere in its architecture. Tallinn's Old Town is full of medieval walls, buildings, and cobblestones. Toomkirik, a cathedral in Toompea, was built during the 13th century. Toompea is also the location of the Russian Orthodox Alexandr Nevsky Cathedral, built in the 19th century.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts national currency million: 40.5
 Number of Cinemas: 200
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: 900,000

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

The oldest Estonian song type is the runic chant; this form dates back over 2,000 years. It consists of lines of eight syllables that gradually develop a theme. Estonian folk poems cover such subjects as family life, farming and the land, the seasons, love, and myths of the gods and goddesses. Estonians kept their traditional folklore alive through hundreds of years of foreign domination by passing on their songs and poems orally. Estonians still sing their old songs. In July the city of Tallinn holds the Baltika Folk Festival, at which people sing, dance, and enjoy Baltic folk traditions. Every five years the country holds the All Estonian Song Festival, at which a choir of 30,000 people sings traditional songs. Every November Estonians remember their dead ancestors during the Time of Spirits; it is believed that spirits come back to visit at this time.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Estonians make the most of their summers, which are short but have extra-long days. People enjoy canoeing and walking in the bogs of the national parks and nature reserves. People from all over Europe go to Estonia to watch birds, especially in the Käina Bay Bird Reserve and the Matsalu Nature Reserve. The Lahemaa National Park offers sailing, diving, and the opportunity to build canoes out of logs. Winter sports such as skiing, snowboarding, and snow-biking are also popular. Many people enjoy visiting saunas throughout the year.

There are many festivals during the summer months. The night of June 23 is very significant; it is midsummer eve, the shortest night of the year, and a time for dancing, singing, lighting bonfires, and searching for a mystical flower that supposedly only blooms that night. In August the White Lady Festival takes place; the ghost Haapsalu is said to visit during this event.

ETIQUETTE

Estonian etiquette is very similar to practices in the rest of Europe, though there are some differences due to holdovers

from the Soviet days. Estonians can be very sensitive about their culture and appreciate listeners taking an interest in their history. It can be difficult to arrange meetings, especially with older people, and it is always a good idea to confirm that an arranged meeting really will happen. Estonians greet everyone in a room with a handshake; businessmen hand business cards to everyone. It is not proper to show physical affection too soon. Sarcasm is appreciated. No one schedules important meetings in the summer if they can possibly avoid it, because there are so many holidays then. Tipping has not yet become customary, though taxi drivers and waiters appreciate tips when they get them.

FAMILY LIFE

The marriage rate has declined dramatically in the last decade. The divorce rate is high, though it has declined slightly since 2001; this may be because fewer people are marrying in the first place. The average woman has 1.37 children. Well over 60 percent of births occur outside marriage. The mean age at which women are first giving birth has increased slightly, to 24.6. Abortions have been declining. Under Estonian law divorced spouses are entitled to equal use of marital property, and a spouse who is unable to work is entitled to maintenance from his or her former partner. This applies to women who are pregnant at the time of the divorce and for the first three years after the birth.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Most Estonians dress in typical Western clothes, dressing very warmly in the winter; styles are fairly conservative. Many people own traditional folk costumes that they wear to the summer folk festivals.

SPORTS

Estonians of all ages are involved in a variety of sports, including soccer, basketball, cricket, and winter sports. Estonia has had an Olympic Committee since 1923, though its independent participation was suspended during the years of Soviet occupation. Estonian athletes have won several medals in recent Summer and Winter Olympics. Erki Nool won gold in the decathlon in 2000, and the cross-country skier Andrus Veerpalu won both a gold and a silver medal in the 2002 Winter Olympics. Estonian skiers have also performed well at the world championships.

CHRONOLOGY

1918 Estonia declares independence from Russia and engages in an armed struggle against both German and Russian forces.

- 1920** The Tartu-Dorpat Treaty recognizes Estonian independence.
- 1939** The Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact places Estonia in Soviet sphere of influence.
- 1940** Soviets invade Estonia.
- 1941** German occupation of Estonia.
- 1944** Soviet reoccupation of Estonia and the annexation of Estonian territory; Estonian resistance to Soviet rule leads to massive deportations and the deaths of some 15,000 Estonians.
- 1949** The forced collectivization of agriculture begins.
- 1956** Those surviving Estonians who were deported to Siberia begin to return.
- 1968** First open, mass protests against Soviet occupation since the end of World War II.
- 1979–80** “The Letter of the Forty,” a protest by intellectuals against continuing efforts at Russification of the country, is written; mass student protests.
- 1988** “The Singing Revolution”—mass demonstrations by 300,000 Estonians in Tallinn, marked by singing—occurs; Estonian flag is reintroduced; popular resistance organizations are established; the Estonian Supreme Soviet declares the nation “sovereign.”
- 1989** Estonian is reestablished as an official language.
- 1990** The Congress of Estonia is organized in an effort to assert independence from the Soviet Union; Estonia is spared the harsh military crackdown imposed on Latvia and Lithuania.
- 1991** After the failed coup against Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, Estonia declares its independence; on September 6, Estonian independence is recognized by Moscow.
- 1992** The Republic of Estonia is reestablished and elections are held that place conservatives in power; a new constitution is promulgated. Lennart Meri is elected president.
- 1993** Estonia becomes a member of the Council of Europe and enters into a trade agreement with the European Union; along with Latvia and Lithuania, the republic creates a Baltic free-trade zone.
- 1994** The last Russian troops leave Estonia; the republic joins NATO’s Partnership for Peace program and becomes an associate member of the Western European Union.
- 1998** Estonia begins accession talks with the European Union.
- 1999** Prime Minister Mart Laar forms a center-right coalition government.

- 2000** Estonia and Russia each claim that the other has been spying and expel one another's diplomatic representatives.
- 2001** Former Communist Party member Arnold Rüütel becomes president. Rüütel signs a law eliminating the requirement that candidates for public office speak Estonian. Mart Laar resigns as prime minister and is replaced by Siim Kallas of the Reform Party.
- 2003** The Centre Party and Union for the Republic Res Publica form a coalition government. Estonians vote to join the European Union.
- 2004** Estonia is admitted to NATO and the European Union.
- 2005** Reform Party leader Andrus Ansip becomes prime minister and forms a new government.

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OFFICIAL PUBLICATIONS

Estonia. *Eesti Statistika Aastaraamat* (Estonia Statistical Yearbook); *Estonian Human Development Report* (annual)

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Bank of Estonia. Statistical Datasheets
<http://www.ee/epbe/datasheet/index.html>
- Statistical Office of Estonia
<http://www.stat.ee/>

ETHIOPIA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (Ityop'iya Federalawi Demokrasiyawi Ripeblik)

ABBREVIATION

ET

CAPITAL

Addis Ababa

HEAD OF STATE

President Girma Wolde-Giorgis (from 2001)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Meles Zenawi (from 1995)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Federal republic

POPULATION

73,053,286 (2005)

AREA

1,127,127 sq km (435,184 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Oromo, Amhara, Tigre

LANGUAGES

Amharic (official), English

RELIGIONS

Orthodox Christianity, Islam, animism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Birr

NATIONAL FLAG

Tricolor of green, yellow, and red horizontal stripes, with a yellow pentagram and single yellow rays emanating from the angles between the points on a light blue disk centered on the three bands

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A circle within a wreath. Within the circle are a star with 14 points, a cogwheel, and a plow.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"Ityop'iya, Ityop'iya, Kidemi"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

March 2 (Commemoration of the Battle of Adawa of 1896), April 6 (Victory Day), May 1 (Labor Day), September 12 (National Day, National Revolution Day), September 11 (Ethiopian New Year's Day and Reunion of Eritrea with Ethiopia), various Christian festivals, including Maskal, or the Feast of the Finding of the True Cross, Christmas, Timkat, or Epiphany, and Good Friday according to the Coptic calendar, various Islamic festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

Ethiopia is one of oldest independent countries in the world and was under foreign rule—Italian military occupation—for only six years, from 1935 to 1941.

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

August 22, 1995 (effective)

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Ethiopia, in the Horn of Africa, has an area of 1,127,127 sq km (435,184 sq mi), extending 1,639 km (1,018 mi) east to west and 1,155 km north to south. Ethiopia is landlocked, with no coastlines. It borders Djibouti and Somalia to the east, Eritrea to the north, Kenya to the south, and Sudan to the west.

The Abyssinian plateau has some of the highest elevations in Africa. Swift rivers and tributaries forming spectacular gorges, river valleys, and low-lying plains dissect

the whole country. At the highest summit in the Northern Mountains, northeast of the famous Lake Tana, the elevation climbs to 4,620 m (15,153 ft). The Ethiopian Plateau, which makes up two-thirds of the country, consists of two topographical regions: the high plateau bisected by the Great Rift Valley to the west and the lower Somali Plateau to the east. The high plateau or central plateau is marked by a number of mountain ranges, such as the Cercher, Aranna, and Chelalo. Toward the southeast lies the Somali Plateau, a flat, arid, and sparsely populated semidesert. The southern half of Ethiopia is bisected by

Ethiopia



the Great Rift Valley, which runs in a northeast-to-southwest direction. Its floor, 40 to 60 km (25 to 37 mi) in width, is occupied by a number of lakes, such as Zwai, Langano, Abiata, Shala, Awasa, Abaya, and Chamo. To the north the Great Rift Valley is marked by the Danakil Depression, a large triangular region of the Afar Plains. The Danakil Depression, extending northeast beyond the border with Eritrea, is believed to be the hottest place on earth.

Numerous rivers originate in the highlands and flow outward in many directions through the deep gorges. Because of the westward slope of the highlands, many of the larger rivers are tributaries of the Nile. Of these, the largest are the Abbai (Blue Nile), the Tekeze in the north, and the Baro in the south, which account for half of the outflow of water from the country. The Blue Nile has its source in Lake Tana. Lake Tana is the country's largest lake, in the west-central section of the plateau. The lake contains islands on which ancient churches and church relics of classical significance can be found. Some 32 km (20 mi) downstream the river drops through the Tisisat (Smoke of Fire) Falls. The Baro River drains the southern plateau, which is navigable up to Gambela, the Akobo, and the Gilo. Together they form the headwaters of the Sobat River in Sudan. The only river west of the Great Rift Valley that is not part of the Nile system is the Omo, which drains southward into Lake Rudolph and is known in its upper course as the Gibbie. There also are a number of closed river basins, of which the largest, the Awash, flows through the Afar Plains into Lake Abe. The Wabi Shebele and Genale (Juba in Somalia) river systems drain the highlands of the southeast.

Geography

Area sq km: 1,127,127; sq mi 435,184
 World Rank: 26th
 Land Boundaries, km: Djibouti 349; Eritrea 912; Kenya 861; Somalia 1,600; Sudan 1,606
 Coastline, km: 0
 Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Denakil -125
 Highest: Ras Dejen 4,620
 Land Use %
 Arable Land: 10.7
 Permanent Crops: 0.8
 Permanent Pastures: 40
 Forest and Woodland: 25
 Other: 23.5

Population of Principal Cities (1994)

Addis Ababa	2,112,737
Dire Dawa	164,851
Gonder	112,249
Nazret	127,842

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Ethiopia has three climatic zones: a cool, or *dega*, zone, consisting of the central parts of the western and eastern sections of the high plateaus and the area around Harer, with terrain generally above 2,400 m (7,900 ft) in elevation; a temperate, or *weina dega*, zone, comprising portions of the high plateau between 1,500 and 2,400 m (4,900 and 7,900 ft); and the hot, or *kolla*, zone, encompassing the area with an altitude of less than 1,500 m (5,000 ft) and including the eastern Ogaden, the Blue Nile, and Tekeze valleys and the Kenyan and Sudanese border regions. In the cool zone the hottest months are March to May, and temperatures range from 15.6°C (60°F) to near freezing. Near the mountaintops snow falls in winter, and alpine conditions prevail. In the temperate zone temperatures range from 15.6 to 29.4°C (60 to 85°F).

There are two distinct seasons: the rainy season, or *kremt*, lasting from mid-June to mid-September; and the dry season, or *bega*, lasting from mid-September to mid-June. The main rainy season is preceded by a period of sporadic rains, known as the *balg*, during April and May. Rains are heaviest in the southwest, near Gore, where they reach 2,640 mm (104 in) per year. Average annual precipitation over the central plateau is 1,200 mm (48 in).

The prevailing wind system is the southwesterly monsoon in the rainy season and the northeasterly wind from the Eritrean seacoast in the dry season.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature
 Cool Zone: 60°F to freezing
 Temperate Zone: 60°F to 85°F
 Hot Zone: High 140°F
 Average Rainfall
 Addis Ababa: 48 in
 Asmara: 16 in
 Gore: 104 in
 Denakil Depression: 4 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Ethiopia was once home to a variety of flora and fauna, but much of it has disappeared or declined. Nearly all of the country's trees have been cut down. Eucalyptus trees were planted during the 19th century in an effort to reverse deforestation, but they have caused their own problems, such as soil erosion, and local animals will not live in them or eat their leaves. Much of the land is covered in grasses, which die during droughts. There are bamboo stands and rain forests in wetter areas. Animals include antelope, monkeys, baboons, lions, elephants, giraffes, gorillas, rhinoceroses, and zebras, though almost all of these are in decline. Birds are still thriving, and Ethiopia is home to numerous endemic species.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005:	73,053,286
World Rank:	16th
Density per sq km:	68.6
% of annual growth (1999-2003):	2.3
Male %:	50.0
Female %:	50.0
Urban %:	15.7
Age Distribution %:	
0-14:	44.7
15-64:	52.5
65 and over:	2.8
Population 2025:	107,804,000
Birth Rate per 1,000:	39.23
Death Rate per 1,000:	20.36
Rate of Natural Increase %:	2.6
Total Fertility Rate:	5.44
Expectation of Life (years):	
Males:	40.03
Females:	41.75
Marriage Rate per 1,000:	10.0
Divorce Rate per 1,000:	2.6
Average Size of Households:	4.5
Induced Abortions:	—

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

The great Ethiopian historian Carlo Conti Rossini described Ethiopia as an “ethnic museum.” His description is apt given that Ethiopia comprises more than 70 ethnic groups distinguished by separate origins, physical appearance, culture, religions, and languages.

There are at least 100 minor ethnic groups, which include the Falasha, or Ethiopian Jews, who live in the Semien Mountains and around Lake Tana. The Nilotic tribes along the Sudan border and the Agew of the central plateau are some of the ancient ethnic groups. Although they constitute about one-third of the Ethiopian population, the Amhara and the closely related Tigray dominate the country politically, culturally, and linguistically. The largest ethnic group, estimated to constitute over 38 percent of the Ethiopian population, is the Oromo. In the last two decades the rise of a nationalist political consciousness among the Oromo has led to the quest for independent statehood for Oromia. The Amhara and the Tigray are Semitic and speak two distinct Semitic languages. They occupy the highland provinces that form the historical and geographical core of Ethiopia. With the exception of the Shankella, the vast majority of the populations of Ethiopian peoples are part of the Afroasiatic race.

Whereas previous governments attempted to assimilate the various ethnic groups through policies of Amharization, the current regime in Addis Ababa has divided the country along ethnic lines. The regime argues that organizing the country along ethnic lines will help those ethnic groups that were neglected under the Amharization assimilation programs of previous regimes. The Amhara,

whose domination of the political system was challenged by the decentralization of ethnic groups, have rejected the program and openly protested its implementation. In the northern areas the process of Amharization has advanced significantly, resulting in the complete Amharization of a significant number of Falasha and Tigray in Gonder. The constitution of 1955 recognized the existence of different population groups and provided safeguards of their identities. However, it did not regard Ethiopia as a pluralistic and open state.

LANGUAGES

More than 70 languages and 200 dialects are spoken in Ethiopia, but only six are spoken by a large number of people. The six languages commonly used in the country are: Amharic, Oromo, Somali, Guragie, Agaw, and Danakil. Amharic is the official language of Ethiopia proper, and Oromo is regaining popularity among the Oromo people. Amharic uses the Ge'ez script, while Oromo uses the Latin script. At least half of the population speaks Amharic, but the country has more speakers of Cushitic than of Semitic languages. As a consequence of the large number of languages, many Ethiopians are bilingual or trilingual. Only the Shankellas speak languages belonging to the Nilo-Saharan family.

Ge'ez, or Ethiopic, is considered a sacred language as well as the language of philosophy and literature and is usually referred to as *Lesana Ge'ez/AgAzeeyan* (the tongue of the free). It is no longer spoken, but its syllabary is used in writing Amharic and Tigrinya. Ge'ez is the liturgical language of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church and until the 19th century was the exclusive language of literature. Amharic, called the language of the king (*Lesane Nigus*), is the national language, the lingua franca, and the language of instruction at the primary level and in administration.

At the turn of the 20th century French was the language of instruction in secondary schools. Italian was used for a brief period in the 1930s, mainly in the civil service sector. Both French and Italian were eclipsed by the popularity of English when it became the language of instruction of secondary and higher education as well as that employed in the civil services.

RELIGIONS

Until 1975 the Ethiopian Orthodox Church was the state church of Ethiopia. The Ethiopian Orthodox Church, associated with the Coptic Church of Egypt, is one of the oldest Christian churches in the world, having been established in the fourth century, when the Ethiopian king Ezana was converted by the Syrian missionary Freminatious. Until 1959 the Ethiopian Church was subordinate

to the Church of Alexandria and was administered through an *abuna*, or metropolitan, who was always an Egyptian Copt. In 1959, under pressure from the emperor, the Ethiopian Church became autocephalous under its own patriarch. Members of the clergy are numerous, and it is estimated that one in every five Ethiopians belongs to an ecclesiastical order. The church's influence has declined in recent years, facing stiff competition from Islam and Protestantism. The resurgence of Islam, compounded by Middle Eastern funds for the building of mosques and Islamic schools, has eclipsed the remarkable dominion held by the Orthodox Church in Ethiopia.

The estimated population of Christians is about 42 percent. For administrative purposes the church is divided into 10 dioceses. The number of churches is estimated at over 20,000.

Other religions, particularly Western Protestant evangelical denominations, have unrestricted access to proselytize and participate in welfare delivery activities. Missionaries and aid workers affiliated with the Protestant, Catholic, and Muslim faiths, and the Orthodox Church itself, are allowed to proselytize and engage in charitable services.

Although it does not possess the same monolithic unity as the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, Islam is followed by an estimated 45–50 percent of the population, and its adherents are spread over more ethnic groups and geographical regions. In the lowland regions of the west and south, traditional animist religions persist. The number of animists is estimated at only 15 percent of the population, but certain animist beliefs and practices pervade much of the popular religions of Christians and Muslims.

The Falasha, also known as Beta Israel (House of Israel) or Black Jews, follow a primitive form of Judaism built on the Torah, which includes not only the Pentateuch but also the Old Testament. They also observe all the major Jewish holidays. Most of them live in Semien, south of Gondar.

Religious Affiliations

Ethiopian Orthodox	28,000,000
Muslim (mostly Sunni)	35,000,000
Traditional beliefs	11,000,000
Other	9,140,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

One of the oldest nations in the world, Ethiopia was also one of the most stable countries in Africa until the overthrow of Emperor Haile Selassie in 1974. In its classical sense, the country's name is associated with the ancient empire known as Ethiopia ruled by the biblical queen Sheba. Classical Ethiopia extended its realm as far as

southern Egypt and covered the whole length of East Africa and beyond, including the island of Madagascar, South Arabia, and parts of southwestern India. It was replaced in the first century c.e. by a much weaker realm covering only the Ethiopian plateau and part of South Arabia. With the advent of the Persian Empire and its subsequent rule over Asia Minor in the seventh century, Ethiopia's rule declined. Sometime between 300 and 400 c.e. Christianity entered Ethiopia.

Ethiopian legend tells of the Queen of Sheba visiting King Solomon. During her long stay the queen conceived a son, who was then born on her way to her capital of Aksum, in northern Ethiopia. All Ethiopian emperors claimed royal lineage to King Solomon through the Queen's son, whom she named Menelik I.

In the fourth century c.e. two kings, Abraha and Asbaha, declared Christianity a state religion. Some two centuries later, in the sixth century, the Persians invaded South Arabia and Asia Minor and reduced the empire to its African base in northern Ethiopia. Islamic conquests in the seventh century further deprived the empire of its northern territories in eastern Sudan and caused it to shrink to the territory encompassed by northern Ethiopia today. The empire remained docile and isolated until the 16th century, when Portuguese explorers, curious about its geographical features and religious traditions, made extensive studies of the country. The Portuguese visit was propitious because it coincided with a massive Islamic invasion under the leadership of Ahmad Ibn Ibrahim Gran, supported by the Ottoman Empire at his base in southeastern Ethiopia. Christopher da Gama and a contingent of 400 Portuguese soldiers fought against Gran and restored the tattered empire. In the 17th and 18th centuries the Ethiopian kingdom disintegrated due to internal strife. In 1855 Emperor Tewodros reunited the country and restored central authority. He distinguished himself as a unifier of the empire, but his rule was also marked by wonton violence directed against all sectors of society. In 1867 he detained a group of British and European visitors. Britain sent an expeditionary force to release the hostages. In the ensuing battle at Magdala, Tewodros's capital, his forces were defeated, and he committed suicide in 1868.

Emperor Yohannes succeeded Tewodros and kept the country united. He confronted persistent Muslim and European invasions until his death in 1889 in the battle of Mettemma, with a resurgent Muslim sect from Sudan. Menelik II, who showed adroit diplomatic and military skills, succeeded Yohannes. Menelik is recognized for his victory over the Italians in the Battle of Adawa in 1896. When he died in 1913, his daughter Zauditu ruled as an empress but was overshadowed by her regent successor, Tafari Makonnen, later to be known as Emperor Haile Selassie.

Haile Selassie's rule lasted for 44 years, with the exception of a five-year interval (1936–41) during which the country was under Italian control. In his long years in

power the emperor expanded educational opportunities and modernized the armed forces and the civil service. He also instituted a series of government reforms, such as granting a constitution and establishing a cabinet and parliament. Yet real power remained firmly in his hands. Despite his reforms the country remained feudal, with a coterie among the noble class amassing disproportionate wealth at the expense of the vast peasant class.

During the 1960s support for his regime crumbled. Discontent increased after an abortive 1960 coup, and secessionist movements were established in several provinces, particularly Eritrea. In 1974 a wave of strikes broke out in response to Haile Selassie's autocratic rule as well as deteriorating economic conditions and the government's failure to prevent the death of over 200,000 people in the 1972–74 famine. Haile Selassie was deposed in a military coup in September 1974; a Provisional Military Administrative Council (PMAC), also known as the Derg, composed of junior officers took power.

In December 1974 Ethiopia was declared a socialist state. The government nationalized foreign interests and began a program of land reform. In 1977 Col. Mengistu Haile Mariam became head of government as the chairman of the PMAC. Besieged by political opponents on the left and confronted with secession demands by Eritrea, he ruthlessly eliminated his opponents and aggressively fought the secessionists. Taking advantage of the situation, Somalia invaded the Ogaden in July 1977. With the aid of Cuba, the Soviet Union, and South Yemen, which had been Somalia's allies, Ethiopia forced Somalia out of the area by March 1978. However, sporadic fighting continued until 1988.

Mengistu conducted eight military offensives, employing Soviet-supplied MiGs, tanks, and military advisers, against the Eritreans. The Eritreans, under the leadership of the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF), mobilized strong resistance and, in 1989 at the Battle of Afabet, destroyed one-third of the Ethiopian army. The Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF), and the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) coordinated their military offense with that of the EPLF and assaulted the Ethiopian army in the provinces south of Eritrea. By 1988 Mengistu was forced to concede that much of Eritrea was in the EPLF's hands. By the end of 1989 the military balance had shifted against the Mengistu regime. The EPLF in Eritrea and the EPRDF in Ethiopia escalated the war, forcing the Ethiopian army to retreat to the vicinity of Addis Ababa. On May 28, 1991, the Ethiopian civil war came to an end when the EPRDF took possession of Addis Ababa and announced a coalition government. Mengistu had resigned on May 21, fleeing the capital to seek refuge in Zimbabwe.

Meanwhile, the Eritrean People's Liberation Front gained control of the Eritrean capital of Asmara and announced the formation of a provisional government to

administer Eritrea until a referendum could be held on the issue of independence.

A multiparty conference in Addis Ababa adopted a national charter providing guarantees for human rights. It also elected an 87-member Council of Representatives, whose chairman, Meles Zenawi, became de facto interim president. In accordance with the National Charter's promise of self-determination for ethnic groups, the country was divided into 14 regional administrations, which would have autonomy in matters of regional law and internal affairs. Nevertheless, the transitional government found itself locked into a struggle with the Oromo and the Eritreans. Hostilities between the Oromo Liberation Front and the EPRDF continued in various parts of the country for two years, until the former joined the government. Meanwhile, Eritrea proclaimed its independence in 1993. The severe famine that began in the early 1980s continued through the early 1990s. By 1992 more than 13.5 million people had been affected by the drought, and a further 1.4 million were affected by internal conflicts. More than 200 people were dying of starvation every week in the southeast. In 1995 Ethiopia was formally proclaimed a federal democratic republic with a titular federal president. Negaso Gidada was elected president and Meles Zenawi was named to the far more powerful office of prime minister.

When Eritrea became independent from Ethiopia, the common border had not been precisely defined, and in 1998 clashes broke out between the two nations, each accusing the other of seizing territory. By 1999 the dispute had developed into a full-scale war, and tens of thousands of soldiers died before a peace agreement was signed in December 2000. By mid-2001 Ethiopian and Eritrean troops had withdrawn from the border region, and the United Nations was monitoring the peace process. Meles was reelected prime minister in October 2000.

In 2001 Ethiopia withdrew its remaining troops from Eritrea. In 2002 the two countries drew up a common border but still could not agree on the ownership of the town of Badme, which both claimed. In 2003 an independent commission ruled that Badme belonged to Eritrea; Ethiopia initially refused to accept this ruling but in November 2004 grudgingly agreed that the town was Eritrean.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1889–13	Menelik II (emperor)
1913–16	Iyasu V (emperor)
1916–30	Zauditu (empress)
1930–36	Haile Selassie (emperor)
1936–41	Victor Emmanuel III ("emperor")
1941–74	Haile Selassie (emperor)
1974–77	Tafari Benti (chairman of the Provisional Military Administrative Council)

- 1977–87 Mengistu Haile Mariam (chairman of the Provisional Military Administrative Council)
 1987–91 Mengistu Haile Mariam (president)
 1991 Tesfaye Gebre Kidan (acting president)
 1991–95 Meles Zenawi (interim president)
 1995– Meles Zenawi (prime minister)

CONSTITUTION

The constitution of 1995 establishes a three-branch government. The legislative body is composed of the House of People's Representatives and the House of Federation. The House of People's Representatives is elected by a plurality from electoral districts within each of the nine *kililoch* for five-year terms. State assemblies appoint members to the House of Federation.

The executive branch includes the president of the republic as head of state and the prime minister as head of government. The head of state exercises ceremonial functions with little or no effect on policy deliberations. The prime minister, by contrast, wields enormous powers through cabinet appointments. He is also the commander in chief of the armed forces. The constitution as it stands in its 1995 form accommodates the political goals of the EPRDF, which is itself dominated by the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF). Critics argue that most cabinet appointments and policy deliberations are driven by the TPLF.

PARLIAMENT

The tradition of parliamentary government in Ethiopia started in 1955 when Haile Selassie reformed the 1931 constitution to expedite modernization. After the overthrow of Haile Selassie in 1974, the succeeding Marxist regime abrogated the 1955 constitution. In 1987 the Workers Party of Ethiopia, an ideologue Marxist party created in 1984 and controlled by the then dictator Mengistu Haile Mariam, introduced the People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (PDRE) under a new constitution. A parliament known by its Amharic name as the Shengo, comprising 835 members from electoral districts representing 80,000 inhabitants of rural areas and 15,000 residents of urban areas, was seated. The Shengo proved ineffective as a representational body because the personality of Mengistu Haile Mariam overshadowed and undercut parliamentary functions. With the overthrow of Mariam in 1991 the PDRE was replaced by the new Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE), introduced by the EPRDF in 1995.

In 1995 the EPRDF introduced a new constitution ratified by a Constituent Assembly. The new constitution created the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, comprising nine states and the cities of Addis Ababa and

Harer as autonomous constituencies. The head of state is the president of the republic, while the head of government, in whom the majority of power is vested, is the prime minister.

The nine states were districted into electoral ethnic constituencies to ensure parliamentary representation of all ethnic groups and nationalities. Voting age is 18 years or older. Parliament consists of two chambers. The lower house, or House of People's Representatives, has 548 seats, and the upper house, the House of the Federation, has 108. The assemblies of the federal states elect the upper house. The term of service is five years. In May 2000, 50 parties and 500 independent candidates contested for elections to the council. Those affiliated with the EPRDF scored an overwhelming electoral victory, guaranteeing Meles Zenawi, the EPRDF's leader, another term in office as prime minister.

POLITICAL PARTIES

The Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) is the main political party. There are about 50 other small parties, all ethnically based, but the EPRDF controls all power. The EPRDF itself is composed of a coalition of 18 smaller ethnic-based organizations, all of which are subordinated to and under the virtual control of the dominant party, the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF).

Political awareness is extremely limited among the masses. Ethiopia's high birthrate and vast geography combined with minuscule investment in the development of human capital have resulted in a low level of literacy. Lack of exposure to the practice of establishing organizations that would articulate the political ideas, beliefs, and values of organized groups with a mature sense of political judgment and would hold political elites responsible for the successes or failures of a party agenda and platform have never been allowed to flourish.

In an attempt to introduce pluralism in 1991, the TPLF leadership encouraged the creation of various ethnic political groups. Among those groups that initially subscribed to the TPLF's overtures, the most prominent was the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF), representing the largest single ethnic group in Ethiopia. By contrast the TPLF represented the smallest ethnic group, the Tigray of the northern province. The tension created by the inequalities of power among the affiliated ethnic coalitions was bound to create political friction, which spilled over into regional crises. The first crisis started in the snap elections of 1992, when some of the ethnic organizations, particularly the OLF and the All Amhara People's Organization (AAPO), refused to participate, claiming that they deserved to play larger roles in the exercise of political power. They refused to accept TPLF's institutional domination and boycotted the election. Subsequently, the

OLF withdrew from the governing coalition and resorted to armed struggle. It called for Oromo self-determination, the outcome of which would be either federation or complete independence.

The AAPO also withdrew from the government, but before it could organize armed resistance, TPLF cadres overpowered the leadership. Its leader, Asrat Woldeyes, was taken to jail, where he developed persistent illnesses, leading to his release and subsequent death in the United States, where he went for medical treatment. His fate generated bitter anger among his ethnic constituency, the Amhara. They accused the TPLF of having prolonged his detention unnecessarily and causing his premature death. The Ogaden Liberation Front and the Western Somali Liberation Front participated in the elections of 1992 and 1995. Their influence has since been overshadowed by the EPRDF's policy of exclusive exercise of power, leading to diminished political efficacy and sporadic rebellion in their constituent region, the Ogaden territory. Subsequent developments promoting the democratic evolution of party activity from that of a controlled and contrived posture to a genuine representation of an articulate ideology have produced little progress.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

In June 1991 town meetings were held throughout the country in which Peace and Stability Commissions were selected by local citizens to act as de facto local governments. These commissions were slated to administer local affairs until after a transitional national government was established and a new constitution was written and ratified. Subsequently, the commissions were used to expedite the snap election of June 1991. Under the directives given in the 1991 Transitional Charter (part 1, article 2), local governments were defined as components of the local government. Each unit of government was recognized as an extension of the autonomous regional states (*kilil*), each delegated with the mandate to "preserve its identity and have it respected, promote its culture and history, and use and develop its language." The constitution of 1995 reiterated the same clause.

The organization of authority, as stated in article 46, no. 2, in the new constitution, takes into consideration ethnolinguistic differences and "settlement patterns" and attempts to address them by drawing borderlines for the purpose of creating the member states of the federal system. At the apex of authority is the federal government. It is composed of nine states (*kilil*) and two cities (Addis Ababa and Harer) with chartered status. A collection of *weredas* inhabited by peoples of similar language and ethnic affiliations make a state. Similarly, collections of villages are designated as *weredas*. The smallest unit of local government is the village, or *kebele*. There are ap-

proximately 32,000 *kebeles* and 600 *weredas* in Ethiopia, constituting the nine *kililoch* and two chartered cities.

The administrative practices of local governments are eclectic and decidedly autonomous, mainly due to the experimental nature of the *kilil* system, which is still resented by a large segment of the population. In all aspects of local government, the traditional patterns of local and city administration, especially the mayoral (*kentiba*) hierarchy of city governance, are apparent in towns and cities.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The judiciary branch is stipulated by the 1995 constitution as constituting the third branch of government. The court system consists of the Federal Supreme Court, the Federal High Court, and the courts of first instance (original jurisdiction). There is an overlap of judicial functions between the federal and state courts. The courts of first instance and the Federal High Court serve simultaneously as courts of original jurisdiction and supreme courts for the federal states. The federal courts have sole jurisdiction of judicial review with respect to state cases. Regional and local courts also play a role in the judicial system.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Under the Haile Selassie monarchic state and the Marxist dictatorship that replaced it, Ethiopia experienced widespread violations of human rights. The administrative laws enacted in 1991 extended freedom of movement, which was under tight control during the Communist era, but residence and employment in a particular province is largely restricted to the dominant ethnic group within that province.

The human rights record of the current EPRDF regime is also regarded as dismal. The level of brutality against the defenseless and disregard for the rights of civilian prisoners and prisoners of conscience by successive Ethiopian regimes were uniformly repudiated by independent observers such as Africa Watch and Amnesty International. All Ethiopian regimes have been constantly engaged in suppressing revolts of insurgent groups and waging border conflicts with Somalia, Sudan, and Eritrea. They also share the same patterns of conducting arbitrary arrests, torture, and summary executions.

Part of Ethiopia's war strategy, under the EPRDF, involved the mass expulsion of Eritreans and Ethiopians of Eritrean blood, dumping them in a no-man's land at the Eritrean border. According to Eritrean official data, close to 70,000 civilians were stripped of their possessions and their citizenship in contravention of the 1995 Ethiopian constitution and deported to Eritrea. The deportees included women, children, senior citizens, hospital patients, and children whose parents were deported separately.

As of 2004 the U.S. state department still found Ethiopia's human rights record to be poor. Arbitrary arrests and detentions, murders of suspects, and terrible prison conditions were all common. The government has continued to detain Eritreans. The judicial system is gradually becoming more independent and is working its way through a backlog of cases. Fewer journalists have been detained than in previous years. Violence against women and child abuse were common. Female genital mutilation persists, though the government is trying to eliminate the practice. Child prostitution, child labor, and human trafficking have all remained problems.

FOREIGN POLICY

The liberation and subsequent independence of Eritrea introduced a new dilemma for Ethiopia. The loss of Eritrean ports rendered Ethiopia landlocked and dependent on Eritrea and Djibouti for access to the sea. Even though Eritrea pledged free access to the sea for Ethiopian goods, tension between the two countries gradually escalated into deeper misunderstandings on matters of port administration, maintenance, and management. Ethiopia gradually shifted its primary port activity to Djibouti. When Eritrea abandoned the Ethiopian birr as its legal tender and introduced its own currency, the nakfa, Ethiopia refused to accept the Eritrean currency and demanded trade transactions between the two countries to be conducted on the basis of letters of credit backed by hard currency, specifically the American dollar. Relations between the two countries soured and deteriorated, resulting in open warfare in May 1997 in the Badme War. When Ethiopian border police started dismantling border posts and uprooting Eritrean farmers from their villages and farms, Eritrea responded by occupying the Badme plains on the western border connecting the two countries. Between May 1997 and February 2000 the two countries clashed in intermittent battles, summarily involving the deployment of an estimated half million troops. Afterward, the United Nations, the Organization of African Unity (OAU), and the European Union attempted to mediate a reconciliation between the two countries. During the 35th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Heads of States of the OAU held in Algiers, Algeria, on July 12–14, 1999, the OAU endorsed the Framework Agreement and Modalities for resolving the border war between the two countries. Both subscribed to the documents initially, but Ethiopia later balked at accepting the Technical Agreement for Implementation of the Framework Agreement and Modalities. Repeated mediation by the United States, the European Union, and the OAU failed to produce any reconciliation, as Ethiopia upped the ante by demanding that Eritrea renounce any border claims. Eritrea refused to do so, adamantly stating that to abandon territories it considered legally belonging to it would amount to renouncing its won sovereignty and supremacy over its own borders.

Following the diplomatic failures, Ethiopia carried out new waves of attacks on Eritrean positions in May 2000. Eritrean troops were driven away from their defensive positions at the border and deep into Eritrean territory. Ethiopia's gain in the military offensive resulted in both countries agreeing to new terms of cease-fire. On June 18, 2000, both countries signed the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities. On July 31, 2000, the UN Security Council authorized the creation of the UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE). The mandates of UNMEE include monitoring the cessation of hostilities, troop redeployment, and the implementation of a UN observer force of about 4,200 to be stationed inside Eritrean territory until the borders are eventually demarcated.

Relations with Sudan deteriorated after 1994 when Sudan was singled out as supporting terrorists espousing an Islamic mission to destabilize the Horn of Africa. Ethiopia, along with Eritrea and Uganda, sought help from the United States to confront Islamic terrorists inspired and supported by Sudan. Relations with Sudan remained irreconcilable until the closing weeks of 1999. In early 2000 the two countries drew closer in view of Ethiopia's attempt to isolate its new enemy, Eritrea. In March 2000 Ethiopia and Sudan concluded agreements for peaceful resolution of conflicts, border security, and the use of Sudanese ports for Ethiopian imports and exports.

In general, Ethiopia's foreign policy, as it enters the 21st century, is driven by Ethiopia's determined hostility to Eritrea. In order to isolate Eritrea, Ethiopia has made overtures to erstwhile suspicious neighbors, including Sudan, Yemen, Egypt, Libya, and the Arab world in general. Its diplomatic pronouncements carry a conciliatory tone to Middle Eastern countries as part of an effort to dispel disapproval of Ethiopia's traditional alliance with Israel. Because Addis Ababa, Ethiopia's capital, serves as the headquarters for the African Union (the successor to the Organization of African Unity), Ethiopia is well regarded by sub-Saharan African countries. In 2004 Ethiopia grudgingly agreed to the UN resolution of its border dispute with Eritrea, and there is some possibility of more cordial relations between the two countries in the future.

The United States has traditionally had good relations with Ethiopia, though this changed somewhat during the regime of the Provisional Military Administrative Council, or the Derg. In July 1980 the two countries limited diplomatic ties with one another. Since the fall of the longtime Derg leader Mengistu, however, relations have once again improved. The United States reinstated its ambassador in 1992 and in the past decade has furnished Ethiopia with over \$2 billion in aid.

DEFENSE

Currently, the Ethiopian National Defense Forces (ENDF) has about 200,000 members, though it had about

300,000 during the 1998–2000 border war with Eritrea. Universal conscription is enforced for all males aged 18 and over, though boys as young as 13 fought in the war.

During the struggle with Eritrea the Ethiopian government spent a great deal of money rebuilding its air and ground forces. Most of the equipment bought between 1998 and 2000 came from Russia, though Israel, Bulgaria, Ukraine, and Turkey also emerged as major arms suppliers for the Ethiopian armed forces. In the spring of 1999 North Korean armament specialists arrived in the country, reportedly to expand its armament industry.

Since the end of the war the nation has demobilized some 100,000 troops and is transitioning from a guerilla army to a volunteer professional military. The United States and other countries are helping with training programs. Ethiopia has sent contingents of peacekeepers to Liberia and Burundi.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 200,000
 Military Manpower Availability: 15,748,632
 Military Expenditures \$million: 345
 as % of GDP: 5.2
 as % of central government expenditures: —
 Arms Imports \$million: 20
 Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

Ethiopia is poverty stricken. Since the 1890s it has been plagued with apocalyptic famines, and it has never had a decade in which it managed to feed its population independently. Ethiopia was still as heavily dependent on foreign food aid at the beginning of the 21st century as it was at the beginning of the 20th century. The combined effects of persistent drought, protracted wars, natural disasters, and misguided economic policies of the Derg in recent years have had terrible effects on the economy. Overall economic growth has declined since 1985, and by 1998–99 gross domestic product (GDP) growth was flat. The economy had negative growth in 2004; per capita GDP was \$700. Meanwhile, the population has grown as the economy has declined, making matters worse. In November 2001 Ethiopia was classified as a Highly Indebted Poor Country for purposes of debt relief. The droughts of 2002 and 2004 once again devastated the countryside and resulted in calls for more external aid. The country persists in spending a great deal of money on its military, which diverts funds from feeding the population.

In order to rehabilitate the economy, the Transitional Government of Ethiopia (TGE) pledged that it would adapt liberal free-market policies and singled out agriculture as a primary engine of growth and development, but

so far the nation has made little to no economic progress. Traditionally, the Ethiopian economy has been heavily dominated by subsistence agriculture, with poor or non-existent provisions for environmental control, soil erosion, deforestation, and pest control. The government owns all land and leases it to the people on long-term bases. This system hampers growth and makes it difficult for entrepreneurs to open businesses because they cannot use their land as collateral for loans. Ethiopia depends on its coffee crop for export income, but prices have fallen, and many farmers have switched to growing the mild stimulant khat, a popular supplement throughout the region.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 46.81
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 700
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 3.6
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 1.3
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 46.0
 Industry: 12.6
 Services: 41.4
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 77
 Government Consumption: 20
 Gross Domestic Investment: 17.0
 Foreign Trade \$million: Exports: 537
 Imports: 1,964
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 3.0
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 33.7

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
107.6	108.3	99.5	101.0	119.0

Finance

National Currency: Birr (ETB)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = ETB 8.5678
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 18.6
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: —
 Total External Debt \$billion: 2.9
 Debt Service Ratio %: 7.27
 Balance of Payments \$million: –408
 International Reserves SDRs \$million: 945
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
 17.8

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$billion: 1.3
 per capita \$: 19
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 75

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: 8 July–7 July
 Revenues \$billion: 1.813

Expenditures \$billion: 2.4
 Budget Deficit \$million: 587
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: 12.9

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 46.0
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 0.4
 Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares: 0.3
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 1.7
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 12.6
 Total Farmland % of land area: 10.7
 Livestock: Cattle 000: 35,500
 Sheep 000: 11,450
 Hogs 000: 26
 Chickens 000: 39,000
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 94
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 12.3

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: —
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 6.7

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 160
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 1.7
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 28
 Net Energy Imports % of use: 6.1
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: 530
 Production kW-hr billion: 1.713
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 1.594
 Coal Reserves tons billion: —
 Production tons million: —
 Consumption tons million: —
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet billion: 880
 Production cubic feet billion: —
 Consumption cubic feet billion: —
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels 000: 428
 Production barrels 000 per day: —
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 23
 Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 1.964
 Exports \$billion: 0.537
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 14.6
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 7.8
 Balance of Trade \$million: –408

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Saudi Arabia %	24.1	6.9
United States %	17.0	5.1
China %	6.4	—

Italy %	4.1	6.4
Djibouti %	—	13.4
Germany %	—	11.4
Japan %	—	6.8

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 31,571
 Paved %: 12.0
 Automobiles: 71,000
 Trucks and Buses: 34,600
 Railroad: Track Length km: 681
 Passenger-km million: 151
 Freight-km million: 90
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 9
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 101.3
 Airports: 82
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 3.3
 Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 148
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 75
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 44

Communications

Telephones 000: 435
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.02
 Cellular Telephones 000: 97.8
 Personal Computers 000: 150
 Internet Hosts per million people: 0.1
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 1

ENVIRONMENT

The Ethiopian highland plateau, as among the highest elevations in Africa, contains several rivers and streams that dissect the ground surface and wash out topsoil, rendering agricultural enterprise unproductive. The Blue Nile, originating from Lake Tana in the heart of Ethiopia, accumulates massive floods with rich soil contents that serve to benefit Sudanese and Egyptian farmers. Even if Nile waters were to be harnessed by Ethiopia, the level of capital development for the utilization of water is at a primitive state. There exists no supplemental infrastructure, such as agricultural equipment, pest control, animal husbandry, and sophisticated skills, that would complement the availability of Nile waters.

Ethiopia is endowed with a suitable environment for agricultural and recreational industry. However, deforestation and drought combined with incessant wars have degraded the topography. The forest fires that hit at the heart of Ethiopia's virgin forests in February–March 2000 consumed 70,000 hectares, including ancient trees and rare

animals unique to Ethiopia. In view of the fact that only 5 percent of Ethiopia's forests remain due to clear-cutting for lumber and fuel, the damage caused by the fires is expected to have a lasting impact on the remaining forests.

There is a low level of industrialization in Ethiopia. As a result, industrial waste and pollution are minimal, except in the cities, where smog from congested streets creates unacceptable levels of pollution. The capital, Addis Ababa, like many other Ethiopian cities, suffers from poor sanitation. Local authorities tolerate disorderly urban development by allowing the construction of squalid cardboard houses in the business districts and in the vicinity of government offices.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 4.6
 Average Annual Forest Change, 1990-2000, 000 ha: —40
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 17
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 21,533
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 0.09

LIVING CONDITIONS

Most Ethiopians live in rural areas in small clusters of homes near relatives. Traditional homes are circular huts made of mud with conical roofs made of branches and straw. A group of friends and relatives will usually share a farm and operate it together. Towns have mutual aid societies, to which everyone makes weekly contributions; the fund pays out when people need money for weddings, funerals, or illness, or when the local area needs repairs. When a couple marries, the community helps build a house for the newlyweds or at least gives them furniture and money. The society can also furnish small business loans. This system has been breaking down as more people move to the city. High-rise apartments have been appearing in urban areas.

HEALTH

Ethiopia has some of the worst health conditions in the world. The country provides free medical care to the poor and has private hospitals for those who can pay for them. Yet most medical facilities are in cities, and much of the countryside has no modern clinics or hospitals. The country has a major shortage of medical professionals; pharmacists commonly give medical advice. Most Ethiopians in the countryside still visit traditional healers for home remedies, either herbal or spiritual. Midwives and neighbor women help during childbirth. Life expectancy is quite low, less than 41 years, and the infant mortality rate is over 100 deaths per 1,000 live births. Most women have five or six children. In 2003, 1.5 million Ethiopians were estimated to have HIV, making it a serious problem

for the country. Venereal diseases are common in urban areas. Most of the population has no access to clean water, and waterborne diseases are endemic, as are tropical diseases such as malaria and dengue fever. The World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) have attempted to institute vaccination programs, but low literacy and a lack of access to clinics have impeded their efforts.

Health

Number of Physicians: 1,971
 Number of Dentists: 61
 Number of Nurses: 13,018
 Number of Pharmacists: 125
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 3
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 102.12
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 850
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 3.6
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 3
 HIV Infected % of adults: 4.4
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 56
 Measles: 52
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 6
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 22

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Ethiopia does not have enough food to feed its people. The drought of 2004 has resulted in severe food shortages.

Ethiopian cuisine is centered around *injera*, a flat bread made from a grain called teff. People eat this bread at every meal. They serve it with various stews, such as *wat*, a spicy stew made of meat or vegetables cooked with onions, red peppers, and spices, or *alicha*, a stew flavored with onions and ginger. Curds and whey are popular. Most Ethiopians do not eat pork. Vegetarian dishes are common because of the large number of fasting days in the Ethiopian calendar. Tea and coffee are ubiquitous. There are few sweets in Ethiopian cuisine, though people do eat honey. Popcorn is a common snack.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 46.5
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 1,880
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 140.4
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 21.4

STATUS OF WOMEN

Ethiopian women are among the most disadvantaged sectors of the population, due to cultural and traditional biases, marriages imposed at a very young age, the hard

and time-consuming labor of rural women, and inadequate employment opportunities and wages for urban women. Women in the countryside work very long hours raising children and tending crops. Women and children are especially likely to suffer from malnutrition. Urban women are more likely to work outside the home, but they usually are paid less than men. Village leadership is male, and all clergy are male. Female circumcision is practiced in the northern parts of the country, although the government has stated its opposition to the practice. The government's token efforts to improve conditions for women have had minimal effect. The Revolutionary Ethiopia Women's Association has encouraged women to organize workplace groups to address gender inequality.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 8
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 0.82
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: —

WORK

The vast majority of Ethiopians live in rural areas and work in agriculture, most of them growing crops to feed their families and to trade on a small scale. Droughts, pests, and soil erosion have made farming difficult; the drought of 2004 left many people starving. Ethiopians who do not farm work in service, government, or business. Professionals of both sexes are more likely to live in urban areas. Some people work in industry, manufacturing food products, textiles, and beverages. The country has vast mineral resources which, if exploited, could be a good source of employment.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 29,500,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 41.0
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture and Animal Husbandry: 80
 Industry and Construction: 8
 Government and Services: 12
 Unemployment %: 8

EDUCATION

Traditionally, education was under the complete control of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. By 1974 the church no longer played any role in educational life. Education is compulsory from ages seven to 13, though most children do not attend for all of those years. Public education is free from the primary to the college level. There is a

considerable difference between urban and rural school enrollment rates. Nearly 65 percent of urban children of school age attend school, whereas only 4 percent of rural children do so. The rural figure is bound to decline even further, as the provision of educational opportunities for Ethiopian children has failed to keep up with the phenomenal increase in the country's birthrate. There is a severe shortage of teachers and materials.

Schooling consists of 12 years, as divided into six years of primary school, two years of middle school, and four years of secondary school. National examinations are held at the conclusion of the eighth and 12th grades, and secondary education is concluded with the Ethiopian School Leaving Certificate. Dropout rates are high, averaging between 68 and 70 percent in the primary cycle. Less than 50 percent of first-grade enrollees complete public school. The curricula are based on European, particularly British and French, models. The alien character of the curricula is reinforced by the lack of locally written texts and the absence of qualified indigenous teachers.

The academic year runs from September to June. The medium of instruction, which was formerly Amharic at the primary level, has been replaced by ethnic and local languages. It is too early to judge whether language segmentation will contribute to or hinder learning.

There are 17 institutions of higher learning, six of them universities; the biggest are Addis Ababa University and Mekele University. Women often go to college to study teaching. College and university education suffers from uncertainty and interruptions as the government makes use of students for various campaigns, such as literacy drives in the countryside, or national emergency measures, such as service in the armed forces. Many Ethiopian families value higher education, and the wealthiest families often send their children abroad to study.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 42.7
 Male %: 50.3
 Female %: 35.1
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 5.2
 First Level: Primary schools: 9,276
 Teachers: 117,017
 Students: 7,623,074
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 65.2
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 47.4
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: —
 Teachers: —
 Students: 1,695,955
 Student-Teacher Ratio: —
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 15.0
 Third Level: Institutions: —
 Teachers: 4,224
 Students: 147,954
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 2.4
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 4.6

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Ethiopia is still working to build up its technological infrastructure. Electricity is not universal. In 2003 there were only nine Internet hosts in the country and about 75,000 Internet users. The Ethiopian Science and Technology Commission was first established in 1975 and then reestablished in 1994 to promote traditional and new technologies and make the country's technological and scientific systems more efficient and productive.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$000: 70
 Patent Applications by Residents: 3

MEDIA

The Ethiopian News Agency (ENA), founded in 1942, served continuously as a news gathering and disseminating organ of government until it was restructured in 1994 as a semiprivate agency with the stated purpose of expanding press freedom. The major impact of the 1994 reform was the expansion of media conglomerates owned and operated by political parties affiliated with the ruling party, TPLF/EPRDF. Among the media organizations that enjoy particular favor in the governing centers are the Walta Information Center, with extensive holdings in the print, electronic, and broadcasting media, and Radio Fana.

Theoretically, the government allows press freedom. The current press laws make a point of ensuring free expression for the media but at the same time place heavy burdens on journalists for disseminating inaccurate or "defamatory" information. The condition placed on journalists was cited by the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), a nonprofit and independent organization, as a "draconian" law. The head of the Ethiopian Free Press Journalist's Association (EFJA) defected in 1999, citing persecution. CPJ and other human rights organizations accuse the government of employing extrajudicial treatment against journalists and independent publishers of newspapers and magazines.

The situation improved greatly in the early 2000s. Privately owned newspapers have been printing criticism of the government and for the most part have not been punished. Private radio broadcasters were allowed to apply for licenses in 2004, and there are plans to deregulate the media. Opposition groups have been broadcasting in Ethiopia from overseas.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 2
 Total Circulation 000: 23
 Circulation per 1,000: 0.4
 Books Published: —

Periodicals: 15
 Radio Receivers 000: 11,750
 per 1,000: 193
 Television set 000: 320
 per 1,000: 5

CULTURE

Ethiopians follows the Julian calendar, which has 12 30-day months plus one month of five or six days. The Ethiopian calendar is now almost eight years behind the usual Western calendar. The Islamic calendar is determined by the phases of the moon and sets dates for festivals such as Ramadan. During Ramadan, Muslims fast during the day, and businesses may close. Ethiopian Christians uphold many practices similar to those of Jews, such as avoiding pork. Christians fast during Lent and Kuskam as well as on Wednesday and Friday; on those days they eat nothing before noon and no animal products after noon. Ethiopian Jews have their own unique rituals and scriptures, written in Ge'ez instead of Hebrew.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 4
 Volumes: 124,000
 Registered borrowers: 11,680
 Museums Number: 1
 Annual Attendance: 6,000
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Indigenous religions still survive among Ethiopians, especially among the Cushitic people in the southern and western lowlands, who practice animism. They believe that all natural objects are imbued with sacred energy. The Afar and Oromo people worship their ancestors. People all over the country wear charms to prevent disease and ward off evil spirits; one type of charm is the *katab*, a roll of parchment that carries spiritual energy.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

The most popular pastime among Ethiopians is visiting friends and family and drinking coffee with them in an elaborate ritual. In big cities people go to movies, plays, musical performance, and nightclubs. Some people like to play Italian billiards at bars.

Various kinds of outdoor activities are popular. People go to the lakes of the Rift Valley for swimming, sailing, and fishing. Wildlife safaris and hiking are possible in the interior. Tourists can ride horses or go on cycling tours.

ETIQUETTE

It is common to hand out business cards when meeting people on business. The best time to schedule business meeting is October through May. Tipping is expected. It is polite to ask permission before photographing someone, and people often expect to be tipped for allowing themselves to be photographed.

Ethiopian hosts always offer guests tea or coffee; guests are expected to drink three cups. At meals Ethiopians eat with their right hands. They begin a meal by washing their hands at the table. The hostess places a platter on the table with *injera* bread and stew. The diners tear off portions of bread, dip it in the stew, and place it in their mouths without touching their lips or tongues with their fingers. No one ever touches food with the left hand.

Women are not permitted in many houses of worship.

FAMILY LIFE

Most Ethiopians live close to their extended families, and much of daily life is based on cooperation with relatives and close neighbors. Marriage practices vary by ethnic group. Most families are patriarchal. Parents arrange marriages for their children, and brides go to live with their husbands' families. Families exchange goods and livestock when their children marry. Women keep their names and property after they marry, and husbands and wives are expected to treat one another as equals. Either spouse can initiate a divorce; dowry goods are not returned. Ethiopian children are taught to respect all adults, and adults feel responsible for the children of their relatives and neighbors. Informal adoptions are common.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Ethiopians display a neat personal appearance. Men wear suits and ties for business. Women also dress up. Women especially dress modestly, wearing shorts or bathing suits only when they are at the beach. Hairstyles are a popular medium of self-expression. Women of the Harar group make their hair into two buns behind their ears, while people of other ethnic groups like to mold their hair with clay and decorate it with feathers.

SPORTS

The most popular sport across the country is soccer, which is played on any kind of terrain, sometimes using a handmade bundle of cloth instead of a ball. Ethiopians are excellent runners, and many Ethiopian men and women

have won Olympic running events and set world records, especially in long-distance events. Other common sports are cycling, basketball, volleyball, boxing, tennis, wrestling, and pole-vaulting. Horse racing is popular in rural areas, as is *gugs*, a game in which men ride on horseback and throw spears at one another. People play a hockey-like game called *genma* at Christmastime. Children like to play jacks and hopscotch.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1941** British and Ethiopian forces return Emperor Haile Selassie to the throne after an Italian occupation of Ethiopia.
- 1947** After an Allied treaty with Italy regarding disposition of the former Italian colonies of Eritrea, Italian Somaliland, and Libya, the UN General Assembly votes in favor of a federation of Eritrea with Ethiopia, to be completed by September 1952.
- 1955** Haile Selassie issues a revised constitution giving limited powers to the parliament.
- 1960** Members of the imperial guard stage an unsuccessful coup.
- 1963** Haile Selassie founds the Organization of African Unity in Addis Ababa; a long-standing border dispute between Ethiopia and the Somali Republic erupts into armed warfare.
- 1964** A truce between Ethiopia and the Somali Republic establishes a demilitarized zone along the border.
- 1965** Ethiopia accuses Sudan of abetting an Eritrean independence movement.
- 1967** 7,000 Eritreans flee to Sudan to escape Ethiopian military reprisals against secessionists.
- 1970** Ethiopia lays siege to regions of Eritrea in a failed attempt to end the guerrilla warfare.
- 1972** A severe drought lasting through 1975 strikes northern Ethiopia.
- 1974** Soldiers led by Major Mengistu Haile Mariam oust the emperor and institute socialist reforms under a Provisional Military Administrative Council, also known as the Derg.
- 1975** Mengistu begins a program of land reform, abolishes the monarchy, and declares Ethiopia a republic.
- 1977** Critics of the military regime, led by the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party (EPRP), launch the "White Terror," a campaign of urban guerrilla warfare; the government responds with its own "Red Terror" campaign, arming Ethiopians loyal to the Derg, who kill an estimated 100,000 people suspected of being enemies of the government. The United States withdraws its support for the government.

814 Ethiopia

- 1978** Mengistu secures support from the USSR and Cuba and wins back territories lost to the revolutionaries.
- 1984** A northern drought lasting until 1986 plunges the country into famine, and one million die of starvation; the government attempts the forced resettlement of 600,000 northerners to the south.
- 1987** Mengistu proclaims a new, Soviet-style constitution with popular elections and renames the country the People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia; power remains in the hands of the Derg, who elect Mengistu president; the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) and the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) again stage armed resistance.
- 1989** Having lost the support of the USSR, the Ethiopian national assembly conducts peace talks with the EPLF and the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), a coalition of opposition groups led by the TPLF.
- 1990** EPLF forces capture the strategic Eritrean port city of Massawa; EPRDF forces overtake Ethiopia's capital, Addis Ababa.
- 1991** The EPRDF overthrows Mengistu's government and establishes the Transitional Government of Ethiopia.
- 1992** Ethiopia's first snap elections are conducted to facilitate redistricting and redrawing of electoral lines along ethnic and language affiliations.
- 1994** The Constituent Assembly is elected to implement ratification of a new constitution.
- 1995** A new constitution is promulgated and the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia announced, with Negasso Gidada as head of state and Meles Zenawi as prime minister.
- 1997** War breaks out between Eritrea and Ethiopia over the Badme Triangle, a disputed territory in southwestern Eritrea.
- 2000** The EPRDF party wins an overwhelming victory in national elections; under supervision of UN troops, Ethiopia and Eritrea sign a peace agreement in December.
Haile Selassie is buried in the Trinity Cathedral of Addis Ababa.
- 2001** Ethiopia withdraws troops from Eritrea.
- 2002** Ethiopia and Eritrea draw up new boundary; they both claim the town of Badme.
- 2003** An independent boundary commission gives Badme to Eritrea; Ethiopia disagrees.

- 2004** Ethiopia accepts the boundary decision on Badme "in principle."

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Ethiopia on the Web
<http://www.ethiopians.com/>
- Addis Ababa Chamber of Commerce
<http://www.addischamber.com>

FIJI

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of the Fiji Islands

ABBREVIATION

FJ

CAPITAL

Suva

HEAD OF STATE

President Ratu Josefa Iloilo (from 2000)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Laisenia Qarase (from 2000)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Republic

POPULATION

893,354 (2005)

AREA

18,270 sq km (7,055 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Fijians, Indo-Fijians

LANGUAGES

English (official), Fijian, Hindustani

RELIGIONS

Christianity, Hinduism, Islam

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Fijian dollar

NATIONAL FLAG

A blue field with the Union Jack in top left corner and the Fijian coat of arms on the fly. The coat of arms shows a gold, imperial lion carrying a coconut in its forepaw, a flying dove carrying an olive branch, stalks of sugarcane, bananas, and a coconut palm.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

The Fijian coat of arms flanked on either side by a Fijian warrior and hunter, with an outrigger canoe on the top. Beneath is the legend *Rerevaka na Kalou ka Doka na Tui* (Fear God and honor the Queen).

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“God Bless Fiji”

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year’s Day), February 18 (National Youth Day), May 29 (Ratu Sukuna Day), June 14 (Queen Elizabeth’s Birthday), October 10 (Independence Day, National Day), November 1 (All Saints’ Day), November 11 (Remembrance Day), November 14 (Prince Charles’ Birthday), December 25 (Christmas), December 26 (Boxing Day), various Christian festivals (Good Friday, Easter Monday), Hindu festivals (Dipavali), and Islamic festivals (Muhammad’s Birthday, Ramadan)

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

October 10, 1970

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

July 25, 1990; amended July 25, 1997

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

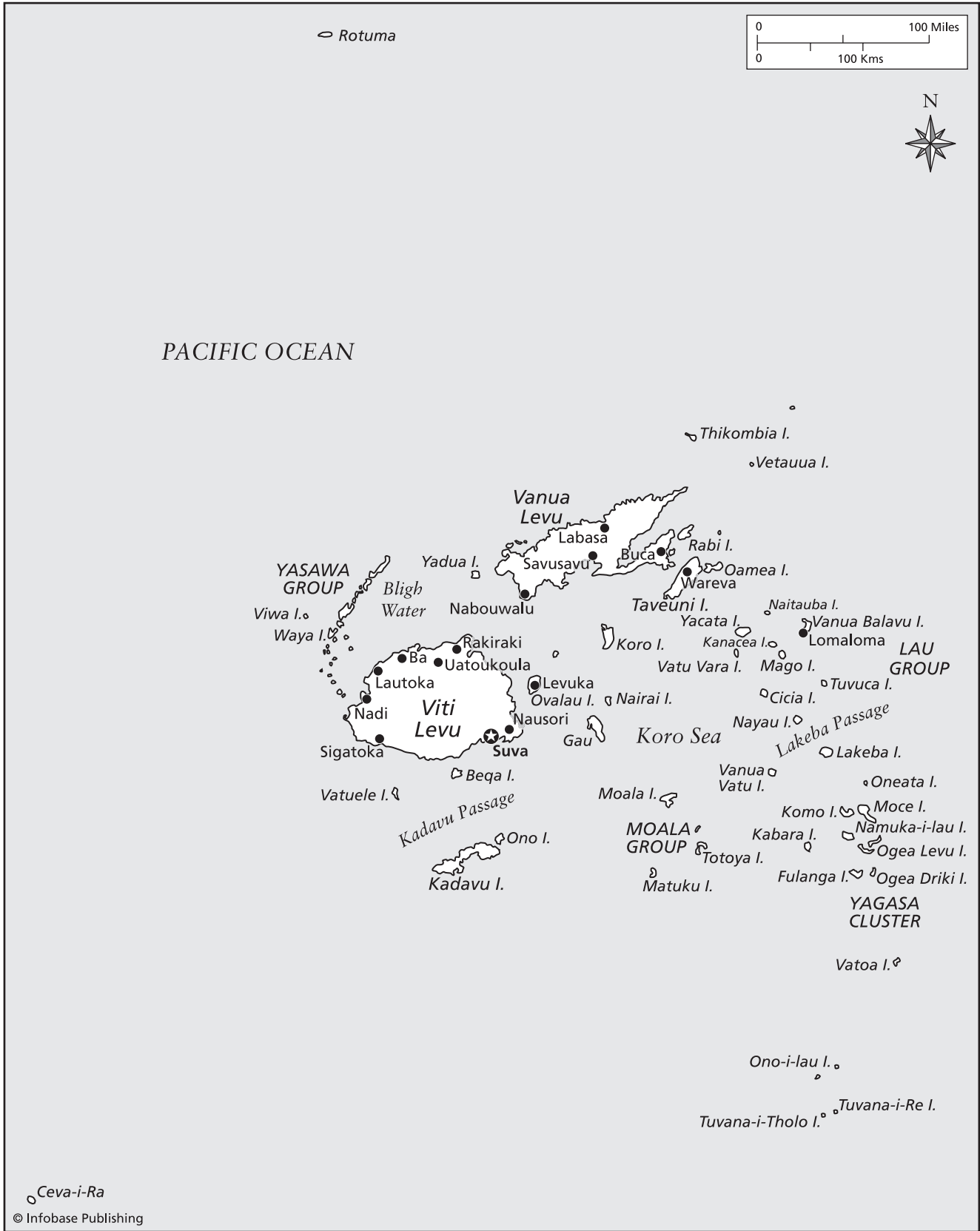
Fiji, in the South Pacific, is about 2,735 km (1,700 mi) northeast of Sydney, 1,769 km (1,100 mi) north of Auckland, and 4,466 km (2,776 mi) southwest of Honolulu. The country consists of over 822 islands stretched over a total area of some 650,000 sq km (250,000 sq mi). The total land area, including the island of Rotuma, which is geographically separate from the main archipelago, is 18,270 sq km (7,055 sq mi). Only 105 of the islands are inhabited; over 500 are islets, and some are mere rocks a few meters in circumference. The largest islands are

Vanua Levu, with 5,535 sq km (2,137 sq mi), and Viti Levu, with 10,386 sq km (4,010 sq mi). The total coastline stretches 1,129 km (700 mi).

Fiji’s larger islands are mountainous and of volcanic origin, often rising precipitously from the shore. On the southeastern windward sides the islands are covered with dense tropical forests. The highest elevation is atop To-manivi (1,324 m; 4,343 ft); there are 28 other peaks over 900 m (3,000 ft). Most islands are surrounded by coral reefs.

The major river is the Rewa on Viti Levu, which is navigable by small boats for 113 km (70 mi).

Fiji



Geography

Area sq km: 18,270; sq mi 7,055
 World Rank: 151st
 Land Boundaries, Km: 0
 Coastline, km 1,129
 Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Pacific Ocean 0
 Highest: Tomanivi 1,324
 Land Use %
 Arable Land: 11
 Permanent Crops: 4.7
 Forest: 44.6
 Other: 39.7

Population of Principal Cities (1996)

Lautoka	36,083
Suva	77,366

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

On the leeward sides of the islands there are two seasons: wet and dry. Mean annual rainfall ranges between 1,780 mm (70 in) and 2,030 mm (80 in), with Suva receiving the maximum precipitation of 3,120 mm (123 in).

Temperatures at sea level vary from 15.6°C to 32°C (60°F to 90°F). The prevailing trade winds blow from the east for most of the year.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature: 60°F to 90°F
 Average Rainfall: 70 in to 80 in
 Suva: 123 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

There are about 3,000 plant species on the Fiji Islands. These include rare tropical flowers and valuable hardwoods, including mahogany.

Originally, Fiji had only a few species of terrestrial mammals, six species of bats, and one species of rat. The earliest settlers 3,500 years ago brought pigs, chickens, and dogs with them, which immediately resulted in the extinction of several types of native birds. Other imported mammals include goats and the Indian mongoose, which was introduced to catch rats in sugarcane fields and is now the most common wild animal. There are also turtles, snakes, and a crested iguana that somehow reached the islands from South America. About 100 species of birds live in Fiji.

The seas around Fiji teem with plant and animal life, including spectacular coral reefs and all the flora and fauna that live around them. There are also large marine animals such as sharks, rays, whales, and dolphins.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 893,354
 World Rank: 153rd
 Density per sq km: 45.7
 % of annual growth (1999-2003): 1.1
 Male %: 50.2
 Female %: 49.8
 Urban %: 51.7
 Age Distribution %: 0-14: 31.7
 15-64: 64.3
 65 and over: 4.0
 Population 2025: 1,153,122
 Birth Rate per 1,000: 22.91
 Death Rate per 1,000: 5.68
 Rate of Natural Increase %: 1.8
 Total Fertility Rate: 2.78
 Expectation of Life (years): Males 66.74
 Females 71.79
 Marriage Rate per 1,000: 10.1
 Divorce Rate per 1,000: —
 Average Size of Households:
 Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Fijians, who are ethnically Melanesian with a Polynesian admixture, constitute 51 percent of the population, while Indo-Fijians, descendants of immigrants who were brought to Fiji as indentured laborers from India, constitute 44 percent of the population.

There are small colonies of Americans, Britons, Australians, and New Zealanders.

There has been considerable ethnic hostility between Indo-Fijians, who suffer economic and political discrimination, and Fijians, who wish to preserve the Melanesian character of the country.

LANGUAGES

The official language is English, which virtually all literate Fijians speak, although both Fijian and Hindustani are used in parliament and in the administration. Fijian belongs to the Malayo-Polynesian group of languages. The spoken dialect is Bau throughout the archipelago, except on Rotuma Island, where Rotuman is spoken. Most Indian descendants retain Hindustani as their lingua franca.

RELIGIONS

Virtually all native Fijians are Christian, while about 80 percent of Indo-Fijians are Hindus and about 15 percent

are Muslims. Of the Christians, 85 percent belong to the Methodist Church and 12 percent to the Roman Catholic Church. There is a Roman Catholic archbishopric and an Anglican bishopric in Suva. The Methodist Church is organized under a president.

Religious Affiliations

Christian (mostly Methodist and Roman Catholic)	464,000
Hindu	339,000
Muslim	71,000
Other	19,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The first settlers of the Fiji islands were Lapita who arrived around 1500 B.C.E. Some 2,500 years later, Polynesians invaded from Tonga and Samoa, engaging the Melanesians in large-scale wars. Intermarriage and time helped merge the two ethnic groups together.

In 1643 the first known European to sight the Fijian islands was Abel Tasman. His description of the dangerous reefs and his account of cannibalism kept Europeans away until 1774. In that year James Cook stopped at Vatoa. In 1789 Captain William Bligh stopped under the duress of mutineers on the HMS *Bounty*.

The 1800s saw an increase in interaction between Fijian society and Westerners, as traders used the nations ports when seeking sandalwood and *bêche-de-mer* (succulent sea cucumbers prized in Asia). The traders fueled interclan warfare by swapping goods for guns and metal tools. Stories of cannibalism were propagated as most shipwrecked Westerners were eaten. One notable exception was Charles Savage, a Swede, who managed to serve as an interpreter and diplomat between warring chiefs.

Early missionary attempts also failed to civilize the Fijians. In 1867 the Reverend Thomas Baker was eaten (his shoes are on exhibit at the Fiji Museum). However, Westerners refused to leave the islands alone, as they became more important as Pacific trading posts. One such post, Levuka, was razed in 1847 in order to restore peace.

Interaction with Westerners was growing, and Fiji was slowly becoming more Western and open. Cakobau, the self-proclaimed King of Fiji, attempted to form a Western-style government in 1871, but it collapsed after just two years. Afterward Fiji was under British rule from 1874, when a convention of chiefs ceded Fiji unconditionally to the United Kingdom, to 1970, when it became a fully independent dominion within the Commonwealth. British rule was marked by the pacification of the countryside, the spread of plantation agriculture, and the introduction of Indian indentured labor. At the same time many traditional institutions, such as communal ownership of land, were maintained intact.

The British introduced a new constitution in 1966 that gave Fiji a ministerial form of government with a

predominantly elected Legislative Council. The electoral system was based on a complex combination of communal rolls and cross-voting, reflecting traditional ethnic tensions between Fijians and Indians. In 1967 Ratu Kamisese Mara, head of the Alliance Party (AP), became the chief minister. Fiji achieved independence within the Commonwealth in 1970; upon independence Mara became prime minister.

Fiji's political history has been dominated by ethnic tension between the Fijians, who were a minority but maintained political power, and Indians, who were discriminated against in politics and in land tenure. In 1977 Mara's Alliance Party lost the legislative election to the National Federation Party (NFP), traditionally supported by Indians. The NFP was unable to form a government, however, and the AP was returned to power that same year with the largest majority it had ever achieved. In light of the continuing ethnic tensions and the development of the Fijian Nationalist Party, which ran on a "Fiji for the Fijians" program, Mara suggested forming a government of national unity in 1980. The suggestion received little attention, as disagreements continued between the AP and NFP over Indian demands for reformed land tenure. In 1982, in an election dominated by race, the AP retained power but saw its majority dramatically reduced.

A coalition of the NFP and the Fiji Labor Party (FLP), which had been formed in 1985 with the idea of promoting more effective parliamentary opposition and establishing more extensive government social services, won the general election of April 1987. The new government, led by Timoci Bavadra, was the first in Fijian history to have a majority of Indian ministers. This government was overthrown in May by a military coup under the leadership of Sitiveni Rabuka, who wished to preserve Fijian political domination. In an effort to end the political crisis, Bavadra and Mara agreed to form a bipartisan government, but before it could be established, Rabuka staged another coup. He assumed the position of head of state, announced the establishment of a republic, and appointed a temporary Council of Ministers, whose members were primarily Fijian. Rabuka resigned at the end of the year and was replaced by Ratu Sir Penaia Ganilau, the former governor-general. Mara was reappointed prime minister, and Rabuka became home minister.

Fiji returned to civilian rule after 1990 when General Rabuka stepped down as home affairs minister and later resigned his commission to become head of the recently organized Fijian Political Party (SVT). In 1992 the SVT won an overwhelming majority in parliament, and Rabuka formed a government of national unity with the support of the Indians. In 1997 a new constitution was passed, replacing the 1988 ethnically discriminatory constitution. It provided for the continued Melanesian domination of the Senate but opened the door to possible Indian control of the House. Following the adoption of the new constitution, Fiji was readmitted to the Commonwealth. In

new elections in 2000 Indians managed to obtain legislative majority and the leader of the Indian-dominated Fijian Labour Party, Mahendra Lal Chaudhry, was elected prime minister. However, during a legislative meeting Fijian nationalists stormed the building and held the prime minister and a number of his colleagues hostage. All hostages were released in July, and the Great Council of Chiefs appointed the Fijian Ratu Josefa Iloilo president. The leader of the insurrection, George Speight, was arrested and charged with treason. The Commonwealth suspended Fiji again in June 2000.

In 2001 the Fiji High Court ruled the current government illegal, and new elections were held in August that brought the Fijian United Party to power. Its leader, Laisenia Qarase, was named prime minister. He immediately defied the constitution by refusing to offer cabinet positions to members of the Labour Party, which was dominated by ethnic Indians. Speight was expelled from parliament. In December 2001 Fiji was once again admitted to the Commonwealth.

In February 2002 Speight came to trial for treason. He was sentenced to death, but Iloilo commuted his sentence to life imprisonment. The following July the Supreme Court ruled that ethnic Indians from the Labour Party must be included in Qarase's parliament. In August 2004 Vice President Ratu Jope Seniloli was jailed briefly, after being found guilty of treason for his involvement in the coup attempt of 2000.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

Governor-General

1970–73	Sir Robert Sidney Foster
1973–83	Ratu Sir George Cakobau
1983–87	Ratu Sir Penaia Ganilau

President

1987	Sitiveni Rabuka (interim)
1987–93	Ratu Sir Penaia Ganilau
1993–2000	Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara
2000	Major General Frank Bainimarama (interim)
2000–	Ratu Josefa Iloilo

Prime Minister

1967–87	Ratu Kamisese Mara
1987	Timoci Bavadra
1987–92	Ratu Kamisese Mara
1992–99	Sitiveni Rabuka
1999–2000	Mahendra Lal Chaudhry
2000–	Laisenia Qarase

CONSTITUTION

Fiji's constitution was promulgated in 1990 and amended in 1997 to make multiparty government mandatory and to allow non-Fijians a greater say in government. In 1998

the amended constitution entered into force after the Great Council of Chiefs approved the draft. Under its terms, executive authority is vested in a president who is appointed by the Great Council of Chiefs, who hold their positions based upon lineage. The president serves for five years and selects a prime minister to lead the cabinet. The prime minister, who must be a Fijian by ethnicity, selects the remaining members of the cabinet.

The legislature is a bicameral system in which the upper house consists of 34 members appointed by the president upon recommendations made by the Council of Chiefs, the cabinet, and the opposition. The House of Representatives consists of 71 members elected by all citizens over the age of 21. The seats are allocated along racial lines, with 23 for ethnic Fijians, 19 for Indians, three for other races, and the remaining 25 open to all. The legislative session may last as long as five years.

The judiciary consists of the High Court and the Supreme Court, which are the final arbiters of the constitution.

PARLIAMENT

The parliament consists of two houses. The Senate (upper house) has 34 members. The president selects 24 of them on the basis of advice from the Great Council of Chief and appoints 9 himself, leaving one representative to be appointed by the council of Rotuma. The House of Representatives (lower house) consists of 71 members. The majority of the seats are reserved for specific ethnic groups, with 23 for Fijians, 19 for Indians, three for others, one reserved for the council of Rotuma, and the remaining 25 open to any race. The session may last no longer than five years.

POLITICAL PARTIES

There are more than 15 active political parties in Fiji. The largest and strongest of them are Soqosoqo ni Vakavulewa ni Taukei (SVT), which defends the right of native Fijians to control politics in the country, and National Federation Party, formed in 1960 with the merger of several smaller organizations; the National Federation Party advocates multiracial politics, though it is largely Indian. In addition to these two large parties, the Fijian Association Party is a multiracial faction of the SVT, and the Fiji Labour Party is a strong Indian party.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For purposes of local administration, Fiji is divided into four administrative divisions, each headed by a division commissioner, who is assisted by district officers. In addition, eight main urban areas are governed by local author-

ities. Suva has a city council, Lautoka a town council, and six other main urban areas are administered by township boards. Some members of urban councils are appointed, but the majority of members are elected.

The Fijian community is under a separate administration, known as the Fijian Administration, headed by the Fijian Affairs Board. The Fijian Administration comprises 14 *yasanas* (communal provinces), each with its own partially appointed and partially elected council. Each council has an elected majority and has powers to make bylaws and draw up its own budget. Members are elected for two-year terms, and the council elects a chairperson from among its own members. At the apex of the Fijian Administration is the Great Council of Chiefs, presided over by the minister of Fijian affairs and rural development.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The judiciary is completely independent of the legislative and executive branches of government. The judicial power of the state is vested in the High Court, the Court of Appeal, the Supreme Court, and various small magistrate courts. Magistrate courts handle small matters. The High Court hears more significant criminal and civil cases. The Court of Appeal hears appeals from the High Court. The final appellate court of the state is the Supreme Court; four of the five Supreme Court justices also serve in courts in Australia or New Zealand.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Fiji has successfully maintained the legal, political, and human rights traditions of its former British rulers. In constitutional practice, there are safeguards that ensure freedom from torture; respect for the integrity of the person and the home; right to a fair and open public trial; freedom from arbitrary arrest and imprisonment; and equal treatment before the law irrespective of race, creed, or sex.

FOREIGN POLICY

Fiji has close relations with its neighbors in the South Pacific but somewhat cool relations with the rest of the world. In the South Pacific, Fiji has hosted various regional summits and the 2003 South Pacific Games. The governments of other Pacific islands tend to be sympathetic to Fiji's ethno-political difficulties. Fiji's military coups have had an adverse effect on its foreign relations with other nations, particularly its close trading partners Australia and New Zealand. It was expelled from the Commonwealth in 1987 but readmitted after a few months. In 1999 the appointment of the first ethnically Indian prime minister led to a siege of the parliament by

Fijian extremists. This led to further ostracism of Fiji by the international community. Fiji has recently been working on improving its relations with China, admitting Chinese immigration and accepting Chinese aid.

DEFENSE

Until 1970 the defense of Fiji was the responsibility of the United Kingdom, and even today there is only a small regular force supplemented by a territorial force and a reserve. Only about 9,000 men reach military age each year, and the force is correspondingly small. There is no draft. The armed forces are overwhelmingly Fijian in membership, as is the national police force. The command structure of these forces is not clearly established.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	4,000
Military Manpower Availability:	239,221
Military Expenditures \$million:	34
as % of GDP:	2.2
as % of central government expenditures:	—
Arms Imports \$million:	—
Arms Exports \$million:	—

ECONOMY

Fiji, endowed with forest, mineral, and fish resources, is one of the most developed of the Pacific island economies, though it still has a large subsistence sector. Sugar exports and a growing tourist industry are the major sources of foreign exchange. Sugar processing makes up one-third of industrial activity. Every year Fiji exports many tons of tuna—fresh yellowfin to Japan and Hawaii and canned tuna to Canada and the United Kingdom. It also exports mahogany and pine, though the government has banned the export of some indigenous hardwoods. There are also gold mines on Vanua Levu and Viti Levu. Imports currently outpace exports, and the government is actively encouraging the development of new industries, such as garment manufacture.

Roughly 300,000 to 400,000 tourists visit each year, including thousands of Americans, following the advent of regularly scheduled nonstop air service from Los Angeles. The political unrest of the early 2000s slowed the growth of tourism somewhat.

Fiji's growth slowed in 1997 because the sugar industry suffered from low world prices and rent disputes occurred between farmers and landowners. Drought in 1998 further damaged the industry, but its recovery in 1999 contributed to robust gross domestic product (GDP) growth. Long-term problems include low investment and uncertain property rights. The political turmoil in Fiji has had a severe impact; the economy shrank by

8 percent in 1999, and more than 7,000 people lost their jobs. The economy seemed to have recovered by 2004, growing at a rate of 4.8 percent.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 5.012
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 5,800
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 3.7
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 2.6
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:

Agriculture: 16.6
 Industry: 22.4
 Services: 61.0

Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:

Private Consumption: 71
 Government Consumption: 16
 Gross Domestic Investment: —

Foreign Trade \$million: Exports: 609

Imports: 835

% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: —

% of Income Received by Richest 10%: —

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
114.8	116.1	121.0	122.0	127.0

Finance

National Currency: Fijian Dollar (FJD)

Exchange Rate: \$1 = FJD 1.8958

Money Supply Stock in National Currency million: 900

Central Bank Discount Rate %: 1.75

Total External Debt \$million: 188.1

Debt Service Ratio %: 2.51

Balance of Payments \$million: —

International Reserves SDRs \$million: 393

Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 1.6

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 34.04

per capita \$: 41

Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 76.9

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year

Revenues \$million: 427.9

Expenditures \$million: 531.4

Budget Deficit \$million: 103.5

Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 16.6

Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2002) %: 3.1

Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares: 35

Irrigation, % of Farms having: 1.05

Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 50

Total Farmland % of land area: 11.0

Livestock: Cattle 000: 330

Sheep 000: 5

Hogs 000: 139

Chickens 000: 3,700

Forests: Production of Roundwood (000 cubic meters): 383

Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 44.5

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 254

Industrial Production Growth Rate %: —

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 36

Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 471

Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 573

Net Energy Imports % of use: —

Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: 200

Production kW-hr million: 520.1

Consumption kW-hr million: 483.7

Coal Reserves tons billion: —

Production tons million: —

Consumption tons million: —

Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —

Production cubic feet billion: —

Consumption cubic feet billion: —

Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —

Production barrels 000 per day: —

Consumption barrels 000 per day: 5.7

Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$million: 835

Exports \$million: 609

Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999): 10.2

Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999): 3.8

Balance of Trade \$million: —

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Australia %	35.1	18.4
Singapore %	19.2	—
New Zealand %	17.2	—
Japan %	4.9	4.8
United States %	—	23.7
United Kingdom %	—	13.6
Samoa %	—	6.0

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 3,440

Paved %: 49.2

Automobiles: 51,700

Trucks and Buses: 48,600

(continues)

Transportation *(continued)*

Railroad: Track Length km: 597
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: —
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 2
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 7.5
 Airports: 28
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 2.9
 Length of Waterways km: 203

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 398
 Number of Tourists from 000: 99
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 181
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 78

Communications

Telephones 000: 102
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.05
 Cellular Telephones 000: 109.9
 Personal Computers 000: 42
 Internet Hosts per million people: 552
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 62

ENVIRONMENT

As an idyllic Pacific island with few manufacturing industries, it might be expected that Fiji is free from many of the environmental problems to which mainland nations are subject. The two main islands have a rich ecosystem. But Fiji's natural beauty and marine attractions are in themselves the cause of some of its pollution; indeed, many problems are caused by the tourism industry itself. Resorts typically dump their wastewater straight into the ocean, where it kills the fish tourists come to see. Coral sand extraction, oil and gas exploration, sewage and waste disposal, and overfishing pose a serious threat to the marine environment. Toxic waste, sewage, and air pollution persist in urban areas, while widespread use of pesticides, fertilizer runoff, and slumping and salination of groundwater contribute to pollution in rural areas. Inadequate farming practices on sloped land and poorly managed logging operations cause soil erosion. Soil transported into coastal ecosystems smothers coral reefs, chokes mangroves, and reduces the local fish population. Since 1969 there has been a more than 40 percent reduction in Fiji's forest resources, primarily as a result of logging. The loss of forest cover is particularly threatening to the highly diverse native flora as well as to the few species of wildlife. In many places the landscape is barren.

In 2003 Fijians launched a plan to protect their coral reefs from pollution and from dangerous crown-of-thorns

starfish, which eat coral. Fijian women have been working with a group called Ecowoman to discuss ways to protect the environment while maintaining the economy.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 44.6
 Average Annual Forest Change, 1990-2000, 000 ha: —2
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 0
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 0.89

LIVING CONDITIONS

Traditional Fijian homes are bamboo and thatch structures built on raised mounds; the higher the mound, the higher the family's status. Modern homes are more commonly built of corrugated iron and concrete blocks. A typical house has one room and little furniture. People sleep and eat on the floor and share all possessions. The women cook in a smaller hut separate from the living quarters.

Most Indo-Fijians live in the cities. Many ethnic Fijians have also begun moving to the cities to find work. As a result, it has become difficult to find housing in urban areas, and homelessness is becoming a problem.

Public transportation is good. There are regular boat and ferry connections between most of the islands, and air service is fast and reliable, though more expensive than boats. Larger islands have bus systems.

HEALTH

Fiji is a healthy place, with a life expectancy of nearly 70 years. It has a good public health system; the government subsidizes most of the cost, and patients pay small fees for services. There are numerous hospitals and clinics throughout the island system, and even the smallest islands have airstrips where medical staff can land. Diseases such as malaria, dysentery, and tuberculosis are uncommon, though dengue fever and filariasis do occur.

Sexually transmitted diseases and alcoholism have been increasing, and the government is trying to educate people about them. Some fish have become poisonous due to water pollution, and pollution has also harmed the drinking-water supply.

Indigenous Fijians like to visit traditional healers instead of modern doctors or nurses. Healers can be either men or women. They diagnose two kinds of illness, spiritual and physical, and they prescribe herbs or massage for treatment. Kava is commonly prescribed as a diuretic.

Health

Number of Physicians: 271
 Number of Dentists: 32
 Number of Nurses: 1,576
 Number of Pharmacists: 59
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 34
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 12.99
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 75
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 4.0
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 79
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.1
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 92
 Measles: 88
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 98
 Access to Improved Water Source %: —

FOOD AND NUTRITION

The typical Fijian meal consists of a large portion of some starch, such as cassava, yam, breadfruit, or taro, and a side dish to give the starch flavor, such as meat, fish, or vegetables. Taro leaves cooked in coconut milk are a popular side dish. Fish is a common food and is prepared in a variety of ways, such as baked or marinated in lime juice. Villagers will work together to catch fish by standing in a circle in the water and gradually driving the fish to the center of the circle, where women can catch them in nets. For feasts people prepare meats by roasting them in pits filled with coconut husks. People also enjoy eating *balolo*, a small ocean worm that can only be caught two nights out of the year. Different ethnic communities have different cooking styles. Chinese and Indian Fijians eat a great deal of rice and curry as well as typical native dishes. Muslims do not eat pork, and Hindus do not eat beef. Most of the different ethnic traditions have blended together. Almost all people drink kava, a mildly narcotic drink made from the *yagona* plant.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 148.7
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 75.7

STATUS OF WOMEN

Few women hold high-level economic or political positions. There is a growing awareness among women of both the Fijian and Indian communities of their right to participate more actively in social and political endeavors outside their homes. As Fiji modernizes, more women work in the cities especially, where they gain employment as nurses or teachers or in garment factories. Women in

the rural areas continue to fill the traditional roles of village life. Tribal inheritance is usually based on a patriarchal system. Women can and do, however, inherit status as chiefs; Fiji's third-highest-ranking chief is a woman.

Official policy favors the reduction of population growth and supports family planning. Fiji is among the countries participating in the World Fertility Survey. The private Family Planning Association, founded in 1962, plays an active role in the distribution of contraceptives and the monitoring of birth-control programs. In 1982 a total of 33.4 percent of married women of childbearing age were believed to use family-planning services.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 9
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.0
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 35.9

WORK

Approximately 70 percent of the workforce is employed in agriculture—including subsistence agriculture—growing sugarcane, coconuts, cocoa, ginger, vanilla, and bananas for export and other foods for themselves. Many work in forestry or fishing. Tuna is an especially lucrative fish. Thousands of people work in garment factories, making clothing to sell in North American markets. Gold mines employ some Fijians. About 40,000 work in the tourism industry.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 137,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 32.5
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 70
 Other: 30
 Unemployment %: 7.6

EDUCATION

Education is free but not compulsory for the first eight years. Parents must pay for secondary school, but state subsidies are available in cases of hardship. Schooling consists of 12 years, as divided into eight years of primary school and four years of secondary school. The curriculum is of British origin, and courses culminate in British school certificates. The academic year runs from January to December. Instruction is in English, but Fijian is taught in all schools. Though the state

does not segregate its ethnic groups, Indians and native Fijians usually attend separate schools. Of the over 700 schools, only a very small portion are controlled by the government; the rest are run by Christian missions or other private organizations.

The University of the South Pacific, jointly owned by 12 Pacific island nations, has a campus in Suva. Suva is also home to a medical school, a nursing school, an agricultural college, and an institute of technology. There are vocational colleges throughout the island system.

Almost all children attend primary school. Indian children are more likely than Fijians to graduate from secondary school and attend college or university. The Ministry of Education has tried to correct this imbalance by offering scholarships to Fijians and reserving half of the first-year seats at the university for them. The government has also made efforts to keep girls in school as long as boys.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 93.7
Male %: 95.5
Female %: 91.9
School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: —
First Level: Primary Schools: 693
Teachers: 4,125
Students: 115,014
Student-Teacher Ratio: 27.9
Net Enrollment Ratio: 99.8
Second Level: Secondary Schools: 142
Teachers: 5,764
Students: 93,534
Student-Teacher-Ratio: 16.7
Net Enrollment Ratio: 76.0
Third Level: Institutions: —
Teachers: —
Students: —
Gross Enrollment Ratio: —
Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 5.6

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Fiji has an Institute of Technology in Suva. Maritime studies and fisheries are specialties. The country has become increasingly interested in marine ecosystems and preventing water pollution. Many of the institute's graduates go into mechanical, civil, or electrical engineering.

Fiji has a fairly modern and sophisticated technological infrastructure, with cable connections, many telephone lines, and a large number of Internet users.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
High-Tech Exports \$million: 2.34
Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

Two dailies are published in English at Suva. In addition, five nondailies and periodicals are published in English, three in Fijian, and three in Hindi. All but one are published in Suva. Newspapers regularly criticize the government, and politicians have protested this treatment. There is no national news agency, but the government public relations office supplies news to the media. Fiji has a modest book publishing industry, with at least four active full-time publishers. Fiji adheres to the Berne and Universal Copyright conventions.

Radio is the main source of information on the islands. The official broadcasting organization, the Fiji Broadcasting Commission (FBC), operates 10 medium-wave and FM transmitters at Suva and Lautoka. The domestic service is on the air for 110 hours per week in English, 54 hours in Hindi, and 38 hours in Fijian. The content of all broadcasts is subject to government control.

Most of the films shown in the country are of U.S. or Indian origin. The largest libraries are the Suva Public Library, the University of the South Pacific Library, and the Western Regional Library at Lautoka. There is one museum, with annual attendance of over 40,000.

Media

Daily Newspapers: —
Total Circulation 000: —
Circulation per 1,000: —
Books Published: —
Periodicals: —
Radio Receivers 000: 500
per 1,000: 635
Television sets 000: 21
per 1,000: 27

CULTURE

The culture of Fiji blends Hindu, Muslim, Chinese, and native traditions. Holidays are an important part of social life. Christmas is a major festival for most people; Diwali and Holi are significant to Hindus, and Ramadan and Eid al-Adha are important to Muslims. The Hibiscus Festival takes place in Suva for one week every summer. Lautoka holds a Sugar Festival every September.

Fiji has many beautiful traditional art forms. Women dye cloth in elaborate patterns. Pottery, basket weaving, and woodcarving are all common. Music, singing, and dancing are all important parts of social life and festivals. Fijian choral singing is famous around the world. Indian artistic traditions have become part of Fijian culture; Indians perform traditional Hindu dances and music at their own festivals.

Fiji has produced a number of authors, most of whom write in English. They include novelist Joseph Veramu,

playwrights Vilsoni Hereniko and Jo Nacola, and writers Marjorie Crocombe, Subramani, and Raymond Pillai.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Traditional Fijian mythology taught that there are many deities, all led by the snake god Degei. The spirits of ancestors were also important to the lives of the living. Before taking any action, priests would have to consult the deities and ancestors and perform rituals. The practice of cannibalism was part of a ritual in which people would consume the flesh of their enemies and therefore also consume their spirits. Fijians have kept their myths and legends alive through oral tradition, storytelling, and singing. At festivals, people will wear traditional costumes woven of leaves and perform war dances, humorous dances, sultry dances, or reenactments of legendary events. Most Fijians still believe in ancestral spirits and consume kava as a way of reuniting with their forebears. Many Fijians, including Indians, perform fire walking as a means of purification.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Kava drinking is the most popular activity in Fiji. People will spend hours in the evening drinking kava and talking, and a morning kava break is a standard part of the workday. Markets sell a wide variety of objects, from fruits and vegetables to traditional war clubs. Scuba diving, snorkeling, and other water sports are all extremely popular and among the main reasons tourists come to Fiji.

ETIQUETTE

Fijian families typically eat together, sitting on the floor. Indian families eat together at ordinary meals but follow an elaborate hierarchy of rank on formal occasions, when guests eat first, starting with the older men; hosts may not eat until the guests are completely finished.

The most important formal ceremony is the kava-drinking ceremony. People sit around a large wooden bowl;

a braided cord runs from the bowl to the guest of honor. The person running the ceremony mixes crushed *yagona* root with water to make the kava. The guest of honor drinks first and then the other participants take their share.

The giving of gifts is extremely important. A guest always brings a small gift for his or her hosts; *yagona* root is standard. The most valuable gift is a polished sperm whale tooth; no one keeps these teeth indefinitely, instead passing them on to other people. It is extremely rude to refuse a gift.

Tipping is not expected.

FAMILY LIFE

Traditional Fijians are members of a tribe that is subdivided into several clans, each of which includes several extended families. Older people are held in high esteem. Brothers live near one another and treat one another's children as their own. All adults in a community care for all of the children. Parents are rarely affectionate to their children in public, though they do love them. Though the father is considered the head of the household and women do most of the housework, husbands value the work women do and are expected to show humility to their wives.

Relatives are always welcome to stop by a family's home. When one family has guests or otherwise needs help, other families will give what they have of food or other items.

Indian families follow the Hindu caste system. Families arrange marriages within castes. Indians and Fijians almost never marry one another.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Typical Fijian attire is the *sulu*, a kind of sarong or wrap-around skirt. Men and women both wear it, but they tie it differently. Fijian men sometimes wear a shirt, tie, and suit jacket over a dark grey *sulu*. In traditional times, hair expressed a man's status. Fijian men devoted hours to arranging their hair; they would dye it different colors and make it into unusual shapes. A chief might spend two days in a row with his hairdresser, creating a sculpture more than six feet across.

SPORTS

Rugby and soccer are the two most popular sports in Fiji. Native Fijians like rugby, which boys begin playing in school. Fiji's national rugby team is one of the best in the world. The Indian community prefers soccer, which they learned from the French during colonial times. People also play cricket, volleyball, field hockey, wrestling, golf, and lawn bowling. Fiji has sent representatives to the

Summer Olympics since 1956, and it hosted the South Pacific Games in 1963 and 2003.

Outrigger canoe racing is an important traditional sport. The 1998 world championships were held in Fiji. Fijians have surfed the waves for centuries. They also enjoy whitewater rafting on the islands' rivers. Children like to play a game similar to baseball.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1943** Fiji is occupied by Allied forces waging the Solomon Islands campaign; Fijian Indians, offered far less money than their ethnically European and Fijian counterparts, decline to work for the war effort.
- 1962** The Fijian legislative council is reconstituted.
The franchise is extended to women.
- 1966** Fiji is granted internal self-government.
- 1970** Fiji becomes a sovereign and independent state within the Commonwealth, with Ratu Sir Kamisese K. T. Mara as prime minister.
- 1972** In elections to the House of Representatives, Sir Kamisese's Alliance Party wins 33 of 52 seats.
- 1973** Ratu Sir George Cakobau is named governor-general, succeeding Sir Robert Foster.
- 1974** The Fijian dollar's link with sterling is severed.
- 1977** In elections to the House of Representatives, the Alliance Party improves its majority by capturing 35 seats.
- 1978** The Emperor Gold Mining Company, the nation's fourth-largest employer, lays off 1,000 employees.
- 1982** In elections to the House of Representatives the ruling Alliance Party loses eight seats but maintains a majority.
- 1983** Governor-General George Cakobau dies and is succeeded by Penaia Ganilau.
- 1985** The Fiji Labour Party is founded by leaders of the Fiji Trades Union Congress.
- 1987** In the April elections the ruling Alliance Party is defeated by a coalition of the National Federation Party (NFP) and the Fiji Labour Party (FLP). Lt. Col. Sitiveni Rabuka leads a military coup that overthrows the government. On September 22 Timoci Bavadra of the FLP and Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara of the AP agree to form an interim bipartisan government. Three days later Rabuka stages a successful second coup. Rabuka revokes the constitution and declares Fiji a republic.
- 1988** A new draft constitution ensuring key government positions for ethnic Fijians is proposed by the interim government.
- 1990** Rabuka resigns from the cabinet; Mara agrees to remain as prime minister of the interim government; the new constitution is promulgated by decree of the president; the NFP and FLP claim they will boycott any elections held under the new charter.
- 1994** Mara is once again reelected prime minister of a coalition government that guarantees a majority of seats for ethnic Fijians.
- 1997** Fiji rejoins the Commonwealth.
- 1998** A new constitution is established creating an ethnic balance between native Fijians, Indians, and other groups.
- 1999** In the May elections, the FLP defeats Rabuka's Fijian Political Party, and Mahendra Chaudhry, an ethnic Indian, becomes prime minister.
- 2000** In May, George Speight leads Fijian ethnic nationalists, who take hostage Prime Minister Chaudhry and 26 others in an attempt to roll back Fiji's efforts at creating a multiethnic society; in July the military storms the rebel stronghold and releases the hostages, and the Great Council of Chiefs appoints Ratu Josefa Iloilo president. George Speight and 369 of his supporters are arrested and charged with treason.
- 2001** The Fiji High Court rules that the military-backed government is illegal. Parliamentary elections in August bring the Fijian United Party to power. Its leader, Laisenia Qarase, is named prime minister and refuses to admit members of the Labour Party to his cabinet. Fiji is readmitted to the Commonwealth.
- 2002** Speight is sentenced to death, but Iloilo commutes his sentence to life in prison. Government announces privatization plan to shore up sugar industry.
- 2003** Supreme Court rules that Qarase must include Labour Party members in his cabinet.
- 2004** Vice President Ratu Jope Seniloli is found guilty of treason during the 2000 coup attempt.

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OFFICIAL PUBLICATIONS

- Fiji.** *Annual Employment Survey; Census of Industries* (annual); *Current Economic Statistics* (quarterly); *1986 Census of the Population*

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Fiji Government Online
<http://www.fiji.gov.fj/>

FINLAND

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Finland (Suomen Tasavalta)

ABBREVIATION

FI

CAPITAL

Helsinki

HEAD OF STATE

President Tarja Halonen (from 2000)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Matti Vanhanen (from 2003)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Parliamentary democracy

POPULATION

5,223,442 (2005)

AREA

338,145 sq km (130,558 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Finns

LANGUAGES

Finnish Swedish

RELIGION

Evangelical Lutheran

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Euro

NATIONAL FLAG

An ultramarine cross with an extended right horizontal on a white background. The Åland Islands have, in addition, a provincial flag.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A crowned gold lion on a red shield. The rampant lion brandishes a silver sword in its mailed right forepaw and tramples on a Russian scimitar. Nine silver roses are placed around the central figure, one for each of the ancient provinces from which Finland was formed.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Maamme” (in Swedish, “Vårtland”; Our motherland)

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year’s Day), December 6 (Independence Day), all major Christian festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

December 6, 1917

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

March 1, 2000

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Finland is in the far north of the European continent, with one-third of its territory above the Arctic Circle. Its coastline on the Gulf of Finland, the Baltic Sea, and the Gulf of Bothnia is deeply indented and studded with islands. The capital is Helsinki, on a peninsula on the Gulf of Finland west of the estuary of the Vantaanjoki. It was founded in 1550 by Gustavus Vasa about four miles north of its present site, to which it was transferred when the old site was destroyed by fire in 1640. It became the capital in 1812. There are at least 15 other cities with a population of over 40,000.

The Finnish landscape is characterized by a rather asymmetric distribution of hills and plains, with higher elevations to the north. More than half of eastern Finland is hilly, with the land gently sloping toward the southwest. Paralleling the coast of the Gulf of Bothnia is a belt of plains. The separation between these plains and the hills is rather sharp in the north compared with the southwest. The surface of the land has been scoured and gouged in recent geological times by glaciers that have left thin deposits of gravel, sand, and clay. The resulting formations can be seen most clearly in the shape of complex features such as the Salpausselka ridges and numerous eskers running north to west and south to east.

Finland



Another reminder of the Ice Age is the fact that Finland is still emerging from the sea, such that its area grows by 7 sq km (2.7 sq mi) annually and the land rises 1 to 3 ft every 100 years.

The entire Finnish coast is paralleled by an island zone that reaches its greatest breadth and complexity in the southwest. Finland's offshore islands number in the tens of thousands—the Åland Archipelago alone has nearly 7,000. The Åland and Turku archipelagoes are rich in flora and fauna and abound in fish.

Finland's coastal zone is appropriately known as the golden horseshoe. It is dominated by the two cities of Helsinki and Turku (Åbo), the former capital of the country, situated on the mouth of the Aurajoki. The developed coastal zone extends northward from Turku through the so-called Vakka Suomi and on to the Koke-maki River, which drains the lakes of Häme to the port of Pori. Eastward the coastal plain extends to the Russian border. Ostrobothnia (Pohjanmaa to the Finns) also has its coastal zone. It is a land of little relief but of many rivers. Its southern coastal plains, the broadest in Finland, are traversed by a series of parallel flowing rivers, such as Oulujoki, Finland's most impressive river, Ijoki, Simojoki, Kemijoki, and Tornionjoki.

Lakes cover a greater part of southern Finland. In relation to its size Finland has more lakes than any other country. There are 55,000 small lakes and 19 large lakes, including the artificial reservoirs of Lokka and Portipahhta. The largest, Lake Saimaa, is the fifth largest lake in Europe. The lakes are dominated by long, sinuous esker ridges clad in lofty pines and flanked by sandy beaches. Such ridges as Punkaharju, Pyynikki, and Pulkila are nationally renowned.

The eastern part of Finland is Karelia, part of which was ceded to the Soviet Union by the Armistice of 1944 and the Peace Treaty of 1947. It is dominated by the Saimaa Canal.

Nearly half of Finland's land area is the North Country, or Nordkalotten (Pohjoiskalotti in Finnish), the land of the Lapps. The timberline passes through it. Below and above the tree line the North Country has extensive swamps, and about one-third of the area is covered with bog land. The North Country is intersected by some of the country's longest rivers, such as the Kemi, Muonio, and Tornio. Many of these rivers empty into the freshwater Gulf of Bothnia, but some, such as the Paatsjoki and Tenojoki, drain into the Arctic, and others have carved dramatic gorges through to Russian Karelia.

Geography

Area sq km: 338,145; sq mi 130,558

World Rank: 63rd

Land Boundaries, km: Norway 736; Russia 1,340; Sweden 614

Coastline, km: 1,250

Elevation Extremes meters:

Lowest: Baltic Sea 0

Highest: Halti 1,328

Land Use %

Arable Land: 7.2

Permanent Crops: 0

Permanent Pastures: 0

Forest and Woodland: 72

Other: 20.8

Population of Principal Cities (2000)

Helsinki	1,027,305
Lahti	110,160
Oulu	157,605
Tampere	270,753
Turku	239,018

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

The Finnish climate is considerably warmer than the country's location close to the Arctic Circle might seem to warrant. Temperatures are ameliorated by the Baltic Sea and the west winds that bring air currents from the Atlantic warmed by the Gulf Stream. In contrast, winds from the Eurasian continent bring cold spells in winter and heat waves in summer. Winter is the longest season. Its short dark days are made up for by the long, light nights of summer. In most of Lapland, the dark-free summer, when the sun does not go below the horizon, lasts more than 70 days. The snow cover lasts for more than 90 days in the southwest and up to 250 days in the north.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature

Summer: 55°F to 68°F

Winter: 9°F to 27°F

Average Rainfall

South: 24 in to 28 in

North: 20 in to 24 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Finland is one of the most densely forested countries in Europe, with pine, spruce, and birch forests covering about 75 percent of the terrain. In the north much of the soil is covered by reindeer moss. In the forests to the south, below the Arctic Circle, many types of berries can be found. Water lilies cover Finland's lakes. Throughout the country can be found such flowers as marguerites and buttercups. Finland also provides many varieties of mushroom.

The fauna of Finland includes bear, wolf, lynx, fox, wolverine, and fur-bearing animals such as mink, marten, and ermine. The size of the reindeer herds has been diminishing. Lemmings live in high areas above the tree lines, and elk can be found primarily in southern Lapland. Finland

has 11 species of frogs and reptiles and about 350 species of birds (230 migratory species). The seas contain 77 species of fish, including pike, bass, perch, salmon, and trout.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005:	5,223,442
World Rank:	110th
Density per sq km:	17.1
% of annual growth (1999-2003):	0.2
Male %:	49.0
Female %:	51.0
Urban %:	61.0
Age Distribution %:	
0-14:	17.5
15-64:	66.7
65 and over:	15.8
Population 2025:	5,251,000
Birth Rate per 1,000:	10.56
Death Rate per 1,000:	9.69
Rate of Natural Increase %:	0.1
Total Fertility Rate:	1.73
Expectation of Life (years):	
Males:	74.73
Females:	81.89
Marriage Rate per 1,000:	5.2
Divorce Rate per 1,000:	2.6
Average Size of Households:	2.2
Induced Abortions:	10,908

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

The overwhelming majority of the population is Finnish. National minorities include the Swedish Finns, whose language enjoys an official status on a par with Finnish, as well as the Sami (Lapps) and the Romani (Gypsies). The Swedish-speaking minority makes up less than 6 percent of the population, down from some 14 percent in the late 19th century. That minority traces its origins to the Swedish colonists from between the 12th and 19th centuries, when Finland was under varying degrees of Swedish rule. The Swedish culture is strongest in the autonomous Åland (Ahvenanmaa) Islands, where Swedish is the primary language, and around Turku, but it blends with Finnish culture around Helsinki.

The number of Sami is estimated at under 6,000. Generally, Sami are divided into two groups: mountain Sami, who are reindeer herders, and forest Sami, who are farmers and fishermen. Younger Sami are giving up their traditional lifestyles and adopting Finnish customs and lifestyles. The constitution recognizes the Sami as an indigenous people and guarantees that minority groups such as the Sami and Romani have the right to maintain their language and culture.

Romani seem to have first appeared in the region of Finland in the 16th century. At the end of the 20th century they numbered several thousand, living primarily in or near the urban areas of southern Finland.

Some 104,000 foreign nationals, among them Russians, Estonians, and Swedes, were residents of Finland in 2002, up from 21,000 at the beginning of 1990. Among the foreigners were several thousand refugees from such countries as Somalia, Vietnam, and Iraq.

LANGUAGES

Finnish is spoken by nearly all inhabitants of the country. Swedish is spoken by a large minority, with Russian, Estonian, and Sami all also spoken by smaller minorities.

RELIGIONS

The central facet of Finnish religious life is the dominance of Lutheranism. In 2003 approximately 84 percent of the population was registered with a parish of the Evangelical Lutheran Church. Both the Eastern and Western branches of Christianity reached Finland by the 12th century. Finland was largely pagan before the crusade by Eric IX of Sweden in 1155.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church is divided into nine dioceses, including one Swedish-speaking diocese, and some 80 deaneries. There are 576 parishes, which range in size from a few hundred members to tens of thousands.

The status of the church is defined by the constitution and the Ecclesiastical Law and may be described as a "special relationship." The government consults the Church Assembly on issues touching on such "mixed matters" as marriage, divorce, oaths, the care of the poor, and religious instruction. The state, in turn, has a voice in church administration, particularly regarding such matters as whether new dioceses and parishes should be founded and whether new churches should be built. The church and state also cooperate on other programs. The church keeps records of births, marriages, and deaths of all members and cares for most of the country's cemeteries. Roughly half of Finnish children aged four to six make use of day-care facilities provided by the church. On its side, the state pays the salaries of the theological faculty of the National University and provides chaplains and religious instructors for the army, navy, prisons, and hospitals. The second-largest church is the Finnish Orthodox Church, with nearly 60,000 members in 2002, divided among 25 parishes. There are three dioceses: Karelia, Helsinki, and Oulu. Like the Evangelical Lutheran Church, the Finnish Orthodox Church has enjoyed special status as a national church. Its chief source of revenue is the church tax.

The Roman Catholic Church was entered on the register of religious groups in 1929. The diocese of Helsinki still has a relatively small membership, with approximately 5,000 in the year 2000, and just seven parishes.

Among other religious communities in Finland, the Pentecostals are almost as numerous as the Orthodox. Smaller groups include the Finnish Evangelical Free Church, Seventh-Day Adventists, Baptists, Methodists, Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons, and Jews. By 2000 the proportion of the population unaffiliated with any church was about 10 percent, up from 2.7 percent in 1950.

Up to the end of the 19th century, Finns had to be members of either the Lutheran or Orthodox church. With independence, the state adopted a more neutral stance toward religion. Complete freedom of religion was guaranteed by the Freedom of Religion Act of 1923. Schools provide religious instruction, but this is in accord with the beliefs of the majority of the students at the school, and students who do not belong to any denomination may study other philosophies of life.

Religious Affiliations

Evangelical Lutheran	4,387,000
Other	835,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The ancestors of modern day Finns were a Mongoloid people who reached Finland in the early centuries of the Common Era. The region fell under the control of the Swedes following several religious crusades, the first in 1154. By 1293 Swedish rule extended as far as Karelia. Finland shared Swedish history for the next six centuries. In Finland proper, Swedish became the official language while Finnish continued to be spoken by the peasantry, but both Swedes and Finns shared a common faith, first Catholic and then Lutheran. After Sweden's military defeat in 1808–09, Finland was transferred to Russia. Alexander I granted Finland a privileged autonomous status as a grand duchy, and the Finns never revolted, unlike the Poles, and succeeded in retaining a large measure of autonomy. The czar respected the Lutheran religion and never imposed the Russian language on the Finns. During the era of conservative reaction (1809–62) a liberal nationalist movement emerged.

During World War I, Finland took advantage of the Russian Revolution to declare independence on December 6, 1917. A short civil war ensued (January 28–May 10, 1918) in which the Finnish war hero Karl Mannerheim beat off both Germany and the Russian Bolsheviks. In 1919 Finland became a democratic and parliamentary republic. During the next 20 years, following the settlement of disputes with Sweden over the Åland Islands and with the Soviet Union over East Karelia, Finland made considerable economic and social progress as a nation. However, at the beginning of World War II, the Soviet Union demanded territorial concessions from Finland and, when they were rejected, invaded the coun-

try in 1939. A large area, including the Karelian Isthmus, Viipuri, and the northwest shore of Lake Ladoga, were ceded to Russia in the peace treaty of 1940. After the German attack on Russia in 1941, the Finns took part in the campaign on the side of the Axis powers. With German defeat, Finland was forced to sign an armistice under which it ceded Petsamo and agreed to lease Porkkala headland to Russia as a military base. It also undertook to pay reparations.

A new Treaty of Friendship and Mutual Assistance was signed with the Soviet Union in 1948. Finnish politics from World War II to 1994 were marked by a considerably stable presidency under three Finnish statesmen—J. K. Paasikivi (1946–56), Urho K. Kekkonen (1956–81), and Mauno Koivisto (1981–94)—and a volatile parliamentary system with short-lived coalition governments based on shifting alliances. Most have been center-left administrations dominated by the Social Democratic Party, especially under the premiership of Kalevi Sorsa between 1972 and 1987. In 1995 Finland joined the European Union. In May 1998 Finland agreed to replace its national currency with a new single European currency; the euro was officially adopted in 2002. In February 2000 Tarja Halonen of the Social Democratic Party became Finland's first female president.

In 2002 the Finnish parliament approved construction of the nation's fifth nuclear power plant, the first in western Europe since 1991 and the first in Finland for 30 years, prompting the Green Party to withdraw from the government coalition. In 2003 the Center Party of Anneli Jäätteenmäki defeated the Social Democrats in the general election and formed a new coalition with the Social Democrats and the Swedish People's Party, but two months later Jäätteenmäki resigned in the face of charges that she had illegally obtained secret documents about the war in Iraq when she was opposition leader. (She was acquitted of these charges in 2004.) Matti Vanhanen took over as prime minister.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

President

1946–56	Juho Kusti Paasikivi
1956–82	Urho Kaleva Kekkonen
1982–94	Mauno Henrik Koivisto
1994–2000	Martti Oiva Kalevi Ahtisaari
2000–	Tarja Kaarina Halonen

Prime Minister

1946–1948	Mauno Pekkala
1948–1950	Karl Fagerholm
1950–1953	Urho Kekkonen
1953–1954	Sakari Tuomioja
1954	Ralf Törngren
1954–1956	Urho Kekkonen
1956–1957	Karl Fagerholm

1957	Vaino sukselainen
1957–1958	Rainer von Fieandt
1958	Reino Kuuskoski
1958–1959	Karl Fagerholm
1959–1961	Vaino sukselainen
1961–1962	Martti Miettunen
1962–1963	Ahti Karjalainen
1963–1964	Reino Lehto
1964–1966	Johannes Virolainen
1966–1968	Rafael Paasio
1968–1970	Mauno Koivisto
1970	Teuvo Aura
1970–1971	Ahti Karjalainen
1971–1972	Teuvo Aura
1972	Rafael Paasio
1972–1975	Kalevi Sorsa
1975	Keijo Liinamaa
1975–1977	Martti Miettunen
1977–1979	Kalevi Sorsa
1979–1982	Mauno Koivisto
1982–1987	Kelevi Sorsa
1987–1991	Harri Holkeri
1991–1995	Esko Aho
1995–2003	Paavo Lipponen
2003	Anneli Jäätteenmäki
2003–	Matti Vanhanen

CONSTITUTION

A new constitution took effect in Finland on March 1, 2000. It consolidated and updated the previously existing body of constitutional law, which consisted of four separate constitutional acts dating from early in the 20th century plus numerous amendments. Much of Finland's earlier constitutional history was linked to that of Sweden and Russia.

Of the four fundamental laws at the basis of the former constitutional legislation, the most important were the Constitution Act of 1919 and the Parliament Act of 1928, which derived from the Parliament Act of 1906. The 1906 legislation, adopted during the period of Russian rule, established one of the most modern forms of representative government in Europe. It replaced the previous Diet comprising four estates with the unicameral Eduskunta, a legislature of 200 members elected on the basis of proportional representation and universal suffrage.

The new constitution that came into force in 2000 by and large preserved the fundamental principles of the previous constitutional legislation but strengthened the parliamentary features of the Finnish system of government. The individual rights of citizens are guaranteed in chapter 2 of the constitution, which declares that everyone is equal before the law. These rights encompass freedom of movement, speech, religion, and association and freedom from arbitrary arrest. The right to vote in national elections and referendums is guaranteed to all

Finnish citizens who are at least 18 years old. The chapter also mandates protection of the right to privacy, the right to receive a basic education, and the right to gainful employment and to social security. While confirming that Finnish and Swedish are the national languages, it requires that the rights of the Sami, Romani, “and other groups” to maintain their languages and cultures be protected. Chapter 2 also imposes on everyone a responsibility for protection of the environment.

The primary responsibility for ensuring that legislative proposals do not violate the constitution rests on the Eduskunta, with its Constitutional Law Committee playing a leading role. There are two ways in which the constitution may be amended. Under the normal procedure, a proposal must first be approved by the Eduskunta and left in abeyance, by a simple majority, until the first parliamentary session after the next general election. At that time it may be adopted if it has not been materially altered and receives at least two-thirds of the votes cast. The other procedure is more rapid, to permit timely responses to emergency situations. Under this procedure the Eduskunta must declare the constitutional proposal urgent, by a five-sixths majority. The proposal can then be adopted, without abeyance, if it receives a two-thirds majority.

The constitution spells out the separation of powers among the governmental branches, guaranteeing legislative authority to the Eduskunta, which also makes decisions on state finances. Executive power is vested in the president and in the Council of State, or government—that is, the prime minister and the other ministers. Judicial authority is granted to independent courts of law, with the highest courts being the Supreme Court and the Supreme Administrative Court.

The president is elected by direct vote for a term of six years and may serve no more than two consecutive terms. Impeachment of the president, on grounds of treason or an offense against humanity, requires a three-fourths vote in the Eduskunta. Traditionally the president has no party ties while in office.

The powers of the Finnish presidency are more circumscribed than they were decades ago. Nonetheless, the president wields substantial authority as commander in chief of the armed forces and as head of state, and the president continues to direct foreign policy (although the constitution now specifies that this be done “in cooperation with the Council of State”). The president appoints the prime minister (upon election by the Eduskunta) and cabinet ministers (upon nomination by the prime minister). The president, the Council of State, and ministries may issue decrees in accordance with the authority granted them in the constitution or by law, but principles involving the rights and obligations of private individuals and other matters of a legislative nature are governed by parliamentary acts.

Upon proposal by the prime minister, the president can dissolve the Eduskunta and can dismiss the Council of State or a minister. (Dismissal is also possible if the Council

of State ceases to enjoy the confidence of the Eduskunta.) The powers of the president also include the appointment of department heads and judges and the issuance of pardons. The chancellor of justice, who monitors the actions of officials and others performing public duties to make sure they are in accordance with the law, is appointed by the president and is attached to the Council of State but has no vote. Although the president is the supreme commander of the armed forces, command may be transferred to another Finnish citizen upon recommendation by the Council of State. This was the case when President Kyosti Kallio named Marshal Carl Gustav von Mannerheim commander in chief in 1939 at the outset of the Winter War.

Most legislative initiatives in the Eduskunta are proposed by the government, although individual members of the Eduskunta also have the right to submit bills. The State Council's responsibility to the Eduskunta is expressed largely through interpellations by 20 or more representatives addressed to the government or an individual minister, with a response required in a plenary session of the Eduskunta within 15 days. There is also a question hour, introduced in 1966, when members may cross-examine ministers once a week.

By the year 2003 Finland had had 68 governments since its 1917 declaration of independence. Some lasted just a few months, and one, the third cabinet of Julio Vennola in 1931, held office for less than a month. The longest-serving government was the first administration of Paavo Lipponen, which took office in 1995 and lasted 1,464 days.

PARLIAMENT

The national legislature is the unicameral Eduskunta (Riksdag in Swedish) of 200 members, elected by universal suffrage in a proportional representation system known as the d'Hondt method. A party receives seats in the Eduskunta in proportion to the number of votes received by that party in each electoral district. The period between elections cannot exceed four years. While the Eduskunta is in session, the president has the right to dissolve it, upon the recommendation of the prime minister and after having consulted the parliamentary groups. The Eduskunta is ordinarily in session almost year-round, except in the summer and on state holidays. Parliamentary activity tends to take place along party lines. When a new government is formed, it must immediately present a statement of its program to the Eduskunta for a show of confidence.

At the outset of each session the Eduskunta chooses from among its members a speaker, whose duties include chairing plenary sessions of the Eduskunta. Also chosen are two deputy speakers, who, together with the speaker and the heads of the select committees, constitute the Speaker's Council, which directs the Eduskunta's work. The Eduskunta appoints a parliamentary ombudsman

and two deputy ombudsmen, who are expected to be prominent jurists. The ombudsman oversees the courts, public officials, and other individuals performing public duties to make sure they obey the law, fulfill their responsibilities, and maintain fundamental and human rights.

Committee work undergirds all legislative activity; the committees' makeups generally reflect the relative strengths of the various parties. Ministers, the speaker, and deputy speakers are not permitted to be committee members.

The so-called Grand Committee, with 25 regular members (plus 13 alternates), was once most important in playing a sort of supervisory role, making up for Finland's lack of an upper house. The Grand Committee is now the main committee responsible for studying EU matters on behalf of the plenary session.

The ultimate forum is the plenary session, in which party groups are seated from the speaker's left to the speaker's right in ideological order. The agenda is prepared by the speaker, who is not allowed to take part in debates or vote in plenary sessions. Legislative proposals must ordinarily be considered in plenary session in two readings. Discussion precedes vote, and no time limit is placed on speeches, interjections, or replies; indeed, members of the Eduskunta enjoy broader freedom to speak on all matters under consideration than is found in the parliaments of many other countries. This right is protected in the constitution.

Matters considered by the Eduskunta may be in the form of bills submitted by the government or legislative, budgetary, or petitionary initiatives put forward by members. After a piece of legislation is approved by the Eduskunta, it is submitted to the president for ratification. If the president does not ratify it, the measure is returned to the Eduskunta for reconsideration; if readopted without material changes, the measure becomes law without ratification. In addition to its legislative function, the Eduskunta supervises the governmental administration, maintaining oversight over financial management and budget compliance with the assistance of the independent State Audit Office.

All Finnish citizens who have reached the age of 18 have the right to vote. For general elections the country is divided into at least a dozen electoral districts, with seats varying in number based on the number of citizens residing in the district. The semiautonomous Åland (Ahvenanmaa) Islands are guaranteed their own constituency, with one representative. As of the year 2004 Finland had 15 electoral districts, including the one for Åland.

POLITICAL PARTIES

The Finnish Center Party, or Kesk, was once known as the Agrarian League and still has a strong rural base of support. Other prominent political parties include the Social Democratic Party, which is socialist; the Chris-

tian Democrats; the Green League, an environmentalist party; the Left Alliance, composed of the People's Democratic League and Democratic Alternative; the conservative National Coalition Party; and the Swedish People's Party for Swedish speakers.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The main units of local administration are the municipalities, which carry the primary responsibility for providing citizens with education, health, social welfare, and other basic services. Finland has been divided into six provinces since 1997, when nine of the previous 12 provinces were combined into three in an effort to streamline the administration and improve efficiency. The provincial administrations monitor the provision of services by the municipalities, provide regional commands for police and rescue services and the like, and carry responsibility for inspections and certain licenses. The provincial governors are appointed by the president. As of 2004 Finland was divided into 15 electoral districts for parliamentary elections. Under the Local Government Act of 1995 the only official form of local government is the municipality, although a particular municipality may be called a town or city. Municipalities vary enormously in land area and population size. The highest administrative organ of a municipality is the Local Council, elected every four years. This body names the Local Executive Board, which oversees the management of local government functions in accordance with the council's decisions. The board's executive officer is the municipal manager. Vocational colleges, hospitals, and other operations that may be too large and expensive for individual municipalities, especially smaller ones, to deal with may be handled by intermunicipal corporations, of which there are a few hundred in Finland.

At the beginning of 2004 Finland had a total of 452 municipalities, 67 of which were urban municipalities, 70 semiurban municipalities, and 315 rural municipalities. Citizens of other countries residing permanently in Finland are permitted to vote in municipal elections.

The Swedish-speaking Åland Islands (Ahvenanmaa) constitute a separate province and a separate electoral district and have a semiautonomous status under law. The power of the governor in this province is nominal and subordinate to that of the Lagting (Parliament), whose 30 members are elected every four years. The Lagting elects the Executive Board, with five to seven members. The speaker of the Lagting is the highest official in the province, ranking above the chairman of the Executive Board. The Lagting has legislative authority applicable to the province. In addition, it has special taxing and budgetary powers beyond those pertaining to other regions, including the right to levy an increment on state income revenues. Also, treaties between Finland and other countries that affect Åland cannot come into effect in the province without the Lagting's consent.

LEGAL SYSTEM

There are three types of courts: the general courts, a parallel system of courts of administrative law, and the special courts. Tenured judges are appointed by the president. The president also appoints the prosecutor-general (who heads the prosecution service), the chancellor of justice, and the deputy chancellor of justice. The Eduskunta appoints the parliamentary ombudsman and two deputies. The chancellor of justice and the parliamentary ombudsman safeguard the legal rights of citizens and the legality of state actions.

The general courts handle both civil and penal cases and exist in three tiers: the local courts, appellate courts, and the Supreme Court. In penal cases and in some civil cases the local court usually consists of a chairman and three lay members, with each having a vote. Less important cases may be dealt with by the chairman alone. Appeals of decisions by the local courts are handled by six appellate courts, located in Helsinki, Turku, Vaasa, Kuopio, Kouvola, and Rovaniemi. Each appellate court consists of a president and several councillors. The highest court is the Supreme Court, which accepts appeals of important cases from the appellate courts and also some special courts. It consists of a president and approximately 20 justices, with five justices constituting a quorum.

The system of administrative courts, headed by the Supreme Administrative Court in Helsinki, was established in the 20th century. A network of eight regional administrative courts serve as general courts for administrative matters. Most of the appeals handled by the regional administrative courts deal with tax issues. The courts also hear legal disputes between local and central government organs or private individuals and the government, as well as cases involving civil liberties, such as the confinement of a drug addict or a mentally ill person. Like the Supreme Court, the Supreme Administrative Court consists of a president and about 20 justices, with five required for a quorum.

Among the various special courts is the Court of Impeachment, which tries ministers and justices of the Supreme Court and the Supreme Administrative Court as well as the chancellor of justice and the parliamentary ombudsman when arraigned for illegal acts in the exercise of their official functions. This court also tries the president if the chief of state is charged with treason or an offense against humanity. The Swedish General Code of 1734 is still basic law in Finland, although only some articles and the general framework remain in force. The court system has undergone reform, and much of the code has been revised, since 1734.

The Finnish prison population has been dropping for decades, primarily because of a decline in convictions for crimes against property. Meanwhile, prisoners convicted of drug-related crimes or crimes of violence and/or robbery have increased slightly in recent years.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Finland has experienced no major violations of human rights in recent years. The constitution asserts that human dignity and the rights and freedoms of individuals shall be inviolable, although temporary exceptions to the guarantee of basic rights are allowed in such serious situations as an armed attack on Finland. The importance of the rule of law is underlined in the constitution. Everyone, it declares, shall be equal before the law. Discrimination on such grounds as “sex, age, origin, language, religion, convictions, opinions, state of health, disability” is barred “unless there is an acceptable reason for the same.” Among the rights guaranteed to all in the constitution are freedom of association and the right to hold meetings and demonstrations without a permit. The constitution prohibits the deportation or extradition of foreigners in cases where they face a risk of a “death sentence, torture or other treatment violating human dignity.” The chancellor of justice and the parliamentary ombudsman are responsible for supervising the implementation of human rights in public life. The ombudsman for aliens monitors discrimination against foreigners. The Council for Equality and the equality ombudsman oversee the progress of equal rights.

In 1999 Amnesty International accused Finland of imprisoning people for their conscientious beliefs under the Military Service Act, which came into effect the previous year. The law reduced the length of military service, but the alternative civilian service required for conscientious objectors remained as long as 395 days, more than twice the time served by half of the conscripts under the new measure; the penalty for refusing alternative service was imprisonment. Amnesty International argued that the length of alternative civilian service was punitive and violated international principles on conscientious objection.

FOREIGN POLICY

The constitution declares that Finland will take part “in international cooperation for the protection of peace and human rights and for the development of society.” The president, “in cooperation with the State Council,” is responsible for the direction of Finland’s foreign policy, which is implemented by the Foreign Ministry. The government, however, is required to keep the Eduskunta, in particular the Eduskunta’s Committee for Foreign Affairs and its Grand Committee (regarding European Union matters), informed of developments concerning foreign and security policy. Decisions on war and peace are made by the president with the consent of the Eduskunta.

Having lost two wars with the Soviet Union in 1939–44, Finland was constrained in the ensuing decades to maintain a *modus vivendi* with its powerful neighbor. Finland founded its foreign policy on the principles of neutrality and friendship with Moscow as well as of sup-

port for Nordic cooperation. In 1992, shortly after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Finland signed a new treaty with Russia that lacked the military obligations imposed in the old, superseded Soviet-Finnish agreement.

The Soviet Union had been Finland’s chief trading partner, however, and the new Russia floundered economically, creating severe stresses in the Finnish economy. Finland sought to energize its trade relations with the West. Finland applied in 1992 to join the European Union (EU), although the Finnish public was divided over the merits of EU membership. But EU membership won the endorsement of some 57 percent of the voters in a 1994 referendum and was subsequently approved by the Eduskunta. To allay concern that Finland would lose its neutrality, the Finnish leadership announced that the country would not move to gain admission into NATO. (Finland has cooperated with NATO’s Partnership for Peace program, however.)

After officially becoming a member of the EU on January 1, 1995, Finland joined in the movement toward economic and monetary union, adopting the new EU currency, the euro, in 1999, along with most of the other member states. Finnish policy has tended to support increased economic integration of the EU member countries, as distinguished from their political integration, for which Finland has shown less enthusiasm. Finland, not neglecting its traditional regional interests, pushed the EU to adopt a “northern dimension” policy aimed at promoting partnership with Russia and other countries in the vicinity of the Baltic and Barents seas in such fields as energy, the environment, and economic management. To promote democracy and regional stability, Finland has supported expansion of the EU to include additional countries in central and eastern Europe. Finland, along with other Nordic countries, has built close ties with Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.

Finland has for decades supported the central role of the United Nations in international peacekeeping operations and has taken an active role in them, although Finnish law imposes restrictions on participation in peace enforcement—that is, the use of military force to push warring parties to a peace settlement. Finland has also assisted in peacekeeping operations under the leadership of other organizations, such as the NATO-led International Fellowship of Reconciliation operation in Bosnia in the late 1990s.

Finland pursues its foreign policy objective of promoting human rights largely by working through the EU. Finnish aid to developing countries is delivered both via bilateral programs and through participation in EU assistance programs.

DEFENSE

The terms of the Treaty of Paris, signed with the Allied Powers after World War II in 1947, imposed certain re-

restrictions on the Finnish army. It limited the size of the armed forces to 34,400 men, the air force to 3,000 men and 60 combat aircraft, and the navy to 4,500 men with ships totaling 10,000 tons. The treaty also prohibited bombers, submarines, and missiles as well as nuclear weapons, but in a 1963 agreement Finland was allowed to acquire certain classes of defensive missiles. Today Finland's military consists of about 35,000 active-duty personnel, and the nation's defense budget is about 1.2 percent of gross domestic product (GDP).

The constitution requires every Finn to take part, or at least assist in, national defense. It vests supreme command of the armed forces in the president of the republic, who may, however, entrust this duty to another person, upon the proposal of the Council of State. The decision to mobilize the armed forces is made by the president, again upon a proposal by the Council of State. The chief military planning and coordinating body is the Defense Council, consisting of the prime minister, the ministers of defense, foreign affairs, interior, finance, trade, and industry, along with other ministers the president may name as members as well as the chief of defense and the chief of the general staff.

The armed forces consist of three military commands (western, eastern, and northern) as well as the air force and the navy, which are separate services with their own commanders in chief and headquarters.

Every Finnish male becomes subject to compulsory military service at the beginning of the year in which he turns 18 and remains on call until the end of the year he turns 60. Military service typically lasts 180, 270, or 362 days, depending on rank and skills. After this obligatory service conscripts enter the reserves and are subject to periodic refresher training.

Finnish participants in international peacekeeping operations are not permitted to total more than 2,000 at any given time. They are operationally subordinate to the organization carrying out the operation, such as the United Nations or the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. However, they sign a contract with the Finnish government, and the Defense Forces help with peacekeeper training and readiness. In the late 1960s Finland became the first country to set up a separate peacekeeper training program. Between 1956 and 1999 more than 35,000 Finns served in United Nations peacekeeping missions worldwide. Almost all Nordic military observers are trained at an instruction center in Niinisalo; since 1984 trainees have also included officers from NATO members, the Baltic nations, Asia, and South America.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 35,000
 Military Manpower Availability: 1,226,890
 Military Expenditures \$billion: 1.8
 as % of GDP: 1.2
 as % of central government expenditures: —

Arms Imports \$million: 24
 Arms Exports \$million: 12

ECONOMY

During the 20th century Finland developed from a primarily agrarian possession of the Russian Empire, with industrial activity rooted largely in the abundant Finnish forests, into a member nation of the EU, with an advanced industrial economy occupying a prominent role in the information and telecommunications revolution transpiring at century's end.

The early 1990s were marked by severe recession, in part a reflection of economic disruption in the former Soviet Union, which had long been a key trade partner. By middecade, however, Finland was again registering substantial growth in GDP (4.8 percent a year in 1995–98, compared with 2.4 percent for the EU as a whole), although continuing high levels of unemployment (hovering around 10 percent at the end of the 1990s) remained a concern. The increased investment and sharpened competitive pressures attendant on Finland's entry into the EU in 1995 assisted the recovery from recession. Pursuing a policy of economic integration into the EU's Economic and Monetary Union, Finland was among the 11 member countries that launched the euro currency in 1999.

Based on its forest resources, capital investment, and high technology, Finland has a strong industrial economy and in recent years has become a net exporter of capital and has outperformed other euro nations in economic growth. In 2000 growth was 5.1 percent, though that figure fell to 1.2 percent in 2001. More recently growth has been modestly stronger: 2.2 percent in 2002 and 2 percent in 2003. The nation has cut taxes to spur consumption and growth, which is forecast at 2.5 percent in 2004 and 2.75 percent in 2005. Unemployment has decreased since 1994 but still remains high at 9.2 percent (2004), above the EU average. One cause of high unemployment has been high employer-paid social security taxes, which impede employment growth. In 2004 investment represented 18 percent of GDP. Inflation in 2004 was negligible, at just under 1 percent.

A total of 33 percent of Finland's GDP comes from exports of goods and services. Its main industries are metals, engineering, and timber. Outside of Europe and Russia, the United States is Finland's largest trading partner, and the total value of U.S. exports to Finland in 2003 was \$2.1 billion, primarily in machinery, telecommunications equipment and parts, aircraft and aircraft parts, computers and software, electronic components, chemicals, medical equipment, and agricultural products. Major Finnish exports include ships and boats, paper products, refined petroleum products, telecommunications equipment and parts, and automobiles.

Finland depends on imports for most of its raw materials, energy, and manufactured products. Its farms are

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small, but most farmers own timber to supplement their income during nongrowing seasons. The nation's main agricultural exports are dairy products, meats, and grains.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 142.2
GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 27,400
GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 2.6
GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 2.4
Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:

Agriculture: 4.3
Industry: 32.8
Services: 62.9

Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:

Private Consumption: 50
Government Consumption: 22
Gross Domestic Investment: 18.0

Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 54.28

Imports: 37.35

% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 4.2

% of Income Received by Richest 10%: 21.6

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
104.4	108.0	109.8	111.6	112.2

Finance

National Currency: Euro (EUR)

Exchange Rate: \$1 = EUR 0.886

Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: —

Central Bank Discount Rate %: 3.5

Total External Debt \$billion: 30

Debt Service Ratio %: —

Balance of Payments \$billion: 10.3

International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 9.5

Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 0.9

Official Development Assistance

Donor ODA \$million: 379

per capita \$: 73

Foreign Direct Investment \$billion: 2.9

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year

Revenues \$billion: 87.03

Expenditures \$billion: 81.62

Budget Surplus \$billion: 5.41

Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 4.3

Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2002) %: 2.8

Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares: 88.5

Irrigation, % of Farms having: 2.9

Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 136

Total Farmland % of land area: 7.2

Livestock: Cattle 000: 977

Sheep 000: 67

Hogs 000: 1,394

Chickens 000: 6,000

Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 53.8

Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 159.9

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 27

Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 0.8

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 8.5

Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 26.3

Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 5

Net Energy Imports % of use: 55.2

Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 16.2

Production kW-hr billion: 71.2

Consumption kW-hr billion: 76.18

Coal Reserves tons billion: —

Production tons million: —

Consumption tons million: 7.3

Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —

Production cubic feet billion: —

Consumption cubic feet billion: 161

Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —

Production barrels 000 per day: —

Consumption barrels 000 per day: 211

Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 37.35

Exports \$billion: 54.28

Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2002): 7.3

Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2002): 5.5

Balance of Trade \$billion: 10.3

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Germany %	16.2	11.8
Sweden %	14.1	9.9
Russia %	11.7	7.5
Netherlands %	6.3	4.8
Denmark %	5.7	—
United Kingdom %	5.3	8.0
France %	4.3	—
United States %	—	8.2

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 78,137

Paved %: 64.5

Automobiles: 2,194,700

Trucks and Buses: 329,700

Railroad: Track Length km: 5,851

Passenger-km billion: 3.3

Freight-km billion: 9.7
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 90
 Total Deadweight Tonnage million: 1
 Airports: 148
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 8.8
 Length of Waterways km: 7,842

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 2.83
 Number of Tourists from million: 5.82
 Tourist Receipts \$billion: 1.44
 Tourist Expenditures \$billion: 1.85

Communications

Telephones million: 2.55
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.13
 Cellular Telephones million: 4.7
 Personal Computers 000: 2.3
 Internet Hosts per million people: 233,404
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 507

ENVIRONMENT

Finland is heavily forested, and the country has taken active measures to protect and conserve its natural wealth. The Nature Conservation Act of 1923 led to the establishment of Finland's first national parks in 1938. By 2004 Finland had 35 national parks, occupying 8,150 sq km (about 3,147 sq mi), or about half of the country's total protected area.

Important environmental legislation was enacted in the 1970s and 1980s. In the 1990s Finnish environmental law was adapted to the requirements of European Union regulations, and a policy statement on the environment was added to the constitution. The Nature Conservation Act of 1996 focused efforts on preserving natural diversity through the protection of varied habitats and native species.

The Ministry of the Environment has jurisdiction over the regulation and protection of the environment. Other agencies playing a role in Finnish environmental policy include the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, the Finnish Forest and Park Service, the Finnish Environment Institute (a research center), and several regional environment centers.

The chief concerns faced by Finnish environmentalists in recent years include air pollution from industrial emissions, acid rain produced by power-plant emissions, pollution of water by industrial wastes and agricultural chemicals, and the threat posed to wildlife by the loss of habitats. The 1995–99 environmental program for Finnish agriculture placed limits on the use of fertilizers to help reduce the leaching of phosphorus and nitrogen from farms into waterways. Chemical pesticides have also been the target of restrictions.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 72.0
 Average Annual Forest Change, 1990-2000, 000 ha: 8
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 8
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 62,610
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 10.33

LIVING CONDITIONS

Finland is a Scandinavian welfare state, so the level of social benefits is high. Social insurance programs include health, pension, and disability payments. In addition, the state provides maternity allowances, children's allowances, child-support payments, and municipal housing allowances. All of these programs account for one-fifth of the nation's GDP and are financed by taxes and employer contributions. Finland's system of payments for maternity and child care is among the most generous in the world.

Traditional homes in Finland were constructed of wood, usually by the owner-occupant. Many of these homes, both in rural areas and cities, have been torn down since World War II and replaced by apartment buildings. Apartments are small—generally two or three rooms with a kitchen. Many Finns own cabins in the forests. Because driving in the snow and ice can be treacherous, the nation has a well-developed rail system, with over 5,800 km of tracks. The sparseness of Finland's population has made cell phones popular, with nearly twice as many cell phones in use as landlines.

Alcoholism is an endemic problem. Although Finland's consumption of alcohol is about average for the EU, its rate of alcoholism is much higher and weekend binge drinking is common.

HEALTH

Finland has a highly developed health-care system, with a network of 265 state-financed medical centers. About \$1,600 per Finn per year is provided by public and private sources for health care. The entire population is covered by medical insurance. In 2004 life expectancy was nearly 75 years for men and nearly 82 years for women. The infant mortality rate was low, at 3.59 per 1,000 live births. A continuing problem is the high mortality rate for men over 25, because of heart disease, alcoholism, and suicide. Finns believe that saunas provide relief from pain and illness and are avid users of saunas for social and family bathing.

Health

Number of Physicians: 16,110
 Number of Dentists: 4,731
 Number of Nurses: 112,637

(continues)

Health (continued)

Number of Pharmacists: 7,755
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 311
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: 7.5
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 3.59
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 6
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 7.0
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 1,631
 HIV Infected % of adults: < 0.1
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 98
 Measles: 96
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 100
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 100

FOOD AND NUTRITION

The Finnish diet is similar to that of other Western nations, consisting of fish and meat, vegetables, and bread and butter. Finns consume a great deal of milk, both as a beverage and in various soured and cultured forms such as cheese and yogurt. It is a common ingredient in soups, puddings, and stews, as well as in bread making. Since the 1950s Finns have come to rely on sausage as a type of convenience food. Because of the high rate of cardiovascular disease in Finland, successful efforts have been made to cut fat consumption by replacing butter with margarine, encouraging the use of low-fat and skim milk, and emphasizing less fatty meats. Finns are obsessive coffee drinkers and have the highest rate of coffee consumption in the world. Coffee is drunk throughout the day and is part of sauna bathing and special occasions. About 12 percent of Finns are obese, with the number equally divided between men and women. About 4.3 percent of Finnish babies are of low birth weight.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 106.3
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 166.9

STATUS OF WOMEN

In 1906 Finland, while still a part of the Russian Empire, became the first country in Europe to grant women the right to vote and the first in the world to permit them to run for office. Almost 10 percent of the members elected to the first Eduskunta (Parliament) the following year were women. Despite this promising beginning, the picture of women's rights in Finland over the ensuing years was mixed, with slow progress toward full equality. The first female government minister in Finland took office in 1926. Four years later the Marriage Act freed wives from the guardianship of their husbands and granted them the

right to their own property. But it was not until 1988 that women were permitted to enter the clergy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church. It was not until 1994 that a woman became speaker of the Eduskunta, and it was not until 2000 that a woman was elected president.

Of the 200 members elected to the Eduskunta in 2003, 75, or 37.5 percent, were women, one of the highest proportions in the world. Eight women received portfolios in the government that was formed after the 2003 elections: ministers for labor, culture, finance, transport and communication, education, culture, foreign trade, and social care. Yet women's average pay was only four-fifths that of men's. Women were still not equally represented in politics and the workplace. In the governmental apparatus, just one-fifth of parliamentary committees were chaired by women, and most provincial governors were men, as were most municipal managers and municipal council chairpersons. In the educational sphere, students' choices of fields of study continued to reflect sex distinctions, with men tending to prefer engineering, manufacturing, construction, and agriculture programs, and women health, welfare, education, services, and humanities.

Still, movement toward full equality between the sexes quickened in recent decades, and this in part reflected a strengthening of legal requirements for equality. The constitution now explicitly stipulates, "Equality of the sexes is promoted in societal activity and working life, especially in the determination of pay and the other terms of employment." This mandate was spelled out in the Act on Equality between Women and Men, which came into effect at the beginning of 1987 and was aimed at improving the status of women and preventing discrimination on the basis of sex, particularly in the workplace. It required the authorities and employers to promote equality and mandated that men and women be provided with equal opportunities for education and professional development, and implementation is monitored by the office of equality ombudsman. The law was amended in 1992 to prohibit discrimination on the basis of pregnancy and parenthood. An amendment adopted in 1995 required that each sex account for at least 40 percent of the members of government committees, advisory boards and similar bodies, and municipal bodies (but not municipal councils).

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 37.5
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.0
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 50.6

WORK

Finland's labor force in 2004 was 2,599,000. Nearly 90 percent of women in their 30s and 91 percent of women

in their 40s are labor-force participants. Unemployment remained high, at over 9 percent. A total of 8 percent of Finns work in agriculture and forestry, 22 percent in industry, 6 percent in construction, 14 percent in commerce, 10 percent in finance, insurance, and business services, 8 percent in transportation and communications, and 32 percent in public services. Per capita gross domestic product was high in 2004, at \$27,400, even though the average Finn enjoys 126 days per year off work, ranking fifth in the world in days off. Finland has undergone a dramatic revolution in high technology. Nokia, one of Finland's major corporations, was known in the 1980s for paper and rubber products but by the 1990s was one of the world's major exporters of cell phones, computers, and telecommunications products.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 2,599,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 48.2
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture and Forestry: 8
 Industry: 22
 Construction: 6
 Commerce: 14
 Finance, Insurance, and Business Services: 10
 Transportation and Communications: 8
 Public Services: 32
 Unemployment %: 9.2

EDUCATION

The constitution guarantees to everyone the right to a basic education free of charge and mandates that all shall have an "equal opportunity to receive other educational services in accordance with their ability and special needs, as well as the opportunity to develop themselves without being prevented by economic hardship." Compulsory basic education is provided to all children between ages seven and 16. After 16 education is voluntary, with students spending two to four years, or more, at an upper secondary or vocational school.

An 1872 act removed secondary schools from ecclesiastical control and placed them under civil authority. It also grouped them under three types: *lyceer* (*lycea*), *realskoler*, and higher schools for girls. The *lyceer* offered both a four-year course leading to technical high school and an eight-year course leading to university.

A hallmark of these reforms was the principle of comprehensiveness, which means that all children attend the same basic school and follow the same curriculum. Under the Basic Education Act, which took effect in 1999, either of Finland's two official languages, Finnish and Swedish, may be used in teaching. Instruction can also occur in Sami or Romani and in sign language. Special groups or schools may be set up to teach students in a language that is not their mother tongue.

Education is free of charge for degree candidates at the some 20 universities and institutions of higher education in Finland (whose students total more than 280,000, 59 percent of them women) as well as at the 29 polytechnics. Students entering a university may study for a bachelor's degree, which can take three or four years, but most individuals are admitted to programs leading to a master's degree, which can take five to six years to complete. Those who wish to continue their studies may seek a doctorate. In many fields, however, they may first take an optional predoctoral licentiate's degree; this typically requires about two years of full-time study.

The financial costs of education are borne by both the state (which funds two-thirds of public education expenditures) and the municipalities (one-third). As it is the right and duty of every citizen to be educated, all municipalities are required by law to provide education of equal standard irrespective of financial capacity.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 100
 Male %: 100
 Female %: 100
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 18.1
 First Level: Primary schools: 4,474
 Teachers: 25,260
 Students: 393,267
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 15.6
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 100.0
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 477
 Teachers: —
 Students: 320,560
 Student-Teacher Ratio: —
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 94.4
 Third Level: Institutions: 21
 Teachers: 17,564
 Students: 283,805
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 85.7
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 6.2

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Funding for scientific and technological research in Finland increased dramatically from 1991 to 2003. In 1991 the nation spent the equivalent of about 1.7 billion euros; that number rose to almost 4.9 billion euros, or \$6.67 billion, in 2003. Business and industry invested the lion's share, 69.5 percent; the remainder was sponsored by the government (10.7 percent) and universities (19.8 percent).

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 5,009
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 3.42
 High-Tech Exports \$billion: 9.14
 Patent Applications by Residents: 3,405

MEDIA

In 2004 Finland had over 1.2 million Internet hosts and over 2.65 million Internet users. Finland's total newspaper circulation per capita (445) ranked third in Europe and third in the world in 2004. The total number of registered periodicals exceeded 2,800, and their overall circulation was 18 million.

The volume of book publishing is enormous, with an annual output in 2000 of over 13,000 titles, most of them in Finnish. The production of titles per 10,000 inhabitants ranked among the highest in Europe. The annual output of Swedish-language titles numbers in the hundreds. Finland has a well-developed network of libraries. As of the late 1990s, book borrowers amounted to roughly half the population, and most libraries provided access to the Internet.

As of 2004 the Finnish mass media were dominated by three major corporations: Sanoma-WSOY, Alma Media Oy, and the state-owned, noncommercial Finnish Broadcasting Company, YLE. National television programming is broadcast on four channels: two public-service channels and two commercial channels supported by advertising. YLE broadcasts nationally (including Swedish-language programming) on TV 1 and TV 2. The two companies with commercial TV broadcasting licenses, MTV Oy and Oy Ruutunelonen Ab, broadcast on the MTV3 channel and channel Nelonen, or channel 4, respectively. In the late 1990s Finland had five nationwide radio stations, four public service and one commercial. There were approximately 60 local radio stations, including about a dozen commercial stations in the Helsinki area. YLE dominates radio broadcasting and in 1989 launched a weekly five-minute broadcast of Finnish and international news in Latin.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 55
 Total Circulation 000: 2,304
 Circulation per 1,000: 445
 Books Published: 13,173
 Periodicals: 5,711
 Radio Receivers 000: 7,700
 per 1,000: 1,497
 Television sets 000: 3,200
 per 1,000: 622

CULTURE

A prominent feature of Finnish cultural life is the hundreds of festivals held around the country, including theatrical and musical presentations, among them the well-known Savonlinna Opera Festival. Artistic and cultural activities such as theater, dance, cinema, and music benefit from regular state subsidies, which helps explain why there are almost

60 permanent theaters in such a small country. Tickets are consequently relatively inexpensive, and it is said that virtually every other Finn attends the theater at least once a year. National theatrical arts institutions of note include the National Opera, the National Theater, the TTT Theater in Tampere, and the Svenska Teatern (Swedish Theater) in Helsinki. Film production has been averaging about a dozen or so movies annually in recent years.

Finland has a rich musical tradition. Roughly 40,000 Finns belong to a professional or amateur music association, and choirs are especially popular. The country has some 30 subsidized symphony and chamber orchestras, drawing a million people a year, a large figure for a country with a total population of some five million. Finland's most famous composer was Jean Sibelius.

Several ministries provide support to cultural activities, but most funding comes from local authorities and from the Ministry of Education, which is the state body with the chief responsibility for promoting and developing culture. The ministry oversees the Arts Council of Finland, which includes the Central Arts Council, a provider of project grants, as well as nine separate councils that allocate artist grants. There also exist more than a dozen regional arts councils that promote both professional and amateur arts.

Finland's classic national epic is the *Kalevala*, which has had a major impact on the nation's culture and fine arts. In 1939 a Finn, Frans Eemil Sillanpää, won the Nobel Prize for Literature.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 461
 Volumes: 31,700,000
 Registered borrowers: 2,084,354
 Museums Number: 572
 Annual Attendance: 2,897,000
 Cinema Gross Receipts national currency million: 217
 Number of Cinemas: 232
 Seating Capacity: 55,800
 Annual Attendance: 7,000,000

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

The *Kalevala* is important not only to Finnish literature but to the nation's folklore history as well. The folk tales of the epic were first collected and published by Elias Lönnrot in 1835, and these tales have formed the bases of musical compositions by such composers as Jean Sibelius as well as sculptures and paintings, especially those of Akseli Gallen-Kallela.

Of great significance is the Finnish creation myth. The hero in the creation of the world, Väinämöinen, is said to have entered the primeval waters and created the world from the broken pieces of an eagle's egg. Variations of this

story explain the creation of the ancient seabed and the freeing of the sun and moon from the stomach of a fish.

Finnish folktales tend to be melancholy and suffused with mystery, in large part because they originated in dense forests where wildlife such as wolves posed danger. Some folklore has to do with Midsummer night. For example, a person looking for wealth is told to sit that night on top of a house whose roof had been replaced three times; there he is to look for fires over a swamp or lake. Also on Midsummer night, the flowering of a fern was said to make a person invisible.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Finns are great readers. The literacy rate in Finland is among the highest in the world, and for a nation with a relatively small population it produces an enormous number of newspapers, periodicals, and books. Libraries are used extensively. Additionally, Finns enjoy the theater, the opera, classical music, soccer, and relaxing in the sauna; many social gatherings take place not in a living room but in the sauna, where friends can relax with a drink or the ever-present coffee.

ETIQUETTE

Finns are known for being reserved, cautious, and silent, even to the point of being taciturn. Small talk tends not to be important, and loud conversation is frowned upon in public, although Finns are more outgoing with close friends and family in the privacy of their homes, including the sauna. Public formality is maintained through the use of professional titles when appropriate, the second-person plural with those who are not family and close friends, and greetings that consist of a firm handshake and a nod of the head rather than embracing or kissing.

FAMILY LIFE

Family life in modern Finland, particularly in the cities, follows the Western model, with the nuclear family being the norm. Family size has dropped, and the age of first birth for women has risen to over 27, consistent with women entering the workforce and government. Traditionally, though, mates were nearly always chosen from the same village, parish, or town, with joint families having the same background and status. Thus, the founding couple's male children, along with their wives, would continue to live on the same farm together in a unit that often comprised 20 to 25 people. Today more couples are living together before marriage, though these arrangements are generally con-

sidered to be "trial marriages." Child rearing in Finland places great emphasis on perseverance, personal autonomy, and respect for the privacy of others.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Finns wear Western-style clothing. At work or for formal occasions men wear suits, and both sexes wear casual clothing such as jeans for informal occasions. Traditional costumes for men include a full-sleeved white shirt with a stiff collar and a colorful waistcoat, for women a long, gathered skirt, often black with a red border, a blouse, a vest, and a cap.

SPORTS

Finns were historically accomplished long-distance runners. One national hero is Paavo Nurmi, who won nine Olympic gold medals as a runner in the 1920, 1924, and 1928 Olympics. Undoubtedly, though, skiing is the quintessential Finnish sport, especially since skiing was always important as a mode of transportation. Finland claims to have invented skiing, and 3,700-year-old skis have been found in the country. There are over 200 ski jumps in Finland, which regularly makes a good showing at the Winter Olympics. In 2002 the Finnish skier Samppa Lajunen won three gold medals. Hockey, too, is a favorite winter sport, and baseball is popular in the summer.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1946** Marshall Carl Gustav von Mannerheim retires as president; Prime Minister Julio Paasikivi is named president, and Mauno Pekkala becomes prime minister.
- 1948** Agreement of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance is signed with the Soviet Union; Finland cedes part of eastern Karelia to Soviet Union and agrees to pay war reparations. Karl Fagerholm forms first Social Democratic ministry.
- 1950** Urho Kekkonen heads Agrarian League government.
- 1953** Sakari Tuomioja heads no-party government.
- 1954** Ralf Törngren of Swedish People's Party heads brief government, followed by Urho Kekkonen, who becomes prime minister for the second time.
- 1955** Finland joins the United Nations and the Nordic Council.
- 1956** Karl Fagerholm heads his second government; Urho Kekkonen is president.
- 1957** Vaino Sukselainen heads the government, followed by Rainer von Fieandt.

- 1958** Raino Kuuskoski forms a no-party government but yields to Karl Fagerholm's third government.
- 1959** Vaino Sukselainen forms his second government.
- 1961** Martti Miettunen forms his first government. Finland joins the European Free Trade Association.
- 1962** Ahti Karjalainen forms his first government.
- 1963** Reino Lehto forms a no-party government.
- 1964** Johannes Virolainen forms a Center Party government.
- 1966** Rafael Paasio heads a Finnish Social Democratic government.
- 1968** Mauno Koivisto heads a Finnish Social Democratic government.
- 1970** Teuvo Aura heads a brief no-party government but is replaced by Ahti Karjalainen's second government.
- 1971** Teuvo Aura heads his second no-party government.
- 1972** Rafael Paasio heads a brief Social Democratic government but yields to Kalevi Sorsa of the same party.
- 1975** Keijo Liinamaa heads a brief government but is replaced by Martti Miettunen's second government. Finland hosts the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe.
- 1977** Kalevi Sorsa heads his second government.
- 1979** Mauno Koivisto heads his second government.
- 1981** Urho Kekkonen dies. Mauno Koivisto is elected president.
- 1982** Kalevi Sorsa heads his third government. Mauno Koivisto becomes president.
- 1987** Finland's first conservative-led government takes office under Harri Holkeri as prime minister.
- 1991** Esko Aho of the Center Party forms a center-right coalition government.
- 1994** Martti Ahtisaari is elected president.
- 1995** Finland becomes a member of the European Union. Social Democrat Paavo Lipponen forms a coalition government.
- 1999** Paavo Lipponen forms his second coalition government.
- 2000** Social Democratic Party-member Tarja Halonen becomes Finland's first female president.
- 2002** The euro replaces the local markka. The Green Party withdraws from the government coalition after parliament approves the construction of the nation's fifth nuclear reactor.
- 2003** Anneli Jäätteenmäki's Center Party defeats Lipponen's Social Democrats in the general election, forming a new coalition with the Social Democrats and the Swedish People's Party. Prime Minister Jäätteenmäki resigns amid charges that she had illegally obtained secret documents about the war in Iraq while she was the opposi-

tion leader; she was later acquitted. Matti Vanhanen becomes prime minister.

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OFFICIAL PUBLICATIONS

- Finland.** *Annual Statistics of Agriculture: Economic Survey* (annual); *Population Census 2000*; *Statistical Yearbook of Finland*

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Embassy of Finland (Washington, D.C.)
<http://www.finland.org/en>
- Statistics Finland
http://www.stat.fi/index_en.html

FRANCE

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

French Republic (République Française)

ABBREVIATION

FR

CAPITAL

Paris

HEAD OF STATE

President Jacques Chirac (from 1995)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Dominique de Villepin (from 2005)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Parliamentary democracy

POPULATION

60,656,178 (2005)

AREA

547,030 sq km (211,208 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Celtic and Latin

LANGUAGE

French

RELIGION

Roman Catholicism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Euro

NATIONAL FLAG

Tricolor of blue, white, and red vertical stripes

NATIONAL EMBLEM

France does not have an official coat of arms. The unofficial emblem consists of a dark blue oval disk displaying the golden-bound rods and ax of the Roman fasces. Golden oak and olive branches surround the figure. A gold band with blue letters carries the national motto, Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité. Framing the design is the massive gold collar of the Legion of Honor, with the blue, gold, and white grand cross of the order suspended below.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“La Marseillaise”

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year’s Day), May 1 (Labor Day), May 8 (World War II Armistice Day), July 14 (Bastille Day), November 11 (World War I Armistice Day), all major Christian festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

August 843

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

October 4, 1958

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

France is the largest country in Western Europe, with an area (including the island of Corsica) of 547,030 sq km (211,208 sq mi). It extends 962 km (598 mi) north to south and 950 km (560 mi) east to west. Its total boundary length of 2,889 km (1,795 mi) is shared with seven countries: Belgium, Luxembourg, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Andorra, and Spain. France’s maritime boundaries lie along the Mediterranean Sea; the Bay of Biscay and the Atlantic Ocean, including islands; and the North Sea and English Channel.

The capital is Paris, on both banks of the Seine River shortly below its junction with the Marne River. It is

the largest city in France and the eighth-largest city in Europe. Paris is not only the administrative and political capital but also the country’s intellectual and artistic center.

Shaped in the form of a hexagon, France is distinguished topographically by clear-cut features and divisions. The present landscape is dominated by four Hercynian massifs, composed of granite, sandstone, or shale. Between the massifs lie undulating floors of sedimentary formation linked to each other by a series of lowland corridors. Beyond them, to the southeast and southwest, rise the high walls of mountain ranges—the Jura, the Alps, and the Pyrenees—that form the frontiers of France.

France



Of the Hercynian massifs, the first, the Ardennes Plateau, occupying 1,295 sq km (500 sq mi), is the western tip of a block that is part of the Middle Rhine uplands of Germany and has an elevation of 456 m (1,500 ft). The Vosges, in the south, rises to rounded granite summits more than 1,219 m (4,000 ft) high. The Ardennes and the Vosges enclose the Paris Basin on its eastern side, separating it from the Alsace Plain. The Armorican Massif, which protects the Paris Basin to the west, covers 64,767 sq km (25,000 sq mi) and thrusts out into the Atlantic in two rocky promontories, Brittany and the Cotentin Peninsula. Its hills run east to west in a series of ridges that seldom exceed 366 m (1,200 ft). Finally, there is the Central Massif, which covers 77,720 sq km (30,000 sq mi) and has a summit that rises to 1,524 m (5,000 ft) or more.

The Pyrenees, whose uplift occurred before that of the Alps, form a barrier that rises more than 3,034 m (10,000 ft) and more or less seals off the border with Spain. From their foothills stretches eastward to the Alps the southern fringe of France—the coastal plain between the Central Massif and the sea. The plains are broken by chains of low hills.

The French Alps represent only a small area of the mountain chain; nonetheless, they occupy 38,860 sq km (15,000 sq mi) of French territory and include the highest peak in Europe, Mont Blanc (4,807 m; 15,767 ft). The Jura Mountains rise to 1,524 m (5,000 ft) along the border, completing the line of natural fortification.

The drainage system of France is based on five major rivers: the Seine, Loire, Garonne, Rhône, and Rhine. The Nord is the terminal point of the lowlands bordering the English Channel, including coastal Flanders and the Walloon areas. The Paris Basin is the cradle of France. At the center of the basin lies Paris, the heart of French culture and history. The basin includes the Île-de-France, parts of Orleans, Upper Normandy, and Picardy. The eastern region comprises Lorraine, the Vosges Mountains, and Alsace, including the French Rhineland. Burgundy and the Upper Rhine encompass the corridor between Alsace and central France. A series of ridges project north and northeast from the Central Massif, increasing in elevation toward the south and reaching more than 914 m (3,000 ft) in the star-shaped cluster of the mountains of Beaujolais. South of Dijon is the Alps region with its Mediterranean influences. The area is enclosed on the east by the Alps, which are represented by the massifs of Belledune and Pelvoux, the latter rising to over 3,657 m (12,000 ft).

The Mediterranean region lies on the border with Spain and Italy and consists of Languedoc and Provence. Marseilles and Toulon provide gateways to the Mediterranean, and the island of Corsica exhibits the same features as Provence though they are separated by 161 km (100 mi) of water. The island rises to 2,710 m (8,990 ft) at Mont

Cinto and possesses a coastal strip only on its eastern side. Languedoc, on the western bank of the Rhône, is rocky and mountainous. Aquitaine covers the basins of the Garonne and the Adour. The center is occupied by the wide Garonne Plain, and the region is bordered on the west by the Bay of Biscay. The Central Massif is a triangular area from which many of the nations' rivers flow. Although it is called central, it is situated almost entirely in the southern half of the country, and its outer edge is less than 80 km (50 mi) from the Mediterranean. While the massif divides northern and southern France, the Loire Valley and the Atlantic region reunite them. This area makes up the central section of the Atlantic seaboard between the Loire and the Gironde. Amorica comprises Brittany and Lower Normandy. Eastern Lower Normandy is geologically part of the Paris Basin, but southwest of Caen the region is hilly and therefore known as the "Norman Switzerland." Extending far out into the English Channel is the Cotentin Peninsula, at the tip of which lies Cherbourg. To the south of Normandy is Celtic Brittany, stronghold of the Bretons. Brittany remains one of the few provinces of France where the rural areas are still overpopulated.

Geography

Area sq km: 547,030; sq mi 211,208

World Rank: 47th

Land Boundaries, km: Andorra 56.6; Belgium 620; Germany 451; Italy 488; Luxembourg 73; Monaco 4.4; Spain 623; Switzerland 573

Coastline, km: 3,427

Elevation Extremes meters:

Lowest: Rhone River delta -2

Highest: Mont Blanc 4,807

Land Use %

Arable Land: 33.5

Permanent Crops: 2.1

Forest: 27.9

Other: 36.5

Population of Principal Cities (2004 est.)

Bordeaux	229,500
Grenoble	157,900
Le Havre	186,700
Lille	222,400
Lyon	468,300
Marseille	795,600
Montpellier	244,700
Nantes	276,200
Nice	339,000
Nimes	133,607
Paris	2,142,800
Rennes	209,100
Saint-Étienne	177,300
Strasbourg	273,100
Toulon	168,200
Toulouse	426,700

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

The three main divisions of European climate—maritime, continental, and Mediterranean—are all found in France. The Atlantic influence brings the country the benefits of the warm waters of the North Atlantic drift. The seasons are marked by mild onsets, frequent fine rain or drizzle, and westerly winds. The continental climate covers eastern France. Its features are a wide seasonal range of temperatures, with cold winters, 80 to 100 days of frost, long periods of snow cover, warm summers with thundershowers, and calm autumns. The Mediterranean influence extends only a short distance northward from the coast. It is characterized by absence of clouds, high evaporation rates, infrequent but heavy rains between seasons, and strong winds of which the cold Mistral blowing in from the north is best known.

France receives an average of 450 billion cu m (15,891 trillion cu ft) of precipitation every year as either rain or snow. Coastal areas receive the most in autumn and winter, while inland areas receive the maximum amounts in summer and autumn. The amount of snowfall varies with elevation. The amount of snowfall may rise as high as 47 m (154 ft) on the summit of Mont Blanc.

In the summer southern France's temperature will average 21°C (70°F), and the north's is 18°C (65°F). In winter the extreme southern regions' average temperature is 6°C (42°F), but the rest of the nation has temperatures close to freezing.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature

Paris: 50°F

Nice: 57°F

Average Rainfall

Paris and Marseille: 22 in

Bordeaux and Lyon: 35 in

Brittany and the northern coast: 44 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Climate and elevation have a major impact on the flora of France. Alpine pastures that provide grazing for sheep and cattle can be found on mountains slopes. At lower elevations grow coniferous forests of pine, fir, spruce, and larch. Farther down are deciduous forests of chestnut, beech, and oak. Along the Mediterranean coast, where summers are hot and dry, can be found expanses of maquis, or evergreen shrub. Also along the coast are olive, cork oak, and Aleppo pine trees.

France provides habitat for various species of deer and foxes, and in remote forest areas can be found red deer, roe deer, and wild boar. In the Alps and the Pyrenees lives a rare type of goat called the chamois, and brown bear and lynx inhabit the Pyrenees. Smaller mam-

mals include otters, beavers, and badgers. Many species of migratory birds, including ducks, geese, and thrushes, winter in France. Exotic bird species along the Mediterranean coast include flamingos, bee-eaters, egrets, herons, and black-winged stilts. France has few reptiles and only one species of poisonous snake, the adder.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 60,656,178

World Rank: 20th

Density per sq km: 108.6

% of annual growth (1999-2003): 0.5

Male %: 48.7

Female %: 51.3

Urban %: 75.9

Age Distribution %: 0-14: 18.5

15-64: 65.1

65 and over: 16.4

Population 2025: 63,085,000

Birth Rate per 1,000: 12.34

Death Rate per 1,000: 9.06

Rate of Natural Increase %: 0.3

Total Fertility Rate: 1.85

Expectation of Life (years): Males 75.8

Females 83.27

Marriage Rate per 1,000: 4.7

Divorce Rate per 1,000: 1.9

Average Size of Households: 2.6

Induced Abortions: 163,985

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Until France acquired a sizable minority community in the 20th century, it was an ethnically homogeneous country, with all of its inhabitants of Celtic and Roman stock.

Recent estimates put the number of foreigners living and working in France at about three to four million, or about 6 percent of the population. Estimates of the number who have become naturalized French citizens range from 1.3 to 2.4 million. As part of its perceived imperial obligations, France opened its doors to migration from its colonial and former colonial possessions. The largest numbers came from Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, French Indochina, and France's West African colonies. In addition, labor shortages in the 1950s and 1960s led the nation to encourage non-European immigration. By the 1970s efforts were initiated to stem the flow of immigrants. Successive laws were passed to tighten immigration. The major minority groups in France include the Basques, Arab North Africans, West Africans, and Indo-chinese. The increase in the number of non-European aliens has led to anti-immigrant sentiment and the rise of right-wing, anti-immigrant parties, as well as ethnic violence in some urban areas.

LANGUAGES

French is the official and national language spoken by virtually everyone within French borders. It is also an official language in Francophone Africa and in French dependencies and territories overseas. While it has lost its preeminence in international diplomacy since World War II, it remains a popular third language. There are a number of regional dialects within the nation that are rapidly disappearing. These include Provençal, Breton, Alsatian, Corsican, Catalan, Basque, and Flemish. The influx of English words into the French language has led to a hybrid dialect known as Franglais. This has become a major concern for Francophiles, and efforts have been taken to discourage the use of Franglais and promote the French language.

RELIGIONS

France was Christianized by the second century, and a strong Christian community had been established in Lyons by 150 C.E. The mass baptism of the Frankish king Clovis with his warriors in 496 established the Christian faith as the national creed. The Roman Catholic Church dominated society throughout the Middle Ages, and France was part of the schism that resulted in two rival popes, one at Avignon and the other at Rome. France was less affected by the Reformation than many other nations of Europe, but the movement led to the establishment of some 2,000 Protestant Huguenot churches. Religious conflict was widespread until the Edict of Nantes granted some degree of religious freedom in 1598. The revocation of the edict by Louis XIV in 1685 led to a new wave of persecution and the exile of thousands of non-Catholics. Protestants remained a persecuted minority until the French Revolution. Church-state relations were not resolved until the constitution of 1905, which reaffirmed the secular nature of the government. The principle of secularism is not absolute, and the government has some control over the appointment of clergy. Also, all clergy are considered civil servants and receive their pay from the state.

Roman Catholics still make up some 86 percent of the population, although their number has been in decline since World War II. Protestants make up about 2 percent of the population and Jews 1 percent. Most Protestants live in Alsace and the Rhône Valley and are members of the Lutheran Church. Islam is the fastest-growing religion in France, with about five million adherents thanks to the recent waves of immigrants from North Africa. This has led to conflict over the wearing of religious garb in public and especially in the otherwise secular school systems.

Religious Affiliations

Roman Catholic	51,861,000
Protestant	1,213,000
Muslim	4,549,000
Jewish	607,000
Unaffiliated	2,426,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Little is known of the present territory of France before its conquest by Julius Caesar in 58–51 B.C.E. The land was inhabited by a Celtic tribe known as the Gauls. Roman rule lasted for five centuries. Roads and cities were built, and Latin superseded the Celtic language. Early in the fifth century Teutonic invaders, including the Visigoths, the Burgundians, and the Franks, conquered regions of Gaul.

The first ruler who took upon himself the title of King of the Franks was Clovis, who in 486 routed the forces of the last Roman governors and established an empire that extended into western Germany. A century of warfare and anarchy followed his death and was brought to an end by Charles Martel, who defeated the Saracens at Tours in 732 and prevented an Islamic invasion of Western Europe, and Charlemagne (768–814), who was crowned emperor of the West by the pope in 800. After his death, Charlemagne's Carolingian Empire broke apart. However, his brother's grandson Hugh Capet (987–96) established the royal line that would rule France for the next 800 years.

By the ninth century feudalism was well established in France, and the Capetians had only nominal hegemony over their territories. Some areas, such as the Duchy of Brittany, were practically independent kingdoms. For several centuries the kings of France would have to fight to retain power over these feudal holdings and also battle the English. By the 12th century, the English controlled Normandy, Brittany, Anjou, and Aquitaine. However, as the power of the French kings expanded, that of the feudal lords and the English waned. The reign of Philip the Fair marked the apogee of the early Capetian power. His emissaries arrested Pope Boniface VIII and removed the seat of the papacy to Avignon, where the popes resided until 1378.

Philip the Fair had no heirs, and the throne passed to his nephew, Philip VI, who became the first of the Valois kings. Philip's claim to the throne was challenged by Edward III of England and resulted in the Hundred Years' War (1337–1453). Although the English won most of the early battles, led by Joan of Arc and Bertrand du Guesclin, the French were able to ultimately defeat them during the reign of Charles VII, and by his death in 1461 the English had been driven from most of France.

Following the expulsion of the English, the French kings were able to consolidate their power and subju-

gate the feudal lords. Meanwhile, the rise of Protestantism led to a new civil conflict between the Protestant, or Huguenot, groups and the established Catholics. In 1572 thousands of Protestants were slaughtered in the Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre. However, following the death of Henry III, the Protestant Henry of Navarre ascended the throne as the first ruler of the House of Bourbon. Although he converted to Catholicism in order to consolidate his power, in 1598, he signed the Edict of Nantes, which guaranteed religious freedom for Huguenots. Henry restored peace and stability and embarked upon a course of geographical exploration in the New World.

His successor, Louis XIII, demolished the power of the Protestants at home and the Hapsburgs abroad through the Thirty Years' War. He was succeeded by his son Louis XIV, who established France as the dominant power on the Continent. Louis reigned for 54 years and transformed France into a centralized absolute monarchy. Known as the Sun King, Louis built the great palace at Versailles, and his reign was the golden age of French culture. The French Enlightenment produced such luminaries as Voltaire, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and Diderot, but it also produced a class that questioned the absolutism of the monarchy.

The signal for the fall of the *ancien régime* was the summoning of the Estates General in 1789 by Louis XVI in an effort to impose new taxes to restore the treasury. Meeting separately, the third estate, the Commons, proclaimed itself the National Assembly and overcame royal opposition. This initiated the French Revolution. In 1791 the National Assembly forced Louis to accept a new constitution. Austria declared war on France in an effort to restore the monarchy and in response the First French Republic was declared. Louis was tried and executed for treason. France then underwent the "Reign of Terror" as radicals, known as Jacobins, sought to eradicate all vestiges of the aristocracy. Although the revolution was launched with the goals of liberty and equality, France soon reverted to totalitarianism.

In 1799 Napoleon Bonaparte established a consulate with himself as first consul. After a series of military victories, Napoleon had himself crowned emperor in 1804. Although he was able to conquer most of Europe, with the notable exception of Great Britain, the emperor's ill-fated invasion of Russia and insurgencies in Spain and Portugal led to his downfall. By 1814 the Allied powers had conquered Paris and restored the Bourbon monarchy. Napoleon was forced into exile, only to return in an attempt to reclaim the throne. Allied forces under the Duke of Wellington defeated Napoleon at the Battle of Waterloo in 1815, and the former emperor was forced into exile on the island of Saint Helena.

From 1815 until 1848 France was ruled by three kings, the last of whom was Louis-Philippe of the House

of Orleans, who attempted to rule as a citizen-king. After the fall of Louis-Philippe the Second Republic was established, with Louis Napoleon, nephew of Napoleon I, as its president. Louis engineered a coup in 1852 and proclaimed himself Napoleon III. His reign was known as the Second Empire (1852–71). He embarked on an aggressive foreign policy that led to conflict with Prussia and his ultimate defeat in the Franco-Prussian War (1870–71). As a result of the war, France lost Alsace and Lorraine, and Napoleon III was overthrown. A new government, the Third Republic, was established.

The republic's constitution, adopted in 1875, granted freedoms of press, speech, and religion and established a weak presidency and a strong national legislature. Much of World War I (1914–18) was fought on French soil, and although the nation was devastated by the conflict, it was able to regain Alsace and Lorraine. The postwar years were marked by economic depression, political instability, and social unrest. France was unable to counter German aggression following the rise of Adolf Hitler, and when the German dictator invaded Poland in 1939, France joined with Great Britain in declaring war.

At the onset of the war French military strategy relied on the supposedly impregnable Maginot Line of fortresses between France and Germany. However, the German army was able to easily defeat French forces and Marshall Philippe Pétain, an aged hero of World War I, hastily formed a government and sued for peace. With the exception of a small zone near Vichy, France was placed under German control, and the Third Republic ended. Opposition to the Germans coalesced around the underground resistance within France and the Free French Forces of General Charles de Gaulle. In the wake of the liberation of Paris in 1944, de Gaulle formed a provisional government. In 1946 the Fourth Republic was proclaimed under a new constitution, which unfortunately reproduced most of the weaknesses of the Third Republic.

In 1953 de Gaulle retired from public life as the nation struggled through a series of weak and rapidly changing governments. A year later France was defeated at the Battle of Dien Bien Phu and was forced to withdraw from its colonies in Indochina.

France was one of the forces behind the drive for economic and political integration in Europe and in 1957 was one of the founding members of the European Economic Community, which in 1965 became the European Community. However, disagreements with the United States led to the withdrawal of France from the integrated command structure of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) in 1966.

In response to a military insurrection in Algeria in 1958, de Gaulle was invited to form a government. He proposed a new constitution, which, after its adoption, established the Fifth Republic. Algeria was granted in-

dependence in 1962. As president, de Gaulle endeavored to maintain the status of France as a great power in an era of declining national resources. In 1968 there were widespread student protests, but de Gaulle was reelected president. However, the following year, he resigned after voters rejected his proposed constitutional amendments. He was replaced by Georges Pompidou. De Gaulle died in 1970.

After Pompidou died in office in 1974, he was replaced by Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, who served until 1981. The election of François Mitterrand marked the end of two decades of rule by the conservative Gaullist parties. Mitterrand's tenure as president was marked by severe economic crises and by deepening integration into the European Union. In 1985, French special forces sank the Greenpeace ship *The Rainbow Warrior* in Auckland, New Zealand, creating a diplomatic crisis. After his reelection in 1988, Mitterrand presided over the nation as it faced the reunification of Germany and fought alongside the United States and Great Britain in the Persian Gulf War.

The election of Jacques Chirac in 1995 returned the Gaullists to power. Chirac adopted a much more conciliatory approach toward the United States. He also continued on the path of integration, and in 1999 France was one of the first nations to join the European Monetary Union. Chirac was reelected in May 2002 in a landslide victory against the far-right National Front leader Jean-Marie Le Pen. In legislative elections that year, the center-right coalition won a landslide victory, with the National Front failing to win a seat in parliament. In the years after his reelection, Chirac dealt with a variety of issues, including leading the opposition to the U.S.-led war in Iraq, worker unrest over privatization and increased contributions to pension funds, efforts to devolve taxing and other powers to local areas, separatist violence in Corsica, and a 2003 heat wave that killed 11,000 people. In late 2005 his government was confronted with urban riots by immigrant youth followed by student protests in early 2006.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS (FIFTH REPUBLIC)

1959–69	Charles de Gaulle
1969–74	Georges Pompidou
1974–81	Valéry Giscard d'Estaing
1981–95	François Mitterrand
1995–	Jacques Chirac

CONSTITUTION

The Fifth Republic is governed by the constitution passed on September 28, 1958. It replaced the constitution of the Fourth Republic, under which France had notoriously un-

stable governments. The new constitution was very much the work of one man, Charles de Gaulle, and one event, the Algerian crisis. The constitution replaces the old weak central government with a strong executive, which suited de Gaulle's style. It encompasses the concept of stewardship, by which the president does not hold authority strictly as the servant of the people, because his power embodies the historical fact of French statehood, the grandeur of the nation, and the totality of its existence. Hence, the president must be sufficiently removed from politics to make decisions that are in the best interests of the nation but which may run counter to public opinion. The constitution of the Fifth Republic is unique in French history in both the power it delegates to the executive and the power it retracts from the legislature. Under its terms the president can dismiss parliament, call for early elections, and issue decrees that carry the weight of law.

Under the constitution, the president is head of state, commander in chief of the military, and presiding officer of the Council of Ministers. The French president's power is broadly divided into three sectors: a "reserved" sector involving foreign affairs and security matters in which the head of state is directly involved; a "delegated" area in which technical matters are assigned to bureaucrats; and a "supervisory" part in which the president intervenes only when necessary.

Presidents are elected through either an absolute majority on the first ballot or, failing that, a second runoff ballot cast 14 days later in which only a simple majority is needed. In the runoff election only the top two candidates from the first election may run. There is no limit to the number of seven-year terms a president may serve.

The office of the prime minister has been described alternatively as that of a power broker, a vice president, and a chief of staff. The position has five major tasks: 1) to initiate policy, 2) to coordinate the government's activities, 3) to provide a liaison between the government and the legislature, 4) to maintain a governing coalition or party, and 5) to resolve conflicts between the government and the legislature. Normally the president and prime minister have a close working relationship, but matters become strained when the two figures are from different political parties, a situation known as "cohabitation."

Although it is responsible to the legislature, the government is not a part of it. When a government is chosen, its members must resign from the legislature if they are members. However, the government does have supremacy over the conduct of legislative business. For instance, if the two houses of the parliament are unable to agree on an act, the government may intervene to secure a compromise.

Two other bodies play a monitory role in the Fifth Republic: the Council of State and the Constitutional Council. The Council of State is a remnant of the prerevolutionary Conseil du Roi. Although it is not mentioned

in the constitution, it has an administrative function to advise the government on all legislation, and it provides constitutional interpretations. The Constitutional Council advises the president, cabinet, and legislature on matters of law. This council also supervises elections.

PARLIAMENT

In the Fifth Republic the parliament is a bicameral body made up of the *Assemblée Nationale* (National Assembly) and the *Sénat* (Senate). The National Assembly consists of 577 seats, and the Senate of 321, although plans are to raise that number to 346 by 2010. The National Assembly is the lower house but maintains a slight edge in legislative power. If there is disagreement between the two houses and the disagreement persists for more than two formal readings and if a joint committee convened to resolve the dispute fails, the National Assembly can rule definitively.

The constitution gives the parliament the power to force the government to resign and to declare war. The parliament also has sole legislative power. Members of either house also enjoy parliamentary immunity, and legal action can be taken only after they have left office or if their immunity is stripped by the legislature.

Parliament meets for two short sessions during the year. The first begins on October 2, lasts 80 days, and is concerned mainly with budgetary matters. The second session begins on April 2 and is principally involved with legislation. Special sessions may be convened by the president, prime minister, or a majority of parliament.

On the opening of the October session, each chamber elects its bureau, which provides leadership for the session. In the National Assembly, the bureau consists of a president, six vice presidents, 12 secretaries, and three *questeurs*. In the Senate, there is a president, four vice-presidents, eight secretaries, and three *questeurs*. The presidents do not have the stature of their counterparts in the United States or Great Britain. The secretaries supervise records and tally votes, and the *questeurs* are responsible for financial and administrative matters. The bureau is responsible for the conduct of business, including quorum and discipline.

Bills may be introduced in either house, although finance bills must be submitted to the National Assembly. All bills must go through the appropriate committees. There are six standing committees. Four are specialized committees consisting of a maximum of 61 members each, dealing with defense, foreign affairs, finance, law, and administration. The remaining two committees, consisting of a maximum of 121 members each, deal with economic affairs and cultural and social affairs.

Members of the National Assembly are elected for five-year terms, with all seats being filled at the same time through direct majoritarian election. Senators are elected for nine-

year terms, and one-third of the body stands for reelection every three years. They are elected by local electoral colleges composed of mayors, municipal and departmental councilors, and deputies of the department. There are also 12 senators who represent French citizens living overseas and who are nominated by an official advisory committee.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Political parties in France run the gamut of ideologies. There are three extreme Communist parties, although these are generally considered minor parties with limited impact. Three left-of-center parties include the *Parti Radical de Gauche* (Left Radical Party), the *Parti Communiste Français* (French Communist Party), and the *Parti Socialiste*, the major Socialist Party. On the political right are the *Union pour la Démocratie Française*, or Union for French Democracy, and the *Union pour un Mouvement Populaire* (UMP), or Union for a Popular Movement, a major party whose membership includes President Jacques Chirac and Prime Minister Jean-Pierre Raffarin. In the elections of 2004 the UMP made the strongest showing, winning 156 seats in the Senate and 355 seats in the National Assembly. The next strongest party showing was that of the Socialist Party, which won 97 seats in the Senate and 140 seats in the National Assembly. In addition to these major parties, there are numerous minor parties, including environmental parties and parties that oppose integration with the rest of Europe.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

With 36,782 communes as of 2004, France has more units of local government than any of the other members of the European Union, but only 2 percent of these communes have a population of over 2,000, while 90 percent have fewer than 10,000. These territorial divisions do not reflect demographic or economic realities but rather traditional boundaries.

The lowest level of local government is the commune, dating from 1789 and based on the parish system of the old regime. At the next level are 100 departments. Above the departments are 22 regions. Successive governments have tried to limit and reduce the number of governments but to no avail.

National power over the localities is exercised by the Ministry of the Interior and the Council of State. Local governments are funded by a complex and intricate system of finance by which localities receive loans and subsidies and aid from Paris for particular joint projects, such as urban integration.

In local politics the mayor has substantial power, and the municipal council is weak and has limited pow-

ers. This trend is reinforced by the fact that many mayors also hold national positions in parliament or government. Municipalities with populations over 100,000 enjoy a special privileged status and have more autonomy than smaller communities. They have greater control over issues of finance, planning, and zoning.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The distinctive characteristic of the French judicial system is its division into two jurisdictions: the civil and criminal and the administrative. Civil cases are heard in 454 courts of first instance or, in cases of substantial sums, in courts of great instance, which also have an appellate function. Criminal law is dispensed in one of three sets of courts, depending on the gravity of the offense. Police courts function in almost all localities and deal with minor infractions. More serious matters are brought before correctional courts. Finally, major felonies and crimes are tried at periodic settings of the assize courts, which have three judges and nine jurors. (The other courts do not utilize juries.) French judges are career civil servants.

French law allows only one appeal in civil and criminal cases. In civil cases, the appeals go to one of 27 regional appeals courts. Criminal cases also go to an appeals court, but there is no effective appeal possible from an assize court. The highest court of the land is the Court of Cassation, which has one criminal and five civil chambers. The entire judiciary is overseen by the Superior Council of the Judiciary, which reports to the president and government.

The administrative court system is much simpler than the civil and criminal systems and involves those cases of abuse of official power or of civil servants' failing to perform their duties and therefore harming private interests. The highest administrative tribunal is the Council of State, which hears appeals from the administrative tribunals.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Although France does not have a bill of rights, all political and civil liberties are secured by legal guarantees. Two institutions serve as watchdogs of these rights: the Constitutional Council and the Council of State. Both of these institutions investigate and condemn illegal administrative encroachments on individual freedom. Freedom from invasion of privacy is guaranteed by law and respected in practice. The search of a private residence requires a search warrant, except under special circumstances such as in drug cases. There is no direct equivalent of habeas corpus in the French legal system, although there is a limit of two days before a suspect is transferred to a magistrate for investigation.

The promotion of human rights is also a tenet of French foreign policy. There is a secretary of state for human rights to oversee policy in this regard. The major problem for French authorities in the realm of human rights has been terrorism. The government has granted the power to summarily expel foreigners suspected of terrorism without legal proceedings.

FOREIGN POLICY

De Gaulle established the main principles of French policy that continue to underlie French foreign policy. He attempted to reassert France's position as a global power, all the while maintaining a high degree of autonomy. As a result, France developed and maintained independent military capabilities, including nuclear weapons. France refused to sign the nuclear-test-ban and nonproliferation treaties, preferring to establish its own *force de frappe* (the French nuclear force). Paris also endeavored to utilize the institutional framework of the West to augment its rank in the world. France accepted the economic provisions of the Treaty of Rome but resisted efforts at political integration on a supranational level and twice vetoed British entry into the European Community. Although it was a founding member of NATO, France withdrew its military forces from the alliance and refused use of its territory for Allied military actions. In economic as well as military relations, de Gaulle assailed U.S. primacy and asserted French autonomy on issues such as recognition of China, U.S. involvement in Vietnam, and condemnation of Israel.

Although the basic premises of Gaullist foreign policy have never been formally repudiated, successive presidents have retreated from its more extreme positions. The anti-U.S. and anti-British tenor of French policy were reversed, and France was brought into closer alignment with the Western alliance. In the process, French foreign policy has become less visionary and more pragmatic.

The election of the socialist president François Mitterrand in 1981 aroused great hopes of a break with the policies of the previous three presidents. However, Mitterrand continued the Gaullist tradition but modified it to conform to changing global circumstances. Mitterrand reaffirmed his commitment to the established Gaullist line of autonomous national membership in the Atlantic alliance. He then went further than his predecessors and supported a buildup of NATO missiles in Europe. France also supported U.S. actions in other international areas. Mitterrand also managed to both open ties with Israel and restore Franco-Arab relations after the opening.

Within the European Community, Mitterrand continued the close relations between France and Germany. In 1987 the two nations held bilateral military exercises and later announced the creation of the Franco-German

Brigade, a joint military force that was, in turn, expanded to the Eurocorps, a multilateral military force. France worked to develop an autonomous military arm for the European Union and supported increased economic and political integration.

French relations with the developing world have been uneven as the nation's pursuit of nuclear tests in the South Pacific during the tenure of Mitterrand and his successor, Jacques Chirac, angered many nations in the region. In addition, the 1985 government-sponsored sabotage of the Greenpeace ship *The Rainbow Warrior* led to the resignation of the French head of the secret service and the minister of defense. Moreover, French support for the military regime in Algeria has soured relations with some Arab states and led to terrorist acts on French soil. Conversely, even as France granted independence to its colonies, it was able to maintain close ties with many of its former possessions, especially in Africa. The Francophone states of Africa have close economic, cultural, and military ties with France. For instance, France aided Chad in repulsing Libyan invaders in 1987. Relations with Iran were initiated under Mitterrand, over objections by the United States.

Under Chirac, France drew closer to the United States as the president sought to maintain French influence in light of diminishing resources and power. Hence, Chirac ordered the reintegration of France into NATO as a means to maintain French influence as NATO expanded and took on new missions. Chirac also supported increased integration in the European Union, including monetary union, in order to preserve influence against a reunified Germany. Relations with the United States, however, were severely strained by Chirac's vocal opposition in 2002 and 2003 to the U.S.-led war in Iraq.

DEFENSE

The French army claims to be the oldest national army in the world and has a long history marked by both great military victories and innovations and ignominious failures. The constitution of 1958 clearly establishes the primacy of the president in defense matters. He is the commander in chief of the armed forces and oversees governmental committees on national defense.

Conscription was long a hallmark of the French military, but it was done away with under President Chirac in 2001 in an effort to both cut costs and improve the professionalism of the military. In the post-cold war era, successive governments have dramatically cut military expenditures in an effort to meet the criteria necessary for European Monetary Union. Nonetheless, the French maintain a large standing military force of 360,000 in 2003, divided between the army, navy, and air force. In 2003 France's military expenditures were \$45.2 billion, about 2.6 percent of the nation's gross domestic product (GDP).

French military commitments run along two lines. The first is the defense of Western Europe. During the cold war, in spite of the fact that France was not an integrated member of NATO, security policy centered on defense against a Soviet attack. The backbone of this policy was, and continues to be, close military cooperation with Germany. Although Chirac reintegrated France into NATO, present French security policy continues to support the development of an autonomous European Security and Defense Identity (ESDI), which would lessen European reliance on the United States. The second main tenet of French security policy is the defense of national interests around the world. France has bilateral defense agreements with 11 of its former colonies in Africa and with a number of states in the Middle East. Paris has honored these treaties on several occasions by deploying troops to aid these nations. In 2004, 34,000 French troops were deployed overseas, many in peacekeeping operations in such troubled countries as Côte d'Ivoire, Chad, Afghanistan, Kosovo, and the Sudan.

The French policy of autonomy led governments to maintain a large defense-industrial complex both to supply the national military forces and to export weapons systems around the world. France continues to spend more money on research and development, as a percentage of GDP, on new weapons than any other nation except the United States. Also, French forces almost exclusively use domestically produced weapons, aircraft, and ships. In addition, France developed and deployed its own nuclear weapons (outside the framework of NATO). The *force du frappe* consists of submarine-launched nuclear missiles, air-dropped weapons, and land-based ballistic missiles.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	360,400
Military Manpower Availability:	14,487,165
Military Expenditures \$billion:	45.24
as % of GDP:	2.6
as % of central government expenditures:	5.4
Arms Imports \$million:	120
Arms Exports \$billion:	1.75

ECONOMY

France maintains a mixed economy that includes a growing services sector, a shrinking but diversified manufacturing base, and a significant agricultural complex. Services now account for the majority of the nation's GDP, but industrial products provide the main export earnings. Major French industries include steel, machinery, chemicals, automobiles, aircraft, electronics, textiles, and tourism. Major exports are manufactured equipment, chemicals, automobiles, textiles and clothing, foodstuffs, and other agricultural products. Imports consist mainly

of oil, machinery, chemicals, and iron and steel products. The nation's primary trading partners are Germany, Italy, Great Britain, Spain, Belgium, and the United States.

More so than in any of the other industrialized nations, the French government maintains substantial influence in the economy and owns majority stakes in key industries such as railways, electricity, aircraft manufacturing, and telecommunications. Efforts to privatize these industries have been proceeding slowly and are often met with resistance by the public. Through the 1980s and 1990s the French economy was plagued by a persistently high unemployment rate of over 10 percent, and in 2004 the rate was still 9.7 percent. A 35-hour workweek was mandated in an effort to create new jobs, but the result has been labor-market inflexibility. France entered the European Monetary Union in January of 1999, and the strict fiscal requirements for admittance have forced successive governments to curtail spending on programs to stimulate the economy and to raise taxes. More recently, taxes have been cut in an effort to boost employment, and the nation's budget deficit of 4 percent exceeds the European Union's 3 percent debt limit. However, governments have also avoided deep cuts in the nation's generous social welfare system or the widespread governmental bureaucracy. French agriculture, too, remains highly protected from market forces. The nation is also one of the world's largest commercial fishing powers.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$trillion: 1.661
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 27,600
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 2.2
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 1.7
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 2.7
 Industry: 24.4
 Services: 72.9
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 54
 Government Consumption: 24
 Gross Domestic Investment: 19.2
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 346.5
 Imports: 339.9
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 2.8
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 25.1

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
104.4	106.2	108.0	110.1	112.4

Finance

National Currency: Euro (EUR)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = EUR 0.886
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: —
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: —
 Total External Debt \$million: —
 Debt Service Ratio %: —

Balance of Payments \$billion: 13.8
 International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 23.12
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
 2.1

Official Development Assistance

Donor ODA \$billion: 5.4
 per capita \$: 89.00
 Foreign Direct Investment \$billion: 47.75

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$billion: 882.8
 Expenditures \$billion: 955.4
 Budget Deficit \$billion: 72.6
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: 22.6

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 2.7
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: –1.0
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 6.9
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 13.3
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 215.1
 Total Farmland % of land area: 33.5
 Livestock: Cattle million: 19.19
 Chickens million: 200
 Pigs million: 15.19
 Sheep million: 8.95
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 36.85
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 869.8

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 233.7
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: –0.3

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 126.66
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 249.94
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 4.22
 Net Energy Imports % of use: 49.5
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 111.2
 Production kW-hr billion: 528.6
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 414.7
 Coal Reserves tons million: 40
 Production tons million: 2.3
 Consumption tons million: 22.8
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet billion: 451
 Production cubic feet billion: 65
 Consumption cubic feet trillion: 1.586
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels million: 146
 Production barrels 000 per day: 76.6
 Consumption barrels million per day: 2.04
 Pipelines Length km: 3,024

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 339.9
 Exports \$billion: 346.5
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 3.6
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 5.0
 Balance of Trade \$billion: 13.8

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Germany %	19.1	14.9
Belgium %	9.4	7.2
Italy %	9.0	9.3
Spain %	7.4	9.6
Netherlands %	7.0	—
United Kingdom %	7.0	9.4
United States %	5.4	6.8

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 894,000
 Paved %: 100
 Automobiles: 29,160,000
 Trucks and Buses: 6,178,000
 Railroad: Track Length km: 32,175
 Passenger-km billion: 71.55
 Freight-km billion: 50.4
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 32
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 889.7
 Airports: 477
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 114.77
 Length of Waterways km: 8,500

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 75.05
 Number of Tourists from million: 17.43
 Tourist Receipts \$million: —
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: —

Communications

Telephones million: 33.9
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.15
 Cellular Telephones million: 41.7
 Personal Computers million: 20.7
 Internet Hosts per million people: 39,514
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 361

ENVIRONMENT

The environmental movement in France has not gained the popularity or support that it has in other nations. Environmental parties were able to gain nine seats in parliament in the 1998 elections, but after the most recent elections the Green Party held no seats in the Senate and just three in the National Assembly. The most

controversial environmental issue in France involves nuclear energy. In an effort to lessen dependency on imported oil, the French government aggressively built nuclear power plants. Nuclear waste and the potential for accidents have now diminished the popularity of the plants. In addition, the French were roundly criticized for their decision to conduct nuclear tests in the South Pacific.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 27.9
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: 62
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 12
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 281,747
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 6.15

LIVING CONDITIONS

France is a nation with sharp class divisions and a wide gap between rich and poor. As of 2000, 6.5 percent of the population lived below the poverty line. Additionally, France continues to grapple with a high unemployment rate and inadequate housing, especially for the nation's aging population and large number of immigrants, who often live in crowded and rundown suburban communities. Industrial strikes often interrupt public services, and public protests are common. The environment is threatened by industrial pollution and lack of landfill capacity, especially for toxic wastes.

Yet for many visitors to France, the nation epitomizes history and romance. Paris, the "City of Lights," is a premier world capital filled with museums (especially the Louvre), culture, and arguably the world's finest cuisine. The countryside is dotted with world-class vineyards and wine producers, as well as breathtaking scenery and quaint country villages. France has a modern, efficient transportation system, including state-owned railways and its high-speed train, the TGV (*train à grand vitesse*), that has been connected by the new Channel Tunnel ("Chunnel") with England. The Métro, Paris's subway, carries over one million passengers a day.

HEALTH

In 2003 life expectancy for women was over 83 years and for men nearly 76 years. The rate of infant mortality was low, at 4.3 deaths for every 1,000 live births, and the rate of low-birth-weight babies was 6.4 percent. The number of people living with AIDS in 2003 was estimated at 120,000, and France's rate of AIDS is second only to that of the United States. (The AIDS virus was first identified at Paris's Institut Louis Pasteur, a major research institute.) The major causes of death are heart disease and

cancer, but the third-leading cause of death is complications from alcoholism. Health care in France is provided by the government, funded by social security payments from wages, with the national health system covering medical expenses and hospitalization. Many people buy supplemental health insurance. Total spending for health care per capita was \$2,348 in 2003.

Health

Number of Physicians: 196,000
 Number of Dentists: 40,426
 Number of Nurses: 397,506
 Number of Pharmacists: 60,366
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 329
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: 8.2
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 4.31
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 17
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 9.7
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 2,348
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.4
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 97
 Measles: 86
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: —
 Access to Improved Water Source %: —

FOOD AND NUTRITION

French cuisine is world famous, and throughout the world no city of any pretensions to good taste and culture is without at least one restaurant that serves French cuisine, including French wine and cheeses, a source of national pride. Also prominent would be such regional French dishes as *choucroute*, an Alsatian dish made of cabbage in white wine with pork and sausages; *boeuf bourguignon*, or beef in wine sauce, from central France; ratatouille, a vegetable stew from the Mediterranean region; and the quintessential French dishes coq au vin, or chicken simmered with vegetable in red wine, and *canard à l'orange*, or duck in an orange sauce—all served with the baguette, a thin loaf of white bread with a soft inside but a crunchy crust. With all of this rich food, including cream sauces, it is surprising to some observers that the rate of obesity—nearly 10 percent for both men and women—is not higher than it is. Nutritionists are concerned that because of time constraints, the French, like many Westerners, are relying more on less nutritional convenience foods and fast food.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 117.3
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 237.8

STATUS OF WOMEN

Women enjoy full civil rights in France, including universal suffrage. The penal code prohibits spousal abuse, and law enforcement authorities vigorously enforce this law. In 2003 the Ministry of Interior reported 10,408 cases of rape and 15,394 instances of other criminal sexual assault, down very slightly from 2002. Numerous private and public organizations assist abused women. Prostitution is legal in France, but pimping is not. A government agency, the Central Office on the Treatment of Human Beings, deals with trafficking in women and prostitution. In theory women receive wages equal to men for comparable work, but in practice they do not. In the 5,000 largest French firms, the average difference in salary between men and women is 27 percent. The law prohibits sex-based job discrimination and sexual harassment in the workplace. But the scope of the law is narrow, and the fines and compensatory damages are modest. The Women's Bureau in the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment is responsible for the promotion of women's rights.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 12
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.0
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 47.0

WORK

France's labor force consists of 27.39 million people, with 4.1 percent employed in agriculture, 24.4 percent in industry, and 71.5 percent in services. Most French workers belong to influential labor unions. The workweek had been 39 hours, but in 2002 it was lowered to 35 hours. The minimum hourly wage is 7.6 euros, or about \$10.35 (late 2004 exchange rate). Most workers enjoy a two- to three-hour lunch break, when the main meal of the day is often eaten (although this tradition has been changing in recent years). The government provides partial funding for day care for the children of workers. French workers receive five weeks of vacation each year and a total of 117 days off work each year. About 6 percent of the labor force consists of foreign workers. Youth unemployment is high at 20.7 percent.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 27,390,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 45.6
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 4.1
 Industry: 24.4
 Services: 71.5
 Unemployment %: 9.7

EDUCATION

France has a rich educational history beginning with Charlemagne and the founding of the University of Paris in the 12th century. For the next six centuries education was controlled by the Catholic Church. The Revolution led to the dismantlement of the church schools, and Napoleon established lycées, divided the nation into academies, and consolidated higher education. The present school system was established in 1975 and reformed in 1983.

The school year runs from the end of September to the end of June, with short holidays. Education is compulsory between the ages of six and 16. Preprimary education is not compulsory, but it is free and nearly universal. Elementary education runs from grades one through five, and secondary education begins at grade six and ends at grade 12. At the end of grade nine, students choose between two tracks: one which prepares them for the university and the other for vocational fields. Education in France is highly centralized, and the bureaucracy is the largest of the French government.

Most French universities date back to the Renaissance. The earliest was the University of Paris, founded in 1150. Higher education in France is free and offered by the traditional university, two-year technical colleges, and prestigious *grandes écoles* for postgraduate work. French university students have a long tradition of protest and activism. This has made governments unwilling to undertake significant reforms of the educational system.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 99.0
Male %: 99.0
Female %: 99.0
School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 15.4
First Level: Primary schools: 41,244
Teachers: 204,287
Students: 3,807,739
Student-Teacher Ratio: 18.6
Net Enrollment Ratio: 99.6
Second Level: Secondary Schools: 11,212
Teachers: 510,467
Students: 4,407,801
Student-Teacher Ratio: 11.5
Net Enrollment Ratio: 93.3
Third Level: Institutions: 1,062
Teachers: 129,007
Students: 2,029,179
Gross Enrollment Ratio: 53.6
Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 5.7

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

France is one of the world's leaders in funding for science; the nation ranks third in the world in government funding for research and development. Most scientific research is conducted by such agencies as the Center for National

Research, the French National Space Agency, and the National Institute for Health and Medical Research. France has produced six winners of the prestigious Fields Medal, the Nobel Prize in mathematics. Among its six Nobel Prize winners in chemistry was one of the world's most famous scientists, Marie Curie, who discovered radium and polonium.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 2,718
Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 2.26
High-Tech Exports \$billion: 56.3
Patent Applications by Residents: 21,959

MEDIA

The first French newspaper was published in 1631, and the nation has a long history of a free and vocal press (with the notable exception of the Vichy period). Formal freedom of the press was first established with the constitution of 1789. Eleven major general-interest newspapers are published in Paris. The largest is *France soir*. *Le monde* is the most influential paper in France and one of the most influential throughout Europe. Also noteworthy is *Le figaro*, a more conservative paper. Paris also publishes 60 nondaily newspapers and 8,800 periodicals, including 1,300 with general news and politics and 2,000 technical publications. The leading magazine is *Paris match*. There is a monthly Catholic magazine, *L'écho des françaises*. Five groups control the French press; the largest is the Franpar-Hachette group, arguably the most powerful publishing group in the world.

Journalism is heavily organized, and union members account for some 60 percent of all French journalists. Strikes are common but usually involve local issues and are quickly resolved. In addition, most publications are subsidized by the government, with the average subsidy amounting to 12 percent.

There are approximately 800 FM and 41 AM radio stations in France, although private advertising on the radio was only legalized in 1987, and the state heavily regulates the industry. There are two state-run television stations and an increasing number of private stations. Government regulation of the content of these stations has boosted the popularity of satellite stations, which bring in programming from around the world. The main purpose of government regulation in the broadcast media is not direct censorship but the promotion of French culture and language.

As in many nations, French culture can be divided into high culture (art, literature, music) and low culture, which encompasses both traditional forms of culture and popular culture. In the post-World War II era, France began to lose its dominance as the center for world culture. Other major cities, including London, Rome, and

New York, have developed well-established cultural outlets. In addition, the advent of cinema and modern forms of music has transferred the center of popular culture to the United States. In response, the French government has enacted legislation to protect its film and television industry from outside competition. Paris remains the center for such fields as fashion and design.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 84
 Total Circulation million: 8.42
 Circulation per 1,000: 142
 Books Published: 39,083
 Periodicals: 245
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets million: 36.5
 per 1,000: 620

CULTURE

French culture is the envy of the world. The nation achieved cultural prominence during the Middle Ages, and Paris was a magnet for artists and writers during the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries. French literature and art made major contributions to the Renaissance and Age of Enlightenment. Its cathedrals, such as Chartres and Notre Dame in Paris, draw millions of visitors each year. Any list of major French writers and artists would read like a “who’s who.” Among writers would be François Rabelais, Voltaire, Henri Rousseau, George Sand, Victor Hugo, Stendhal, Honoré de Balzac, Gustave Flaubert, and Marcel Proust. Among artists would be Eugène Delacroix, Jean-François Millet, and many impressionists, including Claude Monet, Jean Renoir, Camille Pissarro, Edgar Degas, and Édouard Manet, as well as postimpressionists, including Henri Matisse, Paul Cézanne, and Georges Seurat. Twentieth-century artists are Georges Braque and Auguste Rodin. In drama, France produced Molière, Hugo, Jean Racine, Alexandre Dumas (père and fils), Jean Anouilh, and Jean Genet. The Comédie-Française in Paris is a major institution. Opera is popular among all classes of people in France, and theater flourishes throughout the provinces. The French cinema is subsidized by the government more than that of any other nation in Europe, and it has produced major directors, such as François Truffaut and Louis Malle. Each year in May, Cannes is the site of a major international film festival.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 1,620
 Volumes: 89,766,404
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —

Cinema Gross Receipts national currency billion: 5.14
 Number of Cinemas: 2,150
 Seating Capacity: 990,000
 Annual Attendance: 155,400,000

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

The different regions of France all have their own folklore. In Basque legends, for example, witches and caves dwellers with supernatural powers are prominent. Ancient Celtic beliefs are reflected in religious sites in Auvergne. Folklore surrounding death is prominent in Breton, where death is seen as a skeletal figure, Ankou, who carries a scythe and whose arrival can be sensed by the creaking of a cart. When a death occurs, doors and windows are left open so that the person’s spirit can escape, and mirrors are turned to the wall.

France’s chief cultural hero is Charlemagne, or Charles the Great, whose exploits as king are chronicled in France’s national epic, *The Song of Roland*.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Businesses and offices in France close late, often at 6:00 or 7:00 p.m., so there tends to be little leisure time in the evenings. Many French watch television, but other activities abound. Half of men and one-third of women take part in at least one sporting activity, and one-quarter of the French belong to some sort of organized sports federation. One popular activity is gathering for coffee and conversation at one of the thousands of cafés in the cities. Cooking is a popular leisure-time activity, and as many as one-third of the French are regular gardeners. The rate of movie attendance is the fourth highest in the world. Vacation trips are also popular. Traditionally, the French took their vacations at one time in August, but in recent years the trend has been to take vacation days throughout the year. In the provinces, folk crafts and folk dancing are popular activities. Among the Basques, for example, there is a folk dance troupe in nearly every village.

ETIQUETTE

The French suffer from a reputation for being rude and haughty, but this is an unfair judgment that fails to account for a natural reserve and formality, combined with pride in French culture. Many rules of etiquette are intended to maintain class distinctions. Greetings tend to be rather formal. A kiss on each cheek (called a *faire la bise*) is common among both men and women but is reserved for family members and close friends. Otherwise, a handshake is common, and the titles “Monsieur,” “Madame,”

and “Mademoiselle” are used with the name. In public, eye contact and smiling at others are avoided. Smaller shops are not “self-service”; rather, the shopkeeper helps the customer pick out items for purchase. Dinner guests always bring along a gift of wine or flowers for the host and hostess.

FAMILY LIFE

As in many Western nations, the traditional extended family, including grandparents, is not as common as it once was. Today a nuclear family with two or three children is the norm. In recent years the marriage rate has been declining, and the age at which people marry has been rising—29 for men and 27 for women. Divorce rates are high, with one in three marriages ending in divorce. All marriages in France have to be endorsed by a civil ceremony that precedes the religious ceremony, so it is not uncommon for a wedding party to go first to the mayor’s office and then proceed to a church. More and more young people are cohabitating, and recent laws have permitted legal unions for cohabitating couples, including gay couples. A 1999 law called the *Pacte d’association civile et solidaire* created an intermediate union between cohabitation and marriage.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Most French wear modern, Western-style clothing, both for formal and for casual occasions. The most recognizable item of French clothing is perhaps the men’s beret. Women in France tend to be stylish, for France was the leader of the fashion world throughout much of the 20th century, and fashion designers such as Coco Chanel, Yves Saint-Laurent, and Christian Dior are known throughout the world. In the provinces traditional costumes are worn at festivals and include bonnets, lacy blouses, and colorful aprons.

SPORTS

As in much of Europe, soccer is an immensely popular sport, and the nation has some 8,000 organized soccer clubs. In 1998 France won soccer’s World Cup. The French also enjoy rugby, horse racing, and auto racing. A major event in France is the Tour de France, a grueling, 2,000-mile-long bicycle race that lasts for three weeks in July. Also common are fishing, skiing, swimming, tennis, and mountain climbing. As a nation of sports enthusiasts, France placed seventh in the medal table at the 2004 Summer Olympics in Athens with a total of 33 medals, 11 of them gold.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1944** Liberation of France from German control
- 1946** The Fourth Republic is established.
- 1953** De Gaulle retires from public life.
- 1954** France is defeated by the Viet Minh in the Battle of Dien Bien Phu and is forced to evacuate Vietnam.
- 1957** France signs the Treaty of Rome, establishing the European Economic Community.
- 1958** In response to a military insurrection in Algeria, de Gaulle is invited to form a government to resolve the crisis; he proposes a new presidential-type constitution, which leads to the formation of the Fifth Republic with de Gaulle as the first president.
- 1962** Algeria is granted full independence.
- 1965** France signs the Brussels Treaty, which establishes the European Community.
- 1966** France withdraws from NATO.
- 1968** Student riots spark mass protests; de Gaulle is reelected president.
- 1969** De Gaulle resigns following voter rejection of his constitutional amendments in a referendum; Georges Pompidou is elected president.
- 1970** De Gaulle dies.
- 1974** Pompidou dies; Valéry Giscard d’Estaing is elected president.
- 1981** Socialist François Mitterrand is elected over Giscard d’Estaing.
- 1984** Socialists abandon plans to establish unified secular education.
- 1985** French special forces sink the Greenpeace ship *The Rainbow Warrior* in Auckland, New Zealand, creating a diplomatic crisis.
- 1988** Mitterrand is reelected president.
- 1991** France joins the coalition against Saddam Hussein.
- 1995** Gaullist Jacques Chirac is elected president.
- 1999** France joins the European Monetary Union.
- 2002** The euro replaces the franc as the national currency.
Chirac is reelected president in a landslide victory against right-wing National Front leader Jean-Marie Le Pen. In legislative elections Chirac’s center-right coalition wins a landslide victory.
- 2003** A heat wave kills almost 15,000 people; France leads opposition in the United Nations to the U.S.-led war in Iraq.
- 2005** Voters reject proposed EU constitution, government imposes emergency measures to quell riots by immigrant youths.
- 2006** Widespread protests follow new youth employment law.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- INSEE
http://www.insee.fr/en/home/home_page.asp

GABON

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Gabonese Republic (République Gabonaise)

ABBREVIATION

GA

CAPITAL

Libreville

HEAD OF STATE

President Omar Bongo (from 1967)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Jean Eyeghe Ndong (from 2006)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Multiparty democracy

POPULATION

1,389,201 (2005)

AREA

267,667 sq km (103,346 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Fang, Eshira, Mbede, Okande

LANGUAGES

French (official), Fang (vernacular)

RELIGIONS

Christianity and animism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Coopération financière en Afrique centrale franc

NATIONAL FLAG

Tricolor of green, golden yellow, and royal blue horizontal stripes

NATIONAL EMBLEM

Two black panthers balanced on the spreading roots of a yellow okoume tree grasp a shield with their forepaws. The shield is divided horizontally into two sections: The larger, bottom section shows a fully rigged black schooner flying the national flag; the smaller, top segment shows three flat ornamental disks. The Latin motto *Uniti progrediemur* (United we shall go forward) appears just below the spreading branches of the okoume tree, and the French motto *Union, travail, justice* (Union, work, justice) appears above its roots.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“United in Concord and Brotherhood, Awake, Gabon, Dawn is at Hand”

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year’s Day), March 12 (National Day, Renovation Day), May 1 (Labor Day), May 25 (African Freedom Day), August 17 (Independence Day), various Christian festivals, including Assumption, Easter Monday, All Saints’ Day, Christmas, and Pentecost Monday

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

August 17, 1960

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

March 14, 1991

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Gabon is situated on the western coast of Africa, straddling the equator, with an area of 267,667 sq km (103,346 sq mi). The greatest distance north-northeast to south-southwest is 717 km (446 mi); east-southeast to west-northwest, 644 km (400 mi). The Atlantic coastline is 885 km (550 mi) long.

Gabon’s total international land boundary of 2,551 km (1,585 mi) is shared with three countries: Cameroon (298 km; 185 mi), Republic of Congo (1,903 km; 1,182 mi), and Equatorial Guinea (350 km; 217 mi).

The low-lying coastal plain is narrow in the north (29 km; 18 mi) and south but broader in the estuary region of Ogooué. South of the Ogooué are numerous lagoons, such as N’Dogo, M’Goze, and M’Komi, along the coastline. The interior relief is more complex though nowhere dramatic. In the north the Crystal Mountains enclose the valleys of the Woleu and N’Tem rivers and the Ivindo Basin. In southern Gabon the coastal plain is dominated by granitic hills. Between N’Gounie and the Ogooué the Chaillus Massif rises to 915 m (3,000 ft). The highest point in Gabon is Mount Iboundji (1,575 m; 5,167 ft).

Gabon



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Geography

Area sq km: 267,667; sq mi 103,346
 World Rank: 74th
 Land Boundaries, km: Cameroon 298; Congo-Brazzaville 1,903; Equatorial Guinea 350
 Coastline, km: 885
 Elevation Extremes meters
 Lowest: Atlantic Ocean 0
 Highest: Mount Iboundji 1,575
 Land Use %
 Arable Land: 1.3
 Permanent Crops: 0.7
 Forest: 84.7
 Other: 13.3

Population of Principal Cities (1993)

Libreville	419,596
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CLIMATE AND WEATHER

The climate in Gabon is equatorial, with abundant rain in the rainy season, small variations in temperature, and a hot and dry summer. From June to September there is virtually no rain, and there is only occasional rain in December and January. Rainfall is very heavy during the rest of the year, averaging 2,540 mm (100 in) per year at

Libreville. Farther north of the coast the average annual rainfall rises to 3,810 mm (150 in). Being on the equator, the country enjoys a uniform temperature throughout the year, varying only slightly from the average mean of 26.6°C (80°F). The cold Benguela Current lowers the coastal temperatures.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature: 80°F
Average Rainfall: 100 in to 150 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Although Gabon has some savanna, and mangrove forests can be found along estuaries on the Atlantic seaboard, more than three-quarters of the country is covered by dense equatorial rain forest with some 8,000 plant species, up to 20 percent of them native to Gabon, that provide habitat for 200 mammals and 600 species of birds. Commonly sighted in Gabon are elephants, buffalos, panthers, antelopes, hippopotami, crocodiles, chimpanzees, and grey parrots. Gabon is home to up to four-fifths of Africa's gorillas and chimpanzees.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 1,389,201
World Rank: 147th
Density per sq km: 5.2
% of annual growth (1999–2003): 2.3
Male %: 49.5
Female %: 50.5
Urban %: 83.7
Age Distribution: % 0–14: 42.2
 15–65: 53.7
 65 and over: 4.1
Population 2025: 2,197,000
Birth Rate per 1,000: 36.4
Death Rate per 1,000: 11.43
Rate of Natural Increase %: 2.6
Total Fertility Rate: 4.8
Expectation of Life (years): Males 54.85
 Females 58.12
Marriage Rate per 1,000: —
Divorce Rate per 1,000: —
Average Size of Households: 4.0
Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Excluding the Pygmies, who are the original inhabitants of the country, Gabonese belong to 40 Bantu tribes divided into four tribal groupings: Fang, Eshira, Mbede, and Okande. The largest tribal group is the Fang, who

came from the north, perhaps Cameroon, and settled in the middle Ogooué and its estuary in the 19th century. The peoples of the Myene language group—Mpongwe, Orungu, Galoa, and Nkomi—occupy the lower Ogooué and the coast. The Mitshogo-Okande group occupy the center. The Jumba and the Inenga also live along the lower Ogooué. The Kota, known for their carved wood figures, occupy the northeast. Other groups include the Duma, Kanda, Seke, Mbee, and Bongom or Bakele. There are only approximately 3,000 Pygmies in the population. Ethnic distinctions are less sharply drawn and ethnicity is less divisive in Gabon than elsewhere in Africa.

Gabon has a large expatriate population, estimated at over 100,000, of whom 27,000 are French. There are more French in Gabon today than there were in colonial times. One of the most famous of these expatriates was Dr. Albert Schweitzer, whose hospital at Lambaréné is a national landmark.

LANGUAGES

French is the official language of the republic. Fang is the main vernacular, spoken primarily in northern Gabon. Other vernaculars include Myene, Bateke, Bapounou/Eschira, and Bandjabi.

RELIGIONS

Gabon is the most Christian of the Francophone states in Africa and often is called the “Bastion of the Cross of Africa.” About 50 percent of the population are Roman Catholics. The Catholic Church has 36 missions, about 120 priests, and 251 schools under the archbishop of Libreville. The Christian and Missionary Alliance devotes its activities to the south of the country, while Eglise Evangélique de Gabon is active throughout the country and runs four colleges, 66 primary schools, and two hospitals. Muslims constitute an estimated 1 percent of the population. Additionally, there are some 2,300 Jehovah's Witnesses in Gabon.

Religious Affiliations

Roman Catholic	694,000
Muslim	14,000
Other	681,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Sometime between the 16th and 18th centuries the Pygmies, the original inhabitants of the region, and Bantu-speaking people, who arrived around the first century c.e., were displaced by the Fang, who migrated south from

Cameroon and Equatorial Guinea. The first westerners were Portuguese who arrived in 1472. While the Portuguese focused their attention on Bioko and São Tomé, British, Dutch, and French traders stopped in order to obtain slaves, ivory, and precious tropical woods. By 1849 the capital, Libreville, was established as a settlement for freed slaves.

Gabon was under French rule from 1890, when it formally became a part of French Congo. It was separated into an administrative region in 1903 and was reorganized as part of French Equatorial Africa in 1910. Gabon became independent along with other units of French Equatorial Africa in 1960. It allied itself with other moderate states that preferred to retain political, economic, and cultural ties with France.

At independence, Gabon was led by Léon M'Ba, the conservative, pro-French head of the Bloc Démocratique Gabonais (BDG). The opposition centered around the Union Démocratique et Sociale Gabonaise (UDSG), led by Jean-Hilaire Aubame. The two parties, which were evenly matched in support, agreed on a joint slate for elections in 1961, following the adoption of a new constitution. M'Ba won the election with 99.6% of the votes cast. He became the nation's first president, and Aubame was appointed minister of foreign affairs.

M'Ba attempted to merge the two parties, but when the UDSG resisted, its members, including Aubame, were forced to resign from the government. Aubame led a coup that deposed M'Ba in 1964. However, M'Ba was reinstated with the help of the French military, and Aubame was imprisoned. The BDG won the majority of seats in the 1964 elections, with the remainder going to a reorganized UDSG.

President M'Ba died in 1967 and was succeeded by Vice President Albert-Bernard (later Omar) Bongo. The following year Bongo announced the restructuring of the BDG into a broad-based political grouping, the Parti Démocratique Gabonais (PDG), and declared Gabon a one-party state.

During the 1970s the country remained politically stable. Discontent with the existing one-party system was limited because of high living standards—Gabon had the highest per capita income in sub-Saharan Africa—and economic growth. Beginning in 1981 banned opposition groups began to emerge and call for a multiparty system. Bongo resisted reform, insisting that democratic debate was permitted within the PDG. Bongo survived a coup attempt in 1985, but poor economic conditions in the late 1980s resulting from a decline in the world oil market led to social unrest. Acceding to popular demands, Bongo consented to multiple parties in 1990. He appointed a new prime minister, Csimir Oye-Mba, who named six opposition figures to his cabinet.

In national elections held in 1993 and 1998 Omar Bongo easily won reelection, although his opponents charged that the elections were tainted by massive fraud.

A qualified multiparty system was introduced in 1991. Constitutional amendments approved by the legislature in 1997 lengthened the presidential term from five to seven years and empowered the president to name both the prime minister and a vice president. The president has since managed to successfully divide the opposition while creating token democratic institutions like the National Democracy Council. In 2002 the PDG retained a convincing majority in parliamentary elections, and in 2003 the constitution was amended to allow the president to run for office as often as he wishes. In 2004 Gabon took steps to strengthen its economy by signing a deal with a French firm to export Gabonese oil to China as well as a deal with China to mine one billion tons of iron ore.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1961–67 Léon M'Ba

1967– Omar Bongo

CONSTITUTION

The legal basis of the Gabonese government is the constitution of 1991, which was adopted by referendum in July 1995. The constitution established a presidential form of government in which the president is elected for a seven-year term by direct universal suffrage. In 2003 the constitution was amended to allow the president, Omar Bongo, to run for office as often as he wants. The head of the government is the prime minister, who appoints the council of ministers. The bicameral legislature consists of the National Assembly and the Senate. The 120 members of the National Assembly and the 91 members of the Senate are directly elected for terms of five years. The judiciary includes the Supreme Court, the High Court of Justice, the Court of Appeal, the Superior Council of Magistracy, and other lesser courts.

PARLIAMENT

The bicameral national legislature consists of the National Assembly (*Assemblée Nationale*) and the Senate (*Sénat*). The 120 members of the National Assembly and the 91 members of the Senate are directly elected for five-year terms by universal suffrage. The national legislature normally holds two sessions per year. It may be dissolved or prorogued for up to 18 months by the president; in the case of dissolution, new elections must be held within 20 to 40 days. Legislation may be initiated by the president or by members of the national legislature. The national legislature may override a president's veto by a two-thirds vote.

Suffrage is universal over age 21.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Gabon is a multiparty state that is largely ruled by the successor party to the one party that originally ruled the country. The main party is the Gabonese Democratic Party (PDG), which succeeded the Gabon Democratic Bloc. Other minor parties include the National Rally of Woodcutters, or *Bûcherons RNB*, whose leader Father Paul Mba Abesole won 27 percent of the vote in the 1993 presidential election; the People's Unity Party (PUP); the Circle of Liberal Reformers (CLR); and the Gabonese Party for Progress (PGP).

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For purposes of regional administration Gabon is divided into nine provinces, each administered by a governor. These provinces are divided into 37 prefectures (departments) headed by presidentially appointed prefects. There are eight subprefectures led by subprefects. These officers answer to the central government directly. The original system of regions, districts, and administrative control posts was supplanted by the present system in 1975.

Only towns and cities have popular representative institutions. Libreville and Port-Gentil have popularly elected mayors and municipal councils. Four towns—Oyem, Bitam, Mouila, and Lambaréné—have communal administrations that are partly elected and partly appointed.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The judicial system is headed by the Supreme Court, which has four chambers: constitutional, judicial, administrative, and accounts. Immediately below the Supreme Court are three superior courts: the High Court, whose judges are appointed by and from the deputies of the National Assembly; the Court de Sûreté de l'Etat, with 12 members; and the Court of Appeal. Subordinate courts, or *tribunaux de grande instance* (county courts of first instance), are found in Libreville, Port-Gentil, Lambaréné, Mouila, Oyem, Franceville, and Kolamoutou. Appeals from these courts may be heard by the courts of second instance.

HUMAN RIGHTS

In terms of political and civil rights Gabon is ranked as a country that is not free. Human rights are tightly restricted. Gabonese law enforcement officials use beatings in conjunction with interrogation regularly. Central Prison, the government's primary prison, deprives prisoners of proper living conditions, medical facilities, and

sufficient food. Amnesty International has reported numerous instances in which criminals and illegal aliens have been beaten and tortured. Law enforcement officials defy legal constraints against arbitrary detention, detaining persons without charge under the constitutional specification prohibiting "acts against the Chief of State." Search warrants are optional, and ransacking of detainee homes is permissible.

Before 1990 freedom of speech was restricted. Criticism of the president and advocacy of multiparty systems were prohibited. At present, all outdoor meetings must be approved or organized by the ruling party. Jehovah's Witnesses and several small syncretistic sects have been banned from practicing. The right of workers to strike is severely restricted under recently imposed regulations as well as a curfew.

FOREIGN POLICY

Gabon is heavily dependent on French support but nevertheless resents French dominance in the country's affairs. In 1995 relations between the two countries were temporarily broken off but were quickly restored. Relations with neighboring countries are often strained as a result of the large number of illegal immigrants from Benin, Cameroon, Congo, and Equatorial Guinea. Nevertheless, Gabon actively participates in the Economic Community of Central African States and holds close relations with Congo, whose president, Denis Sassou-Nguesso, is President Bongo's father-in-law. The country is engaged in a continuing maritime boundary dispute with Equatorial Guinea over oil-rich Mbane Island.

DEFENSE

Gabon has virtually no military capability of its own; total armed forces personnel number about 7,000, and the size of Gabon's army and navy ranks last in the world. Defense is based on a series of mutual defense and military assistance agreements with France. France continues to supply arms, equipment, and instructor-advisers. Annual French assistance is in the range of \$800,000. In 2003 Gabon spent about \$149 million, or 2 percent of its gross domestic product (GDP), on defense.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	7,000
Military Manpower Availability:	314,434
Military Expenditures \$million:	149.3
as % of GDP:	2.0
as % of central government expenditures:	—
Arms Imports \$:	—
Arms Exports \$:	—

ECONOMY

Gabon enjoyed a per capita income of \$5,500 in 2004, equal to four times that of most nations in sub-Saharan Africa. This has supported a sharp decline in extreme poverty, yet because of high income inequality a large proportion of the population remains poor. Gabon depended on timber and manganese until oil was discovered offshore in the early 1970s. The oil sector accounted for 50 percent of GDP in the early 2000s. Gabon continues to face fluctuating prices for its oil, timber, manganese, and uranium exports. Despite the abundance of natural wealth, the economy is hobbled by poor fiscal management. In 1992 the fiscal deficit widened to 2.4 percent of GDP, and Gabon failed to settle arrears on its bilateral debt, leading to a cancellation of rescheduling agreements with official and private creditors. Devaluation of its currency by 50 percent on January 12, 1994, sparked a one-time inflationary surge, to 35 percent; the rate of inflation dropped to 6 percent in 1996, and in 2004 it stood at just 0.5 percent. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) provided a one-year standby arrangement in 1994–95 and a three-year Enhanced Financing Facility (EFF) at near commercial rates beginning in late 1995. Those agreements mandate progress in privatization and fiscal discipline. France provided additional financial support in January 1997 after Gabon had met IMF targets for mid-1996. In 1997 an IMF mission to Gabon criticized the government for overspending on off-budget items, overborrowing from the central bank, and slipping on its schedule for privatization and administrative reform. The rebound of oil prices in 1999–2000 helped growth, but drops in production hampered Gabon from fully realizing potential gains. In 2004 the real growth rate stood at 3.4 percent. Oil production stood at almost 300,000 barrels per day.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion:	7.301			
GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$:	5,500			
GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %:	0.9			
GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %:	-1.3			
Origin of Gross Domestic Product %				
Agriculture:	8.1			
Industry:	48.8			
Services:	43.1			
Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %				
Private Consumption:	42			
Government Consumption:	10			
Gross Domestic Investment:	22.7			
Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports:	2.891			
Imports:	1.079			
% of Income Received by Poorest 10%:	—			
% of Income Received by Richest 10%:	—			
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)				
1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
100.7	104.7	106.2	104.2	104.7

Finance

National Currency:	CFA Franc (XAF)
Exchange Rate: \$1 =	XAF 581.2
Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion:	345
Central Bank Discount Rate %:	6.0
Total External Debt \$billion:	3.284
Debt Service Ratio %:	11.7
Balance of Payments \$million:	-101
International Reserves SDRs \$million:	196
Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index	
Growth Rate %:	0.5

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million:	331
per capita:	\$55
Foreign Direct Investment \$million:	123

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year:	Calendar Year
Revenues \$billion:	1.771
Expenditures \$billion:	1.413
Budget Surplus \$million:	358
Tax Revenues as % of GDP:	—

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %:	8.1
Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %:	4.6
Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares:	4.6
Irrigation, % of Farms having:	3.0
Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare:	0.9
Total Farm Land as % of land area:	1.3
Livestock: Cattle 000:	35
Sheep 000:	195
Hogs 000:	212
Chickens 000:	3,100
Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million:	3.1
Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000:	41

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million:	297
Industrial Production Growth Rate %:	1.6

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million:	15.85
Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million:	1.486
Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million:	1.2
Net Energy Imports % of use:	-769
Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000:	400
Production kW-hr million:	798.4
Consumption kW-hr million:	742.5

(continues)

Energy *(continued)*

Coal Reserves tons million: —
 Production tons: —
 Consumption tons: —
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: 1.2
 Production cubic feet billion: 3
 Consumption cubic feet billion: 3
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: 2.45
 Production barrels per day 000: 289.7
 Consumption barrels per day 000: 12
 Pipelines Length km: 1,385

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 1.079
 Exports \$billion: 2.891
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): –0.4
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): –1.2
 Balance of Trade \$million: –101

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
France %	49.9	8.7
United States %	5.3	51.5
United Kingdom %	4.6	—
China %	—	7.5
Japan %	—	4.0

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 8,464
 Paved %: 9.9
 Automobiles: —
 Trucks and Buses: —
 Railroad; Track Length km: 814
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: —
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: —
 Total Deadweight Tonnage: —
 Airports: 56
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 643
 Length of Waterways km: 1,600

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 212
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 7
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 170

Communications

Telephones 000: 38.4
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.22
 Cellular Telephones 000: 300
 Personal Computers 000: 30
 Internet Hosts per million people: 67
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 25

ENVIRONMENT

Gabon is blessed with an abundance of natural resources and biodiversity. In the early 2000s three-quarters of the land was covered with lush rain forests, of which 35 percent had never been exploited. The country's high standard of living (the highest in sub-Saharan Africa) is largely due to the exploitation of its oil reserves. The use of oil has protected other natural resources such as forests. However, with worldwide oil prices remaining unstable, there is growing pressure to expand Gabon's economy and to exploit other natural resources, especially timber. Increased logging threatens Gabon's forests.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 84.7
 Average Annual Forest Change, 1990-2000, 000 ha: –10
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 16
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 2.8

LIVING CONDITIONS

Gabon's standard of living is generally much better than that of other African nations. It has the second highest per capita income on the continent, largely because of an abundance of oil and timber and a low population density. In cities such as Libreville and Port Gentil, a significant number of people live in relative luxury, with modern apartments, late-model luxury cars, and satellite dishes. These cities, however, are surrounded by shantytowns filled with rural immigrants and immigrants from other countries in Africa looking for work. Throughout Gabon much of the population lacks access to modern facilities, including medical care, education, plumbing, electricity, and the like: Only 30 percent of the rural population in 2002 had adequate sanitation facilities; 37 percent of the urban population had such facilities. Many Gabonese live through subsistence farming, and while much of the nation's labor force is employed in farming, Gabon imports most of its food.

HEALTH

Health care in Gabon is poor. Hospitals are ill equipped, and Gabonese in the cities, who have some access to health care, have to pay for pharmaceuticals out of pocket. Health-care spending amounts to only about \$127 per person. As of 2004 life expectancy was only about 56 years, and the infant mortality rate was about 54 deaths per 1,000 live births. In 2003 over 8 percent of the adult population was living with AIDS, and 3,000 people died of the disease. Additionally, such infectious

diseases as malaria and tuberculosis are widespread, and few people receive treatment for them. Only about 55 percent of children are immunized against measles. The sale of alcohol is not regulated, so alcoholism is rampant. Many Gabonese turn to *ngangas*, or medicine men, for health-care needs.

Health

Number of Physicians: 321
 Number of Dentists: —
 Number of Nurses: —
 Number of Pharmacists: —
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 29
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 54.34
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 420
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 3.6
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 127
 HIV Infected % of adults: 8.1
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 38
 Measles: 55
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 36
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 87

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Staples in Gabon, which are relatively uniform throughout the country, include such fruits as bananas, papayas, pineapples, mangoes, avocados, and coconuts; vegetables include eggplants, corn, peanuts, plantains, and tomatoes. The main starch is the nutritionally poor cassava. Another staple is manioc root, which is ground, soaked, and fermented and sold in blocks resembling cheese. Protein is provided by fish and bush meat such as wild turkey, monkey, and even cat among the Fang. Beverages include beer, palm wine, and a great deal of American cola.

From 1998 to 2003 about 14 percent of Gabonese infants were of low birth weight. About 2 percent of children under age five were severely underweight, and 10 percent were moderately underweight. A total of 21 percent of children under age five suffered from stunting.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 6.4
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,550
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 110.9
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 199.6

STATUS OF WOMEN

In recent years women have begun to play an increasing role in the economic, political, and cultural life of the country, particularly in urban areas. The govern-

ment and the ruling PDG have become more sensitized to women's issues. Newly created government and party institutions are actively promoting women's rights. The Ministry of Women's Affairs in 1984 commanded additional resources, creating a national commission for the promotion of women. The ministry's action program is still largely in the planning stage, although an effort is under way to determine women's needs and aspirations in the traditional agricultural sector. The party's women's union is active in organizing women's cultural presentations throughout the country.

Women

Women-headed Households: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 9.2
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men age 15 to 24: —
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: —

WORK

Gabon's labor force in 2004 was 610,000 strong, with 60 percent employed in agriculture, 15 percent in industry, and 25 percent in services. The unemployment rate is high, at 21 percent in 1997. As a result, one worker often supports dozens of people on a single salary. Much work in Gabon is carried out in the informal sector, with people scratching out livings selling fruits and vegetables, driving unregistered taxicabs, or sewing. In rural areas men make a living by hunting and fishing or running subsistence farms.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 610,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 44.8
 Total Activity Rate %: 43.9
 Labor by Sector: %
 Agriculture: 60
 Industry: 15
 Services: 25
 Unemployment %: 21

EDUCATION

Education is free, universal, and compulsory, in principle, for 10 years, from ages six to 16. Schooling consists of six years of primary school, four years of middle school, and three years of secondary school, leading to the *baccalauréat*. The curricula are based on French models, and Gabonization is being introduced only gradually.

The academic year runs from September to June. The medium of instruction is French throughout the school system.

Teachers are trained at six teacher-training institutions.

Private schools are fully integrated with the school system and account for 29 percent of enrollment at both the primary and secondary levels. Approximately 70 percent of higher secondary teachers are foreigners.

Technical training is provided in 12 technical schools. Higher education is provided by the Université Omar Bongo.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 63.2
Male %: 73.7
Female %: 53.3
School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: —
First Level: Primary schools: 1,105
Teachers: 5,727
Students: 281,871
Student-Teacher Ratio: 49.2
Net Enrollment Ratio: 78.3
Second Level: Secondary Schools: —
Teachers: —
Students: 105,191
Student-Teacher Ratio: —
Net Enrollment Ratio: —
Third Level: Institutions: 2
Teachers: —
Students: —
Gross Enrollment Ratio: —
Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 3.9

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

As a relatively poor country, Gabon supports little scientific infrastructure. The major research facilities are the Université Omar Bongo and, in the south, the University of Science and Technology. What research is conducted in Gabon focuses on the discovery of chemicals and pharmaceuticals in the rain forest. Because resources are so limited, Gabonese scientists tend to leave for other countries where research facilities are more available. Foreign organizations involved in scientific research include the World Wildlife Fund, which sponsors ecological research and wildlife preservation, and GTZ, a German organization that sponsors the Gabonese National Forestry School.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million persons: —
Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
High-Tech Exports \$million: 3.83
Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

An information bulletin, *Gabon-matin*, is issued daily in French by the Ministry of Information. The government

also owns 75 percent of the daily *L'union*. The national news agency is the Agence Gabonaise de Presse, founded in 1961.

The official broadcasting organization is Radiodiffusion Télévision Gabonaise (RTG), with stations at Libreville, Franceville, Oyem, and Port-Gentil. The national network broadcasts 24 hours a day on shortwave and medium wave bands in French and local languages. A 100 kw shortwave transmitter at Libreville covers the whole country and is supplemented by relay stations throughout Gabon. A French-built international radio station, Africa No. 1, the most powerful on the continent, was opened at Moyabi in February 1981. It is a 35 percent state-controlled international commercial radio station, broadcasting in French and English.

RTG operates a television service, with two main 50 kw transmitters at Libreville and Port-Gentil, supplemented in 1972 by two 2 kw transmitters. Coverage now extends inland as far as Kango and Lambaréné. Programs are transmitted by satellite to other African countries. Color television broadcasts began in 1975.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 2
Total Circulation 000: 35
Circulation per 1,000: 29
Books Published: —
Periodicals: —
Radio Receivers 000: 208
per 1,000: 177
Television sets 000: 63
per 1,000: 54

CULTURE

Culture in Gabon has largely been influenced by the French. Gabonese authors write in French, and newspapers and television broadcasts are in French. The French Cultural Center features dance performances and choral singing. Libreville is the site of the International Center for Bantu Civilizations, created in 1983, and Gabon's history and artifacts are featured at the Gabonese Museum. The Fang are particularly noted for their masks and basketry; they don masks for ceremonies and hunting and also carve protective figures on boxes called *bieri* that hold the remains of ancestors. In the south, soapstone carvings of female heads, called *pierres de m'bigou*, are highly prized and have become something of a national symbol.

Cultural Indicators

Libraries Number: 20
Volumes: —
Registered borrowers: —

Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

The languages of Gabon were not written down until the 19th century. As a result, the nation has a long history of oral storytelling. These stories transmit the values of the nation's various ethnic traditions. Common to these ethnic groups are morality tales, such as one involving a wasp that alienates his mate because of his pride in his trim waist and beautiful stripes. After Gabon nationalized, some folk heroes emerged. One is Charles Tchorere, who fought bravely with the French against the Germans in World War II.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Much of Gabon's entertainment is influenced by the West. Traditional pastimes have given way to music and television from the United States and France. Popular television shows in recent years have included *Dynasty*, *Dallas*, and soap operas as well as French film. The Gabonese enjoy central African music. A major form of entertainment is visiting friends, neighbors, and relatives; many such visits are unannounced, and gossip is the staple of conversation. Also popular is checkers, and bars and cafés commonly have checkerboards set up, often using bottle caps as the checkers.

ETIQUETTE

Because Gabonese culture is very communal, the people do not demand, nor do they receive, much personal space. Staring is common, and foreign visitors are often put off when Gabonese simply ask for items that they would like to have, such as watches and shoes. Nonetheless, the Gabonese tend to be reserved with strangers, both in social and business settings. Conversation in social settings tends to be slow to develop. When meeting friends, the Gabonese commonly exchange four kisses, two on each cheek. Men often walk hand in hand. Among the older generation, the sexes tend to segregate in social settings, and elderly people are held in high respect.

FAMILY LIFE

Family arrangements in Gabon tend toward the loose and unstructured. Many women give birth to several children

before marriage then have further children with a husband. Many "marriages" in Gabon, however, are never legal; rather, men and women simply pair off, the man refers to the woman as his "wife," and they are presumed married. While polygyny is legal, it is not practiced as much as it once was because of the expense. Extended families are large. When a woman marries, she generally moves to her husband's village and takes up residence with her husband's parents and brothers and sisters and their families as well as with grandparents, aunts and uncles, and nephews and nieces. In some Gabonese cultures families are matrilineal and include the mother's parents and siblings. Children tend to be raised communally and often roam about through villages until they are old enough to attend school.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Most Gabonese wear Western clothing. Suits and ties are common for men; women wear Western-style dresses, though these dresses are often elaborately embroidered or are made from colorful West African print fabrics. A traditional garment is the *boubou*, a robe that extends to at least the knee. Beneath, men wear loose matching pants and women wear double-wrapped *pagnes*, colorful strips of African cloth often also used for tying babies to mothers' backs.

SPORTS

The national sport in Gabon is soccer, although basketball and martial arts are popular as well. In 1993 a national tragedy struck when eighteen members of the Gabon soccer team lost their lives in an air crash off the country's coast. In 2004 the then unheralded Gabon soccer team shocked heavily favored Algeria in World Cup competition.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1960** Gabon is formally proclaimed an independent nation with Léon M'Ba as prime minister.
 - 1961** M'Ba is elected president and heads a government of national union with his opponent, Jean-Hilaire Aubame, as foreign minister.
 - 1963** Aubame is relieved of his foreign affairs portfolio.
 - 1964** Aubame leads a successful coup; French troops, responding to M'Ba's appeal, intervene and restore him to office; Aubame is sentenced to 10 years in prison.
- In new elections M'Ba's party, the Gabon Democratic Bloc, wins 31 seats to the 16 seats for the

- opposition, the Gabonese Democratic and Social Union.
- 1965** Dr. Albert Schweitzer dies at Lambaréné.
- 1967** M'Ba is reelected president but dies within months; Vice President Albert-Bernard (later Omar) Bongo succeeds to the presidency.
- 1968** Parti Démocratique Gabonais (PDG) is proclaimed the sole legal political party in the country.
- 1969** Gabon recognizes dissident Biafra in Nigerian civil war.
- 1972** Equatorial Guinea accuses Gabon of invading its islands; Gabon withdraws claims and the issue is settled.
- 1973** Bongo is reelected president.
- 1975** Leon Mebiame is named prime minister.
- 1978** Beninese workers are expelled.
At the Franco-African summit Bongo asks for an African joint force.
- 1979** As the sole candidate in the national presidential election, Bongo is reelected for a second seven-year term.
- 1980** In national municipal and legislative elections independents are permitted to run against official candidates.
- 1981** Over 10,000 Cameroonians are expelled following a riot in Douala, Cameroon, against a soccer team from Gabon.
- 1982** Members of the opposition Mouvement de Redressement National (MORENA) are arrested for "insulting the president" and sentenced to harsh prison terms, provoking a strong reaction from Paris.
- 1983** The Owenda-Booué section of the Trans-Gabonais Railway is opened by the French and Gabonese presidents.
- 1984** France agrees to supply Gabon with a 300 mw nuclear power plant, the first in black-ruled Africa.
- 1986** The Chernobyl accident in the USSR causes the cancellation of Gabon's nuclear power plant. MORENA political prisoners are freed.
- 1990** After much social unrest and increasing pressure from disgruntled workers, President Bongo legalizes opposition and names Casimir Oye-Mba prime minister.
In the country's first multiparty election Bongo's PDG wins 65 seats in the legislature, while opposition parties take the remaining 55.
- 1991** The government promulgates a new constitution.
- 1993** Omar Bongo is reelected president, a post held since 1967.
- 1995** The constitution, which has been in effect since 1991, is approved by referendum.

- 1996** An Ebola outbreak kills 13 in a remote Gabon village; in legislative elections the PDG wins 89 of 120 seats in the National Assembly and 53 of 91 Senate seats.
- 1998** Bongo is reelected, gaining two-thirds of the vote.
- 2001** An outbreak of the deadly Ebola virus occurs in December.
- 2002** The PDG retains a convincing majority in the parliamentary elections.
- 2003** The constitution is amended to allow the president, currently Omar Bongo, to run for office as many times as he wishes.
- 2004** Gabon strikes major deals to export oil to China and to allow China to mine iron ore in Gabon.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- World Fact Book: Gabon
<http://www.mapsofworld.com/country-profile/gabon.html>

THE GAMBIA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of the Gambia

ABBREVIATION

GM

CAPITAL

Banjul (formerly Bathurst)

HEAD OF STATE & HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

President Yahya Jammeh (from 1994)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Republic

POPULATION

1,593,256 (2005)

AREA

11,300 sq km (4,363 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Mandingo, Fula

LANGUAGES

English (official), Wolof, Mandinka

RELIGIONS

Islam, Christianity

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Dalasi

NATIONAL FLAG

Tricolor of red, blue, and green horizontal stripes divided by narrow white stripes

NATIONAL EMBLEM

Two heraldic lions holding a blue shield displaying a Mandingo hoe and a Locar ax with a scroll beneath. At the crest of the design is a blue knight's helmet with a green oil palm and peanuts sprouting from a mound. On the scroll is the national motto, "Progress, Peace, Prosperity."

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"For the Gambia, Our Homeland"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day), February 18 (Independence Day, National Day), April 24 (Republic Day), August 15 (Queen's Birthday), various Christian festivals, various Islamic festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

February 18, 1965

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

April 24, 1970; rewritten and approved by national referendum on August 8, 1996

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

The Gambia is on the western coast of Africa along both banks of the Gambia River, with a total land area of 11,300 sq km (4,363 sq mi). The greatest distance east to west is 470 km (292 mi), while the greatest distance north to south is only 47 km (29 mi). The country's Atlantic coastline is 80 km (50 mi) long.

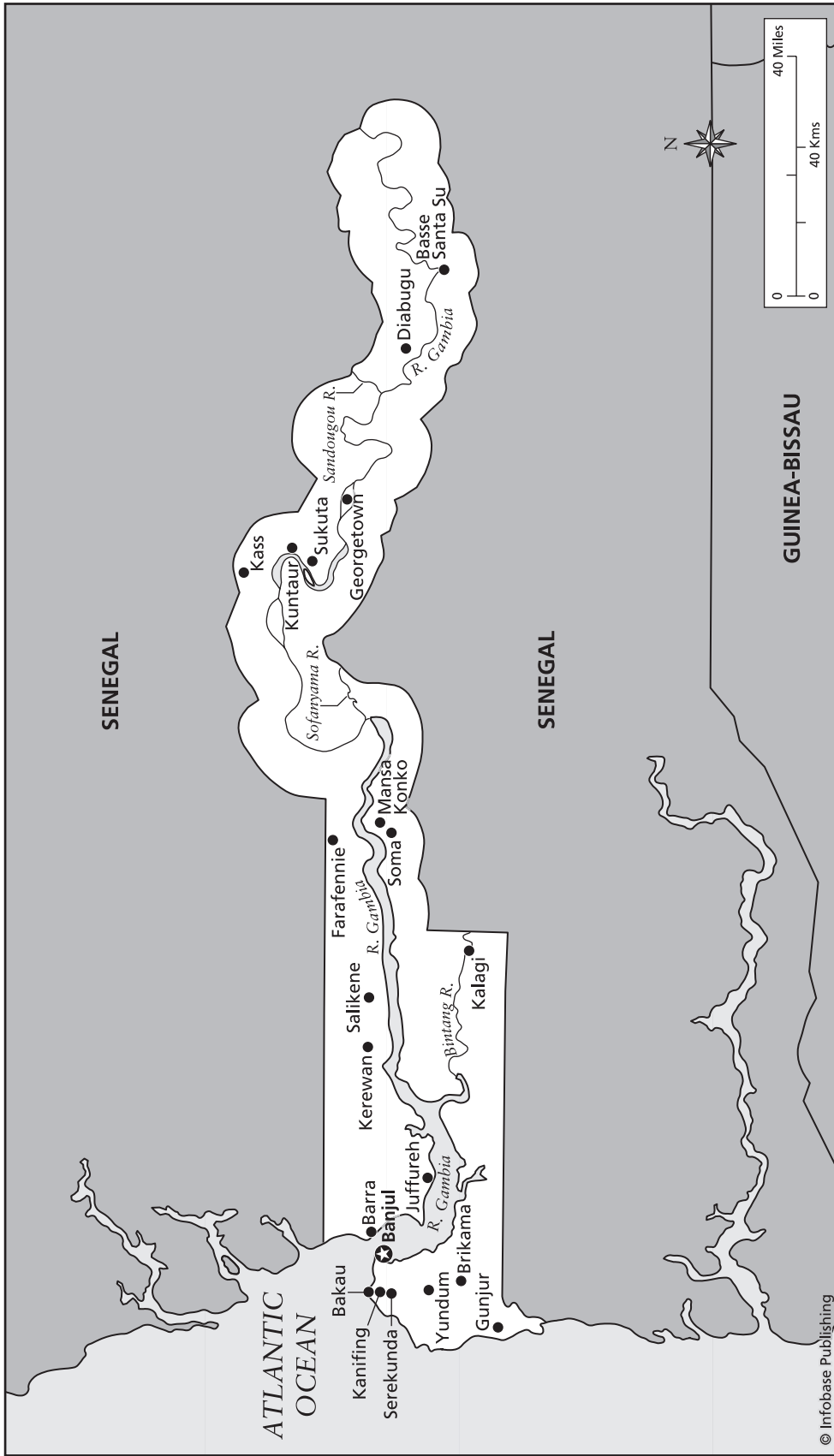
The Gambia is an enclave within Senegal, with which it shares its entire international border of 740 km (459 mi).

Most of the Gambia is low-lying, but the country is generally divided into three regions on the basis of topo-

graphical features: the valley floor, built up of alluvium, with areas known as Bango Faros; a dissected plateau edge consisting of sandy and often precipitous hills alternating with broad valleys; and a sandstone plateau that extends, in places, across the border into Senegal.

The Gambia River is one of the finest waterways in western Africa and is navigable as far as Kuntaur, 240 km (150 mi) upstream, by seagoing vessels and as far as Koina by vessels of shallow draft. Thick mangrove swamps border the lower reaches of the river, and behind these mangroves are the "flats," which are submerged completely during the wet season. Near Banjul the river is 4.8 km (3 mi) wide.

The Gambia



Geography

Area sq km: 11,300; sq mi 4,363
 World Rank: 158th
 Land Boundaries, km: Senegal 740
 Coastline, km: 80
 Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Atlantic Ocean 0
 Highest: 53
 Land Use %
 Arable Land: 25
 Permanent Crops: 0.5
 Forest: 48.1
 Other: 26.4

Population of Principal Cities (2003)

Brikama	63,000
Kanifing	322,410

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

The Gambian climate is subtropical, with a hot, wet season from June to October alternating with a cooler dry season from November to April. Average annual rainfall is about 1,016 mm (40 in), concentrated in the rainy season, with August being the wettest month. Near the coast the summer temperatures vary between 18°C and 32°C (65°F and 90°F), but inland the range is greater, from 10°C to 40°C (50°F to 105°F). From November to April cooler weather prevails, with temperatures as low as 7°C (45°F) in Banjul and surrounding areas. The dry season, however, is plagued by the dusty harmattan wind blowing from the Sahara. Floods are common in the wet season but not destructive. Receding floodwaters leave swamps, where rice is cultivated.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature
 Summer Coastal Region: 65°F to 90°F
 Summer Inland: 50°F to 105°F
 Winter: 45°F
 Average Rainfall: 40 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

The flora of the Gambia is similar to that found throughout West Africa. Mangrove trees are common, but mahogany, rosewood, oil palm, and rubber vine trees can be found as well. There are many varieties of fern, and the cassava and indigo plants are indigenous.

Fauna include lions, leopards, several kinds of deer, monkeys, bush cows, and wild boars. There are also many baboons, hyenas, jackals, and antelope. Hippopotami are found in the upper part of the river, and crocodiles abound

in the creeks. Over 400 species of birds can be observed, including bush fowl, bustards, guinea fowl, quail, pigeon and sand grouse; the Gambia is regarded as a major bird-watching destination. Dolphins can be spotted as far up-river as Albreda.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 1,593,256
 World Rank: 145th
 Density per sq km: 142.1
 % of annual growth (1999-2003): 2.9
 Male %: 50.0
 Female %: 50.0
 Urban %: 26.2
 Age Distribution %: 0-14: 44.7
 15-64: 52.6
 65 and over: 2.7
 Population 2025: 2,654,000
 Birth Rate per 1,000: 40.3
 Death Rate per 1,000: 12.08
 Rate of Natural Increase %: 2.9
 Total Fertility Rate: 5.46
 Expectation of Life (years): Males 52.76
 Females 56.87
 Marriage Rate per 1,000: —
 Divorce Rate per 1,000: —
 Average Size of Households: 8.7
 Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Despite its small size, the population of the Gambia is characterized by great diversity; no ethnic group commands an absolute numerical majority.

The Mandingo are the most westerly extension of the Manding group of people, who include the Bambara, Dyula, and Kuranko. The Fula, Fulani, Peul, and Fulbe are found in great numbers from Cameroon and Sudan to the Atlantic coast. The Jola are related to the Serer, with whom they maintain a close relationship. The Serahuli are a mixture of Mandingo, Berber, and Fulbe.

The Mandingo are found throughout the country and make up about 42 percent of the population. The Fula are concentrated in the east, the Wolof in the west, and the Serahuli in the easternmost region. Two other important communities are the Aku, who are numerous in the capital, and the Diola, who live in the west.

LANGUAGES

The official language of the Gambia is English, although less than 2 percent of the population speak it. Wolof and Mandinka are used as lingua francas and as trade languages. The more Islamized inhabitants speak Arabic.

RELIGIONS

The constitution does not specify a state religion, but about 90 percent of Gambians are Sunni Muslims. Though Islam was introduced in the 12th century, it was not until the Soninke-Marabout wars of the mid-1850s that most of the population was converted to Islam. Of the major tribes, the Mandingo, Fula, and Serahuli are almost entirely Muslim.

Christians are estimated to constitute about 9 percent of the population, concentrated in the capital. The most influential Christian tribe is the Aku, who until recently dominated the government and commerce. There is a Roman Catholic bishopric at Banjul.

Most of the Jola tribesmen follow traditional African religions.

Religious Affiliations

Muslim	1,434,000
Other	159,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Beginning in the 13th century the region that is now the Gambia was settled by the Wolof, Mandingo, and Fulani, all of them Islamized peoples from Mali. European exploration began with the discovery of the Gambia River by Portuguese navigators in 1555. The first English merchants arrived in 1587. The Royal Africa Company acquired a charter in 1687 and established a small fort on James Island, a small island in the river estuary. After suffering losses as a result of attacks by the French, the company was divested of its charter in 1750. From 1765 to 1783 the fort and the nearby settlement were part of the British colony of Senegambia, with the capital at St. Louis. In 1779 the French captured and destroyed Fort James, and in 1783 the greater part of the colony was handed over to the French, excluding the small enclave that is now the Gambia.

The Gambia was under British rule from 1816, when Captain Alexander Grant entered into a treaty with the chief of Kombo for the cession of Banjul Island, to 1963, when the Gambia attained full self-government. British power in the Gambia was never seriously challenged by internal or external forces. Most Gambians were exhausted by the half century of wars that preceded British arrival and welcomed Pax Britannica. The British system of indirect rule also left unchanged the political and social systems that had existed prior to the 19th century. British cultural penetration was limited to Bathurst (now Banjul). British economic and financial administration was characterized by conservatism; the British Colonial Office expected all territories to live within their budgets, and reserves were normally not used for development. British

contributions to the development of political institutions were more lasting. The Gambia is one of the few states in Africa to have remained faithful to the basic concepts of Westminster-type parliamentary democracy. The British departure was peaceful, and there is no significant anti-colonial sentiment in the country. The Gambia remains a member of the Commonwealth, and current relations with Britain are cordial.

The Gambia gained full independence in 1965 and became a republic in 1970. Sir Dawda Jawara, a Mandingo, and his People's Progressive Party remained in power almost continuously from independence to 1994. The national unity that characterized the first years of independence broke down during the 1970s, with growing resentment over the power of the Mandingo and Jawara's failure to deal with government corruption and demands for confederation with Senegal. In July 1981, when President Jawara was in London to attend the wedding of Prince Charles, the field force took over Banjul. The uprising was quelled, however, with the help of Senegalese troops dispatched under the terms of a 1965 mutual defense and security treaty.

In February 1982 Senegal and the Gambia announced plans for the creation of the Senegambian Confederation. The process of confederation continued during the mid-1980s. Tariff barriers were harmonized and transportation links improved. Important steps were taken to implement protocols on defense and security. The Gambia gendarmerie was organized on the Senegalese model and was trained and initially commanded by a Senegalese officer. The Gambian army was also trained by Senegalese. Despite the movement toward economic union, the two states continued to function as separate entities, and the confederation was formally dissolved in 1989 after Senegal unilaterally withdrew the troops it had stationed in the Gambia in the wake of the 1981 coup.

Following the breakup of the Senegambia Confederation, the Jawara government was overthrown in 1994 in a bloodless coup led by army officers who installed Lieutenant Yahya Jammeh as chairman of a five-member Armed Forces Provisional Ruling Council. Three days later the council named a 15-member government composed equally of military and civilian members. In 1995 Jammeh named a constitutional commission charged with drafting a constitutional document for the holding of multiparty elections. The regime survived many abortive coups until 1996, when Jammeh was elected to a five-year presidential term as the candidate for the newly formed Alliance for Patriotic Reorientation and Construction (APRC). In the 1997 legislative elections APRC won 33 of the 45 contested seats, giving the ruling party the two-thirds majority necessary to make constitutional changes. In 2001 Jammeh was reelected president in elections that were called fair and democratic by international observers. In 2002 the APRC swept the parliamentary elections, which were boycotted by the opposition. That year, too,

Sir Dawda Jawara returned to the Gambia for the first time since he was exiled in 1994. In 2004 the nation announced the discovery of large reserves of oil.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

- 1965–94** Dawda Jawara (prime minister 1965–70; president 1970–94)
1994– Yahya Jammeh (president)

CONSTITUTION

The basis of the Gambian government is the constitution of 1970, which established a republican and presidential form of government. Under the constitution executive power is vested in the president, who is both head of state and head of government and who is elected directly for a five-year term. He designates a vice president, who is required to belong to the same party as the president and who exercises the functions of a prime minister and leader of government business in the parliament. The president also appoints the cabinet and the principal civil servants.

Legislative power is in the hands of a unicameral parliament, which is elected for a five-year term. The Supreme Court is the highest in the land. There are also a Court of Appeal and various subordinate courts and Islamic courts.

A referendum in 1996 changed the parliament to a National Assembly and increased the membership to 45 directly elected members and four nominated members, which numbers have since risen further. The ban on political parties was also lifted.

PARLIAMENT

The national legislature is the National Assembly, a unicameral body currently consisting of 53 members who serve for five-year terms. Of those, 48 are elected by universal suffrage, while five are appointed by the president. The attorney general sits *ex officio*.

Among African countries, the Gambia is noted for its fair and free elections. Suffrage is universal over age 18.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Although the Gambia is a multiparty state, the Alliance for Patriotic Reorientation and Construction as of 2004 controlled 45 of the 48 elected seats in the National Assembly. The APRC is the political party of Yahya Jammeh, who seized power in 1994. Additional parties represented in the national assembly include the United Democratic Party (UDP), the National Reconciliation Party, and the People's Democratic Organization for Independence

and Socialism. The government banned several political parties in 1996, including the People's Progressive Party (PPP), which was headed by former president Dawda K. Jawara, and the National Convention Party, headed by the former vice president Sheriff Dibba. The PPP recently formed a coalition with the Gambian People's Party and the UDP to form a single party currently headed by Ousainou Darboe.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For purposes of regional administration, the Gambia is divided into five divisions and one city, each headed by a commissioner appointed by the president. The divisions are subdivided into 35 districts administered by chiefs with the help of village mayors and councillors. The districts are grouped into seven area councils, each with an elected majority. Each council has its treasury and is responsible for local government services. Banjul is a separate region with its own city council.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The judicial system is based on English common law as modified by the legislative enactments of the Gambian National Assembly. Under a Muslim Law Recognition Ordinance, a Muslim court exercises jurisdiction in cases between, or exclusively affecting, Muslims.

Three kinds of law operate in the Gambia: sharia, general, and customary law. Sharia law, governing certain aspects of social interaction of rural Muslims, is observed, even in the capital of Banjul, in marriage, inheritance, divorce, land tenure and utilization, local government, and all other civil and social relations originating in the traditional religious and ethnic situation of the country. General law, based on English statutes and modified to suit the Gambian context, governs criminal cases and trials and most organized business practices. If there were a conflict between general and sharia law, general law would prevail. Trial procedures in general law are carefully regulated to ensure protection of the rights of the accused.

The court system is headed by the Court of Appeal and the Supreme Court. The Court of Appeal consists of a president, justices of appeal, and judges of the Supreme Court *ex officio*. The Supreme Court consists of a chief justice and a lower judge. It has unlimited jurisdiction but is subject to the appellate power of the Court of Appeal. The subordinate courts are known as magistrate and divisional courts. These are courts of summary jurisdiction presided over by a magistrate or, in his absence, by two or more lay justices of the peace. In 1974 a system of traveling magistrates was introduced to speed up the administration of justice in rural areas. In some areas

chiefs retain the power to dispense justice according to customary law.

HUMAN RIGHTS

In terms of civil and political rights, the Gambia is classified as a free country. The Gambia is a multiparty, functioning democracy in which human rights are guaranteed by the constitution and observed in practice. Constitutional provisions against torture, cruel and inhuman punishment, disappearances, and arbitrary arrests and imprisonments are strictly enforced. The judiciary is independent of the executive and, since there are no armed forces, military courts do not exist. The legal system, modeled on that of the United Kingdom, ensures fair and open trials for all defendants.

Censorship is nonexistent, although a media law passed in 2002 required journalists and the press to register with a state-run commission. The law was widely condemned and eventually repealed in 2004, but a new law passed in 2004 mandated jail time for journalists found guilty of libel and sedition, the eliciting of widespread protest, especially after a prominent journalist who opposed the law was shot and killed. Opposition viewpoints are discussed openly both in the print media and on the radio. Although the Gambia is 90 percent Muslim, there is no discrimination against non-Muslim minorities. One of the few multiparty states in Africa, the Gambia provides full freedom, both in law and in practice, to form and promote political groups of any persuasion and to contest elections under any label. In 1980 the Gambia hosted the 37-nation Organization of African Unity (OAU) Conference on Human and People's Rights.

FOREIGN POLICY

The Gambia's closest external relations have been with two countries: Senegal, which borders the Gambia on three sides, and the United Kingdom, its former colonial master and the source of much of its foreign aid. For some time in the early 1980s the Gambia was a partner in the Confederation of Senegambia, but relations between the two countries rapidly deteriorated after the dissolution of the union in 1989. Since 1998 the Gambia has taken an active role in quelling the civil unrest in Guinea-Bissau. Further, the Gambia struggles to stem refugees, cross-border raids, arms smuggling, and political instability from the separatist movement in southern Senegal's Casamance region.

DEFENSE

A defense agreement made in 1965 with Senegal provides for a joint defense committee with a permanent secretariat. Military training may be provided by the United

Kingdom and Senegal, if requested by the Gambia. Following the 1981 coup the government reorganized the field force into a national gendarmerie in which service is voluntary. The gendarmerie is trained by Senegal. Total armed forces number 1,000. In 2003 the nation spent only about \$900,000 on defense, 0.3 percent of gross domestic product (GDP).

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	1,000
Military Manpower Availability:	350,256
Military Expenditures \$million:	0.9
as % of GDP:	0.3
as % of central government expenditures:	—
Arms Imports \$million:	—
Arms Exports \$million:	—

ECONOMY

The Gambia has no important mineral or other natural resources and has a limited agricultural base. About 75 percent of the population depends on crops and livestock for its livelihood. Small-scale manufacturing activity features the processing of peanuts, fish, and hides. Reexport trade has normally constituted a major segment of economic activity, but the 50 percent devaluation of the franc of the African Financial Community (CFA franc) in January 1994 made Senegalese goods more competitive and hurt the reexport trade. The Gambia benefited from a rebound in tourism after its decline in response to the military's takeover in July 1994, but tourism began to decline again in 2000. Short-run economic progress remains highly dependent on sustained bilateral and multilateral aid, responsible government economic management as forwarded by International Monetary Fund (IMF) technical help and advice, and expected growth in the construction sector. Annual GDP growth was estimated at 3 percent in 2004. Inflation remained high in 2004, at 14 percent.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion:	2.56
GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$:	1,700
GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %:	4.7
GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %:	1.7
Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:	
Agriculture:	46.8
Industry:	9.3
Services:	43.9
Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:	
Private Consumption:	83
Government Consumption:	13
Gross Domestic Investment:	20.0
Foreign Trade \$million: Exports:	156
Imports:	271

% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 1.6
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 38.0

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)				
1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
107.5	109.9	110.1	119.0	124.8

Finance

National Currency: Dalasi (GMD)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = GMD 19.9182
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 1.76
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 18.0
 Total External Debt \$million: 476
 Debt Service Ratio %: 14.0
 Balance of Payments \$million: -42
 International Reserves SDRs \$million: 105
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
 14.0

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 60.54
 per capita \$: 43.6
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 42.8

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: 1 July-30 June
 Revenues \$million: 58.63
 Expenditures \$million: 62.64
 Budget Deficit \$million: 4.01
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 46.8
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999-2003) %: 6.7
 Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares: 0.2
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 0.8
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 3.2
 Total Farmland % of land area: 25
 Livestock: Cattle 000: 328
 Sheep 000: 147
 Hogs 000: 17.8
 Chickens 000: 620
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters 000: 742
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 45.8

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 10.5
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: —

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of
 oil equivalent million: —
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 94

Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 66
 Net Energy Imports % of use: —
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: 29
 Production kW-hr million: 90
 Consumption kW-hr million: 80
 Coal Reserves tons billion: —
 Production tons million: —
 Consumption tons million: —
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
 Production cubic feet billion: —
 Consumption cubic feet billion: —
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
 Production barrels 000 per day: —
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 1.98
 Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$million: 271
 Exports \$million: 156
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999-2003): 3.3
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999-2003): 4.0
 Balance of Trade \$million: -42

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
China %	24.9	6.7
Senegal %	8.9	—
Brazil %	6.8	—
United Kingdom %	6.6	26.7
United States %	5.6	—
Netherlands %	5.0	—
India %	4.9	—
Belgium %	—	6.7
Germany %	—	6.7
Italy %	—	6.7
Malaysia %	—	6.7
Thailand %	—	6.7

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 2,700
 Paved %: 35.4
 Automobiles: —
 Trucks and Buses: —
 Railroad: Track Length km: —
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: —
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: —
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: —
 Airports: 1
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: —
 Length of Waterways km: 390

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 75
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: —
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: —

Communications

Telephones 000: 38.4
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.03
 Cellular Telephones 000: 100
 Personal Computers 000: 19
 Internet Hosts per million people: 357
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 16

ENVIRONMENT

Like many developing African nations, the Gambia suffers from environmental problems that have to do with supporting the population. The land is being deforested both for fuel and for the creation of agricultural lands. However, the land is also becoming more desert-like as farming methods and deforestation rob the land of essential nutrients. The country has a large number of waterborne diseases that routinely infect the population.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 48.1
 Average Annual Forest Change, 1990-2000, 000 ha: 4
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 4
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 0.21

LIVING CONDITIONS

The Gambia is a nation beset by living problems. The unemployment rate is high, at roughly 15 to 20 percent for people in the 20 to 50 age bracket. Poverty is rampant. Over 59 percent of the population has an income of under \$1 a day, and an astonishing 83 percent live on less than \$2 a day. Further, income distribution is poor: While the richest 10 percent enjoy over 38 percent of consumption, the poorest 10 percent get by on only 1.6 percent of consumption. Given these conditions, as well as inadequate water and sanitation, it is no surprise that the Gambia suffers from widespread infectious diseases. While the class of businessmen, professionals, and senior civil servants enjoy relatively comfortable lives, with cars and adequate housing, the bulk of the population, especially in rural areas, live in homes made of mud or corrugated metal. Cities such as Banjul are choked with traffic during rush hour, and the roads are generally in poor condition, especially after the rainy season.

HEALTH

While modern health care can be found in the cities, health in the Gambia is generally poor. Life expectancy is only a little under 55 years. The infant mortality rate is high, at over 73 deaths per 1,000 live births. Per capita spending on

health care is only about \$19. Tropical diseases, many of them waterborne, are a major cause of death. Over 27 percent of deaths are caused by intestinal diseases, and each year the swampy areas around the river, breeding grounds for mosquitoes, lead to 17,340 cases of malaria for every 100,000 people. Additionally, each year there are 283 new cases of tuberculosis for every 100,000 people. A large proportion of the Gambian population, up to 0.4 percent, is blind; nearly one-fifth of blindness is caused by trachoma. About 6,800 people were living with AIDS in 2003.

Health

Number of Physicians: 42
 Number of Dentists: 6
 Number of Nurses: 149
 Number of Pharmacists: 6
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 4
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 73.48
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 540
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 6.4
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 19
 HIV Infected % of adults: 1.2
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 90
 Measles: 90
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 53
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 82

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Diet varies with ethnic group. The Mandingo rely on rice, supplemented by millet, as do the Jola. The Wolof, Fulbe, and Serahuli rely on millet and sorghum. Where cattle are kept, millet is often cooked with curdled milk. Common fruits include bananas, grapefruit, papayas, mangoes, and oranges; common vegetables, grown during the dry season, include tomatoes, eggplant, okra, shallots, and onions. Traditional Gambian dishes include various types of stews made with chicken or fish cooked with vegetables, leaves, and rice, though meat tends to be reserved for festivals or other special occasions, and most fish is smoked or sun-dried.

From 1998 to 2003, 17 percent of Gambian children suffered from low birth weight. Further, 4 percent of children under age five were severely underweight, with an additional 13 percent moderately underweight. Nearly one in five children under age five suffered from moderate to severe stunting, and nearly one in 10 suffered from wasting.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 27.3
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,400
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 142.6
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 38.8

STATUS OF WOMEN

The education of women is increasingly accepted, and women participate in both professions and political life, although only about one-third of Gambian women are literate. Marriages are still often arranged, but there is increasing freedom of personal choice. Family planning, focused on the health and welfare of mother and child, remains controversial but is gaining acceptance. The Women's Bureau in the Office of the President actively promotes debate on women's issues.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 13
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: —
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: —

WORK

The most recent statistics available show a labor force in the Gambia of about 400,000. A total of 75 percent of people make their living through agriculture, 19 percent through industry, commerce, and services, and 6 percent through government. Per capita GDP is only \$1,700 per year. Farming is often done with animal labor, including ox plows and weeding machines pulled by donkeys. Women tend to be responsible for rice cultivation and dry-season gardening, men for clearing the land and growing millet and groundnuts. The Gambia has some manufacturing, mostly in such industries as groundnut processing, fish smoking, and furniture making. Many people make livings operating small shops or market stalls, others in the tourist trade. Still others make their livings through smuggling.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 400,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 45.2
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 75
 Industry, Commerce, and Services: 19
 Government: 6
 Unemployment %: —

EDUCATION

The Gambia has not yet introduced universal, free, and compulsory education.

Primary education lasts for seven years and is followed by a junior secondary cycle of four or five years and a senior secondary cycle of two years. Secondary edu-

cation culminates in the "advanced" level examination of the West African Examination Council.

The academic year runs from September to July. The medium of instruction is English throughout.

Private and missionary schools are integrated within the school system. Private schools account for 2 percent of primary school enrollment but over 28 percent of secondary-school enrollment. Vocational training is provided at Banjul and Sapu.

Primary- and secondary-education policies and programs are coordinated by the Ministry of Education. For purposes of educational administration, the country is divided into two regions.

Many Gambians who wish to pursue higher studies go abroad rather than attending one of the Gambia's three tertiary institutions: The University of the Gambia (established in 1999), Gambia College, and the Gambia Technical Training Institute. Gambia College at Brikama offers postsecondary courses in teacher training, agriculture, and health.

According to 2003 estimates, only 40 percent of the population can read or write by the age of 15; the figure is 48 percent for males and 33 percent for females.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 40.1
 Male %: 47.8
 Female %: 32.8
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: —
 First Level: Primary schools: 250
 Teachers: 4,708
 Students: 178,288
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 37.9
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 78.8
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 32
 Teachers: 2,365
 Students: 59,793
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 25.5
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 32.7
 Third Level: Institutions: —
 Teachers: —
 Students: —
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: —
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 2.8

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

As a poor nation, the Gambia devotes few of its resources to science and technology. The Ministry of Agriculture has a number of agencies that carry out research in such areas as crops, livestock, fisheries, soil, and water. Gambia Horticultural Enterprises conducts horticultural research. Some research is conducted at the University of the Gambia and at such places as the School of Public Health at Gambia College. A two-year technical-training program is offered at the Gambia Technical Training Institute.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$000: 80
 Patent Applications by Residents: 1

MEDIA

There are two daily newspapers in the country: the *Point* and the state-owned *Gambia Daily*. Six nondaily newspapers are published, of which the *Gambia News Bulletin*, published three times per week by the government information office, enjoys the widest circulation. Six periodicals are also published, with a total circulation of 4,000.

Gambia News Agency, located in Banjul, is the country's national news agency.

Radio Gambia, the official broadcasting service, operates one shortwave transmitter and one FM transmitter. There are four private commercial radio stations and three community ones. Television service began in 1995; the government operates one channel serving about 60 percent of the country.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 1
 Total Circulation 000: 2
 Circulation per 1,000: 1.7
 Books Published: 10
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers 000: 196
 per 1,000: 164
 Television sets 000: 4
 per 1,000: 4

CULTURE

A number of Gambian authors have written books in English, including the playwright Gabriel Roberts, the poets Tijan Sallah and Swaebou Conateh, the novelists Lenrie Peters and Ebou Diba, and the short-story writer Nan Humasi. In recent years collections of Gambian folktales have been published. The most prominent Gambian graphic arts are decorative and ceremonial masks. Music is a primary form of cultural expression. Men often sing as they work the fields or paddle a canoe; the Fula play fiddles as they tend cattle, and young men play flutes while guarding fields. Group singing takes place during games or as workers till their fields, and singing is an important part of ceremonial occasions, to cure the sick, or to bring rain. The kora is a 21-stringed instrument unique to the Gambia, and musicians who play the *salam*, an ancestor of the guitar, go through a long apprenticeship and are held in high regard, actually representing a caste.

Cultural Indicators

Libraries Number: 5
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

The Gambia has a rich tradition of oral folklore. Folktales and legends are related by professional storytellers called griots, to whom the Wolof refer as *gewel* and the Mandingo as *jalola*. The stories are often told to the accompaniment of a stringed instrument. One group of folktales, about the Hare and the Hyena, is similar to the Brer Rabbit and Brer Fox stories in English. Hare is sometimes himself seen as a *gewel*, sometimes as a trickster. Other groups of tales deal with the theme of injustice and how matters are set right through the agency of a spirit or an old woman. Many tales are intended to enforce cultural and family norms, such as respect for elders, bravery, and obedience to parents.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

In addition to listening to Radio Gambia, Gambians have been able to watch television since 1995. Videocassettes are available in some stores. Additionally, small movie theaters show films, primarily from India. Tourists enjoy watching the National Dance Troupe, and weekend wrestling tournaments are popular. Gambians play a form of checkers, pachisi (called *ludo*), and *wari*, a board game in which counters are moved around a board. Gambians are also skilled at folk arts and crafts, including wood carving, gold- and silver-smithing, leatherwork, weaving, basketwork, and especially dyeing. Some Gambians use paper to make lanterns in the form of ships or houses. During the Christmas season these lanterns are lit from within and paraded about town.

ETIQUETTE

Gambians have an elaborate code that governs greetings, which can differ depending on the time of day, the place, the social status of the parties, and whether the occasion is formal or informal. The normal Arabic greeting is "*Salaam aleekum*," roughly meaning "Peace be with you." This is followed by an inquiry such as "Have you spent the day in peace?" It is important to know another's surname in order to be able to honor the person's clan. It is also important to inquire about the other person's relatives. Generally, a lower-ranking person initiates greetings with superiors,

while people of equal rank often greet one another simultaneously. Only after these greetings are exchanged can business be conducted. Also important to Gambians is a sense of peace and tranquility. Accordingly, most are soft-spoken and avoid conflict and confrontation.

FAMILY LIFE

Patterns of marriage and family life tend to differ between ethnic groups, many of which are changing with modernization. Marriage is regulated by three sets of laws. Customary law applies to non-Muslims, while sharia law applies to Muslims. General law is a legacy of British colonialism. Polygyny is allowed among most ethnic groups. Women in either polygynous or monogamous marriages have the right to divorce their husbands and remarry. Most marriages are arranged, with people tending to marry someone from their own caste or class. Family units in rural areas typically live in compounds, with houses arranged around a central courtyard. The family is generally patrilineal. Men (including adolescent boys) and women generally live in separate sections, with small children staying with their mothers and wives visiting their husbands at night. The oldest man in the family is generally a kind of ruler, settling disputes and allocating land. While the Jola and some Fulbe tend to be egalitarian, most Gambian ethnic groups are highly stratified socially.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Western-style clothing is generally worn in offices, and younger people enjoy copying American fashions, wearing jeans, T-shirts, and baseball caps; there is an active market for secondhand clothing from the United States, as in much of Africa. Men wear elaborate robes for religious purposes and at special events. Women usually wear long skirts with a loose upper garment and another piece of cloth for carrying children on their back. They nearly always wear headscarves, tied in various fashions. Hairstyles among women tend to be elaborate, and differences in hairstyle reflect age differences.

SPORTS

Water sports are popular in Gambia, with fishing (both in the ocean and in the Gambia River), swimming, and windsurfing leading the way. The Gambia Sailing Club in Banjul sponsors races, including an annual race to Dog Island. The Banjul Golf Club has a course near the ocean, and the Gambia Cricket Association organizes matches. The major sport, however, is soccer, played in a large stadium built by the Chinese. The soccer star Edrissa Sonko is a national hero among Gambian youth.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1965** The Gambia attains full independence within the Commonwealth, with David (later Dawda) Jawara as prime minister. Proposal to establish a republic is defeated in a referendum by a narrow margin.
- 1967** The Muslim Congress Party merges with the ruling People's Progressive Party (PPP).
- 1968** Sherif Sisay, on being expelled from the PPP, forms a rival political party, the Progressive People's Alliance.
- 1970** Republic status is approved by voters in a second referendum. The Gambia becomes a republic, with Dawda Jawara as first president.
- 1971** The dalasi is introduced as the Gambia's national currency.
- 1972** In national elections the ruling PPP wins 28 of 32 seats in House of Representatives; President Jawara is reelected.
- 1973** The capital, Bathurst, is renamed Banjul. President Jawara visits Senegal.
- 1975** Two new opposition parties are founded: the National Convention Party and the National Liberation Party.
- 1976** President Senghor of Senegal visits Banjul; new cooperation agreements are signed between the two countries, including one that establishes the Gambia Basin Development Organization.
- 1977** In election to the House of Representatives the ruling PPP gains 28 of 35 seats.
- 1979** The PPP holds its first congress in 16 years. President Jawara announces formation of the National Planning Commission.
- 1981** Members of the field force unit of the police force stage a coup and seize Banjul while President Jawara is in London. Senegalese forces help quell the revolt under a 1965 mutual defense and security treaty. A state of emergency is declared; over 1,000 people are killed.
- 1982** The Confederation of Senegambia comes into being, with Jawara as vice president of the new federation. Jawara's PPP wins 35 seats in elections to the House of Representatives.
- 1987** Jawara is reelected president. His People's Progressive Party retains its overwhelming majority in the House of Representatives, capturing 31 seats. The opposition National Convention Party wins five.
- 1989** The Senegambian Confederation is officially dissolved.
- 1991** Gambia and Senegal sign a bilateral agreement of friendship and cooperation.

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- 1994** A military junta seizes power under Lieutenant Yahya Jammeh.
- 1996** Jammeh is elected president of the country over three other candidates.
- 1997** In national elections, the Alliance for Patriotic Reorientation and Construction gains 33 of the National Assembly's 45 elected seats.
- 2001** Jammeh is reelected president.
- 2002** Alliance for Patriotic Reorientation and Construction gains 45 of the 48 elected seats in the National Assembly; elections boycotted by the opposition.
Sir Dawda Jawara returns to the nation for the first time since his 1994 exile.
The Gambia passes restrictive media laws, repealed in 2004.
- 2004** Government passes new law requiring imprisonment for journalists guilty of libel and sedition; law meets with widespread protest, especially after a prominent journalist who opposed the law was gunned down.
President announces discovery of large oil reserves.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Official Site of the Republic of the Gambia
<http://www.gambia.gm>

GEORGIA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Georgia (Sakartvelo)

ABBREVIATION

GE

CAPITAL

Tbilisi

HEAD OF STATE AND HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

President Mikheil Saakashvili (from 2004)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Republic

POPULATION

4,677,401 (2005)

AREA

69,700 sq km (26,911 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Georgian, Armenian, Russian, Azeri, Ossetian

LANGUAGES

Georgian, Russian, Armenian

RELIGION

Russian Orthodox, Georgian Orthodox, Muslim, Armenian Apostolic

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Lari

NATIONAL EMBLEM

On a red shield is displayed Saint George slaying the dragon, in silver; the shield is surmounted by the royal crown of Georgia (the Iberian crown) and flanked by two lions rampant, all in gold. The motto "Strength in unity" is written in the Mkhedruli script of the Georgian alphabet on a silver banner at the base.

NATIONAL FLAG

Large central red cross dividing a white field, with four smaller red crosses in each of the four smaller white fields. The central cross, known as Saint George's cross, represents the patron saint of Georgia. The four crosslets are said to represent four of the Holy Wounds of Christ.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"Freedom"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

May 26 (Independence Day)

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

April 9, 1991

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

August 24, 1995

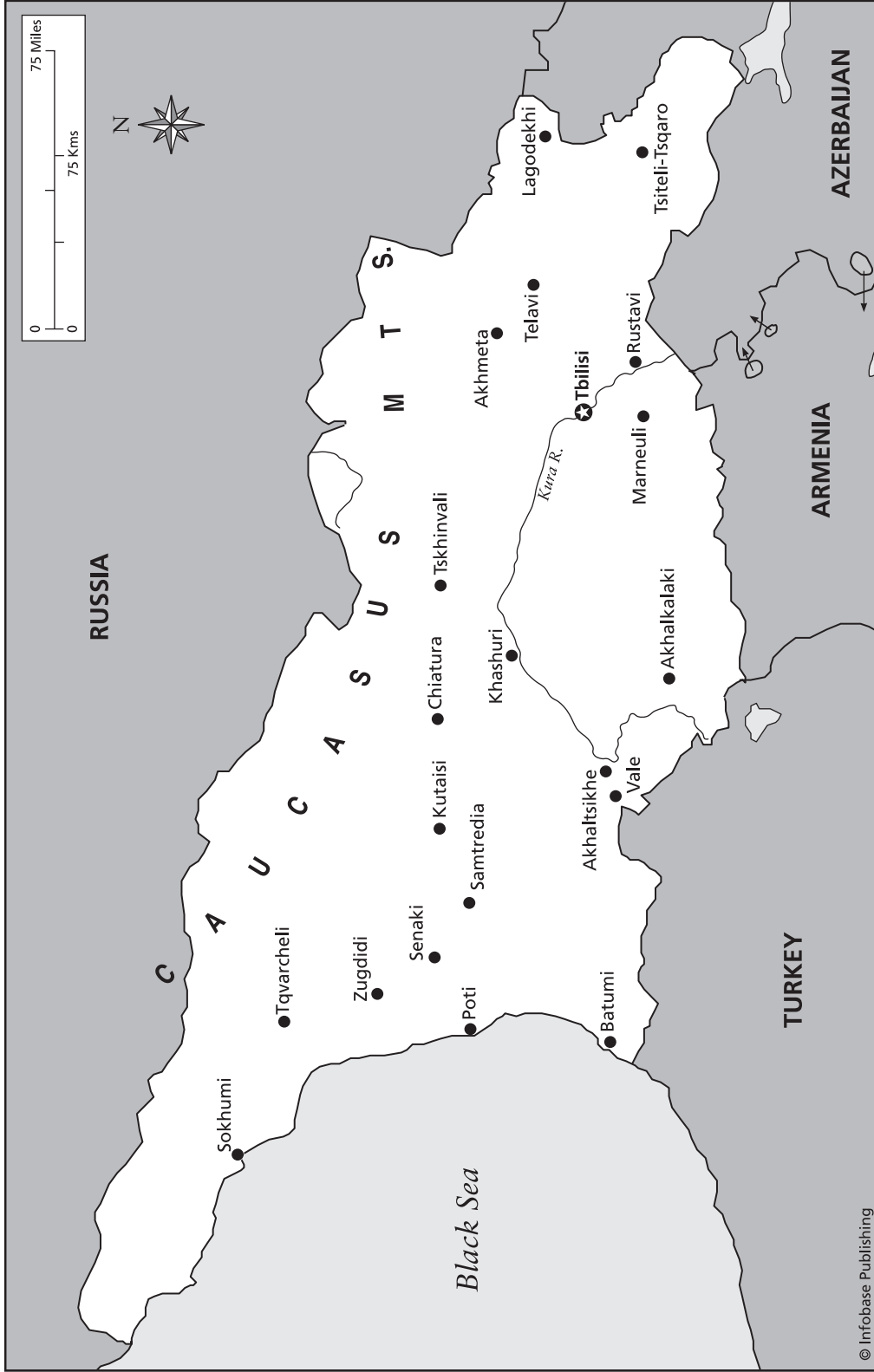
GEOGRAPHIC FEATURES

Georgia is situated in the southwestern Caucasus on the northern periphery of the subtropical zone, between 41°07' and 43°35' north latitudes and 40°05' and 46°44' west longitudes. Georgia borders Turkey and Armenia to the south, Russia to the north, Azerbaijan to the east, and the Black Sea to the west. The length of its land borders totals 1,461 km (908 mi), with 310 km (193 mi) of coastline. Georgia covers 69,700 sq km (26,911 sq mi). Its area exceeds that of such countries as the Netherlands, Belgium, Switzerland, Denmark, and Israel.

Georgia is a mountainous country. Land below 1,967 ft occupies only 31 percent of the total area; 44 percent of its territory lies between 1,967 ft and 5,900 ft and 25 percent above 5,900 ft. Mountainous areas are located mainly along the northern and southern borders. The highest mountains are Shkhara, 5,201 m (17,059 ft); Janga, 5,059 m (16,598 ft); Mkinvartsveri (Kazbek), 5,048 m (16,562 ft); Shota Rustaveli, 4,866 m (15,965 ft); Tetnaldi, 4,858 m (15,939 ft); and Ushba, 4,700 m (15,420 ft).

Georgia is divided into three major geographical zones: the northern highlands Caucasus (Kavkasioni in Georgian), the intermountain lowlands, and the uplands

Georgia



of southern Georgia. Kavkasioni and the southern upland are joined by the Likhi Range, which divides Georgia into western and eastern parts.

The main topographical unit of the Kavkasioni highlands is the main range of the Caucasus (average heights of 9,843 ft–11,483 ft above sea level). Caucasus ranges have steep slopes and are separated by deep river basins.

The intermountain lowland covers two-fifths of Georgian territory. The lowland is narrowest in its central part and widens out to the east and the west. The intermountain lowland consists of two major units: on the east, the Iberia lowland, consisting of the Shida Kartli Plain, the Alazani Plain, and the Bri Plateau, and, on the west, the Kolkheti lowland, made up of the Kolkheti lowland itself, the Imereti Plain, and premountain hills.

The highest summit of the southern upland, Mount Didi Abuli, reaches 10,844 ft (average height—6,562 ft). The southern upland comprises the Meskheta-Trialeti, Dmanisi, and Gomareti volcanic plateaus and Arsiani, Meskheta, Shavsheti, Trialeti, Samsari, and other minor ranges, which are dissected by canyon-like river gorges.

The hydrological network is not equally distributed in Georgia. Compared with the eastern part of the country, the western part is highly saturated with river basins. The rivers of Georgia belong to the basins of the Black and Caspian seas. The Mtkvari River—the longest at 1,364 km (847 mi)—with its numerous tributaries belongs to the Caspian basin. The Black Sea basin rivers include the Rioni (327 km; 203 mi) and Enguri (213 km; 132 mi). The largest lake is Lake Paravani (37.5 sq km; 14.4 sq mi), and the deepest are Lake Ritsa (116 m; 448 ft) and Lake Amtkeli (72–122 m; 286–400 ft), both of which are impounded lakes.

Geography

Area sq km: 69,700; sq mi 26,911
 World Rank: 118th
 Land Boundaries, km: Armenia 164; Azerbaijan 322; Russia 723; Turkey 252
 Coastline, km: 310
 Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Black Sea 0
 Highest: Mt'a Shkhara 5,201
 Land Use %
 Arable Land: 11.4
 Permanent Crops: 3.9
 Forest: 43.0
 Other: 41.7

Population of Principal Cities (2002)

Batumi	121,806
Kutaisi	185,965
Rustavi	116,384
Tbilisi	1,073,345

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Georgian climate varies markedly. The relatively small territory is covered by different climatic zones, which are determined by distance from the Black Sea and by altitude. Climatic zones range from the humid subtropical to the glacial. Georgia's climate is affected by subtropical influences from the west. The main range of the Caucasus protects Georgia from the cold northern winds. The Likhi Range serves as the dividing line between western and eastern Georgia. In western Georgia the dominant subtropical climate features high humidity and heavy precipitation (average is 1,600 mm). The midwinter average temperature is 8°C (46°F), and the midsummer average is 22°C (72°F). Eastern Georgia has a more continental, moderately humid subtropical climate, with a considerably lower level of precipitation (average of 600 mm). The average temperature in summer is 20°–24°C (68–72°F) and in winter is 2°–4°C (36–39°F).

High climate zonality is typical for the mountainous areas. Alpine and highland regions have distinct microclimates. Alpine conditions start at 2,100 m.

Glaciers are found only on the main range of the Caucasus (688 sq km) and occupy 508 sq km. The regular snow line begins at 2,800 m.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature
 July: 73.8°F
 January: 27.3°F
 Average Rainfall: 20 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Georgia is heavily forested, with 43 percent of the country covered by forest. At higher elevations there are alpine meadows and coniferous forests. At lower elevations deciduous forests cover the land.

Georgia is home to 100 species of mammals, 330 species of birds, 48 species of reptiles, 11 species of amphibians, and 160 species of fish. Some species that are unique to Georgia include the Dagestanian and the Caucasian goats, the striped hyena, the Caucasian mink, the Gudaurian field vole, the steppe eagle, and the Caucasian salamander.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 4,677,401
 World Rank: 113th
 Density per sq km: 73.8
 % of annual growth (1999-2003): -0.7

(continues)

Population Indicators *(continued)*

Male %:	47.6
Female %:	52.4
Urban %:	—
Age Distribution %:	
0–14:	18.1
15–64:	65.9
65 and over:	16.0
Population 2025:	4,341,000
Birth Rate per 1,000:	10.25
Death Rate per 1,000:	9.09
Rate of Natural Increase %:	0.1
Total Fertility Rate:	1.41
Expectation of Life (years):	
Males	72.59
Females	79.67
Marriage Rate per 1,000:	2.7
Divorce Rate per 1,000:	0.4
Average Size of Households:	4.1
Induced Abortions:	43,549

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Out of 4.6 million inhabitants, 70 percent are of Georgian ethnicity. More than 80 other nationalities make up the balance, including Armenians (8.1 percent), Russians (6.3 percent), Azeris (5.7 percent), Ossetes (3 percent), Greeks (1.9 percent), Abkhazians (1.8 percent), Jews (0.5 percent), and others (2.6 percent).

The ancestors of today's ethnic Georgians were mentioned in Assyrian records about 3,000 years ago. Although Georgians are divided into a dozen distinctive regional groups, they are all highly conscious of Georgian common traditions and cultures. The Georgians constitute an absolute majority in West Georgia (81.4 percent of total population). Abkhazians mainly reside in the northwest, Greeks in the central part of the country, Azeris and Armenians in the south, and Jews, Kurds, and Slavs in larger urban centers.

The exact ethnic makeup and origin of Abkhazians are debated political issues. Most scholars trace their ancestry back at least two millennia in Georgia and consider them Georgians by origin. Present-day Abkhazians have been a minority within Abkhazia, forming less than 20 percent of the population. There is an autonomous region of South Ossetes, created by the Bolsheviks in 1922 as part of a divide-and-rule policy in Georgia.

LANGUAGES

The Georgian language is the state language of the country. The Georgian alphabet is among 14 existing throughout the world. Georgian script is an independent, unique system, conveying the sound composition of Georgian speech and forming the written and printed symbols of the national Georgian language. It belongs to the Kartvelian group of Ibero-Caucasian languages. It has 33 letters (five vowels and 28 con-

sonants) and uses the original script, which has been only slightly modernized.

Most people in urban areas can speak Russian. Ethnic minorities speak their native language in addition to Russian and Georgian. After Russian, English is the most widely spoken foreign language, followed by German, French, and Turkish. The Ossetes speak an Iranian language.

RELIGIONS

Two-thirds of the population belongs to the Georgian Orthodox Church, 10 percent to the Russian Orthodox Church, and approximately 8 percent to the Armenian Apostolic Church; about 1 to 2 percent of the population is of the Roman Catholic faith. About 11 percent of the total population are adherents of Islam. Jews represent 0.5 percent of the population and live mainly in urban areas.

The Orthodox Church of Georgia traces its foundation to the time of Constantine the Great. Georgia adopted Christianity in 337. In the fifth century (around 466–68) the Georgian Church gained autocephaly, and in the 11th century the Georgian Patriarchate was formed. The liturgy is celebrated in Georgian.

Religious Affiliations

Georgian Orthodox	3,040,000
Muslim	514,500
Armenian Apostolic	374,000
Russian Orthodox	468,000
Other	280,500

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

It has been a very long time since humans arrived in Georgia. Near the town of Dmanisi, a human skull 1.8 million years old was found. Archaeological evidence attests that there was a flourishing Neolithic culture in the fifth and fourth centuries B.C. in the territory of modern Georgia. The western region was known as Egrisi (or Kolkheti), and eastern Georgia was known as Iberia. In about the fourth century B.C. Georgia was united into a single kingdom with Mtskheta as its capital.

In the fifth century the capital of Georgia moved to Tbilisi. Until the seventh century control over Georgia was contested by the Persian and Byzantine empires. The region was conquered by the Arabs in the seventh century and by the Turkish Seljuks in the 11th century. However, in the 11th century, unified Georgia, with its capital in Kutaisi, was one of the major powers in the region.

King David IV the Builder (1089–1125), one of the greatest Georgian kings, expelled the Turks in the early 12th century and reunited Georgia as a kingdom. Dur-

ing the reign of Queen Tamar (1184–1213) the Georgian kingdom reached the apex of its political might. This was the era of great architectural projects and flourishing literature, including the great epic poem *The Knight in the Panther's Skin*, dedicated to Queen Tamar by Shota Rustaveli.

Georgian domination in the Caucasus was crushed by the Mongol invaders in the 12th century, which led to the breakup of Georgia into individual principalities. Thereafter Georgia was divided into spheres of influence between Ottoman Turkey and Safavid Iran until the 18th century. In the 18th century Vakhtang VI compiled *Kartlis Tskhovreba* (History of Georgia). A Georgian kingdom was proclaimed in the mid-18th century. The Russian czar absolved the last Georgian king in 1801, and Georgia became a part of the Russian Empire.

In 1918 Georgia became an independent republic. However, in 1921 a Soviet regime was installed by the Red Army. In 1922 it became one of the four republics constituting the newly formed USSR. In 1924, after an attempted uprising led by Georgian Mensheviks, more than 5,000 patriots were executed. Georgia had to pass through the ordeal of industrialization and collectivization, suffering severely during the depression of the 1930s and repression of 1937–38. Three hundred thousand Georgian soldiers fell in World War II.

The struggle for independence assumed the form of a widespread national liberation movement and brought victory to Georgians in late 1989. In 1990 multiparty elections were held, and on April 9 a new national parliament declared the independence of Georgia. The well-known dissident Zviad Gamsakhurdia was elected the first president of independent Georgia. Although earlier he had been a victim of totalitarianism, he showed neither a desire nor an ability to maintain a dialogue with the growing opposition.

On December 11, 1990, in reaction to a declaration by Ossetian separatists to secede from Georgia and join with Russia, the Supreme Council of Georgia abolished the autonomous region of South Ossetes as a political and administrative unit. Fights broke out between Georgians and Ossetians and did not abate until a peacekeeping force of Russians, Georgians, and Ossetians was deployed.

In the winter of 1991–92 a military rebellion by the opposition forced Gamsakhurdia to leave Georgia. Unable to cope with many international, economic, and other domestic problems, the rebel Military Council formed a State Council, inviting Eduard Shevardnadze, the former USSR minister of foreign affairs, to Georgia. In October 1992 a new Georgian parliament was elected, along with Shevardnadze as head of state.

After Georgian independence Abkhazian separatists tried to make Abkhazia a part of Russia. Heavy fighting between Georgian troops and Abkhazian separatists started after the central authorities sent troops to protect supply routes in August 1992. The Abkhazian side

received support from Russia, and as a result more than 250,000 Georgian refugees were expelled by October 1993. In the same month, the Georgian government was forced to seek Russian military help and joined the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). In 1994 Abkhazian separatists agreed to a UN peacekeeping force, which consisted of a Russian contingent.

In 1995 Shevardnadze survived a bomb attack, and he was reelected president with 76.8 percent of the vote. A new constitution was promulgated in the same year. The rebel district of Abkhazia conducted elections to its own assembly in 1996, which Georgia declared invalid. At Georgia's request, the CIS imposed sanctions on the district to force Abkhazia to rejoin Georgia. Brokered by Moscow, a new accord was reached with South Ossetian representatives in 1996. Despite this accord, South Ossetians held a direct presidential election. In 1998 Shevardnadze survived a second assassination attempt. He was reelected president in April 2000.

Tensions over Abkhazia continued into the new millennium. In March 2001 Georgia and the separatist region of Abkhazia signed an accord agreeing not to use military force, but in October clashes erupted between Abkhaz troops and Georgian paramilitaries. Tensions increased when Russia accused Georgia of harboring Chechen terrorists, and in 2002 the Russian president warned of military action if Georgia did not root them out. In the parliamentary elections of 2003 many international observers noted irregularities, leading to widespread protests and seizure of the parliament building by demonstrators. Under pressure, Shevardnadze resigned, and Mikheil Saakashvili won the election in a landslide in early 2004. Immediately Saakashvili faced problems with the autonomous region of Ajaria, which refused to recognize the Georgian president's authority, claimed that Georgian forces were about to invade the region, and blew up all the bridges connecting Ajaria and Georgia. Similar problems occurred in South Ossetia, which held parliamentary elections unrecognized by Tsibili.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1990–92	Zviad Gamsakhurdia
1992–2003	Eduard Shevardnadze
2004–	Mikheil Saakashvili

CONSTITUTION

On August 24, 1995, the parliament of Georgia adopted the new constitution. Separation of powers is declared in the constitution as the basic principle of organization. According to the constitution, a publicly elected president directly governs the executive branch and possesses other important powers, but he is not authorized to dis-

miss the parliament. The president is simultaneously the head of state and the head of executive authority; the state minister is a part of the government who directs the president's office and is entrusted by the president to fulfill his separate tasks. The parliament independently exercises the legislative functions and supervises executive bodies.

PARLIAMENT

Georgia has a single-chamber parliament consisting of 235 members. The members of the parliament are elected by proportional (150 deputies) and plurality-majority (85 deputies) electoral systems. A party must gain more than 7 percent of the vote in order to be seated in the parliament. The last parliamentary elections were held in March 2004, and only two parties could get more than 7 percent of nationwide votes. Those were the National Movement–Democrats, which won 67.6 percent of the votes and 135 seats, and the Rightist Opposition, which won 7.6 percent of the votes and 15 seats.

POLITICAL PARTIES

There are more than 60 parties and up to 10 blocs registered in Georgia. Although they represent different political platforms, most of them are small and lack well-developed party organization.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The administrative division of Georgia is organized on three levels. At the regional level the country is divided into 12 territories: two autonomous republics (AR)—Abkhazia and Ajara—which have constitutions, nine regions, and the independent city of Tbilisi. The local government at the regional level is a branch of the national government, except for the ARs. The president appoints district governors, who liaise with the local authorities within the regions.

The Ajara AR is governed by its Supreme Council, which elects a chairman among its members. The Abkhazia AR has unilaterally seceded from Georgia, and its authorities are not recognized.

At the second level, the *rayon*, the local government is twofold, comprising a district governor, a presidential appointee who represents the national government and is in charge of the executive branch, and a *rayon* council, a publicly elected body. At this level there are 53 *rayons* and seven towns.

At the third level, each *rayon* is split into *sakrebulo* (1,031), which are administered by directly elected councils.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The legal system of Georgia is based on the civil law system. The president represents the executive branch, and the parliament has legislative power. Judicial branches are represented by the Supreme Court, the Constitutional Court, the Council of Justice, the supreme courts of the ARs, courts of appeal, circuit courts, and regional and city (districts or town) courts.

The Supreme Court of Georgia is the Highest Cassation Court. The Supreme Court supervises general courts.

The Constitutional Court of Georgia rules on whether the laws and decisions adopted by state and local administrations abide by the constitution.

The Council of Justice, an advising body, chooses and appoints judges for the first level of the general courts—the regional and city courts. Circuit courts comprise several bodies that rule on issues in criminal law, civil law, and so forth. The courts of appeal comprise the courts of appeal of Georgia and the Supreme Courts of Ajaria and Abkhazia. The courts of appeal are second-instance courts, which consider decision made by the courts of the first instance.

HUMAN RIGHTS

The constitution of Georgia sets up legal, organizational, and institutional guarantees for human rights and freedoms in the country. Its second chapter contains the list of universally acknowledged rights and freedoms.

Georgia joined several conventions protecting human rights—the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the Optional Protocol to the International Bill of Human Rights; the International Conventions on the Rights of Children and the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women; and the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

Amnesty International (1998) lists the major human rights abuses in Georgia as torture and ill treatment of prisoners, poor prison conditions, and weak trial standards.

FOREIGN POLICY

Given its geographical proximity and historical relationship with Russia and as a member of the CIS, Georgia plays a key role in regional and current international affairs. Georgia joined Partnership for Peace in 1994 to secure limited military cooperation with the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation. In 1999 Georgia joined the Council of Europe and was accepted into the World Trade Or-

ganization. Georgian embassies operate in 20 countries. Georgia continues to have boundary disputes with its neighbors. A third of the boundary with Russia remains unspecified, including several strategic segments. Similarly, several key segments of boundary with Armenia and Azerbaijan remain in dispute.

DEFENSE

The total number of active-duty military personnel is over 29,000, which includes ground forces and the national guard, air and air defense personnel, naval personnel, and border and internal security troops. In fiscal year 2000 the nation spent \$23 million, or about 0.6 percent of gross domestic product (GDP), on defense. Georgia requires its conscripts to serve for 18 months.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 29,200
 Military Manpower Availability: 1,038,736
 Military Expenditures \$million: 23
 as % of GDP: 0.6
 as % of central government expenditures: 5.3
 Arms Imports \$million: 25
 Arms Exports \$million: 72

ECONOMY

Georgia's economy has traditionally revolved around Black Sea tourism; cultivation of citrus fruits, tea, and grapes; mining of manganese and copper; and output of a small industrial sector producing wine, metals, machinery, chemicals, and textiles. The country imports the bulk of its energy needs. Its only sizable internal energy resource is hydropower. Despite the civil war, the economy has made substantial gains, increasing GDP growth and slashing inflation; growth for 2004 was estimated at 9.5 percent, and inflation was down to 5.5 percent. Georgia still suffers from energy shortages. The Caspian oil pipeline through Georgia has spurred greater Western investment in the economy. The start of construction on the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline and the Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum gas pipeline are bringing needed investment and job growth to a nation with 17 percent unemployment in 2001.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 14.45
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 3,100
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 5.2
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 6.0
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 20.5

Industry: 22.6
 Services: 56.9
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 74
 Government Consumption: 9
 Gross Domestic Investment: 18.5
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 0.909
 Imports: 1.806
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 2.3
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 27.9

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
100.0	119.2	124.0	129.8	137.0

Finance

National Currency: Lari (GEL)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = GEL 2.12
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency million: 516.9
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: —
 Total External Debt \$billion: 1.8
 Debt Service Ratio %: 9.95
 Balance of Payments \$million: –632.9
 International Reserves SDRs \$million: 185.8
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 5.5

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 219.8
 per capita \$: 42.90
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 337.9

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$million: 671.7
 Expenditures \$million: 804.7
 Budget Deficit \$million: 133
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 20.5
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 2.4
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 2.74
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 44.1
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 35.5
 Total Farmland % of land area: 11.5
 Livestock: Cattle million: 1.24
 Chickens million: 10
 Pigs 000: 474
 Sheep 000: 658
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters 000: —
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 2.6

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 701.6
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 3.0

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 613
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 1.78
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 341
 Net Energy Imports % of use: 48.2
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 4.4
 Production kW-hr billion: 6.7
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 6.8
 Coal Reserves tons billion: —
 Production tons 000: 1
 Consumption tons 000: 25
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet billion: 300
 Production cubic feet million: 600
 Consumption cubic feet billion: 35.3
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels million: 300
 Production barrels 000 per day: 2.1
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 40.1
 Pipelines Length km: 1,027

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 1.806
 Exports \$billion: 0.909
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 9.9
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 0.5
 Balance of Trade \$million: –632.9

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
United States %	11.0	6.5
Turkey %	10.6	23.3
Russia %	10.3	8.9
Azerbaijan %	8.2	—
Germany %	6.5	—
France %	6.0	—
Ukraine %	5.7	—
Italy %	5.2	5.5
Bulgaria %	4.9	—
Greece %	—	11.9
Turkmenistan %	—	5.8
Spain %	—	5.2

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 20,229
 Paved %: 93.5
 Automobiles: 252,000
 Trucks and Buses: 69,600
 Railroad: Track Length km: 1,612
 Passenger-km million: 392
 Freight-km billion: 5.06
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 175
 Total Deadweight Tonnage million: 1.29
 Airports: 30
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 230
 Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 298
 Number of Tourists from 000: 317
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 144
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 189

Communications

Telephones 000: 650.5
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones 000: 522.3
 Personal Computers 000: 172
 Internet Hosts per million people: 1,103
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 32

ENVIRONMENT

With the assistance of the World Bank, Georgia has prepared a National Environmental Action Plan that has strengthened overall institutional capacity and environmental institutions and encouraged integration of environmental concerns in economic and sectoral policies.

Despite this institutional framework, current major environmental issues include deforestation; erosion; air pollution, particularly in Rustavi; heavy pollution of the Mtkvari River and the Black Sea; inadequate supplies of potable water; soil pollution from toxic chemicals; and inadequate hazardous and solid-waste management.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 43.0
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: —
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 4
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 1.17

LIVING CONDITIONS

The transition from a Communist to a capitalist economic system has been difficult for Georgia. Food is often in short supply, and energy supplies are irregular at best, often leaving Georgians with no electricity or gas in the winter. In 2001, 54 percent of the population lived below the poverty line, and the gap between rich and poor is wide. Some people have prospered from the transition to capitalism and enjoy the earmarks of wealth, but others live in poverty. Schools are in poor repair, with leaky roofs and lack of equipment and textbooks. Items that used to be free or heavily subsidized under Communism, including rent, education, and health care, are often too expensive for the ordinary Georgian to afford.

HEALTH

In 2004 life expectancy was just under 76 years. Infant mortality is relatively high, at over 18 deaths per 1,000 live births. Spending on health care is low, at just \$25 per person per year in 2002.

Health

Number of Physicians: 20,225
 Number of Dentists: 1,532
 Number of Nurses: 19,298
 Number of Pharmacists: 364
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 391
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: 4.3
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 18.59
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 32
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 3.8
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 25
 HIV Infected % of adults: < 0.1
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 76
 Measles: 73
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 83
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 76

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Because Georgia has traditionally been a “crossroads” nation, its cuisine reflects Turkish, Greek, Arabic, and Indian influences. In the west the emphasis is on vegetables prepared with walnuts and spices such as tarragon, basil, coriander, and pepper. Common vegetables include tomatoes, potatoes, radishes, pumpkins, eggplant, beans, and cabbage. Corn bread and cheese made from cow’s milk are common. In the east more emphasis is placed on meat, especially mutton and pork; wheat is preferred to corn; and cheese made from sheep’s milk is more common. In the mountain regions a popular food is *kbinkali*, a type of meat dumpling. Georgia has an abundance of walnuts, which are used in many dishes, as well as wild berries.

Although Georgians are forced to spend a high percentage of their income on food—up to two-thirds—the state of nutrition is relatively good. From 1998 to 2003 about 6 percent of infants were of low birth weight. The number of children under five years of age who were severely underweight was negligible, while only about 3 percent were moderately underweight. Continuing problems include lack of clean drinking water, especially in rural areas, and iodine-deficiency disorders.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 26.6
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,440
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 174.6
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 130.1

STATUS OF WOMEN

There is a strong tradition of respect toward women in Georgian society that leads to socially defined roles for women.

Most women care for the household and children and also work outside the home. Following the transition to a market economy, women have become more successful at work than men have, and in the majority of families women are the principal breadwinners.

Women still play a secondary role in politics, but there are a few female ministers in Georgia. As of 2004 the minister of environment, the minister of infrastructure and development, and the minister of foreign affairs were women. There were 22 female members of parliament as of 2004.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 9
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: —
 Women’s Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 45.2

WORK

In 2001 the Georgian labor force was estimated at 2.1 million, with 40 percent in agriculture, 20 percent in industry, and 40 percent in services. Common agricultural pursuits include growing citrus fruits, tea, grapes, nuts, and vegetables and tending livestock. Those in industry are most likely to produce steel, machine tools, aircraft, electrical appliances, wine, chemicals, and wood products or to mine manganese and copper. The unemployment rate is high, estimated at 17 percent in 2001. Per capita GDP in 2004 was estimated at \$3,100. Many Georgians survive only by having two or even three jobs; others survive by selling goods on the black market. The elite are generally former Communist officials, who lead lives of privilege.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 2,100,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 46.9
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 40
 Industry: 20
 Services: 40
 Unemployment %: 17

EDUCATION

Obtaining a good education is a high priority for Georgians, and almost the entire population can read and write; the literacy rate is 99 percent.

In 2002 there were some 700,000 pupils attending primary and secondary schools. The larger ethnic minorities have their own schools, and Russians, Armenians, Azeris, Abkhazians, and Ossetians use their native languages for instruction.

There are 21 state-run institutions of higher education and up to 130 private schools, including 12 and 83, respectively, situated in Tbilisi. The oldest and the most prestigious is Tbilisi State University.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 99

Male %: 100

Female %: 98

School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 11.3

First Level: Primary schools: 3,378

Teachers: 16,500

Students: 238,371

Student-Teacher Ratio: 14.5

Net Enrollment Ratio: 88.7

Second Level: Secondary Schools: —

Teachers: 48,965

Students: 441,049

Student-Teacher Ratio: 9.2

Net Enrollment Ratio: 61.3

Third Level: Institutions: 19

Teachers: 17,165

Students: 155,453

Gross Enrollment Ratio: 37.9

Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 2.2

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

During the Soviet period, science and technology in Georgia were well funded and highly developed, primarily because of their applicability to defense. Since independence, however, there has been almost no funding for science and technology, and many scientists have emigrated for better opportunities in other countries.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 2,418

Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 0.29

High-Tech Exports \$million: 34.04

Patent Applications by Residents: 202

MEDIA

The constitution and the 1991 press law provide for freedom of the press, and new laws further support this freedom; however, even though the independent press has become increasingly active, the government constrains some press freedoms. According to journalists, security and law-enforcement authorities have attempted to intimidate the press through public comments and private

admonitions. The recent Administrative Code contains a freedom-of-information section that provides for public access to government meetings and documents. Journalists have lacked effective legal protection, a circumstance that has hindered investigative journalism. The Civil Code and other legislation make it a crime to insult the honor and dignity of an individual and place the burden of proof on the accused.

Some 200 independent newspapers are in circulation. The press increasingly serves as a check on government, frequently criticizing the performance of high-level officials. Increasingly, independent newspapers have been replacing the government-controlled press as the population's source of information; the leading independent daily newspaper, *Alia*, has a national circulation nearly 20 percent higher than the government-controlled daily. However, observers report that this seems to be mostly a Tbilisi-based phenomenon and that independent newspapers continue to struggle in the provinces. Several newspapers are serious and reputable sources of information. High printing costs and general poverty, especially in the countryside, limit the circulation of most newspapers to a few hundred or a few thousand. The government finances and controls one newspaper (which also appears in Russian-, Azeri-, and Armenian-language versions) and a radio and television network with a national audience; they reflect official viewpoints.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 35

Total Circulation 000: 25.7

Circulation per 1,000: 4.9

Books Published: 697

Periodicals: 122

Radio Receivers 000: —

per 1,000: —

Television sets million: 2.6

per 1,000: 516

CULTURE

The economic and political crises of the 1990s and early 2000s largely dried up funding for the arts. Both cinema and the book trade collapsed. As a result, much of the nation's culture is traditional. Georgians enjoy music, and many play the piano or guitar. Georgia has produced a number of world-class classical musicians and has theater, opera, and ballet companies, though funding is always tight. The *duduk*, a double-reed wind instrument, and the *panduri*, a lute with three strings, are often used to accompany folk music. Choirs are popular and often sing at church services. The Georgia State Dance company is a hit with international audiences, and folk dancing is popular throughout the country. These dances include the *sammaia*, a dance performed by three women, and a military

dance called the *mkbedruli*. Poetry is often recited among friends or at meals.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 2,251
 Volumes: 31,600,000
 Registered borrowers: 2,000,000
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: 97
 Seating Capacity: 22,800
 Annual Attendance: 18,700,000

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Georgia has a particularly rich tradition of folklore, with characters including magicians, beasts, spirits, and heroes. Georgian folktales were first printed in collections in the 17th century and survive in song and in rituals surrounding death, the new year, and the harvest. Much of the symbolism, folklore, and mythology of Georgia reflect the confluence of Eastern and Western traditions, including European Christian and pagan, Byzantine, and Persian influences. One prominent character is the *mzetunakhavi*, or the most beautiful woman in the world; others include the *modzalade devi*, a three-headed monster, and the *natsarkekia*, a ne'er-do-well. Important mythological characters include Saint George and Amirani, a hero similar to the West's Prometheus. The Greeks set the story of the Golden Fleece in the Georgian kingdom of Colchis. Both the Abkhazians and the Ossetians have a mythological cycle that deals with the exploits of a semidivine race.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Georgians enjoy singing around the table with family and friends. The nation also has a long history of crafts and folk art. Pottery such as wine bowls, called *pialebi*, and long-necked pots for pouring wine, called *dokebi*, can be purchased in many villages. Rug making with traditional Georgian patterns is a widely practiced craft, as is gold and silver work, enameling, and jewelry making; in fact, the Georgians' skill at metalwork explains in part why the Greeks set the myth of the Golden Fleece in the ancient Georgian kingdom of Colchis. Most young Georgians, like youth in much of the world, are fans of Western rock-and-roll music.

ETIQUETTE

An important value to Georgians is loyalty to kin and family. For this reason, nepotism is viewed favorably, in

contrast to the United States. To fail to help a kinsman or kinswoman get a job or a promotion, secure a business opportunity, or gain entrance to a university would be considered an act of disloyalty. Another important value has to do with the treatment of guests. Even those who cannot afford to do so treat a guest lavishly, often by having a feast, called a *keipi*, in the guest's honor; the *keipi* is an important component of Georgian social life. Such a feast is held for all important social occasions, such as marriages, and is marked by elaborate toasts in which speakers compete to offer eloquent and poetic homage to friends, family, and Georgian history and tradition.

Georgians are very expressive with family and friends. They adhere to three rules: never sit with your back to another, always rise when someone enters a room, and always greet others properly. Georgians also tend to be superstitious. In the countryside it is common to see ribbons that symbolize wishes tied around trees, a legacy of pagan beliefs in wood spirits.

FAMILY LIFE

Although some instances of extended families living under the same roof can be found in rural areas, the typical Georgian family is nuclear. It is not uncommon, though, for young married couples to live with the husband's parents or, in some cases, the wife's parents. Generally, a person's extended family lives nearby, including grandparents, who often play a major role in the upbringing of children. Families in Georgia are generally very close, and one's family consists of aunts and uncles, cousins, nephews and nieces, grandparents, and even godparents. The large extended family assembles for any important events, such as a birth, death, or marriage, and it is considered shameful to neglect the extended family. This strong sense of kinship has become important for economic survival, as the family provides a support network in helping Georgians face hardship and the loss of social welfare benefits.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Georgians have long enjoyed a reputation as stylish dressers. The latest fashions can be seen on the people strolling down Rustaveli Prospect, the main boulevard in Tbilisi. Although Georgians usually wear modern clothing, they also wear traditional clothing on special occasions and at festivals. The men wear regional hats or tunics belted at the waist; the women wear the *kartuli kaba*, which consists of a silk veil, full sleeves, and a long dress gathered at the waist. Many traditional costumes are associated with particular regions. Women from Khevsureti, for example, wear woven tunics with intricate patterns. Virtually all women in Georgia wear jewelry made with silver and

semiprecious stones, reflecting the nation's centuries-old metalworking skills.

SPORTS

Traditional sports in Georgia include fencing, wrestling, archery, horseback riding, a form of polo, and a game similar to rugby, called *leloburti*. The most popular sport is soccer. Georgian teams have their own league, but they also compete internationally and won the European Cup Winners' Cup in 1981. As part of the Soviet Union, Georgians won 23 Olympic gold medals from 1952 to 1980. In the 2004 summer Olympic Games in Athens, Georgians took home four medals, two gold and two silver.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1940s** Two million Meshketians are deported from South Georgia to Siberia on Joseph Stalin's orders.
- 1953** Stalin dies; Nikita Khrushchev becomes first secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and begins a process of de-Stalinization throughout the Soviet Union.
- 1972** Eduard Shevardnadze becomes the first secretary of the Communist Party of Georgia.
- 1977** Zviad Gamsakhurdia forms the Initiative Group for the Defense of Human Rights.
- 1985** Mikhail Gorbachev becomes leader of the Soviet Union and initiates policies of glasnost (openness) and perestroika (restructuring), which inadvertently fuel the nationalistic sentiment of Georgia.
- 1989** The Georgia Supreme Soviet declares Georgian the official state language; secessionist Abkhazian and Ossetian nationalists demand autonomy for their regions, provoking violent demonstrations.
- 1990** In Georgia's first multiparty elections, the Round Table-Free Georgia coalition, a collection of pro-independence parties led by Gamsakhurdia, wins a majority of seats in the Georgia Supreme Soviet.
- 1991** On April 9 the Georgia Supreme Soviet formally declares Georgia's independence from the Soviet Union; in May Gamsakhurdia is elected Georgia's first president; Georgia declines to join the new CIS; violent clashes between Gamsakhurdia supporters and Shevardnadze supporters escalate into a full-scale civil war; Gamsakhurdia declares a state of emergency in Tbilisi and orders the arrest of opposition leaders.
- 1992** With military and Russian backing, Gamsakhurdia is ousted in January; the presidency is abolished, and Shevardnadze is named acting chairman of the State Council, the new national legislature; elections confirm Shevardnadze as chairman of the State Council; Abkhazia reinstates its 1925 constitution; a mostly Russian peacekeeping force enforces a cease-fire between Ossetians and Georgians.
- 1993** Pro-Gamsakhurdia forces are suppressed; Gamsakhurdia dies in exile; Abkhazi separatists repel Georgian forces, and over 200,000 ethnic Georgians flee Abkhazia; Georgia joins CIS.
- 1994** Georgia agrees to permit Russia to continue operating three military bases in Georgia in exchange for military supplies and training; the United Nations brokers a cease-fire between the government of Georgia and Abkhazi separatists and dispatches a Russian peacekeeping force of 2,500; Abkhazia adopts a new constitution declaring independence; by the year's end 30,000 refugees reportedly have returned to their homes in Abkhazia.
- 1995** Shevardnadze survives an assassination attempt; a privatization program is launched; Georgia adopts a new constitution reinstating the office of president, and Shevardnadze is named president; President Shevardnadze is reelected in November with over 70 percent of the vote, and his party, the Citizens' Union of Georgia, wins the most seats in parliament.
- 1996** CIS imposes economic sanctions on Abkhazia at Georgia's request.
- 1997** Shevardnadze denounces Russia's importation of Abkhazian fruit; more than 1,700 prisoners are granted amnesty and released.
- 1998** Shevardnadze survives a second assassination attempt; Russia agrees to allow Georgia joint control of military airbases in Georgia; four UN military observers are taken hostage by Abkhazian separatists; Georgia and Turkey agree to build a major oil pipeline across Georgia; more than 30,000 ethnic Georgians flee Abkhazia after renewed fighting breaks out in May; the United Nations brokers a cease-fire.
- 1999** Georgia is admitted to the Council of Europe; Pope John Paul II visits Georgia; the Citizens' Union of Georgia again dominates legislative elections.
- 2000** Shevardnadze is reelected president, receiving nearly 80 percent of the vote.
- 2001** Georgia and separatist region of Abkhazia sign an accord agreeing not to use military force to resolve tensions, but clashes erupt between Abkhaz troops and Georgian paramilitaries; Russia accuses Georgia of harboring Chechen terrorists.
- 2003** International observers note irregularities in 2003 parliamentary elections, in which She-

vardnadze's party wins 67 percent of the vote and 135 of 150 elected seats in the parliament, prompting widespread protests leading to Shevardnadze's resignation.

- 2004** Mikheil Saakashvili wins the presidency; clashes continue with the autonomous region of Ajaria and with South Ossetia.
- 2005** Georgia accuses Russia of sabotage when gas and electricity supplies are disrupted following explosions that damage pipelines.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- UNDP Human Development Report Georgia 1998
<http://www.undp.org.ge/>
- Embassy of Georgia in the United States of America
<http://www.georgiaemb.org>
- Parliament of Georgia
<http://www.parliament.ge>

GERMANY

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Federal Republic of Germany (Bundesrepublik Deutschland)

ABBREVIATION

DE

CAPITAL

Berlin

HEAD OF STATE

President Horst Köhler (from 2004)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Chancellor Angela Merkel (from 2005)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Federal republic; parliamentary democracy

POPULATION

82,431,390 (2005)

AREA

357,021 sq km (137,847 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

German

LANGUAGE

German

RELIGIONS

Protestantism, Roman Catholicism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Euro

NATIONAL FLAG

Tricolor of black, red, and gold horizontal stripes

NATIONAL EMBLEM

Stylized black eagle displayed with red beak and claws against a dark gold shield

NATIONAL ANTHEM

No official national anthem, but “Deutschlandlied” is used widely, especially its third verse

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year’s Day), May 1 (Labor Day), October 3 (German Unity Day), all major Christian festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

Germany became a kingdom on January 18, 1871; the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany, FRG) was created on May 23, 1949, the German Democratic Republic (East Germany, GDR) October 7, 1949; FRG and GDR united on October 3, 1990, and once again became the independent nation of Germany on March 15, 1991

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

May 23, 1949 for FRG; became constitution of united Germany on October 3, 1990.

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

On October 3, 1990, the unification of communist East Germany with democratic West Germany increased the new nation’s land area; the western portion grew overnight by 30 percent with the accession of the eastern lands, from 248,577 sq km (95,976 sq mi) to 357,021 sq km (137,847 sq mi), making the country about the size of the state of Montana, in the United States.

Germany now extends 877 km (548 mi) from north to south and 640 km (400 mi) from east to west. These extremities include the cities of List in the north, Oberstdorf in the south, Deschka in the east, and Selfkant in the west.

Germany has an extraordinary variety of landscapes. From north to south it is divided into five regions with different topographical features: the North German Plain (northern lowlands), Central Upland Range, Terrace Region (scarp lands), alpine foothills, and Bavarian Alps.

The greater part of the country drains into the North Sea via the Rhine, Ems, Weser, and Elbe rivers. A small area north and northeast of Hamburg drains into the Baltic Sea. Moreover, a large area in the southeast lies in the Danube River basin, which eventually empties into the Black Sea from Romania. The divide between the watersheds of the Danube and Rhine basins winds around Baden-Württemberg and Bavaria; most of the

Germany



900 Germany

water drains into the Danube. A small area north of the Bodensee drains into the Rhine.

Geography

Area sq km: 357,021; sq mi 137,847
World Rank: 61st
Land Boundaries, km: Austria 784; Belgium 167; Czech Republic 646; Denmark 68; France 451; Luxembourg 138; Netherlands 577; Poland 456; Switzerland 334
Coastline, km: 2,389
Elevation Extremes meters:
Lowest: Neuendorf bei Wilster -4
Highest: Zugspitze 2,963
Land Use %
Arable Land: 33.9
Permanent Crops: 0.6
Permanent Pastures: 15
Forest: 31
Other: 19.5

Population of Principal Cities (2003)

Berlin	3,388,477
Bremen	544,853
Dortmund	589,661
Duisburg	506,496
Düsseldorf	572,511
Essen	589,499
Frankfurt am Main	643,432
Hamburg	1,734,083
Hannover	516,160
Köln	965,954
Munich (München)	1,247,783
Stuttgart	589,161

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Germany is situated in a climatic zone where westerly winds and a maritime climate from the Atlantic Ocean prevail over most of the country most of the year. Sharp changes in temperature are rare, and there is precipitation year-round. Maritime influences are predominant in the northwest along the coast. Continental conditions and greater temperature extremes between day and night and between summer and winter occur increasingly inland. The continental high-pressure center with easterly wind flows sometimes influences the eastern regions of the country, making for colder winters and warmer summers in that area. In addition to the maritime and continental climates to which most of Germany is exposed, the Alpine regions in the extreme south and, to a lesser degree, a few of the upland sections of the central and western areas have a mountain climate in which temperatures decrease with higher elevations and precipitation increases when moisture-laden air is forced to lift over higher terrain. Variable local winds develop as high and irregular terrain deflects prevailing winds.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature: 48°F
South: January 28°F
July 67°F
North: January 35°F
July 61°F to 64°F
Berlin: January 34°F
July 64°F
Dresden: January 32°F
July 66°F
Higher Mountains: January 21°F
Average Rainfall: 24 in to 31 in
Northern Mountains: 79 in
Mainz: 16 in
Herz Mountains: 58 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Germany has been inhabited by humans for millennia, and much of its native foliage has been cleared for such a long time that its native plant and animal species are rare. Germany was originally covered in forests and had large wetland habitats of fens, peat bogs, and wet forests. About 30 percent of Germany is currently covered in mixed broadleaf and conifer forests, with oak and hornbeam forests in the southern part of the nation and pine forests in the north. Most of these forests have been planted by humans instead of occurring naturally. The wetlands have mostly been drained for agriculture and human housing.

Germany used to be home to numerous large carnivorous and grazing species, including wolf, lynx, steppe polecat, spotted sousek, and the European bison, but most of these animals are now endangered or threatened due to habitat loss and human hunting. Germany also was home to many species of birds, many of which are also threatened; these include the corncrake, the lesser kestrel, the aquatic warbler, the white-tailed eagle, and the greater spotted eagle. Most of the indigenous animals were adapted to life in the old mixed forests and do not find modern tree farms, which consist largely of pine trees, to be satisfactory habitats.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 82,431,390
World Rank: 14th
Density per sq km: 236.6
% of annual growth (1999-2003): 0.1
Male %: 49.0
Female %: 51.0
Urban %: 88.1
Age Distribution %: 0-14: 14.7
15-64: 67.0
65 and over: 18.3
Population 2025: 80,637,000
Birth Rate per 1,000: 8.45

Death Rate per 1,000: 10.44
 Rate of Natural Increase %: -0.1
 Total Fertility Rate: 1.38
 Expectation of Life (years): Males 75.56
 Females 81.68
 Marriage Rate per 1,000: 4.8
 Divorce Rate per 1,000: 2.4
 Average Size of Households: 2.2
 Induced Abortions: 130,387

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

The German nation grew out of a number of tribes, including the Franks, Saxons, Bavarians, and Swabians. The differences among them are still felt today. Bavarians, Swabians, and Franks reside in the south of Germany; Rhinelanders, Palatinans, and Hessians inhabit the center; Westphalians, Lower Saxons, and Schleswig-Holsteiners live in the north; and Thuringians, Brandenburgers, and other Germans reside in the eastern states. Strong group loyalties complement and counterbalance German national consciousness and often vie with it as a focus of citizens' self-identity.

Germany's population has always been predominantly Caucasian, and Germans have traditionally been very conscious of race and ethnicity; the systematic extermination of Jews and other non-Teutonic people by the Nazis made the country even more ethnically homogenous in the mid-20th century. In the late 1950s and early 1960s Germany invited numerous "guest workers" to come to the country; these workers came from Italy, Greece, Spain, Portugal, Yugoslavia, and Turkey. Some returned to their homes, but others settled in Germany. Germany has been a common destination for refugees from war or political instability and has thus become home to people from Vietnam, Pakistan, and Afghanistan, and after the fall of the Soviet Union about 2.5 million ethnic Germans immigrated to Germany from former Eastern bloc countries. Germany's economic prosperity has attracted a large number of immigrants in the late 1990s and early 2000s. The overall influx of new residents has changed the ethnic and social landscape of Germany, which until the 1970s was one of the most ethnically homogenous countries in Europe. Today about 9 percent of the population is non-German. Turks make up about 2.4 percent of the population. Ethnic mixing has not been an easy process for Germany, which is plagued with racial violence, instigated both by immigrants who feel shortchanged and by right-wing groups who resent the newcomers.

Though Jewish people tended to avoid Germany in the decades after the Second World War, in the 1990s Germany's Jewish population grew rapidly, and in 2004 there were an estimated 105,000 Jews living in the country, though this number is still only one-fifth the number of Jews of the late 1930s. Gypsies have also been returning to Germany, especially from the former Yugoslavia;

the German government does not keep information on ethnicity, so it is impossible to say exactly how many Gypsies live in Germany, but estimates put their population around 70,000, compared to a prewar population of 500,000. Germany is also home to about 60,000 Sorbs, a Slavic people who live in Brandenburg and Saxony; about 50,000 Danes in Schleswig-Holstein; and about 60,000 Frisians in Schleswig-Holstein and Niedersachsen.

LANGUAGES

Germany's official language is German. German is a Germanic language, related to English, Dutch, and the Scandinavian languages. Standard German, also called High German (Hochdeutsch) is the version of the language taught in schools and used by the media. German is a fairly complicated language. Nouns come in three genders (masculine, feminine, and neuter), definite and indefinite articles decline according to case, word order follows very specific rules, verbs often divide into two portions that must be placed at different points in a sentence, and extremely long compound words are common. German uses one diacritical mark, the umlaut, which is two dots over a vowel; its effect is to add an "e" to the vowel sound. So, for example, Chancellor Gerhard Schröder's name is pronounced as if it were spelled "Shroeder."

Germany is also home to a profusion of regional dialects; most people grow up speaking both a dialect and standard German. German dialects are very distinctive, and Germans often find it difficult to understand unfamiliar dialects.

RELIGIONS

The experience of Nazi interference in church affairs persuaded Roman Catholic and Protestant clergy that safeguards were essential for church autonomy. Beyond accepting freedom of conscience, the Basic Law (Grundgesetz) of 1949 adopted Weimar's formulation of church-state relations, which provided for church autonomy in religious matters. The German preamble, thus, states, "The German people . . . conscious of their responsibility before God and man . . ." The constitution guarantees freedom of religion in a free state and avers that no state church exists. There are no politico-religious ties between the German state and German church administrations. Churches are independent of state control.

Yet, separation between church and state is not total. Unlike in the United States, German society has created a working partnership between church and state. This relationship is subject to the Basic Law and governed by agreements. Churches are involved in education, social services, and the military. The state finances parts of the costs of certain church establishments (e.g., kindergartens

and schools). The churches, meanwhile, are empowered to levy taxes on their members, which the state collects against reimbursement of costs. The clergy are trained mainly at state universities, and the churches have a say in appointments to chairs of theology. Church charity plays an integral role in German public life.

Most Germans still belong to churches, but Germany is becoming increasingly secular. In 2004 about 38 percent of Germans said they were Protestant, 34 percent Roman Catholic, and 1.7 percent Muslim. The remaining 26.3 percent were either members of other religions or not affiliated with any organized religion.

Religious Affiliations

Protestant (mostly Evangelical Lutheran)	31,300,000
Roman Catholic	28,000,000
Muslim	1,400,000
Other (mostly nonreligious)	21,800,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Germanic tribes first appeared in European history in the first century B.C.E., when the Cimbri and Teutons clashed with Roman legions in Gaul and on the Alps. Later, as the Roman Empire began to disintegrate, the Alemanni, Burgundians, Franks, Lombards, Ostrogoths, and Visigoths settled in the region between the Rhine and the Elbe rivers. However, it was not until Charlemagne (768–814) that the Germans acquired political unity. After Charlemagne's death, his empire soon fell apart. In the course of various inheritance divisions, a western and an eastern realm developed, with the eastern realm called Deutschland—the land of Deutsch speakers. Germany's western frontier was fixed relatively early and has remained fairly stable, but the eastern frontier was pushed eastward for hundreds of years, until it contracted in the 20th century.

The transition from the East Franconian to German Reich is usually dated from 911, when Conrad I was elected the first German king, the official title being "First Frankish King." The monarch later became the Roman king while the name of the realm was the first Roman Empire, and later the Holy Roman Empire, and the words "of the German Nation" were added to the title. The monarchy was originally electoral but later became dynastic. Otto I, the greatest of his dynasty, united Germany and Italy and was crowned first Holy Roman Emperor in 962. His successors were engaged in constant struggles within Germany as well as with the papacy, and it was not until the Salian dynasty that a new upswing occurred. Under Henry III (1039–56), German power reached its zenith, only to later decline once again. In 1138 a century of rule by the Staufer began the Hohenstaufen dynasty. Its most brilliant ruler was Frederick I, "Barbarossa" (1115–90), who led the empire into a

golden age. Under his successors, the empire broke up. With the end of Hohenstaufen rule in 1268 the princes became sovereign land dukes. Germany did not again become a true national state until the 19th century.

The Hapsburgs took power in the 13th century under Rudolf I (1273–91). The Golden Bull, or the Imperial Constitution, issued by Charles IV in 1356 regulated the election of the German king by seven electors privileged with special rights. These sovereign electors and their towns gradually gained in power and influence. The towns linked into leagues, the most important of which, the Hanseatic League, became the leading Baltic power in the 14th century. The power of the emperors was curtailed and increasingly eroded by capitulations, which they negotiated at their elections with the various princes. The empire was further weakened in the 16th century by the Reformation, which led to the division of Germany into two camps. In 1522–23 the Reich knights rose in revolt, and in 1525 the Peasants' Revolt erupted, the first revolutionary movement in German history. The dukes profited most from the Reformation when they were given the right to dictate the religion of their subjects by the Treaty of Augsburg of 1555. This treaty failed to end the conflict between the faiths, although four-fifths of the country had become Protestant. In the following decades the Catholic Church was able to recapture many areas. A local conflict in Bohemia triggered the Thirty Years' War (1618–48), which widened into Europe's worst and perhaps last major religious conflict. The war devastated and depopulated much of Germany. In 1648 the Treaty of Westphalia ceded territories to France and Sweden and ultimately confirmed the withdrawal of Switzerland and the Netherlands from the Reich.

In the 18th century, Prussia became the premier German state, especially through the military brilliance of Frederick II (Frederick the Great, 1740–86). During the French Revolution and the Napoleonic wars German nationalism resurfaced and triumphed briefly in the Frankfurt Parliament of 1848. The following decades witnessed the rise of Prussia under its autocratic prime minister, Otto von Bismarck. After a series of successful wars (1864–71) with Denmark, Austria, and France, Bismarck brought about the union of German states (excluding Austria) that formed the Second Reich. In 1871 Wilhelm I was proclaimed the German emperor in the Versailles Hall of Mirrors. This signaled the eclipse of France and the rise of Germany as a European superpower. Bismarck avoided further wars by creating an elaborate alliance network. With the advent of Wilhelm II as German emperor and the dismissal of Bismarck, the delicate international equilibrium was disturbed after 1890. Under Wilhelm II Germany undertook a collision course with the other major imperial powers, leading to World War I, in which it suffered an ignominious defeat. Both the military and the monarchy collapsed. Wilhelm II abdicated and fled the country. Germany became a republic in 1918.

The new state, known as the Weimar Republic, confronted anarchic conditions. The Social Democratic Party, which as the majority party was charged with the transition to the new political order, left the political structure of the Second Reich untouched. The armed forces remained under the command of the imperial officer corps, while the reactionary bureaucracy entrenched themselves in the administration. In 1925 Field Marshal Paul von Hindenburg was elected president. Bedeviled by inflation, the Ruhr occupation by France, and left-wing and Nazi coups, the Weimar Republic's final deathblow came with the world economic crisis of 1929.

The Weimar Republic not only died unmourned but also begat a monster in Adolf Hitler. On January 30, 1933, Hitler became Reich chancellor. The 12 years that followed were the blackest in German history. It witnessed the most brutal of dictatorships, the virtual annihilation of European Jewry, and the bloodiest war in military annals. The Third Reich was consumed in the ashes of a vast *Götterdämmerung*, which pales in comparison to all other historical disasters. Most of Germany lay in ruins and under the heels of occupying powers. Germany's future looked bleak. In 1945 Germany was divided by the victorious Allies into four occupation zones controlled by the Soviet Union, United States, United Kingdom, and France. In 1949, pending a peace settlement, the U.S., British, and French zones were consolidated into West Germany (the Federal Republic of Germany, FRG) and the Soviet Zone into East Germany (German Democratic Republic, GDR). Former German territories in the East, including East Prussia, were ceded to Poland and the Soviet Union. The city of Berlin, inside the Soviet Zone, was likewise divided into four zones under the four occupying powers. Eight districts in Berlin were united with the GDR and 12 with the FRG. For the first 20 years of its existence the FRG was under the rule of Christian Democrats led by Konrad Adenauer, Ludwig Erhard, and Kurt-George Kiesinger. There was a major shift in 1969 when the Social Democratic Party swept into power under Willy Brandt. The Socialists remained in power until 1982, when the Christian Democrats were returned to power under Helmut Kohl as chancellor. Kohl remained in power until 1998, presiding over the reunion of East Germany and West Germany in 1990 with the collapse of the Soviet Union. Germany took a lead in the formation of the European Union and has remained one of its strongest supporters.

In 1998 Kohl lost the chancellorship to the Socialist candidate Gerhard Schröder. Schröder and his Green Party allies kept the majority in parliament in the 2002 elections, though they lost some numbers. Schröder has worked to reduce racial violence, attempting unsuccessfully to ban the neo-Nazi National Democratic Party in 2003. Horst Köhler, a Christian Democrat, won the presidency in 2004. Following very close elections in 2005 the Christian Democrats and Social Democrats formed a grand coalition headed by Chancellor Angela Merkel.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

German Democratic Republic
1949–64 Otto Grotewohl
1964–73 Willi Stoph
1973–76 Horst Sinderman
1976–90 Willi Stoph

Federal Republic of Germany
1949–63 Konrad Adenauer
1963–66 Ludwig Erhard
1966–69 Kurt Kiesinger
1969–74 Willy Brandt
1974–82 Helmut Schmidt
1982–98 Helmut Kohl
1998–2005 Gerhard Schröder
2005– Angela Merkel

CONSTITUTION

The German constitution is the Basic Law (*Grundgesetz*) and was enacted on May 22, 1949, for the former West German state. It was viewed as a temporary constitution until Germany was reunited. The authors of the Basic Law used the Weimar Constitution of 1919 and the post-World War II constitutions of the various states as models. The framers determined to avoid both the weak, multiparty democracy of the Weimar Republic and the authoritarianism of the Third Reich. Although amended some 30 times in its first 32 years, the Basic Law has functioned successfully, giving Germany its longest period of democracy in modern times, including a successive transition in the postunification era.

Articles 1 through 19 enumerate the basic rights that apply to all citizens. They include equality before the law; freedom of speech, assembly, the press, and worship; freedom from prejudice based on race, sex, religion, or ideology; and the right of conscientious objection to military service. Article 18 provides a caveat to these rights and sanctions their forfeiture in the case of those who abuse them.

The majority of the 146 articles of the Basic Law outline the makeup and functions of the various governmental bodies as well as the careful system of checks and balances that governs their interactions. Other major areas addressed by the Basic Law are the distribution of power between the federal government and the various state governments, the administration of federal laws, government finance, and administration during emergencies. Economic matters are largely ignored, although Article 14 does guarantee property and the rights of inheritance and restricts expropriation to cases involving the public weal.

The system of federalism established in the Basic Law follows a tradition dating to the founding of the Second Reich in 1871. The Federal Republic of Germany is a community of states, each having its own constitution and administrative structures. Sovereignty is vested in the

federation. The Basic Law divides authority between the federation and the states, thus constitutionally guaranteeing a mutual dependence and an ongoing important role for the states.

The federal government can legislate only in areas specifically prescribed by the Basic Law. Areas that come under the exclusive administrative and legislative jurisdiction of the federal government include foreign affairs, defense, citizenship, currency, rail and air transportation, and postal services. Areas of concurrent legislation relating to the economy and ecology have also increasingly come under federal jurisdiction. By virtue of their omission from the enumerated exclusive or concurrent federal powers, a large number of matters, including education, culture, church affairs, police, media, and local government are left primarily to the jurisdiction of the states. The states also retain considerable powers of taxation.

The Federal Constitutional Court is vital to the preservation of German federalism. The Bundesrat (Federal Council, upper house of parliament), representing state interests, elects its judges. Its jurisdiction extends to cases involving differences or incompatibilities between federal and state laws or between federal and state rights and duties as well as interstate disputes. Thus, this house of parliament is the guardian of German federalism.

Amendments to the Basic Law require the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members of the two federal legislative bodies—the Bundestag (Federal Assembly, lower house of parliament) and the Bundesrat.

Within the dual executive created by the Basic Law, the president, as head of state, is clearly subordinate to the federal chancellor, the head of government. The president's functions are largely formal or ceremonial.

The federal chancellor and his cabinet ministers are collectively known as the federal government. The chancellor controls the composition of the cabinet. Although ministers are given considerable freedom of action, only the chancellor is responsible to the Bundestag for government policies. The Bundestag may not censure cabinet ministers. The chancellor controls the federal bureaucracy, the distribution of public funds, and the implementation of legislation. He may veto budgetary appropriations not to his liking. In wartime, the chancellor assumes supreme command over the armed forces from the minister of defense. The number of ministers is left to the discretion of the chancellor. As a rule, German cabinets are highly stable. Nearly all ministers rise and fall with the chancellor, and resignations for political reasons are rare, even though the realities of coalition governments generate occasional public differences.

PARLIAMENT

The federal legislature consists of two chambers: the Bundestag and the Bundesrat (the lower and upper cham-

bers, respectively). The Bundestag is the only popularly elected organ at the federal level and is by far the more important of the two legislative chambers. Its members are elected every four years. The size of the Bundestag has gradually increased, from 402 in 1949 to 669 in 2000.

The key organizing agents of the Bundestag are the caucuses (Fraktionen), parliamentary groups of the political parties. Deputies belonging to the same party constitute a single caucus provided there are 15 party members in the house. Technically, although not constitutionally, the Bundestag is composed of caucuses and not individual deputies. Only caucuses may initiate legislative proposals. Debate time and representation in the standing committees are determined in accordance with the relative strength of the caucus. Even independent delegates have visiting rights with the caucuses. The importance of the caucuses in organizing the work of the chamber also extends to the relationship between the leadership of the parties and individual deputies. Party discipline and hence party voting are high—about 85 percent to 90 percent of all votes are straight party votes, with deputies following the caucus leadership or the results of a caucus vote. Free votes, where the party gives no binding instructions to its deputies, are rare. A deputy who cannot support a party line may leave a caucus and join another without having to run for election again.

The daily agenda of the chamber is determined by the Council of Elders (Ältestenrat), in essence a steering committee, composed of the Bundestag president, who is himself a member of the largest caucus, three vice presidents, and 12 to 15 representatives of all the caucuses. The Ältestenrat schedules debates, allots time to each party, and assigns committee chairmanships to each in proportion to its parliamentary strength. A second executive body in the Bundestag is the Präsidium, consisting of the president and the vice presidents, which is responsible for overall administration and personnel recruitment.

Parliamentary committees are more important in Germany than in Great Britain or France but less so than in the United States. There are about 19 functional standing committees (Ausschüsse), each of which has 17 to 29 members. Opposition parties sometimes have shares of committee chairmanships. The committees cannot pigeonhole or reject bills but must examine them carefully, take testimony, and propose amendments, if necessary, to the whole house.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Since the first general election held in unified Germany in 1990, six parties have emerged in prominence in the Bundestag: the Christian Democratic Union (CDU), Christian Social Union (CSU), Free Democratic Party (FDP), Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD), Party for Democratic Socialism (PDS), and Alliance '90/The Greens. The SPD, CDU, CSU, and FDP were formed

in the western states between 1945 and 1947. In the five decades since their establishment these four parties have undergone significant changes. At the federal level they have all at one time formed coalitions with one another or been in opposition. Today they all see themselves as “popular” parties representing a cross section of German society. Other parties in the unified Germany are new and small. Although the Green Party (Die Grünen) existed in the former West Germany since 1979, it joined forces with Alliance ‘90 (Bündnis 90) in 1993 so that both could contend at the national political level. The Party for Democratic Socialism (Partei für demokratischen Sozialismus, PDS) is the successor to the former Socialist Unity Party of Germany (Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands, SED), the Communist party that ruled in the former GDR. In the 1998 election it cleared the 5 percent hurdle due largely to the support of voters in the former GDR, thus acquiring parliamentary group status. In the 2002 elections the SPD received 38.5 percent of the vote, the CDU 29.5 percent. The CSU, Greens, FDP, and PDS each received less than 10 percent of the vote. Germany also has numerous fringe parties, such as extreme right-wing groups, but these parties are regarded with suspicion by most of the people and usually fail to make any progress on the national level.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Germany consists of 16 states: Baden-Württemberg, Bayern (Bavaria), Berlin, Brandenburg, Bremen, Hamburg, Hessen (Hesse), Niedersachsen (Lower Saxony), Mecklenburg-Vorpommern (Mecklenburg-West Pomerania), Nordrhein-Westfalen (North Rhine-Westphalia), Rheinland-Pfalz (Rhineland-Palatinate), Saarland, Sachsen (Saxony), Sachsen-Anhalt (Saxony-Anhalt), Schleswig-Holstein, and Thüringen (Thuringia). The Basic Law requires that the “constitutional order in the states . . . conforms to the principles of republican, democratic, and social government based on the rule of law.” With this exception, the states are free to form any type of governmental structure. Most states are governed by a cabinet led by a minister-president and have a unicameral legislative body known as the Landtag. The relationship between the legislature and the executive duplicates the system at the federal level. Legislatures are popularly elected, normally for four-year terms of office. The Council of Elders (Ältestenrat) manages the affairs of the Landtag. The Landtag elects the chief executive (Ministerpräsident), who in turn appoints the members of his cabinet. State cabinets (Staatsregierung) contain eight to 10 ministers.

There are three levels of local government under the states. The largest states are divided into districts (Regierungsbezirke), each headed by a district president (Regierungspräsidenten), who is subordinate to the state’s minister

of the interior. There are no separate legislative or judicial agencies at this level. The next fundamental units of local government are the counties (Kreise), administered by a Landrat, Kreisrat, or Oberkreisdirektor. The legislative body at this level is the Kreistag. The third level of local government is the Gemeinde, which may apply to a town, village, or city. Gemeinden also contain elected councils, which in turn elect executive Bürgermeisters (mayors).

LEGAL SYSTEM

Germans are a very law-conscious and court-minded people. There is hardly any area of human relations untouched by some rule, order, or regulation, whether it be the nighttime working hours of bakers or the time when parents should keep their children quiet. Germans are more inclined to settle their disputes through legal means than through informal negotiations and bargaining. Further, the judicial process is relatively speedy and inexpensive. On a per capita basis there are nine times as many judges in Germany as in the United States, and over half of all lawyers are either judges or in the civil service. Thus, the complexity of law affects the social, political, and economic arenas as well.

German law is an amalgam of two streams of influence: Roman legal codes introduced by Italian jurists in the Middle Ages and the Napoleonic Code enforced in the Rhineland during the French occupation in the 19th century. After the founding of the Second Reich in 1871, a process of legal revision began that was completed only toward the turn of the century. These codes form the basis of a unified legal system and are the same in all states, even in such matters as bankruptcy, divorce, criminal offenses, and extradition. The codified character of German law also means that, unlike Anglo-American law, there is no judge-made or common law. The German judge may not set precedents and thus make law but must be a neutral administrator only, fitting particular cases to the existing body of law. Although neutral in theory, the German judge is not, according to the rules of procedure, a disinterested referee of court proceedings but an active inquisitor, trying to appraise the facts and determining their legal relevance.

The Basic Law guarantees the rights of defendants. A suspect cannot be forced to talk to the police. If statements were made under duress, they may be retracted later during a court trial. Suspects may not be subjected to physical abuse, torture, drugs, deceit, or hypnosis. Only the minimum force necessary for arrest is authorized. A suspect must be brought before a judge no later than the day following arrest, and the judge must issue a warrant of arrest specifying the reasons for detention or else release the suspect.

There is no separate system of federal and state courts. With the exception of the national high courts

of appeal, all regular tribunals are state courts. Although national law outlines the basic organization of the judiciary, it is established and administered by state statutes. The other significant characteristics of the court structure are its collegial nature and the extensive system of specialized courts. Regular courts, both civil and criminal, are organized on four levels: local, district, appellate, and federal. The 670 local courts (Amtsgerichte) are located in small and medium-sized towns and are usually staffed by single judges, who may be assisted by two lay judges in criminal cases. These courts also perform some administrative functions, such as in bankruptcy. At the next level are the district courts (Landesgerichte), each consisting of separate chambers of three to five judges. At the third level are the appellate courts (Oberlandesgerichte), which take cases only on appeal, except for cases involving treason and anticonstitutional activity. In Germany, appeals involve both reexamination of the facts in a case and its procedural and legal aspects. These courts are also divided into panels of three to five judges. At the apex is the Federal Court of Justice at Karlsruhe, which has 132 judges divided into 20 panels, or senates. It holds no original jurisdiction. There are five kinds of special courts, most under state control: administrative, social, labor, financial, and the single Federal Patents Court in Munich. The highest level of each kind of court falls under the authority of the federal government. The final type of court is the constitutional court. There are several constitutional courts that function in several of the different states. All of them are administratively independent and financially autonomous. Judges of the Federal Constitutional Court may be removed only upon a motion from the court itself.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Germany has a fairly good record of respecting the human rights of its citizens and has a well-developed legal system to deal with individual cases of human rights abuses. The Basic Law is as strong a bulwark of freedom as can be found in any country. Virtually all the classic liberties are specified and guaranteed, including academic freedom, privacy of mail and telephone, freedom from censorship, and the right to refuse military service. Finally, in an extraordinary departure from German constitutional tradition, Article 20 declares that "all Germans shall have the right to resist any person or persons seeking to abolish the constitutional order, should no other remedy be possible." Major controversies involving alleged violations of these basic liberties have occurred only infrequently.

Germany's critics suggest that the rule of law applies less to lower-status, disadvantaged groups than to the "establishment." There is no German version of the Ameri-

can Civil Liberties Union and no culturally ingrained sympathy for the underdog. The German humanistic tradition is, above all, abstract and philosophical, not pragmatic. Germany does not have a strong civil libertarian tradition. German legal and political theory for the most part has emphasized the duties of the individual vis-à-vis the state rather than state responsibilities toward the protection of individual liberties.

The legal system itself has a strong upper-class flavor. The bottom half of society is estranged from the courts not only because of these class differences but also because of the pedantic legalese and jargon in which legal procedures and principles are couched. Bureaucratic red tape, often a mask for inefficiency and lack of compassion, also deters the less fortunate from even seeking justice. Nevertheless, there has been remarkable progress in this direction in the past 40 years.

Many of Germany's human rights difficulties stem from racism. The mushrooming of terrorist and deviant groups, both indigenous and foreign, in the 1970s placed a strain on the evolution of human rights. Much of the domestic violence associated with the notorious Red Army Faction has been contained, although there have been sporadic incidents involving U.S. army personnel stationed in the former West Germany, some of them racially motivated attacks on black U.S. soldiers. Efforts to curb Middle Eastern violence have been less successful because of retaliations against German citizens in Lebanon. In its 1986 report Amnesty International expressed concern over the length of pretrial detention spent in isolation by persons detained on suspicion of terrorism. The German police have on occasion been accused of human rights abuses against asylum seekers and foreign nationals, and there have been numerous cases of foreigners being killed by Germans, particularly by right-wing anti-immigration factions. Germany also has a serious problem with violence against women and the trafficking of girls and women as sex slaves.

FOREIGN POLICY

Since 1989 international conditions have changed the framework of German foreign policy. Germany is reunified and sovereign in its foreign policy, and its security situation has improved greatly. Previously inconceivable forms of cooperation are now possible in the whole of Europe and the world. German foreign policy is thus oriented toward maintaining peace and prosperity, promoting democracy, and developing respect for human rights the world over. It includes the further development of the European Union as a unit capable of action in all areas of global policy; the safeguarding of peace, democracy, and prosperity in Europe to be achieved through EU enlargement; the strengthening of Pan-European cooperation within

the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe; the further development of the Atlantic Alliance and transatlantic cooperation with the United States; the strengthening of international organizations (e.g., the United Nations) and a more active role for Germany in these organizations; the promotion of human rights; the further development of relations based on equal partnership with the regions bordering the European Union (e.g., the Mediterranean and Middle East); and the preservation of a habitable world for future generations.

Ever since its founding in 1949 the Federal Republic of Germany has been one of the main advocates of European unification. The FRG's founders believed that European unification would strengthen Europe's position in the world and serve to promote peace, freedom, and prosperity on the continent. Germany signed the Single European Act of 1986, the Maastricht Treaty on European Union of 1992, and the Treaty of Amsterdam of 1997 and in 2002 transitioned its currency to the euro.

Germany and France have suffered strained relations due to disagreements about farm subsidies and Europe's political future, but in 2003 the two countries reaffirmed their amity. Germany, along with France and Russia, refused to support the U.S. war in Iraq in 2003.

DEFENSE

The German armed forces were dismantled after the Second World War. In 1955 the Bundestag, fearing encroachment by the Soviet Union during the Cold War, authorized the formation of the Bundeswehr (federal armed forces), composed initially of volunteers. The Basic Law says almost nothing of the status of the army because none existed at the time of its formulation in 1949 and none was envisaged. It does not, however, prohibit the raising of an army (as it does waging an aggressive war), so the federal government found no serious impediment to its creation of one in 1956. Authorities have inferred, though, that because the army may not wage war, the sole mission of the Bundeswehr is defense.

Parliament promulgated legislation on compulsory military service in 1956. By the end of that year the force numbered 65,000, including 10,000 volunteers from the Federal Border Force (Bundesgrenzschutz, BGS), almost all of whom were World War II veterans. Many West Germans bitterly opposed the re-creation of a German military.

Throughout the remainder of the cold war era the former East Germany became an integral part of the Warsaw Pact coalition of Communist nations led by the former Soviet Union, which was aligned against the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) coalition of

democratic nations led by the United States. Occupation forces from the superpowers remained in Germany until the early 1990s, when they gradually disbanded as a result of the Two Plus Four Agreements, which facilitated German unification.

The German armed forces consist of an army, a navy, an air force, a joint support service, and a central medical service. Military service is compulsory, and all German men must serve a nine-month tour of compulsory military service or equivalent state service. Germany spent over \$35 billion on the military in 2003, which was 1.5 percent of the country's gross domestic product (GDP).

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	331,000
Military Manpower Availability:	20,468,942
Military Expenditures \$billion:	35
as % of GDP:	1.5
as % of central government expenditures:	
Arms Imports \$million:	—
Arms Exports \$million:	—

ECONOMY

Germany is one of the major industrial countries of the developed world, Europe's largest economy, and the fifth-largest national economy in the world. Its economic growth in the late 20th century was very strong. After price adjustments GDP has doubled in the past 30 years and increased fivefold over 45 years. Per capita GDP in 2003 was \$27,600.

Germany currently suffers major economic problems, however. Between 2001 and 2003 economic growth stalled completely. The western part of the country is still economically much better off than the east; many eastern businesses collapsed in the face of western competition and the infrastructure of the east is substandard after years of inadequate investment. Racial unrest and social divisions do not help matters; the western states in particular resent having to bear the financial burden of taxes to support the east. The west transfers about \$70 billion to the east every year. Since 1995 the German unemployment rate has remained high, ranging from 9.5 percent to 11.5 percent; unemployment is especially bad in the eastern states. Unemployment is partially caused by governmental policies regulating the workplace and strictly limiting the number of people who can be hired and fired. Germany's population is aging, which puts a strain on the social security system. The government is working to liberalize Germany's rigid workplace laws and to restructure corporations to meet the demands of the global marketplace, hoping to cure Germany's economic problems in the future.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$trillion: 2.271
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 27,600
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 1.1
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 1.0
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 1
 Industry: 31
 Services: 68
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 57
 Government Consumption: 19
 Gross Domestic Investment: 17.7
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 696.9
 Imports: 585
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 3.6
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 25.1
 CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
104.9	107.0	109.6	111.0	112.2

Finance

National Currency: Euro (EUR)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = EUR 0.886
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: —
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 2.5
 Total External Debt \$million: —
 Debt Service Ratio %: —
 Balance of Payments \$billion: 57.24
 International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 41
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 1.1

Official Development Assistance

Donor ODA \$billion: 5.6
 per capita \$: 68
 Foreign Direct Investment \$billion: 11.3

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$trillion: 1.079
 Expenditures \$trillion: 1.173
 Budget Deficit \$billion: 94
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 1
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2002) %: 0.8
 Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares: 87.3
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 4.0
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 221
 Total Farmland % of land area: 33.9
 Livestock: Cattle 000: 13,386
 Sheep 000: 2,170
 Hogs 000: 26,495
 Chickens 000: 110,000
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 42.38
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 274.3

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 407
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 0.2

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 126.54
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 326.5
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 3.966
 Net Energy Imports % of use: 61.9
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 115
 Production kW-hr billion: 548.3
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 512.9
 Coal Reserves tons billion: 72.8
 Production tons million: 230.9
 Consumption tons million: 273.9
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: 10.8
 Production cubic feet trillion: 0.8
 Consumption cubic feet trillion: 3.2
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels million: 442
 Production barrels 000 per day: 158.7
 Consumption barrels million per day: 2.64
 Pipelines Length km: 3,540

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 585
 Exports \$billion: 696.9
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2002): 6.7
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2002): 4.5
 Balance of Trade \$billion: 57.24

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
France %	9.2	10.6
Netherlands %	8.4	6.2
United States %	7.3	9.3
Italy %	6.3	7.4
United Kingdom %	6.0	8.4
Belgium %	4.9	5.1
China %	4.7	—
Austria %	4.0	5.3
Spain %	—	4.9
Switzerland %	—	4.0

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 230,735
 Paved %: 100
 Automobiles: 44,383,300
 Trucks and Buses: 3,455,300
 Railroad: Track Length km: 46,039
 Passenger-km billion: 70.8
 Freight-km billion: 72
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 278
 Total Deadweight Tonnage million: 6.8

Airports: 550
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 124
 Length of Waterways km: 7,300

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 18
 Number of Tourists from million: 73.3
 Tourist Receipts \$billion: 19.2
 Tourist Expenditures \$billion: 53.2

Communications

Telephones million: 54.35
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.09
 Cellular Telephones million: 64.8
 Personal Computers million: 40
 Internet Hosts per million people: 32,586
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 473

ENVIRONMENT

Germany is deeply concerned about the environment and has long been a world leader in environmental legislation. Germany's environmental problems include air pollution caused by coal-burning utilities, acid rain that damages forests, pollution in the Baltic Sea and rivers in eastern Germany, and hazardous wastes. Environmental conditions in the eastern states are typically worse than those in the west. The national government has signed numerous international treaties and agreements in an effort to reduce pollution and is working with the European Union to identify nature preservation areas as part of the union's Flora, Fauna, and Habitat directive. Germany's government passed several laws in the 1990s that have already had perceptible effects on the environment. In 1996 over 50 percent of Germany's trees had been damaged by air pollution. At that time the government introduced a comprehensive clean-air program to check pollution sources through the use of filters, scrubbers, and catalytic converters. As a result, sulfur dioxide emissions from industrial firing installations and power stations in the western states fell by more than 85 percent between 1980 and 1994, and nitrogen oxide emissions decreased by 65 percent. Laws regulating the discharge of wastewater have resulted in the fish stocks in rivers being restored to 1920 levels. The Soil Protection Concept of 1985 and the Federal Soil Conservation Act of 1998 protect soil. The Packing Ordinance requires manufacturers to reclaim and recycle their packing materials, and the Duales System Deutschland ("Green Dot") collects used packaging materials from consumers and recycles them.

Germany's government is actively working to create energy sources for the future, including solar, wind, and nuclear fuels. Concern about nuclear radiation has

prompted the government to pass several laws regulating the use of atomic energy and protection from radiation exposure.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 30.8
 Average Annual Forest Change, 1990-2000, 000 ha: —
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 30
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 792,193
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 9.55

LIVING CONDITIONS

Germany has a high standard of living. Most people live in comfortable dwellings with all the usual modern amenities, such as telephones, television, heat, and furniture. A wide variety of consumer goods is available in most cities and towns. Germany is fairly crowded, and real estate prices are accordingly high. Public transportation is efficient and widely available. Roads are good; Germany is especially known for its Autobahn superhighway, which has no posted speed limit.

The German standard of living declined slightly at the beginning of the 21st century as the economy stagnated. Poverty increased from 12.5 percent in 2001 to 13.5 percent in 2002. Conditions were worse in the east than in the west. On the whole, German people were dissatisfied with their quality of life, and Germany ranked toward the bottom of EU countries in terms of standard of living.

HEALTH

Germany has an excellent health-care system. Over 90 percent of the populace is covered by compulsory national health insurance. The national health-care system is run by a combination of public and private doctors and hospitals and administered by insurance companies known as sickness funds. All people below a certain level of income are required to enroll in a sickness fund. Workers and their employers share equally the cost of their insurance premiums, and the government subsidizes insurance for the unemployed, the poor, and old people. Patients pay copayments for prescription drugs and hospital services, though in some cases the fees are waived. People with high incomes are allowed to choose between enrolling in a sickness fund or purchasing private health insurance, which allows patients to see any doctor they want and obtain the best available services. Patients who are obligated to join sickness funds are also allowed to purchase supplemental private insurance. There are usually no waits for nonemergency services, unlike in many other European countries. Germany is working to streamline the health-

insurance system to increase revenues to hospitals, avoid duplication of tests, and otherwise save costs while maintaining the standard of care.

Germans are in general a healthy people. Life expectancy is over 81 years for women, over 75 years for men. The infant mortality rate is very low.

Health

Number of Physicians: 297,893
 Number of Dentists: 63,854
 Number of Nurses: 783,000
 Number of Pharmacists: 47,692
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 362
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: 9.1
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 4.2
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 8
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 10.8
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 2,412
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.1
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 97
 Measles: 89
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 100
 Access to Improved Water Source %: —

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Germany has ample food to feed its people. The traditional German diet is heavy. Germans eat a great deal of cold meats, cheese, veal, pork, bread, dumplings, and the ubiquitous potatoes. Sausages are very popular, and many of Germany's states have their own sausage specialties; Bavaria is especially famed for its bratwurst with sauerkraut. Schnitzel (breaded fried veal cutlet) is popular. In the north people eat more fish, in the south more meat. Cabbage is one of the most common vegetables, often served sautéed with vinegar or as sauerkraut. Germans make a variety of pastries, such as strudel. Fast food is readily available in most German towns, as are stands selling Turkish *döner kebabs* (gyros). Germany is famous for its beer, which comes in numerous varieties. It also produces some excellent wines, such as the apple wine from Frankfurt.

Germans have become more health conscious over the last few decades and now eat many more fresh vegetables and salads than they did in the mid-20th century. Obesity has been increasing in Germany, as in much of the developed world, and in the early 2000s the government was trying to encourage people to eat a healthy diet and get more exercise.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 106.9
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 206.1

STATUS OF WOMEN

Germany's Basic Law confers equal rights to men and women. Women's groups, however, feel that women remain excluded from opportunities available to men. They believe the actual practice of equal treatment remains more of an ideal than a reality regarding employment, family, and politics, even though women make up the majority of Germany's population. Under pressure from the German Women's Council—a women's lobby representing 52 associations with 11 million members—governmental officials have broadened the constitutional and statutory foundations for establishing equality among the sexes.

In 1919 women obtained the right to vote and stand for election. Since then the number of politically active women has increased steadily, though it remains smaller than that of men. Most political parties have introduced quotas to increase the number of female representatives on executive committees. The number of women in Parliament increased from 8.4 percent in 1980 to 32.8 percent in 2003. Each federal government since 1961 has included at least one woman. In 2003 women headed six of the 13 federal ministries, and there were about 40 female ministers in state governments. All state governments have ministers or commissioners for women's affairs, and nearly 1,500 municipalities have created "equality posts" for women.

In 1958 the Act on Equal Rights for Men and Women introduced equal rights for women within the institution of marriage based on the assumption that women were housewives. Almost 20 years later, in 1977, the First Act to Reform the Marriage and Family Law eliminated the traditional marriage model, assuming instead that spouses divide responsibilities as they see fit. It legislated the partnership principle by ensuring equal rights for women in marriage and divorce. Further reform developed in 1994, with the Act to Amend the Law Relating to Family Names, which ensured the equality of men and women regarding the right to the use of a name. The law accords no unilateral preference to the man's family name. Rape within marriage became a punishable offense in 1997.

Educational opportunities for females have improved greatly in Germany. More than half of the secondary students obtaining university entrance qualifications and over 43 percent of all students in higher education are women. The number of women completing courses in vocational training has increased sharply since the 1950s. With more education and equality, over 55 percent of the women in Germany between the ages of 15 and 65 have employment. In 2002, 64 percent of women with children below the age of 18 were working outside the home. Despite such success, women's groups still complain of discrimination. Women tend to lose their jobs faster than men, find new ones less quickly, receive fewer

apprenticeships, and receive lower wages than their male counterparts. Only one-third of top managers in industry are women, and very few women are members of the boards of large corporations. Women still assume most of the responsibility for home and family, which interrupts their careers, though the government has tried to improve this situation by providing allowances for raising children, establishing all-day schools and nurseries, and encouraging men to become involved in their families. In 2002 women earned about 30 percent less than their male counterparts, though the discrepancy was much less in the eastern states.

Women serving in the armed forces received equal rights to men in 2001, which means they can train for armed combat if they so choose, thereby earning a chance at the full range of career possibilities offered by the military.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 32.8
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.0
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 46.4

WORK

Some two-thirds of Germany's workers are employed in the service sector, a number that has increased dramatically over the last two decades. In 2002, 34.6 million people worked for employers, four million were self-employed, and another four million people of working age were unemployed. The unemployment rate was 7.6 percent in western Germany and 17.7 percent in the east. The government has made reducing unemployment its top priority. Of particular concern are those who spend more than a year looking for work; most of these people are insufficiently trained or unskilled, elderly, or disabled, but they also include a large number of east German women. Almost 40 percent of the chronically unemployed have no vocational qualifications. Western Germans with high levels of education enjoy nearly full employment, and their job situations are not affected by fluctuations in the labor market.

The Federal Agency for Employment handles all job-related matters, including job placement and the payment of unemployment benefits. All workers and their employers must pay into the unemployment benefits scheme. Any worker who has paid unemployment insurance for two years is entitled to payment of unemployment benefits for a limited time. If the worker still has not found work after exhausting these benefits, the government may provide more unemployment assistance, after testing the individual's need.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 42,630,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 42.5
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 2.8
 Industry: 33.4
 Services: 63.8
 Unemployment %: 10.5

EDUCATION

Formal compulsory education begins at age six and extends for nine years. Thereafter it is partly compulsory—there are no penalties if pupils drop out—for an additional three years. There is virtually 100 percent enrollment at the primary level. Most students attend public schools. Girls and young women are well represented at all levels of education. They have long formed the majority of students at the primary and intermediate levels, and in 2002–03 new students enrolling in institutions of higher education were 50.4 percent female.

In current terminology Germans refer to preschool programs as the elementary stage (*Elementarstufe*) and to the first four years of school as the primary stage (*Primarstufe*). Preschool programs are voluntary and usually not part of the formal school system. Primary school (*Grundschule*) includes grades one through four. The primary school offers 23 to 27 class hours of instruction per week, half of it devoted to German and mathematics. At the end of the fourth year the child and his or her parents must make a decision regarding secondary education. In the 1970s a so-called orientation phase was introduced in all states, designed to extend the period of decision and to make the transition to the appropriate secondary school easier.

There are four types of general secondary education, together known as continuation schools: the *Hauptschule*, the *Realschule*, the *Gymnasium*, and the *Gesamtschule*. Students who plan to attend universities usually choose either the *Gymnasium* or the *Gesamtschule*. Alternate routes to university education include a part-time evening school called *Abendgymnasium* or an institution called *Studienkolleg*, meant primarily for foreigners. The *Gymnasium* is also called the grammar school or the senior high school. The *Gymnasium* extends for nine years, from grades five through 13, and is the most academic and prestigious branch of the secondary-school system. The upper secondary school culminates in the *Abitur*, an examination that students must pass to enter a university. The *Gesamtschule* offers an all-inclusive curriculum for students from ages six through 19, who are allowed to take whatever courses they choose. Some of the *Gesamtschulen* are all-day schools, unlike the *Gymnasien*, which have classes only part of the day but have extensive home-

work assignments. Within the secondary educational tradition, most pupils attend *Gymnasium*, though the *Gesamtschule* is growing in popularity.

Students who do not plan to pursue higher education attend either the *Hauptschule* or the *Realschule*. The *Hauptschule* is referred to as the secondary modern or short-course school and the *Realschule* as the intermediate school. The *Hauptschule* is the main type of secondary school, covering grades five through nine. Most of its students come from lower social groups and many of them are children of foreign workers. *Hauptschulen* have typically geared their curricula to less academically gifted children, although more recently advanced courses (*Aufbauzüge*) have been offered from grades eight through 10 to enable pupils to enter academic secondary school in the 11th grade. The *Realschule* comprises grades five through 10 or seven through 10, concluding at age 16 with the intermediate certificate (*Realschulabschlusszeugnis*), often called middle maturity (*mittlere Reife*). There is a parallel continuation (*Aufbau*) school for those who transfer from the *Hauptschule*. The *Realschule* offers between 30 and 34 class hours weekly and is a popular choice among the lower middle class, craft workers, and industrial workers because it offers safe passage to white-collar jobs in middle management without the rigors of the *Gymnasium*.

There are well over 100 institutions of higher education in Germany, including specialized institutions such as the Medical University in Hannover, the army universities in Hamburg and Munich, and the Sports University in Cologne. The majority of the institutions fall into three groups: the traditional-type university (*Universität*), technical universities (*Technische Hochschulen*), and the comprehensive universities (*Gesamthochschulen*), combining multiple institutions.

Higher education is tuition free and admits students from both the *Gymnasium* and the so-called second-route institutions. The basic right of the holder of an *Abitur* to enroll at any university in the Federal Republic has been sharply curtailed in recent years by a rapid increase in the number of qualified applicants and the lack of facilities. Thus, admissions in almost all fields are curtailed by *numerus clausus* restrictions. To assist academically qualified students to find places in higher education, a central registry was established in Hamburg in 1971. This registry was replaced in 1973 by a mandatory federal selection process involving all student applications in those fields in which the number of applications exceeds available seats.

In 1998 the Fourth Act to Reform the Framework Act for Higher Education instituted a fundamental overhaul of the higher education system. Through deregulation, a stronger performance orientation, and the creation of incentives to excel, it aimed to encourage competition and differentiation, thereby ensuring the international com-

petitiveness of Germany's higher education institutions in the 21st century.

Education

Literacy Rate %:	99.0
Male %:	99.0
Female %:	99.0
School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling:	15.9
First Level: Primary schools:	17,910
Teachers:	235,993
Students:	3,373,176
Student-Teacher Ratio:	14.3
Net Enrollment Ratio:	100
Second Level: Secondary Schools:	17,711
Teachers:	589,964
Students:	6,711,740
Student-Teacher Ratio:	14.4
Net Enrollment Ratio:	88.1
Third Level: Institutions:	335
Teachers:	277,042
Students:	2,183,129
Gross Enrollment Ratio:	48.7
Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP:	4.6

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

German researchers have made many significant contributions to the world's scientific knowledge. The German government finances research at universities and at public and private institutions, such as the Max Planck Gesellschaft, which does research in the natural and life sciences, social sciences, and humanities; the Fraunhofer Gesellschaft; the Helmholtz Gesellschaft, which focuses on aerospace, nanoparticles, cancer, and climate and the environment; and the Wilhelm Leibnitz Gesellschaft. Several universities include academies of science; the most prominent are in Düsseldorf, Gottingen, Heidelberg, Leipzig, Mainz, Munich, and Berlin. The German Academy of Natural Scientists Leopoldina specializes in medicine. Private industry also conducts research. German scientists have been involved in the German Genome Project and the European Organization for Nuclear Research. The government's main scientific administrative organization is the German Research Council, which provides financing for projects, donates money to universities, and sets up research networks among scientists. The government especially wants to develop nanotechnology, plasma technology, superconductors, nonlinear dynamics, and magnetoelectronics, all of which show promise for developing Germany's economy in the future.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people:	3,145
Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP:	2.5
High-Tech Exports \$million:	86.86
Patent Applications by Residents:	80,222

MEDIA

According to the International Press Institute in Vienna, Germany is one of the few countries where the state respects the strong position of a free press. Article 5 of the Basic Law establishes formal guarantees for freedom of opinion, freedom of the press, and rights to accessible information sources. There is no censorship. The state cannot restrict, abridge, or even indirectly interfere with this freedom. Legislators, however, have written two basic restraints into the law: The first provides for lifting constitutional protection in cases of subversion. The second requires the press to observe the general laws protecting personal honor and general propriety. The ultimate judge of the legality of the specific applications of these restraints is the Federal Constitutional Court. The court has enlarged the application of the law to cover not only publication but also the technical processes of production, transportation, and sales. In other words, the law guarantees not only freedom of the press as a theoretical adjunct of freedom of speech and expression but also independence of the press as an intellectual and business institution. Presently, there are nearly 1,200 accredited correspondents in Bonn and Berlin. They are members of the Federal Press Conference or the Foreign Press Association, both of which are entirely independent of the authorities. Thus, the press is on a par with other national institutions with clearly defined legal status and functions for its well-lobbied membership.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 382
 Total Circulation 000: 23,946
 Circulation per 1,000: 291
 Books Published: 78,042
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers 000: 77,800
 per 1,000: 948
 Television sets 000: 46,500
 per 1,000: 567

CULTURE

Germany has never had a central culture and has never had a national ministry of culture; instead, individual states and cities maintains their own cultural centers and traditions. Cologne, Kassel, and Düsseldorf are known for fine arts. Berlin is famous for its theater. Berlin, Dresden, Stuttgart, Nuremberg, Munich, Frankfurt, Cologne, and Hildesheim have the best museums. Weimar and Marbach have fine literary archives. Hamburg is home to many media companies. The federal library, the Deutsche Bibliothek, has branches in Berlin, Leipzig, and Frankfurt am Main. The national German Cultural Council serves as a contact for federal states and local governments and ensures that matters of national cultural policy get debated.

The federal government also funds various organizations that promote German culture at home and abroad, such as the Goethe Institut, the German Academic Exchange Service, the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, and the Institute for Foreign Relations.

Germany has spawned a large number of famous artists, composers, and other cultural figures, ranging from Johann Sebastian Bach and Johann Wolfgang von Goethe to the mid-20th century Gruppe 47 and the postunification artists. German architecture introduced the Bauhaus style in the early 20th century. German filmmakers such as Werner Herzog and Volker Schlöndorff have won international awards for their groundbreaking work.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 12,134
 Volumes: 113,256,357
 Registered borrowers: 11,100,286
 Museums Number: 2,709
 Annual Attendance: 90,448,000
 Cinema Gross Receipts national currency billion: 1.58
 Number of Cinemas: 4,712
 Seating Capacity: 835,000
 Annual Attendance: 149,000,000

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Germanic people lived in central Europe centuries ago, migrating from place to place and spreading their beliefs throughout the area that is now Germany. Medieval Germanic people were the ancestors of the Vikings. The old Germanic gods were the predecessors of Norse deities, and for that reason many German and Norse deities have similar names. The Norse king of the gods is called Odin, while the same god was called Wotan in Germany; his wife was called Frigg in Norway, Freya in Germany. The mythical world was populated with rather frightening gods and goddesses, dwarfs, elves, goblins, dragons, and other monsters. The old religions were gradually replaced by Christianity, but German people continued to tell the old stories about them. Mythology formed a core of the German national identity that emerged in the 19th century. Richard Wagner incorporated Germanic myths into his Ring cycle, and Germany was one of the first places to engage in research into folklore. The brothers Grimm were especially famous for their work in this area during the 1800s, collecting folk tales from older and rural people and compiling them in their collection of fairy tales.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Germans have a great deal of free time. The workweek averages 36.7 hours, and most people receive up to six

weeks of vacation every year. This leisure time combined with a substantial disposable income amounts to a great deal of time spent on recreation. Many people spend much of their free time at home, watching television, listening to music, gardening, painting, or pursuing other hobbies. They also enjoy going out to movies, concerts, and restaurants. Museums are very popular destinations for Germans.

About 70 million Germans belong to one or more of the nation's 345,000 clubs. There are clubs to meet almost any interest: sports, dog breeding, childrearing, marksmanship, carnival activities, singing, regional culture, and many others. Many citizens volunteer with their clubs or other organizations.

Germans travel a great deal. In 2002 Germans spent \$53 billion traveling abroad.

ETIQUETTE

Germans are known for being rule oriented. They insist on punctuality; arriving late for an appointment is considered insulting, as is missing a deadline. They are often serious and do not appreciate humor or surprises in business situations, though they do not mind them so much during leisure time. Compliments are not considered a necessary part of conversation, and Germans will assume that their performance in something is satisfactory unless they are informed that it is not. German men greet one another with a handshake, often accompanied by a slight bow, and both parties are expected to meet one another's eyes. The rules on handshakes are not so well established between men and women. Age is important, and older people expect to speak or enter a room before younger ones. Germans are fond of titles, and often address one another as Herr (Mister) or Frau (Mrs. or Ms.) even when they know one another well. They will also address a person with multiple titles if he or she possesses them, such as "Herr Professor Doktor Schmidt." Only family members and close friends use first names with one another. People usually use the formal form of address, reserving the informal *du* for friends and relatives, although young people generally use the informal form more often.

At German restaurants it is not unusual for strangers to share a table, but it is not necessary for everyone seated at the same table to talk to one another. Germans eat using the continental system of flatware manipulation, holding the fork in the left hand and the knife in the right at all times. Germans often drink large amounts of beer, but they do not approve of public drunkenness. They usually do not request tap water at restaurants, though they will drink mineral water with meals. Restaurants include a service charge with the price of the meal, and tipping is not necessary.

FAMILY LIFE

Germans consider family very important. Some 81 percent of Germans live in a family, most in a traditional family consisting of a married couple and their children. Germans are quite tolerant of nontraditional family arrangements, however, and it is becoming increasingly common for couples to live together without being married. Only 17 percent of Germans live alone, most of them women. Same-sex couples exist; officials estimate that Germany contains somewhere between 50,000 and 150,000 same-sex households. Traditional gender roles have been changing, and men are sharing more of the household chores with their female partners.

Germany's Basic Law protects marriage and the family by giving married couples preferential tax treatment and by providing financial support to families with children. Both mothers and fathers are allowed up to three years of leave from work after the birth of a child; the state pays them an allowance for two years of this time. This encourages Germans to have children, in part to combat the declining birthrate, which was 1.38 children per woman in 2004. Germans do not necessarily indulge their children, but they consider the use of violence against children to be wrong.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Germans consider personal appearance very important and usually dress carefully. Businesspeople wear conservative dark suits, usually with white shirts. Even during leisure Germans do not appear in sloppy or excessively casual clothing, nor do they chew gum while talking to one another. Women usually do not wear much makeup. In the summer people may wear shorts and sandals, often with socks. Regional garments are still popular in some areas, such as Bavaria, where men appear in Lederhosen (short leather pants) and women in Dirndlkleider (traditional dresses with aprons) both during festivals and on ordinary days.

SPORTS

Germans are avid sports fans. The German Sports Federation (Deutsch Sportbund, DSB) has 27 million members and oversees a variety of sports. In addition to soccer, it sponsors clubs engaging in a variety of sports of interest to both men and women. The DSB offers sports badges to outstanding participants, and every year nearly one million Germans attempt to win these badges. Germans especially enjoy watching soccer (football) both live and on television, and many Germans, the vast majority of them male, also play. Some 6.26 million Germans belong to the German Football Association. Soccer's World Cup will be held in Germany in 2006.

The government places a high priority on training and supporting professional athletes. Germany's Olympic training facilities are among the best in the world. The government has also increased support for high-level athletics by the disabled, and it is working to build more modern sports facilities in the east.

Many Germans like to ride bicycles. One popular event is traffic-free day, when stretches of road are closed to automobiles, allowing bicyclists stress-free travel. The wine route in Rhineland-Palatinate is a popular traffic-free destination.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1949** The Federal Republic of Germany is born and enacts a new constitution called the Basic Law. The Deutsche Mark replaces the Reichsmark as the national currency. Economic Affairs Minister Ludwig Erhard lifts all price controls. Theodor Heuss is elected president, and Konrad Adenauer enters his first term as federal chancellor.
- 1951** Revision of the occupation statute grants the Federal Republic limited autonomy in foreign relations.
- 1954** The Treaty of Paris is signed between the occupying powers and the Federal Republic.
- 1955** The Hallstein Doctrine proclaims West Germany the sole representative of the German people and prohibits diplomatic relations with countries recognizing East Germany. Western occupation formally ends as West Germany enters NATO and is accepted as a sovereign state.
- 1956** The Bundestag accepts remilitarization and the creation of the Bundeswehr.
- 1957** West Germany joins the European Community (EC); the Saar joins West Germany.
- 1958** Soviets and East Germans close off land access to West Berlin; for the next three years the Allies airlift people and materials to the besieged city.
- 1959** Heinrich Lübke is elected second president of West Germany.
- 1961** East Germany constructs the Berlin Wall, sealing off East Berlin's inhabitants from contact with the West.
- 1963** West Germany signs a treaty of friendship with France. Following the Der Spiegel Affair, which led to the dismissal of Defense Minister Franz Josef Strauss, Adenauer steps down and is succeeded as chancellor by Ludwig Erhard.
- 1966** Diplomatic relations are established with Romania, contrary to the Hallstein Doctrine. Ludwig Erhard yields chancellorship to Kurt-Georg Kiesinger, who enters into a Grand Coalition with the SPD and FDP.
- 1969** Following the CDU electoral reversal, the SPD and FDP join in a coalition government. Gustav Heinemann is elected West Germany's third president. Willy Brandt becomes chancellor.
- 1970** Brandt launches Ostpolitik treaties with East Germany and the Soviet Union, legitimizing the existing German boundaries.
- 1971** Four-power agreement is signed in Berlin.
- 1972** Munich Olympics is marred by terrorist kidnappings of Israeli athletes. Treaty on the Basis of Relations is signed with East Germany.
- 1973** West Germany and Czechoslovakia sign a peace treaty.
- 1974** Following a spy scandal, Brandt resigns and is succeeded by Helmut Schmidt of the SPD as chancellor. Walter Scheel is elected West Germany's fourth president.
- 1977** In a daring rescue operation, West German police free captives held by hijackers of a Lufthansa plane in Mogadishu, Somalia.
- 1979** Karl Carstens is elected West Germany's fifth president.
- 1982** The FDP leaves Schmidt's coalition government and joins with the CDU to form a new government under Helmut Kohl.
- 1983** The CDU/FDP coalition is returned to power with a large majority in national elections.
- 1984** Richard von Weizsäcker is elected West Germany's sixth president.
- 1987** In national elections the CDU suffers significant losses, but Kohl retains the chancellorship.
- 1989** The Berlin Wall is torn down in the wake of the collapse of the Honecker regime.
- 1990** East Germany and West Germany begin discussions on reunification, a process culminating with the monetary and political union of the two states. The German electorate chooses Helmut Kohl to be the first chancellor of a united Germany.
- 1991** Richard von Weizsäcker becomes the first Bundespräsident (federal president) of a united Germany and Germany's sixth overall. The first elected Bundestag of the unified Germany convenes and passes legislation making Berlin the new capital by 2000.
- 1992** With 2 million guest workers already, Germany accepts 450,000 asylum seekers, of which 27 percent come from the former Yugoslavia. This represents a 70 percent increase from the year before. The government registers nearly 2,500 attacks by right-wing extremists against foreigners.
- 1993** Germany becomes the final nation to ratify the Maastricht Treaty on the European Union. It tightens asylum restrictions, which immediately decreases the number of asylum applications.
- 1994** National elections return the CDU/FDP coalition to power with a slim majority, allowing Chancellor Kohl to return for his second term

in the unified Germany and fourth overall. Russian and Allied troops complete their final withdrawal from Berlin. The German High Court rules that German military participation in UN peacekeeping missions outside of NATO is constitutional, thus removing a major impediment to Germany's bid for a permanent seat on the UN Security Council.

- 1995** Roman Herzog is elected as united Germany's second president and Germany's seventh overall. German courts charge seven former East German party officials with manslaughter, making them partly responsible in the "shoot-to-kill" orders issued to border guards.
- 1996** After five years the Bundesrat finally resolves to follow the Bundestag to Berlin. Mounting financial strains from German unification and EU integration raise the unemployment rate to 11 percent, the highest level since World War II. Under protest from unions and the SPD, Chancellor Kohl announces a plan to reduce welfare benefits in order to bring the German economy into line with the strict criteria for EU monetary union set for 1999.
- 1997** The German unemployment rate rises to 13 percent, forcing 5 million people out of work, exacerbating Germany's ability to meet EU monetary qualifications. Germany and the Czech Republic sign treaties of joint apology for misdeeds executed during World War II.
- 1998** The SPD and Bündnis 90/Die Grünen win in the national elections, making Gerhard Schröder united Germany's second chancellor and Germany's seventh overall.
- 1999** Johannes Rau is elected as united Germany's second president and Germany's eighth overall. Former chancellor Helmut Kohl and others are accused of a campaign finance scandal.
- 2000** Germany and the nuclear industry come to a social consensus regarding the phasing-out of nuclear energy by 2032. Kohl is forced to resign as the CDU's honorary chairman.
- 2002** Germany adopts the euro as its national currency.
- 2004** Horst Köhler elected president. Germany's government suggests cutting unemployment benefits and welfare spending, resulting in massive protests.
- 2005** Angela Merkel becomes the first East German and first woman chancellor of Germany.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Federal Statistical Office of Germany
http://www.statistik-bund.de/e_home.htm
- Federal Foreign Office—Facts about Germany
<http://www.tatsachen-ueber-deutschland.de/1610.99.html>

GHANA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Ghana

ABBREVIATION

GH

CAPITAL

Accra

HEAD OF STATE & HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

President John Kufuor (from 2000)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Constitutional democracy

POPULATION

21,029,853 (2005)

AREA

239,460 sq km (92,456 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Akan, Ewe, Mole-Dagbane

LANGUAGE

English

RELIGIONS

Christianity, animism, Islam

UNIT OF CURRENCY

New cedi

NATIONAL FLAG

Three horizontal stripes of red, gold, and green, with a black star in the middle of the gold stripe

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A blue shield supported by golden eagles with upswept wings. The shield is quartered by a golden cross with a golden lion in the center. The four quarters show a silver castle, a cocoa tree, a gold mine, and a crossed sword and baton. At the crest and around the necks of the eagles are black stars, and on a gold ribbon beneath the emblem is the national motto, "Freedom and Justice."

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"Hail the Name of Ghana"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day), January 13 (National Redemption Day), March 6 (National Day, Independence Day), Good Friday, Holy Saturday, Easter Monday, July 1 (Republic Day), December 25 and 26 (Christmas)

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

March 6, 1957

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

April 28, 1992

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Ghana is on the Gulf of Guinea on the western coast of Africa. The total land area is 239,460 sq km (92,456 sq mi). The total length of its land border is 2,094 km (1,301 mi), consisting of a 549 km (341 mi) northern border with Burkina Faso, a 668 km (415 mi) western border with Côte d'Ivoire, and an 877 km (545 mi) eastern border with Togo. The length of the coastline is 539 km (335 mi).

Low plains consisting of scrub-covered savannas (the flat and featureless Accra plains), the Volta delta, and

the Akan lowlands cover the southern part of the country. To the north lie the rich Ashanti highlands (which produce most of the cocoa), the generally arid Volta basin, and the forest-covered Akwapim-Togo ranges. High plains occupy the northern and northwestern parts of the country.

The entire country is crisscrossed by a network of streams and rivers, although the smaller rivers dry up during the dry seasons. The largest river is the Volta, with its three branches. Its vast drainage system covers some 157,989 sq km (61,000 sq mi), or two-thirds of the country.

Ghana



Geography

Area sq km: 239,460; sq mi 92,456

World rank: 77th

Land Boundaries, km: Burkina Faso 549, Côte d'Ivoire 688, Togo 877

Coastline, km: 539

Elevation Extremes meters:

Lowest: Atlantic Ocean 0

Highest: Mount Afadjato 880

Land Use %

Arable Land: 16.3

Permanent Crops: 9.7

Forest: 27.9

Other: 46.1

Population of Principal Cities (2002 est.)

Accra	1,605,400
Kumasi	627,600
Sekondi-Takoradi	167,500
Tamale	269,000
Tema	237,700

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

The climate resembles that of other equatorial countries. The eastern coastal belt is warm and comparatively dry, the southwest is hot and humid, the eastern forest belt is warm and humid, and the northern plains are hot and dry. Variations in the weather are governed by the interplay between the dry harmattan winds from the Sahara, the southwesterly monsoons, and the cool equatorial easterlies. In the north there are two seasons: a hot season from November to March or April, and a rainy season from April or May to October. In the south there are four seasons: two wet seasons, from May to June and from September to November, and two dry seasons, from July to August and from December to April.

The annual mean temperature ranges from 26.1°C to 28.9°C (79°F to 84°F). Temperatures run higher in the north, with annual mean maximum temperatures near 34.4°C (94°F). The highest recorded temperature was 42.8°C (109°F), at Navrongo, and the lowest 10.6°C (51°F), at Kumasi and Tafo. The hottest month is generally February or April; the coolest, December. Humidity in the coastal zone is high throughout the year, reaching between 95 and 100 percent, dropping to only about 15 percent in January when the dry harmattan blows from the northeast.

The southwest has the heaviest average annual rainfall, with over 2,230 mm (88 in). The amount of precipitation gradually decreases northward, with Kumasi receiving only 1,450 mm (57 in) and Tamale 1,070 mm (42 in). Accra has a low average rainfall, only 740 mm (29 in). There also are considerable annual variations in rainfall.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature: 79°F to 84°F
North: 94°F
Average Rainfall
Kumasi: 57 in
Tamale: 42 in
Accra: 29 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

About one-third of Ghana, primarily the western region, is covered by high evergreen and semideciduous forest that includes silk cottons, kolas, and hardwood such

as mahogany, odum, and ebony. Most of the rest of the country is covered by savanna grasslands interspersed with shea trees, acacias, and baobabs. Ghana has about 3,600 species of flora, over 2,200 found in the high forest. Large mammals such as elephants and lions used to roam the savannas, but these animals are now largely confined to nature reserves. The forests provide habitat for monkeys, snakes, and, along the rivers, crocodiles. Ghana is a bird-watcher's paradise, with at least 725 species of birds.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005:	21,029,853
World Rank:	50th
Density per sq km:	90.8
% of annual growth (1999-2003):	9.1
Male %:	50.0
Female %:	50.0
Urban %:	37.4
Age Distribution %:	
0-14:	38.0
15-64:	58.3
65 and over:	3.7
Population 2025:	25,365,000
Birth Rate per 1,000:	24.9
Death Rate per 1,000:	10.67
Rate of Natural Increase %:	1.8
Total Fertility Rate:	3.17
Expectation of Life (years):	
Males:	55.36
Females:	57.22
Marriage Rate per 1,000:	—
Divorce Rate per 1,000:	—
Average Size of Households:	4.9
Induced Abortions:	—

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

More than 100 ethnic groups distinguishable by culture, language, or race are found in Ghana. No single group constitutes more than 15 percent of the population, and no part of Ghana is ethnically homogeneous. In the south, five clusters of the Kwa peoples—the Akan, Ewe, Ga-Adangbe, Guan, and Central Togo—constitute about 70 percent of the population. In the north, the three clusters of the Gur peoples—Mole-Dagbani, Gurma, and Grusi—dominate, making up 20 percent of the population. Among the non-Ghanaian population there are more than 15 major ethnic groupings. Tribal ties among members of each group are still strong and, in many cases, determine social and political attitudes.

LANGUAGES

More than 100 languages and dialects are spoken in Ghana. Because no single language is spoken or understood by the majority of Ghanaians, English is the official

language and is extensively used in government, business, education, and communications. The constitution of 1969 required all members of the National Assembly to read and speak English with reasonable fluency. In most regions Hausa is used as a lingua franca.

The most important indigenous languages are the Kwa languages (Twi-Fante, Ga, and Ewe) in the south and the three subdivisions of the Gur family (Dagbane, Grusi, and Gurma) in the north. Only a handful of the 100 languages have writing systems. Most scripts were introduced by missionaries, and in many cases the Bible was the first published work in the languages. Ashanti, Fante, Ewe, Ga, and Dagbane have developed a considerable body of literature, by African standards. The related languages of Twi and Fanti are the most widely used. The government has selected nine languages for development and use in schools: Akuapem-Twi, Ashanti-Twi, Dagbane, Dangbe, Ewe, Fanti, Ga, Kasem, and Nizima.

RELIGIONS

Though statistical data have only limited validity in Ghana, as in other African countries, in determining the exact nature of religious affiliations, 63 percent are classified as Christians, 21 percent as followers of traditional religions, and 16 percent as Muslim. In many cases, however, self-professed Christians continue to participate in traditional rituals associated with African religions.

Religious Affiliations	
Christian	13,250,000
Indigenous beliefs	4,415,000
Muslim	3,365,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Oral traditions suggest that the area that is now Ghana was inhabited about 3,000 to 4,000 years ago, although there is no definite link between the earlier inhabitants and present-day Ghanaians. Some of the kingdoms that later developed in northern Ghana were ruled by Mande speakers ethnically related to the rulers of the empire of Mali. By the 13th century the town of Jenné (Djenné) became the headquarters of the Dyula traders from Mali, and much of their trade was with the Akan speakers of southern Ghana. The states of Akany and Twifu in the Ofin River valley became noted for their gold mines. Meanwhile, the Mande moved southwestward to found the states of Dagomba and Mamprusi and the kingdom of Gonja in northern Ghana. Although the Mande rulers themselves were not Muslims, they brought with them Muslims as scribes, traders, and medicine men. From the

15th to the 18th centuries Islam expanded its influence in the north and in the Akan states, especially among the Ashanti.

Of the groups that make up modern Ghana, the Ashanti are the most prominent. The Ashanti are members of the Twi-speaking branch of the Akan people who settled in the vicinity of Lake Busumtwi. By the mid-17th century they formed the most powerful of the states of the central forest zone. Under Chief Oti Akenten a series of military operations helped to found an alliance of states known as the Ashanti Confederation. At the end of the 17th century Osei Tutu became the *asantabene* (king) of Ashanti, and under his rule the alliance of Ashanti states threw off the domination of Dankyira, the most powerful state in the coastal hinterland, which had been exacting tribute from other Akan groups in the central forest. The capital of the confederation then moved to Kumasi. During the reign of Osei Tutu, a golden stool was caused to fall from the sky by the Ashanti high priest, Okomfo Anokye, and this golden stool was accepted as the national symbol, representing the united spirit of the confederation.

This was the state of the country when the first Portuguese arrived in 1471 on what became known to the Europeans as the Gold Coast. While large quantities of gold were found, it was the slave trade that proved most lucrative. Other European nations also built forts in order to participate in the slave trade. By the 19th century there were 76 forts on the coast.

When the slave trade came to an end, the British remained on the Gold Coast, using its outposts for customs. The Ashanti people prospered. However, when they refused to cede their capital of Kumasi to the British in 1873, the British sacked the city and declared the Gold Coast a Crown colony. More than two decades of fighting ensued, with the Ashanti people eventually being beaten.

Ghana was under British rule from 1901 to 1957, although the British had remained in control of the coastal region from the early part of the 19th century and the British presence was over 300 years old in some areas. British rule was relatively benevolent and was marked by the progressive development of self-governing institutions, especially after 1946. Ghana was the first West African nation to achieve independence. British influences continue to be felt in every aspect of society, most strongly in language, education, justice, and commerce. Political relations with Great Britain have remained close, despite a brief suspension of diplomatic relations under Kwame Nkrumah.

In 1957 Ghana was led by Kwame Nkrumah, who had been prime minister of the Gold Coast since 1952. Ghana became a republic in 1960, with Nkrumah as executive president. Nkrumah gradually consolidated his own power and that of his party, the Convention People's Party (CPP), establishing a single-party socialist state in

1964. His autocratic rule and his financial mismanagement led to growing discontent and finally to his overthrow by the military in 1966. The National Liberation Council (NLC), composed of four military and four police officers, took control under the leadership of General Joseph A. Ankrah. Following admission of corruption, Ankrah resigned in 1969 and was replaced by General Akwasi Amankwa Afrifa.

The NLC prepared the way for the return to partial civilian government in 1969, lifting the ban on political parties in preparation for legislative elections. The Progress Party (PP), led by Kofi Busia, won decisively, and Busia became prime minister. The NLC still exercised presidential power until August 1970, when Edward Akufo-Addo became head of state. The Busia administration, unable to deal with Ghana's economic problems, particularly rampant inflation and a huge foreign debt, and increasingly unpopular as a result of charges of corruption, was toppled by the army under Colonel Ignatius Kutu Acheampong in 1972. Acheampong established the military National Redemption Council (NRC) to head the government, banned all political parties, dissolved the legislature, and abolished the Supreme Court.

Acheampong focused on the nation's economic problems, instituting policies of self-reliance and austerity that permitted the government to reschedule its tremendous foreign debt. However, inflation continued, reaching three figures, the black market flourished, and corruption increased. From 1975 to 1977 food prices rose between 300 and 600 percent. The regime became increasingly unpopular, with five coup attempts in five years. In 1975 Acheampong disbanded the NRC and replaced it with a seven-member Supreme Military Council (SMC). Acheampong was forced to resign as leader of the SMC in 1978 and was replaced by General Frederick Akuffo, who promised an end to corruption and a return to civilian rule in 1979.

The Akuffo government, unable to fulfill its promise, was toppled in a coup led by Lieutenant Jerry Rawlings in June 1979. Rawlings went ahead with preparations for legislative elections, which were won by the People's National Party, led by Hilla Limann, who became civilian president. Like previous governments, Limann's was unable to deal with the nation's economic problems, and it was toppled by Rawlings in 1981. He abrogated the constitution, abolished political parties, and dissolved parliament. The prodemocracy Movement for Freedom and Justice demanded a referendum on the reestablishment of a multiparty system, and the Provisional National Defense Council (PNDC) pledged to accept the results of a national consensus.

Military rule came to an end in 1993, when the Fourth Republic was declared on January 7. Multiparty elections were held three years later, with Jerry Rawlings winning the presidency. In 2000 term limits precluded Rawlings

from seeking the presidency again. In a runoff election John Kufuor of the New Patriotic Party was elected president, receiving 57 percent of the vote. The Kufuor government eliminated fuel subsidies, causing gasoline prices to rise by 60 percent, and worked out a debt relief plan by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The government also attempted to stamp out the legacy of the Rawlings years by eliminating the public holiday celebrating Rawlings's military coup and appointing a "reconciliation commission" to investigate human rights abuses during those years. The commission began hearings in 2003. After a group of current and former military personnel were arrested on charges of planning to destabilize the government prior to the 2004 elections, Kufuor was elected to a second term.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1957–66	Kwame Nkrumah
1966–69	Gen. Joseph A. Ankrah
1969–70	Gen. Akwasi Amankwa Afrifa
1970–72	Kofi Busia
1972–78	Col. Ignatius Kutu Acheampong
1978–79	Gen. Frederick Akuffo
1979–81	Hilla Limann
1981–2000	Lt. Jerry Rawlings
2000–	John Kufuor

CONSTITUTION

One of the first acts of the Provisional National Defense Council (PNDC), which assumed power following the coup of December 31, 1981, was to abrogate the constitution of 1979. The Council of State was abolished, and the National Assembly and political parties were dissolved. On January 21, 1982, a 17-member, all-civilian cabinet was appointed, including a number of prominent individuals of "spotless integrity."

A massive government reorganization was initiated by a 1983 edict setting out the principles of state policy. Intended to supplement the proclamation of January 1982, the law allows the PNDC to mobilize all available personnel and resources as it deems fit and to occupy and use land for any purpose conducive to public welfare or to the interests of Ghana. Under this edict a number of bodies, such as the National Security Council and the Press Commission, were eliminated, and new bodies, such as the Education Commission and the Land Valuation Board, were created.

In 1992 a referendum adopted a new constitution with a presidential system of government, a multiparty parliament, and an independent judiciary. The president is elected by universal suffrage and has a four-year term, which is renewable only once.

PARLIAMENT

The former national legislature, the unicameral National Assembly, was suspended by the PNDC following the 1981 coup and the suspension of the constitution of 1979. With the adoption of a new constitution in 1992, parliamentary elections were held in 1996. The most recent elections were held in December 2004. The new parliament is a unicameral body consisting of 200 members, who are elected by direct popular vote to serve four-year terms.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Ghana is a multiparty state that until recently was largely controlled by one ruling party, the National Democratic Congress (NDC), which holds 92 of the assembly's 200 seats, but in the 2000 elections the New Patriotic Party captured 100 seats. Several other opposition parties have representatives in the assembly, including the People's National Convention (PNC) with three seats, and the Convention People's Party (CPP) with one seat. Four seats were held by independents.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For purposes of local government Ghana is divided into 10 regions. Each region is administered by a regional commissioner. The regions are further divided into 110 districts. The larger urban centers are organized as cities and municipalities. The institution of chieftaincies, with traditional councils and regional houses of chiefs, has been retained. Periodic attempts to decentralize the administration have been undertaken through regional, district, local, and urban councils.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The civil law is based on common law, doctrines of equity, and general statutes and the criminal law on the Criminal Code. Both are derived from Great Britain. Customary Ghanaian law is also enforceable in courts.

Traditional legal safeguards remain available in the established court system, which includes the High Court, the Court of Appeals, and the Supreme Court, headed by a chief justice. However, the Rawlings government also established a number of other judicial-type bodies that parallel the older court system. These organs include public tribunals, the Citizens' Vetting Committee (recently renamed the Office of Revenue Commissioners), the National Investigations Committee, the Special Military Tribunal, and the Public Tribunals Board.

Council Law 78, effective December 21, 1983, established a new public tribunals board to supervise the

public tribunals, originally set up in 1982. National Public Tribunals, set up in 1984, hear appeals from Regional Public Tribunals, which decide certain types of criminal cases and other cases presented to them by the PNDC. Critics of the public tribunals, however, decry the almost complete absence of trained and experienced legal practitioners on them and insist that accepted rules of evidence and procedure are not always followed. Government officials acknowledge imperfections but defend the new tribunals as a means of providing justice more quickly, to more people, with less corruption. They defend the ability of laypersons to make independent judgments and have instituted a training program for lay officials.

HUMAN RIGHTS

In terms of civil and political rights Ghana is classified as a not-free nation. The early years of the PNDC regime were marked by a number of systematic violations of human rights. These were regarded by the government as necessary to achieve its task of cleaning up the Augean stable. By 1984 some positive trends began to emerge, however. The universities were reopened. The curfew imposed since the assumption of power by the Rawlings regime in 1981 was lifted, and the country's borders, closed since September 1982, were reopened. A number of detainees, including all journalists, were released. Physical attacks on various institutions and groups ceased. A freely elected trade union leadership supplanted a government-appointed management group. Discipline is gradually being restored in the uniformed services, the police, and among militant political cadres. The government of John Kufuor has attempted to eliminate the legacy of military rule by appointing a commission to investigate human rights violations during the Rawlings years. Generally, the media are considered free. While there have been major improvements in the human rights record under Kufuor, serious problems remain, including corruption in the judiciary and police brutality.

FOREIGN POLICY

Under Rawlings, Ghana has received favorable international attention, particularly because of the country's internal stability relative to many of its neighbors. In contrast, relations with neighboring African countries have been stormy, particularly with Togo from 1977 to 1995. The border between the two countries was periodically closed during this period, as the two countries accused each other of carrying out acts of subversion.

Relations with Burkina Faso and Côte d'Ivoire have also been strained, primarily because of personality conflicts between Rawlings and the former Côte d'Ivoire president Félix Houphouët-Boigny. The assassination of Thomas Sankara of Burkina Faso was a personal blow to

Rawlings, while the expulsion of Ghanaians from Côte d'Ivoire and Nigeria also caused a near rupture of diplomatic relations with those countries. In 2004 Ghana was still dealing with the problem of refugees and nationals fleeing rebel fighting in Côte d'Ivoire.

DEFENSE

The defense structure is headed by the chairman of the PNDC. The line of command runs through the chief of the defense staff to the chiefs of the army, air force, and navy and the commandant of the border guards.

Manpower is provided by voluntary enlistment. The total strength of the armed forces is 7,000. In 2003 the nation spent \$44 million, or about 0.6 percent of gross domestic product (GDP), on defense. Ghanaian armed forces are second only to Nigeria in West Africa in offensive and defensive capability. Though as yet untested in battle, the armed forces have rendered a good account of themselves in handling civil disturbances and as part of international peacekeeping forces.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 7,000
 Military Manpower Availability: 5,391,378
 Military Expenditures \$million: 44
 as % of GDP: 0.6
 as % of central government expenditures: —
 Arms Imports \$million: 1
 Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

Well endowed with natural resources, Ghana has twice the per capita output of the poorer countries in West Africa. Even so, Ghana remains heavily dependent on international financial and technical assistance. Gold, timber, and cocoa production are major sources of foreign exchange. The domestic economy continues to revolve around subsistence agriculture, which accounts for 35 percent of GDP and employs 60 percent of the work force, mainly small landholders.

In 1995–97 Ghana made mixed progress under a three-year structural adjustment program in cooperation with the IMF. On the minus side, public sector wage increases and regional peacekeeping commitments have led to continued inflationary deficit financing, depreciation of the cedi, and rising public discontent with Ghana's austerity measures. Political uncertainty and a depressed cocoa market led to disappointing growth in 2000. A rebound in the cocoa market was predicted to push growth over 4 percent in 2001–2002. In 2002 Ghana opted for debt relief under the Heavily Indebted Poor Country Program. Receipts from the gold sector should help GDP growth, estimated

at 4.7 percent in 2004, but inflation, at 26.7 percent, and an unemployment rate of 20 percent remain problems.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 44.44
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 2,200
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 4.4
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 2.5
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 35.4
 Industry: 25.4
 Services: 39.2
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 82
 Government Consumption: 12
 Gross Domestic Investment: 24.5
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 2.642
 Imports: 3.24
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 2.2
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 30.1

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
214.8	241.5	302.3	401.8	461.4

Finance

National Currency: Cedi (GHC)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = GHC 7,932.7
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency trillion: 8.05
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 21.5
 Total External Debt \$billion: 7.398
 Debt Service Ratio %: 5.19
 Balance of Payments \$million: 110
 International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 1.3
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
 26.7

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 906.7
 per capita \$: 43.90
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 136.7

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$billion: 1.943
 Expenditures \$billion: 2.192
 Budget Deficit \$million: 249
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 35.4
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 3.8
 Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares: 90

(continues)

Agriculture *(continued)*

Irrigation, % of Farms having: 0.17
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 7.4
 Total Farmland % of land area: 18.4
 Livestock: Cattle million: 1.4
 Chickens million: 29.5
 Pigs 000: 305
 Sheep million: 3.1
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 21.8
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 377.2

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 646.8
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 3.8

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 614
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 2.28
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 114
 Net Energy Imports % of use: 28.4
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 1.2
 Production kW-hr billion: 8.8
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 8.84
 Coal Reserves tons billion: —
 Production tons million: —
 Consumption tons million: —
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet billion: 840
 Production cubic feet billion: —
 Consumption cubic feet billion: —
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels million: 16.2
 Production barrels 000 per day: 7
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 40.5
 Pipelines Length km: 74

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 3.24
 Exports \$billion: 2.642
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 2.9
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 0.8
 Balance of Trade \$million: 110

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Nigeria %	13.2	—
China %	9.3	—
United Kingdom %	7.2	10.7
United States %	6.1	4.3
Germany %	4.8	6.2
France %	4.5	7.7
South Africa %	4.0	—
Netherlands %	—	11.2
Japan %	—	5.2
Italy %	—	4.6
Turkey %	—	4.4

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 39,409
 Paved %: 29.6
 Automobiles: 91,200
 Trucks and Buses: 123,500
 Railroad: Track Length km: 953
 Passenger-km million: 242
 Freight-km million: 170
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 8
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 26.2
 Airports: 12
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 912
 Length of Waterways km: 1,293

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 483
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 383
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 184

Communications

Telephones 000: 302.3
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.03
 Cellular Telephones 000: 799.9
 Personal Computers 000: 82
 Internet Hosts per million people: 19
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 8

ENVIRONMENT

Ghana suffers from a number of environmental problems due to its rapid population growth and chaotic urbanization. Chief among its problems is the deforestation of the country, which has wiped out nearly 70 percent of the country's original forests for fuelwood, logging, and agricultural clearing. The country's growing population has also contributed to soil erosion by overfarming. Urban and industrial areas have highly polluted water supplies, and the disposal of solid waste is a growing concern. The mining industry has polluted most of the country's waterways and air. The water supply has dangerous levels of arsenic and cyanide.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 27.8
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: -120
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 15
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 0.3

LIVING CONDITIONS

With nearly one-third of the population below the poverty line, life is a struggle for many Ghanaians. A large percent-

age of the population makes a living through subsistence farming, and one of the country's major export crops is cocoa. While the minimum working age is 15, many younger Ghanaians take employment out of economic necessity. Ethnic relations are generally quite good, although many ethnic immigrants from the poorer northern regions of the country face discrimination in the more affluent south and are forced by low wages to live in segregated enclaves called *zongos*. Visitors to Ghana are struck by the vibrancy of its urban life, where much commerce is conducted in open-air markets. Wealthier Ghanaians live in Western-style homes, but most live in traditional homes where renters mingle in central courtyards.

HEALTH

Life expectancy in Ghana is low, at just over 56 years, and the infant mortality rate is high, at just over 52 deaths per 1,000 live births. Ghana has a major problem with AIDS: In 2003, about 3.1 percent of the adult population, or 350,000 people, were living with AIDS, and some 30,000 people died of the disease. Ghana has a relatively modern medical system funded by the government, church groups, and various international agencies, but the system reaches only those who live in the cities and larger towns. Dispensaries in smaller towns have had some success in dealing with common diseases such as malaria. Many Ghanaians rely on traditional medicine, which emphasizes supernatural causes of disease or herbal medicine, and efforts have been made in recent years to find links between indigenous herbs and Western scientific medicine.

Health

Number of Physicians: 1,842
 Number of Dentists: 36
 Number of Nurses: 13,102
 Number of Pharmacists: 1,433
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 9
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 52.22
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 540
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 5.6
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 17
 HIV Infected % of adults: 3.1
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 80
 Measles: 80
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 58
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 79

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Ghanaian cuisine tends to be spicy, with cayenne, all-spice, curry, ginger, garlic, and onions used in many

dishes, primarily soups and stews, including groundnut, or peanut, stew. In the south, plantain, cassava, and tropical yams are widely used, along with rice and corn. Common dishes include "red-red," or black-eyed peas served with rice and fish, and *plava*, a spicy stew. In the north, millet is a more common staple. People of all social levels tend to eat the indigenous diet. In urban areas many people eat indigenous "fast foods" sold by street vendors and at "chop bars." This reliance on street food—for up to 40 percent of the diet in at least one city—helps to account for the poor state of nutrition in Ghana. From 1998 to 2003, 11 percent of Ghanaian infants were of low birth weight. During the same years 5 percent of children under age five suffered from being severely underweight, and 20 percent were moderately underweight. Some 10 percent suffered from wasting and 25 percent from stunting.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 12.5
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,650
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 92.2
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 149.5

STATUS OF WOMEN

Women's rights in the economy, business, and the civil service, as well as in the home, have long been well established and respected. Although women in urban centers and those who have entered modern society encounter little bias in most endeavors, role pressures still exist. Women in the rural agricultural sector remain subject to practices that reinforce their subservience to males in spite of efforts by the government and more enlightened elements in the society to curtail these practices. In 1988 the government appointed a secretary for the National Commission for Women and Development. Ghana ranks first in the world for the percentage of women ages 50 to 64 who engage in some form of economic activity.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 11
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: —
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: —

WORK

In 2004 the Ghanaian labor force was estimated at 10 million, with 60 percent in agriculture, 15 percent in in-

dustry, and 25 percent in services. Farmers typically grow cocoa, rice, coffee, cassava, corn, peanuts, shea nuts, and bananas; many agricultural workers are employed in forestry. Industries include mining (of gold, diamonds, manganese, and bauxite), lumbering, light manufacturing, aluminum smelting, and food processing. Many people along the coastline make their living by fishing, and tuna and lobster are major exports. Still others throughout Ghana produce and sell handicrafts, including woven clothes, leather goods, bead necklaces, and carved masks. Figures from 1997 showed unemployment at 20 percent. Per capita GDP in 2004 was \$2,200.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 10,000,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 50.1
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 60
 Industry: 15
 Services: 25
 Unemployment %: 20

EDUCATION

The state provides free, universal, and compulsory education for 10 years, from age six. The academic year runs from September to August. English is the medium of instruction. Schooling consists of six years of primary school (followed by a two-year prevocational continuation course for those not going to secondary school) and seven years of secondary school, consisting of five regular years and two years of the sixth form, an advanced secondary course that prepares students for university work. Only one of five students entering secondary school reaches the sixth form. Ghana currently has 12,130 primary schools, 5,450 junior secondary schools, 503 senior secondary schools, 21 training colleges, and 18 technical institutions.

There are regional disparities in education, with significantly fewer children from the north attending school. In 2003 there was an overall national literacy rate of 74.8 percent, but the rural and largely Muslim north has a lower rate. National literacy efforts are coordinated by the People's Education Association, a voluntary organization with 134 branches.

Approximately 1.8 percent of secondary-school students are in the vocational stream. Technical education is provided by primary-technical schools, technical institutes, and polytechnic schools. A number of private schools are run by foreign missions and churches, especially Roman Catholic, Presbyterian, Anglican, and Methodist.

Higher education is the responsibility of the National Council for Higher Education, an autonomous body. The

universities are governed by academic boards responsible to the council. The five universities are the University of Ghana, the University of Science and Technology at Kumasi, the University of Cape Coast, the University for Development Studies, and the University College of Education.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 74.8
 Male %: 82.7
 Female %: 67.1
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 7.3
 First Level: Primary schools: 12,130
 Teachers: 80,459
 Students: 2,519,272
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 31.3
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 63.1
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 5,953
 Teachers: 64,419
 Students: 1,150,994
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 18.2
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 33.4
 Third Level: Institutions: 39
 Teachers: 3,691
 Students: 70,293
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 3.3
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 4.1

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Ghana is a poor nation, so few resources are devoted to scientific research. Most research is conducted by the University of Ghana and the University of Science and Technology, and most of it is concentrated on agriculture, especially cocoa cultivation. Additionally, the University of Science and Technology conducts research in industrial engineering and medicine. The Ministry of Health, in conjunction with the World Health Organization, conducts health-related research.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: 4.7
 Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

The Ghanaian press provides four dailies, all in English. The majority of the nondailies are also published in English. The Bureau of Ghana Languages sponsors monthly papers in eight vernaculars—Ashanti, Fante, Akwapim, Ewe, Ga, Nzema, Dagbane, and Kasem. The periodical press consists of 74 titles, almost all in English, of which the best-known is *Drum*.

The national news agency is the Ghana News Agency. Major foreign agencies in Accra include the Associated Press, ITAR-TASS, United Press International, and New China News Agency.

Broadcasting is a state monopoly of the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation, which operates 17 short-wave transmitters and seven VHF-FM transmitters, with stations at Accra, Ejura, and Tema. Television was introduced in 1965 and is controlled by Ghana Broadcasting Corporation (GBC), which has 11 transmitters.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 4
 Total Circulation 000: 260
 Circulation per 1,000: 13.9
 Books Published: 7
 Periodicals: 74
 Radio Receivers million: 14.6
 per 1,000: 695
 Television sets million: 2.3
 per 1,000: 115

CULTURE

Modern culture suffered under the regime of Kwame Nkrumah, whose government censored the arts. After his overthrow the arts began to flourish. Prominent contemporary playwrights include Kofi Awoonor, Efua Sutherland, and Joe Graft; Awoonor has also written novels, along with Ayi Kwei Armah and Ama Ata Aidoo. Ghanaian poetry is influenced by the nation's oral tradition; prominent poets include Awoonor, Atukwei Okai, and Vincent Odamtten.

With little funding for the arts, Ghanaian artists have to be self-supporting, and many practice traditional arts. Woodcarving is especially developed, with Ghanaians known for stools carved in one piece out of large logs into the abstracted shapes of animals. Performance arts tend to be connected to traditional and religious rituals. Music and dance is especially important in traditional cultures. For example, among the Ga, the Homowo Festival is a kind of "debutante ball" for adolescent girls, where traditional drum music is played. Funeral ceremonies among the Dagomba include musical performances by as many as six different groups. Traditional dances include the *baamaya*, performed by dancers in headdresses with fans and with bells tied around the hands and feet. The University of Ghana is home to the highly regarded Ghana Dance Ensemble, which performs internationally.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 11
 Volumes: 1,152,000
 Registered borrowers: 54,514

Museums Number: 8
 Annual Attendance: 69,000
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Storytelling is an important part of Ghanaian culture. Stories are told to children, and even to adults, to enforce cultural norms. Each Friday schoolchildren are invited to share the oral stories told to them by their parents and grandparents. Traditions of oral storytelling extend back centuries. The Akan, for example, had a set of fixed texts that had to be recited word for word. Today, among the Akan as well as the Guan-speaking people, popular folklore characters include hares, vultures, crows, and tortoises. One especially well-known folk character is Kwaku Ananse, a spider that conquers his enemies through cunning and humor. These spider tales were introduced to Jamaica by Akan slaves transported to the Caribbean, where they are referred to as the "Anancy tales." A well-known folk hero to all Ghanaians is the Ashanti queen Yaa Awantewa, who declared war on the British in 1900.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

In addition to sports, music, dancing, and folk arts and crafts, there is one unique form of entertainment in Ghana: concert parties. These are comic musical performances in the Akan language that are especially popular in coastal towns, where some 50 troupes put on performances that blend Western musicals, slapstick humor, political and social satire, masquerade, and oral storytelling traditions. Typically, the performances begin with a late-evening dance, followed by the troupe's performance, which lasts well past midnight.

ETIQUETTE

Ghanaians tend to be formal and extremely polite in their interpersonal relationships. It is considered rude to point, stare, or wave with the left hand. Greetings consist of a formal handshake and inquiries about family and friends, and those who begin conversation with exchanges of greetings are considered rude. Great importance is attached to social status. Visitors to a home greet each member of the family, and only after they are seated are they greeted by each person present. Hosts and hostesses invite visitors to have food and drink, and it is considered rude to decline. When a person is about

to take or returning from a long journey, a drink to the person's ancestors is shared. It is common for friends of the same age and sex to hold hands while walking. Ghanaians regard certain English words that are considered innocuous in the West, such as "silly" or "nonsense," as highly offensive.

FAMILY LIFE

Western influences have made the nuclear family more common in Ghana, but a number of complex traditional family life patterns can still be found that involve extended families. Akan-speaking groups, such as the Fante, have matrilineal families, so that a person traces descent through the female line. Other groups are patrilineal, where ancestors are traced through the male line. Still other patterns are "natalocal" arrangements, in which spouses remain with their families after marriage, and "avunculocal" families, where a man resides with his mother's brother. In many cultures men and women occupy different quarters after they are married. All of these forms of extended family provide Ghanaians with a social and economic support network, and failing to support a member of the extended family is strongly disapproved of. Although Christian Ghanaian men have only one wife, non-Christian cultures allow for polygyny, and having a dozen or more wives is regarded as a sign of status and wealth. Traditionally, Ghanaian marriages are arranged by the families, though this, too, is changing with westernization.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Ghanaians can be seen wearing either Western or traditional clothing, and either is considered appropriate in, for example, business settings. With regard to traditional dress, while certain styles or materials were formerly associated with a specific region or ethnic group, today a given item of traditional dress may be seen throughout the country. An example is the striped cotton *fugu* shirt traditionally worn by elderly Dagomba and Kassina men on ceremonial occasions but now worn widely. Many women wear what is called a "kaba and slit," a blouse and long skirt made from colorful African cloth. Traditional cultures also dictate what leaders must wear on ceremonial occasions. The queen mother of the Fante, for example, must wear her hair naturally and wear handmade sandals on all public occasions.

SPORTS

Basketball and tennis, as well as cricket, tend to be favored by the more affluent, but soccer is the sport played

and watched by ordinary Ghanaians. Each city has its own stadium and team, and the national team, called the Black Stars, is made up of the best players from each of these teams.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1957** Ghana becomes an independent dominion within the Commonwealth of Nations, with Kwame Nkrumah as prime minister.
- 1958** The Constitution Act and the Preventive Detention Act are passed, giving Nkrumah wide extraconstitutional powers to suppress opposition. Regional assemblies are dissolved. The first Conference of Independent African Nations is attended by five independent nations in Africa.
- 1960** The nation approves a republican constitution, with Nkrumah as president, in its first plebiscite.
- 1961** Nkrumahism becomes the official ideology of the nation. Ghana becomes a one-party state, with the Convention People's Party as the sole political party. K. A. Gbedemah, leader of the CPP's right wing, is dismissed.
- 1962** An assassination attempt against Nkrumah is followed by wholesale arrests of Nkrumah's political rivals, including Tawia Adamafo, Ako Adjei, and John Tettegah.
- 1963** Ghana joins in the founding of the Organization of African Unity. Supreme Court acquits alleged plotters in the 1962 assassination attempt. Nkrumah retaliates by dismissing the chief justice and packing a new court.
- 1965** Ghana suspends relations with the United Kingdom. In first national elections the CPP wins all parliamentary seats with an unchallenged slate.
- 1966** Akosombo Dam, built over the Volta River at a cost of \$414 million, is completed. Nkrumah is overthrown, while on a visit to Beijing, by a military coup led by Emmanuel Kotoka, Akwasi Afrifa, and John Harlley. Nkrumah is given asylum in Guinea. National Liberation Council assumes supreme power.
- 1967** New cedi is introduced with a devalued rate of exchange. Kotoka is killed in abortive countercoup. Ghana joins West African Economic Community.
- 1969** New constitution of Second Republic is promulgated. In the first free national elections, Progress Party, led by K. A. Busia, wins absolute majority. Busia

- forms cabinet. A three-man presidential commission consisting of Harley, Afrifa, and A. K. Okran is appointed to serve as head of state.
- 1970** Presidential troika is abolished. Edward Akufo-Addo is elected president.
- 1972** Busia government is overthrown by military coup under Ignatius Acheampong. National Redemption Council assumes supreme power. A countercoup by Busia's supporters is foiled. Supreme Court is abolished. Nkrumah dies in Bucharest, Romania. His body is returned to Ghana and is buried with state honors. NRC repudiates foreign loans and nationalizes mining and textile firms.
- 1975** Supreme Military Council is created as the highest legislative and administrative body in the state, with a reconstituted NRC as a subordinate cabinet.
- 1977** Acheampong promises return to civilian rule by 1979.
- 1978** Frederick Akuffo, Acheampong's deputy, assumes power in a bloodless coup. Local assembly elections are held, and National Assembly is set up.
- 1979** Six-year ban on political parties is lifted. Flight Lt. Jerry John Rawlings leads a coup of junior officers. Armed Forces Revolutionary Council takes over power and begins house-cleaning campaign. Revolutionary Court finds Acheampong, Akuffo, and seven other senior officers guilty of corruption, treason, and other offenses and sentences them to death. A new constitution is adopted as a prelude to the return of civilian rule. In presidential elections Hilla Limann, candidate of the People's National Party, is elected.
- 1981** Rawlings seizes power for the second time in a bloodless coup. He suspends National Assembly, political parties, and Council of State. Rawlings sets up Provisional National Defense Council with himself as chairman.
- 1984** National Commission for Democracy is named, with Justice D. F. Annan as chairman.
- 1986** Preparations for a raid on Ghana by American mercenaries in the pay of Ghanaian exiles are discovered, and five officers suspected of plotting against the government are arrested.
- 1988** Three universities are closed for four months following student boycotts over proposals to make them pay for their education. The first of three stages of local council elections begins in December.
- 1989** The government tightens controls over the media.
- An attempted coup reportedly takes place in September.
- 1990** Ghana sends troops to Liberia as part of a peace-keeping force under the auspices of the Economic Community of West African States. A prodemocracy organization, Movement for Freedom and Justice, demands a national referendum on establishing a multiparty system.
- 1992** A new constitution is adopted by referendum in April. Rawlings is elected president in multiparty elections in November.
- 1993** The Fourth Republic is proclaimed on January 7.
- 1995** A state of emergency is declared in the northern portion of the country, as fighting between the Konkomba and Manumba peoples leaves more than 150,000 refugees.
- 1996** President Rawlings is reelected with 57 percent of the vote against two other candidates.
- 2000** Term limits preclude Rawlings's standing for a third term. John Kufuor of the New Patriotic Party is elected president.
- 2003** A government-appointed reconciliation commission begins hearings on human rights abuses during the Rawlings regime.
- 2004** Kufuor is reelected president.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Ghana Government Web Site
<http://www.ghana.gov.gh/>

GREECE

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Hellenic Republic (Elliniki Dimokratia)

ABBREVIATION

GR

CAPITAL

Athens

HEAD OF STATE

President Karolos Papoulias (from 2005)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Konstantinos Karamanlis (from 2004)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Parliamentary democracy

POPULATION

10,668,354 (2005)

AREA

131,940 sq km (50,942 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Greek

LANGUAGE

Greek

RELIGION

Greek Orthodox

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Euro

NATIONAL FLAG

A white cross with arms of equal width and length in a blue, upper left canton. The remainder of the flag contains nine horizontal bars of equal width, five blue and four white, placed alternately.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A square shield, featuring a white cross with arms one-third the width of the width of the shield on a blue background, fimbriated in gold, surrounded by a green wreath

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Ethnikos Hymnos” (Hymn to liberty; same as for Cyprus)

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year’s Day), March 25 (Independence Day), October 28, (National Day), Labor Day, all major Christian festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

February 30, 1830

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

June 11, 1975

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Greece, the southernmost country in the Balkan Peninsula, has a total land area of 50,942 sq mi (131,940 sq km), about one-fifth of which is composed of several hundred islands in the Ionian and Aegean seas. Continental Greece has a length of 584 mi (940 km) north to south and a width of 480 mi (772 km) east to west. The country is bounded on three sides by seas—the Ionian, Mediterranean, and Aegean.

The capital, Athens, about 5 mi (8 km) from the seaport of Piraeus, is one of the largest Mediterranean cities. Other major cities are Salonika, Piraeus, and Iráklion.

Greece is divided into nine geographical regions, six mainland (Thrace, Macedonia, Epirus, Thessaly, Central Greece, and Peloponnese) and three insular (Crete, the Ionian Islands, and the Aegean Islands).

The region of Thrace is in the northeastern corner of Greece and includes the island of Samothrace. The Maritsa River runs along eastern Thrace and forms the border between Turkey and Greece.

Macedonia is the largest geographical region, extending from the Mesta (Nestos) River to the Albanian border in the west. Its northern boundary runs through the mountain ranges that Greece shares with the former Yugoslav republic of Macedonia and Bulgaria, while the

Greece



southern border is the Aegean Sea. Salonika is second only to Athens both as a port and as a city.

Epirus lies southwest of Macedonia and to the south of Albania. Its southern limits are the Ambracian Gulf and Central Greece. The high Pindus Mountains to the east have rendered Epirus the most isolated region of mainland Greece.

Across the Pindus Mountains from Epirus and south of Macedonia is the region of Thessaly, which stretches to the Aegean Sea. The plains of Thessaly are the most extensive lowlands and most fertile agricultural lands in the country. Mount Olympus, the legendary home of the gods, is at the northeast corner of Thessaly.

South of Epirus and Thessaly, stretching from the Ionian Sea to the Aegean Sea, is Central Greece. The plains of Central Greece yield grains, olives, grapes, figs, and cotton, while the foothills make good pastureland.

The Peloponnese, a peninsula of 8,278 sq mi (21,446 sq km), is connected to Attica (the southeastern end of Central Greece) by the narrow Isthmus of Corinth. The Corinth Canal cuts through this mountainous isthmus to connect the Gulf of Corinth with the Saronic Gulf.

Crete is the largest of the Greek islands, with an area of 3,207 sq mi (8,308 sq km). The site of the first European civilization, Crete is long, narrow, and mountainous, with some fine natural harbors in the north. Mount Ida, at 8,058 ft (2,456 m) is the highest point on Crete.

The Ionian Islands are spread along the coast from Albania to the Peloponnese. The northernmost and second largest of the Ionian Islands is Corfu, which lies off the southern coast of Albania and is divided from mainland Greece by the Corfu Straits. The four other major islands in the Ionian group are Cephalonia, Leukas, Ithaca, and Zante.

The Aegean Islands are remnants of a land bridge that once connected Greece to Asia. The Aegean Island region includes the Cyclades, a group of 29 islands spread from a few miles to 120 miles southeast of Attica. The Dodecanese archipelago comprises 18 islands east of the Cyclades and just off the southwestern coast of Turkey, the largest and most famous of which is Rhodes (540 sq mi; 1,399 sq km).

A mountainous country, Greece has at least 20 peaks of more than 2,000 m (6,562 ft), most of them only a few miles from the sea. The highest mountains, in descending order, are Olympus (9,571 ft; 2,917 m), Smolikas (8,652 ft; 2,637 m), Voras (8,281 ft; 2,524 m), Grammos (8,268 ft; 2,520 m), Giona (8,235 ft; 2,510 m), Tyrphi (8,193 ft; 2,497 m), Tzoumerka (8,101 ft; 2,469 m), and Parnassus (8,061 ft; 2,457 m). There are few large rivers in Greece because of the mountainous terrain and low rainfall. The major rivers are the Vistritsa (Aliákmon), Achelous, Pinios, Maritsa (Evros), Maritsa Mesta (Nestos), Struma (Strymon), and Thíamis. There are few lakes, and they are relatively small in size.

Greece is an area of frequent earthquakes and earth tremors. In the 1950s the country was ravaged by earthquakes, particularly among the Ionian Islands, along the western coast, and on some of the Aegean Islands.

Geography

Area sq km:	131,940; sq mi 50,942
World Rank:	94th
Land Boundaries, km:	Albania 282, Bulgaria 494, Turkey 206, Macedonia 246
Coastline, km:	13,676
Elevation Extremes meters:	
Lowest:	Mediterranean Sea 0
Highest:	Mount Olympus 2,917
Land Use %	
Arable Land:	21.1
Permanent Crops:	8.8
Forest:	27.9
Other:	42.2

Population of Principal Cities (2001)

Athens	745,514
Iráklión	133,012
Kallithéa	109,609
Larissa	124,786
Pátraí	161,114
Peristériorion	137,918
Piraeus	175,697
Thessaloníki (Salonika)	363,987

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

The Mediterranean climate generally characterizes Greece, and one season makes a smooth transition to the next. A short spring with moderate temperatures is followed by a long, hot summer, then by autumn, with average temperatures above those of spring, and finally a mild and sunny winter. There are about 3,000 hours of sunshine each year, rain in the summer is rare, and a cooling northwestern wind called the *meltemi* blows from the sea.

In addition to these common features, each region has its climatic particularities. In Thrace the Mediterranean climate prevails in the plains, but in the mountains the winters are colder, as in continental climates. The climate of Macedonia is Mediterranean, with continental influences more pronounced away from the coasts. The hot, dry summers and the cold, damp winters are somewhat moderated along the coasts. Epirus, on the windward side of the Pindus Mountains, has annual precipitation greater than any other mainland region. In Thessaly summers on the plains are hot and dry, while winters are cold and damp. The Ionian Islands have a favorable climate, and their fertile lands are well watered. Central Greece has generally moderate temperatures. Crete has hot, dry summers with northerly winds that parch the interior, and its total annual precipitation is received only in the winter.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature

Thrace: January 43°F
July 80°F

Macedonia: January 36°F
July 76°F

Epirus: January 41°F
July 77°F

Thessaly: January 42°F
July 82°F

Ionian Islands—Tripolis: January 42°F
July 77°F

Kalamata: January 32°F
July 81°F

Patras: January 50°F
July 79°F

Average Rainfall

Crete: 20 in

Macedonia: 23 in

Salonika: 17.5 in

Epirus: 50 in

Thessaly: 19 in

Central Greece: 16 in

Expectation of Life (years): Males 76.44

Females 81.59

Marriage Rate per 1,000: 5.8

Divorce Rate per 1,000: 1.0

Average Size of Households: 3.3

Induced Abortions: 12,542

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

In the 20th century Greece remained more ethnically homogeneous than most northern European nations. The population is about 98 percent Greek, 1 percent Turkish, and 1 percent Vlach, Slav, Albanian, and Jewish.

Most of the Turkish minority lives in Thrace, with a few thousand Turks in the Dodecanese Islands. Many Thracian villages have Turkish majorities that regularly elect Muslim councillors and mayors. The Vlaches are predominantly Greek Orthodox but speak a dialect of Romanian. Slavs belong to two groups: the Macedonian Slavs, living mainly in Macedonia, and the Pomaks, Bulgarian-speaking Muslims living in Thrace. Most Albanians are Greek Orthodox and identify themselves as Greeks. Most of the Jews live in Salonika and a few urban centers in Macedonia.

FLORA AND FAUNA

The Greek islands offer a rich abundance of flora, with more than 6,000 species, some 700 to 750 of them indigenous. Trees include pine, fir, and beech at the higher elevations and olive, mulberry, Judas, plane trees, and citrus at lower elevations. Other vegetation varies depending on the location and elevation. Mount Olympus, for example, abounds in wildflowers. In the forests can be found tulips, gentians, fritillaries, lilies, and orchids. In the alpine areas are pansies, saxifrage, columbine, bellflowers, yellow Spanish broom, anemone, violets, narcissus, and a variety of wild herbs such as oregano, basil, chamomile, and sage. Greece has 116 mammal species, 422 species of birds, and 447 of the 579 species of fish found in the Mediterranean Sea.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 10,668,354

World Rank: 75th

Density per sq km: 85.6

% of annual growth (1999-2003): 0.4

Male %: 49.2

Female %: 50.8

Urban %: —

Age Distribution %:	0–14:	14.5
	15–64:	66.9
	65 and over:	18.6

Population 2025: 10,671,000

Birth Rate per 1,000: 9.73

Death Rate per 1,000: 10.08

Rate of Natural Increase %: 0.0

Total Fertility Rate: 1.32

LANGUAGES

Linguistically, Greece is a homogeneous country in which 98 percent of the population speaks Greek as its mother tongue. The minority languages include Turkish, Macedonian, Slav, Vlach, Albanian, and Pomak.

Greek is an ancient Indo-European language. Of the many dialects used in ancient times, the Attic dialect of Athens became dominant. During the seventh and sixth centuries B.C.E., as the Greeks established colonies from Spain to the Black Sea, the Attic dialect, or Koine (common), became the lingua franca of the civilized world. Koine was the language used for writing the New Testament. However, Koine as a sacred language began to stagnate and fossilize. Meanwhile, the common, or demotic, Greek language continued to change, assimilate new words, and drop old ones. In the 19th century a reform movement aimed at restoring the Attic dialect of Classical Greece developed Katharevousa (pure language). In addition, journalists began a fourth form of Greek called *kathomiloumeni*.

The battle over the various forms of Greek lasted for most of the 20th century, becoming a political issue that threatened the life of governments and erupted in riots. As a result, schoolchildren had to learn one form of Greek for everyday speech, another for reading classical literature, a third for reading newspapers, and a fourth for understanding church liturgy. Finally, in 1977 the government of Konstantinos Karamanlis decreed an end to the language conflict by adopting the demotic form and proscribing both Katharevousa and *kathomiloumeni* for official use. However, the church was permitted to use Koine.

English and French are other languages that are widely understood in Greece.

RELIGIONS

The established religion of Greece is the Orthodox Church, to which 98 percent of the population belongs. It is the “dominant religion,” according to the constitution. The relationship between the Orthodox Church and the state is unique. The state provides for and protects the church, which is a public entity, both financially and administratively. Throughout the educational system and up to the university level, religious instruction is given in the Orthodox faith.

Church-state relations are extremely complex due to both the Byzantine heritage and the growth of socialist ideas during the second half of the 20th century. Relations between the church and the state were smooth for most of the 20th century, until the Papandreou government in 1977 passed laws authorizing the government to take over most of the land held by the Orthodox Church. The state also exercises supervision over the church through several government ministries. Crises became frequent, either as a result of internal church conflicts that drew state intervention or as a result of state efforts at reform, usually resisted by the clergy and the conservative public.

Monasticism is an important element of Orthodoxy, but Orthodox monks are solely devoted to the practice of asceticism. Mount Athos and its 20 monasteries has been the site of colonies of monks since 959 C.E.

Muslims compose 1.3 percent of the population, with Catholics and Protestants accounting for 0.7 percent.

Religious Affiliations

Greek Orthodox	10,245,000
Muslim	140,000
Other	75,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Greek civilization was born in Crete and Asia Minor in the second millennium B.C.E. Adapting the Minoan culture of Crete to their own native traditions, the Greeks developed what became the basis of Western civilization.

During the second millennium B.C.E. Greece was ruled by the Achaeans, then was later conquered by the Aeolians, Ionians, and Dorians. In the first millennium B.C.E., overpopulation in a land with scant resources forced many Greeks to emigrate and colonize nearby Anatolia (part of modern Turkey) as well as distant lands, such as France and Spain. The fifth century B.C.E. witnessed the Golden Age of Athenian culture, the defeat of Athens by Sparta in the Peloponnesian Wars, and the defeat of Persia.

Internecine strife led to the annexation of most of Greece by Philip II of Macedon (Macedonia) in 338 B.C.E. and also by his son Alexander the Great. Alexander’s armies carried Greek culture as far east as the Indus River and as far south as Nubia in Africa. After the breakup of Alexander’s empire, Greece yielded its supremacy on the world stage to Rome, which annexed the country in 146 B.C.E. and made it a Roman province. When the Roman Empire was split in 395 C.E., Greece became the seat of the Byzantine Empire, and Greek culture was reborn in Byzantine art and civilization.

The Ottoman Turks conquered Constantinople in 1453, and the four darkest centuries in Greek history followed. Although the Ottomans gave the Greeks considerable local autonomy, the Greek people faced forced religious conversions, high taxation, and cycles of repression and persecution. Communal affairs of the Greeks were controlled by the Greek Orthodox Church, which, in the absence of a free government, represented the nation.

Following an unsuccessful attempt to regain national freedom in 1770, the Greeks, led by the archbishop of Patras, proclaimed a war of independence against the Turks on March 25, 1821. Britain, France, and Russia came to the aid of the Greeks. Greek independence was recognized and guaranteed by the London Protocol of 1830, which Turkey accepted. Greece also acquired a German-born monarch, Otto I of Bavaria, who was overthrown in 1862 in favor of Prince George I of Denmark. King George I ruled until he was assassinated in 1913.

During the century following independence, Greece gradually added islands and neighboring territories with Greek-speaking populations, including the Ionian Islands, ceded by the British in 1864, Thessaly, seized from Turkey in 1881, and Macedonia, Crete, and many Aegean Islands in 1913. After World War I Greece gained the former Italian possessions of Rhodes and the Dodecanese Islands.

The aftermath of World War I witnessed the expulsion of Greeks from Asia Minor during a disastrous war with Turkey, followed by a period of republican rule. Italian and German troops occupied Greece during World War II. The end of World War II led to the restoration of the monarchy in 1946 amid a civil war, between the Soviet-backed Communists and the anti-Communists, that had erupted in 1944. The civil war ended with the defeat of the Communists in 1949, with British and subsequent U.S. military assistance.

A succession of conservative governments held office until 1963, when the Center Union Party, a left-center coalition led by Georgios Papandreou, won a parliamentary majority. Disagreements with King Constantine on military and other issues led to the dismissal of Papandreou in 1965, initiating a series of crises culminating in a military coup and the establishment of a military junta in 1967. An unsuccessful effort by the king to mobilize

support against the junta led to his expulsion, the appointment of a regent in his place, and the reorganization of the government, with Col. Georgios Papadopoulos as prime minister. In 1973, following a naval mutiny designed to restore the king, Constantine was deposed and a republic was proclaimed.

Papadopoulos was ousted in 1974 and replaced by Gen. Dimitrios Ioannides. The junta collapsed the same year, and the conservative elder statesman Konstantinos Karamanlis was invited to form a caretaker civilian government. The conservatives held power under Karamanlis and Georgios Rallis until 1981, when the Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK) swept to victory with a margin of 22 seats under Andreas Papandreou (son of Georgios Papandreou), who formed Greece's first socialist administration. PASOK won the 1985 elections but, damaged by a series of financial and sexual scandals, was defeated in 1989. Papandreou's parliamentary immunity was lifted, and he was ordered to stand trial on a number of charges, including bribery, receipt of stolen goods, and authorization of illegal wiretaps. The 1989 elections were inconclusive, and Greece suffered from a series of unstable caretaker or coalition governments.

In 1992 Papandreou was acquitted of all charges against him and, despite poor health, led his party to victory in 1993. Papandreou resigned because of ill health in 1995 and was succeeded as prime minister by Kostas Simitis, who called for an early election in 1996. PASOK won the election handily, amassing 162 seats out of 300.

U.S. and North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) air strikes against Serbia in 1999 placed great strains on Greece, whose natural sympathies lay with the Serbs. That year, too, a major earthquake hit Athens, killing dozens of people and leaving thousands homeless. In 2000 a senior British diplomat was assassinated by November 17, a left-wing guerrilla group.

In February 2004 Simitis called for March elections and stepped down. In March the conservative New Democracy Party led by Konstantinos "Kostas" Karamanlis won the general election, ending a decade of PASOK rule. In the summer of 2004 Greece took center stage in the world when the Olympic Games returned to Athens.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

(Note: Interim prime ministers and those who served for less than a year are excluded.)

1967–73	Georgios Papadopoulos
1974–80	Konstantinos Karamanlis
1980–81	Georgios Rallis
1981–89	Andreas Papandreou
1990–93	Konstantinos Mitsotakis
1993–96	Andreas Papandreou
1996–2004	Kostas Simitis
2004–	Kostas Karamanlis

CONSTITUTION

The Greek republic dates from 1975, when the monarchy was abolished and a republican constitution was proclaimed and approved in a popular referendum. The constitution established a parliamentary democracy in which power is clearly divided between the branches of government.

The executive branch comprises the prime minister as head of government and the cabinet, known as the Council of Ministers. The cabinet usually numbers 19 ministers. The prime minister must always enjoy the confidence of the parliament, which may pass a censure motion approved by two-fifths to force new elections.

The head of state is the president, who is elected indirectly for a five-year term by the Greek parliament, the Vouli. The president is constitutionally above the government structure. The president's authority, while largely ceremonial, enables the holder of the office to break political deadlocks if no political party has a majority in parliament.

PARLIAMENT

The Greek parliament, the Vouli, is a unicameral body of 300 members elected by direct popular vote to serve four-year terms. Parliament is frequently divided into two sections, equal in size and proportionately representative of the strength of the political parties in the whole chamber. Each section has jurisdiction over half of the government ministries. Most legislation is introduced by the government, while individual members devote most of their time to servicing constituency needs.

The constitution does not specify electoral laws, and no two Greek elections have been held under precisely the same system. Each successive government has tried to manipulate elections in its favor.

All Greeks age 18 and over have a right to vote, and those over age 25 are eligible to run for election. Voting is compulsory in a system of proportional representation. Current electoral laws work in favor of larger parties and give a modest advantage to the party winning the most votes over the runners-up.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Greece has a clear two-party system, unlike most democracies in continental Europe. The two major parties, which have alternated in power during the past 25 years, are the Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK), founded in 1974 by Andreas Papandreou, and the New Democracy, founded the same year by Konstantinos Karamanlis. PASOK won a majority in parliament for the first time in 1981, when Papandreou became prime minister. PASOK lost power in 1986 but returned in 1993. When Papandreou died in 1996, he was succeeded as

leader of the party and prime minister by Kostas Simitis. The New Democracy is the Greek version of a conservative party, and it was in power in the late 1970s, the 1980s, and the early 1990s and returned to power in 2004. The party is now led by Prime Minister Kostas Karamanlis, the nephew of the former president.

Minor parties include the Communist Party, with 12 members of parliament, and the Progressive Coalition, with six.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Greece is divided into 13 regions, or *diamerismata*, subdivided into 51 prefectures, or *nomoi*, each administered by an official (*nomarch*) appointed by the minister of the interior. Each *nomos* is further divided into one or more provinces called *eparchies*, of which there are 147.

The two important units of local self-government are municipalities, or cities of more than 10,000 inhabitants, and communes, with 300 to 10,000 inhabitants. The central government exercises administrative control over local government through the prefect, whose responsibilities have increased significantly in recent years.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The Greek legal system is based on codified Roman civil law. Greek justice is administered through a civil and criminal court system and a system of administrative courts. Administrative courts are specialized by legal areas; there are local arbitration courts, social security courts, and tax courts.

The lowest courts in the civil and criminal system are the 360 justice of the peace courts and the 48 magistrate's (or police) courts, which handle minor civil and criminal cases, respectively. Above these courts, the courts of first instance handle the bulk of civil and criminal litigation. Appeals from the courts of first instance are heard by courts of appeal. The Supreme Court hears cases brought from the courts of appeal on questions of law.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Citizens are guaranteed the full range of human rights by the constitution, including full political rights. Although Greece suffered human rights abuses during the period of junta rule (1967–74), later governments have been sensitive to the protection of individual rights.

The constitution provides for freedom of religion and prohibits discriminatory practices against religious minorities. The Muslim minority, living mostly in Thrace, constantly alleges persecution and discrimination, however, often related to political tensions flaring in recent decades between Greece and Turkey.

Fair and public trials are ensured by the constitution, and defendants enjoy a presumption of innocence. All trials are public, and defendants and their attorneys may confront witnesses.

FOREIGN POLICY

Greek foreign policy may be divided into two parts: One is its relations with its neighbors in the Balkans and the Middle East, the other its long-standing troubled relations with Turkey, which have brought tensions and near warfare since the 1970s. The Turkish invasion of Cyprus in 1974, following a failed coup by Greek army officers there, deeply strained relations between Greece and Turkey. In subsequent years deep divisions continued over the status of Cyprus as well as territorial disputes and drilling rights in the Aegean. By 2004 Greece and Turkey were involved in discussions to resolve their long-standing dispute.

The Middle East has also had a key role in Greek foreign policy. Greece sent personnel to the UN military force defending Kuwait in the Persian Gulf War of 1991, and in 1994 it signed a defense cooperation agreement with Israel. In 1995 Prime Minister Papandreou visited Jordan and Syria to encourage the peace process in the Middle East. In the war against Serbia in 2000 Greek sympathies were with its Slavic neighbor, but Greece nevertheless officially supported NATO's actions.

DEFENSE

The Greek army is primarily an infantry force that borrows heavily in doctrine and training from the U.S. army. All Greek citizens capable of bearing arms are required to serve in the defense of their country by the 1975 constitution. Young men are eligible for military duty at age 17, and if they have not enlisted voluntarily by age 21, they may be conscripted. Less than one-quarter of the army's strength consists of long-service regulars. In 1977 armed forces careers were opened to women, and women between 20 and 32 were made liable for compulsory service for 14 months. The Greek armed forces number over 180,000. In 2003 the country spent about \$7.3 billion on defense, 4.3 percent of its gross domestic product (GDP).

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	181,600
Military Manpower Availability:	2,638,949
Military Expenditures \$billion:	7.3
as % of GDP:	4.3
as % of central government expenditures:	—
Arms Imports \$billion:	1.96
Arms Exports \$million:	—

ECONOMY

Greece has a mixed capitalist economy, with the public sector composing about half of GDP. In the 1990s the government launched economic reforms designed to qualify Greece to join the European Union's euro currency. These reforms led to a steadily improving economy, in which the national budget deficit was cut sharply to just 2 percent of GDP and tightened monetary policy brought inflation to 3.1 percent in 2000—the lowest rate in 26 years—and 3.6 percent in 2004. The government also planned to privatize some major state enterprises. Greece adopted the euro currency on January 1, 2002.

Tourism is a key industry that provides 15 percent of Greek GDP and foreign exchange earnings. Greece also benefits from EU aid, amounting to about 3.3 percent of GDP in 2004. GDP growth was estimated at 4.7 percent in 2004.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 213.6
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 20,000
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 4.0
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 3.6
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:

Agriculture: 6.7
 Industry: 22.0
 Services: 71.3

Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:

Private Consumption: 66
 Government Consumption: 15
 Gross Domestic Investment: 25.5

Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 5.9

Imports: 33.27

% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 3.0

% of Income Received by Richest 10%: 25.3

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
122.8	126.6	130.9	135.6	140.5

Finance

National Currency: Euro (EUR)

Exchange Rate: \$1 = EUR 0.886

Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: —

Central Bank Discount Rate %: 8.1

Total External Debt \$billion: 65.5

Debt Service Ratio %: —

Balance of Payments \$billion: -11.33

International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 3.8

Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
 3.6

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: —

per capita \$: —

Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 717

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year

Revenues \$billion: 76.84

Expenditures \$billion: 79.48

Budget Deficit \$billion: 2.64

Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 6.7

Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: -2.0

Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 9.2

Irrigation, % of Farms having: 37.2

Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 149

Total Farmland % of land area: 21.1

Livestock: Cattle 000: 624

Chickens million: 28

Pigs 000: 948

Sheep million: 9

Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 1.67

Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 177

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 14.17

Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 0.7

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 9.3

Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 28.8

Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 2.88

Net Energy Imports % of use: 64.8

Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 10.3

Production kW-hr billion: 49.8

Consumption kW-hr billion: 48.8

Coal Reserves tons billion: 3.17

Production tons million: 75

Consumption tons million: 76.4

Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet billion: 35

Production cubic feet billion: 1

Consumption cubic feet billion: 77

Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels million: 6

Production barrels 000 per day: 6.4

Consumption barrels 000 per day: 429

Pipelines Length km: 94

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 33.27

Exports \$billion: 5.9

Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 4.7

Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 4.8

Balance of Trade \$million: -11.33

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Germany %	12.5	12.6
Italy %	12.2	10.5
France %	6.6	4.2
Russia %	6.1	—
South Korea %	5.4	—
United States %	5.2	6.5
Netherlands %	5.2	—
Japan %	4.3	—
United Kingdom %	4.2	7.0
Bulgaria %	—	6.2
Cyprus %	—	4.8
Turkey %	—	4.0

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 117,000
 Paved %: 91.8
 Automobiles: 3,423,700
 Trucks and Buses: 1,112,900
 Railroad: Track Length km: 2,571
 Passenger-km billion: 1.63
 Freight-km million: 427
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 793
 Total Deadweight Tonnage million: 52.9
 Airports: 79
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 8.6
 Length of Waterways km: 6

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 14.18
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$billion: 10.1
 Tourist Expenditures \$billion: 3.3

Communications

Telephones million: 5.2
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones million: 8.94
 Personal Computers 000: 900
 Internet Hosts per million people: 19,589
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 161

ENVIRONMENT

Athens, where one-third of Greece's population lives, suffers from air pollution, as do many Greek cities that have rapidly industrialized since the 1970s. New textile and chemical factories, power stations, increasing car traffic, and high-sulfur oil used in central heating have contributed to the problem. To combat air pollution, the government limited or banned truck and auto traffic throughout Athens, with frequent declarations of emergencies, in the 1980s and 1990s. All motor vehicles must now meet required emission standards.

The government has encouraged the use of nonpolluting energy sources, such as solar power, wind power, and hydropower. Currently, Greece has the largest area powered by solar energy collectors in Europe, many of which are on the numerous Greek islands.

Pollution of Greece's coastal waters is a serious environmental issue. Untreated industrial waste is emptied into nearby gulfs, and oil tankers and ships spill oil and empty bilge into the seas. Runoff from farmlands adds to the threat, as since 1950 Greek farmers have doubled the amount of nitrous fertilizers applied to their land.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 27.9
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: 30
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 3
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 8.21

LIVING CONDITIONS

Since World War II Greece has changed from a largely rural nation to a largely urban one, as people have moved from the mountains and internal, rural areas to cities such as Athens, where economic opportunities, trade, government functions, and education are more readily available. By 1991 only about 25 percent of Greeks lived in rural settlements. In rural areas homes tend to house single families and are constructed of stone or brick. They often lack running water and rely on wood stoves for heat. In the cities apartment buildings of five to 10 stories are the norm, but home ownership is prized in Greece, so most apartments are owned, not rented. Greeks also place a high value on privacy, so homes generally have walled courtyards while apartments tend to have tented balconies. Greece has little violent crime because of a strong sense of what is called *philotimo*, or love of honor, although the concept of family honor sometimes leads to blood feuds.

HEALTH

The quality of health care in Greece is generally high. Life expectancy is almost 79 years, and the infant mortality rate is under 6 deaths per 1,000 live births. The country has a relatively low incidence of AIDS, with fewer than 100 people dying of the disease in 2001. Per capita funding for health care each year amounts to just under \$1,200. The state-run National Health Service, established in 1983, provides health care in public facilities, but private facilities are available to those who can afford them. Most towns and cities have health centers, and efforts have been made to extend health care to more remote areas, where many

people continue to rely on folk healers, spells, and herbal remedies and place great stock in the effects on health of the wind, certain foods, temperature, and anxiety.

Health

Number of Physicians: 47,944
 Number of Dentists: 12,394
 Number of Nurses: 32,449
 Number of Pharmacists: —
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 440
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: 4.9
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 5.63
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 9
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 9.5
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 1,198
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.2
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 88
 Measles: 88
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: —
 Access to Improved Water Source %: —

FOOD AND NUTRITION

While Greece is a European nation, its diet is predominantly Middle Eastern. Greek cooking makes extensive use of native herbs, including oregano, thyme, basil, sage, and rosemary. Lamb is a commonly used meat, and olive oil consumption is high, averaging about 35 pints per capita per year. Staple items in the diet include rice, yogurt, figs, cheese made from goat's milk or sheep's milk, and whole-grain breads. Quintessential Greek items include such dishes as moussaka and baklava, as well as phillo dough, a paper-thin dough used to make pastries, and ouzo, a strong liquor made from the residue of winemaking. Greece has the highest incidence of obesity in Europe, with 35 percent of men considered obese. This trend is attributed to higher consumption of prepared foods and fast food. In spite of this high rate of obesity, Greeks rank seventh in the world in longevity and have the lowest heart disease rate in Europe, a phenomenon some nutritionists attribute to the "Mediterranean diet" and olive oil consumption.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 152.4
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 412.5

STATUS OF WOMEN

The constitution of 1975 provides for equality before the law and full protection of all citizens. Greek women enjoy broad legal protection, including equal pay for equal work, though women often earn less because they are

hired for low-level jobs. In fact, it is estimated that women's 1997 salaries in manufacturing were 70 percent of those of men and that women face a "glass ceiling" in promotions in both the public and private sectors. Though still relatively few women occupy senior positions, larger numbers of women in recent years have entered the traditionally male-dominated professions

There are no legal restrictions on women in politics, but their representation at the higher levels of government remains low. In 2005 women held only 42 of the 300 seats in parliament and were underrepresented in the leadership of the two primary parties, though the head of the Communist Party was a woman. One of the most visible Greek women in recent years was "Iron Lady" Gianna Angelopoulos-Daskalaki, who almost single-handedly organized the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 14
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: —
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 41.1

WORK

Greece's labor force in 2004 was estimated at 4.39 million, with 20 percent employed in agriculture, 20 percent in industry, and 60 percent in services. Unemployment is high, at 9.4 percent in 2004, and youth unemployment approaches 30 percent. Agricultural products include grains such as wheat, corn, and barley as well as olives, tomatoes, wine, and beef and dairy products. While most farming is done on commercial farms, small farms of 10 acres or less that rely on horses or donkeys can still be found. Industries include not only tourism but also food processing, textiles, chemicals, metals, and mining. Many businesses in Greece are family owned and have fewer than 10 employees.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 4,390,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 38.3
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 20
 Industry: 20
 Services: 60
 Unemployment %: 9.4

EDUCATION

Education is free, and school attendance is compulsory from age six until age 15. The state school system has two main levels. Primary school lasts six years, after which

students enroll in gymnasium for the remaining three years of compulsory education.

Greece currently has 18 institutions of higher learning, including 11 general universities, six specialized universities (such as for agriculture and the fine arts), and a naval academy. The two largest universities are the University of Athens and the University of Thessaloniki. Admission is highly selective, with fewer than one-third of applicants gaining admission.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 97.5
 Male %: 98.6
 Female %: 96.5
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 14.9
 First Level: Primary schools: 7,634
 Teachers: 51,606
 Students: 646,343
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 12.5
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 96.8
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 2,988
 Teachers: 78,963
 Students: 608,947
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 9.4
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 85.0
 Third Level: Institutions: 17
 Teachers: 21,094
 Students: 527,959
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 68.3
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 3.9

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The university of Athens, founded in 1837, conducts scientific research. Other universities and technical schools offer theoretical and applied science courses. State-funded research centers include the National Center for Scientific Research, the National Center for Social Research, and the Center for Programming and Economic Research.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 1,390
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 0.65
 High-Tech Exports \$million: 962.4
 Patent Applications by Residents: 614

MEDIA

There are 38 daily papers in the Athens metropolitan area and 130 daily papers in the rest of Greece. Most national political dailies are heavily partisan, biased, and geared to sensationalism in coverage. Although investigative reporting is relatively new, criticism of the government is vigorous and uninhibited.

Radio and television broadcasting is operated by government-run agencies. U.S. imports dominate the entertainment segments of most programs.

Greece has a vigorous book publishing industry, with over 50 active publishers.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 207
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: 4,067
 Periodicals: 14
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets million: 5.1
 per 1,000: 480

CULTURE

The cultural heritage of Greece is familiar to any student of Western philosophy, literature, and history. The works of the philosophers Plato and Aristotle are still widely read; dramas written by Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, and Aristophanes are performed worldwide; Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* rank among the world's great epic poems; and early Greek historians virtually invented the discipline. Until well into the 19th century the mark of an educated person was the ability to read the works of these authors in the original Greek. Ancient Greek architects gave the world the Parthenon and the Doric, Ionian, and Corinthian architectural styles.

Today Greek culture is funded in large part by the Ministry of Culture. Throughout Greece can be found local theaters, institutes for the study of folklore, orchestras, dance troupes, and literary groups. Greece has two Nobel laureates in literature, George Seferis and Odysseas Elytis. The nation has a long tradition of graphic arts, including metalworking, woodcarving, textiles, and rug making. Painters and sculptors work in contemporary and traditional Orthodox forms. Music and dance are an integral part of Greek culture, and a great deal of music is performed with instruments that are unique to Greece and a part of Greek national identity.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 672
 Volumes: 9,088,431
 Registered borrowers: 605,000
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: 13,000,000

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Greek mythology has been an endless source of fascination for students of history. The ancient Greeks believed in a polytheistic universe in which a pantheon of gods and goddesses ruled humans' fates, foretold the future, and frequently quarreled among themselves. The Olympians were 12 gods and goddesses, including Aphrodite, the goddess of love; Apollo, who daily harnessed his chariot to drive the sun across the sky; and Zeus, the head of the gods of Mount Olympus. The Titans were a group of gods and goddesses who ruled the universe before being overthrown by the Olympians. Among the best known of the Titans are Prometheus, who brought fire to the world; Mnemosyne, the goddess of memory and mother of the Muses (and the source of the English word *mnemonic*, referring to a tool such as a rhyme or song to aid memory); and Atlas, condemned by Zeus to hold the world on his back. In Greek mythology, oracles could foretell the future. The most famous of these was the oracle at Delphi. The original Olympics were held in honor of the Olympian gods, and households in ancient Greece honored the gods and goddesses with statues and offerings of food and wine.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Entertainment and recreation in Greece are tied to the nation's cultural and folklore traditions. Many people attend theatrical presentations, particularly at the open-air theater in Epidaurus. They also enjoy operas, concerts, ballets, and folk music played on traditional Greek instruments such as the bouzouki. Folk dancers give performances in colorful, traditional costumes. Also popular are shadow puppet shows featuring the wily character of Karagiozis. For day-to-day recreation, coffeehouses are popular among men who gather for conversation and strong Turkish coffee.

ETIQUETTE

Greeks have a reputation for being lively and free spirited. Much of their time is spent in gatherings with family and friends in coffeehouses, taverns, village squares, and homes, drinking, talking animatedly (with both their voices and hands), singing, and dancing. Greeks open their homes to visitors on the feast day of the saint for which the homeowner is named, and visitors seize the chance to make an unannounced call. Hospitality is typically warm, and it is considered rude to refuse offers of food and drink. Men often walk down the street arm in arm or hand in hand as a sign of friendship.

FAMILY LIFE

The nuclear family is the norm in Greece, but elderly parents frequently move in with their grown children when they can no longer take care of themselves, it is common for adult children to remain with their parents until they marry, and it is equally common for young married couples to live with the parents of one of the spouses until they can afford a home of their own. Only relatively recently did the Greek government grant women the right to vote, pass laws to make divorce easier and protect the rights of the woman, and repeal laws making adultery a crime (which were enforced primarily against women). A key part of family life is honor, or *philotimo*, which often gives rise to feuds between families over such matters as land, property, and power. These feuds, in turn, give rise to insults, theft, and occasionally murder. It has been estimated that two out of three murders in Greece occur from such feuds and the perceived need to defend family honor.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Most Greeks wear Western-style clothing. The traditional men's costume consisting of a tunic, vest, and pants belted tight at the knees are seen during festivals and in the remotest parts of the country.

SPORTS

The national sport of Greece is soccer, but also enjoyed are basketball, volleyball, tennis, swimming, water skiing, mountain climbing, sailing, fishing, and golf. On the island of Corfu cricket is popular. In the 2004 Summer Olympic Games in Athens, Greek athletes won 16 medals, including 6 gold and 6 silver. Still a hero to many Greeks is Spyridon Louis, a 24-year-old shepherd who won the first Olympic marathon in 1896 in donated shoes. The marathon celebrates in name the Greek victory at the Battle of Marathon in 490 B.C.E., news of which was carried from Marathon to Athens by a runner who, upon reaching Athens, collapsed and died.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1941** German forces seize Greece and share occupation of the country with Italian and Bulgarian forces.
- Active resistance groups form, including the National Liberation Front (EAM) of the Communist Party (ELAS) and the National Greek Republican League (EDES).
- A famine takes hold, during which 100,000 die.

- 1942** British soldiers parachute into Greece to aid resistance movements.
- 1943** Nearly the entire Jewish population is deported to Nazi death camps in Poland. ELAS and EDES resistance forces engage in civil war in the mountains.
- 1944** Occupying troops withdraw. A bloody confrontation breaks out in Athens between ELAS and British troops escorting the exiled government of King George II back to Greece.
- 1945** EAM agrees to disarm and disband ELAS in exchange for the right to participate in elections. Right-wing death squads pick off known Communists.
- 1946** The first elections in 10 years, boycotted by leftist voters, bring a monarchist government to power by a landslide. A plebiscite confirms the monarchy. Civil war erupts between leftist and rightist groups. The Communist EAM establishes the Democratic Army.
- 1947** The United States articulates the anti-Communist Truman Doctrine. The Greek Communist Party is declared illegal. The Communists establish a provisional government.
- 1949** With military aid from Britain and the United States, monarchists defeat the Communist partisans, ending two and one-half years of civil war, in which 160,000 died and 800,000 were made homeless.
- 1952** The right-wing Greek Rally Party comes to office, with Alexandros Papagos as prime minister. Greece becomes a member of NATO. A new constitution is promulgated, granting women the franchise.
- 1955** Papagos dies. King Paul names as prime minister the political unknown Konstantinos Karamanlis. Karamanlis dissolves the Greek Rally Party and establishes the National Radical Union, a virtually identical party.
- 1959** Britain refuses to allow the union of Cyprus with Greece.
- 1960** Cyprus becomes a republic under the British Commonwealth, aligned with both Greece and Turkey.
- 1961** Karamanlis is narrowly reelected in snap elections. The opposition, led by Georgios Papandreou of the Center Union Party, alleges election fraud.
- 1962** Greece becomes a member of the European Community, later known as the European Union.
- 1963** Unable to resolve conflicts with King Paul, Karamanlis resigns.
- 1964** The Center Union Party achieves a sweeping victory, and Georgios Papandreou becomes prime minister. King Paul dies and is succeeded by his son, the young Constantine II.
- 1965** King Constantine accuses Prime Minister Papandreou of political maneuvering to protect his son Andreas Papandreou, himself a member of parliament and a suspected radical-left conspirator. Papandreou resigns.
- 1967** To forestall May elections, which Georgios Papandreou's Center Union Party was expected to win, anti-Communist military officers known collectively as "the Colonels" seize power in April under Georgios Papadopoulos. King Constantine goes into exile after a counter-coup fails. Political activity is banned, and leftists are sent to prison camps.
- 1968** A new constitution formalizes the military regime.
- 1969** The Council of Europe's Commission of Human Rights condemns the junta for maltreatment of political prisoners. The junta withdraws Greece from the council.
- 1973** Papadopoulos abolishes the monarchy and declares Greece a presidential republic, then is elected president in a race in which he is the sole candidate. Student protests are brutally suppressed. Dimitrios Ioannides, head of the military police, seizes power.
- 1974** Ioannidis launches a coup to depose Makarios III, president of Cyprus. Turkey invades Cyprus to protect Turkish Cypriots, ultimately controlling 40 percent of the island. Unable to mobilize for war with Turkey, the Greek military regime self-destructs. Recalled from self-imposed exile in France, Konstantinos Karamanlis forms the Government of National Salvation and neutralizes hostilities with Turkey. The Communist Party is legalized. Karamanlis is confirmed as prime minister in multiparty elections won overwhelmingly by his conservative New Democracy (ND) party. In a referendum 69 percent vote to abolish the monarchy.
- 1975** A new, nonmilitary constitution is promulgated.
- 1980** Karamanlis is elected president.
- 1981** In a stunning electoral victory, Andreas Papandreou of the Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK) becomes Greece's first socialist prime minister. Greece joins the European Community.

- 1983** Turkish Cypriots declare the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus.
- 1985** President Karamanlis resigns. PASOK candidate Christos Sartzetakis is elected president.
- 1990** The ND party wins a small legislative majority, with Konstantinos Mitsotakis as prime minister. Karamanlis is reelected president.
- 1991** Yugoslavia's constituent republic of Macedonia declares independence as the Republic of Macedonia. Greece objects to Macedonia's name and national symbols and accuses the republic of positioning itself to claim Greek territory.
- 1993** PASOK and Andreas Papandreou return to power. The Republic of Macedonia amends its constitution to disavow territorial claims to Greece and is admitted to the United Nations as the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM).
- 1994** Greece imposes an economic blockade on FYROM.
- 1995** ND candidate Konstantinos Stephanopoulos is elected president. Greece lifts the economic blockade on FYROM.
- 1996** PASOK candidate Kostas Simitis succeeds Papandreou as prime minister. Numerous territorial disputes between Turkey and Greece nearly culminate in war, but hostilities are averted.
- 1998** Simitis imposes economic austerity measures to qualify Greece for membership in the EU currency zone. Public servants and their sympathizers, including opposition members of parliament, stage a general strike in April, bringing the country to a standstill. Annual inflation is below 2 percent for the first time in 26 years.
- 1999** A major earthquake hits Athens, killing dozens and leaving thousands homeless.
- 2000** President Stephanopoulos is reelected. Turkey and Greece sign a series of agreements pledging more cordial relations. PASOK wins parliamentary elections with a narrow margin over ND. A heat wave and high winds fan more than 100 forest fires in July. A senior British diplomat is assassinated by the Greek left-wing terrorist group November 17.
- 2001** Greece adopts the euro currency on January 1.
- 2004** Simitis steps down and calls for new elections. The New Conservative Party, led by new Prime

Minister Kostas Karamanlis, wins the general election.

Athens hosts the Summer Olympic Games.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Greek Indexer
<http://www.gr-indexer.gr>
- World Gazetteer
<http://www.world-gazetteer.com>

GRENADA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Grenada

ABBREVIATION

GD

CAPITAL

St. George's

HEAD OF STATE

Queen Elizabeth II, represented by Governor-General Sir Daniel C. Williams (from 1996)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Keith C. Mitchell (from 1995)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Parliamentary democracy

POPULATION

89,502 (2005)

AREA

344 sq km (133 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Black

LANGUAGE

English

RELIGION

Christianity

UNIT OF CURRENCY

East Caribbean dollar

NATIONAL FLAG

A red border surrounding a rectangle divided into two gold and two green triangles—gold at the top and bottom and green at the fly and hoist. Seven yellow stars, six on the red border and one at the apex of the four triangles. On the green triangle near the hoist is a pot of nutmeg.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

The principal elements of the national coat of arms are a shield with four quarters flanked by an armadillo and a dove. Beneath appears the motto "Ever conscious of God we aspire build and advance as one people."

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"Hail, Grenada, Land of Ours, We Pledge Ourselves to Thee"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 and 2 (New Year's Days), February 7 (Independence Day, National Day), May 1 (Labor Day), June 2 (Queen's Birthday), last Thursday in November (National Day of Prayer), various Christian festivals, including Christmas, Boxing Day, Good Friday, Easter Monday, Whitmonday, and Corpus Christi

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

February 7, 1974

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

December 19, 1973

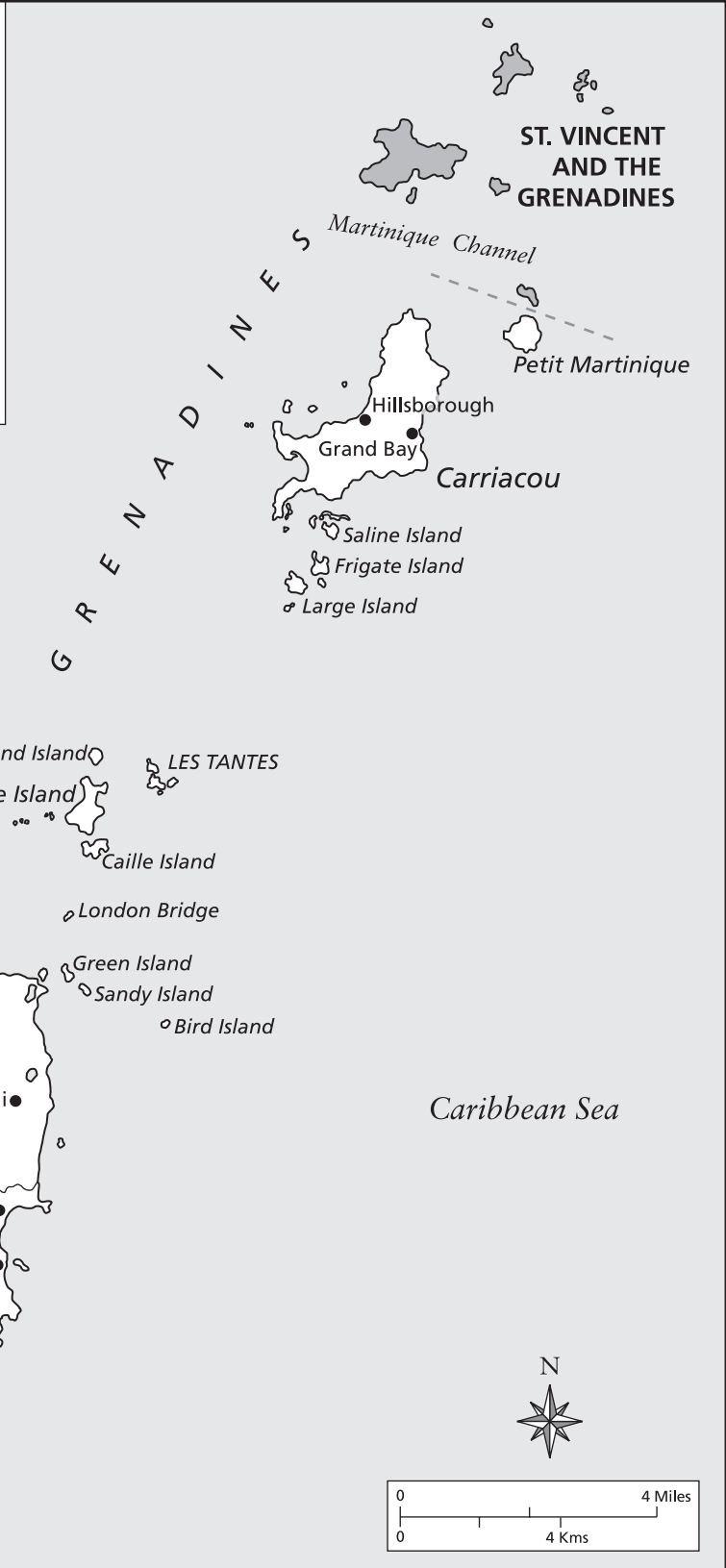
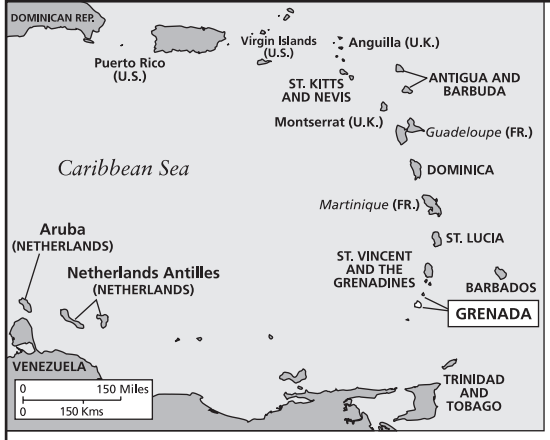
GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Grenada is about 241 km (150 mi) southwest of Barbados and 145 km (90 mi) northwest of Trinidad and Tobago. The state of Grenada consists of the island of Grenada, the most southerly of the Windward Islands; the islands of Carriacou and Petite Martinique; and a number of smaller islets of the Grenadines. Grenada is the smallest of the Caribbean countries, with an area of 344 sq km (133 sq mi), extending 34 km (21 mi) northeast to

southwest and 19 km (12 mi) southeast to northwest. The length of the coastline is 121 km (75 mi).

The island is almost wholly volcanic. The mountain mass in the center of the main island consists of a number of ridges, some of which contain crater basins and one a larger crater lake, Grand Etang. Close to the northeastern coast there are two other crater lakes, Lake Antoine and Levera Pond. The highest peak is Mount St. Catherine, 840 m (2,756 ft) above sea level. The coastline is indented with beautiful beaches and bays.

Grenada



Geography

Area sq km: 344; sq mi 133
 World Rank: 183rd
 Land Boundaries, km: 0
 Coastline, km: 121
 Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Caribbean Sea 0
 Highest: Mount St. Catherine 840
 Land Use %
 Arable Land: 5.9
 Permanent Crops: 29.4
 Forest: 14.7
 Other: 50

Population of Principal Cities (2001)

St. George's	3,908
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CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Grenada has a semitropical climate. A mild dry season lasts from January to May, with night temperatures dropping to 15.6°C (60°F); the wet season lasts from June to December, with November the wettest month. During the wet season the temperature rises to 32.2°C (90°F), and the humidity is high both night and day. The average annual temperature is about 23°C (78°F). Rainfall varies from 1,524 mm (60 in) in the coastal districts to 5,080 mm (200 in) in the mountains. The Grenadines tend to be drier, and Carriacou has an average rainfall of only 1,270 mm (50 in).

The prevailing winds are northeasterly trades. The hurricane season extends from June to December.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature: 60°F to 90°F
 Average Rainfall
 Coastal districts: 60 in
 Mountains: 200 in
 Grenadines: 50 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Grenada's islands are small, but they present a diverse range of habitats. Perhaps the most popular with tourists is the rainforest that surrounds Grand Etang, where towering stands of mahogany and gommier trees and a rich array of ferns and tropical wildflowers can be seen. Also popular are the coastal regions, where estuaries, mangrove swamps, and coral reefs can be explored. Grenada's beaches provide nesting for sea turtles. The islands are perhaps best known for bird watching. At least 117 spe-

cies of birds have been identified, and although none are endemic to Grenada alone, many are endemic to the Caribbean, including the Antillean crested hummingbird, the Antillean wren, the lesser Antillean bullfinch, the lesser Antillean tanager, the purple-throated carib, the scaly-breasted thrasher, and the scaly-naped pigeon.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 89,502
 World Rank: 179th
 Density per sq km: 308
 % of annual growth (1999–2003): 1.4
 Male %: 51.9
 Female %: 48.1
 Urban %: 40.8
 Age Distribution: % 0–14: 34.5
 15–65: 62.0
 65 and over: 3.5
 Population 2025: 96,253
 Birth Rate per 1,000: 21.3
 Death Rate per 1,000: 7.9
 Rate of Natural Increase %: 1.5
 Total Fertility Rate: 2.41
 Expectation of Life (years): Males 62.74
 Females 66.31
 Marriage Rate per 1,000: 5.0
 Divorce Rate per 1,000: 1.1
 Average Size of Households: 3.7
 Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

The bulk of the Grenadan population is of African descent, and there are no traces of the Arawaks and Caribs who lived on Grenada when it was discovered by Columbus. The proportion of blacks is estimated at 82 percent and that of mulattoes at 13 percent. East Indians and whites comprise the remaining 5 percent of the population.

LANGUAGES

English is the official and national language of the country. A French patois is spoken by a small number.

RELIGIONS

The predominant faith is Roman Catholicism (53 percent), but there is a strong and influential Anglican minority consisting of nearly 14 percent of the population. Other Protestant groups—Seventh-Day Adventists, Methodists, Plymouth Brethren, and Presbyterians—make up 33 percent. There are also a few hundred Hindus.

Religious Affiliations

Roman Catholic	47,000
Anglican	12,000
Other	30,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Grenada was discovered by Christopher Columbus in 1498. When Columbus discovered the island, it was already inhabited by the Carib Indians, who had migrated from the South American mainland. The Carib Indians had killed or enslaved the original island inhabitants, the peaceful Arawak. The Amerindians called their island Camerhogue, but Columbus renamed the island Concepción.

The island was renamed by French settlers who were attracted to St. George's Harbor during the 16th century. In 1650 it was purchased by Governor Du Parquet, who sold it to Comte de Cerillac in 1657. In 1674 the French government annexed Grenada, and the island remained under French control until 1762, when it was captured by Admiral George Rodney of Great Britain. It was again under French control from 1779 to 1783. The last pre-modern challenge to British rule in Grenada was in 1795, when a French-led native uprising was suppressed.

Grenada remained a British colony until 1958, when it joined the Federation of the West Indies, which dissolved in 1962. In 1967 it gained internal autonomy and became a member of the West Indies Associated States, a loose association of the United Kingdom and five of the West Indies territories: Antigua, St. Kitts-Nevis, Dominica, Grenada, and St. Lucia. Grenada gained full independence in 1974.

Politics during the pre-independence period was dominated by Eric M. Gairy, founder of the Grenada United Labour Party (GULP), who served as chief minister until he was removed from office by the British in 1962 for alleged corruption. He became premier following the 1967 elections and again after the 1972 elections. Gairy assumed the office of prime minister upon Grenada's independence.

The opposition viewed Gairy as autocratic and corrupt, comparing him to "Papa Doc" Duvalier of Haiti for his totalitarian tendencies and his efforts to terrorize opponents. In 1976 the various parties united to oppose Gairy and the GULP. As a People's Alliance, the Grenada National Party (GNP), the New Jewel Movement (NJM), and the United People's Party (UPP) failed to win the election but reduced the size of GULP in the lower house.

In March 1979 the Gairy government was overthrown, and a People's Revolutionary Government (PRG) was established, with Maurice Bishop, leader of the New Jewel Movement, serving as prime minister. The government was subsequently joined by two members of

the Grenada National Party and nine working-class representatives. The constitution of 1967 was suspended and Parliament dissolved, although Bishop stated that no changes were envisaged in Grenada's relationship with the British Crown; the governor-general continued to represent Queen Elizabeth II as head of state, and the prime minister as head of government exercised executive power on her behalf.

By mid-1982 relations with the United States, the United Kingdom, and the more conservative members of CariCom, the Caribbean Community, became increasingly strained, as Grenada was aligning more closely with Cuba, suppressing the free press, and establishing a Marxist dictatorship. Cuba was supplying about 40 percent of the funds and several hundred construction workers for the controversial international airport at Point Salines, which was believed to be intended to provide a Soviet facility for military maneuvers.

On October 13, 1983, long-standing divisions between the more liberal wing in the ruling PRG's elite, led by Prime Minister Bishop, and the hard-liners, led by his deputy, Bernard Coard, broke into the open. Bishop was ousted and placed under house arrest by General Hudson Austin, commander of the People's Revolutionary Army. Six days later, having been freed by rioting supporters, he was recaptured and executed. General Austin was installed as head of a 16-member Revolutionary Military Council. The PRG was abolished, and a shoot-on-sight curfew was imposed.

In the wake of this outrage, Sir Paul Scoon, the governor-general, requested that the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) intervene and restore democratic order. The OECS in turn requested help from the United States, which, already concerned for the safety of some 1,000 U.S. nationals on the island and convinced that Grenada was being turned into a "Soviet-Cuban colony and military bastion for the export of terror," in the words of President Reagan, readily complied. On October 25 some 1,900 U.S. troops invaded the island, accompanied by 300 troops from Jamaica, Barbados, and other OECS islands. Fighting continued for some days, and U.S. troop strength grew to 7,355 before General Austin's army was overwhelmed. General Austin, Coard, and others involved in the coup were captured and imprisoned.

On November 9, 1983, Sir Paul Scoon appointed a nonpolitical interim government until elections could be held. The government was headed by Sir Nicholas Braithwaite. The constitution of 1974 was reinstated, and an election commission was appointed to prepare for elections within 12 months. The United States began a gradual withdrawal of troops.

Several political parties that had gone into exile or underground during the PRG interregnum reemerged. Eric Gairy himself returned to Grenada in January 1984 to lead his Grenada United Labour Party (GULP). Ap-

prehensive over a GULP return to power, four centrist parties—the Grenada National Party, led by Herbert Blaize; the Christian Democratic Labour Party, led by Winston Whyte; the Grenada Democratic Movement, led by Francis Alexis; and the National Democratic Party, led by George Brizan—merged to form the New National Party (NNP), led by Blaize. Whyte's party soon left the coalition. In the December elections the NNP won 14 out of 15 seats in the House of Representatives and garnered 59 percent of the popular vote. Blaize was sworn in as prime minister on December 4, 1984. On February 4, 1985, the new House of Representatives approved a bill validating all laws enacted during the suspension of the constitution from March 1979 to November 1983, while a commission to amend the constitution was sworn in on February 14.

Factional discord between various components of the NNP climaxed with the resignation of three cabinet members in 1987. The ministers, including the former leaders of the National Democratic Party and the Grenada Democratic Movement, formed a new political party, the National Democratic Congress (NDC), which included all opposition members in the House of Representatives. In 1989 Blaize lost control of the NNP to his main rival, Keith Mitchell, but remained prime minister. Factional fighting continued within the NNP, and in mid-1989 Blaize dismissed Mitchell from the cabinet. In response several other members of the government resigned, and Blaize lost his legislative majority. In an effort to hold power, Blaize launched a new political party, the National Party (TNP), in August, but Blaize died in December 1989 and was succeeded by TNP's vice president, Ben Jones.

Grenada held legislative elections in March 1990. The contest proved inconclusive, with the NDC winning only a plurality in Parliament. The party achieved a majority shortly thereafter, however, when a member of the GULP joined the NDC. Nicholas Braithwaite, the party leader, became prime minister that same month. In 1991 Grenada joined the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States.

The NNP won a decisive victory in the 1995 parliamentary elections, and its leader, Keith C. Mitchell, became prime minister. In 1996 Grenada signed two treaties with the United States. In an effort to repair relations with Cuba, broken off after the U.S. invasion in 1983, Prime Minister Mitchell visited Cuba in 1997, and Fidel Castro returned the visit in 1998. In the 1999 elections the NNP won all 15 of the country's parliamentary seats.

In 2000 the government launched a Truth and Reconciliation commission to examine the "revolutionary years" of 1976 to 1983. That year, too, Grenada expelled Chinese diplomats for alleged interference in the nation's internal affairs. In 2001 opposition leaders criticized the government for establishing diplomatic ties with Libya. Money laundering was a major issue in the early 2000s. In

2001 the Paris-based Financial Action Task Force black-listed Grenada for failing to deal with the problem of offshore money laundering, though it removed the country from the list in 2002 and the U.S. Treasury Department removed its advisory on Grenada in response to the country's efforts to eliminate the problem. In 2003 Keith Mitchell narrowly won a third term in office; in 2004 he had to deal with the widespread devastation caused by Hurricane Ivan.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

(Note: The following list excludes interim military leaders.)

1974–79	Eric M. Gairy
1979–83	Maurice Bishop
1984–89	Herbert Blaize
1990–95	Nicholas Braithwaite
1995–	Keith Mitchell

CONSTITUTION

The constitution of 1967, which had been adopted when Grenada became an associated state, was modified only slightly with independence in 1974. The constitution established a parliamentary form of government based on the British model. Executive authority is exercised by the prime minister, who is the leader of the majority party in the lower house. The bicameral legislature is composed of a popularly elected House of Representatives and an appointed Senate. The judicial system includes a Supreme Court composed of a High Court of Justice and a two-tiered Court of Appeal. There are also eight magistrate's courts.

PARLIAMENT

The bicameral Parliament comprises an appointed Senate of 13 members (10 appointed by the government, 3 by the leader of the opposition) and a popularly elected 15-member House of Representatives. Parliament was suspended from March 1979 to December 1984.

Elections are held every five years, with the most recent in 2003. Suffrage is universal over age 21.

POLITICAL PARTIES

There are eight active political parties in Grenada. The largest (in terms of seats in the legislature) is the New National Party, the centrist party founded in 1984. It won all 15 seats in the House of Representatives in 1999 but held only 8 after the 2003 elections. The second largest

party is the National Democratic Congress, which was formed in 1987 out of the left-of-center parties, including the Democratic Labour Congress and the Grenada United Labour Party. It held the remaining seven seats in the House of Representatives after 2003.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Grenada is divided into six parishes and one dependency—Carriacou and Petite Martinique—with 52 village councils.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The law of the land is English common law and statute law. The highest court is the West Indies Associated States Supreme Court, which consists of the Court of Appeal, comprising the chief justice as president and two justices of appeal, and the High Court of Justice, comprising the chief justice and six puisne judges. The judges are appointed on the advice of the Judicial and Legal Service Commission, although the chief justice is appointed by the lord chancellor of the United Kingdom. Appeals go from the Supreme Court to the Privy Council of the United Kingdom.

The courts of summary jurisdiction are presided over by puisne judges. Two magistrate's courts exist in each of the three magisterial districts. Magistrates are appointed by the governor-general on the advice of the Judicial and Legal Service Commission.

Grenadan police retain the right to arrest individuals "on suspicion" without a warrant, but they are required to abide by time restrictions as to when those detained must be formally charged or released.

There is a functioning system of bail, although those charged with murder or any other capital offense are not eligible. Habeas corpus is found in Grenadan law.

The main correctional facility is Richmond Hill Prison.

HUMAN RIGHTS

With the restoration of constitutional government, all civil and human rights have been restored and constitutional guarantees reinstated.

FOREIGN POLICY

The U.S. invasion of Grenada in 1983 was the central event in modern Grenadan history. It severed Grenada's relations with Cuba and brought it firmly into the U.S. orbit. The United States helped to restore parliamentary

government on the island. Subsequently, Grenada participated in the U.S.-backed regional security plan designed to avert future leftist takeovers, and Grenada became one of the strongest supporters of the U.S. presence in the region.

In 1997 Grenada resumed diplomatic relations with Cuba. That year Prime Minister Keith Mitchell made a visit to Cuba, the first by a Grenadan president since 1983, and Fidel Castro returned the visit in 1998. In recent years Grenada has made efforts to strengthen its ties with Libya and China in response to a drop-off in aid from the United States and Great Britain.

DEFENSE

Grenada has no standing army. A paramilitary unit known as the Special Service Unit, trained by U.S. advisers, acts as the defense contingent and is part of the Regional Security System, a defense pact with other East Caribbean nations.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	—
Military Manpower Availability:	—
Military Expenditures \$million:	—
as % of GNP:	—
as % of central government expenditures:	—
Arms Imports \$:	0
Arms Exports \$:	0

ECONOMY

Grenada is one of the lower-middle-income countries of the world, with a free-market economy in which the dominant sector is private. The economy is heavily agricultural and centers on the production of spices, primarily nutmeg (up to a third of the world's supply), and tropical plants, such as bananas and cocoa beans. About 7.7 percent of the country's gross domestic product (GDP) is accounted for by agriculture, while 23.9 percent is provided by light industry and 68.4 percent by services, including financial services. Tourism is the leading source of foreign exchange.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$million:	440
GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$:	5,000
GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %:	3.2
GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %:	2.3
Origin of Gross Domestic Product %	
Agriculture:	7.7
Industry:	23.9
Services:	68.4

Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %

Private Consumption: 65
 Government Consumption: 17
 Gross Domestic Investment: —
 Foreign Trade \$million: Exports: 46
 Imports: 208
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: —
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: —

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
104.8	105.4	107.6	109.4	110.6

Finance

National Currency: East Caribbean Dollar (XCD)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = XCD 2.7
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency million: 282
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 6.5
 Total External Debt \$million: 196
 Debt Service Ratio %: 17.5
 Balance of Payments \$million: —
 International Reserves SDRs \$million: 83
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index
 Growth Rate %: 2.8

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 8.3
 per capita \$: 91
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 41

Central Government Revenues
and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$million: 85.8
 Expenditures \$million: 102.1
 Budget Deficit \$million: 16.3
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 7.7
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2002) %: 0.1
 Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares: 6
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: —
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: —
 Total Farmland as % of land area: 5.9
 Livestock: Cattle 000: 4
 Sheep 000: 13
 Hogs 000: 5
 Chickens 000: 268
 Forests: Production of Roundwood (000 cubic meters): —
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons: 2,171

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 25
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 0.7

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of
 oil equivalent 000: —
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons
 of oil equivalent 000: 77
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 758
 Net Energy Imports % of use: —
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: —
 Production kW-hr million: 138
 Consumption kW-hr million: 128.3
 Coal Reserves tons million: —
 Production tons 000: —
 Consumption tons 000: —
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic meters billion: —
 Production cubic meters million: —
 Consumption cubic meters million: —
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels million: —
 Production barrels per day: —
 Consumption barrels per day: 1,000
 Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$million: 208
 Exports \$million: 46
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2002): 4.5
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2002): –2.5
 Balance of Trade \$: —

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
United States %	30.0	14.9
Trinidad and Tobago %	26.8	4.3
United Kingdom %	5.2	6.4
Japan %	4.4	—
Germany %	—	12.8
Netherlands %	—	8.5
Saint Lucia %	—	8.5
Antigua and Barbuda %	—	6.4
Belgium %	—	4.3
Dominica %	—	4.3
France %	—	4.3
Saint Kitts and Nevis %	—	4.3

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 1,040
 Paved %: 61.3
 Automobiles: 15,800
 Trucks and Buses: 4,200
 Railroad; Track Length km: —
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: —
 Merchant Marine: No of Vessels: —
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: —
 Airports: 3
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: —
 Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 132
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 84
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 8

Communications

Telephones 000: 33.5
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.09
 Cellular Telephones 000: 7.6
 Personal Computers 000: 14
 Internet Hosts per million people: 201
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 168

ENVIRONMENT

Like many other developing nations, Grenada faces environmental challenges in terms of managing limited land. Marginal agricultural practices, including the cultivation of steep slopes, has led to increased soil erosion and the sedimentation of rivers. As tourism and the population increase, the country is also susceptible to growing concerns over waste disposal. In recent years Grenada has made strong efforts to protect its natural resources, with, for example, the establishment of the Grand Etang Forest Reserve, the 450-acre Levera National Park, and the La Sagesse Nature Centre.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 14.7
 Average Annual Forest Change, 1990-2000, 000 ha: —
 Nationally Protected Areas as % of Total Land Area: 0
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 2.1

LIVING CONDITIONS

While Grenada is a relatively poor country, with 32 percent of the population living below the poverty line in 2000, it had a fairly respectable per capita GDP of \$5,000 in 2002, and few Grenadans go hungry. The land is fertile, and most people have a plot of ground on which to grow food to feed their families, with enough left over to sell at markets. While some Grenadans enjoy comfortable and brightly painted bungalows for homes, others, especially in the rural areas, live in huts made of wood with tin roofs. The cities are generally free of slums and shantytowns. Few Grenadans own cars, relying instead on buses. Grenada's fortunes took a turn for the better after the completion of the Point Salines International Airport in 1984, further opening the country to tourism and trade. Crime consists largely of such offenses as petty theft, and the rate of violent crime is low.

HEALTH

Life expectancy in 2004 was 65 years, while the infant mortality rate was 14.6 per 1,000 live births—down significantly from 28 in 1990. Grenada's medical facilities are limited, though there are three hospitals, six health-care centers, and 30 district medical clinics, and St. George's University, a private school funded by Americans, provides medical training. Many people turn to herbs and medicinal plants, especially nutmeg mixed in a toddy of rum, lime, and honey, which is said to remove blood impurities. Taking sweat baths and writing sacred words on the skin with special pens are also common folk medicinal practices. Per capita spending on health care is only about \$262 per year.

Health

Number of Physicians: 41
 Number of Dentists: 7
 Number of Nurses: 303
 Number of Pharmacists: —
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 50
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 14.62
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: —
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 5.3
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 262
 HIV Infected % of adults: —
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 98
 Measles: 94
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 97
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 95

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Because Grenada is an island nation, its citizens predictably eat a great deal of fish; some 20 varieties are caught in the waters surrounding the islands. Staples include rice, bread, and a variety of fruits and vegetables, including yams, avocados, pigeon peas, callaloo greens, citrus, papayas, plantains, mangoes, and coconuts. Chicken is commonly eaten, pork is reserved for special occasions, and beef is virtually nonexistent. Two common local dishes are "oildown," a mixture of pork, breadfruit, and vegetables steamed in coconut milk, and "turtle toes," or deep-fried mixtures of lobster, conch, and other seafood. Grenadan dishes are commonly seasoned heavily with local spices. Overall, the state of nutrition in Grenada is rather high. In 1998 only about 2.8 percent of children were undernourished, and obesity was not a major problem. Grenada's most prevalent nutritional issue is iron deficiency, or anemia. The most recent studies show more than half of children and women (but only about one-fifth of men) suffering from iron deficiencies in their diet.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita: —
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 86.6
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 250.8

STATUS OF WOMEN

Sexual harassment and domestic violence are common. However, there are no courts to deal with this problem, nor are there specific spousal abuse laws. In 1998 a new Sexual Offenses Act went into effect to replace a previous act that required medical evidence or witness corroboration for indictment. The Department of Labor has a permanent counselor to assist women who are victims of domestic violence. The Welfare Department assists victims of spousal abuse by finding shelters, providing counseling, and recommending police action.

While there is no legal discrimination against women, property ownership continues to be deeded to heads of households, who are usually males. When the male head of a household dies without a will, the wife cannot inherit the property or sell it, although she can live in it and pass it to her children. The Dominica National Council of Women oversees programs that help women find jobs.

Women

Women-headed Households: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 27
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men age 15 to 24: 1.0
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 42.8

WORK

The most recent estimates (1996) put the size of Grenada's labor force at about 42,000. A 1999 study shows that 24 percent work in agriculture, 14 percent in industry, and 62 percent in services. The rate of unemployment in 2000 was relatively high, at 12.5 percent, although that figure was down from 25 percent in 1994. Those in the agricultural sector cultivate or harvest cocoa, bananas, nutmeg, citrus, avocado, sugarcane, root crops, corn, and vegetables. Industry is concentrated in food and beverages, textiles, construction, and light assembly operations. Women are beginning to be a dominant presence in the banking industry.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 42,300
 Female Participation Rate %: —
 Total Activity Rate %: 39.9

Labor by Sector: %
 Agriculture: 24
 Industry: 14
 Services: 62
 Unemployment %: 12.5

EDUCATION

Education is free, universal, and compulsory for eight years, from ages six to 14. Compulsory attendance is not enforced, such that about 84 percent of children attend primary school and only 45.5 percent attend secondary school. Literacy is high, at 98 percent.

Schooling lasts for 14 years and is divided into seven years of primary school, five years of junior secondary school, and two years of senior secondary school. Secondary education is not free, but the government grants scholarships on the basis of competitive examinations. The academic year runs from September to August. The medium of instruction is English.

There are five institutions of higher learning in Grenada: the University of the West Indies in St. George's, the Teacher Training College, the School of Medicine at St. George's, the School of Agriculture at Mirabeau, and the School of Fishing at Victoria.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 98
 Male %: 98
 Female %: 98
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: —
 First Level: Primary schools: 57
 Teachers: 888
 Students: 16,598
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 18.7
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 84.2
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 19
 Teachers: 700
 Students: 7,425
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 20.7
 Net Enrollment Ratio: —
 Third Level: Institutions: 1
 Teachers: —
 Students: —
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: —
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 4.4

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Grenada has little in the way of infrastructure to support science and technology. Few Grenadans can afford to attend the medical school at St. George's. Many Grenadans rely on scholarship and exchange programs in Cuba and the United Kingdom to study sciences and technology. In 2004 Grenada's prime minister called for sweeping changes to promote scientific research and innovation in Grenada and throughout the Caribbean.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million persons: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$000: 670
 Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

Among the country's newspapers are *Grenada Guardian*, *Grenadian Voice*, *Indies Times*, *Informer*, *National*, *Tribune*, and *West Indian*, as well as the official government weekly, the *Government Gazette*. There is no institutionalized censorship.

Grenada has no national news agency. No foreign news bureaus function in St. George's.

Grenada Broadcasting Corporation, a government-owned entity, runs Radio Grenada and Grenada Television. In addition, there are four independent radio stations and a private cable TV company on the island. Television programs are also received on Grenada from Trinidad and Tobago and from Barbados.

Media

Daily Newspapers: —
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: —
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets 000: —
 per 1,000: —

CULTURE

The arts and culture in Grenada are supported primarily by the tourist trade and a fairly large expatriate community. Grenadians are best known for their skill in the visual arts. One prominent artist is Canute Caliste, who depicts traditional life on the islands; another is Elinus Cato, whose paintings have been exhibited in London and Washington, D.C. Grenadan painters rely on a wide variety of materials for canvases, including bamboo, calabash, wood, and metal. Woodcarving is highly developed, with Stanley Coutain one of the nation's leading wood sculptors. Folk arts abound, with big drum music, derived from African song, dance, and drumming, an indigenous art form. Big drum music blends rhythmic percussion with rings of dancers and songs that emphasize social commentary and satire. Other folk arts include weaving of items such as hats, placemats, and baskets with straw, bamboo, and wicker. Mahogany and cedar are used to fashion carved kitchenware and furniture.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Grenadan folklore is dominated by animal tales from Africa. Especially popular are the Anansi (or Anansy) fairy tales, in which animals play tricks on or frighten their adversaries, sometimes by taking on the shape of human beings. These and other stories are often called "crick-crack" stories because they are told in groups; the storyteller begins by saying "crick," and the listeners reply "crack." Earlier beliefs in supernatural characters, including the zombie, or a dead person returned to life to carry out the bidding of a voodoo priest, survive in carnival figures and bedtime stories. Much Grenadan folklore survives in folk remedies used to cure illnesses.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Grenadians watch television programming from the United States on the Grenada Broadcasting Corporation television station as well as on private stations operated on the islands. Song and dance, including calypso and steel drum music, provide other popular forms of entertainment. Meals, especially on holidays such as Christmas, when they are accompanied by local rum or a rum grog, provide entertainment. Funerals are also social occasions. Carnival was traditionally celebrated during the weekend before Ash Wednesday but is now celebrated in August to generate more tourist dollars.

ETIQUETTE

Even among strangers, greetings are part of everyday good manners. Girls and younger women can often be seen walking down the street hand in hand, and boys and younger men often walk with their arms around each other's shoulders. Crowded buses demand strict rules of etiquette, with priority given to women, especially older women and those with children. Children are reared never to speak out of turn; corporal punishment of children is common.

FAMILY LIFE

Because Grenada is a predominantly Catholic country, marriage is expected and families have traditionally consisted of 10 or more children, although that is changing as birth control has become more widely available and used and as women have begun working outside the home. In 2004 the fertility rate was 2.41 children per woman. Extended families are very strong, and it is common for three generations, including grandparents, siblings, and aunts and uncles, to live in the same house—with everyone playing a role in the upbringing of children. This role sharing is especially important in those families where a wage earner goes abroad to earn a better income.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Most Grenadans wear Western clothing. Dresses and floral print blouses are common on women, as are hats to shield their wearers from the intense sun. Men wear suits in business settings and on formal occasions. Because of the tropical climate, light, cool, casual clothing is the norm.

SPORTS

While soccer is a popular sport in Grenada, cricket is the “national pastime.” Cricket is played formally in a large stadium, Queen’s Park, outside St. George’s, and is played informally almost everywhere, even on the beaches. Sir Vivian Richards, a West Indies cricket legend, has said that “cricket has become a religion” in Grenada.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1974** Grenada proclaims independence as riots against Prime Minister Eric Gairy rock the island. Governor-General Hilda Bryce resigns, protesting Gairy policies, and is replaced by Leo de Gale.
- 1976** Gairy’s party, the Grenada United Labour Party, wins a narrow victory over the united opposition front, the People’s Alliance, but its majority in the House of Representatives is reduced.
- 1978** Grenada’s minister of state for agriculture is assassinated.
- 1979** Gairy is overthrown in a coup led by Maurice Bishop of the New Jewel Movement. Bishop is named prime minister of the People’s Revolutionary Government. The constitution and Parliament are retained. The opposition paper *Torchlight* is forced to close as a threat to national security.
- A two-year technical pact is signed with Havana. Following an assassination attempt on Bishop, the nation is placed on a war alert, and the government reveals an “imperialist plot” against it.
- 1982** Work on Point Salines International Airport begins with Cuban aid.
- 1983** Maurice Bishop goes to Washington but is unable to meet with President Reagan. Bishop is ousted, placed under house arrest, and later executed by General Hudson Austin, commander of the People’s Revolutionary Army. Austin is installed as head of a 16-member Revolutionary Military Council. A curfew is declared. Governor-General Sir Paul Scoon requests that the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) intervene and restore order. The OECS seeks U.S. help. U.S. and OECS forces invade the island and after heavy fighting capture General Austin, Bernard Coard, and other coup leaders. Sir Paul Scoon appoints a nonpolitical interim government headed by Sir Nicholas Braithwaite. The constitution of 1974 is reinstated.
- 1984** In general elections the New National Party (NNP) wins 14 of 15 seats in the House of Representatives. NNP leader Herbert Blaize is sworn in as prime minister.
- 1985** The House of Representatives validates all laws enacted during the suspension of the constitution from March 1979 to November 1983.
- 1987** The National Democratic Congress is formed by George Brizan and Francis Alexis as well as a number of other anti-Blaize figures.
- 1989** Blaize announces the formation of the National Party. Blaize dies in office on December 19. The governor-general, Sir Paul Scoon, appoints Ben Jones prime minister.
- 1990** The National Democratic Congress wins a majority in March elections. Nicholas Braithwaite becomes prime minister.
- 1995** Dr. Keith C. Mitchell becomes prime minister, as the New National Party wins a decisive victory in parliamentary elections.
- 1996** Sir Daniel C. Williams is appointed governor-general.
- 1999** The ruling New National Party, led by prime minister Keith Mitchell, is reelected after winning all 15 of the country’s parliamentary seats.
- 2000** The government appoints the Truth and Reconciliation Commission to examine the revolutionary years of 1976–83. Chinese diplomats are expelled for alleged interference in the nation’s internal affairs.

- 2001** Grenada strengthens diplomatic ties with Libya. Grenada is placed on a Financial Action Task Force blacklist because of widespread money laundering; the country is removed from the list in 2002.
- 2003** Mitchell narrowly wins a third term in office. The New National Party captures eight seats in the House of Representatives; the National Democratic Congress wins the other seven.
- 2004** Grenada is devastated by Hurricane Ivan.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- SpiceIsle.com
<http://www.spiceisle.com/>
- World Gazetteer
<http://world-gazetteer.com/>

GUATEMALA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Guatemala (República de Guatemala)

ABBREVIATION

GT

CAPITAL

Guatemala City

HEAD OF STATE & HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

President Óscar Jose Rafael Berger Perdomo (from 2004)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Democratic republic

POPULATION

14,655,189 (2005)

AREA

108,890 sq km (42,042 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Amerindian, ladino (Hispanic/Amerindian)

LANGUAGE

Spanish (official)

RELIGION

Roman Catholicism, Protestantism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Quetzal

NATIONAL FLAG

Three vertical stripes of blue, white, and blue, with the national coat of arms in the center of the white stripe

NATIONAL EMBLEM

The principal elements of the national emblem are crossed gold sabers and red and gold rifles with their silver bayonets fixed; entwining laurel branches tied with blue and white ribbons; a scroll with the words “Libertad 15 de Septiembre de 1821,” commemorating the liberation of Guatemala from Spain; and perched above it on a rifle muzzle, a quetzal, a native bird with red, green, and yellow plumage and a long tail.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Guatemala Feliz” (Guatemala be praised)

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year’s Day), May 1 (Labor Day), June 30 (Anniversary of the Revolution of 1871), September 15 (National Day, Independence Day), October 12 (Columbus Day), October 20 (Anniversary of the 1914 Revolution), various Christian festivals, including Christmas

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

September 15, 1821

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

January 14, 1986 (promulgated June 1985); last amended November 1993

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Guatemala is in Central America to the northwest of the Isthmus of Panama, occupying an area of 108,890 sq km (42,042 sq mi), extending 457 km (284 mi) north-northwest to south-southeast and 428 km (266 mi) east-northeast to west-southwest. Guatemala, the third-largest country in Central America, has a total land border of 1,687 km, shared with Mexico to the west and north, Belize to the northeast, and El Salvador and Honduras to the southeast. The border with Belize is still in dispute, resulting from Belize’s 1981 independence from Great Britain.

The country is divided into four topographical regions. The Pacific coast, some 48 km (30 mi) wide, is a

tropical, fertile savanna plain interspersed with wet lagoons. From the plain a piedmont region rises in a system of mountains and high plateaus extending from Mexico to El Salvador and Honduras, covering 50 percent of the total surface area. The principal mountain chains are the Sierra Madre, Sierra de Chaucus, Sierra de las Minas, Montañas del Mico, Sierra de los Cuchumatanes, and Sierra de Chama. The region contains some 33 volcanoes, some of them still active. The four highest are Tajumulco (4,211 m; 13,812 ft), Tacaná (4,053 m; 13,300 ft), Fuego (3,834 m; 12,579 ft), and Agua (3,795 m; 12,451 ft). To the north of the volcanic belt lie the Continental Divide and the Caribbean lowlands. Three deep river valleys—the Motagua, the Polochic, and the Sarstoon—extend in-

Guatemala



land from the coast and serve as links to the interior, but they are separated from one another by mountain ranges. The fourth region is the vast Petén, constituting one-third of the national territory (35,000 sq km; 13,510 sq mi), extending into the Yucatán Peninsula. It is a rolling limestone plateau covered with dense tropical forest.

A total of 18 relatively short rivers flow from the highlands to the Pacific Ocean, most of them navigable

for short distances. Of these, the Samalá and Michatoya rivers serve as sources of power. The Motagua, Polochic, and Sarstoon Rivers drain the Caribbean lowlands. Petén is drained by the Chixoy, Usumacinta, Pasión, San Pedro, Belize, and Azul Rivers. There are four major lakes in the country. One, Lake Atitlán in the Sierra Madre highlands, is considered to be one of the most beautiful lakes in the world. The others are Lake Amatitlán, also in the Sierra

Madre; Lake Izabal, to the north of the Sierra de las Minas and Montañas del Mico; and Lake Petén Itzá, in Petén.

Geography

Area sq km: 108,890; sq mi 42,042
 World Rank: 104th
 Land Boundaries, km: Belize 266, El Salvador 203, Honduras 256, Mexico 962
 Coastline, km: 400
 Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Pacific Ocean 0
 Highest: Volcán Tajumulco 4,211
 Land Use %
 Arable Land: 12.5
 Permanent Crops: 5.0
 Forest: 26.3
 Other: 56.2

Population of Principal Cities (2002)

Guatemala City	942,348
Mixco	277,400
Quezaltenango	106,700
Villa Nueva	187,700

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Guatemala has a rainy season from May until October and a dry season from November through May. There are three climatic zones: the *tierra caliente* (hot country), extending from sea level to 750 m (2461 ft), with temperatures from 25° to 32°C (77°F to 90°F); the *tierra templada* (temperate country), from 750 m (2461 ft) to 1,700 m (5278 ft) with average temperatures from 23.9°C to 26.7°C (75°F to 79°F); and the *tierra fría* (cold country), over 1,700 m (5278 ft) high, with average temperatures from 15°C to 21.1°C (59°F to 70°F). Rainfall is heaviest in central Guatemala and along the southern slopes exposed to air from the Pacific. The prevailing winds are the northeastern trades, which blow inland from the Caribbean.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature
 Tierra caliente: 77°F to 90°F
 Tierra templada: 75°F to 80°F
 Tierra fría: 59°F to 70°F
 Average Rainfall
 Central Guatemala: 70 in to 200 in
 East Highlands: 32 in to 79 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Guatemala has 18 distinct ecosystems. Along the coast, mangrove forests can be found on lagoons and estuar-

ies. Tropical forests dominate the Guatemalan lowlands. Oak trees dominate on the lower slopes of the mountains, but above 2,100 m (7,000 ft) conifer forests are prevalent. Throughout the nation flowers such as orchids are abundant. In the sparsely populated lowlands, deer, monkeys, and piglike animals called peccaries are common. Other mammals include jaguars, tapirs, and pumas. Crocodiles can be found in some rivers. The nation is home to over 700 species of birds, including the increasingly rare, brightly colored national bird, the quetzal, as well as species of jays, woodpeckers, parakeets, owls, swallows, and piprites.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 14,655,189
 World Rank: 62nd
 Density per sq km: 113.5
 % of annual growth (1999-2003): 2.6
 Male %: 50.7
 Female %: 49.3
 Urban %: 40.6
 Age Distribution %: 0–14: 42.6
 15–64: 54.1
 65 and over: 3.3
 Population 2025: 22,985,000
 Birth Rate per 1,000: 34.58
 Death Rate per 1,000: 6.79
 Rate of Natural Increase %: 3.0
 Total Fertility Rate: 4.6
 Expectation of Life (years): Males 64.3
 Females 66.13
 Marriage Rate per 1,000: 5.5
 Divorce Rate per 1,000: 0.1
 Average Size of Households: 5.2
 Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Mestizos—or people of mixed European and indigenous ancestry, also called ladinos—make up 55 percent of the population of Guatemala. Most European ancestry stems from the conquering of Central America by Spanish settlers in the 15th to 18th centuries. Those whose ancestry is entirely indigenous constitute at least 43 percent of the population (some sources put this figure higher). The indigenous population, descended from the ancient Mayan civilization, has inhabited the area since around 2500 B.C.E. Central American blacks, called Black Carib or Garifuna, constitute less than 1 percent of the population; as of the 1991 census, they numbered only 16,700. The Black Carib population stems from freed and runaway African slaves who intermarried with Carib Indians and were transported to Central America from the Caribbean Island of St. Vincent by the British in 1797.

LANGUAGES

The official language is Spanish, and it is spoken by 60 percent of the population. The remaining 35 percent speak one of 23 indigenous languages, of which Kekchi, Mam, and Quiché are the most commonly used. The Black Carib population speaks its own language, called Garifuna.

RELIGIONS

The main religions are Roman Catholicism, Protestantism, and traditional Mayan religion. Current estimates put the Catholic population at about 75 percent, but this includes practitioners who combine the Mayan and Catholic religions. Indigenous religion is most prevalent in traditional stories, usually passed along verbally to new generations, as well as in a handful of traditional feast days, such as the Rabin Ajau, a traditional Kekchi festival held in July.

Religious Affiliations

Roman Catholic	8,645,000
Protestant	5,862,000
Traditional Mayan Religions	147,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The first signs of life in what is now Guatemala date from around 2500 B.C.E., when the first indigenous people, Mayans, occupied the area, setting up temples, cities, and an extensive culture. The Mayan civilization reached its peak around 600 C.E., and much of the civilization moved to the lowlands around 900. Individual cities continued to flourish even after 900 in the highlands of Guatemala.

The first Europeans came to the area in 1501, bringing both warfare and diseases that were previously nonexistent in the indigenous population. By the time the conquistador Pedro de Alvarado came in 1523, much of the indigenous population was enslaved, dying from unfamiliar disease, or had been killed directly by conquering European invaders. Guatemala was a Spanish colony until 1821.

After winning its independence, Guatemala was annexed briefly to Mexico (1822–23) and was a part of the Federation of Central American States, from which it withdrew in 1838. Rafael Carrera, who led a mainly indigenous revolt against the federation, served as Guatemala's first president from 1838 until his death in 1865.

In 1871 Justo Rufino Barrios became president and set up policies that would have serious ramifications for the Guatemalan people, plunging many into poverty and increasing the country's reliance on exported crops

and thus foreign influence. Barrios favored the wealthy landowners who grew export crops—sugar, coffee, and cotton—and encouraged foreign companies to come to Guatemala. The United Fruit Company, owned by American businessmen, came in 1901, becoming the largest landowner and employer in Guatemala and starting a period of American influence, chicanery, and domination that would last for most of the century.

Another prolonged dictatorship under the right-wing general Jorge Ubico ruled Guatemala from 1931 to 1944. Ubico allied himself with the large landowners, disbanded trade unions, and cracked down on opponents, until he was overthrown by an alliance of students, liberals, and dissident members of the military. The decade from 1944 to 1954 was a period of reform, first under José Arévalo and then Jacobo Arbenz Guzmán. The latter launched a land reform program in 1952 that provided for the confiscation of land owned by the United Fruit Company. As a result Arbenz, denounced as a Communist by the U.S. government, was overthrown by a coup in 1954. The coup was instigated by the United States and carried out by the American Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). Arbenz was replaced by the right-wing colonel Castillo Armas. Most of Arbenz's reforms were rescinded, and all of United Fruit's land restored.

From 1955 to 1985 Guatemala was ruled directly or indirectly by the armed forces, although elections remained a feature of political life. Between 1970 and 1982 voting became a narrow choice between conservative parties allied with the military. The country was constantly marked by violence. Manuel Osorio, an army general who had led many counterinsurgency attacks with the CIA's assistance, became president in 1970. He was alleged to have said that he would “turn the country into a graveyard” to bring order, and whether he actually said the words or not, his alleged statement set the tone for the next decades.

In elections marked by regular fraud and widespread abstention, the presidency rotated between officers selected for the position by the high command of the armed forces and endorsed by powerful conservative private interest groups. The number of people in poverty rose sharply, as wealth was concentrated into fewer and fewer hands. Labor groups were outlawed, and labor leaders and other protesters were hunted down and killed by death squads. In 1980 protesters took over the Spanish embassy to call attention to their plight. Almost 40 of the protesters were killed, as were several Spanish embassy officials, which resulted in Spain's breaking of diplomatic ties with Guatemala.

In the 1982 election this pattern unraveled against a background of economic decline, an escalating guerrilla war, and factional strife within the military and among its civilian backers. After evidence of unusually blatant fraud, army officers ousted the official candidate, Defense Minister Gen. Anibal Guevara, in a bloodless coup. Gen.

Efraín Ríos Montt, himself a former presidential candidate believed to have been robbed of victory by fraud in 1974, declared himself president in 1982. The military ruled by decree, banned all civilian political activity, and suspended the traditional parties. Ríos's approach for handling unrest and protest within the country encouraged "death squads" and a "scorched earth" policy of burning entire villages and killing their inhabitants. In 2004 he would be placed under house arrest for his role in these crimes.

Amnesty International reported increased human rights violations in the late 1980s. By this time the United States had reversed its stance. While U.S. president Jimmy Carter enforced sanctions against Guatemala because of its human rights abuses, the Reagan administration, which governed the United States for most of the 1980s, dismissed any human rights-related agenda in Guatemala and again sold arms and provided soldiers. The concern over mistreatment was backed by other groups, however, and in 1984 the World Council of Indigenous Peoples accused the Guatemalan government of genocide. (Later reports cite high percentages of indigenous people among Guatemalans who were killed, disappeared, or were tortured.) Although Marco Vinicio Cerezo, a civilian, became president in 1986, he was a puppet leader, and the military maintained complete control over the country.

Urged by international groups, Guatemala sat down with its Central American neighbors in an attempt to bring peace to the region in 1987. This was the beginning of an extended period of negotiations, violations of accords, and attempted reconciliation. Though there was little actual progress as a result of the talks, the Guatemalan government did meet with the opposition forces in Oslo, Norway, in 1989. Again, in 1990 America Watch charged that rights abuses under the civilian government had reached levels that had prevailed under past military dictatorships. In 1991 the United Nations was able to begin peace talks between the guerrillas and the government. While those continued, in 1993 Jorge Serrano Elías, who had won the presidency in a runoff election two years prior, tried to disband Congress and the Supreme Court. Amidst threatened sanctions by the United States and other countries, Serrano was ousted, and Ramiro de León was elected by the Congress to finish out Serrano's term. A peace treaty was finally signed in 1996.

Although the peace treaty was signed, there are still reports of human rights abuses, crime is high, and indigenous peoples especially continue to struggle for equality. The Catholic Church instituted the Recovery of Historical Memory project, an attempt to document the atrocities of the 36-year civil war. In 1998, days after Bishop Juan Gerardi released the report, he was assassinated. In 1999 the United Nations-led Historical Clarification Commission delineated the widespread torture, killing, and corruption of the late 20th century, putting blame al-

most exclusively on the Guatemalan dictatorships and the United States, which put or kept many of the dictators in power. In a visit to Guatemala in March 1999, U.S. president Bill Clinton apologized to Guatemala for the atrocities that the United States had propagated in the country, although official U.S. documentation (especially from the State Department and the CIA) rarely acknowledges this culpability.

In the elections held in November 1999, the Guatemalan Republican Front won the majority of seats. In December 1999 Alfonso Portillo Cabrera was elected president; he took office in 2000. In the years that followed Guatemala continued to deal with the fallout from the nation's civil war. In 2001 the president agreed to pay \$1.8 million in compensation to the families of men, women, and children who were killed by special forces and paramilitaries in the village of Las Dos Erres, and in 2004, \$3.5 million was paid to other victims of the civil war. Meanwhile, major cuts were made in the military, and the government formally admitted culpability in human rights crimes. In 2002 the Organization of American States (OAS) sponsored talks to resolve the border dispute with Belize. In 2003 Óscar Berger won the nation's presidential election.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

(Note: The following list excludes interim presidents and those who served for less than a year.)

1982–83	Gen. Efraín Ríos Montt
1983–86	Oscar Humberto Mejía Victores
1986–91	Marco Vinicio Cerezo Arévalo
1991–93	Jorge Antonio Serrano Elías
1993–96	Ramiro de León Carpio
1996–2000	Álvaro Enrique Arzú Irigoyen
2000–04	Alfonso Antonio Portillo Cabrera
2004–	Óscar Jose Rafael Berger Perdomo

CONSTITUTION

The constitution, written in 1985 and amended in 1993, established a democratic form of government. In order to prevent the return of dictatorships, presidential power was diluted by the reduction of the presidential term from six to four years and by the establishment of the office of vice president. The executive branch also consists of the Council of State, which acts in an advisory role, and various ministries. Reelection and prolongation of the presidential term are punishable by law, although the president may suspend constitutional guarantees for up to 30 days in the event of a national emergency. The vice president may succeed the president if the president dies or becomes disabled but cannot be elected president immediately after serving as vice president. Although its

role has diminished since the peace accords, the military still plays a significant part in the country's government.

PARLIAMENT

Legislative power rests with the 80-member Congress of the Republic. There are 158 members of Congress, and each of them serves a four-year term. Congress meets on June 15 each year, and ordinary sessions last four months. The president may veto congressional bills, but Congress may override a veto by a two-thirds vote. Between sessions a standing committee of eight deputies serves as a watchdog on the actions of the executive branch, with the power to call a special session of Congress if needed.

POLITICAL PARTIES

As of the 2003 elections there were five major Guatemalan political parties. Berger's Grand National Alliance (GAN) won 49 seats in Congress. The Guatemalan Republican Front (FRG), the conservative party, won 41. The National Unity for Hope Party (UNE) won 33, and the National Advancement Party (PAN) won 17. The Christian Democratic Party (DCG) is the centrist party. Additionally, the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Union (URNG), the former guerrilla faction, has been incorporated into the electoral process.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Guatemala is divided into 22 administrative departments, each headed by a governor. Each department is divided into a number of *municipios* (townships) governed by elected *alcaldes* (mayors) and autonomous municipal councils, whose members are popularly elected for two-year terms. The municipal council membership also includes *syndics*, or local officials who act as judges or advocates.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The judicial system consists of the Supreme Court, Civil Courts of Appeal, Courts of First Instance, and a number of special courts. The president of the Supreme Court is also the head of the judicial branch, with authority over all courts. The president of the Supreme Court and all other judges are elected by Congress for five years.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Since the peace treaty signed in 1996, Guatemala has made attempts to improve its human rights record. However,

alleged killings by the police forces, along with police harassment and possible elimination of "undesirables" (e.g., street children and juvenile delinquents), remain a serious problem. There have also been frequent mob lynchings of criminal suspects, due in part to citizen frustration at judicial inefficiency. Violence against women, including domestic violence, is a widespread problem.

Since the 1500s indigenous peoples, especially, have been subjugated, enslaved, and abused. This unfortunately continues to the present day. In a press conference in 2000 René Godínez García of Guatemala's Movimiento de Jóvenes Mayas por la Objeción de Conciencia stated that 88 percent of those who disappeared and 83 percent of those tortured during Guatemala's civil war were indigenous people. Carlos Coc Rax, an indigenous leader, disappeared in 1999.

The government has been trying to make some amends, but progress is slow. No convictions have been made for the 1998 murder of Bishop Gerardi. The Presidential High Command, which leads the army, has yet to be disbanded, and reports of killings by security forces and other military and paramilitary groups are still common, as are death threats against public officials who investigate the atrocities. Still, millions of dollars have been paid to the families of the victims of civil war. General Efraín Ríos Montt was placed under house arrest in 2004, and the government has made a formal admission of guilt in human rights abuses during the civil war.

Children are also at especially high risk in Guatemala. In 1999 the United Nations stated that kidnapping, child prostitution, and child pornography were serious problems.

FOREIGN POLICY

Guatemala has sought to strengthen its ties with other countries and became a founding member of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 1995. The end of the 36-year civil war in 1996 further strengthened foreign trade and investment in the country. A number of laws were passed from 1996 to 1998 to encourage foreign investment in Guatemala. In 2003 the nation signed a free-trade agreement with the United States, a sign of improved relations after U.S. president Bill Clinton's apology to the nation for the U.S. role in human rights abuses in the 1980s.

DEFENSE

Reforms in 1998 allowed for a civilian minister of defense. Personnel is provided by a draft system of all males of 18 to 50 years of age. In 2003 the country spent \$203 million on defense, about 0.8 percent of the gross domestic product (GDP). Although a civilian police force

was implemented in 1997, the military continues to play a significant role in government. In 2003 the nation had over 50,000 military personnel.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 50,400
 Military Manpower Availability: 3,421,682
 Military Expenditures \$million: 202.6
 as % of GDP: 0.8
 as % of central government expenditures: 3.8
 Arms Imports \$million: —
 Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

The Guatemalan economy is still largely agricultural, and coffee remains by far the single most important source of foreign revenue. Agriculture generates 22.5 percent of GDP and two-thirds of exports and employs half the labor force. Most of the industrial sector is in the hands of ladinos, the traditional moneyed elite, and foreign interests and consists mostly of sweatshops exploiting unskilled workers.

The signing of the peace accords in 1996, ending 36 years of civil war, removed a major obstacle to foreign investment. In 1997 the government met its economic targets when the GDP growth rate accelerated to 4.1 percent and inflation fell to 9 percent. The government also increased tax revenues—historically the lowest in Latin America—to 9 percent of GDP and created a new tax administration. Debt service costs declined in 1998. Throughout 1998 the Central Bank maintained a tight money supply, but it also caused high interest rates. By 2004 growth had slowed to 2.1 percent, but inflation had also continued to decline, to 5.5 percent.

Ongoing challenges include increasing government revenues, negotiating further assistance from international donors, increasing the efficiency and openness of both government and private financial operations, curtailing drug trafficking, and lowering the deficit—over \$1 billion in 2004. Guatemala, along with Honduras and El Salvador, reached free-trade agreements with Mexico and with the United States and has moved to protect international property rights.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 56.5
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 4,100
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 2.8
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 0.2
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 22.5
 Industry: 18.9
 Services: 58.6

Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:

Private Consumption: 88
 Government Consumption: 8
 Gross Domestic Investment: 15.2

Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 2.763

Imports: 5.749

% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 1.6

% of Income Received by Richest 10%: 46.0

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
136.1	144.2	155.2	167.7	176.9

Finance

National Currency: Quetzal (GTQ)

Exchange Rate: \$1 = GTQ 7.9409

Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 26.9

Central Bank Discount Rate %: —

Total External Debt \$billion: 4.957

Debt Service Ratio %: 9.78

Balance of Payments \$billion: -1.106

International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 2.8

Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
 5.5

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 247

per capita \$: 20.00

Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 115.8

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year

Revenues \$billion: 2.741

Expenditures \$billion: 3.316

Budget Deficit \$million: 575

Tax Revenues as % of GDP: 10.4

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 22.5

Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 1.8

Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 0.32

Irrigation, % of Farms having: 6.82

Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 136.9

Total Farmland % of land area: 12.5

Livestock: Cattle million: 2.54

Chickens million: 27

Pigs 000: 780

Sheep 000: 260

Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 16.07

Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 32.1

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 3.16

Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 4.1

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 1.33
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 3.08
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 264
 Net Energy Imports % of use: 26.8
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 1.9
 Production kW-hr billion: 6.237
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 5.559
 Coal Reserves tons billion: —
 Production tons million: —
 Consumption tons million: —
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet billion: 110
 Production cubic feet billion: —
 Consumption cubic feet billion: —
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels million: 526
 Production barrels 000 per day: 22
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 61
 Pipelines Length km: 480

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 5.749
 Exports \$billion: 2.763
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 1.4
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 4.0
 Balance of Trade \$billion: –1.106

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
United States %	34.1	56.7
Mexico %	8.8	—
South Korea %	7.8	—
El Salvador %	6.4	10.8
China %	4.6	—
Nicaragua %	—	3.6

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 14,118
 Paved %: 34.5
 Automobiles: 646,500
 Trucks and Buses: 21,200
 Railroad: Track Length km: 886
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: 836
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: —
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: —
 Airports: 452
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 342
 Length of Waterways km: 990

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 880
 Number of Tourists from 000: 658
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 646
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 373

Communications

Telephones 000: 846
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.08
 Cellular Telephones million: 1.577
 Personal Computers 000: 173
 Internet Hosts per million people: 1,389
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 27

ENVIRONMENT

Guatemala still has substantial forests, covering more than one-third of the country, but deforestation has increased alarmingly. This has contributed to accelerated erosion and soil loss, especially on mountain lands. The natural ecosystem is exceptionally diverse and harbors a wide variety of plant and animal species. Unfortunately, deforestation is accelerating the rate of species extinction. The largest protected area in Guatemala—4,559,000 acres—is the Maya Biosphere Reserve.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 26.3
 Forest Change (1990–2000) hectares 000: –54
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 22
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 0.87

LIVING CONDITIONS

In a nation in which 75 percent of the population lives below the poverty line, ethnic and class tensions divide the country, and the legacy of a civil war that killed as many as 200,000 people persists, life in Guatemala is filled with uncertainties and social problems: illegal drugs, money laundering, police brutality, abridgments of civil rights, and others. Social class is based on education and wealth, creating a virtual caste system in which the lowest 10 percent of households have about 1.6 percent of the nation's income, while the highest 10 percent have 46 percent, and in which some 2 percent of the population owns 70 percent of the cultivable land. Ladinos dominate in business, education, and the professions, while others scratch out livings in subsistence farming and small trade. Ladinos accept Indians only if they possess wealth and adopt a Western style of life, although this attitude is slowly changing. The Garifuna are shunned by all groups. Domestic violence is rampant and receives little attention. While 11 years of schooling are compulsory, less than 30 percent of teenagers attend secondary school, and child labor is common. In 2004 population growth was high, at 2.61 percent per year; the birthrate was 34.58 per 1,000 people, while the death rate was only 6.79 per 1,000.

HEALTH

Guatemalans have a life expectancy at birth of just a little over 65 years, while the infant mortality rate is high, at nearly 37 per 1,000 live births—an unsurprising figure in a nation where only 41 percent of births are attended by medical staff. Poor sanitation often leads to gastrointestinal disease, which accounts for over 23 percent of deaths. Malaria continues to be a major problem in coastal and low-lying areas. Spending on health care is only about \$93 per person per year. While high-quality medical care is available in the capital city, the rural areas go virtually without health care and rely instead on herbal remedies, magic, and prayer.

Health

Number of Physicians: 9,965
 Number of Dentists: 2,046
 Number of Nurses: 44,986
 Number of Pharmacists: —
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 90
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 36.91
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 240
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 4.8
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 93
 HIV Infected % of adults: 1.1
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 83
 Measles: 75
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 61
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 95

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Staples for most Guatemalans include corn made into tamales and tortillas, beans, rice, and bread. The more affluent can afford meats, and those along the coasts eat fish and seafood. The country grows a wide variety of vegetables: avocados, radishes, potatoes, squash, carrots, beets, onions, tomatoes, lettuce, green beans, broccoli, cauliflower, artichokes, and turnips. Fruits include pineapples, papayas, mangoes, melons, citrus, peaches, pears, plums, and guavas. The large meal of the day has traditionally been eaten at midday, though that custom is changing as traffic congestion makes it increasingly harder for people to get home for lunch and back to work in a timely manner.

Despite this rich array of foods, the state of nutrition is generally poor, especially for the six million people who live on less than \$2 a day. Some 90 percent of energy requirements come from beans, grains, and sugar, with little animal protein and few micronutrients. Among children under five years of age, 24 percent are underweight and 46 percent are stunted; in rural areas these numbers approach 70 percent.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 24.2
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,160
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 129.8
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 126.4

STATUS OF WOMEN

Guatemala signed the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1981 and made significant progress in the 1990s in implementing legal protection for women. However, although women have the right to vote, they are not prevalent in high-ranking corporate and government positions, and they earn considerably less than their male counterparts. As of 2004 women made up only 8 percent of parliamentary representatives, holding 13 seats out of 158. Domestic and other types of violence against women are widespread. Laws governing rape allow the perpetrator to be exonerated if he marries the victim, if she is over 12 years of age.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 8
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 0.86
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 38.7

WORK

Guatemala's labor force in 2004 was estimated at 3.84 million, with 50 percent employed in agriculture, 15 percent in industry, and 35 percent in services. The unemployment rate was 7.5 percent in 2003. Unions represent only 5 percent of the workforce. Ladinos tend to dominate in the professions, as well as among shopkeepers, government employees, and workers in industry, although some poorer ladinos provide seasonal labor in the fields. A large portion of the population, primarily Amerindians, makes its living through subsistence farming as well as through the sale of handicrafts and seasonal work on plantations. Plants that use imported materials and semiskilled labor to produce items such as clothing for export, called *maquilas*, provide relatively high wages for some Guatemalans.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 3,840,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 31.3
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 50
 Industry: 15
 Services: 35
 Unemployment %: 7.5

EDUCATION

The literacy rate is only 70.6 percent. While education is free and compulsory for 11 years, many rural residents cannot afford additional education, and many children must work to support their families rather than attend school. The wide variety of indigenous languages, and the lack of written communication in them, leaves Spanish as the only widespread language for formal education, which frequently results in the marginalization of indigenous oral traditions.

In the 1990s and early 2000s several small private universities opened, bringing the total in the country to nine. The largest university, with an enrollment of 90,000, is San Carlos University, founded in 1676.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 70.6
Male %: 78.0
Female %: 63.3
School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 9.1
First Level: Primary schools: 10,770
Teachers: 68,901
Students: 2,075,694
Student-Teacher Ratio: 30.1
Net Enrollment Ratio: 87.3
Second Level: Secondary Schools: 1,274
Teachers: 44,435
Students: 434,830
Student-Teacher Ratio: 13.7
Net Enrollment Ratio: 29.7
Third Level: Institutions: 5
Teachers: 4,033
Students: 111,739
Gross Enrollment Ratio: 9.3
Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: —

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The scientific community of Guatemala is based in the universities, the National Meteorological Agency, and the Academia de Geografía e Historia. Several research centers have been formed under the sponsorship of the Central American Common Market. One of these is the Central American Nutritional Research Center, headquartered in Guatemala City. Most scientific research is geared toward economic development, especially agriculture.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
High-Tech Exports \$million: 78.4
Patent Applications by Residents: 5

MEDIA

There are well over 100 radio stations, including 25 AM and 50 FM stations, in Guatemala City. There are six television stations, including two that are government owned, and seven major national newspapers, five distributed in the morning and two in the afternoon, including *Diario la hora* and *Prensa libre*.

Media

Daily Newspapers: —
Total Circulation 000: —
Circulation per 1,000: —
Books Published: —
Periodicals: —
Radio Receivers 000: —
per 1,000: —
Television sets 000: 680
per 1,000: 61

CULTURE

Guatemala's primary art forms are textiles and painting, though colorful pottery and wood carvings are also produced. Exhibits are held at the Instituto Guatemalteco-Americano and other galleries. The Patronato de Bellas Artes promotes the arts and the preservation of the nation's cultural heritage, including Mayan and Spanish art forms. The government has an agency similar to the National Endowment for the Arts in the United States. The National Symphony Orchestra and the National Ballet Company perform as finances allow. The Biannual Paiz Cultural Festival showcases the visual and performing arts, the latter at the modern National Theater complex. Guatemala's national musical instrument is the marimba.

The country is best known for its textiles. Each of the nation's ethnic groups preserves its cultural roots through native textiles and distinctive costumes, including the hand-woven blouses called *huipiles*. The Ixchel Museum, on the campus of Francisco Marroquin University, houses collections of indigenous textiles in an effort to protect this art form from the proliferation of machine-made goods.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 100
Volumes: 1,824,000
Registered borrowers: —
Museums Number: 18
Annual Attendance: 58,000
Cinema Gross Receipts: —
Number of Cinemas: —
Seating Capacity: —
Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Much of the folklore and mythology of Guatemala derives from Amerindian beliefs and those brought by Spanish conquerors. Mayans believed that shamans had the ability to predict the future and to influence natural forces that affect the fate of humans. Shamans were also healers and practiced herbal medicine. Many folk beliefs grew out of agricultural concerns. Before planting, for example, the seed was blessed. The night before planting, the men burned incense in the fields and sprinkled the ground with a concoction made of sugarcane, while the women prayed before candles, which the next morning were placed in the fields in the direction of the four winds. It was also believed that every person has a *nagual*, or animal totem. Tecún Umán was a heroic Quiché warrior who was killed by the Spaniard Pedro de Alvarado; his *nagual* was Guatemala's national bird, the quetzal.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Films are popular, and a number of theaters, especially in Guatemala City, offer recent U.S. films as well as films from Mexico, Italy, France, and Argentina. The 2,000-seat National Theater hosts plays, concerts, and dance performances and has been a stop on the tour for the Moscow Ballet, the National Ballet of Spain, and the Berlin Philharmonic. A widespread form of popular entertainment is the fiesta, with dancing, music, food, and fireworks. Almost every city and town has a marimba group that performs at social functions such as weddings. A lively arts community offers numerous exhibitions.

ETIQUETTE

In the past, Amerindians were expected to show deference to ladinos, but today a more egalitarian attitude prevails. Among the Mayans, children greet adults with their hands folded and bow; adults greet other adults by inquiring about the person's health and that of his or her family. Ladinos are physically more demonstrative. When women greet one another, embraces and kisses on the cheek are common; men will commonly kiss a new female acquaintance on one cheek. In public, Guatemalans are accustomed to giving one another less personal space than are Americans; when they converse, touching and patting are common. Almost all social events in Guatemala begin later than the scheduled time.

FAMILY LIFE

The nuclear family is the most common domestic unit, among both ladinos and Amerindians, although many

Amerindian households include the extended family. While some marriages are arranged, most spouses are freely chosen. Amerindians rarely marry outside their villages and linguistic group. Although the country is primarily Catholic, divorce is common, and many men keep mistresses. Among ladinos, children are raised by mothers, grandmothers, and nannies; Amerindian women tend to rely on older children to help raise the younger ones.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Personal appearance is an important indicator of caste or class. In the cities, ladino men in the professions and in business wear Western business suits, while women wear dresses with nylons and high-heeled shoes. Poorer ladinos often buy secondhand clothing from the United States. Indian men and women are more likely to wear traditional garb, and a person's village of origin can often be identified by the design of the cloth from which clothing is made. Among women, this includes long, colorful wraparound skirts and the *huipil*, a smock-style woven blouse. Also common are scarves and shawls. While many Amerindian men wear traditional clothing, including colorful pants, tunics, jackets, and straw hats, as a way of asserting cultural identity, many wear Western clothing, including cowboy boots and hats.

SPORTS

Guatemalans are passionate about soccer. National and international soccer matches are frequently held in Guatemala City's soccer stadium, the largest in Central America. On January 2, 2005, however, the world soccer federation banned all Guatemalan teams from international competition in response to the Guatemalan government's seizure of the country's soccer federation. Bicycle racing, car racing, baseball, and softball are increasing in popularity. Joggers and competitive runners can be seen around the city, and several organizations sponsor races. Although facilities are limited, bowling is also becoming popular.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1941** Guatemala declares war on Germany, Japan, and Italy.
- 1944** Jorge Ubico is forced out of office and an interim government is overthrown.
Juan José Arévalo is elected president, introducing laws that provide protection for workers and improve health care.
- 1945** A new constitution is written. Women are given the right to vote.

- 1950** Jacobo Arbenz is elected president.
- 1952** Arbenz introduces agrarian reform. The United Fruit Company and the U.S. government attempt to overthrow Arbenz's government.
- 1953** The government seizes the United Fruit Company lands, redistributing uncultivated land (400,000 acres) to peasants.
- 1954** The U.S. government publicly accuses Arbenz of Communism, while the CIA stages a coup and overthrows him, putting Col. Carlos Castillo Armas in power.
- 1957** Armas is assassinated. In the ensuing turmoil the military takes over and declares Guillermo Flores Avendaño president.
- 1962** A breakaway army faction initiates war with the military regime. The U.S. government sends Green Berets to the aid of the Guatemalan dictatorship. The M-13 and Rebel Armed Forces (FAR) guerrilla groups are formed.
- 1966** Julio César Méndez Montenegro becomes president. U.S. Special Forces launch a counterinsurgency campaign, led by Gen. Carlos Manuel Arana Osorio, killing 8,000. Right-wing death squads, such as the White Hand, appear.
- 1969** The U.S.-backed government wins over the guerrillas. Death squads continue to operate.
- 1970** General Arana Osorio becomes president and enforces order ruthlessly.
- 1976** An earthquake hits Guatemala, leaving 25,000 dead and more than 1 million homeless.
- 1977** The United States suspends all economic and military aid to Guatemala due to human rights violations.
- 1978** Gen. Fernando Romeo Lucas García is elected president.
- 1980** When the Committee for Peasant Unity (CUC) occupies the Spanish embassy to call attention to the plight of peasants, the government attacks the group, killing 39 protesters and several embassy staff members. Spain breaks diplomatic ties.
- 1982** General Efraín Ríos Montt comes to power. Civil patrols are instituted. Guerrilla organizations combine to become the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity (URNG).
- 1983** United States announces the resumption of arms sales to Guatemala, then suspends economic aid after two U.S. government officials are killed by the Guatemalan military.
- 1983** Ríos Montt is ousted in a coup. General Oscar Mejía Victores becomes president.
- 1984** The Guatemalan government writes a new constitution and schedules elections for 1985. The World Council of Indigenous Peoples accuses the Guatemalan government of genocide.
- 1985** The new constitution is promulgated. In national elections Christian Democrat Marco Vinicio Cerezo Arévalo wins 68.7 percent of the vote and the presidency, becoming the first civilian in the office in 15 years.
- 1987** The presidents of five Central American nations meet in Guatemala and sign a peace plan aimed at settling the conflicts in Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Guatemala. The government and URNG guerrillas meet in Spain to discuss peace initiatives.
- 1988** Costa Rica accuses Guatemala and the other three countries of violating the 1987 peace accord. Two coups are attempted, unsuccessfully. The military continues its bloodshed.
- 1989** URNG and the National Reconciliation Commission (NRC) begin talks in Oslo, Norway.
- 1990** The election campaign is marred by political violence. The United States suspends most military aid but continues to provide training.
- 1991** Jorge Serrano Elías is elected president in a runoff vote. The peace process, moderated by the United Nations, begins again. The United States releases \$50 million in funds. The Communities of Population in Resistance (CPR) demands recognition and protection.
- 1992** Activist Rigoberta Menchú receives Nobel Peace Prize.
- 1993** Serrano attempts to dissolve Congress and the Supreme Court. Serrano is ousted by Congress, which then elects Ramiro de León as president.
- 1995** The Accord on Indigenous Rights and Identity is signed.
- 1996** Álvaro Arzú is elected president. Peace treaty is signed. Pope John Paul II visits Guatemala.
- 1997** The National Civilian Police (PNC) is created in January.
- 1998** Congress passes a number of constitutional reforms in compliance with the 1996 peace treaty, including recognition of ethnic, cultural, and linguistic groups and allowing a civilian minister of defense. In October Hurricane Mitch hits Guatemala. Bishop Juan Gerardi is murdered two days after delivering the Catholic Church's report on

the Recovery of Historical Memory project (REHMI), which discussed responsibility for numerous human rights abuses during the civil war.

- 1999** The UN Historical Clarification Commission issues its report, citing widespread human rights abuses, genocide on the part of the Guatemalan military and government and the U.S. government, and deaths numbering 200,000 due to the 36-year civil war.
President Bill Clinton apologizes for the role of the United States during Guatemala's civil war.
- 2000** Alfonso Antonio Portillo Cabrera becomes president
- 2001** A sum of \$1.8 million in compensation is paid to the families of the 226 people killed by paramilitaries and soldiers in the village of Las Dos Erres in northern Guatemala in 1982.
- 2002** OAS sponsors talks to resolve the Guatemala-Belize border dispute.
- 2003** Óscar Berger wins a second term as president.
- 2004** Guatemalan government pays \$3.5 million to victims of the civil war and formally admits culpability in human rights crimes.

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OFFICIAL PUBLICATIONS

- Guatemala.** *Anuario estadística; Censos nacionales*, 2002, IX de población—IV de habitación

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Banco de Guatemala
<http://www.banguat.gob.gt/>
- U.S. Department of State Background Notes
<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/>

GUINEA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Guinea (République de Guinée)

ABBREVIATION

GN

CAPITAL

Conakry

HEAD OF STATE

President Lansana Conté (from 1984)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Cellou Dalein Diallo (from 2004)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Republic

POPULATION

9,467,866 (2005)

AREA

245,857 sq km (94,926 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Fulani (Peul), Malinke, Soussou

LANGUAGES

French (official), Peul, Arabic, national languages

RELIGIONS

Islam, animism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Guinea franc

NATIONAL FLAG

Tricolor of red, green, and yellow vertical stripes

NATIONAL EMBLEM

The principal elements of the national emblem are a dove with an olive branch; the elephant (the national animal); and the motto *Travail, justice, solidarité* (Work, justice, solidarity) on a scroll under a heraldic shield.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Liberty”

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year’s Day), May 1 (Labor Day), September 28 (Referendum Day), October 2 (Independence Day, National Day), November 1 (Army Day), various Christian festivals, including Assumption, Easter Monday, All Saints’ Day, and Christmas, various Islamic festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

October 2, 1958

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

December 23, 1990

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

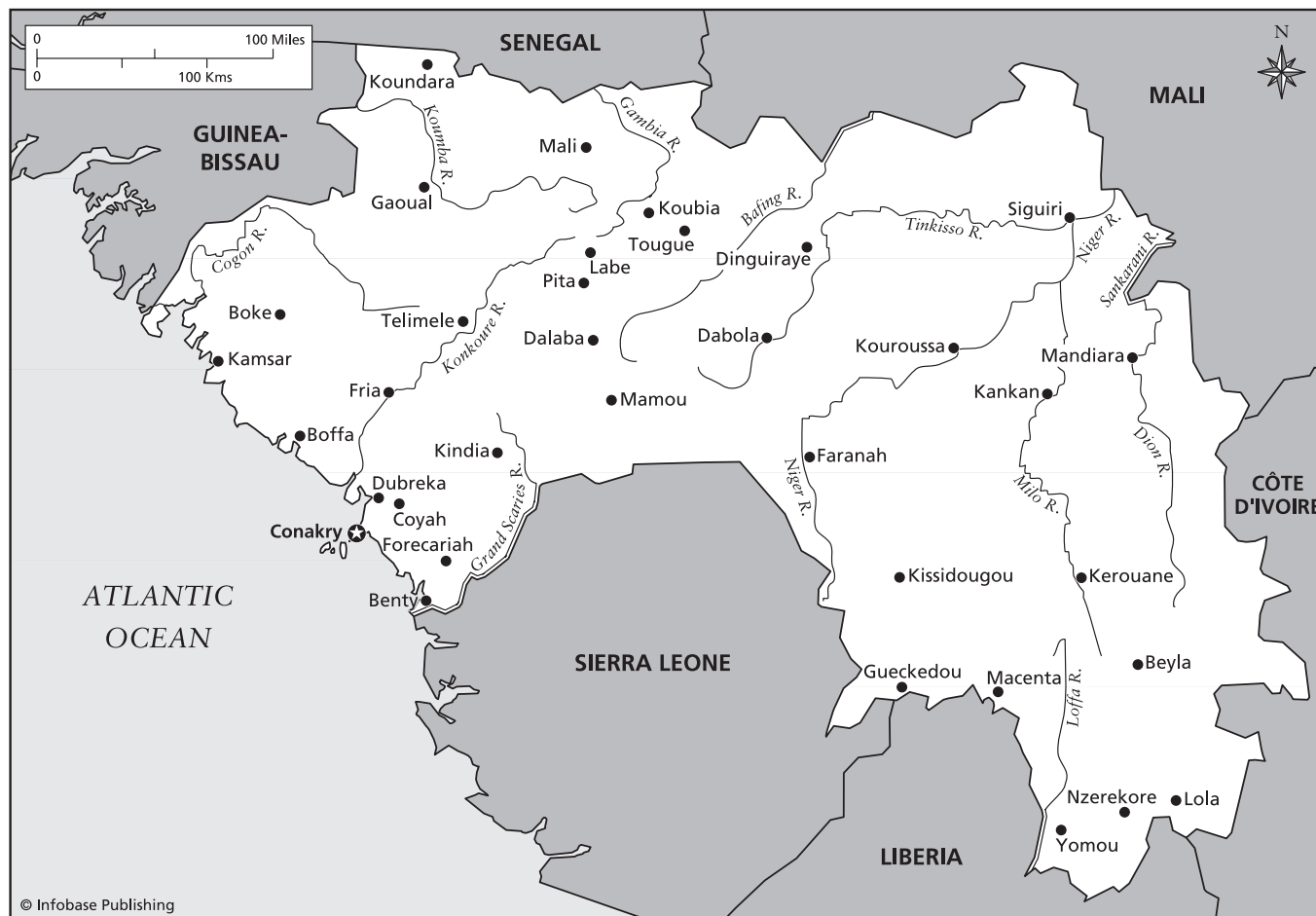
Guinea is located in southwestern West Africa, in an arc curving over Sierra Leone and Liberia. Guinea’s total land area of 245,857 sq km (94,925 sq mi) extends 831 km (516 mi) southeast to northwest and 493 km (306 mi) northeast to southwest. Its Atlantic coastline stretches 320 km (199 mi). Guinea’s total international land boundary of 3,399 km (2,112 mi) is shared with six countries: Guinea-Bissau (386 km; 240 mi), Senegal (330 km; 205 mi), Mali (858 km; 533 mi), Côte d’Ivoire (610 km; 379 mi), Liberia (563 km; 350 mi), and Sierra Leone (652 km; 405 mi).

Guinea’s varied terrain is divided topographically into four regions: Lower, or Maritime, Guinea; Middle Guinea, including the Fouta Djallon highlands; Upper

Guinea savannas; and the forest region of southeastern Guinea. Lower Guinea stretches from the coastal swamps across an alluvial plain, 50–90 km (30–55 mi) broad, crossed by winding tidal rivers. About 50 km (30 mi) inland the Kakoulima Massif rises to 1,124 m (3,688 ft). Lower Guinea also contains the Kaloum Peninsula; the island of Tombo, on which the capital, Conakry, stands; and the Los Islands.

Middle Guinea, formed by the Fouta Djallon Massif, consists of a stepped plateau with an average elevation of 900 m (3,000 ft), deeply cut in many places by narrow valleys. Upper Guinea, in the northeast, is a region of grassy plains and savannas. The forest region, in the southeast, reaches its highest elevation at Mt. Nimba (1,752 m; 5,747 ft). The forest region’s major feature is the Guinea

Guinea



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highlands, although areas around Beyla and Nzerekore consist of rolling plains once covered by rain forest.

Geography

Area sq km: 245,857; sq mi 94,926
 World Rank: 75th
 Land Boundaries, km: Guinea-Bissau 386, Côte d'Ivoire 610, Liberia 563, Mali 858, Senegal 330, Sierra Leone 652
 Coastline, km: 320
 Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Atlantic Ocean 0
 Highest: Mount Nimba 1,752
 Land Use %
 Arable Land: 3.6
 Permanent Crops: 2.6
 Forest: 28.2
 Other: 65.6

Population of Principal Cities (1996)

Conakry	1,092,936
Kankan	100,192
Nzerekore	107,329

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Guinea has a tropical climate with two distinct seasons. Although there are seasonal variations, the wet season generally lasts from April or May to October or November, with the heaviest rainfall during July and August. The dry season lasts from November to April. April is the hottest month.

Lower Guinea has an average rainfall of 2,400 mm (95 in) annually, although in some places, such as Conakry, the rainfall may exceed 4,300 mm (169 in) in most years. Toward the interior the rainfall diminishes in volume but is more evenly distributed. The average varies from 2,540 mm (100 in) in southern Fouta Djallon to 1,830 mm (72 in) in the savannas of Upper Guinea.

Temperatures and humidity are high. Conakry has an annual average maximum of 29°C (85°F) and an annual average minimum of 23°C (74°F). In Upper Guinea the temperature range is 18°C to 40°C (64°F to 104°F). Temperatures are lower in the Fouta Djallon region, with daily mean temperatures between 12.2°C (54°F) and 34.4°C (94°F) in the dry period and 18.3°C (65°F) and 26.7°C (80°F) in the wet period.

The prevailing wind systems are the southwestern monsoons and the northeastern harmattan, the latter a dry, scorching wind from the Sahara. Tornadoes and thunderstorms are common in coastal areas.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature

Conakry: 74°F to 85°F

Upper Guinea: 64°F to 104°F

Fouta Djallon: 54°F to 94°F (dry period), 65°F to 80°F (wet period)

Average Rainfall

Fouta Djallon: 100 in

Upper Guinea: 72 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Guinea is home to a wide variety of animals, including forest elephants, chimpanzees and monkeys, hippopotamuses, crocodiles and snakes, and many birds and insects. Many of these animals are endangered due to poaching and habitat loss. The eastern part of Guinea is covered in plants and forests, though they are not virgin forest. Years of logging, farming, and burning have resulted in a great deal of deforestation, which has worsened in recent years, as an improved road system makes it easier to transport logs out of the forest.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 9,467,866

World Rank: 83rd

Density per sq km: 32.2

% of annual growth (1999-2003): 2.2

Male %: 50.0

Female %: 50.0

Urban %: 28.9

Age Distribution %:	0-14:	44.4
	15-64:	52.4
	65 and over:	3.2

Population 2025: 16,165,000

Birth Rate per 1,000: 42.26

Death Rate per 1,000: 15.53

Rate of Natural Increase %: 2.7

Total Fertility Rate: 5.87

Expectation of Life (years): Males 48.45

Females 50.99

Marriage Rate per 1,000: —

Divorce Rate per 1,000: —

Average Size of Households: 4.7

Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Guinea has three main ethnic groups and numerous smaller groups. The Peul (also known as the Fulani,

Fulbe, or Foulah) account for about 40 percent of the population, the Malinke for 30 percent, and the Soussou for about 20 percent. The Soussou are most numerous in Lower Guinea, the Peul in Middle Guinea, and the Malinke in Upper Guinea. The smaller forest groups, including Gerz and Toma, together make up 10 percent of the population. Ethnic affiliations are fluid, however, and the smaller groups are subject to a constant process of assimilation within the larger ones. Though ethnic loyalties tend to be pervasive and persistent, ethnic differences are less crucial in Guinea than in most other African countries.

Since independence the government has sought to break down ethnic barriers and to de-ethnicize politics. The process of national integration has been accelerated by the fact that the tribal groups no longer have access to the traditional machinery of keeping alive historic cultural and emotional ties among their members. The government also has encouraged mixed marriages to build up a new community without clear-cut ethnic affiliations.

Non-Guineans living in Guinea include other West Africans and a scattering of Lebanese, French, and other Europeans.

LANGUAGES

Guinea has one official language, French, and eight major vernaculars: Peul, Malinke, Soussou, Kissi, Guerze, Toma, Coniagui, and Bassari. Because these vernaculars do not have their own scripts, they are transcribed into a modified Latin alphabet. Among Guinea's vernaculars, Baga, Landouma, Mmani, Nalou, Peul, Badyaranke, Kissi, Coniagui, and Bassari belong to the West Atlantic family of languages. Soussou, Mikhifore, Dialonke, Diakhanke, Malinke, Ouassoulounke, Guerze, Toma, Mano, Kono, Konianke, Kouranko, and Toma-Manian belong to the Mande family of languages. Of these, Soussou and Malinke serve as lingua francas over large areas. Peul, using Arabic script, has an extensive literature.

French is understood by about 20 percent of the literate population.

RELIGIONS

Guinea is a secular state, but Islam is the religion of the majority of the people, cutting across ethnic lines. Slightly more than one-third of the people adhere to traditional African beliefs, and fewer than 2 percent are Christian. Even within the frameworks of Islam and Christianity, traditional beliefs and practices have survived, if in modified forms. Islam is believed to be growing at the expense of other faiths; at the same time, in the process of being adopted by the majority of Guineans, Islam has assumed a specifically local quality.

The Christian community is primarily Catholic and is concentrated in Lower Guinea. The Roman Catholic Church in Guinea is presided over by the archbishop of Conakry and two bishops, at Kankan and N'Zérékoré.

Religious Affiliations	
Muslim	8,050,000
Christian	760,000
Indigenous Beliefs	660,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Most of Upper Guinea belonged to the Empire of Ghana at the height of its power in the 14th century. By the 17th century French, Portuguese, and British traders were competing with one another along the coast. Guinea was one of the centers of the slave trade, and the Guinea creeks along the deeply indented coast of the southern rivers afforded secluded hiding places for slavers harried by the ships of the Royal Navy. The Peace of Paris of 1814 affirmed French rights along the Guinea coast. In 1725 a jihad, or holy war, against the Malinke was declared in Fouta Djallon by the Muslim Fulani under the leadership of Kamamoko Alfa. Eventually, the Fulani of the Fouta Djallon became a united nation under Almany (Chief) Alfa of Timbo, who in 1881 accepted the protectorate of the French.

However, effective French colonial rule in Guinea did not begin until 1898, with the capture of the Malinke adventurer Samory Touré, who had overrun Upper Guinea by the late 1870s. Guinea was part of French West Africa until 1958, when it became the first and only state in francophone Africa to vote against the French Community concept proposed by President Charles de Gaulle.

French rule revolved around the central concept of assimilation as the instrument of a civilizing mission to extend France's language, institutions, laws, and customs to Africa. Under the influence of this concept, all existing political and legal institutions were dismantled and replaced by French ones with little or no modification. The process of Frenchification became counterproductive by the end of World War II, however, as it created a class of labor leaders and teachers deeply influenced by the French school of Marxism and hostile to all forms of colonialism.

On independence the break with France was complete and decisive. France showed its displeasure at Guinea's opting out of the French Community by suspending aid, withdrawing administrative personnel, and rescinding the favored-nation status of Guinean exports to France. Guinea retaliated by de-Westernizing education and administration. Relations between the two countries were suspended from 1965 to 1975. Anti-French feelings were very strong in the Ahmed Sékou Touré administration.

At independence on October 2, 1958, Touré, the leader of the dominant Parti Démocratique Guinée (PDG), became president. The following month he established the PDG as the sole party, eliminated all opposition, and instituted a program of economic and political centralization. In principle, Touré policies were directed toward building "scientific socialism," but in practice they were a reflection of party corruption and the president's desire to maintain power.

Touré's administration was dominated by political unrest and attempted coups, with Touré developing a siege mentality that resulted in the imprisonment, torture, and execution of those thought to oppose him. In 1970 Portuguese troops and dissident Guineans attempted an invasion. The coup failed, but in response Touré unleashed a reign of terror against all suspected enemies. In 1976 Touré's minister of justice, Diallo Telli, was arrested on charges of conspiracy against the government and executed while awaiting trial.

Touré died in March 1984 while undergoing heart surgery, and Prime Minister Lansana Beavogui assumed office as acting president. Several days later the military staged a successful coup, forming a Comité Militaire de Redressement National (CMRN). The committee installed Col. Lansana Conté as president and Col. Diarra Traoré as prime minister. The CMRN immediately acted to reduce political repression. It released more than 1,000 political prisoners, lifted censorship, and restored freedom of speech and internal travel. It also promised to liberalize the economy and to return property confiscated in Touré's drive toward centralization. As a result, some of the two million Guineans who had fled Touré's regime returned.

In the following months Conté consolidated his power by abolishing the office of prime minister and demoting Traoré to education minister. In 1985 Traoré led an unsuccessful coup that was crushed by troops loyal to Conté. Traoré was arrested and executed without trial.

Following the coup Conté continued to press for economic reform and the implementation of austerity programs demanded by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) before foreign aid would be granted. These measures, together with serious inflation, prompted civil unrest in 1988. The following year Conté promised a return to a two-party system and a transitional government, composed of military and civilians, that would oversee the transition to democracy.

After the failed coup of 1985 there were no significant challenges to President Conté's authority until the abortive military coup of 1996, when approximately 2,000 soldiers demonstrating for higher wages stormed the presidential palace and held Conté hostage. The president reached an agreement with the rebels, but shortly thereafter all the coup leaders were arrested. Conté was popularly elected for a five-year term in 1993 and again in 1998.

Conté is widely regarded as a dictator. In 2001 the people voted for a referendum that removed the two-term limit on presidents, which allowed him to run for president again in 2003. Though the opposition boycotted the election and the constitutional amendment was regarded as a coup to allow him to rule Guinea for the rest of his life, Conté won the election and is currently serving his third term as president. During 2004 Conté fired several unpopular ministers and appointed technocrats in their places.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1958–84 Ahmed Sékou Touré
 1984 Louis Lansana Beavogui
 1984– Lansana Conté

CONSTITUTION

From 1984 to 1990 Guinea was ruled by the 20-person Military Committee for National Redress (CMRN), led by Conté. In 1989 Conté promised a return to a two-party system as well as to the democratic election of the president and assembly after a transitional period, which would be supervised by a National Recovery Council, composed of military personnel and civilians.

In December 1990 a referendum was held on a new five-year transitional constitution. In October 1991 President Conté allowed for the formation of multiple political parties, and in December the ruling Transitional Council for National Recovery replaced the CMRN. The new constitution calls for a unicameral National Assembly, whose 114 members must be at least 25 years of age and serve five-year terms. The constitution also calls for the election of a president who serves a five-year term and appoints a prime minister to serve as head of government. Suffrage is universal at the age of 18. In November 2001 voters endorsed a constitutional amendment that extends the presidential term to seven years. The referendum was boycotted by the opposition.

Guinea's power is effectively concentrated in the strong president, who governs as assisted by civilian ministers he appoints himself. Most of Conté's appointees come from his Soussou ethnic group.

PARLIAMENT

The National Assembly was dissolved by the CMRN in April 1984. After several postponements by President Conté, the first assembly elections in a decade were held in June 1995. The ruling Party for Unity and Progress won 71 of the 114 seats in an election marred by fraud and boycott.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Political parties were illegal for Conté's first eight years of rule. In 1992 political parties were legalized by the government. More than 40 parties registered to participate in the 1995 elections. However, the ruling party, the Party for Unity and Progress (PUP), won 71 of the parliament's 114 seats. Opposition parties that won seats include the Democratic Party of Guinea–African Democratic Rally (PDG-RDA), the Democratic Party of Guinea (PDG-AST), the National Union for the Prosperity of Guinea (UNPG), the Party for Renewal and Progress (PRP), the Rally for the Guinean People (RPG), the Union for Progress of Guinea (UPG), the Union for a New Republic (UNR), and the National Union for Prosperity (UNP). These opposition parties have not been a unified voice in opposing the ruling Conté government. They generally do not have access to electronic media, and this hampers their ability to confront the leadership.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For administrative purposes Guinea is divided into four levels. At the apex are four regions corresponding to the four geographic regions: Lower Guinea, Middle Guinea, Upper Guinea, and the Forest Region, each headed by a minister delegate or super governor. At the next level are 33 prefectures, or administrative regions (*régions administratives*), each under the authority of a governor appointed by the president. Each administrative region has a popularly elected 40-member general council. The third tier is the district or subprefecture (*arrondissement administrative*), of which there are 175. The commandant, or the executive head, of a district is responsible to the governor of the administrative region. The basic village-level unit of government is the local revolutionary authority (*pouvoir révolutionnaire local*, PRL), numbering 7,800 and combining local administrative organs. Leaders at the lowest level are elected; the president appoints all others.

LEGAL SYSTEM

Despite frequent attempts to Guineanize the legal system, French commercial and civil codes have been retained almost intact. A new Penal Code was introduced in 1965 and a new Code of Criminal Procedure the following year.

The court system was reorganized in 1973; people's courts were created in villages and city wards and presided over by the mayors. The other two members of each of these courts are also elected party members. People's courts also exist at the *arrondissement* and administrative region levels, but only at the latter level are they headed

by magistrates. Criminal courts and courts of appeal are at Conakry and at the four regional headquarters. The seven members of these courts consist of three professional judges and four officials. At the apex of the court system is the Superior Court of Cassation, composed of three magistrates and two people's judges. Outside of the regular court system are the High Court of Justice, which hears cases concerning state security, and the Special Court, which tries crimes concerning external commerce.

Judges are known to be influenced by political concerns and external pressures.

HUMAN RIGHTS

In terms of political and civil rights, Guinea is classified as a partly free country.

A general amnesty of all Guinean exiles was declared in July 1977, and thousands of emigrants returned to Guinea. Immediately after the 1984 coup the military government released 250 political prisoners, mainly from Camp Boiro, the principal political detention center, and permitted reporters to describe the heinous conditions and practices, including standard tiny concrete cells and the "black diet" (total deprivation of food and water). The new military government invited Amnesty International to interview former political detainees in the early fall and signed an instrument of adherence by the Republic of Guinea to the Geneva Conventions of August 12, 1949 (plus additional protocols), on Civil and Political Rights. It also announced its intent to adhere to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

However, following Traoré's unsuccessful coup in 1985, the military began a purge of suspected followers. Traoré was executed immediately, and 60 other officers were sentenced to death following a secret trial.

As of 2004 external observers believed Guinea's human rights record to yet be poor. The government has severely restricted democracy by controlling elections and outlawing broadcast media. Members of the security forces have beaten, killed, arrested, imprisoned, and generally abused civilians without punishment from the government. Prison conditions have been deplorable. All essential freedoms have been limited, and the government has not respected privacy rights. Ethnic discrimination, discrimination and violence against women, child labor, child prostitution, and human trafficking have continued to be problems.

FOREIGN POLICY

President Lansana Conté has pursued a foreign policy that reversed the socialist directions of his predecessor, Ahmed Sékou Touré. Nevertheless, Guinea remains a

one-party state without broad support among Western nations. It also has a number of problems with neighbors, though relations have vastly improved since the 1970s.

The Liberian civil war placed Guinea at the front of the line of nations trying to restore peace in Liberia. The political and military volatility of Guinea's neighbor was underscored in 1995 by the cross-border incursions of Liberian rebel forces into Guinea. Since Charles Taylor of Liberia went into exile in 2003, relations between Guinea and Liberia have improved. The civil war in Sierra Leone also brought Guinea into the vortex of West African conflict. The border between the two countries was closed in 1998 after rebels from Sierra Leone attacked a town in Guinea. Relations with Mali also suffered after Guinean troops stormed into the Malian embassy at Conakry in search of a leader of the November 1996 military uprising against President Conté.

Guinea belongs to the United Nations and most of the relevant African treaty organizations, including the African Union and the Economic Organization of West African States (ECOWAS). It has gotten involved in diplomatic and military efforts with the aforementioned nations, sending peacekeeping troops and offering asylum to refugees. The United States has maintained close relations with Guinea, assisting the nation with economic development and various social and environmental programs. The United States also provides Guinea with funds for military training, language training, and humanitarian assistance. More than 100 Peace Corps volunteers work in the country, collaborating with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) on natural resources management, assisting with health education, and teaching in schools.

DEFENSE

Guinea's armed forces have four branches: army, navy, air force, and gendarmerie. There were about 12,000 soldiers serving in the armed forces in 2003, including fewer than 1,000 in each of the navy and air force and several thousand gendarmes. The gendarmerie and national police together handle internal security; they are infamous for oppressing the citizenry. The presidential guard in particular has wide latitude and is answerable only to the president himself. The chiefs of the various branches report to the chairman of the joint chiefs of staff, Colonel Kerfalla Camara. The president serves as commander in chief and also heads the Ministry of Defense, of which he took command in 2000.

Military manpower is provided by voluntary enlistment. A conscription law created by ordinance in 1959 makes all able-bodied male citizens liable for military service between the ages of 19 and 49, but it has never been enforced. Military personnel are liable for reserve duty after release.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 12,300
 Military Manpower Availability: 2,108,948
 Military Expenditures \$million: 58.5
 as % of GDP: 1.7
 as % of central government expenditures: —
 Arms Imports \$million: 5
 Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

Guinea possesses major mineral, hydropower, and agricultural resources yet remains a poor, underdeveloped nation. The agricultural sector employs 80 percent of the workforce; most people are engaged in subsistence agriculture, growing food to support themselves. Guinea possesses over 25 percent of the world's bauxite reserves and is the second largest bauxite producer. It also mines gold and diamonds. The mining sector accounted for about 75 percent of exports in 1999.

Long-term improvements in government fiscal arrangements, literacy, and the legal framework are needed if the country is to move out of poverty. For the most part the economy is market based, but the government controls the price of rice and other important commodities. Economic growth was slow in 2004, at only 3 percent, and foreign aid has declined. Donors are reluctant to contribute funds due to governmental corruption, the government's refusal to reform fiscal policies, and increased defense spending.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 19.02
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 2,100
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 3.1
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 0.9
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 24.9
 Industry: 38.2
 Services: 36.9
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 76
 Government Consumption: 7
 Gross Domestic Investment: 21.2
 Foreign Trade \$million: Exports: 726
 Imports: 646
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 2.6
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 32.0

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1990 = 100)

1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
181.9	190.0	203.1	214.0	220.2

Finance

National Currency: Guinean Franc (GNF)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = GNF 1,975.84

Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 681.2
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 16.25
 Total External Debt \$billion: 3.25
 Debt Service Ratio %: 10.73
 Balance of Payments \$million: –252
 International Reserves SDRs \$million: 169.6
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 14.8

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 237.5
 per capita \$: 30.00
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 79

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$million: 410.7
 Expenditures \$million: 708.5
 Budget Deficit \$million: 297.8
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 24.9
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 4.4
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 0.06
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 6.2
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 3.6
 Total Farmland % of land area: 3.7
 Livestock: Cattle million: 3.4
 Chickens million: 14
 Pigs 000: 67.5
 Sheep million: 1.07
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 12.2
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 104

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 138.6
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 3.2

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 37
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 418
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 51
 Net Energy Imports % of use: —
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: 195
 Production kW-hr billion: 0.79
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 0.74
 Coal Reserves tons billion: —
 Production tons million: —
 Consumption tons million: —
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
 Production cubic feet billion: —
 Consumption cubic feet billion: —

Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
 Production barrels 000 per day: —
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 8.7
 Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$million: 646
 Exports \$million: 726
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 2.0
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 2.6
 Balance of Trade \$million: –252

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
France %	16.8	9.2
China %	9.3	—
Belgium %	7.1	6.4
Italy %	6.6	—
Netherlands %	5.4	—
United Kingdom %	5.4	—
Côte d'Ivoire %	4.8	—
United States %	4.5	10.1
South Korea %	—	14.8
Spain %	—	10.7
Russia %	—	9.0
Ireland %	—	7.9
Germany %	—	5.6
Ukraine %	—	5.3

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 30,500
 Paved %: 16.5
 Automobiles: —
 Trucks and Buses: —
 Railroad: Track Length km: 837
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: —
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 3
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 5
 Airports: 16
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 94
 Length of Waterways km: 1,295

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 38
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 8.1
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 26

Communications

Telephones 000: 26.2
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.08
 Cellular Telephones 000: 111.5
 Personal Computers 000: 43
 Internet Hosts per million people: 40
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 4

ENVIRONMENT

Since 1985 the Republic of Guinea has tried to protect its considerable natural resources while promoting socio-economic development. While Guinea is not as ecologically diverse as many neighboring countries, the abundance of natural resources provides it with the means for sustainable development. Unfortunately, it does not appear that the nation will be able to avoid environmental destruction. Deforestation is already a big problem; forested areas are overpopulated, and the presence of refugees from other countries has made conservation impossible. Guinea has no national parks, and its plants and animals are dying as they lose their habitat to logging and cultivation or are hunted for meat. Some areas of the country are turning into desert. The soil has become contaminated in places, and erosion is occurring; poor mining practices are especially likely to damage the ground. The coastal waters have been overfished.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 28.2
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: –35
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 6
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 0.17

LIVING CONDITIONS

The cost of living in Guinea is relatively high. Electricity and water supplies are unreliable, and the country suffers frequent shortages of both. Food is expensive. Wages have not risen at the same rate as inflation. High fuel prices have sparked riots and protests. Most roads are unpaved. There are numerous navigable streams and rivers, though water levels sometimes fall too low to sustain boat traffic. Public transportation is by bus, minibus, and bush taxi and occasionally by riverboat or hydrofoil. Minibuses are usually crowded and fairly dangerous. Buses are slow and unreliable but cheap. There are no trains. Fewer than 30 percent of people live in cities. Only half the population has access to safe water.

HEALTH

Guinea's health infrastructure is primitive, and the country has many health problems. Diarrhea caused by unclean food and water occurs very frequently; typhoid fever and cholera are among the most serious gastrointestinal ailments. Malaria, dengue fever, yellow fever, sleeping sickness, filariasis, onchocerciasis, and leishmaniasis are all caused by insects. Hepatitis of all varieties is common. Life expectancy is about 49 years. The infant mortality

rate is 92 deaths per 1,000 live births, and some 40 percent of children die before their fifth birthdays. Fertility is high; women on average bear nearly six children. Contraceptive use is uncommon; only 4 percent of the population uses modern methods of preventing pregnancy. Only 3.2 percent of the population is infected with HIV; 9,000 people died of AIDS in 2003.

Health

Number of Physicians: 764
 Number of Dentists: 38
 Number of Nurses: 3,506
 Number of Pharmacists: 199
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 9.4
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 91.82
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 740
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 5.8
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 22
 HIV Infected % of adults: 3.2
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 45
 Measles: 52
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 13
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 51

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Food is fairly expensive. Occasional food shortages result in panic buying, followed by more shortages. Most people subsist on rice or cassava supplemented with vegetables and occasional meat, such as monkey. Malnutrition is not uncommon among the poorer people. Towns of all sizes have restaurants that sell meals of rice and sauce, or stalls selling grilled fish, peanuts, cake, and meat brochettes. The larger towns have more elaborate restaurants that serve slightly more formal food with meat, chicken, or potatoes. In Conakry people can buy fare more typical of Western nations, such as pizza and hamburgers. French cafés serve coffee with cake and other pastries.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 25.7
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,240
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 113.9
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 158.2

STATUS OF WOMEN

Women in Guinea have enjoyed special status as a result of the important political role they played prior to independence. Guinean women are represented in all professions, from civil engineering to the national police and armed forces, though they are typically paid less than men

in the same jobs. An Office of Women's Affairs has been established in the Ministry of Social Affairs. The majority of students enrolled in the National Medical College have been women. Women are still economically and socially constrained, however, and have been demanding better representation in government.

Women have been instrumental in bringing about peace between Guinea, Sierra Leone, and Liberia. The Mano River Union Women's Peace Network insisted that President Conté negotiate with Charles Taylor of Liberia. Men have been resistant to listening to women, but the women who have spoken out in support of peace have had some success.

The government's health-care policies have stressed prevention and child and mother care, but the quality of care has been low, owing to inadequate facilities and medical supplies. Women claim that men do not take responsibility for their share of reproductive health. Improvement of the national health sector is one of the CMRN's priorities. Violence against women is still common, and female genital mutilation is widespread.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 19
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: —
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: —

WORK

Most of the population—80 percent—works in agriculture, the majority growing food for themselves, especially rice and cassava. Many people sell their fruits, vegetables, palm oil, cloth, or yogurt at public markets and roadside stands, using small-scale trade to meet their needs. Bargaining is fierce. Those who produce cash crops grow coffee, palm kernels, bananas, pineapples, and sweet potatoes. Logging can also be profitable, though deforestation is limiting the viability of that trade. One-fifth of the workforce is employed in industry and services. Mining is one of the more lucrative industries, accounting for 75 percent of exports in 1999; bauxite mining is especially profitable. Most people are illiterate and thus unable to hold more technological jobs, which for the most part do not exist anyway.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 3,000,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 47.1
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 80
 Industry and Services: 20
 Unemployment %: —

EDUCATION

Guinea has introduced free, universal, and compulsory education for six years, from ages seven to 13. However, this requirement has had little effect on school enrollment rates, which remain low: 36 percent in the primary age group (five to 14) and 16 percent in the secondary age group (15 to 19), for a combined enrollment rate of 26 percent. Girls in particular are likely to be kept out of school to work. Schools do not have adequate supplies, and there are severe shortages of teachers. The national literacy rate is very low, at only about 36 percent; for women the rate is close to 22 percent.

Schooling consists of 12 years, as divided into six years of primary school, three years of the first cycle of secondary school, and three years of the second cycle of secondary school. French curricula and degrees have been retained, but under Touré history and social studies were Africanized. Primary studies are nonspecialized, and secondary studies consist of 40 percent general coursework, 20 percent vocational instruction, and 40 percent productive activities. The academic year runs from September to July. The medium of instruction is French, but eight vernaculars have been added to the curriculum below the fourth grade. Guinea has no university, but there are three institutions of higher learning, including two polytechnics and the Higher School of Administration.

The United States has been contributing money to Guinea's education system. In 2004 President George W. Bush's Africa Education Initiative gave 500,000 textbooks to schools. School attendance for the youngest students increased in 2002–03, giving the government cause for hope.

Education

Literacy Rate %:	35.9
Male %:	49.9
Female %:	21.9
School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling:	—
First Level: Primary schools:	3,237
Teachers:	23,859
Students:	1,073,458
Student-Teacher Ratio:	45.0
Net Enrollment Ratio:	65.5
Second Level: Secondary Schools:	—
Teachers:	—
Students:	301,491
Student-Teacher Ratio:	—
Net Enrollment Ratio:	20.8
Third Level: Institutions:	—
Teachers:	—
Students:	—
Gross Enrollment Ratio:	—
Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP:	1.9

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Guinea does not have an advanced technological infrastructure. Electricity is uncommon and unreliable and most people cannot read. There were only about 26,000 land telephone lines in use in 2003, though there were well over 100,000 cellular telephones. In 2004 there were about 300 Internet hosts, with 40,000 users.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people:	—
Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP:	—
High-Tech Exports \$million:	0.4
Patent Applications by Residents:	—

MEDIA

The state controls much of the media, including the nation's only daily newspaper and the radio and television stations. The government does not allow itself to be criticized and restricts coverage of the opposition. The government is allowed to censor publications. There are more than 10 private newspapers that do criticize the government, but the high cost of printing forces them to publish either weekly or even less frequently. The state-run television station is Radiodiffusion-Télévision Guinéenne (RTG); RTG also runs the state radio station, which broadcasts in French, English, and several local languages.

Media

Daily Newspapers:	—
Total Circulation 000:	—
Circulation per 1,000:	—
Books Published:	—
Periodicals:	—
Radio Receivers 000:	490
per 1,000:	52
Television sets 000:	343
per 1,000:	47

CULTURE

There is a great deal of traditional culture in Guinea. People still listen to traditional music, although modern music is becoming more popular. Musicians have been blending African musical styles with Western instruments. Guinea has a recording label called Syliphone, which has produced numerous recordings of various musical genres. The Malinké people produce little in the way of art, aside from some antelope carvings, unlike their neighbors in Mali.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
Volumes: —
Registered borrowers: —
Museums Number: 5
Annual Attendance: 21,000
Cinema Gross Receipts: —
Number of Cinemas: —
Seating Capacity: —
Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Many Guineans still hold their traditional animist beliefs and follow the rituals their ancestors have used for centuries. Most tribes have creation myths that feature gods who are unhappy with their human creations and try to destroy them in some way. Humans are left to take care of themselves, but they often attempt to build ladders to reach heaven and communicate with the deities. The gods who take an interest in earthly matters usually enjoy earthly activities themselves, such as hunting and drinking. The deities often use animals as a medium of communication with humans.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Guinea's cities have a spirited public life during both day and night. Street celebrations and public musical performances are common. Cafés and restaurants serve patrons strolling down the boulevards. Most of Guinea's big events are established by the Muslim calendar and include Ramadan and Tabaski. Outdoor recreational options include swimming at the beaches near Conakry and hiking in the interior.

ETIQUETTE

For the most part behavior is casual and people are friendly. People shopping in markets are expected to bargain for their purchases. Foreign visitors and wealthy locals are expected to tip about 10 percent in hotels, restaurants, and taxis. In Muslim areas, people act more modestly and follow Muslim practices.

FAMILY LIFE

Men and women are supposed to be equal in families, but in rural areas wives do not have the same freedoms as their husbands. Inheritance laws favor male heirs, putting pressure on women to bear sons. Women bear the burden of subsistence farming and raising children.

Many men still have more than one wife, though polygyny is illegal. When a divorce occurs, the man usually receives the lion's share of assets and the custody of children. Many girls marry at a very early age—as young as 11 years in some parts of the forest, although such marriages are illegal.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Most people dress in brightly colored cotton robes. Households grow indigo plants and use these to dye cloth themselves, often in bright patterns. Men often wear Western shirts and shorts or pants. Businessmen usually wear safari suits without ties. Women typically carry burdens on top of their heads.

SPORTS

Guineans enjoy sports of all kinds. Soccer is the favorite, but they also enjoy basketball, volleyball, running, and other sports. The government's Ministry of Youth and Sport oversees national sports programs for young people. Guinea has a good national soccer team, but the sport's international governing body, FIFA, banned the team from international competition in 2001 after Guinea's government refused to reinstate the national soccer association it had dissolved earlier that year.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1958** Republic of Guinea is proclaimed, as Guineans overwhelmingly reject the French Community in national referendum.
New constitution is promulgated.
- 1960** Guinea withdraws from the franc zone, establishes the Central Bank of the Republic of Guinea (Banque Centrale de la République de Guinée), and introduces the Guinean franc as the national currency.
- 1961** The Guinean school system is secularized and nationalized.
A teachers' union strike is put down, and the Soviet ambassador is expelled for alleged complicity in the strike.
- 1965** Diplomatic relations with France are suspended over French support for Guinean dissidents.
- 1966** The U.S. Peace Corps is expelled, and the American embassy in Conakry is attacked.
Kwame Nkrumah is named copresident of Guinea following his overthrow in Ghana.
- 1968** The "Cultural Revolution" is launched, and de-Westernization programs are intensified.
Sekou Touré is reelected president.

- 1969** Over 1,000 Guineans, including three cabinet ministers, are arrested in the so-called Labe Plot.
- 1970** Portuguese-backed Guinean dissidents mount a sea-borne invasion of Conakry. The invasion is foiled. In the aftermath of the invasion, mass purges are ordered by Touré. Nearly 10,000 are arrested, and over 100 are sentenced to death. Over 250 are convicted and sentenced to life imprisonment, including the Roman Catholic archbishop of Conakry.
- 1972** The office of the prime minister is created, and Louis Lansana Beavogui is named to the post. The syli is introduced as the national currency.
- 1973** Local revolutionary authority (*pouvoir révolutionnaire local*) is created as the basic unit of village-level administration.
- 1974** In extensive constitutional changes the PDG is elevated as the supreme state organ. Touré is reelected to a third seven-year term.
- 1978** At a meeting in Monrovia, Liberia, Guinea and five other nations—Senegal, Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, Togo, and Gambia—sign a treaty of non-aggression and mutual assistance. Touré meets with Leopold Senghor of Senegal and Félix Houphouët-Boigny of Côte d'Ivoire in a Summit of Reconciliation at Monrovia. Diplomatic relations with Senegal are reestablished. The country is renamed the Popular and Revolutionary Republic of Guinea.
- 1979** Private enterprise is legalized. Ten ministers are dismissed in a government reshuffle. In legislative elections, voters approve list of 210 candidates to the National Assembly. Touré visits the United States for the first time and meets with President Carter. Two hundred political prisoners are released, out of the more than 2,000 believed to be held in Guinean jails.
- 1984** President Touré dies. Before PDG names a successor, the army seizes power and installs the Military Committee for National Redress (CMRN), with Col. Lansana Conté as head. The CMRN dissolves the PDG, suspends the constitution and the National Assembly, and releases all political detainees.
- 1985** Diarra Traoré leads an unsuccessful coup. He is arrested and immediately executed.
- 1989** Conté promises a return to a two-party system.
- 1990** A new constitution authorizing the transitional government is adopted.
- 1992** Parliamentary elections are postponed twice by President Conté.
- 1993** Facing seven opponents, Conté is reelected president with 51 percent of the vote.
- 1995** Parliamentary elections are finally held after more than two years' delay. The ruling Party for Unity and Progress wins a majority of seats.
- 1996** Nearly a quarter of the military riots in the streets of Conakry, demanding higher pay and better working conditions. Thirty are killed, and the presidential palace is set ablaze in the melee. Conté dismisses his defense minister and negotiates with the protesters.
- 1998** Conté is reelected. Immediately thereafter Conté jails Alpha Condé, the leader of the opposition Guinean People's Rally (RPG), raising public criticism.
- 1999** Political unrest in Sierra Leone spills into Guinea.
- 2000** Sierra Leone militants again enter Guinea, some taking Guinean hostages.
- 2001** In a poll that is boycotted by the opposition, voters approve President Conté's proposal to extend the presidential term from five to seven years.
- 2002** Guinea, Sierra Leone, and Liberia agree on a plan to stop insurgency and secure borders.
- 2003** Conté wins a third term as president. Opposing parties boycott the election.
- 2004** Prime minister François Lonseny Fall resigns during visit to the United States. Cellou Dalein Diallo is appointed to the post.
- 2005** Alpha Gondé returns from exile.

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- Guinea.** Recensement général de la population et de l'habitat, février 1983. Vol. 1. Résultats définitifs

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- U.S. Department of State Background Note: Guinea
<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2824.htm>

GUINEA-BISSAU

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Guinea-Bissau (República da Guiné-Bissau)

ABBREVIATION

GW

CAPITALS

Bissau

HEAD OF STATE

President João Bernardo Vieira (from 2005)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Aristides Gomes (from 2005)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Democracy

POPULATION

1,416,027 (2005)

AREA

36,120 sq km (13,946 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Balanta, Fula, Manjaca, Mandinga, Papel

LANGUAGES

Portuguese (official), Crioulo

RELIGIONS

Animism, Islam

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Communauté financière d'Afrique franc (CFA franc)

NATIONAL FLAG

Three stripes two horizontal, yellow over green at the fly, and a red vertical at the hoist, with a black star in the center of the red stripe

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A green wreath on the left and right flanking a black star at the top and the national motto *Unidade, luta, progresso* (Unity, struggle, progress) and a yellow seashell at the bottom.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"This Is Our Well-Beloved Land"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day), January 20 (National Heroes' Day), March 8 (International Women's Day); May 1 (Labor Day), August 3 (Day of the Martyrs of Colonialism), September 24 (Independence Day), November 14 (Day of the New Order), December 25 (Christmas Day)

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

September 24, 1973 (de facto), September 10, 1974 (de jure)

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

May 16, 1984; amended 1991, 1993, 1996

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Guinea-Bissau is on the coast of West Africa and occupies a total land area of 36,120 sq km (13,946 sq mi), including land under water during high tides. The country extends 336 km (209 mi) north to south and 203 km (126 mi) east to west. Its Atlantic coastline stretches 398 km (247 mi). Guinea-Bissau shares its total international land boundary of 724 km (450 mi) with two countries: Senegal (338 km; 210 mi) and Guinea (386 km; 240 mi).

Guinea-Bissau consists of a mainland, the Bijagos Archipelago, and various coastal islands, such as Jeta,

Bolama, Melo, Pecixe, Bissau, Areicas, and Como. The Bijagos Archipelago consists of over 18 islands, among them Caravela, Caraxe, Formosa, Uno, Organo, Orangoziinho, Bubaque, and Roxa. The mainland relief consists of a coastal plain and a transition plateau forming the Planalto de Bafata in the center and the Planalto de Gabu abutting the Fouta Djallon. The highest elevation is 244 m (80 ft), in the southeast.

The country is drained by a number of meandering rivers flowing into the Atlantic through wide estuaries. The main rivers are Cacheu, also known as Farim for part of its course; the Mansoa; the Gêba; the Corubal;

Guinea-Bissau



the lower course of the Rio Grande; and on the southern border with Guinea, the Cacine. These rivers provide the principal means of transportation. Oceangoing vessels of shallow draught can reach most of the main towns, and flat-bottomed tugs and barges can reach smaller settlements, except those in the northeast.

Geography

Area sq km: 36,120; sq mi 13,946
 World Rank: 133rd
 Land Boundaries, km: Guinea 386, Senegal 338
 Coastline, km: 350
 Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Atlantic Ocean 0
 Highest: 300
 Land Use %
 Arable Land: 10.7
 Permanent Crops: 8.8
 Forest: 77.8
 Other: 2.7

Population of Principal Cities

Bissau 203,000

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Guinea-Bissau has a typical tropical climate with two seasons: a dry season from December to May and a rainy season from June to November. April and May are the hottest months; December and January are the coolest; August is the rainiest. Rainfall is abundant and exceeds 1,980 mm (78 in) in the north. The maximum temperature is 30°C (86°F), the minimum about 25°C (77°F). During the dry season the prevailing wind is the hot, dry harmattan blowing from the desert.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature: 77°F to 86°F
 Average Rainfall: 88 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Guinea-Bissau has a great diversity of animal and plant life. Mangroves and rain forests grow along the coast, while inland is savanna. Swamp estuaries are especially rich in plant and animal life. None of this area is protected, and all flora is endangered by overgrazing, soil erosion, and deforestation. Many fruit trees and cashew trees grow in the country. Animals that live in Guinea-Bissau include crocodiles, African buffalo, hippopotamuses, elephants, birds, lizards, and chimpanzees. The coastal areas are rich in fish, but overfishing is a problem.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 1,416,027
 World Rank: 146th
 Density per sq km: 53.0
 % of annual growth (1999-2003): 2.8
 Male %: 48.5
 Female %: 51.5
 Urban %: 33.9
 Age Distribution %: 0–14: 41.7
 15–64: 55.4
 65 and over: 2.9
 Population 2025: 2,047,000
 Birth Rate per 1,000: 38.03
 Death Rate per 1,000: 16.57
 Rate of Natural Increase %: 2.3
 Total Fertility Rate: 5.0
 Expectation of Life (years): Males 45.09
 Females 48.92
 Marriage Rate per 1,000: —
 Divorce Rate per 1,000: —
 Average Size of Households: 4.1
 Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Guineans may be broadly divided ethnically into mulattos, of mixed African and non-African backgrounds; *assimilados*, of Guinean stock; and *indigenas*, or Africans proper, who constitute 95 percent of the population. There are five principal African ethnic groups: the Balante of the central region (30 percent), the Fulani of the north (20 percent), the Malinke of the north-central region (13 percent), the Mandyako (14 percent), and the Pepel of the coastal area (7 percent). Most Africans are farmers who still hold to traditional animist beliefs.

The small foreign community consists mainly of Lebanese and Syrian traders and Cuban advisers, who have been temporarily assigned from Cuba to help in the reconstruction of the country. No Americans are known to reside permanently in the country.

LANGUAGES

The official language is Portuguese, but the lingua franca and trade language is Crioulo, an Africanized Portuguese patois. Most people speak the language of their ethnic group. Many people speak French.

RELIGIONS

Guinea-Bissau is a predominantly animist country, where over 50 percent of the population adheres to traditional religious beliefs. Some 45 percent of the population, mainly Malinke and Fulani tribesmen, are Muslim.

Christians account for less than 5 percent of the population, and their influence is marginal. There is an apostolic prefecture at Bissau.

Religious Affiliations	
Indigenous Beliefs	708,000
Muslim	637,000
Christian	71,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The earliest known inhabitants of Guinea-Bissau were the Baga, who came from the east. The Portuguese explorer Nuno Tristão arrived in the region in 1446 and established the first trading posts; he was followed by the French and British, who set up trading posts in the 17th and 18th centuries. The slave trade expanded in the 17th century, centering around the port of Bissau. British claims to the coastal region were dismissed by arbitration in 1870.

Guinea-Bissau was under Portuguese rule from 1879, when it was made a Portuguese dependency subordinate to Cape Verde, to 1974, when the country won its independence after a 17-year underground struggle. Guinea-Bissau was not a settler colony; Portuguese influence on the interior, which was not effectively occupied until 1920, was nominal. Guinea-Bissau became a Portuguese overseas province in 1951, but five years later a group of dissident Cape Verdeans founded an underground movement known as Partido Africano da Independência da Guiné e Cabo Verde (PAIGC), with Amílcar Cabral as secretary-general. The long struggle that followed took a heavy toll in men and material and undermined the Portuguese administrative apparatus. By 1973 PAIGC was in virtual control of the country, and its unilateral declaration of independence was accepted by the United Nations. When Portugal finally granted *de jure* independence in 1974, it represented not so much an act of statesmanship as one of capitulation.

At independence Luiz Cabral, the brother of Amílcar, became president. He was reelected in 1977, and João Bernardo Vieira was designated vice president; Vieira became prime minister the following year. PAIGC became the sole political party and was synonymous with the state. However, the armed forces would exercise decisive political influence.

In November 1980 Cabral was overthrown in a coup led by Vieira. Cabral was placed under house arrest and later exiled to Cuba. The coup stemmed from a long-standing struggle between the blacks of Guinea-Bissau and the mulattoes of Guinea-Bissau's sister republic, Cape Verde. Although both were Marxist-leaning countries and former Portuguese colonies, there were splits between the two because of racial animosity and the issue

of unification. Cabral was a mulatto from Cape Verde, and Vieira was a black from the mainland. A special party conference in 1981 legitimized the new regime and reaffirmed its socialist orientation.

Politics in Guinea-Bissau during the 1980s were characterized by instability, with frequent changes of ministers, constitutional amendments, and several attempted coups. In 1984 Prime Minister Victor Saúde Maria was dismissed, the office of prime minister abolished, and the presidency strengthened. The following year Paulo Correia, the first vice president and minister of justice, was accused of plotting a coup against Vieira. He was executed after a trial in 1986.

Beginning in 1983 Vieira initiated a plan of economic liberalization designed to reduce state controls over trade and the economy. In 1990 Guinea-Bissau began the process of becoming a multiparty state. In the country's first multiparty elections, held in 1992, President Vieira was reelected handily.

In May 1999 President Vieira was overthrown in a military coup led by Gen. Ansumane Mané. General Mané was appointed president of the National Assembly, and Malan Bacai Sanhá was named president. In January 2000 runoff elections, Kumba Yalá of the Social Renewal Party was elected president with a 72 percent electoral majority. After an uneasy coalition government with the former military junta was established briefly, in November 2000 General Mané and eight of his supporters were killed in a clash with government forces. President Yalá worked to continue to establish civilian control of the government.

The economic and political situation in Guinea-Bissau failed to improve in the early 2000s, and many people blamed Yalá. Yalá himself appeared increasingly unstable and erratic. He dismissed foreign minister Antonieta Rosa Gomes for criticizing him, fired prime minister Faustino Imbali for failing to meet expectations, and claimed that the army was trying to stage a coup in 2001. In late 2002, after continuing disagreements with his prime minister, Yalá announced his intention to dissolve parliament and hold early elections. The following September 14 the military ousted him in a bloodless coup.

The new civilian administration was sworn in on September 28, 2003. The new interim leaders were president Henrique Rosa and prime minister António Artur Sanhá. Political and military leaders agreed to hold new elections. The following March the PAIGC once again won a majority of legislative seats. President Rosa appointed a new prime minister, Carlos Gomes Júnior, on May 9. In July 2005, Vieira, who had returned from exile a few months earlier, won presidential election.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1973–80 Luís de Almeida Cabral (chairman of the Council of State)

1980–84	João Bernardo Vieira (chairman of the Council of the Revolution)
1984	Carmen Pereira (president of the National People's Assembly)
1984–94	João Bernardo Vieira (chairman of the Council of State)
1994–99	João Bernardo Vieira (president)
1999	Ansumane Mané (commander of the military junta)
1999–2000	Malam Bacai Sanhá (acting president)
2000–03	Kumba Yalá (president)
2003	Veríssimo Correia Seabra (interim president)
2003–2005	Henrique Rosa (interim president)
2005	João Bernardo Vieira (president)

CONSTITUTION

The Republic of Guinea-Bissau returned to a form of constitutional government in 1984. Under the May 1984 constitution the African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (PAIGC) was “the guiding political force of Guinea-Bissau society and the state.” The constitution established a 15-member Council of State headed by President Vieira. All powers remained concentrated in the hands of the president, whose legitimacy came from a nomination by the PAIGC general congress. Elections at the district, regional, and national levels were controlled by the party. In 1991 a multiparty system was approved, and the constitution was amended several times, in 1991, 1993, and 1996. Legislative power is now vested in the National People's Assembly, whose 102 members are directly elected to four-year terms. The legislature elects the Council of State and its prime minister, who heads the government. The country's first multiparty elections were held in 1994.

PARLIAMENT

The national legislature is the National People's Assembly, a unicameral body of 102 members elected or appointed for terms of four years. The assembly meets at least once a year. The most recent election was held in 2004.

The constitution provides for universal adult suffrage over 18. The country's first multiparty election was held in January 1994.

POLITICAL PARTIES

The country has more than 10 active political parties. The largest political party is the Partido Africano da Independência da Guiné e Cabo Verde (PAIGC), which was founded in 1956 and was the ruling party of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde up until the coup in 1980 and a leading

institution until the November 1999 elections. Resistência da Guiné-Bissau–Movimento Bah-Fatah was formed in 1986 as a party in exile and continues to operate outside the country, with offices in Paris, France. The Partido para a Renovação Social (PRS) is a social democratic party formed in 1992. União para a Mudança is a coalition party that sought to challenge the ruling party in the 1995 elections. Frente de Luta para a Libertação da Guiné is an external opposition party that was founded in 1962 but did not become legally registered until 1992. The remaining parties have historically accounted for less than 10 percent of the vote. In 1999 the PRS won 38 of 102 National Assembly seats, ending 26 years of domination by the PAIGC. In the 2004 legislative elections the PAIGC once again dominated, winning 45 of the 102 seats.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For purposes of local administration, Guinea-Bissau is divided into three provinces, each subdivided into regions, sectors, and villages. Party committees are organized at each level. The nine regions are Bafata, Biombo, Bissau, Bolama, Cacheu, Gabu, Oio, Quinara, and Tombali; there has been talk of changing the name of Bolama to Bolama/Bijagos. Each region has a regional council, consisting of elected representatives from its sectors. There are sector state committees at the sectoral level. The lowest unit of administration is the *tabanca* (village). In addition, there are nine municipalities also administered by party committees.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The judicial system is headed by the Supreme Court, which is led by nine justices appointed by the president. The Supreme Court is the final court of appeals for both criminal and civil cases. Each of the nation's nine regions has its own regional court, which is the first level of appeal for sectoral court decisions and which serves as a trial court for all civil cases valued at over \$1,000 and all felony criminal cases. The nation's 24 sectoral courts hear misdemeanor criminal cases and civil cases under \$1,000. Sectoral court judges do not have to be trained lawyers.

The judiciary is known to be influenced by the desires and money of politicians. There is no published civil or criminal code. Habeas corpus based on the Portuguese penal code exists in urban areas but is generally not observed in rural areas, where traditional law prevails. There are no bail procedures. In rural areas nonpolitical offenders in other than the most important criminal and civil cases are often tried outside the formal court system, under traditional law. The private practice of law is prohibited. Defendants are assigned legal assistants from the Ministry of Justice when available. The interval between arrest and trial may be lengthy.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Guinea-Bissau has a bad human rights record with many violations. The army and police tend to abuse people, beating, harassing, and arbitrarily imprisoning their enemies. Rebel forces have looted, robbed, beaten, and otherwise assaulted civilians. Occasional killings are the rule, and the government never punishes its armed forces for abuses. Prison conditions are bad, and the government often holds prisoners without allowing them any communication. The judicial system is notoriously corrupt. Violence against women is common, as is female genital mutilation. Child labor and child slavery occur, and the army is known to recruit child soldiers. The government has interfered with journalistic freedom and the privacy rights of ordinary citizens.

On the positive side, elections are for the most part free and fair, and citizens are permitted to vote.

FOREIGN POLICY

Guinea-Bissau maintains a nonaligned foreign policy. It is a member of the United Nations and various other international groups, including the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the World Health Organization (WHO) as well as many African organizations. Guinea-Bissau has abandoned its earlier orientation toward the former Communist bloc in favor of better relations with Portugal and other Western nations. A border dispute with neighboring Senegal led to clashes in 1990 and to the Senegalese bombing of a Guinea-Bissau border village in 1995. Both countries agreed to abandon hostilities and signed an agreement to share equally in offshore mineral and energy resources. In recent years Cape Verde has drifted away from its original links with Guinea-Bissau, which were prominent during the common liberation struggle. The eventual merger of the two countries mentioned in the 1984 constitution now appears impossible.

The United States broke off relations with Guinea-Bissau in 1998 and currently has no diplomatic representation there. The Peace Corps withdrew at the same time. Numerous other countries still maintain embassies in the country or conduct negotiations with Guinea-Bissau through their embassies in Senegal.

The United States has nevertheless provided aid to Guinea-Bissau since it declared independence, since 1998 furnishing over \$800,000 for the purpose of removing land mines, \$1.6 million in food aid, and \$3 million for state building. Before 1998 the United States also provided educational and military aid.

DEFENSE

The Guinean armed forces, known as the People's Revolutionary Armed Forces (FARP), are headed by the pres-

ident, and the line of command runs through the state commissioner for the armed forces. The FARP is manned mainly by Balanta and Nalu tribesmen. The nation spent 2.8 percent of its gross domestic product (GDP), or \$8.4 million, on the military in 2003. Guinea-Bissau has a defense treaty with Senegal, apparently directed against Guinea, which claims two of the Piolu Islands in southwestern Guinea-Bissau.

The Ministry of the Interior maintains a police force that is charged with handling internal security, but it lacks funds and training and so is ineffectual.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 14,200
 Military Manpower Availability: 326,864
 Military Expenditures \$million: 8.4
 as % of GDP: 2.8
 as % of central government expenditures: —
 Arms Imports \$million: —
 Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

Guinea-Bissau is one of the 10 poorest countries in the world. Per capita income was only \$800 in 2003, and the economy suffered a 7 percent decline in 2004. External debts and very high unemployment have made it difficult for the nation to revive its economy from the slump it suffered during the war in the late 1990s. In particular, the nation has been unable to repair the damage done to infrastructure during fighting. The population supports itself through fishing and subsistence farming. Cashews have become the major cash crop, and Guinea-Bissau is now sixth in the world in cashew production. Other exports include fish, timber, peanuts, and palm kernels. There are unexploited oil reserves off the coast, but the country has not yet had the financial ability to exploit those and other mineral resources. Income distribution is extremely unequal, with most of the nation's money in the hands of very few people. The government has not managed to implement a coherent economic policy, and prospects for economic growth in the near future are not good.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 1.063
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 800
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 1.8
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: –1.0
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 62
 Industry: 12
 Services: 26

(continues)

Principal Economic Indicators (continued)

Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 95
 Government Consumption: 13
 Gross Domestic Investment: —
 Foreign Trade \$million: Exports: 54
 Imports: 104
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 0.5
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 42.4
 CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
239.4	234.5	254.7	262.8	265.2

Finance

National Currency: CFA Franc (XOF)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = XOF 581.2
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 85
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 4.5
 Total External Debt \$million: 941.5
 Debt Service Ratio %: 9.43
 Balance of Payments \$million: —
 International Reserves SDRs \$million: 102.3
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 4.0

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 145.2
 per capita \$: 97.50
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 2.07

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$billion: —
 Expenditures \$billion: —
 Budget Deficit \$million: —
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 62
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 3.8
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 0.01
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 3.1
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 8
 Total Farmland % of land area: 10.7
 Livestock: Cattle million: 0.52
 Chickens million: 1.55
 Pigs 000: 360
 Sheep 000: 290
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters 000: 592
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 5

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 22.87
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 2.6

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: —
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 91
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 64
 Net Energy Imports % of use: —
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: 11
 Production kW-hr million: 60
 Consumption kW-hr million: 50
 Coal Reserves tons billion: —
 Production tons million: —
 Consumption tons million: —
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
 Production cubic feet billion: —
 Consumption cubic feet billion: —
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
 Production barrels 000 per day: —
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 2.6
 Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$million: 104
 Exports \$million: 54
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 20.1
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 7.4
 Balance of Trade \$million: —

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Senegal %	18.1	—
India %	14.6	76.8
Portugal %	14.6	—
China %	9.7	—
Italy %	9.0	5.1
Spain %	4.9	—
Nigeria %	—	12.1

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 4,400
 Paved %: 10.3
 Automobiles: —
 Trucks and Buses: —
 Railroad: Track Length km: —
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: —
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: —
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: —
 Airports: 28
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 10
 Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 8
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: —
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 6

Communications

Telephones 000: 10.6
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones 000: 1.3
 Personal Computers 000: —
 Internet Hosts per million people: 1.4
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 13

ENVIRONMENT

Guinea-Bissau is a country nearly completely dependent on its natural resources for survival. However, it faces a number of environmental challenges, including deforestation, soil degradation because of poor farming techniques, water contamination, and coastal degradation. The country suffers from extensive brushfires, which burn large portions of its forests each year. In recent years agricultural areas have suffered from droughts, which have increased soil erosion and concerns over water quality and access. The coastal waters have been overfished.

The low-lying coastal areas flood frequently; flood waters occasionally cover as much as one-third of the country. Rice farming in these areas is destroying the native mangrove swamps, while peanut farming is depleting the soil of nutrients.

The nation is party to several environmental treaties, including treaties on climate change, biodiversity, endangered species, wetlands, desertification, and the Law of the Sea. Guinea-Bissau has designated several national parks, including the Bolama-Bijagos Biosphere Reserve, the Cacheu Natural Park, the Cantanhez Natural Park, and the Cafada Natural Park.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 77.8
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: -22
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: —
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 0.19

LIVING CONDITIONS

Living conditions are for the most part very poor. Most people are subsistence farmers and live in primitive conditions. There are some good hotels, restaurants, and houses, but these are available only to the wealthiest people and visiting foreigners. Most people use cash for financial transactions; credit cards are uncommon, as are banks. Roads are mostly unpaved and become impassible during the rainy season. During wet months canoes and boats are often better transportation options. There are no bridges, so any river crossing involves a ferry or boat, such as a motor-canoe. Few people own automobiles.

Public transportation consists of bush taxis, minibuses, and trucks. There are no internal flights.

Some areas of the country are still plagued by fighting and are quite dangerous; muggings and landmine injuries occur frequently. This problem is especially bad near the Senegalese border.

HEALTH

Guinea-Bissau has major health problems. The infant mortality rate is 109 deaths per 1,000 live births. On average, each woman has five children. Life expectancy is only 47 years. Some 10 percent of the population is infected with HIV. Tropical diseases such as cholera, malaria, typhoid, yellow fever, schistosomiasis, and hepatitis A are endemic. Less than 60 percent the population has safe water to drink. There are very few doctors, and medical facilities are few and far between.

Health

Number of Physicians: 203
 Number of Dentists: 11
 Number of Nurses: 1,340
 Number of Pharmacists: 12
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 17
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 108.72
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 1,100
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 6.3
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 9
 HIV Infected % of adults: 10.0
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 50
 Measles: 47
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 34
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 59

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Most people survive on domestically grown rice, Guinea-Bissau's main subsistence crop. To this rice people add vegetables and occasionally meat; monkey meat is common, though people also eat beef and goat. Within the city of Bissau, there are numerous restaurants, especially seafood restaurants and French-influenced patisseries. Almost all soft drinks and beers are imported. Local alcoholic beverages include palm wine, rum, and cashew rum.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 129.6
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 58.0

STATUS OF WOMEN

The Constitution prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex, race, and religion. However, in practice discrimination persists. The National Women's Movement is active nationally. Women hold some senior government and party positions. The president of the National Assembly and the mayor of Bissau were both women in 1999. Political activity by women is officially encouraged at all levels. By statute, party organizations must have a stated proportion of women officeholders. Official discrimination against women in the modern sector of society does not take place.

In most rural sectors, however, traditional male-dominant sociological practices prevail, imposing attendant limitations on women. Physical violence, including beating, is an accepted means of settling disputes. There is no government agency or mechanism to report rape or other domestic abuse. Female genital mutilation is a widespread practice.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 14
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: —
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: —

WORK

Guinea-Bissau suffers from high unemployment and an extremely low per capita income. The vast majority of people—82 percent—work in agriculture, most of them subsistence farmers, growing food to support their families and not to sell. Some people work growing cash crops such as cashews or as fishermen. The remainder of the workforce is employed by the government, industry, services, and commerce.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 480,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 40.7
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 82
 Other: 18
 Unemployment %: —

EDUCATION

The national adult literacy rate is 42.4 percent (58.1 percent for males and 27.4 percent for females).

Guinea-Bissau has introduced universal, free, and compulsory education, in principle, from ages seven to

13. Schooling consists of 11 years, as divided into six years for the basic first cycle, three years for the basic second cycle, and two years for the secondary cycle. The curriculum has been completely Africanized, but shortages of textbooks and educational materials plague the system. The academic year runs from October to July. The medium of instruction is Portuguese.

In 1985 there were 3,910 teachers, as compared to 30 in 1962; by 2000 there were over 4,600. Mass literacy campaigns have been launched by the PAIGC youth organization, Juventude Africana Amilcar Cabral (JAAC). The United States previously helped the nation with education but since withdrawing diplomatic relations in 1998 has not provided as much assistance.

Guinea-Bissau has no institution of higher learning.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 45.4
 Male %: 58.1
 Female %: 27.4
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 5.5
 First Level: Primary schools: —
 Teachers: 3,405
 Students: 150,041
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 44.1
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 45.2
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: —
 Teachers: 1,226
 Students: 24,911
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 21.0
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 8.8
 Third Level: Institutions: —
 Teachers: 31
 Students: 463
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 0.39
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 2.1

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Guinea-Bissau is not technologically advanced. Its electricity consumption is low. In 2003 there were slightly over 10,000 telephone lines in use, and there were only 1,300 cellular telephones. Internet use is still quite low.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: —
 Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

Under President Kumba Yalá the media was seriously oppressed; journalists were imprisoned, and RTP Africa, the Portuguese broadcaster, was taken off the air. Since

Kumba Yalá's overthrow in 2003 the media has been rejuvenated.

Nô pintcha is the state-run newspaper. It was founded in 1990 and is published in Portuguese. Private newspapers include *Correio de Bissau*, *Fraskera*, and *Banobero*. Finances are tight at private newspapers because they must use the expensive state-run printing house. As of 2004 the government did not appear to be interfering excessively with the private newspapers.

Radiodifusão Nacional, the official station, broadcasts in shortwave, medium-wave, and FM. The domestic program is on the air for about 15 hours a day. Private radio stations are now allowed to broadcast as well. The country's only television station is Radio Televisão de Guinea Bissau (RTGB), although the Portuguese-managed RTP Africa, launched in 1997, does broadcast some programs.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 1
 Total Circulation 000: 6.2
 Circulation per 1,000: 4.8
 Books Published: —
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers 000: 252
 per 1,000: 178
 Television sets 000: —
 per 1,000: —

CULTURE

Bissau's biggest cultural event is its carnival, which lasts for several days each February and involves the wearing of masks and costumes, dancing, and parades. Ramadan and Tabaski are the most important Muslim events. The nation's ethnic groups hold their own annual holidays.

Traditional music has much in common with the music of Gambia and Senegal. Typical instruments include the *kora*, a kind of harp made from a gourd covered with cowhide and strung with 21 fishing lines, and the *balafon*, a kind of xylophone. Dances are frenetic. Musical performers are called *griots*; they sing and tell stories and histories in verse. One of the most popular musicians in the country is Kaba Mané. Guinea-Bissau also has modern music that blends traditional styles with Portuguese and Spanish music. Salsa is popular.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

The majority of Guinea-Bissau's people hold traditional animistic beliefs, which vary by ethnic group and tribe. Many of these old traditions are displayed annually at the Bissau carnival, though people in the city tend to put aside tradition for the rest of the year. The Bjango people on the islands are notable for maintaining their traditional practices year-round. They conduct farming and initiation rituals in the presence of statues of the spirit Iran, who wears a top hat. During their rituals people wear elaborately carved animal masks, including representations of sawfish, sharks, bulls with real horns, and hippos so big the masks have attached legs.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

The city of Bissau is the country's center for nightlife and urban culture. There are some historical sights for interested tourists; the Centro Artístico Juvenil, where local young people make arts and crafts; and two markets that sell fruit, crafts, and Senegalese-style clothing. There are also restaurants and nightclubs for people with the money to pay for them. Bicycling, swimming, hiking, and deep-sea fishing are popular pastimes.

ETIQUETTE

For the most part, behavior is casual. Businessmen usually wear safari suits without ties. Foreign visitors and wealthy locals are expected to tip about 10 percent in hotels, restaurants, and taxis. In Muslim areas people act more modestly and follow Muslim practices. It is a good idea to ask permission before photographing anything or anyone.

FAMILY LIFE

Many people follow traditional practices of arranging marriages. Parents meet with each other several times to negotiate marriage agreements, bringing gifts of local alcohol. Wedding ceremonies are accompanied by rituals and dancing, and after the marriage the bride undergoes a ritual washing that involves all the women in the village; all men must leave while this happens. The minimum age for marriage is 14 for girls and 16 for boys. Most women have many children—five is the average—but the infant mortality rate is high.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

People wear casual clothing. Many people dress in a style similar to that of neighboring Senegal. Lightweight cot-

ton clothing is most common because of the hot weather. Modest attire is the rule in Muslim areas.

SPORTS

Guinea-Bissau does not have the money to fund many professional athletes, though it does have a national Olympic committee in Bissau.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1956** African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (PAIGC) is founded.
- 1973** PAIGC secretary-general Amilcar Cabral is assassinated. Aristides Pereira takes over leadership of the movement.
PAIGC unilaterally proclaims the establishment of the Republic of Guinea-Bissau.
United Nations welcomes the proclamation, by 97 votes to 30.
New nation adopts a constitution for itself.
- 1974** Military coup in Portugal is followed by cease-fire in Guinea-Bissau, ending 17-year insurrection. Negotiations follow with rebel leaders. By formal agreement Portugal acknowledges independence of Guinea-Bissau and withdraws all Portuguese troops from the territory.
- 1975** Aid agreements are signed with Portugal, France, the Soviet Union, China, Senegal, and other countries.
National People's Assembly passes legislation nationalizing most lands and domestic and foreign trade.
- 1976** Protocol is signed with Cape Verde providing for the integration of the judicial systems of the two countries as a prelude to political union.
- 1977** Guinea-Bissau attends France-Africa summit in Dakar, Senegal.
- 1980** President Cabral is ousted in a coup led by Prime Minister (Principal Commissioner) João Bernardo Vieira.
New Revolutionary Council is set up.
Relations with Cape Verde are broken, and the foreseeable prospect of a union between the two countries is shattered.
- 1984** A new constitution is promulgated, suspending the military administration.
President Vieira is elected as president for a five-year term.
Prime Minister Victor Saúde Maria is ousted along with other left-wingers in the cabinet.
- 1985** Col. Paulo Alexandre Nunes Correia and a number of other prominent military and civilian officials are accused of attempting to overthrow the government.

- 1986** Correia and five of his associates are executed.
- 1990** Vieira announces movement toward a multiparty system.
- 1991** Government officially legalizes opposition political parties.
- 1994** Vieira defeats seven opponents to retain the presidency of the country.
- 1997** Vieira is reelected prime minister.
- 1998** Former army chief of staff Ansumane Mané attempts to overthrow the government led by Vieira. United States withdraws embassy staff and ends diplomatic relations.
- 1999** The country again erupts into civil war.
- 2000** In national elections the Party for Social Renewal (PRS) defeats PAIGC. In presidential elections, Kumba Yalá of the PRS defeats incumbent Malan Bacai Sanhá. Alamara Nhassé is named prime minister. Mané is killed, allegedly trying to stage a coup against Yala.
- 2001** World Bank suspends aid, claiming that millions of dollars from development funds have disappeared under Guinea-Bissau's watch. Yalá behaves erratically, sparking concern. Foreign minister Rosa Gomes is dismissed for criticizing Yalá's behavior. Army is accused of attempting a coup.
- 2002** Yalá announces plan to dissolve parliament and hold early elections.
- 2003** Yalá is ousted in military coup. Interim president Henrique Rosa and interim prime minister António Artur Sanhá are sworn in.
- 2004** PAIGC once again gains majority in parliament. Soldiers mutiny, demanding payment of outstanding wages, and kill head of armed forces. Carlos Gomes Júnior is sworn in as prime minister.
- 2005** Vieira returns from exile and wins presidential elections.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

The Embassy of the Republic of Guinea-Bissau in Washington, D.C., is closed. Guinea-Bissau's representative in the United States can be reached at (301) 947-3958 or (202) 361-9852.

INTERNET RESOURCES

- Guinea-Bissau by the Library of Congress
<http://www.loc.gov/law/guide/guineabissau.html>

GUYANA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Cooperative Republic of Guyana

ABBREVIATION

GY

CAPITAL

Georgetown

HEAD OF STATE

President Bharrat Jagdeo (from 1999)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Samuel A. Hinds (from 1997)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Republic within the Commonwealth

POPULATION

765,283 (2005)

AREA

214,970 sq km (83,000 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

East Indian, black, Amerindian

LANGUAGES

English (official), Amerindian dialects, Creole, Hindi, Urdu

RELIGIONS

Christianity, Hinduism, Islam

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Guyana dollar

NATIONAL FLAG

Green field, with a red triangle half the width of the flag edged with black superimposed on a yellow triangle the width of the flag edged with white, both pointing toward the fly

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A white shield flanked by gold and black indigenous jaguars rampant, one holding a sugarcane stalk and the other a miner's pickax. The shield is divided by three wavy blue lines. The upper half displays the Victoria Regina lily, the national flower, and the lower half the Canje pheasant, with red feathers and white breast. The design is crested by a golden helmet mantled in blue and white, bearing a candy-striped wreath and the blue-feathered headdress of an Amerindian chief with two diamonds in the headband. Beneath the emblem is the national motto, One People, One Nation, One Destiny, on a red and gold riband.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"Dear Land of Guyana, of Rivers and Plains"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day), February 23 (Republic Day, National Day), May 1 (Labor Day), first Monday in July (Caribbean Day), August 1 (Commonwealth Day), October 24 (UN Day), various Christian festivals, including Easter Monday, Good Friday, and Christmas, various Hindu and Islamic festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

May 26, 1966 (from England); February 23, 1970 (became republic)

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

October 6, 1980

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Guyana, on the northern coast of South America, has an area of 214,970 sq km (83,000 sq mi), extending 807 km (501 mi) north to south and 436 km (271 mi) east to west. The length of the Atlantic coastline is 459 km (285 mi). Guyana shares its total international boundary of 2,462 km (1,529 mi) with three countries: Brazil (1,119 km; 695

mi), Venezuela (743 km; 461 mi), and Suriname (600 km; 372 mi).

Guyana is divided into three major geographical zones: a coastal plain, a forest zone, and a grass-covered savanna. The coastal plain, about 15–65 km (10–40 mi) wide, is made up of alluvial mud from the Essequibo River, but much of the plain is below sea level by as much as 1.2–1.5 m (4–5 ft) at high tide. A barrier of swamps

Guyana



divides the plain from the interior forest zone, which occupies over 80 percent of the land area. Geologically, the zone consists of an eroded plateau from which hill ranges

known as the Pakaraima Mountains and the Kaieteurian Plateau rise. The savanna zone includes the Rupununi River valley in the extreme southwestern part of an in-

intermediate savanna about 95 km (60 mi) inland from the Berbice (northeast) coast.

Geography

Area sq km: 214,970; sq mi 83,000
 World Rank: 81st
 Land Boundaries, km: Brazil, 1,119; Suriname, 600; Venezuela, 743
 Coastline, km: 459
 Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Atlantic Ocean 0
 Highest: Mount Roraima 2,835
 Land Use %
 Arable Land: 2.4
 Permanent Crops: 0.2
 Forest: 85.8
 Other: 11.6

Population of Principal Cities (2002)

Georgetown	137,330
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CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Guyana has a subtropical climate with two rainy and two dry seasons. Although there are high temperature ranges in the interior mountains, nowhere are they extreme, and in general temperatures are moderated by sea breezes throughout the year. Georgetown's mean temperature is 26.6°C (80°F), with a daily range of less than 11°C (20°F). Temperatures in the Rupununi River valley range from 18.9°C (66°F) to 39.4°C (103°F), with the higher range common during the long dry season from August to May.

The coastal rainy seasons are from April to July and from November to January; in most years rain falls for 200 days. The amount of rainfall increases moving up the coast, from an average of 2,280 mm (90 in) in Georgetown to 3,560 mm (140 in) in the forest zone. Humidity is high throughout the year.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature
 Georgetown: 80°F
 Rupununi River Valley: 66°F to 103°F
 Average Rainfall
 Georgetown: 90 in
 Forest Zone: 140 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

The vast majority of Guyana is covered with jungle, most of it unexplored and unexploited; only about 15 percent of the land is inhabited by humans, most of whom live on the

coastal plains. The area contains some of the world's best tropical rain forests, with profusions of trees and flowers. A variety of tropical animals live there, including toucans and other colorful birds, many types of monkeys, ocelots, and tapirs as well as an assortment of reptiles, amphibians, and insects. The southwestern part of the country is savanna grasslands, which are home to termites who live in gigantic mounds. This is also the area people use to graze cattle.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 765,283
 World Rank: 156th
 Density per sq km: 3.9
 % of annual growth (1999-2003): 0.4
 Male %: 50.2
 Female %: 49.8
 Urban %: —
 Age Distribution %: 0-14: 26.5
 15-64: 68.3
 65 and over: 5.1

Population 2025: 755,884
 Birth Rate per 1,000: 17.85
 Death Rate per 1,000: 9.71
 Rate of Natural Increase %: 1.0
 Total Fertility Rate: 2.06
 Expectation of Life (years): Males 60.12
 Females 64.84

Marriage Rate per 1,000: —
 Divorce Rate per 1,000: —
 Average Size of Households: 5.1
 Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Guyana has a varied ethnic composition, with seven definable groups. Ethnicity is an important element in the nation's political, economic, and cultural life.

Most of the East Indians came to Guyana between 1844 and 1917 under what was known as the indenture system. Unlike Africans, East Indians were permitted to retain their cultural, religious, and linguistic traditions. Their cultural isolation was reinforced by the compulsory education law of 1871, which exempted them from attending Christian schools. Bound by strong kinship and family ties, the East Indians have developed into a cohesive community with few Guyanese attachments other than to their land. Most East Indians live in rural villages as farmers and have avoided participation in politics, government service, and social activities. Their resistance to assimilation poses the gravest threat to national integration.

The Afro-Guyanese, who form the largest minority, are descendants of slaves imported from the Guinea coast of West Africa. They form the most mobile sector of the population and the predominant working class in

the larger towns and cities. They are actively involved in politics and occupy the most important positions in the national government.

The mixed, or mulatto, group forms the second largest minority in Guyana. This group formerly held a privileged position in society and are often better educated and wealthier than other Guyanese. The small Chinese minority has been completely assimilated as a result of frequent intermarriages with Africans. Most Chinese have converted to evangelical Christianity and retain few of the traditional bonds of overseas Chinese. The Amerindians, the original inhabitants of the land, form three linguistic families: Warrau, Arawak, and Carib. There are six Carib-speaking groups—Carib, Akawaio, Patamona, Arekuna, Makusi, and Waiwai—most of whom live in the interior.

Permanent Western communities include British and Portuguese nationals, who generally do not identify themselves with the Guyanese.

LANGUAGES

English is the official language, though many people also speak Guyanese Creole. People from different ethnic groups speak a number of vernaculars, such as Hindi (Hindustani), Urdu, Portuguese, and Chinese, used by the older immigrants; English is gradually displacing all of these languages. Amerindians speak languages belonging to three linguistic families: Warao, Arawak, and Carib.

RELIGIONS

The religious affiliations of the Guyanese correspond to the ethnic patterns. About 50 percent declared themselves as Christian, 35 percent as Hindu, and 10 percent as Muslim. The largest Christian denomination is the Anglican Church of the West Indies. The Roman Catholics are mostly drawn from the Amerindian and Portuguese populations. Christian values predominate in Guyana, although they are coming into conflict with the traditions of the East Indians. There remains a natural tendency to split along ethnic and religious lines and to find solidarity and identity as members of religious groups rather than as members of the Guyanese nation.

Religious Affiliations

Christian	380,000
Hindu	270,000
Muslim	75,000
Other	38,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The aboriginal inhabitants of the Guyanese coast were Carib Indians, who had driven the peaceful Arawak north and westward into the Antilles. The first European settlers in Guyana were the Dutch, who founded the settlement of Kijkorveral in 1616. In 1621 the colony was placed under the direction of the West Indian Company of the Netherlands, which administered it for the next 170 years. The British then began migrating to the colony in large numbers and by 1760 constituted a majority of the population of Demerara. The British occupied the colony in 1796 and again in 1803 and gained formal possession in 1814. The two most important events in the early years of the British administration were the abolition of slavery in 1837 and the institution of the indenture system, under which thousands of coolies were imported from India from 1844 through 1917.

The colony was granted full self-government in 1961 and final independence in 1966.

Guyanese politics has been characterized by conflicts between the urbanized Africans and rural East Indians. In the years before independence this was reflected in the conflict between the People's Progressive Party (PPP), led by Cheddi B. Jagan, and the People's National Congress (PNC), led by Forbes Burnham. The former was backed primarily by East Indians, the latter by Africans. The PPP won the general elections of 1957 and 1961 but was defeated in 1964, following the introduction of a system of proportional representation that made possible the formation of a coalition government composed of the PNC and the more conservative United Force (UF). Burnham became the premier of Guyana, remaining in office through independence within the Commonwealth in 1966 and the adoption of a republican government in 1970. His government won reelection in 1968 and 1973 amid charges of fraud and the 1968 withdrawal of the UF from the coalition.

Following the end of the coalition, Burnham pushed for measures to bring about a transition to socialism, beginning with the change to Cooperative Republic status in 1970 and continuing in succeeding years through the nationalization of all bauxite and major sugar-producing operations. At the same time the PNC increasingly attempted to present itself and the government as synonymous.

In 1980 a new constitution was declared in effect. It replaced the largely ceremonial office of the president with a powerful office of the same name that combined responsibilities of head of state, chief executive, and commander in chief of the armed forces. Forbes Burnham, for which the office was tailor made, declared himself president. That year the PNC was credited with an overwhelming majority in elections considered fraudulent by international observers.

In 1985 Forbes Burnham died and was succeeded by Vice President Hugh Desmond Hoyte. The general elec-

tions held in December of that year gave Hoyte a five-year mandate, again amid reports of widespread fraud. Hoyte made revitalization of the economy his chief priority, and in 1987 he announced the “roll-back of cooperative socialism.” During the late 1980s Hoyte, in return for International Monetary Fund (IMF) assistance, was forced to implement a stringent IMF-sponsored austerity plan, which resulted in social unrest and industrial disruption. His government was also buffeted by increasing demands for electoral reform. However, presidential and parliamentary elections promised for early 1991 did not take place.

Elections were held in 1992, and the U.S.-educated dentist Dr. Cheddi Jagan, the candidate of the PPP, was victorious. A committed Marxist, Jagan faced economic turmoil. He attempted to privatize several state industries and worked closely with the IMF to turn the country’s economy around. After his death in 1997 his wife, the American-born Janet Rosenberg Jagan, became president. In 1999 Jagan retired due to health problems, and Bharrat Jagdeo succeeded her. He was reelected president in 2001.

In 2000 a long-standing border dispute between Guyana and Suriname resulted in serious conflict when Guyana gave permission to a foreign oil company to explore the offshore area for oil, and Suriname sent gunboats to evict the rig. This dispute still had not been settled in 2004, when the United Nations created a special commission to intervene. During 2002 and 2003 the nation experienced a rash of crimes, which were partly due to political unrest started by the 2001 elections, which the opposition PNC had disputed. Matters had improved somewhat by 2004. The year 2005 began badly, with massive flooding in the capital city; the government declared the zone a disaster area.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1964–85	Forbes Burnham
1985–92	Desmond Hoyte
1992–97	Cheddi Jagan
1997	Sam Hinds
1997–99	Janet Rosenberg Jagan
1999–	Bharrat Jagdeo

CONSTITUTION

The constitution of 1980 established Guyana as a cooperative republic within the Commonwealth. The constitution is the supreme law of Guyana and prevails over all other laws. It includes a bill of rights based on the 1950 European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and the UN Covenant on Human Rights. The constitution secures a citizen’s

political and legal rights and guarantees the freedoms of property, religion, expression, association, assembly, and movement as well as freedom from discrimination. The constitution also spells out the social and educational rights of citizens and the rights of workers. Special protection is extended to Amerindians.

Under the 1980 constitution the largely ceremonial office of president was replaced by an executive presidency, which combined the responsibilities of head of state, head of government, and commander in chief of the armed forces. The office of prime minister, which was retained, was made subsidiary to the presidency, as were other cabinet positions, including a number of vice presidencies. Appointments to cabinet positions, including prime minister and vice presidents, are made by the president. The president is not directly elected but is chosen from the party with the largest number of votes in legislative elections.

Legislative power is vested in the unicameral National Assembly. Members of the National Assembly are elected by a system of proportional representation, with each voter casting his or her vote in favor of a list rather than a candidate. The seats are allocated from those among the list in proportion to the popular vote, but there is no minimum percentage that a party must receive to ensure representation. Elections are conducted by the Elections Commission. The constitution provides for a Supreme Court of Judicature, consisting of the Court of Appeal and the High Court.

The voting age is 18; suffrage is universal.

PARLIAMENT

The unicameral National Assembly consists of 68 members, 65 of whom are elected for five-year terms under a system of proportional representation; of the remaining three, one is elected as speaker of the house, and the president appoints the other two. The National Assembly may make laws “for peace, order, and good government” of Guyana. It also may amend the constitution, subject to certain constitutional provisions. Any member may introduce a bill. The president may dissolve the Assembly and call for new elections at any time during its five-year term. This action could cost the president his or her office, if a different party wins the majority of legislative seats.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Guyana is largely a two-party system in which party discipline is quite strong. Electoral laws ensure that political parties are the central institution in the legislature. Additionally, party leaders are permitted to fill legislative seats after the elections. The current ruling party, the People’s

Progressive Party/Civic (PPPC), is a centrist party that is seen as largely representing the needs of the Indo-Guyanese community. The People's National Congress (PNC) is identified largely as an Afro-Guyanese party. Political disagreements between the two parties were the source of major unrest during the early 2000s; the parties were committed to working out their differences in 2003–04 but still had not resolved all their problems.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For purposes of local government Guyana is divided into 10 administrative regions, each administered by a chairman and council. There are five municipalities—Georgetown, New Amsterdam, Linden, Rose Hall, and Corriverton—each administered by a mayor and a town council. The number of councillors varies according to the population, but their functions are more or less similar.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The legal system is based on English common law, with some elements of Roman-Dutch law. The judicial structure of Guyana comprises the Supreme Court of Judicature, consisting of the Court of Appeal and the High Court as the superior courts, and a number of subordinate courts of summary jurisdiction.

The Court of Appeal consists of the chancellor as president, the chief justice, and a varying number of justices of appeal, as prescribed by the National Assembly. The High Court consists of the chief justice and nine junior judges. The lower courts are presided over by magistrates. Criminal cases are always tried by juries of 12 persons.

The courts are known to be inefficient and subject to political influence.

HUMAN RIGHTS

In terms of civil and political rights, Guyana is ranked as a partly free country. The People's National Congress (PNC) government ruled Guyana for some 25 years, from 1966 until 1992, preserving the facade of parliamentary democracy without the substance. The party employed government apparatuses to advance its aims and to maintain political power in the hands of a ruling elite. Guyanese who were not members of the ruling party elite were effectively denied meaningful participation in the decision-making processes of the state. Since the PPP took power in 1992, conditions have been somewhat better, though there are still abuses and intolerance of opposition viewpoints. In 2003 the government charged a political activist and a television talk show host with treason for expressing opposition viewpoints.

The Security Act allows the police to search for and seize illegal weapons, ammunition, and explosives without a warrant. Sometimes these raids have led to the seizure of “subversive” literature. Wiretaps, mail interception, and physical surveillance are used to monitor and intimidate political opponents of the government. The police are known to abuse suspects and kill people unlawfully and continue to do so with impunity despite minor efforts by the government to investigate abuses. Prison conditions are poor, and the delay between imprisonment and trial is lengthy due to the inefficiency of the courts.

The government has used the religious sect known as the House of Israel (founded by an American fugitive from justice) to harass the Catholic Church. The opposition has accused the government of employing “hit men” from the sect to murder those in official disfavor and to break strikes and opposition meetings.

The government record on academic freedom is mixed. Several opposition Working People's Alliance leaders teach at the University of Guyana, and opposition parties have organized student groups there. However, some teachers critical of the government's educational policies have been summarily fired without explanation.

The Guyana Human Rights Association was founded in 1980. The government has not interfered with the activities of this organization.

Guyana suffers other usual human rights problems. Violence against women and children and discrimination against women and ethnic minorities continue. Human trafficking and child labor have been problems.

FOREIGN POLICY

Guyana's principal foreign policy issues relate to its boundaries with its eastern and western neighbors, both of whom claim territory that Guyana believes to be Guyanese. In 1962 Venezuela claimed a large chunk of Guyanese territory; Suriname has also claimed a portion of Guyana's land and some of the offshore territory that Guyana considers its own. This dispute became especially touchy in 2000 when a Canadian company wanted to drill for oil in the disputed territory. These disputes remain unresolved.

Guyana has been an active member of the international community since independence in 1966. It has served on the UN Security Council, the International Court of Justice, and has diplomatic relations with the European Union, the World Health Organization (WHO), the Organization of American States (OAS), and the Caribbean Community (CariCom). The government is particularly interested in regional cooperation with other American nations. Guyana has been working to improve relations with the United States since 1992, and the two nations were on good terms with one another by the early 2000s.

DEFENSE

Guyana's professional military is the Guyana Defence Force (GDF), which handles internal security and national defense. There is also a paramilitary organization called the Guyana Police Force, which is responsible for internal law and order. The defense structure is headed by the president as head of state. Command and administration of the defense forces are vested in the Defense Board. Military manpower is provided by voluntary enlistment.

The Guyanese armed forces are maintained more for prestige than for any pressing military or defense needs. The army has no significant military traditions, and its combat-worthiness has never been tested in the field. Its mission seems to be to help preserve law and order. The security forces tend to run rampant, however, without any checks by the government, killing and abusing suspects and arresting those they consider a threat to the state.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 3,100
 Military Manpower Availability: 209,545
 Military Expenditures \$million: 6.5
 as % of GDP: 0.8
 as % of central government expenditures: —
 Arms Imports \$million: 6
 Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

Guyana is one of the poorest nations in the Americas. Severe drought and political turmoil contributed to Guyana's negative growth of 1.8 percent in 1998, following six straight years of growth of 5 percent or better. Growth came back to a positive 1.8 percent in 1999 and 3 percent in 2000 but returned to a stagnant 0.5 percent in 2004. Underlying growth factors have included expansion in the key agricultural and mining sectors, a more favorable atmosphere for business initiatives, a more realistic exchange rate, a moderate inflation rate, and continued support by international organizations. The nation is plagued by a poor infrastructure and an uneducated workforce that cannot perform skilled jobs.

President Jagdeo, the former finance minister, is taking steps to reform the economy, including drafting an investment code and restructuring the inefficient and unresponsive public sector. Numerous businesses have been privatized, and the country has hired international companies to manage the nation's sugar company (GuySuCo) and the biggest state bauxite mine. The government has removed most price controls and has reformed the tax system to support exports.

The nation has tremendous mineral resources, including gold, diamonds, and bauxite. The country exports sugarcane and cattle.

Guyana has a large amount of foreign debt, which limits the funds it can devote to its own infrastructure. Increasing fuel prices have hurt industry. Many Guyanese choose to emigrate to the United States or Canada rather than try to support themselves and their families at home.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 2.797
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 4,000
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 0.7
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 0.2
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 37.2
 Industry: 22.7
 Services: 40.1
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 49
 Government Consumption: 23
 Gross Domestic Investment: 38.5
 Foreign Trade \$million: Exports: 512
 Imports: 612
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: —
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: —

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
116.0	124.7	132.4	135.9	143.1

Finance

National Currency: Guyanese Dollar (GYD)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = GYD 190.665
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 32.1
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 5.5
 Total External Debt \$billion: 1.2
 Debt Service Ratio %: 9.46
 Balance of Payments \$million: -158
 International Reserves SDRs \$million: 271.5
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 5.7

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 86.62
 per capita \$: 84.70
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 26.1

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$billion: 263.4
 Expenditures \$billion: 326.7
 Budget Deficit \$million: 63.3
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 37.2
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2002) %: 3.3
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 0.76
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 29.4
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 37.2
 Total Farmland % of land area: 2.4
 Livestock: Cattle 000: 110
 Chickens million: 21.3
 Pigs 000: 20
 Sheep 000: 130
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 1.14
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 48.6

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 54.6
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 7.1

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: —
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 545
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 715
 Net Energy Imports % of use: —
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: 301
 Production kW-hr million: 854
 Consumption kW-hr million: 794
 Coal Reserves tons billion: —
 Production tons million: —
 Consumption tons million: —
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
 Production cubic feet billion: —
 Consumption cubic feet billion: —
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
 Production barrels 000 per day: —
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 11
 Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$million: 612
 Exports \$million: 512
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2002): 0.2
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2002): 0.5
 Balance of Trade \$million: –158

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
United States %	22.6	21.8
Trinidad and Tobago %	19.2	—
Italy %	11.2	—
United Kingdom %	7.2	13.5
Cuba %	5.2	—
Canada %	—	23.2
Portugal %	—	6.7
Belgium %	—	6.5
Jamaica %	—	6.1

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 7,970
 Paved %: 7.4
 Automobiles: 61,300
 Trucks and Buses: 15,500
 Railroad: Track Length km: 187
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: —
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 5
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 8.8
 Airports: 49
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 175
 Length of Waterways km: 1,077

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 101
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: —
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: —

Communications

Telephones 000: 80.4
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones 000: 87.3
 Personal Computers 000: 24
 Internet Hosts per million people: 801
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 163

ENVIRONMENT

Guyana suffers from the same general environmental problems as most developing nations, including deforestation, water pollution from agricultural runoff and industrial chemicals, and waste disposal concerns. Coastal areas flood periodically. The rain forests have recently become the target of multinational companies interested in their timber and gold-mining potential, which could cause serious problems in the near future. Hydroelectric companies have been considering using the giant waterfalls of the interior to generate electricity for the nation. Guyana has tremendous natural beauty, which it could leverage into ecotourism if it develops an adequate infrastructure and protects the wild areas from exploitation.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 85.8
 Forest Change (1990–2000) hectares 000: –49
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 2
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 2.1

LIVING CONDITIONS

Most Guyanese live on the coastal plain. The majority of people are quite poor; 35 percent of Guyanese live below the poverty line. The nation suffered from a wave of crime in the early 2000s, and many urban areas are plagued with shootings, carjackings, kidnappings, and home invasions. People avoid walking in cities at night. Few roads are paved, though there is plenty of ferry transportation on the rivers. The country still lacks some aspects of infrastructure; electricity is unreliable, and the telephone system is only fair.

HEALTH

The government has been trying to improve the health-care system since 1993, but care is still substandard. Life expectancy is fairly low, at under 63 years, and the infant mortality rate is high. Health care is free but facilities are inadequate. Wealthy people usually go to other countries for treatment of severe illnesses. Many medical professionals have emigrated to other countries, leaving a severe shortage of doctors and nurses in their wake. In the interior there are no clinics or doctors, so people treat ailments themselves with herbs and roots. The diseases associated with developing tropical nations are all common; these include malaria, dengue fever, cholera, typhoid, and tuberculosis. In 2004, 2.5 percent of the population was infected with HIV.

Health

Number of Physicians: 366
 Number of Dentists: 30
 Number of Nurses: 1,738
 Number of Pharmacists: —
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 48
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 37.22
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 170
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 5.6
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 53
 HIV Infected % of adults: 2.5
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 91
 Measles: 93
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 70
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 83

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Guyanese cuisine blends the cooking traditions of its many ethnic groups. Rice is the staple starch, though people also eat bread, Indian roti, cassava, and yams. People eat a large amount of vegetables, eggs, cheese, butter, beans, and meat, though Hindus do not eat beef, and Muslims

do not eat pork. Milk may appear at more than one meal every day. The evening meal is the largest. Popular dishes include curry, Chinese stir-fries, and pepper pot, a stew made of meat, hot pepper, and cassava juice. People drink tea, coffee, ginger beer, and drinks brewed from bark and vegetables.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 9.5
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,550
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 128.8
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 165.9

STATUS OF WOMEN

The Burnham and Hoyte regimes were generally supportive of women's rights. A Women's Affairs Bureau was established in 1981 within the Ministry of Labour to combat discrimination toward women and promote their development and full integration into national life. In 1983 the government passed legislation to erase the stigma of illegitimacy and accord legal rights to children of unwed mothers. Women serve in many high government and business positions, and Afro-Guyanese women form the core of the People's National Congress. In 1990 the government established a credit bureau to assist women running small businesses. In 1997 it created the Guyana Women's Leadership Institute to train women how to be leaders and decision makers in order to facilitate equality, believing this to be fundamental to national development. Women have served in the Guyanese armed forces since the 1960s.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 31
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: —
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: —

WORK

Most Guyanese work as farmers, raising rice, vegetables, and livestock to support their families and working on sugarcane plantations or cattle farms for pay. In farming families, all members work year-round, including children. Women are responsible for the home and the children as well as field work. In urban areas many people make crafts for sale, work for shops, or manufacture goods in factories. Some families own their own shops or businesses, which they may keep open seven days a week. Educated people work as civil servants, teachers,

or in the professions. The business workday runs from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The public sector works from Monday through Friday, but many private businesses open on Saturday as well. Unemployment is fairly high; officially, it was at least 9 percent in 2000, and it was probably higher.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 418,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 36.0
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: —
 Industry: —
 Services: —
 Unemployment %: 9.1

EDUCATION

Education is free, universal, and compulsory for eight years, between ages six and 14. Schooling lasts for 12 years, as divided into six years of primary school, four years of lower secondary school, and two years of upper secondary school. Schooling culminates in the College of Preceptors' O-level examination. Pupils are permitted to choose their courses at the end of the third year in secondary schools, selecting an academic or vocational course of study.

The curriculum emphasizes Guyanese and Caribbean history, science, and commercial subjects. The government has been accused of politicizing education, which critics cite as a principal cause of declining educational standards. All teaching is in English. The school year runs from September through August.

The University of Guyana, founded in 1963, is the only university in the country, though there are two technical colleges and several trade schools. The government runs several adult education programs in an effort to equip adults with the skills they need to enter universities at home or abroad.

Schools at all levels are underfunded and ill equipped. Many teachers have emigrated to other countries; private organizations raise money to import foreign teachers to tutor children during vacation. The nation does have several prestigious public schools that select their students on the basis of entrance examinations given at the age of 11 or 12; most students who win national scholarships for university study are graduates of these schools.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 98.8
 Male %: 99.1
 Female %: 98.5
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 12.3

First Level: Primary schools: 423
 Teachers: 4,202
 Students: 109,012
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 25.9
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 98.4
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 93
 Teachers: 3,417
 Students: 64,637
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 19.4
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 77.2
 Third Level: Institutions: —
 Teachers: —
 Students: 4,848
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 6.1
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 8.4

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Guyana is working to develop its technological potential. The Institute of Applied Science and Technology is an industrial research organization that sponsors research into ways to develop Guyana's natural resources in a way that will best benefit the country, while working within governmental parameters. The Information Network for Science and Technology (INSAT) is a network of scientific resources within Guyana. Guyana's physical infrastructure is still noticeably deficient, which delays its adoption of significant technologies.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: 5.28
 Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

There are two daily newspapers, the most important of which is the government-owned *Guyana Chronicle*. The other is the privately owned liberal publication *Stabroek News*. There are several weekly and biweekly papers. Newspapers are allowed to print what they wish, though most journalists refrain from criticizing the government.

The government owns the country's only national radio network, the Guyana Broadcasting Corporation. It also owns the Guyana Television Corporation. There are many other private channels, which criticize the government freely.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 2
 Total Circulation 000: 57
 Circulation per 1,000: 74.6
 Books Published: 25

(continues)

Media *(continued)*

Periodicals: 4
 Radio Receivers 000: 429
 per 1,000: 560
 Television sets 000: 54
 per 1,000: 70

CULTURE

Guyana has produced several authors, the best-known of whom is E. R. Braithwaite, author of *To Sir, with Love*. Visual arts are popular, and Guyanese artists are skilled at painting and sculpture. Favorite themes are the landscape, ethnic variations, and native people. Famous artists include Philip Moore, Ronald Savory, Stanley Greaves, and Aubrey Williams, who won the Commonwealth Prize for painting in 1964 and the Guyanese Golden Arrow Prize in 1970. Local people make excellent baskets and pottery.

Music is very popular, especially at social events. Songwriters compose in Guyanese Creole and in Hindi. Calypso songs make fun of politics and local customs; calypso composers enter their works in annual calypso competitions during the festival of Mashramani, which takes place during Republic Week. Another kind of comic song is called chutney; these songs are written partly in Hindi and partly in English.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 37
 Volumes: 190,000
 Registered borrowers: 45,233
 Museums Number: 4
 Annual Attendance: 97,000
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Guyanese folklore combines African, East Indian, and indigenous legends. One favorite character is the Old Hag, a female vampire who sheds her skin and travels around as a ball of fire and sucks people's blood. East Indians call her a *sukhanti*. The symptoms of an attack by the Old Hag include a feeling of weakness and a blue spot somewhere on the body. If a person sees a woman engaging in suspicious behavior such as shedding her skin and turning into a fireball, they are supposed to rub the empty skin with hot pepper, which will kill the Old Hag when she returns from blood-sucking and tries to put her skin back on.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Guyanese people love visiting relatives, with whom they eat, drink, and talk for hours. Families enjoy going on picnics at rivers, where they cook food and swim; these outings may be very large, including relatives and friends of all ages. People like to play dominoes and cards. In Georgetown, walking on the old Dutch dykes is a popular pastime. Movies are also popular, particularly East Indian films and westerns.

ETIQUETTE

Guyanese etiquette is casual. Guyanese have a great sense of humor and often tease one another, even on somber occasions such as funerals; this is meant to lighten the atmosphere and is not considered impolite. In 2004 the government introduced a new program into the schools designed to teach students about office and business etiquette in an effort to expand the nation's economic possibilities.

FAMILY LIFE

When Guyanese people talk about family, they are referring also to extended families, including aunts, uncles, cousins, and grandparents. Nonparental relatives help raise children, and relatives stand ready to resolve family disputes. Adult children often do not move out of their parents' homes until they can afford to buy their own houses, even if this means living at home after marriage. Houses tend to be large and rambling, the result of numerous additions being built as families get bigger. Large groups of relatives will often go visiting en masse, especially on weekends, and these occasions turn festive, with much food, drink, and conversation.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Most people in Guyana dress casually in cool clothes suitable to heat and humidity. Businessmen usually wear shirts and ties and women dress in suits or dresses.

SPORTS

Cricket, introduced by the British, is the most popular sport. Both sexes play it at all levels, from village to school to national. Guyanese cricket players are often recruited to play on British teams. Soccer is the next-most popular sport. People also cycle and play tennis, American football, volleyball, basketball, golf, and badminton.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1966** Guyana becomes a self-governing dominion within the Commonwealth, with Forbes Burnham as prime minister.
Venezuela occupies Anakoka Island and asserts a claim to land west of the Essequibo River.
- 1968** Burnham's People's National Congress (PNC) wins electoral victory following the controversial enfranchisement of overseas Guyanese.
United Force (UF) leaves coalition, protesting irregularities in the elections.
- 1969** National Social Insurance Scheme is introduced.
Government suppresses Rupununi rebels trying to establish an independent state.
Border clashes with Suriname revive old border dispute.
- 1970** Guyana is proclaimed a cooperative republic.
Post of governor-general is abolished. Supreme Court justice Arthur Chung is elected president.
- 1971** Demerara Bauxite Company is nationalized.
- 1973** Legislation is passed permitting preventive detention without trial and restricting freedom of movement.
- 1974** By the Declaration of Sophia, the PNC is transformed into a socialist party committed to nationalization of all foreign enterprises and redistribution of land.
- 1975** Reynolds Guyana Mines are nationalized.
- 1976** Booker Sugar Estates are nationalized.
Government announces plans to nationalize the school system.
Guyana permits Cuban planes to refuel on their way to Angola.
U.S.-Guyana relations deteriorate.
- 1977** CIA reports illegal payments to Burnham.
Burnham rejects plan of Cheddi Jagan, leader of the opposition People's Progressive Party (PPP), for a national coalition government.
Strike by sugar workers becomes stormy and violent as the government uses the police to break it.
- 1978** Government wins constitutional referendum extending term of the National Assembly.
Guyana signs the eight-nation Amazon Pact.
Jonestown, Guyana, is the scene of the bizarre and grisly suicide-murder of over 900 members of the People's Temple Commune, led by U.S. cultist Jim Jones.
- 1979** Burnham postpones national elections because of the dislocations caused by the Jonestown tragedy and industrial strikes.
Minister of Education Vincent Teekah is slain.
- 1980** Guyana adopts presidential form of government, as new constitution is approved. Burnham becomes the first president under the constitution, and Ptolemy Reid, his longtime aide, is named prime minister.
- 1985** Burnham dies and is succeeded in office by Hugh Hoyte, who promises to continue Burnham's leftist policies.
In national elections Hoyte is elected president, and the PNC wins predictably with a massive majority. Hamilton Green is named prime minister.
- 1988** The IMF begins negotiations for economic assistance in Guyana.
- 1990** Guyana accepts IMF conditions and begins receiving assistance. The World Bank and the Caribbean Development bank also resume lending.
- 1991** Guyana becomes a member of the Organization of American States (OAS).
- 1992** Dr. Cheddi Jagan is elected president.
Jagan administration attempts to privatize sugar and bauxite industries.
- 1997** President Jagan dies.
Jagan is succeeded by his wife, American-born Janet Rosenberg Jagan, who wins 55 percent of the votes.
- 1998** Violent riots erupt in the capital after opposition members and Guyanese of African descent accuse the ruling PPP of discrimination. The government declares a state of emergency.
- 1999** President Janet Jagan resigns due to poor health. Bharrat Jagdeo becomes president.
- 2000** Guyana and Suriname argue about offshore oil drilling in disputed territory.
- 2001** Bharrat Jagdeo is reelected president in March.
- 2002** Television talk show host Mark Benschop is charged with treason for encouraging a protest at the presidential complex. A crime wave begins, and the murder rate quadruples.
- 2003** The crime wave continues.
- 2004** Home Affairs Minister Ronald Gajraj steps down after allegations of his association with a death squad that executed hundreds of suspected criminals. The United Nations sets up a tribunal to resolve the border dispute between Guyana and Suriname.
- 2005** Severe floods hit Georgetown.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Guyana News and Information
<http://www.guyana.org/>

HAITI

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Haiti (République d'Haïti)

ABBREVIATION

HT

CAPITAL

Port-au-Prince

HEAD OF STATE

President René Prével (from 2006)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Interim Prime Minister Gérard Latortue (from 2004)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Republic

POPULATION

8,121,622 (2005)

AREA

27,750 sq km (10,714 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Black

LANGUAGES

French (official), Haitian Creole (official)

RELIGIONS

Roman Catholicism (official), Protestant, Vodou

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Gourde

NATIONAL FLAG

Two horizontal stripes, blue at the top and red at the bottom, with the Haitian coat of arms in a small white rectangular center panel.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

Six blue and red national flags and six rifles with fixed bayonets guarding a tall, indigenous palm tree, above which flies a blue and red national flag. In the front are two gold cannons on red caissons with gold cannonballs. At the base of the palm is a gold drum, and nearby are golden fouled anchors. Over the horizon are two hauled-down warships with pennants flying, and in the foreground is a white scroll with the national motto: *L'union fait la force* (Union makes strength).

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"La Dessalinienne" (Song of Dessalines)

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (Independence Day, National Day), January 2 (Heroes of Independence Day), April 14 (Pan American Day), May 1 (Labor and Agriculture Day), May 18 (Flag and University Day), May 22 (National Sovereignty Day), June 22 (President's Day), October 22 (United Nations Day), November 18 (Battle of Vertieres and Armed Forces Day), December 5 (Discovery of Haiti Day), all major Catholic festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

January 1, 1804

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

March 1987

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Haiti occupies the western third of the island of Hispaniola, the second-largest island in the Caribbean Sea. Haiti's total land area of 27,750 sq km (10,714 sq mi) includes the islands of Gonave, Tortuga (Île de la Tortue), Vache, and the Cayemites. The mainland extends 485 km (301 mi) east-northeast to west-southwest and 386 km (240 mi) south-southeast to north-northwest. The total length of the coastline is 1,771 km (1,099 mi).

Haiti has only one land neighbor, the Dominican Republic, with which it shares a border of 360 km (224 mi).

Because of the pressures of illegal emigration across the border, Haiti has closed the border and banned the construction of homes within 1 km (0.62 mi) of it.

Covering three-fourths of the land area are five mountain ranges, which meet one another to form a continuous highland. The most extensive of the ranges is the Massif du Nord, which forms part of the Caribbean Antillean system, which extends from the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico westward to Cuba. To the southwest are the Montagnes Noires, separated by the Artibonite River from another range, the Chaîne de Mateaux, which extends into the Dominican Republic as the Sierra de

Haiti



Neiba. To the far south is a system that extends the full length of the Tiburan Peninsula. To the west it is known as Massif de la Hotte, to the east as Massif de la Selle. The latter range contains the country's highest peak, Morne de la Selle (2,680 m; 8,793 ft).

Lowlands cover about one-quarter of the country's territory. The largest of the country's four major flatlands is the central plateau, which extends eastward from the Montagnes Noires. The northern plain is between the Atlantic Ocean and the Massif du Nord. The Artibonite Plain is to the north of the Chaîne de Mateaux. The Cul-de-Sac, between the Chaîne de Mateaux and the Massif de la Selle, is the fourth. There are 16 smaller valleys and plains.

Haiti has more than 100 small rivers, all flowing into the Gulf of Gonâves and the Caribbean Sea. The largest are the Artibonite; Trois Rivières; Grande Anse; the Massacre River, also known as Rio Djabon; and the Ped-

ernales River. None of the rivers is navigable, but each is used for irrigation.

There are large lakes in the southern half of the island, the Étang Saumâtre and the Étang de Miragoâne, the former salty and the latter fresh.

Geography

Area sq km:	27,750; sq mi 10,714
World Rank:	143rd
Land Boundaries, km:	Dominican Republic 360
Coastline, km:	1,771
Elevation Extremes meters:	
Lowest:	Caribbean Sea 0
Highest:	Morne de la Selle 2,680
Land Use %	
Arable Land:	28.3
Permanent Crops:	11.6
Forest:	3.2
Other:	56.9

Population of Principal Cities (1999)

Cap-Haïtien	113,555
Carrefour	336,222
Delmas	284,079
Port-au-Prince	990,558

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Although the climate is tropical, the country is generally semiarid because the mountains in the middle of the island cut off the moist trade winds. The temperatures in the main population centers tend to be warm, ranging from 20°C to 34°C (68°F to 94°F). The differential between summer and winter temperatures is only 4.4°C to 5.6°C (8°F to 10°F). The highest temperatures are recorded from June through September, the lowest from February through April.

Most of the country lies in a rain shadow, and the heaviest rainfall received in the north is no more than 2,540 mm (100 in). Port-au-Prince has two rainy seasons, April through June and August through November, during which it receives 1,370 mm (54 in).

Haiti lies in the Caribbean hurricane belt, but the main paths of maximum hurricane frequency pass to the north and to the south of the island. Thunderstorms are common and sometimes destructive.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature: 68°F to 94°F
 Average Rainfall
 Port-au-Prince: 54 in
 North: 100 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

More than 5,600 species of plants have been identified on the island of Hispaniola. The lowlands are home to mangroves, sweet acacia, wild frangipani, West Indian boxwood, poisonwood, and Monte Christi sage. Plants that favor higher elevations include bamboo, tree ferns, West Indian cedar, sierra palms, pasture fiddlewood, and Krug wild avocado. Most of Haiti's forests have been cut down, and the diversity of species has decreased sharply in recent years. Parc National Macaya contains some of the last remaining virgin rain forest.

The island also contains many animal species, though it does not have the variety of birds or large mammals found in mainland Central America; in particular, it has never had any large cats. Large lizards and tarantulas, however, are abundant. The seas around the island teem with fish and other sea creatures, such as manatees and sea turtles. Humpback whales mate just off the northern coast. Many of the island's animals are endangered; en-

dangered species include the humpback whale, the Pacific pilot whale, the Caribbean monk seal, the Atlantic spotted dolphin, the Caribbean manatee, the Antillean manatee, the American crocodile, the rhinoceros iguana, the Hispaniola ground iguana, the loggerhead turtle, the green turtle, the leatherback turtle, the hawksbill turtle, the *jutia* (a large rodent), the *coterra* (a parrot), and many others.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 8,121,622
 World Rank: 90th
 Density per sq km: 306.2
 % of annual growth (1999-2003): 2.0
 Male %: 49.7
 Female %: 50.3
 Urban %: 37.6
 Age Distribution %: 0-14: 42.2
 15-64: 54.1
 65 and over: 3.7
 Population 2025: 12,629,000
 Birth Rate per 1,000: 33.76
 Death Rate per 1,000: 13.21
 Rate of Natural Increase %: 2.3
 Total Fertility Rate: 4.76
 Expectation of Life (years): Males 50.52
 Females 53.12
 Marriage Rate per 1,000: —
 Divorce Rate per 1,000: —
 Average Size of Households: 4.4
 Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

The Haitian population is relatively homogeneous, with blacks constituting 95 percent and mulattoes and a few whites the balance. Mulattoes have had educational advantages and have traditionally received the best military and government jobs. Mulattoes speak French, as opposed to the Haitian Creole of the blacks. Until the 20th century the mulattoes were the elite class, and much of Haiti's turbulent history may be explained through the rivalry between blacks and mulattoes. Even now the 1 percent of the population that controls 44 percent of the nation's wealth is mulatto. The small white community is concentrated in the capital and includes French, Danish, German, Syrian, Lebanese, and Corsican nationals.

LANGUAGES

Haiti is the only republic in the Western Hemisphere where French is the official language. However, true French is spoken by only 20 percent of the people; the

rest speak Haitian Creole, which is almost unintelligible to those who speak only French. Approximately 7 percent of the population is bilingual. In 1969 a law was passed granting legal status to Creole and permitting its use in the legislature and law courts but not in schools, where French is the language of instruction.

English is used in the capital and provincial cities, and a Spanish Creole is spoken along the Dominican Republic border.

RELIGIONS

The official religion of the state is Roman Catholicism, which is nominally practiced by 69 percent of the population. Ecclesiastically, the church is organized under the Archdiocese of Haiti, as headed by an indigenous archbishop, and six suffragan bishoprics. Almost all the members of the clergy are native Haitians.

Despite its official status, Roman Catholicism has little influence other than in the urban areas, outside of which its place is taken by the folk religion of Haiti, Vodou, commonly known as voodoo. Vodou in Haiti is an amalgam of African beliefs and Christian practices. It is an informal religion with no set theology, scriptures, or clergy. Its principal elements are dance, music, magical invocation and rites, and cults of the dead. Priestly functions are exercised by *houngans* (medicine men), *mambos* (priestesses), and *bocors* (sorcerers). The Haitian peasant regards Catholicism and Vodou as inseparable and considers himself or herself a member of both religions, giving rise to the aphorism “Haiti is 90 percent Catholic and 100 percent Vodoo.” Moreover, black nationalists favored and emphasized Vodou in opposition to the Western value systems represented by the Catholic Church. President François Duvalier himself openly encouraged and reputedly practiced Vodou, retained Vodou priests as advisers, and had a running battle with the Roman Catholic clergy. Haiti recognized Vodou as an official religion in 2003.

Protestantism, particularly Anglicanism, has had considerable success in recent years. The success of Protestant efforts is explained by the church’s emphases on education and social welfare, its use of Creole rather than French, and active missionary work in rural areas. Most of the Protestant clergy are indigenous Haitians. There is no significant discrimination against Protestants.

Religious Affiliations

Roman Catholic	6,500,000
Protestant	1,300,000
None	81,000
Other	244,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The first known inhabitants of Haiti were Taino Arawak Indians. Haiti’s colonial experience began in 1492 with the Spanish conquest of the Taino Indians on Hispaniola, but the Spanish period had little political or cultural significance. Colonization technically began only with the arrival of the French planters and their African slaves in the middle of the 17th century. Successful uprisings by African-descended slaves between 1791 and 1803 led in 1804 to the declaration of the world’s first independent black republic, ruled by Jean-Jacques Dessalines, who had succeeded Toussaint Louverture, among the original leaders of the insurrection.

Although the French presence in Haiti was of very short duration—shorter, in fact, than that of any other colonial power in the New World—its impact was much greater and more durable. French legacies included racism and capitalism on the one hand and Roman Catholicism, education, and culture on the other. Haiti accepted these legacies and value systems wholeheartedly and has never seriously attempted to shake them off. The French actually left three nations in Haiti: the white elite; the mulattos, who aspired to higher positions in society through the attainment of wealth, education, or power; and the black slave masses. Racial strife between these three groups led to the slave revolts and the establishment of the Republic of Haiti in 1804.

Haiti’s third colonial period was the U.S. occupation from 1915 to 1934. Although Americans supported the mulattoes, U.S. policies tended to create and strengthen a strong black middle class and reinforce black consciousness among the educated class.

Mulatto presidents retained power until 1946, when Dumasris Estimé, a black, was elected. He was overthrown by a 1950 military coup led by another black, Gen. Paul Magloire. Magloire was forced to resign in 1956, and in 1957 Dr. François “Papa Doc” Duvalier was elected president. Duvalier quickly became a dictator who maintained his power through the means of a private army that used extortion and intimidation to quell all opposition.

Duvalier’s son, Jean-Claude “Baby Doc” Duvalier, became president upon his father’s death in 1971. The younger Duvalier’s regime was slightly more humane than his father’s. He released political prisoners and appointed more moderate cabinet ministers. However, a new law was introduced in 1979 that banned all criticism of the president or government officials and any media activities deemed subversive. The first municipal elections in 25 years were held in 1983–84. President Duvalier had promised that these would be free and democratic, but because no opposition candidates were allowed, Duvalier’s party won all the National Assembly seats.

Uprisings to protest widespread poverty and government corruption began in 1984, and despite Duvalier’s attempts to calm the unrest by introducing humanitar-

ian reforms, he was forced to flee the country in 1986. He was replaced as president by Gen. Henri Namphy. Unrest continued in 1986 to protest the inclusion of pro-Duvalier officials in the new government, and it persisted into 1987 to protest the government's attempt to dissolve Haiti's principal trade union, the Centrale Autonome des Travailleurs Haïtiens (CATH).

Concurrent legislative and municipal elections were held in January 1988, and Leslie Manigat was elected president. Manigat did not include any pro-Duvalier members in his cabinet, which initiated protests by Duvalier supporters. In June 1988 Manigat was ousted by disaffected army members and replaced by Gen. Namphy, who reinstated Duvalier's violent policies.

Gen. Namphy was overthrown in a coup in September 1988 and was replaced by Brig. Gen. Prosper Avril. Avril introduced radical reforms, purged the armed forces of pro-Duvalier members, and promised to hold democratic elections. The Avril government withstood two coup attempts in March 1989. In September 1989 Avril released a timetable for elections.

The president came under increasing criticism for mismanagement of the economy and for failing to put an end to a wave of robberies and killings, believed to have been carried out in many instances by soldiers. During the fall of 1989 Haiti experienced a series of general strikes in response to the increased taxation that was part of Avril's economic reform program. To prevent the continuation of antigovernment protests and to restore order, in January 1990 Avril imposed a 30-day state of siege. He also announced that all political exiles were to be permitted to return to Haiti in preparation for elections. At the same time he announced the release of all political prisoners.

In the face of growing antigovernment protests, Avril resigned in March. He was immediately succeeded by the acting army chief, Maj. Gen. Harard Abraham, who turned power over to the civilian Ertha Pascal-Trouillot, a Supreme Court justice chosen by a coalition of opposition leaders, the Group of 12. Her appointment marked the first time since Duvalier's overthrow that Haitian civilians had taken power for themselves and chosen their own leader. Pascal-Trouillot was to rule with a Council of State until elections.

The presidential and legislative elections took place, as scheduled, in December 1990. Jean-Bertrand Aristide, a left-wing Catholic priest who was the candidate of the Front National pour le Changement et le Démocratie, won by an overwhelming margin. One month before Aristide was to be inaugurated, Roger Lafontant, a former head of Duvalier's private militia, led armed supporters in the seizure of the presidential palace. He forced the resignation of Pascal-Trouillot, but loyalist army forces crushed the coup the following day. Aristide was inaugurated in February. He immediately sought the extradition of Duvalier from France and undertook the reform of the armed forces. In April former president Pascal-Trouillot

was arrested and charged as an accomplice in the coup that had tried to overthrow the government in January, although Lafontant reportedly told investigators that Trouillot had willingly handed over the presidency.

Aristide was overthrown September 30, 1991, in a coup staged by the nation's powerful military. The coup leaders established a three-man junta, headed by Gen. Raoul Cédras, to lead the country. In early October, under pressure from the military, the National Assembly declared the presidency vacant and as mandated in the constitution swore in Supreme Court Justice Joseph Nerette as interim president.

Aristide was finally returned to power in 1994 under diplomatic and military pressure from the United States, which sent both former president Jimmy Carter and 20,000 troops. The following year the United Nations sent a peacekeeping force, and in December René Préval won the presidency. In 1997 internal fighting continued, and the prime minister, Rosny Smarth, was forced to resign; Préval was prevented from selecting another. The UN peacekeepers left the country. In 2000 Aristide was declared president in an election that was plagued by irregularities.

The early 2000s were difficult for Haiti's government. In 2001 there were two coup attempts, apparently instigated by the army. Anti-Aristide factions agitated during 2002 and 2003. During the bicentennial celebrations at the beginning of 2004 rebels launched violent uprisings throughout the country. Aristide resigned from office and went into exile in South Africa, claiming that the United States had forced him out of power; he declared his intent to return. In the meantime, Boniface Alexandre, chief justice of the Supreme Court, was sworn in as interim president. The rest of 2004 was equally tumultuous: two major storms caused flooding that devastated the country, and political violence continued, resulting in many murders. In general elections held in February 2006 René Préval again won the presidency.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1930–41	Sténio Vincent
1941–46	Élie Lescot
1946	Franck Lavaud (chairman of Military Executive Committee)
1946–50	Dumarsais Estimé
1950	Franck Lavaud (chairman of government junta)
1950–56	Paul Eugène Magloire
1956–57	Joseph Nemours Pierre-Louis (provisional)
1957	Franck Sylvain (provisional)
1957	Executive Government Council
1957	Daniel Fig nolé (provisional)
1957	Antonio Thrasybule Kebreau (chairman of Military Council)

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1957–71	François Duvalier
1971–86	Jean-Claude Duvalier
1986–88	Henri Namphy (chairman of National Council)
1988	Leslie Manigat
1988	Henri Namphy
1988–90	Prosper Avril
1990–91	Ertha Pascal-Trouillot (provisional)
1991	Jean-Bertrand Aristide
1991	Raoul Cédras (leader of Military Junta)
1991–92	Joseph Nérette (provisional)
1992–93	Marc Bazin (acting)
1993–94	Jean-Bertrand Aristide
1994	Émile Jonassaint (provisional)
1994–96	Jean-Bertrand Aristide
1996–2001	René Préval
2001–04	Jean-Bertrand Aristide
2004–06	Boniface Alexandre (provisional)
2006–	René Préval

CONSTITUTION

Haiti is the oldest black republic in the world and the second-oldest republic in the Western Hemisphere, after the United States. Haiti has had more than 20 constitutions, the first of which was drawn up in 1801 by Toussaint Louverture, the last in 1987. However, most of the chief executives of Haiti during its turbulent history have ruled with virtually absolute authority as dictators. The title of president-for-life was first created in 1807, abolished in 1843, reintroduced in 1868, again abolished in 1870, and re-created in 1964. Another remarkable feature of Haitian constitutional history has been the existence of constitutions that were constantly ignored but not actually suspended by the chief executives.

Haiti's most recent constitution was approved by the electorate in 1987. It was suspended in 1988, with most of its articles reinstated in 1989; the government claimed to be following the constitution in 1991, but it was not formally reinstated until October 1994. Under its provisions executive power is vested in a president who is elected to a five-year term by universal adult suffrage. The voting age is 18. The president may not serve two consecutive five-year terms. The president selects a prime minister from the controlling party in the legislature, who in turn selects a cabinet after consulting the president. The constitution specifically bars military rulers. The interim president chief justice Boniface Alexandre assumed office in 2004 in accordance with the constitution.

PARLIAMENT

Legislative power is vested in a bicameral National Assembly (Assemblée Nationale) consisting of an 83-mem-

ber Chamber of Deputies, whose members serve four-year terms, and a 27-member Senate, whose members serve six-year terms. The terms of the last group of legislators expired in January 2004, and as of the beginning of 2005 no replacements had been elected; the prime minister, Gérard Latortue, was ruling by decree.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Aristides' party, the Famille Lavalas (FL), is the largest single party in the country. It controlled the vast majority of seats in both legislative houses in the early 2000s. There were numerous smaller parties that opposed the FL. The political situation was in turmoil at the beginning of 2005, with no legislature and thus no party holding a majority.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For purposes of local government, Haiti is divided into nine departments: Artibonite, Centre, Grand'Anse, Nord, Nord-Est, Nord-Ouest, Ouest, Sud, and Sud-Est. Each department is headed by a prefect appointed by the central government.

At the secondary level there are 27 arrondissements (districts), and at the third level there are 112 communes. Each commune has an elected mayor.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The basis for law in Haiti is the Roman civil law system. The judiciary is headed by the Court of Cassation, composed of a president, a vice president, and 10 judges. Usually, the Court of Cassation functions in two chambers of five judges each. The second tier of the judiciary consists of four courts of appeal, in Port-au-Prince, Cayes, Gonaïves, and Cap Haïtien; the court in the capital has a president and five judges. Courts of first instance are of two types: civil and criminal. Justice of the peace courts, in each of the country's 124 communes, are each presided over by a single judge.

All judges are appointed by the president.

HUMAN RIGHTS

In terms of political and civil rights, Haiti is ranked as not free. Haiti has had a long, troubled history of authoritarian rule characterized by serious human rights abuses. Nominally a republic, it is run more like a monarchy, with the president wielding all actual power for life—or as long as he can hold on. During the eight months that the legislative chamber is in recess the president rules by decree, and during the

other four months the legislative chamber simply rubber-stamps his decrees. Despite clear constitutional guarantees against arbitrary arrest and imprisonment, such measures are routinely used against political opponents. Similarly, the provision for a fair public trial is more honored in the breach, and defendants often languish in the jails for months without trial. Persons detained for political or security reasons are seldom charged or brought to trial. Some have been held for years. Searches without warrants are routine. The courts not only are dependent on the executive but also seem willing to follow government directions in sensitive cases. Haiti is also plagued with many of the usual human rights problems of developing nations, including violence and discrimination against women, child abuse, and human trafficking.

A press law promulgated in 1980, while milder than a 1979 code, retains serious restrictions on the media: a formal requirement (impossible in the case of daily newspapers) that all publications be submitted to censors 72 hours in advance, the licensing of journalists by the Ministry of the Interior, and the prohibition of material critical of the president and his family. Because prescreening is difficult in practice, publishers issue newspapers and journals at their own risk. Most media practice some self-censorship; however, the press is frequently critical of the government.

In 1980 the government established the Division of Human Rights within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The League of Human Rights has also been allowed to function without interference.

FOREIGN POLICY

Although a member of the United Nations, Haiti, as the only major French-speaking country in the Western Hemisphere, has avoided close ties with its neighbors, most of whom speak English or Spanish. It has also for the same reason distanced itself from any Caribbean economic and political integration, though it finally became a full member of the Caribbean Community (CariCom) in 2003. Haiti's most sensitive foreign policy issue is its porous border with the Dominican Republic. Each year thousands of Haitians cross the border illegally and make their homes in the neighboring country, which periodically rounds them up and sends them back to Haiti.

The single most important country for Haitian foreign policy makers is the United States, which has historically served as a patron, absorbing the nation's refugees, providing financial aid, and providing military men and material in times of near-anarchy. The United States is particularly interested in fostering Haiti's economic development. In 2004 the United States promised Haiti \$230 million in aid over the following three years, the majority earmarked for health and nutrition. During the

1994 crisis U.S. military intervention involved 20,000 troops, but this force was subsequently scaled down. There is a steady flow of illegal Haitian immigrants into the United States, in addition to the 13,000 or so who immigrate legally each year. Between 1985 and 2004, the U.S. Coast Guard caught an estimated 100,000 Haitians attempting to sneak into the United States; the majority of these came between 1991 and 1994, when the military was ruling the country.

DEFENSE

Haiti disbanded its armed forces in 1995 and created the Haitian National Police (HNP) in its place. The HNP is now the nation's only security force. It is ostensibly a civilian-run institution and autonomous from the government, but in fact it has long been manipulated by politicians. Aristide gave away HNP positions to political allies regardless of experience or qualification for the jobs in question. HNP officers have been implicated in narcotics trafficking and other forms of corruption, including arresting people without reason. The HNP has been unable to maintain order within the country and was helpless in the face of the violence and killings that overtook the country in the early 2000s, especially 2004.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	5,300
Military Manpower Availability:	1,792,112
Military Expenditures \$million:	25.8
as % of GDP:	0.9
as % of central government expenditures:	—
Arms Imports \$million:	—
Arms Exports \$million:	—

ECONOMY

About 80 percent of the population lives in abject poverty, while a small elite controls most of the nation's wealth. The majority of Haitians depend on the agriculture sector, which consists mainly of small-scale subsistence farming and employs about two-thirds of the economically active workforce. Most of this labor is informal, which makes it difficult for the government to collect taxes. The country has experienced little job creation since 1996, although the informal economy is growing. Still, unemployment and underemployment remain major problems.

Haitians living abroad, especially in the United States, sent about \$931 million back to Haiti in 2002. Other sources of income were textiles, assembled goods, leather, agricultural products, and handicrafts. Economic growth was flat in 2004, and inflation was extraordinarily high at 37.8 percent. One of Haiti's problems is its shortage of skilled labor; the nation has abundant unskilled

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workers, but in order to increase foreign investment it needs a more substantial educated class.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 12.3
GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 1,600
GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 0.5
GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: -1.5
Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:

Agriculture: 30
Industry: 20
Services: 50

Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:

Private Consumption: 132
Government Consumption: 10
Gross Domestic Investment: —

Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 0.321

Imports: 1.028

% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: —

% of Income Received by Richest 10%: —

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
174.8	198.7	226.9	249.3	347.2

Finance

National Currency: Gourde (HTG)

Exchange Rate: \$1 = HTG 40.5

Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 13.5

Central Bank Discount Rate %: —

Total External Debt \$billion: 1.2

Debt Service Ratio %: 10.75

Balance of Payments \$million: -48

International Reserves SDRs \$million: 81.1

Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
37.8

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 199.8

per capita \$: 23.70

Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 7.8

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: 1 October to 30 September

Revenues \$million: 231.6

Expenditures \$million: 366.7

Budget Deficit \$million: 135.1

Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 30

Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2002) %: -2.2

Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 0.02

Irrigation, % of Farms having: 6.8

Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 17.9

Total Farmland % of land area: 28.3

Livestock: Cattle million: 1.456

Chickens million: 5.5

Pigs million: 1

Sheep 000: 153.5

Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 2.22

Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 5

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 225.8

Industrial Production Growth Rate %: —

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 19

Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 544

Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 67

Net Energy Imports % of use: 27.2

Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: 240

Production kW-hr million: 633

Consumption kW-hr million: 589

Coal Reserves tons billion: —

Production tons million: —

Consumption tons million: —

Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —

Production cubic feet billion: —

Consumption cubic feet billion: —

Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —

Production barrels 000 per day: —

Consumption barrels 000 per day: 11.24

Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 1.028

Exports \$billion: 0.321

Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2002): 4.2

Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2002): 12.0

Balance of Trade \$million: -48

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
United States %	53.5	83.8
Dominican Republic %	5.9	6.5
Colombia %	2.9	—
Canada %	—	3.2

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 4,160

Paved %: 24.3

Automobiles: 93,000

Trucks and Buses: 61,600

Railroad: Track Length km: —

Passenger-km million: —

Freight-km million: —

Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: —
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: —
 Airports: 12
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: —
 Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 142
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: —
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: —

Communications

Telephones 000: 130
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones 000: 140
 Personal Computers 000: —
 Internet Hosts per million people: —
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 10

ENVIRONMENT

Haiti has terrible environmental problems. It suffers from growing deforestation, caused by clear-cutting for agricultural purposes, construction, and fuel. In the early 2000s almost all of Haiti's forests were gone. The deforestation causes soil erosion and mudslides when rainfall is heavy, and without topsoil, agriculture and reforestation are impossible. The country also suffers from a lack of sufficient supplies of potable water. Rivers are terribly polluted because people use them as garbage dumps. The ocean surrounding Haiti is also polluted, and the waters have been severely overfished. The last vestiges of Haiti's original environment can be seen at Parc National la Visite and Parc National Macaya.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 3.2
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: -7
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 0
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 0.18

LIVING CONDITIONS

Haiti is a very poor country, and living conditions are not good for the majority of people. The nation is very densely populated, with over 250 people per square kilometer. Some 75 percent of the population lives in rural areas. Most people live in one- or two-bedroom houses with no running water or electricity; they burn charcoal to cook their food. The infrastructure is woefully inad-

quate; sewage sits in ditches, roads are unpaved, and law and order is virtually nonexistent. The exceptions to this are the gated communities where Haiti's few wealthy people live, which are surrounded by shopping malls and restaurants.

HEALTH

Haitian health conditions are poor. There are fewer than 2,000 doctors to serve the entire country, most of them in Port-au-Prince, and there are very few medical clinics, especially in the countryside. Rural people rely on local midwives and Vodou practitioners with herbal remedies for their medical needs. Sanitation is poor, water is contaminated, and infectious diseases are rife, as is malnutrition. The infant mortality rate is extremely high; 15 percent of children die before they turn five years old. Fertility is high; each woman gives birth to nearly five children. The population is growing steadily despite a low life expectancy, though the prevalence of AIDS has slowed this growth somewhat.

Health

Number of Physicians: 1,949
 Number of Dentists: 94
 Number of Nurses: 834
 Number of Pharmacists: —
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 25
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 74.38
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 680
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 7.6
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 29
 HIV Infected % of adults: 5.6
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 43
 Measles: 53
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 34
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 71

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Food is expensive in Haiti because the land is not large enough or fertile enough to support its growing human population. Poor people in the country do not get enough to eat, and rarely consume eggs, fish, or meat. Most people subsist on rice, cassava, corn, millet, and fruit, including coconuts, pineapples, oranges, grapefruit, and mangoes.

For those who can afford it, Haitian cuisine is excellent, combining French, African, and native cooking techniques and spices. Local specialties include *lambi*, or grilled or boiled conch meat, and *grillot*, fried marinated pork with a spicy sauce made from citrus juice and hot peppers. People drink many concoctions featuring condensed milk and local fruit juices, often mixed with rum.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 47.1
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,040
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 109.2
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 110.9

Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 66
 Industry: 9
 Services: 25
 Unemployment %: 65

STATUS OF WOMEN

The role of women in Haitian society is limited by the nation's traditionalism. Since 1982 there has been no legal discrimination against women as compared to men. Women enjoy full rights to education and property ownership and such social rights as divorce. A total of 43 percent of the workforce is female.

Nevertheless, especially among the peasantry, women are generally limited to traditional domestic occupations. Middle-class women quite often work but out of economic necessity. Secretarial, teaching, and nursing positions are dominated by women. Few women rise to prominent positions in the Haitian business world. As a rule, greater opportunities are available to women in the civilian government bureaucracy. Women constitute a large part of the assembly membership. Women are not permitted in the armed forces, except as nurses. Violence against women is very common.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 4
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.01
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: —

WORK

Most Haitians work in subsistence agriculture, growing beans, sweet potatoes, rice, and other food for their families. They may make small incomes selling vegetables or crafts in the markets. Some agricultural laborers work for plantations growing cash crops such as coffee, sugarcane, cocoa, cotton, and sisal. About 5 percent of the workforce is employed in factories in Port-au-Prince, manufacturing clothing, baseballs, and electronics. Haiti's minimum wage is slightly higher than that of neighboring countries, which has caused manufacturing to decrease somewhat. About 65 percent of the workforce is estimated to be unemployed or underemployed. There is very little welfare, and most people rely on family members for help. Some parents send their children to work as servants in wealth homes.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 3,600,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 43.4

EDUCATION

Technically, education is free, universal, and compulsory for six years, from ages six to 12. Schooling lasts for 12 years, as divided into six years of primary school and six years of secondary school. Primary schooling is divided into three cycles—preparatory, elementary, and intermediate—and secondary schooling is divided into two cycles of three and four years, known as basic and upper, respectively. Secondary schools are almost entirely in urban areas. Students who complete the first six years receive a certificate, those who complete nine years receive a brevet, and those who complete 13 years receive the baccalaureate. The academic year runs from October through July. The medium of instruction is either French or Creole, but the study of English is required at the last grade of the upper cycle of secondary school.

In truth, Haiti's public school system is woefully inadequate. There are not nearly enough schools to serve all the children in rural areas. Dropout rates are high. Fewer than two-thirds of those who begin primary school ever graduate. Only about half of Haiti's adult population is literate.

Private schools play an important role in the school system. Over half of primary-school enrollment and 75 percent of secondary-school enrollment are in private schools. Private schools are of two types: those supported by the state and those supported by tuition charges and contributions. The bulk of the schools in both categories are affiliated with either Roman Catholic orders or Protestant missions.

The principal adult education agency is the Office National d'Alphabetisation et d'Action Communautaire (ONAAC), which has taught over 200,000 Haitians to read and write. Vocational training is provided in three-year professional schools known as *écoles professionnelles*. These schools are all public, whereas most commercial schools are private. There is one university in Port-au-Prince, the State University of Haiti. The children of wealthy parents often go abroad for higher education.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 52.9
 Male %: 54.8
 Female %: 51.2
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: —
 First Level: Primary schools: 6,111
 Teachers: 41,160
 Students: 1,429,280
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 34.7
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 56.1

Second Level: Secondary Schools: 630

Teachers: —

Students: —

Student-Teacher Ratio: —

Net Enrollment Ratio: —

Third Level: Institutions: 2

Teachers: —

Students: —

Gross Enrollment Ratio: 1.2

Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: —

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Haiti is not in a position to make many contributions to global science and technology. The technological infrastructure there is substandard, with an unpredictable supply of electricity and a largely illiterate populace. In 2002 there were about 80,000 Internet users in the country. The telephone system is also unreliable.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —

Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —

High-Tech Exports \$million: —

Patent Applications by Residents: 1

MEDIA

Most Haitians, many of whom cannot read, receive their news by radio. There are over 250 private radio stations, broadcasting in French and Haitian Creole and expressing a range of political views, though journalists usually try to avoid offending politicians or sponsors. There are several television stations that broadcast in French, Creole, and Spanish. A few newspapers are published in Port-au-Prince.

Aristide's government was notorious for restricting free expression by the media. Freedom of the press improved after the departure of Aristide in early 2004. The gang violence that surrounded his departure was costly to broadcast stations, many of which suffered damage done by members of both political camps.

Media

Daily Newspapers: —

Total Circulation 000: —

Circulation per 1,000: —

Books Published: —

Periodicals: —

Radio Receivers 000: 146

per 1,000: 18

Television sets 000: 42

per 1,000: 5

CULTURE

Haitian's Creole culture combines French and African influences, which appear in a variety of art forms. Haiti has produced excellent painters since its earliest days, when Vodou practitioners decorated the walls of their temples with depictions of the spirit world. The nation established several art schools in the early 1800s. Modern Haitian artists such as Jacques Gourgues and Hector Hyppolite are famous around the world. Port-au-Prince has many museums that display the work of Haitian artists.

Haitian music is an integral part of daily life. The national dance is the *meringue*; people also dance salsa and *compas direct*. Haitian authors have traditionally written in French, but there have been recent efforts to promote the use of Creole in literature. Famous Haitian authors include Jean Price-Mars and Jacques Roumain.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: — 10

Volumes: 28,480

Registered borrowers: —

Museums Number: 4

Annual Attendance: —

Cinema Gross Receipts: —

Number of Cinemas: —

Seating Capacity: —

Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Nearly all Haitians practice Vodou, which evolved from a synthesis of various west African animist beliefs. The government has outlawed Vodou many times, but the religion has persisted and is now protected. Vodou practitioners use Catholic saints to symbolize spirits in their pantheon. There is an elaborate hierarchy of practitioners and a variety of ceremonies for different purposes. During a Vodou ceremony, the officiant will summon a spirit to possess a human body after opening the gates to the spirit world and greeting the snake god. Each of the different spirits receives different offerings during ceremonies. Vodou dolls serve as messengers to the spirit world.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Haitian recreation often consists of visiting friends and family to eat and drink. People like to go dancing; salsa and *bachata* are popular dances. Sometimes a family will hold a *combite*, a kind of working party in which the guests help with some large work project and then drink alcohol

and dance late into the night. Haitians enjoy visiting the beach and camping and hiking in the countryside.

ETIQUETTE

Haitians tend to be very exuberant in their social interactions and consider it important to greet everyone they see. Teasing is common and innocuous. Begging on the street is extremely common. Sometimes people will look at a visitor and make a throat-slitting gesture; this is only a request for food or money and not a murder threat. It is impolite to enter a Vodou ceremony without being invited; if invited, it is proper to bring a gift for the leader.

FAMILY LIFE

Most Haitian families today consist only of parents and children, a departure from the large extended families that were common until recently. For the most part, couples do not marry but instead live together in an informal arrangement called *plasai*. They agree on how to share finances and work but do not receive any official recognition by the government. Men typically do heavy agricultural labor; women care for the house and children and also grow and harvest vegetables and fruit to sell in the markets. Haitian women are more involved in the labor force than many women in the Caribbean.

Wealthy people are more likely to marry formally. Though traditionally wealthy women did not work outside the home and employed servants to do housework, that is changing. Divorce has become more acceptable than it once was, and married women's legal and property rights have expanded.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Haiti's heat and poverty lead to most people dressing casually. People still like to look nice, however, and tend to be somewhat conservative in their dress. Women typically wear skirts at or below the knee and do not appear in public in shorts.

SPORTS

Soccer is Haiti's national sport. Boys and girls play, and there are both men's and women's national soccer teams. Professional matches at the Sylvio Cator Stadium in Port-au-Prince attract huge crowds of spectators. Haiti also has national karate and volleyball teams. People with the money to afford leisure sports play golf, tennis, and go sailing or scuba diving. Most Haitians cannot afford such

recreational activities; instead, they might play miniature football on the streets or go to cockfights to gamble and drink while roosters peck at one another.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1946** With the backing of the Haitian Guard, Dumarsis Estimé is elected president.
- 1950** The army deposes Estimé, forestalling his attempt to amend the constitution to enable him to run for another term. Col. Paul E. Magloire becomes president, supported by both mulattoes and blacks.
- 1956** Magloire is reinstated at the end of his constitutional term.
Nationwide strike forces Magloire to step down. Joseph Nemours Pierre Louis is named interim president.
- 1957** Franck Sylvain is elected president.
After 53 days Sylvain is arrested and replaced by an Executive Council.
Riots erupt nationwide, and civil liberties are suspended.
Army commander Léon Cantave takes over.
Following a near-civil war, Daniel Figiolé is inaugurated as president.
The army arrests and deports Figiolé.
The army revolts under Antoine Kébreau.
In nationwide elections under Kébreau's auspices, François Duvalier, a black physician, is elected president.
- 1960** Clément Barbot, the chief of the security services, is arrested.
Roman Catholic Archbishop François Poirier is exiled.
- 1961** Duvalier has himself elected for another six years by an electoral ruse.
- 1964** Duvalier sponsors new constitution, under which he is made president-for-life.
- 1971** In failing health Duvalier has constitution amended to enable him to name successor and to lower the age of induction to the presidency to 18. Duvalier names his son Jean-Claude as successor.
Duvalier dies and is succeeded by 19-year-old Jean-Claude.
- 1972** Duvalier succeeds in dismissing strongman Luckner Cambronne, head of the Tontons Macoutes.
- 1977** Following the Carter administration's criticism of Haiti's violations of human rights, Duvalier releases a few political prisoners.
- 1978** Gen. Roger St. Albin named chief of staff, and Jean Valme chief of police, in a major government reshuffle.

- 1980** Mass exodus of Haitian refugees is reported. Hurricane Allen kills over 200 and destroys the nation's coffee crop. Duvalier reshuffles cabinet for the fifth time in two years in an effort to consolidate his power vis-à-vis his mother, Simone Duvalier.
- 1981** United States and Haiti reach agreement on forcible repatriation of Haitian immigrants to Haiti.
- 1986** President-for-Life Jean-Claude Duvalier flees Haiti, leaving the government in the hands of a clique of old Duvalier cronies, with Chief of Staff Henri Namphy as provisional head.
- 1987** A new constitution is approved by 88 percent of the voters. Two presidential candidates are murdered and 12 barred from running because of their connections to Duvalier. Presidential elections are cancelled three hours after voting begins because of violence.
- 1988** Leslie Manigat wins the January presidential elections. Manigat's government is overthrown by Gen. Henri Namphy and disaffected members of the army. Namphy dissolves the legislature and formally abrogates the constitution of 1987. Gen. Namphy is ousted in a coup led by Gen. Prosper Avril. Duvalier's supporters within the armed forces are purged.
- 1989** Avril partially restores the constitution. The government survives two coup attempts by the Leopard Corps and the Dessalines battalion. General strikes occur during the fall to protest tax increases.
- 1990** Avril resigns and is replaced by Ertha Pascal-Trouillot as interim president. Jean-Bertrand Aristide wins the December presidential elections.
- 1991** Roger Lafontant, former head of Duvalier's private militia, leads an unsuccessful coup against Pascal-Trouillot. Aristide is inaugurated in February. The military overthrows Aristide in September.
- 1993** Under diplomatic pressure the military junta initially agrees to the reinstatement of Aristide. However, the military prevents UN forces from landing in October. The result is a naval blockade of Haiti by the United States and the United Nation.
- 1994** Former U.S. president Jimmy Carter leads a delegation that negotiates the landing of some 20,000 U.S. troops and the return to power of Aristide.
- 1995** A UN peacekeeping force takes over for U.S. troops. In December, Lavalas candidate René Préval wins 88 percent of the presidential vote.
- 1997** Internal fighting in the government leads to the resignation of Prime Minister Rosny Smarth, and Lavalas prevents Préval from appointing another. UN peacekeepers leave the country.
- 1999** Préval begins ruling by decree, asserting that parliament has no authority because its term has expired.
- 2000** Aristide is elected president in elections soured by accusations of fraud. Opposition members of parliament refuse to recognize Aristide's government.
- 2001** Armed assailants break into the presidential palace, sparking fears of a coup, which does not occur.
- 2002** Haiti becomes a full member of CariCom.
- 2003** Haiti recognizes Vodou as a religion.
- 2004** Aristide is forced into exile in February after rebels launch riots during bicentennial celebrations. An interim government takes over. Flooding devastates the countryside in May. In September, Tropical Storm Jeanne kills 3,000. Violence increases in the capital.
- 2006** René Préval is again elected president.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Embassy of Haiti
<http://www.haiti.org/>

HONDURAS

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Honduras (República de Honduras)

ABBREVIATION

HN

CAPITAL

Tegucigalpa

HEAD OF STATE & HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

President Manuel Zelaya Rosales (from 2005)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Constitutional democracy

POPULATION

6,975,204 (2005)

AREA

112,090 sq km (43,278 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Mestizos

LANGUAGE

Spanish

RELIGION

Roman Catholicism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Lempira

NATIONAL FLAG

Tricolor consisting of a white horizontal stripe between two blue horizontal stripes, with five blue stars on the white stripe

NATIONAL EMBLEM

The central feature of the emblem is an oval shield with a massive stone pyramid surrounded by blue skies and a blue sea. The shield is bordered with a white band inscribed with the name of the country, “Rep’ca de Honduras,” the date of independence from Spain, “15 de Septiembre 1821,” and the national motto, *Libre, soberana e independiente* (Free, sovereign and independent). The oval shield is embraced by two cornucopias spilling roses, with a quiver of arrows at the crest. The emblem rests on a brown mound, on which are shown a farmhouse, farm tools, and trees.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Thy Flag Is a Floating Heavenly Light”

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year’s Day), April 14 (Pan American Day), May 1 (Labor Day), September 15 (Independence Day, National Day), October 3 (Birthday of Francisco Morazan), October 12 (Columbus Day), October 21 (Army Day), December 18 (King Alfonso’s Decision Day), all major Roman Catholic festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

September 15, 1821

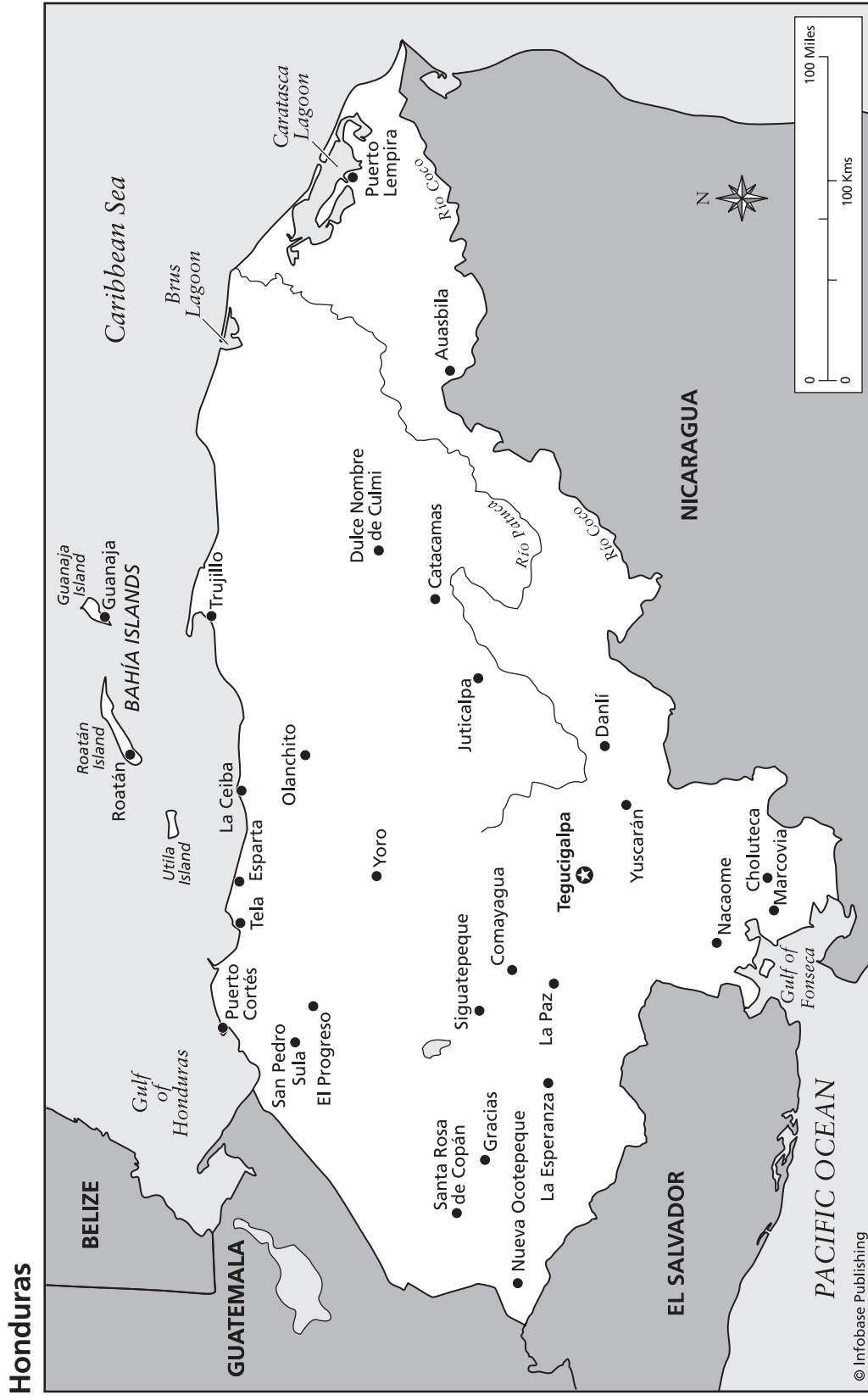
DATE OF CONSTITUTION

January 1982; amended 1995

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Honduras is in the Central American isthmus and occupies a land area of 112,090 sq km (43,278 sq mi). It extends 663 km (412 mi) east-northeast to west-northwest and 317 km (197 mi) north-northwest to south-southeast. The coastlines on the Gulf of Fonseca, in the southwest, and the Caribbean run a total of 820 km (510 mi). Honduras borders Guatemala to the northwest, El Salvador to the southwest, and Nicaragua to the southeast.

Honduras’s rights to the Gulf of Fonseca, on the Pacific Ocean, are currently in dispute with Nicaragua and El Salvador. The border with El Salvador, defined by the International Court of Justice in 1992, has not yet been marked. Honduras is also in dispute with Nicaragua over maritime boundaries. A treaty concerning several islands and maritime rights was signed with Colombia and ratified in late 1999. This caused Nicaragua to close its country to Honduran goods. Offshore territories include the Islas de la Bahía (Bay Islands) and the Swan Islands, both in the Caribbean,



and three islands in the Pacific: Tigre, Grand Zacate, and Gueguensi.

Honduras is generally a mountainous country, with mountains covering 63 percent of its area. The remaining 37 percent consists of lowlands and valleys. Two ranges, the Central American Cordillera and the Volcanic Highlands, divide the country in half. Major bodies of water include Lake Yojoa in the west and Caratasca Lagoon in the northeast.

The country is drained by an extensive river system. In the north, from west to east, are the Chamelecón, Ulúa, Aguán, Sico, Paulaya, Sicre, Patuca, and Coco (Segovia) rivers. In the south, from west to east, are the Lempa, Sumpul, Goascoran, Nacaome, and Choluteca rivers, all flowing into the Gulf of Fonseca. The country is heavily forested, with a combination of tropical forests covering more than one-half of the country.

Geography

Area sq km: 112,090; sq mi 43,278
World Rank: 100th
Land Boundaries, km: Guatemala 256, El Salvador 342, Nicaragua 922
Coastline, km: 820
Elevation Extremes meters:
Lowest: Caribbean Sea 0
Highest: Cerro Las Minas 2,870
Land Use %
Arable Land: 9.6
Permanent Crops: 3.2
Forest: 48.1
Other: 39.1

Population of Principal Cities (2001)

Choloma	108,260
La Ceiba	114,584
San Pedro Sula	439,086
Tegucigalpa	769,061

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

The coastal regions have a wet, tropical climate, and the interior has a dry, cool climate. Both areas have a wet season from April to October and a dry season from November to March. In the coastal lowlands the annual temperature averages 31°C (87.8°F), the intermontane valleys average 29.4°C (85.0°F), and the higher elevations average 23°C (73.4°F). From October to April the country receives a moderately cold northerly wind that tempers the heat. Hurricanes are common.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature
Coastal Lowlands: 88°F
Intermontane Valleys: 85°F
Higher Elevations: 73°F

Average Rainfall

Northern Coastal Region: 70 in to 100 in
Pacific Coastal Plain: 60 in to 80 in
Tegucigalpa: 33 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Much of Honduras is covered with thick rain forest, making travel difficult, though deforestation progresses at a rate of 3,000 square miles per year; there is a very real danger that Honduras could soon lose all its trees. The north coast is covered with banana and sugar plantations. The Bay Islands are located in the midst of a barrier reef; their flora includes coconut palms and more rain forest. The Mosquitia region has the best untouched rain forest.

Many animals live in Honduras, though the ones who make their home in the rain forest are endangered by habitat loss. There are many birds, including quetzals, kingfishers, herons, and toucans. Mammals include monkeys, pigs, jaguars, ocelots, tapirs, pumas, and armadillos. There are many alligators and snakes and numerous amphibians and insects, especially butterflies. The coastal waters are home to myriad aquatic species, including sharks and whales. La Tigra National Park, near Tegucigalpa, is home to a wide variety of plant and animal species.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 6,975,204
World Rank: 96th
Density per sq km: 62.3
% of annual growth (1999-2003): 2.6
Male %: 50.0
Female %: 50.0
Urban %: —
Age Distribution %:
0-14: 41.2
15-64: 55.1
65 and over: 3.7
Population 2025: 9,495,000
Birth Rate per 1,000: 31.04
Death Rate per 1,000: 6.64
Rate of Natural Increase %: 2.8
Total Fertility Rate: 3.97
Expectation of Life (years): Males 64.99
Females 67.37
Marriage Rate per 1,000: —
Divorce Rate per 1,000: —
Average Size of Households: 5.7
Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Mestizos, of mixed European and indigenous ancestry, constitute 90 percent of the population, indigenous

peoples about 7 percent. Caribbean blacks—referred to as Black Caribs or Garifuna, the descendants of a group of people of mixed African and Carib race transported by the British from St. Vincent Island in 1797—account for 2 percent of the population, and those of strictly European ancestry account for the remaining 1 percent.

The indigenous peoples are the remnants of the various tribes that originally inhabited the country, dating back to at least 1500 B.C.E. There are six major indigenous groups that exist in Honduras today: Tolupán or Xicaque (numbering over 60,000), Miskitos (about 35,000), Lenkas (80,000), Chortis (2,000), Tawahkas (2,000), and Pech (4,000). Each of the indigenous groups is centered in a specific area. Miskitos are mostly located in the north, especially the department of Gracias a Dios, as are the Tawahkas, who are also prominent in Copán. The Lenkas live primarily in the departments of Lempira, Intibucá, La Paz, Comayagua, and parts of Cortés, Valle, and Francisco Morazán. The Pech are centered in Olancho, whereas the Chortis are centered in Ocotepeque and Gracias a Dios. The Garifuna are most prominent along the northern coast.

LANGUAGES

The official language, Spanish, is spoken by most of the population. English is spoken chiefly in the Islas de la Bahía. The Black Carib population speaks its own language, called Garifuna. There are five indigenous languages spoken by small sections of the population, the most common of which are Miskito and Lenca.

RELIGIONS

The main religions are Roman Catholicism, Protestantism, and traditional Mayan religions. Current estimates put the Catholic population at about 97 percent, but this includes practitioners who combine Mayan and Catholic religions. Little is known about indigenous religions outside of some generalities: They are similar to native religions in the United States; tobacco is used in a number of healing and other spiritual rituals; and some indigenous religions make use of a *santero*, or spiritual leader who assists in healing and related matters. The *santero*, however, is likely an import from Honduras's Caribbean neighbors and is more prominent in the Garifuna religions found along the north coast.

Religious Affiliations

Roman Catholic	6,766,000
Other (Mostly Protestant)	209,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Long before Spanish settlers came to what is now Honduras, an indigenous culture flourished. Most notable is the Mayan culture, which goes back to at least 1500 B.C.E. Although that culture all but vanished, many other indigenous cultures flourished until the Spanish arrival and conquest in the 1500s. In 1538 the chief of the Lenca tribe, Lempira, led a revolt against Spanish rule. He was murdered by the Spanish representatives, who met him under the guise of beginning peace negotiations. Although the revolt was crushed shortly thereafter, he is a national hero who symbolizes indigenous culture and heritage. Honduran currency is named after the chief, as is one of the departments.

Spanish rule continued for three centuries. Honduras joined other provinces of Central America in declaring its independence from Spain in 1821. It was part of the Mexican empire of Agustín de Iturbide from 1822 to 1823, then a member of the United Provinces of Central America from 1824 to 1838. Honduras declared its independence later that year, although its initial 1821 declaration of independence from Spain is the date that is celebrated.

Honduras has a long history of political instability, revolution, and military rule, caused by the nation's chronically troubled economy, its overt favoritism to fruit companies (which leave wealth in a few, largely foreign hands), and its involvement with both Central American neighbors and the United States in various disputes. By the mid-1980s the nation had had 16 constitutions, 126 governments, and more than 380 armed rebellions. Between 1855 and 1932 Honduras had 67 different heads of state, as power swung between relatively weak conservative and liberal governments. The greatest political influence, in fact, was in the hands of foreign fruit companies, particularly the United Fruit Company.

A measure of internal stability was achieved under the presidencies of Gen. Tiburcio Carías Andino and his successor, Juan Manuel Gálvez (1932–54). The election of Andino marked the political ascendancy of the military, which he used to maintain power. From 1954 to 1982 the army held political power through a series of military coups, in 1956, 1963, 1972, and 1978. Under pressure from the United States the military returned the government to civilian hands in 1982 with the election of Roberto Suazo Córdova. However, the commander in chief of the army, Gen. Gustavo Adolfo Álvarez Martínez, maintained considerable power until his removal in 1985.

In November 1985 José Azcona Hoyo was elected president, and he assumed office the following January. His inauguration marked the first time an elected government was peacefully succeeded by another since 1929. During the 1980s he refused to allow the United States to use Honduras as a “base camp” for various military operations in El Salvador and Nicaragua. This had the effect of stabilizing the country somewhat politically but removing much of its funding. However, both funding

and U.S. involvement returned in 1986, when Honduras began clashing with Nicaragua over Nicaraguan contras in Honduran territory. Honduras requested troops from the United States in 1988 because of the invasion of Nicaraguan troops along its border.

In 1989 Central American countries met again to negotiate the disbanding of contra troops in Honduras. Further demilitarization came when the police were separated from the military in 1997 and both put under civilian leadership in 1999. With the interference of other countries subsiding somewhat, labor and indigenous groups are continuing to call attention to police abuse, labor rights issues, and freedom of the press. In a vote held on November 25, 2001, Ricardo Madura was elected president; he was inaugurated in January, 2002.

Madura's first act as president was to crack down on street gangs, which have been a growing problem in the country. Many people were dismayed at this announcement because the police and military have historically abused their power when confronting street children; in 2000 more than 1,000 children were killed by police and death squads.

Honduras has been attempting to establish a firmer position in the modern world, sending troops to Iraq and entering a free-trade agreement with Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and the United States in 2003. Gang violence continued to be a problem in 2004, with over 100 inmates dying in a prison fire and a gang attack on a bus in Chamalecon. Liberal Party leader Manuel Zelaya Rosales was elected president in December 2005.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1933–49	Tiburcio Carías Andino
1949–54	Juan Manuel Gálvez
1954–56	Julio Lozano Díaz
1956–57	Military Government Council
1957–63	Ramón Villeda Morales
1963–71	Oswaldo López Arellano
1971–72	Ramón Ernesto Cruz Uclés
1972–75	Oswaldo López Arellano
1975–78	Juan Alberto Melgar Castro
1978–82	Policarpo Paz García
1982–86	Roberto Suazo Córdova
1986–90	José Azcona Hoyo
1990–94	Rafael Leonardo Callejas
1994–98	Carlos Roberto Reina Idiáquez
1998–2002	Carlos Roberto Flores Facussé
2002–05	Ricardo Maduro
2005	Manuel Zelaya Rosales

CONSTITUTION

The 1982 constitution established a unitary and democratic republic, with a president elected for a four-year

term by popular vote. The president may not succeed himself in office. The constitution also provides for a unicameral legislature, whose members serve four-year terms concurrent with that of the chief executive.

PARLIAMENT

The national legislative body is the Asamblea Nacional (National Assembly), whose 128 representatives, from all of the 18 provinces, meet annually for a 100-day session. Although the Assembly possesses broad constitutional powers designed to prevent absolute presidential rule, in practice it is a tame appendage of the presidency. Beginning in 1997 voters were allowed to elect the president, National Assembly, and local leaders separately, in an effort to make elected officials at all levels more accountable.

POLITICAL PARTIES

The National Party of Honduras (PNH) is the country's major conservative party. The Honduran Liberal Party (PLH) is the major liberal party of Honduras; the two most recent presidents have been affiliated with this party.

Other prominent parties include Partido de Innovación y Unidad (PINU), an offshoot of the PNH; the centrist Partido Demócrata Cristiano (PDC), or Christian Democrats; the Partido Unión Democrática (PUD), the Democratic Unification Party; and the Partido Nacional, the National Party of Honduras.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The country is divided into 18 departments, each headed by a governor appointed by the president to serve a four-year term. The 18 departments are divided into 282 municipalities, of which 63 are urban centers. Municipalities are further subdivided into units called *aldeas*, which are villages or hamlets. Settlements smaller than *aldeas* are known as *caseríos*.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The Honduran legal system is based on Roman and Spanish civil law as influenced by English common law. The courts have recently abandoned the Napoleonic Code and replaced it with oral advocacy. The judicial system consists of the Supreme Court, five courts of appeal, and several courts of original jurisdiction, including specialty courts for tax, labor, and criminal matters. The Supreme Court consists of seven judges, appointed since 1972 by the president. The constitution grants the Supreme Court the right to appoint lower court judges, to

declare laws unconstitutional, and to censure ministers, but these powers are rarely exercised. The five courts of appeal are composed of three judges each. Two are in Tegucigalpa, one each in San Pedro Sula, Comayagua, and Santa Bárbara. Original jurisdiction in criminal cases lies with the courts of first instance, each presided over by a single judge.

Although slow and at times cumbersome, the judicial system does allow for fair trials. There are no secret tribunals. There are delays resulting from administrative inefficiency, however, and adequate access to the legal process is not always available to those at the lower end of the social and economic scale. The constitution provides for judicial independence.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Although discrimination based on sex, race, class, or “in any form that harms human dignity” is prohibited by the constitution, discrimination and violence against indigenous people, homosexuals, and women are widespread. The government has drawn much criticism from international human rights groups for not investigating or taking action with regard to human rights abuses, including many alleged abuses by the police and military. Investigations continue into the “disappearances” of leftist activists in the 1980s, which were caused by paramilitary groups supported by both the Honduran and the Nicaraguan governments, but little progress has been made. Although the most recent president is also a co-owner of a newspaper, *La tribuna*, human rights groups have continued to report the harassment, arrest, censorship, and torture of journalists. The World Bank has estimated that one in five Hondurans is the victim of corruption. President Maduro’s harsh antigang laws have resulted in the imprisonment or extrajudicial execution of thousands of minors. As of 1999 over 10,000 people were held in prison, most of them still awaiting trial; many had already served longer than their maximum possible sentence if convicted. Various human rights and environmental activists have been killed. Violence against women, child labor, and human trafficking in sex slaves were all problems.

FOREIGN POLICY

Honduras’s key aims in foreign policy are to ease tensions with other Central American countries and improve economic conditions via foreign investment. The nation has been relatively successful with respect to both. It has entered an agreement to reduce restrictions to trade with Guatemala, Nicaragua, and El Salvador. Although the United States was out of favor in the 1980s because of its contributions to unrest (through involvement in El Salvador and most particularly Nicaragua), relations have

improved, and the United States is one of many countries providing the country with direct aid, investment, or loans. Nicaragua protested and cut off Honduran trade when it ratified a 1986 treaty with Colombia, but Honduras’s relations with its other Central American neighbors are significantly better.

DEFENSE

In 1999 control of the armed forces was moved to a civilian minister of defense and out of the direct control of the president. Before this change in the law the Honduran Armed Forces (HOAF) had much freedom in carrying out duties and were reported to engage in human rights violations with impunity. Because of such problems caused by the military in the past, those on active military duty are not allowed to vote. Service in the armed forces is voluntary, and Honduras has sought to modernize its defense forces, as influenced heavily by aid and advisers from the United States. The military currently spends much of its energy combating organized crime and drug trafficking. Since the end of the draft, the all-volunteer force has become much smaller and suffers considerable gaps in staffing.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	18,000
Military Manpower Availability:	1,642,029
Military Expenditures \$million:	99.8
as % of GDP:	1.5
as % of central government expenditures:	—
Arms Imports \$million:	—
Arms Exports \$million:	—

ECONOMY

Honduras is a very poor country, with little infrastructure development or industry. It is still recovering from years of unrest and the \$2 billion in damage wrought by Hurricane Mitch in 1998. The Honduran economy has been based on agriculture, especially the exports of bananas, coffee, beef, and timber, but many of these markets are vulnerable to climate problems and price fluctuations. The coffee industry in particular has been hurt by low global prices, and the banana industry was devastated by Hurricane Mitch. The nation is currently working to diversify its economy by developing a *maquila* industry—assembling garments for sale in other countries—as well as farming nontraditional exports such as shrimp and melons and encouraging tourists to visit. The *maquila* sector is currently the largest source of foreign revenue, but remittances from Hondurans living abroad will soon surpass that sector. The government has begun offering incentives to foreign companies considering locating facilities in Honduras.

Inflation was 7.7 percent in 2003, a vast improvement from the double-digit rates of the late 1990s. Unemployment was a very high 27.5 percent. Honduras is classified as a Heavily Indebted Poor Country (HIPC), which qualifies it for multilateral debt relief, but the International Monetary Fund (IMF) halted that program because of the Honduran government's fiscal problems. In 2004 the IMF and Honduras agreed to a new three-year poverty-reduction plan.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 17.55
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 2,600
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 2.3
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: –0.3
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 12.8
 Industry: 31.9
 Services: 55.3
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 70
 Government Consumption: 12
 Gross Domestic Investment: 24
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 1.37
 Imports: 3.11
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 0.6
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 42.7

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
188.9	209.8	230.1	247.8	266.8

Finance

National Currency: Lempira (HNL)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = HNL 17.3453
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 17.26
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: —
 Total External Debt \$billion: 5.246
 Debt Service Ratio %: 9.45
 Balance of Payments \$million: –279.6
 International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 1.4
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
 7.7

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 389
 per capita \$: 55.80
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 198

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$billion: 1.342
 Expenditures \$billion: 1.744
 Budget Deficit \$million: 402
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 12.8
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 3.3
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 0.5
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 5.6
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 47
 Total Farmland % of land area: 9.6
 Livestock: Cattle million: 2.4
 Chickens million: 18.7
 Pigs 000: 478
 Sheep 000: 12.5
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 9.7
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 26.8

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 1.25
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 7.7

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 251
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 1.84
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 278
 Net Energy Imports % of use: 52.8
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: 912
 Production kW-hr billion: 3.801
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 3.835
 Coal Reserves tons billion: —
 Production tons 000: —
 Consumption tons 000: 136
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
 Production cubic feet billion: —
 Consumption cubic feet billion: —
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
 Production barrels 000 per day: —
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 33
 Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 3.11
 Exports \$billion: 1.37
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 0.2
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 3.1
 Balance of Trade \$million: –279.6

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
United States %	53.1	65.5
El Salvador %	4.5	3.5
Mexico %	3.0	—
Guatemala %	—	2.4

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 13,603
 Paved %: 20.4
 Automobiles: 46,000
 Trucks and Buses: 39,300
 Railroad: Track Length km: 699
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: —
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 238
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 616.2
 Airports: 115
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: —
 Length of Waterways km: 465

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 610
 Number of Tourists from 000: 277
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 341
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 217

Communications

Telephones 000: 322.5
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones 000: 326.5
 Personal Computers 000: 100
 Internet Hosts per million people: 279
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 24

ENVIRONMENT

Honduras suffers from deforestation and soil erosion due to the exploitation of natural resources, as people clear land to grow crops and for timber. At the current rate of deforestation, all of Honduras's native forests could be gone by 2025. Honduras once exported a good amount of mahogany, but now most of its wood exports are pine. The Honduran Forestry Development Corporation frequently clashes with indigenous peoples and other landowners, as it usually favors timber, mining, development, and other activities over the environment. Mining has polluted much of the country's freshwater supply, including Lake Yojoa. These problems made the damaging effects of Hurricane Mitch in 1998 much worse than they otherwise would have been. The urban population is expanding rapidly, and uncontrolled development causes land degradation and soil erosion as well as other infrastructure problems, such as the contamination of water sources with sewage.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 48.1
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: -59
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 18
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 0.74

LIVING CONDITIONS

The standard of living for most Hondurans is very low. Economic inequality is a major problem, and a large proportion of the people live in abject poverty. Housing is poor, electrical supply is unpredictable, the water supply is contaminated, and job opportunities are few and far between. Few people own automobiles because both cars and gasoline are expensive. People get around on buses or taxis, hitch rides in pick-up trucks, or simply walk.

These poor conditions have resulted in crime waves that make Honduras a relatively dangerous place to live and visit. Drug trafficking is one of the few ways for poor people to make money, so many young men and boys join gangs called *maras*. Residents of Tegucigalpa and other cities avoid walking downtown at night, and they never set foot in areas such as the Comayagüela market. The police are part of the problem, killing young people without provocation and generally adding to the sense of insecurity.

HEALTH

Honduras has very little medical care available to its population. Most citizens cannot afford to pay for drugs or doctors, or even for transportation to clinics. Some people receive publicly subsidized health care; wealthy people usually pay for their own treatment at private facilities. The majority of clinics, doctors, and nurses are located in Tegucigalpa. People in the countryside sometimes visit traditional healers, who treat ailments with herbs and folk remedies.

Hondurans on average are not healthy people. Life expectancy is low and the infant mortality rate high. Many people complain of constant fatigue even if they do not complain of illness; stunted growth from malnutrition is common. A variety of infectious diseases afflict the people, including diarrheal illnesses from contaminated water, tuberculosis, typhoid, influenza, pneumonia, malaria, and dengue fever. Drug addiction and alcoholism are growing increasingly prevalent, and in 2003, 1.8 percent of the population was infected with HIV. Fertility is high; each woman has about four children, which has caused Honduras to have a disproportionately young population: Only one-fourth of Hondurans are over age 30.

Health

Number of Physicians: 4,960
 Number of Dentists: 1,002
 Number of Nurses: 1,520
 Number of Pharmacists: —
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 83
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —

Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 29.64
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 110
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 6.2
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 60
 HIV Infected % of adults: 1.8
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 92
 Measles: 95
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 68
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 90

FOOD AND NUTRITION

The Honduran diet is based on rice, beans, and corn. People eat these basic ingredients as tortillas, tamales, and beans and rice. Other common foods are plantains, peppers, and cassava. Meat and cheese supplement the basic foodstuffs. Sliced green mangoes are a popular snack. The midday meal is usually the biggest of the day. Many people cannot afford to buy enough food for their families, so they grow vegetables to supplement their diets, occasionally selling surpluses in the market. Pineapples are a ubiquitous crop. Most people make their food from scratch, down to grinding the corn for their tortillas and roasting their own coffee beans.

Adults drink coffee with nearly every meal. Soft drinks are popular, as are drinks that mix milk, fruit juice, and *orchata*, a drink made from rice and seeds. Tap water is unsafe to drink, so many people drink bottled water; those without the means to buy water sometimes drink tap water despite the risks. Alcohol is not drunk daily, but people do enjoy drinking at parties, where they may consume wine, beer, *chichi*, which is brewed from pineapple skin, or *guaro*.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 22.5
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,390
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 119.7
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 101.1

STATUS OF WOMEN

The women's movement in Honduras has been active since the 1920s, when women fought for the rights of banana and mining workers. Women have had the right to vote since 1954. The 1984 Family Code gives rights to the children of single mothers and requires fathers to support all their children. Although women have the right to vote, they are not prevalent in high-ranking corporate and government positions, and they earn considerably less than their male counterparts.

Honduran men are still raised in the tradition of machismo, in which they are expected to be assertive and

strong and to be good supporters of their families. Women are still expected to be submissive and put their families ahead of their own aspirations. This has been changing as more women work outside the home, but few Honduran men are willing to help with housework.

Domestic and other types of violence against women are widespread. In 1997 the criminal code was changed so that domestic violence and sexual harassment became crimes. That same year the Assembly passed the Law against Domestic Violence, which strengthened penalties for domestic violence and allowed the government to set up shelters. To date, however, only one shelter is operational. In 1998, 3,000 women sought legal action under the 1997 law. Also in 1998 the military and police academies accepted female students for the first time.

Human trafficking in sex slaves is a major problem. The government has made legal efforts to stop this trade, but it continues nevertheless.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 6
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.05
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 50.5

WORK

Over one-quarter of Hondurans of working age either are unable to find any kind of employment or make their money in illegal enterprises such as drug dealing. Of those who work, one-third are employed in agriculture, many of them as seasonal workers. The banana and coffee industries still employ a large number of people, and shrimp, pineapple, and sugarcane are growing in importance. Banana and coffee workers are organized into trade unions, and the wages for those workers are some of the highest in the nation; this is the result of the 1954 Great Banana Strike. Other Hondurans work in factories making garments and other products; these jobs pay somewhat less than coffee and banana work. A few people work in professions such as teaching or medicine. Many women work as domestics. Child labor is quite common.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 2,410,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 34.5
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 34
 Industry: 21
 Services: 45
 Unemployment %: 27.5

EDUCATION

The literacy rate is 73 percent. Education is free, universal, and compulsory, in theory, for six years, from the ages of seven to 13. Schooling lasts 11 to 12 years. The academic year runs from February through November. All private schools that meet standards, including those run by the Catholic Church, are subsidized by the government. The main public university is the National Autonomous University, founded in Tegucigalpa in 1847. There are three private universities.

In practice, most children never make it past second or third grade. Many people forget how to read because they never use the skill after leaving school. Rural areas do not have many secondary schools, and schools throughout the country lack supplies and teachers. Only about 10 percent of the population ever attends secondary school, which is where people receive training in trades such as carpentry, computer technology, or teaching.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 76.2
 Male %: 76.1
 Female %: 76.3
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: —
 First Level: Primary schools: 8,186
 Teachers: 32,754
 Students: 1,115,579
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 34.1
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 87.5
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 661
 Teachers: —
 Students: 315,940
 Student-Teacher Ratio: —
 Net Enrollment Ratio: —
 Third Level: Institutions: 8
 Teachers: 5,500
 Students: 96,612
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 15.2
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 4.0

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Honduras's government runs the Consejo Hondureño de Ciencia y Tecnología (Honduran Council of Science and Technology) to handle national scientific policy. For the most part, the nation is not technologically advanced. The telephone system is inadequate for the size of the population, electrical supply is unreliable, and many people cannot read well. In 2002 only about 170,000 people were using the Internet.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 73
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 0.05

High-Tech Exports \$million: 0.3
 Patent Applications by Residents: 7

MEDIA

The Honduran government restricts freedom of the press through strict antidefamation laws, which prevent honest reporting; journalists are required to identify their sources, which limits the amount of material they are willing to publish. Most journalists censor themselves in order to avoid offending politicians and other influential people. Politicians have been known to bribe journalists to receive favorable coverage.

Five daily newspapers are published in Honduras, all in Spanish. The most influential daily is *La prensa*. Other large newspapers include the left-of-center *El tiempo* and the independent *La tribuna*. There are numerous radio and television stations, most of them privately owned.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 5
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: 26
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets 000: 600
 per 1,000: 95

CULTURE

Honduras has produced many visual artists, especially painters. López Rodezno founded the National School of Arts and Crafts and painted murals. José Antonio Velázquez painted primitive paintings of village life and won the National Prize for Art in 1955. Cruz Bermudez has become famous for his paintings of endangered species. Honduran craftsmen carve animals from wood, form figures and vessels from clay, make jewelry, and weave cloth. Mayan temples still display ancient carvings and ceramics.

There are many Honduran writers, though most Honduran people cannot afford to buy books. Famous authors include Marcos Reyes, Lidia Handal, Ramon Amaya-Amador, and Juan Molina. Lucila Gamero de Medina wrote the first Honduran novel in 1893, at the age of 20.

Honduras has thriving native musical styles. Musicians play drums and wind instruments made of wood, bamboo, or clay as well as instruments made of turtle and conch shells. Unusual instruments include the marimba and the *caramba*.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
Volumes: —
Registered borrowers: —
Museums Number: —
Annual Attendance: —
Cinema Gross Receipts: —
Number of Cinemas: —
Seating Capacity: —
Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

The ancient Maya lived in the area that is now Honduras and had an active mythological pantheon, complete with rituals that incorporated torture and human sacrifice. Some Maya still live in Honduras today. Modern Hondurans incorporate folklore into their daily lives, telling stories at festivals; many stories have been passed through multiple generations by the oral tradition. The audience often participates in the telling of stories, singing a chorus at pauses, a tradition that comes from West Africa. People tell tales of a frightening man called a *duende* and another of the day the rooster overslept, so no one got up. A modern folktale based on an actual event is that of the “rain of fish”: sometimes thunderstorms will pick up fish and drop them on the ground in Yoro. This unusual event has become a favorite theme for native paintings. Festivals also include traditional folk dancing; each region has its own distinctive style.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Hondurans like to spend their free time visiting family and friends. Games are a popular pastime; people enjoy chess, checkers, cards, and billiards. Children play games such as marbles, hopscotch, and kick the can and like to fly kites. Girls and women love to dance; they begin taking dancing lessons at a young age. Villages commonly hold dances on holidays and weekend, and the cities have discos where people go to dance.

During holidays people enjoy visiting the beach, where they swim, surf, and have picnics. Families like to visit the national parks to see the native plants and animals. The Bay Islands are a popular destination for scuba divers and whale watchers.

ETIQUETTE

Hondurans are not always punctual, and lateness is not considered cause for offense. When greeting people, it is polite to shake hands and to exchange business cards if the meeting is for business purposes. People always like to

engage in small talk before discussing business. It is polite to address people by their formal or academic titles.

FAMILY LIFE

Hondurans believe family is extremely important; they have close ties to relatives and will help one another in times of need. Relatives share resources. The system helps parents because there are always kin to watch children, allowing many women to leave home to work for money. Grandparents are held in high esteem, and people ask them for advice; few people live to old age, which makes them that much more valuable. Single-parent families are relatively common. Society looks down on men who abandon their families, but it happens occasionally nevertheless. Many couples do not marry in the Catholic Church, preferring to have a civil ceremony or simply to live together without marrying.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Professionals in Tegucigalpa dress formally, in suits, but in other cities people tend to dress more casually. People in the countryside dress quite casually and usually do not have very extensive wardrobes.

SPORTS

Soccer is the most popular sport in Honduras and inspires great passion among fans. Both men and boys play. The best soccer players are national heroes. Baseball and basketball also have a number of followers. For the most part girls do not participate in organized sports, preferring to spend their time dancing. Famous Honduran athletes include the women's basketball player Leticia Castro and the soccer player Caneja Cardona.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1944** Demonstrations outside the Presidential Palace initially result in the release of some prisoners but are soon crushed by the military and secret police.
- 1949** After opposition parties boycott the election, PNH candidate Juan Manuel Gálvez becomes president almost unanimously.
United Fruit obtains a 25-year contract with very favorable terms.
- 1954** Guatemalan governmental reform inspires strikes in Honduras.
Honduras works first with the United States to overthrow the Guatemalan government, then with the fruit companies to crush the strikes.

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- Following an electoral crisis Vice President Lozano Díaz proclaims himself president.
- 1956** Maj. Roberto Gálvez seizes power in a coup and rules the country through a U.S.-trained military junta.
- 1957** Gálvez promulgates a new constitution.
- 1958** Ramón Villeda Morales is elected president.
- 1963** A few weeks before the end of his six-year term, Villeda is ousted by an army coup led by Osvaldo López Arellano.
- 1965** A new constitution is promulgated.
- 1969** Riots sparked by the World Cup soccer match between Honduras and El Salvador lead to a four-day war.
Under the auspices of the Organization of American States (OAS), the two warring nations agree to a compromise settlement.
- 1971** López initiates the Pact of National Unity, under which seats in the National Assembly are to be divided equally between the National and Liberal parties.
López steps down, and Ramón Ernesto Cruz Ucles is elected president.
- 1972** Cruz is deposed, and López returns to power.
The United States acknowledges Honduran sovereignty over the Swan Islands.
- 1974** Hurricane Fifi strikes Honduras, leaving 12,000 dead and 150,000 homeless.
- 1975** United Brands admits paying a “high Honduran official” (by implication, the president) \$1.25 million for a reduction in banana export taxes.
López is overthrown and replaced by Juan Alberto Melgar.
- 1976** Renewed border conflicts with El Salvador lead to OAS intervention.
- 1978** Political parties are legalized.
Melgar is ousted after charges surface that he was associated with a \$30-million drug ring.
- 1980** The Liberal Party, led by Robert Suazo Córdova, wins National Assembly elections, but real power remains in the hands of the military, especially the chief of staff, Gen. Gustavo Alvarez.
- 1982** General Alvarez instigates an amendment to the constitution whereby the president is stripped of his authority as commander in chief.
- 1984** General Alvarez is ousted and sent into exile by a group of junior army officers. General Walter López Reyes is named commander in chief.
- 1985** In national elections José Azcona Hoyo of the Liberal Party is awarded the presidency, although he polled less than 30 percent of the vote, while his rival, Rafael Leonardo Callejas of the National Party, polled 44 percent.
- 1986** Honduras and Nicaragua renew border fighting as Nicaraguan government forces continue to wage war against contra rebels in Honduran territory.
- 1987** Honduras is a signatory to the Central American peace plan for the region.
- 1988** At the government’s request, the United States airlifts 3,200 troops into Honduras to repel Nicaraguan troops.
Amnesty International and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights report human rights violations in Honduras.
- 1989** Honduras and Nicaragua negotiate amnesty terms offered the contras within Honduras.
Rafael Leonardo Callejas wins the presidential election.
- 1994** Carlos Roberto Reina Idiáquez takes office as president.
- 1997** The National Police is placed under civilian, rather than military, leadership.
- 1998** Carlos Roberto Flores Facussé takes office as president.
- 1999** The constitution is amended to provide for civilian control of the military.
Honduras ratifies a treaty (signed in 1986) with Colombia regarding the San Andrés y Providencia islands, prompting Nicaragua to suspend trade with Honduras.
- 2000** Death squads backed by the police murder over 1,000 street children.
- 2001** Ricardo Maduro is elected president. The United Nations calls on the government to prevent the killing of street children.
- 2002** Maduro is inaugurated. Honduras reestablishes diplomatic ties with Cuba.
- 2003** Honduras sends troops to Iraq. Honduras formalizes free-trade agreement with the United States, along with El Salvador, Guatemala, and Nicaragua.
- 2004** Over 100 inmates, many of them gang members, die in a fire at San Pedro Sula prison. Gang members attack a bus in Chamalecon and kill 28 passengers.
- 2005** Manuel Zelaya Rosales is elected president.

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OFFICIAL PUBLICATIONS

Honduras. *Anuario estadístico; Censo nacional de población y vivienda*, 1988; *Honduras—Statistical Appendix* (IMF Staff Country Report), 1997; *Honduras en cifras* (annual)

INTERNET RESOURCES

- Honduras general information
<http://www.hondurasnet.com>

HUNGARY

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Hungary (Magyar Köztársaság)

ABBREVIATION

HU

CAPITAL

Budapest

HEAD OF STATE

President László Sólyom (from 2005)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Ferenc Gyurcsány (from 2004)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Parliamentary democracy

POPULATION

10,006,835 (2004)

AREA

93,030 sq km (35,919 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Magyar

LANGUAGE

Hungarian

RELIGIONS

Roman Catholicism, Calvinism, Lutheranism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Forint

NATIONAL FLAG

Tricolor of red, white, and green horizontal stripes, from top to bottom

NATIONAL EMBLEM

The left side of the coat of arms is divided by four red and three white stripes, known as the “Arpad stripes,” representing the seven Hungarian tribes that arrived in Transylvania in 896 c.e. On the right side are three green hills that symbolize the three main mountains of Hungary: Tatra, Fatra, and Matra. On the middle hilltop sits an open golden crown, from which emerges the apostolic double cross that was awarded by Pope Sylvester II to Saint Stephen I, the first Hungarian king, in 1000 c.e., in recognition of his mission to convert the pagan Hungarians to Christianity.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“God Bless the Hungarians”

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year’s Day), March 15 (1848 Revolution), Easter Monday, May 1 (Labor Day), August 20 (Foundation of State/St. Stephen’s Day), October 23 (National Day), All Saints’ Day, Christmas, Boxing Day

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

November 16, 1918

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

August 20, 1949; revised April 19, 1972, and October 18, 1989; amended 1997

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Hungary, a landlocked country in the Carpathian Basin of central Europe, has a total area of 93,030 sq km (35,919 sq mi). The country is generally divided into four topographic regions: the Great Hungarian Plain (Nagy Magyar Alföld), more commonly called the Great Alföld; Dunar Túl, the Hungarian name for Transdanubia; the Kis, or Little, Alföld; and the Northern Mountains. The Great Alföld accounts for about half of the total land area and is made up of the lowlands east of the Danube. It has a mean elevation of little more than 91 m (300 ft), with

the largest deviation from the average elevation on the plateau between the Danube and Tisza rivers and in an area in the northeast along the Romanian border. The plateau is about 30–46 m (100–150 ft) higher than the floodplains of the rivers, and the northeastern hills reach approximately 183 m (600 ft).

Transdanubia consists of rolling country, with uplands to the west, at the foothills of the Alps. Lake Balaton, the last remnant of the ancient Pannonian Sea, is roughly in the center of this region. To its east and extending to the Danube is the lowland known as the Mezőföld. To the south are the Somogy, or the Transdanubian, Hills,

Hungary



and the Mecsek and Villány mountains. On the Austrian border the alpine foothills rise to over 914 m (3,000 ft). The Transdanubian Central Mountains extend along the northern side of Lake Balaton. The chain consists of several minor ranges, with elevation between 213 and 762 m (700 and 2,500 ft).

The Little Alföld, bordering Slovakia and Austria, is mostly agricultural land. The Northern Mountains are the lower volcanic fringe of the Carpathian Mountains and extend northeastward from the gorge of the Danube near Esztergom for about 225 km (140 mi). Their highest point, Mount Kékes in the Matra Range, has an elevation of 1,014 m (3,326 ft).

The entire country is in the middle Danube Basin. Local rivers in northern Transdanubia and the Little Alföld flow into the Danube within Hungary, but others drain into the Drava and Tisza tributaries and join the Danube in Serbia. The Tisza is the Danube's second-largest tributary, and it meanders across the Great

Alföld. In contrast to the Danube, its streambed is flat, and it has virtually no valleys. The Drava, slightly smaller than the Tisza, accumulates most of its volume in Austria, flows across the northern tip of Serbia, forms part of the Hungarian-Serbian border for about 129 km (80 mi), and turns back into Yugoslavia again for about 64 km (40 mi) before joining the Danube.

There are three large and well-known lakes in the country. Lake Balaton, about 72 km (45 mi); Neusiedler Lake (Fertő tó), on the northwestern border, is shared with Austria; and Lake Velence, filled artificially to maintain proper depths for fishing and bathing.

Geography

Area sq km: 93,030; sq mi 35,919

World Rank: 108th

Land Boundaries, km: Austria 366, Croatia 329, Romania 443, Serbia and Montenegro 151, Slovakia 677, Slovenia 102, Ukraine 103

Coastline, km: 0

(continues)

Geography *(continued)*

Elevation Extremes meters:
Lowest: Tisza River 78
Highest: Mount Kékes 1,014
Land Use %
Arable Land: 50.1
Permanent Crops: 2.1
Forest: 20.0
Other: 27.8

Population of Principal Cities (2001)

Budapest	1,775,203
Debrecen	211,034
Győr	129,412
Kecskemét	107,749
Miskolc	184,125
Nyíregyháza	118,795
Pécs	162,498
Szeged	168,372
Székesfehérvár	106,346

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Hungary experiences three weather systems: continental air masses dominate the weather about 65 percent of the time in winter and 20 percent of the time in summer; maritime, or Atlantic, weather prevails about 30 percent of the time in winter and 65 percent of the time in summer; and subtropical Mediterranean weather prevails for the remainder of the time, about 5 percent in winter and 15 percent in summer.

Geography and topographic relief account for the lesser influences from the maritime and Mediterranean systems. The country is more than 1,126 km (700 mi) from the Atlantic Ocean, from which it is separated by the Alps. It is nearer the Mediterranean but also separated from that body of water by high terrain. On the other hand, clear, dry air from the high-pressure polar and continental air masses, circulating clockwise, enters the country from the southern quadrants. The low hills of the eastern Carpathians provide little resistance to its entry into the Danube Basin, but once there it tends to be trapped and is difficult to dislodge.

Nevertheless, the weather that reaches Hungary from the Atlantic and the Mediterranean is moderating and brings in a great portion of the country's precipitation. Rainfall averages 711 mm (28 in) per year in the western part of the country and 559 mm (22 in) in the eastern part. Even the most arid portions of the Great Alföld receive about 508 mm (20 in). However, the seasonal distribution of rain differs widely and may be higher or lower.

The mean temperature for the country as a whole is about 10°C (50°F). Budapest and the extreme southeastern regions are warmer, and higher elevations cooler, than average. July is the hottest month, with an average

of 21°C (70°F), and January the coldest, with an average of -2°C (29°F). Winters are warmer and summers are cooler in Transdanubia than in the Great Alföld. The highest temperature recorded in the country over a 175-year period was 41°C (106°F) in Pécs in southern Transdanubia in 1950; the lowest, -34°C (-29°F) in Debrecen in 1942. Typical annual extremes are about 35°C (95°F) and -26°C (-15°F).

The surrounding mountains isolate Hungary from strong winds. Over the greater part of the country, winds are most frequently from the north and northwest. East of the Tisza and in the eastern portion of the Northern Mountains, they are most often from the northeast.

The annual average of sunshine is about 5.5 hours per day, or 2,000 hours per year. The range varies from one hour and 15 minutes per day in December to nine hours and 40 minutes per day in August. In general, western regions are slightly less sunny than those in the east, and the plateau between the Danube and the Tisza experiences the most sunshine.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature: 50°F
July: 70°F
January: 29°F
Highest recorded temperature: 106°F in Pecs
Lowest recorded temperature: -29°F in Debrecen
Average Rainfall
Western part: 28 in
Eastern part: 22 in
Great Plain: 20 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Two-thirds of Hungary is flat, low-lying land, less than 200 meters above sea level. The Great Alföld lies east of the Danube and covers almost half the area of Hungary. Wheat and fruit are grown in this area, which is also used for grazing. The people of the Great Alföld are known for their horses and their riding skills. In the center of the Great Alföld is an area known as the Hortobágy Puszta, a region of flat grassland which has inspired many Hungarian poets and artists. Along the northern border of Hungary rise the Matra Mountains. Some of the mountains in this region are of volcanic origin. To the west of the Danube, in an area known as Transdanubia, the terrain is varied. There are mountainous areas in the south, and in the northwest is the Little Alföld. In the center of Transdanubia is Lake Balaton, Central Europe's largest lake and a popular resort area. Hungary has five national parks and almost 1,000 protected areas. The country is known for its hot springs; Budapest, the capital, has about 80. Hungary's climate is dry and continental. In the south, summers are long and winters mild and wet. The Great Plain has cold, windy winters and hot, dry summers. The long, warm and

sunny autumn, known as *venasszonyok nyara*, or “old ladies’ summer,” helps produce fine fruits and sweet wine grapes. May, June and November are the rainiest months.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005:	10,006,835
World Rank:	81st
Density per sq km:	110.0
% of annual growth (1999-2003):	0.0
Male %:	47.6
Female %:	52.4
Urban %:	65.4
Age Distribution %:	
0–14:	16.0
15–64:	69.0
65 and over:	15.0
Population 2025:	9,438,000
Birth Rate per 1,000:	9.77
Death Rate per 1,000:	13.16
Rate of Natural Increase %:	-0.4
Total Fertility Rate:	1.31
Expectation of Life (years):	
Males:	68.07
Females:	76.69
Marriage Rate per 1,000:	4.5
Divorce Rate per 1,000:	2.5
Average Size of Households:	2.9
Induced Abortions:	56,075

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

About 96 percent of the population is Magyar (the proper term for “Hungarian”). This category includes both true Magyars and those who have been assimilated into Magyar culture. The principal national minorities, who constitute about 4 percent, include Germans, Slovaks, Serbs, Croats, Romanians, and Ruthenians. Over two-thirds of each of these minority groups are peasants living in villages dispersed across the country, where rural life offers a better environment for preserving individuality. There is little evidence of interethnic friction, although constitutional provisions for bilingual education for minorities are not entirely enforced.

There are a few thousand Gypsies, or Roma, in Hungary, whom the state does not consider an ethnic minority. Prejudice against Gypsies is long established and strong.

LANGUAGES

Hungarian, or Magyar, is the national language. Written in Latin characters, Magyar belongs to the Finno-Ugric family, a branch of the Ural-Altai language group. Magyar has a heavy admixture of Turkish, Slavic, German, Latin, and French words. Since World War II many Hungarians have learned to speak one or more second languages, such as Russian, German, and English.

RELIGIONS

Roman Catholicism became the official religion of the land in 1001 under Stephen, who was given the title of apostolic king by the pope. Both Stephen and his son were canonized.

Catholics live mostly in Transdanubia, in the area between the Danube and Tisza rivers, and in the mountains of the north. They form the majority in 70 percent of the towns and are particularly strong among such minorities as Croats, Germans, and Slovaks. The church survived the bitter persecutions of the early postwar years under Matyas Rakosi and remains active and influential both in the rural areas and among intellectuals. Masses are well attended, and pilgrimages are frequent. External piety is no longer concealed or engaged in merely as a form of political protest.

Discrimination against Protestant churches officially ended with the Communist takeover. The new government made individual agreements with each body and subsidized the reconstruction of churches extensively damaged during the war. Religious education is subsidized by the state. The Calvinist Reformed Church of Hungary, with about 19 percent of the population, has 2,000 autonomous parishes in four districts or dioceses, two theological seminaries, several institutions of higher learning, and 20 charitable organizations. The Evangelical Lutheran Church, claiming about 4 percent of the population, is divided into two districts, with 500 parishes forming 16 seniorates, and has one theological academy and 18 social service institutions. The largest of the smaller denominations is the Baptist Church, which was established in Hungary in 1846. It has 500 congregations, one theological seminary, and three social service institutions. Methodists entered Hungary in 1900 and now have 55 congregations and one charitable institution.

The Orthodox Church has 10 parishes, serving mostly Serbian and Romanian minorities in Szentendre and Budapest. Hungarian Orthodoxy is under the Moscow Patriarchate.

Church-state relations are governed by the 1972 revision to the constitution of 1949 and by a series of laws regulating religious practice. The constitution guarantees freedom of conscience and freedom of worship.

Religious Affiliations

Roman Catholic	6,755,000
Calvinist	2,000,000
Lutheran	500,000
Other/Atheist	750,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Magyars arrived in the Carpathian Basin at the end of the ninth century, and this event generally marks the beginning of the Hungarian nation. The early Magyars were

a seminomadic, pastoral people who lived in the Khazar state north of the Black Sea, to which they had migrated probably from the region between the great bend of the Volga River and the Ural Mountains. The Magyars were one of many warlike, nomadic hordes who swept into Europe from the East, bent on conquest and plunder. They consisted of seven tribes led by a chieftain known as Arpad, and they easily defeated the Slavs and other peoples living in the Carpathian Basin. The successors of Arpad later became kings of Hungary, and the Arpad dynasty lasted until the male line died out at the beginning of the 14th century. In the course of time the Magyars ceased their depredations and became sedentary; in turn, their land was subject to invasions by other marauding armies. Finally, the Magyars were decisively defeated by a coalition of forces of the Holy Roman Empire at Augsburg.

Back in 972 Prince Geza, great-grandson of Arpad, became the leader of the entire Hungarian confederation. To solidify the Western orientation of the country, he caused his son Istvan (Stephen) to be baptized a Roman Catholic. Stephen succeeded to the throne, and through his efforts Hungarians were converted to Roman Catholicism. As a reward Stephen received a crown from the pope (a story doubted by some modern historians but indelibly inscribed in Hungarian legend). Later he was canonized, and as St. Stephen and the first king of Hungary, he is revered as the father of the Hungarian nation, and his crown is considered the symbol of its sovereignty.

During Stephen's reign Transylvania was brought under Hungarian hegemony, and the Latin script was adopted by the Magyar language. Stephen built forts in uninhabited territories between existing settlements, and in time towns grew up around them.

Although Stephen established a unitary state in which the royal authority was supreme and Crown lands extensive, the power of his successors was challenged in 1222, when the small landholders compelled the king to sign the Golden Bull, which has been compared to the Magna Carta. The Golden Bull set limits on the king but did nothing to alleviate the condition of the landless peasants.

The 13th century was one of troubles for the nation. In 1241 the Mongols invaded Hungary, devastating and depopulating the countryside. The death in 1301 of Endre III, the last Arpad in the direct male line, intensified the troubles of the realm. During the next two centuries, until the Turkish invasion, Hungary was ruled by various European royal houses. A Bohemian king gave way to a Bavarian, and he, in turn, to Charles Robert of Anjou. Charles's son Louis the Great enjoyed a successful reign and is remembered for his many financial, administrative, military, and commercial reforms. The next to wear the crown of St. Stephen was Sigismund of Luxembourg, but because he was also the Holy Roman Emperor, his interests were diffused relative to those of Hungary.

Meanwhile, the Ottoman Turks were becoming more menacing around the fringes of the Hungarian domains.

They were turned back at Belgrade, the modern capital of Serbia and Montenegro, in 1456 by Matyas Hunyadi, one of Hungary's great heroes. After Hunyadi's death his son Matyas was elected king. Known to historians as Corvinus Matthias, he gave Hungary a period of prosperity, peace, and national glory from 1458 until 1490. He established a mercenary standing army, restored public finances, and reduced the power of masters over serfs. While keeping the Turks in check, he extended the kingdom over Bohemia, Silesia, Moravia, Lower Austria, and other principalities.

After the death of Matyas, the inevitable power struggle culminated in the election of a weak king. Many of the foreign territories broke away, and the nobles became restive once more. In 1514 a serious serf uprising was suppressed with great loss of life. Under these conditions, in 1526 the Turkish and Hungarian armies met once again, in the Battle of Mohacs, in which the latter was disastrously defeated, signaling the beginning of 150 years of Turkish rule. Hungary was partitioned, with the western and northern sections under Austrian rule, the central area under direct Turkish rule, and Transylvania governed by Hungarian princes under Turkish suzerainty.

When the Turks were finally forced to withdraw from Hungary, the three-way partition was replaced by Hapsburg dominion rather than independence. The economy was in shambles as a result of extortionate Turkish taxation. The population was sharply reduced, and most of the people who survived were in a condition of servitude. Only Transylvania, ruled by a series of able Hungarian princes, was able to maintain the national culture. The principality also enjoyed a measure of religious tolerance unique in Europe at that time.

Although conditions were desperate, the national will to independence survived. Toward the end of the 18th century a national renaissance began to enhance Hungarian pride in native culture and language. Around 1830 a great reform movement began, led by Count Istvan Szechenyi, a moderate, on the one hand and Lajos Kossuth, a landless noble and revolutionary, on the other. These two leaders became the opposite poles of the Hungarian response to the revolutionary ferment of the 19th century. Szechenyi wanted to educate the masses and reform the system, but Kossuth wanted to unleash the masses and topple the system. Szechenyi was led by critical realism, Kossuth by nationalistic idealism.

When repression followed the demand for moderate reforms, Kossuth gained ascendancy. Influenced by the news of revolution in Paris, in 1848 Kossuth demanded the abolition of serfdom, the establishment of popular representation, and the replacement of control from Vienna by a Budapest-based government. These demands were placed before King Ferdinand, who responded favorably by appointing Count Lajos Batthyany as president of a Hungarian council. The Diet was established as a bicameral legislature to be elected for three years, but suffrage was

limited to Hungarian-speakers with certain property and educational qualifications. The king was bound to act as a constitutional monarch through responsible ministers.

The success was short-lived. Austrian reactionaries and Hungarian counterrevolutionaries set national minorities against the Hungarians, and there were violent conflicts between Hungarians on the one hand and Croats, Serbs, Romanians, and Slovaks on the other. King Ferdinand was forced to abdicate, and his successor, Francis Joseph, stated that he was not bound by the concessions of his predecessor. On April 14, 1849, Kossuth declared Hungary's independence and set up a national government. The Austrians, backed by the Russians, then moved with direct military force and crushed the revolt. Kossuth was exiled. Hungary was incorporated into the empire as a province, but some of its historic lands, such as Transylvania and Croatia, were separated from it to destroy its unity and strength.

The next 16 years were characterized by an absolute regime ruling by imperial decree. The period of reaction was dominated by Alexander von Bach, minister of internal affairs and a revolutionary agitator turned tool of absolutism. Repression and persecution fostered the development of intense national patriotism accompanied by the hatred of everything Austrian. The nationalist groups were united in their opposition to Vienna but divided in the methods they espoused. Both the old conservatives and the moderates, the latter led by Ferenc Deak, wanted a return to the constitutional arrangements of 1847–48, while the radicals and emigrants, led by Kossuth, wanted nothing less than the expulsion of Austrians. Meanwhile, Austria's defeat in the wars against Italy, France, and Prussia and its growing isolation, especially from Russia, led it to moderate its own stand and adopt the Compromise of 1867. In effect, it established a dual monarchy with a common king but two governments. Parliamentary bodies functioned in both states, and ministers involved with matters of common concern—finance, defense, and foreign affairs—were responsible to equal delegations from the two parliaments, which sat alternately in the two capitals. Agreements concerning commerce and customs were made subject to periodic revisions every 10 years.

Although the emperor remained loyal to the compromise until his death in 1916, the Austrian officialdom was adamantly obstructive and caused problems for the Hungarian government. Moreover, the problems of minorities remained thorns in the side of Hungary; that involving the Croats was the most critical. The onset of World War I, the subsequent defeat of Austria, and the death of Francis Joseph in 1916 sounded the death knell of the compromise.

In 1918 Count Mihály Károlyi, a leader of the left wing of the Party of Independence, was appointed prime minister and formed a cabinet consisting of Social Democrats, radicals, and members of his own party. He declared Hungary a republic. However, the Allies accepted

Italian, South Slav, Romanian, and Czech territorial demands against Hungary and ordered the country's dismemberment. Gradually, the Karolyi government was infiltrated at all levels by Communists, who had in many instances returned from Russian prisoner-of-war camps, where they were influenced by Leninists. In 1919 Karolyi was forced to step down in favor of Bela Kun, a Communist, who unleashed a reign of terror that lasted for five months, until he was ousted by a reactionary regime led by Admiral Miklós Horthy de Nagybanya, who was declared regent. In 1920 Hungary was forced to accept the dictated war settlement embodied in the Treaty of Trianon. By this treaty, which most Hungarians considered savage and unjust, Hungary lost 72 percent of its territory and 64 percent of its population to the so-called successor states to the dual monarchy.

The interwar years were characterized by reaction and reconstruction. The Depression and the influence of the rise of national socialism in Germany were keenly felt in the evolution of Hungarian political and social institutions. The prime ministers during this period were Count István Bethlen of the Party of Unity, who held office until 1931; Gyula Károli, from 1931 to 1932; General Gyula Gómbós, who held power until 1936; Kálmán Darányi, 1936–38; Bála Imrády, 1938–39; and Count Pál Teleki, 1939–41. Although Teleki was determinedly anti-German, Hungary received from Germany through the first and second Vienna accords 11,917 sq km (4,600 sq mi) of territory from Czechoslovakia and 41,451 sq km (16,000 sq mi) and 2.5 million people from northern Transylvania.

During the Second World War, Hungary became a virtual German satellite. Teleki was driven to suicide, and the next prime minister, László Bárdossy, collaborated with the Nazis in promoting Hungarian participation in the war. Horthy dismissed Bardossy for declaring war against the United States without consent and appointed Miklós Kállay as prime minister. When Kállay began negotiating with the Allies, Hitler occupied Hungary. In 1944 Horthy arranged an armistice and broke off his alliance with the Nazis, for which he was arrested. By Christmas 1944, Soviet troops had occupied Budapest, and the nation's second Communist government in modern history was set up.

After rigging elections in 1947, the Communists were thrust into power in Hungary by the Soviets. The Hungarian people never reconciled themselves to Soviet control, however, and rebelled in 1956. The Soviets crushed the revolution by the use of blunt force. Reacting to the bloodshed, a milder form of Communism was installed in the country under the direction of János Kádár, who remained in power until 1988. Under Kádár the Hungarians practiced a form of consumer-oriented communism. By the mid-1970s Hungary was by far the richest and sociopolitically most liberal of the countries under Soviet influence.

The economic downturn of the 1980s combined with the growing desire for freedom led to the downfall of Com-

munism. In 1989 the country declared itself the Republic of Hungary. The following year Hungary held its first free elections since before World War II. The economy and country initially flourished under its newfound freedom; the pace of economic growth began to decline, however, as foreign investors and Western nations began to more critically evaluate its spending. By 1994 the economy was bad enough that the Socialists came to power in elections. The country continued to move forward despite high unemployment, a growing organized crime syndicate, and the slow conversion of state corporations to private ones. In 1997 Hungary was invited to apply for membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO). The following year talks began with the European Union. In 1999 Hungary was admitted to NATO.

In August 2000 Ferenc Mádl took office as president. In the summer of 2001 the parliament passed a controversial law that entitled Hungarians living in neighboring nations to take advantage of Hungarian benefits; this law had to be amended in 2003 after complaints from the other nations that it interfered with their sovereignty and from ethnic minorities who claimed that the law discriminated against them. In May 2002 prime minister Péter Medgyessy formed a center-left coalition between the liberal Free Democrats and the Socialists. A month later Medgyessy was accused of working as a counterintelligence officer in the secret service under Soviet authority; he admitted the truth of the accusations but denied ever collaborating with the KGB or acting against Hungary's interests. Medgyessy constantly emphasized his efforts to get Hungary in line with western Europe and the United States and the importance of becoming an EU member.

Hungary joined the European Union in 2004 after a fairly tepid turnout of voters to approve the measure. Medgyessy resigned as prime minister that September and was replaced by sports minister Ferenc Gyurcsány.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

President	
1920–44	Miklós Horthy
1944–45	Ferenc Szalasi
1944–46	Béla Miklós
1946–48	Zoltán Tildy
194–50	Árpád Szakasits
1950–52	Sándor Rónai
1952–67	István Dobi
1967–87	Pál Losonczi
1987–88	Károly Németh
1988–89	Brunó Ferenc Straub
1989–90	Mátyás Szűrös
1990–2000	Árpád Göncz
2000–2005	Ferenc Mádl
2005–	László Sólyom

Prime Minister

1921–31	Count István Bethlen
1931–32	Count Gyula Károlyi
1932–36	Gyula Gömbös
1936–38	Kálmán Darányi
1938–39	Béla Imrédy
1939–41	Count Pál Teleki
1941–42	László Bárdossy
1942–44	Miklós Kállay
1944	Döme Sztójay
1944	Géza Lakatos
1944–45	Ferenc Szálasi
1944–45	Béla Miklós
1945–46	Zoltán Tildy
1946	Mátyás Rákosi
1946–47	Ferenc nagy
1947–48	Lajos Dinnyés
1948–52	István Dobi
1952–53	Mátyás Rákosi
1953–55	Imre Nagy
1955–56	András Hegedüs
1956	Imre Nagy
1956–58	János Kádár
1958–61	Ferenc Münnich
1961–65	János Kádár
1965–67	Gyula Kállai
1967–75	Jenő Fock
1975–87	György Lázár
1987–88	Károly Grósz
1988–90	Miklós Németh
1990–93	József Antall
1993–94	Péter Boross
1994–98	Gyula Horn
1998–2002	Viktor Orbán
2003–04	Péter Medgyessy
2004–	Ferenc Gyurcsány

CONSTITUTION

As the 1980s began, the leadership of Hungary admitted that its constitution was basically a reflection of the 1936 “Stalinist” Soviet constitution and decided that in light of the country's political transformation a new “European-type” constitution must be enacted. Constitutional experts began its preparation in 1982 by studying modern foreign constitutions, including the U.S. document. The first draft, made public on November 30, 1988, reflected a continuation of the one-party Hungarian Socialist Worker's Party (HSWP) system and provoked widespread criticism by reformists—the alternative organizations and associations—who demanded deletion of references to “socialist society” and the leading role of the HSWP.

The second draft, published on January 30, 1989, provided for a parliamentary democracy based on a multiparty system. The following month the HSWP's Cen-

tral Committee agreed to the exclusion of its mention in the constitution. The Central Committee favored the state system's being characterized as "free, democratic, and socialist Hungary," the country's continuing to be a "people's republic," and its flag's reflecting national traditions. At its March 8–10, 1989, session, the National Assembly endorsed the further codification of the second draft, and in 1990 it was adopted by referendum.

On September 19, 1989, the government and opposition parties agreed on a multiparty system. No one party can hold a monopoly of power; the only condition levied on parties is that their goals and activities must be in accord with the constitution. There should be a division of power—that is, power should be shared by the president, the National Assembly, the Council of Ministers (which is responsible to the National Assembly), local governments, independent courts, and a Constitutional Court.

Positive developments toward democratic principles continued to be initiated in preparation for the constitution's formal adoption in 1990. The National Assembly passed a law on economic associations, including those with foreign businesses, to attract foreign capital, and a law extending rights to non-Hungarian investors. Of particular significance was legislation for multiparty democracy and for freedom of association and assembly, permitting the formation of associations by as few as 10 people for any purpose within constitutional limits. Demonstrators were to give notice but required no authorization. Other laws—including the rights to strike and bring forth a motion of no confidence—were enacted, all leading to a more democratic constitution.

The highest organ of state administration is the Council of Ministers (*Miniszter Tanács*), which is elected by and responsible to the National Assembly. According to the constitution the Council of Ministers consists of the prime minister (the head of government), deputies, ministers of state, ministers, and the chairman of the National Planning Office.

Article 35 of the constitution enumerates the Council of Ministers' responsibilities and authority: it safeguards and guarantees the political and social order of the state and the rights of the citizens; enforces laws and decrees; directs and coordinates the work of the ministries and other organs; directs and supervises councils at lower levels; arranges for and implements economic plans; sets policy and provisions for scientific and cultural development; establishes and ensures the functioning of social and health services; concludes and approves international agreements; and performs other functions assigned by law. The Council of Ministers is empowered to organize government committees and to establish special organs to administer any sector of activity. The Council of Ministers or individual ministers may issue decrees in the performance of their duties. The Council of Ministers functions by issuing decrees and passing resolutions.

It has authority to annul or amend measures enacted by subordinate organs deemed infringements of laws or violations of public interest, and ministers direct the subordinate organs to conform to rules of law and resolutions of the Council of Ministers.

Two new institutions have been established by the constitution. They are the Constitutionality Court and the Office of the Ombudsman. The Constitutionality Court oversees the constitutionality of legislation, decrees, and statutes. Its 15 members are elected by the National Assembly but may not belong to any political party. The ombudsman is an officer of the National Assembly, elected by it on the recommendation of the president of the republic.

PARLIAMENT

The Hungarian National Assembly is a unicameral legislative body with 386 members. Only 176 of the members are elected directly by universal suffrage by citizens over the age of 18; the remaining 210 members are chosen from party lists. Voters cast two ballots in each election, one for an individual candidate, and the other for a particular party. It is from the latter that the proportions are set with regard to how many of the 210 each party gets to select.

Two sessions are held annually by the legislators, who are elected for four-year terms. The president of the republic may once during that four-year time frame suspend parliament for 30 days. Legislation may come before parliament from the president, from a committee, or from a single member of parliament. The president holds a conditional veto over legislation, which may be overridden with a simply majority vote in the Assembly.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Hungary's Law on Political Parties came into effect on October 31, 1989. Only political parties that recognize and observe the constitutional order of the Republic of Hungary can operate in the country. The licensing of a political party depends on the fulfillment of four requirements: it must have a distinct program, a membership of at least 10 people, an official leader, and a bank account.

The Law on Political Parties says that parties can be registered with legal continuity only within three months following the promulgation of the law. Out of the 53 parties that have appeared on the Hungarian political scene, 43 were registered by the designated deadline. The largest single group is a coalition made up of the Fidesz-Hungarian Civic Party (MPP, formerly the Federation of Young Democrats) and the center-right Hungarian Democratic Forum. The Hungarian Socialist Party (formerly the Communist Party) and the Alliance of Free Democrats represent the left in Hungarian politics.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Hungary is administratively organized into 19 counties (*megye*), 20 urban counties (*megyei varos*), and the capital city (*fovaros*), Budapest. The counties, in turn, are divided into districts (*jaras*) and communes (*kozseg*).

LEGAL SYSTEM

The Hungarian legal system has both civil and common law elements. The civil law system derives from the Civil Code of 1960. The Supreme Court has the power to declare legislative acts unconstitutional.

The judicial system functions under a law promulgated in 1973 that substantially reformed a law of June 1952. The system comprises local courts, labor courts, county courts, the Capital (Metropolitan) Court, five courts of appeal, and the Supreme Court. Among the changes introduced under the 1973 law was an expansion of the jurisdiction of the courts to deal with two categories of essentially economic disputes: those involving individual workers and employers and those between state enterprises. Until 1973 labor disputes had been handled almost exclusively by enterprise arbitration committees in the first instance and by regional committees on appeal, and disputes between enterprises were dealt with by economic arbitration committees. The 1973 law also permits citizens to appeal to the courts the decisions of the state administrative organs and permits the courts to review decisions of these organs on the basis of legality.

The Supreme Court is primarily a court of appeal, but it may also function as a court of first instance in important cases. Its decisions may be appealed to a council of the Supreme Court. When the Supreme Court acts as a court of appeals, it is divided into councils, such as civil, criminal, economic, labor, or military. Appeals from these councils on points of law may be heard by the Presidential Council.

The penal code was amended in 1989 to conform to the democratic nature of the new constitution. No one may be executed for crimes against the state. Amendments to the law on criminal procedure enhance the rights of the suspect and extend the scope of the defense counsel. They also abolished prolonged prison terms for certain recidivists.

In 1990 the National Assembly passed a law amnestying thousands of prisoners in Hungarian jails. All prisoners serving first sentences of less than one year were released. Prison terms of between one and three years were reduced by one-third, and those of over three years by one-quarter. All pregnant women, women with small children, and the terminally ill serving any sentence were also released. Those sentenced for serious offenses, however, such as rape, murder, or terrorism, did not benefit from the amnesty.

The 1997 constitutional amendment altered the three-level judiciary to a four-level system through the introduction of three courts of appeal positioned between the county courts and the Supreme Court. The new appellate courts have no original jurisdiction and function exclusively as appellate courts from the local and county courts.

HUMAN RIGHTS

The government generally respects the human rights and civil liberties of its citizens; however, there are problems in some areas. Although the authorities address problems in specific cases, police continue to use excessive force against suspects. In practice, the authorities do not always ensure due process in all cases. Prosecutors and judges may impose what amounts to unlimited pretrial detention, although the government expanded legal provisions for the right to fair trial. There is still ethnic discrimination against Roma and Jews. Both women and children are the targets of human traffickers dealing in sex slaves.

FOREIGN POLICY

During the Communist period, Hungary followed the Soviet Union's lead with regard to its foreign policy. Since leaving the Warsaw Pact in 1990, Hungary has made regional stability a priority. It primarily wants to be integrated into Western economic and security arrangements and has thus joined NATO and the European Union. It has signed treaties with Romania, Slovakia, and Ukraine renouncing any claims to the territory of those nations. Hungary and the United States have had good relations since 1945, and Hungary has had most-favored-nation status with the United States since 1978. The United States has given Hungary considerable economic assistance to restructure its economy and build up its private sector.

DEFENSE

The armed forces have been making a slow transition from the Warsaw Pact military to a lighter and more versatile modern operation. In 2003 the armed forces were about 47,000 strong, down from 130,000 in 1989. Hungary is an island of stability in an unstable neighborhood, and the nation takes seriously efforts to bring peace to the region. It contributed troops and airbase space to the peacekeeping effort in Kosovo in 1995. Since 1999 Hungary has been working with NATO to keep peace throughout the region, especially in the Balkans, Ukraine, and Russia. Hungarian soldiers are serving in Afghanistan and Iraq.

The president of the republic is the commander in chief of the armed forces. The army provides for border

protection with a small border guard operation. The navy of the landlocked country consists of a small flotilla on the Danube. The air force has been using aging Soviet MiG fighters and fighter-bombers, but the nation has been gradually modernizing its equipment. All men between the ages of 18 and 23 are subject to a nine-month conscription; drafts occur twice a year. Most young men perform their military service between secondary school and university.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 47,400
 Military Manpower Availability: 2,519,052
 Military Expenditures \$billion: 1.08
 as % of GDP: 1.75
 as % of central government expenditures: 4.2
 Arms Imports \$million: 14
 Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

Hungary continues to demonstrate strong economic growth. It joined the European Union in 2004. In 1992 the nation helped build a canal from the Danube River to the Main River in Germany, which allows shipping from the North Sea to the Black Sea. The private sector currently accounts for more than 80 percent of GDP. Foreign firms have invested a great deal of money in Hungary and have provided employment for many citizens. Germany is the country's most important trading partner. Hungary's debt is currently the second-lowest among the Central European transition economies. In 2003 inflation had fallen to 4.7 percent, and unemployment was a steady 6 percent. In order to continue its economic growth, Hungary needs to facilitate the running of businesses and reduce the public-sector deficit.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 139.8
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 13,900
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 4.0
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 3.9
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 3.3
 Industry: 32.5
 Services: 64.2
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 53
 Government Consumption: 23
 Gross Domestic Investment: 22
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 42.03
 Imports: 46.19
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 4.1
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 20.5

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
183.7	201.7	220.3	231.9	242.7

Finance

National Currency: Forint (HUF)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = HUF 224.307
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency trillion: 3.64
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 12.5
 Total External Debt \$billion: 42.38
 Debt Service Ratio %: 6.84
 Balance of Payments \$billion: –7.347
 International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 12
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
 4.7

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 248.4
 per capita \$: 24.50
 Foreign Direct Investment \$billion: 2.5

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar year
 Revenues \$billion: 35.0
 Expenditures \$billion: 39.88
 Budget Deficit \$billion: 4.88
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: 22.2

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 3.3
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2002) %: 4.7
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 2.46
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 4.8
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 108.7
 Total Farmland % of land area: 50.1
 Livestock: Cattle million: 0.739
 Chickens million: 37.5
 Pigs million: 4.913
 Sheep million: 1.281
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 5.785
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 18.3

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 16
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 6.4

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 11.34
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million:
 24.74
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 2.43
 Net Energy Imports % of use: 57.4
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 8.4
 Production kW-hr billion: 34.075
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 35.99
 Coal Reserves tons billion: 1.2
 Production tons million: 14.2
 Consumption tons million: 15

(continues)

Energy *(continued)*

Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: 1.2
 Production cubic feet billion: 110
 Consumption cubic feet billion: 473
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion:
 Production barrels 000 per day: 45.7
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 137
 Pipelines Length km: 990

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 46.19
 Exports \$billion: 42.03
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2002): 12.0
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2002): 11.5
 Balance of Trade \$billion: –7.347

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Germany %	24.5	34.1
Italy %	7.1	5.8
China %	6.9	—
Austria %	6.3	8.0
Russia %	6.2	—
France %	4.8	5.7
Japan %	4.2	—
United Kingdom %	—	4.5
Netherlands %	—	4.1

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 188,203
 Paved %: 43.4
 Automobiles: 2,629,500
 Trucks and Buses: 399,300
 Railroad: Track Length km: 7,937
 Passenger-km billion: 10.5
 Freight-km billion: 7.8
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 2
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 10
 Airports: 43
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 3.12
 Length of Waterways km: 1,622

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 2.95
 Number of Tourists from million: 14.28
 Tourist Receipts \$billion: 3.5
 Tourist Expenditures \$billion: 2.133

Communications

Telephones million: 3.67
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.16
 Cellular Telephones million: 6.86
 Personal Computers million: 1.1
 Internet Hosts per million people: 38,281
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 160

ENVIRONMENT

Hungary faces many of the familiar problems of eastern European nations. Air and water quality and waste management systems are lacking. The nation had to spend several billion dollars to upgrade its systems of waste management, improve energy efficiency, and repair water, soil, and air pollution in order to enter the European Union. Hungary has five national parks and has protected over 1,000 other plots of land. In February 2000 Hungary suffered an environmental scare when its second-largest river, the Tisza, was contaminated with cyanide waste from a mine in Romania.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 20.0
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: 7
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 9
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 113,527
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 5.4

LIVING CONDITIONS

Most urban Hungarians live in apartments, though single-family homes are common in rural areas. A large proportion of the Hungarian population lives in the countryside; many work in the cities and commute back and forth. At home they engage in farming part-time to supplement their incomes. Hot springs are common, and many people use them to heat their homes. Many people lost their property under Communist rule, but some have been compensated for their losses since 1991. Public transportation within and between cities is efficient and inexpensive.

HEALTH

Hungary has relatively good health, though the typical fatty diet and high levels of stress and pollution have made the average lifespan relatively low by European standards. Alcohol abuse and tobacco smoking are very common, as is heart disease. The Roma are on average less healthy than other Hungarians, partly due to their poverty. Medical care was free during the Communist days; since 1992 people have had to purchase their own medical insurance. Rates are set in proportion to income, and people usually pay at least 10 percent of their incomes. There is private medical care as well. Many Hungarians choose to treat their ailments with natural remedies such as hot springs, radioactive caves, and the mud from thermal springs near Lake Balaton.

Health

Number of Physicians: 31,768
 Number of Dentists: 4,618
 Number of Nurses: 84,947

Number of Pharmacists: 5,024
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 316
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: 8.2
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 8.68
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 16
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 7.8
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 496
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.1
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 99
 Measles: 99
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 95
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 99

Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.0
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 47.1

WORK

Hungarian workers have a relatively generous social welfare network. All workers are covered against illness, and women are guaranteed 24 weeks of maternity leave with full pay or three years' leave with 75 percent pay. About two-thirds of Hungary's workforce is employed in services, which includes tourism. About one-quarter work in industry, which includes manufacturing, construction, and mining; in the Communist days industry made up the majority of the workforce, but that sector has become steadily less important since the early 1990s. Hungarian factories still manufacture rubber products, porcelain, automobiles and other large transportation vehicles, electronics, food, and clothing. Less than one-tenth of Hungarian workers are now employed in agriculture, including forestry and fishing. The transformation of the economy has made it difficult for some industrial workers to find jobs because their skills do not translate well into the service sector. Foreign companies have opened branches in Hungary and are employing increasing numbers of workers.

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Paprika is Hungary's national spice and gives the nation's cooking its distinctive color and flavor. It appears in Hungarian goulash, a meat and vegetable stew, and in *tarbonya*, flour dumplings served with meat. Pork, bacon, and lard are extremely important components of the Hungarian diet. Lard is the most commonly used cooking fat. Winter pig killing is a major event in rural areas, where people will spend two days slaughtering pigs and making sausage. For desserts and snacks people like to eat pastries, donuts, and roasted chestnuts. Hungary's sweet wines and fruit brandies are famous around the world.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 0.5
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 3,420
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 124.7
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 176.3

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 4,164,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 44.6
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 8
 Industry: 27
 Services: 65
 Unemployment %: 5.9

STATUS OF WOMEN

Women hold equal rights as a matter of law. Generally, women have achieved the same educational levels as men. However, they do lag behind in positions of power; though Hungary legislates equal pay for equal work, women tend to occupy the lower-paid jobs. Most teachers are female, but most school principals are men. Less than 10 percent of the members of the National Assembly are women. Women still do most of the housework and the caring for children and old people. There are free day-care centers for children between the ages of three and six, which helps mothers return to work.

Violence against women, spousal abuse, and sexual harassment in the workplace have all been serious problems. Human traffickers are known to deal in women as sex slaves.

Women

Women-headed Households %: 34.8
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 9
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —

EDUCATION

Schooling is compulsory for 10 years, from ages six to 16. The school year runs from the beginning of September to the end of June. Higher education is similarly organized, with the curricula divided into annual units.

There are no private schools as such, but there are a few Catholic, Calvinist, and Jewish schools. Although enjoying a certain amount of curricular autonomy, they are fully incorporated into the public school system with regard to admissions and certification procedures as well as the financing and appointment of teachers.

The medium of instruction is Hungarian, but there are separate schools for Germans, Slovaks, Yugoslavs, and Romanians living in Hungary. There are no separate schools for the Roma, who are recognized as neither a minority nor a distinct ethnic group.

Kindergartens (*ovodak szama*) enroll preschool children ages three to six. The enrollment rate is as high as 90 percent in certain urban areas, and many classrooms are overcrowded. Kindergartens are also maintained by

factories, companies, and institutions. All children are required to attend the last year of kindergarten in order to prepare for school.

Primary education is eight years long, as divided into four-year lower and four-year upper divisions. The lower division classes are taught by single teachers; in the upper division each subject is taught by a different teacher, generally a specialist. Those who repeat grades have to remain in elementary school until they reach 16. In 1978 a new law made every other Saturday free for students; owing to the 11-day teaching cycle, lesson schedules are not broken down by weeks. Gifted students are placed in intensive courses, where the number of class hours per week is higher. Singing and music begin in the first grade, foreign languages and mathematics in the upper grades. Promotion is automatic if the student attends school regularly.

Secondary education is organized in a series of middle schools, with the general secondary school constituting the academic sector and the technical secondary schools and the trade schools constituting the vocational sector. The general secondary school, or *gimnazium*, is the most traditional type of school in Hungary. It includes training schools and experimental schools that enjoy great prestige. Some secondary schools have divisions for pupils with aptitude in special learning areas. More than half of all secondary students work in study groups, and each year national competitions are held for study group members in subject areas such as history or geography. At the end of four years *gimnazium* students take maturity examinations.

Technical secondary schools are divided into four-year and three-year schools. Workshop practice may take place either at school or in participating factories. The four-year school offers a diploma, which allows students to pursue postsecondary studies. The three-year school trains skilled workers but does not provide full secondary education. Training is provided in 126 trades.

Higher education is run by the state and is not a quasi-independent sector, as in many Western countries. College admission is based on the results of a college entrance examination. The administration of universities is vested in the rectors and deans, who share their powers with university councils and faculty councils. Universities and colleges represent the two stages of a continuum. The former train students for research with greater theoretical input, while the latter train specialists for practical purposes. Female participation in higher education is much higher than that of males because males tend to follow technical opportunities during college-going years. Enrollment is limited not only by the capacity of the institutions but also by forecasts of labor demand by economists. There are too many candidates in the case of certain institutions and faculties. While school education is free, students pay fees for higher education, although 90 percent of students receive scholarships.

Education

Literacy Rate %:	99.4
Male %:	99.5
Female %:	99.3
School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling:	15.3
First Level: Primary schools:	3,765
Teachers:	46,497
Students:	477,865
Student-Teacher Ratio:	10.3
Net Enrollment Ratio:	90.8
Second Level: Secondary Schools:	980
Teachers:	93,283
Students:	948,071
Student-Teacher Ratio:	10.9
Net Enrollment Ratio:	92.1
Third Level: Institutions:	89
Teachers:	23,938
Students:	354,386
Gross Enrollment Ratio:	44.1
Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP:	5.2

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Hungary's scientific education facilities are excellent. Elementary-school students study advanced mathematics and sciences such as trigonometry, geometry, physics, and chemistry. Secondary students generally perform extremely well on science tests. Hungary has produced such famous scientists as the Manhattan Project physicist Leó Szilárd, the "father of the hydrogen bomb" Edward Teller, and Dennis Gábor, who invented laser holography and won the Nobel Prize in 1971.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people:	1,440
Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP:	1.02
High-Tech Exports \$billion:	9.63
Patent Applications by Residents:	962

MEDIA

Hungary has numerous daily newspapers, several of which are published in Budapest. Most of the Budapest papers circulate nationally. All major dailies are printed in Hungarian, although the small-circulation *Budapest Daily News/Neustes nachrichten* appears in both English and German. Each of the national minority groups—German, Slovak, Yugoslav, and Romanian—has a publication in its own language; all of these publications are weeklies, except that in Romanian, which appears every two weeks. Unlike in other former Communist countries, the religious press is active, as are provincial newspapers.

In 1990 the Hungarian press underwent a major transformation. Foreign investors now own major shares in three of the country's four major dailies and a number

of provincial newspapers. These investors include Rupert Murdoch, Robert Maxwell and the Springer chain, and the Bertelsmann group of Germany. The most independent major publication is *Datum*, founded in April 1989. Other independent papers include such general-interest publications as the weeklies *Vilag* (Words) and *Beszelo* (Speaker) as well as the satirical biweekly *Magyar narancs* (Hungarian orange) of the Free Democratic Union. The big success story of the press is the lively color tabloid *Reform*, in which Rupert Murdoch purchased a 50 percent interest in 1989.

The media are under the direct control of the Information Bureau (IB), which has overall responsibility for all state information activities. Its head is the principal spokesperson for the government.

Foreign publications are readily available in the country. There is no jamming of foreign broadcasting. Newspapers in western Hungary regularly carry the schedules of Austrian TV programs for the benefit of their readers. Foreign correspondents are allowed to work freely, with few bureaucratic obstacles.

The national news agency is Magyar Tavirati Iroda (MTI), an arm of the Information Bureau. MTI is composed of four major departments: cultural and internal policy, economics, agriculture, and sports. It also publishes the *Budapest Daily News/Neustes nachrichten* and a number of special bulletins. HTI receives the regular services of some 20 foreign agencies but relies heavily on TASS.

Standard radio broadcasting started in Hungary on December 1, 1925. The Hungarian Broadcasting Company, which operated the system, was virtually destroyed in World War II, and its Budapest antenna tower, one of the tallest in Europe, was demolished. Radio Budapest was on the air again in 1945.

The radio network, Magyar Radio, is part of Magyar Radio es Televiz (MRT). Its two principal radio stations are both in Budapest. Radio Kossuth, which transmits Program I, is broadcast on medium wave 24 hours a day. Radio Petofi transmits Program II broadcasts on medium wave during the morning hours and on ultra-shortwave in the evening. In addition, Radio Bartok, a very-high-frequency transmitter, broadcasts musical and literary programs. There are daily broadcasts in English, German, and five other foreign languages and separate programs for Hungarians living abroad. Radio licenses were abolished in 1980.

Television was introduced in 1957. Magyar Televizio has two channels: the first broadcasts about 66 hours a week, the second about 20 hours a week, mostly in color. There are over 100 relay stations.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 40
Total Circulation million: 1.625
Circulation per 1,000: 162.3

Books Published: 10,352
Periodicals: 167
Radio Receivers 000: —
per 1,000: —
Television sets million: 4.5
per 1,000: 447

CULTURE

Hungary has produced a large number of musicians, including Franz Liszt, Bela Bartok, and Zoltán Kodály, all of whom incorporated traditional Magyar folk melodies into their compositions. The conductors Eugene Ormandy and George Szell were both born in Hungary. The Roma traditionally worked as musicians at social events, playing their emotional music on violin and *cimbalom*; today Roma bands still play at some events, though they are not as much in demand. Kalyi Jag is a famous Roma band.

Hungarian pottery is famous and widely exported, especially the Herend and Zsolnay porcelains and the black pottery made from black clay. Hungarian visual arts incorporate baroque, gothic, romanesque, and art nouveau traditions along with folk motifs. Many buildings display elaborate paintings on their ceilings and walls. Hungary's literary style is complex and rich and shaped by historical events; famous writers include Péter Esterházy, György Konrád, Tibor Fischer, Stephen Vizinczey, and Ferenc Molnár.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 2,586
Volumes: 43,377,000
Registered borrowers: 1,460,013
Museums Number: 442
Annual Attendance: 14,658,000
Cinema Gross Receipts national currency billion: 5.3
Number of Cinemas: 628
Seating Capacity: 121,000
Annual Attendance: 13,400,000

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Hungarians still treasure their folk traditions. People dance folk dances at festivals and other special occasions, and musicians accompany them with traditional Magyar folk songs played on zithers, lutes, bagpipes, and the native instruments called the *cimbalom* and the *trogato*. Hungary's national dance is the *csardas*. Artists engage in folk arts such as wood and bone carving, lace or pottery making, painting, and a kind of embroidery known as *kalokcsai*, which uses traditional symbols to represent meaning; for example, tulips represent women, carnations represent men, and birds represent freedom.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Hungarians like to go to rivers and lakes to swim, sail, and engage in other aquatic activities; the thermal springs near Lake Balaton are a popular family destination, offering beaches, hiking trails, cafés, and restaurants. People also like to travel to neighboring countries; the government offers special bus rates to Hungarian citizens who want to cross the border to visit other Slavic nations. Hungary's café culture is well developed, and people enjoy spending hours at cafés talking with friends and playing chess.

Hungarian businesses close during national holidays. On March 15 people gather to commemorate Hungary's revolt against Hapsburg rule. August 20, St. Stephen's Day, is an occasion for parades, sporting events, fireworks, and religious processions.

ETIQUETTE

Service charges are not added to bills, so it is appropriate to tip waitstaff at restaurants and other people who perform services, such as chambermaids. Most Hungarians are quite friendly and outgoing. People often address one another by both first and last name. When doing business, Hungarians hand out business cards liberally. It is customary to invite business partners out to lunch or dinner; at meals, a guest should not drink until his or her host has. Eating with the left hand is considered very impolite. Hungarians often use the word *egészségedre* ("to your health") as a toast; English speakers would do well to verify the pronunciation of this word before attempting it, because a mispronunciation has a very rude meaning in Hungarian.

FAMILY LIFE

Until recently children lived with their parents until marriage and then tended to settle near their parents, but this is changing. Hungary is largely Roman Catholic, but many Hungarians today live in common-law unions or have children out of wedlock. People who do marry are required to have civil marriages; Catholics usually have church weddings as well. The two ceremonies can take place as much as a month apart. Roma have two or three times more children than other Hungarians. Roma men often leave their families in the country while they work in the city.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Hungarians have always appreciated fashion and dressing with style. They do not like conservative dress styles and prefer to see people dressed with flair.

SPORTS

Soccer is the most popular sport in Hungary. People spend their weekends watching the national teams play in Népstadion stadium or listening to broadcasts of games on the radio. Weekend television is devoted to soccer. Ferenc Puskas is one of the nation's most famous former players. Hungarians are excellent at water sports, including swimming, water polo, sailing, canoeing, and surfing. Swimmer Krisztina Egerszegi has won many gold medals for swimming in recent Olympics; she was the youngest athlete ever to win a gold medal for swimming. Many people enjoy hiking, tennis, cycling, gymnastics, boxing, and running; sports clubs are very popular. The Budapest Marathon is held every May; the course runs along the Danube from Visegrad to Taban Park. Car racing is also popular; the Hungarian Formula 1 Grand Prix has taken place in the second week of August since 1986.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1946** Hungary promulgates a republican constitution.
- 1947** Hungary signs a peace treaty with the Allied powers, giving up all territories acquired after 1937.
- 1948** The Hungarian Workers' Party seizes power under Matyas Rakosi.
- 1949** The constitution of 1946 is replaced by a new constitution, under Communist aegis.
- 1953** Rakosi yields the prime ministership to Imre Nagy, who initiates liberal reforms.
- 1956** Hungary throws off the Soviet yoke in a revolution.
Soviet troops invade Hungary and crush the uprising. Nagy is deposed and later executed.
János Kádár is named to head a Soviet puppet regime.
The Hungarian Workers' Party is renamed the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party (HSWP).
- 1958** Kádár yields the prime ministership to Ferenc Munnich.
- 1961** Kádár begins his second term as prime minister.
- 1965** Kádár resigns as prime minister in favor of Gyula Kallai but remains first secretary of the HSWP.
- 1967** Jenő Fock replaces Kallai as prime minister.
- 1968** The regime initiates a series of reforms known as the New Economic Mechanism (NEM), decentralizing authority.
- 1972** The constitution of 1949 is revised, and a new constitution is promulgated.
- 1975** György Lazar takes over as prime minister.
- 1985** The 13th Party Congress reelects Kádár as leader, with the new title of general secretary.

- 1987** Karoly Grosz is named prime minister in place of Lazar, who becomes deputy general secretary of the Central Committee.
- 1989** Imre Nagy's body is exhumed and reburied in a massive public ceremony attended by over 250,000 Hungarians, including members of the government.
President George Bush visits Budapest and announces a program of U.S. economic assistance. Hungarian Communist Party is renamed Hungarian Socialist Party.
- 1990** Hungary signs pact with the Soviet Union on pullout of Soviet troops.
Vatican ties are restored.
In first free elections since World War II, the center-right Democratic Forum, together with its allies, the Independent Smallholders' Party and the Christian Democratic People's Party, gains nearly 60 percent of the seats in parliament.
Jozsef Antall, the leader of the Democratic Forum, heads new cabinet as premier.
Soviet military forces begin complete withdrawal from Hungary.
- 1994** Hungary applies for membership in the European Union.
A sluggish economy leads to Socialists winning the majority of seats in the nation's second parliamentary election.
- 1995** President Arpad Goncz is reelected to a second five-year term.
- 1997** Hungary is invited to apply for NATO membership.
- 1998** Viktor Orban, head of the Hungarian Civic Party, is elected prime minister.
- 1999** Hungary joins NATO.
- 2000** Goncz retires. Ferenc Mádl is elected president. The Tisza River is contaminated with cyanide from a mine in Romania.
- 2001** Parliament passes a law allowing Hungarians living in neighboring countries to work or study in Hungary and to use the Hungarian health-care system.
- 2002** Prime Minister Peter Medgyessy forms a coalition with the Free Democrats and the Socialist Party. The European Union invites Hungary to become a member in 2004.

- 2003** Voters approve Hungary's joining the European Union.
- 2004** Hungary gains EU membership. Medgyessy resigns; Ferenc Gyurcsány replaces him as prime minister.

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OFFICIAL PUBLICATIONS

- Hungary.** *Statistikai evkonyv* (Statistical Yearbook); *Evi nepszamlalas* (Census of Population)

CONTACT INFORMATION

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Embassy of the Republic of Hungary
<http://www.hungaryemb.org/>
- Hungarian Central Statistical Office
http://portal.ksh.hu/portal/page?_pageid=38,119919&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL

ICELAND

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Iceland (Lýðveldið Island)

ABBREVIATION

IS

CAPITAL

Reykjavík

HEAD OF STATE

President Ólafur Ragnar Grímsson (from 1996)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Halldór Ásgrímsson (from 2004)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Parliamentary democracy

POPULATION

296,737 (2005)

AREA

103,000 sq km (39,768 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Nordic-Celtic

LANGUAGE

Icelandic

RELIGION

Evangelical Lutheran

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Icelandic krona

NATIONAL FLAG

A red cross, with an extended right horizontal, bordered in white, on a blue field

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A red-tongued silver vulture with gold claws and beak, and a black dragon, also red of tongue and with gold crest and claws and white teeth, sit back to back on top of a shield, on which is the design of the Icelandic flag. A black bull with golden hooves and a glowing eye paws the rocky land to the left of the shield; a white-bearded giant with black and gold belt, black staff, golden sandals, and gold-lined cape stands to the right, with his right hand resting on the shield.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“O Goth Vors Lands” (O God of our land)

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year’s Day), June 17 (National Day), April 21 (First Day of Summer), May 1 (Labor Day), major Christian festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

June 17, 1944

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

June 17, 1944

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

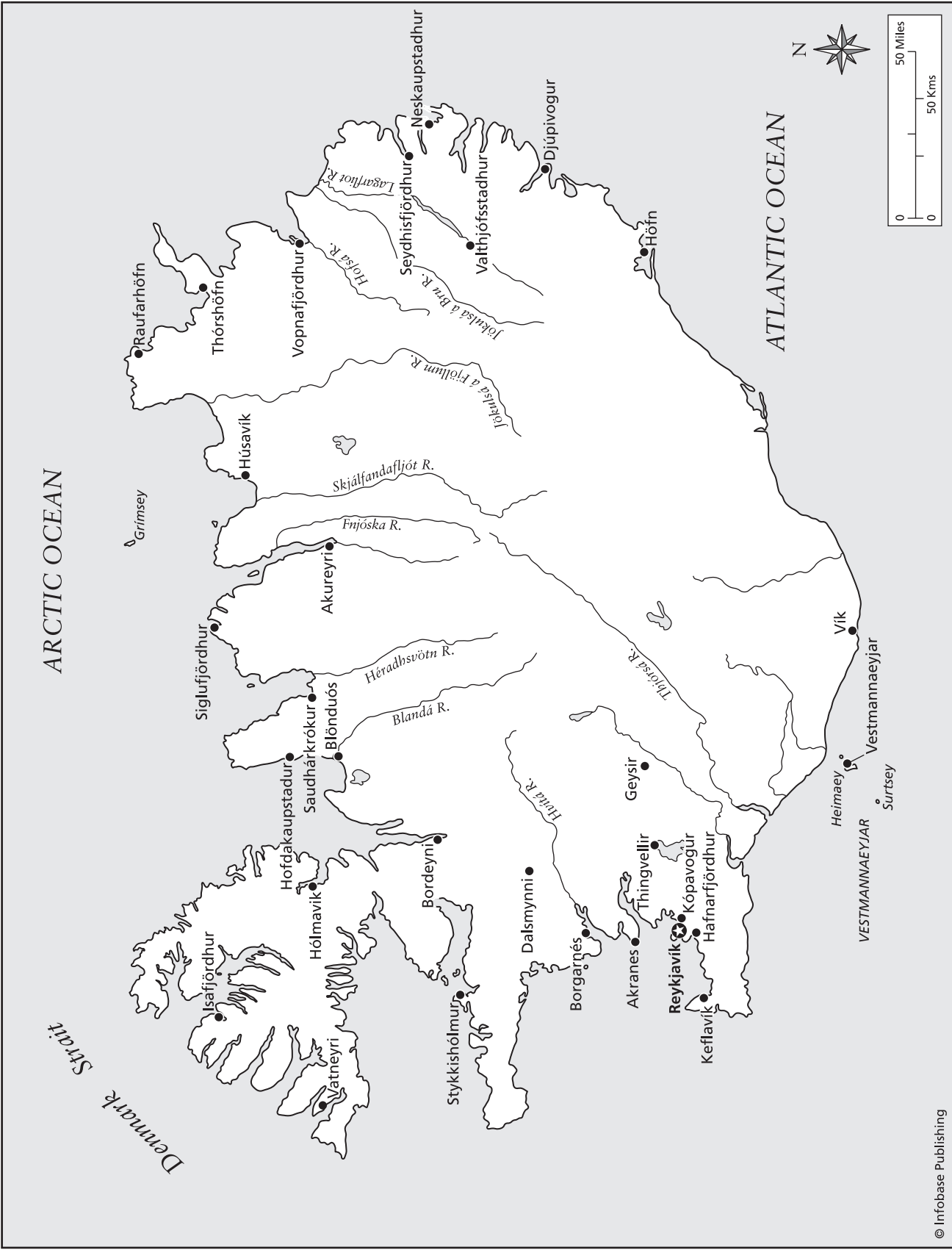
The westernmost country of Europe, Iceland is an island in the North Atlantic Ocean just below the arctic circle, 322 km (200 mi) east of Greenland, 1,038 km (645 mi) west of Norway, and 837 km (520 mi) northwest of Scotland. Its area is 103,000 sq km (39,768 sq mi), extending 490 km (304 mi) east to west and 312 km (194 mi) north to south. The total length of the coastline is 4,988 km (3,099 mi). The mainland comprises 102,850 sq km (39,710 sq mi), including 408 sq km (157 sq mi) of lakes. The islands and skerries comprise 150 sq km (58 sq mi).

Iceland’s capital is Reykjavík, located on a bay on the southwestern coast. Only around 20 percent of the land,

near the coast, is considered arable and habitable. Most of the country’s population and agriculture is concentrated in the southwest, between Reykjavík and Vík.

Iceland is a relatively young land mass and is subject to much geological activity. The central volcanic plateau ranges in elevation from 700 to 800 m (2,297 to 2,625 ft) and is ringed by mountains. Volcanoes are frequently active, and earthquakes are common. Iceland is richer in hot springs and other high-temperature geological activity than any other country in the world. Certain areas are characterized by steam vents, mud pools, and precipitation of sulfur. Geysir, in Haukadalur in south Iceland, is the most famous erupting hot spring (and the source of the English word geyser).

Iceland



1052 Iceland

Glaciers, another characteristic of this rough landscape, cover over 11,800 sq km (4,500 sq mi) of the country. The largest glacier cap is Vatnajökull in southeast Iceland (8,400 sq km, 3,240 sq mi), which is equal in size to all the glaciers in mainland Europe. Since the 1980s the glaciers have retreated somewhat, owing to a milder climate.

The landscape is also rich in waterfalls and has numerous lakes, mostly of tectonic origin. Because of the heavy rainfall, Icelandic rivers are many and large, and they are subject to annual turbulent glacial runoff, making navigation nearly impossible.

Geography

Area sq km: 103,000; sq mi 39,768
World Rank: 105th
Land Boundaries, km: 0
Coastline, km: 4,988
Elevation Extremes meters:
Lowest: Atlantic Ocean 0
Highest: Hvannadalshnukur 2,119
Land Use %
Arable Land: 0.1
Permanent Crops: 0.0
Forest: 0.3
Other: 99.6

Population of Principal Cities

Reykjavík 113,022

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

The temperature is cool and oceanic, as influenced by Iceland's location in a zone where two very different air masses, one polar and one tropical, meet. It is also affected by the confluence of two ocean currents. The Gulf Stream flows clockwise around the south and west coasts, and the East Greenland Polar Current curves southeastward around the north and east coasts. A third climatic factor is arctic drift ice, brought by the Polar Current, which occasionally blocks the north and east coasts in late winter and early spring. The advance of drift ice causes a considerable fall in temperature.

Fluctuations in average annual temperature are more pronounced in Iceland than elsewhere, but considering the country's northern location, the climate is warmer than might be expected. The lowest temperature noted in Iceland was -36.2°C (-33.2°F) in Siglufjörður in March 1881; the highest, 30.5°C (86.9°F) at Teigarhorn in June 1939.

Iceland is very windy, due to the frequent passage of depressions. Rainfall is also plentiful, although thunderstorms are rare. Fog is not frequent. The northern lights are often visible, especially in autumn and early winter.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature: 39°F
Reykjavík: July 52°F , January 30°F
Average Rainfall
North: 12 to 27 in
South: 50 in
Mountains: 80 in
Southern slopes of Vatnajökull and Myrdalsjökull: 157 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Iceland has little in the way of vegetation; the volcanic landscape tends to discourage plants from growing. There are a few forests and a number of birch trees, but most of the land is tundra, bog, grassland, or simply rocky desert. The Arctic fox is the only indigenous land mammal. Polar bears sometimes ride ice floes to Iceland from Greenland. Europeans have introduced mice, mink, and reindeer. Many seabirds live in Iceland. The waters surrounding the island are rich in whales, dolphins, and fish. Fish also live in the fresh water of streams, including salmon, trout, Arctic char, and eels.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 296,737
World Rank: 168th
Density per sq km: 2.9
% of annual growth (1999-2003): 1.1
Male %: 50.0
Female %: 50.0
Urban %: —
Age Distribution %: 0-14: 22.5
15-64: 65.8
65 and over: 11.7
Population 2025: 337,632
Birth Rate per 1,000: 13.83
Death Rate per 1,000: 6.57
Rate of Natural Increase %: 0.9
Total Fertility Rate: 1.93
Expectation of Life (years): Males 78.18
Females 82.27
Marriage Rate per 1,000: 5.6
Divorce Rate per 1,000: 1.8
Average Size of Households: 2.9
Induced Abortions: 926

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

The population is almost entirely Icelandic, as descended from the original settlers, who came chiefly from Norway in the late ninth and early 10th centuries, with admixtures of Scots and Irish. Information on the early settlers is given in the Landnamabok (Book of Settlements), believed to have been compiled in the 12th century. According to this source, the great majority of settlers came from

western Norway, with some from other parts of Scandinavia. A sizable number arrived from the Celtic areas of the British Isles, some of them slaves of free settlers. Blood group investigations show a close similarity between the Irish and Icelandic peoples.

Less than 1 percent of inhabitants are foreign born, most of them coming from Scandinavia and other European countries.

LANGUAGES

Icelandic is the official language. English and Danish, as well as German, are widely spoken and understood.

Because of the country's isolation and strong literary heritage, Icelandic has changed very little from the language spoken by the Norse settlers. It began to evolve separately from Norwegian at the end of the 10th century but did not become markedly different until the 14th century. The only genuine loanwords were Celtic. In the following centuries the advent of Christianity, the Reformation, and the introduction of printing served to modify the language under the influence of Low German and Danish. Many of these later influences were successfully purged during the purist movements of the 18th and 19th centuries. Icelandic today is a remarkably uniform language, although there are geographical dialectal differences.

RELIGIONS

There is complete religious freedom in Iceland. The national church, according to the constitution, is the Evangelical Lutheran Church, which, although claiming the membership of over 90 percent of the population, plays only a muted role in national life.

Iceland was converted to Christianity in the year 1000, when it was adopted by an act of the Althing (parliament) as a result of missionary activity by Norwegian evangelists. Monasteries were established and played an important role in the creation of Iceland's rich medieval literature. This strong literary tradition continued with the new translation of the Icelandic Bible, printed in Iceland by Bishop Guobrandur Porlaksson in 1584.

The practice of regular religious exercises in the rural areas developed in the centuries following the Reformation. Apart from regular church attendance, prayers were said, together with reading and singing, particularly during Lent. The churches of the period were mostly small and made of turf and stone, with interiors decorated with primitive art.

Since the 19th century social, economic, and demographic changes have contributed to the decline of the church as a force in national life. Today the national church comprises congregations grouped into district

assemblies, each supervised by a dean. The supreme authority is the president of the republic, who delegates power to a minister of justice and ecclesiastical affairs.

Religious Affiliations

Evangelical Lutheran	258,500
Other Protestant	12,200
Roman Catholic	5,000
Other	21,100

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Iceland's first settler was Ingolfur Arnarson, who sailed from Norway to Iceland in 874 and settled in what is now Reykjavík. Others followed in the succeeding centuries, and in 930 a republic was established under the authority of the Althing. In 1263, torn by civil strife, the Althing decided to submit to the rule of Norway by a treaty that established a purely nominal union under the Norwegian Crown. In 1381 Iceland, together with Norway, passed under the rule of the king of Denmark, and it remained so after Norway was separated from Denmark in 1814. Gradually, Iceland had lost much of its former autonomy. Exclusive trading rights were given in 1602 to a private Danish trading company, and Danes had a complete monopoly of trade with Iceland until 1786. The ensuing economic ruin was compounded by epidemics and volcanic eruptions, particularly that of 1783, which reduced the population to 38,400 by 1786, half of the number before the union. In 1800 the Danish king abolished the Althing.

After a long constitutional struggle, marked by disagreement over the appropriate level of autonomy, the Althing was reestablished as an advisory body in 1843. Limited home rule was granted in 1874, and complete home rule was given in 1903. In 1918 Iceland was declared a free and independent state, linked to the Danish king as head of state and with complete autonomy except in foreign affairs. This agreement quieted the independence movement until the Nazi takeover of Denmark in 1940. Iceland then assumed control over its defense and foreign affairs. In a referendum held in 1944, over 97 percent of those participating voted to end the union with the Crown of Denmark, and Iceland was declared an independent republic in that year.

Iceland became a charter member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) in 1949. In 1970 it was admitted to the European Free Trade Association. During the 1980s and 1990s Iceland became less culturally isolated, as it strengthened ties to Europe and increased foreign product imports and technology. The service and tourism industries greatly expanded, which served to diversify the economy and culture.

Coalition governments have dominated Icelandic politics, and there have been few single-party govern-

ments in the nation's history. In 1980 Vigdís Finnbogadóttir, a nonpolitical candidate who was favored by the left because of her opposition to the U.S. military base in Keflavík, achieved a narrow victory in the presidential election and became Iceland's first woman president. She was reelected four times and served as president until 1996, when Ólafur Ragnar Grímsson took office.

Because fishing is Iceland's most important industry, the nation extended its territorial limits to within 50 nautical miles of its coast in 1972. British opposition to this extension resulted in three "Cod Wars." In 1976 Iceland temporarily severed diplomatic relations with Britain, the first break in diplomatic relations between two NATO countries. In the same year the two countries reached an agreement resulting in the withdrawal of the British trawler fleet from Icelandic waters. In 1993 there was a similar dispute with Norway in an area of the Barents Sea. In 1991 Iceland withdrew from the International Whaling Commission (IWC), asserting its right to catch whales. The nation applied to rejoin the IWC in 2001 but was only granted observer status because it stated plans to resume whaling in 2006. The IWC admitted Iceland as a full member in 2002 after a narrow vote. In August 2003 Iceland launched its first whale hunt in 15 years, claiming that it needed to do so in order to perform a scientific study of whales' impact on fish stocks.

Grímsson was reelected as president in 2004. The former prime minister, David Oddsson, traded jobs with former foreign minister Halldór Ásgrímsson.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

President

1944–52	Sveinn Björnsson
1952–68	Ásgeir Ásgeirsson
1968–80	Kristján Eldjárn
1980–96	Vigdís Finnbogadóttir
1996–	Ólafur Ragnar Grímsson

Prime Minister

1944–47	Ólafur Thors
1947–49	Stefán Stefánsson
1949–50	Ólafur Thors
1950–53	Steingrímur Steinthórsson
1953–56	Ólafur Thors
1956–58	Hermann Jónasson
1958–59	Emil Jónsson
1959–63	Ólafur Thors
1963–70	Bjarni Benediktsson
1970–71	Jóhann Hafstein
1971–74	Ólafur Jóhannesson
1974–78	Geir Hallgrímsson
1978–79	Ólafur Jóhannesson
1980–83	Gunnar Thoroddsen
1983–87	Steingrímur Hermannsson

1987–88	Thorsteinn Pálsson
1988–91	Steingrímur Hermannsson
1991–2004	Davíd Oddsson
2004	Halldór Ásgrímsson

CONSTITUTION

According to historical records, a state organization was set up in Iceland around 930 c.e., at the end of the settlement period. In the same year a legal and uniform code was promulgated, and the Althing was established. No king or other dignitary held supreme political or administrative power, which was vested in local leaders. When Iceland passed into Danish rule in 1381, these political and legal institutions were radically altered, and representatives of the Danish king took over the administration. Although the Althing was reestablished in 1845, it was subject to royal veto. The Icelandic Constitution was established in 1920 and was subject to review in 1943, but Icelanders took advantage of their position when Denmark was occupied by the Nazis in 1940. On June 17, 1944, a republic was proclaimed, and a new constitution was approved in a popular referendum.

The present constitution dates from the establishment of the republic in 1944. It has been amended four times, in 1959, 1968, 1984, and 1991. It consists of 81 articles grouped in seven chapters. The first chapter is a preamble; the other six deal with the president and the cabinet, elections, functions of the Althing, the courts, the state Evangelical Lutheran Church, and human rights.

The constitution defines the powers of the president, who is head of state. All laws require the signature of the president and the countersignature of a cabinet member. The president has veto power and the right to issue decrees when the Althing is not in session. The president is elected by direct, popular vote for a term of four years. There is no vice president. When necessary, presidential functions are discharged by a committee of three, consisting of the prime minister, the speaker of the Althing, and the president of the Supreme Court. Despite these powers, the president is expected to play essentially the same limited role as a monarch in a parliamentary democracy.

The constitution also provides for the Council of State, presided over by the president and comprising the prime minister and cabinet members. The administration is headed by the prime minister as the head of government and by a cabinet consisting of 13 ministries. The ministers are formally appointed by the president. There is no election of a new prime minister. As no single political party has held a working majority in the Althing for decades, the country is almost always ruled by coalition governments, and sometimes long negotiations have proven necessary before they could be formed.

The constitution provides for a system of universal suffrage for citizens over the age of 18. Turnout in na-

tional elections is high, typically in the 85–90 percent range.

PARLIAMENT

The national parliament is the Althing, one of the oldest legislatures in the world, dating back to 930 c.e. Iceland's contemporary parliamentary system formally dates from the establishment of independence in 1944. It is a unicameral legislature with 63 members.

Iceland is divided into eight districts, and parliament members are elected by a modified system of proportional representation. A distinctive feature of the representation system is that the districts are skewed against Reykjavík: although the capital holds nearly 60 percent of the nation's citizens, it holds fewer than half the seats. Parliamentary members are elected for terms of four years.

The party groups in the Althing meet regularly—at least twice a week during the sessions, which begin in October and end in April or May.

The cabinet has 12 standing committees. Each political party attempts to place at least one member on each committee and use that individual as a resource regarding the body's issue areas.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Although Iceland is demographically a highly homogeneous country, it supports several political parties with diverse ideologies. The ideological and demographic bases of the parties are not as starkly drawn as in earlier years, and most have had factions break away to form other groups.

The Independence Party (IP) was founded in 1929 when the Conservative and Liberal Parties merged. It is the largest in the country, generally the most conservative in ideology, and best characterized by pragmatism. It formed a coalition with the Progressive Party (PP) in 1995 and has kept a majority in parliament ever since. The left-wing Social Democratic Party (SDA), is the IP's major challenger. It is a coalition party formed in 2000 of three smaller parties, the socialist People's Alliance (PA), the centrist Social Democratic Party (SDP), and the all-female Women's List. The founders of this coalition hoped that it would provide a challenge to the IP, but they were unable to persuade all leftists to join them. Two new splinter parties, the Left Green Movement and the Liberal Party, both took small chunks of votes away from the SDP, leaving the IP in control.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Central government control over local authorities is exercised by the minister of social affairs. Iceland is divided

into 23 administrative districts (*sýslur*) and 14 towns or boroughs (*kaupstaðir*), headed by sheriffs (*sýslumadur*) in districts and magistrates (*baufjarfógeti*) in boroughs. In Reykjavík the duties of the magistrate are divided between several officials. Borough magistrates are assisted by town councils made up of one representative from each parish (*breppur*). Each parish also has its own council and administrative officers. Town councils are elected by proportional representation, and rural councils by a majority. The councils elect a town manager or mayor.

The scope of local authority, defined in the Local Government Act, includes activities not handled by the central government. Local authority covers such functions as social welfare, health, education, sanitation, libraries and museums, harbors and fishing, and livestock and farming inspections. Local governments are funded by direct local taxation and by grants from the central government.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The Supreme Court of Iceland was established in 1920 when the government decided to abolish recognition of the power over Iceland of the Supreme Court in Copenhagen. The court has eight judges, appointed for life technically by the president, though in reality by the minister of justice. Ruling on questions of both law and fact, the Supreme Court decides an average of 200 cases per year, mostly on appeal from a complex system of district and special-jurisdiction courts. The principal source of Icelandic law is the written statutes of the Althing, a civil code based on Danish law, but custom, precedent, the constitution, and general legal principles are also recognized as sources of law. The courts have the power to declare acts of parliament unconstitutional, which has happened on a few occasions.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Iceland has an exemplary record in human rights. There is long-standing respect for the autonomy of individuals. Persons detained are brought before judges within 24 hours. Defendants are guaranteed the right to free and competent legal counsel if they are indigent. The independence and fairness of the court system are carefully guarded by the Supreme Court.

There are no restrictions on civil and political rights. One of the few human rights violations referred to the European Commission on Human Rights was that raised by a single Icelander who questioned the practice of having just one traffic official serve as both prosecutor and judge in traffic courts. There have also been reports of trafficking in women and of excessive use of solitary confinement in prisons.

FOREIGN POLICY

Iceland has close ties to the United States, the Scandinavian nations, and most of the other members of NATO, though it has good relations with most of the world. In 1986 Iceland hosted the historic Reagan-Gorbachev summit in Reykjavík. It was the first country to recognize the independence of the Baltic states in the 1990s and is the greatest Nordic contributor per capita to NATO-led troops in Bosnia and Kosovo. Despite its lack of a military, Iceland has participated in many civilian peacekeeping efforts, sending doctors, nurses, lawyers, engineers, journalists, and others to trouble spots in the world.

Most of Iceland's foreign policy difficulties come from its dependence on fishing. It is reluctant to join the European Union for fear of having its fishing policies dictated by outsiders. Iceland left the International Whaling Commission in June 1992 following the IWC's decision to uphold its ban on whaling, establishing its own commission—along with Norway, Greenland, and the Faeroe Islands—for the conservation, management, and study of marine life. Iceland rejoined the IWC in 2002 and immediately resumed catching whales, to much international dismay. Iceland claimed that the hunt in question was a necessary, scientific one that would help establish the effects whales have on the fish stocks that are necessary to the nation's economy.

DEFENSE

Iceland does not maintain a defense force. It joined NATO in 1949 on the understanding that it would never have to contribute military forces to any endeavor. Its sole responsibility is to provide space for NATO forces. The U.S.-manned Icelandic Defense Force (IDF), headquartered at Keflavík, is the largest military presence on the island.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 100
 Military Manpower Availability: 75,568
 Military Expenditures \$million: —
 as % of GDP: —
 as % of central government expenditures: —
 Arms Imports \$million: —
 Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

Iceland has a capitalist economy combined with a Scandinavian-style welfare state. It has very few natural resources aside from the fish in its oceans, and so the economy depends heavily on fishing. Fish stocks and prices for fish-based products are unpredictable, and the government is therefore trying to expand into other areas, including

manufacturing and services. It is making particular efforts in high-tech areas such as software development and in ecotourism. The whales that live in the oceans surrounding Iceland are a particular draw for tourists.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 8.678
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 30,900
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 3.2
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 2.1
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 9.2
 Industry: 26.7
 Services: 64.1
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 53
 Government Consumption: 26
 Gross Domestic Investment: 21.6
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 2.379
 Imports: 2.59
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: —
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: —

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
109.3	114.9	112.3	128.6	131.2

Finance

National Currency: Icelandic Krona (ISK)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = ISK 76.709
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 84.3
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 8.2
 Total External Debt \$billion: 2.6
 Debt Service Ratio %: —
 Balance of Payments \$million: –574
 International Reserves SDRs \$million: 765
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 2.1

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: —
 per capita \$: —
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 345

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar year
 Revenues \$billion: 4.205
 Expenditures \$billion: 4.405
 Budget Deficit \$million: 200
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 9.2
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2002) %: 0.5
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 155.7
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: —
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 2,555.4

Total Farmland % of land area: 0.07
 Livestock: Cattle 000: 68
 Chickens 000: 210
 Pigs 000: 44
 Sheep 000: 470
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters 000: —
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons million: 2.13

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 973
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 8.1

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 1.1
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 1.75
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 6.15
 Net Energy Imports % of use: 27.7
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 1.46
 Production kW-hr billion: 8.27
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 7.69
 Coal Reserves tons billion: —
 Production tons 000: —
 Consumption tons 000: 154
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
 Production cubic feet billion: —
 Consumption cubic feet billion: —
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
 Production barrels 000 per day: —
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 17.65
 Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 2.59
 Exports \$billion: 2.379
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 3.9
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 2.1
 Balance of Trade \$million: -574

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Germany %	11.8	17.4
Denmark %	8.0	5.0
United States %	7.5	9.8
United Kingdom %	7.5	17.4
Norway %	7.0	4.5
Sweden %	6.5	—
Netherlands %	6.2	11.2
Italy %	4.7	—
Spain %	—	6.3
France %	—	4.0

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 12,955
 Paved %: 29.8
 Automobiles: 161,700

Trucks and Buses: 21,900
 Railroad: Track Length km: —
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: —
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 1
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 6
 Airports: 100
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 3.2
 Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 601
 Number of Tourists from 000: 257
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 380
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 440

Communications

Telephones 000: 190.7
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones 000: 279.1
 Personal Computers 000: 130
 Internet Hosts per million people: 411,728
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 657

ENVIRONMENT

Current environmental concerns in Iceland include water pollution from fertilizer runoff and inadequate wastewater treatment. Iceland is party to several international environmental agreements, including those concerning air pollution, biodiversity, hazardous wastes, nuclear test bans, ozone-layer protection, and climate change. Whaling, marine conservation, and North Atlantic fishing rights are the areas where Iceland draws criticism from environmental agencies (as well as from countries such as Norway and Russia, who also assert commercial rights in the North Atlantic). Following the 1992 split from the International Whaling Commission, Iceland asserted its right to resume whaling.

The Ministry for the Environment was established in 1990. It is responsible for nature conservation, wildlife management, pollution control and public health, planning and regional matters, land surveying and cartography, environmental research and monitoring, education and public information, international collaboration, and cooperation with other ministries and institutions, including the Ministry of Agriculture.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 0.3
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: 1
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 6
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 7.68

LIVING CONDITIONS

Living conditions in Iceland are very good. The government subsidizes the cost of housing, which is modern and well-heated. Prices for food and everything else are high because the island must import nearly all commodities. Gasoline is extraordinarily expensive. Public transportation is adequate during the summer but sparse in the winter, when airplanes become the only reliable form of transport. There are no trains, and the bus system is inconvenient. People travel around the coast on ferries. Most highways are unpaved. Flights to and from Europe are frequent; it is also possible to travel by ferry to and from Denmark, though the trip takes several days.

HEALTH

The people of Iceland are some of the healthiest in the world. Life expectancy is over 80 years, and the infant mortality rate is extremely low, about 3 deaths per 1,000 births. Each woman has on average slightly fewer than two children. The government subsidizes the health-care system. The biggest health risk is hypothermia brought on by cold and inclement weather.

Health

Number of Physicians: 990
 Number of Dentists: 283
 Number of Nurses: 2,544
 Number of Pharmacists: 243
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 347
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 3.31
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 0
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 9.9
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 2,916
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.2
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 97
 Measles: 93
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: —
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 100

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Iceland imports most of its food, which is standard northern European fare. Traditional Icelandic cuisine tends to appall foreigners. Specialties include shark that has been buried for six months, pickled ram's testicles pressed into a cake, boiled sheep head, and sheep innards stuffed into a sheep stomach and cooked. People eat local species such as char, puffin, and haddock as well as whale and seal meat. They also eat yogurt. They drink a great deal of coffee, along with beer, wine, and *brennivín*, a caraway-flavored schnapps brewed from potatoes. Vegetables do not feature prominently in Icelandic cuisine.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 87.4
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 167.7

STATUS OF WOMEN

Women enjoy the same legal status and rights as men. In the workforce and in the political arena they have increased their presence in recent years. Vigdís Finnbogadóttir became Iceland's first woman president in 1980. In addition to the Women's List political party, which is restricted to women and specifically pursues their concerns, Iceland's largest political party, the center-right Independence Party, has begun addressing women's issues in response to growing public awareness.

Despite women's visibility, many major businesses and political institutions remain male dominated, and there is around a 20-percent wage gap between men and women working in comparable jobs nationwide. There is a special committee for complaints in the Equal Rights Affairs Office of the Ministry of Social Affairs.

There is increasing awareness of violence against women, including domestic abuse, resulting from extensive media coverage during the past decade. This has resulted in stiffer criminal penalties and enforcement and in training programs for those investigating reported crimes. The problem is particularly bad in couples in which an Icelandic man marries an Asian woman, an increasingly common phenomenon. These Asian women do not always assimilate well into local society and do not know how to find help.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 30
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.0
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 52.5

WORK

Iceland has low unemployment (3.4 percent in 2004), a fairly even distribution of income, and a generous welfare system. Per capita gross domestic product (GDP) in 2004 was \$30,900. About 60 percent of the workforce is employed in services, in areas such as biotechnology, software production, financial services, and the expanding ecotourism industry, which includes whale watching. About 23 percent of the workforce is employed in manufacturing or construction; the remaining workers are employed in agriculture and fishing.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 160,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 45.1
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 5.1
 Fishing and Fish Processing: 11.8
 Manufacturing: 12.9
 Construction: 10.7
 Services: 59.5
 Unemployment %: 3.4

EDUCATION

Literacy has been universal in Iceland since the end of the 18th century. The Central Grammar School, or Gymnasium, at Reykjavík can be traced back to the foundation in 1056 of a cathedral school at Skalholt in south Iceland.

In 1907 the Althing passed legislation making school attendance obligatory for all children ages 10 to 14. In 1946 compulsory school attendance was extended to cover all children ages seven to 16. Local authorities operate preprimary classes for children of age five or six. Students may opt for a four-year secondary-school program following their compulsory studies, choosing a preuniversity track or a comprehensive or vocational program.

The language of instruction is Icelandic. At the secondary level, and even more so at the university level, textbooks in both English and other Scandinavian languages are also used.

The University of Iceland was founded in 1911, although three of its constituents—the Theological Seminary, the School of Medicine, and the Law School—were founded earlier. Departments since added include economics, philosophy and liberal arts, engineering, social sciences, and dentistry.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 99.9
 Male %: 99.9
 Female %: 99.9
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 17.6
 First Level: Primary schools: 205
 Teachers: 2,861
 Students: 31,282
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 10.9
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 99.7
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 35
 Teachers: 2,602
 Students: 25,557
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 12.4
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 84.6
 Third Level: Institutions: 14
 Teachers: 1,980
 Students: 11,584
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 54.6
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 6.2

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Iceland has a very educated population and ample financial resources, and as a result it is quite technologically advanced. It is on the forefront of green energy sources; its electricity is produced by entirely renewable sources, and 90 percent of homes are heated with geothermal energy. The nation wants to spread hydrogen technology throughout the world and has thus created a consortium called Icelandic New Energy, which includes DaimlerChrysler and Royal Dutch Shell, in an effort to produce hydrogen-powered ships, cars, and buses. Iceland is also at the forefront of innovations in cellular telephone technology.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 6,592
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 3.1
 High-Tech Exports \$million: 21.7
 Patent Applications by Residents: 71

MEDIA

Iceland has a very well-developed and sophisticated media. In a country with a fairly small population, there are numerous daily newspapers and other periodicals, both publicly and privately owned. Important dailies include *Frettbladid*, *Morgunbladid*, and *DV*. The government guarantees freedom of the press.

Iceland was a country of books even before the invention of printing. Ample Icelandic manuscripts survive to attest to the vitality of book activity in the Middle Ages. The printing press was introduced into the country in the 16th century. Today Iceland is among the top five countries in the world in book publishing, and the general literacy rate is the highest in the world. Icelanders are known for their love of both prose and poetry.

Radio and television stations are limited compared to most countries in mainland Europe, but there has been an expansion in stations and programs since the 1980s. The government funds the Icelandic National Broadcasting Service (RUV), which is required to promote Icelandic language and heritage. The expansion of the Internet during the 1990s has also proved popular, and there has been a proliferation of Iceland-related and Iceland-sponsored Web sites.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 3
 Total Circulation 000: 91
 Circulation per 1,000: 322
 Books Published: 1,527
 Periodicals: 20
 Radio Receivers 000: 320
 per 1,000: 1,081
 Television sets 000: 141
 per 1,000: 505

CULTURE

Iceland's culture reflects its heritage, with its combination of rugged terrain, isolation, and colonization by Vikings who came to the island from medieval Scandinavia. The literary tradition is extremely important, especially the Icelandic sagas, from 1180–1300 c.e., which tell stories of battles, heroes, and religion and give glimpses into daily life in medieval settlements. Modern authors have continued this literary tradition; one modern writer, Halldór Laxness, won the 1955 Nobel Prize for literature. Traditional Icelandic music is usually maudlin and includes many lullabies, but Iceland has also produced internationally successful popular musicians, such as the singer Björk.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 149
Volumes: 2,081,101
Registered borrowers: 79,421
Museums Number: —
Annual Attendance: —
Cinema Gross Receipts national currency million: 930.1
Number of Cinemas: 46
Seating Capacity: 9,000
Annual Attendance: 1,500,000

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Iceland has a rich mythological heritage dating from the medieval period. The stories are full of the activities of the Norse gods, such as Odin, Loki, and Thor, and their adventures with various elves, dwarfs, giants, trolls, and monsters. People passed the stories through the centuries by memorizing poems and speaking them aloud as entertainment during the long winter nights. Although the stories were not typically recorded in writing, many Norse myths are known today because Icelandic monks wrote them down and the manuscripts survived; Snorri Sturluson's *Prose edda* is one of these.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Icelanders enjoy indoor recreation such as chess and bridge as well as reading, drinking, and general socializing. Chess is especially significant, and the country has numerous chess clubs and has produced many chess grand masters. Icelandic bridge players also compete at the international level.

There are many festivals during the long summer days. Independence Day, on June 17, is the biggest celebration, with parades, street music, and other festivities. Another June festival is Sjómannadagurinn, which

features swimming contests and other nautical activities to celebrate Iceland's seagoing heritage. On midsummer night people seek out dew so that they can roll in it naked, as it is supposed to cure various illnesses. Other festivals involve bonfires, barbecues, horse racing, camping, dancing, singing, eating, and drinking copious amounts of alcohol.

ETIQUETTE

Icelanders address one another by their first names. It is very uncommon to refer to anyone by their last name, and Icelanders do not have traditional last names anyway. Icelanders do not usually tip servers in restaurants or other places, though an occasional tip for good service is appreciated.

FAMILY LIFE

By law Icelanders must follow the ancient tradition of deriving their last names using the patronymic system. In the patronymic system, a woman creates her last name by combining her father's first name with "dóttir," meaning "daughter;" a man creates his by combining his father's first name with "son." Thus, the former president was named Finnbogadóttir, meaning "daughter of Finnboga" and the current one is named Grímsson, which means "son of Grimm." Occasionally people use their mothers' names instead of their fathers'. Women keep their surnames after they marry. This system results in most family members having different last names; it is impossible to determine the marital status of a person's parents from his or her last name.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Icelanders like to dress fashionably and follow the latest European trends. They import most of their clothing. One local fashion is hand-knitted sweaters that use traditional colorful patterns; these are popular in Iceland and have become a profitable product for export.

SPORTS

People in Iceland enjoy a variety of sports, including golf, soccer, basketball, skiing, and a kind of traditional Viking wrestling called *glima*. A favorite sport is swimming, both indoor and outdoor; many pools are heated by natural hot springs, which makes swimming possible in the cold climate. There are many sports clubs that organize sporting activities for young people.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1944** Iceland proclaims itself a sovereign republic with a new constitution.
Independence and Labor Parties coalition under Ólafur Thors forms a government.
- 1947** Labor, Independence, and Progressive parties form a coalition government under Stefán Stefánsson.
- 1949** Iceland joins NATO.
Independence Party forms a minority government under Ólafur Thors.
- 1950** Progressive and Independence parties form a coalition government under Steingrímur Steinthórsson.
- 1951** U.S. base at Keflavík begins operations.
- 1953** Independence and Progressive parties form a coalition government under Ólafur Thors.
- 1956** Progressive, Labor, and Labor Union parties form a coalition government under Hermann Jónasson.
- 1958** Iceland extends territorial limits to 19 km (12 mi), triggering the first Cod War with the United Kingdom.
Labor Party forms a minority government under Emil Jónsson.
- 1959** Independence and Labor Parties form a coalition government under Ólafur Thors.
- 1961** Central Bank of Iceland is founded.
Iceland extends territorial limits to 80 km (50 mi), triggering second Cod War.
- 1963** Ólafur Thors steps down and is replaced by Bjarni Benediktsson.
- 1968** Iceland joins the European Free Trade Association (EFTA).
- 1970** Benediktsson steps down as prime minister in favor of Johann Hafstein.
- 1971** Progressive, Labor Union, and Liberal and Left Alliance parties form a coalition government under Ólafur Jóhannesson.
- 1974** Independence and Progressive parties form a coalition government under Geir Hallgrímsson.
- 1975** Iceland extends territorial limits to 322 km (200 mi), triggering third Cod War.
- 1978** Progressive, Labor, and Labor Union parties form a coalition government under Ólafur Jóhannesson.
- 1979** Labor Party forms a minority government under Benedikt Gröndal.
- 1980** A breakaway group from the Independence Party along with the Progressive and Labor Union Parties form a coalition government under Gunnar Thoroddsen.
- 1983** Progressive and Independence parties form a coalition government under Steingrímur Hermannsson.
- 1987** Hermansson coalition loses election. Thorsteinn Pálsson of the Independence Party forms coalition government.
- 1988** Steingrímur Hermansson returns to office as prime minister.
- 1990** Iceland forms its Ministry for the Environment.
- 1991** Davíð Oddsson becomes prime minister.
- 1992** Iceland quits the International Whaling Commission.
- 1994** Iceland celebrates the 50th anniversary of the modern Icelandic Republic.
The agreement on a European Economic Area (EEA) takes effect, giving Iceland full access to the internal market of the European Union (EU).
- 1995** The Independence and Progressive parties form a coalition government under Davíð Oddsson.
- 1996** After four four-year terms as president, Vigdís Finnbogadóttir chooses not to run for reelection.
Ólafur Grímsson is elected by a comfortable margin.
- 1997** Iceland hosts its first Partnership for Peace exercise, notable for the participation of Russia.
- 1999** The Independence and Progressive parties renew their coalition government.
- 2001** Iceland rejoins the International Whaling Commission as an observer.
- 2002** Iceland joins the International Whaling Commission as a full member.
- 2003** Iceland launches a whale hunt to make a “scientific catch” for research on fish populations.
- 2004** Grímsson is reelected president. Oddsson and foreign minister Halldór Ásgrímsson trade jobs.

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Iceland. *Hagmaninat* (monthly); *Landsþagir* (Statistical Yearbook of Iceland, annual); *Útanríkisverslun* (External trade, annual)

CONTACT INFORMATION

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Icelandic Government
<http://government.is/>
- Embassy of Iceland, Washington, D.C.
<http://www.iceland.org/>

INDIA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of India (Bhāratīya Ganarājya)

ABBREVIATION

IN

CAPITAL

New Delhi

HEAD OF STATE

President Abdul Kalam (from 2002)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh (from 2004)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Socialist secular parliamentary democracy

POPULATION

1,080,264,388 (2005)

AREA

3,287,590 sq km (1,269,388 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Indo-Aryan

LANGUAGES

Hindi, English, and 14 other official languages

RELIGIONS

Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Sikhism, Buddhism, Jainism, and Zoroastrianism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Rupee

NATIONAL FLAG

Tricolor of deep saffron, white, and green horizontal stripes, with a blue dharma chakra (wheel of the law, a Buddhist emblem) in the center of the white stripe. The wheel appears

on the abacus of Asoka's Lion Capitol, built in Sarnath in Uttar Pradesh in 250 B.C.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

Three imperial lions standing back to back, as they appear on the stone pillar erected by Emperor Asoka at Sarnath. On the base is a dharma chakra, flanked by a bull and a horse. Beneath the emblem is the national motto, *Satyameva Jayate* (Truth alone triumphs), in Devanagiri script.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"Thou Art the Ruler of the Minds of All People," written by the Nobel Prize-winning poet Rabindranath Tagore. Two other songs—"I Bow to Thee, Mother" and "Bankim Chandra Chatterji"—are accorded equal status in public functions.

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day), January 26 (Republic Day), August 15 (Independence Day), October 2 (Mahatma Gandhi's birthday). The festivals of all of India's major religions are observed in the country, many of them nationally and others regionally. The chief of these festivals are the Hindu festivals of Rath Yatra, Janmashtami, Durga Puja, Dussehra, Diwali, Pongal, Holi, Ram Navami, Baisakhi, Raksha Bandan, Ganesh Chaturthi, and Onam; the Islamic festivals of Id-ul-Fitr, Muharram, Id-ul-Zuha, and Id-ul-Milad; the Christian festivals of Christmas and Good Friday; the Sikh festival of Guru Nanak Jayanti; and the Buddha Jayanti (Buddhism), Mahavir Jayanti (Jainism), and Jamshed Navroz (Zoroastrianism).

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

August 15, 1947

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

January 26, 1950

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

India, the second largest country in Asia, is located in the Indian Subcontinent in South Asia. Including the Andaman and Nicobar Islands in the Bay of Bengal and Lakshadweep (formerly the Laccadive, Minicoy, and Amindivi Islands), the total land area is 3,287,590 sq km

(1,269,388 sq mi). The length of the total coastline on the Bay of Bengal, Arabian Sea, and Indian Ocean is 7,000 km (4,350 mi). India shares international borders with Bangladesh (4,053 km; 2,518 mi), Bhutan (605 km; 376 mi), Myanmar (1,463 km; 909 mi), China (3,380 km; 2,100 mi), Nepal (1,690 km; 1,050 mi), and Pakistan (2,912 km; 1,809 mi).

India



Mainland India comprises four well-defined regions: the northern mountain zone, or the Himalayas; the Indo-Gangetic Plain; the desert region; and the southern region, including a narrow coastal plain

along the Arabian Sea and a broader one along the Bay of Bengal.

The Himalayas (literally, “the abode of snow”) comprise three parallel ranges interspersed with large pla-

teaus and valleys, like the Kashmir and Kulu valleys. The Greater Himalayas, with an average height of 6,700 m (20,000 ft), include such famous peaks as Mount Everest (8,847 m, 29,028 ft), in Nepal, and Mount Kanchenjunga (8,598 m, 28,208 ft). The peaks of the Lesser Himalayas range between 1,500 m (5,000 ft) and 3,650 m (12,000 ft). The Outer Himalayas form a system of low foothills. The high altitude limits travel to a few passes, such as the Jelep La and Natu La, northeast of Darjeeling, and Shipki La in the Sutlej Valley. The mountain wall extends over a distance of 2,400 km (1,490 mi).

The Indo-Gangetic Plain, about 2,400 km (1,500 mi) long and 240–320 km (140–200 mi) broad, is formed by the basins of three river systems: the Ganges, the Indus, and the Brahmaputra. The plain is the product of millenia-long deposits of soil in what was once a gulf between the peninsula and the Himalayas. There is hardly any variation in relief, and between Delhi and the Bay of Bengal there is a drop of only 200 m (656 ft) in elevation.

The desert region is divided into the great desert extending northward from the Rann of Kutch and the little desert extending northward from the Luni River. The absence of surface water makes the region completely infertile.

Separated from the Indo-Gangetic Plain by a mass of mountain ranges and scalped plateaus is the Deccan, or the Indian Peninsula, flanked on one side by the Eastern Ghats, with an average elevation of 610 m (2,000 ft), and on the other by the Western Ghats (910–1,220 m; 2,985–4,000 ft), rising in places to 2,440 m (8,000 ft). The interior plateau between these *ghats* (or mountain ranges), called the Deccan, is actually a series of plateaus intersected by many rivers.

The rivers of India are generally divided into Himalayan rivers and peninsular rivers. Of the Himalayan rivers the longest—and also the holiest—is the Ganges. The Ganges basin receives waters from an area constituting one-quarter of India's total land area. The Ganges has two main headwaters in the Himalayas, the Bhagirathi and the Alaknanda, the former rising from the Gangotri Glacier and the latter from the Alakapuri Glacier. The Ganges enters the plains at the sacred city of Hardwar and joins with its major tributary, the Yamuna, at Allahabad. Throughout the rest of its course the Ganges is joined by a number of other Himalayan rivers, such as the Ghawghara, Gandak, and Kosi, and central Indian rivers, such as the Chambli, Betwa, and Son.

Geography

Area sq km: 3,287,590; sq mi 1,269,338

World Rank: 7th

Land Boundaries, km: Bangladesh 4,053, Bhutan 605, Burma 1,463, China 3,380, Nepal 1,690, Pakistan 2,912

Coastline, km: 7,000

Elevation Extremes meters:

Lowest: Indian Ocean 0

Highest: Kanchenjunga 8,598

Land Use %

Arable Land: 54.4

Permanent Crops: 2.7

Forest: 21.6

Other: 21.3

Population of Principal Cities (2003)

Ahmadabad	2,954,000
Bangalore	3,302,000
Bhopal	1,062,000
Chennai (Madras)	3,841,000
Delhi	7,206,000
Hyderabad	3,145,000
Indore	1,091,000
Jaipur	1,458,000
Kalyan	1,014,000
Kanpur	1,879,000
Kolkata (Calcutta)	4,399,000
Lucknow	1,619,000
Ludhiana	1,042,000
Mumbai (Bombay)	9,925,000
Nagpur	1,624,000
Pune	1,566,000
Surat	1,505,000
Vadodara (Baroda)	1,061,000

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

India is a tropical country but is subject to a wide range of climates, from subfreezing Himalayan winters to 50°C (122°F) in the shade in the Indo-Gangetic Plain and from the highest annual rainfall in the world (1,096 cm; 428 in) in Cherrapunji in Meghalaya to almost permanent drought in the Thar Desert. Four fairly distinct seasons are common to all regions: a relatively cool winter monsoon season, a hot and rainless transitional season, a rainy monsoon season, and a humid season during the retreating monsoon. Although seasonal duration varies according to the region, the northeast monsoon generally lasts from December to March, the transitional hot weather from April to May, the rainy southwest monsoon from June to September, and the transitional humid season from October to November.

Based on rainfall and temperature India may be divided into seven climatic zones as follows:

The Himalayan region has three temperature levels: 18.3°C (65°F) at 2,150 m (7,000 ft), freezing temperatures at 4,600 m (15,000 ft), and up to 37.8°C (100°F) in the valleys. The eastern Himalayas have from 127 to 233 cm (50 to 80 in) of rainfall and the western Himalayas from 76 to 101 cm (30 to 40 in).

Assam and West Bengal have humid and rainy weather. Assam has torrential rainfall and moderately high temperatures, while West Bengal has rainfall between 127 and 152 cm (50 and 60 in) and an average an-

nual temperature between 18.3°C and 29.4°C (65°F and 85°F).

In the Indo-Gangetic Plain temperatures run as high as 50°C (122°F) and as low as -2.2°C (28°F). The monsoon becomes weaker as it moves north: Patna receives 119 cm (47 in), Delhi 71 cm (28 in), and the Rajasthan deserts less than 25 cm (10 in) per year.

The western coastal region receives high rainfall, ranging from 190 to 305 cm (75 to 120 in) in Mangalore and Bombay to 648 cm (255 in) in Mahabaleshwar. Kerala, in the south, receives heavy rainfall during both the southwest and northeast monsoons. The temperature there is fairly uniform at about 26.7°C (80°F).

The peninsular interior has a high average annual temperature, with maximums reaching 37.8°C (100°F) during April, May, and June. Rainfall varies from 76 cm (30 in) in Madhya Pradesh to between 101 and 152 cm (40 and 60 in) in southern Uttar Pradesh and 101 and 177 cm (40 and 70 in) in Orissa.

The northern Deccan has summer temperature maximums exceeding 37.8°C (100°F) and January minimums below 15.6°C (60°F). Most of the region is in a rain shadow and gets barely 51–101 cm (20–40 in) of rain per year.

The east coast receives 84–127 cm (35–50 in) of rainfall. During the summer temperatures exceed 37.8°C (100°F) on most days.

Because of the erratic nature of the monsoons both droughts and floods are common in most parts of India. The daily temperature range varies from only 2°C to 3°C (4°F to 5°F) in Kerala to 33°C to 39°C (60°F to 70°F) in Rajasthan.

Tropical hurricanes and cyclones strike the coastal areas in most years between April and June and between September and December.

Climate and Weather

Average Temperature

- Himalayan Region: 37.8°F in the valleys to 65°F at higher elevations and 0°F above 15,000 ft
- Assam and West Bengal: 65°F in to 85°F
- Indo-Gangetic Plain: 28°F to 122°F
- Western Coastal region: 80°F
- Peninsular Interior: 85°F to 100°F
- Northern Deccan: 60°F to 100°F
- East Coast: 90°F to 100°F

Average Rainfall

- Eastern Himalayas: 50 in to 80 in
 - Western Himalayas: 30 in to 40 in
 - Assam: 80 in to 100 in
 - West Bengal: 50 in to 60 in
 - Indo-Gangetic Plain Patna: 47 in, Delhi 28 in, Rajasthan 10 in
 - Western Coastal region: 75 in to 120 in
 - Mangalore and Bombay: 255 in
 - Peninsular Interior Madhya Pradesh: 30 in, Uttar Pradesh 40 in to 60 in, Orissa: 40 in to 70 in
 - East Coast: 35 in to 50 in
-

FLORA AND FAUNA

India has about 15,000 species of plants. In the north-east and along the Western Ghats can be found evergreen forests. The plains contain deciduous forests, Bengal and Madhya Pradesh contain swampy marshes, the Himalayan foothills have pine forests, and the southeast is marked by lagoons and estuaries.

India has about 500 species of mammals. The nation is known for its tigers, elephants, and rhinoceroses, but there are also gazelles, antelopes, blue bulls, various species of deer (including the rare swamp deer), buffalo, bison, sloth bears, hyenas, jackals, foxes, and others. Other mammals include mongooses, leopards, panthers, and various species of monkeys, including macaques and langurs. India has 2,000 species and subspecies of birds, including hornbills, peacocks, herons, ibises, storks, cranes, and pelicans. Around 500 species of reptiles and amphibians include cobras, pythons, crocodiles, tortoises, and lizards.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 1,080,264,388

World Rank: 2nd

Density per sq km: 358

% of annual growth (1999–2003): 1.6

Male %: 51.7

Female %: 48.3

Urban %: 28.3

Age Distribution: %	0–14:	31.7
	15–65:	63.5
	65 and over:	4.8

Population 2025: 1,361,625,000

Birth Rate per 1,000: 22.8

Death Rate per 1,000: 8.38

Rate of Natural Increase %: 1.6

Total Fertility Rate: 2.85

Expectation of Life (years): Males 63.25

Females 64.77

Marriage Rate per 1,000: —

Divorce Rate per 1,000: —

Average Size of Households: 5.6

Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Ethnically, India has one of the greatest mixtures in the world; its racial diversity is perhaps the most complex to be found anywhere outside of Africa. The great majority of the population belongs to the Caucasoid family. The Dravidians of South India are believed to be descendants of the alpiners, the Mediterranean branch of the Caucasoids, while most north Indians are believed to be Indo-Nordics. The former constitute 25 percent of the population, and the latter 72 percent.

The aboriginal inhabitants of India have survived in geographic pockets in isolated hilly regions, today constituting 3 percent of the population. These tribes are concentrated in three zones, known as scheduled areas: the northwest (the states of Mizoram, Manipur, Nagaland, Meghalaya, Assam, and Arunachal Pradesh), the hills of central India (Madhya Pradesh and Orissa), and the southern part of the peninsula (Kerala and Tamil Nadu).

The tribes of the northeast are Mongoloid peoples, speaking Sino-Tibetan languages. The tribal people are an estimated 7 percent of the population. The government has met with only modest success in its efforts to improve the positions of these groups.

Every large Indian city has substantial Western communities. For many years India has been a haven for members of the Western counterculture.

LANGUAGES

In India 1,652 languages and dialects are spoken. Of these, 15 are recognized in the constitution as regional languages, and one, Hindi, written in the Devanagiri script, is designated as the official language. Linguistic loyalties run deep, and political boundaries of the 25 states follow, for the most part, linguistic boundaries.

The 15 languages specified in the constitution, spoken by 91 percent of the population, are broadly divided into Indo-European and Dravidian. Almost 75 percent of the population speak one of the Indo-European languages, while 25 percent speak Dravidian languages.

Hindi, together with its numerous dialectal forms, such as Western Hindi, Eastern Hindi, Bihari, and Pahari, is taught as the primary or secondary language throughout India. Through the Central Hindi Directorate, the government runs several programs for the enrichment and spread of Hindi. Some of these measures have met with considerable resistance in Dravidian language areas as well as in Bengal, leading to language riots.

Urdu, the language of urban Muslims, differs from Hindi in that it is written in Arabic-Persian script and also in its large admixture of Arabic and Persian words.

Although English is the mother tongue only of the Anglo-Indians, it is spoken by more than 190 million persons in India with some degree of proficiency. It is accorded the position of an associate official language in the constitution, but for practical purposes it is the official language of India and the principal medium of communication among the educated classes.

RELIGIONS

Almost all the major religions of the world are represented in India, and four of them originated in the country: Bud-

dhism, Jainism, Sikhism, and Hinduism. India has not adopted a state religion, and the constitution guarantees every citizen the right to freedom of worship. Despite pressures from Hindu extremists, there is no discrimination against any faith or creed.

Hindus form the majority of the population in all areas except Jammu and Kashmir (where Muslims are dominant) and Nagaland (where Christians are in the majority). Hinduism is less a monolithic system than a conglomeration of loosely related but interwoven cults and traditions. It has no unifying creed or priesthood, no founder, no ecclesiastical organization, and no concept of heresy. Relatively tolerant, it encompasses differing theologies and spans the religious spectrum from monism to polytheism and from atheism to animism.

Religion is a pervasive influence in India, permeating all aspects of national life. Even political and economic movements have religious overtones; Hinduism particularly serves as the principal unifying force in the country. Hindu-Muslim riots, among the many deplorable features of the Indian religious scene, occur with almost predictable regularity.

Muslims are the largest religious minority, constituting the majority in Jammu and Kashmir and the second-largest religious group in 12 other states.

There are two main groups of Christians in India. The older of these, known variously as the Christians of St. Thomas or Syrian Christians, dates back to the first century, the Indian Christians to the late 16th century.

Buddhism is no longer an active religious force in India, where it is confined to small groups in the Himalayas and scattered converts from the untouchable class. Among the smaller religious minorities are the Jews and Zoroastrians. The latter, who are also known as Parsis, worship the god Ahura Mazda and sacred elements, especially fire.

Religious Affiliations

Hindu	878,000,000
Muslim	129,000,000
Sikh	20,000,000
Christian	25,000,000
Other	53,000,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Around 2500 B.C.E. the first major Indian civilization, along the Indus River, was established in what is today Pakistan. When Aryan invaders came in successive waves from 1500 to 200 B.C.E., the original Dravidian inhabitants were forced south. During this period both the caste system of the Brahman priests and the rise of Buddhism became critical factors in Indian culture. In the third century Ashoka, the Mauryan emperor, embraced Hinduism.

The Gupta Empire came into power after the fall of the Mauryan Empire in the fourth century. It ruled India for more than 150 years, during which it was established as a powerful and widespread empire, completing the Mauryan design of unity and consolidating the whole of India under the governance of a centralized state. This period, the Gupta period, is often termed the golden age of the arts in ancient India. The Guptas were defeated by the White Huns in the sixth century.

In 1192 Muslims arrived. Within 20 years the Ganges River basin was under Muslim control, which was limited, however, and never fully penetrated the Indian Subcontinent. Two great kingdoms developed in what is now Karnataka: the mighty Hindu kingdom of Vijayanagar and the fragmented Bahmani Muslim kingdom.

During the 16th century the Mughals invaded Punjab, defeating the sultan of Delhi in 1525. The creation of the Mughal Empire marked a renaissance of artistic development. However, the Mughals' control was ceded to the Maratha Empire in the 17th century. The Maratha Empire was able to consolidate the central portion of India under its rule before ultimately being replaced by the British.

The first British settlement was erected in Surat on the west coast in 1612 by the English East India Company, under charter from the Mughal emperor Jahangir. By 1857, when the company's Indian territories were taken over by the Crown, its writ ran from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin and from Burma to Afghanistan. Despite many glaring inadequacies, the British must be credited with the introduction of modern systems of education, public health, public works, railroads and roads, banking and public finance, the judiciary, social welfare, and media. Although reluctant to do so, they also laid the foundations of a parliamentary system of government. Above all they welded hundreds of feudal princedoms into the modern political entity known as India, giving the country a political unity it had never previously possessed within its present borders. Unlike many other former British colonies, India has not turned its back on the principal British legacies, although many of them have been Indianized in form. Much goodwill toward the British seems to survive, and India has retained its membership in the Commonwealth unbroken since independence.

India as a colonial enterprise was not particularly profitable to the British, but it was the jewel in the British Crown, and the fact that a small island nation was able to rule over a large subcontinent of over several hundred million added to the British sense of superiority and their imperial sense of destiny. The British believed that they could continue to rule India indefinitely, but they overlooked the hidden dynamic of nationalism. The English language, which the British introduced, was uniting Indians, and the typically British notions of self-governance and freedom helped to subvert the notion of an empire.

Nationalist sentiments were crystallized by the convergence of two forces: The first was the renaissance of Hinduism, the second the foundation of the Indian National Congress (INC). Led by typical 19th-century liberals who sought extensive social reforms and increasing self-government, such as Gopal Krishna Gokhale and Motilal Nehru (the father of Jawaharlal Nehru), the INC by 1900 had become a loyal opposition that posed absolutely no danger to the empire.

After 1905, however, when Japan defeated Russia, the INC became a mass movement with the slogan *Swaraj* (self-government), shedding much of its moderate stance in favor of a transfer of power to Indian hands. In response to the hardening of Congress policy on nationalist lines and the emergence of a separate Muslim political organization, the British adopted a policy of incremental appeasement without relinquishing control.

It was at this time that a new leader appeared on the scene, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, known to millions of his countrymen as Mahatma, or "The Great Soul". From 1919 to 1949 he was at the forefront of the agitation for independence, which included *hartals* (strikes), boycotts, noncooperation, civil disobedience, and passive resistance. He was jailed many times, sometimes provoking the British to arrest him and then using his jail terms to dramatize his cause. He also espoused a number of social reforms, such as support for the *harijan* (literally, the people of God, a euphemism for the untouchables), cottage industry, the promotion of *swadeshi* (literally, economic autarky), and hand spinning. He was a master manipulator of public opinion and a skilled propagandist as well. He sparred with the British at roundtable conferences, winning small concessions each time. One of these concessions was the constitution of 1935, which granted autonomy to the various provinces.

The nationalist movement came to full maturity during World War II. In 1947 the British announced that they would divide the Indian Empire into two states, India and Pakistan—the former primarily Hindu, the latter primarily Muslim—and grant independence to both. India was saved from a civil war, but the partition between India and Pakistan proved bloodier than a civil war might have been; several million perished, and several million more were uprooted. Nevertheless, on the stroke of midnight on August 14, 1947, an independent India, the dream of thousands of Indian nationalists, came into existence.

In 1950 India adopted a constitution that declared the country a republic and a federal union with a parliamentary system of government. Jawaharlal Nehru, the prime minister since independence, remained in that office. Under Nehru the nation pursued policies of non-alignment in foreign affairs and socialism at home. Nehru focused on industrialization to spur development. However, the nation's size, growing population, refugee prob-

lems, and continued tension with Pakistan all hindered economic growth. During Nehru's tenure India constitutionally annexed Jammu and Kashmir into the union in 1957, annexed Goa and other Portuguese possessions in 1961, and fought a limited war with China over disputed border areas in 1962.

Nehru died in 1964 and was succeeded by Lal Bahadur Shastri, who led the nation into another war with Pakistan in 1965 over the disputed regions of Jammu and Kashmir. The war ended without territorial gains for either side. Shastri died in 1966, and Indira Gandhi (Nehru's daughter) became prime minister. India again went to war with Pakistan in 1971, supporting East Pakistan's bid for independence from West Pakistan. The conflict resulted in the creation of Bangladesh.

Gandhi's tenure was marked by a decline in the political ascendancy of the Indian National Congress, the party that had dominated Indian politics since before independence. Foreign policy problems and food shortages contributed to the party's loss of 80 parliamentary seats in the 1967 election. In an effort to maintain her power in the legislature Gandhi moved to form an alliance with the radical wing of the party. The right wing, led by Morarji Desai, opposed the move, and the party split in 1969. In 1975, following food riots, charges of government corruption, and her conviction for election law violations, Gandhi declared a state of emergency. She suspended civil liberties and postponed elections scheduled for 1976. She also sponsored legislation that retroactively cleared her of the election violations.

Gandhi's actions met with widespread disapproval, and when elections were held in 1977, the Congress Party suffered an overwhelming defeat, losing more than half its seats. A new government was formed under Morarji Desai, the compromise choice of the winning five-party Janata coalition. The government failed to develop a coherent set of policies, and the coalition was racked by factionalism. In 1979 Desai resigned as prime minister and was briefly succeeded by Charan Singh.

Gandhi returned to power in 1980, following an overwhelming victory by her newly reorganized Congress-Indira Party. Gandhi's term was marked by an increase in ethnic violence. In 1983 at least 3,000 persons were killed when Hindu mobs in Assam attacked Muslim immigrants. That same year serious unrest developed in the Punjab over Sikh demands for regional autonomy. In an effort to suppress Sikh militants who had organized the murder of political opponents, Gandhi in June 1984 sent the army to assault the holiest of Sikh shrines, the Golden Temple of Amritsar, from which the militants were operating. The militants were routed, but Sikhs were deeply offended by the operation. In October, Gandhi was assassinated by two of her Sikh bodyguards in retaliation. Her death led to a terrible outbreak of violence, in which approximately 2,500 Sikhs were massacred.

The Congress Party chose Gandhi's son, Rajiv, as her successor. He called for elections for December 1984, in which he and the Congress Party won the largest parliamentary victory in India's history. Despite the victory Gandhi's popularity declined dramatically. He was unable to solve the sectarian problems in the Punjab or to cleanse Indian politics of its pervasive corruption. In 1987 Gandhi sent troops to Sri Lanka to disarm the Tamil separatists. The operation proved difficult, and the last of the troops were withdrawn in March 1990.

Elections held in 1989 resulted in the defeat of Gandhi's Congress Party and the victory of the National Front coalition, led by the Janata Dal. V. P. Singh was sworn in as prime minister to head a minority government. Singh's tenure in office was short. In the wake of caste violence and renewed violence between Hindus and Muslims, the Singh government overwhelmingly lost a vote of confidence in November 1990 and immediately resigned. Chandra Shekhar, the head of a dissident faction of the Janata Dal, became prime minister. Shekhar's government was shortlived; in March 1991 he resigned following the withdrawal of support for his minority government by the Congress (I) Party, led by Gandhi. Gandhi was assassinated in 1991 by Tamil extremists during the election campaign that followed. In June of that year, P. V. Narasimha Rao, who had been elected head of Congress (I) following Gandhi's death, was sworn in as prime minister.

During 1994 Prime Minister Rao became increasingly beleaguered by his critics and the resignation or dismissal of many of his cabinet members. In 1995 Congress (I) woes continued with electoral defeats in Maharashtra and Gujarat. In the balloting for the 11th Lok Sabha, Congress (I) suffered a heavy defeat, retaining only 140 seats, against the 167 gained by the Hindu fundamentalist BJP. There followed three years of chaos, during which Rao resigned, to be followed first by Sitaram Kesri of the Congress (I) Party and then by Inder Kumar Gujral of the Janata Dal. New elections were held in 1998 but failed to produce a majority for any of the major national parties. However, BJP and its allies emerged with a plurality parliamentary support of some 225 seats, and BJP's leader, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, was sworn in as prime minister. Meanwhile, Congress Party, facing renewed internal dissension, turned to Rajiv Gandhi's widow, Sonia, for leadership. However, the BJP consolidated its gains throughout India and gained a decisive majority in the 2000 national elections. In December 2001 a suicide squad attacked the parliament in New Delhi, killing several police officers. India blamed two Kashmiri militant groups for the attack and imposed sanctions against Pakistan to force it to take actions against the groups. Pakistan retaliated with similar sanctions, and both countries began to mass troops along the common border amid rising fear of an imminent war. Violence continued in 2003 when a pair of explosions

in Mumbai killed 46 people; the government suspected that Islamic militants and Kashmiri separatists were behind the blasts. In May 2004 Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee resigned after his party suffered stunning losses in parliamentary elections. Many observers believed that a Gandhi regime would return and that Sonia Gandhi would become prime minister. She declined, however, paving the way for Manmohan Singh to be named prime minister. In late 2004 a devastating Indian Ocean tsunami killed over 200,000 in nations of Southeast Asia, hitting India's Andaman and Nicobar islands.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

(Note: Excluded are interim prime ministers and those who served less than a year)

1947–64	Jawaharlal Nehru
1964–66	Lal Bahadur Shastri
1966–77	Indira Gandhi
1977–79	Morarji Desai
1980–84	Indira Gandhi
1984–89	Rajiv Gandhi
1991–96	P. V. Narasimha Rao
1998–2004	Atal Bihari Vajpayee
2004–	Manmohan Singh

CONSTITUTION

The Indian constitution of 1950, the longest constitution in the world, consisting of 397 articles and nine schedules, proclaims India a sovereign democratic, socialist, and secular republic with a parliamentary system of government. The constitution is federal in structure with unitary features.

The constitution lays down certain Directive Principles of State Policy to be applied as standards in legislation. Among these are social justice, equitable distribution of ownership and control of material resources to prevent concentration of wealth, and free and compulsory education.

The constitution is flexible in character, and a simple process of amendment has been adopted. The ordinary process requires a two-thirds majority of the members of each house present and voting, a simple majority in terms of total membership, and the president's assent. Numerous amendments have been adopted for the constitution, dealing with various emergency measures, balance between the people and parliament, and the states and the central government.

The division of powers between the union and the states is secured through demarcation of the areas of legislation into three divisions: a Union List, a Concurrent List, and a State List. Union parliament has exclusive

powers to make laws pertaining to defense, foreign affairs, communications, interstate commerce, and transportation. It can also make laws concurrently with state legislatures for 47 subjects on the Concurrent List, including marriage and divorce, trade unions, criminal law and procedure, social security, planning, price controls, factories, and newspapers. In case of conflict between state laws and union laws, the union laws prevail. The State List includes education, public health, local government, land revenues, and irrigation.

The executive consists of a president, a vice president, and a Council of Ministers headed by a prime minister. The president is elected for a renewable term of five years by an electoral college consisting of the elected members of both houses of the union parliament and of the legislative assemblies of the states. He or she may be removed from office by parliament through impeachment. Although vested with broad powers, the president is a largely ceremonial figure acting solely on the advice of the prime minister and the cabinet.

Effective executive power rests with the prime minister and the Council of Ministers. The council comprises ministers who are members of the cabinet, ministers of state, and deputy ministers. The ministers are collectively and individually responsible to the Lok Sabha, the lower chamber of parliament. At the administrative head of each ministry is a secretary.

The governmental machinery of the states closely resembles that of the union. Each state has a governor appointed by the president for a term of five years. The governor acts only on the advice of a Council of Ministers headed by a chief minister.

The seven Union Territories are administered by the president through administrators. Voting is universal at the age of 18.

PARLIAMENT

The Indian parliament is a bicameral body consisting of an indirectly elected upper chamber, the Council of States (Rajya Sabha), and a directly elected lower chamber, the House of the People (Lok Sabha). The Council of States has a maximum membership of 250, all but 12 of whom are elected by state legislatures for six-year terms, with one-third retiring every two years. The 12 nonelected members are appointed by the president on the basis of their intellectual preeminence. The House of the People has 543 elective seats and two seats filled by nominations. Out of the elective seats, 530 are from the states and 13 from the Union Territories. Members are directly elected by universal suffrage for five-year terms, subject to dissolution. The president may nominate additional members if convinced that certain minorities, such as Anglo-Indians, are not adequately represented.

House members have a normal term of five years, unless the House is dissolved earlier.

Legislation requires the consent of both houses of parliament. All financial legislation must be recommended by the president, and the Lok Sabha alone has the power to authorize appropriations and approve proposals for taxation. The president cannot withhold his assent from a money bill, but he may send back other bills to parliament for reconsideration; if both houses pass them again, the president must approve them.

Parliament must meet at intervals of at least six months, and it usually holds three sessions a year.

POLITICAL PARTIES

No fewer than 85 political parties contested India's first general elections in 1952, most of them splinter parties and regional parties. The very multiplicity of parties ensured continued Congress Party successes at the polls until 1977. Parties that poll 3 percent or more of the vote in the previous general elections are classified as all-India parties at the national level and regional parties at the local level. Only these recognized parties are entitled to the exclusive use of certain voting symbols.

The Indian National Congress (INC), founded in 1885 by an Englishman, Allan Octavian Hume, was a monolithic party when it led India to independence. It was the ruling party of India for 30 years, from 1947 to 1977. As an umbrella organization focused on independence, the Congress Party sought to unite disparate ideologies and personalities in the fight for self-rule. With independence, ideological and personal differences loomed larger and led to defections from the party. In 1969 the INC split into two groups, the ruling (Gandhi) faction and the conservative, anti-Gandhi Indian National Congress (Opposition). The latter became the nation's first recognized opposition party. The INC was weakened further in 1977 when dissidents broke away to form the Congress for Democracy. In 1978 Indira Gandhi's faction was expelled from the party, and she and her followers formed a new party, called the Indian National Congress-Indira (INC-I), or Congress-I. In 1981 the party again split when the Indian National Congress-Socialist (Congress-S) was formed. That year the Supreme Court ruled that the INC-I was the real Congress Party. However, by late 1982 the anti-Gandhi Congress (O) had disintegrated. In December 1986 Congress-S split, the majority voting to rejoin Congress-I, while the remaining members decided to continue as Congress-S.

The Janata Party was formed in 1977 as a coalition of the Jana Sangh, the Bharatiya Lok Dal, the Socialists, and the Congress (O). The Congress for Democracy later joined this group. The party ruled India from 1977 to 1979. Although each of these groups was supposed to submerge its separate identity into the new party, the en-

tire period of Janata rule was characterized by factional infighting. After the Janata government collapsed, various elements and individuals left to form or reform separate parties. The Rashtriya Sanjay Manch and the Lok Dal (A) merged with the Janata Party in 1988. The party aimed to achieve a socialist society free from social, political, and economic exploitation.

The Bharatiya Janata Party was founded in 1980 as a breakaway group from the Janata Party. It is a radical right-wing Hindu party.

The Communist Party of India, formed in 1925, worked with the Congress Party for independence in the 1930s but broke with it during World War II. The Communists advocated collaboration with the British in the "antifascist war," while the Congress launched an anti-British noncooperation movement and demanded immediate independence. With the coming of independence, the Communists were divided over the appropriate approach to parliamentary democracy and to the Congress government. In 1964 the party split over this issue, with the moderates advocating opposition to the Congress only on domestic issues and without intent to bring down the government. The radicals, the Communist Party of India (Marxist), argued for implacable opposition to the Congress.

The All-India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam is a Tamil party founded in 1972 in a break from the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam, an anti-Brahman regional party dedicated to the promotion of Tamil interests.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The Republic of India is a union of 25 states and seven Union Territories. The states and Union Territories are grouped into four zones: Northern, Western, Central, and Southern. Each level has a high-level advisory body known as the Zonal Council. The northeastern states have a Northeastern Council similar to a zonal council. In November 2000 three new states were carved out of existing states, bringing the total number of states to 28: Uttaranchal, from Uttar Pradesh; Chhattisgarh, from Madhya Pradesh; and Jharkhand, from Bihar. Tribal groups that had waged long campaigns for the creation of separate states in the interest of cultural autonomy and regional economic development form the majority of the population in all three states.

The principal subdivision within a state is the district, headed by a district collector. Municipal bodies in smaller towns have less autonomy and fewer financial resources and are more closely controlled by appointed executive officers. Municipal functions include roads, water supply, drainage, public health, education, and parks.

For rural areas there is a three-tier system of *panchayati raj* at the village, block, and district levels. Although there is some variation in the powers and structure of the

panchayats (literally, the councils of five, the traditional village councils), the basic units of the *panchayati raj* and the general framework is the same. Elected directly by and from among villagers, the *panchayats* are responsible for agricultural production, rural industries, medical relief, grazing grounds, village roads, tanks and wells, and sanitation.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The legal system is based on English common law.

The judiciary is completely separate from the executive and is highly esteemed for its independence, competence, and impartiality. It retained its integrity even under the pressures of Indira Gandhi's state of emergency. Judges of the state high courts and the Supreme Court are selected by the law ministry on the recommendations of the chief justice of the Supreme Court. Since 1983 state chief justices are required to be non-state residents.

The judicial system is headed by the federal Supreme Court, consisting of a chief justice and not more than 25 judges. The chief justice is appointed by the president, and the other judges are appointed by the president after consultation with the chief justice. These appointments do not require the concurrence of parliament, but judges may be removed by the president only after a parliamentary impeachment. The Supreme Court has original, appellate, and advisory jurisdiction. It exercises exclusive jurisdiction in disputes between the union and the states and between states and is the ultimate interpreter of the constitution and all laws.

There are 18 state high courts, 17 of which are located in states and one of which is located in Delhi. Each high court is headed by a chief justice, who is appointed by the president in consultation with the governor of the state and the chief justice of India. The number of judges on a high court bench varies from state to state, ranging from a minimum of three to a maximum of 33. High courts are not subject to the control of the state legislatures or executives; judges may be removed only in the same manner as judges of the Supreme Court.

Each state is divided into a number of judicial districts. Under the Code of Criminal Procedure of 1973 there are separate sets of district magistrates for the discharge of executive and judicial functions. Under the district magistrate are first-, second-, and third-class magistrates, who try criminal offenses not triable by sessions courts. At the village level, *nyaya* (justice) *panchayats* try cases involving minor offenses.

The constitution permits the enactment of preventive detention laws against threats to the public welfare and to national security. Such laws provide for limits on the length of detention, generally not to exceed 12 months, and for review of such detention.

The Terrorist Affected Areas Act of 1984 empowers the government to declare any part of the country as "terrorist affected" and set up special courts that can hold trials in camera. The whole of the Punjab was so declared following the unrest in that state.

There is no constitutional guarantee of public trial. The criminal procedure code provides for open trial but permits the judiciary to close the proceedings under relatively narrow circumstances where the evidence would be prejudicial to the state.

HUMAN RIGHTS

India is a multiparty democracy with its external democratic framework still intact after more than 50 years of independence. It exhibits all the characteristics of a sound democracy: an independent judiciary, a nonpolitical military, a free press, regular elections, and unfettered voting rights for all citizens. Some internal strains were visible toward the end of the 1970s, with ethnic and religious conflicts, disharmony between states and between the federal government and the states, and police excesses.

Acts of sabotage and terrorism occurred in the Punjab through the late 1980s. In October 1990 the government, reacting to the continuing violence, extended direct rule in the Punjab for an eighth term. Violence reached an unprecedented level in 1990, with the Indian press reporting about 4,000 deaths in that year. Sikh terrorists killed about 80 people in a train bombing in the Punjab in June 1991. The Punjab remains closed to foreign visitors without special permission to enter.

Incidents of communal violence increased throughout the 1990s. There were clashes both between religious communities (usually Hindu-Muslim) and between castes of different economic levels, particularly attacks on untouchables by higher-caste Hindus.

There is widespread circumstantial evidence that torture by the police does occur. Amnesty International cited reports that third-degree methods were used in many cases of police custody in West Bengal, and there were other reports of police torture in the Punjab, Bihar, and Haryana.

While there are effective legal safeguards to ensure fair trials, the problem of prisoners awaiting trials for months or years severely vitiates the quality of justice.

The freedoms of press and speech are among the strongest characteristics of Indian democracy at work. The Indian press is believed to be among the freest in Asia, and there is no censorship of the printed word. Electronic media, however, are entirely state controlled. Films are subject to a film censorship board, where censors are more concerned with moral content than with politics. Trade unions operate without restrictions on their rights to organize, negotiate and strike.

There is universal adult suffrage, which permits citizens to participate fully in the political processes and in periodic elections at all levels. Elections are free, impartially administered, and supervised by an election commissioner. Every group is free to organize, agitate, publish, recruit, and seek judicial redress in the case of perceived injustice.

FOREIGN POLICY

Although not a major power by world standards, India dominates South Asia in the same way China dominates East Asia and Russia dominates Eastern Europe. However, India has not been able to exercise the kind of leadership in the region to which it would be entitled by virtue of its size or population. India's status among world nations has declined significantly since the death of Prime Minister Nehru, who set the goals of Indian foreign policy in the 1950s. By proposing nonalignment as a viable alternative for developing newly independent nations, Nehru was able to assume the role of spokesman for the third world and to translate, with considerable success, his concepts into instruments of mediatory diplomacy. During the 1950s and 1960s India made important contributions to peacekeeping operations and commissions.

The four most critical areas of Indian foreign policy are its relations with Pakistan, China, the United States, and Russia. (Although its relations have been historically closest with the United Kingdom and Commonwealth countries, they have never loomed large in the sight of Indian foreign policy makers.) In the case of Pakistan there has been a state of permanent conflict that has lasted more than 50 years. The principal bone of contention is Kashmir, the bulk of which remains in Indian hands, although the population is overwhelmingly Muslim and which, if the logic of partition had been followed uniformly, should have been placed within Pakistani borders. But India, as a secular state, has never accepted the religion-based nature of the partition imposed by the British before they left. Since 1947 India and Pakistan have engaged in three wars, in 1947, 1965, and 1971. There have been no open wars since 1971, but the cold war has continued, ranging from verbal duels in international forums to sporadic gunfire across border lines. In 1998 both India and Pakistan acquired nuclear capability, though on a rudimentary scale, making the danger of a nuclear conflict in the subcontinent very real. After an attack on the parliament in New Delhi, allegedly by two Kashmiri militant groups, both India and Pakistan began massing troops along their common border, which led to growing fear of an imminent war. By 2004 diplomatic talks had defused tensions to some degree and the threat of war seemed diminished, but the issue remained unresolved.

China poses an even greater threat to India, according to the Indian defense minister. The border conflict between the two countries, involving 50,500 square miles

of Himalayan territory, escalated into military conflict in 1962 and has never been settled. The two countries greatly distrust each other, and China's support of Pakistan has added to the brew of hostility.

India's strongest ally over the past 50-plus years has been Russia. The two countries are bound by a number of treaties of peace, friendship, and cooperation, the first dating to 1971. Relations with the United States first improved after the end of the East-West cold war, but since then they have suffered as a result of India's nuclear tests in defiance of U.S. wishes. However, in early 2006 the United States and India signed an agreement that gives India access to civilian nuclear technology.

DEFENSE

The Indian defense structure is headed by the president. Responsibility for national defense rests with the parliament and the cabinet. At the cabinet level there is the standing National Defense Council, with the prime minister as chairman. The three chiefs of staff are equal and independent. The army is divided into five commands. The Southern, Eastern, Central, and Western Commands have headquarters at Poona, Calcutta, Lucknow, and Simla, respectively. The fifth command is called Northern, but its headquarters remain undisclosed. The bulk of the army is deployed on the Pakistani and Chinese borders. The navy is organized into three regional commands (Western, Eastern, and Southern) and two fleets (Western and Eastern). The air force is organized into three regional commands (Western, Central, and Eastern) and two operational commands (Training Command and Maintenance Command).

Military manpower is provided by voluntary enlistment. Since the days of the British Raj, the bulk of the recruitment is from the so-called martial races: the Rajputs, Sikhs, Gogras, Marathas, Jats, and Punjabis, as well as the Gurkhas, although the latter are Nepali citizens. Paramilitary forces include the territorial army and the Lok Sahayak Sena, or the national volunteer force.

The total strength of the armed forces is 1.3 million, including a 1.1-million-man army. Military expenditures in 2003 were \$14 billion, 2.4 percent of the nation's gross domestic product (GDP).

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	1,300,000
Military Manpower Availability:	293,677,117
Military Expenditures \$billion:	14
as % of GDP:	2.4
as % of central government expenditures:	14.0
Arms Imports \$million:	969
Arms Exports \$million:	1

ECONOMY

India's economy encompasses traditional village farming, modern agriculture, handicrafts, a wide range of modern industries, and a multitude of support services. More than one-third of the population is too poor to be able to afford an adequate diet. The government has reduced controls on investment and foreign trade, but privatization of output has proceeded slowly. Economic growth has been strong, averaging almost 6 percent between 1999 and 2003 and estimated at 8.3 percent in 2004. This growth has enabled India to reduce the poverty rate by 10 percentage points (though the rate remained high in 2002, at 25 percent). The nation has a large number of well-educated people with strong English-language skills, making the nation a major exporter of software services and workers. The World Bank remains troubled by the size of India's public debt, amounting to nearly 60 percent of GDP.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$trillion: 3.033
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 2,900
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 5.8
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 4.1
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %

Agriculture: 23.6
 Industry: 28.4
 Services: 48.0

Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %

Private Consumption: 64
 Government Consumption: 13
 Gross Domestic Investment: 23.1

Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 57.24

Imports: 74.15

% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 3.5

% of Income Received by Richest 10%: 33.5

CONSUMER PRICE INDEXES (1995 = 100)

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
	138.4	144.0	149.3	155.8	161.8

Finance

National Currency: Indian Rupee (INR)

Exchange Rate: \$1 = INR 46.5806

Money Supply Stock in National Currency trillion: 5.02

Central Bank Discount Rate %: 6.0

Total External Debt \$billion: 101.7

Debt Service Ratio %: 18.1

Balance of Payments \$billion: 3.41

International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 97.6

Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
3.8

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$billion: 1.46

per capita: \$1.40

Foreign Direct Investment \$billion: 2.577

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: 1 April–31 March

Revenues \$billion: 86.69

Expenditures \$billion: 114.6

Budget Deficit \$billion: 27.91

Tax Revenues as % of GDP: 9.9

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 23.6

Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 1.6

Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares: 9.4

Irrigation, % of Farms having: 32.3

Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 107.3

Total Cropland as % of Farmland: 54.4

Livestock: Cattle 000: 185,500

Sheep 000: 62,500

Hogs 000: 14,300

Chickens 000: 425,000

Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 321.5

Fisheries: Total Catch tons million: 5.96

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 83.67

Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 6.5

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million:
263

Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million:
319

Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 309

Net Energy Imports % of use: 17.6

Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: 120,000

Production kW-hr billion: 533.3

Consumption kW-hr billion: 497.2

Coal Reserves tons billion: 93

Production tons million: 393

Consumption tons million: 421

Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: 30.1

Production cubic feet billion: 883

Consumption cubic feet billion: 883

Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: 5.4

Production barrels per day 000: 819

Consumption barrels per day 000: 2,200

Pipelines Length km: 5,613

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 74.15

Exports \$billion: 57.24

Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 15.4

Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 8.0

Balance of Trade \$billion: 3.41

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
United States %	6.4	20.6
Belgium %	5.6	—
United Kingdom %	4.8	5.3
China %	4.3	6.4
Singapore %	4.0	—
Hong Kong %	—	4.8
Germany %	—	4.4

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 3,319,644
 Paved %: 45.7
 Automobiles: 6,042,000
 Trucks and Buses: 8,438,000
 Railroad; Track Length km: 63,140
 Passenger-km billion: 493.5
 Freight-km billion: 333.2
 Merchant Marine: No of Vessels: 306
 Total Deadweight Tonnage million: 11.07
 Airports: 333
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 27.5
 Length of Waterways km: 485

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 2,384
 Number of Tourists from 000: 4,205
 Tourist Receipts \$billion: 2.923
 Tourist Expenditures \$billion: 3.449

Communications

Telephones million: 48.9
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.02
 Cellular Telephones million: 26.154
 Personal Computers million: 7.5
 Internet Hosts per million people: 80
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 17

ENVIRONMENT

Perhaps the single greatest environmental concern for India is its rapidly growing population, which is straining natural resources. The country suffers from increased air pollution, especially in urban areas, caused by automobile emissions and industrial smoke. Deforestation is occurring at an alarming rate, as is soil degradation. All of India's waterways are polluted with industrial and agricultural runoff as well as raw sewage, leaving insufficient supplies of potable water throughout the country.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 21.6
 Average Annual Forest Change, 1990-2000, 000 ha: 38
 Nationally Protected Areas as % of Total Land Area: 4.8
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 1,582,285
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 1.05

LIVING CONDITIONS

The income gap in India is huge, with the poorest 10 percent of the population earning just 3.5 percent of the nation's income and the highest 10 percent earning over one-third. Those Indians fortunate enough to be wealthy lead comfortable lives, and a growing middle class is gaining access to modern conveniences. At the same time, huge numbers of people live—and die—in abject poverty on the streets and in the slums of the cities; Kolkata is virtually synonymous with such grinding poverty, largely by virtue of the renown of the work of the Nobel Peace Prize-winner Mother Teresa. Despite the country's huge cities, nearly three-quarters of Indians live in rural areas, making India a nation largely made up of villages—as many as a half million of them. Throughout the nation many people endure poor sanitation, contaminated drinking water, and inadequate nutrition.

HEALTH

Improvements in medical care have raised the life expectancy to 64 years. Among the leading causes of death are parasites and infectious diseases, the result of poor sanitation and contaminated drinking water. In 2001 there were 310,000 deaths from AIDS. Infant mortality is quite high, at nearly 58 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2004, in large part because only 42 percent of babies are born with the aid of medical staff. India has four major health-care systems, each having different historical origins. Three of them take a holistic approach to illness and see it as a result of underlying imbalances. The oldest, Ayurveda, relies on herbal remedies. *Sidda* developed in south India, and its diagnoses depend on careful reading of the pulse. *Unami* is of Islamic origins and also emphasizes holistic treatments. The fourth system is modern Western medicine, taught at about 140 medical colleges in India. A major health issue in India is population growth. Efforts to stem this growth have brought the rate down to 1.6 percent per year—still a large rate of growth in a nation where at least 25 percent of the population lives in poverty. Through the end of the 20th century India's yearly addition to its population was roughly equal to the population of New York State.

Health

Number of Physicians: 503,900
 Number of Dentists: —
 Number of Nurses: 607,376
 Number of Pharmacists: —
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 51
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 58
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 540
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 5.1
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 24
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.8
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 70
 Measles: 67
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 30
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 86

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Cooking varies throughout the regions of India, and diet differs by caste and religion. Hindus, for example, do not eat beef, and most are vegetarian. Rice is the staple food item in the south, while grains such as wheat, maize, and millet are staples in the north. The quintessential Indian dish is the curry, a term used by Europeans to describe spicy dishes, but there are many variations of curry depending on the spices used, which include asafetida, cardamom, clove, cinnamon, cumin seeds, coriander, garlic, ginger, turmeric, green/red chilies, aniseed, and various peppers. There are at least 50 varieties of bread. A typical Indian meal consists of five or six dishes served on a tray or plate with several small bowls to hold each dish.

Nutrition varies widely depending on economic status. Because such a large percentage of the population is poor, 18 percent of children ages one through five are regarded as underweight, but figures can vary by state, with an astounding 77 percent of children in this age group in Gujarat underweight. Adult malnutrition is especially common in the states of Karnataka, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, and Orissa.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 21.4
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,430
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 157.8
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 107.2

STATUS OF WOMEN

Although women are guaranteed equal rights and protection under the law in India, in practice long-standing cultural biases cause women to have fewer educational and career opportunities. While there are no legal barriers to

female candidates, their numbers have remained small since independence.

The 1980s and 1990s saw the deaths under suspicious circumstances of many women whose parents were unable to pay the supplementary dowries demanded by the husbands' families after marriage. Most reported cases of "dowry deaths" have been in northern India, and most are in lower-middle-class urban families. In New Delhi, which is perhaps the worst-affected area, 690 women reportedly died of burns under suspicious circumstances in 1984. That year parliament passed a bill to amend the Dowry Abolition Act of 1961, but many women's organizations maintain that the changes are inadequate.

Women

Women-headed households: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 9
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men age 15 to 24: —
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 17.5

WORK

India's labor force in 2004 was 472 million, consisting of 60 percent in agriculture, 17 percent in industry, and 23 percent in services. The unemployment rate was 9.5 percent. Per capita GDP was about \$2,900. Most of those working in agriculture are small subsistence farmers. While less than one-fifth of the labor force works in industry, India is a leader in Asia in some industries, including nuclear power production and research and garment production. Efforts have been made in recent years to take advantage of the nation's large number of highly educated people who are fluent in English by luring jobs "outsourced" from the United States, including computer programming and services and customer-service centers.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 472,000,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 32.6
 Total Activity Rate %: 37.5
 Labor by Sector: %
 Agriculture: 60
 Industry: 17
 Services: 23
 Unemployment %: 9.5

EDUCATION

Education, in theory, is free, universal, and compulsory (in most states) for five years, from the age of six.

Schooling consists of six years of primary school, three years of lower secondary school, and three years of upper

secondary school, for a total of 12 years. The pattern, however, varies from state to state. A pattern of 12 years of schooling followed by three years of college has been adopted by the majority of the states. The culmination of secondary-school studies is the secondary-school leaving certificate examination, which is both a diploma in itself and a passport to the university. Elementary schools vary widely in curriculum facilities and in quality of instruction. A new pedagogical approach called basic education was introduced in the 1960s. The curriculum of basic schools is activity oriented and correlates teaching with the social and physical environment of the child. The dropout rate is high, particularly in the first grade, where it approaches 26 percent, and most of the dropouts revert to illiteracy.

The academic year runs from April to March. English is the medium of instruction in most private schools; Hindi or the dominant state language is the medium of instruction in primary grades in public schools, but the medium shifts to English either in the upper secondary schools or early in college. Many universities, however, offer examinations in Hindi or regional languages. All students are required to be bilingual, some trilingual (in Hindi, English, and their mother tongue).

A few private schools (called public schools, on the British model) cater to the wealthy. These schools receive no subsidies, but the quality of the teaching staffs is generally high, and the medium of instruction is English. Schools run by religious denominations, both Christian and non-Christian, also operate within the school system.

About 6 percent of the secondary school enrollment is in the vocational stream. Vocational and technical education is provided in junior technical schools and industrial institutes.

Education is funded mainly by state governments and administered by the state ministries of education and the municipal and district school boards. The union government provides and funds support services and educational development schemes, particularly in the areas of vocational education, basic education, adult education, propagation of Hindi, textbook research, and audiovisual education.

Higher education is provided in some 130 universities. Of these, 77 have been established since independence. Most universities have affiliated undergraduate colleges. The most prestigious are the universities of Kolkata, Mumbai, Chennai, and Delhi.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 59.5

Male %: 70.2

Female %:

School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 9.0

First Level: Primary schools: 590,421

Teachers: 2,832,912

Students: 115,194,576
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 40.7
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 82.8
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 265,869
 Teachers: 2,357,820
 Students: 75,596,384
 Student-Teacher-Ratio: 32.3
 Net Enrollment Ratio: —
 Third Level: Institutions: 8,407
 Teachers: 428,646
 Students: 10,576,653
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 11.4
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 4.1

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Scientific research in India has long been sponsored by the government, which funds such organizations as the Archaeological Survey of India, the Botanical Survey of India, the Census of India, the Ethnological Survey of India, and the Indian Council of Medical Research. The chief scientific organizations are the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, the Atomic Energy Commission, and the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research. The government supports four national academies: the Indian National Science Academy in New Delhi, the Indian Academy of Sciences in Bangalore, the National Academy of Science in Allahabad, and the Indian Science Congress Association in Kolkata.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million persons: 154

Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —

High-Tech Exports \$billion: 1.79

Patent Applications by Residents: 234

MEDIA

India is by far the world's leader in the number of newspapers. Over 5,200 dailies and over 21,500 nondailies are published in India, with aggregate circulation in 2003 of 72 million. In addition, the periodical press consists of some 10,000 titles. By language, the largest number of newspapers are published in Hindi. There are about 1,000 bilingual newspapers, which have significantly decreased in number since the 1970s. The overwhelming majority (95.5 percent) of the papers have circulations of fewer than 15,000 each. The majority of the newspapers are owned by individuals; the rest are owned by societies and associations and by central and state governments.

The main characteristics of the Indian press are the dominance of the English-language press; the shortage of newsprint, over half of which must be imported annually, at the expense of foreign currency reserves; and the difficulty of adapting Indian scripts other than Bengali, Tamil,

and Hindi to linotype machines. Most Indian-language newspapers are manually composed. In the case of papers in Urdu, for which no typeface has been developed, all texts are handwritten by calligraphers for lithographic reproduction.

The national news agencies are the Press Trust of India, United News of India, Hindustan Samachar, and Samachar Bharati. There are small news-feature agencies, such as Indian News and Feature Alliance, India Press Agency, Eastern India News Agency, and 12 feature agencies, including News Features of India.

All-India Radio is the largest radio network in Asia, with programs covering some 80 percent of the population and about three-fourths of the geographic area. In addition, a self-contained entertainment service, known as Vividh Bharati, broadcasts popular music and commercial advertising. The home service is broadcast in all the principal languages and also in 51 local languages and 82 tribal dialects. The external service programs are broadcast in 16 foreign languages and eight Indian languages. The News Services Division broadcasts bulletins every day in 24 languages and 36 dialects.

Television, introduced in 1959, is now operated by Doordarshan India. To maximize broadcasting coverage, the government installs and maintains radio and television sets in community centers. Some 94 percent of all program hours are produced domestically, dedicated to information, education, and entertainment. In August 1990 a bill was unanimously passed in Lok Sabha granting autonomy to the state-operated national radio and television networks.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 5,221
 Total Circulation 000: 59,023
 Circulation per 1,000: 60
 Books Published: 14,085
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers 000: 116,000
 per 1,000: 120
 Television sets 000: 63,000
 per 1,000: 65

CULTURE

Indians today are the inheritors of cultural traditions dating back thousands of years. Some of the world's oldest literature was written in India, including the four *Vedas*, the first of which was written in the second century B.C.E., and the *Upanishads*, written in the eight through the fifth centuries B.C.E. Around 300 B.C.E. one of India's first secular works of literature and the world's longest poem, the *Mahabharata*, was written. A second major epic, the *Ramayana*, was written in about 200 B.C.E. Both of these epics were written in Sanskrit. Another famous Indian work, the *Kama Sutra*, or "Treatise on love," was writ-

ten in the Middle Ages by the poet Vatsyayana. More recently, Rabindranath Tagore (1861–1941), a Bengali, won the Nobel Prize in literature in 1913.

Indian architecture reflects the nation's religious heritage, with magnificent Hindu temples and Buddhist and Muslim religious sites. Graphic-arts traditions date back 4,000 years. A leading form of cultural expression in India is the cinema, and India has the largest movie industry in the world. Centered in Mumbai (formerly Bombay), it has come to be known as "Bollywood." Total cinema attendance in 1998 was 2.86 billion. Some 1,200 feature films were released in 2002.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance:
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: 21,801
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance billion: 2.86

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

The mythological and folk heroes of India are largely associated with religious beliefs or regional cultural traditions. Thus, deities and epic literature provide the source of much Hindu mythology, while Sufi mystics are important to Muslims and martyred Gurus are important to the Sikhs. Throughout the nation each tribe and region has its own folk heroes, but a major figure throughout India is Shivaji, a 17th-century Maratha leader who confronted the power of the Mughals and created the last Hindu empire in India. Modern leaders who opposed the British, including Nehru, Mahatma Gandhi, and Indira Gandhi, are widely considered folk heroes.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

India is a poor nation consisting of several thousand castes, tribes, ethnic and linguistic groups, and religions, so it is difficult to generalize regarding entertainment and recreation. Television viewing has become more common, especially with the advent of satellite television. The nation came to a virtual standstill when the television production of the epic *Mahabharata* was being broadcast, and in some locales trains would actually remain stopped in stations so that people could watch the latest episode. India has the world's largest film industry, and theaters are generally packed with viewers interested in the latest melodrama or action film. Indians also enjoy playing

chess, which likely originated in India, as well as badminton, tennis, table tennis, soccer, cricket, and golf.

ETIQUETTE

India's caste system determines proper etiquette when people meet. Among Hindus, the most common greeting is *namaste*, which means "greetings to you." The word is said while joining the hands together in front of the body with the fingers pointing upward. This greeting does not require one person to touch another—particularly to touch a woman or a member of a lower caste. It also allows one to greet another without necessarily knowing the other's caste. However, Western-style handshaking is also common. Among Muslims the common greeting is *salaam alaikum* or just *salaam*), meaning "peace be with you." Among Sikhs it is *Sat Sri Akal*, meaning "God is Truth."

Leather is regarded as unclean, so it is considered polite to remove shoes before entering another's house.

FAMILY LIFE

The nature of family life in India is determined by caste and region. Generally, marriages are arranged by families, and one can only marry someone of the same caste (although this is slowly changing, especially among the middle classes in the cities). Marriages that are not arranged, called "love marriages," are regarded as suspect, being based on passion and impulse. In northern India a man generally may not marry a close blood relative such as a cousin, but in the south the ideal mate for a man is his mother's brother's daughter, though his father's sister's daughter is also acceptable. Marriage partners often barely meet beforehand, and the marriage of girls at a young age is not uncommon. Marriages between uncles and nieces are also common in the south. Joint families are typical throughout India. Families are patriarchal in the north, with two or three generations of males and their dependents living in the same household. In the south the joint family tends to be matriarchal, consisting of the grandmother and her siblings, the mother and her siblings, and one's own brothers and sisters. Marriage is regarded as indispensable for a woman, who does not achieve status until she has children, preferably males.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

In the cities the norm for men and for the younger generation has become to wear Western-style clothing, but many men—and women—throughout India continue to wear traditional clothing. For men, this consists of the dhoti, which is a long swath of white cotton wrapped around the waist and drawn between the legs. The style of turban of-

ten identifies a person as belonging to a particular ethnic group or region. Also common are the kurta, a long shirt, and pajamas, or baggy pants. For women, traditional dress is the sari, a piece of cotton or silk that is wrapped around the waist with one end thrown over the right shoulder. The *choli* is a bodice that leaves the midriff exposed. The sari is still the preferred form of dress for most Indian women.

SPORTS

India has a long history of traditional games. Among the many that could be cited are *asol aap* and *asol-tale aap*, both common among the Andaman and Nicobar island tribes. The former refers to racing in 110-foot-long canoes. The latter refers to canoe racing on sand, with the "canoe" made of the stem of a coconut tree. India also has a long tradition of martial arts, often combining physical movements with archery and sword fighting. Modern sports include those brought by the British, especially cricket, hockey, and badminton. India has numerous world-class cricket grounds, and the Indian national team has won international competitions.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1947** Under the Independence of India Act, the British Parliament grants full independence to India and Pakistan. Indo-Pakistani borders are delimited under the Cyril Radcliffe Award. Both nations are plunged into communal violence. Amid scenes of carnage 11 to 16 million Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs flee across the borders. An estimated 1 million die in post-partition violence. Lord Mountbatten, the last Crown representative, becomes the first governor-general of the Dominion of India and Jawaharlal Nehru its first prime minister. Indian armed forces occupy Jungagadh, a Hindu state whose Muslim nawab, or ruler, had acceded to Pakistan. The Hindu maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir, a Muslim state, accedes to India. Pakistani irregulars invade Kashmir and occupy the northwestern portion of the state.
- 1948** Mahatma Gandhi is assassinated by a Hindu fanatic. C. Rajagopalachari is named the first Indian governor-general. India forcibly annexes the state of Hyderabad into the Indian union.
- 1949** The Indian Constitution Act is enacted. A cease-fire is arranged in Jammu and Kashmir under UN auspices.
- 1950** Under the new constitution India proclaims itself a republic within the Commonwealth.

- Rajendra Prasad is named first president of India. The integration of former princely states is completed.
- 1952** India holds first general elections, and Nehru's Congress Party wins predictable victory.
- 1953** Andhra Pradesh is formed as the first linguistic state.
- 1956** Under the States Reorganization Act, state boundaries are redrawn on linguistic bases. France cedes its Indian territories to India.
- 1957** In the nation's second general election Communists win heavily in Kerala and form India's first Communist state government. Decimal coinage is introduced, with the paise replacing the anna.
- 1958** Aid-India Consortium is formed by a number of donor nations.
- 1960** India and Pakistan sign the Indus Waters Agreement under World Bank auspices. The state of Bombay is bifurcated into Maharashtra and Gujarat states.
- 1961** Goa and other Portuguese territories are "liberated" and merged into the Indian union.
- 1962** India holds third general elections. Nagaland is formed as a separate state. Chinese troops occupy disputed border areas in Ladakh (Kashmir) and northeastern India and expel Indian troops. Defense Minister V. K. Krishna Menon resigns in the wake of this defeat.
- 1964** Nehru dies. Lal Bahadur Shastri elected prime minister.
- 1965** Three-week Indo-Pakistani war over disputed areas in the Rann of Kutch ends inconclusively through the Tashkent Accord, signed under Soviet auspices.
- 1966** Shastri dies at Tashkent. Nehru's daughter, Indira Gandhi, elected prime minister.
- 1967** Parliament authorizes continued use of English as the official language, in view of southern opposition to Hindi.
- 1969** Power struggle in the Congress Party breaks out between Indira Gandhi's faction and the old guard. The party splits into the New Congress and the Old Congress.
- 1971** India intervenes in force in the civil war in East Pakistan on the side of the rebels. Indian Army occupies East Pakistan in the third conflict between India and Pakistan in 24 years. The state of Bangladesh is proclaimed. Indira Gandhi wins landslide victory in general elections. Titles and privileges of maharaja abolished. Under the North East Areas Act of 1971, Meghalaya, Manipur, and Tripura become states, and Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh become Union Territories.
- India and Soviet Union sign the 20-year Peace, Friendship and Cooperation Treaty.
- 1974** India joins the "nuclear club" by exploding a nuclear device in Rajasthan.
- 1975** Following the abolition of the monarchy by the Sikkim Assembly, Sikkim becomes India's 22nd state. Indira Gandhi responds to nationwide unrest against her rule by proclaiming a state of emergency, suspending civil liberties, arresting opposition political leaders, and imposing press censorship. Government launches 20-point economic program.
- 1976** India and China reestablish diplomatic relations after a 14-year lapse.
- 1977** Indira Gandhi calls surprise national elections. Her Congress Party suffers serious election reverses and loses majority in parliament to a coalition of opposition parties known as Janata Party. Janata leader Morarji Desai forms government. Emergency is lifted and civil rights are restored.
- 1978** President Jimmy Carter of the United States visits India. Expelled from the Congress Party, Indira Gandhi forms a new party, also called Congress Party, and her supporters win surprising victories in state elections. Indira Gandhi elected to parliament but is condemned by a parliamentary commission, ousted, and jailed. Five persons are killed in pro-Gandhi riots.
- 1979** Janata coalition begins to break up, as its factions are unable to settle on a unified policy. Desai resigns office of prime minister and as leader of the Janata coalition. Charan Singh, influential Uttar Pradesh leader, is named prime minister but is unable to form government and win parliamentary majority. Mother Teresa of Kolkata wins Nobel Peace Prize.
- 1980** Indira Gandhi leads her Congress Party to victory in parliamentary elections in January and is installed as prime minister. In one of her first official acts, Gandhi recognizes the Vietnamese puppet government of Cambodia. Leonid Brezhnev visits India and promises lavish Soviet military and economic aid. Indira Congress Party wins majority in eight state legislatures. Sanjay Gandhi, Indira Gandhi's son and prospective successor, killed in plane crash.
- 1983** Sikhs restive over the rejection of their separatist demands storm parliament building. New Delhi hosts nonaligned nations conference.

- 1984** U.S. multinational corporation Union Carbide's chemical plant in Bhopal leaks poisonous gas, which kills more than 2,000 people.
Indian cosmonaut joins the Soviet Soyuz.
Indira Gandhi is assassinated by Sikh revanchists.
Her son Rajiv Gandhi is nominated as prime minister.
Rajiv Gandhi's Congress Party wins overwhelming majority in parliamentary elections.
- 1985** India joins other nations of the Indian Subcontinent in forming the South Asia Regional Conference.
- 1986** Mizo National Front signs peace agreement with Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi.
- 1987** The Union Territories of Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram, and Goa become states of the Indian Republic.
- 1988** Guidelines for the Eighth Five-Year Plan (1990–95) approved. Four major centrist parties form a coalition National Front to oppose Congress (I) at the next general election.
- 1989** General elections held except in Assam. V. P. Singh sworn in as new prime minister.
- 1990** Widespread violent demonstrations held in many north Indian states to oppose government's stand on increasing quota of reserved jobs for lower castes.
Violent clashes occur between Hindus and Muslims about the disputed site of a 16th-century mosque in the Hindu holy town of Ajodhya.
V. P. Singh loses prime ministership in a vote of no confidence.
- 1991** Chandar Shekhar resigns as prime minister but agrees to head the interim government.
Former prime minister Rajiv Gandhi assassinated.
P. V. Narsimha Rao sworn in as India's ninth prime minister in June.
- 1993** Conflicts in Punjab and Assam wane, but growing tensions in Jammu and Kashmir lead to violence.
- 1996** Congress Party loses elections, and a weak coalition government led by President K. R. Narayanan takes power.
- 1997** In April, Inder Kumar Gujral forms a new government, which lasts only until November.
- 1998** The BJP wins the largest number of seats in elections but falls short of a majority.
Atal Bihari Vajpayee is selected to lead the coalition government.
In May India conducts a nuclear weapons test.
- 2000** The BJP wins decisive majority in Lok Sabha.
- 2001** On January 26 an earthquake measuring 7.7 on the Richter scale strikes the western state of Gujarat, killing about 20,000 people, injuring more than 165,000, and leaving more than 700,000 people homeless.

In December a suicide squad attacks the parliament in New Delhi. India blames two Kashmiri militant groups for the attack, and both India and Pakistan move troops to the common border.

- 2003** Explosions in Mumbai kill 46 people; Islamic militants and Kashmiri separatists are suspected.
- 2004** Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee resigns after his party loses the general elections for parliament. Sonia Gandhi declines the position of prime minister, which is accepted by Manmohan Singh.
In late December a devastating tsunami occurs in the Indian Ocean, killing over 200,000 people and hitting India's Andaman and Nicobar islands.
- 2005** India and the United States sign an agreement that gives India access to civilian nuclear technology.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- India Image
<http://www.indiaimage.nic.in>
- Ministry of External Affairs
<http://www.meaprotocol.nic.in>

INDONESIA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Indonesia (Republik Indonesia)

ABBREVIATION

ID

CAPITAL

Jakarta

HEAD OF STATE & HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (from 2004)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Republic

POPULATION

241,973,879 (2005)

AREA

1,919,440 sq km (741,095 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Javanese, Sundanese, Madurese, Coastal Malays

LANGUAGE

Bahasa Indonesia (official)

RELIGION

Sunni Islam

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Rupiah

NATIONAL FLAG

Divided horizontally, with the top half red and the bottom half white

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A shield with five symbols: a star (God) in the center field, a golden chain (humanity), a banyan tree (nationalism), a head of a buffalo (democracy), and rice and cotton (social justice). The shield hangs from the neck of an outstretched eagle. Clutched in its talons is a white scroll bearing the national motto in Indonesian in black letters: “Bhinneka tunggal ikai” (“Unity through diversity”).

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Great Indonesia”

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year’s Day), Good Friday, Ascension, August 17 (Indonesian National Day), Christmas, various Islamic festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

August 17, 1945

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

August 17, 1945

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Indonesia, the largest archipelago nation in the world and the third-largest country in Asia, consists of some 17,000 islands; only about 6,000 are inhabited, and not all have names. The total land area is 1,919,440 sq km (741,095 sq mi). Four islands—Java, Sumatra, Celebes (Sulawesi), and Borneo (Kalimantan)—account for 90 percent of the land area. Jakarta is the capital as well as the center of national life.

Rugged mountains covered by dense tropical forests characterize most of the islands. With 100 active volcanoes, Indonesia is the most highly volcanic area in the world.

Geography

Area sq km: 1,919,440; sq mi 741,095

World Rank: 15th

Land Boundaries, km: East Timor 228; Malaysia 1,782; Papua New Guinea 820

Coastline, km: 54,716

Elevation Extremes meters

Lowest: Indian Ocean 0

Highest: Puncak Jaya 5,030

Land Use %

Arable Land: 11.3

Permanent Crops: 7.2

Forest: 58.0

Other: 23.5



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Population of Principal Cities (2000)

Balikpapan	409,023
Bandung	2,136,260
Banjarmasin	527,410
Batam	437,358
Bekasi	1,663,802
Bengkulu	279,753
Binjai	213,725
Bogor	750,819
Cilegon-Merak	294,936
Cirebon	272,263
Denpasar	532,440
Depok	1,143,403
Jakarta	8,347,083
Jambi	417,507
Kediri	244,519
Kendari	200,474
Kupang	237,271
Malang	756,982
Manado	372,887
Mataram	315,738
Medan	1,904,273
Padang	713,242
Palembang	1,451,419
Palu	263,826
Pekalongan	262,272
Pekanbaru	585,440
Pematangsiantar	241,480
Pontianak	464,534
Samarinda	521,619
Semarang	1,348,803
Sukabumi	252,420
Surabaya	2,599,796
Surakarta	490,214
Tangerang	1,325,854
Tanjungkarang	742,749
Tegal	236,900
Ujung Pandang	1,100,019
Yogyakarta	396,711

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Because of its location straddling the equator, Indonesia has no seasons as they are understood in most of the Northern and Southern Hemispheres. The days and nights are always 12 hours long, the humidity averages 80 percent year-round, and there is a bare two-degree variation between the mean temperatures of the warmest and the coolest months. In the lowland areas the daily maximums and minimums range between 31.1°C and 18.9°C (88°F and 66°F). Rainfall never drops below 965 mm (38 in) a year, even in the driest areas. In the equatorial high-rainfall belt, average annual rainfall exceeds 1,980 mm (78 in), although up to 3,810 mm (150 in) has been recorded in the highlands. Thunderstorms are frequent; the average number of storm days is 100 a year. There are two seasons, wet and dry, as determined by the monsoons, with the dry season lasting from June to September and the wet from November to March.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature: 66°F to 88°F

Average Rainfall

Northern Sumatra, southeastern Celebes Moluccas, and Irian Jaya: 78 in to 150 in

Northern Celebes, northern and eastern Java, and Madura: 60 in to 78 in

Nusa Tenggara Islands: 40 in to 60 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Many kinds of plants and animals live in Indonesia. There are similarities between the species of the archipelago and those of northern Australia, which suggests that the islands were once attached to the larger land mass. The main exception to this is the Lesser Sunda Islands, which have animal and plant species that are seen nowhere else in the world. Indonesia is covered with rain forests, mostly on Irian Jaya, Sumatra, Kalimantan, and Sulawesi, but these forests are rapidly disappearing as people cut them down for fuel, agriculture, and sale. Hardwoods such as sandalwood, teak, ebony, nutmeg, clove, and camphor grow wild. Sumatra is home to the world's largest flower species, *Rafflesia arnoldi*. Animal species include orangutans, the Javanese rhinoceros, miniature deer, giant atlas moths, elephants, tigers, leopards, and birds of paradise. Sea turtles make nests on the beaches of Bali. The rare Komodo dragon lives on its namesake island, which is a national park.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 241,973,879

World Rank: 4th

Density per sq km: 118.5

% of annual growth (1999-2003): 1.3

Male %: 50.0

Female %: 50.0

Urban %: —

Age Distribution %: 0-14: 29.1

15-64: 65.7

65 and over: 5.2

Population 2025: 300,277,000

Birth Rate per 1,000: 20.71

Death Rate per 1,000: 6.25

Rate of Natural Increase %: 1.4

Total Fertility Rate: 2.44

Expectation of Life (years): Males 67.13

Females 72.13

Marriage Rate per 1,000: —

Divorce Rate per 1,000: —

Average Size of Households: 4.5

Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Indonesia is home to over 300 ethnic groups speaking almost as many languages. Most of these groups belong to the Malay stock. Major groups include Javanese (45 percent), Sundanese (14 percent), Madurese (7.5 percent), and Coastal Malay (7.5 percent). Some, like the Kalimantan, are primitive tribes with rudimentary material cultures, following animist beliefs and until recently practicing headhunting.

The principal ethnic minority group is the Chinese, who number over 3.5 million. The Chinese are overwhelmingly urban, owing partly to official policies and partly to their mercantile interests. Their conspicuous insularity, wealth, and resistance to assimilation have contributed to widespread resentment of them. During the 1970s they were restricted and harassed. Ethnic aliens also include Arabs and Indian Muslims, who have been assimilated into Indonesian society without difficulty. Most of the Dutch left in 1958.

LANGUAGES

An estimated 25 languages and more than 250 dialects are spoken in Indonesia. These languages belong to three language families: Malayo-Polynesian, North Halmaheran, and Papuan. The Malayo-Polynesian family consists of 17 groups, including nearly 100 dialects. Javanese is spoken by 40–50 percent of the population, Sundanese by 15 percent, Madurese by 5–10 percent, and Malay by 5–10 percent.

The official language is Bahasa Indonesia, derived from trade Malay, or Malay Pasar, which is used as a lingua franca throughout the Indonesian islands. Bahasa Indonesia differs little from standard Malay and is principally distinguished by its large vocabulary of words borrowed from European languages, Arabic, and Sanskrit. Considerable efforts have been made to modernize and standardize its orthography.

Despite centuries of Dutch rule, few Indonesians speak Dutch. English is officially the second language of Indonesia and is taught in schools from the senior secondary level.

RELIGIONS

Almost 90 percent of Indonesians are Muslims; Indonesia has the largest Muslim population in the world. But Indonesian Islam is deeply divided by a cleavage between the *santri* (orthodox) and the *abangan* (nominal) Muslims. The *santri*, who became an organized force with the founding of the Muhammadiyah movement in central Java in 1912, are distinguished by strict observance of the Five Pillars of the Muslim faith and sharia, the Islamic

legal code. The *abangan*, who are in the vast majority, follow an amalgam of animistic, Hindu, and Muslim beliefs, rituals, and institutions.

Christians, a sizable and influential minority in Indonesia, numbered more than 19 million in 2004. The more important Christian ethnic groups are the Bataks in Sumatra, the Minahasaans in Celebes, the Ubans in Kalimantan (on Borneo), and the Moluccans. Smoldering hostility against Christians among *santri* Muslims erupted into anti-Christian riots in 1962, 1964, 1967, and 2001, but both Catholics and Protestants have strong political representation. The other religious minorities include the Hindus of Bali and Buddhists, Taoists, and Confucianists, who are mostly Chinese Indonesians.

There are no legal bars to religious conversion, and conversions between faiths are common. However, a significant event in 1978 was the handing down of government decrees 70 and 77, officially designed to discourage overt proselytizing by any religion. This is partly the result of religious tension in many areas of Indonesia and the government's concern that these tensions could contribute to political and economic instability. Some Christians saw the decrees as powerful measures to curtail their missionary efforts among Indonesians of other faiths, Muslims in particular.

Religious Affiliations

Muslim	212,937,000
Protestant	12,099,000
Roman Catholic	7,260,000
Hindu	4,840,000
Buddhist	2,420,000
Other	2,420,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The original inhabitants of Indonesia are a mixture of Chinese who reached the islands through Malaysia and Indians from Southeast Asia. Indian immigrants were most numerous in Java and Sumatra. Indonesia was under Buddhist influence for many centuries. The Indian-Buddhist civilization flourished in the Javanese kingdom of Majapahit, founded in 1299 by King Vijaya. Even before the end of this kingdom, Muslim missionaries from Arabia had converted much of the population to Islam.

About this time the first Europeans arrived on the islands. The Portuguese captured Malacca on the west coast of the Malay Peninsula in 1511 and established control over the archipelago. Dutch ships visited Java in 1596. The United East Indian Company was incorporated in 1602, with a monopoly of shipping and trade and the power to make alliances and treaties. Within a century the company not only drove the Portuguese out

of the archipelago but also brought all native rulers under its control. In 1799 the Dutch government nullified the company's charter and took over what became the Dutch East Indies in 1800. The British occupied the Indies during the Napoleonic Wars from 1811 but returned them to the Dutch in 1816. Dutch rule was relatively benign, and an increasing amount of Dutch capital moved to the colonies.

In the early 20th century the first steps were taken to give Indonesians some participation in their government. A central representative body, the Volksrad, was instituted in 1918. At first it had only advisory powers, but in 1927 it was given legislative powers. An Indonesian nationalist movement began to take shape in the interwar years. The Japanese occupied the islands in World War II, at the end of which a group under the leadership of Sukarno and Mohammad Hatta proclaimed an independent republic on August 17, 1945. After years of intermittent conflict, the Dutch agreed to grant national independence to Indonesia. The terms of independence were settled at a roundtable conference at The Hague in 1949, and full sovereignty was transferred to the new state at the end of the year.

Sukarno, who had been a leader of the nationalist movement since the 1920s, became Indonesia's first president. Originally a federation of 16 regions with limited self-government, the nation emerged as the unitary Republic of Indonesia in August 1950. Sukarno's presidency was marked by extreme nationalism and increasing authoritarianism. In foreign policy the People's Republic of China was a close ally, although the country was active in the nonaligned movement. Inflation and rampant corruption eventually led to open opposition in the form of an abortive military coup in September–October 1965. The Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) was suspected of initiating the attempted takeover, and the mass slaughter of thousands of party members followed. By March 1966 Sukarno conferred emergency executive powers on the military under the command of General Suharto, chief of staff of the army. Suharto outlawed the PKI. In February 1967 Suharto assumed full executive power, and in March, after Sukarno had been dismissed from office by the People's Consultative Assembly and placed under house arrest, Suharto was appointed acting president. He assumed the position of prime minister in October 1967, and in March 1968 he was inaugurated president following election by the assembly.

The first general election since 1955 was held in July 1971. The government-backed Sekretariat Bersama Golongan Karya (Joint Secretariat of Functional Groups), or the Golkar, achieved a majority victory in the House of Representatives, and in 1973 Suharto was reelected to a second term as president. Political power became concentrated in a small group of army officers through the imposition of Suharto's "New Order." This inner circle,

along with the internal security organization, Kopkamtib, suppressed left-wing movements and enforced a liberal economic policy. Despite periods of unrest, Suharto and the Golkar remained in power until 1998.

Provincial problems continued to plague the Indonesian government and to significantly affect its international relations. Western New Guinea, the eastern portion of the island of which is Papua New Guinea, was excluded from the 1949 independence accord. It continued to be governed by the Dutch until October 1962. After briefly being administered by the United Nations, it was transferred to Indonesia in May 1963 and became known as West Irian, or Irian Jaya. Following the outbreak of civil war in 1975, Indonesia directly intervened and set up a provisional government, later integrating the area as Indonesia's 27th province, Irian Jaya.

More critical was the situation of East Timor, a former Portuguese colony that was incorporated into Indonesia by the Suharto government in 1975–76. East Timor is on the island of Timor, southeast of Borneo and east of Java. After years of rebellion and military repression, in October 1999 the National Assembly agreed to accept the results of an August 30 referendum in which 78.5 percent of the 800,000 people of East Timor voted for independence. The vote was followed by a wave of violent bloodshed and destruction by paramilitary forces opposed to independence from Indonesia, which brought an Australian-led UN peacekeeping force to the territory. The agreement led to UN administration of the territory during transition to independent rule. East Timor, also known as Timor Leste, became fully independent in May 2002.

Suharto was replaced by B. J. Habibie in May 1998. Suharto had been accused of corruption, violations of human rights, and the turmoil surrounding East Timor. He and his children reputedly stole billions of dollars and stashed the money overseas. Some believe that these actions crippled the Indonesian economy.

On October 20, 1999, the Electoral Assembly chose Abdurrahman Wahid to be president of Indonesia, representing the first democratic transfer of power in the nation's history. A general election in June had given opposition leader Megawati Sukarnoputri a plurality of parliamentary seats; when Wahid's National Awakening Party placed third in the June elections, he became a supporter of Megawati but broke with her before the assembly vote. When the incumbent president, Habibie, withdrew as a candidate, Wahid defeated Megawati 373 to 313, with 5 abstentions. Wahid became the first cleric to head the world's most populous Muslim nation. He then named Megawati vice president. In 2000 the Wahid administration was accused of two incidents of embezzling funds. In September 2001 the assembly ousted Wahid for alleged incompetence and corruption, and Megawati assumed the presidency, though Wahid initially refused to leave the presidential palace.

Separatist agitation and ethnic violence became a major problem in the early 2000s, with ethnic groups in most of the archipelago demanding recognition. These movements occurred in Aceh, Irian Jaya, East Timor, and Kalimantan, where indigenous Dayaks forced out Madurese migrants. In 2002 the government signed agreements with Irian Jaya, now called Papua, and East Timor, giving both of them more independence. That year parliament passed a law allowing Indonesians to elect their president and vice president. The government seemed to make progress with those in Aceh, but peace talks broke down in May 2003, and the government ended up imposing martial law on the province.

In October 2002 a bomb exploded in a nightclub in Bali, killing over 200 people, most of them foreign tourists; another exploded near the U.S. consulate. A Muslim cleric was arrested in connection with the bombings, which he had performed as part an effort to overthrow the government on behalf of a radical Islamic group called Jemaah Islamiah. Occasional bombings continued to plague the country in 2003 and 2004.

In 2004 the Indonesian people held their first ever direct presidential elections. Former general Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono beat Megawati in a runoff. At the end of the year an enormous undersea earthquake off Sumatra's coast caused a massive tsunami that devastated the nations in the Bay of Bengal; over 220,000 people died or disappeared throughout the region. Aceh was especially hard hit.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1945–67	Sukarno
1967–98	Suharto
1998–99	Bacharuddin Jusuf Habibie
1999–2001	Abdurrahman Wahid
2001–04	Megawati Sukarnoputri
2004–	Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono

CONSTITUTION

The government of Indonesia is based on the constitution of 1945, as supplemented by the General Elections Law of 1945. It is a short, broadly phrased document that defines the national ideology, or Pancasila, but does not spell out the details of its application. Pancasila consists of the five principles that form the basis of the Indonesian state: belief in one supreme God, just and civilized humanity, Indonesian unity, democracy, and social justice.

The constitution provides for a strong executive form of government in which the real power is vested in the president, who is both head of state and head of government. The president is the chief executive and the supreme commander of the armed forces. According to the

original constitution, the assembly elected the president, but a law passed in 2002 allows the Indonesian citizenry to elect the president and vice president directly. A president's term lasts five years, and no president may serve more than two terms.. If the president dies or is removed, the vice president becomes president.

The Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat (MPR), the People's Consultative Assembly, is the highest authority of the state and since 1987 has had 1,000 members. It includes all members of the Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat (DPR), or House of Representatives, plus regional delegates, members of political organizations, and representatives of other groups. It meets at least once every five years, with its role being to interpret the constitution and make general policy for the state and government. Traditionally, all decisions of the MPR are unanimous.

All citizens 17 and older or who have married may vote in general elections. Voting is indirect and by secret ballot. Candidates must be 21 or older.

PARLIAMENT

The House of Representatives (Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat, DPR), is the legislative body proper and has 550 members. It sits at least once each year and must approve every law. Members may submit draft bills, which must be ratified by the president. The president may enact laws during times of emergency, but these must be ratified by the House of Representatives during the next session or be revoked. The People's Consultative Assembly (Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat, MPR) is the country's supreme legislative body. It approves the general outline of government policy, though it does not formulate national policy itself. Its membership consists of 678 representatives, including the 550 members of the House of Representatives and 128 members from the Regional Representative Council, which includes four representatives from each of Indonesia's 32 provinces.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Indonesia has numerous political parties, reflecting its vast population and assortment of ethnic interests. Among the principal parties are the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDI-P), led by Megawati Sukarnoputri, daughter of Sukarno, Indonesia's founding president; the National Awakening Party (PKB), led by Abdurrahman Wahid; the National Mandate Party; and Golkar, which was dominant during the Sukarno era. The Golkar won 74.4 percent of the parliamentary election in 1987 and still won the largest portion of seats in 2004, taking 21.6 percent of the vote. Other parties are the United Development Party (PPP), the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS),

the National Mandate Party (PAN), the Democratic Party (PD), and the Crescent Moon and Star Party (PBB).

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Indonesia is divided into 30 first-level *propinsi* (provinces), two special regions, and one specialty capital city district; each province is headed by a governor. The second tier of government consists of 357 *kabupatens* (regencies), administered by *bupats* (regents), and *kota* (municipalities), administered by *walis* (mayors). The government decentralized in 2001 and made the regencies responsible for providing most governmental services to their inhabitants. The third tier consists of *desa* (villages), administered by *lurabs* (chiefs). Each *desa* is a collection of *dukubans* (hamlets), which are under the charge of *kamituas*. Between the *desa* and the *kabupatens*, there is in some places an intermediate division known as a *ketjamatan* (subdistrict), headed by a *tjamat*. Though there is some popular representation in regional governments, the mayors, regents, and governors are all centrally appointed officials whose primary responsibility is to the central government.

LEGAL SYSTEM

Three systems of law are prevalent in Indonesia: the Criminal Code, based on the Dutch Criminal Code; the Code of Civil Law, which is applied to all non-Indonesians; and customary law, or *bokum adat*, which is uncoded and varies from region to region. Indonesia's legal system combines Dutch and Roman principles with indigenous laws.

The Indonesian court system has four branches: general, religious, military, and administrative. Within the general court structure the court of first instance is the district court (*pengadilan negeri*). Above are the high courts (*pengadilan tinggi*) in at least 14 provinces. At the apex is the Supreme Court (Mahkamah Agung), consisting of a chairman, a vice chairman, and four members. The principle of the independence of the judiciary has been proclaimed in recent years, but in practice the courts are subordinate to the government. In 2002 the nation created a human rights court specifically to try cases involving allegations of national human rights abuses, such as the military's atrocities in East Timor in 1999.

Indonesia's criminal justice system lacks the number of courts, judges, prosecutors, and police needed to cope with increases in crime and civil rioting in recent years. Accordingly, there are sometimes lengthy delays in scheduling trials. Trials are conducted by three-judge panels that hear evidence, decide guilt or innocence, and assess punishment. Although the right of appeal is not absolute, it is observed in some cases. Most court sessions are open, and most defendants have access to counsel.

It is widely believed that political interference and corruption exist in the Indonesian legal system. In criminal proceedings, defendants can sometimes buy their way out of prosecution at various stages of the proceedings. In civil cases, court decisions are sometimes influenced by the payment of bribes. In response to these abuses, the attorney general and the minister of justice have directed that disciplinary action be taken against officials involved in corrupt activities and have sought to increase salaries and benefits for judicial officials, with the aim of reducing the incentives for corruption.

HUMAN RIGHTS

During the Sukarno and Suharto regimes (1955–98), Indonesia, in terms of civil and political rights, could be classified only as a partially free country. The Suharto regime permitted only its own political party, Golkar, and two powerless opposition parties. Martial law had begun in 1957; there were large numbers of political prisoners. The press was carefully controlled, censorship of foreign media took place, and some widely read publications were closed.

When B. J. Habibie became president in May 1998, he began to include, in a political reform program, measures to ensure human rights. A free press was permitted, and amnesty was given to many political prisoners. Free, multiparty elections were held in 1999. Yet ethnic and religious riots brought church and property burning in many parts of Indonesia. The results are a very mixed picture of human rights.

Government security forces have been responsible for human rights violations throughout the archipelago, torturing, imprisoning, and abusing separatists. The government has not protected peaceful protesters or journalists. Prison conditions are harsh, and the judiciary is corrupt. Violence and discrimination against women and children, female genital mutilation, forced child labor, and human trafficking have all been serious problems; the government passed an antitrafficking law in an effort to stop that problem.

FOREIGN POLICY

Domestic developments and conditions have influenced, and have been influenced by, foreign policy from the time of Indonesian independence. In the struggle to win political and economic independence from the Netherlands, the United Nations played a major role. The Sukarno regime attempted to become a leader of the nonaligned nations known as the third world. At the same time Indonesia became a staunch friend of Communist China and also a bitter enemy of emerging Malaysia—even leaving the United Nations to protest UN acceptance of Malaysia.

The Suharto government reversed Sukarno's foreign policy, rejoining the United Nations in 1966, breaking off diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China in 1967, establishing relations with Malaysia, and restoring friendly relations with the Netherlands. The United States became the principal supplier of military hardware and economic aid. In recent years the thorny problems of East Timor and Western New Guinea (Irian Jaya) led to confrontations with the United Nations, the United States, and Australia, but the Wahid government moved to restore good relations.

Indonesia currently tries to play a role in foreign affairs while avoiding conflicts between major powers. It is an active member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and of the Organization of the Islamic Conference. It tries to balance relations with the Muslim world with a moderate stance toward issues such as Israel. The nation has supported the Asia Pacific Economic Conference (APEC) and is moving forward with plans to implement regional free trade by 2010 for industrialized nations and by 2020 for developing ones.

The United States considers Indonesia a key nation with regard to regional stability because of its position amid several important sea routes. The United States has assisted Indonesia's development of democracy since independence, though it deplores the nation's many human rights violations.

DEFENSE

Indonesia has a sizable armed forces, with almost 500,000 members. The defense structure is headed by the president of the republic, who is also the defense minister and commander of the armed forces. Under him is the minister of defense and security, to whom the chiefs of the army, navy, and air force report as their immediate superior. The armed forces are organized under a territorial system, with four regional commands. Separate from these commands is the Strategic Reserve Command, known as Kostrad. At any given time almost one-third of army personnel are believed to be involved in civil or nonmilitary duties. A selective service system and volunteers provide the manpower for the armed forces.

The military is also deeply involved in the national economy under the *dwifungsi* (double function) principle. Military manpower and managerial skills play a significant role in economic development plans. The military runs a number of enterprises, such as Pertamina, the state-controlled oil company, and is engaged in transportation, road and building construction, rice milling, and timber concessions. It also participates actively in political life through regional leadership councils and through membership in parliament. A *kekaryaan* (civilian) section in the Hankam (Department of Defense and Security) is concerned with placing armed forces personnel in civilian life. The military

has also been involved in peacekeeping during outbreaks of separatist agitation, in which context it has committed numerous human right violations; many offenders have been held accountable for their actions.

The military has traditionally played an important role in government, occupying a number of seats in parliament, and many government officials have come from a military background. As of 2004 the military no longer played a formal political role.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	497,000
Military Manpower Availability:	60,543,028
Military Expenditures \$billion:	1.3
as % of GDP:	3.0
as % of central government expenditures:	—
Arms Imports \$million:	333
Arms Exports \$million:	20

ECONOMY

Indonesia is a country of extensive natural wealth, including the tropical rain forests covering two-thirds of the land surface and minerals such as crude oil, natural gas, metals, and coal. However, because of its large and rapidly growing population, it remains a relatively poor nation.

Agriculture, which includes forestry and fishing, is a significant sector of the economy, contributing roughly 15 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) and employing almost 50 percent of the labor force. Rice is the staple crop, with regard to which the country is almost self-sufficient. Most farming is performed either at the subsistence level or on smallholder or plantation farms. Other crops include sugarcane, cassava, coconuts, and maize. Cannabis is illegally produced for the international drug trade. Indonesia is the world's second-largest producer of rubber, which, along with palm oil, is actively encouraged as a plantation crop, both to create jobs and to expand exports. Timber is an important natural resource, and forest products have accounted for more than 10 percent of total exports in recent years.

Industry, which includes mining, manufacturing, construction, and power, is the most financially significant sector of the economy, contributing 45 percent of GDP. Indonesia's rich natural resources of crude oil, natural gas, metals, and coal provide the basis for the industrial sector.

Indonesia is the main oil producer in the Far East, and the country relies heavily on the oil industry for government revenue. Although sporadic decreases in world oil prices have had adverse effects on export revenues and have led to increased diversification into non-oil and gas products, oil has continued to dominate external trade, providing more than 60 percent of government revenues and over 50 percent of export revenues. Indonesia is also the world's leading exporter of liquefied natural

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gas. Other significant industries include textiles, cement, chemical fertilizers, agroprocessing, and rubber processing. Other than petroleum, important mineral resources are nickel, bauxite, copper, manganese, iron, tin, silver, gold, and coal. In general, Indonesia remains primarily a supplier of raw materials to world markets and a major importer of manufactured goods and technology.

In recent years Indonesia has faced severe economic problems, stemming from secessionist movements and the low level of security in the region, the lack of reliable legal recourse in contract disputes, corruption, weaknesses in the banking system, and strained relations with the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Investor confidence remains low. In 2004 Indonesia experienced 4.9 percent growth. Unemployment was 9.2 percent. Income disparity is extreme, with a small percentage of the populace controlling a disproportionate amount of national wealth, while many people live in abject poverty. Foreign investors have been scared away by the threat of terrorism and the frustration of dealing with governmental corruption. The current government wants to reform its economic structures to win back foreign investors and keep the economy growing.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 827.4
GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 3,500
GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 3.4
GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 2.0
Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
Agriculture: 14.6
Industry: 45.0
Services: 40.4
Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
Private Consumption: 72
Government Consumption: 8
Gross Domestic Investment: 16.6
Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 69.86
Imports: 45.07
% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 4.0
% of Income Received by Richest 10%: 26.7

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
218.6	228.5	255.9	285.2	301.9

Finance

National Currency: Indonesian Rupiah (IDR)
Exchange Rate: \$1 = IDR 9,060.14
Money Supply Stock in National Currency trillion: 220.6
Central Bank Discount Rate %: 8.31
Total External Debt \$billion: 141.5
Debt Service Ratio %: 12.84
Balance of Payments \$billion: 7.338
International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 34.7
Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 6.1

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$billion: 1.74
per capita \$: 8.10
Foreign Direct Investment \$million: —

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: 1 April–31 March
Revenues \$billion: 52.13
Expenditures \$billion: 55.88
Budget Deficit \$billion: 3.75
Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 14.6
Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 2.0
Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 0.46
Irrigation, % of Farms having: 14.3
Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 146.0
Total Farmland % of land area: 11.3
Livestock: Cattle million: 11.5
Chickens million: 1.2
Pigs million: 6.4
Sheep million: 8.2
Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 112.5
Fisheries: Total Catch tons million: 5.42

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 51.35
Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 10.5

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 206.7
Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 86.9
Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 417
Net Energy Imports % of use: -54.3
Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 25.6
Production kW-hr billion: 99.3
Consumption kW-hr billion: 92.4
Coal Reserves tons billion: 5.92
Production tons million: 144
Consumption tons million: 31.1
Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: 90.3
Production cubic feet trillion: 2.48
Consumption cubic feet trillion: 1.2
Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: 4.7
Production barrels million per day: 1.26
Consumption barrels million per day: 1.13
Pipelines Length km: 7,472

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 45.07
 Exports \$billion: 69.86
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 0.2
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): –1.9
 Balance of Trade \$billion: 7.338

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Japan %	13.0	22.3
Singapore %	12.8	8.9
China %	9.1	6.2
United States %	8.3	12.1
Thailand %	5.2	—
Australia %	5.1	—
South Korea %	4.7	7.1
Saudi Arabia %	4.6	—

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 342,700
 Paved %: 46.3
 Automobiles: 3,403,400
 Trucks and Buses: 2,579,600
 Railroad: Track Length km: 6,458
 Passenger-km billion: 16.83
 Freight-km billion: 4.45
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 728
 Total Deadweight Tonnage million: 4.3
 Airports: 667
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 18.4
 Length of Waterways km: 21,579

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 4.47
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$billion: 4.461
 Tourist Expenditures \$billion: 4.427

Communications

Telephones million: 7.75
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones million: 11.7
 Personal Computers million: 2.52
 Internet Hosts per million people: 256
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 33

ENVIRONMENT

Indonesia has one of the largest tracts of rain forest in the world, but it has lost millions of acres of virgin forest since independence; the temptation among the people to cut valuable hardwoods and sell them to international markets is too great for environmental regulations to have

much effect. Shrimp ponds and logging concessions are destroying the remaining mangrove forests. Overpopulation has driven migrants to the outer islands, resulting in irreversible deforestation. Erosion, often caused by logging, threatens water transport, irrigation systems, and downstream fisheries. Industrial waste and sewage pollute rivers in port cities, presenting serious health risks to urban dwellers and also killing nearby coral reefs. The air in cities is terribly polluted. Forest fires cause air pollution as well.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 58.0
 Forest Change (1990–2000) hectares 000: –1,312
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 9
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 753,657
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 1.31

LIVING CONDITIONS

Indonesia is a very poor country, and the standard of living for most people is quite low. The water supply is contaminated, and people who drink tap water risk various gastrointestinal ailments. Plumbing is primitive. People bathe by scooping water out of well with bowls and pouring it over themselves. Many homes have no electricity, and people cook over wood or gas fires. Homes are typically small and can be extremely crowded. Different ethnic groups live in different styles of homes; for example, the Dayak people still live in traditional longhouses. Transportation is fairly inexpensive and reliable, but Indonesia's geography complicates travel between many points; some islands have only sporadic boat service to other places.

HEALTH

Indonesia's government provides public hospitals and clinics, including mobile clinics that travel to remote areas. There are also a number of private hospitals and clinics. Poor people receive free medical care, and care for others is subsidized. The health-care system has suffered from recent economic problems, and there is a shortage of supplies and facilities. Wealthy people usually prefer to travel abroad for the treatment of serious illnesses. Many people in the countryside still choose to visit folk doctors and use traditional remedies, particularly herbal treatments. Indonesia's overall health has been improving; infant mortality is about 36 deaths per 1,000 live births, and life expectancy is almost 70 years, both of which statistics have shown improvement in recent years. The nation has been training midwives in an effort to further reduce the infant mortality rate and improve maternal health. Tuberculosis causes thousands of deaths every year. Mosquito-borne illnesses such as malaria and dengue fever are endemic, as are gastrointestinal illnesses.

Health

Number of Physicians: 34,347
 Number of Dentists: 2,406
 Number of Nurses: 92,371
 Number of Pharmacists: —
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 16.2
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 35.6
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 230
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 3.2
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 26
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.1
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 70
 Measles: 72
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 52
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 78

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Most Indonesians eat rice at almost every meal. They eat rice with vegetables, meat, soy products such as *tabu* and *tempe*, pressed in banana leaves, and fried with vegetables in a dish called *nasi goreng*. Muslims do not eat pork, and Indonesians in general do not eat much red meat. Traditional flavorings are hot pepper, a red chili sauce called *sambal*, and peanut sauce, used to spice up meat skewers called *satay* and vegetable salads called *gado gado*. Typical cooking herbs include lemongrass and basil. Indonesia grows a vast quantity of fruit; popular fruits include durian, rambutan, coconut, mango, papaya, carambola, and salak. People eat these fruits plain or make them into juice; avocado juice is quite popular. Tea and coffee are also popular. On the street, people can buy food at various open-air restaurants and stands as well as at more formal restaurants, where 20-dish meals are not uncommon.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 5.9
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,900
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 203.1
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 63.9

STATUS OF WOMEN

Indonesian women generally enjoy a high degree of economic and social freedom, and there is significant cultural latitude for women's participation in public life. Women occupy important midlevel positions in the civil service, educational institutions, labor unions, the military, professions, private business, and parliament. Cabinets in recent years have included women, and Megawati Sukarnoputri, whose party had won a plurality of parliamentary seats, was only narrowly defeated in the 1999

election for president and became vice president. She assumed the presidency in 2001, after the assembly ousted President Wahid for alleged incompetence.

Although legislation guarantees women equal treatment, they seldom receive equal pay for equal work. In addition to government-sponsored women's organizations in which membership and participation are mandatory, several voluntary, private groups work to advance women's legal, economic, and political rights. Chief among these is Kowani (Congress of Indonesian Women), an umbrella for some 55 women's groups.

Most Indonesian married women stay home, though some middle- and upper-class women work outside the home. Violence against women is a major problem. In a rare exception to the rule of masculine domination, the Minangkabau people of Sumatra have a matrilineal society, in which women own all the property and men live with their mothers and visit their wives.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 11
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 0.99
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 30.8

WORK

Almost half of Indonesia's labor force is employed in agriculture. Others work in services, such as tourism or the restaurant business, or in manufacturing or construction. Many people do not work for pay at all. Agriculture practices are often primitive, though traditional rice cultivation techniques can produce two or three crops per year without reducing soil fertility. Other agricultural products include nutmeg, cloves, rubber, and coffee as well as valuable hardwoods such as mahogany and ebony. The manufacturing sector produces clothing, automobiles, electrical appliances, automobiles, and airplanes. Tourism is increasing in importance, especially in Bali, but it has been hurt by recent terrorist attacks. In Bali many people run guest houses or shops selling local crafts or lead tours around the island.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 111,500,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 41.2
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 45
 Industry: 16
 Services: 39
 Unemployment %: 9.2

EDUCATION

Indonesia has an above-average literacy rate, with almost 88 percent of its population literate (93 percent of males and 83 percent of females).

Schooling is technically free—fees are charged in some areas for uniforms, lunches, and transportation—and compulsory for primary grades. The academic year runs from January to December, and the school year consists of three terms of 13 weeks each. All regular schools are coeducational. The language of instruction is Bahasa Indonesia, with English taught at the senior secondary level. All students study religion and civics. All public schools teach the same curriculum.

There is an extensive private-school system, in which are included Islamic schools, or *madrassas*, Catholic and Protestant schools, and the intensely nationalist *Taman Siswa* school system. Private schools that meet government standards receive state subsidies.

After primary school, students can choose to attend junior high school for three years and senior high school for another three years. Secondary schools teach either academic or vocational subjects; some train students to teach primary school. To enter a university a student must pass a very difficult examination; most of those who attempt the examination do not pass, although they may try again the next year. Indonesia has both state and private universities; the private universities are quite expensive. The largest university is Jakarta's *Universitas Indonesia*. The *Institut Teknologi* in Bandung is the best school for studying technology and engineering. About half of Indonesia's university students are female.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 87.9
Male %: 92.5
Female %: 83.4
School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 10.9
First Level: Primary schools: 149,464
Teachers: 1,383,914
Students: 28,926,376
Student-Teacher Ratio: 20.9
Net Enrollment Ratio: 92.1
Second Level: Secondary Schools: 27,177
Teachers: 1,114,798
Students: 13,376,377
Student-Teacher Ratio: 13.6
Net Enrollment Ratio: 48.3
Third Level: Institutions: 1,236
Teachers: 251,542
Students: 3,175,833
Gross Enrollment Ratio: 15.2
Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 1.3

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Indonesia has reasonably good technology facilities. The *Institut Teknologi Bandung* is an excellent place to study scientific subjects. The archipelago has had a communications satellite system since 1976, with which it broadcasts television and telephone services throughout the islands. Some 10 million Indonesians were using the Internet in 2003. The government has several bodies devoted to scientific matters, including the Agency for the Assessment and Application of Technology, the Ministry of Environment, the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries, and the Environmental Impact Management Agency.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
High-Tech Exports \$billion: 4.58
Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

Indonesia has numerous daily and weekly newspapers and magazines. Publishing is concentrated in the large cities. Jakarta alone has 26 dailies, with half the total national circulation. All of these are published in Bahasa Indonesia, except for three in English and one in Chinese. The provincial press is poor in quality. Two military newspapers, *Harian umum* and *Berita yuddha*, function as official organs of the administration.

The press is largely privately owned. A 2000 compilation listed a total of 396 daily publications, with a combined circulation of more than 4.7 million. Control of the press is based on the press law of 1966, as since modified, which governs issuance of publishing permits. Though there is no explicit censorship, the government has the right to silence any publication that publishes material contrary to the *Pancasila*. The very vagueness of these restrictions makes them a grave threat to press freedom.

Radio Republik Indonesia (RRI), a government department under the Ministry of Information, operates transmitters, with studios in towns throughout the country. The external broadcasting service, Voice of Indonesia, operates short-wave transmitters. *Televisi Republik Indonesia* (TVRI) is a state-owned service with transmitters covering major portions of the archipelago. *Televisi Pendidikan Indonesia* is a commercial TV station with national access. *Rajawah Citra Indonesia* (RCTI) operates communications satellites that provide radio, telephone, and television links throughout the nation. There are some 10 commercial television networks competing with public television. Radio is widespread, with at least 60 stations in Jakarta alone. There is a huge market in il-

legal broadcasting; in 2003 there were over 2,000 illegal television and radio stations.

The national news agency is Antara (Lembaga Kantor Berita Nasional Antara), which is under the direct control of the president of the republic. Antara has domestic bureaus in all provincial capitals and six foreign bureaus. Kantor Berita Nasional Indonesia is an independent news agency.

Indonesia has a healthy book-publishing industry. It does not adhere to international copyright conventions.

Film distribution and production are in private hands but remain closely regulated by the government through the Film Council. The Film Censor Board is in charge of film censorship.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 396
 Total Circulation million: 4.78
 Circulation per 1,000: 22.9
 Books Published: 537
 Periodicals: 746
 Radio Receivers million: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets million: 30
 per 1,000: 143

CULTURE

Among the arts for which Indonesia is internationally famous are puppet shows, or *wayang*, which tell stories from Hindu epics and folk tales. The country has a multiplicity of dance styles, many featuring elaborate and traditional costumes. Dancers in Bali and Java perform to gamelan music, played on gongs, drums, xylophones, flutes, and stringed instruments. Dance techniques include very precise head and hand movements. Dancers begin training as young children. Gamelan orchestras and dancers still play for the *kratons*, or royal courts, in Solo, Yogyakarta, and Cirebon; these courts no longer serve any political function but do play an important role in preserving Indonesia's cultural heritage.

Batik, made almost exclusively in Java, uses a complex wax-resistance process to create intricate and elaborate fabric designs. Each local area has special designs for unique weaving. Bali is noteworthy for preserving—in sculpture, wood carving, and painting—Hindu tradition undisturbed by the spread of Islam. Knife makers in Java produce a special kind of dagger called a *keris*, which is traditionally given by fathers to sons and is believed to have magical powers.

Indonesia also produces more contemporary art forms. Modern authors include Mochtar Lubis and Pramoedya Ananta Toer, who spent nearly 14 years in jail for criticizing the government. The country's best-known contemporary filmmaker is Garin Nugroho, who has won several international awards for his work.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: 100
 Annual Attendance: 7,171,000
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: 1,009
 Seating Capacity: 674,400
 Annual Attendance: 190,000,000

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Indonesia has a wide variety of folkloric traditions. People in far-flung areas still hold animistic beliefs and worship nature spirits of various types. Puppet shows are one of Indonesia's great folkloric events. Bali has Hindu traditions that permeate everyday life; one of the most interesting events is Nyepi, the New Year, during which people leave food for the demons who live at crossroads and then bang gongs to frighten those demons away.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

There are many things to do in Indonesia. Bali, Lombok, and other areas have beautiful beaches and offer a variety of water sports. Different ethnic groups celebrate various cultural events, such as the mock battles of Sumba, the whip duels in Flores, funeral feasts in Sulawesi, and various Hindu events in Bali. People enjoy listening to traditional music and watching dances or puppet shows and plays. Tourist areas have nightclubs and restaurants. Most towns have large markets where people go to shop and visit friends. People enjoy visiting family members, during which they may play traditional games such as *congklak*, which involves getting pebbles into the holes in a board.

ETIQUETTE

Indonesians are extremely friendly and gregarious and expect to receive equally enthusiastic greetings in return. Indonesian society is hierarchical; businesses will make it clear who outranks whom, and they expect to be able to discern that information about other businesses quickly. Members of a company will sit down at a meeting in order of importance, with the highest-ranking sitting first. Business cards contain as much information as possible, including facts about the holder's nobility.

At an Indonesian meal, the hostess will place all dishes on the table at once. Everyone sits on the floor around the table. First everyone takes rice, and then a portion of food from each of the other dishes. A guest

should not eat until invited to do so by the host. In some places people eat with their fingers. Indonesian hosts will prepare more food than their guests can possibly eat at a single meal; a guest should never eat all the food on the table because this tells the hosts that there was not enough food.

FAMILY LIFE

Indonesians place great importance on extended family and their local community; they consider duty to the community, village, or workplace almost as important as familial obligations. Children live with their parents until they marry, at which point they become adults; even after marriage, some couples continue to live in the husband's parents' home. Weddings are elaborate festive events. The bride and groom sit on thrones and greet their guests, but they do not mingle with them. Most women stay home after marriage, caring for the home and children. Pregnant women and children are highly valued. Muslim boys officially become men at adolescence, when they are circumcised; this is a major event, and the boys often dress as princes to be paraded through town.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Indonesia is very hot, and people dress in light, flowing garments. The sarong is the ubiquitous garment for both sexes. Men and women tie their sarongs differently. Muslim women often cover their heads with scarves. Many people now wear Western clothing.

SPORTS

Indonesia's government encourages all citizens to be involved in sports. September 9 is National Sports Day, in which sporting events occur across the country. Karang Taruna is a state-run sporting organization for youths. Tennis, badminton, and running are popular sports in Indonesia. The Indonesian tennis team has won numerous regional championships. Indonesian badminton players habitually win the Thomas Cup competition, and Rudy Hartono is one of the world's best badminton players. Competitors from around the world come to Bali for its annual Paradise Run. Corporations often sponsor their own professional soccer teams, with employees of the corporations participating. The boxer Ellyas Pical has met with international success. The women's archery team won the gold medal in the Seoul Olympics in 1988; this was Indonesia's first Olympic gold medal.

Traditional games are also common. Boat racing, cockfighting, and bull racing are all popular in various places. In Nias young men participate in stone jumping,

in which they jump over stone walls, sometimes carrying swords. People also participate in martial arts.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1949** The Netherlands recognizes the Republic of the United States of Indonesia and relinquishes sovereignty over all Indonesian territories except West Irian.
- 1950** The country is renamed the Unitary State of Indonesia.
- 1955** In national elections no party achieves a parliamentary majority.
- 1956** President Sukarno initiates his Guided Democracy program, strengthening the powers of the president.
- 1957** Attempted military coups are put down.
- 1958** Dissidents in Sumatra, aided by the United States and Taiwan, proclaim the Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Indonesia but are suppressed.
- 1963** The Netherlands turns West Irian over to Indonesian control.
- 1965** After putting down a coup, led by Lieutenant Colonel Untung of the palace guard, in which six generals are killed, General Suharto becomes acting president. Numerous Muslim groups exterminate Communists throughout the countryside for their alleged involvement in the coup attempt, killing 300,000 to one million.
- 1966** Suharto declares the Communist Party illegal.
- 1968** Suharto is inaugurated as Indonesia's second president, a post he will hold for 32 years.
- 1975** Pertamina, Indonesia's state-owned oil company, declares its inability to make scheduled debt repayments of \$10.5 billion, precipitating a national financial crisis.
- 1976** Indonesia integrates East Timor, formerly a Portuguese possession.
- 1984** Indonesia joins Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand to form the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).
- 1994** Disaffected members of the military place Megawati Sukarnoputri, a daughter of the country's founding president, at the head of the fast-growing Indonesian Democratic Party.
- 1996** The government removes Megawati as leader of the Indonesian Democratic Party and raids party headquarters, spurring riots in Jakarta. Some 20,000 factory workers in Surabaya march to protest poor wages and working conditions.
- 1997** The Golkar party wins the national election in May with a record 74.4 percent of the vote, claiming 325 of the 425 contested seats in the House of Representatives.

More than 200 people are killed as opposition demonstrations turn into riots.

The Asian financial crisis begins to affect Indonesia.

Runaway forest fires in Indonesia spread smoke to all Southeast Asia, sickening thousands.

- 1998** Military repression of student protests at Jakarta's Triskati University foments massive riots, in which more than 1,000 die.

After thousands of students occupy the parliament building, Suharto's political and military support evaporates on May 21.

The new president, B. J. Habibie, institutes reforms as Indonesia's economic crisis worsens.

- 1999** Some 96 percent of 116 million registered voters cast ballots in the first free multiparty elections since 1955. Muslim leader Abdurrahman Wahid becomes Indonesia's fourth president, and PDI leader Megawati Sukarnoputri its vice president.

UN peacekeeping forces mediate the rampage of the paramilitary forces who oppose the popular 78.5 percent vote favoring East Timor's independence from Indonesia.

- 2001** President Abdurrahman Wahid, charged with corruption, is ousted by the national assembly and Megawati becomes president. Ethnic violence breaks out in Kalimantan. The IMF cuts off funds due to the government's corruption.

- 2002** Irian Jaya and East Timor are given more independence. Parliament passes a law allowing the direct election of the president and vice president. A bomb explodes at a tourist nightclub in Bali, killing 202. The government signs a peace agreement with the Free Aceh Movement.

- 2003** Peace talks with the Aceh separatists break down and the government imposes martial law on the region. A car bomb explodes in Jakarta. The suspects in the Bali bombing are found guilty.

- 2004** Christians and Muslims clash in the Moluccas. Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono is elected president in Indonesia's first direct elections. A car bomb explodes at the Australian embassy in Jakarta. A tsunami sweeps through the Indian Ocean, killing more than 220,000 people in the region.

- 2005** The government signs another peace agreement with the Free Aceh Movement providing for rebel disarmament and the withdrawal of government troops. Disarmament begins in September and troop withdrawal completes in December.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Department of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia <http://www.dfa-deplu.go.id/>

IRAN

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Islamic Republic of Iran (Jomhuri-ye Eslami-ye Iran)

ABBREVIATION

IR

CAPITAL

Tehran

HEAD OF STATE

Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei (from 1989)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad (from 2005)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Theocratic republic

POPULATION

68,017,860 (2005)

AREA

1,648,000 sq km (636,296 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Iranians (Persians)

LANGUAGES

Persian (or Farsi), Turkic, Kurdish, Luri, Balochi, Arabic

RELIGION

Shia Islam

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Iranian rial

NATIONAL FLAG

Three horizontal stripes of green, white, and red, from top to bottom, with the emblem of the Islamic Republic centrally positioned in red, with the words “Allah akbar” (“God is great”) repeated 11 times along each of the green and red stripes.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

The creed of the Revolutionary (Islamic) Government in Persian

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Upward on the Horizon Flies the Eastern Sun”

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

February 11 (Victory of the Islamic Republic), March 20 (Oil Nationalization Day), March 21–25 (No Ruz, Iranian New Year), April 1 (Islamic Republic Day), April 2 (Revolution Day), June 5 (Revolution Day).

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

Islamic Republic of Iran proclaimed on April 1, 1979

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

December 2–3, 1979; revised 1989

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Iran is located in southwestern Asia between the Persian Gulf and the Caspian Sea and shares borders with Azerbaijan, Armenia, Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Turkey, and Iraq. The total land area is 1,648,000 sq km (636,296 sq mi), which makes it larger than all of the nine original countries of the European Union combined. The longest distance northwest to southeast is 2,250 km (1,400 mi) and that northeast to southwest is 1,400 km (870 mi).

Iran has four natural geographic regions. The central, interior plateau is a barren, largely uninhabited area occupying a series of closed basins with elevations of 600–900 m (2,000–3,000 ft) and is completely surrounded by

mountains. The plateau is covered partly by salt swamps, known as *kavirs*, and partly by salt flats, called *dashts*. Because of its forbidding nature, this region is known as the “Dead Heart” of Iran. The second region is the Zagros mountain range, which originates in the Armenian Knot near Armenia and extends 965 km (600 mi) along the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman, joining the Makran range near Pakistan. The northwestern part of this region includes the fertile states of East and West Azerbaijan, and in the southern part is the coastal plain of Khuzestan. The highest elevation in this region is 3,960 m (13,000 ft). The third region consists of the Elburz and Talish mountains and the Caspian lowlands. The Elburz Range extends to Afghanistan along the southern side of the

Iran



Turkmenistan border, with elevations between 2,100 and 3,000 m (7,000 and 10,000 ft). The fourth region consists of the eastern mountains along the Pakistani and Afghan borders, with barren ranges, fertile valleys, and elevations between 1,200 and 2,750 m (4,000 and 9,000 ft).

Land Boundaries, km: Afghanistan 936; Armenia 35; Azerbaijan 611; Iraq 1,458; Pakistan 909; Turkey 499; Turkmenistan 992
 Coastline, km: 2,440
 Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Caspian Sea -28
 Highest: Kuh-e Damavand 5,671
 Land Use %
 Arable Land: 8.7
 Permanent Crops: 1.4
 Forest: 4.5
 Other: 85.4

Geography

Area sq km: 1,648,000; sq mi 636,296
 World Rank: 17th

Population of Principal Cities (1996)

Abadan	206,073
Ahvaz	804,980
Arak	380,755
Ardabil	340,386
Bakhtaran	692,986
Bandar-e 'Abbas	273,578
Borujerd	217,804
Dezful	202,639
Esfahan	1,266,072
Eslamshahr	265,450
Hamadan	401,281
Karaj	940,968
Kashan	201,372
Kerman	384,991
Khorramabad	272,815
Mashhad	1,887,405
Orumiyeh	435,200
Qazvin	291,117
Qom	777,677
Rasht	417,748
Sanandaj	277,808
Shiraz	1,053,025
Tabriz	1,191,043
Tehran	6,758,845
Yazd	326,776
Zahedan	419,518
Zanjan	286,295

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

The climate of Iran is one of great extremes. Temperatures vary from -27.8°C (-18°F) to 55.6°C (132°F) in parts of the central plateau, where some of the highest temperatures in the world have been recorded. Most of Iran is arid, except the northwest and the Caspian coast, which receive over 2,000 mm (78 in) of rainfall annually and are the most densely populated regions in the country. Generally, rain falls from October to May, with the heaviest concentration from December to March. Desert areas receive less than 50.8 mm (2 in) per year, while the Persian Gulf region receives between 200 and 508 mm (8 and 20 in) per year. In the coastal areas humidity is high throughout the year. Two strong summer winds, the shamal in the northwest and the "Wind of 120 Days" in the southeast, blowing with destructive velocities of up to 160 km per hour (99 mph), intensify the heat and erode the soil.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature: 18°F to 132°F
 Average Rainfall
 Desert regions: 2 in
 Persian Gulf region: 8 to 20 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

The area near the Caspian Sea is Iran's most fertile region; it is covered with forests of many types of trees, including

willow, oak, orange, lemon, fig, pomegranate, and date. The northern desert supports cacti and scrub vegetation; the southern desert is completely barren. Kurdistan has many valuable walnut trees.

The forests are home to animals such as wolves, boars, bears, tigers, lynxes, and jackals. Desert mammals include Persian gazelles, Iranian wild asses, Persian squirrels, porcupines, badgers, goats, and sheep such as the Oreal and Alborz varieties. Birds include pheasants, flamingos, partridges, and pelicans. The Caspian Sea is rich in marine animals such as sturgeon, herring, and whitefish.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 68,017,860
 World Rank: 18th
 Density per sq km: 40.6
 % of annual growth (1999-2003): 1.4
 Male %: 51.0
 Female %: 49.0
 Urban %: —
 Age Distribution %: 0–14: 27.1
 15–64: 68.0
 65 and over: 4.9
 Population 2025: 83,187,000
 Birth Rate per 1,000: 16.83
 Death Rate per 1,000: 5.55
 Rate of Natural Increase %: 1.1
 Total Fertility Rate: 1.82
 Expectation of Life (years): Males 68.58
 Females 71.4
 Marriage Rate per 1,000: 9.9
 Divorce Rate per 1,000: 1.0
 Average Size of Households: 5.1
 Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

About two-thirds of the Iranian population consists of people of Aryan origin, of whom the Persians, or Farsi, are predominant. The Gilanis and the Mazandarani are closely related to the Persians but speak a different dialect and have lower cultural status. The Kurds, who form the fourth-largest ethnic group in the Middle East, are concentrated in the Zagros Mountains area from Khuzestan to the Russian border. They are distinguished from the Persians by their religion (being mostly Sunni rather than Shia, or Shi'ite, Muslims), physical appearance, ethnic origin, social organization, and language. They retain a tribal type of social structure and are divided into more than 40 tribes.

South of the Kurds live two related ethnic groups, the Lurs and the Bakhtiari, each with nomadic and sedentary branches. Perhaps the poorest and least advanced people of Iran are the Baluchis, numbering about half a million, who are found in greater numbers in Pakistan

and Afghanistan. About one-third of the population consists of various Turkic speakers. Included in any of these ethnic groupings are about 800,000 nomads whose ethnic affiliations have not been established.

There are relatively large Western communities in Tehran, along the Caspian coast, and in the booming oil towns of the south.

LANGUAGES

The official national language is Persian, or Farsi, which is spoken by about 46 percent of the population. Some dialects of Persian, such as Gilani and Mazandarani, are so different from pure Persian as to be virtually unintelligible to a person from Tehran or Shiraz. One-quarter of the population speaks Turkic languages. Other Indo-Iranian languages include Kurdish, itself divided into a number of dialects, Luri, and Baluchi, each spoken by the ethnic group of that name. A small minority of the population speaks Arabic. Most of the languages, including Farsi, Azerbaijani, and Kurdish, are written in the Arabic script with some modifications and additional consonants. An attempt under Reza Shah in the 1930s to romanize written Persian was dropped because of the opposition of religious leaders.

For many decades French, and to some extent German, enjoyed great prestige as the languages of the elite. English, however, has been displacing French in diplomacy and commerce.

RELIGIONS

Iran terms itself an Islamic republic, and religion is closely intertwined with government. Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei is recognized as the supreme leader, and this position is viewed as holding something akin to divine sanction. The president and many other top officials are mullahs (religious leaders), as are the speaker of the Majlis (the assembly) and roughly half of the Majlis deputies. Some 89 percent of Iranians are Shia, while 9 percent are Sunni Muslims. The Sunnis tend to be located in tribal areas remote from Tehran; their political influence is nearly nil. The constitution declares that “the official religion of Iran is Islam, and the sect followed is Ja’fari Shiism,” but it also states that “other Islamic denominations shall enjoy complete respect.” Although Sunnis have encountered religious discrimination on the local level and in many cases persecution based on ethnic origin, the regime has made efforts to reduce Shia-Sunni antagonism.

The Baha’i religion is not recognized in Iran, and Baha’is have suffered severe persecution since the revolution. This is mainly government directed and aimed at the religious leadership, although there were some earlier

instances of mob action against Baha’is. Baha’i property has been confiscated, shrines demolished, businesses disbanded or confiscated, and known Baha’is denied employment by the government.

There are small Christian, Jewish, and Zoroastrian (the pre-Islamic religion of Iran) populations, concentrated mainly in urban areas. These religions are recognized by the constitution, and they elect representatives to seats reserved for them in the Majlis. They are permitted to practice their religions, to instruct their children, and in some cases to maintain schools. There have been reports of religious persecution of these minorities, particularly in the early stages of the 1979 revolution. They continue to have problems with the regime over religious practice, and some members of all three groups suffer officially sanctioned job discrimination. Jewish groups report fewer such problems because the language spoken in Jewish homes and informally among Jews is Farsi. In parts of Iran, Zoroastrians are reportedly considered “unclean” and are required to warn barbers, launderers, and restaurant owners that their services will be for “unclean” people, so that they can decide whether to serve such clients.

Religious Affiliations

Shia Muslim	60,536,000
Sunni Muslim	6,122,000
Zoroastrian, Jewish, Christian, Baha’i	1,360,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The history of Iran (known as Persia until 1935) dates from the sixth century B.C.E. The Medes and the Persians were united in 633 B.C.E. by Cyrus the Great, leading to the foundation of the first Persian Empire. The empire was overthrown in 331 B.C.E. by Alexander the Great and upon his death was divided between his generals. The Seleucid Dynasty was in power until 247 B.C.E., followed by the Parthian Empire of the Arsacids, who ruled for 500 years. The last empire of the Sassanids (established in 33 C.E.) was defeated by Muslim Arabs in 637 C.E.

The Arabs converted most of the population to Islam and introduced the new Persian script and Islamic culture. In 1051 the Turks captured control of the empire. For more than 200 years the Turks held on to power, until Genghis Khan destroyed Turkish control early in the 13th century. For the next century and a half the Mongols ruled the region. In the late 14th century they were replaced by the Timurid dynasty.

By the late 16th century, with the rise of the Safavids under Ismail Safavi, Persia reemerged with the same general boundaries that exist today. Shiism was declared the state religion. The Safavids ruled until 1750, and after a

short interregnum under Karim Khan Zand, the Qajar dynasty assumed power, remaining until the beginning of the 20th century. The country adopted its first imperial constitution in 1906. In 1921 Reza Khan, a Cossack officer, staged a military coup and became minister of war. In 1923 he became prime minister, and in 1925 the Majlis (Islamic Consultative Assembly) deposed the shah and handed full power to Reza Khan. He was subsequently elected shah, taking the title Reza Shah Pahlavi. During World War II Reza Shah favored Nazi Germany. British and Soviet forces entered Iran in 1941, forcing the shah to abdicate in favor of his son, Muhammad Reza Pahlavi.

After the war, British and U.S. forces left Iran, although Soviet forces remained in Azerbaijan until 1946. The Majlis approved the nationalization of the petroleum industry in March 1951. The leading advocate of this measure was Dr. Mohammad Mossadegh, leader of the National Front, who became prime minister in April 1951. The shah assumed full control of the government in 1963, when he began a program of land reform and social and economic modernization known as the White Revolution. The period was marked with some success, as party politics functioned, and elections were held in 1967, 1971, and 1975. Opposition to the increasing Westernization and secularization of Iranian society was articulated by Islamic clergy, notably Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, exiled to Turkey and then Iraq after 1964.

In March 1975 the shah introduced a single-party system based on the Iran National Resurgence Party. Opposition grew, however, and during 1977 and 1978 demonstrations against the shah and his secret police (SAVAK) rose to crisis level. The most effective opposition came from Ayatollah Khomeini, who conducted his campaign from France, where he had arrived in October 1978 after 14 years in exile in Iraq. Khomeini demanded a return to the principles of Islam, and the response to this call in Iran was so great that the shah felt compelled to leave the country in January 1979.

Khomeini arrived in Tehran shortly afterward and effectively took power on February 11. A 15-member Islamic Revolutionary Council (IRC) was formed. Khomeini declared Iran an Islamic republic on April 1, 1979, and introduced a constitution that vested supreme authority in the *wali faqih* (religious leader), initially Khomeini. In the immediate aftermath of the revolution, militant students, with the tacit approval of the mullahs, occupied the U.S. embassy and took 66 diplomatic personnel hostage. This action, which was against all accepted international conventions, was condemned by both the United Nations and the International Court of Justice. The hostages were released after 444 days of captivity in 1981, coincident with the inauguration of President Ronald Reagan. A presidential election in January 1980 resulted in a win for Abolhassan Banisadr, who received about 75 percent of the votes. Elections for the 270-seat

Majlis followed and resulted in a clear win for the Islamic Republic Party (IRP).

In June 1981 proceedings on the grounds of incompetence were instituted against Banisadr in the Majlis, and Khomeini ordered his dismissal. He was succeeded by Mohammad Ali Rajai in July 1981. The following month, however, Rajai and his prime minister, Mohammad Javad Bahonar, were the victims of a bomb attack mounted by the Mujahideen e-Khalq, an opposition group. In October, Ali Khamenei was elected president, and Mir-Hossein Mousavi was elected prime minister. Both Ali Khamenei and Mir-Hossein Mousavi were reelected in 1985.

In 1987 Tehran reacted bitterly to a bloody midyear confrontation with Saudi security forces at Mecca's Grand Mosque that resulted in the death of more than 400 Iranian pilgrims. In 1989 relations with the West again plummeted after Khomeini issued a fatwa, or death decree, against Salman Rushdie for his book *Satanic Verses*, considered offensive to Muslims.

From 1980 to 1989 Iran was embroiled in a war with Iraq that proved costly and bloody. In 1980 Iraq abrogated a 1975 accord dividing the Shatt al-Arab along the median line and invaded Iran's Khuzestan Province. Despite early reverses, Iran succeeded in retaining control of most of the larger towns, including Abadan, and by the end of the year the conflict resulted in a stalemate. Iran advanced into Iraqi territory for the first time in 1982 but made only marginal gains on the southern front. A renewal of the Iranian military offensive in late 1987 proved futile as Iraqis drove the Iranians from Basra, and half the Iranian fleet was lost during the fighting. In 1988 the war of the cities commenced, with both countries bombing each other's capitals and large cities. The two countries, faced with a no-win situation, agreed to a cease-fire in 1988, followed by a peace agreement in 1990. The agreement was essentially on Iranian terms and restored the border to its 1975 status.

Ayatollah Khomeini died in June 1989. The Council of Experts elected President Khamenei to succeed Khomeini as the *wali faqih*. In the presidential election of July 1989, Hashemi Rafsanjani commanded 95.9 percent of the votes. He was sworn in as president in August 1989. Over the course of the next eight years the government of Iran slowly moderated its Islamic extremist, separatist position. In 1997 a more moderate government was elected under the leadership of Mohammed Khatami. Khatami's election did not improve relations with the West immediately, but he has had a moderating effect. He has also relaxed some of the Islamic restrictions on women and young people. However, there is tension between Khatami and the more hard-line fundamentalist supporters of Iran's supreme leader Khamenei. Khatami was reelected in 2001.

Iran was outraged in early 2002 when U.S. President George Bush referred to the nation as part of an "axis of evil," along with Iraq and North Korea, and accused

Iran of developing long-range missiles. That September, Iran began construction on a nuclear reactor at Bushehr. The United States and United Nations both kept a close watch on Iran's nuclear weapons program. Iran agreed to suspend its nuclear program in 2003 and allow UN inspectors to visit; the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) found no evidence of nuclear weapons in 2003 but then scolded Iran for lack of cooperation in 2004. In November 2004 the European Union persuaded Iran to suspend its uranium enrichment program.

Iran's government became increasingly conservative in 2004. Conservative representatives gained a large majority in parliament after a controversial election in which the Council of Guardians disqualified most reformist candidates before voting began. In 2005 ultra-conservative Mahmoud Ahmadinejad became president. Under his leadership, Iran resumed its uranium enrichment program. The IAGA consequently reported Iran to the UN Security Council charging violation of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

Presidents

1980–81	Abolhassan Banisadr
1981	Mohammad Ali Rajai
1981–89	Ali Khamenei
1989–97	Akbar Hashemi Bahramani (Hashemi Rafsanjani)
1997–2005	Mohammad Khatami
2005	Mahmoud Ahmadinejad

Supreme Leaders

1979–89	Ruhollah Khomeini
1989–	Ali Khamenei

CONSTITUTION

A draft constitution was published in mid-June 1979, and a 75-member Council of Experts was elected to debate the various clauses and propose amendments. The amended constitution was put to a referendum in early December 1979 and easily gained the approval of the electorate. In 1989 the most important amendments to the constitution were the elevation of the president to the government's chief executive and the abolition of the post of prime minister.

The constitution states that the form of government of Iran is that of an Islamic republic and that the spirituality and ethics of Islam are to be the basis for political, social, and economic relations. Persians, Turks, Kurds, Arabs, Baluchis, Turkomans, and others enjoy completely equal rights.

The constitution provides for a popularly elected president with a term of four years and a popularly elected Majlis (Islamic Consultative Assembly) of 270 members

with a term of four years. The number of seats in the Majlis was increased to 290 with the February 2002 elections. Provision is made for the representation of Zoroastrians, Jews, and Christians (but not Baha'is).

All legislation passed by the Majlis must be sent to the Council of Guardians (article 94), which will ensure that it is in accordance with the constitution and Islam. The Council of Guardians consists of six religious lawyers appointed by the *faqih* and six lawyers appointed by the High Council of the Judiciary and approved by the Majlis. Articles 19–42 deal with the basic rights of individuals and provide for equality of men and women before the law and for equal human, political, economic, social, and cultural rights for both sexes. The Committee to Determine the Expediency of the Islamic Order, created in February 1988 and formally adopted into the constitution in July 1989, rules on legal and theological disputes between the Majlis and the Council of Guardians.

The amended constitution provides for a *wali faqih* (religious leader) who, in the absence of the Imam Mehdi (the hidden Twelfth Imam), carries the burden of leadership. According to Article 57 the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of state power are under the authority of the *faqih*. Among the extensive powers reserved to the *faqih* is the right to appoint half the members of the Council of Guardians. He is also supreme commander of the armed forces and can appoint the joint chiefs of staff and the head of the Revolutionary Guard. He appoints four of the seven members of the National Defense Council and, on their recommendation, appoints the senior commanders of the armed forces. He also has power to declare war and make peace on the recommendation of the National Defense Council. The first *faqih* has the right to approve all candidates for the presidency (a right which was exercised by Ayatollah Khomeini). The *faqih* can also dismiss the president on the basis of a Supreme Court decision or a vote of no confidence by the Majlis.

Elections are overseen by election supervisory councils. Suffrage is universal for those over age 15. Those excluded from voting are criminals, converts from Islam, and members of the armed forces and the gendarmerie. In 1963 suffrage was opened to women.

PARLIAMENT

The 1979 Constitution replaced the former bicameral parliament with the unicameral Islamic Consultative Assembly (Majlis-e-Shura-ye-Eslami), with members elected by popular vote for four-year terms. The first election to the assembly, held in two stages in 1979 and 1980, resulted in an absolute majority for the mullah-dominated Islamic Republican Party. The ruling Revolutionary Council's legislative power was transferred to parliament in July when Ayatollah Hashemi Rafsanjani was elected speaker.

Beginning a year after the shah's departure, the revolutionary regime has held elections at fairly regular intervals for president, Majlis deputies, members of the Council of Experts (responsible for choosing Khomeini's successor), and members of local government councils. All candidates must be approved by the Interior Ministry, however, and only those meeting with the approval of the government may run. In practice, only supporters of the theocratic state are accepted. There has, however, been considerable diversity of opinion among candidates on economic and social questions.

The Majlis holds genuine debates and normally broadcasts live on radio on a wide variety of issues. In some cases laws proposed by the government have been voted down. Five cabinet ministers lost their posts in August 1983 when, following heated debate on the performance of the cabinet, they failed to win votes of confidence, and on several occasions during the year the prime minister's nominees to fill ministerial vacancies were rejected. Rejections of bills and officials by the Majlis are accepted by the executive branch.

Iran's constitution provides for a Council of Guardians composed of 12 members, six clerics unilaterally appointed by the *faqih* and six lay members well grounded in Islamic law who are nominated by the head of the Judicial Council, subject to the approval of the Majlis. The Council of Guardians must certify all bills passed by the Majlis as being in accordance with Islamic law and the constitution. If a bill fails to be certified, it is sent back to the Majlis for revision. It cannot become law until the council has certified it. The Council of Guardians has rejected various important bills and portions of bills passed by the Majlis, including legislation on land reform, nationalization of foreign trade, and reform of Iran's civil code.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Iran does not have many formal political parties; the conservative leaders prefer to use political pressure groups. The Second Khordad Front, a loose coalition, won a number of seats in the 2000 election. This coalition includes members from the Islamic Iran Participation Front (IIPF), the Executives of Construction Party (Kargozaran), the Solidarity Party, the Islamic Labor Party, the Mardom Salari Party, the Mujahideen of the Islamic Revolution Organization (MIRO), and the Militant Clerics Society (Ruhaniyun). A new conservative group called the Builders of Islamic Iran won a majority of seats in the February 2004 elections.

Progovernment political pressure groups include Ansar-e Hizballah, Muslim Students Following the Line of the Imam, the Tehran Militant Clergy Association (Ruhaniyat), the Islamic Coalition Party (Motalefeh), and the Islamic Engineers Society. Reformist groups that oppose the government include the Organization for Strengthening Unity; opposition groups include Freedom Move-

ment of Iran, the National Front, Marz-e Por Gohar, and various ethnic and monarchist organizations. There are also a few political groups whose activities have been almost completely repressed by the state, including Komala, the Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan, and the Mujahideen e-Khalq Organization (MEK).

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Iran is divided into 28 *ostans*, or provinces. The provinces are administered by *ostandars*. The powers of provincial councils, called *anjumans*, are gradually being enlarged. The second tier of local government consists of *shabrestans*, or counties, under junior *farmandars*. The third tier is *bakhsbes*, or districts, which are under *bakshadars*. The fourth tier is *dehistans*, or groups of villages, under *dehdars*. At the base are the villages, which are in the charge of *kadkbodas*, or headmen. Towns and cities have municipal governments with mayors and councils either elected or designated by the Ministry of Interior.

LEGAL SYSTEM

In August 1982 the Supreme Court revoked all laws dating from the previous regime that did not conform to Islam. In October 1982 all courts set up prior to the Islamic revolution were abolished. In June 1987 Ayatollah Khomeini ordered the creation of clerical courts to try members of the clergy opposed to government policy. The new Supreme Court has 16 branches.

Islamic codes of correction were introduced in 1983, including the dismembering of a hand for theft, flogging for fornication and violations of the strict dress code for women, and stoning for adultery. Over 100 offenses may be punished by the death penalty.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Iran's human rights record is poor. The state restricts citizens' right to change their government, imprisons people arbitrarily, and uses summary executions, torture, and rape to maintain power. Most freedoms are restricted, including freedoms of speech, association, religion, and the press. Religious minorities such as Baha'is are persecuted. Women are severely disadvantaged. Child labor and human trafficking are persistent problems. The government does not allow human rights groups to enter the country.

FOREIGN POLICY

Iran's foreign policy since the 1979 revolution has undergone two phases, both of which have been guided

by two goals: unremitting hostility to the United States (“The Great Satan”) in particular and the West in general, and the export of militant Islamic radicalism to other Muslim countries in the Middle East. The main events during the first phase, which lasted about two decades, included taking members of the U.S. embassy in Tehran hostage, sponsoring Hezbollah radicals and terrorists in Lebanon and Palestine, seizing Abu Musa, a small island in the Persian Gulf that belonged to the United Arab Emirates, orchestrating a bloody confrontation with Shia Saudi Arabia at Mecca’s Grand Mosque, and the issue of a fatwa against the Indian-born writer Salman Rushdie. The bloody Iran-Iraq War, which cost billions of dollars and thousands of lives, chastened the more radical elements among Iran’s ruling mullahs.

The election of moderate president Khatami in 1997 proved a turning point in Iran’s foreign relations and showed that Iran wanted to emerge from its isolation and rid itself of its outlaw image. In 1998 Khatami proposed cultural exchanges with the United States and dissociated himself from the fatwa against Rushdie, a decision that prompted the reestablishment of full relations with the United Kingdom. President Khatami’s charm offensive toward Europe included a visit to the Vatican. Khatami has also called for a “dialogue of civilizations” with the West and has attempted to convince neighboring states that Iran has no interest in establishing regional dominance. Iran’s supreme religious leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, continues to lash out at the United States, however, revealing deep internal divisions in Iranian leadership.

Iran’s current “Islamic foreign policy” consists of opposition to the United States and Israel, support for Islamic efforts in other countries, the elimination of all outside influences, and support for developing countries, especially Islamic ones. Iran has been negotiating with the European Union over the matter of nuclear weapons; the United States has refused to cooperate in these dealings, so in early 2005 relations between the United States and Iran were still extremely tense.

DEFENSE

Iran’s military includes a ground army, a navy, an air force, and a Revolutionary Guard Corps. There are also paramilitary groups called Basijis and vigilante gangs called Ansar-e Hezbollah, who intimidate and attack anyone who they suspect of opposing the government, often at the behest of the religious leadership. The defense structure is headed by the *faqih*, Ayatollah Khamenei, who, as the supreme commander of the armed forces, exercises operational control through a joint staff organization. Soon after the outbreak of the war with Iraq, Ayatollah Khomeini handed over his military powers to then president Banisadr. The minister of war is outside the actual chain of command.

Much of Iran’s military might has disintegrated following the Islamic revolution. Because of a U.S. embargo, Iran’s sophisticated but old U.S.-supplied military equipment lacks parts and maintenance. The war with Iraq and the early reverses suffered in that war reduced both the inventory and the morale of the troops to their lowest levels in decades. Iran is currently working to modernize its military. It wants to have nuclear capabilities and has already initiated work on a nuclear facility, though UN pressure has so far kept it from developing weapons of mass destruction.

Conscription provides the main source of military manpower. Every Iranian citizen becomes eligible for military service at the age of 18 for a period of 18 months. During the war with Iraq the army recruited boys as young as 9 years old. There is no organized reserve. The strength of the armed forces is 580,000.

The principal training institutions are the Military College, the Army Staff College, the War Academy, and the National Defense University.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	580,000
Military Manpower Availability:	18,319,545
Military Expenditures \$billion:	4.3
as % of GDP:	3.3
as % of central government expenditures:	16.4
Arms Imports \$million:	323
Arms Exports \$million:	—

ECONOMY

Iran’s economy is a mixture of central planning, state ownership of oil and other large enterprises, village agriculture, and small-scale private trading and service ventures. Governmental corruption and inefficiency make what could be a very wealthy country into a relatively poor one. Iran depends above all on revenues from oil exports. Currently, all large-scale industry is publicly owned and state operated. Charitable groups called *bonyads* control the businesses formerly owned by the shah’s family; these groups, which are closely connected to the government, do not pay taxes on their considerable revenues.

President Khatami has continued to follow the market reform plans of former President Rafsanjani and has indicated that he will pursue the diversification of Iran’s oil-reliant economy, although he has made little progress toward that goal. The strong oil market in 1996 helped ease financial pressures on Iran and allowed for Tehran’s timely debt-service payments. Iran’s financial situation tightened in 1997 and deteriorated further in 1998 because of lower oil prices. High oil prices in the early 2000s furnished Iran with substantial income but did not solve the nation’s economic problems. The nation subsidizes food and fuel, but poverty is still a major problem; 40 percent of the population lives below the poverty line.

Most private sector enterprises are small-scale farms and workshops. Unemployment is high, at around 11 percent, and inflation has been hovering around 15 percent. Unemployment in particular is a major problem because it leaves a large number of young men at loose ends, which foments violence and Islamic extremism.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 516.7
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 7,700
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 4.8
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 3.4
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 11.2
 Industry: 40.9
 Services: 48.7
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 43
 Government Consumption: 14
 Gross Domestic Investment: 31.3
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 38.79
 Imports: 31.3
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: —
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: —

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)				
1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
214.1	245.1	272.8	311.9	363.2

Finance

National Currency: Iranian Rial (IRR)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = IRR 8,885
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency trillion: 162.5
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: —
 Total External Debt \$billion: 13.4
 Debt Service Ratio %: 3.55
 Balance of Payments \$billion: 2.1
 International Reserves SDRs \$million: —
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
 15.5

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 133.07
 per capita \$: 2.00
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 120

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: 21 March to 20 March
 Revenues \$billion: 43.34
 Expenditures \$billion: 47.7
 Budget Deficit \$billion: 4.36
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 11.2
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 2.4

Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 1.58
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 43.9
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 86.0
 Total Farmland % of land area: 9.2
 Livestock: Cattle million: 8.8
 Chickens million: 280
 Pigs 000: —
 Sheep million: 54
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 1.31
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 401.7

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 17.3
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 3.5

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million:
 255.15
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million:
 123.8
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 1.95
 Net Energy Imports % of use: -79.6
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 26.4
 Production kW-hr billion: 124.2
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 115.5
 Coal Reserves tons billion: 1.89
 Production tons million: 1.3
 Consumption tons million: 1.5
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: 940
 Production cubic feet billion: 2.65
 Consumption cubic feet billion: 2.8
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: 125.8
 Production barrels million per day: 4.1
 Consumption barrels million per day: 1.5
 Pipelines Length km: 8,256

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 31.3
 Exports \$billion: 38.79
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 4.8
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 7.2
 Balance of Trade \$billion: 2.1

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Germany %	11.5	—
France %	9.0	—
China %	8.8	10.2
Italy %	8.5	6.6
Switzerland %	7.1	—
United Arab Emirates %	7.1	—
Russia %	4.6	—
Japan %	4.3	23.0
South Korea %	—	5.0
Netherlands %	—	4.0

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 167,157
 Paved %: 56.3
 Automobiles: 1,351,800
 Trucks and Buses: 384,900
 Railroad: Track Length km: 7,203
 Passenger-km billion: 8.04
 Freight-km billion: 14.6
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 144
 Total Deadweight Tonnage million: 8.24
 Airports: 305
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 8.6
 Length of Waterways km: 850

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 1.34
 Number of Tourists from million: 2.29
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 967
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 670

Communications

Telephones million: 14.57
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones million: 3.38
 Personal Computers million: 6
 Internet Hosts per million people: 77
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 63

ENVIRONMENT

Iran suffers from a number of environmental concerns. There is growing air pollution in urban areas due to increased emissions from automobiles and industrial smoke. Unrestricted industrial and urban development and rapid population growth have damaged the land around the Persian Gulf and Caspian Sea and on the southern part of the Alborz range. The country suffers from growing desertification caused by overgrazing and deforestation. Oil operations in the Persian Gulf have caused some environmental concerns, as spills occur regularly. Like most of its Middle East neighbors, the country suffers from a lack of potable water for its growing population.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 4.5
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: —
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 7
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 140,774
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 4.87

LIVING CONDITIONS

Iran's cities are very crowded and have terrible traffic. Cities have many modern amenities, including fast-food

restaurants and shopping malls as well as outdoor bazaars. Gasoline is cheap, but driving is dangerous. There is ample and inexpensive public transportation, both buses and trains.

HEALTH

The government provides health care for all citizens, including vaccinations, paid maternity leave, and subsidized prescription drugs. Most modern medical facilities are located in Tehran and other large cities. Many doctors emigrated during the revolution, but the government has encouraged students to attend medical training, so there are now more health workers. People in the countryside still rely on traditional midwives and healers. The infant mortality rate is quite high, at almost 42 deaths per 1,000 live births. Iran has a poor water and sewage system, so waterborne diseases and parasites are common. Malaria, schistosomiasis, and cholera all occur with some frequency.

Health

Number of Physicians: 68,079
 Number of Dentists: 12,378
 Number of Nurses: 155,542
 Number of Pharmacists: 8,108
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 105
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 41.58
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 76
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 6.0
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 104
 HIV Infected % of adults: < 0.1
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 99
 Measles: 99
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 84
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 93

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Iranian cuisine uses many vegetables, herbs, nuts, and fruit. Seasonings include saffron, cinnamon, turmeric, sumac, pomegranate juice, and dried limes. Rice and bread are the main starches. Mutton and lamb are the most common meats, though meat is usually just a flavoring, not the main ingredient in a dish. Muslims do not eat pork. People occasionally eat beef, camel, goat, and buffalo. Breakfast foods include bread, butter, honey, eggs, and feta cheese. The largest meal is served in the middle of the day and is almost always structured around rice and flat naan bread. Iranians eat many salads of fresh greens and herbs and also like to stuff green leaves with rice and meat. Kebabs, pieces of meat grilled on a skewer, make a popular meal. The evening meal often features omelets or sandwiches.

People drink *chai*, or tea, constantly; they serve it strong and sweet. Fresh fruit juices, yogurt drinks, and milkshakes are popular, but alcohol is forbidden. Snacks include cherries, pomegranates, plums, melons, berries, cookies, pastries, and nuts, such as pistachios.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 4.0
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,910
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 210.2
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 329.7

STATUS OF WOMEN

Ultraconservative dress, entirely hiding the hair and all of the body except the face and hands, is now an absolute requirement for all women, regardless of their religion, national origin, citizenship, or diplomatic status. Women are harassed, detained, or physically attacked if they appear in public in clothing that official or self-appointed guardians of public morality deem insufficiently modest or if they wear makeup. There have also been incidents in which men have been attacked on the streets of Tehran for dressing in "un-Islamic" fashion, such as for wearing short-sleeved shirts or failing to button all their shirt buttons.

Employment opportunities for women are more restricted than they were under the shah. Women are legally barred from being judges. Although there are cultural barriers making employment in professional-level positions difficult to obtain and maintain, women do work as lawyers, physicians, and statisticians and in other professions in both the public and private sectors. Several women serve as deputies in the Majlis. In 2003 the Islamic rulers issued a decree allowing women to lead all-female congregations.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 4
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: —
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: —

WORK

Before the revolution Iran had a number of professionals of both sexes, but in the past 25 years conditions have changed. Unemployment is fairly troublesome, as 10 percent of the workforce cannot find jobs. Women are discouraged from working outside the home, though some must in order to support their families or to fill needs such as providing medical care to female patients. Some 30 percent of the workforce is employed in agriculture.

Industry employs about 25 percent of the workforce; factories produce clothing, pharmaceuticals, automobiles, and carpets. The workplace tends to be hierarchical, and employees must respect their bosses. Family members typically help one another with business matters.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 23,000,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 29.4
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 30
 Industry: 25
 Services: 45
 Unemployment %: 11.2

EDUCATION

Education is officially compulsory for eight years, between six and 14 years of age, but this has not been fully implemented in rural areas. Primary education, which is free, begins at the age of six and lasts for five years. Secondary education, from the age of 11, lasts up to seven years. Religious instruction is required. Iranian schoolchildren are assigned large amounts of written homework and material to memorize. Students choose a specialty while in high school, either academic, vocational, or science-math.

The academic year runs from September to June. The language of instruction is Persian, but both English and French are taught as second languages. There is an acute shortage of teachers at both the primary and secondary levels. Teaching staffs in primary schools are supplemented by the Literacy Corps.

Educational administration, modeled on the French system, is highly centralized under the Ministry of Education. The ministry establishes curricula, hires and trains teachers, administers examinations, and prepares textbooks. The state encourages private schools and subsidizes equipment and salaries. Christian and secular French private schools attract the best students.

Iran has 74 state-run universities. University education is free to students who pass the entrance examinations, though universities do not admit students who do not please the authorities; these include women and members of ethnic minorities or political opposition groups. Women's enrollment has dropped since the revolution, but women continue to study and are some of the best students at the universities.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 79.4
 Male %: 85.6
 Female %: 73.0
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 11.6

(continues)

Education *(continued)*

First Level: Primary schools: 61,889
Teachers: 308,105
Students: 7,513,015
Student-Teacher Ratio: 24.4
Net Enrollment Ratio: 86.5
Second Level: Secondary Schools: 18,445
Teachers: 343,258
Students: 9,180,173
Student-Teacher Ratio: 28.9
Net Enrollment Ratio: —
Third Level: Institutions: 74
Teachers: 84,197
Students: 1,714,433
Gross Enrollment Ratio: 21.1
Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 4.9

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Iran has advanced scientific and technological resources. The Iran University of Science and Technology and several other universities have excellent engineering and scientific programs. The Iran Secretariat for the Advancement of Science and Technology leads the nation's efforts in this area. The nation is rapidly modernizing its telephone system. Some 4.3 million people were using the Internet in 2003.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
High-Tech Exports \$million: 50.88
Patent Applications by Residents: 691

MEDIA

Tehran dominates the press scene, as many of the daily papers are published there, and the biweekly, weekly, and less frequent publications in the provinces generally depend on the major metropolitan dailies as sources of news.

The constitution states that prepublication censorship is forbidden and that no publications may be banned without a court order. The press law of 1979 governs the legal status of the press. Khatami's government has fought to keep the press free, but the conservatives have fought back; they have succeeded in shutting down many reformist publications and jailing reformist writers and editors. Khatami and his parliament have done little to intervene.

The official national news agency is the IRNA (Islamic Republic News Agency), operated by the Ministry of Information's General Department of Publications.

Broadcasting is a state activity operated by Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran, an administratively indepen-

dent body under the Ministry of Information. Broadcast media are more restricted than newspapers. Some satellite television stations are allowed to operate and are believed to have played a role in the 2003 student protests. Iran broadcasts Islamic programming to Iraq and the Middle East on the al-Alam and Sahar television networks. Most Iranians watch some television; the youth channel is the most popular.

Radio is also widely broadcast. Islamic radio broadcasts 24 hours a day. Iranians also listen to foreign stations, such as the youth-oriented Radio Farda.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 112
Total Circulation 000: —
Circulation per 1,000: —
Books Published: 14,783
Periodicals: 906
Radio Receivers 000: —
per 1,000: —
Television sets million: 10.3
per 1,000: 154

CULTURE

Iran has a very ancient culture. It was home to the Persian empire in the first millennium B.C.E., and the ruins of Persepolis are still visible today. The Persian tradition of carpet-weaving dates to the fifth century B.C.E., and Persian carpets continue to be an important part of local festivals as well as a profitable export. Persians were creating art long before the Arabs arrived; today Iranian art combines the two traditions and is largely nonrepresentational. Persian calligraphy and poetry are famous. Most traditional music in Iran is played by ethnic minorities, such as the Turkmen and Kurds. Iran has begun producing original films; Mohsen Makhmalbaf is the most famous modern filmmaker.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 507
Volumes: 3,332,000
Registered borrowers: 7,062,103
Museums Number: —
Annual Attendance: —
Cinema Gross Receipts: —
Number of Cinemas: —
Seating Capacity: —
Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

The ancient Persians had a complex pantheon of deities. Ahura Mazda was the supreme creator god. Ahurani was

the goddess of water and health and Ahura Mazda's wife. Various other deities cared for the moon, sponsored warfare, or accepted sacrifices. Zoroastrians who follow the ancient pre-Islamic religion still live in Iran. One of their notable customs is that they do not bury their dead, instead leaving them out to be consumed by vultures.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Much of Iranian social life is segregated by sex. Men enjoy meeting their friends at cafés, while women like to entertain female friends and relatives at home. Many people like to smoke water pipes at cafés, but those were banned in June 2004. Families commonly go visiting friends and relatives several times a week. The adults talk and the children play; before the revolution adults would play games such as chess or cards, but these are now forbidden. Iranians tend to become very close to their neighbors, and children grow up accustomed to playing with neighboring children in their local street. Girls like to play with dolls and make clothes for them, and adult women enjoy embroidery. During the summer families go on all-day picnics in the shady hills of Shemiran. The Caspian Sea is a popular spot for vacations.

ETIQUETTE

Iranians are very hospitable and enjoy entertaining guests. Hosts always offer their visitors tea, fruits, and sweets, while guests always bring some small gift for their hosts. Iranians must always be conscious of religious rules of behavior; men may not touch women who are not related to them, and women must always take care with their attire. The sexes are segregated in mosques.

FAMILY LIFE

As a rule, Iranians consider their patriarchal families the most important social structure in their lives and usually choose to live near and interact with their relatives. Families are headed by males, with the oldest having the most authority. Children are taught to respect their elders. Iranians often marry very young, before the age of twenty. Shia Muslims are technically allowed to have up to four wives, but polygamy is rare in practice.

Before the revolution upper-class women had moved out of their homes and into the labor force; they were often well educated and worked in highly respected professions. Since Khomeini came to power, women of all classes have had more restrictions imposed on them, and sexual segregation has become the rule in all aspects of life.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Iranians dress extremely modestly. Men and women both cover their entire bodies, including arms and legs. Additionally, women must cover their heads. They wear either a headscarf along with pants and a long coat or the chador, a black cloak that covers their entire bodies. Women who violate Islamic dress codes run the risk of being arrested.

SPORTS

Iran's most popular sport is soccer. Iranian professional soccer players play on European teams, and the Iranian national team qualified for the World Cup in 1998. Men play soccer and other sports such as basketball, volleyball, swimming, fencing, wrestling, and horseback riding. They conduct some sports in a building called a *zurkhaneh*, a "house of power and strength," where they dance, wrestle, and perform feats of strength to a drum accompaniment. Boys spend their summers playing soccer with their friends. Girls and women do not participate in organized sports nearly as much. A few girls play soccer and other sports in special enclosed areas, while wearing their headscarves. Some adult women compete internationally in sports such as archery, shooting, and fencing.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1945** Iran joins the United Nations.
- 1946** British and Russian occupation troops leave Iran. Ahmad Qavam al-Sultaneh becomes prime minister. Azerbaijani dissidents establish independent republic. Iranian troops move into the province and put an end to the republic. Nationalist Kurds rebel with Soviet encouragement. Kurdish republic of Mahabad is proclaimed. Republic is suppressed by Iranian troops.
- 1947** Qavam resigns; Ibrahim Hakimi is appointed premier.
- 1948** Hakimi is succeeded by Abdul Hussein Hajir as premier; Hajir cabinet falls within months; Mohammad Maragheh Said is named premier.
- 1949** Constituent Assembly meets and ratifies amendment to the constitution.
- 1950** Gen. Ali Razmara becomes premier; Kurds revolt again.
- 1951** Razmara is assassinated; Hossein Ala becomes premier; Ala yields to Mohammad Mossadegh, who enjoys Communist and right-wing support.
- 1952** Anglo-Iranian Oil Company is nationalized; relations with Great Britain are broken; Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi dismisses Mossadegh.

- and replaces him with Qavam; the shah is forced to reinstate Mossadegh; Mossadegh assumes absolute control over government.
- 1953** Mossadegh attempts to suppress political opposition, adopting increasingly repressive measures; Mossadegh loses support in the Majlis and calls for referendum to abolish Majlis; Mossadegh is dismissed by the shah but defies dismissal and announces deposition of the shah, who flees the country; in a counter coup Gen. Fazlollah Zahedi rallies army behind the shah, arrests Mossadegh and supporters, and assumes premiership; the shah returns to capital; Mossadegh is sentenced to three years of solitary confinement for treason.
- 1954** New oil agreement is reached with a consortium of Western oil companies.
- 1955** Iran joins Central Treaty Organization; Zahedi resigns; Hossein Ala becomes new premier.
- 1957** Hossein Ala yields office to Manuchehr Eghbal.
- 1958** Television is introduced.
- 1960** Jafar Sharif-Imami is named new premier; Israel is recognized; Egypt breaks diplomatic relations over recognition.
- 1961** Imami resigns, and Ali Amini becomes premier; Pahlavi Foundation is established.
- 1962** Amini steps down, and Asadollah Alam becomes premier.
- 1963** Shah launches "White Revolution"; land reforms are approved by nationwide referendum; women are granted suffrage; Literacy Corps is organized.
- 1964** Iran joins the Regional Cooperation for Development (RCD), with Pakistan and Turkey as comembers.; Hasan Ali Mansour becomes premier.
- 1965** Mansour is assassinated, and Amir Abbas Hoveyda becomes premier; Majlis confers title of *aryamehr* on the shah.
- 1967** Coronation of the shah held in Tehran.
- 1969** Dispute with Iraq over Shatt al-Arab erupts into open conflict.
- 1970** Iran accepts UN mediation on claim to Bahrain.
- 1971** Persian monarchy's 2,500th anniversary is celebrated with pomp and splendor at Persepolis.
- 1973** Oil industry is nationalized; agreement with the Anglo-Iranian Consortium is renegotiated to provide full ownership; Iran joins Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) oil price hike.
- 1975** Rial's link with the dollar is broken: exchange rate is tied to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Special Drawing Right; Iran is declared a one-party state, with the Restakhiz as the sole political party.
- 1976** Police gunfights with purported Marxist terrorists and guerrillas during the year result in the deaths of at least 25 guerrillas and the capture of many others.
- 1977** Premier Hoveyda resigns at shah's request and is replaced by Jamshid Amuzegar; Maj. Gen. Ahmed Moqarreb is executed after being convicted of spying for the USSR.
- 1978** Nationwide anti-shah demonstrations and strikes, inspired by the exiled Ayatollah Khomeini, paralyze the country; shah names Shapur Baktiar as prime minister to conciliate the dissidents.
- 1979** Shah leaves the country. Khomeini returns from exile as Baktiar is ousted. An Islamic republic is proclaimed, with Mehdi Bazargan as prime minister but Ayatollah Khomeini as the strongman. Hundreds of pro-shah officials and soldiers are executed by firing squads under orders of summary Islamic Revolutionary Courts. Banks, insurance companies, and key industries are nationalized. Secessionist movements in Azerbaijan and Kurdish provinces are suppressed. National referendum approves new constitution, establishing an Islamic government with Ayatollah Khomeini as *faqih* and with the president and prime minister as head of state and government, respectively. Council of Guardians is established to monitor the Koranic acceptability of legislation. Islamic militants take over the U.S. embassy in Tehran and hold nearly 60 diplomatic personnel captive. Iranian government sides with the militants. United States retaliates by freezing Iranian assets.
- 1980** Abolhassan Banisadr is elected president under the new constitution. In a two-stage election to parliament, the hard-line Islamic Republic Party gains absolute majority; Mohammed Ali Rajai is named prime minister. The Revolutionary Council disbands itself as the Banisadr cabinet takes office. The former shah dies in Cairo after a long bout with cancer. Iraq revokes the Shatt al-Arab agreements concluded with the former imperial government of Iran and sends in troops to occupy territory that it had renounced under that agreement. Iran suffers early reversals and loses Khorramshahr to Iraq. U.S. attempt to rescue the hostages through a secret commando-style mission fails.

- 1981** The Muslim clergy accuse President Banisadr of inept leadership. Following long and torturous negotiations, Iran releases U.S. embassy personnel in return for release of frozen Iranian assets in the United States. Banisadr is ousted as president. Ayatollah Mohammad Hosseini Beheshti, four government ministers, six deputy ministers, 27 Majlis members, and 34 others are killed in bomb explosion at Islamic Republican Party headquarters. Prime Minister Mohammad Ali Rajai is named president and Mohammad Javad Bahonar prime minister. Rajai and Bahonar are killed in bomb blast. Seyyed Ali Khomeini is named president, Mohammad Reza Mahdavi-Kani prime minister. Madhavi-Kani resigns and is succeeded in office by Mir-Hosein Musavi.
- 1983** Communist (Tudeh) Party is banned.
- 1984** In parliamentary elections the clerical party retains control of the Islamic Consultative Assembly.
- 1985** Ali Khamenei is reelected president; Hussein Ali Montazeri is chosen as eventual successor to Ayatollah Khomeini.
- 1986** Iran begins the Wal-Fajr (Dawn) 8 offensive; the United States is reported to have been selling arms to Iran in exchange for Iranian assistance in releasing American hostages in Lebanon.
- 1987** The UN Security Council adopts Resolution 598, urging an immediate cease-fire between Iran and Iraq.
- 1988** Iran Air Airbus A300B is accidentally shot down by the USS *Vincennes* over the Strait of Hormuz; Iran announces its acceptance of UN Resolution 598.
- 1989** Ayatollah Khomeini dies. Then president Ali Khamenei is elected as Khomeini's successor; Rafsanjani is elected president.
- 1990** Iran and the United Kingdom restore diplomatic relations; the United States ends ban on imports of Iranian petroleum.
- 1991** Khamenei expresses hope for "an Islamic and truly popular government" in Iraq.
- 1992** More moderate supporters of Rafsanjani win elections over more fundamentalist forces.
- 1995** Iran urges the United Nations to end sanctions against its neighbor and adversary Iraq.
- 1997** A moderate reformer, Mohammed Khatami, wins the presidential election.
- 1999** Reformers win control of a majority of local seats in Iran's first municipal elections; some 1,400 are arrested for participating in prodemocracy demonstrations in Tehran.
- 2000** Reformers receive 70 percent of the vote and conservatives 30 percent in Consultative Assembly elections. Iran reportedly test-fires missiles. United States imposes sanctions on Iran for accepting missiles and related technology from other countries. Hard-liners shut down Iran's last reformist newspaper. Violence erupts as police shut down a pro-reform student rally at Khorramabad. Clerics issue a decree allowing women to lead female congregations.
- 2001** Mohammed Khatami is reelected president, winning 78 percent of the vote. Iran and Saudi Arabia sign an accord against terrorism, organized crime, and drug trafficking.
- 2002** George Bush offends Iran by describing it as part of the "axis of evil," along with Iraq and North Korea. Iran begins building a nuclear reactor at Bushehr.
- 2003** Students in Tehran protest the religious government. Shirin Ebadi wins the Nobel Peace Prize. Iran announces that it will suspend its uranium enrichment program and allow UN inspections of nuclear facilities. An earthquake destroys the city of Bam.
- 2004** Conservatives take over parliament after disqualifying most reformist candidates.
- 2005** Conservative Mahmoud Ahmadinejad is elected president. The IAGA reports Iran to the UN Security Council over its nuclear activities after Iran resumes its uranium enrichment program.

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- Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran (London)
<http://www.iran-embassy.org.uk/>

CONTACT INFORMATION

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IRAQ

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Iraq (Al-Jumhuriyah al-Iraqiyah)

ABBREVIATION

IQ

CAPITAL

Baghdad

HEAD OF STATE

President Jalal Talabani (from 2005)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Ibrahim al-Ashaiqir al-Jaafari (from 2005)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Transitional democracy

POPULATION

26,074,906 (2005)

AREA

437,072 sq km (168,753 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Arabs, Kurds

LANGUAGES

Arabic, Kurdish

RELIGION

Islam

UNIT OF CURRENCY

New Iraqi dinar

NATIONAL FLAG

Tricolor of, from top to bottom, red, white, and black horizontal stripes, with three five-pointed stars in green in the center of the white stripe; the phrase "Allahu Akbar" ("God is great") is printed between the stars in Arabic script.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

An Arab eagle with a shield engraved on its breast, with the motif of the flag on the shield. The eagle stands on a base on which is written, in Kufi Arabic script, "Republic of Iraq."

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"Hymn of the Republic"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day), January 6 (Army Day), February 24 (Ramadan Revolution), March 21 (Nau Roy), May 1 (Labor Day), July 14 (National Day, Republic Day), July 17 (Ba'ath Revolution Day), various Islamic festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

October 3, 1932; on June 28, 2004, the Coalition Provisional Authority transferred sovereignty to the Iraqi Interim Government

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

March 8, 2004 (interim)

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Iraq, situated in the Fertile Crescent of West Asia, has an area of 437,072 sq km (168,753 sq mi). The coastline on the Persian Gulf runs 19 km (12 mi). Iraq has international boundaries with six countries, with a total length of 3,650 km (2,268 mi), of which the longest is with Iran (1,458 km; 905 mi). The other boundaries are with Turkey (352 km; 219 mi), Kuwait (240 km; 149 mi), Saudi Arabia (814 km; 505 mi), Jordan (181 km; 112 mi), and Syria (605 km; 376 mi).

The country is divided into four main topographical regions. The northeastern highlands are dominated by the Zagros Mountains, rising to 3,650 m (12,000

ft) near the Iranian and Turkish borders. This region is the homeland of the Iraqi Kurds and the site of the major oil fields. The upland between the Tigris River north of Samarra and the Euphrates River north of Hit is known as Al-Jazirah. Much of this region is desert. Southeast of Baghdad the Euphrates and the Tigris meander through a broad, flat delta interlaced by numerous irrigation channels and shallow lakes fed by the rivers in flood. A large area just above the confluence of the two rivers at Al-Qurna is a permanent marshland. Barren sandy and rocky deserts cover the south (Al-Hajara) and the west (part of the Syrian Desert). These extensive regions constitute 38 percent of the total land area.

Iraq



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Both the Euphrates and the Tigris have defined the location and growth of human settlements in Iraq. The Euphrates (2,350 km; 1,460 mi) rises in Turkey, flows through Syria, and enters Iraq in the northwest. The Tigris (1,850 km; 1,150 mi) also rises in Turkey and is joined by numerous large tributaries, among them the Khabur, Great Zab, Little Zab, and Uzaym, before joining the Euphrates at Al-Qurna to form the Shatt al-Arab, which flows 185 km (115 mi) into the Persian Gulf. In many places the streambeds, being higher than the surrounding floodplains, must be contained by levees. Both rivers change their courses often.

Navigation is difficult in the middle and upper reaches, and the rivers are not significant traffic routes.

Geography

- Area sq km: 437,072; sq mi 168,753
- World Rank: 57th
- Land Boundaries, km: Iran 1,458; Jordan 181; Kuwait 240; Saudi Arabia 814; Syria 605; Turkey 352
- Coastline, km: 58
- Elevation Extremes meters:
 - Lowest: Persian Gulf 0
 - Highest: 3,611

Land Use %
Arable Land: 13.2
Permanent Crops: 0.8
Forest: 1.8
Other: 84.2

Population of Principal Cities (2002 est.)

Al Amarah	340,100
Arbil	839,600
Baghdad	5,609,000
Baqubah	280,700
Basra	1,337,600
Ad Diwaniyah	421,800
Al Hillah	524,500
Karbala	549,700
Al Kut	381,500
Mosul	1,739,800
An Najaf	563,000
An Nasiriyah	535,100
Ar Ramadi	423,300
As Sulaymaniyah	643,200

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Iraq has hot, dry summers lasting from May to October and cold winters from December to March. Temperatures in the summer often exceed 40°C (120°F), especially during July and August. The mean minimum temperatures in the summer range from 22°C (72°F) to 28°C (82°F), with the lower end of the scale prevailing in Mosul and the upper end in Basra. Mean minimum temperatures in the winter range from -14°C (6°F) at Rutba in the western desert to 4.4°C (40°F) in the plains, while mean winter maximums range from 10°C (50°F) in the west and northeast to 15.6°C (60°F) in the south.

Most of the rainfall occurs from December through March. Mean annual rainfall ranges between 102 mm (4 in) and 178 mm (7 in) in the cultivable areas of the south. Rainfall is more abundant in the mountains, where it may reach 1,000 mm (40 in) annually. The foothills and steppes receive no more than 380 mm (15 in) per year.

The prevailing winds are the northwesterly *shamal*, a dry, cool wind, and the southeasterly *sharqi*, or sirocco, a dry, dusty wind that may last for several days and is often accompanied by dust storms.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature
Summer: 72°F to 82°F
Winter: 8°F to 60°F
Average Rainfall
South: 4 in to 7 in
Mountains: 40 in
Foothills: 15 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Iraq has a variety of terrains and thus supports many different plant and animal species. The Zagros Mountains are covered with forests of oak, hawthorn, maple, and pistachio trees and various alpine plants. To the west and southwest are deserts with plants such as storksbill, rock-rose, and catchfly. The central plain is covered with grass. The southeast is marshy; plants there include rushes, reeds, buttercups, and saltbush. Iraq's animal population has been reduced by millennia of human settlement, but there are still gazelles, wildcats, hyenas, and boars in some areas as well as birds such as buzzards, vultures, geese, ducks, and partridges. Reptiles live in the deserts.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005:	26,074,906
World Rank:	44th
Density per sq km:	56.5
% of annual growth (1999-2003):	2.0
Male %:	50.5
Female %:	49.5
Urban %:	67.5
Age Distribution %:	0-14: 40.0
	15-64: 57.0
	65 and over: 3.0
Population 2025:	40,418,000
Birth Rate per 1,000:	32.5
Death Rate per 1,000:	5.49
Rate of Natural Increase %:	2.7
Total Fertility Rate:	4.28
Expectation of Life (years):	Males 67.49
	Females 69.97
Marriage Rate per 1,000:	7.3
Divorce Rate per 1,000:	—
Average Size of Households:	8.9
Induced Abortions:	—

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Arabs constitute about 80 percent of the population. Within the Arab group are two relatively unassimilated ethnic groups: the Bedouins, the nomads of the desert, and the sedentary Marsh Arabs of the lower Tigris and Euphrates Delta. The Kurds, the largest ethnic minority, constitute at least 15 percent of the population and live in the northern mountains, where they retain their tribal organization. Intermittent efforts by Kurds to wrest some measure of autonomy from the central government in Baghdad resulted in inconclusive civil wars followed by truces. The 1958 constitution declared that Iraq was composed of two nationalities, Arab and Kurd, and Kurdish was made a co-official language and medium of instruction in Kurdish areas. Iraqi Kurds are divided into three groups: the Badinan, the Suran, and the Baban. Al-

though nomads by tradition, the majority of the Kurds are now settled agriculturalists or herdsmen, but increasing numbers have moved to cities, such as Mosul, Kirkuk, Sulaimanya, and Baghdad.

Smaller ethnic minorities account for less than 5 percent of the population. They include Turkomans, Persians, Lurs, Assyrians, Armenians, Yazidis (sometimes called devil worshippers), Shabaks, Sabaeans (or Mandaeans), and Sarliyahs. The once-prosperous Jewish community, numbering over 100,000 in the 1930s, has now dwindled to around 2,500.

LANGUAGES

Arabic is the official language of Iraq and the mother tongue of about four-fifths of the people. As in other Middle Eastern countries, Arabic exists in three forms. The classical Arabic is used for religious purposes; Modern Standard Arabic is used for writing and in the media, political communication, and education; and spoken Arabic, described as the Mesopotamian dialect, with its two subdialects, Qeltu and Gelet, is used by the common people. As part of its general Arabization policies, Saddam Hussein's government favored the use of Arabic to the exclusion of all other languages.

Kurdish, an official language in Kurdish regions since 1966, is spoken by 19 percent of the population, including Kurds, Shabaks, Sarliyahs, and Yezidis. Kurdish exists in two dialects: Kurdi and Kermanji. Aramaic, the pre-Islamic language of Mesopotamia, still survives in speech islands among the Assyrians and as the liturgical language of the Chaldeans and the Jacobites. An Aramaic dialect is the sacred language of the Mandaeans. Some of the smaller ethnic groups retain their own vernaculars, although using Arabic for intergroup communication. These vernaculars include Turkoman, Lur, Persian, and Armenian.

English is the most common European language used by the educated elite and is employed in institutions of higher learning and in scientific publications.

RELIGIONS

Islam is the state religion, adhered to by about 97 percent of the population, including Arabs, Kurds, Lurs, and Turkomans. But Islam, far from being a monolithic structure, is deeply divided between the Sunni and the Shia (also known as Shiite). Iraq is the only Arab country in which Shia form a majority of the population. With the addition of non-Arabs such as Turkomans, Iranians, and others, the Shia constitute about 63 percent of the total population and from two-thirds to three-fourths of the Arab population. The Sunni, with a higher literacy rate than the Shia, historically dominated the government

and the bureaucracy; however, with the introduction of democratic elections, the Shia majority look to have a substantial measure of control. Almost all the members of the revolutionary governments since 1958 were Sunni. The non-Arab Kurds are also Sunni, although their religious practices differ in some respects from those of the Arab Sunni.

The position of the non-Muslim minorities has always been a precarious one. Many non-Muslims, principally Jews and Christians, left Iraq under previous regimes. Members of religious minorities have expressed fear that they would again face persecution if Iran were to impose an Islamic regime in Baghdad.

Christians constitute about 3 percent of the population. Their freedom of worship in churches of established denominations is legally protected, but they are not permitted to proselytize or to hold meetings outside church premises. Convents and monasteries exist, and some new churches are constructed, in some cases with government financial support. Although Christians sometimes allege discrimination in education and jobs, adherence to their religion, for many, has not prevented them from obtaining wealth and professional advancement.

Though insignificant in numbers, three other religious groups add to the religious diversity of the country. The Yazidis are a Kurdish-speaking group calling themselves *Dasnayi*. They have achieved some notoriety as devil worshippers since their rites propitiate Satan in the form of a peacock. The Sabaeans or Mandaeans, also known as Christians of St. John, follow an eclectic creed borrowed from many religions. Since their tenets stress regular immersion in water, they always dwell near riverbanks. They also have a reputation as silversmiths. The Jews, who once dominated the professions and commerce, have all but disappeared under the pressures of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Religious Affiliations

Shia Muslim	16,300,000
Sunni Muslim	9,000,000
Christian or Other	780,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Iraq is the home of some of the world's most ancient civilizations. Known as Mesopotamia, the Land between the Two Rivers, it is identified with Ur of the Chaldees, where Abraham lived in biblical times. Recorded history began with the Sumerians, who flourished around the third millennium B.C.E. Sumerians were followed by the Akkadians (2400 B.C.E.) and the Semitic Babylonians (2000 B.C.E.) and Assyrians (1800 B.C.E.). The zenith of Babylonian culture is represented by Hammurabi (1792–

1749 B.C.E.), whose name is associated with the world's first legal code. Under the Assyrian rulers, with the fabled Nineveh as their capital, the empire encompassed all of the Middle East, including Egypt.

Assyrian power was destroyed by the Scythians in 606 B.C.E. Nebuchadnezzar rebuilt the city-state of Babylon in the seventh century B.C.E., but it fell to Cyrus the Achaemenian (Persian) in 539 B.C.E. Persian power in turn was destroyed by the Greeks under Alexander the Great, who himself died at Babylon in 323 B.C.E. The Seleucids, the Greek rulers who followed Alexander, built their capital, Seleucia, on the Tigris south of modern Baghdad. They were overthrown by the Parthians in 138 B.C.E.

Parthian rule lasted until the Arab conquest in 637 C.E. Under the Umayyid caliphs, Mesopotamia was a province of the Islamic empire, but the Abbasids, who followed them, made Baghdad their capital. Under Caliph Harun al-Rashid and his son Ma'mun, Baghdad became wealthy and powerful. In the 13th and 14th centuries the country was laid waste by the Mongols and Tamerlane, and it never recovered. In 1534 the Turkish sultan Süleyman the Magnificent captured Baghdad, and except for a brief period of Persian control Iran remained an Ottoman province until the end of World War I.

England established a consulate in Baghdad in 1802 and wielded considerable influence throughout the 19th century. In World War I, when the Ottoman Empire sided with Germany, the British occupied much of southern Iraq, including Basra and Baghdad. A nationalist movement blossomed during and after the war, but the San Remo Conference of 1920 made Iraq a British mandate, with virtual colonial status. In August 1921 Amir Faisal ibn Ausayn, son of a Mecca royal figure, became king of Iraq. Over nationalist opposition an Anglo-Iraqi treaty was signed in October 1922 and renewed in 1930. In 1932 the mandate ended, and Iraq entered the League of Nations.

Relations with England deteriorated in the 1930s, largely because of what was perceived as Britain's pro-Zionist position. German influence increased, notably through the fascist officers' group Golden Square. A military coup in 1941 led to a brief pro-Nazi regime, but English forces occupied Basra and Baghdad in May 1941, holding those areas until the end of the war. Cooperating with the Allies, Iraq declared war on the Axis powers in 1943.

Iraq's post-World War II history has been marked by nationalism, pan-Arabism, efforts to expand territorially, and a variety of domestic factors. These include almost constant conflict between the central government and the Kurds in the north; attempts to secure and enlarge petroleum exports, the mainstay of the economy; and autocratic, centralized governments. Nuri as-Said, a corrupt, pro-British prime minister, governed sporadically from 1945 to 1958. He was swept aside by a growing educated,

nationalist elite component. Nuri and the royal family were assassinated in July 1958.

The new government was headed by the Free Officers under Gen. Abd al-Karim al-Qasim, but a split arose between nationalists, who backed the Egyptian leader Gamal Nasser's Pan-Arabism, and Communists, who opposed it. In a February 1963 coup nationalists and Pan-Arab Baathists took control and violently purged the left. They also undertook a five-year campaign against Kurdish separatists. Another coup in July 1968 by Baathist officers led by Ahmed Hassan al-Bakr turned toward the Soviet Union, owing partly to U.S. support for Israel in 1967.

The Kurds, under Gen. Mustafa al-Barzani, resisted most Baghdad governments from 1945 to 1965 and, with Iranian help, were intermittently in revolt from 1961 to 1975. A 1970 settlement that included Kurdish autonomy broke down over the distribution of petroleum revenues and the exclusion of Kirkuk from Kurdistan.

In July 1979 al-Bakr resigned from both party and government offices. He was succeeded by Saddam Hussein, who had generally been considered the strongman of the regime. Hussein launched an invasion of Iran in September 1980, beginning a war that dominated Iraqi life through 1988. Among the reasons for the conflict were the climate of confusion in Tehran in the wake of the Islamic revolution and the perceived weakness in Iran's recently purged army. Iraq also attacked as a response to Iran's announced goal of exporting its revolution.

The war was intended as a short campaign that would wrest territory from Iran, giving Iraq, among other things, increased access to the Persian Gulf. It became a devastating eight-year conflict, however, causing about one million casualties on each side. Early Iraqi incursions were halted, and Iran was on the offensive for most of the war. By 1988 Iraq regained the momentum, and in the summer of that year Iran agreed to a UN cease-fire, although permanent peace was not established until 1991. In the end Iraq gained no territory and was left with a \$60-billion war debt.

Within the Arab world Jordan, Kuwait, and eventually Egypt were Iraq's chief allies and suppliers in the war. Beginning in 1984 the United States and Soviet Union, both officially neutral, began supporting Iraq. By late 1987 the Soviets had given Iraq an estimated \$10 billion in military aid.

Domestically, the war hurt Iraq in several ways. The disruption in Gulf oil exports reversed the economic upsurge started in the 1970s, which had been due largely to petroleum sales. To retain some exporting capacity, the government undertook such projects as expanding an existing oil pipeline through Turkey and constructing two pipelines through Saudi Arabia. Austerity measures were enacted, and much expenditure was channeled to war costs.

Iraq invaded and conquered Kuwait on August 2, 1990, touching off a series of events that would have major ramifications for the country. Eventually, these would include the large-scale destruction of the Iraqi infrastructure, revolts by both the Kurds in the north and the Shia in the south, and the surprising survival of the Hussein regime.

The invasion of the tiny emirate seems to have been motivated by an array of factors, which in retrospect included miscalculations of international response. President Hussein was angry at Kuwait's refusal to forgive the multibillion-dollar debt Iraq ran up during the Iranian war. He also apparently hoped to turn Iraq into a regional superpower with the economic might to match its military clout: Iraq and Kuwait together would control 20 percent of the world's oil supply.

Led by the United States, much of the world community, under the aegis of the United Nations, responded quickly to the invasion. Originally intended as a defense against a possible Iraqi move on the oil fields of Saudi Arabia, by January 1991 the Allies had an offensive force of about 500,000 troops and 2,000 tanks stationed in the region. While the United States accounted for the bulk of the force, 28 countries participated in the Persian Gulf War as U.S. allies. These included the major Western nations and Egypt, Syria, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, and the United Arab Emirates.

On August 8 Hussein decreed the annexation of Kuwait as Iraq's 19th province and stationed large portions of the army there. He also used Western citizens trapped in Iraq and Kuwait as hostages against possible Allied attacks. Perhaps 2,000 such people were held as "human shields" at vital installations, although all foreigners were permitted to leave by December. Hussein's effort to link occupation of Kuwait with Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza drew some support in the Arab world, notably in Jordan. Diplomatic efforts to solve the crisis floundered, mostly because Iraq would not leave Kuwait.

From August to November 1990 the United Nations, at the behest of the United States, passed a series of resolutions aimed at achieving the withdrawal of Iraqi forces from Kuwait. Among these were strict economic sanctions against the Baghdad regime. On November 29 the Security Council authorized the use of force after January 15, 1991, to evict Iraqi forces from Kuwait.

The Allies launched the Persian Gulf War, primarily an air war, against Iraq and occupied Kuwait on January 16–17. Before the war ended on February 28, about 110,000 missions were flown, dropping 88,500 tons of munitions. Among the types of facilities destroyed were military, petroleum, industrial, transportation, communications, power, and water.

The Iraqi military was overwhelmed. Its major response was Scud surface-to-surface missile attacks against Saudi Arabia and Israel, launched at the latter in an attempt to pry the Arab members away from the coal-

tion. While Iraq launched a total of 72 Scuds, most were destroyed by American antimissiles, and those that fell caused little damage. They also failed to draw Israel into the conflict.

From February 24 to 28 the Allies launched a major ground offensive, which succeeded in forcing Iraqi troops to retreat from Kuwait. The Allies also drove deep into central Iraq and destroyed several divisions of the Republican Guard, the elite units. On April 6 Iraq accepted formal UN peace terms. These included the payment of reparations to Kuwait and the Allies as well as supervised destruction of chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons. A UN survey conducted in the immediate aftermath of the war called the damage in Iraq "near apocalyptic." It was estimated that it would take 15 years and billions of dollars to rebuild the Iraqi infrastructure. There were also thousands of civilian casualties.

Uprisings by Kurds and Shia began within days of the Allied victory. In the south Shia fighters had the initial edge in Basra, An-Najaf, and Karbala, but troops loyal to Hussein crushed the rebellion by mid-March. Kurdish guerrillas claimed by March 13 that they controlled three-fourths of Kurdistan with 90,000 soldiers. Government forces successfully counterattacked, however, and by early April hundreds of thousands of Kurds fled to Turkey and Iran. The Allies and then the United Nations set up "safe zones" for Kurds in the north. By early June 1991, despite much friction, the refugees seemed to be returning.

Internally, Hussein made certain moves following the defeat by the Allies to preserve the regime. These included promises of democratic reforms and the appointment as premier of Saddam Hammadi, a Shia who had served as foreign minister from 1974 to 1981. Beyond that the president fell back on his usual policy of placing relatives in key posts. His cousin Ali Hassan al-Majid was made interior minister, and Hussein Kamal al-Majid, the president's son-in-law, took over as minister of defense.

Threats to Hussein's power, it seemed, might come only from outside. The rebuilding process following the Gulf War was enormous. Damaged relationships with former creditors, especially Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, made it difficult to secure loans for reconstruction. The economic crisis in Iraq worsened in 1995 and 1996. Although the prewar sanctions remained in place, in April 1995 the UN Security Council voted unanimously to allow Iraq to sell \$2 billion worth of oil in order to buy medicine and food on the international markets. That amount was increased in 1998 to \$5.2 billion. Meanwhile, Iraq's interference with UN weapons inspectors prompted intermittent air strikes by the United States and Britain. In 1999 Hussein announced that Iraq would no longer comply with UN inspection regulations. Through 2001 Iraq challenged the aircraft patrolling the "no-fly zones" over southern Iraq, and British and U.S. planes struck Iraqi missile launch sites and other targets. That May, Sad-

dam's son Qusay was elected leader of the ruling Baath Party in what appeared to be an effort to groom him as Saddam's successor.

In April 2002 Iraq suspended oil exports for 30 days to protest Israeli incursions into Palestinian territories; it resumed exports when other Arab countries failed to suspend their own exports. That September, George W. Bush, citing both suspected Iraqi possession of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) and alleged connections between the Hussein regime and al-Qaeda, the group responsible for the September 11 terrorist attacks in the United States, told the United Nations that Iraq presented a grave danger and that the United States would take preemptive military action whether or not the international community approved. Weapons inspectors led by Hans Blix returned to Iraq that November to resume their search for WMDs, which the Bush administration was convinced existed in spite of a lack of supporting evidence. Likewise, no evidence ever suggested that al-Qaeda and Saddam Hussein had any connections. Blix claimed that Iraq was cooperating and that his team needed more time to complete inspections, but the inspectors were forced to evacuate on March 17, 2003, after Bush gave Saddam and his sons 48 hours to leave Iraq. They did not leave, and on March 20 U.S. forces began bombing Iraq.

By April 9, 2003, U.S. forces had captured Baghdad, and fighting and looting were occurring all over the country. In May the United States began developing an administration for the country and lifting economic sanctions, declaring the war over. It abolished the Baath Party and ousted all former leaders. Saddam's two sons were killed in July. Violence continued throughout the country as insurgents fought against the U.S.-led coalition forces. The situation deteriorated through the fall, with U.S. soldiers killed constantly and the Iraqi death toll—military and civilian alike—also rising. On December 14, U.S. soldiers captured Saddam Hussein, who had been hiding for months.

Fighting continued through 2004, with Shia militias led by the radical Islamic cleric Muqtada al-Sadr fighting to oust the coalition forces. U.S. forces besieged the city of Fallujah for a month; hundreds were killed. In June the United States handed leadership over to an interim government under prime minister Iyad Allawi. Saddam was transferred to Iraqi custody and was tried on charges of crimes against humanity beginning in October 2005. U.S. soldiers, meanwhile, continued fighting against militia in Fallujah and Najaf.

On January 30, 2005, eight million Iraqis voted in elections to choose a Transitional National Assembly, an important step on the way to establishing a new government. Earlier that month U.S. military courts began trying American soldiers accused of torturing Iraqi prisoners at Abu Ghraib Prison; several soldiers were found guilty. The Shia-led United Iraqi Alliance won parliamentary election in December.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

President	
1958–63	Muhammad Najib ar-Ruba'i
1963–66	Abd as-Salam Arif
1966	Abd ar-Rahman al-Bazzaz (acting)
1966–68	Abd ar-Rahman Arif
1968–79	Ahmed Hassan al-Bakr
1979–2003	Saddam Hussein
2003–04	Interim nine-member collective (rotating) presidency
2004–05	Ghazi Mashal Ajil al-Yawer
2005–	Jalal Talibani
Prime Minister	
2004–05	Iyad Allawi
2005–	Ibrahim al-Jaafari

CONSTITUTION

Until 2003 the basis of Iraqi government was the constitution of 1958, as amended in 1964, 1968, and 1972. The constitution defined Iraq as a popular, democratic, and Islamic state founded on socialism. The supreme authority in the state was vested in the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC), which legislated by decree. In early 1991 the council, chaired by Saddam Hussein, had eight members.

Under Saddam Hussein the presidency became the locus of power, with all the principal state offices held by him. Since taking power in 1979 Hussein usually held the posts of president and head of state, prime minister, defense minister, commander in chief, chairman of the RCC, and secretary-general of the ruling Baath Party.

The responsibility for the formulation and implementation of executive policies was vested in the Council of Ministers. Each ministry consisted of a number of directorates-general subdivided into sections. In theory, legislative power was shared between the RCC and the National Assembly. However, the assembly had no real power. The real source of stability in Iraq was not so much ideology—although Pan-Arabism was officially touted as one—but an alliance formed between officers and civilians who were linked by ties of blood or locality.

The transitional government signed an interim constitution, the Transitional Administrative Law, on March 8, 2004. The Iraqi Interim Government (IIG) drafted a new constitution that was approved by voters in October 2005. The IIG consisted of a president, two deputy presidents, a Council of Ministers, an Interim National Council, and the Judicial Authority.

PARLIAMENT

Under Saddam's regime, the National Assembly (Majlis al-Umma) was a 250-member body (with 30 seats re-

served for the Kurdish region remaining vacant) elected by universal suffrage for four-year terms. The Kurdish National Assembly was a 115-member regional assembly representing the northern autonomous regions of Erbil, D'hok, and Sulaimaniya and elected by proportional representation. A total of 100 seats were reserved for Kurds, five for Assyrians, and 10 for Turkmen.

As of early 2005 the Iraqi Interim National Council was serving as a legislative branch, pending the creation of a new constitution.

POLITICAL PARTIES

While a 1991 law permitted the formation of political parties not based upon religion, race, or ethnicity, Iraq was fundamentally a one-party state under Saddam Hussein, with the Arab Baath Socialist Party, founded in 1947, as the dominant political institution. Baathist ideology was a mixture of socialism and ultra-Arab nationalism; its power base was the minority Sunni community. Its limited membership reflected the elitist character of the movement. The United States banned the Baath party in 2003.

The outlawed, Iranian-supported Da'wa (Islamic Call) Party was a major target of persecution. It claimed responsibility for violent acts against the government in Iraq and abroad. Since 2003 over 300 political parties have appeared in Iraq. The largest and most coherent are the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq, the Da'wa Party, the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, the Kurdistan Democratic Party, and the Iraqi Islamic Party.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The country is divided into 18 governorates (*liwa* or *muhafazat*), each administered by a governor (*mutasarrif*) assisted by a Provincial Council. The desert areas are divided into three separate districts, or territories, each under a director: the Jazirah Desert (Al-Badiyah al-Jazirah), the Northern Desert (Al-Badiyah al-Shamaliyah), and the Southern Desert (Al-Badiyah al-Janubiyah).

Each province is divided into a number of districts (*aqdiya*), each under a deputy governor or district officer (*qaimmaqam*). They are further subdivided into subdistricts, or *nawabin*, each administered by a subdistrict officer, or *mudir*. Though the *mudir* is the lowest official in local government, the final link is provided by the *mukhtar*, the leader of a village (*qarya*) or town quarter (*maballa*).

Cities and towns (*madina* or *balad*) are administered by municipal councils (*baladiyah*), each presided over by a mayor (*rais al-baladiyah*), who is an official appointed by the Ministry of Interior. The cities and towns are divided into five classes: superior (Basra, Mosul, and Kirkuk), first, second, third, and fourth. Baghdad enjoys special status as the national capital and is administered by an authority known as governorate of the capital (*amanat al-*

asimah), presided over by a mayor known as the guardian of the capital (*amin al-asimah*). Unlike territorial units, municipalities levy their own taxes.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The legal system under Hussein was based on the Baghdad Penal Codes, formulated by the British but drawing on Ottoman and French sources. These codes were amended but never superseded. Iraqi courts have typically used a moderate interpretation of Islamic law, giving women equal rights in divorce, land ownership, and suffrage. Under the Iraqi Interim Government, the judiciary has based its decisions on civil and Islamic law and the Transitional Administrative Law.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Under Hussein, Iraq was a not-free state. The government was authoritarian, the press was severely restricted, all forms of dissent were considered threats to the state, and there was no freedom of religion or assembly. Religious and ethnic minorities were severely persecuted. Political parties opposed to the leading Baathists were not tolerated. The government was known to execute prisoners en masse and to assassinate opponents of the state. Since the war began, some accusations of human rights violations have been directed at foreigners, such as the American soldiers who abused Iraqi prisoners at Abu Ghraib.

FOREIGN POLICY

The Iraqi Interim Government has resumed Iraq's interaction with the international community, rejoining the United Nations, the Arab League, OPEC, and the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC). It has reestablished full diplomatic relations with the United States and other nations. The United States has promised to help Iraq establish a stable democratic state, reconstruct the infrastructure, and help train its security forces.

DEFENSE

Most of the Iraqi military's equipment was destroyed or looted in 2003 and 2004. The Coalition Provisional Authority began recruiting a New Iraqi Army (NIA) to defend the nation, with no provisions for aggressive warfare. The Iraqi Interim Government created a new Ministry of Defense in March 2004; they renamed the NIA the Iraqi Armed Force—Army. They planned to form a new Army Air Corps and a Coastal Defense Force. The Iraqi Civil Defense Corps was made subordinate to the Ministry of Defense and the Iraqi Armed Forces and renamed the Iraqi National Guard. The

new army's mission is to stop domestic counterinsurgency and protect the nation from external threats.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 432,000
 Military Manpower Availability: 5,870,640
 Military Expenditures \$billion: 1.3
 as % of GDP: —
 as % of central government expenditures: —
 Arms Imports \$million: —
 Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

Iraq has historically made the vast majority of its income from oil. It has ample land and water, but nevertheless has long imported most of its food. Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990 and subsequent sanctions imposed by the international community reduced revenues to the point that the United Nations began an Oil for Food program in 1996 to help average Iraqis. Under this program Iraq was allowed to export enough oil to buy food, medicine, and the necessary supplies for its infrastructure. The government, however, continued to funnel most of the nation's resources into the military and the pockets of a few influential families, leaving most Iraqis desperately poor.

The war seriously damaged Iraq's economy. Most of the nation's central economic administration was shut down in 2003. Gross domestic product (GDP) growth that year was negative 21.8 percent; however, growth was 52.3 percent in 2004. That year the interim government began rebuilding the oil industry, but the United Nations predicted that Iraq would need some \$55 billion between 2004 and 2007 to fully rebuild the nation's facilities. International donors have pledged much of this sum.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 89.8
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 3,500
 GDP Annual Growth Rate (2004) %: 52.3
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: —
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 13.6
 Industry: 58.6
 Services: 27.8
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 75
 Government Consumption: 17
 Gross Domestic Investment: —
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 10.1
 Imports: 9.9
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: —
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: —

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
—	—	—	—	—

Finance

National Currency: New Iraqi Dinar (NID)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = NID 1,890
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: —
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: —
 Total External Debt \$billion: 125
 Debt Service Ratio %: —
 Balance of Payments \$million: –560
 International Reserves SDRs \$million: —
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
 25.4

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$billion: 2.27
 per capita \$: 91.70
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: —

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar year
 Revenues \$billion: 17.1
 Expenditures \$billion: 28.2
 Budget Deficit \$billion: 11.1
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 13.6
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: —
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 1.03
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 57.9
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 111.1
 Total Farmland % of land area: 13.2
 Livestock: Cattle million: —
 Chickens million: —
 Pigs 000: —
 Sheep 000: —
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters 000: 113.3
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 14.5

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: —
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: —

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 121.2
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 26.7
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 1.075
 Net Energy Imports % of use: –263.6
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 5
 Production kW-hr billion: 34
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 34

(continues)

Energy *(continued)*

Coal Reserves tons billion: —
 Production tons million: —
 Consumption tons million: —
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: 110
 Production cubic feet billion: 83
 Consumption cubic feet billion: 83
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: 115
 Production barrels million per day: 1.9
 Consumption barrels million per day: 0.4
 Pipelines Length km: 5,418

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 9.9
 Exports \$billion: 10.1
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —
 Balance of Trade \$million: –560

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Jordan %	14.8	7.8
Vietnam %	11.5	—
United States %	7.4	45.4
Germany %	5.4	—
Russia %	5.1	—
United Kingdom %	5.1	—
France %	4.1	—
Italy %	4.0	7.4
Taiwan %	—	8.8
Canada %	—	8.1
Morocco %	—	4.9
Brazil %	—	4.0

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 45,550
 Paved %: 84.3
 Automobiles: 754,100
 Trucks and Buses: 372,200
 Railroad: Track Length km: 1,963
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: —
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 14
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 125.3
 Airports: 111
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: —
 Length of Waterways km: 5,275

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: —
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: —
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: —

Communications

Telephones 000: 675
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones 000: 20
 Personal Computers 000: 200
 Internet Hosts per million people: —
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 96

ENVIRONMENT

Iraq suffers from growing air and water pollution, especially in urban areas, where emissions are a growing concern. While Iraq would seem to have a sufficient water supply, the country has a lack of potable water. Deforestation, soil erosion, desertification, and degradation caused by salinization are also problems. In southern Iraq, as a result of the Second Persian Gulf War, the release of enormous volumes of smoke and other pollutants into the atmosphere and the contamination of soil due to destruction of oil wells, oil storage facilities, refineries, petrochemical industries, and electric power stations took place. The government has drained the inhabited marshes near An-Nāsiriyyah, displacing Marsh Arabs and threatening native wildlife. Iraq wants to develop the Tigris and Euphrates river system, but activity must be negotiated with Turkey, which holds the upstream portions of those rivers.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 1.8
 Forest Change (1990–2000) hectares 000: —
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 0
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 3.29

LIVING CONDITIONS

Living conditions have deteriorated since the Second Gulf War began, and many people have lost their homes to bombing. Stone and concrete are the main building materials. Stone walls surround many houses; flat roofs are common. In the summer, many people sleep on the roofs of their houses. Women use roofs to dry their laundry. Iraqi cities have become crowded, and many people live in apartments. Most cities and towns are located next to rivers to supply water. Before the war started, Iraq had good transportation infrastructure, with excellent roads and ample bus services. Because the weather is often quite hot, many people get up early in the morning to start work and then take a nap in midafternoon after their work is finished.

HEALTH

Iraq's government provides a health-care system that furnishes care free of charge; there are also private facilities for citizens who want to pay for them. Facilities were good until the First Gulf War and the subsequent sanctions; the national vaccination program had reduced the incidence of measles, diphtheria, and tuberculosis. Iraqis also received paid maternity leave and sick leave. Since the early 1990s, however, Iraq's health-care system has lacked supplies and personnel, which has resulted in a resurgence of infectious diseases. Typhoid, cholera, dysentery, and tuberculosis are once again common. The infant mortality rate had risen to over 50 deaths per 1,000 births in 2005. Food shortages have caused malnutrition. In the absence of medical facilities, people in the countryside and the cities have continued using folk remedies, such as chamomile to calm nerves and orange blossom water to prevent heart attacks.

Health

Number of Physicians: 12,955
 Number of Dentists: 2,89
 Number of Nurses: 69,525
 Number of Pharmacists: 1,955
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 54
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 50.25
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 250
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 1.5
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 11
 HIV Infected % of adults: < 0.1
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 81
 Measles: 90
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 80
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 81

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Iraqi cuisine follows the Arabic tradition, using exotic spices and many vegetables along with rice, lamb, goat, mutton, chicken, and occasionally beef. Cooks use oil or gas stoves, though microwaves have become common in the cities. Main dishes include kebabs, stuffed lamb, and tripe. Flat bread accompanies most meals. Iraqis make many pastries and puddings, and they also enjoy fruit. Muslims do not drink alcohol. They do drink copious amounts of sweet tea and strong black coffee; soft drinks are common.

Since the early 1990s Iraq has had difficulty feeding its people. Food has been rationed since economic sanctions began in 1991, and in some places the food supply has been grossly inadequate, despite international assistance. The war did not improve this situation.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,150
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: —
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: —

STATUS OF WOMEN

Since its founding outside Iraq in 1947, the Baath Party was committed to the equality of the sexes. The Baath Party's Ninth Party Congress report of 1983 reiterated that the emancipation of women is a "natural and human right" and an "essential condition for economic, social, and cultural development." A series of laws since the Baath Party came to power in 1968 steadily improved the status of women. Such laws protected women from exploitation in the workplace; granted subsidized maternity leave; permitted women to join the regular army, Popular Army, and police forces; and equalized women's rights on divorce, land ownership, taxation, suffrage, and election to the National Assembly. In the 1970s the government imposed legal penalties on families who opposed sending their women to literacy schools and on men who were seen harassing women.

The General Federation of Iraqi Women (GFIW) was established in 1969, the Baath regime's first year in power, to promote the government's policies toward women. Membership in the GFIW did not require affiliation with the Baath Party. The GFIW has organized conferences on women's issues, established training courses for women, implemented programs to eradicate illiteracy, undertaken civilian war relief activities, and administered nurseries. It drew up a four-year plan (1983–86) to encourage women to work outside the home and has opened four employment offices in Baghdad for woman graduates.

In the 1984 elections for the National Assembly, 32 percent of the seats were won by female candidates. The war with Iran from 1980–88 accelerated the government's drive to elevate the status of women, and some Iraqis believe that it permanently broke cultural barriers to acceptance of women in traditional male roles. With official encouragement, women became increasingly visible as architects, construction engineers, oil engineers, air traffic controllers, factory and farm managers, and air force pilots. In 1999 women represented about 19 percent of the total workforce. About 39 percent of the female labor force was employed in agriculture, about 52 percent in the service industry. They accounted for about one-third of the professionals in education and health care.

Despite these achievements, women are still supposed to be meek and quiet when out with their husbands.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: —
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: —
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: —

WORK

The war disrupted the world of Iraqi work. As of early 2005 there were no figures available on unemployment or employment by sector. Before the war many Iraqis worked in factories, making clothing or electronics. Professionals worked in medicine, teaching, or engineering. The government encouraged women to work outside the home, especially as doctors or teachers. The army employed a large number of people.

The oil industry has historically employed many citizens, and in the 1980s it lured many Iraqis away from their traditional rural occupations of farming and herding. Since the institution of sanctions in the early 1990s, many of those same people returned to the land, where they at least had the possibility of growing food to feed their own families. Farmers grow dates, wheat, barley, rice, vegetables, nuts, and fruits such as apricots, pomegranates, and figs. Herders raise sheep and goats for milk, meat, wool, and skin. Some Iraqis breed Arabian horses.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 6,700,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 20.9
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: —
 Industry: —
 Services: —
 Unemployment %: 25–30

EDUCATION

Education in Iraq is compulsory for children ages six to 12 and free for citizens between the ages of six and 18; university education is also free. Schooling consists of 12 years, as divided into six years of primary school and six years of secondary school, which consists of a three-year intermediate course and a three-year college preparatory course. Primary schools are coeducational, while secondary schools are segregated by sex.

The majority of the schools are run by the government, but despite the reforms of the mid-1970s, private schools continue to function at both primary and secondary levels. Most of the private primary schools are operated by Muslim religious organizations; their share of primary-school enrollment was 1 percent in 1983. Private secondary schools, on the other hand, most maintained

by Christian denominations, had a 24 percent share of secondary-school enrollment. The private-school curricula conform to government standards. Some subjects are required to be taught by teachers appointed by the Ministry of Education.

Female education has made rapid strides in recent years, and in 1985, the most recent year for which data is available, girls accounted for 45 percent of the enrollment at the first level and 35 percent at the second level.

Educational administration is centralized in the Ministry of Education. The ministry's eight departments, each headed by a director-general, are concerned with general education, research, inspection, vocational education, administration, cultural relations, Kurdish studies, and physical education. The Council on Social and Educational Development functions as a consultative body within the ministry. The country is divided into 15 educational districts, each under a director. Construction and maintenance of schools are the responsibilities of the provincial governors.

Higher education is provided by eight universities and numerous vocational and technical colleges.

School enrollment fell in the early 1990s, and by 2003 only 40 percent of the population was literate. The war closed many schools and made it impossible for children to attend the ones that remained.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 40.4
 Male %: 55.9
 Female %: 24.4
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 9.0
 First Level: Primary schools:
 Teachers: 220,366
 Students: 4,280,602
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 19.4
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 90.5
 Second Level: Secondary Schools:
 Teachers: 62,034
 Students: 1,148,545
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 19.7
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 33.0
 Third Level: Institutions:
 Teachers: 14,743
 Students: 317,993
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 14.1
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: —

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

As of early 2005 Iraq did not have a well-developed technological infrastructure. Telecommunications equipment was severely damaged during the war in 2003, and there was little or no telephone service, either ground lines or cellular. Very few people have computers or use the Internet.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: —
 Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

The media has been vigorous and free since Hussein was ousted. In early 2005 there were more than 100 newspapers and magazines published in Baghdad, and there were numerous television and radio stations. The new Iraqi Public Broadcasting Service took control of broadcasting. Numerous foreign stations were broadcasting in Iraq; in 2004 there were approximately 80 private radio stations on the air. Iraqis who can afford them have bought satellite dishes, which were banned under Hussein. Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya are popular stations among satellite viewers. The various rival factions all run their own radio stations, broadcasting content that espouses particular political or religious views. There have been some cases of journalists being attacked by insurgents or the coalition forces.

Media

Daily Newspapers: —
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: —
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets million: 1.85
 per 1,000: 82

CULTURE

Iraq has produced artists for thousands of years. Assyrian and Babylonian artists were decorating temples and making statues as early as 2000 B.C.E. Ancient artworks were housed in the Iraqi Museum in Baghdad, though they suffered damage during the war. The ruins of the city of Babylon still exist and have been the site of a yearly art festival. Islamic visual art prohibits the use of human figures, so contemporary and classical Iraqi artists employ floral and geometric designs and calligraphy to create images.

The Arabs have maintained their poetic traditions; poetry is still esteemed as an art form, among Kurds as well as Arabs. Popular poets include Lamia Abbas Amara, Muhammad Mehdi El Jawahiri, and the Kurds Mawlawi and Goran. The novelist Dhu al-Nun has written innovative modern works. People still listen to folk music on traditional instruments, which include the *oud*, a kind of

lute, the *def*, a tambourine, and the *rebaba*, a bowed string instrument.

Iraqis celebrate religious festivals throughout the year. Ramadan is the month of fasting and is marked by elaborate dinners after dark during the month itself and then a large celebration at the end. Id al-Adha, the Feast of the Sacrifice, is observed by sacrificing lambs and giving the meat to the poor. Shia Muslims celebrate the birthdays and deaths of important religious leaders. Kurds have their own festival called Nau Roy, which marks the first day of spring and is celebrated with bonfires, poetry, picnics, parades, singing, and dancing.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: 13
 Annual Attendance: 63,000
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

The Sumerian epic *Gilgamesh* and tales from Babylon and Assyria predate the Bible. *Gilgamesh* was written around 3000 B.C.E. It tells the story of the hero Gilgamesh creating a civilization and fighting off gods and monsters; it includes a flood story similar to the one told in the book of Genesis. Arabs introduced poetry to Iraq when they arrived in the seventh century C.E.; the *Book of One Thousand and One Nights*, or simply *Arabian Nights*, a collection of folktales, was compiled between 1000 and 1500.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Iraqis spend much of their free time visiting family and friends. At home they watch television, listen to music on the radio, and read voraciously; most people own many books by Iraqi and Arabic writers as well as translations of Western books. Girls and women sew and embroider. Chess is a popular game; Eman al-Rufei is a chess grand master and has competed in the World Chess Olympiad.

ETIQUETTE

Iraqis often visit one another unannounced and expect their friends and relatives to do the same. Wives almost

always cook extra food in case someone drops by; if a guest is expected, the hosts will prepare elaborate dishes for the occasion. People eat their evening meal around eight o'clock. At celebrations Iraqis show their appreciation for singers by hugging and kissing them and placing banknotes on the singer's hands or head.

FAMILY LIFE

Iraqis organize their lives around family unity and try to preserve family honor at all costs. Men consider themselves superior to women, but women make most decisions involving the house and children. More women have been working outside the home in recent years. Young people usually live with their parents until they marry. Traditionally, extended families lived together in the countryside; though that still occurs, most urban Iraqis live in nuclear family units.

Most Iraqis marry after they finish school or university; arranged marriages are common, though couples usually meet one another before weddings. A groom gives his bride a dowry of money, jewelry, and furniture. Wives keep their own family names. Iraqis like children, and many have large families, though couples in the cities are having fewer children. Extended family members and neighbor adults consider it their responsibility to correct all children's behavior.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Iraqis dress modestly, covering most of their bodies. Most women cover their hair. For festive occasions, such as the end of Ramadan, most people dress in new clothes, and women will decorate their hands with henna. When a family member dies, Iraqis spend 40 days dressed in black to mark their mourning. Kurdish women dress in a distinctive costume of a long dress with tied sleeves worn over loose pants and topped with a tight jacket.

SPORTS

Soccer is the most popular sport in Iraq. Men and boys play the game in their neighborhoods, and nearly everyone watches Iraq's national team compete on television or live in Baghdad stadium. Girls and women have also begun to play soccer. Hussein Saeed and Ahmad Al Rahdi were popular players in the early 2000s. Other common sports are basketball, weightlifting, boxing, swimming, and horseback riding for men and tennis and volleyball for women. Men also like hunting. Iraq lacks sporting facilities, which hampers efforts to train international athletes.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1945 Iraq joins the Arab League and the United Nations.
- 1946 Tawfiq al-Suwaidi, Arshad al-Umari, and Nuri as-Said head brief governments.
- 1947 Saleh Jabr forms new cabinet. British forces are withdrawn from Iraq.
- 1948 Mohammed as-Sadr and Muzahim al-Bajaji head brief governments.
- 1949 Nuri as-Said and Ali Jawdat al-Aiyubi head brief governments. Forced emigration of Jews from Iraq begins.
- 1950 Tawfiq al-Suwaidi and Nuri as-Said head brief governments.
- 1952 Mustafa Mahmud al-Umari and Nureddin Mahmud head brief governments.
- 1953 Faisal II ascends the throne. Jamil al-Midfai and Muhammad Fadhel al-Jamali head brief governments.
- 1955 Iraq joins the Baghdad Pact.
- 1957 Ali Jawdat al-Aiyubi and Abd al-Wahhab Marjan head brief governments.
- 1958 Ahmed Mukhtar Baban heads new cabinet. Iraq and Jordan unite to form the Arab Federation. In swift army coup Abdul al-Karim al-Qasim, Abd as-Salam Arif, and other army officers seize power. Faisal II, Crown Prince Abdul Ilah, and Nuri as-Said are executed. Arif is later dismissed from post as prime minister and arrested. Agrarian reform law is passed. New constitution is promulgated.
- 1959 Iraq withdraws from the Baghdad Pact and the Arab Federation. Revolt by a military contingent in Mosul is suppressed.
- 1961 Kurds launch revolt under Mustafa al-Barzani.
- 1963 al-Qasim is overthrown and executed in a Baathist-inspired coup led by Ab as-Salam Arif and Ahmed Hassan al-Bakr. National Council of Revolutionary Command is formed as supreme state body. Baathists are ousted from government after an internal power struggle.
- 1964 New provisional constitution is promulgated. An uncertain cease-fire is arranged with the Kurds. Iraqi Arab Socialist Union is formed as the country's sole political party. All banks and major industries are nationalized.
- 1965 Arif Abd ar-Razzaq is named premier and is later replaced by ar-Rahman al-Bazzaz. ar-Razzaq stages two pro-Nasser coups, both unsuccessful.
- 1966 Arif is killed in helicopter crash with 10 aides. His brother, Abd ar-Rahman Mohammad Arif, is chosen to succeed to the presidency.
- 1967 Iraq breaks with the United States and the United Kingdom following Arab-Israeli War.

- Television is introduced. Tahir Yahya is named premier.
- 1968** Ahmed Hassan al-Bakr topples Arif regime and forms new Baathist-dominated government. Arif is exiled, and Yahya is imprisoned.
- 1970** Iraq and Iran come to the brink of war following Iran's demand for a revision of the Shatt al-Arab border between the two countries.
- 1973** The national Progressive Front is formed, with the Baath Party and the Communist Party as partners in a ruling coalition. Security chief Nazim Kazzar leads abortive coup.
- 1975** Iraq nationalizes the Iraq Petroleum Company and its subsidiaries.
- 1976** Kurds in fresh uprisings against the government call for more autonomy. Iran and Iraq sign treaty of reconciliation resolving the border dispute.
- 1977** The Revolutionary Command Council is expanded from five members to 22.
- 1978** The Communist Party, accused of subversion, is withdrawn from the National Progressive Front. A total of 21 Communists are executed for engaging in political activities with the armed forces.
- 1979** President Ahmed Hassan al-Bakr steps down for reasons of health and is succeeded in office by his second-in-command, Gen. Saddam bin Hussein al-Majid al-Takriti. Five high-ranking members of the Revolutionary Command Council are arrested and executed for plotting against the Hussein regime. Syria is identified as the foreign power behind the plotters. Iraq and the Soviet Union fall out over Soviet policies toward Ethiopia and Israel.
- 1980** Iraq revokes agreement with Iran over the Shatt al-Arab and launches all-out attack against its Shiite neighbor. In swift thrust Iraq captures Khorramshahr and establishes credible military supremacy in the region.
- 1981** Iran retakes Khorramshahr. Relations with Syria and Libya are broken over their support for Iran in the Iran-Iraq War.
- 1983** Kurds renew their insurgency under the leadership of the sons of Mullah Barzani.
- 1984** Iraq restores diplomatic ties with the United States after 17 years. Elections are held for the National Assembly. Iran crosses border and takes oil rich Magnoon Island. Iraq retaliates with attacks on Khârk Island oil terminal and gulf shipping. Iraq enters into agreement with Turkey and Saudi Arabia for new pipeline projects that will bypass the gulf.
- 1986** At Baath congress Saddam Hussein strengthens position as party leader.
- 1987** At an Arab League meeting, Iraq and other Arab countries reestablish relations with Egypt.
- 1988** Iraq regains the offensive initiative in Iranian war—taking Faw Peninsula, Shalamchek area, and Magnoon Island—and expels Iranian troops from Kurdistan. Iran accepts UN cease-fire terms in August. Iraq puts down a Kurdish revolt, forcing thousands to flee to Turkey and Iran.
- 1989** Talks with Iran on a permanent peace are stalled over disputes on the border and on the Shatt al-Arab waterway. Elections for National Assembly draw 75 percent voter turnout. Ruling National Progressive Patriotic Front, three-party coalition led by Baath, takes all 250 seats. Explosion at Iraqi defense industry complex, presumably a missile development site, focuses Western concern on Iraq's military buildup.
- 1990** Permanent peace concluded with Iran in mid-August. Iraq accepts all Iranian terms, including dividing Shatt al-Arab. Iraq invades and conquers Kuwait on August 2, declaring the tiny emirate annexed as Iraq's 19th province on August 8. Led by United States, a multinational coalition under the aegis of the United Nations responds diplomatically and militarily to Iraqi invasion. United Nations passes resolutions calling on Iraq to withdraw, imposing economic sanctions and authorizing member states to evict Iraqi forces from the occupied emirate.
- 1991** A 30-member coalition, led by United States, defeats Iraq and forces it to withdraw from Kuwait, through air and ground military assaults from mid-January to late February. Allied bombing campaign inflicts massive damage on all parts of the Iraqi infrastructure. Iraq accepts UN peace terms, calling for billions in reparation payments. Regime of Saddam Hussein puts down revolts by Shia in southern Iraq and by Kurds in the north, undertaken in aftermath of defeat in Gulf War.
- 1992** United States, United Kingdom, and France enforce no-fly zone in southern Iraq.
- 1993** After an attempt on President George Bush's life while visiting Kuwait, U.S. forces attack an intelligence center in Baghdad.
- 1994** Iraq officially recognizes the borders with Kuwait.
- 1995** Saddam Hussein is reelected with 99.96 percent of the vote in a presidential referendum.
- 1996** Iraq is allowed to sell \$2 billion of oil in order to buy food and medicine on the international markets.
- 1997** Iraq refuses to allow UN arms inspectors entry into a number of locations. After several failed negotiations, the United Nations ends its inspections and warns Iraq of the consequences.
- 1999** United Nations authorizes Iraq to sell as much oil as needed on the international market as part of the Oil for Food program.

- 2000** Baghdad airport is reopened, and domestic passenger flights are resumed for the first time since the Persian Gulf War in 1991. Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz rejects proposals for weapons inspection.
- 2001** Despite minimal international support, the United States and Britain conduct bombing raids to try to disable Iraq's air defense network. Qusay Hussein is elected leader of Baath Party. Iraq briefly suspends oil exports to protest Israeli incursions into Palestinian territories.
- 2002** The United Kingdom publishes a dossier summarizing Iraq's military capabilities. U.S. President Bush tells United Nations that United States will be taking action against Iraq. UN weapons inspectors enter Iraq.
- 2003** Bush declares that Hussein is hiding weapons of mass destruction. The weapons inspectors evacuate in March. U.S. forces begin bombing Baghdad on March 20 and take the city on April 9. The United States temporarily administers the country, though the United Nations insists that it transfer control to Iraqis as soon as possible. American and Iraqi death tolls climb as violence continues. Saddam Hussein is captured on December 14.
- 2004** Fighting continues as Shia militia attack coalition forces, especially in Fallujah. Photographs appear of American soldiers abusing Iraqi prisoners. The United States hands over sovereignty to an interim government headed by Iyad Alawi in June.
- 2005** Eight million Iraqis vote in elections for a Transitional National Assembly on January 30. In December the Shia-lead United Iraqi Alliance wins parliamentary elections.
- 2006** The National Assembly meets to form a full-term government.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Iraq Foundation
<http://www.iraqfoundation.org/>

IRELAND

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Ireland (Éire)

ABBREVIATION

IE

CAPITAL

Dublin

HEAD OF STATE

President Mary McAleese (from 1997)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister (Taoiseach) Bertie Ahern (from 1997)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Parliamentary democracy

POPULATION

4,015,676 (2005)

AREA

70,280 sq km (27,135 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Celtic

LANGUAGES

English, Irish

RELIGION

Roman Catholicism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Euro

NATIONAL FLAG

Tricolor of green, white, and orange vertical stripes, from left to right

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A gold harp on a blue field

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Amhran na bhFiann” (The soldier’s song)

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year’s Day), March 17 (National Day, Saint Patrick’s Day), November 1 (All Saints’ Day), December 25 (Christmas), December 26 (Saint Stephen’s Day), all major Catholic festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

December 6, 1921

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

December 29, 1937

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Located on an island in the eastern part of the North Atlantic, Ireland, called Éire in Gaelic, covers an area of 27,135 sq mi (70,280 sq km). The island’s length is 302 mi (486 km) north to south, and its width is 171 mi (275 km) east to west. It is bounded on the northeast by Northern Ireland; on the east and southeast by the Irish Sea and Saint George’s Channel; and on the north, west, and south by the Atlantic Ocean.

The capital is Dublin, located on the Irish Sea at the termini of the Grand and Royal canals, which connect the port with the Shannon River, which runs down through the middle of the island and turns west to enter the Atlantic. Dublin’s population was just under half a million in the 2002 census.

Ireland has been compared to a saucer, built of a limestone plateau rimmed by coastal highlands. The central plain area is characterized by many lakes, bogs, and scattered low ridges. The principal mountain ranges are the Mourne Mountains in the northeast, the Wicklow Mountains in the east, and the Macgillicuddy’s Reeks in the southwest.

The Central Lowland is the heart of Ireland. Easy passageways along valley and lowland corridors lead from there to every Irish shore. Around the lowland are several types of landscapes. The southwestern area between Galway Bay and Killarney lies off the main commercial and tourist routes. To the northwest the lowland is replaced by bogs or towering mountains in west Connacht. In Connacht’s Lower Moy Basin, the limestone lowland is separated from the center of the country by the Ox

Ireland



Mountains. The finest plateau lies northeast of there between Curlew Hills and Donegal Bay.

The rivers of Ireland have courses of considerable length and are among the most attractive features of the scenery. They cross the Central Lowlands as slow-moving streams, frequently surrounded by bogs and marshes. The most important rivers of the lowland are the Shannon, which is the British Isles' longest, the Boyne, and the Barrow. Other Irish rivers include the Slaney, Lagan, Foyle, Erne, Moy, and Corrib.

The Irish coast, with its striking cliffs, is among the most impressive in Europe. In the south and west the coast is heavily indented where ranges of the Counties Donegal and Mayo and of Munster Province end in bold headlands and rocky islands. For nearly 50 miles (80 km) south of Dundalk, the Irish Sea coastline is a smooth stretch of cliff broken only by the inlets of small streams.

Bogs remain the most significant feature of the Irish landscape, occurring on all mountains and covering large areas of the lowlands.

Geography

Area sq km:	70,280; sq mi 27,135
World Rank:	117th
Land Boundaries, km:	United Kingdom 360
Coastline, km:	1,448
Elevation Extremes meters:	
Lowest:	Atlantic Ocean 0
Highest:	Carrauntoohil 1,041
Land Use %	
Arable Land:	15.2
Permanent Crops:	0.0
Forest:	9.6
Other:	75.2

Population of Principal Cities (2002)

Cork	123,062
Dublin	495,781

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

The weather of Ireland is described as "mild, moist, and changeable." The seasons generally grade imperceptibly into one another, with rain as the only common element throughout the year. Monthly winter temperatures in the west are 44°F to 45°F (6°C to 7°C) from December to March, in the east 41°F to 43°F (5°C to 6°C) from November to March. The western valleys, such as those around Killarney, have luxuriant woods, and the evergreens rarely experience any check to growth through the cold. The mean summer temperatures range from 60°F to 61°F (15°C to 16°C) in the south and on the coasts of Donegal, in the far northwest.

Ireland has excessive rainfall. About three-fifths of the country has a mean annual rainfall of between

30 and 50 in (762 and 1,270 mm). The highest precipitation is recorded in the western region, from Kerry to western Connacht, and in the Muilrea Mountains area. The average number of rain days per year ranges from 175 in the extreme southeast to between 200 and 250 on the western coast. Ireland is not so much a country of perpetual rain as one in which frequent showers alternate with sunny days.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature:	50°F
West Winter:	44°F to 45°F
East Winter:	41°F to 43°F
South Summer:	60°F to 61°F
Northwest Winter:	42°F, summer 57°F to 58°F
Connacht and Clare:	42°F to 43°F to 58°F to 59°F
Southwest Winter:	44°F to 45°F
Southeast Winter:	44°F to 45°F, summer 59°F to 61°F
Central Lowland Winter:	40°F to 42°F
Northeast Winter:	42°F to 43°F, summer 58°F to 59°F
Average Rainfall:	30 to 50 in
Uplands:	100 in
Northwest:	40 in to 70 in
Connacht and Clare Mountains:	100 in, lowlands 40 to 60 in
Southwest:	60 in to 100 in
Southeast:	30 to 40 in
Central Lowland:	30 in
Northeast:	30 to 40 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

In ancient times Ireland was covered with oak forests, virtually none of which remain today; the land has been inhabited for such a long time and farmed so intensively that almost none of its native vegetation has survived. Today most forests are tree farms growing pines. Ireland's natural bogs are disappearing, though environmentalists are trying to preserve some of them. Bogs support unusual ecosystems with unique plants, including some carnivorous ones that eat insects. The bogs are home to many animals, especially birds. The landscape also harbors foxes, badgers, hares, hedgehogs, bats, red deer, and the occasional otter or pine marten. Migratory birds stop in Ireland on their way north and south. Ireland's rivers are full of salmon and trout, and the oceans are home to dolphins, seals, sea lions, mackerel, and pollock. The only reptile in Ireland is a kind of lizard. There are no snakes there; legend credits Saint Patrick with removing them.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005:	4,015,676
World Rank:	122nd
Density per sq km:	58.0
% of annual growth (1999-2003):	1.5

(continues)

Population Indicators *(continued)*

Male %:	49.7
Female %:	50.3
Urban %:	59.1
Age Distribution %:	
0–14:	20.9
15–64:	67.5
65 and over:	11.5
Population 2025:	4,842,000
Birth Rate per 1,000:	14.47
Death Rate per 1,000:	7.85
Rate of Natural Increase %:	0.7
Total Fertility Rate:	1.87
Expectation of Life (years):	
Males	74.95
Females	80.34
Marriage Rate per 1,000:	5.0
Divorce Rate per 1,000:	0.7
Average Size of Households:	3.3
Induced Abortions:	—

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

The basic ethnic stock is Celtic, with an admixture of Norse, French, Norman, and English. There are no significant ethnic minorities. Historically, Ireland has been free of ethnic conflicts because of its racial homogeneity.

LANGUAGES

The official languages of Ireland are English and Irish (or Gaelic). Irish is the favored language of Irish nationalists, who wish to preserve the cultural separateness of Ireland from Britain. Since the establishment of the Irish Free State in 1921, the government has been committed to a policy of teaching and fostering Irish. However, the use of Irish as a commercial and administrative language (as distinct from a literary language) has been steadily declining over the years.

RELIGIONS

Ireland is one of the most Catholic countries in Europe, and Roman Catholicism is an integral, pervasive influence on national life and culture. Although there is no legal or constitutional relationship between church and state, the status of the Catholic Church was safeguarded in the 1937 constitution. The state does not subsidize the churches, nor is there a government department in charge of religious affairs. Both civil and religious marriages are permitted by law.

The Anglican Church of Ireland, disestablished in 1867, is the largest non-Catholic denomination. Anglicans compose 3 percent of the Irish population. Like other Protestant denominations, Anglicans never laid down deep roots in the country. Despite the Catholic

predominance, there is very little religious discrimination against non-Catholics.

Religious Affiliations

Roman Catholic	3,678,000
Church of Ireland	100,000
Other	237,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The history of Ireland began with the arrival of the Celts around the fourth century B.C.E. and their establishment of a flourishing Gaelic civilization. By the third century C.E. there were five permanent kingdoms on the island. The arrival of Saint Patrick in 432 was perhaps the most important event in Irish history, transforming the island into a center of learning and Christian culture.

Toward the end of the eighth century the Viking invasions began, destroying the monasteries and laying waste to the land. Around the 10th century the Anglo-Saxons followed and gradually gained control of the island. The English Crown never subjugated the Irish as they did the Welsh and the Scots, despite harsh measures such as the confiscation of lands and the large-scale colonization by English settlers. From the time of Henry VIII, when England seceded from the Roman Church, there were successive waves of bitter persecutions, particularly under Elizabeth I, Oliver Cromwell, and William of Orange. The treatment of the Irish reached its nadir in the 18th century when penal laws deprived Catholics and Dissenters (others not conforming to the Church of England) of all legal rights.

By the end of the 18th century many of the English settlers in the provinces outside Northern Ireland began to identify with the Gaels and joined in demanding greater self-government. In response, Britain granted them an independent Irish Parliament in 1783, but it was abolished by the Act of Union of 1800, which gave Ireland direct representation in the British Parliament. Catholic emancipation was finally achieved in 1829 through the efforts of Daniel O'Connell. The tragic condition of Ireland was highlighted by the Great Famine of 1840, however, which decimated the population and forced over a million people to emigrate to England and North America.

Irish nationalism became stronger and even more violent in the early decades of the 20th century, climaxing in the Easter Uprising of 1916, in which an Irish Republic was proclaimed. Bowing to the inevitable, in 1921 the British signed the Anglo-Irish Treaty, establishing an Irish Free State having dominion status and a Protestant-dominated North Ireland with a separate government. Violent opposition to the treaty by ultranationalists precipitated a civil war that lasted over a year. The Free State

survived, but the Irish Republican Army (IRA) remained as a powerful force in Irish politics.

Under Eamon de Valera, who took office as prime minister in 1932, Ireland kept out of World War II to demonstrate its continued displeasure with Britain. In 1937, under a new constitution, the governor-general was replaced by an elected president, and the name of the country was officially changed to Ireland (Éire in Gaelic). In 1948 Ireland voted itself out of the Commonwealth and on April 18, 1949, declared itself a republic. In the republic's first election the Fianna Fáil became the majority party, and its leader, de Valera, was chosen as prime minister; as of 1949 the prime minister has the Gaelic title of *taoiseach*.

During the 1950s Ireland developed as a moderate welfare state, and by the end of the decade, a new generation came to power politically. The nationalist movement, led by the Irish Republican Army (IRA), increased its efforts for unification of Ireland and Northern Ireland. During the 1960s those favoring unification brought increased pressures on the governments in both parts of the island. In Ireland protest marches and demonstrations grew with the passing years, and in Northern Ireland the IRA stepped up guerrilla activity and violence. During the 1970s this sectarian terrorism in Northern Ireland cost more than 2,500 lives. As a result, in the 1980s the British government signed an agreement giving Ireland a consultative role in Northern Irish disputes.

In 1987 the Fianna Fáil leader Charles Haughey became prime minister of Ireland, but a sharp economic downturn in the early 1990s, with inflation and high unemployment, brought to office a coalition government led by Charles Reynolds. Reynolds negotiated with the British government in an attempt to end the escalating violence in Northern Ireland. The British insisted the IRA must disarm, while the IRA insisted that Britain withdraw its forces from Northern Ireland. In 1996 the IRA announced a cease-fire in its attempt to expel British troops from Northern Ireland. However, for two more years isolated terrorist attacks by extremist Irish nationalists continued. Conditions improved in Northern Ireland when a peace agreement was signed in 1998 and ratified by Irish voters.

In December 1999 the British Parliament formally transferred a wide range of powers to the Northern Ireland government, while the Irish government gave up its territorial claim on Northern Ireland. However, the unresolved conflict over the pace of IRA disarmament triggered a series of crises, and by September 2001 the British government had suspended the Northern Ireland legislature three times. In a historic breakthrough, the IRA decided to begin disarmament in October, thereby preserving the power-sharing government.

In the 2002 elections the dominant Fianna Fáil returned to power, along with its coalition partner, the

Progressive Democrats. Mary McAleese was reelected president in October 2004. Earlier that year Irish voters had participated in European and local elections, in which they approved a measure that would end Ireland's granting of Irish citizenship to any child born in Ireland.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

Prime Ministers

1919	Cathal Brugha
1919–21	Eamon de Valera
1922	Michael Collins
1922–32	W. T. Cosgrave
1932–48	Eamon de Valera
1948–51	John A. Costello
1951–54	Eamon de Valera
1954–57	John A. Costello
1957–59	Eamon de Valera
1959–66	Sean Lemass
1966–73	Jack Lynch
1973–77	Liam Cosgrave
1977–79	Jack Lynch
1979–81	Charles J. Haughey
1981–82	Garret FitzGerald
1982	Charles J. Haughey
1982–87	Garret FitzGerald
1987–92	Charles J. Haughey
1992–94	Albert Reynolds
1994–97	John Bruton
1997–	Bertie Ahern

Presidents

1938–45	Douglas Hyde
1945–59	Seán T. O'Kelly
1959–73	Eamon de Valera
1973–74	Erskine Hamilton Childers
1974–76	Cearbhall Ó Dálaigh
1976–90	Patrick Hillery
1990–97	Mary Robinson
1997–	Mary McAleese

CONSTITUTION

Ireland is a parliamentary republic and a unitary state under the 1937 constitution. Suffrage is universal at age 18.

The ceremonial head of state is the president, who is elected by direct suffrage for a term of seven years. The president summons or dissolves parliament (the *Oireachtas*), signs and promulgates laws passed by parliament, appoints as prime minister the leader of the majority party in parliament, and appoints judges selected by the prime minister.

Article 13 of the constitution provides that the president shall appoint the prime minister (or *taoiseach*) on

nomination of the Dáil (House of Representatives). The prime minister holds office during the life of parliament or until he or she loses support of the majority in the Dáil.

The government's responsibility in the Dáil is collective, and it is required to meet and act as a collective authority. Irish governments are rarely defeated by parliamentary vote and dissolution. This feature of the Irish parliamentary system is due to party solidarity and loyalty.

Over the years since de Valera's terms of leadership, the office of the prime minister has grown in power and authority vis-à-vis that of the president. As head of government, the prime minister is answerable only to the Dáil and is required only to keep the president "generally informed on matters of domestic and international policy."

The Supreme Court is the highest body in the judicial branch. The chief justice and six other justices are appointed by the president on the advice of the prime minister. It is the highest court and the ultimate court of appeal. The Supreme Court also decides the constitutionality of laws if the president asks for an opinion. The judicial hierarchy also includes district courts, circuit courts, a high court, and the court of criminal appeals.

PARLIAMENT

The national parliament (Oireachtas) is a bicameral body comprising the House of Representatives (Dáil Éireann) and the Senate (Seanad Éireann). Parliament has the sole power to make laws. The Dáil has 166 members, who are elected by popular vote on the basis of proportional representation for five-year terms. A member of the Dáil is called a Teachta Dála (TD). The Seanad has 60 members, 11 of whom are named by the prime minister and 49 of whom are elected by the universities and from candidates put forward by five vocational panels.

The powers of the Seanad are, in general, less than those of the Dáil. The Seanad has complementary powers with the Dáil in broad areas, such as the removal from office of a president or judge, the declaration of a state of emergency, and the initiation of bills other than money bills. The Seanad has prior or exclusive powers in other areas.

Of the three branches of government, parliament is perhaps the weakest. Although vested with far-reaching powers by the constitution to make or break governments, parliament's authority is wielded by the prime minister and the majority party. The prime minister has a virtual monopoly on new legislation. Almost all bills are proposed by the government, and the national legislative program is determined at cabinet meetings.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Modern Irish history is dominated by two parties that have vied for and alternated in power since independence. The older of the two parties is Fianna Fáil (Soldiers of Destiny), founded in 1926 by Eamon de Valera. It has stood for a united Ireland and is slightly more nationalistic than other parties. It has held power for nearly 50 of the past 68 years. Its rival is the Fine Gael (Family of the Irish), formed in 1933 through an amalgamation of parties that accepted the 1921 partition, although it advocates ultimate reunion with Northern Ireland.

The smaller parties play only a fringe role in Irish politics. They are the Thatcherite Progressive Democrats, founded in 1985; the Labour Party, founded in 1912; the Green Party, founded in 1981; and Sinn Féin, an arm of the Irish Republican Army. In the 2002 general elections 14 Dáil members were elected as independents, with no party affiliation.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The system of local government includes the administration of towns, cities, and counties. The principal unit is the county council or county borough corporation. The members of the various local authorities are elected by a system of proportional representation for periods of five years. Local authorities are responsible for housing and building programs, roads and traffic, water supply and sanitation, land development, environmental protection, waste disposal, fire protection, recreation, and local tax collection.

County government is administered by the county councils and the county managers. There are 26 counties. Most authority, however, resides with the national government.

LEGAL SYSTEM

Irish law is based on English common law, as modified by legislation and the 1937 constitution. Judges are appointed by the president and can be removed from office only by the resolution of both houses of parliament and only for incapacity or misbehavior.

The court of summary justice is the district court, which is presided over by a district justice sitting without a jury. It tries minor criminal offenses and handles minor civil cases. More serious cases are tried by the country's eight circuit courts, each presided over by a judge sitting with a jury. Circuit courts try all criminal cases except murder, treason, piracy, and allied offenses. They also act as appeals courts from district courts. The high court has original jurisdiction in all matters of law, civil and criminal, and also hears appeals from circuit courts in civil cases. It is presided over by a judge sitting with a jury.

The Supreme Court is the court of final appeal, consisting of a chief justice and six other justices. It can decide if any legislation of parliament violates the constitution. In addition, it may declare existing laws to be unconstitutional.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Human rights and civil liberties are guaranteed by the 1937 constitution. In recent decades human rights problems have arisen primarily from prison overcrowding and special arrest and detention authority.

The major human rights problem has been the spillover of violence from Northern Ireland. Terrorist activities there of the militant wing of the Irish Republican Army (IRA) led to government crackdowns on extremists in the Irish Republic in the 1980s and 1990s. Nevertheless, the government used great restraint in dealing with acts of terrorism. Although a cease-fire was signed by the IRA leader Gerry Adams in 1994, bombings and other violence by Irish militants continued to test the government's moderate policies. However, in 1997 the IRA renewed its pledge to end violence, and the peace settlement signed by Ireland and Northern Ireland and approved by Irish voters in 1998 offered hope for the future. The IRA began disarmament in October 2001.

FOREIGN POLICY

Since independence Ireland has adhered to a policy of neutrality and nonalignment, remaining neutral during World War II and avoiding membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) or any other postwar regional security organizations. However, it has been active in the major international forums, first as a member of the League of Nations and since 1955 as a member of the United Nations. It has also contributed personnel to UN peacekeeping units in the Middle East, New Guinea, Congo, Cyprus, Lebanon, and Afghanistan, as well as to Kuwait during the Persian Gulf War of 1991.

Since Ireland joined the European Community, now the European Union, in 1973, its foreign policy has shifted from a concentration on relations with the United Kingdom to relations with European countries in general. Nevertheless, Northern Ireland and Britain continue to occupy the attention of Irish foreign policy makers. Although still committed to the goal of a united Ireland, the Irish government has cooperated with Britain on security matters since the 1970s. However, Anglo-Irish relations underwent severe strains because of IRA bombings and terrorist violence in Northern Ireland in the 1980s and 1990s. In 2003 and 2004 the British and Irish continued to work to achieve resolution, though without much success.

Ireland's relations with the United States have grown stronger in the past decade, as American businesses invest in the Irish economy. Irish citizens have a long history of migration to the United States, though that trend reversed itself in the 1990s. Many Irish people still spend a time in the United States working or studying before returning home to establish families and careers.

As of 2004 Ireland was involved in a territorial dispute with Iceland, Denmark, and the United Kingdom over the continental shelf boundary around the Faeroe Islands. Ireland has become a transshipment point for drug dealers moving narcotics and hashish between North Africa and Europe, who also use the nation for money-laundering purposes.

DEFENSE

Ireland has historically been a neutral country, and Irish defense forces have never engaged in a war. There is no compulsory military service, with all recruitment voluntary. Persons between ages 17 and 32 may enroll in the armed forces. The minimum period of service is three years.

The main divisions of Irish military forces are the army, navy, and air corps. In 2001 Ireland spent less than 1 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) on the military.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	10,400
Military Manpower Availability:	977,092
Military Expenditures \$million:	700
as % of GDP:	0.9
as % of central government expenditures:	—
Arms Imports \$million:	18
Arms Exports \$million:	—

ECONOMY

Ireland was nicknamed the "Celtic Tiger" in the 1990s because of its rapid economic growth, much of which was spurred by growth in the information-technology sector and in exports. Industry and services now account for nearly all of the nation's GDP; agriculture was traditionally the most important sector but now brings in only about 5 percent of GDP. The government has reduced taxes to encourage foreign investment, reduced government spending, and implemented programs to slow inflation. Growth slowed in 2002–03 but increased again in 2004. International companies find Ireland attractive because of its well-educated workforce and good infrastructure. In 2004 over 570 U.S. subsidiaries employed about 90,000 people in Ireland.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 126.4
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 31,900
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 7.6
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 6.1
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 5
 Industry: 46
 Services: 49
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 43
 Government Consumption: 15
 Gross Domestic Investment: 23.8
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 103.8
 Imports: 60.65
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 2.0
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 27.3

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
107.4	113.4	118.9	124.5	128.8

Finance

National Currency: Euro (EUR)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = 0.886
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: —
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 4.06
 Total External Debt \$billion: 11
 Debt Service Ratio %: —
 Balance of Payments \$billion: –2.881
 International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 3.43
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
 2.2

Official Development Assistance

Donor ODA \$million: 283
 per capita \$: 70.50
 Foreign Direct Investment \$billion: 26.6

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar year
 Revenues \$billion: 62.51
 Expenditures \$billion: 63.52
 Budget Deficit \$billion: 1.01
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 5
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: —
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 13.83
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: —
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 523.6
 Total Farmland % of land area: 16.3
 Livestock: Cattle million: 6.8
 Chickens million: 12.8
 Pigs million: 1.73
 Sheep million: 4.85

Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 2.68
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 345

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 35.03
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 7.0

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 1.85
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million:
 14.43
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 3.74
 Net Energy Imports % of use: 90.2
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 4.4
 Production kW-hr billion: 22.9
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 21.8
 Coal Reserves tons million: 15
 Production tons million: —
 Consumption tons million: 3.18
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: 0.7
 Production cubic feet billion: 29.6
 Consumption cubic feet billion: 150.6
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
 Production barrels 000 per day: —
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 194.8
 Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 60.65
 Exports \$billion: 103.8
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2002): 12.6
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2002): 10.6
 Balance of Trade \$billion: –2.881

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
United Kingdom %	34.9	18.1
United States %	15.8	20.5
Germany %	7.9	8.3
Netherlands %	4.1	5.1
Belgium %	—	12.6
France %	—	6.1
Italy %	—	4.6

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 95,736
 Paved %: 100
 Automobiles: 1,402,300
 Trucks and Buses: 231,700
 Railroad: Track Length km: 3,312
 Passenger-km billion: 1.63
 Freight-km million: 426
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 39
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: —

Airports: 36
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 18.58
 Length of Waterways km: 753

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 6.48
 Number of Tourists from million: 4.63
 Tourist Receipts \$billion: 4.23
 Tourist Expenditures \$billion: 3.84

Communications

Telephones million: 1.955
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones million: 3.4
 Personal Computers million: 1.65
 Internet Hosts per million people: 40,399
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 314

ENVIRONMENT

Ireland faces environmental issues arising from both increasing industrialization and the consolidation of agriculture. Rapid growth of industry has increased the pollution of Ireland's waters and air, particularly in urban areas. Many of Ireland's lakes are terribly polluted.

As farmland is consolidated into larger holdings, the use of fertilizers and pesticides has rapidly increased. Larger agricultural holdings have meant the loss of the country's hedgerows—about 14 percent since the 1970s—endangering wildlife and plant diversity. Ireland's turf bogs, a unique resource with important household and industrial resources, are rapidly being cleared to meet energy needs. The use of these cleared bog lands may pose environmental challenges in the future.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 9.6
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: 17
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 1
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 49,144
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 11.08

LIVING CONDITIONS

Ireland's standard of living has increased tremendously since 1990. More than 70 percent of households live in homes that they own, and nearly every household owns a television set. About half of the people of driving age own cars, but the public transportation system is good enough that cars are usually unnecessary. The majority of the population lives in or near the bigger cities in modern housing. People still live in the traditional thatched-

roof stone cottages in the countryside, though these are gradually being replaced with new buildings.

HEALTH

Ireland's national health-care system is administered by the Ministry of Health and eight regional boards. There are both public and private hospitals and clinics. Health examinations and tuberculosis treatment are available free of charge. Children below 16 receive free examinations and hospitalization. People pay a small fee, determined by income, for other services. Heart disease and lung disorders are the most common serious illnesses, owing largely to the nation's habits of smoking and eating fatty food. Breast cancer has increased in recent years, and the government has instituted a national screening program to give women mammograms every two years.

Health

Number of Physicians: 9,166
 Number of Dentists: 2,006
 Number of Nurses: 63,474
 Number of Pharmacists: 3,165
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 237
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 5.39
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 5
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 7.3
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 2,255
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.1
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 85
 Measles: 78
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: —
 Access to Improved Water Source %: —

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Irish food is fairly heavy and is based on foods that are readily available in its climate. Potatoes appear at nearly every meal, fried, boiled, mashed, made into pancakes or bread, or distilled into a strong alcoholic beverage called *poitin*. Potatoes are quite nutritious and easy to grow, and many poor Irish depended on them for nearly all their calories in the early 1800s. When potato blight destroyed the potato crops in 1845, it was especially devastating because the poor had absolutely nothing else to eat.

Other common vegetables are onions, carrots, and cabbage. People eat a great deal of meat, especially pork and mutton or lamb. The typical breakfast includes porridge, eggs, and bacon. Near the ocean seafood is popular. Dairy products such as butter, cream, and cheese appear on the table daily. Traditional Irish soda bread uses soda

instead of yeast as a rising agent (people saved the yeast for making whiskey). Tea is a national habit, and people drink it throughout the day. Alcoholic beverages include beer, especially Guinness, cider, and whiskey.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 128.8
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 182.9

STATUS OF WOMEN

Although the Constitution of 1937 recognized the woman's role primarily in terms of her "life within the home," the women's movement led to significant changes in the status of women in the 1980s and 1990s. Abortion remained illegal, but in 1995 the government passed legislation permitting Irish doctors to provide information about foreign abortion providers. Abortion is now legal in very limited circumstances. Contraception gradually became legal starting in the 1960s and 1970s. Irish women used to be notorious for having many children close together, but fertility in 2004 was a mere 1.87 children per woman. Divorce became legal in 1996, and the legislature also overturned a 1937 constitutional ban on remarriage after divorce.

Discrimination against women in the workplace is unlawful, but inequalities in salaries and promotions continue. In 1997 the hourly industrial wage for women was about 70 percent of that earned by men, and the weekly earnings of women averaged 70 percent of those for men. Women account for only 36 percent of the public sector workforce, and they are further underrepresented in managerial positions. Working women are also often hampered by inadequate child-care facilities. However, legislation in 1994 provided women with 14 weeks of paid maternity leave and the right to return to their jobs after giving birth. Middle- and low-income women receive maternity care free of charge.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 13
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.0
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 47.4

WORK

Ireland has a highly skilled workforce that has been getting larger as women gain employment, Irish emigrants

return home, and the young Irish grow up. The nation's low taxes make it attractive to foreign companies, so many Irish people work for foreign firms, manufacturing electronics, software, food, chemicals, and clothing. High-tech jobs are expanding, and increasing numbers of Irish are working in information technology, telemarketing, and pharmaceuticals. Tourism employs a number of people. Agriculture still employs about 8 percent of the workforce, many of whom continue to work on family farms producing livestock and dairy products or growing oats, potatoes, and other products for export.

Irish unions are very strong and vocal, and over half the workforce belongs to them. The nation's social welfare system provides unemployment benefits and subsidies for low-income families.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 1,920,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 35.9
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 8
 Industry: 29
 Services: 63
 Unemployment %: 4.3

EDUCATION

Schooling is compulsory for all children between the ages of six and 15. The chief language of instruction is English, but Gaelic is compulsory for all students in state-aided schools. Public education is divided into primary and secondary schools, with preprimary classes available in private schools. More than 95 percent of primary schoolchildren attend national schools, of which 20 percent are run by Catholic orders. All primary schoolchildren receive free medical treatment, and needy children receive free lunches. Most secondary schools are also funded by the state; about half are run by the Catholic Church.

The Department of Education exercises enormous control over all aspects of education. In the primary sector it draws up the curriculum, sanctions textbooks, and monitors teaching performance. At the secondary level it also administers three public examinations.

Ireland's oldest university, founded in 1591, is the University of Dublin, of which Trinity College is a famed constituent. The National University, established in 1908, is a federal institution with constituent colleges at Cork, Dublin, and Galway.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 98.0
 Male %: 98.0
 Female %: 98.0
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 16.7

First Level: Primary schools: 3,319
 Teachers: 22,979
 Students: 445,947
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 19.4
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 95.5

Second Level: Secondary Schools: 452
 Teachers: —
 Students: 323,043
 Student-Teacher Ratio: —
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 82.4

Third Level: Institutions: 29
 Teachers: 11,594
 Students: 176,296
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 49.9

Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 4.4

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Ireland has been focusing development on its high-tech industries. Information technology was responsible for much of its spectacular economic growth in the late 1990s and early 2000s. The telemarketing, computer, and pharmaceutical industries have done well. The nation's technological infrastructure is quite modern and efficient; telephone and television signals are ubiquitous, and over one million people were using the Internet in 2003.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 2,190
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 1.13
 High-Tech Exports \$billion: 27.6
 Patent Applications by Residents: 1,255

MEDIA

The Irish media operate freely. The Department of Communications regulates broadcasting, and the Competition Authority prevents unfair competition. The *Irish Times* is the country's most influential daily newspaper, although it has less than half the circulation of the *Irish Independent*, the popular daily founded in 1905, which is the nation's circulation leader. While press competition is spirited in Dublin, fewer than 10 Irish cities have competing newspapers. All Irish newspapers are privately owned. Ireland has no national news agency.

Irish television began service in 1961, and much of programming is domestic, including Irish and bilingual programs. Satellite broadcasting service became available to Irish viewers in 1986; much of the programming viewed in Ireland comes from England via satellite. The national public broadcasting company, Radio Telefís Éireann (RTÉ) is the largest broadcaster of both radio and television. TV3, which began broadcasting in 1998, is Ireland's only commercial television station. Many households have cable.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 6
 Total Circulation 000: 564
 Circulation per 1,000: 148

Books Published: —
 Periodicals: 61

Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —

Television sets million: 1.5
 per 1,000: 406

CULTURE

Ireland has a rich background of Celtic and medieval Christian culture. The Celts left art and artifacts that display their obvious skill at metalworking and stone carving. The monks of the medieval period compiled numerous manuscripts of sacred and secular texts, many of them elaborately decorated; the Book of Kells and the Book of Durrow are famous examples of medieval manuscripts. These monks preserved many ancient documents that otherwise would have been lost. Ancient and medieval Irish people loved language and poetry and whiled away long evenings listening to bards sing epic poems.

Poetry and language have remained popular in more recent times, and Ireland has produced more than its share of writers, including Jonathan Swift, Oscar Wilde, George Bernard Shaw, John Millington-Synge, William Butler Yeats, James Joyce, Seamus Heaney, Roddy Doyle, and Frank and Malachy McCourt.

Irish music has long played a central role in daily life. Traditional music has recently had a resurgence in popularity, with groups such as the Chieftains taking an old form and making it new again. The musical *Riverdance* made Irish music and dancing popular the world over. Ireland has also produced a number of modern rock musicians, including U2, Van Morrison, Clannad, Sinead O'Connor, and the Pogues.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 32
 Volumes: 10,838,000
 Registered borrowers: 867,000

Museums Number: 49
 Annual Attendance: 824,000

Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: 12,400,000

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Ireland has a tradition of mythology that goes back to about 350 B.C.E., when the Celts moved to the island. Many stories center around the heroes Cuchulain and

Finn McCool. The *Táin Bó Cuailnge* (pronounced “toyn boe cooley”) is one of the classics of Irish mythology; it describes the battles and negotiations surrounding a cattle raid. The traditional seat of Irish kings was at Tara. Slightly more recent tales concern Saint Patrick, Ireland’s patron saint, and the activities of fairies who roam the world and cause mischief.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

The pub is the epicenter of Irish social life. Many people go to their local pub every day to drink beer or whiskey and chat with friends. The legal drinking age is 18, but the age to enter pubs is 14. The Irish love music, and most villages have a pub where people can go to hear traditional Irish music played. Customers sometimes join the band on an instrument or singing. In the outdoors people enjoy golf, sailing, windsurfing, and fishing for salmon or trout.

ETIQUETTE

Hospitality is a key Irish virtue. The Irish have traditionally been kind to strangers and generous to those in need. It is courteous for people to offer visitors a cup of tea or to buy drinks for companions at a pub. Tipping is becoming more common, but it is not necessary if a restaurant adds a service charge.

FAMILY LIFE

The family is very important to Irish people. People tend to be close to their parents, siblings, and grandparents. Children usually stay with their parents until they marry. The government supports families by providing benefits to old people, children, and single parents. Friendship and loyalty to friends are nearly as important as family.

Divorce was illegal until 1996. Now couples are allowed to divorce after three years of separation, and the courts currently have a large backlog of divorce applications waiting to be processed.

Women have traditionally stayed home to care for their usually large families; the Catholic Church has banned birth control for many years, and as a result many Catholic Irish had a great many children. Today, more women are entering the workforce, and families have become smaller. Contraception is now legal, as is abortion if the mother’s life is in danger.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

The Irish live in a cold climate with many sheep, so traditionally most of their clothes have been made from wool.

Irish fishermen’s sweaters, with their intricate knitting and thick warm wool, are still popular. Most modern Irish dress in typical Western fashions, though raincoats and umbrellas are ubiquitous accessories.

SPORTS

Irish love soccer, and Irish teams compete in international events all over the world. Rugby and cricket are also popular. Irish athletes have won medals at the Olympics and elsewhere in swimming, boxing, running, rowing, and cycling.

Ireland has several unique sports. Hurling, a 4,000-year-old game, is similar to hockey; players hit a leather ball with curved sticks called *hurleys*. When women play the game, it is called *camogie*. Gaelic football is similar to hurling but without the sticks. Both sports are popular with children and attract enough players for national championships to be held every year. Road bowling is another traditional game; players try to roll a metal ball down a two- or three-mile course in as few throws as possible.

Horse racing, show jumping, and other equestrian sports are popular everywhere. The form of horse racing known as steeplechase was invented in Ireland.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1937** In a plebiscite voters adopt a new constitution replacing the Irish Free State with the “sovereign independent democratic state” of Éire.
- 1938** British troops withdraw from three Irish naval bases.
- 1941** Dublin endures German air raids.
- 1943** Prime Minister Eamon de Valera and his Fianna Fáil party are reelected.
- 1945** World War II ends, Éire having successfully maintained neutrality throughout.
- 1948** John Aloysius Costello leads a coalition of parties defeating de Valera and Fianna Fáil in the Dáil Éirann.
- 1949** On Monday, April 16, 1949, the anniversary of the Easter Rebellion of 1916, Éire leaves the Commonwealth and becomes the Republic of Ireland.
- 1955** Ireland becomes a member of the United Nations.
- 1957** As continued guerrilla attacks by the Irish Republican Army against British targets strain Irish-British relations, doing damage to both the Irish economy and the prospects for a unified Ireland, Prime Minister Costello calls for forceful action against the IRA.
- 1958** The government initiates a five-year plan of economic development, offering tax incentives to foreign investors.

- 1959** De Valera retires as prime minister and is elected to the first of two seven-year terms as president. Sean Lemass of Fianna Fáil becomes prime minister.
- 1962** The IRA announces it has abandoned violence.
- 1963** The five-year plan exceeds its goals, achieving 4 percent growth rather than the planned-for 2 percent.
The rate of emigration from Ireland, high for more than 100 years, begins to decline.
- 1965** Prime Minister Sean Lemass of Ireland and Prime Minister Terence O'Neill of Northern Ireland exchange visits in an effort to defuse tensions between the territories.
- 1966** Elections bring to power Jack Lynch and Fianna Fáil.
- 1972** The government calls for a surrender of all firearms.
- 1973** Ireland joins the European Economic Community.
A referendum approved by 83 percent of voters amends the constitution to terminate the special status of the Catholic Church.
A Fine Gael-Labour Party coalition comes to power, led by Liam Cosgrave.
Ireland, Northern Ireland, and Britain accept the Sunningdale Agreement, which states that a change in the political status of Northern Ireland must be approved by a majority of its citizens.
- 1974** The Sunningdale Agreement is abandoned.
- 1976** The British ambassador to Ireland is assassinated in Dublin.
- 1977** The Fianna Fáil returns to power under Jack Lynch and proposes an aggressive economic policy based on tax cuts and the cultivation of new, foreign-financed industries.
- 1979** Charles Haughey succeeds Lynch as prime minister.
- 1982** National debt and unemployment continue to increase.
In the third election in less than two years, Garret FitzGerald of the Fine Gael-Labour Party coalition takes power with a clear majority.
- 1985** The Anglo-Irish Agreement gives the Republic of Ireland a consultative role in the government of Northern Ireland and affirms that a change in the political status of Northern Ireland must be approved by a majority of its citizens.
- 1986** Sinn Féin, the political arm of the Provisional IRA, breaks its 63-year boycott of elections and stands for office, but it wins no seats.
- 1987** A constitutional referendum ratifies the Single European Act, which permits Ireland's participation in the European Community.
- 1990** Mary Robinson becomes the first woman president of Ireland.
- 1991** Having been granted a clause preserving its strict antiabortion laws, Ireland signs the Maastricht treaty to join the European Union.
- 1992** Albert Reynolds succeeds Charles Haughey as leader of Fianna Fáil and prime minister.
In a referendum, voters loosen restrictions on abortion.
- 1993** The prime ministers of Britain and Ireland issue the Downing Street Declaration, which offers to support Anglo-Irish peace talks between groups that have renounced violence.
The Supreme Court strikes down the prior year's relaxations of abortion policy.
- 1994** Catholic and Protestant paramilitaries in Northern Ireland announce a cease-fire.
Following elections, John Bruton of the Fine Gael leads a coalition government with Labour and the Democratic Left.
- 1995** John Bruton and Prime Minister John Major of Britain adumbrate a framework for negotiating the status of Northern Ireland, providing for its self-determination and the possibility of administrative collaboration with the Republic of Ireland.
A national referendum legalizes divorce by a narrow margin, effective in 1997.
- 1996** The IRA resumes terrorist activities in February.
- 1997** Fianna Fáil leader Bertie Ahern becomes prime minister.
The immensely popular President Robinson resigns to become High Commissioner for Human Rights at the United Nations, and Mary McAleese of Fianna Fáil is elected president.
- 1998** On April 10 peace talks between Prime Minister Bertie Ahern of Ireland, Prime Minister Tony Blair of Britain, and other delegates, moderated by U.S. senator George Mitchell, establish the historic Good Friday Agreement, whose provisions include Ireland's renunciation of territorial claims to Northern Ireland, the founding of an assembly of Northern Ireland, and the establishment of a North-South Ministerial Council composed of ministers of both Irish governments.
Voter referenda in both Ireland and Northern Ireland approve the agreement.
- 1999** The European Union introduces the euro as a common currency for financial institutions in member states, including Ireland.
The Good Friday Agreement becomes effective, but actual power sharing between Catholics and Protestants still appears remote.
- 2001** In October the IRA begins disarmament. Ireland rejects the Nice Treaty, aimed at allowing the

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European Union to expand to include 12 eastern European nations.

- 2002** The euro becomes the sole currency for EU member states. Voters reject government's attempt to tighten antiabortion laws. Fianna Fail's Ahern remains prime minister. Irish voters endorse the Nice Treaty.
- 2004** Ireland, the then EU president, hosts ceremonies welcoming 10 new nations to the European Union.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Central Statistics Office (Ireland)
<http://www.cso.ie/index.html>

ISRAEL

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

State of Israel (Medinat Yisra'el)

ABBREVIATION

IL

CAPITAL

Jerusalem/Tel Aviv

Note: The United Nations and most governments do not recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel.

HEAD OF STATE

President Moshe Katsav (from 2000)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Ariel Sharon (from 2001)

Acting Prime Minister Ehud Olmert (from 2006)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Parliamentary democracy

POPULATION

6,276,883 (2005; includes about 206,000 Israeli settlers in the West Bank, about 20,000 in the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights, more than 6,400 in the Gaza Strip, and approximately 170,000 in East Jerusalem)

AREA

20,770 sq km (8,019 sq mi), excluding the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and East Jerusalem

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Jews, Arabs

LANGUAGES

Hebrew, Arabic, English

RELIGIONS

Judaism, Islam, Christianity

UNIT OF CURRENCY

New Israeli shekel

NATIONAL FLAG

The blue six-pointed Star of David (Magen David) centered between two blue horizontal stripes on a white field, representing a Jewish prayer shawl

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A white-rimmed blue shield displaying a white menorah, the seven-branched candelabra from the Temple of Jerusalem, flanked by white olive branches. Blue and white, the national colors, are inspired by the tallit, the Jewish prayer shawl. The text at the bottom reads "Israel" in Hebrew.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"Hatikvah" (The Hope)

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

Independence day and all major Jewish festivals, including Yom Kippur, Succot, Simchat Torah, Chanukkah, Purim, Pesach (Passover), and Shavuot (Pentecost). Because Israel observes the complex Jewish luni-solar calendar to determine these holidays, they fall on different dates each year on the Gregorian calendar.

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

May 14, 1948

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

No formal constitution

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Israel, located in southwestern Asia along the eastern end of the Mediterranean Sea, has an area of 20,770 sq km (8,019 sq mi). The nation extends 322 km (200 mi) north to south and 111 km (69 mi) east to west. At its narrowest point, north of Tel Aviv, it is only 19 km (12 mi) across. Israel also administers territory taken from Syria and Jordan in the Six-Day War of 1967, including the Golan Heights (1,710 sq km; 660 sq mi) and the West Bank of Judea (5,878 sq km; 2,270 sq mi). The nation's total

boundary extends some 1,017 km (632 mi) and borders Lebanon, Jordan, Syria, and Egypt. The Mediterranean coast runs 273 km (170 mi), including the Gaza Strip. Outstanding territorial disputes were settled with Egypt in the 1979 Camp David Accords and with Jordan in the 1994 Israel-Jordan Treaty. Boundary disputes continue with Syria and with representatives of the Palestinian Authority. Israel has no de jure rights to territory in the Golan Heights, the Gaza Strip, or the West Bank. Since 1995 the Gaza Strip and West Bank have been partly administered by the Palestinian Authority.

Israel



The official capital is Jerusalem (including East Jerusalem), close to the northern end of the Dead Sea. The United Nations and most countries do not recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, however, and most embassies are located in Tel Aviv. The other major cities are Haifa, Holon, Petach-Tikva, Ramat-Gan, Beersheba, and Bene Baraq.

Topographically, Israel has four distinct divisions: coastal plains, mountains, valleys, and deserts. Nearly two-thirds of the population is concentrated along a narrow strip of Mediterranean coastal plain, including the three urban zones of Acre-Haifa, Tel Aviv-Jaffa, and Ashkelon-Ashdod as well as the occupied Gaza Strip.

The largest topographical division comprises mountains, softstone or dolomite in the north, pierced by natural caves and intersected by wadis (mostly dry riverbeds) and lofty granite peaks in the south. Mount Hermon in the north, with several peaks rising up to over 2,000 m (6,600 ft), towers over the basalt plateau of the Golan Heights. The mountains of Upper Galilee rise to 1,208 m (3,962 ft) at Meron, while Lower Galilee is about half as high. Parts of Samaria are 960 m (3,149 ft) above sea level. The Judean Hills are a compact range 80 km (50 mi) long and 14–19 km (9–12 mi) across, with an average altitude of 750 m (2,460 ft).

Descending eastward to the Dead Sea, the Judean Hills turn into the Judean Desert. The Negev Desert makes up two-thirds of the land area but contains only 6 percent of the population. The northern Negev region consists of low sandstone hills, steppes, and fertile plains abounding in canyons and wadis. In the central Negev, to the south, the mountains are higher and the climate drier. The Arava, an extremely parched stretch of desert between the Dead Sea and the Red Sea, has annual rainfall of less than 25 mm (1 in). To the south lie the Jordan Valley, the Jezreel, and the Hula.

Israel's only permanent rivers are the Jordan, Yarkon, Na'aman, Kishon, Taninim, Alexander, and Ga'aton. Except for the Jordan, all of the rivers flow into the Mediterranean. The Jordan is the largest river and the major source of water. It flows some 254 km (158 mi), at one point crossing the lowest point on earth at 701 m (2,300 ft) below sea level. The nation's major lakes are the Sea of Galilee, Lake Hula, and the Dead Sea.

Geography

Area sq km: 20,770; sq mi: 8,019

World Rank: 149th

Land Boundaries, km: Egypt 266; Gaza Strip 51; Jordan 238; Lebanon 79; Syria 76; West Bank 307

Coastline, km: 273

Elevation Extremes meters:

Lowest: Dead Sea -408

Highest: Har Meron 1,208

Land Use %

Arable Land: 16.4

Permanent Crops: 4.2

Forest: 6.1

Other: 73.3

Population of Principal Cities (2002 est.)

Ashdod	187,500
Beersheba	181,500
Haifa (Hefa)	270,800
Holon	165,800
Jerusalem	680,400
Netanya	164,800
Petah Tiqwa	172,600
Rishon LeZiyyon	211,600
Tel Aviv-Jaffa	360,400

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Israel has a Mediterranean climate, as characterized by long, hot, dry summers and short, cool, rainy winters. In general, the temperature is higher and rainfall lower as one moves from north to south.

January is the coldest month and August the hottest. The average temperature in Jerusalem ranges from 5–12°C (41–51°F), that in Tel Aviv from 11–20°C (52–68°F). About 70 percent of rainfall occurs between November and February. Rainfall tends to occur in violent storms, often causing flooding. Little rain falls in the Negev Desert. Snowfall is not uncommon in the higher elevations in January and February.

Climate and Weather

Temperature Range

Upper Galilee: January 36°F to 37°, August 64°F to 82°F

Hula Valley: January 46°F to 70°F, August 64°F to 93°F

Tel Aviv and Coastal Plain: January 52°F to 68°F, August 72°F to 86°F

Jerusalem and Judean Hills: January 41°F to 54°F, August 66°F to 82°F

Northern Negev: January 46°F to 68°F, August 68°F to 86°F

Gulf of Eliat: January 52°F to 73°F, August 68°F to 92°F

Average Rainfall

Upper Galilee: 42.5 in

Eliat: 0.8 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Israel is located at the convergence of three geographic zones, which makes it hospitable to a wide variety of plant and animal types. The southern part of the country is desert. Plants there include date palms, wild tulips, and irises. The east is subtropical. In the north, Galilee is fertile, wet, and mountainous, covered in olive trees and laurel forests. Animals include otters, sheep, goats, and a huge number of migratory birds who stop in Israel on their way to points north or south; Israel is the second-largest migratory bird flyway in the world. Israel has about 300 national parks, covering 20 percent of its territory, and these parks nurture plants and animals that have been endangered for centuries.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005:	6,276,883
World Rank:	100th
Density per sq km:	308.1
% of annual growth (1999-2003):	2.3
Male %:	49.7
Female %:	50.3
Urban %:	91.5
Age Distribution %:	
0–14:	26.5
15–64:	63.7
65 and over:	9.8
Population 2025:	7,612,000
Birth Rate per 1,000:	18.21
Death Rate per 1,000:	6.18
Rate of Natural Increase %:	1.2
Total Fertility Rate:	2.44
Expectation of Life (years):	
Males:	77.21
Females:	81.55
Marriage Rate per 1,000:	6.0
Divorce Rate per 1,000:	1.7
Average Size of Households:	3.7
Induced Abortions:	19,131

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Israel is a very homogeneous nation, with some 80 percent of the population belonging to the Semitic race. However, ethnoreligious differences have led to major divisions within Israeli society.

Israeli Jews are among the most ethnocentric people in the world; the culture, politics, society, language, and religion revolve around their identity as a separate ethnic group. However, even within the Jewish community there are major distinctions. The major split in Israel is between the European Ashkenazim and the Sephardim, also known as Oriental Jews, along with the Edot HaMizrata, or Black Jews. The Sephardim constitute the majority, but the Europeans are politically and economically dominant. There is a vast social and economic gulf between the two groups. The income of the Sephardim is only half that of the Europeans, and only 13 percent of the population has attended college. Furthermore, since many Sephardim subgroups, including the Falasha of Ethiopia and Bene Israel of India, emigrated en masse from developing nations, economic, linguistic, and cultural differences emerged. Religious strife also exists, as many outside groups integrated customs from their native lands and Orthodox Jews view any religious deviations as heresy.

Two other Jewish subgroups include the Karaites and the Samaritans. The Karaites date back to the ninth century. They accept only the five books of Moses (the Torah) and reject the rabbinical tradition. Although officially regarded as Jews, they are not permitted by the Rabbinical Council to marry other Jews. Samaritans date back to biblical times and believe that Mount Gerizim is

the site of the true temple. They speak Arabic. There are two main Samaritan Jewish communities—one in Holon and the other at Shechem.

The Arab population of Israel is also divided religiously. There are three main groups: Sunni Muslims (73 percent), Christians (11 percent), and Druze. Although granted the same rights on paper, Arabs are in fact second-class citizens subject to considerable restrictions in every area of public life. The Arab population has one of the highest birthrates in the world. This, combined with the prevalence of low-skill and low-wage jobs, has created considerable poverty among the Arabs, especially when compared with the Jewish population. Unemployment is common and is exacerbated by discrimination. Urban Arabs live mainly in the Arab cities of Nazareth and Ahafa Amr. Rural Arabs live in 104 Arab villages, most of them in Galilee and the Jerusalem area. Although quiescent until the 1980s, the Arab population of Israel has become radicalized, and the government has responded with brutal and repressive tactics. Human rights abuses are common, especially detention, restrictions on movement, and torture.

In addition to Arab Muslims and Christians, there are non-Arab Muslims and Christians in smaller numbers. Among the former is the Circassian community, concentrated mainly in two Galilean villages.

LANGUAGES

The official languages are Hebrew and Arabic, but English is used extensively in government, commerce, and education.

Hebrew is the language of the Old Testament. It has an alphabet of 22 letters and is written from right to left. After lying dormant since the beginning of the Christian era, Hebrew was revived in the 19th century, primarily through the efforts of Eliezer Ben-Yehuda (1858–1922). Upon immigrating to Palestine in 1881, he pioneered the use of Hebrew in homes and schools and the coining of new Hebrew words, established the first Hebrew periodical in 1884, cofounded the Hebrew Language Committee in 1890, and compiled the first Hebrew dictionary. Hebrew became an official language of Palestine under the British Mandate. The Academy of the Hebrew Language, established in 1953, guides the development of the language.

Arabic is used mainly by the Druze and Palestinian populations. However, as the Arab population has grown, so has the language. State documents are printed in both Arabic and Hebrew.

RELIGIONS

Israel is one of two modern states (the other being Pakistan) expressly founded as a homeland for a religious

group. Zionism and Judaism are inextricably linked, and it is difficult to conceive of Israel without its religious underpinnings.

Israel implies an exclusion from its polity of the other two monotheistic religions that claim their origins, partly or wholly, within the country. Efforts to Judaize society invariably conflict with the traditions of non-Jews and relegate them to the status of second-class citizens. Jews who convert to other religions cease to be Jewish in the eyes of the law. Religious education is compulsory in elementary and secondary education. On the Sabbath and religious holidays, particularly in Orthodox communities, public activity ceases. There are no civil marriages, divorces, or funerals, and even atheists must submit to religious authorities.

Certain religions are recognized by the state. These include Orthodox Judaism, Islam, Druze, Baha'i, and seven Christian sects: Greek Orthodox, Melkite, Latin, Maronite, Armenian, Coptic, and Anglican. Evangelical Christian churches have no legal status. Children under the age of 18 are not allowed to be converted.

The religious-political establishment includes the Chief Rabbinate and its Council, the Ministry of Religious Affairs, and local religious councils. All recognized religious communities are under the jurisdiction of the same ministry, which since 1956 has been headed by a member of the National Religious Party. The ministry maintains the courts of the various religious communities and provides funds for the construction and maintenance of religious buildings. The rabbinical courts are maintained by the ministry's Department for Jewish Religious Affairs. They include the Supreme Rabbinical Council and district rabbinical courts in nine cities.

Although Judaism is nondenominational, there are cleavages that may properly be called trends within the body. The three main trends are the Orthodox, the Messorati (Traditional/Conservative), and the Reform/Progressive. The Orthodox branch has a virtual monopoly over synagogues, courts, education, and marriages. The Orthodox branch is itself divided into two branches. The Ultraorthodox branch observes every nuance of Jewish law, with no concessions to modernity; among this group are the Hassidim. Moderate Orthodox groups include the Mafdal.

Officially, neither Reform nor Conservative Judaism is recognized by the state. Rabbis belonging to these branches may not perform marriages or divorces, conduct services in immigration absorption centers, supervise kashruth, or receive financial support from local religious councils. Relations between Reform and Orthodox branches are so hostile that the latter consider the former a separate non-Jewish sect.

The great majority of Christians are Palestinian Arabs. However, the Christian community is shrinking as a result of emigration.

A special religious problem concerns holy places. Within a radius of 1 km (0.6 mi) in Jerusalem are the sacred sites of three monotheistic religions: the Wailing Wall; two mosques; and numerous Christian shrines, including the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the site of the Last Supper, the Tomb of the Virgin, and the Chapel of the Ascension.

Religious Affiliations

Jewish	5,028,000
Muslim (mostly Sunni)	916,500
Christian	131,800
Other	200,900

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Palestine (now Israel) was under foreign rule continuously from the year 70, when Emperor Titus's legions marched into Jerusalem, to 1948, when the modern state of Israel was founded. Palestine was ruled by the Romans, Byzantines, Arabs, Christian crusaders, Ottoman Turks, and British.

In 1838 the first proposal for a Jewish state was put forward by Moses Montefiore. This was followed by efforts to start new Jewish settlements outside Jerusalem. In 1861 the first Jewish agricultural settlement was built at Mishkenot Sha'ananim. The Jewish pioneers were joined by members of the Hovevei Zion (Lovers of Zion) from Eastern Europe. In 1882 the first large-scale aliyah, or Jewish immigration into modern Israel, began from Russia, Romania, and Yemen, followed five years later with the founding of Zichron Yaacov by Baron Edmond de Rothschild. The Dreyfuss affair in France led to the formation of political Zionism. In 1897 the World Zionist Congress founded the World Zionist Organization to establish a homeland in Palestine. In 1903 the World Zionist Organization rejected a British proposal to found a Jewish state in Uganda.

The next year the second aliyah began in the wake of pogroms in Poland and Russia. The first kibbutz, or communal settlement, was founded in 1909 at Degania, and the Jewish city of Tel Aviv was established north of Jaffa. In 1917 the Balfour Declaration pledged British support for the establishment of a Jewish national home in Palestine. That same year British troops entered Jerusalem, ending 400 years of Ottoman rule. In 1919 the third aliyah began.

In 1920 the League of Nations granted Great Britain a mandate over Palestine and Trans-Jordan. In the same year the Histadrut, a Jewish labor federation, and Hagannah, a clandestine defense organization, were founded. The fourth and fifth aliyahs took place in 1924 and 1933. After the end of World War II, the United Nations proposed a partition of Palestine that was rejected by the

Arabs. The Haganah initiated a terrorist war against the British. When the British Mandate ended in 1948, the Jewish communities in Palestine were transformed into the State of Israel. In 1949 the first elections for the legislature (the Knesset) were held.

Immediately after the departure of British troops the new nation found itself under attack from five surrounding Arab nations. Israeli forces were able to defeat the invading troops, and a UN-sponsored armistice was negotiated. Israel was recognized by the United States and the USSR and in 1949 became a member of the United Nations. Efforts to seek accountability for the Holocaust reached a dramatic climax in 1960, when Israeli operatives kidnapped Nazi Adolf Eichmann from Argentina. Eichmann was subsequently tried and hanged for his actions during the Holocaust.

In 1955 Israeli forces were able to expel Egyptian troops from the al-Auja neutral zone. Following escalating tensions, in 1967 the Israelis won a stunning military victory during the Six-Day War. In the aftermath of the victory Israel occupied the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and annexed the Old City section of Jerusalem. In 1970 the United States brokered a cease-fire between Israel, Egypt, and Jordan.

The Knesset enacted legislation that allowed Jews who were overseas to claim Israeli citizenship in addition to their own in 1971. The next year the world was stunned as Palestinian terrorists killed 11 Israeli athletes at the Olympic Games in Munich. Israel retaliated with air strikes against Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) bases in Syria and Lebanon. In 1973 Egypt and Syria launched attacks that were repulsed by Israeli forces in what became known as the Yom Kippur War.

Tensions in the Middle East were greatly reduced in 1979 when U.S. president Jimmy Carter was able to negotiate the Camp David Accords between the Israeli prime minister Menachem Begin and the Egyptian president Anwar Sadat. The accords called for the Israeli withdrawal from the Sinai Peninsula in exchange for Egyptian recognition of Israel. However, following terrorist attacks from Lebanon, Israel invaded that nation in 1982 and occupied Beirut. After the arrival of a multinational peace-keeping force, the Israelis withdrew to a so-called security zone in the south of Lebanon.

Economic problems in 1985 led to the implementation of austerity measures, including wage freezes. Meanwhile, the nation airlifted Ethiopian Jews out of that nation and to Israel. Economic and political problems led to the intifada, an Arab uprising against Israel in predominantly Palestinian areas.

In 1991 the Middle East peace process was relaunched through the Madrid Conference. This ultimately led to the 1994 signing of a peace treaty between Israel and Jordan. In addition, the Palestinians were granted limited self-government in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip following the Interim Agreement between the two parties. In 1995 Prime Minister Yitzhak

Rabin was assassinated by an extremist for his role in the peace process. Nonetheless, the peace process continued, and in 1997 Israel and the Palestinian Authority signed the Hebron Agreement, which detailed the steps for the implementation of the Interim Agreement. This was followed by the Wye River Agreement in 1998. In 2000 Israel removed its troops from the security zone in south Lebanon. U.S. President Bill Clinton hosted a summit at Camp David that attempted to resolve the issues between Israel and Palestine, but the talks broke down and violence broke out in Israel, Gaza, and the West Bank that September.

In April 2001 the Sharm el-Sheikh Fact Finding Committee, chaired by former U.S. Senator George Mitchell, submitted a report calling for an immediate end to violence and the resumption of peace negotiations. Despite these efforts, violence continued. In September 2000 Prime Minister Ariel Sharon toured the al-Aqsa Temple Mount complex in Jerusalem, offending Arabs and prompting Palestinian demonstrations that quickly developed into what became known as the al-Aqsa intifada (also called the second intifada). The United States kept working to broker peace and implement the Mitchell plan. In April 2003 the United States, United Nations, European Union, and Russian Federation ("the Quartet") announced a roadmap for peace that posited two separate states. Both Israel and Palestine claimed to be committed to the plan, but violence continued on both sides. Arab terrorists and Ultraorthodox Jewish settlers continued to attack one another, and the leadership of Sharon and Arafat did not help.

In the winter of 2003–04 Sharon proposed a plan for disengaging from Gaza, which was endorsed by the Quartet. Yasser Arafat's death in November 2004 gave renewed hope to those seeking peace. The new Palestinian prime minister, Mahmoud Abbas, was widely regarded as a moderate more likely to negotiate with Israel than had been his predecessor. In January 2006 Sharon suffered a stroke and Ehud Olmert stepped in as acting prime minister. Shortly thereafter Hamas won elections to the Palestinian Legislative Council, making peace negotiations again unlikely.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

Prime Ministers

1948–54	David Ben-Gurion
1954–55	Moshe Sharett
1955–63	David Ben-Gurion
1964–69	Levi Eshkol
1969–74	Golda Meir
1974–77	Yitzhak Rabin
1977–83	Menachem Begin
1983–64	Yitzhak Shamir
1984–86	Shimon Peres
1986–92	Yitzhak Shamir
1992–95	Yitzhak Rabin
1995–96	Shimon Peres

1996–99 Benjamin Netanyahu
 1999–01 Ehud Barak
 2001– Ariel Sharon
 2006– Ehud Olmert (acting)

CONSTITUTION

Israel has no formal constitution. The Declaration of the State of Israel called for the promulgation of a constitution in 1948, but political differences prevented this, and in 1950 the Israeli parliament, the Knesset, passed a compromise resolution calling for the passage of basic laws that would form the basis of the national constitution. By 1978 six basic laws had been enacted. These acts cover topics that range from the Knesset and the presidency to the economy and the army.

In addition to the basic laws, there are a number of ordinary laws that deal with the structure of state institutions, including the Equal Rights for Women Law (1951), the Nationality Law (1952), the State Education Law (1953), and the Knesset Elections Law (1959). In the absence of a constitution, the courts are the principal guardians of civil rights and liberties. There is also no standard against which the Knesset acts can be judged or their legality tested.

The president is elected by the Knesset for a five-year term but may not serve for more than two terms. There is no vice president, and if the president is killed or incapacitated, the speaker of the Knesset exercises presidential functions. The president has no veto power but appoints major officials and is important in the formation of the cabinet. The executive is the prime minister and the cabinet. The cabinet consists of 15 ministers in addition to the prime minister. The president selects the prime minister, choosing the party leader he believes most capable of forming a government. The Israeli people voted for prime minister from 1996 until 2001, when the Knesset rescinded the law allowing direct election and the choice reverted to the president.

PARLIAMENT

The Israeli parliament, or Knesset, is a 120-member body whose members are elected by universal suffrage for four-year terms under a system of proportional representation; voters vote for parties, and the parties choose members on the basis of their party rank. The functions and structure of the Knesset are delineated in the traditional laws, as amended by later legislation. Every Israeli over the age of 21, regardless of gender or race, may be elected to the Knesset. The parliament is elected by a proportional party-list system in which the entire country forms one constituency. Parties receiving at least 1 percent of the votes are entitled to seats in the Knesset. Women and Arabs are underrepresented.

Within the constraints of party and group discipline, Knesset members have substantial freedom of action. The interests of their constituencies take precedence over

party discipline. Members often vote against their parties. There is no quorum requirement, which leaves members free to be absent for long periods. The narrow government coalitions that have characterized Israeli politics have reinforced the power of the individual member. In relation to the executive, the Knesset is far more powerful than its Western counterparts. With a simple vote of no confidence, the Knesset can topple the government. Legislation by the Knesset is not open to challenge in a court and may not be vetoed by the president.

All legislative work is done in committees. Standing committees deal with constitution, law, justice, economics, finance, foreign affairs, security, education, culture, immigration, internal affairs, environment, labor welfare, and state control. The committees do much of their work through subcommittees.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Israel has historically been governed by coalitions formed among multiple parties. Labor led the government from independence through 1977, when the Likud bloc rose to power. In 1984 Labor and Likud were forced to form a unity government that lasted until 1990. Likud held power from 1990 to 1992, when Labor, led by Yitzhak Rabin, formed a coalition with Meretz, Shas, and two Arab-majority parties. Shas promptly left the coalition, and Rabin was assassinated in 1995. Likud took power in 1996, Labor reclaimed the majority in 1999, and Likud again took dominance in 2001, under Ariel Sharon. Sharon formed a coalition with Labor, but the unity government collapsed in 2002, and the 2003 elections resulted in another coalition formed with Likud, the National Religious Party, the National Union Party, and the centrist Shinui. In 2004 this coalition was once again on the verge of collapse.

Major parties include the Geshet, a center-right party formed from dissident Likud members; the Labor Party, center-left; the Likud Party, center-right; the Meretz, a center-left party that supports the peace process; the National Religious Party, a center-right religious party that promotes Zionism; the Shas, a conservative Talmudic party; the Third Way, formed from defectors from the Labor Party, which opposes “land for peace”; the Tsomet, a center-right party; the United Arab List, a far-left party that represents Arab interests; the United Torah Judaism, an ultraconservative Orthodox party; and Yisrael Ba’aliya, a party that supports immigrant rights. There are a number of other minor and religious parties.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Israel is a highly centralized state, and local government is relatively limited in power. The nation is divided into six administrative districts and 14 subdistricts under the charge of district commissioners and district officers, re-

spectively. These officers are appointed by and responsible to the minister of the interior.

Local self-government consists of elected municipal, local, and regional councils. Councillors are elected by secret, universal, direct, and proportional voting. Mayors and chairpersons are elected by the councils. Larger urban areas are classified as municipalities, and local councils are classified as Class A or Class B, depending upon population. Regional councils are elected by settlements such as *kibbutzim* and *moshavim*.

The *kibbutz* and *moshav* are institutions peculiar to Israel. The *kibbutz* is a cooperative, egalitarian, and economically independent community. Members own no property and receive no salaries. Needs are provided by the community, and all members participate equally in decision making.

In the *moshav* each family maintains its own household and farms its own land, but major economic and social services are provided cooperatively. The *moshav's* cooperative provides marketing, supply, educational, and medical services through its central governing body.

LEGAL SYSTEM

Israeli legal codes and judicial procedures are derived from a variety of sources. Laws applicable to Israeli Jews in matters of personal status are based on the Torah. There are also Ottoman influences, and British law provides the basis for the court procedure, criminal law, and civil code. Provisions for civil liberties and rights bear the imprint of U.S. models.

The judiciary comprises three main kinds of courts—secular, religious, and military—each under a separate ministry. The secular courts are under the Ministry of Justice, the religious courts are under the Ministry for Religious Affairs, and the military courts are under the Ministry of Defense. Secular judges are appointed by the president on the recommendation of a broadly constituted nomination committee. The judges of the religious courts are appointed by the president on the advice of a committee chaired by the minister of religious affairs. Judges serve for life or until age 70.

At the top of the court hierarchy is the Supreme Court, which is composed of a number of justices determined by the Knesset, currently 12. The court has both appellate and original jurisdiction. Although the court is the supreme guardian of fundamental rights, it does not have the power of judicial review and cannot invalidate Knesset legislation.

There are also five district courts, which form the second tier of the civil court structure. These courts have original jurisdiction over cases not within the jurisdiction of the lower courts. They also have an appellate function. The lowest tier of courts is the magistrate courts, which include traffic, juvenile, labor, and military courts.

The highest court in the Jewish religious court structure is the High Rabbinical Court of Appeal, also known as the Rabbinical Supreme Court. The court hears appeals from the eight district rabbinical courts. For Muslim, Druze, and Christian religious courts, the legal authority is not their respective religious traditions but the secular laws of the state.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Human rights in Israel present a mixed picture. Israel is a parliamentary democracy that guarantees civil, political, and religious rights to all citizens irrespective of race, religion, and gender. However, in the occupied territories there is a large and hostile minority group that is underrepresented in government and whose only outlets for grievances have been demonstrations and terrorism at home and abroad. There is a cycle of violence and repression in the country, with the Jewish majority not shunning the most brutal means to subdue the Arabs and the latter in turn resorting to indiscriminate terrorism to make their voice heard around the world.

In these circumstances, the quality of human rights as well as the guarantees of civil, political, and religious liberties have suffered. In 1987 a special judicial commission issued a report condemning the Israeli security agency. Under the state of emergency initiated in the wake of security cases, freedoms of speech, press, and movement are limited. Arabs may be confined by administrative orders to their neighborhoods or villages.

Since 1987 there has been a significant increase in violence, including acts of terrorism by Jewish settlers and the PLO and other Palestinian groups. International human rights organizations have complained of the frequent and systematic mistreatment of Arab prisoners in Israel. Armed suspects may be held in custody without charges for up to 18 days. Persons held for security reasons are not allowed bail, and there is often no notification of their arrest. Security policy may impose curfews and close off areas. Homes of suspects may be destroyed. Persons arrested for security reasons are tried by military court. In the occupied territories political rights are almost entirely absent. No political party is permitted to function, and public gatherings of more than 10 people require official permits, which are routinely denied. Several labor unions have been disbanded, and registrations for new unions are denied.

The September 1993 Israeli-Palestinian Declaration of Principles and the Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip in 1995 marked the beginnings of an effort at reconciliation and the establishment of a Palestinian self-governing authority. The agreements called for the transfer of civil authority to the Palestinians. The 1997 Hebron Agreement established arrangements for the redeployment of Israeli forces. The beginning of the

second intifada in September 2000 brought about a new wave of suicide bombings aimed at Israeli civilians, with the Israeli military responding with frequent retaliatory acts. In 2002 the Israeli government began constructing a highly controversial “wall of separation” around the West Bank in an attempt to stem the tide of suicide bombers coming from the West Bank.

FOREIGN POLICY

Since the nation was founded, Israel has been under constant military threat. As such, its foreign and defense policies are inexorably intertwined. Israel has concentrated on military strength and preparedness to ensure its survival. While the United States is its only firm and consistent ally, Israel has had substantial economic and political support from Jewish groups around the world.

Despite decisive military victories in three wars—the War of Independence in 1948–49, the Six-Day War in 1967, and the Yom Kippur War in 1973—Israel has only recently made progress toward a sustainable peace settlement with its neighbors. Compounding Israel’s problems have been the invasion and occupation of southern Lebanon and the consistent opposition of the United Nations toward Israeli occupation of the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

The 1979 Camp David Accords marked the beginning of the Middle East Peace Process, but real progress on this front has come only recently. The accord restored to Egypt its pre-1973 borders and led to diplomatic relations between the two nations. This was followed by the restoration of diplomatic ties with Jordan in 1994 and the establishment of the Palestinian Authority (consisting of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip) in 1995. Disagreements over Israeli troop withdrawals and the amount of land to be turned over to the Palestinians have slowed the peace process and led to domestic political problems for Israel. Other major disputes continue with Syria over the status of the Golan Heights and the continuing Israeli occupation of southern Lebanon.

A visit to the Temple Mount (the Dome of the Rock) in Jerusalem, a site considered traditionally off limits to non-Arabs, by Ariel Sharon, the Likud leader, led to a deadly escalation of violence that began toward the end of 2000 with the second intifada. By September 2004 the death toll was estimated at more than 2,400 Arabs and 1,000 Jews. The election of Sharon as prime minister in 2001 only contributed to a worsening of the situation.

Yasser Arafat died in November 2004. His death has given Israelis and Palestinians new hope for peaceful reconciliation. A shaky truce between the Israelis and Palestinians in February 2005 was also grounds for hope of a peaceful resolution to the violence.

DEFENSE

In few countries of the world does national security play as pervasive a role in society as it does in Israel. The country devotes more human and economic resources per capita to defense than any other nation; in 2002 the nation spent 8.7 percent of its gross domestic product (GDP) on the military. The Israel Defense Force (IDF) has no commander in chief; instead, the main elements of command are the Ministry of Defense, the chief of staff, and the director general of the ministry. Unlike other defense forces in Western democracies, parliamentary control over the IDF is weak, although cabinet control is strong. The United States and Israel have collaborated on military planning and weapons development since establishing the Joint Political Military Group in 1983. The United States supplies Israel about \$2 billion annually in security assistance.

The IDF has a ground corps, a navy, and an air force. Most Israelis must serve in the military when they turn 18; men serve for three years and women for 21 months. Women do not serve in combat branches. Ultraorthodox Jews and Christians are not subject to conscription but may volunteer. Arabs do not ordinarily serve in the military.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	175,000
Military Manpower Availability:	1,492,125
Military Expenditures \$billion:	9.11
as % of GDP:	8.7
as % of central government expenditures:	16
Arms Imports \$million:	318
Arms Exports \$million:	212

ECONOMY

Israel has a free-market economy with a dominant private sector but substantial government involvement. It is dependent on the importation of oil, raw materials, and military equipment. The major industries include food processing, textiles, chemicals, transport equipment, high-technology electronics, metal products, and tourism. Nearly one-third of the population is employed in public services, one-fifth in manufacturing.

Israel’s main exports include machinery and equipment, chemicals, textiles and apparel, agricultural products, and metals. Its main imports are raw materials, military equipment, investment goods, oil, and consumer goods. The nation’s major trade partners are the United States, Belgium, Germany, the United Kingdom, Italy, Japan, and the Netherlands. During the 1980s the economy was hampered by high inflation and unemployment, and unemployment continues at high levels among the Arab population. However, in the 1990s the economy rebounded as exports increased. In addition, the normalization of relations with

Jordan opened new markets. The economy grew at a rate of 1.3 percent in 2003 as tourism and foreign direct investment improved over the previous two years. It grew another 2.7 percent in 2004 as a result of greater consumer confidence and increased demand for Israeli exports.

The nation has achieved self-sufficiency in fruits, vegetables, poultry, eggs, and dairy products but still imports a substantial portion of its requirements for meat and vegetable oil and about half its grain needs. Agriculture has a historic prominence in Israeli life greater than its economic contribution. It had a central place in Zionist ideology and played a dominant role in the settlement of the country, particularly the kibbutzim and the moshavim. Freshwater is a scarce resource in Israel, as it is in most of the Middle East. The success of Israeli agriculture is partly the result of the extensive development of this scarce resource through an integrated national water system. Some 90 percent of the nation's water resources are being used.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 129
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 20,800
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 2.1
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: –0.2
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 2.8
 Industry: 37.7
 Services: 59.5
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 55
 Government Consumption: 30
 Gross Domestic Investment: 17.6
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 34.41
 Imports: 36.84
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 2.4
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 28.3

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
134.5	136.1	137.6	145.3	144.4

Finance

National Currency: New Israeli Shekel (ILS)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = ILS 4.53
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 38.4
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 5.2
 Total External Debt \$billion: 74.46
 Debt Service Ratio %: —
 Balance of Payments \$million: 211.9
 International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 25.8
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 0

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 440
 per capita \$: 65.80
 Foreign Direct Investment \$billion: 3.67

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$billion: 48.09
 Expenditures \$billion: 52.11
 Budget Deficit \$billion: 4.02
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 2.8
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: —
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 7.25
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 45.8
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 240.5
 Total Farmland % of land area: 15.6
 Livestock: Cattle 000: 400
 Chickens million: 30
 Pigs 000: 195
 Sheep 000: 390
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters 000: 27
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 27.1

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: —
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 4.5

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 101
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 19.7
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 3.06
 Net Energy Imports % of use: 96.6
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 9.7
 Production kW-hr billion: 41.2
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 36.9
 Coal Reserves tons billion: —
 Production tons million: —
 Consumption tons million: 10.9
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: 1.375
 Production cubic feet million: 350
 Consumption cubic feet million: 350
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels million: 3.8
 Production barrels 000 per day: 0.1
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 279
 Pipelines Length km: 1,509

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 36.84
 Exports \$billion: 34.41
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 4.8
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 3.4
 Balance of Trade \$million: 211.9

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
United States %	19.7	37.3
Belgium %	7.8	5.3
Germany %	7.6	-
United Kingdom %	6.5	4.1
Switzerland %	6.4	-

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 16,903
 Paved %: 100
 Automobiles: 1,474,000
 Trucks and Buses: 350,200
 Railroad: Track Length km: 640
 Passenger-km million: 961
 Freight-km billion: 1.1
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 17
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 881
 Airports: 51
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 12.2
 Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 1.06
 Number of Tourists from million: 3.30
 Tourist Receipts \$billion: 2.38
 Tourist Expenditures \$billion: 3.34

Communications

Telephones million: 3.006
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones million: 6.334
 Personal Computers million: 1.61
 Internet Hosts per million people: 69,703
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 319

ENVIRONMENT

The limited amount of arable land and water in Israel has led to concerns over resource use. Intensive farming has also led to serious depletion of water and soil and to desertification. Air pollution from industrial plants and auto emissions is a problem in urban areas, as is ground-water pollution from fertilizers, industrial discharge, and chemicals. The government is well aware of its environmental problems, and the Ministry of the Environment has developed strategies for confronting them.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 6.1
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: 5
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 16
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 39,823
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 10.03

LIVING CONDITIONS

Over 90 percent of Israelis live in cities, mostly in modern apartments. Some people live in detached houses called *villas*; villas have been built all over the hillsides of the small nation, some of them supported on stilts. Houses are painted light colors and are floored with stone tiles to be as cool as possible; shutters keep out the bright sunlight.

Transportation in and out of the country can be expensive and complicated; anyone with an Israeli stamp in his or her passport is not allowed to enter Lebanon or Syria. Bus transportation is cheap and efficient, though many buses do not run on Saturday, the Sabbath. Many people use shared taxis, which do run on Saturdays.

HEALTH

Israel's National Health Insurance Law provides that all residents receive medical care. There are many doctors and clinics. People who do not wish to use the excellent national facilities may pay for their choice of private medical caregivers. Israelis are quite healthy, with high life expectancies and a low infant mortality rate. There are special mother and child-care facilities specifically to handle pregnancy and early childhood. The government spends money promoting healthy lifestyles and preventative care. The Dead Sea area attracts patients who believe that the waters and air will cure their psoriasis, asthma, and other conditions.

Health

Number of Physicians: 24,140
 Number of Dentists: 7,387
 Number of Nurses: 38,029
 Number of Pharmacists: 4,176
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 391
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: 6.2
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 7.03
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 17
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 9.1
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 1,496
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.1
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 97
 Measles: 95
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 100
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 100

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Many of Israel's dietary traditions are dictated by religion. Neither Jews nor Muslims eat pork. Jews do not mix meat and milk and avoid certain unclean animals, such as shrimp. Jews do not cook on Saturday, the Sabbath, and so they usually cook a stew called *cholent* the day before

and eat it cold. People eat food that originated in eastern Europe, such as gefilte fish, borscht, blintzes, schnitzel, and goulash, and in Yemen, such as stuffed vegetables. There is also a variety of traditional Arab food, such as hummus, falafel, pita bread, and salads. Sandwiches made of pita bread and hummus or falafel are popular fast foods. Nuts and corn on the cob are popular snacks. Muslims do not drink alcohol but do consume a great deal of coffee and tea. People make juice from almonds, tamarinds, and dates. Meat is scarce and expensive, while vegetables are abundant. Many early Israeli settlers were vegetarian, and vegetarianism is still common.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 153.7
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 336.4

STATUS OF WOMEN

Violence against women is a problem in Israel, in both the Hebrew and Arab communities. There are discrepancies in pay, despite the fact that legislation passed in 1996 provides for legal remedies for inequities in pay. Women are also underrepresented in government and the higher levels of industry. Religious law is more restrictive for women, especially Muslims. For instance, Islamic courts have held that Muslim women may not request a divorce. Ultraorthodox Jews tend to rank women well below men, and Ultraorthodox women often have very many children—perhaps ten or more.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 15
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.0
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 48.9

WORK

The vast majority of Israel's workforce is employed in service, manufacturing, and the public sector. Factory workers make products such as electronics, computer hardware and software, and chemicals. Some people work in the diamond industry, cutting and polishing rough diamonds for export. Most workers belong to trade unions. Many Palestinians work in Israel, commuting across the border daily; they are employed on farms, in construction, and in the garment industry. When the border is sealed during tense periods, these workers cannot reach

their jobs, which causes problems for them and their employers. A few Israelis work as farmers, using complex irrigation techniques to produce their crops.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 2,680,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 42.2
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishing: 2.6
 Manufacturing: 20.2
 Construction: 7.5
 Commerce: 12.8
 Transport, Storage, and Communications: 6.2
 Finance and Business: 13.1
 Personal and Other Services: 6.4
 Public Services: 31.2
 Unemployment %: 10.7

EDUCATION

The legal foundation of education is found in the Compulsory Education Law of 1949 and the State Education Law of 1953. These laws made Hebrew or Arabic the language of instruction. Hebrew-language schools are divided into two tracks: state and state-religious. Higher education is controlled by the Law on the Council for Higher Education of 1958.

Education is free and compulsory for children ages six to 16. Primary education lasts six years. The structure of secondary education is based on European models. It has three tracks: academic, technological, and agricultural. The first leads to the university and the other two to technical careers. There are seven universities in Israel, an Open University program, and several regional colleges. About 75 percent of university funds come from the state, the rest from tuition fees, grants, gifts, and endowments.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 95.4
 Male %: 97.3
 Female %: 93.6
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 15.8
 First Level: Primary Schools: 1,937
 Teachers: 61,294
 Students: 760,346
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 12.4
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 99.9
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 797
 Teachers: 72,369
 Students: 480,467
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 8.4
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 88.9
 Third Level: Institutions: 7
 Teachers: —
 Students: 299,716
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 57.7
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 7.3

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Israel has a well-developed information-technology industry, which manufactures computer hardware and software and other technical products. Israelis are very comfortable using computers and other technologies. In 2002 about two million people had Internet access. Israel is one of the world's leaders in irrigation techniques, using high-tech methods to water their desert farms.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 1,563
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 5.08
 High-Tech Exports \$billion: 5.3
 Patent Applications by Residents: 2,323

MEDIA

Israelis are passionately interested in the news. Almost all adults read at least one newspaper a week, and nearly everyone listens to daily news on the radio or watches reports on television. Because of its small size, Israel has only national newspapers. The major dailies are published in Hebrew, but there are also newspapers in English, Arabic, French, German, Yiddish, Russian, and Hungarian. All dailies are privately owned. Since most dailies are organs of political or religious groups, they are heavily subsidized by their parent organizations. There are two major television networks, but most households subscribe to satellite or cable services. The first commercial radio station opened in 1995. In 2003 there were about 150 pirate radio stations, many of them illegally broadcasting Ultraorthodox programming.

The media are monitored by two state agencies: the Central Office of Information and the Government Press Office; however, there is little *de jure* censorship. The Arab press is treated as hostile and subversive and is subject to onerous restrictions. In the early 2000s there were numerous violations of freedom of the press; almost all of them were carried out by Israelis against Arab journalists.

Media

Daily Newspapers: —
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: 2,317
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets million: 2
 per 1,000: 328

CULTURE

Israeli culture is a mix of several distinct traditions, including Arab, Jewish, and Druze; in addition, within each of these groups there are distinct subcultures. In the dominant Jewish culture there is a continuing debate between the secular and religious communities over the place and role of Orthodox law and tradition. In many ways Israeli culture is very cosmopolitan and Western, yet these trends exist side by side with traditional communities that shun modern popular culture. There also exist conflicts between native-born Israelis and newer Jewish immigrants over issues such as education and language.

Israel's well-educated and cosmopolitan population supports a variety of artistic endeavors, which are supported with government funds. There are several professional dance companies, the Israeli Philharmonic Orchestra, the New Israel Opera, and the Jerusalem Symphony as well as numerous smaller orchestras and ensembles in cities and towns. Many Israeli musicians come from the former Soviet Union. There are three large theater repertory companies, including Habimeh, founded in 1917. Israeli audiences watch performances of the full range of dramas in translated works and in original works by Israeli playwrights. There are artists' colonies in Ein Hod, Jaffa, and Safed. The Israel Museum in Jerusalem displays a collection of regional artworks, including Jewish folk exhibits and the Dead Sea Scrolls.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: 95
 Annual Attendance: 6,780,000
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Folk dancing is popular; folk groups perform the dances of the various ethnic groups that form Israel's population. The University of Haifa has a program in folklore studies that examines Israeli folk culture and beliefs. The Old Testament is full of myths, such as the two versions of the creation of humans and the tale of the flood that destroyed all of humanity.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Because Israel has a warm, dry climate, people spend a great deal of time outdoors. They like to sit at sidewalk

cafés in the afternoons, where they may talk with friends or read newspapers; stores close during the afternoon, so many people are free then. People love to go to the cinema; most films are subtitled in Hebrew, English, or French. Water sports are wildly popular on the Mediterranean, Red Sea, and Sea of Galilee coastlines, and people engage in swimming, waterskiing, parasailing, sailing, surfing, scuba diving, and snorkeling. One attraction for scuba divers is the ruins of Caesarea, Herod's city. Hiking and horseback riding are also popular.

ETIQUETTE

Israelis often come across as blunt or even rude. They consider it appropriate to interrupt speakers, to ask personal questions, or to answer questions addressed to other people, preferring directness to ambiguous subtleties. Israelis often stand closer to their conversational partners than Americans, and men engage in physical contact while talking. People gesture constantly, but pointing is rude.

There is a wide range of behaviors considered acceptable, depending on ethnic group. For example, Ultraorthodox Jewish men do not introduce their wives to strangers, and it is not appropriate to ask to be introduced to women. Men do not offer to shake hands with women and vice versa.

Food and meals are a central part of Israeli social life for both Jews and Arabs. When guests arrive, they will be served food. Arabs use only their right hands for eating and consider it rude to eat food with the left.

FAMILY LIFE

Most Israelis have small nuclear families with one or two children. The exception to this is the Ultraorthodox Jews, who marry young and have many children, sometimes well over ten. People usually wait to marry until they have completed their military service at the age of 20 or 21. Most urban women now work outside the home, leaving their children in preschool or day care. Families make a point of eating together. The early Jewish settlers in Palestine established kibbutzim, where all adults worked and shared the income and all children were raised together in day care; the importance of kibbutzim has declined. Arabs in Israel mostly live in small villages in the north and in East Jerusalem; villages usually house extended families.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Israelis typically dress casually; businessmen rarely wear ties and sometimes wear short-sleeve shirts. They usu-

ally dress formally, however, when meeting business partners for the first time. Women are expected to dress modestly in religious areas, and devout women dress quite conservatively at all times. They wear long sleeves, high necks, and long, loose skirts or pants. In especially religious areas, women in revealing attire may be verbally attacked by both Ultraorthodox Jews and Muslims. Nevertheless, most Israelis dress according to modern European fashions.

SPORTS

Soccer and basketball are both wildly popular. The City Hall in Tel Aviv owns huge television screens that it uses to broadcast coverage of championships in the town square for the benefit of crowds that gather there. Tennis and swimming are also popular sports. Thousands of people participate every year in the Jerusalem March.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1948** Great Britain relinquishes its Palestinian Mandate and withdraws from territory. Arab military forces invade Palestine but are repelled by Jewish resistance. Under UN auspices Israel enters into armistice with its Arab neighbors. United States and Soviet Union recognize the new state of Israel.
- 1949** Israel is admitted to United Nations. First Knesset election is held.
- 1955** Israel invades al-Auja neutral zone to expel Egyptians and retaliates against Syrian attacks.
- 1960** Nazi Adolf Eichmann is kidnapped from Argentina, tried, found guilty, and hanged.
- 1967** Clashes with Syria and Egypt escalate. Egypt initiates a blockade. Israeli aircraft launch attacks that destroy over 400 Arab aircraft, ensuring an Israeli victory in the Six-Day War. Israel occupies the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and annexes the Old City part of Jerusalem.
- 1970** Egypt, Israel, and Jordan accept a U.S.-proposed 90-day cease-fire.
- 1971** Knesset enacts new citizenship law enabling overseas Jews to claim Jewish citizenship in addition to their own.
- 1972** At the Olympic Games in Munich, Palestinian terrorists kill 11 Israeli athletes. Israel retaliates with air strikes against PLO bases in Syria and Lebanon.
- 1973** Egypt and Syria launch attacks across the 1967 cease-fire line on Yom Kippur.

- Israeli forces drive the Syrians back to within artillery distance of Damascus and cross the Suez Canal into Egypt, before a cease-fire is agreed upon.
- 1979** Through the mediation of U.S. president Jimmy Carter, Egyptian president Anwar Sadat and Israeli prime minister Menachem Begin sign the Camp David Accords in Washington, D.C., under which Israel withdrew from the Sinai Peninsula and Egypt recognized Israel.
- 1982** Israel invades Lebanon and occupies Beirut. Following the arrival of a multinational peace-keeping force, Israel begins phased withdrawal.
- 1985** As economy falters and inflation soars, the government launches an emergency austerity plan restraining wages and public spending. Ethiopian Jews are airlifted to Israel from Ethiopia through Sudan.
- 1987** Arab riots and demonstrations prompt Israel to counter with repressive measures.
- 1991** The peace process is reinvigorated by the Madrid Conference.
- 1994** Peace treaty with Jordan signed.
- 1995** Israel and Palestinians sign Interim Agreement on the West Bank and Gaza Strip, which calls for the establishment of self-government for the Palestinians and the redeployment of Israeli security forces. Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin is assassinated.
- 1997** Israel and the PLO sign the Hebron Agreement, which details the Israeli withdrawal and outlines the steps for the implementation of the Interim Agreement.
- 1998** Wye River Agreement facilitates continuation of process initiated by the Interim Agreement.
- 2000** Israeli forces withdraw from South Lebanon. Talks at Camp David attempt to engineer a peaceful resolution to the conflicts between Israel and Palestine but ultimately fail. The second intifada begins.
- 2001** Ariel Sharon is elected prime minister. Escalating death toll in Arab-Israeli conflict is estimated at more than 1,000.
- 2002** Israel begins building a controversial "wall of separation" through the West Bank in an effort to reduce the onslaught of suicide bombers.
- 2003** The United States, United Nations, European Union, and Russian Federation offer Israel and Palestine another peace plan. Violence continues.
- 2004** Sharon suggests a plan for removing Israelis from Gaza. Yasser Arafat dies in November.
- 2005** Mahmoud Abbas is elected Palestinian prime minister. A tentative truce is announced between the

Israelis and Palestinians, offering hope of an end to the second intifada.

- 2006** Sharon suffers a stroke and Ehud Olmert becomes acting prime minister. Hamas wins Palestinian elections.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Central Bureau of Statistics
<http://www.cbs.gov.il/engindex.htm>
- Israel Government Gateway
<http://www.info.gov.il/eng/mainpage.asp>

ITALY

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Italian Republic (Repubblica Italiana)

ABBREVIATION

IT

CAPITAL

Rome

HEAD OF STATE

President Carlo Azeglio Ciampi (from 1999)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi (from 2001)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Parliamentary democracy

POPULATION

58,103,033 (2005)

AREA

301,230 sq km (116,275 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Italian

LANGUAGE

Italian

RELIGION

Roman Catholicism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Euro

NATIONAL FLAG

Tricolor of green, white, and red vertical stripes, from left to right

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A white, red-bordered star superimposed on a gear, flanked by an olive branch and an oak branch, with "Repubblica Italiana" on a red ribbon at the base

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"Inno di Mameli" (Hymn of Mameli)

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day), January 6 (Epiphany), April 25 (Liberation Day), May 1 (Labor Day), June 2 (Proclamation of the Republic), August 15 (Assumption), November 4 (Day of National Unity), all major Christian festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

March 17, 1861

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

January 1, 1948

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

A peninsula jutting out from southern Europe, Italy covers a land area of 116,275 sq mi (301,230 sq km). The boot-shaped Italian peninsula is 736 miles (1,185 km) in length, and its greatest width is 391 mi (630 km). Italy is surrounded by the Ligurian, Tyrrhenian, Ionian, and Adriatic seas, all arms of the Mediterranean Sea. Besides Sardinia and Sicily, the nation's territory includes many islands and archipelagoes. Italy's coastline runs for 4,722 mi (7,600 km).

The capital and largest city is Rome, situated on the banks of the Tiber River.

Italy is predominantly mountainous, and plains compose less than one-third of its area. The two principal mountain ranges are the Alps and the Apennines. The Alps in northern Italy are made up of a series of massifs and chains running almost parallel to each other. The Apennines, running north to south in the interior of the peninsula, are formed of softer rocks and are less elevated than the Alps. Italy's topography is marked by several active volcanoes, including Vesuvius near Naples, Etna in Sicily, and Stromboli and Vulcano in the Lipari Islands.

The Po Plain, flanked by the Alps and the northern Apennines, is a major landform. Other plains are small in

Italy



1160 Italy

area. The Po River is Italy's largest river, 399 mi (642 km) in length and navigable almost its entire length. Other rivers are the Adige, Reno, Bradano, Rota, Tiber, and Arno.

Geography

Area sq km: 301,230; sq mi 116,275
World Rank: 69th
Land Boundaries, km: Austria 430; France 448; Vatican City 3.2; San Marino 39; Slovenia 232; Switzerland 740
Coastline, km: 7,600
Elevation Extremes meters:
Lowest: Mediterranean Sea 0
Highest: Mont Blanc de Courmayeur 4,748
Land Use %
Arable Land: 27.8
Permanent Crops: 9.5
Forest: 34.0
Other: 28.7

Population of Principal Cities (2004)

Bari	314,166
Bologna	373,539
Brescia	191,114
Cagliari	162,560
Catania	307,774
Florence	367,259
Foggia	154,792
Genoa	601,338
Livorno	155,880
Messina	248,616
Milan	1,271,898
Modena	178,874
Naples	1,000,449
Padua	208,938
Palermo	679,730
Parma	164,528
Perugia	153,857
Prato	176,013
Reggio di Calabria	181,440
Rome	2,542,003
Taranto	199,131
Turin	867,857
Trieste	208,309
Venice	271,663
Verona	258,115

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Italy has a temperate climate with a wide variety of regional characteristics. The principal climatic factors are the peninsula's length from north to south, the length of the coastline, and the presence of the Alps and the Apennines.

The alpine region is characterized by harsh winters and moderately warm summers. Precipitation, often in the form of snow, is abundant there. The Po Plain has a semicontinental climate, with harsh winters, long pe-

riods of subfreezing temperatures, and warm summers. High humidity makes summer sultry and creates frequent heavy fog in winter. The Ligurian and Tyrrhenian regions enjoy exceptionally mild winters and moderately warm summers. In the Adriatic region, coastal temperatures are lower in the winter, and summers are hotter. In the Apennine region, climatic conditions vary along the two opposing seaboard but are generally continental, with extremely mild winters and hot summers.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature: 52°F to 66°F
Po Valley: 55°F
Sicily: 64°F
Coastal Lowlands: 58°F
Average Rainfall
Southeastern Coast, Sicily, and Sardinia: 20 in
Alps: 80 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Italy's plants are Mediterranean. Olive trees and cypress are everywhere, as are pines, cork trees, and ilex. Herbs such as rosemary, thyme, and lavender grow wild. There are many shrubs, including heather, juniper, and gorse, and flowering plants such as irises, gladioli, and orchids. Prickly pear cacti cover much of the southern part of the country. Wild animals are rare, though there are still a few wolves, bears, foxes, marmots, wildcats, deer, sheep, chamois, and wild boar. Birds of prey include golden eagles, falcons, and hawks.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 58,103,033
World Rank: 23rd
Density per sq km: 196.0
% of annual growth (1999-2003): 0.0
Male %: 49.0
Female %: 51.0
Urban %: 67.2
Age Distribution %: 0-14: 13.9
15-64: 66.7
65 and over: 19.4
Population 2025: 56,234,000
Birth Rate per 1,000: 8.89
Death Rate per 1,000: 10.3
Rate of Natural Increase %: -0.1
Total Fertility Rate: 1.28
Expectation of Life (years): Males 76.75
Females 82.81
Marriage Rate per 1,000: 4.6
Divorce Rate per 1,000: 0.7
Average Size of Households: 2.6
Induced Abortions: 126,164

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Ethnically, Italians are an amalgam of the various peoples to whom Italy has been home for centuries: Lombards and Goths in the north; Greeks, Spaniards, and Saracens in Sicily; Latins in and around Rome; and Etruscans and others in central Italy. Regional loyalties remain strong, but they are being gradually erased and replaced by socioeconomic differences.

Non-Italian minorities form less than 2 percent of the population and are concentrated in provinces close to France, Austria, Croatia, and Slovenia.

LANGUAGES

The national and official language is Italian. While each region has its own dialect, Tuscan, the dialect of Tuscany, is the standard. Regions are permitted to have official second languages, and under this provision French is the official second language in Valle d' Aosta, German in Alto-Adige, and Ladin (related to the Romansch language of Switzerland) and Slovene in the northern Venetian region. Sard, the dialect of Sardinia, is sometimes considered a distinct Romance language.

RELIGIONS

The Roman Catholic Church occupies a special place in the history of Italy. As the home of the papacy, Italy's religion, culture, and politics have long been intertwined with the Catholic Church. Roman Catholicism remains the religion of the vast majority, with one-tenth or so of the people classified as nonreligious. Islam and other religions are practiced by some 5 percent of the population.

Relations between church and state are governed by the Lateran Agreements of 1929, which confirmed the existence of Vatican City as the sovereign papal territory within Rome and recognized the preeminence of the Catholic Church in the nation's religious affairs.

The Catholic Church played an important role in politics in the two decades following World War II through its strong, acknowledged support of the Christian Democratic Party, which controlled the Italian government. During the reign of Pope John XXIII (1958–63), the church relaxed its political efforts, as the danger that the Communist Party would come to power became less serious. Since the 1970s the church has for the most part remained out of the nation's politics.

Religious Affiliations

Roman Catholic	49,388,000
Other	8,715,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Although Italy is relatively young as a nation-state, the name Italy is an ancient name used to identify the boot-shaped peninsula that juts from the Alps into the Mediterranean. The name was coined by the Greeks, for whom it meant a country good for grazing cattle. The Latins and other Italic tribes are reported to have settled in the land by 2000 B.C.E. Around 1200 B.C.E. the Etruscans appeared to challenge the early settlers as well as the Greeks. The first Greek colonies were planted in southern Italy in the eighth century B.C.E. Thus, at the time when Rome was founded, around 756 B.C.E., the peninsula was the home of the Etruscans, the Latins and other Italic tribes, and Greeks.

The origins of Rome are shrouded in legend, according to which Latin villagers sought safety from attackers behind the wooden palisades constructed on the Palatine Hill, overlooking the Tiber. They took as their first king Romulus, a descendant of Aeneas the Trojan and after whom the city is named. A hereditary Etruscan monarchy was overthrown around 510 B.C.E., and a republic was set up. Within a few centuries Rome was transformed from a city-state into an empire, but it developed haphazardly, not from preconceived strategy. Victories against Carthage in the Punic Wars of the third century B.C.E. gave Rome mastery of the Mediterranean and put Italy at the center of an empire that stretched from the British Isles to the Euphrates by the beginning of the common era.

Although the republic was a sacred institution for the early Romans, the state evolved through military and political pressures toward a monarchical system. Octavian, Julius Caesar's nephew, concentrated all power in his hands, and having been given the title *princeps* (first citizen) and the name Augustus by the Senate, began the reign of the Roman emperors in 17 B.C.E. From a military perspective the empire went on the defensive in the first century C.E., and by the third it was in full retreat. Sacked by the Visigoths in 410 C.E., Rome was prey thereafter to attacks by marauding Germans. In 476 a palace coup forced the abdication of the last Western emperor, a puppet of his German advisers.

In 488 Theodoric, king of the Goths and also a Roman patrician, set about to restore Italy and rebuild Rome. In 526 Justinian, the Byzantine emperor best remembered for his compilation of Roman law, known as *Corpus Juris Civilis*, turned on the Goths and revived direct imperial control over Italy. In removing his Gothic allies, however, Justinian left Italy open to invasion by Germanic Lombards, who established kingdoms throughout the peninsula. Although some portions of Italy, including Rome, remained in Byzantine hands, the creation of Lombard kingdoms meant the end of political unity for Italy for 1,400 years.

Christianity was brought to Italy by Greek-speaking Jews in the first century. Although severely persecuted at

first, it spread like wildfire through all provinces of the empire and was granted official recognition by Emperor Constantine in 321. By the fourth century the Christian bishops of Rome, who claimed succession from the apostle Peter, had assumed a position of primacy in the western, or Latin, church and bore the titles of pope and Pontifex Maximus. With the transfer of the imperial capital to Constantinople, temporal jurisdiction over the city of Rome passed on to the pope. As the papacy grew more independent, papal historians argued that fullness of power rested in the Vatican and that civil power was merely derived from the power of the church. This enabled the pope to assume a wide range of civil, diplomatic, and military responsibilities in Italy in the absence of the emperor.

In 754 the pope called on Pepin, king of the Franks, to expel the troublesome Lombards from Roman lands. Pepin did so and restored to the pope these territories, which thereafter came to be known as the Papal States. In 800 Pope Leo III recreated the Western Roman Empire by conferring the imperial crown on the Frankish king, Charlemagne. By this step he linked the future of Italy to Germany and northern Europe and separated it from Byzantium. The Holy Roman Empire stood for another 1,000 years, until modern times.

Only Sicily and southern Italy remained in Byzantine hands, and even there the Byzantine hold was weak. In 1053 Robert Guiscard united all Norman territories in southern Italy. His kingdom lasted until the time of Napoleon.

The Middle Ages in Italy were marked by the rise of the communes, or city-states, such as the maritime republics of Venice, Genoa, and Pisa. Although their political institutions developed independently, the city-states exhibited some common characteristics. Oligarchies composed of merchant families dominated political life through guilds. The guilds were riven by factions, many of them highly radical. Emperor Frederick of Hohenstaufen (called Barbarossa in Italy) tried to bring these communes under his control, but they united into the Lombard League. At Legnano in 1176 the league defeated the emperor's forces and forced him to recognize its liberties. Barbarossa's grandson, Frederick II, the king of Naples and Sicily, also failed to subdue the communes of Lombardy and Tuscany.

The 15th century was a time of war, famine, and plague, but it was also a time of consolidation for the communes, many of which became lordships, or seignories. The dynasties of these lordships, such as the Visconti of Milan, Gonzaga of Mantua, d'Este of Ferrara, and Scaligeri of Verona, ranked equal in power and wealth to the royal houses of Europe. The five principal city-states—Naples, the Papal States, Venice, Milan, and Florence—were fully sovereign by the 15th century. The Italian League, a formal alliance of these states forged in

1455, kept the peace in Italy for the 40 years that coincided with the intellectual and cultural flowering of the High Renaissance. The linchpin of the alliance was Florence, then controlled by the Medicis, who held no office and took no title.

The Italian League collapsed in 1494, and for the next 300 years Italy was the arena in which Spain, France, and the Hapsburgs fought out their rivalries. For nearly 200 years the Hapsburgs were dominant. The era culminated in the Italian campaigns of Napoleon Bonaparte, as a result of which France annexed large portions of Italy, including Rome, Piedmont, and Naples.

This was the setting for the Risorgimento, the 19th-century movement for political unity in Italy. It was not a mass movement and was promoted chiefly by an elite of middle-class liberals who organized it around a core of secret societies. Later in the century three figures, Giuseppe Mazzini, Giuseppe Garibaldi, and Camillo di Cavour, emerged as its leaders. By 1870 all of Italy had been brought under Victor Emmanuel II as king. Cavour convened a national parliament, and the constitution of Piedmont became the basic law of the new kingdom. Parliament enacted the Law of Guarantees in 1871, establishing the Vatican as an independent papal territory within the city of Rome and according the pope the status of a sovereign. Pope Pius IX rejected the offer out of hand and proclaimed himself the "prisoner of the Vatican." The pope excommunicated King Victor Emmanuel II, refused to recognize the legality of the Italian state, and condemned the occupation of Rome. For the next quarter century the government was left to the anticlericals, and Catholic leadership was cut off from the political life of the nation. Italy wanted to gain status as a major European power, so it tried to seize Ethiopia, but its imperialist dreams were crushed by its defeat at the Battle of Adowa in 1896.

Italy entered World War I on the side of the Allies. More than 600,000 Italians died in the war, but the nation's case was poorly presented at the Versailles Conference, and it gained only minor territories. The resulting sense of frustration and betrayal, combined with severe postwar economic depression, created great social unrest and eventually led to the rise to power of Benito Mussolini in 1922. In 1929 he sought to placate the church with the Lateran Pact, which consisted of a treaty between the Italian state and the Holy See and a concordat regulating the relations between the two. It created the independent Vatican City and recognized the pope as its sovereign. The church was restored to its role in Italian education and allowed the unencumbered operation of its press and communication facilities.

Mussolini established a Fascist dictatorship, a corporate state, and sought to regain Italy's imperial past by conquering Ethiopia (1935–36). In 1936 he agreed to the Rome-Berlin Axis, and the next year Italy joined

Germany and Japan in the Anti-Comintern Pact. By 1939 Italy had become a virtual Nazi satellite. Mussolini aided Franco in Spain during the Spanish Civil War, and his support was crucial in ensuring Franco's victory. However, Italy was unprepared for World War II, which it joined on the side of Germany. A series of early fiascos, including a disastrous invasion of Greece, was followed by the Allied invasion of Italy in 1943.

In a palace coup the Fascist Grand Council forced Mussolini's resignation, had him arrested, and called on Marshal Pietro Badoglio to become prime minister. The government declared war on Germany, but the Germans were in control of most of the country. A new government of national unity was formed to direct Italian resistance in German-occupied areas. Mussolini was rescued by German commandoes, and he set up a rival government in the German-occupied region, with headquarters at Salo. Rome was liberated by the Allies in 1944. Partisans captured and executed Mussolini as he tried to escape to Switzerland.

Two years of shelling and bombing and reprisals by the Germans and the Fascists had taken a heavy toll. The economy was disrupted, large parts of the country lay in ruins, and hundreds of thousands were left homeless. Following a provisional government in 1945, the monarchy was abolished in 1946, and a republican constitution went into effect in 1946. For the next 16 years Italy was ruled by a series of center-right coalitions led by the Christian Democrats.

The first change came in 1962, with the formation of a center-left government under Amintore Fanfani under a policy of *apertura a sinistra* (an opening to the left). In 1981 Giovanni Spadolini became the first non-Christian Democrat to head a government. In the 1983 elections the Christian Democrats suffered their worst setback, while the Communists also lost seats. The beneficiaries were the smaller parties, most notably the Republicans. In 1994 a coalition government led by the media magnate Silvio Berlusconi ended when Berlusconi resigned in the face of charges of tax evasion. In 1995 emerged a new coalition called the Olive Tree, a loose alliance of center-left parties, whose leader, Romano Prodi, remained in power from 1996 until 1998. He was followed by Massimo d'Alema, leader of the Democrats of the Left, who then formed Italy's 56th cabinet. In 2001 Berlusconi led his revived center-right Forza Italia to victory in national elections and became Italy's 58th post-World War II prime minister. His victory represented a further blow to Italy's traditional parties. He quickly formed a coalition government incorporating the leaders of the right-wing National Alliance and Northern League and a pro-European foreign minister, Renato Ruggiero, though Ruggiero resigned early in 2002 in protest of the "Euroskeptical" views of the other cabinet members.

Berlusconi spent most of 2002 and 2003 involved in a corruption trial stemming from his business activities in the 1980s. He claimed that he was the victim of a politically motivated conspiracy by the judiciary. He was granted a brief reprieve in June 2003, when parliament passed a law granting him immunity from prosecution, but the Constitutional Court invalidated that law in January 2004, and the trial resumed. He was finally acquitted in December of that year, after four years of trial.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1981–82	Giovanni Spadolini
1982–83	Amintore Fanfani
1983–87	Bettino Craxi
1987	Amintore Fanfani
1987–88	Giovanni Gorla
1988–89	Ciriaco de Mita
1989–92	Giulio Andreotti
1992–93	Giuliano Amato
1993–94	Carlo Azeglio Ciampi
1994	Silvio Berlusconi
1995–96	Lamberto Dini
1996–98	Romano Prodi
1998–2000	Massimo D'Alema
2000–01	Giuliano Amato
2001–	Silvio Berlusconi

CONSTITUTION

The Constitution of the Italian Republic, after approval by the Constituent Assembly, came into force on January 1, 1948. It establishes a democratic republic and guarantees the rights and freedom of the people. Universal suffrage at age 18 forms the basis of Italy's representative democracy. Turnout in most elections is generally high—rarely less than 90 percent of eligible voters.

The head of state is the president, who is elected by a two-thirds vote of the parliament for a seven-year term. The president's power is based not so much on the constitution as on the dynamics of Italian political processes, which has made him a mediator and moderator of the political coalitions that have led the government since the late 1960s. The major restraint on the powers of the president is the constitution's requirement that before they become law, all acts must be countersigned by the ministers who propose them.

The executive branch—often referred to as the government—is composed of the prime minister, who is the head of government, and the Council of Ministers, or the cabinet. Italian prime ministers and cabinets have been so numerous since the founding of the republic that they resemble a revolving-door government. The average life of a prime minister and cabinet is about 10 months.

However, this governmental instability can be misleading. Behind the facade of continuous cabinet crises is a significant continuity of party, persons, and posts involving permutations and combinations among the same partners. The average Italian minister has a long, active political career. Leaders such as Fanfani, Aldo Moro, Andreotti, Emilio Colombo, and Mariano Rumor were in office continuously for over 20 years.

Nevertheless, cabinet instability remains a persistent and chronic problem and has grown worse in the 1980s and 1990s. All prime ministers, in fact, are caretakers of the government as long as a coalition holds together. The size of the Council of Ministers varies slightly; it includes the prime minister, 19 department ministers, as many as six ministers without portfolio, and one or more deputy prime ministers.

In 2001 Italians voted on the first constitutional referendum since 1946, choosing to transfer more autonomy to regional governments in matters of education, taxes, and environmental policy.

PARLIAMENT

The constitution provides for a bicameral system with equality of powers between the two legislative bodies. The national legislature is composed of the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies, with 315 and 630 members, respectively, elected for five-year terms, but it may be dissolved before the elected term expires. Deputies are elected by universal suffrage, senators on a regional basis. Over the years the Chamber of Deputies has gained the edge in influence through its selection of the prime minister and important ministers from that body.

Like most European parliaments, the Italian parliament is characterized by a preponderance of lawyers, the underrepresentation of women, and the overrepresentation of the middle and upper classes. Other significant traits are the prominence of professional politicians. Few business leaders pursue political careers.

Normal sessions of parliament are long, and it sits almost continuously, with short breaks at Christmas and Easter and a summer recess. Each house is organized into standing committees for legislative work, and a party's committee membership is proportional to its size in that house. The most significant feature of parliamentary activity is the prodigious output of laws—up to 2,300 bills per legislative term. Most of this legislation, however, is minor, and nearly one-third of the total are often private member bills. Nearly 90 percent of all laws are passed unanimously, indicating a great deal of agreement among members of all political views, despite the often violent ideological clashes in parliament.

Parliamentary control over the executive is exercised primarily through three means: votes of confidence, budget votes, and members' floor questions to the executive.

However, these controls have seldom caused cabinets to fall when party discipline is tight. Further, changes in cabinets are often changes in name only, and new cabinets may contain old faces in slightly different orders.

POLITICAL PARTIES

The Italian political landscape has been dominated since the 1990s by the second generation of political parties. For more than four decades after World War II, the battle lines in politics were clearly drawn between the Christian Democrats (CD) on the center-right and the Italian Communist Party (PCI) on the left. The CD was in power continuously from 1945 to 1994, either by itself or in alliance with other center-right, reformist, or moderate socialist parties. The PCI, although shut out of power during this period, remained the largest Communist party in Western Europe and by far the largest opposition party. The far right, constitutionally ostracized after World War II, nevertheless participated in politics under disguised names.

The established postwar party structure came under increasing challenge in the 1980s, before effectively disintegrating in the 1990s. On the left the PCI responded to the collapse of Communism by morphing into a democratic socialist party. The change was not merely in name but represented a genuine shift in positions; most Italian Communists are now hardly distinguishable from moderate socialists. On the right increasing popular discontent with political corruption in Rome gave rise to various regional movements, especially in the north, threatening Italy's unity. On the center-left the main casualty was the venerable CD, which became mired in the worst scandals in any European country in modern times. Its conversion into the Italian Popular Party (PPI) did not prevent a hemorrhage of support. It was forced to seek alliances with assorted parties, including the Communist Party.

As a result of all of these developments, the Italian political scene is a kaleidoscope of shifting ideologies, alignments, and alliances. The center-right Freedom House coalition consists of Forza Italia (Berlusconi's party), National Alliance, the Whiteflower Alliance, and the Northern League. The center-left Olive Tree coalition consists of the Democrats of the Left, the Daisy Alliance, the Sunflower Alliance, and the Italian Communist Party. Each of the "alliances" consists of a number of smaller parties. There are also several minor parties that do not belong to alliances or coalitions.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The basic unit of local government is the commune, typically a city, town, or village. There are some 8,000 communes in all, varying from Rome, Milan, and Naples to

small hamlets of less than 500. Municipal self-government at the commune level is carried out through a communal council elected every four years. The voting system and number of councillors vary with population size. Few large councils have stable administrations, and their politics, as in the national government, are characterized by infighting and shifting alliances. The council approves the junta, a collegiate body of two to 14 councillors, and the mayor.

Communes' powers are limited, though law and order is a central responsibility. They levy and collect a variety of local taxes, but revenues are usually inadequate to provide even basic services, and municipalities, including Rome, are chronically in debt. Communes are thus forced to borrow from special government credit institutions or banks.

The powers of the governments of the 92 provinces are equally limited. They may legislate and perform administrative functions only in a few fields, such as highway construction, public assistance, public health, and conservation of fish and game. Their finances are wholly dependent on the national treasury, from which they received a share of certain national taxes.

The prefect is the national government's representative in the provinces. This career civil servant is appointed by the president of the republic on the advice of the Council of Ministers. The prefect exercises substantial powers of control over local administration in the provinces as well as in the communes.

Regional government is carried out by a unicameral legislature called the regional council, which has authority over local police, health and hospital services, museums and libraries, and regional roads. Regional government is financed by regional taxes, particularly land and property taxes, as well as road and traffic taxes. The national government supervises regional government through a commissioner residing in the regional capital, who is assisted by a control commission. Despite this elaborate formal structure of government, regional autonomy is limited, and Italy remains an essentially unitary state. As a result, relations between the national government and the regions have ranged from uneasy to bitter contests for ascendancy. Regional governments did manage to secure more power for themselves in a 2001 constitutional referendum.

LEGAL SYSTEM

Roman law, as modified by the Napoleonic Code, is the basis of the Italian judicial system.

Italy has a unified national court system. There are no regional, provincial, or municipal courts. At the bottom of the court structure are the justices of the peace (*conciliatori*), who hear only civil disputes involving small amounts of money. The lowest-salaried magistrates are the *pretori*, with jurisdiction over civil cases involving greater amounts of money and criminal cases involving

a maximum penalty of three years' imprisonment. The court above the *pretori* is the tribunal (*tribunale*), in which three judges sit on a panel hearing cases outside the competence of the lower magistrates and criminal cases that do not exceed a maximum of seven years' imprisonment. Serious criminal cases are heard by the courts of assizes (*corti d'assise*), which are specialized sections of the tribunals. Civil and criminal appeals from the tribunals and courts of assizes may be taken to the court of appeal (*corte d'appello*), composed of five judges.

The highest court is the Court of Cassation (Corte di Cassazione), which either sustains or quashes lower court decisions.

The Italian judicial system is characterized by its slow pace and general inefficiency. The tradition of judicial review did not exist in Italy before the republic, but this function is now exercised by the Constitutional Court, composed of 15 members, each appointed for a nine-year, nonrenewable term. The court has no power to enforce its decisions, but it has successfully protected civil liberties, such as freedom of speech, freedom of religion, and freedom of the press.

HUMAN RIGHTS

All basic human rights are guaranteed by the constitution and respected in practice.

In the 1970s and early 1980s the major human rights problem was terrorism. The decline and near-disappearance of terrorist activities since then has seen a corresponding decrease in complaints of ill treatment of suspected activists and unlawful detention of offenders pending trial.

The Civil Code provides a limit of 60 days for trials, but this does not preclude some trials from lasting an inordinately long time. Organized crime also presents challenges to human rights, as law enforcement officials adopt extraordinary means to dragnet members of the Mafia. However, there is no evidence of any systematic flouting of legal procedures by authorities who are engaged in combating organized crime. Searches and electronic monitoring are carried out only under judicial warrant and in carefully defined circumstances. Prisons are overcrowded.

Ethnic violence against immigrants was a problem, as were child labor, particularly with immigrant children. There was also some trafficking in women and girls for prostitution.

FOREIGN POLICY

The conclusion of World War II ended Italy's ambitions of maintaining an Italian empire abroad. The balance of power shifted, as the cold war rivalry between the United

States and the Soviet Union took the center of the world stage. Italy found itself relegated to a minor role in post-war international politics, and it has generally been content with this status.

Italy has aligned itself with the nations of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and was a founding member of the European Community (now renamed the European Union). Italy joined the United Nations in 1955. It has remained a member in good standing of those organizations for many decades. At the same time, it has tried to align its policies with those of its Western allies in both NATO and the European Union, although Italy's domestic instability and economic problems have reduced its influence on their programs and policies. The presence of Italy's large and powerful Communist Party and the influence of the Catholic Church have also reinforced Italy's historic identification with western European nations.

Italy's firm commitment to the United Nations has led it to strongly support that body's efforts to promote international peace. This was evidenced in Italy's active participation in UN peacekeeping missions to Mozambique and Cambodia in the 1980s and Somalia in the early 1990s. In the mid-1990s Italian forces took an active role in NATO and UN operations in Bosnia. In the early 2000s Italy sent troops and humanitarian workers to Afghanistan and Iraq.

In 1998 Italy achieved a major foreign policy goal when it qualified to enter the European Monetary Union and agreed to participate in the new single European currency, the euro. The euro became Italy's national currency in 2002.

DEFENSE

Italy's armed forces are under civilian control. The president of Italy is the titular head of the armed forces, but actual control is exercised by the cabinet through the Ministry of Defense. A parallel policy-making agency, the Supreme Defense Council, is composed of the president, the prime minister, the minister of foreign affairs, the minister of defense, the heads of several other ministries, and the chief of the Defense General Staff. The Ministry of Defense and Ministry of the Interior control the military security force, called the Carabinieri.

Italy is a full member of NATO and is committed to maintaining land forces of 12 divisions. No Italian force is stationed outside national territory, and the armed forces are sometimes used for providing emergency relief as well as for fighting organized crime.

The constitution imposes the duty of military service on all fit male Italians at age 18. The term of service is 12 months in the army and air force and 18 months in the navy from the age of 21. Reservists remain in the reserve until age 45.

The army is the largest of the three military branches, and it maintains 20 major schools, including a military preparatory school and officer training schools. The navy emphasizes antisubmarine warfare and its personnel include two battalions of marines. The air force, which was rebuilt in 1951 with United States assistance, has an electronic surveillance system and integrated air defense system. Italy spent \$28.2 billion, or about 1.8 percent of gross domestic product (GDP), on the military in 2004.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	454,300
Military Manpower Availability:	13,491,260
Military Expenditures \$billion:	28.2
as % of GDP:	1.8
as % of central government expenditures:	—
Arms Imports \$million:	348
Arms Exports \$million:	277

ECONOMY

Italy's economy has been transformed in the decades since the end of World War II, from one with an agricultural base to that of an advanced industrial nation. The fact that Italy achieved a GDP of \$1.212 trillion in 1999, equal to that of Great Britain or France, is evidence of its truly remarkable economic achievement. However, Italy's traditional political divide between the northern and southern parts of the country is also clearly reflected in its economic development. Southern Italy (particularly Sicily) remains a less developed region still largely dominated by farming. It also has widespread unemployment, estimated at nearly 20 percent. By contrast, northern Italy is heavily industrialized, with large and small business enterprises, including multinational corporations.

The major sectors of Italy's industrial economy are machinery, iron and steel, chemicals, textiles, motor vehicles, clothing, footwear, and ceramics. Tourism is an important factor in Italy's economy. The main agricultural products include grapes, other fruits, vegetables, potatoes, sugar beets, soybeans, grain, and olives.

Since 1992 Italy has adopted budgets compliant with the requirements of the European Monetary Union (EMU); wage moderation agreements by representatives of government, labor, and employers have helped to bring Italy's inflation into conformity with EMU requirements. Italy's economic performance, however, has lagged behind that of its EU partners, and it must work to stimulate employment, promote labor flexibility, reform its expensive pension system, reduce its high taxes, and tackle the informal economy. Labor unions have resisted most attempts at change.

Italian exports totaled \$336.4 billion in 2004 and imports \$329.3 billion, in a favorable balance of trade. More than 40 percent of Italy's exports were sent to members

of the European Union, while the United States received 8.5 percent. The same nations were the major producers of the goods Italy imported.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$trillion: 1.6
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 27,700
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 1.4
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 1.4
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 2.3
 Industry: 28.8
 Services: 68.9
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 60
 Government Consumption: 19
 Gross Domestic Investment: 19.3
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 336.4
 Imports: 329.3
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 2.1
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 26.6
 CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
110.0	112.8	115.9	118.8	121.9

Finance

National Currency: Euro (EUR)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = EUR 0.886
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: —
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 3.0
 Total External Debt \$billion: 913.9
 Debt Service Ratio %: —
 Balance of Payments \$billion: –21.1
 International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 26
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
 2.3

Official Development Assistance

Donor ODA \$billion: 1
 per capita \$: 17.20
 Foreign Direct Investment \$billion: 16.54

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$billion: 768.9
 Expenditures \$billion: 820.1
 Budget Deficit \$billion: 51.2
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 2.3
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: –1.4

Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 20.03
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 24.9
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 172.9
 Total Farmland % of land area: 28.2
 Livestock: Cattle million: 6.73
 Chickens million: 100
 Pigs million: 9.22
 Sheep million: 8
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 8.2
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 454

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 259.6
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 0.7

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million:
 27.5
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million:
 171.3
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 2.96
 Net Energy Imports % of use: 84.6
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 69.1
 Production kW-hr billion: 262
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 294
 Coal Reserves tons million: 37
 Production tons million: —
 Consumption tons million: 21.8
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: 8
 Production cubic feet billion: 515
 Consumption cubic feet trillion: 2.5
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels million: 622
 Production barrels 000 per day: 147
 Consumption barrels million per day: 1.9
 Pipelines Length km: 1,136

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 329.3
 Exports \$billion: 336.4
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 0.8
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 2.5
 Balance of Trade \$billion: –21.1

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Germany %	17.9	13.8
France %	11.2	12.3
Netherlands %	5.8	—
Spain %	4.8	7.0
United Kingdom %	4.7	6.9
Belgium %	4.3	—
United States %	4.0	8.5

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 479,688
 Paved %: 100
 Automobiles: 33,129,300
 Trucks and Buses: 3,749,200
 Railroad: Track Length km: 19,507
 Passenger-km billion: 46.7
 Freight-km billion: 24.4
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 565
 Total Deadweight Tonnage million: 10.35
 Airports: 134
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 34.33
 Length of Waterways km: 2,400

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 39.6
 Number of Tourists from million: 26.8
 Tourist Receipts \$billion: 32.6
 Tourist Expenditures \$billion: 23.7

Communications

Telephones million: 26.6
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones million: 55.9
 Personal Computers million: 13
 Internet Hosts per million people: 24,740
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 319

ENVIRONMENT

Italy's rapid industrialization in the decades after World War II resulted in many threats to the environment, especially pollution of the air and water. In the 1950s, 1960s, and much of the 1970s, however, environmental issues were put on the shelf, as economic development took priority in a nation that had emerged from the war impoverished.

Pollution from Italy's industries, power plants, motor vehicles, mechanized agriculture, and the tourist industry became serious threats. For example, the Modena area, which produces 70 percent of the world's ceramic tile, became severely blighted, and heavy industries, such as petrochemicals, polluted coastal waters near those sites. As the number of vehicles in Italy rapidly increased, air pollution caused by traffic and noise levels also became major concerns.

Italy's environmental legislation began in 1966 with a law reducing the sulfur content of fuels to limit urban air pollution. Despite this legislation, the implementation of early environmental law was ineffective. In the 1960s and 1970s environmental issues were largely ignored by the public and businesses alike. In the mid-1970s this attitude began to change, and in 1977 a law was enacted to limit the pollutants in industrial and residential waste.

The real turning point in Italy's environmental policy was the creation of the Ministry of Environment in 1986. In the late 1980s parliament enacted tougher laws designed to reduce air emissions and soil and landscape erosion as well as to protect the nation's parks. It also earmarked more funds for tackling problems of the environment. As a result, by the late 1980s the local, regional, and national governments were spending about \$7.5 billion on environmental issues, an amount that increased annually in the 1990s.

Legislation in 1993 required that all automobiles must have catalytic converters to retard their emissions. Moreover, Rome, Milan, Florence, Bologna, and other cities have limited traffic in historical areas, where air pollution poses an ongoing threat to ancient monuments and priceless artifacts.

Rapid urbanization has cost Italy much of its farmland, including the rich agricultural areas of the Po Valley, and much of the remaining land has deteriorated, with soil erosion and water pollution from the growing use of agrochemicals a growing reality. Increased mining and excessive timber cutting have also contributed to soil erosion in many parts of the nation. Moreover, the rapid growth of tourism has brought massive construction along the coasts, particularly the Adriatic, which suffers extensive beach erosion.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 34.0
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: 30
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 13
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 495,972
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 7.42

LIVING CONDITIONS

The standard of living in Italy is quite high. Per capita GDP was \$27,700 in 2004. Most people live in modern apartments or houses, and many families have one or two automobiles. Traffic can be bad in the cities, and parking is a perennial problem, but public transportation is widespread, cheap, and efficient. About three-quarters of the Italian population live in urban areas.

HEALTH

The Italian government provides health care to all citizens. Italy has more doctors per person than any other European country. Italians are quite healthy, and life expectancy is almost 80 years. The Catholic Church still runs many hospitals and clinics, which are covered by the state insurance scheme. The national health plan even covers visits to spas on occasion. Italy has the lowest birth

rate in Europe, at 1.28 children per woman in 2005, and its population has actually been dropping. The government, fearing an economic depression in the near future, has been encouraging people to have more children.

Health

Number of Physicians: 348,862
 Number of Dentists: 34,014
 Number of Nurses: 256,860
 Number of Pharmacists: 63,008
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 606
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: 4.9
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 5.94
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 5
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 8.5
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 1,737
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.5
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 96
 Measles: 83
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: —
 Access to Improved Water Source %: —

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Italians love food, and Italy has produced a dizzying array of culinary styles and delicacies. Each region has its own cooking traditions. People everywhere eat pasta, but they make it in different ways in different places. Cheese, tomatoes, eggplants, olives, basil, veal, and sausage are all common ingredients. Pizza has become ubiquitous. Sicily makes excellent dessert, many of them featuring almond flavoring. Italian wine is world famous, and each region has its own varieties. People drink a great deal of coffee, both with milk at breakfast, as cappuccino, and plain later in the day, as espresso.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 161.9
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 282.2

STATUS OF WOMEN

Italian women generally play a less visible role outside the home than their counterparts in northern Europe. Although women achieved equality with men in the constitution of 1947, their position changed little during the next 30 years. Since 1977 broader social forces have helped them gain a more clearly defined status, despite opposition from male strongholds in southern Italy. Although the process has been slow, since the 1980s a job outside the home and economic independence is becoming

the norm in northern Italy and, increasingly, in the south.

Several major laws affecting women have been passed, including the legalization of abortion within 90 days of pregnancy and a strengthened law on rape.

Italian law guarantees women equal pay for equal work, but in practice women's wages are lower than those of men. Women are still often the first to be fired, and they have to work harder than men to win promotions. Women continue to be forced to combine housework and jobs outside the home because many Italian men consider it demeaning to do housework. Many women choose to stay home with their children, although it is also common for grandparents to watch children while mothers go to work.

Maternity leave is generous, equal to five months—two before and three after birth—with 80 percent wages paid in the private sector and 100 percent in the public sector. There is also a supplementary optional leave for a maximum of six months. Leave for looking after sick children is the longest in Europe: up to three years.

New family laws have expanded the scope of women's rights. Divorce has been made legal, and adultery is no longer a cause for separation. When separation or divorce occurs, property is divided between husband and wife, and the woman can administer her own. Parental authority is divided between parents, and when spouses are separated young children are generally assigned to the mother. Women have the right to keep their surnames and bequeath them to their children. Women also may contract for mortgages and other loans.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 12
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.0
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 41.2

WORK

Italy's unemployment rate was 8.6 percent in 2003. Almost two-thirds of the Italian workforce is employed in services, including tourism and government work. Almost one-third work in industry, especially in the north, where manufacturing is the mainstay of the economy. Products include automobiles, computers, high fashion clothing, furniture, and appliances. Only 5 percent of the workforce is still employed in agriculture.

The Italian workday is typically split into two portions, divided by a break between 1 and 4 p.m.; workers go home for lunch and take a short nap before returning to work until late in the evening. The workweek averages 36 hours.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 24,270,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 39.0
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 5
 Industry: 32
 Services: 63
 Unemployment %: 8.6

EDUCATION

Education is free and compulsory for all children ages six to 13.

Traditional central control of education in the national government has gradually been weakening. Local authorities, particularly the communes, not only have authority in construction and maintenance of school buildings but are also responsible for operating schools. School districts within communes are designed to make schools and educators more responsive to the needs of the people. Nevertheless, the Ministry of Public Education dominates Italian education and administers public instruction, determining the standards, curriculum, diplomas, and regulations for grading and promotion.

In recent years school enrollment has expanded dramatically, effecting a consequent drop in illiteracy among the general population. Regional disparities continue, however, to the disadvantage of the south. Grade repetition and dropout rates have declined considerably. Higher enrollments have influenced the social composition of the student population by providing access to higher education to young people from less privileged classes of society and by improving sex equality. Unlike many other industrialized societies, Italy has little difficulty in recruiting teachers.

The number of pupils in private institutions is comparatively small. Private institutions do not receive state aid, and enrollment in private schools, particularly Catholic schools, has dropped sharply since the 1970s as a result of the growing secularization of society.

Most Italian cities have universities. The University of Rome has one of the largest student bodies in the world. Most universities are state run, and they are required by law to admit every eligible candidate; as a result, they are overcrowded and there is little contact between students and professors. There is no division of studies into graduate and undergraduate, and all studies are technically graduate programs.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 98.6
 Male %: 99.0
 Female %: 98.3
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 15.4
 First Level: Primary Schools: 20,442

Teachers: 263,421
 Students: 2,789,880
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 10.6
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 99.2
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 9,278
 Teachers: 440,667
 Students: 3,795,458
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 10.3
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 90.5
 Third Level: Institutions: 48
 Teachers: 80,313
 Students: 1,854,200
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 53.1
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 5.0

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Italy is technologically quite advanced. Its universities have excellent programs in the sciences, math, engineering, and medicine. In the early 2000s the government increased funding for scientific research and development in an effort to bring Italy in line with European norms; particular topics of research include space, climate change, and public health. The north is well known for its high-tech factories. Telecommunications are highly advanced, and in 2003, 18.5 million Italians were using the Internet.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 1,128
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 1.11
 High-Tech Exports \$billion: 20.03
 Patent Applications by Residents: 4,086

MEDIA

Italy has some of the oldest newspapers in Europe, such as *La nazione* (1859), *La stampa* (1868), *Il corriere della sera* (1876), and *Il messaggero* (1878). However, in terms of circulation, Italy ranks well below most European nations. The Italian press is highly politicized and regionalized. A large number of dailies and magazines are printed in Milan. The Catholic viewpoint is represented by the Vatican's *L'Osservatore Romano*. The Christian Democrat voice is *Il popolo*. The principal Communist Party organ is *L'Unita*, and socialism is represented in the pages of *Avanti*.

Radio and television stations that operated as state monopolies in the past are now for the most part privately owned and run. There are about 2,500 commercial radio stations sharing airspace with the public broadcaster Rai. Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation launched Sky Italia in 2003 and quickly cornered the market on pay television. Parliament passed a law in 2004 that would partly privatize Rai and create new digital television channels; critics claimed this was an attempt to strengthen Berlusconi's control of the media.

The Italian film industry is one of the best organized and also the largest in Europe, and Italian movies, their directors, and their stars have become world famous.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 89
 Total Circulation million: 6.27
 Circulation per 1,000: 109
 Books Published: 32,365
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets million: 28.2
 per 1,000: 492

CULTURE

Italy has long been one of the world's cultural centers. It has produced artists such as Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo, musicians such as Giuseppe Verdi, and writers such as Petrarch, Boccaccio, and Dante. Millions of tourists descend on Italy every year to visit the Sistine Chapel, Saint Peter's Church in the Vatican, and the Roman Forum in Rome as well as the myriad attractions of Florence, Venice, and other cities. Italian high fashion and film have become famous in modern times.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 6,048
 Volumes: 56,959,914
 Registered borrowers: 567,800
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: 39,746,000
 Cinema Gross Receipts national currency billion: 875
 Number of Cinemas: 4,603
 Seating Capacity: 472,000
 Annual Attendance: 104,900,000

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Italy was the home of the ancient Romans, who had a complex system of mythology adapted from the Greek version. Romans also incorporated mythical traditions from other cultures, such as Mithras from Persia and various beliefs from the Etruscans who lived on the peninsula before the Romans took over. Romans had their own foundation myths, such as the tale of the rape of the Sabine women and the *Aeneid*.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Italians love to spend hours having meals with relatives, either at home or at restaurants. Bars, restaurants, and

discos are ubiquitous. Many people enjoy going for an evening walk, called a *passeggiata*. At home they watch television, play cards, and read books. Italy celebrates numerous national and regional festivals, which are usually an occasion for a holiday from work or school. Most people take vacation for most or all of the month of August.

ETIQUETTE

Good manners, decorum, and proper self-presentation are very important to Italians. When Italians meet people, they like to get to know them and cultivate a sense of trust before engaging in negotiations or business. When presenting gifts or materials, they like them to look good. Organizations tend to be hierarchical, with the oldest members receiving the most respect. Italians consider their family extremely important and take seriously any insults to family honor.

FAMILY LIFE

Though Italians still love children, the most noticeable change in the Italian family in recent years is that it has become much smaller. A generation or two ago, many Italians had several children, but now most parents have only one or very occasionally two. Extended family is still important, and grandparents often care for children while their parents go out to work; day care for young children is uncommon. It is still common for grown children to work in their family's business.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Italians dress quite well. They appreciate fashionable clothes and value a neat appearance, which is part of their emphasis on presentation. Clothing reflects social status. Men often wear expensive well-cut suits for business; women dress simply and elegantly, often using accessories to accent their outfits.

SPORTS

Soccer, called *calcio*, permeates Italian culture. Every village has a soccer field, children and adults play the game, and many people spend Sunday afternoons watching league games live or on television. The Italian soccer team has won the World Cup three times. Road bicycling is also extremely popular; the Giro d'Italia is the most important race, attracting competitors from all over the world. Boccie, or lawn bowling, is a traditional sport played mostly by men in parks.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1939** Prime Minister Benito Mussolini of Italy and Chancellor Adolf Hitler of Germany sign a military assistance pact.
Italy invades and captures Albania.
- 1940** Italian forces occupy British Somaliland but are repelled from Greece.
Mussolini requests German military aid.
- 1941** Italian military endeavors meet with repeated failure.
Allies blockade Italy.
The Italo-German Balkan campaign is successful.
Italy declares war on the Soviet Union and the United States.
- 1942** British forces reclaim Italian and German gains in Africa.
British air raids devastate industrial cities and strategic sites throughout Italy.
- 1943** Allied bombings intensify.
Allies invade Italy.
King Victor Emmanuel III arrests Mussolini and names Marshal Pietro Badoglio prime minister.
Italy surrenders to the Allies and on September 3 signs an armistice declaring war on Germany.
German soldiers rescue Mussolini, who establishes a government-in-exile in the north.
- 1944** Allies liberate Rome on June 4.
King Victor Emmanuel steps down in favor of his son Humbert.
King Humbert II appoints Ivanoe Bonomi as prime minister.
- 1945** Allies liberate Italy.
Mussolini is executed, and hundreds of his supporters are killed, in anti-Fascist reprisals.
World War II ends.
Acting as parliament, the Committee of National Liberation names as prime minister Alcide de Gasperi of the Christian Democratic Party.
- 1946** Food shortages persist.
Voters approve a referendum to abolish the monarchy and make Italy a republic.
King Humbert abdicates and leaves Italy.
Christian Democrats win Constituent Assembly elections and confirm Prime Minister Gasperi.
- 1947** The Paris Peace Conference produces a rigorous treaty that strips Italy of all colonies and imposes reparations of \$360 million.
The Constituent Assembly ratifies the treaty, and Allied occupation forces withdraw.
A new constitution is promulgated.
The pro-Communist faction of the Socialist Party breaks away as the Social Democratic Party.
Political dissent escalates to violence as rightists attack Communists, who in turn attempt to bring down the Gasperi government via massive demonstrations and strikes.
- 1948** The new constitution is adopted, granting women the franchise.
Bitter political campaigns nearly propel Italy into civil war.
The first parliamentary election since 1923 gives an overwhelming majority to Alcide de Gasperi's Christian Democratic Party, beginning 40 years of Christian Democrat domination of Italian politics.
CD candidate Luigi Einaudi is elected president.
After the leader of the Communist Party, Palmiro Togliatti, is assassinated, the government dispatches 300,000 military and police personnel to quell riots throughout Italy.
Industrial production achieves prewar levels.
- 1949** Italy joins NATO.
The UN General Assembly settles the disposition of Italian Somaliland, Libya, and Eritrea.
- 1950** The Southern Development Fund is set up to finance the building of roads, schools, and electricity and water systems in central and southern Italy, while a concurrent program of land reform attempts to redistribute the region's farmland.
Nonetheless, high rates of emigration continue to depopulate these regions.
- 1952** Italy joins the European Coal and Steel Community.
- 1953** An electoral reform bill grants 65 percent of seats in the Chamber of Deputies to any party or coalition polling at least 50 percent of the popular vote.
- 1954** Italy and Yugoslavia resolve their territorial dispute over Trieste.
- 1955** Italy joins the United Nations.
- 1957** The European Coal and Steel Community evolves into the European Economic Community, with Italy as a charter member.
- 1962** Local elections show diminishing Communist support among the electorate.
- 1963** Pietro Nenni's Social Democrats join the government to form the first center-left coalition since 1947, with Aldo Moro of the Christian Democratic Party as prime minister.
- 1964** An economic downturn begins to set in.
- 1967** The Southern Development Fund is expanded to finance industrial development in the south via tax incentives.
- 1968** Police suppress student demonstrations for educational reforms.
Strikers demand social security reform.
- 1969** During the "hot autumn" protesters stage strikes, factory sit-ins, and mass demonstrations across northern Italy.

- 1970** Parliament passes a bill permitting civil divorce, the most controversial legislation in the history of the republic.
Fifteen ordinary regions are established with limited autonomy.
A “Statute of the Workers” forces employers to grant 15-percent pay raises and other improvements.
The rate of emigration declines markedly.
- 1972** Christian Democrat Giulio Andreotti becomes prime minister, a post he will hold seven times over the next 20 years.
- 1974** Recession sets in as world oil prices and Italy’s deficit soar.
Referendum confirms the civil divorce law.
- 1975** In regional elections Communists increase their share of the vote to 33 percent.
Legislation applies index linking to most pay scales, requiring employers to adjust wages for inflation quarterly.
- 1976** Winning 35 percent of the vote in parliamentary elections, compared with a 39 percent pull by the long-ruling Christian Democrats, the Italian Communist Party issues a “historic compromise” plan for cooperation with non-Communist parties and receives several cabinet posts under Prime Minister Andreotti.
Broadcasting operations are privatized.
- 1977** Unemployment is rampant, especially among the young, with one million Italians under age 24 jobless.
- 1978** Former prime minister Aldo Moro is kidnapped and murdered by Red Brigade terrorists.
Abortion legislation passes parliament.
Numerous central powers are allocated to regional governments.
- 1979** Communists go into opposition.
Andreotti resigns.
The world oil crisis abates.
- 1980** Right-wing extremists bomb Bologna Station, killing 84.
Parliament grants the police special powers to counteract terrorism.
- 1981** Republican Party leader Giovanni Spadolini becomes the first non-Christian Democratic prime minister in postwar history.
Referendum confirms the legality of abortion.
- 1982** The lira’s value against the dollar suffers a 60 percent loss since 1973.
Economic growth begins to revive.
- 1983** Bettino Craxi takes office as Italy’s first Socialist prime minister.
- 1984** A new concordat replaces the Lateran Treaty of 1929, eliminating the status of Roman Catholicism as the state religion.
- Having failed to industrialize southern Italy despite investing some \$20 billion since 1950, the Southern Development Fund is abolished.
- 1985** Referendum reduces the index-linking of wages.
- 1987** Christian Democrats recapture the prime ministership with Giovanni Gorla.
- 1988** CD leader Ciriaco de Mita heads the government.
- 1989** CD leader Giulio Andreotti becomes prime minister.
- 1991** The collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe ushers in a decade of short-lived Italian governments.
The Communist Party renames itself the Democratic Party of the Left and emphasizes the environment, feminism, and Italy’s north-south economic disparity. The Socialist Party bills itself the Party of Socialist Unity.
- 1992** Top anti-Mafia prosecutor Giovanni Falcone, his wife, and three bodyguards are killed in a car bomb attack.
Voter displeasure with established parties brings to parliament an unprecedented number of candidates from new parties, including the Northern League, a populist party with support among northern separatists.
The lira fails to qualify for the European Monetary System and is withdrawn.
- 1993** Exposure of government corruption and Mafia links triggers a political crisis. By midyear more than 200 officials are under investigation, including Bettino Craxi, Giulio Andreotti, and five other former ministers.
The Christian Democratic Party is renamed the Italian Popular Party.
Italian voters approve a host of governmental reforms.
- 1994** The right-wing Freedom Alliance coalition forms a government under media magnate Silvio Berlusconi, leader of the new Forza Italia Party.
Facing charges including the bribing of tax police, Berlusconi resigns as prime minister.
- 1995** Lamberto Dini’s caretaker government enacts austerity measures to counteract Italy’s runaway deficit and devalued lira.
- 1996** The center-left Olive Tree coalition takes power under Romano Prodi of the Democratic Party of the Left.
Parliament approves an austerity budget designed to qualify Italy for the European Union’s common currency plan.
- 1997** Two earthquakes strike the Umbria region.
The separatist Northern League stages an election for its self-styled Parliament of Padania.
- 1998** Berlusconi is convicted of bribery and corruption.

More than 150 people die in mudslides near the city of Sarno.

Massimo d'Alema succeeds Prodi as prime minister, leading a broad center-left coalition.

- 1999** The euro is introduced.
Italy participates in NATO action against Serbia. Alema resigns, and Giuliano Amato leads Italy's 58th government since World War II.
- 2000** Torrential rainstorms flood the regions surrounding Turin and Milan.
- 2001** Silvio Berlusconi leads Forza Italia to victory in national elections and is named prime minister. Italians vote to give greater autonomy to regional governments.
- 2002** The euro replaces the lira as Italy's currency.
- 2003** Berlusconi is tried on corruption charges; the trial ends when parliament passes a law granting him immunity from prosecution.
- 2004** The Constitutional Court throws out the law granting Berlusconi immunity and his trial resumes; he is acquitted. Italy expels hundreds of African asylum seekers from the island of Lampedusa.
- 2005** Parliament ratifies proposed EU constitution.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Tavole Statistiche
<http://www.istat.it>

JAMAICA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Jamaica

ABBREVIATION

JM

CAPITAL

Kingston

HEAD OF STATE

Queen Elizabeth II, represented by Governor-General Sir Howard Cooke (from 1991)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Portia Simpson Miller (from 2006)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Constitutional parliamentary democracy

POPULATION

2,731,832 (2005)

AREA

10,991 sq km (4,244 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Black

LANGUAGE

English, patois English

RELIGION

Christianity

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Jamaican dollar

NATIONAL FLAG

Two diagonal yellow gold bars forming a saltire divide the flag into four triangular panels, the top and bottom green and the two sides black.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A male Amerindian stands to the right and a female Amerindian stands to the left of a shield that bears a red cross with five golden pineapples superimposed on it. The crest is a Jamaican crocodile surmounting the royal helmet and mantling. On a scroll beneath the device appears the national motto, "Out of many, one people," a translation of the Latin motto *Indus uterque serviet uni* in the original armorial bearings granted to the island in 1662.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"Jamaica, Land We Love"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day), May 23 (Labor Day), June 2 (Queen's Birthday), First Monday in August (Independence Day, National Day), various Christian festivals, including Ash Wednesday, Good Friday, Easter Monday, Christmas, and Boxing Day (the feast day of Saint Stephen)

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

August 6, 1962

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

August 6, 1962

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

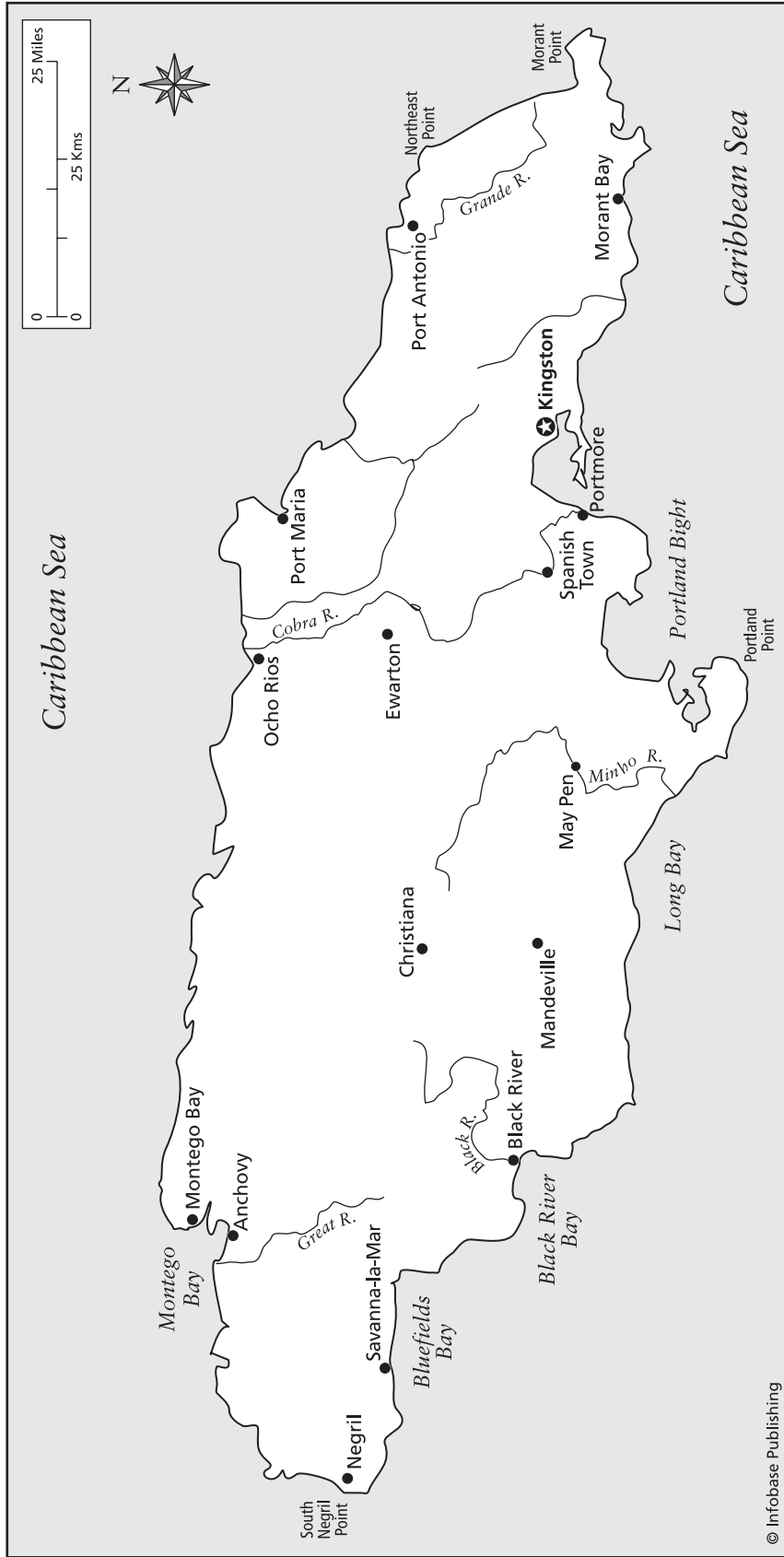
Jamaica, an island in the Caribbean Sea 90 mi (145 km) South of Cuba, has a total land area of 4,244 sq mi (10,991 sq km) and extends 146 mi (235 km) north to south and 51 mi (82 km) east to west. Its coastline stretches 635 mi (1,022 km).

The capital of Jamaica is Kingston. The other major urban centers are Spanish Town, Portmore, and Montego Bay.

The topography consists mainly of coastal plains around the island divided by the Blue Mountains to the east and limestone plateaus in the central and western areas of the interior. The Blue Mountains have an average elevation of 6,000 ft (1,800 m), with Blue Mountain Peak reaching 7,402 ft (2,256 m).

There are numerous rivers, many of which rise only a few miles from the coast. The Black River is the most navigable river on the island.

Jamaica



Geography

Area sq km: 10,991; sq mi 4,244
 World Rank: 159th
 Land Boundaries, km: 0
 Coastline, km: 1,022
 Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Caribbean Sea 0
 Highest: Blue Mountain Peak 2,256
 Land Use %
 Arable Land: 16.1
 Permanent Crops: 10.2
 Forest: 30.0
 Other: 43.7

Population of Principal Cities (2001)

Kingston	96,052
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CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Jamaica has a tropical climate at sea level and a temperate climate in the uplands. The four seasons are distinguished mainly by differences in rainfall; there are two rainy seasons, from May to June and from September to November, and two dry seasons, from July to August and from December to April. The winter mean temperature is about 75°F (24°C), the summer mean temperature 80°F (27°C). The temperature maximums are 91°F (32.8°C) at Kingston, on the coast, and 80°F (26.7°C) in the highlands.

The annual average precipitation is 77 in (1,950 mm), with the highest rainfall, 200 in (5,030 mm), occurring on the northeastern coast and on Blue Mountain. The lowest, 33 in (840 mm), occurs around Kingston, in the southwest,

The island is subject to hurricanes from late August to November.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature
 Summer: 80°F
 Winter: 75°F
 Average Rainfall: 77 in
 Highest recorded rainfall: 200 in on the northeastern coast

FLORA AND FAUNA

Jamaica is covered with lush vegetation and is inhabited by hundreds of animal species; Jamaicans say that “even the fence posts grow.” Native plants include hundreds of types of ferns, 30 species of orchids, bougainvillea, allamanda, and hibiscus. The Arawak Indians planted sweet potato, cassava, tobacco, cocoa, and corn. Africans imported the ackee tree, which produces Jamaica’s national

fruit. East Indian slaves and indentured servants brought marijuana, locally called ganja. Spanish settlers brought sugarcane, pineapple, coconut, banana, oranges, and lemons. The British imported breadfruit. The island does not support any large mammals, but it does have over 250 species of birds and wide varieties of insects, amphibians, reptiles, and tropical fish in the surrounding waters. Notable birds include egrets, hummingbirds (especially the swallowtail hummingbird, which lives only in Jamaica), the patoo owl, and the kling-kling.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 2,731,832
 World Rank: 135th
 Density per sq km: 244.0
 % of annual growth (1999-2003): 0.8
 Male %: 50.0
 Female %: 50.0
 Urban %: 52.1
 Age Distribution %: 0–14: 27.5
 15–64: 65.6
 65 and over: 6.9
 Population 2025: 3,128,000
 Birth Rate per 1,000: 16.56
 Death Rate per 1,000: 5.37
 Rate of Natural Increase %: 1.5
 Total Fertility Rate: 1.95
 Expectation of Life (years): Males 74.23
 Females 78.45
 Marriage Rate per 1,000: —
 Divorce Rate per 1,000: —
 Average Size of Households: 4.2
 Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

About 98 percent of the Jamaican population is of African descent. Of this ethnic majority, 7.3 percent are of mixed black and white origin. Of the minorities, Chinese and Afro-Chinese constitute 0.2 percent, East Indians and Afro-East Indians 1.3 percent, whites 0.2 percent, and others 0.1 percent. Africans were originally imported to work as slaves on the island plantations. When the slave trade was abolished in 1834, East Indians and Chinese were imported to replace black laborers.

LANGUAGES

The official language is English. British English is the received standard, but recent decades have seen the growth of a patois known as Jamaican English. Its main characteristics are the incorporation of archaic English and African words and certain peculiarities of word order and pronunciation.

RELIGIONS

There is no established church in Jamaica, but Christianity is the religion of the majority. Protestant denominations are the largest group (61 percent), mainly composed of Church of God, Anglicans, Pentecostals, Seventh-day Adventists, and Baptists. Roman Catholics total 4 percent. About 35 percent of the population belongs to non-Christian groups, including Jews, Hindus, and followers of an African folk religion called Pocomania. Jamaica is also the home of Rastafarianism, a religious movement that venerates the former Ethiopian emperor Haile Selassie I.

Religious Affiliations

Protestant	1,674,600
Roman Catholic	109,300
Other	947,900

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Jamaica was discovered by Christopher Columbus in 1494 and was settled by the Spanish in the 16th century. The indigenous Arawak Indians were exterminated by the 17th century, when the Spanish themselves were expelled by the British. The island was formally ceded by Spain to England in 1670. The English developed a flourishing plantation economy with slave labor brought from West Africa, but the abolition of the slave trade in 1834, the Civil War in the United States, and the removal of British tariff protection for Jamaican products destroyed the economy and led to a black uprising in Morant Bay in 1865. The British Parliament established a Crown colony government in Jamaica in 1866, and the administration and the economy were gradually rebuilt.

From 1866 Jamaica was a Crown colony ruled by a governor. New programs led to the development of banana cultivation, internal transportation, and educational and public health facilities. However, the depression of the 1930s, coupled with a blight on the banana crop and a large population increase, led to serious unrest. A royal commission investigated the island's economic, social, and political conditions, and its report led to the constitution of 1944, granting Jamaica a wide degree of internal self-government. Jamaica joined other British Caribbean colonies in 1958 to form the Federation of the West Indies but withdrew in 1961.

Jamaica became an independent nation in 1962. In the decades prior to independence, Jamaica developed a stable two-party system under the leadership of Norman W. Manley, founder of the People's National Party (PNP), and Sir Alexander Bustamante, founder of the

Jamaican Labour Party (JLP). Upon Jamaica's independence in 1962, the JLP became the governing party, with Bustamante assuming the post of prime minister. Bustamante retired in 1967; Hugh L. Shearer, who became prime minister several months after Bustamante's retirement, continued in office until 1972, when the PNP became the majority party. Michael Norman Manley, the son of the party's founder, an advocate of democratic socialism, headed a government that emphasized economic independence and social reform.

The 1970s were a period of political unrest generated by a declining economy and high unemployment. Street violence and gang warfare erupted in 1976, prompting the government to declare a state of emergency that lasted for six months. Violence again erupted in 1979.

The JLP was returned to power in 1980 in the bloodiest election campaign in Jamaica's history. Led by Edward Seaga, the JLP governed the country until 1989. Civil unrest continued throughout the 1980s, fueled by government economic policies that withdrew food subsidies and devalued the currency. Crime, particularly drug-related violence, increased rapidly. In this atmosphere elections were held in early 1989, and Manley was returned to office. The PNP also won control of 12 of the 13 municipal councils in 1990.

Back in office Manley modified his socialist policies and allowed private sector businesses a greater role in the nation's economic development. Percival James Patterson succeeded Manley as prime minister, and the PNP won a landslide victory in the 1993 election. Although Jamaica's economy continued to face serious problems, the PNP continued to dominate the legislature and local government. In September 1997 it won control of all 13 municipal councils, and in December 1997 Patterson was reelected by the voters. The PNP majority won a third term in the 1998 elections and a fourth in 2002.

The economy deteriorated in 1998 and 1999, and fuel prices rose, sparking increases in crime and violent protests. The government ordered the army to begin patrolling the streets of Kingston, but crime linked to the drug business and gangs continued. In July 2001 three days of violent protests and unrest killed at least 27 people, and armored vehicles rolled into the city to restore order. Terrible crime continued through 2004, when an estimated 1,145 people were murdered, mostly as the result of street gang activity.

Prime Minister Patterson announced in 2003 that he intended for Jamaica to be an independent republic by 2007, when he planned to leave office after his third term. Jamaica granted asylum to ousted Haitian president Jean-Bertrand Aristide in 2004, angering Haiti. That September, Hurricane Ivan devastated the island, leaving thousands homeless.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1962–67	Alexander Bustamante
1967	Donald Sangster
1967–72	Hugh L. Shearer
1972–80	Michael Norman Manley
1980–89	Edward Seaga
1989–92	Michael Norman Manley
1992–2006	Percival James Patterson
2006–	Portia Simpson Miller

CONSTITUTION

Under the 1962 constitution, Jamaica is a titular monarchy, with the queen of England as the head of state, represented on the island by a governor-general appointed by the monarch on the recommendation of the prime minister. The executive consists of a prime minister, who is the head of government, and at least 11 cabinet ministers appointed by the governor-general. All cabinet members, excluding the justice minister, must be members of Parliament. The leader of the party that wins the majority in a parliamentary election becomes prime minister. The governor-general is assisted by the Privy Council, whose six members are appointed on the advice of the prime minister.

Legislative power is vested in a bicameral Parliament, with an appointed upper house, the Senate, and an elected lower house, the House of Representatives. The judicial system is composed of the Supreme Court, with both original and appellate jurisdiction, a court of appeals, and minor courts.

PARLIAMENT

Under the constitution the bicameral Parliament consists of the Senate and the House of Representatives. The Senate has 21 members, appointed by the governor-general. A total of 13 senators are appointed on the advice of the prime minister, eight on the advice of the leader of the opposition party. The House of Representatives consists of 60 members, elected for five-year terms by popular vote.

Bills may originate in either body of Parliament. The Senate is also the reviewing body for legislation sent up by the House. On the British model, the governor-general appoints as leader of the opposition the member of the House of Representatives best able to command the support of the majority of members opposed to the government.

The Seaga government began a reform of the electoral system through the compilation of new electoral rolls in 1985. However, before the new rolls were completed, the government called for an early election, allowing only four days for nominating candidates. The PNP boycot-

ted the elections as a result, and the JLP won all the seats in the House of Representatives. After the JLP returned to power under Prime Minister Patterson, it instituted a major reform in the electoral system by requiring voter identification cards with photographs in 1997.

Suffrage is universal over age 18. Parliamentary elections are held every five years and are free and open. Voter participation is generally high.

POLITICAL PARTIES

The social-democratic PNP has been in power since 1990; it has historically been linked with the National Workers' Union. The other major party, the conservative JLP has been associated with the Bustamante Industrial Trade Union. Two more recent (and somewhat marginal) parties are the center-right National Democratic Movement, established in 1995, and the populist United Peoples Party, established in 2001.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For purposes of local government, Jamaica is divided into three counties and 14 parishes. The County of Cornwall consists of the parishes of Hanover, Saint James, Trelawney, Westmoreland, and Saint Elizabeth. The County of Middlesex has the parishes of Saint Ann, Saint Mary, Manchester, Clarendon, and Saint Catherine. The County of Surrey includes the parishes of Portland, Kingston, Saint Andrew, and Saint Thomas.

Of the 14 parishes, two—Kingston and Saint Andrew—are amalgamated and administered by the Kingston and Saint Andrew Corporation. In the other parishes, local affairs are administered by parish councils consisting of 13 to 21 members, elected every three years by universal adult suffrage beginning at age 18. The chairman of the parish council is known as the mayor, and each parish has a chief magistrate. Parish revenues are derived from central government loans and taxes.

LEGAL SYSTEM

Jamaica's legal system is based on English common law. The highest courts are the Supreme Court, composed of a chief justice, one senior puisne judge, and 15 puisne judges, and the Court of Appeal, with a president and six judges. The chief justice of the Supreme Court and the president of the Court of Appeal are appointed by the governor-general after consultation with the prime minister and the leader of the opposition; other judges are appointed by the governor-general on the advice of the Judicial Service Commission. Subordinate courts are the resident magis-

trates' courts, petty session courts, traffic courts, and juvenile courts. Britain's Privy Council is the final court of appeals for Jamaica as well as other former colonies.

The Department of Prisons takes care of the island's five prisons. In 2002 Britain's Privy Council announced that it would no longer carry out capital punishment in some Caribbean countries, to the dismay of Prime Minister Patterson; many in Jamaica consider execution an important deterrent to violent crime.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Jamaica continues to function as a parliamentary democracy despite highly partisan and sometimes violent elections. Free elections were strengthened in 1997 when voter identification cards with photographs were introduced in the general election. The legal system, following British common law, provides for fair trials and protects the rights of defendants.

There is no press censorship, and although some of the media are government owned, the privately owned paper the *Daily Gleaner*, which has been highly critical of present and past governments, has strengthened freedom of the press.

Jamaica has a strong organized labor movement. In fact, the major political parties are offshoots of two of Jamaica's major unions, the Bustamante Industrial Trade Union and the National Workers' Union.

Police brutality and arbitrary arrests became serious problems in the early 2000s, as the government attempted to suppress gang violence. Prison conditions were poor, and long waits for trials were common.

FOREIGN POLICY

Jamaica is a member of the British Commonwealth of Nations. Historically, Jamaica has maintained close ties with Great Britain, though now its trade and financial relations are primarily with the United States. In 2003 the United Kingdom announced that Jamaicans would need visas to enter the country, as part of an effort to stop a tide of illegal immigration.

Jamaica has diplomatic relations with most nations and is a member of the United Nations and the Organization of American States (OAS). It plays a prominent role in the Caribbean, as seen in its contributing to the multinational UN force that returned Haiti's elected government to power in 1994.

DEFENSE

Although the queen of England is titular head of the defense forces, the prime minister, in his role as minister of defense, acts as the political and operational head. There

is a British training mission for the three services: the army, coast guard, and air force.

Military manpower is provided by voluntary enlistment.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 3,000
 Military Manpower Availability: 696,900
 Military Expenditures \$million: 31.2
 as % of GDP: 0.4
 as % of central government expenditures: —
 Arms Imports \$million: —
 Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

Jamaica's economy has faced troubled times in recent decades. Under the Jamaican Labour Party (JLP), government regulation of the island's business and industry resulted in widespread unemployment, devaluation of the currency, and huge foreign debts. During the 1970s continued deterioration of the economy led to continual internal unrest. The reforms required by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for its loans to Jamaica were not properly implemented. For much of the 1980s economic difficulties continued, and labor, unrest, and crime hurt tourism, a major pillar of the economy.

In the 1990s Jamaica's economic development remained stalled. Its foreign debt was nearly \$3.2 billion in 1998, and interest on the debt consumed 22.4 percent of the budget. In the late 1990s many Jamaican banks failed and had to be taken over by the government. Much of its managerial, technical, and entrepreneurial personnel continued to emigrate to the United States and Canada.

Agriculture, mining, and tourism remain the major sectors of the economy. Sugarcane and bauxite are the main exports. In 1998 Jamaica earned more than \$1 billion from foreign visitors. Depressed economic conditions in 1999–2000 led to increased civil unrest, including a mounting crime rate. The economy began to grow again in 2000, and inflation dropped to less alarming levels than the 25 percent of 1995, but the Jamaican dollar continued to slip and the slow world economy of 2001 stunted growth. While 2003 was one of the best tourism years on record, the economy still only grew at a rate of 1.9 percent. The nation faces serious long-term problems, such as a high ratio of debt to GDP, double-digit inflation, massive unemployment, and civil unrest. Almost 20 percent of the population lives below the poverty line.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 11.13
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 4,100

GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 1.3
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 0.5
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:

Agriculture: 6.1
 Industry: 32.7
 Services: 61.2

Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:

Private Consumption: 63
 Government Consumption: 16
 Gross Domestic Investment: 32.0

Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 1.679

Imports: 3.624

% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 2.7

% of Income Received by Richest 10%: 30.3

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
159.5	172.6	184.6	197.7	218.1

Finance

National Currency: Jamaican Dollar (JMD)

Exchange Rate: \$1 = JMD 61.5321

Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 63

Central Bank Discount Rate %: —

Total External Debt \$billion: 5.964

Debt Service Ratio %: 21.4

Balance of Payments \$million: –830.7

International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 1.19

Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
 12.4

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 3.44

per capita \$: 1.30

Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 720.7

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: 1 April–31 March

Revenues \$billion: 2.793

Expenditures \$billion: 3.157

Budget Deficit \$million: 364

Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 6.1

Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: –1.5

Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 1.77

Irrigation, % of Farms having: 8.8

Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 128.7

Total Farmland % of land area: 16.1

Livestock: Cattle 000: 430

Chickens million: 11

Pigs 000: 180

Sheep 000: 1.4

Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters 000: 859

Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 11.8

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 1.02

Industrial Production Growth Rate %: –2.0

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 13

Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million:
 3.34

Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 1.27

Net Energy Imports % of use: 88.2

Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 1.4

Production kW-hr billion: 6.26

Consumption kW-hr billion: 5.83

Coal Reserves tons billion: —

Production tons million: —

Consumption tons 000: 59

Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —

Production cubic feet billion: —

Consumption cubic feet billion: —

Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —

Production barrels 000 per day: —

Consumption barrels 000 per day: 66.2

Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 3.624

Exports \$billion: 1.679

Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 1.8

Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 4.7

Balance of Trade \$million: –830.7

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
United States %	39.3	29.3
Trinidad and Tobago %	9.6	—
Germany %	5.5	6.2
Venezuela %	4.4	—
France %	4.4	7.8
Japan %	4.1	—
Canada %	—	11.7
United Kingdom %	—	10.8
Norway %	—	7.0
China %	—	5.9
Netherlands %	—	4.4

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 18,700

Paved %: 70.1

Automobiles: 129,400

Trucks and Buses: 65,200

Railroad: Track Length km: 272

Passenger-km million: —

Freight-km million: —

Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 9

Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 100.7

(continues)

Transportation *(continued)*

Airports: 35
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 4.9
 Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 1.35
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$billion: 1.62
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 269

Communications

Telephones 000: 444.4
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones million: 1.4
 Personal Computers 000: 141
 Internet Hosts per million people: 542
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 220

ENVIRONMENT

Increases in the population have created environmental challenges. Tourism and rapid growth in mining have combined to degrade the island's watersheds and cause serious groundwater and surface water pollution. Tropical forests are disappearing and covered only 25 percent of Jamaica's land area by the late 1990s. Hillside farming in rural areas contributes to the problem of soil erosion.

To meet these environmental problems, the government established the National Resource Conservation Authority in 1991. In 1995 a plan was developed to deal with land use and watershed management, soil erosion, water pollution from untreated sewage, and pollution from bauxite mining. The government's efforts in implementing this plan are being aided by environmental specialists at the University of the West Indies in Kingston.

One environmental problem the government cannot solve is Jamaica's vulnerability to hurricanes. Hurricane Ivan in 2004 was particularly devastating.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 30.0
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: -5
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 14
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 4.18

LIVING CONDITIONS

Most Jamaicans are quite poor; per capita GDP was about \$4,100 in 2004. Crime is a terrible problem, especially in

Kingston, and people are murdered on an almost daily basis. Many people in the cities live in crowded conditions, sometimes in slum structures made of corrugated metal. About 60 percent of the population lives in rural areas in small, flimsy homes that fall down in storms. Many Jamaicans have abandoned their homeland and emigrated to the United States, Canada, or the United Kingdom, where their prospects are better.

HEALTH

Jamaica's government established a national health service in 1966, and as a result Jamaicans are quite healthy, with a life expectancy of 76 years. The government pays for vaccinations and family planning services; in 2004 the average Jamaican woman had less than two children. The nation's medical schools are quite good, and Jamaican doctors and nurses have found work in many other countries. Since the 1980s, however, the health service has become increasingly underfunded, and so now many people either pay for their own care at private clinics or simply go without, which has undone some of the benefits of the earlier years of good care. Many Jamaicans use traditional herbal remedies to treat themselves. HIV infection is a growing problem.

Health

Number of Physicians: 2,253
 Number of Dentists: 212
 Number of Nurses: 4,374
 Number of Pharmacists: —
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 85
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 12.36
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 87
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 6
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 180
 HIV Infected % of adults: 1.2
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 81
 Measles: 78
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 80
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 93

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Jamaican cuisine combines cooking practices from the various ethnic groups that have settled on the island, including African, Spanish, Arawak Indian, East Indian, Chinese, and British. One common dish is jerk, meat marinated and barbecued over pimento wood. People eat a great deal of fish and other seafood cooked in various ways. Goat, chicken, and pork are also popular meats. These meats are served with rice and beans or cooked into pie. The national fruit is ackee, which is poisonous unless prepared correctly and which looks like scrambled

eggs when cooked; one popular dish is ackee with salted dried cod. Vegetables include plantains, yam, breadfruit, peppers, and onions. People drink coffee, tea, cocoa, rum, and beer as well as the juice of the many local fruits.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 9.7
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,680
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 101.0
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 224.2

STATUS OF WOMEN

Jamaican women are accorded full equality under the constitution. The Employment Act of 1975 guarantees women equal pay for equal work. The legal status of women is reflected in their influential positions in the civil service and government. Nevertheless, cultural and social values often cause women to suffer job discrimination. Many are denied access to higher-paying jobs, and they are often confined to service jobs, such as teaching, health-care, office, and commercial work. Pay disparity continues despite the 1975 law, and unemployment is higher for women than for men.

Primary health clinics provide pre- and postnatal care for mothers and their children. The National Planning Board organizes education in family planning and family life, and it makes available oral contraceptives and condoms. Jamaica's birthrate is quite low for a developing nation.

Domestic violence is a continuing problem, as is human trafficking.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 12
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.07
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 48.0

WORK

Unemployment was estimated to be about 15 percent in 2004. A number of young men find employment of a sort in the drug trade. About 20 percent of the legitimate workforce is employed in agriculture, growing food either for themselves or for large plantations; all agricultural workers are vulnerable to price fluctuations and storms. Another 17 percent work in industry, such as bauxite mining and clothing manufacture. A full 63 percent of workers are employed in services, including tourism. Women dominate jobs in schools, hospitals, and offices. The government is the largest single employer in Jamaica. Job security is poor for nearly everyone.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 1,140,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 47.6
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 20.1
 Industry: 16.6
 Services: 63.4
 Unemployment %: 15.0

EDUCATION

Education is free, universal, and compulsory for children from ages six to 15. Schooling is divided into six years of primary school, three years of lower secondary school, and four years of upper secondary school. High school poses a problem for many parents because they must buy books, supplies, and uniforms for children who attend. Some students receive scholarships to a government-subsidized secondary school, and wealthier parents manage to pay for private schools, but about one-third of Jamaican teenagers do not attend high school at all.

The academic year runs from September to July. English is the medium of instruction in all grades. The shortage of trained teachers is the most serious education problem. Both public and private education is controlled by the Ministry of Education.

Higher education is provided at the University of the West Indies or at one of several other specialized postsecondary institutions, such as the University of Arts, Science, and Technology or the School of Agriculture. Only about 5 percent of Jamaicans obtain higher education.

Literacy remains a modest problem, with 88 percent of the population over age 15 literate as of 2003; government programs in adult education have had limited success.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 87.9
 Male %: 84.1
 Female %: 91.6
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 11.8
 First Level: Primary Schools: 788
 Teachers: 9,759
 Students: 329,762
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 33.8
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 95.2
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 126
 Teachers: 11,801
 Students: 227,934
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 19.4
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 74.9
 Third Level: Institutions: 15
 Teachers: 1,990
 Students: 45,394
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 17.4
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 6.1

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Jamaica has a University of Arts, Science, and Technology, where students can specialize in scientific subjects. The University of the West Indies also has good scientific facilities, notably an excellent faculty of medicine. Jamaica's Ministry for Commerce, Science, and Technology has been working to increase fiber-optic networks to link Jamaica with other nations and to negotiate contracts for the exploration of oil and gas on and around the island. The nation as a whole has a good domestic telephone network. In 2002 about 600,000 people were using the Internet.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: 1
 Patent Applications by Residents: 15

MEDIA

Three daily newspapers, the *Star*, *Daily Gleaner*, and *Jamaica Observer*, are published in Kingston, while two weeklies are published in Montego Bay. The press is noted for its vigor and freedom from political suppression, despite its regular criticism of the government. Jampress is the government-run news agency. Although relatively few titles are printed annually, the island is home to several book publishers.

Broadcasting organizations include the privately owned Television Jamaica Limited (TVJ), the privately owned CVM Television, the religiously oriented Love TV, Radio Jamaica, and Island Broadcasting, commercially run stations, and several other stations. The BBC World Service and Caribbean Service are available on FM radio.

Media

Daily Newspapers: —
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: —
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets 000: 490
 per 1,000: 191

CULTURE

Jamaicans listen to and dance to music all the time; ska, rock steady, calypso, soca, and reggae are popular styles, and Jamaican musicians are constantly creating new

forms, many of which attract international notice. Bob Marley remains the most recognized Jamaican musician. Jamaica has produced many excellent visual artists, starting with the Arawak Indians who decorated the walls of caves. During the mid-twentieth century Edna Manley, the mother of Prime Minister Michael Manley, worked to create a unique Jamaican art style; she herself was a sculptor, and she encouraged other artists to explore native artistic principles. Primitive, or "intuitive," art became popular under her oversight, and Jamaican artists now commonly employ historical and cultural motifs such as Rastafarians, animals, African myths, and religious symbols. Jamaica underwent a literary renaissance after independence and has produced famous authors such as Kwame Dawes and Velma Pollard; others write dub poetry, performed to reggae music.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 216
 Volumes: 1,108,000
 Registered borrowers: 614,911
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Jamaican folklore combines elements from the folk traditions of the various ethnic groups that make up its population. Anancy the trickster is a popular character in folk tales; Anancy is a spider-man who originated in East Africa and is known for his quick wits and ability to survive any eventuality. The indigenous doctor bird, or swallow-tail hummingbird, appears in many local legends.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Jamaicans love to go out to listen to music and dance at discos, where they may drink rum, beer, or other alcoholic beverages. At home people watch television or listen to the radio. The beach and the mountains are popular destinations for day trips. Many people enjoy reading, and libraries are well used; museums are also popular.

ETIQUETTE

Jamaican rules of etiquette are virtually identical to those of Western nations. Many Jamaicans are somewhat aggressive when trying to sell goods and services, especially

to Western tourists, who appear quite wealthy compared with the average islanders.

FAMILY LIFE

Women have been the heads of Jamaican families since the days of slavery, when slaves could not marry and so children lived with their mothers alone. Women still raise their children without help from male partners; many couples do not marry until their children are grown up. Women love to have children, and many bear their first child in their teens. Women and men both typically have children with multiple partners. Grandmothers often make up for the lack of two parents, helping to raise the children of their sons or daughters.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Jamaicans dress in typical Western fashion. They wear suits or dresses on formal occasions and otherwise dress in light casual clothing.

SPORTS

Soccer and cricket are the most popular sports in Jamaica. Jamaica's national soccer team, the Reggae Boyz, was the first team from an English-speaking Caribbean nation to qualify for the World Cup finals. Jamaican cricket players often captain the West Indies cricket team. Jamaicans also participate in sports such as field hockey, cycling, boxing, weightlifting, and track and field. In 1988 the island sent a bobsled team to the Olympics for the first time; though that first attempt was not particularly successful, subsequent teams have performed increasingly well.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1944** Universal suffrage is introduced. Jamaica's first constitution is adopted, granting the island a degree of self-government under a popularly elected House of Representatives, an appointed Legislative Council as the upper house, and an Executive Council.
- 1945** Following World War II Britain launches the Colonial Development and Welfare Act, which stimulates economic growth in Jamaica.
- 1947** A branch of the University of the West Indies is established in Kingston.
- 1951** A severe hurricane kills 150 and destroys crops in Jamaica.
- 1953** The constitution is amended to make seats of the Legislative Council elected offices.
- 1958** Jamaica joins the British-sponsored Federation of the West Indies.
- 1960** Opposition leader Alexander Bustamante of the Jamaica Labour Party calls for the dissolution of the Federation of the West Indies owing to Jamaica's limited influence on policy making.
- 1961** In a national referendum voters withdraw Jamaica from the Federation of the West Indies.
- 1962** Jamaica achieves full independence within the Commonwealth, with Alexander Bustamante of the center-right JLP as prime minister. The Federation of the West Indies is dissolved.
- 1963** Jamaica joins the IMF.
- 1965** Donald Sangster acts as prime minister during Bustamante's prolonged illness.
- 1966** Queen Elizabeth II pays a state visit to Jamaica.
- 1967** Jamaica's first general election since independence is marked by violence, as are most elections in the next three decades. The JLP holds its ruling position under Donald Sangster. Upon Sangster's death Hugh Shearer becomes prime minister.
- 1968** Jamaica becomes a founding member of the Caribbean Free Trade Area.
- 1969** Jamaica becomes the 24th member of the Organization of American States.
- 1972** The socialist PNP takes power, led by Michael N. Manley, son of PNP founder Norman W. Manley. Prime Minister Manley acts on his campaign promise of establishing "politics of participation" and social justice by initiating social reforms, including an end to censorship, improved civil liberties, and pro-literacy programs, but he also strengthens ties to Cuba's Communist dictator Fidel Castro, inspiring widespread criticism.
- 1976** Manley and the PNP are reelected, but polling is violent.
- 1977** The government nationalizes foreign-owned bauxite mines.
- 1980** About 800 die during Jamaica's bloodiest campaign season to date. Elections restore the conservative JLP to power, with Edward Seaga as prime minister.
- 1981** Seaga breaks ties with Cuba, establishes friendship with the United States, and attempts to stimulate foreign investment in Jamaican enterprises. Jamaica becomes a major recipient of U.S. aid.
- 1983** The JLP wins all 60 seats in national elections.
- 1986** In the midst of a steadily declining economy, the JLP posts poor returns in local elections.
- 1988** Hurricane Gilbert devastates Jamaica, inflicting \$8 billion worth of damage and leaving 500,000 homeless.

- 1989** PNP wins a landslide victory, with Manley returning as prime minister. Embarking on a program of free-market reforms, Manley cooperates with IMF recommendations, floats the Jamaican dollar, and deregulates the financial sector.
- 1992** Manley retires owing to poor health and is succeeded by Percival J. Patterson. Patterson imposes austerity measures to stabilize the economy.
- 1993** The PNP and Patterson are reelected.
- 1995** A faction of the JLP splits off to form the National Democratic Movement. GDP growth falls to 0.5 percent, down from 1.5 percent in 1992.
- 1996** GDP posts negative growth of 1.4 percent.
- 1997** Patterson leads the PNP to an unprecedented third consecutive term as governing party in elections judged by international observers as among the least violent in Jamaica's recent history. The rate of violent crime increases substantially, however.
- 1999** Jamaica's economy stagnates in crisis mode, with negative GDP, high unemployment, a widening trade deficit, and growing government debt. Violent protests take place in response to a 30 percent increase in fuel prices. In July the army restores order in Kingston after three days of unrest leave at least 27 people dead.
- 2001** More than 1,100 people are murdered in Jamaica in the year 2001, an increase of nearly 30 percent over the previous 12 months and the highest number ever recorded in a single year. The army drives into Kingston in armored vehicles to restore order after three days of unrest in July.
- 2002** The PNP and Patterson win the general elections in October.
- 2003** The British government announces that Jamaicans entering the United Kingdom will be required to hold visas. Patterson announces plans to transform Jamaica into a republic by 2007.
- 2004** Former Haitian president Jean-Bertrand Aristide is given asylum in Jamaica. Hurricane Ivan devastates the island in September.
- 2005** Jamaican police blame street gangs for the 1,145 murders that occurred in 2004.
- 2006** Portia Simpson Miller becomes Jamaica's first female prime minister.

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OFFICIAL PUBLICATIONS

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Embassy of Jamaica
<http://www.emjam-usa.org>
- Statistics Institute of Jamaica
<http://www.statinja.com>

JAPAN

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Japan (Nippon)

ABBREVIATION

JP

CAPITAL

Tokyo

HEAD OF STATE

Emperor Akihito (from 1989)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi (from 2001)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Constitutional monarchy with parliamentary government

POPULATION

127,417,244 (2005)

AREA

377,835 sq km (145,881 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Japanese

LANGUAGE

Japanese

RELIGIONS

Shintoism, Buddhism, Christianity

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Yen

NATIONAL FLAG

Sun flag (Hinomaru) consists of a red circle on a white background

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A single round gold chrysanthemum with 16 symmetrical petals

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Kimi Ga Yo” (The reign of our emperor)

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year’s Day), January 15 (Adults’ Day), February 11 (Commemoration of the Founding of the Nation Day), March 21 or 22 (Vernal Equinox Day), April 29 (Green Day), May 3 (Constitution Day), May 5 (Children’s Day), September 15 (Respect for the Aged Day), September 23 or 24 (Autumnal Equinox Day), October 10 (Health-Sports Day), November 3 (Culture Day), November 23 (Labor Thanksgiving Day), December 23 (Emperor’s Birthday)

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

ca. 660 B.C.E.

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

May 3, 1947

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Japan is an archipelago off the eastern coast of Asia consisting of four principal islands—Hokkaido, Honshu, Shikoku, and Kyushu—and over 3,000 small adjacent islands. The total area of Japan is 145,881 sq mi (377,835 sq km). No point in Japan is more than 93 mi (150 km) from the sea. The distance between Japan and the Asian mainland, of which the Korean Peninsula is the nearest point, is about 124 mi (200 km).

The capital is Tokyo, formerly known as Edo, on the northwestern shore of the Bay of Tokyo in southeastern Honshu. Tokyo itself had a population of 12,459,115 in 2004. The Greater Tokyo area, which includes Kana-

gawa, Saitama, and Chiba prefectures, is the world’s largest metropolitan area; it had a total population of 33,418,366 in 2000. There are 11 other Japanese cities with populations over one million: Yokohama, Osaka, Nagoya, Sapporo, Kyoto, Kobe, Fukuoka, Kawasaki, Hiroshima, Sendai, and Kitakyushu.

The Japanese islands are the summits of mountain ridges uplifted near the outer edge of the Asian continental shelf. Consequently, the country is extremely mountainous, and plains and intermontane basins make up only 25 percent of Japan. A long series of mountain ranges runs down the middle of the archipelago, dividing it in half, with the “front” facing the Pacific Ocean and the “back” facing the Sea of Japan. Three ranges converge

Japan



in central Japan to form the Japanese Alps (Hida Mountains), which contain about 15 peaks that exceed 10,000 ft (3,048 m). The highest point in the country is Mount Fuji, a dormant volcano that rises 12,389 ft (3,776 m).

Most of Japan's plains are along the coast, including the Kanto Plain, the country's largest, where Tokyo is located. Wide riverbeds lined by high banks cut across these lowlands.

Topographically, Japan is divided into eight regions, of which the islands of Hokkaido, Shikoku, and Kyushu each form one, while the island of Honshu has five. The Tohoku region in the northeastern part of Honshu is a dry, bright area with well-drained alluvial plains. The central zone, corresponding to the widest parts of the archipelago, includes the Kanto, Chubu, and Chugoku regions. Kanto, the country's most industrialized area, includes the Tokyo-Yokohama industrial complex. The Chubu region, west of Kanto, is characterized by the greater height and ruggedness of its mountains and comprises three districts: Hokuriku, a coastal strip on the Sea of Japan; Tosan, the central highlands; and Tokai, a narrow corridor along the Pacific coast.

The Shikoku region is divided by mountains into a narrow northern zone fronting the Sea of Japan and a wider southern zone that faces the Pacific. Most of the population lives in the northern zone; the southern zone is mostly mountainous and sparsely populated. Kyushu, the southernmost of the main islands, is divided into northern and southern parts by the Kyushu Mountains. The northern part is one of Japan's most industrialized areas and includes the Kitakyushu industrial zone. The Ryukyu Islands include over 200 islands in a chain extending southward from the Tokara Strait to within 120 mi (193 km) of Taiwan.

Japan has 10 percent of the world's volcanoes, about 265 in all, of which 20 have been active in the past century. They are particularly numerous in Hokkaido, Kyushu, and the Fassa Magna. Among the great eruptions of modern times were those of Mount Bandai in 1888 and Mount Aso in 1953 and 1958.

Japan is also subject to periodic earthquakes, with over 1,500 recorded annually. Major earthquakes are rarer but can result in thousands of deaths, as with the Kanto earthquake of 1923, in which 130,000 people were killed. Undersea earthquakes also expose the Japanese coastline to danger from tsunamis. An equally great hazard is posed by movements of the earth that shake loose entire mountainsides. These landslides are especially numerous on Hokuriku on the Sea of Japan coast.

Japan is perhaps the only country to suffer from both typhoons and snow. Typhoons cause an average of 1,500 deaths and destroy 20,000 dwellings each year. Southern Shikoku is particularly vulnerable. Winter monsoons, laden with snow, are a destructive force in regions bordering the Sea of Japan.

Although Japan is exceptionally well watered, the absence of large plains precludes the formation of a good river system. Rivers tend to be steep and swift and hence unsuitable for navigation. The country's landscape is speckled with lakes of every size, the largest of which is Biwa, which fills a large fault basin east of Kyoto.

Geography

Area sq km:	377,835; sq mi 145,881
World Rank:	60th
Land Boundaries, km:	0
Coastline, km:	29,751
Elevation Extremes meters:	
Lowest:	Hachiro-gata -4
Highest:	Mount Fuji 3,776
Land Use %	
Arable Land:	12.2
Permanent Crops:	1.0
Forest:	66.1
Other:	20.7

Population of Principal Cities (2000)

Chiba	887,164
Fukuoka	1,341,470
Funabashi	550,074
Hachioji	536,046
Hamamatsu	582,095
Higashiosaka	515,094
Hiroshima	1,126,239
Kagoshima	552,098
Kawasaki	1,249,905
Kitakyushu	1,011,471
Kobe	1,493,398
Kumamoto	662,012
Kyoto	1,467,785
Nagoya	2,171,557
Niigata	501,431
Okayama	626,642
Osaka	2,598,774
Sagamihara	605,561
Sakai	792,018
Sapporo	1,822,368
Sendai	1,008,130
Tokyo	8,134,688
Yokohama	3,426,651

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Japan's climate is of two major types: marine and continental. The mainland Asian climate regulates temperatures and precipitation. There are two periods of heavy rains, one in June, called the "plum rains," and the other in September. Between these two periods the archipelago is hot, humid, and rainless. From the end of summer through October still more violent atmospheric disturbances occur, resulting in typhoons.

The seasonal temperatures in Japan are lower than those at similar latitudes on the Asian mainland, owing

to the country's insularity. Cold winds from the mainland prevail for four months of the year. The annual average temperature for Sapporo is 44°F (6.8°C). Hakodate averages 27°F (2.9°C) in January and 72°F (22.2°C) in July. The mean temperature in Tokyo in January is 36°F (2.4°C); even the most southerly regions of Japan have several weeks of frost each year. In general, summer heat and humidity vary little across Japan. The July average is 79°F (26°C) in Kagoshima in the south and 72°F (22°C) in Sapporo in the north.

Japan has two well-watered zones: one between Kanazawa and Niigata on the Sea of Japan coast and another between the Kii Peninsula and Kyushu on the Pacific coast. Between these two zones lie the dry inland regions, where droughts are common. The central basin of the Inland Sea receives barely 24 in (610 mm) of precipitation between May and September.

The cycle of seasons is quite distinct for each region. The main difference is the drop in temperature from the southwest to the northeast. The difference is illustrated by the dates on which cherry trees bloom, marking the beginning of spring: March 25 in Kyushu, April 10 in Kansai and southern Hokuriku, April 20 in Tokyo, April 30 in northern Tohoku, and May 10 in Hakodate, in southern Hokkaido. The summers and winters vary in length on the four main islands. Summer lasts for four months in the central region, three months in Tohoku and Hokkaido, and five months in the regions of Shikoku and Kyushu. Even though the duration varies, summer tends to be hot and humid in all regions.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature

Tokyo: 36°F

Sapporo: 44°F in January and 72°F in July

Hakodate: 27°F in January and 72°F in July

Kagoshima: July 79°F

Average Rainfall: 40 to 100 in

Central Basin: 24 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Japan is home to a wide variety of plants and animals. The climate ranges from subtropical in the southern islands to near arctic in the north, and the flora and fauna are accordingly diverse.

Until the 20th century, much of central Japan was covered in deciduous forests. The country now suffers from deforestation, as timber is cut down for development and acid rain and pollution kill trees, but two-thirds of the country is still forested. Many of the plants now common in Japan are not indigenous to the islands but were imported from Europe and the Americas during and

after the Meiji period (1868–1912). Common Japanese plants include the *sakura* (cherry) tree, Japanese plum, Japanese maple, pine trees, and bamboo.

Many of Japan's animals are similar to animals from Korea and China. Animals unique to Japan include the Japanese macaque, also known as the snow monkey, the Japanese giant salamander, and the Iriomote cat. Other animals typically associated with Japan include the crane, fox, deer, and tanuki, or raccoon dog. Japan has two kinds of bear, the large brown bear and the smaller Asiatic brown bear; these bears are Japan's largest carnivorous mammals. Many of Japan's animal species are in danger of extinction from loss of habitat.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 127,417,244

World Rank: 10th

Density per sq km: 350.0

% of annual growth (1999-2003): 0.2

Male %: 49.0

Female %: 51.0

Urban %: 65.2

Age Distribution %: 0-14: 14.3

15-64: 66.2

65 and over: 19.5

Population 2025: 120,001,000

Birth Rate per 1,000: 9.47

Death Rate per 1,000: 8.95

Rate of Natural Increase %: 0.1

Total Fertility Rate: 1.39

Expectation of Life (years): Males 77.86

Females 84.61

Marriage Rate per 1,000: 5.9

Divorce Rate per 1,000: 2.3

Average Size of Households: 2.8

Induced Abortions: 329,326

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Japan is one of the most ethnically homogeneous nations in the world. Its members are unified not only by a common language, history, and culture but also by a common body of concepts about social order. The Japanese people compose 99.4 percent of the population.

Koreans are the largest minority group. Although they have lived in Japan for centuries, Koreans are treated as inferior and are subject to discrimination in the realms of education, marriage, and employment. The *burakumin*, although ethnically and culturally Japanese, are an outcast group heavily discriminated against in national life. The Ainu, who number about 16,000, are confined to a small area of the island of Hokkaido and the Kuril Islands, where they were forced to move after 1878.

LANGUAGES

The official and sole national language is Japanese. Written Japanese originally used only adapted Chinese characters (kanji), to which phonetic characters (kana) were added in the eighth century. Since 1945 both types of characters have been simplified, their number reduced, and romanized writing introduced.

English is taught as a second language in school, and most educated Japanese have a working knowledge of English, though most are much more comfortable reading English than speaking it.

RELIGIONS

Japanese society is highly secular. This secularism reflects the profound impact of Confucian ethical concepts. The Japanese approach to religion is eclectic and tolerant. No conflict is felt in simultaneously holding beliefs drawn from Shintoism and Buddhism—the predominant religions—and even Christianity.

Shintoism is the ancestral religion of the country. It came under the influence of Confucianism in the fifth century, then was eclipsed by Buddhism from the seventh to the ninth centuries, before its revival in the 19th century during the Meiji era. It then became a national cult to which all citizens had to submit. State Shintoism ended in 1945 with the emperor's declaration that he was no longer divine. However, this renunciation gave rise to a large number of heterogeneous sects of Shinto inspiration. Most of these sects are now incorporated within the Association of Shinto Shrines (Jinja-honcho). As a rule, Shintoism includes all groups that revere the Japanese gods (*kami*) and is a collective more than an individual religion.

Buddhism was introduced into Japan in the sixth century and has been the country's principal religion since the seventh century. Its evolution has been marked by the rise and spread of over 13 sects (*shu*) and 56 denominations. Buddhism has also had a profound effect on Japanese culture, including the arts, gardens, and the tea ceremony.

A variety of "new religions" developed in the 19th century, many of them not discrete religions but only renewals or new movements or sects within Shintoism or Buddhism. The new religions share some common beliefs: promise of salvation, miracles, and the practice of magic, shamanism, authoritarianism, and community morale.

Christianity is the religion of a tiny minority and is viewed by the majority of the Japanese as a Western institution. The first Catholic missionary to Japan was Saint Francis Xavier, who founded the first mission, in Kogoshima, in 1549. Authorities banned Christianity in 1613, and severe persecution followed. Foreign missionaries were not permitted to return until 1858.

Religious Affiliations

Shintoist/Buddhist	107,030,000
Christian	892,000
Other	19,495,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Human settlements in Japan date from as early as 50,000 B.C.E. After the Paleolithic period ended in about 11,000 B.C.E., three cultural eras developed. The Jomon (Rope Pattern), from 11,000 to 300 B.C.E., was followed by the Yayoi, lasting until about 300 C.E., during which waves of people from China and Korea introduced wet rice cultivation and the use of bronze and iron weapons. The Tomb culture lasted from 300 to 600. By the fifth century a centralized, clan-based authority had been firmly established in the fertile Yamato Plain in west-central Honshu. The most powerful of these clans was the Yamato, whose authority extended as far as Korea. During this formative period through the eighth century China was the principal source of cultural borrowing. In the fifth century Confucian texts and Chinese characters were brought to Japan by Korean scholars. Buddhism came in the sixth century, again through Korea, and became the vehicle for the transmission of Chinese civilization to Japan.

Between 645 and 702 a centralized bureaucracy was organized, modeled on China's, and in 710 a national capital was set up at Nara. Japan was divided into provinces and districts headed by governors appointed by the emperor. Real power, however, had fallen into the hands of the Fujiwara clan, which had become dominant through marriage with the Yamato family.

In 784 the capital was moved to Nagaoka, and then to Heian, or modern Kyoto, where it remained until 1868. The Heian (Kyoto) period, from 794 to 1185, saw the flowering of Japanese classical culture, with great literary works produced, the most famous of which was *Genji monogatari* (*The Tale of Genji*), written about 1100 by Lady Shikibu Murasaki. The Fujiwara wielded such immense power that the three centuries to 1160 are sometimes called the Fujiwara period.

After the 10th century Fujiwara power began to wane as wealthier local groups (the forerunners of the samurai) organized private governments. Rivalry between these local military clans continued until two great clans, Genji and Heike, emerged. The struggle between these two clans ended in Genji victory in 1185, ushering in Japan's feudal period.

Japan's 700-year period of rule by military overlords began in 1192, when Minamoto Yoritomo assumed the title of shogun, relegating the emperor to a merely titular role. Yoritomo established his military government at Kamakura, near modern Tokyo. As shogun he appointed the provincial military governors (daimyo), who collected all taxes. The military, or samurai, class that crystallized during this period comprised armored nobles and foot

soldiers. The samurai became the ruling class responsible for both civil and military affairs while maintaining the fiction of imperial rule.

From the death of Yoromito to 1568 Japan was torn by constant domestic strife. In the 13th century the country suffered two Mongol invasions, in 1274 and 1281. Continual warfare between the dominant clans undermined the power of the shogunate, particularly after the War of Imperial Succession (1467–77). By the mid-16th century the country had fallen into the hands of some 200 daimyo, who wielded absolute power within their fiefs. Many of the new daimyo were not of aristocratic samurai origins but seized power through their military prowess. Peasant revolts, often led by impoverished samurai, were common.

In 1582 Toyotomi Hideyoshi reduced the warfare among the daimyo and began to unify the country. He then launched two invasions of Korea, which were cut short by his death in 1598. Hideyoshi was succeeded by Tokugawa Ieyasu, who in 1603 was appointed shogun by the emperor and established his military government at Edo, modern Tokyo. Ieyasu consolidated his power by stripping the daimyo of their autonomy. The samurai class was transformed into a hereditary, privileged warrior bureaucratic group prohibited from intermarrying with peasants.

Lasting political stability characterized the Tokugawa period (1603–1853), with a rigid class structure and a policy of national seclusion. Official edicts prescribed the functions and standards of behavior of each class. Derived from both samurai and Confucian ideals, they stressed absolute loyalty to the ruler and filial piety to family heads. Confucian ethics, with emphases on status distinctions, paternalism, and lord-vassal relationships, strengthened the shogunate and brought domestic peace to Japan. In the course of time, internal commerce developed, urban centers sprang up, and a new merchant class came into being.

The collapse of the Tokugawa shogunate came not from within but from without. In 1853 U.S. warships led by Commodore Matthew Perry arrived with demands that included the establishment of facilities for trade. Unable to offer resistance, the shogun signed treaties with the United States in 1854 and soon after with other Western powers. After a decade of turmoil and confusion, the 15th, and last, Tokugawa shogun laid down his office.

Imperial rule was formally restored on January 3, 1868, to Emperor Matsuhito, who took the reign title of Meiji (Enlightened Rule), signaling the start of Japan's modern era. In 1869 the imperial capital was moved to Tokyo. The Meiji period lasted until 1912, the nucleus of Meiji power consisting of some 100 young samurai leaders and a few court nobles. As part of the new order, the Meiji government agreed to open Japan to Western knowledge. The Meiji Constitution, promulgated in 1889 as an imperial gift to the people, was patterned on the Prussian model. Its effect was to sanction the power already exercised by the military, vesting sovereignty in a divine emperor who nevertheless remained a figurehead. A bicameral legisla-

ture, the Imperial Diet, had two houses. A civilian cabinet, headed by a prime minister, was responsible only to the emperor. Suffrage was limited to male property owners, who constituted 1 percent of the population. The Meiji leaders laid the foundations of the country's modern industry and finance. The first family business, industrial, and banking conglomerates, known as *zaibatsu*, were founded in this period. The Bank of Japan was established in 1882 as the country's central bank.

Not surprisingly, military modernization was given top priority by the Meiji government, and by the 1880s it accounted for one-third of the national budget. Japan became engaged in several conflicts in the late 19th century in an effort to enhance its stature as a world power. In 1894 Japan won a quick victory over China, in the 1895 Treaty of Shimonoseki gaining Taiwan, the Pescadores Islands, and the Liaodong Peninsula in southern Manchuria. In 1904 Japan attacked Russian positions at Port Arthur on the Liaodong Peninsula. The Treaty of Portsmouth in 1905 sealed Japan's victory with grants of territory in Korea and Manchuria. In 1910 Korea was annexed as an integral part of the Japanese Empire. By 1912, when the Meiji period ended, Japan was the dominant power in East Asia.

The Taisho period, from 1912 to 1926, saw the beginning of political party rule in parliament. It witnessed Japan's role as one of the Big Five powers at the Versailles Peace Conference and as a leading naval power at the Washington Naval Conference in 1922.

By 1926 the Showa reign began with the accession of Emperor Hirohito. By then Japan had fallen under the control of right-wing leaders whose goal was to make China a Japanese satellite. They believed that the Japanese people had a divine mission to conquer Asia and that the Japanese were racially superior. In 1931 a railroad explosion at Mukden started a series of events that culminated in army control of political power in Japan. Japan occupied Manchuria in 1932 and soon began its effort to conquer China, culminating in the capture of Canton in 1937 and control of most of the Chinese seacoast by 1938.

Early German successes in World War II led the Japanese government of General Hideki Tojo to sign the Triple Alliance with Germany and Italy. On December 7, 1941, Japan attacked the U.S. fleet at Pearl Harbor, and by mid-1942 Japan was poised for a sweep of the Pacific. However, the tide of war turned in January 1943 with the loss of Guadalcanal, followed by the Battle of Midway and then the loss of Saipan in 1944. Despite these losses, Japan refused the Allies' call for unconditional surrender, and in early August 1945 the United States dropped the only atomic bombs ever used in warfare on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Japan formally surrendered on August 14, 1945.

After Japan's defeat General Douglas MacArthur and American military forces took control of the country. The role of the emperor was drastically redefined in 1946; he became a largely symbolic figure, no longer a divine ruler. In 1947 the MacArthur Constitution became the new ba-

sis of Japan's governmental system. Japan renounced the right to wage war and maintain military forces. The *zai-batsu*, the industrial-financial conglomerates, were broken up. In 1948 Japan regained some of its sovereignty; its position was strengthened when it served as an American military base of operations during the Korean War, from 1950 to 1953. Aiding the American war effort also greatly spurred the revival of Japan's postwar economy.

Japan built vast new industries and businesses in the postwar decades, devoting the nation's budget and resources entirely to economic growth. By the 1980s its booming enterprises were admired as an "economic miracle," and Japan ranked second only to the United States among the world's economies. The Japanese people enjoyed one of the highest living standards in the world.

During nearly all the postwar years Japan's government was controlled by the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and its leaders. This political stability helped reinforce Japan's remarkable economic growth and expanding overseas trade. However, by the late 1980s the LDP, weakened by revelations of widespread corruption and bribery, saw its parliamentary majority reduced. In 1993 the LDP was forced to form coalition governments with the Socialist Party, but it returned to sole power during the remainder of the 1990s, though with reduced majorities.

The Japanese economy suffered a prolonged slump in the 1990s, and the country's vaunted prosperity was seriously threatened. The government's efforts to use fiscal and monetary measures to stimulate the economy met with little success and contributed to political instability among the LDP leadership and Japan's other political parties. However, in the early 2000s the economy showed some signs of improvement, and the LDP was able to maintain its strength in the parliament.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

Emperors

1867–1912	Emperor Mutsuhito (referred to as the "Meiji emperor")
1912–26	Emperor Yoshihito (referred to as the "Taishō emperor")
1926–89	Emperor Hirohito
1989–	Emperor Akihito

Prime Ministers

1945–46	Kijuro Shidehara
1946–47	Shigeru Yoshida
1947–48	Tetsu Katayama
1948	Hitoshi Ashida
1948–54	Shigeru Yoshida
1954–56	Ichiro Hatoyama
1956–57	Tanzan Ishibashi
1957–60	Nobusuke Kishi
1960–64	Hayato Ikeda
1964–72	Eisaku Sata

1972–74	Kakuei Tanaka
1974–76	Takeo Miki
1976–78	Takeo Fukuda
1978–80	Masayoshi Ohira
1980–82	Zenko Suzuki
1982–87	Yasuhiro Nakasone
1987–89	Noboru Takeshita
1989	Sosuki Uno
1989–91	Toshiki Kaifu
1991–93	Kiichi Miyazawa
1993–94	Morihiro Hosokawa
1994	Tsutomu Hata
1994–96	Tomiichi Murayama
1996–98	Ryutaro Hashimoto
1998–2000	Keizo Obuchi
2000–01	Yoshiro Mori
2001–	Junichiro Koizumi

CONSTITUTION

The MacArthur Constitution of 1947 made a clean break with the basic provisions of the Meiji Constitution. The ideological bases of the new constitution were popular sovereignty, human rights, and the renunciation of war. The emperor now assumed a largely ceremonial role in government and society, with no political power.

A prominent feature of the constitution is a comprehensive listing of the rights and duties of citizens. These rights include freedom of religion, freedom of speech, and freedom of association as well as the rights to a fair trial, to serve in public office, and to own private property.

The explicit renunciation of war in the constitution was one of its most striking and controversial features. It clearly reflected the origin of the document and pressure from the U.S. government. In fact, many Japanese at first viewed the constitution as a purely American document. However, this document and its philosophical basis have been reinforced by postwar social trends. Its relevance is attested to by the inability of opposition parties to revise it to make it more authentic. In part this inability is also due to the fact that amendments to the constitution require a two-thirds vote in the two houses of the Diet.

The MacArthur Constitution vested the executive power solely in the prime minister and the cabinet. The prime minister is the head of government, not simply first among equals. To guard against military resurgence, all cabinet members must be civilians and members of the Diet. The prime minister and the cabinet also select the chief justice and other judges of the Supreme Court.

The constitution clearly establishes cabinet responsibility to the Diet. The prime minister is elected by the Diet, and the lower house plays a dominant role in this process. The lower house may pass a motion of no confidence in the government, which requires the prime minister and the cabinet to resign and call an election.

Postwar government in Japan has witnessed the growing power of the prime minister, the office held by skilled politicians with commanding positions in the ruling Liberal Democratic Party. Cabinet turnover has been very high in postwar Japan, with cabinets changing or reforming an average of once per year.

PARLIAMENT

The Japanese Diet is a bicameral legislature, with a lower house called the House of Representatives (Shugi-in) and an upper house called the House of Councillors (Sangi-in). The lower house consists of 500 members elected by popular vote every four years. The upper house consists of 252 members elected by popular vote for six-year terms; one-half of the body is elected every three years. The House of Representatives has the greater power of the two houses, in contrast to the prewar system, in which they were coequal bodies.

The Diet is the highest authority of government. It has the power to make laws, elect the prime minister, approve the national budget, investigate government policies, draft amendments to the constitution, and impeach judges. The structure and purpose of the Diet are defined in the constitution, the Diet Law of 1947, and the rules of each house.

Much of the legislative work of the Diet is done in committees. There are 16 standing committees for each house, with identical names and areas of authority, such as commerce and industry, budget, social and labor affairs, and foreign affairs. According to the Diet Law, each member must serve on at least one and not more than three standing committees. Selection of committee chairmen is based on party strength, not seniority, and thus all are usually headed by Liberal Democratic Party members. Committees maintain absolute control over the flow of all bills. The Diet Law also provides for the establishment of special committees to focus the Diet's attention on particularly pressing problems or to remove issues from the influence of standing committees that may be unduly responsive to the vested interests involved.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Throughout the postwar era Japan's political system was characterized by the predominance of a single party, the conservative Liberal Democratic Party, over an anemic opposition comprising assorted parties in the middle and left. The LDP attached more importance to organization and financial power than to ideology. It was particularly strong in rural areas and favorable to private enterprise and the Japan-U.S. alliance. Buffeted by a series of major scandals, the LDP lost its parliamentary majority for the first time in 1993. After yielding to two successive fragile coalitions of former opposition parties, it returned

to power in 1994 as the largest party in a coalition with Social Democrats and the New Party Harbinger.

In 1994 nine opposition groups united as the New Frontier Party (or Shinshinto). In addition to five dissident LDP groups, the Shinshinto brought together the Japan New Party, the Japan Renewal Party, the Clean Government Party, and the Democratic Socialist Party. The Shinshinto never coalesced into a viable alternative to the LDP and by 1996 had lost momentum, although it remained the largest opposition group, with 156 seats in the House of Representatives. In 1997 the Shinshinto was dissolved, with many of its elements re-forming as new parties in 1998. A number of these groups, including the Sun Party, joined the Democratic Party, which emerged as the largest opposition grouping. Another Shinshinto successor, the Liberal Party, founded by Ichiro Ozawa and Tsutomu Hata in 1994 as Shinseitō (Japan Renewal Party), left the opposition and formed a governing coalition with the LDP in 1999.

In 2004 the second-most powerful party was the newly formed Minshuto, or Democratic Party of Japan, which won one more seat than the LDP in the July 2004 elections. The LDP was still the ruling party thanks to its alliance with the Komeito, or Clean Government Party. The Socialist Party had completely disintegrated, the Communist Party still retained its usual 3 to 5 percent of seats, and the Liberal Party and Social Democratic Party each had small presences in the Diet.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Japan is divided into 47 prefectures—43 rural (*ken*); two urban (*fu*), Kyoto and Osaka; one district, Hokkaido; and one metropolitan district (*to*), Tokyo. These jurisdictions are subdivided into cities, towns, and villages. Tokyo, Osaka, Kyoto, and other large cities are subdivided into wards (*ku*), which are further split into precincts (*machi* or *cho*). All municipalities are collectively known as *shichoson*. Below them are towns, built-up villages (*mura* or *son*), and hamlets (*buraku*).

Each prefecture or district has a governor and a unicameral assembly, both elected by popular vote for four-year terms. Cities, like prefectures and districts, are self-governing units administered independently of the larger units of which they are a part. City government is headed by a mayor elected by popular vote for a four-year term. A city assembly, with representatives according to population, is elected at the same time.

Popular control over local government is exercised by the assemblies at the various levels. Assembly members are elected for four-year terms but may be recalled by the voters. Increasingly, local assemblies express their wishes to the central government in the form of resolutions, not only on local issues but on national and international issues as well.

Local government finances have historically suffered from inadequate resources and growing expenditures. All local taxes are prescribed by national laws, which set standard rates and exemptions.

LEGAL SYSTEM

Article 76 of the MacArthur Constitution assigns the “whole judicial power” to the Supreme Court and various inferior courts. The Supreme Court alone determines the procedures, practices, and administration of all courts. The chief judge of the court is designated by the cabinet, as are its 14 other judges. The Supreme Court is the court of last resort for civil and administrative cases. It also has the power of judicial review—it can declare laws, unofficial acts, and administrative rules unconstitutional, although it rarely does so.

The high courts, with three to five judges, are courts of appeal in civil and criminal cases and have original jurisdiction in election cases. District courts have original jurisdiction in all civil and criminal cases except for petty offenses. Summary courts try minor civil and criminal cases and issue warrants for arrest, search, and seizure. Family courts have original jurisdiction in matters concerning inheritance, divorce, and juvenile delinquency.

Japan’s criminal justice system changed dramatically with the 1949 Code of Criminal Procedure. That code guarantees the fundamental rights of citizens and favors the defendant over the accuser. Most significantly, it abolished the feudal concept of the family as the basic social unit and established substantial equality of the sexes. Equally important were reforms in civil procedure whereby parties examine evidence in place of preliminary investigation by the court.

Nevertheless, Japanese courts have retained many traditional features. Thus, the trial judge tends to play an active role in judicial procedures. There are frequent informal discussions between the judge and counsel. The constitution does not provide for a jury system.

HUMAN RIGHTS

All civil and political rights are guaranteed by the constitution. There are no restrictions on political, religious, or trade union activities. However, resident aliens, particularly Koreans, have suffered from entrenched social prejudice. Social exclusion is also practiced against the economically deprived *burakumin*, who number over two million. Both groups have restricted access to public housing, employment, and education. In an attempt to remedy these situations, the government has extended public benefits, such as housing loans, social security pensions, and public employment rights, to Koreans and has provided funds to help assimilate the *burakumin* into mainstream society.

FOREIGN POLICY

Throughout the postwar period Japan’s economic growth was the central factor in domestic affairs and foreign policy. As a result Japan avoided a major role in world affairs and followed a policy of close and flexible accommodation to the regional and global policies of the United States. Japan’s renunciation of war in the 1947 constitution allowed it to devote its national budget and resources to rebuilding the country’s economy.

Close military and political ties with the United States, formally embodied in the 1960 mutual defense treaty, remain the cornerstone of Japan’s foreign policy. Trade relations between the two nations grew in importance as Japan’s economy strengthened dramatically during the 1970s and 1980s, making it the world’s second-mightiest economic power. Japan and the United States, together accounting for more than 42 percent of the world’s gross domestic product (GDP), also became keen competitors in world trade.

Japan’s militarism and policy of conquest had culminated in World War II; acknowledgment of this forced the defeated nation to limit its postwar role in Asian affairs. Until 1960 Japan had no political or commercial relations with China, the legacy of its policy of aggression against that country in the 1930s. In 1972 relations between the two nations improved significantly when Japan recognized the Communist regime as the sole legal government of China, with Taiwan as an inalienable part of China. Japanese investments in China and trade with that nation vastly increased in the following decades. Japan’s relations with Korea followed a similar pattern, with the two formerly bitter enemies establishing close financial and trade relations, which greatly benefited both their economies.

Japan became a member of the United Nations in 1956 and has supported UN peacekeeping efforts in various parts of the world. In 1966 Japan also helped found the Asian Development Bank to assist emerging Asian countries in developing their economic resources.

Japan has long disputed several island territories with its neighbors; Russia and Japan both claim the Kuril Islands north of Hokkaido, and China and Taiwan are disputing Japan’s claim to the Senkaku Islands. Japan’s relations with Korea have historically been delicate. Japan occupied Korea from 1910 to 1945, which has caused some resentment by older Koreans, but currently has fairly amicable relations with the government of South Korea. Japan considers North Korea a major threat because of its proximity and its nuclear weapons.

DEFENSE

Japan’s Self-Defense Forces (SDF), as the armed services are called, are the smallest among all the major industrialized nations. The size and structure of the armed forces is

limited by the MacArthur Constitution of 1947, which required Japan to renounce war and the use of force. The SDF has never been deployed outside Japan, and it is prohibited from possessing nuclear weapons or any arms with offensive capabilities. Because the SDF is small and only minimally equipped, it confines its activities to UN peacekeeping efforts, disaster relief, earthquake disaster prevention, disposal of old weaponry, and various public works projects.

National security policy is based on the 1960 mutual defense treaty with the United States. The Japanese people have approved this strategic cooperation with the United States, which protects the nation and at the same time allows Japan to concentrate its resources on economic development.

The largest of the three forces in the SDF is the army, called the Ground Self-Defense Force, consisting of about three-fifths of all military personnel. The Ground Self-Defense Force is divided into five regional armies, each containing two to four divisions, an engineering brigade, anti-aircraft artillery units, and support units. The navy, called the Marine Self-Defense Force, has an authorized strength of around 45,000. The Marine Self-Defense Force includes a self-defense fleet, five regional district commands, an air-training squadron, and various support units. The air force, called the Air Self-Defense Force, has an authorized strength of around 47,000. The Air Self-Defense Force maintains an integrated network of radar installations and air defense direction centers.

Recruitment to all three military services is by voluntary enlistment, with recruits eligible at age 18. The defense forces are equipped almost entirely by domestic manufacturers.

In 2004 Japan spent about \$45.8 billion, or 1 percent of GDP, on the military.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 252,100
 Military Manpower Availability: 27,003,112
 Military Expenditures \$million: 45.84
 as % of GDP: 1.0
 as % of central government expenditures: —
 Arms Imports \$million: 210
 Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

Japan is the world's second-richest economy, with a GDP of \$3.745 trillion in 2004 and a per capita GDP of \$29,400. The country's economy grew at an unprecedented rate in the postwar period, a remarkable achievement for a densely populated nation in a small national territory with few natural resources. For three decades Japan's economic growth was spectacular, averaging an annual rate of 10 percent in the 1960s, 5 percent in the 1970s, and 4 percent in the 1980s.

In the early 1990s Japan's economic boom ended in a recession triggered by real estate speculation, overinvestment by financial institutions, and certain national fiscal and monetary policies. The government, led by the LDP, itself mired in scandals involving bribery and corruption, responded with a series of measures designed to stimulate the economy. However, these measures proved contradictory and ineffectual. By 1997–98 Japan was in a deep recession, which had a severely adverse impact on the banking system, industrial production and exports, and the labor market. Government efforts to revive economic growth met with little success and were further hampered in late 2000 by the slowing of the U.S. and Asian economies. In 2004 the economy grew at the rate of 2.7 percent.

Japan's advance to being the second-most-powerful economy in the world was based on government-industry cooperation, a strong shared work ethic, and a mastery of high technology. Another strong factor has been the *keiretsu*, the networks of manufacturers, suppliers, and distributors in the nation's leading industries. In addition, Japan's military forces consumed less than 1 percent of the GDP, freeing capital for investment and economic expansion.

Japanese industry is a world leader in the production of iron and steel, automobiles, computers, and electronics, especially robotics. Yet its industry is heavily dependent on imported raw materials and fuel. Japan produces nearly all the rice it consumes, but agriculture is heavily protected and subsidized by the government, since half the country's requirements of grain and fodder crops must be imported. Japan's fishing fleet is one of the largest in the world and accounts for 15 percent of the total catch. In addition, the crowding of habitable land and the aging of the population are expected to cause long-term economic problems.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$trillion: 3.745
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 29,400
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 1.1
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 0.9
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 1.3
 Industry: 24.7
 Services: 74.0
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 56
 Government Consumption: 18
 Gross Domestic Investment: 24.0
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 538.8
 Imports: 401.8
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 4.8
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 21.7

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
102.2	101.5	100.8	99.8	99.6

Finance

National Currency: Yen (JPY)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = JPY 108.725
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency trillion: 348
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 0.1
 Total External Debt \$million: —
 Debt Service Ratio %: —
 Balance of Payments \$billion: 170.2
 International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 652.8
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: -0.1

Official Development Assistance

Donor ODA \$billion: 7.9
 per capita \$: 62.00
 Foreign Direct Investment \$billion: 6.24

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: 1 April–31 March
 Revenues \$trillion: 1.401
 Expenditures \$trillion: 1.748
 Budget Deficit \$billion: 347
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 1.3
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2002) %: -1.4
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 45.9
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 54.8
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 290.6
 Total Farmland % of land area: 12.1
 Livestock: Cattle million: 4.48
 Chickens million: 286
 Pigs million: 9.72
 Sheep 000: 11
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 15.2
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons million: 5.27

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 815.9
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 6.6

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 99.3
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 474.5
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 3.73
 Net Energy Imports % of use: 81.0
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 238
 Production kW-hr trillion: 1.044
 Consumption kW-hr trillion: 0.971
 Coal Reserves tons million: 852
 Production tons million: 3.3
 Consumption tons million: 179.1
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: 1.4
 Production cubic feet billion: 100
 Consumption cubic feet trillion: 2.67

Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels million: 59
 Production barrels 000 per day: 120
 Consumption barrels million per day: 5.57
 Pipelines Length km: 170

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 401.8
 Exports \$billion: 538.8
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 5.2
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 3.9
 Balance of Trade \$billion: 170.2

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
China %	19.7	12.1
United States %	15.6	24.8
South Korea %	4.7	7.3
Indonesia %	4.3	—
Taiwan %	—	6.6
Hong Kong %	—	6.3

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 1,171,647
 Paved %: 77.1
 Automobiles: 54,540,500
 Trucks and Buses: 17,716,300
 Railroad: Track Length km: 23,705
 Passenger-km billion: 385.4
 Freight-km billion: 22.4
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 702
 Total Deadweight Tonnage million: 12.68
 Airports: 174
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 164.1
 Length of Waterways km: 1,770

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 5.2
 Number of Tourists from million: 13.3
 Tourist Receipts \$billion: 11.5
 Tourist Expenditures \$billion: 36.5

Communications

Telephones million: 71.15
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones million: 86.66
 Personal Computers million: 48.7
 Internet Hosts per million people: 101,729
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 449

ENVIRONMENT

Japan is one of the most efficient users of energy among the industrialized nations. However, it remains a major contributor to the world's greenhouse gas emissions. Air

pollution increased steadily in Japan's major urban areas during the postwar era of rapid industrialization. Concentrations of sulfur dioxide and other contaminants posed serious health threats to the people of Tokyo, Osaka, Yokohama, and other major manufacturing centers.

During the 1980s, however, Japan increased its efforts to combat these problems by tightening air-quality regulations for business and industry. Governmental action plans have also substantially reduced sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxide emissions from power plants. Despite these government programs, acid rain remains a problem in many parts of Japan and continues to degrade the water quality in many lakes and reservoirs.

Japan's fishing fleet continues to engage in overfishing in its home waters as well as in many other parts of the world. This practice, combined with increasing levels of pollution in Japanese coastal waters, poses a threat to many commercial species of fish. The use of drift-net fishing by Japanese commercial fleets indiscriminately kills large numbers of fish and sea mammals. Protests by the United States and other nations have led Japanese fishers to restrict these operations in international waters.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 66.1
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: 3
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 9
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 1,279,287
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 9.34

LIVING CONDITIONS

Japan has a large population and a relatively small amount of habitable land, which means Japanese living conditions are crowded. The population density is 350 people per square kilometer. Many families live in very small apartments, especially in Tokyo and other big cities. Housing is very expensive, and it is difficult to obtain a loan from a bank, so many people rent instead of buying homes.

Japanese people usually remove their shoes upon entering a house or apartment, out of tradition and because many homes are floored with tatami, mats woven from reeds. Traditionally, Japanese people have sat and slept on the floor, using the same room for both purposes. During the day they sit at a low table called a *kotatsu*, which usually has some form of heater underneath. At night they sleep on the floor on thick quilts called futons. In the morning, they fold the futons and place them in a closet to free up the floor for daytime living. Many people now have Western-style furniture in their homes.

Japan manufactures a plethora of electronic products, and most Japanese people own many electronic devices, including cellular telephones, televisions and video players, and stereo equipment.

Public transportation in Japan is excellent and widespread, though it is also expensive and extremely crowded in major cities. Gasoline and automobiles are very expensive, and traffic on Japanese roads can be extremely bad, especially on holidays.

HEALTH

The Japanese people are some of the healthiest in the world. Life expectancy for women is 84.6 years, among the world's highest; life expectancy for men is 77.8 years. Medical facilities are widely available, and all citizens are covered by the national health-insurance system. Japanese doctors tend to hospitalize their patients readily and usually keep them in the hospital four times as long as do U.S. doctors.

Health

Number of Physicians: 255,792
 Number of Dentists: 90,857
 Number of Nurses: 1,042,468
 Number of Pharmacists: 217,477
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 201
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: 16.5
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 3.26
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 10
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 7.9
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 2,476
 HIV Infected % of adults: < 0.1
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 97
 Measles: 99
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 100
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 100

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Many experts believe that the secret to Japan's high life expectancy is its diet, which is based on rice, vegetables, and seafood. Rice especially is the dietary mainstay and has traditionally appeared at every meal. Other ubiquitous foods include miso (soybean paste used in soup), pickled vegetables, seaweed, tofu, and green tea. More elaborate foods include tempura, sushi, sashimi, and fish and meat cooked with teriyaki sauce. Noodles are also common, such as ramen noodles from China and soba noodles made from buckwheat flour. Japanese restaurants and home cooks prepare many communal dishes such as *shabu-shabu*, *sukiyaki*, and *nabe*, all forms of hot soup or stew cooked on the table. Traditional Japanese sweets often feature sweet red bean paste or sweet rice dough.

Many Western foods became popular in Japan during the 20th century, and it is now easy to find bread, pizza, hamburgers, coffee, and other European or American foods. Fast food restaurants are common and popular.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 113.8
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 162.8

STATUS OF WOMEN

The constitution of 1947 prohibits discrimination against women and ensures the essential equality of the sexes. However, long-standing cultural mores and customs continue to adversely affect women's status in society. Recent legislation, such as the 1997 laws banning discrimination against women by employers and ensuring women's rights on the job, remain largely ineffectual.

The traditional male-female division of labor in Japanese families continues little changed, placing a disproportionate burden on working women. In 1997 government surveys reported that women do 90 percent of the housework and child rearing, while men do 10 percent. These statistics applied nearly equally to women who were wives with jobs and those who did not work outside the home.

The same discrimination is prevalent in the educational system. Though female students perform at least as well as males in high school, the vast majority of spots in the top-ranking universities go to men, and women tend to choose two-year colleges where they major in subjects considered useful for wives and mothers, such as child psychology.

In 2004 about 40 percent of Japanese women worked outside the home, but women held only 9 percent of managerial positions. Many of the jobs available to women are support positions, where they are expected to greet clients, make tea, and perform other similar tasks that do not prepare them to climb the corporate ladder. The Japanese workplace is regimented and requires very long hours from its workers, and women find it difficult to ask for flexible schedules or other accommodations that would make it possible for them to combine work and motherhood. Some experts believe that the lack of women in the workforce may be costing Japan future economic growth.

Though Japan is generally a very safe place for women, sexism is overt. Women riding public transportation often find themselves fondled by strangers, and it is common to see men on trains or buses reading explicitly pornographic books and magazines. Television shows typically have a male spokesman accompanied by a beautiful young woman whose job is to agree with everything he says.

As of 2004 Japan's crown prince, Naruhito, had only one child, his daughter Aiko, and he and his wife Masako appeared unlikely to have any more. This has ignited debate in Japan as to whether a woman might take the throne as empress; current law prohibits female rule, but many Japanese people want to change this law and allow a woman to accede to the throne.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 7
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.0
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 40.8

WORK

Japanese workers put in some of the longest working hours in the world. Japanese "salarymen," or male office workers, are expected to devote their lives to their jobs, often working well into the evening. Japanese work habits have even led to a new word, *karoshi*, which means "death from overwork." Nevertheless, work hours have been dropping steadily since the 1980s, when the Japanese economic miracle was in full force. In 1980 the average Japanese worked 2,121 hours per year; by 1995 this number had dropped to 1,889.

Work is also an important part of a Japanese person's social life. Workers are expected to show loyalty to their companies and their working teams, and after-work socializing is an essential part of any job. Lifetime employment with a company was considered the norm during the 20th century, but economic upheavals in the 1990s called into question the loyalty of a company to its workers and vice versa.

Japanese companies often pay their workers monthly salaries supplemented with bonuses once or twice a year. These bonuses are not usually related to performance and are considered a normal part of compensation.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 66,970,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 41.8
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 5
 Industry: 25
 Services: 70
 Unemployment %: 4.7

EDUCATION

Education is free and compulsory for nine years, with all children ages six to 15 enrolled in school. Students attend primary school for six years, then secondary school, which consists of three compulsory years in lower secondary school (*chugakko*) and three noncompulsory years in upper secondary school (*kotogakko*). The central role of education in Japanese society is symbolized by the nation's literacy rate of nearly 100 percent.

Higher education is highly prized in Japanese society, and admission to the country's top universities is extremely competitive. Several hundred privately run preparatory

1200 Japan

schools (*yobiko*) provide rigorous training and preparation for passing university admissions examinations.

Tokyo University, founded in 1877, is Japan's oldest university and was long the capstone of the educational system. In the years before World War II six more public imperial universities were established: Kyoto, Tohoku, Kyushu, Hokkaido, Osaka, and Nagoya. The top-ranked private universities include Hosei, Keio, Nihon, and Waseda Universities in Tokyo; Doshisha University in Kyoto; and Kansai University in Osaka.

In the postwar decades many other universities were founded, including specialized universities and institutions for advanced research. Two-year junior colleges were established in 1948, offering courses in home economics, liberal arts, and teacher training. In the 1990s nearly three million students were enrolled in institutions of higher education.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 99.0

Male %: 99.0

Female %: 99.0

School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 14.7

First Level: Primary Schools: 24,548

Teachers: 365,540

Students: 7,325,866

Student-Teacher Ratio: 20.0

Net Enrollment Ratio: 100.0

Second Level: Secondary Schools: 16,775

Teachers: 619,504

Students: 7,302,374

Student-Teacher Ratio: 13.6

Net Enrollment Ratio: 99.7

Third Level: Institutions: 1,223

Teachers: 482,048

Students: 3,966,667

Gross Enrollment Ratio: 49.2

Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 3.6

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Japan's government has lavished attention and money on science and technology development since the mid-20th century, seeing science as one of the keys to economic development. The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology and its Science and Technology Policy Bureau plan and implement the nation's basic science and technology policies. The Science and Technology Policy Bureau promotes and formulates research programs, trains researchers and technicians, determines Japan's policy on international research exchange, and promotes regional education in science and technology. The Ministry of International Trade and Industry oversees the Agency of Industrial Science and Technology. The Agency of Industrial Science and Technology supervises 15 laboratories in eight cities in Japan, each of which engages in research

and development of new technologies. Japan is especially known for its automobile technology and its high-quality consumer electronics products, especially cameras.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 5,321

Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 3.12

High-Tech Exports \$billion: 105.5

Patent Applications by Residents: 371,495

MEDIA

Freedom of the press is guaranteed by the 1947 constitution. Japanese newspapers have a huge collective circulation of roughly 72 million copies daily. This circulation is concentrated in 110 dailies, with only one newspaper published in most prefectures. Press ownership is often family based. The three leading newspapers, each with audiences of more than four million, are *Yomiuri shimbun*, *Asahi shimbun*, and *Mainichi shimbun*. Japan has two main news agencies, the Kyodo News Service and the Jiji Press.

Commercial broadcasting in Japan includes more than 100 television companies and 34 radio companies. Nippon Hoso Kyokai (NHK), the only noncommercial broadcaster, operates two television and three radio networks.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 110

Total Circulation million: 71.9

Circulation per 1,000: 566

Books Published: 56,221

Periodicals: 6

Radio Receivers 000: —

per 1,000: —

Television sets million: 91

per 1,000: 719

CULTURE

The Japanese people have a clearly defined sense of their own culture and their uniqueness as a people. Japanese traditional culture is still readily apparent, even though most Japanese live modern daily lives. Many Japanese people enjoy wearing traditional kimonos (robes) on special occasions. Japanese cities are filled with temples and shrines from old religious traditions, and the Japanese regularly attend local religious festivals. Modern Japanese practice traditional art forms such as calligraphy and flower arranging, and tea ceremonies are popular at special events. The Japanese people love music, ranging from traditional tunes on ancient instruments such as *shamisen* to modern pop music sung along with karaoke machines.

Traditional dramatic forms include Kabuki and Noh plays, both of which are highly stylized and difficult for modern people to understand. Japanese literature has existed since the eighth century, when authors began imitating the Chinese writing style. Many early Japanese works of literature, such as *The Tale of Genji*, were written by women. The poetic form called the haiku came out of the samurai and Zen Buddhist traditions of the 17th century.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number:	2,585
Volumes:	—
Registered borrowers:	35,756,000
Museums Number:	14,450
Annual Attendance:	196,974,000
Cinema Gross Receipts:	—
Number of Cinemas:	2,221
Seating Capacity:	—
Annual Attendance:	145,000,000

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Japanese mythology and folklore reflect the Japanese peoples' sense of their own uniqueness while incorporating foreign traditions, such as Buddhism, Confucianism, and Taoism, imported from China and Korea. Much of Japanese myth comes from an eighth century document called the *Kojiki*, or Record of Ancient Matters. The creation story tells of gods dropping globs of mud from the tip of a spear to create the many islands of Japan and then of the creation of the main Japanese deities. The most important of these was the sun goddess, Amaterasu, who was considered the direct ancestor of the imperial family until after World War II, when the emperor declared that he was no longer divine.

Shinto is the only organized system of beliefs that arose in Japan independently, probably around 500 B.C.E. Shinto teaches that gods, called *kami*, are found everywhere in nature and that family and group harmony are very important. The importance of family extends to dead ancestors, who the Japanese believe come to visit them during the summer festival O-Bon. Shinto shrines are found throughout Japan, and Japanese people often visit them to pray and buy charms that offer protection against various misfortunes.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Going out with groups of friends or coworkers is an important part of Japanese social life. An evening out will usually involve drinking beer, sake, or other alcoholic beverages and eating snacks, perhaps followed by a couple of hours at a karaoke box, a small room with a karaoke machine where everyone takes turns performing their favorite songs.

Japanese people enjoy traveling, and their strong currency makes international travel inexpensive. Travel within Japan is also popular, especially to Kyoto and Nara. Most schools bring their students on trips during the school year, either to visit cultural sites or to engage in an activity such as skiing.

ETIQUETTE

Japanese society emphasizes harmony within the group, if necessary at the expense of individual desires. Japanese people value courtesy and proper social behavior. The Japanese language allows for variation in levels of respect, and Japanese people vary their language depending on situations and conversational partners. Japanese people bow when meeting one another, and the depth of a bow also reflects the social standing of the individuals bowing to one another. Directness in speech is considered vulgar, and Japanese people prefer instead to hint at or otherwise suggest their opinions and desires indirectly.

FAMILY LIFE

Family is very important to Japanese people. Many Japanese marriages originate through a practice called *omiai*, or an arranged introduction; if the introduced parties like one another, they will continue courtship and perhaps marry, but they are not obligated to do so. Women usually take their husband's names when they marry, though sometimes a man marrying an only daughter will take his wife's family's name. An older mother will often move in with the family of her oldest son. At the end of the 20th century fewer and fewer Japanese women were choosing to marry, citing the burdens placed on them by family obligations and the economic freedom they could achieve by continuing to work.

Japanese parents indulge their very young children, but by the age of three or four a child is expected to begin preparing for school and a future career. Many Japanese families bathe together and sleep together in the same room, which complicates matters for married couples seeking privacy. The birthrate in Japan has dropped precipitously in recent years, leading to fears that the population will become disproportionately elderly. Parents claim that children are too expensive, and many women do not want to have to give up work when they have children.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Appearance is very important to the Japanese. Most Japanese people dress neatly in clean, fashionable clothes.

Wealthy people often choose to wear expensive designer clothes. Many schools require their students to wear uniforms. Some teenagers rebel against social rules by bleaching their hair or wearing outrageous fashions. *Yakuza*, members of organized crime groups, often perm their hair and tattoo their bodies.

SPORTS

Japanese people love sports, both playing and watching. Golf is extremely popular and extremely expensive, as is alpine skiing. Professional baseball and soccer are favorite spectator sports. People also enjoy practicing and watching traditional sports such as karate, judo, kendo (Japanese fencing), and sumo. Many schoolchildren play sports at school, often choosing one sport and specializing in it year-round.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1945** United States drops atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.
Japan surrenders.
U.S. general Douglas MacArthur heads the Allied occupation administration.
A new cabinet is formed under Kijuro Shidehara.
- 1946** The occupation administration completes demobilization and demilitarization of Japan and embarks on extensive civil reforms, including universal suffrage, land reform, and the dissolution of large business conglomerates known as *zaibatsu*.
Emperor Hirohito formally renounces divinity.
The Liberal Party forms the first government under the conservative Shigeru Yoshida.
An 11-nation War Crimes Tribunal is set up in Tokyo under the Potsdam Declaration.
- 1947** A new constitution prepared by U.S. advisers, which includes a provision renouncing war, replaces the Meiji Constitution.
The New Police Law creates a decentralized police administration under the National Public Safety Commission.
The first elections are held under the new constitution, which calls for a British-style parliamentary form of government, with a bicameral Imperial Diet led by an elected lower house.
Socialists form the first ministry under Tetsu Katayama.
- 1948** The War Crimes Tribunal sentences 25 war criminals to death or life imprisonment and debars 202,000 from public life.
Hitoshi Ashida serves for eight months as Democratic Party prime minister, followed by the Liberal Party's Shigeru Yoshida.
- 1950** The United Nations uses Japan as a logistical base for its operations in the Korean War through 1953.
- 1951** The San Francisco Peace Conference negotiates a treaty of peace with Japan, which ends the state of war and the occupation and restores full sovereignty to Japan by April 1952. The treaty entrusts the Ryukyu Islands to the United States, which develops military bases on the island of Okinawa. The Soviet Union abstains from the treaty and retains control of the Habomai group and three other islands claimed by Japan.
- 1952** Occupation forces withdraw.
Japan and the United States sign a security treaty endorsed by conservatives but opposed by liberals, who call for Japan to maintain neutrality in the cold war.
The National Police Reserve is transformed into the National Safety Forces, which later become the Self-Defense Forces.
- 1954** Ichiro Hatoyama of the Democratic Party replaces Yoshida as prime minister.
- 1955** Japan's socialist parties unite to form the Japan Socialist Party. The Liberal Party and the Democratic Party merge to form the conservative Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), which goes on to dominate Japanese politics for the next half century.
Japan achieves a robust gross national product of 9 percent, a rate it maintains for 18 years.
- 1956** The Soviet Union and Japan agree to terminate their technical state of war and establish diplomatic relations but do not conclude a formal treaty or resolve the status of the disputed islands.
Tanzan Ishibashi begins a two-month term as prime minister.
Japan is admitted to the United Nations.
- 1957** Nobusuke Kishi begins a three-year term in office as prime minister.
- 1960** As parliament debates a revised Japan-U.S. security treaty, antitreaty demonstrations reach fever pitch, forcing Kishi to resign. Hayato Ikeda begins a four-year term as prime minister.
- 1964** Eisaku Sato, brother of Kishi, begins an eight-year term as prime minister.
Tokyo becomes the first city in the world with a population of 10 million.
Japan hosts the Olympic Games.
- 1965** Japan and South Korea establish relations for the first time since World War II.
- 1968** Japan boasts the world's third-largest economy.
- 1971** The United States allows its foreign exchange rates, fixed since World War II, to float. The value of the yen rises, and Japanese exports decline.

- 1972** Japan restores full diplomatic relations with China and withdraws recognition of Taiwan. Sato yields office to Kakuei Tanaka, who heads government for the next two years. Japan regains the Ryukyu Islands except for the U.S. military bases on Okinawa.
- 1973** World oil prices rise steeply. Japan's gross domestic product declines to 4 percent.
- 1974** Tanaka is implicated in the Lockheed scandal and is forced to step down in favor of Takeo Miki.
- 1975** Japan is one of the "Big Five" nations to participate in the first world economic summit.
- 1976** Takeo Fukuda begins a two-year tenure as prime minister.
- 1978** Masayoshi Ohira begins a two-year term as prime minister.
- 1980** Zenko Suzuki begins a two-year term as prime minister.
- 1982** Yasuhiro Nakasone begins a five-year term as prime minister.
- 1985** A sudden rise in the value of the yen leads to widespread speculation and the beginning of a bubble economy.
- 1989** Implicated in an influence-peddling scandal, Noboru Takeshita steps down as prime minister and is replaced by Sosuke Uno. Uno is forced to resign in the wake of a sex scandal, and Toshiki Kaifu is named prime minister. Emperor Hirohito dies and is succeeded by his son Akihito.
- 1990** The government raises interest rates in an effort to diminish investor speculation. A long economic slowdown begins.
- 1991** Kiichi Miyazawa succeeds Kaifu as prime minister.
- 1992** Japan provides funds for the UN military action in the Gulf War but sends no troops. The Diet passes legislation permitting Japanese military participation in UN peacekeeping operations on a case-by-case basis.
- 1993** Factions of the LDP break away to form new parties. A coalition of eight opposition parties forms a government under Morihiro Hosokawa, depriving the LDP of its long rule. Japan provides humanitarian aid to Russia, although the World War II-era territorial dispute remains unresolved. Crown Prince Naruhito marries Princess Masako.
- 1994** Having abandoned its opposition to the U.S. security treaty and the SDF in favor of a centrist philosophy, the Social Democratic Party of Japan (SDPJ, formerly the Japan Socialist Party) forms a coalition with the LDP under Tomiichi Murayama, who becomes Japan's first socialist prime minister since 1948.
- 1995** An earthquake devastates Kobe.
- 1996** Murayama's coalition collapses. LDP leader Ryutaro Hashimoto forms a government with the SDPJ and Sakigake, a progressive conservative party.
- 1997** The fiscal crisis in Southeast Asia further dampens Japan's economy, which is enduring the longest recession in its postwar history. A new security treaty with the United States commits Japan to support U.S. forces in Pacific Rim conflicts.
- 1998** After the LDP loses power in the upper house, Hashimoto resigns. Keizo Obuchi forms another LDP-led coalition.
- 2000** Obuchi falls ill, and Yoshiro Mori takes his place as prime minister and leader of the LDP.
- 2001** Junichiro Koizumi becomes prime minister. Princess Masako gives birth to a daughter, Aiko, on December 1.
- 2003** LDP's majority in parliament decreases. Japan's economy appears to be improving.
- 2004** Japan applies for a seat on the UN Security Council.
- 2005** Koizumi wins a second term as prime minister.

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OFFICIAL PUBLICATIONS

Japan. *Japan Statistical Yearbook; Statistical Indicators on Social Life* (annual); *2000 Population Census of Japan*

CONTACT INFORMATION

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Bank of Japan
<http://www.boj.or.jp/en/index.htm>
- Statistics Bureau and Statistics Center (Japan)
<http://www.stat.go.jp/english/>
- Cabinet Office Government of Japan
<http://www.cao.go.jp/index-e.html>

JORDAN

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan (Al-Mamlakah al-Urdunyah al-Hashemiyah)

ABBREVIATION

JO

CAPITAL

Amman

HEAD OF STATE

King Abdullah II ibn al-Hussein (from 1999)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Marouf Al-Bakhit (from 2005)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Constitutional monarchy

POPULATION

5,759,732 (2005)

AREA

92,300 sq km (35,637 sq mi), excluding the West Bank

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Arab

LANGUAGE

Arabic

RELIGION

Sunni Islam

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Jordanian dinar

NATIONAL FLAG

Three horizontal stripes of black, white, and green (from top to bottom) are joined at the hoist by a red triangle with a seven-pointed white star at its center.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

The emblem is displayed against a canopy on the top of which rests a gold and red crown. A brown eagle with outstretched wings stands on a gold globe that is partially obscured by a round gold ceremonial shield. On the globe and shield are planted black, white, green, and red flags, three to a side, and pairs of gold-hilted swords and gold bows with fixed arrows. Beneath the design three ears of wheat and a palm branch are placed over a badge of the Muslim Order of Resurrection and a green ribbon carrying the king's name and his prayer, "Allah may bring happiness and help."

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"The Royal Salute" (or "Long Live the King")

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 15 (Tree Day), March 22 (Arab League Day), May 1 (Labor Day), May 25 (National Day, Independence Day), June 10 (Arab Revolt and Army Day), August 11 (King Hussein's Accession), November 14 (King Hussein's Birthday), various Islamic festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

May 25, 1946

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

January 8, 1952

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

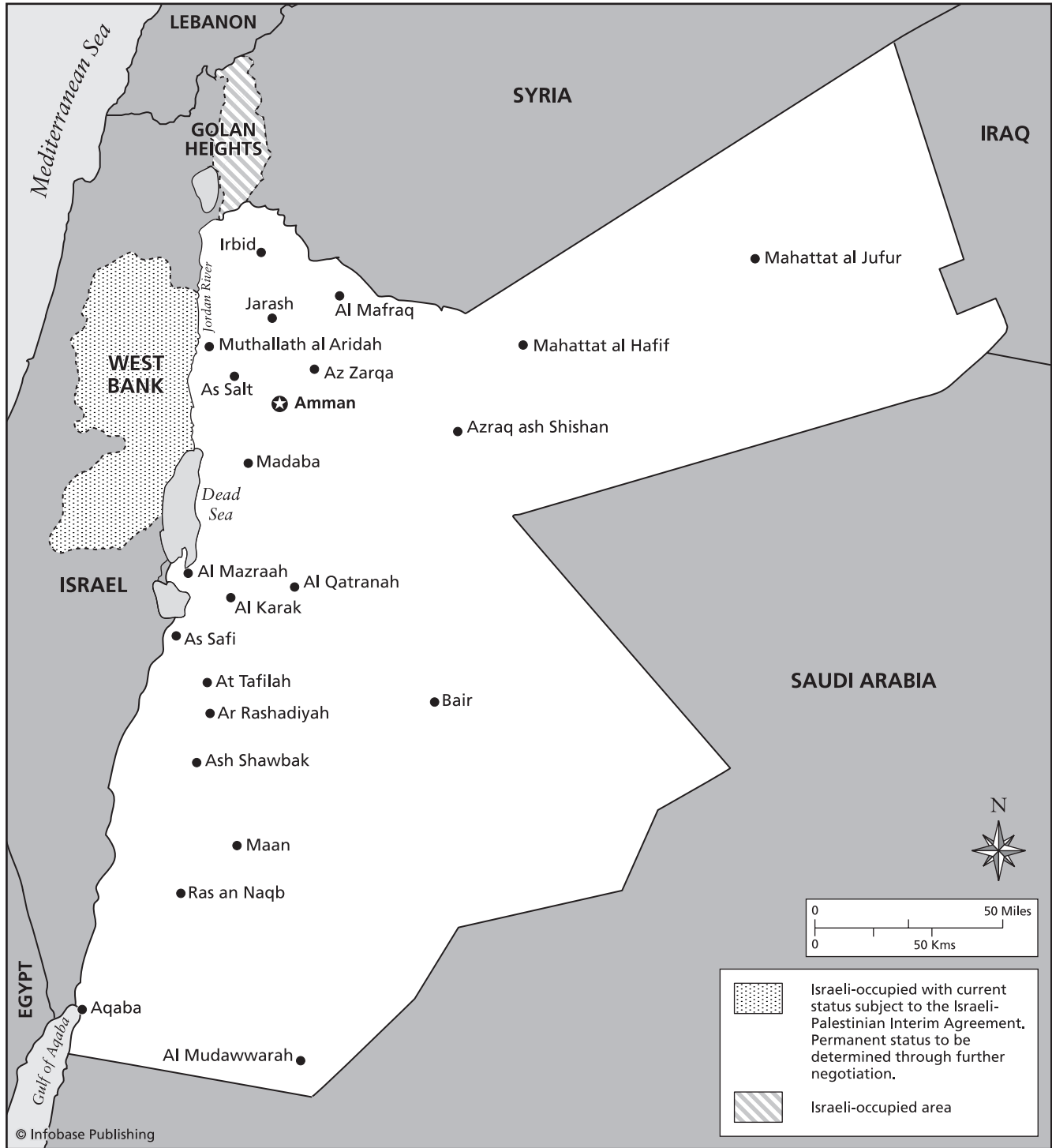
Jordan is in southwestern Asia and occupies an area of 92,300 sq km (35,637 sq mi), excluding the West Bank, which has been under Israeli occupation since 1967. Jordan extends 562 km (349 mi) northeast to southwest and 349 km (217 mi) southeast to northwest.

Jordan shares its total international land boundary of 1,635 km (1,016 mi) with four countries, in addition to the West Bank: Syria (375 km; 232 mi), Iraq (181 km;

112 mi), Saudi Arabia (744 km; 462 mi), and Israel (238 km; 147 mi).

Jordan consists of a tilted plateau region in the northwestern corner of the Great Arabian Plateau. To the west the edge of the plateau is abruptly marked by the major rift system of the Dead Sea lowlands, which include the lowest point on earth, more than 400 m (1,312 ft) below sea level. Relatively featureless desert plains occupy the east and the south. The country is landlocked except at its southern extremity, where 26

Jordan



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km (16 mi) of coastline along the Gulf of Aqaba provide access to the sea. There are no natural features to the borders with Syria, Iraq, or Saudi Arabia. The average elevation is 500 m (1,650 ft), with summits occasionally reaching 1,200 m (4,000 ft) in the north and 1,500 m (5,000 ft) in the south.

Geography

Area sq km: 92,300; sq mi 35,637
 World Rank: 110th
 Land Boundaries, km: Iraq 181; Israel 238; Saudi Arabia 744; Syria 375; West Bank 97
 Coastline, km: 26

Elevation Extremes meters:	
Lowest: Dead Sea	-408
Highest: Jabal Ram	1,734
Land Use %	
Arable Land:	2.7
Permanent Crops:	1.8
Forest:	1.0
Other:	94.5

Population of Principal Cities (1994)

Amman	1,307,017
Irbid	381,329
Al Mafraq	116,204
As Salt	188,579
Az Zarqa	622,570

World Rank: 104th		
Density per sq km: 59.7		
% of annual growth (1999-2003): 2.9		
Male %: 52.4		
Female %: 47.6		
Urban %: 79.1		
Age Distribution %:	0-14:	34.5
	15-64:	61.7
	65 and over:	3.8

Population 2025: 8,652,000	
Birth Rate per 1,000: 21.76	
Death Rate per 1,000: 2.63	
Rate of Natural Increase %: 1.9	
Total Fertility Rate: 2.71	
Expectation of Life (years):	Males 75.75
	Females 80.88
Marriage Rate per 1,000: 8.8	
Divorce Rate per 1,000: 1.7	
Average Size of Households: 6.1	
Induced Abortions: —	

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Jordan has a modified Mediterranean climate, with hot, dry summers and cool, damp winters. August is the hottest month and January the coolest. Daytime temperatures reach 38°C (100°F) in the summer, and they fall to -4°C (25°F) in the winter. The climate is modified by the hot khamsin, a sirocco-like wind accompanied by dust clouds, and the dry shamal, which blows for days at a time. Average rainfall is 300 mm (12 in) per year. Rainfall is variable, and sudden cloudbursts are often followed by protracted dry periods.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature: 25°F to 100°F
Average Rainfall: 12 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Jordan is very dry, and much of the land is desert. Around the Dead Sea nothing grows. The desert is home to desert plants and a few animals that can survive in arid conditions, such as desert foxes, sand rats, camels, jerboas, and hares. The northern hills are covered in pine trees and inhabited by goats, badgers, and boars. Cedars, eucalyptus, and olive trees grow in the Jordan River Valley. Gazelles and oryx, once common but now rare, have been reintroduced in the Saumari Wildlife Reserve. The Gulf of Aqaba has a profusion of aquatic plants and animals, including stunning coral reefs and tropical fish.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 5,759,732

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

The original Emirate of Transjordan was dominated by Arab Bedouin tribal groups, but as a result of the acquisition of Palestine (the West Bank) in 1948, Palestinian Arabs became a large and relatively unassimilated element in the population. Palestinians constituted 40 percent of the nation in 1973, but their economic and cultural influence far surpassed their numbers. Bedouins form 5 percent of the population and are looked after by the Office of Tribal Affairs. There is long-standing cultural hostility between Bedouins and non-Bedouins.

Members of the minority ethnic groups, both non-Arab and non-Muslim, live in the cities and towns, where they occupy a disproportionate share of posts in government, business, and the professions. Arab Christians dominate banking and commerce, but their numbers are diminishing through emigration. The Circassians, non-Arab Muslims from the Caucasus, number about 12,000 and are prominent in landowning, commerce, and industry. They are concentrated in Amman, where their loyalty to the royal family ensures their representation in the cabinet.

Western communities are concentrated in Amman.

LANGUAGES

The official language is Arabic, which is, like Islam, a unifying force in the country. Jordanians speak a dialect of Arabic that is common to Syria, Lebanon, and parts of Iraq. It is spoken by the ethnic minorities, who also employ their own languages in their everyday lives. There are differences between the languages of the towns and of the countryside and between those of the East Bank and the West Bank. English is taught in the schools as a second language.

RELIGIONS

The official religion of Jordan is the Sunni sect of Islam. Sunnis constitute 92 percent of the population. The Druze form the largest Muslim minority sect, with less than 2 percent.

The largest religious minority group, Christians, constitutes 6 percent of the population and are divided into Greek Orthodox, Greek Catholic, Roman Catholic, Protestant, and Armenian churches. Instances of religious persecution or intolerance are rare. Nevertheless, Jordanian Christians have been emigrating in large numbers.

Religious Affiliations

Sunni Muslim	5,299,000
Christian	346,000
Other	115,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Jordan has a rich past, dating back to 6000 B.C.E. City-states were well developed in the Bronze Age (3200–2100 B.C.E.). In the 10th century B.C.E. the western part of Jordan formed part of the dominion of David and his son Solomon; subsequently, the West Bank became part of the Kingdom of Judah. The Jewish states fell prey to the Babylonians and the Persians. The area was conquered by Alexander the Great in 331 B.C.E., beginning a period of intermittent rule by European powers.

In the first century B.C.E. the region came under Rome. In southern Jordan the Nabatean kingdom, a native Arab state in alliance with Rome, developed a distinctive culture, as evidenced in the ruins of Petra. With the annexation of Nabatea by Trajan in the second century C.E., both Palestine and Transjordan came under Roman rule. Christianity became the dominant rule for the next four centuries, until the Arab conquest in the seventh century. The region saw some of the fighting during the Crusades in the 12th century. In Ottoman times Jordan formed part of the Damascus *vilayet*, while the West Bank formed part of the *sanjak* of Jerusalem within the *vilayet* of Beirut.

Ottoman rule came to an end with the famous Arab Revolt, between 1915 and 1918. Jordan, then known as Transjordan, was placed under British mandate in 1921. In the same year Abdullah, son of Sharyf Husayn, was installed by the British as the emir of Transjordan. In 1923 the kingdom became independent under British tutelage. British control was partially relaxed in 1928, and a cabinet government was introduced in 1939. British penetration was never deep, and Britain's only legacy was the legendary Arab Legion.

Transjordan achieved full independence in 1946; in May of that year Abdullah bin Husayn was proclaimed king of the Hashemite Kingdom of Transjordan. Following the Arab-Israeli war of 1948, King Abdullah I annexed the West Bank, an area of Palestine bordering Jordan that

contained many Arab refugees from Israeli-held areas. In 1950 an act of union joined the West Bank and Transjordan to form the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. King Abdullah was assassinated in Jerusalem in July 1951 by a Palestinian Arab, and his eldest son, Talal, was proclaimed king. Because of mental illness, however, King Talal was declared unfit to rule. Succession passed to his son Hussein, then 16 years of age. King Hussein was formally enthroned in May 1953. In an effort to ensure the survival of the state, Hussein attempted to steer a middle course in international affairs. Despite internal and foreign opposition, the king maintained close relations with Great Britain, whose troops and military subsidies helped protect the regime. Hussein was forced to negotiate an end to Jordan's treaty with Britain following Anglo-French intervention at Suez in 1956. The king then formed a federation with Iraq in 1958, which lasted until the assassination of his cousin, King Faisal of Iraq, a few months later. Hussein again turned to the West for support.

The early 1960s were a period of relative calm. Hussein steadied relations with other Arab states while retaining Western ties and establishing relations with the Soviet Union. Jordan lost the West Bank and East Jerusalem in the 1967 Arab-Israeli war but received still further Palestinian refugees. Efforts to incorporate the Palestinians into the Jordanian political system failed, and the refugee camps became centers of Palestinian nationalism. By 1970 organized Palestinian groups had become a threat to the Jordanian government, and over the course of a year, the Jordanian military was used to expel the Palestinian guerrilla groups.

Jordan played a minor role in the 1973 Arab-Israeli war. Hussein reluctantly endorsed the Arab League's declaration in 1974 that the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) was the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinians. Jordan joined other Arab states in condemning the 1979 Egyptian-Israeli Peace Treaty but resumed relations with Egypt and Israel in 1984 to form a moderate Arab block against Syria and Libya.

During the 1980s Jordan played a key role in attempts to deal with the Palestinian question. Initially, Jordan and the PLO agreed to work with each other toward settling the question, but in 1987 the agreement to do so was scrapped. In 1988, following the outbreak of the intifada on the West Bank, Hussein declared unconditional support for the intifada and insisted that the PLO was the sole representative of the Palestinians. In accordance with agreements reached during a summit of Arab leaders, he severed all legal and administrative links with the West Bank in preparation for turning administration over to the PLO. The PLO proclaimed the establishment of an independent state of Palestine in November 1988.

From the mid-1980s onward Jordan faced severe economic difficulties, with riots occurring in response to austerity measures. The most serious rioting disturbances occurred in 1989 following government-imposed

price rises in basic goods and services. In elections held in November, opposition groups won the majority of seats in the House of Representatives.

Jordan was deeply affected by the Gulf crisis of 1990–91. Although King Hussein condemned the invasion of Kuwait, he was slow to do so and spent the fall of 1990 attempting to negotiate an “Arab solution” to the crisis. He criticized what he called the Allies’ “total war” and urged a cease-fire. The crisis crippled the Jordanian economy; Iraq was Jordan’s chief trading partner and the source of most of its petroleum. Following the Allied victory over Iraq, Jordan was politically ostracized by coalition members.

Hussein quickly returned to a more moderate position, calling for regional reconciliation. He further reversed his position in 1993 when he expressed his opposition to Saddam Hussein’s continued rule and called for the installation of a democratic regime. In 1994 and 1995 he granted asylum to Saddam Hussein’s opponents and renegade family members. Jordan’s new stance was welcomed by Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states, with all of whom normal relations were reestablished. After 1996 Hussein’s declining health precluded him from taking an active role in internal or international affairs. His death in 1999 was not followed, as feared, by a struggle over succession. His eldest son, Abdullah, assumed the throne on February 7, 1999, with the promise to continue the work of Hussein in maintaining a stable Jordan.

Abdullah spent the early years of his reign in facilitating joint ventures with Jordan’s neighbors, including linking the electrical grids of Jordan, Syria, and Egypt, building a joint dam with Syria, and collaborating with Israel on a desert research center and a plan to pipe water from the full Red Sea to the shrinking Dead Sea.

Jordan’s government spent the early 2000s struggling to balance Islamic interests against the desire for a peaceful and prosperous place in the world community. In 2000 a military court sentenced six men to death for plotting terrorist attacks against Israeli and U.S. targets, and in 2004 the court sentenced another eight men to death for the assassination of an American diplomat in Amman. In 2002 Jordan broke off relations with Qatar and shut down Al-Jazeera broadcasts after the station supposedly insulted the Jordanian royal family on a television program. Jordan’s embassy in Baghdad was the target of a bomb attack in August 2003. In 2004 Jordanian police caught several men they claimed were linked with al-Qaeda and planning chemical bomb attacks in Amman. In November 2005, 56 people, mostly Jordanians, were killed in suicide attacks on three international hotels in Amman linked to al-Qaeda.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

- 1921–51 King Abdullah I
1951–52 King Talal

- 1952–99 King Hussein
1999– King Abdullah II

CONSTITUTION

The kingdom is a limited constitutional monarchy in name but an absolute monarchy in fact. The basis of government is the constitution of 1952, which provides for a royal executive and a bicameral legislature. Executive power is vested in the king and cabinet, but the monarch, the head of state, has the power to appoint and dismiss the prime minister and cabinet ministers. His power over the legislature is reinforced by his right to appoint senators, dissolve the House of Representatives, veto bills passed by the legislature, and issue royal decrees with the consent of the prime minister and at least four members of the cabinet. He is also the commander in chief of the army and head of the judicial system. The throne devolves by inheritance in the dynasty of ibn al-Hussein by direct line through male heirs.

Legislative power is vested in a bicameral National Assembly with a 30-member Senate appointed by the king and an 80-member House of Representatives elected by universal suffrage. The assembly, in joint session, can override the king’s veto of legislation.

The Jordanian cabinet members are usually chosen from among members of the royal family, the palace staff, former army officers, and representatives of noble tribes, such as the Majali. The cabinet always includes one Circassian and one Christian. The cabinet formed in 2003 contained an unprecedented three female ministers.

PARLIAMENT

Under the constitution the National Assembly is a bicameral body consisting of two chambers. The upper house is the Senate, with a membership of 30 appointed by the king for four-year terms. The lower house is the House of Representatives, with a membership of 80 elected for four-year terms. Under a proportional representation system, 10 of the seats in the House of Representatives are allotted to Christians. There are also seats reserved for ethnic groups and six seats reserved for women.

Legislative proposals are placed before the House of Representatives and then referred to the Senate. If both chambers accept a bill, it is sent to the king for confirmation.

The king is allowed to dissolve parliament if he so chooses. The National Assembly was dissolved in 1974 after having become moribund in the wake of the 1967 war with Israel. From 1978 to 1984 the king ruled with the advice of the National Consultative Council, a 60-member appointive body he established for the purpose. In an effort to strengthen his hand in dealing with the

Palestinian issue, King Hussein reconvened the House of Representatives in 1984. By-elections were held at that time for eight vacant seats. King Abdullah dissolved parliament in 2001 and again in 2003. Parliament has become the main forum for expressing dissident political views, particularly by political Islamists.

POLITICAL PARTIES

All political parties were banned in 1957. In 1971 Hussein announced the formation of the Jordanian National Union as Jordan's sole political party. In 1972 the party was renamed the Arab National Union. Hussein was its president and his brother Hasan, the crown prince, its vice president. In 1976 the union was abolished, leaving Jordan without any legal political party or group. King Hussein showed a commitment to democratization, most importantly by ending martial law in 1991 and legalizing political parties in 1992. However, in the 1993 elections more than 90 percent of the candidates ran as independents.

Since the accession of Abdullah II, political parties have reappeared. Parties that emerged in the early 2000s include Al-Ahed Party, Al-Ajyal, the Ba'th Arab Progressive Party, Al-Umma (Nation) Party, the Arab Land Party, the Communist Party, the Constitutional Front, the Democratic Arab Islamic Movement, the Green Party, the Jordanian Democratic Left Party, the Jordanian Democratic Popular Unity Party, the Jordanian Progressive Party, the Jordanian People's Democratic (Hashd) Party, the Islamic Action Front, the Muslim Centrist Party, the National Action (Haqq) Party, the National Constitutional Party, the (Arab) Socialist Ba'th Party, and the Pan-Arab (Democratic) Movement.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For purposes of local administration Jordan is divided into 12 governorates, each headed by a governor appointed by the king. These governorates are divided into cities, towns, districts, and subdistricts. A governorate is the sole authority for all developmental projects within its territory.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The sharia, the Islamic legal code, is the dominant legal system, but as a result of the British occupation of Palestine from 1917 to 1948, much of English common law has been adopted either by statute or by case law. There are three categories of courts: civil, special, and religious.

The civil court system has four tiers. At the apex is the Court of Cassation, with seven judges; it is both the

supreme court of appeal and the high court in matters of habeas corpus, mandamus, and certiorari. Below are two courts of appeal and seven courts of first instance. At the bottom are 14 magistrate's courts. Special courts include the Supreme Council, which interprets the constitution; the Special Council, which interprets the constitutionality of laws; three special civil courts; tribal courts; and land settlement courts. There are two types of religious courts whose jurisdiction extends to all personal matters: the sharia courts for Muslims and ecclesiastical courts for Christians of each of three denominations, Melkite, Catholic, and Armenian.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Jordan's human rights record is uneven, and significant problems remain, including restrictions on the citizens' right to change their government. Citizens may participate in the political system through their elected representatives in parliament; however, the king has the discretionary authority to appoint and dismiss the prime minister and cabinet, to dissolve parliament, and to establish public policy. Other human rights problems include extrajudicial killings by members of the security forces; police abuse and mistreatment of detainees; allegations of torture; arbitrary arrest and detention; lack of transparent investigations and accountability within the security services; prolonged detention without charge; lack of due process of law and interference in the judicial process; infringements on citizens' privacy rights; harassment of members of opposition political parties and the press; and significant restrictions on freedom of speech, press, assembly, and association.

The 1999 Press and Publications Law reduced somewhat the restrictions outlined in previous legislation on the ability of journalists and publications to function and report freely; however, significant restrictions remain in effect. The government imposes some limits on freedom of religion, and there is official and societal discrimination against adherents of unrecognized religions. The law still allows for reduced punishments for violent "honor crimes" against women for alleged immoral acts. Child abuse remains a problem, and discrimination against Palestinians persists. The abuse of foreign servants is a problem.

FOREIGN POLICY

Jordan has long had a pro-Western foreign policy and close relations with the United States and the United Kingdom. These were somewhat harmed by Jordan's support for Iraq in the 1991 war, but its subsequent participation in sanctions against Iraq restored good relations.

Representatives from 75 countries (including 50 heads of state) attended the funeral of King Hussein in 1999, underscoring the widespread respect he had gained for his peacekeeping efforts. Hussein was one of Israel's best friends in the region.

Jordan maintains a moderate stance in the Middle East and wants to see stability restored to the region. One of King Abdullah II's first statements reiterated his commitment to the peace process with Israel, although the policy has been far from popular with Arabs. Since 2000 Jordan has functioned as an intermediary between Israel and Palestine. Abdullah faces the challenge both of remaining in the good graces of radical Arab states, such as Syria, and maintaining cordial relations with the United States, Israel, and other Western nations.

DEFENSE

The defense structure is headed by the king, who exercises his command in a personal and direct manner. The king is the supreme commander of the armed forces, with the constitutional right to declare war, conclude peace, and sign treaties. The country ended military conscription in 1999, though all males under 37 are still required to register with the military. Jordan spends a huge amount of money on its military: almost \$1.5 billion in 2004. Jordan is very much an army-run state, and the loyalty of the troops to the Hashemite dynasty makes any possibility of an international coup or subversion remote. The country has not experienced serious civil disturbances since 1971, when the PLO was expelled.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 110,500
 Military Manpower Availability: 1,573,995
 Military Expenditures \$billion: 1.46
 as % of GDP: 14.6
 as % of central government expenditures: —
 Arms Imports \$million: 258
 Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

Jordan suffers from debt, poverty, and unemployment. It lacks necessities such as water, and it has no notable oil reserves, unlike many of its Arab neighbors. The Persian Gulf crisis, which began in August 1990, exacerbated Jordan's already serious economic problems, forcing the government to shelve an International Monetary Fund (IMF) program, stop most debt payments, and suspend rescheduling negotiations. Aid from Gulf Arab states, worker remittances, and trade all contracted, and refugees flooded the country, producing serious balance-of-

payments problems, stunting gross domestic product (GDP) growth, and straining government resources. The economy rebounded in 1992, largely owing to the influx of capital repatriated by workers returning from the Gulf. After averaging 9 percent in 1992–95, GDP growth averaged only 2 percent in 1996–99.

In an attempt to spur growth, King Abdullah has undertaken limited economic reform, which has involved the partial privatization of some state-owned enterprises and Jordan's entry in January 2000 into the World Trade Organization (WTO). Jordan has also entered into free-trade agreements with the United States and the United Kingdom, which has increased foreign investment. Until 2003 Jordan depended on Iraq for discounted oil, but the U.S. invasion put a stop to that, causing a major economic blow. Jordan is currently receiving foreign aid to help with fuel costs, and the government has promised to deal with the problem itself when the aid expires by raising fuel prices and increasing the sales tax. The government is also working to encourage more investment in the hope of creating jobs, reducing the budget deficit, and attracting tourism.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 25.5
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 4,500
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 3.9
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 1.0
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 2.4
 Industry: 26.0
 Services: 71.6
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 77
 Government Consumption: 24
 Gross Domestic Investment: 11.6
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 3.2
 Imports: 7.6
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 3.3
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 29.8

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
113.8	114.6	116.6	118.7	121.5

Finance

National Currency: Jordanian Dinar (JOD)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = JOD 0.709
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 2.83
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 4.5
 Total External Debt \$billion: 7.32
 Debt Service Ratio %: 22.57
 Balance of Payments \$million: 203.2
 International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 5.19
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
 3.2

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Official Development Assistance

ODA \$billion: 1.23
per capita \$: 232.50
Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 376.2

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
Revenues \$billion: 3.483
Expenditures \$billion: 3.616
Budget Deficit \$million: 133
Tax Revenues as % of GDP: 18.8

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 2.4
Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: -0.9
Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 1.96
Irrigation, % of Farms having: 18.8
Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 113.6
Total Farmland % of land area: 3.3
Livestock: Cattle 000: 68
Chickens million: 25
Pigs 000: —
Sheep million: 1.48
Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters 000: 249
Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 1

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 1.4
Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 5.0

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 234
Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 4.65
Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 898
Net Energy Imports % of use: 95.1
Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 1.66
Production kW-hr billion: 7.1
Consumption kW-hr billion: 6.9
Coal Reserves tons billion: —
Production tons million: —
Consumption tons million: —
Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet billion: 220
Production cubic feet billion: 11
Consumption cubic feet billion: 11
Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels million: 1
Production barrels 000 per day: 0.04
Consumption barrels 000 per day: 107
Pipelines Length km: 743

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 7.6
Exports \$billion: 3.2

Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 4.7
Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 4.9
Balance of Trade \$million: 203.2

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Iraq %	12.5	18.6
Germany %	7.8	—
United States %	7.7	19.0
China %	7.2	—
Italy %	5.2	—
France %	4.7	—
United Kingdom %	4.5	—
India %	—	8.6
Saudi Arabia %	—	5.0

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 7,301
Paved %: 100
Automobiles: 346,000
Trucks and Buses: 176,700
Railroad: Track Length km: 505
Passenger-km million: 3
Freight-km million: 531
Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 20
Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 92.7
Airports: 17
Traffic: Passenger-km million: 4.15
Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 1.57
Number of Tourists from million: 1.53
Tourist Receipts \$billion: 1.02
Tourist Expenditures \$million: 573

Communications

Telephones 000: 622.6
Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.05
Cellular Telephones million: 1.33
Personal Computers 000: 245
Internet Hosts per million people: 549
Internet Users per 1,000 people: 79

ENVIRONMENT

Jordan's most pressing environmental problem is water shortage. Contributing to the problem are limited rainfall and a high rate of evaporation as well as inefficient usage and poor conservation measures. A good 90 percent of the water supply is used for agriculture. Drinking water is tainted by industrial toxins and untreated sewage.

Cultivable land area is rapidly decreasing because of the exploding population, deforestation, desertification,

and severe erosion. The government has introduced a tree-planting program in an effort to preserve the land.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 1.0
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000:
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 11
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 18,681
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 3.18

LIVING CONDITIONS

Most people in cities live in apartments, which they usually own. The very wealthy might have large houses and hired help. In the countryside most people live in one- or two-room houses, usually with electricity and running water. A few Bedouin live in goat-hair tents that they move around the desert. Public transportation is good, though traffic in the cities is terrible. Street crime is virtually nonexistent.

HEALTH

The Jordanian health-care system provides medical care to everyone; most people pay a small portion of their medical care costs, but free care is available for the poorest. The national insurance program includes eye care and dentistry. The cities have excellent hospitals. The Noor al-Hussein Foundation runs the Institute for Child Health and Development, which handles the health of children throughout Jordan. It also helps women with family planning, provides homes for orphans, and helps rural people with general health. Jordan is a relatively healthy country, though dysentery, typhoid, and hepatitis are problems, and cancer and heart disease have been increasing. A high birthrate is the nation's biggest health problem; the government encourages the use of contraception, but religious leaders discourage it.

Health

Number of Physicians: 10,623
 Number of Dentists: 2,850
 Number of Nurses: 14,251
 Number of Pharmacists: 4,975
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 205
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 17.35
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 41
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 9.3
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 165
 HIV Infected % of adults: < 0.1
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 97
 Measles: 96
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 93
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 91

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Jordanian cuisine features a great deal of rice, bulgur, flat bread, lamb, chicken, yogurt, lentils, chickpeas, fava beans, eggplant, and tomatoes, flavored with garlic or mint. Most meals contain a selection of appetizers called *mezzeh*. Popular dishes include shish kebab (skewers threaded with chunks of meat and vegetables and grilled), *magluba* (a casserole of rice, meat, and vegetables served inverted onto a plate), and *mansaf* (a whole lamb cooked in yogurt and served over rice). Street food includes *shawarma* and falafel. People eat olives with nearly every meal. Lunch is usually the biggest and most social meal of the day, except during Ramadan. Coffee and tea are common beverages; both are served very sweet.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 7.5
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,720
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 148.7
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 169.5

STATUS OF WOMEN

Women in Jordan, as in other Islamic states of the region, are traditionally disfavored economically and, to a lesser extent, educationally. The status of women is heavily influenced by traditional social values, which fix women in the role of housewives and mothers. For example, women are still required to have the written permission of the family's eldest male to travel.

This pattern, however, is changing. The government encourages more female participation in the labor force. Women work in managerial, professional, and clerical positions in the public sector, the military, and the police, albeit in much lower numbers and at a generally lower level than men. Women are steadily increasing their numbers in the workplace. Women have the right to initiate divorce under limited circumstances, they have the right to own and inherit property, and they have priority "rule of first right" for the custody of minor children. In 2003 six parliamentary seats were expressly reserved for women. King Abdullah's 2003 cabinet contained three female ministers.

Men and women often eat separately. In rural areas women are not allowed to eat at restaurants without a male relative; this is no longer the case in cities. Some restaurants have "family" rooms, where women and children are allowed to eat.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 6
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.0
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 24.9

WORK

A sizable minority of Jordanian adults cannot find work; though unemployment officially runs at about 15 percent, the true rate has been estimated at 30 percent. The problem is especially bad for professionals, many of whom have had to leave Jordan to find jobs. More than 80 percent of the workforce is employed in services. The nation is particularly trying to promote tourism at Aqaba and among the ancient ruins at Petra and Jerash. Most women who work are employed in schools, hospitals, and in offices. Industry and construction employ about 13 percent of the workforce, particularly in the production of phosphate and potash. The remainder work in agriculture, using ingenious techniques to water crops, and nomads still raise sheep and goats.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 1,410,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 25.5
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 5
 Industry: 12.5
 Services: 82.5
 Unemployment %: 30

EDUCATION

Schooling is free and compulsory for nine years, from ages six to 15. The educational ladder consists of six years of primary schooling and six years of junior and senior secondary schooling. The academic year runs from September to June. The medium of instruction is Arabic, but English is taught from the fifth grade on. Education is financed and administered by the Ministry of Education, while the National Council for Planning Human Resources makes broad policy decisions. About 70 percent of Jordan's children attend public schools; the rest attend private or religious institutions. Schools teach Islamic values, which the government considers important for citizens.

The nation's universities are the University of Jordan, at Jubaiha, near Amman; Yarmuk University, at Irbid; Mut'ah University, in the Karak governorate in southern Jordan; and the University of Jordan for Science and Technology. These universities are considered some of the best in the Arab world. During the 1970s several polytechnic and community colleges were established. About half of all Jordan's college and university students are female. Wealthy families often send their children abroad for university.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 91.3
 Male %: 95.9
 Female %: 86.3

School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 12.6

First Level: Primary Schools: 2,482

Teachers: —

Students: 766,093

Student-Teacher Ratio: —

Net Enrollment Ratio: 91.3

Second Level: Secondary Schools: 741

Teachers: —

Students: 564,134

Student-Teacher Ratio: —

Net Enrollment Ratio: 80.5

Third Level: Institutions: 55

Teachers: 6,616

Students: 162,688

Gross Enrollment Ratio: 31.0

Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 5.0

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The government has been encouraging investors to use Jordan's young and highly educated workforce for technological jobs. The Higher Council for Science and Technology exists to build a national scientific base to support economic development in the kingdom; key areas include education, optimizing land and mineral resources, and creating research centers. Telephone services are available, but not to the entire population. Jordan has recently added digital switching equipment to its telephone system, but access is still inadequate. In 2003 about 460,000 people were using the Internet.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 1,948

Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —

High-Tech Exports \$million: 27.8

Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

The Jordanian state controls most of the media. The government passed laws in 2001 adding restrictions to the press; journalists can go to prison for criticizing the king, insulting the country, or reporting anything determined to be "false." Foreign broadcasters are reluctant to locate in Jordan for fear of censorship. Nonetheless, there are several daily newspapers published in Jordan, two of them in English. The state runs Jordan Radio and Television, the primary source of broadcast information. Its television offerings include a sports network, a film network, and a satellite channel. It broadcasts radio programming in Arabic, French, and English. There is also an FM radio station run by the army, called Radio Fann. BBC broadcasts are available in some areas. The state-run news agency is called Petra; it is operated by the Information Ministry.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 8
 Total Circulation 000: 352
 Circulation per 1,000: 74
 Books Published: 511
 Periodicals: 20
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets 000: 540
 per 1,000: 83

CULTURE

Poetry and literature are considered the most important kinds of art; Jordanians admire writers. Contemporary writing covers topics such as love, war, daily life, the lives of women, and the struggles of the Palestinian people. Some modern writers have written in Arabic dialects, but this is controversial because many Muslims believe that the language of the Koran is the language of God and the only language suitable for writing. Traditional Arabic music often accompanies performances of poems; musicians often improvise. Young people like Western popular music.

Jordanians create various arts and crafts. For centuries women have woven rugs and embroidered cloth. Women like to wear intricately crafted jewelry of gold or silver. Some artists practice the craft of packing colored sand into bottles to make patterns.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 17
 Volumes: 1,122,000
 Registered borrowers: 49,017
 Museums Number: 16
 Annual Attendance: 147,000
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Jordan has been inhabited for thousands of years and is home to numerous folkloric traditions, including Middle Eastern, Greek, and Roman. The Jordan Folklore Museum in Amman has a thorough display of items from the traditional lives of local people.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

People love to eat meals with their families; a festive mid-day meal can last several hours. Men spend much of their

free time in coffeehouses, drinking tiny cups of coffee, smoking water pipes, and playing backgammon, which has been popular in the country for thousands of years. The Dead Sea is a popular tourist attraction; people like to float on the extremely buoyant water. Scuba diving, water skiing, and snorkeling are good at resorts around Aqaba, and the Wadi Rum is a popular location for rock climbing. Jordan also has many ancient sites to visit, such as the rock city Petra, Roman ruins, and castles from the days of the Crusaders.

ETIQUETTE

Jordanians are very hospitable and love to entertain visitors. A host will serve a guest coffee in a tiny cup, and it is polite for the guest to drink several refills. Giving gifts is an important part of social interaction. When Jordanians meet one another, they immediately try to find out which mutual friends and acquaintances they share. Punctuality is not as important in Jordan as it is in the West.

FAMILY LIFE

Most Jordanian adults are either married or want to be. Having a family is extremely important to Jordanians, and many people consider it tragic to remain unmarried. Most Jordanians do not like to be alone, and a family is a constant source of company. Arranged marriages still occur frequently. Divorce is uncommon. Jordanians tend to have many children; almost half of all Jordanians are currently 20 years or younger. The government is encouraging smaller families. Children are taught to respect adults. Traditionally, the father is the decision maker and the mother is the homemaker, though many women are now working outside the home.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Jordanians combine Western and Arab styles. Though many people wear typical Western clothing, both men and women wear head coverings; men's head coverings are called *kaffiyeh*. Most Jordanian women do not wear veils.

SPORTS

Jordanians love soccer, playing it and watching it live or on television. Groups of friends will gather to watch soccer games together. Many people practice martial arts such as karate and tae kwon do. The government recently built a sports complex called Al-Hussein Youth City to offer families facilities to play sports, swim, and work out.

Jordanians also enjoy watching various kinds of races, from cars to horses to camels. The Koran forbids betting on races.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1946** Kingdom of Transjordan is established, with Abdullah as king.
- 1948** Jordan invades Palestine in Arab-Israeli war and captures Old Jerusalem and the West Bank. A truce with Israel is reached under auspices of UN Truce Supervisory Organization—Palestine.
Jordan annexes West Bank.
- 1949** Transjordan is renamed Jordan.
United States recognizes government.
UN admission is vetoed by USSR.
- 1950** Administration headed by Prime Minister Tawfik Abu al-Huda yields to Prime Minister Said Pasha al-Mufti, who later is succeeded by Samir Pasha al-Rifai.
- 1951** Abdullah is assassinated. His son Talal is named king.
Tawfik Abu al-Huda is appointed prime minister. New elections are held.
- 1952** Talal is deposed in favor of his son Hussein, who is declared king.
- 1955** al-Mufti forms a government for a few months. Other brief governments follow, headed by Hazza al-Majali and Ibrahim Hashim.
Jordan is admitted to the United Nations.
- 1957** Prime Minister Sulayman al-Nabulsi, after a conflict with the king over radical and pro-Soviet policies, is ousted and replaced by Hussein al-Jalidi
Nationalists and Communists organize a general strike.
Army Chief Abu Nuwar attempts a coup and is ousted and exiled.
Hussein rides out the crisis with the help of a loyal army.
All political parties are banned. Abdelhalim al-Nimr and Hashim head new cabinets.
- 1958** Samir al-Rifai is named prime minister.
Relations with the United Arab Republic are broken.
- 1959** Hazza al-Majali replaces al-Rifai as prime minister.
Ties with United Arab Republic are resumed.
- 1960** al-Majali is assassinated. Bahjat al-Talhouni becomes prime minister.
- 1965** Hassan is named crown prince.
- 1966** Hussein ibn Nassar becomes prime minister.
- 1967** Arab-Israeli war results in loss of the West Bank to Israel.
Hussein takes personal control of the army.
- New Council of Representatives is elected.
Saad Jumaa and Bahjat al Talhouni serve as prime ministers.
- 1970** Civil war with the Palestinian guerrillas erupts. Guerrillas are suppressed as fighting ends following Hussein–Yasser Arafat truce.
- 1971** Fighting with Palestinian commandos resumes. Jordanian forces crush the Palestinians after days of heavy fighting.
Prime Minister Wasfi al-Tal is assassinated in Cairo and is replaced by Ahmad al-Lawzi.
Jordanian National Union is founded as the country's sole political party.
- 1974** National Assembly is dissolved.
Hussein relinquishes right to the West Bank at Rabat Conference.
- 1976** Arab National Union is dissolved.
al-Rifai resigns and is succeeded briefly by Mudar Badran.
- 1977** Queen Alia and Health Minister Muhammad al-Bashir die in helicopter crash after inspecting hospital at Tafleh.
- 1978** Hussein creates National Consultative Council of 60 appointed members.
Jordan rejects Egyptian-Israeli peace initiatives.
Hussein meets with Arafat to demonstrate solid front against Egypt.
- 1979** Prime Minister Mudar Badran resigns and is replaced by Abdelhamid Sharaf. Sharaf cabinet includes six West Bank Palestinians and, for the first time in Jordanian history, a woman.
Egypt breaks diplomatic relations with Jordan.
Hussein accuses the Carter administration of “arm-twisting” to try to gain Jordan’s support for the Egyptian-Israeli Peace Treaty.
- 1980** Prime Minister Sharaf dies of a heart attack. Hussein names Kassim al-Rimawi as interim prime minister.
On the latter’s resignation Hussein brings back Mudar Badran, a former prime minister, to head the cabinet.
Jordan lends active aid to Iraq in Iran–Iraq war.
Jordan and Syria come to the brink of armed conflict but are restrained by Saudi Arabia.
- 1986** King Hussein severs political links with the PLO.
- 1987** King Hussein arranges the first summit meeting of the Arab League in eight years.
- 1988** King Hussein declares unconditional support for the intifada and insists that the PLO is the sole representative of the Palestinians. Jordan severs all legal and administrative links with the West Bank and recognizes the independent state of Palestine.
- 1990** King Hussein is slow in condemning the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and works through the fall for an “Arab solution” to the problem.

- Jordan is overwhelmed by refugees fleeing occupied Kuwait.
Frequent public demonstrations occur in support of Iraq.
- 1991** King Hussein condemns the UN ground offensive to liberate Kuwait and appeals for a ceasefire.
- 1994** King Hussein signs a peace treaty with Israel.
- 1999** King Hussein dies and is succeeded by his son Abdullah II.
- 2000** A military court convicts six men of planning attacks against U.S. and Israeli targets.
- 2001** Jordan, Syria, and Egypt build an electricity line linking the grids of all three nations.
- 2002** Jordan recalls its ambassador to Qatar and shuts down its Al-Jazeera office after a television program allegedly insulted the royal family. Jordan and Israel formulate an \$800 million plan to pipe water from the Red Sea to the Dead Sea. U.S. diplomat Laurence Foley is assassinated in Amman.
- 2003** Politicians loyal to King Abdullah II win two-thirds of the parliamentary seats. A bomb explodes at the Jordanian embassy in Baghdad. Prime Minister Ali Abu al-Ragheb resigns, and Faisal al-Fayez replaces him.
- 2004** Jordan and Syria agree to build the Wahdah Dam. Israel and Jordan agree to build a desert science center.
- 2005** Fifty-six people die in suicide attacks on three international hotels in Amman linked to al-Qaeda.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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Washington, DC 20008
Phone: (202) 966-2664 Fax: (202) 966-3110

INTERNET RESOURCES

- Embassy of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan
<http://www.jordanembassyus.org/new/index.shtml>
- Jordan National Information System
<http://www.nic.gov.jo/>

KAZAKHSTAN

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Kazakhstan (Qazaqstan Respüblıkasy)

ABBREVIATION

KZ

CAPITAL

Astana

HEAD OF STATE

President Nursultan Abishevich Nazarbayev (from 1990)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Daniyal Akhmetov (from 2003)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Republic

POPULATION

15,185,844 (2005)

AREA

2,717,300 sq km (1,049,150 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Kazakh, Russian

LANGUAGES

Kazakh (official), Russian

RELIGIONS

Islam, Russian Orthodoxy

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Tenge

NATIONAL FLAG

Sky blue background, representing the endless sky, and a gold sun with 32 rays soaring above a golden steppe eagle in the center; on the hoist side is a “national ornamentation” in yellow.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

In gold, two winged horses flank an X in a circle, all over a blue background. Golden rays emanate from the center, with a small star at the top. At the bottom is the name of the republic.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Anthem of the Republic of Kazakhstan”

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year’s Day), March 8 (International Women’s Day), March 21–22 (Naurysz), May 1 (Unity of Kazakhstan People Day), May 9 (Victory Day), October 25 (Day of the Republic), December 16 (Independence Day)

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

December 16, 1991

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

August 30, 1995

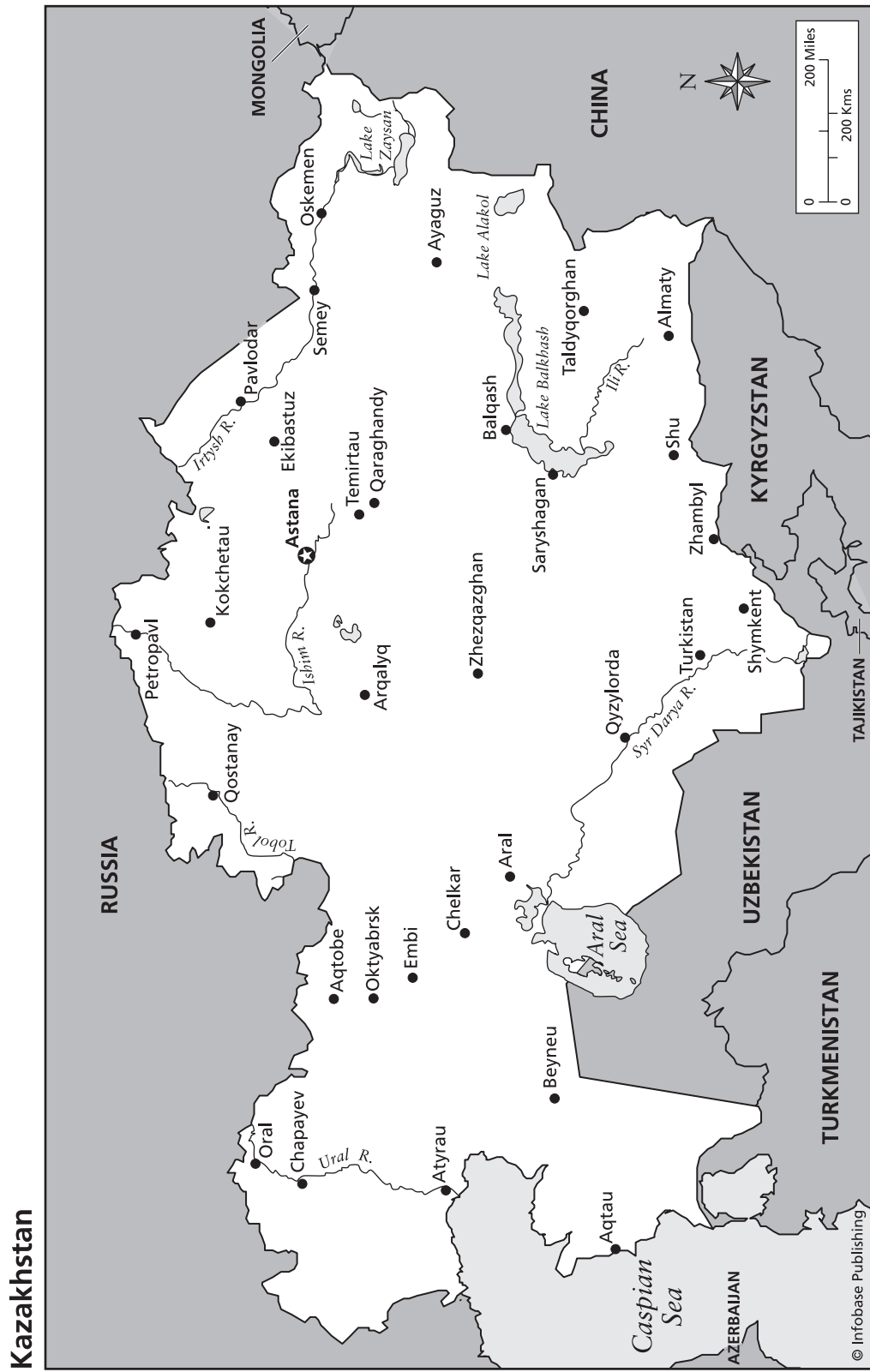
GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Kazakhstan easily covers the largest territory of the five Central Asian states, 2,717,300 sq km (1,049,150 sq mi), making it the ninth-largest nation in the world. It measures 1,900 km (1,200 mi) from east to west and 1,300 km (800 mi) from north to south. It has an extensive border with European and Siberian Russia of 6,846 km (4,254 mi), one of the longest international boundaries in the world, on the north and northwest. To the southeast lies the Chinese region of Xinjiang, with a boundary 1,533 km (953 mi) long, and Kazakhstan’s southern boundary is shared by three other Central Asian states, Kyrgyzstan (1,051 km; 653 mi), Uzbekistan (2,203 km;

1,377 mi), and Turkmenistan (379 km; 236 mi). On the west is the Caspian Sea. Approximately half of the Aral Sea lies within Kazakhstan. One other lake of substantial size lies within the country’s borders, Lake Balkhash. All told, Kazakhstan has more than 48,000 lakes, mostly quite small and in the better-watered north.

The capital is Astana, previously called Akmola and before that Tselinograd. The largest city is the former capital, Almaty, formerly Alma-Ata.

Taking Kazakhstan’s large size into account, it is not surprising that its topography varies considerably from region to region. Much of the country is mountainous, yet there are plateaus, vast plains, and depressions, some of these lying below sea level. The northwestern



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part of the country is a plateau, rising to the Mugodzhar uplands, representing the southernmost extent of the Ural Mountain chain. Farther south, the Caspian Depression is a wide, flat expanse. The lowlands are watered by the Ural River as it empties into the Caspian, and they extend westward to the edge of the Volga Delta. The west-central portion of the country is marked by the Turgai Trough, also known as the Turanian Depression, which spreads out southward into the basin of the Aral Sea, an area that coincides with the Kyzylkum Desert.

East of the Turgai Trough, Kazakhstan's natural features fall into several bands running east-west: the northerly steppe region known as the Virgin Lands, which serves as the nation's granary; the central-eastern semiarid uplands rising to the foothills of the Altai Mountains in the east; and the south, much of which is the very arid and sandy Betpak Dala Desert but which is also watered by rivers flowing out of mountains lying to the east (in China) and south, primarily the Ili, emptying into Lake Balkhash, and the Syr Darya, draining into the Aral Sea. The southeastern marches of the country are defined by the Tien Shan Mountains, rising to 6,995 m (22,949 ft) at the Khan Tengri massif. Through the northeast flows the Irtysh River; it is dammed to form a large reservoir, Lake Zaysan.

Kazakhstan has more than 2,700 glaciers, covering about 2,000 sq km (more than 800 sq mi), primarily in the Tien Shan, Dzungarian Alatau, and Altai ranges.

The mountainous areas of the country are subject to seismic activity, particularly in the region around Almaty. The city suffered a severe earthquake in 1911. An elaborate system of dams and barriers has been built to protect Almaty from mudflows and avalanches spilling out of the nearby mountains.

Geography

Area sq km: 2,717,300; sq mi 1,049,150
World Rank: 9th
Land Boundaries, km: China 1,533; Kyrgyzstan 1,051; Russia 6,846;
Turkmenistan 379; Uzbekistan 2,203
Coastline, km: 0
Elevation Extremes meters:
Lowest: Vpadina Kaundy -132
Highest: Pik Khan-Tengri 6,995
Land Use %
Arable Land: 8.0
Permanent Crops: 0.1
Forest: 4.5
Other: 87.4

Population of Principal Cities (1999 est.)

Almaty	1,129,400
Aqtobe	253,100
Astana	313,000
Oskemen	311,000
Pavlodar	300,500

Petropavl	203,500
Qaraghandy	436,900
Qostanay	221,400
Semey	269,600
Shymkent	360,100
Taraz (Dzambul)	330,100

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Kazakhstan, far from any ocean, has a continental climate whose extremes are for the most part not tempered by the presence of large inland bodies of water. Mean January temperatures range from -18°C (0°F) in the north to -3°C (27°F) in the southern basins, while mean July temperatures vary from 19°C (66°F) in the north to as much as 30°C (86°F) in the deserts of the south. The infiltration of arctic air in the winter can drive temperatures down to -35°C (-31°F), even in the southern regions. In general, summers are long and dry on the plains and much shorter in the mountains.

Precipitation in Kazakhstan tends to rise the farther north one ventures. In the far north there is enough rainfall (annually, 300–400 mm; 12–16 in) to support forests. The band of steppes receives 250 mm (10 in) per year, mostly in summer. Semidesert and desert areas receive anywhere from 100 to 200 mm (4 to 8 in) per year, though parts of the Kyzylkum Desert get even less than 100 mm a year, and what little there is falls mainly in early spring. The foothills and mountains are wetter than elsewhere in the country, with anywhere from 400 to 1,600 mm (16 to 63 in) of precipitation a year.

Kazakhstan is subject to high winds at any time of year; these can create major dust and salt storms. The dry wind known as the *sukhovey*, when it occurs in spring or summer, can be very destructive to crops by kicking up dust.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature
July: 81°F
January: 23°F
Average Rainfall: 15 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Much of Kazakhstan is devoid of plants and animals, owing to ecological disasters during the Soviet era. The central plain is flat and treeless, covered with grasses in some parts. Cannabis, or marijuana, grows wild in many places, as do tulips and poppies. Farmers grow wheat on the northern steppe and cotton, fruits, vegetables, tobacco, and rice on the southern part. Herd animals include goats, sheep, horses, camels, and cattle. In the wild there are eagles, rooks, roe deer, lynx, wolves, badgers, foxes, brown bears, wild boars, and antelopes. The rare snow leopard also lives in Kazakhstan.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005:	15,185,844
World Rank:	61st
Density per sq km:	5.5
% of annual growth (1999-2003):	-0.8
Male %:	48.2
Female %:	51.8
Urban %:	55.8
Age Distribution %:	
0-14:	23.7
15-64:	68.4
65 and over:	7.9
Population 2025:	16,041,000
Birth Rate per 1,000:	15.78
Death Rate per 1,000:	9.46
Rate of Natural Increase %:	0.6
Total Fertility Rate:	1.89
Expectation of Life (years):	
Males:	61.21
Females:	72.2
Marriage Rate per 1,000:	6.7
Divorce Rate per 1,000:	2.1
Average Size of Households:	4.0
Induced Abortions:	137,808

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Ethnic Kazakhs are barely a majority within their own state; they represent the largest population group at 53 percent. Previously only a plurality, they became a majority because of two trends: natural increase among the Kazakhs and continued out-migration by people of European stock. Russians constitute some 30 percent of the population, down from 40 percent at independence. Other minorities of significance are Ukrainians, Germans, and Uzbeks. Various other minorities (Belarusians, Uighurs, Koreans, and Azeris) make up the remaining portion of the population. Although more than half a million Russians departed in the years following independence, the in-migration of Russians from other Central Asian states in the same period has tempered the flow somewhat. Nearly as many ethnic Germans as Russians left Kazakhstan in the 1990s. The remaining Russian population is concentrated in a band across the north, adjacent to southern Russia and Siberia, raising concerns about the potential for secession. Kazakhs, traditionally nomadic, are decidedly a minority (at less than 15 percent) in the composition of most major cities and make up less than one-quarter of Almaty's residents.

LANGUAGES

Kazakhstan is divided roughly equally between speakers of Kazakh, a Turkic language with some Mongol influences, similar to the languages spoken in most of the other Central Asian states, and speakers of Russian. Kazakh is the official language, but the language of business, science,

and technology is Russian, and Russian still predominates in education despite official efforts to support Kazakh-language schools. A provision of the 1995 Constitution made Russian a semiofficial language alongside Kazakh.

Kazakh is written in a modified form of the Cyrillic alphabet. Originally, Arabic script was used. The government has shown a desire on several occasions to move to the Latin alphabet, but the costs of such a transition are daunting.

RELIGIONS

Kazakhs are overwhelmingly Muslims of the Sunni branch, while Russians and other Slavs are generally Russian Orthodox. In 1999 Muslims made up 47 percent of the population, while the Russian Orthodox followers constituted 44 percent. Protestants constituted some 2 percent, and proselytizing by various Protestant missions has upset some in the government and led to the subtle harassment of Adventist and other churches. There are small numbers of Catholics and Jews, and since 1991 the country has had a single Roman Catholic diocese.

Islam, its religious practices suppressed under Soviet rule, has made a comeback, as encouraged by the efforts of foreign partners; Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Turkey in particular have aided the construction of mosques and religious schools. Unlike in Uzbekistan or Tajikistan, Islamic fundamentalism has made little headway, but the question of the relationship between Islam and the state is still a sensitive one. Since 1990 the nation has had its own Muslim religious authority headed by a mufti appointed by the president. Given the strength of Kazakh ethnic nationalism and religion's fundamental place in the makeup of Kazakh identity, the influence of Islam is likely to increase.

The 1995 constitution specifies that Kazakhstan is a secular state. It forbids religious parties and organizations seen as fomenting religious or racial strife, and foreign religious groups operate under governmental restrictions.

Religious Affiliations

Muslim	7,137,000
Russian Orthodox	6,682,000
Protestant	304,000
Other	1,063,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

It is difficult to distinguish Kazakh history prior to modern times from more general Central Asian history, and attention to the latter focuses mainly on the great cities of the south, now located in Uzbekistan. Most of Central Asia was unified briefly under the Mongols and Genghis

Khan in the early 13th century, but Genghis Khan divided the region between two sons, with the area that is now Kazakhstan forming a part of the Golden Horde, a Mongol state making up most of Russia founded in the mid-13th century. For centuries after the Mongol Empire crumbled, the people who would slowly come to identify themselves as Kazakhs ran livestock freely across the southern steppe. Kazakh culture and nomadic life-style centered on the flocks they tended.

From the 17th century onward Russian expansionism slowly began to constrain this freedom. The Cossacks reached the Ural River in the first half of the 17th century. They continued to move eastward in the 18th century, setting down fortifications in Kazakh lands now in southern Siberia (Orsk, Omsk) and northern Kazakhstan (Pavlodar, Petropavl, Öskemen). Pressure from the opposite direction—invading Mongols referred to as Oirots or Kalmyks—compelled first the khan of the Lesser Horde in 1731 and then the khan of the Middle Horde in 1740 to seek Russian protection and to swear loyalty to the czar. This sealed the fate of the khanates' political power, as the Russians moved to expand their control.

By the middle of the 19th century the northern reaches of what is now Kazakhstan were sufficiently Russified that the upper classes sent their sons to Russia for education and missionaries, first Tatar Muslims, then Russian Orthodox, came to “civilize” the nomads. Russian administrators brought the agriculturally valuable parts of the country into Russia's economic orbit, growing wheat in the north and cotton in the south, and extended the rail network as far as Tashkent.

The large-scale migration of Russian peasants starting in the 1890s provoked Kazakh violence; these farmers were seizing prime grazing lands. Kazakh uprisings toward the end of the 19th century and again in 1916 were put down with much bloodshed. Beyond the Cossacks, who numbered half a million by 1917, more than one million Russian families put down roots in the region, and a fresh wave followed in the 1920s and 1930s following Stalin's dispossession of lands in Russia for collective farms.

With the Russian Revolution, Central Asia became part of the Soviet Union in 1918. The Kazakh lands were originally an “autonomous” part of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic. Not until 1936, when a new Soviet constitution came into force, was there a full-blown Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic. The Kazakhs were Europeanized culturally, and their economic structures and political practices were reshaped along Communist lines. Islam was suppressed; women were educated and encouraged to join the workforce. Heavy industry and large-scale agriculture were introduced.

World War II prompted a shift of industries and academic centers east of the Urals to escape the German ad-

vance. There was also a new bout of migration, this time by peoples accused of collaborating with the enemy and forced to go to Central Asia: Crimean Tatars, Meskhetian Turks, Chechens, Ingush, Volga Germans, Greeks, and Koreans.

Nikita Khrushchev's Virgin Lands policy—to take into cultivation large areas of grazing land in northern Kazakhstan—brought yet another wave of Slav settlers to grow grain on the Kazakh steppes in the late 1950s and early 1960s. With a new push for industrialization in the cities of the north and east and with space exploration (following the creation of the Baikonur space launching facility), tens of thousands more Russian technicians arrived. The Russians' percentage of the total population rose from less than 20 percent in 1926 to a peak of 42.7 percent in 1959.

In spite of Kazakhstan's continual absorption of fresh generations of Slavic migrants, from the 1960s onward ethnic Kazakhs began to replace Russian speakers in positions of power in the republic. A stirring of Kazakh nationalism led to riots in Almaty when Mikhail Gorbachev replaced, on grounds of corruption, the populist Kazakh Communist Party secretary Dinmukhamed Kunayev with a Russian, Gennadi Kolbin, in 1986. Kolbin cleaned house during his three-year tenure, but when he was transferred back to a Moscow posting in 1989, another ethnic Kazakh, Nursultan Nazarbayev, took his place. Nazarbayev supported Gorbachev's policies of greater openness and economic reforms and extended their logic to a revamping of the Kazakh Republic's institutions. A Supreme Soviet was established on a permanent basis as a legislature, multicandidate elections (at least in theory) were implemented, and Kazakh was declared the official language. The Supreme Soviet showed its nationalist spirit by asserting the Kazakh Republic's control over its own natural resources and economic development.

When the Soviet Union began to break up into its constituent republics, Kazakhstan was the last of the 15 to declare independence, on December 16, 1991. The new state joined the Russian-led Commonwealth of Independent States. Its policies at home, however, were seen by Slavs and other minorities as favoring ethnic Kazakhs at their expense. A new constitution in 1993 enshrined Kazakh as the official language and relegated Russian to secondary status. Kazakhs were winning political and legislative posts out of all proportion to their actual strength in the population, leaving others feeling excluded. Between 1992 and 1997 the number of those with European ancestry leaving Kazakhstan was reported to be 1,652,700, and many of these were among the most skilled workers and professionals.

In 1994 fresh elections were held. Kazakhs won a majority of the seats in the legislature, now called the Supreme Kenges, and President Nazarbayev's support-

ers, purged of their Communist elements and reconstituted as the People's Unity Party, won the largest share. Their triumph was cut short in 1995 by a Constitutional Court ruling that the election had violated the principle of one person, one vote. The legislature disbanded, leaving Nazarbayev to rule by decree, pending a new vote. He used this opportunity to push through a referendum extending his term to the year 2000 and to propose a new constitution that expanded his own power and replaced the Kenges with a weaker bicameral legislature.

Kazakhstan's severe economic difficulties in the mid-1990s prompted Nazarbayev to name a committed reformer, Akezhan Kazhegeldin, as prime minister. His economic austerity program was broadly unpopular with workers, yet Kazhegeldin's team was able to impose macroeconomic stability and halt the devastating decline in yearly production. The more Kazhegeldin seemed to be acquiring his own power base, however, the more Nazarbayev felt threatened. After being tarred with accusations of corruption and reports of onetime links to the KGB, the prime minister was compelled to resign in 1997 and was replaced by Nurlan Balgymbayev.

Although Kazakhstan remained more liberal than most Central Asian states, opposition leaders were sometimes jailed, and when the legislature, having rejected a package of proposed constitutional reforms, voted to move up the presidential election to 1999, Kazhegeldin and other prominent figures were prohibited from contesting it. The 1999 election returned Nazarbayev to power with a large majority, but outside observers were at best skeptical about the fairness of the vote.

Kazakhstan spent the early 2000s working to beef up its economy and stop ethnic violence. Islamic militants began entering the country from Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan in 2000, prompting the government to increase border security. Uighurs were involved in fighting in Almaty, and the government cracked down on those responsible. In 2001 Kazakhstan opened the first oil pipeline from the Caspian Sea to the Black Sea. That year Kazakhstan joined the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in an effort to end ethnic violence and promote trade in the region. Nazarbayev met with George W. Bush to discuss a long-term partnership.

Nazarbayev's government experienced some turmoil, as prime ministers came and went, and opposition leaders were purged from the cabinet or put in jail. In 2003 the legislature passed a bill allowing private land ownership, and the country abolished the death penalty. In 2004 Kazakhstan and China signed an agreement to construct an oil pipeline to the Chinese border. Nazarbayev's party retained control of the lower house of parliament in the September and October elections, which international observers believed to be unfair. In January 2005 the opposition party Democratic Choice was ordered to dissolve for protesting the elections.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1990– Nursultan Abishuly Nazarbayev

CONSTITUTION

Kazakhstan is functioning under the constitution of 1995, which is less liberal than its predecessor, passed by the old Supreme Soviet in 1993. The 1995 constitution, approved by a referendum whose precise returns were disputed, extends the powers of the president at the expense of the legislature. Only the president can initiate constitutional amendments, dissolve parliament, appoint or dismiss the government, and appoint regional governors. Human rights guarantees are less salient than previously; the president is specified as the guarantor of citizens' rights. There is now a bicameral parliament of 114 members. There is a Cabinet of Ministers led by a prime minister, who is chosen by the president with parliament's approval. There is universal suffrage for those age 18 and over. In principle, the president is elected by popular vote for a seven-year term; in practice, elections have occurred off schedule, and the president used a 1995 referendum to extend his first term until 2000. Nazarbayev also unilaterally decided to move the capital from Almaty to Astana in 1998.

PARLIAMENT

Kazakhstan has a parliament consisting of two chambers: the 77-member Mazhilis, or assembly, with members elected for five-year terms, and the 39-member Senate, of which seven members are appointed by the president and the others are elected to six-year terms by regional legislatures. The legislature is weak, since the president has vast powers of decree: The president can declare a bill "urgent," and if the two chambers then fail to pass it within 30 days, he can put it into force by decree. The legislature does not exercise power over the national budget or even the shape of its own legislative program, and its only check on the executive is that it can remove the president in extreme circumstances—disability or treason. Currently, parliament is dominated by the president's party, Otan, and its allies. Several major opposition parties refused to take part in the 1999 parliamentary elections.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Kazakhstan is, for all practical purposes, a single-party state. The Otan Party, founded in 1999, is Nazarbayev's personal political vehicle; it won the vast majority of seats in the 2004 parliamentary elections. Two other parties also won seats in

2004: the agrarian-industrial party AIST, and Nazarbayev's daughter's party, Asar. Though nine opposition parties ran candidates, only one seat was won by an opposition candidate. Independent candidates won 18 seats, though almost all of them were affiliated with progovernment institutions or were otherwise aligned with the president.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Kazakhstan is divided into 14 regions called oblasts, whose regional legislatures are called *maslikhats*, plus the cities of Almaty and Astana. Governors in charge of regional executive bodies are *akims*; they are appointed by the president. The regions have little independent authority or revenue-raising capability and exist to carry out the laws and directives of the central government. The one exception is the city of Leninsk, serving the Baikonur space facility; by treaty it is under Russian jurisdiction until 2015. The regions do retain some rights to the development of local resources, except for those deemed strategic.

LEGAL SYSTEM

There are three levels of courts in Kazakhstan. At the top is the Supreme Court, which advises in the appointment of senior judges. The 44-member Supreme Court is elected by the Senate for an unspecified term of office at the behest of the president, based on the recommendation of the Highest Judicial Council of the Republic. In fact, the court is completely subservient to Nazarbayev. The Supreme Court oversees the lower courts, the oblast courts and their equivalents. Oblast-level courts deal with serious crimes, while local courts handle petty crime and minor disputes.

The constitution guarantees legal representation for a person accused of a crime, but this guarantee remains theoretical in all too many instances. Pretrial detention for up to three days is allowed, and an individual may be held for up to a year in jail between being charged and being brought to trial. There is no bail.

Until 1995 there was a Constitutional Court. This was replaced by a seven-member Constitutional Council whose rulings are subject to presidential veto. The president appoints the council's chair and two other members, while the Senate and the assembly each select two members. The council decides on the manner and timing of elections, examines international treaties, and vets legislation for accordance with the constitution.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Kazakhstan has a poor human rights record. The nation has set up a Presidential Human Rights Commission to respond to external criticism of its record, but with minimal cooperation from officials, a tiny budget, and a purely

advisory capacity, it has not been able to make much of an impact. Citizens are essentially denied the right to assemble peaceably; a presidential decree from 1995 restricts the conduct of unsanctioned demonstrations. Unions are permitted, but strikes are not. The courts are corrupt, as influenced by money and by clans and other networks. The security forces arbitrarily imprison people, and they torture, abuse, and execute prisoners and detainees.

The media are quite constrained, and there are taboo subjects, such as the president and his family, ethnic strife, and certain aspects of economic management and external relations. Outside the major cities, newspapers, television, and radio serve largely at the behest of local governors, who are like presidential prefects. The main state television channel is controlled by Nazarbayev's daughter. Private television began in 1990, but a 1996 law greatly limited its freedom to operate through a variety of measures.

Violence against women and ethnic minorities were serious problems, as was trafficking in teenage girls. Ethnic tensions stem from the government's policy of favoring ethnic Kazakhs, who are grossly overrepresented in government at all levels, education, housing, and business. The biggest bone of contention is the language law designed to make the use of Kazakh mandatory in government by a certain date (which has been postponed several times following objections by Russian speakers) and to guarantee that at least half of all radio and television broadcasting be in the Kazakh language.

There is broad religious freedom in Kazakhstan, though some Christian groups have reported incidents of harassment. Islam, predominant among Kazakhs, has no official status.

FOREIGN POLICY

Kazakhstan enjoys cordial relationships with all its neighbors. It has joined in partnerships with China, Russia, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization to improve trade and ethnic matters in the region. In 2000 the nation joined with Russia, Belarus, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan in the Eurasian Economic Community to create a free-trade zone. Kazakhstan is working with China to control illegal migration and trade across their mutual border and is working out border disputes with Russia, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan as well as seabed boundary questions with Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan, and Russia. Kazakhstan is a transit point for narcotics traffickers, which is an issue the government plans to confront.

DEFENSE

In principle, Kazakhstan has a military with ground forces, air forces, a naval force, and a republican guard; in practice,

the nation does not allocate very much money to the military and still depends on Russia for defense. The nucleus of Kazakhstan's defense force is what used to be the Soviet Fortieth Army, "nationalized" by Nazarbayev in 1992. The president of the republic is commander in chief and chairman of the National Security Council. The armed forces report to the chief of general staff and through that office to the minister of defense. The officer corps had been dominated by Slavs; after many transferred elsewhere in the Commonwealth of Independent States, a new and relatively untrained cadre of ethnic Kazakhs had to be called upon to replace them. Russian troops still help guard the country's extensive borders, especially the Chinese border, guarding against smuggling and illegal immigration. The Kazakh armed forces fill their ranks through two-year conscription obligations. Morale is low and desertions are common.

Kazakhstan renounced nuclear weapons in 1993 and by 2000 had gotten rid of all its uranium and had sealed up its last nuclear test tunnels.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 100,300
 Military Manpower Availability: 3,758,255
 Military Expenditures \$million: 221.8
 as % of GDP: 0.9
 as % of central government expenditures: 6.01
 Arms Imports \$million: 62
 Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

Kazakhstan's economy has done relatively well for a former Soviet republic. It had repaid all of its debt to the International Monetary Fund by 2000, seven years ahead of schedule. In 2002 the U.S. Department of Commerce classified Kazakhstan as a market economy; that same year it became the first Soviet nation to receive an investment-grade credit rating from an international credit-rating agency. Foreign debt was only 14 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) in 2003. Inflation has been slightly higher than forecast, at 6.9 percent in 2004.

Almost all of Kazakhstan's economic growth has come from its oil and gas industries. The nation has tremendous deposits of fossil fuels and minerals, including coal, iron, uranium, gold, copper, and zinc, which have attracted a good deal of foreign investment. In 2003 Kazakhstan exported more than \$7 billion worth of oil. Agriculture accounted for only 7.4 percent of GDP in 2004.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 118.4
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 7,800
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 9.0

GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 9.9
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 7.4
 Industry: 37.8
 Services: 54.8
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 57
 Government Consumption: 12
 Gross Domestic Investment: 23.9
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 18.47
 Imports: 13.07
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 3.3
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 26.5

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
189.7	214.7	232.6	246.3	262.0

Finance

National Currency: Tenge (KZT)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = KZT 136.684
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 382
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 7.0
 Total External Debt \$billion: 26.03
 Debt Service Ratio %: 2.99
 Balance of Payments \$million: –39.02
 International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 4.24
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
 6.9

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 268.4
 per capita \$: 18.00
 Foreign Direct Investment \$billion: 2.09

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$billion: 8.67
 Expenditures \$billion: 8.968
 Budget Deficit \$million: 298
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 7.4
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 8.0
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 0.23
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 10.8
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 3.01
 Total Farmland % of land area: 8.0
 Livestock: Cattle million: 4.87
 Chickens million: 24.7
 Pigs million: 1.06
 Sheep million: 10.8
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters 000: 300.8
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 25.7

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 4.3
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 10.6

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 84.9
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 38.8
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 2.6
 Net Energy Imports % of use: -106.2
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 17
 Production kW-hr billion: 63.7
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 62.0
 Coal Reserves tons billion: 37.5
 Production tons million: 86.5
 Consumption tons million: 58.3
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: 68.5
 Production cubic feet billion: 490
 Consumption cubic feet billion: 560
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: 13.3
 Production barrels million per day: 1.2
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 170
 Pipelines Length km: 10,158

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 13.07
 Exports \$billion: 18.47
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 11.7
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 5.0
 Balance of Trade \$million: -39.02

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Russia %	34.9	15.5
China %	18.4	10.3
Germany %	9.1	9.4
Bermuda %	—	16.8
Switzerland %	—	6.3

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 82,980
 Paved %: 94.0
 Automobiles: 1,062,600
 Trucks and Buses: 280,300
 Railroad: Track Length km: 13,601
 Passenger-km billion: 10.45
 Freight-km billion: 133.1
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 3
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 0.65
 Airports: 392
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 1.73
 Length of Waterways km: 4,000

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 2.41
 Number of Tourists from million: 2.37
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 638
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 783

Communications

Telephones million: 2.08
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones million: 1.03
 Personal Computers 000: —
 Internet Hosts per million people: 1,448
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 16

ENVIRONMENT

The worst environmental problem Kazakhstan faces is the alarming shrinkage of the Aral Sea. The world's fourth-largest lake before it was disturbed for large-scale agriculture in the 1960s, the Aral has been reduced to a small fraction of its original volume and surface area, with greatly increased salinity and greater concentrations of man-made pollutants, because its two feeder rivers, the Amu Darya and the Syr Darya, have been diverted for irrigation. Not only is the Aral an ecological dead zone but also the disappearance of so much water has drastically affected the stability of the local climate and shortened the growing season.

Because Kazakhstan had a high concentration of particularly dirty industries under the Soviet Union, it has one of the worst rates of air pollution in the region. It was also used as a testing ground for Soviet nuclear weapons between 1949 and 1989. There have been industrial accidents at times, notably the escape of poisonous beryllium oxide from a factory in Ulba, contaminating an area around the city of Öskemen in 1990, which spurred protests concerning nuclear waste sites in the oblasts of East Kazakhstan and Semey. There are no longer any nuclear weapons testings or facilities in Kazakhstan, but those living nearby still contend with radioactive contamination.

Water pollution has mostly involved localized agricultural runoff of fertilizer and pesticides; in this area there seems to have been some modest improvement in recent years. Still, the Ural and Irtysh rivers and Lake Balkhash are seriously tainted from industrial discharges.

Kazakhstan has one national park of 50,852 hectares (125,660 acres), Bayanaulskiy, created in 1985. There are also seven nature reserves scattered about the northern steppe, the foothills of the mountains to the east and south, and the shores of the Caspian and Aral seas to the west.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 4.5
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: 239
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 3
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 8.05

LIVING CONDITIONS

Housing is in short supply. About half the population lives in cities, most of them crammed into small apartments. In rural areas many people have homes made of brick; they usually have electricity, but they may not have running water. Kazakhstan's remaining nomadic herders live in felt tents called yurts. Nomads can assemble or disassemble these tents in an hour. Travel can be difficult, owing to the vast distances between destinations. Trains are cheap, slow, dirty, and dangerous. Buses are also cheap and likely to break down. Airplanes and helicopters are the fastest way of traveling, but they as well are unsafe.

HEALTH

Kazakhstan's government provides free public health care, but the public system lacks supplies and equipment, particularly in rural areas. Doctors and nurses are not paid very well, and there are few dentists. Children receive vaccinations for free, and there are special clinics for children. Some older people live in nursing homes, but most of them are cared for by family members. Those who can afford to do so usually choose to pay for private doctors and clinics, where the care is better.

On the whole, health is not very good. The pollution from fertilizers and dust from the dried-up Aral Sea bed causes health problems for people living in the area. People who live near former nuclear test sites have high rates of cancer; the government has compensated some victims. Smoking and alcoholism are problems, to the point that the government has encouraged people to become devout Muslims so that they will stop drinking. Tuberculosis, typhoid, diphtheria, and hepatitis are all common, as is undulant fever, caused by drinking unpasteurized milk. Many people believe they can improve their health by toughening their bodies, such as by pouring cold water over themselves outdoors.

Health

Number of Physicians: 51,289
 Number of Dentists: 4,337
 Number of Nurses: 88,140
 Number of Pharmacists: 2,672
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 330
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: 7.02
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 29.21

Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 210
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 3.5
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 56
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.2
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 99
 Measles: 99
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 72
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 86

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Kazakh cuisine combines Mediterranean, Middle Eastern, Russian, and nomadic eating traditions. People eat a great deal of vegetables, beans and nuts, yogurt, cheese, rice, and grilled meat, especially mutton, including all innards. *Pulau*, or pilaf, is a dish of rice with fruit, nuts, and spices. Apples are famous throughout the region. (*Almaty* means "father of apples.") In Russian areas, people eat potatoes, dumplings, noodles, and meat, including horse. Yogurt is often used in stews and sauces. For dessert, people eat raisins, nuts, fruit, cookies, and halvah. People always begin a meal with tea, called *chai*, and usually breads and nuts. Russians and Kazakhs drink vodka, and Kazakhs also drink alcoholic beverages made from fermented mare's or camel's milk.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 12.9
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,720
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 163.3
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg:
 120.8

STATUS OF WOMEN

Kazakh women are relatively liberated for Central Asian women. Islam has never caught on as a key force in the nomadic lifestyle, and as a result women have not suffered the restrictions imposed on them in more devout countries. Women participate in sports such as the wild boy-girl horse chases, and though men consider it appropriate to "steal" women to be their brides, there is often a certain degree of collusion on the part of the stolen women. The 1995 constitution prohibits discrimination based on sex and reaffirms the right of all to employment. Since the Soviet days urban women have worked outside the home and have held some of the country's top posts; Nazarbayev's daughter is one of the most influential people in the nation. With Soviet mores fading and traditional and Islamic ones taking their place, however, there is social pressure on women to stay home and raise children. As unemployment increases, women are often the first to lose jobs.

Family planning has made little headway in Kazakhstan. Kazakh nationalists, concerned about their near submajority status in the republic, have inveighed against birth control and abortions for ethnic Kazakh women. Though the number of births per woman is high, so is the number of abortions, and in 1992 the latter actually exceeded the former. This is attributed to the difficulty of obtaining contraceptives since independence. The birth-rate overall is declining. The maternal mortality rate is 210 per 100,000 births, with the countryside having a much more severe problem than the cities.

Domestic violence is a serious problem in the country. Kazakhstan is also notorious for trafficking in women, especially teenage girls, who are sold as sex slaves, often with the collusion of border officials.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 10
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.0
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 48.7

WORK

In 2004 the unemployment rate was 8 percent, marking an improvement over the early 1990s, when unemployment soared after the end of Soviet rule. More than one-quarter of Kazakhstan's population lives below the poverty line; the wealthiest 10 percent of the population hold almost 27 percent of the nation's wealth. The biggest source of wealth is the oil and mineral industries, which employ some 30 percent of the population. One-fifth of the population works as farmers and herders; these include the nomads, who produce all their own essentials. About half the population works in services.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 7,950,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 47.3
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 20
 Industry: 30
 Services: 50
 Unemployment %: 8.0

EDUCATION

Primary and secondary education is compulsory and state provided. Primary education begins at age seven and lasts four years. Secondary education is divided into a five-year first cycle and a two-year second cycle. Most children at-

tend school, and literacy is near universal. Classes are large, and many students attend for half days. Secondary school comes in several varieties, depending on the student's plans for higher education. There are two universities and several technical colleges and arts schools. Distance education is available for students who live in remote areas.

Although Kazakh is the official state language, a 1997 law mandated that instruction be provided in both Kazakh and Russian in secondary and vocational schools and institutions of higher learning. Parents are allowed to choose the language of their children's instruction, and more and more schools are teaching in Kazakh. Some Muslim parents send their children to madrassas, where they learn about Islam. Most university courses are still conducted in Russian, despite the fact that 64 percent of higher education students are ethnic Kazakhs—many Russian speakers choose to go elsewhere for university—as the Kazakh language has not developed a sufficiently modern or technological vocabulary.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 98.4
 Male %: 99.1
 Female %: 97.7
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 13.5
 First Level: Primary Schools: 8,700
 Teachers: 60,509
 Students: 1,120,005
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 18.5
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 91.5
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: —
 Teachers: 176,083
 Students: 1,976,390
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 11.7
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 86.8
 Third Level: Institutions: 69
 Teachers: 37,602
 Students: 603,072
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 44.7
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 3.0

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Kazakhstan has long been home to the Russian space program, which is based at the Baikonur Cosmodrome in the central part of the country. From this base the Russians launched their first satellites, first astronauts (a man in 1961 and a woman in 1963), and space station. Russia now rents the Baikonur site from Kazakhstan and still uses it for the space program. Otherwise, basic technological infrastructure is antiquated; there are few telephone lines and Internet hosts for the population, and service is poor. Most people use cellular telephones instead of land-based lines.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 716
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: 199.8
 Patent Applications by Residents: 1,610

MEDIA

The press in Kazakhstan is fairly constrained, despite the fact that the constitution supposedly guarantees press freedom. As of 2004 the government was increasingly intimidating to the media, particularly to privately owned and opposition concerns. Journalists who insult the president or mention his private life risk going to jail. In early 2003 an opposition journalist, Sergey Duvanov, was convicted of raping a minor, but critics claimed that the trial was in fact an attempt to silence a media critic. The government controls radio, television, and most printing facilities. The president's daughter Dariga Nazarbayeva and her husband run the Khabar Agency, which controls several television channels, along with two major newspapers and three important radio stations.

Media

Daily Newspapers: —
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: 1,223
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets million: 3.9
 per 1,000: 240

CULTURE

Kazakhstan has been home to numerous writers and poets. Abai Kunanbaev transformed Kazakh into a written language in the 19th century, encouraged Kazakhs to preserve their native culture, and translated numerous Russian works into Kazakh. Fyodor Dostoevsky spent some years in Kazakhstan in the 1850s, where he became acquainted with the writer and artist Chokan Valikhanov, who recorded his experiences traveling in Central Asia and was the first person to transcribe the oral poetry of the nomadic bards, or *agin*. The modern poet Olzhas Suleimenov wrote antinuclear works toward the end of the Soviet era.

Kazakhstan has been renowned for its carpets for centuries. Carpet designs incorporate influences from China, Mongolia, and Russia and are covered with geometric and floral patterns in bright colors. The Scythian people lived on the steppes in ancient times, and their gold artifacts can be seen in Kazakhstan today.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: 1,129
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: 1,000,000

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Kazakhs traditionally told stories in long musical poems during nights around fires in nomadic camps. Singers called *agins* still travel the countryside performing from memory and improvising verses. They compete in events called *aitysy*, in which different poets spend days reciting stories; the winner may win a prize such as a horse. Kazakh people also enjoy listening to folk music played on bagpipes, stringed instruments called *dombira* and *gobiz*, and harps and horns made of wood. Mukan Tulebayev is a famous folk musician.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Kazakhs enjoy visiting one another to eat and drink; vodka is a popular beverage. They like to visit public baths where they can eat, drink, and submerge themselves in hot water. Almaty has some pleasant parks and museums. In the summer people like to go camping, mountain climbing, trekking, and fishing for carp or trout in rivers. Horseback riding is perennially popular among nomads. The town of Medeu near Almaty has one of the largest skating rinks in the world.

ETIQUETTE

Kazakhs value hospitality highly. They enjoy entertaining guests and providing ample food, and they either entertain or visit friends and relatives nearly every night of the week. A guest in a nomad's yurt will be seated next to the fire in the warmest and most comfortable place.

FAMILY LIFE

Kazakhs take genealogy very seriously, and many of them can list several generations of ancestors. The Kazakh population is divided into three large clans, and clan identification is one of the first pieces of information people learn about one another. Because of the housing shortage, many young couples must live with relatives during their

first years of marriage. Families typically live in fairly crowded conditions. Traditionally, the youngest son of a family is expected to care for his parents, and he and his wife will often live with or near them. A wife is expected to treat her in-laws with respect. Live-in grandmothers help with housework and children and are considered an important part of the social fabric. Most women in the cities work outside the home, many of them in very important positions. Rural women work with their husbands on the farms, and the children pitch in when they get big enough.

Kazakhs still practice the tradition of “wife stealing,” in which a man who wants to marry a woman will kidnap her—usually with her cooperation—after which their parents must formalize the marriage with a bride-price.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Traditional Kazakh clothes make great use of furs and animal skins and elaborate embroidery and beading. Until recently women wore elaborate gold headdresses called *saukele* when they married. Most Kazakhs now dress in typical Western clothes, usually dressing warmly against the harsh weather of the steppes.

SPORTS

Kazakhstan has several sports that were invented by nomads. One of the most dramatic is *kokbar*, a form of polo in which enormous teams of horsemen (up to 1,000 men) will try to drag a goat carcass into the opposing team’s goal. Girls and boys play a game called *kыз куу*, in which the girl races away from the boy and strikes at him with a whip when he gets too close; if she wins the race, she gets to whip him further, while if he wins, he gets to kiss her. Horsemen also play *kumis alu*, in which a rider tries to pick up a coin from the ground, and *audaryspak*, or wrestling on horseback. Kazakhs also wrestle on the ground in a sport similar to sumo. Some people enjoy falconry.

Kazakhs also play more conventional sports, such as soccer, basketball, gymnastics, volleyball, skating, cross-country skiing, and hockey. Aleksandr Parygin won the modern pentathlon at the 1996 Olympics.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1936** Kazakh (Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic, ASSR) achieves status as full republic of the Soviet Union.
- 1930s** More than one million in Kazakhstan die in Stalin’s campaign of forced collectivization. Deportees from other parts of Soviet Union are settled in the republic.

- 1953–64** “Virgin Lands” policy of Khrushchev brings more European settlers to cultivate former grazing lands.
- 1955** Baikonur launch site at Turatam for Soviet rockets is selected, and construction begins.
- 1986** Protests are sparked by forced resignation of local Communist Party secretary Dinmukhamed Kunayev and his replacement by a Russian bureaucrat, Gennadi Kolbin.
- 1989** Kazakhstan Supreme Soviet establishes Kazakh as official language of republic.
- 1990** Nursultan Nazarbayev becomes president.
- 1991** With the fall of Soviet Union, Kazakhstan achieves independence.
- 1992** Supreme Kenges (Kazakh legislature) ratifies START I Treaty.
- 1993** New constitution adopted. Kazakhstan ratifies Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.
- 1994** Pro-Nazarbayev forces win majority in Kenges. Vote of no confidence in government brings in an economic reformer, Akezhan Kazhegeldin, as prime minister. Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan agree to form Central Asian Union.
- 1995** Constitutional crisis occurs after Constitutional Court declares 1994 elections void, suspending parliament. Nazarbayev rules by decree, obtains referendum approval extending his term to 2000, and pushes through a new constitution giving himself greater powers and replacing Kenges with a new bicameral legislature. Last of the nuclear warheads in Kazakhstan are transferred to Russia.
- 1997** Kazhegeldin, compelled to resign following accusations of corruption and previous ties to the KGB, is replaced by Nurlan Balgymbaev, formerly head of the state oil company, Kazakhoil. Capital is moved from Almaty to Aqmola, which was renamed Astana.
- 1999** Nazarbayev wins 81.7 percent of the votes for presidency in an election whose conduct is denounced by Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.
- 2000** Kazakhstan adopts an economic reform plan for the next 10 years. Islamic militants encroach from Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, prompting Kazakhstan to increase security.
- 2001** The first major pipeline for transporting oil from the region to world markets connects the Tengiz oil field in western Kazakhstan to the Russian Black Sea port of Novorossiysk. Kazakhstan joins the Shanghai Co-

- operation Organization (SCO). Pope John Paul II visits. Nazarbayev and U.S. President Bush declare long-term partnership.
- 2002** Nazarbayev replaces his prime minister and jails opposition leaders.
- 2003** Private land ownership is made legal. The death penalty is abolished.
- 2004** Kazakhstan and China agree to construct an oil pipeline to the Chinese border. The Otan party wins a majority of seats in the parliamentary elections, which observers criticize as unfair.
- 2005** Kazakhstan's court orders the dissolution of the opposition party Democratic Choice.

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- Kazakhstan.** *Economic Reviews: Kazakhstan* (IMF, irreg.); *Statisticheskyy Yezbegodnik* (Statistical Yearbook)

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Kazakhstan Human Development Report 2001
http://www.undp.org/hdr2001/indicator/cty_f_KAZ.html

KENYA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Kenya

ABBREVIATION

KE

CAPITAL

Nairobi

HEAD OF STATE & HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

President Mwai Kibaki (from 2002)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Republic

POPULATION

33,829,590 (2005)

AREA

582,650 sq km (224,961 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Kikuyu, Luhya, Luo, Kalenjin, Kamba, Kisii, Meru

LANGUAGES

English, Kiswahili

RELIGIONS

Protestantism, Roman Catholicism, animism, Islam

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Kenyan shilling

NATIONAL FLAG

Black, red, and green horizontal stripes in descending order, separated by narrow white bands. In the center are a warrior's shield and crossed spears.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

The principal elements of the national coat of arms are two gold lions rampant holding two crossed spears; an oval shield with the colors of the national flag; a white cockerel holding an ax; and the national motto, *Harambee* (Let us pull together), at the bottom.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"O God of All Creation"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day), May 1 (Labor Day), June 1 (Madaraka [Self-Government] Day), October 10 (Moi Day), October 20 (Kenyatta Day), December 12 (National Day, Independence Day), December 25 (Christmas), December 26 (Boxing Day), various Christian festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

December 12, 1963

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

1963; amended 1979, 1983, 1986, 1991, 1992, 1997, and 2001

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Kenya lies astride the equator in eastern Africa between the Indian Ocean and Lake Victoria. Its total area of 582,650 sq km (224,961 sq mi) includes 13,393 sq km (5,171 sq mi) of Lake Turkana (Lake Rudolf) and Lake Victoria. The total length of its Indian Ocean coastline is 536 km (333 mi). It shares international land borders totaling 3,477 km (2,161 mi) with five countries: Sudan (232 km; 144 mi), Ethiopia (861 km; 535 mi), and Somalia to the north (682 km; 424 mi); Tanzania to the south (769 km; 478 mi); and Uganda to the west (933 km, 579 mi).

Nairobi, the capital, sits atop a vast plateau at the entrance to the Rift Valley. The other major urban cen-

ters are Mombasa, the country's main Indian Ocean port; Kisumu; Nakuru; and Eldoret.

Topographically, the country is divided into seven regions. Beyond the coastal strip the country rises in well-defined steps to a featureless plain known as Nyika. The inland plains give way to the Eastern Plateau region, which includes the game-rich lands of the Amboseli, Serengeti, and Aruba plains. The Rift Valley bisects the country near Nairobi. The remaining areas are the Northern Plains; the Kenya Highlands, also known as the White Highlands, which include Mount Kenya (5,199 m; 17,058 feet); and the Western Plateau region. The country's two largest rivers, the Tana and the Galana (also known as the Athi or Sabaki), flow into the Indian Ocean.

Kenya



Geography

Area sq km: 582,650; sq mi 224,961
 World Rank: 46th
 Land Boundaries, km: Ethiopia 861; Somalia 682; Sudan 232; Tanzania 769; Uganda 933
 Coastline, km: 536
 Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Indian Ocean 0
 Highest: Mount Kenya 5,199
 Land Use %
 Arable Land: 8.1
 Permanent Crops: 1.0
 Forest: 30.0
 Other: 60.9

Population of Principal Cities (1999)

Eldoret	167,016
Kisumu	322,734
Mombasa	665,018
Nairobi	2,143,254
Nakuru	219,366

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Despite being on the equator, Kenya has a varied climate, with seasons distinguished by the duration of rainfall rather than changes in temperature. In the Western Plateau and highlands, rain falls in one long season, while east of the Rift Valley, there are four distinct seasons: the long rains from March to May, the short rains from September to October, and two dry seasons in the intervening periods. Over 70 percent of the country is arid or semiarid, receiving less than 51 cm (20 in) of rain a year. The highlands have a cool, bracing climate with a mean annual maximum of 26.1°C (79°F) and a mean annual minimum of 10°C (50°F). The highest temperatures prevail in the Northern Plains, where the mean maximum is 34°C (93°F). The hottest months are January through March, while June and July are the coldest.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature: 50°F to 79°F
 Nairobi: 67°F
 Eastern Plateau: 57°F to 84°F
 Lower Plateau: 64°F to 93°F
 Coastal Areas: 70°F to 82°F
 Average Rainfall
 Coast and the Highlands: 40 in
 Western Plateau: 70 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Kenya has an extremely wide variety of flora and fauna, which are popular with visitors who come for safaris. The

northern plateau and the southern part of the country are dry and covered with shrubs and dry grasses that can survive with little water; plants include baobab trees, thorn bushes, and acacias. The highlands are wetter; plants there include bamboo, the groundsel tree, and giant lobelias. Coconut palms grow on the Indian Ocean coast. Kenya is home to many well-known large mammals, such as elephants, rhinoceroses, hippopotamuses, water buffaloes, giraffes, lions, leopards, and cheetahs; many of these animals are endangered, but the nation has established sanctuaries to protect them.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 33,829,590
 World Rank: 34th
 Density per sq km: 56.1
 % of annual growth (1999-2003): 2.1
 Male %: 50.2
 Female %: 49.8
 Urban %: 36.3
 Age Distribution %: 0-14: 42.5
 15-64: 55.2
 65 and over: 2.3
 Population 2025: 49,357,000
 Birth Rate per 1,000: 40.13
 Death Rate per 1,000: 14.65
 Rate of Natural Increase %: 2.5
 Total Fertility Rate: 4.96
 Expectation of Life (years): Males 48.87
 Females 47.09
 Marriage Rate per 1,000: —
 Divorce Rate per 1,000: —
 Average Size of Households: 6.2
 Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

No ethnic group is numerically dominant in Kenya. The largest group, the Kikuyu, constitutes about 22 percent of the population; the five largest ethnic groups—Kikuyu, Luhya (14 percent), Luo (13 percent), Kalenjin (12 percent), and Kamba (11 percent)—together constitute 72 percent of the population. Language is a primary factor in ethnic identity. Only about 1 percent of the population is of non-African extraction (Asian, European, and Arab). The principal ethnic minorities are Asians (descendants of Indian and Pakistani settlers) and Arabs. Because of the Asian community's closed nature and its prosperity through control of small-scale trade and retail outlets, it has consistently been the target of African hostility.

LANGUAGES

The official languages of Kenya are English and Swahili, with the latter declared the co-official language in 1974.

It is a Bantu language modified by contact with Arabic and incorporates words from Arabic, Hindi, Persian, and English. Seven dialects and three subdialects of Swahili are spoken in Kenya, but the preferred standard for spoken Swahili is Kiunguja, the dialect of Mombasa, commonly referred to as Kiswahili. Written Swahili uses a Latin alphabet. English is the language of big business, higher education, and government.

RELIGION

As of 2004 the vast majority of Kenyans were Christians (45 percent Protestant, 33 percent Catholic), with 10 percent practicing indigenous faiths and another 10 percent being Muslim. Numbers, however, fail to reflect the persistence and pervasiveness of indigenous and traditional beliefs, even among those professing Christianity or Islam. The Roman Catholic Church is organized in 12 dioceses under the archbishop of Nairobi. The Protestant churches are linked together by the National Christian Council of Kenya. Of the Kenyan Muslims, more than half are ethnic Somalis.

Religious Affiliations

Protestant	15,223,000
Roman Catholic	11,164,000
Muslim	3,383,000
Indigenous Beliefs	3,383,000
Other	677,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Africa's eastern coast underwent profound change near the end of the first millennium c.e. Bantu speakers migrated from the interior and settled along the coast from Kenya to South Africa. At the same time traders from India and the Middle East began calling and building settlements in the region known in Arabic as al-Zanj, or "the Blacks." The Swahili language and culture was born as a mix between Arabic and Bantu nations. The Kenyan town of Mombasa grew into an important city-state and trading center.

Kenya's contacts with the West began with an exploratory visit to East Africa in 1448 by Vasco da Gama, who initiated 200 years of Portuguese rule. The Portuguese showed no particular interest in colonization, and their presence was virtually eliminated after Fort Jesus, in Mombasa, fell to Omani forces in 1699. European influence was renewed in 1888 when the privately financed Imperial British East Africa Company was granted a royal charter to administer the territories of Uganda and Kenya, assigned to Britain under the Anglo-German Agreement of 1886. The British Crown took over the company

in 1895 and established the East Africa Protectorate under the charge of a commissioner.

Continuing resentment among the Kikuyu to European appropriation of land led to the emergence in 1952 of the secret society known as Mau Mau. As the Mau Mau movement spread that year, a state of emergency was declared. By the time the emergency was lifted in 1959, more than 79,000 Africans, including Jomo Kenyatta—the journalist and teacher turned revolutionary leader who would eventually become Kenya's first postindependence president—had been detained, and nearly 3,000 civilians had been killed.

Meanwhile, significant constitutional progress had been made in introducing black majority rule in the country. The Lyttleton Constitution of 1954, the Lennox-Boyd Constitution of 1957, and the MacLeod Constitution of 1960 brought the Kenyans to the verge of self-government. The final step toward independence was a constitutional conference in London in 1962, under which a national government was formed, incorporating representatives of all political parties. Power was transferred in 1963 to a largely pro-British elite, who have helped to preserve the chief legacies of British rule: the legal, administrative, and educational systems and the English language.

In June 1963 Kenyatta was appointed prime minister, and in December 1964 Kenya became an independent republic, with Kenyatta as its first president. His ruling party was the Kenya African National Union (KANU). Under Kenyatta's rule the country prospered economically, growing to become an important regional manufacturing and transportation hub, despite corruption in both the public and private sectors.

In 1966 emerged a socialist opposition group, the Kenya People's Union (KPU), under the leftist Ajuma Oginga Odinga. Fearing this opposition, Kenyatta used newly instituted security laws against KPU supporters, and in December 1966, in order to strengthen his parliamentary position, he merged the legislature into the single-chamber National Assembly. Nevertheless, the KPU won limited seats in that year's parliamentary elections.

Unrest was also fomented by intra-ethnic rivalries that led to the uneven government disbursement of lands as well as to Kenyans outside of the Kikuyu tribe being given lesser government positions. Conflict within KANU between Kikuyus and non-Kikuyus is believed to be the primary cause for the assassination in July 1969 of Tom Mboya, an opposition leader of the Luo clan. This led to the banning of the KPU prior to the 1970 elections and the solidifying of Kenyatta's power base. At this point the National Assembly was, to a great extent, under Kenyatta's private control. Corruption among those in power was criticized by the unofficial leader of the parliamentary opposition, Josiah Mwangi Kariuki, and was probably the cause for his assassination in March 1975.

President Kenyatta died in August 1978 and was replaced by Vice President Daniel arap Moi. In the November 1979 elections Moi was the only candidate. Odinga was allowed back into KANU, but his outspoken positions on Kenyatta's rule and corruption in the government disallowed his taking part in parliamentary elections and precipitated his expulsion from the party in early 1982. In June of that year the National Assembly declared KANU to be the only legal party.

An increase in press censorship and political detentions were the immediate causes of an attempted coup in August 1982 by the Kenyan air force. The University of Nairobi was closed, and Moi disbanded the air force; about 650 air force members were convicted of mutiny. Odinga was connected with the coup and put under house arrest.

In September 1983, with only 48 percent of the electorate in attendance, Moi was reelected unopposed for a second term. The country then entered a period of relative stability, with Moi attempting in 1984 to cut inefficiency and root out corruption in the government.

Following the mass arrests of so-called illegal aliens in March 1987 and the continued detention of dissidents, Kenya was accused of human rights violations by Amnesty International, and the police officers said to be responsible for brutality were dismissed. Elijah Mwangale, minister of foreign affairs, was forced out of office for not being strong enough in defending Kenya's record on human rights. Soon afterward it was announced that only members of KANU could vote. Former vice president (under Kenyatta) Oginga Odinga denounced the government and called for a multiparty system. In October riots among Muslims and student arrests led to a reclosing of the University of Nairobi. Anticipating the national elections in March 1988, Moi dissolved the National Assembly in February, and 10 political prisoners were released; one, Raila Odinga, son of the former vice president, was rearrested in August 1988. In February 1988 Moi dismissed the formality of a public election and was summarily reelected president.

Constitutional amendments in July 1988 made it possible for the president to dismiss senior judges. In addition, detention without trial was allowed to be increased to 14 days from a previous 24 hours. Opposition to Moi's one-party rule grew during 1990. At the beginning of the year a loose coalition of politicians, churchmen, lawyers, and human rights activists, citing the examples of Eastern Europe and growing prodemocracy activism in other African nations, called for political pluralism and accused the Moi government of repression, corruption, and election rigging. In the months that followed Moi allowed some public debate on the multiparty issue, but in June he announced that the debate was over and that the Kenyan people had unanimously backed KANU as the country's sole party. Security police cracked down on the opposition in July and suppressed the rioting that followed.

In 1991, as popular unrest and international criticism grew, a multiparty democracy was finally restored by constitutional amendment. Amid accusations of vote rigging and corruption, Moi won a fourth term as president in 1992 with 36.3 percent of the vote, ahead of Ken Matiba's 26 percent and Mwai Kibaki's 19.5 percent. KANU captured 100 of the 188 parliamentary seats up for grabs. In 1997, in the second election since the restoration of a multiparty democracy, KANU captured 107 of the 210 parliamentary seats available, and Moi secured a fifth term as president, winning 40.64 percent of the vote, compared to the 31.39 percent for his closest rival, Mwai Kibaki.

The Kenyan government was perpetually seen as corrupt, despite the government's attempts to fight corruption under the leadership of the parliament member and conservationist Richard Leakey; Leakey himself was accused of corruption in 2001. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) stopped lending money to Kenya in 2001, claiming corruption to be too profound. In 2002 the Kenyan people finally had a chance to remove the KANU party from the presidency, and they did so with a vengeance, electing the opposition candidate Mwai Kibaki in a landslide victory over the KANU candidate Uhuru Kenyatta, son of Jomo Kenyatta. The government immediately set about prosecuting those guilty of the worst corruption, though they promised Moi immunity. The IMF resumed lending in 2003. Kenya continued to be troubled by ethnic violence and the occasional terrorist bomb, and in the summer of 2004 the country suffered a severe famine caused by crop failures and drought. That year the government completed a draft of a new constitution that would have weakened the president and created a vice president, but parliament failed to enact the legislation on time.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1963–78	Jomo Kenyatta
1978–2002	Daniel arap Moi
2002–	Mwai Kibaki

CONSTITUTION

The basis of the government of Kenya is the constitution of 1963, which has been amended several times, most recently in 2001. The amendment of 1964, called the Republican Constitution, established a republican form of government with a strong executive and a strong central government. There are 13 sections of the constitution, known as the Bill of Rights, that protect the fundamental rights and freedoms of the individual, including property rights. The National Assembly is the supreme state organ in theory, as the president has no powers of veto.

The president is the head of state, the head of government (as prime minister), and commander in chief of the armed forces. He must command a majority vote in the National Assembly, and if he loses a vote of confidence, he must either resign or dissolve the assembly and call for new elections within 90 days. The president is elected by popular vote in general elections for a term of five years. The winning candidate must receive at least 25 percent of the votes in five of Kenya's seven provinces and one area. He also must be an elected member of the National Assembly. The legal voting age in Kenya is 18.

Following the failed coup in 1982, Kenya became a *de jure* one-party state. The constitution was amended in December 1991 to permit the reestablishment of a multi-party state. In September 1997 the constitution was again amended, granting fair and equal access to the media for all political parties. An amendment written in 2004 would have created a prime minister and decreased the president's power, but it was not enacted.

PARLIAMENT

The unicameral National Assembly, which sits in Nairobi, consists of 224 members serving five-year terms, including 210 directly elected representatives, 12 members nominated by the president but selected by the parties in proportion to their parliamentary vote totals, and two *ex-officio* members (the attorney general and the speaker).

POLITICAL PARTIES

Most of the country's political parties are ethnic or regionally based with vaguely defined agendas. The ruling party for Kenya's first 40 years was the KANU, which still holds over one-quarter of the seats in parliament. Its support lies primarily with the Kalenjin ethnic groups, though Moi has attempted to be inclusive of other groups. The new ruling coalition party is the National Rainbow Coalition. The only other party with significant numbers of parliamentary seats is the Forum for the Restoration of Democracy–People, which has a large Luo ethnic base.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Kenya is divided for administrative purposes into seven provinces and one area. The provinces are Coast, North-eastern, Eastern, Central, Rift Valley, Nyanza, and Western; the area is Nairobi. Provinces are governed by provincial commissioners who are directly responsible to the president. The next level is the district; there are 69 districts, each headed by a presidentially appointed commissioner. Each district contains a varying number of divisions, each headed by a district officer. In the smallest

units, called locations or sublocations, the government is represented by chiefs or subchiefs.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The main sources of Kenyan jurisprudence are English common law, African customary law, legislative acts of the British Parliament before independence and of the National Assembly after independence, and judicial precedent, as reported in *East African Law Reports*. The Kenya Court of Appeals is the final court of appeal for all civil and criminal cases. The High Court includes the chief justice and at least 30 other High Court judges. The subordinate district magistrate's courts are divided into three classes. At the third-class level are the six *qadi* courts, which have jurisdiction over Muslims in cases relating to personal status. At the village level, bodies of elders settle disputes related to African traditional law. Kenya retains the death penalty for violent crimes and treason.

HUMAN RIGHTS

In terms of civil and political rights, Kenya is ranked as a partially free country. The government's overall human rights record is generally poor, though there have been improvements, especially in the latter part of the 1990s, following allegations by Amnesty International of the systematic torture of criminal suspects and opposition political activists. The new administration is devoted to amending some of the nation's human rights problems.

Individual privacy rights are virtually nonexistent, and freedom of assembly is restricted. Freedom of speech and press are accepted in principle but are restricted under various sections of the penal code, and police have at times harassed, beaten, and arrested journalists who were blatantly critical of the government and its policies. Although the trade union movement is relatively free, strikes are always illegal, and trade unions may be deregistered if they attempt to pursue a strike against government advice. Police and security forces have abused civilians with torture, illegal imprisonment, and execution. Child labor, child prostitution, violence against women, and female genital mutilation are all problems.

FOREIGN POLICY

Despite wars, ethnic unrest, and political chaos in neighboring Somalia, Sudan, and Ethiopia, Kenya continued to maintain relatively cordial, if at times tense, relations with these nations throughout the 1990s. In 1997 Kenya protested to the Ethiopian government following a clash between the countries' security forces that left 16 Kenyans dead. The crisis was resolved when the two coun-

tries agreed to reinforce border security to prevent cattle rustling and illegal arms shipments. The border between Kenya and Sudan continued to be an issue throughout the 1990s, but relations remain good because of Kenya's mediation efforts to end the fighting between Sudan's Islamic government and the Christian and animist rebels in southern Sudan. In 2005 Kenya was host to the commission signing the Sudan North-South Comprehensive Peace Accord.

Relations with Uganda and Tanzania have greatly improved with the movement to revive the defunct East African Economic Community, consisting of Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania.

In an effort to repair its tarnished human rights reputation, Kenya finally cooperated with international authorities in 1996 in the arrest of Rwandan Hutu rebels suspected of genocide in the civil war in that country. Despite strong international condemnation, the Moi government had refused to cooperate with the international tribunal investigating war crimes in Rwanda or hand over suspects who had fled to Kenya.

While Kenya has traditionally enjoyed good relations with Western nations, strains began to show in those relationships in the 1990s, with Western donors suspending aid because of Kenya's refusal to follow IMF and World Bank restructuring programs and to act against internal corruption. Moi frequently blamed Western nations for the political and economic instability that characterized his last decade in office. By the late 1990s Kenya was again back in the good graces of the IMF and World Bank, and aid once again began to flow to the country; international support improved further with the election of the opposition leader Mwai Kibaki in 2002, who pledged to root out corruption. Relations with the United States became strained in 1999 when the Kenyan High Court refused to extradite a suspect accused in the bombing of the U.S. embassy in Nairobi a year earlier, which left 254 people dead—mostly Kenyans—and more than 5,000 injured. Nevertheless, the U.S. has cordial relations with Kenya; thousands of U.S. citizens visit or live in Kenya every year; the majority of these Americans are missionaries or volunteers.

Also in 1999 Turkish secret police operating in Kenya captured the leader of the Kurdistan Workers' Party, Abdullah Öcalan, in a raid apparently planned in conjunction with Kenyan forces. Relations with Greece became strained as a result, since Öcalan had been hiding in the Greek embassy in Nairobi, and Kurdish activists occupied several Kenyan diplomatic missions in Europe in protest.

DEFENSE

The president is the commander in chief of the Kenyan Defense Forces. The minister of defense presides over

the Defense Council, while the Defense Headquarters is headed by the chief of defense staff, who is also commander of the army. The right to declare war is vested in the National Assembly. There is no draft, and manpower is provided by voluntary enlistment. Kenya has a small national defense force consisting of an army, an air force, and a navy. The military exerts little influence on national affairs.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	29,100
Military Manpower Availability:	7,303,153
Military Expenditures \$million:	177.1
as % of GDP:	1.3
as % of central government expenditures:	—
Arms Imports \$million:	—
Arms Exports \$million:	—

ECONOMY

Kenya has a per capita income of \$1,100 and remains one of the world's low-income countries; half its population lives in poverty. Relative to the rest of Africa, Kenya has a reasonably diversified economy, with agriculture contributing about 19 percent of gross domestic product (GDP), industry 19 percent, and services 62 percent. Unemployment remained endemic through the 1990s, with fully 40 percent of the workforce jobless in 2001.

After independence Kenya, with its free market economy, was considered one of the most prosperous nations in Africa, promoting strong growth through public investment and incentives for both local and international private investment. Growth rates above 6 percent were common. However, between 1974 and 1990 the country's economic performance began a steep decline, as the government reversed course and launched a massive intrusion into the private sector.

From 1991 to 1993 the country experienced its worst economic performance since independence. GDP growth stagnated, and inflation reached 100 percent per year. The budget deficit was over 10 percent of GDP, and government corruption took its toll on the private sector. Not only did foreign investment dry up, but international aid donors, disgusted with the government's failure to reform, suspended aid.

Since 1993 the government has implemented a program of economic liberalization and reform, including the removal of price controls and import-licensing restrictions. Exchange and interest rates are now fully determined by market forces. After years of uneasy relations with the World Bank and IMF, the end of the 1990s saw a renewal of government cooperation and a reversal of the decline, with growth rates topping 4 percent and inflation falling to under 3 percent annually by 1998. By then

the government had managed to meet crucial economic benchmarks, especially the budget deficit target of 1.7 percent of GDP.

Long-term obstacles to development include power and electricity shortages, the government's continued interference in the private sector, corruption, and the relatively high population growth rate. One promising sign is the revival of the East African Economic Community. By 1999 Kenyan companies were playing a key role in privatization in Uganda and Tanzania.

Severe drought in 1999 and 2000 caused water and energy rationing and reduced agricultural sector productivity. A new economic team was put in place in 1999 to revitalize the reform effort, strengthen the civil service, and curb corruption. The IMF and World Bank renewed their support to Kenya in mid-2000, but a number of setbacks to the economic reform program in late 2000 renewed donor and private-sector concern about the government's commitment to sound governance. Growth continued to lag in the early 2000s, as the IMF once again cut off loans to the nation because of governmental corruption. The election of the new government in 2002 brought about slight improvements; the IMF resumed loans, and GDP grew 1.7 percent in 2003. A famine in 2004, however, did nothing to help the economy and forced the government to ask for international assistance. Tourism has slackened owing to fears of terrorism.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 34.68
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 1,100
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 1.0
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: –1.1
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 19.2
 Industry: 18.5
 Services: 62.3
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 72
 Government Consumption: 19
 Gross Domestic Investment: 14.7
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 2.589
 Imports: 4.19
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 2.0
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 37.2

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
136.8	150.5	159.1	162.2	178.1

Finance

National Currency: Kenyan Shilling (KES)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = KES 80.495
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 194
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 26.46
 Total External Debt \$billion: 6.792
 Debt Service Ratio %: 14.45

Balance of Payments \$million: –459.2
 International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 1.46
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
 9.0

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 483.5
 per capita \$: 15.20
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 81.74

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: 1 July–30 June
 Revenues \$billion: 2.89
 Expenditures \$billion: 3.443
 Budget Deficit \$million: 553
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: 22.8

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 19.2
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 0.6
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 0.28
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 1.74
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 31.0
 Total Farmland % of land area: 8.1
 Livestock: Cattle million: 11.5
 Chickens million: 28
 Pigs 000: 332
 Sheep million: 7.7
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 22.16
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 145.3

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 1.73
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 2.6

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 0.548
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million:
 2.93
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 94
 Net Energy Imports % of use: 16.0
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 0.934
 Production kW-hr billion: 4.03
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 3.98
 Coal Reserves tons billion: —
 Production tons million: —
 Consumption tons 000: 70
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
 Production cubic feet billion: —
 Consumption cubic feet billion: —
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
 Production barrels 000 per day: —
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 57
 Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 4.19
 Exports \$billion: 2.589
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 6.9
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 2.8
 Balance of Trade \$million: –459.2

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
United Arab Emirates %	13.3	—
Saudi Arabia %	9.7	—
South Africa %	8.6	—
United Kingdom %	7.4	11.7
China %	6.4	—
United States %	5.2	8.8
India %	5.1	—
Japan %	4.9	—
Germany %	4.2	—
Uganda %	—	19.3
Netherlands %	—	7.9
Pakistan %	—	5.1
Egypt %	—	4.3
Tanzania %	—	4.0

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 63,942
 Paved %: 12.1
 Automobiles: 255,400
 Trucks and Buses: 263,700
 Railroad: Track Length km: 2,778
 Passenger-km million: 166
 Freight-km billion: 1.6
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 3
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 7.08
 Airports: 221
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 3.94
 Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 841
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 536
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 183

Communications

Telephones 000: 328.4
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.07
 Cellular Telephones million: 1.59
 Personal Computers 000: 204
 Internet Hosts per million people: 246
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 12

ENVIRONMENT

Kenya faces a multitude of environmental concerns, many of them stemming from its population growth rate and urbanization. There are few environmental regulations, and enforcement of the few laws is virtually nonexistent. One of the chief concerns is the deterioration of the freshwater supply, which is polluted from urban and industrial waste. Water quality is also decreasing because of the uncontrolled use of pesticides and fertilizers. Soil erosion, desertification, and deforestation are major problems. Lake Victoria has become infested with water hyacinth, which have drastically changed environmental conditions and limited access to the lake's natural resources. The poaching of endangered species has caused populations of some animals to continue to drop, despite laws protecting them. Kenya is party to several major international conventions to protect the environment, including treaties on biodiversity, desertification, endangered species, the Law of the Sea, marine dumping, whaling, and ozone layer protection as well as the Nuclear Test Ban accord.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 30.0
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: –93
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 13
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 53,028
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 0.31

LIVING CONDITIONS

Living conditions in cities have deteriorated in recent years. Nairobi is a cosmopolitan city with many modern amenities, but it also suffers from terrible crime, and people have become hesitant to venture out at night for fear of muggings. Housing has become very crowded as more people move into the city. Most people live in small apartments or haphazardly constructed shelters. There is electricity but not necessarily running water. The wealthiest Kenyans live in large houses called villas; Kenya's rural pastoralists, meanwhile, still live in traditional houses and produce all their own food. The Masai have started settling down and farming, as land for grazing their cattle has become scarce. Women must collect firewood and water daily. In the country, huts are made of earthen bricks or mud with thatched roofs and dirt or concrete floors; they are lit with oil lamps. Electricity is scarce. The village market is often the main social gathering area. Traffic everywhere is terrible, and buses are dangerous, in terms of both accidents and robberies.

HEALTH

Kenya's government provides free health care to all citizens at government clinics available throughout the coun-

try; patients must pay for their own drugs and bandages, however. There are also private, church-run and volunteer clinics and hospitals. The best hospital is Kenyatta National Hospital, which serves as a teaching hospital for the medical school. Doctors and nurses are underpaid and overworked, and there are few supplies. There is also a Flying Doctor service for emergency cases in remote areas. Most Kenyans see doctors rarely and instead treat their ailments with herbal remedies. Most babies are delivered by midwives.

HIV and AIDS have become a terrible problem in Kenya. In 2004, 6.7 percent of the population was infected with HIV. Other common illnesses include malaria, typhoid fever, cholera, yellow fever, hepatitis, meningococcal meningitis, and schistosomiasis.

Health

Number of Physicians: 3,616
 Number of Dentists: 603
 Number of Nurses: 24,679
 Number of Pharmacists: 1,370
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 13.2
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 61.47
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 1,000
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 4.9
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 19
 HIV Infected % of adults: 6.7
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 73
 Measles: 72
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 48
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 62

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Many Kenyans do not have enough to eat, and malnutrition is a serious problem. Kenyan cuisine is basic, consisting of a starch such as boiled maize meal (called *ugali*), rice, or potatoes, supplemented with a sauce made of beans or meat and perhaps flavored with curry. Goat is a common meat, and goat shish kebabs are commonly served to guests. People eat fish on the coast. Fruits are widely available, including bananas, papayas, custard apples, mangoes, and passion fruit. Tea, or *chai*, is ubiquitous, usually served mixed with milk, sugar, and ginger. People also like to drink beer.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 33.3
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 1,960
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 114.4
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg:
 85.1

STATUS OF WOMEN

While the constitution offers equal rights and freedoms to men and women, the country has few specific prohibitions against sex discrimination. Despite some gains, women remain vastly underrepresented in both business and politics, mainly because of traditional views of the female role as subservient to the male's. Women are seriously underrepresented at decision-making levels in the government, with only eight female members of parliament (four elected, four nominated) in the 1997 National Assembly. The Women's Political Caucus, formed in 1997, continues to lobby over women's issues. A parliamentary proposal to reserve up to one-third of all National Assembly seats for women was overwhelmingly defeated in 1997.

The constitution continues to discriminate against women by allowing the transfer of citizenship through the male bloodline only. Monthly average income for working women is 37 percent below that of men, and fewer than 5 percent of land titles are in women's names. Men outnumber women by a 2 to 1 ratio in higher educational institutions, and 70 percent of illiterate persons in the country are women. Female genital mutilation is still widespread, despite a law banning it in children. Men can still have more than one wife. Domestic violence is common, as is prostitution of both children and adults.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 7
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 0.99
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 38.5

WORK

Most Kenyans work as subsistence farmers and herders, raising the food they need to feed their own families. Some 75 percent of workers are employed in agriculture; some of them work on large-scale farms producing cash crops such as coffee and tea. Subsistence farmers sell surplus vegetables and other products when they can. The amount of arable land is decreasing, as the population is growing rapidly, putting intense pressure on the land and making it increasingly difficult for farmers to make ends meet. The remainder of the workforce is mostly employed in tourism and industry; many of these workers are farmers who could not support their families and so moved to the cities to find paying work. Many people make crafts and sell them in the markets. Child labor occurs but is becoming less common as people value education more.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 11,400,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 46.2
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 75
 Other: 25
 Unemployment %: 40

EDUCATION

The government-run education system consists of eight years of primary school, four of secondary school, and four years of university. Primary school education, which begins at age six, is compulsory and provided free of charge. However, free primary schooling was introduced abruptly by the Kibaki administration, and as a result there have not been enough schools and teachers to support the school-age population. Families must supply their own books and uniforms, which puts financial pressure on many parents. Children and communities all help building and maintaining school buildings. Students must pass a difficult examination at the end of primary school in order to continue their education. About 67 percent of primary-school-age children are enrolled in classes; that rate falls to less than 25 percent in the secondary-school years. The country has seven universities, four state universities and three under private charter. The University of Nairobi is considered one of the best institutions of higher learning in Africa and has a renowned school of veterinary medicine. About 15 percent of the country's adult population is considered to be illiterate.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 85.1
 Male %: 90.6
 Female %: 79.7
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 8.3
 First Level: Primary Schools: 15,804
 Teachers: 166,758
 Students: 5,590,143
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 33.5
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 66.5
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 2,639
 Teachers: 48,019
 Students: 1,362,131
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 26.1
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 24.5
 Third Level: Institutions: 14
 Teachers: —
 Students: 95,104
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 2.9
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 7.0

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Kenya's Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology has set ambitious goals for the improvement of science

education in Kenya. In particular, it wants to develop a comprehensive system of technical training by the year 2010. In the meantime, Kenya is not very technologically advanced. Electrical supply is uneven, the telephone system is unreliable, and in 2002 only 400,000 people were using the Internet.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: 22.6
 Patent Applications by Residents: 28

MEDIA

Kenya has a thriving media industry, especially by African standards. There is no official censorship, though all newspapers and magazines are required by law to register and secure a publishing license. The Kibaki administration promised to liberalize the media, but so far that has not happened, and in 2003 the government cracked down on "alternative" newspapers. Two publications, the *Nation* and the *Standard*, dominate the print media and also run broadcasting enterprises. Kenya also has one of the largest book-publishing industries in Africa.

The government maintains a virtual monopoly over the electronic broadcast media. It controls the Kenya Broadcasting Corporation, which operates the main radio stations and six broadcast television and cable television stations and networks in the country. Concerns friendly to the government control the two other television broadcast outlets, Kenya Television Network and Stellavision. The BBC, Voice of America, and Radio France Internationale all broadcast within Kenya.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 4
 Total Circulation 000: 250
 Circulation per 1,000: 8.3
 Books Published: —
 Periodicals: 10
 Radio Receivers million: 7.5
 per 1,000: 221
 Television sets 000: 744
 per 1,000: 22

CULTURE

Kenyans love music and dance. Traditional songs tell stories about tribal history or celebrate weddings and other occasions. Native instruments include the *nyatiti*, a kind of harp, and the *udi*, similar to an Indian sitar. Dancers and musicians tie cans full of beans to their ankles to

make a rattling noise. Kenyans of all ages enjoy dancing and enacting tribal dramas, and schools sponsor dramatic competitions in which members of different tribes enact their own cultural performances. Kenyan craftsmen make carvings of ebony or soapstone, fashion jewelry out of gold, brass, shells, and beads, and weave baskets and rugs of sisal. Weavers decorate cloth with batik patterns. Famous Kenyan authors include Ngugi Wa Thiong'o, Meja Mwangi, and Ali Mazrui.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 14
 Volumes: 511,000
 Registered borrowers: 97,387
 Museums Number: 6
 Annual Attendance: 531,000
 Cinema Gross Receipts national currency 000: 100
 Number of Cinemas: 20
 Seating Capacity: 6,600
 Annual Attendance: 900,000

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Folktales are still popular in Kenya, especially in rural areas, where tribal elders tell stories around the fire at night. People also like traditional proverbs. Each ethnic group has its own folk tales and myths. Masai and Kikuyu legends often feature stories about cattle, which they believe were given to them by a god. Stories about tricksters, such as the hare or the tortoise, are popular. Ogres often appear as villains.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Kenyans love to go to movies. In rural areas, there are mobile movie theatres that travel around bringing movies to the people. They also enjoy going out to dance and listen to music, especially to the popular *benga* style. Children like playing traditional games such as *kodi*, similar to jacks, and *putano*, similar to marbles. Adults play checkers and cards.

Kenya offers a wealth of outdoor recreational possibilities, including swimming, scuba diving, windsurfing, game fishing, and white-water rafting. Hiking and trekking are extremely popular with tourists, as are safaris to the nation's game preserves.

ETIQUETTE

Etiquette varies by tribe and ethnic group, but observing standards of behavior typical of the United Kingdom is usually acceptable for anyone. People are usually punc-

tual for meetings, both business and social. Most people are quite friendly and appreciate courtesies such as smiles and handshakes. It is considered rude to chew with one's mouth open.

FAMILY LIFE

For Kenyans, tribe is the most important facet of identity. There are more than 70 tribes in Kenya, and though ethnic distinctions are becoming blurred, most Kenyans still want to know first and foremost which tribe someone belongs to. People will sacrifice individual desires for the good of the group, and tribes always take care of their sick and elderly members.

Rural people often live in small villages of relatives. Men may have several wives, each of whom may have four to six children. Children live with their mothers and sometimes their fathers; girls remain at home until they marry, but older boys often go to live in separate houses with their grandparents. Women do most of the housework, building houses, farming, collecting water and wood, and caring for children. AIDS has created a crisis in Kenyan families. Children have become orphaned, and many families have lost the young, strong adults to whom they looked for support.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

People in the countryside typically still wear traditional garments, which are often made of colorfully woven and dyed cloth. Ethnic groups and tribes each have their own styles. Western attire has become more common in the cities, but there has been a movement back to traditional African styles. In 2004 the Kenyan government announced the creation of a new national dress, based on traditional colorful African robes. This was part of a movement to rid the nation of vestiges of colonialism, which remained in the requirement that members of parliament dress in suits and ties.

SPORTS

Kenya has had a national sports program since 1951, when it formed the Amateur Athletic Association. Since then, schools and villages have been facilitating athletic events, and as a result Kenya has produced some internationally recognized athletes. It is especially known for its distance runners; some of the most famous runners include Mike Boit, Paul Ereng Kipchoge Keino, Peter Koech, and Henry Rono. Kenyan track and field athletes won eight medals at the 1996 Olympics. Soccer is also extremely popular; the Harambee Stars are the national soccer team. Other common sports are volleyball, field

hockey, cricket, and golf. The annual Safari Rally is one of the most difficult automobile races in the world.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1963** In pre-independence elections, the leader of the ethnic Luo- and Kikuyu-backed KANU, Jomo Kenyatta, is elected prime minister under the constitutional monarchy.
Kenya achieves independence from Great Britain.
- 1964** Kenya declares itself a republic. Kenyatta assumes the presidency.
- 1965** Kenyatta initiates a program of land reform.
- 1966** Vice President Oginga Odinga resigns from the government and forms the KPU, an opposition party drawing ethnic Luo support, which the House of Representatives effectively keeps out of office.
- 1969** Cabinet member Tom Mboya is assassinated, further eroding Luo support for Kenyatta's government.
The KPU is banned and its leaders detained.
- 1974** Kenyatta is elected unopposed to a third term as president.
- 1978** Kenyatta dies. Vice President Daniel arap Moi, an ethnic Kalenjin, becomes president.
- 1982** Moi alters the constitution to illegalize all parties but KANU.
Air force personnel attempt a coup that proves unsuccessful.
Odinga is arrested under suspicion of instigating the coup.
- 1983** Moi accuses Charles Njono, Kenya's minister of constitutional affairs, of conspiring with foreign agencies to supplant Moi and compels Njono to resign his post.
Moi is elected to a second term as president.
- 1986** The government arrests numerous members of parliament for allegedly cooperating with the nascent left-wing opposition group, Mwakenya.
The constitution is amended to eliminate voters' right to a secret ballot.
- 1988** Moi dissolves the National Assembly in February.
In March, Moi is reelected to a third term as president amid cries of foul play.
- 1991** Kenya restores multiparty democracy by constitutional amendment.
- 1992** In multiparty elections Moi wins fourth term as president.
More than 2,000 people are killed in ethnic tribal clashes in western Kenya. All political rallies are outlawed "to quell ethnic unrest," according to the government.
- 1993** The Central Organization of Trade Unions stages a general strike.
The British Commonwealth gives the 1992 Kenyan general election a clean bill of health.
- 1994** Oginga Odinga, one of Moi's chief rivals for power and the chairman of FORD, dies of natural causes.
- 1995** Kenya refuses to cooperate with an international tribunal investigating genocide in Rwanda.
Roman Catholic bishops in Kenya publish a pastoral letter critical of government's human rights record.
- 1996** At their first regional meeting, presidents Moi, Yoweri Museveni of Uganda, and Benjamin Mkapa of Tanzania formally inaugurate the Permanent Tripartite Commission for East African Cooperation.
Succumbing to international pressure, Kenya arrests Hutu rebels charged with genocide in Rwanda.
- 1997** Moi wins another term with a plurality of the vote in multiparty elections.
Amnesty International publishes a report condemning widespread use of torture by Kenyan authorities.
- 1998** A car bomb explodes at the U.S. embassy in downtown Nairobi, killing 254 people and injuring 5,000 others.
The 270,000-strong Kenyan National Union of Teachers organizes an unsuccessful strike against the Moi government to demand back pay.
- 1999** Kenya refuses to extradite to the United States a Pakistani suspected of involvement in the U.S. embassy bombing. Turkish agents capture Kurdish leader Abdullah Öcalan in Nairobi, triggering worldwide protests against Kenya and occupation of Kenyan diplomatic missions in Europe by Kurdish activists.
- 1999** Richard Leakey is appointed head of anticorruption effort.
- 2001** Circumcision of girls under 17 is banned. Leakey is accused of abusing power. Ethnic violence breaks out in Nairobi.
- 2002** The British Ministry of Defense compensates Masai and Samburu tribespeople injured by British army explosives. An Israeli-owned hotel in Mombasa is blown up by a car bomb. Mwai Kibaki wins the presidential election.
- 2003** The government appoints John Githongo anticorruption head. The IMF resumes lending money to Kenya because of its anticorruption efforts.

- 2004 Parliament misses the deadline to approve a new constitution. A famine strikes rural Kenyans. Female ecologist Wangari Maathai wins the Nobel Peace Prize.
- 2005 Violence breaks out over land and water rights.

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OFFICIAL PUBLICATIONS

- Kenya. *Economic Survey* (annual); *Population Census 1989*; *Statistical Abstract* (annual)

CONTACT INFORMATION

Embassy of Kenya
2249 R Street NW
Washington, DC. 20008
Phone: (202) 387-6101 Fax: (202) 462-3829

INTERNET RESOURCES

- Central Bank of Kenya
<http://www.centralbank.go.ke/index.asp>

KIRIBATI

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Kiribati (formerly the Gilbert Islands)

ABBREVIATION

KI

CAPITAL

South Tarawa

HEAD OF STATE & HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

President Anote Tong (from 2003)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Republic

POPULATION

103,092 (2005)

AREA

811 sq km (313 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Micronesian

LANGUAGES

English (official), I-Kiribati

RELIGIONS

Protestantism, Roman Catholicism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Australian dollar

NATIONAL FLAG

On a red background, a frigate bird in flight above a sun rising over alternating wavy lines of blue and white

NATIONAL EMBLEM

The motif of the national flag on a shield; at the bottom, in black lettering on a gold and red scroll, is the motto *Te mauri te raoi ao te tabomoa* (Health, peace, and prosperity).

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Stand Up, Kiribati”

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year’s Day), July 12 (Independence Day), August 4 (Youth Day), Christmas, Boxing Day, Good Friday, Easter Monday, Queen’s Birthday, Prince of Wales’s Birthday, other Christian holidays

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

July 12, 1979

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

July 12, 1979

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Kiribati is made up of three island groups of 32 low atolls and Banaba, or Ocean Island, a raised atoll to the west. The total land area is 811 sq km (313 sq mi). The three island groups are dispersed over an area of 3 million sq km (1.1 million sq mi) in the mid-Pacific: the Gilbert Islands to the west, the Phoenix Islands along the equator, and the Line Islands to the north and south of the equator. The country extends 3,870 km (2,400 mi) from east to west and 2,050 km (1,275 mi) from north to south. The total coastline is 1,143 km (778 mi).

Coastline, km: 1,143

Elevation Extremes meters:

Lowest: Pacific Ocean 0

Highest: 81

Land Use %

Arable Land: 2.7

Permanent Crops: 50.7

Forest: 38.4

Other: 8.2

Population of Principal Cities (2000)

Bairiki	36,717
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Geography

Area sq km: 811; sq mi 313

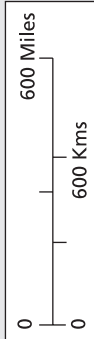
World Rank: 170th

Land Boundaries, km: 0

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Because Kiribati lies wholly within the tropics, the climate is uniformly hot and humid, as tempered by con-

Kiribati



PACIFIC OCEAN

KIRIBATI (GILBERT IS.)

PHOENIX IS.

TUVALU

Cook Islands (N.Z.)

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tinuous breezes from the sea. There are no true seasonal changes, in the conventional sense of the term. Rather, the year is divided into periods of greater or lesser rainfall, with a season of northwesterly trade winds from March to October and a season of gales and rains from October to March. Average annual rainfall varies from 3,000 mm (118 in) in the northern islands to 1,500 mm (59 in) at Tarawa and 700 mm (28 in) in the southern Line Islands. Daytime temperatures vary between 28°C (79°F) and 32°C (90°F). Drought conditions are common on many atolls.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature: 79°F to 90°F
Average Rainfall
Northern Islands: 118 in
Tarawa: 59 in
Line Islands: 28 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Kiribati cannot support much vegetation because it lacks soil and fresh water. There are many coconut trees planted by humans; native plants include mangroves, scrub bushes, pandanus, ferns, and epiphytes. On the islands themselves, the only animals are Polynesian rats, sea birds, and lizards. Christmas Island is home to many kinds of birds, including petrels, frigate birds, noddies, and the Christmas Island warbler, which is found nowhere else in the world. The oceans, on the other hand, are home to stunningly beautiful coral reefs, reef fishes, and other forms of aquatic plants and animals. Fish species include grouper, sailfish, tuna, bonefish, trevally, wahoo, shark, and milkfish. There are nature reserves on Starbuck Island, Malden Island, and Phoenix Island. The rise in sea levels is causing fresh water on the islands to become salty, which endangers all terrestrial plant and animal life.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 103,092
World Rank: 178th
Density per sq km: 132.0
% of annual growth (1999-2003): 2.3
Male %: 49.7
Female %: 50.3
Urban %: 39.5
Age Distribution %: 0-14: 38.9
15-64: 57.8
65 and over: 3.3
Population 2025: 158,047
Birth Rate per 1,000: 30.86
Death Rate per 1,000: 8.37

Rate of Natural Increase %: 2.2
Total Fertility Rate: 4.2
Expectation of Life (years): Males 58.71
Females 64.86
Marriage Rate per 1,000: —
Divorce Rate per 1,000: —
Average Size of Households: 6.6
Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

The population is overwhelmingly Micronesian. In appearance residents bear a striking resemblance to Indonesians. There is some evidence of intermingling with Polynesians, who constitute the largest minority group. A scattering of Europeans and Chinese complete the ethnic mosaic.

LANGUAGES

English is the official language, but the language of the people is I-Kiribati (formerly Gilbertese), a Micronesian language derived from the Austronesian linguistic family. The local alphabet has only 13 letters; “ti” functions as the letter “s,” such that the country’s name is pronounced “kee-ree-bahs.”

RELIGIONS

Nearly 94 percent of Kiribatians are Christians, of whom 52 percent are Roman Catholic and 40 percent are Protestants. The evangelization of the Northern Gilbert Islands began in 1856 through the efforts of Hiram Bingham, who opened the first American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions station. Catholics are under the Diocese of Tarawa, Nauru, and Funafuti.

Religious Affiliations

Roman Catholic	53,600
Protestant	41,200
Other	8,200

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

There is growing archaeological and linguistic evidence that the original inhabitants of Kiribati were present on the islands more than 3,000 years ago. The origin of these migrants was Southeast Asia. More recent immigration came from Samoa 500 to 600 years ago.

The European discovery of the islands occurred between 1764 and 1824 by the British navy. In 1892 they became a British protectorate under the name Gilbert and Ellice Islands, and they remained so until becoming a col-

ony in 1915. They were under the jurisdiction of the British high commissioner for the western Pacific until 1972, when they were placed under a governor directly appointed from London. In 1978 the Ellice Islands became the independent nation of Tuvalu. Despite demands by the people of Ocean Island (Banaba) for separation and independence, the Gilbert Islands were granted internal self-government in 1977. In 1979 the islands became an independent republic within the Commonwealth under the name Kiribati.

Upon independence in 1979 Ieremia T. Tabai, the former chief minister, assumed the presidency. He was returned to office in 1982. Later that year his government fell following a dispute over salary raises for several public officials. As provided by the constitution, the Council of State assumed interim administration. Tabai was reelected in 1983 and then again in 1987 despite others' assertions that he would be violating a constitutional provision limiting the president to three terms. Tabai contended that he had not served three full terms, since his second government was in power for less than a year.

In 1991 Teatao Teannaki won the presidency, but he was forced to resign in 1994 when he lost a no-confidence motion brought by the opposition. In 1994 Teburoro Tito of the Christian Democratic Unity Party won the presidential election, and he was reelected in 1998. In 1999 Kiribati was admitted to the United Nations. Also that year a severe drought led to the imposition of a state of emergency on March 3.

Tito was ousted in a vote of no confidence in March 2003. Anote and Harry Tong, two brothers, ran against one another in the presidential elections in July of that year, and Anote won. Anote Tong faces major economic problems stemming from a lack of jobs and a growing population as well as the losses by the state-owned Kiribati Air.

One perennial problem for the Kiribati government is Banaba Island, the residents of which have long petitioned the government to let them secede and join Fiji. The residents of Banaba have lived in Fiji since the 1940s, when their island was devastated by phosphate mining. They have full Fiji citizenship. The government of Kiribati has responded by giving Banabans special treatment in the legislature.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1979–91	Ieremia T. Tabai
1991–94	Teatao Teannaki
1994–2003	Teburoro Tito
2003–	Anote Tong

CONSTITUTION

Kiribati is a sovereign democratic republic under the constitution that came into force on independence in 1979.

The president, or *beretitenti*, is both head of state and head of government and presides over the cabinet, which consists of the *beretitenti*, the *kauoman-ni-beretitenti*, or vice president, the attorney general, and not more than eight ministers. Presidents are limited to three terms of office, regardless of the length of any of the terms. After each general election the House of Assembly, or Maneaba ni Maungatabu, nominates three or four members to stand as candidates for president, and the citizenry elect the president from these candidates.

The constitution makes special provisions for Banaba, guaranteeing the Banabans' inalienable right to enter and reside in Banaba (from which they had been evacuated because of the adverse effects of the open-cast mining of phosphates) and their right to the land upon the completion of phosphate extraction. The constitution also provides for a Banaba Island Council.

The constitution provides for a Council of State composed of the chairman of the Public Services Commission, the chief justice, and the speaker of the Maneaba ni Maungatabu. The council serves as an interim government when the president no longer enjoys the confidence of the legislature.

Elections are held on the basis of universal adult suffrage beginning at age 18. The constitution provides for a judicial system composed of the High Court, the Court of Appeals, and local magistrates' courts.

PARLIAMENT

The national legislature is the Maneaba ni Maungatabu (House of Assembly), comprising 42 members: 40 members elected for four-year terms, one nominated member from Banaba, and the attorney general as ex officio member. The cabinet is directly responsible to the Maneaba ni Maungatabu. The Maneaba can depose a president by majority vote.

POLITICAL PARTIES

There are no formally organized political parties, only ad hoc groupings that become extinct after a few months or years. Among them are the Mouth of the Kiribati People, Christian People's Party, National Progressive Party (Boutokaan Te Koaua), Kiribati United Party, and Christian Democratic Party (Maneaban Te Mauri). Most candidates for public office run as independents.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Under the Local Government Ordinance of 1966, elected councils function in each of the inhabited islands with the authority to enact local bylaws and oversee social ser-

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vices. Administrative government is divided into three units—the Gilbert Islands, Line Islands, and Phoenix Islands—and six districts: Tarawa, North Gilbert, South Gilbert, Central Gilbert, Banaba, and the Line Islands. The districts have retained much autonomy due to the geographic layout of the nation. There are also 21 island councils, one for each of the inhabited islands: Abaiang, Abemama, Aranuka, Arorae, Banaba, Beru, Butaritari, Kanton, Kiritimati, Kuria, Maiana, Makin, Marakei, Nikunau, Nonouti, Onotoa, Tabiteuea, Tabuaeran, Tamana, Tarawa, Teraina. Council powers include taxation and independent budget planning.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The judiciary consists of the High Court, a Court of Appeals, and magistrates' courts. The High Court and Court of Appeals are superior courts of record, presided over by the chief justice, who is appointed by the *beretitenti*, and local magistrates' courts, representing a consolidation of former land and other subordinate courts.

The only prison, on Tarawa, accommodates all prisoners sentenced to terms of two months or more; those given shorter terms are not confined but serve their sentences in their homes. Prison conditions are generous, the diet is good, and the discipline is not onerous or harsh. Prisoners generally must work on public projects. Prison officials may reduce sentences of more than a month by as much as one-third for good behavior. Imprisonment rarely carries any social stigma.

HUMAN RIGHTS

A traditional society with a constitutional democracy, Kiribati has no significant human rights problem. All human rights are respected.

FOREIGN POLICY

Kiribati's international contacts are quite limited except for its membership in the Commonwealth and diplomatic relations with the United Kingdom, United States, New Zealand, Australia, and neighboring Pacific islands. It has been working to establish itself as a state in the world community. Under a 1979 treaty the United States relinquished all claims to the Phoenix and Line Island groups. Kiribati suspended diplomatic relations with France in 1999 to protest French nuclear weapons testing at Mururoa Atoll in French Polynesia. In 1992 Kiribati asked Japan for compensation for war damages, and Japan finally agreed to discuss the matter in 2000. Kiribati joined the United Nations in 1999. The following year Kiribati and

its neighbors Tuvalu and the Maldives announced that they were taking legal action against the United States because of its refusal to sign the Kyoto Protocol. In November 2003 Kiribati established diplomatic relations with Taiwan; China retaliated by severing diplomatic ties with Kiribati and removing its satellite tracking system from the main island.

DEFENSE

No military force is maintained. A police force enforces the law and carries out paramilitary functions. Defense assistance is provided by Australia and New Zealand.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	—
Military Manpower Availability:	—
Military Expenditures \$million:	—
as % of GDP:	—
as % of central government expenditures:	—
Arms Imports \$million:	—
Arms Exports \$million:	—

ECONOMY

The economy of Kiribati was based, until 1979, on the production of phosphates on the island of Banaba. Production ended in 1979, which devastated the economy; phosphate exports had accounted for about 80 percent of total export earnings. Per capita gross domestic product (GDP) fell from \$750 in 1979 to \$370 in 1987. Kiribati has yet to find an adequate replacement industry.

The nation has very few resources, and poor soil limits the production of agricultural commodities. It must import all essentials, including most of its food. It sustains itself through a trust fund financed by phosphate earnings and has shepherded its reserve fund well.

The economy is currently dependent on tuna fish and copra (dried coconut meat) exports, tourism, and foreign aid from the United Kingdom, Australia, and international organizations. Copra brings in about two-thirds of export revenues but is dependent on the world demand for coconut oil. Fishing licenses bring in some money, but the nation's maritime area is so vast that it is impossible for the government to force all vessels in its waters to pay for the right to fish there, and thus the nation loses millions of dollars every year from unlicensed fishing. About 5,000 tourists visit annually to see World War II battle sites, fish, and scuba dive; Millennium Island, the closest land mass to the International Date Line, attracts some visitors. Kiribati also exports some pet fish, shark fins, and seaweed, primarily to Japan and Australia.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$million: 79
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 800
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 3.3
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 0.9
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 30
 Industry: 7
 Services: 63
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 43
 Government Consumption: 22
 Gross Domestic Investment: —
 Foreign Trade \$million: Exports: 35
 Imports: 83
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: —
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: —
 CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1990 = 100)

1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
116.7	123.0	127.4	126.7	126.6

Finance

National Currency: Australian Dollar (AUD)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = AUD 1.3158
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: —
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: —
 Total External Debt \$million: 10
 Debt Service Ratio %: —
 Balance of Payments \$million: —
 International Reserves SDRs \$million: —
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 2.5

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 18.37
 per capita \$: 190.60
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: —

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: —
 Revenues \$million: 28.4
 Expenditures \$million: 37.2
 Budget Deficit \$million: 8.8
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 30
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2002) %: 1.8
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 0.9
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: —
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: —
 Total Farmland % of land area: 2.7
 Livestock: Cattle million: —
 Chickens 000: 460
 Pigs 000: 12.2
 Sheep 000: —
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters 000: —
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 31

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 0.35
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 0.7

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: —
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 10
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 121
 Net Energy Imports % of use: —
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: 2
 Production kW-hr million: 7
 Consumption kW-hr million: 7
 Coal Reserves tons billion: —
 Production tons million: —
 Consumption tons million: —
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
 Production cubic feet billion: —
 Consumption cubic feet billion: —
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
 Production barrels per day: —
 Consumption barrels per day: 170
 Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$million: 83
 Exports \$million: 35
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —
 Balance of Trade \$million: —

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Australia %	39.6	6.3
Fiji %	24.5	—
New Zealand %	7.5	—
Japan %	5.7	56.3
South Korea %	5.7	21.9
United States %	—	6.3

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 670
 Paved %: —
 Automobiles: —
 Trucks and Buses: —
 Railroad: Track Length km: —
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: —
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 1
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 1.3
 Airports: 20
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 11
 Length of Waterways km: 5

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 5
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 3
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: —

Communications

Telephones 000: 4.5
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.12
 Cellular Telephones 000: 0.5
 Personal Computers 000: 1
 Internet Hosts per million people: —
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 19

ENVIRONMENT

For generations Kiribati's natural resources were used in moderation. However, with growing urbanization and westernization, environmental problems have resulted in unmanaged waste disposal, inefficient sewage services leading to contaminated groundwater and lagoons, the emergence of land-poor squatter areas, and the loss of terrestrial and coastal vegetation. Kiribati is extremely concerned about global warming, which has a very real and noticeable effect on its landscape. As sea levels have risen, some of Kiribati's land has disappeared, and its freshwater supply is in danger of saline contamination.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 38.4
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: —
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 2
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 0.28

LIVING CONDITIONS

Kiribati has a fairly poor population, with a per capita income of about \$800 a year. Because almost all consumer goods must be imported, they are in short supply and can be expensive. Transportation is difficult. Air Kiribati flies small aircraft to most of the populated atolls in the Gilberts. Small ships with irregular schedules run between outlying islands. In order to travel between the Gilbert Islands and the Line Islands, a traveler must first go to Hawaii and either Fiji or the Marshall Islands. Traditional island homes are made of wood frames with thatched roofs and woven mats for sides. They can be quickly opened or shut for ventilation or to keep out rain. They fall apart easily but can also be easily rebuilt.

HEALTH

Despite a short life expectancy of 62 years as of 2004, Kiribati's biggest health problem is its rapidly growing population, which is outstripping the nation's resources. Each woman bears an average of 4.2 children. The infant mortality rate is high, at almost 50 deaths per 1,000 births, but the birthrate is much greater than the death rate. Modern health care is scarce, especially on the outer islands; the land masses are too far apart for adequate medical coverage to be provided.

Health

Number of Physicians: 24
 Number of Dentists: 4
 Number of Nurses: 191
 Number of Pharmacists: 4
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 30
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 48.52
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: —
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 8.0
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 49
 HIV Infected % of adults: —
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 99
 Measles: 88
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 39
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 64

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Traditionally, the people in Kiribati produced all their own food, growing coconuts, taro, sweet potato, and other vegetables, and catching fish and other sources of protein in the sea. Today, imported food is more common and is seen as more prestigious than the indigenous diet and has thus been displacing native food. The most popular local alcoholic beverage is a sour toddy, which is brewed from coconut palm.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 100.9
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 118.6

STATUS OF WOMEN

Violence against women is not a major concern in Kiribati society. Communal pressures are brought to bear on those who transgress the laws in this respect. Women have full rights of ownership and inheritance of property and have full and equal access to education. Married women have

always been considered the equals of their husbands—though unmarried women are not respected at all.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 5
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: —
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: —

WORK

Most islanders are subsistence farmers and fishermen, growing food crops such as bananas, breadfruit, and papaya for their own consumption. These workers are not included in the official tally of the labor force. Some work in the coconut industry; the nation has plans to build a co-pra-processing plant in Tarawa. Tourism employs a small number of people. The unemployment rate is quite low, officially at 2 percent, but the government estimates that 70 percent of the working population is underemployed. Many of Kiribati's people have chosen to work abroad, sending home over \$7.5 million annually.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 7,870
 Female Participation Rate %: —
 Labor by Sector %: —
 Unemployment %: 2

EDUCATION

Every atoll has at least one primary school. Traditionally, primary education was dominated by mission schools, but in the 1980s the government began to take control. The education system, operated by the Ministry of Education, embraces the Overseas Scholarship Programme, three local tertiary institutions (Tarawa Teachers College in Bikenibeu and Tarawa Technical Institute and the Marine Training School in Betio), the secondary and primary schools, the School Broadcasting Service, the Curriculum Development Unit, and the National Library and Archives.

Schooling is free, universal, and compulsory for nine years. Schooling lasts for 12 years, as divided into six years of primary school, three years of middle school, and three years of secondary school. Kiribati participates in the Kiribati Extension Center of the University of South Pacific, based in Fiji.

Education

Literacy Rate %: —
 Male %: —
 Female %: —

School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: —
 First Level: Primary Schools: 92
 Teachers: —
 Students: —
 Student-Teacher Ratio: —
 Net Enrollment Ratio: —
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 9
 Teachers: —
 Students: 4,809
 Student-Teacher Ratio: —
 Net Enrollment Ratio: —
 Third Level: Institutions: —
 Teachers: —
 Students: —
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: —
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: —

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Kiribati lacks a technological infrastructure. Telecommunications between islands are expensive and unreliable. In 2002 there were about 4,500 telephone lines and 500 cellular telephones in service. There is only one Internet service provider on Tarawa, and it is extremely expensive. There is no broadband service. In 2002 only about 2,000 islanders were using the Internet.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: —
 Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

The media is generally allowed the freedom to express differing viewpoints. The government runs a weekly newspaper called *Te uekera*, and there is also a new private weekly paper called *Kiribati New Star*. The Catholic and Protestant churches both publish newsletters and magazines, which are a major source of information for many islanders.

The government-owned Radio Kiribati broadcasts on medium-wave and shortwave transmitters. The programs are in English and I-Kiribati. President Ieremia Tabai attempted to set up a private radio station, Newair FM 101, in 2000 but was prevented from doing so when the station's directors were fined for operating an unlicensed station. There is no domestic television.

The National Library and Archives has a collection of 40,000 volumes.

Media

Daily Newspapers: —
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —

(continues)

Media *(continued)*

Books Published: —
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers 000: 40
 per 1,000: 388
 Television sets 000: 2
 per 1,000: 23

CULTURE

Religion is an important part of Kiribati's culture. People take the Sabbath very seriously, and no one does anything that could be considered work on Sundays. The local people make some handicrafts, such as carvings. The war canoe is a spectacular traditional art form. People also treasure those who know how to construct a rectangular *maneaba*, or council house, which forms the center of most villages. One traditional art form is a cappella chanting; between one and four singers perform chants for ceremonial events, such as initiations or weddings.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 1
 Volumes: 40,000
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

The people of Kiribati have long been isolated from the rest of the world and from one another, and their traditional folk beliefs have thus survived. People believe in ghosts called *anti* and in magic. They erect small shrines in the outdoors to communicate with spirits and ancestors.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Kiribati is a fairly quiet place without much organized recreation. The scuba diving and game fishing are excellent, as are the beaches. Traditional activities such as dancing and making shapes out of string are popular local activities.

ETIQUETTE

The people of Kiribati follow strict rules of etiquette; old men are the ones who remember all the rules. It is rude

to turn one's back to people, to interrupt old people, or to act out of turn during a ceremony. When sharing food, people observe strict rules of priority. They consider it very insulting to have their heads touched, which caused a great deal of misunderstanding when the first missionaries arrived.

FAMILY LIFE

The clan is the fundamental unit of Kiribati family life. Every clan has a *maneaba*, or meeting house, which is used by a council of older men who lead the clan. Within the family, married women are considered the equals of men. Families do not look on women as servants but as valuable members with their own wealth. Traditionally, however, an unmarried woman is considered worthless. Polygamy has occurred but is very rare. Divorce is uncommon. The adoption of other people's children is very common.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

The islanders typically dress in casual light clothing. Men wear loose shirts and shorts made of cotton, and women usually wear wraparound garments called *lavalava*. People are quite modest, especially in the outer islands, where women never appear in shorts or short skirts. Local people do not wear revealing bathing suits; bikinis are considered inappropriate for both sexes.

SPORTS

Canoe racing is a popular sport among islanders. People also like playing and watching soccer and volleyball. Some people practice an indigenous martial art form.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1979** Kiribati becomes an independent republic within the Commonwealth of Great Britain, with Ieremia T. Tabai as president. Kiribati and the United States sign an agreement under which the United States relinquishes all claims to territory in the Phoenix and Line island groups, including Canton, Enderbury, and Hull.
- 1982** President Tabai is defeated in a vote of no confidence by the Maneaba ni Maungatabu and resigns.
- 1983** President Tabai is reelected in legislative balloting and resumes office as president.
- 1987** Tabai is reelected after a constitutional debate over the legitimacy of a fourth term in office.

- 1990** Kiribati's economy suffers. The value of exports is little more than one-quarter of imports. Britain provides economic assistance to small-scale industries in an effort to help Kiribati reduce its imports.
- 1992** Kiribati asks Japan for compensation for war damages.
- 1994** Teburoro Tito is elected president.
- 1995** Kiribati moves the International Dateline east of its easternmost island, Caroline Island, to ensure that the whole country is on the same date.
- 1998** Tito is reelected president with 52 percent of popular vote, and his Maneaban Te Mauri party claims 14 of 39 seats in the House of Assembly.
- 1999** Two of Kiribati's uninhabited islands, Tebua Tarawa and Abanuea, disappear beneath the waves as global climate changes raise sea levels to new heights. Caroline Island is renamed Millennium Island.
Prolonged drought leads to the declaration of a state of emergency on March 3. Kiribati joins the United Nations.
- 2000** Japan agrees to discuss compensation of victims of World War II. A mass grave containing 20 U.S. marines is found; the remains are sent back to the United States.
- 2002** Kiribati, Tuvalu, and the Maldives agree to take legal action against the United States for refusing to sign the Kyoto Protocol.
- 2003** President Teburoro Tito is ousted by a vote of no confidence. Anote Tong wins the presidency. Kiribati establishes diplomatic relations with Taiwan, and China severs its own relations with Kiribati.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- U.S. Department of State Background Note: Kiribati
<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/1836.htm>

KOREA, NORTH

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Democratic People's Republic of Korea (Choson Minjujuui Inmin Konghwaguk)

ABBREVIATION

KP

CAPITAL

P'yongyang

HEAD OF STATE

Chairman of the National Defence Commission Kim Jong-il (from 1994)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Pak Pong-ju (from 2003)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

One-party civilian dictatorship

POPULATION

22,912,177 (2005)

AREA

120,540 sq km (46,540 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Korean

LANGUAGE

Korean

RELIGIONS

Confucianism, Buddhism, Chondogyo, Christianity

UNIT OF CURRENCY

North Korean won

NATIONAL FLAG

Two blue horizontal stripes at the top and bottom separated from a broad red center band by two narrow white stripes. The left half of the red stripe contains a red five-pointed star within a white circular field.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

The principal elements of the national coat of arms are two sheaves of rice, a five-pointed star, Mount Paektu, a dam, an electric power station and line, and a factory. Under the device is the name of the country in Korean, "Democratic People's Republic of Korea."

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"Morning Sun, Shine over the Rivers and Mountains"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day), February 16 (Kim Il-sung's birthday), April 15 (Kim Jong-il's birthday), May 1 (May Day), August 15 (Liberation Day), September 9 (Founding of the Democratic People's Republic, National Day)

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

August 15, 1945

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

1948; completely revised December 17, 1972; revised 1992, 1998

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

North Korea is in the northern part of the Korean peninsula in East Asia and occupies a total land area of 120,540 sq km (46,540 sq mi), extending 719 km (447 mi) north-northeast to south-southeast and 371 km (231 mi) east-southeast to west-northwest. Its coastlines on the Sea of Japan and the Yellow Sea run 2,495 km (1,550 mi).

North Korea shares its total international boundary of 1,673 km (1,040 mi) with three countries: China (1,416 km, 880 mi), Russia (19 km, 12 mi), and South Korea (238 km; 148 mi). The northern border with China follows the Yalu River for part of its course, according to

an 1875 agreement, and the Tumen River for part of its course, according to a 1909 agreement. The border with South Korea is the Military Demarcation Line of 1953, which has not been formally accepted by either North or South Korea.

Mountains cover four-fifths of the Korean peninsula. The major mountain ranges crisscross the country in northwest-to-southeast and northeast-to-southwest patterns. Almost the whole of north-central Korea is dominated by six mountain ranges: Machol-lyong, Hamgyong, Pujol-lyong, Nangnim, Myohyang, and Choguryong.

The plains constitute only one-fifth of the land area but contain most of the farmlands and human settlements.

North Korea



Geography

Area sq km: 120,540; sq mi 46,540
 World Rank: 97th
 Land Boundaries, km: China 1,416; South Korea 238,
 Russia 19
 Coastline, km: 2,495

Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Sea of Japan 0
 Highest: Paektu-san 2,744
 Land Use %
 Arable Land: 20.8
 Permanent Crops: 2.5
 Forest: 68.2
 Other: 8.5

Population of Principal Cities (2002 est.)

Ch'ongjin	674,000
Haeju	265,200
Hamhung-Hungnam	821,200
Kaesung	198,400
Kanggye	258,500
Kimch'aek (Songjin)	227,300
Namp'o	655,100
P'yongyang	2,724,700
Sinuiju	377,200
Wonsan	347,300

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

North Korea is subject to severe winters because it is exposed to cold winds from Siberia. Winter temperatures, however, are subject to great variations, from far below freezing in five of the winter months in the northern provinces to -3.9°C (25°F) at Wonsan, to the south. Summer temperatures are more uniform throughout the north, with average temperatures ranging from 24.4°C (76°F) in Pyongyang to 21°C (70°F) on the relatively cool northeastern coast.

Annual rainfall ranges from 560 to 1,520 mm (22 to 60 in), with the Tumen and lower Taedong river valleys receiving the least and the Imjin River basin and the upper Chongchon River valley receiving the most. Up to 85 percent of rainfall is concentrated in the summer months, especially from June to early August. Heavy downpours during the rainy season can cause floods and widespread damage to crops.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature: Jan–Jun 70°F to 76°F
 Average Rainfall: 22 in to 60 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Most of North Korea is densely forested; the mountainous areas in particular are still covered with hardwoods and conifers such as pine, beech, and fir, as the terrain would be too difficult to farm. Some areas were damaged by bombing in the 1950s, while some forests were cut down by the Japanese before and during World War II. There are also some marshlands with aquatic plants and animals. Migratory birds stop in North Korea on their trips north and south. There are some large animals such as deer and black bear in the more remote forests.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 22,912,177
 World Rank: 47th
 Density per sq km: 187.8

% of annual growth (1999-2003): 0.5

Male %: 48.5

Female %: 51.5

Urban %: 61.1

Age Distribution %: 0–14: 24.6

15–64: 67.8

65 and over: 7.6

Population 2025: 25,755,000

Birth Rate per 1,000: 16.77

Death Rate per 1,000: 6.99

Rate of Natural Increase %: 1.4

Total Fertility Rate: 2.2

Expectation of Life (years): Males 68.38

Females 73.92

Marriage Rate per 1,000: —

Divorce Rate per 1,000: —

Average Size of Households: 4.8

Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

North Korea, along with South Korea, ranks first in the world in ethnic homogeneity, with 100 percent of the population being Korean. There are no racial or linguistic minorities. The total non-Korean resident population is probably about 50,000, nearly all of them Chinese.

The racial origins of Koreans are obscure, but the primary stock is believed to be Tungusic—that is, related to the Mongols with some Chinese admixture.

LANGUAGES

The national language is Korean (officially known as Choson Muntcha), using the hangul script. Korean is generally considered to be a member of the Altaic family. The alphabet consists of 14 basic consonants and 10 simple vowels. The letters are combined into syllables by clustering, as in Chinese. Chinese loanwords form roughly half the vocabulary.

English is the principal second language and is taught in all secondary schools.

RELIGIONS

The Communist government actively discourages the practice of religion. The government sponsors some religious groups to promote the appearance of religious freedom. Historically, North Koreans have subscribed to a variety of religious beliefs, none of which currently wields any significant national influence; Buddhism and Confucianism, both tempered by persistent shamanist and animist beliefs, have filled the role of national religions. Chondogyo (Religion of the Heavenly Way), a native eclectic sect, was introduced in the latter half of the 19th century. Christianity, the last of

the major religions to penetrate North Korea, has the fewest adherents.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

According to archaeologists, the first inhabitants of the Korean peninsula arrived around 30,000 B.C.E. The region was under constant pressure from China, which encouraged the formation of the first kingdom around the first century. By the eighth century the Silla Kingdom had become a major cultural force itself. In the 13th century the Mongols destroyed the kingdom.

When the Mongol Empire collapsed, the Choson dynasty arose. It was during this period that Korean script was developed. Independence proved short-lived, as Japan invaded in 1592. Shortly thereafter the Chinese followed, and the Manchu dynasty then ruled the country. Japan took control of Korea prior to World War II, when it invaded China. Japanese control of Korea ended with its defeat in World War II.

The desire of the Allies at the Cairo Conference in 1943 was to restore an independent Korea, but the need to accomplish a prompt arrangement of the Japanese surrender led to a division of the country. The Soviets occupied the northern section, whose industry had been developed by the Japanese, and the southern, more agrarian sector of the country was occupied by U.S. forces. In 1947 the problem of unifying Korea was referred to the UN General Assembly on U.S. initiative. A UN-observed election was held only in the southern part of Korea in May 1948, soon followed by the establishment there of the Republic of Korea (RK), or South Korea. The northern half, controlled by a Communist government, established itself as the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), or North Korea, on September 9. The United Nations recognized only the Republic of Korea as the legitimate government of Korea.

U.S. and Soviet troops subsequently withdrew from the area, but on June 25, 1950, Democratic People's Republic of Korea troops invaded the Republic of Korea in an attempt to unify the two Koreas. U.S. military forces immediately aided South Korea. Subsequently, 16 other UN countries, along with the United States, made up the UN Unified Command, headed initially by Gen. Douglas MacArthur. In late 1950 some 300,000 Chinese troops came to the aid of the North Korean side, causing a stalemate. An armistice agreement was eventually signed on July 27, 1953, at Panmunjom. A four-kilometer-wide demilitarized zone was established, bisecting Korea at the 38th parallel.

In 1949 a merger of Communists in the north and south had created the Korean Workers' Party (KWP), led by Kim Il-sung, who was the head of North Korea until his death in 1994. Kim gradually consolidated his power, liquidating rival factions within the KWP, until by 1958 his power was absolute. Kim's long period of rule was charac-

terized by the development of an extraordinary personality cult as linked to his personal interpretation of Marxism-Leninism. His ideology, known as Juche, rests on the principles of the primacy of the party, self-sufficiency, and self-defense.

Kim groomed his son, Kim Jong-il, as his successor, and in 1984 Radio Pyongyang referred to Kim Jong-il as the "sole successor" to his father. Yet there was still a question of whether he had the support within the party and the army to continue his father's rule. Reports of a November 1986 coup and the assassination of Kim Il-sung were proven untrue. In the same month elections were held for the North Korean legislature, the Supreme People's Assembly, in which all candidates ran unopposed, and Kim Il-sung was re-elected president.

Despite the fall of the Soviet Union and the death of Kim Il-sung in 1994, Korea remained a committed Communist country. Kim Il-sung was succeeded by his son, Kim Jong-il, who many thought would not be up to leading the isolated country. A recluse, Kim Jong-il did not meet foreign heads of state and remained largely out of sight. Raised to the second highest post of chairman of the National Defense Commission in 1998 at a ceremony in which his dead father was given the title eternal president, Kim Jong-il continued to preside over a country whose economy and food supplies were failing. In June 2000 Kim Jong-il broke out of his isolationist past by announcing a meeting between South Korean President Kim Dae-jung and himself. The meeting was followed by an emotional reunion between North and South Korean families who had not met since the partition of the two countries in 1945.

The European Union sent a delegation in 2001 to help with the reconciliation process between the two Koreas, and that summer Kim Jong-il traveled to Moscow for the first time. This hopeful attempt at peace came to an end in 2002, when U.S. President Bush accused North Korea of keeping nuclear weapons and included it in an "axis of evil" along with Iraq and Iran. The North Korean government considered this tantamount to a declaration of war by the United States. Also in 2002 North and South Korean navy ships engaged in a skirmish in the Yellow Sea that left 34 people dead. At the end of the year North Korea ousted nuclear inspectors and reactivated the Yongbyon reactor. In January 2003 the nation withdrew from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

In 2003 and early 2004 several countries, including the United States and China, met with North Korean representatives in Beijing in an effort to stave off a nuclear crisis. These talks ended in June 2004 with North Korea's decision to end negotiations. During this time the nation is believed to have produced enough plutonium and fuel rods to make six nuclear bombs. In September 2005 North Korea agreed to give up its nuclear weapons in return for aid and security guarantees.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1948–57	Kim Doo-bong
1957–72	Choi Yong-kun
1972–94	Kim Il-sung
1994–	Kim Jong-il

CONSTITUTION

The constitutional basis of the North Korean government is the constitution of 1972, which replaced the constitution of 1948. The 1972 constitution defined North Korea as an “independent, socialist state that represents the interests of all the Korean peoples.” The constitution has 11 chapters and 149 articles. The first three chapters set forth the directive principles of the state. The ideological basis of the state is defined as the *Juche*, or *chuche sasang*, the ideology of self-reliance, along with Marxism-Leninism. The ideology is also known as Kim Il-sungism, *hyongmyong sasang* (revolutionary ideology), and *yuil sasang* (the one and only ideology). The constitution reaffirms the national desire to achieve the unification of the Korean Peninsula and to protect the legitimate rights of overseas Koreans.

Under the 1972 constitution real decision-making power rests with the Korean Workers’ Party and its Political Committee. Government agencies are only the executors of party policies and the administrative links between the party and the people. Through its extensive network of cadres within the organs of power, the party oversees administration and ensures compliance with party directives.

The underlying principle of government is defined as “democratic centralism,” which means that all representative or democratic bodies are elected by lower-level bodies and that they in turn elect the executives at their level. The highest legislative body and the highest organ of power is the Supreme People’s Assembly (SPA).

Constitutional changes adopted in 1998 included the abolition of the state presidency. Although the SPA remains the highest state organ, its authority to determine questions of war and peace passed on to the 10-member National Defense Committee, whose chairman now serves as head of state. The Central People’s Committee and the Standing Committee were abolished, with most of their duties and powers being assigned to a newly created SPA Presidium, which ranks as the highest organ of state power between full SPA sessions. The Presidium also assumed responsibility for diplomatic functions, including ratifying and abrogating treaties. The Presidium’s president, the second highest North Korean official, represents the state and receives credentials of foreign diplomats. The Administration Council was replaced by a smaller cabinet that not only functions as the SPA’s administrative and executive body but also has additional authority

for governmental management. Judges are elected by the SPA. The premier is assisted by two vice premiers.

The constitution provides for national elections every five years. Suffrage is universal, direct, and equal over age 17, and voting is by secret ballot. The Korean Workers’ Party approves a single list of candidates, who are elected without opposition. Every election since 1962 has resulted in a 100 percent voter turnout and a 100 percent affirmative vote for the official slate.

PARLIAMENT

The national legislature is the unicameral Supreme People’s Assembly (SPA), consisting of 655 members, all of whom belong to the Korean Workers’ Party. The SPA is described in the constitution as the highest organ of state power. Its chief functions are the adoption and amendment of constitutional enactments; the election of the president of the country, the premier, the president of the Central Court, and other legal officials; approval of the state plan and budget; and declarations of war and peace. Though its normal term is four years, the 1982 election was the first since 1972. The SPA meets twice a year in sessions that last only a few days. The spring session meets in March or April, and the fall session in November or December. Extraordinary sessions may be held at the request of at least one-third of the deputies. Bills may be introduced by the deputies or by the president. When the SPA is not in session, its functions are carried out by the Presidium, which consists of 19 members elected by SPA members from among themselves.

Though the SPA is nominally the highest organ of state power, it in fact has no autonomy and exists only to ratify decisions made by the Korean Workers’ Party, the actual source of government.

POLITICAL PARTIES

The ruling party in North Korea since 1949 has been the Korean Workers’ Party (KWP), founded through the merger of the Communist Party and the New People’s Party. The Korean Workers’ Party is a Marxist-Leninist party with an estimated membership of three million, representing a cross section of the population and divided into four categories: peasants, intellectuals, workers, and military personnel. The party is a well-disciplined organization that controls every aspect of national life, including the army.

Political activity is also carried out through a number of front organizations, some of which are used solely for propaganda, while others are designed to mobilize special-interest groups. These include the Socialist Working Youth League, the General Federation of Korean Trade Unions, the Korean Democratic Party, the Korean Dem-

ocratic Women's Union, the Friends (or Chongu) Party, and the Democratic Front for the Reunification of the Fatherland.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

North Korea has a relatively elaborate system of local government, consisting of nine levels of administration. Of these, five are recognized in the constitution, but the four bottom tiers have no constitutional status. The five principal divisions are provinces, cities with provincial status, ordinary cities, urban districts, and counties. There are nine provinces and four cities with provincial status. The provinces are subdivided into ordinary cities (*si*), counties (*kun*), and districts (*kuyok*). The four bottom tiers include towns (*up*) serving as administrative headquarters for the counties, villages (*ri*), urban blocks (*tong*), and workers' districts and industrial settlements (*non-dongjaku*). Workers' districts are established in any industrial suburb with more than 400 workers, miners, or fishermen.

The permanent executives and administrative organs at the local level are the People's Committees and Administrative Committees. The functions of the People's Committees, elected by the People's Assemblies, include supervision of local elections, implementation of decisions of People's Assemblies and higher state organs, and general control over all state institutions. The Administrative Committees are concerned with day-to-day affairs.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The judiciary is a three-tiered system consisting of the Central Court at the apex, provincial courts in each province, municipal courts in each municipality at the intermediate level, and people's courts in cities, counties, and urban districts. Trials in the subordinate courts are held with one to three judges and two people's assessors. The judges and people's assessors of the Central Court are elected every four years by the Standing Committee of the Supreme People's Assembly, while at the local levels they are elected by the People's Assemblies for terms of four years in the provincial and municipal courts and terms of two years for the county and city people's courts. The terms of the Central Court judges are concurrent with those of SPA members.

The judiciary is subordinate to the party, and all judicial activities are guided and controlled by party committees. There is no judicial review of legislative acts. The courts and the prosecuting authorities are defined as "powerful weapons for proletarian dictatorship." The penal system has also been combined with political reeducation and indoctrination. Most judges are party members, and judicial decisions are subject to scrutiny for their conformity to party policies and directives. North Korea's

laws come from the German civil law system as combined with Japanese and Communist influences.

HUMAN RIGHTS

In terms of political and civil rights, North Korea is ranked as a not-free country.

North Korea is perhaps the most highly regimented and controlled society in the world today. Controls are enforced by two security organizations. Persons who fail to cooperate with the regime face imprisonment, confiscation of property, or enforced removal to remote villages. Observation by informers is so prevalent that suspicion has become a national characteristic. The constitution requires citizens to follow the socialist norms of life and to have a collective spirit. The government attempts to shape the citizens' consciousness by requiring both children and adults to participate in daily indoctrination sessions and to recite party maxims by rote.

Despite claims to being a socialist and classless society, ideological considerations and control mechanisms have come to differentiate North Koreans into highly stratified classes, with the governing minority perched clearly on the top and having privileges associated in the past with royalty. Security ratings are awarded to each citizen, and these ratings determine access to better schools, positions, and stores. Individuals with relatives or close family associates in South Korea are regarded as suspect.

North Koreans do not enjoy any of the freedoms of speech, press, or assembly. Censorship of the media is strictly enforced. Virtually no outside information, other than that approved and disseminated by North Korean authorities, is allowed to reach the public. Listening to foreign broadcasts is prohibited, and violators are subject to severe punishment. The government has developed a pervasive network of spies and informers to enforce these laws.

Internal travel is strictly controlled. Movement from one area to another requires documentary permission. To monitor internal travel more effectively, the government discourages travel by automobiles and even bicycles, thus forcing travelers to depend on the more easily controlled buses. The government has put many citizens in prison camps, where they have been forced to work and where forced abortions and infanticide have occurred.

FOREIGN POLICY

For the more than four decades of its existence, the two pillars of North Korean foreign policy were its strong links with the Soviet Union and China on the one hand and the goal of the reunification of the peninsula on the other. The first pillar collapsed with the end of the Soviet Union, and the second has been virtually abandoned.

The death of Kim Il-sung in 1994 and the election of his son, Kim Jung-il, marked a transition between the ideological phase of North Korean foreign relations and a more pragmatic one. In an abrupt reversal of policy, North Korea sought to reestablish relations with Japan after a formal apology from Japan for the many decades of Japanese misrule of the Korean Peninsula. In 1991 North Korea and South Korea were both admitted to the United Nations, thus giving North Korea a semblance of legitimacy. Relations with South Korea entered a new phase when South Korean President Kim Dae-jung visited North Korea for the first time in 1999. Relations with Japan remained cool in the early 2000s, after attempts to reconcile the two nations were thwarted by Japan's insistence that North Korea still harbored Japanese captives originally kidnapped in the 1970s and 1980s.

A major hurdle to U.S.–North Korean relations is North Korea's noncompliance with the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. In early 2005 North Korea announced its intention to build more nuclear weapons and to withdraw from any international negotiations on the subject, citing U.S. hostility toward its government. North Korea has become the world's leading exporter of rockets and related technology, posing a threat to the containment of global terrorism.

DEFENSE

The defense structure is headed by the president, who is also the supreme commander of the armed forces and the chairman of the National Defense Commission. Ultimate political control is vested in the Military Committee of the Korean Workers' Party. Operational control is under the Ministry of People's Armed Forces, with three principal divisions: the General Staff, the General Political Bureau, and the General Bureau of Rear Services.

Military manpower is provided through a system of conscription. The age of conscription is 17 for all able-bodied males. The term of service is three years in the army and four years in the navy and air force.

North Korea no longer possesses the overwhelming military superiority it had in 1950. It does, however, possess what appears to be a moderate nuclear weapons arsenal and in 2005 was actively increasing its nuclear weaponry. In 2003 it was estimated to have spent 22.9 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) on the military. While the government continues to spend untold millions on weapons technology, more than seven million North Koreans were reported to be on the verge of starvation. The nation's most serious strategic problems are the vulnerability of its transportation system, hydroelectric plants, and population centers to air strikes.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	1,000,000
Military Manpower Availability:	6,181,038
Military Expenditures \$billion:	5.2
as % of GDP:	22.9
as % of central government expenditures:	—
Arms Imports \$million:	3
Arms Exports \$million:	32

ECONOMY

North Korea has suffered terrible economic conditions for years. Before the widespread fall of Communism it traded with the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, but the nation now has no real trading partners or foreign investors. In 2004 it was in its seventh straight year of food shortages caused by drought and the lack of fuel and fertilizer. The nation depends on food aid from international donors, but in 2003 donor nations were showing signs of cutting off aid due to political disagreements and general fatigue with the nation's perennial problems. North Korea spends nearly one-quarter of its GDP on its military at the expense of food for the citizenry. There is a thriving black market, which many people use to buy necessary items, but its high prices have put much out of reach for the elderly and the unemployed. In the early 2000s North Korea was making a nominal effort to attract foreign investment, but the nation has nevertheless shown no signs of reforming the market or relinquishing control over national assets. In 2003 the nation relaxed some restrictions on farmers' market activities. North Korea has vast mineral resources, but they are almost entirely untapped.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion:	29.58			
GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$:	1,300			
GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %:	—			
GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %:	—			
Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:				
Agriculture:	30.2			
Industry:	33.8			
Services:	36.0			
Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:				
Private Consumption:	73			
Government Consumption:	16			
Gross Domestic Investment:	—			
Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports:	1.044			
Imports:	2.042			
% of Income Received by Poorest 10%:	—			
% of Income Received by Richest 10%:	—			
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)				
1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
—	—	—	—	—

Finance

National Currency: North Korean Won (KPW)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = KPW 300
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: —
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: —
 Total External Debt \$billion: 12
 Debt Service Ratio %: —
 Balance of Payments \$million: —
 International Reserves SDRs \$million: —
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: —

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 266.8
 per capita \$: 11.90
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: —

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$billion: —
 Expenditures \$billion: —
 Budget Deficit \$million: —
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 30.2
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: —
 Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares: 28
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 52.1
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 114.8
 Total Farmland % of land area: 20.8
 Livestock: Cattle 000: 566
 Chickens million: 20.3
 Pigs million: 3.194
 Sheep 000: 171
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 7.18
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 268.7

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: —
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: —

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 46.15
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 51.5
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 2.3
 Net Energy Imports % of use: 5.8
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 9.5
 Production kW-hr billion: 30.01
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 27.91

Coal Reserves tons million: 661
 Production tons million: 105.3
 Consumption tons million: 105.2
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
 Production cubic feet billion: —
 Consumption cubic feet billion: —
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
 Production barrels 000 per day: —
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 86
 Pipelines Length km: 154

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 2.042
 Exports \$billion: 1.044
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —
 Balance of Trade \$million: —

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
China %	39.7	28.4
Thailand %	14.6	—
Japan %	11.2	24.7
Germany %	7.6	—
South Korea %	6.2	28.5

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 31,200
 Paved %: 6.4
 Automobiles: —
 Trucks and Buses: —
 Railroad: Track Length km: 5,214
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: —
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 203
 Total Deadweight Tonnage million: 1.34
 Airports: 78
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 35
 Length of Waterways km: 2,250

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: —
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: —
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: —

Communications

Telephones million: 1.1
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones 000: —
 Personal Computers 000: —
 Internet Hosts per million people: —
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: —

ENVIRONMENT

North Korea suffers from the common problems associated with developing nations. Among the most severe is growing air pollution due to a lack of industrial controls on emissions. In addition, the country suffers from a lack of potable water and continues to pollute that which it currently has.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 68.2
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: —
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 2
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 8.48

LIVING CONDITIONS

North Korea's living conditions are poor. There is a general lack of food, and malnutrition is a problem throughout the country. All basic consumer items are in short supply. GDP per capita is about \$1,300. There is little public transportation, and almost no private citizens own either automobiles or even bicycles. Most people travel on foot. On the other hand, North Korea has no traffic problems. Pyongyang, the capital, is a large, clean city with wide boulevards and numerous monuments; only people in good health with the proper political credentials are allowed to live there, and anyone with a disability is excluded—including the elderly and pregnant women. Tens of thousands of North Koreans have fled the country in recent years, most of them entering China, in the hope of escaping famine and repression.

HEALTH

North Korea's health-care system suffers from a lack of all basic supplies, including heat and water. Some people treat their ailments with traditional remedies such as moxibustion or acupuncture. Life expectancy is high, at 71 years on average, while the infant mortality rate is about 25 deaths per 1,000 live births. Malnutrition is the most significant health problem; almost two-thirds of the population suffers chronic malnutrition, which causes babies to be born underweight and children to grow up stunted.

Health

Number of Physicians: —
 Number of Dentists: —
 Number of Nurses: 38,471
 Number of Pharmacists: 63,478
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 297
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —

Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 24.84
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 67
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 2.5
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 22
 HIV Infected % of adults: —
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: —
 Measles: —
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 59
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 100

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Korea does not have enough food to feed its people. Malnutrition is a major problem, despite the food aid the nation receives from donor countries.

Where there is food, people eat the typical Korean diet, which includes rice, vegetables, and a spicy cabbage dish called kimchi. Many people like to drink ginseng tea, which supposedly has health benefits. Alcoholic beverages include *insam-ju*, which is vodka infused with ginseng, and locally brewed beer.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 36.4
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,170
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 142.9
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 210.9

STATUS OF WOMEN

The constitution states that "women hold equal social status and rights as men." Despite this provision, no women reach high levels of the ruling Korean Workers' Party or the government. Women are represented proportionally in the labor force, and personnel in small factories are predominately women. Reportedly, women are often paid less than men for similar work. Two women are revered: the mother of Kim Il-sung and the mother of Kim Jong-il.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 20
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: —
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: —

WORK

About one-third of Koreans work in agriculture, growing rice, wheat, potatoes, vegetables, and beans and raising livestock. The other two-thirds work in industry and

services. The military employs a large number of these people, either as soldiers or in factories producing military products. There have been reports of slave labor in prison camps.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 9,600,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 43.4
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 36
 Other: 64
 Unemployment %: —

EDUCATION

Education is free, universal, and compulsory for 11 years, from ages four to 15. Schooling is divided into five years of primary school, four years of middle school, and two years of high school. The curriculum emphasizes the ideologies of Marxism-Leninism and *chuche sasang*, and party teachings are built into the content of every course. Adulation of Kim Il-sung is taught from nursery school onward. All students are encouraged to acquire some technical skills, and practical knowledge is stressed over general knowledge.

In addition, there is a special category known as revolutionary schools for children destined to become national leaders. Enrollment in these schools favors children of party cadres.

The academic year runs from September to August. The medium of instruction is Korean. Both English and Russian are taught as second languages from the middle grades on.

Technical training is provided by two-year vocational schools and three-year higher technical schools. Students who wish to continue their technical education may go on to one of 15 technical colleges, seven medical colleges, one pharmaceutical college, or 40 "factory colleges," where work and training are combined. Adult-education programs are designed not only to reduce illiteracy but also to provide ideological orientation and technical training.

Paralleling the national education system is the party school system. Units of the party school system are the county party schools, provincial Communist colleges, and the Kim Il-sung Higher Party School. In addition to regular training there, instruction is provided in ideology, party history, and organization.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 99.0
 Male %: 99.0
 Female %: 99.0

School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: —
 First Level: Primary schools: 6,122
 Teachers: —
 Students: —
 Student-Teacher Ratio: —
 Net Enrollment Ratio: —
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: —
 Teachers: —
 Students: —
 Student-Teacher Ratio: —
 Net Enrollment Ratio: —
 Third Level: Institutions: 281
 Teachers: —
 Students: —
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: —
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: —

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

North Korea does not have many telephones for its citizens, and most people do not have cellular telephones or computers, to say nothing of Internet access. The nation does, however, have some highly skilled scientists and technicians who are capable of constructing nuclear weapons.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: —
 Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

The government controls the press and the broadcast media. North Korea holds the honor of committing the worst violations of freedom of the press in the world. All newspapers and broadcasters produce a steady stream of propaganda praising the government; they never report economic difficulties or famines. It is impossible to get accurate news reports. The largest daily newspaper is *Rodong simmun* (Labor daily), the organ of the Central Committee of the KWP. The official government organ is *Minju Choson*. The Korean Central Broadcasting Station and Korean Central Television Station operate radio and television stations throughout the country. North Koreans do not usually read or listen to news from foreign sources; those who get caught doing so risk being sent to forced labor camps.

The principal agency concerned with the media is the Propaganda and Agitation Department of the KWP. The official news agency is the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA).

Media

Daily Newspapers: —
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: —
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets million: 1.3
 per 1,000: 55

CULTURE

The North Korean government has spent a great deal of money and energy promoting traditional Korean arts and culture, decorating the cities and subways and constantly informing the people that they are culturally superior and live in the best country in the world. Kim Jong-il considers himself an artist; he is reported to have composed six operas in two years and to have designed the Juche tower in Pyongyang. The state funds artistic companies who perform traditional music and dances. North Korean artists are highly skilled at Chinese brush calligraphy and Buddhist sculpture. Many people think that North Korean art is more “genuinely Korean” than South Korean.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Though the government supports the study and practice of traditional art forms, its current mythology is all focused on the modern rulers and their regime. Kim Il-sung cultivated a cult of his own personality, erecting statues of himself throughout the country and disseminating stories about his deeds. He went by the name “Great Leader,” and his son, Kim Jong-il, uses the title “Dear Leader.” Indeed, almost all North Koreans believe in the tremendous wisdom of their leaders. During the days of Kim Il-sung, most people wore pins with his picture on them, and Kim Jong-il has also cultivated this kind of adulation. He was supposedly born in a log cabin on the country’s highest mountain, under a bright star and a double rainbow.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

The biggest celebrations in North Korea are May Day, Liberation Day, and the birthday celebrations for Kim Il-sung and Kim Jong-il, which are marked with giant military parades and massive gymnastic displays. Possible outdoor activities include mountaineering, hiking, golf, and hunting, though there are many restrictions on freedom of movement, and most North Koreans cannot afford recreation.

ETIQUETTE

The most important aspect of North Korean etiquette is the absolute necessity of respecting the government, especially Kim Jong-il and his relatives. North Koreans are extremely careful to do nothing that could be construed as critical of the state because of their very real fear of being sent to prison camps. People are careful not to engage in immoral acts, such as making physical contact with someone of the opposite sex in public.

FAMILY LIFE

North Koreans have traditionally based their family relations on the principles of Confucianism, which emphasizes respect for authority. Today, families tend to be small and to include only two generations. Most people marry in their late 20s or early 30s; small weddings are the rule. Most women put their babies in state-run day-care centers, which are both free and perform the important role of beginning the process of political indoctrination. Families still value sons to carry on the family name, and a husband is allowed to divorce a wife if she cannot bear him a son. Parents of grown children usually live with their youngest son and his wife. Though mothers-in-law were traditionally known for dominating and tormenting their sons’ wives, that has changed in modern times, and the two usually have fairly amicable, or at least equal, relations.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

North Koreans do not have access to the world of fashionable clothes. The government insists that people dress neatly and have clean shoes. The government launched a campaign in 2005 to induce men to cut their hair short and listed a selection of acceptable hairstyles, claiming that short hair and tidy clothing are linked to mental ability.

SPORTS

North Koreans love soccer and they have a long-standing rivalry with South Korea’s soccer team. In 2005 the

team performed quite well in a match against Japan. Many North Koreans practice gymnastics when they are at school in order to participate in massive gymnastics demonstrations on public holidays.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1945** Following Japanese surrender, Soviet occupation forces reach Pyongyang.
Power is transferred to a Communist-dominated coalition named the People's Political Committee and later to the North Korean Five-Province Administrative Bureau.
North Korean Communist Party is founded.
- 1946** The Five-Province Administrative Bureau is reorganized as the North Korean Provisional People's Committee.
Sweeping social and economic reforms are introduced, including expropriation of farms over 5 hectares and nationalization of basic industries, banks, and transportation.
North Korean Democratic National United Front is formed, composed of 13 parties, including the Communist Party.
- 1947** Convention of the People's Committee elects the North Korean People's Assembly, which in turn elects the North Korean People's Committee, headed by Kim Il-sung.
- 1948** North Korea declines to participate in elections under UN auspices.
Constituent Committee of the People's Assembly promulgates new constitution, establishing Democratic People's Republic of Korea, with Kim Il-sung as prime minister.
Soviet occupation forces withdraw from North Korea.
- 1949** Korean Workers' Party (KWP) is founded through merger of Communist Party and New Democratic Party. Kim Il-sung is named chairman
- 1950** North Korea launches full-scale invasion of the South. UN Security Council brands North Korea an aggressor.
President Truman orders U.S. forces into battle under a multinational UN command.
South Korean forces cross the border, take Pyongyang, and reach several points on the Yalu River.
Chinese "volunteers" enter the fighting and force UN troops into a pell-mell retreat; North Korea is regained by combined Communist forces.
- 1951** Seoul is taken by Communists then regained by UN forces.
Battle lines are stabilized along the 38th parallel.
- 1953** Armistice is signed at Panmunjom, providing for military demarcation line, Demilitarized Zone, Military Armistice Commission, and neutralization Supervisory Commission.
- 1956** KWP holds Third Party Congress. Kim Il-sung faces and survives challenges from the Yen-an and Soviet factions in the party.
Relations with the Soviet Union cool following Khrushchev's denunciation of Stalin.
- 1959** The new won is introduced, replacing the old currency.
- 1961** Mutual Defense Assistance treaties are signed with Moscow and Beijing.
- 1964** Following Premier Kosygin's visit to North Korea, relations between North Korea and the Soviet Union are renormalized.
- 1967** Kim Il-sung is denounced by the Red Guards during the Chinese Cultural Revolution.
- 1968** North Korea seizes USS *Pueblo* off Wonsan.
North Korean guerrilla teams land in South Korea.
- 1969** North Korea downs a U.S. reconnaissance aircraft over international waters.
- 1970** KWP holds Fifth Party Congress.
- 1972** Kim Il-sung promulgates new constitution, under which he becomes president.
- 1976** Park Sung Chul is named prime minister.
North Korea apologizes for the killing of two U.S. servicemen at Panmunjom.
North Korea defaults on its international debt payments.
- 1977** Kim appoints Li Jong Ok as prime minister, replacing Park Sung Chul.
Kim announces new seven-year plan, for 1978–84.
- 1979** Reunification talks are deadlocked despite mediation of UN secretary-general Kurt Waldheim.
- 1980** KWP Congress elevates Kim Jong-il as general secretary in place of his father, Kim Il-sung.
- 1983** North Korea is implicated in terrorist attack on South Korean delegation in Rangoon.
Burma suspends diplomatic ties with North Korea.
- 1984** Kim Il-sung visits the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, and China to gather support for his son's succession to the North Korean leadership.
- 1985** Negotiations between North and South Korea are held to discuss cooperation but are soon suspended due to annual South Korean–U.S. military maneuvers.
- 1986** False reports of Kim Il-sung's assassination are quickly dispelled.
Kim Il-sung is reelected president. Li Gun Mo becomes premier.
- 1987** The DPRK government objects to South Korea's intention of hosting of the 1988 Olympic Games.

- The United States reduces economic and diplomatic restrictions on North Korea.
Speculations of weakened relations with China are proven false when Kim Il-sung visits Beijing.
North Korea is blamed when a South Korean aircraft is destroyed.
- 1988** Japan imposes economic and diplomatic sanctions on North Korea following the South Korean airliner attack.
North Korea boycotts the Olympic Games.
A meeting of legislators from North and South Korea proves inconclusive.
Premier Li Gun Mo resigns, reportedly due to ill health, and is replaced by Yong Hyong Muk.
- 1990** The premiers of North and South Korea meet in a series of three conferences to try to improve relations but reach no agreement on the issues dividing the two nations.
- 1991** North Korea calls off talks with the South because of U.S. South Korean military exercises.
- 1994** Kim Il-sung, head of state since 1948, dies and is succeeded by his son, Kim Jong-il.
- 1995** North Korea agrees to dismantle a nuclear facility in return for aid to build two new reactors from which it is difficult to extract weapons-grade plutonium.
- 1996** Severe floods destroy most of the rice crop, and widespread famine and homelessness result.
- 1997** Peace talks between North Korea, South Korea, the United States, and China initially break down over North Korea's negotiation precondition of food aid.
- 1998** North Korea blames the United States for the failure of another round of negotiations involving the two nations as well as South Korea and China. United States sends aid to help famine victims.
- 2000** In the first meeting between leaders of North and South Korea since 1945, Kim Jong-il and South Korean president Kim Dae-jung agree in principle to promote reconciliation and economic cooperation between the two countries.
- 2001** An EU delegation visits North Korea to help the reconciliation process. Kim Jong-il visits Moscow. A drought strikes the countryside.
- 2002** President George W. Bush names North Korea as a member of the "axis of evil," with Iran and Iraq; North Korea is offended. North and South Korean navy ships fight in a gun battle in the Yellow Sea. Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi visits; Kim Jong-il apologizes for abducting Japanese citizens in the 1970s and 1980s. The United States accuses North Korea of having a secret nuclear weapons program; North Korea throws out international inspectors.

- 2003** North Korea withdraws from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and claims it has enough plutonium to make bombs and has engaged in production.
- 2004** International talks on the nuclear crisis end without resolution.
- 2005** North Korea agrees to abandon its nuclear weapons in exchange for aid and security guarantees. It insists on continuing its civilian nuclear program.

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North Korea. *Naegak Kongbo* (official gazette)

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Korean News
<http://www.kcna.co.jp>
- United States Department of Energy
<http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/cabs/nkorea.html>

KOREA, SOUTH

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Korea (Daehan Minguk)

ABBREVIATION

KR

CAPITAL

Seoul

HEAD OF STATE

President Roh Moo-hyun (from 2003)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Lee Hae-chan (from 2004)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Democratic republic

POPULATION

48,422,644 (2005)

AREA

98,480 sq km (38,023 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Korean

LANGUAGE

Korean

RELIGIONS

Christianity, Buddhism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

South Korean Won

NATIONAL FLAG

The *taegukki*, consisting of a disc divided in the shape of the yin and yang symbols, with red above and deep blue below

in the center of a white field. In the four corners of the flag are black divination bars from the *I Ching*, in sets of three, representing heaven (in the upper hoist), water (in the upper fly), fire (in the lower hoist), and earth (in the lower fly). All three bars are unbroken in the upper hoist and halved in the lower fly. The two outer bars are halved in the upper fly, and the center bar is halved in the bottom hoist.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

The yin and yang symbol is centered within a lotus, with the name of the country beneath, on a scroll.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Till Paektu Mountain Wears Away, Until the Eastern Sea Is Drained”

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year’s Day), March 1 (Independence Movement Day), May 5 (Children’s Day), June 6 (Memorial Day), July 17 (Constitution Day), August 15 (Independence Day), September 27 (Thanksgiving Day), October 1 (Armed Forces Day), October 3 (National Foundation Day), October 9 (Anniversary of the Proclamation of the Korean Alphabet), December 25 (Christmas), various Buddhist and Confucian festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

August 15, 1945

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

July 17, 1948; revised 1987

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

South Korea, on the southern part of the Korean peninsula, in East Asia, has a total land area of 38,023 sq mi (98,480 sq km). The greatest distance north-northeast to south-southeast is 399 mi (642 km); that east-southeast to west-northwest, 271 mi (436 km). The coastline along the Sea of Japan and the Yellow Sea runs for 1,499 mi (2,413 km). South Korea shares its entire international

land boundary of 148 mi (238 km) with the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, commonly referred to as North Korea. This border, just north of the 38th parallel, was created in 1953 at the end of the Korean War and includes a demilitarized zone.

The capital is Seoul. There are six other large cities: Pusan, Taegu, Inch’on, Kwangju, Taejon, and Ulsan.

South Korea is a rugged, mountainous country. Only 15 percent of its land is made up of plains, and these are

South Korea



mainly along the coast. The major topographical feature is a chain of mountains, with the Taebaek Range at its core, running parallel to the eastern coast.

The four largest rivers within South Korea are the Han, with a length of 320 mi (514 km); Kum, 249 mi (400 km); Naktong, 326 mi (524 km); and Somjin, 132

mi (212 km). These rivers are subject to floods in the summer.

Geography

Area sq km: 98,480; sq mi 38,023
 World Rank: 107th
 Land Boundaries, km: North Korea 238
 Coastline, km: 2,413
 Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Sea of Japan 0
 Highest: Halla-san 1,950
 Land Use %
 Arable Land: 17.2
 Permanent Crops: 2.0
 Forest: 63.3
 Other: 17.5

Population of Principal Cities (2000)

Ansan	554,998
Anyang	578,845
Ch'angwon	472,151
Cheju	279,529
Chinju	279,524
Ch'onan	285,098
Ch'ongju	585,622
Chonju	615,804
Inch'on	2,392,745
Iri	246,735
Kimhae	247,716
Koyang	762,598
Kumi	264,686
Kunp'o	262,593
Kunsan	219,710
Kwangju	1,350,948
Kwangmy'ong	333,596
Masan	357,973
Mokp'o	250,336
P'ohang	332,056
Puch'on	757,832
Pusan	3,655,437
Py'ongt'aek	230,265
Seongnam	912,222
Seoul	9,895,972
Shihung	304,260
Suwon	944,239
Taegu	2,473,990
Taejon	1,365,961
Uijongbu	354,322
Ulsan	851,751
Wonju	209,606
Yosu	253,462

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

South Korea has a continental climate, with dry, cold winters and hot, humid summers. Even though winters are less severe than in North Korea, snowfall is not uncommon in South Korea. The average January temperature varies

from -5°F (-20.5°C) at Chungcheong to 28.4°F (-2°C) at Seoul. Summer temperatures are more uniform.

No region receives less than 30 in (762 mm) of rainfall annually, though serious droughts periodically occur. In most areas yearly rainfall is over 40 in (1,016 mm). Rainfall is concentrated in the April-to-September rainy season, sometimes causing damaging floods. Typhoons occur at least twice a year, damaging crops and bringing torrential rains.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature
 Winter Chungcheong: 25°F
 Seoul: 23°F
 Busan: 28.4°F
 Jeju Island: 40°F
 Summer South: 77°F to 80°F
 Northeastern coast: 70°F
 Average Rainfall
 30 in to 60 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Most of South Korea's native forests were cut down during the Japanese occupation. The nation has been working to replace its forests. Vegetation in the south and in coastal areas is typical of temperate climates; ginseng grows in this area. The northern part of the country is covered with forests of conifers, such as fir, beech, and pine. Black bears and deer sometimes appear in this area. South Korea has 20 national parks.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 48,422,644
 World Rank: 24th
 Density per sq km: 485.3
 % of annual growth (1999-2003): 0.7
 Male %: 50.2
 Female %: 49.8
 Urban %: 80.3
 Age Distribution %: 0-14: 20.4
 15-64: 71.4
 65 and over: 8.2
 Population 2025: 49,870,000
 Birth Rate per 1,000: 12.33
 Death Rate per 1,000: 6.13
 Rate of Natural Increase %: 0.8
 Total Fertility Rate: 1.56
 Expectation of Life (years): Males 71.96
 Females 79.54
 Marriage Rate per 1,000: 6.4
 Divorce Rate per 1,000: 3.1
 Average Size of Households: 3.7
 Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Along with North Korea, South Korea is the most ethnically and linguistically homogeneous nation in the world. Virtually the entire population is of Korean origin, and there is no evidence of non-Mongoloid admixture. There is no national ethnic minority. The total resident, non-Korean population is estimated at no more than 20,000, mainly Chinese.

LANGUAGES

The national and official language is Korean, a member of the Altaic family of languages. Korean is written in a largely phonetic alphabet called hangul, consisting of 14 basic consonants and 10 simple vowels. The American presence in South Korea since the 1950s has stimulated the growth of English as the most important foreign language. English is taught in all secondary schools.

RELIGIONS

South Korea has no state religion, and freedom of worship and conscience are guaranteed in the constitution. Buddhism claims the most adherents, but Christianity is the most influential organized religion. South Korean Buddhism has 18 denominations, of which the Chogye-Jong is the largest order, with almost half the total believers. Christianity was introduced into South Korea in the late 16th century. Christian missionaries were more successful in Korea than in most other Asian nations. Christianity became acceptable to Koreans as a harbinger of Western learning, or *sobak*. In the 1970s and 1980s the government sometimes cracked down against Christian social activists for opposing governmental attempts at regimentation and for pressing for economic and political reforms. By the 1990s Christians once more reclaimed their status as the most influential religious group.

Religious Affiliations

Nonreligious	22,300,000
Buddhist	12,500,000
Christian	12,500,000
Confucian	500,000
Other	500,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The earliest Korean peoples are believed to have been migrants and invaders from present-day Manchuria, northern China, and Mongolia, of either Tungusic or Mongoloid origin. According to legend, the Korean state

was founded in 2333 B.C.E. by a mythical figure called Tangun in what is now the lower Taedong River basin in the northwestern region of the peninsula. Another legend of Chinese origin ascribes the origin of the country to a Chinese prince named Chi-tzu (Kija in Korean), who flourished around 1123 B.C.E.

Ancient Korea, known as Choson, developed into a league of tribal groups in northern Korea around the 4th century B.C.E. In the third century an indigenous Han tribal family ruled the region; this reign was overthrown in 194 B.C.E. by Wiman, a tribal chieftain of Korean or Chinese origin. The deposed Han family migrated south to the Han River basin, and three branches of the family—Ma Han, Chin Han, and Pyon Han—then ruled the southern half of the peninsula. In 108 B.C.E. the Chinese emperor Wu Ti of the Han Dynasty destroyed the Wiman state in the north and annexed it.

By the fourth century C.E., however, the Han settlements in the north had been wiped out. By the late fourth to the mid-seventh century, three Korean kingdoms competed for hegemony: Koguryo in the north, Paekche in the southwest, and Silla in the southeast. During this period Buddhism was introduced into Korea. Ultimately, the Silla crushed the other two kingdoms and united all but the northernmost part of the peninsula. Korea emerged as a unified entity in 676 under the Silla.

The century that followed is known as the golden age of Korea. The Koryo dynasty (from which the name Korea is derived) was established in 935 by Wong Kon, a general during the last days of Silla. The end of the Koryo dynasty around 1392 was marked by coups, rebellions, and a state of anarchy. The last 160 years of the kingdom were especially turbulent, as punctuated by waves of Mongol invasions. Koryo capitulated to the Mongols in 1259, and the northern part of the country was incorporated into the Mongol Empire, soon to be known as Yuan.

Koryo regained its national freedom in 1368 when General Yi Song Gye seized control of the government and moved his capital from Kaesong to Seoul, then called Hanyang. The Yi dynasty, which lasted for the next 500 years, adopted the ancient name of Choson and Confucianism as the official state doctrine. The Yi era is known for its brilliant cultural achievements, including the casting of the world's first movable type in 1403, the invention of the rain gauge, and the invention in 1443 of the phonetic vernacular writing system known as hangul. Around 1500 Yi Choson was riven by bitter internecine conflicts and, battered by successive Japanese (1592–98) and Manchu (1627 and 1636) invasions, was forced to become a tributary of the Ching Manchu Empire.

In the 18th century the nation of Korea recovered somewhat under two kings, Yongjo (1724–76) and Chongjo (1776–1800). In the 19th century Korea responded to growing external dangers by adopting a policy

of isolationism and thereby became known as the hermit nation. Internally, as part of this policy, 13,000 Roman Catholic converts were executed in 1866.

The Japanese were the first to succeed in penetrating Korea's isolation. After warlike provocation in 1875 and the failure of China to come to Korea's aid, the Japanese forced the unequal Kanghwa treaty on Korea in 1876, giving Japanese nationals extraterritorial rights and opening three Korean ports to Japanese trade. During the last quarter of the 19th century Japan and China competed for dominance in Korea. During 1894 and 1895 Japan seized upon a peasant uprising in Korea's southern provinces, called the Tonghak Rebellion, to destroy Chinese power in Korea.

In 1910, after the Russo-Japanese War, Korea became a Japanese protectorate and later a Japanese colony under the Treaty of Annexation. Korea was under Japanese occupation from 1910, when the Yi dynasty was abolished, to 1945, when the country was liberated by U.S. and Soviet forces, with the Soviets then holding sway over a northern Communist government and the United States backing a democratic southern government. Although Japanese rule was accompanied by some economic development, those years represented systematic national humiliation. The Japanese openly aimed to eradicate Korean national identity, even banning the use of the Korean language. Few Japanese legacies have survived, though relations between the two countries were normalized in 1965.

South Korea became the independent Republic of Korea on August 15, 1948. In June 1950 North Korea invaded South Korea in an attempt to unify the two nations under Communist rule. The Korean War lasted until a truce was signed in July 1953, creating a demilitarized zone just north of the 38th parallel. The war devastated much of South Korea's economy and caused enormous suffering and hardships for its people.

Between 1948 and 1960 the nation was ruled by Dr. Rhee Syng-man, head of the Liberal Party. Increasingly authoritarian, and unable to deal with economic problems, Rhee was forced to resign in May 1960. His eventual successor, Yun Bo-seon of the Democratic Party, was forced from office by a military coup in May 1961 led by Gen. Park Chung-hee. Park's military junta ended constitutional government and ruled by decree until 1963. That year Park created the Democratic Republican Party as a step toward civilian government.

In the fall a new constitution was adopted, and Park easily won election as president. Park subsequently won presidential elections in 1967 and 1971, though by narrow margins, against New Democratic Party candidates. During the 1970s Park established dictatorial rule; he dissolved the National Assembly, proclaimed martial law, and drew up a new constitution vastly increasing his powers as president, giving him the power to declare

martial law and dissolve the Assembly during "emergencies." Popular opposition led Park to enact emergency measures in 1975, strengthening his control over the nation.

Park was assassinated in 1979, and civilian rule was briefly reestablished. However, struggles within the political parties, strikes by workers for higher wages and better working conditions, and widespread student unrest gave the military an opportunity to reestablish control in 1980. Gen. Chun Doo-hwan proclaimed martial law in May 1980, banning all political parties, outlawing strikes, and muzzling the press.

Martial law was lifted in January 1981, and Chun was elected president in February. Chun's Democratic Justice Party (DJP) won a majority in the Assembly. Under Chun's rule South Korea enjoyed stability and continuity at the price of civil and political rights. Chun also stifled dissent at home and among South Koreans abroad through a ruthless secret service.

A new opposition party, the New Korea Democratic Party (NKDP), was formed in January 1985, making impressive gains in February elections, though the DJP retained its majority. The NKDP tried unsuccessfully to limit presidential powers, and unrest spread, as led by student riots. Violent clashes on the eve of the 1988 Olympic Games in Seoul forced President Chun to step down in July 1987. A new constitution was promulgated on October 29. The Reunification Democratic Party, headed by Kim Young-sam, was formed by a faction in the NKDP. In December Roh Tae-woo of the DJP was elected president of South Korea; the split in the opposition also enabled the DJP to win a slim majority in the Assembly in the April 1988 elections.

Student demonstrations against corruption and authoritarian rule continued throughout 1988. In addition to President Chun, many high-ranking former government officials were replaced. The end of the decade saw both peaceful and violent demands for reunification with North Korea and for the removal of U.S. troops from South Korea.

In a dramatic move in February 1990, the DJP merged with two opposition parties to create the Democratic Liberal Party (DLP). That year South Korea and North Korea agreed to work for reunification, though little immediate progress was achieved.

In 1992 Kim Young-sam, as head of the DLP Party, won election as president of South Korea, becoming the first civil head of state since 1961. President Kim's effectiveness, however, was compromised by continuing revelations of corruption and scandals in the DLP. Both former presidents Chun and Roh were sentenced to prison terms by the courts. Other prominent members of the DLP were jailed for corruption. Some progress in political reform was finally seen in the June 1995 elections; for the first time in more than 30 years, direct elections

for local government were carried out, with open voting for mayors, governors, and chiefs of wards and counties.

In December 1997 the opposition leader Kim Dae-jung of the National Congress for New Politics was elected president, marking the first time in the nation's history that an opposition party gained the presidency. The nation was soon forced to turn its attention away from politics, as South Korea faced serious threats to the stability of its economy in 1997–98. Aid in the form of a \$57-billion loan from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) helped South Koreans to deal with this crisis. In 2001 South Korea's economic problems remained a central concern, though business and industry began to recover. In 2000 Kim Dae-jung won the Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts at improving relationships between North and South Korea. In an emotional reunion between South and North Korean families, relatives were able to meet for the first time since the partition of the country in 1945.

Generally, however, relations between the two countries remained tense. In 2002, 25 North Koreans defected to South Korea by way of the Spanish embassy in Beijing, drawing attention to the tens of thousands of North Koreans who, having fled repression and famine, were hiding in China. That June, naval vessels from the two Koreas fought a battle over the disputed sea border, leaving over 40 people dead. Kim's regime proved tainted with corruption, and two of the president's sons went to jail for graft. In December 2002 the governing Millennium Democratic Party's candidate for president, Roh Moo-hyun, managed to win a very close election.

Roh Moo-hyun suffered from his own allegations of corruption and was suspended between March and May 2002 after parliament voted to impeach him for incompetence and breaching election rules. He was reinstated after the Constitutional Court overturned the suspension.

In June 2004 the United States proposed reducing its troop presence in Korea by one-third; the opposition forces opposed this move, fearing attacks if American forces were to leave. The government decided to build a new capital city, Yeongi-Kongju, to replace Seoul by 2030. The United Nations rebuked South Korea that fall for its experiments in enriching uranium but decided not to call on the Security Council to discipline the nation.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1948–60	Rhee Syng-man
1960–62	Yun Bo-seon
1963–79	Park Chung-hee
1979–80	Choi Kyu-ha
1980–88	Chun Doo-hwan
1988–93	Roh Tae-woo
1993–98	Kim Young-sam
1998–2003	Kim Dae-jung
2003–	Roh Moo-hyun

CONSTITUTION

The constitution of the Sixth Republic, approved in October 1987, rescinded many of the presidential powers allowed by the constitution of 1972. This earlier constitution, with its authoritarian and antidemocratic provisions, had represented a break with earlier constitutions. The 1987 constitution provides for the direct election of the president by universal suffrage to a five-year, nonrenewable term. It restricts the president's emergency powers and gives the National Assembly the power to end martial law.

The State Council, which functions as the cabinet, is made up of the president, the prime minister, and 15 to 20 other members appointed by the president. No active member of the military may be a member of the council.

Legislative power is vested in the unicameral National Assembly, popularly elected for four-year terms. The judiciary is headed by the Supreme Court, whose chief justice is appointed for a five-year term with the approval of the National Assembly.

National elections and referendums are held and supervised by the Central Election Management Committee. This independent, nonpartisan body has nine members, three of whom are appointed by the president, three by the National Assembly, and three by the Supreme Court. Election of members of the National Assembly is by universal, direct, and secret vote. The voting age is 20.

PARLIAMENT

The national legislature is the National Assembly (Huk Hoe), a unicameral body consisting of 299 members elected by popular vote for four-year terms. Amendments to the constitution in 1988 provide for direct election to all but 75 seats. Half of those seats are awarded to the party receiving the most votes, with the rest distributed proportionately to the other parties.

The party makeup in the National Assembly changed dramatically in 1990, when the ruling Democratic Justice Party merged with two opposition parties to form the Democratic Liberal Party.

Traditionally, the South Korean voting system was weighted in favor of the ruling party, making that party virtually certain to retain its majority in the National Assembly. The constitution of 1987 eliminated the ruling party's advantage by replacing vote by electoral college with direct popular vote. Nevertheless, the DLP, renamed the New Korea Party in 1992, retained power in the assembly because of divisions in the opposition parties. Even after the election of Kim Dae-jung, leader of the National Congress for New Politics in 1997, the New Korea Party held a majority of seats in the assembly.

POLITICAL PARTIES

South Korea has a near two-party system. The presidential coalition consists of the Millennium Democratic Party (MDP) and the United Liberal Democrats (ULD). The former was founded by Kim Dae-jung in 1995 as a centrist party, initially called the National Congress for New Politics. The conservative ULD was formed by Kim Jong-pil. The main opposition parties are the Grand National Party (GNP), formed in 1997 by the merger of the New Korea Party and the Democratic Party, and the New Party by the People (NPP), also founded in 1997. There is also the Uri Party/Our Open Party (UP).

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For purposes of local administration, South Korea is divided into nine provinces—Gyeonggi, Gangwon, North Chungcheong, South Chungcheong, North Jeolla, South Jeolla, North Gyeongsang, South Gyeongsang, and Jeju Island—and seven separate cities—Seoul, Busan, Incheon, Daegu, Gwangju, Ulsan, and Daejeon. The cities are divided into wards, or *ku*, each headed by a *kuchongjang*; the wards are further divided into blocks, or *dong*. There are no representative institutions at the local level.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The judicial system is headed by the Supreme Court, which consists of a chief justice and no more than 14 other justices. The justices are appointed to six-year terms by the president, with the consent of the National Assembly. The Supreme Court hears appeals from the appellate courts and also has jurisdiction over military tribunals. Constitutionality of laws is decided by the nine-member Constitution Court, three of whose members are selected by the president, three by the Assembly, and three by the chief justice.

Appellate courts, district courts, and family courts make up the lower court system. The appellate courts hear appeals in civil and criminal cases. District courts, in Seoul and the provincial capitals, have original jurisdiction over civil and criminal cases. Thirty-six branch courts are found in other principal cities. There is also a family court sitting in Seoul.

The constitution guarantees many rights to defendants: the presumption of innocence and protection against self-incrimination, ex post facto laws, and double jeopardy; the right to a speedy trial; and the right to legal counsel. Though these rights were sometimes not observed in the past, they are now the rule. Trials are usually open to the public, and charges against defendants are clearly stated.

The police normally wait several days, and sometimes more than 40 days, the maximum under Korean law, to notify an arrested person's family. The constitution guarantees the right of prompt legal assistance and the right to request court review in case of arrest. Habeas corpus, although not traditional in Korean law, is now part of the legal system.

HUMAN RIGHTS

South Korea's record on civil and human rights has been mixed. During the 1990s the government generally respected the freedoms guaranteed to all citizens in the constitution of 1987, which includes provisions concerning the freedoms of speech and the press, for example. In earlier years the human rights picture was often marked by press censorship and the suppression of political activity, particularly among college students. Student riots in Seoul and Gwangju in 1980, for example, led the government to declare martial law, arrest political dissidents, and dissolve the National Assembly. In 1984 the government relaxed these policies by restoring the civil rights of many of those imprisoned after the 1980 unrest.

FOREIGN POLICY

South Korea's foreign policy is geared toward four major goals: national security, economic development, the unification of North and South Korea, and the enhancement of the country's international stature.

Maintaining its 1954 Mutual Defense Treaty with the United States is of central importance to South Korea. The force of 37,000 American soldiers stationed in the demilitarized zone (DMZ) separating North and South Korea is vital to the nation's security. South Korea has also sought American backing in its efforts to improve relations with North Korea.

After years of bitter relations following the end of the Korean War, in 1972 South Korea and North Korea agreed in principle to work toward normalizing relations. South Korea hoped that an end to hostility with the North could lead to the eventual reunification of Korea. The goal of reunification proved elusive almost from the beginning, however; tensions between the two nations both continued and increased in the 1980s and 1990s. North Korea built up its armed forces and took provocative actions that escalated at times into isolated clashes along the DMZ. In time North Korea's Communist government secretly developed nuclear weapons and missiles, posing ever greater danger to South Korea. South Korea responded by undertaking a nuclear weapons development program in the 1990s. Tensions grew when North Korea launched a test missile into the Sea of Japan in August

1998. Relations with North Korea entered a new phase when President Kim Dae-jung visited North Korea for the first time in 1999; he won the Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts at reconciliation. Despite those efforts, relations have remained tense, and there was sporadic fighting between the two Koreas in the early 2000s.

South Korea achieved recognition from the world community when, along with North Korea, it was admitted to the United Nations in 1991. Its international stature was also enhanced by Seoul's hosting the 1988 Olympic Games.

DEFENSE

The defense structure is headed by the president as commander in chief of the armed forces. The president, the chairman of the joint chiefs of staff, the chiefs of staff, and other ministers serve on the National Security Council, which oversees national defense. Military manpower for the army and part of the marine corps is provided by conscription, while the air force and navy depend on voluntary enlistment. All male citizens are liable for compulsory military service at age 20, though they can volunteer at 18. They serve between 24 and 28 months, depending on the branch of service.

The Korean Peninsula is one of the world's most heavily armed regions. The combined North and South Korean armed forces total some 1.4 million. The South Korean army is virtually the creation of the post-World War II U.S. military government in Korea. This relationship was cemented by the 1954 Mutual Defense Treaty between the two nations. South Korea's armed forces personnel were estimated to total 665,000 in 1999. The nation spent \$14.5 billion on military preparedness in 2003, or 2.7 percent of its gross domestic product (GDP).

The U.S. has kept troops in South Korea since the late 1940s. In 2004 the U.S. proposed reducing its troop strength by one-third, a suggestion that was not received with universal enthusiasm. South Korea itself admitted to experimenting with nuclear weapons in 2000.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 665,000
 Military Manpower Availability: 14,233,895
 Military Expenditures \$billion: 14.522
 as % of GDP: 2.7
 as % of central government expenditures: —
 Arms Imports \$million: 229
 Arms Exports \$million: 22

ECONOMY

South Korea's economy has undergone a dramatic transformation since the early 1950s. In 1954 it was an improv-

erished nation largely dependent on agriculture; today it is a modern industrial power, with a generally skilled workforce of over 20 million, as well as a leading nation in world trade. South Korea's remarkable economic growth can be seen in the increase in its GDP in recent decades: From 1963 to 1978 the annual GDP growth rate was 10 percent, one of the highest in the world. In 1963 per capita GDP was \$100; in 2000 per capita GDP was \$16,100.

South Korea enjoys a leading role in trade among the nations of the world. Its major exports include electronic and electrical equipment, machinery, steel, automobiles, ships, clothing, and textiles. South Korea's leading trade partners are the United States, which purchases 17.8 percent of these goods, and Japan, which buys 18.2 percent.

The economic crisis that afflicted Asian nations in 1997–98 became a serious threat in South Korea. The nation's currency and banking system was weakened by massive credit problems and foreign debt. Government efforts to help South Korean industries and banks were unable to resolve the crisis. The intervention of the IMF in 1997 helped to bolster South Korea's economy with a \$57 billion loan. By enabling the government and the private sector to work together to implement economic reforms, this loan helped the nation to begin recovery in 1999.

Growth was strong in the early 2000s, and in 2003 GDP grew at a rate of 3.1 percent; this was a reduction from 2002, as brought about by rising household debt and other external factors. Per capita GDP in 2003 was a high \$17,800. Trade with North Korea increased, with South Korea shipping its neighbor humanitarian supplies in exchange for metal products. However, economists fear that South Korea's growth years may be over, due to its aging population and rigid market structures.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 857.8
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 17,800
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 6.4
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 5.6
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 3.6
 Industry: 36.4
 Services: 60.0
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 59
 Government Consumption: 11
 Gross Domestic Investment: 29.6
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 201.3
 Imports: 175.6
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 2.9
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 22.5

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
118.8	121.5	126.5	129.9	134.5

Finance

National Currency: South Korean Won (KRW)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = KRW 1,191.61
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency trillion: 63.15
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 2.5
 Total External Debt \$billion: 130.3
 Debt Service Ratio %: —
 Balance of Payments \$billion: 12.32
 International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 154.5
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 3.6

Official Development Assistance

Donor ODA \$million: 200
 per capita \$: 4.10
 Foreign Direct Investment \$billion: 1.97

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$billion: 135.5
 Expenditures \$billion: 128.7
 Budget Surplus \$billion: 6.8
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 3.6
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: -0.5
 Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares: 118.6
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 60.6
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 422.6
 Total Farmland % of land area: 17.2
 Livestock: Cattle million: 2.1
 Sheep: 600
 Hogs million: 9.1
 Chickens million: 97
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 4
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons million: 1.97

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 141.9
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 5.1

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 31.34
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 159.4
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 3.367
 Net Energy Imports % of use: 82.4
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 52
 Production kW-hr billion: 290.7
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 270.3

Coal Reserves tons million: 86
 Production tons million: 4.2
 Consumption tons million: 75.8
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
 Production cubic feet billion: —
 Consumption cubic feet billion: 739
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
 Production barrels million per day: —
 Consumption barrels million per day: 2.1
 Pipelines Length km: 827

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 175.6
 Exports \$billion: 201.3
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 12.0
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 13.7
 Balance of Trade \$billion: 12.32

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Japan %	20.3	18.2
United States %	13.9	17.8
China %	12.3	9.0
Saudi Arabia %	5.2	-
Hong Kong %	-	7.6

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 86,990
 Paved %: 74.5
 Automobiles: 9,737,400
 Trucks and Buses: 4,169,700
 Railroad: Track Length km: 3,125
 Passenger-km billion: 28.7
 Freight-km billion: 10.8
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 535
 Total Deadweight Tonnage million: 9.76
 Airports: 102
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 65.85
 Length of Waterways km: 1,608

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 5.35
 Number of Tourists from million: 7.12
 Tourist Receipts \$billion: 5.28
 Tourist Expenditures \$billion: 7.64

Communications

Telephones million: 22.877
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.03
 Cellular Telephones million: 33.59
 Personal Computers million: 27
 Internet Hosts per million people: 14,336
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 603

ENVIRONMENT

Only a little more than half the Korean population has piped water because of a dearth of storage and purification facilities. A lack of sewage treatment and direct discharges of industrial plants contaminate many water supplies. The overuse of pesticides and fertilizers on farmland has led to the runoff of these chemicals into rivers, adding to the pollutant burden.

Rapid industrial growth has brought an increase in the use of low-grade coal both for heating and industrial purposes. Untreated emissions result in high levels of pollution, which is exacerbated by the growing number of automobiles. More than 100 species of animals have disappeared from rural areas because of the destruction of their habitat and the use of chemical fertilizers. Of particular concern is the Naktong River delta, the winter home of thousands of birds.

South Korea has made great efforts to clean up industrial pollution, with some notable success. Air pollution, however, is growing rapidly as more and more people drive automobiles.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 63.3
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: -5
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 4
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 303,091
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 9.08

LIVING CONDITIONS

Living conditions are quite good in South Korea. Housing is modern and well heated through systems of pipes under floors. Traditional houses are one-story structures shaped like Ls or Us. Rooms serve multiple functions; people typically eat and sleep on the floor; though many people also use Western-style furnishings. Furniture is elaborately decorated. Public transportation is cheap and efficient, though it can be extremely crowded; traffic jams make driving inconvenient.

HEALTH

The government supplies health care to all citizens; workers pay small portions of their paychecks to cover health insurance, which includes dental care. An oldest son can cover his parents on his health insurance policy. Drugs such as antibiotics are readily available without prescriptions. National insurance also covers traditional remedies such as acupuncture, moxibustion, massage, baths, and herbal treatments such as ginseng.

Health

Number of Physicians: 84,611
 Number of Dentists: 18,039
 Number of Nurses: 160,301
 Number of Pharmacists: 50,623
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 181
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: 6.1
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 7.18
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 20
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 6.0
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 532
 HIV Infected % of adults: < 0.1
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 97
 Measles: 97
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: —
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 92

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Korean food features rice and soup at nearly every meal, along with many vegetables, stews made of meat and vegetables, and spicy pickled cabbage called kimchi. Most food is extremely spicy. A fancy dish is *pulgogi*, meat that is grilled on the table and then wrapped in lettuce leaves. Ginseng, ginger, and green tea are all popular drinks.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 1.6
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 3,060
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 151.7
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 276.0

STATUS OF WOMEN

Violence against women remains a problem, and some women's rights groups maintain that such violence, including spousal abuse, has worsened with the recent decline of the economy. A 1997 survey found that 31.4 percent of households had experienced incidents of domestic violence. In July 1998 the government enacted the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Victim Protection Act, which defines domestic violence as a serious crime.

Enacted to combat sexual harassment in the workplace, a new sexual harassment law went into effect in July 1998. Under the law, companies can be fined up to \$2,500 (3 million won) for failing to take steps to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace or for failing to punish an offender. The law also requires companies to establish in-house sexual harassment complaint centers and forbids firms from punishing employees for taking their complaints to outside organizations.

The amended Family Law, which went into effect in 1991, permits women to head a household, recognizes a wife's right to a portion of the couple's property, and al-

lows a woman to maintain greater contact with her offspring after a divorce.

In January 1998 the National Assembly revised the 1987 Equal Employment Act to include tougher penalties to be imposed on companies found to discriminate against women in hiring and promotions.

Women have full access to education, and social mores and attitudes are gradually changing. For example, the major political parties are making more efforts to recruit women; the Ministry of Women's Affairs continued its efforts to expand employment opportunities; and the military and service academies continued to expand opportunities for women.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 13
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: —
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 41.2

WORK

South Koreans have worked very hard in the days since the Second World War, transforming their once poverty-stricken nation into an economic powerhouse. Electronics and technology, manufacturing, and services dominate the economy. There are many jobs for skilled workers. Women make up about 42 percent of the workforce, typically holding traditionally female jobs, as teachers, nurses, secretaries, and tour guides, for example. Confucian standards of behavior apply in the workplace, and junior employees are expected to respect their elders. In 2003 the National Assembly passed a law reducing the workweek from six to five days.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 22,920,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 42.0
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 8.8
 Industry: 19.1
 Services: 72.1
 Unemployment %: 3.4

EDUCATION

The national literacy rate was 98 percent in 1998. Education is compulsory, free, and universal from ages six to 12. Schooling consists of 12 years, as divided into six years of primary school, three years of middle school, and three years of secondary school. The curriculum was standard-

ized in 1954 but has since been modified many times. The academic year runs from September through June. The medium of instruction is Korean, but English is taught as a compulsory subject from the secondary grades on. Private schools function as an integral part of the national school system, with enrollment in private schools rising to 45 percent at the middle-school level.

Control of education is vested in the Ministry of Education, but the public school system is under the administrative direction of city, county, and provincial school boards. Only higher educational institutions are directly under the Ministry of Education; these include two- and four-year public colleges as well as private institutions, such as Ewha Women's University in Seoul.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 97.9
 Male %: 99.2
 Female %: 96.6
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 15.8
 First Level: Primary Schools: 5,732
 Teachers: 132,716
 Students: 4,148,432
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 31.3
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 99.8
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 3,790
 Teachers: 200,805
 Students: 3,081,485
 Student-Teacher-Ratio: 18.2
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 87.1
 Third Level: Institutions: 802
 Teachers: 163,603
 Students: 3,210,142
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 84.7
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 4.3

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

South Korea's scientific infrastructure developed with dazzling speed between 1960 and 2000. Initially, firms worked on reverse engineering, imitating—and occasionally pirating—existing products, but by the 1990s the nation was engaging in legitimate scientific research and development in its own right. South Korea has about 100 research centers, scientific and engineering centers at universities, and private research concerns. In 1998 the nation spent about \$1.35 billion on science and technology. There are excellent telecommunications facilities. Nearly 30 million Koreans were using the Internet in 2003.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 2,238
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 2.6
 High-Tech Exports \$billion: 46.4
 Patent Applications by Residents: 74,001

MEDIA

More than 100 daily newspapers are published, including several in English. The periodicals press consists of more than one thousand titles. The most influential newspapers and periodicals are privately owned by wealthy individuals or families with direct or indirect ties to the government or to one of Korea's large industrial conglomerates; they have been subject to government censorship in past years, though they were seldom forced to close, as were many independent newspapers. Freedom of the press is greatly respected, and the press regularly criticizes the government.

South Korea has a large book-publishing industry, with over 75 major publishers.

The electronic media are subject to government regulation, but there is no government monopoly. The government-owned Korean Broadcasting System (KBS) exists alongside private radio networks. In the field of television, government and private networks compete in the same manner. KBS has a television station in Seoul, as does the private Munhwa Broadcasting Network. Most Koreans have cable television, and satellite services have become increasingly popular since their introduction in 2002.

South Korea has a strong film-production industry, which produces many feature films and short films each year. Films are subject to regulations set out by the Ministry of Culture and Information and to the censorship standards of an advisory council.

Since Kim Dae-Jung met with Kim Jong-il in 2000, the South Korean press has been kinder in its coverage of North Korea, though there have been cases in which South Korean journalists have been criticized for making favorable comments about the nation's northern neighbor.

Media

Newspapers and Periodicals: —
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: 30,487
 Radio Receivers million: -
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets million: 16.9
 per 1,000: 364

CULTURE

South Korea has maintained its traditional art forms, such as dance, drama, and painting. Most types of performing arts come in two varieties: one for the nobility and one for the common people. Korean ceramics are world famous; vases may be glazed in celadon green or depict scenes from nature. There is a Ceramic Art Village

in Incheon that employs potters who make traditional works. Korean literature came from an oral tradition influenced by Buddhism, Confucianism, and shamanism. Some of the earliest written literature are poems called *hyangga*, written in Chinese characters that sounded like phonetic Korean. Modern writers explore themes such as industrialization and social justice. Young people enjoy European and American popular music.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 168
 Volumes: 3,184,000
 Registered borrowers: 2,157,628
 Museums Number: 146
 Annual Attendance: 665,000
 Cinema Gross Receipts national currency billion: 286
 Number of Cinemas: 588
 Seating Capacity: 195,000
 Annual Attendance: 54,700,000

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

South Koreans are interested in their country's traditional culture, occasionally wearing traditional costumes and attending performances of folk dances and music. The government has actively encouraged the revival of traditional dances, considering them important cultural properties. The Korean Folk Village in Suwon is an entire village constructed in the traditional style and filled with employees dressed as old-time Koreans. Some Koreans still observe the customs of shamanism, a kind of nature worship, and perform acts such as leaving offerings at shrines or hanging chilies and pine needles over the doors of houses where sons have been born.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

South Korea has all the entertainment possibilities of a modern country, with nightclubs, restaurants, shopping, and bathhouses. People enjoy outdoor activities such as hiking, skiing, and skating.

ETIQUETTE

Koreans do not address older people by first names, only by title. A younger Korean will not look an older person in the eye. Bowing is fairly common. Koreans find politeness extremely important and do not like direct confrontation or criticism. When a group of people go out to dinner, one person pays the bill for the entire group; it is rude to offer to help. In social settings, men and women typically socialize separately, in different rooms if possible.

FAMILY LIFE

Confucian traditions inform Koreans' attitudes toward the family. Everyone knows his or her place and is expected to respect all superiors; all parents encourage their children to respect their elders and to have a sense of obligation to the family. Most people can trace their family trees back several generations. While in the old days extended families often lived together, modern family units are smaller, though people still take care of their elderly parents. Most women choose to stay home after marrying and having children; it is customary for a husband to turn over his entire pay package to his wife, who uses it for household expenses and gives her husband an allowance for his needs.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

South Koreans dress conservatively, in typical Western styles. Men wear dark suits for business, and women wear modest suits or dresses.

SPORTS

South Koreans have substantial disposable income and spend much of it on leisure activities. Martial arts such as taekwon do are very popular; *ssireum* is another martial art and is similar to sumo. People also enjoy Western sports such as soccer, basketball, and skiing. Korean athletes have done very well in international competitions in sports such as archery, wrestling, handball, volleyball, and swimming.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1945** Soviet Union invades Korea and occupies the half north of the 38th parallel. U.S. forces occupy the southern half of the peninsula.
- 1948** Communist north becomes the Democratic Republic of Korea, with Kim Il-sung as president, and the democratic south the Republic of Korea, with Rhee Syng-man as president.
- 1950** North Korea invades South Korea. United States, backed by UN forces, pushes back the aggressors. China intervenes and drives UN forces back to the 38th parallel.
- 1953** Korean War ends with no peace treaty, but each side accepts the 38th parallel as the dividing line between the warring countries. U.S. troops remain in the country to guarantee peace.
- 1960** Rhee resigns as president following student-led protests.
- 1961** Military coup brings Gen. Park Chung-hee to power.
- 1972** Martial law is imposed, and presidential powers are augmented.
- 1979** President Park is assassinated. Interim government of President Choi Kyu-ha introduces liberalizing reforms.
- 1979** Gen. Chun Doo-hwan assumes power after anti-government riots.
- 1987** Constitutional reforms are introduced to placate liberal critics. Democratic Justice Party candidate Roh Tae-woo is elected president.
- 1988** Olympic Games are held in Seoul.
- 1991** South Korea joins United Nations.
- 1992** South Korea establishes diplomatic relations with China. Kim Young-sam is elected president.
- 1996** South Korea is admitted to Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. Former presidents Roh Tae-woo and Chun Doo-hwan are convicted for corruption.
- 1998** Kim Dae-jung is elected president, the first from an opposition party.
- 2000** President Kim Dae-jung meets with Kim Jong-il of North Korea and allows some South Koreans to meet their North Korean relatives; he receives the Nobel Peace Prize for his role in fostering better relations between North and South Korea. Pak Tae-chun becomes prime minister.
- 2001** Incheon International Airport opens.
- 2002** Some 25 North Koreans defect to South Korea. South and North Korean naval vessels fight a battle in the Yellow Sea over the disputed sea border. Roh Moo-hyun of the Millennium Democratic Party wins the presidential election.
- 2003** Hundreds of South Koreans travel to Pyongyang for a celebration opening a gymnasium funded by Hyundai.
- 2004** South Korea sends 3,000 troops to Iraq. President Roh Moo-hyun is suspended from March 12 to May 14. Yeongi-Kongju is selected as a site for a new capital city, to replace Seoul by 2030. The government admits to carrying out nuclear experiments in 2000.

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OFFICIAL PUBLICATIONS

South Korea. *Korea Statistical Yearbook; Social Indicators in Korea* (annual); *1995 Population and Housing Census*

CONTACT INFORMATION

Embassy of Korea
2450 Massachusetts Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20008
Phone: (202) 939-5600 Fax: (202) 387-0205

INTERNET RESOURCES

- National Statistical Office
<http://www/nso.go.kr/eng/>

KUWAIT

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

State of Kuwait (Dawlat al-Kuwayt)

ABBREVIATION

KW

CAPITAL

Kuwait City

HEAD OF STATE

Emir Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jabir al-Sabah (from 2005)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Nasser Muhammad al-Ahmed al-Saban (from 2006)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Constitutional hereditary emirate

POPULATION

2,335,648 (2005)

AREA

17,820 sq km (6,880 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Arab, South Asian, Iranian

LANGUAGES

Arabic, English

RELIGION

Islam

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Kuwaiti dinar

NATIONAL FLAG

Three horizontal stripes of equal height—from top to bottom, green, white, and red—with a black trapezoid based on the hoist. The trapezoid's shorter base is equal to the height of the white stripe.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A circular badge on which a dhow, a white-sailed craft, appears on a blue-and-white sea against a blue sky and white clouds. At the crest appears the name of the country in Arabic, and at the base appears a brown falcon, under which the Kuwaiti shield is shown, which bears the motif of the flag hung vertically.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

Unnamed instrumental melody

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day), February 25 (National Day), February 26 (Kuwait Liberation Day), various Islamic festivals, including Islamic New Year's Day

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

June 19, 1961

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

November 11, 1962

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Kuwait, located in the northeastern corner of the Arabian Peninsula at the western head of the Persian Gulf, is one of the world's smallest countries. It is roughly rectangular in shape, extending 205 km (127 mi) southeast to northwest and 176 km (109 mi) northeast to southwest. Outlying islands include Bubiyan, Miskan, Auha, Warbah, Kubbar, Umm al-Maradim, Umm an-Namil, Qaruh, and Failaka, of which only the last is inhabited. The total land area, estimated at 17,820 sq km (6,880 sq mi), includes the Kuwaiti section of the Neutral Zone (5,700 sq km; 2,201 sq mi),

jointly owned by Kuwait and Saudi Arabia from 1922 to 1966. The length of the coastline is 499 km (310 mi).

The borders of Kuwait have never been precisely surveyed, but their length is estimated at 462 km (287 mi), of which the border with Saudi Arabia constitutes 222 km (138 mi) long, that with Iraq 240 km (149 mi).

The terrain is an almost flat desert except for the Jal az-Zor scarp to the west of Kuwait Bay. The central part of the country is separated from the narrow coastal plain by the Ahmadi ridge, 120 m (395 ft) high, which runs north to south.

There are no streams or rivers in the country.

Kuwait



Geography

Area sq km: 17,820; sq mi 6,880
 World Rank: 152nd
 Land Boundaries, km: Iraq 240; Saudi Arabia 222
 Coastline, km: 499
 Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Persian Gulf 0
 Highest: 306
 Land Use %
 Arable Land: 0.7
 Permanent Crops: 0.1
 Forest: 0.3
 Other: 98.9

Population of Principal Cities (1995)

As Salimiyah	129,775
Jalib ash Shuyukh	102,169

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Kuwait has an arid, subtropical climate. Summer, which lasts from May to October, is extremely hot, with temperatures ranging from 43°C (113°F) to 54°C (130°F). Winter, lasting from November to April, is generally pleasant,

with night temperatures in December and January occasionally touching the freezing point. Annual rainfall varies between 30 mm (1 in) and 220 mm (9 in), mainly between November and April. Sand and dust storms are frequent in the summer, when the *shamal*, a strong northeasterly wind, blows from the gulf.

Climate and Weather

Temperature Range: 34°F to 130°F
Average Rainfall: 1 in to 9 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Kuwait does not have many plants or animals; conditions are too hot and dry to support much life. There are a few desert flowers and shrubs that bloom during the rainy season. The most common plant is a short shrub called *arfaj*. Camels, sheep, and goats are the main animals, along with a few desert creatures such as rats and foxes.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 2,335,648
World Rank: 137th
Density per sq km: 133.7
% of annual growth (1999-2003): 3.2
Male %: 60.3
Female %: 39.7
Urban %: 96.2
Age Distribution %: 0-14: 27.5
15-64: 69.8
65 and over: 2.7
Population 2025: 4,175,000
Birth Rate per 1,000: 21.85
Death Rate per 1,000: 2.44
Rate of Natural Increase %: 2.0
Total Fertility Rate: 3.03
Expectation of Life (years): Males 75.86
Females 77.86
Marriage Rate per 1,000: 5.3
Divorce Rate per 1,000: 1.7
Average Size of Households: 7.4
Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

The majority of indigenous Kuwaitis are descendants of Arabs of the Aniza tribe, who immigrated from Njed, in Saudi Arabia, in the 18th century. Among the early settlers was the al-Sabah family, which became the ruling dynasty.

The traditional Kuwaiti minorities are descendants of African slaves and Iranians, who have their own quarter in Kuwait City. About 55 percent of the population

consists of foreign workers who have immigrated from other Arab countries as well as India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and the Philippines.

LANGUAGES

Arabic is the official language of the country. English is the second language taught in schools and is the medium of commercial communication.

RELIGIONS

Islam is the official religion of the emirate. Muslims, both Shia and Sunni, make up 85 percent of the population, and Christians, Hindus, Parsis, and adherents to other creeds constitute the other 15 percent. About 70 percent of Muslims are Sunni, the remainder Shia.

Modern Kuwait is relatively tolerant of other faiths, but the construction of Hindu, Sikh, or Buddhist temples is prohibited, and proselytizing of Muslims by non-Muslims is prohibited. In 1986 the National Assembly approved legislation barring citizenship to non-Muslim applicants.

Religious Affiliations

Sunni Muslim	1,390,000
Shia Muslim	595,000
Christian, Hindu, Parsi, Other	350,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In 1716 several clans of the tribe of Aniza migrated from the interior of the Arabian Desert to a tiny gulf coastal locality later called Kuwait, derived from the Arabic word *kut*, meaning "fort." In 1756 the tribes chose as their ruler a sheikh from the al-Sabah family. During the reign of Sheikh Abdallah al-Sabah (1866-92) a dynastic battle raged in Arabia between the rival houses of al-Rashid and al-Saud. The Turks, who supported al-Rashid, wanted to extend their control over the coastal area south of Kuwait, which was by then a semiautonomous Ottoman province. Fearing his territory would be annexed, Sheikh Mubarak al-Sabah asked to be taken under British protection. Increasing British involvement in India beginning in the late 18th century quickened British interest in the gulf region as a means of protecting the sea routes to India. Through an 1899 treaty, Kuwait ceded its external sovereignty to Britain in exchange for financial subsidies and military support.

The strategic importance of the Persian Gulf became increasingly apparent as the oil industry developed in the 20th century. Sheikh Amed, who ruled Kuwait from

1921 to 1950, was responsible for the development of the Kuwaiti oil industry. He was succeeded by his cousin, Sheikh Abdallah al-Salim al-Sabah, who, using petroleum revenues, developed an extensive welfare system for his people.

Kuwait achieved full independence in June 1961, when the United Kingdom terminated the 1899 treaty. The ruler assumed the title of emir. A National Assembly replaced the Constituent Assembly upon the inauguration of the constitution in 1962. The emir died in 1965 and was succeeded by the prime minister and heir apparent, Sheikh Sabah al-Salem al-Sabah. His cousin, Sheikh Jabir al-Ahmed al-Sabah, was named prime minister and heir apparent.

The emir dissolved the National Assembly in 1976 on the grounds that it was acting against the state's interest by criticizing the government. He also suspended the constitutional provision that elections be held within two months and instituted severe restrictions on the press. Constitutional government returned in 1981 with elections for the National Assembly. However, following a series of confrontations over fiscal and internal security issues, Emir Saad al-Abdallah al-Salim al-Sabah, who had succeeded in 1978, dissolved the assembly in 1986. As had his predecessor, the emir postponed elections and imposed strict press controls. The emir has since ruled by decree.

The war with Iraq of 1990–91 was an important juncture in Kuwait's modern history in several ways. The event demonstrated the nation's military weakness and drew it into a close alliance with major Western powers, especially the United States. Iraq's destruction of Kuwait's petroleum industry significantly impaired the economy for years. Finally, in the aftermath of liberation, the emirate confronted serious questions about democracy and the presence of large numbers of non-Kuwaitis.

In late July 1990, before a meeting of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), Iraq made several demands of and threats against Kuwait. Iraq called for a waiver of the large debt to Kuwait accumulated during the Iranian war and accused the emirate of violating the common border to steal Iraqi oil reserves. The Iraqi president Saddam Hussein also threatened to take military action against countries that ignored OPEC quotas and placed two armored divisions on the border with Kuwait. An OPEC meeting on July 25 appeared to calm the situation; prices were raised \$3 a barrel to \$21, and Kuwait agreed to limit production. The two nations were also talking about disputed territory, mostly the islands of Bubiyan and Warbah.

The border negotiations broke off August 1, however, and the following day Iraq invaded and easily conquered the emirate. Kuwait's army of 20,000 troops and 275 tanks was no match for Iraq's invading force of 100,000, although defending soldiers offered some resistance at the emir's palace, after the ruler had fled

to Saudi Arabia by helicopter. Fighting also occurred around military barracks outside the capital. Perhaps 200 Kuwaitis were killed in the assault. Little evidence supported Hussein's claim that Iraq invaded to support domestic anti-emir insurgents.

On August 8 Hussein announced the annexation of Kuwait as Iraq's 19th province, soon renaming the capital Kadhima, the city's name under the Ottoman Empire. The Iraqi occupation was brutal, especially after Ali Hassan Majid, Hussein's cousin, was made military governor in mid-September. Majid had organized the repression of Kurdistan in 1988; he gave orders to crush all Kuwaiti resistance, partly due to frustration over the refusal of the conquered to return to work and join a revolutionary government under Iraq.

The occupier's policy of killing six Kuwaitis for each Iraqi slain led to diminished resistance, but defiant groups continued sporadic night hit-and-run raids against Iraqi installations. These groups received weapons smuggled from Saudi Arabia and also probably received help from the American Central Intelligence Agency. The Iraqis engaged in looting, torture, and summary executions and, among other insults, killed and ate edible animals at the national zoo. About 7,000 Kuwaitis were killed and 17,000 detained during the occupation.

The Kuwaiti government-in-exile operated from a hotel in the western Saudi city of Taif. Although the emir was present, most affairs were handled by the crown prince, Premier Sheik Saad al-Abdallah al-Sabah. The ruler was reportedly emotionally distraught over the invasion and occupation. In September 1990 the government pledged \$5 billion to aid U.S. military operations and nations affected economically by the crisis. Kuwait's ambassador to the United States, Saud Masir al-Sabah, who had called for American help on the day of the invasion, was a key figure throughout the ordeal.

Led by the United States under the aegis of the United Nations, the international community responded vigorously to the Iraqi invasion. The United Nations declared the annexation of Kuwait null and void, demanded Iraqi withdrawal, and eventually authorized the use of force to evict the occupiers. By January 1991 the U.S.-led alliance had more than 500,000 troops in the region.

In a two-stage campaign from mid-January to late February 1991, the allies defeated and forced the Iraqis to leave the emirate. The first stage was a massive air war against installations and troops in Kuwait and southern Iraq; some Kuwaiti pilots participated in these bombing missions. The second stage was the ground campaign of February 24–28. As part of the allied invasion force, Kuwaiti soldiers led the march into the capital February 27, although resistance forces claimed to have controlled the city a day earlier.

Liberation, however, was a mixed blessing. Early estimates of the cost of reconstructing the emirate were

\$100 billion. Much of Kuwait City was in ruins, with many large buildings set afire just before the Iraqi retreat. Damage to the nation's petroleum industry was extensive. Of 1,080 oil wells, Iraq rendered more than 800 completely inoperable, including 535 fractured or set ablaze with explosives. Hundreds of wells were still burning months after the Iraqi departure. Also destroyed were half of the petroleum-gathering centers and all above-ground oil storage facilities.

The Gulf War created a siege mentality in Kuwait, which henceforth remained prepared to meet another invasion from Iraq. Indeed, in 1994 Iraq once again deployed troops near the Kuwaiti border, withdrawing them only after Western warnings. Thereafter, Iraq dropped its long-standing territorial claim against Kuwait by formally recognizing Kuwait's sovereignty and accepting the border as demarcated by the United Nations.

Internally, the major postliberation questions confronting Kuwait were how to handle the expatriate issue and to what degree the nation's political system might be democratized. Tensions existed between resistance fighters and those who had taken refuge abroad during occupation. The energized opposition demanded elections for a new parliament and a free press. In national elections held in 1992 and 1996, government critics won a substantial number of seats. The ruling family of Kuwait since became more responsive to complaints by its people about the lack of democratic institutions. In 1999 Sheikh Jabir al-Ahmed al-Sabah issued a decree giving women the right to vote, but the move was defeated in the National Assembly by 32 to 30 votes. Additionally, the government began a savings plan to ensure the country's continued wealth after oil reserves are depleted. The emir suspended the National Assembly after a dispute over misprints in the state edition of the Koran; in the elections to replace the dismissed Assembly, liberals and Islamists took the majority of seats, though liberals lost most of these seats again in the 2003 elections.

Kuwait has been keenly interested in restoring good relations with Iraq. In 2002 representatives from Kuwait and Iraq met in Beirut to discuss normalizing relations, and Iraq promised not to invade Kuwait again. The following year, Kuwait donated troops, land and money to the U.S.-led military campaign against the Hussein regime. Also in 2003, the emir appointed a new prime minister, for the first time separating that office from the position of crown prince.

In 2004 the government began preparing numerous indictments against Saddam Hussein and his aides for war crimes committed during the occupation of 1990–91. At the same time, the government made known that it would consider waiving a large portion of Iraq's debt. In 2005 legislation was approved granting women full political rights. Emir Jabir al-Ahmad died in January 2006 and Sheikh Sabah al-Ahmad was sworn in as emir.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1950–65	Sheikh Abdallah al-Salim al-Sabah
1965–77	Sheikh Sabah al-Salim al-Sabah
1977–2006	Sheikh Jabir al-Ahmad al-Jabir al-Sabah
2006–	Sheikh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jabir al-Sabah

CONSTITUTION

The constitution of 1962 established a constitutional monarchy based on Arab traditions. Islam is declared the religion of the state, Islamic law the source of legislation. The constitution also contains a bill of rights.

Executive power is vested in the emir, the head of state, who is also the supreme commander of the armed forces, with the power to declare "defensive war" ("offensive war" is prohibited by the constitution). Succession to the emirate is confined to the heirs of Sheikh Mubarak al-Sabah. The emir exercises his executive powers through the Council of Ministers, which is headed by the prime minister, the chief of the government, who is appointed by the emir after traditional consultations. Though the prime minister was traditionally the crown prince, in 2003 the emir separated the two offices and appointed a new prime minister.

Ministers, appointed on the recommendations of the prime minister, need not be members of the National Assembly, although all ministers assume *ex officio* membership in the assembly for the duration of the office. The assembly may pass a vote of no confidence in a minister, in which case he must resign, but a vote of no confidence in the prime minister is not permitted. Many members of the cabinet, including the prime minister and deputy prime minister, are princes of the al-Sabah royal family.

The country is divided into 25 electoral districts. Voters must be literate, over 21, and not members of the armed forces. The voting community constitutes only 10 percent of the total population. Women are not allowed to vote or hold office.

Kuwait has a very stable government. Power is closely held in the al-Sabah family, and little or no opposition has been allowed to develop.

PARLIAMENT

The National Assembly, or *Majlis al-Umma*, is a unicameral legislature with a 50 members who are elected for four-year terms by native-born, literate males over 21. There are 25 electoral districts, each of which returns two members. The 25 appointed members serve *ex officio* as cabinet ministers. At one time a "grandfather clause" effectively limited suffrage to adult males who resided in Kuwait before 1920 and maintained a residence there

until 1959 and to their descendants. This limitation was broadened in 1992 to include all sons of naturalized persons since 1992.

The Assembly sits for at least eight months in a year. When in session it meets once or twice a week in four-hour sessions. Most of the legislative work is done in committees.

Legislation may be initiated by a minister or by any member of the assembly. If a law is passed by a two-thirds majority, the emir signs it and promulgates it as law; if the law is passed by a simple majority vote, the emir can withhold his signature until the next session if he so chooses. The emir may also issue decrees with the force of law when the Assembly is not in session, but the decrees must be submitted to the Assembly for approval when it again convenes.

The emir has the right to dissolve the Assembly. This right was exercised for the first time in 1976 in the wake of alleged "unjust attacks and denunciations against ministers" by members of the Assembly. The National Assembly was dissolved again in 1986, when the emir announced that he would henceforth rule by decree. He also suspended the constitutional provision requiring elections within two months. In the aftermath of the Persian Gulf War, elections were held in 1992, 1996, 1999, and 2003.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Kuwait's government has banned political parties. All candidates for election to the National Assembly run as independents. Some de facto coalitions do form along ideological lines; these include groups of Bedouins, Sunni or Shia Muslims, merchants, and secular leftists.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For purposes of local government, Kuwait is divided into six governorates—Al-Kuwayt (Kuwait City), Al-Ahmadi, Al-Farwaniyah, Al-Jahra, Hawalli, and Mubarak al-Kabeer—each under a governor.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The judicial system, revised in 1959, is based on the Egyptian model. Its family, land, and inheritance laws are derived from the sharia (Islamic law), but the Law of Commerce incorporates Western legal concepts.

The courts of first degree include criminal, assizes, magistrates, civil, domestic, and commercial courts, as well as the Misdemeanors Court of Appeal. The Domestic Court is subdivided into separate chambers for Shiites, Sunnis, and non-Muslims. Civil appeal is to the High

Court of Appeal and, in matters concerning personal status, to the Court of Cassation.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Until the 1990–91 Iraqi occupation, Kuwait's human rights situation had been stable. As a traditional emirate, it could afford to ignore political civil rights because of a number of unusual considerations: the oil wealth acted as a cushion against dissent, blunting tensions and rivalries; the majority of the population was expatriate, excluded from political power and depending on the goodwill of the government for continued residence; and the patriarchal system of Bedouin social life not merely assented to but also demanded an authoritarian government.

Although the government does not encourage torture, third-degree methods are employed by the police on occasion to extract confessions. Capital punishment by hanging is rarely sanctioned. Flogging is used, but with decreasing frequency. Arbitrary arrest most commonly occurs during roadblocks or spot checks of outdoor gatherings of foreign expatriates to locate illegal immigrants. Expatriate troublemakers may be summarily expelled. Legally, a person may be held without charges for no more than four days. Thereafter the suspect must be either released or turned over to a public prosecutor, who may authorize detention for up to an additional 21 days. Further detention may be authorized by a judge, pending trial.

Kuwait's legal system is independent and provides for public trials, the right of appeal, and representation by an attorney of one's choice. Secret trials are carried out by the State Security Court. There is no appeal of this court's decisions.

Since 1986 the press has been subject to prepublication censorship. All printed material must be approved by the government or rewritten, if not excised altogether. Under the Press Law, newspapers may be closed or suspended for violations of public morality or criticism of the ruling family or for any but the mildest comments on government policies and high-level officials. Editors are criminally liable for attacking leaders of friendly Arab states and for inciting sectarian strife. Although foreign publications are available freely, they are subject to censorship and cannot clear customs without permission from the Ministry of the Interior. Censorship has become rigid since 1986. The State Security Court has sentenced citizens to prison for illegally printing politically oriented literature. Academic freedom is restricted by the same measures used to censor the press.

Any group of more than three people desiring to meet for public discussion (or to meet privately but issue a public statement) must receive explicit and prior permission from the Ministry of the Interior. *Diwaniyyas*, or traditional gatherings, are exempt from this rule. The

establishment of trade unions is officially permitted, but non-Kuwaitis are barred from membership for five years and may not hold union office.

FOREIGN POLICY

The Gulf War was the central event in modern Kuwaiti foreign policy. Since the end of the Gulf War, Kuwait has become a firm ally of the United States, United Kingdom, and other allied participants in the war, and the nation was also an unrelenting opponent of Saddam Hussein's Iraq. Kuwait signed a 10-year military cooperation agreement with the United States and, in addition, agreed to the permanent stationing on its territory of a squadron of U.S. airplanes. In 1993 Kuwait also signed a 10-year defense cooperation agreement with Russia, and in 1995 it signed a military cooperation pact with China, thus completely isolating Iraq. In 2002–03 Kuwait participated in the execution of Operation Iraqi Freedom by donating \$350 million and 60 percent of its land for the use of coalition forces. In October 2003 Kuwait pledged \$1.5 billion for the reconstruction of Iraq.

Although a member of the Arab League, Kuwait downgraded its relations with six Arab countries that supported Saddam Hussein during the First Gulf War: Algeria, Jordan, Mauritania, Sudan, Tunisia, and Yemen.

DEFENSE

The defense structure, consisting of an army, navy, air force, and coast guard, is headed by the emir, who is also the commander in chief. The line of command runs through the army chief of staff and the deputy chief of staff, both of whom are princes of the al-Sabah royal family. A national service was introduced in 1975. All males between 18 and 30 are required to enlist for military service of 18 months. In 2003 Kuwait spent more than \$2.5 billion on its military.

Following the First Gulf War, a review of Kuwaiti armed forces was undertaken by a Defense Review Group, which began a 10-year development plan to retrain and equip Kuwaiti armed forces. Mutual defense agreements are a key element in Kuwait's defense strategy; the most significant agreements are with Great Britain and the United States.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 21,000
 Military Manpower Availability: 880,461
 Military Expenditures \$billion: 2.5
 as % of GDP: 5.8
 as % of central government expenditures: —
 Arms Imports \$million: 27
 Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

Kuwait is quite rich for its size. It possesses about 10 percent of the world's oil reserves—in the neighborhood of 98 billion barrels; only Saudi Arabia and Iraq have larger known reserves. Petroleum is the source of three-quarters of the government's income and nearly half of GDP. The main oil producer is the Kuwait Oil Company, which is jointly owned by British Petroleum and Gulf Oil. The Kuwaiti Oil Tankers Company is the largest tanker company in any OPEC nation. The land is too arid for agriculture, and so the nation must import almost all its food, except for locally caught fish. Kuwait has essentially no freshwater, so it must import water or purify seawater. In the early 2000s the government was negotiating with foreign oil companies about opening oil fields in the northern part of the country.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 41.46
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 19,000
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2002) %: 0.0
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2002) %: –3.4
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 0.4
 Industry: 59.5
 Services: 40.1
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 50
 Government Consumption: 28
 Gross Domestic Investment: 8.0
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 22.29
 Imports: 9.606
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: —
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: —

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
107.5	109.5	111.3	112.8	114.2

Finance

National Currency: Kuwaiti Dinar (KWD)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = KWD 0.298
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 2.6
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 3.25
 Total External Debt \$billion: 12.18
 Debt Service Ratio %: —
 Balance of Payments \$billion: 8.652
 International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 6.64
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
 1.2

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 4.63
 per capita \$: 2.00
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 164.5

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: 1 July–30 June
 Revenues \$billion: 29.41
 Expenditures \$billion: 17.57
 Budget Surplus \$billion: 11.84
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: 3.4

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 0.4
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: —
 Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares: 6.8
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 86.7
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 80.5
 Total Farmland % of land area: 0.7
 Livestock: Cattle 000: 25
 Sheep 000: 900
 Hogs 000: —
 Chickens million: 32
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters 000: —
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 6.1

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: —
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: –5.0

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 126.7
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 20.6
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 9.04
 Net Energy Imports % of use: –565
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 8.5
 Production kW-hr billion: 31.5
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 29.3
 Coal Reserves tons billion: —
 Production tons million: —
 Consumption tons million: —
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: 55.5
 Production cubic feet billion: 293
 Consumption cubic feet billion: 293
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: 96.5
 Production barrels million per day: 2.3
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 293
 Pipelines Length km: 540

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 9.606
 Exports \$billion: 22.29
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —
 Balance of Trade \$billion: 8.652

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
United States %	14.7	11.5
Japan %	10.3	21.3
Germany %	9.6	—
China %	6.6	—
United Kingdom %	6.1	—
Saudi Arabia %	5.5	—
Italy %	5.0	—
France %	4.2	—
South Korea %	—	14.9
Singapore %	—	9.8
Taiwan %	—	9.3

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 4,450
 Paved %: 80.6
 Automobiles: 715,000
 Trucks and Buses: 226,000
 Railroad: Track Length km: —
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: —
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 38
 Total Deadweight Tonnage million: 3.77
 Airports: 7
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 6.7
 Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 73
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 119
 Tourist Expenditures \$billion: 3

Communications

Telephones 000: 486.9
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.00
 Cellular Telephones million: 1.42
 Personal Computers 000: 400
 Internet Hosts per million people: 1,472
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 243

ENVIRONMENT

Kuwait suffered from a number of environmental problems prior to the First Gulf War, including a lack of sufficient quantities of potable water and pollution associated with emissions and oil production. The nation currently gets most of its water from desalination plants that remove salt from seawater. The war had serious effects on the environment of Kuwait. Extensive crop and soil destruction occurred as a result of the soot and oil mist produced by burning wells. Oil spills killed off wildlife, and

some oil lakes formed, destroying the underlying land. In addition, bombing, mining, and other military activities destroyed much of the country's limited farmable land. The long-term environmental effects of the war have proven tremendous; changes in the country's biodiversity mix, for example, may persist for decades.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 0.3
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: -5
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 3
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 11,412
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 21.9

LIVING CONDITIONS

The Kuwaiti government provides its people with extensive welfare benefits, including free education, health care, pensions, subsidized food, and low-interest housing loans, which are sometimes forgiven completely. Non-Kuwaitis living in the country also obtain some of these benefits. Kuwait has no sales or income taxes. Public transportation is cheap, efficient, and thorough. The cost of living is high.

HEALTH

Kuwait's government provides high quality health care to all residents free of charge, though noncitizens must pay for their own drugs. Many of the country's doctors and nurses come from other countries, enticed by good pay, but Kuwait is gradually training its own people in these jobs. About one-third of Kuwaiti doctors are women, who have succeeded in this field in large part because most women prefer to be treated by females. Overall health is quite good, and life expectancy averages almost 77 years. Fertility is relatively high, with slightly more than three children born per woman in 2004, and infant mortality quite low, such that Kuwait's population continues to grow.

Health

Number of Physicians: 3,589
 Number of Dentists: 673
 Number of Nurses: 9,197
 Number of Pharmacists: 722
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 153
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 10.26
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 5
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 4.3
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 630
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.12

Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:

DPT: 98

Measles: 99

Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: —

Access to Improved Water Source %: —

FOOD AND NUTRITION

The staples of Kuwaiti cuisine are rice, chickpeas, fava beans, garlic, lemon, vegetables, and flat bread. People eat a great deal of *fuul* (fava bean paste), falafel (deep-fried balls of chickpea paste), and hummus (chickpea paste with tahini, garlic, and lemon). The standard flat bread is called *aish*. Chicken and lamb are common meats. There are some Indian and Western restaurants in the cities. Coffeehouses are common gathering places, and people serve a great deal of sweet coffee at home. No one drinks alcohol, which is banned from the country.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 5.3

Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 3,130

Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 146.1

Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 179.4

STATUS OF WOMEN

Kuwaiti women are allotted a subordinate role by statute and practice. Denied suffrage, women are also limited by tradition from freely choosing their places in society, though less so than in some other Islamic countries. Nevertheless, some Kuwaiti women are outspoken in their demands for broader societal roles. In contrast to the practices of some neighboring nations, Kuwaiti women are permitted to drive cars and wear Western dress in public and outside the country. Legal challenges against the government led Sheikh Jabir al-Ahmad al-Sabah to announce full political rights for women in 1999. However, the move was defeated in the National Assembly. The cabinet once again proposed legislation in 2004 that would give women the rights to vote and to run for parliament and the constitutional amendment was approved in 2005.

Although women have yet to join the workforce in large numbers, they are able to compete for government and corporate employment and have the right to litigate against men, such as in child custody suits. Women have primarily occupied positions in health care, education, and domestic service, though a few have risen to high ranks within the government. Many women have accumulated substantial personal wealth. However, the government has restricted women from being assigned abroad in Kuwait's diplomatic service.

Some prominent, educated women are wary of current fundamentalist trends, which they fear may lead the government to restrict their freedoms as a price for fundamentalist restraint on other issues.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 0
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.02
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 24.1

WORK

Kuwait is a wonderful place to work—so much so that 80 percent of its workforce comes from other countries; at least one-third of those employed in the oil industry are non-Kuwaitis. Indeed, there are not nearly enough skilled Kuwaitis to fill positions in various areas, from petroleum processing to social welfare to tourism, and high wages attract skilled workers from other Arab nations and from Asia. Unemployment in 2003 was 2.1 percent. The work day is slow and gentle, and most Kuwaiti businesses take a four-hour break at midday, when the air is hottest.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 1,380,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 32.5
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: —
 Industry: —
 Services: —
 Unemployment %: 2.1

EDUCATION

Kuwait has one of the most developed educational systems in the world; in the past 50 years, oil money has allowed the country to transform itself from a land of mostly illiterate nomads to a nation where nearly everyone can read, though some elders remain illiterate. Education is compulsory between the ages of six and 14 and free from kindergarten (for Kuwaitis—from first grade for non-Kuwaitis) to the university level. Students are also offered free food, books, stationery, clothing, and transportation. Enrollment at the secondary level includes a substantial proportion of foreign students attracted by Kuwait's subsidized and free education.

The academic year runs from September to May. The medium of instruction is Arabic, with English taught as a second language. Schooling consists of 12 years, as divided into primary (four years), intermediate (four years),

and secondary (four years) cycles. School curricula are based on Arab League standards. Schools are segregated by sex until the university level.

A high proportion of Kuwaiti teachers are foreigners, mostly Egyptians and Jordanians. Indigenous Kuwaitis constitute less than 2 percent of teaching staffs.

Private schools include a variety of institutions, such as the International School, run by the U.S. community; English schools, run by missionaries; and Indo-Pakistani schools. Private school enrollment is 40 percent at the kindergarten level and 20 percent at the primary level.

Kuwait University, founded in 1966, has become a major institution of higher learning in the Middle East; almost one-quarter of its students are non-Kuwaitis. New petroleum-engineering and medical colleges were opened in 1977. Kuwaiti students who complete their secondary-school science courses in the upper 80 percent and liberal arts courses in the upper 70 percent are eligible to study abroad at the government's expense, provided they pursue courses not offered at Kuwait University

Education

Literacy Rate %: 83.5
 Male %: 85.1
 Female %: 81.7
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: —
 First Level: Primary Schools: 251
 Teachers: 11,594
 Students: 154,056
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 13.3
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 83.4
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 409
 Teachers: 23,673
 Students: 239,047
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 10.3
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 77.2
 Third Level: Institutions: 1
 Teachers: —
 Students: —
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: —
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: —

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Kuwait is technologically advanced. It has a modern efficient telephone system with advanced wiring, pay telephones nearly everywhere, and near-universal cellular telephone coverage. In 2003, 567,000 Kuwaitis were using the Internet. Kuwait's government has emphasized scientific and technological training in order to create an advanced society that can work with other developed nations in the global economy. Several scientific bodies work on this project, including the Kuwait Institute of Scientific Research, the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Science, and the Scientific Club.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 174
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 0.18
 High-Tech Exports \$million: 35.18
 Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

Kuwaiti journalists enjoy a great deal of freedom and are known for their outspoken criticism of the government. They do, however, hesitate to criticize the emir and other members of the royal family. Journalists can go to jail for insulting God or Mohammed. The Ministry of Information licenses all newspaper publishers and censors all print publications for morally offensive content.

The national news agency is the Kuwait News Agency (KUNA). The state owns most of the television stations and all radio stations. The state-owned Kuwait Broadcasting Service has 20 transmitters and broadcasts programs in Arabic, Farsi, English, and Urdu. Kuwaiti Television, a state-owned corporation, operates five main and two auxiliary transmitters and one experimental transmitter; it is on the air for 114 hours a week, with over 60 percent of programs of local origin. Many Kuwaitis have satellite dishes, such that they can watch international programs. The BBC World Service broadcasts in Kuwait City.

Media

Newspapers and Periodicals: —
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: 219
 Radio Receivers million: 1.33
 per 1,000: 570
 Television sets 000: 1.12
 per 1,000: 480

CULTURE

Kuwaitis, like most Arabs, love poetry and the artistic use of language. Bedouin artistic styles are prevalent in poetry, music, jewelry, and textiles, which are woven from sheep wool. One spectacular art form is the sword dance called the *ardab*, in which men dance to drum and tambourine music. Songs about the sea, boats, and pearl diving are also well known.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —

Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Much of Kuwait's mythology comes from Bedouin traditions. Arab hospitality is a favorite theme; for example, there is a story about a Bedouin who killed his horse to feed an unexpected guest, having no other food to offer the visitor. Kuwait established a Folklore Preservation Center in 1956 to record and classify native legends.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

The most common way Kuwaitis spend free time is socializing with friends and families. Men spend time with one another in *diwaniyya*, a room separate from a main house that has an atmosphere similar to that of a social club, where visitors eat refreshments, discuss family and politics, watch television, play cards, or just sit. Many Kuwaitis belong to sea clubs, where they can swim, play on the beach, windsurf, water-ski, dive, and sail around in boats. The cities offer a variety of nightlife, especially in Salmiya and the area around the Gulf Road, where there are many shopping areas, restaurants, and coffee shops, though no bars.

ETIQUETTE

Hospitality is highly valued by Kuwaitis. They love to have visitors and will always offer their guests the best they have; in return, guests are expected to consume what they are offered and show appropriate gratitude.

FAMILY LIFE

The family is the building block of Kuwaiti society. Until recently, most Kuwaitis lived with their extended families, in large houses if they could afford them. Nowadays people most commonly live in nuclear family units, but they still live near relatives if they can. Men and women used to be completely segregated from one another, and homes were built to accommodate what were essentially two separate households. Gender roles have become more flexible, however, and women have been working outside the home. People still usually consult their parents before marrying. Kuwaitis value large families and like to have many children, which is easier to do when living with many relatives; most people have between three and five

children, which is less than in the past. Many Kuwaitis hire foreign nannies and maids to help in the home.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Men and women both typically dress in Western fashions, and shopping malls contains many stores selling brand names from Europe and the United States. Many men still wear traditional clothes; the typical outfit is a dish-dasha, a long-sleeved coat that falls to the ankles, over loose pants. They wear head coverings that consist of a *gabfiya*, a round knit cloth, covered with a large white- or red-checked *kbitra*, tied on with a circular *igal*. Fewer women wear traditional clothing, but some still wear a loose dress called a *dara'a*. Women are not required to wear veils or head coverings, although some choose to do so.

SPORTS

Soccer is the most popular sport in Kuwait. Every school and town has soccer teams, and the small country has over 120 soccer fields. Almost all citizens follow the fortunes of the national team. Kuwait also has many other top-quality sporting facilities, and Kuwaitis can participate in nearly any sport that interests them. Karate, swimming, and other water sports are all popular. People also engage in falconry and horse racing.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1961** Kuwait becomes a fully independent state upon the termination of the 1899 agreement with the United Kingdom, under which Kuwait was a British military protectorate. Sheikh Abdallah takes the title of emir. Kuwait is admitted to the Arab League. Iraq claims sovereignty over Kuwait and threatens invasion. British troops land in Kuwait in response to the emir's appeal for assistance. The Arab League intervenes in the dispute. An Arab League contingent replaces British troops as a guarantee of Kuwait's independence. The Kuwaiti dinar replaces the Persian Gulf Indian rupee as the unit of currency. Kuwait founds the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development. Elections are held for the National Assembly.
- 1962** New constitution is promulgated.
- 1963** First session of the National Assembly is held. Sheikh Sabah al-Salim al-Sabah is named prime minister. Iraq recognizes the Kuwaiti govern-

ment and renounces territorial claims. A new trade and economic agreement with Iraq is concluded.

Kuwait is admitted to the United Nations.

- 1965** Emir Abdallah dies. Sheikh Sabah is named new emir, and Sheikh Jabir al-Ahmed becomes prime minister.
- 1966** Kuwait University is founded.
- 1969** The Neutral Zone is partitioned between Saudi Arabia and Kuwait.
- 1971** British withdraw all troops from the Gulf region. In new elections radicals register some gains.
- 1973** Iraqi troops occupy the Kuwaiti outpost at Samtah.
- 1975** Kuwait nationalizes Kuwait Oil Company. The Kuwaiti dinar is floated.
- 1976** Emir Sabah dissolves the National Assembly in the wake of a constitutional crisis. A constitutional provision calling for new elections within two months of the dissolution is suspended. Censorship is imposed on the media.
- 1977** Kuwait agrees to buy sophisticated military equipment from the Soviet Union. Kuwait mediates Egypt-Libya dispute. Emir Sabah dies and Sheikh Jabir al-Ahmed becomes emir.
- 1979** Kuwait expels Ayatollah Khomeini's envoy amid Shiite protests.
- 1981** Gulf Cooperation Council is formed with six founding members, including Kuwait.
- 1983** U.S. and French embassies in Kuwait City are bombed by Arab terrorists. Government retaliates with mass arrests of Shiite extremists.
- 1984** Kuwait Airways airliner is hijacked to Iran. Kuwait concludes an arms purchase agreement with the Soviet Union.
- 1985** Terrorists attempt to assassinate the emir.
- 1986** The emir dissolves the National Assembly and imposes new restrictions on the press.
- 1990** Iraq invades and overruns the emirate, forcing the emir and most of the royal family to flee to Saudi Arabia, beginning a six-month Iraqi occupation of Kuwait, which entails considerable destruction of property and hostility toward Kuwaiti residents. About 400,000 Kuwaitis take refuge in other countries during the occupation. A resistance force continues to harass the Iraqis. President Saddam Hussein annexes Kuwait as Iraq's 19th province and later renames the capital Kadhima, Kuwait City's name under the Ottoman Empire. United Nations passes resolutions demanding Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait and authorizing use of force to evict Iraqi troops.

- Multinational force, led by the United States, assembles in region with intent to liberate Kuwait. Force includes troops from Syria, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait as well as most Western nations.
- 1991** From mid-January to the end of February Allied forces stage air, sea, and ground campaign that defeats Iraqi forces and liberates Kuwait. Al-Sabah family rulers return and retain firm hold on power. New cabinet in April retains Crown Prince Saad as premier. Emir promises parliamentary elections for 1992. Government and Kuwaiti citizens crack down on Palestinians accused of siding with Iraq during the occupation. Emirate begins massive reconstruction effort, estimated to cost \$100 billion. Following devastation to petroleum industry caused by retreating Iraqis, efforts to return Kuwait's oil-based economy to prewar levels expected to take years.
- 1992** In elections for parliament the opposition wins 30 of the 50 elected seats. Prepublication censorship ends.
- 1994** A brief assembly of Iraqi troops on the border ends peacefully. Iraq recognizes the borders of Kuwait.
- 1996** Elections are once again held for parliament.
- 1999** Parliamentary elections are held in July; liberals and Islamists take most of the seats. In May, Sheikh al-Sabah decrees that women can vote in the next elections, to be held in 2003. Parliament rejects this proposal in November.
- 2002** Kuwait and Iraq begin to normalize relations at a summit in Beirut.
- 2003** Kuwaiti soldiers march into Iraq to join American campaign to oust Saddam Hussein. The emir appoints Sheikh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Sabah prime minister. Liberals lose most of their seats in parliament.
- 2004** Kuwait prepares indictments for war crimes against Saddam Hussein and his aides.
- 2005** The cabinet approves legislation to allow women to vote and stand for parliament. The first woman cabinet minister, Massouma al-Mubarak, is appointed.

- 2006** Emir Jabir al-Ahmad dies. Sheik Sabah al-Ahmad becomes emir.

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- Kuwait.** *Annual Statistical Abstract; General Census of Population and Housing and Buildings 1995*

CONTACT INFORMATION

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Central Bank of Kuwait
<http://www.cbk.gov.kw>
- Kuwait Information Office (Washington, D.C.)
<http://www.kuwait-info.org>
- Ministry of Planning
<http://www.mop.gov.kw/MopWebSite/english/default.asp>

KYRGYZSTAN

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Kyrgyz Republic (Kyrgyz Respublikasy)

ABBREVIATION

KG

CAPITAL

Bishkek

HEAD OF STATE & HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Acting President and Prime Minister Kurmanbek Bakiyev (from 2005)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Republic

POPULATION

5,146,281 (2005)

AREA

198,500 sq km (76,642 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Kyrgyz, Russian, Uzbek

LANGUAGES

Kyrgyz, Russian

RELIGIONS

Islam, Russian Orthodox

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Kyrgyzstani som

NATIONAL FLAG

Red field with a yellow sun in the center having 40 rays, representing the 40 Kyrgyz tribes; in the center of the sun is a red ring crossed by two sets of three curved lines, a stylized representation of the roof of the traditional Kyrgyz yurt.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

Within a blue circle are, from top to bottom, a sun with rays extending outward, mountains, and an eagle with wings outspread; the name of the republic in Kyrgyz appears in the border of the seal.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“High Mountains, Valleys, and Fields”

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year’s Day), January 7 (Russian Orthodox Christmas), March 8 (Women’s Day), May 1 (Labor Day), May 5 (Constitution Day), May 9 (Victory Day), May 29 (Armed Forces Day), August 31 (Independence Day), various Islamic festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

August 31, 1991

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

May 5, 1993; amended 1996, 1998, 2003

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

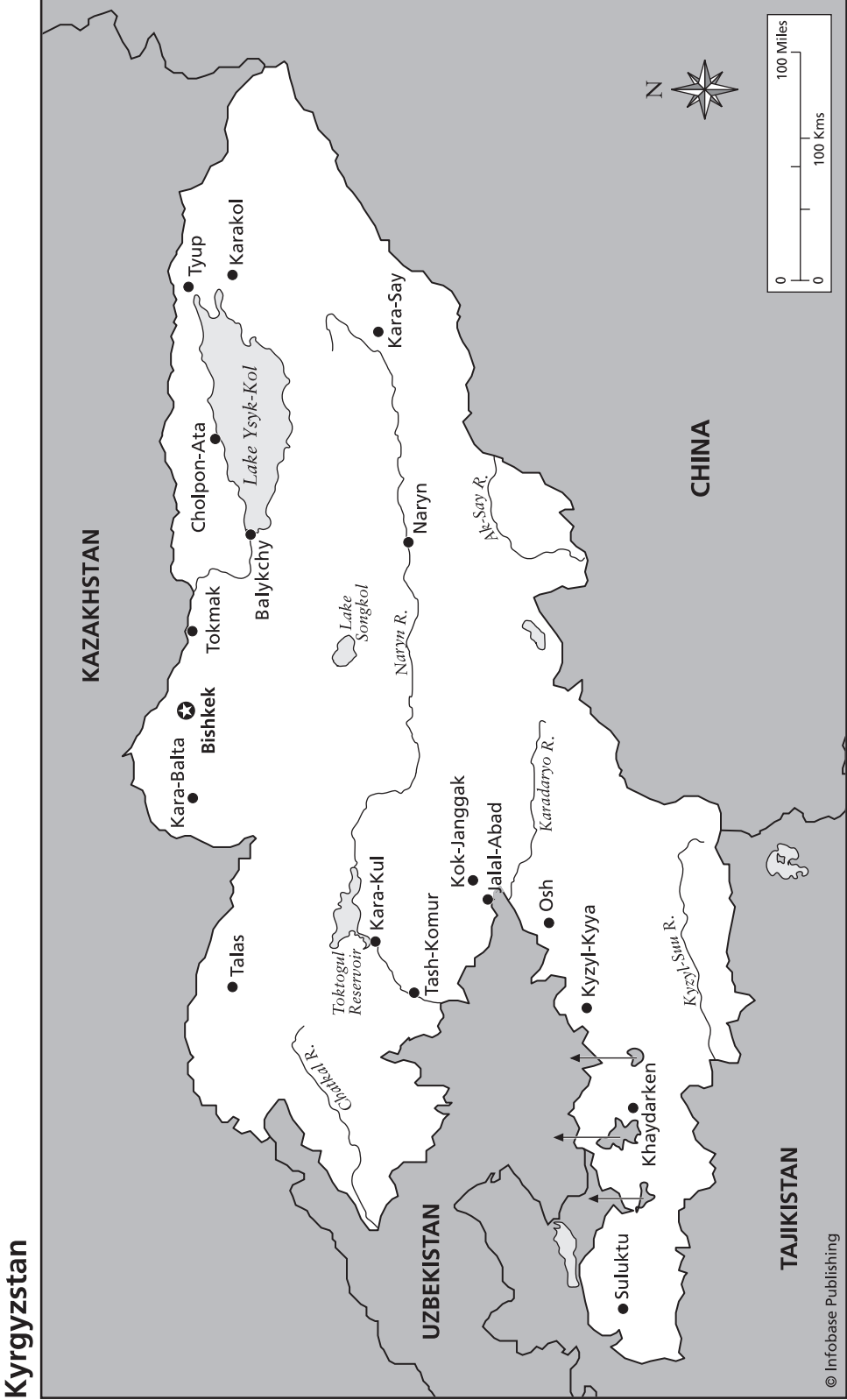
Kyrgyzstan is the second smallest of the Central Asian republics, at 198,500 sq km (76,642 sq mi). It shares a long boundary of 1,051 km (653 mi) with Kazakhstan to the north. To the southeast lies the Xinjiang region of China; the border here is 858 km (536 mi) in length. To the south and west are Tajikistan and Uzbekistan; the Tajikistan border is 870 km (544 mi) in length, the Uzbekistan border 1,099 km (687 mi). In addition, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan each control tiny enclaves completely surrounded by the territory of Kyrgyzstan.

Three-quarters of the landscape is dominated by two east-west mountain ranges. The northern part of the re-

public, which constitutes the bulk of the country’s land area, lies mostly amid the Tien Shan Mountains; the small southern section consists mainly of the Pamir-Alai mountain system (comprising the Turkestan, Alai, and Trans-Alai ranges). There is no place in the country that lies below 500 m (1,640 ft), and about one-third of the republic has an elevation between 3,000 and 4,000 m (9,842 and 13,123 ft).

Kyrgyzstan lies in a region of considerable seismic activity, with several major faults and tectonic depressions. Avalanches on high mountain slopes are common.

The river systems of the republic spill into three basins: the Aral, the Tarim, and the Issyk Kul. The most important rivers are the Naryn (616 km, 385 mi), which



1298 Kyrgyzstan

flows east to west from the Petrov Glacier toward the Ferghana Valley and becomes the Syr Darya; the Talas, in the northwest (294 km, 184 mi); the Chu (221 km, 138 mi); and the Kyzyl-Suu, in the Alai Valley of the extreme south. There are approximately 3,000 lakes, most quite small; the largest by far is Ysyk-Kol (Hot Lake), one of the world's largest high-mountain lakes, which covers 12 percent of Kyrgyzstan's surface area.

The capital is Bishkek (called Frunze when it was part of the Soviet Union). Kyrgyzstan's other sizable city is Osh. Smaller cities are Naryn, Jalal-Abad, Uzgen, Karabalta, Karakol (Przhevalsk), Kyzyl-Kyya, Mayli-Say, Tokmak, Talas, and Ysyk-Kol (Rybach'ye).

Vegetative zones include wide areas of desert and semiarid basins; steppe; shrub-steppe; forests of birch, maple, and aspen on lower mountain slopes; coniferous forests higher up; and alpine meadows and tundra surrounding the summits of ranges.

Geography

Area sq km: 198,500; sq mi 76,642

World Rank: 84th

Land Boundaries, km: China 858; Kazakhstan 1,051; Tajikistan 870;

Uzbekistan 1,099

Elevation Extremes meters:

Lowest: Kara-Daryya 132

Highest: Jengish Chokusu 7,439

Land Use %

Arable Land: 7.3

Permanent Crops: 0.4

Forest: 5.2

Other: 87.1

Population of Principal Cities (1999)

Bishkek	750,327
Osh	208,520

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Kyrgyzstan has a high-elevation continental climate, with wide extremes of temperature and moderate rainfall. Microclimates vary from dry subtropical to tundra. Summer-time temperatures have reached as high as 43°C (109°F) in the Chu and Ferghana valleys, but 20–27°C (68–81°F) is more typical. The middle elevations experience summer temperatures averaging 15–17°C (59–63°F), while the high mountain areas may not even reach 5°C (41°F). The average January temperatures range from –8 to –1.5°C (17 to 29°F) in the low-lying valleys and from –20 to –8°C (–4 to 17°F) in the higher ones and dip to around –27.7°C (–18°F) in the high Aksai Valley, where the coldest temperature on record is –53.6°C (–64°F). Bishkek has gotten as cold as –34.4°C (–30°F) at its bitterest.

The highest precipitation is recorded on mountain slopes facing directly into the prevailing winds: as

much as 900–1,000 mm (36–39 in) per year on the southwestern edge of the Ferghana Range and 750–770 mm (29.5–30 in) on the northern fringe of the Kyrgyz Range, but only 200–250 mm (8–10 in) on the opposite sides of these mountains. The Chu Valley receives 300–400 mm (12–16 in) per year. The western portion of the Issyk Kul Basin is arid, with just 100 mm (4 in) of annual precipitation; this rises to 500 mm (20 in) in the eastern portion. The rainiest season is early spring in the lowland valleys, May on the slopes of the western-facing mountains, and late spring or early summer in the interior basins.

Glaciers cover 6,578 sq km (2,540 sq mi), mostly in the far east but also in the southern ranges. The largest, Inyl'chek in the Khan-Tengri Massif, measures 583 sq km (225 sq mi). The depressions between mountain ranges are largely snow free and used for pasture in winter.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature

January: 25°F

July: 82°F

Average Rainfall: 12.2 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Kyrgyzstan is mountainous and undeveloped, and a number of plant and animal species still exist there despite a certain amount of environmental devastation. The mountains are covered with grassy meadows and forests of juniper, larch, and Tian Shan spruce. In the spring and summer, wildflowers bloom in profusion. *Cannabis indica*, or marijuana, grows wild. Animals include lynx, brown bear, wild boar, wolf, antelope, and rare snow leopards. Wild birds such as eagles and lammergeiers also inhabit the mountains.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 5,146,281

World Rank: 111th

Density per sq km: 26.3

% of annual growth (1999-2003): 1.0

Male %: 49.0

Female %: 51.0

Urban %: 34.0

Age Distribution %: 0–14: 32.3

15–64: 61.6

65 and over: 6.1

Population 2025: 6,679,000

Birth Rate per 1,000: 22.13

Death Rate per 1,000: 7.19

Rate of Natural Increase %: 1.4

Total Fertility Rate: 2.71

Expectation of Life (years): Males 63.84

Females 72.05

Marriage Rate per 1,000: 6.3
 Divorce Rate per 1,000: 1.2
 Average Size of Households: 4.2
 Induced Abortions: 18,690

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Kyrgyz constitute a tenuous majority as the “titular nationality” of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan, at 65 percent (up from 52 percent at independence). Kyrgyz are closely related to both Kazakhs and Uzbeks and, in a land where notions of nationality were fluid prior to the 20th century, are frequently lumped with one or the other.

Ethnic Russians constitute some 12.5 percent of the population (down from 21 percent at independence), while Uzbeks make up around 13.8 percent, found almost entirely in the Ferghana Valley. Osh, the largest city in the south, is more than 40 percent Uzbek in composition. The capital city, with a slight Kyrgyz majority, has by far the largest concentrations of Europeans in the country. The total Russian population was 920,000 at the last Soviet census. Other nationalities of significance are Ukrainians (1 percent in 1999), Germans, Tatars, Kazakhs, Dungans, Uighurs, Tajiks, Koreans, and Jews.

LANGUAGES

Kyrgyz is a Turkic language very similar to Kazakh; they are classified in the same linguistic subgroup (Kipchak), and both have considerable Mongolian influences, though Kyrgyz has borrowed more Mongol elements. Kyrgyz had no written form until the 1920s, when Arabic script was adopted. This was replaced by Latin script in 1928 and then Cyrillic in 1940.

The immediate postindependence years saw a drive to entrench the Kyrgyz language, culminating in the declaration in the 1993 Constitution that Kyrgyz was the sole official language. However, protests by Slavs and by the Russian government forced the regime to soften, and in 2001 Russian was made a second official language. About 17 percent of the population speaks Russian as a first language. Other languages used are Uzbek, Tajik, Ukrainian, Kazakh, German, Korean, and Uighur.

RELIGIONS

Islam has been the religion of most people in Kyrgyzstan since the 19th century, although the state is secular by the terms of the constitution. Islamic traditions, originally weak among the ethnic Kyrgyz, were severely repressed under Soviet rule. Since independence there has been an Islamic revival, particularly in the Ferghana Valley among that region’s more than half million Uzbeks, who fled religious repression in Uzbekistan. The Kyrgyz have in-

clined toward a more syncretistic worship incorporating animistic and shamanistic rituals and beliefs from their nomadic heritage, especially in the northern part of the country. Both Kyrgyz and Uzbeks are overwhelmingly Sunni Muslims.

Most Slavs in Kyrgyzstan are either Eastern Orthodox or atheist. The president of the republic has taken pains to reassure Russians and others that Islam’s resurgence is not coming at their expense.

Religious Affiliations

Muslim	3,860,000
Russian Orthodox	1,030,000
Other	260,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Although experts disagree about the origin of the Kyrgyz people, it is generally thought that the Kyrgyz tribes migrated south from Siberia during medieval times. The Kyrgyz were nomads for most of their history and intermingled extensively, so modern Kyrgyz show evidence of Turkic, Kipchak, and Mongol ancestry. The land that is today Kyrgyzstan was inhabited by Scythian tribes in ancient times. The Kyrgyz appeared (or reappeared) in the region in the sixth century and established their own khanate, which achieved its pinnacle with the conquest of the Uighur khanate in western Mongolia in 840 c.e.

Not numerous enough to maintain control of such a vast region, the Kyrgyz lost territory to rivals throughout the succeeding centuries, retaining only small areas along the western fringes of Mongolia. The Mongol invasion of the 14th century ended any semblance of a Kyrgyz khanate, and for centuries afterward the fragmented Kyrgyz tribes were dominated by various foreign powers: the Mongols under Dzhuchi, son of Genghis Khan; the Oirots in the 15th century; the Kalmyks in the 17th century, following a period free of outside rule in the 16th and early 17th centuries; the Manchu dynasty in the mid-18th century; and the Uzbeks of the Kokand khanate in the early 19th century. Despite requesting the protection of the Russian czar against the Kokand forces in 1785, the Kyrgyz suffered a series of military defeats at the hands of the Uzbeks in the middle of the 19th century.

The expansion of the Russian Empire brought the khanate of Kokand to an end in 1876 and ushered in more than a century of rule from St. Petersburg and Moscow. Nonetheless, small, independent Kyrgyz khanates have survived into modern times. Russians and Ukrainians began settling in northern Kyrgyzstan in the 1890s. However, Russian rule inspired fierce resistance, culminating in a 1916 rebellion against both land confiscation and conscription into the czar’s army; imperial retaliation was

harsh, and an estimated one-third of the Kyrgyz fled into China.

The Russians drastically reoriented the Kyrgyz way of life, putting severe bounds on nomadic ways and bringing in settled agriculture and modern infrastructure. Although the Kyrgyz suffered greatly, the general standards of living and education rose sharply, at least through the early years of the Soviet regime. Forced collectivization under Stalin caused thousands of deaths and large losses to livestock herds. Much of the post-Stalin era saw the republic under the command of the Communist Party first secretary Turdakan Usubaliyev, who hewed closely to Moscow's line. Usubaliyev remained in charge until Mikhail Gorbachev became first party secretary in Moscow. Although Kyrgyzstan made only weak attempts to implement glasnost and perestroika, reform made sufficient inroads to allow some dissent to be expressed in the media and some pluralist political movements to organize.

The sense of Kyrgyz nationality was sharpened in June 1990 when riots broke out between Kyrgyz and ethnic Uzbeks over scarce land and housing in the Osh region, leaving several hundred dead between the two communities. In the subsequent national power struggle, a lesser-known reform-minded candidate, Askar Akayev, gained control. When the Soviet Union broke apart in 1991, Akayev quickly declared Kyrgyzstan's independence and distanced himself from the Communist Party. In October of that year he organized a presidential election in which he ran unopposed and won 95 percent of the vote.

Akayev empowered local leaders throughout the country to initiate reform, but local corruption and nepotism hobbled his efforts. The country's relative isolation was deepened by its decision to leave the ruble zone and set up its own currency and monetary system in 1993 and by the failure of the Russian-led Commonwealth of Independent States to gain much traction. Large numbers of Russians left Kyrgyzstan, depriving the country of some of its most highly skilled workers, and other ethnic minorities accused Akayev of promoting democracy merely to disguise his true intention of advancing Kyrgyz interests. To secure good relations with its neighbors, Kyrgyzstan joined Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan in forming the Central Asian Union in 1994.

President Akayev followed up his reelection in 1995 with fresh constitutional changes that greatly enhanced his own powers. Reports of the official suppression of independent media and the jailing of opposition leaders surfaced more frequently in the late 1990s.

Resolution of the civil war in neighboring Tajikistan did not immunize Kyrgyzstan from that country's continued unrest. Drug trafficking and smuggling continued, and in both 1999 and 2000 Muslim fundamentalist forces invaded Kyrgyzstani territory, further threatening the stability of the entire region.

President Akayev succeeded in getting popular approval for a round of constitutional reforms in 1998, allowing him to run for a third term, which he won in 2000. The citizenry became increasingly disillusioned with their supposedly democratic government, which led to major protests in 2002 over a deal giving Kyrgyz territory to China and over the jailing of opposition leaders Feliks Kulov and Azimbek Beknazarov. The government has gone out of its way to silence opposition voices. Meanwhile, the nation has suffered from increasing ethnic tension between the Uzbek and Kyrgyz communities, as exacerbated by economic hardships, as well as an exodus of skilled Russian workers. In 2004, in the hope of changing the nation's fortunes, a group of opposition leaders formed a coalition to run in the 2005 elections. For his part, Akayev made public statements that he would not run for president in 2005. Regardless, runoff parliamentary elections in early 2005 were seen as fraudulent, leading to mass demands for the resignation of the incumbent government. By late March protesters had succeeded in taking control of the presidential administrative building, ousting Akayev, whose whereabouts soon after were undisclosed. The former prime minister Kurmanbek Baliyev was then installed as acting president and prime minister by the upper house of parliament.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1990–2005 Askar Akayev
2005– Kurmanbek Bakiyev

CONSTITUTION

Independent Kyrgyzstan adopted its current constitution in May 1993 and has amended it regularly since then. The 1993 constitution set up a presidential system with a 105-member unicameral legislature, the Zhogorku Kenesh. Kyrgyzstan is officially a secular state that acknowledges its Muslim heritage in the constitution's preamble. Through an amendment process that itself contravened the constitution, in 1994 President Akayev pushed through changes that split the legislature into two chambers, the lower 35-member Legislative Assembly and the upper 70-member People's Assembly, and reduced its powers overall in favor of the executive branch. The locus of domestic and foreign policy making became the executive branch, and the legislature lost its control over cabinet appointments, retaining only the right to approve the president's choice of prime minister and high court judges. A further round of amendments in 1996 gave the president greater powers to veto legislation and dissolve parliament and made him more difficult to impeach; it also clarified the roles of the two parliamentary chambers, which had been a bone of contention between

them. Later amendments in 1998 and 2003 rearranged the legislative chambers so that the Legislative Assembly increased in size to 70 members, while the People's Assembly, the upper chamber, representing the regions, was reduced to 35; amendments also limited parliamentary immunity, legalized private ownership of land, and prohibited any restriction on freedom of speech or the media. The amendments of 2003 made the president much more powerful and the legislature weaker.

The president is head of state and commander in chief of the armed forces and is elected to serve a five-year term. His position stands apart from the three branches of government, and he acts to supervise the doings of all three. He names the prime minister, subject to parliamentary approval, and the Council of Ministers. The Council of Ministers has authority over routine government affairs and policy; in practice, however, the office of the president has been ultimately decisive in policy making. The president retains broad powers to initiate legislation and to dissolve the legislature. The prime minister heads the government (council) and also has the power to appoint and dismiss ministers and department heads.

Kyrgyzstan has universal suffrage. The voting age is 18.

PARLIAMENT

Kyrgyzstan's two-chamber parliament is known as the Supreme Assembly, or Zhogorku Kenesh. Its form has changed several times over the first decade of the country's independence (the constitution originally called for a unicameral assembly), but in the early 2000s it consisted of a 70-member lower house, the People's Assembly, and a 35-member upper house, the Legislative Assembly. Members of both houses were elected to five-year terms by popular vote. The Legislative Assembly had lawmaking powers and was responsible for the approval of the budget proposed by the government, while the People's Assembly was a forum for mediating regional interests. The constitutional amendments of 2003 stated that the parliament would become a single 75-member house in January 2005.

The various changes instituted by referendum at the president's behest have worked to steadily erode the powers of the legislature. According to the constitution, the legislature organizes referendums, ratifies international agreements, and can declare war and peace, but these prerogatives have mostly been taken over by the president. The legislature has retained enough genuine independence to have overridden presidential vetoes on several occasions, and it refused to pass some legislation on economic reforms and nationalities that President Akayev strongly supported. It also refused Akayev an extension of his term in office in 1995, forcing an election. The party system is not well developed, which hampers the opposition's effectiveness in parliament.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Political parties have not had time to develop, in either ideological or organizational terms, and they have been hindered by state control of the means of mass communication. It is significant that President Akayev managed to realize so much of his agenda without resorting to identification with any particular party; his prime minister came from the Unity Party, whose platform is outward-looking and opposed to narrow nationalism. In the early years Akayev was associated with the Democratic Movement of Kyrgyzstan (DMK), in opposition to the Communists. The DMK still exists as an umbrella movement, but with reduced influence as compared to the early days of independence, when it served to unite the forces of reform. The Communist Party still provides the strongest opposition, having won nearly one-quarter of the votes in 1995 for its presidential candidate, Absamat Masaliyev, who had been Akayev's predecessor as party secretary under Soviet rule. Most other parties were disqualified from contesting the presidency.

A number of other parties have been banned and their leaders jailed. The government has refused registration to parties advocating Uighur autonomy (such as Ittifak), parties promoting a distinct southern identity (the abortive South Party), or parties with a religious basis. These restrictions, as added to the overrepresentation of ethnic Kyrgyz in parliament, have effectively left minority ethnic groups, the Uzbeks of the Ferghana Valley most of all, feeling disfranchised. Other small ethnic groups, such as Germans and Koreans, have cultural associations that have adopted some of the functions of political parties.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Kyrgyzstan is divided into seven provinces (called *dubans*, or oblasts in Russian)—Batken, Chuy, Jalal-Abad, Naryn, Osh, Talas, and Issyk Kul—plus the city of Bishkek, which is the capital of both the country and Chuy Province. The president appoints the governor, or *akim*, for each province, and that appointee controls tax collection and the distribution of pension and other state benefits. There is a legislature for each province, but real power resides with the governor.

At one time the replacement of local governors in the southern provinces of Osh and Jalal-Abad by Akayev associates from the capital exacerbated north-south tensions in the state.

LEGAL SYSTEM

Judges are chosen by the president of the republic, subject in the case of the highest judicial offices to the approval of the Supreme Assembly. The constitution provides

for a Constitutional Court composed of a chairperson, deputies, and seven judges, appointed for 15-year terms. President Akayev was opposed to this provision, and the court did not take shape until several years after its legal inception. Supreme Court justices are appointed for 10-year terms, as are judges of the State Arbitration Court. The Supreme Court is the “highest organ of judicial power in the sphere of civil, criminal and administrative justice.” The State Arbitration Court looks into jurisdictional conflicts between government departments and settles financial disputes between government agencies or between government and private business. Under the Supreme Court is a network of regional courts.

The state has had problems staffing all its judicial positions with qualified officials and establishing the rule of law on a consistent basis. This has frustrated those trying to start business enterprises or invest in existing ones. The Soviet legacy does not provide much in the way of useful precedents. The government has used libel and slander laws in criminal courts to harass its opposition.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Kyrgyzstan has derived considerable goodwill from its characterization by Westerners as the freest and most democratic of the five Central Asian states, a reputation that it only partially merits. It is true that elections have been fairer and that media have operated with far more leeway than in Uzbekistan or Kazakhstan; however, it is also the case that President Akayev initially ran unopposed and that his regime disqualified a number of opposition party candidates (though not all) from challenging his successful 1995 reelection bid. Even though much legislative power has been usurped by the executive branch, there have been bureaucratic interference, intimidation, vote buying, and fraud in parliamentary campaigns.

Opposition leaders—notably the chairman of the Erkin Kyrgyzstan Party, Topchubek Torgunaliyev—have been jailed on spurious charges from time to time. The constitution honors freedom of assembly, but that has not stopped the state police from breaking up large demonstrations and bringing charges against organizers. The Supreme Assembly, in which ethnic Kyrgyz enjoy representation beyond their proportion of the population, has denied dual citizenship for ethnic minorities, including Russians. These violations have disturbed U.S.-Kyrgyzstan relations.

There is, generally speaking, freedom of religion. Occasionally, the police and the State Commission on Religious Affairs have shown hostility toward Protestant sects that proselytize and have carefully monitored the activities of fundamentalist Muslim groups, whose influence has grown among the Uzbek community.

As in the Soviet era, the law permits pretrial detention of up to a year. Human rights organizations have

generally given Kyrgyzstan good marks in terms of the absence of political arrest, disappearances, beatings, and torture. Activists have been subject to wiretapping and surveillance. The country has not created an ombudsman position for human rights and has been slow to staff its official human rights institute, set up in 1997. A number of nongovernmental organizations concerned with human rights conduct programs throughout the country.

FOREIGN POLICY

Kyrgyzstan’s small size, landlocked position at the heart of Asia, and energy dependence make it vulnerable and reliant on its neighbors. It has close relations with Russia and Kazakhstan and still depends on Russian military protection. In an effort to improve ethnic tensions between Russians and Kyrgyz, the constitution was amended in 2001 to make Russian an official national language. On the other hand, in 2004 the parliament adopted a law making non-Kyrgyz speakers ineligible for certain governmental positions. Kyrgyzstan had some tension with Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan in the mid-1990s, around the time that Kyrgyzstan abruptly withdrew from the ruble economy in 1993. Kyrgyzstan has attempted to increase economic and military cooperation within Central Asia, signing an economic union agreement with Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan in 1994, but the nation has been hampered by the unilateral barriers erected by its neighbors; it supplies them with water, and they supply it with oil and gas. Kyrgyzstan participated in negotiating peace within Tajikistan during its civil war, but relations there have been tenuous, partly because of the steady influx of narcotics from the Tajik border. Kyrgyzstan is also cultivating relations with Turkey, with which it shares cultural and ethnic characteristics. China has made overtures of friendship, which have been met with some ambivalence by Kyrgyzstan, which remembers China’s historical domination of the region. The United States has been providing humanitarian, economic, and political assistance, as well as some nonlethal military aid, but has been reluctant to deepen relations with a Kyrgyzstan that has logged a dubious record on democracy and human rights.

DEFENSE

Immediately after independence Kyrgyzstan made few plans for its own defense, investing its hopes in collective security from the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). Russia opted not to support a CIS-wide system, however, so in 1992 the Akayev regime simply “nationalized” all troops remaining locally, about 15,000 in all. Many of these troops and their officers,

who were mostly ethnic Russians, refused to swear loyalty to Kyrgyzstan and resigned to return to Russia or simply deserted. This loss was only partially offset by the repatriation of about 2,000 Kyrgyz troops who had been stationed elsewhere in the Soviet Union. To stanch the outflow, the Akayev regime signed an accord with Moscow stipulating that it would pay for housing and relocation costs for Russian officers agreeing to serve through 1999.

The government tacitly acknowledged that Kyrgyzstan could not adequately defend itself when it agreed to allow Russian Army border troops to patrol along its frontier with China. It also asked Russia to reclaim the old Soviet airbases on its soil, which had fallen into disuse, an offer the Russians declined. In 1994 Kyrgyzstan joined the Partnership for Peace within the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO).

The president is the commander in chief of the army and appoints and dismisses senior officers. Military policy is made by the seven-member National Security Council, while operations are under the command of the minister of defense. The chief of staff coordinates the functions of the National Security Council, the state's intelligence unit, the border troops, and the civil defense. Cadets and noncommissioned officers receive training at the Bishkek Military School; some are sent abroad for training. Higher-ranking officers are trained in Moscow. The country's small air force unit is trained mostly at the Bishkek Aviation School. The nation maintains an army, an air force, security forces, and border troops. Military service is compulsory for 18-year-old males.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 12,000
 Military Manpower Availability: 1,347,312
 Military Expenditures \$million: 19.2
 as % of GDP: 1.7
 as % of central government expenditures: 9.7
 Arms Imports \$million: —
 Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

The Kirghiz Soviet Socialist Republic briefly enjoyed one of the highest republic economic growth rates in the Soviet Union's waning years, benefiting from demand for its livestock products, metals, and hydroelectric power. Once independence was achieved, however, Kyrgyzstan suffered one of the severest declines of any post-Soviet state, with per capita consumption dropping an estimated 40 percent in 1991 and 1992 alone. The country remains a poor and primarily agrarian economy, reliant on the foreign aid it

receives in larger amounts per capita than any former Soviet state other than the Baltic nations.

Considered a leader among former Soviet states in economic reform and privatization, Kyrgyzstan sold off about half of all state property upon independence, including retail, industrial, construction, and transport enterprises. But management skills remain scarce, in no small part because of emigration by ethnic Europeans, and the country's financial and transportation infrastructures remain primitive.

Following a bout of hyperinflation that affected all countries using the ruble, Kyrgyzstan adopted its own currency, the som, in May 1993. After contracting steadily through the first half of the 1990s, the economy gained steadily starting in 1996, growing by 6 percent in 2003. Despite the Akayev regime's success in taming inflation, controlling government budgets, and attracting some foreign investment, general prosperity has eluded most Kyrgyzstanis: unemployment was well above the officially stated level of 3.1 percent in January 1998, industries are chronically unable to pay their employees, privatization largely benefited only a few wealthy investors, and foreign investment has been minimal beyond the mining sector. Only Russia has invested in Kyrgyzstan's industries, particularly its defense manufacturing plants, in part because it could make acquisitions by canceling debt.

Kyrgyzstan belongs to the Economic Cooperation Organization, set up by several large Muslim states in Central Asia; the Asian Development Bank; and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. In 1998 it became the first CIS state to gain admission to the World Trade Organization.

Manufacturing made up 23 percent of Kyrgyzstan's GDP in 2003 and occupied 15 percent of the workforce. Heavy industry—primarily metal processing and machine building for agriculture—constitutes nearly half of overall industrial production. Light industry, however, has increased its share of manufacturing. This has largely consisted of wool, leather, and food processing, but the country also has modest industries in textiles, clothing, and shoes.

The processing of nonferrous minerals accounted for 11.2 percent of GDP in 1996 and employed just 0.5 percent of the population. Kyrgyzstan has commercially valuable deposits of gold as well as coal, tin, mercury, molybdenum, antimony, zinc, tungsten, and uranium. It imports slightly more coal than it produces. Its considerable hydroelectric generating capacity is enough to meet a little more than one-quarter of its energy needs; 40 percent of energy resources must be imported, primarily in the form of oil or gas from its neighbors.

Kyrgyzstan's service sector amounted to 38 percent of GDP in 2000; almost one-third of the working population was engaged in this sector.

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Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 7.808
GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 1,600
GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 3.9
GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 2.8
Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
Agriculture: 38.7
Industry: 22.9
Services: 38.4
Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
Private Consumption: 70
Government Consumption: 19
Gross Domestic Investment: 17.6
Foreign Trade \$million: Exports: 548
Imports: 601
% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 3.2
% of Income Received by Richest 10%: 27.7

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
244.5	290.2	310.3	316.9	328.0

Finance

National Currency: Kyrgyzstani Som (KGS)
Exchange Rate: \$1 = KGS 43.6484
Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 10.6
Central Bank Discount Rate %: —
Total External Debt \$billion: 1.5
Debt Service Ratio %: 7.67
Balance of Payments \$million: –108
International Reserves SDRs \$million: 354.3
Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
3.5

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 186
per capita \$: 37.20
Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 4.8

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
Revenues \$million: 371.5
Expenditures \$million: 387.1
Budget Deficit \$million: 15.6
Tax Revenues as % of GDP: 12.4

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 38.7
Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 5.0
Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares: 18.1
Irrigation, % of Farms having: 73.1
Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 5
Total Farmland % of land area: 7.3
Livestock: Cattle million: 1
Chickens million: 4.3
Pigs 000: 82.8
Sheep million: 3.03

Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters 000: 26
Fisheries: Total Catch tons: 142

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 128
Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 6.0

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 1.323
Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 2.4
Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 486
Net Energy Imports % of use: 39.5
Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: —
Production kW-hr billion: 13.45
Consumption kW-hr billion: 10.46
Coal Reserves tons billion: —
Production tons million: —
Consumption tons million: —
Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
Production cubic meters million: 16
Consumption cubic meters billion: 2.016
Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
Production barrels 000 per day: 2
Consumption barrels 000 per day: 20
Pipelines Length km: 13

Foreign Trade

Imports \$million: 601
Exports \$million: 548
Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 4.0
Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 2.1
Balance of Trade \$million: –108

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Russia %	24.7	16.7
Kazakhstan %	24.0	9.8
China %	10.3	4.0
United States %	6.7	—
Uzbekistan %	5.5	—
Germany %	5.3	—
United Arab Emirates %	—	24.7
Switzerland %	—	20.3
Canada %	—	5.3

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 18,500
Paved %: 91.1
Automobiles: 188,700
Trucks and Buses: —
Railroad: Track Length km: 470
Passenger-km million: 43
Freight-km million: 395

Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: —
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: —
 Airports: 61
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 315
 Length of Waterways km: 600

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 69
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 14
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 11

Communications

Telephones 000: 394.8
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.09
 Cellular Telephones 000: 53.1
 Personal Computers 000: 75
 Internet Hosts per million people: 2,390
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 30

ENVIRONMENT

Inefficient irrigation has reduced the amount of water reaching the Syr Darya River as it makes its way to Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan and ultimately to the much-depleted Aral Sea. Poor water management has also caused the level of the lake of Issyk Kul to drop, leaving deposits of salt in the soil. Banned in 1972, DDT still contaminates 32 percent of the soil in the Chu Valley, and chemical fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides taint both soil and water. Mine tailings and industrial runoff have added to the contamination of the country's rivers with oil, copper, ammonia, and nitrites.

Although Kyrgyzstan has never had a great deal of industry, its smelters and other metallurgical plants have created enough air pollution to make Bishkek and Osh among the most polluted cities of the former Soviet Union, with particulates, sulfur dioxide, carbon monoxide, nitrous oxide, and other by-products of fossil-fuel combustion all present at hazardous levels. Mining and smelting have released mercury, arsenic, lead, and antimony, as well.

Biodiversity is affected primarily by excessive concentrations of livestock, to a lesser extent by commercial hunting and poaching. Herds and flocks have been expanded and moved to ever-higher grazing grounds in the mountains, as lower pastures are exhausted, depleting the wild grasses that indigenous grazing mammals depend on. Land under protected status in Kyrgyzstan amounts to 4 percent of the republic's territory; protected areas include the 19,400-hectare (47,939-acre) Ala-Archa national park, four nature reserves, and 66 nature preserves.

The republic devised its first National Environmental Action Plan in 1994, which addresses critical problems

such as management of mining and refining wastes, water management, land degradation, and habitat loss.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 5.2
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: 23
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 4
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 0.94

LIVING CONDITIONS

Most Kyrgyz are relatively poor. Winters are bitterly cold, and summers are extremely hot. Few people own cars, traveling mostly on foot or by bus. Trains are cheap but slow and unreliable. In the winter, airplanes and helicopters can be the only available forms of transportation. There are some restaurants and shops, but they are not always open, and people do most of their shopping at open-air markets. People pay for almost everything with cash, not checks or credit cards. Fuel is expensive, roads are in bad condition, the general infrastructure has fallen into disrepair, and crime is ubiquitous. There are landmines in some areas. Nomads still live in tents called yurts, which they can assemble or disassemble in about an hour.

HEALTH

Life expectancy in Kyrgyzstan is fairly low, at not quite 68 years. Infant mortality is also high, at nearly 37 deaths per 1,000 live births. Each woman had an average of 2.7 children in 2004. The Soviet health-care system has fallen into disrepair, and there are not nearly enough medical facilities, supplies, or personnel to service the population. Infectious diseases such as hepatitis, tuberculosis, undulant fever, and diphtheria are endemic. There is little information or education about contraception.

Health

Number of Physicians: 13,379
 Number of Dentists: 1,077
 Number of Nurses: 33,698
 Number of Pharmacists: 109
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 268
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: 5.5
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 36.81
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 110
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 4.0
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 12
 HIV Infected % of adults: < 0.1
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 98
 Measles: 98
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 60
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 76

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Kyrgyz cuisine is similar to that of neighboring countries and blends Middle Eastern, nomadic, Russian, and Mediterranean traditions. The main ingredients are rice, beans, vegetables, yogurt, and grilled meat. Sheep are common meat animals, the fatter the better. Many dishes are extremely spicy. Nomads typically use every part of their herd animals, including entrails. People drink tea with nearly every meal; they usually drink it without milk. Most Kyrgyz drink alcohol, especially when entertaining. Popular alcoholic beverages include Russian vodka, *kumys* (fermented mare's milk), and *bozo* (fermented millet).

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 5.8
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,830
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 230.3
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 169.5

STATUS OF WOMEN

Sex equity is one area in which Kyrgyzstan has regressed since the demise of the Soviet Union, which took pains to educate women to the same standards as men and set minimum quotas to ensure their participation in functions of the state, society, and economy. Such quotas have been abolished, and many professional women have lost their government jobs. There are few women in parliament or cabinet-level positions and fewer still in high-level administrative positions. Average wages paid to women in 1993 were 23 percent lower than those paid to men. Women make up the bulk of the unemployed.

The Women's Democratic Party was founded to counter these trends. A number of female professionals have become more involved in nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) focused on a variety of issues, most prominently the Women's Congress of Kyrgyzstan. Among other activities, the Women's Congress has created a women's business education center in Bishkek and has helped rural women to set up their own home-based businesses. It has successfully pressured the government to adopt several international conventions on women's issues. Matters of special concern are working conditions for women in industry and agriculture and the rise of domestic abuse as social support systems break down.

Rural women are a world apart from the urban professionals running the NGOs. In these patriarchal settings women are more subservient and less educated. Until the 19th century the Kyrgyz were a nomadic society that depended as much on female as male labor, so Kyrgyz women traditionally enjoyed higher status than

their counterparts elsewhere in Central Asia. Though women have assigned roles in traditional society, only the most religious are sequestered and veiled, mostly among Uzbeks in the south, where the Islamic revival is strongest.

Family planning is regarded as taboo in Muslim culture; therefore, in the southern part of Kyrgyzstan family-planning efforts have had little impact. In the country as a whole, one-quarter of women of reproductive age were using one or another method of contraception, and the state was following World Health Organization guidelines for the provision of family planning services. Most Kyrgyz people believe that it is necessary to limit births both to preserve the health of children and mothers and for economic reasons. In 2004 Kyrgyz women bore 2.7 children on average, a drop from 4.1 in 1980, but the birthrate is considerably higher in rural areas and among the less educated.

Women

Women-headed Households %: 26.4
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 10
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: —
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 44.1

WORK

Unemployment in Kyrgyzstan is high, and half the population lives in poverty. During the Soviet era many people were employed in factories producing goods for trade throughout the Soviet Union, but most of those factories sit idle now. As of 2000, 55 percent of the population worked in agriculture; many of them are subsistence farmers and herders who live nomadic lives. Sheep are a common herd animal; herders raise them for meat and wool, which is important during the cold winters. About 15 percent of the workforce is employed in industry, especially the oil industry and metallurgy; the remaining 30 percent work in services, some of them just scraping by. Many older people, especially women, have no income and are virtually worthless, and they live by growing food for themselves and selling any surplus. Many people have returned to a barter economy.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 2,700,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 47.2
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 55
 Industry: 15
 Services: 30
 Unemployment %: 7.2

EDUCATION

All children are supposed to attend school from ages six to 15, and most do; literacy is near universal. The course of study is divided into four years of primary school and five of lower secondary school. Students can opt to attend ordinary secondary schools for two years, specialized secondary schools for two to four years, or technical or vocational schools for varying durations. The curriculum has shifted since Soviet times, replacing Marxist ideology with cultural studies geared to the school's prevailing ethnic group and allowing for electives. As the population has grown, textbook and teacher shortages have increased, and class sizes have increased, especially in rural areas.

Language issues in schools have been much debated. The primary language of instruction is Kyrgyz (in 63.6 percent of schools in 1993–94). Kyrgyzstan's continued use of the Cyrillic alphabet has caused a crisis in Uzbek-language schools (12.7 percent), whose textbooks are printed only in Uzbekistan, which has returned to using the Latin alphabet. Russian and other Slavic children continue to be educated in Russian (23.4 percent), and a few schools teach in Tajik (0.3 percent).

Kyrgyzstan has numerous institutions of higher education, including a branch of the American University.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 97
Male %: 99
Female %: 96
School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 12.9
First Level: Primary Schools: 1,885
Teachers: 18,376
Students: 449,399
Student-Teacher Ratio: 24.5
Net Enrollment Ratio: 89.3
Second Level: Secondary Schools: 1,474
Teachers: 52,655
Students: 713,287
Student-Teacher Ratio: 14.0
Net Enrollment Ratio: —
Third Level: Institutions: 23
Teachers: 13,221
Students: 201,128
Gross Enrollment Ratio: 42.2
Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 3.1

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Kyrgyzstan does not have a well-developed technological infrastructure. Electrical supply is unreliable, and the telephone system is rudimentary; in 2002 there were fewer than 400,000 telephone lines, along with 100,000 unfilled applications for lines outstanding. There were only about 50,000 cellular telephones in the country in 2002.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 522
Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 0.2
High-Tech Exports \$million: 5.62
Patent Applications by Residents: 84

MEDIA

Journalists are free to practice their profession in Kyrgyzstan—within limits. If journalists have sometimes been irresponsible in serving up charges of corruption, the government has not hesitated to bring criminal slander and libel suits against them. Worse, reporters and editors have periodically been subject to extrajudicial punishment, threats, and beatings. On occasion, the Akayev regime resorted to closing newspapers. In recent years the press came under increasing pressure to toe the government line, and journalists became increasingly likely to censor their own content.

Nevertheless, Kyrgyzstan's environment for publications is still the most liberal in Central Asia. The privately owned Russian-language *Vechernii Bishkek* is the largest and the most respected publication; it has a definite progovernment slant. There are well over 100 weekly and other periodicals. There are two domestic news agencies: the official Kyrgyzkabar and the independent Belyi Parokhod. Foreign news bureaus include ITAR-TASS, Interfax, and RIA-Vesti.

Television and radio are still mostly state owned. Broadcasters tend to be cautious about challenging the official line, and there have been no instances of crackdowns by the regime on radio or television stations. Bishkek is well served by television and radio; more remote areas are not. The south gets its broadcasting from Uzbekistan, which accentuates the split identity of the country's two parts. Russian television is relayed from Moscow despite occasional government attempts to reduce Russian programming. Radio is provided by the official Kyrgyz Radio and by several small, privately owned stations.

There are a few publishing houses in Bishkek.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 3
Total Circulation 000: —
Circulation per 1,000: —
Books Published: 351
Periodicals: —
Radio Receivers 000: —
per 1,000: —
Television sets 000: 230
per 1,000: 49

CULTURE

Though nominally an Islamic country, Kyrgyzstan has never taken on a truly Islamic character; the nation is rich with musical and poetic traditions that come from its nomads. Folk music is still popular; people play a variety of stringed, wind, and percussive instruments. The nation's most famous modern authors are Chinghiz Aitmatov and Kazat Akmatov. Visual arts include handicrafts and elaborate metal jewelry as well as embroidery depicting mountain patterns.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
Volumes: —
Registered borrowers: 19,423
Museums Number: —
Annual Attendance: —
Cinema Gross Receipts national currency million: 1.6
Number of Cinemas: 293
Seating Capacity: 80,800
Annual Attendance: 300,000

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Kyrgyzstan, like its neighbor Kazakhstan, has long been a haven for traveling bards and poets called *akyn*. These people still travel the countryside performing long oral poems and songs that tell traditional stories and occasionally participating in competitions. The Kyrgyz are especially known for a long epic cycle about a hero called Manas. This hero came to be associated with Kyrgyzstan because Soviet scholars gave him to the nation in an effort to instill the republic with its own native culture and oral history.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Until recently many entertainment facilities were only available to political bigwigs, but they have now opened up to the masses; however, the facilities are typically substandard, and the masses do not have much money to spend on beaches or nightclubs, so the entertainment in question is often not very entertaining. There are some good areas for hiking and trekking, especially Ala-Archa Canyon. Lake Issyk-Kul has good thermal springs, health spas, hiking trails, and trout fishing. There are excellent mountains for those interested in mountaineering, but access can be difficult.

ETIQUETTE

People greet one another the first time they meet in a day, using formal greetings with people they do not know very

well; they do not greet one another again during subsequent meetings that same day. They do not thank one another as frequently as do Westerners, and they do not smile frequently. Tipping is not customary and may even offend some Muslims, who believe it their duty to offer superb hospitality. Prices in markets and bazaars are open to negotiation. Kyrgyz do not have a strict sense of time and are often late for appointments.

FAMILY LIFE

Kyrgyz people tend to have traditional attitudes toward gender roles in marriage; they believe men should be older than women when they marry for the first time, and that women should be primarily concerned with being homemakers and mothers. People still often want from three to five children, but the reality has been changing because of the poor economic. Rural people are more likely than urban people to want large families.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Traditionally, Kyrgyz people wore different costumes depending on region and clan, with wool and sheepskin common materials used to make clothing. Today, most people wear more modern clothing, especially in the cities. Most people dress rather formally for work, though they may dress casually for other formal occasions. During the summer, people dress in light clothing to suit the hot climate. It is considered acceptable to wear the same outfit several days in a row.

SPORTS

Kyrgyz play a number of sports involving galloping horses, such as wrestling on horseback, picking up a coin from the ground while racing on horseback, and *ulak tartysh*, a form of polo that uses a dead goat instead of a ball. Young men and women still play a traditional game in which the boy pursues the girl on horseback, trying to catch her and kiss her; if he fails, she can hit him with her whip.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1936** Kyrgyz SSR is granted full republic status.
- 1980** Sultan Ibrahimov, chairman of Kyrgyz Council of Ministers, is murdered.
- 1985** Mikhail Gorbachev's rise in Moscow leads to resignation of longtime Kyrgyz Communist Party secretary Turdakan Usubaliyev.
- 1990** The conflict over land between Uzbeks and Kyrgyz in Osh region explodes into rioting, killing at least 320 on both sides.

- 1991** Kyrgyzstan asserts its independence on August 31 in the wake of Soviet Union's disintegration. Askar Akayev is confirmed in October as president of the new republic, which joins Commonwealth of Independent States.
- 1993** A new constitution is passed in May. First deputy prime minister German Kuznetsov, the highest-ranking Russian official, announces his resignation, expressing doubt about future of Slavic peoples in independent Kyrgyzstan. Persistent accusations of corruption lead to the resignation of Vice President Feliks Kulov and the dismissal of the government. Apas Jumagulov takes over as prime minister.
- 1994** Kyrgyzstan becomes a founding member of the Central Asian Union with Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, joins NATO's Partnership for Peace, and allows Russian troops to patrol its border with China.
- 1995** Elections are held for a new bicameral legislature. The Supreme Assembly vetoes Akayev's proposal to extend his term to 2001, forcing a presidential election in December, which Akayev wins.
- 1996** A second constitutional referendum further heightens the president's powers. The Russian language is given official status in areas with large Slavic populations and in specialized fields. Kyrgyzstan joins a common market with Russia, Belarus, and Kazakhstan. Several high officials step down following corruption inquiries.
- 1997** Kyrgyzstan signs an agreement on joint border security with Russia, China, Kazakhstan, and Tajikistan. Human rights groups report increasing instances of government repression and jailing of journalists and opposition figures.
- 1998** Jumagulov announces retirement. A new government is formed under Prime Minister Kuvachbek Jumaliyev. Kyrgyzstan admitted to the World Trade Organization. A fresh set of constitutional amendments are passed by referendum, reshaping Supreme Assembly, restricting parliamentary immunity, and allowing for private land ownership.
- 1999** Kyrgyzstani territory is invaded by Muslim fundamentalists from the south, who take hostages, releasing them only after returning to Tajikistan.
- 2000** Parliamentary elections result in a plurality for the Communist Party, but a "centrist" coalition is formed to work closely with the president. Akayev is elected president for the next five years in what observers called a flawed election. Muslim fundamentalists stage a second invasion of southern Kyrgyzstan.
- 2001** Kyrgyzstan joins the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).
- 2002** There is unrest surrounding the detention of opposition leader Azimbek Baknazarov. Kyrgyzstan and China stage a joint military exercise. Opposition forces demand the president's resignation. A terrorist bomb explodes in Bishkek.
- 2003** Russia opens a military base in Kyrgyzstan. Akayev passes laws consolidating his power.
- 2004** Opposition parties form a coalition to challenge the government in 2005.
- 2005** After parliamentary elections perceived to be fraudulent, protesters seize presidential administrative building, ousting Akayev. Kurmanbek Bakiyev is instated as acting president and prime minister.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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1732 Wisconsin Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20007
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INTERNET RESOURCES

- National Statistical Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic
<http://stat-gvc.bishkek.su/english/index.html>
- Embassy of the Kyrgyz Republic
<http://www.kyrgyzstan.org/>

LAOS

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Lao People's Democratic Republic (Sathalanalat Paxathipatai Paxaxon Lao)

ABBREVIATION

LA

CAPITAL

Vientiane

HEAD OF STATE

President Khamtai Siphandon (from 1998)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Chairman of the Council of Ministers Boungnang Vorachith (from 2001)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Communist state

POPULATION

6,217,141 (2005)

AREA

236,800 sq km (91,428 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Lao

LANGUAGE

Lao

RELIGION

Theravada Buddhism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Kip

NATIONAL FLAG

Three horizontal stripes of red, dark blue, and red—the dark blue stripe twice the height of each of the red stripes—with a white disc representing the full moon in the center

NATIONAL EMBLEM

Two sheaves of grain enclosing a cityscape, the Mekong River, a cogwheel, and a farmstead

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Hymn of the Lao People”

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

July 19 (Independence Day, National Day), May 1 (Labor Day), various Buddhist festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

July 19, 1949

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

August 24, 1991

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Laos, a landlocked nation located in the heart of the Indochinese peninsula, has an area of 236,800 sq km (91,428 sq mi), extending 1,162 km (722 mi) south-southeast to north-northeast and 478 km (297 mi) east-northeast to west-southwest. Laos's international border is shared with five countries: China, Vietnam, Cambodia, Thailand, and Myanmar.

Laos is divided topographically into the northern mountains, composing two-fifths of the country, and the southern panhandle. The mountains of the northwest are characterized by steep slopes and sharp crests, with a number of peaks rising over 1,800 m (6,000 ft). Laos's

highest mountain, Phou Bia (2,817 m; 9,240 ft), is in this region in the province of Xieng Khouang. Another major feature is the Plain of Jars, on the Tran Ninh Plateau, between 1,014 and 1,219 m (3,330 and 4,000 ft) above sea level, so named from the prehistoric stone jars found in the area. The panhandle is bounded on the east by the Annam Cordillera, a continuous range with peaks rising to 2,350 m (8,000 ft), effectively cutting off Laos from Vietnam. West of the divide the range is buttressed by a series of plateaus, such as the Khammouane and the Boloven plateaus.

The Mekong River is the lifeline of Laos. It is the major transportation artery and the major source of irrigation. Its waters supply fish, a staple of the diet.

Laos



Geography

Area sq km: 236,800; sq mi 91,428
 World Rank: 79th
 Land Boundaries, km: Myanmar 235; Cambodia 541; China 423;
 Thailand 1,754; Vietnam 2,130
 Coastline, km: 0
 Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Mekong River 70
 Highest: Phou Bia 2,817
 Land Use %
 Arable Land: 3.8
 Permanent Crops: 0.4
 Forest: 54.4
 Other: 41.4

Population of Principal Cities (2004 est.)

Savannakhet	211,850
Vientiane	716,000

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Laos has two seasons: a wet season during the southwest monsoons, from May to October, and a dry season during the northeast monsoons, from November to April. July and August are the months of maximum precipitation, while November is almost dry.

The annual mean rainfall over all of Laos ranges from 1,270 to 2,290 mm (50 to 90 in). The lowest average rainfall is recorded in the region around Luang Prabang in the north, while the highest rainfall—more than 4,060 mm (160 in)—is recorded on the Boloven Plateau. Rainfall occurs at least 100 days a year throughout the country and in some areas as many as 150 days a year.

Temperatures are never extreme but vary from tropical to subtropical with altitude, latitude, and the monsoons. The hottest months are March and April, just before the southwest monsoon rains, when temperatures climb to around 35°C (95°F). Absolute highs of well over 37.8°C (100°F) have been recorded. During the rainy season the temperatures fall to an average of 26.7°C (80°F). During the cooler part of the dry season, from December to February, the temperatures hover between 14 and 28.4°C (57 and 83°F). Below-freezing temperatures have occasionally been recorded in Xieng Khouang.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature
 Winter: 57°F to 83°F
 Summer: 90°F to 100°F
 Average Rainfall: 50 in to 90 in
 Highest: 160 in the Boloven Plateau

FLORA AND FAUNA

Over half of the country is covered in dense forests, including tropical rain forests and monsoon forests. Vegetation includes broad-leaved evergreens as well as hardwoods such as teak. Though much of the forest is now second growth, there are some protected areas of original-growth rain forest. Bamboo, small trees, rattan, palms, and various grasses are found under the thick forest canopy.

The forests are home to an assortment of wild animals, from the panther to the elephant, the national symbol of Laos. However, numbers of elephants, as well as tigers and leopards, are declining rapidly as deforestation progresses throughout the country. Other significant mammals include deer, bears, monkeys, and wild oxen. Numerous colorful birds are found in the forests, as are reptiles such as cobras and crocodiles. Laos also boasts a wide variety of butterflies.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 6,217,141
 World Rank: 101st
 Density per sq km: 24.5
 % of annual growth (1999-2003): 2.3
 Male %: 49.5
 Female %: 50.5
 Urban %: 20.7
 Age Distribution %: 0-14: 41.6
 15-64: 55.2
 65 and over: 3.2
 Population 2025: 9,450,000
 Birth Rate per 1,000: 35.99
 Death Rate per 1,000: 11.83
 Rate of Natural Increase %: 2.4
 Total Fertility Rate: 4.77
 Expectation of Life (years): Males 53.07
 Females 57.17
 Marriage Rate per 1,000: —
 Divorce Rate per 1,000: —
 Average Size of Households: 6
 Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

The ethnic configuration of Laos is characterized by limited diversity. Three main ethnic groups are officially listed: Lao Loum, Lao Theung, and Lao Soung. All of these groups are ethnically related to the Tai, or Thai, people.

The Lao Loum (lowland Lao) are the dominant ethnic group, constituting some two-thirds of the population. Historically, the Lao Loum have imposed their social values, religion, language, and political system on the other peoples.

Around one-fifth of the population is made up of the Lao Theung (upland Lao), who were until recently also known as Kha (slaves). The Lao Theung, believed to be the original inhabitants of the land, are distinguished by features suggesting a possible ancestral connection with Negrito races.

The name Lao Soung (mountain Lao) is principally applied to two groups: the Miao (Hmong) and the Mien (Yao). They are believed to be the most recent migrants from China, appearing in Laos as recently as 1850. The Miao are a proud people with a reputation as valiant fighters. They have been generally successful in maintaining their identity, owing partly to their more highly developed social organization. The Lao Soung groups make up 10 percent of the population.

LANGUAGES

The official language of Laos is Lao, the language of the Lao Loum ethnic group. French is still used as a logical and convenient language for diplomatic communication and is spoken by most of the Lao elite. Most official publications continue to be issued in French. The American presence in Laos during the 1960s led to the adoption of English by many educated Laotians, but with the growing isolation of Laos since 1975, the status of English is in doubt.

The minority languages of Laos are for the most part unwritten and used only locally. The more important of these are the Mon-Khmer languages, spoken by the Lao Theung people; the Tibeto-Burman languages, spoken by the Lolo, Akha, and Lahu; and the Miao-Yao languages, spoken by the Miao and the Mien.

RELIGIONS

Until a secular state was established in 1975, Theravada, or Hinayana, Buddhism was the official faith of Laos. The pervasive influence of Buddhism is attested to by the thousands of pagodas that dot the towns and the countryside—Vientiane and Luang Prabang have been called “cities of a thousand temples.” Most of the Lao and a smaller number of the non-Lao regard themselves as Buddhists. However, coexisting with orthodox Buddhism is a cult of Phi, or spirit worship, which regulates a large part of the daily activities of the average Lao. Most non-Lao adhere to tribal religions in which spirit worship is the major element, as modified in some cases by Buddhist or Confucian beliefs.

Christian missionary activity in Laos has not been rewarded with many converts, and in the 1960s there were only 50,000 Christians in the country. There are three Roman Catholic vicars apostolic, in Vientiane, Pakse, and Khammouane.

Religious Affiliations

Buddhist	3,730,000
Christian	93,000
Animist and Other	2,394,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Laos has been occupied by its neighbors for much of its history. The first independent principalities were created in the 13th century following invasions by Kublai Khan. In the mid-14th century Fa Ngum formed a kingdom, Lan Xang. This kingdom prospered, but it split in the 17th century into three warring kingdoms. By the end of the 18th century most of the country was under the control of the Siamese.

With the Europeans came European control. Laos was under French rule from 1893 to 1953, except for a five-year Japanese occupation from 1940 to 1945. On the whole, French rule rested lightly. Patterns of local government under the French were not greatly changed, and local customs and traditions were respected when they were not incompatible with larger French objectives. The French *résident supérieur* exercised only indirect rule over Luang Prabang, though administration of the eight provinces outside that kingdom was more direct.

The Japanese pressured King Sisavang Vong to declare Laos independent in 1945, but following the Japanese surrender he reaffirmed France's protectorate role. Free Lao forces deposed the king shortly thereafter. However, France regained Laos in early 1946 and reinstated the monarch. In 1949 Laos was granted limited self-government as an Associated State within the French Community. The royalist government was led by Prince Souvanna Phouma, who served as prime minister from 1951 to 1954. Anti-French forces coalesced in 1950 to form the Pathet Lao, led by pro-Communist Prince Souphanouvong, Souvanna Phouma's half-brother.

Laos was granted full independence from France in 1953. Except for a short period in 1957–58, when Souvanna Phouma and Souphanouvong formed a coalition government, Laos was ruled by a series of pro-Western conservative regimes from 1954 to 1960. During the 1950s the Pathet Lao gradually gained control of the northern portion of the country with the assistance of Vietnamese Communist forces. By 1965 the country was de facto partitioned into a Communist north and “neutralist” government under Souvanna Phouma in the south. The two sides signed a cease-fire agreement in 1973, and the following year a coalition government led by Souvanna Phouma and Souphanouvong was formed. In the wake of the Communist victory in Vietnam, the Pathet Lao gradually established control of administration.

In December 1975 the monarchy was abolished, the coalition government dissolved, and the People's Demo-

cratic Republic of Laos declared. Within two years the new regime had consolidated its power and given the country its first stable government since 1953. With a disciplined army and party as its power base, the government liquidated all opposition and began a process of national "reeducation," or indoctrination. Private industry was nationalized and agriculture collectivized. Faced with an economy near collapse and strong resistance to collectivization, the government slowed the pace of socialization during the 1980s and announced a limited return to free enterprise and private landownership.

In March 1989 Laos held its first national elections since the Communists came to power in 1975. A total of 121 candidates vied for 70 seats in the Laos Supreme People's Assembly. Western news reports indicated that only 7 percent of the electorate participated in the voting. Since that election, there began a movement toward a market economy. Laos joined the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in July 1997. In 1998 the former prime minister Khamtai Siphandon became president, and he was reelected in 2002. The country began talks to join the World Trade Organization in 2001 and hosted the ASEAN summit in 2004. Despite the nation's efforts to normalize relations with its neighbors and the international community, Laos demonstrated its authoritarian character in 2003 with the arrest and conviction of two international journalists covering the Hmong insurgency. Though the journalists were later released, their Laotian guides were not. President Siphandon stepped down as leader of the Communist party in 2006 and was replaced by Choummaly Sayasone.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

Prime Minister

1945–46	Prince Phaya Khammao
1946–47	Prince Kindavong
1947–48	Prince Suvannarat
1948–50	Prince Boun Oum na Champasak
1950–51	Phoui Sananikon
1951–54	Prince Souvanna Phouma
1954–56	Katay Don Sasorith
1956–58	Prince Souvanna Phouma
1958–59	Phoui Sananikon
1959–60	Sunthon Patthamavong
1960	Kouprasith Abhay
1960	Prince Tiami Sovanith
1960	Prince Souvanna Phouma
1960	Quinim Pholsena
1960–62	Prince Boun Oum na Champasak
1962–75	Prince Souvanna Phouma
1975–91	Kaysone Phomvihane
1991–98	Khamtai Siphandon
1998–2001	Sisavat Keobounphan
2001–	Boungnang Vorachith

President

1975–1986	Prince Souphanouvong
1986–1991	Phoumi Vongvichit
1991–92	Kaysone Phomvihane
1992–98	Nouhak Phoumsavan
1998–	Khamtai Siphandon

CONSTITUTION

In 1991 the National Assembly adopted a new constitution, whereby the assembly elects the president of the country. In addition to the dependent executive, the constitution recognizes only the Lao People's Revolutionary Party as the central organ. That party has a central committee, or politburo, that consists of nine members, including the country's president. The constitution also calls for an independent judiciary.

PARLIAMENT

The National Assembly of Laos is the legislative organ of the government. Its 109 members are elected for terms of five years by universal adult suffrage at the age of 18. The assembly has the power to elect or to remove the president and vice president, to make or abrogate laws, and to amend the constitution. The president in turn appoints a prime minister, with assembly approval. Both the president and the prime minister serve five-year terms.

POLITICAL PARTIES

The sole legal political party in the country is the Lao People's Revolutionary Party (Phak Pasason Pativat Lao, or PPPL), formerly the People's Party of Laos. The PPPL is the Marxist core of the Lao Patriotic Front (Neo Lao Hak Xat, or NLHX), the political wing of the former Pathet Lao, later the Lao People's Liberation Army. In the 2002 elections one non-Communist candidate was, in fact, elected to the National Assembly; he was officially approved by the government.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For purposes of regional administration Laos is divided into 16 provinces and one municipality. The provinces (*khoueng*) are subdivided into districts (*muong*), the districts into cantons (*tasseng*), and the cantons into villages (*ban*). Each province is headed by a governor, or *chao khoueng*; each district is headed by a *chao muong*; and each village is headed by a chief, called *pho ban* in the south and *nai ban* in the tribal areas and in the north. The Miao and Kha tribes have chieftains who occupy administra-

tive posts called *naikong lao theung*, corresponding to the office of *chao muong*. Vientiane and a few other cities and towns are each administered as a *muong* by a *chao muong*. All units of local administration are subject to close central government control.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The highest Laotian court is the Central Supreme Court in Vientiane. Under its jurisdiction are a court of appeals, in Vientiane; three criminal courts, in Vientiane, Pakse, and Luang Prabang; one provincial tribunal for each provincial capital; and 37 district justices of the peace. At the village level, justice is usually dispensed by village headmen in the presence of village elders.

No fully codified law exists in Laos, and there is no guaranteed due process. The government has promulgated interim rules and regulations for the arrest and trial of those accused of specific crimes, including armed resistance to the government. Although the regulations allow an accused person to make a statement presenting his side of the case, they provide no real opportunity for the accused to defend himself and do not permit bail or the use of an attorney. Rather, the government has issued instructions on how to investigate, prosecute, and punish wrongdoers. These instructions are applied capriciously and inconsistently. People can be arrested on the accusations of others and detained while the accusations are investigated. Those arrested are not always informed of the charges against them, and investigations often take long periods of time, unless family members and friends take strong interest in the cases. Influential government officials and their families can easily affect the judgments reached. There are some provisions for appeal, but important political cases tried by "people's courts" are without appeal.

HUMAN RIGHTS

In terms of civil and political rights, Laos is classified as an unfree country. Citizens do not have the right to change their government. Prison conditions are harsh, and police use arbitrary arrest and detention. Lengthy pretrial detention is a problem. The judiciary is subject to executive influence, suffers from corruption, and does not ensure citizens due process. The government infringes on citizens' privacy rights, restricting freedom of speech, assembly, and association. The government closely monitors the press. The government restricts freedom of religion; at least 40 Christians and animists were arrested and detained in 1998. Some societal discrimination against women and minorities persists. The government restricts some worker rights. However, the state has permitted increased access to the foreign press and the Internet and has actively supported a policy encouraging greater rights

for women and minorities. There is increased participation by women in government and a new focus on the problem of trafficking in women and children.

An organized Hmong insurgent group was responsible for the killing of 16 civilians in three incidents in Vientiane and Xieng Khouang provinces in 1998. These incidents appeared to be acts of deliberate terror against those not supporting resistance to the government. The Hmong continued to battle government forces into the new millennium. Two foreign journalists covering that story brought about an international stir in 2003 when they were arrested and sentenced to 15 years imprisonment. International pressure later forced Vientiane to release them.

FOREIGN POLICY

During the Southeast Asian crises of the 1970s and 1980s, Laos was firmly positioned in the Soviet camp, supporting Vietnam in every move against Thailand, Cambodia, and China. Laos remains very much Communist, like Vietnam; with the collapse of the Soviet Union, Laos made the necessary readjustments in foreign policy. In 1991 it concluded a border security and cooperation agreement with Thailand, providing for the repatriation of 60,000 Laotian refugees from Thailand. In 1994 the first bridge across the lower Mekong was opened, providing a major link between the two countries. A year later Cambodia and Vietnam joined Laos and Thailand in establishing the Mekong River Commission.

Relations with the United States, suspended from 1975 until 1992, were bogged down by two problems: narcotics trafficking in Laos and the search for several hundred U.S. servicemen listed as missing in action in Laos during the Vietnam War. Vientiane's cooperation on these issues led the way to the normalization of relations. In 1997 Laos became a member of ASEAN and in 2004 hosted the tenth ASEAN summit. The country has continued to normalize relations with its neighbors and with China.

DEFENSE

After 1975 the Pathet Lao, or the Lao People's Liberation Army, was transformed into the national army, and the former royalist forces were disbanded. As of the early 2000s, military service was compulsory for 18 months.

The Laotian armed forces consist of tough, seasoned personnel exposed to warfare for much of their adult lives. Though rated as inferior to the Vietnamese in fighting quality, their combat-worthiness is estimated by most military observers as higher than that of comparable Asian troops.

In 2002 the Laotian armed forces numbered over 129,000 active personnel. In 2004 defense spending ac-

counted for 0.5 percent of gross domestic product (GDP), or \$10.7 million, down from \$55 million in 1998.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 129,100
 Military Manpower Availability: 1,500,625
 Military Expenditures \$million: 10.7
 as % of GDP: 0.5
 as % of central government expenditures: —
 Arms Imports \$million: —
 Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

Laos is a landlocked country with a primitive infrastructure. It has no railroads, a rudimentary road system, and limited external and internal telecommunications. Electricity is available only in a few urban areas. Agriculture, primarily subsistence, accounts for half of GDP and provides 80 percent of total employment. The predominant crop is glutinous rice. Although Laos is self-sufficient overall with respect to food, each year floods, pests, and localized droughts cause shortages.

The nation moved away from a command economy throughout the 1990s, decentralizing control and encouraging enterprise. As a result, GDP growth averaged 7 percent from 1988 to 1997. Because Laos depends heavily on trade with Thailand, it was damaged by the regional financial crisis beginning in 1997; reform efforts subsequently slowed, and GDP growth dropped an average of 3 percentage points annually. Government mismanagement deepened the crisis, and from June 1997 to June 1999 the Laotian kip lost 87 percent of its value. Laos's foreign-exchange problems peaked in September 1999 when the kip fell from 3,500 kip to the dollar to 9,000 kip to the dollar in a matter of weeks. The currency eventually stabilized, at which point the government seemed content to let the extant situation, however substandard, persist.

The early 2000s witnessed GDP growth rates of between 5 and 6 percent. Major setbacks to the economy in 2003 were a downturn in tourism as well as the failure of the Nam Theun-2 hydroelectric power plant project when its largest shareholder, Édf International, a subsidiary of state-owned Électricité de France, pulled out at the last minute. Laos relies on cash infusions from the International Monetary Fund and international investors in food processing and mining. The country is planning to join the World Trade Organization.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 11.28
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 1,900

GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 5.8
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 3.3
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:

Agriculture: 49.5
 Industry: 27.5
 Services: 23.0

Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:

Private Consumption: 77
 Government Consumption: 6
 Gross Domestic Investment: —

Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 365.5

Imports: 579.5

% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 3.2

% of Income Received by Richest 10%: 30.6

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
628.7	786.4	847.8	937.9	1,083

Finance

National Currency: Kip (LAK)

Exchange Rate: \$1 = LAK 10,820

Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 836.5

Central Bank Discount Rate %: 20.0

Total External Debt \$billion: 2.49

Debt Service Ratio %: 10.32

Balance of Payments \$million: –80.76

International Reserves SDRs \$million: 189.5

Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
 12.3

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 298.6

per capita \$: 52.80

Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 19.48

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: 1 October–30 September

Revenues \$million: 284.3

Expenditures \$million: 416.5

Budget Deficit \$million: 132.2

Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 49.5

Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 4.5

Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 0.12

Irrigation, % of Farms having: 17.5

Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 7.6

Total Farmland % of land area: 4.0

Livestock: Cattle million: 1.25

Chickens million: 14

Pigs million: 1.65

Sheep 000: —

Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 6.3

Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 93.2

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 402.6
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 9.7

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 300
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 428
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 79
 Net Energy Imports % of use: —
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 0.639
 Production kW-hr billion: 3.55
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 2.69
 Coal Reserves tons billion: —
 Production tons 000: 1
 Consumption tons 000: 1
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
 Production cubic feet billion: —
 Consumption cubic feet billion: —
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
 Production barrels 000 per day: —
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 2.7
 Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$million: 579.5
 Exports \$million: 365.5
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —
 Balance of Trade \$million: –80.76

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Thailand %	59.7	20.7
China %	12.8	—
Vietnam %	10.2	15.8
France %	—	7.3
Germany %	—	5.3
Belgium %	—	4.0

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 21,716
 Paved %: 44.5
 Automobiles: —
 Trucks and Buses: —
 Railroad: Track Length km: —
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: —
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 1
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 3.1
 Airports: 44
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 91
 Length of Waterways km: 4,600

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 259
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 86
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 17

Communications

Telephones 000: 61.9
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.06
 Cellular Telephones 000: 55.2
 Personal Computers 000: 20
 Internet Hosts per million people: 151
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 2.4

ENVIRONMENT

Laos continues to suffer from deforestation, as timber is cut for fuel as well as cleared for agricultural expansion. Deforestation and rudimentary farming techniques have resulted in soil erosion. There is also a significant amount of unexploded ordnance, including landmines, scattered across the countryside. Perhaps the country's most pressing environmental problem is the fact that most of its citizens do not have sufficient access to potable water.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 54.4
 Forest Change (1990–2000) hectares 000: –53
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 16
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 0.08

LIVING CONDITIONS

In its 2004 Human Development Index, the United Nations ranked Laos 135th out of 177 nations in terms of quality of life. The index focuses on three measurable dimensions of human development: life expectancy, education, and standard of living. Life expectancy in Laos in 2004 was 55 years. The literacy rate in 2002 was 66.4 percent, with just 59 percent of eligible students enrolled in primary, secondary, and tertiary schools. Laos's GDP per capita in 2004 was \$1,900, making the nation one of the poorest in Asia.

Much of life in the country is carried on without the benefit of modern infrastructure or tools. Three-fourths of the population is rural, and villages seldom have running water or electricity. Farming is still done by ox and plow. Village life lacks privacy. Wooden or bamboo houses are built on stilts to avoid flooding and are close together, with roofs made of corrugated metal or thatch. Furnishing is minimal; much of the living is done on mats

on the floors of huts. Transportation is problematic, with few paved roads and much of farmers' produce shipped by ox-drawn cart.

In the cities and towns conditions are somewhat better. There is better access to proper sanitation and water supplies, and the availability of electricity is higher. However, there are acute housing shortages in urban areas, and many existing buildings are substandard. According to the United Nations, the urban population growth rate for 2000–05 was 4.9 percent.

HEALTH

Laos is very much a developing country in terms of its health-care system. Malaria, with 759 cases per 100,000 of population in 2000, is still the leading cause of death; diarrhea is the second-highest cause of childhood mortality. Other major health risks are leprosy, measles, dysentery, yaws, and tuberculosis. HIV/AIDS, a scourge in many other Asian countries, has yet to have a large impact in Laos; in 2003, 1,700 people were estimated to be living with HIV/AIDS, and fewer than 200 deaths occurred from the disease.

The lack of proper sanitation and safe drinking water remains a major problem. As of 2002, only 24 percent of the population had access to adequate sanitation facilities, while only 43 percent had access to safe drinking water. Childhood immunization rates are also low. In 2002, 65 percent of one-year-olds were fully immunized against tuberculosis. Of children under five, 40 percent were undernourished as of 2002; 22 percent of the full population was undernourished as of 2001. The infant mortality rate in 2005 was 85 deaths per 1,000 live births. The overall death rate in the country was 12 deaths per 1,000 population.

There have been improvements in health care with the introduction of Western medicine. Diseases such as malaria and smallpox have become more controlled than they once were, although with only 59 physicians per 100,000 people, much of the population is still underserved medically. In 1999 there were a mere 2.6 hospital beds per 1,000 people.

Health

Number of Physicians: 2,812
 Number of Dentists: 196
 Number of Nurses: 4,931
 Number of Pharmacists: —
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 59
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: 2.6
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 85.22
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 650
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 2.9
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 10
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.1

Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:

DPT: 50

Measles: 42

Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 24

Access to Improved Water Source %: 43

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Sticky rice is a major agricultural crop and the staple food of the country, served three times a day. Eaten with the fingers, such rice can be shaped into balls and then dipped into a variety of sauces. Most often, such sauces are spicy concoctions of fish, chili, garlic, and lime. Meat and fish are both salted, and beef is often deep-fried. Noodles are sometimes substituted for rice.

A common Lao dish is *laap*, a mixture of meat or fish and lime juice, garlic, rice, green onions, mint, and chilis. Laotians also enjoy salads made with shredded green papaya and seasoned with *padek*, a fermented fish paste, and chilis. Other favorite fruits include bananas, oranges, and berries. Peanuts are also widely eaten.

Food is often served on a bamboo tray placed in the middle of a circle of people sitting cross-legged on the floor. At meal times the sexes are generally separated: men sit on one side of the room and women on the other. Tea leaves and coffee beans, both of which grow in Laos, produce favorite drinks. People also drink a rice whiskey called *lao lao* and a rice wine called *kbao kam*.

Lack of nutrition remains a problem in the country. Of children under five, 40 percent were undernourished as of 2002; 22 percent of the general population was undernourished as of 2001.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 22.1

Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,240

Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 190.8

Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 187.9

STATUS OF WOMEN

The role of women in Laotian society has traditionally been subservient to that of men, but discrimination is not highly pronounced. The government-controlled Lao Women's Federation states as one of its goals the achievement of rights for women "equal" to those of men. Laotian women are encouraged to increasingly take part in economic and state-controlled political activity.

As a result of such politicized efforts, many Laotian women have come to hold key positions in the civil service as well as in the private sector. However, few represent the people in government. An estimated 15,000 to 20,000 Laotian women and girls, mainly highland eth-

nic minorities, are trafficked each year for prostitution, mostly to Thailand.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 23
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 0.9
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: —

WORK

As of 2001 there were an estimated 2.6 million Laotians in the work force, 80 percent of whom were estimated to be engaged in agriculture. The primary farming product is wet rice, which depends on the flooding of fields by seasonal rains. Other agricultural products include sweet potatoes, vegetables, corn, coffee, sugarcane, tobacco, cotton, tea, and peanuts, as well as water buffalo, pigs, cattle, and poultry. Most agriculture is subsistence. Public-sector employment and industry occupy the rest of the labor force. Industries include tin and gypsum mining, timber, electric power, agricultural processing, construction, garments, and tourism. As of 1997 the unemployment rate was 5.7 percent.

The government controls union activity. The Federation of Lao Trade Unions is an arm of the PPPL and the only union in the country; it has about 80,000 members, mostly in the public sector. There is no right to strike or to bargain collectively. The minimum work age is 15, and the maximum workweek is 48 hours; the daily minimum wage was \$0.53 in 2002. However, as most of the population is engaged in agriculture, which is not controlled by such laws, such restrictions are largely meaningless.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 2,600,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 46.7
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 80
 Other: 20
 Unemployment %: 5.7

EDUCATION

Education is, in principle, universal, compulsory, and free for five years, for children between the ages of seven and 12. More than one-third of those who enter the primary cycle do not finish, however. Total schooling consists of 11 years, as divided into five years of primary education and six years of secondary education. Primary education is divided into two cycles of three and two years each. There are four types of schools at this level: district group

elementary schools, which offer the full five-year course, and village primary schools, elementary schools, and rural centers of community education, all of which offer courses lasting less than five years. The educational system has two primary functions: to indoctrinate the student in the values of a radical society and to meet the manpower needs of the state.

The academic year runs from September to May. The medium of instruction is Lao, but French is taught as a second language from the primary grades onward. English and Vietnamese are taught as additional languages in secondary schools.

Sisavongvong University in Vientiane is the country's main university. A total of 10 other smaller colleges for teacher training and agriculture were merged in 1995 to form the National University of Laos. The government has made a commitment to educate the populace. In 2002 public expenditures on education were 2.8 percent, or 11 percent of total public expenditures. Some 85 percent of eligible students were enrolled in primary schools. Of those, 64 percent made it to the fifth grade, with, from there, a 79 percent transition rate to secondary schools. The literacy rate in 2002 was 66.4 percent, as improved from the 1990 level of 56.5 percent.

Many Laotians go abroad for higher education.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 66.4
 Male %: 77.4
 Female %: 55.5
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 9.1
 First Level: Primary Schools: 7,591
 Teachers: 28,571
 Students: 875,300
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 30.6
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 85.0
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 750
 Teachers: 13,771
 Students: 348,309
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 25.7
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 35.1
 Third Level: Institutions: 9
 Teachers: 1,794
 Students: 28,117
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 5.3
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 2.8

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Laos depends on foreign assistance and foreign technicians for much of its research in science and technology. Sisavongvong University, in Vientiane, has faculties of agriculture, forestry, and irrigation and of medicine; the university also comprises a technical college and a polytechnic. There are regional technical colleges in Luang Prabang, Savannakhét, and Champasak. Between 1987

and 1997 science and engineering students accounted for 20 percent of college and university enrollments.

The National Agricultural Research Center pursues research into crop propagation and pest resistance, while the National University of Laos has several agricultural and forestry faculties and colleges that also conduct research into crops, livestock, and the forests.

In 2004 the Asian Institute of Technology and the Laos Ministry of Education signed a memorandum of understanding to continue the strengthening of cooperation in education and research in the fields of technology, planning and management. The accord—effective until 2006—aimed to provide higher education opportunities to increasing numbers of Laotian students.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: —
 Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

All existing newspapers were suspended upon the establishment of the People's Republic and replaced by one daily, *Vientiane may*, the organ of the Party Committee. By 1996, three dailies were in existence.

The national news agency is Khao San Pathet Lao, which publishes a government organ of the same name in French and Lao. Novosti and the Vietnam News Agency maintain bureaus in Vientiane.

The official broadcasting organization, Lao National Radio, operates one shortwave and three medium-wave transmitters, broadcasting in Lao, French, and Vietnamese. The Voice of Peaceful Laos and the Voice of Pathet Lao are also broadcast to both domestic and foreign listeners.

Television was introduced in 1983 and is run by Lao National Television. Though there are foreign-language broadcasts via satellite, these are also strictly controlled and censored by the government.

The Laotian media is state controlled. The law authorizes jail terms for journalists who overstep what the government deems to be proper press conduct. Most criticism of the state or the ruling party is considered a criminal offense. As underlined this stance, two European journalists and their Hmong-American interpreter were arrested in June 2003 while covering the Hmong insurgency. Though the journalists were released several weeks later, having first been sentenced to 15-year prison terms for the killing of a village guard, the incident served as a warning to domestic and international journalists alike.

The government controls all domestic Internet servers, and authorities at times block access to Web sites that

they consider pornographic or that are critical of the government. In its 2004 rankings, Reporters without Borders ranked Laos 153rd out of 167 countries worldwide in terms of freedom of the press.

In 2002 there were 55,200 mobile cellular telephone users and 15,000 Internet users.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 3
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: 88
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets 000: 51
 per 1,000: 10

CULTURE

Religion plays a major role in Laotian culture. Buddhism is the primary religion; images of the Buddha and his life and teachings are found carved on temples and other religious sites throughout the country. An indigenous Asian overlay is placed on such religious and spiritual artifacts; for example, the snake, an animist symbol of water (from the shape of a river through the jungle), is often found represented on temples.

The traditions of dance, music, and drama are all combined in what is called *mohlam*, performed by a man and a woman who both dance and sing. The content of this minidrama and comedy usually regards courting. Dance movements are handed down from generation to generation, as are the contents of each tale, though improvisation is appreciated. Such dance and song is accompanied by the wind instrument known as the *khene*, or *khaen*, which is made of a group of bamboo pipes of different lengths. Other dance performances have classical Indian themes and stem from that country's epics. For such classical performances, only men dance, with younger boys playing female roles.

In literature, most writing displays a Buddhist tradition. However, there are also more secular tales, such as the Lao epic *Sin xay*, from the 16th and 17th centuries, as adapted from Hindu epic poems.

The Ministry of Information and Culture is responsible for cultural policy. Archaeological museums include Wat Prakeo and That Luang, the former Royal Palace Museum in Luang Prabang. There is also the National School for Dance and Music in Vientiane. Additionally, Laos is engaged in a project to preserve its store of priceless palm-leaf manuscripts. These dried leaves were etched with a stylus; scribes wrote the folk literature of the region on such treated leaves long before the advent of paper.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
Volumes: —
Registered borrowers: —
Museums Number: —
Annual Attendance: —
Cinema Gross Receipts: —
Number of Cinemas: —
Seating Capacity: —
Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Laos has a rich tradition of folklore, both oral and written. Lao folk narratives include fictional tales, such as myths, legends, folk epics, and folktales, and nonfiction works, including historical chronicles and treatises on folk medicine and folk law.

Lao myths generally deal with spiritual topics or creation tales; they include *Phya Kbankhaak, the Toad King*, the myth of the Great Gourd of Heaven; *Khua Khao Kad, the Giant Creeper*; and *Phuen Khun Boromrajathirat*, or *The Myth of Lord Boromrajathirat*. Legends, on the other hand, are considered secular. In the Lao tradition, these can relate to how things happen or deal with the history of a place and how it obtained its name. Examples of these are *The Blacksmith, Crow and Peacock, Dog and Pig, Chakacan (The Cicada), Maeng Nguan (The Singing Cricket)*, and *The Dog's Habit*. Folk epics are usually composed in verse and were originally passed along in the oral tradition. Later, they may have been written down on palm-leaf manuscripts. *Thao Hung Khun Bulom*, or *Khun Bulomrajathirat (Lord Bulom, or Lord Bulomrajathirat)*, *Thao Cheuang (King Hung and King Cheuang)*, and *Phadaeng Nang Ai (King Phadaeng and Princess Aikham)* are three examples of folk epics.

Folktales are stories passed on by word of mouth from generation to generation. Some Lao folktales had been recorded on palm-leaf manuscripts. These could be related in either prose or verse. There are numerous types of folktales, including tales of the Bodhisattva or Jataka tales, trickster tales featuring the clever and deceitful character Xiangmiang, riddles, and stories in which animals take on human characteristics, though humans usually get the upper hand. There are also plentiful tales of ghosts and magic in Lao folklore. Proverbs are popular, both as entertainment and as teaching tools. An example of such a proverb is "To judge an elephant, look at its tail; to judge a girl, look at her mother."

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Though government controlled, radio and television provide major sources of entertainment for Laotians. For

those living along the borders and in cities, Thai radio and television is available and is much more popular than local media, which tends to be propagandistic in content. In Vientiane and other urban areas, Western influences can be found in modern music performances and in dance clubs. Movies, mostly imported, are also strictly censored for content by the government.

In rural areas the population finds entertainment around the major Buddhist festival days and ceremonies such as marriage. Food is a major ingredient of such entertainment. However, with most of the population engaged in subsistence agriculture, there is little leisure time.

ETIQUETTE

The *nop* is the usual form of greeting. This gesture involves placing the hands together as if praying, with deference shown by the level of the hands: the higher the hands, the more respect shown. The nose is the upper limit to such signs of respect. This gesture is accompanied by a bow for those of greater age or higher status. The *nop* can also be used to show thanks, regret, or farewell. With Westerners, Laotians will also shake hands.

As is typical in many Asian cultures, the top of the head and bottom of the feet have special significance. As the soles are considered the lowliest part, it is rude to show them by crossing one's leg at the knee, for example. The top of the head is considered sacred and it is impolite to touch it, even to pat an infant's head.

Displays of public affection are not considered good etiquette. Shoes are taken off before entering homes or religious buildings.

FAMILY LIFE

Most Laotians live in rural areas, and the traditions of rural life persist despite changes in government. Families tend to be large, with children helping in the rice paddies. The fertility rate per woman in 2004 was just under five children per woman. Taking into account high infant and child mortality rates, families typically number between six and eight, including parents. Western-style dating does not exist; instead, groups of young men will go to homes with eligible daughters to meet prospective brides. The groom will pay a bride price, and the couple will live with the bride's family for a time before setting up their own home nearby. Generally, the youngest daughter is responsible for the care of aging parents and thus also inherits the family house and rice paddy.

Domestic work is the concern of women. This includes fetching water and processing rice. The men work in the fields, but if there is a smaller kitchen garden, that is also the responsibility of the woman.

Polygamy, once legal, was banned by the PPPL; however, many men have mistresses. Divorce may be initiated by either party. If a couple encounters domestic difficulties, the two families usually talk about the problem first. If necessary, village elders join the attempt to resolve the couple's differences and achieve reconciliation. If none of this works, the couple can divorce, after which both husband and wife may return to their families of birth, unless either can make a living other than from farming. Children of divorce may remain with either parent. In the case of a spouse's death, the widow or widower may return to their birth household, but more commonly he or she maintains an independent household or remarries.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Traditional Laotian clothing includes the *sin* for women and the *phakhawma* for men. The *sin* is a practical garment in tropical Laos—basically a tube of cloth fixed with a belt at the waist. It can be worn either at waist level, with a blouse on top, or above the breasts as a one-piece covering. At home many Laotian men wear the long length of cloth called the *phakhawma* wrapped like a skirt or into shorts. They also wear Western-style shirts and pants. Jeans and other blatantly Western clothing were initially banned by the Communist government, but that is no longer the case. In cities, Western dress is typical.

Laotians have rich collections of regional traditional costumes, such as brightly colored silk wraps with embroidery, which are only worn on special occasions in modern times.

SPORTS

Popular sports include soccer, volleyball, badminton, and *takraw*, a Southeast Asian sport in which players keep a rattan ball in the air using only the feet and head, as in soccer. The Laotian national soccer team was formed in 1951 and has competed in the South East Asian Games every year since 1993. The team also competes for the Asian trophy known as the Tiger Cup.

Martial arts, including *muay thai* (Thai kickboxing), are also popular, particularly as spectator sports. Top spinning is another popular sport, using large wooden tops. People compete to see how long they can keep their tops in motion. Sometimes competitors use their tops to knock out their opponents' tops.

CHRONOLOGY

1949 Laos becomes a nominally independent state within the French Community, with Prince Boun Oum as prime minister.

- 1950** Phoui Sananikon replaces Boun Oum as prime minister.
The Lao Patriotic Front (Neo Lao Hak Xat, NLHX) is founded, with Prince Souphanouvong as leader.
- 1951** Prince Souvanna Phouma forms his first ministry.
- 1953** Viet Minh troops, with support from Pathet Lao troops, cross into northern Laos and establish a resistance government in the province of Houa Phan.
Laos is granted complete independence by France.
- 1954** Souvanna Phouma yields post of prime minister to Katay Don Sasorith.
Geneva Conference reaches a settlement for Laos under which the two northern provinces, Phong Saly and Houa Phan, are granted to the Pathet Lao, and the International Commission for Supervision and Control is set up, with India, Canada, and Poland as members.
- 1955** General elections are held.
- 1956** Souvanna Phouma resumes position of prime minister.
- 1957** Under the Vientiane Agreement a coalition government is formed, with the Pathet Lao as one group, as a first step toward the front's reintegration into the kingdom.
- 1958** The NLHX and its allies win 13 of 21 seats in supplementary national elections.
The United States suspends aid.
The Government of National Union falls, and its successor, headed by Phoui Sananikon, excludes the Pathet Lao from the government.
Committee for the Defense of National Interests gains upper hand in the leadership.
Prince Souphanouvong is jailed but manages to escape and renew revolt.
- 1959** Prince Savang Vatthana ascends the throne as king.
- 1960** Kouprasith Abhay and Prince Tiarni Sovanith hold office of prime minister briefly.
Young paratroop commander Kong Le seizes Vientiane in a coup and installs new government, with Souvanna Phouma as prime minister.
Rightist general Phoumi Nosavan leads counter-coup, retakes the capital, and expels Kong Le and Souvanna Phouma.
Neutralists and Pathet Lao join forces.
- 1961** Combined leftist and neutralist forces regain initiative.
Two governments prevail in Laos: Prince Boun Oum's royalist government in the capital and Souvanna Phouma's neutralist government at Khang Khay.
Boun Oum calls for a cease-fire.
International conference at Geneva guarantees cease-fire. Parties sign agreement on the neutrality and independence of Laos and the evacuation of all foreign forces.

- Government of National Union is formed, with Souvanna Phouma as prime minister and Gen. Phoumi Nosavan and Prince Souphanouvong as deputy prime ministers.
- 1963** Kong Le's forces and the Pathet Lao split. The NLHX withdraws from the government, although the fiction of a coalition is maintained.
- 1964** Souvanna Phouma is briefly overthrown by a rightist coup but is almost immediately reinstated. Pathet Lao resume fighting.
- 1965** Rightist general Phoumi Nosavan leads an abortive coup and is forced to flee to Thailand, where he is granted asylum. The NLHX boycotts elections.
- 1967** National elections are again boycotted by the NLHX.
- 1974** In the aftermath of U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam, a third coalition government is formed, with the NLHX as the dominant partner. The Pathet Lao are believed to control three-fourths of the national territory.
- 1975** The Pathet Lao launch final drive to achieve complete political and military supremacy. United States closes Agency for International Development mission in capital. Rightists flee country in thousands. United States ends two decades of military presence in Laos. People's Democratic Republic of Laos is proclaimed. King Savang Vatthana abdicates throne. People's Congress is convened, which in turn appoints 45-member People's Supreme Council. A new government is named, with Prince Souphanouvong as president and Kaysone Phomvihane as prime minister. Thai border is closed to stem flight of refugees.
- 1976** As the exchange value of the kip plummets to 14,000 to the dollar, the government introduces the new kip as the national currency.
- 1977** Border clashes with Cambodia are reported. Ex-king Vatthana is arrested. Laos and Vietnam conclude 25-year Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation.
- 1978** Diplomatic relations with France are broken over French support for Miao rebels.
- 1979** The Lao Patriotic Front is replaced by the Lao Front for National Construction. Laos backs Vietnam in conflict with Cambodia. Laotian troops are deployed against the Khmer Rouge. Souphanouvong visits Phnom Penh and joins the Heng Samrin government and Vietnam in a call for the mutual defense of Indochina. Laos accuses China of massing troops on the Laotian border and orders withdrawal of Chinese road builders in northern Laos. China complies with Laotian demand and closes embassy in Vientiane.
- Thai prime minister Kriangsak Chomanan visits Vientiane, and Kaysone Phomvihane returns the visit as the two nations make an effort to reduce tensions. The new kip is replaced by a revised version of the new kip and devalued by 75 percent.
- 1982** Diplomatic relations with France are restored.
- 1983** Third Congress of the Lao People's Revolutionary Party is held.
- 1984** Border dispute erupts with Thailand over three villages.
- 1986** Souphanouvong suffers a stroke in September and is replaced by Phoumi Vongvichit.
- 1989** Supreme People's Assembly is elected to consider a new constitution.
- 1991** A new constitution is approved by the assembly.
- 1992** Kaysone dies. The Lao People's Revolutionary Party wins the first "free" elections under the new constitution, with Nouhak Phoumsavan as state president, Khamtai Siphandon as party president and prime minister, and Sisavat Keobounphan as vice president.
- 1995** Laos is a signatory to a water rights treaty with Cambodia, Thailand, and Vietnam.
- 1997** Laos is admitted to ASEAN. The Asian fiscal crisis abruptly slows the economy, with the kip losing 87 percent of its value from June 1997 to June 1999.
- 1998** Khamtai Siphandon is elected president, and Sisavat Keobounphan is appointed prime minister.
- 1999** After the kip's value reaches a low of 9,000 kip to the dollar in September, the economy begins to stabilize. Vice President Oudom Khattiya dies.
- 2000** A series of explosions in the first half of the year threatens tourism, with no group taking responsibility for the bombs. Laos suffers from record flooding of the Mekong River basin in September. A small anti-Communist force called the Neutral Justice and Democratic Party attacks customs and immigration offices at the town of Pakse and then flees across the Thai border.
- 2001** Khamtai Siphandon is reelected party chairman of the Lao People's Revolutionary Party. The National Assembly chooses Finance Minister Bounngang Vorachith to replace Sisavat Keobounphan as prime minister. Laos and Thailand sign an agreement to construct a second bridge over the Mekong River at Savannakhet.

- 2002** In elections for the National Assembly, one non-Communist candidate is elected. Khamtai Siphandon is reelected president for another five years.
- 2003** A Belgian photographer and a French journalist are sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment amidst their investigation of the conditions of the Hmong ethnic minority. International pressure later forces their release.
- A series of bus attacks dampers tourism.
- 2004** Vientiane hosts tenth ASEAN summit.
- 2006** President Siphandon steps down as the leader of the PPPL and is replaced by Vice-President Choummaly Sayasone.

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- Laos.** *Selected Issues and Statistical Appendix* (IMF Staff Country Report), 2002

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- CIA World Factbook: Laos
<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/la.html>
- Discovering Laos
<http://www.laoembassy.com/discover/index.htm>

LATVIA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Latvia (Latvijas Republika)

ABBREVIATION

LV

CAPITAL

Riga

HEAD OF STATE

President Vaira Vike-Freiberga (from 1999)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Aigars Kalvītis (from 2004)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Emerging democracy

POPULATION

2,290,237 (2005)

AREA

64,589 sq km (24,938 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Latvian, Russian

LANGUAGES

Latvian, Russian, Lithuanian

RELIGIONS

Lutheran, Roman Catholic, Russian Orthodox

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Latvian lat

NATIONAL FLAG

Three horizontal bands of maroon (top), white (half width), and maroon (bottom)

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A shield is divided into three parts: In the top center is a rising sun on a blue field, symbolizing Latvian national statehood; at the bottom are a red lion rampant on a silver background on the left and a silver griffin rampant on a red background on the right, facing each other. Above the shield are three golden stars, to the left and right are a red lion and a silver griffin, respectively.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Dievs Svēti Latviju” (Bless Latvia, O God)

NATIONAL HOLIDAY

November 18 (Independence Day)

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

November 18, 1991

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

1991

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Latvia is located in northeastern Europe on the Baltic Sea. The nation is bordered by Estonia to the north, Lithuania to the south, and Russia and Belarus to the east. Latvia has a total area of 64,589 sq km (24,938 sq mi). It has 531 km (332 mi) of coastline, and its total land borders run 1,150 km (719 mi). From north to south the country runs 210 km (131 mi), from east to west 450 km (281 mi). The coastal plain in the west is mainly flat, but in the interior the land becomes hilly and marked by rolling forests and lakes. Approximately 47 percent of the nation is covered by forests.

While there are over 2,256 lakes in the country, only 16 have areas larger than 10 sq km (3.9 sq mi). The larg-

est lake in Latvia is Lubans, with an area of 82 sq km (32 sq mi). In addition, there are 777 rivers whose lengths exceed 10 km (6.2 mi). The longest river is Daugava, which runs for 1,020 km (638 mi), although only 357 km (223 mi) are in Latvia. In all, some 10 percent of the territory is marshland.

The highest point is Gaizinkalns, at 312 m (1,023 ft). In western Latvia the elevation varies from 40 to 150 m (131 to 492 ft), in the eastern areas 50 to 250 m (131 to 820 ft).

The nation's main natural resources include amber, limestone, and dolomite. Latvia's capital and largest city is Riga, with a population around 750,000. Other major cities include Daugavpils, Liepāja, and Jelgava.

Latvia



Geography

Area sq km: 64,589; sq mi 24,938
 World Rank: 121st
 Land Boundaries, km: Belarus 141; Estonia 339; Lithuania 453; Russia 217
 Coastline, km: 531
 Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Baltic Sea 0
 Highest: Gaizinkalns 312
 Land Use %
 Arable Land: 29.7
 Permanent Crops: 0.5
 Forest: 47.1
 Other: 22.7

Population of Principal Cities (2002)

Daugavpils	113,409
Riga	747,157

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

The Latvian climate is dominated by maritime influences that create moderate, wet winters, with the temperature averaging 0°C (32°F). In summer the temperature averages between 20 and 28°C (68 and 82°F). The ports of Riga, Liepāja, and Ventspils remain ice free during the winter.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature
 July: 62°F to 64°F
 January: 20°F to 27°F
 Average Rainfall: 24 in to 26 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Latvia's woodlands and forests cover almost 50 percent of the country's land mass. More than half of such forests are coniferous, with pine, spruce, and fir predominating. Deciduous trees include alder, birch, and aspen. About 10 percent of the forest areas are harvested commercially. Meadowland is found mainly along the country's numerous river valleys and in the hills.

These forests and woodlands are home to 14,000 species of animals, including rabbits, badgers, squirrels, wild boar, rabbits, and foxes. Less common, but gaining in number following the introduction of modern preservation methods and game management techniques, are the brown bear, beaver, deer, and elk. Fish are plentiful in the country's thousands of lakes. Lying along migratory routes to the Black Sea, Latvia is also a part-time home to storks and herons, which make their homes in marshes, and to numerous other birds, such as the lark, quail, finch, partridge, grouse, owl, nightingale, oriole, blackbird, and woodpecker.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 2,290,237
 World Rank: 138th
 Density per sq km: 37.4
 % of annual growth (1999-2003): -0.8
 Male %: 46.2
 Female %: 53.8
 Urban %: 69.0
 Age Distribution %: 0-14: 14.4
 15-64: 69.4
 65 and over: 16.1
 Population 2025: 1,993,000
 Birth Rate per 1,000: 9.04
 Death Rate per 1,000: 13.7
 Rate of Natural Increase %: -0.5
 Total Fertility Rate: 1.26
 Expectation of Life (years): Males 65.78
 Females 76.6
 Marriage Rate per 1,000: 4.2
 Divorce Rate per 1,000: 2.6
 Average Size of Households: 3.1
 Induced Abortions: 14,685

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Latvia has two main ethnic groups. The largest group is the Latvians, who make up 56.5 percent of the population, and the second largest is the Russians, with 30.4 percent. There are significant minorities of Belarusians (4.3 percent), Ukrainians (2.8 percent), and Poles (2.6 percent). There are also minor communities of Estonians, Jews, Gypsies, and Germans. Some three-quarters percent of the population are Latvian citizens, and national law guarantees equal rights for all ethnic groups, regardless of citizenship. Of the noncitizens, 65 percent are Russian. Most of the minority ethnic groups live in urban areas, and in seven of the eight largest cities non-Latvians constitute the majority of the populace.

LANGUAGES

The official language is Latvian, spoken by most citizens. The language has three main dialects based on regional variations: West Latvian, Central Latvian, and East, or High, Latvian. Central Latvian is the basis for literary Latvian; Tamian is a subdialect of Central Latvian. High Latvian is the basis for Latgalian, which essentially died out in the 1980s but has undergone a literary revival. Livonian, Romani, and Yiddish are spoken by small communities. Russian is widely spoken by the ethnic Russian community, and as a legacy of the occupation, it is the prevailing language of several state monopolies. Lithuanian, Polish, German, Estonian, and Ukrainian are also spoken among ethnic minorities.

Latvia has a language law requiring Latvian to be used in government and private enterprise. Noncitizens must also be proficient in Latvian in order to gain citizenship. While Russian and eight other languages are still used in public schools where students are primarily non-Latvian speakers, the government is slowly scaling back non-Latvian language use in schools. As of 2004, 60 percent of all subjects in secondary schools were taught in Latvian. In the 2004–05 school year 75 percent of all first-graders began their studies in Latvian. Students must also speak Latvian in order to gain entrance into universities.

RELIGIONS

The constitution mandates freedom of religion. Religious groups are not required to register with the government, but under the 1995 Law on Religious Organizations, they gain certain privileges if they do. Under this act some 800 religious congregations have registered. The government has rejected the Church of Scientology and the Latvian Free Orthodox Church but has permitted such sects as the Mormons and the Jehovah's Witnesses to register. Most Latvians are Lutheran; the next largest Christian denominations are Roman Catholic and Russian Orthodox.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The first human settlements in Latvia date back to approximately 10,000 B.C.E. In about 2000 B.C.E. Baltic tribes came into the area and displaced the Finno-Urgic tribes who had settled there. These Balts were first recorded by the Romans in 100 B.C.E. In the 12th century C.E. German crusaders arrived in the region in an effort to spread Christianity. The present capital, Riga, was founded in 1201. By 1280 the Germans had established a union of feudal territories conquered by the Livonian order of knights. The union became known as Livonia, and regular trade and cultural ties emerged between the area and the German states. In 1282 Riga became part of the Hanseatic League. Feudal control by the Germans eventually led to the establishment of a single language, Latvian, among the indigenous tribes.

Russian efforts to gain access to the Baltic Sea led to the Livonian Wars of 1558–83, after which Livonia was divided between Sweden and the Polish-Lithuanian state. Russia gained sovereignty over the northern provinces of Latvia as a result of the Great Northern War in 1700–21, and the partition of Poland in the late 18th century brought the remainder of Latvia under Russian control. While Saint Petersburg was nominally in charge of Latvia, the German aristocracy retained significant power and autonomy through the feudal system.

The movement toward Latvian self-determination began in the mid-19th century. The first Latvian language

newspapers were published, and intellectuals loosely known as the Young Latvians revived Latvian as a literary language and rebelled against both German and Russian influences. The Russians responded with a sweeping program of Russification in the 1880s.

The first major rebellion against Russian control took place in 1905 and was led by the Latvian Social Democratic Labor Party. The revolution spread quickly but was brutally suppressed by the Russian army. During World War I the German army occupied about one-half of Latvian territory. After the collapse of the czarist government in Russia, Latvian political parties formed military units to fight both the Russians and the Germans. In 1918 a coalition of parties, calling itself the Democratic Block, formed the National Council and on November 18 proclaimed independence. Nonetheless, fighting continued between the Latvians and both Russian and German forces until 1920.

In April 1920 the first elections were held, and a constitution was promulgated. Latvia was recognized by the international community and joined the League of Nations in 1922. The government carried out a number of reforms, including land redistribution and privatization, and Latvia became a fairly prosperous state during the 1920s, but the economic crisis of the 1930s led to a coup, whereby Prime Minister Kārlis Ulmanis dissolved parliament.

In 1939 the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact divided Europe between Adolf Hitler and Joseph Stalin, and Latvia was placed in the Soviet sphere of influence. The Soviets occupied Latvia in 1940 and annexed the nation as part of the greater Soviet Union. Thousands of prominent Latvians were executed, and thousands more were sent to Siberia. In July 1941 Latvia was occupied by the Germans, who were initially greeted as liberators from Soviet domination. However, the Nazis executed or deported almost the entire Latvian Jewish community. Still, Latvian troops fought with the Germans against the Russians until the very end of World War II. Most intellectuals and political leaders and many citizens, about 130,000 in all, fled during the Soviet advance; the nation lost some one-third of its population during the war. Latvian resistance against the Soviets continued until 1957, as led by a group known as the Green Resistance, which carried out a guerrilla campaign from the forest areas of the nation.

In 1946 the Soviets began formal collectivization and Russification programs. By 1949 some 43,000 Latvians had been deported. Although relations gradually improved in the 1950s, the Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev ordered new purges in 1959. Efforts to make Latvia dependent on the Soviet Union culminated in the 1960s with the construction of large industrial plants.

In 1987 mass demonstrations against Soviet rule were held, followed two years later by more protests. In 1990 the pro-independence United Front received two-

thirds of the vote in popular elections, and the Latvian Supreme Soviet declared independence. In response, Soviet troops were dispatched, and a brief civil war ensued. After the failed coup against the Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, Latvia gained independence, and the 1922 constitution was restored and supplemented by later legislation.

Guntis Ulmanis was elected the nation's first post-independence president in 1993. In 1994 Latvia joined the Partnership for Peace program, under the auspices of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), and in 1998 the nation was admitted to the World Trade Organization (WTO). In 1999 Vaira Vīke-Freiberga, a former Canadian citizen, was elected president. When Andris Šķēle, who had been prime minister since July 1999, resigned in a dispute over privatization of the economy, Andris Bērziņš was appointed prime minister. His four-party coalition lasted until the elections of 2002, at which time his Latvian Way (Latvijas Ceļš, LC) party, which had been in government since independence, was voted out of parliament. Einārs Repše's New Era Party (Jaunais Laiks, JL), which ran on an anticorruption platform, gained the most seats, and Repše then headed a four-party coalition government for two years, to be replaced by Indulis Emsis in 2004. Emsis was in turn replaced that same year by a center-right coalition led by Aigars Kalvītis, Latvia's 12th government since the restoration of independence in 1991. In 2004 Latvia became a full member of NATO and also joined the European Union.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

President

1993–99	Guntis Ulmanis
1999–	Vaira Vīke-Freiberga

Prime Minister

1990–93	Ivars Godmanis
1993–94	Valdis Birkavs
1994–95	Māris Gailis
1995–97	Andris Šķēle
1997–98	Guntars Krasts
1998–99	Vilis Krištopāns
1999–2000	Andris Šķēle
2000–02	Andris Bērziņš
2002–04	Einārs Repše
2004	Indulis Emsis
2004–	Aigars Kalvītis

CONSTITUTION

Latvia is a parliamentary democracy. The Latvian constitution (Satversme) was adopted on February 15, 1922. After the end of the Soviet occupation, the Declaration of the Renewal of Independence, dated May 4, 1990,

proclaimed the authority of the original Satversme and those articles of the constitution of the Soviet Republic of Latvia that did not contradict the Satversme. This was followed in 1991 by a constitutional law which provided for the civil rights and liberties of the Latvian people. In October 1998 further amendments were added to the constitution in order to bring Latvia's laws into compliance with the citizenship laws of the European Union. Suffrage is universal for all citizens over the age of 18.

The Satversme established a unicameral parliament (Saeima) consisting of 100 members elected for four-year terms. The Saeima is the highest legislative body in the nation. The president is the head of state and serves a four-year term. Parliament elects the president, who in turn appoints the prime minister. The president must receive an absolute majority of 52 votes and cannot serve for more than two terms. The president is the commander in chief of the military and can call for the dissolution of parliament, which must then be approved by a referendum. The prime minister is the chief executive and head of government. The constitution also provides for an independent judiciary, with judges who are confirmed by parliament.

PARLIAMENT

The Latvian parliament (Saeima) is a unicameral chamber made up of 100 deputies who are elected for four-year terms. The parliamentary elections are proportional, and parties must gain at least 5 percent of the vote in order to be represented in the Saeima. Candidates for parliament must be at least 21 years old. Members of the body may serve concurrently in the government. The leader of the majority faction in the Saeima is usually appointed prime minister by the president.

The Saeima elects the president and judiciary and approves legislation. The Saeima also elects its Board, which consists of the president, two deputies, and secretaries. The Board of the Saeima remains in session throughout the legislative calendar and may propose legislation or advise the parliament. The presiding officer of the Saeima is the speaker, and the leadership of the body is known as the Presidium. The Presidium consists of the speaker, two deputy speakers, a secretary, and a deputy secretary. There are 16 standing committees in the parliament. In addition, there are nine factions that represent specific interests, similar to caucuses in the U.S. Congress.

The Sixth Saeima (1995–98) held 197 plenary sessions and debated some 1,335 draft laws. During this session the length of tenure in the parliament was increased from three to four years. The body also amended the constitution to include a chapter on human rights. The Seventh Saeima (1998–2001) reviewed 1,442 draft laws and adopted 917 laws. The Eighth Saeima began sessions in 2002; women constitute 21 percent of its members.

POLITICAL PARTIES

In the 1993 elections eight political parties passed the 5 percent threshold to enter parliament. These were led by the liberal LC, which joined with the Latvian Farmers' Union to form a center-right coalition. Over the next decade more parties were formed, including the People's Party and the reformist JL. Other political parties in the country include the Fatherland and Freedom Union, nationalist and conservative; the Latvian Christian-Democratic Union, center-right; Latvian Green Party; Latvian Social Democratic Union; Latvian Unity Party; Democratic Party; Worker's Party; Popular Concord Party; Latvia First Party (LPP); and Union of Greens and Farmers (ZZS).

In the 2002 parliamentary elections a center-right coalition was formed with Einõrs Repše's JL having the largest number of seats. The LC failed to retain any seats in parliament. In 2004 the ZZS and LPP formed the government only briefly, to be replaced by Aigars Kalvõtis of the conservative People's Party in coalition with the JL, LPP, and ZZS.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The nation is divided into 26 counties and seven independent municipalities. The local governments have control over various police and budgetary matters.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The nation's legal system is based on civil law. A defendant has the right to hire an attorney, confront accusers, and call witnesses. However, there is no sheriff or bailiff system in place to enforce court decisions, and some trials may still be closed to the public. Also, many judges have inadequate legal training.

Latvia has an independent judicial system divided into three broad levels. Original trial courts exist at the district and city levels; these courts are usually presided over by a single judge, although some civil and criminal courts have a professional judge and two lay judges. Regional courts both hear original cases and act as appeals courts for the lower courts. The highest legal body in Latvia is the Supreme Court. All judges within the general court system are nominated by the minister of justice and appointed by the parliament.

There is also a Constitutional Court, which exists outside of the general court system. This court reviews whether laws comply with the constitution. It is made up of seven judges; three are appointed by parliament, two by the government, and two by the Supreme Court.

In 1995 the government launched broad reforms of the legal system in order to end widespread corrup-

tion. These reforms included the appointment of lay judges and the establishment of regional courts. In 1999 the death penalty was rescinded in preparation for EU membership. There are severe backlogs in the court system, which have led to lengthy delays in reviewing cases. Detainees awaiting trial spend an average of two years in prison before their cases are heard. Prisons and other incarceration facilities remain severely overcrowded, and cases of excessive force by guards have been reported.

HUMAN RIGHTS

The constitution establishes the nation's basic rights, including the freedoms of speech, the press, religion, assembly, and movement and the right to a trial by jury. It also prohibits discrimination based on race, sex, religion, language, or disability. The constitution also provides for an independent judiciary, but the courts must rely on the Ministry of Justice for administrative support and enforcement.

The 1998 Latvian Citizenship Law includes requirements for citizenship, such as language proficiency, that make it difficult for the nation's minority groups to become citizens. It is also difficult for noncitizens to acquire land. Discrimination and human rights concerns are investigated by a government agency, the National Human Rights Office.

Up to one-quarter of Latvia's population are noncitizens, who cannot vote, hold office, or hold certain civil service positions. Professional careers as lawyers and notaries are also off-limits for noncitizens. The government has made attempts to make the attainment of citizenship easier by reducing the cost of application. Moscow continues to accuse Riga of discriminating against the country's 700,000 Russian language speakers, mostly ethnic Russians.

FOREIGN POLICY

Since independence Latvia has pursued a Western orientation in its foreign policy. The two main goals of Latvian policy have been admission into NATO and the European Union. Latvia joined NATO's Partnership for Peace initiative in 1994 and has sought close military cooperation with the West.

Latvia is a member of the Council of Baltic Sea States, which promotes regional cooperation in the Baltics. Latvia supported the creation of a common market among the Baltic states as a precursor to entrance to the European Union. Latvia was the first Baltic nation to join the WTO.

Latvia has ongoing border disputes with both Russia and Lithuania. The dispute with Russia is based on Latvian claims to the Abrene and Pytalovo, which Russia forced

the nation to cede to Moscow in the aftermath of World War II. The dispute with Lithuania is over oil exploration claims. Latvia's 2004 accession to the European Union and NATO further worsened relations with Russia.

DEFENSE

Latvia has received significant foreign military aid from Western nations, including Germany, Sweden, Denmark, and the United States. In 2003 the total armed forces for the country numbered about 8,000, including several thousand paramilitary troops serving as border guards. Conscription is mandatory for all males 19 and older; the length of service is 12 months. Latvia plans to phase out conscription, however, moving to an all-professional force by 2007.

The army consists of 1,500 troops. One company of the army is part of the Baltic Peacekeeping Battalion, and the nation participates in several other regional defense organizations, including the Baltic Naval Squadron. The navy has 1,000 personnel, while the air force has just 150. There is also a small coast guard, which operates 12 small patrol and rescue vessels. The reserves are made up of some 18,000 troops organized into a home guard.

Defense spending in 2003 was \$170 million, almost double the 2001 level of \$88 million. In 2002 the defense budget equaled 1.8 percent of gross domestic product (GDP).

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 8,100
 Military Manpower Availability: 517,713
 Military Expenditures \$million: 170
 as % of GDP: 1.8
 as % of central government expenditures: 6.4
 Arms Imports \$million: 29
 Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

Latvia has endeavored to make a complete transformation into an open, free-market economy. The nation has pursued strict monetary and fiscal policies and has attempted to attract foreign investment. Latvia was the beneficiary of more than \$100 million in economic aid from the West in 2003.

The major economic sector is services, although manufacturing ranks a close second; agriculture and forestry together constitute the third main area of business. The nation's major industries involve transportation equipment, synthetic fibers, agricultural equipment, fertilizers, chemicals, textiles, and processed food. The nation has maintained a large trade deficit, with a heavy reliance on imports, such as fuels, machinery, and chemicals. The na-

tion's main exports are wood and wood products, textiles, and foodstuffs. Latvia's main trading partners are Russia, Finland, Germany, Sweden, and the United Kingdom.

In the agricultural sector, privatization efforts have been largely successful, and most farms are now privately owned. Unemployment fell to 8.6 percent in 2004, down from 9.6 percent in 1999. Privatization of large state-owned utilities and the shipping industry faced more delays in 2000, and political instability has continued to delay the privatization process. Healthy growth in the economy continued to take place in 2002 and 2003, despite bad grain harvests and a dispute with Moscow that led to the stoppage of the importation of Russian petroleum to the Latvian port of Ventspils for transshipment abroad. With its 2004 membership in the European Union, Latvia became part of a large trading block projected to help to improve its privatized economy.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 26.53
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 11,500
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 6.4
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 7.2
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 4.4
 Industry: 24.8
 Services: 70.8
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 63
 Government Consumption: 19
 Gross Domestic Investment: 26.1
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 3.569
 Imports: 5.97
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 2.9
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 25.9

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
	136.6	140.3	143.7	146.5	150.8

Finance

National Currency: Latvian Lat (LVL)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = LVL 0.542
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 1.23
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 3.0
 Total External Debt \$billion: 7.368
 Debt Service Ratio %: 4.01
 Balance of Payments \$billion: -1.251
 International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 1.43
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
 6.0

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 113.7
 per capita \$: 49.00
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 300

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$billion: 4.231
 Expenditures \$billion: 4.504
 Budget Deficit \$million: 273
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 4.4
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 4.2
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 3.08
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 1.07
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 27.3
 Total Farmland % of land area: 29.5
 Livestock: Cattle million: 0.38
 Chickens million: 4
 Pigs 000: 440
 Sheep 000: 39
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 12.9
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 114.1

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 1.38
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 8.5

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 260
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 2.86
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 1.21
 Net Energy Imports % of use: 56.2
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 2.2
 Production kW-hr billion: 4.4
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 5.5
 Coal Reserves tons million: 2
 Production tons million: —
 Consumption tons million: —
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
 Production cubic feet billion: —
 Consumption cubic feet billion: 62
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
 Production barrels 000 per day: —
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 47
 Pipelines Length km: 409

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 5.97
 Exports \$billion: 3.569
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 5.4
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 4.4
 Balance of Trade \$billion: -1.251

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Germany %	16.0	12.2
Russia %	14.3	4.4
Lithuania %	11.0	—
Estonia %	6.7	4.7
Finland %	5.7	—
Sweden %	5.5	11.6
Italy %	4.9	—
United Kingdom %	—	20.5
United States %	—	10.0
Denmark %	—	4.3

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 60,472
 Paved %: 94.6
 Automobiles: 619,100
 Trucks and Buses: 113,900
 Railroad: Track Length km: 2,303
 Passenger-km million: 744
 Freight-km billion: 15.02
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 19
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 37.4
 Airports: 51
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 184
 Length of Waterways km: 300

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 0.97
 Number of Tourists from million: 2.29
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 271
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 365

Communications

Telephones 000: 653.9
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones million: 1.22
 Personal Computers 000: 436
 Internet Hosts per million people: 22,599
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 409

ENVIRONMENT

Many of Latvia's environmental problems stem from its Soviet-era development, when ecological concerns took second place to production. Rivers and lakes were used as dumps for industrial waste, and even the Baltic Sea became toxic. With farm collectivization and imposed quotas, pesticides and fertilizers were used indiscriminately and leached into water supplies.

Latvia's extensive forests have received some damage from acid rain, which results from sulfur dioxide emissions from industrial plants in Latvia as well as in neighboring countries. The lack of waste treatment centers

has contributed to both air and water pollution. Both the Gulf of Riga and the Daugava River are contaminated by industrial discharge.

The most pressing environmental problems stem from the contamination of soil and groundwater at and near former Soviet military bases. This contamination is the result of decades of chemical and petroleum discharges and runoff from poorly stored chemicals.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 47.1
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: 13
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 14
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 25,106
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 2.53

LIVING CONDITIONS

The UN Human Development Index (HDI) ranks Latvia 50th among 177 nations in quality of life. The HDI focuses on three measurable dimensions of human development: life expectancy, education, and standard of living. In 2004 life expectancy in Latvia was nearly 71 years. The literacy rate in 2003 was nearly 100 percent. Per capita GDP for Latvians in 2004 was \$11,500.

In 2001 an estimated 69 percent of Latvians were urban dwellers, living in one of the 75 or so urban areas throughout the country. Population has declined since independence, largely as a result of the repatriation of many Russians who had been living in Latvia. Housing, once largely state owned, has been over 80 percent privatized. Most Latvians live in apartment houses; the rural population tends to live in single-family dwellings. As in the other Baltic republics, the standard of living is lower than in the rest of western Europe; however, with EU membership this is expected to improve.

Free time is valued, but work takes precedence. As elsewhere in Europe, however, Latvians look forward to their summer vacations, when they go to the countryside or seacoast to enjoy periods of paid leave that usually last a month. As Latvia's economy has improved, more and more Latvians have been taking vacations abroad as well. Throughout the summer, those Riga residents who have summerhouses or family in rural areas make a point of spending every weekend they can near a lake, river, forest, or seashore.

There is an extensive network of roads and highways, and the rail system also provides thorough and efficient transport for passengers as well as goods and services throughout the country and abroad. There are 10 ports in the country.

HEALTH

Health care in Latvia is organized by the State Compulsory Health Care Agency. All citizens and legal residents

of the Republic of Latvia receive guaranteed medical assistance by the state. All members of the state insurance system have a primary-care physician or family doctor. Primary care is delivered in a fourfold system, through urban health centers, emergency and hospital facilities, private practices, and rural clinics, the last of which are often staffed by nurses and midwives.

Smoking—as of 2000, 49 percent of the male population smoked—and a diet heavy in fats has led to a high rate of mortality due to cardiovascular disease. Waterborne diseases, including cholera, are also episodically a problem, as is diphtheria. Tickborne encephalitis, a viral infection of the central nervous system, occurs in central and western Europe. Ticks are found in forests and wooded areas. There were 83 cases of tuberculosis per 100,000 population in 2002. There were fewer than 500 deaths from HIV/AIDS in 2003, with an estimated 7,600 people living with the disease.

Public expenditure on health care in 2002 was 3.3 percent of GDP, with health expenditures per capita totaling \$203. As of 2004 there were 291 physicians for every 100,000 people. Immunization rates for one-year-olds are near 100 percent for polio, DPT, measles, and tuberculosis. Routine vaccinations are fully financed by the government.

Many Latvians go to mineral spas as a form of medical therapy. There they drink local mineral water and take mud baths. One of the most famous of such spas is in Kemeris, near Riga.

Health

Number of Physicians: 6,851
 Number of Dentists: 1,245
 Number of Nurses: 11,954
 Number of Pharmacists: —
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 291
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: 8.2
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 9.55
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 42
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 5.1
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 203
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.6
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 98
 Measles: 99
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: —
 Access to Improved Water Source %: —

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Latvian food is often referred to as farmer's food, or peasant food, relying as it does on cheap ingredients, such as dried black peas and bacon, and being heavy in calories for outdoor workers. Potatoes, cabbage, onions, eggs, wheat, and barley form staples of the diet, as do smoked fish, such as herring, flounder, and eel. In general, Lat-

vian food bears many similarities to German, Russian, Polish, and Swedish cuisine, all of whose traditions have come into play in Latvia.

A specialty in Latvia, as in other eastern and central European countries, are *priagi*, crescent-shaped or square dumplings made of unleavened flour and stuffed with fillings ranging from sauerkraut to cheese to mashed potatoes or even fruit. In Latvia the filling tends to be bacon and onions. Other national dishes are cabbage soup, buckwheat soup, beet soup, and gray or black peas with bacon rind. Also popular are *rasols*, or potato salad; *zemieku brokastis*, or "peasant's breakfast," a large potato-and-mushroom omelet; *maizes zupe ar putukrejumu*, or cornbread soup with whipped cream; and, for fancy occasions, *aukstais galds*, a Latvian variation of the smorgasbord. Desserts include the *kringel*, which is similar to a coffee cake; *manna*, a cold, creamy dessert served with a cranberry sauce topping; and the Latvian apple loaf.

Latvia's major beer is Aldaris. Riga Black Balsam is a potent (45-proof) stout, deep black in color, that has been a Latvian specialty since 1755.

Nutritionally speaking, Latvians are well off, though they rely on large amounts of carbohydrates. Between 1995 and 2003 only 5 percent of infants had low birth weight; 3.5 percent of the general population was estimated to be undernourished as of 2001.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 3.5
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,880
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 111.3
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 153.4

STATUS OF WOMEN

Although women enjoy the same legal protections as men, they face discrimination on a number of fronts. The most significant inequalities occur in the workplace, where women face unequal wages and various forms of sexual harassment. Domestic violence is also a problem, and there are no shelters for battered or abused women. The government has attempted to address these problems by sponsoring dialogues and by establishing the National Human Rights Office to hear and investigate complaints.

In the 2002 parliamentary election, 21 women were elected to the 100-member Saeima.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 21
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.0
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 53.4

WORK

A 2004 estimate put the Latvian labor force at nearly 1.2 million, with an 8.8 percent unemployment rate. Services accounted for 60 percent of employment, industry 25 percent, and agriculture 15 percent. Industrial products include buses, vans, street and railroad cars, synthetic fibers, agricultural machinery, fertilizers, washing machines, radios, electronics, pharmaceuticals, processed foods, and textiles, while agricultural products include grain, sugar beets, potatoes, vegetables, beef, pork, milk, and eggs. The fishing industry is also an important employer.

The postindependence transition to a market economy has been a challenge to Latvian workers. Under Soviet rule there was little profit incentive; neither was there unemployment. With the changeover to a market economy and privatization, there has been considerable job dislocation, with unemployment rates approaching 10 percent in the 1990s.

Latvian workers have the right to establish unions, strike, and engage in collective bargaining. About 20 percent of the labor force, mainly in the service sector, was unionized as of 2002. The minimum work age is 15, and the maximum workweek is 40 hours. Among other worker benefits is an annual four-week vacation. As of 2004 the minimum wage was about \$160 per month.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 1,170,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 49.6
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 15
 Industry: 25
 Services: 60
 Unemployment %: 8.8

EDUCATION

Basic education in Latvia lasts nine years, including four years of primary school plus five years of lower secondary education. After a student's basic school is complete, there are three educational paths: general secondary education, vocational secondary education, and specialized secondary education. General secondary education can be at a middle school or through the more prestigious gymnasium. Either school offers a curriculum designed to prepare students for university. There are a variety of vocational programs, which range from one- or two-year apprenticeships to four-year programs that also include general secondary education. Specialized schools offer programs in music or art, nursing, or other technical fields. The nation's main institution of higher learning is the University of Latvia; there are also 16 more specialized institutions.

Education is widespread and publicly financed. Instruction is in Latvian and other minority languages, including Russian, which was once the primary language of instruction. Attempts to decrease the percentage of classes taught in Russian led to widespread protests in 2003 and 2004, when a law went into effect mandating 60 percent of the curriculum of secondary schools be taught in Latvian.

In 2001, 88 percent of eligible pupils were enrolled in primary schools, which had a collective pupil-to-teacher ratio of 14 to 1. Of these students, 98 percent reached fifth grade, and there was a 99 percent transition rate to secondary schools. Public expenditure on education in 2001 was 5.5 percent of GDP. There is virtually 100 percent literacy in Latvia.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 99.8
 Male %: 99.8
 Female %: 99.8
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 15.0
 First Level: Primary Schools: 643
 Teachers: 7,942
 Students: 113,923
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 14.3
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 87.6
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 376
 Teachers: 24,492
 Students: 238,066
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 11.4
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 87.6
 Third Level: Institutions: 28
 Teachers: 5,264
 Students: 110,500
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 68.5
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 5.5

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Much of Latvian research and development is geared toward agricultural and forestry projects. The Ministry of Agriculture directs numerous institutes that research topics ranging from seed propagation to animal husbandry to reforestation methods. The Latvian University of Agriculture operates research institutes in similar areas as well as in food processing.

The Latvian Academy of Sciences has departments of biological sciences, chemical sciences, physical sciences, and technical sciences. Over a dozen research institutes operate through the academy, pursuing medical, scientific, and technical research.

Numerous universities and technical schools offer classes in the sciences and also pursue research. Among these are the University of Latvia, with its mathematics, physics, biology, and chemistry departments, the engineering faculty of Riga Technical University, the Latvian Academy of Medicine, and the Riga Aviation University,

all in Riga. Since the mid-1990s Latvia has focused on technology, with numerous firms setting up business in biotechnology and bioengineering, information technology, electronics and mechanics, energetics, medicine, and pharmacology.

Between 1994 and 1997, 29 percent of students in tertiary schools were enrolled in math, engineering, or science programs. As of 2001 there were 1,078 researchers involved in research and development per 1,000,000 inhabitants, and research expenditures totaled 0.4 percent of GDP. In 2001 there were 124 patents applied for by residents.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 1,078
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 0.4
 High-Tech Exports \$million: 76.1
 Patent Applications by Residents: 124

MEDIA

Latvia has a free and open press. There are 25 radio broadcast stations and 30 television stations. The television market is dominated by LNT, a commercial channel; two public TV channels operated by LTV; TV3 Latvia, a commercial station; and major channels broadcast from Russia. The government supports limited programming in languages other than Latvian through subsidies. A variety of daily and weekly papers are published, and many Latvians have access to Western media and broadcast outlets.

Since the end of Soviet occupation, efforts to revive Latvian culture have been ongoing, including a renewal of Latvian literature and music. However, the continued presence of ethnic Russians and the carryover from intensive efforts at Russification during the cold war era have slowed such initiatives.

The press and the broadcast media in Latvia generally operate freely, with few legal restrictions. A law does provide for prison terms for libel and the incitement of racial hatred. Reporters without Borders ranked Latvia 10th out of 167 nations in its 2004 world press freedom survey. A wide range of political viewpoints are represented by some 26 daily newspapers. Major publications include *Diena*, a daily, and its business tabloid, *Dienas biznes*, as well as by *Telegraf*, the major Russian-language daily. Latvia had 1,219,600 cellular telephone users and 936,000 Internet users in 2003.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 26
 Total Circulation 000: 327
 Circulation per 1,000: 135
 Books Published: 2,178

Periodicals: 201
 Radio Receivers million: 1.7
 per 1,000: 700
 Television sets million: 1.8
 per 1,000: 757

CULTURE

Occupied for so many centuries by Germany and then by Russia, Latvia has struggled to maintain a truly Latvian culture. A cornerstone of national culture are the four-line couplets known as *dainas*, which reflect the daily life, mores, and ethics of ancient Latvians. As collected in the 19th century, there are some 1.4 million folk lyrics written in *dainas*, accompanied by about 30,000 different identified folk melodies. In the modern world these songs are preserved in the tradition of the song festival *Dziesmu Svetki*, held every four years since the late 19th century. These festivals draw crowds in the hundreds of thousands, with upwards of 20,000 performers, and in 2003 they were included on the world cultural heritage list by the UN Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization. Folk dance is also a part of such festivals; singing is often accompanied by the zither-like instrument known as the *kokle*.

Literature, aside from the rich tradition of haiku-like *dainas*, is a relatively recent innovation. The national epic is the 19th-century epic poem *Lacplesis* (The bear slayer), written by Andrejs Pumpurs and based on folktales. Jānis Rainis is generally considered the most important Latvian writer. A poet and dramatist vital to the nationalist resurgence of the early 20th century, Rainis died in 1929.

In the visual arts, Jānis Rozentals, who painted scenes of peasant life and portraits in the early 20th century, is one of the first truly Latvian artists. Vilhelms Purvītis and Jānis Valters were the outstanding landscape artists of the time. In contemporary music, noted Latvian composers include Jurjānu Andrejs, Alfrēds Kalniņš, Pēteris Vasks, Romualds Kalsons, Jāzeps Medinš, Jānis Medinš, and Emīlis Melngailis. Latvia also has a growing film industry, producing feature films, documentaries, and animated features.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 974
 Volumes: 15,344,000
 Registered borrowers: 524,670
 Museums Number: 131
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts national currency million: 1.8
 Number of Cinemas: 115
 Seating Capacity: 26,100
 Annual Attendance: 1,400,000

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Much of the folk wisdom of Latvia has been preserved in some 1.4 million four-line couplets known as *dainas*. These poems cover the gamut of the Latvian human experience over many centuries, dealing with topics from nature to military invasion and from love and marriage to death. It is thought that these *dainas* might have originally stemmed from magical incantations; with growing urbanization in medieval times, there were clear divisions between town *dainas* and rural *dainas*.

Latvian myths go back to the times of the Baltic tribes before the advent of the Romans. Some of the major figures of Latvian mythology are Dekla, deity of fortune and destiny; Dewing Uschinge, god of horses; Karta, goddess of fate and destiny; and Mara, protective deity of cattle. Another key figure in Latvian myth is Lacplesis, the bear slayer, who could force bears to pull his plow. The powerful Lacplesis was finally undone by a three-headed ogre. In the 19th century the writer Andrejs Pumpurs turned the legends and myths about Lacplesis into an epic poem.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Television is at the center of entertainment activities for Latvians. Average daily viewing jumped from 23 minutes in 2001 to 207 minutes in 2003. Cinemas are also popular. With nearly 100 percent literacy, the country is also a nation of free-time readers. There were over 500,000 registered users of Latvian national libraries in 1999; that same year saw 2,178 books published in the country. The average circulation of the daily press in 2001 was 135 per 1,000 people.

In the urban areas nightclubs and discos are popular with young people, while theater is popular across a wide spectrum of the population. The Riga Opera-Theater has been going strong for over two centuries. Dramas and musicals are popular forms of theater productions. Circuses are well attended; Riga has had a permanent circus for over a century.

A pastime shared by most of urban Latvia is communing with nature, at the seashore or by one of the thousands of lakes in the country.

ETIQUETTE

In general, the usual European courtesies and manners are observed in Latvia. Handshakes are appropriate for greetings; eating is continental style, with knife and fork used simultaneously; the use of first names is reserved for friends; formalities are observed in public; and punctuality is appreciated. Low-keyed, Latvians find ostentatious displays of wealth in bad taste.

FAMILY LIFE

Latvia is a multicultural state, and marriage between different ethnic groups is relatively common. Latvian family traditions have led to strong bonds between grandparents, children, and grandchildren. In most families where both parents are forced to work, the grandmother assumes the most responsibility for maintaining the household and looking after the children. Latvian families rarely have more than two children, a holdover from the Soviet period when housing was tight. Most Latvian families tend to be closely knit and spend holidays—such as Midsummer's Night, Christmas, and Easter—anniversaries, birthdays, and name days together.

More pressures have been put on the family unit as a result of the changeover to a market economy and resulting insecurities. One of the fallouts of this situation is an alarmingly high rate of marital separation: Almost two-thirds of all Latvian marriages end in divorce.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Latvians are Nordic in physical appearance and European in style of dress. Folk costumes, such as large, pleated skirts with white blouses and round hats for women, are worn only for special ceremonies and folk dancing.

SPORTS

Soccer, ice hockey, basketball, and volleyball are the most popular team sports in Latvia both for participation and as spectator sports. Numerous sports clubs and associations organize athletics on the local level. The Latvian Sports Administration was founded in 1993 to oversee the country's professional sports teams. In 2003 the national soccer team qualified for their first European Championships final, while the following year the national hockey team qualified for the 2006 Olympics. Other popular sports include bobsledding and Formula One auto racing.

The Latvian Sports Museum, in Riga, houses a rich collection of materials about Latvian sporting activities abroad as well as in Latvia, including an exhibit of Latvian Olympic medal winners.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1918** Independence is declared.
Fighting breaks out between Latvians, Germans, and Russians.
- 1920** Latvian independence is recognized.
- 1939** German-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact places Latvia in Soviet sphere.

- 1940** Soviets invade and annex Latvia. They execute some 35,000 Latvians and exile many more to Siberia.
- 1941** Germans invade and conquer Latvia.
- 1944** Soviets reconquer Latvia.
- 1945–57** Fighting continues against Soviet occupation.
- 1946** Soviets formally begin mass collectivization and Russification campaign.
- 1949** Some 43,000 people are deported in new round of purges.
- 1959** Following a brief “thaw” in Latvian relations with the Soviet Union, Nikita Khrushchev orders a new round of deportations in response to efforts to gain more autonomy by Latvian Supreme Soviet.
- 1964** Under Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev, a massive program of building large industrial plants is begun in order to increase interdependence between Soviet satellites.
- 1987** Mass demonstrations against Soviet rule occur.
- 1989** Latvian population has declined to 51 percent of total of nation as a result of Russification policies.
New round of anti-Soviet demonstrations occurs.
- 1990** In elections, two-thirds of population vote for the United Front, which advocates freedom for Latvia.
Independence is declared by the Latvian Supreme Council.
- 1991** The Soviets respond to Latvian independence by sending in troops, and a brief civil war ensues.
During a coup attempt in Moscow, the Latvians again declare independence, which is recognized following the restoration of Mikhail Gorbachev to power.
The 1922 Constitution is renewed and supplemented by the Constitutional Law.
- 1993** Guntis Ulmanis is elected Latvia's first president.
- 1994** Latvia joins NATO's Partnership for Peace initiative.
- 1998** Latvia joins the WTO.
- 1999** Parliament elects Vaira Vīķe-Freiberga president.
- 2000** Andris Bērziņš becomes prime minister after Andris Šķēle resigns over privatization issues.
- 2001** Latvians celebrate Riga's 800th anniversary in the summer.
Latvian and Russian presidents meet in February, but no progress is made toward easing relations between the two countries.
- 2002** Parliamentary elections in October lead to the formation of a four-party center-right coalition government, headed by Einārs Repše.

- 2003** Two-thirds of the Latvian electorate endorse EU membership.
Language reform is instituted in secondary schools, whereby 60 percent of the curriculum will be taught in Latvian.
Vaira Vīke-Freiberga is reelected to another four-year term as president.
- 2004** Latvia becomes a full member of NATO and joins the European Union.
A no-confidence vote in parliament leads to the formation of a center-right coalition led by Aigars Kalvītis.
- 2005** Riga and Moscow continue a war of words over the signing of a border treaty between the two countries, which had been pending since 1997.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- CIA World Factbook: Latvia
<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/lg.html>
- Embassy of Latvia (Washington, D.C.)
<http://www.latvia-usa.org/>
- Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia
<http://www.csb.lv/avidus.cfm/>

LEBANON

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Lebanese Republic (Al-Jumhuriyah al-Lubnaniyah)

ABBREVIATION

LB

CAPITAL

Beirut

HEAD OF STATE

President Émile Lahoud (from 1998)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Fouad Siniora (from 2005)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Multiparty republic

POPULATION

3,826,018 (2005)

AREA

10,400 sq km (4,015 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Arab

LANGUAGE

Arabic

RELIGIONS

Islam, Christianity

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Lebanese pound

NATIONAL FLAG

A green and brown cedar tree in the center of a white stripe flanked by two red stripes, each of which is half as wide as the white stripe

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A red heraldic shield with a white stripe running diagonally from the bottom left to the upper right, with a cedar tree in the center

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“All of Us for the Country, Glory, Flag”

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year’s Day), March 22 (Arab League Anniversary), November 22 (Independence Day), December 31 (Evacuation Day), various Christian festivals observed according to the Gregorian and Julian calendars, various Muslim festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

November 22, 1941 (proclaimed; independence granted by France on January 1, 1944)

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

May 23, 1926

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Lebanon is located on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea, with a total land area of 10,400 sq km (4,015 sq mi). It extends 217 km (135 mi) northeast to southwest and 56 km (35 mi) southeast to northwest. Its Mediterranean coastline stretches 225 km (140 mi). Lebanon’s total international land boundary of 454 km (282 mi) is shared with two countries: Syria (375 km; 233 mi) and Israel (79 km; 49 mi).

Topographically, Lebanon is divided into four regions: the coastal plain, the coastal mountain range, the central plateau, and the eastern mountain range. The plain, a narrow strip about 12 km (8 mi) wide in the north,

sometimes disappears, where the mountains reach the sea. The mountain range, called the Lebanon Mountains, is a series of imposing crests and ridges, the highest peaks of which are the Qurnat as-Sawda’ (3,088 m; 10,129 ft) and Jabal Sannin (2,608 m; 8,557 ft). To the east the land drops to a broad, troughlike valley known as the Bekaa, which opens onto the Syrian Plain at Homs. The Bekaa Valley, which is about 900 m (3,000 ft) above sea level, is 8–13 km (5–8 mi) wide. To the east of the Bekaa Valley rise the Anti-Lebanon Mountains (Jabal ash-Sharqi) and their southern extension, Mount Hermon (Jabal ash-Shaikh), which form the eastern boundary with Syria. With its superb mountain scenery, Lebanon is perhaps the most attractive region in the Middle East.

Lebanon



1342 Lebanon

Two rivers rise in the Bekaa: the Orontes, which flows northward into Syria and Turkey, and the Litani, or Leontes, which flows southward and, at a short distance from the Israeli border, bends westward to reach the Mediterranean through a deep gorge.

Geography

Area sq km: 10,400; sq mi 4,015
World Rank: 160th
Land Boundaries, km: Israel 79; Syria 375
Coastline, km: 225
Elevation Extremes meters:
Lowest: Mediterranean Sea 0
Highest: Qurnat as-Sawda' 3,088
Land Use %
Arable Land: 16.6
Permanent Crops: 14.0
Forest: 3.5
Other: 65.9

Population of Principal Cities (2004 est.)

Beirut	1,800,000
Tripoli	500,000

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Lebanon has, in general, a Mediterranean climate, but with a wide variety in climatic conditions. The coastal lowlands are moderately hot in summer and warm in winter. In the coastal mountains about 16 km (10 mi) away there is heavy winter snowfall, and the higher peaks are covered with snow from December to May. The Bekaa has a moderately cold winter and a distinctly hot summer, as it is cut off from sea winds.

Rainfall, abundant on the whole, decreases rapidly toward the east, so the Bekaa and the Anti-Lebanon are drier than the west. Annual rainfall on the coast is between 760 and 1,010 mm (30 and 40 in), with up to 1,270 mm (50 in) in the mountains but only 380 mm (15 in) in the Bekaa. Almost all the rain falls between October and April, and the three summer months are completely dry. The average mean temperature in Beirut is 20.5°C (69°F). Average temperatures in the winter range from 13°C (55°F) on the coast to 10°C (50°F) inland, while temperatures in the summer range from 29°C (84°F) on the coast to 30°C (86°F) inland.

The prevailing wind is the khamsin, a hot wind blowing from the Egyptian desert, and the severely cold north winter wind.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature
Winter: 55°F on the coast to 50°F inland
Summer: 84°F on the coast to 86°F inland

Average Rainfall
Coast: 30 in to 40 in
Mountains: 50 in
Bekaa Valley: 15 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

The mythical "Cedars of Lebanon" are largely that in the contemporary world: myth. The country's forests, including its cedar, were cut and exported long ago, leaving a typical Mediterranean mix of low brush and trees, which include carobs, firs, junipers, cypresses, pines, and oaks. The few cedars left are found at higher elevations; in low-lying areas the olive and fig tree predominate, as do grapevines. Lebanon is home to about 3,000 species of plant life.

Of wild animals, the larger mammals have largely been killed off, though jackals can still be found in the less settled areas of the nation. The Arabian gazelle is extinct, though other gazelle species are found in the south. The leopard is also extinct. Smaller animals include deer, rabbit, wildcats, hedgehogs, squirrels, mice, gerbils, and martens. There are also numerous varieties of lizards and snakes. Migratory birds, such as flamingos, pelicans, ducks, and herons, can be seen in marshland. At higher elevations hawks, eagles, falcons, and buzzards can be found. Thrushes and songbirds are common, as are owls, woodpeckers, and cuckoos.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 3,826,018
World Rank: 123rd
Density per sq km: 439.7
% of annual growth (1999-2003): 1.3
Male %: 48.5
Female %: 51.5
Urban %: 90.7
Age Distribution %: 0-14: 26.7
15-64: 66.4
65 and over: 6.9
Population 2025: 4,565,000
Birth Rate per 1,000: 18.88
Death Rate per 1,000: 6.24
Rate of Natural Increase %: 1.3
Total Fertility Rate: 1.92
Expectation of Life (years): Males 70.17
Females 75.21
Marriage Rate per 1,000: 9.1
Divorce Rate per 1,000: 1.2
Average Size of Households: 5.3
Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Arabs constitute the dominant ethnic group in the country, with 93 percent of the population. Armenians are the

largest ethnic minority group, followed by Assyrians and Kurds. The few thousand Jews are officially regarded as a separate religious community and not as an ethnic group.

Broadly speaking, the term *Arab* is applied in the Middle East to anyone who speaks Arabic as his or her mother tongue and shares Arab culture. However, in common usage *Muslim* and *Arab* are used interchangeably; therefore, Christian Lebanese are not always eager to identify themselves as Arabs. The Armenians, who constitute roughly 6 percent of the population, are the country's largest unassimilated group. They inhabit separate quarters in the cities and proudly regard themselves as sojourners waiting for the day when Turkish Armenia will become independent. The Assyrians, who constitute less than 1 percent of the population, are properly Nestorian Christians (whose relationship to the ancient Assyrians is disputed). They fled from Iraq after World War I and from Syria in the 1950s, and some of them are still stateless. The Muslim Kurds, who also constitute less than 1 percent of the population, have been almost completely absorbed into the Arab mainstream. None of these minorities poses any threat to the Arab majority, and as such interethnic relations are harmonious.

LANGUAGES

The official language is Arabic, which is used in both the classical and modern standard forms. (The coexistence of classical and colloquial forms of the same language is called *diglossia* by linguists.) A third language is used in mass communications, incorporating elements from both classical and colloquial Arabic. In the central plateau and eastern mountain ranges a number of Arabic dialects are spoken, but few have written forms, and they vary from place to place and from group to group.

Minority languages include Armenian, Kurdish, Assyrian, and Syriac, the last a purely liturgical language. Though French has no official status, government publications appear in French as well as Arabic and nearly all Lebanese have some knowledge of French. The Lebanese dialect of Beirut is heavily interlarded with French words, and modern Arabic literary style has been influenced by French authors. English has made considerable headway since World War II and now competes with French as a working language in education and business. English is believed to be spoken by about 15 percent of the population, compared to the 24 percent who reportedly speak French.

RELIGIONS

Religious affiliations in Lebanon transcend purely personal beliefs and form the basis of the state itself. Every

Lebanese adult carries an identity card that shows his religious community, regardless of his personal convictions. Every Lebanese is primarily a member of his own *millet* (a term used in Ottoman law to mean "religious community"), to which his loyalty is due in both a religious and political sense. Each religious community has its own hierarchical structure, with its own *zaim* (professional political leader), schools, hospitals, charitable institutions, and newspapers. The relative proportion of communities within a district determines the composition of electoral slates for public office.

A total of 17 different religious communities are officially recognized in Lebanon: 11 Christian sects, five Muslim ones, and the Jews. The 11 Christian sects are Maronite, Greek Orthodox, Greek Catholic, Armenian Orthodox, Armenian Catholic, Protestant, Syrian Orthodox, Syrian Catholic, Roman Catholic, Chaldean, and Nestorian. The five Muslim sects are Shia, Sunni, Druze, Alawite, and Ismailian. The religious balance in the Lebanese state is based on the census of 1932, which established a Christian majority, with six Christians for every five Muslims. The subsequent agreement, known as the National Covenant, reflected the strength of the competing religious groups on this basis. In the twenty-first century, the population is approximately 70 percent Muslim, 30 percent Christian.

Lebanon's small Jewish community completes the religious mosaic of the country. Though there is no overt persecution, they make themselves as inconspicuous as possible so as not to attract the attention of Muslims.

Religious Affiliations

Muslim	2,284,000
Christian	1,492,000
Other	50,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The original inhabitants of Lebanon were a Semitic people, called Canaanites by the Hebrews and Phoenicians (because of the purple dye they sold) by the Greeks. They lived in coastal cities, such as Tyre and Sidon, and engaged in mercantile trade. Between the 17th and 14th centuries B.C.E. they were part of the Egyptian Empire. The territory regained its independence in the 12th century, and for the next three centuries the people prospered. The Phoenicians invented the alphabet; mastered the arts of navigation; founded colonies in Cyprus, Rhodes, Crete, and Carthage; and carried on extensive trade.

From 875 B.C.E. the Phoenicians suffered under a number of imperial powers: first the Assyrians (875–608 B.C.E.), whose kings Sargon and Esarhaddon destroyed and erased their cities; later the Babylonians (608–536 B.C.E.); next the Persians (536–333 B.C.E.); and finally the

Greeks under Alexander the Great. All of these conquerors laid waste to the land and overburdened the people with heavy tributes. After Alexander the Phoenicians adopted Greek culture and flourished under the Seleucids. Seleucid rule ended in 64 B.C.E., when the Roman general Pompey added Syria and Lebanon to the Roman Empire. As part of the Pax Romana, Lebanon, as the land was by then known, prospered, and the cities of Byblos, Tyre, and Sidon recovered. Beirut became known for its law school and university. In the sixth century C.E. an earthquake destroyed the city of Beirut, killing about 30,000 inhabitants.

Within a century the Arabs conquered all of the Middle East, and they remained Lebanon's new masters for over a millennium. Islam generally spread by forced conversion, but the country remained predominantly Christian. In the 11th century the Druze established themselves in the south. Parts of Lebanon temporarily fell to the Crusaders. Along with Syria and Mesopotamia, Lebanon suffered heavily from the Mongol invasions and from the bitter conflicts between the various regional and racial groups. From the 13th to 16th centuries, the Mamluks, a dynasty founded by Turkoman slaves, gained control of Egypt, Syria, and Lebanon.

In 1516 the Ottoman sultan, Salim I, invaded Syria and conquered the empire of the Mamluks. During this conflict the emirs of Lebanon sided with the Ottomans and, as a result, were granted semiautonomous status. The Ottomans ruled the country through two great feudal families, first the Maans and then the Shihabs. The Druze Maans were in power until 1697, when the Shihab family displaced them. From 1788 to 1840, except for a few intervals, Mount Lebanon was ruled by Bashir II of the Shihab family. In 1840 the Ottoman sultan proclaimed Bashir III the prince of Mount Lebanon. Under the new prince, bitter conflicts developed between the Druze and the Christians. At the request of the European powers, the Ottoman sultan partitioned Lebanon between the Christians and Druze, the north under a Christian and the south under a Druze.

The partition only intensified interreligious conflict. In 1860 there were large-scale massacres of the Maronite Christians by the Druze, offering France an opportunity to intervene for the purpose of restoring order. An international commission was formed in 1860 by five European powers—France, Great Britain, Russia, Austria, and Prussia—which recommended ending the partition of Lebanon and bringing about its reunion under a Christian governor appointed by the sultan. From 1861 to 1915 Lebanon was ruled by Christian governors.

With the outbreak of World War I, Lebanon's precarious semiautonomous status was abolished, and direct Turkish rule was restored. The new Turkish governor massacred hundreds of Christians and established a blockade around the country, leading to the death of

thousands more from famine and plague. Relief came in 1918 when the British general Edmund Allenby's forces occupied Syria and Lebanon. At the conclusion of World War I, Allies at the San Remo Conference in Italy in 1920 placed Syria and Lebanon under French mandate.

Lebanon achieved independence early in 1944. French penetration of Lebanon was facilitated by the pro-Western attitudes of the dominant Christian community. Lebanon owes its position as the most culturally, educationally, and economically advanced nation in the Middle East to its acceptance of French legacies and progressive assimilation of Western ideas.

At independence the various Christian and Muslim groups agreed on a delicate balance of power in order to avoid hostilities. The so-called National Pact of 1943 allocated executive and legislative functions throughout government among religious groups. The country survived a revolt by Muslim leftists in 1958, when the government called in U.S. Marines to restore state authority, but the delicate balance between groups was increasingly disturbed by influxes of Palestinian Arabs fleeing Arab-Israeli wars.

Tensions mounted in the early 1970s when the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), expelled from Jordan, moved to Lebanon and became the target of Israeli retaliatory raids. An alliance between the PLO and Lebanese Muslim leftists further alarmed the Lebanese Christians. A series of clashes between the PLO and the Christian militia, the Phalange, led to civil war in 1975. The civil war was not so much a breakdown of the constitutional system as a renewal of the age-old hostility between Christians and Muslims that has existed since the time of the Crusades, fueled this time by new elements. The Christian community had a disproportionate share of the wealth and important positions in the civil service and armed forces. It was generally more conservative by Arab standards and had taken a more moderate position toward Israel. The less privileged Arab majority had been in favor of both domestic reform and a more militant posture toward Israel. In the Palestinians the Muslims found a useful ally with the appropriate ideological stance and military resources.

The political situation became more confused in 1978 when Israeli forces invaded southern Lebanon in an effort to root out terrorist bases. A month later the United Nations authorized the dispatch of an Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL). During the deployment of UNIFIL troops, fighting again broke out between Christian militiamen and the Arab Deterrent Force (ADF). The 30,000-strong ADF, heavily Syrian in composition, had become pro-Muslim and pro-PLO for all intents and purposes and was deterred from wiping out the Christian forces only because of a fear of Israeli retaliation. Backed up by Israel, the Christians were in no mood to make deals either with the ADF or with the Lebanese

government, and they were in the process of carving out a Christian enclave in the south.

However, the situation was quite different in the north, where a series of clashes between Christians and Syrian troops had escalated into open warfare, with the use of tanks, mortars, heavy artillery, and rockets. While the Syrians suffered over 1,000 casualties in the period of a year, Christian losses were negligible. A French plan for ending the conflict was rejected by both parties, and France withdrew its 800-strong contingent from the UNIFIL force. However, a cease-fire was arranged by the Saudis at a conference held at Beit Eddine, under the terms of which Saudi troops replaced the Syrians in East Beirut and took the heat out of the situation. Meanwhile, intrarightist conflict erupted at Beirut, during which supporters of the former president Suleiman Franjiya were eliminated.

In 1982 the National Assembly chose a successor to President Elias Sarkis. The election, boycotted by most of the assembly's Muslim members, was won by Bachir Gemayel, the youngest son of Pierre Gemayel, leader of the Phalangist Party. The president-elect was assassinated on September 14. His brother, Amine, was then elected in his place. Shafiq al-Wazzan continued as prime minister, with a cabinet of 10 ministers drawn from outside the assembly.

In the spring of 1982 infringements of the cease-fire imposed the previous July became more frequent, and in June 1982 Israeli forces moved into Lebanon under Operation Peace for Galilee. Its initial limited objective was enlarged to an effort to crush the PLO. Israeli forces surrounded West Beirut, trapping more than 6,000 Palestinian fighters. In late August Philip Habib, President Ronald Reagan's special envoy, secured an agreement that brought about the dispersal of PLO fighters from Beirut to various Arab countries and the arrival of a multinational peacekeeping force. In September the inhabitants of the Shatila and Sabra Palestinian refugee camps were massacred by the right-wing Phalangists. The *de facto* complicity of Israel's authorities in this massacre generated widespread condemnation from abroad.

During late 1982 and early 1983 the presence of the 5,700-strong multinational force (2,000 French, 2,000 Italians, 1,600 Americans, and 100 Britons) helped to stabilize the situation, although the force came under increasing attack from Muslim militiamen. In two grisly incidents, 241 U.S. and 58 French marines were killed in suicide bombings carried out by Muslim fanatics on October 23, 1983.

From September 1983 onward the fight for control of Fatah, the military arm of the PLO, between the forces of Yasser Arafat and those of the Syrian-backed rebels under Abu Musa and Abu Saleh, was concentrated in Arafat's last stronghold, the northern Lebanese port of Tripoli.

After months of fighting, a truce allowed Arafat to leave Tripoli in December with about 4,000 of his supporters. Aboard five Greek ships and under UN protection, they dispersed to Algeria, Tunisia, and Yemen.

Talks between Israel and Lebanon, begun in December 1982, had culminated in the signing on May 17, 1983, of a 12-article agreement, formulated by the U.S. secretary of state George Shultz, declaring an end to hostilities and calling for the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Lebanon within three months. Syria refused to recognize the agreement (which was never ratified by President Gemayel) and kept 40,000 of its troops and 7,000 PLO men encamped in the Bekaa Valley and northern Lebanon. Israel consequently refused to withdraw its own forces from the south, deploying its 30,000 troops (reduced to 10,000 by the end of the year) south of Beirut, along the Awali River. Members of Major Saad Haddad's South Lebanon Army policed the Israeli-controlled south, thus effectively partitioning the country. Soon a full-scale war flared up between the Druze and Phalangist militias in the Chuf Mountains. Within months the Druze forced the Christians out of the region, establishing a Druze ministate, with its own local administration and executive council.

In Beirut interfactional fighting continued, as punctuated by numerous cease-fires. The Conference of National Reconciliation held in Geneva from October 31 to November 4, 1983, was attended by the Shiite Amal militia, led by Nabih Berri; the Syrian-backed National Salvation Front, led by the Druze leader Walid Jumbalatt; and the former prime minister Rashid Karami. The conference foundered upon President Gemayel's refusal to abrogate the May 1983 pact. By February 1984 fighting flared up again on a more intense level, as the Muslim members of the army defected en masse to the militias, the Druze and Shiites joined forces, and the multinational force was withdrawn. In March 1984, bowing to Syrian president Hafez al-Assad's pressures, Amine Gemayel abrogated the May 17 agreement with Israel in return for Syrian guarantees. A week later the National Reconciliation Conference was reconvened in Geneva. It failed to produce a compromise and witnessed the disintegration of the National Salvation Front. Ex-president Suleiman Franjiya vetoed Syrian plans, which called for a diminution of presidential powers.

In April 1984 President Gemayel formed a government of national unity, with Rashid Karami as prime minister heading a cabinet of five Christians and five Muslims. Franjiya boycotted the government, and his Greek Orthodox son-in-law, Abdullah al-Rassi, the interior minister, refused to attend cabinet meetings. The goals of the new government were to end Israeli occupation of the south, reorganize the army, disengage rival militias, and reform the constitution to provide more equitable representation for the Muslims. A Syrian-backed

security plan was put into operation in July 1984, leading to the reopening of the port and seaport of Beirut and the clearing of the Green Line separating Christian and Muslim sectors in Beirut.

In 1984 Israel pledged itself to a withdrawal from Lebanon and entered into talks with the Lebanese government on the conditions of such a move. When the talks failed, Israel elected to vacate the territory unilaterally in three phases. By mid-1985 the Israeli forces had withdrawn completely, although they remained in effective control of the border area and watchful of both the Syrian ADF forces and the resumed presence in Lebanon of the PLO.

Thereafter, the fundamental Christian-Muslim divide became overlaid by more immediate conflicts between rival factions within the two broad camps. On the Christian side a Syrian-sponsored peace plan proposed in 1985 was backed by one Phalangist faction but opposed by President Gemayel and his followers. On the Muslim side the pro-Syrian Amal movement and the Iranian-backed Hezbollah vied for support within the Shiite community, and both came into conflict with the Druze, Sunni militia, and the PLO from 1986 to 1988. Moreover, militant Muslim groups resorted to the kidnapping of Western nationals, amid a total breakdown of government authority and the inexorable destruction of the economic infrastructure.

Upon the expiration of Gemayel's six-year term in September 1988, the election of a successor proved impossible, such that Gemayel's final presidential act was to appoint a transitional military government headed by General Michel Aoun, the Maronite army commander. However, the Muslim nominees refused to serve under General Aoun and declared their support for the government of Selim al-Hoss (appointed prime minister in June 1987), from which Christian support had been withdrawn earlier. Aoun launched a "war of liberation" against Syria in March 1989, thereby initiating a new round in Lebanon's bloody conflict. Intervention by the Arab League to halt the ensuing fighting resulted in the drawing up of an "accord for national reconciliation," which was approved on October 22 by a majority of Lebanese MPs meeting in Taif, Saudi Arabia. Aoun vehemently rejected the accord on the grounds that it failed to provide for an immediate Syrian withdrawal. Under the terms of the Taif accord, the MPs elected a new president, René Moawad, on November 5. Moawad was brutally assassinated 17 days later and was replaced on November 24 by Elias Hrawi.

Aoun condemned Hrawi as a Syrian puppet and considered himself the country's rightful ruler, refusing to vacate the bunker he occupied beneath the presidential palace in Baabda, an east Beirut suburb. As a result, Hrawi's government controlled only those areas occupied by Syrian soldiers. A decisive event occurred on April 3, 1990, when Lebanese forces and the Phalange military leader Samir Geagea declared their allegiance to Hrawi.

The Lebanese parliament met on August 21 in Beirut and approved the constitutional changes called for in the Taif accord that gave the Muslim majority greater political power. The amendments expanded the National Assembly to 128 seats from 99 and divided them equally between Christians and Muslims. It allowed for the Christians to retain their traditional hold on the presidency but diluted the powers of that office by giving more authority to the Muslim prime minister and his cabinet. The next day Aoun reiterated his opposition to the Taif accord. Nevertheless, Hrawi signed the constitutional changes into law on September 21, 1990, and warned Aoun to join the peace process.

The violent eviction of General Aoun from the presidential palace at Baabda finally occurred on October 13, removing the biggest single obstacle to the reunification of Lebanon and fostering an immediate improvement in confidence both at home and abroad. Having lived through 750 days of Aoun's occupation of the palace, President Hrawi and his ministers were faced with the task of rebuilding the country.

On December 19, 1990, Prime Minister Selim al-Hoss resigned to make way for a government of national unity and was succeeded by Omar Karami, the brother of the late prime minister Rashid Karami, who, like Hoss, was a Sunni Muslim. The new cabinet, apparently formed with Syrian backing, included the leaders of seven militias, among them Samir Geagea, Elie Hobeika, the Druze leader Walid Jumblatt, and Nabih Berri of the Shiite Amal. The pro-Iranian Hezbollah rejected the new government.

In September 1991 Lebanon and Syria signed a formal peace agreement. The first parliamentary elections in 20 years were held in August 1992 but were boycotted by the Christian opposition. As a result, Muslim fundamentalists won the largest number of seats in parliament. In October, the Syria-backed billionaire Rafiq al-Hariri was appointed prime minister. His attempts at stabilizing the economy and building confidence within the country were hampered by continued fighting between Hezbollah and the South Lebanon Army. Both Syrian and Israeli forces maintained their presence in Lebanon. In 1995 Rafiq al-Hariri won a second term. In 1996 fighting between Israel and the Hezbollah continued to escalate, provoking Israel to launch a heavy air and missile campaign in southern Lebanon. The air raids led to civilian casualties, resulting in international criticism. A U.S.-brokered cease-fire was never signed. In September 1996 the second postwar elections were again boycotted by the Christian opposition. In October 1998 parliament elected as president Émile Lahoud, who named the veteran politician Selim al-Hoss prime minister after Hariri, citing irregularities in the selection process, withdrew his name from the running. Peace talks between Israel and Syria resumed in December 1999. After talks broke down the following month, Israel announced that it would unilaterally withdraw its troops from southern Lebanon.

The withdrawal was completed on May 24, 2000. In June 2001 Syria withdrew its troops from Beirut and the surrounding area, but an estimated 20,000 troops remained in Lebanon. In parliamentary elections held in September 2000, with few reports of irregularities, the opposition won a decisive victory, and Selim al-Hoss lost his seat in parliament. Rafiq al-Hariri was appointed prime minister in October 2000.

In February 2003 the Syrian army withdrew from northern Lebanon, still leaving, however, a contingent of 16,000 troops in the Bekaa Valley, fueling Lebanese groups opposed to Syria's continued military presence. Meanwhile, Israel and Hezbollah continued to exchange fire over a contested region known as the Shabaa Farms, which was captured by Israel during the 1967 war.

The refugee situation in Lebanon has remained problematic; as of 2003 there were 350,000 to 400,000 Palestinians in Lebanon. Renewed hope for a settlement of the entire Lebanese conflict came in late 2004 when the United Nations passed a resolution calling for Syria to remove the last of its troops and end its interference in Lebanese affairs. Syria refused, citing the Taif accord and noting that all its provisions had not been fulfilled. That same year Hariri resigned his post as prime minister in protest over the extension of the presidential term of Lahoud. In February 2005 al-Hariri was assassinated by a car bomb, an action that drew worldwide condemnation, incited further calls for Syrian withdrawal, and led to the toppling of the pro-Syrian Lebanese government headed by Omar Karami. In elections that year the anti-Syrian alliance led by Saad al-Hariri won a majority and al-Hariri's ally Fouad Siniora became prime minister.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

Presidents

1976–82	Elias Sarkis
1982–88	Amine Pierre Gemayel
1989	René Anis Moawad
1989–98	Elias Khalil Hrawi
1998–	Émile Geamil Lahoud

Prime Minister

1976–80	Selim al-Hoss
1980	Takieddin as-Solh
1980–84	Shafiq al-Wazzan
1984–87	Rashid Karami
1987–90	Selim al-Hoss
1990–92	Omar Karami
1992	Rashid as-Solh
1992–98	Rafiq al-Hariri
1998–2000	Selim al-Hoss
2000–04	Rafiq al-Hariri
2004–05	Omar Karami
2005	Najib Mikati
2005–	Fouad Siniora

CONSTITUTION

The constitutional basis of the Lebanese government is the largely unwritten and unique system of compromise and adjustment known as the National Covenant (*al-Mithaq al-Watani*), which was superimposed on the constitution of 1926. The 1926 constitution, as amended in 1927, 1929, 1944, and 1947, established a centralized parliamentary republic in which executive power was shared by a strong president and a prime minister who headed a cabinet. Legislative functions are performed by a unicameral Chamber of Deputies, which was renamed the National Assembly in March 1979. The constitution is predominantly French in character, but it is the National Covenant rather than the constitution that determines the specific political organization of the country. The National Covenant is based on Article 95 of the constitution, which provides for the distribution of all political and legislative positions according to a confessional system in proportion to the numerical strength of religious communities at the time of the 1932 census. The president, ministers, and deputies act as members and representatives of their respective religious groups rather than as national or regional leaders. By custom the president of the republic is a Maronite Christian, the prime minister a Sunni Muslim, the foreign minister Greek Orthodox, and so on. This system of government, known as confessionalism, worked satisfactorily until the civil war of 1975.

Under the terms of the Taif peace accord, ratified by the National Assembly in 1990, executive powers have been transferred from the presidency to a cabinet, with portfolios divided equally between Muslims and Christians. The president appoints the prime minister in consultation with the members and president of the National Assembly; the approval of the cabinet is required before he dismisses a minister or ratifies an international treaty. The number of seats in the National Assembly has increased from 99 to 128, divided equally between Christian and Muslim deputies. Constitutional provisions which remain unchanged are as follows: the president of the republic is elected for a term of six years and is not immediately reeligible. Legislative power is exercised by one house, the National Assembly. A quorum of two-thirds and a majority vote is required in the assembly for constitutional issues.

Suffrage is compulsory for all Lebanese males over 21 and authorized for all females over 21 with an elementary education. The country is divided into six governorates, which are subdivided into 26 electoral districts, in each of which seats are allocated to the different religious communities in proportion to their numerical strength. Although candidates are chosen on the basis of confessionalism, they are elected by voters of all communities by direct and secret ballot and thus represent the district as a whole.

PARLIAMENT

The national legislature is the National Assembly, formerly the Chamber of Deputies, a unicameral body of 128 members elected by universal, direct suffrage for four-year terms. The number of seats in the National Assembly is divided equally between Christian and Muslim deputies.

Deputies are considered representatives of the whole nation and are not bound to follow directives from their constituencies. The assembly holds two sessions annually, from March to May and from October to December. Membership in the assembly is open to all Lebanese citizens 25 years of age or older. The president of the assembly is, by custom, a Shiite Muslim.

The assembly's substantial powers include controlling the national budget, interrogating cabinet members and voting no confidence on the cabinet, and recommending constitutional amendments. The assembly can also transform itself into a judicial body in order to arraign the president or members of the cabinet in cases of high treason or violation of the constitution.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Political activity is organized along largely sectarian lines; numerous political groupings exist, consisting of individual political figures and followers motivated by religious, clan, and economic considerations. A welter of parties exists as a result, representing both Christian and Muslim viewpoints as well as a variety of political viewpoints. The mainly Christian groups, especially the Maronites, favor an independent course for Lebanon, with close ties to Europe, and are represented by the National Liberal Party and the Phalangist Party. Muslim groups favor closer ties with Arab states and are represented by Amal and the more militant Hezbollah. There are also various parties of the left, including the Progressive Socialist Party (of mostly Druze membership), the Ba'ath Party, and the Lebanese Communist Party. Christian parties largely boycotted elections in the 1990s, decreasing their role in parliament.

Other major parties that emerged in the 2000 parliamentary elections include Resistance and Development, which took 23 parliamentary seats; al-Karamah (Dignity), 18; Baalbeck-Hermel al-I'tilafiah (Baalbeck-Hermel Coalition), nine; al-Jabhar al-Nidal al-Watani (National Defense Front), eight; Wahdal al-Jabal (Mountain Union), seven; I'tilafiah (Coalition) and al-Karal (Decision), six each; al-Kitla al-Chaabi-Elias Shaft (People's Front-Elias Shaft), al-Wifah al-Matni (Metn Accord), and al-Karamah wah Tajdid (Dignity and Renewal), five apiece; and numerous other parties with three or fewer seats. Nonpartisans took 20 seats in the 2000 elections.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For purposes of regional administration Lebanon is divided into six governorates, or *muhafazaa*. Each division is headed by a governor, or *muhafez*, the district by a district chief, or *qaim maqam*. The six governorates are subdivided into 26 districts.

The governor is assisted by the provincial council, or Mjlis al-Muhafazat, whose members include the district chiefs and two nominated representatives from each district. There are no organs of self-government at the district level.

Some towns have municipal councils, but only in Beirut do the councils and the mayor run the local government. Membership in the council is based on the size of the urban population, but the minimum number is eight.

LEGAL SYSTEM

Lebanon follows France in terms of jurisprudence and the judicial system. The court hierarchy consists of three tiers. At the bottom are 56 courts of first instance, presided over by single judges, who deal with both civil and criminal cases. Appeals from these courts go to 11 courts of appeal, each presided over by three judges. At the apex are four courts of cassation, three of which deal with civil and commercial cases, the fourth with criminal cases. In addition, there are two special courts: the Council of State, which serves as an administrative court of last resort, and the High Court, which may meet only to try the president of the republic upon indictment by the National Assembly for high treason or violation of the constitution. Matters relating to personal status are handled by religious courts.

Under the constitution there is complete separation between the judiciary and the executive. Judges are appointed by the president, but they may be transferred only with the approval of the Higher Council of the Magistracy, which functions as a watchdog of judicial integrity.

Human rights groups argue that the Lebanese judiciary is strongly influenced by Syrian political pressure, which affects the appointments of key prosecutors and investigating magistrates. Moreover, the judicial system consists of civilian courts, a military court, and a judicial council. International standards of criminal procedure are not observed in the military court, which consists largely of military officers with no legal training. Cases in the military court are often tried in a matter of minutes.

HUMAN RIGHTS

In terms of civil and political rights, Lebanon ranks as a partly free country.

The major violations of human rights in Lebanon are committed not by the government but by armed groups and by Syrian and PLO troops. These include torture, mutilation, murder, abduction, mass execution, arbitrary arrest and imprisonment, and wanton destruction of private and public property. Because of the collapse of the public security system, judges are unwilling to pass sentences for fear of personal reprisal. However, arbitrary arrests by security forces, both Lebanese and Syrian, have continued since official hostilities ended in the early 1990s and appear to be officially sanctioned. The use of torture and beatings to extract confessions is practiced. Human rights groups also claim that Syria monitors the telephone activity of both cabinet ministers and political dissidents. In 2003 numerous Islamic militants were arrested by security forces on national security grounds; many political prisoners remain in custody in substandard and overcrowded jails and prisons.

Although the civil war officially ended in 1990, decades of violence have severely weakened the Lebanese tradition of respect for the rights of others. Not only have civilians been endangered unintentionally by opposing groups that have fought major battles in densely populated areas, but noncombatants far removed from battlefronts have also been the deliberate targets of indiscriminate violence, such as terrorist bombings, random shellings, and abductions. Civilians have also been the targets of indiscriminate terrorist violence. On several occasions car bombs have exploded in crowded streets, killing and wounding large numbers of passersby. In most instances these explosions have occurred in neighborhoods in which one confessional group predominates and have thus appeared to be attacks against those groups' members.

Violence has had a devastating effect on Lebanon's once-prosperous economy. The division of the country into zones controlled by militias and foreign armies has disrupted trade and led to serious economic hardship in some areas. Business confidence has evaporated, new investment has dried up, and remittances from overseas Lebanese—a major source of foreign exchange—have dropped sharply.

Hundreds of thousands of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon still live in overcrowded refugee camps, struggling to fulfill basic human needs. They do not have the right to work in dozens of professions or to receive social security, nor do they have the right to own or inherit property.

FOREIGN POLICY

A member of the United Nations as well as a member with special status (because it is partly Christian) of the Arab League, Lebanon is a bridge between the Muslim world and the West. It has maintained good relations

with the West while following a policy of comparative restraint with respect to Israel. The principal aim of its foreign policy is to safeguard its own independence while maintaining a broad commitment to Arab nationalism.

Lebanon was the scene of one of the worst civil wars in modern history and at the end of the fighting found itself under Syrian occupation, which was partly beneficial because it neutralized much of the residual extremist violence generated by the civil war. At the same time, it restricted Lebanon's autonomy in external affairs, since Lebanon had to clear all major moves with Damascus. In 1999 Israel withdrew its forces from southern Lebanon, thus ending a serious concern for Arab militants. Syria maintained 16,000 troops in the country until 2005, when they were finally withdrawn.

DEFENSE

The Lebanese defense structure is headed by the president of the republic. Since the start of the civil war, little information was available on the structure and organization of the armed forces. Troops were divided up along religious lines, with the Christian officers fighting on the Phalangist side, and the Muslim ranks on the leftist, Palestinian side. With the cessation of hostilities, the armed forces regrouped. By 2003 the army numbered some 80,000, with a navy and air force of about 1,000 each, neither of which was well equipped. There were also 40,000 reserves in the People's Militia. Military manpower is provided through selective 12-month service, which is compulsory for Lebanese males between the ages of 18 and 30. In 2002 the government spent \$541 million on defense.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	85,100
Military Manpower Availability:	974,363
Military Expenditures \$million:	540.6
as % of GDP:	3.1
as % of central government expenditures:	—
Arms Imports \$million:	—
Arms Exports \$million:	—

ECONOMY

The 1975–91 civil war seriously damaged Lebanon's economic infrastructure, cut national output by half, and all but ended Lebanon's position as a Middle Eastern entrepôt and banking hub. Peace enabled the central government to restore control in Beirut, collect taxes, and regain access to key port and government facilities. Economic recovery was helped by a financially sound banking system and resilient small- and medium-scale

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manufacturers, with family remittances, banking services, manufactured and farm exports, and international aid as the main sources of foreign exchange.

Lebanon's economy made impressive gains following the launch of Horizon 2000, the government's \$20-billion reconstruction program, in 1993. Real gross domestic product (GDP) grew between 4 and 8 percent from 1994 to 1997, but slowed to an average of less than 1 percent between 1998 and 2003. Through the 1990s annual inflation fell from more than 100 percent to almost 0 percent, and foreign exchange reserves jumped from \$1.4 billion to more than \$6 billion. Burgeoning capital inflows generated foreign payments surpluses, and the Lebanese pound remained relatively stable.

Progress was also made in rebuilding Lebanon's war-torn physical and financial infrastructure. Solidere, a \$2-billion firm, took over the management of the reconstruction of Beirut's central business district, the stock market reopened in January 1996, and international banks and insurance companies started returning.

The government nonetheless faces serious challenges in the economic arena. It has had to fund reconstruction by tapping foreign exchange reserves and boosting borrowing. The Hariri government's policies failed to address the ever-increasing budgetary deficits and national debt burden. The gap between rich and poor widened in the 1990s, resulting in grassroots dissatisfaction over the skewed distribution of reconstruction's benefits.

In order to reduce escalating national debt, the government began an economic austerity program, reducing government expenditures, increasing revenue collection, and privatizing state enterprises. The privatization of state-owned enterprises, begun in 2002, has resulted in large amounts flowing in from donor nations to help stabilize government finances.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 18.83

GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 5,000

GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 1.5

GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 0.2

Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:

Agriculture: 12

Industry: 21

Services: 67

Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:

Private Consumption: 78

Government Consumption: 31

Gross Domestic Investment: 26

Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 1.783

Imports: 8.162

% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: —

% of Income Received by Richest 10%: —

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1990 = 100)

1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
310.3	331.3	412.7	438.1	447.1

Finance

National Currency: Lebanese Pound (LBP)

Exchange Rate: \$1 = LBP 1,507.5

Money Supply Stock in National Currency trillion: 2.83

Central Bank Discount Rate %: 20

Total External Debt \$billion: 15.84

Debt Service Ratio %: 81.51

Balance of Payments \$billion: -2.389

International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 12.46

Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 2

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 228.3

per capita \$: 50.80

Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 358

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year

Revenues \$billion: 4.895

Expenditures \$billion: 6.642

Budget Deficit \$billion: 1.747

Tax Revenues as % of GDP: 15.1

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 12

Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 1.4

Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 4.88

Irrigation, % of Farms having: 33.2

Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 231.9

Total Farmland % of land area: 16.6

Livestock: Cattle 000: 90

Chickens million: 34

Pigs 000: 20

Sheep 000: 350

Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters 000: 88.9

Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 4.76

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 1.57

Industrial Production Growth Rate %: —

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 45

Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 4.95

Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 1.4

Net Energy Imports % of use: 96.4

Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 2.29

Production kW-hr billion: 7.7

Consumption kW-hr billion: 8.26

Coal Reserves tons billion: —

Production tons million: —

Consumption tons million: 0.22

Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
 Production cubic feet billion: —
 Consumption cubic feet billion: —
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
 Production barrels 000 per day: —
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 101
 Pipelines Length km: 209

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 8.162
 Exports \$billion: 1.783
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 9.1
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 1.9
 Balance of Trade \$billion: -2.389

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
France %	13.1	—
Germany %	11.4	—
Italy %	10.5	—
Syria %	5.2	—
China %	5.1	—
United Kingdom %	4.8	—
United States %	4.4	7.5
United Arab Emirates %	—	10.3
Switzerland %	—	9.3
Saudi Arabia %	—	7.7
Turkey %	—	4.6
Jordan %	—	4.5

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 7,300
 Paved %: 84.9
 Automobiles: 1,370,900
 Trucks and Buses: 102,400
 Railroad: Track Length km: 401
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: —
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 44
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 248.3
 Airports: 8
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 1.75
 Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 956
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 956
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: —

Communications

Telephones 000: 678.8
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.10
 Cellular Telephones 000: 775.1

Personal Computers 000: 350
 Internet Hosts per million people: 1,829
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 105

ENVIRONMENT

The arid climate of Lebanon raises concerns over soil erosion and continued desertification. Beirut suffers from air pollution from vehicular traffic and the burning of industrial wastes. Coastal waters are being polluted by raw sewage and oil spills.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 3.5
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: —
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 1
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 3.5

LIVING CONDITIONS

Despite the official end of the civil war in 1991, indiscriminate violence still punctuates the daily life of Lebanese and informs many other aspects of society; rebuilding is still underway to counteract the 15 years of destruction. The United Nations Human Development Index (HDI) ranks Lebanon 80th among 177 nations in terms of quality of life. The HDI focuses on three measurable dimensions of human development: life expectancy, education, and standard of living. In 2004 life expectancy in Lebanon was over 72 years. The literacy rate in 2003 was over 87 percent, while combined gross enrollment at primary, secondary, and tertiary schools in 2001–02 was 78 percent. Per capita GDP in 2004 was \$5,000.

In 2001 around 90 percent of Lebanese were dwelling in urban areas, with almost half the population in Beirut alone, with a population of around 1.8 million. Other major cities include Tripoli, Sidon, and Tyre. With half of Lebanon's real estate damaged or destroyed in the civil war, there is still an acute housing shortage.

HEALTH

Lebanon has a national medical-insurance program that is financed through contributions made by employers, employees, and the government. The program partially compensates patients for medical care, and people make up the difference with copayments.

Violence was the leading cause of death in the late 1980s. There were over 144,000 war-related deaths that decade, and thousands more were injured, all of which heavily affected, and to some extent still affects, the nation's health-care system. Crippling injuries and posttrau-

matic stress syndrome affect large numbers of Lebanese, both young and old. Major health problem and leading causes of death as of 2000 included hypertension, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and asthma. With much of infrastructure restored by 2002, 100 percent of the population had access to safe drinking water and 98 percent to adequate sanitation.

As of 2002 there were 325 physicians per 100,000 people, and the government spent 3.5 percent of GDP on health care, reflecting gains made in the health-care system. The infant mortality rate and under-five mortality rate have steadily declined. As of 2005 the infant mortality rate was just under 25 deaths per 1,000 live births. The government pays for immunizations; the 2003 immunization rates for children up to one year old for diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, measles, and polio were all over 90 percent. There have been no cases of polio recorded since 1994. Nearly all pregnant women have access to prenatal care and trained attendants during childbirth.

In 2003 there were 2,800 Lebanese living with HIV/AIDS; less than 200 people died of the disease that year. In 2002, there were 15 cases of tuberculosis per 100,000 people. Smoking is a significant health hazard for Lebanese; as of 2000, 46 percent of men and 35 percent of women smoked.

Health

Number of Physicians: 11,505
 Number of Dentists: 4,283
 Number of Nurses: 4,157
 Number of Pharmacists: 3,359
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 325
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 24.52
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 150
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 11.5
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 568
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.1
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 92
 Measles: 96
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 98
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 100

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Lebanese cuisine is a blend of Turkish and Arabic cooking, with a Mediterranean/French influence. A typical Lebanese breakfast dish is *manakish*, a pastry baked with thyme, olive oil, spices and sesame seed. *Kishk* is made from bulgur wheat soaked in yogurt and fried with onions and garlic.

Lunch or dinner usually begins with appetizers of meze dishes, which include food ranging from stuffed vine leaves to spinach pies to hummus to baba ghanoush, an eggplant and sesame puree. Mutton is a usual meat for the main course, as is fish. The national dish is kibbe, a finely

minced paste of lamb and bulgur wheat, sometimes served raw but more often fried or baked into a pie. Bulgur wheat is also used in the salad called tabbouleh. Bread is served with most meals. Lebanese bread is pita style; two types are called *khub* and *marqouq*. Rice is another popular grain. Baklava, a walnut paste-stuffed pastry, is a typical dessert.

Other popular ingredients in Lebanese cooking include allspice, anise, cinnamon, cloves, coriander, cumin, lentils, mint, nutmeg, olive oil, oregano, parsley, pine nuts, pistachios, sesame seeds, and sesame paste.

Coffee is drunk strong. Arrack is a potent alcohol with a licorice flavor. Wine is also popular, having been cultivated in the region for millennia.

Between 1995 and 2003 only 3 percent of children under five were moderately to severely underweight; only 3 percent of the general population was considered undernourished as of 2001.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 2.9
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 3,160
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 125.5
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 354.3

STATUS OF WOMEN

Women enjoy equality of civil rights and attend institutions of higher learning in large numbers, but they are still limited by religion and custom. The prevailing atmosphere, replete with insecurity and economic hardship, makes it difficult for women to expand their participation in society. The women's organizations that do exist are for the most part subordinate arms of political groups and work to advance the interests of the parent party rather than of women in general. Moreover, continuing turbulence has spawned Islamic religious movements that advocate confining women to traditional roles and "modest" dress—that is, chadors and veils.

Muslim women in Lebanon are subject to discriminatory laws governing marriage, divorce, inheritance, and child custody. Women are underrepresented in politics, holding only three parliamentary seats and no cabinet positions, and do not receive equal social security provisions and other benefits. Men convicted of so-called honor crimes against women—such as revenge for an extramarital affair—usually receive lenient sentences.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 2
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: —
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: —

WORK

In 2001 the Lebanese workforce totaled some 2.6 million. To this, however, would be added approximately one million foreign laborers, many of them Palestinian refugees. As of 1995, one-sixth of the labor force was engaged in agriculture, producing citrus, grapes, tomatoes, apples, vegetables, potatoes, olives, tobacco, sheep, and goats. Another quarter of the workforce was employed in industry; industrial products include processed food, jewelry, cement, textiles, mineral and chemical products, wood and furniture products, refined oil, and fabricated metal. The remaining nearly two-thirds of workers were involved in the service sector. Official numbers put unemployment around 18 percent, with 30–35 percent unemployment among young people. Many of the country's skilled workers go abroad for work or remain underemployed or unemployed in Lebanon.

Lebanese workers have the right to unionize and strike; however, with high unemployment and jobs at a premium, organized labor has little bargaining power. As of 2001, about 42 percent of the labor force was unionized in 160 different unions. The largest single organization is the General Confederation of Workers, with 22 unions representing 200,000 workers. The standard workweek is 48 hours, and in 2002 a minimum wage of \$200 per month was in place. The minimum work age is 14, but this is not enforced. Child labor is a major social problem. In 2000 the UN Children's Fund estimated that 45.3 percent of Lebanese children ages six to 14 were working.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 2,600,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 30.2
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: —
 Industry: —
 Services: —
 Unemployment %: 18

EDUCATION

While free, universal, and compulsory education has not been introduced at all levels, primary education is nominally free. Schooling consists of five years of primary school and four years of primary-complementary school or seven years of secondary school, for a total of nine or 12 years. During the fifth and sixth years of secondary school, students may elect to follow a general humanistic or a technical program. At the end of the sixth year students take a comprehensive public examination known as Baccalaureate I, and at the end of the seventh year they complete their schooling with a stiffer examination known as Baccalaureate II.

The academic year runs from October to June. The medium of instruction is French in private schools and Arabic and French in public schools. However, English is stressed from the primary grades onward. The school system is characterized by the predominance of private schools at both the primary and secondary levels. The administration of public education, formulation and implementation of educational policies, and budget planning are the responsibility of the director general of education.

Lebanon has 12 institutions of higher learning, including five universities.

Despite legislation mandating free, compulsory primary education, the average annual cost per student for primary education in 1997 was 271,000 Lebanese pounds, or about \$176. Economically disadvantaged families, especially refugees, are often unable to afford tuition costs and are compelled to withdraw them from school and send them to work.

On paper, Lebanon enjoys one of the most advanced educational systems in the Arab world in terms of quality and gender parity. Literacy rates are the highest in the Middle East, and in 2002 the net primary enrollment rate was a healthy 90.6 percent. However, attendance rates are not available, such that while enrollment rates indicate a level of commitment to education, they do not necessarily reflect children's participation. As of 2002 public expenditure on education was 2.7 percent of GDP, or 12.3 percent of total government expenditures.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 87.4
 Male %: 93.1
 Female %: 82.2
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 13.2
 First Level: Primary Schools: 2,100
 Teachers: 26,428
 Students: 449,311
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 17.0
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 90.6
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: —
 Teachers: 46,208
 Students: 303,940
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 7.6
 Net Enrollment Ratio: —
 Third Level: Institutions: 20
 Teachers: 11,196
 Students: 144,050
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 44.3
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 2.7

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Lebanon's research and development projects include both agriculture technology and oil refining research. While the latter is taken care of largely by international oil companies operating in Lebanon, agricultural re-

search is sponsored by several institutions. The Ministry of Agriculture's Lebanese Agricultural Research Institute pursues research into field crops, horticulture, crop protection, livestock, animal health, and food technology, while the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences at the Lebanese University, Beirut, is also involved in diverse agricultural research. Oceanographic and fishery research is conducted by the National Council for Scientific Research's National Center for Marine Sciences.

The National Council for Scientific Research also establishes national science policies and fosters research in fundamental and applied research. Seven colleges and universities in Beirut offer degrees in basic and applied sciences. Between 1994 and 1997, science, math, and engineering students accounted for 17 percent of college and university enrollments.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: 16.95
 Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

Lebanon leads Middle Eastern countries in newspapers per capita, with a dozen daily newspapers in print. Other publications include political and nonpolitical weeklies and monthlies, nearly all published in Beirut. Most dailies are printed in Arabic; a few are printed in Armenian and French. Lebanese newspapers and periodicals are sold in substantial numbers in other Arab countries. The principal dailies are *an-Nabhar*, *al-Anwar*, *al-Amal*, *al-Hayat*, *Lisan ul Hal*, *L'orient le jour*, *al-Liwa'*, and *at-Tayyar*, several of which have an online presence.

The national news agency is Wakalat al-Anbaa al-Wataniyah, with two foreign bureaus, in Paris and Cairo. Foreign news bureaus in Beirut include UPI, AP, AFP, Reuters, ITAR-TASS, ADP, and MENA. Beirut is the most important base in the Middle East for foreign correspondents.

The official Lebanese broadcasting service, Radio Lebanon, broadcasts in Arabic, English, French, and Armenian. An FM station transmits mainly music. Domestic programs are all of domestic origin. The foreign service broadcasts in Arabic and European languages, with the signature Voice of Lebanon.

Television, introduced in 1959, is operated by the commercial service Television Lebanon. Tele-Liban is the state TV service and broadcasts a large proportion of domestically produced programming. Cable and satellite TV are also widespread. In its first steps toward privatization in 2000, the government laid off all the employees of the official television network.

The constitution provides for freedom of the press. However, the government controls content to some extent through a law prohibiting attacks on the dignity of the head of state. Still, criticism of officials and policies is carried daily in dozens of newspapers and hundreds of periodicals. In its 2004 report, Reporters without Borders ranked Lebanon 87th out of 167 nations in its freedom of press index.

In 2001 there were 36 radio stations and 7 television stations. The government owns one radio and one television station, and the rest are privately owned. As of 2000 there were 182 radios and 355 television sets for every 1,000 people. In 2002 there were 400,000 Internet subscribers and 775,100 cellular telephone users.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 13
 Total Circulation 000: 220
 Circulation per 1,000: 63
 Books Published: 289
 Periodicals: 7
 Radio Receivers 000: 570
 per 1,000: 182
 Television sets million: 1.15
 per 1,000: 355

CULTURE

Lebanon has a long cultural history, stretching from Phoenician times through Greek and Arab dominance. Moreover, its ties to Europe, through the Crusader states in medieval times and more recently as a French protectorate, made the country a beachhead for European culture in the Middle East. Before the civil war Beirut was called "the Paris of the Middle East," with a cosmopolitan air to it. Ballet, opera, theater, and classical music were all available. Following the civil war, Lebanon has taken on more of the trappings of Arab and Levantine culture. Resurgences in folk art, music, and dance have occurred. The line dance known as the *dabke* has become the national dance. Traditional Arab music, with its complex rhythms and many-layered voice parts, has become more popular as the population has shifted to a Muslim rather than a Christian majority. The *Baalbeck International Festival* is a popular annual event. Musical instruments that accompany traditional music include the oval-shaped stringed *oud*, the drumlike *tabla*, the single-reed wind instrument called the *nay*, and the *qanun*, a flat stringed instrument. Belly dancing is also a popular cultural form.

In literature perhaps the most famous native son is Khalil Gibran, the 19th-century poet and artist. Other notable writers include Michel Chiha, Amin Maalouf, Emily Nasrallah, and Hanan al-Shaykh. Before these people gained international repute, there was a long tradition of Lebanese folk poetry, called *zajal*.

Contemporary Lebanon is also home to a burgeoning film and publishing industry.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
Volumes: —
Registered borrowers: —
Museums Number: —
Annual Attendance: —
Cinema Gross Receipts national currency billion: 761
Number of Cinemas: 25
Seating Capacity: 38,900
Annual Attendance: 10,900,000

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Lebanon, ancient home of the Canaanites and location of Phoenicia, has a folkloric tradition and mythology that is a blend of Greek, Christian, and Arab cultures. From Phoenician times comes the cult of Anat, the fertility goddess. Anat was regarded as a just and benevolent goddess of beauty, sexuality, and the fertility of crops, animals, and men. In her more martial aspect she slays the enemies of Baal Biq'ah, the west Semitic weather god and "Lord of the Plains" in Lebanon. The city of Baalbeck is named after him.

In Hellenistic times Baal became a sun and sky god, and the Greeks identified him with their Helios. The story of Adonis and Aphrodite took place in Byblos, Lebanon, and is also a holdover of the Greek epoch. From the Christian era comes the story of Saint George and the Dragon. Saint George reputedly lived in Lebanon and fought the legendary sea dragon near Beirut. Crusaders later took the tale home with them, making him the patron saint of England.

From Arab folklore come such popular figures as Jeha the Fool and also the tale of the lovers Antar, poet and slave, and Ablah, daughter of a chief.

In addition to such folklore and mythology, Lebanese have a rich storehouse of proverbs, which not only provide folk wisdom but also give modern readers insight into the mind and culture of the Lebanese. For example, the proverb "The son of a son is dear, the son of a daughter a stranger" tells volumes about marriage rights and the place of women in Lebanese society in ancient times. Other proverbs demonstrate earthy humor ("When the wolf comes for the sheep, the dog goes to defecate") or clear-headed logic ("Lower your voice and strengthen your argument").

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Television is a major source of entertainment for Lebanese. Many Lebanese have cable, which allows them to receive such disparate programming as CNN, the BBC,

Al-Jazeera and numerous movie and other specialized channels. In addition, there are dozens of local television stations, both commercial and public.

Cinema, both imported and domestic, is also popular. As of 1999 there were 10.9 cinema seats per 1,000 Lebanese, and annual attendance per inhabitant was 3. With high literacy, Lebanese also enjoy free-time reading. In 1999, 289 books were published in the nation, and the average circulation of the daily press was 63 per 1,000 inhabitants.

Card games, board games, and backgammon, or *tawleh*, are also popular forms of entertainment. Lebanon's beaches attract many inhabitants, and family picnics and outings are a typical form of recreation.

ETIQUETTE

A mixture of cultures, Lebanon has a corresponding smorgasbord of customs when it comes to politesse. Lebanese Muslims have many of the same social taboos as other Muslims, such as removing the shoes before entering a home or mosque, refraining from showing the soles of one's feet, never eating with the left hand, and observing prohibitions against alcohol and pork. The role of women in Islam is significantly different than in other religions, such that, for example, a Muslim man might not introduce his wife to another man when introductions are being made.

Handshakes are customary in Lebanon, but those who know each other well may exchange kisses on the cheek, including men. In the marketplace, or *souq*, it is considered bad manners not to bargain with merchants. Public displays of affection are frowned upon.

Deference is shown to the elderly. Gestures are also important in Lebanese life. For example, "no" is often gestured by a backward nod of the head and verbalized "tsk, tsk."

FAMILY LIFE

Highly urban, Lebanese tend to have small families of one to two children who live with their parents until they marry. In traditional times, the extended family living under one roof was the rule; in modern times, with small apartments, such living arrangements are no longer feasible. Children tend to move into nearby neighborhoods after marriage, and family members often help support each other and the parents.

In rural areas larger families are typical, in order to ensure help with farm work. Whether urban or rural, men usually assume the role of head of the family, though women hold much of the power in domestic matters. With more women entering the workforce, the traditional male-dominated model is changing, especially among non-Muslims.

Lebanese usually marry within their own religious and ethnic groups. Though parents often influence the choice of marriage partner, marriages are not strictly arranged in Lebanon.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Most Lebanese wear modern Western-style clothing. For men this is modified somewhat with the Arab headscarf, the *keffiyah*. Lebanese Muslim women may also wear headscarves or other prescribed clothing such as chadors and veils, though they are less likely to do so than Arab women in other locales, such as in Kuwait.

Villagers may still wear more traditional clothing. This includes mainly dark clothing: long dresses for women and pants that are baggy in the thigh and resemble jodhpurs for men. Men's jackets might have brightly colored embroidered trim. Also, village men might still wear the cone-shaped felt hat instead of the *keffiyah*.

SPORTS

Soccer is the national sport and is both played and watched by most men and many women. Another popular sport is basketball. Lebanon has hosted both the Asian and Arab League basketball cups. Volleyball is another widely played team sport. Horseracing draws large crowds at the Beirut hippodrome. Ping-pong, swimming, cross-country running, pigeon shooting, and martial arts are other popular sports. One does not usually associate skiing with the Mediterranean climate of Lebanon, but the country has six ski resorts and regularly sends a ski team to the Olympics.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1945** British and French troops withdraw from Lebanon.
Lebanon joins the Arab League.
- 1946** Lebanon achieves full independence, with Béchara el-Khoury as president.
- 1947** Riad as-Sohl is named premier.
- 1948** Israeli troops capture Maroun er Rass in Lebanon but later withdraw.
Palestinian refugees flee to southern Lebanon.
- 1949** Khoury is reelected president.
- 1952** Khoury is forced to step down in the face of mounting unrest. Camille Chamoun is elected president, with Khaled Chehab as premier.
- 1953** Saeb Salam is named premier but is later replaced by Abdallah al-Yafi.
- 1956** Rashid Karami and Abdallah al-Yafi form brief governments.
Sami as-Solh forms cabinet.
- 1958** U.S. Marines land in Lebanon in response to President Chamoun's appeal to avert possible takeover by radical elements.
Chamoun leaves the presidency at end of term.
Fouad Chehab, former commander in chief and a compromise candidate acceptable to the Muslims, is elected president. Rashid Karami is named premier.
Strength of the Chamber of Deputies is raised to 99.
- 1959** Television is introduced.
- 1961** Saeb Salam is premier briefly but is replaced by Rashid Karami.
- 1964** Charles Hélou is elected president, with Hussein al-Oweini as premier.
- 1966** Rashid Karami resigns as premier and is succeeded in office by Abdallah Yafi.
Karami returns to office when Yafi cabinet falls.
The failure of Intra Bank, the largest Lebanese bank, sends shock waves through the Beirut financial community.
- 1968** Karami resigns, and Yafi assumes the premiership.
- 1969** Syria closes Lebanese border.
Yafi resigns, and Karami heads cabinet.
Lebanese army moves against Palestinian guerrillas.
Truce is arranged in Cairo between Emile Bustani, commander in chief of Lebanese Army, and Yasser Arafat, the PLO leader.
- 1970** Suleiman Franjiyeh is elected president with rightist and center support. Saeb Salem is named premier.
- 1972** National elections are held.
Five-year preferential trade agreement is signed with the European Economic Community.
- 1973** Syria again closes border.
Amin al-Hafez, Takeddin as-Solh, and Rashid as-Solh form brief governments.
Lebanon plays virtually no role in October war against Israel.
- 1974** Israel begins retaliatory strikes against Lebanon for guerrilla incursions and terrorism.
- 1975** Civil war erupts between Christians and Muslims. Prime ministers Nureddin Rifai and Rashid Karami fail in efforts to arrange cease-fire.
- 1976** Fighting escalates into civil war.
Tal Zataar, guerrilla stronghold, falls to Christian Phalangists.
Syria intervenes in force, initially in support of moderate Christian forces. Arab League sends 30,000-man peacekeeping force.
Elias Sarkis, a moderate, is elected president, with Syrian support. Selim al-Hoss is named prime minister.
- 1977** Kamal Jumblatt, the Druze leader, is slain.
Israeli aid to Phalangists is reported.
Banks reopen as fighting subsides.

- 1978** Israel attacks PLO bases in south Lebanon. UN Interim Force in Lebanon is dispatched to enforce truce in the disputed area. Major Saad Haddad's Lebanese forces in the south carve out an autonomous Christian enclave near the Israeli border. The pro-Syrian Suleiman Franjiya quits the National Front of Christian right-wing groups.
- 1979** The Chamber of Deputies changes its name to National Assembly.
- 1980** Prime Minister Selim al-Hoss, in office since 1976 (despite resigning several times), finally steps down and is succeeded in office by Shafiq al-Wazzan.
- 1982** Bachir Gemayel, youngest son of Pierre Gemayel, the Phalangist leader, is elected president but is assassinated before assuming office. Bachir's older brother, Amin, is elected in his place and sworn in. Prime Minister Shafiq al-Wazzan continues as head of government. Israeli forces move into Lebanon under Operation Peace for Galilee and surround Beirut, trapping more than 6,000 Palestinian fighters. Philip Habib, the U.S. special envoy, secures agreement under which PLO fighters are dispersed to various Arab countries. Multinational peacekeeping force arrives in Beirut. Right-wing Phalangists, with Israeli complicity, massacre refugees in Chatila and Sabra camps.
- 1983** Muslim suicide bombers attack U.S. and French military headquarters, killing 241 U.S. and 58 French marines. Fighting breaks out in Tripoli between PLO factions, in which Yasser Arafat's group is beaten. Arafat and his followers leave Tripoli for Algeria, Tunisia, and Yemen under UN protection. Israel and Lebanon sign peace agreement calling for withdrawal of all foreign forces from Lebanon within three months. Syria condemns agreement and takes over the Bekaa Valley and northern Lebanon, while Israel continues to occupy southern Lebanon. Full-scale war flares up between Druze and Phalangist forces in the Chuf Mountains. The Druze push Christians out of the region. Conference of National Reconciliation is held in Geneva but founders.
- 1984** Multinational forces are withdrawn from Beirut. Bowing to Syrian pressures, President Gemayel abrogates the Israeli peace treaty. A second conference at Geneva fails to produce compromise and results in the disintegration of the National Salvation Front. President Gemayel forms a government of national unity. Syrian-backed security plan leads to the reopening of the port and airport of Beirut and the clearing of the Green Line separating Christian and Muslim Beirut. Israel announces unilateral withdrawal from southern Lebanon in three phases.
- 1985** Israeli troops withdraw completely, except for a 10 km deep security zone north of its border with Lebanon. A peace agreement is signed by leaders of the Druze, Amal, and Christian Lebanese forces to end the civil war, although clashes erupt again in Beirut later that year.
- 1986** Fighting erupts between Palestinian guerrillas and Shiite Amal militiamen for control of refugee camps in the south of Beirut. Lebanese and Syrian troops are deployed to impose cease-fire.
- 1987** Amal forces besiege Palestinian refugee camps near Beirut, Tyre, and Sidon. Infighting between Muslims erupts in Beirut. Syrian troops are again called to restore peace. Israeli air attacks on Palestinian targets in southern Lebanon resume and continue through 1990. Prime Minister Rashid Karami is assassinated. President Gemayel appoints Selim al-Hoss in his place.
- 1988** Nabih Berri, the leader of Amal, announces the ending of the siege of Palestinian refugee camps in Beirut and southern Lebanon. As no successor is elected, outgoing President Gemayel appoints a transitional military government headed by Gen. Michel Aoun. Prime Minister Selim al-Hoss refuses to recognize this government. Christians and Muslims renew fighting in Beirut for control.
- 1989** General Aoun launches a "war of liberation" against Syria, killing thousands. Aoun later consents to an internationally sponsored cease-fire. A charter of national reconciliation is proposed by the Lebanese National Assembly, meeting in Taif, Saudi Arabia, providing for the expansion of the assembly from 99 to 108 seats, to be divided equally between Christians and Muslims. René Moawad is elected president in November and is assassinated 17 days later. Elias Hrawi is elected president on November 24. General Aoun refuses to vacate the presidential palace.
- 1990** Samir Geagea, leader of the Phalangist militia, pledges his allegiance to President Hrawi. The Lebanese National Assembly approves constitutional changes, which are drafted in the Taif

- peace accord. Hrawi signs the constitutional changes into law.
General Aoun is violently evicted from the palace but escapes.
President Hrawi begins to consolidate control over Beirut by ordering the departure of rival militias from the city.
Prime Minister Selim al-Hoss resigns to make way for a government of national unity and is succeeded by Omar Karami.
- 1991** PLO guerrillas trade military blows with Israeli forces in southern Lebanon.
Clashes in south end with Lebanese government troops moving into the area.
- 1992** The government of Christian prime minister Omar Karami collapses after riots over economic troubles.
- 1994** Israeli-Hezbollah skirmishes on the border continue.
- 1995** Syrian-backed premier Rafiq al-Hariri wins a second term.
- 1996** Fighting between the Israelis and the Hezbollah continues to escalate, with the Israelis conducting extensive air raids and launching artillery barrages into southern Lebanon.
United States brokers an unsigned cease-fire.
- 1997** The United States lifts its official ban on travel to Lebanon.
Twelve Israeli commandos are ambushed in southern Lebanon and killed.
- 1998** Émile Lahoud is elected president. Selim al-Hoss is appointed prime minister for the third time.
- 1999** After talks with Syria break down, Israel declares that it will withdraw its troops from southern Lebanon.
- 2000** Israel completes withdrawal of its troops from southern Lebanon. Rafiq al-Hariri is appointed prime minister.
- 2001** Syria begins withdrawal of troops from Beirut and the surrounding area.
- 2002** A row with Israel ensues over Lebanon's plan to divert water from the Wazzani River, a major source of Israel's water supply.
Lebanon serves as host to the Arab League Summit for the first time in more than 35 years.
- 2003** Car bomb in Beirut kills a member of Lebanon's militant Hezbollah group.
Prime Minister al-Hariri strongly opposes an extension of President Lahoud's term in office.
- 2004** UN Security Council adopts a resolution aimed at Syria demanding that foreign troops leave Lebanon.
Parliament votes to extend President Lahoud's term by three years. al-Hariri resigns in protest.
- 2005** Former prime minister Rafiq al-Hariri killed in a massive car bomb attack in Beirut in February.

Pro-Syrian Lebanese government led by Omar Karami is dissolved as protests mount over al-Hariri's killing. Syrian troops finally evacuate Lebanon
Anti-Syrian alliance wins parliamentary elections. Fouad Siniora becomes prime minister.

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Lebanon. *Statistical Bulletin; L'indice des prix à la consommation des deux premiers trimestres de 2004*

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- CIA World Factbook: Lebanon
<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/le.html>
- Embassy of Lebanon in Washington, D.C.
<http://www.lebanonembassyus.org>
- Bank of Lebanon
<http://www.bdl.gov.lb>
- Lebanese Armed Forces
<http://www.lebarmy.gov.lb>

LESOTHO

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Kingdom of Lesotho (Mmuso wa Lesotho)

ABBREVIATION

LS

CAPITAL

Maseru

HEAD OF STATE

King Letsie III (from 1990)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Pakalitha Bethuel Mosisili (from 1998)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Constitutional monarchy

POPULATION

1,867,035 (2005)

AREA

30,355 sq km (11,720 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Basotho

LANGUAGES

English (official), Sesotho, Zulu, Xhosa

RELIGIONS

Christianity, animism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Loti

NATIONAL FLAG

Divided diagonally from the lower hoist side corner; the upper half is white, bearing the brown silhouette of a large shield with an ostrich plume, crossed spear, and club; the lower half is a diagonal blue band with a green triangle in the corner.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

The principal element of the coat of arms is a yellow native warrior's shield displaying a crocodile flanked by two heraldic horses, with the legend *Khotso, pula, nala* (Peace, rain, abundance) beneath. Behind the shield are an ostrich plume, a crossed spear (*assegai*), and a club (*knobkerrie*).

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"Lesotho, the Country of Our Fathers"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day), March 12 (Moshoeshoe's Day), May 3 (King's Birthday), June 13 (Commonwealth Day), August 5 (Arbor Day), October 1 (National Sports Day), October 4 (Independence Day, National Day), various Christian festivals, including Good Friday, Easter Monday, Ascension Day, and Christmas, and Boxing Day (Saint Stephen's Day, the day after Christmas)

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

October 4, 1966 (unification July 2, 1976)

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

April 2, 1993

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Lesotho, an enclave within the east-central part of South Africa, is the only country in the world entirely surrounded by another. It occupies an area of 30,355 sq km (11,720 sq mi), extending 248 km (154 mi) north-northeast to south-southwest and 181 km (112 mi) east-southeast to west-northwest.

Lesotho has three distinct geographical regions extending longitudinally across the country. The western lowlands, between the Caledon River and the Cave Sandstone foothills, cover approximately one-quarter of

the country's land area. They consist of undulating basins and plains ranging in width from 10 km (6 mi) to 64 km (40 mi), with altitudes averaging between 1,520 and 1,820 m (5,000 and 6,000 ft). The Cave Sandstone Terrace is an intermediate region between the highlands and the lowlands, with an average altitude of more than 1,820 m (6,000 ft). The Maluti Mountains, spurs of the main Drakensberg, with some peaks over 3,000 m (10,000 ft) high, mark the western edge of the eastern highlands, which are South Africa's main watershed. In this high plateau is Lesotho's highest point, Thabana Ntlenyana (3,482 m; 11,425 ft).

Lesotho



Lesotho is drained by tributaries of the Orange and Caledon rivers and by the Tugela River.

Geography

Area sq km: 30,355; sq mi 11,720
 World Rank: 137th
 Land Boundaries, km: South Africa 909

Coastline, km: 0
 Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Junction of Orange and Makhaleng rivers 1,400
 Highest: Mount Thabana Ntlenyana 3,482
 Land Use %
 Arable Land: 10.9
 Permanent Crops: 0.1
 Forest: 0.5
 Other: 88.5

Population of Principal Cities (2004 est.)

Maseru 180,000

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Lesotho's climate is dry and rigorous, with extremes of heat and cold. Mean annual temperatures in the lowlands range from 90°F in the summer to 20°F in the winter. Mean temperatures in the highlands range from 60°F to as low as 0°F. Hail and snow are frequent in the mountains, while the lowlands may have snow occasionally in winter. Most areas have an average annual rainfall of 635 mm (25 in), with the highest precipitation in the highlands and the lowest in the western lowlands and the Orange River valley. Rainfall is concentrated in October and April, and showers generally tend to be short and heavy. Thunderstorms are common in the rainy season.

Climate and weather

Mean Temperature

Lowlands: 20°F to 90°F

Highlands: 0°F to 60°F

Average Rainfall: 25 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

The animal and plant life of Lesotho are determined both by geography and by the incursions of humans. At least a mile high in elevation throughout, the country is almost treeless, and the grass that covers the landscape has been drastically altered by erosion consequent to overuse and overgrazing. The few trees that exist include Cape willows and wild olives. White poplars have been introduced to the country, but attempts at reforestation have not been successful. Grasses include red oat grass. Aloe is also found in wetter regions.

Few large mammals now exist in the wild in Lesotho, as they have been eliminated by hunting and deforestation, though antelope and hare are still found. The bearded vulture, also called the African lammergeier, and the bald ibis both make Lesotho their home; both are near extinction. Raptors and larger mammals such as the leopard are protected in the Sehlabathebe National Park. The Maloti minnow, once prevalent in the streams and rivers of the county, has lost 90 percent of its original population as a result of the introduction of trout for recreational fishing. The construction of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project has placed further pressure on remaining populations, as the dams act as a source of alien predatory fish.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 1,867,035

World Rank: 143rd

Density per sq km: 59.1

% of annual growth (1999-2003): 1.0

Male %: 49.0

Female %: 51.0

Urban %: 30.3

Age Distribution %: 0-14: 36.9

15-64: 57.6

65 and over: 5.5

Population 2025: 1,806,000

Birth Rate per 1,000: 26.53

Death Rate per 1,000: 25.03

Rate of Natural Increase %: -0.4

Total Fertility Rate: 3.35

Expectation of Life (years): Males 36.86

Females 36.49

Marriage Rate per 1,000: —

Divorce Rate per 1,000: —

Average Size of Households: 4.8

Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Apart from an estimated 2,000 Europeans and a few hundred Asians and *coforeds* (persons of mixed race), the population is entirely of Basotho stock. The Zulu-speaking Nguni, who constitute about 15 percent of the population, are sometimes classified as a separate group. The Basotho and the Nguni comprise a number of distinct groups, each with its own chief and totem. Belonging to the Nguni family are the Bathepu (or Zizi), Baphuthi, Maphetla, and Baroa. The principal divisions of the Basotho are the Bafokeng, Basia, Bataung, and Batlokoa.

LANGUAGES

The official languages of Lesotho are English and Sesotho. Sesotho is spoken by virtually all Basotho. Also called Sotho and Suto, it is a member of the Bantu family of languages. Zulu and Xhosa are also spoken.

RELIGIONS

Christianity is the religion of the majority of the Basotho; it is followed by some 80 percent of the population. The Catholic Church, under the archbishop of Maseru, is the dominant religious force in the country, with some 410,000 adherents. The Catholic Church operates several teacher-training colleges, high schools, secondary schools, and vocational schools, besides hospitals, seminaries, convents, and the famous Mazenod Institute. The largest Protestant denomination is the Church of Leso-

tho, founded by the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society and claiming 22 percent of the population as followers. The smaller Anglican Church lies administratively under the Church of the Province of South Africa. About 20 percent of the population follow traditional African religions and cults.

Religious Affiliations

Christian	1,494,000
Indigenous Beliefs	373,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Sotho people have lived in southern Africa since the 10th century c.e. However, it was not until the 16th century that they arrived in the area known as Lesotho. When they arrived, they found the land already inhabited by the Khoisans, with whom they intermarried.

By the early 18th century the people of Lesotho had established contact with white traders followed by Voortrekkers (Boer pioneers). In addition to the growing white population, the land was coveted by the Zulu, who were attempting to expand their power and territory. The Basotho people came together around 1820 when Moshoeshe the Great established a stronghold against the Zulu near present-day Maseru. With more than 40,000 followers by 1840, Moshoeshe the Great was also concerned about the Boers and sought the support of the British. However, the British decided to attack the Basotho. When the British were defeated, the Boers launched their own attack, leading to the 1858 Free State–Basotho War, which was won by the Basotho. Seven years later, however, the Basotho lost to the Boers. Under continued pressure the Basotho placed themselves under the protection of the British in 1868.

Lesotho, known until independence as Basutoland, was under British rule as a Crown protectorate from 1868 to 1871 and from 1884 to 1966. British colonial policy toward Basutoland was characterized by parsimony and indifference. Actual governance was left to the numerous chieftains, who opposed all attempts to centralize and modernize the administration. The only condition of the protectorate agreement that was strictly observed by the British was the proviso that no white would be allowed to acquire land in Basutoland and that the land tenure system would remain unchanged. Much of the social and educational modernization of Lesotho is due to the work of Christian missionaries rather than the British Colonial Office. Britain guided the country to independence in 1966, and the British departure was peaceful.

At independence Lesotho became a constitutional monarchy. Moshoeshe II, the paramount chief, became king, and Leabua Jonathan became prime minister. Jonathan was head of the Basotho National Party (BNP), which

had won a parliamentary majority in the pre-independence elections. Through alliances with powerful chieftains, Jonathan gradually consolidated his power at the expense of the king, who was left with primarily ceremonial duties.

In 1970, when the opposition Basutoland Congress Party (BCP) seemed likely to win the parliamentary elections, Jonathan declared a state of emergency, suspended the constitution, and had opposition leaders arrested. The leaders were released the following year but forbidden to take part in politics. The state of emergency was eventually lifted in 1973, but clashes between the police and guerilla groups allegedly aligned with the BCP prompted Jonathan to impose strict security measures in 1974. Outside funding of political groups was forbidden, and the government was permitted to detain individuals for two months without legal aid. Jonathan also established a BNP militia, which harassed political opponents.

Dissatisfaction with Jonathan's rule grew, and in 1984 a general meeting of the BNP ordered him to call legislative elections. After opposition parties refused to participate because of registration irregularities, Jonathan declared all BNP candidates elected. In 1986 Jonathan was toppled in a coup led by the commander in chief of the army, General Justin M. Lekhanya. Government was established under the king, who was given legislative and executive powers. He ruled along with the six-man Military Council, led by Lekhanya, which effectively exercised power. Although it stated its commitment to democracy, the Military Council banned all political activity pending a new constitution, and no movement was made toward drafting the document.

The military regime that seized power in 1986 faced its first major crisis in 1990, when three members of the Military Council, two of whom were cousins of the king, were dismissed and arrested. In the ensuing dispute between the king and General Lekhanya, the king was dethroned, and his son, David Mohato Bereng Seeiso, was sworn in as King Letsie III. The accession of the new monarch was approved by an assembly of 22 traditional chiefs. Leaders of all seven registered political parties appealed to Lekhanya to repeal an order banning political activity and urged him to halt plans to make the National Assembly only an advisory body to the Military Council. On April 30, 1991, General Lekhanya was overthrown in a bloodless coup and replaced as chairman of the ruling Military Council by council member Colonel Elias Phisoana Ramaema. In 1992 the former king Moshoeshe returned from a sabbatical in Great Britain, not as monarch but as head of the royal family.

In 1993 general elections were held, in which the previously outlawed BCP swept all 65 assembly seats and the BCP leader Ntsu Mokhehle was named prime minister. In 1994 King Letsie dismissed the Mokhehle government, but nationwide protests forced the king to abdicate in favor of his father and also reinstate Mokhehle. King Moshoeshe was killed in an automobile accident in 1996,

and Crown Prince Letsie ascended the throne for the second time. In 1997 the aged and ailing Mokhehle bolted the BCP after much intraparty squabbling and formed a new party, the Lesotho Congress for Democracy (LCD). He resigned as prime minister in 1998.

In the elections that followed, the LCD captured 78 of 80 seats, and its leader, Pakalitha Bethuel Mosisili, was named prime minister. Violent opposition demonstrations against the new government led to Mosisili inviting the South African Development Community to send a multinational force to restore peace. In 1999 an Interim Political Authority was sworn in to organize new elections.

Elections were held in May 2002 under a new electoral system designed to increase opposition representation in the parliament. The LCD again won the elections, and Mosisili was once more named prime minister.

Politicians have done little to solve the real problems of Lesotho, one of the poorest countries in Africa. The majority of its population lives below the poverty line, eking out a living in subsistence farming. The effects of a three-year drought led Prime Minister Mosisili to appeal for international food aid in early 2004. The rural population, with no livelihood and little food, is migrating to the cities, where there is also extreme poverty.

In 2004 the first phase of the Lesotho Highlands Development Authority, a huge and scandal-ridden five-dam hydroelectric and water project, was initiated, providing water for South Africa and badly needed revenues for Lesotho.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

- 1965–86** Joseph Leabua Jonathan (prime minister)
- 1986–91** Justin Metsing Lekhanya (chairman of the military council)
- 1991–93** Elias Phisoana Ramaema (chairman of the military council)
- 1993–94** Ntsu Mokhehle (prime minister)
- 1994** Hae Phoofolo (prime minister, interim)
- 1994–98** Ntsu Mokhehle (prime minister)
- 1998–** Pakalitha Bethuel Mosisili (prime minister)

CONSTITUTION

Under the constitution the paramount chief, or *motlotlebi*, is the sovereign, but his powers are subject to the constitutional guarantees of human rights and freedoms and to the legislative authority exercised by the king, who is the head of state, through a cabinet consisting of a prime minister, who is the head of government, and not less than seven other ministers, who together are known as the king's government. The king acts only on ministerial advice, except in some minor matters where he has absolute discretion. He is advised by the Privy Council, which consists of the

prime minister and two other members. The constitution specifically provides that all land in Lesotho is owned by the nation and is administered in trust for the nation by the king. The constitution also makes proviso for an impartial, four-member Public Service Commission.

The bicameral legislature consists of a 120-member elected National Assembly and a Senate composed of 22 principal chiefs and 11 members nominated by the king.

The High Court, the Court of Appeals, and subordinate courts compose the judicial system. Members of the High and Appeals Courts are appointed by the king on the advice of the government. Some 63 lower courts administer customary law for Africans.

By the terms of the 1993 constitution, the king became purely a figurehead with no executive or legislative powers. However, the elected government is still limited in exercising its constitutionally granted powers by three opposing forces: the autonomous military, the royal family, and traditional clan structures.

PARLIAMENT

Under the constitution the national legislature is the bicameral Parliament, consisting of the Senate and the National Assembly. The National Assembly consists of 120 members elected for five-year terms, 80 by direct vote from single-member constituencies by universal adult suffrage beginning at age 18, 40 by proportional representation. The Senate consists of 33 members, of whom 22 are chiefs and 11 are appointed by the chief of state.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Various political parties are allowed, and many have stood for election. The BCP won all of the seats in the first free parliamentary election in 1993. In the 1998 elections a new opposition party became the ruling majority; the LCD defeated the BCP, winning a majority of single-member 80 seats.

In 2002 parliamentary elections the LCD won 54.9 percent of the vote, retaining 79 of the 80 constituency-based seats, while the BCP won only 2.6 percent of the votes. The BNP came in second, with 22.4 percent of the vote, receiving 21 seats of the 40 chosen by proportional representation. Other active political parties in the 2002 election included the Lesotho People's Congress, National Independent Party, and Basutoland (or Basotho) African Congress.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For purposes of local government Lesotho is divided into 10 districts. Since 1970 each district has been adminis-

tered by a commissioner appointed by the central government. The districts are divided into a total of 22 wards headed by ward chiefs.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The High Court, headed by the chief justice, is the superior court of record, with unlimited original jurisdiction and appellate jurisdiction to hear appeals and reviews from subordinate courts. There is also a Court of Appeals of five judges. The subordinate courts consist of judicial commissioners' courts; first-, second-, and third-class resident magistrates' courts in each of the nine districts; 58 local courts; and 13 central courts. Customary laws are administered by paramount chiefs within their own tribal jurisdictions.

The judiciary in Lesotho is independent and has acted to limit police or military infringements of law and procedure on a number of occasions. Court decisions and rulings are respected and obeyed by the authorities. Civil suits alleging maltreatment are accepted and adjudicated. Verdicts of civil courts may be appealed to the High Court. In military cases, decisions may be appealed to officers of higher rank, including the Lesotho paramilitary force commander, but not to civilian courts. Under the system of Roman-Dutch law applied in Lesotho, there is no trial by jury. Habeas corpus applies to ordinary arrests, and few prisoners are held outside legal norms. Habeas corpus does not apply to those detained under the Internal Security (General) Act of 1984.

Though the courts are guaranteed by the constitution to be independent, the higher courts are sometimes subject to outside influence. Additionally, a large backlog of cases leads to lengthy delays in trials.

HUMAN RIGHTS

The government of Lesotho generally respects the human rights of its citizens. However, in 2000 there were unconfirmed allegations of torture by security forces and credible reports that the police, at times, used excessive force against detainees. Prison conditions are poor, and lengthy pretrial detention is a problem. Domestic violence is common, and women's rights continue to be severely restricted. Societal discrimination against the disabled is common. Some workers' rights are restricted. Government enforcement of prohibitions against child labor improved in 2000 in commercial enterprises that involve hazardous working conditions. The government generally respects the freedoms of religion and assembly; several nongovernmental organizations operate openly.

FOREIGN POLICY

As an enclave within South Africa, Lesotho's principal link to the outside world is through Pretoria. From 1976, however, until the collapse of apartheid and white minority rule in South Africa, relations between the two countries were strained, as Lesotho was accused of harboring African National Congress militants. Pretoria was involved in the overthrow of Chief Jonathan; the military government that took over was more favorable to Pretoria. South African troops were called in to help quell unrest in 1998, and friendly relations have ensued between the two countries. Lesotho is an active member of the Southern African Development Community.

DEFENSE

Prior to 1986 Lesotho had a paramilitary force of about 1,000 in addition to the BNP militia of 4,000. Following the 1986 coup the paramilitary forces were reorganized as the Royal Lesotho Defense Force, now called the Lesotho Defense Force, which includes an army and an air wing of an estimated 2,000 members. The nation has no navy, and its air units consist of support craft. It has received military assistance from Great Britain, South Africa, and Israel.

The prime minister also holds the title of minister of defense and internal security. In 2004 the country spent \$32.3 million on defense, 2.3 percent of gross domestic product (GDP).

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	2,000
Military Manpower Availability:	400,457
Military Expenditures \$million:	32.3
as % of GDP:	2.3
as % of central government expenditures:	—
Arms Imports \$million:	—
Arms Exports \$million:	—

ECONOMY

Small, landlocked, and mountainous, Lesotho's only important natural resource is water. Although drought has decreased agricultural activity over the past few years, the completion of a major hydropower facility in January 1998 permitted the sale of water to South Africa, generating an important source of income for Lesotho.

The Lesotho economy is based on subsistence agriculture, livestock, and remittances from miners employed in South Africa. The number of such mine workers has declined steadily over the past several years. In 1996 their remittances added about 33 percent to GDP, compared to the addition of roughly 67 percent in 1990. A small manufacturing base depends largely on farm products that support the milling, canning, leather, and jute in-

dustries. Agricultural products are exported primarily to South Africa. Proceeds from membership in a common customs union with South Africa form the majority of government revenue. The pace of parastatal privatization has increased in recent years.

Civil disorder in September 1998 destroyed 80 percent of the commercial infrastructure in Maseru and two other major towns. Most firms were not covered by insurance, and the rebuilding of small and medium business proved a significant challenge in terms of both economic growth and employment levels. Output dropped 10 percent in 1998 and recovered slowly in 1999.

A rapidly growing textile and apparel industry bolstered the country's economy from 2000 to 2004; that industry provides 43 percent of all foreign exchange. However, by 2005 there was a downturn in the textile industry as a result of global quota changes. Extreme inequality of income and high unemployment rates continue to plague the country.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 5.892

GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 3,200

GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 2.4

GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 1.4

Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:

Agriculture: 15.2

Industry: 43.9

Services: 40.9

Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:

Private Consumption: 91

Government Consumption: 20

Gross Domestic Investment: 39.6

Foreign Trade \$million: Exports: 484.5

Imports: 730.9

% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 0.9

% of Income Received by Richest 10%: 43.4

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
137.9	146.3	132.3	177.0	188.8

Finance

National Currency: Loti (LSL)

Exchange Rate: \$1 = LSL 7.19

Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 1.54

Central Bank Discount Rate %: 15.0

Total External Debt \$million: 735

Debt Service Ratio %: 8.86

Balance of Payments \$million: -108.3

International Reserves SDRs \$million: 454.4

Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 5.3

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 79

per capita \$: 44.10

Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 41.9

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: 1 April–31 March

Revenues \$million: 698.5

Expenditures \$million: 697.6

Budget Surplus \$million: 0.9

Tax Revenues as % of GDP: 33.5

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 15.2

Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 0.6

Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 0.61

Irrigation, % of Farms having: 0.3

Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 34.2

Total Farmland % of land area: 10.87

Livestock: Cattle 000: 540

Chickens million: 1.8

Pigs 000: 65

Sheep 000: 850

Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 2.04

Fisheries: Total Catch tons: 32

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 201.5

Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 15.5

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: —

Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: —

Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: —

Net Energy Imports % of use: —

Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: —

Production kW-hr billion: —

Consumption kW-hr million: 40

Coal Reserves tons billion: —

Production tons million: —

Consumption tons million: —

Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —

Production cubic feet billion: —

Consumption cubic feet billion: —

Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —

Production barrels 000 per day: —

Consumption barrels 000 per day: 2

Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 730.9

Exports \$billion: 484.5

Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 17.9

Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 2.4

Balance of Trade \$million: -108.3

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Hong Kong %	36.7	—
Taiwan %	36.3	—
China %	12.0	—
Germany %	9.9	—
United States %	—	97.6
Canada %	—	1.5
France %	—	0.5

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 5,940
Paved %: 18.3
Automobiles: —
Trucks and Buses: —
Railroad: Track Length km: —
Passenger-km million: —
Freight-km million: —
Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: —
Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: —
Airports: 28
Traffic: Passenger-km 000: —
Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 186
Number of Tourists from 000: —
Tourist Receipts \$million: 23.1
Tourist Expenditures \$million: 17

Communications

Telephones 000: 28.6
Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.11
Cellular Telephones 000: 92
Personal Computers 000: —
Internet Hosts per million people: 64
Internet Users per 1,000 people: 11

ENVIRONMENT

Lesotho's growing population is straining the resources of the land. Overgrazing, severe soil erosion, and soil exhaustion continue to limit the productivity of agricultural lands. While the country has water resources in the highlands, much of these are diverted to South Africa.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 0.5
Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: —
Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 0
Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
CO2 Emissions per capita ton: —

LIVING CONDITIONS

The United Nations Human Development Index (HDI) ranked Lesotho 145th among 177 nations with regard to life expectancy, education, and standard of living. In 2005 life expectancy in Lesotho was only 36.7 years, partly as a result of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, which has infected almost a third of the population. The literacy rate in 2003 was 85 percent, while combined gross enrollment at primary, secondary, and tertiary schools in 2001–02 was 65 percent of eligible students. Per capita GDP for residents of Lesotho in 2004 was \$3,200; the Basotho in particular are among the poorest people in the world. Half the population lives below the poverty line.

Basic services are unavailable to most of the population, about 70 percent of whom live in rural areas. Most of the population lives in the lowlands, where it is possible to farm, but the soil has been so overgrazed and overcultivated that even subsistence farming is difficult. Village life revolves around agriculture. Women are responsible for the domestic chores, while the husbands work in the fields or as herders. In addition to domestic responsibilities, women often do craftwork, such as grass weaving. Housing in rural areas is simple, built of whatever materials are close at hand, be they stones, bricks, or cinder blocks, though not wood. The government is encouraging more private ownership through the Land Policy Review Commission and the Lesotho Building Corporation.

In general, the people remain loyal to the system of chieftaincy and institutions such as initiation schools, which perpetuate traditional values, although these are declining in importance. Transport in the countryside is by bus or minivan taxis.

Urban life is a blend of traditional and Western cultures. In Maseru there are shops and markets that offer regional crafts and goods. There are also modern Western-style hotels, restaurants, and nightclubs, though many of these were either burned or damaged by looting following the general election in 1998. Other large towns are Leribe, Berea, and Mafeteng. The urban population growth rate for 2000–05 was 4.6 percent.

HEALTH

Any discussion of health-care issues in Lesotho in the new millennium begin with HIV/AIDS. As of 2003 the prevalence of the disease was 31 percent, one of the highest rates in the world. That year there were 29,000 deaths from AIDS, and 320,000 people were living with the disease; an estimated 100,000 children were orphaned by AIDS. All of this puts an enormous strain not only on the already hard-pressed health-care system but also on the economy and society as a whole. Homeless children live on the streets of Maseru and other large cities, as orphan-

ages are too few. Families are destroyed as mothers join the risky sex trade simply to feed their hungry children.

Other major health problems include pellagra and kwashiorkor, which stem from poor nutrition and inadequate hygiene. Between 1995 and 2002, 46 percent of children under five years of age were considered undernourished, while 12 percent of the total population was undernourished as of 2001. Poor harvests, rising costs of food, and several years of drought exacerbated the food situation to the point where the prime minister declared a state of emergency in 2004. Neither are sanitary conditions improving. In 2002 only 37 percent of the population had access to adequate sanitation, 76 percent to safe drinking water.

Tuberculosis is another serious health problem. There were an estimated 449 cases of tuberculosis per 100,000 people in 2002; 87 percent of one-year-olds were vaccinated for tuberculosis that year. Lack of iodine in the diet has also led to a high prevalence of goiter: 43 percent of children suffered from it in 1996.

The government spent 5.3 percent of GDP on health in 2002, yet there were only 5.4 doctors for every 100,000 people as of 2004. In 1999, between 80 and 95 percent of the population had access to affordable essential drugs.

Health

Number of Physicians: 91
 Number of Dentists: 8
 Number of Nurses: 1,011
 Number of Pharmacists: 17
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 5.4
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 84.23
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 550
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 6.2
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 25
 HIV Infected % of adults: 28.9
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 79
 Measles: 70
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 37
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 76

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Scarcity largely affects the Sotho diet. The country's cuisine is similar to that of South Africa in that it is heavily reliant on maize, which can be eaten either as cornbread or as a thick paste. Meats, when available, include chicken, mutton, and beef. Milk and milk products, especially sour milk, are also popular

Lesotho is a water-rich country and sells water to South Africa, but large numbers of its own people have poor access to water and must fetch it from miles away. Sorghum beer is often home-brewed. Most Sotho skip lunch, the main mealtimes being breakfast and dinner.

Nutrition in the country is generally poor. Diseases caused by bad nutrition are common and widespread. Deficiencies in niacin and iodine, for example, cause pellagra and goiter, respectively, at high rates. As of 2001, 12 percent of the population was undernourished. Periodic droughts worsen this situation.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 12.2
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,300
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 244.5
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 26.4

STATUS OF WOMEN

All Basotho have fairly equal opportunities within the confines imposed by political reality, although in the areas of property and contracts the rights of married women independent of their husbands are limited by custom and laws. For example, married women cannot apply for loans without their husband's written consent. Lesotho's constitution perpetuates the minority status of Basotho women who are married under customary law: A woman is considered a legal minor while her husband is alive.

Nevertheless, women in Basotho society have traditionally been a stabilizing force, due to the absence of the hundreds of thousands of men working in South Africa. The fuller use of women's abilities will depend on progress in providing education, health, and other social services to rural areas.

Domestic violence is reportedly widespread but is becoming increasingly socially unacceptable. Women's rights organizations have highlighted the importance of women's participation in the democratic process as part of a broader effort to educate women about their rights under both customary and common law. A total of 14 of the members of the parliament elected in 2002 are women.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 12
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: —
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: —

WORK

As of 2000 the labor force was estimated at 838,000; 86 percent of the larger population is involved in subsistence agriculture, producing corn, wheat, pulses, sorghum, barley, and livestock. Meanwhile, as much as 35 percent of male workers are not employed in Lesotho; rather, they find work in South Africa, in the mines or in agriculture.

The official unemployment rate in 2002 was estimated at 45 percent, but other estimates put it higher, especially among the young. Industry in the country includes food, beverages, textiles, apparel assembly, handicrafts, construction, and tourism. By 2004 the textile industry was Lesotho's biggest employer, with more than 50,000 workers supplying garments to international companies such as Wal-Mart. Many of these firms, it has been claimed, operate under sweatshop conditions. Changing textile quotas threatened this industry in 2005.

The constitution recognizes the right to form unions, bargain collectively, and strike (except for civil servants), yet only about 10 percent of the country's labor force is unionized. Of the remainder, most are engaged in subsistence agriculture or employment in South African mines. As the textile industry has become increasingly important to the economy, the government has shown a tendency to crackdown on deviant activity in this vital industry; in 2003 two striking textile workers were shot and killed by police. Unions include the Lesotho Clothing and Allied Workers' Union and the Factory Workers' Union. The Congress of Lesotho Trade Unions, the Lesotho Federation of Democratic Unions, and the Lesotho Trade Union Congress are small federations of unions. While 14 is the minimum work age, \$73 per month is the minimum wage, and a 45-hour workweek is the law, such labor legislation is seldom obeyed.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 838,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 38.2
 Labor by Sector %:
 Subsistence Agriculture: 86
 Other: 14
 Unemployment %: 45

EDUCATION

Education is one of Lesotho's success stories, a holdover from missionary activity during the 19th and 20th centuries. Education is free, universal, and compulsory for seven years, from ages six to 13. Schooling consists of 12 years total, as divided into seven years of primary school, three years of middle school, and two years of secondary school. The final two-year course leads to the Cambridge Overseas School Certificate. Until the early 1970s primary and secondary education was almost entirely in the hands of Evangelical, Roman Catholic, and Anglican missions, but the public school system is gradually gaining ground.

The academic year runs from January to December. The medium of instruction is English, but Sesotho is taught as the vernacular from the primary grades on.

Teacher training is provided in seven institutions. Vocational training is provided at nine vocational schools.

Adult education is provided at an adult-education center in Maseru.

The National University of Lesotho was founded in 1975, with the former Roma campus of the University of Lesotho, Botswana, and Swaziland as its nucleus. The Lesotho Agricultural College, in Maseru, was founded in 1955. In 1997 all higher-level institutions had 6,108 pupils and 545 teaching staff.

In 2002 net primary-school enrollment was 86 percent, while only 23 percent of eligible students attended secondary schools. The student-to-teacher ratio in primary schools approaches 50 to 1. Public expenditures on education in 2001 were 10.4 percent of GDP, and the country has a relatively high literacy rate, around 85 percent.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 84.8
 Male %: 74.5
 Female %: 94.5
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 10.8
 First Level: Primary Schools: 1,234
 Teachers: 8,908
 Students: 418,668
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 47
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 85.8
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 187
 Teachers: 3,546
 Students: 81,130
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 23.2
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 22.5
 Third Level: Institutions: 1
 Teachers: 545
 Students: 6,108
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 3.0
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 10.4

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The Lesotho Ministry of Agriculture directs research in crops, livestock, and agronomy through the Agricultural Research Division of its Department of Field Services and in forestry through its Department of Conservation and Forestry. Additionally, the National University of Lesotho conducts research through its Faculty of Agriculture. Both the Geological Survey and Lesotho Agricultural College are in Maseru.

Little other research and development is done in the country. Between 1994 and 1997, 13 percent of students in colleges and universities were studying science, math, or engineering courses. Some students go abroad for higher technical training.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: —
 Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

Lesotho has several daily and nondaily newspapers, including the official weekly publication *Mochochonono*. South African daily newspapers also circulate within the country. Other weeklies include one owned by a Catholic mission and one by the Basotho National Party. The national news agency is LENA, founded in 1983 with UN Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization aid. Reuters maintains a bureau in Maseru.

Though the constitution provides for freedom of speech and the press, the government does use coercion and harassment to discourage opposition voices. A favorite target is *MoAfrika*, both a newspaper and a radio station, against which the government has repeatedly issued heavy fines. Public support inside Lesotho, however, has kept oppositions voice alive. Reporters without Borders ranked Lesotho 99th out of 167 nations in its 2004 survey of world press freedom.

Radio Lesotho is under the administrative control of the Lesotho National Broadcasting Service. The Catholic School Secretariat operates the radio station 7PA22, which broadcasts educational programs with a shortwave transmitter. Lesotho has three television transmitters and 16 sets for every 1,000 people, by a 1999 estimate. There are four private radio stations in all, but radio and television broadcasts from South Africa easily reach Lesotho.

In 2002 there were an estimated 21,000 Internet users and 92,000 cellular phone users.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 2
 Total Circulation 000: 15.8
 Circulation per 1,000: 9
 Books Published: —
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets 000: 33
 per 1,000: 16

CULTURE

Intensely tribal, Lesotho culture places value on agrarian pursuits and on its history, a cornerstone of southern African history. The legacy of King Moshoeshe, founder of the nation, still influences modern Lesotho, as does its agrarian and village society.

Music is perhaps the strongest single element of Lesotho culture. The passage of the seasons, the importance of cattle, and the rites of passage in the life of farming families are celebrated in song, which employs group singing and chanting, and in dance. Song is accompanied by a variety of instruments. Herders play a traditional instrument called the *letsiba*, made from a pole, with a feather as

the reed. Other instruments include the stringed *thomo*, a female instrument; the *setolo-tolo*, a stringed instrument played by men with the mouth; drums; accordions; and guitars. Dances use high stepping and kicking and are accompanied by much hand clapping. Some typical dances are the “gum-boot dance” and the *lefela*, both of which are influenced by the Sotho tradition of going to work in South Africa’s mines. Songs also display this migrant worker tradition; the *difela* has lyrics telling of the travels, loves, and viewpoints of the migrant workers.

Written literature began appearing in the 19th century, the product mostly of missionary schools and converts to Christianity. *Chaka*, one of the first books about southern Africa, was written in Sesotho by Thomas Mofolo in the early years of the 20th century. Journalism is also a proud tradition in Lesotho; the newspaper *Leselinyana la Lesotho* began publishing in the late 19th century.

Museums include the Lesotho National Museum, in Maseru, which has collections of ethnography, geology, and archaeology. Similar collections can be found at the Morija Museum. Significant library collections are found at the Lesotho National Library, in Maseru, and the National University of Lesotho. Craftwork is still practiced in the villages and includes pottery and grass weaving, notably of traditional Sotho hats, which are sold at shops in Maseru.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

One of the earliest myths of the Sotho or Lesotho is that of Kholomodumo, a mythical monster who, at the beginning of time, ate all of the human race except for an old woman. This woman subsequently gave birth to twins, who killed the monster, disgorging all the humans. Along this line, one of the best known of Lesotho folktales is about a boy named Sankatana who saves the world from a giant monster. Another creation myth involves the first human, who emerged from an immense lake of reeds.

Rituals often involve attempts at warding off bad luck. A rainmaking ritual has a group of young women and girls stealing a wooden spoon.

Folktales, or *distsono*, and so-called praise poems, or *diboko*, also form rich folkloric traditions in Lesotho. Audience participation is often used in the telling of these.

Praise poems often relate actual historic deeds, and King Moshoeshoe figures in more than one.

As in much of African culture, proverbs are a potent teaching tool and index to ancient times. Some Lesotho proverbs include "A person is a person because of other persons," "He that digs up a grave for his enemy may be digging it for himself," "Peace, rain, prosperity," and "Peace is prosperity."

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Village life revolves around seasonal celebrations and those that mark rites of passage, including marriages and coming of age. Such events are celebrated with song and dance, both traditional and more modern.

Throughout Lesotho the radio is a vital source of entertainment and a link to the outside world. Sotho people listen to music on their local channels as well as on ones received from South Africa and from the BBC, which built a radio transmitter in the country.

In larger towns and cities, television, videos, and cinemas are also popular. Such entertainment content often comes from South Africa, but movies may also be imported from other countries.

ETIQUETTE

As a system of respect figures largely in the chieftain culture of the Sotho, children in Lesotho are instilled at an early age with a sense of deference and reverence for their elders. Such respect is built into the very greetings and responses that children give adults. The Sesotho words for father, *ntate*, and for mother, *mme*, are added to the person's name or title, so that the proper address ends as "my father" or "my mother." It is also proper to greet people with both hands.

Hospitality and generosity are also virtues taught at an early age. In a country where scarcity is the norm, it is considered polite to share food with visitors.

FAMILY LIFE

Traditional family life for the Sotho was built strongly along clan lines. Marriages were arranged, and after the bride price was paid, the woman would move in with the husband's family. Patriarchal in structure, the family was ruled by the man yet held together by the woman, who took on all the domestic chores as well as craftwork. Inheritance was through the male line only; women had few rights of inheritance.

Much of this traditional way of life is breaking down under the pressures of the modern world, especially with

the Sotho tradition of migrant labor, in which the man of the house might be missing for long periods of time working in South Africa or elsewhere, sending back remittances to his family. Much more of the burden of head of household falls on the women in such cases.

Traditional family ties and structures are also breaking down as families move to urban areas in search of a better future. Women are gaining more rights as a result, though by law they are still considered minors while their husbands are alive.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Dress in Lesotho is similar to that of South Africa, with an emphasis on Western styles. The traditional costumes of colorful small skirts for men, with tassels around the ankles, are only worn for special dance events. Otherwise, apparel is strictly functional. Women usually wear dresses and cover their hair with hats or headscarves. Colorful blankets are worn by many rural people in Lesotho in place of coats. Traditional grass-woven hats are also worn by men and women.

SPORTS

Soccer is the most popular sport in the country; it is played by school children and professionals alike. The country has amateur teams and a 16-team premier league. However, as most of Lesotho's top players play for South African teams, where the pay is higher, the country does not compete well internationally.

Other popular sports include judo, tae kwon do, boxing, long-distance running, tennis, and horseracing. Lesotho sent two runners and one tae kwon do competitor to the 2004 Olympics. Skiing is new to the country, with at least one village in the Maluti Mountains providing skiing opportunities four months a year.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1966** Lesotho is granted independence under the Independence Constitution. Moshoeshoe II is proclaimed king. In a trial of strength between the king and Prime Minister Leabua Jonathan, the king is forced to yield.
- 1967** Lesotho National Development Corporation is founded.
- 1969** Lesotho, Botswana, and Swaziland renegotiate customs union agreement with South Africa.
- 1970** Lesotho holds first national elections. When the electoral defeat of his Basotho National Party appears imminent, Prime Minister Jonathan

- proclaims an emergency and suspends the constitution.
Opposition leaders are arrested. The king is placed under house arrest and is later exiled for nine months.
- 1971** All political prisoners are released under a general amnesty.
- 1973** An interim National Assembly is constituted with nominated members.
- 1974** Alleging an attempted coup by the opposition, Prime Minister Jonathan launches brutal reprisals against his enemies.
Lesotho demands the return of Basotho territories conquered by South Africa in the 19th century.
- 1975** National University of Lesotho is established by nationalizing the Roma campus of the University of Botswana, Lesotho, and Swaziland.
- 1976** In a move toward political reconciliation, Prime Minister Jonathan appoints two members of the opposition to his cabinet.
Lesotho requests a special UN Security Council meeting to consider its charges of South African aggression for closing the Transkei border.
- 1979** Chief Jonathan announces the imminent establishment of a regular army drawn from paramilitary police units.
- 1980** Lesotho introduces a new currency called the loti to replace the South African rand. However, Lesotho remains within the Rand Monetary Area.
- 1982** South African forces raid Maseru in pursuit of African National Congress (ANC) dissidents.
- 1983** South Africa blockades Lesotho to punish Prime Minister Jonathan's regime for granting asylum to ANC dissidents.
- 1986** Jonathan is ousted in a pro-South African coup led by Gen. Justin Lekhanya, who is sworn in as head of government.
- 1987** Charles Mofeli, leader of the opposition United Democratic Party, is detained for a week after petitioning the king for a return to parliamentary democracy.
- 1988** Five opposition parties appeal to the Organization of African Unity and the Commonwealth to use their influence to restore civilian government.
- 1990** Lekhanya strips King Moshoeshoe II of his power and sends him into exile. Moshoeshoe's son, Prince Mohato, is sworn in as King Letsie III.
- 1991** Lekhanya is ousted by rebel army officers in bloodless coup and replaced by Colonel Elias P. Ramaema.
- 1993** The Military Council is dissolved, and a democratic constitution is announced. BCP comes to power in parliamentary elections.
- 1995** King Moshoeshoe II is restored to the throne but dies in a car accident and is again replaced by his son Letsie III.
- 1998** The new LCD wins all but one of the seats in the assembly. Pakalitha Mosisili becomes prime minister.
The opposition stages protests against the election, and the government calls in help from South Africa to restore order.
- 1999** South African and Botswanan troops withdraw from Lesotho.
- 2000** King Letsie III's marriage draws huge crowds.
- 2001** Political parties agree on a new election plan in February, expanding the National Assembly to 120 members, 40 of whom are to be elected by proportional representation.
Unemployment in Lesotho reaches 50 percent.
- 2002** LCD wins majority of seats in the expanded National Assembly.
Former chief executive of Highlands Development Authority, Masupha Sole, found guilty of accepting bribes.
- 2003** Harsh winter drought cuts cereal production by 60 percent.
- 2004** The third year of drought forces Prime Minister Mosisili to declare state of emergency.
The multibillion dollar Highlands Water Project opens.
- 2005** One of the six textile factories that closed down in 2004 reopens, raising hopes that Lesotho's garment industry is recovering.
Independent studies show that more than 70 percent of the Lesotho labor force is unemployed.

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OFFICIAL PUBLICATIONS

- Lesotho.** *Recent Economic Developments* (IMF Staff Country Report), 1996; *Statistical Annex* (IMF Staff Country Report), 2002; *Statistical Yearbook; 1996 Population Census*

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- CIA World Factbook: Lesotho
<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/lt.html>
- Lesotho Government Online
<http://www.lesotho.gov.ls/>
- Lesotho National Assembly
<http://www.lesotho.gov.ls/parliament/default.htm>

INTERNET RESOURCES

- The Central Bank of Lesotho
<http://www.centralbank.org.ls>

LIBERIA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Liberia

ABBREVIATION

LR

CAPITAL

Monrovia

HEAD OF STATE & HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf (from 2006)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Republic

POPULATION

3,482,211 (2005)

AREA

111,370 sq km (43,000 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Kpelle, Bassa, Gio, Kru, Grego, Mano, Krahn, Gola

LANGUAGES

English (official), more than 20 regional dialects

RELIGIONS

Animism, Islam, Christianity

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Liberian dollar

NATIONAL FLAG

A variation of the U.S. flag, with 11 horizontal stripes, alternately red (six) and white (five), and a five-pointed

white star in a blue square, five stripes high, in the upper left corner

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A heraldic shield depicting a dove of peace carrying an open scroll, the sun rising over a sea on which there is a ship under full sail, and, on the land in the foreground, a palm tree, a plow, and a spade; below the crest is the name of the republic, above is the national motto, "The Love of Liberty Brought Us Here."

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"All Hail, Liberia, Hail"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day), February 11 (Armed Forces Day), second Wednesday in March (Decoration Day), March 15 (J. J. Roberts's Birthday), May 14 (Unification Day), July 26 (Independence Day), August 24 (Flag Day), first Thursday in November (Thanksgiving Day), November 12 (National Memorial Day), November 29 (William Tubman's Birthday), various Christian festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

July 26, 1847

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

July 3, 1984

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Liberia is a few degrees north of the equator on the southern coast of West Africa. It extends 548 km (341 mi) east-southeast to west-northwest and 274 km (170 mi) north-northeast to south-southwest, with a total area of 111,370 sq km (43,000 sq mi). Its Atlantic Ocean coastline is 579 km (359 mi) long. Liberia's international land boundary of 1,585 km (945 mi) is shared with three countries: Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire, and Sierra Leone.

Topographically, Liberia is divided into three regions. The coastal region is a belt of gently rolling plains 30 to 55 km (19 to 31 mi) wide, with tidal creeks, shallow lagoons, and swamps. The plains rise slowly to a plateau, with elevations varying from 183 to 610 m (600 to 2,000 ft). The eastern section of the country is rugged and covered with forest, while the far northern region has densely forested, mountainous terrain culminating in Mount Wuteve (1,380 m; 4,528 ft). Other prominent features are the Nimba Mountains and the Wologisi Range.

Liberia



The country's seven major rivers all flow perpendicular to the coast and are spaced at regular intervals. Sandbars obstruct the mouths of all rivers, making their entrances hazardous. Floods are common in the rainy season.

Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Atlantic Ocean 0
 Highest: Mount Wuteve 1,380
 Land Use %
 Arable Land: 4.0
 Permanent Crops: 2.3
 Forest: 36.1
 Other: 57.6

Geography

Area sq km: 111,370; sq mi 43,000
 World Rank: 101st
 Land Boundaries, km: Guinea 563; Côte d'Ivoire 716; Sierra Leone 306
 Coastline, km: 579

Population of Principal Cities (2004 est.)

Monrovia	935,000
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CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Liberia has two rainy seasons in the southeast and one rainy season, from May to October, in the rest of the country. From Monrovia, with annual average rainfall of 4,650 mm (183 in), precipitation decreases toward the southeast and north, decreasing to 2,240 mm (88 in) at Ganta. Although there are wide variations in precipitation patterns, most of the rainfall comes as heavy downpours that may last several hours or several days.

Temperatures are uniformly warm throughout the country, with only small daily variations. The average mean temperature is about 28°C (82°F), and the maximum rarely exceeds 38°C (100°F). In the north temperatures may rise to 44°C (111°F) in March and fall to 9°C (48°F) in December or January.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature: 82°F
 Temperature Range in the North: 48°F to 111°F
 Average Rainfall
 Monrovia: 183 in
 Ganta: 88 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Liberia and its neighbors Côte d'Ivoire and Sierra Leone together contain one of the largest evergreen forests on the African continent. Trees such as mahogany, cotton, teak, oil palm, kola, ironwood, and rubber are all indigenous in quantities great enough to allow for commercial use. However, as these grow alongside other noncommercial trees, harvesting them is not easy. In total there are some 235 species of trees. Commercial rubber comes from the *Hevea brasiliensis*. Coffee plantations are found throughout Liberia, and cotton, cacao, cassava, and rice are also cultivated. Fruit trees include mango, pineapple, papaya, avocado, and numerous citrus varieties.

The dense forest is home to monkeys, chimpanzees, antelope, and anteaters. Fewer in number, and some endangered if not almost extinct, are the elephant, pygmy hippopotamus, leopard, and short-horned buffalo. Most of the 15 species of snakes found in Liberia are poisonous. There are also three types of crocodile and many species of lizards. Bats and scorpions are also common, as are wild pigs and porcupines in areas with little human habitation. The avian population includes woodpeckers, flamingos, cowbird, and wild guinea. Numerous fish are found in the waters of Liberia, and insects include the tsetse fly, mosquitoes, and termites.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 3,482,211
 World Rank: 127th

Density per sq km: 35.0
 % of annual growth (1999-2003): 2.6
 Male %: 49.5
 Female %: 50.5
 Urban %: 46.7
 Age Distribution %: 0-14: 43.6
 15-64: 52.8
 65 and over: 3.7
 Population 2025: 4,746,000
 Birth Rate per 1,000: 44.22
 Death Rate per 1,000: 17.87
 Rate of Natural Increase %: 2.2
 Total Fertility Rate: 6.09
 Expectation of Life (years): Males 46.75
 Females 48.65
 Marriage Rate per 1,000: —
 Divorce Rate per 1,000: —
 Average Size of Households: 5.0
 Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

The principal ethnic cleavage is between Americo-Liberians, described as the descendants of the early settlers, and the tribal and indigenous peoples, described as aborigines. Few of those classified as Americo-Liberians are the actual descendants of original slaves from America. Their ranks include over 4,000 Congos, whose ancestors were freed from captured slave ships, and detribalized people of indigenous origin. Therefore, the group's members are usually called "civilized" or "lettered" people. The aboriginal people, who make up 95 percent of the population, are themselves divided into nearly 28 tribes, though only 16 are recognized as major tribes by the government.

The constitution does not permit nonblacks to become citizens. The non-Liberian resident population is estimated at 30,000, of whom five alien groups are numerically significant: Ghanaians, Lebanese, Americans, Spaniards, and Dutch. Ghanaians and Lebanese are generally permanent residents who regard Liberia as their home country. Most Ghanaians are Fanti fishermen, while most Lebanese are merchants and can be found in almost every town. Most of the Europeans and Americans are engaged in private or government-sponsored enterprises, and they remain in the country for limited periods only. Germans, Swedes, British, and Italians are also represented in the country.

LANGUAGES

The official language is English, although less than one-third of the population can speak it, and less than one-quarter can read and write it.

The native languages of Liberia fall into three subgroups of the Niger-Congo family of languages: the western and eastern branches of Mande, the southern branch of the West Atlantic, and the Kru branch of Kwa.

Multilingualism is common, and intertribal communications are usually carried on in pidgin English or through the more prestigious of the lingua francas, such as Vai and Mandingo.

RELIGIONS

Liberia is often referred to in official documents as a Christian state, and Christians once made up at least 71 percent of the population. However, according to 2002 estimates only 40 percent of the population was Christian, while another 40 percent practiced traditional animist beliefs. Islam was also gaining importance in the country, claiming about 20 percent of the population. The constitution provides for the free exercise of religion and stipulates that no denomination be given preference by the state and that no religious tests be laid down for entry into civil offices or for the exercise of civil rights. However, discrimination has been reported against the Muslim community.

Despite their minority status, Protestants—particularly Methodists, Baptists, and Episcopalians—constitute the social and political elite; they have formed virtually a ruling class since 1847. Almost all Protestant denominations are represented in the country, some by more than one missionary organization. The Roman Catholic Church is organized under the vicar-apostolic of Monrovia.

Religious Affiliations

Christian	1,393,000
Indigenous Beliefs	1,393,000
Muslim	696,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The indigenous peoples of Liberia migrated there from the north and east between the 12th and 16th centuries. Portuguese explorers visited the coast in 1461, and Europeans traded with the local tribes during the next three centuries.

Liberia was settled in 1822 by freed black slaves from the United States repatriated to Africa under the auspices of the American Colonization Society and six other philanthropic organizations. Black emigration from the United States continued until 1892, and these settlers were augmented by Africans freed from slaving vessels by the British and American navies. Each society established its own independent territory, such as Mississippi in Africa, at Greenville, and Maryland in Liberia, around Harper. The first governors were agents appointed by the American Colonization Society, and only in 1847 was the independent Republic of Liberia established, with a U.S.-type constitution.

Liberia was never an actual colony of the United States, and relations between the two countries were not very close until the mid-1920s. Liberia received annual subsidies from the various colonization societies until 1847, but after the establishment of the republic American assistance was suspended. To avert a financial breakdown, Liberia—whose budget in 1847 was only \$8,000—turned to Europe. The period from 1891 until 1925 is known as the “European period” of Liberian history, and it was Europe, rather than the United States, that helped the new republic establish itself as a viable nation. Links with the United States were renewed in 1926 with the arrival of the Firestone Tire and Rubber Company in Liberia.

During the presidency of William Tubman, after World War II, other foreign interests were encouraged, and the influence of the United States gradually diminished. On his death in 1971, Tubman was succeeded by his vice president, William Tolbert. Tolbert maintained Liberia’s ties with the West but also developed relations with the Eastern Bloc and with Liberia’s neighbors. Tolbert’s domestic performance was less than distinguished, as characterized by a series of lackluster campaigns to galvanize Liberians economically and politically.

On April 12, 1980, Tolbert was assassinated in a military coup led by Sgt. Samuel K. Doe, who took over as chairman of the People’s Redemption Council (PRC), suspending the constitution and banning all political parties. Opposition to and divisions within the PRC gave rise to a series of upheavals, alleged coup attempts, and resignations by or dismissals of military and civilian members of the government in the early 1980s.

At the end of 1981 Doe undertook to return the country to civilian rule by April 1985. A new constitution, similar to the precoup document, was drafted and in July 1984 was approved by a national referendum. The ban on political activity was lifted, and a period of intense political turbulence followed. Elections were held in October 1985, and amid widespread allegations of flagrant irregularities Doe was elected president.

In November 1985 another coup was attempted and failed. On January 6, 1986, Doe was sworn in as elected president. The cabinet was reshuffled several times in 1987, and Liberia went through another period of political turbulence early in 1988. A coup plot was discovered in March, and another was attempted and put down in July.

On December 24, 1989, an armed insurrection began, led by Charles Taylor of the rebel National Patriotic Force (NPF). For a time it seemed no more than a regional revolt in the northeast, but by June 1990 rebels were on the outskirts of Monrovia, and President Doe and his supporters became besieged in the presidential mansion. The conflict was fueled by tribal differences. Doe’s followers were mostly Krahn or Mandingo tribesmen, while Taylor’s were mostly members of the Gio and

Mano tribes. Doe's army slaughtered thousands of Gio and Mano noncombatants, for which the NPF retaliated by killing Krahn and Mandingo civilians. The army abuses angered many Liberians, who then joined Taylor's original force of about 150 men, bringing the total number to more than 4,000 well-motivated fighters. By contrast, Doe's army of some 5,000 men, many of them forcibly conscripted, shrunk through mass desertions.

By July 1990 the NPF had split into two rival factions, one led by Taylor and the other led by Prince Johnson (whose first name is a common one in Liberia and not an indication of royalty). In August the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) landed a peacekeeping force in Monrovia and set up an interim government headed by Amos Sawyer.

On September 9, 1990, when Doe went to ECOWAS headquarters to plan his escape, he and his men were intercepted by Johnson. By the next day Doe had been mutilated and killed. On September 21 Taylor announced a cease-fire, which lasted less than a week. ECOWAS later sponsored a peace agreement, which was signed on November 28, 1990, by Taylor, Johnson, and Major Wilmott Diggs, who then represented the remaining followers of Doe. However, even though he signed the truce, Taylor refused to accept the interim government of Amos Sawyer, who had been sworn in as president on November 22, and a stalemate followed.

A final cease-fire was signed on February 13, 1991, ending the stalemate, and an agreement was made by all three parties to take steps to form an interim government. The cease-fire was signed by Taylor, Johnson, and General Hezekiah Bowen, the commander of the remnants of Doe's army. The accord stated that until a new government was chosen, the provisional administration headed by Amos Sawyer would remain in power. Despite the cease fire, fighting continued, spilling over into Sierra Leone. In 1996 the fighting was so intense in Monrovia that 3,000 deaths occurred and almost all the capital's buildings were either damaged or destroyed. Nevertheless, with the aid of peacekeepers and international observers, free and open presidential and legislative elections were held on July 19, 1997, during which the former faction leader Charles Ghankay Taylor and his NPP overwhelmingly won, with 75.3 percent of the vote, defeating 14 other political parties. After seven years of civil war, the situation remained volatile, with occasional outbreaks of fighting. The Taylor government reacted by consolidating its power and curtailing political opposition.

All told, over 200,000 were dead and 700,000 displaced as a result of the civil war, and the nation's infrastructure was in shambles. There was hardly any health-care system, and the capital was without electricity and running water. Further, the Taylor regime proved corrupt. He and his family managed to loot the resources of Liberia and leave the nation destitute. Taylor supported Sierra Leone's Revolutionary United Front, earning diamonds

for his efforts; as a consequence, the United Nations imposed sanctions.

In 2002 a rebel group called Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD) began a vigorous campaign to oust Taylor. A year later rebels, including the LURD, controlled two-thirds of the country. On August 11, 2003, Taylor stepped down and went into exile in Nigeria. Gyude Bryant, a businessman seen as a coalition builder, was selected as interim president, or chairman, and it became his task to prepare the nation for elections in 2005. Taylor, it was discovered, had stolen some \$100 million in public funds, leaving Liberia the world's poorest nation. In 2006 Liberia asked Nigeria to extradite Taylor. Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf was elected president in 2005, the first woman to be elected as an African head of state.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1944–71	William V. S. Tubman (president)
1971–80	William Richard Tolbert (president)
1980–84	Samuel Kanyon Doe (chairman of the People's Redemption Council)
1984–90	Samuel Kanyon Doe (president)
1990–94	Amos Claudius Sawyer (president of the Interim Government of National Unity)
1994–95	David D. Kpormakpor (chairman of the Council of State)
1995–96	Wilton G. S. Sankawulo (chairman of the Council of State)
1996–97	Ruth Sando Perry (chairman of the Council of State)
1997–2003	Charles Ghankay Taylor (president)
2003	Moses Zeh Blah (interim president)
2003–06	Charles Gyude Bryant (chairman of the National Transitional Government)
2006–	Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf (president)

CONSTITUTION

In 1984 a new constitution was drafted by the Constitutional Commission, approved by the PRC, submitted to a national referendum, and approved by 78.3 percent of registered voters. The constitution provides for a multiparty system; the formation of a one-party state, the dissolution of the legislature, and the suspension of the judiciary are prohibited. A two-thirds majority in both houses of the National Assembly is required to amend the constitution.

The new constitution does not differ significantly from its predecessor, providing for the division of the government into the executive, legislature, and judiciary. Executive powers are vested in the president, elected for a six-year term by universal adult suffrage; he is head of state, head of government, and commander in chief of the armed

forces. The legislature is a two-chamber National Assembly comprising the Senate (26 members) and the House of Representatives (64 members), both directly elected.

The constitution provides for the establishment of the Supreme Court, which consists of a chief justice and four associate justices, to be appointed by the president from a panel recommended by the Judicial Service Commission. The consent of the Senate is required for these appointments and for the confirmation of lower court judges, to which a similar procedure applies.

PARLIAMENT

Liberia has a bicameral legislature. The lower body, the House of Representatives, consists of 64 members who are directly elected by universal suffrage and serve six years. The upper house, the Senate, has 26 members who serve for nine years.

POLITICAL PARTIES

The ruling party of the country is the NPP, formerly known as the National Patriotic Front. Dozens of small factions oppose the NPP. The most successful in terms of representation is the Unity Party, which has seven seats to the NPP's 49. Other parties that took part in the 1997 election were the All Liberia Coalition Party, with three seats; the Alliance of Political Parties and the United People's Party, with two seats each; and the Liberian People's Party, with one seat.

New elections are to be held in 2005. Meanwhile, a transitional parliament was established after President Taylor was forced into exile in 2003. Posts in that body were given to the former ruling NPP, two rebel groups—LURD and Movement for Democracy in Liberia (MODEL)—and other political parties and civic groups. Together the NPP, LURD, and MODEL chose a 21-member cabinet to aid in the transitional government.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For purposes of regional administration, Liberia is divided into 13 counties, two territories, and the federal district of Monrovia. The chief administrative official in each county is a county superintendent. Monrovia, the national capital, is governed directly by the central government. The territories are headed by territorial superintendents appointed by the president.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The judicial system is headed by the Supreme Court, which consists of a chief justice and four associate jus-

tices, all appointed by the president from a panel recommended by the Judicial Service Commission; the consent of the Senate is required for these appointments. Immediately below the Supreme Court are the circuit courts of assize, one in each county and two in Monrovia. Inferior courts include magistrate's courts and justice-of-the-peace courts. Though nominally independent, the judicial system has been subject to pressure and direct influence by the executive branch.

A parallel tribal court system dispenses justice according to tribal law. The key court under this system is the court of the paramount chief, which is superior to the court of the clan chief. Appeals from these courts are heard by the court of the district commissioner and the court of the county commissioner. The district commissioner and the paramount chief sometimes hold a joint court to settle disputes falling within their dual competence. Trial by ordeal is an accepted procedure in tribal courts.

HUMAN RIGHTS

In terms of political and civil rights, Liberia is classified as a country that is not free. On Christmas Eve 1989 rebel forces invaded Liberia, and rival factions continued to fight for power until 1996. The long ordeal came to an end after what is known as April 6th: a final, few bloody months of terror as factions fought for power in the capital Monrovia.

It was a brutal civil war that forced nearly 700,000 to flee their country, left more than one million displaced, and claimed the lives of more than 200,000 people. Charles Taylor, the former leader of the National Patriotic Front of Liberia, one of the main rebel factions, was elected president in democratic elections in July 1997, but Taylor's regime proved to be as brutal as his predecessor's and brought about further civil unrest. In 2003 Taylor was forced into exile by two rebel groups, and a transitional government was set up. With international peacekeeping forces in place, it is hoped that rampant human rights abuses, including torture and rape, will be curtailed.

FOREIGN POLICY

The watershed in Liberian foreign relations was the 1980 coup, in which the pro-American Liberian elite were ousted and Doe instituted a military government. Doe himself was assassinated in 1990, leading to a civil war, in which Charles Taylor, the eventual winner, was supported by Burkina Faso, Libya, and Côte d'Ivoire, among other countries, and opposed by Guinea, Ghana, Nigeria, and others. The United States maintained official neutrality in the conflict.

Subsequently, Taylor himself was actively involved in supporting the rebels in the Sierra Leone civil war. The Taylor government fell to rebel forces in 2003, and a transitional government was established. It was hoped that there would be a regional solution to the tribal grievances in Liberia, which in the past spilled over into neighboring countries.

DEFENSE

Prior to the civil war, the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) consisted of around 6,000 soldiers. This army, however, was basically destroyed, either by desertion or death, during the rebellion launched by Charles Taylor in 1989. Following the 1996 peace accord, a new national army was supposed to have been installed, but Taylor relied instead on his personal militia. In 2003 UN peacekeepers disarmed the supporters of Taylor as well as the two main rebel groups, MODEL and LURD.

In 2005 the United States pledged \$200 million to train a new defense force; the nation's military personnel now total 15,000. A new Liberian police force was due to reach its full strength of 3,500 officers in 2006.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 15,000
 Military Manpower Availability: 659,795
 Military Expenditures \$million: 1.5
 as % of GDP: 0.2
 as % of central government expenditures: —
 Arms Imports \$million: —
 Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

The civil war of 1989–96 destroyed much of Liberia's economy, especially the infrastructure in and around Monrovia. Many businessmen fled the country, taking capital and expertise with them. Some returned during 1997, but many stayed away. Richly endowed with water, mineral resources, forests, and a climate favorable to agriculture, Liberia had been a significant producer and exporter of basic products, while local manufacturing, mainly foreign owned, has been small in scope.

The democratically elected government installed in August 1997 inherited massive international debts and relied on revenues from its maritime registry to provide the bulk of its foreign exchange earnings. The restoration of the infrastructure and the raising of incomes in the ravaged economy depended on the implementation of sound macro- and microeconomic policies by the new government, including the encouragement of foreign investment.

The Taylor regime, however, proved to be corrupt. Taylor embezzled over \$100 million in public funds, leaving the country nearly bankrupt when he fled in 2003. The establishment of a more inclusive transitional government was a positive sign for both society and the economy.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 2.903
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 900
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 4.4
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 1.7
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 76.9
 Industry: 5.4
 Services: 17.7
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 70
 Government Consumption: 13
 Gross Domestic Investment: —
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 1.079
 Imports: 5.051
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: —
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: —

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
—	—	—	—	—

Finance

National Currency: Liberian Dollar (LRD)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = LRD 61.7542
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 2.36
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: —
 Total External Debt \$billion: 2.1
 Debt Service Ratio %: 0.21
 Balance of Payments \$million: —
 International Reserves SDRs \$million: 3.26
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 15.0

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 106.9
 per capita \$: 31.70
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 2.8

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$million: 85.4
 Expenditures \$million: 90.5
 Budget Deficit \$million: 5.1
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 76.9
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999) %: 20.0
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 0.09
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 0.5
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: —
 Total Farmland % of land area: 4.0
 Livestock: Cattle 000: 36
 Chickens million: 6
 Pigs 000: 130
 Sheep 000: 210
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 5.69
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 11.5

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 29
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: —

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 17
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 165
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 53
 Net Energy Imports % of use: —
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 0.33
 Production kW-hr billion: 0.44
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 0.47
 Coal Reserves tons billion: —
 Production tons million: —
 Consumption tons million: —
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
 Production cubic feet billion: —
 Consumption cubic feet billion: —
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
 Production barrels 000 per day: —
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 3.2
 Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 5.051
 Exports \$billion: 1.079
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —
 Balance of Trade \$million: —

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
South Korea %	43.5	—
Japan %	15.9	—
Singapore %	12.1	—
Germany %	9.7	39.5
Spain %	4.0	—
Poland %	—	8.9
Greece %	—	8.3
Denmark %	—	6.7
United States %	—	5.4
France %	—	5.1
Thailand %	—	4.5

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 10,600
 Paved %: 5.3
 Automobiles: 17,100
 Trucks and Buses: 12,800
 Railroad: Track Length km: 490
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: —
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 1,465
 Total Deadweight Tonnage million: 79.13
 Airports: 53
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: —
 Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: —
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: —
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: —

Communications

Telephones 000: 7
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones 000: 2
 Personal Computers 000: —
 Internet Hosts per million people: 4
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 0.3

ENVIRONMENT

Liberia's lush rain forests suffer from increasing deforestation as well as loss of biodiversity. Meanwhile, the coastal waters are being polluted by oil residue and the dumping of raw sewage. After 14 years of civil war, much of the country has been degraded.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 36.1
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: -76
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 13
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 0.13

LIVING CONDITIONS

Even before the recent fighting, Liberia's people were among the worst off in the world. According to the United Nations' 2002 Human Development Index, Liberia ranked 158th out of 174 countries. This index incorporates measurements of life expectancy, education, and income. Life expectancy was almost 48 years in 2004, thanks to the cessation of most of the hostilities in the country. In 2003 the adult literacy rate was 58 percent,

while combined gross enrollment for primary, secondary, and tertiary schools in 2001–02 was 61 percent. In reality, however, less than 50 percent of children 6 to 18 were in schools full time. Gross domestic product (GDP) per capita in 2004 was about \$900; Liberians rank among the poorest in the world.

Much of the housing in cities such as Monrovia have historically been corrugated iron structures. These were in the process of being replaced with more modern structures when the civil war disrupted such development. Large tracts of Monrovia and other cities were damaged or destroyed during the war, and infrastructure remains badly in need of repair.

The typical housing for the tribal people of Liberia is the *rondavel*, a circular, one-room hut made of mud and wattle, with a thatch roof, low door, and no windows. Many of these are being replaced by larger rectangular huts, also made of mud and wattle. These newer structures have two or more rooms and also windows.

Transportation in the countryside is by bike, scooter, bus, shared taxi, oxcart, or foot.

In 2002 an estimated 47 percent of the population lived in urban areas. Monrovia has a population nearing one million, and more than one-third of the population lives within 50 miles of the capital. Other major towns and cities are Buchanan, Harper, and Greenville on the coast and Gbarnga, Kakata, Sanniquellie, Zorzor, and Ghanpa in the interior. The urban population growth rate for 2000–05 was 4.9 percent.

HEALTH

People in Liberia pay for their own medical costs. Non-governmental organizations run clinics, which provide cheap medical treatment for the sick, but they are not widespread. Many people seek natural remedies before approaching doctors.

Deaths and injuries from the years of civil war put a huge strain on the country's health-care system. As of 1999 there were an estimated 0.02 physicians and 1.6 hospital beds per 1,000 people—hardly adequate to deal with war's carnage. Even with the virtual end to hostilities in 2003, the usual endemic illnesses and diseases remained. Major causes of death are malaria and gastrointestinal disease, both attributable in part to poor sanitation. In 2000 there was a 27 percent incidence rate of malaria, and in 2002 there were 501 tuberculosis cases per 100,000 population. That year only 26 percent of the population had access to proper sanitation, 62 percent to safe drinking water.

The 2004 death rate was almost 18 deaths per 1,000 population; the infant mortality rate was almost 130 deaths per 1,000 live births. The mortality rate for children less than five years old in 2002 was 235 per 1,000 live births. Immunization rates for children under one have improved: In 1994, 44 percent were immunized for

measles; in 2003, 53 percent. Other immunization rates are less positive. The 2003 rate of tuberculosis immunization for one-year-olds was 43 percent, down from 84 percent in 1994. Polio vaccination was at 39 percent, DPT 38 percent.

Female genital mutilation is a severe problem in Liberia, affecting 60 percent of the female population.

HIV/AIDS has also made inroads in Liberia. Adult prevalence of the disease was 5.9 percent in 2003 by official estimates, though other estimates put the rate much higher. In 2003, an estimated 100,000 Liberians were living with HIV/AIDS, and there were 7,200 deaths from the disease.

Health

Number of Physicians:	55
Number of Dentists:	2
Number of Nurses:	141
Number of Pharmacists:	—
Physician Density per 100,000 people:	2.3
Hospital Beds per 1,000:	1.6
Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births:	128.87
Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births:	760
Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP:	2.1
Health Expenditures per capita \$:	4
HIV Infected % of adults:	5.9
Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:	
DPT:	38
Measles:	53
Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %:	26
Access to Improved Water Source %:	62

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Cooking in Liberia is traditionally done in pots over a charcoal fire. In the cities the population has access to electric or gas ranges. Eating is done either with the hands or with utensils, Western style.

The staple of the Liberian diet is rice, generally eaten at every meal. Other carbohydrates include potatoes, yams, cocoyams, farina, cassava, couscous, and *fufu*, a sticky concoction of yams and plantains dipped in sauce. Meats and fish are often smoked. Other common ingredients include eggplants, spicy peppers, collard greens, fresh ginger, palm butter, peanuts, peas, beans, onions, and coconut. Many tropical fruits are available.

Typical dishes include cabbage cooked with bacon and pigs' feet, sweet potato leaves with fish, palm nuts with shrimp in a fish or chicken stock, rice and okra, and goat soup. Desserts include sweet potato pie, coconut pie, and rice bread with mashed bananas. Ginger beer and palm wine are popular drinks for non-Muslims. Coffee is also popular.

After 14 years of fighting, the country was left in ruins, and food supplies were minimal. Starvation was widespread and malnutrition common among adults and

children alike. International agencies distributed food to hundreds of thousands of displaced Liberians. Between 1995 and 2003, 26 percent of children under five in Liberia suffered from mild to severe undernourishment. As of 2001, 46 percent of the general population was considered undernourished.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 46.2
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,140
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 78.2
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 68.5

STATUS OF WOMEN

In urban areas along the seacoast, where settler dominance was strongest, a modern sector has evolved, with a free-enterprise economy, substantial political and economic equality for men and women, and Anglo-American judicial procedures based on English common law, as transmitted and modified by the American experience. Land is plotted, deeded, and held in fee simple, and women can inherit equally. There is no formal discrimination in property ownership, educational opportunity, or participation in economic and political processes. Women in Liberia have held ministerial and ambassadorial positions and are represented in the professions and throughout the modern economy.

In rural areas, however, inhabitants practice subsistence agriculture and follow a traditional culture in which men's and women's roles are more strictly defined. Most land is held communally among the related families of clans, and women provide most of the labor in food production and distribution, both for household consumption and market sale. As opposed to statutory marriage, seen as a contract between individuals, customary marriage is an agreement between families. With the payment of dowry under the customary marriage system, a woman is considered the property of her husband and family. Upon the husband's death, the marital contract continues with the family, which has certain obligations and responsibilities to the widow, or more commonly widows, if they remain with the family as wives to other relatives. In the traditional sector women are usually not entitled to inherit from their husbands or to administer their estates. In addition, in many indigenous ethnic groups, women are informally excluded from chieftaincies or membership in the councils of elders that direct the affairs of the community. In practice, especially in newly urban areas, many women use both the customary and statutory legal systems.

Many women continue to suffer from physical abuse and traditional societal discrimination, despite constitutionally guaranteed equality. Rape, including gang rape,

was rampant during the civil war. Women and girls were often abducted as laborers and sex slaves, while others joined rebel groups or militias to protect themselves. According to Amnesty International, between 60 and 70 percent of women have undergone genital circumcision. The practice is carried out only in some parts of the country and not by all ethnic groups. Although the Liberian government has published policy opposing female genital mutation, no law currently prohibits its use.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 5
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 0.64
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: —

WORK

The most startling fact about work in Liberia is that an estimated 85 percent of the nation was unemployed as of 2003. As of 2000 about 70 percent of workers were engaged in agriculture; agricultural products include rubber, coffee, cocoa, rice, cassava (tapioca), palm oil, sugarcane, bananas, sheep, goats, and timber. The service sector employed 22 percent of the workforce, and the remaining 8 percent were engaged in industry, such as rubber processing, palm-oil processing, timber, and diamonds. The indigenous people of the interior, the bulk of the population, are mostly engaged in subsistence agriculture; there has been a distinct shortage in skilled and trained workers in the country.

Firestone was one of the main private employers before the outbreak of hostilities. In 2005 that company was given additional years of use of its million-acre concession by the transitional government, much to the dismay of local activists who criticize Firestone for its colonial policies and for what they term underpayment to its employees.

The right to strike, organize, and bargain collectively is permitted by law, but there is little union activity because of the lack of economic activity. The Liberian Federation of Labor Unions covers some 60,000 workers, but most are unemployed, and the unions have little power. Labor laws regarding minimum wage and working age are largely ignored. Child labor is widespread; so ubiquitous is the use of children in the labor force that many were impressed into various militias during the civil war.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: —
 Female Participation Rate %: 39.6

Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 70
 Industry: 8
 Services: 22
 Unemployment %: 85

EDUCATION

Education is free, universal, and compulsory, in principle, for 10 years, from ages six to 16. Nevertheless, school enrollment ratios are very low. Schooling consists of 12 years, as divided into six years of primary school, three years of junior high school, and three years of senior high school. There is a high dropout rate at the primary level, and only about 15 percent of those who enter primary school complete it. Fewer attend secondary schools because of commuting difficulties. As of 1999 the net primary enrollment was 70 percent, while secondary enrollment was only 18 percent. In all, less than half of Liberian children ages six to 18 attend school. Many well-to-do students attend secondary schools in Europe, the United States, or nearer to home, in Ghana or Nigeria. The literacy rate in Liberia as of 2004 was just 57.5 percent.

In principle, teachers have to be certified annually by the Department of Education, but this requirement is rarely enforced, and some 85 percent of teachers lack minimum professional qualifications. A serious shortage of teachers is compounded by poor salaries and consequent loss of prestige. In 1999 the pupil-to-teacher ratio in primary schools was 38 to 1. The school system relies heavily on foreign, particularly U.S. Peace Corps, teachers. Teacher training is provided through a number of institutions, of which the best known are the Tubman Teachers' College and Our Lady of Fatima College.

Private schools, run by Christian missions and foreign concessions, account for almost 35 percent of primary enrollment and 43 percent of secondary enrollment. Some schools are run by tribal authorities, where the training for boys is known as *poro* and the training for girls is known as *sande*.

A number of high schools offer exclusively vocational secondary-education programs. Of these the best known is the Booker T. Washington Agricultural and Industrial Institute, in Kakata. Other schools offer limited numbers of vocational courses.

The school system is under the direct control of the Department of Education. Foreign aid for educational programs and projects is received from the United States, Germany, and Sweden.

The principal institution of higher learning is the University of Liberia, in Monrovia. There are two smaller denominational colleges: the Episcopalian Cuttington University College and the Roman Catholic Our Lady of Fatima College. There are also a number of scientific, vocational, and technical training institutions.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 57.5
 Male %: 73.3
 Female %: 41.6
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: —
 First Level: Primary Schools: —
 Teachers: 12,966
 Students: 496,253
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 38.3
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 69.9
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: —
 Teachers: 6,765
 Students: 90,442
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 20.2
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 17.9
 Third Level: Institutions: —
 Teachers: 723
 Students: 44,107
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 17.0
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: —

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The Ministry of Agriculture, through its Central Agricultural Research Institute, Forestry Development Authority, Liberia Rubber Research Institute, and Division of Fisheries pursues various research projects in areas ranging from plant breeding to forestry management. Another major institution that carries out research and development in the country is the University of Liberia's College of Agriculture and Forestry. Research into rubber technology is carried out by the Firestone Plantations Company, which maintains a Botanical Research Department as well as a Chemical Research Department.

Monrovia is home to a geological, mining, and metallurgical society. Other institutions of higher education with research and/or science divisions are Cuttington University College, William V. S. Tubman College of Technology, and the Liberian Institute for Biomedical Research, all in Monrovia. Agricultural and industrial courses are offered at the Booker T. Washington Institute.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: —
 Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

Liberia's official newspaper is the *New Liberian*. Among the seven other newspapers are the *Daily Observer* and the *Mirror*, which produce five editions a week.

The national news agency is the Liberian News Agency (LINA). Foreign news agencies represented in Monrovia include UPI.

The official Liberian Broadcasting Corporation operates one medium-wave and two shortwave transmitters at Monrovia and one medium-wave transmitter at Harper. A second broadcasting service is the private ELWA, operated by the Sudan Interior Mission. The Voice of America's shortwave relay station in Monrovia, with six 250 kw transmitters and two 50 kw transmitters, is the most powerful on the continent. Another private station is owned by a mining company at Nimba.

The Liberian Broadcasting Corporation's television service, ELTV, covers 20 percent of the country, with a transmitter at Monrovia and relays at Buchanan and Bomi Hills.

Press freedom, assured by the constitution, was at a premium during the civil war years. Journalists and others in the media mainly exercised self-censorship to stay in business. Journalists were targeted by the militia on both sides during the 2003 fighting around Monrovia. Many media outlets were damaged or destroyed during the years of fighting. Reporters without Borders ranked Liberia 123rd among 167 nations in its 2004 press freedom index.

As of 2001 there were seven FM radio stations. In 2000 there were 274 radios and 26 television sets for every 1,000 people. That same year there were 2,000 cellular phone users, and in 2002 there were about 1,000 Internet users, though that number has grown significantly since the end of hostilities in 2003.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 6
 Total Circulation 000: 36.6
 Circulation per 1,000: 14.2
 Books Published: —
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers 000: 954
 per 1,000: 274
 Television sets 000: 91
 per 1,000: 26

CULTURE

The cultural heritage of Liberia is an amalgam of it numerous ethnic and indigenous people, with a thin veneer of Western culture from the returning American slaves that founded the country in the 19th century. Music, dance, storytelling, and crafts such as bronze casting and wood carving in Liberia are similar to those in other countries of West Africa. Dance is accompanied by huge drums carved out of tree trunks; dancers often wear masks of varying sizes that put them in touch with their spirit brothers from other ages. Huge, carved wooden doors are produced for the lodges of chiefs.

With Liberia entering the modern world and with the disruptions of the civil war, much of this tradition is dying

out. Dance and music and the recitations of praise singers occur on special religious or sacred occasions; animist beliefs predominate among the population, giving rise to numerous such ceremonies. Many of the traditional crafts are no longer as prevalent as they once were. The carving work of the Dan people, for example, is world famous, yet more and more difficult to find as older artists die off. Prior to the civil war, the government promoted ethnic culture through the work of the National Museum and National History Museum of the University of Liberia, in Monrovia; the Tubman Center for African Culture, in Robertsport; the William V. S. Tubman Library-Museum, in Harper; the National Cultural Center, in Kendeja; and the Africana Museum of Cuttington University College. Unfortunately, the collections of these various institutions suffered badly during the war years. The 3,000-artifact collection at Cuttington, for example, was largely destroyed; hungry refugees, in desperation, even stripped the goatskins off all the drums in the museum to boil for sustenance. Still, much of Liberia's cultural heritage has been immortalized in the famous epic poem *Sonjara*, sung by minstrels since the 13th century and still extant.

Modern culture in cities like Monrovia is strongly affected by Western influences. Liberian and African music are popular, as are hip-hop, rhythm and blues, reggae, calypso, jazz, country and western, and gospel music. Television and movies come from Europe and the United States.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: —
 Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Myth, folktales, epic poetry, and proverbs all are part of Liberian folklore traditions. Though many myths and tales differ between ethnic groups, some have universal West African dominance. One popular creation myth tells of Sno-Nysoa, the creator god who sent his four sons to the world. When he called them back to heaven, they did not wish to return; the Earth, too, wanted to keep the four and made efforts to retain them. Sno-Nysoa used his powers to bring them back, but in the morning they did not awaken. Earth retained their bodies, while the creator god had their souls. Ever since that time, Sno-Nysoa has used his powers to take humankind from Earth. This

myth goes on to include a legend similar to the Christian Fall, in which a clever cat that tries to outwit a medicine man brings death to humans.

Roving minstrels called praise singers, or *griots*, are known throughout West Africa, including in Liberia. For centuries they have kept the story of the early Mali Empire alive through the epic poem *Sonjara*, a 3,000-line poem dealing with the exploits of the leader Sonjara at the beginning of the 13th century.

Proverbs form another rich source of Liberian folklore. Examples of Liberian proverbs are “Do not look where you fell but where you slipped,” “If the townspeople are happy, look for the chief,” and “If the walls were adamant, gold would take the town.”

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Liberians in cities have access to television and cinema, both of which are popular forms of entertainment. Music is popular throughout the country; people both listen to it on the radio and make music together, especially in the interior. Western and African music are equally popular. Urban Liberians, before the civil war, enjoyed going to soccer, volleyball, or basketball matches; to bars or clubs to dance; or to the beach.

In rural areas, where there is little access to electricity, television is a rarity. If one exists in a village, the entire population gathers to watch it, and it is a prized possession. Recreation is simpler in the villages. Children might play soccer (with homemade balls), the rhythm game called *nan fo* (literally, “nine foot”), or marbles. Generally, even in the villages people have access to radios, so they can at least listen to music.

Throughout the country *woaley*, a board game similar to backgammon, is a major pastime. The rectangular *woaley* board has twelve indentations to hold beans and two larger indentations at the ends to hold the captured beans. Spectators and players of all ages enjoy *woaley* matches.

ETIQUETTE

An interesting holdover from Liberia’s past, as it was founded by returning slaves from the United States, is the Liberians’ manner of greeting one another: When shaking hands one grasps the middle finger of his friend’s right hand between his own thumb and third finger and brings it up quickly with a snap. Slave owners often broke the fingers of their slaves to show ownership; when freed, former slaves used this hand gesture as a sign of their newly won freedom. People of the opposite sex do not shake hands with one another, and public displays of affection are not acceptable.

As in much of African culture, sharing is important. Guests who drop by are expected to share in meals. The taboo against using the left hand for receiving or giving, or for eating, is in force in Liberia, as throughout much of Africa. While one usually uses the hand to eat, the fingers should not touch the mouth. It is polite to remove one’s shoes before entering a house, or, in the case of Muslims, before entering a mosque. Also, one should never expose the bottom of the feet to a Muslim, as that is considered the basest part of the body.

FAMILY LIFE

Families tend to be large in Liberia. In 2004 over six children were born per woman. In some tribal groups, the larger the family, the more status it has. Men rule families and make important decisions, though women do have certain power in the home. Polygamy is found among some ethnic groups and among the Muslim population; up to four wives can be taken. However, as the bride price must still be paid, only the best off among Liberians can afford the practice. Two types of marriage are available in Liberia, according to the constitution and law: traditional marriages, which are valid until the death of a mate or divorce and allow multiple marriages, and statutory marriages, which do not allow multiple marriages. One cannot marry under both systems at the same time. Though unemployment is high, women are seldom idle, for domestic chores are their responsibility.

Some ethnic groups in Liberia have rigid caste systems, and people of different castes seldom marry, just as people seldom marry outside of their ethnic group. The legal marriage age is 18, but many girls are reserved or spoken for long before that time in arranged marriages that take place once the bride reaches 18—or as early as 14 in some rural areas. Family groups include the extended family; in villages, families live in houses and huts they build themselves. The entire community is seen as a broader family in Liberia, such that it is not uncommon for children to be disciplined by adults other than their parents. Physical punishment is common for children. Women also suffer physical abuse by their husbands, and though divorce is legal, not many resort to it.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Liberians living in urban areas wear mostly Western-style clothes. Women still wear brightly colored cotton skirts with bandanas wrapped loosely around their heads, a holdover from more traditional apparel.

Different ethnic groups had different styles of traditional clothing, most of which were adapted to deal with the region’s hot weather; clothing was mostly loose and made of cotton. In the villages traditional clothing

can still be seen: scoop-necked smocks over wraparound skirts for women, with matching bandanas worn over the hair. Cloth is dyed in colorful patterns or decorated with woodblock prints. Many men wear loose-fitting, home-made pajama-like pants and tops. Formal occasions bring out what is called the *grand boubou*: embroidered dresses for women and long robes over pants and shirt for men.

SPORTS

Popular sports include soccer, volleyball, and basketball. Soccer in particular draws large crowds at two stadiums in Monrovia. Not only a spectator sport, soccer is the national pastime for children throughout the country. Make-shift fields and homemade balls are used in the villages. National games are broadcast on radio and television, and soccer players attain the rank of celebrities. Such was the case with the Liberian George Weah, who played for AC Milan, in Italy, and in 1995 was selected as world player of the year by the soccer governing body FIFA.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1947 By the seventh amendment to the constitution, representation in Congress is given to the tribes of the hinterland provinces. By the eighth amendment suffrage is extended to all Liberians, including women.
- 1952 Liberia pays off the notorious Firestone Loan 15 years before maturity. A monument is erected in Monrovia to commemorate this event.
- 1961 Monrovia Group is formed by Liberia and seven other African countries to counter the Casablanca Group, led by Ghana.
- 1962 Liberia holds its first national census.
- 1963 Hinterland provinces are abolished in extensive reorganization of local administration. Liberia is divided into nine counties and six territories. President Tubman launches Operation Production.
- 1968 Henry Fahnbullah is arrested and convicted in the so-called Red China Plot.
- 1971 President William Tubman dies. Vice President William Tolbert succeeds to the presidency.
- 1972 Tolbert establishes first Liberian mission in Moscow.
- 1973 Liberia joins the Mano River Union (with Sierra Leone) and the Economic Community of West African States.
- 1975 Constitution is amended to restrict presidential term to eight years.
Liberia signs the Lome Convention.
- 1976 Tolbert is elected unopposed to an eight-year term.
- 1977 Liberia establishes diplomatic links with China.
- 1978 U.S. president Jimmy Carter receives warm welcome on brief visit.
- 1979 The main opposition group, Progressive Alliance of Liberia, holds first conference.
A proposal to increase the price of rice is followed by riots, bloodshed, and looting.
- 1980 A group of disgruntled noncommissioned officers, led by Sgt. Samuel Doe, leads successful coup in which President Tolbert is killed. Doe sets up the People's Redemption Council, with full legislative and executive powers. The national constitution is suspended along with parliament.
Thirteen prominent officials of the former regime are arrested and executed.
- 1981 Five members of the PRC, including Thomas Weh Syen, are executed for plotting against Doe. Government adopts strong measures to put down dock strike in Monrovia.
- 1983 Brigadier General Thomas Quiwonkpa, the strongman of the regime, is dismissed and forced to flee the country.
Diplomatic relations with Libya are suspended.
- 1984 Doe submits draft constitution, formulated by the constitutional commission, to the electorate, who approve it in a national referendum.
- 1985 Political parties are legitimized, and 13 new parties announce their intention to contest the elections. Doe announces the formation of the Liberian Democratic Party, with himself as leader.
In national elections Doe is elected president, and his LDP wins strong majority. Diplomatic relations with Soviet Union are suspended.
- 1986 Teachers' strikes and student demonstrations are brutally suppressed by the army.
The Liberian Unification Party, the Liberian Action Party, and the Unity Party form a united front as the Liberia Grand Coalition, led by William Kpolleh. The three parties of the Grand Coalition boycott by-elections.
- 1988 Kpolleh is among 10 people arrested in March on charges of plotting to overthrow the government.
Kpolleh is later sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment for treason.
Another attempted coup, led by Nichola Podier, is put down in July.
- 1989 Armed insurrection, led by Charles Taylor of the NPF, begins in the northeast.
- 1990 Fighting degenerates into a civil war between Doe's ethnic group, the Krahn, and the local Gio and Mano tribes.
The NPF divides into two rival factions, one led by Taylor and the other led by Prince Johnson.

The Economic Community of West African States sends in a peacekeeping force and sets up an interim government headed by Amos Sawyer.

Doe is killed by followers of Johnson.

- 1991** A cease-fire is signed in February.
- 1993** A peace agreement is signed in Geneva.
- 1994** Groups excluded from forming the transitional government reject peace and resume violence.
- 1995** The 11th peace treaty is signed to bring an end to the civil war.
- 1996** Fighting resumes in April, but another cease-fire is in place by August.
- 1997** Charles Taylor is elected president by a large majority.
- 1999** Ghana and Nigeria accuse Liberia of supporting rebels in Sierra Leone, while President Taylor accuses Guinea of supporting Liberian rebels in the north.
- 2001** UN Security Council charges Taylor with trading weapons for diamonds from rebels in Sierra Leone and reinstalls weapons embargo.
- 2002** Taylor declares state of emergency in February.
- 2003** Two main rebel groups, LURD and MODEL, force Taylor to leave Liberia for Nigerian exile. A transitional government is established headed by Gyude Bryant.
- 2004** International donors pledge more than \$500 million in reconstruction aid.
Renewed violence breaks out in Monrovia.
- 2005** The United States hires a private company to train a new Liberian army.
Refugees begin returning to Liberia after the 14 years of civil war.
- 2006** Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf becomes the first woman to be elected as an African head of state.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- allAfrica.com: Liberia
<http://www.allafrica.com/liberia/>
- CIA World Factbook: Liberia
<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/li.html>
- Perspective: The Liberian Government
<http://www.theperspective.org/govt.html>

LIBYA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya (Al-Jamāhīrīyah al-'Arabīya al-Lībīyah al-Sha'bīyah al-Ishtirākīyah)

ABBREVIATION

LY

CAPITAL

Tripoli

HEAD OF STATE

Leader of the Revolution Muammar Abu Minyar al-Qaddafi (from 1969)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

General Secretary of the People's Committee Shukri Mohammed Ghanem (from 2003)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Military dictatorship

POPULATION

5,765,563 (2005)

AREA

1,759,540 sq km (679,360 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Arab

LANGUAGE

Arabic

RELIGION

Sunni Islam

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Libyan dinar

NATIONAL FLAG

A solid green field, green being the traditional color of Islam

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A black-and-white eagle with a shield on its breast on a green circular field. At the eagle's base is the nation's name in Arabic.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"Almighty God"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

March 28 (British Evacuation Day), June 11 (Evacuation Day), July 23 (Revolution Day), September 1 (National Day), October 7 (Italian Evacuation Day), December 24 (Independence Day), various Islamic festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

December 24, 1951

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

December 11, 1969

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Libya, on the central Mediterranean coast of North Africa, extends 1,502 km (933 mi) from the coast to the north-central highlands of the Sahara and 1,989 km (1,236 mi) from the Egyptian border to the east to the Algerian border to the west. Libya's total area of 1,759,540 sq km (679,360 sq mi) makes it the fourth-largest country in Africa. The country shares land borders with six nations: Egypt, Sudan, Chad, Niger, Algeria, and Tunisia. Libya claims about 19,400 sq km in northern Niger and part of southeastern Algeria.

The capital of Libya is Tripoli (2004 population estimated at 1,111,900), but in September 1988 it was announced that all but two of the secretariats of the General People's Committee were to be relocated from Tripoli to Sirte, the birthplace of the Libyan leader Colonel Muammar al-Qaddafi; to Benghazi, the country's other major urban center (pop. 635,800); and to the town of Kufra.

The major topographical areas are Tripolitania (Western Muqataa), a series of terraces rising toward the south; Cyrenaica (Eastern Muqataa), consisting of al-Marj Plain, which rises in two narrow steps to an upland plateau called Jabal al-Akhdar, or Green Mountain;

Libya



and Fezzan (Southern Muqataa), a series of depressions with a few oases. The rest of the country consists of the Libyan Desert; the pebble plain of Sarir Calanscio; and the huge sand seas of Marzuq, Awbari, and Rabyanah.

Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Sabkhat Ghuzayyil -47
 Highest: Bikku Bitti 2,267
 Land Use %
 Arable Land: 1.0
 Permanent Crops: 0.2
 Forest: 0.2
 Other: 98.6

Geography

Area sq km: 1,759,450; sq mi 679,360
 World Rank: 16th
 Land Boundaries, km: Algeria 982; Chad 1,055; Egypt 1,115; Niger 354; Sudan 383; Tunisia 459
 Coastline, km: 1,770

Population of Principal Cities (2004 est.)

Benghazi	650,000
Tripoli	1,115,000

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Because of few natural barriers, the Libyan climate is greatly influenced by the desert to the south and the Mediterranean Sea to the north. The coastal regions have a Mediterranean climate, with moderate temperatures and enough rain during the winter months for grain farming. Winter is fairly cold in the north, with sleet and snow on the hills. Average mean summer temperatures are 40.6 to 46°C (105 to 115°F) along the Tripolitanian coast, and 26.7 to 32°C (80 to 90°F) in northern Cyrenaica. A scorching wind called the *ghibli*, a hot, very dry, sand-laden wind, can raise the temperatures in a matter of hours to between 40 and 50°C, occasionally blowing into the usually humid coastal towns.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature

Summer Tripolitanian Coast: 105°F to 115°F

Northern Cyrenaica: 80°F to 90°F

Tobruk: 79°F

Average Rainfall

Coastal Strip: 8 in to 16 in

Tripolitania and Cyrenaica: 12 in to 14 in

Northern Highlands: 2 in to 24 in

Pre-desert and Desert: 0 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Vegetation in Libya varies according to region. The northern Green Mountains support a low forest of junipers and mastic trees, while the coastal plain is covered by annual grasses and vegetation in years of plentiful rainfall. Grass species such as rye, brome, and bluegrass are found. South of the mountains plant life is less common, and in the vast Libyan Desert such vegetation is restricted mainly to date palms in the oases. Cultivated plants include millions of olive trees and date palms.

Hyenas, desert hares, foxes, jackals, gazelles, and wildcats are among the wild animals in the country. Various reptiles make the oases their home, while bird life includes eagles, hawks, vultures, larks, prairie hens, and partridges. Domesticated animals include goat, cattle, sheep, and camels.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 5,765,563

World Rank: 103rd

Density per sq km: 3.2

% of annual growth (1999-2003): 2.0

Male %: 51.2

Female %: 48.8

Urban %: 88.5

Age Distribution %: 0-14: 33.9

15-64: 61.9

65 and over: 4.2

Population 2025: 8,323,000

Birth Rate per 1,000: 26.82

Death Rate per 1,000: 3.48

Rate of Natural Increase %: 2.3

Total Fertility Rate: 3.34

Expectation of Life (years): Males 74.29

Females 78.82

Marriage Rate per 1,000: 6.2

Divorce Rate per 1,000: 0.3

Average Size of Households: 5.4

Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Libya has a highly homogeneous population, with Arab Muslims of mixed Arab-Berber ancestry constituting some 90 percent. The principal ethnic minorities are Berbers, Tuaregs, Tebus, and black Africans. Berbers, defined as native speakers of a Berber dialect, account for about 1 percent of the population. The Tuaregs, black Africans, and Tebus constitute about 1 percent of the population. Arabic-speaking black Africans are known as *barratins*. Hostility toward all foreigners, particularly Westerners, has been a significant element of Libya's revolutionary ideology.

LANGUAGES

Arabic has been the official language of Libya since 1969. Its use in official communications, street signs, private letterheads, and even passports of visiting foreigners is mandatory. The spoken dialects of Tripolitania and Fezzan belong to the Magurebi group, used in the Maghreb countries (Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia), while the dialects of Cyrenaica are related to those used in Egypt and the central Middle East. Minority languages include Berber, a Semitic language distantly related to Arabic, and the Tamahek dialect of Berber used by the Tuaregs.

RELIGIONS

Sunni Islam is the religion of almost all Libyans. Since 1969 the military regime has converted religion into a keystone of state domestic and foreign policy by re-aligning Islamic values and establishing literal Koranic practice in national life at home and propagating Islam abroad. The Constitutional Declaration of 1969, while guaranteeing the freedom to practice religious rites to all religious groups, declared Islam to be the state religion. Any Islamic group in variance with the state teaching of Islam is prohibited.

Nevertheless, members of some minority religions are permitted to conduct services. There are 50,000 Christians in Libya, and in 1997 the Vatican reestablished diplomatic relations with the nation, noting that new steps had been taken to protect religious freedom for non-Muslims.

Religious Affiliations

Sunni Muslim	5,593,000
Other	173,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Archaeological finds show that from at least the eighth millennium B.C.E. Libya's coastal area shared in a Neolithic culture, with tribespeople domesticating cattle and cultivating crops. Inscriptions found in Egypt dating from 2700–2200 B.C.E. are the first known mention of Libya's Berber tribes.

Libya was colonized first in the 12th century B.C.E. by the Phoenicians, then later in the sixth century B.C.E. by the Carthaginians. Rome took control in the second century B.C.E., holding on for more than 600 years. An Arab invasion of Libya in 643 C.E. marked the beginning of Arab and Islamic influence. Throughout the 16th century Libya became a battleground between the Hapsburg and Ottoman empires for control of the North African trade routes.

Libya was under Italian rule from 1912 until 1942, at which time British and French troops occupied the country. The United Kingdom governed Cyrenaica and Tripolitania, while France administered Fezzan until independence. Libyan territory was the scene of several key battles between Allied and Nazi forces during World War II.

A UN resolution in 1949 led to Libyan independence as the United Kingdom of Libya in 1951. The postindependence period can be divided into two distinct phases. The first, under King Idris, was a time of internal political stability and economic growth, which, as a result of oil discoveries, permitted the nation to end its dependence on Western funds. Idris's reign was also a period of good relations with the Arab world and with the West, although by the mid-1960s Libya had become an outspoken critic of Israel and South Africa.

A bloodless revolution in 1969 brought about a complete change in government and the establishment of the Libyan Arab Republic, with Colonel Muammar al-Qaddafi (also spelled Qadhafi or Gadhafi) as chairman of the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC), which functioned as the executive. Qaddafi dissolved the legislature and declared the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. Over the next five years he began a series

of reforms that transformed every aspect of society. He nationalized banks and forced oil companies to sell 51 percent of their holdings to the Libyan government. In foreign affairs he moved to the left, supporting the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and Syria. In 1973 he initiated his "cultural revolution," later set forth in his *Green Book*. It was an attempt to eliminate all foreign ideologies and to blend Arab socialism and Islamic fundamentalism in the administration of the country. The Koran was declared the social code of the country.

During the 1970s and 1980s Qaddafi indiscriminately backed terrorism, providing arms, money, and asylum for any revolutionary cause he supported without regard for the issues behind the movements. Libyan funds went to Ulster, Chad, Sudan, Morocco, Uganda, and Zimbabwe, as well as the more extreme wings of the PLO.

In the mid-1970s rumors of rich uranium deposits led Libya to annex the Aozou Strip in Chad. Libya then became an active participant in that nation's civil war, opposing the forces of Chadian President Hissène Habré. Qaddafi was humiliated in 1987 when his militarily superior forces were resoundingly defeated. In 1990 the two countries finally agreed to take their dispute to the International Court of Justice, which ruled in early 1994 that the Aozou Strip belonged to Chad.

In foreign affairs Qaddafi attempted to forge alliances with other Arab states, many of which were deterred by his volatile leadership style. Libya's support of terrorism and repression of dissent angered many Western nations. In 1984 Great Britain severed diplomatic relations following a series of bomb attacks in Britain aimed at Libyan dissidents. Conflict with the United States, which began in the late 1970s, came to a head in 1986, when the United States bombed Tripoli and Benghazi in response to Libyan missile attacks on U.S. planes and terrorist attacks on U.S. personnel in Europe.

Power has remained securely in the hands of Qaddafi and the General People's Committee. That there is internal dissent is indicated by the occurrence of at least six coup attempts since 1969: one led by Adam Said Hawwaz and Musa Aumad in 1969, a tribal uprising in 1970, a coup led by Omar Miheishi in 1975, a coup attempt in 1978, a series of commando attacks in 1984 by members of the National Front for the Salvation of Libya, and a failed coup in 1993 by members of the Warfalla tribe.

In 1980 Qaddafi launched a drive against both domestic and foreign opposition, warning exiles to return to Libya or be "liquidated." Within Libya more than 2,000 persons were reported to be under arrest, while anti-Qaddafi exiles were shot and killed by hit squads in London, Paris, and Rome.

The late 1980s and 1990s were marked by Libya's ostracism from international politics following its alleged involvement in terrorist acts. In 1988 two Libyan intelligence agents allegedly planted an ex-

plosive device in Malta on the flight connecting with Pan Am flight 103 in Germany, which later exploded over Lockerbie, Scotland, killing 259 passengers and crew and 11 people on the ground. In September 1989 Libya allegedly masterminded the bombing of French airline UTA flight 772 over Niger, killing all 171 persons aboard. In March 1999 a French court convicted in absentia and sentenced to life in prison six Libyan intelligence agents, one of them the brother-in-law of Qaddafi, in the UTA bombing.

In 1999 Libya began moderating its stance in world politics and its support of extremism. Qaddafi agreed to cease his financial support of terrorists and extradited two suspects in the Lockerbie bombing. In 2001, one Libyan defendant was convicted in the Lockerbie trial held in the Netherlands, while a second was acquitted. As a result of Libya's cooperation, UN sanctions that had been imposed in 1992 were first suspended and then fully lifted, in 2003. Sanctions by the United States, however, remained in place. In 2003 Libya agreed to a \$2.7 billion settlement with the families of the Lockerbie tragedy and also worked out settlements regarding the UTA bombing and other terrorist actions. In December 2003 Qaddafi, whose change of course was prompted by the failure of many of his earlier policies, announced that Libya would cease its nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons programs and submit to international inspections. In 2004 Libya made public its stockpiles of chemical weapons. Relations with European nations and the United States finally began to normalize; world leaders visited Libya, and Qaddafi made his first trip to western Europe in 15 years when he visited Brussels in 2004. That year the United States ended most of its sanctions and resumed diplomatic relations with Libya.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1951–69 King Idris I
1969– Muammar Abu Minyar al-Qaddafi

CONSTITUTION

Libya is in theory a *jamahiriyah* (state of the masses), governed by the people through local revolutionary councils and people's committees. In 1975 a 1,112-member General National Congress was established, consisting of the members of the RCC, leaders of the existing people's congresses, trade unions, and professional organizations. In late 1976 the congress renamed itself the General People's Congress (GPC, Mutamar al-Sha'ah Al'Am). Direct people's authority was set forth as the basis of Libyan political order in the form of people's congresses and popular committees. Members of the unicameral General People's Congress are elected indirectly through the hi-

erarchy of people's committees. However, in reality the government remains a dictatorship.

PARLIAMENT

The legislature, which has limited legislative powers, is unicameral. The sole chamber, the GPC has between 750 and 1,000 members (though some sources report double that number), appointed by local "basic people's congresses" for three-year terms. Nominally, the GPC has executive power, and its general secretary is often listed as head of government. However, real power lies in the hands of Qaddafi, who holds no office and has been the self-styled "Leader of the Revolution" since 1979.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Political parties are prohibited. One of the tasks of the RCC was to create an organization for mass mobilization without legalizing political parties. The answer was the Arab Socialist Union, which was founded in 1971. The Arab Socialist Union is not described as a party in government circles but as a "popular revolutionary alliance of the working forces."

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

From 1951 to 1963 Libya was divided into three autonomous provinces—Cyrenaica, Tripolitania, and Fezzan—corresponding to historical and topographical regions. In 1963 the kingdom was divided into 10 *mohafadas*, or governorates, each under a *mohaafiz*, or governor. The governorates were divided into *mutasarrifiyaat*, or districts, each under a *mutasarrif*, or district chief. The districts in turn were subdivided into *mudiriyyat*, each headed by a *mudir*, or chief. Municipalities, such as Tripoli and Benghazi, were divided into *aqsam*, or wards, each under a *mukhtar*, or headman, who was invariably a tribal sheikh. This form of local government was retained when Libya became a republic in 1969.

All local government officials are appointed by the RCC, and at least half the governors are members of the police or armed forces. Municipal and local councils, where they function, have only nominal and advisory powers.

In 1974 all *mohafadas* were abolished, and the administrative structures and departments of the local governments were transferred to the central ministries. Control offices were established in the major municipalities. The towns themselves were divided into quarters, each quarter having its own basic people's committee incorporating local trade unions and vocational syndicates. A total of 25 municipalities, or *baladiyat*, were established as local government units; these may have later been replaced by 13 regional administrative divisions.

LEGAL SYSTEM

With the acceptance of the primacy of Islamic law, the dual religious-secular court structure became unnecessary. In November 1973 the religious judicial system of *qadi* courts was abolished. The secular court system was retained to administer justice, but its jurisdiction came to include religious matters. Secular jurisprudence had to conform to Islamic sharia, or religious law. There are four levels of courts: summary courts, which try petty offenses; the courts of first instance, which try more serious crimes; the court of appeals; and the Supreme Court, which is the court of final appeal.

Special revolutionary courts were set up in 1980 to try political offenses. These courts usually meet in secret. Security forces also have the right to pass sentence without trial in the case of political cases.

In 1997 the Charter of Honor was instituted, imposing stiff penalties on anyone opposing the regime.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Libya has a poor human rights record. Sharp restrictions on freedom of the press, speech, assembly and association, and religion are in place. All political activities not officially approved are banned and subject to harsh penalties. Citizens do not have the right to change their government; any activity "opposed to the revolution" is punishable by death. The security forces arbitrarily detain citizens, who also do not have the right to be represented by legal counsel or receive a fair trial. Amnesty International has frequently criticized the government, accusing it of systematic torture and cruelty toward political dissidents.

Despite Libya's changed posture in the international community since the late 1990s, little has changed domestically in terms of human rights. Freedoms of the press, of speech, of assembly, and to change the government are either nonexistent or severely restricted. The judiciary is not independent, security forces have the power to pass sentences without a trial, and the government has used summary judicial proceedings to suppress domestic dissent. Political trials are held in secret with no due process considerations. Arbitrary arrest and torture are commonplace.

FOREIGN POLICY

Since taking power in 1969, Qaddafi determined Libya's foreign policy based on a series of goals, including Arab and African unity, the elimination of the state of Israel, the advancement of Islam, and an end to Western influence in the Middle East and Africa. In the early 1990s Libyan terrorism continued to target anti-Qaddafi dissi-

dents abroad, and Libyan agents were suspected in the disappearance of the prominent Libyan dissident Mansour Kikhya from Cairo in December 1993.

Libya, which sided with Iraq during the Persian Gulf War, spent much of the 1990s battling its international pariah status, with limited success. On April 5, 1999, more than 10 years after the 1988 bombing of Pan Am flight 103, Libya finally extradited two men suspected in the attack. In response the United Nations suspended the economic sanctions that had been in place since April 1992. These sanctions, expanded in November 1993, had included a freeze on Libyan funds overseas, a ban on the sale of oil equipment for oil and gas export terminals and refineries, and restrictions on civil aviation and the supply of arms. Although UN sanctions were suspended, some U.S. sanctions, which covered foreign companies making new investments of \$40 million or more over 12-month periods in Libya's oil or gas sectors, remained in place into the 2000s.

On a regional basis, Libya's relations with Sudan are troubled over accusations that Sudan has harbored anti-Qaddafi Islamic dissidents. Libya expelled more than 150,000 Sudanese guest workers between 1996 and 1999. In 2002 Libya and the United States held talks for the first time after years of hostility over Libya's sponsorship of terrorism. In 2003 UN sanctions were fully lifted after Libya made reparations for terrorist acts, including the downing of the Pan American flight over Lockerbie, Scotland. In late 2003 Libya renounced its program to develop weapons of mass destruction, an action which normalized relations with Western Europe and with the United States.

DEFENSE

The Libyan defense structure is headed by Qaddafi as commander in chief of the armed forces. Senior ranks have been purged on several occasions because of suspected or actual coup plots. Compulsory military service was introduced in 1975. The draft age is 17, and the conscription service period is two years. Both men and women are eligible. As of 2003 the total strength of the armed forces, consisting of the army, air force, and navy, was 76,500 members. In 1999 defense spending was \$1.3 billion, or 3.9 percent of gross domestic product (GDP).

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	76,500
Military Manpower Availability:	1,505,675
Military Expenditures \$billion:	1.3
as % of GDP:	3.9
as % of central government expenditures:	—
Arms Imports \$million:	—
Arms Exports \$million:	23

ECONOMY

According to official Libyan figures, the UN sanctions in place from 1992 to 1999 cost Libya more than \$24 billion, the hardest-hit sector being the oil industry, with an estimated \$5 billion in lost revenues. The government dominates the economy through the complete control of the country's oil resources, which account for virtually all of Libya's export earnings and about one-third of GDP. Libya has three domestic refineries, with a combined capacity of approximately 348,000 barrels per day, nearly twice the volume of domestic oil consumption. Indeed, the combination of vast oil revenues and a small population gives Libya one of the highest per capita GDPs in Africa. However, much of the country's income has been wasted through mismanagement. This has led to high levels of inflation and overall declining living standards, as the government has been forced to cut back on public expenditures. Import restrictions and inefficient resource allocations have led to periodic shortages of basic goods and foodstuffs. A wage freeze for government jobs, imposed in 1981, lasted into the late 1990s. Largely due to international sanctions and reduced oil export revenues, Libya's economy averaged virtually 0 percent growth in the latter half of the 1990s. In efforts to diversify, such non-oil sectors as manufacturing and construction, which account for about 25 percent of GDP, expanded to include the production and refining of petrochemicals, iron, steel, and aluminum.

In general, the heavy socialist flavor of the economy has stifled entrepreneurialism. The 1994 Purge Laws, which allow for the confiscation of private assets above a nominal amount (describing wealth in excess of such an undetermined amount "the fruits of exploitation and corruption"), have been a death knell for private enterprise.

Nevertheless, at least with respect to oil, Libya's future looks bright. As of 1999 Libya had 12 oil fields with reserves of one billion barrels or more and two others with reserves of 500 million to one billion barrels. Higher oil prices in 1999 and 2000 led to increases in export revenues, which improved macroeconomic balances and helped to stimulate the economy. Following the easing of UN and U.S. sanctions, Libya tried to increase its attractiveness to foreign investors, and several foreign companies have sought contracts. GDP growth was estimated at 6.5 percent in 2000. Additionally, Libya has taken small steps toward a more liberal economic structure, applying for World Trade Organization membership, ending some subsidies, and beginning the privatization of some industries.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 37.48
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 6,700
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: —
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: —

Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:

Agriculture: 8.7

Industry: 45.7

Services: 45.6

Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:

Private Consumption: 57

Government Consumption: 17

Gross Domestic Investment: 9.9

Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 18.65

Imports: 7.224

% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: —

% of Income Received by Richest 10%: —

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
—	—	—	—	—

Finance

National Currency: Libyan Dinar (LYD)

Exchange Rate: \$1 = LYD 1.325

Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 8.34

Central Bank Discount Rate %: 5.0

Total External Debt \$billion: 4.069

Debt Service Ratio %: —

Balance of Payments \$billion: 9.895

International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 18.3

Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
2.9

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 10

per capita \$: 1.80

Foreign Direct Investment \$million: —

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar year

Revenues \$billion: 13.52

Expenditures \$billion: 12.23

Budget Surplus \$billion: 1.29

Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 8.7

Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: —

Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 2.19

Irrigation, % of Farms having: 21.9

Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 34.1

Total Farmland % of land area: 1.0

Livestock: Cattle 000: 130

Chickens million: 25

Pigs 000: —

Sheep million: 4.13

Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters 000: 652

Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 33.7

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: —
Industrial Production Growth Rate %: —

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 73.97
Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 13.35
Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 2.5
Net Energy Imports % of use: -271.7
Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 4.6
 Production kW-hr billion: 20.2
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 18.8
Coal Reserves tons billion: —
 Production tons million: —
 Consumption tons 000: 6
Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: 52
 Production cubic feet billion: 219
 Consumption cubic feet billion: 197
Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: 39
 Production barrels million per day: 1.58
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 237
Pipelines Length km: 7,252

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 7.224
Exports \$billion: 18.65
Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —
Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —
Balance of Trade \$billion: 9.895

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Italy %	27.2	39.2
Germany %	10.3	13.5
Tunisia %	7.7	—
United Kingdom %	6.9	—
South Korea %	6.3	—
France %	5.8	6.1
Spain %	—	13.6
Turkey %	—	6.6

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 83,200
 Paved %: 57.2
Automobiles: 552,700
Trucks and Buses: 195,500
Railroad: Track Length km: 191
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: —
Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 17
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 105.1
Airports: 139
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 409
Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 178
Number of Tourists from 000: —
Tourist Receipts \$million: 39
Tourist Expenditures \$million: 574

Communications

Telephones 000: 750
Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
Cellular Telephones 000: 100
Personal Computers 000: 130
Internet Hosts per million people: 11.6
Internet Users per 1,000 people: 28

ENVIRONMENT

Libya's major environmental issues focus almost exclusively on the availability of freshwater. The falling water tables in the country's best agricultural lands, caused by too much irrigation, pose severe long-term ecological threats to agriculture, as does desertification.

Libya is party to several international environmental treaties, including those regarding desertification, marine dumping, nuclear testing, ozone-layer protection, and maritime law.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 0.2
Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: 5
Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 0
Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 10.91

LIVING CONDITIONS

The United Nations Human Development Index for 2002 ranked Libya 58th among 177 nations in terms of life expectancy, education, and standard of living. In 2004 life expectancy in Libya was 76.5 years. The literacy rate in 2003 was 82.6 percent, while combined gross enrollment at primary, secondary, and tertiary schools in 2002 was 97 percent. Per capita GDP for Libyans in 2004 was \$6,700.

Social welfare networks in Libya have vastly improved since the 1969 coup. The retirement, social-security, health-care, educational, and transportation systems were all upgraded to serve more people. Adequate housing has been a more difficult problem. Most urban Libyans live in government-subsidized housing, and while the early years of the regime saw an increase of some 300,000 such units, the last two decades of the 20th century witnessed little new investment in housing. In 2001 about 89 percent of the population lived in cities, and urban growth is con-

tinuing. Added to this is the high fertility rate of almost 3.5 children per woman in 2004. These factors together have amplified housing shortages and led to the creation of shantytowns on the outskirts of cities. Apartment living is the norm for the middle classes. Most families own a television, while only 10 percent own cars.

The small percentage of the population living in rural areas makes their living from agriculture or as shepherds.

Islam is central to the Libyan way of life, which revolves around the five daily prayers Muslims are required to recite. Many Libyan men attend the mosque regularly, in keeping with the five prayer times; Libyan women predominantly pray in the home. Friday is Libya's holy day, and that day's noon prayer is almost always attended at the local mosque.

HEALTH

Medical care is free in Libya, as part of the social services provided by the government. Enormous improvements in the health-care system came about following the 1969 takeover by Qaddafi. In 1960 the infant mortality rate was a staggering 159 out of every 1,000 live births; by 2005 that number had dropped to 25 per 1,000 live births. Life expectancy increased 15 years in the same time period. Between 1970 and 1985 the number of health-care providers increased sevenfold. As of 2004 there were 129 physicians for every 100,000 people. Access to safe drinking water and proper sanitation has also improved: In 2002, 97 percent of people had access to proper sanitation, 72 percent to safe drinking water. Immunization rates for children one year of age are also high: 99 percent for tuberculosis, 93 percent for DPT and polio, and 91 percent for measles in 2003.

Serious illnesses in Libya include infectious hepatitis and typhoid. Malaria has been eradicated from the country, and together with the World Health Organization the government has engaged in a campaign of polio eradication. HIV/AIDS, though not the major health concern it is in sub-Saharan Africa, is still a menace, with 10,000 Libyans living with the virus as of 2003. Most of the transmission of the disease comes through drug use; thus, education is an important factor in fighting its spread. In September 2002 the Libyan government launched a National AIDS Program. In 2002 public expenditures on health care were 1.6 percent of GDP.

Health

Number of Physicians: 6,371
 Number of Dentists: 693
 Number of Nurses: 17,779
 Number of Pharmacists: 1,225
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 129

Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 24.6
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 97
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 3.3
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 121
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.3
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 93
 Measles: 91
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 97
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 72

FOOD AND NUTRITION

A Muslim country, Libya has the dietary restrictions of that religion; alcoholic drinks and pork are forbidden. The semolina wheat known as couscous is popular in Libya, as it is throughout North Africa. The grain is consumed for lunch or dinner, as accompanied by meat (usually lamb) or vegetables in a sauce or served with milk and honey for breakfast. Another source of carbohydrates is the flat bread known as *kasrah*, which is eaten with most meals, often with dips, such as the mashed eggplant and sesame seed dish known as baba ghanoush.

Grown widely in Libya, dates are a popular snack food, as are olives. The date palm is a versatile food, eaten dried or fresh or squeezed for its juice. Other drinks include coffee and mint tea.

In general, nutrition in Libya is adequate. Between 1995 and 2003, for example, only 5 percent of children under five were diagnosed as moderately to severely underweight. In the same time frame, 90 percent of households were using iodized salt.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 0.8
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 3,300
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 204.7
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 276.0

STATUS OF WOMEN

Although the 1969 constitution grants women total equality, the country's cultural attitudes and Islamic society still restrict women's rights. For example, a woman must have her husband's permission to travel abroad, and rural women often do not attend school.

Qaddafi has taken a leadership role in efforts to change the status of women and expand their access to educational and employment opportunities. However, there is still minimal female representation in government.

Female genital mutilation is still practiced in remote rural areas. Violence against women also continues to be a problem.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: —
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 0.94
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: —

WORK

As of 2004 there were some 1.6 million people in the Libyan labor force. As of 1997 the service sector was the biggest employer, with 54 percent of workers; industry employs 29 percent. The oil industry, next to the government itself, is the largest single employer. Industrial workers are also engaged in food processing, textiles, handicrafts, cement, appliances, and construction equipment. Agriculture accounts for the remaining 17 percent of the workforce; wheat, barley, olives, dates, citrus, vegetables, peanuts, soybeans, sheep, and cattle are all raised. Fishermen catch mullet, sardines, and tuna in the waters off of Tripoli. The 2004 unemployment rate was 30 percent. Much of Libya's workforce is made up of foreign workers, who do the unskilled tasks Libyans look down on, or foreign technicians, who advise on petroleum extraction and design and construct irrigation projects.

There are no independent labor unions in Libya. All unions must be authorized by the government and belong to the National Trade Unions' Federation. All workers are required to join a union, though they have no right to collective bargaining or to strike, and labor laws are basically imposed top to bottom by the government. The minimum work age is 18, the maximum workweek 48 hours.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 1,590,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 24.7
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 17
 Industry: 29
 Services: 54
 Unemployment %: 30

EDUCATION

Education is compulsory from the ages of six to 15, the duration of primary education in Libya. Secondary education is for three years or to the age of 18. As of 2003, 82.6 percent of the population was literate.

Institutions of higher education include Al-Fatah University (formerly the University of Libya at Tripoli), the University of Garyounis (formerly the University of Libya at Benghazi), and the Bright Star University of Technology, at Marsa al-Brega. There are also two higher

institutes of technology and one of mechanical and electrical engineering. Education is one area in which the status of women in Libya is improving. Approximately 46 percent of postsecondary students are female, up from 25 percent in 1980.

Libya is emphasizing higher education, with over half of public revenues spent on tertiary education in 1999 to 2001. Total enrollment at all higher-level institutions was 375,028 in 2002. Public expenditures on education in 1999 totaled 2.7 percent of GDP.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 82.6
 Male %: 92.4
 Female %: 72.0
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 16.4
 First Level: Primary Schools: —
 Teachers: 94,079
 Students: 794,293
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 8.4
 Net Enrollment Ratio: —
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: —
 Teachers: —
 Students: 619,940
 Student-Teacher Ratio: —
 Net Enrollment Ratio: —
 Third Level: Institutions: 10
 Teachers: 15,711
 Students: 375,028
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 58.1
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 2.7

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Libya pursues research in fields from agriculture to nuclear power to petroleum engineering and electronics. Numerous universities and public ministries oversee such research. Al-Fatah University has faculties in science, medicine, nuclear engineering, and agriculture. Faculties of science and engineering are also found at the University of Garyounis and at Bright Star University. Al-Arab Medical University and Sebha University focus on medicine, while Sebha also has agricultural and engineering faculties.

The Secretariat of Agriculture, through its Agricultural Research Center, pursues research in field crops, horticulture, plant protection, livestock, forestry, and natural resources. The Secretariat of Training and Habilitation, through its Nuclear Research Center and its Libyan Center for Remote Sensing and Space Sciences, pursues research in those topics. Other government secretariats sponsor research in fisheries and livestock.

As of 2001 Libya had 361 technicians involved in research and development per million people. Many of these research positions were filled by foreign scientists and technicians.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 361
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: —
 Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

There are no independent media in the country. There is the popular daily newspaper *al-Fajr al-Jadid*, and local revolutionary committees publish smaller newspapers. Two other dailies are *al-Jihad* and *Libyan Press Review*. The official news agency, JANA, is government run. While foreign publications are allowed to be imported into the country, they are routinely censored, and the government frequently bans the entry of individual issues.

All 23 radio and 12 television outlets are state controlled. Libya also runs the Voice of Africa radio service, which broadcasts across Africa in Arabic, French, and English. Satellite television is available, though its content is also censored. Internet access is limited; in 2003 there were an estimated 160,000 Internet users. The same year there were 100,000 cellular phone users.

With the government owning and controlling all print and broadcast media outlets, Libya cannot be said to have a free and open media. Reporters without Borders ranked the country 155th out of 167 countries in its 2004 world press freedom index.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 4
 Total Circulation 000: 71.1
 Circulation per 1,000: 14
 Books Published: —
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers million: 1.49
 per 1,000: 273
 Television sets 000: 760
 per 1,000: 139

CULTURE

Libyan culture is strongly influenced by Islam in its teachings and art. The country was once known for its traditional weaving, embroidery, metal engraving, and leatherwork. Such artwork seldom depicts people or animals, as this runs counter to Islamic tradition. Instead, Muslim and Libyan artists developed the arabesque, in which designs are complex, geometric, and abstract. This style can be seen in carpets, engraving, and the ornamentation of mosques, such as the Karamanli and Gurgi in Tripoli. These geometric designs are often ornamented with words from the Koran. The Qaddafi regime, with its nationalization of business, has inadvertently discouraged the work of artisans.

Folk dance and folk music are also important parts of the Libyan cultural scene. Popular and very physical line dances might be accompanied by such traditional instruments as the lyre; the *'ud*, or windpipe made of cane; the *tablah*, or hand-beaten drum; violins; and tambourines. Other folk traditions include horse races and festivals.

The Qaddafi regime has discouraged such folk arts insofar as they might represent the influence of old tribal life; the government wants to reduce such influence in order to create a Pan-Arab state. Otherwise, the arts are supported by the government through the Ministry of Information, the Ministry of Education and National Guidance, and the Al-Fikr Society, a group of intellectuals and professionals.

Libraries include the government library and archives in Tripoli, the public library in Benghazi, and university libraries. The government strongly controls the content of printed matter, and such collections contain more religious writing than contemporary works.

Numerous museums preserve Libya's cultural heritage. The Department of Antiquities is responsible for the Archaeological Museum, the Leptis Magna Museum of Antiquities, the Natural History Museum, and the Sabratha Museum of Antiquities, all in the western region, and the archaeological sites of Ptolemais and Appolonia in the eastern region. The Sebha Museum contains exhibits of ancient remains of the former Fezzan region.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts national currency million: 1.4
 Number of Cinemas: 27
 Seating Capacity: 14,400
 Annual Attendance: 2,900,000

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Libya is rich in ancient myth. The very name of the country comes from a woman beloved by Poseidon, whose name was given to all of then-known Africa. Other mythological connections have to do with the Argonauts. Euphemus was the son of Poseidon and Europa and was the helmsman of the Argonauts. Medea predicted that he would one day rule over Libya, and the prophecy became true when Battus, one of Euphemus's descendants, came to Libya and founded Cyrene.

Legends and folktales are important parts of Libyan folklore. The country's legends mostly deal with historical figures, such as Muslim leaders who fought the Crusaders or the Italian invaders. Often from religious backgrounds, these leaders were thought to be holy men and to possess

a grace that allowed them to perform miracles. The graves of such holy men, or *marabouts*, have become pilgrimage destinations.

Folktales in Libya also take on a religious significance, many of them relating stories of the prophet Muhammad. Evil spirits are also a feature of Libyan and Arab folklore in general. These spirits, or *jinn*, are able to take on human form and need to be warded off by different methods, both religious and animistic.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

In cities, towns, and villages, sidewalk cafés are where mostly men gather to socialize, play chess or dominoes, and drink tea and coffee. There are no nightclubs or bars in this Muslim country. Evening entertainment consists of visits to the cinema or time at home. Attending camel races and soccer matches is another popular form of public entertainment.

Listening to the radio or watching television, though the content of both is strictly controlled by the government, is a popular form of entertainment. In 2000 there were 273 radios and 139 television sets for every 1,000 people.

Along the coast, outings to the beach are popular, as are water sports such as swimming and scuba diving.

ETIQUETTE

The primary factor in the social life of Libya is its status as an Islamic state. While it is not fundamentalist, religion rules not only social conventions but also codes of etiquette. The typical Libyan greeting is the Islamic *as-salamu'alaykum* ("Peace be with you"), answered by *wa'alaykum as-salam* ("And peace be with you as well"). God, or Allah, is continually referred to in polite conversation, as in *in-sha' Allah*, or "If God wills it." Handshakes are also typical forms of greeting between men and with some women.

Islam has numerous taboos, most prominently in food and drink. Neither alcohol nor pork is allowed. Bread is considered sacred, and bread crumbs should not be brushed off the table onto the floor. Shoes are removed before entering a home or mosque, and the soles of neither shoes nor feet are shown to others. The left hand is considered unclean; therefore, it is considered rude to gesture, accept or take things, or eat with the left hand. The thumbs-up gesture common in North America is rude in Muslim countries. The role of the female in Muslim society is very subservient, and it is considered impolite to ask about female members of a family if the topic is not brought up by the male head of the household himself.

The nation's desert location determines other forms of etiquette. For example, a Libyan always greets guests with a cup of coffee or tea, and desert tradition requires that a guest be offered food. Such hospitality is part of the Libyan code of honor. It is considered disrespectful to openly criticize anyone, and courtesy must always be shown when in public. Children are taught to respect adults. Titles rather than first names are normally used in public address. Libyans of tribal background give great importance to tribal loyalty.

FAMILY LIFE

Most Libyan marriages are arranged; even ones that are based on love must have the approval of parents, and the terms of the marriage contract are negotiated by the parents. The wedding ceremony is officiated by a prayer leader, or imam, and usually takes place in the mosque or at the bride's home. The Libyan family is patrilineal. A father's sons and their wives traditionally lived with him, as did any unmarried daughters and the grandparents. Upon the death of the father, the sons establish their own homes and repeat the same process.

With the 1969 coup, some of the established traditions of Libyan life changed, including the role of women. The new regime wanted to include women in the power base and thus encouraged them to vote, gain an education, and obtain work. To this end, day-care centers were established for working mothers, and a retirement age of 55 was set. However, traditions die hard, and women are still underrepresented in higher-paying positions despite their near parity in education.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Both Western attire and traditional clothing can be found in modern Libya. In urban areas the dress tends to be Western but modest in style. Women wear head coverings in traditional Muslim fashion. Jeans are typical for young men and boys in cities, while dresses are usual for women.

Some urban men still wear the traditional clothing of a long white gown over shirt and pants, with a Muslim cap. More traditional women will wear the long, dark gowns that cover both body and hair. Such attire is the norm in rural areas.

A special style of traditional clothing is worn by the Tuareg tribe in the Libyan Desert. Both men and women cover their heads with blue veils, leaving only their eyes visible, a protection against both sun and blowing sand.

SPORTS

Soccer is the most popular spectator and participatory sport in the nation. The top national league includes 15

teams; Tripoli and Benghazi are both home to four clubs. Al-Ahly and Al-Etihad of Tripoli are the main teams and have won most national league championships. Libya's national soccer team competes against Arab and African teams.

Basketball and track and field are also popular. More traditional are camel-racing and horse-racing events. Libya's athletes first took part in the Olympics in 1968 but did not compete again until 1992. Since then the country has regularly sent small contingents in track and field and martial arts.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1949** United Nations resolves to grant Libya independence.
- 1951** Libya achieves independence as the United Kingdom of Libya, with Emir Sayid Idris al-Sanusi as King Idris I.
- 1953** Libya joins the Arab League.
- 1955** Libya becomes a member of the United Nations.
- 1956** Libya establishes diplomatic relations with the USSR.
U.S. oil companies are granted drilling rights in Libya.
- 1961** A 100-mile pipeline links Libyan oil to Mediterranean ports.
Royal decree increases the government's share of oil profits from 50 to 70 percent.
- 1963** Women are granted the right to vote.
- 1964** Britain and the United States begin negotiations with Libya to shut down their Libyan air bases.
- 1967** After the Six-Day War between Israel and neighboring Arab countries, Libya assists Jordan and Egypt and distances itself from Israel.
- 1969** A bloodless revolution establishes the Libyan Arab Republic, led by Col. Muammar al-Qaddafi, chairman of the RCC.
Qaddafi quells a coup attempt.
- 1970** A tribal coup attempt is put down.
Withdrawal of British and U.S. troops is completed.
- 1973** Qaddafi promulgates his "cultural revolution," an attempt to turn away from all foreign ideologies and embrace Arab socialism and Islamic fundamentalism as the guiding principles of Libya.
Banks are nationalized and oil companies brought under government control.
- 1975** Omar Miheishi leads a failed coup attempt.
- 1976** At Qaddafi's behest, the GPC proclaims the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, intended to be a bureaucracy-free style of government.
- 1978** Dissidents unsuccessfully attempt a coup.
- 1979** Qaddafi relinquishes his duties as general secretary of the GPC but remains supreme commander of the armed forces.
- 1980** Qaddafi commands exiles to return to Libya or be "liquidated."
Numerous anti-Qaddafi Libyans in London, Paris, and Rome are subsequently assassinated. Libya intervenes in Chad's civil war, opposing the forces of Hissène Habré.
- 1981** U.S. Navy shoots down two Libyan fighter planes over the Gulf of Sidra.
- 1982** United States imposes an embargo on Libyan oil imports.
- 1984** After suffering a series of bombings aimed at Libyan dissidents, Great Britain cuts off diplomatic relations with Libya.
Members of the National Front for the Salvation of Libya launch a series of commando attacks against the government.
- 1986** United States retaliates against Libyan attacks on U.S. personnel and airplanes by destroying two Libyan ships and bombing Tripoli and Benghazi.
- 1987** Qaddafi's forces are routed in Chad.
- 1988** Libya is suspected when Pan Am flight 103 explodes over Lockerbie, Scotland, killing 270.
- 1989** Libya is suspected when Flight 772 of UTA, a French airline, explodes over Chad, killing 171.
- 1990** Libya and Chad agree to allow the International Court of Justice to arbitrate their dispute over the Aozou Strip.
- 1992** United Nations imposes sanctions on Libya for its refusal to extradite two Libyans suspected of bombing Pan Am flight 103.
- 1993** Libyan agents are suspected in the disappearance of prominent Libyan dissident Mansour Kikhya from Cairo.
A failed army-led coup attempt against Qaddafi leads to mass arrests and a shakeup of army command.
The UN toughens sanctions over Libya's continued refusal to extradite Lockerbie bombing suspects.
Members of the Warfalla tribe unsuccessfully attempt a coup against the government.
- 1994** International Court of Justice rules against Libyan claims to the Aozou Strip in Chad. Libyan troops are withdrawn from the region under UN supervision.
- 1995** Faced with economic problems, Qaddafi initiates a policy of expelling foreign workers from Libya to provide employment for Libyans.
- 1996** Still frustrated with Libyan refusal to extradite Lockerbie suspects, the United States imposes

- “secondary” sanctions penalizing any company operating in U.S. markets that invests more than \$40 million in Libya.
- 1997** South African leader Nelson Mandela visits Libya, signaling a break in the country’s isolation. The Vatican resists U.S. pressure and reestablishes diplomatic relations with Libya.
- 1998** Qaddafi announces Libya’s plan to be more closely aligned with Africa than the Arab world, signaling a seminal change in country’s foreign policy focus.
- 1999** Libya hands over two suspects in the Lockerbie bombing to the Scottish court. UN Security Council suspends economic sanctions. Britain reestablishes diplomatic relations with Libya. French court finds six Libyans guilty in absentia for bombing of UTA flight over Chad in 1989.
- 2001** The Lockerbie trial concludes, convicting one Libyan defendant and acquitting the other.
- 2002** In January, Libya and the United States begin talks to improve relations. The Libyan convicted in the Lockerbie trial loses his appeal and begins serving a life sentence.
- 2003** The United Nations lifts sanctions against Libya after Qaddafi agrees to a \$2.7 billion settlement with the families of victims of the Lockerbie bombing. Qaddafi renounces Libya’s program to build weapons of mass destruction.
- 2004** Libya pays compensation to the families of victims of the UTA and La Belle disco bombings. Qaddafi visits western Europe for the first time in 15 years. Most U.S. economic sanctions on Libya are terminated.
- 2005** Libya apologizes to Mauritania for allegedly supporting rebels who tried to overthrow President Maaouya Ould Taya in 2004.

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Libya. *The Five-Year Development Plan, 1981–85; Libya Population Census, 1995*

CONTACT INFORMATION

Mission of Libya to the United Nations
309 East 48th Street
New York, NY 10017
Phone: (212) 752-5775 Fax: (212) 593-4787

INTERNET RESOURCES

- CIA World Factbook: Libya
<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/ly.html>
- Libyan Mission to the United Nations
http://www.un.int/libya/index_n.htm

LIECHTENSTEIN

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Principality of Liechtenstein (Fürstentum Liechtenstein)

ABBREVIATION

LI

CAPITAL

Vaduz

HEAD OF STATE

Prince Hans-Adam II (from 1989)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Chief of Government Otmar Hasler (from 2001)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Constitutional monarchy

POPULATION

33,717 (2005)

AREA

160 sq km (61.8 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

German (Alemannic)

LANGUAGE

German

RELIGION

Roman Catholicism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Swiss franc

NATIONAL FLAG

Two horizontal rectangles, blue above red. On the blue rectangle, near the hoist, is the princely crown in gold.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

Shield divided into five segments, with a smaller heart shield of a red bar over yellow, the colors of the ruling house, superimposed in the center. A black eagle with a woman's head displayed on a gold field in the lower-right quarter represents the ancient barony of Schellenberg. Another eagle, crowned and gold backed, in the upper left, stands for Silesia. A *crancelin*, or crown of rue (portion of a leafy coronet), diagonally across yellow and black stripes in the upper-right quarter stands for Saxony. The golden horn on the blue lower-middle sector stands for the duchy of Jagorndorf. The red and white vertical halves of the lower-left quarter signify the duchy of Troppan. Ceremonially, the emblem is surrounded by an ermine-lined red canopy and topped by a red, gold, and white prince's crown surmounted by an orb and cross.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"Oben am Jungen Rhein" (On the Banks of the Young Rhine)

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

All major Christian festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

July 12, 1806

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

October 5, 1921

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

The fourth-smallest country in Europe, Liechtenstein is landlocked and roughly triangular in shape. It is located in the Rhine River valley. It has a total area of 160 sq km (61.8 sq mi), extending 28 km (17.4 mi) north to south and 11.3 km (7 mi) east to west. Its total boundary length of 76 km (47.2 mi) is shared with Austria (34.9 km, 21.7 mi) and Switzerland (41.1 km, 25.5 mi).

One-third of the country lies in the upper Rhine valley, occupying a narrow slice of land. The remainder of the country is in a part of the Alps range that runs

east to west through Switzerland. The greatest elevation is Grauspitz (2,599 m; 8,525 ft), in a spur of the Rhaetian Alps.

Geography

Area sq km: 160; sq mi 61.8

World Rank: 188th

Land Boundaries, km: Austria 34.9; Switzerland 41.1

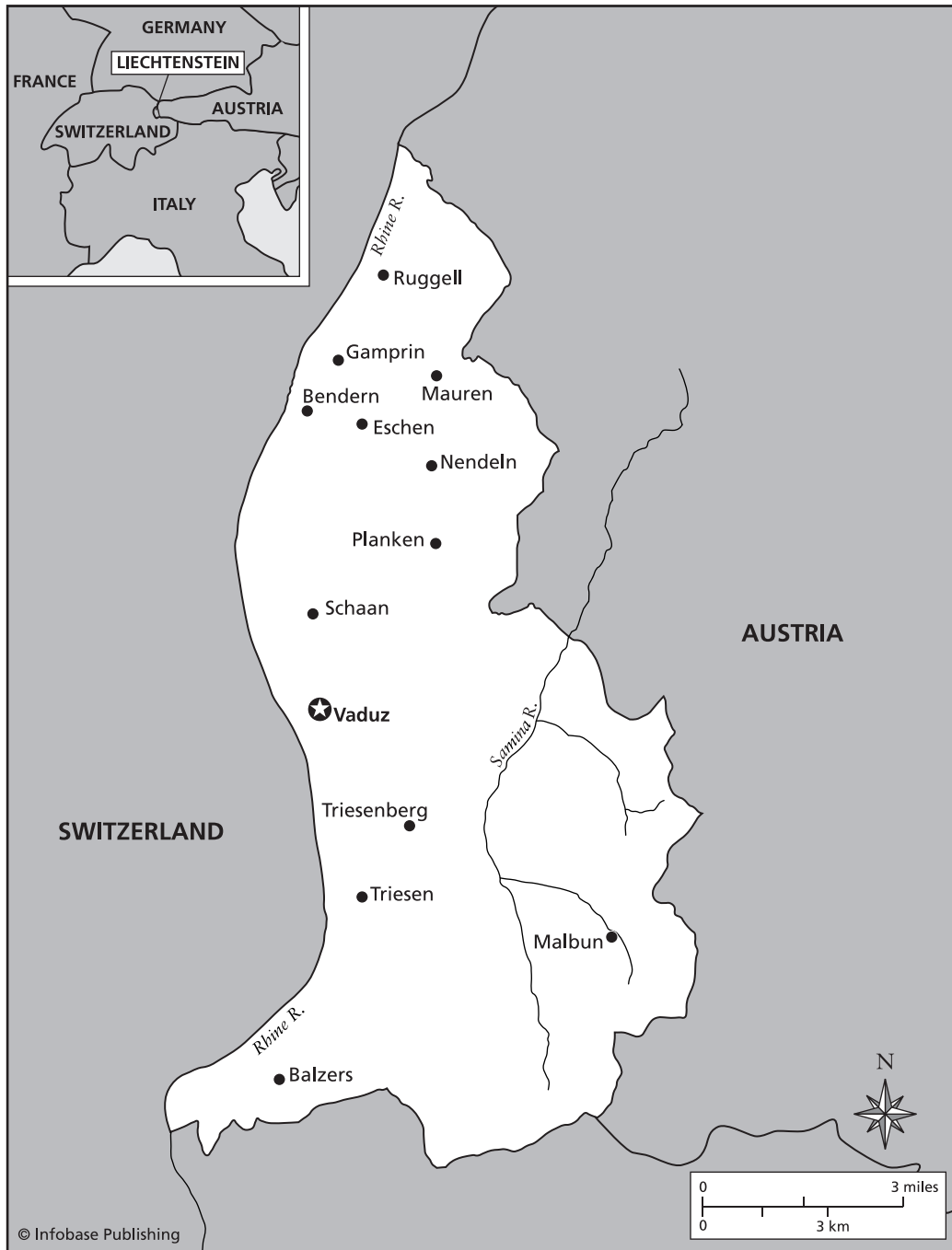
Coastline, km 0

Elevation Extremes meters:

Lowest: Ruggeller Riet 430

Highest: Grauspitz 2,599

Liechtenstein



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Land Use %

- Arable Land: 25.0
- Permanent Crops: 0.0
- Forest: 43.8
- Other: 31.2

Population of Principal Cities (2003)

Schaan	5,639
Vaduz	5,005

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Liechtenstein has an alpine climate with mild winters. The climate is less severe than might be expected from its inland location and elevation because of the warm, south-western winter wind called the *Föhn*, which hastens the coming of spring. The annual lowland temperature average is about 9°C (47°F). Annual precipitation, including some 35 days of snow, is about 1,143 mm (45 in), concentrated from June to August.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature: 47°F
Average Rainfall: 45 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Partly Alpine and partly low-lying land washed by the Rhine, Liechtenstein displays a wide variety of flora and fauna consistent with such varied geography. Plant life includes trees such as conifers, beech, alder, maple, and larch, while at higher elevations Alpine flora such as the edelweiss, gentian, and Alpine rose are typical. Orchids are even found at lower elevations, a result of the hot-house effects of the *Föhn*.

Animal life is also affected by varying elevations as well as by the prevalence of humans. Chamois are found in the mountains, while mammals at lower elevations include the badger, fox, and deer. Avian life is particularly rich, with over 120 species, including eagles, ravens, and falcons, present in the small country.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 33,717
World Rank: 187th
Density per sq km: 206.0
% of annual growth (1999-2003): —
Male %: 48.7
Female %: 51.3
Urban %: 22.0
Age Distribution %: 0-14: 17.6
15-64: 70.4
65 and over: 12.0
Population 2025: 37,600
Birth Rate per 1,000: 10.41
Death Rate per 1,000: 7.06
Rate of Natural Increase %: 0.3
Total Fertility Rate: 1.51
Expectation of Life (years): Males 75.96
Females 83.16
Marriage Rate per 1,000: 5.1
Divorce Rate per 1,000: —
Average Size of Households: 3.0
Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

The population is mainly of German stock, descended from the Alemannic tribes who settled between the Main and Danube rivers in the early centuries of the Common Era. About one-third of the population is foreign.

LANGUAGES

The official language is German. The common vernacular is Alemannic.

RELIGIONS

The state religion is Roman Catholicism. The principality forms a single deanery within the Diocese of Chur in Switzerland. The major Protestant body is the Evangelical Church.

Religious Affiliations

Roman Catholic	25,700
Protestant	2,400
Other	5,700

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The principality of Liechtenstein comprises the counties of Vaduz and Schellenberg, ruled by various families in the Middle Ages, including the von Hohenems. When the von Hohenems succumbed to financial pressures, the principality was purchased by Prince Johann Adam between 1699 and 1712 through an act of Holy Roman Emperor Charles VI. The emperor made Liechtenstein a direct fief of the Crown and confirmed the rule of Prince Anton-Florian, Johann Adam's successor. During the Napoleonic Wars and following the 1806 Treaty of Pressburg, Liechtenstein joined the Confederation of the Rhine, which made the principality a sovereign state. In 1815, following Napoleon's downfall, Liechtenstein joined the German Confederation; this connection lasted until the Prussian victory over Austria in 1866. From 1852 until the end of World War I in 1918, Liechtenstein was closely tied to Austria, but in 1923 the nation forged new economic and political links with Switzerland that have lasted to this day.

From 1938 until 1997 Liechtenstein's government was a coalition of the Progressive Citizens' Party (FBP) and the Fatherland Union (now the Patriotic Union). The former was the senior coalition partner from 1938 to 1970, 1974 to 1978, and May to October 1993. In 1997 the FBP announced that it was leaving the coalition to become an opposition party. In 2001 the FBP won parliamentary elections, and the party leader Otmar Hasler became prime minister. Women were granted suffrage for the first time in 1984. Prince Franz Josef II died in 1989 after a 51-year reign that had made him the world's most durable monarch at the time, and he was immediately succeeded by 44-year-old Prince Hans-Adam II.

In 2000 the country was rocked with international charges of money laundering for Latin American drug cartels and the Russian mafia. Subsequent investigations led to the arrests of eight high-profile Liechtensteiners, including a brother of the country's highest-ranking judge.

Prince Hans-Adam II came to fight with parliament to increase his powers in government. In the 2001

elections the FBP won the majority of seats, and Otmar Hasler became prime minister. In 2003, under allegations of functioning as a tax haven, Liechtenstein signed a treaty allowing U.S. investigators access to bank records when tracking terrorists. Meanwhile, Hans-Adam continued to press for more power for the head of state; in 2003 voters approved a number of constitutional amendments demanded by the prince, including giving him the right to veto parliament, dismiss the government, and approve judicial nominees. In 2004 Hans-Adam transferred the official duties of the ruling prince to his son, Alois, but kept the official title of head of state for himself.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

Heads of State

1938–89	Prince Franz Josef II
1989–	Prince Hans-Adam II

Prime Ministers

1945–62	Alexander Frick
1962–70	Gerard Batliner
1970–74	Alfred I. Hilbe
1974–78	Walter Kieber
1978–93	Hans Brunhart
1993	Markus Büchel
1993–2001	Mario Frick
2001–	Otmar Hasler

CONSTITUTION

Liechtenstein is a constitutional monarchy ruled by the hereditary princes of the House of Liechtenstein. The current constitution was adopted in 1921. The chief of government (Regierungschef) is appointed by the sovereign. The government, which is responsible to both the sovereign and the Landtag (Diet), also includes a deputy chief (Regierungschef-Stellvertreter), appointed by the sovereign from the minority party in the Diet, and three government councilors (Regierungsräte), elected by the Diet. The term of office of these officials is four years. In 2003 a referendum amended the constitution to give the prince sweeping new powers to veto laws passed by and dissolve parliament.

PARLIAMENT

The Landtag is a unicameral body of 25 members directly elected for four-year terms on the basis of universal suffrage by all adults over 18. (Before 1984 suffrage was limited to men.) The voting system is based on proportional representation.

All legislation must have the concurrence of the prince, who also has the right to dissolve the Landtag.

The constitution permits any group of 600 citizens or three communes to propose legislation. Bills passed by the Landtag may be submitted to popular referendum.

POLITICAL PARTIES

There are three political parties in Liechtenstein. The conservative FBP currently holds 13 of the 25 seats in the Landtag. The Free List Party, an ecological party founded in 1985, holds one seat. The Patriotic Union, a conservative-centrist party founded in 1938, holds 11 seats.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For administrative purposes the principality is divided into two districts and 11 communes, or Gemeinde.

LEGAL SYSTEM

Liechtenstein has its own civil and penal codes. The lowest court is the county court (Landgericht), which decides minor civil cases and summary criminal offenses. The criminal court (Kriminalgericht) is for major crimes, and the court of assizes is for misdemeanors. The superior court (Obergericht) and Supreme Court (Oberster Gerichtshof) are courts of appeal for civil and criminal cases, respectively. An administrative court of appeal hears appeals against government actions, and the State Court determines the constitutionality of laws.

A backlog of cases in the criminal courts means that many cases go untried for a number of years. Liechtenstein abolished the death penalty in 1987.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Liechtenstein is a constitutional monarchy and parliamentary democracy with no serious human rights problems. The independent judiciary is effective in dealing with individual instances of abuse. The constitution guarantees freedom of religion, speech, and press. The sole local human rights organization, Justitia et Pax, is an informal group that monitors prison conditions and assists foreign workers with immigration matters.

The sweeping constitutional changes of 2003 put European organizations on the alert for a possible rollback of Liechtenstein's democracy. However, to date there is no evidence that the monarchy has abused its new powers.

FOREIGN POLICY

Liechtenstein maintains an embassy in Bern, Switzerland, but is represented elsewhere by Swiss embassies and consulates through a 1919 agreement. The principality became

1406 Liechtenstein

a member of the United Nations in 1989 and a member of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) in 1991. Liechtenstein acceded to the European Economic Area in 1995 but is not part of the European Union.

DEFENSE

Since 1868 Liechtenstein has not maintained a standing army, although the constitution provides for obligatory military service for all able-bodied men up to age 60. The defense of the country is the responsibility of Switzerland.

ECONOMY

In terms of per capita gross domestic product (GDP), Liechtenstein is one of the richest nations in the world, a phenomenon that reflects the principality's rapid transition from a largely agricultural economy at the end of World War II to a highly industrialized and financially innovative nation. Some industries are owned and managed by Swiss interests, but Liechtenstein-based companies are active in exports and undertake substantial production abroad through subsidiaries.

In addition to manufacturing, two other sectors undergird the economy. The financial sector consists of a great number of foreign corporations and holding companies with nominal offices in Vaduz that are subject to virtually no regulation and pay no taxes on income or sales. In other words, the principality is one of the world's favorite tax havens. Though the country passed banking reform laws in 2000 that allow for greater transparency, its low taxes still make it an attractive location for so-called letterbox companies. Such companies provide 30 percent of state revenues. The third major sector is one it shares with all minicountries: income from the sale of postage stamps, tourism, and related activities.

The country participates in a customs union with Switzerland and uses the Swiss franc as its national currency. It imports more than 90 percent of its energy requirements. Liechtenstein has been a member of the European Economic Area (an organization serving as a bridge between the EFTA and European Union) since May 1995. The government is working to harmonize its economic policies with those of an integrated Europe.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 0.825
GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 25,000
GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: —
GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: —
Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
Industry: 40
Other: 60

Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:

Private Consumption: 59
Government Consumption: 14
Gross Domestic Investment: —

Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 2.47
Imports: 0.917

% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: —

% of Income Received by Richest 10%: —

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
—	—	—	—	—

Finance

National Currency: Swiss Franc (CHF)

Exchange Rate: \$1 = CHF 1.3467

Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: —

Central Bank Discount Rate %: —

Total External Debt \$million: —

Debt Service Ratio %: —

Balance of Payments \$million: —

International Reserves SDRs \$million: —

Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
1.0

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: —

per capita \$: —

Foreign Direct Investment \$million: —

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year

Revenues \$million: 424.2

Expenditures \$million: 414.1

Budget Surplus \$million: 10.1

Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: —

Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: —

Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: —

Irrigation, % of Farms having: —

Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: —

Total Farmland % of land area: 25.0

Livestock: Cattle 000: 6

Chickens million: —

Pigs 000: 3

Sheep 000: 2.9

Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters 000: —

Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: —

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: —

Industrial Production Growth Rate %: —

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: —
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: —
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: —
 Net Energy Imports % of use: 90
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: —
 Production kW-hr billion: —
 Consumption kW-hr billion: —
 Coal Reserves tons billion: —
 Production tons million: —
 Consumption tons million: —
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
 Production cubic feet billion: —
 Consumption cubic feet billion: —
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
 Production barrels 000 per day: —
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: —
 Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 0.917
 Exports \$billion: 2.47
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —
 Balance of Trade \$million: —

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Germany %	—	24.3
Austria %	—	9.5
France %	—	8.9
Italy %	—	6.6
United Kingdom %	—	4.6
United States %	—	18.9
Switzerland %	—	15.7

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 250
 Paved %: 100
 Automobiles: —
 Trucks and Buses: —
 Railroad: Track Length km: —
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: —
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: —
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: —
 Airports: —
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: —
 Length of Waterways km: 28

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 49
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: —
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: —

Communications

Telephones 000: 19.9
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.11
 Cellular Telephones 000: 11.4
 Personal Computers 000: —
 Internet Hosts per million people: 110,538
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 593

ENVIRONMENT

Liechtenstein has no current environmental crises or major problems; pollution from neighboring countries is the sole concern. The nation is party to most international agreements on water and air pollution as well as on biodiversity and endangered species.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 43.8
 Forest Change (1990–2000) hectares 000: —
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 40
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: —

LIVING CONDITIONS

A modern industrialized nation, Liechtenstein enjoys one of the world's highest standards of living. In 1999 per capita GDP was a robust \$25,000. Life expectancy is high, at just under 80 years, and the literacy rate stands at 100 percent.

Single-family dwellings are the norm, though with demographic changes that include a shift from rural to urban areas (22 percent of the population lived in towns as of 2003), apartment life is also common. The typical house in the countryside is similar to those found in the mountainous areas of Austria and Switzerland: It generally has a ridged roof with wide, overhanging eaves and a balcony or veranda with bright flowers such as geraniums in the summer months. These picturesque wooden and stucco structures give way in Vaduz to multistory apartment buildings. The country does not suffer from a housing shortage.

Most Liechtensteiners get about by private car, though there is also a good mass-transit system, including postal buses that take people to out-of-the-way destinations. The country's one rail line is operated by Austria.

HEALTH

Liechtenstein has a national medical-insurance system that provides free medical care to all residents as well as those employed in Liechtenstein. As of 2005 the crude birth rate and overall mortality rate were estimated at

10.4 and 7.1 per 1,000 people, respectively. The infant mortality rate was an estimated 4.7 per 1,000 births. There were an estimated 1.5 physicians and 3 nurses per 1,000 people as of 2004. Preventive medicine is built into the health-care system, with series of regular examinations scheduled for all children up to age 10. Immunization rates are correspondingly high. With few hospitals, Liechtenstein has agreements allowing its citizens to use those in Switzerland and Austria.

The population has access to safe drinking water and proper sanitation. Goiter was long a problem in this Alpine land, as it was in others before iodized salt was added to the diet. As throughout much of western and central Europe, tickborne encephalitis, a viral infection of the central nervous system, is prevalent. Ticks can be found in the woods, especially under certain pine trees, and in tall grass.

Health

Number of Physicians: 51
 Number of Dentists: —
 Number of Nurses: 101
 Number of Pharmacists: —
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 150
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 4.7
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: —
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: —
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: —
 HIV Infected % of adults: —
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: —
 Measles: —
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: —
 Access to Improved Water Source %: —

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Liechtenstein takes its culinary traditions from both Switzerland and Austria. Heavy in meat and potatoes, the cuisine is a holdover from times of hard physical labor and life without central heating. The fried shredded potatoes called *rösti* in Switzerland as well as pork in its many forms, especially as sausage or wurst, are popular. Soups and cheese also form a large part of the diet.

Lunch is typically the big meal of the day. Breakfast is simply coffee or cocoa and rolls or bread with jam. A light meal of cheese and cold cuts with bread is often served for dinner. Lunch, however, comes in several courses, including soup, salad, a main course, and dessert.

Typical dishes are *Käsknöfle*, baked noodles with grated cheese and onions; *Hafaläb*, or fried cornmeal; and *Törkarebl*, a dessert dumpling made from corn flour served with elderberry jam. Liechtenstein wines are served with most meals. In general, food is plentiful, and nutrition is

adequate, though the diet is generally heavy in fats and carbohydrates.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: —
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: —

STATUS OF WOMEN

There are no constitutional barriers to full participation by women in society. Women often play more traditional roles in the family, however, in large part due to the historic stability of Liechtenstein's society. This deference to tradition helps explain why women were not granted the vote until the early 1980s.

A Catholic country, Liechtenstein has a restrictive abortion law, allowing the procedure only when the life or health (including mental health) of the woman is threatened.

An equal opportunity law deals with workplace discrimination and sexual harassment. Domestic violence is an increasingly serious problem. The 2001 Law on Protection against Violence governs the right to expel perpetrators from and prohibit reentry into the home. Since 2001 marital rape has been a punishable offense. The government ratified the UN Convention of the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 12
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.0
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: —

WORK

The 2002 labor force of Liechtenstein was 29,000, which included 19,000 foreign workers. Of these, 13,000 commuted daily from Switzerland, Germany, and Austria. Unemployment in 2002 was just 1.3 percent, which accounts for the large foreign labor force; though in the main highly skilled, the native Liechtenstein population is not large enough to meet industrial demand.

Since World War II Liechtenstein transformed itself from an agrarian nation into an industrial one with one of the highest per capita GDPs in the world. Once a mainstay of the economy, agriculture had shrunk to just 1.3 percent of the labor force by 2001; agriculture produces wheat, barley, corn, potatoes, livestock, and dairy

products. The service sector accounted for 51.3 percent of the labor force, with many involved in banking and government work. Industry employed 47.4 percent. The industrial sector includes electronics, metal manufacturing, dental products, ceramics, pharmaceuticals, food products, precision instruments, and optical instruments.

The constitution provides for the right of association; Liechtenstein's one union has 13 percent of the labor force enrolled. Though strikes are permitted, they are rarely resorted to. The legal workweek is set at 48 hours in nonindustrial businesses, 45 hours in industry. The minimum work age is 16. With one of the world's highest average wage rates, there has been no need to set a minimum. Health and safety measures on the job are strictly enforced.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 29,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 38
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 1.3
 Industry: 47.4
 Services: 51.3
 Unemployment %: 1.3

EDUCATION

Compulsory education begins at age seven. Basic instruction follows in a primary school for five years, after which a pupil may transfer to a lower or upper secondary school for four years or to a gymnasium school for eight years. Such gymnasium education is intended to lead to a college education. The Roman Catholic influence is strong in the curriculum and pedagogic philosophy. Liechtensteiners traditionally go to Switzerland, Germany, or Austria for higher education, though there are institutes of higher education within the country, including Hochschule Liechtenstein, (the University of Applied Sciences), the University of Human Sciences, the International Academy of Philosophy, and the Liechtenstein Institute.

The adult literacy rate in Liechtenstein is 100 percent.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 100
 Male %: 100
 Female %: 100
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: —
 First Level: Primary Schools: 14
 Teachers: —
 Students: —
 Student-Teacher Ratio: —
 Net Enrollment Ratio: —
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 8

Teachers: —
 Students: —
 Student-Teacher Ratio: —
 Net Enrollment Ratio: —
 Third Level: Institutions: —
 Teachers: —
 Students: —
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: —
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: —

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Liechtenstein industry depends on research and development to maintain an edge on competition. To that end, the Advisory Council for Research and Technology was founded in 1989 to provide research for both the government and the Liechtenstein Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI). In 2003, LCCI industrial companies invested around 292 million Swiss francs in research and development, corresponding to over 8,000 Swiss francs per capita. Overall, approximately 5 percent of the country's revenue is invested in research and development. Total research and development spending in 2000 rose by 20.7 percent to approximately \$149 million.

Liechtenstein is one of the financial supporters of the Interstate University of Applied Sciences of Technology Buchs, in Switzerland, which offers systems engineering degrees. Liechtenstein research institutes include the Liechtenstein University of Applied Sciences, with projects in market and product research, and the University of Human Sciences, with projects in neuroscience.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 5.0
 High-Tech Exports \$million: —
 Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

Two daily papers are published in Liechtenstein: *Liechtensteiner Vaterland*, founded in 1913 and an organ of the Fatherland Union, and *Liechtensteiner Volksblatt*, founded in 1878 and an organ of the FBP. In 2002 they had circulations of 9,800 and 8,200, respectively, while *Liechtensteiner Wochenzeitung*, a weekly, had a circulation of 14,000.

The principality's news agency is Presse und Informationsamt.

Liechtenstein has one state-run and one private television station and one private radio station. The country also receives programming from Switzerland and Austria. As of 2004 there were 3,727 Internet hosts, and almost two-thirds of the population were Internet users. In 2002 there were 11,400 cellular telephone users.

The media in Liechtenstein is independent, and freedom of the press is guaranteed.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 2
 Total Circulation 000: 18
 Circulation per 1,000: 534
 Books Published: —
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets 000: 15
 per 1,000: 469

CULTURE

Liechtenstein's relics from the Stone Age, Bronze Age, Iron Age, Roman epoch, and Middle Ages are on display at the National Museum in Vaduz. The art collection of the princes of Liechtenstein, second only to that of Britain's royal family as the largest private art collection in the world, can be seen at the Engländerhaus, also in the capital. This collection includes the works of the 17th-century Dutch and Flemish painters Breughel the Elder, Rembrandt, and Peter Paul Rubens and many other famous artists, as well as sculptures, tapestries, silver, and porcelain, though little of local production.

Stamps, one of the mainstays of the Liechtenstein economy, often reproduce some of the princes' masterpieces. Several hundred framed originals of stamps are on display at Vaduz's Postage Stamp Museum.

The country has a strong musical tradition, which includes brass bands and vocal ensembles in rural areas. Vaduz has a popular operetta company.

Folk crafts included basket weaving, barrel making, clog carving, and rake making. Woodcarving is still practiced in Liechtenstein, but ceramics and sculpture have taken the place of more rustic earlier crafts.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 3
 Volumes: 23,921
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Witches figure prominently in Liechtenstein folklore; in the 17th century the principality was wracked by witch

hunts. One legend tells of a fiddler named Hans Jöri who unknowingly plays at a party thrown by a group of witches. Another tale deals with a farmer who thinks his cow's milk is prevented from thickening into butter by a witch's spell. Such traditions are maintained in the contemporary festival Funkensonntag, or Spark Sunday, just before Easter, when straw witches are burned in giant bonfires. The size of the bonfires provides a form of competition between villages.

Other legends and folktales in this largely Catholic country deal with the lives of saints.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Outdoor activities are popular forms of recreation for Liechtensteiners. In winter there are downhill and cross-country skiing, while in warmer months a well-maintained system of footpaths provides excellent hiking opportunities.

Many of the musically minded take part in local bands and choruses. Television and radio are also popular forms of entertainment, as throughout Western Europe. Most television programming comes from Switzerland, Germany, and Austria.

In rural areas, Catholic holidays provide other opportunities for socializing and communal dining.

ETIQUETTE

Greetings are made with a firm handshake and verbally with *Grüss Gott* (literally, "Greetings from God"), a salutation that is also popular in Austria and Switzerland. A shortening of this is *Grüzi*. Such greetings are made at close distance rather than shouted down the street or across a room, for example. As with Austrian etiquette, first names are used by friends, while titles and last names are normally used in formal settings. The informal *du* is reserved for close friends, though younger people are generally less formal.

Dining is continental style, with fork and knife used simultaneously. Liechtenstein is fairly conservative; public displays of affection are not considered polite.

FAMILY LIFE

Small nuclear families are the norm in Liechtenstein. The 2004 fertility rate was 1.5 children per woman.

Couples marry in their late twenties, and it is not unusual for couples to live together before or instead of marrying. Rural weddings still engage in old customs of "bribing," in which village children might bar the way of the newly married couple until they pay a passage fee, or

friends of the groom might stage a mock kidnapping of the bride, such that he must pay a fee for her release.

With the rapid changeover from an agrarian economy to an industrial one, marriage roles are in flux. With more and more women working outside of the home (38 percent of the workforce is female), the old male-dominated union is giving way to a partnership. Divorce is legal; 92 occurred in 2001. Marriages numbered 253 that year.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Dress in Liechtenstein is modern and Western, with a bit more formality and conservativeness than in other countries of Western Europe. Traditional costumes known as *Trachten* are worn for special occasions, while men in rural areas still sport lederhosen, or leather knee breeches, and perhaps loden-style wool hunting jackets with piping and bone or antler buttons. For women the traditional dress is the dirndl, a full skirt gathered at the waste with an embroidered blouse and an often colorful apron. Men also wear flat black hats with their outfits. Such clothing can be found in Austria and Switzerland as well.

SPORTS

Soccer and skiing are the major sports in Liechtenstein. The soccer teams play in the Swiss leagues; FC Vaduz is perhaps the most successful team in the nation, competing in the second level of Swiss soccer, the Swiss Challenge League. One Liechtenstein team per year is eligible to play in the UEFA Cup, for the European leagues championship. In 2004 the Liechtenstein national team, usually a sure loser, stunned competitors by qualifying for the 2006 World Cup.

Skiing draws much national attention. Hanni Wenzel won two Olympic titles in 1980, and the country generally has strong skiers in international competition. Malbun and Steg are the two principal ski resorts, with world-class downhill and toboggan runs. Steg also has a cross-country ski course.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1970** Fatherland Union replaces the FBP as the majority party in the Landtag.
- 1978** Liechtenstein joins the Council of Europe.
- 1981–84** Prince Franz Josef hands over most of his executive powers to his son Hans-Adam.
- 1984** Women are granted the franchise.
- 1989** Prince Hans-Adam II becomes the head of state.
- 1990** The United Nations grants membership to Liechtenstein.

- 1991** Liechtenstein joins the EFTA.
- 1993** Mario Frick is elected prime minister, becoming the youngest prime minister in the world, at age 28.
- 1995** Liechtenstein becomes a member of the European Economic Area.
- 1997** Frick begins a second term as prime minister.
The FBP severs its 60-year coalition with Frick's Fatherland Union to become an official opposition party.
- 2001** The Conservative FBP wins the parliamentary election, and Otmar Hasler becomes prime minister
- 2003** Prince Hans-Adam wins sweeping new powers in a constitutional amendment referendum.
- 2004** Hans-Adam turns over many of the powers of his office to his son Alois but retains the title of head of state.
- 2005** A long-standing Liechtenstein claim for damages from Germany for property confiscated during World War II is rejected by the International Court of Justice.

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- Liechtenstein.** *Statistisches Jahrbuch* (annual); *Volkszählung, 2. Dezember 1990* (Census of Population); *Liechtenstein in Figures* (annual)

CONTACT INFORMATION

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- CIA World Factbook: Liechtenstein
<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/ls.html>
- Liechtenstein Online (in German)
<http://www.lol.li/>
- Permanent Mission to the United Nations
<http://www.un.int/liechtenstein>
- Portal of the Principality of Liechtenstein
<http://www.liechtenstein.li>

LITHUANIA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Lithuania (Lietuvos Respublika)

ABBREVIATION

LT

CAPITAL

Vilnius

HEAD OF STATE

President Valdas Adamkus (from 2004)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Algirdas Brazauskas (from 2001)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Constitutional democracy

POPULATION

3,596,617 (2005)

AREA

65,200 sq km (25,174 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Lithuanian

LANGUAGES

Lithuanian, Russian, Polish

RELIGION

Roman Catholic

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Litas

NATIONAL FLAG

Three equal horizontal bands of yellow (top), green, and red.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A heraldic shield features a red field with an armored knight mounted on a silver horse and holding a silver sword in his right hand above his head. A blue shield with a double gold cross on it hangs on the left shoulder of the charging knight. The horse's saddle, straps, and belts are blue. The hilt of the sword and the fastening of the sheath, the knight's spurs, the curb bits of the bridle, the horseshoes, and the decoration of the harness are gold.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"Lithuania, Land of Heroes"

NATIONAL HOLIDAY

February 16 (Day of Reestablishment of the State of Lithuania), March 11 (Day of Restitution of Independence), July 6 (Statehood Day), all major Christian festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

September 6, 1991

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

October 26, 1992

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Lithuania is part of the Baltic region of northeastern Europe, which also includes Estonia and Latvia. It is the largest of the three Baltic states. The nation has 99 km (62 mi) of coastline, and its land borders stretch 1,273 km (796 mi), touching Belarus, Latvia, Poland, and the Kaliningrad enclave of Russia. Its total land area is 65,200 sq km (25,174 sq mi). From north to south the nation extends 276 km (173 mi), from east to west 373 km (233 mi). Lithuania is part of the great east European plain. There are two main topographical divisions in the

nation: lowland plains, collectively known as Samogitia, or Žemaitija, and uplands marked by rolling hills, the Aukštaitija. The three main lowland plains include the Pajuris Lowlands, the Middle Lowlands, and the Eastern Lowlands. Juozapines Hill, at 292 m (958 ft), is the highest point in Lithuania. In the south the Courland Lagoon is separated from the Baltic Sea by the Courland Spit.

The terrain is dominated by small lakes (there are more than 3,000), which constitute 1.5 percent of Lithuania's total area. However, only 25 lakes have areas greater than 10 sq km (3.9 sq mi). Most of the lakes are in the Aukstaiciai Uplands. There are also 722 riv-

Lithuania



ers that are more than 10 km (6.2 mi) in length, of which 21 are more than 100 km (62 mi) long. Many of these rivers flow across the Middle Lowlands. The soil is rich, and almost one-third of the nation is covered by woodlands.

Vilnius is the capital and largest city, with a population of 541,000. The second-largest city is Kaunas, with 364,000 inhabitants. Other major cities include Klaipėda,

Šiauliai, and Panevėžys. Over two-thirds of the population live in urban areas.

Lithuania has several border disputes. There is an ongoing dispute with Latvia over oil-exploration rights, and continuing talks are under way with Belarus over boundary demarcation. The nation was able to negotiate a border agreement with Russia in 1997, but the concord has not been ratified.

Geography

Area sq km: 65,200; sq mi 25,174
 World Rank: 120th
 Land Boundaries, km: Belarus 502; Latvia 453; Russia 227; Poland 91
 Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Baltic Sea 0
 Highest: Juozapines/Kalnas 292
 Land Use %
 Arable Land: 45.2
 Permanent Crops: 0.9
 Forest: 31.8
 Other: 22.1

Population of Principal Cities (2005)

Kaunas	364,083
Klaipėda	188,775
Panevėžys	116,242
Šiauliai	130,035
Vilnius	541,291

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Lithuania's climate is influenced by both continental and maritime weather. In the coastal region the weather is dominated by relatively mild maritime influences, while in the eastern areas of the nation the harsher continental climate prevails. There are four distinct seasons, marked by significant temperature changes. The springs and summers are mild or moderately warm, while the autumns and winters are relatively long and cold. The average temperature in Vilnius is 6.3°C (43°F), although the high temperature in the coastal regions is 31°C (88°F), and the low is -28.8°C (-19.8°F). Average humidity throughout the nation is around 80 percent, and the average precipitation is 665 mm (26 in). The Middle Lowlands receive the least precipitation, at 540 mm (21 in), and the southwestern slopes of the Aukštaitija receive the most, at 930 mm (37 in).

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature
 January: 33°F
 July: 63°F
 Average Rainfall: 21 in to 37 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Almost one-third of Lithuania is covered in forest of one type or another: pine by the coast; oak, aspen, black alder, and birch in the center; and pine in the south. Another 20 percent of the nation is meadowland, and 7 percent is swamp and marshland. The dunes along the coast are home to wild rye and small, bushy plants of various types.

Animal life is surprisingly varied. Among the nearly 70 species of mammals are rabbit, wolf, fox, deer, otter,

beaver, mink, wild boar, raccoon, elk, lynx, and wild boar. Almost 300 bird species are found in the country, including herons, hawks, geese, ducks, grouse, partridge, and, along the coast, cormorants. Numerous species of fish and amphibians make their homes in and near the country's several thousand small lakes. The fish species include perch, ruff, and bream.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 3,596,617
 World Rank: 125th
 Density per sq km: 55.1
 % of annual growth (1999-2003): 0.6
 Male %: 47.1
 Female %: 52.9
 Urban %: 68.0
 Age Distribution %: 0-14: 16.1
 15-64: 68.7
 65 and over: 15.2
 Population 2025: 3,356,000
 Birth Rate per 1,000: 8.62
 Death Rate per 1,000: 10.92
 Rate of Natural Increase %: -0.2
 Total Fertility Rate: 1.19
 Expectation of Life (years): Males 68.94
 Females 79.28
 Marriage Rate per 1,000: 4.7
 Divorce Rate per 1,000: 3.1
 Average Size of Households: 3.2
 Induced Abortions: 12,495

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Some 81 percent of the nation's population are ethnic Lithuanians. The dominant minority groups are the Russians, with 8.5 percent of the population, and the Poles, with 7 percent. There are also Belarusians, Ukrainians, Germans, Gypsies, and Jews. The minority groups live mainly in the urban areas, and the Polish population is concentrated in the southeast corner of the nation.

LANGUAGES

The official language of the nation is Lithuanian. Lithuanian belongs to the Indo-European family of languages. It is the oldest of the continuing Baltic tongues, dating from the fifth century, and as such a number of dialects and regional versions of the language have evolved. The government requires that public employees have a functional knowledge of Lithuanian, and language proficiency is required for citizenship.

In addition to Lithuanian, Russian and Polish are widely spoken among ethnic groups. There is a Polish-language radio station in Vilnius. English is growing as a second language.

RELIGIONS

Roman Catholicism dominates Lithuanian religious life; more than 80 percent of the people identify themselves as Catholic. Otherwise, there are 47 different religious denominations in the nation. There are 684 Catholic parishes and 58 Russian Old Believer and 41 Russian Orthodox congregations. In addition, there are a number of Lutheran denominations. Evangelical Lutherans are concentrated in the north of the country and have 53 congregations, while the Reformed Lutheran Church has 11 in the south of Lithuania. There are five Jewish congregations and a growing number of evangelical Protestant sects.

Religious Affiliations

Roman Catholic	2,900,000
Other	700,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Lithuanians are a Baltic people who originally settled in the region around 200 B.C.E. The first reference to the Lithuanian people is in the medieval Prussian manuscript *Annales Quedlinburgenses* in 1009 C.E. During the 13th century the various tribes of Lithuania were united in a confederation. In 1230 Grand Duke Mindaugas established the first Lithuanian state. Lithuania was able to defeat the German Teutonic Knights through two centuries of warfare and invasion. In the mid-1300s the Jogailans established a dynasty of grand dukes that greatly expanded the Lithuanian Empire, which included Belarus and western Ukraine.

A marriage between the grand duke of Lithuania and the queen of Poland led to the Christian conversion of the nation in 1387 and the beginning of the Polish-Lithuanian state, which lasted from 1386 to 1795. Lithuania reached its zenith under Grand Duke Vytautas the Great (1392–1430), who extended the empire to the Black Sea. The combined armies of the state decisively defeated the Teutonic Knights in 1410. Lithuania also served as the main bulwark against the Tatar invasions of eastern Europe. At the Union of Lublin in 1569, the Polish-Lithuanian kingdom formally became a commonwealth, headed by a monarch. In 1579 the Jesuits established Vilnius University, the oldest university in the Baltic region.

The divisions of Poland in the 1700s led to the absorption of Lithuania into the Russian Empire. Although the Russians carried out an intensive Russification campaign, the Lithuanians resisted fiercely, staging revolts against the various czars in 1812, 1831, 1863, and 1905. The Russians closed Vilnius University and banned books in Lithuanian. Thousands of Lithuanians fled this oppression and emigrated. Nonetheless, Lithuania experienced a cultural revival in the 19th century.

During World War I the German army occupied most of Lithuania, but as the war ended, the Lithuanians rose in revolt again and declared independence. There followed a brief struggle against the new Soviet government and Poland. By 1920 most countries had recognized Lithuania as an independent state. In 1922 a constitution was promulgated and a parliament elected. Clashes between liberal and conservative elements in the country led to a coup in 1926. The parliament was overthrown by nationalists and the army, led by Antanas Smetona, who subsequently became president. In 1940, following the division of Poland between the Germans and Soviets, Lithuania was annexed by the Soviet Union, although most nations refused to recognize the occupation. Lithuanians rose in revolt against the Soviets when the Germans invaded the nation in 1941 but soon turned against the new occupying force. The Nazis exterminated almost the entire Lithuanian Jewish community during the war; in all some 200,000 Lithuanians were killed during World War II.

The Soviets reconquered Lithuania in 1944 and reincorporated the nation into the USSR. The Soviet invasion was marked by purges, and some 350,000 Lithuanians were deported to labor camps in Siberia. These mass purges continued through 1946. In 1949 the Soviets initiated programs to suppress religion, including the closing of churches. Another intensive Russification campaign began in 1956, with further deportations and the resettlement of large numbers of Poles and Russians.

Meanwhile, the Lithuanian exile community began the publication of the first complete national encyclopedia in 1953. Within Lithuania dissent was marked by the publication of underground journals and newspapers. In 1990 the Sajudis Coalition, or the Lithuanian Movement for Reconstruction, led an effort that resulted in a declaration of independence. The Soviets countered with a harsh military crackdown, which resulted in the deaths of numerous civilians. After the failed coup against Mikhail Gorbachev in 1991, however, the nation was granted independence, and the last Soviet troops left in 1993.

Following elections in 1992 a new constitution was promulgated. Efforts to integrate into western Europe culminated in Lithuania's joining the Partnership for Peace program, under the auspices of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), in 1994 and becoming an associate member of the European Union. The transition to a free-market economy was difficult, and in 1995 a major banking scandal resulted in the closure of two of the nation's largest banks. A year later the prime minister was ousted over corruption charges. In 1998 Valdas Adamkus, a Lithuanian American ecologist, was elected president. The former Communist leader and popular ex-president Algirdas Brazauskas became prime minister in July 2001 after the previous center-right government fell amid disagreement over privatization.

Lithuania was formally invited to join NATO and the European Union in 2002. The following year Ro-

landas Paksas was elected president, and in a referendum the country voted overwhelmingly in favor of EU membership. Allegations of a link between Russian organized crime and the office of President Paksas brought about the impeachment of Paksas in 2004, which was followed by the reelection of Adamkus as president. That same year the country joined NATO and became an official member of the European Union. More political scandal followed in 2005, when it was revealed that the minister of finance had been a KGB officer.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

Presidents

1993–98	Algirdas Brazauskas
1998–2003	Valdas Adamkus
2003–04	Rolandas Paksas
2004	Artūras Paulauskas (acting)
2004–	Valdas Adamkus

Prime Minister

1990–91	Kazimiera Prunskienė
1991–92	Gediminas Vagnorius
1992	Aleksandras Abišala
1992–93	Bronislovas Lubys
1993–96	Adolfas Šleževičius
1996	Laurynas Mindaugas Stankevičius
1996–99	Gediminas Vagnorius
1999	Rolandas Paksas
1999–2000	Andrius Kubilius
2000–01	Rolandas Paksas
2001–	Algirdas Brazauskas

CONSTITUTION

Lithuania is a parliamentary democracy. The nation's constitution, known as the Fundamental Law, was established on October 25, 1992. The chief of state is the president, who is elected for a five-year term in a direct election. The president directs foreign affairs and appoints various governmental officials, including the prime minister and members of the government. The nation's parliament, known as the Seimas, is the supreme legislative body. The Seimas has the power to consider legislation and to amend the Fundamental Law. It consists of 141 members who serve four-year terms. The government consists of the prime minister and the cabinet. There is also an independent judiciary, with the Supreme Court as the highest legal authority. Suffrage in Lithuania is universal for all citizens 18 years and older.

PARLIAMENT

The nation's parliament is a unicameral body known as the Seimas. Deputies are elected to the Seimas through a com-

bination of direct and proportional elections. Of the 141 members of the chamber, 71 are directly elected, while 70 are elected by proportional voting in which the political parties must gain at least 5 percent of the total vote in order to be represented. Members serve four-year terms.

The Seimas considers and decides on all legislation, including constitutional amendments. In addition, the body appoints judges to the Supreme Court and the Court of Appeals. Budgetary responsibility is also the domain of the parliament. The leader of the majority faction is usually appointed prime minister by the president, as subject to approval by the Seimas. The legislature must also approve the appointment of all government ministers. The leader of the parliament is known as the chairman.

POLITICAL PARTIES

The two major political parties are the populist Darbo Partij, or the Labor Party, and For a Working Lithuania, a coalition of the Lithuanian Social Democratic Party and New Union, both center-left liberal parties. In the 2004 parliamentary elections the Darbo Partij took 39 seats in the 141-member Seimas, while the For a Working Lithuania coalition took 31. The conservative Homeland Union took 25 seats, the Liberal Center Union 18. A coalition of the Liberal Democratic Party and Lithuanian People's Union for a Fair Lithuania, running on a theme of order and justice, won 11 seats, while a coalition of farmers and the liberal New Democratic Party took 10. Other smaller parties include the Christian Conservative Social Union and the Lithuanian Christian Democratic Party, both center-right parties.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Lithuania's 10 provinces are divided into 44 districts. These districts in turn contain 423 local governmental units known as *apylinkes*, which are the smallest administrative divisions. There are also 11 independent cities. In total there are 92 cities, including the 11 independent municipalities and 22 other urban communities. There is an ongoing effort to reorganize the nation's system of local government and reapportion districts.

LEGAL SYSTEM

There are three main components in the postindependence Lithuanian legal system. At the lowest level are district courts, which hear original civil and criminal cases. The Supreme Court is the nation's highest judicial body and the main appellate court. Finally, a constitutional court has sole domain over constitutional issues. Prosecutorial power rests with the prosecutor general, who oversees a network of local prosecutors. There is no sys-

tem of public defenders, although defendants do have the right to representation in court. The president appoints all judges, though the judiciary does act independently of the executive branch. There is a lack of trained judges, creating a backlog of cases in the court system.

In 1995 the Court Reform Law was enacted in an effort to increase the efficiency of the judicial system. The law created two new types of courts: local district courts, which operate at the level of the local municipality, and appellate courts intended to oversee the decisions of the district courts and reduce the caseload of the Supreme Court. There is an ongoing reform effort to bring the nation's laws into compliance with the European Convention on Human Rights and Freedoms.

In 1997 an arbitration system was established by the Chamber of Commerce. This led to the abolition of the Economic Court, so that business or commercial cases must now either be arbitrated or be heard by general district courts.

HUMAN RIGHTS

The Fundamental Law established the nation's basic civil rights and liberties. These include freedom of speech, of the press, and of movement within and without the country. Discrimination based on race, sex, disability, or ethnicity is forbidden. After becoming a member of the European Council in 1993, the government ordered the Ministry of Justice to initiate a broad series of reforms to bring the nation in line with the provisions of the European Convention on Basic Human Rights and Freedoms.

The nation has liberal citizenship laws that extend the right of citizenship to all persons who were born in the nation or who were citizens prior to 1940. More than 90 percent of Lithuania's ethnic minorities are citizens of the republic.

No significant human rights abuses have been reported in independent Lithuania, though there have been credible reports of police abuse of suspects and detainees. Prison overcrowding and pretrial detention remain serious problems. In 2003 Lithuania abolished capital punishment in all cases.

FOREIGN POLICY

In 1993 Lithuania became the first of the Baltic republics to witness a complete withdrawal of Russian military personnel. The nation has subsequently endeavored to end ongoing border disputes with Russia and Belarus. There is also a dispute with Latvia over oil-exploration rights.

Since gaining independence from Russia, Lithuania has pursued a pro-Western foreign policy marked by efforts to join the major institutions of the West, including the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and

the European Union. In 1994 Lithuania joined NATO's Partnership for Peace initiative. That same year Lithuania participated in NATO exercises in Poland in the first joint military operations between NATO and the former Warsaw Pact nations. In 1993 Lithuania became a member of the Council of Europe. In the meantime, the nation has signed free-trade agreements with a number of regional states, including its sister Baltic republics and such states as the Ukraine. Other examples of regional cooperation are Lithuania's participation in the Baltic peacekeeping battalion, BALTBAT, and the combined Baltic naval force, BALTRON.

In 2004 Lithuania became a full member of both NATO and the European Union.

DEFENSE

The Lithuanian National Defense Volunteer Forces include ground forces, a navy, and an air force. In 2003 military personnel totaled 27,300, with over 300,000 reserves. The army had the bulk of these forces, with about 1,000 in each of the navy and the air force and between 4,000 and 5,000 border guards. There is also a home-guard, reservist force of 12,000. Military service is mandatory for all males ages 18 and older. The length of service is one year. Army forces include a company of troops attached to BALTBAT. The navy has two small former-Soviet frigates and 10 patrol craft. The air force has a number of training aircraft and helicopters but no combat aircraft.

In 1994 Lithuania joined NATO's Partnership for Peace program, and Lithuanian troops formed part of the NATO-led peacekeeping force in the former Yugoslavia. In its efforts to join NATO, the nation acquired Western equipment and participated in various NATO military exercises. Since independence Lithuania has received military aid from Germany, Denmark, and several other Nordic nations. Lithuania supported the U.S.-led war in Iraq in 2003, sending a small contingent.

In 2001 military expenditures were \$230.8 million, or 1.9 percent of gross domestic product (GDP).

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	27,300
Military Manpower Availability:	830,368
Military Expenditures \$million:	230.8
as % of GDP:	1.9
as % of central government expenditures:	6.7
Arms Imports \$million:	7
Arms Exports \$million:	3

ECONOMY

Lithuania has adopted market reforms and pursued strict monetary and fiscal policies in order to constrain inflation and meet criteria imposed by the International Monetary

Fund. In 1997 the nation became the first Baltic state to have more than \$1 billion in direct foreign investment. However, imports of energy products have fueled a growing trade deficit. A large number of workers remain employed by state enterprises, though the country has completed over 80 percent of privatization of the economy.

The nation's main exports are agricultural products, mineral products, textiles, and machinery. Lithuania also has a significant fishing industry. Its main imports are fuel sources, transport equipment, chemicals, and foodstuffs. The nation's major trade partners are Russia, Germany, Poland, Belarus, Latvia, Ukraine, and Italy.

As the Baltic state that has conducted the most trade with Russia, Lithuania has been slowly rebounding from the 1998 Russian financial crisis. High unemployment and weak consumption have held back recovery. GDP growth for 2000—estimated at 2.9 percent—fell behind that of Estonia and Latvia, and unemployment was estimated at 8 percent in 2004. In early 2001 the Lithuanian government announced that it would peg its currency, the litas, to the euro; the litas was formerly pegged to the dollar. Lithuania ratified 25 agreements along with other legal documents and obligations to gain World Trade Organization membership in 2001. Lithuania was invited to the Helsinki summit in December 1999 and began EU accession talks in early 2000. Privatization of the large, state-owned utilities, particularly in the energy sector, has almost been completed. Lithuania gained EU membership in 2004, and the Lithuanian economy picked up in 2003, with a 9 percent real growth rate.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 45.23
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 12,500
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 4.9
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 5.5
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 6.1
 Industry: 33.4
 Services: 60.5
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 63
 Government Consumption: 20
 Gross Domestic Investment: 21.9
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 8.88
 Imports: 11.02
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 3.1
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 25.6

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
143.6	145.1	147.0	147.4	144.9

Finance

National Currency: Litas (LTL)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = LTL 2.8157

Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 10.54
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: —
 Total External Debt \$billion: 10.01
 Debt Service Ratio %: 11.34
 Balance of Payments \$billion: -1.6
 International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 3.37
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 1.1

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 372
 per capita \$: 107.70
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 179.2

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$billion: 6.542
 Expenditures \$billion: 7.121
 Budget Deficit \$million: 579
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 6.1
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: -0.7
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 3.49
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 0.23
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 66.2
 Total Farmland % of land area: 46.8
 Livestock: Cattle 000: 812
 Chickens million: 8.07
 Pigs 000: 1.06
 Sheep 000: 16.9
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 6.28
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 151.9

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 3.26
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 12.0

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 3.5
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 7.9
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 2.28
 Net Energy Imports % of use: 42.8
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 5.8
 Production kW-hr billion: 19.6
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 11.6
 Coal Reserves tons million: 4
 Production tons million: —
 Consumption tons million: —
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
 Production cubic feet billion: —
 Consumption cubic feet billion: 110
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels million: 12
 Production barrels 000 per day: 14
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 107
 Pipelines Length km: 331

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 11.02
 Exports \$billion: 8.88
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 11.4
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 9.6
 Balance of Trade \$billion: –1.6

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Russia %	22.0	10.1
Germany %	16.1	9.9
Poland %	5.2	—
Italy %	4.3	—
France %	4.2	5.1
Switzerland %	—	11.6
Latvia %	—	9.7
United Kingdom %	—	6.4
Denmark %	—	4.7
Estonia %	—	4.3
Sweden %	—	4.0

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 77,148
 Paved %: 89.7
 Automobiles: 1,180,900
 Trucks and Buses: 120,900
 Railroad: Track Length km: 1,998
 Passenger-km million: 498
 Freight-km billion: 9.77
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 54
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 317.7
 Airports: 102
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 355
 Length of Waterways km: 600

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 1.49
 Number of Tourists from million: 3.5
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 700
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 476

Communications

Telephones 000: 824.2
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones million: 2.17
 Personal Computers 000: 380
 Internet Hosts per million people: 18,842
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 193

ENVIRONMENT

The major environmental problem in Lithuania is contamination around former Soviet military bases. Pollution of soil and groundwater is extensive at these sites as

the result of years of discharge of toxic chemicals, including petroleum products, and poor sanitation systems.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 31.8
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: 5
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 11
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 37,539
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 3.39

LIVING CONDITIONS

The UN Human Development Report ranks Lithuania 41st out of 177 countries in terms of life expectancy, education, and standard of living. Lithuanian life expectancy in 2004 was 74 years, literacy stood at 99.6 percent, with 90 percent of eligible students enrolled in primary, secondary, and tertiary schools, and the GDP per capita was \$12,500.

Much of the housing in Lithuanian towns was destroyed during World War II, and subsequent rebuilding was conducted with prefabricated materials that have not stood the test of time. Thus, housing has become a problem in the country. However, demographics have helped in some respects: The country has a declining population, with a 2004 decrease of 0.33 percent. This shift is partly a result of the trend toward smaller families. The birth rate for 2004 was 8.6 per 1,000, while the death rate that same year was 10.9 per 1,000 people. The declining population is also the result of Russians returning to their own country. The net out-migration rate for 2004 was 0.7 persons per 1,000 population. It was estimated that 68 percent of the population lived in urban areas in 2001, with the urban growth currently at a standstill. As of 2001 there were 356 housing units per 1,000 people. About 97 percent of such units are privately owned.

Infrastructure throughout the country is badly in need of repair, although in their extent, roads, airports, and ports are thorough and well developed.

HEALTH

The vast majority of health care is provided by nonprofit public institutions run by councils, counties, or the Ministry of Health. The main health-care institutions are financed by the Compulsory Health Insurance Fund, which covers citizens and residents of Lithuania. In 2004 there were 14,031 physicians—or 4 per 1,000 people—2,490 dentists, and 191 hospitals, with 33,160 beds.

Cardiovascular disease is one of the major health problems in the country. Other health issues include tuberculosis and cancer. In 2002 there were 2,272 new cases of tuberculosis and over 15,000 new cases of can-

cer. HIV/AIDS has not yet made a large impact on the population; in 2003 there were 1,300 people living with HIV/AIDS, and fewer than 200 died of the disease.

In 1994 the Public Health Surveillance Service was established to oversee control of communicable diseases, environmental and occupational health, and other areas. As of 2002 total public health-care expenditures were estimated at 4.3 percent of GDP. The infant mortality rate was only 6.9 deaths per 1,000 live births.

Health

Number of Physicians: 14,031
 Number of Dentists: 2,490
 Number of Nurses: 27,787
 Number of Pharmacists: 2,266
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 403
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: 9.22
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 6.89
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 13
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 6.3
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 255
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.1
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 94
 Measles: 98
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: —
 Access to Improved Water Source %: —

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Bread, dairy products, and potatoes are staples of the Lithuanian diet, and pancakes are particularly popular. Poultry, meat, fish, and vegetables are also important ingredients. In the nation's cold northern climate, root crops are particularly prevalent; these include beets, carrots, parsnips, radishes, turnips, and onions. Other hearty vegetables include cabbage, celery, cucumbers, and leeks.

Another vital ingredient of the diet is sour cream, used as a topping for many dishes or in soups, Russian style. A dry cottage cheese called *vaske* is used as a stuffing in many dishes.

A traditional meal is *cepelinai*, a dumpling of potato dough stuffed with cheese, meat, or mushrooms and topped with a sauce made from onions, butter, sour cream, and crumbled bacon. Smaller dumplings are called *virtinukai*. Pork in many varieties is more popular than beef.

Pickled foods are also popular, including herring, pickles, and mushrooms. Open-faced sandwiches make traditional appetizers. A cold soup for summertime eating is made from sour cream, beets, green onions, and cucumber.

Sakotis is a tall, tiered cake generally served at weddings, while dinner on Christmas Eve consists of 12 different vegetarian dishes. There are several brands of beer in the country, while other popular alcoholic beverages

include *midus*, or mead, which can be as potent as 60 proof, and *stakliskes*, another honey liqueur.

In general, nutrition is adequate in Lithuania. Only 4 percent of infants born between 1998 and 2003 had low birth weight.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 0.8
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 3,010
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 161.5
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 152.1

STATUS OF WOMEN

Spousal abuse is reportedly common in Lithuania, and institutional mechanisms for deterring such abuse are not yet in place. There is a woman's shelter founded in part with Norwegian assistance. In a 1997 survey, 20 percent of women reported experiencing an attempted rape, while another 33 percent reported having been beaten at least once in their lives.

Women also face discrimination in the workplace. The Law on Realization of Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men came into effect in 1999, establishing the Office of the Ombudsman for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men to oversee complaints concerning sex discrimination and sexual harassment. Women are significantly underrepresented in some businesses, especially at the management level, in some professions, and in the government.

Trafficking in women and girls for forced prostitution is a major problem. Many women from Belarus, Russia, Latvia, and the Lithuanian countryside are trafficked to Western Europe. Most trafficking is undertaken by organized crime figures, who lure women with deceptive offers of work abroad as models, bar dancers, and waitresses.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 22
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.0
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 50.0

WORK

The labor force in 2004 totaled over 1.6 million. Of laborers, 20 percent were involved in agriculture, 30 percent in industry, and 50 percent in service. Agricultural products include grain, potatoes, sugar beets, flax, vegetables, beef, milk, eggs, and fish, while industry produces metal-cutting

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machine tools, electric motors, television sets, refrigerators and freezers, refined petroleum, small ships, furniture, textiles, processed food, fertilizer, agricultural machinery, optical equipment, electronic components, computers, and amber. Unemployment in 2004 stood at 8 percent.

The freedoms of assembly and association are generally respected. Workers have the right to form and join trade unions, to strike, and to engage in collective bargaining. However, ongoing problems include inadequate or employer-biased legislation and management discrimination against union members. About 13 percent of the workforce are represented by four unions.

The minimum work age in Lithuania is 16, and the standard workweek is 40 hours. As of 2004 the minimum monthly wage was \$190, or \$1.12 per hour. About 18 percent of all wage earners and about 10 percent of full-time employees are paid at or below the minimum wage.

The postindependence transition to a private-enterprise market economy has been difficult, with many workers losing their jobs as national industries became privatized.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 1,630,000
Female Participation Rate %: 48.1
Labor by Sector %:
Agriculture: 20
Industry: 30
Services: 50
Unemployment %: 8.0

EDUCATION

Education is mandatory for 12 years in Lithuania. Students follow a typical European program that gives them the choice of pursuing either a general education in preparation for university or a technical degree for the trades. Since 2000 a shift to a ten-year secondary education, called lower secondary education, has been made. As of 2002 the nation spent approximately 6 percent of GDP on education.

Lithuania has over 2,000 educational establishments, both private and public, including 21 universities, 15 colleges, and 83 vocational schools. Combined gross enrollment in primary, secondary, and tertiary schools in 2002 was 90 percent of eligible students. In 2003, 14,700 students earned a bachelor's degree or the equivalent. Some 40 percent of all students go on to higher education. The government funds about 75 percent of the costs of an individual's college fees.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 99.6
Male %: 99.7
Female %: 99.6

School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 15.4

First Level: Primary Schools: 2,361

Teachers: 12,452

Students: 197,463

Student-Teacher Ratio: 15.9

Net Enrollment Ratio: 94.3

Second Level: Secondary Schools: (included in First Level)

Teachers: 42,594

Students: 405,180

Student-Teacher Ratio: 10.4

Net Enrollment Ratio: 92.9

Third Level: Institutions: 15

Teachers: 13,981

Students: 148,788

Gross Enrollment Ratio: 64.5

Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 5.9

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Much of the research in the country is carried out under the aegis of the Lithuanian Academy of Science. Some 10 institutes attached to the academy, all located in Vilnius, pursue research in medicine, technology, and natural science. Additionally, four other research institutes conduct research in agriculture and forestry. The Ministry of Agriculture also has 11 departments researching fields ranging from fishery activity to seed propagation to food technology. Numerous universities and colleges offer degrees in the sciences. Between 1987 and 1997 science and engineering students made up 31 percent of university enrollment. Expenditures on research and development in 2003 were \$145 million, or 0.68 percent of GDP. Of the almost 15,000 people involved in research and development in 2003, 5,399 were researchers with scientific degrees.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 2,303
Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 0.68
High-Tech Exports \$million: 210.6
Patent Applications by Residents: 91

MEDIA

The constitution calls for a free and open press, and censorship is limited. Reporters without Borders ranked Lithuania 16th out of 167 countries in its 2004 world press freedom index. There are over 300 newspapers and periodicals published in the country, including 22 dailies with a collective daily circulation of 108,000 copies. The national media scene is dominated by two dailies, *Lietuvos rytas* and *Respublika*. All major daily papers are owned by a group of local shareholders. In 1995 the government passed legislation calling upon private broadcasters and media to establish an ombudsman to investigate libel and slander charges.

The government sponsors a state-controlled radio station and a television service. As of 2001 there were 142 FM stations, 29 AM stations, and 27 television stations operating in Lithuania. In 2000 there were about 524 radios and 422 television sets for every 1,000 people. Lithuanians have access to a wide variety of programming from other European states through satellites and cable television. In 2003 there were 2.17 million cellular telephone users and almost 700,000 Internet users.

Since independence there have been widespread efforts to revive traditional Lithuanian culture and counter the intensive Russification programs of the cold war. The government has enacted legislation to promote the Lithuanian language and given support for traditional folk arts. In addition, the nation has embraced many elements of the popular culture of western Europe, including modern music and theater.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 22
 Total Circulation 000: 108
 Circulation per 1,000: 29.3
 Books Published: 4,097
 Periodicals: 339
 Radio Receivers million: 1.89
 per 1,000: 524
 Television sets million: 1.56
 per 1,000: 422

CULTURE

Lithuanian culture has maintained its own unique blend of folk and high art, despite long occupation by various powers and the determined Russification of the Soviet period. The language and culture of Lithuania is one of the oldest in Europe. In addition to rich and varied folklore of fairy tales, riddles, and proverbs, there is also the tradition of folk songs called *dainos*, which were sung during the Middle Ages by Lithuanian women. These songs were performed solo or as accompanied by various instruments, including *skrabalai*, or cow bells; the *dambrelis*, or jaw harp; the *kankles*, or zither; the *smuikas*, or fiddle; the *skuduciai*, or panpipe; the *lamzdelis*, or recorder; the *ragas*, or horn; and the *birbyne*, a type of folk clarinet. Choral singing is still an important part of cultural festivals. One such festival, held every five years in Vilnius, has a stage large enough to hold thousands of performers at a time, all dressed in traditional costumes and performing folk music and dances. Lithuanian folk arts are also a strong cultural tradition, including ceramics, leatherwork, wood carving, and textiles, all decorated with subtle coloring and geometric or floral patterns.

More contemporary arts, such as painting and drawing, also flourish. The Vilnius drawing school was

founded in 1866 and has continued to be a major influence on fine arts in Lithuania. One well-known painter and composer was Mikalojus Ciurlionis, who died in the early 20th century.

Lithuanian literature is also an important part of the country's cultural heritage. The first book published in the area was 1547's *Catechisma Prasty Szadei* (Simple Words of the Catechism); Kristijonas Donelaitis, considered the first truly Lithuanian author, wrote an epic poem about the lives of struggling serfs. Antanas Baranuskas was a famous poet of the mid-19th century. His romantic poem *Anykšciu öilelis* (The Forest of Anykšciai) is one of the seminal works in Lithuanian literature. During the 19th and 20th century Lithuanian literature promoted the nationalistic movement, despite repression by the Russian occupiers.

Theater has also long been a major component of Lithuanian culture, and amateur acting companies abound in towns and villages, as do highly regarded professional ones in Vilnius. Lithuania currently has 13 professional theaters, several orchestras, and 53 museums.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 61
 Volumes: 22,666,196
 Registered borrowers: 816,629
 Museums Number: 53
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts national currency million: 11.9
 Number of Cinemas: 105
 Seating Capacity: 26,100
 Annual Attendance: 1,800,000

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Lithuanian folklore has a rich tradition, including songs, fairy tales, legends, riddles, proverbs, and aphorisms that all have their roots deep in the language. The medieval songs known as *dainos* were generally created by women to celebrate various rites of passage, such as weddings and departures. These songs, 80,000 of which have been written down, have been adapted by modern composers, with their words putting listeners in touch with a bygone age.

The first recorded Lithuanian folk tales date from the 16th century and have much in common with such tales in Russia. One popular tale deals with Egle, queen of the grass snakes, who turns her children into the oak, ash, and birch tree out of grief for the loss of her husband.

Myths include stories of the ancient Lithuanian thunder god Perkõnas as well as many tales venerating Mother Earth and the origin of fire.

Riddles are another folkloric element in Lithuania. Thousands of these test children's reasoning abilities.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Song and dance continue to be favorite forms of recreation and entertainment for Lithuanians. Many are involved in folk groups, performing at song contests or dance festivals. Modern dancing is also popular with urban residents in nightclubs and discos. Going to cafés and dining out are also popular forms of urban entertainment. Lithuanians spend an average of 4.3 percent of their annual income on entertainment, including concerts, theaters, and museums.

With a 99.6 percent literacy rate and over 4,000 books published annually, and with 23 million books in libraries in 2003, reading is clearly one of the major forms of entertainment in Lithuania. Watching television and going to the movies are also popular.

Outdoor activities are common. In the summer the beaches of the Baltic coast are packed, as are its resorts. Camping is popular, and with thousands of small lakes, fishing and camping vacations are typical, as are visits to spas and health resorts. Other forms of entertainment focus on Christian celebrations, such as Christmas and Easter.

ETIQUETTE

In general, the usual European courtesies and manners are observed in Lithuania. Firm handshakes are appropriate for greetings, sometimes accompanied with a nod of the head; eating is continental style, with knife and fork used simultaneously; use of first names is reserved for friends; formalities are observed in public; and punctuality is appreciated. An archaic greeting is still used in some rural areas: *Garbe Kristui* ("Praise Christ"), with a reply of *Per amžius amen* ("Forever amen"). Hospitality is a hallmark of Lithuanian life.

FAMILY LIFE

Traditionally, the Lithuanian family was large, with upward of a dozen children. In modern Lithuania, however, this has drastically changed. Families are small, with one to two children; the fertility rate was under 1.2 children per woman in 2004. Marriage takes place at a later age than it once did, as couples need to save to be able to afford their own place to live.

Some traditions still hold. Even though women make up over one-third of the workforce, the family continues to be male dominated. Women end up doing double duty, working both outside and inside the home. Abortion is legal, as is divorce, in this Catholic country. The total number of divorces was 10,579 in 2002; about 41 percent of all marriages end in divorce. The number of single-parent families is on the rise.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Dress in Lithuania is modern and Western. Traditional costumes made of homespun fabric are worn only for special folk festivals of singing and dancing. Such apparel was common until the late 19th century. Although traditional dress for women varies by region, the predominant look was a high-collared shirt over long woolen skirts with shorter aprons. Bronze pins and embroidery decorated such clothing, while a woolen shawl provided warmth. For men, the traditional costume includes an embroidered shirt, trousers, vest, lightweight coat, cape, sheepskin coat, and head dress. Men's shirts usually had long sleeves and were made of thick linen. Colors were darker for winter than for spring and summer. Wooden shoes, or clogs, were worn by both genders.

SPORTS

Of the dozens of sports played in Lithuania, basketball is the most popular; it was introduced to the country after World War I by a returning Lithuanian American. During the Soviet era Lithuanian players constituted much of the Soviet national team. Two Lithuanian players, Arvydas Sabonis and Sarunas Marciulionis, made careers in the American National Basketball Association and led their country to Olympic bronze medals in 1992 and 1996.

Soccer is also popular in Lithuania, as are cycling, track and field, table tennis, tennis, and canoeing. A traditional game called *ripkos* is similar to baseball, with a wooden disk to hit instead of a ball. Baseball, too, is becoming more popular.

The country boasts a large number of athletic institutions. Vilnius, Klaipėda, and Kaunas have the largest of the country's 41 stadiums. There are also about 2,000 basketball and volleyball courts and over 100 tennis courts, as well as about 1,000 gymnasiums and soccer fields.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1918–20** War for independence against Germany, followed by struggle against Soviet Union. International recognition of independent Lithuanian state.
- 1922** New constitution.
- 1926** Coup overthrows elected government.
- 1940** Soviet invasion.
- 1941** German invasion.
- 1944** Soviets reconquer Lithuania and begin widespread purges.
- 1946** Mass purges and deportations continue in the wake of the Soviet occupation.
- 1949** The Soviets close most churches and begin a wave of persecution against religious figures.

- 1953** Exiled Lithuanians begin publication of the first complete national encyclopedia.
- 1956** A Russification campaign results in the deportations of large numbers of Lithuanians and an influx of Russians and Poles into the country.
- 1972** An underground religious journal, the *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania*, begins publication.
- 1990** Led by the Sajudis Coalition, or the Lithuanian Movement for Reconstruction, Lithuania declares independence from the Soviet Union, but military force is used by the Soviets to retain the nation. Numerous civilians are killed as a result of the military crackdown.
- 1991** Following the failed coup against Mikhail Gorbachev, Lithuania is granted independence from the Soviet Union.
- 1992** Following parliamentary elections, a new constitution is promulgated.
- 1993** The last Soviet troops leave Lithuania.
- 1994** The nation joins NATO's Partnership for Peace program. Lithuania becomes an associate member of the European Union.
- 1995** Major banking scandal results in the closure of two of the nation's largest commercial banks.
- 1996** Parliament ousts the prime minister over corruption charges.
- 1998** Valdas Adamkus, a Lithuanian American ecologist, is elected president.
- 2000** After parliamentary elections the center-right coalition of the Lithuanian Liberal Union and the New Union form a government.
- 2001** The coalition government collapses, and left-wing former president Algirdas Brazauskas becomes prime minister.
- 2002** Lithuania is formally invited to join NATO and the European Union.
- 2003** Rolandas Paksas is elected president in January. In a referendum Lithuanians vote overwhelmingly in favor of EU membership. Impeachment proceedings begin against President Paksas after an inquiry concludes that alleged links between his office and Russian organized crime pose a threat to national security.
- 2004** Lithuania becomes a member of NATO and the European Union. Parliament impeaches and dismisses President Paksas.

- Valdas Adamkus becomes president again.
- 2005** Foreign Minister Valionis admits in January that he was once an officer in the Soviet KGB reserves.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- CIA World Factbook: Lithuania
<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/lh.html>
- Lithuanian Department of Statistics
<http://www.std.lt>

LUXEMBOURG

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Grand Duchy of Luxembourg (Grand-Duché de Luxembourg; Großherzogtum Luxemburg; Groussherzogtum Lëtzebuerg)

ABBREVIATION

LU

CAPITAL

Luxembourg City

HEAD OF STATE

Grand Duke Henri (from 2000)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Jean-Claude Juncker (from 1995)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Constitutional monarchy

POPULATION

468,571 (2005)

AREA

2,586 sq km (998 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Celtic, with French and German blend

LANGUAGES

French, German, Luxembourgish

RELIGION

Roman Catholicism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Euro

NATIONAL FLAG

A tricolor of red (top), white, and blue horizontal stripes

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A gold-crowned red lion on a shield of alternate white and blue stripes, topped by a ducal gold coronet

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Ons Hemecht” (Our Homeland)

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

June 23 (Grand Duke’s Birthday), all major Catholic festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

1867

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

1868

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Luxembourg consists of two distinct geographical regions. The rugged uplands of the Ardennes in the north, called Oesling, have elevations ranging from 396 to 559 m (1,300 to 1,800 ft). The fertile lowlands of the south, called Bon Pays, have a mean altitude of 229 m (750 ft). The northern region, constituting one-third of the country, is heavily forested. Along the Moselle River is a very fertile wine-growing region.

Land Use %

Arable Land: 23.3

Permanent Crops: 0.4

Forest: 22.0

Other: 54.3

Population of Principal Cities (2004)

Esch-sur-Alzette	27,891
Luxembourg	77,325

Geography

Area sq km: 2,586 sq mi 998

World Rank: 166th

Land Boundaries, km: Belgium 148; France 73; Germany 138

Coastline, km: 0

Elevation Extremes meters:

Lowest: Moselle River 133

Highest: Buurplaatz 559

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Luxembourg has a mild, temperate climate, with generally cool summers and mild winters. Mean summer temperatures are about 16.6°C (62°F), while winter temperatures rarely drop below the freezing point. The high peaks of

Luxembourg



1428 Luxembourg

the Ardennes in the north shelter the country from the rigorous north winds, while the prevailing northwesterly winds have a cooling effect. The average annual precipitation is about 762 mm (30 in). The southwest receives the most rainfall.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature
Summer: 62°F
Winter: 32°F
Average Rainfall 30 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Trees are among the most varied flora in the country. The northern, forested region contains pine and spruce as well as hardwoods such as oak, linden, beech, and elm. Numerous shrubs, including wild blueberries, are found in the Ardennes. Ferns are also plentiful. Cultivated plants include fruit trees and vineyards along the Moselle River.

Only a few wild species of animal remain in this long-settled land, such as wild boar and deer. Trout, carp, eel, bream, and perch are found in the country's rivers, and a wide variety of birds can be found.

Luxembourg has established numerous nature parks to preserve what is left of its biodiversity.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 468,571
World Rank: 162nd
Density per sq km:
% of annual growth (1999-2003):
Male %: 49.2
Female %: 50.8
Urban %: 91.0
Age Distribution %: 0-14: 18.9
 15-64: 66.5
 65 and over: 14.6
Population 2025: 586,300
Birth Rate per 1,000: 12.06
Death Rate per 1,000: 8.41
Rate of Natural Increase %: 0.4
Total Fertility Rate: 1.79
Expectation of Life (years): Males 74.45
 Females 82.24
Marriage Rate per 1,000: 4.5
Divorce Rate per 1,000: 2.5
Average Size of Households: 2.6
Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Luxembourgers consider themselves to be an ethnic group in their own right, although prior to World War

II they viewed themselves as more of a German subgroup than distinct and separate. Due to Luxembourg's central European location, its prominent role in the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), and the large number of foreign banks, it has an immigrant population of 35.6 percent. The majority of this population comes from other EU countries.

LANGUAGES

The official languages of Luxembourg are Luxembourgish, French, and German. Luxembourgish is the native Germanic dialect, used chiefly in informal discussion and almost never in formal written communication. French is the language most commonly used in administrative and official documentation; German is frequently used in business. English, Portuguese, and Italian are also commonly used languages. With the country's international flavor, it is not uncommon for Luxembourgers to speak four or more languages. Many Luxembourgian families have Italian, Portuguese, French, or German roots and therefore speak the respective language as their native language in conjunction with Luxembourgish; native Luxembourgers, who made up 63.4 percent of the population in 2000, mostly speak Luxembourgish. Whether they also speak German, French, Portuguese, English, Italian, or some other language, and which language they would state as their "native" language, varies from individual to individual.

RELIGIONS

There is no state religion, and the Luxembourgian constitution provides for freedom of religion. As in Belgium, Luxembourg subsidizes recognized religions, which are currently Roman Catholicism (practiced by some 95 percent of the population), Protestantism, and Judaism.

Religious Affiliations

Roman Catholic	407,700
Other	60,900

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Luxembourg was founded in 963 by Count Siegfried, who rebuilt a small ruined fortress called Lucilinburhuc (Little Burg) on the site of the present city of Luxembourg. As with many fortresses and castles built in the Middle Ages, Siegfried built his castle upon the ruins of a previous Roman structure. Siegfried's dynasty became powerful under the blind John, count of Luxembourg and king of Bohemia (1310-46), who is the national hero.

In 1443 Luxembourg came under Burgundian rule, and for the succeeding 500 years the state was mostly under foreign control. By the 1867 Treaty of London, Luxembourg was proclaimed an independent state under the protection of the Great Powers but was required to dismantle its fortress. In 1890 the house of Nassau-Weilbourg, through the Grand Duke Adolphe, became the ruling house of Luxembourg. The grand duchy was under German rule from 1914 to 1918 and again from 1940 to 1944. During the Second World War the royal family escaped, but the people of Luxembourg suffered under the Nazi yoke.

Since the war, Luxembourg has benefited from its often turbulent history. Now an independent country, it has exploited its multinational heritage to become a world center of banking and finance as well as the linchpin in many diplomatic efforts. In 1957 it joined an economic union with Belgium and the Netherlands (Benelux), and shortly after it became a founding member of what has become known as the European Union. Today it is one of three official centers for EU activity.

In 2000 Grand Duke Jean, who had headed the royal house since 1964, abdicated in favor of his son Henri. The royal family has limited political power. The integration of the country's economy into that of the European Union progressed in 2002 with adoption of the euro as the country's official currency. The 2004 parliamentary elections secured a center-left government, returning Prime Minister Jean-Claude Juncker, head of government since 1995.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

Prime Ministers

1937–53	Pierre Dupong
1953–58	Joseph Bech
1958–59	Pierre Frieden
1959–74	Pierre Werner
1974–79	Gaston Thorn
1979–84	Pierre Werner
1984–95	Jacques Santer
1995–	Jean-Claude Juncker

CONSTITUTION

Luxembourg is a constitutional monarchy with a constitution dating back to October 17, 1868. The executive branch of government consists of the grand duke, who is chief of state, and his appointees: the prime minister, vice prime minister, and Council of Ministers, or cabinet. The legislative branch consists of the unicameral 64-member Chamber of Deputies. Members of the Chamber of Deputies are elected to serve five-year terms. The judicial branch consists of the Superior Court and the Adminis-

trative Court. Judges in both courts are appointed by the monarch and serve life terms.

PARLIAMENT

The national legislature is the Chamber of Deputies, with the appointed Council of State exercising some vestigial legislative functions. The Chamber of Deputies consists of 64 members, elected for five-year terms by direct, compulsory voting in a proportional representation system.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Like many European countries, Luxembourg has a multi-party system based on proportional representation. Most coalition governments have been headed by the Christian Social People's Party or the Democratic Party, as allied with each other or with the Socialist Workers' Party. The Christian Social People's Party is centrist, the Socialist Workers' Party socialist, and the Democratic Party somewhere in between, drawing support from the more liberal professional and business groups.

In the 2004 elections the Christian Social People's Party formed the government with the Socialist Worker's Party. Two other single-issue parties, the ecological Green Party and the Action Committee for Democracy and Pension Justice, each took seven seats in parliament. The Democratic Party took 10 seats.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Luxembourg is divided into three districts: Luxembourg, Diekirch, and Grevenmacher. These districts are further divided into 126 communes. Districts are headed by commissioners, who are part of the national civil service. Communes are each headed by an elected communal council, which enacts local laws similarly to the way the Chamber of Deputies in the national government enacts laws for the whole country. The grand duke or grand duchess has the right to disband a communal council, however, and when this is done, an election must be held within three months. Communal council members are elected for six years. The method of election depends on the size of the commune. For communes with 3,000 or fewer people, council members are elected by a simple majority vote. For communes with more than 3,000 people, council members must be elected according to a system of proportional representation, the ballot listing the affiliated party of each candidate. (Since Luxembourg does not have a dense population by European standards, fewer than 25 of the 118 communes have proportional representation.)

Each communal council works in conjunction with its respective burgomaster and aldermen, or in some cases the burgomaster alone. The burgomaster runs meetings of the communal council, and he or she, along with the aldermen and council members, is responsible for the day-to-day activities of the commune. Both burgomasters and aldermen are chosen from among the communal council members. All burgomasters are appointed by the grand duke, whereas aldermen are appointed by either the grand duke or the minister of the interior, depending on whether their commune is urban or rural, respectively.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The legal system is based on the Napoleonic Code but has penal and commercial sections similar to those of Belgium. The court structure consists of 13 justices of the peace at the bottom level, two district courts (one in Luxembourg City and one in Diekirch), and the Superior Court of Justice as the court of appeal. Crimes are judged by the court of assizes and appealed to the Superior Court of Justice. There is no jury system. All judges are appointed by the grand duke for life terms; the judiciary remains independent.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Individual human rights are provided for in the constitution. In 1997 the law was expanded, enacting severe penalties for hate crimes based on race, sex, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or trade union or political activity. Luxembourg provides first asylum to refugees and received an estimated 1,300 requests for refugee status in 1999.

The government is largely free from corruption. Transparency International, a corruption watchdog, ranked Luxembourg 11th cleanest of 133 countries surveyed in 2003.

FOREIGN POLICY

Luxembourg is home to the headquarters of the European Parliament and NATO and plays strong roles in both organizations. Luxembourg has especially close relationships with Belgium and the Netherlands and is a strong proponent of greater European integration. It was opposed to the U.S.-led war in Iraq in 2003 and later announced, along with France, Germany, and Belgium, an effort to create a military-planning cell based in the Belgian town of Tervuren.

DEFENSE

Since Luxembourg's history prior to independence is one of intense conflict and domination, the country has

emphasized nonmilitary means of achieving peace with neighbors. Therefore, while a national defense exists, its primary role is to serve in multinational forces as needed and to assist in the event of a civil emergency. Compulsory military service, introduced in 1944, was abolished in 1967. Luxembourg maintains an army of 1,500 volunteers as part of NATO. The 2003 defense budget was equivalent to \$232 million, or 0.9 percent of gross domestic product (GDP).

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	1,500
Military Manpower Availability:	110,867
Military Expenditures \$million:	231.6
as % of GDP:	0.9
as % of central government expenditures:	2.1
Arms Imports \$million:	1
Arms Exports \$million:	—

ECONOMY

Luxembourg has a stable, prosperous economy featuring moderate growth, low inflation, and low unemployment. The small agricultural sector is based on small, family-owned farms. The industrial sector, until recently dominated by steel, has become increasingly diversified; during the past three decades growth in the financial sector has more than compensated for the decline in steel. Services, especially banking, account for a growing proportion of the economy. The number of banks has risen from 13 in 1955 to nearly 200 in 2000, and the financial sector accounts for 22 percent of GDP. Luxembourg participates in an economic union with Belgium on trade and finance and is also closely connected to the Netherlands. As part of the European Union, many its trade policies are determined by the greater European body in Brussels. Luxembourg enjoys a very high standard of living; it has topped the worldwide per capita GDP list several times. Even with the international economic downturn in 2001, Luxembourg maintained moderate growth. Its per capita GDP in 2004 was \$58,900.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion:	27.27
GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$:	58,900
GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %:	4.4
GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %:	3.4
Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:	
Agriculture:	0.5
Industry:	16.3
Services:	83.1
Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:	
Private Consumption:	41
Government Consumption:	18
Gross Domestic Investment:	19.8

Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 13.4
Imports: 16.3
% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: —
% of Income Received by Richest 10%: —

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
104.8	108.1	111.0	113.3	115.6

Finance

National Currency: Euro (EUR)
Exchange Rate: \$1 = EUR 0.886
Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: —
Central Bank Discount Rate %: —
Total External Debt \$million: —
Debt Service Ratio %: —
Balance of Payments \$million: —
International Reserves SDRs \$million: 88.9
Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 2.4

Official Development Assistance

Donor ODA \$million: 147
per capita \$: 313.70
Foreign Direct Investment \$billion: 92.7

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
Revenues \$billion: 13.74
Expenditures \$billion: 14.49
Budget Deficit \$million: 750
Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 0.5
Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: -3.7
Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: —
Irrigation, % of Farms having: —
Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: —
Total Farmland % of land area: 23.3
Livestock: Cattle 000: 185
Chickens million: 80
Pigs 000: 76
Sheep 000: 7
Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters 000: —
Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: —

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 2.7
Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 2.9

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 80
Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 3.04
Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 6.87
Net Energy Imports % of use: 98.6
Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: 129
Production kW-hr billion: 2.51
Consumption kW-hr billion: 5.74
Coal Reserves tons billion: —
Production tons 000: —
Consumption tons 000: 140
Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
Production cubic feet billion: —
Consumption cubic feet billion: 42
Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
Production barrels 000 per day: —
Consumption barrels 000 per day: 51.6
Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 16.3
Exports \$billion: 13.4
Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 7.1
Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 6.9
Balance of Trade \$million: —

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Belgium %	29.0	10.4
Germany %	22.9	23.3
France %	11.4	19.0
China %	10.9	—
Netherlands %	4.8	4.3
United Kingdom %	—	9.1
Italy %	—	6.8
Spain %	—	4.6

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 5,210
Paved %: 100
Automobiles: 280,700
Trucks and Buses: 48,700
Railroad: Track Length km: 274
Passenger-km million: 346
Freight-km million: 634
Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 40
Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 805.1
Airports: 2
Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 437
Length of Waterways km: 37

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 867
Number of Tourists from 000: 261
Tourist Receipts \$billion: 2.96
Tourist Expenditures \$billion: 2.4

Communications

Telephones 000: 355.4
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones 000: 473
 Personal Computers 000: 280
 Internet Hosts per million people: 60,213
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 352

ENVIRONMENT

Luxembourg's largest concern is air and water pollution, especially in populated and industrial areas. However, Luxembourg's low population density and long tradition of preservation—one-fifth of the country remains forested—means that it does not suffer from the ill effects of overpopulation. While it has moved away from predominantly relying on polluting industries such as steel and mining, Luxembourg's size means that it cannot enact effective environmental measures in a vacuum; most work regarding the cleanup and preservation of the environment has taken place at the European level.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 22.0
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: —
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 17
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 6,047
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 19.37

LIVING CONDITIONS

The UN 2004 Human Development Report ranked Luxembourg 15th out of 177 countries in terms of life expectancy, education, and standard of living. Life expectancy in 2004 was 78.7 years, literacy stood at 100 percent—with 75 percent of eligible students enrolled in primary, secondary, and tertiary schools—and per capita GDP was \$58,900.

Over 60 percent of Luxembourgers own their own homes, which range from rustic, thick-walled country cottages to high-rise apartments in Luxembourg City. Detached houses account for 60 percent of all housing units, apartments 36 percent, and farms 4 percent. Geographically small, Luxembourg is well serviced by mass transit; roads and highways cover the nation and connect with major highways throughout Europe. As of 2001, 91 percent of the population lived in urban areas. All the country's towns and cites have populations under 100,000.

Luxembourg has an extensive system of social insurance, which covers employees and their families for sickness, maternity, retirement, disability, and survivors' benefits. Both the employee and employer contribute, and the government also absorbs part of the cost. Birth,

maternity, child, and education allowances are provided to all residents, as are parental leave and child-rearing allowances.

HEALTH

Luxembourg's health-care system is administered by the Ministry of Public Health and provides free care to citizens and residents of the country. Hospitals are operated both by the state and by the Catholic Church. Between 1995 and 2002, 100 percent of births were attended by trained health-care professionals. As of 2004 there were 254 physicians per 100,000 Luxembourgers. Immunization of children younger than two is at a high level: In 2003, 98 percent were immunized for polio and tuberculosis, 91 percent for measles. The infant mortality rate in 2004 was less than 5 deaths per 1,000 live births.

As with many developed nations, leading causes of death include cardiovascular disease, cancer, and automobile accidents. Tuberculosis is almost eradicated; in 2002 there were only 11 cases per 100,000 people. The AIDS prevalence rate in 2002 was just 0.2 percent; in 2003 fewer than 500 Luxembourgers were living with HIV/AIDS, and fewer than 100 died of the disease. Smoking remains a health hazard; the smoking rate was nearly equal for men (32 percent of men over 15) and women (26 percent) in the mid-1990s.

Health

Number of Physicians: 1,123
 Number of Dentists: 283
 Number of Nurses: 3,391
 Number of Pharmacists: 325
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 255
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 4.81
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 28
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 6.2
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 2,951
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.2
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 98
 Measles:
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: —
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 100

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Luxembourg's culinary culture is influenced by its three bordering neighbors, France, Germany, and Belgium, and in fact blends many of the best traits of each into cuisine with plenty of pork, game, and fish as well as heavier German fare, such as sauerkraut.

Servings tend to be generous, another German influence, and sauces rich and heavy, a French influence.

Typical dishes include Ardennes ham served with beans or smoked pork and sauerkraut. *Cochon de lait en gelée* is a suckling pig done in aspic, while *civet de lièvre* is rabbit in sauce. Of mixed French and German influence is *quenelles de foie de veau*, or liver dumplings. Sausages are also popular, as is tripe. Fish include trout, pike, carp, and crayfish, all from the Moselle and smaller rivers. Desserts include pastries, plum tarts, and cakes.

Moselle wines and hearty beers complement the cuisine.

Nutrition overall is adequate in Luxembourg. No sections of the population have been reported undernourished. Between 1998 and 2003 just 8 percent of infants had low birth weight.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: —
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: —

STATUS OF WOMEN

Women and men are provided similar rights. Women are active in political life, including in the Chamber of Deputies, although their presence is disproportionate. Women constitute almost 40 percent of the workforce, where they earn 9 to 25 percent less than men, depending on class and type of work; the government is working to eliminate this discrepancy. The government also provides allowances to women who are at home or working at low-paying jobs and have children younger than two. This money is provided regardless of the woman's marital status or the income of her husband. The government provides funding for domestic violence hotlines, women's shelters, and counseling. Upon the dissolution of marriages, property is divided equally, unless prenuptial agreements state otherwise. Though abortion law does not technically provide for abortion on demand, a woman who has had an abortion while under "distress" is considered not to have violated the law, and "distress" is interpreted liberally.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 23
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.0
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 38.4

WORK

Luxembourg's labor force in 2004 numbered almost 300,000, of whom 105,000 were foreign workers. Many

people cross the borders daily from France or Belgium to work in Luxembourg's industries and financial sector. As of 2004 an estimated 86 percent of workers were employed in services, including the government, tourism, and the growing financial sector. Only 13 percent were involved in industry such as iron and steel, food processing, chemicals, metal products, engineering, tires, glass, and aluminum. A mere 1 percent were engaged in the once dominant agricultural sector, with products including barley, oats, potatoes, wheat, fruits, wine grapes, and livestock products. In 2004 there was a 4.5 percent unemployment rate.

Freedom of assembly is protected, and Luxembourgers may organize in trade unions. The right to strike is constitutionally guaranteed, though workers may strike only after their dispute is submitted to the National Conciliation Office and all mediation efforts have failed. Almost 60 percent of the labor force is unionized. The minimum work age is 16, the maximum workweek 40 hours. Minimum wages in 2004 for single workers over the age of 18 were \$1,860 per month for unskilled workers, \$2,230 per month for skilled workers. Occupational health and safety laws are strictly enforced.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 293,700
 Female Participation Rate %: 37.6
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 1
 Industry: 13
 Services: 86
 Unemployment %: 4.5

EDUCATION

Primary education is compulsory and runs for six years, from ages six through 12. Secondary education lasts an additional six years, three of which are also compulsory. If a child does not attend secondary education, intermediate alternatives are offered in the form of trade and technical schools.

The literacy rate in Luxembourg in 2004 was 100 percent. In 2002, net primary enrollment was 96 percent of eligible children, net secondary enrollment 80 percent, and combined gross enrollment at primary, secondary, and tertiary schools 75 percent. In 2001, 99 percent of primary school students reached grade five.

The Centre Universitaire offers first-year undergraduate courses and various postgraduate courses, but a student must obtain degrees outside of the grand duchy. The government made a decision in 2002 not to build a university, which would keep citizens from going abroad for higher education—most go to Belgium or France—an experience considered invaluable for a citizen of Luxembourg. Public spending on education in 1999 was 3.6 percent of GDP.

Education

Literacy Rate %:	100
Male %:	100
Female %:	100
School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling:	13.5
First Level: Primary Schools: —	
Teachers:	2,893
Students:	33,966
Student-Teacher Ratio:	11.7
Net Enrollment Ratio:	96.2
Second Level: Secondary Schools: —	
Teachers: —	
Students:	22,725
Student-Teacher Ratio: —	
Net Enrollment Ratio:	79.9
Third Level: Institutions: 1	
Teachers:	142
Students:	2,965
Gross Enrollment Ratio:	11.5
Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP:	3.6

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The major learned society in the country is the Grand Ducal Institute, with both scientific and medical departments. The natural sciences are sponsored by another learned society, the Society of Luxembourg Naturalists. Public research institutes include two that handle health and applied-sciences projects.

Courses in computer science and engineering are offered at the Higher Institute of Technology, while undergraduate science degrees are offered at the Centre Universitaire. Luxembourgers go abroad for advanced science and technology degrees. Luxembourg has been a European leader in satellite communication. At Betzdorf is located the Société Européenne des Satellites, the control center for the Astra satellite fleet, a group of satellites vital to European broadcasting.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people:	—
Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP:	1.71
High-Tech Exports \$billion:	1
Patent Applications by Residents:	193

MEDIA

There are five native daily newspapers in Luxembourg, the *Luxembourger wort* being the oldest (1848). Other major dailies include *Tageblatt*, in German and French, and *La républicaine Lorraine*, in French. *Telecran* is a weekly newspaper, and *352* is an English-language weekly that is also available online.

Radio-Télé-Luxembourg, RTL, is almost legendary in radio and television broadcasting in Europe. Genera-

tions of young Europeans and British grew up listening to the pop and rock music programming of Radio Luxembourg long before their domestic radio stations had such programming. RTL and other private stations broadcast to the domestic audience in Luxembourgish, French, German, Dutch, and English. RTL signals also reach eight million people throughout Europe. As of 1999 there were two AM stations, nine FM stations, and five television stations in the country. Radio, television, and newspapers from western Europe are widely digested.

Luxembourg has also taken to new communication technologies. In 2002, 473,000 people were using cellular telephones, and 165,000 were using the Internet.

The law provides for freedom of speech and the press, and the government upholds these provisions in practice. Newspapers represent a broad range of opinion, and Internet access is unrestricted.

Media

Daily Newspapers:	5
Total Circulation 000:	120
Circulation per 1,000:	276
Books Published: —	
Periodicals:	10
Radio Receivers 000:	184
per 1,000:	392
Television sets 000:	255
per 1,000:	599

CULTURE

As with other aspects of life in Luxembourg, the royal house affects the cultural scene. The Grand Ducal Institute is the country's premier cultural institution, not only carrying out research in science and medicine but also promoting the arts and literature. Luxembourg City is venue to a continual stream of visiting music, dance, and theatrical companies, and the Grand Orchestra of RTL is considered world class. Luxembourg City is also home to the Music Conservatory as well as the National Museum of History and Art, which has collections of fine art and also showcases the history of Luxembourg.

The history of the land can also be seen in local architecture, both secular and ecclesiastical, ranging from ancient Gallo-Roman villas to medieval castles, Gothic and Baroque churches, and contemporary buildings.

Publishing and broadcasting are both vital to the maintenance of Luxembourg culture. Books are published in French, German, and Luxembourgish.

Well-known Luxembourg artists include Daniel Muller, a 17th-century sculptor, and Joseph Kutter, the 20th-century Expressionist painter who was essential in introducing modern art to Luxembourg. Writers include the French-language Felix Thyès and Marcel Noppeney, the German-language Nikolaus Welter, and Michael Ro-

dange and Roger Manderscheid, both of whom wrote in Luxembourgish. Paul Palgen is the country's best-known poet, and Edward Steichen, the acclaimed pioneer in photography, was also a Luxembourg native.

Much of the folk culture and folk music of Luxembourg is similar to that of Belgium, including the making of fiddles from wooden clogs. The folk traditions of the nation are not as strong as those in, for example, the Baltic states.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 2
Volumes: 528,266
Registered borrowers: —
Museums Number: —
Annual Attendance: —
Cinema Gross Receipts: —
Number of Cinemas: 21
Seating Capacity: 4,500
Annual Attendance: 1,300,000

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Luxembourg has a rich tradition of folklore, much of which deals with the founding of the land that became known as Luxembourg. One of the most famous of all legends is that of Mélusine and Count Siegfried, who in 963 bought a rocky promontory on the river Alzette and called it Lucilinburhuc, the cradle of the modern nation. According to this legend, Siegfried married a maiden named Mélusine but did not realize that she was actually a mermaid. Every Saturday she changed back into a mermaid at a time when she had forbidden her husband to visit her. However, he once broke his promise and discovered the transformation. With this, she disappeared into the walls of Luxembourg City and is said to still be there. However, she changes form every seven years, becoming either a beautiful woman or a serpent. It is also said that Mélusine is spending her long years in the walls knitting a garment that, if ever finished, will mean that Luxembourg will vanish along with her.

Other famous legends involve a ghost in the city walls called the Steirchesgeesch, the dancing witches of the village of Koerich, and a werewolf that lives near the town of Bettembourg.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Favorite forms of entertainment for urban Luxembourgers include dining out or taking afternoon coffee in a café. Musical theater, classical concerts, and choral music all draw regular audiences in the nation's theaters and concert halls. In Luxembourg City, jazz and popular music

are served up in numerous clubs. Cinema is also popular. In 1999 there were 9.6 cinema seats per 1,000 people, and the average attendance per person was 2.8 times per year. Television is also popular, as in all developed countries. Luxembourg broadcasts programs produced in the country and also receives broadcasts from many other European nations. As multilingual, the population has a wide variety of programming to choose from.

Nature outings are also popular with Luxembourgers. There are dozens of nature parks throughout the nation where city dwellers can get in touch with regional flora and fauna. Gardening is another popular recreation, as are various sports, including soccer, tennis, and swimming. The country has 16 national hiking routes as well as numerous other paths and trails, making hiking one of the country's favorite outdoor recreational activities. Favorite winter sports include cross-country skiing and ice skating.

EITQUETTE

Luxembourg's system of etiquette is similar to that of other western European countries. A handshake at greeting is typical for both old and new acquaintances. Women often hug or kiss each other on the cheek three times. *Moien* (Good morning), *Gudden owend* (Good evening), *Wéi geet et?* (How are you?), and *Bonjour* ("Good day" in French) are common greetings. Departures are announced with *Addi* (Goodbye) or the more formal French *Au revoir*. Younger people use the more casual and international *salut* and *ciao*.

First names are used with close friends. Dining is European style, with both fork and knife used simultaneously. Public displays of affection are not considered appropriate. In general, snapping the fingers of both hands, talking with the hands in the pocket, or pointing with the index finger are also considered to be inappropriate.

FAMILY LIFE

Families in Luxembourg, as throughout the developed world, have become smaller in modern times. Typically, the living situation involves a nuclear family with one or two children. The fertility rate in 2004 was 1.8 children per woman. Irrespective of size, family is a cornerstone of Luxembourgian culture; it is even written into law that adult children must take on part of the financial burden of their aging parents. The state also provides a children's allowance to parents.

In general, because of the length of the workweek and the proximity of places of employment to homes, working parents are able to spend a large amount of time with their children. Annual paid vacations and numerous holidays in this predominantly Catholic country also pro-

vide free time for families to be together. Since the 1960s families have adopted orphans from around the world.

In 2002 there was a 51 percent divorce rate in the country.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Apparel is modern and Western. Traditional homespun peasant clothing and clogs are only brought out for folklore festivals. Socially conservative, Luxembourgers tend to dress quite well in public. Women wear skirts and dresses more often than slacks; men wear hats with their suits.

SPORTS

Soccer is popular in Luxembourg, as it is throughout much of the rest of the world. The national championships keep people in front of their televisions or in the sports stadiums. The national team regularly participates in the UEFA Cup championships. Other popular sports include jogging, tennis, badminton, and volleyball. Cycling takes center stage annually when part of the route of the world's most famous bicycle race, the Tour de France, passes through the country.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1940** On May 10 Luxembourg is invaded by Nazi Germany. The occupation lasts through 1944; 5,700 people (2 percent of the total population) die in the resistance effort. The grand ducal family remains in exile throughout the Nazi occupation.
- 1944** American troops enter Luxembourg and free the city of Pétange on September 9, Luxembourg City on September 10, and then the rest of the country.
Along with Belgium and the Netherlands, Luxembourg forms the Benelux Economic Union.
- 1945** Hitler, having returned to the Ardennes in December 1944 on his way to the Belgian port of Antwerp, clashes with Allied troops in the Battle of the Bulge. Hitler is driven out on February 12, 1945.
- 1949** Luxembourg participates in the founding of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO).
- 1951** Leopold III abdicates the throne.
- 1952** Luxembourg joins, as a founding member, the European Coal and Steel Community.
- 1953** Prime Minister Pierre Dupong resigns, and Joseph Bech is named head of government. Hereditary Grand Duke Jean marries Charlotte, the daughter of the former Belgian king Leopold III and sister of the Belgian king Baudouin.
- 1957** Luxembourg becomes a founding member of the European Community.
- 1958** Prime Minister Bech resigns and is replaced by Pierre Frieden.
- 1959** Pierre Werner succeeds Frieden as prime minister.
- 1963** Luxembourg celebrates the 1,000th anniversary of its founding as an independent state.
- 1964** Grand Duchess Charlotte abdicates in favor of her son, Jean.
- 1974** Werner is ousted by a coalition cabinet headed by Democratic Party leader Gaston Thorn.
- 1979** Werner returns to office following electoral success for the Christian Social People's Party.
- 1981** Hereditary Grand Duke Henri marries Maria Teresa Mestre. Originally from Cuba, she was raised in the United States and Europe.
- 1983** Luxembourg Monetary Institute is founded.
- 1984** Werner steps down, and Jacques Santer is named head of government.
- 1985** Grand Duchess Charlotte dies.
- 1989** Luxembourg celebrates the 150th anniversary of its independence.
- 1994** Luxembourg celebrates the 50th anniversary of its liberation by Allied forces during World War II.
- 1998** Prince Henri, eldest son of Grand Duke Jean, is appointed *lieutenant representant*, a position used in the modern grand duchy as a stepping-stone to becoming grand duke or grand duchess.
- 1999** In his Christmas Eve message, Grand Duke Jean announces he will step down in favor of his son, Henri.
- 2000** Henri becomes grand duke in September.
- 2001** Grand Duke Henri breaks with tradition by officially opening the parliament in person, the first time a royal has done so in 124 years.
- 2002** A large peace march is held in October to protest the potential war with Iraq.
The euro becomes the official currency of Luxembourg.
- 2003** Luxembourg maintains its banking secrecy laws, becoming one of only three of the 15 EU countries not to agree to share information on savings accounts of EU citizens abroad.
- 2004** Jean-Claude Juncker is again invited to form the government after his party wins the general election.
- 2005** Voters approve a proposed EU constitution.

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OFFICIAL PUBLICATIONS

Luxembourg. *Annuaire statistique; Bulletin du Statec* (monthly); *Recensement general de la population du 15 février 2001*

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- CIA World Factbook: Luxembourg
<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/lu.html>
- Gouvernement du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg (in French)
<http://www.gouvernement.lu>

MACEDONIA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (Poranesna Jugoslavenska Republika Makedonija)

ABBREVIATION

MK

CAPITAL

Skopje

HEAD OF STATE

President Branko Crvenkovski (from 2004)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Vlado Bučkovski (from 2004)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Constitutional democracy

POPULATION

2,045,262 (2005)

AREA

25,333 sq km (9,781 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Macedonian, Albanian, Serb, Turkish

LANGUAGES

Macedonian, Albanian

RELIGIONS

Eastern Orthodox, Muslim

UNIT OF CURRENCY

New Macedonian denar

NATIONAL FLAG

A rising yellow sun with eight rays extending to the edges of a red field

NATIONAL EMBLEM

The sun of freedom rising above Shar Mountain and Ohrid Lake, all bounded by wheat and poppy to either side, a red star at the top, and a decorative red banner at the bottom

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Today over Macedonia”

NATIONAL HOLIDAY

September 8 (National Day)

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

September 17, 1991

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

November 17, 1991

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is located in the Balkan region of southeastern Europe. At the center of the Balkans, Macedonia lies at the junction of the major trade and communication routes that connect western and central Europe with the Aegean Sea and northern with southern Europe. The landlocked nation borders Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, and Yugoslavia; in all, Macedonia's border is 766 km (476 mi). This includes 48 km (30 mi) of borders across lakes and 16 km (10 mi) of borders that cross rivers. There is an ongoing

dispute with Yugoslavia over the boundary between the two nations.

The total area of Macedonia is 25,333 sq km (9,781 sq mi). The Vardar River bisects the nation and has the lowest elevation in the country at 50 m (164 ft). The nation has 477 sq km (184 sq mi) of lakes, including the three principal lakes of Dojran, Ohrid, and Prespa. The terrain is mostly mountainous, with high ridges and deep ravines and valleys. The highest point in the country is Golem Korab, at 2,764 m (9,066 ft). The rugged terrain has provided the nation with a number of valuable natural resources, including chromium, lead, zinc, manganese, and nickel.

Macedonia



Geography

Area sq km: 25,333; sq mi 9,781
 World Rank: 145th
 Land Boundaries, km: Albania 151; Bulgaria 148; Greece 246; Serbia and Montenegro 221
 Coastline, km: 0
 Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Vardar River 50
 Highest: Golem Korab (Maja e Korabit) 2,764
 Land Use %
 Arable Land: 22.3
 Permanent Crops: 1.8
 Forest: 35.6
 Other: 40.3

Population of Principal Cities (2002)

Kumanovo	103,205
Skopje	467,257

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Macedonia's climate is marked by hot, dry summers, but the combination of elevation and mountains also leads to relatively cold winters with heavy snowfall. The Aegean Sea basin and the high mountains create a combination of Mediterranean and continental climates. The average precipitation is between 500 and 700 mm (20 and 28 in) per year, but rainfall patterns vary considerably. Temperatures average 10°C (50°F) but range from summer highs of 40°C (104°F) to winter lows of -30°C (-22°F).

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature
 July: 70°F to 73°F
 January: 24°F to 32°F
 Average Rainfall: 19 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

A mountainous land, Macedonia is home to conifer forests at higher elevations and deciduous forests at lower elevations. Such forests predominate in the northwest of the country.

Wildlife thrives in these forests; animals include rabbits, deer, boars, wolves, bears, foxes, and lynx. The country is also home to a declining population of European bison. Along waterways are found muskrats, raccoons, turtles, ducks, and frogs. Trout inhabit the lakes and streams. Insect life is also varied, with grasshoppers very common. Many species of lizard also reside in Macedonia.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 2,045,262
 World Rank: 140th
 Density per sq km: 80.6
 % of annual growth (1999-2003): 0.4
 Male %: 50.0
 Female %: 50.0
 Urban %: 62.0
 Age Distribution %: 0-14: 20.5
 15-64: 68.7
 65 and over: 10.8
 Population 2025: 2,120,000
 Birth Rate per 1,000: 12.0
 Death Rate per 1,000: 8.73
 Rate of Natural Increase %: 0.3
 Total Fertility Rate: 1.57
 Expectation of Life (years): Males 71.28
 Females 76.37
 Marriage Rate per 1,000: 7.1
 Divorce Rate per 1,000: 0.6
 Average Size of Households: 3.8
 Induced Abortions: 12,028

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Ethnic Macedonians are the largest single group in the country, accounting for some 65 percent of the population. The next largest group is the Albanians, who make up 22 percent of the population. There are also significant Turk, Serb, and Gypsy minorities. The minority groups have been granted limited autonomy, including the ability to establish schools in their own languages. However, ethnic Albanians are underrepresented in both government and the upper economic circles. Poverty and unemployment are also highest among minority groups.

LANGUAGES

Some 71 percent of the population speak Macedonian, which is an official national language. Macedonian is from the Indo-European family of languages and belongs to the South Slav subgroup, which also includes Serbian, Croatian, and Bulgarian. It uses the Cyrillic alphabet. In addition, Albanian is widely spoken and as of 2002 became one of the official national languages. Other widely spoken languages are Turkish and Serbo-Croatian. The government allows education to be delivered in languages other than Macedonian, based on the ethnic concentration of communities.

RELIGIONS

Most Macedonians practice the Eastern Orthodox religion. In 1967 the Macedonian Orthodox Church was re-

stored. In all, some 54 percent of the population identifies itself as Orthodox. There is also a large Muslim community, with one-third of the population adhering to Islam. The constitution guarantees the freedom of religion, but some Protestant denominations have not been allowed to register their churches. Also, the refusal of the Serbian Orthodox Church to recognize the independence of Macedonia has prompted the government to refuse Serbian priests entrance to the country. In 2002 one bishop of the unrecognized Macedonian Orthodox Church decided to break ranks with the Macedonian church hierarchy and accept the canonical authority of the Orthodox Patriarch of Serbia.

Religious Affiliations

Macedonian Orthodox	1,432,000
Muslim	593,000
Other	20,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Around 653 B.C.E. King Perdiccas I established the Macedonian kingdom. Under Phillip II (359–336 B.C.E.), Macedonia underwent a period of significant military and political consolidation and reform. Macedonia's golden age occurred during the reign of Alexander the Great (336–323 B.C.E.). Alexander conquered most of the then-known world and established the largest empire the West had seen to that date. However, after his death the empire disintegrated, and Macedonia was conquered by Rome in 167 B.C.E.

In 535 C.E. the town of Justiniana Prima was established near present-day Skopje by the Byzantine Empire. During the sixth and seventh centuries Macedonia was settled by the Slavs. In 886 Macedonia was Christianized by Saint Clement. The medieval Macedonian Empire was founded after a revolt against Bulgarian sovereignty in 969, but that empire was conquered by the Byzantines in 1018. During the period of Byzantine control there were numerous revolts against Constantinople, but the empire's domination was only broken by the Turks, who conquered the region in 1395. Over the next five centuries the population raised a number of major rebellions against Turkish suzerainty.

The Razlovci Uprising of 1876 in eastern Macedonia is generally credited with launching the country's modern liberation movement. In 1903 the Ilinden Revolt briefly established a republic, but it was not until the 1912–13 Balkan Wars that Macedonia was freed from Turkish control, and only then to be partitioned between several states, including Greece. Following the World War I, the Treaty of Versailles sanctioned the partition of Macedonia, most of which then became part of Yugoslavia.

By the 1920s indigenous independence movements had formed. The Yugoslav Communist Party supported the creation of an autonomous Macedonian state and the recovery of lands lost to Greece and Bulgaria. Following the 1941 invasion of the Balkans by German and Italian forces, Macedonia was divided between Bulgaria and Italy. Throughout the war there was active resistance to the occupying forces, and by the end of the war there were 56,000 partisans.

In 1945 the People's Republic of Macedonia was proclaimed as a republic of Yugoslavia, and those areas that had been conquered by Italy were returned to Macedonia. Josip Tito became Yugoslavia's premier. That same year collectivization began, with restrictions on land ownership, and in 1946 the government began nationalizing businesses and corporations. In 1946 Macedonia adopted its first constitution. The following year the Bled Accords ceded Bulgarian Macedonia back to Macedonia, but the accords were rejected after the split between Moscow and Tito's Belgrade. Unlike the other Communist states of Europe, Tito endeavored to develop a policy of nonalignment for Yugoslavia, with ties to neither Moscow nor the West. Tito was elected president of the country in 1953.

Throughout the post-World War II era ethnic tensions persisted between the various groups in Yugoslavia. In an effort to reduce these tensions, the Communist League was formed in 1969. Purges were conducted two years later, with supporters of free-market reforms removed from the government. This was followed by the revision of the constitution in 1974 to establish a collective presidency in order to grant greater power to the individual regions.

The stability that marked Yugoslav history in the post-World War II era began to erode after Tito's death in 1980. In 1991 Macedonia proclaimed independence following a national referendum. After gaining independence, the country now formally called the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) adopted a new constitution. Macedonia became a member of the United Nations in 1993 and of the European Council in 1995. In 1999 North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) peacekeeping forces were dispatched to Macedonia in response to the conflict in the neighboring Serbian province of Kosovo. As a result of the conflict, 245,000 refugees fled to Macedonia. In 2001 an Albanian group called the National Liberation Army started an insurgency from Kosovo and soon controlled territory in northern and western Macedonia. In August a peace agreement was signed granting ethnic Albanians greater political rights.

The Ohrid Accord, which stopped the fighting, set out several points that would give Albanians greater autonomy in the country. These included making Albanian an official language of Macedonia, which took place in 2002, and redrawing district and community boundaries to give more power to locales with large populations

of Albanians. This latter measure was accomplished in 2004 but sparked off a new series of violence and a referendum attempt (which failed) to repeal these new laws. The road toward Albanian integration has not been easy for Macedonia.

Meanwhile, the country has been hampered by unemployment hovering around 40 percent, allegations of government corruption, and the death of President Boris Trajkovski in a plane crash in 2004. Elections held to replace him resulted in a new government, with the prime minister, Social Democrat Branko Crvenkovski, becoming president and another Social Democrat, Vlado Bučkovski, succeeding Crvenkovski as prime minister. In 2004 Macedonia formally applied for EU membership.

LISTS OF MODERN RULERS

Prime Minister

1991–92	Nikola Kljusev
1992–98	Branko Crvenkovski
1998–2002	Ljubco Georgievski
2002–04	Branko Crvenkovski
2004	Radmila Sekerinska (acting)
2004	Hari Kostov
2004	Radmila Sekerinska (acting)
2004–	Vlado Bučkovski

CONSTITUTION

Macedonia is a relatively new democracy. The head of state is the president, who is directly elected for a five-year period but can serve only two terms. In order to run for the presidency, an individual must be at least 40 years old and be nominated by either 10,000 voters or 30 members of parliament. The president is commander in chief of the military and appoints all ambassadors but in other respects is largely ceremonial.

The Macedonian government is based on a parliamentary system. The legislature, a unicameral body known as the Sobranje, has 120 members who serve four-year terms. The executive is led by a prime minister, who, as well as the Council of Ministers, or cabinet, is elected by the parliament. The cabinet is responsible for proposing the budget and other laws. Members of the government may not serve concurrently in parliament.

There is an independent judiciary, with the Supreme Court as the highest legal body. The constitution grants all citizens of the nation the right to form local government bodies.

The acknowledgement of ethnic-Albanian rights was formalized in amendments to the constitution approved by parliament in late 2001.

PARLIAMENT

The nation's parliament is a unicameral body of 120 deputies known as the Sobranje. Deputies are elected in a mixed system whereby 85 of the seats are directly elected and 35 are elected by proportional voting, in which parties must gain at least 5 percent of the total vote in order to be represented. Members of parliament serve four-year terms. The majority party in the Sobranje nominates the prime minister, who is then formally appointed by the president. Suffrage is universal for all citizens 18 and over.

The parliament debates and adopts all laws of the country and has the authority to amend the constitution. It is also responsible for developing the budget and approving all international agreements.

POLITICAL PARTIES

The major political parties in Macedonia as of 2004 were the Social Democratic Union of Macedonia, a center-left party; the center-left Liberal Democratic Party; the Democratic Union for Integration, the Albanian minority party; the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization–Democratic Party of Macedonian National Unity, a conservative party; and the Democratic Alternative. In the 2004 elections the government was formed by a coalition of the Social Democratic Union of Macedonia, the Liberal Democratic Party, and the Democratic Union for Integration. The main opposition party was the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization–Democratic Party of Macedonian National Unity, taking 33 of 120 seats. In addition, there are dozens of minor and regional parties.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The constitution guarantees citizens the right to form local governmental units, and a law passed in 1996 established the criteria for the creation of new bodies. The basic unit of local government became the municipality, of which there are 123; these are supported by both their own tax revenues and funds from the central government. Municipalities have considerable control over urban planning, education, social security, and health care. The nation has 34 counties and 1,660 local communities, including some 200 urban areas.

As part of accommodations plans and attempts to better integrate the Albanian minority, the number of municipalities will be reduced to 76 by 2008.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The constitution of Macedonia establishes an independent judiciary. The court system exists at three levels. At the local level are municipal courts; at the regional level

there are district courts, which have an appellate function; and the nation's highest legal authority is the Supreme Court, although there is an independent Constitutional Court that oversees constitutional issues.

In 1997 the government created the Office of People's Ombudsman in order to assist citizens in defending individual and constitutional rights. Judges are appointed by an independent panel known as the Republican Judicial Council and then confirmed by the president. Each trial judge is assisted by two lay judges, but the professional jurist has the final determination.

The judicial system has been criticized for not having a representative ethnic balance among its judges and prosecutors and for having a large backlog of cases. Judicial independence has been questioned, as judges are nominated by parliament in less-than-transparent procedures.

HUMAN RIGHTS

The constitution guarantees the freedoms of religion, expression, press, and protest and forbids discrimination based on race, sex, ethnicity, political persuasion, or social status. Citizens have the right to own and acquire property and to form political groups.

There are tensions between the nation's majority Macedonian ethnic group and the Albanian minority. Albanians are significantly underrepresented in government and industry. Also, Albanians face discrimination when attempting to gain citizenship. The nation's citizenship laws require residency for 15 years.

Such tensions bubbled over into an insurgency in 2001 that was finally brought under control by the international community. The constitutional reforms envisioned by the Ohrid Accords, which ended the fighting, entailed making Albanian an official language, granting more self-government to local municipalities, increasing the number of ethnic Albanians in the police force, devolving some of the powers of the central government from Skopje to local municipalities, and granting amnesty to ethnic Albanian insurgents.

FOREIGN POLICY

Macedonia gained independence through a national referendum and the subsequent adoption of a new constitution on November 17, 1991. Since that date, Macedonia has faced international pressure from the rest of the former Yugoslavia; the nation has sought to avoid the kind of conflict that occurred between Serbia and other breakaway states, such as Croatia and Bosnia.

Macedonia has also faced pressure, including an economic embargo, from Greece, which objects to the nation's name. Some traditionally Macedonian territory and people are part of Greece, and Athens has feared that

the new nation might have territorial ambitions, such as to wrest control of the Greek province of Macedonia. Greece used its membership in the European Union and other regional bodies to block recognition of the new nation. Over time, the two nations began to develop closer relations. In 1995, under pressure from the United States, Greece lifted its trade embargo.

In general, Macedonia has pursued a pro-Western foreign policy. It has sought integration into the institutional framework of Western Europe, and the European Union has provided significant economic and development aid to the country. The deployment of UN peacekeeping troops soon after independence forestalled Serbian aggression, but the nation has had to deal with the impact of the ethnic war in Kosovo, including the immigration of large numbers of refugees. Macedonia supported the Western coalition during the 1999 Kosovo conflict, including allowing the deployment of NATO forces in the nation as a staging base for operations against Serbia.

The country has attempted to use the significant Macedonian minorities in nations such as Australia, Canada, and the United States to promote its interests. As one of the poorest areas of the former Yugoslavia, Macedonia has sought significant foreign aid and assistance.

Macedonia was a proponent of the American-led war against Iraq in 2003 and sent a small contingent to take part in the conflict and subsequent peacekeeping. In 2004 the country applied for EU membership and also sought membership in NATO.

DEFENSE

The Macedonian military numbered about 20,000 troops as of 2003. Most of these are conscripts who serve for six months. Draft age is 18; minimum volunteer age is 17. There is also a small air force of 50 personnel, though no combat aircraft, and a 7,500-person paramilitary police force under the control of the Ministry of the Interior. Macedonia has received limited military aid from the West, including the United States. The military has little equipment—only some outdated tanks, antiaircraft missiles, and artillery pieces that were used by the territorial defense forces. The government plans to develop a substantial reserve force, to number some 100,000. In the 2002 fiscal year defense spending reached \$200 million, or 6 percent of gross domestic product (GDP). By 2003, with an easing of tensions within the country and international peacekeepers on hand, this had been reduced to \$108 million, with a similar reduction in active personnel. The country is in the process of overhauling its defense structure, making it leaner and more responsive to new forms of attack. Such reforms are expected to be completed by 2007, at which time the peacetime structure of the army should include 12,858 soldiers, out of which 70 percent will be professional soldiers, 30 percent conscripts.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 20,400
 Military Manpower Availability: 498,259
 Military Expenditures \$million: 108
 as % of GDP: 2.8
 as % of central government expenditures: —
 Arms Imports \$million: —
 Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

Macedonia is the poorest of the former Yugoslav states but has a substantial agricultural base to provide most basic food needs. However, the nation is dependent on imports of energy and modern machinery. Since the re-opening of trade with Greece, the Macedonian economy has begun to grow. An important component of the economy is remittances from the large Macedonian diaspora around the world. The largest employers in the nation are the mining and manufacturing industries. Services provide the largest share of GDP, followed distantly by industry. Unemployment remains a profound problem, with over one-third of workers without jobs; the minority communities have the highest levels of unemployment. Macedonia's major exports are foodstuffs, beverages, and machinery and equipment, while its main imports include machinery, energy sources, and chemicals. The nation's most important trade partners are the former Yugoslav republics, Bulgaria, Germany, Italy, and Austria. Macedonia joined the World Trade Organization in 2003, and the political situation has stabilized since 2002. However, with unemployment remaining between 35 and 40 percent, much work in the economic arena needs to be completed. The unofficial, or gray, economy is estimated at about 40 percent of GDP.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 14.4
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 7,100
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 1.7
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 1.3
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 11.2
 Industry: 26.0
 Services: 62.8
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 71
 Government Consumption: 21
 Gross Domestic Investment: 17.5
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 1.629
 Imports: 2.677
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: —
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: —

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
	104.4	103.0	103.7	103.0	103.0

Finance

National Currency: Macedonian Denar (MKD)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = MKD 49.3884
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 27.2
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 6.5
 Total External Debt \$billion: 1.863
 Debt Service Ratio %: 8.66
 Balance of Payments \$million: –311
 International Reserves SDRs \$million: 897.8
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 0.4

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 233.5
 per capita \$: 114.00
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 94.56

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$billion: 1.198
 Expenditures \$billion: 1.245
 Budget Deficit \$million: 47
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 11.2
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: –1.8
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 9.54
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 9.0
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 39.4
 Total Farmland % of land area: 22.3
 Livestock: Cattle 000: 265
 Chickens million: 3.3
 Pigs 000: 200
 Sheep million: 1.2
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters 000: 812
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 1.4

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 739.6
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 0

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 2.24
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 3.15
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 1.55
 Net Energy Imports % of use: —
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 1.56
 Production kW-hr billion: 6.47
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 6.11

(continues)

Energy *(continued)*

Coal Reserves tons billion: —
 Production tons million: 8.27
 Consumption tons million: 8.44
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
 Production cubic feet billion: —
 Consumption cubic feet billion: —
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
 Production barrels 000 per day: —
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 19
 Pipelines Length km: 120

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 2.677
 Exports \$billion: 1.629
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 3.7
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 5.6
 Balance of Trade \$million: –311

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Greece %	17.3	9.8
Germany %	12.6	27.1
Serbia and Montenegro %	9.2	—
Slovenia %	8.9	—
Bulgaria %	7.3	—
Italy %	6.3	14.8
Turkey %	5.9	—
Croatia %	—	7.0
United States %	—	6.1
Netherlands %	—	4.8

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 8,684
 Paved %: 63.8
 Automobiles: 307,600
 Trucks and Buses: 33,000
 Railroad: Track Length km: 699
 Passenger-km million: 98
 Freight-km million: 334
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: —
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: —
 Airports: 17
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 236
 Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 158
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 65
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 71

Communications

Telephones 000: 560
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones 000: 365.3
 Personal Computers 000: —
 Internet Hosts per million people: 1,828
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 49

ENVIRONMENT

The nation's main environmental problem is pollution from metallurgical and chemical plants. In addition, chemical runoff from other factories has polluted some rivers and lakes. Only urban dwellers have access to safe drinking water.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 35.6
 Forest Change (1990–2000) hectares 000: —
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 7
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 5.52

LIVING CONDITIONS

With 30 percent of the population living below the poverty line in 2002 and an unemployment rate of almost 40 percent, Macedonia is among the poorest countries in Eastern Europe. However, other aspects of life in the country are better; the UN 2004 Human Development Report ranked Macedonia 60th out of 177 countries in terms of life expectancy, education, and standard of living. Life expectancy in 2005 was almost 74 years, gross enrollment of eligible students in primary, secondary, and tertiary schools was 70 percent in 2001, and per capita GDP was \$7,100 in 2004.

Living standards vary widely, from the poverty of some remote mountain villages to the urban lifestyles of inhabitants of cities such as Skopje, where imported consumer goods, including automobiles, TVs, VCRs, refrigerators, washers, and dryers, are widely found. Housing has improved since independence. Banks have made loan terms easier, facilitating buying and building, and many dwellers in urban areas, home to 62 percent of the population, have an apartment and a small country home. As of 1994 there were 3.8 people per household. Overall, while the current living conditions leave much to be desired by blocks of the rural population, the situation is much better than it was under Communism for the majority of people.

HEALTH

Health care is a constitutionally guaranteed universal right for citizens. Contributions to the Health Insurance

Fund (HIF), which provides a package of basic health benefits, are compulsory. However, with high unemployment rates in the country, as much as 40 percent of the population lacks health-insurance coverage.

Health care is delivered through a mixture of public and private clinics and hospitals; as of 2000 there has been movement toward the privatization of the health-care system. As of 2004 there were an estimated 309 physicians per 100,000 population. Between 1995 and 2002, 97 percent of births were attended by skilled health personnel; the infant mortality rate was just over 10 per 1,000 live births in 2005 (down from 54 per 1,000 in 1980). A major problem with health care is inadequate and outdated equipment; many who can afford to do so go to other countries for major surgery and the treatment of other serious illnesses.

Smoking and alcoholism are serious problems. HIV/AIDS was at a less than 0.1 prevalence rate in 2001; in 2003 fewer than 200 people were living with AIDS, and fewer than 100 died of the disease. There were 54 cases of tuberculosis per 100,000 people in 2002. In 2003 the government paid for 90 percent of routine immunizations. Immunization rates for children one year of age, as of 2003, were 95 percent for tuberculosis and 96 percent for DPT, polio, and measles. Public expenditures on health care in 2001 were 5.8 percent of GDP.

Health

Number of Physicians: 4,459
 Number of Dentists: 1,125
 Number of Nurses: 10,553
 Number of Pharmacists: 309
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 219
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: 4.83
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 10.09
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 23
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 6.8
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 124
 HIV Infected % of adults: < 0.1
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 96
 Measles: 96
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: —
 Access to Improved Water Source %: —

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Macedonian food bears a mixture of influences, from Turkish to Greek to Slavic. Breads and roasted or grilled meats are staples of the diet, as are feta cheese and peppers. Fruits and vegetables are plentiful, and wine is becoming a major export. Plum brandy is another Macedonian and Balkan specialty.

Grilled kebabs of minced mutton are typical street food. Yogurt or cheese pies called *burek* make up a breakfast on the run. Other traditional dishes include *gravče na*

tavče (beans in a skillet), Ohrid trout, and stews, typically beef with potatoes, pork with beans, and lamb with rice or spinach. Stews are prepared spicy; thickened with flour, red pepper, and fat; and always consumed with bread. Other favorite dishes are *zelnik*, a flat pastry made up of several layers of sheet dough, filled with cheese, leeks, or spinach, and *kolbasi* (homemade kielbasa), made almost entirely of pork and leeks.

Nutrition is generally adequate, though pockets of poverty and of undernourishment remain. As of 2002, 6 percent of children less than five years old were underweight, while 11 percent of the general population were considered undernourished between 1999 and 2001.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 10.9
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,960
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 132.3
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 304.6

STATUS OF WOMEN

The constitution provides for equality of all citizens regardless of sex. However, Macedonian society is patriarchal, and women are often confined to limited roles. Women are underrepresented in the higher levels of business and government and are often paid less than men in equal jobs. In the Albanian community there are also restrictions on education and employment available to women.

Violence against women is considered a particular problem within the ethnic Albanian and Roma, or Gypsy, communities. Domestic violence and the trafficking of women from former Soviet republics remain serious problems. In Muslim areas, many women are effectively disenfranchised because proxy voting by male relatives is common.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 19
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: —
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 42.2

WORK

The Macedonian labor force was estimated at 855,000 in 2004. The service sector contributed 62.8 percent of GDP, industry 26 percent, and agriculture 11.2 percent. Industries include mining (for coal, metallic chromium, lead, zinc, and ferronickel), textiles, wood, tobacco, buses,

and steel, as well as food processing. Agricultural products include rice, tobacco, wheat, corn, millet, cotton, sesame, mulberry leaves, citrus, vegetables, beef, pork, poultry, and mutton. The gray economy of the country, including illegal small businesses and street vendors of food and cigarettes, provides substantial untaxed income to large portions of the population. In 2004 Macedonia had an unemployment rate of 37.7 percent.

The constitution provides for the right to form and join trade unions, to collectively bargain, and to strike, and the government generally respects these rights in practice. The concept of collective bargaining, though, is new to the country and somewhat ineffectual as a result. The Confederation of Trade Unions of Macedonia is the largest group of unions in the country. More than 50 percent of the legal workforce is unionized, and unions were particularly strong in the garment industry and the public sector. The minimum work age is 15, though many younger children work in the gray economy. The average workweek is 40 hours, and in 2003 the average monthly wage was \$244. Workplace safety is ensured in the constitution, but regulations are seldom enforced. With high unemployment, workers have little power.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 855,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 42.6
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: —
 Industry: —
 Services: —
 Unemployment %: 37.7

EDUCATION

In Macedonia there are eight years of compulsory education. In 2001 there were 1,015 primary schools, with 121,109 students enrolled, while at the secondary level there were 96 schools, with 161,119 enrolled students. In addition to these were about 100 other special institutions, including art schools, schools for students with disabilities, religious secondary schools, and adult schools.

Less than half of the students who attend secondary school attend university. The nation has two universities, Bitola University and the University of Skopje (also known as the University of Cyril and Methodius), where the language of instruction is Macedonian, as well as the Albanian-language Tetovo University and 29 separate colleges. In 2003 there were about 30,000 students enrolled in higher education in Macedonia's University of Cyril and Methodius alone. Combined gross primary, secondary, and tertiary enrollment in 2002 was 70 percent. Education is free, and tuition costs are covered by the state. The government has established a system of adult educa-

tion to retrain workers and provide basic skills. In 2001 the government spent 4.1 percent of GDP on education.

Education

Literacy Rate %: —
 Male %: —
 Female %: —
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 12.1
 First Level: Primary Schools: 1,015
 Teachers: 5,718
 Students: 121,109
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 21.2
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 92.3
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 96
 Teachers: 13,630
 Students: 161,119
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 16.1
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 81.2
 Third Level: Institutions: 44
 Teachers: 2,738
 Students: 44,710
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 27.1
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 4.1

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Macedonia's research and development is mainly focused on agricultural and forestry projects. Three main agencies are involved in such research: the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Water Resource Management; the Association of Sciences and Arts, in Bitola; and the Agriculture University of Cyril and Methodius, in Skopje, which also has faculties in medicine, pharmacy, mechanical engineering, electro-technical engineering, technology and metallurgy, natural and mathematical sciences, and geology and mining. Additionally, the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts, in Skopje, has sections of biological and medical sciences and mathematical and technical sciences. In 2004, 110 students earned master of science degrees, most in technology, and 67 persons gained the title doctor of sciences, mostly in medical science and technology. As of 2001 there were 387 scientific researchers for every one million people.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 387
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 0.26
 High-Tech Exports \$million: 12.7
 Patent Applications by Residents: 42

MEDIA

The constitution calls for a free press, and there is open and free criticism of the government and society. Several

media outlets remain either partially or wholly government owned. There are 29 AM and 20 FM radio broadcast stations in Macedonia, three state-run television channels, and almost 30 private ones, as well as numerous daily and weekly newspapers and journals. The government subsidizes several Albanian- and Turkish-language newspapers. Foreign-owned newspapers and journals must register with the government. In 2003 the German WAZ media group announced that it had purchased majority stakes in three major Macedonian-language daily newspapers. The state-run *Nova Makedonija*, along with *Vecer*, also state subsidized, were the leading newspapers in 2002. Private papers include *Makedonija Denes* and *Dnevnik*. Reporters without Borders, a watchdog media group, ranked Macedonia 49th out of 167 nations in its 2004 press freedom index. In 2002 there were 365,300 cellular telephone users and 100,000 Internet users.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 6
 Total Circulation 000: 108
 Circulation per 1,000: 53.3
 Books Published: 733
 Periodicals: 33
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets 000: 515
 per 1,000: 252

CULTURE

Folk culture is still strong in Macedonia, especially Balkan-flavored music accompanied by the bagpipe, or *gajda*; the lute, or *tambura*; the flute, or *kaval*; the pipes, or *zurla*; and the drum, or *tapan*. Such music often accompanies folk dances, such as the male dance called *teokoto*. Dancers in traditional costumes begin slowly and work to a frenzy in the steps of this dance, which is supposed to symbolize the leave-taking of Macedonia's men for foreign shores. The *sitnoto* is another popular folk dance.

The years of Ottoman occupation and the Islamic culture still prevalent in the country are evidenced in mosques and in structures such as Skopje's clock tower, the oldest Islamic clock tower in Europe.

Modern culture centers are found mostly in Skopje, where museums, concert halls, and theaters are located. The Struga Poetry Festival draws a large international audience. In the 18th century poetry was enriched by the work of the brothers Dimitar and Konstantin Miladinov, and in the 20th century the poetry of Kosta Racin, particularly his collection *Beli mugri* (*White Dawns*), drew international attention. The plays of Goran Stefanovski have reached outside the borders of Macedonia, as have other cultural products, including films. The 1995 Mace-

donian movie *Before the Rain* was a finalist for the Academy Award for best foreign language film.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts national currency million: 45
 Number of Cinemas: 30
 Seating Capacity: 12,000
 Annual Attendance: 500,000

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Legend, myth, proverbs, fairy tales, and folktales combine in Macedonia's rich folkloric tradition. Legendary heroes such as King Marko, who defied the Turks, are at the center of numerous legends. More humorous in nature are the tales featuring Witty Pejo, who troubled the Ottoman overlords with witty and pithy observations rather than the sword.

Macedonia, along with the northern part of its neighbor Greece, is home to numerous ancient myths, including that of the Striges, winged female demons who preyed on children and drank their blood.

Proverbs and folktales both impart morals or folk wisdom. Examples of Macedonian proverbs are "Falsehoods have short legs," "Begin a task but always have its conclusion in mind," and the famous "In the kingdom of the blind the one-eyed are kings." Folktales include the popular "Justice Never Dies," about a young boy who helps an eagle that cannot fly and is in turn helped by the eagle. Another didactic tale is the one about the ill daughter of the czar who is saved by the inscription put on her ring by an old healer telling her that everything passes.

Some tales and proverbs embody particularly bleak perceptions of powerful women, which are typical of some male-dominated societies, as traditional Macedonia was.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Urban Macedonians have a wide variety of entertainment possibilities at hand. In addition to spending time in cafés playing chess and dining out, there are more than a dozen professional theater groups as well as the Philharmonic Orchestra and numerous chamber ensembles. Folk music, rock, and jazz are also served up in clubs and at festivals. The Skopje International Jazz Festival draws audiences and performers from around the world.

Watching television is a popular form of entertainment, as is going to the cinema. Macedonia imports films and also has a homegrown film industry that is over a century old.

Outings to the countryside and hikes in the woods are also popular activities.

ETIQUETTE

The customary greeting is with a firm handshake with eye contact. Verbal greetings include *Zdravo*, literally, "health." Children show respect for elders by calling all older men "uncle," *striko*, and older women "aunt," *strino*.

Balkan etiquette is similar to that in the rest of Europe in many ways, such as with dining (both fork and knife are used at the same time) and the use of first names (which are reserved for friends). With a large Muslim population, Macedonian etiquette is affected by many of the traditions and prohibitions of that culture. One should never show the sole of the shoe or foot to another or touch the top of another's head, even a baby's. Shoes should be removed before entering a mosque or a private home.

FAMILY LIFE

Marriages are usually determined by the couples themselves rather than being arranged. Dating begins in the early teens, and prolonged dating usually implies to the families that marriage is in the offing. Though families are mainly nuclear, with one to two children, extended families sharing households are common; Macedonia rates among the highest in Europe for the incidence of such family structures. A married couple often sets up house with the groom's parents until they save enough money for their own place. Aged parents often live with their offspring.

The structure of the family is not as overtly patriarchal as in traditional times. Women have more power inside and outside the home, although they still do not fare as well as women in northern Europe. Divorce is legal but frowned upon, especially after the birth of children. In 2002 the divorce rate was only about 10 percent. The age at first marriage has continued to rise; in 2002 the mean age at which women first married was 24 years, while for men it was 27. In 2005 the fertility rate was 1.6 children per woman.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Macedonians dress in Western-style clothing and are very conscientious about outward appearances, dressing the part of their social or professional class, unlike in countries such as the United States, for example, where informal dress is common.

Traditional clothing is now only worn for special occasions. Such clothing consists of intricately embroidered garments made of coarse, tightly woven wool yarn. Ornamentation varies from region to region. Men wear vests, white linen shirts, a *pojas*, or wide cummerbund, and jodhpur-like pants. Women wear ankle-length dresses, a long, wide apron that ties just below the chest, a white linen shirt, a *pojas*, and a headscarf that covers the head and back. The predominant color in men's traditional attire is black, while in women's red and white are prominent. For footwear, both sexes wear the curved-toed leather slippers called *opinci*.

SPORTS

Soccer is the most popular professional sport. The national team plays in the Europe zone of the World Cup qualifications and competes in UEFA Cup matches. The game is not only for viewing; children and young adults all over the country play on makeshift fields.

Basketball is another popular spectator sport and is increasingly popular as a participation sport as well, almost as much as in the United States. Tennis and table tennis are other common sporting activities.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1945** Josip Tito becomes premier of liberated Yugoslavia.
Collectivization and mass purges are undertaken by Communist-dominated government.
- 1946** University system is introduced.
Nation's first constitution is adopted.
- 1947** The Bled Accords cede Bulgarian Macedonia back to Macedonia, but the accords are rejected the following year after the split between Moscow and Belgrade.
- 1948** Tito breaks with Moscow and embarks on a policy of nonalignment with either the West or the Eastern Bloc.
- 1953** Tito is elected president of Yugoslavia.
- 1967** The Macedonian Orthodox Church is restored.
- 1969** League of Communists formed in an effort to unite the ethnic and national groups in Yugoslavia.
- 1971** Prominent politicians and public officials are purged for their support of a free market.
- 1974** The constitution is revised to establish a collective presidency.
- 1980** Tito dies.
- 1991** Following a referendum Macedonia proclaims independence and adopts a new constitution.
Kiro Gligorov is elected president, and Branko Crvenkovski becomes prime minister.

- 1992** Gligorov negotiates the peaceful withdrawal of the Yugoslav army, making Macedonia the only Yugoslav republic to achieve independence without war.
- 1993** The nation becomes a member of the United Nations under a temporary name, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), pending the resolution of Greece's objections.
- 1994** Gligorov is reelected president, and Crvenkovski is again named prime minister. Greece, fearing the FYROM will make territorial claims upon the Greek province also named Macedonia, imposes a trade blockade on the former Yugoslav republic to protest its appropriation of the name and its use of traditionally Greek symbols.
- 1995** The nation becomes a member of the European Council. Greece signs an interim accord with the FYROM and lifts the blockade. Gligorov survives an assassination attempt.
- 1996** The FYROM begins negotiations with Serbia and Montenegro to resolve border disputes. The FYROM and the Republic of Yugoslavia officially recognize one another.
- 1998** Ljubco Georgievski becomes prime minister.
- 1999** Boris Trajkovski is elected president on a second-round ballot. Nearly 250,000 ethnic Albanians from Kosovo seek refuge in the FYROM when NATO begins a campaign of air strikes against Yugoslavia.
- 2001** The Albanian National Liberation Army begins an insurgency from Kosovo, soon controlling territory in the northern and western FYROM. A peace agreement is signed in August.
- 2002** Parliament passes a law making Albanian an official language.
- 2003** With unemployment near 40 percent, Macedonia joins the World Trade Organization.
- 2004** President Boris Trajkovski dies in a plane crash near Mostar in Herzegovina. Macedonia applies for EU membership.
- 2005** Macedonia gains Italy's support in joining the European Union and NATO.

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Macedonia. *Selected Issues and Statistical Appendix* (IMF Staff Country Report), 2002; *Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Macedonia*

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- CIA World Factbook: Macedonia
<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/mk.html>
- Macedonian Cultural and Information Center
<http://www.macedonia.co.uk/mcic/>
- National Bank of the Republic of Macedonia
<http://www.nbrm.gov.mk/main.htm>
- Secretariat of Information
<http://www.sinf.gov.mk/>
- State Statistical Office of the Republic of Macedonia
http://www.stat.gov.mk/english/glavna_eng.asp

MADAGASCAR

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Madagascar (République de Madagascar;
Repoblikan'i Madagasikara)

ABBREVIATION

MG

CAPITAL

Antananarivo

HEAD OF STATE

President Marc Ravalomanana (from 2002)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Jacques Hugues Sylla (from 2002)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Republic

POPULATION

18,040,341 (2005)

AREA

587,040 sq km (226,657 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Merina, Betsimisaraka, Betsileo, Tsimihety

LANGUAGES

French, Malagasy

RELIGIONS

Animism, Christianity, Islam

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Malagasy franc

NATIONAL FLAG

A white vertical stripe at the hoist with two stripes extending horizontally across the remaining area, red above green

NATIONAL EMBLEM

In a white circle in the center of a yellow circular seal is the geographical image of Madagascar colored red. Above the white circle are stylized rays, below the red head of a zebu. At the top of the yellow seal is the name of the republic in Malagasy, at the base is the motto *Tanindrazana fahafabana fandrosoana* (Fatherland, liberty, justice).

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"Ry Tanindraza Nay Malala O" (O Our Beloved Fatherland)

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day), March 29 (Commemoration of 1947 Rebellion), May 1 (Labor Day), June 26 (National Day, Independence Day), December 30 (Anniversary of the Republic), various Christian festivals, including Assumption, Ascension, All Saints' Day, Easter Monday, Pentecost Monday, and Christmas

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

June 26, 1960

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

August 19, 1992

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Madagascar is in the southwestern Indian Ocean, about 400 km (250 mi) off the coast of Africa, from which it is separated by the Mozambique Channel. Madagascar is the fourth-largest island in the world, after Greenland, New Guinea, and Borneo. Madagascar's land area of 587,040 sq km (226,657 sq mi) extends 1,570 km (976 mi) north-northeast to south-southwest and 569 km (354 mi) east-southeast to west-northwest. The coastline stretches 4,828 km (2,998 mi).

Topographically, Madagascar consists of a central highland region rising abruptly from a narrow eastern

coastal strip, then descending gradually to the broad plains on the western coast. There are six topographical regions: the Diego-Suarez region in the north, the northwestern region converging on the port of Majunga, the southwestern coastal plains, the southernmost province, the densely populated eastern coast, and the mountainous hinterland. There are three main groups of mountains of volcanic origin, the highest of which is the Tsaratana, with the peak of Maromokotro (2,876 m; 9,433 ft). The others are the Ankaratra and the Andringitra, both rising over 2,590 m (8,500 ft).

The Mananara and Mangoro rivers flow from the central highlands to the eastern coast, as does the Manin-

Madagascar



gory, which flows from Lake Alaotra. Other rivers flowing east into the Indian Ocean include the Bemarivo, Ivondro, and Mananjary. These rivers tend to be short because the watershed is located close to the east coast. Owing to steep elevations, they flow rapidly, often over spectacular waterfalls. The rivers flowing to the western coast and emptying into the Mozambique Channel tend to be longer and slower due to the more gradual slope of the land. The major rivers on the west coast are the Sambirano, Mahajamba, Betsiboka (with the port of Mahajanga located at the mouth), Mania, North and South Mahavavy, Mangoky, and Onilahy.

The country also includes a number of small coastal reefs and islands, of which only five islands or island groups have more than a handful of inhabitants: Île Sainte-Marie, Île Nossi-Mitsio, Île Nossi-Be, Île Nossi-Fali, and the Îles Barren.

Geography

Area sq km: 587,040; sq mi 226,657

World Rank: 45th

Land Boundaries, km: 0

Coastline, km: 4,828

Elevation Extremes meters:

Lowest: Indian Ocean 0

Highest: Maromokotro 2,876

Land Use %

Arable Land: 5.1

Permanent Crops: 1.0

Forest: 20.2

Other: 73.7

Population of Principal Cities (2001)

Antananarivo	1,403,449
Antsirabe	160,356
Fianarantsoa	144,225
Mahajanga	135,660
Toamasina	179,045

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Madagascar has a tropical marine climate in which the main influences are altitude, monsoons, and proximity to the sea. The central highlands divide the island into two main climatic zones: a windward zone facing the Indian Ocean and a leeward zone facing the Mozambique Channel. A wet, tropical climate with no completely dry season prevails on the eastern coastal plain and the northern peninsula. The western slope region, which has a larger land area, receives its rainfall from a different wind system and has distinct wet (summer) and dry (winter) seasons. The central highlands constitute a transition zone influenced by both climates. In the extreme south long dry periods occur between irregular rainstorms; droughts are not

common. Among these major zones are at least four ecological subregions and many more microclimates based on altitude and contour. In general, the most healthful and comfortable climate is in the central highlands.

The eastern and northwestern coasts receive their heaviest rainfall during the austral winter (May to September), while the central highlands and the west receive rains from the monsoon winds that blow during the austral summer (October to April). In an average year, the eastern coast receives 2,030–3,250 mm (80–120 in), the maximum being recorded at Toamasina; the northern peninsula, 1,010–1,270 mm (40–50 in); and the northwest and central highlands, 1,010–2,030 mm (40–80 in). Antananarivo, the capital, receives 1,340 mm (53 in), while Toliary, in the southwest, receives only 510 mm (20 in).

Temperatures are also moderated by altitude, with the coastal regions being hotter than the plateau. The mean temperatures in the former regions range from 21 to 26.6°C (70 to 80°F), in the latter region from 13 to 19.4°C (55 to 67°F). Temperatures over 37.8°C (100°F) are uncommon, as are freezing temperatures and snow.

Because of frequent violent clashes of air masses over the island, lightning is a permanent hazard; more than 60 people are killed by it every year. The most dramatic feature of the island's weather is the frequency of tropical storms and cyclones, generally lasting from December to March.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature

Coastal Region: 70°F to 80°F

Plateau: 55°F to 67°F

Average Rainfall

Eastern coast: 80 in to 120 in

Northern peninsula: 40 in to 50 in

Northwest and central highlands: 40 in to 80 in

Antananarivo: 53 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Madagascar, part of the landmass of Africa many millions of years ago, is a petri dish of flora and fauna. Because of its isolation, many of the island's plants and animals have evolved into quite unique forms and give scientists the opportunity to trace evolutionary changes.

Once covered in evergreen and deciduous forest, Madagascar now maintains thick forests only on the eastern escarpment and in isolated patches in the west. Ebony, rosewood, and sandalwood are all present, and their export value has endangered these remaining forests. Most of the country is covered in savanna or prairie grass. The island is home to a wide variety of flowering plants, 80 percent of which are found nowhere else in the world. Drought-resistant plants unique to Madagascar are found in the south of the island. There are also numerous types of singular baobab trees.

Animal life is equally varied and unique to the island, as well as threatened by the incursions of humans. There are 28 species of lemurs indigenous to Madagascar, numerous evolved insectivores, and 32 varieties of chameleons. Birds are numerous; among 202 species, 105 are found nowhere else in the world. There are about 800 species of butterfly, many moths, and a variety of spiders. Crocodiles are the only large, dangerous animal present. The snakes are harmless; 95 percent of them are unique to the island.

Fish life is equally diverse. The island's streams and rivers contain tilapia, rainbow trout, and black bass, while in the coastal waters surrounding the country are found tuna, sharks, sardines, crayfish, crabs, shrimps, mussels, and oysters. The coelacanth, thought to be extinct for millions of years, has also been found in Madagascar's offshore waters.

As of 2001, 46 of Madagascar's mammal species were endangered, as were 28 bird species and 255 plant species. Worldwide trade in endangered and extinct species, a booming industry, has created a market for Madagascar's exotic snakes and tortoises and has led to the destruction of animal habitats.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005:	18,040,341
World Rank:	56th
Density per sq km:	29.1
% of annual growth (1999-2003):	2.9
Male %:	49.7
Female %:	50.3
Urban %:	26.0
Age Distribution %:	
0-14:	44.8
15-64:	52.2
65 and over:	3.0
Population 2025:	32,966,000
Birth Rate per 1,000:	41.66
Death Rate per 1,000:	11.35
Rate of Natural Increase %:	3.0
Total Fertility Rate:	5.66
Expectation of Life (years):	
Males:	54.57
Females:	59.4
Marriage Rate per 1,000:	—
Divorce Rate per 1,000:	—
Average Size of Households:	4.7
Induced Abortions:	—

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

The population of Madagascar may be described as homogeneous because all ethnic groups speak the same language, share the same culture, and also claim the same Afro-Asian origins, although the proportion in which the elements are mixed varies from group to group. In general, it is more accurate to term the ethnic groups clans

rather than tribes, because tribes—in the African sense of peoples of differing origins speaking mutually unintelligible tongues and practicing different social customs—do not truly exist on the island.

The ethnic affiliations and origins of the Malagasy have not been precisely determined and are still subject to considerable speculation. The most commonly accepted theory is that proto-Malagasy were Malayo-Polynesian immigrants who came to the island in successive waves by sailing across the Indian Ocean in primitive craft, in much the same way as Polynesians are supposed to have sailed across the Pacific to South America. To this basic stock were added later arrivals from Africa, resulting in a remarkable blending of Indonesian and African cultures.

There are 18 clans in Madagascar, each with its own territorial niche. Despite common ethnic heritage, inter-clan attitudes are colored by historical rivalries and controversies. The main rivalry is between the highlanders and the people of the plains, known as *cottiers*. This rivalry underlies much of the civil turbulence of recent times. There is also bad blood between the Merina and other clans and between the northerners and the people of the south, called collectively the *Tatsimo*.

The principal alien ethnic groups include the Comorans, Chinese, and Indians. Because Comorans are Muslims speaking a different language, they tend to live apart, and many return to Comoros after a few years; widespread anti-Comoran riots in 1977 led the Comoros government to call for their repatriation. Most of the Chinese came from south China in the early 1930s, and most of the Indians came around 1901 to work on the railroads. Both Chinese and Indians are small merchants.

Of permanent Western residents, the French are the most numerous. Also counted as French are the Creoles from Réunion. There are also scattered Greeks.

LANGUAGES

French and Malagasy are the official languages of the republic. Malagasy belongs to the Malayo-Polynesian family, but its vocabulary has an overlay of African, Sanskrit, Arabic, and European words. Of the many mutually intelligible dialects, Merina, also called Hova, is considered the standard. Malagasy makes use of a Latin script first devised by Christian missionaries in the early 1800s.

RELIGIONS

Nearly 52 percent of the population follows traditional African religions; 41 percent are Christians, evenly divided between Catholic and Protestant churches; and 7 percent are Muslims. Christianity is the dominant religious force in the country and is particularly associated with the elite ruling groups.

Traditional Malagasy religion has no dogma or clergy, but its central concept is belief in the soul and its immortality. Besides the creator of the universe—Zanahary, or Andrianahary—secondary divinities are worshiped, especially ancestors and legendary queens and kings. For this reason burial places have special significance and are in themselves objects of veneration. Tombs are often more splendid structures than the houses of the living. Funerals are elaborate, as accompanied by ritual feasting for which oxen are often sacrificed. Divination is widely practiced.

Christianity was introduced in the early 19th century, and its progress was aided by the conversion of the Merina and their royalty. The earliest missionaries were Anglicans; Protestantism has traditionally been the faith of the upper-class Merina, Catholicism that of the slaves and the *cotiers*. About one-third of Roman Catholic clergy are Malagasy, including the archbishop of Antananarivo. Six Protestant denominations belonging to the Protestant Federation are represented in the country. Most of the Protestant pastors are also Malagasy.

Some 1.2 million people, concentrated mainly on the northwestern coast, are adherents of Islam. Most of the Comoran immigrants are Muslim.

Religious Affiliations

Indigenous Beliefs	9,381,000
Christian	7,397,000
Muslim	1,263,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The island of Madagascar was initially settled by Malayo-Polynesian seafarers, who probably arrived by way of eastern Africa and the Comoros around 700 c.e. The ruins of fortifications built by Arab traders as far back as the ninth century underscore Madagascar's historical role as a destination for travelers from the Middle East, Asia, and Africa. Beginning in 1643 several French settlements emerged; the best known of them, Tolagnaro (formerly Faradofay) on the southeast coast, lasted for more than 30 years. The settlement survived in part because the colonists took pains to establish cordial relations with the Antanosy, the ethnic group inhabiting the area. Relations deteriorated later, however, and in 1674 a massacre of nearly all the settlers ended French colonization endeavors for more than a century.

Madagascar became a source of slaves, not only for the neighboring islands of Mauritius and Rodrigues but also for more distant points, including the Western Hemisphere. Madagascar's social and political structure facilitated the slave trade. The most powerful of Madagascar's kingdoms—the one that eventually established hegemony over a great portion of the island—was that developed by the Merina ethnic group. Before the Merina

emerged as the dominant political power on the island in the 19th century, they alternated between periods of political unity and periods in which the kingdom separated into smaller political units. The location of the Merina in the central highlands afforded them some protection from the ravages of warfare that recurred between the coastal kingdoms.

Two monarchs played key roles in establishing Merina political dominance over Madagascar. The first, who ruled under the name of Andrianampoinimerina, seized the throne of one of the Merina kingdoms in 1787. By 1806 he had conquered the remaining three kingdoms and united them within the former boundaries of Imerina, the capital established at the fortified city of Antananarivo. Radama I, an able and forward-looking monarch, succeeded to the throne in 1810 upon the death of his father. By adroitly playing off competing British and French interests in the island, he was able to extend Merina authority over nearly the entire island of Madagascar.

French influence was introduced in Madagascar piecemeal, beginning with a treaty in 1840 with the Merina monarchy. The French later claimed a protectorate over parts of the kingdom; when this claim was disputed, they launched a war, which ended in 1885 with the French gaining control over the kingdom's foreign policy. The Anglo-French Agreement of 1890, which acknowledged Madagascar as a French zone of influence, paved the way for the final annexation of the country in 1896. However, resistance, especially in the south, was not overcome until 1904. In 1946 Madagascar became an overseas territory of France, and the Malagasy became French citizens, although the franchise was extended to a few only. A Territorial Assembly was established, with some control over the budget. In 1947 a rebellion broke out, which was suppressed only after a loss of life estimated as high as 80,000. In 1958 Madagascar voted overwhelmingly for the new French constitution and thus became an autonomous member of the new French Community.

Full independence was achieved in 1960. Since then Madagascar has had a history of political upheaval. No leader has come to power in accordance with the constitutional process. At independence the government was led by President Philibert Tsiranana, who ruled with the support of the Social Democratic Party. His tenure was characterized by general social unrest; ethnic conflict stemmed from Merina opposition to the government's pro-French stance. Economic problems led to a revolt by peasants in Tulear Province in 1971, and a lack of job prospects precipitated a student insurrection in 1972. Unable to govern, Tsiranana resigned, and a military government was formed under the leadership of Gen. Gabriel Ramanantsoa in May 1972. The general was confirmed as leader in a popular referendum that year.

Following a coup attempt by dissident *cotier* officers in 1975, Col. Richard Ratsimandrava replaced Ramanantsoa. Ratsimandrava was assassinated after just six

days in office. Gen. Gilles Andriamahazo then assumed leadership. He in turn was succeeded in June 1975 by Cdr. Didier Ratsiraka. A referendum that year endorsed the Charter of Socialist Revolution, which committed the government to the nationalization of foreign companies, banks, and agriculture. State corporations were set up to coordinate food production, and free health care and education were introduced.

In 1975 Ratsiraka was designated president of the Democratic Republic of Madagascar under a new constitution in which the chief executive had extensive powers. He was returned to office in 1982 with 80 percent of the vote, in an election widely criticized as fraudulent.

During the late 1970s Madagascar's economy declined dramatically. A massive program of public investment in industry and, conversely, a neglect of agriculture resulted in growing foreign debt. French aid declined in the face of the government's leftist programs. Madagascar received aid from the Eastern Bloc, but this was primarily in the form of equipment, not desperately needed foreign currency.

In 1982 the government signed a restructuring agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which led to the introduction of a free market and a rollback of Ratsiraka's socialist programs. The austerity measures dictated by the IMF had a disastrous impact on the quality of life and generated civil unrest. Nevertheless, Ratsiraka was returned to office in 1989 with over 60 percent of the vote.

Civil unrest continued, however, and in March 1990 Ratsiraka lifted the ban on political parties that had been in effect since 1975. Three new parties immediately registered. In May a group of armed rebels briefly seized control of the national radio headquarters in Antananarivo but were soon put down by security forces. It was estimated that up to 5,000 people died in the failed coup attempt.

With a new constitution in place in 1992, Professor Albert Zafy was elected president. By the latter half of 1994 the heady optimism that accompanied this dramatic transition process had declined somewhat, as the newly elected democratic government found itself confronted with numerous economic and political obstacles. After four years of rule by Zafy, who failed to unite the country or overcome years of bureaucratic misrule, Ratsiraka was voted back into power in 1996, to almost universal surprise. That only 25 percent of the 6.5 million registered voters bothered to cast a ballot indicates that the Malagasy had overwhelmingly lost faith in the political process. As president, Ratsiraka sought to consolidate more power under his control. In 2001 the Senate reopened after 29 years, completing the government framework provided for in the 1992 constitution. In presidential elections in 2001, opposition candidate Marc Ravalomanana charged Ratsiraka with rigging the elections and claimed victory for himself. When mediated talks between Ravalomanana and Ratsiraka deadlocked, Ravalomanana declared him-

self president in February 2002, leading to riots between rival protesters.

Ravalomanana gained control of the capital, but Ratsiraka moved his government to Toamasina and had strong support from much of the army. A recount of the votes in April 2002, negotiated by the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and agreed to by both candidates, found Ravalomanana the winner. Ratsiraka rejected those results, however. As forces supporting Ravalomanana gradually won control of most of the island, Ratsiraka fled Madagascar.

In parliamentary elections held in December 2002 Ravalomanana's I Love Madagascar (TIM) party won a majority. This victory reassured any doubters as to the legitimacy of his government, and the African Union as well as France and the United States recognized the new government. In 2003, Ratsiraka was tried in absentia and convicted on charges of embezzlement, and Ravalomanana further secured his electoral mandate when the TIM did well in local elections. However, he faced a desperate situation economically, with massive foreign debt and over 70 percent of the population living below the poverty line. One positive event occurred in 2004, when the IMF and the World Bank forgave over \$2 billion in debt.

The nation was rocked by natural catastrophes in 2004, with thousands losing their homes when cyclones struck in February and March. More lost homes when the Indian Ocean tsunami struck in December, but no deaths were reported.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

Head of State

1960–72	Philibert Tsiranana (president)
1972–75	Gabriel Ramanantsoa (military head of government)
1975	Richard Ratsimandrava (military head of government)
1975	Gilles Andriamahazo (chairman of the National Military Leadership Committee)
1975–93	Didier Ratsiraka (chairman of the Supreme Council of Revolution and then president)
1993–96	Albert Zafy (president)
1996–97	Norbert Lala Ratsirahonana (acting president)
1997–2002	Didier Ratsiraka (president)
2002–	Marc Ravalomanana (president)

CONSTITUTION

The Third Republic received its first expression of popular support and legitimacy on August 19, 1992, when the

constitutional framework constructed by the National Conference was approved by more than 75 percent of those voting in a popular referendum (the constitution took effect on September 12). On this date, the people overwhelmingly approved a new constitution consisting of 149 articles that provided for the separation of powers between the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government; the creation of a multiparty political system; and the protection of individual human rights and freedom of speech.

The power of the executive branch is divided between a president who is elected by universal suffrage and a prime minister from the parliament who is nominated by his or her peers but who must be approved by the president. If the nominee for prime minister does not achieve an absolute majority of support within the parliament, the president may choose a candidate from the parliament who will serve for one year. The president is also the recognized leader of foreign policy and constitutes by far the single most powerful political person within the country. All presidential decrees must be countersigned, however, and the president is bound by the constitutional reality that the prime minister is responsible for the functioning of the government. The president is elected for a five-year period and is limited to two terms in office. In the event that no candidate wins a simple majority of the popular vote, a runoff election is held between the two leading candidates within a period of two months.

The constitution provides for a strong, independent judiciary and a bicameral parliament composed of a Senate and a National Assembly.

PARLIAMENT

The constitution provides for a bicameral parliament composed of a Senate and a National Assembly (Assemblée Nationale). The Senate represents territorial groups and serves as the consultative chamber on social and economic issues. Two-thirds of its members are chosen by an electoral college, and the remaining one-third are chosen by the president. The National Assembly consists of 160 deputies elected by universal suffrage using a proportional representation list system. Both senators and deputies serve for four years. The parliament as a whole operates with a variety of classic parliamentary measures, such as a vote of no confidence, that enable it to serve as a check on the power of the executive.

POLITICAL PARTIES

The creation of a truly free and fair multiparty system is the centerpiece of the new constitutional order. In sharp contrast to the Ratsiraka era, when political parties could exist only under the ideological umbrella

of the Front National pour la Défense de la Révolution, democratization of the political system has led to the proliferation of political parties of all ideological stripes. In the first legislative elections held under the Third Republic in 1993, for example, more than 120 political parties fielded at least 4,000 candidates for a total of 138 legislative seats. Despite constitutional guarantees concerning the rights of citizens to form political parties without fear of government retribution, parties that call for ethnic or religious segregation or demonstrably endanger national unity are subject to being banned.

In the 2002 parliamentary elections, the TIM party of President Marc Ravalomanana took 103 of the 160 seats, while the old socialist Association for the Rebirth of Madagascar (AREMA) won only three, and the National Union, the major opposition party, took 22. Several other smaller parties also took part in the election, and nonpartisans won 22 seats.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

A new system of local governance under the constitution is known as the Decentralized Territorial Authorities (Collectivités Territoriales Décentralisées). According to the decentralization law adopted by the National Assembly in 1994, six provinces (*faritany*), 28 regions (*faritra*), 148 departments (*fileovana*), and 1,400 communes (*faribobitra*) have been created. At the commune level, there is a further division into more than 11,000 *fokontany*, or neighborhood/village organizations that elect their own councils as well as councils and mayors for the communes. The commune councils in turn vote for the members of the national Senate. Envisioned as regional vehicles for popular input in which members are elected by universal suffrage, these local authorities are still in the process of being implemented. Their exact role in the policy-making process remains ill defined, but it is contemplated that the national government will handle such areas as foreign affairs, defense, public security, justice, currency, and broad economic planning and policy, leaving economic implementation to the decentralized bodies. Provincial council elections were held in 2000. Municipal elections were held in 2003.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The legal system is based on French civil law and customary Malagasy law. The 11-member Supreme Court serves as the highest arbiter of the laws of the land. Other judicial bodies include the Administrative and Financial Constitutional Court, the appeals courts, tribunals, and the High Court of Justice. The creation of this complex system indicates the desire of the constitutional fram-

ers for a society built upon the rule of law. Indeed, the constitution explicitly outlines the fundamental rights of individual citizens and groups (most notably freedom of speech) and guarantees the existence of an independent press free from government control or censorship.

All criminal cases are tried by one of 10 criminal courts without permanent location. The court comprises a magistrate and four assessors (or laymen picked from a list of 18 at the beginning of each court term). The subordinate courts are the tribunals of first instance, located in 25 urban centers, and subprefectural and district courts.

In general, the judiciary is independent of government influence. However, a lack of training, resources, and personnel hampers the courts' effectiveness, and case backlogs are quite large. As of 2003, 20,000 of the people being held in the country's prisons were pretrial detainees.

HUMAN RIGHTS

The government generally respects citizens' human rights in several areas; however, a number of problems remain. Prison conditions are harsh, even life threatening. Some prisoners are used for forced labor; in some prisons women experience physical abuse, including rape. Lengthy pretrial detention remains a major problem, and suspects are often held for periods that exceed the maximum sentence for the alleged offenses. The government has continued with a major effort to reduce the number of preventive detainees. A government crackdown on and arrest of opponents termed "terrorists"—those who supported then President Ratsiraka in the 2001–02 electoral crisis—has elicited criticism from some who say that President Ravalomanana is simply getting rid of his opposition.

State authorities impose summary justice—including executions—in rural areas where the government's presence is weak, although overall, government efforts to bring local authorities under closer regulation and scrutiny have shown results. Women continue to face some societal discrimination. There are reports of trafficking in women and girls.

FOREIGN POLICY

Malagasy foreign policy has undergone frequent shifts. Under Tsiranana, relations with France were very close. This was reversed under the Ramanantsoa government, which withdrew from the franc zone and terminated its membership in the francophone Common African and Malagasy Organization. Agreements with the Republic of South Africa were repudiated, and diplomatic relations were established with the Soviet Bloc and with the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Subsequently, there was a drift toward the West, and diplomatic relations with Washington were restored after

a lapse of more than four years. In the 1990s economic and air links were reestablished with South Africa, and in 1998 Ratsiraka became the first Malagasy head of state to visit South Africa. In 2003 Madagascar rejoined the African Union after dropping out during the 2001–02 election crisis. President Ravalomanana has consciously sought to strengthen relations with anglophone countries as a means of balancing traditionally strong French influence.

DEFENSE

The defense structure is headed by the president. Military manpower is ensured by the conscription of all males between 20 and 50 years of age for 18-month periods. However, it has not been necessary to enforce the conscription law because of a surplus of voluntary enlistees. As of 2003 the Madagascar military had about 21,600 members, with 500 in each the navy and air force and the remainder in the army. In 2004 defense spending was \$44.6 million, or 1.2 percent of gross domestic product (GDP).

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	21,600
Military Manpower Availability:	3,542,797
Military Expenditures \$million:	44.6
as % of GDP:	1.2
as % of central government expenditures:	11.5
Arms Imports \$million:	—
Arms Exports \$million:	—

ECONOMY

Madagascar faces problems of chronic malnutrition, underfunded health and education facilities, a roughly 3 percent annual population growth rate, and the severe loss of forest cover, which is accompanied by erosion. Agriculture, which includes fishing and forestry, is the mainstay of the economy, accounting for 29 percent of GDP and contributing more than 70 percent to export earnings. Industry features textile manufacturing and the processing of agricultural products.

Growth in output in 1992–97 averaged less than the growth rate of the population. Growth has been held back by antigovernment strikes and demonstrations, a decline in world coffee demand, and the erratic commitment of the government to economic reform. The extent of government reforms, outside financial aid, and foreign investment will be key determinants for future growth. Since the mid-1990s, Madagascar has been following recommendations and directives from the World Bank and IMF to privatize its economy, and such policies are beginning to pay off. Nevertheless, GDP dropped 12 percent in 2002 as a result of the electoral crisis and conflict. In

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2003 the real growth rate in GDP was 6 percent, double the population growth.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 14.56
GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 800
GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 2.5
GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: –0.5
Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
Agriculture: 29.3
Industry: 16.7
Services: 54.0

Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
Private Consumption: 83
Government Consumption: 9
Gross Domestic Investment: 14.7

Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 0.868

Imports: 1.147

% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 3

% of Income Received by Richest 10%: 29

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
146.1	163.7	175.0	202.9	200.4

Finance

National Currency: Malagasy Franc (MGF)

Exchange Rate: \$1 = MGF 7,150

Money Supply Stock in National Currency trillion: 5.86

Central Bank Discount Rate %: —

Total External Debt \$billion: 4.6

Debt Service Ratio %: 4.66

Balance of Payments \$million: –281.9

International Reserves SDRs \$million: 414.2

Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 7.5

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 539.46

per capita \$: 31.90

Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 12.73

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year

Revenues \$billion: 0.784

Expenditures \$billion: 1.079

Budget Deficit \$million: 295

Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 29.3

Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 1.6

Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 0.12

Irrigation, % of Farms having: 30.7

Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 30.9

Total Farmland % of land area: 5.1

Livestock: Cattle million: 10.5

Chickens million: 24

Pigs million: 1.6

Sheep 000: 650

Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 10.6

Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 149

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 688.2

Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 3.0

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 46

Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 661

Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 40

Net Energy Imports % of use: —

Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: 285

Production kW-hr million: 770

Consumption kW-hr million: 830

Coal Reserves tons billion: —

Production tons million: —

Consumption tons million: 0.01

Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —

Production cubic feet billion: —

Consumption cubic feet billion: —

Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —

Production barrels 000 per day: —

Consumption barrels 000 per day: 15

Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 1.147

Exports \$billion: 0.868

Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 22.8

Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 25.7

Balance of Trade \$million: –281.9

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
France %	31.6	34.1
China %	13.0	—
Hong Kong %	10.0	—
Belgium %	5.7	—
United States %	5.4	35.1
Singapore %	4.6	—
Germany %	—	6.1

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 49,827

Paved %: 11.6

Automobiles: 64,000

Trucks and Buses: 9,100

Railroad: Track Length km: 732
 Passenger-km million: 19
 Freight-km million: 26
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 9
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 17.9
 Airports: 116
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 319
 Length of Waterways km: 600

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 62
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 61
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 109

Communications

Telephones 000: 59.6
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones 000: 279.5
 Personal Computers 000: 80
 Internet Hosts per million people: 43
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 3.9

ENVIRONMENT

Madagascar suffers from a number of environmental problems common to developing nations. Deforestation and soil erosion are among the country's chief concerns because of overgrazing, nomadic agriculture, forest fires, and land clearing. Water contamination from raw sewage and other organic waste threatens drinking and surface water. The country's unique flora and fauna are threatened by these environmental changes as well as by the illegal trade of rare species.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 20.2
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: -117
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 3
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 0.15

LIVING CONDITIONS

The UN 2004 Human Development Report ranked Madagascar 150th out of 177 countries in terms of life expectancy, education, and standard of living. Life expectancy in 2004 was under 57 years; only 45 percent of eligible students were enrolled in primary, secondary, and tertiary schools in 2002; and the country had an adult literacy rate of 68.9 percent in 2003. In terms of economic well being, Madagascar is the world's ninth-poorest country. Some 70 percent of the population struggles to survive on less than a dollar a day. In 2004 per capita GDP was just \$800.

There is a sharp split between the poor and the wealthy; the middle class is new and slowly increasing in number. The wealthy live in guarded compounds, while the poor inhabit shantytowns and hardscrabble rural villages. All the essentials of life, including adequate housing, food, proper water and sanitation, education, and transportation are hard to come by for most citizens of Madagascar.

Malagasy houses are constructed of varying materials in different parts of the island: brick and wood in the plateau, thatch and leaves in the west, and often on stilts in the east. Regardless of the building material, they are generally rectangular and constructed on a north-south axis, with doorways opening to the west. In the central plateau homes are often two stories high and have outside terraces. The housing shortage in cities is acute; in 2000, 26 percent of the population lived in urban areas, which were growing in population by almost 5 percent annually.

HEALTH

Like other features of life in Madagascar, health care is in great need of revamping. With an average of only nine physicians and 42 hospital beds per 100,000 people as of 2003, the country is seriously understaffed medically. Each province has its own hospital as well as clinics and dispensaries, but only 46 percent of births were attended by trained health-care professionals between 1995 and 2002, leading to an infant mortality rate of nearly 77 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2004, among the worst rates in the world.

Nearly 100,000 Malagasy children under age five die each year from preventable diseases, such as malaria, diarrhea, and acute respiratory illnesses. Half of all the nation's children, and 50 percent of the total population, suffer from stunted growth due to chronic malnutrition. Three-quarters of the population live in rural areas, where two out of three residents have no access to safe, clean water.

Indeed, the high incidence of disease in Madagascar is a result of an inadequate diet and insufficient medical care and sanitation practices. Malaria, schistosomiasis, and tuberculosis are common, as are leprosy, bubonic plague, diphtheria, typhoid, venereal infections, tetanus, hepatitis, and gastroenteric parasites. HIV/AIDS is also spreading quickly; as of 2003, 140,000 people were living with HIV/AIDS in Madagascar, with 7,500 deaths from the disease and 30,000 children orphaned as a result.

Immunization rates for infants one year of age are low. In 2003, 72 percent were immunized against tuberculosis, only 55 percent for measles and DPT, and 58 percent for polio. Public expenditures on health care in 2002 were 1.2 percent of GDP.

Health

Number of Physicians: 1,428
 Number of Dentists: 76
 Number of Nurses: 3,088
 Number of Pharmacists: 8
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 8.7
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: 0.42
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 76.83
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 550
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 2.1
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 5
 HIV Infected % of adults: 1.7
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 55
 Measles: 55
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 33
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 45

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Rice, or *vary*, is the staple food in Madagascar, served at least two to three times per day and in quantities large enough to make it the main course.

Meats include chicken, beef, pork, and fish, usually served in small amounts and in stews or curries along with rice. Some typical stews are *ravitoto* (with pork) and *romazava* (with beef and vegetables). Other popular dishes include *akoho sy voanio*, or chicken and coconut; *lsary voatabia*, or tomato and scallion salad; *kitoza*, or beef cut into strips and broiled over a charcoal fire; *vary amin anana*, or rice and greens; and *achard*, a hot vegetable curry. *Sakay*, a hot red pepper, is usually served on the side with all Malagasy dishes. Along the coast seafood is plentiful, and tropical fruit, including bananas, mangos, lychees, and pineapples, are also popular.

Some culinary features are holdovers from French times; this is true with coffee, which is more prevalent than tea. However, the best coffee is produced for export, and the same is true for the vanilla bean, for which the country is famous. Wine is produced locally, as are beer and rum. *Litchel* is an alcoholic drink made from lychees. *Koba* is a ground mixture of peanut, banana, and rice used as a snack food.

Nutrition is less than adequate in Madagascar. Between 1995 and 2002, 33 percent of children younger than five were underweight, while 37 percent of the general population were considered undernourished as of 2001.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 36.6
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,010
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 110.1
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg:
 62.6

STATUS OF WOMEN

Madagascar has what is essentially a matriarchal society, and a highly visible role for women has long been recognized as an integral part of the country's sociological framework. There are no restrictions concerning activities in which women may engage. Women have a lengthy tradition of involvement in high-level political activity, and there are women members of the cabinet, Supreme Revolutionary Council, and National Assembly. Women have prominent positions in the economic life of the country, with many managing or owning businesses or filling management positions in state industries. Women constitute 45 percent of the nation's workforce.

However, women in rural areas and among the poor face a greater degree of hardship. In addition to the responsibilities associated with child rearing and household management, economic necessity forces many of these women to engage in long hours of farm labor or similar activities. These conditions stem more from socio-economic factors than from any discrimination against women in Madagascar society.

Women

Women-headed Households %: 21.6
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 7
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 0.94
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: —

WORK

The labor force was 7.3 million in 2000, of which about 80 percent were engaged in agriculture, forestry, and fishing, much of it at the subsistence level. Agricultural products include coffee, vanilla, sugarcane, cloves, cocoa, rice, cassava (tapioca), beans, bananas, peanuts, and livestock. Agriculture accounts for a little less than one-third of GDP. Industry, about 17 percent of GDP, comprises meat processing, soap, breweries, tanneries, sugar, textiles, glassware, cement, automobile assembly, paper, petroleum, and tourism. The service sector brings in over 50 percent of GDP, which stood at over \$14 billion in 2003. In general, the native Malagasy are involved in agriculture, while business is the province of the French, Chinese, Creoles, Indians, and Merina highlanders. Unemployment in 1999 was 5.9 percent. Women make up 45 percent of the workforce; they are often engaged in the planting, cultivating, and processing of crops.

The law provides for the right to unionize, but essential service workers, including police and military personnel, may not form unions. Overall, less than 10 percent of workers are in unions. The minimum work age is 15, but as of 2004 nearly 13 percent of urban children and 36

percent of rural children between the ages of 10 and 14 were intermittently employed, the vast majority on family farms. With the vast majority of the workforce employed in agriculture, unions have little power, and workplace safety and health regulations are seldom enforced. The minimum wage in 2004 was raised to \$23 per month, and the maximum workweek was 40 hours.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 7,300,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 44.5
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: —
 Industry: —
 Services: —
 Unemployment %: 5.9

EDUCATION

Education is in principle free, universal, and compulsory from ages six to 13 in some areas and from seven to 14 in other areas.

Schooling lasts for 13 years, as divided into six years of primary school and seven years of secondary school. The primary course is itself divided into three cycles of two years each: a preparatory course, an elementary course, and a middle course. Upon completion of primary education, the student is awarded a *certificat d'études primaires élémentaires*. Secondary schools offer two cycles: the short cycle (*enseignement court*) lasts four years, the long cycle (*enseignement long*) three. Upon completion of secondary education, the student receives a baccalaureate.

Vocational training programs in more than 40 specializations are available to Malagasy students with primary education. Four-year programs are offered in technical colleges, seven-year programs in technical institutes. Private schools account for a major share of educational enrollment: 49 percent at the secondary level.

The responsibility for both private and public education is vested in the Ministry of Cultural Affairs. However, primary education is also partly financed by local funds.

Higher education is provided by the University of Madagascar, with campuses in Antananarivo, Antsirana, Fianarantsoa, Mahajanga, Toamasina, and Toliara. In 2001, combined gross enrollment in primary, secondary, and tertiary schools was 45 percent. The literacy rate in 2003 was 68.9 percent, and government spending on education was 2.9 percent of GDP in 2001.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 68.9
 Male %: 75.5
 Female %: 62.5

School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: —
 First Level: Primary Schools: 13,624
 Teachers: 55,309
 Students: 2,856,480
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 51.7
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 78.6
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 1,142
 Teachers: —
 Students: 436,211
 Student-Teacher Ratio: —
 Net Enrollment Ratio: —
 Third Level: Institutions: 5
 Teachers: 1,857
 Students: 32,593
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 2.1
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 2.9

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The major research efforts in the country focus on agriculture, forestry, and fisheries, with institutes sponsored by the Ministère de la Recherche Scientifique et Technologique pour le Développement. The National Center of Applied Research in Rural Development, in Antananarivo, also pursues research in agriculture, forestry, fisheries, zoology, and veterinary studies.

The University of Antananarivo at its various campuses has departments of mathematics, physics, chemistry, engineering, computer engineering, oceanography, medicine, and agriculture. Between 1987 and 1997 science and engineering students accounted for 25 percent of college and university enrollments, while research and development expenditures totaled 0.12 percent of GDP, with 37 technicians and 15 scientists and engineers per million people engaged in research and development.

Other technology and research comes from abroad. French institutes study geology, hydrology, tropical forestry, and veterinary medicine.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 15
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 0.12
 High-Tech Exports \$million: 1.33
 Patent Applications by Residents: 4

MEDIA

Five daily newspapers were published in the country as of 1998, with a total circulation of about 68,000. Only one daily is published in both French and Malagasy; others are single-language publications. In 1989 Ratsiraka announced the end of restrictions on press freedom and the permanent abolition of press censorship. During the 2002 presidential election crisis the newspapers and media in general became very partisan, but the atmosphere has seemed to change since then. Major dailies include

the *Madagascar Tribune*, *Midi-Madagasikara*, *L'express*, and *La gazette de la grande île*. With low literacy rates, Malagasy citizens also tend to get their news from radio and television. Reporters without Borders, an international media watchdog, ranked Madagascar 72nd out of 167 nations in its 2004 rankings of press freedom.

The national news agency is Agence Nationale d'Information Taratra, which replaced Agence Madagascar Presse in 1977.

The official broadcasting service, Radiodiffusion Nationale Malgache, operates 24 transmitters (in addition to a relay station at Fenoarivo with eight transmitters), broadcasting two home-service networks. Television, introduced in 1967, covers about 15 percent of the population. As of 2003, only half of Madagascar's households had access to radio broadcasts. Of the scores of private radio and television channels, President Ravalomanana owns one of each; his Malagasy Broadcasting System operates the MBS TV and Radio MBS networks.

In 2003 there were 279,500 cellular phone users and 70,500 Internet users.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 5
 Total Circulation 000: 68
 Circulation per 1,000: 4.5
 Books Published: 108
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets 000: 360
 per 1,000: 23

CULTURE

The cultural heritage of Madagascar is as blended as is its population. Despite lying so close to Africa, the island's population is primarily related not to the people of that continent but rather to those of Indonesia, from where the first settlers came. However, to say the culture is similar to that of the Pacific islands is not accurate, as other influences have shaped the country, including French rule.

Traditional music is a fusion of rhythms from Indonesia and Kenya. Musical instruments include the harp-like *valiba*, the stringed *lokango voatavo*, and the *kabosy*, which is similar to a ukulele. Other instruments include the tube zither and cone drum, as well as drums and animal horns as wind instruments. Hand clapping accompanies the rhythmic singing style known as *vaky soava*. The church music of modern days has been adapted to typical Malagasy rhythms.

Another traditional art form adapted to the modern world is *kabary*, or public oratory and storytelling. *Kabary* is an integral part of *hira gasy*, popular spectacles that

also include music and dancing. The town of Fianarantsoa has developed into the literary mecca of the country, with several contemporary novelists and writers working there. Wood carving is also practiced by some of the clans of Madagascar.

The government attempts to encourage traditional art forms and promotes both ancient and modern festivals. The major libraries and museums, all located in Antananarivo, include the National Library, the Municipal Library, the National Archive, and various museum collections of Malagasy culture and archaeology.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 56
 Volumes: 1,209,000
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: 4
 Annual Attendance: 21,000
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Folklore in Madagascar includes myths of the Malagasy belief system, folktales, and proverbs. Zanahary is the supreme god in the Malagasy folk religion, with both male and female aspects. Zanahary's wife is the goddess Andriamanitra, who created the earth and human beings. There is an earthly Zanahary who creates humans from clay or wood, and there is a heavenly Zanahary who breathes life into them. Sometimes, however, these two battle over their creations, and then the heavenly god takes back his vital breath, while the earthly god keeps the bodies. This in part explains the elaborate funerary traditions in Malagasy religion. Family tombs are important, as each year the dead are removed in the ceremony called *famadianana*. Corpses are rewrapped, and offerings are made to them by other family members. For the Malagasy these dead are not divorced from life. Rather, they continue to influence daily activity.

Other beliefs and myths of the Malagasy people include fear of *tromba*, the trance-like state that some spirits of the dead inflict on the living. A divine healer, or *ombiasy*, must be called in to bring the afflicted out of their trance and end their ceaseless dancing. Other typical mythical figures include the *vizimba*, the powerful spirits that lived on Madagascar before humans came, and Rasoalao, goddess of the hunt.

Proverbs make up another vital part of Madagascar folklore, imparting wisdom by using everyday analogy and allusion to farming and other homely pursuits. Some popular proverbs include "You think you are strong like the corn plant, yet the bean vine is already choking you," "Sor-

row is like rice in an attic: You use a little every day and at the end it is all gone,” and “Poverty won’t allow him to lift up his head; dignity won’t allow him to bow it down.”

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

In urban areas cinemas are available, and families also watch television. Most recreational activities revolve around the family. Extended families get together to dine and share news of distant relations; music, dance, and sports may be part of these gatherings. Church and traditional cultural festivals such as the *bira gasy* are other entertainment outlets, with traditional storytelling, poetry, dance, and music all performed. Cockfighting is still popular with a large segment of the Malagasy population. Children have many unique games played with stones.

ETIQUETTE

Like many tribal people, the Malagasy are warm and friendly in familiar surroundings and with people they know but are more reserved and formal with strangers. In Madagascar, handshakes are used at greeting and leaving-taking. A kiss on the cheek, French style, is also used for close friends. Respect is shown to elders, especially in public situations.

Being made up of many different clans, Madagascar society is full of taboos, many of which change from village to village. One universal taboo is that of refusing food when visiting; in spite of being among the poorest nations on the planet, Madagascar’s citizens are proud of their hospitality. Punctuality is not a top priority with the islanders.

FAMILY LIFE

In traditional Malagasy tribal life kinship and family were the main determiners of activity, and they still hold sway today. One of the difficulties of creating a modern nation-state is that the islanders’ first loyalties are to their extended families, and this loyalty typically extends beyond death. Such kinship identity is called *fibavanana*. The home is often made up of three generations, the oldest male being the head. With the shift to urban living, traditional family paradigms are breaking down somewhat, and women have taken on authoritarian roles as well. Nevertheless, boys are still raised to be providers, while girls are set to work taking care of younger members of the family. In general, women are still expected to take care of domestic matters. Although educational and job opportunities are improving for women, certain traditional male-dominated societal patterns still exist.

Families are large in Madagascar. Traditionally, seven boys and seven girls was the desired number of offspring, but in the modern world the average family has shrunk to four or five children, still large by Western standards. The fertility rate in 2004 was almost six children per woman, but the infant mortality rate was very high, at nearly 77 deaths per 1,000 live births.

In some ethnic groups, marriages can take place only with others of the same ethnic or kinship background. Others demand that marriages take place outside kinship lines so as to strengthen bonds between clans. Polygamy was once common on the island, but this is no longer so outside of the Muslim community. Marriages are both arranged between parents and forged through romantic commitments on the parts of the bride and groom. In both cases, lengthy negotiations precede the ceremony, and a bride price, a *vody ondry*, is usually paid. Divorce is legal in Madagascar; by law, women receive an equal portion of property upon dissolution of the marriage.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Attire in Madagascar is a mix of Western and local traditional styles. Typical clothing for women includes the robe- or toga-like cloth wrapping called the *lamba*. This cloth is brightly colored and is sometimes also used as a baby sling. Many men wear the long cotton shirts called *malabar*, made of cotton, with loose trousers. Some wear mixtures of Western and traditional garb at the same time. Materials include cotton, silk, and raffia, some of it still homespun. In the more humid eastern forests men tend to wear shorts rather than trousers.

SPORTS

Soccer is the primary spectator sport in the country. In addition to local teams, Madagascar fields a national team that is part of the Council of South African Football Associations and has been a member of the world governing body of soccer, FIFA, since 1962. The team regularly plays in the COSAFA Castle Cup competition. Soccer matches are held at Mahamsina Municipal Stadium in Antananarivo, which holds 30,000 spectators.

Other common sports include volleyball, basketball, martial arts, boxing, wrestling (called *tolona*), swimming, and tennis.

CHRONOLOGY

1960 Madagascar becomes a sovereign independent republic within the French Community as the Malagasy Republic, with Philibert Tsiranana as president.

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- 1971** The Antandroy, an ethnic group in the south, revolt in protest against northern domination. The government takes drastic action to suppress the revolt.
Vice President Andre Resempa is dismissed.
- 1972** In national elections Tsiranana is reelected with 99.72 percent of the votes.
A strike by students at the medical school escalates into nationwide riots.
Amid the clamor for his resignation, Tsiranana hands over all his powers to Gen. Gabriel Ramanantsoa, who forms a government of national unity.
Voters approve a constitutional referendum to abolish all existing parliamentary institutions until 1977 and replace them with the High Council of Institutions (Conseil Supérieur des Institutions).
- 1973** Madagascar leaves the franc zone and the Common African and Malagasy Organization.
- 1975** In a surprise move, Ramanantsoa yields office to Col. Richard Ratsimandrava, who is assassinated within six days.
Power is assumed by an 18-man military directorate headed by Gen. Gilles Andriamahazo.
The directorate is superseded by the Supreme Revolutionary Council, headed by Cdr. Didier Ratsiraka.
The Second Republic is inaugurated, as the electorate approves a new constitution.
Ratsiraka issues the Charter of the Malagasy Socialist Revolution (popularly known as the Little Red Book).
The republic's official designation is changed from the Malagasy Republic to Madagascar.
- 1976** Ratsiraka is sworn in as president for a seven-year term.
The name of the capital is changed from Tananarive to Antananarivo.
Prime Minister Joel Rakotomalala is killed in a plane crash and is replaced by Justin Rakotonina. Hundreds of Comorans are killed in anti-Comoran riots.
- 1977** In a major cabinet reshuffle, Désiré Rakotoarijaona is named prime minister.
- 1982** President Ratsiraka is reelected.
- 1983** AREMA, the "revolutionary association" of the ruling Front National pour la Défense de la Révolution, wins decisively in national legislative elections.
- 1986** Violent demonstrations take place in Toamasina in response to food shortages and the government austerity program. Student protests erupt at the University of Madagascar in Antananarivo.
- 1987** Rioting breaks out. Indian and Pakistani traders are attacked because of resentment at their comparative wealth during a period of increased poverty.
- 1988** Prime Minister Rakotoarijaona resigns and is replaced by Victor Ramahatra.
- 1989** President Ratsiraka is reelected with over 60 percent of the vote.
- 1990** Ratsiraka lifts a 15-year ban on political parties, and several immediately register. Security forces foil a coup attempt.
- 1991** Madagascar defies the OAU ban on South Africa by restoring trade and transportation ties with that country.
In response to numerous antigovernment demonstrations and strikes, Ratsiraka agrees to implement democratic reforms.
- 1992** A new constitution is adopted, recognizing the Third Republic. Its measures include the formal abolition of the single-party rule of the country.
- 1993** Albert Zafy, a doctor, is elected president in the first free elections under the new constitution.
- 1996** In September the National Assembly impeaches President Zafy for failure to renegotiate favorable terms with the IMF.
Zafy steps down in October.
Ratsiraka wins December presidential elections.
- 1997** Ratsiraka is sworn in as president. He focuses on bringing inflation under control and renegotiating the country's growing foreign debt.
- 1998** A swarm of locusts devastates crops in southern Madagascar.
Voters narrowly approve a referendum expanding the powers of the president.
AREMA dominates National Assembly elections. Tantely Andrianarivo is named prime minister.
- 2000** A cholera epidemic breaks out.
Two severe cyclones strike Madagascar, killing 1,300 and leaving 40,000 homeless due to destruction and flooding.
A third cyclone inflicts further damage, including the destruction of more than half the island's vanilla crop.
- 2001** The Senate reconvenes after 29 years.
Opposition candidate Marc Ravalomanana claims victory in presidential elections and charges Ratsiraka with rigging election results.
- 2002** Violence between rival protesters breaks out after Ravalomanana declares himself president. The Constitutional High Court names Ravalomanana as winner of the elections after a recount, but Ratsiraka refuses to accept the verdict.
In parliamentary elections, Ravalomanana's TIM party wins a majority of seats. The United States and France recognize Ravalomanana's victory.
- 2003** Ratsiraka is convicted in absentia of embezzling government funds.

- 2004** Thousands are left homeless when two cyclones hit.
The World Bank and IMF write off \$2 billion of Madagascar's debt.
The December Indian Ocean tsunami hits Madagascar's east coast near the towns of Manakara, Sambava, and Vohemar, destroying infrastructure and leaving close to 1,000 people homeless. No deaths are recorded.
- 2005** Madagascar's Ministry of Justice refuses to yield to demands of striking judges for better pay and working conditions.
Three UN agencies sign an agreement with Madagascar to supply \$101 million to help in efforts to reduce poverty.

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Madagascar. *Selected Issues and Statistical Annex* (IMF Staff Country Report), 2001; *Recensement général de la population et de l'habitat, août 1993*; *Situation économique* (annual)

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- CIA World Factbook: Madagascar
<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/ma.html>
- Institut National de la Statistique
<http://www.cite.mg/instat/>
- Mission of Madagascar to the United Nations (Geneva; in French, summary only in English)
<http://www3.itu.ch/MISSIONS/Madagascar>
- Online Information Service of the Embassy of Madagascar in Washington, D.C.
<http://www.embassy.org/madagascar/>

MALAWI

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Malawi (Dziko la Mala i)

ABBREVIATION

MW

CAPITAL

Lilongwe

HEAD OF STATE & HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

President Bingu wa Mutharika (from 2004)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Partial democracy

POPULATION

12,158,924 (2005)

AREA

118,480 sq km (45,745 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Chewa, Nyanja, Yao, Lomwe, Ngoni, Tumbuka

LANGUAGES

Chichewa (official), English (official)

RELIGIONS

Animism, Christianity, Islam

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Kwacha

NATIONAL FLAG

Tricolor of black (top), red, and green horizontal stripes, with a red rising sun in the center of the black stripe

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A central shield is divided into three horizontal parts. The top contains wavy blue and white lines, the center a gold lion on a red background, and the bottom a golden rising sun on a black field. The shield is flanked by a golden lion and leopard standing on the ranges of Mount Mlanje. Cresting the design is a silver helmet mantled in red and gold, on top of which a fish eagle in gold, brown, and white is outlined against a rising sun. At the bottom appears the national motto, "Unity and Freedom."

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"O God Bless Our Land of Malawi"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day), March 3 (Martyrs' Day), May 14 (Kamuzu Day), July 6 (National Day, Republic Day), August 1 (bank holiday), October 17 (Mothers' Day), Christmas, Boxing Day, Good Friday, Holy Saturday, Easter Monday

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

July 6, 1964

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

May 18, 1994

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

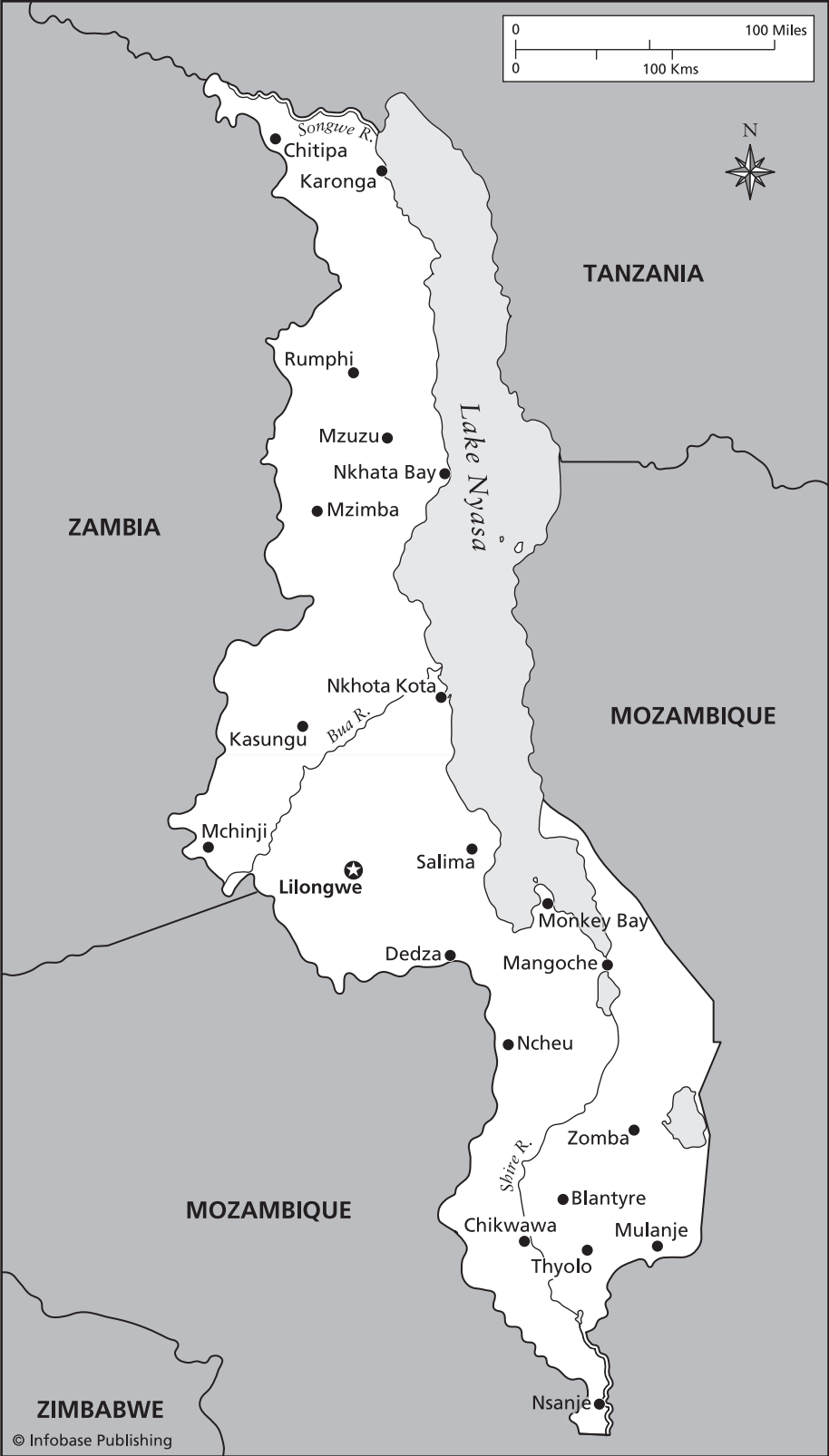
Malawi, a landlocked country in southeastern Africa, has an area of 118,480 sq km (45,745 sq mi), of which the land area is 94,916 sq km (36,647 sq mi). The country extends 853 km (530 mi) north to south and 257 km (160 mi) east to west.

Malawi shares its total international boundary of 2,881 km (1,790 mi) with three neighbors: Tanzania, Mozambique, and Zambia. In 1968 President Hastings Banda made claims to territories in all three neighboring countries, specifically to the land 160 km (100 mi) north of the Songwe River in Tanzania, south to the Zambezi River in Mozambique, west to the Luangwa River in Zambia, and east through Mozambique to the Indian Ocean. The

claims were never pressed. Lilongwe replaced Zomba as the capital in the mid-1970s.

Three-fourths of the land area is covered by plateaus. The best known of these, in the southern region, is the Shire Plateau, covering 7,251 sq km (2,800 sq mi). A much broader plateau in the central region is the Lilongwe Plain. The highest plateau, the Nyika, in the north, covers 23,310 sq km (9,000 sq mi), with average elevations of 2,100–2,500 m (6,900–8,200 ft). There are six other plateaus, some of which are known locally as hills or plains. A few mountains rise above the level of the highest of these plateaus: among them are Dedza Mountain (2,100 m, 6,900 ft) and Mount Mulanje, whose highest peak, Sapitwa, rises to 3,002 m (9,847 ft).

Malawi



The most prominent physical feature of the country is Lake Malawi (formerly Lake Nyasa), which extends north to south for more than 563 km (359 mi), representing an extension of the East African Rift Valley. The lake's surface is about 472 m (1,550 ft) above sea level, while its bottom lies 213 m (699 ft) below sea level. The shoreline of the lake is a flat littoral plain marked by many swamps.

The shallow section of the Rift Valley, continuing from the shoreline of the lake to the southern border, is known as the Shire Valley. Floodplains and riverine swamps cover this area, the largest of which is known as the Elephant March. Two other major valleys join the lower Shire Valley: the Mwanza and the Ruo.

Malawi is part of the Zambezi River basin. Lake Malawi is drained through Lake Malombe by the Shire River, which flows through the Shire Valley before joining the Zambezi in Mozambique. Eight rivers and hundreds of streams carry surface runoff from the plateaus and hills into Lake Malawi, while a few streams in the southeast drain into Lake Chilwa.

Geography

Area sq km:	118,480; sq mi 45,745
World Rank:	98th
Land Boundaries, km:	Mozambique 1,569; Tanzania 475; Zambia 837
Coastline, km:	0
Elevation Extremes meters:	
Lowest:	Shire River at Mozambique 37
Highest:	Sapitwa (Mount Mulanje) 3,002
Land Use %	
Arable Land:	23.4
Permanent Crops:	1.5
Forest:	27.2
Other:	47.9

Population of Principal Cities (2003)

Blantyre	646,235
Lilongwe	597,619
Mzuzu	119,592
Zomba	90,325

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

The country's latitudinal extent and great variations in altitude produce a wide range of climatic conditions. In general, the seasons may be divided into cool (May to mid-August), hot (mid-August to November), rainy (November to April), and post-rainy (April to May). The broadest contrasts are between the cooler and wetter highlands and the hot and humid low-lying Rift Valley region.

The country is subject to occasional cyclones from the Indian Ocean, some of which prove destructive.

Climate and Weather

Temperature Range	
Zomba:	45°F to 95°F
Lilongwe:	26°F to 97°F
Nsanji:	70°F to 84°F
Dedze:	57°F to 70°F
Plateau:	60°F to 76°F
Rift Valley:	68°F to 86°F
Average Rainfall:	30 in to 40 in
Northern region:	60 in to 100 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Vegetation in Malawi is as varied as the landscape. In the lowlands are grassy savannas, while the plateaus, which constitute 75 percent of the country's area, have woodlands with bark cloth trees, baobab, mopane, mahogany, and acacias, and higher elevations are home to evergreen forests. Swampland is also found in the lowlands, though much of this has been drained for farmland. Likewise, much of the woodland has been harvested for lumber, and in the highlands softwood forests have been planted. The country's high population density has altered the natural landscape considerably.

Such alterations are also evident in Malawi's animal life. Big-game animals, such as lions, zebras, rhinoceroses, leopards, elephants, giraffes, and antelope, are generally only found in reserves. Hippopotamuses inhabit the shores of Lake Malawi, and baboons and monkeys also exist in the forests. Avian life is particularly rich, with over 500 species present. Among reptiles are found crocodiles, tortoises, chameleons, lizards, and numerous snake species, including the Egyptian cobra. The waters of Lake Malawi are home to several hundred species of fish, including tilapia, trout, bream, carp, catfish, and bass; however, overfishing has depleted the number and variety of fish. Insect life is also abundant, including flies and mosquitoes of various types.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005:	12,158,924
World Rank:	68th
Density per sq km:	116.5
% of annual growth (1999-2003):	2.1
Male %:	49.7
Female %:	50.3
Urban %:	15.9
Age Distribution %:	
0-14:	46.9
15-64:	50.3
65 and over:	2.8
Population 2025:	19,969,000
Birth Rate per 1,000:	43.95
Death Rate per 1,000:	23.39
Rate of Natural Increase %:	2.4
Total Fertility Rate:	5.98

Expectation of Life (years): Males 36.59
 Females 37.36
 Marriage Rate per 1,000: —
 Divorce Rate per 1,000: —
 Average Size of Households: 4.3
 Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Diverse Africans constitute 99.5 percent of Malawi's population. The closely related Chewa and Nyanja together constitute about half the population. The Chewa are numerically dominant in the central region, the Nyanja in the southern region around Lake Chilwa and in the districts of Zomba and Blantyre.

Ethnicity has declined in importance in the modern era, and interethnic relations are characterized by tolerance and flexibility. National alignments tend to be regional, political, or religious rather than ethnic in character. All whites are classified as Europeans, but they are mostly of British origin; very few have become Malawian citizens. Nearly 65 percent of Europeans live in the urban centers of Blantyre, Zomba, and Lilongwe, where they continue to exercise a disproportionate influence on the country's administration and economy.

Asians, nearly all of them Indians, constitute a still smaller minority. As in other parts of Africa, they play an important role in the economy as small traders, craftsmen, and professionals.

LANGUAGES

Chichewa, or Chinyanja, the mother tongue of the Chewa and the Nyanja (the prefix *chi-* is used before the name of a tribe to mean "the language of"), was declared the national language in 1968. A standardized form of Chichewa is used in the administration, schools, and the media. Chichewa is spoken by over 50 percent of the population as their mother tongue.

The rest speak a number of languages, of which the leading ones are Chilomwe, Chiyao, Chitumbuka, and Chisena. Because the Chewa and Nyanja tribes are concentrated in the central and southern regions, Chichewa is understood by only 2.5 percent of the population in the north. Many Africans are bilingual by necessity. English, the other official language of the country, is spoken by at least 5 percent of the population and is used as a *lingua franca* by educated Africans.

RELIGIONS

An estimated 75 percent of the population are Christians, 20 percent are Muslims, and 3 percent are animists. Traditional African religions have in common a belief in the

life force that permeates everything, a concept generally equated with God or a supreme being (called *mulungu* in Chichewa), but most such religious activities revolve around intermediary spirits called *mizimu* and nature spirits. Sorcery, witchcraft, and other practices are closely related to efforts to win the good favor of these spirits.

Christianity was introduced in the Shire highlands in 1861 by Anglican missionaries and in 1889 by the Roman Catholic White Fathers. In the 1970s there were three Protestants to every two Roman Catholics. There are a number of independent African churches, which broke away from the established churches in protest against white control and racial discrimination. These churches are characterized by their millenarianism, emphasis on rituals, and incorporation of typical African religious beliefs. One of these African-controlled churches was the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society (more commonly known as Jehovah's Witnesses), an American sect introduced into Malawi in the 1920s. The refusal of Witnesses to join the Malawi Congress Party brought them into conflict with the government; the sect was banned in 1967, and its members were expelled from the country.

Most Muslims belong to the Yao tribe, which derives its faith from Arab slave traders in the 19th century. Because the Yao are largely illiterate, Islam exerts little or no influence on national affairs.

In general, religious freedom is respected. However, Muslims suffered attacks after the 1999 elections when the ruling party and its president, a Muslim, were returned to power.

Religious Affiliations

Protestant	6,687,000
Roman Catholic	2,432,000
Muslim	2,432,000
Indigenous Beliefs	365,000
Other	243,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The original inhabitants of Malawi were the Twa and Fula peoples, who are believed to have settled in the region between 8000 and 2000 B.C.E. They were displaced by Bantu-speaking peoples, who entered the region during the first four centuries of the Common Era. In 1480 the Maravi (from which the name Malawi is derived) Confederacy was founded, encompassing most of central and southern Malawi. Within the next century the Ngonde people founded a kingdom. The last to enter the region were the Swahili-speaking peoples who appeared between 1830 and 1860.

The first white man to explore the territory now known as Malawi was David Livingstone, who discovered Lake Nyasa (now Lake Malawi) in 1859. Livingstone was

instrumental in establishing a series of mission stations in Nyasaland in the 1870s, two named Livingstonia and a third named Blantyre. In 1878 the African Lakes Company was formed by Scottish businessmen to open up the interior and to supply the needs of the missions. By the 1890s over 100 coffee plantations had been established. The expansion of British commercial interests brought them into conflict with both the Arabs and the Portuguese. By the 1890s the boundaries of the British sphere of influence had been defined through Anglo-German and Anglo-Portuguese agreements.

In 1891 the British Foreign Office announced the establishment of the Nyasaland Districts Protectorate (renamed two years later the British Central Africa Protectorate), under a commissioner. In 1907 the territory was again renamed Nyasaland Protectorate, under a governor. From the beginning, Nyasaland had been viewed by the imperial government as a dependency rather than as a settlers' colony. Missionaries and civil servants outnumbered planters in the British community, and British-owned plantations did not dominate agriculture, as they did in Rhodesia. Administration was based on the concept of indirect rule, which permitted African headmen significant roles in the lower echelons of government.

Under these circumstances, nationalism developed early in Nyasaland; it was not inflamed or rebellious but led Africans to seek to expand their opportunities in government. For this reason there was considerable native opposition to union with Northern and Southern Rhodesia (now Zambia and Zimbabwe) in the Central African Federation in 1953. The Malawi Congress Party (MCP) under Dr. Hastings Banda led a successful fight against the federation, and in 1962 the British government accepted Nyasaland's right to secede from the federation.

Nyasaland became an independent dominion in 1964 under the name of Malawi. Two years later it became a republic, with Dr. Banda as president. The republican constitution of 1966 established a one-party system, under which Banda's MCP was accorded a political monopoly. During the first years of independence, Banda consolidated power under a strong presidency. A strict conservative, he established early policies that included the retention of Europeans in the civil service, the espousal of free-enterprise capitalism, and the maintenance of good relations with Rhodesia and South Africa. In 1971 Banda made himself president for life.

The country's first multiparty elections were not held until 1994, when the ailing Banda was replaced by Bakili Muluzi of the opposition United Democratic Front (UDF). Muluzi assembled a coalition government that included the Alliance for Democracy (AFORD). In 1995 Banda and five codefendants were charged with the murder of political opponents but were later acquitted. Nevertheless, Banda himself apologized for the "pain and suffering" he had caused while in office. Muluzi was re-

lected in 1999, but the United Democratic Front failed to secure a majority in parliament, winning 93 of 192 seats. Following the election, AFORD joined the MCP in an unsuccessful court challenge of Muluzi's victory. In 2000 he reorganized his government in response to charges of fraud and corruption.

In 2002 Muluzi began a concerted effort to change the constitution to allow him to run for a third term, but this stirred political and popular opposition, and he abandoned the attempt the following year. In late 2003 AFORD again formed an alliance with the UDF, and as helped by a division in the opposition, the UDF candidate, Bingu wa Mutharika, won the 2004 presidential election. However, Mutharika's party failed to win a plurality in parliament, and the new president was forced to form a majority coalition with independents and the small National Democratic Alliance. Upon taking office, Mutharika began an anticorruption campaign that has led to several high-level arrests but no convictions. Increasing corruption, population growth, increasing pressure on agricultural lands, and HIV/AIDS pose major problems for the country.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

President

1966–94 Hastings Kamuzu Banda

1994–2004 Elson Bakili Muluzi

2004– Bingu wa Mutharika

CONSTITUTION

Malawi's original constitution was promulgated in 1966. It prescribes a presidential form of government in which the president is both head of state and head of government. He has the right to participate in parliamentary debates. The president is elected for a maximum of two five-year terms by universal adult suffrage in the context of a multiparty political system. Parliament consists of the National Assembly and the president. The National Assembly has 177 elective seats, and an unlimited number of additional members may be nominated by the president. The parliamentary term is normally five years. The assembly may change the constitution by a two-thirds majority.

A new constitution, as proposed by a National Constitutional Conference, was approved by the assembly in 1994 and promulgated in 1995. The new Basic Law approves multiparty elections and also provides for a new constitutional committee and a Human Rights Commission. It also authorized the eventual creation of a senate, and the number of seats in the National Assembly was increased to 192. In 2001 a bill was tabled in the National Assembly to abolish the senate, which existed only

in principle, because it was thought to be too expensive a proposition. Legislators also feared the new body would be too powerful. In 2003 an attempt was made to change the constitution to allow the president to serve for more than two terms, but the effort ultimately failed due to a lack of public support.

PARLIAMENT

All legislative powers are vested in parliament, which comprises the National Assembly and the president as head of state. The constitution states that the National Assembly consists of a number of seats, representing every constituency in Malawi, determined by the Electoral Commission. Provisions of the 1994 constitution allow for the president to be called to parliament to answer questions at such times as may be prescribed by the standing orders of parliament or on motion of the National Assembly. The National Assembly has 192 elective seats. Elections are by universal suffrage in the context of a multiparty system, and additional members may be nominated by the president. Members of the National Assembly have to be a minimum of 21 years of age and are elected to five-year terms.

The speaker is appointed from among the members of the assembly. The assembly may change the constitution by a two-thirds majority on the second and third readings. The president has power to prorogue or dissolve parliament.

POLITICAL PARTIES

There have been three major political parties in Malawi. The UDF is based mainly in the southern region of the country; the MCP represents the central region; and the AFORD represents mostly the northern region. The political parties in Malawi cannot be classified or characterized in terms of ideology; generally, the ideas and styles of the leaders define the parties' philosophies. The MCP is a nationalist party that for 30 years was led by Dr. Hastings Banda, who tended to be authoritarian, and was the only party in Malawi under the one-party constitutional setup. The UDF was basically a split from the MCP; its main thrust was democratic change. The AFORD has tended to be a labor-based party because its leader has been a labor-union leader.

In the 2004 elections new parties made their presences felt. The Republican Party took one-quarter of the votes in the presidential elections and won 15 seats in the National Assembly. The National Democratic Alliance took 9 percent of the presidential votes and won eight seats in the assembly. The presidential party, the UDF, formed a coalition government with these and other small parties in the assembly.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For purposes of local government Malawi is divided into three regions, 27 districts, and eight municipalities. Although the district is the lowest unit of local government directly administered by the national government, there are 134 chiefs' areas and 60 subchiefs' areas into which districts are divided on the basis of tribal territoriality. Each region is under a cabinet minister, and each district is under a district commissioner.

LEGAL SYSTEM

Malawi's legal system is based on English common law and African custom. The judiciary consists of two parallel court systems, the traditional and the modern. At the apex of the modern system is the Supreme Court of Appeals, presided over by the chief justice. Cases are heard by three or five judges, all drawn from the High Court. The High Court is composed of the chief justice and four other judges. The lower courts are known as magistrate's courts and are divided into four levels. There are 23 magistrate's courts scattered throughout the country.

The traditional court structure was established in 1969 and parallels the modern sector. At the base are 176 traditional courts divided into four levels. Appeals from these courts go to the regional traditional court of appeal and finally to the national traditional court of appeal. The traditional courts are supervised by the traditional courts commissioner, who functions under the Ministry of Justice. He may alter or set aside sentences.

Those charged with criminal offenses may be tried in either the traditional or modern court system, depending on the nature of the charge. The defendant has the right of access to counsel before and during judicial proceedings in the modern courts. The modern court system is almost totally independent of the executive, notwithstanding the fact that the president appoints the chief justice, who in turn appoints the other justices.

Traditional court justices are appointed directly by the president. Defendants are charged publicly, and the courts are open to the public. Political prisoners are generally brought before traditional court justices; although both traditional and modern courts employ the same procedures, such as the Code of Criminal Procedure and Evidence, the rules of evidence are less strict in the former, the accused need not be represented by a lawyer, and a case may be tried in secret. Traditional judges owe their positions to the ruling party, and the minister of justice has the freedom to assign cases to the judge who, in his opinion, is most likely to favor the government.

Malawi has an unusual form of punishment called forfeiture, under which the government may revoke the property rights of those suspected of economic crimes without recourse to appeal. When the Forfeiture Act is invoked, the individual loses all his or her worldly possessions.

Police brutality remains a human rights issue in the country, as do arbitrary arrests and detentions. Overcrowding in the nation's prisons is so severe that many prisoners die from suffocation.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Malawi held its first democratic multiparty elections since independence in 1994, following 30 years of authoritarian, one-party rule. President Bakili Muluzi and his UDF party came into power on a platform that promised to restore the rule of law and uphold human rights. Under the Muluzi government, the human rights situation in Malawi has improved significantly, although certain problems, such as police misconduct, remain. Bingu wa Mutharika, elected president in 2004, has attempted to clean up corruption and police abuse.

The constitution created three institutions to deal with human rights issues: a Human Rights Commission, an ombudsman, and a National Compensation Tribunal (NCT). The Human Rights Commission was created to protect and investigate violations of rights accorded by the constitution. The ombudsman is mandated to investigate and take legal action against government officials responsible for human rights violations and other abuses. To address past abuses of human rights, the constitution created the NCT to adjudicate claims of criminal and civil liability against the former government and provide financial reparation. Very few of its claims have been settled, however, due to lack of funds; as of February 1999 the NCT had registered more than 8,700 claims, of which approximately 25 percent had been resolved. Similarly, the Human Rights Commission only just began to function at full capacity with the appointment of all commissioners and staff in late 1999; an unduly long wait on the part of the government to pass enabling legislation and a working budget delayed the creation of the commission. Nevertheless, the enabling legislation is regarded as among the best-drafted human rights commission legislation on the African continent. The two commissioners who drafted the enabling legislation have ensured autonomy and strong investigative and remedial powers. It is now up to the commissioners to use this legislative license to ensure greater respect for human rights in Malawi. The commission has taken a proactive role in political life, warning, for example, in November 2003 that political violence was on the rise as party and regional divisions deepened ahead of the 2004 elections.

FOREIGN POLICY

In foreign relations Malawi is one of the most conservative of the most recently independent nations of Africa. From its independence in 1964 to 1994, Malawi's foreign affairs were characterized as "reactionary" under Banda. Malawi outraged the Organization of African Unity with its refusal to condemn apartheid in South Africa and was isolated by most of the African continent. Malawi did not believe that isolation, embargo, or violence would succeed in promoting racial equality in South Africa and as such always maintained full diplomatic relations with Pretoria. In 1971 President Banda paid an official visit to South Africa, the first head of state of a black African nation to do so.

During the 1980s Malawi took steps to improve relations with neighboring states. The change in policy was in part a result of pressure by Zambia and Tanzania; it was also prompted by the need to find alternate trade routes because the civil war in Mozambique had closed traditional routes to the Indian Ocean. Malawi did not support the independence struggle in Mozambique and did not develop close ties with the newly independent government.

In 1980 Malawi joined the Southern African Development Coordination Conference. Five years later the nation reestablished ties with Tanzania, despite suspicions that Tanzania supported opponents of the Banda regime. In the 1990s, especially following the adoption of the new democratic constitution in 1994, Malawi became increasingly integrated into southern Africa.

There is an ongoing dispute with Tanzania over the boundary in Lake Malawi that has remained dormant for many years.

DEFENSE

The defense structure is headed by the president. The armed forces are partially commanded by British officers, and military training assistance and equipment are received from the United Kingdom. Military manpower is provided by voluntary enlistment for a period of four years. The total strength of the armed forces is 6,800.

The Malawian armed forces, known as the Malawian Rifles, have no offensive capability. If faced with an invasion by any of the forces of surrounding states or well-equipped guerrilla forces, the army would not be able to defend more than a few key points or survive for more than a few days. However, there is no probable threat against Malawi from its neighbors. In 2004 military spending amounted to \$11.1 million, or 0.7 percent of gross domestic product (GDP).

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 6,800
 Military Manpower Availability: 2,320,190
 Military Expenditures \$million: 11.1
 as % of GDP: 0.7
 as % of central government expenditures: —
 Arms Imports \$million: —
 Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

Malawi is one of the lowest-income, least-developed countries in the world. It has a free-market economy in which the dominant sector is private.

Malawi's economy is predominantly agricultural. That sector accounts for 55 percent of GDP and 95 percent of export revenues. Subsistence farming dominates the north, and large estates and cash-crop agriculture are dominant in the south. Tobacco, tea, and sugar are the principal cash crops; tobacco alone makes up 50 percent of exports. Malawi's dependence on agriculture makes it extremely vulnerable to changes in world demand and price fluctuations. Declines in cash-crop prices during the early 1980s contributed significantly to the country's increasing external debt.

Malawi relies heavily on foreign investment and aid, primarily from the World Bank, the European Economic Community, the United Kingdom, and South Africa. Debt service has become an increasing problem; in 2000 external debt service was the equivalent of 25 percent of Malawi's budget.

The Malawian unit of currency is the kwacha, divided into 100 tambala.

The banking sector consists of a central bank, the Reserve Bank of Malawi, and two commercial banks, the Post Office Savings Bank and the Investment and Development Bank of Malawi.

In 2002 the World Bank approved a \$50 million drought-recovery package.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 7.41
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 600
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 1.3
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: –0.8
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 54.8
 Industry: 19.2
 Services: 26.0
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 80
 Government Consumption: 25
 Gross Domestic Investment: 10.7
 Foreign Trade \$million: Exports: 503.4
 Imports: 521.1

% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: —
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: —

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
282.1	365.6	448.6	514.8	564.0

Finance

National Currency: Malawian Kwacha (MWK)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = MWK 110.534
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 12.74
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 40
 Total External Debt \$billion: 3.129
 Debt Service Ratio %: 23.09
 Balance of Payments \$million: –55.5
 International Reserves SDRs \$million: 161.98
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
 12.0

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 497.9
 per capita \$: 45.40
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 23

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: 1 April–31 March
 Revenues \$million: 536
 Expenditures \$million: 635.6
 Budget Deficit \$million: 99.6
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 54.8
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 4.6
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 0.06
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 1.23
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 83.9
 Total Farmland % of land area: 24.5
 Livestock: Cattle 000: 750
 Chickens million: 15.2
 Pigs 000: 456.3
 Sheep 000: 115
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 5.6
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 41.9

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 149.4
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 1.4

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 75
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 305
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 26
 Net Energy Imports % of use: —
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: 308
 Production kW-hr million: 770
 Consumption kW-hr million: 720
 Coal Reserves tons million: 2.2
 Production tons 000: —
 Consumption tons 000: 20
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
 Production cubic feet billion: —
 Consumption cubic feet billion: —
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
 Production barrels 000 per day: —
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 6
 Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$million: 521.1
 Exports \$million: 503.4
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): –3.0
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 0.9
 Balance of Trade \$million: –55.5

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
South Africa %	48.8	22.6
Zambia %	13.4	—
India %	4.4	—
United States %	—	13.0
Germany %	—	10.9
Egypt %	—	5.6
Portugal %	—	4.7
Japan %	—	4.3
Netherlands %	—	4.0
Poland %	—	4.0
Russia %	—	4.0

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 28,400
 Paved %: 18.5
 Automobiles: 22,500
 Trucks and Buses: 57,600
 Railroad: Track Length km: 797
 Passenger-km million: 19
 Freight-km million: 62
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: —
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: —
 Airports: 42
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 140
 Length of Waterways km: 700

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 421
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 43
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 48

Communications

Telephones 000: 85
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.06
 Cellular Telephones 000: 135.1
 Personal Computers 000: 15.8
 Internet Hosts per million people: 1.5
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 3

ENVIRONMENT

Malawi's fertile, tropical soil makes it a very productive agricultural region when the country receives good rainfall. Although average rainfall levels are considerably better than in neighboring semiarid Zimbabwe, the rainfall pattern was erratic through the end of the 20th century, with several years of serious drought since 1990. To compound the problem, the country's high population density exerts mounting pressure on the land, with farming in marginal areas and land degradation increasingly becoming problems.

Lake Malawi, covering 20 percent of the country's surface area, is a vital resource. Freshwater fish from the lake provide 70 percent of the animal protein consumed by the population. However, there are signs that the lake is being overfished, as fish production per head has fallen since the mid-1980s. The Department of Fisheries is engaged in several projects to increase fish production in order to sustain the industry, which in 1994 employed 243,000 people.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 27.2
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: –71
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 16
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 0.07

LIVING CONDITIONS

The UN 2004 Human Development Report ranked Malawi 165th out of 177 countries in terms of life expectancy, education, and standard of living. Life expectancy in 2005 was less than 37 years. The country had an adult literacy rate of only 63 percent in 2003, with less than half the female population literate. In terms of economic well being, Malawi is one of the poorest countries in the world. In 2003 per capita GDP was a mere \$600.

These impoverished conditions are manifested in all aspects of life in Malawi. The 1998 census noted that two-thirds of the country still lived in mud huts with thatched roofs; only 16 percent of the population were urban dwellers as of 2003. Rural villages, which support most of the population, rarely have basic services such as sanitation, water, electricity, or health-care facilities.

Generally, villages are compactly built to form protection from predatory animals or rival ethnic groups. Modern bungalows made of brick or cement with corrugated metal roofs are sometimes found in the countryside alongside the more primitive huts. Housing is so inadequate in urban areas such as Lilongwe that most of the population lives in shantytowns far removed from work. Walking is the major form of transportation; in both cities and rural areas people are forced to walk long distances daily, to get to work in the cities and to gather fuel and water in the countryside.

Even in the cities people have little access to proper sanitation and safe drinking water.

HEALTH

The Ministry of Health administers the country's health-care system. Although it is free, and a majority of people have access to some form of care, there is a distinct shortage of physicians in the country, and medical facilities are outdated. As of 1999, there were fewer than 0.01 physicians and 1.3 hospital beds per 1,000 people. In 2002, 67 percent of the population had access to safe drinking water, only 46 percent to adequate sanitation. Few people have plumbing in their homes. Between 1995 and 2002 only 56 percent of births were attended by skilled health-care providers. Frequent droughts as well as tribal taboos lead to serious undernourishment and malnutrition; as of 2001, one-third of the population was undernourished, and one-quarter of children under five were underweight.

These conditions have led to numerous health risks. The infant mortality rate in 2004 was 103 deaths per 1,000 live births. Diseases such as malaria, bilharzia, intestinal worm infections, tuberculosis, measles, and HIV/AIDS contributed to a death rate of over 23 per 1,000 people in 2004. HIV/AIDS is of particular concern in Malawi, where the prevalence in 2003 was 14.2 percent, among the highest rates in Africa. That same year there were 84,000 deaths from HIV/AIDS and an estimated 900,000 people living with the disease. There were half a million AIDS orphans in Malawi in 2003. Malawi has taken an aggressive stand on the AIDS pandemic; in 2004 the government announced it would supply antiviral drugs to AIDS sufferers free of charge.

As of 2002 the government was spending 4.1 percent of GDP on health, and immunization rates among one-year-old children were improving. The immuniza-

tion rate for tuberculosis in 2003 was 91 percent, for DPT 84 percent, for polio 85 percent, and for measles 77 percent.

Health

Number of Physicians:	137
Number of Dentists:	4
Number of Nurses:	3,094
Number of Pharmacists:	39
Physician Density per 100,000 people:	1.1
Hospital Beds per 1,000:	1.3
Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births:	103.32
Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births:	1,800
Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP:	9.8
Health Expenditures per capita \$:	14
HIV Infected % of adults:	14.2
Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:	
DPT:	84
Measles:	77
Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %:	46
Access to Improved Water Source %:	67

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Maize flour is a staple in Malawi. The Chewa make a thick porridge from it called *nsima*. This is eaten at every meal and is usually accompanied by another dish, *ndiwo*, that supplies protein from eggs, poultry, meat, or insects and vitamins from leafy vegetables or beans. Generally, there are two main meals, at lunch and dinner; however, in many instances mothers are too busy with chores to prepare a main course for any meal but dinner. Food is commonly cooked over a wood fire and eaten with the hands.

Children often make do with snacks such as roasted cassava, roasted maize, sweet potatoes, sugarcane, wild fruits, or wild insects such as roasted grasshoppers and flying termites.

Frequent droughts have caused food shortages, leading to widespread undernourishment and malnutrition in the population. One-third of the general population was considered undernourished as of 2001. Food shortages are compounded by various dietary taboos among ethnic groups. For example, many men do not eat one of the major vegetable types for fear of losing their virility; pregnant women are forbidden eggs, lest they have a bald-headed baby.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population:	32.8
Daily Available Calories per capita kcal:	2,160
Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg:	150.8
Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg:	58.9

STATUS OF WOMEN

Under Malawi's new constitution women enjoy equal rights with men, but nonlegal impediments based on custom and tradition prevail.

As mothers, women have enjoyed a high degree of access to traditional health services and to extension programs geared toward improving homemaking abilities. Such programs, while beneficial, have failed to recognize the importance of women as agricultural producers in the rural sector—roughly 70 percent of all smallholder farms and over 50 percent of subsistence farms are headed by women—and the potential role women can have in the modern sector. Although men still have a comparative advantage in terms of educational opportunities, the government has initiated sufficiently broad-scale programs to begin to rectify existing discrimination. One-third of the positions in the public education system are reserved for women. Within Malawi's traditional and primarily matrilineal tribal leadership structures, there are several small ethnic groups wherein women possess fewer rights and privileges and where female circumcision is occasionally practiced.

The Malawi Human Rights Commission issued a report in 2003 charging that a sex-slave trade flourishes in remote areas of the north, with young girls sold by their parents to pay off debts. On the other hand, there has been increased attention to domestic violence and a greater effort to improve the rights of widows. Female employees recently won the right to maternity leave.

Women

Women-headed Households %: 25.7
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 14
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 0.86
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 12.5

WORK

The workforce in Malawi in 2001 was 4.5 million strong. Of these workers, 90 percent were employed in agriculture, most at the subsistence level, growing a variety of crops such as the staple maize, beans, sorghum, peanuts, rice, pumpkins, cassava, and tobacco, which is the major cash crop. Industries in Malawi include tobacco, tea, sugar, sawmill products, cement, and consumer goods.

Unions are legal and must register with the Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training; registration is routinely granted. In 2003, 26 unions were registered, all of which are independent of the government, parties, and other political forces. The right to bargain collectively and strike is assured, although strikes can only occur after arbitration. In 2003 the urban minimum wage amounted to approximately \$0.52 per day, while in all other areas it was approximately

\$0.37 per day, neither of which allows a family a decent standard of living. Wage earners tended to supplement their incomes through farming activities. By law the maximum workweek is 48 hours and the minimum work age 14, but in 2000 an estimated 27 percent of children ages five to 14 were working. Worker safety is an issue, with few employers observing health and safety standards on the job.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 4,500,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 48.7
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 90
 Other: 10
 Unemployment %: —

EDUCATION

In 2003 the adult literacy rate stood at a low 62.7 percent; about three-quarters of the male population were literate, while just less than half of females were. In 2002 the primary school enrollment rate was 81 percent, over half of whom finished fifth grade; however, only 29 percent of eligible students were enrolled in secondary schools. High rates of malnutrition and the long distances walked to schools have resulted in high failure and dropout rates. Malawi's poor educational standards make people ill suited for industrial and manufacturing employment, and surveys have found that the little-educated rural poor are not well equipped to grow crops such as tobacco, which needs intensive tending.

When the government of Bakili Muluzi abolished fees for primary schools in September 1994, primary school enrollment shot up from 1.9 million to 2.9 million. Although providing education for a greater percentage of the population was one of the most salient achievements of the Muluzi government, the swelling numbers of students caused quality indicators to deteriorate, with classroom size and ratios of students to teachers ballooning—the pupil-teacher ratio in primary schools in 2002 was 62 to 1. Enrollment in secondary and higher education also continued to grow through the 1990s. Public expenditures on education in 2002 were 6 percent of GDP.

The University of Malawi, founded in 1965, has campuses at Zomba, Lilongwe, and Blantyre, and a new medical school was recently established in Blantyre. Females are generally underrepresented at all levels of education.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 62.7
 Male %: 76.1
 Female %: 49.8
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: —

First Level: Primary schools: 3,425
Teachers: 45,780
Students: 2,846,589
Student-Teacher Ratio: 62.2
Net Enrollment Ratio: 81.0
Second Level: Secondary Schools: 94
Teachers: 11,360
Students: 517,690
Student-Teacher Ratio: 45.6
Net Enrollment Ratio: 28.5
Third Level: Institutions: 4
Teachers: —
Students: —
Gross Enrollment Ratio: —
Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 6.0

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Most research in the country is geared toward agriculture. In 2001 there were seven agencies employing 146 full-time researchers. Research stations for tea, tobacco, and other aspects of agriculture conduct their activities under the auspices of the Ministry of Agriculture, while the Ministry of Forestry and Natural Resources maintains forestry and fishery research units. The Department of Science and Technology, formed in 2004, is intended to improve the capacity of the national systems for science and technology, to intensify the promotion and transfer of science and technologies to key livelihood systems, and to increase investment in research and development.

The country also has a few institutions of higher education that pursue research, including the University of Malawi's Bunda College of Agriculture and Kamuzu College of Nursing, both in Lilongwe; Malawi Polytechnic and the College of Medicine, in Blantyre; and Chancellor College, in Zomba, which has a faculty of science. In 1987–97 science and engineering students accounted for 27 percent of college and university enrollments.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
High-Tech Exports \$million: 0.66
Patent Applications by Residents: 2

MEDIA

Although Malawi enacted a new constitution and bill of rights in 1994, the new democracy has failed to ensure full press freedom. A 30-year legacy of self-censorship among journalists remains strong, and many preexisting laws remain in conflict with the new democratic provisions. Many hoped that a communications bill passed in 1998 would help turn the situation around. In 2004 the international media watchdog group Reporters without

Borders ranked Malawi 101st out of 167 nations in its worldwide press freedom index.

There are a number of private newspapers in Malawi, including some owned by political parties or openly affiliated with them. A recent ban on state advertising in opposition papers proved a major economic setback for independent newspapers, as the government is the largest advertiser. The ban occurred after the independents *The Daily Times* and *Malawi News* published critical coverage of government mismanagement and corruption. The government did not establish its own paper, the *Weekly News*, until 1996. It mainly uses copy from the official Malawi News Agency. The *Nation* is another newer daily that also has an online presence.

Radio has a much larger audience than print media in Malawi. There are nine AM and five FM channels, including the state-run MBC-II; the “nominally independent” FM 101; one women’s channel; and one religious channel. There are no local independent broadcasters. There is only one television station in the country, the state-controlled Télévision Malawi (TVM), introduced in 1999. Satellite TV, carrying such stations as CNN, BBC, and South Africa’s, Mnet, is available to those who can afford sets, decoders, and satellite dishes. Malawi was the last country in Africa to gain full Internet connectivity. MalawiNet, a joint venture between Malawi’s PTO and a U.S. company, has been the only full-service Internet provider; as of 2003 there were 18 Internet hosts and 36,000 Internet users.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 5
Total Circulation 000: 26
Circulation per 1,000: 2.4
Books Published: 120
Periodicals: —
Radio Receivers 000: —
per 1,000: —
Television sets 000: 27
per 1,000: 3

CULTURE

Traditional Malawian culture includes song, dance, and folk crafts. Most tribes have their own tunes and dances. The most notable traditional dance in Malawi is the Chewa tribe’s *gule wa mkulu*, which deals with beliefs in spirits and is also part of the activities of secret tribal societies. Other well-known dances are *ingoma* for men and *chimtali* and *visekese* for women. Songs are another traditional holdover and are sung at initiation rites, other rituals, marriage ceremonies, and post-harvest celebrations. Among the numerous song types are puberty, praise, funeral, work, beer drinking, coronation, and chief songs. Women often sing as they do their daily chores. Musical

instruments accompanying both song and dance include drums such as the hand-held *ulimba*, made from gourd, and large ceremonial drums carved from tree trunks. The *mambilira* is similar to the xylophone. Rattles and shakers called *maseche* are often tied to the legs and arms of dancers.

Malawian folk artists work in wood, stone, and ivory carving as well as in batiks. Some well-known modern artists include Cuthy Mede, Kay Chirombo, Willie Nampeya, and Louis Dimpwa.

The oral storytelling tradition in the country is also rich and has fed the literary scene. Notable Malawian poets include Jack Mapanje, Frank Chipasula, and Steve Chimombo, who wrote the play *The Rainmaker*. Major novelists include Legson Kayira, Paul Zeleza, Sam Mpasu, Chipasula, Rubadiri, and Felix Munthali.

There are two museums in the country: the Museum of Malawi, in Blantyre and a smaller one in Mangochi. Various cultural activities are organized by the Ministry of Youth and Culture and the University of Malawi Traveling Theatre as well as by similar groups in Blantyre.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number:	1
Volumes:	305,000
Registered borrowers:	54,965
Museums Number:	2
Annual Attendance:	80,000
Cinema Gross Receipts:	—
Number of Cinemas:	—
Seating Capacity:	—
Annual Attendance:	—

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

The folklore of the Chewa, Malawi's dominant ethnic group, predates the arrival of Europeans. Their songs and stories deal with rural themes about farming and accompanying occurrences, including drought, fire, and rainmaking. The rainmaker Mbona is a major figure in Chewa myth. Ethnographers have noted the similarity of Mbona to Jesus Christ in that he was born to a virgin mother and was ultimately killed by his own people for the miracles he performed—in Mbona's case, bringing rain to a parched land.

The people of Malawi were historically animists, and as such there is an abundance of local gods among the ethnic groups. The Tumbuka, for example, have as their supreme being Chiuta, who doubles as their rain god.

Proverbs are a major aspect of Malawian folklore, as they are throughout much of Africa. Among the more popular proverbs are, *Kabanga mwala*, or "The tortoise looks like a stone," meaning that things are not always what they appear to be; *Chibanga mwala tsosenga nyala*, or "A rolling stone gathers no moss"; and *Mutu imodzi*

tsosenga denga, or "One head cannot support a roof," meaning two heads are better than one.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Urban entertainment includes clubs, bars, and cinemas. The nation has only one television channel, but broadcasts from abroad fill the airwaves and provide entertainment for those with televisions and electricity.

In rural areas, more traditional forms of entertainment, including music and dance, serve as free-time activities. Listening to the radio, especially musical programs with both traditional African and Western pop music, is popular throughout the country.

The most common recreational game in Malawi is *bao*, also spelled *bawo*. It is one variant of the classic African pit-and-pebble game where opponents move pebbles through various holes on a board in an effort to capture their opponent's pebbles. Other variants go by the names *mankala*, *oware*, and *coro*. Young and old alike play this game.

ETIQUETTE

Greetings in Malawi are done with a strong handshake. When a man greets his mother-in-law in this matrilineal country, he keeps his distance. Women, on the other hand, have more cordial relationships with their mothers-in-law.

Respect is shown to elders; it is impolite, for example, for a younger person to look directly in the face of an older person. When introduced to an elder, the younger often bows or even squats down.

Public displays of affection such as hugging and kissing are not acceptable. Numerous taboos hold regarding the relationships between the sexes. Before coming of age or being initiated, boys and girls play together; however, after such initiation ceremonies the sexes are kept separate until marriage.

FAMILY LIFE

The predominant feature of Malawi family life is the matrilineal kinship system, whereby inheritance is passed through the female line. The average age of marriage for girls is 17. While partners make their own marriage choices, these must be approved by maternal uncles. Marriages in villages follow traditional lines, while in urban areas Western-style church weddings and attire are becoming popular. Fathers have no control over their children, as offspring are considered part of the wife's line, and their guidance thus falls to the maternal uncle.

Families tend to be large; the 2004 fertility rate was six children per woman. Large families are traditionally a sign of wealth and serve as insurance for parents against old age. Divorce is common. Polygamy was once common as well, but the practice has declined in recent years.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Clothing and attire is a mixture of traditional and Western styles, especially in the cities. Typical dress for women in urban areas is a skirt and blouse or brightly colored dress. Men wear trousers or shorts and shirts. Businessmen dress in suits.

In rural areas the most important article of clothing for a woman is her *chitenje*. A *chitenje* (plural *zitenje*) is a piece of fabric worn over a regular skirt. This outer wrap-around skirt serves as an apron, a basket, a potholder, and a baby-carrier. *Zitenje* are generally brightly colored and bear designs of everything from abstract patterns to portraits of rock stars.

SPORTS

Soccer is the major sport in the urban areas of Lilongwe, Mzuzu, Zomba, and Blantyre. The national team competes in the southern Africa league and has been a major contender in regional championships. Soccer clubs, such as the Bakili Bullets of the Super League, draw large weekend crowds to Civo Stadium in Lilongwe and Chichiri Stadium in Blantyre. In the countryside children play soccer on makeshift fields.

Another sport growing in popularity is basketball. Malawians also play cricket and rugby, holdovers of the country's colonial past.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1964** Nyasaland becomes a fully independent dominion within the Commonwealth under the name of Malawi, with Hasting Banda as prime minister. Six cabinet members, including Kanyama Chiumi, Henry B. M. Chipembere, and Yatuta Chisiza, are dismissed because of their opposition to Banda's domestic and foreign policies, particularly his pro-Western stance and tardiness in Africanizing the civil service.
- 1965** Banda's opposition takes up arms: Chipembere attacks Fort Johnston but is repelled at Liwonde Ferry. The revolt is crushed, and the dissidents flee into exile.
- 1966** Malawi is declared a republic, with Banda as president. A republican constitution is promulgated.
- 1967** A group of 25 rebels led by Chisiza attack Malawi. Chisiza is killed, and 13 other infiltrators are captured, of whom five are sentenced to death. Jehovah's Witnesses are banned as a subversive organization.
- 1968** Tanzania breaks diplomatic ties with Malawi. Malawians are expelled from Zambia. Banda makes territorial claims on Tanzania and Zambia.
- 1970** Banda is made president for life. Peace Corps volunteers are expelled from Malawi. Prime Minister Johannes Vorster of South Africa visits Malawi.
- 1971** Banda visits South Africa, the first black African head of state to do so. The kwacha is introduced as the national currency.
- 1974** The capital is moved from Zomba to Lilongwe. Banda visits Zambia in an attempt to improve relations.
- 1975** Recruitment of Malawian workers for South African mines is temporarily banned following the crash of a plane carrying 75 Malawians from South Africa.
- 1976** The Goan community, comprising immigrants from Goa, a former Portuguese colony in India, is expelled from Malawi.
- 1979** In National Assembly elections more than one official candidate is allowed to contest the results. Foreign reporters are banned following unfavorable comments about Banda by the foreign press.
- 1983** New elections are held for the National Assembly.
- 1987** Malawi stations troops in Mozambique to protect the strategic rail line to the sea.
- 1988** Malawi and Mozambique sign an agreement on the repatriation of Mozambican refugees in Malawi.
- 1990** Malawi exempts itself from a global ban on ivory trading.
- 1991** Malawi Socialist Party is formed.
- 1992** Some 100,000 people demonstrate against Banda's authoritarian rule. Chakufwa Chihana forms the political party (AFORD). The UDF is formed.
- 1993** In a national referendum 67 percent of Malawi's electorate vote to amend the constitution to adopt a multiparty democracy.
- 1994** The new constitution goes into effect. Malawi's first multiparty elections vote into power the UDF, led by Banda's former protégé Bakili Muluzi. The UDF forms a coalition cabinet with AFORD, and Muluzi becomes president.

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- 1997** Banda dies in South Africa at the age of 99.
1999 Television is introduced in Malawi.
Muluzi is reelected president despite AFORD and MCP opposition.
2000 World Bank agrees to cancel 50 percent of Malawi's debt.
2001 Several officials are arrested for embezzling funds from the Ministry of Education.
2002 Drought in southern Africa destroys large amounts of Malawi's crops.
Rail line between Malawi and the port of Nacal in Mozambique opens.
2003 President Bakili Muluzi gives up attempt to change the constitution to allow him to serve a third term.
2004 Bingu wa Mutharika wins presidential election.
2005 Three ruling party officials are charged with treason.
Mutharika resigns as party head in protest over opposition to his anticorruption campaign.

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Malawi. *Annual Report and Statement of Accounts* (Malawi Reserve Bank); *Malawi Population and Housing Census, 1998*; *Malawi Statistical Yearbook*; *Malawi: Selected Issues and Statistical Appendix* (IMF Staff Country Report), 2002

CONTACT INFORMATION

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- CIA World Factbook: Malawi
<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/mi.html>
- Government of the Republic of Malawi
<http://www.malawi.gov.mw/>
- National Statistical Office of Malawi
<http://www.nso.malawi.net/>
- Reserve Bank of Malawi
<http://www.rbm.malawi.net/>

MALAYSIA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Federation of Malaysia (Persekutuan Malaysia)

ABBREVIATION

MY

CAPITAL

Kuala Lumpur

HEAD OF STATE

Paramount Ruler Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin ibni al-Marhum Tuanku Syed Putra Jamalullail (from 2001)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi (from 2003)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Constitutional monarchy

POPULATION

23,953,136 (2005)

AREA

329,750 sq km (127,316 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Malay

LANGUAGE

Bahasa Melayu

RELIGION

Islam

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Ringgit

NATIONAL FLAG

Fourteen red and white stripes of equal width with a yellow 14-point star and a yellow crescent in a dark blue field in the

upper right-hand quarter. The 14 points of the star and the 14 stripes originally represented the 14 states of the federation, including Singapore. The deep blue field symbolizes unity, and the crescent moon and star are symbols of Islam.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A shield supported by two tigers. At the crest are a 14-point star and a crescent, both yellow. On the red upper third of the shield are superimposed five gold *kris* (swords). The center of the shield has four equal panels of red, black, silver, and yellow. The outer quarters of the lower two-thirds of the shield portray, on the left, three blue feathers on a sky of yellow over blue and white waves and, on the right, a Malacca tree. The lower portion of the shield contains three panels representing Sabah and Sarawak, two of the states of Malaysia, with the national flower, *bungaraya*, or *Hibiscus rosa sinensis*, in the middle. The motto below the shield in black lettering on a yellow banner reads "Unity Is Strength," in romanized script on the left and in Jawi script on the right.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"Negaru Ku" (My Country)

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

Chinese New Year (movable), May 1 (Labor Day), Wesak Day (May 2), August 31 (National Day, Independence Day), Deepavali (movable), Hari Raya Pu Haji (movable), Christmas, various Islamic festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

August 31, 1957

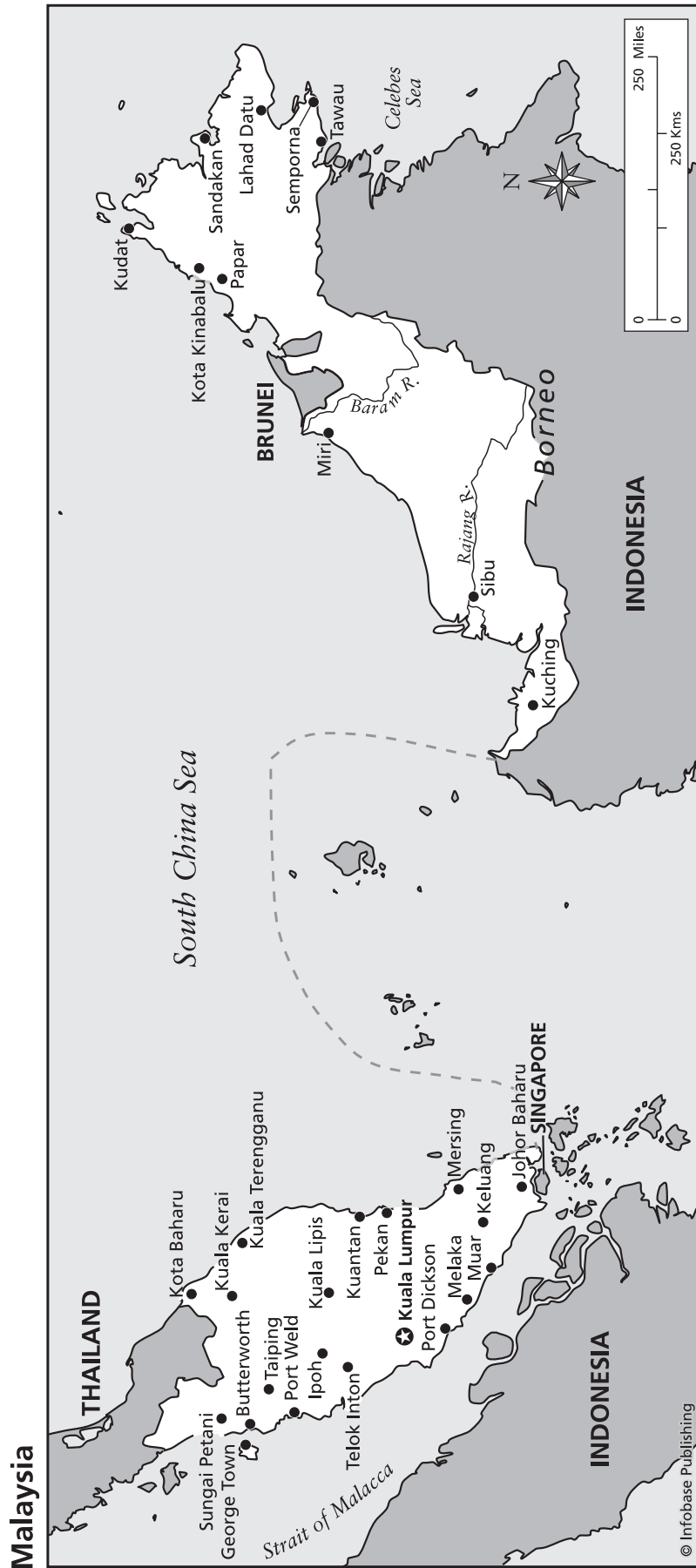
DATE OF CONSTITUTION

August 31, 1957; amended September 16, 1963

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Malaysia consists of two geographical and political segments: West Malaysia occupies the southern third of the Malay Peninsula in Southeast Asia, while East Malaysia, separated by 644 km (400 mi) of the South China Sea, occupies most of the northern quarter of the island of Borneo. West Malaysia consists of 11 states: Johore, Kedah,

Kelantan, Pahang, Perak, Perlis, Selangor, Trengganu, Negri Sembilan, Melaka, and Pulau Pinang. East Malaysia consists of two states: Sabah and Sarawak. There are two federal territories: Kuala Lumpur and Labuan. The total area is 329,750 sq km (127,316 sq mi), encompassing West Malaysia (131,588 sq km; 50,806 sq mi), Sabah (73,711 sq km; 28,460 sq mi), and Sarawak (124,450 sq km; 48,050 sq mi).



West Malaysia features a range of steep, forest-covered mountains running north to south along the center of the peninsula, flanked on the east and west by coastal plains. The western coastal lowland is 16–80 km (10–50 mi) wide, and the eastern coastal lowland, more irregular and less densely populated, is 8–64 km (5–40 mi) wide. Sarawak has a broad coastal plain, frequently swampy, that merges into jungle-covered hills in the interior. Sabah's narrow coastal plain, 16–32 km (10–20 mi) in width, gives way to a complex series of parallel ranges, culminating in Mount Kinabalu, the highest peak in Malaysia at 4,100 m (13,448 ft), and extending to the Sulu Sea.

The Pahang is the principal river in West Malaysia and the longest, at 458 km (285 mi). The other rivers are the Perak, Kelantan, Trengganu, and Endau, which flow into the South China Sea, and the Muar and Muda, which flow into the Strait of Malacca. Both Sarawak and Sabah have extensive river systems.

Geography

Area sq km: 329,750; sq mi 127,316
 World Rank: 64th
 Land Boundaries, km: Brunei 381; Indonesia 1,782; Thailand 506
 Coastline, km: 4,675
 Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Indian Ocean 0
 Highest: Gunung Kinabalu 4,100
 Land Use %
 Arable Land: 5.5
 Permanent Crops: 17.6
 Forest: 58.7
 Other: 18.2

Population of Principal Cities (2000)

Ampang	348,084
Ipoh	574,041
Johor Baharu	630,603
Kajang	207,322
Kelang	631,676
Kola Baharu	252,714
Kota Kinabalu	305,382
Kuala Lumpur	1,297,526
Kuala Terengganu	255,109
Kuantan	289,395
Kuching	423,873
Petaling Jaya	438,084
Sandakan	275,375
Seremban	290,999
Shah Alam	319,612
Subang Jaya	423,338
Tawau	213,903

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Both West and East Malaysia lie in the same latitudes and have almost identical climates. The year is divided into two monsoon periods. The northwesterly monsoons pre-

vail from October to the end of February. The southwest-erly monsoons blow from mid-April to October and are milder and less predictable. The latter monsoon period is also one of sudden squalls and thunderstorms.

The mean temperature in the coastal area is 21.1 to 32.2°C (70 to 90°F), in the mountains 12.8 to 26.7°C (55°F to 80°F). Temperatures rarely rise above 35°C (95°F) or drop below 20°C (68°F). Humidity is high throughout the year.

The annual mean rainfall in West Malaysia is just over 2,540 mm (100 in), with maximum precipitation during the southwesterly monsoon period. In East Malaysia the annual mean rainfall is 4,420 mm (150 in), most of which occurs during the northwesterly monsoon season. There are local variations even within these zones, from a low of 1,620 mm (64 in) in Jelebu, in Negeri Sembilan, to over 5,080 mm (200 in) in the Larut Hills, in Perak. The wettest place in Malaysia is Long Akah, in Sarawak, with an annual rainfall of 6,000 mm (236 in).

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature
 Coastal areas: 70°F to 90°F
 Mountains: 55°F to 80°F
 Average Rainfall
 West Malaysia: 100 in
 East Malaysia: 150 in
 Negeri Sembilan: 64 in
 Larut Hills in Perak: 200 in
 Highest rainfall: Long Akah in Sarawak 236 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

West and East Malaysia have some of the most varied flora in the world. With more than half of peninsular Malaysia and three-fourths of Sarawak and Sabah covered in rain forest, the nation is home to over 2,000 tree species, including camphor, ebony, sandalwood, and teak. One acre of forest may have over 100 species of trees, from hardwoods to semi-hardwoods. Much of the original rainforest has been cleared either by acts of nature or by the work of humans. Over 8,000 species of flowering plants are found just on the peninsula; 800 different orchids and 200 different palms can be found in all of Malaysia. Under the forest canopy are found creepers, shrubs, and epiphytes, or nonparasitic plants that grow on other plants. Sabah and Sarawak also have lowland forests and groves of fig trees as well as flowering species such as violets, buttercups, and valerian at higher elevations.

Peninsular residents of the rain forest include tree shrews, lizards, snakes, crocodiles, wild pigs, the huge Malayan ox, or *seladang*, honey bears, elephants, tigers, monkeys, and civets. Avian life is particularly varied, with over 500 species of breeding birds, and exotic butterflies are found in abundance. Animal life in East Malaysia is

even more varied, with species such as the orangutan, rhinoceros, and proboscis monkey.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005:	23,953,136	
World Rank:	46th	
Density per sq km:	75.4	
% of annual growth (1999-2003):	2.2	
Male %:	50.2	
Female %:	49.8	
Urban %:	61.8	
Age Distribution %:	0-14:	33.0
	15-64:	62.4
	65 and over:	4.6
Population 2025:	33,065,000	
Birth Rate per 1,000:	23.07	
Death Rate per 1,000:	5.06	
Rate of Natural Increase %:	1.8	
Total Fertility Rate:	3.07	
Expectation of Life (years):	Males 69.56	Females 75.11
Marriage Rate per 1,000:	—	
Divorce Rate per 1,000:	—	
Average Size of Households:	4.9	
Induced Abortions:	—	

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

The ethnic makeup of the population is divided into four broad categories. The first consists of numerous native tribal groups in both East and West Malaysia whose members, descended from the earliest inhabitants of their areas, share some physical characteristics and maintain their own cultural identities. These include the Negrito tribes of the Semang, Senoi, and Jakun, in West Malaysia; the Ibans, or Sea Dayaks (the original headhunters of Borneo), Land Dayaks, Melanaus, Kayans, Kenyahs, Kajangs, Muruts, and Kelabits, of Sarawak; and the Kadazans, Muruts, and Bajans, of Sabah. The Ibans form the largest group in Sarawak, the Kadazans the largest in Sabah, both with 32 percent of the respective populations.

The second category encompasses the Malays. The ethnic identity of the Malays is elusive, and the term is applied arbitrarily to any Muslim for whom Malay is the mother tongue. They form 50 percent of the population in West Malaysia but constitute only the third-largest ethnic group in East Malaysia.

The third group is the Chinese, who not only constitute the second-largest ethnic group but also dominate the economy, monopolizing commerce and trade and providing a large portion of the professional and general labor force. The Chinese remain isolated from Malay society and maintain a closely knit structure based on clans and voluntary benevolent associations.

The fourth major ethnic group consists of Indians, a term loosely used to cover Pakistanis and Sri Lankans as well as Indians proper. Among Indians the Tamils are the most numerous, followed by Malayalees, Andhras, and Punjabis. Indians form 10 percent of the population and work mostly on plantations and as merchants, moneylenders, and white-collar workers.

Ethnic aliens, such as Indonesians and Thais, are also strongly represented in the population. British and Australians are the most numerous among Westerners.

LANGUAGES

Bahasa Melayu is the official language of the country. Bahasa Melayu may be written in Jawi or Rumi (roman) script. It has an extensive vocabulary of loanwords from Sanskrit, Arabic, and English. Five different styles or modes of speech are used: standard, trade (or bazaar), court, traditional literary, and modern literary. The Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka (State Office for Language and Books) was established in 1959 to develop and enrich the language.

The Chinese speak nine distinct, mutually unintelligible languages: Hakka, Foochow, Cantonese, Hokkien, Tiechiu, Hailam, Henghua, Luichow, and Kwangsi. The Indians speak one of seven languages.

Despite government efforts, English has remained the language of the educated elite and is almost exclusively used in the courts and commerce. English is a compulsory second language in all schools, beginning with the primary grades.

RELIGIONS

Islam is the official religion of Malaysia, and Muslims form 60 percent of the population of the nation as a whole. The interlocking relationship of mosque and state is strengthened by a number of constitutional provisions, especially those that designate the *yand di pertuan agong* (head of state) as the religious head. Sabah and Sarawak are exempt from many of the strictly religious provisions of the constitution, under which only Muslims are considered Malays. Instruction in Islam is provided in all government-assisted schools. Muslims have special obligations as well as special rights under law; they have a separate system of courts and pay special taxes. Each state has a religious affairs department. The National Council of Islamic Affairs coordinates the activities of these religious departments and also administers the National Mosque.

Most of the Chinese follow Confucianism, Buddhism, or Taoism, while most of the Indians are Hindus. The high correlation between race and religion has been a potentially divisive factor in national life. The number

of Christians is estimated at almost 1,500,000. The indigenous tribes of Sarawak and Sabah are mostly animist, but substantial numbers have been converted to Christianity.

Religious Affiliations	
Muslim	14,375,000
Christian	1,500,000
Other	8,075,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The original inhabitants of the Malay Peninsula were aboriginal Malays (Orang Asli), who came from southwestern China about 10,000 years ago. The peninsula came under the rule of many different empires over the years, including the Cambodian-based Funan, the Sumatran-based Srivijaya, and the Java-based Majapahit empires. The Chinese and Islamic faiths both arrived in the early 15th century.

West Malaysia was under Portuguese rule from around 1511 to 1641, Dutch rule from 1641 to 1795, and British rule from 1795. Sabah became a British territory in 1881, Sarawak in 1888. British colonial rule was relatively brief, largely indirect, and produced less social cleavage than previous colonial regimes.

Malaysia was established as an independent nation within the Commonwealth on September 16, 1963. It was created through the merger of the 11-state Federation of Malaya, which had achieved independence in August 1957; the internally self-governing state of Singapore; and the former British Crown colonies of Sarawak and Sabah. Singapore, because of its largely Chinese population, was seen as a threat to Malay dominance in the country; it left the federation in August 1965.

Tunku Abdul Rahman, as head of the United Malays National Organization (UMNO), served as prime minister from independence until 1970, when serious rioting, resulting from Malay-Chinese tensions over electoral returns, led to his resignation. Tun Abdul Razak assumed the prime ministership and broadened the UMNO-dominated government coalition to establish the Barisan National Front (BNF), which absorbed most former opposition parties. Abdul Razak died in office in 1976 and was succeeded by Deputy Prime Minister Tun Hussein Onn, who also assumed leadership of the BNF. (*Tun* is a nonroyal Malaysian title loosely equivalent to the British *sir*.) In early federal and state elections in July 1978 the BNF firmly established control of the House of Representatives.

Hussein chose not to run for reelection in 1981, and he was succeeded as UMNO president by Tun Dr. Mahathir bin Mohamad. Mahathir was designated prime minister on July 16 and called for an early election on April 22–26. In both that election and the succeeding

election, held August 2–3, 1986, the BNF won impressive victories.

However, issues that had been raised during the 1986 electoral campaign resurfaced in early 1987 and provoked a major crisis in the prime minister's party. Deputy Prime Minister Musa bin Hital accused Mahathir of tolerating corruption, mismanagement, and overspending; Hital supported trade and industry minister Razaleigh Hamzah's candidacy for the party presidency. Although Mahathir managed to defeat Razaleigh by a narrow margin and Encik Abdul Ghaffar by an even narrower one, the party split into two factions. Soon after, Mahathir announced Razaleigh's resignation and the dismissal of several other ministers who had supported him.

Late in the year racial tensions between Chinese and Malays arose over sensitive political issues. In order to prevent riots, the government ordered the detention of more than 100 prominent members of both the BNF and opposition parties. Additionally, the publishing licenses of three major newspapers were revoked. New legislation that took effect in December gave the minister of information the power to monitor television and radio broadcasts as well as to revoke the license of any private broadcasting company not adhering to "Malaysian values." By late January 1989 nearly all detainees had been released, but Lim Kit Siang and his son, both prominent members of the opposition Democratic Action Party (DAP), remained in detention.

In June 1987 dissension within the UMNO led to a suit claiming that since some delegations participating in the UMNO party elections of April 1987 had not been officially registered, the elections should be declared null and void. In February 1988 the High Court of Peninsular Malaysia ruled that there had, in fact, been no legitimate election. Nevertheless, Mahathir claimed that the ruling did not affect the legal status of the government or of the head of state. Former prime ministers Tunku Abdul Rahman and Hussein Onn attempted to effectively assume control of the UMNO by forming a new party, UMNO Malaysia. They were prevented from doing so by Mahathir, who, in his role as minister of home affairs, controlled the office of Registrar of Societies. Instead, Mahathir himself formed a new party, UMNO Baru, and transferred the assets of UMNO to his new party. At the same time he excluded Razaleigh and Hussein Onn from UMNO Baru membership.

Additionally, already existing tension between the executive and the judiciary was exacerbated by new constitutional amendments that restricted the judiciary's power to interpret laws. When Tun Mohammed Salleh, the lord president of the Supreme Court, wrote to the head of state to protest the government's attempts to limit the independence of the judiciary, he was suspended from office. A tribunal set up to investigate the matter rejected Salleh's claims, and he was dismissed from office in August. In November, Tun Abdul Hamid Omar, who had

chaired the tribunal, was confirmed as president of the Supreme Court.

Mahathir's leadership was again contested in two separate by-elections, held in Johore Bahru and Parit Raja. Razaleigh, Musa, and 113 members of parliament left the National Front coalition to form UMNO '46 (after the year UMNO was founded). In a conciliatory move, Mahathir invited his opponents to join UMNO Baru. In December these opponents, led by Musa, drew up the Johore Declaration, stating their terms for joining UMNO Baru, among them the automatic admission of former UMNO members to the new party. UMNO Baru accepted the terms while declaring that they were valid only for the state of Johore. By January 1989 Musa had declared his membership in UMNO Baru.

Mahathir won reelection to a third term in 1990. His ruling party captured 127 seats, enough to maintain the majority needed to pass constitutional amendments; the election was the toughest ever faced by the UMNO. Mahathir was challenged for the first time by his fellow ethnic Malay Razaleigh, who had founded his own party, Spirit of '46 (also named after the year in which UMNO was founded), when he left the UMNO in 1987. His party allied itself with ethnic Chinese and Muslim parties to form a powerful opposition coalition that campaigned on a platform of reforms, which included an end to detention without trial and more aggressive probes of alleged government corruption. The opposition also criticized the government program of privatization. The ruling coalition campaigned on the strength of an economy that had been increasing at a rate of 9 percent after inflation.

Prime Minister Mahathir managed to hold on to power throughout the 1990s, despite these and other challenges. His party, the UMNO, continued to win with significant margins at the polls through exploitation of the racial divides in Malaysian society. In 1993 Finance Minister Anwar bin Ibrahim emerged as Mahathir's likely successor and was named deputy prime minister. Differences between the two surfaced by 1997 during the Asian financial crisis. Mahathir, an economic nationalist, attributed the crisis to foreign currency traders and speculators, accusing them of deliberately devaluing the Malaysian currency, the ringgit, and depressing domestic stocks. Anwar, on the other hand, was a globalist who proposed a series of austerity and financial reform measures; he also advocated a relaxation of Malaysia's notorious racial quotas favoring Muslim Malaysians. The conflict came to a head in 1998, when Mahathir scrapped Anwar's open market and tight monetary policies in favor of currency controls. Anwar was dismissed from his post and charged with the crimes of sodomy and corruption, convicted, and sentenced to six years in prison. In 2000 he was sentenced to an additional nine years. International observers decried his conviction as politically motivated. Despite the contro-

versy, the UMNO-encompassing BNF won the 1999 elections, and Mahathir was reelected prime minister.

Despite his reelection, Mahathir faced renewed criticism from his opponents. In 2001 supporters of Anwar bin Ibrahim were sentenced to prison without trial, bringing out demonstrators against the country's repressive Internal Security Act. A tough new law against illegal foreign workers took effect in 2002, forcing many Indonesians and Filipinos to leave the nation. This strained relations particularly with Indonesia, to which as many as 400,000 returned home. In October 2003 Prime Minister Mahathir finally stepped down and was succeeded by Abdullah Badawi, who had served as his deputy prime minister since 1999.

Mahathir was the longest-serving government leader in Asia, in office from 1981 to 2003. Badawi's BNF coalition won 64 percent of the vote and 90 percent of the seats in parliament in the 2004 elections. The opposition suffered significant losses at the national and state levels.

In 2004 Anwar Ibrahim's conviction on sodomy charges was overturned, and he was released, his corruption sentence having already been reduced. As a result of the Asian tsunami disaster of December 2004, scores of Malaysians were killed, and the deportations of foreign workers, many of them from Indonesia, which was hit hardest by the tsunami, were put on hold.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

Prime Minister

1957–70	Tunku Abdul Rahman
1970–76	Abdul Razak
1976–81	Hussein Onn
1981–2003	Mahathir bin Mohamad
2003–	Abdullah Ahmad Badawi

CONSTITUTION

The government of Malaysia is based on the constitution of 1957, as amended to accommodate the special interests of Sabah and Sarawak, which joined the federation in 1963. The constitution established a federal system of government under a constitutional monarchy. The head of state is the paramount ruler, the *yang di pertuan agong*, who is chosen by and from among the Conference of Rulers, the *Majlis Raja Raja*, for a period of five years. He performs the duties of a constitutional monarch and is also the supreme head of Islam in Pinang, Melaka, and his own state. He mostly acts on the advice of the prime minister and has limited veto power, but he may refuse to dissolve parliament even against the wishes of the prime minister.

Executive power is vested in the prime minister (the head of government) and the cabinet, who are responsible

to the federal parliament. The administration is strongly centralized.

The constitution also grants to Malays as *bumiputras* (sons of the soil) a special, favored position, with quotas in education and public service (and reservations of land) out of proportion to their actual numbers. Another feature of the constitution is the right of parliament (and when parliament is not in session, of the paramount ruler) to declare a state of emergency, permitting the federal government to deal with national crises with absolute powers.

The Conference of Rulers, the *Majlis Raja Raja*, consists of nine hereditary rulers of the Malay states and governors of the states of Malacca, Penang, Sabah, and Sarawak. The primary duty of the inner conference of hereditary rulers is to elect or remove the *yang di pertuan agong* and to decide matters concerning the preservation of Malay and Muslim privileges and their own status.

The cabinet (*Juma'ah Mentri*) is a council of ministers appointed by the *yang di pertuan agong* to advise him in the administration. It is headed by the prime minister, who must always command the confidence of the majority of the House of Representatives. The powers and privileges of the prime minister and cabinet conform to the British model. A number of assistant ministers and parliamentary secretaries are appointed from among members of parliament. In 1989 there were 24 ministers in the cabinet, including the prime minister.

In 1983 the Mahathir administration pushed through the federal parliament a constitutional amendment that restricted the paramount ruler's power to veto money bills. In other cases the veto could not be invoked after the second reading and a month's delay.

The constitution also provides for certain autonomous bodies under cabinet control: the National Land Council, the National Finance Council, the Election Commission, and the National Council for Local Government. Suffrage is universal over age 21.

PARLIAMENT

The federal parliament is a bicameral body consisting of the Senate and the House of Representatives. The Senate (*Dewan Negara*) is made up of 26 elected members (two from each state) and 43 members appointed by the *yang di pertuan agong*. The elected members are elected by state legislatures; the appointed senators have achieved distinction in public service or the professions or are representatives of minorities. The Senate is never dissolved, new elections being held by the appropriate state legislative assembly as often as there are vacancies. A senator's term of office is six years.

The House of Representatives (*Dewan Rakyat*) has 219 members. The term of the House is five years, subject to dissolution. Voting is weighted in favor of Malay

rural areas, with Chinese urban constituencies having three to four times as many voters as their rural counterparts. National elections are held every five years on the basis of universal adult suffrage over 21. The Election Commission reviews the delimitation of constituencies, conducts elections, and keeps electoral rolls.

Parliament must be summoned at least once every six months. If a parliament is dissolved, a general election must be held within 60 days, and the newly elected parliament must meet within 90 days.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Malaysia is a multiparty state whose parties reflect the diversity of its population and the breadth of the political spectrum. However, politics are dominated by the *Barisan Nasional Front* (a confederation of 14 political parties dominated by the UMNO), which holds, as of the 2004 election, 198 of the 219 seats. Major opposition parties are the *Parti Islam SeMalaysia* (PAS), which took only seven seats in the 2004 election, and the DAP, a social democratic party with 12 seats.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The administration of the states (11 in West Malaysia and two in East Malaysia) is carried out by rulers or governors acting on the advice of state executive councils. Each state has its own constitution, flag, anthem, and unicameral legislative assembly, which shares legislative powers with the federal parliament.

Every state has an executive council or cabinet (known in Sarawak as the Supreme Council) headed by a chief minister (in Melaka, Pinang, Sabah, and Sarawak) or a *mentri besar* (in other states). The cabinet is collectively responsible to the state legislature. Cabinet advice is binding for the rulers and governors, but the nine rulers have a wider field of discretionary powers than the governors.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The judiciary is an entirely federal service, while the Muslim religious courts are under the states' jurisdictions. The constitution provides for an independent judiciary, consisting of a federal court with original jurisdiction in constitutional cases and appellate and original jurisdiction in civil and criminal cases; there also are two high courts, one for West Malaysia and one for East Malaysia, with unlimited jurisdiction in civil and criminal cases. The federal court consists of a lord president together with the two chief justices of the high courts and four federal judges. There is a limited right of appeal from

the federal court to the *yang di pertuan agong*, who may refer such appeals to the judicial committee of the Privy Council in the United Kingdom.

Justices are appointed by the paramount ruler on the advice of the prime minister. The Malaysian judiciary is generally regarded by the public and the legal community as committed to the rule of law. Although the courts have rarely challenged legislation, they have not hesitated to rule against government prosecutors in specific cases, both civil and criminal. However, there have been doubts raised internationally about the impartiality of the judiciary. Some high-profile cases in 2000 and 2001 indicated that certain litigants or even lawyers were shown preferential treatment in the courts; the courts initially rejected appeals by the former deputy prime minister Anwar regarding his 15-year prison term.

HUMAN RIGHTS

In terms of civil and political rights, Malaysia is ranked as a partially free country. Malaysia is, and prides itself as, a multiethnic and democratic society, but both these characteristics have been under severe strains and pressures, and the potential for violence and social conflict is ever present in the country. Citing security reasons, including the threat of Communist insurgents and the possibility of renewed communal violence, the Malaysian government maintains legislation that legalizes arrest and detention without trial of persons suspected of subversive activity.

Malaysia's Internal Security Act permits the arrest and detention without trial of persons suspected of subversive activity or other actions contributing to domestic instability. It provides for initial preventive detention for up to two years, extendable indefinitely. A person detained under emergency law has no recourse to the courts but must be told the reason for his or her detention and given an opportunity to challenge the detention order as soon as possible after arrest. Though initiated to combat Communist insurgents, the Internal Security Act has also been used in recent years to jail mainstream politicians, alleged Islamic militants, trade unionists, ordinary criminal suspects, members of Muslim sects called "deviant" by the government, and others. Groups such as Amnesty International complain that the government's secrecy regarding detainees makes it impossible to determine the innocence or guilt of those so incarcerated.

The media are constrained under the Constitution (Amendment) Act of 1971 from discussing certain ethnically sensitive topics, so as not to inflame racial tensions. Mindful of the need for the annual renewal of publishing licenses, the press is circumspect in its criticisms of the government.

In the realm of politics, British traditions continue to have great impact. Elections are held regularly. While

the ruling BNF takes full advantage of its incumbency, even the opposition concedes that votes are cast freely and recorded accurately.

FOREIGN POLICY

Since the 1960s Malaysia has been an ardent supporter of regional cooperation and an active member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. Although the country has been threatened by leftist insurgencies during the 1960s and 1970s, Malaysia espoused nonalignment and expanded relations with the Soviet Union, China, Vietnam, and North Korea.

Relations with Indonesia—with which it is linked by religion, language, and race—have not always been cordial. Malaysia opposed Indonesia's Confrontation Policy under Sukarno and also Indonesia's claims to the islands of Sipadan and Kigitan. Relations were further frayed by Malaysia's expulsion of illegal Indonesian workers and the Indonesian president Jusuf Habibie's support of the ousted deputy prime minister of Malaysia, Anwar.

Relations with Singapore have also been described as "sweet and sour." Only after 28 years of independence did a Malaysian head of state visit Singapore. Singapore later condemned joint military exercises by Malaysian and Indonesian military forces in Johore. There are also ongoing disputes over immigration and customs posts and the island of Palau Batu Puteh, off Johore. However, in 2001 Malaysia and Singapore resolved many of their long-standing disputes over issues ranging from water supplies to airspace. The two countries also agreed to build a new bridge and tunnel. In 2005 Malaysia and Singapore reached another agreement over disputed land reclamation work in their border waters.

Relations with the United States have suffered as a result of Malaysia's resentment of U.S. dominance in Southeast Asia. Prime Minister Mahathir was the only head of government not attending the summit of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation group in Seattle in 1993. Support for Anwar, Mahathir's sworn enemy, from Vice President Al Gore sparked another round of controversy that soured U.S.-Malaysian relations for over two years. Though supportive of the U.S.-led war on terrorism after the terrorist attacks of 2001, Malaysia was highly critical of the 2003 war in Iraq and of the treatment of Muslims by the United States.

DEFENSE

The defense structure is headed by the *yang di pertuan agong*, though only the parliament has the right to declare war. Actual operational control is exercised by the Armed Forces Council, under the chairmanship of the minister of defense.

Malaysian armed forces are noted for their anti-guerrilla capabilities. Since there are no hostile border areas, the army is deployed mainly in the peninsular region. Military service is voluntary, and those over 18 are eligible. The number of active personnel in the armed forces in 2003 was over 120,000, as divided between several services, including the Malaysian Army, Royal Malaysian Navy, Royal Malaysian Air Force, Royal Malaysian Marine Police, and Sarawak Border Scouts. The military budget that same year was \$1.53 billion, or 1.7 percent of gross domestic product (GDP); by 2002 the budget had grown to \$2.17 billion, or 2.4 percent of GDP.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 124,100
 Military Manpower Availability: 5,584,231
 Military Expenditures \$billion: 2.17
 as % of GDP: 2.4
 as % of central government expenditures: 10.2
 Arms Imports \$million: 242
 Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

Malaysia made a quick economic recovery in 1999 from its worst recession since independence in 1957. GDP grew 5 percent, responding to a dynamic export sector, which grew over 10 percent, and to fiscal stimulus from higher government spending. The large export surplus enabled the country to build up its already substantial financial reserves to \$31 billion by 2000. The stable macroeconomic environment, in which both inflation and unemployment stood at 3 percent or less, made possible the relaxation of most of the capital controls imposed by the government in 1998 to counter the impact of the Asian financial crisis.

Malaysia's GDP grew at 8.6 percent in 2000, mainly on the strength of sustained double-digit export growth and continued government fiscal stimulus. As an oil exporter, Malaysia has also benefited from higher petroleum prices. Higher export revenues allowed the country to register a current account surplus, but foreign exchange reserves declined—from a peak of \$34.5 billion in April 2000 to \$29.7 billion by December—as foreign investors pulled money out of the country. Nevertheless, Kuala Lumpur has proven unlikely to abandon its currency peg. An economic slowdown in key Western markets, especially the United States, and lower world demand for electronics products slowed GDP growth to 0.5 percent in 2001. Growth picked up in 2002 and 2003, mainly from a stimulus package, averaging 4.5 percent. With respect to the long term, Malaysia's failure to make substantial progress on key

reforms in the corporate and financial sectors have clouded prospects for sustained growth and the return of critical foreign investment. As the Malaysian economy is dependent on exports to the United States and Japan, it is subject to downturns when those countries have economic difficulties.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 229.3
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 9,700
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 5.0
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 2.7
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 7.2
 Industry: 33.6
 Services: 59.1
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 43
 Government Consumption: 14
 Gross Domestic Investment: 21.7
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 123.5
 Imports: 99.3
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 1.4
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 39.2

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
114.9	116.7	118.3	120.5	121.7

Finance

National Currency: Ringgit (MYR)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = MYR 3.8
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 105.6
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: —
 Total External Debt \$billion: 53.36
 Debt Service Ratio %: 4.65
 Balance of Payments \$billion: 11.81
 International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 43.5
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
 1.3

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 109.14
 per capita \$: 4.40
 Foreign Direct Investment \$billion: 2.47

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$billion: 25.33
 Expenditures \$billion: 29.33
 Budget Deficit \$billion: 4
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 7.2
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 2.9
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 2.41
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 4.8
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 683.3
 Total Farmland % of land area: 5.5
 Livestock: Cattle 000: 750
 Chickens million: 180
 Pigs million: 2.1
 Sheep 000: 120
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 21.1
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons million: 1.44

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 32.2
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 10.2

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 77.7
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 48.5
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 2.07
 Net Energy Imports % of use: -55.1
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 13.76
 Production kW-hr billion: 67.8
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 62.9
 Coal Reserves tons billion: —
 Production tons million: 0.9
 Consumption tons million: 6.9
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: 75
 Production cubic feet billion: 1.7
 Consumption cubic feet billion: 1.0
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: 3
 Production barrels 000 per day: 855
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 534
 Pipelines Length km: 1,841

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 99.3
 Exports \$billion: 123.5
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 6.5
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 7.5
 Balance of Trade \$billion: 11.81

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Singapore %	25.3	16.1
Japan %	12.5	9.4
United States %	12.1	19.5
China %	6.8	10.4
Taiwan %	5.4	—
South Korea %	5.2	—
Thailand %	4.3	—
Germany %	4.0	—
Hong Kong %	—	4.3

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 65,877
 Paved %: 77.9
 Automobiles: 400,400
 Trucks and Buses: 40,100
 Railroad: Track Length km: 2,418
 Passenger-km billion: 1.18
 Freight-km billion: 1.09
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 346
 Total Deadweight Tonnage million: 7.54
 Airports: 117
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 36.9
 Length of Waterways km: 7,200

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 12.78
 Number of Tourists from million: 36.25
 Tourist Receipts \$billion: 7.63
 Tourist Expenditures \$billion: 3.39

Communications

Telephones million: 4.57
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones million: 11.12
 Personal Computers million: 4.2
 Internet Hosts per million people: 4,508
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 363

ENVIRONMENT

The biggest environmental problem facing Malaysia is growing air pollution from industrial and vehicular emissions. In addition to these air pollutants in urban areas, many remote areas suffer from smoke and haze from large forest fires, which are contributing to deforestation. The country also needs to address its waste disposal system, as water is being polluted from raw sewage.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 58.7
 Forest Change (1990–2000) hectares 000: -237
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 24
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 186,197
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 6.21

LIVING CONDITIONS

The UN 2004 Human Development Report ranked Malaysia 59th out of 177 countries in terms of standards of living. Life expectancy in 2004 was over 72 years; literacy stood at nearly 90 percent; 70 percent of eligible students were enrolled in primary, secondary, and tertiary schools;

and per capita GDP was \$9,700. In general, despite the fact that the country is considered only partly free, Malaysia's multiethnic, multicultural population of 24 million has a good standard of living, and the country gives high priority to education, health, and job opportunities for women.

Once heavily rural, with life revolving around the village, or *kampung*, Malaysia is transforming itself into a modern industrial state. As of 2001, 57 percent of the population lived in urban areas, though city dwellers often maintain close ties to the villages whence they came and to where they return regularly for visits.

Housing in *kampungs* is largely wooden and constructed on stilts to prevent flooding in the rainy seasons and to allow for better ventilation. Also, the shaded space beneath the house provides an alternate living space. Urban architecture tends to be of concrete or brick with tile roofing. High-rise apartments are becoming more common in urban areas. With exploding population growth in the cities, there are acute housing shortages, leading to squatters taking up residence in shantytowns.

HEALTH

Malaysia's national health-care plan provides services free or at nominal costs. Access to services, however, can be problematic depending on location. There are only 111 public hospitals but also 197 private ones to service the population. As of 2004 there were 70 physicians per 100,000 people. Primary health-care services consist of immunization, family planning, maternity care, communicable-disease prevention, and accident and emergency services. With 97 percent of births attended by health-care providers, infant mortality is relatively low; as of 2004 it was under 18 deaths per 1,000 live births. Many people in the countryside rely on traditional forms of medicine administered by local shamans rather than on Western medicine. The use of herbs is also widespread.

Access to safe drinking water and adequate sanitation is not a problem in Malaysia. Immunization rates for children under one are high; in 2003, 92 percent were immunized for measles, 96 percent for DPT, 97 percent for polio, and 99 percent for tuberculosis. Public spending on health care in 2001 was 2 percent of GDP.

Two diseases that were once endemic, tuberculosis and yaws, have largely been controlled by public health and immunization measures. Malaria remains a health risk, however, with almost 40,000 cases reported in the mid-1990s. Smoking is another major health hazard. Tobacco use has increased since the mid-1980s; as of 1995 each adult smoked an average of 4.2 lbs of tobacco per year. Between 1970 and 1989 cardiovascular disease death rates more than doubled. Diabetes is also on the rise. In 2003 the HIV/AIDS prevalence rate was 0.4 percent; 52,000 Malaysians were estimated to be living with the disease, while 2,000 died from it.

Health

Number of Physicians: 16,146
 Number of Dentists: 2,144
 Number of Nurses: 31,129
 Number of Pharmacists: 2,333
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 70
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 17.7
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 41
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 3.8
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 149
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.4
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 96
 Measles: 92
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 99
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 95

FOOD AND NUTRITION

The staple of every Malaysian meal is rice, with generous helpings accompanying dishes that include fish, seafood, vegetables, and poultry.

One of the most popular Malaysian dishes is *satay*—bite-sized pieces of beef, mutton, or chicken marinated in spices, then skewered and barbecued. *Satay* is often served with *ketupat* (rice cake) and a raw salad of cucumber, pineapple, and onions. Sweet, spicy peanut sauce accompanies the dish. *Nasi lemak* is a rice dish cooked in coconut milk, served with anchovies, boiled egg, fried peanuts, and cucumber slices. *Roti canai* is a breakfast dish made from wheat-flour dough, with beaten egg and diced onions. *Nasi dagang* is another popular breakfast dish of rice and fish curry. *Nasi goreng* is fried rice, and *rojak* is a salad of pineapple, cucumber, bean curd, prawn fritters, and boiled egg, served with peanut sauce. *Char kway teow* is a dish of flat rice noodles stir-fried with minced garlic, fresh prawns, bean sprouts, cockles, and eggs and seasoned with soy sauce and chili paste. Numerous chicken dishes are popular, including *curry laksa* and chicken rice. "Hotpot," also called steamboat, is a popular mode of eating as well, featuring a sort of Asian fondue.

Fruits are plentiful in Malaysia and include chiku, coconut, durian, guava, jackfruit, mangosteen, pomelo, papaya, rambutan, and starfruit.

Nutrition is generally good in Malaysia. Between 1989 and 1995, 23 percent of children under five years of age were considered malnourished; between 1995 and 2002 that figure dropped to 12 percent.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 2.4
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,930
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 156.4
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 89.4

STATUS OF WOMEN

There are no restrictions on the political rights of Malaysian women. Government policy supports their full and equal participation in government, education, and the workforce. However, the position of women in society is conditioned by the cultural and religious traditions of the country's major ethnic groups; as a result, women are still underrepresented in the government, professions, and civil service.

With a general resurgence of Islamic piety among Malays in recent years, Malay women have tended toward close conformity to Koranic stipulations on women's roles. Islamic courts do not give equal weight to the testimony of women, and some international organizations as well as local activists claim that women are sometimes subject to discriminatory interpretations of Islamic law in divorce and inheritance matters. The interpretation of Islamic inheritance law varies by state but tends to favor male offspring and relatives.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 9
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.0
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 38.0

WORK

In 2003 there were 10.5 million people in the labor force, approximately 20 percent of whom were foreign workers (mostly employed in plantation labor). About half the labor force was involved in the service sector, 36 percent in industry, and 14 percent in agriculture, producing rubber, palm oil, cocoa, rice, timber, pepper, and subsistence crops. Industries include rubber and palm-oil processing and manufacturing, light manufacturing, electronics, tin mining and smelting, logging and timber processing, petroleum production and refining, and agriculture processing. Whereas most people once worked in the rubber or palm-oil industries, the high-tech industry has supplanted such work, necessitating a more educated workforce. The unemployment rate in 2004 was just 3 percent.

Most Malaysian workers can join trade unions. However, the law prevents the formation of broad-based unions spanning multiple industries. In the export-oriented electronics industry, the government discourages national unions in favor of factory-level unions. Labor laws prevent strikes by allowing the government to refer labor disputes to the Industrial Court and prohibiting strikes while disputes are before that court. Thus, workers rarely strike. Unions bargain collectively in many industries, though not in the public sector. Only 8 percent of Malaysian workers are unionized. There is no minimum

wage, but the maximum workweek is 48 hours, and the minimum work age is 14, although younger workers are employed in parts of the country.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 10,490,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 38.4
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 14.5
 Industry: 36.0
 Services: 49.5
 Unemployment %: 3.0

EDUCATION

In theory, the state provides free but not universal and compulsory education for seven years, from ages six to 13. The academic year runs from January to November. The medium of instruction is Malay in state schools. Muslim religious instruction is compulsory for all Muslim children, while private Christian schools offer their own religious training. There are also 525 English-language schools, which enjoy the greatest prestige; 1,052 Chinese-language schools, using Guo Yu, or Mandarin; and 617 Tamil-language schools.

Schooling consists of six grades of primary school, three grades of lower secondary school, two grades of upper secondary school, and two years of pre-university classes, consisting of a lower sixth form and an upper sixth form, in the British fashion. There is a critical shortage of trained Malaysian teachers, which has been partially accounted for through the employment of Indonesians and Commonwealth and Peace Corps volunteers. That situation is improving; in 2001 the primary pupil-to-teacher ratio was less than 20 to 1.

The education system is centralized in the federal Ministry of Education, although both Sabah and Sarawak operate their school systems autonomously. Combined gross enrollment at primary, secondary, and tertiary schools in 2001 stood at 70 percent. Public expenditures on education in 2001 were a high 7.9 percent of GDP. The literacy rate in 2002 was 88.7 percent.

There are nine universities in Malaysia, including the National University of Malaysia, the University of Malaya, the Technological University of Malaysia, and the University of Science Malaysia. The MARA Institute of Technology is the largest postsecondary institute in the country. English is gradually being replaced at the university level by Bahasa Melayu.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 88.7
 Male %: 92.0
 Female %: 85.4

School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 12.2
 First Level: Primary Schools: 7,049
 Teachers: 154,233
 Students: 3,024,959
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 19.6
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 95.2
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 1,427
 Teachers: 125,571
 Students: 2,112,572
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 17.9
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 69.4
 Third Level: Institutions: 48
 Teachers: 30,346
 Students: 557,118
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 26.6
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 7.9

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Science and technology are important elements of the emerging Malaysian economy; the high-tech sector is responsible for over half of the country's export income. Several of the country's universities, such as the National University of Malaysia, the University of Malaya, the University of Agriculture at Selangor Darul Ehsan, and the University of Science at Penang, offer degrees in electronics and engineering. Between 1987 and 1997, science, math, and engineering students accounted for just over half of college and university enrollments.

Agricultural research is another important element in the country's research and development. The Ministry of Agriculture administers the Malaysian Agricultural Research and Development Institute, which carries out research in crops and livestock. The Ministry of Primary Industry has several research agencies involved in research areas from rubber to cocoa to forestry, while the Fisheries Research Institute of the Department of Fisheries deals with that resource. Numerous colleges and universities are also involved in agricultural research, among them the University Putra of Malaysia, the University of Malaya, and the University of Malaysia, Sabah.

As of 2000 there were 276 researchers per one million population; research and development expenditures equaled 0.69 percent of GDP in 2002.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 276
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 0.69
 High-Tech Exports \$billion: 47.04
 Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

The Malaysian press consists of 31 dailies, about half of which are published in the capital. Around five of these are in each of English, Chinese, and Malay, with around two

in each of Tamil and Punjabi. The most widely distributed and respected daily is the *New Straits Times*. Sabah and Sarawak together have over a dozen dailies, mostly in Chinese, with some in English and other languages.

Control of the press is indirect; outright censorship is rarely imposed. All newspapers and publications are required to register with the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting; they may not be published or distributed without a government permit, which may be revoked or suspended for the publication of material officially termed undesirable. In 2000 government authorities refused to renew the permits of several opposition political weeklies and forced the PAS newspaper, *Harakah*, to reduce its frequency of publication. Officials also denied a license to an opposition DAP paper in East Malaysia to print in the rest of the country. Additionally, the government uses the Sedition Act, the Broadcasting Act, the Official Secrets Act, and criminal defamation laws to curb the press and restrict freedom of expression. The threat of these laws often results in self-censorship on the part of the media. The international media watchdog group Reporters without Borders ranked Malaysia a low 122nd out of 167 countries in its 2004 press freedom index.

The national news agency, Bernama, has one foreign bureau, in Djakarta, Indonesia, and four domestic bureaus. The major foreign news agencies are AP, UPI, AFP, and Reuters.

Broadcasting is a state monopoly operated by Radio Malaysia, with three networks. A television service is operated by Television Malaysia and STMB Network I, with its main station at Kuala Lumpur and regional stations at Johore Bahru, Taiping, Pinang, Ipoh, Melak, Batu Pahat, and Kluang. Of the 27 television stations, 26 are state owned.

In this technology-savvy country, in 2003 there were over 11 million cellular phone users and 8.7 million Internet users. Generally, the government does not attempt to control Internet access.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 31
 Total Circulation million: 2.19
 Circulation per 1,000: 95.2
 Books Published: 5,084
 Periodicals: 3
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets million: 3.8
 per 1,000: 174

CULTURE

A blend of Malay, Chinese, Indian, indigenous, and British cultures, in addition to a variety of religious traditions, endows Malaysia with a unique and rich cultural heritage.

Contemporary Malay culture consists of many strands—animistic, early Hindu, early and modern Islamic, and, especially in the cities, Western. The base of the culture, however, is Malay and Muslim. These influences are felt most strongly in Western Malaysia.

A favorite form of theater is the *wayang kilit*, or shadow puppet play, which in the days before television was a typical form of village entertainment. Stories for these plays derive largely from the Hindi epic *Ramayana*.

Music is heavily influenced by the tradition of the *gamelan*, a stringed instrument usually accompanied by drums. Traditional percussion instruments include the double-headed *gendang*, the *geduk*, the *gedombak*, and the *rebana*, a large drum constructed from a hollowed-out log.

Such music often forms the accompaniment for Malay dance, in which participants might hold candles as they perform. The Malaysian martial arts of *silat* is actually a dance form adapted to defense. The *joget* is another traditional dance, adapted from a Portuguese original. In Sarawak the *datum julud* is a traditional dance that deals with the blessing of a grandson. Mak Yong is a dance drama once performed at the sultan's court; it combines romantic stories, operatic singing, and humor.

Examples of Malay decorative arts include batik cloth, silverware, the handmade *kris* (a short sword or heavy dagger with a wavy blade), wood carving, and basketwork.

The Malays also have a rich collection of literature dating to the 16th century. The oldest is *Sejarah Melayu* (The Malay Chronicle), a history of the kingdoms of the Malay Peninsula, with a particular focus on Malacca. Two other works of note include *Hikayat Hang Tuah* (Hang Tuah's Life Story) and *Hikayat Abdullah* (Abdullah's Life Story). These works describe life and society in old Malay times.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
Volumes: —
Registered borrowers: —
Museums Number: —
Annual Attendance: —
Cinema Gross Receipts national currency million: 8.6
Number of Cinemas: 162
Seating Capacity: 37,600
Annual Attendance: 300,000

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

The indigenous people of Malaysia, the Orang Asli, were animists to whom everything in the environment was imbued with spirit. Numerous legends abound of jungle spirits and demons or jinn. The manticore is a half-lion, half-human beast that supposedly inhabits the forests of Malaysia. Even the wavy-bladed *kris* has a spirit that supposedly flies at night to seek out victims and enemies.

Legends also surround various natural features, such as with the dragon princess of Tioman Island. Similarly, the Puteri Gunung Ledang, or the Princess of Mount Ophir, is said to be the immortal wife of the first king of the Malaccan Sultanate. When her husband died, she fled to Mount Ophir in present-day Malaysia.

Malaysian Indian folklore includes numerous legends, one of which is the story behind the celebration of the Festival of Lights, or Deepavali, as a celebration of the death of Nagarasuran, a Hindu tyrant and cruel king. Malaysian Chinese also have numerous myths reflective of Chinese philosophy. According to their creation myth, Pangu created earth and heaven, and humankind is made possible by the complementary opposites, or yin and yang, of these two.

Malaysian folklore is also rich in proverbs. Some typical sayings include “Don't use an ax to embroider,” “Fear to let fall a drop and you will spill a lot,” “Feasting is the physician's harvest,” and “The body pays for a slip of the foot, and gold pays for a slip of the tongue.”

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Favorite recreational activities for Malaysians include several unique forms of sport. *Sepak takraw* is one of the most popular, wherein players must keep a small rattan ball in the air using their feet, legs, shoulders, and heads. This sport is similar to and most probably the inspiration for the North American game of hackey-sack. Kite flying and top spinning are also widely enjoyed in the Malay Peninsula. One of the biggest kites is the *wau bulan*, or moon kite, which may be as wide as three meters and can reach an altitude of nearly 500 meters. Flying such a kite was once merely a harvest time entertainment but has now become an international event, attracting competitors from Europe and Asia. Similarly, top spinning was once another harvest-time recreation. The *gasing*, or spinning top, can weigh up to 10 pounds. Some of the best spinners can throw a top that will spin for over two hours. The Malaysian martial art of *silat* is also a major form of recreation.

Television and cinema are popular forms of entertainment for urban dwellers. Nightlife in cities includes a wide variety of activities, reflecting the ethnic and religious mix of the country. Mah-jongg is particularly popular among older Malaysian Chinese, who often gamble on the outcome of the game.

ETIQUETTE

It is typical to shake hands as a form of greeting, though men and women (especially if Muslim) usually do not exchange handshakes. The handshake itself is different

than in the West; people do not actually grasp the hands; rather, one touches the other's outstretched hand with both hands and then brings those hands back to the chest to indicate a heartfelt greeting.

Pointing with the forefinger is generally considered a rude gesture; one uses the thumb of the right hand to point, with the other four fingers folded into the palm. Shoes are removed before entering mosques, and by extension they are also usually removed before entering private homes, Muslim or non-Muslim. The right hand is used for giving and receiving; the left is usually considered "dirty." Public displays of affection are frowned upon.

FAMILY LIFE

Family life in Malaysia is generally reflective of the traditions of each ethnic group. Indians and Chinese maintain family groupings similar to those found in their parent countries, while Malays have many of their own distinctive customs. The family is at the center of Malay life, and families are often extended. Seniority is respected, and family members are even addressed according to their family position, such as First Brother. Children generally live at home until they are married and remain close to their parents after marriage.

Men are the traditional leaders of the family, and women have usually moved to the home of their husband's family. As more and more women enter the workforce, however, such customs and traditions are breaking down. The size of the family is also decreasing; the fertility rate in 2003 was around 3.1 children per woman. Middle class families tend to have two to three children on average.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Most Malaysians tend to dress in Western fashion. However, each ethnic group also has its own traditional style of clothing. The cheongsam, a tight-fitting, high-collared, slit-skirted dress, is the traditional Chinese women's dress, while the *yi fu* is the men's dress. For Indians, a sari is the traditional dress for women, while Indian men wear a dhoti.

Traditional Malay dress for men and women is based on a rectangle of batik cloth that is wrapped and worn as a skirt. The women wear the skirt with a long blouse, while the men go shirtless but wear a head cloth. Malays, who are Muslim, have a strict dress code. Women usually wear the *baju kurung*, a loose, long-sleeved blouse worn over an ankle-length skirt, and they cover their heads with a scarf. A married woman may often wear a *baju kebaya*, a close-fitting blouse over an ankle-length skirt. Malay men wear *baju melayu*, a long-sleeved shirt over an ankle-length sarong or pants.

SPORTS

Soccer is one of the most popular spectator sports in Malaysia. The Football Association of Malaya (later Malaysia) was founded in 1933. With its Super League and Premier League teams, soccer draws large crowds. The Malay Cup and FA cup are major national competitions. The national team also competes regionally and internationally. Badminton is almost as popular as soccer, with the country hosting the Malaysia Open in July.

Other popular sports include martial arts such as taekwon do, karate, and *silat* as well as ping-pong, rugby, horse racing, car racing, powerboat racing, cricket, squash, and field hockey.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1957** Malaya becomes an independent nation within the Commonwealth, with Tunku Abdul Rahman as prime minister.
Constitution prepared by the Reid Commission is adopted.
- 1959** First local elections are held in Sarawak.
Last Communist rebels surrender.
Central Bank of Malaya is founded.
- 1960** Emergency is ended.
- 1962** First elections are held in Sabah (known as British North Borneo).
- 1963** Malaya, Singapore, Sarawak, and North Borneo join together as the State of Malaysia.
Confrontation with Indonesia begins over the membership of Sarawak and North Borneo (Sabah) in Malaysia.
- 1965** Singapore leaves the Malaysian federation.
- 1966** Confrontation with Indonesia ends as Sukarno is toppled from power there.
- 1967** Malaysia joins the Association of Southeast Asian Nations as a charter member.
- 1969** Ruling Alliance Party suffers reverses in national elections.
Race riots between Malays and Chinese break out in Kuala Lumpur.
Emergency is declared, the constitution is suspended, and a National Operations Council is set up to direct emergency rule.
- 1970** Emergency is ended.
Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman steps down and is succeeded by Abdul Razak.
- 1973** Malaysia establishes diplomatic relations with Hanoi, North Vietnam.
The Malaysian dollar is allowed to float.
- 1974** Diplomatic relations are established with Communist China.

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- The ruling Alliance Party, renamed the Barisan National Front, gains a decisive majority in national elections to the federal parliament.
- Islamic summit conference is held at Kuala Lumpur.
- Kuala Lumpur becomes a federal territory.
- 1976** Hussein Onn becomes prime minister upon death of Abdul Razak.
- The Malaysian dollar is renamed the ringgit.
- 1977** Federal government proclaims emergency in Kelantan State. Four ministers quit in protest.
- 1978** The ruling BNF wins an absolute majority in parliamentary elections.
- 1979** Malaysia admits over 75,000 Vietnamese “boat people” but threatens to “shoot on sight” further arrivals.
- 1981** Prime Minister Hussein Onn steps down and is succeeded in office by Mahathir bin Mohamad. In national elections the BNF routs opposition parties and gains 132 of 154 seats in the House of Representatives.
- Mahathir announces a “Look East” economic policy, stressing increased ties with Japan and Korea.
- 1983** The veto power of the paramount ruler in non-financial bills is curtailed.
- Financial scandal involving loans made by Bank Bumiputra to Hong Kong’s Carrion Group rocks the government.
- 1985** Joseph Pairin Kitingan, a Christian and ethnic Borneo Kadazan, is installed as chief minister in Sabah after his party, Party Bersatu Sabah, wins 25 of the 48 state assembly seats there.
- 1986** Malay nationalism gains victory in elections when the BNF wins 148 seats in the enlarged House of Representatives, now consisting of 177 members. The BNF also retains power in all state assemblies in West Malaysia.
- 1987** Mahathir, whose leadership had been called into question since 1986, wins BNF party presidency by a narrow majority.
- Racial tensions between Chinese and Malays lead to government detention of numerous prominent members of BNF and opposition parties.
- Government revokes publishing licenses of three major newspapers, including the English-language daily *Star*.
- 1988** UMNO is reformed as UMNO Baru by means of much political, legislative, and judicial maneuvering.
- President of the Supreme Court Mohammad Salleh is dismissed from office, along with two Supreme Court judges, as a result of tensions between executive and judiciary.
- In the face of a massive influx of Indochinese refugees, Malaysia announces that they will be treated as illegal immigrants and deported.
- 1990** Mahathir wins reelection to a third term. The UMNO maintains control of parliament in its toughest test since formation.
- 1997** The Asian economic crisis hits Malaysia hard, with both markets and currency failing throughout the year and into 1998.
- 1998** Prime Minister Mahathir dismisses Deputy Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim on charges of sexual misconduct.
- Mahathir introduces radical new controls on currency and foreign investment to combat Malaysia’s deepening recession.
- 1999** Currency and investment controls are lifted, as Malaysia’s economic health returns. Mahathir is reelected prime minister.
- Anwar Ibrahim sentenced to six years in prison for corruption.
- 2000** Nine years are added to Anwar’s prison term when he is found guilty of sodomy.
- 2001** Government proceeds with construction of the Bakun dam in East Malaysia despite environmental concerns.
- Rioting breaks out between Malays and Indians.
- 2002** Tough illegal-immigrant laws come into effect.
- 2003** Mahathir steps down as prime minister and is replaced by his deputy, Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.
- 2004** Badawi wins general election by a wide margin. Scores are killed and much property damage is sustained when the Asian tsunami strikes Malaysia in December.
- 2005** Malaysia and Singapore come to terms over a border dispute.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

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<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/my.html>
- Department of Statistics
<http://www.statistics.gov.my>
- Malaysia
<http://www.jaring.my>
- Malaysia Information
<http://sunsite.nus.sg/SEAlinks/malaysia-info.html>
- Malaysian Information Services (English)
<http://penerangan.gov.my>

MALDIVES

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Maldives (Dhivehi Raajjeyge Jumhooriyyaa)

ABBREVIATION

MV

CAPITAL

Male

HEAD OF STATE & HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom (from 1978)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Partial democracy

POPULATION

349,106 (2005)

AREA

300 sq km (116 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Sinhalese, Arab, Dravidian, black

LANGUAGE

Dhivehi

RELIGION

Sunni Islam

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Maldivian rufiyaa

NATIONAL FLAG

Green rectangle bordered by red field; centered in the rectangle is a white crescent.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A golden five-pointed star surrounded by a golden crescent with horns nearly touching each other. The device is flanked by crossed national flags, with a white scroll at their base carrying the nation's name in Kufic script. Behind the device is a tall palm with green fronds.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"Gavmii Mi Ekuverikan Matii Tibegen Kuriime Salaam" (In National Unity Do We Salute Our Nation)

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

July 26 (National Day), November 11 (Republic Day), various Islamic festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

July 26, 1965

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

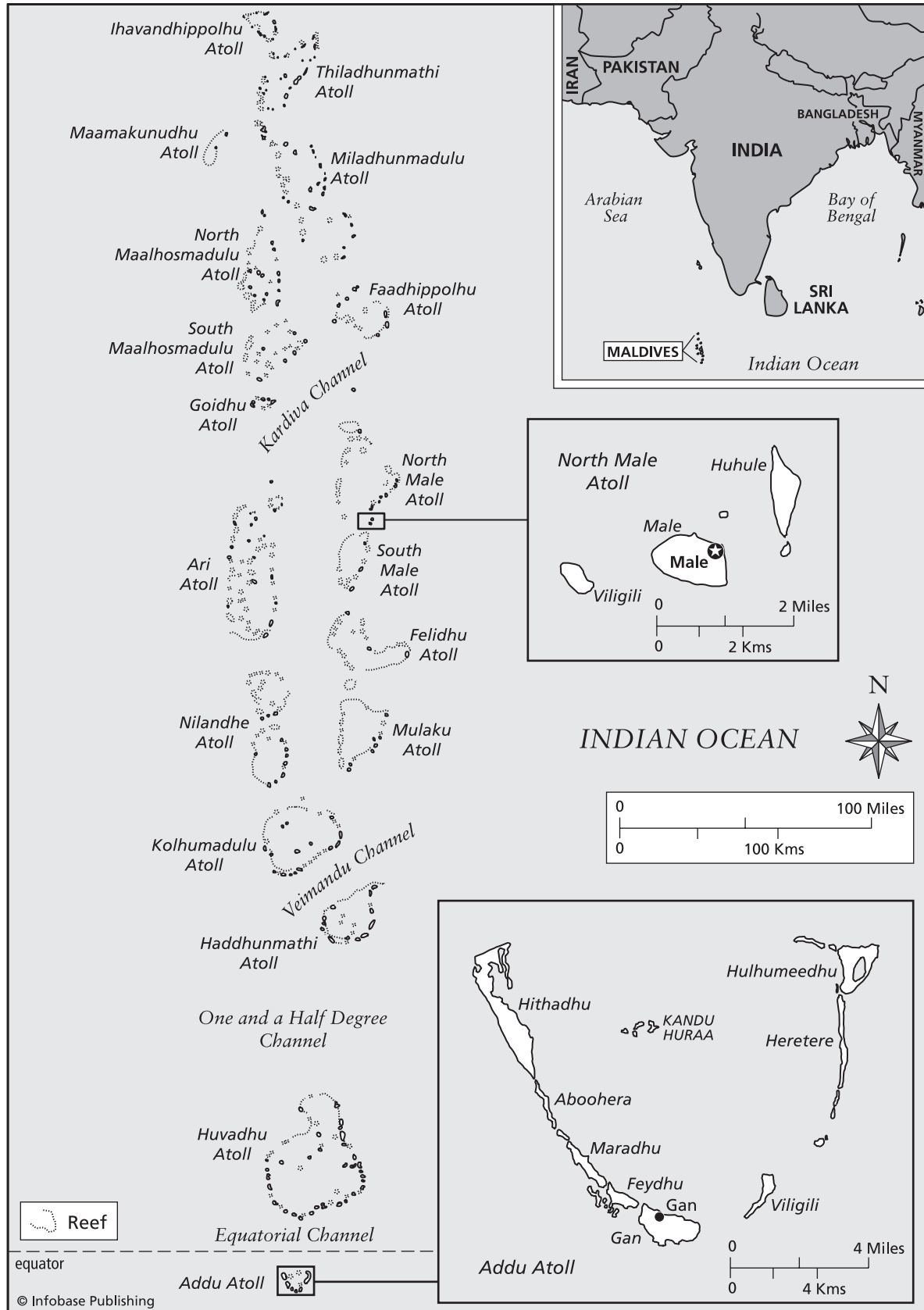
January 1998

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

The Maldives are an archipelago of tropical atolls in the north-central Indian Ocean about 670 km (415 mi) southwest of Sri Lanka and 600 km (372 mi) from the southern tip of India. The islands span an arc 804 km (498 mi) north to south and 159 km (99 mi) east to west, with a total land area of 300 sq km (116 sq mi). The country consists of 1,190 islands, comprising 26 natural atolls (a word derived from Dhivehi, the national language); however, for administrative purposes, the nation is divided into 19 atolls. The total coastline is 644 km (400 mi), and the country's area including sea and land is nearly 90,000 sq km (55,800 sq mi).

Of the 1,190 islands, only 202 are inhabited. The average size of the islands is 0.64 sq km (0.25 sq mi), and none is larger than 13 sq km (5 sq mi). The islands are low, rising only a few feet above sea level, and many of the islands are just tiny banks washed by the ocean. Some disappear over time, while others are formed. Some atolls have encircling reefs, others are made up of many small, ring-shaped reefs. Many contain freshwater lagoons. The inner shores of the islands are frequently marshy. East-west passage through the island chain is facilitated by a number of clear, navigable channels: Kardiva, or Five-Degree Channel (width of 38.6 km; 24 mi); Veimandu, or Kolumadula Channel (24 km; 15 mi); One-and-a-Half-Degree Channel (80 km; 50 mi); and Equatorial Channel (74 km; 46 mi).

Maldives



Geography

Area sq km: 300; sq mi 116
 World Rank: 185th
 Land Boundaries, km: 0
 Coastline, km: 644
 Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Indian Ocean 0
 Highest: on Wilingili in Addu Atoll 2.4
 Land Use %
 Arable Land: 13.3
 Permanent Crops: 16.7
 Forest: 3.3
 Other: 66.7

Population of Principal Cities

Male	74,069
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CLIMATE AND WEATHER

The climate is hot and humid, with little daily variation. The mean temperature is 27°C (81°F). The temperature ranges from 26.6 to 29°C (80 to 84°F) in December and January and from 29.4 to 32°C (85 to 90°F) in March and April. The islands are subject to southwesterly monsoons from June to August and to northeasterly monsoons from November to March. Annual rainfall averages 2,540 mm (100 in) in the north and 3,810 mm (150 in) in the south. Violent storms are common during the monsoons.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature: 81°F
 Temperature Range: Winter 80°F to 84°F
 Summer: 85°F to 90°F
 Average Rainfall: 100 in to 150 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

With sandy, alkaline soil, the islands of the Maldives do not support much natural vegetation aside from breadfruit trees, coconut palms, shrubs, scrub growth, and some wildflowers. The island of Fua Mulaku, higher than other islands in the country and thus experiencing less seawater incursion into its groundwater, is more lush than the other islands. Pineapples and oranges are cultivated there.

Coral reefs consisting of about 70 different species surround the islands. The waters around the Maldives are home to over 700 species of fish, many of which live in the reefs, while others inhabit the open ocean. Among the wide variety of marine life are tuna, including dogtooth tuna, jacks, sweetlips, butterfly fish, wahoo, and fusiliers. Mating octopus can also be found, as well as sharks, turtles, eels, rays, and anemones.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 349,106
 World Rank: 167th
 Density per sq km: 976.9
 % of annual growth (1999-2003): 2.3
 Male %: 51.2
 Female %: 48.8
 Urban %: 27.5
 Age Distribution %: 0-14: 43.9
 15-64: 53.0
 65 and over: 3.1

Population 2025: 563,760
 Birth Rate per 1,000: 35.43
 Death Rate per 1,000: 7.24
 Rate of Natural Increase %: 2.8
 Total Fertility Rate: 5.02
 Expectation of Life (years): Males 62.76
 Females 65.42

Marriage Rate per 1,000: —
 Divorce Rate per 1,000: —
 Average Size of Households: 7.2
 Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

The four main ethnic strains in the population are Sinhalese, Dravidian, Arab, and black. These elements each predominate within specific geographical areas. The northern islanders are primarily Dravidians, the middle islanders Arabs, and the southern islanders Sinhalese, the latter two being lighter skinned and taller. Persons of black origin form a separate endogamous subgroup called the Ravare. The original population of the islands is thought to have been Dravidian, but they were displaced in about the ninth century by the Arabs. Malayan and Portuguese influences are also noticeable in the population.

The only ethnic minority is the Indians, who formed a colony in the Maldives in the 17th century. They also constitute a religious and linguistic minority.

LANGUAGES

The national language is Dhivehi, an Indo-European language closely related to Elu, an archaic form of Sinhalese. Dhivehi has numerous loanwords from Arabic, Hindi, and Tamil. Until recently Dhivehi had two alphabets: one an adaptation of Arabic and the other, called Thaana, derived from Sanskrit and Sinhalese scripts but written from right to left with diacritics. In 1977 the government announced that the Dhivehian script would be romanized, but in 1979 the country returned to the Thaana script. English, Sinhalese, and Hindi are the principal foreign languages used in commerce.

RELIGIONS

Islam is the state religion. Almost all Maldivians belong to the Sunni sect, which was introduced into the islands in the ninth century. Religion is a dominant force in national life, and there are numerous mosques.

Religious Affiliations

Sunni Muslim

349,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The first inhabitants of the islands came from Sri Lanka and southern India before 500 B.C.E. However, many Maldivians believe that their ancestors can be traced back to the Redin people, who were sun worshippers. The country was converted to Islam in 1153 C.E. The first European contact came in the 16th century, when the Portuguese sought to build a fort in Male. In 1558 the Portuguese invaded the islands, then controlling most of the country for the next 15 years, until Chief Mohammed Thakurfaanu led an attack on the main Portuguese garrison and killed them all. The islands remained a stopping point for Europeans on the Indian trade routes throughout the 17th and 18th centuries, when they were both a Dutch and a British protectorate. The Maldives were a British protectorate from 1887 to 1965.

The country was granted internal self-government in 1960 and full independence five years later. The Maldives retained their ancient sultanate during their first three years of independence. After a November 1968 referendum, however, the country became a republic, with a president as head of state and prime minister as head of government. Ibrahim Nasir became the first president. In a 1975 constitutional revision the post of prime minister was abolished, and the president assumed all executive responsibilities.

Nasir did not run for reelection in 1978 due to health concerns. He was succeeded by Maumoon Abdul Gayoom, his minister of transport. On taking office, Gayoom indicated that he would devote himself to the development of the country's impoverished rural areas and maintain the nation's foreign policy of nonalignment.

Nasir departed the Maldives following his resignation, but the government subsequently wanted him to return to the country to be tried on charges of misusing government funds. In 1980 Nasir was implicated in an unsuccessful coup against Gayoom. Nasir denied any involvement, and government efforts to extradite the former president from Singapore, where he lived in exile, failed.

Gayoom was reelected president in 1983 and again in 1988. In both those years there were still other unsuccessful coup attempts against the government. The

1988 attempt was crushed when Indian army commandos arrived to repel an amphibious attack force made up largely of ethnic Tamil mercenaries from Sri Lanka. The coup attempt was believed to have been organized by four prominent political opponents of Gayoom, including Nasir, although he again denied having played any part in the incident. In 1989, 16 people were sentenced to death and another 59 received jail sentences for their involvement in the failed coup attempt. President Gayoom was reelected for a fourth term in 1993, after receiving a 92.8 percent endorsement as the sole candidate, and again in 1998 with 90.9 percent of the vote. In 1998 the country adopted a new constitution.

At the UN World Summit on Sustainable Development held in 2002 in Johannesburg, South Africa, President Gayoom voiced his country's fears of global warming. He warned that his country could be submerged if a rise in sea levels, due to the melting of polar ice caps, continued. Since 2003 the country has experienced occasional antigovernment demonstrations calling for political reforms. Following further riots in the capital, Male, in August 2004, the president and his government pledged to embark upon democratic reforms, including a more representative political system and expanded political freedoms. The December 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami caused severe damage to many of the country's low-lying islands and hurt the important fishing and tourist industries.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

President of the Republic

1968–78 Ibrahim Nasir Rannabandeyri Kilegefan

1978– Maumoon Abdul Gayoom

CONSTITUTION

The country is governed by the constitution of 1998, which replaced the 1964 constitution drawn up by the British jurist Sir Ivor Jennings. The constitution was written for the short-lived republic of 1953 and was reactivated when the republican system was revived in 1968. Under its provisions the Majlis (Citizens' Assembly) chooses by secret ballot, from as many candidates as are proposed by members of the Majlis, a single nominee for president. The nomination is then confirmed or rejected in a nationwide referendum, also by secret ballot. In order to be elected president, a candidate must win at least a 51 percent majority.

The president appoints and heads the cabinet, whose strength is fixed at nine members. The constitution of 1964 originally provided for a prime minister, but that post was abolished in a 1975 constitutional revision that permitted the president to appoint an unlimited number of vice presidents. This provision was abolished in 1977.

The president functions as both head of state and head of government.

The nation's parliament is the unicameral Majlis. The Maldivian judicial system is based on sharia, Islamic law. Justice is administered through a presidentially appointed body, the Maldives High Court, which was initiated in 1980. There is also a Police Court, a Court of Summary Jurisdiction, and eight additional courts in Male. In addition, there are courts on every populated island in the country. All of the nation's courts fall under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Justice. The government of the islands is uncomplicated and simple; there is no department of defense, no post office department (although stamps are issued), and no social security administration.

In 1998 the new constitution went into effect. Like its predecessor, the new constitution provided for a unicameral Majlis controlled by an elected majority. The legislature nominates the president for a five-year term, with confirmation required by popular referendum. There were no changes in the legal system, which continues to be based on sharia. Changes introduced by the 1998 constitution included multiparty candidates for the Majlis, parliamentary immunity from prosecution, the expansion of ministerial powers, and greater rights for citizens.

PARLIAMENT

The Majlis, or Citizens' Assembly, is a unicameral body of 50 members, eight of whom are appointed by the president; the other members are elected by universal suffrage on the basis of two from each inhabited atoll, or territorial unit, and two from the capital, Male. Elections to the Majlis are held individually, atoll by atoll. Thus, a representative elected in the middle of a Majlis session continues to hold office into the following session, until he completes the regular parliamentary term of five years. Candidates for the Majlis must be over 25 years of age, Muslim, able to read and write both Arabic and Maldivian script, free of criminal involvement for the past five years, and in good mental and physical condition. Once elected, Majlis representatives are freely approached by citizens or groups with grievances or points of view on proposed legislation. The Majlis meets three times a year.

Since there are no political parties, factions in the Majlis tend to coalesce around individuals or points of view and vary according to issues. Any member may introduce legislation, which, if seconded, must be considered by the Majlis. All laws must be approved by the Majlis. The Majlis can question ministers and call for their removal. In practice, however, the Majlis generally supports the government after carefully discussing and sometimes amending its proposals.

Suffrage is universal over the age of 21. Despite the facade of free elections, the government is closely controlled by vested interests.

POLITICAL PARTIES

There are no political parties in the Maldives, although they are not banned. The last elections were held on January 22, 2005. Only nonpartisans stand for elections, though 18 of those elected were endorsed by the Maldivian Democratic Party, an exile political party in Sri Lanka that opposes Gayoom's rule.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The Maldives are divided, for purposes of local government, into 20 atolls, including the capital district. Each atoll is headed by a *verin*, or chief, who is assisted by an elected committee. On each inhabited island there is a *kateeb*, or headman. Both *kateeb* and *verin* are appointed by the president. All populated islands also have assistant headmen and a mosque official called a *mudin*. Male is divided into four administrative wards.

LEGAL SYSTEM

Maldivians follow sharia (Islamic law), and violators are occasionally flogged. However, punishment is usually confined to less physical means: fines, payments of compensation, house arrest, imprisonment, or banishment to sparsely populated islands, where prisoners must earn their daily keep. During trial the accused may defend himself and call witnesses. He may also be assisted by a lawyer, but there are few lawyers, and they are not provided by the courts. The accused is sentenced by the judge; the length and type of sentence are established by law and custom.

There are a High Court and eight lesser courts in Male, each dealing with specific types of cases (such as debt, theft, or property claims). On other islands are courts that deal with all types of cases. Judges who are trained in Islamic law are appointed by the president and serve at his pleasure and thus cannot be considered fully independent. Cases in island courts that present knotty legal points are referred to the appropriate specialized court in Male, whose judge may in turn refer the legal point to four judges attached to the Ministry of Justice for assistance. The High Court acts as a court of appeal and handles political cases, such as the trials of the participants in an attempted coup d'état in 1980 and of four Majlis members found guilty of bribery in 1983. President Gayoom can also review High Court decisions and appoint and dismiss judges, which makes the judiciary less than independent of the executive branch.

HUMAN RIGHTS

The Maldives has an extensive system of prisons; international human rights groups have reported that brutality

and torture are common in these institutions. Common forms of punishment are fines, house arrest, and banishment to thinly inhabited islands, where the person is expected to earn his own living. Violent crimes occur very rarely. The legal system is based on sharia, although the more draconian punishments provided for by the sharia are never administered. Still, violators of the law may be subject to flogging.

All publications must be registered with the government, and journalists are subject to prosecution for contravening any number of laws, such as "arousing ill feelings against a lawfully formed government." The government's National Security Service is responsible for certain human rights violations, such as arresting peaceful protestors and political opponents of President Gayoom. The government did amend its Prevention of Terrorism Act in 1998 to put limits on the police detention of suspected persons. However, though Gayoom promised reforms after riots in 2003 and 2004 protesting his autocratic regime, such reforms have not been forthcoming.

FOREIGN POLICY

The Maldives maintains diplomatic missions only at the United Nations' headquarters in New York, London, and Colombo, Sri Lanka, where most ambassadors accredited to Male are resident, except those from Sri Lanka, Pakistan, and India. The Maldives is a special member of the Commonwealth and also a founding member of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation. Maldives has long been an advocate of having the Indian Ocean declared a zone of peace, with foreign military forces and nuclear arms permanently banned from the area.

The Maldives has increasingly opened diplomatic relations with more and more countries, with the tourism industry opening the nation to foreign visitors.

DEFENSE

The internal security forces consist of the *lascreeen* (militia) and a sea patrol. Recruits must be 18 years of age or older. Military expenditures amounted to \$41.1 million in 2004, or 5.5 percent of gross domestic product (GDP).

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 5,000
 Military Manpower Availability: 71,774
 Military Expenditures \$million: 41.1
 as % of GDP: 5.5
 as % of central government expenditures: —
 Arms Imports \$million: —
 Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

Tourism, the Maldives' single largest economic sector, accounts for some 20 percent of GDP and more than 60 percent of foreign exchange receipts. Over 90 percent of government tax revenue comes from import duties and tourism-related taxes; over 560,000 tourists visited the islands in 2002. Fishing is a second leading sector. Agriculture and manufacturing continue to play minor roles in the economy, as constrained by the limited availability of cultivable land and the shortage of domestic labor. Most staple foods are imported. Industry, which consists mainly of garment production, boat building, and handicrafts, accounts for about 18 percent of GDP. Maldivian authorities worry about the impact of erosion and global warming on their low-lying country; 80 percent of the area is one meter or less above sea level.

The Maldivian government began an economic reform program in 1989, initially by lifting import quotas and opening some exports to the private sector. Subsequently, it has liberalized regulations to allow more foreign investment.

The Indian Ocean tsunami of December 2004 caused severe disruption to the country's tourist industry. Many of the islands suffered major damage, and the government announced that the damage set the development of the country back two decades.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 1.25
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 3,900
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 6.1
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 3.7
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 20
 Industry: 18
 Services: 62
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 30
 Government Consumption: 23
 Gross Domestic Investment: —
 Foreign Trade \$million: Exports: 90
 Imports: 392
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: —
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: —

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
116.0	114.6	115.4	116.5	111.8

Finance

National Currency: Rufiyaa (MVR)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = MVR 12.8
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 2.1
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: —
 Total External Debt \$million: 281
 Debt Service Ratio %: 3.47

(continues)

1506 Maldives

Finance *(continued)*

Balance of Payments \$million: —
International Reserves SDRs \$million: 156.7
Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 1.0

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 18
per capita \$: 61.30
Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 13.5

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
Revenues \$million: 224
Expenditures \$million: 282
Budget Deficit \$million: 58
Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 20
Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 5.4
Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: —
Irrigation, % of Farms having: —
Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: —
Total Farmland % of land area: 13.3
Livestock: Cattle million: —
Chickens million: —
Pigs 000: —
Sheep 000: —
Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters 000: —
Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 161

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: —
Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 4.4

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: —
Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 307
Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 1.11
Net Energy Imports % of use: —
Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: 25
Production kW-hr million: 117
Consumption kW-hr million: 109
Coal Reserves tons billion: —
Production tons 000: —
Consumption tons 000: —
Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
Production cubic feet billion: —
Consumption cubic feet billion: —
Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
Production barrels 000 per day: —
Consumption barrels 000 per day: 3.4
Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$million: 392
Exports \$million: 90
Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 7.3
Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 6.4
Balance of Trade \$million: —

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Singapore %	24.9	—
Sri Lanka %	13.8	13.4
India %	10.2	—
Malaysia %	7.7	—
United Arab Emirates %	7.7	—
Thailand %	5.1	17.0
United States %	—	32.1
Japan %	—	10.7
United Kingdom %	—	9.8
Indonesia %	—	4.5

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: —
Paved %: —
Automobiles: 100
Trucks and Buses: 100
Railroad: Track Length km: —
Passenger-km million: —
Freight-km million: —
Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 16
Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 72.8
Airports: 5
Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 447
Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 564
Number of Tourists from 000: 44
Tourist Receipts \$million: —
Tourist Expenditures \$million: 60

Communications

Telephones 000: 28.7
Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
Cellular Telephones 000: 41.9
Personal Computers 000: 20
Internet Hosts per million people: 1,524
Internet Users per 1,000 people: 43

ENVIRONMENT

Growing concern in the Maldives in the early 1990s focused not on internal dissent but on how much longer the country could remain above sea level. In two separate international reports, scientists warned that global

warming could cause ocean waters to rise and submerge the Maldives, which on average is only six feet above sea level, within 100 years. Another environmental threat to the tiny country is the continued depletion of freshwater aquifers.

There is also rising concern about coral-reef and marine-life damage because of coral mining (used for building and jewelry making), sand dredging, and solid-waste pollution. The mining of sand and coral have removed the natural coral reefs that protected several important islands, making them highly susceptible to the erosive effects of the sea. Such mining practices have recently been banned. The Asian Brown Cloud, a U.S.-sized area of pollution over the Indian Ocean, has the potential to wreak havoc on the tourism- and fishery-based Maldivian economy.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 3.3
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: —
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: —
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 1.82

LIVING CONDITIONS

The UN 2004 Human Development Report ranked Maldives 84th out of 177 countries in terms of standard of living. In 2004 life expectancy was 64 years; literacy stood at 97.2 percent, with 78 percent of eligible students enrolled in primary, secondary, and tertiary schools; and per capita GDP was \$3,900. The Maldives ranked 17th among 95 developing countries on the Human Development Report's poverty index.

As a chain of remote islands with few natural resources, the Maldives relies on imports to meet most basic needs. Most people travel by bicycle or foot. Inter-atoll transportation still depends mostly on local sailing boats, and most islands are not large enough to support automobiles. However, an international airport does bring several hundred thousand visitors to the islands annually.

Maldivians live mainly in detached dwellings made of everything from bricks to sticks. In Male, construction is similar to that found in Colombo, Sri Lanka. Most homes have electricity, but heating and cooking are done with oil or firewood. One-quarter of the population lives in Male; the rest live on islands in small communities.

HEALTH

As of 2004 there was one doctor for every 1,500 Maldivians and a total of 643 hospital beds to serve the en-

tire population; health-care expenditures amounted to 4.7 percent of GDP. The infant mortality rate was over 56 deaths per 1,000 live births. State-of-the-art medical services are available at Male's Indira Gandhi Memorial Hospital, which has 200 beds and a staff of both Maldivian and foreign doctors and specialists.

Malaria and diarrheal diseases have been drastically reduced. Waterborne-disease epidemics have occurred, however, often as caused by the contamination of wells. In 2002, 84 percent of the population had access to safe drinking water, but only 58 percent were using adequate sanitation facilities. Immunizations are provided free of charge by the government, and the rates of immunization for children one year of age were 98 percent for polio, DPT, and tuberculosis and 96 percent for measles. The HIV/AIDS prevalence rate in 2001 was 0.1 percent, and fewer than 100 people were living with the disease.

Health

Number of Physicians: 226
 Number of Dentists: —
 Number of Nurses: 358
 Number of Pharmacists: —
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 78
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: 1.8
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 56.52
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 110
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 4.7
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 96
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.1
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 98
 Measles: 96
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 58
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 84

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Fish and rice are the staple foods of the Maldives, with meat and chicken eaten only on special occasions. National dishes include fried fish, fish curry, and fish soup. The areca nut, an oval nut often chewed with betel leaf, cloves, and lime, is typically taken after a meal. As the national religion is Islam, alcohol is only available in tourist resorts. *Raa* is a sweet drink tapped from the crown of the palm trunk. Apart from coconuts, there are very few fruits and vegetables grown on the islands, so most of the food served at tourist resorts is imported.

Adequate nutrition and a balanced diet are problematic. Between 1995 and 2003, 30 percent of children under five suffered moderate or severe undernourishment. Only 44 percent of households used iodized salt, and a little more than half of households used vitamin A supplements.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 116.1
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 223.6

Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 22
 Industry: 18
 Services: 60
 Unemployment %: —

STATUS OF WOMEN

Although traditionally women and men have not been given equal political and economic opportunities, Maldivian women have benefited from the current government's efforts to improve such opportunities for them. In 1982 the president appointed a National Women's Committee, which is charged with increasing participation by women in the country. However, by Islamic and Maldivian tradition, women still play lesser roles than do men in public life.

Nevertheless, patterns of behavior and living conditions for women are less restrictive than in some other Islamic countries. For example, women are not required to wear veils, and a growing number of women serve in responsible positions in the government and in professions.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 6
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.0
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 36.1

WORK

As of 2000 the Maldivian labor force was 88,000 strong, with negligible unemployment. Almost one-third of these workers were foreign. About 22 percent of workers are involved in agriculture, producing coconuts, corn, sweet potatoes, pineapples, and oranges, while 18 percent are engaged in industry, tourism and fish processing being chief among these. Other industries include shipping, boat building, coconut processing, garments, woven mats, rope, handicrafts, and coral and sand mining. The majority of the workforce is involved in the service sector.

Workers lack the legal rights to form trade unions, stage strikes, or bargain collectively. In practice, no unions exist, although some workers have established informal associations that address labor issues. The minimum work age is 14. There are no legal regulations regarding the length of the workweek or minimum wage.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 88,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 43.9

EDUCATION

Education is neither free nor compulsory. Schooling lasts 11 years, as divided into five years of primary school and six years of secondary school. Secondary schooling consists of two cycles of three years each. Paralleling the modern school system is the traditional system, consisting of *kuttabs* and madrassas, in which children receive Islamic instruction.

The academic year runs from January to December. The medium of instruction is Dhivehi in secular schools and Arabic in Islamic schools. Government middle schools in Male use English as the medium of instruction.

Government expenditures on education were 18 percent of the budget in 2002. By early 2003 every inhabited island was equipped to provide primary-school education through grade five. In 2002 net primary-school enrollment was 92 percent of eligible students; however only 51 percent of eligible students were enrolled in secondary school. Fewer islands have secondary schools for grades six through 10, and the only high school (for grades 11 and 12) in the Maldives is in Male. Regardless of secondary enrollment, literacy is high; in 2003 the rate was 97.2 percent. The country has seven postsecondary technical-training institutes, but most Maldivians must go abroad for a college education.

The World Bank committed \$17 million for education development in the Maldives in 2000–04, including distance-learning programs. Another \$7 million came from the Asian Development Bank in 2001–03 to support postsecondary education development.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 97.2
 Male %: 97.1
 Female %: 97.3
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 11.9
 First Level: Primary schools: 134
 Teachers: 3,411
 Students: 68,242
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 20.0
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 92.4
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: —
 Teachers: 1,691
 Students: 25,069
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 15.0
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 51.4
 Third Level: Institutions: —
 Teachers: —
 Students: —
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: —
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: —

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The development of a mechanized fishery industry has been the major technological focus in the Maldives. Research is performed in cooperation with the UN Development Program. In 2005 the Asian Development Bank agreed to provide the Maldives with a \$600,000 technical-assistance grant to develop a technological master plan. The country wants to enhance the role of science and technology in development, especially in improving tourism, fisheries, and opening up new avenues such as e-commerce.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: —
 Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

Two daily newspapers are published in Male, in Dhivehi and in English. The national news agency is the Haveeru News Agency. Book-publishing activity is reflected in the average annual title output of three volumes.

The state-owned radio station, Voice of Maldives, operates one medium-wave transmitter and four shortwave transmitters. It broadcasts 4,288 hours annually in English and Dhivehi. Daily news bulletins from Radio Beijing, the BBC, and Radio Australia are also relayed. One of the first acts of the Gayoom government was to stop renting air-time to Christian evangelistic ministries.

A limited television service was begun in 1978. Male has a public library and a public museum.

The law allows authorities to shut down newspapers and sanction journalists for articles containing unfounded criticism of the government. Moreover, regulations make editors responsible for the content of the material they publish. Thus, self-censorship has been practiced by the media during Gayoom's rule. However, after Gayoom was elected for a sixth term in 2003, newspapers as well as the state-run radio and television became more openly critical of government policies. Still, in its 2004 index on international press freedom, the watchdog media group Reporters without Borders ranked Maldives 155th out of 167 countries.

As of 2002 there were about 42,000 cellular telephone users and 15,000 Internet users.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 2
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: 3

Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers 000: 37.7
 per 1,000: 108
 Television sets 000: 11
 per 1,000: 38

CULTURE

Traditional culture in the Maldives centers on dance performances accompanied by large drums, called *boduberu*. Once part of the life of the islanders, such frenzied dancing is now put on only for tourists. However, modern rock bands in the islands have incorporated some of the rhythms of the *boduberu*. Crafts such as carving and basketry are also still practiced.

Much of the contemporary cultural life of the islands is centered on Islamic tradition and festivals, such as that at the end of Ramadan. Western and South Asian influences have also found their way into the cultural mix in the form of pop music and Hindi movies.

The National Museum in Male has a collection of items of historical and cultural interest from both the pre-Islamic and Islamic eras of Maldivian history. These include various archaeological finds from local excavations.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Until recently, social life in Maldives was largely determined by *fanditha*—a mixture of folk medicine, charms, and black magic based on ancient beliefs and superstitions, with the addition of Arabic Koranic verses. Magic was often used in political intrigue and courtship and marriage rites as well as for launching new ships, ensuring good fish catches, finding guilty parties when crimes were committed, and treating the sick. *Fanditha* assumed less benign forms when it was employed to weaken or kill enemies.

Though modern Maldivians now find *fanditha* traditions outmoded, many ancient beliefs survive. For example, islanders fear jinn, evil spirits that come from the sea, land, and sky. These are blamed for everything that cannot be explained by religion or science. The Handi is another such holdover from a more primitive belief system. Handi has historically referred to an attractive demon woman, dressed in red, who seduces and slowly

kills any man unlucky enough to marry her. The word is derived from the Sanskrit *Candi*, a name for the Hindu goddess Kali. Handi is now often used by Maldivians to describe any horrifying demon supposedly seen at night or during bouts of tropical fever.

A favorite Maldivian myth is the story of King Koi-mala, who supposedly founded Male. An orphan, this future king was raised by cows. He was then herded and captured by the King of Serendip, whom he so enchanted with tales of his feral life that the King of Serendip gave him his daughter's hand. One day a bird told him to build a small boat and set sail. He landed on Male Atoll and decided to start a kingdom there.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Television and home videos are popular forms of entertainment. Martial arts movies and films from India make up much of the cinematic fare. While fishing is one of the major industries, it also provides recreational opportunities for those not working as fishermen. The thousands of miles of coastline in the Maldives beckon Maldivians, as they do the foreign tourists who flock to the various pristine atolls.

ETIQUETTE

Handshakes are the usual form of greeting but are not used between Muslim men and women. Many of the elements of Maldivian daily life reflect the country's Islamic tradition. Shoes should be removed before entering mosques or private homes. Dress is conservative. Taboos regarding pork and alcohol are maintained for the Islamic population.

FAMILY LIFE

About 80 percent of Maldivian households consist of a single nuclear family, composed of a married couple and their children, rather than an extended family. Families tend to be large by Western standards; the fertility rate in 2004 was five children born per woman. Typically, unmarried adults remain with relatives instead of living alone or with strangers. The man is usually the head of the household, and descent is patrilineal. Women do not accept their husbands' names after marriage, instead maintaining their maiden names. Inheritance of property is through both males and females.

As Muslims, men may have as many as four wives, but polygamy is not widespread. Instead, serial marriage is more usual. Islamic law as practiced in the Maldives makes divorce easy for both men and women, and divorce rates

are among the highest in the world; in the 1970s the divorce rate was estimated to be 85 percent. According to the 1977 census, nearly half of women over the age of thirty had been married four times or more. Half of all women marry by the age of fifteen, while men marry a bit later.

These statistics are changing with modern times. In 1999 the divorce rate had fallen to 33 percent throughout the country, although in Male it was still high, at 64 percent.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Western fashions predominate on the streets of Male and on many of the other islands. Traditional clothing is also still worn, however, including the *mundu* for men, a cotton sarong in conservative colors, and saris for women. Clothing is light but conservative, with head coverings often employed by women, according to Muslim tradition.

SPORTS

Soccer is the most popular spectator sport, with the national team competing in the Asian and world championships. The national team's excellent performance in World Cup qualifiers in 2004, upsetting both South Korea and Vietnam, brought a new level of awareness to the game on the part of the islanders.

Water sports, such as scuba diving, are popular with tourists.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1965** The Maldives proclaims formal independence and joins the United Nations. Independence agreement provides for the retention of a British air base in Gan.
- 1968** Following popular referendum the Maldives sultanate is replaced with a republican form of government, with Ibrahim Nasir as president.
- 1972** Ahmed Zaki is named prime minister.
- 1975** Zaki is dismissed and placed under house arrest.
- 1976** United Kingdom withdraws from the Gan air base.
- 1977** Dhivehi script is romanized. All five vice presidents are demoted to the rank of minister.
- 1978** President Nasir steps down for health reasons, and Maumoon Abdul Gayoom is elected president.
- 1979** The Majlis launches an investigation into former president Nasir's administration. Nasir is charged with embezzlement, the collection of illegal taxes, and other violations of the constitution.

- 1980** The Maldivian Monetary Authority is set up as the nation's central bank.
- 1981** The national currency name is changed from rupee to rufiyaa.
- 1982** Maldives joins the Commonwealth as its 47th member.
The Bank of Maldives, the first indigenous commercial bank, is established.
- 1983** President Gayoom is reelected to a five-year term.
- 1986** Accord is signed with India in which New Delhi pledges to give the Maldives about \$17 million toward the building of a hospital at Male, as well as to other projects.
- 1988** President Gayoom is reelected to another five-year term in September.
A coup attempt launched by an amphibious force, composed mostly of ethnic Tamil mercenaries from Sri Lanka, is quashed with the assistance of Indian army commandos.
- 1989** Sixteen people are sentenced to death, and another 59 are jailed, for their involvement in the failed 1988 coup attempt.
- 1990** Two separate international reports warn that global warming could cause the ocean to submerge the Maldives within 100 years.
- 1993** President Gayoom runs unopposed for a fourth five-year term as president.
- 1998** A new constitution is adopted.
President Gayoom is reelected to a fifth term as president.
- 1999** More than 125 nonparty candidates vie for 40 seats in parliamentary elections.
- 2000** Amnesty International accuses the security forces of Maldives of having tortured three opposition candidates for parliament in the 1999 elections.
- 2001** Chinese Premier Zhu Rongji visits the Maldives in May. An agreement on economic and technical cooperation is signed between the two countries.
- 2002** President Gayoom warns of the dangers of global warming at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, South Africa.
- 2003** Antigovernment riots break out in Male as a result of the deaths of four prisoners.
Gayoom is reelected to a sixth term, taking 90 percent of the vote.
- 2004** Prodemocracy demonstrations are met with a declaration of a state of emergency. Gayoom promises democratic reforms.

In December, nearly 100 are killed and millions of dollars of damage to the country's infrastructure is sustained when the Indian Ocean tsunami strikes.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- CIA World Factbook: Maldiver
<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/mv.html>
- Maldiver Mission to the United Nations
<http://www.un.int/maldiver/>
- Ministry of Planning and National Development
<http://www.planning.gov.mv/>
- Republic of Maldiver
<http://www.maldiverinfo.gov.mv/>

MALI

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Mali (République du Mali)

ABBREVIATION

ML

CAPITAL

Bamako

HEAD OF STATE

President Amadou Toumani Touré (from 2002)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Ousmane Issoufi Maïga (from 2004)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Multiparty democracy

POPULATION

12,291,529 (2005)

AREA

1,240,000 sq km (478,764 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Bambara, Fulani, Marka, Songha, Malinke, Tuareg, Senufo

LANGUAGES

French (official), Bambara

RELIGIONS

Islam, animism, Christianity

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Communauté financière d'Afrique franc

NATIONAL FLAG

Tricolor of green (left), yellow, and red vertical stripes

NATIONAL EMBLEM

In black and white, a bird hovers above a mosquelike structure, while bows with taut strings and fixed arrows are poised outward; at the bottom is a rising sun with nine rays.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"Pour l'Afrique et pour toi" (For Africa and for you, Mali)

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day), May 1 (Labor Day), September 22 (National Day, Independence Day), Christmas, various Islamic festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

September 22, 1960

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

January 12, 1992

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Mali, a landlocked country located in West Africa, has an area of 1,240,000 sq km (478,764 sq mi), extending 1,852 km (1,151 mi) east-southeast to west-southwest and 1,258 km (782 mi) north-northwest to south-southeast. Mali shares its international border of 7,501 km (4,661 mi) with seven neighbors: Algeria, Niger, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Senegal, and Mauritania.

Mali is generally flat, except in the south and the east. In the south the Futa Djallon Highlands and the Manding Mountains provide a barrier separating Mali from Guinea. The eastern region contains two spectacular mountain ranges: the Bandiagara Plateau and the Hombori Mountains, the highest point of which is the Hand of Fatima at Hombori Tondo (1,155 m; 3,788 ft). The Adrar des Iforas is an eroded sandstone plateau in north-

eastern Mali that forms part of the Ahaggar Mountain system. The central part of Mali is filled by the floodplain of the Niger River delta, covering a surface area of some 103,599 sq km (40,000 sq mi). Northern Mali lies within the Sahara. In the extreme north are vast plains known as the Tanezrouft and Taoudenni, covered in many areas by shifting sand dunes known as *ergs*.

Geography

Area sq km: 1,240,000; sq mi 478,764

World Rank: 23rd

Land Boundaries, km: Algeria 1,376; Burkina Faso 1,000; Guinea 858;

Côte d'Ivoire 532; Mauritania 2,237; Niger 821; Senegal 419

Coastline, km: 0

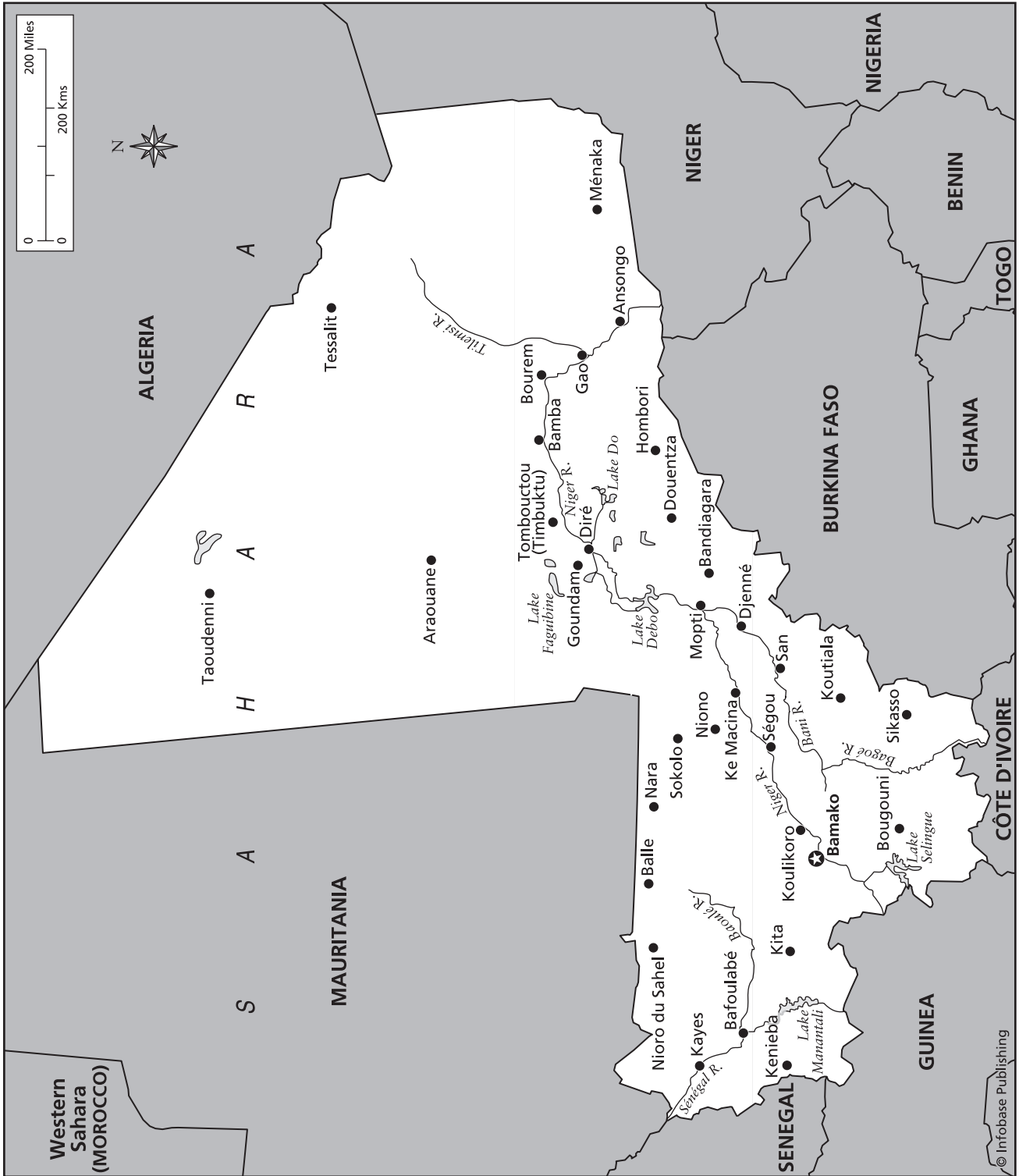
Elevation Extremes meters:

Lowest: Senegal River 23

Highest: Hombori Tondo 1,155

(continues)

Mali



Geography *(continued)*

Land Use %

Arable Land:	3.8
Permanent Crops:	0.0
Forest:	10.8
Other:	85.4

Population of Principal Cities (1998)

Bamako	1,016,167
Sikasso	113,803

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Mali has three climatic zones: Sudanic, Sahelian, and Saharan. In general, the year is divided into three main seasons: a rainy season from June to October; a cool, dry season from November to February; and a hot, dry season from March to May. The average temperature in the Sahelian region is 30°C (86°F), but in the summer temperatures over 40°C (104°F) are common. The Saharan zone, which constitutes 40 percent of the national territory, receives little or no rain. The Sahelian zone receives 200–400 mm (8–16 in) annually, the Sudanese zone 700–1,000 mm (28–39 in). Rains rarely last for more than a few hours in all regions.

From November through January the *alizé* blows cool air from the northeast. In February the dreaded harmattan begins to blow hot, scorching wind from the Sahara, causing temperatures to rise to 60°C (140°F).

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature:	86°F to 104°F
Average Rainfall	
Saharan zone:	0 in
Sahelian zone:	8 in to 16 in
Sudanese zone:	28 in to 39 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Two distinct vegetation zones are found in Mali. The Saharan/Sahelian zone in the north is steppe-like (Sahelian) and also contains fixed dunes (Saharan), while the wetter southern Sudanese zone contains dense forest along with savanna. Trees in the Sudanese zone include the twoball nitta, kapok, mahogany, baobab, and cailcedra. In the drier Sahel are found palmyra and doum palm near the border with the Sudanese zone, while farther north dry-weather vegetation such as acacia, gum trees, and mimosa are found.

Animal life also varies according to zone. In the Saharan zone are found Dorca's gazelle, cheetah, and wild sheep. The Sahelian zone is home to a wide variety of animals, including the oryx, gazelle, giraffe, wart hog, ostrich, bustard,

red monkey, cheetah, lion, jackal, fox, and hyena. In the Sudanese zone are large and small antelope, buffalo, elephant, lion, hare, and monkey. Avian life includes guinea fowl, quail, pigeon, and water birds such as duck, teal, sandpiper, peewee, godwit, and woodcock. Other birds found in the south are pelican, ibis, egret, heron, eagle, and vulture.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005:	12,291,529
World Rank:	67th
Density per sq km:	9.6
% of annual growth (1999-2003):	2.4
Male %:	49.0
Female %:	51.0
Urban %:	32.3
Age Distribution %:	
0–14:	47.1
15–64:	49.9
65 and over:	3.0
Population 2025:	20,436,000
Birth Rate per 1,000:	46.77
Death Rate per 1,000:	19.05
Rate of Natural Increase %:	3.3
Total Fertility Rate:	6.5
Expectation of Life (years):	
Males:	44.69
Females:	45.51
Marriage Rate per 1,000:	—
Divorce Rate per 1,000:	—
Average Size of Households:	5.6
Induced Abortions:	—

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Mali is ethnically a mosaic of tribes, each with its own language, dominant territory, occupation, and social organization. The vast majority of these tribes are Negroid. The Tuareg, however, are classified as Caucasoid and are probably of Berber origin. The Fulani, or Peul, are of mixed origin. The Fulani are also physically distinct from their neighbors, being thin, tall, and light skinned, with some Caucasian facial features. The main ethnic groups of Mali, however, are the Bamana, Malinke, and Sarakole, accounting for 50 percent of the total population.

The Tuareg, Fulani, and Maure, or Moor, are primarily shepherds; the Bozo and Somono are fishermen; the Sarakole and Dioula are merchants; the others are agriculturists. Because of inhospitable climatic conditions, Mali never had a large Western community, even as a French territory. The number of French in the country is estimated at 4,000.

LANGUAGES

The official language is French, but probably less than 10 percent of the population can speak or write it. Bambara

(or Bambara-ka) qualifies as the lingua franca, and since a large proportion of the educated administrators belong to the Bambara tribe, it tends to replace French as the language of administration in certain situations. In the inland delta, Fulfulde, the vernacular of the Fulani, competes with Bambara as the lingua franca, while in the east and northeast Songhai is widely spoken. Most of these languages belong to the Niger-Congo group.

RELIGIONS

Islam, introduced in the 11th century, is Mali's predominant religion, claiming 90 percent of the population as adherents. Islam is the religion of the Sarakole, Maure, Tuareg, Songhai, Dioula, and Tukulor peoples, as well as of most of the Bamana. The Bozo, Fulani, and Somono are only partially Islamized. Most Muslims belong to the Malekite School of the Sunni sect. Of the many Islamic brotherhoods found in West Africa, both Tijaniya and Qadiriya are represented in Mali. More recently, the Wahhabis, a fundamentalist group originating in Saudi Arabia, have gained many adherents. Djenné and Timbuktu are noted centers of Islamic learning.

Animism is still strong in the south and the west among the Bambara, Malinke, Bobo, and Senufo. Animists constitute about 9 percent of the population, but their numbers are being eroded by vigorous Islamic missionary activity, as supported by petrodollars from Libya and Saudi Arabia.

Christians number just over 120,000, of whom some 10 percent are Catholics. The first Catholic missions were established in the late 19th century by the White Fathers, and by 1895 Catholicism had penetrated the stronghold of Islam in Timbuktu. The Catholic Church is organized in five dioceses—Kayes, Mopti, San, Ségou, and Sikasso—and one archdiocese, at Bamako. The majority of Protestant missionaries are from the United States.

Religious Affiliations

Muslim	11,062,000
Indigenous Beliefs	1,106,000
Christian	123,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Mali was part of the Empire of Ghana, which was destroyed by Muslim Berbers in the 11th century. By the middle of the 13th century Sundiata Keita had converted the region to Islam and had taken control of the gold and salt mines and trade. As the wealth of the region grew, Djenné and Timbuktu became powerful commercial centers. The Songhai Empire, which was built in the east with Gao as its center, took control of the west. Songhai

dominance lasted about one century, until they were defeated by the Moroccan Berbers.

The French began their conquest of the territory now known as Mali in 1881. Col. Gustave Borgnis Deborderes opened the campaign by seizing Kita and building a fort at Bamako. Later, Marabout Ahmadou and Al Mami Samory Touré, the leaders of the Muslim resistance, were compelled to accept a French protectorate. When they resisted further encroachments, Col. Louis Archinard led a military expedition from 1888 to 1893 that captured Ségou, put Ahmadou to flight, and forced Touré to withdraw to northern Côte d'Ivoire. With the captures of Timbuktu in 1893 and Sikasso in 1899, the conquest of Mali was complete.

Mali remained part of French West Africa until 1958, when it became a part of the Soudan Federation (not to be confused with Sudan in East Africa, although both names are derived from the Arabic term *bilad es sudan*, the "land of the black people"), which also included Senegal, Dahomey, and Upper Volta. The latter two withdrew from the Soudan Federation in 1959, and the surviving union between Senegal and Mali, known as the Mali Federation, expired in 1960, when Senegal withdrew.

Unlike Senegal, Mali was not subjected to systematic Gallicization, and the French influence on the administration, economy, and education were slight. The major French legacy is the French language. Current relations with France are good, although Mali is no longer a member of the French Community.

At independence Mali's government was headed by President Modibo Keita, the leader of the Sudanese Union Party, which won all seats in the 1959 legislative elections. Keita, a Marxist, gradually moved the country to a one-party socialist dictatorship, with all opposition banned. He nationalized major enterprises and attempted to free Mali of French economic domination by moving it out of the franc zone. His attempts at pursuing a socialist development policy failed as a result of inflation, poor government management, and increased taxes.

In 1968 Keita was overthrown in a bloodless coup organized by a group of junior officers, who set up the Military Committee for National Liberation (Comité Militaire pour la Libération Nationale, CMLN), which installed Moussa Traoré as president and Yoro Diakité as head of government. The military regime abrogated the constitution, banned political parties, and reversed the economic collectivization of the previous regime. It pledged a quick return of political and civil rights, but instability within the regime led to further centralization of the military command. In 1969 a total of 20 officers were arrested in an attempted coup; Diakité was removed as prime minister, and Traoré assumed the post. In 1972 Diakité was tried and convicted of plotting to overthrow the government the previous year. He died in prison in 1973.

To placate growing opposition to military rule, in 1974 the government submitted a constitution providing

for return to civilian rule by 1979. The document was approved by a vote of 99 percent. During the period of transition, Traoré announced the formation of the Mali People's Democratic Union (UDPM) as the country's single party. This further exacerbated opposition to the regime by students and politicians barred from political activity. Army resistance to civilian rule led to an attempted coup in 1978.

Civilian rule was formally restored in 1979, with the UDPM as the country's sole political party. Traoré was elected, unopposed, to a five-year term as president. The presidential term was increased to six years in 1982. Running without opposition, Traoré won reelection in 1985, when pro forma legislative balloting was introduced. The office of prime minister was re-created in 1986, with Mamadou Dembelé assuming the post. Traoré abolished the position two years later without explanation.

Bending to prevailing political winds, Traoré agreed in 1990 to allow opposition leaders to speak freely and gave permission for four new independent journals to be published. However, two months later a journalist was arrested for distributing antigovernment literature. Soon after, 175 prominent Malians published an open letter demanding multiparty democracy. In 1991 prodemocracy supporters protested from March 22 to 25, calling for Traoré's resignation. Government troops opened fire on crowds, killing as many as 150 citizens.

The protests culminated in a coup on March 26, when soldiers overthrew Traoré and his government, promising to replace it with a multiparty democracy. The coup leaders formed the National Reconciliation Council, headed by Lt. Col. Amadou Toumani Touré, and dissolved the UDPM. Touré announced plans to establish "social justice and total democracy" for Mali "when the conditions are right."

In 1992 a new basic law (constitution) was approved by 98 percent of voters in a referendum. In the first presidential election held under the new constitution, Alpha Oumar Konaré, leader of the Alliance for Democracy in Mali (ADEMA), defeated his opponent by a 40 percent margin. Konaré's first two prime ministers, Younoussi Touré and Abdoulaye Sékou Sow, had to resign on account of public unrest. They were succeeded by Ibrahim Boubacar Keïta, whose cabinet included 11 ADEMA members and five members of minor parties. In the 1997 presidential election Konaré garnered 96 percent of the vote. In the two rounds of legislative balloting that followed, ADEMA candidates easily dominated the electoral field, which was depleted by an opposition boycott. In 2000 Prime Minister Keïta stepped down unexpectedly and was replaced by Mandé Sidibé. Despite criticisms of corruption and failed economic policies, under Konaré the government became somewhat more representative and responsive to citizens.

In 1999 the former dictator Traoré, his wife, and an associate were sentenced to death for embezzlement, but

their sentences were commuted to life in prison by President Konaré. Presidential elections in 2002 resulted in a victory for the former interim military ruler Amadou Touré, who ran as an independent candidate. Prime Minister Sidibé resigned in 2002 and was replaced by Modibo Keïta, who in turn was replaced by Ahmed Mohamed Ag Hamani. In 2004, Ousmane Issoufi Maïga became the new prime minister. That year almost half of the country's crop was destroyed by locusts.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

Head of State

1960–68	Modibo Keïta (president)
1968–69	Moussa Traoré (chairman of Military Committee for National Liberation)
1969–79	Moussa Traoré (head of state)
1979–91	Moussa Traoré (president)
1991–92	Amadou Toumani Touré (chairman of transitional committee)
1992–2002	Alpha Oumar Konaré (president)
2002–	Amadou Toumani Touré (president)

CONSTITUTION

The CMLN, which took power in 1968, abrogated the constitution of 1960 and replaced it with the Fundamental Law, under which the Military Committee and the Supreme Court ruled by decree. A new constitution, drafted in 1974 and approved by referendum, took effect in 1979. Under the provisions of this constitution, Mali was to be a single-party state, with the newly formed UDPM as the sole legal party. The president was both head of government and head of state. Under amendments of 1982 and 1985, the president is elected by universal suffrage for an unlimited number of six-year terms.

Following the coup of March 26, 1991, the 1979 constitution was suspended and the UDPM dissolved. The coup leaders, led by Lt. Col. Amadou Toumani Touré, formed the National Reconciliation Council. Upon taking power the National Reconciliation Council promised to lead the country to multiparty democracy. In 1992 a constitutional referendum was passed that indeed established a parliamentary democracy.

PARLIAMENT

The National Assembly consists of 147 members elected by universal suffrage from age 18 and 13 members elected by Malians abroad. Members serve for five-year terms and must be at least 21 years of age. The last elections were held in 2002.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Before the coup of March 1991, the UDPM, formally constituted in 1979, was the country's sole legal political party. It was governed by the 18-member Bureau Exécutif Central, selected from the 100-member National Council. The council served as the party's executive body between congress meetings.

The 1991 coup leaders promised to return the country to a multiparty democracy, and more than a dozen parties formed after the ban on political parties was lifted in 1992. The largest is the ADEMA, which captured 128 of the 147 seats in the National Assembly in 1997. This party was founded by many of the early intellectuals who opposed the Traoré regime. In the 2002 elections ADEMA took 45 seats, while the coalition *Espoir 2002* won 66 seats. The progressive *Alternance et Changement* won 10 seats, nonpartisans six.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For purposes of regional government, Mali is divided into the capital district of Bamako and eight regions, then further subdivided into 46 *cercles* (counties). There is no representative institution at the local level, and all units are administered by officials appointed by the national government.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The legal system is based on French civil and customary law. The judiciary is headed by the Supreme Court, with 19 judges sitting in two sections: the judicial section, comprising three civil chambers and one criminal chamber, and the administrative section, consisting of a single chamber. The members of the Supreme Court are nominated by the executive for five-year terms.

The Malian judicial system is based on the French model, so the principle of habeas corpus does not exist. Bail is not legally available, but prisoners are sometimes released on their own recognizance. Prisoners are usually allowed access to a lawyer of their choosing. Administrative backlogs often cause delays in bringing people to trial.

The judiciary is part of the executive branch and therefore potentially subject to interference. Generally, trials are short in duration. Although confessions are not coerced, defendants usually admit guilt, and defense lawyers tend to argue mitigating circumstances. The verdict and the sentence are rendered by a panel of three judges. The appeals process is limited to presidential pardon or a call for a new trial. The National

Assembly can convene the High Court of Justice to hear cases against state ministers.

HUMAN RIGHTS

In terms of political and civil rights, Mali is classified as a country that is not free. In the past, especially under Traoré, there were widespread reports of political imprisonment, the mistreatment of defendants, and the arrests of student protestors. Amnesty International published an extensive report on the failure of Malian officials to comply with internationally recognized standards of trial and detention.

Some advances have been made. The UN Human Rights Committee praised Mali in 2003 for its progress in improving human rights in the country, citing legislative reform and efforts to eradicate child trafficking. However, the committee called on the government to improve the status of women.

FOREIGN POLICY

Reflecting a commitment to "dynamic nonalignment," the Traoré administration improved relations with the West as well as Russia and China. A border dispute with Burkina Faso over the Agacher Strip was settled by a World Court ruling that divided the disputed territory into roughly equal parts.

Relations with Libya have long been frayed over a number of issues, such as the expulsion of 2,500 Malian workers in 1985, Libyan support for Tuareg insurgents, and the expulsion of Libyan diplomats. In 1991 Algeria mediated a truce between Bamako and moderate Tuareg leaders, which led to the repatriation of thousands of Tuareg refugees in Algeria.

President Konaré made a priority of intensifying regional integration. He served as chairman of the West African Economic Community and of the West African Economic and Monetary Union in 1999.

In 2003 there were border closures as a result of the civil war in Côte d'Ivoire

DEFENSE

The Malian armed forces have never been tested in battle, and much of the equipment obtained by former president Keita from the Soviet Union is now obsolete. Military deployment is designed primarily not for protection against neighbors but to ensure the survival of the regime in any potential conflict with internal enemies. The approximately 12,000-man military was supported by a \$22.4 million budget in 2004, about 0.4 percent of gross domestic product (GDP).

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 12,200
 Military Manpower Availability: 2,206,728
 Military Expenditures \$million: 22.4
 as % of GDP: 0.4
 as % of central government expenditures: —
 Arms Imports \$million: 1
 Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

Mali is among the poorest countries in the world, with 65 percent of its land area desert or semidesert. Economic activity is largely confined to the riverine area irrigated by the Niger. About 10 percent of the population is nomadic, and some 80 percent of the labor force is engaged in farming and fishing. Industrial activity is concentrated on processing farm commodities. Mali is heavily dependent on foreign aid and is vulnerable to fluctuations in world prices for cotton, its main export. Several multinational corporations increased gold-mining operations in 1996–98, and the government has anticipated Mali's becoming a major sub-Saharan gold exporter. In 1997 the government continued its successful implementation of a structural adjustment program recommended by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which program is helping the economy grow, diversify, and attract foreign investment. Mali's adherence to economic reform, in addition to the 50 percent devaluation of the CFA franc in January 1994, pushed economic growth to a sturdy 5 percent average in 1996–2002, though growth slowed to just 0.5 percent in 2003, partly owing to poor rainfall and the effects of the civil war in Côte d'Ivoire. Consequently, the World Bank and IMF granted \$675 million in debt relief. Agriculture was particularly hard hit in 2004 when a plague of locusts destroyed 45 percent of crops.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 11
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 900
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 6.5
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 4.0
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 45
 Industry: 17
 Services: 38
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 70
 Government Consumption: 16
 Gross Domestic Investment: —
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 0.915
 Imports: 0.927
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 1.8
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 40.4

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
109.4	108.6	114.3	120.0	118.4

Finance

National Currency: CFA franc (XOF)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = XOF 581.2
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 486
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 4.5
 Total External Debt \$billion: 3.3
 Debt Service Ratio %: 5.78
 Balance of Payments \$million: —
 International Reserves SDRs \$million: 582.4
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 4.5

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 527.6
 per capita \$: 45.30
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 129

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$million: 764
 Expenditures \$million: 828
 Budget Deficit \$million: 64
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 45
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 5.0
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 0.06
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 2.9
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 9.0
 Total Farmland % of land area: 3.8
 Livestock: Cattle million: 7.5
 Chickens million: 30
 Pigs 000: 68
 Sheep million: 8.36
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 5.3
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 101

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 114
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: —

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 20
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 203
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 17
 Net Energy Imports % of use: —
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: 114
 Production kW-hr billion: 0.48
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 0.45
 Coal Reserves tons billion: —
 Production tons million: —
 Consumption tons million: —

Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
 Production cubic feet billion: —
 Consumption cubic feet billion: —
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
 Production barrels 000 per day: —
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 4.1
 Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 0.927
 Exports \$billion: 0.915
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 12.5
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 6.5
 Balance of Trade \$million: —

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
France %	15.5	—
Senegal %	7.8	—
Côte d'Ivoire %	7.2	—
Thailand %	—	14.2
China %	—	12.3
India %	—	8.0
Italy %	—	7.5
United Kingdom %	—	6.1

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 15,100
 Paved %: 12.0
 Automobiles: 18,900
 Trucks and Buses: 31,700
 Railroad: Track Length km: 729
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: —
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: —
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: —
 Airports: 28
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 130
 Length of Waterways km: 1,815

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 96
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 105
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 62

Communications

Telephones 000: 56.6
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.07
 Cellular Telephones 000: 250
 Personal Computers 000: 15
 Internet Hosts per million people: 15
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 2

ENVIRONMENT

Mali does not have adequate supplies of potable water. The land also suffers from deforestation and soil erosion, which is leading to increased desertification. Poaching of game is also a major problem in wildlife management.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 10.8
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: -99
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 2
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 0.05

LIVING CONDITIONS

One of the poorest countries in the world, Mali ranked 174th out of 177 countries on the UN 2004 Human Development Index, which measures standard of living. Life expectancy as of 2004 was 45 years. Only 26 percent of eligible students were enrolled in Mali's primary, secondary, and tertiary schools in 2002, and the literacy rate was a low 46.4 percent. Per capita GDP in 2004 was only \$900; Mali was 93rd among 95 developing countries on the UN's poverty index, with most of the population living on less than \$1 per day.

Since 1992 the government has toiled to improve the basic infrastructure of the country, but there is still much to be done. Salaries are low, housing is in short supply, and infrastructure is in need of upgrading. The most commonly owned consumer goods are transistor radios and motorbikes or bicycles, although with an increasing number of households having access to electricity, supplied either by public utilities or generators, television sets and VCRs are becoming popular consumer items. Furnishings are simple. Urban families may have a couch, table and chairs, and cabinets, but rural homes are more modest. Courtyards and shaded balconies are the scenes of much of daily life in this warm country. Most income goes toward food, clothing, and health care.

Housing in Bamako is similar to that in European cities, with high-rise apartments and bungalows. In rural areas, housing ranges from the tents of the Tuareg nomads to the circular mud huts with thatched roofs characteristic of indigenous African villages, in addition to the traditional Sudanese architecture made of *banco*, a mixture of wet mud and straw that dries to form cement. As of 2001, 32 percent of the population lived in urban areas, while about 10 percent of the inhabitants are nomadic and the remainder rural.

HEALTH

Malaria, with a 4 percent incidence rate, is a major health problem in Mali, and although medication to treat the

disease is available, the cost is generally high. Gastrointestinal diseases also arise as a result of lack of refrigeration, poor sanitation, and lack of access to adequate water supplies. In 2002, 45 percent of the population had access to improved sanitation, 48 percent to safe drinking water. Respiratory illnesses, parasites, and infections of various kinds are also common among both children and adults. Leprosy and tuberculosis are chronic issues. Most doctors practice in urban areas, while nurses and midwives provide health care in rural areas. Many people still rely on herbal cures and the help of local healers rather than Western-style medicine.

Much of the country's health care is provided by public services. The Institute of Tropical Ophthalmology and the Marchoux Institute for Leprosy in Bamako treat patients and carry out research. However, there are few adequately equipped hospitals or clinics, and there is also a lack of trained doctors and nurses. As of 2004 there were fewer than five doctors per 100,000 people, and just 41 percent of births were attended by trained health-care providers. Infant mortality is correspondingly high; in 2004 it stood at a very high 117 deaths per 1,000 live births. In 2003, HIV/AIDS incidence was 1.9 percent. There were 12,000 HIV/AIDS deaths that year, and 140,000 more were living with the illness. Some 75,000 children under 17 were orphaned by AIDS in 2003.

The government spends 2.3 percent of GDP on health, which is not enough to establish infrastructure and provide public access. Private expenditures on health care amount to 2.2 percent of GDP. Immunization rates are low. As of 2003 the rate of immunization for tuberculosis was 63 percent, for DPT 69 percent, for polio 65 percent, and for measles 68 percent. The government provides free immunization, but access to clinics is limited for much of the population. Female genital mutilation is still practiced in Mali; in 1996 an estimated 80 percent of women underwent the procedure.

Health

Number of Physicians: 529
 Number of Dentists: 10
 Number of Nurses: 1,501
 Number of Pharmacists: —
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 4.4
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 116.79
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 1,200
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 4.5
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 12
 HIV Infected % of adults: 1.9
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 69
 Measles: 68
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 45
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 48

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Two staple foods exist: rice and millet. For those able to afford it, rice is the more popular of the two; both grains are served with a spicy sauce with vegetables, meat, or fish. The main meal is usually served at noon, with leftovers eaten for dinner. Fried plantains or boiled rice and milk also provide light meals. Millet mush or pancakes made from millet flour are usually served for breakfast.

Cooking is usually done over a fire or brazier in the open or in a separate kitchen hut. Food is served family style, with the entire family eating out of one bowl using their hands. Typical dishes include *poulet yassa* (grilled chicken in chili sauce), *riz yollof* (vegetables or meat cooked in a sauce of oil and tomato), and *couscous*. Along the Niger River fish dishes are popular, including Nile perch either fried, grilled, baked, or stewed.

Nutrition is poor in Mali. As of 2001, 29 percent of the population was undernourished. Between 1995 and 2002 one-third of children younger than five were underweight.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 29.2
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,400
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 179.7
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 27.2

STATUS OF WOMEN

Women are free to participate in the Malian political process and, while underrepresented, are present at all levels of government, especially at the local level. A limited number of women occupy positions of responsibility in most ministries. In 1985 the first woman cabinet director was appointed, for the Ministry of Health. The Union of Malian Women is an active political organization under party auspices and acts as a channel through which women can voice their concerns.

The role of women is negatively affected in Mali more by social, cultural, and general poverty factors than by political or economic determinants. Custom often restricts women to "women's issues" when they do participate in politics. The Union of Malian Women promotes health and education issues and has disseminated information on the disadvantages of female circumcision, but the practice is still widely followed, without government sanction, throughout the nation.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 10
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 0.52
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: —

WORK

In 2001 the workforce was estimated at almost 4 million, 80 percent of whom were involved in agriculture. The majority of Malians are self-employed, making a living through subsistence agriculture, pastoralism, fishing, trade, craft production, and services. Some work in small-scale enterprises, some in the tiny industrial sector. Unemployment in 2001 was 14.6 percent in urban areas and 5.3 percent in rural areas. Many Malians, single men as well as entire families, emigrate in search of work and better opportunities, on a short- or long-term basis.

The major union confederations in Mali are the National Union of Malian Workers and the Syndicated Confederation of Malian Workers. The nation has about a dozen active unions. Since membership is restricted to wage earners, such membership numbers are relatively low. The right to strike is protected, except for in certain essential services. The labor code allows for workers as young as 12, though only for two hours daily. However, as much of the work in the country is performed in the private sector, such a law is impossible to enforce, as are the 40-hour workweek, workplace safety and health regulations, and the minimum wage, which was about \$53 per month in 2003.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 3,930,000

Female Participation Rate %: 46.0

Labor by Sector %:

Agriculture and Fishing: 80

Other: 20

Unemployment %: 14.6 urban, 5.3 rural

EDUCATION

Mali is a nation with a large number of linguistically diverse ethnic groups and a significant nomad population. These factors have made the development of a uniform educational system difficult. Illiteracy is a major problem; only 46 percent of the population was literate in 2003. In an effort to solve linguistic difficulties, the country adopted French as the language of instruction. Education is technically universal, free, and compulsory for nine years, between ages six and 15.

Schooling lasts for 12 years, as divided into three cycles: a lower-primary cycle of six years, an upper-primary cycle of three years (these two cycles composing what is known as basic education), and a secondary cycle of three years. The school year lasts from October to July.

Primary-school teachers are trained in secondary-level normal schools, and secondary-school teachers in a teachers' college. There is no university per se, but higher education is provided in five advanced-level schools, including

the teachers' college, an administration school, an engineering school, a medical school, and an agricultural institute. In addition to the secular schools, there are also modernized Muslim schools (madrassas) that combine an Islamic education with general education in French.

Public expenditures on education in 2001 were 2.8 percent of GDP. Net primary enrollment in 2002 was just 45 percent of eligible students; these students were taught in classes with 57 students for every teacher. Of these primary-school students, 84 percent reached grade five, but the number who went on to secondary school was extremely low.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 46.4

Male %: 53.5

Female %: 39.6

School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 4.9

First Level: Primary Schools: 1,996

Teachers: 22,577

Students: 1,294,672

Student-Teacher Ratio: 57.3

Net Enrollment Ratio: 44.5

Second Level: Secondary Schools: 307

Teachers: —

Students: 311,717

Student-Teacher Ratio: —

Net Enrollment Ratio: —

Third Level: Institutions: 7

Teachers: —

Students: 28,332

Gross Enrollment Ratio: 2.5

Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 2.8

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Research into tropical diseases and agriculture are the two main scientific and technological focuses in Mali. In general, the country has a shortage of trained personnel and must rely on foreign scientists in many areas. In 2001 there were only 300 full-time researchers at work in five different government agencies. Of these, about 30 percent had doctorates, 46 percent had master's degrees, and 24 percent had bachelor's degrees.

The National Center of Scientific and Technological Research in Bamako coordinates all research activity in the country. The Institute of Tropical Ophthalmology and the Marchoux Institute for Leprosy carry out medical research projects. The National Directorship for Meteorology deals with agrometeorology and climatology, and there are national centers for fruit and animal research. All of these institutions are located in Bamako. A national association for mineral research and mining is located in Kati.

Some research is also carried out in educational institutions. National schools of engineering and of medicine and pharmacology are located in Bamako. The Rural Polytechnic Institute of Katibougou not only provides in-

struction but also conducts research in crops, agricultural economics, stockbreeding, forestry, veterinary science, and rural technology.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: 1.54
 Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

There are six daily newspapers in the country, with very slight total circulation. The daily *L'Essor—La Voix du peuple* is the government organ; *L'Aurore*, *Le Républicain*, and *L'Independent* are privately owned. *Les Echos* is affiliated with the ruling party. The national news agency is the Agence Malienne de Presse et de Publicité. Foreign news agencies represented in Bamako include CTK, Novosti, ITAR-TASS, and AFP. Édition Imprimerie du Mali, the only book publisher in the country, has an annual output of about five titles.

Radiodiffusion Télévision du Mali manages much of the broadcasting in the country. As of 2001 there were 28 FM radio stations and 1 AM station, both public and commercial. In 2003 there were a quarter of a million cellular telephone users and 25,000 Internet users. In 2001 there were 180 radios and 15 television sets in use for every 1,000 people.

The constitution also provides for free speech and a free press, and the government is said to respect these rights in practice. Although libel is still considered a criminal offense and press laws include punitive presumption-of-guilt standards, Mali's media are among Africa's most open. Reporters without Borders, an international media watchdog group, ranked Mali 72nd out of 167 countries on its 2004 press freedom index.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 6
 Total Circulation 000: 12.6
 Circulation per 1,000: 1.1
 Books Published: 33
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers million: 2.2
 per 1,000: 180
 Television sets 000: 184
 per 1,000: 15

CULTURE

Mali is made up of a welter of different tribes and ethnic groups, each of which has left its own distinctive cultural

imprint on the country. Music and dancing have an especially rich heritage among the Malinke and Songhai peoples. The Bamana and the Voltaic groups are known for their wood carvings of masks, statues, stools, and fetish objects used in animist worship. The *tiewara*, or gazelle mask, of the Bamana is particularly remarkable for its fine carving. The Tuareg nomads are known for artwork as well as their fierce fighting ability. The Dogon homeland, Pays Dogon, has been designated a World Heritage site. The Dogon are also known for their elaborate masks.

The traditional music of Mali is based on the songs of the *jalis* (or griots), a distinct social caste since the days of the Mali Empire. *Jalis* accompany their songs with the *kora*, a harp-lute string instrument with 21 strings. Mali has produced some of the great superstars of modern African music: the *kora* player Toumani Diabaté, the singers Salif Keita and Oumou Sangaré, dance bands like the Super Rail Band, and the river-blues man Ali Farka Touré.

Architecture is well developed in the Niger valley. The Sudanic style, using *banco*, or mud covering, can be seen in the houses and intricate mosques of Djenné and Timbuktu.

The Museum of the Institute of Research and Documentation, in Bamako, has collections of art from most of the country's regions. The Malian Ballet Troupe performs throughout the world. Artists are trained both at the National Institute of Arts and at the Artisan Center of Bamako.

Most of the country's written literature is in French. Major writers include Amadou Hampâté Bâ, Seydou Badian, Nagognime Urbain Dembélé, and Massa Makan Diabaté.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Malian folklore includes many legends and folktales of heroes. Primary among these is Sunjata Keita, the founder of the empire that gave the country its name; the epic oral poem *Sunjata* recounts the deeds of this 13th-century founder. Only specially trained griots or praise-singers and oral historians from certain families are allowed to recite the epic.

Common mythical figures include Faro, the sky and water god of the Bamana, who gave birth to the human

race. The Dogon people have several mythic figures: Nommo, half man and half snake, is their cultural hero and teacher; Yurugy is the trickster; and Amma is the god of fertility and rain, as well as the father of Nommo.

Proverbs form an important part of Malian folklore. One favorite proverb is "One does not give without a motive."

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Listening to music on the radio is one of the favorite pastimes throughout the country. African traditional and folk music is popular, as is Western-inspired rock. Youths form bands and have created a rich musical scene in Bamako and throughout the rest of the country.

With increasing access to electricity, Malians are also watching more television. Movies attract crowds in the towns and cities, with martial arts films and Indian imports among the favorites. Visiting with friends and relatives is also a popular pastime.

ETIQUETTE

Muslim traditions are strong in Mali. Thus, shaking hands with the opposite sex is not done, and pointing is considered rude. The right hand should be used to give or receive and for eating. Shoes should be taken off before entering a mosque. Personal dignity is important, and as such greetings can be long and involved.

FAMILY LIFE

Muslim law allows up to four wives, but polygamy is not usual in Mali. Families are larger in the countryside than in the city. Overall fertility rates are high; in 2004 there were 6.5 children born per woman. However, infant mortality rates are also high. Most women perform extra work outside the home, in small trades or crafts or in agriculture. Households tend to be nuclear in cities, but in rural areas multigenerational families are typical. Among the Bamana, families include a man and his wife or wives along with their sons and their respective wives and children.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Dress is a mixture of Western and more traditional styles. For men, the full-length tunic called a *boubou* or *jellabiya* is typical, and for women the wraparound skirt called *pagne* and a matching tunic and headdress are usual. Social and economic class is indicated by the quality of ma-

terial used for these garments, as well as by the designs and embroidery. Hand dying is employed for the most distinctive designs.

Men also wear Western trousers or shorts with T-shirts, especially when working.

SPORTS

Soccer is the most popular sport in the country, and some of the stars of the country's leagues play for international teams. The national team competes for the African Nations Cup. In the 2004 Olympics the national team reached the quarterfinals, losing to Italy in a well-fought match. The country also sent Ibrahima Maiga to compete in the 400-meter hurdles.

Basketball is also becoming popular and is played by both males and females.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1958** Following a referendum in which the new Constitution of the Fifth French Republic is approved by the voters, the French Soudan becomes the République Soudanaise within the French Community.
- 1959** Mali Federation is established, with Senegal and the République Soudanaise as members. Modibo Keita is elected president of the federation.
- 1960** Mali Federation breaks up as Senegal withdraws. Republic of Mali is proclaimed in Bamako. New constitution is promulgated.
- 1962** At the Sixth Congress of the Union Soudanaise, the government affirms its socialist ideology. Malian franc is introduced as the national currency.
- 1963** The Tuareg begin a two-year revolt against the national government.
- 1966** Comité National de Défense de la Révolution is established.
- 1967** Malian franc is devalued by 50 percent. President Keita launches a cultural revolution on Chinese model. The Popular Militia is reactivated with Chinese advisers.
- 1968** National Assembly dissolves itself. President Keita is overthrown by a military coup. CMLN is formed, with Lt. Gen. Moussa Traoré as president. Provisional government is formed with Capt. Yoro Diakité as prime minister. Fundamental Law replaces the constitution of 1960.
- 1969** Attempted coup by Capt. Dilby Silas Diarra is suppressed. Traoré replaces Diakité as president.

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- 1972** Diakité is expelled from the CMLN and sentenced to hard labor.
A three-year catastrophic drought affects the Sahel. Some 80,000 refugees are housed in 33 camps.
- 1974** New constitution is approved by an overwhelming majority in a national referendum.
- 1975** Border dispute erupts between Mali and Burkina Faso (then called Upper Volta), followed by border skirmishes.
- 1976** UDPM is formed as the nation's sole legal political party according to the constitution.
- 1978** In a major cabinet reshuffle, four civilians are dismissed from the cabinet. Foreign Minister Charles Cissokho and Defense Minister Kissima Doukara are accused of complicity in an antistate plot and expelled from the CMLN and the government.
- 1979** First national elections under the constitution of 1974 are held.
The CMLN is disbanded; President Traoré is elected to a five-year term. The National Assembly is reconvened, and more civilians are included in the cabinet.
- 1981** The constitution is amended to limit the term of the National Assembly to three years.
- 1982** Elections are held for the National Assembly.
- 1983** Border dispute with Algeria is settled, while that with Burkina Faso is submitted to the International Court of Justice.
President Traoré visits Guinea and issues joint declaration on eventual unification of the two countries.
- 1985** Presidential and legislative elections are held. President Traoré is reelected with 98 percent of the vote.
Border fighting with Burkina Faso reerupts.
- 1986** The post of prime minister is re-created.
Burkina Faso and Mali accept World Court settlement of dispute over Agacher Strip.
- 1988** The post of prime minister is abolished.
- 1990** Some 175 prominent Malians publish an open letter demanding multiparty democracy.
- 1991** Traoré is ousted after four days of violent protests. Lt. Col. Amadou Toumani Touré, the coup's leader, becomes head of the National Reconciliation Council and promises to establish multiparty democracy in Mali.
- 1992** Mali adopts a new constitution.
Alpha Konaré is elected president as his party, the ADEMA, wins 76 of the 116 assembly seats.
- 1993** A pro-Traoré coup attempt fails.
- 1994** The CFA franc is devalued by 50 percent.
Ibrahim Boubacar Keïta is named prime minister.
- 1996** The World Bank praises the economic turnaround headed by Konaré's government.
- 1997** Violent opposition to the Konaré government and elections voids the results of the April election. Opposition members boycott new election in July.
- 1999** Konaré dismisses more than a dozen senior officials as part of an anticorruption drive.
Traoré is convicted and sentenced to death on corruption charges, but Konaré commutes the sentence to life imprisonment.
Health workers strike.
Ethnic fighting breaks out in the north.
Konaré announces that he will not run for a third term as president.
- 2000** Prime Minister Keïta steps down unexpectedly. Konaré names as prime minister Mandé Sidibé, a former IMF official.
Mali's anticorruption commission publishes a report revealing rampant embezzlement and waste among public services.
- 2002** Prime Minister Sidibé resigns. He is replaced by Modibo Keïta, who in turn is replaced by Ahmed Mohamed Ag Hamani in April. Amadou Toumani Touré, who overthrew Traoré in 1991, returns to power after winning a landslide victory in presidential elections.
- 2003** Clashes between rival Muslim groups leave 10 dead.
- 2004** Prime Minister Mohamed Ag Hamani resigns in April and is replaced by Ousmane Issoufi Maïga. A severe locust plague destroys 45 percent of the harvest.

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- National Directorate of Statistics and Data Processing
<http://www.dnsi.gov.ml/>
- Embassy of Mali (in Washington, D.C.)
<http://www.maliembassy-usa.org>

INTERNET RESOURCES

- CIA World Factbook: Mali
<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/ml.htm>

MALTA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Malta (Repubblika ta' Malta)

ABBREVIATION

MT

CAPITAL

Valletta

HEAD OF STATE

President Edward Fenech Adami (from 2004)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Lawrence Gonzi (from 2004)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Parliamentary democracy

POPULATION

398,534 (2005)

AREA

316 sq km (122 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Maltese

LANGUAGES

Maltese, English

RELIGION

Roman Catholicism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Maltese lira

NATIONAL FLAG

Two equal vertical stripes, white at the hoist and red at the fly, with a representation of the George Cross, edged with red, in the canton of the white stripe.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

Shield divided into two equal sectors: one white with the George Cross on the upper left, the other red with no decorations. Above the shield is a crown in gold with five turrets, and to either side are olive branches, symbolizing peace, tied at their bases by a red-backed white ribbon upon which is written the name of the republic in Maltese.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"L'Innu Malti" (The Maltese hymn)

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

National Day (March 31), Republic Day (December 13), all major Christian festivals, including the Shipwreck of St. Paul (February 10) and L'Imnarja, the feast of Sts. Peter and Paul (June 28–29)

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

September 21, 1964

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

September 21, 1964; amended 1974, 1987

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Malta is an archipelago of five islands in the central Mediterranean. Three of the islands (Malta, Gozo, and Comino) are inhabited; two, Cominotto and Filfla, are uninhabited. Malta, the main island, lies 93 km (58 mi) south of Sicily and 290 km (180 mi) north of the Libyan coast. The inhabited islands of Malta have a total area of 316 sq km (122 sq mi), of which the island of Malta accounts for 246 sq km (95 sq mi), Gozo 67 sq km (26 sq mi). The total coastline of the inhabited islands is 253 km (157 mi).

The islands have neither mountains nor rivers. The terrain consists of low hills running east to northwest up

to a maximum height of 253 m (830 ft), with clefts that form deep harbors, bays, creeks, and rocky coves.

Geography

Area sq km: 316; sq mi 122

World Rank: 184th

Land Boundaries, km: 0

Coastline, km: 253

Elevation Extremes meters:

Lowest: Mediterranean Sea 0

Highest: Ta'Dmejrek 253

Land Use %

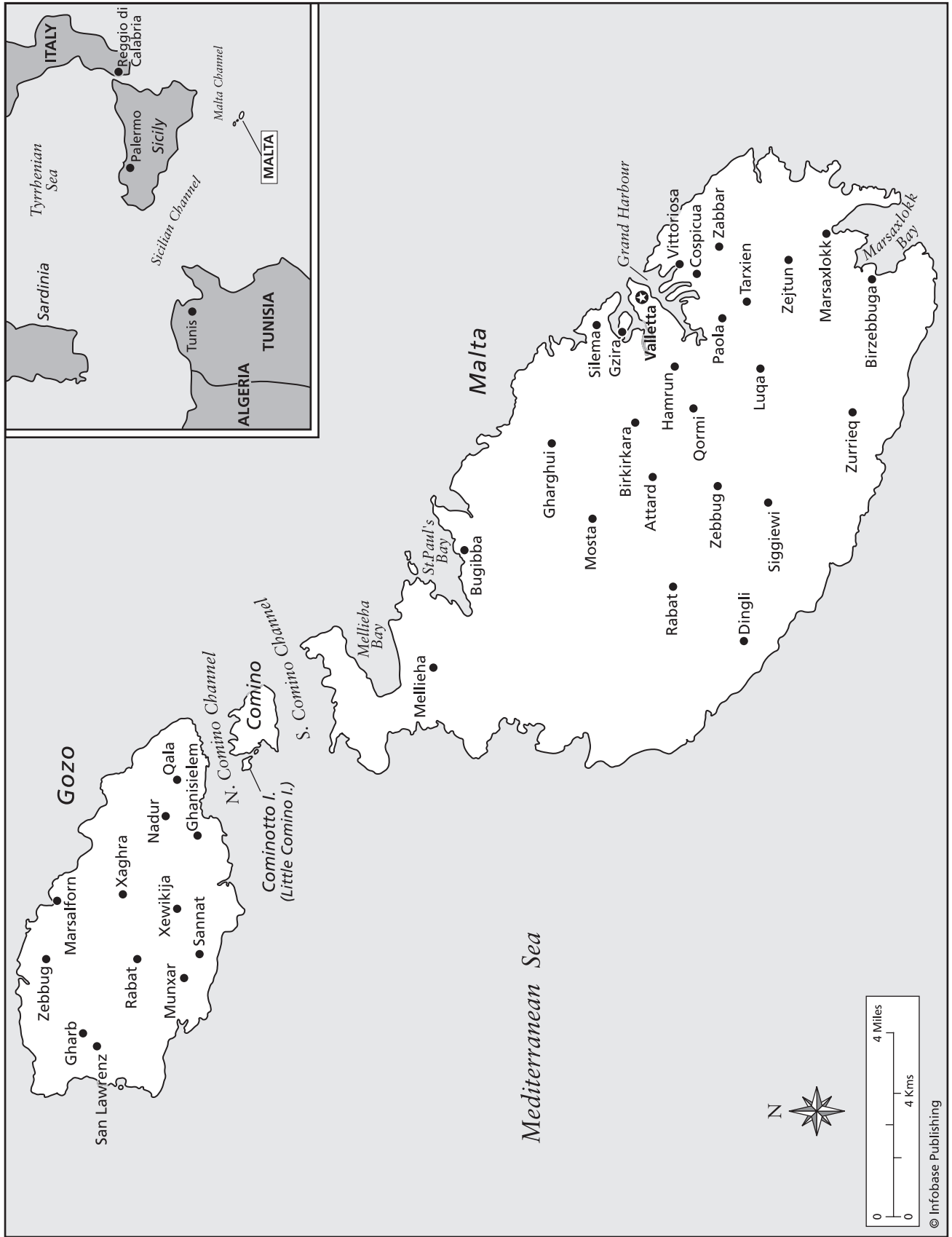
Arable Land: 28.1

Permanent Crops: 3.1

Forest: 0.0

Other: 68.8

Malta



Population of Principal Cities (2000)

Birkirkara	22,334
Valetta	7,048

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

The Maltese climate is typically Mediterranean, with subtropical summers and mild, rainy winters with occasional fog and rare frosts. The average winter temperature is 9.4°C (49°F), the average summer temperature 30.5°C (87°F). Rainfall averages 559 mm (22 in) per year, falling almost entirely between October and April.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature
Winter: 49°F
Summer: 87°F
Average Rainfall: 22 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Few plants grow in Malta, due to the thin, rocky soil. A few protected areas, such as Buskett Gardens, are heavily forested with orange and other trees. Some 10 million migratory birds stop in Malta every year, including many species of raptors. Hunters come from all over to shoot these birds as they pass through, and some experts estimate that 30 percent of the birds stopping in Malta are shot or trapped.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005:	398,534
World Rank:	165th
Density per sq km:	1,246.9
% of annual growth (1999-2003):	0.7
Male %:	49.5
Female %:	50.5
Urban %:	91.6
Age Distribution %:	
0-14:	18.1
15-64:	68.5
65 and over:	13.4
Population 2025:	421,239
Birth Rate per 1,000:	10.09
Death Rate per 1,000:	7.93
Rate of Natural Increase %:	0.3
Total Fertility Rate:	1.49
Expectation of Life (years):	Males 76.51
	Females 80.98
Marriage Rate per 1,000:	5.6
Divorce Rate per 1,000:	—
Average Size of Households:	3.3
Induced Abortions:	—

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Most Maltese are believed to be descendants of ancient Carthaginians and Phoenicians, with strong Arab and Italian admixtures. The foreign community consists largely of retired British nationals and their dependents.

LANGUAGES

Malta has two official languages, Maltese and English. Maltese is a Semitic language with Romance language assimilations. Italian is also widely spoken.

RELIGIONS

The 1964 constitution affirms that the religion of Malta is “the Roman Catholic and Apostolic religion” but guarantees full freedom to all other religions. It stipulates that the Catholic Church is independent from the state in terms of its administration and that the Catholic religion is to be taught in state schools. State legislation on marriage runs parallel to canon law, and there is provision for neither civil marriage nor divorce.

Nevertheless, there is no concordat between church and state, and both remain, in practice, separate. Neither the clergy nor the churches receive remuneration or subsidies from the state, with the exception of schools. There is no department or ministry of religious affairs.

Religious Affiliations

Roman Catholic	390,000
Other	8,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Malta has successively fallen under the rule of the Carthaginians, Phoenicians, Greeks, Romans, Byzantines, Saracens, Norman-Sicilians, Aragonese, Knights of St. John, French, and British. The Knights of St. John ruled the Maltese islands from 1530 to 1798, when they surrendered them to the French. Two years later the British ousted the French, with British possession of Malta confirmed in 1814 by the Treaty of Paris. During the next 150 years Malta remained a loyal Crown Colony, with only occasional disturbances. In 1942 the entire population was awarded the George Cross for exemplary gallantry under fire.

Malta became a sovereign and independent nation within the Commonwealth in 1964. It became a republic in 1974, with the Malta Labour Party (MLP) in power under Dominic Mintoff, an anticlerical socialist. The next 10 years of MLP rule were marked by a bitter strug-

gle with the Catholic Church. The church-state dispute was not officially resolved until 1986. The MLP lost its parliamentary majority in 1986, when the rival Nationalist Party (NP) took office, under Edward Fenech Adami. The NP has retained power since then, with only a brief interlude during 1996–98. Malta applied for EU membership in 1990, but in 1996 the Labour Party regained power and shelved the application. Adami returned to power in 1998 and resubmitted the application. Guido de Marco became president in 1999.

In 2002 the European Union approved Malta's application and invited the nation to join. Malta held a referendum on the issue in March 2003, and 53 percent of voters affirmed their accordance. Adami's Nationalist Party retained power in the 2003 general elections, ensuring Malta's willingness to enter the European Union. Adami resigned as prime minister in 2004 to take office as president; his successor as prime minister was Lawrence Gonzi. In May 2004 Malta and 10 other nations acquired EU membership.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

President

1974–76	Anthony Mamo
1976–81	Anton Buttigieg
1981–82	Albert Hyzler
1982–87	Agatha Barbara
1987–89	Paul Xuereb
1989–94	Censu Tabone
1994–99	Ugo Mifsud Bonnici
1999–2004	Guido de Marco
2004–	Edward Fenech Adami

Prime Minister

1962–71	George Borg Olivier
1971–84	Dominic Mintoff
1984–87	Carmelo Mifsud Bonnici
1987–96	Edward Fenech Adami
1996–98	Alfred Sant
1998–2004	Edward Fenech Adami
2004–	Lawrence Gonzi

CONSTITUTION

The Maltese independence constitution came into effect on September 21, 1964. It was superseded by the 1974 republican constitution, which replaced the British monarch as head of state with the president, who is appointed by the legislature to a five-year term. The head of government is the prime minister, who is the leader of the majority party in the House of Representatives. The president officially appoints the prime minister and the members of the cabinet.

PARLIAMENT

The legislature is the House of Representatives, the members of which are elected to five-year terms on the basis of proportional representation. There are usually 65 members, but the party that wins the most popular votes is occasionally assigned extra seats such that it holds a majority. The legislature is required by the constitution to convene at least once a year. The legislature appoints the president.

POLITICAL PARTIES

The two largest political parties in Malta are the Nationalist Party (a centrist party advocating EU membership, founded in 1980) and the Labour Party (a democratic socialist party founded in 1921). A third party, Alternativa Demokratika, was formed in 1989 to address social and environmental issues.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

There are no local government bodies except for the Gozo Civic Council, which has limited responsibility for public works. Gozo affairs are handled by a cabinet minister and a resident commissioner.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The legal system is based on English common law and Roman civil law. The superior courts are the Constitutional Court and the Court of Appeal. The subordinate courts are the Court of Criminal Appeal, two civil courts, and a commercial court. Nine judges, including the chief justice, serve on the superior courts. The president appoints the chief justice and other key judges. The Constitutional Court hears appeals related to the validity of laws or the constitution or in cases of human rights violations, as well as disputed parliamentary elections.

HUMAN RIGHTS

The human rights situation in Malta improved considerably after the 1987 elections, which ended 16 years of Labour Party rule, and the political atmosphere became appreciably less tense.

Generally, there is freedom from arbitrary arrest and detention. However, any police officer above the rank of inspector may issue an arrest warrant without need of a court order. The police may, on suspicion, arrest a person for questioning, but such a person must be brought before the courts and charged or released within 48 hours. The police also may stop and search private

vehicles without cause or warrant between 9:00 P.M. and 6:00 A.M.

Judicial procedures guarantee a fair trial. Defendants have the right of counsel of their choice (at public expense for the indigent), are presumed innocent, may confront witnesses and present evidence, and have the right of appeal.

The print media are heavily politicized, and the opposition press engages in its adversary role with gusto. State radio and television provide equal time for both parties and organize televised debates between candidates. The constitutionally mandated Broadcasting Authority ensures impartiality in broadcasting. However, there is a certain degree of bias toward the ruling party and some self-censorship.

A 1987 constitutional amendment based on the Foreign Interference Act bans political activity by foreigners for nine months prior to the publication of election results.

FOREIGN POLICY

In the context of Maltese politics, the Labour Party has been consistently pro-Arab, anti-West, and anti-EU, while the Nationalist Party has been pro-West and pro-EU. However, the official Maltese foreign policy is neutral. A 1980 agreement with Italy guarantees Malta's neutrality. Malta concluded an association agreement with the European Union in 1970 and applied for full membership in 1990. Prime Minister Alfred Sant put Malta's application on hold in 1996, but in 1998 Prime Minister Edward Fenech Adami reopened Malta's bid for EU membership. Malta finally joined the European Union in 2004.

Malta's former close relations with Libya were placed on hold as a result of UN sanctions against Libya over the Lockerbie affair. In 1990 Malta and Libya renewed their close cooperation and further strengthened ties by abolishing visa requirements between the two countries and establishing a common radio station, Voice of the Mediterranean.

DEFENSE

The Maltese army took form in 1965, a year after independence, when the government took over the three Maltese Territorial (Reserve) Units hitherto maintained by the British. The next year they were reduced to two: the Light Air Defense regiment and the First Battalion. The regular Maltese units were transferred to the Maltese government in 1970; they consisted of the First Regiment Royal Malta Artillery (RMA), the RMA band, and the Logistics Unit. A Helicopter Flight was added in 1972. With the 1973 raising of three battalions of the Malta Pioneer Corps, a voluntary paramilitary force, the force arrived at its pres-

ent structure, known as the Armed Forces of Malta (AFM). The AFM is headquartered at St. Andrew's Barracks, while the Helicopter Flight division is based at Luga Airport. Basic training is provided on the island. There is also a Police Corps, which is responsible for internal security.

In 1980 Malta entered into an agreement with Italy whereby it declared its neutrality and permitted Italy to use its base on occasion in return for a lump sum payment of \$20 million and an annual grant of \$5 million.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	2,000
Military Manpower Availability:	99,324
Military Expenditures \$million:	33.3
as % of GDP:	0.7
as % of central government expenditures:	
Arms Imports \$million:	—
Arms Exports \$million:	—

ECONOMY

Tourism is the most significant source of income on Malta, though the export of semiconductors has also become profitable. Earnings from tourism have increased steadily since the late 1970s; though the attacks of September 11, 2001, slowed the tourist industry, it rebounded in 2003. The labor market is fairly flexible, and unemployment has held at about 7 percent (2004).

The government has been gradually liberalizing the economy, removing governmental interventions and allowing free-market mechanisms to take over. The currency has been pegged to the euro, the pound sterling, and the dollar, which has kept inflation low. The budget deficit was high, at 9.7 percent, in 2003. The Maltese government has plans to reform the national pension and welfare systems and to reduce further public sector involvement in the economy.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion:	7.082
GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$:	17,700
GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2002) %:	2.7
GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2002) %:	1.9
Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:	
Agriculture:	3
Industry:	23
Services:	74
Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:	
Private Consumption:	65
Government Consumption:	20
Gross Domestic Investment:	23.1
Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports:	2.175
Imports:	2.761
% of Income Received by Poorest 10%:	—
% of Income Received by Richest 10%:	—

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
110.0	112.6	116.0	118.5	119.1

Finance

National Currency: Maltese Lira (MTL)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = MTL 0.3772
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency million: 680
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 3.75
 Total External Debt \$million: 130
 Debt Service Ratio %: —
 Balance of Payments \$million: -250
 International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 2.12
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 0.4

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 11.29
 per capita \$: 28.40
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 394.6

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: 1 April–31 March
 Revenues \$billion: 2.086
 Expenditures \$billion: 2.367
 Budget Deficit \$million: 281
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 3
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2002) %: —
 Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares: 55.1
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 20.0
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 77.8
 Total Farmland % of land area: 28.1
 Livestock: Cattle 000: 17.9
 Chickens million: 1
 Pigs 000: 73.1
 Sheep 000: 14.9
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters 000: —
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 2.12

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: —
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: —

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: —
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 870
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 2.2
 Net Energy Imports % of use: —
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: 600
 Production kW-hr billion: 1.768
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 1.644
 Coal Reserves tons billion: —
 Production tons million: —
 Consumption tons million: —

Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
 Production cubic feet billion: —
 Consumption cubic feet billion: —
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
 Production barrels 000 per day: —
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 20
 Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 2.761
 Exports \$billion: 2.175
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —
 Balance of Trade \$million: -250

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Italy %	19.3	—
France %	13.7	7.5
United Kingdom %	8.5	9.4
Germany %	6.6	8.8
Singapore %	6.1	17.4
Japan %	5.7	—
South Korea %	5.5	—
United States %	4.1	11.6
China %	—	7.0

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 2,254
 Paved %: 87.5
 Automobiles: 227,000
 Trucks and Buses: 53,300
 Railroad: Track Length km: —
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: —
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 1,176
 Total Deadweight Tonnage million: 41.2
 Airports: 1
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 2.3
 Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 1.18
 Number of Tourists from 000: 179
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 579
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 180

Communications

Telephones 000: 208.3
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.12
 Cellular Telephones 000: 290
 Personal Computers 000: 101
 Internet Hosts per million people: 17,956
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 301

ENVIRONMENT

The island's biggest challenge may be the continued depletion of natural freshwater resources and the nation's corresponding increased reliance on desalination to fill the gap. In addition, the country's growing urbanization has created problems with waste and sewage pollution.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 0.0
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: —
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 1
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 7.22

LIVING CONDITIONS

Malta is a modern European nation with good living conditions, while prices are lower than in many other parts of Europe. People live in modern apartments and houses. Roads are good, and there is an efficient public bus system, as well as ferry service connecting the various islands to one another. In the summer there is ferry service between Malta and Sicily and Genoa.

HEALTH

The Maltese are very healthy, with a life expectancy of almost 79 years and very low infant mortality. The Ministry of Health, the Elderly, and Community Care provides health-care services and monitors health conditions. It offers wellness programs designed to help the Maltese improve their health, such as by losing weight, stopping smoking, and avoiding sexually transmitted diseases. Fertility is low, at 1.5 children per women, but the island still has an extremely high population density.

Health

Number of Physicians: 1,144
 Number of Dentists: 158
 Number of Nurses: 1,473
 Number of Pharmacists: 750
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 293
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: 5.0
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 3.94
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 21
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 8.8
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 808
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.1
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 95
 Measles: 65
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 100
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 100

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Maltese cuisine resembles that of Sicily. People eat a great deal of pasta and vegetables, including olives, and like to drink wine. There are also some British culinary practices, and a common meal features a large piece of meat with a few vegetables on the side. People like to eat rabbit, either fried or baked in a pie, cheese pastries called *pastizzi*, and a baked macaroni dish called *timpana*. The country is known for its sweets, especially nougat.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 190.3
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 235.4

STATUS OF WOMEN

For cultural reasons women's rights are not associated with human rights. Laws guaranteeing equal opportunity for both sexes are not always enforced. Working women lose all entitlements and seniority personally acquired upon marriage. The husband is under law the head of the family unit. Divorce and abortion are illegal, though younger Maltese want to liberalize these laws. A comprehensive family law revision has been under consideration by the House of Representatives for some years.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 9
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.02
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 33.0

WORK

Almost three-quarters of working Maltese are employed in services, particularly tourism. Nearly one-quarter work in industry, producing electronics (especially semi-conductors), clothing, and footwear or building and repairing ships. No more than 5 percent of the workforce is employed in agriculture. The unemployment rate was 7 percent in 2003, while per capita GDP was \$17,700.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 160,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 28.6
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 5
 Industry: 24
 Services: 71
 Unemployment %: 7.0

EDUCATION

Education is compulsory between ages five and 16. It is free in both government schools and, since 1986, Catholic schools. Primary schooling starts at five and lasts for six years; secondary education begins at 11 and lasts up to seven years, comprising a first cycle of five years and a second cycle of two years. Both cycles lead to British equivalency certificates. The Roman Catholic Church provides an extensive system of primary and secondary education free of charge under a 1985 agreement with the government. The net enrollment ratio is almost 97 percent at the primary level and 82 percent at the secondary level. The literacy rate is 92.8 percent.

Higher education is provided at the University of Malta, founded in 1769; the College of Arts, Science, and Technology; the College of Education; and other institutions.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 92.8
 Male %: 92.0
 Female %: 93.6
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 14.0
 First Level: Primary Schools: 111
 Teachers: 1,716
 Students: 32,717
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 19.1
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 96.6
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 59
 Teachers: 3,692
 Students: 33,503
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 9.9
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 82.0
 Third Level: Institutions: 1
 Teachers: 622
 Students: 7,259
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 24.4
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 4.7

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The Malta Council for Science and Technology coordinates the government's national policy on science and technology. It includes many representatives from private industry as well as the public sector and academia. Malta's well-educated populace has allowed the nation to expand its electronics industry, particularly the profitable export of semiconductors. The nation has a good telephone system, with coverage for nearly all interested persons. In 2002, 120,000 people were using the Internet.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$billion: 1.044
 Patent Applications by Residents: 26

MEDIA

Many of Malta's daily and weekly newspapers are affiliated with political parties. For example, the daily *L'orizzont* is owned by the Labour Party-affiliated General Workers' Union, while *In-nazzjon* is owned by the Nationalist Party.

For a small country, Malta has an unusually extensive book-publishing industry.

Malta has had radio since the 1930s and television since 1957, when the islands began receiving television programming from Italy; Italian shows remain very popular. Malta Television was founded in 1962. Though for years all broadcasting was done by the Catholic Church and the two main political parties, there are now many private commercial radio and television stations. There has been cable television since 1992, and many people have satellite television.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 4
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: —
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets 000: 212
 per 1,000: 549

CULTURE

Malta has been inhabited for millennia, and its culture has been influenced by Phoenicians, Greeks, Romans, and the British, as well as the Catholic Church. Nowadays the Church is the source of most Maltese traditions, and the celebrations of local saints' days turn much of the year into holidays.

Malta's best-known authors are Joseph Attard and Dashielle Hammet. Maltese artisans make excellent lace, fabric, silver filigree, and blown glass.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 56
 Volumes: 293,000
 Registered borrowers: 73,000
 Museums Number: 22
 Annual Attendance: 526,000
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

The Maltese know stories about numerous saints and celebrate their feast days with unique festivals that feature

parades, confetti, and candy. Folk music is still extremely popular. Every year the country holds a national folk-song competition.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Saints days and Catholic holidays are occasions for major festivals, which occur frequently throughout the year. Christmas, Carnival and Holy Week, the Feast of St. Paul's Shipwreck, and the Feast of Sts. Peter and Paul are some of the biggest events, but each town also has its own local celebrations honoring patron saints. People celebrate by eating fried rabbit and other delicacies, watching parades, dancing, singing folk songs, racing horses, and listening to stories.

Malta has a few good beaches and some excellent scuba diving sites. Tourists enjoy walking about the islands, touring ancient and medieval ruins, and exploring caves.

ETIQUETTE

The Maltese shake hands when meeting new people; businesspeople usually exchange business cards. Friends and relatives greet one another with kisses on both cheeks. Friends of the same sex, both male and female, commonly walk around holding hands. When a Maltese person offers hospitality, it is considered rude to decline; a guest should bring a small gift when visiting someone's house.

FAMILY LIFE

In Malta, a husband is legally the dominant partner in a marriage. Divorce and abortion are both illegal. While the Catholic Church's influence has been declining in recent years, and many Maltese want to see reforms in family law, most Maltese people still believe that marriage is an important institution and that the best environment for a child is in a home with two married parents. Most families have one or two children. Ties to grandparents and other relatives are still important, and many people care for their aging parents.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

The Maltese wear typical Western clothes, though they are more conservative than some other Europeans. No one wears skimpy or provocative clothing in public. Most people try to dress well.

SPORTS

Many sporting facilities are available to the Maltese, who participate in activities such as archery, swimming, bad-

minton, wrestling, basketball, cycling, dance, gymnastics, and, of course, soccer. The nation has an Olympic committee and regularly sends athletes to participate in the Olympic games.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1964** Malta becomes an independent member of the Commonwealth under a new constitution.
- 1971** Winning a clear majority in the elections, the Malta Labour Party comes to power under Dominic Mintoff.
- 1972** Malta renegotiates the Mutual Defense and Assistance Agreement with the United Kingdom and wins a new seven-year agreement tripling the rental payment for the use of naval and military facilities.
- 1974** Malta becomes a republic, with Sir Anthony Mamo as first president.
- 1981** Legislation restricts the power of the courts to challenge government action.
In national elections the Labour Party wins a majority in the House of Representatives, while the Nationalist Party wins a majority of the popular vote. In protest, the Nationalist house members refuse to take their seats and organize a campaign of civil disobedience.
- 1983** Nationalists resume their seats in the house, ending a 15-month boycott, but immediately walk out, protesting a government resolution to loosen ties with the European Economic Community.
The House of Representatives passes another controversial bill, expropriating 75 percent of church property on the islands.
- 1984** Treaty is signed with Libya providing for economic and military assistance.
The courts strike down the law expropriating church property.
The House of Representatives retaliates by forbidding church schools to charge fees or accept donations.
The archbishop of Malta closes all church schools for several months in protest.
Mintoff steps down from office and is succeeded by Carmelo Mifsud Bonnici.
- 1987** In new elections the Nationalists obtain a majority of seats in the house under a new law. Edward Fenech Adami, the Nationalist leader, is named prime minister.
President Agatha Barbara retires and is succeeded in office by Paul Xuereb.
- 1994** Working to establish itself as a center of international finance, the Malta Financial Services Centre is established as an autonomous government agency to regulate financial services.

- Ugo Mifsud Bonnici becomes president of the country.
- 1996** After nine years of rule, the Nationalists are defeated by a slim majority by the Labour Party, and Alfred Sant becomes prime minister. Malta suspends its request for EU membership.
- 1998** Edward Fenech Adami is again elected prime minister. Malta renews its bid for EU membership.
- 1999** Guido de Marco becomes president.
- 2001** Pope John Paul II visits Malta and beatifies three Maltese clerics.
- 2002** The European Union invites Malta to join in 2004.
- 2003** Some 53 percent of Maltese voters vote to support joining the European Union in a referendum. The ruling Nationalist Party wins the election and confirms the EU referendum result.
- 2004** Adami becomes president. Lawrence Gonzi becomes prime minister. Malta gains EU membership.

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OFFICIAL PUBLICATIONS

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- National Statistics Office
<http://www.nso.gov.mt/>

MARSHALL ISLANDS

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of the Marshall Islands (Aolepān Aorōkin M̧ajel)

ABBREVIATION

MH

CAPITAL

Majuro

HEAD OF STATE & HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

President Kessai Hesa Note (from 2004)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Constitutional government in free association with the United States

POPULATION

59,071 (2005)

AREA

181 sq km (70 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Micronesian

LANGUAGES

English, Marshallese, Japanese

RELIGION

Christianity

UNIT OF CURRENCY

U.S. dollar

NATIONAL FLAG

Dark blue with two expanding stripes, orange above white, radiating from the lower hoist-side corner to the upper fly-side corner; a white star with four large rays and 20 small rays appears on the hoist side above the stripes.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A round seal with a winged angel in the center flanked by a palm tree to the left and an outrigger canoe to the right, with a sun at the top, with the name of the republic in English above and the national motto, *Jepilpilin ke ejukaan* (Accomplishment through Joint Effort) below; the whole image is surrounded by a chain that represents all of the islands linked together.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Forever Marshall Islands”

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year’s Day), March 1 (Nuclear Survivors’ Day), May 1 (Constitution Day), first Friday in July (Fisherman’s Day), first Friday in September (Workers’ Day), last Friday in September (Customs Day), November 17 (Presidents’ Day), third Thursday in November (Thanksgiving Day), first Friday in December (Gospel Day), December 25 (Christmas)

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

October 21, 1986

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

May 1, 1979

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

The Republic of the Marshall Islands is located in the central Pacific Ocean between latitudes 4 and 14° north and longitudes 160 and 173° east. It is made up of five islands and 29 atolls with many islets. The islands and islets are divided into two parallel chains, the Ratak (Sunrise) chain to the east and the Ralik (Sunset) chain to the west. The total land area is only 181 sq km (70 sq mi), spread over about 1,950,000 sq km (750,000 sq mi) of ocean.

Two-thirds of the population live in Majuro and Ebeye. Very few people live on the outer islands, which lack employment opportunities.

Geography

Area sq km: 181; sq mi 70

World Rank: 187th

Land Boundaries, km: 0

Coastline, km: 370

Elevation Extremes meters:

Lowest: Pacific Ocean 0

Highest: Likiep 10

Land Use %

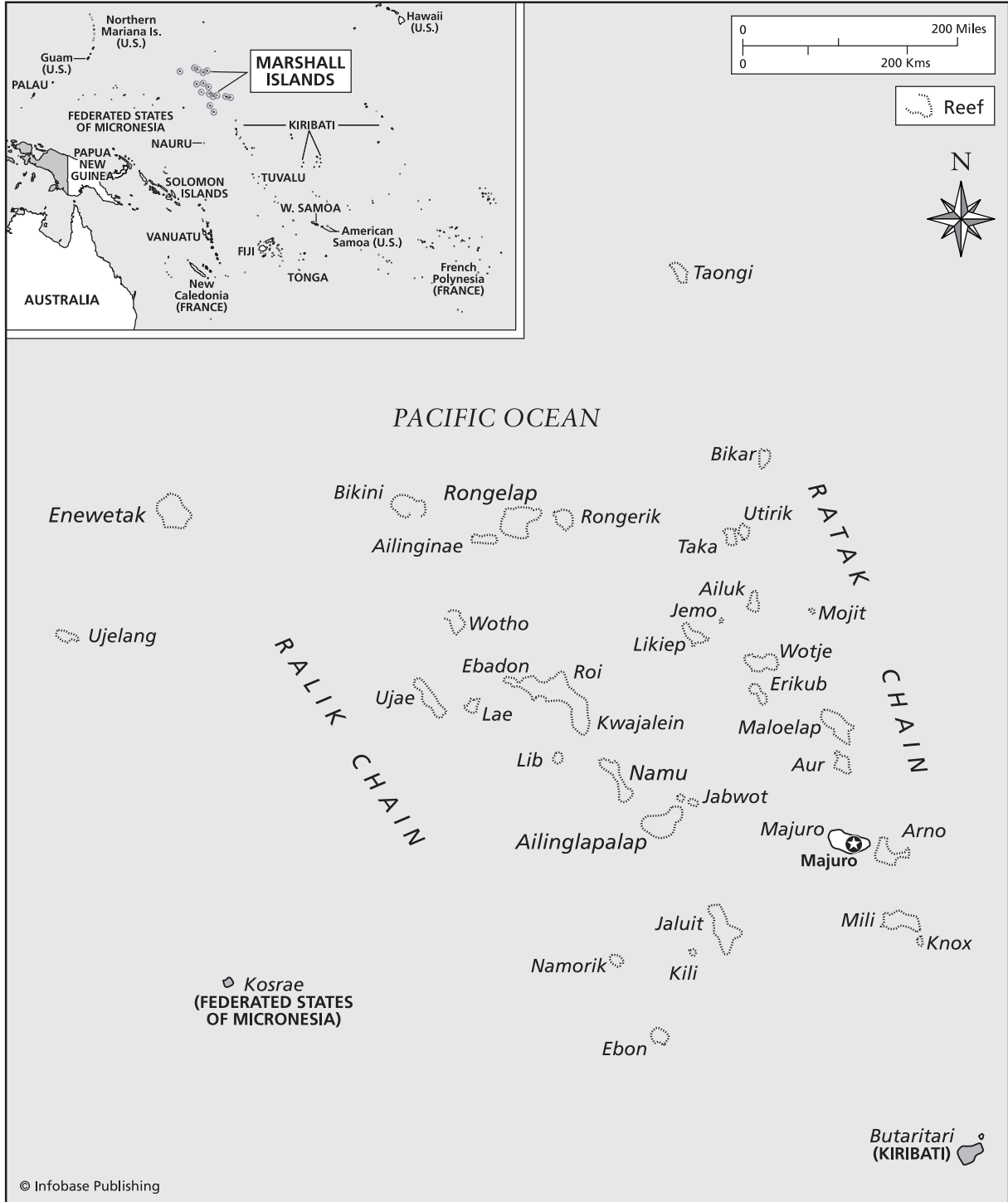
Arable Land: 16.7

Permanent Crops: 38.9

Forest: —

Other: 44.4

Marshall Islands



Population of Principal Cities (2004)	
Majuro	25,400

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

The Marshall Islands have a tropical climate. Conditions are usually hot and humid, with a consistent average tem-

perature of 80 degrees Fahrenheit, though trade winds make the climate pleasant most of the year. Nighttime temperatures are slightly cooler than daytime ones, but the coldest temperatures on the islands generally occur after daytime rainstorms. The skies are usually cloudy, with a predominance of cumuliform clouds. Minor rainstorms are quite common, but major tropical storms are not. Rainfall varies from 20 inches a year on the north-

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ern atolls too 160 inches a year in the south. The rainiest months are between May and November.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature: 27°C
Average Rainfall
North: 20 in
South: 160 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Much of the soil on the islands is fragile and cannot support a great deal of plant life. About 14 percent of the land is covered with meadows and pastures, while 23 percent are forest and woodland. About one-third of the land is devoted to agriculture. In all, perhaps 60 percent of the land has coconut palms growing on it. Other crop plants include banana, breadfruit, taro, yam, arrowroot, tapioca, pandanus, and pumpkin. There are no native species of vegetation growing on the islands.

There are a great many animal species living in and around the Marshall Islands. There are hundreds of species of coral inhabiting the shallow waters around the atolls, and all five of the world's sea turtle species have been found there. Tuna and game fish are abundant, as are other fish species. There are perhaps 27 species of whales, dolphins, and porpoises. Bird life is plentiful; about 70 species have been spotted there, with 31 using the islands as breeding grounds. The only indigenous land mammal is the Polynesian rat. There are seven lizard species, one blind snake species, numerous insects and arthropods, and many coconut crabs, prized for their meat.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 59,071
World Rank: 185th
Density per sq km: 289.6
% of annual growth (2000-2003): 0.8
Male %: 51.0
Female %: 49.0
Urban %: 66.4
Age Distribution %: 0-14: 38.2
15-64: 59.1
65 and over: 2.7
Population 2025: 83,105,000
Birth Rate per 1,000: 33.52
Death Rate per 1,000: 4.88
Rate of Natural Increase %: 2.9
Total Fertility Rate: 3.93
Expectation of Life (years): Males 68.05
Females 72.06
Marriage Rate per 1,000: —
Divorce Rate per 1,000: —
Average Size of Households: —
Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

The people of the Marshall Islands are mostly Micronesian, descendants of ancient emigrants from Southeast Asia. There are a few people with mixed ethnicities, combining Micronesian with German, Japanese, or American ancestry.

LANGUAGES

Marshallese and English are the official languages. Marshallese belongs to the Austronesian language family, which is a member of the Malayo-Polynesian group. There are two main dialects of Marshallese, one spoken in the Ralik chain and the other in the Ratak chain. The two dialects are quite similar to each other.

RELIGIONS

Most Marshallese are Protestants. The United Church of Christ is the largest Protestant denomination, and there are also many others. There are some Roman Catholics, Seventh-Day Adventists, Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses, and members of the Salvation Army. There is a small Baha'i community. Most people use Sundays to go to church and relax; the culture is quite religious.

Religious Affiliations

Christian	59,000
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HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Marshall Islands were originally settled by waves of people who migrated from Southeast Asia across the western Pacific about 3,000 years ago. Little is known about how these ancient inhabitants lived. The first European contact with the Marshalls came in 1529, when the Spanish explorer Miguel de Saavedra landed there. Spain claimed the islands in 1592.

In 1799 the British naval captain John Marshall visited the islands and named them after himself. In 1864 Adolph Capelle of Germany established a trading company on the Marshalls, which was followed by several other trading companies over the next few years, all dealing primarily in copra. Germany bought the islands from Spain in 1885 for \$4.5 million, and the following year Germany established a protectorate over the islands. The Jaluit Company, one of the island group's several trading companies, was given the right to govern them, while traditional chiefs continued to handle local affairs.

The Japanese took the Marshalls from the Germans in 1914, and the League of Nations gave Japan a mandate

to administer the Marshalls in 1920. In 1944 the United States wrested control of the Marshall Islands from the Japanese. Immediately after the end of World War II the Americans began a program of nuclear testing, starting with 1946's Operation Crossroads on Bikini Atoll. The local leader, Chief Juda, agreed to move his people to nearby Rongerik Atoll on the assumption that the move would be temporary and that they would be allowed to return soon. The following year the United Nations established the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, which included the Marshall Islands and six other entities; the United States was named trustee.

In 1948 the United States expanded its operations to Enewetak Atoll, which was also evacuated. In 1954 Americans detonated the largest hydrogen bomb ever tested, Bravo, on Bikini Atoll. Bravo was a 15-megaton bomb, 1,000 times the strength of the bomb dropped on Hiroshima. Radiation from the test site spread over Rongelap, Rongerik, Utirik, and Ailinginae atolls, causing radiation burns on those in the immediate area and forcing the evacuation of all Marshallese and American servicemen. Nevertheless, the United States continued testing bombs. Evacuated islanders suffered great privation on their temporary home islands, which were inhospitable and difficult to cultivate; food shortages were a major problem, and starvation was a constant risk.

The people of Rongelap were allowed to return home in 1957, despite some lingering radiation. The nuclear testing was concluded in 1958, after the detonation of 66 nuclear weapons. As the 1960s progressed, Marshall Islanders began noticing acute health problems, especially thyroid tumors and growth retardation. U.S. officials declared Bikini Atoll safe in 1969, but the Bikini Council was not satisfied with the information and decided not to return en masse, although individual islanders did return. More detailed information about the levels of contamination was released in the mid-1970s, and it became apparent that the water and soil on Bikini was too contaminated for human habitation. The Bikini residents sued the United States, demanding surveys and comprehensive cleanup.

In 1979 the United States recognized the government of the Marshall Islands and its new constitution and supported the nation's efforts toward eventual complete independence and self-government. The islanders elected Amata Kabua as their first president.

In 1986 the United States ratified the Compact of Free Association, which made the Marshall Islands independent and arranged for financial aid and compensation for the extensive aftereffects of the nuclear testing. It established a Nuclear Claims Tribunal in 1988 to create a comprehensive compensation package; through the 1980s and 1990s the United States and the Marshall Islands continued to work on cleanup, surveys, and negotiations for damages. The islanders particularly resented having essentially been used as guinea pigs in American experi-

ments regarding the effects of radiation on humans, as has been concluded through the examination of declassified documents regarding the nuclear tests performed. As of 2001 the United States had paid out millions of dollars to affected Marshallese, and negotiations of final amounts remained ongoing, with no complete resolution foreseen in the near future.

In 1990 the United States terminated its trusteeship over the Marshall Islands. Amata Kabua died in office in 1996, and his first cousin Imata Kabua was elected to replace him. Kessai Note won the 1999 election after campaigning on a reform platform; he was reelected in 2003. Note, the first commoner to be elected president, expressed a desire to make the country self-reliant and end dependence on aid from governments, both local and international.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

President	
1980–97	Amata Kabua
1997–2000	Imata Kabua
2000–	Kessai Note

CONSTITUTION

The constitution was adopted on May 1, 1979. The parliament elects the president from among its own members to a four-year term. The president functions as both head of state and head of government. The president selects his cabinet from among the members of parliament. Suffrage is universal, and the voting age is 18.

Though the democracy of the Marshall Islands is new, it has functioned well, and most local and national elections have been fair and democratic. Kessai Note won 100 percent of the vote in the 2003 election.

PARLIAMENT

The Marshall Islands has a bicameral parliament. The lower house, or Nitijela, has 33 members, called senators, from 24 districts. They serve concurrent four-year terms. The upper house is an advisory council of high chiefs, called the Council of Iroji, a 12-member body that advises the government on matters of customary law.

POLITICAL PARTIES

There are no formal political parties in the Marshall Islands, though there are no formal laws against them. There are associations that function as interest groups or factions, operating without formal platforms or party structures. They include the traditional Kabua Party and

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the reform-minded United Democratic Party, the party of President Note. Political alliances are still formed according to clan affiliation and are influenced by traditional hierarchies. The first two presidents, Amata Kabua and Imata Kabua, were both chiefs. President Kessai Note is a commoner.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The Marshall Islands are divided into 33 municipalities: Ailinginae, Ailinglaplap, Ailuk, Arno, Aur, Bikar, Bikini, Bokak, Ebon, Enewetak, Erikub, Jabat, Jaluit, Jemo, Kili, Kwajalein, Lae, Lib, Likiep, Majuro, Maloelap, Mejit, Mili, Namorik, Namu, Rongelap, Rongrik, Toke, Ujae, Ujelang, Utirik, Wotho, and Wotje. These municipalities correspond roughly to the individual atolls of the nation. There are four district centers, which each have their own elected council, mayor, local officials, and local police. The districts raise their own money and also receive grants from the federal government.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The Marshall Islands has four judiciary levels: the Supreme Court, a high court, district and community courts, and the traditional rights court. The traditional rights court handles disputes arising from customary law and traditional practices, particularly property disputes. Either judges or juries decide cases. The legal system is based on customary law, acts of the legislature, common law, and Trust Territory laws.

HUMAN RIGHTS

For the most part, the human rights record of the Marshall Islands is very good. The legal and judicial systems function well. Prison conditions are substandard. Violence against women and children is a continuing problem.

FOREIGN POLICY

The Republic of the Marshall Islands is a sovereign nation in "free association" with the United States; the two nations presently have amicable relations. The United States has placed more than 40 government agencies in the Marshalls to render assistance, including the Federal Aviation Administration, the U.S. Postal Service, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and the Small Business Administration. The United States and the Marshalls signed an amended Compact of Free Association in 2004 whereby the Marshalls will receive \$57 million in U.S. aid through 2014 and \$62 million from

2014 to 2024. The two nations have been working out the details regarding compensation for nuclear test victims for decades, and as of 2005 the process was far from complete.

The Marshall Islands have diplomatic relations with 67 nations, including most of its Pacific island neighbors, and it considers regional cooperation to be very important. All foreign relations are conducted under the terms of the Compact of Free Association.

DEFENSE

The United States is responsible for the security and defense of the Marshall Islands. The government may not take any actions that would interfere with U.S. defense responsibilities. The U.S. Department of Defense has the use of the lagoon and several islands located at Kwajalein Atoll, which it is allowed to use as a missile test range.

ECONOMY

The Marshall Islands have yet to develop a self-supporting economy, and the nation depends heavily on U.S. aid, which accounted for 55 percent of the national budget for fiscal year 2003. The nation must import most consumer goods, food, machinery, and petroleum products.

External revenue comes from the U.S. Army installation on Kwajalein Atoll and from tourists. The nation has begun developing a ship registry and as of 2004 had registered over 600 vessels, constituting the ninth-largest fleet in the world; registering ships brings in about one million dollars each year. The nation also sells fishing rights to foreign nations. Copra cake and coconut oil are the largest exports.

There is a modern service economy in Majuro and Ebeye, which have retail establishments, restaurants, banking and insurance, professional services, and other urban industries. The outer islands have some copra production. The government subsidizes these businesses to keep excessive numbers of outer islanders from migrating to the densely populated cities. The government plans to further develop fisheries, aquaculture, and tourism.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$million:	115
GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$:	1,600
GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %:	1.2
GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (2000–2003) %:	0.6
Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:	
Agriculture:	14
Industry:	16
Services:	70

Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:

Private Consumption: 52
 Government Consumption: 31
 Gross Domestic Investment: —

Foreign Trade \$million: Exports: 9
 Imports: 54

% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: —

% of Income Received by Richest 10%: —

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
—	—	—	—	—

Finance

National Currency: U.S. Dollar (USD)

Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: —

Central Bank Discount Rate %: —

Total External Debt \$million: 86.5

Debt Service Ratio %: —

Balance of Payments \$million: —

International Reserves SDRs \$million: —

Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 2.0

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 56.47

per capita \$: 1,075.60

Foreign Direct Investment \$million: —

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: 1 October–30 September

Revenues \$million: 42

Expenditures \$million: 40

Budget Surplus \$million: 2

Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 14

Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: —

Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: —

Irrigation, % of Farms having: —

Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: —

Total Farmland % of land area: 16.7

Livestock: Cattle million: —

Chickens million: —

Pigs 000: —

Sheep 000: —

Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters 000: —

Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 38.7

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 4.5

Industrial Production Growth Rate %: —

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: —

Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: —

Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: —

Net Energy Imports % of use: —

Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: —

Production kW-hr billion: —

Consumption kW-hr billion: —

Coal Reserves tons billion: —

Production tons million: —

Consumption tons million: —

Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —

Production cubic feet billion: —

Consumption cubic feet billion: —

Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —

Production barrels 000 per day: —

Consumption barrels 000 per day: —

Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$million: 54

Exports \$million: 9

Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —

Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —

Balance of Trade \$million: —

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
United States %	—	—
Japan %	—	—
Australia %	—	—
New Zealand %	—	—
China %	—	—

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 64.5

Paved %: 100

Automobiles: —

Trucks and Buses: —

Railroad: Track Length km: —

Passenger-km million: —

Freight-km million: —

Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 540

Total Deadweight Tonnage million: 28.2

Airports: 15

Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 32

Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 7

Number of Tourists from 000: —

Tourist Receipts \$million: 4

Tourist Expenditures \$million: —

Communications

Telephones 000: 4.5
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.00
 Cellular Telephones 000: 0.6
 Personal Computers 000: 3
 Internet Hosts per million people: 102
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 24

ENVIRONMENT

Because the Marshall Islands are essentially at sea level, the government has long been concerned about global climate change. It has participated in negotiations for the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and has also allowed research into climate change and sea levels by a team from Harvard University. The only line of defense between ocean surges and most of the islands and atolls are fragile rings of coral reefs. The islanders legitimately fear for their safety in the case that the oceans rise even slightly, which would probably force all residents to evacuate. Under some scenarios, the entire nation could be covered with water as early as 2030.

Majuro's lagoon has become polluted with wastes discharged from fishing boats as well as homes. The increasing population puts increasing pressure on already inadequate supplies of potable water.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: —
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: —
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 1
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: —

LIVING CONDITIONS

Living conditions are relatively poor. The cities have become crowded in recent years, and the country has limited economic resources. The cost of living is relatively low, but there are not many amenities available. Freshwater is in short supply. Public transportation is by shared taxis and minivans, which are cheap and ubiquitous. There are some state-run boats between the islands, but most people use their own boats or hire privately owned ones. People from Bikini Atoll and other nuclear test sites have had especially difficult existences for most of the past half century, having been forced to evacuate to temporary island homes that proved difficult to live on and incurring radiation sickness when attempting to return to their true homes.

HEALTH

The people of the Marshall Islands have numerous health problems. Rapid population growth and crowded cities

with limited economic opportunities have resulted in the increased incidence of diseases such as tuberculosis and leprosy. Meanwhile, Westernization has increased obesity, alcoholism, tobacco use, teenage pregnancy, and suicide. Malnutrition is a chronic problem for many people. Fertility is high; in 2004 each woman had an average of nearly four children. The government has been trying to find solutions for these problems, as assisted by the World Health Organization, but currently lacks medical resources.

Some areas of the Marshalls have exceptionally high levels of cancers associated with radiation exposure from the nuclear testing in 1954 and from living on islands contaminated with radioactive materials; thyroid cancer is extraordinarily common. The nation sued the United States, alleging that islanders were deliberately resettled onto contaminated islands so that the United States could study the effects of radiation exposure. The nation has received many millions of dollars in compensation.

Health

Number of Physicians: 24
 Number of Dentists: 4
 Number of Nurses: 152
 Number of Pharmacists: 2
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 47
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 29.45
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: —
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 10.6
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 210
 HIV Infected % of adults: —
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 68
 Measles: 90
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 82
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 85

FOOD AND NUTRITION

The Marshallese have always had difficulty acquiring adequate amounts of food, and malnutrition has been a chronic problem for centuries. The work of farming and fishing remains difficult. Fish and seafood are the main source of protein. Tuna is a staple food, as are coconut crabs. Breadfruit, coconut, taro, and pandanus are the main plant crops. People on the northern islands grow arrowroot, which they make into flour. The consumption of Western processed food has increased in recent years, with corresponding rises in obesity.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: —
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: —

STATUS OF WOMEN

Women have fairly high social status owing to the matrilineal transfer of property and traditional rank. Women occupy important positions both in the government and within tribes. Women work at all levels of employment, though many have low-paying jobs with no hope for advancement.

Spousal abuse and domestic violence are common and are usually related to alcohol consumption. One survey found that more than 80 percent of Marshallese women had been affected by spousal abuse. Women in cities risk assault if they walk alone at night. Spousal abuse and domestic violence are not against the law, which prohibits only forced rape. Prostitution is illegal, but it does occur.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 3
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.0
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 30.9

WORK

Many residents are employed in a subsistence economy, growing crops and catching fish mostly for their own consumption. Copra and handicraft production provide small incomes for some outer islanders. About 580 women work at a tuna canning plant, where they earn \$1.50 an hour. The government is the largest employer, accounting for 64 percent of workers earning salaries.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 28,700
 Female Participation Rate %: —
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 21.4
 Industry: 20.9
 Services: 57.7
 Unemployment %: 30.9

EDUCATION

The Marshall Islands have a public school system that provides compulsory education for children up to age 14, around eighth grade. Elementary schools are bilingual and bicultural; students begin studying English in fourth grade. Secondary schools are selective, and students must pass a test to enter them. The Marshall Islands have two institutions of higher education: a pre-university branch of the University of the South Pacific and the two-year

College of the Marshall Islands. Students who want a fuller university education must go elsewhere.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 93.7
 Male %: 93.6
 Female %: 93.7
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: —
 First Level: Primary schools: —
 Teachers: 517
 Students: 8,777
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 17.0
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 95.8
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: —
 Teachers: 381
 Students: 6,353
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 16.7
 Net Enrollment Ratio: —
 Third Level: Institutions: —
 Teachers: 48
 Students: 903
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: —
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 11.2

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Scientific training in the Marshalls focuses on fishing techniques, aquaculture, and seabed mining, all of which the government hopes to develop as sources of income. The nation has a modern telecommunications system, including digital switching equipment, international calling, telex, and internet facilities. Nevertheless, the nation remains fairly undeveloped technologically, and most residents do not use much technological equipment. In 2003 there were about 4,500 telephone lines and 600 cellular telephones in operation on the islands; only about 1,400 people were using the Internet.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: —
 Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

The Marshallese media enjoys freedom of speech and disseminates a wide range of views, though it generally handles sensitive political issues with tact, avoiding direct confrontations and accusations. The state-owned radio station is run by the Marshall Islands Broadcasting Company. Micronesia Heatwave is a commercial radio station, while V7AA is religious. AFN Kwajalein, the U.S. military radio and television station, can be received in some areas. MBC TV is the state-run television station. Many

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households receive television broadcasts through cable. The government publishes a monthly magazine, the *Marshall Islands Gazette*, which avoids coverage of political issues. There is one privately owned weekly newspaper, which is published in both Marshallese and English.

Media

Daily Newspapers: —
Total Circulation 000: —
Circulation per 1,000: —
Books Published: —
Periodicals: —
Radio Receivers 000: —
per 1,000: —
Television sets 000: —
per 1,000: —

CULTURE

The Marshallese produce numerous handicrafts. They weave baskets and other objects with intricate patterns, using local materials such as pandanus leaves. Stick charts, an ancient form of oceanic navigational chart, are still produced for tourists, though most modern Marshallese can no longer use them to navigate the ocean. The nation is trying to revive the art of canoe building. Tattooing was a traditional art, and before the missionaries arrived all Marshallese were tattooed, receiving decorations as a rite of passage.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
Volumes: —
Registered borrowers: —
Museums Number: —
Annual Attendance: —
Cinema Gross Receipts: —
Number of Cinemas: —
Seating Capacity: —
Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

The Marshallese maintain a rich oral tradition of legends, songs, and chants. Many myths focus on oceanic navigation, and these were historically used to teach navigation and weather observation skills to young sailors. The creator god, Lowa, brought the islands into existence by humming. The main evil characters are cannibal spirits and ogres. Marshallese myths are related to stories from Asia, Micronesia, and Polynesia, reflecting the common origins of those peoples.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

For the Marshallese, entertainment revolves around the family. Relatives visit one another frequently and often hold large family gatherings, with feasting, singing, and dancing. Visitors to the Marshall Islands generally come to enjoy the spectacular snorkeling and scuba diving or to tour wrecks of World War II airplanes and ships.

ETIQUETTE

The Marshallese do not customarily tip for services, though they welcome tips from visitors. Bargaining is not the custom in markets, though people do occasionally barter with one another.

FAMILY LIFE

Marshallese society is organized by tribes, each of which is under the leadership of a chief and clan head and supported by workers. Chiefs control the use of land and other resources and settle disputes. Clan heads maintain the land and organize daily activities. The other tribe members perform all the daily work. The tribes are matrilineal, and land is passed down through mothers. Extended family is very important, and people maintain close ties with numerous distant relatives. Family members are expected to care for one another if necessary. Family gatherings are very important, especially on such occasions as a child's first birthday.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Marshallese people dress in casual, lightweight clothing but still observe rules of modesty. Women wear dresses, skirts, or sarongs; it is considered offensive to expose bare thighs in public. Men generally wear pants rather than shorts.

SPORTS

Through the early 200s there was a revival of interest in canoe racing, and there are now frequent sailing races throughout the islands. The Outrigger Marshall Islands Cup race is one of the biggest; captains sail 18-foot canoes made of breadfruit tree logs out and back on a six-mile course. The outcome of the race often depends on how rapidly the captain can reverse the direction of his sail for the return voyage.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1788** British captain John Williams Marshall names the Marshall Islands.
- 1864** Germans begin establishing trading companies in the Marshalls.
- 1885** Germany buys the Marshall Islands from Spain for \$4.5 million.
- 1887** Germany entrusts the Jaluit Company with governing the Marshall Islands.
- 1914** Japan captures the Marshalls and builds military bases.
- 1920** The League of Nations gives Japan a mandate to govern the Marshalls.
- 1944** The United States takes the Marshalls from Japan.
- 1946** The United States begins nuclear weapons testing on Bikini Atoll, evacuating the Bikini islanders to Rongerik Atoll and promising to return them soon.
- 1947** The United States takes over the administration of the Marshall Islands, which become part of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands.
- 1948** The U.S. nuclear weapons testing program is expanded to Enewetak Atoll, forcing Enewetak islanders to evacuate.
- 1954** Bravo, the most powerful hydrogen bomb ever tested, is detonated on Bikini Atoll.
- 1965** The United States creates the Congress of Micronesia in order to introduce self-government to the region.
- 1969** The United States initiates attempts to decontaminate Bikini Atoll.
- 1970** Bikini Atoll's residents return to their island throughout the decade, only to expose their bodies to dangerous levels of radiation. They are evacuated again. Many islanders become seriously ill.
- 1973** The Marshall Islands withdraw from the Congress of Micronesia, preferring to govern themselves independently.
- 1979** The Marshall Islands establish a government and ratify a constitution. Amata Kabua is elected president.
- 1980** The residents of Enewetak Atoll return home after most of the topsoil is removed in an attempt to clean up nuclear contamination.
- 1980** The nation names itself the Republic of the Marshall Islands.
- 1983** The Marshalls enter into a Compact of Free Association with the United States, which will give the Marshalls political independence with American military and financial aid. The United States retains its military base on Kwajalein Atoll.
- 1985** The United States promises to finish decontaminating Bikini Atoll by 2000.
- 1986** The United States grants the Marshalls independence as agreed upon in the Compact of Free Association of 1983. The compact promises islanders compensation for damage suffered from nuclear testing.
- 1988** The U.S. Nuclear Claims Tribunal is established to determine the amount of compensation due the Marshalls.
- 1989** The United Nations predicts that global warming could cause the Marshalls to be completely submerged by 2030.
- 1990** The United Nations terminates the Marshall Islands' trustee status.
- 1991** The Marshall Islands join the United Nations. The United States begins efforts to clean up Bikini Atoll.
- 1996** Bikini Atoll is declared safe for human residence and tourism.
- 2000** Kessai Note becomes president.
- 2001** The Nuclear Claims Tribunal announces the amount of damages owed by the United States to the Bikini islanders, but the fund for paying damages does not contain enough money. The Bikini islanders are told to petition the U.S. Congress for more compensation.
- 2003** President George W. Bush signs a new Compact of Free Association with the Marshall Islands and Micronesia.
- 2004** President Kessai Note begins his second term as president.

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- Rottman, Gordon L. *The Marshall Islands 1994: Operation Flintlock, the Capture of Kwajalein and Eniwetok*. Oxford, 2004.
- Stanley, David. *Micronesia Handbook: Guide to the Caroline, Gilbert, Mariana, and Marshall Islands*. Emeryville, Calif., 1992.

OFFICIAL PUBLICATIONS

- Marshall Islands. *Population Census* 2004

1546 Marshall Islands

CONTACT INFORMATION

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- OIA Statistics Online
<http://www.pacificweb.org/>
- Yokwe Online
<http://www.yokwe.net/>

INTERNET RESOURCES

- Embassy of the Marshall Islands (Washington, D.C.)
<http://www.rmiembassyus.org/index.htm>

MAURITANIA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Islamic Republic of Mauritania (République Islamique de Mauritanie; Al-Jumhuriyah al-Islamiyah al-Muritaniyah)

ABBREVIATION

MR

CAPITAL

Nouakchott

HEAD OF STATE

Colonel Ely Ould Mohammed Vall (from 2005)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Sidy Mohamed Ould Boubacar (from 2005)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Republic

POPULATION

3,086,859 (2005)

AREA

1,030,700 sq km (397,950 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Mixed Moor/black, Moor, black

LANGUAGES

Arabic (official); Pular, Soninke, and Wolof (national); French, Hassaniya

RELIGION

Islam

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Ouguiya

NATIONAL FLAG

A yellow star over a yellow crescent on a light green field

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A circular badge bearing an Islamic star and crescent, stalks of millet, and a date palm, with "Islamic Republic of Mauritania" in Arabic and French on the border

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"Mauritania"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day), May 1 (Labor Day), May 25 (African Liberation Day), November 28 (Independence Day, National Day), various Islamic festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

November 28, 1960

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

July 12, 1991

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Mauritania, in northwestern Africa, extends 1,515 km (941 mi) northeast to southwest and 1,314 km (816 mi) southeast to northwest. It has a total land area of 1,030,700 sq km (397,950 sq mi). Mauritania's Atlantic coastline stretches 666 km (414 mi), and the nation's total international land border of 5,074 km (3,153 mi) is shared with four countries: Algeria (463 km; 288 mi), Mali (2,237 km; 1,390 mi), Senegal (813 km; 505 mi), and Western Sahara (1,561 km; 970 mi), which is occupied by Morocco.

The country is a vast, flat plain divided in the middle by a series of plateaus with elevations above 450 m (1,500 ft). To the east of these plateaus lies El Djouf, or the empty quarter. To the west are clayey plains, or *regs*, and sandy dunes, or *ergs*. Topographically, the country is divided into four zones: the Sahara; the Sahel; the Senegal River valley, or Chemama; and the coast. The Saharan zone constitutes two-thirds of the country. The Sahelian zone consists of grasslands and steppes. The Chemama zone is a narrow belt of land extending 15–30 km (10–20 mi) north of the Senegal River. The coastal zone extends the length of the Atlantic coast in an arc from Cape Blanc to the Senegal River.

Mauritania



Geography

Area sq km: 1,030,700; sq mi 397,950
 World Rank: 28th
 Land Boundaries, km: Algeria 463; Mali 2,237; Senegal 813; Western Sahara 1,561
 Coastline, km: 754
 Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Sebket Te-n-Dghamcha -5
 Highest: Kediet Ijill 915
 Land Use %
 Arable Land: 0.5
 Permanent Crops: 0

Forest: 0.3
 Other: 99.2

Population of Principal Cities (2001)

Nouadhibou	72,337
Nouakchott	558,195

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Mauritania has four climatic zones, corresponding to the topographic zones. The Chemama zone has the high-

est rainfall in the country, with up to 660 mm (26 in) per year, beginning in May and lasting until September. Temperatures are cooler than in the rest of the country, with a maximum of 34.4°C (94°F) and a minimum of 23.3°C (74°F).

The Sahelian zone has one rainy season, from July to October, with a maximum of 460 mm (18 in) of rainfall. Temperature extremes are less severe than in the Sahara.

The coastal zone has a humid but temperate climate modified by trade winds from the Canary Islands. Rainfall is less than 25 mm (1 in) annually. Temperatures are moderate, ranging from maximums of 26°C (79°F) in January and 32°C (90°F) in October to minimums of 13°C (56°F) in January and 19°C (66°F) in July.

The Saharan zone receives 25–127 mm (1–5 in) of rain annually during the rainy season, called *hivernage*, from July to September. Temperature extremes are more pronounced. Winter temperatures range from 0°C (32°F) at night to 37.8°C (100°F) at midday, while summer temperatures range from 15.6°C (60°F) at night to over 48.9°C (120°F) at midday. The hottest months are May, June, and July.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature

Chemama zone:	74°F to 94°F
Coastal zone:	Winter 56°F to 79°F
	Summer 66°F to 90°F
Saharan zone:	Winter 32°F to 100°F
	Summer 60°F to 120°F

Average Rainfall

Saharan zone:	1 in to 5 in
Coastal zone:	1 in
Sahelian zone:	18 in
Chemama zone:	26 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

About 60 percent of Mauritania's land is desert, and that proportion grows yearly as the Sahara spreads; very little grows or lives there, aside from a few gazelles and bustards that can survive on almost no water. In the Sahel there are low grasses, acacia trees, and bushes. The southern part of the country is wetter, and the area near the Senegal River is actually fertile and can support many plants, such as the baobab tree; most of Mauritania's food crops are grown there, including dates. The Diawling National Park is full of endangered species, especially birds, and a number of birds also live along the Atlantic coast. The Banc d'Arguin National Park is a stopping point for millions of migratory birds. Desert animals include insects, sandfish, foxes, and gerbils. Lions and monkeys live in the more fertile regions.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005:	3,086,859	
World Rank:	129th	
Density per sq km:	2.6	
% of annual growth (1999-2003):	2.5	
Male %:	49.5	
Female %:	50.5	
Urban %:	61.7	
Age Distribution %:	0–14:	45.9
	15–64:	51.9
	65 and over:	2.2
Population 2025:	5,292,000	
Birth Rate per 1,000:	41.79	
Death Rate per 1,000:	12.74	
Rate of Natural Increase %:	2.9	
Total Fertility Rate:	6.01	
Expectation of Life (years):	Males 50.15	Females 54.56
Marriage Rate per 1,000:	—	
Divorce Rate per 1,000:	—	
Average Size of Households:	5	
Induced Abortions:	—	

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

The largest ethnic group is the Moor, who constitute about 70 percent of the population when people of mixed black-Moor blood are included. The remaining 30 percent are blacks belonging to the Fulbe, Toucouleur, Soninke, Wolof, and Bambara groups.

The Moors are of Arab-Berber stock and are divided into subgroups based on the degree of black admixture and social status. The white Moors, or *bidan*, are predominantly Arab-Berber. The noble white Moors—both the warrior class, or *bassan*, and the religious elite, the *zwaya*—lay claim to pure Arab ancestry. The common white Moors, or the *zenaga*, are clearly Berber. The black Moors are also Berber in origin but have a greater admixture of black African ancestry. The black Moors are essentially a slave class, though they are officially called *barratin* (freedmen). Moor society is characterized by a rigid hierarchical caste system and tribal divisions within the context of an Islamic society, with the *zwaya* and *bassan* at the top and the *barratin* at the bottom.

Of the five black ethnic minority groups, the largest is the Toucouleur. The other four—the Fulbe, Soninke, Wolof, and Bambara—are representative of widely dispersed peoples who are found in greater numbers in neighboring countries. The Fulbe, like the Moors, are nomadic, while other minorities are sedentary farmers concentrated in the fertile Senegal River valley.

The European presence in the country consists of nearly 2,000 French and Canary Islanders.

Mauritanians are not Western-oriented and are uncomfortable when confronted with traditions and ways of

life alien to their own. Whatever degree of receptivity to the West exists is limited entirely to the blacks.

LANGUAGES

The constitution of 1961 designated Arabic as the national language and French and Arabic as the official languages. The 1991 constitution specifies the national languages as Arabic, Pular, Soninke, and Wolof and the official language as Arabic. The Moors speak various dialects of Arabic, grouped together as Hassaniya. The Moor elite classes speak a purer form of Arabic, while the white Moor commoners and the black Moors speak a form of Arabic mixed with Berber.

All the black groups speak languages belonging to the West Atlantic, or Mande, subgroups of the Niger-Congo group of the Congo-Kordofanian family. Nearly all these languages have some Arabic elements introduced as a result of contact with the northerners. The Fulbe speak Fulfulde, or Pular, and the Toucouleur speak a dialect of Fulfulde. Soninke (Sarakole) and Bambara are Mande languages, while the Wolof have absorbed more Arabic words than others.

Language is a sensitive issue that has served to widen the ethnic division between the Moorish north and the black south. The introduction of Arabic as the medium of instruction in primary schools touched off riots in 1966. The compulsory use of Arabic in all schools was suspended in 1979 but reintroduced in 1988.

RELIGIONS

Islam is the official religion of Mauritania and is adhered to by virtually all Mauritania. The centers of religious orthodoxy in the country are the two major brotherhoods, called *tariqa* (ways): the Qadiriya and the Tijaniya, both of which are organized hierarchically. Mauritania subscribes to the Malikite rite of the Sunni branch of Islam. Chinguetti, in the district of Adrar, is considered the seventh holy place in Islam.

Most of the 6,500 Christians in the country are Roman Catholics, under the jurisdiction of the bishop of Nouakchott. Proselytism and the construction of churches and other non-Islamic houses of worship are prohibited without express government permission, which has been granted in several instances, however, to Mauritania's small Roman Catholic community. Several Catholic churches operate freely.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

At one time Mauritania was covered with lakes and other sources of freshwater. However, about 10,000 years ago the Sahara Desert began to encroach upon the land. At some point in the third century c.e. nomads (Berbers) inhabited much of the region, trading salt, gold, and slaves. In the ninth and 10th centuries the Empire of Ghana, with its capital in southwest Mauritania, emerged. As the Islamic faith swept northern Africa, the Muslim Berber Almoravids captured the northwest portion of the continent and established a capital in Marrakesh, from which they destroyed the Empire of Ghana. As the Islamic empire in North Africa grew, it split in two, one centered in Morocco and the other ruled by the Berbers of Mauritania. Defeated by invading Arabs in 1674, the resulting cultural blending gave rise to the Moors.

When Europeans began to gain control over Africa, Mauritania was relatively unscathed. It suffered no depopulation due to slavery, no reorientation of the economy to cash crops, and no stripping of precious minerals. In 1814, however, France gained the right to control the Mauritanian coast. By 1904 Xavier Coppolani, delegate-general of the government of Mauritanian Sahara, had established French military posts in southern Mauritania. His work was continued by Gen. Henri Gouraud, who, as the commissioner of the Civil Territory of Mauritania, captured Atar in 1904. By 1912 all resistance in Adrar and southern Mauritania had been put down. Except for minor raids by Moor warriors, French dominance was never challenged, until 1961.

The French policy of assimilation and direct rule was never applied vigorously in Mauritania. Rather, the French relied on existing political structures to maintain power. Further, no attempts were made to develop the economic resources of the country. French rule was summed up by the former president Moktar Ould Daddah in saying, "Mauritania has hardly known colonization and has, therefore, neither suffered its ill effects nor realized its benefits."

In 1958 Mauritania became a self-governing member of the French Community. It gained full independence on November 28, 1960, with Moktar Ould Daddah as head of both state and government. By 1964 Daddah had established a one-party state under the rule of the Parti du Peuple Mauritanien (PPM).

From late 1976 to mid-1979 many of Mauritania's political and economic problems stemmed from disputes over the Western Sahara territories, which had been ceded by Spain to Mauritania and Morocco in November 1975, with the agreement to take effect in March 1976. On July 10, 1978, a bloodless coup replaced Ould Daddah with Lt. Col. Mustapha Ould Salek. The constitution was suspended, and the government and the PPM were dissolved. The newly formed Military Committee for National Recovery (CMRN) would exercise execu-

Religious Affiliations

Sunni Muslim

3,080,000

tive authority. Salek's continued desire to end hostilities over the disputed Western Sahara led him to replace the CMRN with the Military Committee for National Salvation (CMSN) in April 1979. At the same time he gave over the prime ministry to Lt. Col. Ahmed Ould Bouceif, who was killed in a plane crash the following month. Lt. Col. Mohamed Khouna Ould Haidalla, formerly the minister of defense, was then appointed by the CMSN as a replacement. Salek resigned in June, and the presidency was filled by Lt. Col. Mohamed Mahmed Ould Ahmed Louly. On August 5, after talks in Algiers, Mauritania formally renounced all claims to the Western Sahara regions called Tiris el-Gharbia and subsequently withdrew troops from the territory, which was quickly occupied by Morocco. At the same time Algiers and Mauritania reestablished diplomatic relations.

In 1980 Haidalla consolidated his position by taking over the presidency from Louly and moved toward introducing civilian rule and a multiparty system, with the government to be headed by Sid Ahmed Ould Bnejara. But civilian participation in the government ended following an attempted coup by a group of officers in March 1981 in which Morocco was accused of involvement. Prime Minister Bnejara was replaced by Col. Maaouya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya on April 26. A planned coup was uncovered early in 1982 and resulted in the arrest and imprisonment of the former president Salek and the former prime minister Bnejara.

Student unrest in 1984 led Haidalla to take over the prime minister's office. In December, while Haidalla was out of the country, Taya effected a bloodless coup and assumed the role of head of both state and government. An amnesty for all political prisoners was announced. In the next several years Taya restructured the administrative system and began a major program of economic recovery.

In the mid-1980s civil disturbances broke out, with black Mauritians claiming oppression by Moorish ethnic groups. In late 1987 a discovered coup attempt led to the arrest of 51 people reported to be of the black Toucouleur ethnic groups. Secret trials in December sentenced three officers, who were executed, and 41 others, who were imprisoned. Internal problems in 1988 were followed by the arrest of several hundred people linked to the pro-Iraqi Baathist movement. At the same time Amnesty International and the black African opposition group Forces de Libération Africaine de Mauritanie (FLAM) accused the government of inhuman treatment of prisoners in the desert Walata prison.

President Maaouya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya has remained entrenched in power since the 1984 military coup. He was inaugurated as president in 1992 and reelected to another six-year term in 1997. The Taya regime is heavily antiblack and has been accused of systematic repression of southern blacks, specifically the executing or torturing of several thousand black army officers and government officials. In January 2002 the government banned the opposi-

tion party Action for Change, which had been agitating for increased rights for blacks and the descendants of slaves. Taya was reelected in November 2003 with 67 percent of the vote, in elections that the opposition called flawed.

During 2003 and 2004 the government rebuffed three attempted coups in 15 months. The coup attempt of July 2003 involved heavy fighting on behalf of the president's forces, who managed to retake the capital, which had been seized by rebel soldiers. Former president Haidalla, the main opposition candidate in the 2003 presidential election, was given a suspended sentence for his role in attempting to overthrow the government. In September 2004 the government accused Libya and Burkina Faso of funding the rebels. In August 2005 President Taya was ousted in a military coup led by Ould Mohammed Vall.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1960–79	Moktar Ould Daddah
1979	Mustafa Ould Salek
1979–80	Mohamed Mahmed Ould Ahmed Louly
1980–84	Mohamed Khouna Ould Haidalla
1984–2005	Maaouya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya
2005–	Ely Ould Mohammed Vall

CONSTITUTION

In 1991 Mauritania adopted a new constitution, which instituted multiparty elections. The frame of government calls for a president who is elected by universal suffrage for a renewable six-year term. The voting age is 18. Six candidates ran for president in the 2003 election, including one woman and one *barratin*, from a former slave family. The executive branch keeps tight control of the government. Parts of the constitution were suspended on August 6, 2005, following a military coup.

PARLIAMENT

The 1991 constitution vests legislative power in a bicameral legislature, comprising the 81 members of the National Assembly, elected by universal suffrage, and the 56 members of the Senate, elected by municipal leaders. The parliament's powers are severely limited by the constitution, though it can override a presidential veto. Assembly members serve for five years, Senate members for six. Representatives are elected by universal suffrage by all those 18 years of age and older.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Political parties were legalized by the constitution passed July 12, 1991, though politics continue to be tribally based.

All parties in the country must have an Islamic orientation. As of 2004, 12 major political parties were active. The parliament has been dominated by the Democratic and Social Republican Party (PRDS) since 1994. Other parties include Action for Change (AC), the Alliance for Justice and Democracy (AJD), the Mauritanian Party for Renewal and Concord (PMRC), the National Union for Democracy and Development (UNDD), the Party for Liberty, Equality, and Justice (PLEJ), the Popular Front (FP), the Popular Progress Alliance (APP), the Popular Social and Democratic Union (UPSD), the Progress Force Union (UFP), the Rally of Democratic Forces (RFD), the Rally for Democracy and Unity (RDU), and the Union for Democracy and Progress (UDP). Action for Change was banned in 2002, but its members kept their seats in the National Assembly.

The fundamental divide in Mauritanian politics is between those who consider it to be an Arab country and those who want sub-Saharan blacks to have equal governing roles. Many members of both groups, however, want a diverse society with a place for all races.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For purposes of regional administration Mauritania is divided into 12 numbered regions plus the capital district of Nouakchott. Each region is headed by a governor. The regions are divided into 49 departments, each headed by a prefect, and subdivided into arrondissements.

LEGAL SYSTEM

Mauritanian law is based on a combination of French civil law and Islamic sharia law. The Malikite school of Islamic law is the law of the land in all social and family matters. Criminal and commercial law is largely based on French sources.

At the apex of the judicial system are the Supreme Court, the State Security Court, and the High Court of Justice. The Supreme Court, with six members, has a modern jurist as president and an Islamic judge as vice president. It has four functions under the constitution: constitutional, appellate, administrative, and financial. The State Security Court consists of nonprofessionals appointed by the president. The High Court of Justice consists of a president and 11 other judges, six of whom are elected by the National Assembly from among its own members and five of whom are elected by the National Assembly from a list of Islamic jurists.

HUMAN RIGHTS

During the 1990s Mauritania's human-rights record remained generally poor, although there were areas of improvement. Democratic institutions remained

rudimentary. Police used excessive force, arbitrary arrest and detention, and illegal searches; however, reports of police abuses decreased during the year 2000. Prison conditions remained harsh and unhealthy, but a new men's prison was completed in Nouakchott that improved overcrowding and unsanitary conditions. Pretrial detention continued; however, the lengths of pretrial detentions were shorter due to the improved organization of the courts. The government continued its program of judicial reform and training, but the executive continued to exercise significant pressure on the judiciary, and in practice the right to a fair trial was not always realized.

While the government tolerates a critical independent press, it continues to censor individual editions. Discrimination against women continues, and female genital mutilation remains a serious problem despite government efforts to halt the practice. Ethnic tensions continued to ease, but the largely southern-based ethnic groups, including the Halpular (also called Fulani or Peuhl), Soninke, and Wolof, remain underrepresented in political life, and some of their members feel excluded from effective political representation. Child labor in the informal sector is common.

A system of officially sanctioned slavery in which government and society join to force individuals to serve masters does not exist; however, there continue to be reports that slavery in the form of forced and involuntary servitude persists in some isolated areas, or that unofficial voluntary servitude persists and that former slaves continue to work for former masters or others for food, shelter, and clothing, though under no legal compulsion to do so.

FOREIGN POLICY

Mauritania is a nonaligned country but an active member of the African Union, the Arab League, and the Union of the Arab Maghreb. Mauritania supported Saddam Hussein in the Gulf War but later shifted its support to Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states and distanced itself from Baghdad. In 1995 it made overtures to Israel, provoking Libya to suspend relations. As a former French colony it continues to have a special relationship with France, especially in monetary and military affairs. Mauritania's settlement with the Polisario Front, fighting for the independence of Western Sahara, was followed by the restoration of diplomatic relations with Algeria.

In 1989 violence erupted along the border with Senegal, provoking race riots in the capitals of both nations. In subsequent months 170,000 to 240,000 Mauritanian expatriates fled Senegal, while Mauritania expelled 70,000 Senegalese and 40,000 blacks. Diplomatic relations were severed, but they were restored in 1992. Mauritania's relations with Mali were also strained, with the black-

dominated regime accusing Nouakchott of inciting its ethnically Berber Tuareg population. Morocco is another source of tension. In September 2001 King Mohammed of Morocco visited the country, a step toward normalizing relations between the two countries.

Mauritania has for the most part maintained good relations with the United States, though Mauritania's various human rights violations and its perceived support of Iraq in 1991 caused some problems. The nation is eligible for U.S. trade benefits under the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA). Mauritania opened diplomatic relations with Israel in 2000.

DEFENSE

The defense structure is headed by the president, who is also the commander in chief of the armed forces. The line of command runs through the minister of national defense to the chief of the national staff of the armed forces. The country is divided into three military regions.

Military manpower is provided by voluntary enlistment, although mandatory conscription for two-year periods of service was introduced in 1962. After service periods, veterans are subject to recall in the event of a threat to national security.

In size and equipment the armed forces of Mauritania are geared not to an external, offensive role but only to internal peacekeeping operations. In terms of combat-worthiness and capability of sustained operations, the armed forces have a poor track record and repeatedly had to pull back when faced with the better-disciplined Polisario Front forces. In fact, the army's poor performance in the field persuaded the Mauritanian government to seek a nonmilitary solution to the Western Saharan problem, finally abandoning its claim to Tiris el-Gharbia and seeking its own peace settlement with the Polisario Front in the face of Moroccan pressures. However, martial traditions are strong in the country, and the armed forces have an influence on national life that is not limited to defense needs. The armed forces provide a pool of technical and administrative skills and function as the engine of the modernization processes.

Until French military aid was withdrawn in 1973, France was the major supplier of equipment and training programs to the Mauritanian army.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 11,000
 Military Manpower Availability: 686,629
 Military Expenditures \$million: 40.8
 as % of GDP: 3.7
 as % of central government expenditures: —
 Arms Imports \$million: 9
 Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

Many of Mauritania's subsistence farmers and nomads moved to the cities in the 1970s and 1980s during a period of recurrent droughts, but half the population still lives in rural areas and depends on farming and livestock. Mauritania's two main sources of revenue are iron ore deposits and coastal fisheries, but foreign fishermen have depleted fish stocks, and world demand for iron ore has declined in recent years. Droughts and economic mismanagement are perennial problems.

The result of these difficulties has been a buildup of foreign debt, which has been alleviated somewhat by debt relief that began in 2001. In the early 2000s the government improved the foreign investment climate and began investigating the possibility of drilling for oil offshore. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has been working with the government to improve fiscal discipline, reduce poverty, improve education and health, and privatize the economy.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 5.195
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 1,800
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 4.6
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 3.1
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 25
 Industry: 29
 Services: 46
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 72
 Government Consumption: 20
 Gross Domestic Investment: —
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 0.541
 Imports: 0.86
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 2.5
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 30.2
 CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
118.3	123.1	127.1	133.1	138.2

Finance

National Currency: Ouguiya (MRO)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = MRO 271.739
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 32.2
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: —
 Total External Debt \$billion: 2.5
 Debt Service Ratio %: 15.68
 Balance of Payments \$million: —
 International Reserves SDRs \$million: 415.2
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 7.0

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 355.4
 per capita \$: 135.10
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 12

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$million: 421
 Expenditures \$million: 378
 Budget Surplus \$million: 43
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 25
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 0.6
 Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares: 0.8
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 9.8
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 4.1
 Total Farmland % of land area: 0.5
 Livestock: Cattle million: 1.5
 Chickens million: 4.2
 Pigs 000: —
 Sheep million: 8.7
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 1.55
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 78.9

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 85.08
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 2.0

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 3
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 995
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 365
 Net Energy Imports % of use: —
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: 100
 Production kW-hr billion: 157.4
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 146.3
 Coal Reserves tons billion: —
 Production tons million: —
 Consumption tons million: —
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
 Production cubic feet billion: —
 Consumption cubic feet billion: —
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
 Production barrels 000 per day: —
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 24
 Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$million: 860
 Exports \$million: 541
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): -3.2
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 7.7
 Balance of Trade \$million: —

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
France %	16.8	12.1
Spain %	7.7	11.4
China %	6.3	—
Belgium %	5.1	7.8
Germany %	4.9	7.4
Japan %	4.3	12.5
United Kingdom %	4.1	—
United States %	4.0	—
Italy %	—	10.4
Russia %	—	5.0
Côte d'Ivoire %	—	4.2
Netherlands %	—	4.0

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 7,720
 Paved %: 10.8
 Automobiles: 12,200
 Trucks and Buses: 18,200
 Railroad: Track Length km: 717
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: —
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: —
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: —
 Airports: 24
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 45
 Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 24
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 28
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 55

Communications

Telephones 000: 31.5
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.13
 Cellular Telephones 000: 300
 Personal Computers 000: 29
 Internet Hosts per million people: 8
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 3

ENVIRONMENT

Mauritania suffers from growing desertification caused by overgrazing, deforestation, and soil erosion. These worsening conditions have been exacerbated by drought. The country has limited freshwater resources away from the Senegal River, which is its only perennial river. The country is occasionally struck by plagues of locusts. One bright spot is the recently opened Diawling National Park, which has been attracting endangered species of birds.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 0.3
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: -10
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 2
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 1.22

LIVING CONDITIONS

Half of Mauritians live below the poverty line; though per capita GDP was \$1,800 in 2003, the wealthiest 10 percent of the population consumes 30 percent of the wealth. Living conditions are poor for most people. Roads are bad, and there is little public transportation. The capital city, Nouakchott, was built to accommodate 200,000 residents, but over half a million people now live there, many of them in metal shacks and tents. Crime is steadily increasing in urban areas. Many people still live a nomadic existence, moving about the desert with herds of animals.

HEALTH

Life expectancy is about 52 years. Infant mortality is fairly high, at over 72 deaths per 1,000 live births. Fertility is extremely high, with each woman averaging 6 children in 2004. HIV/AIDS has not yet become a major problem, though malaria is endemic. Women typically give birth at home, but the state has been retraining traditional midwives and encouraging urban women to deliver their babies in hospitals. The government and the United Nation's Children's Fund (UNICEF) have launched programs to encourage mothers to breastfeed their babies instead of using formula in an effort to reduce the infant mortality rate and space births.

Health

Number of Physicians: 317
 Number of Dentists: 46
 Number of Nurses: 1,435
 Number of Pharmacists: 95
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 14
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 72.35
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 1,000
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 3.6
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 12
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.6
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 83
 Measles: 81
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 42
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 56

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Frequent droughts, plagues of locusts, and the encroachment of the desert hampers Mauritania's ability to feed its people. In 2003 nearly one million Mauritians faced starvation after a drought; in 2004 locusts ate most of the growing plants, precipitating another crisis. Rice and tea are staples of the Mauritanian diet. People drink some fruit juices and eat dates. Fish is a common source of protein along the coast, and nomads eat camel, goat, and sheep.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 9.5
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,660
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 172.2
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 23.4

STATUS OF WOMEN

Although Mauritanian women are legally free to participate fully in governmental affairs and private business, traditional values and practices limit their scope of activities. A number of women have risen to important positions in the fields of health and education, and some hold midlevel government positions. Their number is small, however, and the possibilities for advancement are slight.

Girls attend school at a much lower rate than boys, especially in rural areas, where they tend to marry early or stay at home to help their parents. The government has opened boarding schools specifically for girls and offered prizes to keep them in school. Some people still practice female genital mutilation, and in some regions parents force-feed daughters to fatten them up for marriage.

Women

Women-headed Households %: 30
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 4
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 0.73
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: —

WORK

About 80 percent of Mauritians depend on their own crops and livestock to feed themselves; unemployment was estimated to be 21 percent in 1999. Many Mauritanian men have emigrated to other countries to look for work. Of those Mauritians who are employed, about half work in agriculture, growing dates, millet, sorghum, rice, and corn or raising cattle and sheep. The main in-

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dustry in the country is the mining of iron ore and gypsum, though some people also work in fish processing.

Despite laws and governmental protestations to the contrary, many Mauritians insist that slavery still exists in the country, often claiming to themselves be escaped slaves. The status of slaves is inherited, so that the children of slaves are themselves born into slavery.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 786,000
Female Participation Rate %: 43.5
Labor by Sector %:
Agriculture: 50
Industry: 10
Services: 40
Unemployment %: 21.0

EDUCATION

Mauritania has introduced free, universal, and compulsory education for six years, from ages six to 12.

Schooling consists of 12 years, as divided into six years of primary school, three years of middle school, and three years of secondary school. The academic year runs from October to June. The media of instruction are Arabic and French in the primary grades and Arabic, French, and English in the secondary grades. Many students drop out of school.

Strong racial tensions, present throughout the society, have been consistently reflected in the educational system. An attempt to enforce the use of Arabic in all schools was abandoned due to strong opposition by blacks, who traditionally prefer the use of French and their tribal tongues. Nevertheless, a plan was introduced in 1988 to make Arabic the compulsory first language in all schools.

One of the reasons for the poor educational attainments of Mauritians is the continuing emphasis on purely Islamic education at all levels. Traditional Islamic schools are found in both nomadic communities and settled villages. The best known of these Islamic schools is the Institute of Islamic Studies at Boutilimit.

The majority of the teachers in the school system are black because of the greater educational attainments among blacks and the opposition of Islamic marabouts to secular education. Teaching personnel and curricula have been completely Mauritanianized.

Mauritania has 10 technical schools. Both COMINOR and SOMIMA, the nation's mining companies, run their own vocational schools. Vocational enrollment accounts for 12.5 percent of secondary school pupils.

Public education is administered by the Ministry of National Education and the Ministry of Primary Education.

The École Nationale d'Administration and the École Naturelle des Sciences in Nouakchott began degree

courses in 1982. The University of Nouakchott opened in 1983 and by 1986 had an enrollment of 2,850.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 41.7
Male %: 51.8
Female %: 31.9
School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 7.1
First Level: Primary Schools: 1,635
Teachers: 9,606
Students: 394,401
Student-Teacher Ratio: 41.1
Net Enrollment Ratio: 67.5
Second Level: Secondary Schools: 56
Teachers: 3,237
Students: 81,278
Student-Teacher Ratio: 26.1
Net Enrollment Ratio: 16.1
Third Level: Institutions: 4
Teachers: 353
Students: 8,744
Gross Enrollment Ratio: 3.3
Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 3.6

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Mauritania has little in the way of technological infrastructure. The telephone system is rudimentary, though it is rapidly improving, and in 2002 only 10,000 people were using the Internet. Only about 40 percent of the population can read, which hampers technological progress. Agriculture is still performed with traditional tools and labor-intensive methods.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
High-Tech Exports \$million: —
Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

Mauritania's first daily newspaper, *Ach Chaab*, was founded in 1975. Other papers include *Horizon*, a French paper, and *Nouakchott Info*, a private daily. Mauritania's press laws are fairly restrictive; a newspaper can be banned for publishing anything that "undermines" Islam or insults the government. A national news agency, Agence Mauritanienne d'Information, was founded in 1975. AMP maintains a bureau in Nouakchott.

The state owns the radio and television stations, which not surprisingly broadcast only material favorable to the government. In 2000 the state shut down an FM relay of Radio France Internationale, which had supposedly been saying negative things about Mauritania. The

official broadcasting organization is Radiodiffusion-Télévision de Mauritanie, which broadcasts in Arabic, French, Toucouleur, Sarakole, and Wolof. Limited television service was inaugurated in 1984.

Media

Daily Newspapers: —
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: —
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets 000: 247
 per 1,000: 95

CULTURE

The most notable aspect of Mauritanian culture is the music, which usually has wailing vocals accompanied by an *ardin*, a kind of harp, and a *tidnit*, a four-stringed lute. Arab poetry furnishes the lyrics to these songs. The Moors are known for their elaborate goldsmithing. There are some interesting archaeological sites. The ancient town of Tichit has some elaborately decorated mosques. Koumbi Saleh was the legendary capital of the medieval empire of Ghana and might have been home to many thousands of people; excavations are only partly complete.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Mauritania has a variety of folkloric traditions stemming from its different ethnic groups. The Kewri societies are especially known for their folklore. In ancient times Mauritania was wet and lush, and there are still rock drawings by the Bafour people that give some notion of conditions in those days.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

There is not a great deal of entertainment in Mauritania. People spend their free time sitting and drinking tea.

There are a few places to go fishing or bird-watching. Some people go surfing or swimming along the coast. Muslim celebrations are festive. Some of the cities have movie theaters.

ETIQUETTE

Mauritanians are known for their social solidarity and hospitality. People assume that they will share what they have with others, or that others will share with them; starvation is fairly rare when people have relatives and neighbors who can help. Every visitor receives glasses of strong tea with mint; they will typically be given three glasses during a short visit. Serenity is highly valued; people do not usually react passionately to anything.

FAMILY LIFE

Some 30 percent of Mauritanian families are headed by women. There are some cases of polygamy, but most Mauritanians disapprove of the practice, believing it bad for children. A certain number of children are abandoned every year by parents unable to care for them; many of these grow up to be street children who are at risk of being sexually or otherwise abused.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Mauritanians are very conservative in their dress; they keep their arms and legs covered most of the time. The covering serves a practical purpose as well, keeping out the desert sun and sand and keeping the wearer warm during cold desert nights. Large rectangular pieces of cloth form the basis of most wardrobes, and people fold and tie them in various ways to achieve different effects. Many women wear full veils, covering all but their eyes. Men wear loose trousers and turbans.

SPORTS

Mauritania has no organized sports. There are a few private sporting clubs in Nouakchott, Nouadhibou, and Rosso.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1960** Mauritania gains independence as a member of the French Community, with Moktar Ould Daddah as prime minister.
- 1961** New constitution is promulgated, establishing a presidential form of government. Ould Daddah assumes the presidency.

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- Mauritanian People's Party (Parti du Peuple Mauritanien, PPM) is founded through a coalition of four existing parties.
- 1963** Treaty of Kayes is concluded with Mali, defining the border between Mali and Mauritania.
- 1964** PPM is declared the sole political party and the supreme state organ.
- 1968** Government efforts to abandon French and introduce Arabic as the official language and medium of instruction in schools lead to riots in the black south.
The great Sahelian drought disrupts the economy, brings famine to thousands, and decimates the livestock population.
- 1969** Diplomatic relations with the United States are resumed.
- 1971** Ould Daddah is reelected president.
Riots mark French president Pompidou's state visit to the country.
Mauritania joins Organization for the Development of the Senegal River (Organisation pour la Mise en Valeur du Fleuve Sénégal).
- 1973** Revised agreement of cooperation is concluded with France, excluding monetary and military programs.
French military advisers are withdrawn.
Mauritania withdraws from the franc zone and introduces new national currency, the ouguiya.
Mauritania joins the Arab League.
- 1978** Ould Daddah is ousted in a bloodless coup led by army chief of staff Mustapha Ould Mohamed Salek.
The constitution of 1961 is suspended, and the National Assembly and the PPM are dissolved.
The Military Committee for National Rectification (CMRN) is set up as supreme executive and legislative authority.
- 1979** Following internal power struggles, Ahmed Bouceif is named prime minister.
Following Bouceif's death in an air accident, Mohamed Khouna Ould Haidalla succeeds as head of government.
President Salek resigns office and is replaced by Mohamed Mahmed Ould Ahmed Louly.
Organization of African Unity summit conference calls for referendum in former Spanish Sahara.
Mauritania renounces territorial claims on Tiris el-Gharbia and signs peace treaty with Polisario Front.
- 1980** Mohamed Haidalla takes over as president, as Louly steps down.
The nation experiences an economic upturn, as iron ore production edges upward.
Haidalla resigns posts of prime minister and minister of defense.
- An entirely civilian cabinet is named, with Sid'Ahmed Ould Bnejara as prime minister.
A draft constitution is drawn up.
- 1981** An attempted coup, believed to be backed by Morocco, is foiled.
Civilian rule ends. A new military-dominated cabinet is named, with Col. Maaouiya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya as prime minister and minister of defense. Draft constitution is abandoned.
Coup led by former president Salek and former prime minister Bnejara is foiled.
- 1984** Prime Minister Taya ousts Haidalla in a bloodless coup.
- 1987** High government officials, along with the former governor of the Central Bank, are arrested in connection with a financial scandal.
A coup attempt by members of the black Toucouleur ethnic group opposed to ethnic inequality is thwarted. In secret trials held by the Special Court of Justices, 41 are found guilty and sent to prison, and three officers are sentenced to death and executed.
- 1988** Following the executions it is reported that some 500 black officers are dismissed from the armed forces.
Some 600 people are arrested in connection with the pro-Iraqi Baathist movement.
FLAM and Amnesty International accuse the state of inhuman conditions at its desert prison in Walata.
Haidalla and five associates are released on the anniversary of Taya's takeover.
Students at the University of Nouakchott boycott classes, protesting for improved education and welfare facilities and for better distribution of grants.
- 1989** Mauritania signs a treaty with Algeria, Libya, Morocco, and Tunisia to establish the Union of the Arab Maghreb.
- 1991** A new constitution is adopted, calling for multi-party politics.
- 1992** Taya wins the national elections and retains power.
- 1997** Taya and the PRDS are reelected.
- 2001** The king of Morocco visits.
- 2002** Mauritania receives \$1.1 billion in debt relief.
The government bans the pro-black opposition party Action for Change.
- 2003** Opposition forces led by former president Haidalla attempt a coup, which is rebuffed by the soldiers of President Taya. Taya is reelected in November with 67 percent of the vote; the opposition forces allege voting fraud.
- 2004** The government reports another failed coup attempt and blames Burkina Faso and Libya for financing it and the other recent coup attempts.

2005 President Taya is ousted in a coup d'état led by Col. Ely Ould Mohammed Vall.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Mauritania Government Official Site
<http://www.mauritania.mr/>

MAURITIUS

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Mauritius (République de Maurice)

ABBREVIATION

MU

CAPITAL

Port Louis

HEAD OF STATE

President Sir Anerood Jugnauth (from 2003)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Navinchandra Ramgoolam (from 2005)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Parliamentary democracy

POPULATION

1,230,602 (2005)

AREA

2,040 sq km (788 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Indo-Mauritian, Creole

LANGUAGES

English (official), French (official), Creole, Hindu, Urdu, Tamil

RELIGIONS

Hinduism, Christianity, Islam

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Mauritian rupee

NATIONAL FLAG

Four equal horizontal stripes of red (top), blue, yellow, and green

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A shield of alternate blue and yellow quarters in which are displayed a golden sailing vessel with crossed masts and rowing oars, three palm trees, a red key, and a triangle capped by a white star. The latter two symbols are based on the national motto, which appears on a white ribbon at the base: *Stella clavisque maris Indici* (Star and Key of the Indian Ocean). The device is flanked by a dodo on one side and a sambar (deer) on the other, each holding a stalk of sugarcane.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Motherland”

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 and 2 (New Year’s Days), March 12 (National Day, Independence Day), October 24 (United Nations Day), various Christian festivals, including Assumption, Easter, Good Friday, Holy Saturday, All Saints’ Day, Christmas, and Boxing Day, nine Hindu festivals, three Islamic festivals, one Chinese festival

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

March 12, 1968

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

March 12, 1968; amended March 12, 1992

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

A roughly semicircular island in the Indian Ocean about 800 km (500 mi) east of Madagascar, Mauritius extends 61 km (38 mi) north to south and 47 km (29 mi) east to west, with a coastline of 217 km (135 mi). Associated with the main island are a number of lesser islands. The combined area of 2,040 sq km (788 sq mi) includes Rodrigues Island, the Cargados Carajos Shoals, and the Agalega Islands.

The capital is Port Louis. Other major urban centers are Beau Bassin–Rose Hill, and Vacoas-Phoenix. Both Mauritius and Rodrigues are of volcanic origin. The surface of Mauritius consists of a broad plateau sloping toward a northern coastal plain, with elevations up to 826 m (2,710 ft) near the southern coastline. The island has a jagged coastline with many natural harbors and is nearly encircled by a coral reef. Rodrigues is composed of basalt and is mountainous throughout, with very little flat land.

Mauritius



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Geography

Area sq km: 2,040; sq mi 788
 World Rank: 168th
 Land Boundaries, km: 0
 Coastline, km: 177
 Elevation Extremes meters

Lowest: Indian Ocean 0
 Highest: Mont Piton 828
 Land Use %
 Arable Land: 49.3
 Permanent Crops: 3.0
 Forest: 7.9
 Other: 39.8

Population of Principal Cities (2002)

Beau Bassin–Rose Hill	103,872
Port Louis	144,303
Vacoas-Phoenix	100,066

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Mauritius has a tropical maritime climate. From April to October, when southeasterly trade winds blow, the climate is mild on the plain and cold on the plateau. A hot and wet season lasts from November to March. The temperature varies from 16.6°C (62°F) to 30°C (86°F) at sea level and from 13°C (56°F) to 26°C (79°F) in the highlands.

Rains are heaviest in summer and autumn, from December to May, with the southeastern and central regions receiving 1,520–5,080 mm (60–200 in) of rain annually. The relatively dry western coast, where the capital is located, receives less than 1,010 mm (40 in) of rain per year. Devastating tropical cyclones occur from November to March.

Climate and Weather
Mean Temperature

Coastal Areas: 62°F to 86°F
Highlands: 56°F to 79°F

Average Rainfall

Southeastern and central region: 60 in to 200 in
Western coast: 40 in
Rodriguez: 49 in to 69 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Mauritius was covered with forests of ebony and mahogany trees before the 1600s; many unique plant species also grew there. However, European settlers cut down most of the hardwoods to plant vegetables and sugarcane. The forests are now largely composed of introduced eucalyptus, casuarina, and evergreens. The island has some nature preserves and botanical gardens that still harbor indigenous plants.

The dodo bird once lived on Mauritius, but it was quickly killed off by Dutch settlers and their pets. The Dutch introduced the sambar deer, which is now a protected species. Wild animals include pigs, macaques, pink pigeons, echo parakeets, Mauritian falcons and kestrels, and the Mascarene paradise flycatcher.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 1,230,602
World Rank: 149th
Density per sq km: 603.5

% of annual growth (1999-2003): 1.1

Male %: 49.5

Female %: 50.5

Urban %: 43.3

Age Distribution %: 0–14: 24.8

15–64: 68.7

65 and over: 6.5

Population 2025: 1,407,000

Birth Rate per 1,000: 15.85

Death Rate per 1,000: 6.82

Rate of Natural Increase %: 1.0

Total Fertility Rate: 1.97

Expectation of Life (years): Males 68.11

Females 76.13

Marriage Rate per 1,000: 8.7

Divorce Rate per 1,000: 1.1

Average Size of Households: 5.3

Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

When the Dutch settled Mauritius in the late 16th century, there was no indigenous population on the island, and none of the Dutch remained after 1710. The earliest permanent inhabitants were the French and their African slaves. Later immigrants to the island included Indians, Chinese, and mulattoes. About 68 percent of the present population are Indo-Mauritians, 27 percent are Creoles or people of French descent, 3 percent are Chinese, and 2 percent are white. On Rodrigues the ethnic proportions are reversed, with Europeans and Creoles forming a large majority of the population.

Interethnic relations are characterized by intense economic and political rivalry. No two ethnic communities share common values or institutions, and each community has its own sector of the economy in which it has a virtual monopoly. Because ethnic identity is usually reinforced by religious and linguistic heritage, ethnic barriers tend to be fixed and inflexible. Only the Creoles permit some degree of assimilation.

LANGUAGES

English is the official language, but the lingua franca is Creole. Creole on Mauritius is a language, not a dialect, derived from French but with its syntax, pronunciation, and vocabulary modified through borrowing from African languages. Originally a slave language, it has managed to coexist with and even displace French over the years. Six Indian languages are spoken in Mauritius. Three—Hindi, Urdu, and Tamil—are spoken by sizable numbers. Chinese is a minor language.

French enjoys more prestige than English and is spoken by more than 40,000 persons, although the quality of spoken French varies according to the educational level of the speaker.

RELIGIONS

The religious configuration of the country closely follows the ethnic and religious divisions. Nearly 51 percent of the population is Hindu, 34 percent Christian, and 16 percent Muslim. Religious minorities include Buddhists, Confucians, Baha'is, and Ahmadiyyahs; the latter two are heterodox sects related to Islam. Of the orthodox Muslims the vast majority belong to the Sunni sect.

Christianity, the oldest religion on the island, also has the greatest ethnic diversity among its adherents, with membership among all races. The largest single religious institution is the Roman Catholic Church, which also maintains the most extensive educational system on the islands. The Anglican diocese of the Church of England is headed by a bishop in Phoenix.

Religious Affiliations	
Hindu	640,000
Christian	348,000
Roman Catholic	320,000
Protestant	28,000
Muslim	204,000
Other	38,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Mauritius was an uninhabited island before the arrival of the Europeans. The first Europeans to visit Mauritius were the Portuguese, probably around 1510. The Dutch, who settled the island in 1598, named it Mauritius after their stadtholder, Prince Maurice of Nassau. They introduced sugarcane and the Java deer before abandoning the island in 1710.

The French took possession of the island in 1715. The island was governed by the French East India Company until 1767, then by the French government until 1810, when British forces, acting to protect British and Indian shipping, seized control during the Napoleonic Wars. Possession was confirmed by the Treaty of Paris in 1815. The most important events during British rule were the abolition of slavery in 1835 and the importation of indentured laborers from India. Since 1948, when property qualifications were abolished and the franchise was made universal, the Indian community has dominated the legislature.

Mauritius became independent on March 12, 1968, with a constitution based on the British parliamentary system. It changed its status to a republic within the Commonwealth on March 12, 1992. Since that time the political history of Mauritius has been marked by the development of political parties based on ethnic rather than ideological divisions and by the formation of coalition governments.

Governor-General Veerasamy Ringadoo became the first president when Mauritius transformed into a republic but was quickly replaced by the first elected president,

Cassam Uteem of the Mauritian Militant Movement (MMM); he held office until 2002. During his time in office, Mauritius was hit by Cyclone Hollanda in 1994, which did \$81 million in damage, and the Creole singer Kaya died while in police custody in 1999, sparking four days of riots. Uteem and his vice president resigned in 2002 after a disagreement over an antiterrorism bill, and the National Assembly elected Karl Hoffman as the replacement president. Hoffman was replaced in the 2003 elections by Anerood Jugnauth, the leader of the Militant Socialist Movement (MSM) and former prime minister. Jugnauth chose Paul Bérenger as prime minister, making Bérenger the first non-Hindu to hold the office.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

President

1968	Sir John Shaw Rennie
1968–72	Sir Arthur Williams
1972–77	Sir Abdul Rahman Muhammad Osman
1977–79	Sir Henry Garrioch
1979–83	Sir Dayendranath Burrenchobay
1983–85	Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam
1986–92	Sir Veerasamy Ringadoo
1992–2002	Cassam Uteem
2002–03	Karl Hoffmann
2003–	Sir Anerood Jugnauth

Prime Minister

1968–82	Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam
1982–95	Sir Anerood Jugnauth
1995–2000	Navinchandra Ramgoolam
2000–03	Sir Anerood Jugnauth
2003–05	Paul Bérenger
2005–	Navinchandra Ramgoolam

CONSTITUTION

The Mauritius Independence Order of 1968, amended by the Constitution of Mauritius (Amendment) Act 39 of 1969, established Mauritius as an independent parliamentary democracy within the Commonwealth, with the British monarch as head of state. In 1992 a constitutional amendment gave Mauritius a republican form of government, with a president as head of state, still within the British Commonwealth.

Legislative power is vested in the unicameral National Assembly, chosen every five years and consisting of 62 elected and up to eight nonelected members. The nonelected members are added to the assembly by the election commission based on the "best loser" system to provide balanced representation of all ethnic groups. All citizens of Mauritius age 18 and older have the right to vote.

The president and vice president are elected by the National Assembly for terms of five years. Executive

power is exercised by the Council of Ministers, headed by the prime minister, who, as leader of the majority party in the assembly, is appointed to office by the president. The leader of the opposition, who is the leader of the largest opposition party or coalition in the assembly, also has official status and must be consulted by the prime minister on certain appointments.

PARLIAMENT

The National Assembly is a unicameral body with up to 70 members, of whom 62 are elected (including two from Rodrigues). The other representatives, up to eight, are appointed from among the unsuccessful candidates who received the most votes; these usually represent communities underrepresented in the assembly. The legislative term is five years.

The 2000 assembly elections resulted in a landslide victory for the opposition coalition of the Militant Socialist Movement and the Mauritian Militant Movement, which won 54 of the 62 seats. The Labor Party won six seats, the Organization of the People of Rodrigues two. The MSM leader Sir Anerood Jugnauth became prime minister and announced that after three years he would hand the post over to his MMM partner, Paul Bérenger, which he did.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Shifting coalitions of the principal parties in the National Assembly have dominated the recent history of Mauritius. The Mauritian Labor Party (MLP) dominated politics from 1947 to 1982. The Mauritian Militant Movement (MMM) and Mauritian Socialist Party (PSM) won the 1982 election, but in 1983 members of both parties formed a new party, the Militant Socialist Movement (MSM). The MSM realigned with the MMM in 1991 and won all but three of the elected parliamentary seats. In 1995 the MLP formed a coalition with the MMM and returned to power. Prime Minister Navinchandra Ramgoolam dismissed the MMM in 1997, leaving the MLP in power. In 2000 the MSM-MMM alliance won the majority, and MSM leader Anerood Jugnauth became prime minister on the understanding that the MMM leader would take over in 2003, which duly happened when Paul Bérenger became prime minister in 2003.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Mauritius is divided into nine administrative districts, with separate councils for urban and rural areas. There are five municipal and town councils in urban areas. Both urban and village councils have elected and nominated members. They set their own taxes, make their own by-

laws, regulate property rights, and handle road building, sanitation, and water and food supply.

There are also three dependencies: the Agalega Islands, Carajos Shoals, and Rodrigues. Of the dependencies, Rodrigues has considerable autonomy under a resident commissioner and five parish councils; the island sends two elected representatives to the legislative assembly and has a minister in the cabinet.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The Mauritian legal system is a blend of English common law and French civil law. The country's judicial system, modeled on that of Great Britain, consists of a Supreme Court with appellate powers and a series of lower courts. The Supreme Court consists of a chief justice and five junior judges, who also preside over the courts of civil and criminal appeal. Final appeal to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in the United Kingdom is provided for by the constitution. There are no political or military courts. An intermediate criminal court with three senior magistrates can try criminal cases without juries. The subordinate courts are the district courts, with both civil and criminal jurisdiction, and the industrial court, with jurisdiction over labor disputes.

The courts have a very good record of assuring fair, public trials to those charged with crimes. Defendants have the right to private or court-appointed legal counsel.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Because of its British political and legal system, Mauritius has successfully adhered to generally accepted standards of human rights. There are no political prisoners, although members of the opposition parties are occasionally arrested and held for brief periods.

Trials are conducted in conformity with the constitution, and no instances of cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or torture have been reported. The sanctity of the home is guaranteed under law and respected in practice, as are the basic freedoms of the press, assembly, speech, and religion. There are no restrictions on movement within the country, foreign travel, or emigration. Political participation is open to every adult citizen. Labor unions are free to organize, bargain collectively, and strike.

There have been no allegations by political parties, human rights groups, or the media of political bias in the judiciary. In the past the judiciary made several politically unpopular decisions, such as finding a prominent minister guilty of corruption.

FOREIGN POLICY

For historical reasons Mauritian ties are closest to the United Kingdom, France, and India, in that order. In re-

cent years Mauritius has moved to promote greater regional cooperation between the nearby island nations. It also has close relations with the nations of southern and eastern Africa and has joined some regional trade organizations, such as the African Union and the Southern African Development Community. South Africa is its largest regional trading partner, while Mauritian investors are becoming involved with Madagascar and Mozambique.

DEFENSE

Although there is a formal Ministry of Defense and Home Affairs, Mauritius has no standing army. The United Kingdom is bound by treaty to defend the island against external attack. The Commissioner of Police maintains 10,000 active duty personnel, who handle all security and police functions. Some 8,000 of those belong to the National Police, while the rest belong to the Special Mobile Force and the National Coast Guard, the only two paramilitary units on the island.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 2,000
 Military Manpower Availability: 342,482
 Military Expenditures \$million: 11.2
 as % of GDP: 0.2
 as % of central government expenditures: 0.8
 Arms Imports \$million: —
 Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

Mauritius has a very strong economy—one of the strongest in Africa. During the 1980s Mauritius moved from a single-crop agricultural economy based on sugar to a mixed economy. The Export Processing Zone, established in 1971, attracted foreign investment in manufacturing and has shown remarkable growth in a number of enterprises and in both employment and foreign-exchange earnings. Growth averaged just below 5 percent between 1999 and 2003. Sugar exports, the manufacture of textiles, and tourist attractions accounted for most of this economic growth.

The sugar and textile export businesses have begun to slow down as preferential trade arrangements come to an end, and the government has been trying to diversify its economy. In the early 2000s the nation was working to attract the offshore financial services business and to build its information and communications technology sector. The state has been promoting Mauritius as a hub for the seafood industry and has been modernizing the sugar and textile sectors with better technology. Mauritius has a good commercial and legal infrastructure and has a long tradition of private enterprise, which makes it attractive to foreign companies.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 13.85
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 11,400
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 4.7
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 3.6
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 6.1
 Industry: 30.3
 Services: 63.6
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 62
 Government Consumption: 13
 Gross Domestic Investment: 22.9
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 1.965
 Imports: 2.136
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: —
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: —

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
130.0	135.4	142.7	152.3	158.8

Finance

National Currency: Mauritian Rupee (MUR)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = MUR 27.9015
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 20.4
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 17.19
 Total External Debt \$billion: 1.75
 Debt Service Ratio %: 4.69
 Balance of Payments \$million: 289
 International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 1.52
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 4.2

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 23.91
 per capita \$: 19.70
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 27.6

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: 1 July–30 June
 Revenues \$billion: 1.122
 Expenditures \$billion: 1.461
 Budget Deficit \$million: 339
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: 17.3

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 6.1
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 0.5
 Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares: 3.7
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 20.8
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 372
 Total Farmland % of land area: 49.3
 Livestock: Cattle 000: 28
 Chickens million: 9.8
 Pigs 000: 12.9
 Sheep 000: 11.5
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters 000: 17
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 10.8

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 1.04
Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 8

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 6
Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 930
Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 775
Net Energy Imports % of use: —
Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: 365
 Production kW-hr billion: 1.31
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 1.22
Coal Reserves tons billion: —
 Production tons million: —
 Consumption tons 000: 70
Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
 Production cubic feet billion: —
 Consumption cubic feet billion: —
Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
 Production barrels 000 per day: —
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 23
Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 2.136
Exports \$billion: 1.965
Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 5.1
Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 3.8
Balance of Trade \$million: 289

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
South Africa %	12.1	—
France %	12.0	21.3
China %	8.4	—
India %	8.2	—
United Kingdom %	—	31.0
United States %	—	17.6
Madagascar %	—	6.3

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 1,926
 Paved %: 97.0
Automobiles: 98,900
Trucks and Buses: 38,000
Railroad: Track Length km: —
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: —
Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 8
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 27.1
Airports: 5
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 5
Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 682
Number of Tourists from 000: 162
Tourist Receipts \$million: 612
Tourist Expenditures \$million: 204

Communications

Telephones 000: 348.2
Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.04
Cellular Telephones 000: 462.4
Personal Computers 000: 180
Internet Hosts per million people: 3,238
Internet Users per 1,000 people: 122

ENVIRONMENT

Forests, largely felled to make room for sugarcane cultivation, now make up only 8 percent of the island's area. One area became a national park in 1994.

The Mauritius Wildlife Foundation, a private organization, has worked closely with the government since 1994 to conserve and manage the island's flora and fauna. The population of the Mauritius kestrel, once the world's rarest bird, with only four live specimens, now numbers more than 300. Predatory cats, rats, and monkeys and a loss of habitat have severely reduced the population of animals like the pink pigeon (the world's rarest), the echo parakeet, and the fruit bat. Perhaps the historically most important ecological note is the fact that Mauritius was once the home of the extinct dodo.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 7.9
Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: —
Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 1
Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 17,699
CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 2.44

LIVING CONDITIONS

Until recently, most Mauritian houses were built of wood with large windows and verandas. Such houses are vulnerable to cyclone damage, so most newly constructed homes are concrete with flat roofs. The public bus system is cheap and fairly efficient. The road system is adequate, though not all roads are well paved and drivers tend to ignore the rules of the road. Electricity and water supplies are moderately reliable.

HEALTH

The Mauritian government provides health care free to all citizens; the Ministry of Health oversees the system. There

are four large regional hospitals and several smaller clinics. There are also private clinics for those who choose to pay for their care. The health of Mauritians has improved tremendously since the 1950s, especially with the elimination of malaria, cholera, and yellow fever. One result of this was that the population grew very quickly in the 1960s and 1970s. Now the government encourages family planning, and the fertility rate is about two children per woman.

Health

Number of Physicians: 956
 Number of Dentists: 152
 Number of Nurses: 2,619
 Number of Pharmacists: 223
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 85
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 15.57
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 24
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 3.4
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 128
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.1
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 88
 Measles: 84
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 99
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 100

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Mauritian cooking mingles the cuisines of the ethnic groups that make up the population, including Creole, Indian, Chinese, French, and English. Rice is the most typical starch and appears at nearly every meal. Seafood is a common meat, though people also eat chicken, pork, and beef. There are French pastries and flans, Indian curries, and Chinese restaurants. Typical Creole dishes are *rougaille*, a stew of tomatoes, onions, garlic, and ginger, and *daube*, a meat stew with tomatoes, onions, and garlic. Popular fast foods are roti, Indian pancakes with condiments, or *dhobi puri*, pancakes stuffed with split peas. Fresh fruits are eaten at nearly every meal. People drink *lassi*, a yogurt drink, and *alouda*, made from agar and milk. Beer and rum are made locally; wine is available but usually imported.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 5.6
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,970
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 159.3
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 112.9

STATUS OF WOMEN

The Mauritian government has taken steps to improve the status of women. Amendments to laws ranging from emi-

gration to inheritance have removed sexually discriminatory sections. The emphasis on mother-child health care has encouraged food supplements for pregnant women, greater prenatal care, and female education. There is a Ministry of Women's Rights and Family Affairs, headed by a woman.

The literacy rate is currently 82.7 percent for women, as compared to 88.6 percent for men. Women tend to occupy the less-skilled and lower-paid jobs in the economy, such as those of operators in the textile plants. They are particularly susceptible to layoffs during economic downturns.

Women in Mauritius are free to participate in all types of political, business, and social activities, and a few hold high positions. Nonetheless, conservative religious and ethnic attitudes do inhibit women. Some legal inequality remains, including a prohibition against women serving on juries.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 6
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.02
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 38.5

WORK

The unemployment rate in 2003 was 9.8 percent. Almost 40 percent of the workforce was employed in construction and industry. Many of these workers are women employed by textile factories, producing garments for Europe and North America. Around 15 percent of workers are employed in agriculture, especially sugarcane and fishing. Services are employing a growing number of Mauritians, especially in tourism and the nascent high-tech industry.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 560,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 33.1
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture and Fishing: 14
 Construction and Industry: 36
 Transportation and Communication: 7
 Trade, Restaurants, and Hotels: 16
 Finance: 3
 Other Services: 24
 Unemployment %: 9.8

EDUCATION

Educational standards are high. Almost all eligible children attend primary and secondary schools. Primary education is compulsory for children between the ages of five and 12. Schooling is divided into six years of primary

school, three years of lower secondary, and four years of upper secondary school. Most secondary schools are operated by religious orders or other private groups.

The school year is the calendar year. The language of instruction is English, but French is also stressed. Teachers are flexible about language, using Creole or Indian languages to explain words to students who do not understand English well. The curriculum follows the British model. Higher education is provided at the University of Mauritius and at several vocational training schools and other institutions. The Mauritius College of the Air broadcasts its instruction on audio and video media. Wealthy families send their children abroad to study, usually in France, which offers scholarships to Mauritians, or Réunion.

Education

Literacy Rate %:	85.6
Male %:	88.6
Female %:	82.7
School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling:	12.5
First Level: Primary Schools:	279
Teachers:	5,256
Students:	132,432
Student-Teacher Ratio:	25.2
Net Enrollment Ratio:	90.4
Second Level: Secondary Schools:	123
Teachers:	5,934
Students:	99,687
Student-Teacher Ratio:	18.8
Net Enrollment Ratio:	70.6
Third Level: Institutions:	2
Teachers:	—
Students:	16,764
Gross Enrollment Ratio:	15.2
Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP:	4.7

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Mauritius has an advanced technological infrastructure. The government has invested a great deal of money in state-of-the-art digital telecommunications facilities and information technology, including high-speed Internet access and international leased lines, as well as computer training for all citizens. The nation liberalized its telecommunications services in 2003. The newly built Ebene Cyber City outside Port Louis is the showpiece of the state's ambitions of becoming a high-tech "cyber island," where nations all over the world will purchase technological services, such as backups for data, call centers, web hosting, and e-commerce.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people:	—
Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP:	0.28
High-Tech Exports \$million:	28.9
Patent Applications by Residents:	—

MEDIA

Mauritius has a long tradition of a free press, broken only during an emergency in the early 1970s. Print journalists habitually criticize the government and political parties. There are numerous daily, weekly, and monthly publications, and most of Mauritius's languages have their own publications. *L'express*, *Le Mauricien*, and *Le matinal* are the most prominent daily newspapers.

Mauritius News is a media service based in the United Kingdom, providing news in English. Both Reuters and AFP maintain bureaus in Port Louis. Mauritius has a fairly active book-publishing industry. It does not adhere to any copyright conventions.

The government-controlled Mauritius Broadcasting Corporation operates medium-wave and shortwave transmitters, broadcasting in French, English, Indian languages, and Chinese; its broadcasting adheres to government opinions. Privately owned radio stations appeared for the first time in 2002, and there are now several stations. Top FM broadcasts Western pop and Bollywood music. BBC World service is also available.

Television, introduced in 1965, is broadcast over main and auxiliary stations. Several channels are available in Port Louis.

Media

Daily Newspapers:	5
Total Circulation 000:	138
Circulation per 1,000:	119
Books Published:	80
Periodicals:	—
Radio Receivers 000:	466
per 1,000:	379
Television sets 000:	285
per 1,000:	248

CULTURE

Mauritius is moderately famous with respect to literature. A number of French authors lived there, including Bernadin de St. Pierre, author of *Paul et Virginie*, and Joseph Conrad, Mark Twain, and Charles Baudelaire all visited the island. Modern authors are producing works in Creole. The unique Mauritian musical style is the *sega*, in which a singer is accompanied by musicians playing a *ravane* (a drum made of goatskin), a triangle, and a *maravane* (a kind of rattle). Dancers move to the music, first shuffling on their feet and then sitting on the floor to lean forward and back.

Mauritius has produced a number of visual artists, such as the painters Danielle Hitié, Herve de Cotter, and Serge Constantin. Architects of the 18th century developed a distinctive style, which can still be seen in colonial buildings in Port Louis.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 2
 Volumes: 17,000
 Registered borrowers: 8,147
 Museums Number: 3
 Annual Attendance: 237,000
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: 32
 Seating Capacity: 16,000
 Annual Attendance: 1,300,000

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Each of Mauritius's ethnic groups has its own folk practices and rituals. Hindus, Muslims, Buddhists, and Christians each observe their own events and tell their own stories. The Mahatma Gandhi Institute's Folk Museum maintains numerous artifacts and archives documenting Mauritian Indian folk culture.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Mauritius offers many types of outdoor recreation, which has made it very attractive to tourists. People enjoy water sports such as surfing, swimming, windsurfing, fishing, snorkeling, and scuba diving. Some resorts offer "under-sea walks" or rides in semisubmersible boats. Hiking in the mountains is also popular; former railroad tracks have been turned into hiking trails.

There is some nightlife available. The Le Caudan Waterfront in Port Louis has restaurants, bars, cinemas, casinos, and shopping.

ETIQUETTE

Mauritians remove their shoes before entering temples or mosques. It is polite to ask permission before taking a person's photograph. Bargaining over prices is customary.

FAMILY LIFE

Mauritians typically live close to their relatives; it is not uncommon for three generations to share a house. Children live with their parents until they can afford to buy homes of their own, which may be years after they marry. Very few old people go to retirement homes, because their families care for them. Weddings come in several varieties, for Hindus, Muslims, Creoles, and Chinese. The different groups also have their own practices for welcoming new children.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Mauritians are fairly conservative in their dress. Women especially cover themselves in public; they never appear in bathing suits or shorts. On formal occasions men wear jackets and ties, and women wear dresses or long pants.

SPORTS

Soccer is the most popular sport. The nation supports amateur teams at all levels, from school to region, but has no national team. Horse racing is also popular between May and November, when thousands of Mauritians go to the Champ de Mars in Port Louis to watch the races. There are also facilities for tennis, golf, and volleyball. The first international paragliding competition took place in Mauritius in 1993.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1968** Mauritius gains independence from Great Britain and becomes a member of the Commonwealth of Nations. Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam of the Mauritian Labor Party (MLP) leads the new nation.
- 1979** Cyclone Claudette strikes Mauritius, damaging property and crops.
- 1982** Mauritian Militant Movement gains control of the National Assembly, as led by Anerood Jugnauth.
- 1983** Ousted by the MMM, Jugnauth forms the Mauritian Socialist Movement (MSM), whose coalition with the MLP wins a parliamentary majority, making Jugnauth prime minister.
- 1987** Jugnauth's coalition is reelected.
- 1991** Jugnauth's coalition is reelected.
- 1992** Mauritius becomes a republic. The National Assembly elects Cassam Uteem president.
- 1993** Prime Minister Jugnauth dismisses Paul Bérenger, his foreign minister and the leader of the MMM, for openly criticizing the government. The government offers interest-free loans to encourage workers to invest in the Mauritian stock exchange.
- 1994** Mauritius's three-year development program, involving 280 projects and 19 economic sectors, reaches its halfway point. The stock exchange achieves a sixfold increase in volume since its opening in 1988.
- 1995** The opposition alliance of the MLP and the MMM wins two-thirds of the vote and all 60 seats in parliament, defeating the MSM-Mauritian Socialist Party coalition. Navinchandra Ramgoolam, MLP leader and the son of

1570 Mauritius

- Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam, becomes primes minister.
- 1996** Mauritius sees substantial improvements in literacy, life expectancy, health services, water supply, and sanitation, and per capita national product exceeds \$3,000.
- 1997** After months of conflict within the governing coalition, Prime Minister Ramgoolam dismisses Deputy Prime Minister Paul Bérenger. Seven members of Bérenger's MMM resign from the cabinet.
- 1998** In February Mauritius signs a protection-of-investments agreement with South Africa and announces plans to join the proposed South Africa–Malaysia underwater cable. Mauritius hosts the South African Development Community summit in April, which stresses economic integration.
- 1999** Three days of rioting by Creole youths in February results in damages estimated at \$150 million. Discontent among Creoles over their failure to participate in Mauritius's economic progress is cited as a cause. Mauritius and Madagascar agree to an 80 percent tariff reduction. Mauritius signs a protection-of-investment agreement with the Czech Republic.
- 2000** The parliamentary elections in September produce a landslide victory for the opposition coalition of the MSM and the MMM. MSM Leader Sir Anerood Jugnauth becomes prime minister. Mauritius gets a seat on the UN Security Council.
- 2002** President Cassam Uteem and his vice president refuse to sign an antiterrorism bill and resign from office. The head of the legislature becomes president and signs the bill. The National Assembly elects Karl Hoffman president.
- 2003** Anerood Jugnauth becomes president; his son Pravind becomes leader of the MSM. Paul Bérenger becomes the first non-Hindu prime minister.
- 2005** In parliamentary elections the MSM/MMM coalition is defeated and Navinchandra Ramgoolan of the Alliance Sociale becomes prime minister.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Central Statistical Office
<http://ncb.intnet.mu/cso.htm>

MEXICO

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

United Mexican States (Estados Unidos Mexicanos)

ABBREVIATION

MX

CAPITAL

Mexico City

HEAD OF STATE & HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

President Vicente Fox Quesada (from 2000)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Federal republic

POPULATION

106,202,903 (2005)

AREA

1,972,550 sq km (761,602 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Mestizo, Amerindian, white

LANGUAGES

Spanish, Mayan, Nahuatl

RELIGION

Roman Catholicism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Peso

NATIONAL FLAG

Tricolor of green, white, and red vertical stripes, with the national emblem at the center of the white stripe

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A brown eagle perched on a green nopal (cactus) holding a green serpent in its beak, recalling an omen associated with the founding of Tenochtitlán, the Aztec predecessor of Mexico City

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Mexicans, to the Cry of War”

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year’s Day), February 5 (Constitution Day), March 18 (Anniversary of Oil Expropriation of 1938), March 21 (Benito Juárez’s Birthday), May 1 (Labor Day), May 5 (Anniversary of the Battle of Puebla), September 1 (Opening of Congress), September 16 (National Day, Independence Day), October 12 (Columbus Day), November 20 (Anniversary of the Revolution of 1910), various Christian festivals, including Christmas, Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday, All Souls’ Day, and Festival of Our Lady of Guadalupe

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

September 16, 1810

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

February 5, 1917

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Mexico lies at the south of the North American continent, covering 1,972,550 sq km (761,602 sq mi), with 49,510 sq km (19,120 sq mi) of rivers and lakes. Mainland Mexico extends 3,220 km (2,001 mi) south-southeast to north-northwest and 1,060 km (659 mi) east-northeast to west-southwest. The total coastline runs for 9,330 km (5,797 mi), with roughly one-quarter along the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean and three-quarters along the Pacific Ocean.

Mexico shares its 4,353 km (2,705 mi) of land borders with the United States of America to the north (3,141 km; 1,952 mi) and Belize (250 km; 155 mi) and Guatemala (962 km; 598 mi) to the south. The border is fully demarcated, and except for a dormant Mexican claim to

Belize north of latitude 17° north (from an 1882 treaty with Guatemala), there are no current border disputes. By 1971 all earlier minor disputes with the United States over the courses of the Rio Grande and the Colorado River were resolved. The U.S.-Mexican border is perhaps the world’s busiest international frontier.

Mexico City, the capital, is the former capital of the Aztec Empire and the oldest continuously inhabited urban settlement in the Americas.

Two-thirds of Mexico is mountainous; Hernán Cortés, the 16th-century conqueror of Mexico, compared the topography of the country to a crumpled piece of paper. For official purposes the country is divided into five natural regions: the North Pacific, the North, Central Mexico, the Gulf Coast, and the South Pacific.

The North Pacific region lies to the west of the Sierra Madre Occidental and includes the peninsula of Baja California. Most of this region is the Sonoran Desert, which continues south into Sinaloa. A narrow coastal plain extends inland for 15–25 km (10–15 mi). Baja California is mostly desert on which block mountains up to 2,750 m (9,000 ft) in elevation drop precipitously into the Gulf of California (Mar de Cortés).

The North extends eastward from the crests of the Sierra Madre Occidental to the Gulf of Mexico. Apart from a small coastal area, this region constitutes the Northern Plateau of Mexico, narrowing slightly from north to south as its elevation increases.

Central Mexico is the heartland of the country, consisting of rolling hills and old volcanic cones interspersed with broad basins and valleys with floors at elevations of 1,500–2,500 m (5,000–8,000 ft). The seven largest valleys are Puebla, Toluca, Guanajuato, Jalisco, Morelos, Aguascalientes, and Mexico.

The Gulf Coast is made up of the broad Veracruz plain, Tabasco, and the Yucatán Peninsula, the northeastern tip of which is desert.

The South Pacific is a mountainous enclave in the region of Central Mexico.

The principal mountain systems of Mexico are the Sierra Madre Occidental and the Sierra Madre Oriental, a series of north-to-south ranges with an average elevation of 3,000 m (10,000 ft). Three of their volcanic peaks reach 5,200 m (17,000 ft): Popocatepetl (5,452 m; 17,887 ft) and Iztaccíhuatl (5,286 m; 17,343 ft), both of which are located near Mexico City, and the highest peak in Mexico, Pico de Orizaba (5,700 m; 18,696 ft). Most of the volcanoes are dormant or extinct, but Popocatepetl experienced a minor eruption in 1996, and volcanic activity continues. South of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, the Sierra Madre de Chiapas extends to the Guatemalan border, and the Chiapas highlands occupy most of the interior to the east and south.

Mexico has few large rivers, but there are a number of short rivers in the North Pacific, Central Mexico, and South Pacific regions, including the Sonora, Yaqui, Fuerte, Sinaloa, Culiacán, Lerma, Santiago, Grijalva, Usumacinta, Balsas, Panuco, Soto la Marina, and Papaloapán. The largest lake is Lake Chapala, south of the city of Guadalajara, at 80 km (50 mi) long and 13 km (8 mi) wide.

Geography

Area sq km: 1,972,550; sq mi 761,602

World Rank: 13th

Land Boundaries, km: Belize 250; Guatemala 962; United States 3,141

Coastline, km: 9,330

Elevation Extremes meters:

Lowest: Laguna Salada –10

Highest: Volcán Pico de Orizaba 5,700

Land Use %

Arable Land: 13.0

Permanent Crops: 1.3

Forest: 28.9

Other: 56.8

Population of Principal Cities (2000)

Acapulco	620,656
Aguascalientes	594,092
Cancún	397,191
Celaya	277,750
Chihuahua	657,876
Chimalhuacán	482,530
Ciudad Apodaca	270,369
Ciudad Juárez	1,187,275
Ciudad López Mateos	467,544
Ciudad Obregón	250,790
Ciudad Santa Catarina	225,976
Ciudad Victoria	249,029
Coatzacoalcos	225,973
Cuautitlán Izcalli	433,830
Cuernavaca	327,162
Culiacán	540,823
Durango	427,135
Ecatepec	1,621,827
Ensenada	223,492
General Escobedo	230,556
Gómez Palacio	210,113
Guadalajara	1,646,183
Guadalupe	669,547
Hermosillo	545,928
Irapuato	319,148
Ixtapaluca	235,827
León	1,020,818
Los Mochis	200,906
Los Reyes la Paz	211,298
Matamoros	376,279
Mazatlán	327,989
Mérida	662,530
Mexicali	549,873
Mexico City	8,605,239
Monterrey	1,110,909
Morelia	549,996
Naucalpan	835,053
Nezahualcóyotl	1,225,083
Nuevo Laredo	308,828
Oaxaca	251,846
Pachuca	231,602
Puebla	1,271,673
Querétaro	536,463
Reynosa	403,718
Saltillo	562,587
San Francisco Coacalco	252,291
San Luis Potosí	629,208
San Nicolás de los Garzas	496,879
Tampico	295,442
Tehuacán	204,598
Tepic	265,817
Tijuana	1,148,681
Tlalnepantla	714,735
Tlaquepaque	458,674
Toluca	435,125
Tonala	315,278
Torreón	502,964

(continues)

Population of Principal Cities (2000) (continued)

Tuxtla	424,579
Uruapan	225,816
Veracruz	411,582
Villahermosa	330,846
Villa Nicolás Romero	216,192
Xalapa-Enríquez	373,076
Xico	322,784
Zapopan	910,690

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Mexico is half inside and half outside the tropics, but the climate is modified by a number of factors, such as altitude, winds, and cool Pacific currents. On the basis of natural terrain, there are three climatic zones: the tropical and subtropical zone (*tierra caliente*), rising up to 900 m (3,000 ft) in elevation; the temperate zone (*tierra templada*), at elevations between 900 and 1,800 m (3,000 and 6,000 ft); and the cool zone (*tierra fría*), at over 1,800 m (6,000 ft). The *tierra caliente*, which includes the coastal plains, the Yucatán Peninsula, and the lower areas of southern Mexico, has a mean temperature of 25 to 27°C (77 to 80.6°F), with a minimum of 15.6°C (60°F) and a maximum of 49°C (120°F). The *tierra templada* has a mean temperature of 15.5°C (59.9°F), while the *tierra fría*, where Mexico City is located, has a mean annual temperature of 17°C (63°F).

Most of Mexico is dry; only about 15 percent of the national territory receives adequate rainfall in all seasons. Densely populated Central Mexico lies in the rain shadow of the Sierra Madre Oriental, but the two coastal belts on the Gulf of Mexico and the Pacific Ocean receive an average of 1,000 mm (39 in) to 3,600 mm (118 in). The highest precipitation is recorded in Chiapas and Tabasco (5,020 mm, 200 in) and the lowest in Baja California, where no rain may fall in some years. During summer and autumn both coastal areas are subject to hurricanes, and Mexico has also suffered from the effects of El Niño, an oceanic and atmospheric phenomenon along the Pacific Coast.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature
Tierra Caliente: 77°F to 80.6°F
Tierra Templada: 59.9°F
Tierra Fría: 63°F
Average Rainfall
Coastal Belt: 39 in to 118 in
Highest Rainfall: Chiapas and Tabasco 200 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Mexico no longer has nearly the biodiversity it once had. The land has multiple microclimates, and vegetation types include rain forest, savanna, swamp, temperate forest, and

desert. Before the arrival of Europeans at least two-thirds of Mexico was covered with forests. As of the early 2000s only 20 percent of the land was still covered with natural vegetation; these areas were mainly in the east and south.

Common wild animals include snakes, rabbits, armadillos, howler monkeys, spider monkeys, anteaters, ocelots, jaguars, tapirs, peccaries, macaws, parrots, toucans, deer, pumas, and coyotes. Pressure on most wild species is great, as domesticated cattle and other grazing animals are taking over habitats.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005:	106,202,903
World Rank:	11th
Density per sq km:	53.6
% of annual growth (1999-2003):	1.4
Male %:	49.0
Female %:	51.0
Urban %:	75.5
Age Distribution %:	
0-14:	31.6
15-64:	62.9
65 and over:	5.5
Population 2025:	130,199,000
Birth Rate per 1,000:	21.44
Death Rate per 1,000:	4.73
Rate of Natural Increase %:	1.8
Total Fertility Rate:	2.49
Expectation of Life (years):	
Males:	72.18
Females:	77.83
Marriage Rate per 1,000:	5.5
Divorce Rate per 1,000:	0.6
Average Size of Households:	5.1
Induced Abortions:	—

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Some 80 percent of Mexico's population is mestizo. Indigenous peoples make up approximately 8 percent of the population, and people of European ancestry, primarily Spanish, make up about 9 percent. About 2 percent of all Mexicans are immigrants from abroad.

Mestizos are guardians of the Hispanic culture, although most of them are predominantly of Native American descent. Individual Amerindians join mestizo society by adopting Spanish surnames, speaking Spanish, and adopting Western dress. Few Mexican Amerindians retain their pre-Hispanic cultural traits. Amerindians are distinguished from their mestizo countrymen not so much by racial differences, because Spanish genetic influences on the racial stock are slight, as by social organization. There are six primary distinguishing factors used to identify Amerindians: language, community type, village government, economic organization, family and kinship, and religion. Furthermore, most Amerindians are rural dwellers who are closely attached to the land,

from which they draw their economic, social, and religious sustenance. Amerindians lose their ethnic identity when separated from land, community, family, or village. Amerindian life is least affected by the Hispanic value systems at the family or village level.

Amerindian groups live outside the mainstream of mestizo and white society. Relations between the two groups are characterized by the exploitation of Amerindians on the one hand and attempts to integrate them on the other. Inequality of status between the two groups is reflected in the use of the term *indio* in a pejorative way, implying inferiority, whereas mestizos are called *gente de razón* (reasonable people). The integration of Amerindians into national society is carried out through education, health, and agricultural programs. At the same time there is a need to preserve Amerindian cultural heritage. In 1994 in the southern state of Chiapas, the Zapatista Army of National Liberation, an Amerindian guerrilla group, led an uprising to demand better economic, political, and social conditions for Amerindians.

Amerindians are concentrated in the regions of Mexico where indigenous civilizations were located at the time of the conquest. These regions are mainly in central, southern, and southeastern Mexico. The state of Yucatán, where the Mayan civilization was dominant, has the highest concentration of Mexicans who speak an Amerindian language, at 44 percent. The state of Oaxaca is second with 39 percent, followed by Yucatán's neighboring states of Quintana Roo and Chiapas, with 32 and 26 percent, respectively. The central states of Hidalgo and Puebla also have significant proportions of Amerindians.

Other ethnic minorities include blacks, mulattoes, and Chinese. The Spanish are the largest of the European communities, numbering close to half a million, followed by French and Italians. Europeans occupy a number of important economic and political positions. The North American community includes descendants of southerners who fled the United States after the Civil War, and more recent arrivals include Jews, who play an important role in the economy.

LANGUAGES

Mexico is the world's largest Spanish-speaking country, with more Spanish speakers than Spain. Several indigenous languages are found among the Amerindian population, the two most common being Nahuatl, spoken by 23 percent of the Amerindian population, and Mayan, spoken by 13 percent. Mayan is a cluster of mutually unintelligible languages spoken in Yucatán and Chiapas. The two largest linguistic groups in the southern Mexican Highlands are the Macro-Mixtecan, comprising Zapotec, Mixtec, Popolocán, and Macro-Mayance, including Zoqueán and Mixe. Other groups in this region are Chontol, Tlapanec, Cuitlatec, and Nahua, all related to Nahuatl.

There are three linguistic families in the Central Mexican highlands: Uto-Aztecan, Otomian, and Totonacan. Nahuatl, the most important Uto-Aztecan language, is spoken primarily in Puebla, the heart of what was once the Aztec Empire. Modern Nahuatl contains a large number of Spanish loanwords, and Mexican Spanish contains many Nahuatl words. Otomian includes two major subgroups: Otomí and Mazahua. The Totonacan group comprises Totonac and Tepehua. The major language in western Mexico is Tarascan. There are three language families in northwest Mexico: Tarachitan, together with its three subfamilies, Cahitan, Tarahumara, and Opatán; Piman, including Tepehuan; and Aztecoïdan, together with the subfamilies Cora and Huichol. These languages belong to the Uto-Aztecan group.

RELIGIONS

Despite Mexico's long history of conflict between church and state, about 89 percent of the population were Roman Catholic as of 2003, with 6 percent Protestant and 5 percent adhering to other religions or atheist. The bitter anticlericalism of the eras of Benito Juárez (1867–72) and the Revolution of 1910 appears to have passed, and there has been a significant resurgence of Catholicism in national life.

The constitution reflects the anticlerical period, however, devoting many provisions to restrict the influence and privileges of the church. Until major reforms were undertaken in 1992, ecclesiastical corporations had no legal rights and theoretically could not acquire property. In 1992 many of the severe restrictions on the Catholic Church and other religions were lifted. Reforms included the repeal of measures that prevented the clergy from voting, although they are still prohibited from direct involvement in political affairs. In a paradoxical reversal of roles, the church emerged in recent times as the defender of social justice, and the more progressive clergy ally themselves with underprivileged groups to work for economic and social reform. Yet this trend contains the potential for a new rift, not only between church and state but also between conservative and liberal wings within the church.

For ecclesiastical purposes Mexico comprises 14 archdioceses, 55 dioceses, seven territorial prelatures, and one Apostolic vicariate.

Many Amerindians practice a form of folk Catholicism, participating in rituals more fervently than others do. For Amerindians, spiritual practices and beliefs impinge on temporal affairs almost constantly. Particularly significant is the Amerindian veneration of the Virgin of Guadalupe, the patron of Mexico, who appeared in a vision to a poor Amerindian named Juan Diego during the early days of the conquest. The Shrine of the Virgin is considered the holiest in Mexico.

There is a very small group of Jewish Amerindians who speak Hebrew and attend synagogue. Protestant evangelists, especially from outside Mexico, are active and especially successful in certain rural, largely indigenous communities. Although there have been several cases of official persecution of Protestant groups under the old anticlerical laws, in some areas Protestants have benefited from government attacks on the Catholic Church.

Religious Affiliations

Roman Catholic	94,520,000
Protestant	6,370,000
Other	5,310,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Mexico was the home of two of the most advanced Amerindian civilizations in North America: the Mayas and the Aztecs. The Mayan civilization of the Yucatán Peninsula flourished from the third century B.C.E. to the 13th century C.E. Around the 10th century the Nahua culture, including the Toltecs and later the Aztecs, established an empire in the Valley of Mexico. In 1517 the first European to visit Mexico, Francisco Fernández de Córdoba, arrived, and two years later Hernán Cortés began the Spanish conquest. It was from the last Aztec monarch, Montezuma II, that Cortés wrested Mexico. The territory became the viceroyalty of New Spain, or Nueva España, ruled by Antonio de Mendoza, in 1535. The Spanish ruled Mexico for nearly 300 years, until the wars of independence (1810–21), extending their dominion gradually north toward what is now the United States and south toward Guatemala.

Mexican independence was formally recognized in 1836. The mid-19th century was a period of political instability and strained relations with the United States, which went to war with Mexico in 1844. Under the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo of 1848, Mexico ceded one-half of its territory to the United States. Attempts at political and social reform culminated in the War of Reform of 1858–61. In 1861 French troops invaded Mexico, ostensibly because the nation had not paid its foreign debts, and installed Archduke Maximilian of Austria as emperor. Benito Juárez overthrew him, and the republic was restored in 1867. Porfirio Díaz seized power in 1876 and, with the exception of the period of 1880–84, was president continuously until 1911. Under Díaz, Mexico modernized, opening its doors to foreign investors. Díaz strengthened the central government and formed an alliance with the landed interests. Dissent was suppressed, while the problems of the peasants were ignored. Díaz was overthrown in 1911 in a nationalist, reformist revolt that lasted until 1917. That year a constitution was proclaimed that embodied the aims of the revolution. It

curtailed the power of the Catholic Church, established state education, declared mineral and subsoil rights the property of the nation, ensured basic labor rights, and limited the president to one term in order to prevent the recurrence of a long period of dictatorship.

From 1929 to 2000 the country was dominated by the Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI), until 1946 known as the Partido Nacional Revolucionario, in an effective one-party system, while maintaining a democratic form of election. Not until 1997 did the PRI lost its majority in parliament.

The 1940s were a period of dramatic economic development, an “economic miracle” that ensured political stability and laid the foundation for economic expansion and the rise of the middle classes in the postwar years. In the 1970s, however, the economy began to decline in the face of the rapidly rising population, an end to agricultural self-sufficiency, and an international slump in petroleum prices. The country reached a crisis in 1982 when it was forced to acknowledge that it could not make payments on its foreign debt. Economic problems continued until the presidency of Carlos Salinas de Gortari, from 1988 to 1994, when Mexico opened its economy to privatization and negotiated the 1991 North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). Salinas’s presidency was plagued, however, by widespread allegations of corruption and by worsening conditions for many of the country’s Amerindians, culminating in the Chiapas rebellion of 1994.

That same year the election campaign was marred by tragedy when the PRI presidential candidate Luis Donaldo Colosio Murrieta was assassinated in Tijuana. The PRI narrowly retained the presidency when Ernesto Zedillo Ponce de León was elected in August. Presidential elections in July 2000, however, ended 71 years of PRI rule, with the victory of the opposition Partido Acción Nacional (PAN, National Action Party) candidate, Vicente Fox Quesada. The Alliance for Change party barely won the most votes in the parliamentary election, though the PRI was very close behind.

In March 2001 Zapatista guerillas marched to Mexico City from Chiapas to bring attention to their demands. That September parliament passed a bill increasing the rights of indigenous people, but the Zapatista leader Subcomandante Marcos insisted that the bill would actually harm the indigenous people and vowed to continue the uprising in Chiapas. President Fox began investigating the disappearance of left-wing political activists in the 1970s and 1980s, producing a vast amount of evidence of torture and murder by security forces; he pledge to prosecute those responsible. The former president Luis Echeverría and several army officers were among those accused of abuses.

Fox’s regime did not make as much progress as it hoped in its first term. The PAN then lost the 2003 mid-term parliamentary elections to the PRI. That September, world trade talks in Cancun collapsed over the matter of farm subsidies. The following July a judge refused to or-

der the arrest of Luis Echeverría in connection with 1971 attacks on student protesters, even after Fox's investigator determined that the attacks had been genocide. In 2004 the government was also frustrated in its investigations of the murders of over 250 women in Ciudad Juárez.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1917–20	Venustiano Carranza
1920	Adolfo de la Huerta
1920–24	Álvaro Obregón
1924–28	Plutarco Elías Calles
1928–30	Emilio Portes Gil
1930–32	Pascual Ortiz Rubio
1932–34	Abelardo L. Rodríguez
1934–40	Lázaro Cárdenas
1940–46	Manuel Ávila Camacho
1946–52	Miguel Alemán Valdés
1952–58	Adolfo Ruiz Cortines
1958–64	Adolfo López Mateos
1964–70	Gustavo Díaz Ordaz
1970–76	Luis Echeverría Álvarez
1976–82	José López Portillo y Pacheco
1982–88	Miguel de la Madrid Hurtado
1988–94	Carlos Salinas de Gortari
1994–2000	Ernesto Zedillo Ponce de León
2000–	Vicente Fox Quesada

CONSTITUTION

The legal basis of the Mexican government is the constitution of 1917, which established a federal republic with 31 states and one Federal District. Although Mexico has been subjected to at least 40 forms of government since independence, the nation has had only three constitutions: those of 1824, 1857, and 1917. The present constitution divides the government into the executive, legislative, and judicial branches. However, the executive branch dominates the other branches to such an extent that the country is effectively controlled by its president. The distribution of power is asymmetrical but not sufficient to qualify the country as a dictatorship.

Executive authority is vested in the president—the head of state as well as government—who is elected for a nonrenewable term of six years. There is no vice president; should the president die or resign, the Senate elects a provisional president. The presidency is the most important institution in the state, and the extent of the president's power is limited only by his capacity to use it. In addition to broad appointive powers, he controls foreign relations, defense, the budget, and other vital economic and financial areas. The executive branch initiates 90 percent of Mexico's legislation, and the president orders the introduction of laws into the National Congress.

The president is assisted by a cabinet, which is split into smaller groups, such as economic and national security cabinets, that make policy recommendations to the president or respond to his policy initiatives. The most powerful cabinet member after the president is the minister of government, combining the portfolios of justice and interior.

Suffrage is universal over age 18. Voting is compulsory under the constitution, but this provision is rarely enforced.

The constitution contains many radical sections on the collective ownership of land, waters, seas, natural resources, and sources of power and fuel, although these have been under attack by the privatization program introduced in the late 1980s. There are also elaborate provisions on the rights of labor. The concept of *amparo*—a wider form of habeas corpus that the individual Mexican may invoke in protection of his rights—is enshrined in the first 29 articles of the constitution. The right of *amparo* also safeguards personal equity and property rights.

PARLIAMENT

The National Congress (Congreso de la Unión) is a bicameral body consisting of a Senate (Cámara de Senadores) and a Chamber of Deputies (Cámara de Diputados).

The Senate consists of 96 members elected by geographic district, with each state and the Federal District entitled to three seats, and 32 additional members, whose positions are allocated to political parties on the basis of the popular vote.

The Chamber of Deputies consists of 500 members elected for three-year terms. A total of 300 members are elected by majority vote from single-member electoral districts based on population size, with a minimum of two members from each state. The remaining 200 members are elected from multimember constituencies by proportional representation under a system using regional lists. Members of congress may be reelected, but not for consecutive terms.

Regular sessions of congress run from September 1 to December 15 and from March 15 to April 30. A Standing Committee, composed of 19 deputies and 18 senators, functions during recesses of congress. Legislation may be introduced by the president, senators, deputies, or by acts of state legislatures. Each house has a number of commissions to study and recommend bills. The powers of congress include approval of the federal budget, review of the annual public accounts, ratification of international treaties, constitutional amendments, federal legislation, impeachment proceedings, and horizontal control of the administration.

July 2000 saw elections for all seats in the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies. Following the last round of federal elections, the PRI was no longer in absolute con-

trol of the Chamber of Deputies and narrowly retained its absolute majority in the Senate, but without the qualified majority needed for constitutional changes. It recaptured the majority in the Chamber of Deputies in 2003.

POLITICAL PARTIES

For most of the 20th century political parties other than the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) played influential roles neither in politics nor in the decision-making process. Since it was founded in 1929, the government party monopolized most national political offices; the PRI did not lose a senate seat until 1988 or a gubernatorial race until 1989, and it held the presidency until 2000.

The Electoral Reform Act of 1977 resulted in the registration of three new political parties. The presidential election campaign of 1988 was widely criticized as unfair and put increased pressure on the government to loosen its grip on the system. Further constitutional changes in 1995–97 introduced measures to strengthen the fairness of the electoral system, including a limit on the number of Senate seats elected by proportional representation, limits on overrepresentation in the Chamber of Representatives, greater independence for the Electoral Tribunal, complete autonomy for the Federal Electoral Institute (which organizes elections), and moves towards campaign finance reform. In addition, direct elections to the government of the Federal District were held for the first time in 1997, and the mayoral position was won by Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas of the opposition Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD).

Opposition parties now enjoy greater influence and power over government than at any time since the revolution. By 1999 opposition parties had won elections at all levels of government except the presidency, although in the 1988 elections the PRI dissident Cárdenas headed a coalition of smaller parties and came close to winning the presidency, amid claims that ballot rigging and fraudulent voting ensured a Salinas victory. In 1997 the PRI lost its majority in the Chamber of Deputies for the first time, also losing several gubernatorial races as well as that for mayor of Mexico City. The 2000 presidential contest was the first to elect a non-PRI candidate in 71 years. As of 2004, the PRI was back in control of both houses of parliament.

The Partido Revolucionario Institucional (Institutional Revolutionary Party) was founded in 1929 and was strongly rooted in the Revolution of 1910. While initially moderately left-wing, with a broad base of support from labor groups, the peasantry, civil servants, and teachers, the PRI recently moved to a more liberal economic position, advocating the liberalization and privatization of the economy. The PRI remains the most powerful political group in Mexico.

The Partido Acción Nacional (National Action Party) was initially formed as a conservative reaction to PRI nationalization and land confiscation in the 1930s. Support for the PAN derived primarily from the Roman Catholic Church, the business sector, and other groups alienated by the PRI. Since the mid-1980s the PAN's economic program has become almost indistinguishable from that of the PRI.

The Partido de la Revolución Democrática (Party of the Democratic Revolution) was formed after a split within the PRI in 1988. The PRD emphasizes social welfare concerns and opposes most of the economic reforms implemented since the mid-1980s. It remains committed to greater state control of the economy and proposes the renegotiation of parts of NAFTA with the United States and Canada.

There are several other small parties, including the Workers Party (PT), the Convergence for Democracy (CD), and the Mexican Green Ecological Party (PVEM).

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For purposes of local administration, Mexico is divided into 31 states and a Federal District (Distrito Federal). Each state has a constitution and a unicameral legislature. Ordinary sessions of the legislatures are held annually, and bills may be introduced by legislators, state governors, state supreme courts, or municipalities. The principal units of the states are the municipalities, numbering 2,434, which are governed by elected municipal councils. Each state governor is elected for a six-year term of office under a mixture of proportional representation and relative majority voting.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The Mexican legal system is built on Spanish law, with an admixture of U.S. elements. The judiciary is divided into federal and state systems, with both headed by the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court is composed of 21 justices, called ministers, and five auxiliary judges, as organized into four general chambers (*salas*)—penal, administrative, criminal, and labor—each with five justices. The position of chief justice rotates among the justices annually, but a chief justice may be reelected. A fifth chamber, the auxiliary chamber, takes the overload from the other chambers.

Below the Supreme Court are three levels of courts: five circuit collegiate tribunals, each with three magistrates; six circuit unitary tribunals, each with six magistrates; and 46 one-magistrate district courts.

Each state has its own judiciary, generally following the federal pattern. The highest state courts are known as the state superior courts, whose judges are appointed by

the governors with the consent of the state legislatures. They in turn appoint members of subordinate courts, such as courts of first instance and justices of the peace, also called police judges.

The system of trial by jury exists but is not commonly employed. The most powerful judicial instrument is the writ of *amparo*, similar to habeas corpus. The death penalty has not been applied in Mexico since 1929, when the assassin of president-elect Obregón was executed. The federal death penalty was abolished under the Federal Penal Code of 1930, and by 1975 all state codes had also eliminated the death penalty.

Under the constitution trial and sentencing must be completed within 12 months of arrest for crimes that would carry at least a two-year sentence. Nevertheless, trial delays are often caused by cumbersome court procedures and by defendants' inability or unwillingness to pay bribes, in the form of "gratuities," to bring cases to trial. Defendants have the right to counsel, and public defenders are available. Although certain sections of the criminal code provide for convoking tribunals with juries, in practice this almost never takes place. In most cases a judge, generally acting alone, examines written statements, expert opinion, and, less commonly, oral testimony and then renders his verdict.

The penal system has both federal and state correctional facilities. The largest federal prison is the penitentiary for those sentenced in the Federal District. Criminals serving long sentences are sent to one of two penal colonies. Each state has its own state penitentiary; in addition, there are over 2,300 municipal jails. Overcrowding of prisons is chronic. Mistreatment of prisoners, a lack of trained guards, and inadequate sanitary facilities compound the problem. Prisoners frequently exercise authority, displacing prison officials. Violent confrontations, often linked to drug trafficking, are common between rival prison groups.

Mexico signed a Prisoner Transfer Treaty in 1977 with the United States. This allows U.S. prisoners in Mexican jails and Mexican prisoners in U.S. jails to serve their sentences in their home countries. There is also an extradition treaty between the United States and Mexico, implemented in January 1980, which requires the mutual recognition of crimes as defined by the laws of each nation. Because of the extensive processing required under extradition requests, however, informal cooperation has developed among police on both sides of the border. Suspected criminals who flee to the neighboring country to escape apprehension are routinely turned over without formal proceedings to police in the country where the crime was committed.

HUMAN RIGHTS

The Mexican constitution consistently affirms social justice and equality as the basic ideals of the Revolution of

1910. Individual rights, such as the right to a fair trial, are guaranteed by the constitution, and Mexico is a signatory to major international human rights conventions. In December 1998 Mexico officially accepted the jurisdiction of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights. Despite these guarantees, human rights abuses in Mexico remain a considerable problem and attract the concern and condemnation of international groups such as Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights. Abuses by members of security forces are pervasive and largely escape punishment. Practices include the use of torture, extrajudicial killings, disappearances, arbitrary detention, and other cruelties perpetrated against private persons and prisoners. Most of the victims are criminal suspects, but abuses are also perpetrated against indigenous leaders and civil rights activists.

In the past, unofficial paramilitary groups, incorporating various police officials, operated against rural and urban guerrillas and other groups. The most notorious such group was the White Brigade (Brigada Blanca), thought to be active from 1977 until 1980, when the government, though denying its existence, dismantled it. The White Brigade was responsible for the "disappearance" of several hundred leftists, and while "disappearances" declined sharply during the 1980s, they were once again reported in the mid-1990s in connection with the unrest in Chiapas. Fox's government has been investigating allegations of torture and murder by security forces in the 1970s and 1980s but has received limited cooperation from the judiciary.

The growth in drug production and trafficking in Mexico has also led to an increase in human rights abuses, both by the drug traffickers and by law enforcement agents, and to increased militarization in the war on drugs, which feeds this increase. Police linked to drug rings have been accused of extrajudicial executions, and the armed forces have been implicated in several cases. In November 1999 American agents and Mexican soldiers began excavating six mass graves in northern Mexico near the American border, which appeared to hold the remains of around 100 victims of drug violence, both American and Mexican. The drug traffickers implicated are believed to have operated with the knowledge and sometimes support of local police officers.

The border city Ciudad Juarez has experienced a rash of murders since 1993, mostly of poor young women. The government is attempting to solve the mystery, but local officials have been notoriously uncooperative and unwilling to admit the existence of a problem.

In 1990 the Mexican government established the National Human Rights Commission (Comisión Nacional de Derechos Humanos, CNDH). Initially under the Secretariat of Government, the CNDH was granted consti-

tutional status and full autonomy under a law enacted in 1992, and in 1998 the funding and presidency, previously controlled by the government, was brought under the control of the legislature. According to the CNDH, the illegal deprivation of liberty is the most common human rights complaint among its cases.

FOREIGN POLICY

The principles of Mexican foreign policy are respect for international law, the judicial equality of states, the sovereignty and independence of nations, nonintervention in the domestic affairs of other countries, the peaceful resolution of conflicts, and the promotion of collective security through participation in international organizations. Traditionally, Mexico's foreign policy is considered leftist, prorevolutionary, and nationalistic. The country has demonstrated independence from the United States through support for the Cuban government during the 1960s, the Sandinista revolution in Nicaragua during the late 1970s, and leftist revolutionary groups in El Salvador during the 1980s.

As for most of Mexico's history, its foreign policy in the 1990s was dominated by relations with the United States, its largest trading partner and the most powerful actor in the Western Hemisphere. The central theme is free trade, especially as delineated by NAFTA, but agreements have also been signed with Venezuela, Colombia, and Bolivia. Mexico is also important to the United States in terms of its strategic location and large oil deposits.

Along with trade, two other issues dominate Mexican-U.S. relations: immigration and drugs. Illegal immigration from Mexico to the United States runs at an average of 300,000 to 500,000 people per year, and the presence of so many immigrants in places such as Southern California has led to anti-immigration legislation, which places more strain on the countries' relations. Closely related to the immigration issue is the drug problem. Mexico is a major transit country for drugs entering the United States from South America and an important producer of heroin and marijuana. Drug trafficking has fueled widespread corruption on both sides of the border and has prompted harsh military responses, which have contributed to human rights abuses and violent crime in the border region. Each country holds the other responsible for the trade: Mexico blames the U.S. demand for drugs, while the United States blames the lack of Mexican effort through antidrug programs. The assassinations and scandals surrounding top Mexican politicians and their links with drug barons have further complicated relations with the United States.

Mexican policy toward Cuba remains one way for the nation to assert independence from U.S. policies. As part of this policy, the Mexican president pays an official visit

to Cuba during the last year of his term, and Mexico and Cuba hold many formal agreements on economic, educational, and cultural issues.

Guatemalan refugees, both economic and political, continue to cross the border to work in Mexico. This situation contributes to the border region's social and economic problems, which include the Zapatista guerrilla movement and drug trafficking.

Internationally, Mexico maintains relations with over 175 countries, is a founding member of the United Nations, and is a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO), the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), and NAFTA.

DEFENSE

The president—who exercises control through the minister of national defense, customarily a professional military officer—heads the defense structure. Mexico is divided for military purposes into 35 zones, corresponding with the 31 states, except that Oaxaca, Veracruz, and Guerrero each have two zones and the Federal District one. While compulsory military service exists for all males over 18, in practice this is widely ignored, and military manpower is obtained through voluntary enlistment.

Mexico's last foreign war was in 1846; the nation has been at peace for over 150 years. The army has been considerably depoliticized, although some officers are still elected to congress every session.

The Mexican armed forces are smaller in relation to the national population, and military expenditures are smaller in relation to gross domestic product (GDP) and the national budget, than in nearly every other country in Latin America. The logic behind this low profile is that the great size of Mexico's northern neighbor, the United States, would make resistance to armed invasion useless, and the small size of southern neighbors makes a large army simply unnecessary. There is significant internal defense production, mainly in small arms and ammunition.

The main threats requiring military response are guerrilla insurgencies and drug trafficking. The army is deployed in the search for Zapatista rebels in Chiapas and in counternarcotics operations, along with the air force, throughout the country. With Mexican-U.S. relations focused partly on the drug issue, military training and assistance from the United States contributes significantly to the professionalism, equipment, and combat readiness of the armed forces. While the military is subordinate to civil authority, it has the potential to be involved in politics due to its important role in internal police tasks. Military involvement in the war on drugs and in counterinsurgency operations also has negative effects, such as increases in claims of human rights abuses and corruption involving members of the armed forces.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 255,000
 Military Manpower Availability: 27,374,153
 Military Expenditures \$billion: 5.17
 as % of GDP: 0.9
 as % of central government expenditures: 3.3
 Arms Imports \$million: 19
 Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

Mexico is a semi-industrialized country rich in industrial resources such as petroleum and metals. Manufacturing output centers on basic goods, such as steel, machinery, and petrochemicals, and a wide range of consumer goods. Agriculture remains the largest source of employment; however, many rural workers are subsistence farmers earning barely enough to survive. After years of economic growth following World War II, Mexico's economy experienced stagnation and massive foreign debt in the late 1970s and 1980s. Borrowing against future oil revenues crippled the economy with debt repayments once the price of oil fell in the early 1980s, and recession took hold.

Economic restructuring, austerity programs, and foreign debt relief restabilized the economy in the late 1980s, and by the 1990s Mexico was pursuing a policy of privatization and market liberalization. Mexico also began to integrate its economy into the more competitive regional and global economies, in 1992 entering into NAFTA with the United States and Canada, which came into effect on January 1, 1994. The agreement exists to promote free trade and remove tariffs between its members.

While this restructuring provided the basis for economic growth, Mexico's economic foundations remained shaky. The peso became overvalued in relation to the dollar, and an attempt to control this via devaluation in December 1994 led the currency to crash, prompting massive capital flight and threatening economic collapse. An emergency loan provided by the United States and the World Bank prevented total collapse, although the resulting depression was the worst since the global depression of the 1930s, with increased poverty and declining GDP.

By 1997 the economy was recovering, and the emergency loan from the United States was paid off three years early thanks to increased oil revenues. At the turn of the century Mexico's economy was continuing to grow, as boosted by the lengthy U.S. economic boom. In 2001 Mexico entered free-trade agreements with Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, and the European Free Trade Area. Trade with Canada and the U.S. has tripled since NAFTA was implemented in 1994. The government has been slowly modernizing the tax system and labor laws, encouraging investment in energy, and upgrading infrastructure. Despite these efforts, growth was very slow in

the early 2000s, largely due to the slowdown in the U.S. economy. Income inequality remains a major problem.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 941.2
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 9,000
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 2.4
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 1.0
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 4.0
 Industry: 26.4
 Services: 69.6
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 72
 Government Consumption: 10
 Gross Domestic Investment: 19.3
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 164.8
 Imports: 168.9
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 1.6
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 35.6

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
219.1	239.9	255.1	268.0	280.2

Finance

National Currency: Mexican Peso (MXN)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = MXN 10.789
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 679.4
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: —
 Total External Debt \$billion: 159.8
 Debt Service Ratio %: 11.26
 Balance of Payments \$billion: –9.15
 International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 57.74
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
 4.5

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 135.51
 per capita \$: 1.30
 Foreign Direct Investment \$billion: 14

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$billion: 148.3
 Expenditures \$billion: 152.4
 Budget Deficit \$billion: 4.1
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: 13.2

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 4.0
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 2.4
 Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares: 13.1
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 23.2
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 75.4

(continues)

1582 Mexico

Agriculture *(continued)*

Total Farmland % of land area: 13.0
Livestock: Cattle million: 30.8
Chickens million: 540
Pigs million: 18.1
Sheep million: 6.56
Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 45.5
Fisheries: Total Catch tons million: 1.5

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 102.5
Industrial Production Growth Rate %: -0.7

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 237.3
Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 135.4
Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 1.33
Net Energy Imports % of use: -51.2
Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 42.3
Production kW-hr billion: 198.6
Consumption kW-hr billion: 186.7
Coal Reserves tons billion: 1.3
Production tons million: 12.1
Consumption tons million: 13.8
Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: 15.0
Production cubic feet trillion: 1.33
Consumption cubic feet trillion: 1.5
Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: 15.7
Production barrels million per day: 3.8
Consumption barrels million per day: 2.02
Pipelines Length km: 28,200

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 168.9
Exports \$billion: 164.8
Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999-2003): 5.5
Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999-2003): 6.9
Balance of Trade \$billion: -9.15

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
United States %	61.8	87.6
China %	5.5	—
Japan %	4.5	—
Canada %	—	1.8
Germany %	—	1.2

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 329,532
Paved %: 32.8
Automobiles: 12,965,000
Trucks and Buses: 5,919,000

Railroad: Track Length km: 19,510
Passenger-km million: 66
Freight-km billion: 47.8
Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 50
Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 942.8
Airports: 1,827
Traffic: Passenger-km million: 28.3
Length of Waterways km: 2,900

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 19.67
Number of Tourists from million: 11.95
Tourist Receipts \$billion: 8.86
Tourist Expenditures \$billion: 6.06

Communications

Telephones million: 15.96
Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.16
Cellular Telephones million: 28.13
Personal Computers million: 8.35
Internet Hosts per million people: 12,555
Internet Users per 1,000 people: 94

ENVIRONMENT

Significant environmental challenges affect almost every section of Mexico. In the southern and southeastern tropical forests, vast areas have been cleared for cattle raising and agriculture. This contributes to serious levels of soil erosion, which is a nationwide problem, particularly in the north and northwest, where more than 60 percent of land is considered to be in a total or accelerated state of erosion.

Coastal pollution is also a problem, such as in the Coatzacoalcos-Minatitlán zone in the Gulf of Mexico, where poorly regulated petroleum exploration has caused serious damage to the waters and fisheries of Río Coatzacoalcos. In 1992, 190 people were killed when petroleum from a Pemex pipeline seeped into the municipal sewer system in Guadalajara and combined with gases and industrial residuals to produce a massive explosion.

The capital, Mexico City, presents many more environmental challenges. Geography and extreme population levels combine to produce one of the world's most polluted urban areas. Mexico City sits in a valley surrounded on three sides by mountains, which trap contaminants produced by the area's 15 million residents. Vehicle pollution releases carbons and hydrocarbons into the atmosphere, with sulfur and nitrogen coming from industrial plants. During the dry winter months, untreated fecal matter also becomes airborne. This pollution results in a wide range of respiratory illnesses and has damaged the surrounding ecosystem as well. Wastewater from Mexico City that flows north and is used for irriga-

tion in the state of Hidalgo has been linked to congenital birth defects and high levels of gastrointestinal diseases.

In the mid-1980s the government began to attack the pollution problem, introducing measures such as vehicle emissions inspections, unleaded petrol, and the installation of catalytic converters on new vehicles. Pollution has reached such dangerous levels at various times that the government has declared environmental emergencies, with requisite temporary cutbacks in vehicle use and industrial production.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 28.9
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: -631
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 8
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 296,092
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 4.33

LIVING CONDITIONS

Some 40 percent of Mexicans live below the poverty line. Housing is substandard, as not all households have running water or electricity, and diseases are rampant. Wealthy Mexicans, on the other hand, live as well as prosperous Europeans or Americans, in comfortable houses and apartments furnished with all the modern amenities; the gap between rich and poor has been widening. Driving can be dangerous both as a driver or a passenger on a bus; dangers come from poor road surfaces, old vehicles, and highway robbers. Crime is a serious problem in the cities; common crimes include sexual crimes against women, various kinds of theft, and kidnapping.

HEALTH

Health insurance is available for the employed, and there are some state medical programs for the poor. Three-quarters of the population uses public health services. There are special programs for mothers and their small children. Wealthy people often choose to pay for services at private clinics. There is a shortage of doctors, nurses, and medical supplies, especially in rural areas, and these shortages have become worse as the population has grown. Most of the population does, however, have access to care when they need it. Mexico has completely eliminated some infectious diseases, and life expectancy had increased to 75 years by 2004.

Health

Number of Physicians: 172,266
 Number of Dentists: 9,669
 Number of Nurses: 222,389

Number of Pharmacists: —
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 171
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: 1.1
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 21.69
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 83
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 6.1
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 370
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.3
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 91
 Measles: 96
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 77
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 91

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Corn, beans, and hot peppers are the staple ingredients of Mexican cooking. People form corn into tortillas, the flat bread that appears at nearly every meal. Beans are wrapped in tortillas, boiled and fried, or cooked in soups. People supplement the staples with vegetables and fruits. Fresh-squeezed fruit juices are a popular drinks, while alcoholic beverages include beer, mescal, tequila, and *pulque*, made from the sap of the maguey.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 5.2
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 3,150
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 172.2
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 170.4

STATUS OF WOMEN

Since the 1970s dramatic changes have occurred in the role of women in the Mexican economy. In 1990 women represented 31 percent of the economically active population, twice that of 1970. Demographics also changed during this period. Previously, the typical female worker was under 25 years of age, and her participation in the workforce was usually transitional and would end with marriage or childbirth. With the emergence of a feminist movement in the 1970s, it became more acceptable for educated women to pursue careers. The 1980s economic crisis brought many women back into the workforce to supplement their husbands' incomes. About 70 percent of women workers in the mid-1990s were employed in the tertiary sector of the economy, usually at wages below those of men.

In 1995 a survey found growing acceptance that men and women should share in family responsibilities. These views were strongly related to income and educational level, with low-income and minimally educated respondents still regarding household tasks as women's work.

Traditional norms remain strong in Mexico, and men often subject women to control, domination, and

violence. Machismo is still the ruling sentiment; many men simply believe they are superior to women. Women are generally held to a stricter sexual code of conduct than men, particularly concerning sexual activity outside of marriage, which is regarded as immoral for “decent” women but acceptable for men.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 23
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.0
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 37.4

WORK

Though the official unemployment rate in 2003 was only 3.3 percent, underemployment is closer to 25 percent. Per capita income is one-quarter that of the United States. Mexico has a young population, and the nation is unlikely to be able to provide ample jobs for the next generation of workers. For that reason many Mexicans choose to emigrate to other countries. Almost one-fifth of Mexico's workers are employed in agriculture, and one-quarter work in industry. Almost 60 percent are employed in services, including tourism.

Many Mexicans work six days a week. Some people in rural areas still follow the custom of going home in the middle of the day for a leisurely lunch and a nap, after which they return to work. This practice is no longer common in the cities, where people typically work too far from home for it to be feasible.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 34,110,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 34.0
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 18
 Industry: 24
 Services: 58
 Unemployment %: 3.3

EDUCATION

Education is free, universal, and compulsory for six years, from ages six to 11. The medium of instruction is Spanish throughout. Schooling lasts for 12 years, as divided into six years of primary school, three years of lower secondary school, and three years of upper secondary school. Due to the history of Catholic Church involvement in education throughout the colonial period, after independence religious influences of any sort were banned in primary schools. The federal government controls the curriculum

and provides textbooks for primary schools. School attendance is high among six- to 14-year-olds, with 85 percent of all children in class. Attendance declines significantly after 13, however, as youths unofficially join the workforce. Around 45 percent of the population age 15 or older has completed some secondary or college education.

Due to Mexico's high birthrate, while the actual number of illiterate adults has stayed constant, literacy rates have increased as a proportion of the population. Overall literacy was 92 percent in 2003. Amerindians tend to have the lowest literacy rates, with correspondingly high rates of poverty, unemployment, and underemployment. There are over 11,000 adult literacy centers, and the government runs literacy programs on radio and television.

Responsibility for education rests with the Secretaría de Educación Pública, with day-to-day maintenance and operations run by state and municipal governments. Private schools are required to be entirely secular and to conform to standards set by the government.

Higher education, provided in various universities and institutes, is dominated by public institutions, many of them in the capital.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 92.2
 Male %: 94.0
 Female %: 90.5
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 12.3
 First Level: Primary Schools: 91,857
 Teachers: 552,409
 Students: 14,843,381
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 26.9
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 99.4
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 22,255
 Teachers: 571,377
 Students: 8,244,426
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 17.0
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 60.2
 Third Level: Institutions: 10,341
 Teachers: 219,804
 Students: 2,147,075
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 21.5
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 5.2

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Mexico is working to develop its technological infrastructure. In 2003 the telephone system was inadequate for most private users, though there was sufficient coverage for business and government. Far more people—over 28 million in 2003—use cellular telephones than land lines. Many of these users make calls with prepaid cards, and many can only receive incoming calls. Some 10 million people were using the Internet in 2002. The formerly state-owned company Telmex has a monopoly on telecommunications, but some international firms are beginning to offer competition.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 225
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 0.34
 High-Tech Exports \$billion: 28.94
 Patent Applications by Residents: 594

Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets million: 26.5
 per 1,000: 272

MEDIA

Mexico is considered the media power center of Spanish-speaking Latin America due to the sheer number of newspapers, publishers, radio stations, and television networks in the country. The constitution of 1917 explicitly guarantees the freedom of the press. Article 7 forbids prior censorship, and an amendment to Article 6 adopted in 1977 declares that “the right of information will be guaranteed by the state.” However, these guarantees are highly qualified in practice. The Press Law of 1917, for instance, restricts the press on matters of personal privacy, morality, and public health, and many other regulations govern the news media.

Mexico City is the center of the nation’s newspaper industry. The major newspapers with daily circulation over 100,000 issues are *Esto*, *La prensa*, *Novedades*, *Ovaciones*, *El heraldo de México*, *Excélsior*, *El financiero*, and *El universal*. Several magazines, noted for their independence and criticism of the government, are also published in Mexico City, and there are multiple national news agencies. All leading international agencies have bureaus in Mexico City.

There are two types of radio stations: commercial and cultural. Commercial stations are financed by advertising, both public and private, but must provide 12 percent of broadcasting time for government use, while cultural stations are operated either by government agencies or by educational institutions.

Although nominally independent, news media are subject to a variety of mainly indirect economic and political pressures from the government. Government tolerance of press freedoms varies according to the sensitivities of the president in office. Since the 1980s greater political debate has brought about more criticism in the media, and governments have generally been more tolerant of this situation. Television remains highly biased toward the PRI, with open support from the Televisa network, although recent economic policies under Salinas and Zedillo reduced state intervention and promoted private ownership of the media. TV Azteca and foreign satellite and cable broadcasters have recently become serious competitors in the television market.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 311
 Total Circulation million: 9.25
 Circulation per 1,000: 94
 Books Published: 6,952

CULTURE

Mexico has been inhabited for many centuries and has a rich culture, combining indigenous traditions with Spanish religious motifs. The archaeological sites left by the Aztecs, Mayans, and Olmecs are increasingly popular places to visit. Painting and the visual arts have been popular since pre-Hispanic times. The ancient Amerindians made stone sculptures and murals. Modern artists such as Diego Rivera painted giant murals to decorate public buildings, and Frida Kahlo was an immensely popular surrealist. Mexican writers include Laura Esquivel, Carlos Fuentes, Octavio Paz, and Juan Rulfo.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 557
 Volumes: 3,720,000
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: 91
 Annual Attendance: 13,070,000
 Cinema Gross Receipts national currency million: 134.5
 Number of Cinemas: 2,320
 Seating Capacity: 624,100
 Annual Attendance: 120,000,000

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Mexico has a long tradition of mythology associated with the cultures of the Aztecs, Olmecs, and Mayans. These people lived in Mexico between 1500 B.C.E. and 1521 C.E. and had elaborate systems of beliefs. They worshipped various gods that looked like monsters or animals. Paintings and sculptures of these deities still exist at archaeological sites such as Teotihuacan. Their religious rituals were notable for their bloodiness and violence; human sacrifice was common.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Mexicans love to spend their free time visiting family members on weekends and holidays. They eat and drink in one another’s homes or travel to the country for picnics and recreation. Most Mexicans do not engage in outdoor recreation, but a number of activities are available to the many tourists who visit the country; these include mountain climbing, trekking, white-water rafting, scuba diving, and a wide range of other water sports.

ETIQUETTE

Men shake hands with one another in greeting; they can shake hands with women, but the woman must initiate the action. Women greet one another with kisses and hugs or with pats on the forearm or shoulder. Men sometimes hug one another. Mexicans tend to stand close together when speaking and often touch one another; on the other hand, they avoid frequent or intense eye contact during conversations. It is considered rude to speak too directly about a topic, and Mexicans will often talk around an issue before coming to the point.

FAMILY LIFE

For most Mexicans, family takes priority over work. Men and women typically adhere to traditional gender roles, with men working and acting as heads of families and women caring for the home and children. It is very important to Mexican men that they appear strong, confident, proud, and in control, in accordance with the machismo code of behavior. Children usually live with their parents until marriage, though some young urban people move out before marriage. Boys have more freedom than girls, who are closely supervised until marriage. Most Mexicans use the family names of both their mothers and their fathers.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Most Mexicans dress in typical Western fashion. Businesspeople tend to dress conservatively; it is very important to present a neat appearance, with ironed clothing and polished shoes. Women usually wear dresses or skirts and high heels, not trousers; femininity is expected. Most people dress very meticulously and do not go around in shabby clothing, tennis shoes, or shorts. Some people wear jeans, but they must be very neat.

SPORTS

Soccer is the most popular sport, with men and boys alike playing in villages and members of the national team members bearing the status of cult heroes. Mexicans also like to play baseball and American football. Many people ride horses and enjoy watching rodeos. Bullfighting is extremely popular with the older generation; though the government has periodically attempted to restrict the sport, their efforts have been ineffectual. The largest bullfighting arena in the world is in Mexico City.

CHRONOLOGY

1929 Partido de la Revolución Mexicana, the National Revolutionary Party, predecessor of the PRI, is established.

- 1946** The ruling Partido de la Revolución Mexicana is renamed the Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI). Miguel Alemán Valdés is elected president.
- 1947** Suffrage is extended to women.
- 1951** Baja California Norte is granted statehood, becoming the 29th state.
- 1952** Adolfo Ruiz Cortines is elected president.
- 1958** Adolfo López Mateos is elected president.
- 1961** Electoral law is reformed, giving national opposition parties additional seats in proportion to their overall vote.
- 1964** Gustavo Díaz Ordaz is elected president. Mexico opposes Organization of American States sanctions against Cuba and decides to maintain diplomatic relations with it.
- 1964–67** Mexico settles outstanding territorial disputes with United States.
- 1968** Olympic games in Mexico City are marred by riots and demonstrations, which are violently suppressed by troops and police.
- 1970** Luis Echeverría Alvarez is elected president.
- 1973** President Echeverría embarks on world tour to demonstrate Mexico's solidarity with the developing world.
- 1974** Baja California Sure and Quintana Roo are admitted as states.
- 1976** José López Portillo y Pacheco is elected president.
- 1977** Agreement is concluded with the United States transferring U.S. citizens in Mexican jails to the United States.
- 1978** Four former ministers in the Echeverría cabinet are arrested on charges of corruption. Under a new electoral law, the Communist Party and two other opposition parties are legalized, and the opposition is guaranteed at least 25 percent of the membership in the Chamber of Deputies.
- 1979** The ruling PRI wins an absolute majority in national elections to the Chamber of Deputies. The former shah of Iran is granted asylum in the country.
- 1981** Mexico hosts the Cancun North-South Conference.
- 1982** In general elections the PRI retains control of the assembly, but the PAN makes gains. The peso is devalued twice in a year, and an austerity program gets under way under International Monetary Fund monitoring. President López steps down, and Miguel de la Madrid is installed as president. All private banks are nationalized. Foreign creditors assemble a bailout package, as Mexico is unable to meet its debt repayment schedule.

- 1983** A total of 60 police chiefs are dismissed, as widespread bribery scandals break open.
- 1985** Earthquake hits Mexico City, killing over 4,000 and destroying many buildings.
- 1988** PRI candidate Carlos Salinas de Gortari is elected president in an election tainted by accusations of corruption and fraud.
- 1989** Mexico reaches agreement with the "Paris Club" on rescheduling its foreign debt.
- 1990** An official Mexican research institute publishes a report stating that human rights abuses among the police are widespread.
- 1992** On August 12 the North American Free Trade Agreement is signed by the presidents of Mexico, Canada, and the United States.
- 1994** On January 1, NAFTA comes into effect; the Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN) launches an uprising in Chiapas, southern Mexico.
On March 2, following extensive army operations against the guerrillas, a tentative peace agreement is signed.
On March 23 PRI presidential candidate Luis Donaldo Colosio Murrieta is assassinated at a political rally in Tijuana.
Ernesto Zedillo Ponce de León wins the presidential election for the PRI.
- 1995** Following the devaluation of the peso in December 1994, the currency crashes, prompting massive capital flight and threatening economic collapse. An emergency loan provided by the United States and the World Bank prevents total collapse.
President Zedillo replaces the entire Supreme Court and picks a member of the main opposition party as attorney general.
- 1996** The Zapatistas announce the formation of a new civilian political organization, the Zapatista National Liberation Front (FZLN). Leaders say that the new organization will seek to foster democracy through constitutional reforms.
Zapatista representatives and the Mexican government sign the first of six peace accords.
A new guerrilla movement, calling itself the Popular Revolutionary Army, attacks government targets in Guerrero, Oaxaca, México State, and Puebla.
FZLN breaks off peace talks, claiming governmental failure to implement reforms.
- 1997** Three years ahead of schedule, Mexico makes the last repayment on the U.S. emergency loan of 1995.
U.S. President Bill Clinton visits Mexico, his first official visit to Latin America.
In congressional elections, the PRI loses its majority for the first time since 1929.
- Cuahtémoc Cárdenas of the PRD is elected mayor of Mexico City.
- Unknown masked assassins massacre 45 peasants in Chiapas province.
- 1999** Raúl Salinas de Gortari, brother of ex-president Carlos Salinas, is convicted of masterminding the 1994 shooting of José Francisco Ruiz Massieu, the secretary-general of the PRI. He is sentenced to 50 years in prison.
Pope John Paul II visits Mexico, holding a mass for 100,000 people at Mexico City's Azteca Stadium.
Weeks of heavy rain cause floods, which kill more than 400 people and leave tens of thousands homeless.
The PRI chooses its presidential candidate in the first-ever open primary; Francisco Labastida, President Zedillo's choice, wins.
- 2000** The government sends in police to end a 10-month student takeover of the National Autonomous University.
For the first time in 71 years, the PRI loses the presidency, to PAN candidate Vicente Fox. In the lower house of congress the PAN takes 224 seats, the PRI 209, and the PRD 67.
- 2001** Zapatistas enter into negotiation with the Fox administration, but Subcomandante Marcos, the rebel leader, rejects the government's efforts and promises to continue the uprisings. The Fox administration begins investigating the disappearances of political activists in the 1970s and 1980s.
- 2002** Fox's administration uncovers evidence of widespread abuses during the 1970s and 1980s; former president Echeverría is implicated.
- 2003** The National Action Party loses midterm parliamentary elections to the PRI. Multilateral trade talks in Cancun collapse over the issue of farm subsidies.
- 2004** The federal government begins investigating murders in Ciudad Juárez. A judge refuses to arrest Echeverría on charges that he ordered an attack on student protesters in 1971.
- 2005** Drug gangs riot in prisons, resulting in the deaths of six guards.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- National Institute of Statistics, Geography, and Informatics
<http://www.inegi.gob.mx/inegi/default.asp>

MICRONESIA, FEDERATED STATES OF

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Federated States of Micronesia

ABBREVIATION

FM

CAPITAL

Palikir

HEAD OF STATE & HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

President Joseph J. Urusemal (from 2003)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Constitutional government in free association with the United States

POPULATION

108,105 (2005)

AREA

702 sq km (271 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Micronesian, Polynesian

LANGUAGES

English, Chuukese (Trukese), Pohnpeian, Yapese, Kosrean, Ulithian, Woleaian, Nukuoro, Kapingamarangi

RELIGIONS

Roman Catholic, Protestant

UNIT OF CURRENCY

U.S. dollar

NATIONAL FLAG

Light blue with four white five-pointed stars in a diamond formation in the center

NATIONAL EMBLEM

In a circular seal is a plant growing out of the ocean, topped by four stars, below which is a banner bearing the national motto, "Peace unity liberty," and the year 1979; around the seal is written "Government of the Federated States of Micronesia."

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"Patriots of Micronesia"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day), May 10 (Constitution Day), October 24 (United Nations Day), November 3 (Independence Day), December 25 (Christmas)

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

November 3, 1986

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

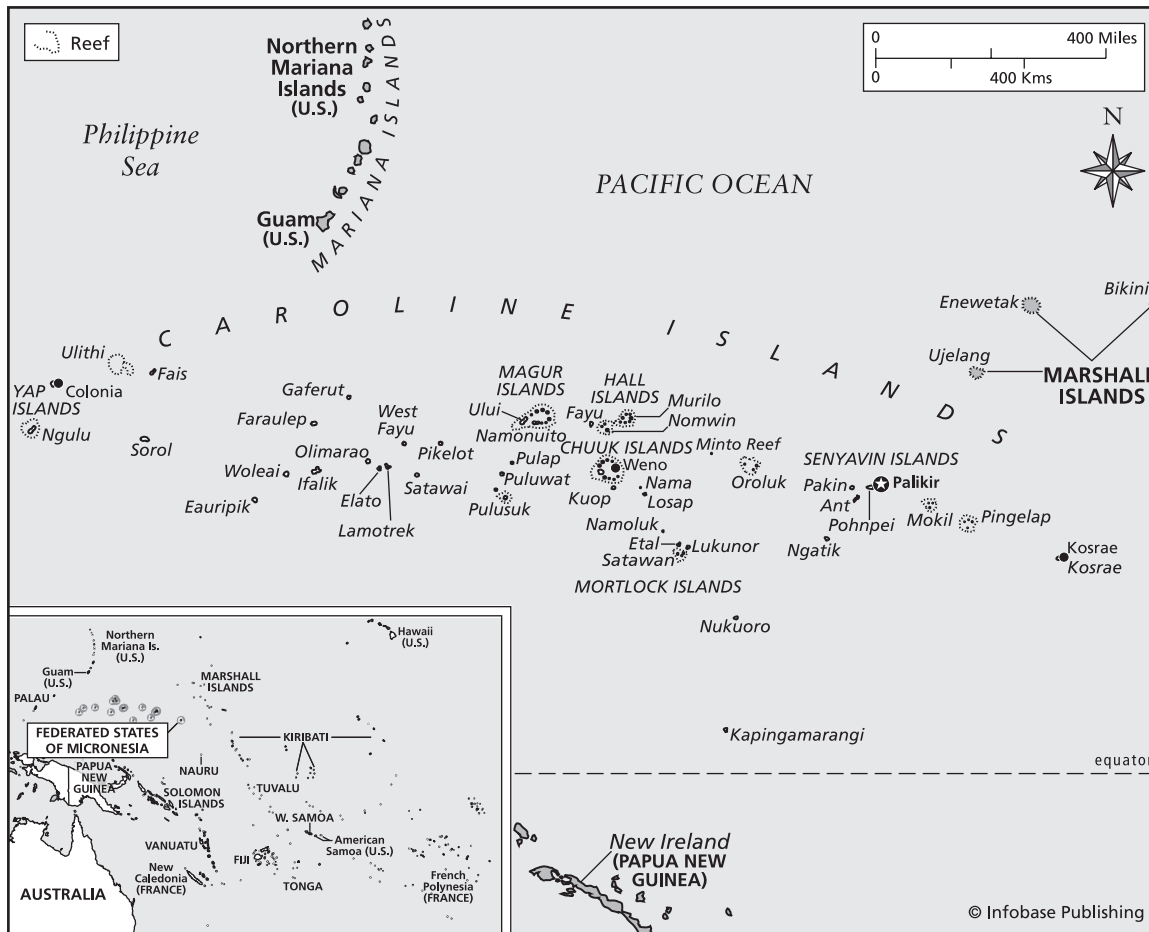
May 10, 1979

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Micronesia is made up of 607 small islands in the western Pacific. It is located just north of the equator about 4,000 km (2,500 mi) southwest of Hawaii, 3,200 km (2,000 mi) east of the Philippines, and 1,600 km (1,000 mi) north of Papua New Guinea. The total land area is 702 sq km (271 sq mi), but the nation occupies over one million square miles of the Pacific Ocean and extends 2,900 km (1,800 mi) from east to west. It encompasses the islands of the Western and Eastern Caroline archipelagos.

Each of Micronesia's four states centers on one or more "high islands," volcanic islands with fertile soils, plentiful fresh water, and thick vegetation. Chuuk State encompasses seven island groups and has a total land area of 127.4 sq km (49.2 sq mi). Yap State has 118.1 sq km (45.6 sq mi) of land distributed among four large islands, seven small islands, and 134 atolls. Pohnpei State is comprised mainly of Pohnpei Island, the largest island in Micronesia; Pohnpei Island is 336.7 sq km (130 sq mi), and Pohnpei State has a total land mass of 345.5 sq km (133.4 sq mi). Kosrae essentially consists of one high island with a total land mass of 109.6 sq km (42.3 sq mi).

Federated States of Micronesia



Geography

Area sq km: 702; sq mi 271
 World Rank: 173rd
 Land Boundaries, km: 0
 Coastline, km: 6,112
 Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Pacific Ocean 0
 Highest: Dolohmwar (Totolom) 791
 Land Use %
 Arable Land: 5.7
 Permanent Crops: 45.7
 Forest: 21.7
 Other: 26.9

Population of Principal Cities (2000 est.)

Weno	13,900
Palikir	9,900

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Micronesia has a subtropical climate, with a year-round temperature of about 27.2°C (81°F). Precipitation is

heavy; Pohnpei receives up to 8,400 mm (330 in) of rain a year. Typhoons hit the area every year and are particularly destructive to the lower atolls. Droughts occur occasionally when El Niño moves into the western Pacific, and groundwater sometimes falls to dangerously low levels.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature: 81°F
 Average Rainfall: 170 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Marine species are the predominant life forms in Micronesia. The oceans contain numerous types of corals and other invertebrates, a profusion of fish species, whales, porpoises, sea turtles, and shellfish. The most famous shellfish species is the giant tridacna snail. Some 200 species of seabirds live on and around the islands. Few species of animals inhabit the tiny landmass; large fruit bats are the only indigenous land mammals. A few sambar deer from Asia still live on Pohnpei. There are large monitor lizards, skinks, geckoes, and numerous insects, but no

snakes. Trees include coconut, lime, tangerine, banana, betel nut, and pepper. Micronesian coconut trees have been turning sterile, which has hurt the copra industry.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005:	108,105
World Rank:	177th
Density per sq km:	177.4
% of annual growth (1999-2003):	1.9
Male %:	50.2
Female %:	49.8
Urban %:	29.4
Age Distribution %:	
0-14:	37.1
15-64:	59.9
65 and over:	3.0
Population 2025:	98,879
Birth Rate per 1,000:	25.11
Death Rate per 1,000:	4.87
Rate of Natural Increase %:	2.0
Total Fertility Rate:	3.25
Expectation of Life (years):	
Males:	67.96
Females:	71.62
Marriage Rate per 1,000:	—
Divorce Rate per 1,000:	—
Average Size of Households:	—
Induced Abortions:	—

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

The population of Micronesia is made up of nine ethnic Micronesian and Polynesian groups, with the majority of the population Micronesian. The original settlers came from the Philippines and Indonesia between 4000 and 2000 B.C.E., followed by people from Melanesia. Each state has developed its own distinctive culture.

LANGUAGES

English is the official language. People on different islands speak indigenous languages from the Malayo-Polynesian linguistic family. The eight principal languages are Yapese, Ulithian, Woleaian, Chuukese, Pohnpeian, Kosraean, Nukuoro, and Kapingamarangi.

RELIGIONS

Most Micronesians are Christian. About half are Roman Catholic, and nearly half are Protestant.

Religious Affiliations

Roman Catholic	54,000
Protestant	50,800
Other	3,200

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Micronesia was settled between 4,000 and 6,000 years ago by people traveling by canoe from Southeast Asia and the Philippines. Later immigrants came from Melanesia. These arrivals developed an elaborate social system based on clan ties and social castes that eventually centered on an imperial government on Yap. European explorers reached the islands, which they called the Caroline Islands, in the 1500s, with Spain claiming them as Spanish territory.

Germany took over Micronesia in 1898. The Japanese laid claim to the islands in 1914, holding them until the United States took control in 1947, assuming the role of trustee of the Trust Territory of the Pacific, which also included the Marshall Islands, Palau, and the Northern Mariana Islands; these island groups began moving toward independence in the 1970s.

On May 10, 1979, Yap, Pohnpei, Kosrae, and Chuuk ratified a new constitution forming the Federated States of Micronesia. The Marshall Islands, Palau, and the Northern Marianas separated from Micronesia at that time. Tosiwo Nakayama was elected as the first president of the new nation.

Micronesia became independent in 1986, when it signed a Compact of Free Association with the United States, which was allowed to maintain a military presence on the islands in exchange for economic aid and the right of Micronesians to live and work in the United States. The compact was renewed in 2003 with the promise of another 20 years of financial aid.

In the early 2000s the Micronesian government's goal was to reduce dependence on U.S. aid by developing the local economy, to expand international partnerships with Australia, Japan, and other Pacific island nations, and to combat climate change, the effects of which are particularly noticeable on low-lying islands.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1979-87	Tosiwo Nakayama
1987-91	John Haglelgam
1991-96	Bailey Olter
1996-99	Jacob Nena
1999-2003	Leo Falcam
2003-	Joseph J. Urusemal

CONSTITUTION

The 1979 constitution guarantees fundamental human rights and separates governmental powers. The president and vice president are elected by the Congress from among the four state-based senators. They serve four-year terms. The president serves as both head of state and

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head of government. An appointed cabinet advises the president and vice president.

PARLIAMENT

Micronesia has a unicameral Congress with 14 members, or senators. Each of the four states elected one senator to serve a four-year term. These four senators serve as presidential candidates, and the president and vice president are chosen from among them. The two states whose senators become president and vice president then hold special elections to refill their congressional seats. The other 10 members of congress are elected from congressional districts to two-year terms. Suffrage is universal; the voting age is 18.

POLITICAL PARTIES

There are no formal political parties in Micronesia.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Micronesia is divided into four states: Chuuk (formerly Truk), Kosrae, Pohnpei, and Yap. Each state has its own constitution, governor, and elected legislature. States set their own budgets and have considerable autonomy.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The legal system is based on laws passed by Congress, Trust Territory laws, common law, state or municipal law, and customary laws. The president appoints all judges, as assisted by Congress. The Supreme Court is the highest court in the nation. Below are trial courts and appellate courts.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Micronesia has a good human rights record and an efficient judiciary and legal system. The main problems are domestic violence, child abuse or neglect, and traditional customs that discriminate on the basis of sex and social status. The government has had limited success in changing those traditional practices.

FOREIGN POLICY

Micronesia has had close relations with the United States since the mid-20th century. The two governments entered into a Compact of Free Association in 1986, and an amended compact took effect in 2004. Under this agreement the United States will provide Micronesia with \$92 million in assistance through 2024. This money is man-

aged by a Joint Economic Management Committee, with representatives from both nations.

Micronesia joined the United Nations in 1991. It has established relations with many of the world's nations, especially its neighbors in the South Pacific, and is a strong proponent of regional cooperation.

DEFENSE

The United States has full authority and responsibility for the defense of Micronesia under the Compact of Free Association.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: —
Military Manpower Availability: —
Military Expenditures \$billion: —
as % of GDP: —
as % of central government expenditures: —
Arms Imports \$million: —
Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

Micronesia depends on foreign aid for most of its income. Between 1986 and 2001 the nation received about \$2 billion from the United States under the Compact of Free Association. Grants in 2002 were worth \$100 million, more than one-third of the nation's GDP that year. Grants go to six sectors: education, health, infrastructure, public-sector capacity building, private-sector development, and environment. Because of the amount of assistance received, Micronesia has a light tax burden and can maintain a large trade deficit. It currently carries a large external debt because of loans taken out in the early 1990s against future Compact of Free Association disbursements.

The government is trying to develop the economy to create more financial independence. Fishing is important: Micronesia earns over \$20 million a year from selling fishing rights to foreign commercial fishing fleets, accounting for nearly 30 percent of revenues; exports of fish to Japan account for nearly all national export revenue. Tourism has potential because of the pleasant climate, excellent scuba diving conditions, and World War II battle sites, but lack of infrastructure and the nation's remote location have prevented large numbers of tourists from descending on the islands. Manufacturing is confined to two garment factories on Yap.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$million: 277
GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 2,000
GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 1.8
GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: -0.1

Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 50
 Industry: 4
 Services: 46
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 43
 Government Consumption: 22
 Gross Domestic Investment: —
 Foreign Trade \$million: Exports: 22
 Imports: 149
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: —
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: —

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
—	—	—	—	—

Finance

National Currency: U.S. Dollar
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency million: 22.5
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: —
 Total External Debt \$million: 53.1
 Debt Service Ratio %: —
 Balance of Payments \$million: —
 International Reserves SDRs \$million: 87.8
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
 1.0

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 114.9
 per capita \$: 922.80
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: —

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: 1 October–30 September
 Revenues \$million: 161
 Expenditures \$million: 160
 Budget Surplus \$million: 1
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 50
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: —
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: —
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: —
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: —
 Total Farmland % of land area: 5.7
 Livestock: Cattle 000: 13.9
 Chickens 000: 185
 Pigs 000: 32
 Sheep 000: —
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters 000: —
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 20.4

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: —
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: —

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: —
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: —
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: —
 Net Energy Imports % of use: —
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: —
 Production kW-hr million: 192
 Consumption kW-hr million: 178.6
 Coal Reserves tons billion: —
 Production tons million: —
 Consumption tons million: —
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
 Production cubic feet billion: —
 Consumption cubic feet billion: —
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
 Production barrels 000 per day: —
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: —
 Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$million: 149
 Exports \$million: 22
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —
 Balance of Trade \$million: —

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
United States %	—	—
Australia %	—	—
Japan %	—	—
Guam %	—	—

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 240
 Paved %: 17.5
 Automobiles: —
 Trucks and Buses: —
 Railroad: Track Length km: —
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: —
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 2
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 1.55
 Airports: 6
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: —
 Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 18
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 17
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 6

Communications

Telephones 000: 10.1
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.00
 Cellular Telephones 000: 1.8
 Personal Computers 000: —
 Internet Hosts per million people: —
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 56

ENVIRONMENT

Thus far, Micronesia does not suffer from major environmental problems. Overfishing and ocean pollution are becoming concerns, however, and global climate change is of great interest to the islanders, who would face the loss of much of their land mass if sea levels were to rise substantially.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 21.7
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: -1
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 0
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: —

LIVING CONDITIONS

Most Micronesians now live in Western-style homes, but there are still some traditional houses and community buildings made of mahogany, with roofs of thatched nipa palm. Yap is the state that has clung most strongly to traditions, and many people there still live in traditional homes. Electricity and running water are in short supply, and most people supplement the public water supply by catching rainwater around their homes. Transportation between islands is by air or boat; most islands have small airstrips. The larger islands have extensive systems of unpaved roads. Public transportation is by shared or private taxis. The cost of living is relatively high owing to the isolated nature of the islands and the fact that all consumer goods must be imported. There is an increasing disparity between rich and poor, as some officials and businessmen manage to secure the lion's share of U.S. aid. More than one-quarter of Micronesians live below the poverty line.

HEALTH

Micronesia has benefited from U.S. involvement in its health-care system. The U.S. Public Health Service provides doctors to the state hospitals in each of the four states, and American volunteer physicians visit the islands regularly to perform specialized surgeries. Micronesians are gradually being trained in medicine through the Medical Officer Training Program in Pohnpei. Some

emergency cases are flown to hospitals in Guam and Hawaii. As a result of this comprehensive system, health is fairly good, with a life expectancy of over 69 years and infant mortality of about 3 percent. Fertility is relatively high, with each woman bearing more than three children in 2004. Typhoid is a common disease.

Health

Number of Physicians: 64
 Number of Dentists: 14
 Number of Nurses: 410
 Number of Pharmacists: —
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 60
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 30.21
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: —
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 6.5
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 143
 HIV Infected % of adults: —
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 92
 Measles: 91
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 28
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 94

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Breadfruit, bananas, coconut, cassava, and seafood are the staples of the Micronesian diet. The residents of Chuuk make a dish called *oppot*, which is breadfruit layered with banana leaves and buried in the ground to ferment for months. People in Pohnpei eat yams and dogs. The people of Yap chew betel nuts constantly. *Sakau* is a drink made from the roots of pepper plants; it has a narcotic effect and is popular on Pohnpei.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: —
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: —

STATUS OF WOMEN

Women have equal rights under the law; they can own property, receive equal pay for equal work, attend all levels of education and work in all areas, and have been increasingly successful in private business. The National Women's Advisory Council lobbies the government to improve women's rights, and the Department of Health, Education, and Social Affairs has a Women's Interest Section that works toward the same end.

Spousal abuse and domestic violence are serious problems. Few women report abuse or pursue prosecu-

tion owing to family pressure. Unmarried women are often assaulted and are presumed to invite assault by living alone. Families have traditionally handled cases of abuse internally, but increasing urbanization is slowly changing this system, which has yet to be replaced by governmental programs.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 0
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: —
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: —

WORK

Micronesians traditionally provided for themselves through subsistence farming and fishing, but the importance of agriculture has declined. A small share of the formal labor force works in agriculture, producing copra, bananas, betel nuts, cassava, and sweet potatoes. Still, about half the population works in agriculture to some extent, and local agriculture accounts for nearly two-thirds of food consumed. Fishing is very important and accounts for 85 percent of export revenue, mainly from exports of fish to Japan. Some Micronesians are employed in the tourist industry, guiding scuba divers and deep-sea fishermen. The national and state governments employ two-thirds of the nation's workforce. Unemployment is fairly high, at 16 percent in 1999.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: —
 Female Participation Rate %: —
 Labor by Sector %:
 Government: 66
 Other: 34
 Unemployment %: 16

EDUCATION

The school system has grown tremendously since the 1960s, when U.S. Peace Corps volunteers served as the first teachers, and as of 2000 many teachers were Micronesian. Micronesian children are required to attend school through eighth grade, and most do. In 2000 about 32 percent of those eligible attended secondary school. About 18 percent of students went on to higher education, attending institutions such as the College of Micronesia, which has campuses in all four states and receives assistance from the United States. Some students go to the University of Guam or to U.S. colleges. Most

current government leaders were educated at American universities.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 89
 Male %: 91
 Female %: 88
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: —
 First Level: Primary schools: —
 Teachers: —
 Students: —
 Student-Teacher Ratio: —
 Net Enrollment Ratio: —
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: —
 Teachers: —
 Students: —
 Student-Teacher Ratio: —
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 32
 Third Level: Institutions: —
 Teachers: —
 Students: —
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: —
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 7.0

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The development of science and technology in Micronesia has been hampered by lack of infrastructure and unreliable electrical supplies. There are perhaps 10,000 telephone lines in the nation and around 2,000 cellular telephones; cellular service is available on Yap, Pohnpei, and Kosrae. About 6,000 people were using the Internet in 2002. The islands are connected by shortwave radio lines, satellite ground stations, and some coaxial and fiber-optic cable. The government has plans to develop deep-seabed mining techniques. The Micronesia Maritime and Fisheries Academy in Yap trains high school and college students in fishery-management techniques.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: —
 Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

Most Micronesians get their news from radio. Each state has its own radio station, and the Baptist Church also operates a station. There are cable television broadcasts available on Chuuk and Pohnpei, and Yap has a state-run television station. There are no daily newspapers. The government publishes the *National Union* every two weeks, and the *Island Tribune* is a private weekly newspaper.

Media

Daily Newspapers: —
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: —
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets 000: 2
 per 1,000: 20

CULTURE

Each state has its own cultural traditions that have been developed for centuries. Dancing and singing are an important part of indigenous culture. On Yap, people use loud and colorful dances to tell stories and legends, record history, and entertain themselves. Men and women dance separately, often chanting in unison. Ocean navigation has been a part of Micronesian culture for thousands of years. People still build single-outrigger canoes out of hollowed breadfruit logs and larger oceanic vessels out of planks bound with coconut husk fibers.

Micronesians historically used shells, clams, beads, and other objects as units of currency. The people of Yap had the most distinctive form of currency: They carved giant stone discs with holes in the center (*rai*) and used these as money. Many of the stones were too big to carry, so their owners simply left them in place on the ground. Many can still be seen today, though the Yapese no longer use them as money.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Micronesian myths are related to those of neighboring areas, including other Pacific islands and Southeast Asia. Ocean navigation is a common theme. Some myths surround the ruins of Nan Madol, on Pohnpei, a city that once housed what may have been a royal civilization, with kings and sorcerers. The people of Mortlock used to carve wooden masks to ward off evil spirits and protect soldiers during battle.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Micronesians spend much of their free time visiting relatives. Clan celebrations involve dancing, singing, feasting, and the consumption of substances such as betel nut or the narcotic drink *sakau*. Visitors to the islands have numerous possibilities for recreation, including scuba diving, exploring World War II wrecks above and below the ocean, and lying on the beach.

ETIQUETTE

Micronesians take their cultural traditions very seriously and appreciate when visitors do the same. They are usually friendly but shy. On Yap it is impolite to take someone's photograph without asking first. In some places there are rules about appropriate clothing.

FAMILY LIFE

Micronesia society is based on clans, which can extend across islands. Clan heads can trace their ancestry back to the original settlers of Micronesia. Descent passes through the maternal line in most of the nation; on Yap, it passes through the paternal line. Most people live with or near many close and not-so-close relatives, including people "adopted" into the family. Relatives depend on one another for support and are expected to help one another when they can, either with money or by helping with chores such as home building, laundry, or child care.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Though Western attire has made some inroads in Micronesia, many residents still wear traditional clothing. The people of Yap have clung to traditions more than the other states. The men there often wear a kind of loincloth called a *thu'u*, and the women wear long grass skirts. Traditional costumes are especially important during festivals. In some areas there are laws prohibiting the wearing of Western clothing such as T-shirts, baseball caps, shirts, and pants.

SPORTS

Micronesia formed a National Olympic Committee in 1996, and it was recognized by the International Olympic Committee the following year. In preparation for the application, the nation organized numerous national games. The first Federated States of Micronesia Games were held

on Pohnpei in 1995, when over 900 athletes and coaches competed in 12 sports. The nation's plan is to develop a junior sport program that will develop athletes who can represent the country in the future. The nation is particularly interested in cultivating female athletes, who are currently in very short supply. Popular sports include basketball, tennis, softball, baseball, volleyball, wrestling, weightlifting, swimming, and athletics.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1898** Germany makes the Caroline Islands a German colony.
- 1914** Japan occupies the nation.
- 1939** Through 1945, many World War II battles are fought in Micronesia.
- 1947** The United States takes over administration of Micronesia as part of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands.
- 1979** Kosrae, Pohnpei, Chuuk, and Yap set up the Federated States of Micronesia and ratify a constitution.
- 1986** Micronesia and the United States enter into a Compact of Free Association, under which the United States provides economic aid and is allowed to establish military bases on the islands.
- 1991** Micronesia joins the United Nations.
- 2002** Typhoon Chata'an devastates Chuuk.
- 2003** Micronesia and the Marshall Islands renew the Compact of Free Association, which will bring in several hundred million dollars over the following twenty years.
- 2004** Typhoon Sudel devastates Yap, destroying most of the island's infrastructure.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Government of the Federated States of Micronesia
<http://www.fsmsgov.org/>
- College of Micronesia-FSM
<http://www.comfsm.fm/>

MOLDOVA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Moldova

ABBREVIATION

MD

CAPITAL

Chişinău

HEAD OF STATE

President Vladimir Voronin (from 2001)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Vasile Tarlev (from 2001)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Parliamentary democracy

POPULATION

4,455,421 (2005)

AREA

33,843 sq km (13,067 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Romanian/Moldovan, Ukrainian, Russian

LANGUAGES

Moldovan, Russian, Gagauz

RELIGION

Eastern Orthodox

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Leu

NATIONAL FLAG

Three equal vertical bands of blue (hoist side), yellow, and red, with the national emblem in the center

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A gold Roman eagle outlined in black with a red beak and talons. It carries a yellow cross in its beak, a green olive branch in its right talon, and a yellow scepter in its left talon. On its breast is a shield divided horizontally, red over blue, with a stylized ox head, star, rose, and crescent—all in yellow and outlined in black.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Our Tongue”

NATIONAL HOLIDAY

August 27 (Independence Day)

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

August 27, 1991

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

August 27, 1994

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Moldova borders Romania to the west and Ukraine to the northeast and south. The richly diverse topography ranges from steppes in the north and south to forested uplands in the central region. Moldova's highest point, in the central Balti Plain, is Mount Balanesti, at 1,411 ft (430 m). Broadly hilly, the Balti Plain is intersected by a multitude of rivers and streams. The most important rivers in Moldova are the Nistru, Dniester, and Prut.

Moldova is richly fertile, with almost three-quarters of the land covered in a very fertile soil called chernozem.

Land Boundaries, km: Romania 450; Ukraine 939

Coastline, km: 0

Elevation Extremes meters:

Lowest: Dniester River 2

Highest: Dealul Balanesti 430

Land Use %

Arable Land: 55.3

Permanent Crops: 10.8

Forest: 9.9

Other: 24.0

Population of Principal Cities (2003 est.)

Bălti	145,900
Chişinău	662,400
Tighina	125,000
Tiraspol	185,000

Geography

Area sq km: 33,843; sq mi 13,067

World Rank: 135th

Moldova



CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Moldova's climate is essentially continental, with long, warm summers and dry, mild winters. Long spells of dry weather are not uncommon.

Average rainfall is greater in the north (600 mm; 23.6 in) than in the south (400 mm; 15.7 in). However, heavy rainfall in early summer and late fall has been responsible for extensive soil erosion and river silting.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature

January: 24°F

July: 68°F

Average Rainfall: 22.8 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Most of Moldova's native plants and animals have been displaced by the dense human population and killed off by chemical fertilizers, pesticides, and the overclearing of forests. Most of the flora now present are cultivated grapevines, wheat and vegetable fields, fruit trees, and sunflowers. There are a few wild animals left, including deer, foxes, wolves, wild boars, and badgers, but for the most part Moldova lacks its former biodiversity.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 4,455,421

World Rank: 117th

Density per sq km: 128.8

% of annual growth (1999-2003): -0.29

Male %: 47.6

Female %: 52.4

Urban %: 46.1

Age Distribution %: 0-14: 20.6

15-64: 69.1

65 and over: 10.3

Population 2025: 4,780,000

Birth Rate per 1,000: 14.81

Death Rate per 1,000: 12.76

Rate of Natural Increase %: 0.0

Total Fertility Rate: 1.78

Expectation of Life (years): Males 60.88

Females 69.39

Marriage Rate per 1,000: 6.0

Divorce Rate per 1,000: 3.5

Average Size of Households: 3.4

Induced Abortions: 15,739

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

In 1998 the largest nationality in the republic—ethnic Romanians, or Moldovans—numbered 2,795,000 persons, accounting for 64.5 percent of the population. The other major nationalities were Ukrainians, numbering about 600,000 (14 percent); Russians, 562,000 (13 percent); Gagauz, 153,000 (4 percent); Bulgarians, 88,000 (2 percent); and Jews, 66,000 (2 percent). There were also smaller numbers of Belarusians, Poles, Roma (Gypsies), and Germans. In Transnistria, a region between the Dniester and Bug Rivers that twice attempted secession in the early 1990s, on the other hand, ethnic Romanians accounted for only 40 percent of the population in 1989,

followed by Ukrainians (28 percent), Russians (25 percent), Bulgarians (2 percent), and Gagauz (1 percent).

LANGUAGES

The Moldovan dialect of Romanian, spoken by the majority of the people, was considered by the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union an impediment to control, and its use was banned. Stalin justified the creation of the Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic by claiming that a distinct "Moldovan" language indicated that "Moldovans" were a separate nationality from the Romanians in Romania. In order to give greater credence to this claim, in 1940 Stalin imposed the Cyrillic alphabet on "Moldovan" to make it look more like Russian and less like Romanian.

On August 31, 1989, the Supreme Soviet of Moldova made Moldovan written in the Latin alphabet the official language of the Moldavian SSR. This was confirmed in the constitution adopted August 27, 1994. In 2002 the Moldovan government suggested the possibility of increasing the use of Russian in schools and making Russian an official language, but the citizenry was vehemently opposed to the idea. In 2004 Transnistria closed some schools that were using the Latin script, favoring Cyrillic and Russian instead.

RELIGIONS

Citizens in independent Moldova have much greater religious freedom than they did under the Soviet regime. In 2000 over 98 percent of the population was estimated to belong to the Eastern Orthodox faith.

Moldova also has a Uniate minority, mainly among ethnic Ukrainians, although the Soviet government declared the Uniate Church illegal in 1946 and forcibly united it with the Russian Orthodox Church.

Despite the Soviet government's suppression and ongoing harassment, Moldova's Jews managed to retain their religious identity. About a dozen Jewish newspapers were started in the early 1990s; there were six Jewish communities of worship throughout the country. As of 2000 about 1.5 percent of Moldovans were Jewish.

Religious Affiliations

Eastern Orthodox	4,366,000
Jewish	66,800
Baptist and Other	22,200

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

During the 15th century the region that is now Moldova became a vassal state of the Ottoman Empire. For the

next 300 years it suffered repeated invasions by Turks, Crimean Tatars, and Russians.

In 1792 Moldova, then known as Bessarabia, was absorbed into the Russian Empire. During World War I political leaders in Bessarabia declared independence.

In 1922 the Soviet government established the Moldavian Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic. In June 1941 German and Romanian troops attacked the Moldavian SSR. Three years later Soviet forces reoccupied Bessarabia and Transnistria. With the restoration of Soviet power in Moldavia, government policy was to both Russify the population and destroy all remaining ties with Romania. The government's harsh regime, whose actions included requisitioning the harvest, induced a severe famine. The situation led to deep resentment, which led in turn to brutal suppression, in which thousands of people were deported or killed.

The resultant hostility continued for another 30 years, until Mikhail Gorbachev introduced his policies of glasnost and perestroika. In this climate of openness, political self-assertion escalated in the Moldavian SSR in 1988. Large demonstrations by ethnic Romanians led to the designation of Romanian as the official language. However, opposition was growing to the increasing influence of ethnic Romanians, especially in Transnistria, home to many Slavic-speaking minorities, and in the south.

During the 1991 coup d'état in Moscow, Soviet military commanders sought to impose a state of emergency in Moldova, but the Moldovan government resisted and declared its support for President Yeltsin. On August 27, following the coup's collapse, Moldova declared its independence from the Soviet Union. At the same time the Gagauz (Christian Turks) declared a separate republic in the south, while Slavs proclaimed the Dnestr Moldavian Republic in Transnistria, with Igor Smirnov as president. In this seething cauldron 50,000 armed Moldovan nationalists marched on Transnistria, where a civil war was averted only by the intervention of the Russian 14th Army.

In 1993 a referendum on reunification with Romania was defeated by an overwhelming margin. In 1995 an accord was reached with the Transdnestr rebels, according them a special status within the republic. Also in 1995 Moldova was admitted to the Council of Europe. In the 1997 presidential election Petru Lucinschi won with 54 percent of the vote; he then named Ion Ciubuc prime minister.

The 2001 election results came as a surprise to many observers. Slightly more than half of the voters sided with the Communist Party, which resulted in the election of a clear Communist majority in parliament and a Communist president, Vladimir Voronin. Voronin's government tried to reduce poverty, improve the social safety net, and privatize industries. In 2002 the government attempted to make Russian an official language and increase its use

in schools but backed down after massive protests. Communists kept their majority in the 2003 elections, but lost the biggest race, for mayor of Chişinău.

Transnistria continued to be a source of dissension. The government spent the early 2000s in negotiations with the region and with Russia but failed to come to any acceptable arrangement. Transnistria has passed its own laws designating Moldovans as "foreigners" and subjecting them to the same restrictions as citizens of other nations. As of 2004 Russia had refused to withdraw from the region until it and Moldova resolved their conflict, but Moldova and Transnistria had broken off negotiations after a dispute over the use of Latin script in the region's schools.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1990–97	Mircea Snegur
1997–2001	Petru Lucinschi
2001–	Vladimir Voronin

CONSTITUTION

The 1994 constitution, the first after independence, describes Moldova as a parliamentary presidential republic based "on political pluralism and the preservation, development, and expression of ethnic and linguistic identity."

Executive power is vested in the president, who is elected by Parliament to a maximum of two four-year terms. The president nominates the prime minister and the Council of Ministers, whose members are subject to approval by the unicameral Parliament, whose members are elected by proportional representation for four-year terms. Passage of a no-confidence motion in Parliament forces the resignation of the Council of Ministers.

Other constitutional clauses assert Moldova's permanent neutrality and proscribe the stationing of foreign troops on national territory. The 1994 constitution also authorized special status for the Gagauz region and the Transnistrian region, where separatists are active. The former has a regional executive leader called the *basbkan*; the latter has its own bicameral legislature and president, but the situation is complicated by the presence of Russian troops.

PARLIAMENT

Moldova is a democracy with a unicameral legislature, the Moldovan Parliament. Following the earlier Soviet model, the Moldovan Parliament maintains a Presidium, which performs legislative functions when the larger body is not in session. Parliament has 101 members di-

rectly elected for four-year terms. Parliamentary leadership consists of a chair and two deputy chairs elected by the delegates. The work of the legislature is undertaken by 15 permanent committees.

In 2000 Parliament cancelled direct, popular elections of the president, and Parliament now selects the president itself.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Moldova has several substantial political parties and alliances and numerous small parties. The ruling party is the Communist Party of the Republic of Moldova (PCRM). The Democratic Moldova Bloc consists of the Democratic Party, Our Moldova Alliance (formerly the Braghis Alliance), and the Social Liberal Party. There is also a Christian-Democratic People's Party (PPCD).

In 1998 the reestablished Communist Party won the largest number of seats; in February 2001 the Communist Party increased its number of seats from 40 to 71, giving it a clear majority. Our Moldova Alliance held 19 seats and the PPCD 11.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The Republic of Moldova is segmented administratively into 32 *raioane*, each of which is governed by a locally elected council. In addition, Chişinău (the national capital), Bălţi, and Bender are defined as municipalities and directly administered by the central government. Transnistria, officially referred to in Moldova as Stînga Nistrului, and Găgăuzia are classified as semiautonomous territorial units.

In 1991 Moldova considered the reorganization of local government and intended to reintroduce a system of counties (*judete*) and communes. Under the plan the counties would centralize functions carried out by the smaller *raioane*, with local executives being elected directly. However, this effort was halted by Transnistria's and Găgăuzia's secession.

LEGAL SYSTEM

Moldova's judicial system is based on Soviet-era models. The most powerful legal institution is the General Prosecution Office. The prosecutor general is responsible for directing investigations and prosecuting criminal cases as well as administering the judicial system.

Moldova's legal framework is based on a network of local courts and higher-level appeals courts, with the highest being the Supreme Court (Curte Suprema). The Constitutional Court reviews legislative acts and governmental decisions. There is only a limited tradition within the judicial system of judicial independence. The govern-

ment has launched reform procedures, but corruption and a poorly organized administration continue to hamper these efforts.

HUMAN RIGHTS

The 1994 constitution codified a number of universal human rights, including the rights to private property and individual freedom of movement, expression, and assembly. However, the constitution still contains language restricting the activities of political parties and the media. Although there is no overt government censorship of Moldova's press, journalists complain that editors encourage them to soften their criticisms of government officials for fear of retribution. After pressure from various European institutions, Parliament liberalized the law.

The Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of National Security were investigated in 1994 as to whether they had exceeded their legal authority. The police are believed to regularly beat prisoners, and there have been reports of police monitoring political figures and searching their belongings illegally. Calumny laws have restricted press freedom. There are documented restrictions of the freedoms of association and religion. Human trafficking in women and girls as sex slaves is a serious problem.

Because the security forces and the government of the semiautonomous "Transnistrian Republic" are so closely connected, human rights abuses in Transnistria are more flagrant.

FOREIGN POLICY

Moldova joined the Commonwealth of Independent States in 1994 and the Council of Europe in 1995. The nation also belongs to the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation's (NATO) Partnership for Peace, the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the World Trade Organization, the North Atlantic Cooperation Council, and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. In 1998 Moldova helped form GUAM, a regional agreement that also includes Georgia, Ukraine, and Azerbaijan. Moldova's activities with GUAM include information exchange, border control, and projects related to energy, trade, and transportation, but it has refused to participate in any mutual defense initiatives suggested by the group. The country is sensitive to terrorism and supports American efforts in the Middle East, having contributed peacekeepers to provide humanitarian assistance in Iraq.

DEFENSE

Moldova's government originally conceived of a force of volunteers, but when fighting erupted in 1991 between

the central government and supporters of separatist regions, full-scale mobilization was ordered, and Moldova's military was temporarily expanded to meet the demands of the Transnistrian conflict. The nation now requires all males to do twelve months of military service when they turn 18. The military consists of ground forces and an air force.

Moldova has accepted the arms restrictions imposed on the former Soviet Union, limiting its possession of military equipment and destroying weapons that exceed the limit. It acceded to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty in 1994 and the Biological Weapons Convention in 2004.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 11,000
 Military Manpower Availability: 1,186,818
 Military Expenditures \$million: 9.5
 as % of GDP: 0.4
 as % of central government expenditures: 1.8
 Arms Imports \$million: —
 Arms Exports \$million: 5

ECONOMY

Moldova is the poorest country in Europe. It enjoys a favorable climate and good farmland but has no major mineral deposits. As a result the economy depends heavily on agriculture, featuring fruits, vegetables, wine, and tobacco. Moldova must import all of its supplies of oil, coal, and natural gas, largely from Russia. Energy shortages contributed to sharp production declines after the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1991. As part of an ambitious reform effort, Moldova introduced a convertible currency, freed all prices, stopped issuing preferential credits to state enterprises, backed steady land privatization, removed export controls, and freed interest rates. Yet these efforts could not offset the impact of political and economic difficulties, both internal and regional. In 1998 the economic troubles of Russia, Moldova's leading trade partner, were a major cause of the 8.6 percent drop in gross domestic product (GDP). In 1999 GDP fell again, by 4.4 percent; exports were down, and energy supplies continued to be erratic.

Beginning in 2000 GDP began to grow, and in 2004 growth was 8 percent. The currency finally stabilized in late 2004, after several years of fluctuation. The government has been working to create a viable free-market economy and has encouraged the privatization of state industries. Unfortunately, several large state enterprises have yet to be privatized, and political uncertainty and lack of law enforcement have discouraged foreign investors. In 2004 imports continued to increase more rapidly than exports, and the cost of fuel outpaced export income.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 7.792
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 1,800
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 3.8
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 4.0
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 21
 Industry: 27
 Services: 52
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 89
 Government Consumption: 18
 Gross Domestic Investment: 17.2
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 0.79
 Imports: 1.34
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 2.2
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 30.7

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
203.2	266.8	292.9	308.4	344.6

Finance

National Currency: Moldovan Leu (MDL)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = MDL 13.9449
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 4.42
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: —
 Total External Debt \$billion: 1.515
 Debt Service Ratio %: 6.58
 Balance of Payments \$million: –135
 International Reserves SDRs \$million: 302
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 11.6

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 141.69
 per capita \$: 33.30
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 110.8

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$million: 474.8
 Expenditures \$million: 443.4
 Budget Surplus \$million: 31.4
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: 20.0

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 21
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: –0.7
 Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares: 22.5
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 14.1
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 2.8
 Total Farmland % of land area: 55.3
 Livestock: Cattle million: 0.4
 Chickens million: 14
 Pigs 000: 500
 Sheep 000: 830
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters 000: 56.8
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 2.33

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 309
Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 17

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 6
Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 3.14
Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 864
Net Energy Imports % of use: 98.0
Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 1
Production kW-hr billion: 3.9
Consumption kW-hr billion: 4.6
Coal Reserves tons billion: —
Production tons 000: —
Consumption tons 000: 200
Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
Production cubic feet billion: —
Consumption cubic feet billion: 78
Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
Production barrels 000 per day: —
Consumption barrels 000 per day: 33
Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 1.34
Exports \$billion: 0.79
Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 13.6
Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 13.0
Balance of Trade \$million: –135

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Ukraine %	22.0	7.1
Russia %	13.0	39.0
Germany %	9.7	7.1
Italy %	8.3	10.4
Romania %	7.0	11.4
Belarus %	—	5.2
United States %	—	4.3

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 12,657
Paved %: 87.0
Automobiles: 268,900
Trucks and Buses: 5,700
Railroad: Track Length km: 1,138
Passenger-km million: 355
Freight-km billion: 2.75
Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 1
Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 1.1
Airports: 24
Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 161
Length of Waterways km: 424

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 18
Number of Tourists from 000: 52
Tourist Receipts \$million: 47
Tourist Expenditures \$million: 86

Communications

Telephones 000: 706.9
Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.02
Cellular Telephones 000: 338.2
Personal Computers 000: 77
Internet Hosts per million people: 2,690
Internet Users per 1,000 people: 34

ENVIRONMENT

Poor agricultural techniques adopted during the era of Soviet control have led to a variety of negative environmental results. The overuse of fertilizers and pesticides (including DDT and other banned substances) has caused widespread soil contamination and groundwater pollution. The continuing destruction of forests has led to topsoil erosion and loss of biodiversity. Moldova has entered into several initiatives to fix environmental damage; it is party to treaties on air pollution, biodiversity, climate change (including the Kyoto Protocol), desertification, endangered species, hazardous wastes, and protection of the ozone layer.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 9.9
Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: 1
Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 1
Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 1.54

LIVING CONDITIONS

Living conditions are not particularly good for most Moldovans. Some 80 percent of the population lives below the poverty line. Water supplies are unreliable. Infrastructure does not work efficiently, and people can have difficulty accomplishing daily tasks such as buying groceries or banking. The economy is based entirely on cash, with no one using credit cards. Public transportation is usually crowded, while fuel is too expensive to be purchased by ordinary people. Many people cannot buy clothing or other necessary items.

Transnistria is especially plagued by poverty. Two-thirds of the citizens are elderly and miss the social security of Soviet days. The currency there is nearly worthless, wages are especially low, and the borders are guarded by

soldiers with guns, who consider Moldovans to be foreigners and require them to register with police when they enter the region.

HEALTH

The Soviets built health-care facilities when Moldova was part of the USSR, but since independence the system has fallen into disrepair. Life expectancy in Moldova is low for Europe, 65 years on average, which is in fact lower than it was under Soviet rule, and the infant mortality rate is relatively high. Alcoholism is common, as are illnesses brought on by exposure to herbicides, pesticides, and other forms of pollution. Cardiovascular and respiratory diseases and cancer are the leading causes of death.

Health

Number of Physicians: 11,520
 Number of Dentists: 1,326
 Number of Nurses: 26,765
 Number of Pharmacists: 2,621
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 269
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: 5.9
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 41
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 36
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 5.1
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 18
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.2
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 97
 Measles: 94
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 68
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 92

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Moldovans are not renowned for their cooking. Soft cornmeal mush called *mamaliga* appears at most meals. People usually eat their mush with Turkish kebabs or with fried pork topped with a fried egg. People also eat Jewish-style stews and Russian dumplings in sauce. Meat and vegetables are commonly boiled until they are very soft. Baklava is a popular dessert. Moldova's wine is its one culinary claim to fame; the nation has some of the best vineyards and vintages in Europe, and wine tasting is a popular activity.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 10.8
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,730
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 193.1
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 163.2

STATUS OF WOMEN

Spousal violence is a serious problem in the country. According to a women's rights group, one-half of women are victims of domestic violence. Women abused by their husbands have the right to press charges, and husbands convicted of such abuse may face prison sentences of up to six months. There is a woman's shelter in Chişinău established by the first lady and the mayor. A private organization operates a confidential service to support abused spouses, including a hot line for battered women.

Trafficking in women is a serious problem, as in many other countries in Eastern Europe. Moldova is a source country for women and girls who accept job offers in other countries as dancers, models, or nannies. The traffickers then take their passports and force them into sexual bondage or sell them in Italy, Israel, Turkey, Greece, and the Middle East.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 16
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.01
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 54.6

WORK

Moldova has a highly educated population but very few good jobs available. About one-fourth of Moldovans have left the country since independence, hoping to have better luck finding work abroad than they did at home; they typically take unskilled jobs, regardless of their education level. Many of those who remain in Moldova would also leave if they had the funds. Young people without hope of work are vulnerable to con artists who promise them work overseas; women and girls get turned into sex slaves, and men and women have been known to sell their kidneys. In 1998, of the workers who remained in Moldova, 40 percent were employed in agriculture, 14 percent in industry, and 46 percent in services.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 1,383,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 48.3
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 40
 Industry: 14
 Services: 46
 Unemployment %: 8.0

EDUCATION

Prior to independence the Moldavian SSR's education system had made substantial progress toward universal

accessibility. By 2003 the adult literacy rate had risen to 99 percent.

Under Moldova's postindependence education system, 10 years of basic education are required. In 1992 the proportion of students going on to higher education institutions had risen to just under 2 percent; by 1995 Moldova had 10 institutions of higher education, four of which had been established since independence. As of the early 2000s the education system had become strong and effective at producing an educated populace, including a large number of people with college degrees.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 99.1
 Male %: 99.6
 Female %: 98.7
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 10.1
 First Level: Primary Schools: 1,700
 Teachers: 11,087
 Students: 215,442
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 19.4
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 79.0
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: (included in first level)
 Teachers: 31,004
 Students: 387,943
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 13.2
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 69.0
 Third Level: Institutions: 20
 Teachers: 7,236
 Students: 114,238
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 29.8
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 4.9

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Moldova's Academy of Sciences provides good training in physics, electronics, computer science, engineering, and other technical and scientific fields. The nation has many people who are well trained in science and technology. Unfortunately, there are very few openings in skilled jobs, such that they usually do not have the opportunity to use their abilities in employment.

The country's telephone system is outmoded and inadequate, especially outside the capital city, and people must wait long periods of time to have lines hooked up. Cellular telephones are becoming more common. In 2002 about 150,000 people were using the Internet.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 324
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 0.81
 High-Tech Exports \$million: 7.57
 Patent Applications by Residents: 437

MEDIA

The Moldovan constitution guarantees freedom of the press, but Moldovan laws place strict limits on that freedom; defaming or insulting the state is illegal. Many of the newspapers sold in the country are Moldovan translations of Russian papers, though there are some publications produced by Moldovans in the local language. Political parties publish their own magazines and newspapers and typically criticize the government, though with some caution. Basa Press, an independent news service, was established in November 1992. Other news services include Interlic and Moldova Azi.

As of 2003 Moldovans could access more than 20 radio stations and about 30 television stations, many of which broadcast from Romania or Russia. Moldova One is the state television station, and Radio Moldova is the state radio station; both are run by Teleradio-Moldova.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 6
 Total Circulation 000: 660
 Circulation per 1,000: 153
 Books Published: 1,166
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers million: 3.38
 per 1,000: 758
 Television sets million: 1.3
 per 1,000: 297

CULTURE

Moldova's culture comes from a combination of Russian, Romanian, and Turkish influences, all processed through years of Soviet socialism. The country has many medieval monasteries, fortresses, churches, and war memorials, decorated with art such as gilded icons, crosses, and frescoes depicting popular medieval Christian themes. Moldovans like to read; Moldovan translations of Russian works of literature sell well. A park in Chişinău has a tree-lined lane decorated with busts of writers and public figures. There are some good history and art museums in Chişinău.

The republic has yet to develop a firm sense of national culture. The main public holiday is Independence Day on August 27, but the people of Transnistria do not agree that this is a day for celebration.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 1,410
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: 27,200

Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts national currency 000: 300
 Number of Cinemas: 48
 Seating Capacity: 28,800
 Annual Attendance: 100,000

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Folk dancing is extremely popular; people dress in old-fashioned embroidered tunics, dirndls, and bonnets to dance in circles and lines to traditional music played on violins, bagpipes, flutes, and panpipes.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Moldova does not have a wide range of recreational possibilities. There are few cities, and the restaurants are typically not very attractive. There are some bars and cafés in Chişinău, but they have trouble making ends meet. Cities also offer the possibility of taking music or dance lessons and other culturally enriching activities. Rural areas have far fewer amenities and greater poverty, which limits recreation. Drinking wine is the most popular activity; people who are especially interested in wine can visit the nation's vineyards.

ETIQUETTE

Moldovans are typically friendly people, though visitors complain that hotel and restaurant staff can be surly. Tipping 10 to 15 percent is expected. When visiting a person's home it is polite to bring a gift; fresh flowers and wine are popular. It is typical for Moldovans to arrive slightly late to events. Many people remove their shoes upon entering a home.

FAMILY LIFE

Traditionally, Moldovan women have stayed home to raise their children while their husbands go out to work, but economic realities have recently forced many women to work if they can find employment. The economic and political difficulties of the country are passed on to families; in 1996, 52 percent of marriages ended in divorce. Many of Moldova's young people have no hopes of finding jobs, marrying, and raising families at home. This has led many young women to offer themselves as "mail-order brides" over the Internet.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Moldovans dress casually but conservatively. People dress up for formal occasions or workplaces, but ordinarily men do not need to wear coats and ties.

SPORTS

Moldova has some sporting facilities and clubs where people can play tennis, swim, and engage in other activities. Sport dance is a popular sport, and Moldovans do well in international competitions. Moldova has some good boxers. Many people like to play soccer, and the country has a national team.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1991** The Republic of Moldova is proclaimed a sovereign state on August 27.
 Moldova joins the Commonwealth of Independent States.
 Mircea Snegur wins the first presidential elections.
- 1992** Moldova becomes a member of the United Nations.
 War breaks out with secessionist groups in the Transnistria region in February.
 In July a cease-fire is established, as overseen by Russian peacekeeping troops.
- 1994** The anticommunist Agrarian Democratic Party (ADP) dominates Moldova's first multiparty parliamentary elections, and Prime Minister Andrei Sangheli leads the first government.
 Referendum confirms the sovereignty of the Republic of Moldova.
 Parliament approves a new constitution.
- 1995** Local referendum secures autonomy for Găgăuzia, a territory composed mostly of Gagauz (Christian Turks).
 Elections are held for local governments.
 Moldova is admitted to the Council of Europe.
- 1997** Petru Lucinschi is elected president in the first multiparty presidential election.
 The International Monetary Fund (IMF) approves a \$195-million loan to Moldova, contingent upon privatization and market reforms.
- 1998** The Communist Party of Moldova (CPM) wins the most seats in parliament. Moldova's three center-right parties form a coalition government under Ion Ciubuc.
 Russia reduces energy delivery due to nonpayment.
 Parliament approves an austerity budget.
 In the wake of Russia's currency crisis, Moldova's leu collapses.

1608 Moldova

- 1999** Ciubuc resigns, and Parliament is unable to agree on a leader of government for a month.
Ion Sturza becomes prime minister.
Parliament rejects agricultural privatization plans.
The IMF and the World Bank suspend payments to Moldova.
Prime Minister Sturza resigns.
- 2000** Russia cuts power supplies due to nonpayment.
Romania and Moldova exchange formal recognition of sovereignty.
Parliament reduces presidential powers.
- 2001** The CPM wins 70 of the 101 seats in Parliament.
Communist leader Vladimir Voronin is elected president.
- 2002** The government announces plans to make Russian an official language but abandons them after protests. The OSCE extends the deadline for Russia to withdraw weapons from Transnistria until the end of 2003, later extended again to 2004.
- 2003** Opposition leaders claim the Communist government wants to strengthen ties with Russia and has failed to confront poverty. President Voronin refuses to sign a Transnistria settlement agreement on the grounds that it gives Russia too much influence.
- 2004** Russia refuses to withdraw forces from Transnistria until Moldova and Transnistria resolve their conflict. Transnistria closes schools using Latin script instead of Cyrillic, and Moldova retaliates by imposing economic sanctions on Transnistria and pulling out of the talks on the region's status.
- 2005** The CPM wins a majority of seats in parliament and president Voronin begins his second term.

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Moldova. *Economic Reviews: Moldova* (IMF, irreg.); *Republica Moldova in Cifre* (annual); *1996 National Human Development Report: Republic of Moldova* (UNDP)

CONTACT INFORMATION

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2101 S Street NW
Washington, DC 20008
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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Moldova.Net
<http://www.moldova.net>
- Embassy of Moldova (Washington, D.C.)
<http://www.moldova.org>

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MONACO

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Principality of Monaco (Principauté de Monaco)

ABBREVIATION

MC

CAPITAL

Monaco-Ville

HEAD OF STATE

Prince Albert II (from 2005)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Minister of State Jean-Paul Proust (from 2005)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Constitutional monarchy

POPULATION

32,409 (2005)

AREA

1.95 sq km (0.75 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

French, Monegasque, Italian

LANGUAGES

French (official), English, Italian, Monegasque

RELIGION

Roman Catholicism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Euro

NATIONAL FLAG

Red horizontal stripe above a white horizontal stripe

NATIONAL EMBLEM

The princely arms of the House of Grimaldi: a shield rendered in red and white diamond-shaped checks, encircled by the red-and-green collar of the Order of St. Charles, its gold and bejeweled cross suspended beneath the emblem; flanking the design, each with a hand on the shield, are two bearded monks in brown robes, brandishing silver swords. Shield and supporters are backed by an open red and gold crown of the Holy Roman Empire. On a white scroll appears the Grimaldi motto: *Deo juvante* (With God's help).

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"Hymne Monegasque" (Hymn of Monaco)

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 27 (Feast of St. Devote), November 9 (Prince's Festival), all major Christian festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

February 2, 1861

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

December 17, 1962

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

The second-smallest country in Europe as well as the world, Monaco borders the southeastern part of the French department of Alpes-Maritimes. The area, including recent reclamation, is 187 ha (1.95 sq km; 0.75 sq mi). The principality's length is 3.18 km (1.98 mi) east to west, its width 1.1 km (0.68 mi) north to south. The total boundary length is 8.5 km (5.2 mi).

The principality has four distinct divisions: La Condamine, the business district around the port; the casino; Monaco-Ville, on a rocky promontory about 61 m (200 ft) above sea level; and Fontvieille.

Geography

Area sq km: 1.95; sq mi 0.75

World Rank: 192nd

Land Boundaries, km: France 4.4

Coastline, km: 4.1

Elevation Extremes meters:

Lowest: Mediterranean Sea 0

Highest: Mont Agel 140

Land Use %

Arable Land: 0

Permanent Crops: 0

Forest: 0

Other: 100

Population of Principal Cities (2005)

Monaco

32,409

Monaco



CLIMATE AND WEATHER

The climate is typically Mediterranean, with warm summers and mild winters and temperatures rarely below freezing. The January average is 8.4°C (47°F). The summer heat is moderated by cool sea breezes; the July and August average is 25.5°C (78°F). Rainfall is light, averaging about 737 mm (29 in). Sunshine domi-

nates for 300 days a year, when there is no precipitation whatsoever.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature
 January: 47°F
 July: 78°F
 Average Rainfall: 29 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Monaco is almost entirely urban. Any flora and fauna that exist have been acquired and nurtured by humans or are vermin such as roaches and rats.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005:	32,409
World Rank:	188th
Density per sq km:	16,461.5
% of annual growth (1999-2003):	—
Male %:	47.6
Female %:	52.4
Urban %:	100
Age Distribution %:	
0–14:	15.5
15–64:	62.1
65 and over:	22.4
Population 2025:	34,590
Birth Rate per 1,000:	9.36
Death Rate per 1,000:	12.74
Rate of Natural Increase %:	–0.3
Total Fertility Rate:	1.76
Expectation of Life (years):	
Males:	75.53
Females:	83.5
Marriage Rate per 1,000:	4.8
Divorce Rate per 1,000:	2.5
Average Size of Households:	2.2
Induced Abortions:	—

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

The Monegasques, believed to be of Rhaetian stock, make up only 16 percent of the population; the remaining 84 percent of the population is foreign. French make up 47 percent and Italians 16 percent, with the rest coming from a variety of other nations.

LANGUAGES

French is the official language. Monegasque—a mixture of the French Provençal and the Italian Ligurian dialects—Italian, and English are also widely spoken.

RELIGIONS

The state religion is Roman Catholicism, which is adhered to by 90 percent of the population. Monaco was a part of the Diocese of Nice from 1247 to 1887, when it became a diocese in its own right, directly subject to the Holy See. The prince functions as the patron of the church, and when there is a vacancy in the episcopal see, he presents a list of three candidates for papal selection. In return the church receives substantial subsidies.

The large English-speaking community is served by St. Paul's Church, attached to the Anglican Diocese of Gibraltar. Monaco is the center of operations for Trans World Radio, an important Protestant missionary outreach.

Religious Affiliations

Roman Catholic	29,200
Other	3,200

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The ruling family of Monaco, the House of Grimaldi, traces its ancestry to Otto Canella (1070–1143), consul of Genoa in 1133. The Genoese built a fort on the site of present-day Monaco in 1215, of which the Grimaldi family secured control in the late 13th century. It became a principality in 1338 under Charles I, and the title passed through Princess Claudine to her husband, Lambert, during whose reign, in 1489, the independence of Monaco was recognized by the Duke of Savoy. The first Monegasque coins were struck in the 16th century. Full recognition of the princely title was suspended in 1793, but the principality's independence was restored with the fall of Napoleon in 1814. In 1815 the Treaty of Stupingi placed Monaco under the protection of the Kingdom of Sardinia. In 1861 the principality became an independent state under the protection of France. Its first constitution was promulgated by Prince Albert in 1911. Agreements in 1918 and 1919 with France provide for Monaco's incorporation into France should the reigning prince die without leaving a male heir.

Prince Rainier III ascended the throne in 1949. His early reign saw the development of Monaco as a center of gambling and tourism. His 1956 marriage to the Hollywood actress Grace Kelly put Monaco on the map as a destination for cosmopolitan sophisticates; they had a son, Albert, in 1958, assuring the Grimaldi family's succession for that generation. Kelly's death in 1982 dealt a blow to the nation's image and economy. In 1963 the principality concluded a new convention with France, bringing under French fiscal authority Monaco-based French companies. After a three-year struggle with the Greek shipping tycoon Aristotle S. Onassis, Prince Rainier gained control of the company that owns the Monte Carlo Casino in 1967.

In 1993 Monaco became a member of the United Nations with full voting rights. Rainier spent the end of the 20th century trying to reduce the nation's dependence on tourism by attracting businesses. In 2002 the state installed a huge floating jetty in its port, intended to double port capacity. Monaco has generally been safe from terrorism, but it suffered its first bomb attack in 2004, when an explosion damaged the main sports stadium. Prince

Rainier passed away in 2005, and Prince Albert II took over as head of state.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1949–2005 Rainier III

2005– Albert II

CONSTITUTION

The current constitution is that of 1962, which replaced the Prince Albert Constitution of 1911. It vests legislative power jointly in the prince and the elected National Council. Executive power is vested in the prince and exercised jointly with the four-member Council of Government, which is headed by the minister of state, a French civil servant. The minister of state also directs the executive services, commands the police, and is in charge of foreign affairs. The monarch chooses the minister of state from a list of three French national candidates presented by the French government.

The nation revised its constitution in 2002 to allow the Grimaldi family to retain the Monacan throne if the then-childless Crown Prince Albert failed to produce an heir; eligibility for succession has been extended to Rainier's daughters and other family members.

PARLIAMENT

The National Council is a 24-member unicameral body whose members are elected by universal suffrage for five-year terms; 16 members are elected by a list majority system, 8 by proportional representation. The electorate comprises only Monegasque citizens age 21 or over—just 15 percent of the total resident population. Should the prince dissolve the National Council, new elections must be held within three months. Usually meeting twice annually, the council votes on the budget and endorses the laws proposed by the prince. All ordinances passed by the National Council must be submitted to the prince within 80 days for his signature; if he does not express opposition within 10 days, they automatically become law.

POLITICAL PARTIES

The National and Democratic Union (UND) has dominated politics in Monaco for decades. It is closely associated with the monarchy and the prince. The Union for Monaco (UPM) is a coalition party that includes the National Union for the Future of Monaco; the UPM and

the Rally for the Monegasque Family are opposition parties that have succeeded in the past in gaining seats in the National Council.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The principality's local affairs are administered as one municipality, or commune. The Communal Council is headed by a mayor, who is assisted by 15 elected members. Their jurisdiction is limited to the four communal quarters: Monaco-Ville, La Condamine, Monte Carlo, and Fontvieille.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The legal system is based on the Code Louis, promulgated by Prince Louis I and derived from French legal codes. Justice is dispensed in the name of the prince, who delegates judicial responsibilities to various courts. The independence of the judiciary is guaranteed by the constitution. The highest court is the Supreme Tribunal, composed of five chief members and two assistant judges; it hears judicial appeals and interprets the constitution.

HUMAN RIGHTS

All basic human rights are guaranteed by law and respected in practice.

FOREIGN POLICY

Monaco linked its foreign policy to that of France with the treaty of July 1918; France agreed to defend the independence and sovereignty of Monaco, and Monaco agreed to exercise its sovereign rights in conformity with French interests. The two nations recently renegotiated the treaty to give Monaco higher status among the world's nations as preparation for Monaco's joining the Council of Europe as a full member, which it did in October 2004.

Monaco is a full member of the United Nations and has 10 diplomatic missions in western Europe, as well as honorary consulates in 45 countries. Monaco and the United States have had excellent relations, made stronger by Grace Kelly's marriage to the prince.

DEFENSE

Monaco has no armed forces. By treaty, France is responsible for the defense of Monaco.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: —
 Military Manpower Availability: —
 Military Expenditures \$million: —
 as % of GDP: —
 as % of central government expenditures: —
 Arms Imports \$million: —
 Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

Tourism, commerce, and finance are Monaco's main sources of income. The casino opened in 1856, and since then tourists have flocked to the principality; in 2002 tourism accounted for about 25 percent of annual revenue. Prince Rainier tried to reduce the nation's dependence on gambling income, and by the early 2000s gambling furnished no more than 5 percent of gross domestic product (GDP). Monaco has low business taxes and no income tax, which have attracted many businesses, especially banks; foreign jetsetters have long settled in Monaco because of its tax policies. The state has a monopoly on tobacco, the post, and the telephone service. The nation has no agriculture and very little industry and must import all its food and most other consumer items. Monaco publishes no economic figures, and so all estimates of GDP and other numbers are rough.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 0.87
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 27,000
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: —
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: —
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: —
 Industry: —
 Services: —
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 54
 Government Consumption: 24
 Gross Domestic Investment: —
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: —
 Imports: —
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: —
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: —

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
—	—	—	—	—

Finance

National Currency: Euro (EUR)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = EUR 0.886
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: —
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: —
 Total External Debt \$million: —

Debt Service Ratio %: —
 Balance of Payments \$million: —
 International Reserves SDRs \$million: —
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: —

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: —
 per capita \$: —
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: —

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$million: 518
 Expenditures \$million: 531
 Budget Surplus \$million: 13
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: —
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: —
 Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares: —
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: —
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: —
 Total Farmland % of land area: —
 Livestock: Cattle million: —
 Chickens million: —
 Pigs 000: —
 Sheep 000: —
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters 000: —
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons: 3

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: —
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: —

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: —
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: —
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: —
 Net Energy Imports % of use: 100
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: —
 Production kW-hr billion: —
 Consumption kW-hr billion: —
 Coal Reserves tons billion: —
 Production tons million: —
 Consumption tons million: —
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
 Production cubic feet billion: —
 Consumption cubic feet billion: —
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
 Production barrels 000 per day: —
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: —
 Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: —
 Exports \$billion: —
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —
 Balance of Trade \$million: —

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 50
 Paved %: 100
 Automobiles: —
 Trucks and Buses: —
 Railroad: Track Length km: —
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: —
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: —
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: —
 Airports: —
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: —
 Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 263
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: —
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: —

Communications

Telephones 000: 33.7
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.11
 Cellular Telephones 000: 19.3
 Personal Computers 000: 5.25
 Internet Hosts per million people: 16,446
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 494

ENVIRONMENT

Air pollution is perhaps the country's greatest environmental problem. The largely urban population suffers from airborne pollutants that include incinerated wastes, automobile emissions, and pollutants generated in nearby Italy.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 0
 Forest Change (1990–2000) hectares 000: —
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 50
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: —

LIVING CONDITIONS

The people of Monaco enjoy a high standard of living, comparable to that of other western European metropol-

itan areas. There is no income tax and the government provides cradle-to-grave security. The roads are good, and there is efficient bus service within the city and to and from neighboring countries. The cost of living is fairly high, but most consumer goods are readily available.

HEALTH

Monacans are on the whole very healthy. The government provides good health coverage to all citizens. Life expectancy was over 79 years in 2004. Fertility is low; each woman has on average 1.76 children.

Health

Number of Physicians: 186
 Number of Dentists: 34
 Number of Nurses: 454
 Number of Pharmacists: 61
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 586
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 5.53
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: —
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 7.6
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 1,653
 HIV Infected % of adults: —
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12–23 months:
 DPT: 99
 Measles: 99
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 100
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 100

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Cooking styles in Monaco are the same as those in France, and most people drink French wine. Fresh bread is an important component of almost every meal. Coffee is a popular beverage, with milk in the morning or black later in the day.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: —
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: —

STATUS OF WOMEN

Violence against women is strictly prohibited and rarely reported to occur. Women are fairly represented in the professions, although less so in business. The law governing transmission of citizenship discriminates against women, in that women who acquire Monegasque citizenship cannot transmit it to their children, while natural-

ized male citizens may do so. Women have had the right to vote since 1962.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 21
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.0
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: —

WORK

Most workers are employed in tourism or by businesses such as banks. Some people work in construction, engaged in projects such as extending the size of the port. Per capita GDP was estimated to be \$27,000 in 1999. Unemployment is low, estimated at 3.1 percent in 1998.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: —
 Female Participation Rate %: —
 Labor by Sector %: —
 Unemployment %: 3.1

EDUCATION

Primary and secondary school are universal and free in Monaco. In 1989 there were 10 public schools and three private religious schools operating under state contracts. The curriculum is similar to that of France, with emphases on international exposure, examination of national culture, and special artistic and literary programs. Total enrollment is around 4,500 students annually. The government grants scholarships in general studies, languages, and internships. Literacy is near universal.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 99.0
 Male %: 99.0
 Female %: 99.0
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: —
 First Level: Primary Schools: 7
 Teachers: 127
 Students: 1,985
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 15.6
 Net Enrollment Ratio: —
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: —
 Teachers: 358
 Students: 2,505
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 8.3
 Net Enrollment Ratio: —
 Third Level: Institutions:—
 Teachers: —
 Students: —
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: —
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: —

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Monaco is especially noted for its work in marine sciences; Jacques Cousteau's Oceanographic Museum is located there. Telecommunications facilities are modern and widespread, and half the population was using the Internet as of 2002.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 679
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: —
 Patent Applications by Residents: 16

MEDIA

Monaco has no daily newspapers of its own; most people read French papers. The government publishes a weekly magazine called *Journal de Monaco*. Radio Monte-Carlo has broadcast within and outside Monaco since the 1960s and still has many listeners in France and Italy. Radio France Internationale operates the Arab-language station formerly called Radio Monte-Carlo Moyen Orient. The Monte Carlo Television festival occurs yearly and attracts international attendees.

Media

Daily Newspapers: —
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: 178
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers 000: 22
 per 1,000: 678
 Television sets 000: 25
 per 1,000: 758

CULTURE

Prince Rainier encouraged the development of the arts in Monaco, which is now home to a world-famous ballet, opera, and symphony, as well as numerous theaters. The Monacan people are still devoted to their religion and have special ceremonies on saints' days. January 27 is the day for the torchlit ceremony celebrating the patron saint Dévôte. Sts. Roman and John are also important.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: 14,400

(continues)

Cultural Indicators *(continued)*

Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Monaco's mythology is quite modern, as centered on the ruling Grimaldi family, and has attracted interest around the world. The Grimaldis are supposedly subject to an ancient curse that brings them misfortune. Rumors abound about the lives and misdeeds of Grace Kelly and her three children, Stephanie, Caroline, and Albert.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Casino gambling is big business in Monaco and has attracted visitors to the principality since the mid-1800s. The city has restaurants, nightclubs, discos, shopping, and almost any other sophisticated urban activity a visitor might desire. The Monte Carlo beach is not known for its swimming but is one of the best places in the world to spot celebrities or simply lie in the sun. People with connections may attend parties on private yachts. Numerous international events take place in Monte Carlo, such as the Formula One Grand Prix and the Monte Carlo Motor Rally. There is also an international Circus Festival every January, a magic competition called the Great Magic Prize in March, and an International Fireworks Competition in July.

ETIQUETTE

Social customs and standards of politeness in Monaco are the same as those in neighboring countries. Many people greet one another with kisses on the cheeks. A higher level of politeness is expected at formal events such as the ballet or opera.

FAMILY LIFE

Family life in Monaco is similar to that in neighboring France. Most couples have just one or two children, and family units are typically small. Women are still more likely than men to give up their careers to care for children. Many foreigners want to marry in Monaco, but because they must have been resident in the principality for thirty days, vow-renewal ceremonies masquerading as marriages are very popular.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

People in Monaco dress and groom themselves as do other western Europeans. There is a greater emphasis on formal wear than in most other places, especially in the casino and during international festivals.

SPORTS

The Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports encourages all citizens to participate in sporting activities. There is an extensive program of physical education at all levels of school, starting with movement classes in preschool and swimming at age five. Specialized teachers instruct children in one hour of physical education every day in elementary school; secondary school students have two or three hours weekly, plus an hour of swimming. On Wednesday afternoons students are encouraged to participate in various athletic clubs. Monacans of all ages participate in the full range of sporting activities available in the region.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1949** Prince Louis II dies and is succeeded on the throne by Prince Rainier III.
- 1959** Prince Rainier suspends part of the 1911 constitution.
- 1962** Prince Rainier promulgates new constitution.
- 1963** Monaco settles tax dispute with France.
- 1982** Princess Grace dies in an auto accident.
- 1993** Monaco becomes a member state of the United Nations.
- 2000** The French Ministry of Finance accuses Monaco of condoning money laundering. Prince Rainier demands a renewal of Monaco's full independence.
- 2002** The constitution is revised to allow the Grimaldi family to keep the throne even if Prince Albert does not produce an heir.
- 2004** A bomb explodes in the main soccer stadium.
- 2005** Prince Rainier dies; Prince Albert II ascends the throne.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Government of Monaco
<http://www.monaco.gouv.mc/portgb>

MONGOLIA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Mongolia (Mongol Uls)

ABBREVIATION

MN

CAPITAL

Ulaanbaatar (Ulan Bator)

HEAD OF STATE

President Nambaryn Enkhbayar (from 2005)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Miyeeegombo Enkhbold (from 2006)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Mixed parliamentary democracy

POPULATION

2,791,272 (2005)

AREA

1,564,116 sq km (603,905 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Mongol

LANGUAGES

Khalkha Mongol, Turkic, Russian

RELIGION

Buddhist Lamaism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Tugrik

NATIONAL FLAG

A light blue vertical stripe between two red stripes; in gold, on the red stripe nearest the hoist, is the Soyombo, the first character of the Soyombo script, which serves as the national symbol.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

The national symbol is the Soyombo, an ideogram of geometric figures representing fire, earth, water, and air. Together these ideograms represent the ritual dagger of Buddhist Lamaism used in exorcising evil spirits. The national emblem is a circular seal with a golden ring of interconnected swastikas around a blue field, on which are displayed the lotus flower, the eight-wheeled charka, and a blue silk scarf, with, in the center, a winged horse bearing the Soyombo in the location of the saddle.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Our Sacred Revolutionary Country”

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year’s Day), July 11 (Independence Day), three days in summer (Naadam), November 26 (Day of Proclamation of Mongolia), Mongol New Year’s Day

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

July 11, 1921

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

February 12, 1992

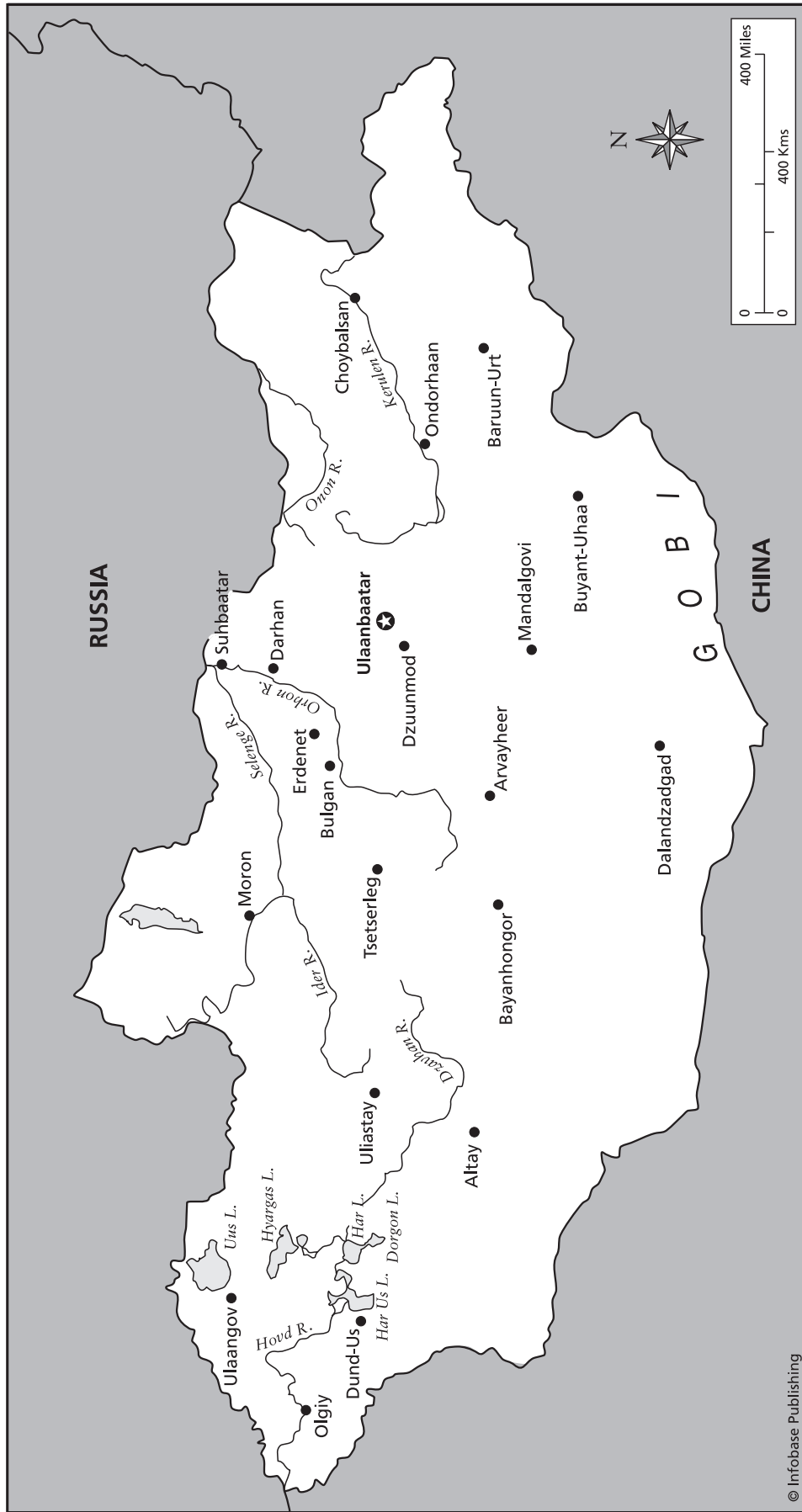
GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Located in East-Central Asia, Mongolia has an area of 1,565,000 sq km (604,248 sq mi). A landlocked country, it shares its total boundary length of 8,220 km (5,108 mi) with two neighbors: Russia (3,543 km; 2,202 mi) and China (4,677 km; 2,906 mi).

Most of northern, western, southwestern, and central Mongolia consists of mountains, plateaus, and depressions. Mongolians divide their country into a Khangai zone and a Gobi zone, but Russians enumerate five natural regions: the mountainous Altai, the Great Lakes De-

pression, the mountainous Khangai-Khentej, the uplifted eastern plains, and the nearly treeless Gobi. Nowhere lower than 457 m (1,500 ft) above sea level, Mongolia has average elevations between 914 and 1,524 m (3,000 and 5,000 ft). In the extreme west in the Altai Range, Nayramadlin (Huyten) Orgil peak soars to 4,374 m (14,298 ft). There is some glaciation. Elevations decline from the northwest to the southeast, from alpine snowy peaks to low hills and flat plains. One-third of the country consists of the Gobi, a desert stretching southeast into Chinese Turkistan. Particularly in the east it is a rocky desert of claylike soil blanketed thinly by shifting sand.

Mongolia



1620 Mongolia

In the north exists a considerable river system. The Selenga rises in the Khangai uplands and flows into Lake Baikal, in Russia; about 595 km (370 mi) of the river lies within Mongolia. Among its numerous tributaries are the Orkhon (1,126 km; 700 mi) and the Tula (703 km; 437 mi). Also originating in this region is the Yenisei and a minor affluent of the Irtysh. In the east, the area of Pacific drainage, the longest river is the Kerulen. In the Great Lakes Depression and in the Central Asian Basin flow the Dzabkhan (805 km; 500 mi), the Tes (563 km; 350 mi), and the Khobdo (499 km; 310 mi). Rivers in the Gobi region vanish in the salt lakes. Only two sizable rivers are of foreign origin: the Khalkhyn, in the extreme east, and the Khobdo, in the extreme west. With the exception of the Selenga, most waterways are not suitable for navigation and are used mainly for floating timber, for watering cattle, and for irrigation.

Mongolia has hundreds of lakes, and those with outlets have freshwater. Most of the biggest lakes are in the northwest. Fed by 200 rivers and rivulets, the bitter Ubs Nur (3,368 sq km; 1,300 sq mi) is the largest saline lake without an outlet. Forty-six rivers empty into the alpine Lake Khubsugul (2,591 sq km; 1,000 sq mi), the country's deepest (518 m; 1,700 ft) and the largest freshwater lake, sometimes called the Mongol Sea. There are more than 300 lakes in the Great Lakes Depression. In the east the largest lake is Buir Nor. There are also more than 200 natural mineral water springs, hot and cold.

Geography

Area sq km: 1,565,116; sq mi 603,905
World Rank: 18th
Land Boundaries, km: China 4,677; Russia 3,543
Coastline, km: 0
Elevation Extremes meters:
Lowest: Hoh Nuur 518
Highest: Nayramadlin (Huyten) Orgil 4,374
Land Use %
Arable Land: 0.8
Permanent Crops: 0.0
Forest: 6.8
Other: 92.4

Population of Principal Cities (2001)

Erdenet	68,310
Ulaanbaatar	760,077

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Mongolia has a typically severe middle-latitude continental climate, as characterized by very low rainfall and wide and constantly variable diurnal, seasonal, and yearly extremes in temperature. In the winter the area is encompassed by great masses of cold air, forming huge high-

pressure zones. In the short and relatively warm summer, the remnants of the southwestern monsoon combine with low-pressure systems to produce modest precipitation, often in the form of brief, localized cloudbursts. January temperatures range from -15°C to -30°C (5°F to -22°F), with the extreme below -46°C (-50°F), July temperatures from 10°C to 27°C (50°F to 80°F), with extremes over 38°C (100°F). The average annual temperature in Ulaanbaatar is a little below freezing.

The total annual precipitation (some 70–80 percent occurring in July and August) varies from 254 to 381 mm (10 to 15 in) in the mountainous northern regions (where Khubsugul receives the most snowfall) to less than 127 mm (5 in) in the Gobi. The mean annual rainfall in Ulaanbaatar is 208 mm (8.2 in). The sun shines for 250 days a year, making Mongolia the “Land of the Everlasting Blue Sky.” Annual average relative humidity is benign, varying from 45 percent to 75 percent year-round. Except for sudden blizzards, the winter winds are weak and local, mainly from the north. In the summer and autumn moister winds emanate from the southwest.

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature
January: 5°F to 222°F , Extreme 250°F
July: 50°F to 80°F , Extreme 100°F
Average Rainfall
Ulaanbaatar: 8.2 in
Northern Mountains: 10 to 15 in
Gobi Desert: 5 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

About two-thirds of Mongolia is grassland, or steppe. Over 3,000 species of plants thrive on the steppe, including 150 that are endemic to the country. The majority of the remainder of the terrain is the Gobi Desert, which is very dry but does support some grass. Mongolia's animals are similar to those that inhabit Siberia; there are 136 species of mammals, 436 birds, 22 reptiles, 8 amphibians, and many fish and insects. Many herd animals, such as sheep, goats, and camels, live in Mongolia, including some in the Gobi Desert. The country's famous *takhi* horses, used by Genghis Khan, live on the grasslands.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 2,791,272
World Rank: 134th
Density per sq km: 1.6
% of annual growth (1999-2003): 1.0
Male %: 50.0

Female %:	50.0
Urban %:	56.8
Age Distribution %:	
0–14:	29.7
15–64:	66.7
65 and over:	3.6
Population 2025:	3,576,000
Birth Rate per 1,000:	21.44
Death Rate per 1,000:	7.1
Rate of Natural Increase %:	1.4
Total Fertility Rate:	2.27
Expectation of Life (years):	Males 61.97
	Females 66.48
Marriage Rate per 1,000:	5.5
Divorce Rate per 1,000:	0.3
Average Size of Households:	4.8
Induced Abortions:	12,870

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Although tribal divisions have weakened, they survive. About 76 percent of the population are Khalkha Mongols, who live in the vast heartland from the east to the Altai and the valleys of the Great Lakes. West Mongols (also known as Oirat, Durbet, Olot, and Torgut) account for about 5 percent. The largest minority, the pastoral nomad Kazakhs (a Muslim people of Turkish origin), constitute another 5 percent and are located in the far west, in their own national province, or *aymag*, of Bayan Uluguei. Lesser minorities, none of whom constitutes more than 3 percent, include Buryats, Tuvinians, and Darigangas, generally found in pockets to the west, northwest, and east, respectively. Nonnatives, such as Russians and Chinese, each making up about 2 percent, live mainly in urban areas. The Chinese are mostly the Mongolized descendants of the ruling Chinese group of preindependence days.

There is virtually no national minority problem. However, some four million Mongols live outside Mongolia, mostly in Inner Mongolia, China, as well as in former Soviet republics. Pan-Mongol sentiments were strong in the early years of autonomy (1911–21) but have since disappeared among the younger generations.

LANGUAGES

The standard Mongolian language, Halh, is that spoken by the Khalkha, the dominant social group. Some 14 percent of the population speak Mongol languages differing only slightly from Khalkha, such as the Oirat, Buryat, Dariganga, and Darkhat. The remaining speak non-Mongolian languages belonging to the same Altaic branch of the Ural-Altaic language family. Of these, the most important are the Turkic and Tungus-Manchu languages. Turkic speakers include numerous linguistically distinctive groups, mainly in the Khobdo region.

Minor Mongolian languages include Darkhat, spoken in the Darkhat region around Lake Khubsugul; Dariganga, spoken in the southeast; and Buryat, spoken by Russian Mongols.

Russian has been a strong second language for most Mongols and a major qualification for officials who have had to deal with their Russian counterparts.

RELIGIONS

The difference between the old Mongolia and the new Mongolia is nowhere more complete and dramatic than with regard to religion. Until 1911 Mongolia was a theocratic state, with the local religion a mixture of shamanism and Buddhism. By the late 19th century more than a quarter of inhabitants were monks, theoretically celibate and thus contributing to a decline in the population. The Buddhist establishment was in effect a state within a state, and monks constituted the most influential special-interest group. The Buddhist dignitaries, known as the “yellow” lords (from the color of their headgear), occupied a position of importance equal to that of the “black,” or secular, lords.

Parallel to this system there existed vestiges of older shamanism, which was the original religion of the Mongols. By heredity, training, spontaneous vocation, or election by supernatural beings, the shaman was a combined medicine man, wizard, and priest with special magical powers, such as the ability to leave his body at will and to communicate with the supernatural world. The shaman’s most important function was healing. He also functioned as guardian of tribal lore and as oral historian.

Thus, when the Communists seized power with Soviet help in the early 1920s, the Buddhists were one of the earliest targets. By the outbreak of World War II, Buddhism was severely diminished.

The war against religion was more successful in Mongolia than in the Soviet Union and its other former satellites. Despite the extensive religious structures, Buddhism had shallow roots in the country, and even outside the ruthless and harsh methods employed by the Communists, religious traditions and practices had become moribund. The government has boasted that Mongolia is today one of the world’s most atheistic nations and that most cities are free of religious superstitions and piety. Nevertheless, approximately half the population still identifies with one or more religious traditions.

Religious Affiliations

Buddhist Lamaist	1,396,500
None	1,116,500
Shamanist and Christian	167,500
Muslim	111,600

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Mongols are believed to be descended from the nomadic tribes of Central Asia in the pre-Christian era. The

most warlike of these nomadic groups was the Xiongnu (Hsiung Nu), against whom the Chinese emperor Shi Huangdi built the Great Wall in the third century B.C.E. In the second century B.C.E. the Xiongnu, finding that the wall was not a serious obstacle, overran northern and western China north of the Yangzi, until they were driven back once again by the Chinese emperor Wudi, known as the Martial Emperor. During the following century there was incessant warfare between the Chinese, the Xiongnu, who forced their way back to Gansu, and other nomadic peoples: Xianbei from the north, remnants of the Xiongnu from the northwest, and the Chang from Gansu and Tibet. By the end of the fourth century the region between the Yangzi and the Gobi was dominated by the Toba tribe of the Xianbei under the Northern Wei dynasty. But by the beginning of the sixth century they were overthrown by a new nomadic group of marauders known as the Gougen, who had established a powerful empire under their leader, Toulun.

In turn, the Gougen were overthrown by the Turks, a subject people in the Altai region. The Turkish Empire was soon split into a number of warring principalities, such as the western Turks, the eastern Turks, and the Uighur Turks. It was not long before the western and eastern Turks followed the trail of the Xiongnu, the Xianbei, the Toba, and the Gougen into China, but they were repulsed by the Tang emperors, who formed an alliance with the Uighurs to reestablish Chinese sovereignty over Xinjiang. As Chinese allies and vassals, the Uighurs conquered much of western and northern Mongolia until, by the middle of the eighth century, their empire extended from Lake Balkash to Lake Baikal. At about that time the rising tide of Islam reached central Asia. Although the Chinese were ejected by Muslims from the Oxus Valley, the Chinese repulsed Muslim efforts to penetrate into Xinjiang. Thereafter, the power of the Uighurs waned, as the Kyrgyz and the Karluk Turks drove them north to the Tarim Basin.

The decline of the Uighurs coincided with the ascendancy of a new Mongol tribe, the Khitans of northern Manchuria. By 925 the Khitans ruled eastern Mongolia, most of Manchuria, and much of China north of the Yellow River. Soon they established themselves as emperors of North China and were known as the Liao dynasty.

As the stage was being set in the 11th and 12th centuries for the most momentous era in the history of the Mongols, the Mongols and the Tartars held sway over the northern and eastern areas; the Turks over western Asia and southeastern Europe; and the Tanguts, who were partly related to the Tibetans, over eastern Xinjiang, Gansu, and western Inner Mongolia. Both the Tanguts (who were also known as Hsi-Hsia, or western Hsia) and the Uighur Turks were allied with the Chinese or nominally under Chinese rule.

Early in the 12th century a new Tungusic people, the Juchen, moved southeastward from central Mongolia and

destroyed the Khitan Empire in a violent seven-year war (1115–22), then turned on their former allies the Sung Chinese. The Juchen leader proclaimed himself the leader of a new imperial dynasty, the Chin. Meanwhile, the defeated Khitan leader fled with a small remnant of his army to the Tarim Basin, where he allied himself with the Uighurs and established the kingdom of the Kara Khitai, or western Liao, which soon controlled both sides of the Pamirs.

In central Mongolia, following the migration of the Juchen, the Borjigin Mongols emerged as the leading clan of a loose federation of Mongols. Its leader was Kabul Khan, to whom was born in 1162 a grandson known as Temuchin. When Temuchin was only 12, his father was treacherously attacked by the Tartars, and Temuchin was left to die in a semidesert mountainous region. He survived, however, and by age 20 he became the leader of the Kiut subclan and by 1190 the undisputed leader of the Borjigin Mongols. Allying himself with the Keraites, he first subdued the region north of the Gobi. Later he broke with the Keraites and in a series of campaigns defeated all of the Mongol and Tartar tribes in the region from the Altai to Manchuria. His principal opponents in the struggle had been the Maiman Mongols, and he selected their capital, Karakorum, as the seat of his new empire. In 1206 Temuchin was formally acknowledged as the leader of all Mongols by the *khuraltai* (council) of Mongol chieftains, with the title of *kbagan* (great khan). They also gave him the honorific title of Chingis, or Genghis, the name by which he is known in history.

Genghis Khan was one of the greatest military leaders in history. He developed an extraordinary military system and one of the most formidable armies that the world has ever seen. Building on a permanent base of 30,000 warriors under arms at all times, Genghis could, by levies on the Mongol tribes, raise armies of more than 300,000 men on short notice.

Genghis Khan's campaigns spanned a period of more than 25 years, beginning in 1205 with the defeat of the Tangut forces in Gansu and Ninghsia, followed by the defeat of the Chin forces; the occupation of North China and the siege, capture, and sack of Beijing (then known as Yenching, or Chengdu) in 1213; the defeat of the Maiman Mongol leader Kushluk, who had seized the throne of Kara Khitai; the conquest of Khwarezm after defeating its Turkish rulers, Alaud-Din Mohammed and Jellaluddin, and sacking and razing to the ground Samarkand, Otrart, and Kohojend; the smashing of the Cumans, capturing of Astrakhan, and annihilating of a combined Russian-Cuman army on the banks of the Kalka River; and finally, the defeating of the combined Chin-Tangut armies in 1226 in a great battle on the banks of the frozen Yellow River. After accepting the surrender of the Tangut emperor, Genghis started back to Karakorum—dying en route.

In accordance with the will of the dead emperor, the *khuraltai* chose his son Ogatai as *kbagan*. The new ruler

completed the conquest of the outlying territories of the western Hsia and the Chin Empire, and in 1231 he sent an expedition to conquer Korea. Under Ogatai the Mongol Empire stretched from the Sea of Japan to Russia in the west and Syria in the south, although the Mongols themselves probably numbered fewer than one million. One of the most incredible empires in history, it was at this point the largest imperial power in the world. The sheer audacity with which the Mongols embarked on these wars was almost as remarkable as the success that invariably attended their operations. The empire was divided between the four acknowledged descendants of Genghis under the overall authority of Ogatai: Batu, son of Juji, was the ruler of the region to the north and west of Lake Balkash; Chagatai, the region comprising modern Afghanistan, Turkistan, and central Siberia; Ogatai, China and east Asia; and Tuli, the youngest, central Mongolia, the homeland, in accordance with Mongol custom.

In 1235 or 1236 Ogatai authorized two more expeditions: one against Tibet, led by his son Godan, which was completed in 1239, and the second against Europe, which was led by Batu and Subotai, one of the most brilliant of Genghis's generals. The European expedition started in 1237 with an army of 150,000 crossing the frozen Volga. For the next two years the Mongols spread death and destruction throughout Russia. In 1240 Subotai crossed the Dnieper and stormed and conquered Kiev. The Mongols then continued westward, advancing on a typically broad front in three major columns. To the north, the horde—a force roughly equivalent to a modern army corps and consisting of several *tumens*, or divisions—of Prince Kaidu went through Lithuania and Poland. After destroying Boleslaw V of Poland at Kraków, Kaidu crushed at Leignitz a combined army of Germans, Poles, and Teutonic Knights led by Prince Henry of Silesia. The southern horde, led by Prince Kadan, went through Transylvania into the Danube Valley and thence into Hungary. Meanwhile, Subotai and Batu, leading the central horde across the Carpathians, destroyed the army of King Bela IV of Hungary at the Sajo River. The Mongols then seized Pest. In 1241 the Mongols crossed the Danube, and their scouting parties reached Venice and Vienna.

Suddenly, the advance halted; the word had come that Ogatai had died. The princes, required by the law of Genghis Khan to return to Karakorum to take part in the election of a new *khagan*, led their armies back, never to return. In 1246 the *khuraltai* selected Kuyuk, a son of Ogatai, as the *khagan*. However, within two years Kuyuk died. His successor was Mangu, the eldest son of Tuli. Mangu resumed Genghis's plans for world conquest. Mangu himself, together with his brother Kublai, took the field against China. Another brother, Hulagu, was sent to Persia, where he became the first of the Ilkhans. He encouraged his cousin Batu to renew Mongol raids into central Europe. Mangu and Kublai—the latter appointed viceroy of China—swept

through China and as far as Hanoi, which fell in 1257. When Mangu died in 1259 Kublai was elected *khagan*. After a two-year war against his brother Arik-Buka, who had opposed his election, Kublai turned his attention to the completion of the conquest of China. Assisted by Bayan, the grandson of Subotai, he captured Hangzhou in 1256; in another three years all the outlying provinces were subdued. The last action in the war took place in 1279: a naval battle in the Bay of Canton, in which all the Sung ships were sunk by the Mongol fleet.

Meanwhile, to the west, the first signs of decline appeared in the vast imperial domains. In the absence of Hulagu Khan, who had returned to Karakorum on the death of Mangu, his deputy was defeated and killed at the Battle of Ain Jalut by a larger Mameluke force. This was the first significant Mongol defeat in 70 years. This defeat went unavenged, as both Hulagu and Kublai devoted their attention to rounding off their conquests elsewhere and suppressing dissidents. There were two abortive invasion attempts against Japan—in 1274 and 1281—and a brief invasion effort against Java—in 1292–93. Kublai had moved his capital from Karakorum to Beijing in 1263, and after the Song dynasty was destroyed in 1279, he established himself as the emperor of a united China, the first ruler of the Yuan dynasty. When he died in 1294, he was mourned by both the Mongols and the Chinese. The golden age of the Mongols was over.

The Yuan dynasty lasted in China until overthrown in 1388 by a leader of a robber band, Chu Yuan-chang, who proclaimed himself Emperor Hongwu, the founder of the Ming dynasty. With an army of 250,000 men, he pursued the defeated Yuan armies into Mongolia and won a decisive victory at the Battle of Puir Nor in 1388. Karakorum was destroyed, and 70,000 Mongols were made prisoners.

Meanwhile, Bereke, brother of Batu, the leader of the Golden Horde, had been converted to Islam, and he allied himself with the Mamelukes against Hulagu. This chain of events marked the end of Mongol expansion in southwestern Asia. The successors of Hulagu gradually yielded their powers to the Turkish viceroys, and the Ilkhan Empire fell apart before the end of the 13th century.

The Golden Horde, of the khanate of the Kipchak, had a longer life than the others. Under Bereke, the court at Sarai on the Volga became a prosperous center of commerce. The Mongols mixed with the Turks of the steppes to become the Tartars of Russia. The power of the khans declined, though, after the princes of Moscow, former vassals and tributaries of the Mongols, asserted their independence under Ivan II in 1480. One cause of the decline was the rise of Tamerlane, or Timur the Lame, during the latter part of the 14th century. This Turkish conqueror claimed to be a descendant of Genghis Khan through the family of Chagatai, and he reunited Turkistan and the khanate of the Ilkhans under his rule. In

1624 Mongolia

1391 he invaded Russia and defeated the Golden Horde, and he again ravaged the Caucasus and southern Russia in 1395. The khanate thereupon split into three separate kingdoms: Astrakhan, Kazan, and the Crimea. That of Astrakhan, home of the main body of the Golden Horde, was destroyed in 1502 by the combined armies of the Crimean Mongols and the Muscovites. The last reigning descendant of Genghis, Shanin Girai, of the khan of the Crimea, was deposed by the Russians in 1783.

By the middle of the 15th century the Mongol Empire had shrunk to a number of independent, warring tribes, particularly the Khalkhas and the Oirats. The latter gained ascendancy under Essen Tayi Khan, who defeated the Ming forces in 1449, and Dayan Khan, leader of a confederation covering north-central Asia between the Ural Mountains and Lake Baikal. Early in the 16th century the three independent sultanates of Khwarezm (Khiva), Ferghana, and Yarkand were overwhelmed by the Uzbek Turks. Despite internal bickering among the Mongol tribes, they continued their hostilities against the Ming. The leaders in the struggle were the Chahar Mongols, among whom the line of the khans had continued, although the title itself had by now become meaningless. In the middle of the 16th century Altan Khan, leader of the Tumed clan of the Khalkhas, reunited most of Mongolia. Tiring of the war with China, he concluded peace with the Ming emperor, thus ending a struggle that had lasted three centuries, perhaps the longest war in history. During an invasion of Tibet, Altan was converted to Buddhism, and in 1577 he proclaimed Buddhism as the state religion of Mongolia.

From the 17th century onward Mongolia was hemmed in by the westward expansion of the Manchus and the eastward expansion of the Russians. The evolution of the art of war, involving muskets and cannon, had also reduced the Mongols' military capabilities. Nevertheless, Mongolia produced several leaders who tried both to unite their people and to repel the incursions of the Russians and the Manchus. Among them were Ligdan Khan of the Chahar Mongols; Tsogto Taji, the national hero of this era; and Galdan Khan, or Bushtu Khan, of the Dzungar tribe. Because of the high quality of their leadership at this time, the Dzungars dominated the history of Mongolia for much of the 17th century. After conquering most of Kashgar, Yarkand, and Khotan from the Kyrgyz, Galdan turned eastward in about 1682, intending to conquer the Khalkhas. In 1688 the hard-pressed Khalkhas appealed to the Manchus for aid. The Manchus were more than pleased to respond, and a Chinese army was sent to Mongolia. This led to the calling of a *khuraltai* in 1689 at Dolonor, where most of the Mongol tribe accepted Manchu sovereignty against the Dzungars, thus marking the end of independent Mongolia for over 200 years.

In 1696 the Chinese host crushed the Dzungar forces of Galdan, near Chao-Modo (Urga, now Ulaanbaatar). This ended Dzungar influence in Mongolia, although they retained control of the western regions and parts of

Sinkiang and Tibet. The Dzungars continued to trouble the Manchus for another 20 years. In 1720 they were driven out of Tibet, then in 1732 defeated again.

Meanwhile, the Chinese and Russian Empires continued their expansion into central Asia. They found it expedient to delimit their respective areas of influence through the Treaty of Nerchinsk in 1689 and the Treaty of Kyakhta in 1727, which regulated Russian-Chinese boundaries for another 175 years. During the 18th and 19th centuries the Chinese generally neglected most of Mongolia. The southern provinces—Suiyuan, Chahar, and Jehl, known as Inner Mongolia—were in time absorbed into China.

The greatest single influence on Mongol life and culture during this period was Buddhism. In 1635 the khan of the Tushetu tribe proclaimed that his son was the reincarnation of the Buddha, and thus was born the tradition of the Living Buddha, or Jebtsun Damba Khutukhtu. Until the office was abolished in the 1920s, all reincarnations of the Living Buddha were from this tribe. To reduce the power of the tribal khans, the Manchus treated the Living Buddha as both the temporal and spiritual spokesman of the Mongols. Contributing to the increasingly theocratic nature of the society was the fact that over one-quarter of the male inhabitants were monks.

The train of events that led to the birth of modern Mongolia began with the overthrow of the Qing dynasty in China by the Republicans on October 10, 1911. In the wake of this Manchu collapse, on November 18, 1911, Mongolia proclaimed its independence on the basis that its allegiance had been to the Qing dynasty and not to China. The new government in Beijing refused to recognize Mongolian independence but was too busy with internal discord to do anything about enforcing its sovereignty. The Jebtsun Damba Khutukhtu was named Bogdo Khan, or ruler. Russia moved rapidly to take advantage of the situation by signing the Russo-Mongolian Treaty in 1912, but Russian involvement in World War I gave an opportunity for the Chinese to reassert their sovereignty. In 1919 the Chinese reoccupied Urga and disbanded the new Mongol army.

Meanwhile, the tides of the Russian civil war spilled over into Mongolia from the north, as the anti-Bolshevik White Russians under Baron Roman von Ungern-Sternberg moved into Mongolia from Siberia and drove the Chinese from Urga. Opposition to the "Mad Baron" led the Mongolian national leaders Sukhe Bator, Danzan Khorlo, and Horloogiyn Choybalsan, with the blessing of the Living Buddha, to appeal to Moscow for assistance. In response, the Revolutionary Provisional Government of Mongolia was established at Kyakhta, just inside Siberia from Mongolia, on March 13, 1921. This government's military force, comprising mostly Red troops, defeated the Mad Baron at the border town of Altan Bulak and then marched on Urga and occupied the capital. The Communist victors established a new national government at Urga, with the Living Buddha as the nominal head of state and a government headed by a monk named

Dogsomyn Bodo and controlled by the three national leaders. On November 5, 1921, a new Mongolian-Soviet treaty of friendship was signed, which recognized the People's Government of Mongolia as the only legal government, and ceded the northwestern portion of Outer Mongolia in the Altai Mountains to the Soviet Union. Dogsomyn Bodo, who opposed the extension of Soviet influence, was executed in 1922, and the next year Sukhe Bator died under mysterious circumstances; the death of the Living Buddha followed in 1924, while the People's Government forbade the selection of his successor. That same year Danzan Khorlo, the last remaining anti-Soviet nationalist leader, was shot.

With the elimination of all opposition, the stage was set for the formal withdrawal of Soviet forces and the establishment of a puppet state. On November 26, 1924, the Mongolian People's Republic was proclaimed, with a new constitution based on the Soviet model. At the same time Urga was renamed Ulaanbaatar (Red Hero). From 1924 to 1928 the leftists consolidated their power without any frontal assault on the two rival national institutions, the abbots and the nobles. A new currency and a new national bank were set up, a standardized tax system was instituted, and a Soviet-equipped and Soviet-trained Mongol army was created. A decisive clash between the nationalists, or rightists, and the Soviet-leaning leftists came in 1928 at the Seventh Party Congress of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party. All rightists were expelled, and the leftists seized control of the party and the government.

They rushed headlong into a series of radical reforms, including confiscation of all feudal estates and a relentless war against the Buddhist clergy. Forcible collectivization followed on Stalin's model. These brutal measures caused bloody uprisings. The government responded with still harsher measures and new party purges. The government banned all private enterprise, forced craft workers to join cooperatives, and nationalized all foreign and domestic trade and transportation. Extremism produced a near disaster, as the nation came to the verge of civil war. The angry and frightened nomads slaughtered their animals rather than hand them over to the state, and there was widespread famine as the food supplies failed.

Finally, the government was persuaded by the Soviets to retreat and end extremism. The party rejected its own earlier "left-wing deviation" and expelled several top leaders as "left-wing adventurers." The collective farm experiment was dropped, the worker cooperatives were abandoned, the cattle tax was reduced, and the herdsmen and peasants were again allowed to hold private property.

The new policy of gradualism continued through World War II and up until late 1947. This period witnessed the successful elimination of Buddhism as a national institution. Choybalsan consolidated his power through purges in which scores of top administrators and party and army officials were imprisoned or executed. The threat of Japanese invasion led to increasing concen-

tration on building up defense forces. Over 10 percent of the national population had been conscripted by the time Mongolia joined the Soviet Union in declaring war on Japan on August 8, 1945. Mongolia remained an independent Communist country through the cold war.

During all this time, since 1921, the country was under the influence of the Soviet Union and adopted many of the governmental policies and methods of the Soviets. However, as the Soviet Union began to fall apart in the 1980s, Mongolia was also seeing changes in its political structure. Jambyn Batmönh began his own reform movement in Mongolia. In 1989 Mongolia established full diplomatic relations with China.

The following year a large prodemocracy protest erupted in front of the parliament. Batmönh quickly lost power, and an amendment to the constitution in May called for multiparty elections. However, these elections resulted in the election of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party (MPRP), the former Communist Party. New elections were held in June 1996, and for the first time in 75 years a group other than the Communists won; the government then pursued reforms and privatization. The country suffered through its transition from a Communist state to a democratic one, with poverty, inflation, and famine combining to make the transition difficult. Despite difficulties, Mongolia created over 10,000 private businesses, opened its own stock market, and repealed all taxes on trade. However, the pace of Mongolia's transition created opposition, and in parliamentary elections in 2000 the MPRP won a landslide victory, securing 72 of 76 seats. The new government has announced further economic reforms, albeit at a more cautious pace.

President Bagabandi was reelected in 2001. That year international donors gave Mongolia millions of dollars in aid to boost the economy, alleviate poverty, and help herders caught in a severe winter. Relations with China became tense in 2002 after the Dalai Lama visited the country.

The parliamentary elections of 2004 resulted in a political deadlock, in which the MPRP and the opposition coalition Motherland-Democracy Coalition (MDC) won nearly equal numbers of seats. The two groups eventually worked out a deal to share power, and Tsakhiagiyn Elbegdorj was appointed prime minister. The coalition government collapsed in 2006 and Miyegombo Enkbold was chosen prime minister. MPRP candidate Nambaryn Enkhbayar won presidential elections in 2005.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

President	
1940–53	Gonchigiyn Bumtsend
1953–72	Jamsarangiyn Sambu
1972–84	Yumjaagiyn Tsendenbal
1984–90	Jambyn Batmönh
1990–97	Punsalmaagiyn Ochirbat

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1997–2005 Natsagiyn Bagabandi
2005– Nambaryn Enkhbayar

Prime Minister

1939–52 Horloogiyn Choybalsan
1952–74 Yumjaagiyn Tsendenbal
1974–84 Jambyn Batmönh
1984–90 Dumaagiyn Sodnom
1990 Sharavyn Gunjaadorj
1990–92 Dashiyn Byambasüren
1992–96 Puntsagiyn Jasray
1996–98 Mendsayhany Enkhsaikhan
1998–99 Janlavyn Narantsatsralt
1999–2000 Rinchinnyamyn Amarjargal
2000–04 Nambaryn Enkhbayar
2004–06 Tsakhiagiyn Elbegdorj
2006– Miyeegombo Enkhbold

CONSTITUTION

The first constitution of the Mongolian People's Republic was adopted by the Great People's Khural on November 26, 1924, the same day on which the nation was established. The constitution was modeled on that of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic and represented the triumph of the pro-Russian leftists over the nationalists in the party.

Mongolia faithfully hewed to the official Soviet line from the Stalin era up through the Gorbachev era. In 1988 the Mongolian party began an unprecedented attack on both Stalin and former Mongolian leaders, particularly Horloogiyn Choybalsan and Yumjaagiyn Tsendenbal. Choybalsan was implicated in the mysterious deaths of his rivals in the 1920s and the purge and deaths of thousands of other party and army officials in the 1930s. Under Jambyn Batmönh both glasnost and perestroika became the watchwords of the Mongolian administration.

A series of dramatic prodemocracy protests and the beginnings of unprecedented opposition political activity led the Mongolian Communist Party to relinquish its constitutionally guaranteed monopoly of power on April 15, 1990. The decision paved the way for a transformation of Mongolia from a one-party system into a multiparty state. Thus, Mongolia became the first Asian Communist country to adopt the type of political reforms that had swept Eastern Europe in the preceding six months. Batmönh stepped down from his dual positions as head of state and general secretary of the party and was replaced by Gombojavyn Ochirbat as general secretary and by Punsalmaagiyn Ochirbat as president. Premier Dumaagiyn Sodnom was also ousted, with Sharavyn Gunjaadorj appointed in his stead.

In 1992 the country adopted a new constitution that abolished the "People's Republic" and established a democratic model with a market economy. The constitution calls for the election of a president and a single-chambered

legislature, out of which the prime minister is selected. Presidential candidates are nominated by political parties and elected to four-year terms by popular vote; no president may serve more than two terms.

PARLIAMENT

The parliament, now referred to as the State Great Hural, is the highest organ of state power and the sole location of legislative power. The Hural is unicameral and consists of 76 members. The members are elected to four-year terms by universal direct suffrage by all citizens 18 years of age or greater. The State Great Hural may consider on its own initiative any issue pertaining to domestic and foreign policies of the country. The parliament also appoints the prime minister and the members of the cabinet, who all serve at the pleasure of the Hural. The prime minister is usually the leader of the majority party.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Mongolia is a multiparty state with nearly two dozen parties; the largest is the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party (MPRP), which is made up largely of former Communist Party members and holds nearly half the seats in the State Great Hural. Its main rival is the Motherland-Democracy Coalition (MDC), formed in 2003 between the Democratic Party, the Motherland-Mongolian New Socialist Democratic Party, and the Citizens' Will Republican Party.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The territory of Mongolia is divided administratively into 18 provinces, or *aymags*, the capital city, and the cities of Darhan and Erdenet. Each province and city is run by an elected *hural*, or assembly. Provinces are subdivided into regions, regions into communities. The capital city is divided into districts, districts into neighborhoods.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The legal system and laws of Mongolia are a unique blend of Russian, Chinese, Turkish, and Western elements. All judges are appointed by a General Council of Courts. Courts include the Supreme Court, provincial and capital city courts, and regional, interregional, and district courts. Specialized criminal, civil, and administrative courts are not subject to review by the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court serves as appeals court for people's and provincial courts but to date has rarely overturned the verdicts of lower courts. The constitution does not specify whether legislative acts are subject to judicial review.

All accused persons are provided due process, legal defense, and a public trial, although closed proceedings are permitted in cases involving state secrets, rape cases involving minors, and other cases provided by law. Defendants may question witnesses and appeal decisions.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Since the adoption of the new constitution in 1992, the government has generally respected the human rights of its citizens. Problems remain, however, including the occasional beatings of detainees and prisoners by members of the security forces, poor prison conditions, restrictions on due process for detainees, occasional government manipulation of the media, and violence against women. Police corruption is a problem. Child abuse and child labor occur, and some women who emigrate to work in other countries may be victims of human trafficking.

FOREIGN POLICY

Mongolia was for many centuries within the Russian sphere of influence and had little or no contact with the outside world. Historically, dependence on Russia stemmed partly from a fear of China, which had carved out Inner Mongolia from Mongolian territory. With the collapse of Communism, Mongolia recognized its need to open doors to the rest of the world and since then has particularly focused on developing amicable relations with China and Russia. It concluded its first formal agreement with China and restored air services between Beijing and Ulaanbaatar. In 1991 President Ochirbat became the first Mongolian head of state to visit the United States, and in the same year Secretary of State James Baker became the first Western statesman to address the Mongolian parliament. In 1992 Russia completed the withdrawal of all its troops from Mongolia, and during the next year the two countries concluded a treaty of friendship and cooperation. Mongolia signed a similar treaty with China in 1994.

Mongolia officially has a nonaligned foreign policy. It has downgraded relations with most eastern European nations and instead is more involved with Asia. It joined the Association of South-East Asian Nations in 1998 and the Pacific Economic Cooperation Council in 2000, and is seeking to join the Asia Pacific Economic Conference. It has close relations with South Korea and Japan; Japan is its largest bilateral aid donor. The United States has provided a great deal of aid for economic development and democracy; in 2004 the two countries signed a Trade and Investment Framework Agreement.

DEFENSE

The Mongolian armed forces are headed by the civilian Minister of Defense, a former military officer. The Minis-

try of Defense is responsible for external security, as aided by the Ministry of Justice and Foreign Affairs, which handles border issues in peacetime and is also responsible for the internal police force. The Mongolian People's Army includes ground and air forces. Mongolian men between 18 and 25 must serve 12 months in the military. The state uses the military to increase political awareness, literacy, and discipline among the nation's people, also employing soldiers on construction projects.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	20,000
Military Manpower Availability:	818,977
Military Expenditures \$million:	23.1
as % of GDP:	2.2
as % of central government expenditures:	7.5
Arms Imports \$million:	—
Arms Exports \$million:	—

ECONOMY

Mongolia's economic growth has been steady since the late 1990s following a depression immediately after independence, when Mongolia lost the Soviet aid that had accounted for nearly one-third of the nation's gross domestic product (GDP); nevertheless, the economy is not strong and has much room for improvement. The government under the Democratic Union Coalition liberalized the economy, reducing price controls, restructuring the banking and energy industries, inviting foreign investment, and allowing domestic businesses to privatize. The former-Communist MPRP governments opposed free-market reforms, and in 1996 natural disasters and drops in global prices for cashmere and copper hurt the economy, but between 1997 and 1999 growth picked up. The nation joined the World Trade Organization in 1997. The economy was fairly strong between 2000 and 2004. Debt owed to Russia loomed as a major problem, but in 2004 Russia wrote off all but \$300 million of the total amount.

Mongolia's economy has traditionally been based on agriculture and herding, and the country currently lacks the infrastructure needed to develop much industry. The country has extensive deposits of copper, gold, coal, tin, tungsten, and molybdenum, and mining is an important sector of the economy. Cashmere from goats is also a profitable export. The nation's best hope for continued economic expansion is attracting more foreign investment, which depends on Mongolia's convincing foreign businesses that their investments would be safe.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion:	4.882
GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$:	1,800
GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %:	2.9

(continues)

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Principal Economic Indicators *(continued)*

GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 1.8

Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:

Agriculture: 20.6

Industry: 21.4

Services: 58.0

Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:

Private Consumption: 68

Government Consumption: 17

Gross Domestic Investment: —

Foreign Trade \$million: Exports: 524

Imports: 691

% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 2.1

% of Income Received by Richest 10%: 37.0

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	
200.6	219.4	236.0	263.3	284.4	

Finance

National Currency: Tugrik (MNT)

Exchange Rate: \$1 = MNT 1,171

Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 212.8

Central Bank Discount Rate %: 11.5

Total External Debt \$million: 885

Debt Service Ratio %: 4.37

Balance of Payments \$million: —

International Reserves SDRs \$million: 235.9

Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
1.5

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 208.5

per capita \$: 85.10

Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 77.8

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year

Revenues \$million: 387

Expenditures \$million: 428

Budget Surplus \$million: 41

Tax Revenues as % of GDP: 23.1

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 20.6

Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 3.1

Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares: 4.2

Irrigation, % of Farms having: 7.0

Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 2.7

Total Farmland % of land area: 0.8

Livestock: Cattle million: 2.2

Chickens 000: 70

Pigs 000: 14.5

Sheep million: 12

Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters 000: 631

Fisheries: Total Catch tons: 129

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 53.66

Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 4.1

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million:
1.626

Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million:
2.134

Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 874

Net Energy Imports % of use: —

Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: —

Production kW-hr billion: 2.225

Consumption kW-hr billion: 2.194

Coal Reserves tons billion: —

Production tons million: —

Consumption tons million: —

Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —

Production cubic feet billion: —

Consumption cubic feet billion: —

Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —

Production barrels 000 per day: —

Consumption barrels 000 per day: 8.75

Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 691

Exports \$billion: 524

Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 5.6

Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 4.4

Balance of Trade \$million: —

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Russia %	33.1	6.7
China %	21.5	46.1
South Korea %	8.5	—
Japan %	7.9	—
Germany %	4.7	—
United States %	—	23.2
Singapore %	—	5.7
Australia %	—	5.5
United Kingdom %	—	4.2

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 49,250

Paved %: 3.5

Automobiles: —

Trucks and Buses: —

Railroad: Track Length km: 1,810

Passenger-km billion: 1.07

Freight-km billion: 4.3

Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 65

Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 533.9

Airports: 36

Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 661

Length of Waterways km: 580

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 198
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 130
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 119

Communications

Telephones 000: 128
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.02
 Cellular Telephones 000: 216
 Personal Computers 000: 190
 Internet Hosts per million people: 14
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 18

ENVIRONMENT

Mongolia is a largely desertlike country that suffers from limited natural freshwater resources. The policies of the MPRP regime, promoting rapid urbanization and industrial growth, have raised concerns about their negative effects on the environment. The burning of soft coal in power plants and the lack of enforcement of environmental laws have severely polluted the air in Ulaanbaatar. The country also suffers from deforestation, overgrazing, and the converting of virgin land to agricultural production, which have increased soil erosion from wind and rain.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 6.8
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: -60
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 14
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 3.13

LIVING CONDITIONS

The typical Mongolian family still lives in the traditional nomadic tent, called a *ger*. These tents are common dwellings even in the cities. A *ger* is made of white felt and can be dismantled and moved easily. Some city dwellers live in high-rise apartment buildings dating from the Communist days. The country is huge and sparsely populated, and ground transportation between cities is slow and unreliable, especially during the harsh winters. Most roads are not paved, and drivers are unpredictable. Ulaanbaatar's public transportation system is old and inadequate for the growing urban population.

HEALTH

The Mongolian health-care system nearly fell to pieces with the withdrawal of Soviet aid. The government has

been working to improve preventive care and make health care more affordable to private citizens. One difficulty facing the nation is its size and population distribution; many people live nowhere near hospitals or medical professionals.

Mongolians face numerous health problems. Alcohol and tobacco use have risen since the early 1990s. Cholera and meningococcal meningitis are common illnesses. Infant mortality is about 55 deaths per 1,000 live births; the nomadic lifestyle is particularly hard on small babies. Life expectancy is 64 years.

Health

Number of Physicians: 6,823
 Number of Dentists: 469
 Number of Nurses: 7,802
 Number of Pharmacists: 788
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 267
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 55.45
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 110
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 6.4
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 25
 HIV Infected % of adults: < 0.1
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 98
 Measles: 98
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 59
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 62

FOOD AND NUTRITION

The Mongolian diet is based on sheep and starches, with few vegetables. Most meals feature mutton, usually boiled, with bread, rice, and butter. The Kazakhs in western Mongolia eat horse. Milk and dairy products also appear on the menu with some frequency. Herders use mare's milk to make the alcoholic drink *airag*, or its stronger distillation, *shimiin arkhi*. Tea is the most popular drink, often prepared with salt.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 27.8
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,020
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 127.8
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 31.5

STATUS OF WOMEN

There is increasing public and media discussion of domestic violence, including spousal and child abuse, after many years of government and societal denial. Although there are no reliable or exact statistics regarding the extent of such abuse, human rights groups, women's groups,

resident diplomats, and other observers believe that it is a common phenomenon. The large economic and societal changes under way have created new stresses on families, including losses of jobs, inflation, and lowered spending on social and educational programs. These factors, coupled with the serious problems caused by extremely high rates of alcohol abuse, have led to increased instances of family abuse and abandonment and have added to the number of single-parent families, most of which are headed by women.

The constitution provides men and women with equal rights in all areas, and both by law and practice, women receive equal pay for equal work and have equal access to education. Women represent about half the workforce, and a significant number are the primary earners for their families. Although many women occupy mid-level positions in government and the professions, and many are involved in the creation and management of new trading and manufacturing businesses, women are almost completely absent from the highest leadership levels of both the public and the private sectors. There is no government agency that oversees women's rights, nor are there any notable efforts by the government to encourage greater representation by women in government policy making.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 7
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.01
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 49.4

WORK

Almost half of Mongolia's population still live as nomadic herders, though their numbers are decreasing as more of them move to the city. The herding life is very difficult, especially in the winter, and herders tend to be quite poor. About 6 percent of the workforce is employed in manufacturing, particularly mining and the production of animal products such as cashmere. Some 10 percent work in trade and 5 percent in the public sector, leaving a third of the workforce in other occupations.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 1,400,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 47.2
 Labor by Sector %:
 Herding/Agriculture: 46
 Manufacturing: 6
 Trade: 10.3
 Public Sector: 4.7
 Other: 33
 Unemployment %: 4.6

EDUCATION

The educational ladder begins with nursery schools and kindergartens, followed by an eight-year middle school or general polytechnic, as divided into four-year primary and four-year junior cycles, leading to a two-year technical and vocational school. The special-school and the senior-school tracks culminate in a university or in technical or professional institutions.

Higher education is provided primarily by the Mongolian State University at Ulaanbaatar, the country's only university. Students in higher education institutions follow a five-year course. The academic year officially opens on September 1, but first- and second-year students are required to work on state farms during September, and for them classes begin October 1. Students are graded on a five-point scale.

The education system at all levels is controlled and financed by the state. At the national level control is exercised by the minister of education, who is formally under a deputy minister who heads the Commission on Special, Middle and Higher Education. At the *aymag* level there are local education authorities who prepare budgets for schools under their jurisdiction. Some special schools are administered by ministries other than the Ministry of Education.

Transition to an open-market economy in the beginning of the 1990s hit Mongolia's centralized education system sharply. Many local schools and boarding houses were forced to close down due to lack of government funding, and dropout rates, which had been negligible before, increased dramatically. Family necessity forced children back into the home environment at the cost of receiving a formal education. However, the problem lay also in the schools themselves, which desperately needed new textbooks, teaching methods, and administrative approaches.

Since the late 1990s the situation for children and Mongolia's education system has begun to improve. Choices have become available, with many private schools and specialized places of learning emerging in the capital, catering to the children of Mongolia's increasing middle and upper classes. Rural schools, however, are still suffering. Kindergartens, once free to all workers, have become a novel luxury for those who can afford to send their three- to seven-year-olds, giving the upper classes a head start. Most children in the countryside, until the age of seven or eight, stay at home with their parents, herding livestock.

Current dropout rates are not as high as at the beginning of the 1990s but are significant enough to warrant concern from local educators and parents alike. Indeed, a full 11-year education is a luxury assured only to those whose parents have the money and resources to assist with their children's educational needs.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 97.8
 Male %: 98.0
 Female %: 97.5
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 11.0
 First Level: Primary Schools: 650
 Teachers: 7,757
 Students: 238,676
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 30.8
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 79.0
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: —
 Teachers: 14,536
 Students: 295,874
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 21.5
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 77.4
 Third Level: Institutions: 12
 Teachers: 5,366
 Students: 98,031
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 37.0
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 9.0

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Mongolia is not yet technologically advanced. Many people do not have electricity. In 2002 there were about 340,000 telephone lines, including cellular telephones, for the entire population. Only about 50,000 people were using the Internet. The government, through the Ministry of Science, Technology, Education and Culture, is taking steps to improve this situation, which it sees as key to enticing foreign investment and developing the economy. In 2003 the ministry created the Inner Mongolian University of Science and Technology in Baotou, equipped with computers and laboratories; more than 30,000 students attend the school.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 531
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: 0.68
 Patent Applications by Residents: 106

MEDIA

The media are generally free to express their opinions, and reporters often criticize the government. There is one government daily newspaper, *Unen*, which was founded in 1920 and is run by the MPRP. The private paper *Onoodor* has the largest circulation among daily newspapers. There are many other papers registered, but most of them do not publish on a regular schedule and have very small circulations. The national news agency is Montsame (Mongol Tsahilgaan Medeeniy Agentlad, Mongolian Telegraph Agency), founded in 1957.

Radio broadcasting began in 1934, television broadcasting in 1967. Mongolradio, Voice of Mongolia, and

Mongolteleviz are the state-owned broadcasters. The Ulaanbaatar city government runs UBS TV. There are also some privately-owned television and radio stations. Transmissions include local programs as well as relays of Soviet programs received via the Ekran or Molniya satellites and the BBC World Service.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 5
 Total Circulation 000: 49
 Circulation per 1,000: 17.6
 Books Published: —
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers 000: 140
 per 1,000: 50
 Television sets 000: 153
 per 1,000: 58

CULTURE

Tibetan Buddhism and nomadic customs are the leading forces in Mongolian culture, influencing music, dancing, and painting. Since independence there has been a major Buddhist revival, with monasteries reopening and many people becoming lamas. Traditional singing in the *khoomi* style is popular, wherein men train their voices to hit two or three tones simultaneously. Contortionism is a common component of traditional dances. Mongolian authors have written a huge body of works, using the Russian Cyrillic alphabet. The most important work is the *Mongol-un Nigucha Tobchiyan*, or *The Secret History of the Mongols*.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 281
 Volumes: 5,946,800
 Registered borrowers: 53,300
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Tibetan Buddhist and nomadic stories, as influenced by shamanism, form the foundation of Mongolian folklore. The Soviets tried to suppress traditional folk practices, but they survived and have been revived since independence. Nomads use the *tsam* dance to drive away evil spirits. The arrangement of *ger* tents is done according to specific folk practices; there are many rules and customs associated with the placement of family photographs, Buddhist images, and elder members of the family.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

There are many possibilities for outdoor recreation around Ulaanbaatar, including hiking and skiing, both downhill and cross country. People enjoy riding horses, and some people also ride camels or yaks. Hiking is popular on the Four Holy Peaks, near the capital, and in other places, including the Gobi Desert. People enjoy fishing and kayaking on Khövsgöl Nuur lake.

Nadam is the biggest traditional festival. It occurs in July during the anniversary of the 1921 Revolution and features nomadic recreational activities such as singing, dancing, horse racing and polo, running, and trade negotiations. In the winter people enjoy festivities during Tsagaan Sar, which involves hard drinking and singing.

ETIQUETTE

Mongolians follow the nomadic tradition of hospitality, in which a guest is always welcome for the night. Hosts will offer their guests the best of what they have, and it is polite for the guest to accept everything. People pass food and drink with their right hands, never the left. When entering a *ger* tent, men walk to the left and women to the right, and no one ever places their back to the house shrine. Stepping on someone's foot is offensive; anyone who does this must immediately shake hands with the foot's owner. It is impolite to whistle inside a *ger* or to touch a person's hat.

FAMILY LIFE

Though traditionally most marriages were arranged, today Mongolians choose their own spouses. The ideal image of courtship features a young couple on the steppe riding horses and singing together. Wives set up their own households instead of joining those of their husband's parents. People typically marry within their social groups, so herders marry herders and professionals marry professionals.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Many Mongolians still wear the traditional clothing that has been around since the days of the khans and which is well designed for nomadic life on freezing steppes. Both men and women wear a *del*, a long coat with a sash, and long pants with boots. Everyone wears a hat, and a hat is considered a sign of status.

SPORTS

The nomads have long had their favorite sports, which include horse racing, wrestling, and archery. Falconry is also popular in the countryside.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1945** Mongolia declares war on Japan. In national plebiscite 100 percent vote for independence from China. Vote is recognized by China.
- 1946** Treaty of friendship and mutual assistance is concluded with the Soviet Union.
- 1949** Railroad from Soviet Union to Ulaanbaatar is completed.
- 1952** Marshal Horloogiyn Choybalsan dies in Moscow. Yumjaagiyn Tsedenbal is elected chairman of the Council of Ministers. Mongolia signs 10-year economic and cultural agreement with China.
- 1957** Railway line from Ulaanbaatar to Beijing is opened. Soviet Union hands over joint Soviet-Mongolian enterprises to Mongolia.
- 1960** New constitution is promulgated.
- 1961** Mongolia is admitted to the United Nations.
- 1962** Mongolia joins Council for Mutual Economic Assistance. Frontier agreement is concluded between Mongolia and China.
- 1972** Jamsarangiyn Sambu, president since 1954, dies. Tsedenbal assumes the position of president and yields the chairmanship of the Council of Ministers to Jambyn Batmönh.
- 1984** Tsedenbal is removed from all party and state posts. Batmönh replaces Tsedenbal as president and party first secretary. Dumaagiyn Sodnom is named chairman of the Council of Ministers.
- 1987** Mongolia and the United States establish diplomatic relations.
- 1988** Before the fifth plenum of the 19th Central Committee of the Communist Party, Batmönh attacks Choybalsan and Tsedenbal for their personality cults and violation of socialist democracy.
- 1990** Yielding to reformist pressures within the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party, the former Communist Party, Batmönh steps down as general secretary of the party and head of state. He is replaced by Punsalmaagiyn Ochirbat as head of state and Gombojavyn Ochirbat as general secretary. Sharavyn Gunjaadorj is appointed chairman of the Council of Ministers in place of Sodnom. Opposition parties are permitted to form and contest elections, marking the beginning of a new era in Mongolian politics. In the first free national elections in the country's history, the MPRP retains control of government, with an absolute majority in the Great State Hural.

- 1992** Mongolia adopts a more democratic and market economy-oriented constitution.
- 1995** Trading on Mongolia's first stock exchange takes place.
- 1996** The Democratic Union Coalition wins parliamentary elections, marking the first time in 75 years that the Communists have not held power.
- 1997** Parliament abolishes all taxes on trade.
- 1998** Secretary of State Madeleine Albright visits Mongolia and pledges U.S. support for the country's transition to democracy.
- 2000** In parliamentary elections the MPRP secures 72 of 76 seats. The Social Democrats, National Democrats, and three other parties create a new Democratic Party.
- 2001** President Bagabandi is reelected. A harsh winter leads the International Monetary Fund to lend Mongolia money to help herders and the economy.
- 2002** The Dalai Lama visits Mongolia. China is furious.
- 2003** Mongolia sends 200 soldiers to Iraq.
- 2004** Russia writes off most of Mongolia's debts. The parliamentary elections end in a deadlock. Tsakhagiyn Elbegdorj becomes prime minister.
- 2005** Nambaryn Enkhbayar wins presidential elections.
- 2006** Elbegdorj's coalition government collapses and Miyegombo Enkhbold is elected prime minister.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Mongolia Online
<http://www.mol.mn>

MOROCCO

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Kingdom of Morocco (Al-Mamlakah al-Maghribiyah)

ABBREVIATION

MA

CAPITAL

Rabat

HEAD OF STATE

King Mohammed VI (from 1999)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Driss Jettou (from 2002)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Constitutional monarchy

POPULATION

32,725,847 (2005)

AREA

446,550 sq km (172,413 sq mi), not including Western Sahara, whose area is 178,000 sq km (68,726 sq mi); Western Sahara's incorporation into the kingdom is not accepted by the United Nations.

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Berber, Arab

LANGUAGES

Arabic (official), French, Berber

RELIGION

Sunni Islam

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Dirham

NATIONAL FLAG

A red field with a green five-pointed star in the center

NATIONAL EMBLEM

Two golden lions rampant, one facing outward, flank a central device crested by the royal red, gold, and green crown. Within the device appear a sun rising over the snow-capped Atlas Mountains and a blazing desert depicted in red. In the foreground is the five-pointed star known as Solomon's (or Suleyman's) star. Beneath the device a golden scrollwork carries in Arabic script a verse from the Koran: "If you aid God he will aid you."

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"Hymne Cherifien"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day), March 3 (Feast of the Throne), May 1 (Labor Day), May 23 (National Day), August 14 (Anniversary of 1979 annexation), November 6 (Anniversary of the Green March), November 12 (Independence Day), various Islamic festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

March 2, 1956

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

March 10, 1972; revised September 4, 1992; amended September 1996

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Morocco is in the northwestern corner of Africa and is separated from Europe by the 12 km (7 mi) Strait of Gibraltar. Geographically, it is part of a larger region called the Maghreb, and in Arabic the kingdom is called al-Maghreb al-Aqsa (Far West), meaning the far west of the Arab world. It extends 1,809 km (1,124 mi) northeast to southwest and 525 km (326 mi) southeast to northwest. Morocco covers an area of 446,550 sq km (172,413 sq mi), not including 178,000 sq km (68,726 sq mi) of Western Sahara, whose incorporation into Morocco proper is disputed. The total length of the Mediterranean and At-

lantic coastlines is 2,177 km (1,355 mi). The international border with Algeria runs 1,559 km (967 mi) and is the subject of recurrent controversies; the border with Western Sahara is 443 km (275 mi). The border with Spain (around Ceuta and Melilla) runs 15.9 km (9.9 mi).

Morocco's capital is Rabat. The largest city is Casablanca. Other major urban centers are Tangier, Marrakech, Fès, and Salé.

Morocco has an open, agriculturally rich, and populous area in the northwest, with mountains and plateaus in the eastern and southern areas. On the Atlantic coast there is a fertile plain, and the Mediterranean coast is mountainous. Between the mountains and the western

Morocco



plains is a transitional region of highlands and inland plains. The Atlas Mountains, running northeastward from the south to the Algerian frontier, average 3,353 m (11,000 ft) in elevation. The Middle Atlas make up the whole of central Morocco. To the east the range merges into the Sarho Mountains and drops gradually to rocky, pre-Saharan desert areas.

Morocco has an extensive river system, with the major river, the Monlouya, emptying into the Mediterranean. Other principal rivers flow into the Atlantic. The rivers terminating in the Sahara are known as *oueds*, or rivers that disappear completely in the dry season and contain water only intermittently in the winter.

Geography

Area sq km:	446,550; sq mi 172,413
World Rank:	56th
Land Boundaries, km:	Algeria 1,559; Western Sahara 443; Spain 15.9
Coastline, km:	1,835
Elevation Extremes meters:	
Lowest:	Sebkha Tah -55
Highest:	Jbel Toubkal 4,165
Land Use %	
Arable Land:	19.6
Permanent Crops:	2.2
Forest:	6.8
Other:	71.4

Population of Principal Cities (2004)

Agadir	678,596
Casablanca	2,933,684
Fès	946,815
Kenitra	359,142
Marrakech	823,154
Meknès	536,232
Oujda	400,738
Rabat	1,622,860
Safi	284,750
Tangier	669,685
Tétouan	320,539

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Morocco has two climatic zones: a Mediterranean climate, with warm, wet winters and hot, dry summers in northern and central Morocco; and a semiarid climate in the pre-Saharan south. The coast in general has a more stable, fresher climate than the interior. The Atlantic coast is cooled by winds blowing off the sea. The mean temperature is 16.4 to 23°C (62 to 73°F) on the western coast and 10 to 27°C (50 to 81°F) in the interior. January is the coldest month, August the warmest.

The rainy seasons are from April to May and from October to November. Summer rain occurs only in the mountains. The amount of rainfall varies considerably between regions, from 1,000 mm (40 in) on the Atlantic coast to 100 mm (4 in) in the pre-Saharan region.

During the summer intensely hot winds from the Sahara, known as the sirocco, or *chergui*, sweep across the lowlands. The winds from the northwest are known as the levanter. Storms are common in the winter, especially in the mountains.

Climate and Weather
Mean Temperature

Western Coast: 62°F to 73°F

Interior: 50°F to 81°F

Average rainfall

Marrakesh: 10 in

Ifrne: 32 in to 40 in

Atlantic Coast: 8 in to 12 in

Haouz: 4 in to 8 in

Eastern Morocco: 4 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Plants in Morocco include herbs, grass, and low bushes in arid areas, along with date palms; evergreen oaks in the mountains; and eucalyptus and olive trees on the flat, fertile plains. The deserts are home to numerous reptiles, including snakes, chameleons, lizards, and the Berber skink, also called the "sand fish." Monkeys called Barbary apes live in the mountains.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 32,725,847

World Rank: 36th

Density per sq km: 67.5

% of annual growth (1999-2003): 1.6

Male %: 50.0

Female %: 50.0

Urban %: 57.4

Age Distribution %: 0-14: 32.6

15-64: 62.5

65 and over: 4.9

Population 2025: 42,553,000

Birth Rate per 1,000: 22.79

Death Rate per 1,000: 5.71

Rate of Natural Increase %: 1.9

Total Fertility Rate: 2.81

Expectation of Life (years): Males 68.06

Females 72.74

Marriage Rate per 1,000: —

Divorce Rate per 1,000: —

Average Size of Households: 5.8

Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Most Moroccans are Sunni Muslims of Arab, Berber, or mixed Arab-Berber stock. Morocco's Jewish minority accounts for some 0.2 percent of the population. Most of the foreign residents are French or Spanish. There are small groups of *barratins*, Berber-speaking black nomads, in the south.

Morocco is considered one of the least-Arabized regions of the Maghreb. However, distinctions between the Hamitic Berber and Semitic Arabs have ceased to have social and political significance because of the common bond of religion.

LANGUAGES

Arabic is the official and principal language, but French is widely used in government and commerce, except in the northern zone, where Spanish is spoken. In rural areas any of three Berber dialects, which are not mutually intelligible, are spoken.

Moroccan Arabic differs greatly from classical Arabic and would be unintelligible to a Syrian or an Iraqi Arab. In Morocco, classical Arabic is used by religious leaders and in literature.

Bilingualism is a feature of the country and a legacy of French rule. French has been the language of the modern bureaucratic, commercial, and intellectual sectors of society, while Arabic has been identified with old-fashioned religious authorities and does not offer prestige, jobs, or cultural mobility. There remains a social divide between individuals educated in French and those who speak only

Arabic, despite various attempts by the government to push Arabization.

RELIGIONS

Almost all Moroccans are Muslims of the Maliki rite of the Sunni sect. The government actively supports orthodox Islam through the *habas* (religious foundations) and the Islamic Affairs Ministry, the construction of new mosques at state expense, the establishment of Koranic schools, Islamic broadcasts on radio and television, and royal participation in religious activities. The center of religious life is the city of Fez.

The constitution provides guarantees for freedom of worship, and Judaism and Christianity are represented on a minor level, primarily in major cities. Conversion to another faith from Islam is strongly discouraged, however, and although the Jewish and Christian communities have experienced few conflicts with Muslims, they are not actively supported by the government.

Islamic fundamentalism has reared its head in recent years, most notably during the 1980s, but government spokesmen and the king have counseled the population against extremist religious philosophies and have admonished religious scholars to hew to orthodoxy.

Religious Affiliations

Muslim	32,300,000
Christian	360,000
Jewish	65,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Morocco's strategic location has shaped its history. Settled by the Phoenicians in the second millennium B.C.E., control of the area was subsequently held by Romans, Vandals, Visigoths, and Byzantine Greeks. Arab forces began occupying the area in the seventh century C.E., bringing with them Arab civilization and Islam. Portuguese and Spanish invasions helped to unify the land in defense. The Alouite dynasty, which has ruled Morocco since 1649, claims descent from the prophet Muhammad.

During the 17th and 18th centuries Morocco was one of the Barbary States, autonomous provinces of the Ottoman Empire. Attacks by local rulers on Mediterranean shipping and their support of piracy led to wars with Western powers and the United States (1801–05, 1815). European colonization in the region began in 1840. By 1904 France and Spain reached a secret agreement dividing Morocco into zones of influence, with France controlling almost all of the territory but Spain controlling the southwestern portion, which became known as Spanish, or Western, Sahara.

Morocco was a French protectorate from 1912 until 1956, when it was declared independent as the Sultanate of Morocco. In August 1957 Sultan Mohammed V became king. King Mohammed V assumed the role of prime minister in May 1960, but he died soon after, in February 1961.

He was succeeded by his son, Moulay Hassan, who took the title King Hassan II. During his nearly four decades in power, Hassan was able to override the relative instability of his early years as monarch. Despite coup and assassination attempts, demonstrations, and riots, he managed to consolidate power in the throne while at the same time allowing for a measure of political freedom in the form of the democratically elected Chamber of Representatives. Successive constitutions were drawn up during the period between 1962 and March 1972, when the current constitution was approved. A constitution promulgated in December 1962 had provision for a bicameral legislature, and in May 1963 Morocco's first House of Representatives was elected. In November Hassan gave up the role of prime minister. Students and workers rioted because of unfavorable economic conditions in 1965, and in June Hassan declared a "state of exception," taking on full executive and legislative powers. Emergency conditions remained in effect until July 1970, when a new constitution was approved, serving to strengthen monarchical power while at the same time providing for a modest return to parliamentary government through the creation of the Chamber of Representatives, which was elected in August.

The 1970s saw continued dispute over the Western Saharan territory. Tens of thousands of Moroccans occupied the area to back the government's claim. Spain withdrew control in 1976, and Mauritania overran the southern sector until 1979. Despite cease-fires declared in 1981 and 1991, Morocco's occupation of this area remains technically unresolved.

Expenditures for the Saharan dispute led to dissatisfaction with economic conditions and the king's programs. There were abortive military coups in 1971 and 1972, the former purportedly supported by Muammar Qaddafi of Libya and the latter by Gen. Mohammed Oufkir, Hassan's minister of defense.

In 1972 the current constitution was approved by popular referendum, but the king delayed elections until 1977, when parliamentary democracy was restored. The Government of National Unity was established, led by Ahmed Osman. The government was composed of members of the two most powerful political parties, Istiqlal and the Popular Movement, as well as promonarchist independents. Osman resigned his post in 1979, reportedly over his handling of the dispute over the Western Sahara. He was replaced by Maati Bouabid.

During the 1980s there were several occasions of serious internal upset—particularly in 1981 and 1984—as a result of rises in staple food prices and rumors of rises

in the cost of education. Using a mixture of ruthless suppression and the encouragement of some democratic participation, the king managed to consolidate and retain his power. Discontent was never channeled into effective political opposition.

In November 1983 the existing cabinet, which had reached the end of its constitutional six-year term, was replaced by an interim Government of National Unity, headed by Muhammad Karim Lamrani. Elections for the Chamber of Representatives resulted in Lamrani's again being named prime minister in 1985. Lamrani resigned for health reasons in 1986, and Hassan appointed Azzedine Laraki to replace him.

In 1985 Islamic fundamentalists were allegedly involved in a plot to overthrow the monarchy; 30 were arrested. Domestic opposition groups and Amnesty International charged the government with human rights abuses and the suppression of dissent throughout the 1980s. In response, Hassan issued amnesties for political and nonpolitical detainees in 1986 and 1987. A human rights group, Organisation des Droits de l'Homme, was created in 1988 and granted official status that same year. In 1989, on the anniversary of Hassan's enthronement, he issued a royal pardon for 1,200 prisoners.

Throughout the 1990s King Hassan promoted "Hasanian democracy," which allowed for significant political freedom while still keeping ultimate power with the monarch. In August 1999, after 38 years on the throne, the king died. His son, Prince Sidi Mohammed, was crowned King Mohammed VI. One of Mohammed VI's early acts as king was a tour of Western Sahara, where no Moroccan king had set foot in 10 years.

The early 2000s saw a fair amount of international disharmony. Morocco and Spain resolved their dispute over the uninhabited island of Perejil, which both nations claimed and which nearly led to the destruction of diplomatic relations between the two countries. In 2003 three Saudi Arabians were convicted by a court in Casablanca of planning attacks on American and British warships in the straits of Gibraltar as part of an al-Qaeda plot. Later that year a series of suicide bomb attacks in Casablanca killed 41 people and injured many others.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1927–61	Mohammed V
1961–99	Hassan II
1999–	Mohammed VI

CONSTITUTION

The constitution proclaims Morocco a sovereign Islamic state, part of the Great Maghreb, and an African state seeking realization of African unity. The monarchy is

described as constitutional, democratic, and social. The king is the highest authority in the state. He also bears the religious title of commander of the faithful and is commander in chief of the army. The cabinet and all top government positions are appointed by the king. The king can initiate amendments to the constitution, but they must be approved by popular referendum. He promulgates legislation that must then pass parliament, and he can submit legislation to popular referendum if he believes parliament will not approve it.

The government is headed by the prime minister, who countersigns laws, except those reserved to the monarch's sole power. The position of the monarch in the political system is the most crucial element determining the stability of the Moroccan government. The king commands widespread allegiance as commander of the faithful and as a descendant of the prophet Mohammed. On the negative side, the army's loyalty has been uncertain in the past, and power has become entrenched in a small and exclusive privileged class.

In 1992 King Hassan responded to popular pressure and constitutionally expanded parliament's powers. In 1996 there was a national referendum that established a new upper house along with direct representation in the House of Representatives.

PARLIAMENT

Since the 1996 constitutional reform, the bicameral legislature consists of the 325-seat lower House of Representatives, elected through universal suffrage, and the 270-seat upper House of Counselors, whose members are elected by various regional, local, and professional councils. The legislature initiates constitutional amendments, authorizes declarations of war, debates new legislation, calls for changes and reforms, and approves legislation. The parliament's powers, though limited, were expanded by the 1992 constitution and include authority over budgetary matters, the approval of bills presented by the king, and the establishment of ad hoc commissions of inquiry to investigate actions by the executive branch.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Morocco has many political parties. The National Rally of Independents (RNI) was founded in 1977 by the then prime minister Ahmed Osman, who continued to lead the party as of 2004. The Istiqlal (PI), founded in 1944, is Morocco's oldest political party and helped lead the fight for independence from the French. The party retains its strongly nationalistic philosophy and is among the most active on Pan-Arab issues. The Berber-based Popular Movement (MP) and breakaway National Popular Movement (MNP) have as their main issue the promotion and

protection of Berber culture and interests. The Union of Socialist Popular Forces (USFP), established in 1974, is in the tradition of the social democratic parties in Europe. It is strong in urban centers, among organized labor, and among youth groups. The center-right Constitutional Union Party (UC) was founded in April 1983. The National Democratic Party (PND) was formed in 1981 when it broke from the RNI. It is principally rural based. The Party of Progress and Socialism (PPS) is the latest label for the small Moroccan Communist party. The party is tolerated now but has been declared officially illegal in the past. Other significant parties include the Democratic and Social Movement (MDS), the Action Party (PA), and the Front of Democratic Forces (FFD). There are multiple smaller parties and independent candidates.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Morocco is divided into 16 administrative regions, which are further subdivided into 36 provinces and two urban prefectures. Each region is run by a *wali* and a governor appointed by the king. Western Sahara is administered as an annexed territory and divided into four provinces.

The basic regional units of the pyramidal structure of local government are the constituency, or *circonscription*; the *cercle*; and the province. The constituency is the traditional unit of administration; it is also called the *caïdat*, headed by an executive called the *caïd*. Constituencies are further subdivided into communes, each administered by a sheikh. Small villages within each commune are under the traditional authority of the *muqaddams*, or headmen. The urban constituencies are headed by officials known as pashas, while each municipal ward in an urban constituency is under a *khalif*. Each ward is the equivalent of a French *arrondissement*.

Representative institutions at the local government level include provincial and prefectural councils, or assemblies, and urban and rural communal councils, elected by universal suffrage.

LEGAL SYSTEM

Until independence the legal system was a mixture of the Islamic sharia code, Berber customary law, rabbinical law, and French and Spanish legal codes. The work of creating a unified legal structure and court system was undertaken between 1956 and 1959. The Code of Personal Status was compiled in 1958, and a reformed penal code was published in 1959.

The Moroccan judicial system is generally considered fair and is in most respects independent of political control. Cases are brought before an initial review court, which can call for a hearing. In cases involving serious crimes, courts generally move quickly to bring cases to

trial. If convicted by a court of first instance, a defendant has the right to appeal. The highest court in the independent judicial structure is the Supreme Court, the judges of which are appointed by the king.

Although most cases are handled by the civilian courts, Morocco also has a parallel judicial system using principles of Islamic law to deal with marriage, divorce, child custody, and inheritance.

The penal system operates under the Penitentiary Administrative Division of the Ministry of Justice. There are some 35 prisons in the country, including three maximum-security prisons. While sentences include the death penalty—with 75 people convicted as of 1999—executions have in fact not been carried out since 1993.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Morocco is an authoritarian state where human rights are enjoyed by the subjects at the sufferance of the government. Although criticism of the monarch is not permitted, criticism of the administration and government officials is commonplace. There is general religious tolerance, although in practice only Islam is encouraged and supported. The role of women remains restricted, although discrimination against them is prohibited by law. The constitution allows workers the right to join trade unions and strike. Constitutional provisions establishing periodic free elections notwithstanding, citizens do not have the full right to change their government.

Human rights groups have often charged that the government permits abuse and torture, and there are frequent charges of abuses of detainment and due process, prisoner abuse, and intolerable conditions. Progress was made during the 1990s, however, and the government released or pardoned detainees.

FOREIGN POLICY

Morocco has expanded its regional role in recent years, maintaining and expanding its relations with Arab countries and with Israel. The country has played a role in the search for peace in the Middle East, participating in peace talks and urging Arab moderation. In 1994 Morocco and Israel announced the opening of liaison offices in each other's countries. Morocco has close relations with Saudi Arabia and the Persian Gulf states; it was the first Arab state to condemn Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, and it sent troops to help defend Saudi Arabia. Relations between Morocco and Algeria have improved in recent years, as reflected by King Hassan's 1992 ratification of the long-pending border agreement.

The sovereignty of Western Sahara is Morocco's biggest foreign relations concern. Morocco claims the country based on the resident tribes' traditional loyalty to the

Moroccan king. An independence movement called the Polisario claim that Western Sahara should be an independent nation; Algeria agrees with this assessment. Morocco, Mauritania, and Spain all fought over the territory during the 20th century. In 1979 Mauritania withdrew, and Morocco built fortifications around the territory and claimed administrative control. The United Nations instituted a cease-fire between the two nations in 1991, but since then neither side has been willing to consider a settlement proposal. King Mohammed VI visited Western Sahara in 2001, the first visit by a Moroccan monarch in a decade and the source of some controversy.

Morocco has long been sympathetic to the West and shares U.S. concerns in regional peace and development. In 2004 a comprehensive bilateral Free Trade Agreement between the United States and Morocco came into effect.

DEFENSE

The defense structure is headed by the king as supreme commander and as chief of the general staff. The Royal Guard is directly under the king's personal command. Manpower is provided by national conscription. The three branches of the armed forces are the army, the navy, and the air force.

At independence the newly created Royal Moroccan Army received \$40 million worth of military equipment from France, and French military aid continued until 1966. Soviet aid began in 1960. From 1949 to 1983 U.S. aid amounted to nearly \$500 million, and Morocco has purchased arms from the United States and France. The United States has granted Morocco Major Non-NATO Ally status, and Morocco allows U.S. forces to use its facilities; NASA has also landed space shuttles in Morocco.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 195,000
 Military Manpower Availability: 8,788,971
 Military Expenditures \$billion: 2.3
 as % of GDP: 4.8
 as % of central government expenditures: —
 Arms Imports \$million: 169
 Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

The Moroccan economy is becoming increasingly diversified. The country has the largest phosphate reserves in the world, accounting for more than one-quarter of the economy. Other major industries include textiles, clothing, and metalworking.

The Moroccan government has pursued an economic reform plan supported by the International Mon-

etary Fund (IMF). Nevertheless, population growth, rural to urban migration, and higher labor force participation have contributed to rising unemployment.

As part of its IMF program, Morocco has reduced its budget deficit. The government actively encourages foreign investment and has made recent regulatory changes to improve the general investment climate.

In 1999, 2000, and 2002 drought conditions depressed activity in the key agricultural sector and contributed to a stagnant economy, though a good rainfall in 2003 led to growth of 6 percent. In the early 2000s Morocco sold a mobile-telephone license and partly privatized the tobacco and telecommunications industries, which contributed to economic growth. The nation's biggest concerns for the future are attracting foreign investment and improving education, which are essential to providing jobs for Morocco's many young people and improving living standards.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 128.3
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 4,000
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 3.2
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 1.5
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 22.9
 Industry: 35.5
 Services: 41.6
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 62
 Government Consumption: 19
 Gross Domestic Investment: 21.7
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 8.466
 Imports: 12.75
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 2.6
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 30.9

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
106.9	107.7	109.7	110.4	113.5

Finance

National Currency: Moroccan Dirham (MAD)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = MAD 9.5744
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 299
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 3.25
 Total External Debt \$billion: 17.32
 Debt Service Ratio %: 25.71
 Balance of Payments \$million: 963
 International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 13.63
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 1.2

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 636.2
 per capita \$: 21.50
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 428

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: July 1–June 30
 Revenues \$billion: 13.8
 Expenditures \$billion: 14.0
 Budget Deficit \$million: 200
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: 25.0

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 22.9
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 4.3
 Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares: 4.9
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 13.8
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 41.2
 Total Farmland % of land area: 19.6
 Livestock: Cattle million: 2.7
 Chickens million: 137
 Pigs 000: 8
 Sheep million: 16.74
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 7.44
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 896.6

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 7.3
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: —

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 131
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 10.98
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 376
 Net Energy Imports % of use: 94.7
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 4.1
 Production kW-hr billion: 13.35
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 14.61
 Coal Reserves tons billion: —
 Production tons 000: 300
 Consumption tons 000: 300
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic meters million: 665.4
 Production cubic meters million: 50
 Consumption cubic meters million: 50
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels million: 1.6
 Production barrels 000 per day: 0.2
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 167
 Pipelines Length km: 285

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 12.75
 Exports \$billion: 8.466
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 3.4
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 4.5
 Balance of Trade \$million: 963

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
France %	20.6	26.5
Spain %	12.4	16.7
Italy %	7.1	5.0
Germany %	5.2	5.2
Saudi Arabia %	5.0	—
Russia %	4.9	—
United States %	4.1	4.0
United Kingdom %	—	7.2

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 57,707
 Paved %: 56.4
 Automobiles: 1,253,000
 Trucks and Buses: 431,000
 Railroad: Track Length km: 1,907
 Passenger-km billion: 2.15
 Freight-km billion: 4.97
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 35
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 252.4
 Airports: 64
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 6.05
 Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 4.193
 Number of Tourists from million: 1.533
 Tourist Receipts \$billion: 2.152
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 444

Communications

Telephones million: 1.22
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.15
 Cellular Telephones million: 7.33
 Personal Computers 000: 600
 Internet Hosts per million people: 111
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 24

ENVIRONMENT

Environmental problems faced by Morocco include those related to agricultural practices, such as land degradation and desertification, soil erosion resulting from farming of marginal areas, and the destruction of vegetation. In addition, the water supplies are noted to be contaminated by raw sewage, and there is oil pollution of the coastal waters. In recent years strides have been made by the government to cooperate with international agreements, including those related to biodiversity, endangered species, hazardous waste and marine dumping, ozone-layer protection, and nuclear test bans.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 6.8
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: -1
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 1
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 88,779
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 1.27

LIVING CONDITIONS

Morocco does not have a good waste-disposal system; the water supply is contaminated in many places, causing diseases. The population has grown rapidly, which puts pressure on housing, transportation, and other facilities, especially in urban areas. Wealthy city dwellers live in modern apartments or houses, but large numbers of the poor live in shantytowns on the outskirts of the cities. Some nomadic tribes in the southern part of the country still wander the desert, stopping at oases for water and living in tents.

HEALTH

The government has worked to make health care available to all its people and to improve health generally. Urban areas now have ample facilities and personnel, and mobile medical units and pharmacies service rural areas. The government offers programs to teach people about health matters, such as hygiene. Since the early 1980s the country has eliminated smallpox and reduced the frequency of malaria, tuberculosis, and typhus. The state is working on eliminating sexually transmitted diseases and eye problems. Despite these efforts, many Moroccans have not been registered with the national health service, and some poor people do not have access to modern medicine. Small children are especially vulnerable to deadly diseases such as tetanus, measles, and whooping cough, and though infant mortality is much better than it once was, in 2004 it was still relatively high. Life expectancy is 70 years.

Health

Number of Physicians: 14,293
 Number of Dentists: 2,304
 Number of Nurses: 29,462
 Number of Pharmacists: 4,901
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 48
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 43.25
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 220
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 5.1
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 59
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.1
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 94
 Measles: 96
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 61
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 80

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Couscous—granular semolina—forms the basis of most Moroccan meals. Cooks mix couscous with spices, nuts, dried fruits, and vegetables and serve it with meat stew; lamb is the usual ingredient. People cook meat or fish for hours in a clay pot with a cone-shaped lid called a *ta-jine*. Semolina bread is also commonly eaten; home cooks make their own dough and form it into loaves, then bring it to the community's baker to be cooked. Moroccans eat many dried fruits and nuts, including raisins, figs, dates, dried apricots, dried lemons, pistachios, pine nuts, and almonds. Spices are crucial to Moroccan cuisine. Popular ones are cinnamon, chili, garlic, cumin, saffron, and coriander, as well as a spicy paste called *harissa*. Typical desserts are made of phyllo dough, nuts, honey, and cinnamon. People drink a great deal of tea, usually flavored with mint.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 6.7
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 3,010
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 247.3
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 165.5

STATUS OF WOMEN

Women have more freedom in Morocco than in other Muslim countries, but they nevertheless suffer various forms of legal and cultural discrimination. The civil-law status of women is governed by the Code of Personal Status, which is based on Islamic sharia law. Although the code was reformed in 1993, women's groups still complain of unequal treatment, particularly under the laws governing marriage, divorce, and inheritance. Spousal abuse and rape are common but rarely reported, due to the difficulty of pressing criminal charges as well as to social stigma.

A new law passed in 2004, the *Mudawana*, has changed women's status, at least on paper. Men were previously able to divorce their wives for any reason at any time, and as a result many women ended up on the street, begging to support themselves and their children. The new law states that whichever parent keeps the children also keeps the family home, and that women over the age of 18 can act as their own guardians, a role that was previously given to fathers and other male relatives, who were thus allowed to decide the fate of their daughters. Women remain minors under the penal code.

Women make up around 35 percent of the workforce, and well-educated women can pursue professional careers, although few rise to the top echelons. Rural women are more subject to inequality, have lower literacy rates, and are more likely to undertake difficult physical labor.

There are various nongovernmental organizations focusing on women's rights in Morocco, including the Democratic Association of Moroccan Women, the Union for Women's Action, and the Moroccan Association for Women's Rights. These groups advocate political and civil rights as well as provide shelters for battered women, instruction in basic hygiene and family planning, and education.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 11
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 0.79
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 26.2

WORK

About 40 percent of the workforce is employed in agriculture, 15 percent in industry, and 45 percent in services. Farm employees work on large mechanized farms that grow wheat, corn, potatoes, sugar beets, citrus fruits, and grapes. Other agricultural workers cut down and process cork from the country's forests or catch fish. Some people still live as subsistence farmers, selling any extra produce in local markets. Industrial workers mine phosphates and other minerals, make clothing, pottery, or leather goods, or refine petroleum. Tourism employs a large number of Moroccans. Almost one-fifth of people of working age are unemployed, and many Moroccans have emigrated to Europe or North America to find work, sending money home to their families.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 10,840,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 34.9
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 40
 Industry: 15
 Services: 45
 Unemployment %: 19

EDUCATION

Education is free and compulsory through primary school. Education now surpasses national defense as the largest item in the government's budget. The curriculum includes learning the Koran by rote, Islamic history, and Islamic reading and writing. Besides Koranic schools, private schools are permitted to operate. Private schools include French Cultural Mission and Jewish schools. Public schools suffer from a shortage of teachers, particularly as the population grows, and rural children have difficulty attending school. Students must buy their own supplies

and provide their own transportation. In rural areas some students cannot attend school at all; boys get priority over girls in most cases. The government has set aside money specifically to educate girls, and the number of girls attending school has grown steadily since the 1980s. Despite this, in some rural areas female illiteracy is 83 percent.

Of Morocco's several universities, the most important is Mohammed V University in Rabat, where students study medicine, law, liberal arts, and the sciences. In Fez, Morocco's religious capital, students from around the world study Islamic law and theology at Karaouine University, which is more than 1,000 years old. Most university students benefit from government stipends.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 51.7
 Male %: 64.1
 Female %: 39.4
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 9.9
 First Level: Primary Schools: 4,740
 Teachers: 145,553
 Students: 4,101,157
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 28.2
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 89.6
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 1,172
 Teachers: 97,146
 Students: 1,651,960
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 18.1
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 35.7
 Third Level: Institutions: 50
 Teachers: 17,962
 Students: 335,755
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 10.8
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 6.5

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Morocco has a modern telephone system, but its density is very low, especially in rural areas; there were just over one million landlines available in 2003. Many more people have cellular telephones; there were around seven million of them in the country in 2003. Approximately 800,000 people were using the Internet in 2003, by all accounts without restriction; the government does not block the sites people may view. Scientific research has been increasing in recent years, but the nation's technological plans are not coordinated, and there is some duplication of effort.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: 438.7
 Patent Applications by Residents: 104

MEDIA

Although freedom of the press is guaranteed by the constitution, the government is empowered to adopt severe measures to limit that freedom, including through the suspension of newspapers, the seizure of copies, and the imprisonment of journalists who insult Islam or the monarchy, especially on the subject of Western Sahara. Though journalists tend to censor what they write, they can and do occasionally investigate other sensitive topics, such as women's rights. The country has several daily and weekly newspapers, and many foreign journals are available in Morocco. All publications, whether printed in Morocco or imported, require government approval before they can be sold. Many Moroccans cannot read, which limits readership of print publications.

The national news agency is the government-owned *Wikalat al-Maghreb al-Arabi*, with headquarters in Rabat. Foreign news agencies also maintain offices in Morocco. Most broadcasting is operated by *Radiodiffusion Télévision Marocaine (RTM)*, an agency of the Ministry of Information. Television, introduced in 1962, now covers all densely populated areas with programs in Arabic and French, and more programs are available by satellite receiver. The other television network is *Medi 1*, a privately owned station based in Tangier.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 23
 Total Circulation 000: 846
 Circulation per 1,000: 28
 Books Published: 386
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets million: 4.6
 per 1,000: 165

CULTURE

Moroccan artists make a wide variety of handicrafts and works of art, including leather goods, jewelry, and elaborately woven carpets. Artisans in the markets make metal objects such as decorated silver trays and bowls. Moroccan architecture is world famous; mosques and madrassas display the fullest extent of the architects' and mosaicists' skill.

Classical Moroccan music evolved in medieval Spain. *Rai* music, typical of Algeria, is very popular in Morocco, as is *chaabi*. Along with music, Moroccans cultivate the artistic use of language. Modern writers usually employ French; well-known authors include Tahar Ben Jelloun, Driss Chraïbi, and Ahmed Sefrioui. Morocco has been the setting for several major movies, including *Lawrence of Arabia* and *The Sheltering Sky*.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: 11
 Annual Attendance: 1,580,000
 Cinema Gross Receipts national currency million: 111
 Number of Cinemas: 175
 Seating Capacity: 124,000
 Annual Attendance: 14,300,000

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Every tribe in Morocco has its own folklore, much of which is communicated through music and dance. Most Berber songs tell stories, which are often visually depicted by dancers. Every year a folklore festival is held in Marrakesh. Performances include dances from the Atlas Mountains, the dagger dance in which a young man and woman dance together, various warrior dances performed only by men, and many other dances done to traditional music played on pipes and drums, along with hand clapping and foot stomping.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Moroccans enjoy visiting and socializing with relatives and friends, either at home or in cafés, where they fuel conversation with endless cups of coffee or tea and occasionally smoke hookahs. Men and women both like to visit public steam baths, called *hammam*, where steam is produced by wetting burning wood shavings. Public markets are popular locations for shopping, socializing, eating from open-air stalls, and watching performers such as snake charmers, acrobats, and magicians.

ETIQUETTE

People always wash their hands before eating, and they always use their right hands to feed themselves, using only the thumb and first two fingers. Often women do not eat with men; a wife will place the meal on the table and then leave the male family members and guests to eat. A guest should never refuse food, and should continue nibbling even when full, unless all other diners are finished eating. It is proper for a guest to praise the meal lavishly. If a guest admires an object in a Moroccan home, his or her hosts will probably present it as a gift.

FAMILY LIFE

Moroccan social life is centered around the family. Though family units have become smaller in recent years,

especially in the cities, many households still consist of parents, unmarried children, and married sons plus their wives and children. Marriages are still arranged on occasion, and the families of the bride and groom are each expected to furnish the couple with a substantial sum of money. When couples divorce, the wife typically takes the property but the husband keeps the children. Traditionally, men and women kept to strictly separate spheres, but in modern times the lines between the sexes have blurred. Berber women have always had more freedom of motion than Arabs.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Though Western clothes have become fairly common, many Moroccans still wear traditional clothing. Both sexes wear the *jellaba*, a loose-fitting long-sleeved hooded robe. Women wear long robes called caftans, and many women veil their faces. Some men wear a red cap called a tarboosh, which is similar to the fez. Berber men like to carry elaborate daggers and wear white turbans.

SPORTS

Soccer is the most popular sport in Morocco, which was the first African nation to enter a team in the World Cup, in 1970. Children and adults play in the streets, and when games are broadcast on television almost everyone stops whatever they are doing to watch the national team, "The Lions of the Atlas." Track and field is the second-biggest sport, and Morocco has produced numerous male and female champions, including Nezha Bidouane and Hicham El Guerrouj. The Marathon des Sables is a week-long footrace across the desert that takes place every year and attracts participants from all over the world. Tennis, golf, rowing, and auto racing are also popular.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1956** Morocco gains independence, with Mohammed V as king. Relations with France are broken over the French hijacking of a plane carrying the Algerian leader Ben Bella. Spanish Tangier is restored to Morocco.
- 1958** The king's Charter of Public Liberties is issued. Spain relinquishes the southern zone of its Spanish protectorate. M'barek Bekkai and Ahmed Balefrej serve briefly as prime ministers. Abdullah Ibrahim is named prime minister, succeeding Balafrej.
- 1959** The dirham is introduced as the unit of currency, replacing the Moroccan franc.
- 1960** Agadir is destroyed in an earthquake, and 4,500 persons are killed. Ibrahim is ousted as prime minister; the king takes over the prime ministership. Diplomatic relations with France are broken over French nuclear testing in the Sahara.
- 1961** King Mohammed dies. Crown Prince Hassan succeeds to the throne as Hassan II. Hassan also heads the cabinet as prime minister.
- 1962** New constitution is promulgated, as ratified in a referendum.
- 1963** Border conflict erupts with Algeria. U.S. air bases in Morocco are returned to the Moroccan government. The king yields the prime ministership to Ahmed Bahnin.
- 1965** In the wake of nationwide riots, Hassan proclaims a state of emergency, or "of exception." The king takes over the prime ministership again. Diplomatic relations with France are suspended over the murder of nationalist leader and politician Mehdi Ben Barka in Paris by the king's agents.
- 1967** Mohammed Benhima is named to head the cabinet.
- 1969** Morocco hosts Islamic and Arab summit conferences at Rabat. Ahmed Laraki heads new government. Spain relinquishes province of Ifni to Morocco.
- 1970** National state of "exception" is lifted. New constitution is promulgated, as approved in a referendum.
- 1971** Hassan survives an assassination attempt and an army coup. Muhammad Karim Lamrani heads a new cabinet.
- 1972** Hassan survives a second assassination attempt, when his plane is shot at in midair. Mohammed Oufkir, the powerful defense minister, is implicated in plot and commits suicide. New constitution is promulgated, as approved in a referendum. Ahmed Osman takes over the prime ministership.
- 1973** Morocco accelerates Moroccanization and Arabization programs. All French-owned farms are taken over by the state. Morocco reaches accord with Algeria over disputed border.
- 1975** Hassan leads "Green March" to Spanish Sahara to demonstrate Moroccan claims to the region.
- 1976** Morocco and Mauritania divide Spanish Sahara between themselves, while Algeria supports Spanish Sahara's claim to independence. Morocco and Algeria reach the brink of war once again.
- 1977** In nationwide elections, independents and royalists gain absolute majority in the Chamber of Representatives.

- 1978** As Mauritania signs a unilateral peace treaty with the Polisario forces fighting for Saharan autonomy, Morocco claims the whole of Western Sahara and occupies Tiris el-Gharbia.
- 1979** Prime Minister Ahmad Osman steps down and is replaced by Maati Bouabid.
- 1981** Consultative Council of Western Sahara meets. Riots break out in major cities following hike in food prices and implementation of IMF austerity program.
- 1983** Muhammad Karim Lamrani is named prime minister, replacing Maati Bouabid.
- 1984** Arab-African Federation Treaty, signed by King Hassan and Colonel Qaddafi of Libya, is approved in referendum. Morocco leaves the Organization of African Unity (OAU) over the Western Sahara issue. New elections are held for the Chamber of Representatives.
- 1985** Some 30 Islamic fundamentalists are convicted of a plot to overthrow the monarchy. Morocco declares unilateral cease-fire in Western Sahara. UN General Assembly upholds Polisario's resolution that direct negotiations with Morocco must precede referendum on self-determination in Western Sahara.
- 1986** Morocco severs diplomatic relations with Syria. A total of 26 left-wing activists are sentenced to prison terms for subversion. Later in the year King Hassan declares a series of amnesties for political and nonpolitical prisoners. Morocco announces boycott of all UN talks on Western Sahara.
- 1987** Royal pardon is granted to Muhammad Basri, who had allegedly been involved in plots against King Hassan. Little progress is made in UN- and OAU-sponsored indirect talks between Morocco and Polisario. Intense fighting involving Moroccan and Polisario forces breaks out on Mauritanian border.
- 1988** By midyear 71 countries have granted diplomatic recognition to Western Sahara, formally proclaimed the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR). Morocco and Polisario provisionally accept a peace plan proposed by the UN secretary-general.
- 1989** For the first time in 13 years direct contact takes place between King Hassan and officials of Polisario and SADR, who meet in Marrakesh in January. Polisario announces cease-fire, which lasts six weeks. Polisario resumes hostilities in mid-March. Diplomatic relations with Syria are resumed.
- 1990** Morocco condemns the Iraq invasion of Kuwait and provides troops to defend Saudi Arabia.
- 1991** In response to pro-Iraqi demonstrations, the government supports a one-day general strike to express solidarity with the Iraqi people. King Hassan visits the United States.
- 1992** Major opposition parties form the National Front to contest government policies and demand electoral reforms. The new constitution is ratified, providing for a prime minister as head of government, to be appointed by the king. King Hassan ratifies the long-pending border agreement with Algeria.
- 1993** Elections are held in June, the fairest and most representative in Morocco since its independence. The Code of Personal Status is reformed, expanding women's rights.
- 1994** Morocco and Israel announce the opening of liaison offices in each other's countries.
- 1996** A national referendum to the constitution approves the creation of a second legislative chamber and the direct election of members of the existing Chamber of Representatives.
- 1999** King Hassan II dies after 38 years on the throne and is succeeded by his son, who is crowned King Mohammed VI.
- 2001** King Mohammed tours Western Sahara.
- 2002** Morocco and Spain engage in talks about the disputed island of Perejil.
- 2003** Morocco jails three members of al-Qaeda for plotting to attack British and U.S. ships. Suicide bomb attacks in Casablanca kill 41 people.
- 2004** Over 500 people die in an earthquake in the north. Morocco and the United States finalize a free-trade agreement.

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- Morocco.** *Annuaire statistique du Maroc; Recensement general de la population et de l'habitat de 1994*

CONTACT INFORMATION

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Moroccan Ministry of Communication
<http://www.mincom.gov.ma>

MOZAMBIQUE

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Mozambique (República de Moçambique)

ABBREVIATION

MZ

CAPITAL

Maputo

HEAD OF STATE

President Armando Guebuza (from 2005)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Luisa Diogo (from 2004)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Republic

POPULATION

19,406,703 (2005)

AREA

801,590 sq km (309,494 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Makua, Sena, Ndau, Tsonga, Shangaan

LANGUAGES

Portuguese (official), Makua, Tsonga, Lomwe, Sena

RELIGIONS

Animism, Christianity, Islam

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Metical

NATIONAL FLAG

Three equal horizontal bands of green (top), black, and yellow with a red isosceles triangle based on the hoist side. The black band is edged in white. Centered in the triangle is a yellow five-pointed star bearing a crossed rifle and hoe in black superimposed on an open white book.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

The main elements of the national emblem are a cogwheel of 24 cogs, a white book outlined in black, and black silhouettes of a hoe and an AK-47 rifle placed on a relief of Mozambique, with the Indian Ocean in the foreground. The emblem appears within a wreath made of two corn husks, with a red star on the top and the legend "República de Moçambique" in a red banner at the bottom.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"Viva, Viva FRELIMO"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

June 25 (National Day, Independence Day), all major Catholic festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

June 25, 1975

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

November 30, 1990

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Mozambique, on the southeastern coast of Africa opposite the island of Madagascar, has an area of 801,590 sq km (309,494 sq mi). Its coastline on the Indian Ocean stretches 2,470 km (1,535 mi). It shares its borders with Malawi, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

Topographically, the country is divided by the Zambezi River into two halves. North of the Zambezi the narrow coastline yields to hills and low plateaus and, farther

west, to rugged highlands, of which the most prominent are the Livingstone-Nyasa Highlands, the Shire or Namuli Highlands, the Angonia Highlands, the Tete Highlands, and the Maconde Plateau. South of the Zambezi the littoral is broader, extending in places almost the entire width of the country. In the south are the Gorongosa Highlands, an extension of the Mashonaland Plateau, and the Lebombo Mountains in the deep south. Only 44 percent of Mozambique is littoral lowlands and marshes; another 17 percent is low plateaus and hills, 26 percent is high plateaus, and 13 percent is mountainous area. The

Mozambique



highest points in the country are the mountain peaks of Namuli (2,418 m; 7,936 ft), Binga (2,436 m; 7,992 ft), and Serra Zaira (2,227 m; 7,306 ft).

Mozambique is drained by five major river systems and several smaller ones, all of which flow into the Indian Ocean. The largest and historically the most important

1650 Mozambique

is the Zambezi, which flows through Mozambique for 820 km (509 mi), of which 460 km (285 mi) are navigable. At Songo the river is the site of the Cabora Bassa Dam, one of the largest in the world and the last monumental legacy of Portuguese rule.

Geography

Area sq km: 801,590; sq mi 309,494
World Rank: 35th
Land Boundaries, km: Malawi 1,569; South Africa 491; Swaziland 105; Tanzania 756; Zambia 419; Zimbabwe 1,231
Coastline, km: 2,470
Elevation Extremes meters:
Lowest: Indian Ocean 0
Highest: Monte Binga 2,436
Land Use %
Arable Land: 5.1
Permanent Crops: 0.3
Forest: 39.0
Other: 55.6

Population of Principal Cities (1997)

Beira	412,588
Maputo	989,386
Matola	440,927
Nampula	314,965

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Mozambique has a tropical climate with two seasons: wet, lasting from October to March, and dry, lasting from April to September. During the wet season monthly temperatures average 26.6°C to 29.4°C (80°F to 85°F); during the dry season the June and July temperatures average 18.4°C to 20°C (65°F to 68°F).

Within this general framework there is considerable variation in climate, as influenced by differences in elevation, the presence of Lake Malawi in the west, and the warm Mozambique Current along the coast. Rainfall is particularly heavy along the central coast but decreases to the north and south of this region. Sofala (formerly Beira) receives more than 1,420 mm (56 in), while the southern coast receives 760–1,010 mm (30–40 in), the northern coast 610–1,220 mm (24–48 in), and the Zambezi lowlands 400–800 mm (16–32 in). Rainfall is irregular; the southern districts are subject to both droughts and floods. Cyclones are common in the wet season.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature
Wet Season: 80°F to 85°F
Dry Season: 65°F to 68°F
Average Rainfall
Sofala: 56 in
Southern Coast: 30 in to 40 in
Northern Coast: 24 in to 48 in
Zambezi Lowlands: 16 in to 32 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Mozambique's landscape includes beaches with palm trees, swamps, grassy savannas, and mountains and plains covered with forests; the main types of trees are hardwoods, acacia, and papaya. More than 5,600 plant species have been identified. The Maputland Center of Plant Diversity and the Chimanimani Mountains have some of the most significant biodiversity in the world.

Many of Mozambique's large mammals were killed during the war; there are a few elephants and black rhinoceroses, but their numbers are alarmingly small. Buffalo seem to have disappeared entirely. The Burchell's zebra and the blue Niassa wildebeest seem to be reestablishing themselves, particularly in the Niassa Reserve. There are many kinds of insects, reptiles, amphibians, and birds. The Mozambique Bird Atlas Project is working to document avian biodiversity. In the ocean, there are many kinds of fish, turtles, and aquatic mammals, including whales, dolphins, and manatees.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 19,406,703
World Rank: 54th
Density per sq km: 24.0
% of annual growth (1999-2003): 2.0
Male %: 49.5
Female %: 50.5
Urban %: 35.6
Age Distribution %: 0–14: 43.6
15–64: 53.6
65 and over: 2.8
Population 2025: 23,595,000
Birth Rate per 1,000: 36.06
Death Rate per 1,000: 23.86
Rate of Natural Increase %: 2.1
Total Fertility Rate: 4.78
Expectation of Life (years): Males 37.83
Females 36.34
Marriage Rate per 1,000: —
Divorce Rate per 1,000: —
Average Size of Households: 4.4
Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Unlike other African countries, the ethnic composition and groups of Mozambique have not been studied and analyzed in detail by ethnographers, and there are gaps in available data. Most scholars identify 10 ethnic clusters with certain common characteristics. However, few of these tribes have the social organization or cohesiveness usually associated with such groups; there are, in fact, few common bonds that transcend single villages or groups of villages. Social organization, while essentially tribal, is too fragmented to be described in general terms.

In terms of territoriality, the Makua-Lomwe cluster and the Neto subgroup dominate the region north of the Zambezi, while the Tsonga cluster dominates the region south of the Zambezi.

The number of Portuguese permanently resident in Mozambique has been variously estimated, but the generally cited figure is 15,000. The country's economic and political troubles and its growing Marxist orientation have been responsible for the steady exodus of even non-Portuguese Western residents.

LANGUAGES

Portuguese is the official language and the medium of administration, education, and commerce. Numerous African languages, including Ronga, Shangaan, Swahili, and Muchope, are widely spoken, but none predominates enough to be a *lingua franca*.

RELIGIONS

The majority of Mozambicans—estimated at 50 percent—adhere to traditional African religions. Muslims, found chiefly along the northern littoral, account for about 20 percent of the population, while about 30 percent are Christian, either Roman Catholic or Protestant.

Roman Catholicism was the dominant religion of Mozambique during Portuguese rule. Catholic missionary efforts began with the arrival of the Jesuits in 1560 and the Dominicans in 1577. Catholics are widely distributed among the population, while Protestants are found mainly in the south. The Niassa Nguni are perhaps the most completely Christianized of all tribes.

The constitution of 1975 established a secular state. The Mozambique Liberation Front leadership is explicitly atheist and particularly hostile to the Catholic Church. Most foreign-born priests and missionaries were expelled in 1976. Although the constitution of 1975 guaranteed freedom of religion, in the past the government placed restrictions on the activities of religious groups. It reserved the right to decide whether individual church buildings could be used and whether individual clergy could visit outlying areas. It also nationalized church schools and hospitals.

Through the early 2000s, however, there has been an improvement in church-state relations. Organized religions operate with relative freedom, and some churches are effective in social work activities and in acting as channels for distribution of emergency food donations to the poorest regions of the country.

Religious Affiliations

Indigenous beliefs	9,703,400
Christian	5,822,000
Muslim	3,881,300

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Archaeological evidence attests to the presence of *Homo sapiens* in the region of modern Mozambique more than 100,000 years ago. Around 2,000 years ago the Bantu people began to settle in the area. Many Arab trading posts were established on the coast, and the Bantu people became important players in international trade. Vasco da Gama arrived in 1498 intending to use the coast as a port for the Portuguese.

Mozambique was one of the first African territories to be colonized by a Western power and among the last to gain independence. The earliest Portuguese settlements were established in the 16th century. The territory was ruled as part of Goa, a Portuguese territory in India, until 1752, when it was given its own administration. After losing Brazil in 1822, Portugal made a conscientious effort to build its African territories. Mozambique was given a governor-general in place of a captain-general. The government also took over the task of providing formal education for the indigenes. By 1890 the borders of the colony were officially demarcated. At the end of the 19th century, when the Portuguese treasury was overburdened by the administrative costs of maintaining its African colonies, the territories were farmed out to chartered companies, which were granted virtual monopoly rights and even some measure of sovereignty. The three largest of these companies were the Zambezia Company, the Mozambique Company, and the Nyassa Company. The two latter companies came under the control of the British and Germans, respectively, thus effectively reducing Portuguese influence in the region. Portugal's general apathy about its African possessions and the rapacity of the private companies combined to inspire at least 16 African revolts between 1890 and 1905, including the Zambezi rebellion of 1917.

The next landmark in Portuguese rule was the rise of Antonio Salazar as finance minister from 1928 to 1932 and as dictator from 1932. Salazar introduced radical changes in Portugal's approach to its colonies. He broke up the special commercial interests and passed the Colonial Act of 1930, under which the colony was to be administered by a governor-general. Salazar envisioned a romantic and spiritual unity of Portugal and its African possessions. He encouraged Portuguese to emigrate to Mozambique and Africans to identify themselves as Portuguese. The government also expanded the economic base of Mozambique through the development of agriculture, industry, and transportation. Beginning in 1927 Africans who were able to speak Portuguese, who earned incomes from occupations in commerce or industry, and who became "civilized" by accepting Portuguese values and standards were legally defined as *assimilados* and freed from the humiliating restrictions imposed on other Africans, known as *indigenas*. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s Portugal made a number of cosmetic changes in

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colonial administration in response to external pressures. In 1951 Mozambique became an overseas province; in 1955 the Organic Law gave African areas their own local councils. The forced cultivation of commercial crops was ended; expenditures on education, health, and welfare were increased; and the legal distinction between *assimilados* and *indigenas* was abolished.

These efforts proved too little and too late, however. In 1962 three African resistance groups coalesced to form the Mozambique Liberation Front (Frente de Libertação de Moçambique, FRELIMO). Under the leadership of Dr. Eduardo Mondlane, FRELIMO initiated armed resistance to Portuguese rule in 1964, and by 1966 much of the north was under FRELIMO control. In 1969 Mondlane was assassinated, and after a brief power struggle, Samora Machel succeeded him as FRELIMO leader. FRELIMO then adopted a more radical, prosocialist ideology. A coup in Portugal in 1974 made possible negotiations between FRELIMO and the new Portuguese government. These led to a period of transitional government until full independence was achieved in 1975.

Machel assumed the presidency of the independent "people's republic." Elections were held from September to December 1977 for FRELIMO-sponsored candidates to local, district, provincial, and national assemblies, and at its third congress FRELIMO declared itself a Marxist-Leninist party, with its goals being the social, economic, and political transformation of the country.

Following independence there was a mass exodus of some 235,000 of the 250,000 resident Portuguese settlers. The Portuguese had been the educated, professional, and skilled segment of the population. In abandoning what they saw as their territory, they angrily destroyed many buildings and much machinery. The economy has not completely recovered from this devastating loss of property and trained manpower.

Government policy makers envisioned the nationalization of abandoned enterprises but were generally hindered in achieving their goals due to lack of experienced personnel. Collective farms were formed, but without skilled management there was a precipitous decline in agricultural production. Floods in 1977 and drought during the early 1980s further lowered agricultural production.

Perhaps the most significant hindrance to Mozambican development, however, was the presence of the subversive guerrilla force Resistência Nacional Moçambicana (RENAMO, Mozambican National Resistance). RENAMO was founded in 1976 and came into being through the workings of the Rhodesian Central Intelligence Organization. Its aim was to harass FRELIMO and to monitor Zimbabwean guerrilla forces within Mozambique. Following Zimbabwe's independence in 1980, RENAMO activities were fostered by South Africa. RENAMO became engaged in armed conflict with the Mozambican government, disrupting and sabotaging government initiatives. While South Africa actively sup-

ported RENAMO, Mozambique harbored South African opposition forces of the African National Congress (ANC). In March 1984 Mozambique and South Africa signed the Nkomati Accord. Each government agreed to prevent opposition forces from attacking the other from bases located in the other's territory. When in 1985 the terms of the agreement appeared not to be met by South Africa, Mozambique called on foreign powers for increased military assistance.

The Council of Ministers was divided into three sections in March 1986 to strengthen FRELIMO's control of the country. The post of prime minister was created in July and assumed by Mario Machungo, who had been minister of planning. Legislative elections that were to have been held in 1982, but which were postponed in October because of security problems, finally began in 1986. However, they were further delayed by internal conflict, and they were again postponed in October due to President Machel's death in an airplane crash. In November 1986 Joaquim Chissano, who had been minister of foreign affairs and was a longtime associate of Machel, was appointed president by the FRELIMO Central Committee.

Elections were resumed, but unlike with the 1977 election, voters had a choice of candidates. A total of 299 FRELIMO candidates were nominated for the 250 legislative seats. However, when elections were completed in December, all government and party leaders had been reelected. Reshuffling of the Council of Ministers took place in January 1987 and again in May 1988 and January 1989.

In late 1987 RENAMO activity intensified. Starvation and food shortages affected six million people, and three million people were displaced. Outside major cities security was minimal, and health and educational facilities were virtually nonexistent. In April 1988 the U.S. State Department declared RENAMO responsible for a "holocaust" resulting in the deaths of over 100,000 civilians in the two previous years. International donors volunteered \$270 million in emergency aid when urged by the United Nations.

Bowing to political pressure, FRELIMO adopted a new platform in December 1989 that abandoned Marxism-Leninism as the party's official ideology and expressed support for a free-market economy. In December 1990 representatives of the Mozambican government and RENAMO signed a partial cease-fire, the first ever in their 14-year-old civil war. One month earlier the Mozambique legislature had adopted a new constitution designed to establish a Western-style democracy. Under the new constitution the country's name was changed from the People's Republic of Mozambique to the Republic of Mozambique.

In 1992 the 16-year-old civil war was brought to an end with the Rome Protocol, which provided for new elections to the Assembly of the Republic by pro-

portional representation, the holding of simultaneous legislative and presidential balloting, the formation of a National Electoral Commission, the establishment of a 30,000-member army drawn equally from the official and rebel forces, a political amnesty, and a Western-financed repatriation of refugees. In the first presidential election under the agreement, Chissano was the clear winner. Chissano's mandate was renewed in the 1999 elections.

The early 2000s were tumultuous. In 2000 and 2001 massive floods swept through the countryside, destroying houses and displacing many thousands of people. In 2000 riots associated with RENAMO activity led to the deaths of more than 100 people. In 2002 defendants in a murder trial accused the son of Chissano of helping kill the journalist Carl Cardoso in 2000; the son denied any knowledge of the killing. AIDS became a growing problem, although in 2003 Brazil promised to build a pharmaceutical plant in Mozambique to produce antiretroviral drugs.

In December 2004 the FRELIMO presidential candidate Armando Guebuza defeated the RENAMO candidate Afonso Dhlakama. He was inaugurated in February of 2005.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1975–86	Samora Moisés Machel
1986–2005	Joaquim Chissano
2005–	Armando Guebuza

CONSTITUTION

The Mozambique legislature in November 1990 adopted a new constitution designed to establish a Western-style democracy. The document contains a bill of rights that affirms such rights as habeas corpus, freedom of speech and of the press, and the right to strike. However, many of these rights can be restricted, depending on circumstances. Citizens have the right to form political parties, although the legislature may enact laws discouraging splinter groups.

The constitution promises strict separation of the executive, judicial, and legislative branches. Under the new constitution executive power is vested in a president who is directly elected for a five-year term. There are no limits on reelection. The president heads the military forces and has the power to declare war. With the support of a legislative majority, he can declare martial law. He has the exclusive power to negotiate internationally and appoints all officers of the national government, except those in the Assembly of the Republic.

Voting is universal for all who have reached 18 years of age. The new constitution effectively ended 15 years of one-party rule by FRELIMO.

PARLIAMENT

Under the constitution of 1990, legislative power is vested in the unicameral Assembly of the Republic, or Assembleia da República. Its 250 members are directly elected by popular vote on secret ballots to serve five-year terms.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Before 1991 the sole legal party was the Frente de Libertação de Moçambique, or FRELIMO, formed in 1962 through the merger of three successive nationalist parties. FRELIMO's ideology was uncomprisingly Marxist-Leninist, as defined in 1977 at the Third National Congress of the party, which also restricted membership to those described as "the vanguard of the proletariat."

Both during the independence struggle and after independence, FRELIMO had to deal with a number of rival parties, collectively referred to by FRELIMO as phantom parties. Before independence the most serious threat came from the Partido de Coligação Nacional (PCN), led by the Rev. Uria Simango. Organized settler opposition took shape in the Frente Independente de Continuidade Ocidental (FICO, which means "I stay" in Portuguese). The most serious postindependence threat came from the Frente de Unidade Democrática de Moçambique (FUMO), led by the black socialist Domingos Arouca. In 1976 FUMO set up a government-in-exile and in 1977 claimed control of northern Cabo Delgado Province.

Today, the principal opposition is the Resistência Nacional Moçambicana, or RENAMO, also known as the Andre Group, after its founder Andre Matade Matsangai. It was formed in the early 1970s primarily as an intelligence network within Mozambique for the white Rhodesian government of Ian Smith. It later developed into an anti-FRELIMO insurgency, as financed by Portugal and South Africa; in 1987 it was Africanized and converted into a political party. After the failure of its insurgency, RENAMO guerrillas demobilized. Its leader, Gen. Afonso Macacho Marceta Dhlakama, lost his presidential bid in 1994, but the party gained 112 members (out of 250) in the Assembly of the Republic.

In the 2004 parliamentary elections FRELIMO took 160 seats and RENAMO 90.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For purposes of local government, Mozambique is divided into 10 provinces plus the capital. The constitution of 1990 provides for directly elected local assemblies in each province.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The legal system is based on Portuguese civil law and African customary law. Under the 1990 constitution the judicial system is headed by the Supreme Court, whose judges are appointed by the president and the assembly. From 1979 to 1990 two separate legal systems existed. The first was the civil and criminal system, with a judicial service and a police force under the authority of the Ministry of the Interior. The second system, which was characterized in its initiating legislation as transitional, was the military-run State Security System, which incorporated the secret police, the Serviço Nacional de Segurança Popular (SNASP, National Service of Popular Security). The latter system, established to deal with the growing armed insurgency, had jurisdiction over both political crimes against the state and economic sabotage. These two systems operated separately and were subject to separate controls.

Under the State Security System all investigations and arrests were carried out by the SNASP. Amnesty International recommended that the SNASP's power to detain persons be drastically reduced because it believed that the situation invited abuse and led to prisoner mistreatment.

The 1990 constitution abolished secret security or police forces. The accused is guaranteed a speedy trial and timely notice of the prosecutor's accusations. Guarantees of due process are written into the constitution. In actual practice, fair and speedy trials are uncommon because the judiciary is understaffed, underfunded, and inefficient.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Though Mozambique's human rights record has improved since the days of civil war, it remains poor. The police commit abuses, torturing, killing, and imprisoning people without trial. Prison conditions are life threatening. There have been some infringements of freedom of the press, freedom of association, and the right to privacy. Discrimination against women and domestic abuse have remained problems. Child prostitution has increased, and street children are often abused.

FOREIGN POLICY

Mozambique abandoned its earlier Marxist-Leninist orientation in favor of a more pragmatic approach, in light of changed international realities. This has meant the resumption of relations with former ideological enemies, such as the United States, Portugal, and South Africa. More than one million refugees from Mozambique who had fled to neighboring countries during the 1980s civil war were returned to Mozambique under the auspices of the UN

High Commission for Refugees. In 1995 Mozambique was admitted to the Commonwealth as the group's 53rd member as a unique and special case. In 1996 Mozambique negotiated security agreements with Malawi, Swaziland, and Zimbabwe to squelch border violence. At the same time Maputo and Pretoria inaugurated the Maputo Corridor Development Project with the aim of redeveloping the trade route from Johannesburg to Maputo.

Relations between the United States and Mozambique are good. The United States has provided large amounts of aid and established a U.S. Agency for International Development mission there in 1985.

DEFENSE

Before 1991 the armed forces, officially called Forças Populares da Libertação de Moçambique (FPLM), were under the control of the FRELIMO Political Committee. The army served mainly as a counterinsurgency force whose goal was the defeat of RENAMO. There were no ranks within the defense forces. A people's organization, Serviço Nacional de Segurança Popular, was established to assist the armed forces in matters relating to national security. Boats left behind by the Portuguese were used for coastal patrol work.

Currently, Mozambique maintains an army, navy, air force, and special forces. Internal security forces include Criminal Investigation Police, Mozambican National Police, and Rapid Intervention Police. The defense structure is headed by the president and the Ministry of the Interior. The leadership has placed greater emphasis on political training than on military capability. There is no evidence that the FPLM would be capable of defending the country against determined aggression by a capable enemy. The military has little funding and no long-term strategy, and though the civilian government controls the police force, at times police act on their own and commit human rights abuses.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 8,000
 Military Manpower Availability: 4,335,294
 Military Expenditures \$million: 101.3
 as % of GDP: 2.2
 as % of central government expenditures: —
 Arms Imports \$million: —
 Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

Before the peace accord of October 1992, Mozambique's economy was devastated by a protracted civil war and socialist mismanagement. In 1994 the nation ranked as one of the poorest in the world.

Mozambique has since undertaken a series of economic reforms. Almost all aspects of the economy have been liberalized to some extent; more than 900 state enterprises have been privatized. Pending are tax and much-needed commercial code reform, as well as greater private-sector involvement in the transportation, telecommunications, and energy sectors. Since 1996 inflation has been low and foreign exchange rates stable. Albeit from a small base, Mozambique's economy grew at an annual 10 percent rate from 1997 to 1999, one of the highest growth rates in the world.

Growth slowed and inflation rose in 2000 due to devastating flooding in the early part of the year. Both indicators recovered somewhat in 2001, but inflation rose again in 2002–03. The country depends on foreign assistance to balance the budget and to pay for a trade imbalance in which imports greatly outnumber exports. The opening of the Mozal aluminum smelter should improve the trade imbalance, and the country hopes that foreign investment in titanium extraction and garment manufacture will further increase export earnings. Mozambique has received a formal cancellation of a large portion of its external debt through an International Monetary Fund (IMF) initiative and is scheduled to receive additional relief.

Nevertheless, poverty is a major problem, as 70 percent of the population still lives below the poverty line. Illiteracy, crime, and major health problems confront the nation, presenting obstacles to substantial economic progress.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 21.23
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 1,200
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 7.4
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 5.2
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 20.1
 Industry: 27.3
 Services: 52.7

Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 74
 Government Consumption: 20
 Gross Domestic Investment: 47.8

Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 0.795
 Imports: 1.142

% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 2.5
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 31.7

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
161.8	166.4	187.6	204.6	238.9

Finance

National Currency: Metical (MZM)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = MZM 23,782.3
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency trillion: 14.4
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 9.95

Total External Debt \$million: 966
 Debt Service Ratio %: 3.89
 Balance of Payments \$million: –566
 International Reserves SDRs \$million: 962
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
 14.0

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$billion: 2.06
 per capita \$: 111.60
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 405.9

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$billion: 1.089
 Expenditures \$billion: 1.269
 Budget Deficit \$million: 180
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 20.1
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 4.5
 Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares: 1.4
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 2.5
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 6.23
 Total Farmland % of land area: 5.1
 Livestock: Cattle million: 1.32
 Chickens million: 28
 Pigs 000: 180
 Sheep 000: 125
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 18
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 37.14

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 408.65
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 3.4

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 857
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million:
 1.29
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 73
 Net Energy Imports % of use: 1.65
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 2.388
 Production kW-hr billion: 7.19
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 1.39
 Coal Reserves tons million: 233.7
 Production tons 000: 20
 Consumption tons 000: 40
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: 4.5
 Production cubic feet billion: 2.12
 Consumption cubic feet billion: 2.12
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
 Production barrels 000 per day: —
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 9
 Pipelines Length km: 292

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Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 1.142
Exports \$billion: 0.795
Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 21.6
Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 11.0
Balance of Trade \$million: –566

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
South Africa %	26.3	14.4
Australia %	9.2	—
United States %	3.9	—
Belgium %	—	26.0
Italy %	—	9.6
Spain %	—	9.5
Germany %	—	8.3
Zimbabwe %	—	4.7

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 30,400
Paved %: 18.7
Automobiles: 81,600
Trucks and Buses: 76,000
Railroad: Track Length km: 3,123
Passenger-km million: —
Freight-km million: —
Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 3
Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 7
Airports: 158
Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 397
Length of Waterways km: 460

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: —
Number of Tourists from 000: —
Tourist Receipts \$million: 144
Tourist Expenditures \$million: 296

Communications

Telephones 000: 83.7
Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.08
Cellular Telephones 000: 428.9
Personal Computers 000: 82
Internet Hosts per million people: 167
Internet Users per 1,000 people: 2

ENVIRONMENT

The civil strife that marked Mozambique's history until recently had serious environmental impact, in part through the spurring of mass migrations of people to urban and coastal areas. The country has also suffered from inter-mixed drought and flooding; floods in 2000–01 displaced

thousands of people. Growing deforestation has led to some people traveling more than five kilometers daily in search of fuelwood. Soil erosion, especially in high-rainfall areas, is also a growing concern. Hunters poach elephants for their ivory tusks. Most water is polluted.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 39.0
Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: –64
Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 9
Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 10,230
CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 0.07

LIVING CONDITIONS

Mozambique has a very low standard of living. More than one million land mines remain unexploded, and unsuspecting people find them regularly. Crime is a terrible problem, especially armed robbery. There is some public transportation. Roads are poorly maintained, and the police are apt to hassle motorists on invented pretexts.

HEALTH

Western medicine is rare, and most people still rely on traditional healers, including witch doctors; these healers sometimes include Western techniques in their repertoires of medical skills. Different healers specialize in different medical problems. HIV/AIDS is an extremely serious problem in Mozambique; in 2003, 12.2 percent of the population was infected with the virus, which has been seriously reducing average life expectancy (37 years in 2004) and devastating family structures. Land mines cause injuries and death on a regular basis. Endemic diseases include malaria, hepatitis, typhoid, tetanus, diphtheria, schistosomiasis, and meningococcal meningitis.

Health

Number of Physicians: 435
Number of Dentists: 136
Number of Nurses: 3,664
Number of Pharmacists: 419
Physician Density per 100,000 people: 2.4
Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 137.08
Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 1,000
Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 5.9
Health Expenditures per capita \$: 11
HIV Infected % of adults: 12.2
Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
DPT: 60
Measles: 58
Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 27
Access to Improved Water Source %: 42

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Many people in Mozambique do not have enough to eat. Malnutrition is common, as are food and waterborne ailments.

Mozambique cooking is heavily influenced by Portuguese cuisine. Cassava, corn, peanuts, and cashews are ubiquitous ingredients, while hot peppers offer a common flavoring. In the cities, people like to eat shrimp and seafood, barbecued chicken, and *matapa*, a spinach and peanut stew. People eat many fresh fruits, including coconuts, pineapples, and papaya. There are many Indian restaurants and a few European ones. Beer is locally brewed, and both beer and wine are imported from South Africa. Locals use coconut milk to make an alcoholic beverage called *sura*.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 46.8
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 1,910
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 105.3
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 22.9

STATUS OF WOMEN

The status of women in Mozambique has not altered appreciably since independence. The constitution of 1975 provided that there should be no discrimination on the basis of sex. In fact, however, two distinct societies exist: the contemporary society of larger urban areas and the more traditional society of rural areas. Women play a prominent role in the urban society; they have equal access to education, and there is a surprisingly large number of women in the professions, the military, within the bureaucracy, and in policy-making positions. They also engage in a wide range of economic activity, including commerce. A few women hold important political posts, and there is a recently established organization devoted to women's affairs.

In the rural areas, traditional practices reinforce discrimination against women. Specific customs vary according to ethnic grouping, but women generally do much of the manual labor in agriculture as well as care for the home and family. In certain ethnic groups women may retain the earnings from cash crops they cultivate, but in most instances economic and political decisions are made by men. Women tend to marry young, which reduces their power in marriage. Girls attend school much less frequently than boys.

Women

Women-headed Households %: 26.8
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 35
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 0.64
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: —

WORK

Four-fifths of Mozambique's people are subsistence farmers, most of them living well below the poverty line. Per capita gross domestic product (GDP) in 2003 was estimated to be a very low \$1,200. A few people are employed in industry, making textiles or processing food, aluminum, petroleum, or tobacco. Some 13 percent of workers are employed in services, including the professions; these workers account for more than half of GDP.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 9,200,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 48.4
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 81
 Industry: 6
 Services: 13
 Unemployment %: 21

EDUCATION

Literacy has improved considerably since independence but is still low, at 48 percent in 2003; far more men can read than women.

Although children are required by law to attend school for seven years, only about 40 percent do; many of those who attend drop out after a year or two. Schooling lasts for nine years, as divided into four years of primary school, three years of lower secondary school, and two years of upper secondary school. Nearly 10 percent of secondary-level enrollment is in the vocational stream. The school year runs from September to August. The language of instruction is Portuguese throughout. All schools have been nationalized and secularized. Education is closely related to the needs of national development and emphasizes reading, vocational training, and food production. Political indoctrination is part of the curriculum.

During colonial days educational opportunities for blacks were limited, and 93 percent of the population was illiterate. The only schools available were run by missionaries; most of today's leaders attended such schools as children. After independence, the school system suffered from the exodus of non-African teachers. Nevertheless, the government wanted to educate the people and put energy into improving education, which temporarily brought literacy up to about 66 percent. In recent years, school construction has dropped off, and teachers have become scarcer, and literacy has fallen again.

Higher education is provided by the Universidade Eduardo Mondlane, named after the first president of FRELIMO, who was assassinated in 1969.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 47.8
 Male %: 63.5
 Female %: 32.7
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 5.4
 First Level: Primary Schools: 4,167
 Teachers: 40,226
 Students: 2,705,013
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 67.3
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 55.3
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 239
 Teachers: 14,778
 Students: 396,256
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 27.2
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 12.2
 Third Level: Institutions: 3
 Teachers: 983
 Students: 9,303
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 0.6
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 2.4

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Mozambique lacks technological infrastructure. Agricultural techniques are still primitive. In 2003 there were fewer than 84,000 telephone lines and about 430,000 cellular telephones in use; telephones are not available to most people. There were about 50,000 Internet users in 2002.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: 1.84
 Patent Applications by Residents: 1

MEDIA

The two daily newspapers are the privately-owned *Diário de Moçambique*, published in Beira, and the partly state-owned *Notícias*; both use the Portuguese language. There are several weekly magazines. The official news agency is the *Agência de Informação de Moçambique*, which issues daily reports in Portuguese and English and a monthly bulletin in French and English. Most of the country's people are illiterate and thus do not read print media.

Radio is the most important source of news for the majority of the country. Private or commercial stations operate in most cities and towns. The government and the UN Education, Scientific, and Cultural Organization fund about 40 community radio and television stations. The two main television stations are the state-run *Televisão de Moçambique* and the private *Radio-Televisão Klint*.

The constitution guarantees freedom of the press, but opposition politicians claim that they do not get the same coverage as the government. Libel is a criminal offense, which deters some freedom of expression.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 12
 Total Circulation 000: 43
 Circulation per 1,000: 2.5
 Books Published: —
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets 000: 100
 per 1,000: 5

CULTURE

Mozambique is known for its excellent art, some of the finest in Africa; resident artists have continued to produce distinctive work despite the years of colonial occupation and war. The Makonde people produce excellent sculptures. Muralists decorate walls in the cities; there is a 310-foot-long mural depicting the Revolution near the Maputo airport. Many painters have emerged in the last fifty years, the most famous of whom is Malangatana.

Literature has become more important in recent years, and the country now claims a number of authors, including Mia Couto. Traditional musical instruments include the marimba xylophone and the *lupembe*, a kind of wind instrument. *Chope* musicians form orchestras of marimba players and perform throughout the country. The most typical musical form is the *marrabenta*.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Folktales are very important to the people of Mozambique, who have transmitted the same stories orally for many generations. About half of Mozambique's people still practice animistic religions. They believe that all natural objects have spirits and find many sacred sites in nature; they also believe that the spirits of dead ancestors still play a role in the lives of the living. In tra-

ditional dancing, men represent the spirits of the dead and attempt to frighten women and children into believing that they are in danger and need men to protect them.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Maputo has a variety of entertainment options, including bars, restaurants, nightclubs, discos, and sidewalk cafés. The Mercado Xipamanine market is said to sell “everything.” The beaches and oceans of the coast are good for swimming, snorkeling, and scuba diving.

ETIQUETTE

The people of Mozambique are proud and courteous. Tipping is not traditional, but international workers have spread the custom, so restaurant workers and taxi drivers now expect tips of about 10 percent.

FAMILY LIFE

AIDS is changing the face of the Mozambican family, killing strong young adults and leaving thousands of children orphaned. In some regions, girls marry very young, often before age 15. This means they often have children young, which increases risks for both mother and child. Men in some areas have multiple wives. In 2004 the Assembly of the Republic passed a law raising the minimum age of marriage from 14 to 18, permitting women to inherit property if they divorce, and legally recognizing traditional marriages, which constitute the majority of marriages in the country.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Dress in Mozambique is casual. In the city people dress in typical Western fashion: pants and shirts, sometimes with coat and tie, for men, light dresses or pants for women. Many people dress in *capalunas*, which are traditional cloth garments.

SPORTS

Mozambique has an excellent national soccer team. The nation has set out to create its own identity in the soccer world and has worked to build its team since losing many players at independence. The national team has played in the African Nations Cup finals and were semifinalists in the 2004 Cosafa Castle Cup.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1975** Mozambique becomes an independent people's republic under FRELIMO auspices, with Samora Moisés Machel as president. White settlers continue to flee the country as the white-led FICO movement collapses. Army coup led by northern malcontents is thwarted.
- 1976** Mozambique closes border with Rhodesia. A joint cooperation committee is established with Tanzania. All private homes and buildings are nationalized. Lourenço Marques, the capital, is renamed Maputo, and other Portuguese geographical names are Africanized. Resistência Nacional Moçambicana (RENAMO) is formed.
- 1977** FRELIMO holds Third National Congress and defines its Marxist-Leninist ideology. Treaty of friendship and cooperation is signed with the Soviet Union. Portuguese nationals are expelled from the country, as relations with Portugal deteriorate. Rhodesian troops raid rebel bases in Mozambique.
- 1978** Banking is nationalized. The cabinet is reshuffled in an effort to stem the country's mounting economic difficulties.
- 1979** A total of 15 Catholic missions are ordered to be closed down, as the Marxist government enters on a collision course with the church.
- 1980** President Machel announces a reorientation in economic policy, permitting a greater role for private enterprise. The cabinet is reshuffled twice in a drive against corruption and inefficiency. Mozambique adopts the metical as unit of currency in place of the escudo. After Zimbabwean independence in April, South Africa assumes Rhodesia's former role as supporter of RENAMO.
- 1984** Mozambique joins the IMF and the World Bank and becomes a party to the Third Lome Convention. The Nkomati Accord is reached with South Africa, whereby the two countries agree not to offer asylum to rebels and guerrillas.
- 1985** Mozambique moves toward free enterprise in limited sectors of the economy. Major military offensive against RENAMO results in capture of rebel command center, “Casa Banana.”
- 1986** RENAMO recaptures Casa Banana. RENAMO declares war on Zimbabwe. President Machel dies in suspicious plane crash in South Africa. Joaquim Chissano is appointed president by Central Committee.

1660 Mozambique

- 1987** Rebel activities, including massacre of 424 civilians in town of Hormoine and ambush of convoy from Maputo, killing 270 people, lead to severe food shortages and increasing numbers of Mozambican refugees outside the country.
- 1988** Amnesty for RENAMO members who surrender weapons results in more than 3,000 rebel defections.
- 1989** Senior U.S. government official claims that South Africa is still providing supplies to RENAMO. FRELIMO abandons its Marxist-Leninist ideology. President Frederik Willem de Klerk, of South Africa, meets with Chissano and claims that his government has cut off all aid to RENAMO.
- 1990** The Mozambique legislature adopts a new constitution designed to establish a Western-style democracy. The country's name is changed to the Republic of Mozambique. The Mozambican government and RENAMO sign a partial cease-fire. Free, multiparty elections are scheduled to take place in 1991.
- 1992** A cease-fire signed by the president and opposition leader ends the civil war.
- 1994** President Chissano (FRELIMO) is elected president in the first-ever multiparty elections. FRELIMO holds power in the assembly by a narrow margin, and Pascoal Mocumbi is named prime minister.
- 1995** UN peacekeeping troops leave the country. Mozambique joins the Commonwealth.
- 1997** Mozambique opens relations with South Africa.
- 1998** The IMF authorizes \$3 billion in debt relief for Mozambique. RENAMO and 15 smaller parties boycott municipal elections, leaving only FRELIMO and the Democratic Union in the running. Queen Elizabeth II conducts a state visit. A consortium of British, Japanese, and South African investors finance the \$1-billion Mozal project, a plan to build a massive aluminum smelting mill near Maputo. Algeria and Mozambique sign four cooperation agreements.
- 1999** Mozambique's economy achieves 10 percent annual growth for the third consecutive year. FRELIMO candidates, led by Pascoal Mocumbi, win the most seats in assembly elections. Joachim Chissano of FRELIMO is reelected president. RENAMO boycotts parliamentary debates.
- 2000** The worst floods in 50 years devastate Mozambique, killing 700, displacing 500,000, and reportedly causing more damage than the civil war. International donors promise \$453 million in aid.

The government averts a strike by Mozambique's largest trade union by promising a 26 percent wage increase.

Production at the Mozal smelter begins six months ahead of schedule.

RENAMO agrees to participate in parliamentary debates. The Supreme Court certifies the 1999 assembly elections.

2001 Floods in the Zambezi valley displace 70,000 people.

2002 Chissano declines to run for a third term, and Frelimo chooses Armando Guebuza as its presidential candidate for 2004.

2003 Brazil offers to build a plant in Mozambique to manufacture AIDS drugs.

2004 Armando Guebuza wins the presidency.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- U.S. Department of State Background Note: Mozambique
<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/7035.htm>
- Mozambique Home Page
<http://www.mozambique.mz/>

MYANMAR

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Union of Myanmar (Pyidaungzu Myanmar Naingngandaw)

ABBREVIATION

MM

CAPITAL

Yangon (formerly Rangoon), in late 2005 the government began moving its capital to Pyinmana

HEAD OF STATE

Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council
Senior General Than Shwe (from 1992)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Lieutenant-General Soe Win (from 2004)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Military dictatorship

POPULATION

42,909,464 (2005)

AREA

678,500 sq km (261,969 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Burman

LANGUAGE

Burmese

RELIGIONS

Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, animism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Kyat

NATIONAL FLAG

Red with a blue canton in the upper left bearing two ears of rice within a cogwheel and a ring of 14 stars, all in white

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A red map of Myanmar over a white cogwheel is centered within a blue circular seal. Around the seal is ornate golden framework, topped by a white star and flanked by two blue heraldic cheetahs facing outward. The legend "Socialist Republic of the Union of Myanmar" is inscribed in red scrollwork in Burmese at the base.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"Our Free Homeland"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 4 (National Day, Independence Day), February 12 (Union Day), March 2 (Peasants' Day), March 27 (Armed Forces Day), May 1 (World Workers' Day), July 19 (Martyrs' Day), December 25 (Christmas), various Buddhist festivals, including Full Moon of Tabaung, Thingyan (Water Festival), Full Moon of Kason, Waso (Beginning of Buddhist Lent), end of Buddhist Lent, Tazaungdaing, and Burmese New Year's Day

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

January 4, 1948

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

January 3, 1974 (suspended September 1988)

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Myanmar (formerly known as Burma, and still referred to as such by the United States), the largest country on mainland Southeast Asia, has a total land area of 678,500 sq km (261,969 sq mi). It has a total coastline of 1,930 km (1,199 mi) and total international land borders of 5,876 km (3,651 mi) with five countries: China, Laos, Thailand, Bangladesh, and India. Most of the land frontiers are defined by mountains.

Myanmar is divided topographically into four regions. The eastern Shan Plateau, a highland region averaging 900 m (3,000 ft) in elevation, merges south with the Dawna Range and the Tenasserim Yoma toward the Isthmus of Kra. The Central Belt spans the valleys of the Irrawaddy, Chindwin, and Sittang rivers, with a mountainous region in the north and a vast, low-lying delta in the south that covers an area of 25,900 sq km (10,000 sq mi), where almost all of the nation's rice is produced. The Western Mountain Belt, also known as

Myanmar (Burma)



the Arakan Mountains, is a series of ridges that originate in the northern mountain arc and extend southward to the southwestern corner. The Arakan Coastal Strip is a narrow, predominantly alluvial belt lying between

the Arakan Mountains and the Bay of Bengal. In some places the strip disappears as the mountain spurs reach the sea. Offshore are hundreds of islands, many of which are cultivated.

The Irrawaddy River is the lifeline of the country, providing a vast drainage and navigation system. The river rises near the northernmost tip of Myanmar and flows nearly the entire length of the country, for about 22,173 km (13,850 mi). It receives the Chindwin, its principal tributary, just below Mandalay. The Irrawaddy enters its vast delta at Henzada. On one of its nine mouths is the port of Yangôn (formerly Rangoon). The Irrawaddy is navigable for 1,287 km (800 mi), while the Chindwin is navigable for another 160 km (100 mi). The Sittang River, which rises just south of Mandalay and parallels the Irrawaddy on the eastern flank, is also part of the Irrawaddy basin. The Sittang suffers from excessive silting and is navigable for short distances only.

Geography

Area sq km: 678,500; sq mi 261,969
World Rank: 39th
Land Boundaries, km: Bangladesh 193; China 2,185; India 1,463; Laos 235; Thailand 1,800
Coastline, km: 1,930
Elevation Extremes meters:
Lowest: Andaman Sea 0
Highest: Hkakabo Razi 5,881
Land Use %
Arable Land: 15.2
Permanent Crops: 1.0
Forest: 52.3
Other: 31.5

Population of Principal Cities (2002 est.)

Bassein (Patheingyi)	219,700
Mandalay	1,057,600
Monywa	165,500
Moulmein (Mawlamyine)	367,500
Pegu (Bago)	228,100
Sittwe (Akyab)	164,400
Taunggyi	157,100
Yangon (Rangoon)	4,016,000

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Myanmar has a tropical climate with three distinct seasons: the monsoon season from May to October, the hot seasons in October or November and also April, and the cool season from December to March. Temperatures are high year-round, and the cool season is such only by comparison. The mean temperature is 26°C (80°F), with higher temperatures, reaching 37.8°C (100°F), in the lowlands and more moderate ones on the Shan Plateau.

Rainfall is regulated by the southwesterly and northeasterly monsoons, with considerable regional variations in amount. Along the coastal regions rainfall is heavy,

with a high of 5,080 mm (200 in). Lower Myanmar receives 2,540 mm (100 in), while central Myanmar, in the lee of the Arakan Mountains, receives only 630–1,140 mm (25–45 in).

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature: 80°F
Average Rainfall
Coastal Region: 200 in
Lower Myanmar: 100 in
Central Myanmar: 25 in to 45 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

About half of the country is covered with forests, although trees are being cut down at a rapid rate; teak is especially profitable. About 15 percent of the country is used to grow rice. In the north are snowcapped mountains and alpine plants. The valleys of the mountains have a subtropical climate and many plants. The climate in the central basin is semiarid, with acacia trees and cacti. The Shan Plateau is heavily cultivated with vegetables and citrus trees.

A huge variety of tropical and subtropical animal species live in Myanmar, including poisonous snakes and insects. Elephants perform work in the logging industry and in farming. Some tigers still live in the forests, but they are endangered, as they are hunted for certain body parts, which are exported to China as drugs. The nation has 17 wildlife sanctuaries and three national parks, but it does not enforce its wildlife protection laws, and poaching continues unchecked.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 42,909,464	
World Rank: 28th	
Density per sq km: 75.1	
% of annual growth (1999-2003): 1.3	
Male %: 49.7	
Female %: 50.3	
Urban %: 29.2	
Age Distribution %:	0–14: 27.2
	15–64: 67.8
	65 and over: 5.0
Population 2025: 52,682,000	
Birth Rate per 1,000: 18.11	
Death Rate per 1,000: 12.15	
Rate of Natural Increase %: 0.8	
Total Fertility Rate: 2.01	
Expectation of Life (years): Males 54.31	
	Females 58.24
Marriage Rate per 1,000: —	
Divorce Rate per 1,000: —	
Average Size of Households: 5.6	
Induced Abortions: —	

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

There are more than 100 indigenous ethnic groups and subgroups in Myanmar; the most numerous are the Burmans, Karens, Kayahs, Shans, Kachins, and Chins. The Burmans constitute the ethnic majority, with 65–70 percent of the population. The Shans form the largest minority group, estimated to be 9 percent of the population. The Shans, calling themselves *Tai* and speaking a *Tai* dialect, live primarily in Shan State; they are primarily a lowland people engaged in wet-rice agriculture. The Karens are the second largest minority group, estimated at 7 percent. Other minorities are mostly hill tribes. The Burmans, who are ethnically related to the Tibetans, descended into the Irrawaddy valley in historical times and intermarried with the Mon and Pyu peoples. The Karens, Shans, and others were later migrants.

The official policy of the Burmese government has been to deemphasize ethnic differences. Terms such as racial minorities and nationalities have disappeared from official usage.

Among the ethnic aliens of Myanmar, whose numbers have been in sharp decline in recent years, are Chinese, Indians, Pakistanis, and Bangladeshis. Similarly, the number of Eurasians has been eroded through emigration. The European population, outside of the diplomatic and UN community, is virtually nonexistent.

LANGUAGES

Under the constitution of 1974 the official language of Myanmar is Burmese. Spoken by 80 percent of the population, the language is Tibeto-Burman, with an alphabet derived from the Pahlavi script of South India. Burmese and to a lesser extent *Tai*, the language of the Shans, are also used as lingua francas by the minorities who retain their own languages. The most developed of these minority languages are Mon, Chin, Karen, and Kachin. According to the constitution, minority languages may be used in areas where their speakers predominate.

English is now taught in schools as a second language from the fifth grade onward, and its use is permitted in some types of official communications. English is now the medium of instruction in the universities.

RELIGIONS

Buddhism is the religion of almost 90 percent of the people. Under the U Nu regime the Theravada form of Buddhism was made the state religion, but it was disestablished by Ne Win, and the constitution of 1974 guarantees the “right of everyone to profess and practice his religion freely.”

An estimated 4 percent of the population is Christian, the majority belonging to the Karen group. Two other Christianized groups are the Kachin-Lisu and the Chin-Lushai. Christian missionaries have long been active in the delta and border areas; their greatest success has been among the hill peoples. Another 4 percent of the population is Muslim, concentrated in Arakan District. Animism and spirit worship have not been totally displaced among the hill peoples, and beliefs in spirits in some form or other persist even among Buddhists.

Religious Affiliations

Buddhist	38,190,000
Christian	1,715,000
Muslim	1,715,000
Animist	430,000
Other	860,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Mons were probably the earliest ethnic group in Myanmar. Coming out of central Asia, they populated the area around the mouths of the Salween and Sittang rivers. Soon after, the Arakanese, Chins, Kachins, and several smaller groups, as well as the Pyus, reached Burma by way of Tibet. From the seventh to the ninth centuries Mon states dotted coastal Burma. Around this time Burma first appears in historical documents. The Burmans moved to the rice-growing areas of Upper Burma, where they founded the cities of Sittang, Pagan, Sagaing, Ava, Amarapura, and Mandalay.

Of these cities, Pagan, founded in 849, was the most important, becoming the stronghold of a dynasty of kings. This was the First Burmese Empire, lasting from 1044 to 1257. The dynasty was founded by Anawrahta (r. 1044–77), and its greatest king was Kyansittha (r. 1084–1112), who built the Ananda Pagoda (still in use) and during whose reign the Burmese language was first written down. In 1287 the Mongols, whose demand for tribute had been rejected, destroyed Pagan and looted and burned the temples.

During the 14th and 15th centuries Burma remained divided into several large and small states. The Shans held power in Ava, the capital of Upper Burma; at Pegu, in Lower Burma, the Mons had their own dynasty, founded by Wareru; and Arakan, with the capital at Chittagong, dominated the western coastal area. During this period of constant internecine warfare, the city of Toungoo gained control of the good rice-growing land of the Kyaukse region. Within a few years King Tabinshwehti (r. 1531–50) of Toungoo and his brother-in-law Bayinnaung (r. 1550–81) united Burma under their crown and established the Second Burmese Empire (1551–1752).

In the 17th century the first Westerners reached Burma, and the Dutch, British, and French all established trading posts in the port towns. The Third Burmese Empire (1752–1885) was founded by a warlord called Alaungpaya. To celebrate a victory over the Mons, Alaungpaya established a port at the little coastal town of Dagon and gave it the name of Yangôn, or Rangoon. In the 19th century the growing power of the British on the Indian Subcontinent brought Britain into conflict with the Burmese kingdom. In 1826, after two years of war, the Burmese king was forced to cede his claims to Assam, Arakan, and Tenasserim to the British East India Company. These arrangements were included in the Treaty of Yandaboo, which also obliged the Burmese court to accept a British resident. By 1853 all of Lower Burma had been annexed by the British. In 1886 Upper Burma was annexed, and all of the Burmese Empire became a colony of British India.

In 1937 Burma was separated from India and granted a constitution for limited self-government. During World War II the country was under Japanese occupation. Full independence was granted to Myanmar, which was then called the Union of Burma, on January 4, 1948.

The fledgling Union of Burma, led by U Nu, was almost immediately assailed by a widespread insurrection of Communists and ethnic insurgents. By 1951 the unrest was brought under control by government forces. Differences within Burma's ruling party, the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League (AFPFL), led to an intraparty split in 1958. In order to maintain law and order, the government invited the army chief, General Ne Win, to assume temporary control of the country, until new elections could take place. After winning by an overwhelming majority in April 1960, U Nu resumed office.

U Nu was ousted from office in March 1962, when Ne Win staged a coup and regained control of the country. The constitution and parliament were suspended. Free enterprise and private trade were abolished, and privately owned companies were placed under military control. In July 1962 the Burma Socialist Program Party (BSPP) was formed. The BSPP was dominated by the military and was the only legal political party in the country.

The new constitution, which was promulgated in January 1974, called for a one-party socialist government. Despite the new constitution, power continued to be held by the military, with Ne Win as chairman of the council of state and president. Although Ne Win retired in 1981, he remained in charge of the BSPP, remaining the real source of political power in the country.

Economic problems and growing unrest among ethnic groups continued to plague the government. Student-led demonstrations in September 1987 marked the beginning of a 12-month period of turmoil. Massive demonstrations against Ne Win compelled him to resign his party post in August 1988. On September 18,

1988, General Saw Maung, at the head of the military-dominated State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), assumed power, ostensibly to maintain order until multiparty elections could be held. The SLORC abolished all executive and legislative institutions (including the People's Assembly, the State Council, and the Council of Ministers). Although Ne Win held no official position in the new regime, it was widely believed that he retained a controlling influence over its leaders, all of whom, including General Saw Maung, were known to be his supporters.

In 1988 the law maintaining the BSPP as the sole party was abrogated, and the BSPP registered under a new name, the National Unity Party (NUP). Although new parties were encouraged to register for upcoming elections, the military arrested and harassed opposition leaders throughout 1989. In this year Burma's name was changed to Myanmar.

A new constitution was scheduled to be promulgated after the May 1990 general elections. Of the 485 parliamentary seats contested in the elections, however, the government-backed NUP won only 10, whereas the National League for Democracy (NLD) won nearly 400. The NLD's triumph only brought more repression by the military, which refused to step down from power. By December 1990 the military had arrested 50 NLD leaders. More than one year after elections, military leaders continued to refuse the NLD its place in government.

In 1991 the NLD leader Aung San Suu Kyi was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for her courageous defiance of the military regime, which focused world attention on Myanmar's plight. This triggered a wave of domestic demonstrations, to which the government responded with more repression. Aung San Suu Kyi was released in 1995 but rearrested in 1996 following violent demonstrations on her behalf. She remained under house arrest until May 2002.

During the mid-1990s the government mounted a series of successful attacks on military insurgents. With the capture of Manerplaw, the headquarters of the Karen National Union and the fall of the its last stronghold, at Kawmoora, most ethnic opposition to the junta came to an end. When the Karenni National Progressive Party also abandoned its armed struggle, the junta claimed that 14 of 16 rebel groups had laid down their arms. Government troops also launched an offensive against the Mong Tai Army of the Shan drug lord Khun Sa and occupied his headquarters at Ho Mong. In 1997 the State Law and Order Restoration Council, the official name of the junta, was dissolved and replaced by the State Peace and Development Council.

In 1998, 300 members of the NLD were released from prison. However, the ruling council continued to break up student demonstrations and failed to reconvene parliament by the deadline set by the NLD. The follow-

ing year Aung San Suu Kyi's husband, Michael Aris, died of cancer in the United Kingdom; Suu Kyi did not get to see him before his death because she refused to comply with the ruling council's conditions for her to travel. In 2000 she and the ruling council began secret talks, and the council subsequently granted her and other NLD members more freedom of movement. Talks continued in 2001, and in May 2002 Aung San Suu Kyi was released from house arrest.

Aung San Suu Kyi once again ended up in "protective custody" in 2003, after her supporters fought with government troops. Khin Nyunt became prime minister and promised to draft a new democratic constitution; the constitutional convention proceeded in May 2004, but the NLD boycotted the event because Aung San Suu Kyi was still under house arrest. In October, Khin Nyunt was placed under house arrest and Soe Win replaced him as prime minister. The following month the government released thousands of prodemocracy protesters.

The Indian Ocean tsunami of December 2004 left more than 3,000 people in Myanmar homeless. In November 2005 the government suddenly announced that its seat of government is moving to Pyinmana.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

(Note: Listed are those who effectively held power.)

1948–56	U Nu
1956–57	Ba Swe
1957–58	U Nu
1958–60	Ne Win
1960–62	U Nu
1962–88	Ne Win
1988–92	Saw Maung
1992–	Than Shwe

CONSTITUTION

The most recent constitution in Myanmar was promulgated in January 1974. This constitution was suspended following the army coup of September 18, 1988, although a national convention started on January 9, 1993, to draft a new constitution.

After the 1988 coup the SLORC was established. This body maintained unqualified executive, legislative, and judicial authority. The executive and legislative institutions established under the 1974 constitution (notably the People's Assembly, the State Council, and the Council of Ministers) were abolished. The new government lifted the ban on political parties, and in 1989 General Saw Maung announced that free, multiparty elections would take place in May 1990. Nonetheless, after the May elections the government refused to honor the outcome and barred the winning party from taking its seats in parlia-

ment. General Than Shwe and the SLORC continue to rule the country by decree.

On June 18, 1989, the country's name was officially changed to the Union of Myanmar. A new constitution was scheduled to be promulgated after the general elections of May 1990. However, the government refused to allow the winning party to take its seats in parliament and continued to rule by decree.

In November 1997 the SLORC was renamed the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC). The chairman of the SPDC, General Than Shwe, served as both head of state and head of government until a prime minister was appointed in 2003, although Than Shwe retained effective control of the country. Local government is administered by military officers appointed by the SPDC. The judicial system is headed by a Supreme Court whose five members are appointed by the SPDC.

PARLIAMENT

Before the 1988 coup the national legislature was the 485-member People's Assembly (Pyithu Hluttaw). Members were directly elected by secret ballot for terms of four years. Regular sessions took place twice a year, the intervening period being no more than eight months. All members of the People's Assembly belonged to the sole political party, the Burma Socialist Program Party. The last elections were held in 1990, but the assembly was never convened. This democratically elected but unconvened parliament has never recognized the name "Myanmar" and continues to call the country "Burma," as does the United States.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Myanmar has three substantial political parties and several political pressure groups. The NLD is Aung San Suu Kyi's party, the main opposition force. The NUP is pro-government. The Shan Nationalities League for Democracy is another opposition party, and there are several other small political parties. The main pressure group is the National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma, composed of individuals, some elected to parliament in 1990, who have fled to a border area and joined insurgents to form a government in exile. Other pressure groups include the Kachin Independence Army, the Karen National Union, the United Wa State Army, the progovernment Union Solidarity and Development Association, and several Shan factions.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For the purposes of local administration, Myanmar is divided into seven states (Chin, Kachin, Kayin, Kayah, Mon,

Rakhine, and Shan) and seven divisions (Ayeyarwady, Bago, Magway, Mandalay, Sagaing, Tanintharyi, and Yangôn). States are areas where a national ethnic minority is the local majority group. States and divisions are divided into townships, including village tracts and towns.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The basis of the Myanmar legal system is the Myanmar Code, which is derived from the Indian Penal Code of 1860 and the Indian Criminal Procedure Code of 1898.

The judiciary has been reorganized a number of times since independence. On September 26, 1988, the State Law and Order Restoration Council established by decree a new judicial structure under a Supreme Court of one chief judge and no more than five other judges. Subordinate state, divisional, and township courts, which are manned by judicial officers, were established by the Supreme Court on September 29, 1988.

There has been no provision in Myanmar law for a person in detention to seek judicial determination of the legality of the detention. In cases involving national security, persons sometimes were never formally charged but held in indefinite detention without trial. The government has neither acknowledged holding political prisoners nor considered itself compelled to justify the detention or imprisonment of anyone.

In common criminal cases police have often detained suspects for up to 24 hours, after which court orders have necessarily been sought from competent judicial authorities. These court orders, which were renewable, authorized extensions of the detention for 14-day periods until charges were formally brought before a court. Detainees have frequently been held incommunicado during periods of investigation and interrogation but have normally been allowed visitors thereafter.

HUMAN RIGHTS

In terms of political and civil rights, Myanmar is ranked as a country that is not free.

The government's long-standing severe repression of human rights continues. Citizens continue to live subject at any time, and without appeal, to the arbitrary and sometimes brutal dictates of the military dictatorship. Citizens do not have the right to change their government. The SPDC has given no sign of willingness to cede its hold on absolute power. There continue to be reports, particularly in ethnic minority-dominated areas, that soldiers commit serious human rights abuses, including extrajudicial killings and rape. Disappearances continue, and members of the security forces beat and otherwise abuse detainees. Prison conditions are harsh and life threatening. Arbitrary arrests and detentions for the expression

of dissenting political views continue with increasing frequency amid the regime's effort to intimidate the populace into submission in the face of deepening economic and political instability.

The SPDC maintains and continues to intensify its restrictions on the basic freedoms of speech, press, assembly, and association. Political-party activity remains severely restricted. The government pressures many party offices throughout the country to close and refuses to recognize the legal political status of key NLD party leaders, such as its general secretary, 1991 Nobel laureate Aung San Suu Kyi.

The government imposes restrictions on certain religious minorities and restricts freedom of movement. Thousands of citizens who fled army attacks against insurgents remain in refugee camps in Thailand. Societal discrimination and violence against women, trafficking in women and girls, and widespread adult and child prostitution are severe problems.

During the SPDC's anti-insurgency operations, members of the military forces were responsible for arbitrary killing, rape, village relocation, destruction of homes and property, and forced labor inflicted on ethnic minorities.

FOREIGN POLICY

Myanmar has become a pariah among nations because of its continued defiance of international calls for the restoration of democracy and the release of opposition leaders from jail. The United Nations and the 18 most-industrialized countries have publicly rebuked the regime for its refusal to surrender power to a democratically elected parliament. The government has repeatedly refused requests by the United Nations to allow human rights groups to visit. The United States has imposed economic sanctions against the military regime.

Since 1988 the government has attempted to improve relations with its neighbors. In 1994 Myanmar concluded a friendship pact with Thailand, but relations have remained cool. Myanmar military forces have repeatedly crossed the border in pursuit of guerrillas on Thai soil. The relationship improved somewhat in 2001, when Myanmar pledged to eliminate drug trafficking in the area by 2005 and Thailand shut down camps housing Burmese dissidents. Relations with Bangladesh have been stormy as well, because of the exodus from Burma of some 260,000 Rohingya Muslims who claimed that they were the target of an extermination campaign. Repatriations began in 1992 and were completed by 1998. In 2001 Chinese President Jiang Zemin became the first Chinese head of state to visit Myanmar since the military coup in 1988. China is becoming Myanmar's most important source of foreign aid and military supplies.

Myanmar joined ASEAN in 1997. The country is also a member of the Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, and Thailand Economic Cooperation and several other regional groups.

DEFENSE

After the 1988 coup all executive and legislative organs were abolished, and the armed forces were placed under the State Law and Order Restoration Council's command. Its leader, General Saw Maung, also served as minister of defense. Reflecting its British origin, the army was until quite recently based on the regimental system, each regiment being composed of a distinct ethnic group. Official policy now discourages ethnicity in regimental composition, favoring a racial mix that inhibits local or ethnic loyalties.

Since independence the Myanmar army has been continuously engaged in anti-insurgency operations. As such, the defense service is structured to meet internal security needs rather than to defend against external threats. The army consists largely of light, mobile infantry battalions, and the air force is designed for ground support. Both men and women can volunteer for service at the age of 18.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 595,000
 Military Manpower Availability: 11,254,374
 Military Expenditures \$million: 39
 as % of GDP: 2.1
 as % of central government expenditures: —
 Arms Imports \$million: 31
 Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

Myanmar has a mixed economy, with private activity dominant in agriculture, light industry, and transport. Substantial state-controlled activity is found mainly in energy, heavy industry, and the rice trade. Government policy between 1989 and 2000 aimed at revitalizing the economy, after three decades of tight central planning, but state enterprises remain highly inefficient, and privatization efforts have stalled.

Published estimates of Myanmar's foreign trade are greatly understated because of the volume of black-market trade. A major ongoing problem is the failure to achieve monetary and fiscal stability. Myanmar remains poor, and for the majority of the population living standards have not improved in recent years. The short-term outlook is for continued sluggish growth because of poor government planning, internal unrest, minimal foreign

investment, and a large trade deficit. The government continues to award contracts to the few companies that support its policies, causing monopolies.

Inflation has been extremely steep, and the local currency is officially overvalued at more than 100 times the market rate. A banking crisis in 2003 and sanctions by the United States, the European Union, and Japan increased the economy's downward spiral. In 2004 the banking sector was near dead, making government contracts the only source of credit available to private businesses. The nation has many resources, including gems, jade, timber, fisheries, and excellent tourist potential, but it has failed to develop these industries. Agriculture accounts for more than 50 percent of GDP. Illicit opium and amphetamines bring a certain amount of money into the country, though the government has pledged to fight the narcotics trade.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 74.3
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 1,700
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: —
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 9.9
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 56.7
 Industry: 8.8
 Services: 34.5
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: —
 Government Consumption: 80
 Gross Domestic Investment: 10.2
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 2.137
 Imports: 1.754
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 2.8
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 32.4

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
228.5	270.5	270.2	327.2	514.0

Finance

National Currency: Kyat (MMK)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = MMK 5.6033 (official); 900 (unofficial)
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency trillion: 1
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 9.0
 Total External Debt \$billion: 6.752
 Debt Service Ratio %: 3.76
 Balance of Payments \$million: –185
 International Reserves SDRs \$million: 470
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
 17.2

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 125.8
 per capita \$: 2.60
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 133.5

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: 1 April–31 March
 Revenues \$million: 474.9
 Expenditures \$million: 955.5
 Budget Deficit \$million: 480.6
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: 2.3

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 56.7
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2000) %: 11.9
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 0.09
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 18.8
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 13.4
 Total Farmland % of land area: 15.0
 Livestock: Cattle million: 11.94
 Chickens million: 65
 Pigs million: 5.22
 Sheep 000: 492
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 40.9
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 1.4

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: —
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: —

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 6.47
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 2.68
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 56
 Net Energy Imports % of use: –25.8
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 1.52
 Production kW-hr billion: 5.42
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 5.05
 Coal Reserves tons billion: —
 Production tons 000: 110
 Consumption tons 000: 109
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
 Production cubic feet billion: 247.2
 Consumption cubic feet billion: 69.2
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
 Production barrels 000 per day: 10.5
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 31.2
 Pipelines Length km: 558

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 1.754
 Exports \$billion: 2.137
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2001): 16.4
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2000): –4.6
 Balance of Trade \$million: –185

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
China %	28.9	5.6
Singapore %	20.8	—
Thailand %	14.0	30.3
Malaysia %	9.3	—
South Korea %	5.5	—
Taiwan %	5.1	—
Japan %	4.0	4.6
United States %	—	9.8
India %	—	9.0

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 28,200
 Paved %: 12.2
 Automobiles: 175,400
 Trucks and Buses: 98,900
 Railroad: Track Length km: 3,955
 Passenger-km billion: 4.45
 Freight-km billion: 1.22
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 37
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 659.6
 Airports: 78
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 1.15
 Length of Waterways km: 12,800

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 206
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 68
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 36

Communications

Telephones 000: 357.3
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.06
 Cellular Telephones 000: 66.5
 Personal Computers 000: 300
 Internet Hosts per million people: 0.07
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 0.7

ENVIRONMENT

The country suffers from a number of environmental concerns, including deforestation caused by overlogging. Additionally, air, soil, and water are being contaminated by industrial waste. Inadequate sanitation and water treatment pose serious health threats to the population.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 52.3
 Forest Change (1990–2000) hectares 000: –517
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 5
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 5,680
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 0.19

LIVING CONDITIONS

Myanmar is an extremely poor country. Gross domestic product (GDP) per capita is \$1,700, but wealth is not evenly distributed, leaving much of the population in abject poverty; the average income for most people is closer to \$225. Public transportation is of poor quality and unreliable. Horse carts and human-powered trishaws (bicycle taxis) remain a common form of transport. Most roads are unpaved and vulnerable to rains. The water supply is contaminated and can spread illness. The electrical supply is unreliable and by no means universal. Houses in villages are made of bamboo and thatch, though wealthy people may have homes made of wood with metal roofs. City dwellings are built on concrete blocks and have plywood walls.

HEALTH

The government supposedly provides all people with health care, but in truth much of the population has no access to modern medicine. The World Health Organization ranks Myanmar toward the bottom of the world's nations in delivering health care. Sanitation is poor, and diseases such as typhoid, viral hepatitis, intestinal worms, and dysentery are common. Mosquitoes spread malaria and dengue fever. Tetanus and rabies both occur with some frequency, as does tuberculosis. In 2003, 1.2 percent of the population was infected with HIV, which has begun to spread at an alarming rate. Life expectancy is about 56 years.

Health

Number of Physicians: 14,356
 Number of Dentists: 984
 Number of Nurses: 12,642
 Number of Pharmacists: —
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 30
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 67.24
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 360
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 2.2
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 315
 HIV Infected % of adults: 1.2
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 77
 Measles: 75
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 73
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 80

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Almost every Burman meal is designed around rice. The universal flavoring is *ngapi*, a fermented shrimp paste. People eat many vegetables, either as raw salad or in

spicy curries that may include chicken or fish. Fresh fruit is a common ingredient in salads and other dishes. Chinese and Indian culinary influences are present, and the Shan people have their own cooking styles. People drink a great deal of tea, either Chinese or Burman, which is strong, milky, and sweet. Street vendors sell sugarcane juice. Alcoholic beverages include lychee wine, white liquor, orange brandy, and jungle liquor. Many people enjoy finishing their meals by chewing betel leaves.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 5.7
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,820
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 213.7
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 96.8

STATUS OF WOMEN

Women in Myanmar have distinct social roles, which vary according to cultural traditions and ethnic backgrounds. In general, Burmese women enjoy most of the same rights as Burmese men; women keep their own names after marriage, are active in trade, can own property, often control family finances, and enjoy the same legal rights as men. Buddhism, like many religions, limits the religious role of women and assigns them a status theoretically inferior to men. Women are greatly underrepresented in senior positions in the ruling SPDC. More women than men pursue higher education, especially in medicine; female doctors are in high demand because male doctors are not supposed to touch female patients.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: —
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 0.98
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: —

WORK

Though the unemployment rate was officially only 5.2 percent in 2004, employment does not translate into prosperity for the majority of people. Most of the population are subsistence farmers, growing food for their own consumption; Myanmar once exported a great deal of rice, but the nation's people now eat most of the domestically grown rice. People who live near forests make a living by cutting and selling teak and redwood. The hill tribes grow poppies and sell opium, which has been a fairly profitable trade but is in danger of being eliminated by the government.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 27,010,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 43.6
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 70
 Industry: 7
 Services: 23
 Unemployment %: 5.2

Second Level: Secondary Schools: 2,916

Teachers: 73,062
 Students: 2,382,608
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 32.6
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 35.1

Third Level: Institutions: 51

Teachers: 10,522
 Students: 555,060
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 11.5

Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 0.6

EDUCATION

Primary education is free and universal but not compulsory. Schooling consists of 11 years, as divided into primary (grades one through five), middle (six through nine), and secondary (10 and 11). The primary-school curriculum includes Burmese, science, social studies, and arithmetic; English is introduced at grade five. There are specialized agricultural and technical schools at the secondary level. The academic year runs from May to March. The medium of instruction is Burmese, but minorities are permitted to use their mother tongues.

Adult literacy courses are offered under the auspices of the Mass Education Council. Monastic schools (*ky-aungs*) continue to provide traditional Buddhist education in rural areas. All private schools have been nationalized.

Educational administration was previously centralized in the Ministry of Education; it is now administered by the SPDC. The country is divided into 13 educational zones, with an inspector in each for secondary education. For primary education each zone has three districts, with an education officer assisted by three or four inspectors. All public education is financed by the national government.

Higher education is consolidated under two large universities, the Arts and Sciences University of Yangon and the Arts and Sciences University of Mandalay, each with independent degree-granting colleges. A total of 10 colleges are affiliated with the University of Yangon, and five are affiliated with the University of Mandalay.

The government claims that more than 85 percent of the population is literate, but estimates of functional literacy are closer to 30 percent. Many rural students drop out of school after the first four years because they are needed by their families to work in the fields.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 85.3
 Male %: 89.2
 Female %: 81.4
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 7.4
 First Level: Primary Schools: 35,856
 Teachers: 149,001
 Students: 4,889,325
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 32.8
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 84.2

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Myanmar has little in the way of science or technology. Agricultural techniques are still primitive. Electricity is not widespread. The telephone system is barely adequate for governmental and business purposes; in 2003 there were only about 360,000 telephone lines and 67,000 cellular telephones. About 28,000 people were using the Internet.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: —
 Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

Myanmar's media are wholly government owned, and all forms of communication are subject to government censorship. The two main newspapers are the state-run *Kyebmon* and the SPDC's *Myanmar alin*. There are numerous nondailies and periodicals, with combined circulation of well over one million. Two daily newspapers are published in English, the *Myanmar Times* and the *New Light of Myanmar*. The *Myanmar Times* prints heavily edited reports from international wire services, and its domestic content follows the government's dictates. Newspapers in languages other than Burmese or English are not permitted. There is little or no advertising. All the daily newspapers have national circulation.

All controversial materials are censored, and discussions of national policy in the press that do not praise the "Myanmar way to socialism" are banned.

The national news agency is the News Agency of Myanmar, which has no foreign correspondents, instead obtaining news from other news agencies. Radio is broadcast by the state-run Radio Myanmar, which, along with TV Myanmar, is run by the national television and radio department. The army has its own television channel, and the city of Yangon has its own entertainment-based radio station. The opposition runs the shortwave radio station Democratic Voice of Burma, which is based in Norway.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 4
 Total Circulation 000: 400
 Circulation per 1,000: 8.7
 Books Published: 227
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers million: 2.8
 per 1,000: 66
 Television sets 000: 323
 per 1,000: 7

CULTURE

Myanmar has many traditional dance and musical forms, which are performed at nearly all festive occasions. *Zat pwe* are religious plays, *yok thei pwe* are puppet shows, and *anyei pwe* are comedies.

Burmese architecture is famous, and the countryside is covered with pagodas and temples decorated with paintings, gemstones, and carvings. The Shwedagon Pagoda in Yangôn is one of the most spectacular structures in Asia; it is covered with gold and various gemstones.

Burmese craftsmen are skilled at lacquerware, wood carving, and embroidery. Some artists make a cloth called *cheik* by weaving silk into twisted patterns.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 1
 Volumes: 4,000
 Registered borrowers: 11,793
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Buddhist folklore is important to the people of Myanmar. At festivals they perform elaborate plays and dances depicting stories from Buddha's life. Folk songs are still sung by people working in the fields, pounding rice, or going about other tasks. The hill people still practice animistic religions. Local mythology incorporates beliefs in various deities and fantastic animals, including dragons and sea monsters; statues of lions guard pagodas because people believe lions make the best guards.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Kite flying is popular in rural areas. Hiking and cycling are possible, but most locals do not engage in such

strenuous activities for fun. People love to watch plays and puppet shows, which can depict Buddhist legends or be comic. All performances are accompanied by music similar to that of Thailand, which is played largely on gongs, drums, and bamboo flutes. There are some restaurants in the cities, and people enjoy shopping in the markets.

ETIQUETTE

Meals are often served on a low table. Diners sit on the floor and help themselves to food from the dishes on the table; if there are no utensils, it is polite to use the right hand for eating. The soles of the feet are considered the lowest part of a person, and it is impolite to point them at someone. It is also impolite to point at a person or to touch another person on the head. People remove their shoes when entering a home or temple.

FAMILY LIFE

Arranged marriages are common in Myanmar; families choose spouses based on wealth, status, and astrology. Most marriage negotiators are female, usually aunts or grandmothers of the people marrying. Rural people still live in extended families, though family groups are now smaller in urban areas. When a child is born, the parents immediately consult an astrologer to choose a name in accordance with the child's horoscope. Babies are officially named when they are seven days old. Children come of age at nine, and both sexes undergo initiations; girls have their ears pierced, and boys go to spend a few weeks at a Buddhist monastery.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Both men and women dress in sarongs called *longyis*, which can be tied in different styles, topped with shirts called *eingyi*. Both sexes wear leather sandals. Women like to own and wear jewelry with pearls, sapphires, rubies, and jade, which they consider an investment. On special occasions men wear turbans.

SPORTS

People in Myanmar engage in a number of traditional sports, including kickboxing, *khe pai kauk* (leg rowing), *chinlon* (a game in which six people stand in a ring and try to keep a ball in the air using their feet and legs), and *gonnyin* (which involves throwing fruit pits at a target on a pole). Soccer, golf, and tennis are also popular.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1948** Burma becomes an independent republic, with U Nu as prime minister. White Flag Communists and Karen secessionists launch rebellions.
- 1951** In national elections, U Nu's AFPFL gains absolute majority.
- 1952** Kyat is introduced as Burmese currency, replacing the Burmese rupee.
- 1956** In second national election, AFPFL retains power but with a reduced majority. Soon after elections U Nu steps down from power for eight months. AFPFL is split into two factions: the Clean SF-PFL, led by U Nu, and the Stable AFPFL, led by U Ba Swe.
- 1958** Faced with internal dissension and threats from insurgents, U Nu yields power to a caretaker government led by Ne Win, the army chief of staff.
- 1960** U Nu returns to power in national elections at head of Clean AFPFL, later renamed Pyidaungsu Party. Border pact with People's Republic of China is concluded, followed by a Treaty of Friendship and Nonaggression.
- 1961** Buddhism is made the state religion.
- 1962** In a bloodless coup General Ne Win seizes power. He sets up the Revolutionary Council as supreme legislative and executive organ, promulgates a manifesto titled *The Burmese Way to Socialism*, and founds the BSPP. U Nu is placed in detention.
- 1963** All banks and major industries are nationalized. Under the Enterprise Nationalization Law, aliens such as Indians and Chinese are excluded from all types of economic activity.
- 1964** All political parties are banned except the BSPP, which becomes the sole political organization in the country.
- 1965** The government-controlled Buddha Sasana Sangha Organization is formed in an effort to reduce the political power of the monks.
- 1966** Burma leaves the sterling area.
- 1967** Anti-Chinese riots erupt in Yangôn. Sino-Burmese relations are strained.
- 1969** Former prime minister U Nu escapes and is granted asylum in Thailand.
- 1972** Ne Win and Revolutionary Council associates give up military ranks.
- 1974** New constitution is promulgated. The country's official name is changed to Socialist Republic of the Union of Burma. Ne Win is elected president. Buddhism is no longer the state religion.
- 1975** Kyat is devalued by 23 percent. Students riot in Yangôn over burial of U Thant, former secretary-general of United Nations. Five Kachin and Karen insurgent groups organize the Federal National Democratic Front to overthrow Ne Win.
- 1976** Plot to assassinate Ne Win is uncovered.
- 1977** U Maung Maung Kha is named new prime minister, replacing Sein Win.
- 1978** President Ne Win is reelected in national elections. Arakanese Muslims flee across the border into Bangladesh, charging persecution and genocide. Myanmar reaches peaceful accord with Bangladesh over repatriation of Muslim refugees and their resettlement in Burma.
- 1979** Burma quits the nonaligned movement after the Havana summit of nonaligned nations.
- 1980** Following general amnesty, former prime minister U Nu returns to Burma from Thailand. Government proposes two-tier citizenship in move to exclude naturalized Burmese of Chinese, Indian, or Pakistani origin from political and economic life of the country.
- 1981** Ne Win steps down as president in favor of San Yu.
- 1983** Former key Ne Win aide Tin U is arrested for corruption, and his supporters are purged. Bomb blast during visit of South Korean president kills 17 South Korean officials. North Korea is implicated in the terrorist attack. Burma cuts diplomatic relations with North Korea.
- 1985** Ne Win resumes BSPP chairmanship. San Yu becomes vice president of the BSPP.
- 1987** Students lead demonstrations against Ne Win. Civil unrest continues to grow.
- 1988** Antigovernment riots are violently repressed. Ne Win resigns his post in the BSPP. General Saw Maung, as head of the SLORC, assumes power in a military coup. Western aid to Burma is halted as thousands are killed in riots. The constitution is suspended, giving the SLORC unrestricted executive, legislative, and judicial authority. Maung's government lifts ban on political parties. The ruling BSPP changes its name to the NUP. The military arrests and harasses opposition leaders.
- 1989** Burma's name is officially changed to the Union of Myanmar (Pyidaungzu Myanmar Naing-gandaw). Maung announces upcoming free, multiparty elections and plans for a new constitution. Maung disqualifies two leading members of the NLD from contesting the May 1990 elections.

1674 Myanmar

- The government forcibly evicts 200,000 citizens from their city homes.
- 1990** Elections are held; of the 485 parliamentary seats contested, the NLD wins 397, the NUP only 10.
Saw Maung and the SLORC refuse to relinquish power. U Nu is placed under house arrest. Government troops kill thousands of protestors, including monks and students. Opposition leaders are arrested and tortured.
- 1991** NLD leader Aung San Suu Kyi is awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.
- 1992** General Than Shwe replaces General Saw Maung as SLORC chairman, prime minister, and minister of defense. U Nu is released from confinement.
- 1993** SLORC organizes a national convention to draft a constitution along the lines of that of Indonesia.
- 1995** Aung San Suu Kyi is freed from house arrest but is unable to participate openly in the political process.
Myanmar forces capture the Karen rebels' base at Mannerplaw.
NLD representatives withdraw from the constitutional convention, citing an absence of democratic principles in the drafting process.
- 1997** Myanmar becomes a full member of ASEAN, a powerful regional trading group.
SLORC arrests more than 200 NLD representatives for attempting to form an NLD party congress. SLORC is renamed the SPDC.
- 1998** Active fighting resumes between Myanmar troops and Karen rebels.
The United States and Japan pledge \$4 million to eradicate illicit opium production.
Myanmar and Thailand improve relations.
Bangladesh and Myanmar reach an agreement on the repatriation of Muslim refugees, known as Rohingyas, to Myanmar.
- 1999** The International Labor Organization denounces and expels Myanmar for use of forced labor.
Myanmar signs an agreement with India for mutual action against rebel activities and drug trafficking along the common border.
- 2000** Human Rights Watch condemns Myanmar for abusing Rohingyas.
Members of NLD, including Aung San Suu Kyi, are again taken into custody.
- 2002** Aung San Suu Kyi is released from house arrest.
- 2003** Aung San Suu Kyi is placed under house arrest again after her NLD supporters clash with the government's supporters.

- Khin Nyunt becomes prime minister and promises to work on creating a new constitution.
- 2004** The constitutional convention takes place, boycotted by the NLD.
Khin Nyunt is placed under house arrest; Soe Win replaces him as prime minister.
The December Indian Ocean tsunami hits the coast of Myanmar and other nations in the region.
- 2005** The military junta announces the surprise move of its capital to Pyinmana.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Myanmar Home Page
<http://www.myanmar.com>

NAMIBIA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Namibia

ABBREVIATION

NA

CAPITAL

Windhoek

HEAD OF STATE

President Hifikepunye Pohamba (from 2005)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Nahas Angula (from 2005)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Democratic republic

POPULATION

2,030,692 (2005)

AREA

825,418 sq km (318,696 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Ovambo, Kavango, Herero, Damara, Nama

LANGUAGES

English (official), Afrikaans, German, Oshivambo, Herero, Nama

RELIGION

Christianity

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Namibian dollar

NATIONAL FLAG

A large blue triangle with a yellow sunburst in the upper-left section and an equal green triangle in the lower-right section; the triangles are separated by a diagonal red stripe bounded by two narrow white stripes.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

In the center of the national emblem is a shield with the motif of the Namibian flag. The shield rests on the roots of *Welwitschia mirabilis*, a plant unique to the Namib Desert that may live for more than a century. Above is a fish eagle representing the north and the water resources of the country, with a headband containing diamonds (which are important to the economy of the country) in his talons; supporting the shield are two oryx, which are indigenous to the northern parts of the country and considered brave animals. The national motto, "Unity, liberty, justice," appears at the bottom.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"Namibia, Land of the Brave"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

March 21 (Independence Day)

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

March 21, 1990

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

February 9, 1990

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Namibia is located on the southwestern coast of Africa. It is bordered by South Africa to the south and south-east, Botswana to the east, and Angola to the north. In the west Namibia has a long coastline on the Atlantic Ocean. The narrow Caprivi Strip, between Angola and Botswana in the northeast, extends Namibia to the Zambezi River, giving it a short border with Zambia as well.

Namibia covers a total of 825,418 sq km (318,696 sq mi). The capital is Windhoek, and the other principal urban centers are Swakopmund, Rehoboth, and Rundu. The country is divided into three basic geographic regions: the Namib Desert along the west coast, the central plateau, and the Kalahari Desert in the east. The Namib Desert covers about one-sixth of Namibia's total area and is uninhabitable. The central plateau, an area of savanna and bush, covers just over half of the land area. The most fertile

Namibia



and best-watered areas of Namibia are in the north near the Kunene River and in the Caprivi Strip.

Geography

Area sq km: 825,418; sq mi 318,696
 World Rank: 33rd
 Land Boundaries, km: Angola 1,376; Botswana 1,360; South Africa 967; Zambia 233
 Coastline, km: 1,572
 Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Atlantic Ocean 0

Highest: Königstein 2,606
 Land Use %
 Arable Land: 1.0
 Permanent Crops: 0.0
 Forest: 9.8
 Other: 89.2

Population of Principal Cities (2001)

Rundu	44,413
Windhoek	233,529

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Namibia's climate is the driest in Africa, with sunny, warm days and cool nights. The mean January temperature at Windhoek is 23°C (73°F); in winter the mean temperature is 13°C (55°F). The fertile northern strip is always warmer.

The rainy season lasts roughly from December to March. Its length may be as short as one month in the Namib Desert, two to four months on the central plateau, and five months in the Caprivi Strip. The mean annual rainfall in the Namib Desert and the southern central plateau is 0–250 mm (0–20 in), in the Caprivi Strip and northern Ovamboland 500–1,000 mm (20–40 in).

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature
Summer: 73°F
Winter: 55°F
Average Rainfall
Namib Desert and Central Plateau: 0 to 10 in
Kalahari Desert: 10 to 20 in
Caprivi Strip and Ovamboland: 20 to 40 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Some 15 percent of Namibia's land area has been turned into national parks to preserve rare and endangered species of plants, animal, and bird life, and Namibia is one of the world's first countries to extend constitutional protection to its wildlife and environment. Etosha National Park contains substantial concentrations of big-game species, including elephants, lions, rhinoceroses, zebras, giraffes, and hartebeests, and the country has the world's largest population of cheetahs. The nation's deserts contain little vegetation, but the central plateau contains woodland savanna with various species of grass, shrubs, and succulents that have adapted to the lack of moisture.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005:	2,030,692
World Rank:	141st
Density per sq km:	2.5
% of annual growth (1999-2003):	2.5
Male %:	50.0
Female %:	50.0
Urban %:	30.9
Age Distribution %:	
0–14:	38.7
15–64:	57.7
65 and over:	3.6
Population 2025:	2,061,000
Birth Rate per 1,000:	25.16
Death Rate per 1,000:	18.36

Rate of Natural Increase %:	0.7
Total Fertility Rate:	3.18
Expectation of Life (years):	
Males:	44.71
Females:	43.13
Marriage Rate per 1,000:	—
Divorce Rate per 1,000:	—
Average Size of Households:	5.2
Induced Abortions:	—

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Approximately 87.5 percent of Namibians are black, 6.5 percent are white, and 6.5 percent are of mixed descent. About 50 percent of the population belongs to the Ovambo tribe and 9 percent to the Kavango tribe. The black population can be subdivided into the Bantu-speaking Ovambo, Kavango, Herero, and Himba; the non-Bantu Damara; the Khoi, also known as Nama; the San; and various smaller groups related to communities in Angola, Botswana, and Zambia.

The Ovambo, the largest ethnic group, live mainly in the well-watered north. The second-largest group, believed to be an offshoot of the Ovambo, is the Kavango, who reside along the Okavango River in the northeast. The Damara live east of the arid coast and south of the Ovambo. The Herero, a herding people, range north of Windhoek. The Nama, also herders, live in the deep south.

The mulatto community, consisting of people of mixed Caucasian and black ancestry, includes the Rehoboth Bastards and some Cape mulattoes, who migrated from South Africa. The white community consists of descendants of the Germans and Afrikaners and a few English-speaking South Africans. Whites live predominantly in cities and in central and southern Namibia.

LANGUAGES

The official language is English, although Afrikaans and German are more widely used. Most of the African ethnic groups speak their own languages. Bantu-speaking groups in the northern regions include the Ovambo, Okavango, East Caprivan, and Kaolander ethnic groups. To the south the major ethnolinguistic division is between the Bantu-speaking Herero and Tswana and the Khoisan-speaking Bergdama, Nama, and San.

RELIGIONS

There is no official state religion, although about 85 percent of Namibians are Christian. Of the remaining 15 percent, a significant number follow traditional animist beliefs. The largest Christian denomination is Lutheran, with more than half the Christian population. Other denominations include Roman Catholic, Dutch Reformed, Anglican, and Methodist.

Religious Affiliations

Christian	1,725,000
Indigenous Beliefs	300,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Prior to European contact Namibia was occupied primarily by the San, Ovambo, Nama, Damara, and Herero tribes. These disparate peoples maintained predominantly agricultural societies. The San were the region's original inhabitants, but they were mostly displaced by the Khoi-Khoi from the south. There followed invasions by Bantu tribes around 1500, such that both the San and the Khoi-Khoi became minority groups within the region.

In the late 1480s Portuguese navigators first explored the country's coastal areas, followed by Dutch and British explorers. The German presence began in the 1840s with the arrival of the Rhenish Missionary Society. In 1878 Britain annexed Walvis Bay. An Anglo-German agreement in 1890 acknowledged German control of Namibia, then called German South-West Africa, with Britain retaining Walvis Bay. The Germans took the land and cattle from the indigenous population, creating a dispossessed African wage-labor force. In their effort to subdue the African inhabitants, the Germans fought extensive campaigns against the Herero and Nama. The resistance to occupation long maintained by these two groups ended in their near annihilation by the Germans. In 1904 the Herero again rose up against the Germans but were ruthlessly suppressed, their population being reduced from 80,000 to 16,000 starving refugees. German retaliation against Nama as well as Damara uprisings wiped out about half of those groups.

German rule ended during World War I; in 1915 South African troops defeated the Germans and occupied Namibia. The territory was mandated to South Africa by the League of Nations in 1920, to be administered on behalf of Britain, with the duty of preparing it for eventual self-determination. However, South Africa had no intention of giving up what was then called South-West Africa, which it governed as though it were another province of the Union of South Africa.

The first attempts to make South Africa adhere to its mandate came in 1945, after the formation of the United Nations as the successor to the League of Nations. While all other countries controlling trusteeship territories agreed to transfer them to UN trusteeships, South Africa refused, demanding full incorporation of South-West Africa into its union. The United Nations refused to accept this demand, and in 1950 the International Court of Justice ruled that the territory should remain under an international mandate. In 1966 the UN General Assembly terminated South Africa's mandate over South-West Africa and transferred the territory to UN control.

South Africa refused to accept the United Nations's right to end its administration and, in 1966, extended its apartheid laws to South-West Africa. In order to enhance its control, South Africa divided the territory into homelands for different ethnic groups, with whites receiving the best farming and mining areas and the remainder being allocated to the African population, resulting in mass forced removals of Africans.

In 1958 the South-West African People's Organization (SWAPO) was founded under Sam Nujoma. After political negotiations failed, in 1966 SWAPO initiated an armed struggle against the regime. In 1971 the International Court of Justice ruled that South Africa's claims were invalid, and in 1973 the United Nations recognized SWAPO as the sole legitimate representative of what it now called Namibia.

Ties between SWAPO and the Marxist Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) led South Africa to invade Angola in 1975 in support of the anti-MPLA forces of the National Union for the Total Liberation of Angola. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s Namibia was a casualty of the cold war, as South Africa launched attacks against the Cuban- and Russian-backed MPLA and SWAPO training bases in Angola, while SWAPO launched insurgency raids against the regime from Angolan territory.

Meanwhile, South Africa attempted to develop an internal settlement of the Namibian insurgency. In 1975 a constitutional conference resulted in plans for a quasi-independent Namibia. SWAPO boycotted the conference, but the Democratic Turnhalle Alliance (DTA), made up of pro-South African whites and anti-SWAPO African groups, formulated a plan for independence by 1978, through which South African troops would remain in the country. In elections held in 1978, boycotted by SWAPO, the DTA won a majority of seats in a constituent assembly. However, the assembly had little real power and was not internationally recognized.

In 1978 the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 435, which called for the cessation of hostilities in the region, the withdrawal of South African troops from Namibia, and UN-supervised elections prior to full independence. Under the terms of a 1988 tripartite agreement, Cuba was to withdraw its troops from Angola in exchange for the South African withdrawal from Namibia and the implementation of UN Resolution 435.

Although there were further clashes between SWAPO guerrillas and South African forces, a 1989 cease-fire allowed elections to be held in November of that year under the auspices of the United Nations. SWAPO won 41 seats in a 72-member assembly, while the DTA won 21 seats. The assembly then produced a new constitution, which was formally adopted on February 9, 1990. Sam Nujoma was subsequently elected the nation's first president, and formal independence was declared on March 21, 1990.

In the 1994 elections Nujoma was reelected with 76 percent of the vote, and SWAPO continued to dominate the legislative assembly. In the elections the party increased its number of seats to 53, while the DTA retained only 15, with the remaining seats split between minor parties. Also in 1994 an agreement was reached whereby South Africa transferred control of Walvis Bay to Namibia.

In 1998 Namibia contributed 2,000 troops to the peacekeeping effort in the Republic of the Congo, which was embroiled in a civil war. In 1999 Nujoma won a third term, and SWAPO further increased its number of seats to 55. Later that year the World Court ruled against Namibia in a territorial dispute with Botswana over the Chobe River island of Sedudu. During Nujoma's final term, issues of land reform became a priority. In 2002 the new prime minister, Theo-Ben Gurirab, along with Nujoma, urged white farmers to accept the nation's land reform program. In 2003 a union representing black farmworkers planned to invade a number of white-owned farms, but the raids were called off after an agreement with the white farmers' group was reached. In November 2004 Nujoma's nominee, Hifikepunye Pohamba, was elected president.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1990–2004 Sam Nujoma
2004– Hifikepunye Pohamba

CONSTITUTION

Under its constitution, Namibia is a sovereign, secular, democratic, and unitary state, and the constitution is the supreme law. It guarantees the fundamental rights and freedoms of the individual regardless of sex, race, color, ethnic origin, religion, creed, or social or economic status and gives all citizens the right to form and join political parties.

Executive power is vested in the president and the cabinet. The president, who is head of state and the commander in chief of the defense force, is elected by direct, universal, and equal suffrage and must receive more than 50 percent of the votes cast. The term of office is five years, and there is a limit of two consecutive terms.

The cabinet consists of the president, the prime minister—who is head of government—and other ministers, whom the president appoints from among members of the National Assembly. The cabinet's functions include directing the activities of the government's departments, initiating bills for submission to the National Assembly, formulating the budget, and advising the president on matters of national defense.

Legislative authority lies with the parliament, a bicameral structure. The lower house is known as the National Assembly, while the upper house is called the National Council; the latter is made up of regional leaders. Amendments to or the repeal of provisions of the constitution require a two-thirds majority of the National Assembly and the National Council. The constitution provides for an independent judiciary, with the Supreme Court as its highest body.

PARLIAMENT

Legislative power in Namibia is vested in the National Assembly, which is composed of 72 members elected by general, direct, and secret ballots and not more than six nonvoting members appointed by the president. Every National Assembly may continue for a maximum period of five years, but it may be dissolved by the president before the expiration of its term.

The National Council has a term of six years and consists of two members from each of the 13 regions. Its functions include considering all bills passed by the National Assembly, investigating any subordinate legislation referred to it by the lower body for advice, and recommending legislation to the National Assembly on matters of regional concern.

POLITICAL PARTIES

The nation's major political party, with 55 seats in the National Assembly, is SWAPO, a socialist party. A number of other parties have small representations in the National Assembly, including the Congress of Democrats, with five seats; the DTA, a conservative coalition of 11 ethnically based parties, with four seats; and the United Democratic Front, a moderate-conservative coalition of eight parties, with three seats. Minor parties include the conservative white Monitor Action Group and the Democratic Coalition of Namibia.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Namibia is divided into 13 regions. Each of these areas is governed by an elected regional council, which in turn administers smaller local levels of government, including municipal governments and village management boards. These local-authority boards are elected with varying terms. Two members from each regional council serve in the National Council. Municipal and village governments provide a variety of local services, such as water and sanitation management. The most important functions of local governments are land distribution and adjudication.

LEGAL SYSTEM

Namibian law is based on Roman-Dutch law. The constitution provides for an independent judiciary, with the Supreme Court as the highest body. There is also an appellate High Court and 30 lower trial courts, known as magistrate's courts. A lack of qualified judges has led the legal system to be overburdened.

Those accused of crimes have the right to hear the charges against them and the right to legal counsel. However, budget shortages often prevent adequate legal representation in rural areas. In addition, persons have had to wait as long as a year for trials. The death penalty was banned after independence.

HUMAN RIGHTS

The constitution guarantees the fundamental rights of the individual regardless of sex, race, color, or social or economic status and gives all citizens the right to form and join political parties. It also makes apartheid a criminal offense, outlaws torture, and formally bans the death penalty. The bill of rights grants freedom of speech and religion and the right to a fair trial. The bill of rights may not be amended.

Elections are generally free and well administered, except for the occasional harassment of opposition members and unequal access to media coverage. Namibia is a first-asylum country, permitting asylum seekers to enter the country. Illegal immigrants from Angola, however, are rounded up and deported without judicial review.

FOREIGN POLICY

After independence Namibia became a full member of the United Nations and various international organizations, including the Organization of African Unity, now the African Union.

The continuing conflict in Angola remains one of the most pressing concerns for Namibia, which has supported various international efforts to resolve the battle between National Union for the Total Liberation of Angola and the MPLA-dominated government, and Angolan rebels still reside in Namibia. There are ongoing territorial disputes between Namibia and the nations of Zambia and Zimbabwe.

DEFENSE

Prior to independence national security was provided by the South African Defense Forces. After their withdrawal in 1990, recruitment began for a new national army. Military service is voluntary. Nations such as Great Britain

sent advisers to train the new force, which numbered 15,000 by 2003. The majority of the defense forces are former members of the military wing of SWAPO. The army is the only formal branch of the National Defense Force, although there is a small coast guard. In 2004 the nation spent \$168.4 million, or about 3.1 percent of gross domestic product (GDP), on the military.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 15,000
 Military Manpower Availability: 441,293
 Military Expenditures \$million: 168.4
 as % of GDP: 3.1
 as % of central government expenditures: 9.5
 Arms Imports \$million: 5
 Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

Namibia has a mixed economy, consisting of both private and publicly owned businesses. The nation has abundant mineral resources, including diamonds and such metals as uranium, copper, gold, lead, zinc, tungsten, silver, and tin, and mining accounts for 20 percent of the nation's GDP while employing just 3 percent of the population. Rich fisheries and limited agricultural products account for the rest of the nation's economy. The nation is not self-sufficient in food production. Its major trade partners include the United Kingdom, Germany, and the United States. Although per capita GDP is four times the per capita GDP of Africa's poorer countries, 50 percent of Namibia's people live in pronounced poverty because of large-scale unemployment, the great inequality of income distribution, and the large amount of wealth going to foreigners. GDP growth in 2003, estimated at 3.3 percent, was led by gains in the zinc, copper, silver, and fish sectors. Agreements have been reached on the privatization of several more enterprises in coming years, which should stimulate long-term foreign investment.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 14.76
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 7,300
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 3.1
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 0.6
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 11.3
 Industry: 30.8
 Services: 57.9
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 54
 Government Consumption: 26
 Gross Domestic Investment: 19.6
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 1.356
 Imports: 1.473

% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: —
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: —

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
135.5	147.7	161.8	180.2	193.1

Finance

National Currency: Namibian dollar (NAD)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = NAD 6.7545
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 7.85
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 7.75
 Total External Debt \$billion: 1.136
 Debt Service Ratio %: —
 Balance of Payments \$million: 234.3
 International Reserves SDRs \$million: 325
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 4.2

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 146.1
 per capita \$: 72.50
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 157

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: 1 April – 31 March
 Revenues \$billion: 1.788
 Expenditures \$billion: 1.956
 Budget Deficit \$million: 168
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 11.3
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 1.9
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 0.39
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 0.9
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 0.37
 Total Farmland % of land area: 1.0
 Livestock: Cattle million: 2.5
 Chickens million: 2.6
 Pigs 000: 22
 Sheep million: 2.37
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters 000: —
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 625

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 467.6
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: —

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: —
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: —
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: —

Net Energy Imports % of use: 74.7
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: —
 Production kW-hr million: 30
 Consumption kW-hr million: 600
 Coal Reserves tons billion: —
 Production tons million: —
 Consumption tons million: —
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: 2.2
 Production cubic feet billion: —
 Consumption cubic feet billion: —
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
 Production barrels 000 per day: —
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 15
 Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 1.473
 Exports \$billion: 1.356
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 3.4
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): -0.9
 Balance of Trade \$million: 234.3

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
United States %	50.0	4.0
European Union %	31.0	79.0

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 42,237
 Paved %: 12.8
 Automobiles: —
 Trucks and Buses: —
 Railroad: Track Length km: 2,382
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: —
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 1
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 3.6
 Airports: 136
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 760
 Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 695
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: —
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: —

Communications

Telephones 000: 127.4
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones 000: 223.7
 Personal Computers 000: 191.1
 Internet Hosts per million people: 1,558
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 32

ENVIRONMENT

Namibia's main environmental dispute is with Spain, concerning overfishing; during the 1980s fish stocks were seriously depleted by foreign commercial fleets. In addition, the nation has a number of mine sites that require cleanup, but the government lacks the fiscal resources to address them.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 9.8
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: -73
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 15
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 0.96

LIVING CONDITIONS

Living conditions vary widely, with whites earning on average far more than many of the nation's blacks—though income statistics can be misleading because many black Namibians do not take part in the cash economy, measuring their wealth in cattle rather than in dollars. About 30 percent of the nation's population live in crowded urban centers, and many have resisted government efforts to lure them back to rural areas. While about two-thirds of Namibians have radios, less than 4 percent have televisions; refrigerators, cars, electricity, and plumbing are also scarce, and there are only about six telephones per 100 people. Perhaps surprisingly, Namibia has a relatively advanced transportation system, with more miles of paved road per capita than most African nations and with 21 airports with paved runways (as well as 115 airports with unpaved runways). A large percentage of rural Namibians continue to rely on donkeys for transportation.

HEALTH

While modern medical facilities can be found in Windhoek, most of the population relies on small local clinics or traditional healers. In general, the state of health care is poor, with life expectancy at birth under 44 years in 2005 and an infant mortality rate of nearly 50 per 1,000 live births. Annual spending per capita on health care was under \$100 in 2002. Malaria is a major problem in the moister north, with over 1,500 cases per 100,000 people in the early 2000s. But the country's biggest problem is AIDS, with an astonishing 21.3 percent of the adult population living with the disease in 2003 and 16,000 deaths from the disease that year.

Health

Number of Physicians: 516
 Number of Dentists: 70

Number of Nurses: 2,940
 Number of Pharmacists: 149
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 30
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 48.98
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 300
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 6.7
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 99
 HIV Infected % of adults: 21.3
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 82
 Measles: 70
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 30
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 80

FOOD AND NUTRITION

The state of nutrition is generally poor. According to UNICEF, from 1990 to 1997, 20 percent of Namibian children under the age of five were moderately underweight, with an additional 6 percent severely underweight. Some 9 percent suffered from moderate to severe wasting, and 28 percent suffered from moderate to severe stunting. While fish is a major export, Namibians have generally not consumed much of it, although in recent years the government has been trying to promote fish consumption. Dietary staples for crop farmers are sorghum and millet, while livestock farmers consume more dairy products. Few vegetables are grown and eaten. The main source of protein is beef produced by cattle farmers. Other subsistence crops include peanuts, pumpkins, and melons.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 22.3
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,600
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 138.2
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 37.1

STATUS OF WOMEN

The constitution provides for universal suffrage, and improving sex equity is a stated continuing goal of the national government, which has taken great strides to make women equal in the eyes of the law. Still, lingering gender discrimination is widespread. For instance, married women have few property rights. The unemployment rate among women is twice that of men, and many women in the workforce face inequity in pay and promotion. Of the 72 members of the National Assembly, only six were women in the late 1990s, but that situation steadily improved until in 2005, 25 percent of the National Assembly consisted of women and an impressive 42 percent of local government officials were women. The racial divide also compounds problems, as white females tend to have a greater range of opportunities.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 25
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.04
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 50.8

WORK

In 2004 Namibia's labor force consisted of about 840,000 workers; the nation is legitimately concerned that the AIDS epidemic is wiping out much of the young adult labor force. About 47 percent of the population makes its living through agriculture, much of it subsistence farming, and in 2004 agriculture contributed just 11.3 percent to the GDP. An additional 20 percent of the workforce is employed in industry, 33 percent in services. The unemployment rate in 1998 was 35 percent, but this figure is of limited usefulness because many Namibians do not take part in the cash economy and have resisted government encouragement to turn away from traditional self-reliance to engage in commercial ranching and beef export.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 840,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 41.7
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 47
 Industry: 20
 Services: 33
 Unemployment %: 35.0

EDUCATION

Since independence the government has worked to make education free and open for children up to 16 years of age. The nation has one of the lowest student-teacher ratios in all of Africa, but many teachers lack full qualification in English, which is the language of instruction. Higher education is provided by an academy and four teacher colleges.

The government has initiated informal local programs to improve literacy. A full 84 percent of the adult population is literate, women virtually as much so as men. In 2002 over 78 percent of primary-school-aged children were enrolled in school, while the enrollment ratio for secondary-school students was over 44 percent.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 84.0
 Male %: 84.4
 Female %: 83.7

School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 11.7
 First Level: Primary schools: 933
 Teachers: 18,782
 Students: 404,783
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 21.6
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 78.3
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 114
 Teachers: 5,643
 Students: 138,099
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 24.5
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 44.2
 Third Level: Institutions: 7
 Teachers: 877
 Students: 13,339
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 7.5
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 7.2

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The University of Namibia, the nation's only tertiary institution, was founded in 1992, and one of its primary goals is to provide professionals with the technical skills to needed to build the nation's commercial infrastructure. Scientific research at the university emphasizes applied sciences such as agriculture, forestry, fishing and marine science, natural resources management, health and nutrition, and the environment.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: 15.2
 Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

The Namibian press is one of the most free in southern Africa. There are four major daily newspapers, three in English and one in Afrikaans; their circulation is limited, however. There are two radio stations and one official television station. Many Namibians are able to access radio and television stations, including satellite programming, from South Africa. As of 2003 there were 65,000 Internet users in Namibia.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 4
 Total Circulation 000: 31
 Circulation per 1,000: 17.2
 Books Published: —
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers million: 1.32
 per 1,000: 650
 Television sets 000: 65
 per 1,000: 38

CULTURE

Prior to independence, much of Namibia's culture was influenced by European styles and tastes. After the nation achieved independence, the government grew concerned that the nation's tribal traditions might disappear, so it appointed cultural preservationists, who travel about the country and record art, music, history, indigenous tales, and oral culture. Many Namibians produced crafts; among the most prominent artisans are the Ovambo, known for their basketry, and the Kavango, known for wood carvings. The nation's various ethnic groups sponsor dance troupes that perform at various festivals, and the National Theatre of Namibia performs musical and theatrical works written by Namibians and artists from other nations.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Many of Namibia's heroic figures achieved their status through resistance to colonialism. In the 19th century an Ovambo named Madume Ndemufayo became a hero through his opposition to both the Portuguese and the Germans; he was ultimately captured and killed by the Germans. The Herero, too, resisted the Germans but were ultimately driven onto barren reservations, and as many as 75 percent of them were killed; Herero culture passes down various stories of heroic resistance to the Germans. Because much of the nation is arid, water has played a major role in folklore. Among the Ovambo, for example, the ability to control water and water supplies was traditionally regarded as divinely ordained, and church bells, for example, were thought of as signals to God to send water. The Namibia Oral Tradition Project has published such books as *The Secret of the Crocodile and Other Animal Stories from Namibia* and *The Tortoise Who Saw the World and Other Tortoise Stories*.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Many young Namibians enjoy American popular culture, including action films, singers such as Michael Jackson, and sports stars such as Shaquille O'Neal. Also popular

is South African "jive" music from such performers as Mahlathini and the Mahotella Queens, Yvonne Chaka Chaka, and Lucky Dube. The nation's many local and regional festivals provide opportunities for dancing.

ETIQUETTE

Greetings tend to be formal and elaborate. While the most common form of greeting is the handshake, among some ethnic groups women and young people bend their knees to older men, and the Caprivians clap their hands when greeting one another. In general, Namibians tend to be restrained in public, and displays of affection are discouraged. An interesting feature of Namibian etiquette is the place of the hug. During the years of SWAPO resistance, the hug became a kind of secret symbol of resistance among fighters. After independence, public hugging was discouraged, but the hug has persisted as a symbol of solidarity and opposition to apartheid.

FAMILY LIFE

A common Namibian joke tells of a man who died and left his wife only his belt, the punch line disclosing that the wife always wore the pants in the family anyhow. The joke reflects the extent to which women have traditionally reigned over family life; an estimated 45 percent of families in some ethnic groups are headed by women. The nuclear family is not the norm; most families contain at least some members of an extended family. Kinship groups are important, and they can be patrilineal, matrilineal, or bilateral, depending on the ethnic group. These kinship groups provide important social and economic networks; their members often jointly own property and run religious and political affairs. The ability of kinship groups to support their members has been strained in recent years by the AIDS epidemic.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Most Namibians, especially those in the cities, wear Western-style dress. Some ethnic groups, however, retain traditional clothing; the Himba, for example, wear leather thongs or skirts and rub a reddish pigment derived from iron ore over their bodies. Herero women continue to wear fashions imported from 19th-century Germany, including shawls, headdresses, and gowns with petticoats.

SPORTS

As in most of Africa, soccer is the most popular sport, and from an early age Namibian children will play soccer

with any type of ball they can find—or make. Namibians also excel at track and field, which they refer to as “athletics,” and in the 1996 Summer Olympics in Atlanta, the Namibian Frankie Fredricks won silver medals in the 100- and 200-meter races.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1920** South-West Africa is mandated to South Africa by the League of Nations, with the goal of eventual independence.
- 1945** First attempts are made to compel South Africa to adhere to its mandate and allow self-determination for South-West Africa.
- 1950** The International Court of Justice rules that South-West Africa should remain under an international mandate.
- 1958** SWAPO is founded.
- 1966** The United Nations terminates South Africa's mandate over South-West Africa. South Africa ignores UN action and extends apartheid laws to South-West Africa. SWAPO begins armed struggle.
- 1968** The United Nations changes the name of the territory from South-West Africa to Namibia.
- 1973** The United Nations recognizes SWAPO as the sole legitimate representative of the Namibian people.
- 1975** South African troops invade Angola.
- 1978** The DTA wins elections boycotted by SWAPO, and a South African-backed internal government is established. The UN Security Council adopts Resolution 435, which calls for full Namibian independence.
- 1988** A tripartite agreement between Angola, Cuba, and South Africa initiates implementation of Resolution 435.
- 1989** UN-sponsored elections are held. SWAPO wins majority in Constituent Assembly, which drafts a new constitution.
- 1990** New constitution is adopted. Sam Nujoma is elected the country's first president. Constituent Assembly becomes National Assembly.
- 1994** Nujoma is reelected president. South Africa transfers control of Walvis Bay to Namibia.
- 1998** Namibia contributes peacekeeping forces to the Republic of the Congo.
- 1999** Nujoma wins a third presidential term. The World Court rules against Namibia in its territorial dispute with Botswana.

- 2002** The new prime minister, Theo-Ben Gurirab, says land reform is a priority, and Nujoma urges white farmers to accept land reform programs.
- 2003** A union representing black farmworkers abandons plans to invade 15 white-owned farms after reaching an agreement with white farmers' group.
- 2004** A bridge across the Zambezi River between Namibia and Zambia opens, raising hopes of increased regional trade. Germany formally apologizes for the colonial-era killings of thousands of Herero but rules out compensation for victims' descendants.
- 2004** Hifikepunye Pohamba, President Nujoma's nominee, wins presidential elections.
- 2005** Nahas Angula is appointed prime minister.

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- Melber, Henning. *Re-examining Liberation in Namibia: Political Culture since Independence*. Uppsala, Sweden, 2004.

OFFICIAL PUBLICATIONS

- Namibia.** *2001 Population and Housing Census; Statistical/Economic Review* (annual)

CONTACT INFORMATION

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Namibia Fact Sheet
<http://www.emulateme.com/namibia.htm>
- CIA World Factbook: Namibia
<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/wa.html>

NAURU

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Nauru (Republik Naoero)

ABBREVIATION

NR

CAPITAL

None. The seat of government is in the district of Uaboe, while government offices are in the district of Yaren.

HEAD OF STATE & HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

President Ludwig Scotty (from 2004)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Republic

POPULATION

13,048 (2005)

AREA

21 sq km (8.1 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Nauruan

LANGUAGES

Nauruan (official), English

RELIGION

Christianity

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Australian dollar

NATIONAL FLAG

A blue field divided horizontally by a narrow gold band, symbolizing the equator. Below the band is a white 12-pointed star to the left.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

An oval crest is wreathed by palm fronds and ritual objects made of sharks' teeth and frigate bird feathers, with a 12-pointed star and the name Naoero on the top and the national motto, "God's Will First," at the bottom. Within the oval are a triangle surmounted by a cross, the alchemists' symbol for phosphorus; a frigate bird; and a sprig of tomano, a tropical plant.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"Song of Nauru"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 31 (National Day, Independence Day), May 17 (Constitution Day), October 23 (Angam Day), various Christian festivals, including Christmas, Boxing Day, and Good Friday

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

January 31, 1968

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

January 29, 1968

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

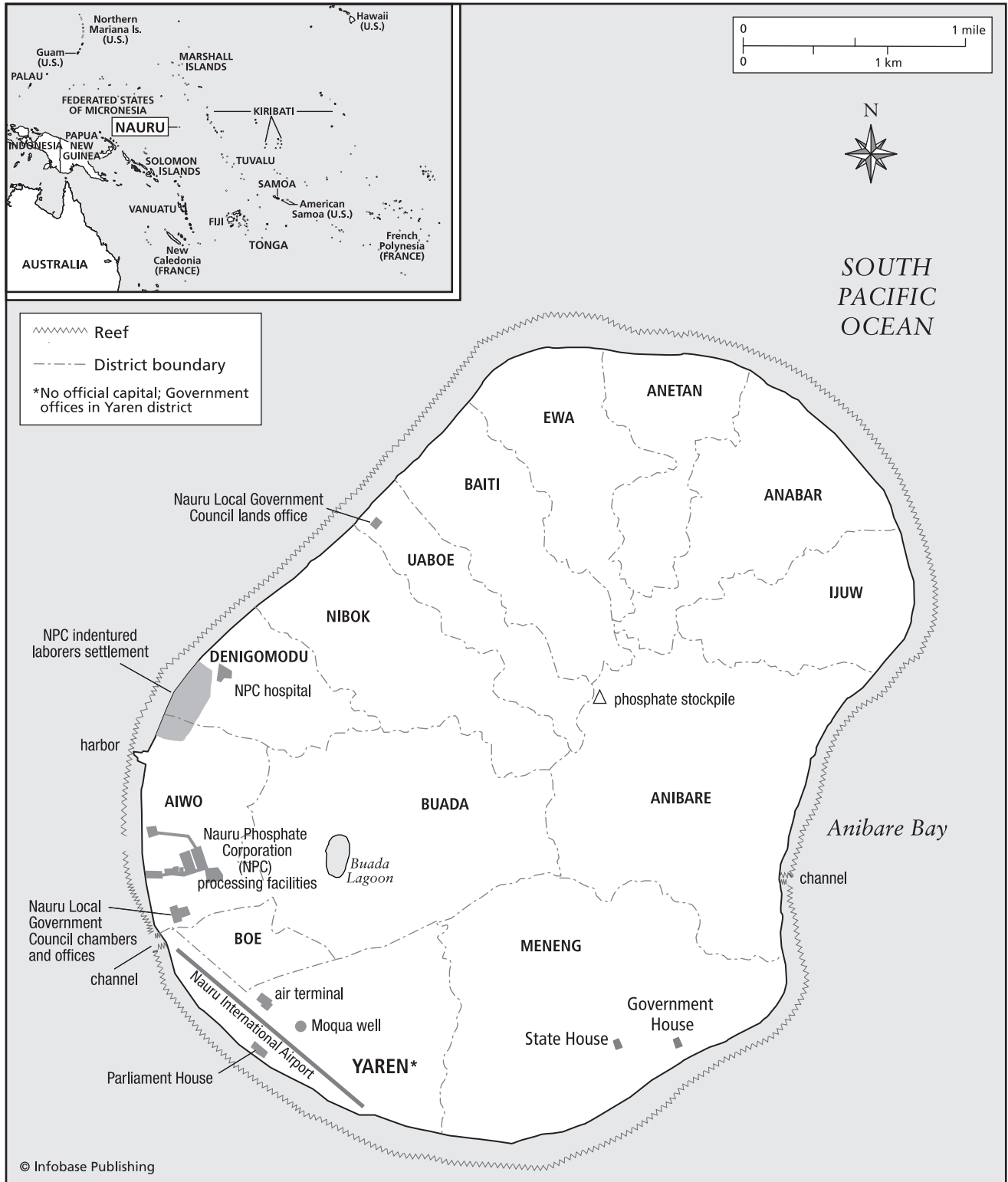
Nauru is an oval-shaped island in the western-central Pacific 53 km (33 mi) south of the equator, 3,539 km (2,200 mi) northeast of Sydney, and 3,934 km (2,445 mi) southwest of Honolulu. Nauru is the smallest nation in Asia, with an area of 21 sq km (8.1 sq mi). Its coastline stretches 30 km (18.6 mi).

The island is encircled by a sandy beach, which rises gradually to a fertile section no wider than 275 m (300 yd). A coral cliff rises from this belt to a central plateau about 60 m (200 ft) high. A brackish lagoon, known as Buada, covers some 121 ha (300 a) at the southeastern end of the plateau.

Geography

Area sq km: 21; sq mi 8.1
World Rank: 191st
Land Boundaries, km: 0
Coastline, km: 30
Elevation Extremes meters:
Lowest: Pacific Ocean 0
Highest: 61
Land Use %
Arable Land: 0.0
Permanent Crops: 0.0
Forest: 0.0
Other: 100.0

Nauru



Population of Principal Cities (2004 est.)

Yaren	4,560
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CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Nauru has a tropical climate, with a dry season from March to October and a wet season from November to February. The temperature in the shade ranges from 22.8°C (73°F) to 33.9°C (92°F). The average annual rainfall is only 45 mm (1.8 in), but the range of annual variation is great; in some years the annual rainfall is 10 times normal, while years with droughts are also common.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature: 73°F to 93°F
Average Rainfall: 18 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

As a small island that has been extensively mined, Nauru offers little in the way of flora and fauna. The central raised plateau, called “topside,” is sparsely vegetated, but the coastline and lagoon area have lush vegetation, including pandanus, coconuts, tomano trees, banyan trees, and frangipani. Marine species of interest include whales, sea turtles, dugongs, and saltwater crocodiles. The island is known for its numerous bird species, including the great frigate bird (the country’s national symbol), the Micronesian imperial pigeon, the Nauru reed-warbler, the white tern, the black noddy, the brown noddy, the wandering tattler, and the reef heron.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 13,048
World Rank: 191st
Density per sq km: 621.3
% of annual growth (1999-2003): 2.1
Male %: 50.0
Female %: 50.0
Urban %: —
Age Distribution %: 0–14: 37.5
 15–64: 60.6
 65 and over: 1.9
Population 2025: 17,900
Birth Rate per 1,000: 25.14
Death Rate per 1,000: 6.82
Rate of Natural Increase %: 1.8
Total Fertility Rate: 3.19
Expectation of Life (years): Males 59.16
 Females 66.48
Marriage Rate per 1,000: —
Divorce Rate per 1,000: —
Average Size of Households: 8.0
Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

In 2005 the population included 58 percent indigenous Nauruans, 26 percent Pacific Islanders—including Tuvaluans and Kiribatians—8 percent Chinese, and 8 percent Europeans. Nauruans are a mixture of the three primary Pacific racial groups: Micronesian, Melanesian, and Polynesian.

LANGUAGES

Nauruan is the official language, although English is used widely in government and the school system. The origin of Nauruan has not been determined by linguists. Nauruan syntax and vocabulary have no relationships to either Polynesian or Melanesian. The nation’s Department of Education is compiling the first-ever Nauruan dictionary.

RELIGIONS

Nearly all Nauruans are professed Christians. About two-thirds are Protestant and the remainder Roman Catholic.

Religious Affiliations

Protestant	8,700
Roman Catholic	4,300

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Little is known about the Polynesian inhabitants of the island before the 1798 arrival of British Capt. John Fearn of the whaling ship *Hunter*. From the 1830s to the 1880s Nauru was a haven for a succession of white beachcombers—primarily runaways, convicts, and deserters. Following the partition of the western Pacific into German and British zones of influence, Nauru came under German rule, and it remained so until occupied by an Australian expeditionary force in 1914. At the close of World War I, Nauru became a League of Nations mandate, administered jointly by Australia, New Zealand, and Great Britain under an Australian-appointed administrator. The Japanese came to occupy the island in 1942 and in the ensuing three years virtually devastated it. Two-thirds of the population was deported to Truk, a small atoll in the Federated States of Micronesia 1,609 km (1,000 mi) northwest of Nauru, and all mining facilities and houses were destroyed.

Australian forces reoccupied Nauru in 1945, and the Nauruans in Truk were repatriated to their homeland. In 1947 the island became a Trust Territory of the United Nations, administered by the former mandatory

powers. A system of progressive self-government introduced in 1927 culminated in the establishment of a local governing council in 1951 and an elected legislature in 1966. Full political independence came in 1968 with the establishment of a republic, and economic independence came in 1970 with the nationalization of the British Phosphate Commission, a three-man board that owned and operated Nauru's only natural resource, its vast phosphate mines.

Nauru's political life has been characterized by government instability. At independence the Parliament elected as president Hammer DeRoburt, who had been head chief since 1956. He was reelected in 1971 and 1973. Dissatisfied by DeRoburt's increasingly personal rule, the Parliament elected Bernard Dowiyogo president in 1976. Dowiyogo resigned in January 1978 because of a budgetary deadlock, only to be immediately reelected; however, he resigned again in April after the defeat of a bill dealing with phosphate royalties. His successor, Lagumot Harris, resigned three weeks later as a result of an impasse over an appropriations bill.

Harris was replaced by former president DeRoburt, who then won reelection in 1978, 1980, and 1983. He was forced to resign for 10 days in October 1986, during which Kennan Adeang served as president, and for four days following an election that December. DeRoburt was sworn in for a ninth term in 1987. Two years later he was removed by a vote of no confidence and replaced by his biological son Kenas Aroi. Aroi resigned on the ground of ill health in December 1989. During the 1990s Nauru had six presidents: Bernard Dowiyogo, who succeeded Aroi, Lagumot Harris, Kennan Adeang, Reubun Kun, Kinza Clodumar, and René Harris. The typically short presidential tenure reflects the high degree of political partisanship in the Parliament. Nauru became a member of the United Nations in 1999.

In 2001 and 2002 relations with Australia became strained after Australia paid Nauru to hold asylum seekers trying to enter Australia illegally. By 2002 Nauru was holding one thousand such persons, and President Harris accused Australia of violating its promise to deport them. Meanwhile, internal political instability persisted. In January 2003 Dowiyogo was again elected president; he agreed to U.S. demands that Nauru end money-laundering activities and gain control of offshore banking, but just two months into his term he died. In 2003 Ludwig Scotty was elected president, but after a vote of no confidence René Harris was again elected. After the nation defaulted on its loan payments, Harris himself lost a vote of no confidence and resigned, to be replaced by Ludwig Scotty in 2004. A month later Australia seized control of Nauru's finances, and two months afterward Scotty disbanded parliament for failing to pass a reform budget. Scotty was reelected, unopposed, in October 2004.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

(Note: Excluded are presidents who served for less than one month.)

1968–76	Hammer DeRoburt
1976–78	Bernard Dowiyogo
1978–89	Hammer DeRoburt
1989–95	Bernard Dowiyogo
1995–96	Lagumot Harris
1996–97	Rueben Kun
1997–98	Kinza Clodumar
1998–99	Bernard Dowiyogo
1999–2000	René Harris
2000–01	Bernard Dowiyogo
2001–03	René Harris
2003	Bernard Dowiyogo
2003	Derog Gioura
2003	Ludwig Scotty
2003–04	René Harris
2004–	Ludwig Scotty

CONSTITUTION

Nauru is the smallest independent republic in the world. The constitution of 1968 provides for a parliamentary government. The constitution restricts citizenship to those of Nauruan or other Pacific Islander descent; this is a subject of special importance because short-term migrants constitute over half the population. The constitution also defines Nauru's relationship with the British Commonwealth, which is that of a partial member attending all meetings except prime ministers' meetings. The president is the head of state, head of government, and chief minister of the cabinet. He is elected by Parliament from among its members for a three-year term that corresponds to that of Parliament. Although he wields broad powers, the constitution does not require his assent to parliamentary bills, which become law under the speaker's signature. The president is assisted by a five-member cabinet, which he appoints.

The constitution provides for a Supreme Court, which has original and appellate jurisdiction. Cases therein may be appealed to the High Court of Australia.

PARLIAMENT

The unicameral Nauruan Parliament consists of 18 members popularly elected for three-year terms. The speaker of Parliament has the right to certify bills into law.

Suffrage is universal for all citizens over 20 years of age, and voting is compulsory.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Nauru has three political parties: the Democratic Party of Nauru, which was founded in 1975; the informal Nauru Party; and the Nauru First (Naoero Amo) Party. In the 2003 elections Nauru First won three seats; the remaining 15 seats were won by independents.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For the purposes of local government, Nauru is divided into 14 districts: Boe, Aiwo, Anabar, Ijuw, Anibare, Anetan, Ewa, Buada, Denigomodu, Nibok, Uaboe, Baiti, Meneng, and Yaren. Nauruans place a great deal of emphasis on district affiliation, and it is expected that each person take part in district affairs.

Nauru's local government councils are elected from the same constituencies as is Parliament, except that seven constituencies return 14 members to Parliament, while Ubenide (Uaboe, Baiti, Nibok, and Denigomodu combined) returns four members to Parliament.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The legal system is based on English common law. The judicial system consists of the Supreme Court as the highest court of the land, the Central Court as the superior court of record, and the District Court, presided over by the resident magistrate. The chief justice presides over the Supreme Court, which exercises both original and appellate jurisdiction. The resident magistrate also acts as coroner under the Inquests Act of 1977. The Supreme Court and district courts are courts of record. The Family Court consists of three members, one being the resident magistrate, serving as chairman; the two other members are drawn from a panel of Nauruans.

A small compound in the southwestern corner of the island serves as a local jail.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Fundamental human rights are provided for in the constitution, and the government generally respects them in practice. The judiciary is independent, but most cases are settled out of court by traditional arbitration. There are only two trained lawyers on the island. The country has no print media, and the sole publication is a government bulletin. The sole radio station is run by the government.

FOREIGN POLICY

Nauru maintains formal diplomatic relations with only a dozen foreign governments, mainly through representa-

tives accredited to Australia and Fiji. For many years its resident diplomatic community consisted only of a Taiwanese consul general. Its principal international links are with the Commonwealth and the United Nations, of which it became a member in 1999.

In 1992 Nauru joined Kiribati, Tuvalu, and the New Zealand dependencies of the Cook Islands and Niue to form a group called the Small Island States, through which are addressed a number of common concerns, including air-space and fishing rights in exclusive economic zones. Nauru has strongly opposed France's nuclear testing program at Mururoa Atoll.

DEFENSE

Nauru has no standing army or other defense forces. The country has an informal agreement with Australia providing for defense.

ECONOMY

In the past Nauru was one of the higher-income countries of the world, maintaining a free-market economy in which the dominant sector is private. The economy has been based almost completely on phosphates, the reserves of which were largely exhausted by the beginning of the 21st century. There are few other resources and, as the topsoil has been depleted as a result of mining, almost no agriculture.

Indeed, phosphates gave Nauruans one of the highest standards of living in the world; virtually the entire gross domestic product (GDP) was received from the phosphate mines. In anticipation of the exhaustion of Nauru's phosphate deposits, substantial amounts of phosphate income were invested in trust funds to help cushion the transition and provide for Nauru's economic future. The government has borrowed heavily from the trusts to finance fiscal deficits, however, and such spending has virtually bankrupted the government. To cut costs, the government has called for a freezing of wages, a reduction of overstuffed public service departments, the privatization of numerous government agencies, and the closure of some overseas consulates. The government has also diversified into shipping, fishing, and tourism.

In recent years Nauru has encouraged the registration of offshore banks and corporations, with tens of billions of dollars channeled through such accounts. Few comprehensive statistics on the Nauruan economy exist, with estimates of per capita GDP varying widely; the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency put total GDP at \$60 million in 2001. In general, Nauru has neither sought nor received any foreign aid, though in 2000 the nation's fiscal crisis forced it to accept \$2.25 million from Australia in addition to some \$5 million from other countries.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$million: 60
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 5,000
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: -0.1
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: —
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: —
 Industry: —
 Services: —
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 45
 Government Consumption: 22
 Gross Domestic Investment: —
 Foreign Trade \$million: Exports: 0.64
 Imports: 19.8
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: —
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: —
 CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
—	—	—	—	—

Finance

National Currency: Australian dollar (AUD)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = AUD 1.3158
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: —
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: —
 Total External Debt \$million: 33.3
 Debt Service Ratio %: —
 Balance of Payments \$million: —
 International Reserves SDRs \$million: —
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
 -3.6

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 7.23
 per capita \$: 579.60
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: —

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: 1 July–30 June
 Revenues \$million: 23.4
 Expenditures \$million: 64.8
 Budget Deficit \$million: 41.4
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: —
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: —
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: —
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: —
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: —
 Total Farmland % of land area: —
 Livestock: Cattle million: —
 Chickens 000: 5
 Pigs 000: 2.8
 Sheep 000: —
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters 000: —
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons: 21

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: —
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: —

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent 000: —
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent 000:
 45
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 3.75
 Net Energy Imports % of use: —
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: 10
 Production kW-hr million: 30
 Consumption kW-hr million: 28
 Coal Reserves tons billion: —
 Production tons million: —
 Consumption tons million: —
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
 Production cubic feet billion: —
 Consumption cubic feet billion: —
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
 Production barrels per day: —
 Consumption barrels per day: 970
 Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$million: 19.8
 Exports \$million: 0.64
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —
 Balance of Trade \$million: —

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Australia %	63.3	6.9
Indonesia %	10.0	—
Malaysia %	6.7	—
United States %	6.7	—
Japan %	—	37.9
India %	—	34.5
South Korea %	—	13.8

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 30
 Paved %: 80.0
 Automobiles: —
 Trucks and Buses: —
 Railroad: Track Length km: —
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: —
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: —
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: —
 Airports: 1
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 302
 Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: —
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: —
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: —

Communications

Telephones 000: 1.9
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones 000: 1.5
 Personal Computers 000: —
 Internet Hosts per million people: —
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 23

ENVIRONMENT

While the overall population of the tiny country of Nauru is declining, the management of waste is a major concern, as groundwater is threatened with contamination. Additionally, deforestation and the increased use of agrochemicals are threats. The country has suffered from the environmental impact of phosphate mining, which has left the island's interior a virtual wasteland. The government has pledged to restore the interior and return the nation to its former status as "Pleasant Island"—which was, in fact, the official name—but there is virtually no revenue with which to do so.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: —
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: —
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: —
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 10.77

LIVING CONDITIONS

Living conditions are in a state of transition. Nauruans formerly enjoyed a high standard of living and a high per capita income thanks to phosphate mining and the Nauru Trust funds established to provide for housing, education, health care, and the like. By the beginning of the 21st century, however, phosphates were essentially depleted, government revenues were down, the trust funds were being used to pay debts, and the government had cut back on services. Nearly all Nauruans live in the narrow coastal strip and around Buada Lagoon; because of the environmental damage caused by mining, little of the island's interior is usable, and there is virtually no arable land. The cost of living is high because the nation has to import virtually everything, including food. A few Nauruans are wealthy because of offshore accounts, but in general they do not flaunt their wealth.

HEALTH

In 2004 life expectancy at birth was just over 62 years, while the infant mortality rate was just under 10 per 1,000 live births. The island formerly had two hospitals, one a government-run facility for Nauruans and the other for contract phosphate workers, but the two amalgamated in 1999. Three major health problems afflict Nauruans: One is the high rate of alcohol abuse, especially among younger people; drunk driving is the leading cause of death on the island. The second is obesity, giving rise to diabetes, heart disease, hypertension, and other disorders. The third is smoking; Nauru ranks first in the world in the percentage of adult female smokers, 10th in the percentage of adult male smokers, and first in the world overall.

Health

Number of Physicians: 16
 Number of Dentists: —
 Number of Nurses: 60
 Number of Pharmacists: —
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 149
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 9.95
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: —
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: —
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: —
 HIV Infected % of adults: —
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: —
 Measles: —
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: —
 Access to Improved Water Source %: —

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Nauru imports nearly all of its food; the only exception is fish, which is supplied primarily by Kiribati fishermen. The basic staple is rice, although Nauruans have been able to purchase a wide range of supermarket foods, including such items as American breakfast cereals. It is common to find supermarket shelves virtually empty until the next shipment of imported food arrives.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: —
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: —

STATUS OF WOMEN

Generally, spousal abuse and related incidents are settled by the extended family or by village elders, rather than

by official agencies. Equal opportunities are afforded to women in education and employment, and women are free to own property; in fact, the nation's matrilineal society gives preference to women in inheritance, and sons who inherit have to obtain permission from the extended family before passing property to their children. A woman's development officer in the government assists women in professional development. There were no female members of Parliament as of 2005, though women have served in the past.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 0
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: —
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: —

WORK

Virtually the entire population of Nauru has been involved in the phosphate-mining industry, which provided nearly all of the nation's GDP. The only real exceptions were a tiny coconut industry and fishing done by the Kiribati Pacific Islanders, many using tame frigate birds or bows and arrows to catch fish. With the depletion of the mines, the government has been encouraging alternative economic sectors, including tourism, shipping, and banking.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: —
 Female Participation Rate %: —
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: —
 Industry: —
 Services: —
 Unemployment %: 90

EDUCATION

Education is free, universal, and compulsory for 10 years, from ages six to 16. Schooling lasts 11 years, as divided into seven years of primary school and four years of secondary school. The Roman Catholic Church runs a few mission schools.

The academic year runs from February to December. The language of instruction is English throughout.

Higher education overseas, mainly in Australia, is encouraged by the government in the form of scholarships. The University of the South Pacific Extension Centre offers opportunities for higher education on Nauru.

Education

Literacy Rate %: —
 Male %: —
 Female %: —
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: —
 First Level: Primary Schools: 3
 Teachers: —
 Students: 1,598
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 23.0
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 81.0
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 2
 Teachers: —
 Students: 738
 Student-Teacher Ratio: —
 Net Enrollment Ratio: —
 Third Level: Institutions: 1
 Teachers: —
 Students: —
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: —
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 6.9

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Virtually all scientific activity on the island is devoted to projects for rehabilitating the interior, mainly through the Committee for Rehabilitation of Nauru, which is staffed largely by Australians.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: —
 Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

The only newspaper published on the island is a weekly official bulletin with a circulation of 750. There is no national news agency. No books are published locally. There is a small lending library containing a few thousand books.

The state-owned Nauru Broadcasting Service is on the air for 42 hours a week, through one medium-wave transmitter, offering programming from Australia and the BBC. Nauru Television (NTV) is government owned and broadcasts New Zealand programming sent by satellite or on videotape. There are two fixed cinemas, with 800 seats.

Media

Daily Newspapers: —
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: —
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets: 15
 per 1,000: 1

CULTURE

Nauruans maintain a strong sense of national identity. For example, citizenship as a Nauruan can be claimed only by someone with a Nauruan mother; one born to a Nauruan father and a mother of a different nationality can be registered as a Nauruan only with special permission. The nation's Department of Education attempts to preserve the cultural past, recording Nauruan history and compiling a Nauruan dictionary. Writers are encouraged in their efforts through the University of the South Pacific Extension Centre. Throughout Micronesia, including in Nauru, music has always had a special cultural place, with long traditions of vocal music accompanied by gestures, dance, and percussion instruments.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 1
Volumes: 3,000
Registered borrowers: —
Museums Number: —
Annual Attendance: —
Cinema Gross Receipts: —
Number of Cinemas: 2
Seating Capacity: 800
Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Of particular importance to Nauruans is Angam Day, translated as “Day of Fulfillment” or “Homecoming Day.” In the 1920s Nauru lost much of its population to a flu epidemic; only 1,068 people were left. It was decided that 1,500 people were the minimum necessary to preserve the Nauruan people. On October 26, 1932, a girl named Eidegenegen Eidagaruwo was born, restoring the population to 1,500. The population found itself perilously depleted again after World War II, and a second Angam Baby was born on March 31, 1949. Angam Day, October 26, remains a time of great rejoicing for when the nation has pulled back from the brink of extinction.

Indigenous folklore is similar to folklore found through Micronesia, emphasizing gods and goddesses who represent the natural order of the world and explain its creation.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Movies and now television are major forms of entertainment. Most movies and programming come from Australia, New Zealand, and the United States, and much of it is out of date. Traditional feasts are common, and the

people take part in a variety of sports, including snorkeling and fishing.

ETIQUETTE

Because of the nation's historical connection with Australia, interpersonal norms, especially in public life, tend to reflect Australian customs. Since Nauru is a Christian country, prayers are a feature of many gatherings. Although they are indulged—as the birth of a child was a major event twice in Nauruan history—young people are supposed to show great deference to elders, and mothers hold a special place in the nation's matrilineal culture.

FAMILY LIFE

As Nauru is a matrilineal society, each person belongs to a kinship group descended from the mother; clan affiliation is noted on public birth certificates. Marriage partners are selected from different clans. While the nominal head of the household is the father, the mother is the main decision maker. While both sons and daughters can inherit property, only the daughters can independently in turn bequeath property to their children; sons need to obtain the consent of the extended family to do so. Also important to Nauruans are their political districts, which are inherited, though they can be changed. Each person is obligated to take part in the political and social affairs of his or her district.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Most Nauruans have adopted Western-style clothing, although some wear traditional dress on ceremonial occasions; Pacific Islanders can still be seen wearing grass skirts, usually over shorts, and carved ornamental accessories.

SPORTS

To overcome widespread obesity, the government is encouraging physical activity. Most sporting activities revolve around the water, such as with fishing, scuba diving, and snorkeling. Tennis has also grown in popularity, and the island has a nine-hole golf course. Traditional forms of competition included kite flying and singing and dancing, with teams organized according to clan.

CHRONOLOGY

1968 Nauru is granted full independence, with Hammer DeRoburt as president.

- 1970** Nauru takes over the British Phosphate Commission, owner of the island's phosphate mines.
- 1976** DeRoburt is replaced as president by Bernard Dowiyogo.
- 1978** President Dowiyogo is replaced by Lagumot Harris and later by Hammer DeRoburt.
- 1982** Nauru signs the South Pacific Regional Trade Agreement.
- 1983** DeRoburt is redesignated president.
- 1986** DeRoburt resigns for 10 days, during which Kennan Adeang serves as president.
- 1987** DeRoburt is again sworn in as president. Kennan Adeang forms the Democratic Party of Nauru.
- 1989** DeRoburt resigns as president and is replaced by Kenas Aroi. In December Aroi resigns and is succeeded by Bernard Dowiyogo, who forms his second government.
- 1990** President Dowiyogo takes a high profile at the meeting of the South Pacific Forum, arguing strongly that chemical weapons should not be detonated in the Pacific at Johnston Atoll because of the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty.
- 1993** Australia agrees to pay for environmental damage caused by mining operations.
- 1997** New Zealand and the United Kingdom also offer compensation for mining operations.
- 1997** Kinza Clodumar is elected president.
- 1998** Bernard Dowiyogo is elected president for the third time.
- 1999** Nauru joins the United Nations.
- 2000** International pressure is put on Nauru's banking system to cooperate in the fight against money laundering.
- 2001** Australia pays Nauru to hold asylum seekers picked up trying to enter Australia illegally.
- 2003** Dowiyogo becomes president after a power struggle with René Harris.
- 2003** Dowiyogo accedes to U.S. demands to clean up Nauru's offshore banking industry, but shortly thereafter he dies.
- 2003** Ludwig Scotty is elected president, but he loses a vote of no confidence; in August, René Harris is reelected as president.

- 2004** Nauru defaults on its debts, and its assets are placed in receivership in Australia. In June, Harris resigns after a vote of no confidence, and Ludwig Scotty is elected president. Australia takes control of Nauru's state finances. President Scotty disbands parliament after it fails to pass a reform budget. Ludwig Scotty is reelected unopposed in general elections in September.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

Permanent Mission of the Republic of Nauru to the United Nations
800 2nd Avenue, Suite 400D
New York, NY 10017
Phone: (212) 937-0074 Fax: (212) 937-0079

INTERNET RESOURCES

- Nauran Language Information
http://www.trussel.com/f_nau.htm

NEPAL

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Kingdom of Nepal (Nepal Adhirajya)

ABBREVIATION

NP

CAPITAL

Kathmandu

HEAD OF STATE

King Gyanendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev (from 2001)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime ministry vacant

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Constitutional monarchy

POPULATION

27,676,547 (2005)

AREA

140,800 sq km (54,363 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Nepali

LANGUAGE

Nepali (official)

RELIGIONS

Hinduism, Buddhism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Rupee

NATIONAL FLAG

Two vertically stacked red right triangles edged with blue—the shorter upper triangle overlapping the peak of the taller lower triangle—bearing white emblems representing the moon (top) and sun

NATIONAL EMBLEM

The main elements of the national emblem are the national flower, the rhododendron; a white cow; a green pheasant; two Gurkha soldiers, one carrying a kukri and a bow and an arrow and the other a modern rifle; peaks of the Himalaya Mountains; the moon and the sun, both with faces showing Hindu caste marks; two crossed Nepali flags and kukris; the footprints of Gorakhnath, the guardian deity of the Gurkhas; and the royal headdress. At the base of the design a red scroll carries the national motto in Sanskrit: “The Fatherland Is Worth More Than the Kingdom of Heaven.”

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“May Glory Crown Our Illustrious Sovereign”

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

National Day, Birthday of the King, January 11 (Prithvi Jayanti), February 18 (Independence Day), various Hindu and Buddhist festivals, primarily on lunar calendar

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

1775

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

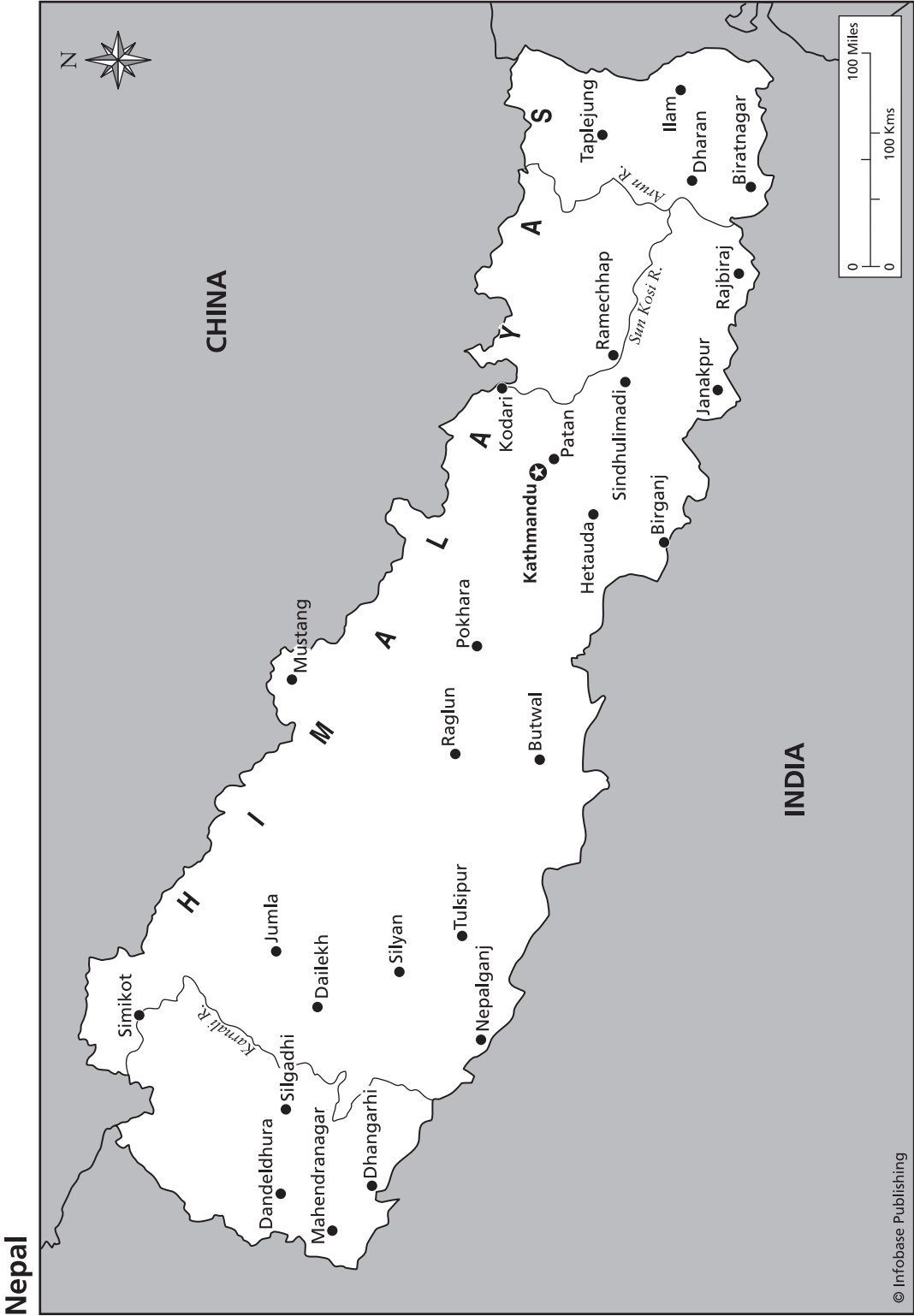
November 9, 1990

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Nepal lies in southern Asia along the southern slopes of the Himalaya Mountains. A landlocked country about 885 km (550 mi) long and 201 km (125 mi) wide, it has two neighbors, India and China, the largest nations in Asia. The total length of its border is 2,926 km (1,818 mi), of which the border with China is 1,236 km (767 mi) and that with India 1,690 km (1,049 mi).

Nepal has three main topographical regions: the high mountains of the main Himalayan range, covering one-third of the country; Kathmandu Valley; and the Tarai, a

narrow belt that extends along the boundary with India in the south. The complex mountain mass in the north contains some of the world's highest peaks, including Mount Everest (8,850 m; 29,028 ft), Mount Lhotse (8,500 m; 27,890 ft), Mount Makalu (8,480 m; 27,824 ft), Mount Cho Oyu (8,189 m; 26,867 ft), Dhaulagiri (8,172 m; 26,813 ft), and Annapurna (8,077 m; 26,502 ft). To the south, less than 60 km (37 mi) from the icy heights, is the narrow, flat belt of alluvial land 45–182 m (150–600 ft) above sea level known as the Tarai. In some places the Tarai is less than 80 km (50 mi) wide. On the northern border of the Tarai are tertiary ranges known as the Si-



Nepal

1698 Nepal

walik Hills and secondary ranges known as Mahabharat Lekh. Kathmandu Valley is a circular basin only 564 sq km (218 sq mi) in area north of the central Tarai.

The entire country is drained by three river systems: the Kosi and its seven tributaries in the east; the Narayani, or Gandak, in the center; and the Karnali, or Gogra, in the west.

Geography

Area sq km: 140,800; sq mi 54,363
World Rank: 93rd
Land Boundaries, km: China 1,236; India 1,690
Coastline, km: 0
Elevation Extremes meters:
Lowest: Kanchan Kalan 70
Highest: Mount Everest 8,850
Land Use %
Arable Land: 21.7
Permanent Crops: 0.6
Forest: 27.3
Other: 50.4

Population of Principal Cities (2001)

Biratnagar	166,674
Kathmandu	671,846
Lalitpur	162,991

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Nepal's climate ranges from subtropical summers and mild winters in the south to cool summers and severe winters in the northern mountains. In the Tarai and Kathmandu Valley there are three seasons: hot, rainy, and cold. The hot season lasts from May to June, the rainy from July to September, and the cold from October to April. In January, the coldest month, average daily temperatures range between 2.2 and 17.8°C (36 and 64°F), while in the hot months they range between 26.7 and 32.2°C (80 and 90°F). The average annual rainfall in Kathmandu is about 1,520 mm (60 in). Violent thunderstorms are common.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature
Summer: 80°F to 90°F
Winter: 36°F to 64°F
Average Rainfall: 60 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

The forested Tarai contains khair, sissoo, and sal, the latter two a source of valuable timber. The region is home to tigers, leopards, elephants, buffalo, and various species of deer. At higher elevations vegetation consists primar-

ily of oaks, pines, rhododendrons, walnuts, poplars, and larch. At still higher elevations are found fir and birch. Just below the timberline of the Himalayas are forests of fir, spruce, juniper, cypress, and birch. Below the snow line at 14,000 feet are grassy areas. The alpine zone is home to deer, tahrs, goat antelopes, wild sheep, wolves, snow leopards, and pheasants.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 27,676,547
World Rank: 40th
Density per sq km: 172.5
% of annual growth (1999-2003): 2.3
Male %: 51.5
Female %: 48.5
Urban %: 12.9
Age Distribution %: 0-14: 39.0
15-64: 57.3
65 and over: 3.7
Population 2025: 39,918,000
Birth Rate per 1,000: 31.45
Death Rate per 1,000: 9.47
Rate of Natural Increase %: 2.2
Total Fertility Rate: 4.19
Expectation of Life (years): Males 60.09
Females 59.5
Marriage Rate per 1,000: —
Divorce Rate per 1,000: —
Average Size of Households: 5.6
Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

By historical origin, linguistic connections, and religious affiliations, Nepalese may be divided into two broad ethnic categories: Indo-Nepalese and Tibeto-Nepalese. The Indo-Nepalese group, which constitutes nearly 80 percent of the population, includes the Pahari, Newar, Tharu, and Indians of the Tarai. The Pahari make up nearly half of the total population. In social organization and physical appearance, they resemble the inhabitants of northern India, though many of these features have been modified in the Nepali environment. The Newar, who make up half of the population of Kathmandu Valley, are distinctively Mongoloid in appearance but Hindu in social and religious organization, and their artistic skills have enabled them to play a dominant role in the country. The Tharu are also Hinduized as a result of long and intimate contact with the neighboring Biharese.

The Tibeto-Nepalese category, which makes up 20 percent of the population, includes a number of ethnic islands without any real sense of common identity. These groups are clustered in the northern and eastern parts of the country, where they live as subsistence farmers and stock raisers at higher altitudes.

Ethnic aliens include Indians and Tibetans, mostly refugees from Tibet. Since Nepal was closed to foreigners until 1951, aliens form, at best, a floating community.

LANGUAGES

Nepali (also called Gurkhali, Khaskura, or Parbatiya) is the official language, and its use in schools and offices has enabled it to displace minor languages. It is an eastern dialect of Pahari and is distinguished from western and central Pahari. Nepali is spoken by nearly half the population; minor languages, in descending order of prominence, include Maithili Pradesh, Newari, Tharuhati, Maithili, Magar, midwestern Tarai dialects, Rai, and Gurung, all spoken by between 2 and 6 percent of the population. Khambu, Yakha, Hayu, Limbu, and Thami belong to the Munda group of the Austroasiatic family; Gurung, Mahar, Newari, Sunwar, and Murmi belong to the Tibeto-Burman family; and Nepali belongs to the Indo-European group. Newari and Pahari show strong Sanskrit influence. Only Pahari and Newari have any literature of their own.

Tibetan is spoken by the Bhotias in the north, while dialects of Hindi—such as Bhojpuri, Kumaoni, and Maithili—are spoken along the southern border. English is the principal second language.

RELIGIONS

By the constitutions of 1962 and 1990 Nepal was officially proclaimed a Hindu state; about 86 percent of the population is Hindu, 8 percent Buddhist, and 4 percent Muslim.

Religious tolerance is traditional, and the constitution provides that “every person, having regard to the traditions, may profess and practice his own religion as handed down from ancient times.” However, the constitution also provides that “no person shall be entitled to convert another person from one religion to another.” The legal code provides a maximum penalty of one year in prison for any Hindu who converts to another religion and three to six years in prison for any person who seeks to proselytize a Hindu.

Religious Affiliations

Hindu	23,860,000
Buddhist	2,160,000
Muslim	1,050,000
Other	610,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Neolithic tools found in the Kathmandu Valley indicate that people were living in the Himalayan region in the

very distant past, although their culture and artifacts are only slowly being explored. Written references to the region appeared by the first millennium B.C.E., during which period political and social groupings in Nepal became known in northern India. The *Mahabharata* and other legendary Indian histories mention the Kiratas, who still inhabit eastern Nepal; some legendary sources from the Kathmandu Valley also describe the Kiratas as early rulers there, taking over from earlier Gopals or Abhiras, both of whom might have been cow-herding tribes. These sources agree that an original population, probably of Tibeto-Burman ethnicity, lived in Nepal 2,500 years ago, inhabiting small settlements with a relatively low degree of political centralization.

The period following the decline of the Licchavi dynasty witnessed little growth in the geographical or administrative power of the Nepalese state; in fact, that period is the least understood time in Nepal’s history, with only a very few inscriptional sources supplemented by dated religious manuscripts. Apparently, the Kathmandu Valley and surrounding valleys officially remained part of a single political unit, although there were struggles for the throne between different royal lineages and notable families. Donations to religious foundations have been dated to a Newari era beginning in 879, suggesting the founding of a new dynasty. Surviving records show a movement away from Sanskrit and admixtures of early Newari, the language of the Newar people in the valley.

The main influences on Nepal continued to come from Mithila or Tirhut to the south, which area intermittently came under the domination of warriors allied to the Chalukya dynasty from Karnataka, in southern India. One of their lieutenants proclaimed himself king in 1097 and founded a capital at Simraongarh in the Tarai. From there he launched raids that allowed the Chalukyas to later claim domination over Nepal without exerting a perceptible impact on Nepalese history. By the late 12th century, however, the king in Nepal was Somesvaradeva (r. ca. 1178–85), a name of Chalukya kings, indicating some degree of political contact with Indian rulers. By the end of Somesvaradeva’s reign there was evidence of mounting political chaos and fighting for the throne.

Profound changes also were occurring in the Nepalese religious system. The early patronage of Buddhism by the kings gave way to more strictly Hindu devotion, based on the worship of a variety of deities but ultimately relying on Pashupatinath, the site of one of Hinduism’s most sacred Shiva shrines. Within the Buddhist community the roles of the monks and monasteries changed slowly but radically. Early Buddhism had rested on the celibacy and meditation of monks and nuns who had withdrawn from the world in their own living complexes (*vihara*). As a more ritualistic *vajrayana* Buddhism expanded, a division grew between the “teachers of the thunderbolt” (*vajracharya*) and ordinary monks (*bhiksbu*) leading to castelike divisions and the marriage of reli-

1700 Nepal

gious teachers. Higher-ranking teachers monopolized worship in the monasteries and controlled the revenues brought in from monastic estates. Monasteries became social and economic centers, serving as workshops and apartments as well as shrines.

Among the small hill states struggling for power during the later Malla period was Gorkha, founded in 1559 by Dravya Shah in an area chiefly inhabited by Magars. Legends trace his dynasty to warrior princes who immigrated from Rajputana, in India, during the 15th century. During its early fight for existence, the house of Gorkha stayed out of the two major confederations in western Nepal. No major expansion of the kingdom occurred until the reign of Ram Shah, from 1606 to 1633, who extended his territories slightly in all directions. During the 17th and early 18th centuries Gorkha continued a slow expansion and appeared increasingly often as an ally of one or more of the three kingdoms in their quarrels with each other, giving the rulers of the hill states valuable experience in the affairs of the Kathmandu Valley. Nar Bhupal Shah (r. 1716–42) extended his lands toward the Kairang Pass in the north and Nuwakot in the east. He attempted to take Nuwakot and failed, but he did arrange the marriage of his son to the daughter of the raja of Makwanpur.

This son, Prithvi Narayan Shah (r. 1743–75), made full use of his position to achieve supreme power and was one of the great figures in Nepalese history. Following in his father's footsteps, he apparently dedicated himself at an early age to the conquest of the valley and the creation of a single state. Before going on the offensive, he traveled to Banaras, or Varanasi, to seek financial assistance and purchase armaments, thus obtaining a personal view of conditions in the outside world, especially the position of the British East India Company. On his return to Gorkha, he established a number of arsenals and trained his troops to use the more modern weapons he had obtained in India. He also arranged alliances with, or bought the neutrality of, neighboring states. Initially composed of 46 sovereign principalities, modern Nepal was founded in 1769 by the Gurkha ruler Prithvi Narayan Shah, who consolidated political power through conquest and assimilation.

From 1846 to 1951 the country was under the control of the Rana family, one of whose members always held the office of prime minister. Their autocratic rule ended in 1950, when a revolution, inspired by India's successful bid for independence, restored the power of the monarchy. The last of the Rana prime ministers resigned in 1951. A period of quasi-constitutional rule followed, until a constitution was promulgated in 1959.

The constitution provided for a parliamentary government but left true sovereignty in the hands of the king, who could dismiss the prime minister, prorogue parliament, and veto all legislation. Under the direction of Prime Minister Bishweshwar Prasad Koirala, head of the

Nepali Congress Party (NCP), the government began a program of land reform designed to give tenants greater security and redistribute some of the large Rana estates. However, tension increased between the prime minister and King Mahendra, who made no pretense of his dislike of parliamentary government and political parties. In 1960 the king, charging the government with misuse of power, staged a coup and assumed control. He jailed government leaders, suspended the constitution, and banned political parties. In 1962 a new constitution established the *panchayat*, or assembly, system, a four-tiered administrative structure headed by the king, who appointed the prime minister. Under the *panchayat* system, directly elected town and village assemblies elected members to hierarchically superior bodies.

The system encountered opposition from NCP supporters and university students. Increasing demands for political liberalization led to the resignation of two prime ministers during the 1970s and to prolonged demonstrations in 1979. That year King Birendra, who had inherited the throne from his father in 1972, announced a referendum offering a choice between the maintenance of the *panchayat* system or the institution of a multiparty system. The population voted for the latter, and in 1980 the king proclaimed several constitutional changes. A national assembly was to be chosen by direct election, and the prime minister was to be designated by the assembly, rather than by the king. In November 1990 Nepal adopted a new constitution that established a constitutional monarchy, with executive power vested in the prime minister, who was the leader of the majority party in the legislature.

In 1991, in Nepal's first multiparty general election, the NCP won control of the new House of Representatives, with Girija Prasad Koirala as prime minister; intraparty squabbles led to Koirala's resignation three years later. In the 1994 balloting the Communist Party won a plurality. A series of short-lived cabinets followed, led by Man Mohan Adhikari, Sher Bahadur Deuba, Lokendra Bahadur Chand, G. P. Koirala, and again Sher Bahadur Deuba in 2001. In 1996 Maoist rebels began a guerrilla insurgency aimed at abolishing the monarchy and establishing a people's republic. They stepped up their campaign in 2000, and thousands died in the violence.

In 2001 King Birendra and all immediate members of the royal family were murdered by Crown Prince Dipendra, who reportedly went into a drunken rage after his mother denied him his choice of marriage—to a member of the Rana clan. The king's brother, Gyanendra, then assumed the throne. That year Maoist rebels stepped up their campaign of violence, forcing the resignation of Koirala as prime minister. The new prime minister, Sher Bahadur Deuba, announced a truce with the rebels, but the truce collapsed in November 2001 and a state of emergency was declared after the deaths of hundreds of

people in violence that continued into May 2002. That month parliament was dissolved by the king over the issue of extending the state of emergency. Deuba was expelled by his party, the NCP, but continued to head an interim government. In October new elections scheduled for that year were delayed, and the king replaced Deuba with Lokendra Bahadur Chand as prime minister. Hopes for peace rose in January 2003 when a cease-fire with the rebels was declared. In May, Chand resigned as prime minister and was replaced by Surya Bahadur Thapa. In August, fighting began once again.

In May 2004 Thapa resigned as prime minister in the aftermath of weeks of street violence staged by opposition groups. The king reappointed Deuba to replace him. In August and again in December rebels blockaded Kathmandu, preventing supplies from reaching the capital city. In February 2005 the king dismissed Deuba once again, assumed executive power, and declared a state of emergency.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1955–72	Mahendra Bir Bikram Shah
1972–2001	Birendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev
2001	Dipendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev
2001–	Gyanendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev

CONSTITUTION

Under the 1990 constitution Nepal is a constitutional monarchy, with the king as head of state and the prime minister as head of government. Executive power is vested in the prime minister, who is the leader of the majority in the 205-member parliament. The prime minister forms the cabinet, which is responsible to the legislature. Voting is the right of all citizens who have reached the age of 18. Since 1951 Nepal has been relatively free from violent changes of government, though rebel violence has led to the resignation of some government officials, including the prime minister. As of mid-2005, the office of the prime minister remained vacant.

PARLIAMENT

Under the 1990 constitution legislative power is vested in the bicameral parliament. Of the 60 seats in the upper chamber, the National Council, 35 are appointed by the lower chamber, the House of Representatives, 10 are appointed by the king, and 15 are elected by an electoral college. One-third of the members are elected every two years to serve six-year terms. All of the House of Representatives' 205 seats are filled by popular vote, the members serving five-year terms. The most recent election

was held in 1999; the king dissolved parliament in 2002, and elections scheduled for 2004 were postponed for a period of up to 12 months by the king.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Nepal is a multiparty state that is largely controlled by its left-leaning political parties. The two largest of the left-wing parties are the Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist-Leninist) (CPN-UML) and the NCP. These two parties controlled 171 of the 205 seats in the house before parliament was dissolved by the king in 2002. Other parties include the National Democratic Party (NDP; also called the Rashtriya Prajatantra Party), the Nepal Sadbhavana (Goodwill) Party, and the Nepal Workers' and Peasants' Party.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Nepal has a unitary system of government. The country is divided into 14 zones and 75 districts, with the district as the basic unit of administration. Each zone is administered by a commissioner and assistant zonal commissioners, all appointed by the central government. At the district level the principal administrative officer is the chief district officer, formerly known as the governor, or *bada hakim*. The chief district officer also serves as secretary to the *panchayat* of each development district.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The present legal system is based on the Mulki Ain, the code of law promulgated in 1962. Among other things, the code ended discrimination based on caste and sex, permitted divorce, and abolished the death sentence except for treason.

The law provides for the right to a fair public trial in most cases (some security and customs cases excepted), and this right is usually honored. There are separate military and civilian courts. Military courts generally deal only with military personnel, but civilians may be tried in these courts for crimes involving the military. Judges are appointed by the government, and decisions in political and security cases sometimes reflect the government's view. All lower-court decisions (including acquittals) are subject to appeal, and the Supreme Court is the court of last appeal. The king may grant pardons and set aside judgments.

The judicial system consists of the Supreme Court and 15 zonal and 75 district courts. The Supreme Court is composed of a chief justice and nine judges. Judges are appointed by the monarch on the recommendation of the Judicial Council. The attorney general is assisted by three

advocates, and the zonal and district courts are provided with public prosecutors and defense advocates.

HUMAN RIGHTS

In terms of civil and political rights, Nepal is classified as a partly free country. The government generally respects citizens' human rights in many areas; however, problems remain. The police at times use unwarranted lethal force. One person is known to have died in custody as the result of torture, and the police continue to abuse detainees, using torture as punishment or to extract confessions. The police also conduct raids on newspapers suspected of having links to the Maoist rebels. The government rarely investigates allegations of police brutality or punishes police officers who commit abuses.

Prison conditions remain poor. The authorities use arbitrary arrest and detention. Lengthy pretrial detention, judicial susceptibility to political pressure and corruption, and long delays before trial remain problems. The government continues to impose some restrictions on the freedoms of expression and religion. Women, disabled persons, and lower castes suffer from widespread discrimination. Violence against women, trafficking in women and girls for prostitution, forced labor, and child labor also remain serious problems. There have been reported instances of forced child labor.

In 1996 the parliament unanimously enacted a bill providing for a permanent human rights commission with the authority to investigate human rights abuses. However, the commission had not been established as of 2005. Meanwhile, the state of emergency declared in early 2005 led to the suspension of press freedoms.

FOREIGN POLICY

Nepal is a buffer state between two rival powers, India and China, and it walks a fine line in endeavoring not to offend either. Relations with India are frequently frayed as a result of disputes regarding transit, the continued Indian military presence in the disputed Kalapani territory, and Nepal's arms purchases from China. Nevertheless, in 1996 Nepal and India signed one agreement calling for a joint hydroelectric project in the Mahakali River basin and another allowing Nepal transit rights across north-eastern India to ports in Bangladesh.

Bhutan's expulsion of illegal migrants from Nepal is the source of a dispute, which remained unsolved in 2005 despite multiple rounds of bilateral talks. In 2004 some 104,000 displaced persons from Bhutan were present in Nepal. Relations with India remained strained, as the two nations continued to dispute boundaries and India tightened its borders to stop the flow of Maoist insurgents into India.

DEFENSE

The defense structure is headed by the king as the supreme commander of the armed forces. Manpower is provided by volunteers; there is no conscription system. The strength of the armed forces is over 100,000. In 2004 the nation spent \$99 million, or about 1.5 percent of gross domestic product (GDP), on the military.

Nepal has neither an air force nor a navy. The army consists of two divisions, further composed of five infantry brigades; one parachute battalion; one palace guard brigade, including one cavalry squadron and one garrison battalion; one support brigade, including one artillery battalion, one engineer battalion, and one signals battalion; one logistics brigade, including one transportation battalion; and one air squadron. Equipment includes 16 light tanks, 25 combat vehicles, artillery, mortars, and antiaircraft guns. Nine aircraft constitute the army's aviation wing.

Nepalese Gurkhas are among the most noted martial ethnic groups in the world, and the average soldier has been described as tough, fearless, and intensely loyal. The Nepalese army has not been engaged in international military combat in modern times, but Gurkhas serve in the British, Indian, and Malaysian armies. The country's best defense, however, is not the army but the terrain, which would make it difficult for any enemy to penetrate, let alone subjugate, the nation.

Until 1969 Nepal had a mutual security agreement with India, under which it received arms and training. Britain and the United States have also provided military assistance; the latter gave \$2.4 million through 1983 in military hardware and training programs.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	103,000
Military Manpower Availability:	6,107,091
Military Expenditures \$million:	99.2
as % of GDP:	1.5
as % of central government expenditures:	—
Arms Imports \$million:	5
Arms Exports \$million:	—

ECONOMY

Nepal is among the poorest and least-developed countries in the world, with 42 percent of its population living below the poverty line. Agriculture is the mainstay of the economy, providing a livelihood for over 80 percent of the population and accounting for 40 percent of GDP. Industrial activity mainly involves the processing of agricultural produce, including jute, sugarcane, tobacco, and grain. The production of textiles and carpets has expanded recently, accounting for about 80 percent of foreign-exchange earnings in the late 1990s. Agricultural production has grown by about 5 percent on average, as compared with annual population growth of 2.2 percent.

As of May 1991 the government moved forward with economic reforms, particularly encouraging trade and foreign investment, such as by reducing business licensing and registration requirements in order to simplify investment procedures. The government also cut expenditures by reducing subsidies, privatizing state industries, and laying off civil servants.

More recently, however, political instability—as exemplified by changes of government virtually every year since the early 1990s—hampered Kathmandu's ability to forge consensus to implement key economic reforms. Nepal has considerable scope for accelerating economic growth by exploiting its potential in hydropower and tourism, areas of recent foreign investment interest, but the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, hampered the tourism industry, as has the ongoing Maoist insurgency. Prospects for foreign trade or investment in other sectors will remain poor because of the small size of the economy and the nation's technological backwardness, remoteness, landlocked geographic location, and susceptibility to natural disaster. The international community's role of funding more than 60 percent of Nepal's development budget and more than 28 percent of total budgetary expenditures will likely remain a major ingredient of growth.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 39.53
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 1,500
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 3.7
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 1.3
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 40
 Industry: 20
 Services: 40
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 78
 Government Consumption: 10
 Gross Domestic Investment: —
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 0.568
 Imports: 1.419
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 3.2
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 29.8

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
135.8	139.2	142.9	147.2	155.6

Finance

National Currency: Nepalese Rupee (NPR)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = NPR 76.1414
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 63
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 5.5
 Total External Debt \$billion: 2.7
 Debt Service Ratio %: 10.03
 Balance of Payments \$million: —
 International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 1.2
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
 2.9

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 466.7
 per capita \$: 18.90
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 14.8

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: 16 July–15 July
 Revenues \$million: 665
 Expenditures \$billion: 1.1
 Budget Deficit \$million: 435
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: 9.4

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 40
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 3.6
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 0.14
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 34.5
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 27.8
 Total Farmland % of land area: 22.4
 Livestock: Cattle million: 7
 Chickens million: 22
 Pigs 000: 950
 Sheep 000: 860
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 14
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 35

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 441.6
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 8.7

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 115
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million:
 1.16
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 48
 Net Energy Imports % of use: 10.5
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 0.408
 Production kW-hr billion: 2.02
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 1.82
 Coal Reserves tons billion: —
 Production tons 000: 11
 Consumption tons 000: 542
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
 Production cubic feet billion: —
 Consumption cubic feet billion: —
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
 Production barrels 000 per day: —
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 15.3
 Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 1.419
 Exports \$billion: 0.568
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —
 Balance of Trade \$million: —

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
India %	22.9	50.5
China %	13.5	—
United Arab Emirates %	12.6	—
Singapore %	7.1	—
Saudi Arabia %	5.5	—
Kuwait %	4.6	—
United States %	—	26.0
Germany %	—	6.6

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 13,223
Paved %: 30.8
Automobiles: 63,500
Trucks and Buses: 72,700
Railroad: Track Length km: 59
Passenger-km million: —
Freight-km million: —
Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: —
Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: —
Airports: 46
Traffic: Passenger-km million: 1.2
Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 338
Number of Tourists from 000: 258
Tourist Receipts \$million: 232
Tourist Expenditures \$million: 119

Communications

Telephones 000: 371.8
Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.01
Cellular Telephones 000: 85
Personal Computers 000: 85
Internet Hosts per million people: 33
Internet Users per 1,000 people: 2.9

ENVIRONMENT

Nepal's use of its once-vast forests as its major source of fuel has started the process of deforestation, which has been accelerated by the clearing of forest for agricultural land use. Associated with the rapid deforestation is soil erosion, which threatens existing agricultural productivity. Water contamination and the associated health risks are additional environmental challenges facing Nepal.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 27.3
Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: -78
Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 17

Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 0.15

LIVING CONDITIONS

Nepal is an isolated, landlocked country that is among the poorest in the world, with per capita GDP in 2004 at just \$1,500 and a poverty rate of 42 percent. Life expectancy is low, and infectious and parasitic diseases are the leading causes of death. Although cities such as Kathmandu, Patan, and Bhaktapur are becoming crowded, most of the population is rural, with some 87 percent living in villages, many with no electricity. Transportation is particularly difficult for Nepalese; the country has only about 4,000 km of paved roads (along with 9,100 km of unpaved roads) and a mere 59 km of railroads, so goods are transported primarily by pack animals. Natural disasters such as mudslides and floods are common, and ongoing rebel violence has led to political instability. Major problems have been the numbers of girls abducted into prostitution in Indian cities and child laborers exploited in the carpet trade.

HEALTH

Health care in Nepal is generally poor, with annual per capita spending on health care in 2002 at just \$12. In 2004 life expectancy at birth was just under 60 years. Infant mortality was nearly 67 per 1,000 live births—not surprising in a country in which a mere 12 percent of births are attended by medical staff. In 2001 a mere 27 percent of the population had access to adequate sanitation facilities. Hospitals are found only in urban areas, and most of these are poorly equipped; clinics in rural areas lack equipment and personnel. Many people turn to shamans or practice ayurvedic medicine, which involves restoring imbalances in the bodily humors, usually through diet.

Health

Number of Physicians: 1,259
Number of Dentists: —
Number of Nurses: 6,216
Number of Pharmacists: —
Physician Density per 100,000 people: 5.2
Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 66.98
Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 740
Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 5.2
Health Expenditures per capita \$: 12
HIV Infected % of adults: 0.5
Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
DPT: 78
Measles: 75
Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 27
Access to Improved Water Source %: 84

FOOD AND NUTRITION

The state of nutrition in Nepal is poor. In 2001 the United Nations estimated that 12.6 percent of children under the age of five were severely underweight, with an additional 35.7 percent moderately underweight. Further, some 17 percent of the total population—over four million people—were undernourished. In much of Nepal, rice is the main staple, eaten with dal, a dish made of lentils, or with cooked vegetables. In mountainous regions where rice is unavailable, the staple is a paste or mush made with corn or millet. In some areas of the country, flat breads made with wheat supplement rice. Generally, Nepalese consume few fresh fruits or vegetables, contributing to vitamin deficiencies. Hindus, especially those in the higher caste, are strict vegetarians, though other castes eat pork and occasionally even beef.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 16.8
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,380
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 194.0
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 86.6

STATUS OF WOMEN

What legal rights women have through national legislation are irrelevant to the vast majority of Nepal's women. Lack of education, formidable communications obstacles, and communal and tribal customs that dictate secondary roles for women combine to make it virtually impossible for women to achieve the equal status with men that is ideally granted them by law. As a result, rights are conferred on or denied to women on the basis of community and ethnic tradition. An AID/Nepal-financed study of eight rural villages showed that women in these areas had no personal rights to landed property or inheritance but could gain access to such rights through marriage or male progeny. In Kathmandu Valley, on the other hand, women can hold land in their own right. Through the early 2000s, 12 women held seats in the 205-member parliament.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 6
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 0.75
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: —

WORK

Estimating the size of Nepal's labor force is difficult because so many people make their living through sub-

sistence agriculture. Figures from 1996 put the total workforce at about 10 million. Some 81 percent of the labor force is occupied in agriculture, with just 3 percent in industry (though that figure was growing at a nearly 9 percent rate) and 16 percent in services. The unemployment rate in 2001 was 47 percent. Primary agricultural products include rice, corn, wheat, sugarcane, dairy products, root crops, and water buffalo meat. Primary industries include textiles and carpets, brick production, some food processing, and tourism—the latter largely a function of the nation's majestic mountains, such as Everest, and the work of Sherpas as guides. Other tourist activities include white-water rafting and canoeing, as well as the production of crafts and souvenirs for the tourist trade.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 10,000,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 39.5
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 81
 Industry: 3
 Services: 16
 Unemployment %: 47

EDUCATION

Schooling is, in principle, universal, free, and compulsory for five years, from ages six through 11. It lasts for 10 years, as divided into primary (five grades), middle (two grades), and secondary school (three grades). The attrition rate is high, attendance is irregular, and facilities and equipment are inadequate. In 2003 the literacy rate was just 45 percent of the adult population; worse, that figure represents 62.7 percent of males but just 27.6 percent of females.

The academic year runs from February to December. The medium of instruction is Nepali in the primary grades and English in the secondary grades. Private schools are autonomous, but in the Buddhist *gompas* and the Sanskrit schools the range of study is considerably narrower, often limited to sacred texts. There is an acute shortage of teachers, which is partly made up through the hiring of Indian teachers and retired Gurkha soldiers.

Responsibility for public education is centralized in the Ministry of Education, which exercises this function through seven zonal inspectorates and 32 subinspectorates.

Nepal has only one true university, Tribhuvan University, in Kathmandu.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 45.2
 Male %: 62.7
 Female %: 27.6

(continues)

Education (*continued*)

School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 9.7

First Level: Primary Schools: 22,157

Teachers: 110,173

Students: 3,928,684

Student-Teacher Ratio: 35.7

Net Enrollment Ratio: 70.5

Second Level: Secondary Schools: 7,582

Teachers: 52,528

Students: 1,806,355

Student-Teacher Ratio: 34.7

Net Enrollment Ratio: —

Third Level: Institutions: 3

Teachers: 4,598

Students: 103,290

Gross Enrollment Ratio: 5.0

Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 3.4

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

In 1982 the Royal Nepal Academy of Science and Technology was founded to encourage scientific development in Nepal, but the academy has accomplished little. Meanwhile, the university is underfunded and poorly equipped, and rampant poverty, low levels of literacy, and poor science education in the primary and secondary schools—which the National Institute of Science and Technology was formed in 1993 to correct—have hampered scientific research. San Francisco State University's Wildlands Studies program conducts onsite environmental research in Nepal.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —

Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 0.66

High-Tech Exports \$million: 0.125

Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

After the liberalization of licensing policies, the number of daily newspapers increased substantially. Two of the more influential dailies are published in English: *Rising Nepal* and the *Motherland*. Nondaily publications and periodicals number over 2,000. Press freedoms in Nepal have been severely abridged as the government has declared states of emergency at various times in the early 2000s; in 2004 more journalists were arrested in Nepal than in any other country.

The official news agency is Rastriya Sambad Samiti, an autonomous company with 60 percent state participation.

Domestic book production is negligible. The Royal Nepal Academy, a state-sponsored society, is one of the few domestic publishers; there are six other publishers whose output is very uneven. Nepal does not adhere to any copyright conventions.

Radio Nepal, founded in 1951, broadcasts a domestic service for eight hours a day and an external service for two hours a week on two medium-wave (0.25 and 10 kw) and two shortwave (50 and 100 kw) transmitters. An annual license is payable for radio receivers. Nepal Television Corporation broadcasts for 32 hours per week; additionally, there are two private television stations. Feature films are imported, mostly from India.

Media

Daily Newspapers: —

Total Circulation 000: —

Circulation per 1,000: —

Books Published: —

Periodicals: 2,288

Radio Receivers 000: —

per 1,000: —

Television sets 000: 150

per 1,000: 6

CULTURE

Nepal's cultural roots extend back to the fourth century, with sculptures from the Licchavi period and wood carvings produced during the early medieval period. Newar architects created the tiered pagoda roofs typical of buildings throughout East Asia in the 13th century. The 11th century saw the production of magnificent illuminated manuscripts. More recently, Bhanubhakta Acharya adapted the Hindu epic *Ramayan* for readers in Nepal in the 19th century. In the 20th century Nepali writers sought publication outside the country because of heavy government censorship. Graphic arts tend to have religious themes, featuring statues of Buddhist and Hindu gods and *tangkas*, intricate paintings depicting Buddhist views of the universe. Dramatic productions, too, have traditionally focused on religious themes derived from Hindu epics. Nepal has a rich musical tradition, including chanting, sacred music, and the music of troubadours. The 72nd Street Band, based in Omaha, Nebraska, records Nepali songs. The Newars and Tibetans are sources of traditional dance forms.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —

Volumes: —

Registered borrowers: —

Museums Number: —

Annual Attendance: —

Cinema Gross Receipts: —

Number of Cinemas: —

Seating Capacity: —

Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Virtually all of the folklore and mythology of Nepal is associated with the nation's Hindu and Buddhist past, though each ethnic group has its own traditions. The word *Himalayas*, for example, comes from the term *himalaya*, meaning "snow abode," and the mountains are regarded as the dwelling place of the god Shiva. The shrine at the sacred site of Swayambhunath in the Kathmandu Valley is linked to a legend that states that in ages past, the valley was the site of a lake on which floated a blue lotus flower with a sacred flame that was the first manifestation of the Buddha. Worshippers came to meditate at the lake, including the sage Manjusri, who wanted to approach the light of the flame, so he drew his sword of wisdom and sliced open the valley. The lotus settled on the valley floor as the water of the lake drained away to become the site of the shrine.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Many forms of modern entertainment have yet to fully penetrate Nepal. Those who can afford television sets watch limited amounts of programming on the state-run station. Movie theaters in the cities show the occasional Western movie, but most features come from India's thriving film industry. Otherwise, entertainment is provided primarily by religious festivals, folk music, and folk dancing.

ETIQUETTE

While men in the cities have adopted the practice of shaking hands with one another, the traditional greeting is to say *Namaste* (I greet the god within you) with the palms of the hands pressed together (as if in prayer) in front of the chest. In the mountains the most common greeting is *Khana khaiyo*, which literally translates as "Have you eaten?" People of the same sex show affection by touching in public, but people of the opposite sex do not. Stepping over a person, pointing the soles of one's feet at another, and hitting someone with a shoe or sandal is regarded as an insult. Considerable etiquette surrounds the act of eating. Guests may not assist with cooking or cleaning up; food is eaten only with the right hand, and because saliva is considered unclean, the right hand must be washed after eating.

FAMILY LIFE

In traditional Nepali families, marriages are arranged by older members of the extended family, who ensure that

the mate is of the right class, caste, and education level. The goal of most marriages is to strengthen as much as possible the families' network of social and economic ties and responsibilities. The family of the bride pays a dowry—often quite large—to the groom's family. The society is patriarchal and patrilocal, meaning that the bride adopts the kinship group of the groom's family and joins the groom's community. In rural areas the nuclear family is becoming the household norm, but among traditional landholding Hindus the norm is the extended family, in which the parents, their children, and their children's spouses and children live together, with new brides, especially those who have not yet borne children, dominated by the older women and given the most onerous work.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Dress varies according to ethnic group. People in the mountains dress like Tibetans, while those of the Tarai dress like Indians. The traditional Nepali dress for a woman consists of a sari, a blouse, and gold jewelry; for a man, a peaked cap, a jacket, a blousy shirt gathered with a belt, and pants with tight, tapered legs are worn.

SPORTS

The most popular sports in Nepal are badminton, table tennis, cricket, basketball, and soccer. The mountainous terrain is too rugged to make skiing possible. Nepal boasts an Elephant Polo Association, has developed a form of full-contact karate called *budokai-do*, and offers one of the world's highest bungee jumps, over the Bhoti Kosi River in the Himalayas.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1945** Padma Shamsheer Rana becomes prime minister.
- 1946** The NCP is founded.
- 1947** The United States establishes diplomatic relations with Nepal.
- 1948** The country's first constitution, the Government of Nepal Act, is promulgated. Padma resigns in the wake of opposition to the new constitution from conservative members of Rana family. Mohan Shamsheer becomes prime minister. The constitution is suspended.
- 1950** Ranas are in open conflict with the monarch, Tribhuvan. Tribhuvan, implicated in NCP conspiracy against Rana power, seeks and is granted asylum in India. General rebellion is stamped out. Second offensive by the rebels gains ground.

1708 Nepal

- Government troops desert to the rebel side.
Over 140 Ranas join the dissidents.
The Treaty of Peace and Friendship and Treaty of Trade and Commerce are signed with India.
- 1951** Mohan capitulates.
King Tribhuvan is restored to the throne. Elections and the formation of a constituent assembly are promised.
Rana power ends. Mohan Shamsher heads new coalition cabinet for 10 months.
Shamsher is succeeded by NCP leader Matrika Prasad Koirala as prime minister.
Interim constitution, the Government of Nepal Act, is promulgated.
- 1952** Koirala resigns. King assumes direct rule.
- 1953** Koirala is recalled as prime minister.
- 1955** Tribhuvan dies and is succeeded by Mahendra as king.
Nepal joins the United Nations.
National Police Front is formed.
Koirala resigns. Mahendra takes over direct control.
- 1956** Tanka Prasad Acharya is named prime minister. Border treaty with China is concluded.
- 1957** Acharya resigns. Kunwar Indrajit Singh becomes prime minister for a few months.
- 1958** USSR opens an embassy at Kathmandu. Subarna Shamshir is named new prime minister.
- 1959** The United States opens an embassy at Kathmandu.
New constitution is promulgated, superseding constitution of 1951.
First general elections are held. NCP wins absolute majority.
Tribhuvan University is founded.
- 1960** Bishweshwar Prasad Koirala heads first popular government.
Koirala's policies are opposed by the king, and Koirala is abruptly dismissed.
All political parties are banned.
The king takes over direct control of government.
Treaty of Peace and Friendship with China is concluded.
- 1961** King proclaims guided democracy.
Boundary treaty with China is renewed.
- 1962** New constitution, third since 1951, establishes *panchayat* form of government.
Land Reorganization Act and Mulki Ain, new legal code, are promulgated.
Anti-Indian riots erupt in Kathmandu over Indian aid to dissidents.
- 1963** Emergency is ended.
Panchayat elections begin.
National Guidance Council is formed.
- 1965** Local government is reorganized.
Giri resigns. Surya Bahadur Thapa is appointed prime minister.
- 1969** Thapa yields office to Kirti Nidhi Bista.
Indian military mission is withdrawn.
- 1970** Bista resigns. Gehendra Bahadur Rajbhandary becomes interim prime minister.
- 1971** Bista is recalled as prime minister.
New trade and transit treaty is negotiated with India.
- 1972** Mahendra dies and is succeeded as king by Birendra.
Tribhuvan University is closed.
Development regions are established under National Development Council.
- 1973** Nagendra Prasad Rijal is named prime minister.
Singha Durbar, the residence of the Ranas, is burned by rebels.
- 1974** Relations with India worsen.
- 1975** Rijal resigns. Tulsi Giri is appointed prime minister.
King Birendra is crowned.
National "Go to the Village" campaign is launched.
- 1976** Koirala returns from India and is arrested.
Treaty with India expires and is not renewed.
- 1977** Prime Minister Tulsi Giri resigns in the wake of corruption charges. Former prime minister Kirti Nidhi Bista is reinstated as prime minister.
- 1979** Following nationwide demonstrations by students, Bista is replaced as prime minister by Surya Bahadur Thapa.
King announces referendum on the *panchayat* form of government.
- 1980** In national referendum people vote for continuance of the *panchayat* form of government and against the reintroduction of political parties.
- 1983** Prime Minister Thapa is defeated in the Rashtriya *panchayat* and is replaced by Lokendra Bahadur Chand.
- 1986** Marich Man Singh Shrestha becomes prime minister.
- 1990** Nepal adopts a new constitution providing for the king as head of state. Executive power is to be exercised by a prime minister, who leads the majority party in the legislature.
- 1991** The NCP wins control of the parliament, with 110 of the 205 seats.
- 1994** Nepal becomes the first communist monarchy when the leftist CPN-UML coalition wins 88 of the 205 seats and forms a new government.
- 1995** A vote of no confidence in the government leads to a new government led by the Nepali Congress Party.
- 1996** The radical Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist begins a guerrilla insurgency to unseat the gov-

- ernment and establish Nepal as a people's republic.
- 1997** The CPN-UML coalition dissolves. The royalist NDP forms a new government coalition incorporating the CPN-UML. NDP splits into two factions, one of which forms another new government that excludes CPN-UML.
- 1998** A CPN-UML faction forms the Communist Party of Nepal (Marxist-Leninist). The NCP controls parliament.
- 1999** The NCP wins a majority of seats in May elections, with Krishna Prasad Bhattarai as prime minister.
- 2000** The king appoints as prime minister the NCP leader Girija Prasad Koirala, who leads the ninth government in 10 years. Maoist attacks, at first confined to remote mountain areas, have occurred in more than half the country's territory, resulting in the more than 1,400 deaths since 1996.
- 2001** King Birendra and all members of the royal family are murdered by Crown Prince Dipendra in a drunken rage. The king's brother Gyanendra assumes the throne. Koirala steps down as prime minister, and Sher Bahadur Deuba heads the government. Peace talks between the government and Maoist rebels begun in July break down in November. Rebels launch coordinated attacks on army and police posts, and a state of emergency is declared.
- 2002** Violence continues through May, when parliament is dissolved and fresh elections are called. In October King Gyanendra dismisses Deuba and indefinitely postpones elections scheduled for November. Lokendra Bahadur Chand is appointed prime minister.
- 2003** In January the rebels and the government declare a ceasefire. Chand resigns as prime minister; the king appoints Surya Bahadur Thapa as new prime minister. In August the rebels withdraw from peace talks with the government, and from late 2003 into 2004 violence continues, and opposition groups stage street protests.
- 2004** Nepal joins the World Trade Organization. Thapa resigns, and Deuba is reappointed prime minister.

In August and December Maoist rebels blockade Kathmandu.

- 2005** King Gyanendra ousts Deuba and his government, assumes executive power, and declares a state of emergency.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Nepal Home Page
<http://www.info-nepal.com/>

THE NETHERLANDS

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Netherlands (Nederland)

ABBREVIATION

NL

CAPITAL

Amsterdam; The Hague is the seat of government

HEAD OF STATE

Queen Beatrix Wilhelmina Armgard (from 1980)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Jan Peter Balkenende (from 2002)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Constitutional monarchy

POPULATION

16,407,491 (2005)

AREA

41,526 sq km (16,033 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Dutch

LANGUAGES

Dutch (official), Frisian (official)

RELIGIONS

Roman Catholicism, Protestantism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Euro

NATIONAL FLAG

Tricolor of red (top), white, and cobalt blue horizontal stripes

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A central shield, the arms of the House of Orange-Nassau, in azure blue dotted with gold billets, or small rectangles, as the background for a gold-crowned lion with red tongue and claws brandishing in its right forepaw a naked silver sword and in its left a bundle of gold-tipped arrows. Larger gold lions flank the shield, which is topped by a rendition of the crown used by William I on his seal. The device is backed with a red, gold-fringed, ermine-lined pavilion and crested with a royal crown. The emblem rests on a blue ribbon scroll bearing the French motto *Je maintiendrai* (I will maintain).

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Wilhelmus van Nassouwe”

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year’s Day), April 30 (Queen’s birthday), all major Christian holidays

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

1648

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

February 17, 1983

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

The Netherlands forms part of the northwestern European plain and is bounded on the east by Germany, on the south by Belgium, and on the north and west by the North Sea. It is crossed almost at its central point by latitude 52° north and longitude 5° east. The total official area is 41,526 sq km (16,033 sq mi), including more than 4,243 sq km (1,638 sq mi) of territorial waters and inlets; the nation is slightly larger than Belgium and slightly smaller than Denmark or Switzerland. The official name is Netherlands (“lowlands”), but the country is commonly referred to as Holland, which, strictly speaking, applies

only to the western coastal provinces of North and South Holland. It extends 312 km (194 mi) north to south and 264 km (164 mi) east to west. Its total land boundary length is 1,027 km (637 mi), while the North Sea coastline is 451 km (280 mi) long.

The highest point is in the extreme southeast, 322 m (1,056 ft) above sea level. The areas in the north and west that lie below sea level account for nearly half of the total land area. The lowest area is a polder, an area reclaimed from the sea, northeast of Rotterdam 7 m (23 ft) below sea level. If the environmentally controversial reclamation of the Zuider Zee, or IJsselmeer (Lake IJssel), is ever completed, an area roughly equivalent to the

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area relinquished to the sea in past centuries will have been reclaimed.

Despite its small size, the Netherlands has a varied topography as a result of its complex geological history. The country is divided into two main regions, one constituting areas below sea level, or Low Netherlands, and the other those above sea level, or High Netherlands. The High Netherlands is composed chiefly of sand and gravel, while the Low Netherlands consists mainly of clay and peat. Among other differences, the High Netherlands is undulating and even hilly in places, with farms alternating with woodland and heath, while the Low Netherlands is predominantly flat and is intersected by natural and human-made waterways.

The Netherlands has nine distinct topographical regions: The South Limburg Plateau is the only part of the country not classified as lowland. The hills, which rise to more than 300 m (984 ft), are the foothills of the central European plateau. This is virtually the only area in the country where rocks can be found at or near surface levels.

The ground moraine region of Drenthe and East Friesland covers the northern part of the country approximately from Haarlem to Nijmegen.

The terminal moraine region covers the central part of the High Netherlands. There are parallel ranges of hills up to 100 m (328 ft) high in the provinces of Utrecht, Gelderland, and Overijssel, dissected by the valley of the IJssel River.

The remaining six regions are the sandy region of North Brabant and Limburg; the raised bog region, a transitional region between the High and Low Netherlands where marshy conditions are conducive to peat formation; the peat regions of Holland, Utrecht, Friesland, and Overijssel, which have historically been subject to erosion to the sea, and where the polders are more than 4 m (13 ft) below sea level; the young marine clay regions in the southwestern and northern coastal districts, including areas reclaimed from the Zuider Zee; the alluvial clay regions; and the dunes created by the action of wind and water, with the new dunes at least 30 m (98 ft) high in places and several kilometers wide.

Much of the Low Netherlands was wrested from the sea over the course of some eight centuries. After 1900, land reclamation was undertaken on a larger scale, with an ambitious plan drawn up for reclaiming land covered by sea after the last great ice age. Land is so limited in the Netherlands that, despite environmental and other objections, Wieringermeer was eventually drained (in 1930); the Zuider Zee, now called Lake IJssel, was sealed off from the Waddenzee; and Lauwers Zee and Maasvlakte were also reclaimed.

Coastline, km:	451
Elevation Extremes meters:	
Lowest: Zuidplaspolder	-7
Highest: Vaalserberg	322
Land Use %	
Arable Land:	26.7
Permanent Crops:	1.0
Forest:	11.1
Other:	61.2

Population of Principal Cities (2005)

Almere	174,822
Amsterdam	739,295
Apeldoorn	155,945
Breda	167,908
Eindhoven	208,573
Enschede	153,640
Groningen	180,848
Nijmegen	157,905
Rotterdam	596,068
The Hague	468,421
Tilburg	198,772
Utrecht	275,797

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

The Netherlands lies in the temperate zone of the Northern Hemisphere, with a maritime climate influenced by the North Sea and the Atlantic Ocean. Daily and annual temperature ranges are moderate; the mean temperature is a little over 1°C (33°F) in January, rising to 17°C (63°F) in July. Since the country is small, there is little variation in climate from region to region, but the influence of the sea is less on inland temperatures; indeed, regional differences are most marked with respect to temperatures. The average number of summer days with a maximum temperature of 25°C (77°F) or more ranges from five in the Frisian Islands, off the northern coast, to more than 35 in the southern province of Limburg. There is a lower incidence of frost in the coastal areas than inland.

Although the mild, damp climate is suited to grassland and to dairy and livestock use, there is too little sunshine in the summer months for much crop production. In winter the frequent changes in weather lead to slippery roads. The Netherlands is not subject to major wind systems.

Although spring is usually drier than autumn, rainfall is fairly even throughout the year, with an annual average of about 30 inches. There is no decrease in rainfall away from the coast, as summer storms are more frequent inland.

Geography

Area sq km: 41,526; sq mi 16,033
World Rank: 131st
Land Boundaries, km: Belgium 450; Germany 577

Climate and Weather

Mean temperature: January 33°F July 63°F
Extremes: Highest 98°F Lowest -13°F
Average Rainfall: 29.5 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Much of the land in the Netherlands is used for agriculture, and little land remains in its natural state. Forests, consisting primarily of birch trees, cover only about 11 percent of the land. Most of the rest of the uncultivated land consists of sand dunes, muddy coastal areas, and lakes. In the coastal areas, sea birds and marine species such as mollusks dominate. Massive numbers of migrating birds pass through the region. Mammals include species of deer, badgers, foxes, beavers, boars, and muskrats.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005:	16,407,491
World Rank:	58th
Density per sq km:	478.8
% of annual growth (1999-2003):	0.7
Male %:	49.5
Female %:	50.5
Urban %:	64.3
Age Distribution %:	
0–14:	18.1
15–64:	67.8
65 and over:	14.1
Population 2025:	17,540,000
Birth Rate per 1,000:	11.14
Death Rate per 1,000:	8.68
Rate of Natural Increase %:	0.2
Total Fertility Rate:	1.66
Expectation of Life (years):	
Males:	76.25
Females:	81.51
Marriage Rate per 1,000:	4.7
Divorce Rate per 1,000:	2.6
Average Size of Households:	2.4
Induced Abortions:	24,141

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

The Dutch are an ethnically homogeneous people descended from Saxon, Frankish, and Frisian tribes. However, since the end of World War II ethnic homogeneity has been considerably diluted by the arrival of both European and non-European immigrants, as a result of which the Netherlands has become a pluralist society. As of 1998 the Dutch constituted 83 percent of the population, with Moroccans, Turks, and others making up the remaining 17 percent.

Immigrants are of two types: former colonials or repatriates and guest workers. The former colonials generally came to the Netherlands between 1945 and the 1960s. Since they were officially Dutch citizens, though born overseas, they were rapidly assimilated into Dutch society and experienced little if any prejudice.

The Dutch are less tolerant of guest workers. There have been anti-immigrant and race riots, owing to economic pressures arising from cheap labor supplies, and

the government tightened border controls to crack down on immigration. Although in 1981 the government officially recognized ethnic minorities' equal status with nationals in matters of housing, social services, and employment—and the new Netherlands constitution also granted them voting rights in local elections—little has been done to actually encourage a multiethnic society.

LANGUAGES

The official language is Dutch, or *Hollands*, which is the mother tongue of all inhabitants except the 700,000 Frisians, who speak their ancient language of the same name. Frisian is closely related to Anglo-Saxon, while Dutch belongs to the Germanic language group.

Dutch has six dialects, notably Gelders and Groningen. The general language of communication, or standard Dutch, is called *Algemeen Beschaafd Nederlands* (ABN), or General Civilized Dutch. There are some differences in sound and vocabulary between the language in the south and in the north, roughly comparable to the difference between the German spoken in Hamburg and that spoken in Vienna. The influence of Dutch goes beyond national borders. The language of the majority in Belgium is Dutch (called Flemish there). An earlier offshoot, known as Afrikaans, is one of the two official languages in South Africa.

Dutch has received less attention from linguists than it deserves because it tends to be overshadowed by German. The myth persists that the Dutch once spoke German and raised their local dialect to the status of a language only on achieving independence in the 16th century—an unfortunate conclusion based upon certain similarities in the two languages. The pronunciation of German is sharper, harder, and more precise than that of Dutch, which thus sounds slightly softer. Many German and Dutch words look alike but differ radically in meaning. Dutch is more analytical than German; long compounds and long sentences are considered ugly.

Frisian, the second official language of Friesland, is even older than Dutch and has an extensive literature of its own. In Friesland it is the language of instruction for the first three years of primary education and is taught well into the secondary grades. There are chairs of Frisian at five Dutch universities, and there are also Frisian libraries and the Frisian Academy.

RELIGIONS

The evangelization of the Netherlands began in the seventh century, when the Franks established a church at Utrecht, and was completed by the English missionaries Willibrord and Boniface during the first half of the eighth century. Holland was the center of a band of mystics,

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known as the Brethren of the Common Life. After the Reformation, Holland became the refuge for the followers of Luther, Zwingli, and Calvin, the latter ultimately taking precedence. With the attempt of King Philip II of Spain to force conversion to Catholicism, the Dutch Reformation became allied with the struggle for freedom, which lasted from 1568 to 1648.

The Dutch Reformed Church became Holland's official religion in 1651, though that status has since been withdrawn. The mother church, also known as the Netherlands Reformed Church (Nederlandse Hervormde Kerk, NHK), retains a confessional balance between liberals and Calvinists. The NHK is divided into 11 church provinces, with a total membership of around 2.3 million. Reaction against liberalism and state influence in the NHK produced a number of neo-Calvinist schisms, beginning in the early part of the 19th century. In 2004 the NHK officially merged with two other churches, forming the Protestant Church of the Netherlands.

Religious freedom was established in several articles in the constitution of 1848. However, religious processions need official permission. The Netherlands has no concordat with the Holy See, and there has been no ministry of religious affairs since 1871. Although church and state are constitutionally separate, religious communities receive considerable aid and support from the state. These include laws enforcing Sunday observance and the prosecution of those who offend religious scruples. Religious bodies are given free radio and television time in the state-run electronic media. Confessional presence is strong in Parliament, where of the 14 political parties two are Catholic and four are Protestant. Theological faculties receive public subsidies, as do church-run elementary and secondary schools.

Religious Affiliations

Roman Catholic	5,085,000
Protestant	3,445,000
Muslim	720,000
Other	590,000
Unaffiliated	6,565,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

At the time of Julius Caesar the lowlands near the mouth of the Rhine and the Meuse were populated by Celtic and Germanic tribes, among which the Batavi and the Frisians were the most numerous. Three hundred years later successive waves of new Germanic tribes, such as the Salic and West Franks, pushed the Frisians back to the east coast. By the time of Charlemagne the West Franks had taken over the region, and the Frankish language displaced the earlier languages of the Germanic tribes.

After the death of Charlemagne and the dismemberment of his realm, several duchies were founded in the region called the Low Countries. In the Middle Ages the province of Holland rose to prominence under Count Floris V (1256–96). As the seat of an ancient bishopric, Utrecht became an important principality, while Amsterdam, Haarlem, and Groningen became prosperous trading centers. In the 15th century most of the Low Countries came under the rule of the dukes of Burgundy and, later, on the marriage of Mary of Burgundy to Archduke (later Emperor) Maximilian I in 1477, the Austrian House of Hapsburg. Mary's son Philip of Hapsburg married Joanna of Castile, and their son Charles, became king of Spain in 1516. In 1519 he united the Netherlands and Spain and became the master of the Low Countries. The Spanish hegemony continued under Charles's son Philip II, who directed his energies toward stamping out Protestantism and suppressing the political and religious liberties of the Dutch. The 17 provinces of the Low Countries thereupon rose in revolt under the leadership of William the Silent, prince of Orange. Much of the country was freed by 1577, with William as the acknowledged ruler. However, in 1578 the southern provinces, now Belgium, turned against William. In 1579 the northern provinces concluded the Union of Utrecht as the United Provinces. Upon the assassination of William the Silent in 1584, his son Maurice was installed as the stadtholder of the republic. Final recognition of Dutch independence by Spain was not obtained until the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648. Meanwhile, the southern provinces remained loyal to Spain and were thereafter known as the Spanish Netherlands.

In the 17th century the United Provinces became the leading commercial and maritime power in Europe, with settlements and colonies in the East Indies, the crown jewel of its empire, as well as South Africa, the West Indies, and South America. For a time the Dutch were also dominant in Ceylon (now Sri Lanka). Alongside trade and commerce, arts, sciences, literature, and philosophy flourished; this was the golden age of the great Dutch masters in painting. In terms of religious freedom, the United Provinces was the most liberal country in the world during this period and a haven for refugees from religious persecution. At the peak of their power, the Dutch led several coalitions of European forces to victory over France. From 1688 to 1707 William III, the great-grandson of William the Silent, and his wife, Mary, were monarchs of England.

In the 18th century the Dutch decline was as swift as its rise. Intense rivalries among the provinces and four naval wars with the rising power of Great Britain sapped its strength. In 1795 a much-weakened republic was overrun by the revolutionary French armies. After the fall of Napoleon, the Congress of Vienna (1814–15) set up a new Kingdom of the Netherlands, composed of the United Provinces and the former Spanish-Austrian Netherlands

under a prince of the House of Orange, King William I. In 1830 the southern provinces broke away to form the Kingdom of Belgium. Dutch claims to the principality of Luxembourg ended with the death of William III in 1890. Thereafter, the Dutch became more insular, concerned mainly with domestic problems such as electoral reforms and conflict over secular versus religious instruction. The Dutch remained neutral in World War I but succumbed to Nazi forces in 1940. Dutch resistance lasted for only five days, and destruction, particularly in the cities of Rotterdam, Arnhem, and Nijmegen, was extensive. The Netherlands was liberated by Allied forces in May 1945. Queen Wilhelmina abdicated in 1948 and was succeeded by her daughter, Juliana. The Dutch had lost the East Indies to the Japanese in 1942; after the fall of Japan, a group of Indonesian nationalists proclaimed an independent republic and resisted Dutch reoccupation. After four years of hostilities, Indonesia was granted independence in 1949. Dutch Guiana, a Dutch possession in South America since 1815, became the independent nation known as Suriname in 1975.

Since 1945 the Netherlands has been governed by a series of coalition governments in which the large Catholic People's Party (KVP) played a pivotal role prior to its merger into the more inclusive Christen-Democratisch Appel (Christian Democratic Appeal, or CDA). Coalitions between the KVP and the Labor Party were the rule until 1958, when the latter went into opposition. A series of center-right coalitions followed, along with a few short-lived center-left coalitions. From 1982 to 1994 Dutch politics was dominated by Ruud F. M. Lubbers, the CDA leader. Since 1994 the Labor Party and People's Party for Freedom and Democracy have headed most of the cabinets. In 2002 the Labor Party suffered its worst election defeat since World War II. Shortly before the election, the right-wing political leader and candidate Pim Fortuyn was murdered. Outraged voters responded by supporting an anti-immigration, anticrime, antiestablishment platform rather than the Labor Party's eight-year record of economic prosperity. CDA and List Pim Fortuyn, the political party founded by its namesake, formed a new government, headed by the CDA leader Jan Peter Balkenende. Three months later the government collapsed, but in January 2003 the CDA won a narrow victory in the general election, and a center-right coalition was formed, with Balkenende as prime minister. In 2004 over 200,000 people demonstrated in Amsterdam against welfare reform and spending cuts. The Netherlands was in the news for three additional events in the early 2000s: In 2001 the former Yugoslav president Slobodan Milošević was turned over to The Hague to be put on trial for war crimes; in March 2004 Queen Mother Juliana died at age 94; and in November 2004 the Dutch filmmaker Theo van Gogh was murdered after receiving death threats in connection with a controversial

film he had made about the place of women in Muslim countries.

In 1957 the Treaty of Rome, instituting the European Economic Community, or Common Market, between six countries, including the Netherlands, was signed. The European Union was formed in 1993, as a natural outgrowth of the European Economic Community, with the Netherlands as one of the original members. The Netherlands was among the first 11 EU countries to introduce the euro as a common currency on January 1, 1999; in the Netherlands the euro replaced the guilder.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

Prime Minister

1945–46	William Schermerhorn
1946–48	Louis Beel
1948–58	Willem Drees
1958–59	Louis Beel
1959–63	Jan de Quay
1963–65	Victor Marijnen
1965–66	Jozef Cals
1966–67	Jelle Zijlstra
1967–71	Petrus de Jong
1971–73	Barend Biesheuvel
1973–77	Johannes den Uyl
1977–82	Andreas van Agt
1982–94	Ruud Lubbers
1994–2002	Wim Kok
2002–	Jan Peter Balkenende

CONSTITUTION

The Netherlands is a constitutional monarchy. It has had three constitutions since the establishment of the monarchy: that of 1814–15, that of 1848, and the present one, which came into force on February 17, 1983. In addition, the relationship between the Netherlands and Netherlands Antilles is defined in the Charter of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, signed by Queen Juliana in 1954.

The constitution regulates the royal succession and regency in great detail. Article 10 states that “the crown of the Netherlands is and shall remain vested in the House of Nassau-Orange” and in the legitimate descendants of William Frederick. A successor to the throne may be appointed by an act of parliament if there is no heir apparent. In other cases, the sovereign is succeeded by his or her oldest child. The age of majority for a sovereign is 18 years. Until a sovereign attains that age, royal powers are exercised by a regent.

Executive authority is vested in the Council of Ministers (Ministerraad), which is appointed by the monarch but is responsible to the States General, the parliament. The ministerial responsibility to the States General is twofold:

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under criminal law and under civil law, both specified in the constitution. There is also a political responsibility, of which the electorate is the ultimate judge.

General elections are held every four years to the lower house, and on that day the ministers of the outgoing government submit their resignations en bloc. Immediately after the election results are known, the queen seeks advice on the formation of a new government. Usually she consults the vice president of the Council of State, the speakers of both houses of parliament, and the leaders of all major political parties. Their initial verbal recommendations are followed by written reports. If no party commands clear majority in the lower house, the queen invites someone to act as a special adviser, called *informateur*, who then acts as a mediator. When the *informateur* has succeeded in this work, he or she withdraws and proceeds to form a cabinet, though not necessarily as prime minister. On the prime minister's advice the queen appoints the members of the new government.

The Council of State is the senior advisory body to the Crown. It must be consulted on all draft legislation, and over the years it has acquired additional functions. The queen presides over the Council of State but delegates its day-to-day affairs to the vice president. There are 24 other members, who are nominally appointed for life but who must retire upon reaching age 70. The Council of State is divided into sections, each of which is concerned with one ministry. The Council of State gives its recommendations upon all proposals before the States General, all drafts of general administrative orders, and all international agreements. The council examines the constitutionality and legality of all proposals. Where required by the national interest, it may call for legislative action on a specific issue, in the form of either a parliamentary bill or a general administrative order.

The constitution provides for a General Chamber of Audit, whose membership and functions are regulated by the Government Accounts Act of 1976. The chamber consists of three members, each of whom is selected by the Crown from a list of three people drawn up by the lower house. Each member has a deputy. Members and their deputies broadly enjoy the same legal status as members of the judiciary. Members are appointed for life (with mandatory retirement at age 70), and may be suspended or dismissed only by the Supreme Court. The General Chamber of Audit is divided into seven divisions, each division into sections that correspond to the various ministries.

PARLIAMENT

The Dutch parliament, known as the States General, has been bicameral since 1815, consisting of an upper house, or First Chamber (Eerste Kamer), and a lower house, or Second Chamber (Tweede Kamer).

Members of the First Chamber, also known as the Senate, are elected indirectly for four-year terms by each provincial council. The current strength of the First Chamber is 75. The speaker, appointed by the queen from among the membership, holds office for a one-year term only.

The 150 members of the Second Chamber are elected directly for four-year terms. As in the First Chamber, the speaker holds office for a one-year term only. The minimum age for membership is 25. Unlike in Great Britain, ministers and state secretaries are not permitted to sit in either house as a member.

Legislation may be initiated by either the Second Chamber or by the government—most often the latter. Government bills are drafted by civil servants and submitted by the concerned minister to the Council of Ministers together with an explanatory memorandum. After approval by the Council of Ministers, a bill is sent to the Council of State for its recommendations. Along with these recommendations, the bill is then submitted to the queen, who forwards it to the speaker of the Second Chamber with a royal message. After appropriate committee reports have been drafted, the bill is debated by the Second Chamber. The Second Chamber has the right to propose amendments, which may or may not be adopted.

Once a bill has been passed by the Second Chamber, it is sent to the speaker of the First Chamber for similar discussion and vote, with the important difference that the First Chamber has no right of amendment. For this reason individual clauses are not discussed and only the general bill is debated. After its passage through the First Chamber, the bill is sent to the queen for her signature and to the relevant minister for countersignature. Finally, the bill is published in the *Staatsblad*, or *Bulletin of Acts, Orders, and Decrees*.

Members of the Second Chamber have the right to initiate legislation, although few private bills end up as acts of parliament. The procedure for a private bill differs from that of a government bill. The former is drafted by a member or group of members with an explanatory memorandum, and the sponsors are responsible for leading the bill through the lower and upper houses. Only then is it sent to the Council of Ministers, which refers it to the Council of State, as required by law. Thereupon it is sent to the queen for her signature and to the concerned minister for his countersignature and is published in the *Staatsblad*.

Amendments to the constitution follow a special procedure. After passage of an amendment through the States General and publication in the *Staatsblad*, both the upper and lower houses are dissolved and new elections are held to give the electorate an opportunity to voice its opinion on the amendment. The newly elected States General may then accept or reject the proposal in its entirety by at least a two-thirds majority.

Parliamentary control over the executive is exercised through the right of the Second Chamber to consider, approve, or reject each item of revenue and expenditure in the national budget, the right of interpolation of individual ministers, the right to institute inquiries independently of government, and the right to pass motions to express the house's wishes or opinions or lack of confidence in the Council of Ministers.

Parliamentary seats are allocated among the parties that have reached or exceeded the electoral quota (calculated by dividing the total number of valid votes by 150, the number of seats in the Second Chamber). The number of votes cast for each list of candidates is divided by the electoral quota, and the quotient determines the party's initial allocation of seats. Individual candidates achieving more than half the quota, including preferential votes (in the proportional representation system), are placed, in order of popularity, at the top of their party list, the others remaining in the order in which they originally appeared on the ballot papers. The seats to which a party is entitled are filled on the basis of this order of preference. The first round of allocations does not normally fill all 150 seats, and those not filled are then apportioned among the parties, using the method of the highest average. The number of votes cast for each party is divided by one more than the number of seats allocated to it. The averages thus arrived at are listed in descending order, and the remaining seats are allotted to the parties heading the list until all the seats are filled.

In addition, the Netherlands elects 25 members to the European Parliament, where they serve five-year terms. They are elected on the basis of universal suffrage also among Dutch subjects in other EU member countries and nationals of EU member states who are resident in the Netherlands.

POLITICAL PARTIES

There are five main political parties in the Netherlands. The CDA, an amalgamation of three denominational parties, supports economic orthodoxy, the application of Christian principles to political life, and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and Western alliances. The Labor Party, or the *Partij van de Arbeid*, is no longer Marxist but has a "personal socialism" label, meaning anything between humanism and militant socialism. The *Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie* is the People's Party for Freedom and Democracy. It is conservative and wedded to free enterprise, opposes any government economic intervention, and has vehemently supported the deployment of cruise missiles while simultaneously supporting social security programs. The *Democraten 66* (Democrats 66) is predominantly an urban liberal-radical party, with natural ties to the Labor Party. The *Democraten 66* advocates the abolition of proportional

representation and the direct election of the prime minister as well as environmental protection and progressive social policies, although its economic orientation is closer to that of the CDA. Finally, the Communist Party joined with three other leftist parties—the Pacifist Socialist Party, the Radical Party, and the Evangelical People's Party—in 1989 to form the *GroenLinks* (Green Left). This party emphasizes a healthy environment and a more equal division of wealth. In addition to these major parties are two smaller ones, the *ChristenUnie* (Christian Union Party) and the *Lijst Pim Fortuyn* (List Pim Fortuyn).

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The Netherlands is divided into 12 provinces, varying considerably in size and population. The general administration of each province is carried out by the provincial council, the provincial executive, and a queen's commissioner. The provincial council is the provincial legislature, with its members elected by universal suffrage on a system of proportional representation for terms of four years. The size of the provincial council is proportional to the population and ranges from 50 to 86. Provincial executive members are in charge of day-to-day administration. They are elected by the provincial council from among its members for a term of four years. Each provincial executive has at least six members. They receive a salary and are eligible for pension. Their duties are specified in the Provinces Act and include control of the Water Boards. The Provinces Act also provides for the establishment of committees, which may include specialists who are not provincial council members. Certain administrative powers are generally delegated to these committees. The head of each provincial administration is a queen's commissioner, who also functions as chairman of the provincial council and as head of the provincial executive, in which he or she has a regular vote as well as a casting vote (which breaks a tie). Under the Provinces Act, the commissioner reports to both the minister for home affairs and the provincial executive. One of the major responsibilities of the queen's commissioner is to draw up a list of candidates from which the queen appoints burgomasters.

The provincial councils and executives may pass independent ordinances but are also required to enforce acts of parliament and central government ordinances. The Crown has the power to suspend provincial measures that are contrary to law or public interest or that conflict with central government regulations.

The constitution provides for the municipality as the only form of administrative unit at the local level. All towns, villages, and hamlets are part of one of approximately 820 municipalities in the country. They are governed by the Municipalities Act of 1851, which has been repeatedly amended.

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Burgomasters are appointed by the Crown for renewable periods of six years. In the case of provincial capitals or municipalities with more than 50,000 inhabitants, the appointment is subject to the approval of the Council of Ministers. In the case of smaller towns, with a population of under 5,000, a burgomaster may head two municipalities if they are adjacent. The burgomaster presides over both the provincial council and the municipal executive, but in the former he or she has no vote, while in the latter he or she has a double vote in case of a tie. The burgomaster is assisted by the municipal clerk, who countersigns all official documents. As head of the municipal police force, the burgomaster has a particular responsibility in maintaining public order and civil peace.

The relationship between provinces and the municipalities is similar to that between the central government and the provinces, except that municipal authorities are accountable to both the provincial government and the central government. This accountability is defined in law, but in practice the provinces and the state do not readily intervene in municipal activities.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The Dutch legal system is based on civil law, with some influences from English common law. Trial by jury is unknown in the Netherlands. Whereas procedures for the administration of justice are mainly embodied in the Code of Civil Procedure and the Code of Criminal Procedure, provisions relating to administrative procedure are embodied in a variety of statutory measures. Some of these proceedings—in particular, all fiscal procedures—are dealt with by ordinary courts, while the rest are handled by special administrative tribunals, whose members are appointed either for life or for specific periods. Each type of tribunal has its own statutory rules. The judiciary is independent of the executive. Judges are retired on reaching age 70.

The ordinary administration of justice devolves upon 20 district courts (which absorbed the 62 lower or cantonal courts), five courts of appeal, and the Supreme Court—with about 800 judges in all. The district courts are courts of first instance. Appeals from the district courts lie with the courts of appeal.

The old cantonal courts had jurisdiction in all civil cases where the claims did not exceed 5,000 guilders and in criminal cases involving only misdemeanors. As of 1997, district courts now have jurisdiction in all civil cases, in divorce and bankruptcy cases, and in criminal cases relating to both felonies and misdemeanors. District court judges are assigned to one or more divisions, in each of which one or three judges sit. Courts presided over by a single judge may be a children's court, a police court, or an economic police court. Police courts handle simple and straightforward criminal cases where

the principal punishment may not exceed six months' imprisonment. The president of a district court may also issue injunctions and settle urgent civil cases by a simplified procedure. The courts of appeal have divisions in each of which three judges sit, except in fiscal cases. The Arnhem Court of Appeal has an agricultural division with five members, of whom two are lay experts. The Supreme Court at The Hague has several divisions, each consisting of five judges. It hears appeals in "cassation," involving nonobservance of procedural formalities or incorrect application of the law. It does not review findings of fact and reviews cases "in the interests of law." Its decisions do not set aside the judgments of the inferior courts but only affect subsequent judgments. Criminal proceedings may be instituted only by the Department of Public Prosecutions.

HUMAN RIGHTS

As a parliamentary democracy, the Netherlands ensures all human rights by law and respects all human rights in practice. The Netherlands attaches great importance to human rights in both domestic policies toward foreign workers and in foreign policy in dealing with states that violate human rights. First asylum is provided for refugees from Eastern European countries and permanent resettlement for a limited number of persons ("invited refugees"), principally from Vietnam and Iran. Support for human rights is also a key tenet of Dutch foreign policy, and the Netherlands has repeatedly condemned violations of human rights in Eastern Europe and Suriname as well as in South Africa.

The problem of integrating racial and ethnic minorities remains the most difficult issue related to human rights confronting the government. Following incidents of violence against these minorities, particularly Turks and Moroccans, the government introduced strong legislation against racial violence. Further, noncitizens who have resided in the Netherlands for more than five years are granted the right to vote in municipal elections.

FOREIGN POLICY

Officially neutral before World War II, the Netherlands reversed its policy after the war and became an active participant in Western alliances, such as the Benelux Union, NATO, and the European Union. The country's principal foreign policy focus in the 50 years since the end of World War II has been its uneasy relations with its former colonies, particularly Indonesia. These relations deteriorated in 1992 after the Jakarta regime renounced financial aid from the Netherlands in protest against Dutch criticism of reported Indonesian atrocities in East Timor. In 1992 the States General completed its ratification of the

EU's Maastricht treaty. However, the Netherlands does not participate in the Eurocorps military force launched by France and Germany in 1992. Instead, the Netherlands signed an agreement with Germany in 1994 for the creation of a joint Dutch-German force to be fully integrated into NATO. The Netherlands was a partner in the NATO International Force (IFOR) deployed in Bosnia under the Dayton Accords and was also a solid supporter of NATO aggression against Yugoslavia in 1999.

DEFENSE

The queen is the commander in chief of the armed forces. Under her, the defense structure consists of the Ministry of Defense, presided over by a minister of cabinet rank. There are four armed service branches: the Royal Netherlands Army, the Royal Netherlands Navy, the Royal Netherlands Air Force, and the Royal Netherlands Military Constabulary. The nation has a joint army corps with Germany and a joint navy base in Den Helder with Belgium. In 2003 the Netherlands had about 60,000 active-duty personnel. In 2004 the nation spent \$9.4 billion, or 1.4 percent of gross domestic product (GDP), on defense.

The Dutch Ministry of Defense has experienced periods of turbulence and relative quiet since the Netherlands abandoned its pre-World War II neutrality and became a United Nations member in 1945 and a NATO partner in 1949.

In 1989 the international context exhibited quite rapid change, with the Eastern Bloc nations engaged in the most rapid changes and NATO reacting conservatively to such developments as the fall of the Berlin Wall. At the national political level, people were divided as to what the developments meant or what reaction they required. By deciding to start a strategy-formation process, the new political executives took the initiative to use the space created by the chaotic international relations. They also anticipated changes in NATO strategy. The white paper then produced came out earlier than the renewed NATO strategy, but it did not represent a fundamental change of course, and internal barriers and conservative colleagues in the cabinet prevented the strategic initiative from getting any follow-through.

At first glance one could argue that the initiation of another strategy formation process in 1991 was motivated by the ongoing events in the deteriorating Soviet Union. A closer look, however, at the proceedings of the Second Chamber of the States General shows that financial questions set this process in motion. Several different political parties were worried that budgetary cutbacks would prevent the realization of the plans in the 1991 defense white paper. As a result of these questions the minister of defense agreed to an evaluation of that document, and as a result of a parliamentary motion the minister also

agreed to widen the research questions for the national committee looking into the future of the draft: It would also consider whether the draft should be maintained. A few months before the new white paper came out, it was decided to end the compulsory draft. The discussions were also influenced by the continuing budgetary cutbacks. During this strategy formation process the amount of room to act was not curtailed by the minister of foreign affairs. NATO criticized parts of the concept white paper, and accusations were made that the traditional task of defending Dutch and NATO territory was being neglected. The concept white paper made it clear that taking part in peacekeeping operations would, though not numbered that way, become the primary task. Indeed, the decisions concerning the core tasks and the draft showed that the mission of the armed forces had fundamentally changed. After this white paper, called the Defense Priorities Review, was published, the Dutch no longer had armed forces with draftees, but rather all-volunteer armed forces that prioritized peacekeeping operations and crisis management.

The minister of defense issued a new white paper at the end of 1999 outlining the Netherlands' two main defensive tasks as the NATO task of defending NATO territory and crisis management/humanitarian questions.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	59,900
Military Manpower Availability:	3,557,918
Military Expenditures \$billion:	9.4
as % of GDP:	1.6
as % of central government expenditures:	3.7
Arms Imports \$million:	132
Arms Exports \$million:	268

ECONOMY

The Netherlands has a developed free-market economy in which the private sector is dominant but the government has a great presence. The Dutch have both strong industrial and agricultural sectors and have sustained their economic growth partially through drastic spending cuts in subsidies and social security, which, combined with moderate inflation, falling unemployment, and a large account surplus, have left the country in a strong economic position.

In 2001 the government implemented its most comprehensive tax reform since World War II, designed to reduce high-income tax levels and redirect the fiscal burden onto consumption. The Dutch were among the first 11 EU countries to establish the euro currency zone, on January 1, 1999. The euro fully replaced the Netherlands guilder in 2002.

The prosperous Dutch economy depends heavily on foreign trade. Industrial activity includes food processing,

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chemicals, petroleum refining, and electrical machinery. Although only 4 percent of the labor force is employed in agriculture, the country produces large surpluses for processing and export. The country has continued to attract a great deal of foreign direct investment. While growth slowed in 2001–03, the four prior years averaged 4 percent growth, above the EU average. The government has faced a deteriorating budget position and is trying to achieve the EU standard of a budget-deficit limit of 3 percent.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 481.1
GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 29,500
GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 1.6
GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 0.9
Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:

Agriculture: 2.4
Industry: 24.5
Services: 73.1

Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:

Private Consumption: 49
Government Consumption: 25
Gross Domestic Investment: 19.9

Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 293.1

Imports: 252.7

% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 2.8

% of Income Received by Richest 10%: 25.1

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
108.6	111.4	116.4	120.5	123.0

Finance

National Currency: Euro (EUR)

Exchange Rate: \$1 = EUR 0.886

Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: —

Central Bank Discount Rate %: —

Total External Debt \$billion: —

Debt Service Ratio %: —

Balance of Payments \$billion: 19.9

International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 7.18

Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
1.4

Official Development Assistance

Donor ODA \$billion: 4

per capita \$: 243.80

Foreign Direct Investment \$billion: 15.7

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year

Revenues \$billion: 256.9

Expenditures \$billion: 274.4

Budget Deficit \$billion: 17.5

Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 2.4

Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2002) %: 0.7

Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 16.3

Irrigation, % of Farms having: 59.5

Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 366.8

Total Farmland % of land area: 27.0

Livestock: Cattle million: 3.7

Chickens million: 100

Pigs million: 11.2

Sheep million: 1.2

Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters 000: 914

Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 518.5

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 56.25

Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 0.8

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million:
65.8

Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million:
84.5

Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 5.27

Net Energy Imports % of use: 23.1

Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 20.4

Production kW-hr billion: 90.6

Consumption kW-hr billion: 100.7

Coal Reserves tons million: 548

Production tons million: —

Consumption tons million: 14.1

Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: 62

Production cubic feet trillion: 2.66

Consumption cubic feet trillion: 1.76

Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels million: 106

Production barrels 000 per day: 98

Consumption barrels 000 per day: 899

Pipelines Length km: 590

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 252.7

Exports \$billion: 293.1

Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2002): 4.6

Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2002): 4.6

Balance of Trade \$billion: 19.9

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Germany %	18.2	25.3
Belgium %	10.0	12.6
United States %	8.0	4.5
United Kingdom %	7.3	10.1
China %	6.2	—
France %	5.0	10.2
Italy %	—	6.0

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 116,500
 Paved %: 90.0
 Automobiles: 6,120,000
 Trucks and Buses: 806,000
 Railroad: Track Length km: 2,808
 Passenger-km billion: 14.9
 Freight-km billion: 3.8
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 558
 Total Deadweight Tonnage million: 5.2
 Airports: 27
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 68.98
 Length of Waterways km: 5,046

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 9.6
 Number of Tourists from million: 16.8
 Tourist Receipts \$billion: 11.75
 Tourist Expenditures \$billion: 14.2

Communications

Telephones million: 10
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones million: 12.5
 Personal Computers million: 7.56
 Internet Hosts per million people: 275,376
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 518

ENVIRONMENT

The Dutch have long been concerned with conservation and environmental protection. It is significant that the Report of the Club of Rome and Global 2000 received far greater public attention in the Netherlands than in the rest of Europe. Well into the latter part of the 1970s Dutch governments were substantially more concerned with accommodating social and environmental demands than in pursuing purely economic strategies. Dutch spending on environmental issues, measured as a percentage of national income, is among the highest in the world. The Dutch are proponents of sustainable development within a framework of eco-efficiency.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 11.1
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: 1
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 14
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 124,181
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 8.72

LIVING CONDITIONS

The Dutch enjoy one of the highest standards of living in the world. In 2004 the United Nations Human Development

Index, which measures such factors as literacy, education, life expectancy, and child welfare, ranked the Netherlands fifth in the world. For 2000–01 Freedom House ranked the country first in the world in terms of civil liberties. The country has an advanced transportation network, including over 6,000 miles of bicycle paths. The Netherlands is known for its social tolerance. The nation legalized same-sex marriage in 2001, takes a soft stand against minor drug infractions, and tolerates prostitution, including the famous “red-light districts” where women display themselves behind windows. There is virtually no violent crime. While the Netherlands maintains a vast network of social security programs, that system has come under strain because of budget deficits. One of the nation’s main social problems is overcrowding in the cities, which leads squatters to take up residence illegally in abandoned buildings.

HEALTH

The state of health care in the Netherlands is high, with annual per capita spending in 2002 of nearly \$2,300. In 2004 life expectancy was nearly 79 years, and the infant mortality rate was just over 5 deaths per 1,000 live births. Virtually everyone in the Netherlands has health insurance; the more well-to-do have private insurance, while the government provides health insurance to people in low-income brackets. In 2001 only about 0.2 percent of the adult population was living with AIDS, and in 2003 the number of AIDS deaths was fewer than 100. Virtually 100 percent of the population has access to sanitation and clean drinking water, and virtually 100 percent of births are attended by medical staff.

Health

Number of Physicians: 52,602
 Number of Dentists: 7,509
 Number of Nurses: 213,128
 Number of Pharmacists: 3,148
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 329
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: 10.8
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 5.04
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 16
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 8.8
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 2,298
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.2
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 98
 Measles: 96
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 100
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 100

FOOD AND NUTRITION

The state of nutrition is high—perhaps too high, to the extent that obesity is becoming a problem, with about 10

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percent of women and 9 percent of men considered obese in 2004. Dutch cuisine tends to the plain and hearty, reflecting the nation's Calvinist tradition. The Dutch consume a great deal of fish, especially herring, and common dishes include soups, stews, potatoes, and poultry; little of this food is spicy or served with rich sauces. The nation is known for its cheeses, including Gouda and Edam, and dairy products are a dietary staple. The Dutch rarely invite strangers of casual acquaintances to dine; instead, having coffee together is a ritual, and coffee breaks at the workplace are scrupulously taken.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —

Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —

Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 80.7

Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 228.5

STATUS OF WOMEN

Women enjoy full legal and political equality. However, women began working in substantial numbers outside the home later in the Netherlands than in other western European countries, and their salaries continue to lag behind those of men. Traditional male/female role stereotypes persist. The United Nations' Women Watch has recommended that employers in the Netherlands permit negotiations regarding shorter work hours and provide parental leave while also increasing women's participation at the decision-making level.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —

Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 37

Female Administrators and Managers %: —

Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.0

Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 45.7

WORK

In 2003 the Dutch labor force consisted of 7.5 million people, with about 4 percent employed in agriculture, 23 percent in industry, and 73 percent in services. The unemployment rate in 2004 was 6 percent. Dutch workers are highly productive, with per capita GDP in 2004 totaling \$29,500. Agricultural products include grains, potatoes, sugar beets, fruits, vegetables, and livestock. Industries include agro-industries, metal and engineering products, electrical machinery, chemicals, petroleum, construction, microelectronics, and fishing. The country maintains a smoothly running economy through periodic negotiations that involve labor unions, the government, and employers' associations.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 7,530,000

Female Participation Rate %: 41.2

Labor by Sector %:

Agriculture: 4

Industry: 23

Services: 73

Unemployment %: 6.0

EDUCATION

The Dutch educational system is world renowned; it was transported both to its colonies and to areas to which the Dutch relocated, such as New York. The success of the Dutch educational system is exhibited by the nation's 99 percent literacy rate. Freedom of education is guaranteed under article 23 of the constitution, including the freedom to found schools on the basis of individual religious, ideological, and educational convictions. The current structure of the Dutch educational system consists of primary, secondary, and tertiary levels. Primary education starts at age four and is compulsory for children aged five to 12 years. About 70 percent of all students attend private schools—predominantly Roman Catholic, Protestant, or other religious schools, but also humanist, nondenominational, and foundation-run institutions. Secondary education, for students between the ages of 12 and 18, is divided into pre-vocational and secondary vocational education. Students participating in professional and middle-management training continue to age 20. Full-time education is compulsory until age 16, at which time students may attend part time until the age of 18. In 2004 there were about 700 public and private secondary schools, and about 1.4 million students were enrolled in secondary, vocational, or teacher-training schools. Pre-university education is for students aged 12 to 18.

Higher education is offered as higher professional education (HBO), university education (WO), and distance learning. HBO is the source of theoretical and practical training for a four-year degree, with the title of *ingenieur* or *baccalaureus*. In 2004 there were nearly 300,000 students in 56 HBO schools. University education, meanwhile, had 156,000 students attending 13 institutions. Most university education is four years in duration, with the exceptions of six years for doctors, dentists, pharmacists, and veterinary surgeons and five years for discipline-specific philosophers and some engineers and agricultural scientists. University graduates are titled with *ingenieur*, *doctorandus*, or *meester*. Teacher training is undergoing reform, stressing a uniform curriculum for primary teachers. Grade-two teachers—those teaching at the primary or first-stage secondary levels—receive their training through HBO. Grade-one training occurs at the university level.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 99.0
Male %: 99.0
Female %: 99.0
School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 16.5
First Level: Primary Schools: 7,411
Teachers: —
Students: 1,287,069
Student-Teacher Ratio: —
Net Enrollment Ratio: 99.4
Second Level: Secondary Schools: 700
Teachers: 103,788
Students: 920,867
Student-Teacher Ratio: 13.5
Net Enrollment Ratio: 90.4
Third Level: Institutions: 20
Teachers: 44,219
Students: 516,769
Gross Enrollment Ratio: 57.0
Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 5.0

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Scientific study is funded largely through the Ministry of Education, Culture, and Science and its Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research, which funds research in chemistry, earth and biological sciences, medical sciences, physical sciences, and technical sciences. In 2003 the government created the Innovation Platform to encourage scientific research and allocated 800 million euros to the effort.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 2,572
Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 1.89
High-Tech Exports \$billion: 49.6
Patent Applications by Residents: 7,496

MEDIA

The Netherlands was one of the first countries in Europe with a free and independent press; Amsterdam had two newspapers early in the 17th century. By 1830, when the first daily appeared, there was a flourishing press. The constitution of 1848 abolished censorship entirely, leading to a virtual publishing boom. Public libraries have been in existence in the Netherlands since only the 1890s.

Broadcasting was organized according to the old compartmentalization principle, airtime being divided among at least five groups of diverse political and religious orientations. The Netherlands has three AM and 12 FM broadcast stations, plus 39 repeaters, as well as 15 television broadcasters plus five repeaters. The EU “Television without Frontiers” directive forced the Netherlands to accept commercial broadcasting. Commercial

television and radio are relatively new phenomena in the Netherlands, with stations being legally allowed to broadcast on television only since 1989. As of 2000 there were at least five commercial television stations—three of them public television networks—and a number of commercial radio stations.

The Dutch Film Fund, the Dutch Fund for the Promotion of Audiovisual Culture, the Dutch Fund for Television Co-productions (COBO-Fund), the Hubert Bals Fund, and the Film Fund Rotterdam emphasize both public and government support for Dutch media. There are a variety of film festivals, such as the Cinekid Film Festival, the annual Worldwide Video Festival held in Amsterdam, the biannual Holland Animation Film Festival, the International Film Festival Rotterdam, and the Netherlands Film Festival.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 35
Total Circulation million: 4.44
Circulation per 1,000: 279
Books Published: —
Periodicals: 49
Radio Receivers 000: —
per 1,000: —
Television sets million: 8.5
per 1,000: 540

CULTURE

The Netherlands has a rich cultural heritage. One of the nation’s major historical figures was the 16th-century humanist Desiderius Erasmus. During the “Dutch Golden Age” of the 17th century, major figures included the philosopher Baruch Spinoza, the writers Pieter Corneliszoon Hooft and Joost van den Vondel, the jurist Hugo Grotius, and the scientists Christiaan Huygens and Antoni van Leeuwenhoek. Major 17th-century Dutch artists included Jan Steen, Frans Hals, Jan Vermeer, and Rembrandt. In the 19th century the country produced the artist Vincent van Gogh, and in the 20th century the de Stijl movement produced Piet Mondrian and Theo van Doesburg. Graduates of the nation’s art academies receive monthly stipends for four years while they begin their art careers.

Holland’s Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra performs internationally, and Rotterdam has a world-renowned symphony. The nation has many museums, including the Rijksmuseum, the Rembrandt-Huis Museum, the Vincent van Gogh National Museum, the Mauritshuis (Royal Picture Gallery), and many others.

Perhaps the most famous work of Dutch literature is *Diary of a Young Girl*, written by Anne Frank, a Jewish girl who kept a journal while hiding in a secret annex with her family from the Nazis during World War II.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 579
 Volumes: 41,489,220
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: 548
 Annual Attendance: 15,959,000
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: 465
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: 18,600,000

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

During the Netherlands' heyday as a world power, wealthy burghers attempted to suppress folktales, riddles, and the like in favor of high culture, but the tales survived, in some cases as part of the nation's Christian tradition. The most famous is that of Sinterklaas, or Father Christmas, and his assistant, Black Peter, who is said to carry naughty children off to Spain in a sack. Most Dutch folktales have to do with the sea and feature mermaids and pirates. A popular folklore character is Joost, a devil who tried to tempt people with wealth and capture their souls.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

The Dutch are outdoor enthusiasts, and much of their recreation involves such activities as fishing, sailing, boating, camping, hiking, and bicycle riding, as well as winter sports such as skating and curling. One world-famous event is the 124-mile Elfstedentocht ice-skating race in Friesland, where thousands of people race over the frozen canals if temperatures are low enough.

ETIQUETTE

The Dutch tend to be reserved, especially with strangers or casual acquaintances. They also tend to be extremely well organized and punctual. It is common to keep calendars listing appointments and obligations, and tardiness for a business meeting, for example, is strongly discouraged. The Dutch are a careful people, and business negotiations and decision making tend to proceed slowly. Greetings consist of a handshake, although women who are close friends will kiss each other on the cheek. The Dutch in general tend to avoid ostentation, dressing fairly casually and driving smaller automobiles. It is common in the Netherlands for families to leave their curtains open after dark, allowing passersby to see inside; this has been interpreted as an effort to allow neighbors to see the family's respectability.

FAMILY LIFE

The nuclear family has been the household norm since the 19th century; extended-family living arrangements are rare. In recent times the number of single-parent families and couples living together outside of marriage has been on the rise. The Dutch place a great deal of emphasis on a "cozy" family life, expressed by the word *gezelligheid*. Families tend to be small (on average fewer than three people), with just one or two children who often spend much time in nursery schools because both parents work outside the home; fully one-third of Dutch households consist of just one person. Dutch law forbids a parent to disinherit a child; by law, each child receives an equal share of the parent's estate.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Most Westerners are familiar with the traditional Dutch costume for women, consisting of wooden shoes, embroidered bodices, and a white, peaked hat with wings at the side. This costume can still be seen in Marken and Volendam, though it tends to be a concession to tourists. While some people continue to wear wooden shoes for such tasks as gardening, most people wear Western-style clothing for both casual and formal occasions.

SPORTS

Popular sports in the Netherlands include tennis, swimming, hockey and soccer. In 1988 the nation won the European soccer championship. Millions of people belong to sports clubs, including the Royal Netherlands Football Association. Field hockey is immensely popular; in 2003 there were 307 registered hockey teams, and the Netherlands is the only country in history to win men's field hockey's "Grand Slam": the Olympic gold medal in 1996 and the World Cup and Champions Trophy in 1998. The women's field hockey team has won the World Cup five times. In the 2004 Summer Olympics in Athens, the Netherlands won 22 medals, including four gold, nine silver, and nine bronze medals.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1945** William Schermerhorn heads Socialist government.
- 1946** Louis Beel begins first term as prime minister in a Catholic People's Party cabinet
- 1948** Willem Drees heads Socialist government; Queen Wilhelmina abdicates, and Juliana is named queen; the Netherlands joins Luxembourg and Belgium in the Benelux Customs Union.

- 1949 The Netherlands recognizes the independence of Indonesia.
- 1953 Heavy storm hits the Netherlands, inundating coastal regions and killing 1,800 people.
- 1954 Kingdom of the Netherlands Statute is promulgated, integrating the Netherlands Antilles as an organic part of the Netherlands.
- 1957 The Treaty of Rome is signed, instituting the European Economic Community, or Common Market, among six countries, including the Netherlands.
- 1958 Socialists are ousted, and Louis Beel returns as prime minister in a Catholic People's Party cabinet. The Benelux Economic Union is launched.
- 1959 Jan de Quay replaces Louis Beel as prime minister in a Catholic People's Party cabinet. Natural gas is discovered at Groningen.
- 1963 Victor Marijnen succeeds Jan de Quay as prime minister in a Catholic People's Party cabinet.
- 1965 Jozef Cals succeeds Victor Marijnen as prime minister in a Catholic People's Party cabinet.
- 1966 Jelle Zijlstra of the Antirevolutionary Party takes office as prime minister.
- 1967 Petrus de Jong leads the Catholic People's Party and returns to office as prime minister.
- 1969 The Netherlands relinquishes control of West New Guinea (now West Irian).
- 1971 Barend Biesheuvel of the Antirevolutionary Party is named prime minister.
- 1973 Johannes den Uyl of the Labor Party is named prime minister.
- 1975 Suriname is granted independence.
- 1977 Andreas van Agt of the Christian Democratic Party begins a five-year term as prime minister. Catholic and Socialist trade union federations merge into the Federated Netherlands Labor Movement.
- 1980 Queen Juliana abdicates, and Beatrix succeeds to the throne.
- 1982 Ruud Lubbers of the Christian Democratic Party is named prime minister in a Christian Democratic Party-led coalition.
- 1993 Netherlands joins the European Union, successor to the European Economic Community. Parliament begins to regulate euthanasia.
- 1994 Wim Kok of the Labor Party is named prime minister.
- 1995 Serious flooding prompts a state of emergency in which 250,000 are evacuated and expenses exceed \$1 billion.
- 1998 Kok's coalition is reelected to parliament.
- 1999 The euro currency is introduced on January 1.
- 2000 Euthanasia is legalized and its strict procedures codified; parliament approves legislation permitting homosexual couples to marry and to adopt children.
- 2001 Yugoslav president Slobodan Milošević is turned over to The Hague to be put on trial for war crimes.
- 2002 The government resigns following an official report criticizing its role in the Srebrenica massacre in Bosnia in 1995, when Dutch peacekeepers failed to stop Bosnian Serb forces from murdering thousands of Muslims. Shortly before elections scheduled for May, anti-immigration party leader Pim Fortuyn is assassinated by a lone gunman. The CDA and List Pim Fortuyn form the new government under Jan Peter Balkenende.
- 2003 The CDA wins a narrow victory in the general election, and a center-right coalition is formed, with Balkenende as prime minister.
- 2004 Over 200,000 people demonstrate in Amsterdam against welfare reform and spending cuts. Queen Mother Juliana dies at age 94. Filmmaker Theo Van Gogh is murdered after receiving death threats in connection with his controversial film about the place of women in Muslim countries.
- 2005 Voters reject the proposed EU constitution in a national referendum.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Central Bureau of Statistics
<http://www.cbs.nl/>
- Netherlands Embassy
<http://www.netherlands-embassy.org>

NEW ZEALAND

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

New Zealand (Aotearoa)

ABBREVIATION

NZ

CAPITAL

Wellington

HEAD OF STATE

Queen Elizabeth II, represented by Governor-General Silvia Cartwright (from 2001)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Helen Clark (from 1999)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Parliamentary democracy

POPULATION

4,035,461 (2005)

AREA

268,680 sq km (103,737 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Caucasians, Maori

LANGUAGES

English (official), Maori (official), New Zealand Sign Language (official)

RELIGION

Christianity

UNIT OF CURRENCY

New Zealand dollar

NATIONAL FLAG

Over a blue field, the red, white, and blue Union Jack lies in the upper left canton, the four-star Southern Cross in the right half, the stars red within white outlines.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

Supporting a shield are (on the right) a brown Maori chieftain in colorful yellow costume and blue headdress, with a traditional war club, or *taiaba*, in his hand, and (on the left) a woman of European ancestry wearing the simple sleeveless white dress of the early settlers and holding the national flag. The two figures stand on branches of green fern, the national plant, across which a white scroll bears the country's name. The shield, of alternate blue and red quarters, has a white vertical stripe running down its center, on which three antique ships are shown. In the blue upper-left quarter of the shield are the stars of the Southern Cross; moving clockwise, the other quarters depict a golden fleece, a crossed gold sledge and mallet, and sheaves of wheat. Above the shield is a crown.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"God Defend New Zealand"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 and 2 (New Year's Day), February 6 (Waitangi Day), April 25 (ANZAC Day), first Monday in June (Queen's birthday), fourth Monday in October (Labour Day), Christmas, December 26 (Boxing Day), other major Christian festivals. Provincial anniversaries are observed by one-day holidays in each province.

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

September 26, 1907

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

No formal constitution; the Constitution Act of 1986, though never made law, is the principal formal charter.

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

New Zealand lies in the southwestern Pacific Ocean, 1,600 km (1,000 mi) southeast of Australia. It consists of two main islands and a number of smaller islands, with a total area of 268,680 sq km (103,737 sq mi). The to-

tal coastline is 15,134 km (9,398 mi) long. New Zealand is bordered by the Pacific Ocean to the north, east, and south and by the Tasman Sea to the west.

The main islands, North and South Islands, are separated by Cook Strait, which is 26–145 km (16–90 mi) wide. Among the nation's other land masses are what

New Zealand



are called nearby islands, such as Stewart Island and the Chatham, and outlying islands, including Raoul Island in the Kermadecs, far to the northeast, and Campbell Island, far to the south. New Zealand also has jurisdiction over Tokelau, north of Samoa, and the Ross Dependency

in Antarctica. Niue and the Cook Islands, between the Kermadecs and Tahiti, are self-governing states in free association with New Zealand.

The capital is Wellington, at the southern end of North Island, on an inlet of Cook Strait. The four other

major urban centers are Auckland, Christchurch, Hamilton, and Dunedin.

New Zealand is very mountainous, with less than a quarter of the land below 200 m (656 ft). South Island is much more mountainous than North Island; a massive mountain chain, the Southern Alps, runs across its length. There are at least 223 named peaks higher than 2,300 m (7,546 ft). Mount Cook, or Aoraki, the loftiest, is 3,754 m (12,313 ft) high.

The rivers are swift flowing and shallow, and only a few are navigable. They are, however, suitable for hydroelectric power generation, with their high rate of flow and reliable volumes of ice-free water.

Volcanic activity over the past few million years has played an important part in shaping the landscape. Compared with some other parts of the almost continuous belt of earthquake activity around the rim of the Pacific, such as in Japan, Chile, and the Philippines, the level of seismic activity in New Zealand is moderate, although earthquakes are common. The degree of activity may be compared roughly with that in California.

Geography

Area sq km: 268,680; sq mi 103,737

World Rank: 73rd

Land Boundaries, km: 0

Coastline, km: 15,134

Elevation Extremes meters:

Lowest: Pacific Ocean 0

Highest: Mount Cook 3,754

Land Use %

Arable Land: 5.6

Permanent Crops: 7.0

Forest: 29.7

Other: 57.7

Population of Principal Cities (2003 est.)

Auckland	406,000
Christchurch	358,000
Hamilton	150,400
Manukau	358,000
North Shore	244,200
Waitakere	191,000
Wellington	178,000

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

The presence of the axial mountain chain extending the length of New Zealand has a major effect on the climates of the various regions and produces sharp contrasts between west and east. In some inland areas of South Island just east of the mountains, the climate is distinctly continental in character, with large daily and seasonal temperature variations, despite the fact that no part of the country is more than 130 km (81 m) from the sea.

As the distribution of rainfall is mainly dictated by mountain features, the highest rainfall occurs where the mountains are exposed to the direct sweep of the westerly and northwesterly winds. The mean annual rainfall ranges from as little as 300 mm (12 in) in central Otago to over 8,000 mm (315 in) in the Southern Alps. The average for the whole country lies between 600 and 1,500 mm (24 and 59 in).

Mean temperatures at sea level decrease steadily southward, from 15°C (59°F) in the far north to 9°C (48°F) in the south of South Island. Temperatures also drop by about 2°C per 300 m (984 ft) of altitude. January and February are the warmest months of the year, July the coldest.

New Zealand is generally sunny. A large portion of the country has at least 2,000 hours of sunshine per year, and even Westland, despite its high annual rainfall, has 1,800 hours. In Southland and coastal Otago, the sunshine drops to about 1,700 hours a year. A pleasant feature is the high proportion of sunshine during the winter months. Humidity is commonly between 70 and 80 percent in coastal areas and about 10 percent lower inland.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature

Auckland (North Island): 58°F

South Island: 50°F

Average Rainfall: 24 in to 59 in

Hawke Bay, Wairarapa and Manawatu: 28 in to 39 in

Central Otago: 12 in

Southern Alps: 315 in

Auckland: 39 in

South Island: 47 in

Milford Sound: 260 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

New Zealand's native vegetation—about 90 percent of which is unique to the country—covers about two-thirds of the land and consists largely of mixed evergreen forest. The most common native tree along the mountain chain is the beech. European settlers introduced a number of additional species, some for ornamental purposes, others to control erosion, including pines, conifers, willows, and poplars. When the islands were first settled, there was little in the way of higher animal life. In addition to frogs and bats were two species of lizard: the gecko and the “beak-headed” tuatara. European settlers introduced species such as red deer, opossum, goats, and rabbits, the populations of some of which have gotten out of control because of a lack of natural predators. Bird species include the flightless moa, weka, notornis, and kiwi; the kiwi is a national symbol, and many New Zealanders refer to themselves as “kiwis.” A species of thrush and the saddleback are unique to New Zealand, while many Australian birds can also be found, such as the tui, fantail, beebeard,

1730 New Zealand

gannet, skua, shad, and species of penguin and albatross. Marine species include marlin, tuna, shark, snapper, bass, grouper, flounder, and other salt- and freshwater fish.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005:	4,035,461
World Rank:	119th
Density per sq km:	15.0
% of annual growth (1999-2003):	1.0
Male %:	49.7
Female %:	50.3
Urban %:	85.7
Age Distribution %:	
0-14:	21.4
15-64:	66.9
65 and over:	11.7
Population 2025:	4,673,000
Birth Rate per 1,000:	13.9
Death Rate per 1,000:	7.53
Rate of Natural Increase %:	0.6
Total Fertility Rate:	1.79
Expectation of Life (years):	
Males:	75.67
Females:	81.78
Marriage Rate per 1,000:	5.3
Divorce Rate per 1,000:	2.6
Average Size of Households:	2.9
Induced Abortions:	17,380

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Almost 80 percent of the population is classified as European, with the overwhelming majority being of British stock.

The most significant minority group is the indigenous Maori, who are of Polynesian ancestry. Their forefathers crossed the Pacific about 1,000 years ago to settle in Aotearoa, the Polynesian name for New Zealand. When Captain Cook touched New Zealand's shores, the Maori numbered some 200,000; the arrival of the Europeans led to the hastened disintegration of Maori society. European diseases decimated the populations of whole regions, and European muskets promoted internecine wars of extermination between the various tribes. Although the Treaty of Waitangi (1840) granted Maori all the rights and privileges of British subjects, along with the full and undisturbed possession of their lands, these guarantees were honored more in their breach than in their observance. By 1896 the Maori population had declined to less than 42,000. Since then, however, there has been a resurgence of Maori culture and growth in their numbers. In 2004 they constituted about 9.7 percent of the population.

LANGUAGES

English is the principal language and one of the three official languages. In 1987 Maori was admitted as a co-

official language under the Maori Language Bill, although virtually all Maori speak English. Maori is taught in schools as well as in *kohanga reo* (language nests) and at urban *maraes* (meeting places). New Zealand Sign Language is also an official language.

RELIGIONS

The earliest Christian mission was opened in New Zealand by an Anglican chaplain in 1814. The Anglican Church of New Zealand remains strong, though not dominant. It has eight dioceses, including the missionary diocese of Polynesia. Anglicans account for 24 percent of the population. The three other major Protestant denominations are Presbyterians (18 percent), Methodists (5 percent), and Baptists (2 percent). The Roman Catholic Church ranks third in size among the Christian churches, accounting for some 15 percent of the population.

By the mid-19th century a written language was developed for the Maori, and parts of the Bible were translated. Christian missionaries tried to protect the Maori in their struggle against colonial excesses but met with only indifferent results.

There is little or no church-state friction. New Zealand has no established church, nor is there any special regulation or law governing relations between church and state. However, ministers of religion are registered as such to maintain marriage registers. Church schools, hospitals, and social-service organizations do receive financial aid from the state. Furthermore, major state ceremonies are usually held in Anglican cathedrals.

Religious Affiliations

Anglican	969,000
Presbyterian	726,000
Roman Catholic	605,000
Methodist	202,000
Baptist	81,000
Other Protestant	121,000
Unspecified or None	1,332,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Maori settlement of the New Zealand islands goes at least as far back as 1000 c.e.; the first European to discover the islands was Abel Tasman, a Dutch navigator who sighted the western coast of South Island in 1642. He was unable to land because of the hostility of the Maori inhabitants. Over a century passed before Captain James Cook of the British Royal Navy made his four voyages to New Zealand, in 1769, 1773, 1774, and 1777, circumnavigating the islands and mapping their coastlines.

In the 1790s small European whaling settlements sprang up around the coast, and colonization accelerated

after 1825. In 1840 the Maori chieftains entered into the Treaty of Waitangi, whereby they ceded sovereignty to the British Crown while retaining territorial rights. The first group of British settlers, sponsored by the New Zealand Company, arrived at Port Nicholson and founded the city of Wellington. Further settlements were made in Nelson in 1842, Dunedin (with the sponsorship of the Free Church of Scotland) in 1848, and Canterbury (with the cooperation of the Church of England) in 1850. After the Maori Wars (1860–70), New Zealand began to enjoy a long period of peace, prosperity, and growth. The discovery of gold in 1861 brought many settlers. The introduction of refrigerated shipping in 1882 enabled New Zealand to become one of the largest exporters of dairy products and meat.

Representative institutions were granted to the colony by the British Parliament after 1852. In 1907 New Zealand was made a dominion, and in 1947 the New Zealand government claimed the complete autonomy that had been available to self-governing members of the British Commonwealth under the 1931 Statute of Westminster.

New Zealand was one of the earliest British colonies to take the socialist road to development. Strongly influenced by the Fabians, Prime Minister Richard J. Seddon introduced far-reaching reforms to make the New Zealand worker the best protected in the world, gaining for the country the reputation of a “social laboratory.” By the end of the 19th century New Zealand had so outdistanced Australia in social legislation that it rejected the invitation to join the proposed Commonwealth of Australia as the seventh founding state.

New Zealand remained closely attached to Britain, fighting by its side in both World War I and World War II. American primacy in the Pacific after World War II led to the country’s establishment of closer relations with the United States, now its principal protector. This situation was reflected in the ANZUS Pact (1951), a defensive alliance among the United States, Australia, and New Zealand, and New Zealand’s joining Southeast Asia Treaty Organization in 1954. Reflecting the nation’s fear of Communism in Asia, New Zealand supported U.S. involvement in Vietnam.

While maintaining its close affinity with the United States, Britain, and the Commonwealth as a whole, New Zealand began to develop a more independent role in world affairs and to take a more active part in the affairs of Pacific countries. This resulted in part from the United Kingdom’s reducing its international role and the diminishing of U.S. influence. In the 1980s the Labour government took a strong stand against the proliferation of nuclear weapons in the area. Its decision to ban nuclear-powered and nuclear-armed vessels from New Zealand ports strained relations with the United States.

In the 1990 elections the National Party won easily, ushering in four years of conservative rule under Jim Bolger. By 1994 the conservative front began to fray. Without a majority in parliament for any party, the country began its

first experiments with coalition government. In addition to the two traditional parties, Nationalist and Labour, there surfaced three additional parties with strong parliamentary presences that together controlled the composition of the government: New Zealand First Party, Alliance, and ACT New Zealand. In the 1996 elections the conservative coalition retained a slight majority; in 1997 Jennifer Shipley became New Zealand’s first female prime minister, taking over the reins of government from Bolger.

The conservative coalition then endured a bumpy ride, with the desertion of several coalition members compensated for by the conditional support of opposition factions. The coalition’s dependence on the day-to-day support of independents and disaffected opposition members left the government unable to enact a consistent legislative program. Among the problems facing the government were Maori land and other claims amounting to over \$90 billion, the increasingly tenuous links to the British Crown, and constitutional and electoral reforms. In national elections in 1999 the Labour Alliance won 59 of the 120 seats, and its leader, Helen Clark, became prime minister. In June 2002 Clark formally apologized to the residents of Samoa for New Zealand’s treatment of the island in colonial times. The following month she won reelection as prime minister. Her government survived a no-confidence vote in 2004 after debate about nationalizing the sea bed, which the Maori said would infringe on their ancestral rights. Also in 2004 the country suspended relations with Israel after detaining two Israeli Mossad agents when they tried to obtain illegal New Zealand passports, and New Zealand and China began free-trade talks. Helen Clark won reelection in 2005.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

Prime Minister

1949–57	Sidney Holland
1957	Keith Holyoake
1957–60	Walter Nash
1960–72	Keith Holyoake
1972	Jack Marshall
1972–74	Norman Kirk
1974–75	Bill Rowling
1975–84	Robert Muldoon
1984–89	David Lange
1989–90	Geoffrey Palmer
1990–97	James Bolger
1997–99	Jennifer Shipley
1999–	Helen Clark

CONSTITUTION

There is no formal, written constitution, but various acts of the New Zealand and British parliaments provide the

government's foundation. The Constitution Act of 1986, containing most of the provisions of written constitutions of unitary countries, has not been fully enacted. Fundamental political and civil rights, including Maori rights, are protected under separate legislation.

The Crown is the formal repository of much power. The British monarch is the head of state; the Crown is part of Parliament, and the governor-general's assent is required before bills can become law. Government administration is also carried out by the Crown through its ministers and state servants. Judges are appointed by the Crown. However, *de facto* powers rest with the prime minister as head of government and with the cabinet, which must carry parliamentary support through the party system for all its actions.

The governor-general is the representative of the sovereign in New Zealand. The sovereign appoints the governor-general on the advice of the prime minister for a term of five years. The governor-general's main constitutional function is to arrange for the leader of the majority party in parliament to form a government, thus becoming prime minister. By convention and law the governor-general is required to follow the advice of his ministers.

Parliament is a unicameral body, the House of Representatives, with 120 members chosen for three-year terms. The cabinet and the executive council are two bodies that in normal circumstances have the same membership but different functions. The latter is a formal body with formal functions, while the former is an informal body with deliberative functions. The executive council tenders advice to the governor-general on the basis of policy formulated in the cabinet. The council is the main legal vehicle for promulgating government decisions that form part of the law as statutory regulations, which are made by orders-in-council. The cabinet, which exists by convention, is nonetheless the actual government.

Citizens over 18 have the right to vote in parliamentary elections. Registration is compulsory, but voting is not. Maori may choose to register for either a Maori or a general constituency. Voter turnout averages 90 percent.

PARLIAMENT

The term Parliament effectively means the House of Representatives (formerly the General Assembly), although it technically includes the sovereign as well. Until 1996 members of the House were elected by popular vote in single-member constituencies for three-year terms. A 1993 referendum called for the replacement of the existing parliamentary system of constituency elections by "first-past-the-post" to one of mixed, member-proportional (MMP) representation. The 99-member Parliament was increased to 120 members—64 elected and 56 appointed from party lists.

The new MMP system of voting produced a pattern of electoral results that, while providing increased repre-

sentation to women, Maori, and smaller groups, made it increasingly difficult to form effective governments after elections. Negotiations by each of the two major parties with small groups in Parliament became necessary, each seeking a coalition to form an effective government. After two elections under the MMP system, New Zealanders appeared satisfied with the operation of the electoral system but at the same time expressed great dissatisfaction with the failure of coalition governments to provide clear policy direction.

The House meets as Parliament in answer to a summons from the governor-general. Sessions of Parliament are marked by a formal opening, whereby the government's legislative program is described in the Speech from the Throne, read by the governor-general, and a prorogation by proclamation. Parliament either is dissolved by the governor-general or expires after three years. The Constitution Act of 1986 (although not enacted as a constitution) forbids the House to allocate public funds for any purpose unless first recommended by the Crown. Thus, control of House business lies with the government. The Standing Orders also favor the ruling party and the government.

A seniority system operates in New Zealand's Parliament, somewhat similar to that of the U.S. Congress. In addition, there are safe seats, and members of Parliament who occupy these seats can be assured of advancement as long as they do not create political trouble.

Proposed laws are placed before the House as bills. There are three types of bills: public bills, dealing with subjects of national interest; local bills, dealing with local issues; and private bills. The procedure for passing a public bill starts when it receives a first reading, for a maximum debate time of two hours, although there is often no debate. Detailed scrutiny is carried out by the committee to which the bill is referred after the first reading. After the committee reports the bill back (with amendments, if made), the bill receives a second reading, during which a formal debate will occur on the substance of the bill. Following this the bill is considered by the whole House in committee and reported back to the full House for a third reading. Debate takes place during the third reading. The various stages do not follow a set time pattern; weeks or even months may elapse between readings. In addition, local and private bills must be advertised before they can be introduced.

The position of ombudsman (technically, the parliamentary commissioner for investigations), created in 1962, serves as an arm of Parliament in investigating complaints against the executive and local authorities.

POLITICAL PARTIES

New Zealand's two major parties have alternated in power for many years. The conservative National Party, which

had its worst showing in 70 years in the 2002 elections, tends to represent rural and affluent urban districts as well as business and management. The primary base of the Labour Party is trade union membership, especially urban, blue-collar workers. Both parties have broadened their ideological bases. Both also tend to be ideologically differentiated complexes; for example, intraparty conflicts over economic policy are often greater than between parties. The political-party scene was radically changed by the introduction of the MMP electoral system, which has led to emphasis on the importance of coalition building and alliances.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Local government is made up of a large number of local authorities, with the following common characteristics: each authority is created by an act of Parliament, which clearly defines its powers; each local authority is controlled by its own council; all local authorities rely on land taxes or charges from trading utilities for funding; and all local authorities determine their own expenditure priorities and set their overall levels of spending.

There are 12 regional authorities for environmental and transportation issues, but 74 territorial authorities administer such matters as housing and roads; these consist of 16 city councils, 57 district councils, and the Chatham Islands council. Local authorities are not involved in the funding or administration of education, social welfare, or police or urban fire services. Hospital boards and area health boards are totally funded by the central government; they are primarily accountable to their electors, and their decisions cannot be reviewed or overturned by the central government.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The law of New Zealand consists of common law, statute law enacted by the New Zealand Parliament, and a number of United Kingdom statutes still in force. New Zealand inherited from the United Kingdom a tradition of an independent judiciary. Both the Judicature Act of 1906 and the Constitution Act of 1986 contain a number of provisions establishing judicial independence. Judges have security of tenure and may not be removed from office except on grounds of misbehavior or incapacity, upon address by the House of Representatives.

The judicial hierarchy consists of the Court of Appeal, the High Court, and district courts. Appeals can also be made to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in London. All courts exercise both civil and criminal jurisdiction. Appeals to the Privy Council may be brought by leave of the court appealed from or by special leave (in criminal cases) of the council itself. The Court of Appeal

is the highest appeal court in New Zealand. Ordinarily, it hears appeals from the High Court, but certain other proceedings from inferior courts may, by order of the High Court, be appealed to it.

The philosophy and practice of the penal system have changed radically in the past 40 years. Wherever possible, nonprison sanctions are imposed on all except the most violent criminals.

HUMAN RIGHTS

New Zealand has a positive record in human rights, particularly in civil and political rights and antidiscrimination policies.

Despite the absence of overt discrimination, the Maori population, which is largely young and urbanized, has become increasingly vocal regarding complaints of historic injustices. They remain marginally educated and economically disadvantaged. The stresses of adapting from a rural, traditional society to an urban, Western one are evident in various social indicators.

In 1985 the government established a ministry of woman's affairs. In addition, the Human Rights Commission hears complaints about all forms of discrimination.

FOREIGN POLICY

Despite its isolation, New Zealand became active in foreign affairs in the 20th century, joining the United Nations and participating in World Wars I and II. In 1993–94 New Zealand had a seat on the UN Security Council, and it has participated in a number of UN peacekeeping activities.

New Zealand governments have become embroiled with those of other nations over antinuclear policies. In 1951 New Zealand signed the Pacific Security Treaty with the United States and Australia, providing for mutual aid in the event of aggression; essentially, the three nations agreed to act together to ensure their collective security in the Pacific region. However, in the mid-1980s New Zealand developed an antinuclear policy that banned nuclear-armed vessels from its ports, including U.S. Navy ships. The United States retaliated by suspending its treaty obligations to New Zealand, effectively rendering ANZUS inoperative. Also, in 1995 New Zealand spoke out strongly against French nuclear testing in the Pacific. In 2005 the only foreign policy issue that continued to involve New Zealand was its territorial claims in the Antarctic.

DEFENSE

The nominal commander in chief of the armed forces is the British monarch, represented by the governor-

general. Actual control is exercised by the minister of defense, assisted by the secretary of defense and the chief of defense staff as the principal civilian and military advisers, respectively. These three, along with the chief of naval staff, the chief of general staff, and the chief of air staff, constitute the defense council, charged with both military administration and the implementation of cabinet policy. Below the defense council is the defense headquarters. A joint operations command was established in 1987.

Militarily, New Zealand is one of the least vulnerable countries of the world. All military operations since World War II have been carried out in other countries.

Military service is voluntary and is popular among the Maori community, which supplies about 25 percent of enlisted persons and 40 percent of the infantry. As of 2003 New Zealand maintained an active-duty military of almost 9,000 troops, representing a 25 percent decline from earlier years. Because of small manpower needs, selection is fairly rigorous. In 2003–04 the country spent about \$1.15 billion, or 1 percent of gross domestic product (GDP), on defense.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 8,600
 Military Manpower Availability: 984,700
 Military Expenditures \$billion: 1.15
 as % of GDP: 1.0
 as % of central government expenditures: 3.1
 Arms Imports \$million: 71
 Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

New Zealand has a free-market economy with a dominant private sector. Although New Zealand is a developed country in conventional terms, its essentially pastoral economy has a number of features common to those of developing countries, and it has never quite made the transition to an industrial economy. Historically, there has been a disproportionately high concentration on a narrow range of farm products favored by the benign climate and an industrious population. Even with recent diversification, agriculture has not lost its primacy, and this sector in New Zealand remains among the most efficient in the world.

Exports of farm products—chiefly wool, dairy products, lamb, mutton, and beef—have normally composed about 75 percent of merchandise exports and provide the great bulk of foreign exchange, upon which manufacturing relies for purchasing raw materials and capital equipment. The relatively great distances separating New Zealand from all other countries of any size (with the exception of Australia) add a high-transportation-cost component to international trade and reduce ben-

efits to the economy. Nevertheless, exports account for the survival of New Zealand. A great deal of economic power rests not so much with government as with the producers' marketing boards, such as the Dairy Board, the Meat Producers' Board, and the Wool Board, which make critical decisions regarding prices, standards, and markets.

Beginning in the 1980s New Zealand's government began a major economic restructuring push, moving from an agrarian economy dependent on a largely British market toward a more industrialized, free-market economy that could compete in markets around the globe. The traditional role of government intervention in the economy has gradually been reduced, with certain subsidies and tax incentives lowered. In a period of dynamic growth, real incomes grew, and the technological capabilities of the industrial sector broadened and deepened, while inflationary pressures were contained. Asian economic problems periodically slowed this impressive growth, but per capita GDP continued to grow, reaching 80 percent of the four largest EU nations, while the inflation rate (under 3 percent) and unemployment (under 5 percent) have remained low.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 92.51
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 23,200
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 3.8
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 2.7
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 4.6
 Industry: 27.4
 Services: 68.0
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 58
 Government Consumption: 19
 Gross Domestic Investment: 22.4
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 19.85
 Imports: 19.77
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 0.3
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 29.8

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
104.7	107.4	110.3	113.2	115.2

Finance

National Currency: New Zealand Dollar (NZD)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = NZD 1.5279
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 21.7
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 5.0
 Total External Debt \$billion: 47.34
 Debt Service Ratio %: —
 Balance of Payments \$million: –3.647
 International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 4.4
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
 2.4

Official Development Assistance

Donor ODA \$million: 99.7
 per capita \$: 24.70
 Foreign Direct Investment \$billion: 2.44

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: 1 July–30 June
 Revenues \$billion: 38.29
 Expenditures \$billion: 36.12
 Budget Surplus \$billion: 2.17
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 4.6
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2002) %: 3.0
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 5.07
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 8.5
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 568.6
 Total Farmland % of land area: 5.6
 Livestock: Cattle million: 9.7
 Chickens million: 18.5
 Pigs 000: 390
 Sheep million: 40
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 22.6
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 645.8

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 8.2
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 5.9

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 14.7
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 17.58
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 4.57
 Net Energy Imports % of use: 17.4
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 8.6
 Production kW-hr billion: 38.4
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 35.7
 Coal Reserves tons billion: —
 Production tons million: 4.92
 Consumption tons million: 2.79
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic meters billion: 58.9
 Production cubic meters billion: 6.5
 Consumption cubic meters billion: 6.5
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels million: 89.6
 Production barrels 000 per day: 40.1
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 134.6
 Pipelines Length km: 160

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 19.77
 Exports \$billion: 19.85
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2002): 5.5
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2002): 5.7
 Balance of Trade \$million: –3.647

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Australia %	22.2	21.8
United States %	11.8	14.6
Japan %	11.8	11.0
China %	9.0	4.9
Germany %	5.3	—
United Kingdom %	—	4.8

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 92,382
 Paved %: 64.0
 Automobiles: 1,988,900
 Trucks and Buses: 443,000
 Railroad: Track Length km: 3,898
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km billion: 4.04
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 13
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 108.4
 Airports: 116
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 23.3
 Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 2.1
 Number of Tourists from million: 1.37
 Tourist Receipts \$million: —
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: —

Communications

Telephones million: 1.765
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones million: 2.6
 Personal Computers million: 1.63
 Internet Hosts per million people: 117,556
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 523

ENVIRONMENT

Principal environmental issues in New Zealand include deforestation, soil erosion, and the depletion of native flora and fauna, which have been seriously affected by species introduced from outside the country. The State Forest Service has been active in repairing the damage done to native forests and in the reforestation of exotic trees.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 29.7
 Forest Change (1990–2000) hectares 000: 39
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 20
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 46,099
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 8.31

LIVING CONDITIONS

With an annual per capita GDP of \$23,200 in 2004, New Zealanders generally enjoy a high standard of living, although the transformation to a more industrialized and information-based economy has left many Maori behind, has increased tension between the Maori and the white population, and has created wider disparities between rich and poor. Most New Zealanders own their own homes with spacious gardens, although high-rise apartment buildings are a feature in the larger cities, which have become congested. Many people own cabins near lakes, streams, or the sea, which they use as weekend get-aways. One of the country's main social problems is alcoholism, with estimates that a quarter million people drink excessively and that over 50,000 people per year die of the effects of long-term alcoholism.

HEALTH

The state of health care in New Zealand is high. Life expectancy at birth in 2004 was almost 79 years, and the infant mortality rate was under 6 deaths per 1,000 live births, a low figure that reflects the fact that virtually 100 percent of births are attended by trained medical personnel. In 2002 per capita annual spending on health care was about \$1,250. In 2003 just 0.1 percent of the adult population was living with AIDS, and the number of deaths from the disease was under 200. Health care was formerly funded entirely by the state, but more recent legislation has created a mixed system of public and private health insurance. Many Maori continue to consult traditional practitioners.

Health

Number of Physicians: 8,491
 Number of Dentists: 1,601
 Number of Nurses: 33,124
 Number of Pharmacists: 3,808
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 223
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 5.85
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 7
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 8.5
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 1,255
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.1
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 90
 Measles: 85
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: —
 Access to Improved Water Source %: —

FOOD AND NUTRITION

New Zealanders enjoy large hearty meals. Breakfast is likely to consist of eggs and sausage or bacon, lunch fea-

tures meat pies or sandwiches, and dinners consist of a meat dish, frequently lamb, with potatoes, sweet potatoes, soup, and a dessert. In recent years New Zealanders have begun to consume more fresh vegetables and fruit, including the native kiwi (the name given to what was originally called the Chinese gooseberry). The Maori consume a great deal of seafood, as well as mutton, pork, and fowl. A famous Maori tradition is the *hangi*, which refers both to a meal and to a way of cooking: A pit filled with hot stones is used to steam meat and vegetables over a period of several hours.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 92.8
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 253.4

STATUS OF WOMEN

In a country with British traditions—like the United States, Canada, and Australia—women in New Zealand have full legal, political, economic, and social rights.

In the 1999 election women led both major parties. Labour Party leader Helen Clark (whose center-left coalition won 59 seats in Parliament) defeated Prime Minister Jenny Shipley of the National Party, and Clark became the new prime minister. The daughter of a dairy farmer, Clark was a lecturer in political science at Auckland University before entering Parliament in 1981. She was a health minister and deputy leader in the last Labour government (1987–90) and had led the opposition since 1993. In 1989 she became the nation's first woman deputy prime minister.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 28
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.0
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 51.3

WORK

New Zealand's labor force consisted of just over two million workers in 2004. Agriculture employs about 10 percent of workers, industry 25 percent, and services 65 percent. The unemployment rate is under 5 percent, but the figure was higher among Maori and Pacific Islanders. Major agricultural products include wheat, barley, potatoes, fruit, wool, beef, dairy products, and fish. Major industries include food processing, wood and paper products, textiles, machinery, transportation equipment, banking and insurance, tourism, and mining. Despite efforts to increase the level

of manufacturing, the fastest-growing sector of the economy has been services, such as tourism, finance, banking, and computer software development. In former years labor unions were powerful, but as New Zealand has shifted to more of a service- and information-based economy, the labor unions have retained little clout.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 2,050,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 46.1
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 10
 Industry: 25
 Services: 65
 Unemployment %: 4.2

EDUCATION

The first school in New Zealand, for the children of the British settlers, was established in 1842. It was a Sunday school, and it typified much of the early schooling provided through church agencies. The 1877 Education Act made primary schooling free, secular, and compulsory.

After 1945 the educational system began to expand, first quantitatively, through rising enrollments, then qualitatively, through improved curricula and assessment. Free education generally came to be accepted as the right of all citizens, with educational funding accepted as one of the first charges on the national budget. Pupils tended to stay on longer at school and to move beyond the secondary school to college and university.

The linchpin of New Zealand education is the Department of Education, which funds, supervises, and shepherds all educational activities. The system has almost universal enrollment in the nine compulsory years, coeducation with near parity among boys and girls, and extensive Maori enrollment.

The school year begins in February after a six- to eight-week summer vacation. The school year has three terms, roughly equal in length. The language of instruction is English, although schools on North Island with above-average Maori enrollment teach some classes in Maori. Private schools are subject to compulsory registration and must comply with standards of accommodation and teacher certification. In return they receive financial and other assistance from the state.

Preprimary education is available in all but the most sparsely populated areas. Primary education is compulsory from age six. Secondary schools, generally of a uniform type, admit students from any town or district, although area zoning regulations may apply. Many older city secondary schools have preserved traditions of academic superiority, while others are strictly technical. About three-fifths are coeducational.

Technical education maintains a traditional emphasis on practical subjects and operates independently of apprenticeship programs with compulsory technical training. Technical high schools no longer exist; they have been replaced by 22 polytechnics.

Higher education is provided by the state through seven universities, a college of agriculture, six teachers' colleges, 18 technical institutes, and six community colleges. The universities are autonomous institutions, but they are subject to financial scrutiny by the University Grants Commission, a statutory body that disburses funds for higher education.

The level of education among New Zealanders is relatively high. The literacy rate is 99 percent, and in 2002, over 99 percent of school-age children were enrolled in elementary school, over 92 percent in secondary school. In turn, tertiary enrollment amounted to 74 percent of college-age students; the country spent nearly 7 percent of GDP on education.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 99.0
 Male %: 99.0
 Female %: 99.0
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 18.9
 First Level: Primary Schools: 2,397
 Teachers: 20,363
 Students: 361,866
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 17.8
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 99.7
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 339
 Teachers: 36,460
 Students: 427,368
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 11.7
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 92.7
 Third Level: Institutions: 7
 Teachers: 13,360
 Students: 184,808
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 73.9
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 6.7

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Science and technology find a hospitable environment in New Zealand, with its large number of technical institutes, universities, and private research agencies, with modern equipment and funding from the government's Ministry of Science and Technology, the Crown Research Institutes, and private foundations and institutes. Significant resources are devoted to medical research and to research in agriculture and, given the islands' volcanic origins, geology.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 2,197
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 1.16
 High-Tech Exports \$million: 471.1
 Patent Applications by Residents: 2,137

MEDIA

New Zealand's first newspaper was published in 1840, at the beginning of the first wave of British immigration. By the 1860s newspapers were being established at the rate of nine per year; by 1911 there were 193 newspapers, serving a population of a little over one million. During this period British traditions became deeply rooted and tended to set the standards of excellence in reporting. Like British newspapers, they were "decent, respectful, and reasonably responsible," but at the same time they were inclined to avoid controversy as well as religious and ethnic issues, prizing above all a sense of fairness and tolerance. These qualities have persisted to this day.

Seven metropolitan dailies, published in the four main cities, form the backbone of the nation's press. There is a flourishing local press composed of dailies in every sizable country town and biweeklies and giveaways in every community.

The periodical press is more varied than the daily press and is led by a very unlikely magazine, the *Listener*, published by the Broadcasting Corporation, which has a monopoly on the right to publish full details of radio and television programs more than 24 hours ahead of their presentation times. More than a program guide, the *Listener* is described as a quality, upscale journal publishing some of the best contemporary New Zealand writing.

Most newspapers are owned by private companies. In general, industrial relations in the media have been reasonably good, and the transition to new technologies, bitterly opposed by unions in other countries, has proceeded painlessly in New Zealand.

In the absence of a formal constitution, press freedom is based on historic conventions. The right to inform—and to be informed—is accepted as one of the basic rights of a citizen. However, there are more restrictions on the press in New Zealand than in the United States. All newspapers and periodicals must be registered under the Newspapers and Printers Act of 1955. The only major legal problem restraining the media is the threat of defamation charges.

With the Ministry of Commerce providing policy advice, Broadcast Communications, the state-owned company that owns and manages most of New Zealand's radio and television broadcast networks, has two major operating services. Radio New Zealand consists of three radio networks—National Radio, Concert FM, and the AM Network—in addition to RNZ International (a shortwave service), RNZ News and Current Affairs, and Sound Archives/Nga Taonga Korero. New Zealand Television has two national networks and 10 regional stations. Additionally, there are two private networks, a pay-TV network, and a Maori-owned network.

Media

Daily Newspapers:	28
Total Circulation 000:	765
Circulation per 1,000:	202
Books Published:	5,405
Periodicals:	123
Radio Receivers 000:	—
per 1,000:	—
Television sets million:	1.98
per 1,000:	516

CULTURE

The culture of New Zealand is a blend of European and Maori traditions. In recent decades efforts have been made to preserve Maori culture, including traditions of weaving and wood carving as well as dances and songs, and numerous museums and galleries are devoted to Maori art. Leading modern artists among the white population include Sir Toss Wollaston, Colin McCahon, and Frances Hodgkins. Two major New Zealanders whose names are known internationally are the modern short-story writer Katherine Mansfield and the opera diva Kiri Te Kanawa. National arts fixtures include the National Symphony Orchestra, the New Zealand Drama School, the New Zealand Choral Foundation, the New Zealand Film Commission, and Chamber Music New Zealand. New Zealand devotes a portion of the profits from its national lottery to fund Creative New Zealand, which in turn funds the arts.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number:	—
Volumes:	—
Registered borrowers:	—
Museums Number:	—
Annual Attendance:	—
Cinema Gross Receipts:	—
Number of Cinemas:	315
Seating Capacity:	—
Annual Attendance:	16,800,000

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Perhaps the most widespread folkloric tradition in white New Zealand is Guy Fawkes Day. In 1605 Guy Fawkes was found in the basement of the Parliament building in England with barrels of gunpowder, part of a Catholic plot to blow up Parliament and the King. The plot was foiled, but since then, on November 5, the people of Great Britain and New Zealand have celebrated Guy Fawkes Day with fireworks and hangings in effigy of the conspirators. In New Zealand children traditionally recited Guy Fawkes rhymes, while adults would toss pennies to the best performers. Sometimes the pennies were heated

over a fire, and children would burn their fingers picking the pennies up. Maori folklore, expressed through dance, art, and song, reflects the people's journeys by sea when they arrived in New Zealand a thousand years ago.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Entertainment and recreation are usually of the outdoor variety, to take advantage of the large amount of sunshine New Zealand receives each year. Most homes have spacious gardens, and gardening is almost a national obsession. Most people hike and camp to enjoy the nation's beautiful scenery, especially in national parks, and many people have a "bach" or "crib," which is a cabin on the beach or near the water.

ETIQUETTE

New Zealanders are generally reserved in public and tend to show good humor under circumstances that might give rise to impatience in many people. Men typically shake hands when they meet; women will give a kiss on the cheek to close friends. The common greeting is "Good day," pronounced something like "gidday," and friends refer to one another as "mates," much as they do in Australia. New Zealanders abroad, however, tend to be touchy about being confused with their larger neighbors and try to maintain an identity distinct from that of Australians. Among the Maori, the traditional greeting is the *hongi*, which entails pressing the noses together so that spirits can merge.

FAMILY LIFE

Among the white population, the small, two-parent nuclear family is the household norm, with the fertility rate in 2003 at 1.79 children born per woman. Arrangements among the Maori are more traditional. Many Maori live in extended families called *whanau*; these families can live in fluid arrangements either under the same roof or as neighbors. The social organization of the Maori consists not only of the extended family but also of the *hapu*, or lineage, and *iwi*, or tribe, and under the terms of the Treaty of Waitangi many Maori in recent years have attempted to reclaim their social affiliations.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Most New Zealanders, including the Maori, dress in Western-style clothing. Most people dress casually and comfortably, and it is not unusual to see men head off to the office in a dress shirt and tie with shorts. On special occasions

the Maori wear traditional costumes, consisting of fringed skirts made of flax. Both men and women wear the skirt, but women wear brightly colored dresses underneath and often accentuate the outfit with a long white cape.

SPORTS

The national game of New Zealand is rugby. The national team is called the All Blacks, because of their black jerseys, and they have done well in World Cup competition, winning the tournament in 1987 and regularly dominating their bracket. Also popular are cricket, skiing, and water sports such as rafting, canoeing, surfing, kayaking, and sailing. New Zealand took the gold medal in yacht racing at the 1988 Olympics, and in 1995 a New Zealand team won the America's Cup trophy.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1947** New Zealand invokes the Statute of Westminster and formally declares its independence.
- 1949** The National Party (NP) comes to power, ending the long tenure of the Labour Party (LP).
- 1950** New Zealand contributes troops to the UN's Korean War effort.
New Zealand takes part in the Colombo Plan, which provides aid for countries in Southeast Asia.
- 1951** Australia, New Zealand, and the United States sign ANZUS, an agreement for mutual defense.
- 1953** The Korean War ends, and troops return home.
- 1954** New Zealand joins other Pacific nations to form the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization.
- 1957** LP returns to power.
- 1960** Keith Holyoake leads the NP to electoral victory.
- 1963** New Zealand troops support a UN peacekeeping mission in Cyprus.
- 1965** New Zealand sends troops to support UN forces in the Vietnam War.
- 1973** The United Kingdom joins the European Community and imposes trade tariffs on non-European Community countries, resulting in a serious GNP decline for New Zealand.
Prime Minister Norman Eric Kirk (LP) and Prime Minister Gough Whitlam of Australia pledge closer ties between the two nations.
- 1974** Prime Minister Kirk dies.
- 1975** The NP returns to power under Robert Muldoon.
- 1984** David Lange of the LP becomes prime minister.
The United States suspends its ANZUS treaty obligations owing to New Zealand's ban on nuclear vessels in its waters.
- 1990** The NP is elected, with James Brendan Bolger as prime minister.

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- 1993** An unusually tight election produces a slight NP majority.
Via a 53.8 percent to 46.2 percent referendum, voters call for mixed, member-proportional (MMP) representation and increase parliament from 99 to 120 members.
- 1994** New Zealand records its first budget surplus in 17 years.
Sandra Lee, the first Maori woman elected to Parliament, becomes leader of the Alliance, a coalition of minor parties.
- 1995** Queen Elizabeth signs a parliamentary agreement that provides for cash and land compensation to settle claims of the Tainui on North Island and that contains a statement of "profound regret and apologies" for the loss of lives in past Maori-settler hostilities.
Prime Minister Bolger seeks to prohibit French nuclear testing in the Pacific.
- 1996** In the first elections implementing the new MMP system of voting, Maori representation doubles to 14 seats, the number of female MPs increases from 21 to 35, and 45 new MPs are chosen.
The New Zealand First Party (NZFP) forms an alliance with the NP.
- 1997** With 80 percent of the electorate voting on a referendum for a national compulsory retirement savings plan, 91.8 percent vote no.
Prime Minister Bolger resigns and is replaced by Minister of Transport Jennifer Shipley, of the NP, who becomes New Zealand's first female prime minister.
- 1998** Prime Minister Shipley fires Deputy Prime Minister Winston Peters of the NZFP. The NP-NZFP coalition collapses.
The Asian financial crisis pushes New Zealand's economy into a recession.
New Zealand completes a \$170 million land-grievance settlement with the Ngai Tahu, the aboriginal Maori tribe of South Island.
- 1999** In national elections the Labour-Alliance coalition obtains 59 of the 120 seats; its leader, Helen Clark, becomes prime minister.
- 2002** Clark formally apologizes to the people of Samoa for New Zealand's treatment of the island in colonial times. Clark later wins reelection as prime minister.
- 2004** Clark's government survives a no-confidence vote after debate about nationalizing the sea bed, which Maori said would infringe on their ancestral rights.
New Zealand suspends relations with Israel after detaining two Israeli Mossad agents when they tried to obtain illegal New Zealand passports.
New Zealand and China begin free-trade talks.
- 2005** Clark is reelected prime minister.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Statistics New Zealand: Te Tari Tatau
<http://www.stats.govt.nz/>
- The Press On-Line: New Zealand News
<http://www.stuff.co.nz/stuff/thepress/0,,0a6009,00.html>

NICARAGUA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Nicaragua (República de Nicaragua)

ABBREVIATION

NI

CAPITAL

Managua

HEAD OF STATE & HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

President Enrique Bolaños Geyer (from 2002)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Republic

POPULATION

5,465,100 (2005)

AREA

129,494 sq km (50,191 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Mestizo

LANGUAGE

Spanish

RELIGION

Roman Catholicism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Córdoba

NATIONAL FLAG

Two cobalt blue horizontal bands separated by a central white band with an encircled triangle, with the national emblem in the center

NATIONAL EMBLEM

An equilateral triangle encircled by the words “República de Nicaragua” above and “América Central” below. Within the triangle five mountains rise from the ocean beneath a rainbow in a blue sky. From the middle of the mountain range rises a red Phrygian cap of liberty on a pole.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Beloved Homeland”

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year’s Day), February 1 (Air Force Day), May 1 (Labor Day), May 27 (Army Day), July 14 (Abrogation of the Chamorro-Bryan Treaty Day), August 1 and 10 (Feast days of St. Domingo, Nicaragua’s patron saint), September 14 (Battle of San Jacinto Day), September 15 (National Day, Independence Day), October 12 (Columbus Day), all major Catholic festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

September 15, 1838

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

January 9, 1987; amended 1995 and 2000

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Nicaragua has an area of 129,494 sq km (50,191 sq mi), of which the land area, excluding the two large lakes, Lake Managua and Lake Nicaragua, is 120,254 sq km (46,610 sq mi). The country extends 580 km (360 mi) northeast to southwest and 494 km (307 mi) northwest to southeast. The total length of the coastline is 910 km (565 mi).

Nicaragua shares its total international land boundary of 1,231 km (765 mi) with two neighbors, Honduras (922 km; 573 mi) and Costa Rica (309 km; 192 mi). The Costa Rican border was settled in 1896; for much of its length, it follows the southern shore of Lake Nicaragua

and the San Juan River. The Honduran border was in dispute until 1960, when the International Court of Justice ruled in favor of Honduras.

Nicaragua has a number of ongoing border disputes. The nation is in dispute with Colombia over the San Andrés Islands and the Quita Sueño Bank. Nicaragua suspended trade with Honduras when the latter ratified a treaty with Colombia in late 1999 acknowledging the San Andrés Islands as belonging to Colombia. Nicaragua also disputes boundaries in the Caribbean Sea with Honduras. On the Pacific coast, it disputes its maritime boundaries in the Gulf of Fonseca with El Salvador and Honduras. The International Court of Justice has referred El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua to the 1900 Honduras-

Nicaragua



Nicaragua Mixed Boundary Commission and has asked the three countries to work out a solution.

There are four main topographical divisions: the coastal highlands; the Great Rift, or the central lowlands; the central highlands; and the Caribbean lowlands. The first region consists of the coastal Diriamba Highlands, locally called sierras, which are structurally a continuation of the Costa Rican highlands. To the south the highlands trail off into the low Rivas Isthmus. The Great Rift, or the central lowlands, is partially occupied by the country's two large freshwater lakes, Lake Managua (known locally

as Xolotlan) and Lake Nicaragua (Cocibolca). Lake Nicaragua is about 161 km (100 mi) long and 72 km (45 mi) wide, occupying an area of 8,000 sq km (3,100 sq mi). Lake Managua is 56 km (35 mi) long and 24 km (15 mi) wide, with an area of 1,000 sq km (386 sq mi).

The central highlands lie to the north and east of the Great Rift. Structurally, these highlands form part of the system of volcanic ranges that begins in the Aleutians and the Alaskan mountains and continues through western British Columbia, the Rocky Mountains, the islands of the West Indies, and the Andes to Tierra del Fuego

and Cape Horn. Within Nicaragua the system includes the Cordillera Dariense, the Montañas de Huapi, and the Cordillera de Yolaina, terminating in the Punta del Mono (Monkey Point). The highest peak in this region is Mogoton (2,438 m; 7,997 ft). Toward the east the highlands merge into the Caribbean lowlands, also known as the Mosquito (or Miskito) Coast, comprising alluvial plains and valleys, with numerous shallow bays, lagoons, and salt marshes.

There are two drainage systems, one flowing into the Pacific and the other into the Caribbean. The most important river in the latter system is the San Juan, which receives the runoff from both Lake Nicaragua and—through the Tipitapa River (an underground channel for part of its course)—Lake Managua. The San Juan valley provides a nearly sea-level route from the Caribbean to Lake Nicaragua, the southwestern edge of which is only 19 km (12 mi) from the Pacific. Through modern engineering, this route could provide an alternative to the Panama Canal. The other east-flowing rivers are the Escondido, the Río Grande (with its tributary the Río Tuma), the Prinzapolca, and the Segovia, or the Coco. The main west-flowing rivers are the Río Negro and the Viejo.

Geography

Area sq km: 129,494; sq mi 50,191
 World Rank: 95th
 Land Boundaries, km: Costa Rica 309; Honduras 922
 Coastline, km: 910
 Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Pacific Ocean 0
 Highest: Mogoton 2,438
 Land Use %
 Arable Land: 15.9
 Permanent Crops: 1.9
 Forest: 27.0
 Other: 55.2

Population of Principal Cities (1995)

León	123,865
Managua	864,201

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Nicaragua has a rainy season from May to January and a dry season from January to May. As in other Central American countries, there are three climatic zones: wet tropical, wet and dry tropical, and mild highland. Temperatures range from 15 to 35°C (59 to 95°F). The city of Managua, the capital, was destroyed by earthquakes in 1931 and 1972. In November 1998 Hurricane Mitch caused much damage and killed more than 10,000 people in the region; the amount of rain during and after the storm also caused mudslides at Volcán Casita, by which several towns were engulfed.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature
 Pacific Coastal Region: 78°F
 Managua: 79°F to 86°F
 Higher altitudes in the interior: 60°F to 80°F
 Lower altitudes in the interior: 75.2°F to 89.6°F
 Average Rainfall
 Mosquito Coast: 100 in to 250 in
 Managua: 45 in
 Pacific Coast: 80 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

The forests of Nicaragua cover about one-quarter of the country and consist principally of mahogany, cedar, pine quebracho (also known as “ax breaker”) and a type of ironwood called guaiacum. Guapinol trees provide resin, and medlar trees yield a crabapple-like fruit. Fauna include deer, peccaries, and monkeys. Avifauna include egrets, eagles, macaws, and pelicans; reptiles include lizards, turtles, snakes, and crocodiles. Also found are numerous species of frogs, toads, mollusks, and fish.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 5,465,100
 World Rank: 107th
 Density per sq km: 45.1
 % of annual growth (1999-2003): 2.6
 Male %: 50.0
 Female %: 50.0
 Urban %: 57.3
 Age Distribution %: 0–14: 37.2
 15–64: 59.7
 65 and over: 3.1
 Population 2025: 7,510,000
 Birth Rate per 1,000: 24.88
 Death Rate per 1,000: 4.49
 Rate of Natural Increase %: 2.0
 Total Fertility Rate: 2.81
 Expectation of Life (years): Males 68.27
 Females 72.49
 Marriage Rate per 1,000: 4.1
 Divorce Rate per 1,000: 0.6
 Average Size of Households: 5.8
 Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Mestizos—people of mixed European and Amerindian ancestry—constitute 69 percent of the population, Amerindians about 5 percent, Caribbean blacks 9 percent, and people of European ancestry the remaining 17 percent.

Most of the indigenous people live in the Northern Autonomous Atlantic Region (RAAN) and the Southern Autonomous Atlantic Region (RAAS). The RAAN and

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RAAS, which cover 47 percent of Nicaragua's territory, were formed in 1987 from the former department of Zelaya. Most Caribbean blacks occupy the islands and shores of the Caribbean coast.

The majority of indigenous people are of the Miskito tribe, which is centered in the RAAN, especially in and near Puerto Cabeza. Their numbers in Nicaragua were estimated to be 150,000–200,000 in the mid-1990s. (A significant number of the group are also found in neighboring Honduras.) Other groups include the Matagalpa (around 20,000), Monimbo (10,000), Rama (under 1,000), Subtiaba (5,000), and Sumo (7,000). The Miskito are one of the few groups that have maintained their own language. The Miskito, Rama, Sumo, and Subtiaba have, to a greater extent than have other groups, maintained some aspects of their indigenous cultures.

LANGUAGES

The official language is Spanish, which is spoken by most of the population. Some indigenous people also speak their native tongues, the most common of which are Miskito and Sumo. Other indigenous languages have disappeared or are nearly extinct. A large number of the Caribbean blacks on the Atlantic coast also speak a creole English.

RELIGIONS

Freedom of religion is guaranteed in the constitution. The main religion is Roman Catholicism, practiced by 85 percent of the population; most of the rest of the people are Protestant. Although the nation has been strongly Catholic from the days of the Spanish conquerors in the 1500s, Protestant religions have been on the rise since the late 20th century, especially among the Pentecostal and related denominations.

Religious Affiliations

Roman Catholic	4,645,000
Protestant	820,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Archaeological remnants date indigenous civilizations in Nicaragua to at least 10,000 years ago. In the 900s C.E. native peoples from what is now Mexico moved south and established settlements in the Pacific lowlands. The Aztecs, who are probably the best known of the indigenous cultures, are not believed to have established settlements in the area until the 1400s. Christopher Columbus came to Nicaragua in 1502, and the country's name comes from the indigenous chief of that time, *Nicarao*.

The Spanish settled and conquered the area, and Spanish rule (from Guatemala) continued for three centuries. Much of the indigenous population was wiped out; those not sent abroad to be slaves often died of diseases unfamiliar to them before the European conquerors arrived. During the colonial era Spanish conquerors had to deal with occasional incursions of Dutch and English invaders, and the British remained a key power throughout much of that time.

In 1821 the independence of the five Central America states, including Nicaragua, was proclaimed, and Nicaragua joined the United Provinces of Central America. In 1838 Nicaragua declared its independence from the United Provinces.

For 100 years Nicaraguan politics was dominated by a power struggle between the Liberal and Conservative parties. This struggle provided an easy opening for U.S. intervention, beginning with the Tennessee adventurer and mercenary William Walker's attempts to take over the country in the mid-1800s. The U.S. government was particularly keen to control whether, when, and where a canal would be dug in the Central American region. As a result, the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty was signed, ensuring that the United States had the sole rights to dig such a canal in Nicaragua. The following year, 1851, Cornelius Vanderbilt's Atlantic & Pacific Ship Canal Company developed a route whereby those in the eastern United States seeking gold in the western United States could travel through Nicaragua.

The United States sought continuous control of Nicaragua—as well as the rest of Central America—but was thwarted somewhat by the policies of President José Santos Zelaya. Elected in 1893, Zelaya eliminated the timber and mining concessions previously given to foreign companies. In retaliation, the United States assisted the conservatives to oust Zelaya from power through military intervention. U.S. Marines landed in Nicaragua in December 1909.

The United States maintained troops in the nation from 1912 to 1933. Subsequently, for more than 50 years (from 1938 to 1979), political power remained in the hands of the Somoza family, which used the National Guard and the National Liberal Party to maintain its dictatorship and domination of economic life. Although elections were held, the victors were always family members or their supporters. The Somoza regime received the continuous support of the United States.

During the 1970s the regime's continued repressive measures—including a ban on political opposition, various human rights abuses, and corruption—alienated large segments of society. The 1972 earthquake that devastated Managua brought in aid funds that wound up in the bank accounts of Somoza family members. In 1978 the newspaper editor Pedro Joaquín Chamorro, who was critical of the government, was assassinated.

The Somoza regime was overthrown in July 1979 by the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN), a leftist guerrilla organization that had pursued its struggle against the Somoza regime since the early 1960s. The FSLN consolidated its dominant role in the revolutionary government within the first six months following Somoza's ouster. The Sandinista regime initiated a program of agrarian and industrial reform designed to improve the living standards of the lower classes, restore industry destroyed during the guerrilla war, and pave the way toward socialism. The government nationalized 40 percent of the nation's industrial capacity. Although civil rights were formally restored in January 1980, intimidation and the restriction of human rights were significant factors in the consolidation of power. Promised elections by the Sandinistas were postponed, and in August 1980 the leader of the junta, Daniel Ortega Saavedra, announced that the FSLN would remain in power until 1985.

Opposition to the government, both within and outside the regime, increased during 1981, and many of the opponents fled to Costa Rica and Honduras, where they formed guerrilla groups dubbed *Contras*. The *Contras* initiated guerrilla warfare against the Sandinista regime in 1982.

During this era the United States continued its interference in the country, both openly and covertly. While then president Ronald Reagan initially sent open support to Somoza sympathizers and other *Contras*, public opposition forced the aid to be stopped. It continued covertly, however, and was later the basis of the Iran-Contra scandal, which involved the Reagan administration, including Col. Oliver North.

Elections were held in 1984 for both the executive and legislative branches, and these elections were deemed fair by international observers. Important sectors of the political opposition declined to participate, however, because of the government's failure to establish the conditions necessary for a fair and free campaign. Pro-government forces repeatedly harassed opposition parties throughout the campaign, and press censorship prohibited the coverage of opposition rallies and statements. Ortega won the presidency, and the FSLN won the majority of seats in the legislature; real power continued to be wielded by the National Directorate of the FSLN.

Nicaragua was a signatory to the regional peace plan drawn up by President Oscar Arias Sánchez of Costa Rica in 1987. Under the agreement each government was to declare a cease-fire, open negotiations with unarmed internal opposition groups, restore civil rights, and hold free elections. In 1989 Central American presidents agreed on a program of electoral reform for Nicaragua that would permit free opposition parties. In elections held in February 1990, Violeta Chamorro, the candidate of a 14-party coalition and the widow of the slain newspaper editor, defeated the favored Ortega. Even before taking office the

Chamorro government negotiated an end to hostilities between the government and the *Contras*.

While Chamorro sought to restore unity within the country, violence periodically erupted, as instigated by both the *Contras* and the Sandinistas. In 1997 Arnoldo Alemán was elected president of the country. More conservative than Chamorro, he convinced voters that her government was too accommodating to the FSLN/Sandinistas. Economic and social struggles continued, however. In 1998 Hurricane Mitch devastated much of the country, leaving as many as 300,000 people homeless. Police brutality and election-related violence also continue to plague the country. In the 2000 elections Yatama Indians protested because of their lack of representation in the upcoming voting. The elections went on as scheduled, however, and the FSLN regained the mayoralty of Managua. The Liberal Party candidate Enrique Bolaños Geyer was elected president in the 2001 elections, defeating Daniel Ortega, who ran as the Sandinista candidate. The Liberal Party also won a majority of seats in the National Assembly, followed closely by the Sandinistas.

In 2002 the Sandinistas reelected Ortega as the party's leader, despite his three consecutive defeats in presidential elections. Meanwhile, former president Alemán was charged with embezzlement and money laundering while in office, and in December 2003 he was jailed. Steps were taken to improve Nicaragua's economy: In late 2003 Nicaragua joined Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador in negotiating a free-trade agreement with the United States. In 2004 the World Bank erased 80 percent of Nicaragua's debt to the bank, and in July Russia agreed to erase the country's lingering debt from the Soviet era. Bolaños faced charges of corruption, but in early 2005 opposition leaders, to avoid a constitutional crisis, agreed to recognize him as president until the end of his term.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1937–57	Anastasio Somoza García
1957–67	Luis Somoza Debayle
1967–72	Anastasio Somoza Debayle
1972–74	Junta rule
1974–79	Anastasio Somoza Debayle
1979	Francisco Urcuyo Maliaños
1979–84	Junta rule
1984–90	Daniel Ortega Saavedra
1990–96	Violeta Barrios de Chamorro
1997–2002	Arnoldo Alemán Lacayo
2002–	Enrique Bolaños Geyer

CONSTITUTION

The constitution was signed in 1987 and widely amended in 1995. According to the 1995 version, the president is

elected for a term of five years, as are members of the National Assembly, Nicaragua's legislative body. The constitution guarantees certain rights, such as the freedoms of speech and religion. The National Assembly has the right to override presidential vetoes by a simple majority. In addition, the president can no longer automatically veto a bill.

The new constitution also puts additional limits on the police and military; for example, while other sectors may form unions, the police and military are barred from doing so. Voting is universal but not compulsory.

In January 2000 the constitution was further amended. The two largest parties, the FSLN/Sandinistas and the Liberal Constitutional Party became entitled to appoint members to the previously independent Supreme Electoral Council, which is responsible for organizing and conducting elections.

PARLIAMENT

The national legislative body is the Asamblea Nacional (National Assembly), whose 92 members are elected to five-year terms concurrent with that of the president. (Defeated presidential candidates with a certain number of votes also become members of the National Assembly.) The assembly elects Supreme Court judges, makes legislation, and can override the president's veto by a simple majority. The assembly also elects magistrates to the Supreme Electoral Council, the body responsible for running and organizing elections.

POLITICAL PARTIES

There are currently over 35 political parties in Nicaragua. These parties typically form alliances with a major right or left party to gain prominent political offices. Major political parties include the Liberal Alliance, the ruling party, which is a coalition of the Liberal Constitutional Party, the Independent Liberal Party, the Nicaraguan Party of the Christian Path, and other, mostly conservative parties. The Liberal Alliance won 48 seats in the 2001 elections; Bolaños belongs to this coalition. The FSLN is the faction that originally took the country into civil war and revolution in the late 1970s. Daniel Ortega Saavedra, the former president and revolutionary, remains the leader. The FSLN earned 41 seats in the 2001 elections.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

There are four levels of local government: departments, *municipios*, *comarcas*, and *cantones*. Each department is headed by a *jefe político* (political chief) and each *municipio* by an *alcalde* (mayor). There are 15 departments. In addition

to the departments, there are two autonomous regions governed by indigenous tribes: the RAAN and RAAS.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The 16 judges of the Supreme Court are elected by the National Assembly for seven-year terms. The number of judges was increased in an effort to create a more independent judiciary. The country is continuing to struggle with an inefficient and backlogged judiciary system, chiefly brought on by the undoing of much of the land redistribution implemented by the Sandinistas in the 1980s.

The Supreme Electoral Council also falls under the legal system. Headed by five magistrates, it organizes and runs elections. Magistrates are elected to five-year terms by the National Assembly.

There are also separate appeals, district, and local courts, as well as separate courts for special considerations, such as labor and administrative courts.

HUMAN RIGHTS

The constitution outlaws discrimination based on nationality, political belief, race, sex, language, religion, and social conditions. However, Nicaragua's police and military forces continue to receive criticism from human rights groups for abuses of power, torture, and killing. Land disputes with the indigenous population are common. Domestic violence against women remains a large problem and is underreported. Women and gay groups have charged that Nicaragua's antisodomy law, passed in 1992, is so broadly worded as to criminalize all relationships of unmarried, cohabiting couples, gay and straight. The Bolaños administration has made some attempts to root out corruption, notably in bringing charges against former president Alemán.

FOREIGN POLICY

Nicaragua is involved in most major international bodies, and the nation currently depends heavily on foreign aid. Its economic plans rely on two key goals: further opening its markets to foreign trade and working out a payment structure with the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Although Nicaragua joined the Alliance for Sustainable Development with its Central American neighbors in 1994 at the Summit of the Americas, it continues to have border disputes with Honduras, El Salvador, and Colombia, stopping trade with Honduras as a result in late 1999.

DEFENSE

Bolaños established a civilian Ministry of Defense once he took office. Tensions remain between civilians and the

military, however, due to Nicaragua's history of having a corrupt military carry out extrajudicial torture and killings. In 2003 the nation had about 14,000 active-duty military personnel, representing a sharp decline from previous years. That year Nicaragua spent about \$33 million, or 0.7 percent of gross domestic product (GDP), on the military.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 14,000
 Military Manpower Availability: 1,309,970
 Military Expenditures \$million: 32.8
 as % of GDP: 0.7
 as % of central government expenditures: 3.2
 Arms Imports \$million: —
 Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

The Nicaraguan economy, devastated during the 1980s by mismanagement and the civil war, began its long rebound in 1991, but the country remains one of the poorest in the Western Hemisphere. Up to 50 percent of the people live below the poverty line, and per capita GDP in 2004 was just \$2,300. Worse, income is distributed in a highly uneven fashion, with the poorest 10 percent of the population earning just 1.2 percent of income and the richest 10 percent earning 45 percent. President Chamorro began a long and ambitious stabilization program that reduced inflation and obtained substantial aid from abroad. Economic growth rose sharply due to surges in exports but then dropped in 1997 when the IMF suspended its Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility. However, aid was resumed in 1998 by the Paris Club, under the Highly Indebted Poor Countries Initiative. Implementation of a 1997 accord to return properties confiscated by the Sandinistas also restored investor confidence; also in 1997 a free-trade agreement was signed with Mexico. The economy, however, received a massive setback in 1998 due to the destruction caused by Hurricane Mitch.

Donors have made aid conditional on improved governability, openness in government financial operations, poverty alleviation, and human rights advances. Nicaragua met conditions for additional debt service relief in December 2000. Growth was estimated at 5 percent in 2000 but had fallen to 2.3 percent by 2003. Economic policy is guided by a 2002 plan worked out with the IMF promoting both poverty reduction and economic growth.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 12.34
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 2,300
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 3.5

GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 0.8
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 20.7
 Industry: 24.7
 Services: 54.6
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 77
 Government Consumption: 16
 Gross Domestic Investment: 28.0
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 0.75
 Imports: 2.02
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 1.2
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 45.0

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
137.8	153.3	171.0	183.5	190.9

Finance

National Currency: Gold Córdoba (NIO)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = NIO 15.9705
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 4.2
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: —
 Total External Debt \$billion: 4.573
 Debt Service Ratio %: 11.73
 Balance of Payments \$million: –843.1
 International Reserves SDRs \$million: 502
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
 9.3

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 833.2
 per capita \$: 152.10
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 201.3

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$million: 725.5
 Expenditures \$billion: 1.039
 Budget Deficit \$million: 313.5
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: 15.3

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 20.7
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 5.1
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 0.15
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 4.4
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 27.9
 Total Farmland % of land area: 15.9
 Livestock: Cattle million: 3.4
 Chickens million: 16.5
 Pigs 000: 450
 Sheep 000: 4.4
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 6
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 29.8

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Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 592.4
Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 4.4

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 548
Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 1.77
Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 340
Net Energy Imports % of use: 43.0
Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 0.65
Production kW-hr billion: 2.34
Consumption kW-hr billion: —
Coal Reserves tons million: —
Production tons million: —
Consumption tons million: —
Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
Production cubic feet billion: —
Consumption cubic feet billion: —
Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
Production barrels 000 per day: —
Consumption barrels 000 per day: 25.6
Pipelines Length km: 54

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 2.02
Exports \$billion: 0.75
Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 7.5
Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 3.7
Balance of Trade \$million: –843.1

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
United States %	22.3	58.3
Costa Rica %	10.3	—
Guatemala %	7.9	—
Venezuela %	7.5	—
El Salvador %	6.1	8.2
Mexico %	5.4	—
South Korea %	4.7	—
Honduras %	—	5.2

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 18,712
Paved %: 11.4
Automobiles: 82,200
Trucks and Buses: 107,700
Railroad: Track Length km: 6
Passenger-km million: —
Freight-km million: —
Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: —
Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: —
Airports: 176
Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 72
Length of Waterways km: 2,220

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 526
Number of Tourists from 000: 562
Tourist Receipts \$million: 155
Tourist Expenditures \$million: 139

Communications

Telephones 000: 171.6
Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.08
Cellular Telephones 000: 202.8
Personal Computers 000: 150
Internet Hosts per million people: 1,298
Internet Users per 1,000 people: 16

ENVIRONMENT

Water pollution, soil erosion, and deforestation are all serious issues in Nicaragua. The country is frequently forced to put economic issues ahead of environmental issues, most notably regarding widespread pesticide use: Although this is a serious environmental and medical issue, heavy pesticide application continues due to the economy's heavy reliance on crops for export.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 27.0
Forest Change (1990–2000) hectares 000: –117
Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 18
Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 0.74

LIVING CONDITIONS

Living conditions in Nicaragua are generally poor, except for the small number of people who enjoy a disproportionate share of the country's income and wealth, especially landholders. The civil war during the 1980s left the nation devastated, and in the mid-1990s an estimated three-quarters of people lived below the poverty line. The Sandinista government struggled to make improvements, especially in health care; the infant mortality rate and deaths from infectious diseases both dropped, but a generally poor economy, coupled with the devastation caused by Hurricane Mitch in 1998, set back efforts to improve living conditions. An ongoing social problem is the shortage of housing, with estimates that the country's shortage amounts to nearly half a million units. In rural areas people typically live in straw and palm-frond huts with dirt floors. Around the towns and cities are shantytowns and squatters' villages. Also a problem is transportation. The country has virtually no railway system, and there are only about 2,100 km (1,300 mi) of paved roads.

HEALTH

Although Nicaragua has a respectable life expectancy of just over 70 years and an infant mortality rate of just under 30 deaths per 1,000 live births (a figure putting the country roughly in the middle of the world's nations), the state of health care is generally poor, with per capita spending in 2002 just \$60. The Sandinista regime made efforts to improve health care by establishing clinics throughout the country, and life expectancy indeed increased by about eight years, but the clinics remain understaffed, underequipped, and underfunded. As such, Nicaraguans continue to suffer from high rates of diseases such as malaria (402 cases per 100,000 population), tetanus, pneumonia, and measles. In 2002 only 66 percent of the population had access to adequate sanitation facilities, and nearly one-fifth lacked access to clean drinking water.

Health

Number of Physicians: 8,986
 Number of Dentists: 1,585
 Number of Nurses: 5,862
 Number of Pharmacists: —
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 164
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 29.11
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 230
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 7.9
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 60
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.2
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 86
 Measles: 93
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 66
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 81

FOOD AND NUTRITION

The state of nutrition in Nicaragua is poor. The United Nations Children's Fund estimates that fully one-third of Nicaraguan children suffer from chronic malnutrition and nearly one in 10 suffer from severe malnutrition. From 1995 to 2005, one in five children under the age of five suffered from stunting, and from 1998 to 2003, 12 percent of babies were of low birth weight. The primary staples are corn and beans. Corn is used primarily to make tortillas, which are wrapped around beans and meat, typically seasoned with onions and garlic. Red beans are especially popular at breakfast, when they are eaten in refried form in a dish called *gallo pinto*, or spotted rooster. Also popular are tamales, which are cooked with corn, meat, rice, tomatoes, and cassava root. The main meal is generally eaten during the middle of the day, followed by a siesta during the afternoon heat.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 27.5
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,240
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 127.1
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 41.5

STATUS OF WOMEN

Although women have the right to vote, they are not as prevalent in high-ranking corporate and government positions and earn considerably less than their male counterparts. Perpetrators in domestic violence crimes are rarely brought to trial, in part due to a lack of training in the police and court systems. Only in 1996 was the criminal code reformed to make domestic violence a crime. There are also "women's commissariats" that provide support and legal help to domestic violence victims.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 21
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.06
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: —

WORK

In 2003 the Nicaraguan labor force consisted of about 1.9 million persons, with 31 percent employed in agriculture, 17 percent in industry, and 52 percent in services. The unemployment rate that year was 7.8 percent, but this figure does not reflect underemployment of nearly 50 percent. Many people take part in the informal economy, and many others scratch out livings as street vendors. Farmers rely on hand tools and oxen, and many farmhands are employed only seasonally. Primary agricultural products include coffee, bananas, sugarcane, cotton, rice, corn, tobacco, sesame, soy, beans, meat, and dairy. Major industries include food processing, chemicals, machinery, metal products, textiles, clothing, petroleum refining and distribution, beverages, footwear, and lumber.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 1,930,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 38.2
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 30.5
 Industry: 17.3
 Services: 52.2
 Unemployment %: 7.8

EDUCATION

Education is free, universal, and compulsory for six years, from ages seven to 12. Schooling lasts for eleven years and is divided into six years of primary school and two cycles of secondary school, one of three years and one of two years. The majority of primary schools are rural and generally offer only one grade. Attrition and grade-repetition rates are high throughout the school system. The school year runs from February through November. The language of instruction is Spanish.

The most serious educational problem is a shortage of teachers. Only one-third of primary-school teachers and 5 percent of secondary-school teachers are certified.

Technical and vocational programs are offered in secondary schools during the second cycle in agricultural schools, public and private commercial schools, and the Instituto Nacional Técnico Vocacional.

Control of the school system is vested in the Ministry of Education, which establishes curricula, supervises examinations, regulates the teaching profession, appoints teachers, and builds and maintains schools.

Higher education is provided by four universities, of which the largest is the National Independent University. The University of Central America is run by the Jesuits.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 67.5
Male %: 67.2
Female %: 67.8
School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 10.6
First Level: Primary schools: 4,993
Teachers: 26,226
Students: 923,391
Student-Teacher Ratio: 35.2
Net Enrollment Ratio: 85.5
Second Level: Secondary Schools: 451
Teachers: 11,300
Students: 364,012
Student-Teacher Ratio: 33.9
Net Enrollment Ratio: 39.0
Third Level: Institutions: 10
Teachers: 6,547
Students: 100,363
Gross Enrollment Ratio: 18.4
Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 3.1

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Despite the country's political instability and poverty, Nicaraguans maintain some well-established institutions for science and technology. For example, the Polytechnical University of Nicaragua, formed in 1968 by the Baptist Church, awards degrees in the industrial arts, architecture, nursing, and engineering. The National University

of Agriculture in Managua, founded in 1929, gives students the opportunity to study natural-resource management, animal sciences, and agronomy. In 1980 the Observatorio Geofísico was founded to study volcanology, seismology, geology, and geophysics.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 73
Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
High-Tech Exports \$million: 3.06
Patent Applications by Residents: 9

MEDIA

Nicaragua has 48 radio stations, four television stations, and four daily newspapers. Since the ending of Nicaragua's civil war, more press freedom has been allowed, and the media have often been openly critical of the government. Most newspapers, though, are quite partisan in their coverage.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 4
Total Circulation 000: —
Circulation per 1,000: —
Books Published: —
Periodicals: —
Radio Receivers 000: —
per 1,000: —
Television sets 000: 340
per 1,000: 69

CULTURE

Easily the most famous writer in Nicaraguan history is Rubén Darío (1867–1916), whose modernist poetry earned him the title "Prince of Spanish-American Literature" and a banner on the Nicaragua National Assembly Web site with his words "*Si pequeña es la patria, uno grande la sueña*" (If the fatherland is small, someone great will dream it). Other important writers include the poets Azaria Pallai, Ernesto Cardenal, Alfonso Cortés, Salomon de la Selva, and Santiago Argüello (who also wrote plays). Nicaragua has a rich tradition of folk crafts, and the Ministry of Culture makes efforts to preserve crafts and train new artisans. Included among these crafts are earthenware and ceramics, wood carving, embroidery, silverwork, and sculpture. Nicaraguans are known for their folkloric dance traditions. Dances include *los diablitos*, *las inditas*, and *las negras*, which each use masked characters. *El güegüense* dates back to at least the 17th century and combines dance with satire.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts national currency million: 34
 Number of Cinemas: 10
 Seating Capacity: 2,700
 Annual Attendance: 1,200,000

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Nicaraguans have a folklore history that includes tales of tricksters such as Uncle Rabbit, who persistently outwits Uncle Coyote. This history includes *el güegüense*, a satiric folk dance that features a trickster figure who thwarts powerful people, including the Spanish monarchy. Indian mythology includes the Corn Goddess Cinteotl, and each year a feast was given in her honor featuring soups and fermented drinks made from corn. This is part of a larger tradition of feasts and festivals associated with planting and harvesting, based on the belief that the gods determined the bounty of a crop. Many Spanish folk practices were imported into Nicaragua, including beliefs in witchcraft, love potions, and folk medicine, and historically many Nicaraguans have believed in the magical powers of the *cuadro*, a picture of a saint kept in the home.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Nicaraguans enjoy films, most of which are in English with Spanish subtitles, and television has become more popular as the number of sets has increased. A considerable amount of the nation's entertainment revolves around its religious and folk heritage. Festivals include such activities as bullbaiting and bull riding, and religious and harvest festivals are a time for feasting. Dancing is a popular form of entertainment; traditional folk dances are common, but modern dancing in clubs is popular as well, and the largest disco club in Central America can be found in Managua.

ETIQUETTE

In rural areas, the concept of *machismo* is still common, and a great deal of emphasis is placed on a masculine sense of honor. This concept of honor pervades the country, making personal criticism directed at another something to be frowned upon. Respect is accorded through the use of professional titles, the words *señor*, *señora*, and *señorita* with the names of people of higher social standing, and the use of *don* and *doña* with the names of elders. Nica-

raguans tend to be demonstrative with one another, and their sense of personal space tends to be lesser than that of people in many other Western countries, such as the United States. Unannounced visiting of friends is commonplace, and people often exchange cards in both business and social settings.

FAMILY LIFE

Largely because of Nicaragua's strong Catholic heritage, formal marriage in a church is highly valued, although there are some common-law marriages. Because of housing shortages, the basic domestic unit is the extended family, with parents, children, aunts, uncles, cousins, and grandparents living together under the same roof. Newlyweds often live with the parents of either the bride or the groom, again because of poverty and a lack of available housing. In rural areas the extended family is regarded as especially valuable, for kin supply many hands to accomplish work on farms. A troublesome issue in recent years has revolved around the inheritance of land that the Sandinista regime seized from wealthy landowners and redistributed to the peasants who worked it; relatives of these wealthy people have been trying to reclaim land for their family, an effort that has become controversial.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Nicaragua is a hot and humid country, so dress tends to be lightweight and casual. Women wear cotton dresses, and both sexes wear sandals. Many men wear the *guay-avera*, a long cotton shirt, even in business settings. Traditional dress for women includes colorful, fringed shirts and blouses, often worn with shawls, jewelry, and flowers in the hair; for men it includes cotton trousers, a collarless white shirt, and a peaked straw hat.

SPORTS

Popular sports include boxing, basketball, volleyball, and water sports. Nicaraguans share with other Central American nations a love of soccer; unlike in those nations, however, baseball is the "national pastime" in Nicaragua. Its people have been playing baseball since the 1890s, and visitors to the country are struck by the local passion for the game; even the indigenous Miskito play. The saying *Nacio con un guante y una bona en la mano* means that every boy is born with a glove and ball in his hand. The Nicaraguan national team came in fourth in the 1996 Olympic Games in Atlanta, and the Major League Baseball pitcher Dennis Martinez, "El Presidente," who retired in 1997 after a career primarily in Baltimore and Montreal, was invited to run for president of the country—an offer he declined.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1936** With the help of the National Guard, Anastasio Somoza García ousts his uncle, Juan Bautista Sacasa, and declares himself president.
- 1939** Somoza visits the United States and is received by President Roosevelt, who allegedly remarks, "He's an SOB, but he's our SOB."
- 1945** Nicaragua joins Allied forces in World War II. Somoza takes over most of the land in Nicaragua.
- 1950** The ruling elite, backed by Somoza and his U.S.-trained National Guard, begin confiscating land in the Pacific Lowlands region in order to grow cotton.
- 1954** Costa Rica attempts to invade Nicaragua but is prevented by the Organization of American States. The Somoza regime allows Nicaragua to be used as a staging ground for Central Intelligence Agency activities in Guatemala.
- 1956** Somoza is assassinated. His son, Luis Somoza Debayle, becomes president.
- 1957** A border dispute with Honduras becomes violent.
- 1960** The International Court of Justice awards the Gracias a Dios area to Honduras.
- 1961** The Somoza regime allows Nicaragua to be used as a staging ground for the U.S. Bay of Pigs Invasion of Cuba.
- 1962** The FSLN is formed, based on the ideology and government opposition of Augusto César Sandino.
- 1965** The Somoza regime helps the United States invade the Dominican Republic.
- 1967** Luis Somoza Debayle suffers a heart attack and dies. His brother, Anastasio Somoza Debayle, assumes the presidency.
- 1972** In December an earthquake destroys Managua. National Guard soldiers loot the city. Aid for earthquake victims goes directly to the Somoza family.
- 1974** Sandinistas kidnap numerous leaders, including Somoza family members, releasing them only when political prisoners are flown out of the country.
- 1978** Pedro Joaquín Chamorro, a leader of the FSLN opposition, is assassinated. Opposition groups call a general strike. Sandinista commandos take hostage the entire Nicaraguan congress. Somoza imposes martial law.
- 1979** Sandinista rebels seize the capital. Somoza, whose family is now worth at least \$500 million, resigns and leaves the country. The Government Junta of National Reconstruction is formed, headed by Daniel Ortega Saavedra.
- 1980** Moderate members resign from the junta. Somoza is assassinated in Paraguay.
- 1981** The junta initiates land and other reforms. The United States publicly cuts off aid to the anti-government counterrevolutionaries, or Contras, and then restores that aid secretly, later launching the Iran-Contra scandal in the United States.
- 1982** Miskito Indians charge genocide.
- 1984** Constitutionally guaranteed civil liberties are suspended. In general elections, boycotted by most of the opposition, the FSLN wins an easy victory. The World Bank suspends loans to Nicaragua.
- 1985** Ortega is sworn in as president, and the junta is dissolved. The U.S. Congress votes against further aid to Contras. The United States imposes a trade embargo on Nicaragua.
- 1987** On January 9 a new constitution is promulgated. Nicaragua signs a regional peace plan, drawn up by Oscar Arias Sánchez of Costa Rica.
- 1988** Ortega attempts currency reform, introducing a new gold córdoba. The government signs a permanent cease-fire agreement with the Yatama group of Miskito rebels. Inflation reaches 35,000 percent.
- 1989** El Salvador suspends diplomatic relations with Nicaragua. The UN Security Council establishes the UN Observer Group in Central America (ONUCA) to monitor and prevent cross-border incursions by rebel groups.
- 1990** In February elections Violeta Chamorro, the candidate of a 14-party coalition, defeats President Ortega. The Chamorro government negotiates an end to hostilities between the government and the Contras. The United States pledges \$300 million in emergency aid.
- 1991** Chamorro announces an economic stabilization plan that includes the devaluation of the new córdoba. Former Contra rebels begin to rearm.
- 1993** Sandinistas rise up in Estelí. The Contras take 42 hostages in nearby El Zungana.
- 1994** A new military code is enacted, aiming to eliminate corruption and increase professionalism in the armed services.
- 1995** Gen. Humberto Ortega is replaced by Gen. Joaquín Cuadra as part of ongoing reforms. The 1987 constitution is amended, giving more power to the National Assembly.

- 1996** The National Assembly places the police under civilian rule and institutes a code of police conduct.
- 1997** Arnaldo Alemán is sworn in as president in January.
- 1998** Hurricane Mitch kills 4,000.
- 1999** Human rights groups cite continued police brutality in Nicaragua.
- 2000** Army and police confront indigenous protesters of the Yatama tribe in Puerto Cabezas, who claim they are being excluded from upcoming elections. The FSLN wins Managua's mayoral seat. The constitution is amended, giving more power to the two largest political parties.
- 2001** Liberal Party candidate Enrique Bolaños Geyer is elected president.
- 2002** Opposition Sandinista party reelects Daniel Ortega as its leader.
Former president Alemán is charged with embezzlement and money laundering during his term in office.
- 2003** Alemán is sentenced to 20 years for corruption. Nicaragua, Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador negotiate a free-trade agreement with United States.
- 2004** The World Bank erases 80 percent of Nicaragua's debt to the institution, and an agreement is reached with Russia to write off Nicaragua's debt from the Soviet era.
- 2005** Congress approves the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA).

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OFFICIAL PUBLICATIONS

Nicaragua. *Censos Nacionales 1995; Compenato Estadístico* (annual); *Nicaragua—Statistical Appendix* (IMF Country Report), 2001

CONTACT INFORMATION

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1627 New Hampshire Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20009
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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Banco Central de Nicaragua (in Spanish)
<http://www.bcn.gob.ni>
- Nicaragua National Assembly (in Spanish)
<http://www.asamblea.gob.ni>

NIGER

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Niger (République du Niger)

ABBREVIATION

NE

CAPITAL

Niamey

HEAD OF STATE

President Mamadou Tandja (from 1999)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Hama Amadou (from 1999)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Republic

POPULATION

11,665,937 (2005)

AREA

1,267,000 sq km (489,190 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Hausa, Djerma, Fulani, Tuareg, Beri Beri

LANGUAGES

French (official), Hausa, Djerma, Tamajaq

RELIGION

Islam

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Communauté financière d'Afrique franc

NATIONAL FLAG

Tricolor of orange (top), white, and green horizontal stripes, with an orange orb in the center of the white stripe

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A shield displaying crossed gold Tuareg swords and lances, crossed ears of millet, a native buffalo head, and a blazing sun; four national flags are crossed behind the shield, two on each side, and a white scroll at the base carries the legend "République du Niger."

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"Stand Up, Niger"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day), April 24 (Concord Day), May 1 (Labor Day), Easter Monday, August 3 (Independence Day), December 18 (Republic Day), Christmas, all major Islamic festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

August 3, 1960

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

January 1993; revised May 12, 1996, and July 18, 1999

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

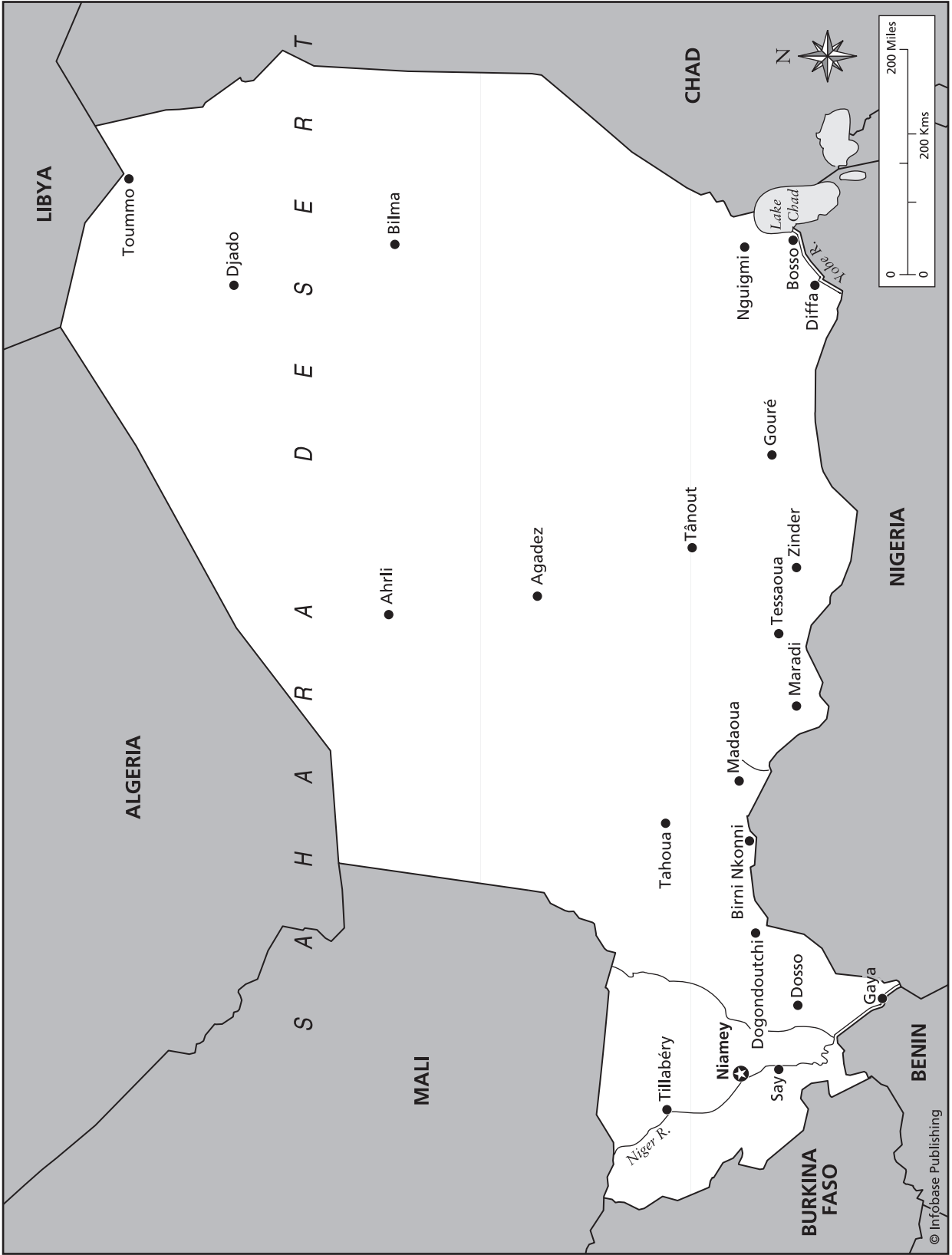
Landlocked Niger is the largest country in West Africa, with an area of 1,267,000 sq km (489,190 sq mi), extending 1,845 km (1,146 mi) east-northeast to west-southwest and 1,025 km (637 mi) north-northwest to south-southeast. Niger shares its total international boundary of 5,697 km (3,540 mi) with seven neighbors: Algeria, Mali, Burkina Faso, Benin, Nigeria, Chad, and Libya.

Four-fifths of Niger is arid desert; the remaining fifth is savanna. Vast areas in the north are character-

ized by the same relief: sandy basins, low plateaus, isolated hills and peaks, and limestone or sandstone bluffs. The Tamgak Mountains in the northwest rise 1,800 m (5,900 ft) above the Iferouane Valley. In the north-central region is the volcanic Air Massif, pierced by deep valleys called *koris*, where there is dense vegetation of acacias and doum palms. Farther east is the Tenere, a sandy and arid desert.

The lifeline of the country is the Niger River, which flows through the south for 300 km (186 mi). Niger also shares Lake Chad with Nigeria, Chad, and Cameroon.

Niger



Geography

Area sq km: 1,267,000; sq mi 489,190
 World Rank: 21st
 Land Boundaries, km: Algeria 956; Benin 266; Burkina Faso 628;
 Chad 1,175; Libya 354; Mali 821; Nigeria 1,497
 Coastline, km: 0
 Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Niger River 200
 Highest: Mont Bagzane 2,022
 Land Use %
 Arable Land: 3.5
 Permanent Crops: 0.0
 Forest: 1.1
 Other: 95.4

Population of Principal Cities (2001)

Maradi	147,038
Niamey	674,950
Zinder	170,574

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Niger is one of the hottest regions on the planet, with temperatures often rising to 50°C (122°F); the intense heat makes rain evaporate before it reaches the ground. From November to February the weather is dry and relatively cool, with the temperature often dropping to 29.4°C (85°F). The rainy season lasts from June to October in the south, with maximum rainfall in August. Annual rainfall averages 500 mm (29 in) south of latitude 16° north; to the north it drops below 200 mm (8 in), and conditions become subdesert (Sahelian) and then desert (Saharan). At the town of Agadez, rainfall is no more than 100 mm (4 in) in good years.

The prevailing wind is the harmattan, a scorching wind that parches all living things during the dry months.

Climate and Weather

Temperature Range: 85°F to 122°F
 Average Rainfall
 South: 29 in
 North: 8 in
 Agadez: 4 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Niger consists primarily of arid desert, where vegetation is extremely sparse, consisting principally of succulents. Wildlife is limited to spiders, reptiles, insects, and occasional nocturnal birds. The southern regions of the country, which receive more rain, have extensive savannas, and in the lowlands can be found forested regions with a variety of trees, including mahogany, kapok,

tamarind, and baobab. Niger's wildlife, much of which is endangered by poachers, includes giraffes, lions, antelopes, and buffalo.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 11,665,937
 World Rank: 69th
 Density per sq km: 9.3
 % of annual growth (1999-2003): 3.2
 Male %: 50.0
 Female %: 50.0
 Urban %: 22.1
 Age Distribution %: 0-14: 47.3
 15-64: 50.6
 65 and over: 2.1
 Population 2025: 20,952,000
 Birth Rate per 1,000: 48.3
 Death Rate per 1,000: 21.33
 Rate of Natural Increase %: 3.0
 Total Fertility Rate: 6.75
 Expectation of Life (years): Males 42.46
 Females 41.8
 Marriage Rate per 1,000: —
 Divorce Rate per 1,000: —
 Average Size of Households: 6.4
 Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Niger has a complex ethnic configuration, but two peoples make up about 78 percent of the population: the Hausa, inhabiting the center and south, with 56 percent, and the Djerma, in the southwest, with 22 percent. The Beri Beri (Kanouri), in the east, make up 4.3 percent of the population. Nomadic herdsmen, some of whom are of Caucasian stock, live alongside the other Negro tribes: the Fulani (or Peul) in the south, constituting about 8.5 percent of the population; the Tuareg in the north, with about 8 percent of the population; and the Tèbu (also called Tubu) in the east.

The two primarily nomadic groups, the Tuaregs and Fulani, have less access to government services, partly because their transient lifestyles make it difficult for the government to supply those services and partly because of historical animosities between the nomads and the sedentary Djerma and Hausa ethnic groups, which dominate the government. Such animosities undoubtedly contributed to slowness by some government officials in 1985 in guaranteeing that adequate quantities of food relief reached isolated Tuareg and Fulani populations.

There are small Western communities in Niamey and other major towns.

Residents of Niger are referred to as Nigeriens, borrowed from the French, rather than Nigerians, who are residents of Nigeria.

LANGUAGES

The official language of Niger is French; it is spoken, however, by only a tiny minority. All major ethnic groups have their own vernaculars, usually bearing the same name as the group, except in the case of the Tuareg, whose language is known as Tamajaq. Arabic is the preferred language in literature. The languages of the dominant ethnic groups, Djerma and Hausa, are used as lingua francas.

RELIGIONS

Niger has been almost completely Islamized, except for some 20 percent of the population who either practice some form of traditional religion or profess to be Catholics or Protestants. The dominant Muslim sect is Sunni; as in other parts of North Africa, the most powerful religious organizations are the Islamic brotherhoods, of which the three most influential are the Tijniyya, Senoussi, and Hamallists.

Christian churches are allowed to operate freely. Conversion from one religion to another is not prohibited but occurs only rarely. Foreign missionaries are permitted to live, work, and travel in Niger. There have been no reports of religious discrimination, but adherence to Islam tends to bestow advantages in all sectors of life. The government, cautious because of the Islamic fundamentalist violence that erupts periodically in northern Nigeria, monitors religious activity through the Islamic Association, which is funded by the government. Local religious leaders are subject to an informal government screening process, and Islamic services that have gone beyond strictly religious subjects have been shut down by the government. Religious groups are allowed to maintain links with coreligionists in other countries.

Religious Affiliations

Muslim	9,335,000
Indigenous Beliefs and Christian	2,330,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Kanem-Bornu Empire ruled the area that now makes up Niger from the 10th century until the 13th. By the 16th century Hausa clans were moving from Nigeria into Niger. These immigrants were followed by members of the Djerma, descendants of the Songhai people. The leaders of these clans, called sultans, were largely independent until the late 19th century. They grew rich on the trading of gold and slaves along the trade routes.

In 1898 the French invaded and began to colonize the region. The earliest French military expeditions into the territory now called Niger met fierce resistance from the

Tuareg and other tribes, but the French steadily pushed forward and by 1900 succeeded in encircling Lake Chad with military outposts. In 1901 the military district of Niger was created as part of the province of Haut-Senegal et Niger. Sporadic rebellions continued to bedevil the French until 1914, when a major German-inspired uprising took place, which was put down only with British assistance. Not until 1922 was the country fully pacified. Until 1932 Niger was administered directly from Paris through the governor-general in Dakar, Senegal. From 1932 to 1947 it was administered jointly with Upper Volta (now Burkina Faso). Niger became an autonomous state in 1958 and proclaimed its independence in 1960. Although no longer a member of the French Community of West Africa, Niger still maintains close economic and political ties with France.

Following 1960 independence the country became a one-party state led by Hamani Diori, the president and head of the Niger Progressive Party. Opposition to the regime centered on the Marxist-oriented Sawaba Party, which carried out activities from abroad. Diori and his government won overwhelming reelections in 1965 and 1970, but their failure to deal with widespread political discontent and official corruption as well as the problems caused by severe drought resulted in their overthrow in a military coup in 1974. The coup was led by Seyni Kountché and Sani Souma Sido, who installed themselves as president and vice president, respectively, of the Supreme Military Council (CMS). The following year Kountché had Sido arrested for attempting to organize another coup.

An initial period of liberalization followed the coup, and political prisoners were released. Economic conditions improved with the end of a drought in 1976 and the recovery of export commodity prices. However, sporadic opposition to the regime continued, culminating in an attempted coup in 1976; student unrest increased in the early 1980s. In an attempt to win popular support, Kountché introduced more civilians into the government in 1980 and initiated procedures to develop a more representative form of government in 1982. Local elections were held for village councils, which in turn elected local councils. These bodies elected regional councils that in turn elected the National Development Council (CND). The CND, established in 1974, was given quasi-leadership status in 1983 after the election of 150 delegates. The office of prime minister was created, and Kountché appointed Mamane Oumarou to the post; Oumarou also assumed the post of president of the CND. Following a coup attempt in October 1983, Kountché replaced Mamane with Hamid Algabid as prime minister.

The following year Kountché announced the creation of the National Charter Commission to draft a national constitution. Largely made up of members of the CND, the commission made slow progress, in part because its work was suspended for a time, as the government made

dealing with the recurring drought and economic problems priorities. At length, a draft document introduced in 1985 was adopted by the government in 1986 and approved by referendum in 1987. Nevertheless, the military remained firmly in command.

Kountché died in 1987 and was succeeded by the armed forces' chief of staff, Ali Saïbou. The civilian Al-gabid remained prime minister, but Saïbou strengthened the army's role in government by increasing army participation in the cabinet. In 1988 Saïbou announced the formation of another commission to draft guidelines for a constitution. He subsequently made clear that the army would continue to play a dominant role in government following the adoption of the constitution. In the same year he announced the lifting of the ban on all political organizations and the formation of a political party, the National Movement for Social Development, which was intended to form the core of a one-party state; Saïbou restated his opposition to a multiparty system.

In September 1989 the nation adopted a new constitution providing for the direct election of the president and the legislature. In the December elections that followed, Saïbou was confirmed as president with over 99 percent of the vote. A single list of candidates approved by the Conseil Supérieur d'Orientation National, which replaced the CMS, won endorsement to the legislature with over 99 percent of the vote, as well.

Niger's recent history has been dominated by two developments: continuing political instability and a Tuareg insurgency. A feeble attempt to restore democracy in 1991 led to the appointment of Amadou Cheiffou as prime minister. A new constitution was approved by referendum in 1992. The 1993 election, which brought in Mahamane Ousmane as Niger's first democratically elected president, did not result in the control of the assembly by any one party. In 1994 opposition legislators boycotted the assembly, and a series of short-lived governments followed. In 1995 international mediators were called in to settle the constitutional impasse. The Tuareg insurgency, meanwhile, continued in the northeast, where government troops had imposed martial law. A final peace accord was signed in 1995, granting full amnesty to all rebels. In a military coup staged in 1996, the army chief of staff Ibrahim Baré Maïnassara overthrew the civilian government, which he characterized as "absurd and irrational." In 1996 Maïnassara captured the presidency in a national election with 52 percent of the vote. Antigovernment violence continued, leading the president to respond with a crackdown on the opposition. In 1999 Maïnassara was assassinated upon his return from a trip to Mecca, reportedly by members of the presidential guard, and Major Daouda Malam Wanké, the head of the presidential guard, became head of state. He suspended the constitution and formally dissolved the government and the Supreme Court.

A military junta known as the Conseil de Réconciliation National took control of the country until presidential and parliamentary elections were held in November 1999. The National Movement for a Developing Society (MNSD) won the largest number of seats in the National Assembly, and its candidate, Mamadou Tandja, was elected president. In a strong environmental move, Niger banned hunting in early 2001 to save endangered wildlife. In 2002 military units in the east and in the capital rebelled, demanding the payment of back wages, but the rebellions were put down. In 2003 Niger found itself in the headlines when the United States and Great Britain charged that Iraq was trying to obtain uranium for nuclear weapons from the country, a charge that was later withdrawn. In 2004 Niger held its first-ever local elections, with the president's party winning most of the seats. In late 2004 Tandja was reelected as president, winning over 65 percent of the votes in second-round balloting.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1960–74	Hamani Diori
1974–87	Seyni Kountché
1987–93	Ali Saïbou
1993–96	Mahamane Ousmane
1996–99	Ibrahim Baré Maïnassara
1999	Daouda Malam Wanké
1999–	Mamadou Tandja

CONSTITUTION

The military government of Niger agreed to enforce the constitution of 1993 as it was modified in 1996. The constitution calls for a president and a bicameral legislature, consisting of a National Assembly and a second chamber neither named nor defined by law. The assembly, elected in a mixed electoral system, consisted at the time of 83 members, and the term of service was five years. The true power in the country rests with the president, who also serves a five-year term. He appoints the prime minister, who shares some executive responsibility. Suffrage is universal at the age of 18. In 1999, after a coup led by Major Daouda Malam Wanké, constitutional amendments were approved that absolved participants in both the 1996 and 1999 coups and restored the constitutional balance between the executive and legislative branches of the government.

PARLIAMENT

Constitutionally, Niger has a bicameral legislature. However, the second chamber is not defined by the constitution and has not been established. The existing National Assembly consists of 113 members, who are elected

through a multiround electoral system. The parliamentary elections in 1999 resulted in a freely elected democratic government; the last elections were held in 2004.

POLITICAL PARTIES

There are several political parties in Niger. Ibrahim Baré Maïnassara headed the National Union of Independents for Democratic Renewal, which won 52 percent of the vote in the 1996 elections. Shortly after Maïnassara's election, eight parties formed an opposition coalition, including the MNSD, the Democratic and Social Convention (CDS), and the Nigerien Party for Democracy and Socialism (PNDS). Maïnassara was assassinated in 1999, reportedly by members of the presidential guard. In the 2004 elections, the MNSD won 47 seats, the CDS 22, and the PNDS just one. There are numerous smaller parties that represent various ethnic groups, such as the Tuareg groups of the northern part of the country.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For purposes of local government, Niger is divided into seven departments and one capital district, 32 *arrondissements*, and 150 communes, or rural districts. The chief administrator in each department is the prefect, appointed by and responsible to the president.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The constitution provides for an independent judiciary. Defendants and prosecutors may appeal a verdict, first to the Court of Appeals, then to the Supreme Court. The Court of Appeals reviews questions of fact and law, while the Supreme Court reviews only the application of the law and constitutional questions. Human rights groups claim that family and business ties influence the lower courts.

There are also customary courts. Traditional chiefs can act as mediators and counselors and have authority in customary law cases as well as status under national law, wherein they are designated as auxiliaries to local officials. Customary courts, located only in large towns and cities, try cases involving divorce or inheritance. They are headed by legal practitioners with basic legal training who are advised by assessors knowledgeable in the society's traditions. The judicial actions of chiefs and customary courts are not regulated by law, and defendants may appeal a verdict to the formal court system.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Niger is beginning a process of consolidating a democratic system and a constitutional government following

the period of instability that characterized the last democratic government and coups d'état in 1996 and 1999. The April 1999 coup put in place a military-led government, which instituted a nine-month transition to a democracy. A July 1999 referendum approved a new constitution that provided for a power-sharing presidential system and granted amnesty to perpetrators of the 1996 and 1999 coups.

Regardless of elective changeovers, the government's human rights record has remained generally poor; although there have been improvements in several areas, some serious problems remain. With the 1999 election of President Tandja and the members of the National Assembly in generally free and fair elections, citizens exercised their right to change their government, and since then the president has been praised for returning some stability to the country. However, human rights groups have reported incidences of police brutality and torture by the military. Prison conditions have remained poor, and arbitrary arrest and detention have occurred. Delays in trials have resulted in long periods of pretrial confinement. The judiciary has also been subject to executive and other influence. Security forces have infringed on citizens' privacy rights, and the government has limited freedom of the press and has frequently restricted freedom of movement. Domestic violence and societal discrimination against women continue to be serious problems. Female genital mutilation persists, despite government efforts to combat it. Societal discrimination exists against the disabled and ethnic and religious minorities. There have also been reports that a traditional form of servitude is still practiced.

FOREIGN POLICY

Niger pursues a moderate line in foreign affairs and maintains friendly relations with both the East and the West. Niger maintains a special relationship with France and is amicable with neighboring states, although in 2005 there remained unresolved boundary disputes with Libya and Nigeria. Niger belongs to the United Nations and is a charter member of the African Union and the West African Monetary Union. It also belongs to the Niger River and Lake Chad Basin Commissions, the Economic Community of West African States, the Nonaligned Movement, and the Organization of the Islamic Conference.

DEFENSE

The defense structure is headed by the president, who also is chairman of the Conseil Supérieur d'Orientation National. The line of command runs through the minister of defense to the army chief of staff. There is no navy, and the air force is a purely transportational arm.

1760 Niger

The Nigerien armed forces have no offensive capability and have yet to be tested in field combat. The army has very little mobility and is deployed almost entirely in the north. In 2003 the country had 10,700 armed forces personnel.

Military manpower is obtained through conscription. The conscript service period is two years.

Until 1974 French troops were stationed in the country under bilateral defense agreements. These troops were withdrawn at the request of the Kountché regime, but defense and military assistance agreements remain in force. Niger spent an estimated 1.1 percent of gross domestic product (GDP), or about \$33 million, on military expenses in 2004.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 10,700
Military Manpower Availability: 2,135,680
Military Expenditures \$million: 33.3
 as % of GDP: 1.1
 as % of central government expenditures: —
Arms Imports \$million: —
Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

Niger is a poor, landlocked sub-Saharan nation whose economy centers on subsistence agriculture, animal husbandry, reexport trade, and increasingly less on uranium, its major export since the 1970s. The 50 percent devaluation of the CFA franc in January 1994 boosted exports of livestock, cowpeas, onions, and the products of Niger's small cotton industry.

The government relies on bilateral and multilateral aid—which was suspended following the April 1999 coup d'état—for operating expenses and public investment. In 2000 the World Bank approved a structural adjustment loan of \$35 million to help support fiscal reforms. However, reforms could prove difficult, given the government's bleak financial situation, despite ongoing help from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries initiative. Growth of 3.8 percent in 2003 came from the gold, coal, oil, and mineral sectors.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 9.716
GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 900
GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 2.7
GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: –0.5
Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 39
 Industry: 17
 Services: 44

Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:

 Private Consumption: 85
 Government Consumption: 12
 Gross Domestic Investment: —

Foreign Trade \$million: Exports: 280
Imports: 400

% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 0.8

% of Income Received by Richest 10%: 35.4

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
110.7	113.9	118.5	121.6	119.6

Finance

National Currency: CFA Franc (XOF)

Exchange Rate: \$1 = XOF 581.2

Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 95.6

Central Bank Discount Rate %: 4.5

Total External Debt \$billion: 1.6

Debt Service Ratio %: 6.43

Balance of Payments \$million: —

International Reserves SDRs \$million: 121.6

Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
3.0

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 453.3

 per capita \$: 38.50

Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 31.3

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year

Revenues \$million: 320

Expenditures \$million: 320

Budget Deficit \$million: 0

Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 39

Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 1.6

Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 0

Irrigation, % of Farms having: 1.5

Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 1.1

Total Farmland % of land area: 3.5

Livestock: Cattle million: 2.26

 Chickens million: 25

 Pigs 000: 39.5

 Sheep million: 4.5

Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 8.8

Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 23.6

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 179.3

Industrial Production Growth Rate %: —

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 123
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 357
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 32
 Net Energy Imports % of use: —
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: 63
 Production kW-hr million: 240
 Consumption kW-hr million: 330
 Coal Reserves tons million: —
 Production tons 000: 193
 Consumption tons 000: 193
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
 Production cubic feet billion: —
 Consumption cubic feet billion: —
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels million: 300
 Production barrels 000 per day: —
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 5
 Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$million: 400
 Exports \$million: 280
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —
 Balance of Trade \$million: —

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
France %	16.4	42.2
Côte d'Ivoire %	13.8	—
China %	10.5	—
Nigeria %	7.7	28.9
United States %	5.5	—
Japan %	4.9	17.2
Spain %	—	4.4

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 10,100
 Paved %: 7.9
 Automobiles: 57,800
 Trucks and Buses: 41,000
 Railroad: Track Length km: —
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: —
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: —
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: —
 Airports: 27
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 130
 Length of Waterways km: 300

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 58
 Number of Tourists from 000: 10
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 28
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 16

Communications

Telephones 000: 22.4
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.10
 Cellular Telephones 000: 24
 Personal Computers 000: 7
 Internet Hosts per million people: 11
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 1.3

ENVIRONMENT

Many of Niger's environmental problems involve the destruction of natural habitats by deforestation and desertification. Farmers use poor techniques that have caused soil erosion and have allowed stock to overgraze certain areas. Many of Niger's wildlife populations—such as those of elephants, hippopotamuses, giraffes, and lions—are threatened because of poaching and habitat destruction. In 2001 Niger banned hunting in an effort to save its wildlife.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 1.1
 Forest Change (1990–2000) hectares 000: –62
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 7
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 0.11

LIVING CONDITIONS

Living conditions in Niger are generally harsh. The country is extremely poor, with a per capita GDP of just \$900 in 2004. Although there has been some migration to cities, the country is largely rural. Rural villages generally do not have electricity, and women are forced to draw water from communal wells. The risk of drought is constant, and extended droughts lead to malnutrition. In 2003 the probability of a female child under the age of five dying was just over one in four. In rural areas most people live in adobe or concrete houses, although the more nomadic and seminomadic peoples such as the Tuareg also live in tents made of animal hides and grass. These tents are marked by gender stratification, with the woman and her belongings on the right side of the tent and the husband and his belongings on the left. In the capital, where the government finds it difficult to deliver even the most basic services, social problems are rampant, with high rates of unemployment, violent crime, drug use, alcoholism, teen prostitution, and the like.

HEALTH

The state of health care in Niger is extremely poor, as is to be expected in a country in which annual per capita

spending on health care in 2002 was just \$7. In 2004 life expectancy at birth was just 42 years. The infant mortality rate was over 120 per 1,000 live births, one of the highest rates in the world, as only 16 percent of births are attended by trained medical staff, one of the lowest rates in the world. In 2002 only 46 percent of the population had access to clean drinking water, contributing to a death rate from intestinal diseases of 36.4 percent, again one of the highest rates in the world. Malaria is common, with an estimated 1,700 cases per 100,000 population in the early 2000s. Only 64 percent of children are immunized against measles.

Health

Number of Physicians: 386
 Number of Dentists: 21
 Number of Nurses: 2,668
 Number of Pharmacists: 63
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 3.3
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 121.69
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 1,600
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 4.0
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 7
 HIV Infected % of adults: 1.2
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 52
 Measles: 64
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 12
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 46

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Niger is a country that is unable to feed its people, over 60 percent of whom live below the poverty line. In 1995–2003, 14 percent of children under age five were severely underweight, with an additional 26 percent moderately underweight. Some 14 percent suffered from moderate to severe wasting and 40 percent suffered from moderate to severe stunting. The primary staple is millet, which is made into a porridge or paste and served variously with milk and sugar, spices, meat, and such vegetables as eggplant, pumpkin, squash, okra, and tomato sauce. The Tuareg consume dates heavily, and the Djerma often use maize rather than millet as the primary staple. Other dishes include rice or beans, couscous, cowpeas, cassava, ground peanut cakes, and grilled tripe. Mangoes are widely consumed when they are in season. Muslims do not consume pork.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 33.9
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,100
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 228.8
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 54.4

STATUS OF WOMEN

Men have considerable advantages in terms of education, employment, and property rights. In case of divorce, custody of all children under eight years is given to the husband. Conscious of this situation, the government has made progress in improving the status of women by launching work on a new family code, making better employment opportunities available to women, giving them a significant role in the Development Society network of councils, and supporting the National Women's Association.

In 1985 the government undertook a major initiative to encourage Nigeriens to use birth control, but in 2002 only about 8 percent of women were doing so.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 12
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 0.42
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: —

WORK

In 2002 Niger's wage labor force was about 70,000, but this figure has little meaning because so many people make their living by subsistence farming, are members of nomadic or seminomadic ethnic groups, or take part in the informal economy as street vendors and the like. About 90 percent of people are involved in agriculture, growing such crops as cowpeas, cotton, peanuts, millet, sorghum, cassava, and rice or, especially in the pastoral north, tending livestock herds. Many people supplement their income with such activities as trade, sewing, smithery, and the like. A growing problem is the availability of land, which continues to be divided into smaller and smaller plots as it is passed down to children. Just 6 percent of people are employed in commerce and industry; major industries include uranium mining, brick and cement production, textiles, food processing, and chemicals. The remaining 4 percent of the labor force is employed by the government.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 70,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 43.4
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 90
 Industry and Commerce: 6
 Government: 4
 Unemployment %: —

EDUCATION

In 2003 the national literacy rate was 17.6 percent—25.8 percent among males and a dismal 9.7 percent among fe-

males. In 2001 the average expected educational attainment was just three years, and only about 40 percent of Niger's children were enrolled in primary school, just 6 percent in secondary school.

Education is free, universal, and compulsory, in principle, for eight years, from ages seven to 15, but the number of schools is insufficient. Schooling lasts for 13 years, as divided into six years of primary school, four years of lower-cycle secondary school, and three years of upper-cycle secondary school. The curriculum, based on the French model, is being Nigerienized with the help of the UN Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization. There are proportionally fewer Christian schools in Niger than in other countries of West Africa. Private schools account for 4.4 percent of primary-level enrollment and 15.6 percent of secondary-level enrollment.

The school year runs from October to June. The language of instruction is French.

The school system is controlled by the Ministry of Education.

Higher education is provided at the Université de Niamey and at the Islamic University of West Africa, at Say, which opened in 1987.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 17.6

Male %: 25.8

Female %: 9.7

School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 2.9

First Level: Primary Schools: 2,656

Teachers: 20,553

Students: 857,592

Student-Teacher Ratio: 41.7

Net Enrollment Ratio: 38.2

Second Level: Secondary Schools: 105

Teachers: 4,063

Students: 123,930

Student-Teacher Ratio: 30.7

Net Enrollment Ratio: 6.1

Third Level: Institutions: 2

Teachers: 806

Students: 13,854

Gross Enrollment Ratio: 1.5

Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 2.3

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Niger's extreme poverty prevents the development of a scientific infrastructure. The Centre National de Recherches en Sciences Humaines conducts some research in the sciences, in such fields as environmental science and agronomy, and Niger has received increasing attention from paleontologists since the early 1990s, as the remains of at least four new species of dinosaur have been discovered in the country.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —

Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —

High-Tech Exports \$million: 0.5

Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

The country has a state-run daily newspaper, *Le sahel*, with a total circulation of just 2,000, and a handful of private nondaily newspapers.

Broadcasting is a state monopoly operated by Office de Radiodiffusion-Télévision du Niger, also known as La Voix du Sahel. Additionally, there are six private radio stations. There is a state-run television station and two private subscription stations.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 1

Total Circulation 000: 2

Circulation per 1,000: 0.2

Books Published: —

Periodicals: —

Radio Receivers million: 1.4

per 1,000: 122

Television sets 000: 285

per 1,000: 15

CULTURE

Oral traditions dominate the culture of Niger. Storytellers and bards, called griots, pass on the nation's history and traditions at celebrations and festivals. Niger's literary tradition includes love poetry, plays, riddles, proverbs, political songs, and epic poetry. A primary form of cultural expression is arts and crafts. The Hausa and Djerma peoples, especially women, are known for their pottery. Hausa and Tuareg men are adept at leatherwork and make saddles, pouches, cushions, boots, sandals, and the like. Hausa women, too are known for their colorful handwoven blankets. Smithery and jewelry making are common among the Tuareg and Fulani. The National Museum contains exhibits of many of all of these crafts. One well-known painter is Rissa Ixa, a Tuareg who found the Association for the Promotion and Development of Traditional Arts and Cultures in Niger.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —

Volumes: —

Registered borrowers: —

Museums Number: —

Annual Attendance: —

(continues)

Cultural Indicators *(continued)*

Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Niger's folkloric traditions are dominated by the belief in spirits who control human destiny, with respect to health, fortune, crops, family disagreements, and the like. In rural regions there is a strong sense of demarcation between settlements and the "wild," where spirits dwell and which has to be controlled. Witchcraft is also thought to be a source of illness, pain, or misfortune, and amulets are often worn, especially by children, to ward off the influence of witches. The presence of these spiritual forces is explained in a Hausa myth about the first man, Adamu, and the first woman, Hawa, who had produced 50 sets of twins. When the creator told them that he wanted to see the children, Hawa hid the most beautiful of each pair, worried that the creator would want to take them for himself. The creator, however, knew of their deception and punished them by making the 50 hidden children invisible, and the descendants of these children are the spirits that plague humans.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

The people of Niger take their recreation where they can find it. Open-air markets provide a place for people to gather and converse. Among some Fulani can be found beauty pageants—in which the men wear makeup and the women determine the most handsome entrant. Television has become more popular with those who can afford sets, and some charge admission fees to allow their neighbors to watch. Solar-powered batteries provide electricity for television sets in some rural areas. Younger people enjoy martial arts films and movies from India in open-air theaters in the cities. Many people who gather for religious festivals dance to music provided by drums and stringed instruments.

ETIQUETTE

Interpersonal relations in Niger are marked by modesty and restraint. Greetings are formal and elaborate, and it would be considered rude to approach a person for conversation without an introduction and greeting. People are expected to dress modestly and conduct themselves properly. Among Muslims, women are expected to defer to their husbands and avoid confronting them or looking

them directly in the eye, and some Muslim women have met with violence when others concluded that their dress was not modest enough. In general, it is rude to directly confront or contradict another person; disagreement or refusal to do something is expressed indirectly.

FAMILY LIFE

Most marriages are arranged. Men and women can refuse a potential partner, but neither is likely to marry someone who meets with disapproval from parents. Polygyny is allowed, but few men have the economic means to support multiple wives. Many people, especially (but not exclusively) outside the cities, live in compounds in which parents live with their sons and their wives; the Tuareg live with nuclear families, but the extended family usually lives in adjacent compounds. Young children are typically given little discipline, but early on they are schooled in such values as respect for elders and authority figures (such as Islamic scholars) and the need to share whatever possessions they may acquire with family.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Most people wear traditional clothing rather than modern Western-style dress, although civil servants tend to wear Westerns slacks and shirts. Dress is an important way to communicate status, ethnicity, religious beliefs, and the like. Men are likely to wear long sleeveless gowns over matching shirts and trousers. Fulani and Tuareg women tend to wear dark dyed clothing, while the Hausa and Djerma tend to wear bright, gaily colored clothing. Most women conform to Islamic law by covering their heads, with either scarves or large veils; among the Tuareg, it is the men who cover their faces.

SPORTS

Nigeriens have great affection for horses, and horse racing is a common sport, particularly among the Hausa. Also popular, especially among boys and young men, is soccer. The most popular sport is wrestling. Cities have arenas where people can attend wrestling tournaments and follow their favorite wrestlers. Wrestling events are often used as venues for spreading information about the prevention of diseases such as AIDS, polio, and malaria and for encouraging education among young people.

CHRONOLOGY

1960 Niger proclaims its independence as a republic, with Hamani Diori as president.

- 1963** A total of 80 people are arrested and scores are executed for plotting against the regime.
- 1965** Hamani Diori escapes assassination.
- 1967** Uranium deposits, the largest in sub-Saharan Africa, are discovered in the Air mountain range.
- 1968** Following a dispute between the ruling Niger Progressive Party and the graft-ridden civil service, the party is given a larger role in the national administration.
- 1973** Drought of unprecedented severity ravages Niger, decimating national herds and wrecking the economy.
- 1974** The chief of staff, Lt. Gen. Seyni Kountché, seizes power in a bloody coup. Diori is placed under house arrest, the National Assembly is suspended, and all political parties are banned.
- 1975** Vice President Sani Souma Sido is arrested for alleged conspiracy against the regime.
- 1976** Former minister of rural development Moussa Bayere leads abortive coup and is sentenced to death along with eight other conspirators.
- 1983** CND is expanded to 150 delegates and given possible role of drafting a new constitution. Mamane Oumarou is named prime minister but is later replaced by Hamid Algabid. Kountché puts down coup and arrests hundreds of dissidents. Former president Diori is released from prison.
- 1985** Tuareg dissidents attack Tchín-Taboradam but are crushed by government troops. Diori is rearrested. External debt is rescheduled as Niger initiates austerity measures.
- 1986** Preparation of draft national charter is completed.
- 1987** The government adopts a national charter, which is approved by over 99 percent of voters in a referendum. Kountché dies and is succeeded by Ali Saïbou. Diori is released from house arrest. Saïbou announces a general amnesty for all political prisoners.
- 1988** The CND is given the task of drafting a new constitution. The ban on all political parties is repealed. Saïbou announces formation of a new party, the National Movement for Social Development.
- 1990** Demonstrators are killed by police. Saïbou tries to calm the situation by announcing plans for democratization. Aliou Mahamidou is named prime minister.
- 1991** A constitutional amendment allowing for a multi-party system is adopted in April. Multiparty elections are promised for 1992.
- 1995** The Tuaregs of the Armed Resistance Organization engage in guerilla activity in the north, seeking autonomy.
- A brokered peace agreement fails to end the Tuareg conflict.
- 1996** A military coup led by Col. Ibrahim Baré Maïnassara takes control of the government. Maïnassara is elected president in a highly contested election.
- 1998** Maïnassara survives an assassination attempt.
- 1999** Maïnassara is assassinated by military dissidents. Mamadou Tandja is elected president.
- 2001** Niger bans hunting to save endangered wildlife.
- 2002** Military units in the east and in the capital rebel, demanding payment of back wages, but the rebellions are put down.
- 2003** The United States and Great Britain charge that Iraq was trying to obtain uranium for nuclear weapons from Niger, a charge that is later withdrawn.
- 2004** Niger holds its first-ever local elections, with the president's party winning most of the seats. Tandja is reelected as president, winning over 65 percent of the votes in second-round balloting.

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- Niger.** *Annuaire statistique; Niger—Statistical Annex* (IMF Staff Country Report), 2002; *Plan de développement économique et social du Niger 1987–91; Recensement général de la population 2001*

CONTACT INFORMATION

Embassy of Niger
2204 R Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20008
Phone: (202) 483-4224 Fax: (202) 483-3169

INTERNET RESOURCES

- United Nations Development Program for Niger
http://www.intnet.ne/pnud_fr.html
- Embassy of Niger
<http://www.nigerembassyusa.org/>

NIGERIA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Federal Republic of Nigeria

ABBREVIATION

NG

CAPITAL

Abuja

HEAD OF STATE & HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

President Olusegun Obasanjo (from 1999)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Democratic republic

POPULATION

128,771,988 (2005)

AREA

923,768 sq km (356,668 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Hausa, Fulani, Yoruba, Ibo

LANGUAGES

English (official), Hausa, Yoruba, Ibo

RELIGIONS

Islam, Christianity, animism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Naira

NATIONAL FLAG

Three vertical stripes, the outer two green and the center white

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A black shield on which appears a silver pall, or “Y” sign, representing the confluence of the Benue and Niger rivers. The shield is flanked by rearing white horses standing on a green mound covered with *Coctus spectabilis*, the commonest wildflower in Nigeria. Above the design is a red eagle, and below is a yellow scroll carrying the national motto, “Unity and Faith.”

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Nigeria, We Hail Thee”

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year’s Day), October 1 (Independence Day), December 25–26 (Christmas), Good Friday, Good Saturday, Easter, various Islamic festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

October 1, 1960

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

May 29, 1999

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Nigeria is in West Africa and has a total land area of 923,768 sq km (356,668 sq mi), extending 1,127 km (700 mi) east to west and 1,046 km (650 mi) north to south. Its coastline, on the Gulf of Guinea, stretches 853 km (530 mi). Nigeria shares its international border of 4,047 km (2,513 mi) with four neighbors: Chad, Cameroon, Benin, and Niger. In the east, Nigeria includes part of the former UN trust territory of the British Cameroons.

In terms of vegetation, altitude, and climate, there are four natural divisions from south to north: the coastal belt of mangrove swamps, about 15–95 km (10–60 mi) wide; the tropical rain forest, with undulating plains and

scattered hills, about 80–160 km (50–100 mi) wide; the high central plateau, with open woodland and savanna, about 600–1,800 m (2,000–6,000 ft) in elevation; and the semidesert in the extreme north. Lowlands predominate except in the central Jos Plateau. The northern semidesert, known as the High Plains of Hausaland, is a broad expanse of sandy plains, broken here and there by rocky dome outcrops.

The Niger River, which rises in the mountains to the northeast of Sierra Leone, enters Nigeria from the west, then runs in a southeasterly direction until it receives the waters of its principal tributary, the Benue, at Lokoja, whereupon it runs south about 547 more km (340 mi) through Nigeria to the Gulf of Guinea.

Nigeria



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Geography

Area sq km: 923,768; sq mi 356,668
 World Rank: 31st
 Land Boundaries, km: Benin 773; Cameroon 1,690; Chad 87;
 Niger 1,497
 Coastline, km: 853
 Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Atlantic Ocean 0
 Highest: Chappal Waddi 2,419
 Land Use %
 Arable Land: 31.3
 Permanent Crops: 3.0
 Forest: 14.8
 Other: 50.9

Population of Principal Cities (1991)

Aba	500,183
Abeokuta	352,735
Abuja	1,078,700
Bauchi	206,537
Benin City	762,719
Calabar	310,839
Enugu	407,756
Ibadan	1,835,300
Ikerre	239,124
Ilorin	532,089
Jos	510,300
Kaduna	993,642

(continues)

Population of Principal Cities (1991) *(continued)*

Kano	2,166,554
Katsina	259,315
Lagos	5,195,247
Maiduguri	618,278
Ogbomoshó	433,030
Okene	312,775
Onitsha	350,280
Oshogbo	250,951
Oyo	369,894
Port Harcourt	703,421
Sokoto	329,639
Warri	363,382
Zaria	612,257

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Nigeria lies entirely within the tropics, but there are wide climatic variations. In general, there are two seasons, dry and wet, throughout Nigeria, but near the coast the seasons are less sharply defined. Temperatures above 37.8°C (100°F) are common in the north, but coastal temperatures seldom climb over 32.2°C (90°F). The humidity at the coast, on the other hand, is higher than in the north. Inland there are two distinct seasons: a wet season from April to October and a dry season from November to March. Temperatures are highest from February to April in the south and from March to June in the north and are lowest in July and August over most of the country.

The annual average rainfall varies from 1,700 mm (70 in) on the western end of the coast to 4,310 mm (170 in) along the eastern section of the coast, to 1,270 mm (50 in) over most central areas and the Jos Plateau, and to 500 mm (20 in) in the extreme north. The length of the rainy season shows similar decreases, from 12 months in the south to under five months in the north.

The prevailing wind systems are the rain-bearing southwesterlies and the hot and dry harmattan from the northeast.

Climate and Weather

Temperature Range: 90°F to 100°F

Average Rainfall

Western Coast: 70 in

Eastern Coast: 170 in

Central Areas and Jos Plateau: 50 in

North: 20 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Along the low-lying coastal region are extensive mangrove forests, the third-largest such forests in the world. Where the water is fresh, swamp forests predominate. The tropical rain forests contain valuable hardwood

trees, including mahogany, obeche, and iroko. The open woodland and savanna of the central plateau are dominated by grasses and low shrubs. Animal species are abundant, although many are endangered; these include gorillas, hippopotamuses, elephants, and chimpanzees. A number of other species are endemic, including antelopes, squirrels, small-clawed and spotted-necked otters, mongooses, and monkeys.

POPULATION**Population Indicators**

Total Population 2005: 128,771,988

World Rank: 9th

Density per sq km: 149.8

% of annual growth (1999-2003): 2.4

Male %: 50.5

Female %: 49.5

Urban %: 46.6

Age Distribution %: 0-14: 42.3

15-64: 54.6

65 and over: 3.1

Population 2025: 206,166,000

Birth Rate per 1,000: 40.65

Death Rate per 1,000: 17.18

Rate of Natural Increase %: 2.3

Total Fertility Rate: 5.53

Expectation of Life (years): Males 46.21

Females 47.29

Marriage Rate per 1,000: —

Divorce Rate per 1,000: —

Average Size of Households: 4.7

Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Nigeria is a typical African country in the diversity and heterogeneity of its ethnic heritage, with an estimated 300 ethnic groups. No group enjoys an absolute numerical majority, but the four dominant groups—the Hausa and Fulani in the north, Yoruba in the west, and Ibo in the east—together constitute 68 percent of the population.

Relative to Nigeria's population, the size of the non-African community is small but fairly diverse; included are Britons, Indians, Lebanese, and Americans.

LANGUAGES

English is the official language and serves as that of administration, law, commerce, and education at all levels. It is spoken with varying degrees of fluency by some 14 million people, making Nigeria the largest English-speaking country in sub-Saharan Africa.

Of the 250 or more vernaculars spoken in the country, Hausa is used most widely as a lingua franca in the north, Yoruba in the west, and Ibo in the east. Locally

dominant languages also tend to be used officially in the various states.

RELIGIONS

Nigeria represents the southernmost outpost of the sweep of Islam across the Sahara from the ninth to the 19th centuries; the penetration of the religion was stopped before it reached the south of the country. Christianity, meanwhile, established itself firmly in the south but made little impact in the north or west. The resulting religious composition of the population closely follows geographic and ethnic lines: the southern Ibo are predominantly Christian, while the northern Hausa are almost entirely Muslim, and the western Yoruba are partly Christian and partly Muslim. About 50 percent of the nation's total population practices Islam.

Of Nigeria's approximately 51 million Christians, about 26 percent are of Protestant faiths, while 14 percent are Roman Catholic, the largest single denomination. There are three Roman Catholic archdioceses, at Kaduna, Lagos, and Onitsha. The Anglican church is under the archbishop of the Province of West Africa, whose seat is in Freetown, Sierra Leone.

Constitutional provisions of freedom of religion, religious practice, and religious education are generally observed throughout the country. Places of worship are established freely. No restrictions are placed on the number of clergy trained in Nigeria. Links with coreligionists in other countries are maintained. Religious travel, including the hajj, is permitted and officially supported. Missionaries and foreign clergy are permitted but not encouraged to enter Nigeria.

Religious Affiliations

Muslim	64,400,000
Christian	51,500,000
Indigenous Beliefs	12,900,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The first inhabitants of Nigeria were the Nok people, who all but disappeared by the 10th century. They were superseded by the Kanem Empire and the Kingdoms of Kano and Katsina, whose inhabitants were Muslim. In the 18th century Fulani religious zealots took control of the region and created a single Islamic state, the Sokoto Caliphate. This move led to intertribal fighting and civil war, a history that the country still suffers from today.

European contact began in the 14th century, when the Portuguese were establishing the spice trade; as the spice trade faltered, they began trading slaves. The Por-

tuguese were replaced by the British when the lucrative slave trade ended in 1807. The extension of British influence over Nigeria in the 19th century was gradual and, at least initially, unplanned. Official British interest in Nigeria dated from 1849, when John Beecroft was appointed consul and agent for the Bights of Benin and Biafra to gain access to the famous markets of the Sokoto Caliphate and Bornu. The trade routes through Yoruba country were secured through the conquest of Lagos in 1851 and its formal annexation in 1861. Lagos was administered from 1866 to 1874 from Freetown, Sierra Leone, and from 1874 to 1886 from Accra, Ghana (then the Gold Coast); in 1886 Lagos was made a separate territory and placed under a governor. Meanwhile, in 1879 the United African Company was formed by the four largest British firms operating on the Niger River. By 1884 the company (renamed the National African Company in 1882) had signed more than 70 treaties with local rulers on both banks of the Niger up to Lokoja. The Berlin Conference of 1884–85, at which Africa was partitioned between European imperial rivals, accepted British claims to areas controlled by the company. In 1886 the company was chartered under the title Royal Niger Company, and this territory became known as the Oil Rivers Protectorate, renamed the Niger Coast Protectorate in 1893.

Over the ensuing decade the company met with, and to some extent suppressed, strong resistance from local rulers, such as the Jojo of Opopo and the Nana of Itshekiriland. In 1899, when it became obvious that the company was unable to bring the emirates under effective rule, the British government revoked the company's charter and took over the administration of all its territories. Areas south of Idah were constituted as the Protectorate of Southern Nigeria, and those north of Idah as the Protectorate of Northern Nigeria, each under a high commissioner. In 1906 the Colony and Protectorate of Lagos was merged with the Protectorate of Southern Nigeria under one governor.

The next step was the merger in 1914 of northern and southern Nigeria into the Colony and Protectorate of Nigeria, with Sir Frederick Lugard as governor-general. This amalgamation was one of the most crucial events in Nigerian history, but it was a limited union; north and south continued with their separate administrations. Lugard introduced countrywide the system of indirect rule he had successfully established in the north. Basically, this system involved the division of power between the British government, which maintained overall responsibility for law and order, and the traditional rulers, who were left to run the day-to-day affairs of the people in accordance with traditional laws and customs. It was a policy of expediency full of contradictions, in that it discouraged social and economic change where it was needed most. The activities of Christian mission-

1770 Nigeria

aries were restricted in the north but promoted in the south; the result was the perpetuation of the economic and educational disparities between the two regions.

After World War II increasing nationalist pressures resulted in a succession of short-lived constitutions, each bringing the country closer to self-government. As pressure for independence mounted, various nationalist parties competed for influence over the final form of the constitution. The northern groups wanted a loose federal structure that would give them considerable regional autonomy, while the powerful parties in the southeast and southwest favored less autonomy for the north, although they did not oppose some measure of regional autonomy. In 1959 elections were held for a federal legislature prior to national independence. Not surprisingly, the legislature was split into three regional blocs.

Full independence was achieved on October 1, 1960, and in June 1961 part of British Cameroons was incorporated into Nigeria. Within two years of independence, regional, ethnic, and religious tensions were already putting the new constitution under strain. In January 1966 the army staged a coup, killing many leading politicians, including Prime Minister Abubakar Balewa and the regional premiers of the north and west. The coup, led by General Johnson Aguiyi-Ironsi, was seen as having been carried out in the selfish interests of the east, where huge oil reserves had recently been discovered. The new military regime was short-lived: Aguiyi-Ironsi was killed in a countercoup in July. Those who carried out the coup named General Yakubu Gowon, the army chief of staff, the new leader. Gowon had managed to stay out of the previous coup attempts.

General Gowon, a Christian from the middle belt of Nigeria, succeeded in establishing his authority in the north and west but was rejected in the east, where Nigerians followed the lead of Lieutenant Colonel Odemegwu Ojukwu in calling for greater autonomy. Attempts at reconciliation between the two sides failed, and in May 1967 Ojukwu announced the formal secession of the east, under the new name Biafra. From May 1967 until January 1970 Nigeria was plunged into a civil war in which thousands perished, before federal forces defeated the Biafran army. Gowon revived constitutional plans for the creation of 12 states out of the three regions and initiated a policy of national reconciliation.

In July 1975 Gowon was toppled in a bloodless coup and replaced by Brigadier Murtala Mohammed, who was himself murdered in an abortive coup in February 1976. The new head of the federal military government, General Olusegun Obasanjo, upheld Mohammed's plan for a return to civilian rule and established a further seven states, bringing the total to 19.

In December 1983 the army staged a coup, and Major General Muhammadu Buhari became head of a 19-member

Supreme Military Council. He was replaced by Major General Ibrahim Babangida in an internal military coup in August 1985. Babangida promised a return to civilian rule by 1992 and a civilian constitution that would satisfy the various ethnic, regional, and religious demands. In May 1989 Babangida announced the creation of two entirely new parties (the only parties allowed by his government), the Social Democratic Party and the National Republican Convention, situated respectively on the left and on the right of the political spectrum.

In April 1990 a coup attempt led by Major Gideon Orkar failed; in July, Babangida ordered the execution of Orkar and 138 participating soldiers. Prior to their executions the coup leaders publicly expressed their deep fears of north-south rivalries and the domination of Christians by Muslims, as well as of economic discontent in a country where certain groups were seen to have profited while the majority suffered from depressed living standards.

In 1993 the country came under the iron-fisted rule of General Sani Abacha, who ruled until his death in 1998. He was replaced by Major General Abdulsalami Abubakar, who promised a return to civilian rule. Abubakar kept his word, Olusegun Obasanjo, the former military leader and until 1998 a political prisoner, was elected president in 1999. Nevertheless, the situation deteriorated, as several rival groups continued to fight. In 2000 several northern states adopted Islamic law, leading to violence between Christians and Muslims that resulted in hundreds of deaths. Further, ethnic fighting broke out in 2001 between the Tiv people and several other ethnic groups in the central Nassarawa State. Some 40,000 people were reportedly displaced following the violence. That year President Obasanjo, together with the presidents of South Africa and Algeria, formed the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD), with the goals of increasing economic development and ending civil violence in exchange for aid, foreign investment, and the elimination of trade barriers.

Ethnic violence continued, however, with clashes between the Hausa and Yoruba in Lagos. In late 2002 over 200 people were killed in rioting sparked by Muslim opposition to the planned Miss World beauty pageant, which was relocated to Great Britain. In the first legislative elections since the restoration of civilian rule in 1999, Obasanjo's People's Democratic Party won a majority, amid charges of ballot fraud. Then in April 2003, in the subsequent presidential election, Obasanjo was reelected with more than 60 percent of the vote, again amid charges of voting irregularities. Violence, meanwhile, continued, erupting in the town of Warri in 2003, as the Ijaw and Itsekiri clashed, leaving 100 dead; in the central plateau in 2004, with over 200 Muslims killed by Christian militias; and among gangs in Port Harcourt, also in 2004, leaving 500 dead.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

- 1963–66 Benjamin Nnamdi Azikiwe (president)
 1966 Johnson Aguiyi-Ironsi (head of Federal Military Government)
 1966–75 Yakubu Gowon (head of Federal Military Government)
 1975–76 Murtala Ramat Mohammed (head of Federal Military Government)
 1976–79 Olusegun Obasanjo (head of Federal Military Government)
 1979–83 Alhaji Shehu Shagari (president)
 1983–85 Muhammadu Buhari (chairman of Supreme Military Council)
 1985–93 Ibrahim Babangida (president of Armed Forces Ruling Council)
 1993 Ernest Shonekan (interim president)
 1993–98 Sani Abacha (chairman of Provisional Ruling Council)
 1998–99 Abdulsalami Abubakar (chairman of Provisional Ruling Council)
 1999– Olusegun Obasanjo (president)

CONSTITUTION

Nigeria has seemingly made the transition from military rule to a democratically elected government. Elections were held in 1999 under the provisions of the constitution adopted in October 1979. In May 1999 a new constitution that closely resembles the previous document was adopted. Under the new constitution, the government consists of a president and a bicameral legislature. The president is elected for a four-year term by receiving a plurality of the total vote and at least one-fourth of the vote in at least two-thirds of the states. The president appoints the cabinet members and is required to reflect the country's diversity in his appointments. Suffrage is universal at age 18.

PARLIAMENT

The National Assembly is a bicameral legislature, with the Senate as the upper chamber and the House of Representatives as the lower chamber. The Senate consists of 107 seats, three from each state and one from the federal capital of Abuja. The lower house has 346 seats, apportioned on the basis of population. Elections were last held in 2003.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Political parties, suppressed by the military government, were allowed to form in July 1998. Three parties were

registered by the Provisional Ruling Council for participation in the local, state, and national elections: the People's Democratic Party, which gained 73 seats in the Senate and 213 in the House; the All Nigeria People's Party, which gained 28 seats in the Senate and 95 in the House; and the Alliance for Democracy, which gained six seats in the Senate and 31 in the House.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

In general, the states are subdivided, in descending order, into provinces, divisions, districts, and local authority units, but arrangements vary. Subordinate to the local authorities are village, urban, or town councils, which function under one of four different kinds of executives: chief in council, chief and council, council, or appointed administrator. Some local authorities are large, such as in the states of Bornu and Kano, whose populations and resources are greater than those of some smaller states. Local authorities are supervised by the state ministry of local government, which also supplies half of the staff salaries. Urban centers with municipal status come directly under divisional or provincial control.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The Nigerian legal system is an amalgam of English common law, African customary law, and (in the north) Islamic sharia. The judicature is headed by the Federal Supreme Court, comprising a chief justice and up to 15 justices. The Federal Court of Appeal was established in 1976. There are high courts of justice in each state, which function as superior courts with unlimited jurisdiction except in matters affecting disputes between states or between a state and the federal government. The subordinate courts include magistrate's courts and native courts. Magistrate's courts have original jurisdiction in civil and criminal cases, and some have the right to hear appeals from the native courts. In the northern states with Muslim majorities, the sharia is administered through the alkali courts and courts of appeal.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Currently, human rights are still under threat in Nigeria, despite certain positive actions taken by the government.

As the transitional government was leaving office, many of the oppressive decrees that allowed it to regularly violate the rights of its citizens were repealed. General Abubakar made a concerted effort to bring the military government in line with the new constitutional provisions that gave great protection to human rights. These measures included the release of all remaining high-profile political prisoners.

President Obasanjo's government made many public commitments to respect the rule of law in Nigeria, but divisions along ethnic lines and years of distrust among various groups have hampered such efforts. Although media freedom has improved under President Obasanjo, rebroadcasts of foreign radio programs have remained banned.

FOREIGN POLICY

Nigeria is the largest, wealthiest, and most powerful country in sub-Saharan Africa outside South Africa, yet its leadership potential was blunted by the corrupt military-led governments that controlled the nation for most of the postindependence period. The election of a democratic government in 1999 opened the way for Nigeria to play a more constructive role in the troubled continent. President Obasanjo, South African president Thabo Mbeki, and Algerian President Abdelaziz Bouteflika launched the revivalist NEPAD in October 2001. Initial results seemed promising, with the Group of Eight industrialized countries announcing a fund of \$500 million to be made available to African countries committed to reform. NEPAD also called for the lifting of trade barriers that impede African exports.

Militating against such improved diplomatic and humanitarian prospects for Nigeria are its relationships with its West African neighbors, with all of whom it has one dispute or another. Nigerian troops have been co-opted as peacekeepers in civil wars in Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Chad. Benin and Cameroon have challenged Nigerian territorial claims along land borders as well as in offshore waters. A dispute with Cameroon over the valuable Bakassi Peninsula remains ongoing; in 2002 the International Court of Justice awarded the peninsula to Cameroon, but in 2003 Nigeria announced that it would not relinquish the region. In early 2004 the United Nations brokered negotiations over the disputed border, and Cameroon and Nigeria agreed to begin joint security patrols.

DEFENSE

The defense structure is headed by the president in the capacity of chairman of the Armed Forces Ruling Council; the chiefs of staff of the three services are also represented on the council. The chain of command runs through a general staff, after the British model. The armed forces consist entirely of volunteers; there is no conscription. The total strength of the armed forces was 160,500 in 2003.

The Nigerian armed forces are the largest and best trained in West Africa. The army has been completely modernized, and military expenditures have risen sharply in recent years, reflecting substantial arms purchases. In 2004 the country spent about \$545 million, or 0.8 percent of gross domestic product (GDP), on the military.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	160,500
Military Manpower Availability:	26,804,314
Military Expenditures \$million:	544.6
as % of GDP:	0.8
as % of central government expenditures:	—
Arms Imports \$million:	51
Arms Exports \$million:	—

ECONOMY

The oil-rich Nigerian economy, long hobbled by political instability, corruption, and poor macroeconomic management, is undergoing substantial economic reform under the new civilian administration. Nigeria's former military rulers failed to diversify the economy away from overdependence on the capital-intensive oil sector, which provides 20 percent of GDP, 95 percent of foreign exchange earnings, and about 65 percent of budgetary revenues. The largely subsistence agricultural sector has not kept up with rapid population growth, and Nigeria, once a large net exporter of food, now imports food. Following the signing of an International Monetary Fund (IMF) standby agreement in August 2000, Nigeria received a debt-restructuring deal from the Paris Club and a \$1 billion loan from the IMF. Both were contingent on economic reforms, however, and Nigeria pulled out of the IMF agreement in 2002, as the nation lacked the ability to implement market-oriented reforms urged by the IMF. Nevertheless, increases in foreign investment and oil production combined with high world oil prices to push growth over 7 percent in 2003.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion:	125.7
GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$:	1,000
GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %:	4.1
GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %:	1.6
Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:	
Agriculture:	36.2
Industry:	30.5
Services:	33.3
Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:	
Private Consumption:	52
Government Consumption:	25
Gross Domestic Investment:	18.0
Foreign Trade \$billion:	Exports: 33.99
Imports:	17.14
% of Income Received by Poorest 10%:	1.6
% of Income Received by Richest 10%:	40.8

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
161.7	185.2	209.2	236.1	269.2

Finance

National Currency: Naira (NGN)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = NGN 133.714
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 946
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 15.0
 Total External Debt \$billion: 30.55
 Debt Service Ratio %: 6.91
 Balance of Payments \$billion: 5.228
 International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 7.13
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
 16.5

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 317.6
 per capita \$: 2.30
 Foreign Direct Investment \$billion: 1.2

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$billion: 11.78
 Expenditures \$billion: 11.47
 Budget Surplus \$million: 310
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 36.2
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 4.0
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 0.1
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 0.7
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 5.5
 Total Farmland % of land area: 33.2
 Livestock: Cattle million: 15.2
 Chickens million: 140
 Pigs million: 6.6
 Sheep million: 23
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 69.9
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 511.7

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 2.27
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 1.8

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 132.5
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million:
 20.5
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 174
 Net Energy Imports % of use: -101.4
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 5.89
 Production kW-hr billion: 17.4
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 16.1
 Coal Reserves tons million: 209
 Production tons 000: 70
 Consumption tons 000: 70
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: 176
 Production cubic feet billion: 501
 Consumption cubic feet billion: 225

Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: 35.3
 Production barrels million per day: 2.5
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 321
 Pipelines Length km: 3,638

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 17.14
 Exports \$billion: 33.99
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 1.6
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 11.5
 Balance of Trade \$million: 5.228

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
China %	13.4	—
United Kingdom %	9.2	—
France %	7.9	5.2
United States %	7.7	41.4
Netherlands %	6.4	—
South Korea %	5.7	—
Italy %	5.6	—
Germany %	5.4	—
Brazil %	4.5	5.5
Spain %	—	8.6
India %	—	4.1

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 194,394
 Paved %: 30.9
 Automobiles: —
 Trucks and Buses: —
 Railroad: Track Length km: 3,557
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: —
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 46
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 608
 Airports: 70
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 522
 Length of Waterways km: 8,600

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 887
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 263
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 640

Communications

Telephones 000: 853.1
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.10
 Cellular Telephones million: 3.15
 Personal Computers 000: 860
 Internet Hosts per million people: 8.9
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 5.8

ENVIRONMENT

Irresponsible environmental policies and widespread corruption have contributed to make Nigeria one of the most polluted countries in Africa. The principal problems are soil degradation resulting from a lack of watershed protection, land overuse and unsuitable farming techniques, water contamination resulting from poor wastewater treatment and inadequate solid waste disposal, and deforestation. Every year the country loses at least 5 percent of its closed forests, and one environmental group puts the annual deforestation rate as high as 14.3 percent. Only 4.7 percent of the country's forests were protected in 1997, and even in those locations there is little protection against illegal poaching and logging.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 14.8
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: -398
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 6
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 0.28

LIVING CONDITIONS

Although Nigeria is one of the wealthier countries in Africa, living conditions are still harsh. Per capita GDP in 2004 was just \$1,000, and in 2000 an estimated 60 percent of the population was living below the poverty line. Wide income inequalities exist, with the poorest 10 percent of the population earning just 1.6 percent of the nation's income and the richest 10 percent earning 40.8 percent. While more affluent Nigerians live in Western-style homes with modern amenities and the middle class can live in modest homes with some comforts, many Nigerians live in crowded conditions and squatter areas. About 53 percent of the population lives in rural areas and village, typically without electricity. Water has to be drawn from communal wells, and people must scavenge for firewood, especially in the sparsely vegetated northern regions. The oil industry has made transportation relatively convenient; the nation has over 60,000 km (37,300 mi) of paved roads, and even 1,200 km (746 mi) of expressways.

HEALTH

The health-care system in Nigeria is generally poor. Life expectancy at birth in 2004 was under 47 years, and the infant mortality rate was nearly 100 deaths per 1,000 live births, in a country where only 42 percent of births are attended by trained medical personnel. In 2002 only about two-fifths of the population had access to adequate sanitation facilities, and under two-thirds had access to

clean drinking water. In 2002 spending on health care amounted to only \$19 per person.

AIDS has had a devastating effect on Nigeria. In 2003 an estimated 5.4 percent of adults were living with the disease, most without knowing it, and that year there were 310,000 deaths from the disease—up from 170,000 just two years earlier. In all, well over two million Nigerians are estimated to have succumbed to the disease, and experts predict that as many as 4.2 million will have died from AIDS by 2008.

Health

Number of Physicians: 30,885
 Number of Dentists: 2,180
 Number of Nurses: 60,356
 Number of Pharmacists: 8,642
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 27
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 98.8
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 800
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 4.7
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 19
 HIV Infected % of adults: 5.4
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 25
 Measles: 35
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 38
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 60

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Malnutrition is a persistent problem in Nigeria. In 2001–03, 11 percent of the nation's women suffered from chronic malnutrition, while 42 percent of children under the age of five were stunted and 25 percent were underweight. The primary dietary staples in the south include sweet potatoes, yams, and maize, often pounded into a paste or dough and served with a stew that includes meats and vegetables such as okra, tomatoes, and onions. Staples in the north include maize, sorghum, and millet, which are often made into porridge and served with soup. Fish is common, but meat and chicken are eaten only if the budget allows. Most Nigerian food is spicy, and hot red peppers are used generously in sauces and relishes.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 9.3
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,840
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 147.0
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 129.2

STATUS OF WOMEN

The status of women in Nigeria involves a complex of economic, legal, and social factors. Women are regarded

as inferior to men in virtually all fields. Discrimination in employment is common. There is no legal recourse in the fight against discrimination because the principle of equal treatment is not enshrined in Nigerian law.

Nevertheless, women are neither powerless nor without representation in government, business, the media, and education. Women have economic power and exert influence either through women's councils or through family connections. Women in southern Nigeria are the principal managers of the market economy in villages. Women have the greatest impact on society in education, culture, and youth affairs. Female faculty members are present in many university departments, and women fill many midlevel positions in the federal and state ministries of education. There have been dramatic increases in the number of women with university degrees and in the number who have become professionals, including teachers, lawyers, doctors, judges, senior civil servants, media figures, and business executives. The new government has named the first female vice chancellor of one of the country's universities.

Women are subject to a number of discriminatory legal provisions, which vary from state to state. Although a woman keeps and controls her own wealth after marriage, her husband is the head of the household and can, for example, prevent his wife from obtaining employment or a passport in many states. A woman may be arrested for leaving her husband. In many states a widow is prohibited from inheriting her husband's property, which in the absence of children usually reverts to the husband's family. Property acquired jointly may be taken from the wife and passed to their children or to the husband's family. Husbands are not legally responsible for their wives' debts.

The issue of gender relations made worldwide headlines in 2002 when a Muslim woman, Safiya Husseini, was sentenced to death by stoning for adultery. Her death sentence was eventually overturned by an appeals court.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 5
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 0.95
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: —

WORK

Nigeria's labor force in 2003 consisted of over 55 million people, with about 70 percent employed in agriculture, 10 percent in industry, and 20 percent in services. Major agricultural products include cocoa, peanuts, palm oil, maize, rice, sorghum, millet, cassava, yams, rubber, timber, fish, and livestock, including cattle, sheep, and goats.

Major industrial products include crude oil, coal, tin, columbite, textiles, cement, food products, footwear, chemicals, fertilizer, ceramics, and steel. Most farmers engage in subsistence farming; Nigeria used to be a net exporter of food, but as more emphasis has been placed on oil at the expense of agriculture, the nation has become a net importer of food. Large numbers of people make their livings as street vendors or in small, informal retail and other types of businesses, making it difficult to calculate an unemployment rate. Still, that rate is considered to be high; in the early 1990s it was 28 percent.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 55,670,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 36.5
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 70
 Industry: 10
 Services: 20
 Unemployment %: —

EDUCATION

Nigeria introduced free, universal, and compulsory education under the third development plan, of 1975–80, for six years, from ages six to 12. Schooling lasts 13 years, as divided into six years of primary school, five years of lower secondary school, and two years of upper secondary school.

The school year runs from September to June. In primary schools the language of instruction is the local vernacular for the first two years but English thereafter.

Technical education is provided in technical institutes, trade centers, and handicraft centers. The most notable of technical education centers is the Yaba Technical Institute, which provides training in a variety of vocational subjects. In 2005 the number of Nigerian universities totaled 53, with seven private and 46 state and federal universities. Additionally, there were 250 polytechnics, colleges of education, and research institutions.

Although primary education is free throughout the country, the commitment to universal free education has been modified, with almost all states imposing some fees on secondary students. Primary and secondary education fall within the jurisdiction of the state governments, while the federal government controls the universities and is responsible for educational policy.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 68.0
 Male %: 75.7
 Female %: 60.6
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: —

(continues)

Education (*continued*)

First Level: Primary Schools: 38,649
 Teachers: 590,655
 Students: 24,563,004
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 41.6
 Net Enrollment Ratio: —

Second Level: Secondary Schools: 6,074
 Teachers: —
 Students: —
 Student-Teacher Ratio: —
 Net Enrollment Ratio: —

Third Level: Institutions: 53
 Teachers: 35,115
 Students: 947,538
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 8.2

Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: —

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Although Nigeria's universities and polytechnics provide vocational education, most scientific research—much of it concentrated on geology and petroleum engineering—is conducted by non-Nigerians in the private sector. The Federal Ministry of Science and Technology has pledged to increase efforts to increase economic development through scientific research in such areas as health, transportation, environmental protection, manufacturing, communications, information technology, and agriculture.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: 0.223
 Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

National and regional newspapers abound in Nigeria. Traditions of energetic and critical journalism go back to the colonial days. There are 25 daily newspapers, both government and privately funded.

The national news agency is the News Agency of Nigeria, founded in 1976. Foreign news bureaus represented in Lagos include AFP, AP, Ghana News Agency, Novosti, Reuters, DPA, Jiji, and ITAR-TASS.

Domestic and foreign television is widely available in Nigeria. The government does, however, limit private television and radio broadcasting to the regional level. The government controls two of the nation's three television broadcast networks. In July 1999 the government announced plans to privatize Nitel, Nigeria's national telecom operator. As aided by a \$1 million UN Development Fund grant, the Nigerian government is working on establishing Internet access across the country.

In 2004 there were 1,142 Internet hosts and in excess of 750,000 Internet users.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 25
 Total Circulation million: 2.76
 Circulation per 1,000: 25.4

Books Published: 1,314
 Periodicals: —

Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —

Television sets million: 7.5
 per 1,000: 69

CULTURE

The Nigerian government has initiated such programs as the All-Nigeria Festival of Arts to preserve and encourage indigenous art forms, many of which, such as dance and sculpture, had traditionally been used for religious purposes—sculpture, for example, was used for healing or to fend off ill luck—that in modern times have slowly disappeared. This effort, combined with demand by Western collectors and tourists, has led to a revitalization of Nigerian art. Prominent among such art forms is bronze work, a tradition that dates back to the ancient cities of Ife and Benin. Weaving, dying, wood carving, leatherwork, and textiles are also prominent art forms. Nigerian literature has a rich history, beginning with oral storytelling traditions. In the 20th century, Wole Soyinka won the 1986 Nobel Prize for literature, and the works of Ben Okri (whose *The Famished Road* won England's 1991 Booker Prize) and Chinua Achebe are well known outside Nigeria. Nigeria's most famous musical form is juju, which uses percussion instruments to accompany singing and guitar work. So-called highlife music combines jazz and American soul music with African rhythms.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: —

Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —

Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Nigeria has a long and fertile history of oral folklore, encompassing riddles, tales, chants, and proverbs. Once each generation the members of the Ijo village commu-

nity in Toro Arua present a saga called *Ozidi*. This saga presents the history of the people in an eight-day event that includes sacrifices to water spirits asking for their blessing. Depicting the community's heroes and enemies are dancers, singers, a drum orchestra, and a narrator. Much folklore and mythology has religious significance, including stories about a supreme being who has various names: the Efiks call the creator Abasi Ibom, or "the Great God"; the Hausa call him Ubangiji; and the Yoruba worship Olorun, or "Lord of Heaven." Shrines are built to lesser gods, who serve as intermediaries between the creator and humans.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

For those who can afford them, television sets and sound systems provide many hours of entertainment for over 40 million Nigerians, in the estimation of the government. In the cities, movie theaters are popular, while throughout the country dance and music, including highlife, juju, and Afro-beat, are popular, especially among the younger generation. Highly popular juju artists include Shina Peters, King Sunny Ade, and Ebenezer Obey.

ETIQUETTE

As in most Islamic African countries, greetings—both in social and business settings—are likely to be formal and elaborate, entailing detailed inquiries about the welfare and health of the other person and his or her family. Because of the nation's linguistic diversity, greetings with strangers are likely to be in English. Personal space during conversation is much closer than Americans would be accustomed to. The left hand is reserved for personal hygiene, so it is considered rude to pass an object to another with the left hand, though objects from others are to be accepted with both hands, never one. In a country with a short life expectancy, elders are accorded great deference—older women and men alike are shown special respect.

FAMILY LIFE

Most marriages in Nigeria are conducted according to the couple's religious tradition, though strictly civil marriages are common. In the cities, Western-style "love" marriages are increasingly common, but in many parts of the country marriages are still arranged by the couple's families, and in some cultures the groom has to pay a bride-price—cattle, money, or other goods of value—to the bride's family. Divorce is common, and it is not uncommon for the wife and husband to live virtually independently of one another, often in separate liv-

ing quarters. Most Nigerian families are large—in 2005 the fertility rate was 5.5 children per woman—in large part because having many children is a sign of high social standing among many men. Under Islamic law, polygyny is allowed, though few men can afford multiple wives. The prominence of the extended family depends on the ethnic group; the Hausa, for example, place little emphasis on the extended family, while the Ibo tend to remain quite close to the clan of their mother.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Dress among Nigeria's ethnic groups formerly had great significance with respect to prestige, religious and ethnic affiliation, marital status, bloodline, and the like. While dress retains some of this significance, especially in rural areas, modern Western-style dress has been replacing traditional dress. The Ibo continue to wear the dashiki, a loose-fitting shirt. Traditional dress among women emphasizes jewelry—toe rings, bracelets, necklaces, and the like—made from a variety of materials, including stone, leather, ivory, mother-of-pearl, animal teeth, and snake vertebrae. Hairdressing was also elaborate and carried symbolic meaning. Traditional clothing made of indigenous fabrics tends to be brightly colored.

SPORTS

Nigerians play many sports, including tennis, swimming, cricket, boxing, wrestling, basketball, and soccer. Wrestling is especially popular among the Yoruba, who have different styles of wrestling with different rules and conventions. Over the years Nigerians have enjoyed some success in the Summer Olympics, beginning with a bronze medal in boxing in the 1964 Tokyo games. In 1992 the men won the four by 100 meter relay in Barcelona, and in 1996 the men's national soccer team, the Super Eagles, won the gold medal in Atlanta. A hero among many Nigerians is the retired American National Basketball Association star Hakeem Olajuwon, who was born in Nigeria.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1960** Nigeria becomes an independent member of the Commonwealth, with Sir Alhaji Abu Bakar Tafawa Balewa as prime minister.
- 1961** Northern Cameroons votes in plebiscite to join Nigeria.
Defense pact with the United Kingdom is terminated.
- 1963** Nigeria becomes a republic, with Nnamdi Azikiwe as first president.

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- A fourth region, the Midwestern, is carved out of the Western Region.
- Nation holds census, the first after independence, but census figures are disputed by Eastern and Midwestern region governments.
- 1966** Part of the army, led by Maj. Chukwuma Kaduna Nzeogwu, rises in revolt, killing Northern Region premier Alhaji Ahmadu Bello, Western Region premier S. L. Akintola, and federal Prime Minister Balewa. Troops loyal to the government foil the coup, but the Council of Ministers hands over the government to the armed forces. Maj. Gen. Johnson Aguiyi-Ironsi is invested as head of the federal military government. Political parties and legislature are suspended. General Aguiyi-Ironsi is kidnapped by Muslim soldiers at Ibadan and killed along with the military governor of the Western Province. Lt. Col. Yakubu Gowon assumes supreme power. In continuing unrest in the north, between 10,000 and 30,000 Ibo are massacred by Muslims.
- 1967** The military governor of the Eastern Region, Col. Odumegwu Ojukwu, and the Eastern Nigeria Consultative Assembly at Enugu declare the Eastern Region the independent Republic of Biafra. Fighting breaks out between 40,000 federal troops and the 25,000-strong Biafran forces. Biafrans gain early successes and occupy Benin City. The Biafran capital of Enugu falls to federal troops, followed by the port of Calabar.
- 1968** Biafran cities of Onitsha and Port Harcourt fall to federal troops. Aba, Umuahia, and Owerri fall in quick succession to federal troops, thus making the blockade of Biafra total. Tanzania, Gabon, Côte d'Ivoire, Zambia, and Haiti recognize Biafra. Efforts to achieve a negotiated settlement fail.
- 1970** Biafran resistance collapses. Ojukwu hands over power to Maj. Gen. Philip Effiong and flees to Côte d'Ivoire. Effiong signs instrument of surrender at Lagos, with the declaration "Biafra ceases to exist."
- 1975** Gowon is ousted in a bloodless coup and replaced by Brig. Murtala Ramat Mohammed. New administration launches cleanup campaign.
- 1976** Government announces plans to transfer capital to Abuja. The country is redivided into 19 states. Mohammed is assassinated in the course of an abortive coup in which General Gowon is suspected to have been involved. Lt. Gen. Olusegun Obasanjo is invested as the new head of state. New draft constitution, drafted by a committee headed by Rotimi Williams, is announced.
- 1977** Constituent Assembly is elected to discuss the draft constitution.
- 1978** State military governments are abolished, and the ban on political parties is lifted. New constitution is approved by the military government.
- 1979** New House of Representatives and Senate elections are held under the new constitution, effective in October. In a freely contested presidential election, Shehu Shagari is elected nation's first civilian president in 13 years.
- 1982** Over two million non-Nigerian Africans are expelled from the country.
- 1983** President Shagari is returned for a second term, and his party wins significant gains in gubernatorial and legislative elections. Shagari is ousted in a bloodless coup led by Maj. Gen. Muhammadu Buhari, who sets up the Supreme Military Council.
- 1984** Buhari suspends sections of the constitution dealing with civil government and liberties and curtails press freedoms. Some 500 politicians, including Shagari, are placed in detention. Relations with the United Kingdom are strained over kidnapping of a Buhari opponent in London.
- 1985** Buhari is toppled in a bloodless coup led by Ibrahim Babangida, who assumes the title of president. A counter coup by rival officers is attempted and fails. The Supreme Military Council is renamed the Armed Forces Ruling Council.
- 1986** Nigeria and Britain restore full diplomatic relations. A total of 10 leading officers of the 1985 coup attempt are executed.
- 1987** Babangida announces a timetable providing for return to civilian rule by 1992. In one of the earliest steps in reestablishing civilian rule, local elections are held in 301 electoral areas. Growing tensions between Christians and Muslims lead to clashes that leave 25 dead.
- 1988** A constituent assembly is inaugurated to debate provisions for the new draft constitution, to be modeled after the constitution of 1979. Two new states are created through the division of existing states, bringing the total number of states to 21. The appointment of a new Sultan of Sokoto sparks violence among Muslims.

- 1989** Babangida lifts ban on political parties, only to reject all ensuing applications and create two new parties, the Social Democratic Party and the National Republican Convention.
- 1990** Antigovernment demonstrations are sparked by a cabinet shakeup, in which Babangida sacks the defense minister Bali, assuming his portfolio himself.
Another coup is attempted and fails.
Later in the year, 138 soldiers convicted of participating in coup attempt are executed.
Nigeria leads a multinational African peacekeeping force into Liberia to intervene in its civil war.
- 1991** Nigeria sends troops to Sierra Leone to help that country repulse rebels from neighboring Liberia.
- 1993** Babangida voids the results of the national elections from 1992, which would have placed opposition candidate Moshood Abiola in power.
Babangida resigns, and his self-selected successor is ousted in a coup in November.
- 1994** The new government, led by former defense minister Sani Abacha, continues the previous government's practice of arresting political opponents.
- 1995** Western nations protest the arrest of political opponents and boycott the sale of arms to the country.
- 1998** After scheduling election for August, Abacha suddenly dies and is replaced by Gen. Abdulsalami Abubakar.
- 1999** Democratically elected president Olusegun Obasanjo is sworn in, as the military government is replaced.
- 2001** Ethnic fighting breaks out in the central Nasarawa State.
Nigeria, South Africa, and Algeria formally launch the New Partnership for African Development, a plan for the revival of Africa.
- 2002** Thousands are left dead by a blast at a munitions dump in Lagos.
Rioting sparked by Muslim opposition to the planned Miss World pageant leaves 200 dead.
In the first legislative elections since the restoration of civilian rule in 1999, Obasanjo's People's Democratic Party wins a majority amid charges of ballot fraud.
- 2003** In the first presidential election since the return of civilian rule, Obasanjo is reelected with more than 60 percent of the vote, again amid charges of voting irregularities.
Violence erupts in the town of Warri, as the Ijaw and Itsekiri clash, leaving 100 dead.
- 2004** Religious violence erupts in the central plateau, with over 200 Muslims killed by Christian mi-

litias. Gang violence erupts in Port Harcourt, leaving 500 dead.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Nigeria Web
<http://odili.net/nigeria.html>
- Nigeria on the Net
<http://www.nigeria.com>

NORWAY

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Kingdom of Norway (Kongeriket Norge)

ABBREVIATION

NO

CAPITAL

Oslo

HEAD OF STATE

King Harald V (from 1991)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg (from 2005)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Constitutional monarchy with parliamentary democracy

POPULATION

4,593,041 (2005)

AREA

324,220 sq km (125,182 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Nordic

LANGUAGE

Norwegian

RELIGION

Evangelical Lutheran

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Krone

NATIONAL FLAG

A blue cross with an extended right horizontal outlined in white on a red field

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A gold-crowned lion on a red shield holding the silver-headed battle ax of Saint Olaf in its forepaws. The shield is crested with a gold crown bearing an orb and a plain gold cross at its peak. When shown as the royal arms, the shield is surrounded by the chain and order of Saint Olaf and displayed on a red, gold-fringed ermine pavilion with a more elaborate crown, repeating the lion and ax theme at its crest.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Ja, Vi Elsker Dette Lander” (Yes, We Love This Country)

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year’s Day), May 1 (Labor Day), May 17 (Constitution Day), all major Christian festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

June 7, 1905

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

May 17, 1814

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

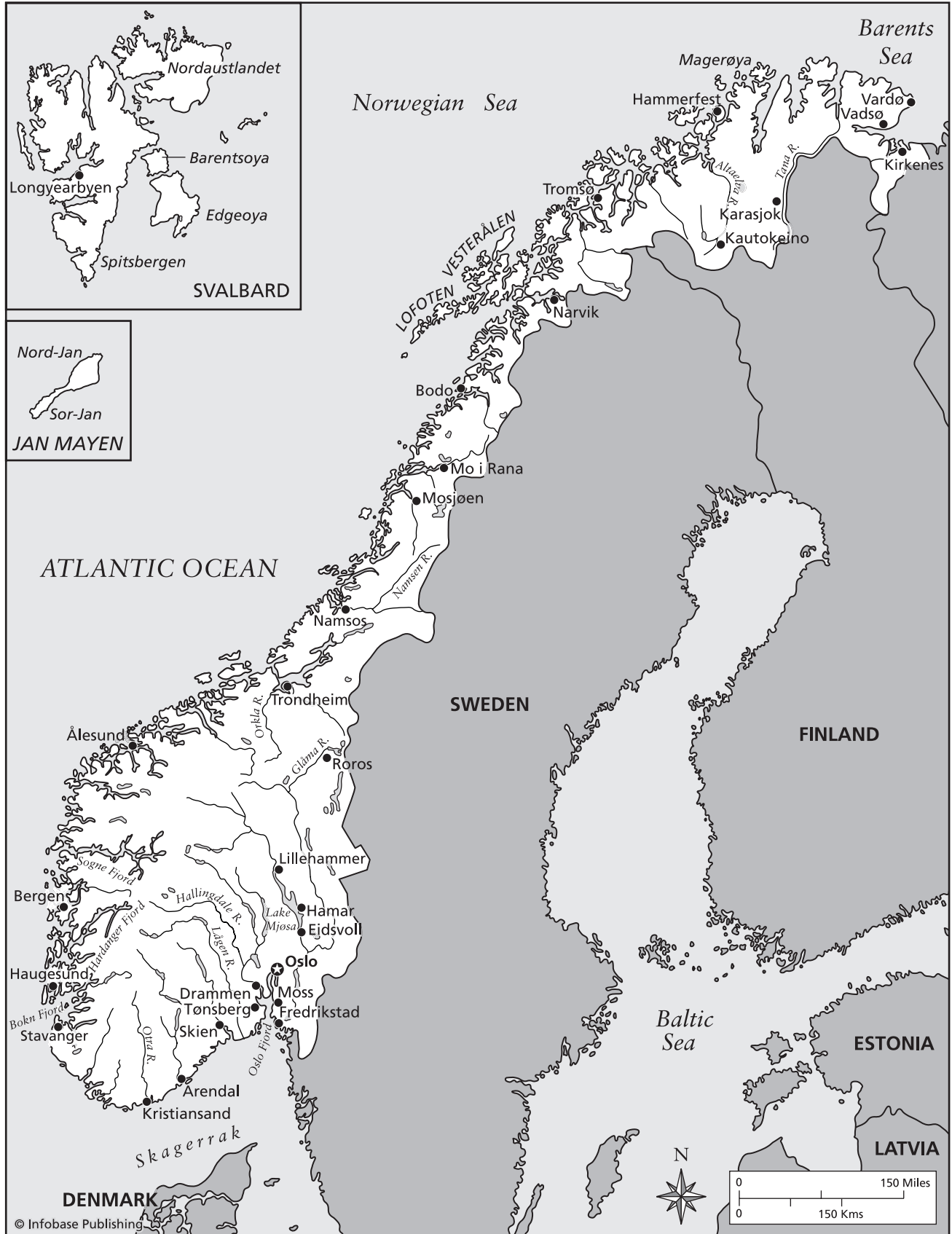
Norway is in the western part of the Scandinavian peninsula, with almost one-third of the country north of the arctic circle. The total coastline is 21,925 km (13,615 mi) with the inclusion of the fjords and the greater islands. Norway’s total land area, including Svalbard and Jan Mayen, is 324,220 sq km (125,182 sq mi). Svalbard, an island group far to the north, with 62,700 sq km (24,202 sq mi), constitutes 16.2 percent of the land area. Jan Mayen, an island between Norway and Greenland, with 380 sq km (147 sq mi), has 0.1 percent of the land area.

Norway extends 1,752 km (1,089 mi) north-northeast to south-southwest. Norway’s width is as great as 430 km

(267 mi) east-southeast to west-northwest, but in places the land is less than 8 km (4.97 mi) wide, where fjords cut inland nearly to the Swedish border. Norway is bounded on the north by the Arctic Ocean, on the far northeast by Finland and Russia, on the west by the Norwegian Sea extension of the Atlantic Ocean, on the east by Sweden, on the south by the Skagerrak, and on the southwest by the North Sea. The land boundaries are 736 km (457 mi) with Finland, 196 km (122 mi) with Russia, and 1,619 km (1,005 mi) with Sweden.

Norway has a disputed claim in Antarctica (Queen Maud Land). There is also a territorial dispute between Norway and Russia regarding maritime boundaries in the Barents Sea around Svalbard. The capital is Oslo, for-

Norway



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merly Christiania, in the southeastern part of the country. Trondheim is the place of coronation and burial for Norwegian kings. It is also the northernmost major city, as most of Norway's population resides in the southern half of the country.

Norway is a fairly mountainous country, with average elevation exceeding 457 m (1,500 ft). Its upland character is most clearly seen in the high fells, which are barren fields. Fully 3,000 sq km (1,158 sq mi) of the fells are under ice fields, the most extensive of which is the Jostedal-breen. The ice surfaces range from 914 to 1,829 m (3,000 to 6,000 ft) in height.

Norwegian mountain ranges are roughly divided into three groups. The most northerly, the Kjölen, is by far the greatest and forms a natural barrier between Norway and Sweden, receding with decreasing height northward to the Finnish border. The Dovrefjell Range marks the division between northern and southern Norway. The Langfjell, consisting of several ranges, contains the highest peaks in the peninsula. Galdhøpiggen, in this group, is the highest peak in the country, at 2,469 m (8,098 ft).

Most of the northern end of the Norwegian Plateau is covered by ice caps, which are, on the whole, uninterrupted by peaks rising above them and are almost without crevasses. Jostedalbreen, 1,503 sq km (580 sq mi) in area and possibly 457 m (1,500 ft) thick, is the largest glacier in Europe.

Norwegian rivers are generally not navigable, but they are valuable as flumes for the timber coming down from forest districts. The only navigable rivers are the Glomma and the Dramselv. The Glomma, the largest river in Scandinavia, is 563 km (350 mi) long and rises more than 610 m (2,000 ft) above sea level at Aursunden Lake, north of Røros. Nearly one-12th of the country is under freshwater, sometimes so deep that the waterbed is far below the level of the sea. By far the greatest of these lakes is the Mjøsa, 363 sq km (140 sq mi) in area and 452 m (1,482 ft) deep.

Svalbard and Jan Mayen have complex geology in comparison to mainland Norway, with much greater ranges of rocks; they share some of the basalt features common to Iceland and the Faeroes. Ice fields cover extensive areas, and the surface is covered by permafrost. Svalbard, between latitudes 74 and 81° north, is the most northerly human settlement in Europe.

Geography

Area sq km: 324,220; sq mi 125,182

World Rank: 66th

Land Boundaries, km: Finland 736; Sweden 1,619; Russia 196

Coastline, km: 21,925

Elevation Extremes meters:

Lowest: Norwegian Sea 0

Highest: Galdhøpiggen 2,469

Land Use %

Arable Land: 2.9

Permanent Crops: 0.0

Forest: 29.0

Other: 68.1

Population of Principal Cities (2004)

Bergen	237,430
Oslo	521,886
Trondheim	154,351

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Considering its northerly location, Norway has a remarkably equable climate, chiefly owing to the currents of tropical air and the warm waters of the Gulf Stream. In the western coastal area the climate is mild during the winter months, from November to March. Coastal areas have the highest levels of precipitation, as clouds blown in from the west lose much of their humidity when they encounter the high mountains close to the sea. Norway is known for its "midnight sun," the period of time in the summer months when the regions north of the arctic circle receive 24 hours of sunlight owing to their proximity to the North Pole. In Tromsø, the largest city in the north, this lasts from about May 20 to July 23. Conversely, Tromsø has a period of total darkness in the winter from about November 25 to January 17.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature

Oslo: 43°F; January 24°F; July 63°F

Lofoten Islands: 68°F

Average Rainfall

Eastern Valleys: 11.8 in

Haukelandin Masfjord: 130 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Forests cover over one-quarter of Norway's area. These forests consist of such deciduous trees as maple, lime, elm, ash, oak, and birch, which dominate the southwestern part of the country and the coast. Conifers such as spruce and pine dominate in the eastern and central regions. In the northern, treeless section of the country, tundra vegetation is sparse and consists principally of dwarf shrubs, lichen, and moss. The tundra region provides habitat for such animals as lemmings, wolverines, wolves, arctic hares, arctic foxes, and reindeer. The southern regions are home to such species as martens, otters, elk, and red deer. Along the coastlines can be seen seals; walrus; and, in the Arctic waters, beluga whales.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 4,593,041

World Rank: 114th

Density per sq km: 14.9
 % of annual growth (1999-2003): 0.6
 Male %: 49.5
 Female %: 50.5
 Urban %: 75.8
 Age Distribution %: 0–14: 19.5
 15–64: 65.7
 65 and over: 14.8
 Population 2025: 4,917,000
 Birth Rate per 1,000: 11.67
 Death Rate per 1,000: 9.45
 Rate of Natural Increase %: 0.2
 Total Fertility Rate: 1.78
 Expectation of Life (years): Males 76.78
 Females 82.17
 Marriage Rate per 1,000: 5.3
 Divorce Rate per 1,000: 2.3
 Average Size of Households: 2.3
 Induced Abortions: 13,557

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

The majority of the population (over 93 percent) are native Nordic. Norway's population now also includes some 315,000 foreign nationals.

The only other significant ethnic group in Norway comprises the roughly 20,000 people of Sami origin (formerly known as Lapps). Norwegian Sami account for about two-thirds of the global Sami population. They are usually fishers or farmers, although they also hold occupations similar to those of their non-Sami neighbors.

LANGUAGES

There are two primary Norwegian dialects in use today: Bokmål (also called Dano-Norwegian), originating from Norway's domination by Denmark, and Nynorsk (also called Landsmaal), with native Norwegian roots. The two dialects emerged over the course of Norway's history.

In 1397 Norway was united with Sweden and Denmark. As the Norwegian literary tradition declined, Danish became the only written language in use. In the late 1400s Denmark had obtained the ability to print books, while Norway had not. In addition, the only university at the time was in Copenhagen. This made Danish, eventually Dano-Norwegian, the language of the educated classes.

In 1814 the union with Denmark was dissolved. A growing community of political activists, authors, and teachers advocated the reintroduction of the original Norwegian, or Landsmaal. This movement gained many converts over the next half century. By 1885 the Storting (parliament) gave Landsmaal the same official status as Dano-Norwegian. Its place as the national language was further strengthened by the dissolution of the union with Sweden in 1905. Landsmaal continued to gain support, and in 1917–18 geographic names were changed

to reflect this. Thus, Oslo obtained its current name, as changed from the former Christiania.

The names of the two dialects were also eventually changed: Dano-Norwegian became Bokmål, while Landsmaal became Nynorsk. The language battle continued throughout the first half of the 20th century, slowed only by World War II. Today, Bokmål is substantially more prevalent than Nynorsk; the primary language of about 80 percent of schoolchildren is Bokmål.

Over 80 percent of Norwegians understand English, and almost one-third of books printed in 1997 were in English, making it the second-most-common language in Norway.

RELIGIONS

The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Norway is the state church. Although official membership figures are high (86 percent), the state church does not actually keep membership rosters; it considers most citizens members of the church. However, in the early 2000s it was estimated that only 5 percent of the population attended church with any regularity (excluding weddings, funerals, and other ceremonies), and only 8 percent of the population claim to be members of religious or philosophical groups. In 1969 laws were enacted that provided for religious freedom and granted subsidies to religions registered with the state.

Religious Affiliations

Evangelical Lutheran	3,950,000
Other Protestant or Roman Catholic	140,000
Other/None	505,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Little is known about how the first Norwegians came to the region. Most scholars subscribe to the theory that people from other parts of Scandinavia and northern Europe moved northward as the polar icecaps melted and land appeared. The first evidence of modern humans there comes from 8000 B.C.E.; artifacts from this date indicate a society based largely on hunting. As the population grew, a number of settlements were founded in southern Norway by 4000 B.C.E. While farming was introduced in the southern part of the country, hunting remained the predominant means of support in the northern regions. By the 400s C.E. the first early writings, in the form of runes, appear.

As Norway's population grew, the stresses of overpopulation in an area with little arable land caused the southern Norwegians to seek food and other resources from outside the country. In the eighth and ninth cen-

turies of the Common Era, Norse Vikings embarked on plundering raids in Germany, Holland, Scotland, England, and France, carrying home rich booty. However, the Vikings did not travel merely for looting; they were also seeking additional land to settle and develop and, as a result, founding Dublin, Ireland, as well as settling in much of northern Scotland, Greenland, and Iceland. They also sailed across the Atlantic, and Bjarni Herjulfsson is credited with first seeing North America in 986, while Leif Eriksson is generally believed to be the first European to set foot on the continent, in 1000.

Norway's explorers brought home many treasures from other countries, and they also brought back the influence of Christianity. Over the centuries belief in the Nordic gods lessened, and belief in Christianity, as assisted by missions from other European countries, grew. King Olaf Haraldsson (d. 1030), also known as Olaf the Stout, died in battle for the church and became a saint. The archbishopric of Trondheim was established in 1152.

From about 1130 through 1227 Norway was rent by civil wars, which were fought over land rights and rulership. In the end the wars left control of more of the country consolidated in the hands of the monarchy. Cities and towns developed, the church gained more power, the aristocracy came under tighter rule, and farmers, who had previously owned their lands, now rented them from noblemen. In the 13th century a common legal code was adopted, and the right of succession to the Crown was fixed. In the same period Iceland and Greenland came under Norwegian rule.

While Norwegian power was consolidated under a monarchy which had gained much wealth and power over the preceding centuries, the plague weakened the young nation considerably. As the population dwindled, there were fewer people to work the land, pay taxes, and serve in armies. Norway lost its independence upon the death of Haakon V in 1319, when Magnus VII became ruler of both Norway and Sweden. After the death of Olaf V, Norway entered the Union of Kalmar with Denmark and Sweden in 1397. The economy suffered, as the German merchants of the Hanseatic League dominated Norwegian trade. Wars with Sweden, which fought with Denmark over control of the Baltic region, broke up the Union of Kalmar, but the union between Denmark and Norway was maintained.

The alliance with Denmark lasted for centuries. Although a treaty signed in 1450 stated that Denmark and Norway were to remain on equal footing, this was not true in practice, and Norway increasingly fell under Danish domination. The Lutheran Reformation was introduced in 1537, when the Danish king extended the official Protestant Church into Norway.

Norway's position changed somewhat in 1660, when a new constitution was put into effect by the new king, Frederick III. This arrangement put more power into

the hands of Norwegian officials and left less power in the hands of the king—and thus less power in Danish hands. Norwegian autonomy was furthered by “town privileges,” which stipulated that wood had to be purchased through a town's inhabitants. This system created a flourishing middle class. The long-term domination by Denmark, combined with Norway's increasing wealth, led to Norwegians' increasing desire for independence. Although Norwegians called for a separate Norwegian bank, university, and other institutions throughout the 18th century, the Danish government rejected these requests, fearing that Norwegian independence would dry up its own percentage of Norwegian wealth.

Denmark's alliance with France during the Napoleonic Wars resulted in the dissolution of its union with Norway. By the Peace of Kiel in 1814, Norway was ceded to Sweden, but Denmark retained the Faeroe Islands, Iceland, and Greenland. A new constitutional law was signed in 1814, and Christian Frederick was elected Norwegian king, but a short war resulted in his abdication and in union with Sweden in the same year. Thus began a struggle for independence which lasted for nearly a century. While Norway was hit hard by the economic fallout of the new arrangement, as the market with Denmark vanished and Britain no longer purchased Norwegian timber, it was hit equally hard by Sweden's attempts to gain more political power over Norway. In 1821 the Swedish king sent troops to surround the Norwegian parliament, the Storting, in an effort to coerce the Norwegian parliament into passing legislation that would increase Sweden's power. The Storting refused.

While Norway asserted its independence whenever it could, it also rebounded economically. By 1854, when the first rail lines were laid, the economy was solid and growing. This economic prosperity also brought intensified class conflict between Norwegian officials and noblemen on the one hand and Norwegian farmers and laborers on the other. This brought about the establishment of both the Liberal and Conservative parties in 1884.

National focus did not stay on class struggle alone. The Storting passed revised constitutions in 1874, 1879, and 1880, based on the idea that any government in Norway must be supported by the legislature to remain in power. The Swedish king refused to ratify any of the constitutional revisions. Within Norway the country was divided as to whether the king's sanction was even needed; the Conservative Party claimed that it was, while the Liberal Party claimed that it was not. Eventually, parliamentarianism and the Liberal Party won: The Conservative government was impeached in 1884 for its role in the king's refusal of the constitutional revisions.

When the Liberal Party took over the prime ministership, through the tenure of Johan Sverdrup, Norway gained the constitutional reform it had sought. Although

Sweden acquiesced to the constitutional changes, the union between the two countries proved increasingly unpopular in Norway. While Norway requested its own consulates, Sweden rejected the proposal, and Norway increased its own military strength. The union between Sweden and Norway was finally dissolved in 1905, when the Storting declared both that Norway would establish its own consulates and that the Swedish king was no longer the Norwegian monarch, since he no longer ruled Norway. Danish Prince Carl was elected king of Norway and assumed the name Haakon VII. The Swedes asked for a Norwegian referendum, which proved almost unanimously in favor of independence from Sweden. Negotiations between the two countries in August and September 1905 ensured Norway's independence.

Norway remained neutral in World War I but was invaded by the Nazis in 1940. The national resistance was led by King Haakon, who escaped to England, where he established a government in exile. Norway was liberated on May 8, 1945, and the king returned a month later.

While Norway had fought hard for independence and proudly stated its neutrality, its postwar outlook also entailed international cooperation. It provided the first secretary-general of the United Nations in 1946 and joined the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) in 1949.

Norway's first postwar election saw the ascendancy of the Norwegian Labor Party, which continued to rule as a majority party until 1961 and as a minority party until 1965, when a coalition of nonsocialist parties took control under Per Borten of the Center Party. Labor again came to power in 1971, under Trygve Bratteli, and later, in 1976, under Odvar Nordli. In 1981 Nordli was succeeded by Gro Harlem Brundtland, the nation's first female chief executive. She was, however, dislodged from power the same year, only to return as the prime minister of a minority government in 1990. The following general elections were dominated by controversy over Norway's renewed application for membership in the European Union, which was favored by the Labor and Conservative parties but not by the smaller parties. The defeat of the Norwegian referendum on this issue led to the resignation of Brundtland in 1996. In 1997 Kjell Magne Bondevik was named prime minister, although he had the support of only 42 votes out of 165 in the Storting. After losing a no-confidence vote in the wake of an energy and environment controversy, Bondevik resigned in March 2000 and was replaced by the Labor Party leader Jens Stoltenberg. However, in elections held on September 10, 2001, the Labor Party lost 22 of its 65 seats, and Bondevik took office as prime minister for a second term. In 2005 the Labor Party regained its majority in parliament and Stoltenberg began his second term as prime minister.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1945–51	Einar Gerhardsen
1951–55	Oscar Torp
1955–63	Einar Gerhardsen
1963	John Lyng
1963–65	Einar Gerhardsen
1965–71	Per Borten
1971–72	Trygve Bratteli
1972–73	Lars Korvald
1973–76	Trygve Bratteli
1976–81	Odvar Nordli
1981	Gro Harlem Brundtland
1981–86	Kåre Willoch
1986–89	Gro Harlem Brundtland
1989–90	Jan P. Syse
1990–96	Gro Harlem Brundtland
1996–97	Thorbjørn Jagland
1997–2000	Kjell Magne Bondevik
2000–2001	Jens Stoltenberg
2001–05	Kjell Magne Bondevik
2005–	Jens Stoltenberg

CONSTITUTION

In the 1814 Grunnloven (constitution), executive power is vested in the monarch, whose powers, however, are nominal. According to the constitution the executive branch has the right of suspensive veto against bills passed by the Storting, but this is rarely done.

The head of government is the prime minister. The cabinet consists of 19 ministers, half of whom must be members of the state church. The entire cabinet is appointed by, and resigns with, the prime minister. Ministers are responsible individually, and the cabinet collectively, to the Storting. Cabinets may be forced to resign through a parliamentary motion of no confidence.

PARLIAMENT

The Norwegian parliament, the Storting, consists of 165 members elected by universal suffrage every four years. Once constituted, it elects one-fourth of its members to serve as an upper chamber, the Lagting, while the remainder serves as a lower chamber, the Odelsting. Each bill is sent first to the Odelsting and then to the Lagting. If both chambers agree, the bill is passed. If there is disagreement after two readings, a vote is taken among the whole Storting, with a two-thirds majority required for passage.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Political power in Norway has historically alternated between the two leading parties, the Conservative Party and

the Labor Party. Traditionally, the Center Party (formerly known as the Agrarian Party, founded in 1920) and the Christian People's Party (1933), together with the Conservative Party (1884), form the conservative wing. The Labor Party (founded in 1887), Socialist Left Party (1973), and Liberal Party (1884) together form the left wing. Because political loyalties are not clearly drawn, many coalition governments have contained units from different ends of the political spectrum. The Christian Democratic Party, the party of Prime Minister Kjell Magne Bondevik, is a centrist party that only recently became prominent. Power is fairly equally distributed among the various political parties. In the 2001 elections the distribution of seats in the Storting was as follows: Labor Party, 43; Conservative Party, 38; Progress Party, 26; Socialist Left Party, 23; Christian People's Party, 22; Center Party, 10; Liberal Party, 2; and Coastal Party, 1. In those elections the Labor Party made its worst showing in 90 years.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Norway is divided into 19 counties and 434 municipalities. Political and financial responsibility is vested in several popularly elected bodies: county councils, county executive committees, municipal councils, and municipal executive boards. Elections are held every four years.

LEGAL SYSTEM

In civil cases there are three levels of courts: district or city courts, the appeals courts, and the Supreme Court. Most disputes must first be brought before a conciliation board before appearing in court. If a conciliation board cannot resolve a matter, it continues through the court system up to the Supreme Court.

There are 85 district courts. In more populated areas the district courts are composed of several judges headed by a president. In less populated areas the district courts are composed of one professional judge and may include several lay judges. Beyond the district courts are the five appeals courts. At the appeals court level, cases are generally heard by three professional judges. However, parties may request two or four lay judges to participate. The highest court is the Supreme Court, which consists of a president, or chief justice, and 18 permanent justices.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Norway continually strives to ensure human rights, both within its own country and abroad. In October 1998 King Harald addressed the Sameting (the Sami minority governing body) to apologize for earlier repression. Current Norwegian law forbids discrimination on the basis of race,

sex, religion, language, and disability. Similar laws cover sexual orientation; however, no law exists barring discrimination with respect to such in private employment.

Norway's greatest challenge in human rights is to ensure those of its burgeoning immigrant population. While government surveys show clear prejudice against foreigners, they also indicate that Norwegians want their government to provide asylum when appropriate.

FOREIGN POLICY

Norway is a founding member of the United Nations, NATO, the Council of Europe, the Council of Baltic Sea States, the Barents Euro-Arctic Council, and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. Regional cooperation is exercised mainly through the Nordic Council. Beginning in 2001 Norway became a member of the UN Security Council.

Norway has long resisted joining the European Union, primarily because of concerns regarding the status of its currency, the krone. Although pro-European, Norway has long maintained amicable relations with Russia, which it borders in the far north, although the two nations continue to dispute maritime boundaries and fishing rights. In 1992 Norway attracted international criticism by withdrawing from the International Whaling Commission (IWC) rather than accept the IWC ban on whaling. Nevertheless, Norway is respected in diplomatic circles as an honest broker in many international issues, as witnessed by its role in the Oslo Accord between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization.

DEFENSE

All males between 20 and 45 years of age can be drafted for military duty, which typically lasts 12 months. In 2003 the nation's armed forces personnel numbered almost 27,000. Military expenditures in 2003 were just over \$4 billion, about 1.9 percent of the nation's gross domestic product (GDP). Despite the country's call for arms reduction in Europe and throughout the world, Norway exported about \$156 million worth of arms in 2002 and employed about 8,000 people in arms production.

Even throughout the cold war, Norway welcomed international support but would not permit foreign troops on its bases unless under direct attack. (Such an attack never occurred.) Defense policy came to be guided by Norway's unique geographical position and by the uncertainty created by the independence of the Baltic states and sustained political turmoil in Russia. While striving to maintain stability in the region, Norway offered a warm welcome to its Baltic neighbors and has provided them with military support. In 2000 Norwegian defense personnel provided assistance in the recovery of bodies from

the sunken Russian submarine *Kursk*. The presence of the Norwegian navy has increased in the northern areas, matching the increased presence of the Russian navy.

As the end of the cold war eased regional tensions, Norway began playing a more substantial role on the world stage. The nation frequently participates in UN defense and peacekeeping exercises and has several units at NATO's disposal for immediate security threats. At the same time the Norwegian government is calling for a decrease in arms throughout Europe and the world, as well as for an increased role by European countries in their own defense.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 26,600
 Military Manpower Availability: 1,014,592
 Military Expenditures \$billion: 4
 as % of GDP: 1.9
 as % of central government expenditures: 5.1
 Arms Imports \$million: —
 Arms Exports \$million: 150

ECONOMY

Norway is a prosperous welfare state whose economy combines free enterprise and Scandinavian-type socialism. The government controls key sectors, such as oil, and extensively subsidizes agriculture and fishing. As in other countries in northern Europe, extensive welfare programs help propel public expenditures to more than 50 percent of GDP. Norway has one of the highest tax levels in the world.

The economy is more trade than manufacturing oriented. The nation is basically an exporter of raw materials and semiprocessed goods and is also one of the world's major shipping nations. The main source of its wealth is oil—only Saudi Arabia exports more oil than Norway, and oil and natural gas revenues have made Norway one of the world's most affluent nations, with a per capita GDP of \$40,000 in 2004. Norway has no external debt and serves as a creditor nation. The development of hydroelectric power in recent decades made Norway western Europe's largest aluminum producer. On the other hand, the nation imports more than half of its food.

Growth hovered around 1 percent through the early 2000s. The government moved ahead with privatization in 2000, even proposing the sale of up to one-third of the 100 percent state-owned oil company Statoil. Despite their high per capita income and generous welfare benefits, Norwegians worry that in the next two decades oil and gas reserves will begin to run out. Accordingly, Norway has been saving its oil-boasted budget surpluses in a Government Petroleum Fund, which is invested abroad and has been valued at more than \$43 billion.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 183
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 40,000
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 1.9
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 1.3
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 2.2
 Industry: 36.3
 Services: 61.6
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 44
 Government Consumption: 22
 Gross Domestic Investment: 17.5
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 76.64
 Imports: 45.96
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 4.1
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 21.8

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
108.7	112.0	115.4	116.9	119.8

Finance

National Currency: Norwegian Krone (NOK)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = NOK 6.8828
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 713.6
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 4.25
 Total External Debt \$billion: 0
 Debt Service Ratio %: —
 Balance of Payments \$billion: 30.52
 International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 21.7
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 1.0

Official Development Assistance

Donor ODA \$billion: 1.4
 per capita \$: 304.80
 Foreign Direct Investment \$billion: 2.06

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$billion: 134
 Expenditures \$billion: 116.8
 Budget Surplus \$billion: 17.2
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 2.2
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: -1.6
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 14.93
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: —
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 211.3
 Total Farmland % of land area: 2.8
 Livestock: Cattle 000: 950
 Chickens million: 3.3
 Pigs 000: 459
 Sheep million: 2.4
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 8.3
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons million: 3.3

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 16.5
Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 5.2

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 236.5
Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 30.9
Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 6.84
Net Energy Imports % of use: -775.8
Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 27.1
 Production kW-hr billion: 126
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 107
Coal Reserves tons million: 1
 Production tons million: 1.73
 Consumption tons million: 1.39
Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: 74.8
 Production cubic feet trillion: 2.41
 Consumption cubic feet billion: 256
Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: 10.4
 Production barrels million per day: 3.18
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 264
Pipelines Length km: 2,213

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 45.96
Exports \$billion: 76.64
Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999-2003): 2.6
Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999-2003): 1.3
Balance of Trade \$billion: 30.52

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Sweden %	22.5	9.0
Germany %	13.3	20.2
United Kingdom %	8.3	14.6
Denmark %	7.7	—
Netherlands %	5.9	8.0
France %	—	8.3
United States %	—	7.4
Canada %	—	4.6

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 91,852
 Paved %: 77.5
Automobiles: 1,899,700
Trucks and Buses: 464,800
Railroad: Track Length km: 4,077
 Passenger-km billion: 2.48
 Freight-km billion: 3.02
Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 740
 Total Deadweight Tonnage million: 27.45
Airports: 101
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 10.55
Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 3.15
Number of Tourists from 000: —
Tourist Receipts \$billion: 3.08
Tourist Expenditures \$billion: 6.75

Communications

Telephones million: 3.34
Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
Cellular Telephones million: 4.16
Personal Computers million: 2.4
Internet Hosts per million people: 129,293
Internet Users per 1,000 people: 498

ENVIRONMENT

Water pollution and acid rain are serious issues in Norway, as they affect fish stocks and forests, respectively. The fish supply is especially vulnerable, as fertilizer runoff from farmland appears to be increasing. As the number of urban residents is rising, the country is working to maintain green spaces and limit sprawling development. The nation must also plan for the eventual exhaustion of its oil supplies, which have contributed substantially to the nation's economy since the 1960s. Sources of ongoing debate in Norway are the issues surrounding whaling, which the country resumed on a commercial basis in 1993, and plans to drill for oil in the Barents Sea.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 29.0
Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: 31
Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 5
Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 51,693
CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 11.11

LIVING CONDITIONS

In 2004 the United Nations Human Development Index, which considers life expectancy, income, educational attainment, and general standard of living, ranked Norway number one in the world. Life expectancy is high, health care is supported by the state, and the country has an extensive system of public transportation and highways. Most people own cars. The flip side of this high standard of living in a mixed socialist state is that the tax rate on income and wealth amounts to nearly 44 percent of GDP. The marginal tax rate on income, including social security contributions, is nearly 65 percent, although the government pledged to reduce taxes during the 2001-05 parliamentary term. Population density in the major cities is low, partly because the government provides significant services to rural communities (encouraging people to re-

main there) and partly because the cities make efforts to incorporate green spaces. Among the main social problems are alcoholism and binge drinking, and drug use has become more extensive in recent years. Crime rates are extremely low, and there is especially little violent crime.

HEALTH

Norway's health-care system is excellent. Life expectancy at birth in 2004 was over 79 years, and the infant mortality rate was a minuscule 3.7 deaths per 1,000 live births. Health-care spending per capita in 2002 was over \$4,000, third in the world (behind the United States and Switzerland). Free hospital care is funded by Norway's National Insurance Scheme, and only modest charges are levied for primary care and medications. The leading causes of death are heart disease and cancer. In 2002 Norway ranked third in the world (behind Japan and Belgium) in the proportion of daily smokers (29 percent).

Health

Number of Physicians: 15,978
 Number of Dentists: 5,627
 Number of Nurses: 92,791
 Number of Pharmacists: 1,781
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 356
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: 14.6
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 3.7
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 16
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 9.6
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 4,033
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.1
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 90
 Measles: 84
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: —
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 100

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Obesity is a growing problem in Norway, with about 8.4 percent of men and 8.2 percent of women regarded as obese in 2004, ranking the nation ninth in the world for obesity rates. Norway has no principal dietary staple. Breakfasts are hearty, often consisting of breads, smoked fish, meats, eggs, and dairy products such as cheese and yogurt. Lunches tend to be lighter, with sandwiches and perhaps fruit. Dinners include fish or meat, often whale meat, accompanied by potatoes or rice and vegetables.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 130.5
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 182.6

STATUS OF WOMEN

Women have played prominent roles in national political offices since the 1980s and continue to do so. The Equal Rights Law of 1978 forbids discrimination with respect to jobs, wages, and related issues. An equal rights ombudsman deals with complaints of sexual harassment. The percentage of female board members in public companies has risen to 12 percent. Norway maintains a tradition of including at least 40 percent women in government posts. Prime Minister Bondevik has eight women among his 19 ministers. Over 60 percent of college graduates are women.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 38
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.0
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 49.1

WORK

Norway's labor force in 2004 consisted of 2.38 million people, with an unemployment rate of 4.7 percent. About 4 percent were employed in agriculture, forestry, and fishing; 22 percent in industry; and 74 percent in services. The distribution of income was relatively even, with the poorest 10 percent of the population earning almost one-fifth of the top 10 percent. The workweek is limited by law to 38 hours, with no more than 200 overtime hours in a year, and Norwegians enjoy a high level of job security. Agricultural products include barley, wheat, potatoes, and meat and dairy products. Major industries include petroleum and gas, food processing, shipbuilding, paper products, metals, chemicals, timber, mining, textiles, and fishing.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 2,380,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 46.8
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishing: 4
 Industry: 22
 Services: 74
 Unemployment %: 4.3

EDUCATION

Primary schooling is compulsory for nine years, and textbooks are provided free by the state. The state also provides free transportation, as well as free living quarters for students who live too far to commute. The school year

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runs from August through June. The pupil-teacher ratio is among the lowest in the world, with an estimated seven pupils per teacher at the secondary level in 2002. Postsecondary education can include attendance at one of four universities, eight specialty schools, or regional vocational colleges. In 2002 the United Nations ranked Norwegians as the most educated people in the world, with an average of 17.3 years of schooling. In 2000, tertiary enrollment amounted to 74 percent of college-age people. Through the 1990s Norway spent nearly 7 percent of GDP on education.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 100
Male %: 100
Female %: 100
School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 17.3
First Level: Primary Schools: 3,308
Teachers: —
Students: 429,445
Student-Teacher Ratio: —
Net Enrollment Ratio: 99.9
Second Level: Secondary Schools: 746
Teachers: —
Students: 254,244
Student-Teacher Ratio: —
Net Enrollment Ratio: 95.0
Third Level: Institutions: 89
Teachers: 16,284
Students: 197,064
Gross Enrollment Ratio: 74.1
Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 7.0

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Scientific research is conducted at Norway's four major universities at Tromsø, Trondheim, Bergen, and Oslo, as well as at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology. The nation's regional institutions also carry out scientific education and research. Applied fields, including agriculture and petroleum engineering, are funded by various research institutes. The Norwegian Forum for Research in the United States was launched in 2001 to strengthen ties with scientists in the United States and Canada. Approximately 30 percent of public funds for research and development are channeled through the Research Council of Norway, established in 1993.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 4,377
Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 1.67
High-Tech Exports \$billion: 2.66
Patent Applications by Residents: 1,780

MEDIA

Newspapers had their heyday in the early part of the 20th century, when they were instrumental in the linguistic movements. In 1972 the government implemented subsidies to newspapers in financial trouble, which policy is continued today.

Major papers that remain in print include *Adresseavisen*, based in Trondheim, an advertising paper that has been in existence since 1767, and *Aftenposten*, established in 1860, which is among Norway's largest papers. The largest-circulation paper is the *Verdens gang*, a tabloid. Most papers are unabashed supporters of a particular political party. The average Norwegian spends about one hour each day reading magazines and newspapers.

Television and radio in Norway have not had the impact that the media have had in other countries. The national station, NRK, was the only television station for much of the 20th century. Norway's rugged terrain and geographic location limited the reception of television and radio stations from outside of the country, and by the time satellite communications were developed, the printed press had become firmly established. With the introduction of the independent stations TV2, TV3, and P4, Norwegians were exposed to television and radio commercials for the first time.

By the 1980s newspapers were feeling some competitive pressure from television and radio news, which was providing less hard news and fewer news stories but was using a more sensationalistic slant. Recent statistics indicate that Norwegians age 15–19 read much less than do their older counterparts, suggesting that a long-term decline in overall reading may not be far away.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 82
Total Circulation million: 2.6
Circulation per 1,000: 569
Books Published: 4,985
Periodicals: 70
Radio Receivers million: 15.3
per 1,000: 3,323
Television sets million: 2.9
per 1,000: 653

CULTURE

Norway's cultural heritage extends back to the sagas written in Old Norse by the Vikings during the medieval period. Those written by Snorri Sturlusson (1178–1241) are regarded as among the first works of Norwegian literature. Under Danish rule in the 18th century, Norway's most famous writer was Ludvig Holberg, who wrote comedies and satires that are still performed. In the 19th century Norway's most famous author, Henrik Ibsen, wrote

plays such as *A Doll's House*, *Peer Gynt*, and *An Enemy of the People* that are still performed worldwide. In the 20th century the writer Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson won the 1903 Nobel Prize, as did Sigrid Undset in 1928. Undset's most famous work was her trilogy of novels *Kristin Lavransdatter*. Two other names in Norwegian cultural history are particularly well known throughout the world: In painting, Edvard Munch, the expressionist from the late 19th and early 20th centuries, is known for his haunting work *The Scream*, which made world headlines in August 2004 when it was stolen from the Munch Museum in Oslo in front of stunned museum patrons. In music, the 19th-century composer Edvard Grieg, who wrote *Holberg Suite* (so named in honor of the 18th-century writer Ludvig Holberg), is known for incorporating Norwegian folk music into his classical compositions.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 435
 Volumes: 20,788,000
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: 195
 Annual Attendance: 4,573,000
 Cinema Gross Receipts national currency million: 579.6
 Number of Cinemas: 605
 Seating Capacity: 89,000
 Annual Attendance: 11,352,000

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Norwegian folklore is dominated by the figure of Odin, a god who lived in the walled city of Valhalla and who went to war with nine warrior maidens called the Valkyries. The nation's folklore tradition includes a number of odd and grotesque figures, including trolls, which are the subject of numerous folktales; some trolls are friendly to humans, but others are determined to pester them. Other folkloric figures include the *nokken*, a water spirit who tempts men and boys to their deaths; the *nisse*, a little man with wooden shoes, a red cap, and a white beard; and the *fossegrimen*, a water spirit who dwells at the bottom of waterfalls and is friendly to humans.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Norway is a mountainous country with a long seacoast, so winter and water sports are immensely popular. In the winter Norwegians enjoy skiing and ice fishing in the mountains. Since the vast majority of the population lives within a few miles of the water, boating, sailing, fishing, swimming, and rafting are popular. Summertime trips to the fjords are a common activity for families. Hiking, too, is popular. The cities try to maintain natural forested ar-

reas within their boundaries (Norway is the least densely populated country in Europe), and people take advantage of these natural areas on the weekends. In Oslo, the commuter train runs all the way to the edge of the city, where hikers disembark and can immediately find trails into the forest.

ETIQUETTE

The forbidding environment and long, dark winters have made Norwegians a self-reliant and reserved people who avoid direct confrontation with others. Any kind of loud or boisterous behavior in public is frowned upon. Public seating in parks is arranged so that people can enjoy the public space but still maintain a sense of privacy. People respect one another's personal space and stand apart during conversation. Norwegians tend to be egalitarian and noncompetitive; a story is told about the king wondering whether Norway had been a poor host for the 1994 Winter Olympics in Lillehammer because Norway won a large number of medals, and for many years it was more acceptable to say that one "participated" in athletics than to say that one "competed." This egalitarianism extends to language, where the informal "you" is nearly universally preferred over the formal "you."

FAMILY LIFE

Families in Norway tend to be small. In 2004 the fertility rate was just 1.8 children per woman, and the country's overall birth rate that year was just under 12 births per 1,000 population. Single-parent homes are increasingly common, as the nation's divorce rate doubled between the 1970s and the 1990s. Marriages are essentially never arranged; even the king sought a spouse who was a commoner rather than a royal. Child rearing and household responsibilities tend to be fairly evenly shared between husband and wife, especially because of the country's generous family leave laws for both women and men. The nuclear family is the norm, but in rural areas it is not uncommon for grandparents to live with the family or very close by. Many children are placed in the hands of child-care centers or babysitters, and attitudes toward child rearing are generally permissive, so Norwegian children have an extended childhood and adolescence.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Western-style clothing is almost universal for business, casual, and formal occasions alike. Traditional costumes can sometimes be seen at festivals. For men, these include buckled shoes, hose, tight knee-length breeches, an embroidered vest, and a broad-brimmed hat. For women,

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traditional dress consists of ankle-length skirts, high-collared and embroidered blouses, and a lace cap.

SPORTS

While tennis is widely played, soccer is the most popular summertime sport. Above all, however, the mountains of Norway have allowed the people to excel at wintertime sports, especially skiing and ice skating. In 1952 the Winter Olympics came to Oslo, and in 1994 they were held in Lillehammer. In the early years of Winter Olympic competition, Norway, "the birthplace of skiing," fared well, but Norwegians were eclipsed by the better-trained Swedes, Germans, and Russians in the 1950s and 1960s. In 1969 the Norwegian College of Sport was established to put Olympic training on a sounder footing, and through the 1970s and 1980s its efforts bred success. Nevertheless, in the 1988 games in Calgary, Canada, Norway won a devastating five medals. A major push was made to improve the nation's competitive posture, and in the 1992, 1994, and 1998 Olympics, Norwegian athletes won a total of 71 medals, including 29 golds. They added 24 medals in Salt Lake City in 2002, including a Norwegian record of 11 golds.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1939** Norway declares its neutrality on the advent of World War II.
- 1940** Nazi forces invade Norway on April 9, taking over the country.
- 1945** With Norway freed by Allied forces, Vidkun Quisling, head of the Nazi administration of Norway, is executed.
Einar Gerhardsen is elected prime minister.
King Haakon VII returns from exile in Great Britain.
- 1946** Trygve Lie becomes first secretary-general of the newly formed United Nations.
- 1949** Spurred by the threat of Communist takeover and "Finlandization," Norway joins NATO.
- 1951** Oscar Torp of the Norwegian Labor Party succeeds Gerhardsen as prime minister.
- 1955** Gerhardsen returns to office for a second term as prime minister.
- 1957** King Haakon VII dies, and his son, Olav V, ascends the throne.
- 1960** Oil fields are discovered throughout the decade, providing a key source of wealth for the country.
- 1963** The Norwegian Labor Party yields power for a month to a Conservative Party-led coalition headed by John Lyng.
Gerhardsen heads his third government.
- 1965** Per Borten of the Center Party displaces Gerhardsen as prime minister.
- 1971** Norwegian Labor returns to office under Trygve Bratteli.
- 1972** Lars Korvald of the Christian People's Party forms a coalition government.
Norwegians reject European Community membership in a national referendum.
- 1973** Trygve Bratteli leads his second government.
- 1976** Odvar Nordli replaces Bratteli as Norwegian Labor leader and prime minister.
- 1981** Norway's first woman prime minister, Gro Harlem Brundtland, takes office as prime minister following her election as Norwegian Labor Party leader. The Brundtland government falls, and Kåre Willoch of the Conservative Party forms a coalition government.
- 1986** Willoch resigns following a no-confidence motion in the Storting, and Brundtland heads a minority government.
- 1989** Following an electoral reverse, Brundtland resigns. A Conservative-led coalition takes office under Jan P. Syse.
- 1990** Brundtland again becomes prime minister on November 3.
- 1991** King Olav V dies on January 17. His son, Harald V, becomes king.
- 1994** Norwegian voters again reject EC membership.
- 1996** On October 25 Brundtland resigns and is replaced as prime minister by Thorbjørn Jagland, head of Norway's Labor Party since 1992.
- 1997** Kjell Magne Bondevik, of the Christian Democratic Party, becomes prime minister
- 2000** Jens Stoltenberg, of the Labor Party, becomes prime minister after Bondevik loses a no-confidence vote in parliament.
- 2001** In parliamentary elections, the Labor Party loses over one-third of its seats. Bondevik becomes prime minister again, leading a center-right coalition government.
- 2003** Environmentalists and the fishing industry oppose plans to drill for oil in the Barents Sea.
- 2005** The Labor Party wins 61 seats in parliamentary elections; Stoltenberg begins a second term as prime minister.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Statistics Norway
<http://www.ssb.no/www-open/english>

OMAN

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Sultanate of Oman (Saltanat Uman)

ABBREVIATION

OM

CAPITAL

Muscat

HEAD OF STATE & HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Sultan Qaboos bin Said al-Bu Said (from 1970)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Absolute monarchy

POPULATION

3,001,583 (2005)

AREA

212,460 sq km (82,031 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Arab

LANGUAGE

Arabic

RELIGION

Islam

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Rial

NATIONAL FLAG

A vertical red band at the hoist side, with the national emblem in the upper-left in white, next to three horizontal stripes of white (top), red, and green

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A belt with silver scimitars crossed beneath a ceremonial curved *kbanjar* dagger

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“God Save Our Sultan”

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

July 22–24 (Accession of the Sultan), November 18 (National Day), November 19 (Sultan’s birthday), various Islamic festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

1650

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

None (Note: On November 6, 1996, the sultan issued a royal decree promulgating basic law that the government regards as a constitution.)

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Oman, the second-largest country on the Arabian Peninsula, is at the southeastern corner of that land mass, facing the Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea. Its area is estimated at 212,460 sq km (82,031 sq mi), including the island of Masirah and the tip of Musandam Peninsula, which juts into the Strait of Hormuz. Oman shares international borders with Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Yemen.

The country is divided topographically into several regions. The tip of the Musandam Peninsula, the Ras al-Jabal, which touches the Strait of Hormuz and is separated from the rest of the sultanate by a belt of United Arab Emirates territory, consists entirely of low mountains.

The fertile and populous coastal plain known as Batinah slopes gradually on the landward side to the foothills of the western Hajar. The Muscat Matrah coastal region is bounded almost throughout its length by cliffs.

The high tableland of central Oman is west of the coastal area. The tableland consists of two ranges: the Hajar al-Gharbi, or western Hajar, and the Hajar al-Sharqi, or eastern Hajar, divided by the Wadi Samail, which forms the traditional route between Muscat and the interior. The average elevation is 1,220 m (4,000 ft), but some peaks of a high ridge known as Jabal Shams rise to 2,980 m (9,777 ft). Beyond the Hajar Mountains is sandy desert, which eventually merges with the wastes of Rub al-Khali.

Oman



Dhofar Province is a coastal plain noted for rich vegetation and natural beauty. Some 16 km (10 mi) inland rise the Qara Mountains, which meet the Rub al-Khali 240 km (150 mi) to the north. The coastline south to Dhofar is barren and forbidding, while

the island of Masirah is virtually uninhabited and inhospitable.

A small number of surface-flowing wadis, or seasonal streams, are found in the Hajar Mountains, but none reaches the sea.

Geography

Area sq km: 212,460; sq mi 82,031
 World Rank: 82nd
 Land Boundaries, km: Saudi Arabia 676; United Arab Emirates 410; Yemen 288
 Coastline, km: 2,092
 Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Arabian Sea 0
 Highest: Jabal Shams 2,980
 Land Use %
 Arable Land: 0.1
 Permanent Crops: 0.1
 Forest: 0.0
 Other: 99.8

Population of Principal Cities (2003 est.)

As-Sib	223,449
Muscat	67,400

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Oman has an arid subtropical climate. The summer months run from May to October, with a maximum average temperature of 46°C (115°F) and humidity in excess of 90 percent. The summer climate is regarded as one of the hottest in the world, and temperatures as high as 54°C (130°F) have been recorded. A west wind known as the *gharbi*, blowing from the Rub al-Khali, makes the heat more oppressive. Mean average temperatures in Muscat for January and July are 22°C (71.5°F) and 33°C (92°F), respectively.

Average rainfall is 50 to 100 mm (2 to 4 in), with wide regional variations. Some coastal areas receive no rain at all in the course of a year, while the Hajar Mountains region receives up to 250 mm (10 in) annually. An exception to the general climatic pattern is southwestern Dhofar, which receives abundant rain during the southwesterly monsoon season between June and September.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature
 January: 71.5°F
 July: 92°F
 Maximum Recorded: 130°F
 Average Rainfall: 2 in to 4 in
 Hajar Mountains: 10 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Oman has about 1,200 species of plants, about 60 percent of which are found in the northern mountainous region, consisting primarily of various species of shrubs. The region is home to three species of tahr (a type of wild goat), three endemic species of geckos, hyenas, wildcats,

wolves, and 71 bird species. The desert and semidesert regions are sparsely vegetated, but along the coast can be found mangrove trees and hardy acacias. These regions provide habitat to tahrs, geckos, and over 400 species of birds, such as the kingfisher and cormorant. The coast itself is home to a large population of green turtles and other turtle species.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 3,001,583
 World Rank: 131st
 Density per sq km: 8.2
 % of annual growth (1999-2003): 2.4
 Male %: 55.8
 Female %: 44.2
 Urban %: 76.0
 Age Distribution %: 0-14: 42.6
 15-64: 54.9
 65 and over: 2.5

Population 2025: 5,294,000
 Birth Rate per 1,000: 36.73
 Death Rate per 1,000: 3.86
 Rate of Natural Increase %: 3.3
 Total Fertility Rate: 5.84
 Expectation of Life (years): Males 70.92
 Females 75.46

Marriage Rate per 1,000: —
 Divorce Rate per 1,000: —
 Average Size of Households: 8.0
 Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

The population is estimated to be seven-eighths Arab, as divided into two principal groups: The first is known as the Yamaniyah, Azdi, Qatitani, or Hinawi, the second as the Nizari, Adani, or Ghafiri. The first predominate in the southeastern districts and the second in the northwestern ones, but members of both groups can be found in every village. This split has played an important part in Oman's civil wars and internal politics.

The small non-Arab population is concentrated in the coastal towns of Muscat and Matrah. The most significant minorities in numerical terms are Iranians, Baluchis, Indians, Pakistanis, and East Africans, most of whom serve as soldiers, civil servants, merchants, or laborers. The Baluchis were originally inhabitants of the sultan's former possession of Gwadur, which he ceded to Pakistan in 1958. The East African blacks are reminders of the days not so long ago when Muscat was the most important center of the slave trade in the East. Two aboriginal tribes of uncertain origin are the Qara and the Shihuh, who are probably descendants of aboriginal inhabitants of southern Arabia.

Foreigners were banned from the interior of the country under the former sultan, Said bin Taimur, who

was deposed in 1970. The Ibadi Omanis, a minority Muslim sect, are among the most xenophobic of Arabs, and despite recent liberalization, prejudice against Westerners persists throughout the country, except perhaps in the capital region.

LANGUAGES

The official language of Oman is Arabic. The main linguistic minorities are Iranians, who speak Farsi; Indian Khojas and Pakistanis, who speak Urdu; and Hindus, who speak a variety of Indian dialects. English is widely understood and used to some extent in government.

While there is no government policy to discourage the use of other languages in speech or print or in religious instruction in the home, the government has increasingly insisted that administrative correspondence and public and legal documents be in Arabic.

RELIGIONS

Islam is the official religion, and three-quarters of Muslims are Ibadis, fundamentalists who follow Abdullah ibn Ibad, an Iraqi Kharedjite theologian. They regard all contacts with infidels and non-Ibadi Muslims as sinful and are notorious for their unity and doctrinal rigidity. There are a number of Sunni Muslims, particularly among the Ghafiri tribes.

Non-Muslim foreigners, both Christian and Hindu, are allowed to worship at designated locations. The government of Oman has donated land for building a Christian church and a new Hindu temple. Non-Muslims are prohibited from proselytizing, however. Conversely, conversion to Islam is encouraged and publicized.

Religious Affiliations

Ibadi Muslim	2,250,000
Other	750,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Oman's history can be traced to biblical times, where it is identified with Sephar or Dhofar. The population was converted to Islam during the lifetime of Muhammad, but Oman soon became the center of the Ibadi sect of Islam, centered at Nazwa, which evolved from the egalitarianist Kharedjite movement and which has elected its own caliph since the eighth century.

The first contact with Europeans occurred in 1508, when the Portuguese overran Muscat; they remained in control until 1650, when they were driven out with

Persian help. During the next 75 years Oman became a major maritime power, conquering the East African trading ports of Mombasa and Mogadishu and the island of Zanzibar. The first sultanate was established in Muscat in 1775. It became a British protectorate in 1778. Around this time, Muscat lost control of the interior, which was not regained until 1955. In 1920 the Treaty of Sib was signed between the Sultan of Muscat and the Imam of Oman, acknowledging the latter's independence. On the death of the imam in 1954, Sultan Said bin Taimur tried unsuccessfully to succeed him. In the same year the sultan granted oil exploration rights to a British firm. By this agreement the company maintained a small army, the Muscat and Oman Field Force, with British officers. This force helped the sultan to bring all of Muscat and Oman under his control. In 1959 the last of the insurgents supporting the imam were defeated, whereupon the sultan abolished that office and terminated the Treaty of Sib.

In 1970 Said bin Taimur, who had been in power since 1930, was brought down in a bloodless palace coup led by his son Qaboos bin Said. Unlike his father, Qaboos has been a modernist influence on a very tradition-bound country. Under his rule, the government has been liberalized, and spending on development and social services has increased. He also ended his father's policy of isolationism. Under his direction Oman has joined the Arab League, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Gulf Cooperation Council, and the United Nations.

Oman is relatively unique in the Persian Gulf region in that it maintained ties with Egypt even after the latter signed a peace agreement with Israel in 1979; the sultan even welcomed a visit from the Israeli prime minister. In 1980 Oman signed a treaty with the United States, permitting the use of ports and air bases in the gulf in exchange for U.S. military and economic aid and a commitment of U.S. security. During the Persian Gulf crisis in 1990 and the ensuing war in 1991, Oman opened its air bases to U.S.-led UN forces and sent ground troops to Saudi Arabia to assist in its defense.

In 1996 Qaboos made some symbolic changes to his absolute rule with the issuance of the Basic Law. In 1998 the country cut its oil production, setting off a pricing battle. In the early 2000s Oman cooperated with coalition forces in the war against the Taliban in Afghanistan, conducting joint training exercises with the British in the Omani desert. In early 2005 the government arrested 100 Islamists who were reportedly forming an organization that was a threat to national security.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1930–70	Sultan Said bin Taimur
1970–	Sultan Qaboos bin Said al-Bu Said

CONSTITUTION

Oman is politically among the least developed nations in the world; it has never had a constitution. Nevertheless, on November 6, 1996, Sultan Qaboos issued a royal decree promulgating a new Basic Law, which, among other things, clarifies the royal succession, provides for a prime minister, bars ministers from holding interests in companies doing business with the government, establishes a bicameral legislature, and guarantees basic civil liberties for Omani citizens.

PARLIAMENT

Through the Basic Law of 1996, the sultan created a bicameral legislature consisting of an upper chamber, the Majlis ad-Dawla, which has 58 members appointed by the monarch and has advisory powers only, and a lower chamber, or Majlis ash-Shura, which has 83 members who were formerly elected by approximately 175,000 Omanis chosen by the government to vote. In 2002 the sultan issued a decree granting universal suffrage to all citizens over the age of 21. The last elections were held in 2003, although the broad extension of suffrage resulted in little change in the legislature's makeup. The upper and lower chambers have only limited powers to propose legislation; they are largely advisory boards instituted to replace the Consultative Assembly, which had been established in 1981.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Oman has no legal political parties. The main illegal opposition was, until 1975, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman and the Arabian Gulf. The revolt was crushed in 1975, and most of its leaders surrendered in 1976. Some remnants of the front continue to operate illegally at home and openly in radical Arab countries.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The sultanate is divided into five regions, three governorates, and 59 *wilayats*, each governed by a *wali*, or governor, appointed by the sultan. Dhofar Province and the capital region have comparatively more autonomy under governors. A system of rural municipalities is being gradually introduced, with limited local responsibility for land use, public health, and sanitation.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The legal system of Oman is based on English common law and Islamic sharia (religious law), which is interpreted by *qadi*, or religious judges. The 1996 Basic Law

affirms the independence of the judiciary; however, the various courts are subordinate to the sultan and subject to his influence. The sultan appoints all judges, acts as a court of final appeal, and intercedes in cases of particular interest, especially in national security cases. However, there have been no reported instances in which the sultan has overturned a decision of the magistrate courts or the commercial court.

The judiciary comprises the magistrate courts, which adjudicate misdemeanors and criminal matters; the sharia courts, which adjudicate personal status cases, such as divorce and inheritance; the commercial court; the Labor Welfare Board; and the Rent Dispute Committee, which hears tenant-landlord disputes. Since the establishment of the Basic Law in 1996, cases that fall under the purview of the sharia courts and the range of corresponding judgments have been regulated.

A State Security Court tries cases involving national security and criminal cases that the government decides require expeditious or especially sensitive handling. The sultan has exercised his powers of leniency, including in political cases.

The criminal code does not specify the rights of the accused. There are no written rules of evidence, codified procedures for entering cases into the criminal system, or legal provisions for public trial. Criminal procedures have developed through tradition and precedents set in the magistrate courts. In criminal cases, the police provide defendants with the written charges against them; defendants are presumed innocent and have the right to present evidence and confront witnesses. The prosecution and the defense question witnesses through the judge, who is usually the only person to directly question witnesses in court. There are no jury trials.

HUMAN RIGHTS

The 1996 Basic Law provides for an independent judiciary and many basic human rights, such as the freedoms of association, speech, and press. Nevertheless, the press can be censored for political or cultural reasons, and the government continues to restrict or deny other important human rights. Human rights abuses include arbitrary arrest, the mistreatment of detainees, prolonged detention without charge, and the denial of due process. The government restricts the freedoms of expression and association and does not ensure full rights for workers and women. As a practical matter, citizens do not have the right to change their government.

FOREIGN POLICY

Reversing the isolationist policy of his father, Sultan Qaboos has taken an active role in foreign policy. Oman

is a moderate Arab nation that has advocated diplomatic relations with Israel, thereby antagonizing the hard-line Arab states. In 1980 Oman granted the United States access to its air and naval facilities, and the nation has become a solid base for U.S. activities in the gulf region. In 1989 the sultanate also signed a military cooperation agreement with France. Relations with Yemen improved after the conclusion of a formal border agreement in 1997; likewise, those with the United Arab Emirates improved in 2003 when the two nations ratified a border agreement.

DEFENSE

The defense structure is headed by the sultan, who is also the defense minister. The defense forces have been commanded by British officers, but the proportion of British officers has been steadily declining; by mid-1980 there were fewer than 1,000. In addition, there are several thousand Baluchi tribesmen in the armed forces. Also, Jebalis, or mountain dwellers, are organized into home-guard units, or *firqats*, in tribal areas. Maintenance and other technical work is contracted out to a British firm. Enlistment for the armed forces is voluntary. The total strength of the armed forces was 46,100 in 2003.

The 2004 military budget was \$253 million, a full 11.4 percent of gross domestic product (GDP), among the highest percentages in the world.

The Omani army and air force are almost entirely equipped and trained by the British. Since 1945 the Omani forces have been tried in the field against the Saudis and the Dhofar insurgents; in both conflicts the Omanis were successful, although the preponderance of mercenary elements makes their viability as a national army questionable.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 46,100
 Military Manpower Availability: 719,871
 Military Expenditures \$million: 253
 as % of GDP: 11.4
 as % of central government expenditures: 40.1
 Arms Imports \$million: 14
 Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

Oman's economic performance improved significantly in 2000 due largely to the upturn in oil prices, though growth in 2003 was a modest 1.1 percent with slight price deflation. The government has continued the privatization of its utilities, is developing a body of commercial law to facilitate foreign investment, and has increased budgetary outlays. Oman joined the World Trade Or-

ganization in November 2000. The nation is trying to reduce unemployment and dependence on foreign countries through "Omanization," a process of replacing foreign workers with Omanis and providing training in information technology, business management, and English. Plans for industrial development are focusing on natural gas, of which Oman has over 29 trillion cubic feet of proven reserves (it produces about 530 billion cubic feet per year).

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 38.09
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 13,100
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2002) %: 3.6
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2002) %: 1.1
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 3.1
 Industry: 41.1
 Services: 55.8
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 43
 Government Consumption: 23
 Gross Domestic Investment: 13.5
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 13.14
 Imports: 6.373
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: —
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: —

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)				
1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
99.4	99.8	98.7	97.7	97.0

Finance

National Currency: Omani Rial (OMR)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = OMR 0.385
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency million: 808
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: —
 Total External Debt \$billion: 4.814
 Debt Service Ratio %: 5.25
 Balance of Payments \$billion: 2.674
 International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 3.47
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
 0.2

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 44.5
 per capita \$: 17.10
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 137.6

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$billion: 9.291
 Expenditures \$billion: 8.747
 Budget Surplus \$million: 544
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 3.1
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: —
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 0.39
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 76.5
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 321.9
 Total Farmland % of land area: 0.1
 Livestock: Cattle 000: 315
 Chickens million: 3.4
 Pigs 000: —
 Sheep 000: 355
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters 000: —
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 143

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: —
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: -1.2

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 61.6
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 10.97
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 4.43
 Net Energy Imports % of use: -477.5
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 2.4
 Production kW-hr billion: 9.15
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 8.51
 Coal Reserves tons million: —
 Production tons million: —
 Consumption tons million: —
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: 29.3
 Production cubic feet billion: 530
 Consumption cubic feet billion: 231
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: 5.5
 Production barrels 000 per day: 784
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 59
 Pipelines Length km: 3,212

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 6.373
 Exports \$billion: 13.14
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —
 Balance of Trade \$billion: 2.674

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
United Arab Emirates %	27.4	—
Japan %	16.8	22.4
United Kingdom %	7.5	—
United States %	5.6	6.7
Germany %	4.5	—
South Korea %	—	20.5
China %	—	17.7
Thailand %	—	12.6
Taiwan %	—	5.6

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 34,965
 Paved %: 27.7
 Automobiles: 390,000
 Trucks and Buses: 140,200
 Railroad: Track Length km: —
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: —
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 1
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 6.4
 Airports: 136
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 4.13
 Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 817
 Number of Tourists from million: 2.06
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 349
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 699

Communications

Telephones 000: 233.9
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones 000: 464.9
 Personal Computers 000: 95
 Internet Hosts per million people: 242
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 60

ENVIRONMENT

Like many arid nations, Oman suffers from a lack of adequate amounts of freshwater. Additionally, the soil has increasing saline content. Pollution from oil spills and associated oil processing, especially on the coast, are also a concern. The nation has set aside protected breeding grounds for sea turtles, which are often threatened by oil spills, and has established a number of protected areas throughout the country.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 0
 Forest Change (1990–2000) hectares 000: —
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 11
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 5,936
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 8.21

LIVING CONDITIONS

Living conditions in Oman improved dramatically after the discovery of oil in the 1960s. In 1970 Omanis lived much like they had a thousand years before. The

country had no electricity, no running water, essentially no modern physicians, no newspapers or television, and, remarkably, just six miles of paved roads. Virtually no one owned cars, and people traveled by donkey or camel; it took two weeks to cross the country, which is smaller than the state of Kansas. After 1970 the new sultan rapidly modernized the country, which now has over 9,600 km (nearly 6,000 mi) of paved roads. Most people own cars, and the country can be crossed in one day. The Sultan Qaboos University is producing trained doctors. Housing has improved, and over 80 percent of Omanis own their own homes. Oil revenue has provided more health care, education, and modern communication infrastructure. Many observers, however, believe that the sultanate is an outmoded institution; the government has provided benefits in part to keep people from questioning the government, and efforts to continue to modernize the country will be impeded by the restrictive political system.

HEALTH

Major improvements have been made in the health-care system. In 1970 Oman had virtually no doctors, and many people died of infectious diseases. By 2005 life expectancy had risen to over 73 years, and the infant mortality rate was down to just under 20 deaths per 1,000 live births—in large part because at least 91 percent of births were attended by trained health professionals in the late 1990s. Modern medicine, especially through immunization—99 percent of children now receive measles vaccinations—has essentially eliminated such diseases as polio, neonatal tetanus, and diphtheria, and while malaria and trachoma remain problems, the incidence of these diseases has been reduced; in the early 2000s there were just 27 cases of malaria and five cases of tuberculosis per 100,000 population each year.

Health

Number of Physicians: 3,478
 Number of Dentists: 297
 Number of Nurses: 8,004
 Number of Pharmacists: 594
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 126
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 19.51
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 87
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 3.4
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 246
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.1
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 99
 Measles: 98
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: —
 Access to Improved Water Source %: —

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Although about 4 percent of Omani children are regarded as severely underweight, the state of nutrition in Oman is generally fairly good. Staples include rice, fish, fruits, dates, and meat, which is often slowly cooked in a *tanour*, a hole in the ground where wrapped meat is placed in hot ashes and covered to cook for as long as 24 hours. Breakfast is generally light, consisting of leftovers, bread, and strong, dark coffee, which is often flavored with cardamom. The main meal is eaten at midday and generally consists of rice and meat (but never pork, which is forbidden by Islamic law). The evening meal is again light and often consists of just tea, bread, and fruit. The Bedouin nomads frequently eat locusts.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: —
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: —

STATUS OF WOMEN

Though conservative, Oman has not been extreme in its attempts to impose strict adherence to Islamic precepts on women. For example, women have shared in the benefits of the social and economic growth of recent years, and schooling for girls is available to the same extent as for boys in urban areas, though less so in rural areas. By 2000 nearly 49 percent of secondary school students were girls. A few women have reached high levels in the public sector; by and large, however, occupational advances available to women are limited to the traditional spheres of teaching, secretarial work, and nursing. Oman's labor laws are protective of women, guaranteeing maternity leave and working conditions.

The gains achieved by a small minority of women are largely irrelevant to the great majority, both in the towns and in the rural areas, where women's lives are carried out within the confines of the house and the local marketplace. The previous lack of adult education facilities means that all but the youngest females in rural areas are illiterate. This problem is being addressed via adult evening classes sponsored by the government; more than half the government's 402 literacy centers are exclusively for female participants. This general lack of education, combined with communal and tribal customs that dictate a subsidiary role for women, make it difficult for most adult women to fully participate in the modern sector. The expansion of educational facilities for girls (including at the university, whose first medical school class included 28 women out of 48 graduates) will allow for some equalization of the position of women in the future, but com-

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munal and tribal customs will continue to militate against full participation by women in the foreseeable future.

Some further steps have been taken toward liberalization. In 1997 the sultan issued a decree that allowed women to vote for and stand for election in the Majlis ash-Shura, and two women were in fact elected. In 2004 the sultan appointed the first woman to a government ministry post.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 2
Female Administrators and Managers %: —
Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 0.98
Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 25.6

WORK

In 2002 the labor force numbered about 920,000. The agriculture sector contributed about 3 percent to GDP, industry about 41 percent, and services about 56 percent. In 2004 about 577,000 people living in Oman were non-nationals, many of them employed. A major Omani goal is to replace foreign workers with locals, thereby reducing dependence on foreign expertise. Most people in the fertile regions, including the coastal plains, are farmers, producing dates, limes, bananas, alfalfa, and vegetables, as well as livestock. Nomadic groups herd sheep, cattle, and camels. Oman has a robust fishing industry in the Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea, and boat building is a craft that has been passed down through the generations. Industries include not only oil and natural gas production but also cement production and construction (in support of the nation's housing growth) and copper mining.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 920,000
Female Participation Rate %: 20.1
Labor by Sector %:
Agriculture: —
Industry: —
Services: —
Unemployment %: 15

EDUCATION

Oman has not introduced free, universal, and compulsory education in the elementary grades. Nevertheless, attendance has recently increased. Schooling consists of 12 years, as divided into six years of primary school, three of preparatory school, and three of secondary school. Nearly 96 percent of students progress to the secondary level.

The academic year runs from September to May. The medium of instruction is Arabic, but English is

taught from the secondary grades onward. Adult education from the primary to the secondary level has received increased attention. A study-at-home program provides students with books and materials.

Schooling is under the control of the Ministry of Education.

Until the opening of the Sultan Qaboos University in late 1986 all of Oman's higher studies students had to go abroad. Only those students with the highest grades are sent to non-Arab countries; of these students, most have been accepted in the United States. Egypt, meanwhile, has been the Arab country with the most Omani university students. In 2002 tertiary enrollment equaled 7.5 percent of college-age students.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 75.8
Male %: 83.1
Female %: 67.2
School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 10.4
First Level: Primary Schools: 415
Teachers: 14,911
Students: 314,064
Student-Teacher Ratio: 21.1
Net Enrollment Ratio: 71.9
Second Level: Secondary Schools: 128
Teachers: 16,941
Students: 279,302
Student-Teacher Ratio: 16.5
Net Enrollment Ratio: 69.3
Third Level: Institutions: 5
Teachers: 631
Students: 19,864
Gross Enrollment Ratio: 7.5
Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 4.6

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Most scientific research is conducted and/or funded by various government ministries and by the Sultan Qaboos University, which has departments of medicine, science, engineering, and agriculture, among others. In 2000 the university had just over 2,000 undergraduate and 900 graduate students. The university has appointed a Director of Innovation Services to boost scientific and technological research; as part of that effort the university is establishing "science parks" to promote research and development and to build the nation's scientific infrastructure in such areas as genetic research, semiconductors, environmental science, and materials engineering.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 4
Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
High-Tech Exports \$million: 26.16
Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

Four daily newspapers are published in Muscat—two in Arabic and two in English.

There are no legal guarantees that protect the freedoms of speech and press. Criticism of the sultan in any form or medium is prohibited by law. Criticism of individual officials, agencies, and their programs is tolerated but is not given media coverage. The government controls all radio and television broadcasting and all printed matter. The law imposes strict controls on, and a mechanism for prior censorship of, all information in printed form in both domestic and imported publications. The government owns two of the four daily newspapers, one in Arabic and one in English. Subsidies to the several privately owned weekly and biweekly publications provide an effective incentive to self-censorship, although there have still been arrests and closure for offensive articles. Thus, editorials and news coverage invariably reflect government views.

The national news agency is the Oman News Agency. No international news bureaus are in Muscat.

Radio Oman broadcasts in Arabic and English on FM. Radio Salalah transmits programs in Arabic and the Dhofari languages daily. The BBC has an eastern relay station on the island of Masirah. One television broadcast station, built at Qurum, outside Muscat, began transmission in 1974, and another, for Dhofar, was opened in 1975.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 4
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: 12
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets million: 1.4
 per 1,000: 575

CULTURE

In 1976 the Ministry of National Heritage and Culture was created to preserve the nation's history and to encourage cultural development. The ministry has restored historic buildings, including houses, castles, and forts, sponsored excavations that have uncovered artifacts dating back to the third millennium B.C.E., funded the construction of libraries, museums, and cultural centers, and maintains a performance arts theater. In 1983 the Oman Center for Traditional Music was created to preserve the nation's folk music. The sultan established the Royal Oman Symphony Orchestra and a music training

school in 1985. Most graphic arts in Oman are utilitarian folk arts, including pottery, goldsmithing, and silver-smithing, camel-hair rugs, wood carving, embroidery, and basketry.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Numbers: 21
 Volumes: 52,074
 Registered borrowers: 7,885
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: 17
 Seating Capacity: 4,723
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Much of Oman's folklore and mythology is associated with its religious past. Prior to the arrival of Islam, the people of Oman were polytheistic, worshipping an assortment of gods and goddesses. One later legend has it that King Solomon, accompanied by his jinni, a spirit that can take the form of an animal or human, flew on a magic carpet to Oman. There, in 10 days he constructed 10,000 canals to provide water for the people.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Perhaps surprisingly, scouting is a popular form of recreation among Omani youth. Scouting for boys has been around since 1948, and the National Organization for Scouts and Guides was created in 1975 to encourage scouting among both boys and girls. Also popular in Oman are a variety of water sports, including diving, and walking in the country's National Protected Areas.

ETIQUETTE

Greetings in Oman are formal and elaborate, and plunging into business or even casual conversation without first offering proper greetings is regarded as rude. Common greetings in Oman include *marhaba* or *ablan*, which essentially mean "hello." It is also common to say, in Arabic, "Peace be with you," to which the other person replies, "And to you peace." Omanis maintain a small amount of personal space in conversation, and it is not uncommon to see members of the same sex holding hands. Contact between men and women in public is generally chaperoned, and many women feel that they must be accompanied by men to public events.

FAMILY LIFE

Marriage in Oman is viewed as an institution for producing children for the next generation, so most marriages are arranged by the families of the bride and groom, even among the well-educated and professional classes. Preference is given to a first cousin on the father's side of the family, but marriage to a first cousin on the mother's side is also acceptable. Islamic law allows polygyny, which some men practice, although in modern times it is more rare. Families tend to be large, with a fertility rate of 5.8 children per woman in 2004. The typical household family unit consists of three generations, with a husband and wife moving in with the husband's family, although nuclear-family households are becoming more common, especially in the cities. In the interior of the country, nomadic groups organize family life around the kin group, which occupies an area of land that is regarded as belonging to the kin group.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Most Omanis wear traditional dress. For men, this consists of leather sandals, a turban or skullcap, and the dishdasha, a long robe that is usually white. Many also wear a *bisht*, a black cloak with gold trim. Many carry a camel stick and a curved dagger called a *khanjar*. Women, too, wear leather sandals, and in public they wear long black robes and often veil their faces. Otherwise, colorful dresses worn over loose pants gathered at the ankles are common.

SPORTS

Camel racing and horse racing have long been popular in Oman. Field hockey was imported from India in the 19th century, which sport many younger people play. Other popular sports are soccer, rugby, and lawn tennis. In 1999 the country held its first-ever figure-skating competition. Omanis are expert marksmen, and many have done well in international shooting competitions. During the reign of Sultan Qaboos, many sports complexes have been built throughout the country. The General Organization for Sport and Cultural Youth Activities monitors the activities of some 50 sports clubs throughout the country.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1955** The imam of Oman, Muhammad ibn Abdullah, dies; his successor, Imam Ghalib ibn Ali, rebels against the sultan of Muscat and Oman, Said bin Taimur.
- 1956** With the aid of the British-led Muscat and Oman Field Force, the sultan occupies the capital of

the imamate, Nizwah. The imam's brother Talib ibn Ali escapes to Cairo and with Egyptian and Saudi help sets up an imamate-in-exile.

- 1957** The civil war intensifies as Talib returns to Oman.
- 1959** The civil war ends with the complete rout of the rebel imam.
- 1960** Muscat and Oman concludes treaty with the United States.
- 1964** Dhofar tribes revolt against the sultan. The revolt escalates into a civil war as the rebel group, known as the Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman and the Arabian Gulf, receives aid from the Soviet Union and neighboring South Yemen.
- 1970** Sultan Said bin Taimur is overthrown in a palace coup led by his son Qaboos bin Said. Tariq ibn Ali is named new prime minister.
- 1971** Tariq resigns, and the sultan additionally assumes the post of prime minister.
- 1974** First U.S. embassy opens in Muscat.
- 1975** The 11-year civil war ends as the Dhofar insurgents are crushed and their leaders surrender.
- 1979** At Persian Gulf Security Conference Oman offers a new system for routing ships through the Strait of Hormuz.
- Oman becomes the first Arab state to endorse the Israeli-Egyptian Peace Treaty.
- 1981** Oman becomes a founding member, along with six other Middle East states, of the Gulf Cooperation Council.
- 1983** Oman and South Yemen resume diplomatic relations.
- 1985** Oman establishes diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union.
- 1987** Oman establishes diplomatic relations with Syria.
- 1990** Oman opens its air bases to U.S.-led UN forces during the Persian Gulf crisis.
- 1991** Oman sends ground troops to Saudi Arabia to assist in its defense. Oman ends financial aid to Jordan because of that country's support of Iraq during the Persian Gulf War.
- 1996** In conjunction with Russia and Kazakhstan, Oman builds a 900-mile pipeline to move oil to the Black Sea.
- Qaboos decrees a new Basic Law that articulates existing government customs and basic civil liberties of Omani citizens.
- 1997** Omani elections bring two women to the Majlis ash-Shura, an advisory body.
- 1998** Oman expels illegal residents; Oman improves relations with Iran, India, Jordan, and Palestinian leadership.
- 1999** Oman and the United Arab Emirates sign an agreement defining a portion of their common border.

- 2000** Both Oman and the United Arab Emirates ratify the border treaty.
In elections held for membership in the Majlis ash-Shura, candidates with the most votes automatically win membership, forgoing the former custom of gaining the approval of the sultan.
Oman is granted membership in the World Trade Organization.
- 2001** Oman conducts joint training exercises in the Omani desert in preparation for strikes against the Taliban in Afghanistan.
- 2002** Sultan extends voting rights to all citizens over the age of 21.
- 2004** Sultan appoints first woman as government minister.
- 2005** Government states that it has arrested 100 Islamists who were forming an organization dangerous to national security.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

Embassy of Oman
2535 Belmont Road NW
Washington, D.C. 20008
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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Omani Ministry of Commerce and Industry
<http://www.mocioman.gov.om>
- Ministry of Information, Sultanate of Oman
<http://www.omanet.om>

PAKISTAN

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Islamic Republic of Pakistan (Islaami Jamhuriya-ay-Pakistan)

ABBREVIATION

PK

CAPITAL

Islamabad

HEAD OF STATE

President General Pervez Musharraf (since 2001)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz (since 2004)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Federal republic

POPULATION

162,419,946 (2005)

AREA

803,940 sq km (310,401 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Punjabi, Sindhi, Pashtun, Balochi, Muhajir

LANGUAGES

Urdu (official), English (official), Punjabi, Pashto, Sindhi, Balochi

RELIGION

Sunni Islam

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Rupee

NATIONAL FLAG

A white crescent and star centered on a field of dark green alongside a white stripe that runs the length of the hoist side

NATIONAL EMBLEM

The emblem features a wreath of narcissus surrounding a shield, with a crescent moon and star above and a scroll below. The shield is divided into four sections, each showing a major product of the country: cotton, wheat, tea, and jute. The scroll bears the national motto in Urdu, *Iman, ittehad, tanzeem* (Faith, unity, discipline).

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Blessed Be the Sacred Land”

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

March 23 (Pakistan Day), May 1 (Labor Day), August 15 (Independence Day), September 6 (Defense Day), September 11 (Death Anniversary of Muhammad Ali Jinnah), November 9 (Allama Iqbal Day), December 25 (Birthday of Muhammad Ali Jinnah), various Islamic and Christian festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

August 15, 1947

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

April 10, 1973; suspended July 5, 1977; restored and amended December 30, 1985; suspended October 15, 1999; restored December 31, 2002

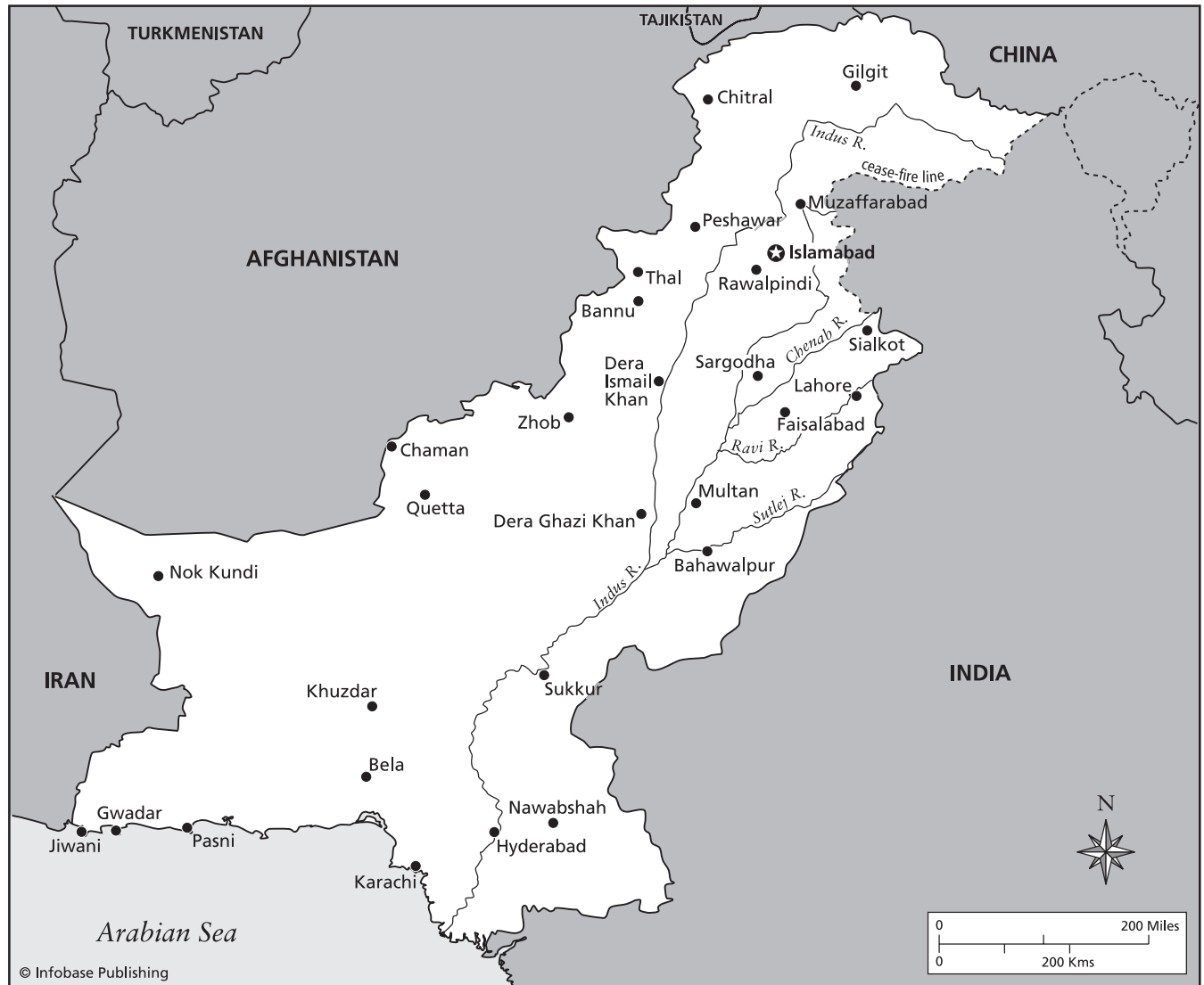
GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Pakistan is in South Asia and extends from the Arabian Sea to the Hindu Kush mountain ranges. The total land area is 803,940 sq km (310,401 sq mi), excluding Azad and Pakistan-held Kashmir, Gilgit, Baltistan, Jungagadh, and Manavadar. The total length of the coastline is 1,046 km (650 mi). Pakistan shares borders with Afghanistan, China, India, and Iran.

Pakistan is divided into three main geographic regions: the northern highlands, the Indus River plain, and the Baluchistan Plateau. The northern and western borders with

Afghanistan are enclosed in the convex arc of the Hindu Kush. Most of this area is above 2,500 m (8,000 ft), with half over 4,500 m (15,000 ft), and there are 50 peaks over 6,700 m (22,000 ft), including K-2, also known as Mt. Godwin-Austen (8,611 m; 28,244 ft). South of the Khyber Pass are a series of mountain ranges: the Safed Koh Range, 4,761 m (15,620 ft); the Toba Kakar Range, 2,743 m (9,000 ft); and the Ras Koh Range, west of Quetta. The Baluchistan Plateau is an arid tableland of about 349,650 sq km (135,000 sq mi) with a number of smaller mountain ranges, such as the Central Brahui Range, the Kirthar Range, the Makran Range, and the Sulaiman Range. The Indus River plain

Pakistan



corresponds roughly to the provinces of Punjab and Sindh and contains some of the most fertile agricultural regions in the country. West of the Indus River plain are the Thal and Thar deserts.

The Indus is the principal river system; it flows through Pakistan for 1,609 km (1,000 mi) of its total length of 2,413 km (1,500 mi). Its major tributaries are the Kabul, Gumal, and Panjnad rivers, the latter of which is actually a confluence of five rivers. The principal river of Baluchistan is the Zhob.

Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Indian Ocean 0
 Highest: K2 (Mt. Godwin-Austen) 8,611
 Land Use %
 Arable Land: 27.9
 Permanent Crops: 0.9
 Forest: 3.1
 Other: 68.1

Population of Principal Cities (1998)

Bahawalpur	403,408
Faisalabad	1,977,246
Gujranwala	1,124,799
Gujrat	250,121
Hyderabad	1,151,274
Islamabad	529,180
Jhang Maghiana	292,214
Karachi	9,269,265

(continues)

Geography

Area sq km: 803,940; sq mi 310,401
 World Rank: 34th
 Land Boundaries, km: Afghanistan 2,430; China 523; India 2,912;
 Iran 909
 Coastline, km: 1,046

Population of Principal Cities (1998)

Kasur	241,649
Lahore	5,063,499
Larkana	270,366
Mardan	244,511
Multan	1,182,441
Okara	200,901
Peshawar	988,055
Quetta	560,307
Rahimyar Khan	228,479
Rawalpindi	1,406,214
Sahiwal	207,388
Sargodha	455,360
Shekhupura	271,875
Sialkot	417,597
Sukkur	329,176

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Pakistan is basically a dry country, and the general climatic character is one of aridity, although differences prevail between north and south. The country has four seasons: a dry, cool winter from December to February; a dry, hot summer from March to May; a southwesterly monsoon season from June to September; and a northeasterly monsoon season in October and November. Average rainfall is less than 250 mm (10 in). Actual rainfall varies by region, from 1,520 mm (60 in) or more in the northern highlands to 127 mm (5 in) or less in Baluchistan, the Thar and Thal deserts, and the lower Indus River plain. The northern mountains and Baluchistan have cool winters and moderate summers, while the upper and lower Indus River plains have oppressive summers, with temperatures over 37.8°C (100°F). The highest temperature recorded on the Indian Subcontinent was 52.2°C (126°F), recorded at Jacobabad, in northern Sindh. The heat is made intolerable by the dry wind called the *loo* that blows in the summer.

Climate and Weather

Temperature Range: 90°F to 126°F
 Average Rainfall: 10 in
 Northern Highlands: 60 in
 Baluchistan: 5 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Much of Pakistan is covered in lush vegetation, particularly forests of conifers and fields of wildflowers at higher elevations. The lower, drier areas have fewer plants, with some grasslands and woodlands that can survive the heat and dryness. The southern deserts are inhospitable and have very few plants or animals.

A variety of animal species live in Pakistan's multiple climatic zones. The coastal waters are full of fish, shellfish, sea turtles, and sharks. The marsh crocodile lives in the Indus delta. The mountains are home to snow leopards, jackals, bears, and deer.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 162,419,946
 World Rank: 6th
 Density per sq km: 192.6
 % of annual growth (1999-2003): 2.4
 Male %: 51.2
 Female %: 48.8
 Urban %: 33.1
 Age Distribution %: 0-14: 39.6
 15-64: 56.3
 65 and over: 4.1
 Population 2025: 228,822,000
 Birth Rate per 1,000: 30.42
 Death Rate per 1,000: 8.45
 Rate of Natural Increase %: 2.2
 Total Fertility Rate: 4.14
 Expectation of Life (years): Males 62.04
 Females 64.01
 Marriage Rate per 1,000: —
 Divorce Rate per 1,000: —
 Average Size of Households: 6.3
 Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Pakistan is a mosaic of ethnic groups held together primarily by a common religion. Each group has its own typical occupation and dress as well as geographic, linguistic, and social boundaries. The four dominant groups correspond roughly to the four provinces: Punjabis in the Punjab, Sindhi in Sindh, Baluchis in Baluchistan, and Pashtuns in the North-West Frontier Province (NWFP).

Punjabis, who form the numerical majority in Pakistan, comprise three major castes, or endogamous and functional groups: the Rajputs, the Jats, and the Arains. The Sindhi are also divided into scores of ethnic, linguistic, occupational, and caste groupings. Baluchis form an important minority in Baluchistan and Sindh; their two main divisions are eastern Baluchis, with seven tribes, and western Baluchis, with nine tribes. The Brahmins form 25 percent of the population of Baluchistan and are believed to be descendants of the original Dravidian inhabitants of the area. Pashtuns constitute the dominant ethnic group in the NWFP and a sizable minority in Baluchistan. Fiercely independent, the Pashtuns lack central organization, but each Pashtun belongs to a tribe or descent group that determines his or her home territory and code of conduct. The more important of these tribes in Pakistan are the Afridis, Yusufzais, Khattaks, Wazirs, Mohmands, Mahsuds, and Orakzais.

Ethnic minorities include the *mujabirs*, Urdu-speaking refugees from India; the Makranis of Baluchistan; and the Khos and Kafirs of Chitral. The Hindus, Parsis, and some other smaller groups are properly considered religious rather than ethnic minorities.

LANGUAGES

In the constitution of 1973 Urdu was declared the official language, although English was to remain the official medium of communication for 15 years. Though widely spoken, Urdu is the native tongue of only 8 percent of the population. More than 30 distinct languages are spoken in Pakistan, besides a number of dialects. Of these, Punjabi is the most important in terms of the number of speakers, estimated at 48 percent of the population. Sindhi is spoken by only 12 percent of the population but has important literary traditions and a separate script. Pashto is the mother tongue of all Pashtuns, some 15 percent of the population, and has been strongly identified with the Pashtun separatist movement. Like Punjabi, Pashto is not normally a written language, and the script and much of the vocabulary are borrowed from Urdu, Arabic, and Persian. Baluchi, an Iranian language like Pashto, and Brahui, a Dravidian language, are spoken by the Baluchis and Brahuīs, respectively, in Baluchistan. Speakers of Brahui and Baluchi combine to form about 4 percent of the population.

RELIGIONS

As an Islamic republic, Pakistan is a theocratic state. Islam is the official religion and is followed by 95 percent of the population. In political terms religion forms the basis of national unity for diverse linguistic and ethnic groups, and the temporal Pakistani nation and the religious Muslim community, or *umma*, are inseparably one. The constitution invokes Islamic principles and provides for the advisory Council of Islamic Ideology to evaluate legislation in terms of its congruence with the sharia (religious law). Both Sunnis and Shiites are represented in Pakistan, although Sunnis form the overwhelming majority.

The government has continued efforts to make Pakistan a fully Islamic society. The Ahmadi sect, which considers itself Muslim despite theological differences with traditional Islam, has historically been repressed. In 1974 the Zulfikar Ali Bhutto regime amended the constitution to declare the Ahmadis a non-Muslim minority. In April 1984 the government of Gen. Muhammed Zia ul-Haq banned the use of Muslim terminology and proselytizing by the Ahmadis. It established a system of *nizam-e-salaat* in which "pious men" in every locality were appointed to encourage all Muslims to pray five times a day. Ordinances established *qazi* (Islamic) courts and amended the military service acts to allow courts-martial to impose Islamic punishments.

Minority religious groups are protected, but Hindus, Christians, and Parsis do not enjoy the same legal rights as Muslims. Seats in the national and provincial legislatures are reserved for members of minority religious groups, but under the reinstated constitution of 1973 the

president and the prime minister must be Muslims. Members of minority religious groups can maintain links with coreligionists in other countries and undertake travel for religious purposes. Although conversions are permitted, the government prohibits proselytizing among Muslims and has refused to renew the residence permits of some foreign missionaries who have ignored this ban.

Religious Affiliations

Sunni Muslim	125,000,000
Shia Muslim	32,500,000
Christian, Hindu, and Other	5,000,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Pakistan was part of the Indian Empire from 1857 to 1947. The territories that today constitute Pakistan were the last on the Indian Subcontinent to come under British rule. Sindh was conquered only in 1842 (15 years before the East India Company transferred its Indian territories to the Crown) by Sir Charles Napier, who wired the news of his conquest to London with a single cryptic word, *peccavi* (I have sinned). British rule over the North-West Frontier Province and Baluchistan was always tenuous and indirect. There was growing national self-awareness in British India in the late 19th century. In 1906 the Muslim League was founded through which to demand an independent Muslim state. After violence escalated between Hindus and Muslims in the mid-1940s, the British recognized that a separate Muslim state was necessary. The new viceroy, Lord Louis Mountbatten, announced that independence would come by June 1948. Pakistan became independent in 1947 under the leadership of Muhammad Ali Jinnah.

The new nation received two serious blows to its political development during its first years of independence: Jinnah died in 1948, and the prime minister, Liaquat Ali Khan, was assassinated in 1951. Only in 1956 did the nation adopt its first constitution. The constitution declared Pakistan to be an Islamic republic with a legislature composed of an equal number of representatives from East and West Pakistan. The constitution did little to provide political stability, and in 1958 President Iskander Mirza declared martial law, banned all political parties, and abrogated the constitution. Gen. Ayub Khan was initially appointed chief martial law administrator, but when Mirza was exiled, Ayub assumed the presidency.

A second constitution was adopted in 1962, establishing a presidential system based on indirect election. Parity between East and West Pakistan was preserved, but Pakistan was no longer called an Islamic republic. Although Pakistan made considerable economic progress under Ayub, political discontent, particularly in East Pakistan, grew during 1968–69, and Ayub was forced to

resign in March 1969. The nation was placed under martial law by Gen. Yahya Khan, head of the armed forces, while preparations were made for the 1970 presidential elections. The 1970 elections precipitated a crisis: The East Pakistan Awami League won a clear majority, but the reluctance of West Pakistan to accept a government dominated by the East led to civil war and the creation of an East Pakistani independent state, renamed Bangladesh, in 1971.

In December 1971 Yahya Khan relinquished the presidency to Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, the leader of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), which had won a majority in West Pakistan in the 1970 elections. Under Bhutto's guidance Pakistan adopted a new constitution in 1973 and curtailed the power of the military. Committed to "Islamic socialism," Bhutto nationalized banking, heavy industry, and educational institutions. He also improved relations with India, the United States, and the Muslim world. Bhutto's PPP won a victory in the 1977 elections amid charges of vote rigging. These allegations and other dissatisfactions led to rioting, and in July 1977 Bhutto, then prime minister, was overthrown by Gen. Zia ul-Haq, who established martial law. Bhutto was eventually convicted of complicity in murder and hanged in 1979 despite international protests.

Zia promised that his would be a caretaker regime leading to elections and the eventual return to civilian government. However, elections were repeatedly postponed. Martial law continued in effect, and all political parties were banned while Zia moved toward establishing a "true Islamic order" in Pakistan. In 1984 he held a nationwide referendum on his policy of Islamization in which more than 60 percent of the voters were said to have favored his program. Zia used this as an excuse to remain in the presidency for another five years. Elections were held in 1985 that were boycotted by the Movement for the Restoration of Democracy, a coalition led by the former prime minister's daughter, Benazir Bhutto.

Following the elections Zia appointed Muhammad Khan Junejo prime minister and lifted martial law. Political parties were legalized in 1986. Then, in May 1988 Zia abruptly dismissed the Junejo government because of alleged corruption. He dissolved the assembly and announced elections within 90 days.

Zia was killed in a plane crash in August 1988. Elections took place in November in which Benazir Bhutto's PPP won a strong plurality. Bhutto became the first female premier of an Islamic state the following month. Faced with ethnic conflict and severe economic problems, Bhutto never established a solid base in the legislature, and in late 1989 her government narrowly survived a vote of no confidence. Her party suffered a decisive defeat in the October 1990 elections, and Nawaz Sharif, leader of the Islamic Democratic Alliance, was sworn in as prime minister in November. In

1993 Bhutto's PPP was reelected, and she once again became prime minister. However, she was dismissed three years later by President Farooq Leghari under a claim of corruption. Elections in early 1997 returned Nawaz Sharif to the prime ministry. In 1998 the Sharif government detonated five nuclear devices two weeks after India had conducted its own tests. Widespread condemnation of the tests by the international community included sanctions. In October 1999 General Pervez Musharraf staged a successful coup, citing the terrible economy as his main motivation. Musharraf tried to stabilize the government and sought international economic aid to rebuild Pakistan's economy. The Supreme Court set a deadline of October 2002 for the restoration of civilian rule.

After the terrorist attacks in the United States on September 11, 2001, Musharraf's government agreed to cooperate with the United States in its fight against international terrorism. Pakistan suspended its support for Afghanistan's Taliban regime, which assisted Osama bin Laden, the mastermind behind the terrorist attacks. The United States in turn lifted economic sanctions imposed on Pakistan in 1998. After an attack on the Indian parliament in 2001, which India blamed on Kashmiri militants, relations between the two countries deteriorated, and both began to build up troops along the common border. President Musharraf then cracked down on militant Islamic groups within Pakistan and took steps to curb religious extremism. In early 2002 he promised a return to a democratically elected government in October, but in a national referendum in May voters extended his rule for five years. The following month Musharraf chose a civilian prime minister, the first civilian premier since the 1999 military takeover.

In 2003 Pakistan and India declared a cease-fire in Kashmir, also resuming direct air links between the two countries and allowing flyovers by each other's airplanes, after a two-year ban on aviation freedom. Meanwhile, that December, Musharraf survived two assassination attempts. The following year the parliament created a military-led National Security Council, which made the role of the military in civilian life more formal and permanent. Late in 2004 Musharraf announced that he would not, after all, step down as head of the military, which he had earlier promised to do. Throughout the early 2000s Pakistan was troubled by factional and religious violence and unrest.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

President	
1956–58	Iskander Mirza
1958–69	Muhammad Ayub Khan
1969–71	Yahya Khan
1971–73	Zulfikar Ali Bhutto

1973–78	Fazal Ilahi Chaudhry
1978–88	Muhammad Zia ul-Haq
1988–93	Ghulam Ishaq Khan
1993	Wasim Sajjad
1993–97	Farooq Leghari
1997–98	Wasim Sajjad
1998–2001	Muhammad Rafiq Tarar
2001–	Pervez Musharraf

Prime Minister

1947–51	Liaqat Ali Khan
1951–53	Khawaja Nazimuddin
1953–55	Muhammad Ali Bogra
1955–56	Chaudhry Muhammad Ali
1956–57	Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy
1957	Ibrahim Ismail Chundrigar
1957–58	Feroz Khan Noon
1958–72	—
1972–77	Zulfikar Ali Bhutto
1977–85	—
1985–88	Muhammad Khan Junejo
1988–90	Benazir Bhutto
1990	Ghulam Mustafa Jatoi
1990–93	Nawaz Sharif
1993–96	Benazir Bhutto
1996–97	Miraj Khalid
1997–99	Nawaz Sharif
1999–2002	—
2002–04	Zafarullah Khan Jamali
2004–	Shaukat Aziz

CONSTITUTION

Pakistan's constitution dates from 1973. Zia's administration amended the document heavily in 1985; Musharraf suspended the constitution in October 1999, but it was restored at the end of 2002. Musharraf added changes to the constitution while it was suspended that are contested by the opposition.

As the constitution currently stands, the president is elected to a five-year term by parliament. The National Assembly selects the prime minister, who has a four-year term. Suffrage is universal for all citizens age 18 and over. Legislation is in the hands of a bicameral parliament. The president chooses the members of his cabinet and the governors and cabinets of the nation's four provinces.

PARLIAMENT

The federal parliament, the Majlis-i-Shura, is a bicameral body consisting of the Senate and the National Assembly. The National Assembly comprises 342 members elected directly by popular vote to four-year terms. A total of 60

seats are reserved for women, 10 for minorities. The Senate consists of 100 members elected indirectly by provincial assemblies to four-year terms. The Senate performs an advisory role in matters relating to almost all subjects. Money bills and legislation relating to national defense, foreign affairs, the civil service, and certain other areas can originate only in the National Assembly. The Senate has the right to send legislation back to the National Assembly for reconsideration only once. On certain subjects, a joint session may be held to decide a matter by simple majority.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Political parties have functioned only intermittently in Pakistan. They were banned from 1958 to 1962 and from 1979 to 1985, when they were again permitted to operate under highly controlled circumstances. Parties continued to operate between 1999 and 2002.

As of 2005, the main national parties were the Pakistan Muslim League and the PPP. The Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal, a coalition of six religious parties, including the Jamaat-e-Islami, gained power in the 2002 elections. The Muttahida Qaumi Mahaz also has a strong religious base. Pakistan has numerous other parties, but most are too small and too fragmented to gain much influence.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Pakistan is divided into four provinces and the Islamabad Capital Area plus agencies and tribal areas, for purposes of regional administration. The governor of each province is appointed by the president, while the chief minister is elected by the provincial assembly. Provincial assemblies are unicameral bodies elected for five-year terms on the basis of universal suffrage. The size of the assembly is 40 in Baluchistan, 80 in the NWFP, 240 in Punjab, and 100 in Sindh. The provincial capitals are Karachi (Sindh), Lahore (Punjab), Quetta (Baluchistan), and Peshawar (NWFP).

There are 12 provincially administered tribal areas and 10 federally administered ones, known as agencies, each under a political agent. Tribal areas are granted varying degrees of autonomy, especially in the administration of justice. The Northern Areas (72,520 sq km; 28,000 sq mi), consisting of the Diamir, Gilgit, and Baltistan agencies, are governed by the Ministry of the Interior, States, Frontier Regions, and Kashmir Affairs. Pakistan-held Jammu and Kashmir, known as Azad Kashmir (11,639 sq km; 4,494 sq mi), consists of four districts under its own president and prime minister, with the seat of government at Muzaffarabad.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The legal system is based on English common law. The central judiciary consists of the Supreme Court of Pakistan, four provincial high courts for each of the four provinces, district and session courts at the district level, and conciliation courts at the village level. The Supreme Court has original, appellate, and advisory jurisdiction, including jurisdiction over disputes between the federal and provincial governments and between provincial governments. The constitution of 1973 provides for the separation of the judiciary and the executive. As the guardian of the independence and integrity of the judiciary, the Supreme Judicial Council can discipline judges and monitor the judicial system in general. The council is composed of the chief justice, the two most senior justices of the Supreme Court, and chief justices of the provincial high courts.

Sharia (religious law) benches try offenses under the Haddud Ordinances but otherwise operate similarly to ordinary civilian courts. Cases referred to the sharia benches are heard by judges from the civilian court system who, in practice, apply ordinary criminal procedures in most cases. The appellate benches are also staffed with ordinary judges from the provincial higher courts. The government's 1979 Haddud Ordinances prescribe traditional Islamic punishments for theft, adultery, and the consumption of alcohol; penalties include flogging, stoning, and amputation. There are occasional floggings, but because of the strict Islamic rules of evidence and the reluctance of officials to carry out penalties, no stonings or amputations have been reported outside of tribal areas.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Pakistan's human rights record is poor. The police are known to abuse, rape, and kill citizens, though the situation has improved somewhat in recent years, as the government has begun a program of police training specifically meant to confront such abuses. Prison conditions are life threatening. The government has been cracking down on religious extremism and has arrested several religious leaders. Religious minorities remain victims of discrimination. The judicial system is inefficient, and there are long waits for trials. Though the national government does not systematically harass journalists, provincial and local governments do. Violence against women, prostitution, and child abuse are serious problems. Mob violence and terrorism are prevalent.

FOREIGN POLICY

Hostility to India is the central determinant of Pakistani foreign policy, based on centuries-old mutual suspicion between Hindus and Muslims. The rivalry found its

sharpest expression in the conflict over Kashmir, which began in 1947 and has led to three wars, in 1947, 1965, and 1971. After 1971 the so-called Simla Process (named after the Indian hill station where the talks were held) produced some improvement in relations until 1990, when Kashmir became the scene of escalating violence on the part of Muslim separatists. Tensions increased after the assassination of the senior Kashmiri Muslim cleric Maulvi Mohammad Farooq.

Following intermittent skirmishes, both diplomatic and military, Pakistan test-fired its first domestically produced medium-range surface-to-surface missile in 1998, which was followed by India's explosion of five nuclear weapons in underground testing and a further six nuclear tests by Pakistan in the Baluchistan Desert. The international community quickly condemned the tests, and the United States imposed economic sanctions against both countries. Relations between the two South Asian countries deteriorated further after an attack on the Indian parliament in New Delhi in 2001 that India blamed on Pakistan-backed Kashmiri militants; both countries began to mass troops along the common border. Relations improved somewhat in January 2004, when Musharraf met with India's Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee during a summit of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation.

Pakistan's relations with Bangladesh improved in the 1980s and 1990s, although no formula has been produced for relocating the 230,000 Biharis stranded in the former East Pakistan following the 1970s breakup. Mutual hostility to India brought China and Pakistan together in the 1960s, and this alliance between a hard-line Muslim nation and a Communist power has grown stronger over the years. China has been one of the most generous providers of loans to Pakistan and has also shared nuclear know-how and material. The two countries are linked through the Karakorum Highway, built by Chinese engineers.

Pakistan was a supporter of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, supplying both arms and trained personnel. This policy changed after September 11, 2001, when terrorist attacks in the United States, directed by Osama bin Laden and his al-Qaeda organization in Afghanistan, killed thousands of people. Pakistan offered to fully cooperate with the United States and allowed U.S. forces to utilize its airspace in the military campaign against the Taliban. Since 2001, Pakistan has remained an active participant in the U.S. war on terror, which has improved relations between the two countries.

DEFENSE

Pakistan has the eighth-largest armed forces in the world. The soldiers are well trained, although the nation has recently lacked the money and time to maintain its normal

training schedule. Military equipment is aging, and the government does not have the money to modernize it. The defense structure is headed by the president; under him are the commanders of the three separate armed services and the paramilitary forces. Military service is voluntary and lasts for two years.

The United States provided military aid to Pakistan until 1990, ending that aid when it was discovered that the country was developing nuclear weapons. Sanctions were waived after 2001, when Pakistan demonstrated willingness to aid the U.S. fight against terrorism. In 2003 President Bush promised Pakistan \$3 billion in military and economic aid over the following three years.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 909,000
 Military Manpower Availability: 39,028,014
 Military Expenditures \$billion: 3.85
 as % of GDP: 4.9
 as % of central government expenditures: 26
 Arms Imports \$million: —
 Arms Exports \$million: 8

ECONOMY

Pakistan is impoverished, underdeveloped, and heavily populated and has suffered from several decades of political turmoil. The fairly high rate of population growth (over 2 percent) contributes to the nation's difficulties, as social services cannot be maintained at a sufficient rate. Very little money goes to infrastructure development.

The Pakistani government has worked to improve the economic situation, putting a stop to fiscal mismanagement and accepting international assistance from the United States, to be used to improve education, health care, and general economic well-being. The nation has been removing barriers to foreign trade and investment and has been privatizing state-owned businesses. Foreign investors remain hesitant about the country's dubious security and political instability, as well as its apparently unreliable judicial system. The United States, in particular, wants to see Pakistan's economy grow stronger.

Pakistan has extensive natural gas reserves and plenty of arable land and water. Though agriculture exports account for nearly one-quarter of gross domestic product (GDP), Pakistan still imports more food than it exports. The country has been slow to exploit its energy resources and will not be able to fully do so until tensions with India are resolved.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 347.3
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 2,200

GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 3.6
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 1.2
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 22.6
 Industry: 24.1
 Services: 53.3

Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 74
 Government Consumption: 11
 Gross Domestic Investment: 16.4
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 15.07
 Imports: 14.01
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 4.1
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 27.6

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
136.0	141.9	146.4	151.2	155.6

Finance

National Currency: Pakistani Rupee (PKR)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = PKR 58
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency trillion: 1.39
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 7.5
 Total External Debt \$billion: 33.97
 Debt Service Ratio %: 16.81
 Balance of Payments \$billion: 1.4
 International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 10.7
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 4.8

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$billion: 1.07
 per capita \$: 7.20
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 534

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: 1 July–30 June
 Revenues \$billion: 13.45
 Expenditures \$billion: 16.51
 Budget Deficit \$billion: 3.06
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 22.6
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 1.9
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 1.49
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 80.5
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 138.1
 Total Farmland % of land area: 27.8
 Livestock: Cattle million: 23.8
 Chickens million: 160
 Pigs 000: —
 Sheep 000: 24.7
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 28
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 611.5

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Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 12.4
Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 13.1

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 25.6
Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 41.4
Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 291
Net Energy Imports % of use: 24.5
Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 17.7
 Production kW-hr billion: 68.9
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 64.0
Coal Reserves tons billion: 2.5
 Production tons million: 3.7
 Consumption tons million: 4.8
Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: 26.8
 Production cubic feet billion: 810
 Consumption cubic feet billion: 810
Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels million: 288
 Production barrels 000 per day: 61.8
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 360
Pipelines Length km: 1,821

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 14.01
Exports \$billion: 15.07
Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 13.6
Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 2.5
Balance of Trade \$billion: 1.4

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
United Arab Emirates %	11.2	9.4
Saudi Arabia %	10.9	—
China %	7.3	—
Japan %	6.6	—
Kuwait %	6.4	—
United States %	6.0	23.1
Malaysia %	4.6	—
Germany %	4.4	5.1
Singapore %	4.0	—
United Kingdom %	—	7.1
Hong Kong %	—	4.6

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 257,683
 Paved %: 59.0
Automobiles: 1,170,800
Trucks and Buses: 488,600
Railroad: Track Length km: 8,163
 Passenger-km billion: 19.8
 Freight-km billion: 4.6
Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 13
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 512.5
Airports: 131
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 10.7
Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 479
Number of Tourists from 000: —
Tourist Receipts \$million: 618
Tourist Expenditures \$billion: 1.16

Communications

Telephones million: 3.98
Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
Cellular Telephones million: 2.62
Personal Computers 000: 600
Internet Hosts per million people: 93
Internet Users per 1,000 people: 9.2

ENVIRONMENT

Pakistan suffers from a number of environmental concerns, including water pollution from raw sewage, industrial wastes, and agricultural runoff. This pollution has further limited the country's natural freshwater resources. There is growing desertification as a result of deforestation and accompanying soil erosion.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 3.1
Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: -39
Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 9
Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 0.76

LIVING CONDITIONS

Pakistan is a poor country, with 35 percent of its people living below the poverty line. Public transportation is plentiful and cheap, but it can be crowded, slow, and dangerous. Wealthier people live in large apartments or houses, often employing servants; poorer people live in small houses or apartments with only two or three rooms. Those in rural areas use kerosene stoves for cooking and get their water from rivers or wells.

HEALTH

Though the government provides health care to all citizens, facilities are not always adequate, and the population is rapidly outgrowing them. Many people choose to pay for private health care instead of using government services; people also treat their ailments with herbal medicines. The public health program concentrates on primary health care, immunization, and disease prevention, particularly the reduction of malaria. Fertility is high, at 4.1 children per woman in 2004. Life expectancy is much

higher than it was 50 years ago but is still relatively low at 63 years. Endemic diseases include malaria, dengue fever, hepatitis, and Japanese B encephalitis.

Health

Number of Physicians: 96,900
 Number of Dentists: 4,560
 Number of Nurses: 68,400
 Number of Pharmacists: 45,390
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 66
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 72.44
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 500
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 3.2
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 13
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.1
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 67
 Measles: 61
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 54
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 90

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Pakistani cuisine resembles that of northern India, with some Middle Eastern influences. The typical starches are breads such as roti and naan, as well as chapati and *paratha*. People also eat a great deal of rice. With these starches people eat many vegetables, such as spinach, cabbage, peas, and lentils. Meats are served in curries, roasted, grilled, or cooked in a tandoor oven. Muslims do not eat pork, so the common meats are chicken, goat, and beef. Pakistanis make many desserts and sweets, using milk, sugar syrup, and flavorings such as cardamom. A typical after-dinner snack is *paan*, a mix of spices, betel nut, and tobacco spread on a betel leaf. People drink copious amounts of *chai*, or sweetened milk tea, and also like to drink *lassis*, or yogurt drinks. Most people do not drink alcohol, though beer and liquor is locally produced and can be purchased in some bars and hotels.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 20
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,460
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 154.1
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 65.5

STATUS OF WOMEN

Pakistani society is traditional and Islamic, leaving women subordinate roles in terms of civil, political, and individual rights. Many Pakistani Muslims interpret the Koran's injunction on modesty to mean that women should remain in *purdah*, or concealment, either at home or behind the

veil. These attitudes have contributed to an adult female literacy rate approximately half that of men. Eight times as many men as women work outside the home, and those women who work or attend school usually do so in separate facilities. Few women hold political office, with the notable exception of Benazir Bhutto.

Urban women are represented in the universities, but postgraduate employment opportunities remain largely limited to teaching, medical services, and the law, with a small number of women entering the commercial and public sectors. The government's policy of full Islamization has reversed some of the social and legal gains made by women in past years.

Violence against women is an extremely serious problem. Wives are considered the property of their husbands' families, and these families feel free to abuse or kill wives; women who fail to produce sons are in particular danger, though any wife can be subject to burning, beating, or other mistreatment. Women are often expected to bear children until they produce one of the proper sex, though they have no power to control their fertility. Female children receive less food and health care than males. "Honor killings," in which a woman's family kills her if she is the victim of rape or some other form of "dishonor," are still prevalent, and though the government has said that such practices are not acceptable it has taken no concrete steps to stop them.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 21
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 0.64
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 8.7

WORK

Almost half of Pakistan's population is engaged in agriculture, many of them in subsistence agriculture, growing food for their own families. Some agricultural workers are employed by commercial growers who produce cotton, rice, wheat, sugarcane, and jute for export. Some 20 percent of the workforce is engaged in industry, working in factories to produce steel, sugar, cement, paper, textiles and clothing, automobiles, and electronics. Textiles are a major industry; cotton cloth and garments account for 64 percent of the country's exports. Pakistan is especially known for its handmade carpets, embroidery, and silk cloth.

Most of Pakistan's people are quite poor; although per capita GDP was a relatively decent \$2,200 in 2004, income disparity is extreme, and most of the nation's wealth is concentrated among a small portion of its population. Many young children work instead of going to school.

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As a result, many Pakistanis have no education and must work as unskilled laborers.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 45,430,000
Female Participation Rate %: 30.3
Labor by Sector %:
Agriculture: 42
Industry: 20
Services: 38
Unemployment %: 8.3

EDUCATION

Pakistan has a low literacy rate of 46 percent (60 percent for males and 31 percent for females in 2003). School is not compulsory, and many children never attend at all. The principle of universal, free education was accepted as official policy by the Zulfikar Ali Bhutto government, but as yet the government has not managed to build enough schools to cover all the country's children. The educational ladder consists of 12 years of schooling: five years in primary school, three in middle school, and four in high school. The tertiary level is of up to seven years' duration, including two-year intermediate, two-year undergraduate, and three-year postgraduate courses. Passage between levels is monitored by standard government-controlled examinations.

The school year runs from July to June in the Karachi region and from April to March in other areas. The medium of instruction is English at all levels of private school and from the secondary level onward in public schools. Adult education is an important concern, and a National Literacy Corps is planned to undertake a massive program in this field.

Private and elite schools have played a significant role in Pakistan and enjoy greater prestige than public schools. Private schools and some public schools teach Islamic history and tenets.

After secondary school, students can attend vocational programs or universities, where they can study law, engineering, agriculture, and other subjects. Most colleges and universities admit both men and women.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 45.7
Male %: 59.8
Female %: 30.6
School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 5.4
First Level: Primary Schools: 115,744
Teachers: 347,221
Students: 14,044,719
Student-Teacher Ratio: 40.5
Net Enrollment Ratio: 59.1

Second Level: Secondary Schools: 20,243
Teachers: 458,972
Students: 5,651,293
Student-Teacher Ratio: 12.5
Net Enrollment Ratio: —
Third Level: Institutions: 888
Teachers: —
Students: 401,056
Gross Enrollment Ratio: 2.8
Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 1.8

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The government has been working to improve Pakistan's telecommunications system, adding lines and modernizing technology. About 1.5 million Pakistanis were using the Internet in 2002. The United States has given the country several million dollars to improve education and create technical links between the two nations as part of the Pakistan Science and Technology Agreement. Proposed projects include adding scientific journal content to the national university digital library system, introducing telemedicine to rural areas, and improving the nation's water quality.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 69
Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 0.22
High-Tech Exports \$million: 120
Patent Applications by Residents: 58

MEDIA

Since Musharraf came to power, both print and broadcast media have experienced unprecedented levels of freedom. The state had a virtual monopoly on radio and television broadcasting for many years, but recently private stations have been appearing. In the early 2000s the government issued licenses for over 20 private satellite television stations and over 50 private radio stations. Private radio stations may only broadcast music and entertainment, not news. International satellite stations are also available; Pakistanis especially like to watch Indian channels, which are not censored as heavily as Pakistani ones.

The print media is still subject to many restrictions, such as blasphemy laws, but Pakistan's newspapers are nevertheless some of the most outspoken in the region. Major newspapers include the Karachi-based *Daily Jang*, in Urdu, and *Dawn*, in English; the *Daily Ausaf*, published in Urdu in Islamabad; and the English *Frontier Post*, published in Peshawar.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 306
Total Circulation million: 5.6
Circulation per 1,000: 39.3

Books Published: —
 Periodicals: 560
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets million: 16
 per 1,000: 105

CULTURE

Pakistan has a rich culture that stems from a combination of Buddhist, Hindu, and Muslim influences. Sculpture has both Greek and Buddhist motifs. Craftsmen make excellent pottery, jewelry, rugs, embroidered textiles, engraved woodwork, and metal objects. Traditional art employs complex geometric patterns, which appear on both formal works of art and on such unconventional canvases as city buses. Writing is a major art form, and calligraphy from the Koran decorates many homes and other buildings. Poetry and traditional singing are still important parts of Pakistani culture. Lahore, the capital of Punjab, is considered the nation's cultural and artistic center; the city is home to some of the country's best museums, mosques, mausoleums, and architecture.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: 10
 Annual Attendance: 561,000
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: 652
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: 9,700,000

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

The Indus River valley was one of the earliest places inhabited by humans and has long attracted people from different regions. The people of the Harappan culture lived there around 2500 B.C.E. and left behind the remains of urban centers, writing, and a complex society. This culture might have been a predecessor of Hinduism. As the centuries passed, Buddhism arrived, as did the doctrines of Vedic Hinduism. Alexander the Great passed through the region in the fourth century B.C.E.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Karachi has many recreational possibilities, ranging from museums to zoos to beach resorts, though the city does not have anything that Westerners would consider nightlife. In general, people enjoy going to city centers to shop

in marketplaces, where one can purchase nearly anything and eat cheaply at local food stalls and restaurants. The coast offers various water sports, including sailing and deep-sea fishing. Tourists come from all over the world to climb Pakistan's mountains, raft down the Indus River, trek from peak to peak, and ski in the winter.

ETIQUETTE

Most business interactions in Pakistan are made easier by the payment of *baksheesh*, or tips. Bargaining is proper protocol whenever a purchase is contemplated; Pakistanis look on bargaining as a form of recreation. When someone wants to buy something, the seller will usually invite them in for tea and conversation, after which the bargaining may begin, always with smiles and good humor.

FAMILY LIFE

Most Pakistani families are quite large; couples like to have many children, considering them gifts from Allah, and several generations of relatives often live in the same home. Parents take their children with them to social events, and all family landmarks are celebrated with relatives. Most marriages are arranged. The birth of a son is an occasion of great celebration. Male babies are circumcised when they are seven days old, and the family holds a party.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Both men and women wear the national dress, the *shalwar-kameez*, which consists of a long shirt worn over loose pants. Women's clothing is usually more colorful than men's, and they usually add a long scarf or shawl called a chador. Some men in the cities wear Western-style clothing.

SPORTS

Pakistanis love to play and watch sports, often as a family. Cricket is the most popular sport, and field hockey, squash, polo, and soccer are also popular; Pakistan has produced many world-class soccer players. Some people play a traditional sport called *kabaddi*, which involves wrestling and capturing members of an opposing team while chanting "kabaddi" as evidence of not breathing in.

CHRONOLOGY

1947 Pakistan is established as an independent dominion consisting of the former provinces of Sindh and NWFP, Baluchistan, and parts of Punjab and Bengal.

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- Muhammad Ali Jinnah becomes governor-general.
Karachi is made the capital; Pakistan joins United Nations; Liaquat Ali Khan becomes prime minister.
- 1948** Jinnah dies and is succeeded as governor-general by Khawaja Nazimuddin.
Dispute with India breaks out over Kashmir.
- 1951** Military coup attempt by Gen. Muhammad Akbar Khan fails.
Liaquat Ali Khan is slain.
Khawaja Nazimuddin becomes prime minister and Ghulam Muhammad governor-general.
- 1953** Anti-Ahmadiya riots occur in Punjab and Sindh.
Muhammad Ali Bogra becomes the new prime minister, replacing Nazimuddin.
- 1954** Chief Minister Khan Sahib is assassinated.
- 1955** Ghulam Muhammad dismisses the Majlis-i-Shura; second Majlis-i-Shura meets.
Ghulam Muhammad leaves office.
Dominion status is ended.
Iskander Mirza becomes new governor-general.
Rupee is devalued.
- 1956** Sindh, Punjab, Baluchistan, and NWFP merge to form West Pakistan.
Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy becomes prime minister.
Constitution is adopted; Pakistan is proclaimed an Islamic republic, with Mirza as first president. It remains in the Commonwealth.
- 1957** Ibrahim Ismail Chundrigar succeeds Suhrawardy as prime minister.
- 1958** Feroz Khan Noon is elected prime minister.
The Majlis-i-Shura is dissolved, and the cabinet ousted in a military coup. Mirza heads the government briefly but later yields to Muhammad Ayub Khan as president.
- 1959** Military government decides to shift national capital from Karachi to Rawalpindi.
Basic democracy and tiered system of popular representation is introduced.
- 1960** Canal Waters Treaty is concluded with India.
- 1961** Ties with Afghanistan are cut over Afghan support for Pashtun separatist movement.
- 1962** Martial law is ended; new constitution is adopted.
- 1963** Zulfikar Ali Bhutto becomes foreign minister and initiates new Rawalpindi-Beijing axis.
- 1964** Television is introduced.
- 1965** Muhammad Ayub Khan is elected president, defeating Fatima Jinnah.
- 1966** War with India ends without a clear victory for either nation; Tashkent peace accord ends the war.
- 1967** Metric system is introduced.
- 1968** Border agreement with India over disputed areas in the Rann of Kutch is concluded.
- 1969** Muhammad Ayub Khan steps down as president and hands power over to Muhammad Yahya Khan.
- 1970** In national direct elections the Awami League of East Pakistan, led by Mujibur Rahman, wins a clear majority.
West Pakistan is redivided into four provinces.
Islamabad becomes the nation's new capital.
- 1971** In a disastrous effort to stem the tide of separatism in East Pakistan, the army jails Mujibur Rahman and unleashes a reign of terror.
Indian intervention in East Pakistan leads to war. The Pakistani army, which had invaded East Pakistan, is overwhelmed and forced to surrender.
East Pakistan proclaims itself the independent state of Bangladesh. Yahya Khan steps down in disgrace.
Zulfikar Ali Bhutto forms a new government as president.
Pakistan leaves the Commonwealth.
Yahya Khan is jailed.
- 1972** Bhutto attends a summit meeting with Indira Gandhi at Simla. More than 90,000 prisoners of the 1971 war are returned under an accord reached by the two leaders.
Land and educational reforms are announced.
- 1973** New constitution, Pakistan's second, is ratified by the National Assembly, establishing a federal republic with a largely ceremonial president and a strong prime minister as chief executive.
Zulfikar Ali Bhutto assumes office as prime minister.
- 1974** Banks and heavy industries are nationalized.
Trade and communications links with India are resumed.
Pakistan recognizes Bangladesh.
- 1977** In first elections under new constitution, Bhutto's PPP wins a landslide victory; widespread disturbances occur in Baluchistan and the NWFP; martial law is imposed in three cities; Bhutto forms a new cabinet.
Bhutto is overthrown in a coup led by army commander in chief Muhammad Zia ul-Haq; new martial law is proclaimed.
Bhutto is arrested on murder charges; chief justice orders hearing on Bhutto arrest but is himself dismissed.
- 1978** Zia announces creation of an advisory council.
Opposition papers belonging to Bhutto's party are suspended. Lahore High Court sentences Zulfikar Ali Bhutto to death for conspiracy to murder a political opponent.
- 1979** Bhutto is executed despite appeals for clemency from many nations; Pakistan National Alliance quits the government; U.S. embassy in Islam-

- abad is stormed and burned by angry mobs heeding the call of Ayatollah Khomeini; Zia turns down U.S. offer of \$200 million in military credits.
- 1980** Local elections are held, but national elections are postponed indefinitely; the government announces plans to Islamize the economy by abolishing interest, limited liability, and incorporation.
- 1984** Khunjerab Pass on the Karakorum Highway is opened.
First U.S. F-16 fighters are delivered to Pakistan.
- 1985** In a cautious return to democracy, Zia relinquishes some authority to a civilian prime minister, Muhammad Khan Junejo, leader of the Muslim League.
- 1988** President Zia is killed in a plane explosion in August. After elections in November, Benazir Bhutto, daughter of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, is named prime minister, the first female leader of a modern Muslim country. Ishaq Khan becomes president.
- 1990** Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto is dismissed August 6 by President Ishaq Khan; Ghulam Mustafa Jatoi is named to head interim government pending national elections scheduled for October 24, 1990. Nawaz Sharif is elected prime minister.
- 1991** Pakistan contributes 10,000 troops to the international coalition against Iraq in the Persian Gulf War. Opinion polls show overwhelming support for Saddam Hussein. Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif submits to parliament legislation to adopt Islamic law in place of the secular code.
- 1993** President Ishaq Khan dismisses government of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, citing corruption.
Benazir Bhutto's PPP wins slim margin in national elections and builds coalition government.
- 1996** Bhutto's government is dismissed under charges of corruption.
- 1997** Former prime minister Nawaz Sharif is elected prime minister.
Political tensions between India and Pakistan on the issue of Kashmir increase.
- 1998** Pakistan tests a nuclear weapon in response to an earlier Indian test.
- 1999** General Musharraf leads a successful military coup, taking control of the government.
- 2000** The Commonwealth of Nations suspends Pakistan's membership as a result of the coup. Sharif is convicted of abuse of power and allowed to immigrate to Saudi Arabia. The Supreme Court sets a deadline of October 2002 for the restoration of civilian rule.
- 2001** After the terrorist attacks in the United States on September 11, 2001, that killed thousands of people, Pakistan agrees to cooperate in the U.S. fight against international terrorism. The United States lifts economic sanctions imposed on Pakistan in 1998.
After an attack on the Indian parliament in 2001, relations between Pakistan and India further deteriorate, and both countries mass troops along their common border. President Musharraf bans two militant Islamic groups within Pakistan and takes steps to curb religious extremism.
- 2002** Amid widespread allegations of fraud, Musharraf garners a landslide victory in a national referendum to extend his presidency for five years. Pakistan test fires three missiles to demonstrate the nation's ability to defend itself from attack.
- 2003** Pakistan declares a cease-fire in Kashmir. Pakistan and India resume air links.
- 2004** Nuclear scientist Abdul Qadeer Khan admits to having leaked nuclear weapons secrets to Libya, North Korea, and Iran. Parliament creates a military-led National Security Council. Musharraf reneges on his earlier promise to step down as head of the army and stays on in that role.
- 2005** Militants in Baluchistan attack Pakistan's largest natural gas field, forcing it to close.
Tens of thousands die in an earthquake with its epicenter in Kashmir.

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<http://www.pak.gov.pk>

CONTACT INFORMATION

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PALAU

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Palau (Beluu er a Belau)

ABBREVIATION

PW

CAPITAL

Koror

HEAD OF STATE & HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

President Tommy Remengesau (from 2001)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Republic in free association with the United States

POPULATION

20,303 (2005)

AREA

458 sq km (177 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Palauan, Asian

LANGUAGES

English (official), Palauan, Japanese, Sonsoralese, Tobi, Angaur

RELIGIONS

Christianity, Modekngei

UNIT OF CURRENCY

U.S. dollar

NATIONAL FLAG

Light blue with a large yellow disk (representing the moon) shifted slightly to the hoist side

NATIONAL EMBLEM

Palau has no coat of arms, only a seal. The seal shows a traditional Palauan triangular hut, surrounded by the title of the state, with the date of adoption below.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"Palau Is Coming Forth with Strength and Power"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day), March 15 (Youth Day), May 5 (Senior Citizens' Day), June 1 (President's Day), July 9 (Constitution Day), first Monday in September (Labor Day), October 1 (Independence Day), last Thursday in November (Thanksgiving Day), December 25 (Christmas)

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

October 1, 1994

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

January 1, 1981

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

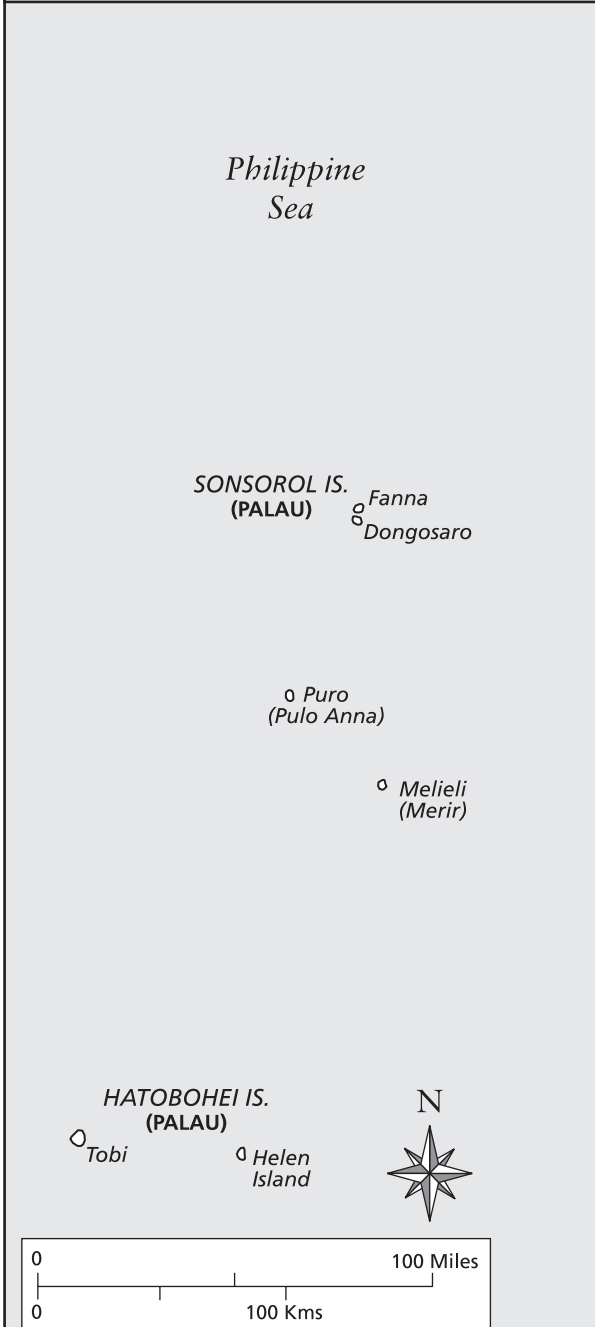
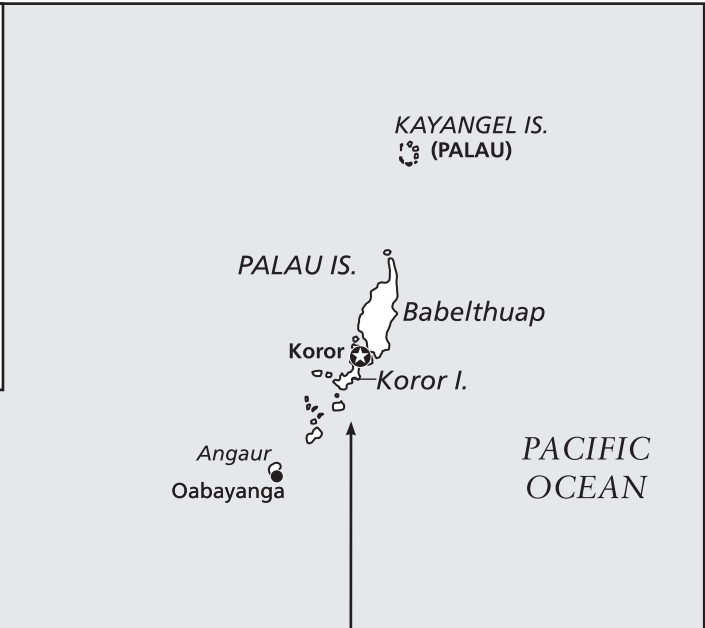
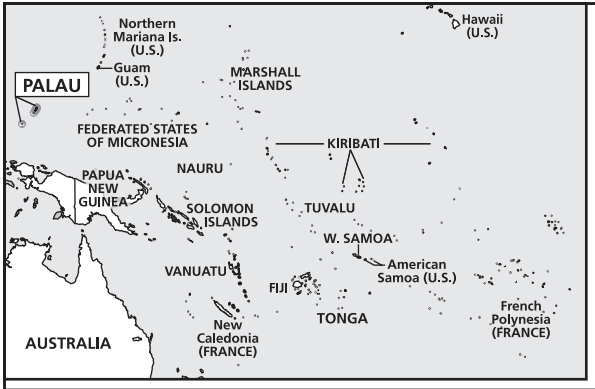
Palau consists of the Palau (or Belau) group of islands in the western Caroline Islands in the western Pacific. The country consists of more than 200 islands, of which Babeldaob is the largest. The other main islands are Koror, containing the capital of the same name; Oreor, where the main airport is located; Ngerekbesang; Ngemelachel; Peleliu; Angaur; Sonsorol; and Hatohebei. Kayangel is a coral atoll. A new capital is being built on Babeldaob. The islands include four types of topographical formation: volcanic, limestone, low platform, and coral atoll. The Palau Barrier Reef encircles the Palau group, except Angaur Island and Kayangel Atoll. The reef encloses another reef on the western side containing a large number of small islets known as the Rock Islands. Babeldaob and

Koror are of the limestone and volcanic type. Arkabesan, Malakal, and other northern islands are also volcanic. Peleliu and Angaur are low platform reef islands.

Geography

Area sq km: 458; sq mi 177
World Rank: 178th
Land Boundaries, km: 0
Coastline, km: 1,519
Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Pacific Ocean 0
 Highest: Mount Ngerchelchuus 242
Land Use %
 Arable Land: 8.7
 Permanent Crops: 4.4
 Forest: 76.1
 Other: 10.8

Palau



Population of Principal Cities (2000)

Koror

11,584

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Since Palau is located near the equator, it has a maritime tropical climate with little seasonal or diurnal variation. The annual mean temperature is 29.4°C (82°F), with high levels of humidity. There is heavy precipitation throughout the year, with up to 3,800 mm (150 in) of rain, augmented by typhoons and tropical storms from July through November. The heaviest rainfall occurs between May and January.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature: 82°F

Average Rainfall: 150 in

Humidity: 82 percent

FLORA AND FAUNA

Most of the islands are covered in tropical forests; the main trees are coconut, breadfruit, ironwood, pandanus, and ironwood. There are also some grasslands and mangroves. Terrestrial animals include fruit bats, birds, monkeys, lizards, nonpoisonous snakes, crocodiles, and monitor lizards.

Palau is world famous for its marine life. The waters surrounding the islands are home to more than 1,500 fish species and 700 species of invertebrates such as coral. Divers flock to Palau to see sharks, manatees, manta rays, giant clams, sea turtles, sea snakes, and chambered nautilus.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 20,303

World Rank: 190th

Density per sq km: 43.0

% of annual growth (2000-2003): 1.7

Male %: 53.1

Female %: 46.9

Urban %: 69.5

Age Distribution %: 0-14: 26.4

15-64: 69.0

65 and over: 4.6

Population 2025: 24,300

Birth Rate per 1,000: 18.37

Death Rate per 1,000: 6.85

Rate of Natural Increase %: 1.2

Total Fertility Rate: 2.46

Expectation of Life (years): Males 66.98

Females 73.48

Marriage Rate per 1,000: —

Divorce Rate per 1,000: —

Average Size of Households: —

Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

About 70 percent of Palauans are Micronesians with admixtures of Melanesian and Malayan genetic stock. Another 28 percent of the population is Asian, mainly Filipinos, with a few Chinese, Taiwanese, and Vietnamese. The remaining inhabitants are white.

LANGUAGES

English is an official language throughout the nation, and nearly all people speak it. Palauan is an official language in most of the states; Palauan is a Malay-Polynesian language related to Indonesian. Palauan is not an official language in Sonsoral, where Sonsoralese takes its place; in Hatobohei, where Tobi is instead official; and in Angaur, where Angaur and Japanese are additional official languages.

RELIGIONS

About 70 percent of Palauans are to some extent Christian and about 9 percent of the population practices the indigenous Modekngai religion, many combining it with Christianity. Of the Christians, 60 percent are Catholic and 40 percent Protestant. The first Catholic missionaries arrived in 1891 and the first Protestant missionaries in 1929, from Liebenzell Mission. The New Testament had been translated into Palauan by 1950, and the United Bible Societies completed the translation of the Old Testament in 1985.

Religious Affiliation

Roman Catholic	8,446
Protestant	4,731
Modekngai	1,787
Other	5,340

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The first inhabitants of Palau were probably immigrants from Southeast Asia who settled the islands about 3,000 to 4,000 years ago. The earliest European explorer to reach Palau was the Spanish sailor Francisco Lezcano, who named the group of islands the Carolines after King Charles II of Spain. Spanish sovereignty was established in 1885. In 1899, after Spain's defeat in the 1898 Spanish-American War, Palau and the rest of the Carolines were sold to Germany. At the outbreak of World War I in 1914, the islands were seized by the Japanese, who were later given a mandate over Palau by the League of Nations. During the interwar years, the islands were the administrative center of Japanese possessions in the North

Pacific. In 1947, following Japan's defeat in World War II, Palau became a part of the UN Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, administered by the United States. Palau became a self-governing republic in 1981.

In the 1980s Palau experienced troubled political times, as marked by the assassination of one president, Haruo Remeliik, in 1985, and the suicide of another, Lazarus E. Sali, in 1988. In 1994 Palau became an independent nation in free association with the United States, which is responsible for its defense.

Tommy Remengesau was elected president in 2001 and reelected in 2004. His stated goals have included protecting the environment, encouraging economy growth, improving infrastructure to allow the nation to cope with an increased influx of tourists, and making the country less dependent on financial aid from the United States.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1981–85	Haruo Remeliik
1985–88	Lazarus Sali
1989–93	Ngiratkel Etpison
1993–2001	Kuniwo Nakamura
2001–	Tommy Remengesau

CONSTITUTION

The Palauan constitution, which is based on the U.S. model, provides for three branches of government. The executive branch is headed by the president, who is elected by popular vote for no more than two terms of four years each. The president is assisted by a cabinet of ministers, one of whom is the vice president, also elected by popular vote. The president and vice president are elected on separate tickets. A council of chiefs, drawn from the principal clans, advises the president on matters of tradition and custom. In 2004 the islanders approved a referendum on constitutional changes that would allow the president and vice president to run as a team, limit congressmen to three terms in office, and permit dual citizenship.

PARLIAMENT

The legislature, known as the Olbiil Era Kelulau, or National Congress, is a bicameral body consisting of nine senators and 16 delegates. The senators, elected for four-year terms, are elected by popular vote on the basis of both population and ethnic groups. Delegates are elected by popular vote from each of the 16 states, also for four-year terms.

POLITICAL PARTIES

There are no formal political parties in Palau.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Palau has 16 states, each state consisting of one or more islands. The states are Aimeliik, Airai, Angaur, Hatoho-bei, Kayangel, Koror, Melekeok, Ngaraard, Ngarchelong, Ngardmau, Ngatpang, Ngchesar, Ngeremlengui, Ngiwal, Peleliu, and Sonsorol. Each state is headed by a governor, who is popularly elected for a four-year term. Each state has a legislature whose members are popularly elected for four- or two-year terms. The states have limited legislative powers.

LEGAL SYSTEM

Palau has a three-tier judicial system with the Supreme Court at the apex and the National Court, Court of Common Pleas, and Land Court as subordinate courts. The Supreme Court, led by a chief justice, hears appeals and some original matters. The legal system is based on Trust Territory laws, as supplemented by customary local laws, municipal laws, common law, and acts of the legislature.

HUMAN RIGHTS

The influence of the United States on the Palauan political system is reflected in the islands' strong guarantees of human rights. However, nearly 30 percent of the population and 73 percent of the workforce are foreign, and these aliens suffer occasional acts of discrimination. There have been some reports of human trafficking from China, the Philippines, and Taiwan. Domestic violence and child neglect are persistent problems.

FOREIGN POLICY

Palau is the 185th member of the United Nations and has joined several other international organizations since independence. It maintains diplomatic relations with the United States, Japan, and a number of other nations, particularly those in the Pacific.

DEFENSE

Defense is the responsibility of the United States until 2044. Palau has a national police force and a Marine Law Enforcement Division that patrols its borders with assistance from Australia.

ECONOMY

The economy consists primarily of subsistence agriculture and fishing, though the importance of these sectors is diminishing as people move to the city. The govern-

ment is the major employer, accounting for 29 percent of the workforce in 2000. A large part of the budget is subsidized by the United States; as a result, Palauans enjoy a higher standard of living and a higher per capita income than their neighbors. Palau is a major hub along Pacific air routes, and as such, long-term prospects for the tourist sector appear extremely good. Tourism already accounts for a large portion of Palau's gross domestic product (GDP); scuba diving and snorkeling are the main attractions to the thousands of visitors who come from Japan, Taiwan, and the United States.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$million: 174
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 9,000
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 0.4
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: —
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:

Agriculture: —
 Industry: —
 Services: —

Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:

Private Consumption: 43
 Government Consumption: 22
 Gross Domestic Investment: —

Foreign Trade \$million: Exports: 18
 Imports: 99

% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: —
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: —

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
—	—	—	—	—

— — — — —

Finance

National Currency: U.S. Dollar
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: —
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: —
 Total External Debt \$billion: —
 Debt Service Ratio %: —
 Balance of Payments \$million: —
 International Reserves SDRs \$million: —
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
 3.4

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 25.5
 per capita \$: 1,256.00
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: —

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: October 1–September 30
 Revenues \$million: 57.7
 Expenditures \$million: 80.8
 Budget Deficit \$million: 23.1
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: —
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: —
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 0.13
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: —
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: —
 Total Farmland % of land area: 8.7
 Livestock: Cattle million: —
 Chickens million: —
 Pigs 000: —
 Sheep 000: —
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters 000: —
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 1

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 0.8
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: —

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 2
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 80
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 4
 Net Energy Imports % of use: —
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: —
 Production kW-hr billion: —
 Consumption kW-hr billion: —
 Coal Reserves tons million: —
 Production tons million: —
 Consumption tons million: —
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
 Production cubic feet billion: —
 Consumption cubic feet billion: —
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
 Production barrels 000 per day: —
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: —
 Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$million: 99
 Exports \$million: 18
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —
 Balance of Trade \$million: —

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
United States %	—	—
Guam %	—	—
Japan %	—	—
Singapore %	—	—
South Korea %	—	—

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 61
 Paved %: 59.0
 Automobiles: —
 Trucks and Buses: —
 Railroad: Track Length km: —
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: —
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: —
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: —
 Airports: 3
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: —
 Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 59
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 59
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 2

Communications

Telephones 000: 6.7
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones 000: 1
 Personal Computers 000: —
 Internet Hosts per million people: —
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: —

ENVIRONMENT

Palau's natural environment is fragile, as with all reef islands. Issues of concern include illegal fishing with the use of dynamite, inadequate facilities for the disposal of solid waste in Koror, and extensive sand and coral dredging in the Palau Lagoon. Like other island nations, the possible rise in sea levels as a result of global warming is a substantial threat. Low-lying areas are subject to coastal flooding. The government has set aside some of the uninhabited Rock Islands as a marine reserve to protect sea turtles and seabirds.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 76.1
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: —
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 3
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: —

LIVING CONDITIONS

Living conditions in Palau are good for a Pacific island state, due in large part to tourism income and foreign aid. Increasing numbers of people are moving from the country-

side to the capital city, which has become the nation's commercial center. Palauans typically use speedboats to travel between the capital and their homes on other islands. The only feasible way to enter or leave the country as a whole is by air, either through Guam or Taiwan. Traditional houses are built of wood and thatch, and most villages once had a building called a *bai* that served as a communal meeting center, but traditional buildings have been disappearing as the nation has modernized. As of 2002, about 16 percent of Palauans still lacked access to safe water.

HEALTH

Palau has a high life expectancy—over 70 years in 2005—and a low infant mortality rate. Fertility is moderate, with each woman bearing an average of 2.5 children in 2004. There are some tropical diseases endemic to the region, including dengue fever, typhoid, and filariasis. Jellyfish present a risk to divers. Health care is adequate, but due to the long distances between islands, some 20 percent of the population does not have access to health services.

Health

Number of Physicians: 20
 Number of Dentists: 2
 Number of Nurses: 26
 Number of Pharmacists: 1
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 109
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 14.84
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: —
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 9.1
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 439
 HIV Infected % of adults: —
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 99
 Measles: 99
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 83
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 84

FOOD AND NUTRITION

The traditional Palauan diet was built around coconut, cassava, sweet potatoes, and seafood. Today, many people eat Japanese and American food. A popular activity among locals, especially older people, is chewing betel nut mixed with lime powder, which stains teeth red if chewed over many years.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: —
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: —

STATUS OF WOMEN

There are occasional acts of violence against women; alcohol and drug abuse contribute to this problem. The inheritance of property and traditional rank are matrilineal, with women occupying positions of influence in the traditional system. An annual women's conference is held. The former senator Sandra S. Pierantozzi became the first female vice president in 2000.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 0
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: —
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: —

WORK

The vast majority of Palauans work in the service sector. Perhaps one-quarter of workers are employed by the government, and many others employed in services work in tourism. Some workers are employed in construction or in making traditional crafts for sale to tourists. One-fifth of the people work in agriculture, most of them at a subsistence level. There are also a number of Chinese immigrants who grow vegetables in Palau, competing with the native farmers.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 9,845
 Female Participation Rate %: —
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 20
 Other: 80
 Unemployment %: 2.3

EDUCATION

Public education is free and compulsory from ages six to 14, and the literacy rate is a fairly high 92 percent. There is only one public high school, but there are five private schools run by religious bodies. The Ministry of Education shares public funding with the private schools, and there is a close working relationship between public and private institutions. Postsecondary education is offered at the Palau Community College, in Koror. U.S. funds pay for Head Start preschool programs for the children of economically disadvantaged families. Some of the private schools offer kindergarten, but none of the public schools do.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 92
 Male %: 93
 Female %: 90
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 14.1
 First Level: Primary Schools: —
 Teachers: —
 Students: 1,942
 Student-Teacher Ratio: —
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 96.4
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: —
 Teachers: 140
 Students: 1,901
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 13.6
 Net Enrollment Ratio: —
 Third Level: Institutions: —
 Teachers: 46
 Students: 484
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 39.0
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 11.2

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Palau's Malakal Island is the site of the Micronesian Mariculture Demonstration Center, a major marine lab dedicated to ocean conservation and economic development; one of the most successful projects done there involves cultivating giant clams.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: —
 Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

Palau's media are sparse. There are no television stations broadcasting from Palau, although most houses have cable television, which allows them to watch American programming. There are three major radio stations, including the government station T8AA Eco Paradise. *Roureur Belau* is a Palauan-language weekly newspaper. *Tia Belau* and *Palau Horizon* are both published weekly in English.

Media

Daily Newspapers: —
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: —
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets 000: —
 per 1,000: —

CULTURE

Palauans practice a number of native crafts, including making beads, carving money from shells, weaving baskets and bags from the pandanus leaf, carving wooden storyboards depicting local myths, and constructing buildings that require great woodworking and thatching skills. The islands were inhabited at least 1,000 years ago, and the prehistoric inhabitants left behind hill terraces, pyramids formed on the hillsides, and monoliths that were supposedly erected to support the roof of an enormous *bai* meeting house.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
Volumes: —
Registered borrowers: —
Museums Number: —
Annual Attendance: —
Cinema Gross Receipts: —
Number of Cinemas: —
Seating Capacity: —
Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

The traditional story of the founding of Palau states that a giant tripped and fell in the ocean, and people crawled out of his body. A number of Palauans still practice the indigenous Modekngai religion, which has been revived and is becoming increasingly popular. People continue to engage in traditional rites, such as conducting rituals over firstborn children or leaving lights on at night to keep away ghosts.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Scuba diving, snorkeling, and lying on beaches are the activities that attract tourists to Palau. Fishing is popular with both tourists and locals, who gather every spring to participate in the annual fishing derby. The Belau Arts Festival takes place in July.

ETIQUETTE

Most Palauans take off their shoes when entering a house or public building. Tipping is not customary in hotels or restaurants.

FAMILY LIFE

Traditionally, everyone belonged to an extended family called a clan, led by a chief. A village would consist of

seven to ten clans. Women farmed taro while men fished, and both sexes had time to spend on projects such as constructing *bai* meeting houses. The society was matriarchal and matrilineal, with women holding clan property; even today women are usually in charge of family finances, dispensing funds to their men as needed. Family and kinship ties remain strong, and chiefs continue to command high respect.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

The people of Palau are quite westernized and typically wear American-style clothing with accessories such as baseball caps. Most people disapprove of skimpy clothing and do not like to see people dressed in bathing suits away from the beach. In some areas, people should not even swim in bathing suits uncovered by shirts and shorts.

SPORTS

A variety of sports are available on Palau. The islands hold triathlons, sportfishing tournaments, and canoe races. The Palau National Olympic Committee is actively working to promote sports and healthy lifestyles throughout the islands and to develop athletes who can compete in the Olympics. Palau hosted the 2005 South Pacific Mini Games.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1947** The islands become part of the UN Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, administered by the United States, which also includes Yap, Chuuk (Truk), Pohnpei, Saipan, and the Marshall Islands.
- 1959** UN missions to Palau criticize U.S. administration of the islands, citing neglect and underfunding.
- 1961** U.S. president John F. Kennedy authorizes Peace Corps programs in Palau and increased spending on the nation's infrastructure.
- 1965** The six territories under the U.S. Pacific Islands Trust form the Congress of Micronesia, a bicameral body whose purpose is to determine the future political status of the territories; representatives to the congress are elected by universal suffrage.
- 1972** The Congress of Micronesia begins to fragment, as Saipan secedes to negotiate its political status directly with the United States.
- 1978** Palau secedes from the Congress of Micronesia.
- 1979** On April 2 Palau's constitutional convention produces the world's first nuclear-free constitution,

- which bans biological weapons as well; despite U.S. opposition to its antinuclear provisions, the constitution is ratified by a large margin in a UN-supervised referendum.
- 1981** The islands acquire autonomy as the Republic of Palau.
- 1982** Palau signs the Compact of Free Association (CFA) with the United States, providing for the U.S. right to maintain military bases, including nuclear materials, for 50 years in return for up to \$700 million in economic aid over 15 years. The compact, however, is not ratified.
- 1983** A referendum for the CFA fails to secure the three-quarters majority required by the constitution to permit nuclear materials, as do six later CFA referenda.
- 1985** President Haruo Remeliik is assassinated.
- 1988** President Lazarus E. Salii commits suicide.
- 1992** The constitution is amended to permit voter approval of nuclear materials in Palau by a simple majority; President Kuniwo Nakamura is elected president.
- 1993** An eighth public referendum on the CFA approves the compact with a 68 percent majority.
- 1994** Palau becomes a sovereign independent nation on October 1. On December 15 Palau becomes a member of the United Nations.
- 1996** President Nakamura is reelected.
- 2000** Tommy Remengesau is elected president.
- 2003** Palau signs the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.
- 2004** Remengesau is reelected.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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PANAMA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Panama (República de Panamá)

ABBREVIATION

PA

CAPITAL

Panama City

HEAD OF STATE & HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

President Martín Torrijos Espino (from 2004)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Constitutional democracy

POPULATION

3,039,150 (2005)

AREA

78,200 sq km (30,193 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Mestizos

LANGUAGE

Spanish

RELIGION

Roman Catholicism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Balboa

NATIONAL FLAG

Four rectangles: The lower left is blue, the upper right red, the upper left white with a blue star in the center, and the lower right white with a red star in center.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A shield is divided into five sections; the central one, running the width of the escutcheon, portrays a canal linking the blue Pacific and the Atlantic, dividing the red isthmus. In the background are an orange sun and a yellow moon, both rising from the sea. In the two upper sections are a gold sword and brown musket to the left and crossed silver and gold tools to the right. In the two lower sections are a winged gold wheel to the right and an overflowing gold cornucopia to the left. A brown eagle perched atop the shield, with wings outstretched, carries in its beak a blue ribbon bearing the nation's motto, *Pro mundi beneficio* (For the benefit of the world). Nine gold stars are placed in a line above the eagle. The device is framed by four national flags, two on each side.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"Victory Is Ours at Last"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day), January 9 (Martyrs' Day), March 1 (Constitution Day), May 1 (Labor Day), October 11 (Anniversary of the Revolution), October 12 (Columbus Day), November 3 (Independence from Colombia Day), November 28 (Independence from Spain Day), December 8 (Mother's Day), December 25 (Christmas), various Christian festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

November 3, 1903

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

October 11, 1972; amended in 1978, 1983, 1994, 2004

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Panama is on the Isthmus of Panama in Central America and has a total land area of 30,193 sq mi (78,200 sq km), including the Canal Zone, which was officially restored to Panama in the year 2000. The country's total coastline stretches 1,547 mi (2,490 km), with the coastline on the Pacific approximately twice the length of that on the Caribbean. Panama shares its land borders of 344 mi (555 km) with two neighbors: Colombia to the southeast and Costa Rica to the northwest.

The capital is Panama City. The other major urban centers are San Miguelito, Colón, David, and Barú.

The country is divided on the basis of natural features into five regions. The fan-shaped Darién Highlands extend eastward from the hinterlands of Panama City to the Colombian border and make up more than one-third of the national territory, mostly underdeveloped and underpopulated. The central isthmus is the low saddle of land that bisects the country at the Canal Zone. Central Panama lies to the southwest of the Canal Zone between the Continental Divide and the Pacific. Chiriquí is sepa-



1832 Panama

rated from central Panama by the hills of the Las Palmas Peninsula and occupies the Pacific side of the Cordillera Central, adjacent to the Costa Rican border. Atlantic Panama lies to the west of the central isthmus on the Atlantic side of the continental divide.

The main mountain range is the Cordillera Central. Near Panama City this range rises toward Cordillera San Blas, which crosses the isthmus at an angle close to the Atlantic coastline, eventually reaching the Colombian frontier. On the Pacific side of the isthmus the Cordillera Occidental covers most of the Azuero Peninsula. Nearer the northwestern border the Serranía de Tabasara extends from Costa Rica into the Canal Zone. The highest elevation in Panama is the Volcán de Chiriquí, inactive for thousands of years, which rises to 11,467 ft (3,475 m).

Panama has more than 500 rivers, of which nearly 300 empty into the Pacific. The longest is the Tuira, which is also the only navigable river in the country.

Geography

Area sq km: 78,200; sq mi 30,193
World Rank: 115th
Land Boundaries, km: Colombia 225; Costa Rica 330
Coastline, km: 2,490
Elevation Extremes meters:
Lowest: Pacific Ocean 0
Highest: Volcán de Chiriquí 3,475
Land Use %
Arable Land: 7.4
Permanent Crops: 2.0
Forest: 38.6
Other: 52.0

Population of Principal Cities (2000)

Las Cumbres	90,368
Panama City	415,964
San Miguelito	293,745

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Panama is located entirely in the humid Torrid Zone. Its temperatures are uniformly high, and there is no seasonal variation. The average annual temperatures are 80°F (27°C) on both coasts and between 50 and 66°F (10 and 19°C) in the mountains.

The rainy season, described as winter by Panamanians, occurs between April and December. No month is entirely free from rain, although winter precipitation is 15 to 20 times greater than that of March. Most of the rain is torrential and, in general, much heavier on the Atlantic than on the Pacific side. On the Pacific side, precipitation ranges from 70 to 100 in (1,780 to 2,540 mm), while the Atlantic side receives more than 100 in (2,540 mm). The

least rainfall is received on the Azuero Peninsula: about 50 in (1,270 mm). Humidity is high throughout the country, averaging 80 percent.

The prevailing winds are northerly and northeasterly during most of the year and southwesterly during autumn.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature
Coastal Regions: 80°F
Mountains: 50°F to 66°F
Average Rainfall
Pacific Coast: 70 in to 100 in
Atlantic Coast: 100 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Most of Panama is covered in rain forest, where can be found incredible biodiversity, with plant and animal species from both North and South America. There are more than 10,000 plant species, within mangroves, broadleaf forests, riparian forests, and cloud forests. There are over 1,000 species of orchids alone.

Panama has about 900 species of birds, including rare quetzals, macaws, harpy eagles, parrots, parakeets, hummingbirds, umbrella birds, and motmots. Mammals include sloths, marmosets, monkeys, giant anteaters, capybaras, and bush dogs. There are numerous fish species, in both fresh- and saltwater.

Scientists have monitored Panama's wildlife from the research station on Lake Gatun since 1914; the station is currently run by the Smithsonian Institution.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 3,039,150
World Rank: 130th
Density per sq km: 40.1
% of annual growth (1999-2003): 1.5
Male %: 50.5
Female %: 49.5
Urban %: 56.2
Age Distribution %: 0-14: 29.8
15-64: 63.8
65 and over: 6.4

Population 2025: 4,110,000
Birth Rate per 1,000: 19.96
Death Rate per 1,000: 6.54
Rate of Natural Increase %: 1.7
Total Fertility Rate: 2.45
Expectation of Life (years): Males 69.67
Females 74.31

Marriage Rate per 1,000: 3.1
Divorce Rate per 1,000: 0.7
Average Size of Households: 4.4
Induced Abortions: 11

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Panama has a racially mixed population in which the Spanish-speaking mestizos (of mixed Amerindian and white ancestry), called Panameños, form the majority, constituting 70 percent of the population. Antillean blacks, or people who immigrated to Panama from the Caribbean islands, many as laborers recruited to dig the Panama Canal, constitute 14 percent of the population. Whites, largely of European descent, constitute 10 percent of the population. Amerindians, the descendants of the native peoples of the region, constitute 6 percent of the population.

Minor groups of ethnic aliens include Chinese, East Indians, Jews, and Middle Easterners. U.S. citizens, most of whom reside in the Canal Zone, occupy a special category because of their political status.

The Panameños component of the population has been steadily increasing, reflecting the growing acculturation of both Amerindians and Antillean blacks. Mestizos are concentrated in Cocle, Herrera, and Veraguas provinces, while whites are heavily represented in Panama, Colón, Chiriquí, and Los Santos provinces.

The traditional monopoly of power by persons of European descent effectively ended with the expulsion of the civilian president by the National Guard in 1968. Since then mestizos and Asians have become more active politically; they are well represented at the senior levels of government and play roles in Panama's urban economy well out of proportion to their numbers. These groups and whites tend to be better off economically and to hold higher positions in government than blacks and Amerindians.

Amerindian tribes receive special government assistance in public health and welfare. They are not restricted to their tribal areas, but most remain there by choice, reflecting long-standing resistance to assimilation. Panama's Kuna Indians mostly reside in a self-governing, semiautonomous district established in 1953. The Embera, or Choco, Indians, who live in Darién Province, gained government approval of their own homeland in 1983.

LANGUAGES

Spanish is the official language and is spoken by virtually all Panamanians. English is spoken by 14 percent of the people as their native tongue and is gaining popularity. Most of the Amerindian languages and dialects are dying out.

RELIGIONS

Roman Catholicism is the country's leading religion, and there is a provision for instruction in the Catholic faith in public schools. Roman Catholics compose 85 percent of the population, Protestants 15 percent. The figures do

not include Amerindians, most of whom have not been converted to Christianity.

The Roman Catholic hierarchy is headed by the archbishop of Panama. The country's parishes are manned by priests, with one of the lowest priest-to-laity ratios in Latin America. The Catholic educational system comprises one university and about 50 schools.

Protestantism is the other major religious force in the country and is heavily represented among Antillean blacks. Jews, Hindus, and Buddhists represent tiny religious minorities.

Religious Affiliations

Roman Catholic	2,580,000
Protestant	460,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Some of the first inhabitants of the region were probably Amerindian tribes such as the Kuna and Guaymí. Panama was under Spanish rule from 1501, when Rodrigo de Bastidas arrived, until 1821, when it became part of Gran Colombia after declaring independence from Spain. Panama is one of the few countries that became independent twice. In 1903 a revolutionary junta, backed by U.S. naval forces, declared independence after Colombia rejected the Hay-Herran Treaty, the agreement that then granted the United States the concession to build, operate, and control a canal through Panama with a lease of 100 years.

Two factors have dominated Panama's political history: government instability and the country's relationship with the United States. Elected presidents were overthrown in 1941, 1949, 1951, and 1968, and although civilians technically held power afterward, the nation was in fact controlled by the armed forces from 1968 to 1990.

The Hay-Herran Treaty, granting the United States the right to build the Panama Canal, also assigned the rights to intervene to protect Panamanian independence, to defend the canal, and to maintain order in Panama City, Colón, and the Canal Zone. The United States indeed intervened in 1908, 1917, and 1918 and supervised all elections between 1903 and 1928. Increased opposition to U.S. influence caused the treaty to be revised to revoke the right to such intervention, and anti-American sentiment grew, culminating in riots in 1959. In 1977 the United States and Panama signed a new canal treaty that made the Canal Zone an integral part of Panamanian territory and would give Panama full control of the canal in 2000.

In 1968 Col. Omar Torrijos ousted the newly elected president, banned all political parties, and effectively held power over a succession of presidents until his death in 1984. Gen. Manuel Noriega—who had been on the payroll of the American Central Intelligence Agency since the 1970s—then did likewise, holding effective rule through the

military over several presidents until being ousted in 1989 by American forces, who invaded Panama to detain him for drug smuggling, arms trading, and electoral fraud. Noriega's successor, Guillermo Endara, remained in power until 1994, when Ernesto Pérez Balladares was elected president. Pérez Balladares worked to improve the country's economy, loosening trade barriers and undertaking free-market reforms. He also helped Panama take over control of the canal in 1999. In May 1999 Mireya Moscoso was elected president, becoming Panama's first woman head of state.

Moscoso immediately created commissions to investigate both crimes committed by the military governments between 1968 and 1989 and general governmental corruption. Her regime saw a number of street protests and strikes related to accusations of corruption and the poor management of the social security fund.

In May 2004 Martin Torrijos, son of the former dictator Omar Torrijos, won the presidential election. He promised to end corruption, investigate human rights violations committed during his father's regime, finalize a free-trade agreement with the United States, and modernize the Panama Canal.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1941–45	Ricardo Adolfo de la Guardia Arango
1945–48	Enrique Adolfo Jiménez Brin
1948–49	Domingo Díaz Arosemena
1949	Daniel Chanis Pinzón
1949–51	Arnulfo Arias Madrid
1951–52	Alcibíades Arosemena
1952–55	José Antonio Remón Cantera
1955–56	Ricardo Arias Espinosa
1956–60	Ernesto de la Guardia Navarro
1960–64	Roberto Francisco Chiari Remón
1964–68	Marco Aurelio Robles Méndez
1968–69	José María Pinilla Fábrega
1969–78	Demetrio Lakas Bahas
1978–82	Aristides Royo
1982–84	Ricardo de la Espriella
1984	Jorge Illueca
1984–85	Nicolás Ardito Barletta Vallarino
1985–88	Eric Arturo Delvalle
1988–89	Manuel Solís Palma
1989–94	Guillermo Endara
1994–99	Ernesto Pérez Balladares
1999–2004	Mireya Moscoso
2004–	Martín Torrijos

CONSTITUTION

Panama is governed by the constitution of 1972, which established a republic with a presidential form of government. Suffrage is universal and compulsory for all persons

18 years and older, though those who do not vote are usually not penalized. Executive power is held by a president directly elected for a term of five years; the president is assisted by two vice presidents elected on the same ticket. Starting in 2009, there will be only one vice president. An autonomous Electoral Tribunal supervises the voter registration and election processes. Legislative power is vested in a unicameral legislative assembly, whose 78 members are elected for five-year terms. Judicial power is headed by the Supreme Court of Justice, with five superior courts and three courts of appeal.

PARLIAMENT

The national legislature is the National Assembly, formerly the Legislative Assembly, a unicameral body of 78 members elected for five-year terms. Legislators in urban areas are elected through a proportion-based formula, while legislators from rural areas are chosen on a plurality basis.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Political parties in Panama tend to be based on personality rather than ideology. Parties were banned from 1968 to 1978, when democracy was restored to Panama. As of 2004 the ruling party was the Democratic Revolutionary Party, which had 40 seats in the National Assembly. The Panamenista Party, formerly the Arnulfista Party, had 17 seats. Other parties include Democratic Change, the National Liberal Party, the Nationalist Republican Liberal Movement, the Popular Party (formerly the Christian Democratic Party), and the Solidarity Party.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Panama is divided into nine provinces, each under a governor appointed by the president, and five indigenous territories. The provinces (with their capitals in parentheses) are as follows: Bocas del Toro (Bocas del Toro), Chiriquí (David), Coclé (Penonomé), Colón (Colón), Los Santos (Las Tablas), Herrera (Chitré), Darién (La Palma), Panamá (Panama City), and Veraguas (Santiago). The territories are Emberá (Cirilo Guainora), Kuna de Madugandí, Kuna de Wargandí, Kuna Yala (El Porvenir), and Ngöbe-Buglé (Chichica).

LEGAL SYSTEM

Panama's legal system is based on Spanish civil law. The judiciary comprises a Supreme Court, which has nine magistrates appointed by the president to 10-year terms and is charged with upholding the constitution and laws, as well as superior courts and circuit courts.

Persons charged with crimes are presumed innocent until proven guilty and have the right to counsel. Arrested persons are not to be detained for more than 24 hours without being charged. These rights, however, are not universally respected. Panama has no death penalty.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Since the restoration of civilian rule in 1990, the government has generally respected the human rights of its citizens. However, several areas of abuse remain. The extended pretrial detention of arrested persons is a serious problem. The criminal justice system is inefficient and often corrupt, and prison conditions are generally poor. The government has continued to prosecute officials responsible for abuses during the years of military rule from 1968 to 1989. There has been some discrimination against ethnic minorities and indigenous people, as well as against women. Child labor and human trafficking are problems.

FOREIGN POLICY

Panama is a member of the United Nations and participates in international financial organizations such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the Inter-American Development Bank. The nation is also a member of the Organization of American States. Panama has also played an active role in regional affairs, aiding the multinational force that restored Haiti's elected government to power in 1994.

The Panama Canal Treaties of 1977 became the basis for close ties with the United States after President Noriega's expulsion and arrest. President Pérez Balladares worked with American officials to facilitate the transfer of the canal and the U.S. military bases in the Canal Zone to Panama in 2000.

DEFENSE

A 1994 amendment to the constitution abolished Panama's military forces, after the long period of military rule from 1968 to 1989. The former National Defense Forces and an even larger paramilitary force were disbanded and converted into security forces called the Panamanian Public Forces (PPF), which include the national police, maritime, and air services. All security and police forces are under civilian control.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 11,800
Military Manpower Availability: 733,031

Military Expenditures \$million: 147
as % of GDP: 1.1
as % of central government expenditures: —
Arms Imports \$million: —
Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

Panama has a free-market economy that is based primarily on services, largely banking, commerce, and tourism. Other sources of income include container ports, flagship registry, the Colón Free Zone, and the Panama Canal. Most of the population is engaged in subsistence agriculture; export crops include bananas and coffee, with trade often adversely affected by changes in world commodity prices.

President Pérez Balladares launched a program of economic reforms in 1994 intended to reduce trade rates, attract foreign investments, privatize state-owned enterprises, and encourage greater job opportunities. The government approved the sale of the national electric company and railroad. These reforms began to produce effects in the late 1990s, when Panama's gross domestic product (GDP) grew at an annual rate of nearly 4 percent. The general assembly passed a banking reform law in 1998 and voted to have Panama join the World Trade Organization.

Economic growth slowed to 2.5 percent in 2000; the government planned public-works programs, tax reforms, and regional trade agreements in order to stimulate growth in 2001. Growth remained slow through 2003, however, as the global economy remained sluggish and the United States withdrew its military forces. As of 2005 unemployment remained unacceptably high, at close to 13 percent, and nearly 40 percent of the population remained below the poverty line. A few families, mostly of European descent, have historically controlled the vast majority of the country's wealth.

Major aspects of the country's economy are the maintenance and operation of the Panama Canal and the shipping profits the canal has traditionally generated. The nation is contemplating widening the canal to allow larger vessels to pass through. In 2004 the canal earned an unprecedented \$1 billion.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 20.57
GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 6,900
GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 2.7
GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 1.2
Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
Agriculture: 7.2
Industry: 13.0
Services: 79.8
Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
Private Consumption: 61
Government Consumption: 16
Gross Domestic Investment: 25.0

(continues)

Principal Economic Indicators *(continued)*

Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 5.699
Imports: 7.164
% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 1.2
% of Income Received by Richest 10%: 35.7

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
103.2	104.5	106.0	106.3	107.4

Finance

National Currency: Balboa (PAB)
Exchange Rate: \$1 = PAB 1
Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 1.45
Central Bank Discount Rate %: —
Total External Debt \$billion: 8.78
Debt Service Ratio %: 9.24
Balance of Payments \$million: -469.6
International Reserves SDRs \$million: 992
Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 2.0

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 30.5
per capita \$: 10.20
Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 791.5

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
Revenues \$billion: 3.095
Expenditures \$billion: 3.737
Budget Deficit \$million: 642
Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 7.2
Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999-2003) %: 5.0
Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 1.48
Irrigation, % of Farms having: 5.0
Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 52.4
Total Farmland % of land area: 7.4
Livestock: Cattle million: 1.6
Chickens million: 14.5
Pigs 000: 310
Sheep 000: —
Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 1.4
Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 309

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 1.04
Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 5.4

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 331
Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 1.98
Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 684
Net Energy Imports % of use: 75.6
Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 1.26
Production kW-hr billion: 4.9
Consumption kW-hr billion: 4.5
Coal Reserves tons million: —
Production tons 000: —
Consumption tons 000: 70
Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
Production cubic feet billion: —
Consumption cubic feet billion: —
Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
Production barrels 000 per day: —
Consumption barrels 000 per day: 83
Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 7.164
Exports \$billion: 5.699
Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999-2003): -2.3
Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999-2003): -3.8
Balance of Trade \$million: -469.6

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Japan %	33.0	4.3
United States %	11.3	13.2
China %	9.0	—
South Korea %	7.7	7.4
Singapore %	7.1	—
Nigeria %	—	9.3
Germany %	—	7.7
El Salvador %	—	5.2
Peru %	—	4.8
Costa Rica %	—	4.6
Belgium %	—	4.5

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 11,643
Paved %: 34.6
Automobiles: 219,400
Trucks and Buses: 70,300
Railroad: Track Length km: 355
Passenger-km billion: 35.7
Freight-km billion: 20.7
Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 5,005
Total Deadweight Tonnage million: 183.6
Airports: 105
Traffic: Passenger-km million: 2.97
Length of Waterways km: 800

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 566
 Number of Tourists from 000: 227
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 809
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 290

Communications

Telephones 000: 386.9
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones 000: 834
 Personal Computers 000: 115
 Internet Hosts per million people: 2,346
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 39

ENVIRONMENT

Soil erosion and deforestation are growing environmental dangers in Panama. Much of the country's southern watershed has been stripped of trees to clear land for farming and cattle. The Darién jungle, the richest rain forest outside the Amazon Basin, is being threatened by the influx of new settlers and by logging companies. In the Chagras River basin, 25,000 families have resettled and are clearing land for subsistence farming. These migrations have caused major soil runoff into rivers and into the Panama Canal, requiring increased dredging operations.

The Chagras National Park has been established to protect fragile land near that river's headwaters, and the Soberania National Park now protects certain areas on the east bank of the canal. Although public awareness of environmental issues is increasing, government initiatives have had only modest success.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 38.6
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: -52
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 23
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 11,692
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 2.22

LIVING CONDITIONS

The population of Panama City nearly doubled between 1980 and 1996, which strained the city's ability to provide services. The city has some elegant older homes and modern houses and apartments, but a number of poorer Panamanians live in shantytowns or in government-subsidized housing. For the most part, the capital is a thriving modern city. The cost of living is slightly higher than in neighboring countries. Public bus transportation is inexpensive and efficient. Some people travel by boat, but this can be dangerous because boats are often overloaded and are occasionally used to transport narcotics as well as people.

HEALTH

Panama is a healthy country for the most part, though tropical diseases such as malaria, dengue fever, yellow fever, and rabies still occur with some frequency. Life expectancy in 2005 was almost 72 years. Fertility is relatively high, with 2.5 children born per woman in 2004. HIV/AIDS is beginning to be a problem; 0.9 percent of the population was infected in 2003. The water supply is generally good, though in some areas it is contaminated by sewage.

Health

Number of Physicians: 4,942
 Number of Dentists: 1,421
 Number of Nurses: 4,484
 Number of Pharmacists: —
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 168
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 20.47
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 160
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 8.9
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 355
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.9
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 86
 Measles: 83
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 72
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 91

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Panamanian food features various meats and vegetables, often cooked with spices. The most common dish is *arroz con pollo*, or chicken with rice. The national dish is a stew of chicken, yucca, and avocado called *sancocho*. People eat a great deal of seafood, especially on the islands; red snapper and sea bass are especially popular. A wide variety of tropical fruit is available. Panama City has many restaurants serving both local and international cuisine.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 26.4
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,410
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 101.6
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 112.8

STATUS OF WOMEN

Panama's constitution accords equality to women, guaranteeing them equal rights. In recent years women have played an active role in political parties and government offices. Women have served as party leaders, as president, and as chief justice of the Supreme Court of Justice. Several women's organizations have actively campaigned to raise the national conscience regarding women's rights.

However, traditional biases against women often persist both at home and in the workplace. Women compose a little more than one-third of the workforce but often toil in low-paying jobs created by government welfare programs, and women generally receive 20 percent lower salaries than men for the same jobs. Sexual harassment in the workplace is another ongoing concern.

Domestic violence is a serious problem. The Center for Women's Development estimates that no more than 20 percent of sexual assaults are reported to the police; most of the nonreported cases involve spouses or relatives. Trafficking in women and children as sex slaves is a problem; most trafficked women are not Panamanian, but traffickers use Panama as a transit point for moving sex workers from other Central American countries to the United States.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 17
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 0.99
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 44.0

WORK

Unemployment was a major problem in Panama in the early 2000s and the unemployment rate was almost 13 percent in 2004. Part of the problem is that Panama has a superabundance of unskilled workers and does not have jobs for them all; at the same time, the nation suffers a shortage of skilled workers. Most employed people work in services, including banking, insurance, medicine, education, and in the Panama Canal and Colón Free Zone. Some work in the tourism industry, which the government is trying to increase. About one-fifth of the workforce is employed in agriculture, another fifth in industry. The banana business employs many agricultural workers.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 1,320,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 36.6
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 20.8
 Industry: 18.0
 Services: 61.2
 Unemployment %: 12.6

EDUCATION

Education is universal and compulsory for nine years, between ages six and 15, and is free up to the university

level. Schooling lasts for 12 years, as divided into six years of primary school, three years of lower secondary school, and three years of upper secondary school. Completion of the 12th grade makes students eligible for admission to a university.

In 2004 Panama had 14 institutions of higher education, including the University of Panama (which has 65,000 students), the private Catholic University of Santa María La Antigua, the Technological University, and several smaller colleges.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 92.6
 Male %: 93.2
 Female %: 91.9
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 13.2
 First Level: Primary schools: 2,845
 Teachers: 17,296
 Students: 419,904
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 24.3
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 99.6
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 339
 Teachers: 15,613
 Students: 147,878
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 16.1
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 63.0
 Third Level: Institutions: 14
 Teachers: 8,444
 Students: 117,601
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 43.2
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 4.5

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

As of 2003 Panama had about 387,000 telephone lines and 834,000 cellular telephones. Domestic and international calling facilities are well developed and functional. In 2002 only 120,000 Panamanians were using the Internet. The nation has built a high-tech research park in the Canal Zone with assistance from the Inter-American Development Bank. This park, called the City of Knowledge, rents space to international technological and research companies.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 95
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 0.38
 High-Tech Exports \$million: 0.84
 Patent Applications by Residents: 7

MEDIA

Panama's press is fairly free to report news and present commentary, but it is not allowed to "insult" the government, and as a result Panamanian journalists exercise

a great deal of restraint in what they publish. A journalist convicted of defamation can go to prison for up to two years.

Panama has several daily newspapers and tabloids. The principal dailies are *La prensa*, *Crítica libre*, *El siglo*, *El Panamá América*, *La estrella de Panamá*, and the English-language *Panama News*. Most radio and television stations are commercially run and privately owned. There are about 100 radio stations and numerous television stations, including the educational channel FETV. Corporación Medcom runs the two most popular television stations.

Media

Daily Newspapers: —
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: —
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets 000: 540
 per 1,000: 192

CULTURE

Panama's culture combines Spanish and Caribbean influences. Salsa is the most popular musical genre, combining rhythm and blues, jazz, rock, and popular Latin American musical styles to create a uniquely Panamanian sound. Ruben Blades is a famous salsa musician.

The visual arts are influenced by Amerindian arts and crafts; the Kuna textiles called *molos* are famous, as are ceramics, masks, and wood carvings. The painter Roberto Lewis decorated the Presidential Palace with murals and restored the National Theater.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 18
 Volumes: 26,000
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Folk traditions are still a visible part of Panamanian culture. People like to dress in brightly colored traditional clothing for festivals and during the carnival season, when a popular activity is folk dancing.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Panama City is a modern city with a variety of entertainment possibilities, including restaurants, bars, discos, and shopping. Dancing salsa is especially popular. Panamanians celebrate many annual festivals, including Carnaval before Lent, Easter, and the Festival of the Black Christ; these festivals feature parades, dancing, music, and pilgrims.

Panama has a number of options for outdoor recreation. Swimming, surfing, scuba diving, and snorkeling attract both locals and tourists. The Panama Canal is an interesting dive site. Deep-sea fishing is also popular. Some people enjoy hiking in the Parque Nacional Darién, especially to spot tropical birds. Urban dwellers sometimes make day trips to Isla Taboga to escape from the city.

ETIQUETTE

Panamanians are extremely conscious of social rank and of their status relative to others. They address one another by title and surname unless they are very close friends. People shake hands upon meeting one another, and close friends and relatives may also embrace or kiss. At restaurants the host usually sits at one end of the table and places the guest of honor at the other end. It is customary to tip 10 percent in restaurants.

FAMILY LIFE

The extended family is very important in Panamanian culture, and Panamanians consider their first loyalty to be due to the family. Especially among the upper classes the same families tend to intermarry, and so many people are related in some way to almost everyone they know. Most Panamanians have two surnames; their father's name is listed first, followed by their mother's name. The father's name is the one used when addressing a person.

Women traditionally care for the home and children, and the bonds between mother and child can be very strong. In modern times more women are working outside the home, but there is still social pressure on women to be subservient to their husbands. Men spend their time at work or socializing with friends. Some men maintain the tradition of keeping a mistress in addition to their wives; women, however, are expected to show total marital fidelity.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Panamanians tend to dress conservatively and in a way that displays their social rank. High-ranking businessmen

wear suits. Other male workers wear open-necked shirts called *camisillas*. Women wear dresses or skirts.

SPORTS

Soccer and baseball are the most popular sports in Panama, which has several national teams for men and one women's national team. The Panamanian baseball player Mariano Rivera has been a star relief pitcher for the New York Yankees. The nation has sent many athletes to the Olympics and Pan-American Games in sports such as boxing, fencing, and swimming. Another popular sport is *cayuco* racing, a kind of team canoe racing done in the Panama Canal.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1939** Panama's status as a U.S. protectorate is ended by mutual agreement.
- 1964** Riots break out in Panama over U.S. failure to fly the Panamanian flag. Panama suspends relations with the United States and demands revision of the Canal Zone Treaty.
- 1968** President Arnulfo Arias is overthrown in a military coup led by Brig. Gen. Omar Torrijos Herrera. The national assembly is dissolved.
- 1972** Torrijos is installed as the supreme leader of the Panamanian revolution. New constitution makes the presidency purely ceremonial.
- 1974** Joint U.S.-Panamanian declaration restores Canal Zone to Panama.
- 1977** New U.S. Panama treaty transfers the Canal to Panama (effective 2000), with the United States guaranteeing protection and annual payment.
- 1984** Nicolás Ardito Barletta, of the right-wing Democratic Revolutionary Party, is elected president.
- 1985** Barletta is forced to resign. Gen. Manuel Noriega, head of the National Guard, seizes power.
- 1988** President Manuel Solís Palma fails to dismiss Noriega, who declares a state of emergency and assumes full powers.
- 1989** Noriega nullifies election results, which favor Guillermo Endara for president. The United States charges Noriega with smuggling drugs and launches an invasion, code-named Operation Just Cause, to arrest him. Nearly 4,000 Panamanians die in the fighting, but Noriega is captured. Guillermo Endara is installed as president.
- 1991** The United States provides nearly \$1 billion in aid; an attempted antigovernment coup is foiled; the assembly approves constitutional reforms, including the abolition of the standing army.
- 1992** Noriega is found guilty of drug offenses in the United States and is given a 40-year prison sentence.
- 1994** Ernesto Pérez Balladares is elected president.
- 1998** Voters reject a proposed constitutional amendment that would have allowed the president to run for a second term.
- 1999** In new national elections Mireya Moscoso, the leader of the opposition Arnulfista Party and widow of former president Arnulfo Arias, becomes Panama's first female president; on December 31 Panama formally takes sovereign control of the Canal Zone.
- 2000** President Moscoso announces the creation of a panel to investigate crimes committed under the military regimes between 1968 and 1989.
- 2002** Moscoso creates a panel to investigate governmental corruption following accusations and street protests alleging political graft. Panama promises to make its taxation system more transparent and is removed from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development's list of uncooperative tax havens.
- 2003** Public service workers go on strike to protest management of the national social security fund.
- 2004** Martín Torrijos, the son of Omar Torrijos, wins the presidency. Before leaving office, Moscoso pardons four Cuban exiles accused of plotting to kill Fidel Castro, and Cuba breaks off diplomatic relations with Panama. Torrijos persuades Cuba to restore relations. The Panama Canal earns \$1 billion.

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Panama. *Indicadores económicos y sociales* (annual); *Censos nacionales de 1990: IX de población y V de vivienda*, 13 de mayo de 1990; *Panamá en cifras* (annual); *Situación económica: Cuentas nacionales* (annual); *Situación económica: Industria* (annual)

INTERNET RESOURCES

- Ministry of Economy and Finance (in Spanish)
<http://www.mef.gob.pa>
- Presidencia de la República de Panamá (in Spanish)
<http://www.presidencia.gob.pa/portada.htm>

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Washington, D.C. 20008
Phone: (202) 483-1407 Fax: (202) 483-8416

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Papua New Guinea (Papua Niu Gini)

ABBREVIATION

PG

CAPITAL

Port Moresby

HEAD OF STATE

Queen Elizabeth II, represented by Governor-General Sir Paulus Matane (from 2004)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Sir Michael Somare (from 2002)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Constitutional monarchy with parliamentary democracy

POPULATION

5,545,268 (2005)

AREA

462,840 sq km (178,704 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Melanesian, Papuan, Negrito, Micronesian, Polynesian

LANGUAGES

Tok Pisin, Hiri Motu, English

RELIGIONS

Christianity, animism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Kina

NATIONAL FLAG

A rectangle divided diagonally from the upper-left to lower-right corners, with the upper section red and the lower black. A golden silhouette of a bird of paradise appears in the center of the red field, the five stars of the Southern Cross in the center of the black field.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A stylized bird of paradise perched on a native drum with indigenous weapons. The name Papua New Guinea appears beneath the device.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"O Arise All You Sons of This Land"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day), September 16 (National Day, Independence Day), Christmas, Boxing Day, various Christian festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

September 16, 1975

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

September 16, 1975

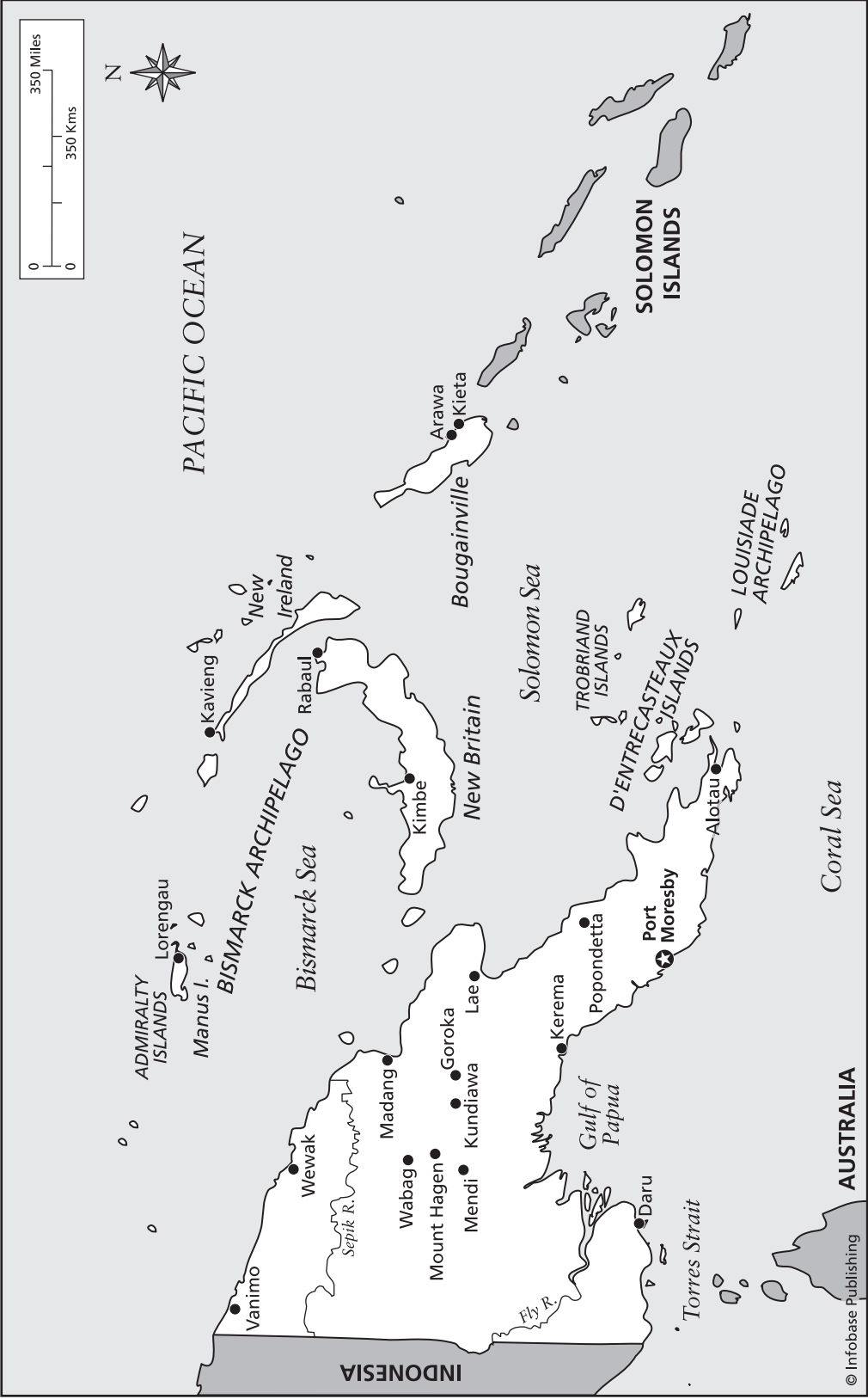
GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Papua New Guinea, in the southwestern Pacific about 160 km (100 mi) northeast of Australia, includes the former Trust Territory of New Guinea, comprising the Admiralty Islands (Manus, Purdy, Sabben, and Western), the Bismarck Archipelago (Mussau, New Britain, New Hanover, and New Ireland), Karkar, Long, Northeast New Guinea, the northern Solomon Islands (Bougainville and Buka), Umboi, and the former Territory of Papua, comprising the D'Entrecasteaux Group (Dobu, Ferguson, Goodenough, Normanby, and Sanaroa), the Louisiade Group (Missina, Rossel, and Tagula), Southeast New Guinea, the Trobriand Group (Kaileuna, Kiriwina,

Kitava, and Vakuta), and the Woodlark Group (Madau and Murua). The country occupies a total land area of 462,840 sq km (178,704 sq mi).

The main island, making up about 85 percent of the land area, has a central mountain core that is not a single chain but a complex of ranges rising to 4,500 m (14,700 ft), interspersed by broad upland valleys at elevations of over 1,524 m (5,000 ft). The main mountain range contains the nation's highest peak, Mt. Wilhelm (4,509 m; 14,793 ft). A second mountain chain fringes the northern coast, and active volcanoes dot the landscape. Swamps cover large areas of the country, and on the southwestern littoral the great delta plain of the Daru coast forms one of the most extensive swamps in the world.

Papua New Guinea



1844 Papua New Guinea

The other islands are characterized by the same pattern of mountain ranges fringed by coastal plains and swamps or extensively developed barrier coral reefs. Many of the 22 islands making up the Trobriand Group are low, coral types. Bougainville and New Britain are among the most active volcanic regions in Melanesia.

The largest rivers are the Fly, Purari, and Kikori, which flow south into the Gulf of Papua, and the Sepik and the Ramu, which flow north into the Pacific. The Fly, more than 1,126 km (700 mi) long, is navigable for 805 km (500 mi) by shallow-draft vessels.

Geography

Area sq km: 462,840; sq mi 178,704
World Rank: 53rd
Land Boundaries, km: Indonesia 820
Coastline, km: 5,152
Elevation Extremes meters:
Lowest: Pacific Ocean 0
Highest: Mount Wilhelm 4,509
Land Use %
Arable Land: 0.5
Permanent Crops: 1.4
Forest: 67.6
Other: 30.5

Population of Principal Cities (2000)

Lae	78,038
Port Moresby	254,158

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Papua New Guinea lies within the tropics and has a monsoonal climate. The northwesterly monsoon season extends from December to March, the southwesterly monsoon season from May to October. Temperatures are not extreme for a tropical climate; the lowland, island, and coastal areas have a mean temperature of 27.2°C (81°F). Seasonal variations rarely exceed 2.8°C (5°F). In the highlands temperatures vary with altitude. At 1,800 m (6,000 ft) the mean temperature is about 16.1°C (61°F), with daytime temperatures rising to 32.2°C (90°F) and night temperatures falling to 4.4°C (40°F).

Rainfall is quite heavy in the highlands all year long. Many areas have an average annual rainfall of 5,030 to 7,620 mm (200 to 300 in), the only exception being Port Moresby, which, lying in a rain shadow, receives only 1,010 mm (40 in) annually.

Papua New Guinea is not within a hurricane belt and generally does not suffer storm damage.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature
Lowland and Coastal Areas: 81°F
Highlands: 61°F

Average Rainfall: 200 to 300 in
Port Moresby: 40 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Papua New Guinea has extremely rich biodiversity. It is home to approximately 9,000 species of plants, 250 species of mammals, 700 species of birds, and a great profusion of reptiles, amphibians, and insects. The seas surrounding the nation have some of the world's most beautiful coral reefs and large numbers of fishes and other aquatic life forms. Notable species include marsupials such as the tree kangaroo, echidnas, parrots, kingfishers, cassowaries, hornbills, cockatoos, scarab beetles, and the Queen Alexandra birdwing, a butterfly large enough to be killed with a shotgun. The nation has created four national parks and wants to form more in an effort to protect the natural resources from logging and the pollution from copper mines.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 5,545,268
World Rank: 106th
Density per sq km: 12.2
% of annual growth (1999-2003): 2.4
Male %: 51.2
Female %: 48.8
Urban %: 18.2
Age Distribution %: 0-14: 38.1
15-64: 58.1
65 and over: 3.8
Population 2025: 8,001,000
Birth Rate per 1,000: 29.95
Death Rate per 1,000: 7.37
Rate of Natural Increase %: 2.3
Total Fertility Rate: 3.96
Expectation of Life (years): Males 62.76
Females 67.21
Marriage Rate per 1,000: —
Divorce Rate per 1,000: —
Average Size of Households: 4.6
Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Papua New Guinea has one of the most heterogeneous populations in the Pacific region. There are hundreds of separate communities, some of them with only a few hundred members, broadly classified into two groups: Papuan and Melanesian. Papuans are generally concentrated in the interiors of the mainland and the larger islands, while the Melanesians are concentrated in the coastal areas. Papuans are dark, woolly-haired people of medium stature and displaying both Negritoid and Australoid physical characteristics; the Australoid elements predominate in the southeast, Negritoid elements in the interior. The

people of the Admiralty Group and the Bismarck Archipelago are described as of mixed Melanesian and Micronesian ancestry, with the Micronesian strain appearing dominant in the former and the Melanesian element in the latter. There is little evidence of Polynesian penetration into the nation's territory.

LANGUAGES

More than 850 languages are spoken in Papua New Guinea, most of which are wholly different from and unrelated to the others. Only a few are spoken by more than 1,000 persons; the isolation of each island community for thousands of years has made these languages mutually unintelligible, even though they are based on the same ancestral language. The two language families in Papua New Guinea are Melanesian and Papuan. Melanesian is a hybrid language that was formed through the grafting of Papuan vocabulary and speech forms onto the Austronesian root languages brought into the area by non-Papuan migrants. Papuan languages are unaffiliated, and their origins have not been established.

Faced with hundreds of mutually unintelligible indigenous languages, Australian administrators tried to create a lingua franca. Their first choice was a pidgin of the Papuan language Motu called Hiri Motu, which was designated as the official language immediately after World War I. Although Hiri Motu is spoken by some 150,000 people, it has not made much recent progress in gaining wider acceptance. The Australians also attempted to legitimize the use of Tok Pisin, a creole language with English, German, and Malay words adapted to indigenous speech patterns. The word *pidgin*, itself a Chinese corruption of the English word *business*, is used widely to designate all creolized versions of the English language; Tok Pisin literally means "pidgin talk." Since 1964 official business in the Papua New Guinea House of Assembly may be transacted in Tok Pisin; the language also is taught in schools and is used in the press and on the radio.

Despite being the third official language, English is spoken only by the relatively small minority of educated people, estimated at no more than 3 percent of the population, and only 0.1 percent are estimated to be proficient enough to both speak and write it. However, in the absence of rival languages its future in the country seems assured. Official policy favors the eventual acceptance of English as the national language.

RELIGIONS

As a result of extensive missionary work, more than half the population has been converted to Christianity. The Catholics form the largest single group, with 22 percent of the population, followed by Lutherans, with 16 percent of the population. The non-Christian portions of the population

adhere to traditional indigenous religions that vary widely vary in ritual and belief but always incorporate some elements of magic and ancestor and spirit worship.

A religious development peculiar to Oceania is known as the cargo cult. Many Pacific Islanders believed that Western material goods (*cargo* in Tok Pisin) would arrive in abundance as a result of their conversion to Christianity. When these goods did not arrive, various self-styled prophets organized cargo cults to invoke divine aid in achieving Western-style material prosperity. The cultists allege that Westerners had secret formulas and rituals for persuading God to bestow material abundance on them.

Religious Affiliations

Roman Catholic	1,220,000
Lutheran	890,000
Presbyterian/Methodist/London Missionary Society	440,000
Anglican	280,000
Evangelical Alliance	220,000
Seventh-Day Adventist	55,000
Other Protestant	550,000
Indigenous Beliefs	1,885,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Papua New Guinea appears to have been settled before 8000 B.C.E., through migrations first of hunters and later of agriculturists coming from Asia by way of Indonesia. The main island was sighted by the Spaniards and Portuguese in the 16th century and christened "Isla del Oro" (Island of Gold). The western part of the island was claimed by Spain in 1545 and named New Guinea, because to the Spaniards the inhabitants looked like those of Guinea, in Africa. The region passed into the hands of the Dutch in 1828. By the Anglo-German Agreement of 1885, Germany took control of the northeastern portion of New Guinea along with New Britain, New Ireland, and Bougainville, while Britain took possession of the southern portion and the adjacent islands. British New Guinea passed into Australian control in 1901 and was renamed the Territory of Papua in 1906. At the outbreak of World War I in 1914, German New Guinea was seized by Australian forces. In 1921 that territory was placed under a League of Nations mandate administered by Australia, and in 1947 it became the Trust Territory of New Guinea, subject to the UN Trusteeship Council. Both these territories were administered jointly by Australia but retained their separate status.

The territory was renamed Papua New Guinea in 1972 and was granted self-government in 1973 and full independence in 1975. During the first three years of independence national unity was threatened by a secessionist movement on the island of Bougainville, where the country's vast copper reserves are located. In 1975 Bougainville declared unilateral independence as the Republic

of North Solomons, although this was never recognized by international bodies such as the United Nations. Subsequently, Papua New Guinea was assured by Australia that no support would be extended to any group trying to undermine Papua New Guinean unity.

Since independence the country has been ruled by a series of unstable coalition governments of political parties based on patronage rather than political ideology. Michael Somare, the leader of the Pangu Party, headed the first coalition government following independence. He was ousted in 1980 following a parliamentary vote of no confidence and replaced by Julius Chan, the head of the People's Progress Party. Somare was returned to power in the election of 1982 but was ousted once again following a vote of no confidence in 1985; Pias Wingti, Somare's deputy premier, who broke away from the Pangu to found his own People's Democratic Movement, replaced him. In 1988 Wingti's coalition was toppled following allegations of governmental corruption. Rabbie Namaliu, who had replaced Somare as Pangu leader, assumed the office of prime minister.

In the late 1980s separatist ideology among the Bougainvilleans boiled over; in 1989, they formed the Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA) and forced the closure of the Australian-owned Panguna copper mine. After much internecine fighting, including the St. Valentine's Day Massacre of 1990, when Australian-supplied warships were employed by the federal government, peace talks were held. However, in 1992 Prime Minister Wingti renewed the fighting. His successor, Sir Julius Chan, was forced to resign when South African mercenaries were sent home instead of being used to take full control of the island. Separatist forces on the island of Bougainville continued to agitate for independence throughout the mid-1990s. In 1997 Bill Skate was elected prime minister; the following year the civil war officially came to an end. After 10 years of fighting more than 40,000 Bougainville islanders were refugees, and some 20,000 had been killed. In 2001 the government signed an agreement with the island's leaders, promising to help create an autonomous government there in the future. Meanwhile, the country as a whole was wracked by weather disasters, including drought and, in July 1998, three giant tsunamis. In 1999 Mekere Morauta was elected prime minister.

Sir Michael Somare, the nation's first prime minister, won the office for a third time in 2002. He immediately halted the privatization programs his predecessor had attempted to implement and pledged to improve the economy and reduce crime. Somare has been widely considered honest, in contrast to the many corrupt politicians that have plagued the nation. Much of Somare's optimism has come from Papua New Guinea's close ties with Australia, which has provided a substantial aid program for many years. Australia, on the other hand, has not been as hopeful; a 2004 study predicted that Papua New Guinea

was at imminent risk of complete economic and political collapse and was a prime target for international crime, and as such the study recommended that Australia consider intervening and running customs and border controls until the resolution of the situation.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

Prime Minister

1975–80	Michael Somare
1980–82	Julius Chan
1982–85	Michael Somare
1985–88	Pias Wingti
1988–92	Rabbie Namaliu
1992–94	Pias Wingti
1994–97	Julius Chan
1997–99	Bill Skate
1999–2002	Mekere Morauta
2002–	Michael Somare

CONSTITUTION

Papua New Guinea is a constitutional monarchy within the Commonwealth. The British monarch is the head of state, as represented by a governor-general, invariably an indigenous Papua New Guinean appointed on the advice of the National Executive Council in accordance with the decision of the House of Assembly by a simple majority vote. The governor-general is eligible for reappointment if the House of Assembly so approves by a two-thirds majority, but he is never eligible for a third term. The normal term of office is six years, but the governor-general may be dismissed earlier on the proposal of the National Executive Council in accordance with the decision of the House of Assembly. The prime minister is the head of government; the governor-general usually appoints the leader of the majority party in parliament to this position. Executive authority is vested in the National Executive Council, composed of the prime minister, the head of government, not fewer than six other ministers, and not more than one-fourth of the House of Assembly. Council members are appointed or dismissed by the head of state on the proposal of the House of Assembly.

The constitution of 1975 established four state services: the National Public Service, the Police Force, the Papua New Guinea Defense Force, and the Parliamentary Service. There are provisions for an ombudsman commission and for the declaration of a state of national emergency under extraordinary circumstances.

The government is responsible to the unicameral parliament, the House of Assembly, whose 109 members are elected for five-year terms by universal suffrage.

The judiciary is composed of the Supreme Court, the National Court, and a series of district and local courts.

PARLIAMENT

Under the constitution of 1975 the national legislature is the unicameral House of Assembly, consisting of 109 members elected for five-year terms. Of the total membership, 91 represent open electorates, the rest regional electorates. There is a provision for nominated members, but none has been appointed.

Suffrage is universal at age 18, with enrollment compulsory but voting voluntary. Elections are done through limited preferential voting intended to make politicians form alliances with one another and pay attention to the needs of their constituents. This system replaced the old system of preferential voting in 2003, which produced ever-shifting party loyalties and unstable governments. Illiterate voters are permitted to use “whispering ballots,” whereby they whisper their choice in the ear of the presiding officer, who then records it on the ballot papers. There are two types of electorates—open and regional—and each voter votes twice in his open electorate and once in his regional electorate.

Papua New Guinea’s governments have been plagued by votes of no confidence from within parliament. New governments are protected from votes of no confidence for their first 18 months, and no votes of no confidence may be made in the 12 months preceding a national election. In an effort to increase stability by ending no-confidence votes, in 1999 the government passed the Integrity of Political Parties Act, which forbids members of one party in parliament from shifting their loyalty to another party.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Most political alignments are formed along ethnic lines or for personal reasons rather than party affiliation. Party allegiances are not strong and party structures are weak. Most parliamentarians do not retain their seats from one election to the next, and so no party has yet managed to achieve enough dominance to run the government.

Somare is the leader of the National Alliance, a coalition of several parties formed in 2002. Among numerous other parties are the Melanesian Alliance, Christian Democratic, National, Papua and Niugini Union, Papua New Guinea First, Papua New Guinea Labor, Papua New Guinea, People’s Action, People’s Labor, People’s Progressive, Pipol First, Rural People’s, United, and United Resources parties and the People’s National Congress.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For purposes of local government Papua New Guinea is divided into 20 provinces: Bougainville, Central, Chimbu, Eastern Highlands, East New Britain, East Sepik, Enga,

Gulf, Madang, Manus, Milne Bay, Morobe, National Capital, New Ireland, Northern, Sandaun, Southern Highlands, Western, Western Highlands, and West New Britain. Each province has its own government headed by a premier.

Popular government at the local-government level consists of district advisory councils, town advisory councils, and village councils. Each district advisory council has a membership of 15 to 20, including the district commissioner. Members of the House of Assembly are entitled to attend council meetings. The membership of town advisory councils consists of private citizens and administration officials appointed for two-year terms. Local government councils have broad powers and functions but are subject to the commissioner for local government.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The Papua New Guinean legal system is based on English common law.

The highest court in the land is the Supreme Court, to which appeals come from the National Court. District courts deal with summary and nonindictable offenses. Local courts deal with minor offenses, including matters regulated by indigenous custom. Wardens’ courts have jurisdiction over civil cases dealing with mining rights. Cases involving land are heard by the Land Titles Commission. The governor-general appoints the chief justice of the Supreme Court, and the Judicial and Legal Services Commission appoints other judges.

The right to a fair, public trial is strictly observed. Defendants are represented by counsel. A high crime rate coupled with shortages of funds, police, and judicial personnel have caused the time spent awaiting trial for serious offenses to increase in recent years. The right of habeas corpus, however, limits the holding of persons without trial to a maximum of six months. The courts are free from executive, political, or military interference. There are no political prisoners. Warrants are required for arrests. Suspects have free access to lawyers of their choice, and in serious cases counsel is provided at state expense. Suspects and their counsel are informed of charges and have the right to judicial review of detention. Reasonable bail is allowed, except when a judge rules that the risk of flight or further crime warrants detention.

HUMAN RIGHTS

In terms of political and civil rights Papua New Guinea is classified as a free country.

Papua New Guinea is not only the largest independent state in the South Pacific but also among the freest. Despite unindustrialized conditions, ethnic and linguistic heterogeneity, and natural difficulties in communication,

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the citizens enjoy in practice all the liberties and rights granted by the constitution. Anglo-Saxon traditions prevail in the law courts and in the government.

Despite the surface placidity at the higher levels of government, there are periodic outbreaks of violence and lawlessness that are more sociological than political in character. Tribal fighting is part of Papua New Guinea's history; under the Australians it was held in check by *ki-aps* (patrol officers), but since independence fighting and crime in the streets have become common. The scale of such violence prompted the government to declare a state of emergency in the highlands region (the five districts of Eastern Highlands, Western Highlands, Southern Highlands, Chimbu, and Enga). Despite provocations, the nation has not introduced capital punishment, and torture and similar inhumane and degrading punishments are neither practiced nor condoned.

Nevertheless, according to human rights reports, members of the police force continued to commit serious human rights abuses even after a peace agreement was signed in 1998 that officially ended the war between Bougainville and the government. Police committed extrajudicial killings, beat suspects, and engaged in excessively punitive and violent raids. On occasion the government has investigated allegations of abuse and prosecuted those believed responsible.

The government has been known to infringe on citizens' right to privacy and freedom of assembly. Violence against women and children has been a growing problem.

FOREIGN POLICY

The two dominant issues in Papua New Guinea foreign policy have been relations with Indonesia, particularly stemming from the status of Irian Jaya, and a dispute with Australia regarding the demarcation of a maritime boundary through the Torres Strait. More than 10,000 refugees have entered Papua New Guinea from Irian Jaya, where a secessionist struggle has raged. Jakarta has denounced the maintenance of two large border refugee camps by Port Moresby, citing the settlements as sources of aid for rebels belonging to the Free Papua Organization. In regard to the Torres Strait, the Papua position is that the boundary should be equidistant from its shore and that of Australia, but that arrangement was deemed unacceptable by Australia because it would have created problems for the citizens of the Torres Strait Islands, part of Australia. A compromise agreement was signed in 1978, but there is pressure in Papua New Guinea to renegotiate. Relations with the Solomon Islands became tense on the outbreak of the uprising in Bougainville (which once attempted to become a part of the Solomon Islands), especially after a number of Papua New Guinean search-and-destroy teams attacked rebel strongholds in that neighbor's territory.

Papua New Guinea has been cultivating relations with neighboring South Asian nations as well as with the rest of the world. It is a member of the South Pacific Forum, the Asia Pacific Economic Conference, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the South Pacific Commission, and the South Pacific Regional Environmental Program. The United States and Papua New Guinea have maintained diplomatic relations since 1975, the former providing large amounts of humanitarian assistance over the years and supporting efforts to protect biodiversity, in addition to granting the country \$18 million per year to provide fishing access to U.S. vessels. The Peace Corps ceased operations in Papua New Guinea in 2001 due to security concerns, but the U.S. military still provides some training and education to national security officials.

DEFENSE

The defense structure is headed by Queen Elizabeth II as head of state, but political control rests with the prime minister and the National Executive Council. Operational control rests with the minister of defense and the commander of the defense forces.

The army, known as the Papua New Guinea Defense Force, consists of four territorial commands: 1st Division, Papua; 2nd Division, New Guinea highlands; 3rd Division, New Guinea coastal areas; and 4th Division, island territories. Military manpower is provided by voluntary enlistment. There is no conscription.

The defense force is still partly officered by Australians, and Australia contributes to the upkeep of the armed forces through annual grants. The Papua New Guinean armed forces are essentially token forces designed for internal peacekeeping. In the event of a conflict with its neighbor Indonesia, Papua New Guinea may seek Australian intervention.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	3,100
Military Manpower Availability:	1,264,728
Military Expenditures \$million:	16.9
as % of GDP:	1.4
as % of central government expenditures:	—
Arms Imports \$million:	—
Arms Exports \$million:	—

ECONOMY

Papua New Guinea is a very poor and undeveloped nation. It is richly endowed with natural resources, but exploitation has been hampered by the rugged terrain and the high cost of developing infrastructure. Most of the population lives off subsistence agriculture. There is some

commercial agriculture and forestry, but most exporting is done by foreign corporations. The government has put a moratorium on logging, but trade in lumber continues illegally at an unsustainable rate. The main agricultural exports are cocoa, coffee, oil, rubber, sugar, tea, and copra. The tuna industry is vigorous, but most of the fishing is done by foreign vessels. Mineral deposits, including oil, copper, and gold, accounted for 25 percent of GDP in 2001, but mineral resources will run out in the future. The nation has limited manufacturing and must import most of its manufactured goods.

Prices are high for most commodities, and the government has been notoriously corrupt. A general lack of law and order, political interference, and questions regarding land tenure have hampered economic growth. Budgetary support from Australia and development aid under World Bank auspices have helped sustain the economy. Other donors include Japan, the European Union, China, Taiwan, the United Nations, the Asian Development Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank, as well as volunteers and missionaries who donate labor as teachers and medical professionals and in other areas.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 11.99
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 2,200
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 1.2
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: -1.2
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 34.5
 Industry: 34.7
 Services: 30.8
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 69
 Government Consumption: 18
 Gross Domestic Investment: 13.6
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 2.437
 Imports: 1.353
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 1.7
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 40.5

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
	151.5	175.1	191.4	214.0	245.4

Finance

National Currency: Kina (PGK)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = PGK 3.2375
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 1.88
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 13.25
 Total External Debt \$billion: 2.463
 Debt Service Ratio %: 7.26
 Balance of Payments \$million: 29.15
 International Reserves SDRs \$million: 481
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 4.2

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 220.8
 per capita \$: 40.10
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 101.4

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$billion: 1.174
 Expenditures \$billion: 1.232
 Budget Deficit \$million: 58
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: 22.3

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 34.5
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 2.9
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 0.53
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: —
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 53.6
 Total Farmland % of land area: 0.5
 Livestock: Cattle 000: 91
 Chickens million: 3.9
 Pigs million: 1.7
 Sheep 000: 7
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 7.24
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 148.7

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 277.3
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: —

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 4.15
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 0.88
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 161
 Net Energy Imports % of use: —
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: 539
 Production kW-hr billion: 1.73
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 1.61
 Coal Reserves tons million: —
 Production tons million: —
 Consumption tons million: —
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: 13.6
 Production cubic feet billion: 3.88
 Consumption cubic feet billion: 3.88
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels million: 170
 Production barrels 000 per day: 67.5
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 15.0
 Pipelines Length km: 264

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 1.353
 Exports \$billion: 2.437
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2000): 3.0
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999): 4.2
 Balance of Trade \$million: 29.15

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Australia %	44.6	26.8
Singapore %	20.6	—
New Zealand %	7.7	—
China %	5.0	5.7
Japan %	—	7.3

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 19,600
 Paved %: 3.5
 Automobiles: 24,900
 Trucks and Buses: 87,800
 Railroad: Track Length km: —
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: —
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 22
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 60.9
 Airports: 571
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 1.18
 Length of Waterways km: 10,940

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 54
 Number of Tourists from 000: 92
 Tourist Receipts \$million: —
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: —

Communications

Telephones 000: 62
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.08
 Cellular Telephones 000: 15
 Personal Computers 000: 321
 Internet Hosts per million people: 70
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 14

ENVIRONMENT

The country's largest environmental concern is the deforestation of the rain forest, caused by the growing commercial demand for tropical timber. The country also suffers from pollution from mining projects and severe drought.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 67.6
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: -113
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 4
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 0.47

LIVING CONDITIONS

Living conditions are extremely basic in much of Papua New Guinea; in some areas tribal people live much the way their ancestors did centuries ago. Most of the country has no running water or electricity, and transportation within the interior is difficult; the rainy season makes travel even more problematic. Lawlessness and crime are major problems, especially in Port Moresby, and outbreaks of ethnic violence occur with some regularity. Port Moresby has actually been ranked the world's most unlivable city, due largely to its violence, as well as to its unreliable electric and water supplies. Flying is often the only way to get from one point to another. Most rural areas do not have anything resembling consumer economies, and, regardless, there are no items to buy. All consumer goods and forms of transportation are quite expensive for the region.

HEALTH

Though the nation suffers from a severe lack of medical professionals and supplies, life expectancy is a moderately high 65 years. Fertility is also somewhat high, at almost four children per woman in 2004. Tropical diseases, including malaria, dengue fever, and diarrhea, are common. The incidence of HIV/AIDS has been increasing, especially among women.

Health

Number of Physicians: 275
 Number of Dentists: 90
 Number of Nurses: 2,841
 Number of Pharmacists: —
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 5.2
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 51.45
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 300
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 4.3
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 22
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.6
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 54
 Measles: 49
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 45
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 39

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Most people in Papua New Guinea live on a subsistence diet composed of crops they grow for themselves and items they gather or hunt. Yams, sago palm pith, rice, fruit, and locally gathered vegetables are the staples of most peoples' diets. Pigs are an important source of meat, and feasts often involve a roasted pig; local feasts are called

mumu. On the coast people eat fish, and crocodile is also a common meat. The larger cities have some international restaurants serving American and Chinese food. Canned food imported from overseas has become an important part of many peoples' diets, though it is expensive.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,180
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: —
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: —

STATUS OF WOMEN

Women have equal rights before the law, and their status is gradually improving, but they still face difficulties. The domestic abuse of women is said to be widespread, but it is rarely brought to the attention of authorities. In urban areas, alongside other violent crimes, rape is a problem of increasing severity. In villages, women play prominent roles in intertribal conflict; they are sometimes exchanged as a means of resolving wars between clans. When a man acquires a wife, he must pay a bride-price to her family (often in pigs), reinforcing the perception of women as property. In areas where men have multiple wives, many women go to prison after attacking their rival wives.

Against the background of traditional male dominance, the achievements of women in Papua New Guinea are significant. Some have become doctors, lawyers, or office directors, and some have held prominent political office. Nevertheless, even in the cities many women are effectively second-class citizens.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 1
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: —
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 35.4

WORK

The majority of people in Papua New Guinea are subsistence farmers, raising food, hunting, and otherwise providing for all their own needs. They have virtually no income and they purchase very little.

Of the official labor force of 3.3 million, a full 85 percent are employed in agriculture, producing both subsistence and cash crops, with the remainder employed in industry or services. Unemployment is a major problem in urban areas. There are some cases of children who are "adopted" by wealthy families but are essentially forced to work as unpaid servants.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 3,320,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 42.6
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 85
 Other: 15
 Unemployment %: —

EDUCATION

In 2002 the national literacy rate was estimated to be 65 percent—71 percent for males and 58 percent for females.

Education is neither free nor compulsory. Schooling lasts for 12 years, as divided into six years of primary school, four years of middle school, and two years of upper secondary school. The academic year is the calendar year. The language of instruction is Tok Pisin in most schools, although some mission schools use English. Missions have played a dominant role in Papua New Guinean education, operating six times as many schools and teaching more than twice as many children as government schools. There are not nearly enough schools to service the population of potential students; every year some 50,000 students, a majority of them girls, drop out after elementary school simply because there are no secondary schools for them to attend. The government has indeed delineated the need for foreign investment in educational infrastructure and particularly wants to improve educational opportunities for girls.

Higher education is provided at numerous institutions, including the University of Papua New Guinea, at Port Moresby; the University of Technology, at Lae; the Papua New Guinea Maritime College; the University of Goroka; and the Catholic-run Divine Word University.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 64.6
 Male %: 71.1
 Female %: 57.7
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: —
 First Level: Primary Schools: 2,790
 Teachers: 17,398
 Students: 609,497
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 35.0
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 68.5
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 135
 Teachers: 7,588
 Students: 152,820
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 22.4
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 23.7
 Third Level: Institutions: 2
 Teachers: —
 Students: —
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: —
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 2.3

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Papua New Guinea does not have much technological infrastructure. In 2002 there were only about 62,000 telephone lines and 15,000 cellular telephones in the country, and only about 75,000 people were using the Internet. Most communication within the country is done by radiotelephone, telegraph, coastal radio, aeronautical radio, and international radio.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: 46.8
 Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

Papua New Guinea's daily newspapers include the *Papua New Guinea Post-Courier*, the *National*, and *Niu Gini nius*, and there are several weeklies and monthlies. The press is free of official censorship, and private publications criticize the government regularly, reporting on corruption and other sensitive topics. There is no national news agency or book-publishing industry.

Radio is the most important medium in the nation, due to the geographic isolation of most of the population and widespread illiteracy. Radio broadcasting is operated by the National Broadcasting Commission of Papua New Guinea, which operates a network of transmitters. The programs are presented in the three official languages—English, Hiri Motu, and Tok Pisin—and in 15 vernaculars. About 95 percent of the population is potentially covered by radio services, though a lack of funding results in broadcasts frequently being taken off the air. The BBC World Service broadcasts in Port Moresby.

Television service was introduced in 1970. The only station is the commercial EMTV Television, for which the signal is available only in Port Moresby and in provincial capitals.

Media

Daily Newspapers: —
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: —
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets 000: 60
 per 1,000: 13

CULTURE

The people of Papua New Guinea are divided into four main cultural and political groups: Papuans in the south, Highlanders in the hills, New Guineans from the north, and islanders. Many of these groups have had very little contact with outside influences, and they have thus maintained a huge variety of individual cultures, made more distinct by linguistic differences; Papua New Guinea is home to about one-third of the world's indigenous languages.

The most typical expression of native culture is a feast called a *sing sing*. During these feasts men and women sing songs about battles, healing, love, sharks, death, the weather, and other topics. Instruments include many types of drums and bamboo flutes.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: 2
 Annual Attendance: 100,000
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Papua New Guinean culture encompasses a great number of mythologies, many of them unique to particular ethnic groups. Pantheistic rituals are widespread; people conduct rituals to improve the weather, celebrate the harvest, or placate dangerous crocodiles. The spirits of ancestors are considered very important and powerful; people believe they must give spirits offerings or otherwise make them happy in order to prevent them from harming the living. Witchcraft and sorcery are commonplace. Some rural people practiced cannibalism until quite recently, eating the flesh either of their enemies or of loved ones.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Papua New Guinea's recreational offerings are found almost entirely outdoors. There is good walking and hiking; the best-known walking route is the Kokoda Trail. There are thousands of birds to watch. There is exceptional diving and snorkeling, and the swimming is excellent at many beaches. Rabaul has many volcanoes, which are interesting to climb. Some tour operators offer rafting trips.

ETIQUETTE

Tribal customs still prevail in many areas, including practices such as killing people as revenge for past wrongs. Papua New Guineans do not have a tradition of bargaining for purchases, so haggling in the marketplace is not done. Tipping is not customary anywhere. People are generally hospitable, sharing what they have.

FAMILY LIFE

In rural areas, family life has not changed much in centuries. The clan is the most important social unit. Women tend gardens, where they grow sweet potatoes, care for the family pigs, and raise children; men hunt. Traditionally, women married at puberty, and men married when they were old enough to build a house and hunt to provide for a family; as a result, many rural people marry at 14 or 15, even though this violates the nation's marriage laws, which prohibit marriage before 16 for women and 18 for men. When a man marries, he pays his bride's family a bride-price of money, property, or other items; pigs are often used for this purpose.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Though increasing numbers of Papua New Guineans are dressing in Western clothing, many still wear traditional homemade garments made from locally foraged materials. These include skirts made from leaves and grass and decorations made from shells, pig tails, flowers, or dog teeth, as well as wigs made from human hair. Most rural people never wear shoes. People often decorate their faces with colored clay or yellow ochre.

SPORTS

Though Papua New Guinea does not have a long history of excellence in organized sports, the nation is making an effort to develop athletes. The National Olympic Committee prepares the Papuan contingent for competition; the nation has some good swimmers and kickboxers.

CHRONOLOGY

1975 Papua New Guinea achieves full independence as a dominion within the Commonwealth; Bougainville unilaterally declares its independence as the Republic of the North Solomons, presided over by Josephine Abaijah, but the secessionist movement is suppressed. The kina is introduced as the national currency, replacing the Australian dollar.

- 1976** The kina is revalued.
- 1977** In the nation's first general elections, Prime Minister Michael Somare's Pangu Party and its coalition partner, the People's Progress Party, win at least 60 of 109 seats in the House of Assembly. Sir John Guise steps down as governor-general and is replaced by Sir Tore Lokoloko.
- 1978** Rival tribes riot.
- 1980** The Somare government falls. Julius Chan is named prime minister. Papua New Guinea sends troops to Vanuatu to quell a revolt.
- 1982** Following general elections, Somare returns as prime minister.
- 1984** Somare survives a no-confidence motion following the exit of Deputy Prime Minister Pias Wingti and forms a new coalition with the Melanesian Alliance and National parties.
- 1988** Rabbie Namaliu becomes prime minister; the secessionist BRA fights for the independence of the island of Bougainville.
- 1994** Fighting between the secessionist BRA and the government ends when the parties sign a peace agreement. Pacific peacekeepers from Fiji, Tonga, and Vanuatu, with Australian support, occupy four neutral zones.
- 1995** The cease-fire ends.
- 1996** The leader of the provisional government is assassinated.
- 1997** Parliamentary elections are held, and Bill Skate becomes prime minister; the government begins to employ foreign mercenaries to fight the rebel BRA; the El Niño weather pattern spurs a severe drought in Papua New Guinea, devastating the nation's subsistence and export crops; Prime Minister Skate is accused of corruption.
- 1998** International aid for the 500,000 facing drought-related food shortages is suspended due to looting; the BRA and the government sign a peace agreement ending their conflict, in which 20,000 were killed; the country is hit by three gigantic tsunamis.
- 1999** Economic crisis sets in, with inflation at 20 percent; Prime Minister Skate extends recognition to Taiwan and consequently breaks off relations with China, reportedly in exchange for \$2.35 billion in loans; two days later Skate resigns; Mekere Morauta becomes prime minister.
- 2000** The government announces that the inhabitants of the Duke of York atoll will have to move because the island is "sinking" as a result of global warming.
- 2001** The government signs the Bougainville Peace Agreement, promising to hold a referendum on Bougainville's political status in 10 to 15 years.

1854 Papua New Guinea

- 2002** Michael Somare becomes prime minister for the third time.
- 2004** Australia sends police to Papua New Guinea to help fight rising crime.
- 2005** Australia withdraws its police force after the supreme court of Papua New Guinea rules their presence unconstitutional.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Prime Minister's Office of Papua New Guinea
<http://www.pm.gov.pg/pmsoffice/PMsoffice.nsf>

PARAGUAY

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Paraguay (República del Paraguay)

ABBREVIATION

PY

CAPITAL

Asunción

HEAD OF STATE & HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

President Nicanor Duarte Frutos (from 2003)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Constitutional republic

POPULATION

6,347,884 (2005)

AREA

406,750 sq km (157,046 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Mestizo

LANGUAGES

Spanish, Guarani

RELIGION

Roman Catholicism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Guarani

NATIONAL FLAG

Tricolor of red (top), white, and blue horizontal stripes. The national emblem appears in the center of the white stripe on the front, and the treasury seal appears on the obverse.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A gold five-pointed star in a blue circle, surrounded by palm and olive branches. The words “República del Paraguay” appear in gold letters within the red, circular border.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Paraguayans, Republic or Death”

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year’s Day), January 6 (Three Kings Day), February 3 (San Blas), March 1 (Heroes’ Day), May 1 (Labor Day), May 14 (Flag Day), May 15 (Independence Day), June 12 (Chaco Armistice), August 15 (Founding of Asunción), August 25 (Constitution Day), September 29 (Battle of Boquerón Day), October 12 (Day of the Race, i.e., Columbus Day), December 8 (Virgin of Caacupé), Ascension, Corpus Christi, All Saints’ Day, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Christmas

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

May 14, 1811

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

June 20, 1992

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Paraguay, a landlocked country in the heart of South America, has a total land area of 406,750 sq km (157,046 sq mi), extending 992 km (616 mi) south-southeast to north-northwest and 491 km (305 mi) east-northeast to west-southwest. It shares its total land boundary of 3,920 km (2,436 mi) with three neighbors: Brazil (1,290 km; 801 mi), Argentina (1,880 km; 1,167 mi), and Bolivia (750 km; 466 mi).

The capital is Asunción. Other major urban centers are Ciudad del Este, Pedro Juan Caballero, Encarnación, Coronel Oviedo, and Villarrica.

The Paraguay River divides the country into two sharply contrasting regions. Three-fifths of the land west

and north of the river is a waterless prairie known as the Chaco.

Eastern Paraguay is a region of spacious plains, broad valleys, and rolling hills. It is divided into five subregions: the Paraná Plateau to the east; the northern upland from the Aquidabán River to the Apa River; the central hill belt; the central lowland; and the Ñeembucú Plain, a swampy lowland.

Rivers are the dominant natural features of Paraguay. Three major rivers—the Paraguay, the Paraná, and the Pilcomayo—are transportation arteries. The Paraguay River rises in Mato Grosso in Brazil and passes through Paraguay for 1,125 km (700 mi). The Paraná rises in Brazil and is known as Alta Paraná after the Guaira Falls.

Paraguay



The Pilcomayo is a tributary of the Paraguay and forms the southwestern border with Argentina. Smaller rivers include the Tobicuary, the Apa, and the Aquidabán.

The largest lakes are Lake Ypoá in the Ñeembucú Plain and Lake Ypacaraí in the central hill belt.

Elevation Extremes meters:

- Lowest: junction of Río Paraguay and Río Paraná 46
- Highest: Cerro Pero (Cerro Tres Kandu) 842

Land Use %

- Arable Land: 7.6
- Permanent Crops: 0.2
- Forest: 58.8
- Other: 33.4

Geography

Area sq km: 406,750; sq mi 157,046
 World Rank: 58th
 Land Boundaries, km: Argentina 1,880; Bolivia 750; Brazil 1,290
 Coastline, km: 0

Population of Principal Cities (2002)

Asunción	513,399
Capiatá	154,469

Ciudad del Este	223,350
Luque	170,433
San Lorenzo	202,745

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Two-thirds of Paraguay lies within the temperate zone and has a mild climate, while one-third lies within the tropical zone and has a hot and humid climate. During the autumn and winter months (April through September), temperatures range from 10°C to 21°C (50°F to 70°F). During spring and summer (October through March), temperatures range from about 26°C to 37°C (78.8°F to 98.6°F), with daytime temperatures often exceeding 37.8°C (100°F). It is not uncommon for temperatures to drop by about 17°C (30°F) within half an hour.

Eastern Paraguay receives fairly evenly distributed rainfall. The annual average is about 2,030 mm (80 in) along the eastern border with Brazil, with precipitation gradually diminishing toward the west, to averages of 1,190 mm (47 in) along the Paraguay River and 810 mm (32 in) in the Chaco.

In the summer the prevailing wind is the hot sirocco, blowing out of the northeast, while in the winter there is the cold pampero, blowing across the South Atlantic.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature

Autumn and Winter: 50°F to 70°F
Spring and Summer: 78.8°F to 98.6°F

Average Rainfall

Paraguay River: 47 in
Chaco: 32 in
Asunción: 50 in
Paraná Plateau: 31 in to 131 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

The eastern part of Paraguay is covered with grasses and patches of subtropical forest. The Chaco, west of the Río Paraguay, is dry and infertile. The country harbors a diverse assortment of animals, including giant anteaters, jaguars, Brazilian tapirs, maned wolves, Chacoan peccaries, caimans, anacondas, boa constrictors, and various birds, such as parrots, parakeets, hyacinth macaws, and wood storks. Human development is pushing out larger animals in the east; the Chacoan peccary was once thought to be extinct, and its numbers remain quite small.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 6,347,884
World Rank: 99th

Density per sq km: 14.2
% of annual growth (1999-2003): 2.3
Male %: 50.2
Female %: 49.8
Urban %: 55.3
Age Distribution %: 0-14: 37.9
15-64: 57.3
65 and over: 4.8

Population 2025: 9,880,000
Birth Rate per 1,000: 29.43
Death Rate per 1,000: 4.53
Rate of Natural Increase %: 2.5
Total Fertility Rate: 3.93
Expectation of Life (years): Males 72.35
Females 77.55
Marriage Rate per 1,000: —
Divorce Rate per 1,000: —
Average Size of Households: 4.7
Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Paraguay is one of the few Latin American countries where the indigenous Amerindian population assimilated its conquerors rather than the reverse, with the resulting fusion showing more Amerindian than Spanish characteristics. Assimilation has been so complete that less than 5 percent of the population is clearly identifiable as either white or Amerindian.

The government's National Indigenous Institute (INDI) estimates the unassimilated Amerindian population to be 128,370. Therein are six linguistic groups, five in the Chaco and one in the east. The 17 ethnically distinct Amerindian groups include the Pai-Tavyterá, Mbya, Aché, and Chiripá in the east and the Toba, Mascoy, Lengua, Chulupí, Tapieté, Ayoreo, and Chamacoco in the Chaco. Some of these peoples are threatened with extinction as a result of the destruction of their traditional habitats. The welfare of Amerindians is the official responsibility of INDI, which can purchase land on their behalf and expropriate private property to establish tribal homelands.

African blacks have contributed modestly to the ethnic melting pot, with 13,000 counted in the latest census.

The two main ethnic alien groups are the Japanese and the German Mennonites. The largest foreign community in Paraguay is from the United States.

LANGUAGES

Paraguay's constitution recognizes two official languages: Spanish and Guarani. Spanish is the medium of instruction in schools and is spoken by about 75 percent of the people. A greater percentage—estimated at more than 90 percent—understand Guarani, the vernacular of the country's original inhabitants. Guarani is a member of the Tupí-Guarani group of languages; it is a melodi-

ous language in which all words end in a vowel. It is the primary language in rural areas and the medium of ordinary communication in urban areas. A number of Guarani words and idioms have found their way into Paraguayan Spanish.

RELIGIONS

An estimated 90 percent of the population is Roman Catholic. The constitution guarantees full religious freedom, and the country's small religious minorities, Protestants and Jews, experience no discrimination. Traditional Amerindian religions have virtually disappeared.

Ecclesiastically, the country is divided into one archdiocese (Asunción), four dioceses (Villarrica, Pilar, Concepción, and the Chaco), four prelatures (Coronel Oviedo, Encarnación, Alto Paraná, and Caacupé), and two apostolic vicariates (Chaco and Pilcomayo).

Protestants do not constitute a major religious force in the country. A sizable percentage of Protestants are members of the Mennonite sect.

Religious Affiliations

Roman Catholic	5,700,000
Mennonite and Other Protestant	650,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Paraguay is the only state in the world that was established by a religious order. The nation was conceived as a result of the efforts of the Jesuits (Society of Jesus) to protect Amerindians from Portuguese slave traders and Spanish colonists. Soon after the founding of Asunción in 1537, Jesuits gathered Guarani families into reductions, or mission villages, where Amerindians owned land in common and were taught trades, better methods of cultivation, and the fine arts, along with religious instruction. Spanish colonists were not allowed to enter the reductions. Eventually, the number of reductions grew to more than 30, with 100,000 members, but in the process the Jesuits incurred the enmity of the colonists, who convinced the Spanish king that the religious order was trying to set up a private kingdom in rivalry with the Spanish realm. In 1767 the king banned the Jesuits; the reductions were plundered by the colonists and then abandoned.

When the Viceroyalty of La Plata was created in 1776, Paraguay became an outpost of Buenos Aires, which thereafter dominated the Río de la Plata. In 1810 Paraguay followed the lead of Buenos Aires in declaring independence from Spain. In 1811 the nation defeated an Argentine expedition to conquer it and became completely independent.

Since independence Paraguay has been dominated by dictators, some of them benevolent, such as the nation's founding father, José Gaspar Rodríguez de Francia, also known as "El Supremo." Assuming power in 1811, he cut off Paraguay from all contact with the outside world, suspended external commerce, broke relations with the Vatican, and began an anticlerical regime that lasted until his death in 1840. He was followed by Carlos Antonio López and his son, who together ruled until 1870. The elder López reversed the anticlerical policies of Francia and reestablished trade and communications with the outside world. The younger López presided over the War of the Triple Alliance (1865–70), fought with Brazil, Argentina, and Uruguay, the bloodiest war in Latin American history, in which Paraguay lost half of its population. In 1932 a long-smoldering feud with Bolivia, over the ownership of a desolate area to the north of the Chaco known as the Green Hell, broke into open warfare. Although outnumbered by the Bolivians three to one, the Paraguayans prevailed and conquered three-fourths of the disputed territory, which they retained following the peace settlement of 1938. A number of short-lived dictators followed the coup d'état of Col. Rafael Franco in 1939; among them were Gen. José Félix Estigarribia, Gen. Higinio Moríñigo, Juan Natalicio González, Gen. Raimundo Rolón, and Federico Chávez. This period of instability came to an end in 1954 with the rise of Gen. Alfredo Stroessner Matiauda. Stroessner remained in power for 35 years, until 1989, when he was ousted by Gen. Andrés Rodríguez with the support of the Colorado Party. In 1992 a new constitution was adopted, following which the Colorado candidate, Juan Carlos Wasmosy Monti, won the first free presidential election in Paraguayan history with 40.29 percent of the vote. The party, however, failed to win a majority in either house of Congress.

In 1995 a rift developed between Wasmosy and the military strongman Gen. Lino César Oviedo. In 1996 Oviedo mounted an unsuccessful attempt to force Wasmosy's resignation and was, in turn, obliged to resign from the army. Later Oviedo was arrested on charges of insurrection and insubordination, and Wasmosy initiated a purge of officers loyal to Oviedo. In 1997 Oviedo, now released by an appeals court, declared his candidacy for the presidency and outpaced all his competitors in national polls, including Colorado Party president Luís María Argaña. Thereafter, in a remarkable series of events, Oviedo tried to get Wasmosy impeached while the president ordered Oviedo's arrest. When the Supreme Court upheld Oviedo's imprisonment, his vice presidential running mate, Raúl Cubas Grau, was appointed as the party's leader and went on to win the presidency in 1998. Following the election, Cubas commuted the sentence on Oviedo in defiance of the Supreme Court. Opposition to the new president developed in the party and in the legislature among the Argaña faction, which joined the

opposition against the government. The political landscape was again altered when Lu s Mar a Araga a, himself the vice president, was shot to death in Asunci n by men in military uniforms, and Oviedo and Cubas were implicated in the assassination. Demonstrators poured into the streets of the capital to demand the president's resignation, and several days of battles ensued between the *arga istas* and *oviedistas*. Under intense pressure Cubas resigned the presidency in 1999 only hours before the Senate was to vote on his removal. He was succeeded by Luis  ngel Gonz lez Macchi, an *arga ista*. Meanwhile, Oviedo fled to Argentina, Cubas to Brazil.

Turmoil continued for the next five years. In 2001 the head of the central bank resigned after being accused of transferring several million dollars to a U.S. bank account. The following year prosecutors implicated Gonz lez in an investment scandal. This allegation sparked violent protests in the street, with people demanding the president's resignation and an ed to free-market policies. Congress impeached Gonz lez but ultimately did not vote him out of office.

In the summer of 2003 Nicanor Duarte Frutos of the Colorado Party replaced Gonz lez as president, and his administration put Gonz lez on trial for corruption. The following year, Oviedo returned to Paraguay and was immediately arrested. In 2005 the daughter of former president Cubas was kidnapped and murdered, and Duarte promised to crack down on organized crime.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1954–89	Alfredo Stroessner Matiauda
1989–93	Andr�s Rodr�guez
1993–98	Juan Carlos Wamosy Monti
1998–99	Ra�l Cubas Grau
1999–2003	Luis �ngel Gonz�lez Macchi
2003–	Nicanor Duarte Frutos

CONSTITUTION

The 1992 constitution states that Paraguay is a representative and pluralist democracy and that government is exercised by the separate powers of the legislature, executive, and judiciary. The president is the head of state and head of government. The president is elected by a simple majority of votes for a five-year term and cannot run for reelection. He must be a Paraguayan by birth and over 35 years of age. The president is authorized to appoint and remove commanders of the army and police. The president appoints a council of ministers. A state of exception can be declared, by the executive or the Congress, only in cases of international armed conflict or serious internal unrest threatening the rule of the constitution. The 1992 constitution created the post of vice president, who

is elected concurrently with the president, running on the same ticket.

PARLIAMENT

The Congress (Congreso) is a bicameral body consisting of the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies, both elected by popular vote concurrently with the president for five-year terms. Deputies are elected by department, senators nationwide. Voting is compulsory for all Paraguayans from age 18 onward.

The Senate consists of 45 members. It has the exclusive rights to initiate bills relating to national defense, ratify international treaties, and consent to the appointment of the attorney general, ambassadors, and members of the Supreme Court of Justice.

The Chamber of Deputies comprises 80 members and has the exclusive power to initiate bills relating to taxation, monetary and banking systems, budgets, and electoral and municipal legislation. Any other bill may originate in either chamber of Congress.

All bills submitted to Congress by the executive are acted on in the same session. If a bill or part of a bill objected to by the executive branch and returned to the chamber of origin is passed again by both chambers by an absolute majority vote, the executive branch must promulgate it. Any bill vetoed by the president may be considered again during the same session of Congress only by an affirmative vote of a two-thirds majority of both chambers.

The two houses of Congress meet in regular sessions every year from April 1 to December 20. The president may convene special sessions or extend the regular sessions.

POLITICAL PARTIES

The National Republican Association (Colorado Party) is Paraguay's oldest party. It dominated the country's politics under Gen. Stroessner and still controls the Chamber of Deputies. It is generally conservative in outlook but is subject to factionalism. There are several other parties, including the Patria Querida (PQ), the Union Nacional de Ciudadanos  ticos (UNACE), the Partido Encuentro Nacional (PEN), the Partido Liberal Radical Autentico (PLRA), and the Partido Pais Solidario (PPS). There are also several political pressure groups.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For administrative purposes the Paraguayan territory is divided into 17 departments: 14 in the eastern region and three in the Chaco, in the west. The capital city forms another unit of local government.

1860 Paraguay

Each department is headed by a *delegado de gobierno*, or governor, elected for a five-year term by direct vote. The departments are divided into districts that are subdivided into municipalities, each of which has a population of over 3,000. Each municipality is governed by a board, which is elected by the local residents. Resident aliens are allowed to vote in municipal elections.

LEGAL SYSTEM

Paraguay's legal system is based on the Argentine code, the French codes, and Roman law.

The judiciary is headed by the Supreme Court of Justice, consisting of nine judges chosen by the executive and Senate on the proposal of the Council of Magistrates. The members of the Supreme Court, as well as the lower courts, are appointed for five-year terms. The Supreme Court has authority in jurisdictional disputes between branches of government, the power to supervise the judicial establishment, and the power to declare laws unconstitutional. There is also an ombudsman and an attorney general appointed by the executive.

Below the Supreme Court are courts of appeal for civil, commercial, and criminal cases; courts of first instance; and justice-of-the-peace courts. The courts of first instance are in Asunción, but each large city has a judicial officer known as a proceedings judge, who gathers evidence and obtains testimony prior to a trial. The Supreme Court appoints judges of lower courts and magistrates.

Paraguay does not have trial by jury. Trials are generally conducted through the presentation of written documents to a judge, who then renders a decision. An appellate-level judge automatically reviews all judgments, and the Supreme Court may hear appeals. Part of the trial process is open to the public, and trials are routinely reported in the press.

Judicial reform began in 1992. A new penal code, establishing the protection of fundamental human rights, entered into force in November 1998, replacing the antiquated 1914 code. In July 1999 the Criminal Procedures Code went into effect, providing for procedures for an oral and accusatorial system as well as a faster and more transparent criminal trial process.

The national penitentiary is in Asunción. Another prison is in Tacumbú, and the Sisters of the Good Shepherd run a Women's Correctional Institute. There are smaller prisons in each of the departmental capitals.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Though Paraguay's government generally respects the rights of its citizens, the country has some serious hu-

man rights problems. The military and police are known to arrest, torture, and kill prisoners without observing due process. Prisons are overcrowded, and prisoners often commit violent acts against one another. The military conscripts minors illegally. Violence against women and child abuse have occurred with some regularity, as have trafficking in children and women as sex slaves.

FOREIGN POLICY

Paraguay is a member of the United Nations, the Southern Cone Common Market (Mercosur), the Organization of American States (OAS), the Rio Group, the Latin American Integration Association (ALADI), and Interpol. The nation supports the creation of a free-trade area in the Americas. The United States and Paraguay cooperate on various enterprises, including efforts to stop drug and human trafficking, end money laundering, and preserve rain forests. The U.S. government has helped Paraguay resolve its various political crises. Paraguay imported over \$483 million in goods from the United States in 2003, and many U.S. businesses have subsidiaries in Paraguay.

DEFENSE

As commander in chief, the president heads the defense structure. There is a minister of national defense, who is not in the direct chain of command. The direct subordinate of the commander in chief is the chief of the armed forces general staff, always an army officer, and below him are the commanders of the army, navy, and air force. For the purpose of national defense the country is divided into six geographical areas known as divisions. The 1992 constitution bans all military personnel in active service from belonging to political parties or engaging in any political activity.

The military consists of an army, an air force, and a navy that includes a naval air force and marines. Military service is compulsory for all Paraguayan males between 18 and 20; all conscripts must serve one year in the army or two years in the navy. Conscientious objection is allowed.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	33,400
Military Manpower Availability:	1,345,022
Military Expenditures \$million:	53.1
as % of GDP:	0.9
as % of central government expenditures:	5.9
Arms Imports \$million:	4
Arms Exports \$million:	—

ECONOMY

Paraguay is considered a lower-middle-income country. It has failed to make any real economic progress in recent years, and income levels essentially remain at the levels they were in 1980. Observers blame poor performance on political corruption, the failure of structural reform, inadequate infrastructure, and large internal and external debts. The nation has a free-market economy with a large informal sector. By some estimates, unregistered trade—the reexport of consumer goods into Brazil and Argentina, along with the activities of thousands of urban street vendors and microenterprises—exceeds the official gross domestic product (GDP). Paraguay's formal economy is dominated by services. Agriculture commodities (particularly soybeans, cotton, lumber, and cattle) are the most important export items, and farming accounts for about 25 percent of GDP and employs about 45 percent of the labor force. The country has vast hydroelectric resources, which it has exploited to export electricity to its neighbors, but lacks significant mineral or petroleum resources. Paraguay's principal industries are related to cattle, such as cold storage plants, tanneries, and the manufacture of leather goods; secondary industries include the production of textiles, vegetable oils, construction materials, tobacco, and sugar.

After Stroessner's dismissal in 1989, the Rodríguez and Wasmosy governments introduced a number of economic reforms with a view to liberalizing the protected Paraguayan economy. These reforms included the establishment of a unified, fluctuating exchange rate for the currency, tax exemptions for newly established foreign businesses, the elimination of export taxes, and the privatization of public-sector enterprises. The Cubas administration attempted to reduce the rising government deficit by cutting spending and cracking down on rampant tax evasion. The top priority for President Luís González was resuscitating an official economy that had languished in the wake of a thriving illegal one. The economy grew by an average of about 3 percent annually in 1995–1997, but GDP declined slightly between 1998 and 2000. On a per capita basis, real income has stagnated at 1980 levels. Growth rebounded slightly in 2001 but fell again in 2002.

In January 1995 Paraguay joined Brazil, Argentina, and Uruguay in creating Mercosur, a four-country free-trade zone. The nation is also a member of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the Latin American Economic System (SELA).

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 29.93
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 4,800
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 0.6

GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: –1.7

Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:

Agriculture: 25.3

Industry: 24.9

Services: 49.8

Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:

Private Consumption: 86

Government Consumption: 8

Gross Domestic Investment: 18.1

Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 2.936

Imports: 3.33

% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 0.5

% of Income Received by Richest 10%: 43.8

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
131.0	140.0	152.4	163.5	180.7

Finance

National Currency: Guarani (PYG)

Exchange Rate: \$1 = PYG 5,967.37

Money Supply Stock in National Currency trillion: 3.79

Central Bank Discount Rate %: 20.0

Total External Debt \$billion: 3.239

Debt Service Ratio %: 6.58

Balance of Payments \$million: –36.11

International Reserves SDRs \$million: 810

Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
5.1

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 50.7

per capita \$: 9.00

Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 90.8

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year

Revenues \$billion: 1.123

Expenditures \$billion: 1.129

Budget Deficit \$million: 6

Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 25.3

Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 3.5

Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 0.55

Irrigation, % of Farms having: 2.2

Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 50.7

Total Farmland % of land area: 7.6

Livestock: Cattle million: 9.8

Chickens million: 15.55

Pigs million: 3.25

Sheep 000: 370

Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 9.9

Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 25

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Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 820
Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 0

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 3.9
Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 4.93
Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 879
Net Energy Imports % of use: -61.2
Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 8
 Production kW-hr billion: 48.4
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 2.5
Coal Reserves tons million: —
 Production tons million: —
 Consumption tons million: —
Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
 Production cubic feet billion: —
 Consumption cubic feet billion: —
Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
 Production barrels 000 per day: —
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 25
Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 3.33
Exports \$billion: 2.936
Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999-2003): -0.8
Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999-2003): -5.2
Balance of Trade \$million: -36.11

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Brazil %	32.4	34.2
Argentina %	21.6	5.3
China %	12.7	—
Uruguay %	—	19.6
Switzerland %	—	7.8

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 29,500
 Paved %: 50.8
Automobiles: 415,800
Trucks and Buses: 56,400
Railroad: Track Length km: 441
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: 1
Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 21
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 30.8
Airports: 878
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 279
Length of Waterways km: 3,100

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 250
Number of Tourists from 000: 141
Tourist Receipts \$million: 76
Tourist Expenditures \$million: 117

Communications

Telephones 000: 273.2
Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
Cellular Telephones million: 1.77
Personal Computers 000: 200
Internet Hosts per million people: 1,456
Internet Users per 1,000 people: 19

ENVIRONMENT

Paraguay's most pressing environmental problem is deforestation, which is driven by the demand for agricultural land as well as the exploitation of timber. More than half of Paraguay is forested, but an estimated 3,266 sq km (1,261 sq mi) of forestlands were cleared per year from 1990 to 1995, mostly in the eastern frontier. Reforestation has been minimal, such that Paraguay is in danger of losing virtually all of its forests by the middle of the 21st century.

Also of concern is the environmental damage caused by the Yacyretá Dam, which runs 42 miles along the Paraná River and was built to export hydroelectric power to Argentina. The dam, which went into operation in the early 1990s, has flooded several islands, has dried up branches of the Paraná upon which a nearby city depends for water, and has created an ecological and economic disaster for the families living in the reservoir area. Moreover, 100,000 hectares (250,000 acres) of indigenous land have been lost, 1,000 families have been displaced or otherwise adversely affected, and ecosystems with unique life forms have been destroyed.

The country has several other environmental problems. Wetlands are disappearing or becoming damaged, and much of the nation's water is becoming polluted. Many animal species are at risk of extinction as humans encroach on their territory. The cities do not have adequate means of waste disposal, presenting health risks for urban dwellers.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 58.8
Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: -123
Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 6
Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 0.69

LIVING CONDITIONS

Paraguay's living conditions show the effects of its years of economic stagnation. Housing for most people is ru-

dimentary. Frequent floods destroy houses in areas near rivers. Water supplies are unreliable; safe water is much more readily available in cities than in rural areas. The urban waste disposal systems do not work, and waste contaminates local water supplies, spreading disease. Bus transportation is good, but the train system still uses wood-burning engines. Motor vehicles share roads with livestock and oxcarts. Driving can be dangerous. About half of the country's roads are unpaved.

HEALTH

The health of Paraguay's people improved a great deal during the late 20th century as a result of the government's efforts to increase vaccination, expand health education, and provide health services to more people. Life expectancy is high, at almost 75 years. Fertility is also high; each woman has an average of nearly four children. In 2004 the population grew at a rate of 2.5 percent.

Nevertheless, the country suffers from many health problems. Poor water and sanitation lead to many diseases, as do unpasteurized milk and improper food processing. Health care is unavailable in many rural areas, and malnutrition remains a problem for many people. Diseases such as tuberculosis, typhoid fever, cholera, dengue fever, malaria, and hepatitis are still common.

Health

Number of Physicians: 6,400
 Number of Dentists: 1,947
 Number of Nurses: 1,089
 Number of Pharmacists: —
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 117
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 25.63
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 170
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 8.4
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 102
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.5
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 77
 Measles: 91
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 78
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 83

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Meat, corn, and manioc are the mainstays of the Paraguayan diet, which is rounded out with eggs, milk, cheese, and tropical and subtropical fruits and vegetables. Beef is a common meat. Corn appears in puddings, stews, mush, soup, and even dessert. A popular dessert called *mbaipy be-é* mixes milk, molasses, and corn. A snack called *chipas* is made from manioc, eggs, and cheese. People drink tea or maté at nearly every meal

as well as between meals. Sugarcane is the basis of alcoholic beverages such as *mosto* and *caña*.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 13.7
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,540
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 72.3
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 133.2

STATUS OF WOMEN

The constitution of 1992 guarantees "the equality of civil, political, social, economic and cultural rights" of women and charges the state with eliminating obstacles to women's full participation in "all dimensions of national life." The recently enacted Electoral Code requires that, in their internal primaries, 20 percent of each party's candidates for elective office be women.

While there are no legal impediments to women's participation in government and politics, in practice they are underrepresented. In May 1998 voters elected 10 women to Congress (eight of 45 senators and two of 80 national deputies), and there were three women in the cabinet. Women are well represented in the judicial system as judges and prosecutors.

Maternal mortality rates are high, and as many as 65 percent of such deaths are related to poor medical care. Domestic violence, particularly by husbands against wives, is extremely common, though women are becoming more willing to report cases of abuse. Prostitution is common, and many women become the victims of human traffickers, who send them to other countries to work in the sex industry.

Several groups work to improve conditions for women. One is Women for Democracy, which is active in civic and electoral education. Other groups include Sumando, a non-governmental organization promoting educational reform and voter participation in elections; Sefem, which addresses such issues as women and public policy; and the Women's November 25th Collective, which sponsors a home for battered women and coordinates legal assistance.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 10
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.0
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 42.0

WORK

In 2004 the official unemployment rate was 15.1 percent, while 35 percent of the population lived below the poverty

line. There is tremendous income disparity, with most of the country's money concentrated in the hands of a few families. Some 45 percent of the workforce is occupied in agriculture; about 200,000 families are subsistence farmers, providing for their own needs but earning no real income. Many people in the cities work as street vendors, selling items on a small scale. A large number of Paraguayans are involved in the underground economy, selling illegal imported goods such as computers, electronics, cigarettes and liquor to people in Brazil and Argentina.

Most working Paraguayans go home at lunchtime and eat with their families.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 2,660,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 30.7
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 45
 Other: 55
 Unemployment %: 15.1

EDUCATION

Primary education is free and, where possible, compulsory for children between the ages of seven and 13. Schooling is divided into six years of primary school, three years of secondary school (*liceo*), and three years of a specialized upper cycle of secondary school (*colegio*). The school year runs from March through November. The language of instruction is Spanish.

Although primary enrollment figures are high (about 92 percent in 2001 for primary schools), the subsequent dropout rate is also relatively high (50 percent enrolled for secondary school in the same year). A number of factors contribute to the high rates of attrition: the dispersion of the rural population, which makes it necessary for children to walk great distances to attend school, especially secondary school; the emphasis on Spanish in areas where Guaraní is spoken; the high costs of textbooks, school uniforms, and examination fees; and deficiencies in teaching methods. Almost all of the secondary schools are in urban areas; nearly 50 percent are concentrated in Asunción.

Private schools, operated by both religious and ethnic groups, form an important part of the educational system and generally enjoy greater prestige than public schools. Attrition and dropout rates are far lower in private schools.

Paraguay's two universities, the National University and Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic University, are located in Asunción; attendance is free at the National University. Paraguay also has schools of agriculture and veterinary science. Half of all university graduates are women.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 94.0
 Male %: 94.9
 Female %: 93.0
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 11.7
 First Level: Primary Schools: 5,318
 Teachers: —
 Students: 966,548
 Student-Teacher Ratio: —
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 91.5
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 1,102
 Teachers: 38,698
 Students: 458,074
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 12.9
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 50.1
 Third Level: Institutions: 2
 Teachers: 1,844
 Students: 96,598
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 18.6
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 4.8

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Paraguay is working with Mercosur and the International Development Research Center to improve its technological infrastructure, usually along with neighboring countries. Paraguay has introduced computers connected to the Internet into schools, has implemented measures to improve health care by focusing more on chronic diseases than communicable ones, and has worked to use technology to increase economic integration in the region. Despite these efforts, as of 2003 the country's technological infrastructure was inadequate for the needs of a modern nation. There were fewer than 275,000 telephone lines, most of them located in Asunción, though nearly two million people had cellular telephones. In all, only 120,000 people were using the Internet.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 166
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 0.1
 High-Tech Exports \$million: 9.5
 Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

The constitution provides for the freedom of the press, and the government generally respects this freedom, though journalists who dare investigate corruption or protests against the government are sometimes threatened by police. Owners of print and electronic media are sometimes harassed by the police or receive threats. Nevertheless, both print and broadcast media express various viewpoints, and the opposition is given a portion of coverage. The print and electronic media are independently owned.

There are several daily newspapers and other publications; daily newspapers include *ABC color*, *La nación*, and *Última hora*. The Colorado Party publishes the periodical *Patria*, the Roman Catholic Church the weekly *Sendero*.

The three main television stations are all privately owned commercial enterprises. The nation has a number of radio stations, including many unlicensed stations in the triborder area, where Paraguay, Argentina, and Brazil come together. Radio Nacional del Paraguay is the state-run radio station; other stations are commercially operated and privately owned.

Media

Daily Newspapers: —
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: —
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets million: 1.1
 per 1,000: 205

CULTURE

Paraguayans love live theater and often attend performances in Spanish and Guaraní. Popular dances include the polka and the bottle dance, which dancers perform with jars balanced on their heads. Music is entirely based on European styles, with no African or native influences; the harp and the guitar are common instruments. Agustín Barríos was one of the nation's most famous guitarists in the early 20th century; he often performed in full Guaraní costume. The poet Augusto Roa Bastos is Paraguay's most famous author. The capital has many art galleries that display the unconventional work of local artists. One famous local art form is spiderweb lace called *ñanduti*, made in the city of Itaguá.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

The indigenous Guaraní people have an elaborate set of mythological beliefs; many of their mythical creatures re-

semble animals of the local forest. One folkloric creature is the *luison*, something like a werewolf; it has red, glowing eyes and razor sharp teeth at night when the moon is full but appears human during the day. The *luison* digs dead bodies from graves and eats them and then may go after the living. Scholars believe that this myth gained strength during the Chaco War, of the 1930s, when soldiers could not bury their dead or dying and many bodies were consumed by wild dogs.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Paraguay's cities offer restaurants, bars, discos, and shopping malls. People love to have late dinners under the stars; it is not uncommon for people to stay out long after midnight. People enjoy swimming and engaging in other water sports at Lago Ypacarí; the waters of the lake are believed to cure illnesses. Hiking, camping, and fishing are all popular activities; people go to Villa Florida, the Parque Nacional Cerro Corá, or the Chaco wilderness to experience the outdoor lifestyle.

ETIQUETTE

Paraguayans generally follow Western rules of etiquette. Dinner is usually served quite late, after 9 p.m. It is impolite to discuss business during a meal. When attending a party, it is important to greet everyone there when either arriving or departing; a handshake is polite, though friends and relatives also kiss one another. Men are expected to be respectful of women and to avoid confronting or offending them.

FAMILY LIFE

Most Paraguayans consider their primary loyalties to be to their family. Extended family is important, and Paraguayans consider cousins, aunts, uncles, and godparents to be close relatives. Most people live in nuclear family units; children usually stay with their parents until they marry. It is uncommon for single people to live alone. In couples, women usually handle household matters and care for children, while men spend their time at work or socializing away from home. Illegitimacy carries a stigma, and many poor people suffer from the lack of a paternal family name.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Paraguayans tend to dress conservatively. Grooming and neatness are quite important, and even the poorest people

always try to look presentable. In formal settings, men wear dark suits and ties, and women wear suits or dresses.

SPORTS

Paraguayans are passionate about soccer, following the fortunes of their national team with zeal. Some people also play rugby and golf.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1954** On May 5 General Alfredo Stroessner, who is commander in chief of the military and head of the Colorado Party, overthrows the government of President Federico Chávez in a bloody coup; two months later voters confirm Stroessner as president in a single-candidate election; Stroessner declares a state of siege in both Asunción and the interior, which remains in place for most of his 32-year tenure as president.
- 1956** President Stroessner forces into exile Epifanio Méndez Fleitas, his rival in the Colorado Party, and purges the military of Méndez's supporters; leaders of Paraguay's opposition parties flee the country; Paraguay signs an agreement whereby Brazil will finance a \$19 billion hydroelectric dam on the Paraná River between the two countries in exchange for favorable energy rates after the dam's completion.
- 1958** Stroessner is reelected to a five-year term; guerrilla insurgents terrorize the countryside, as financed by Cuba and Venezuela.
- 1959** After a two-month period of attempted liberalization, Stroessner reinvokes the state of siege and dissolves the legislature.
- 1960** In legislative elections Stroessner supporters in the Colorado Party obtain all 60 seats; Paraguay closes diplomatic relations with Cuba.
- 1963** A faction of the ousted Liberal Party participates in elections with Stroessner's consent and gains 20 seats; Stroessner is reelected president.
- 1964** The Febrerista Party is legalized.
- 1966** In the wake of a police scandal, Stroessner dismisses Minister of Interior Edgar Ynsfrán.
- 1967** President Stroessner has the constitution altered to expand the legislature to two houses and to permit him to run for two more terms.
- 1968** Paraguay signs the La Plata Basin Pact, an agreement among Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay on the joint development of the La Plata basin; Stroessner is reelected.
- 1970** President Stroessner lifts the state of siege in the interior.
- 1973** Stroessner is reelected; construction begins on the Itaipú Dam between Brazil and Paraguay, boosting Paraguay's economy but also spurring heavy Brazilian immigration.
- 1977** Domingo Laíno, a leader of the dissident faction of the Liberal Party, renames his group the Authentic Radical Liberal Party (PLRA) and begins to publicly accuse Stroessner of corruption, human rights violations, and mismanagement of Itaipú Dam finances; in response to reports of human rights violations, the United States drastically decreases military assistance to Paraguay, in place since 1947.
- 1978** Having amended the constitution again to permit himself to run, Stroessner is reelected.
- 1979** The legal Febrerista Party joins the illegal Authentic Radical Liberal Party (PLRA), Christian Democratic Party (PDC), and Mopoco Party in the National Accord, an agreement to coordinate the strategy of opposition parties.
- 1980** The OAS condemns human rights violations in Paraguay.
- 1982** Laíno is forced into exile; construction of the Itaipú Dam is completed, and the economy slows drastically.
- 1983** Stroessner is reelected.
- 1987** Stroessner lifts the state of siege in Asunción.
- 1988** Stroessner is reelected to his eighth term as president.
- 1989** General Andrés Rodríguez leads a coup ousting Stroessner; Rodríguez is elected president.
- 1992** A new constitution is promulgated on June 20, but the ceremony is boycotted by President Rodríguez, senior army officials, and members of the Supreme Court.
- 1993** Colorado Party candidate Juan Carlos Wasmosy wins the presidency with 40 percent of vote, becoming the first civilian president since 1954; the Colorados fail to gain a majority in either house.
- 1994** Peasants demanding price subsidies for cotton clash with police; unions and peasant organizations stage a general strike to demand pay hikes and land reform and to protest planned privatizations. Congress approves a law banning members of the armed forces from joining political parties; the government and military high command initiate proceedings to have the law declared unconstitutional.
- 1995** President Wasmosy reshuffles the military high command, forcibly retiring two senior officials who questioned his authority; Colorado and opposition parties agree on legislation to break the Colorado Party's link with the armed forces.
- 1996** President Wasmosy dismisses General Lino César Oviedo for participating in political activity; Oviedo refuses dismissal amid speculation of a coup and is arrested for insurrection.

- 1997** General Oviedo wins the Colorado nomination for president over party president Luís María Argaña and former finance minister Carlos Facetti; a liquidity crisis forces the central bank to close three banks and place nine more “under observation.”
- 1998** A military tribunal sentences Oviedo to 10 years in prison for his coup attempt; Oviedo’s running mate, Raúl Cubas Grau, is named the Colorado candidate for president; upon being elected president, Cubas pardons Oviedo. As the banking crisis intensifies, eight financial institutions are closed; Transparency International ranks Paraguay the second-most corrupt nation of 85 covered.
- 1999** Vice President Argaña is assassinated; Congress impeaches Cubas, who resigns and flees the country with Oviedo; Senate president Luís Ángel González Macchi of the Colorado Party is sworn in to serve the remainder of Cubas’s five-year presidential term.
- 2000** Julio César Franco of the Liberal Party is elected vice president, breaking through the Colorados’ 50-year hold on power in Paraguay; Oviedo and two others are convicted in absentia for the murder of Vice President Argaña.
- 2001** The head of the central bank is accused of fraudulently transferring \$16 million to a U.S. bank account and resigns.
- 2002** President González is accused of corruption; street protesters demand his resignation. Congress votes to impeach González, but he is not voted out of office.
- 2003** Nicanor Duarte Frutos, of the Colorado Party, wins the presidential election. González is put on trial for corruption and forbidden to leave the country.
- 2004** Peasants protest the loss of their land and demand that land be redistributed. Oviedo is arrested at the airport upon arriving in Paraguay, returning from exile in Brazil.
- 2005** Duarte promises to crack down on organized crime.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Paraguay News
<http://paraguay.com>

PERU

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Peru (República del Perú)

ABBREVIATION

PE

CAPITAL

Lima

HEAD OF STATE

President Alejandro Toledo Manrique (from 2001)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Pedro Pablo Kuczynski (from 2005)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Constitutional democracy

POPULATION

27,925,628 (2005)

AREA

1,285,220 sq km (496,223 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Mestizo, Amerindian

LANGUAGES

Spanish (official), Quechua

RELIGION

Roman Catholicism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Nuevo sol

NATIONAL FLAG

Tricolor of red, white, and red vertical stripes

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A gold-rimmed shield divided horizontally into two parts. The red lower portion is occupied by a golden cornucopia spilling out gold coins. The upper portion is divided into two halves, with a golden llama on the left and a leafy green cinchona tree on the right. The shield is flanked by crossed national flags. The design is crested by branches of palm and laurel tied with a red ribbon.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“We Are Free, Let Us Remain So Forever”

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year’s Day), May 1 (Labor Day), June 24 (Day of the Peasant), July 28 and 29 (Independence Days), August 30 (Santa Rosa de Lima Day), October 8 (Battle of Angamos), November 2 (All Soul’s Day), November 5 (Puno Day), December 9 (Battle of Ayacucho Day), Christian festivals of Epiphany, St. Joseph’s Day, St. Peter and St. Paul Day, Assumption, Our Lady of Mercy Day, All Saints’ Day, Immaculate Conception, Christmas, Holy Thursday, Carnival (three days in March), Good Friday, Ascension, and Corpus Christi

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

July 28, 1821

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

December 31, 1993

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Located in western South America, Peru occupies an area of 1,285,220 sq km (496,223 sq mi), extending 1,287 km (800 mi) southeast to northwest and 563 km (350 mi) northeast to southwest. Its long Pacific coastline stretches 2,414 km (1,500 mi).

Peru shares its border of 5,536 km (3,440 mi) with Ecuador, Colombia, Brazil, Bolivia, and Chile. The capital is Lima. Other major urban centers are Arequipa, Trujillo, Chiclayo, Iquitos, Piura, Chimbote, Huancayo, and Cuzco.

The country is vertically divided into three well-defined topographic regions: the *costa*, the *sierra*, and the *selva*.

The *costa* is defined as the littoral and the foothills of the Andes, 16 to 160 km (10 to 100 mi) wide, crossed by some 50 rivers. It is broadest in the north where it merges with the Sechura Desert. The dry flat plains near the coast are known as the Low Costa, the dry Andean foothills as the High Costa. The *costa* makes up some 11 percent of the national territory.

The *sierra* runs parallel to the coast and forms the continental divide in Peru. The Cordillera Central and the

Peru



Cordillera Oriental merge in central Peru with the Cordillera Occidental. The highest section of the Cordillera Occidental, called the Cordillera Blanca, has a number of snow-capped peaks, of which the tallest, Mount Huascarán, is 6,768 m (22,205 ft) high. The Cordillera Central, run-

ning south from the Ecuadorian border, culminates in the Cordillera Vilcabamba, Cordillera Vilcanota, and Cordillera Carabaya and ultimately forms the eastern rim of the Lake Titicaca basin. The sierra makes up about 26 percent of the national territory and is the home of the Amerindians.

1870 Peru

The *selva*, constituting 63 percent of the national territory, is divided into two zones: the mountain slopes and valleys, or High Selva, and the rain forest, or Low Selva.

The country has two drainage systems: rivers flowing into the Pacific and those flowing into the Amazon basin. About 50 rivers flow west into the Pacific. The more complex system of rivers flowing east includes the Marañon, which originates in Lake Lauricocha, often cited as the source of the Amazon. Other east-flowing rivers include the Huallaga, the Apurímac, and the Urubamba.

The country's best-known lake is Lake Titicaca, which it shares with Bolivia. Titicaca is the highest lake of its size in the world, with a length of 222 km (138 mi), an average width of 60 km (37 mi), an area of 8,288 sq km (3,200 sq mi), and a maximum depth of 366 m (1,200 ft). The Andes region is noted for its numerous thermal springs.

Geography

Area sq km: 1,285,220; sq mi 496,223

World Rank: 19th

Land Boundaries, km: Bolivia 900; Brazil 1,560; Chile 160; Colombia 1,496; Ecuador 1,420

Coastline, km: 2,414

Elevation Extremes meters:

Lowest: Pacific Ocean 0

Highest: Nevado Huascarán 6,768

Land Use %

Arable Land: 2.9

Permanent Crops: 0.4

Forest: 51.0

Other: 45.7

Population of Principal Cities (1998 est.)

Arequipa	710,100
Chiclayo	469,200
Chimbote	298,800
Cuzco	278,600
Huancayo	305,000
Iquitos	334,000
Lima	7,060,600
Piura	308,200
Pucallpa	220,900
Tacna	215,700
Trujillo	603,700

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Although Peru is within the tropical zone, its climate is influenced by the cold Humboldt Current. The average temperature in the coastal region is 12°C to 32°C (54°F to 90°F). The *costa* is highly vulnerable to the weather phenomenon known as El Niño, whose effects include elevated oceanic temperatures and increased rainfall.

Lima has an average annual temperature of 19.4°C (67°F), with no extreme variations. The prevailing coastal

winds from the southwest warm as they blow across the land to produce a low-hanging fog known as *garúa*. The sierra experiences little seasonal variation in local temperatures but great changes between day and night. Temperatures can drop from 23.9°C (75°F) to freezing within hours. In the eastern jungle temperatures range from 24°C to 35°C (75°F to 95°F).

The rainy season in the Andes extends from October to April. The region between the Western and Central cordilleras receives scant rain, while the region between the Central and Eastern cordilleras receives heavy rainfall, especially from January to March. Precipitation increases toward the east, with the High Selva averaging 396 cm (156 in) and the Low Selva 254 cm (100 in). There is no dry season, and rain falls at least 200 days during the year. At higher altitudes snow falls during the southern winter.

The prevailing winds are from the east and the southwest.

Climate and Weather

Temperature Range

Coastal Region: 54°F to 90°F

Eastern Jungles: 75°F to 95°F

Lima: Temperature Mean 67°F

Average Rainfall

High Selva: 156 in

Low Selva: 100 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Peru is home to a wide variety of plants and animals that have adapted to its varied climates and landscapes. Peru's Amazon basin is one of the top ten biodiversity areas in the world. Many of Peru's plants are unique to the country, such as the hardy *Polylepis* trees, which grow at high elevations. Some areas have been deforested.

Coastal animals include sea lions, pelicans, terns, flamingos, penguins, and the brown booby. In the highlands there are llama, alpaca, vicuña, and alpaca, as well as hummingbirds, puna ibis, and the Andean condor. The Andes are also home to tapirs, capybaras, spectacled bears, monkeys, and jaguars. A total of 16 percent of the country is designated as national parks and wildlife preserves, where animals are protected.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 27,925,628

World Rank: 39th

Density per sq km: 21.2

% of annual growth (1999-2003): 1.5

Male %: 50.2

Female %:	49.8
Urban %:	72.8
Age Distribution %:	
0–14:	31.5
15–64:	63.3
65 and over:	5.2
Population 2025:	34,476,000
Birth Rate per 1,000:	20.87
Death Rate per 1,000:	6.26
Rate of Natural Increase %:	1.5
Total Fertility Rate:	2.56
Expectation of Life (years):	Males 67.77
	Females 71.37
Marriage Rate per 1,000:	2.4
Divorce Rate per 1,000:	—
Average Size of Households:	5.1
Induced Abortions:	—

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

The population is estimated to be 45 percent Amerindian, 37 percent mestizo (of mixed Amerindian and white ancestry), 15 percent white, and 3 percent other, including black, Japanese, and Chinese.

The sierra is the home of the Amerindians, particularly the Aymara and the Quechua. An estimated 120,000 peasant families have left their homelands in the central Andes and Amazon regions to seek shelter in the cities since 1980. Outside mainstream Amerindian life is the *cholo*, a term traditionally applied to acculturated, Spanish-speaking Amerindians. With the spread of education and the migration of Amerindian labor into the cities, the number of *cholos* has increased significantly. President Alejandro Toledo is of Quechua origin, making him the first president to come from Peru's native ethnic group.

Some 100,000 Amerindians live in Peru's lowland forest, mostly members of the Campa, Chunchu, Zaparo, and Jívaro, the last group noted for its isolation and practice of headhunting.

Foreign communities are recent arrivals, and few constitute sizable groups. There are resident nationals from Chile, Bolivia, and Ecuador as well as other resident aliens, such as Levantine Arabs, eastern European Jews, Chinese, and Japanese, the most notable of whom is the former president Alberto Fujimori.

LANGUAGES

The official language of the nation is Spanish, with Quechua, Aymará, and other languages denoted as official on regional bases. Spanish remains the working language of government, the media, education, and commerce and is spoken and understood by all educated Peruvians.

Quechua, outlawed following the Amerindian revolt of 1870 but restored as an official language in 1975, is the national lingua franca of the Amerindians and has largely displaced Aymará, an older rival once spoken widely

throughout the sierra. Linguists have identified 28 Quechua dialects.

Hundreds of local tribal languages are spoken in the *selva*. These include Zapara, Cahuapana, Quechumara, and Jívara, belonging to the Andean language family; Panoa and Witoto, belonging to the Equatorial stock; and Campa, Piro, and Masco, belonging to the Arawak stock.

RELIGIONS

Roman Catholicism is the official religion, followed by about 90 percent of the population. Mormonism, Protestantism, Jehovah's Witnesses, and other evangelical faiths claim an estimated 6 percent of the population, mostly in rural areas. The constitution guarantees religious freedom.

The Roman Catholic Church has supported social reforms since 1968. The clergy is deeply concerned with the growth of the urban poor and has supported land protests among peasants in southern areas such as Puno. The Catholic Church remains staunchly opposed to birth control and has clashed with the government over efforts to control population growth.

Ecclesiastically, the country is divided into seven archdioceses (Lima is the seat of the prelate of Peru), 18 dioceses, eight apostolic vicariates, and 11 prelatures. The Catholic Church is faced with a serious shortage of priests; many bishops and priests are non-Peruvians. There are also parish schools and lay organizations, mostly societies or brotherhoods, which operate as mutual aid societies.

Religious Affiliations

Roman Catholic	25,000,000
Other	2,800,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Peru was founded in the 13th century by the Quechua emperor Sapa Inca, traditionally held to be the son of the sun god. Over the next three centuries the Inca Empire spread into modern-day Ecuador to the north and modern-day Chile to the south. The empire was maintained through an elaborate network of highways, with the help of a small Cuzco hierarchy of priests who looked after the economic and spiritual interests of nearly 12 million people. The end of the empire began when Francisco Pizarro's small band of conquistadores arrived in 1532; the civil war between the two Inca brothers Atahualpa and Huascar enabled the Spaniards to seize the empire within a year. Lima was established in 1535 and soon became the capital of the Spanish viceroyalty of South America (outside Venezuela). Peru was literally a gold

mine for the Spaniards. Its mines and *encomiendas* (serfs) were the backbone of the imperial economy. The Spanish hold on the empire was never seriously challenged, outside of the 1780 revolt of the legendary Inca rebel Tupac Amaru, which was quelled easily.

In 1820 Simón Bolívar and José de San Martín issued the call for the continent's liberation from Spain; San Martín landed on Peruvian shores in 1820 and on July 28, 1821, proclaimed Peru's independence. Royalist resistance did not end until Bolívar, at Junín, and Antonio José de Sucre, at Ayacucho, defeated the Spaniards in 1824. In 1866 a Spanish attempt to retake Peru was frustrated off Callao. Spain recognized Peru's independence in 1879.

Independence was immediately followed by the War of the Pacific (1879–85), in which Chile defeated Peru and Bolivia and forced Peru to cede the nitrate provinces of Tarapaca and Arica. The late-19th-century Peruvian governments were military or autocratic, or both, yet some of them were progressive and abolished Amerindian tributes and other harsh features of the colonial regime. Peru entered the 20th century with a democratic regime in place, but the period of reform ended in 1919 when Augusto Leguía took power in a military coup. Under his leadership Peru became heavily dependent on the United States, which received extensive rights to exploit mineral and oil deposits. In opposition to Leguía, Victor Raul Haya de la Torre founded the American Revolutionary Popular Alliance (APRA), which played a significant role in Peruvian politics for the remainder of the 20th century. Leguía was overthrown in a military coup in 1930.

Between 1930 and 1990 Peru experienced scores of subsequent military coups. In between, a number of popular presidents held sway, including Manuel Prado, José Luís Bustamante, and Fernando Belaúnde Terry. In 1985 the APRA candidate Alan García Pérez won the presidential election by a large margin. He was succeeded in 1990 by Alberto Fujimori. In late 1999 Fujimori, who had been elected to two consecutive terms, announced his decision to seek a third term despite a constitutional ban. In early 2000 he forced a favorable ruling on the matter from the constitutional court. In the election he won a disputed victory over Alejandro Toledo amid allegations of widespread fraud. Within two months the administration was rocked by two scandals, both involving Vladimiro Montesinos, the head of Peru's intelligence service. In the wake of these scandals, Montesinos fled the country and Fujimori announced from Japan that he was resigning as president and would not return to Peru. In his absence Valentín Paniagua Corazao was named interim president until new elections could be held in 2001. In 2001 Alejandro Toledo was elected president. Meanwhile, Montesinos was extradited from Venezuela to face trial.

Toledo's first three years of office saw substantial economic growth tempered by political turmoil. His efforts to privatize two state power companies came to naught

after violent protests. Elsewhere, the parliament accused Fujimori of treason, and Montesinos was convicted of corruption, abuse of power, conspiracy, and embezzlement and sentenced to jail for several years. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission investigating atrocities committed by terrorist insurgent groups as well as the federal government through the 1980s and 1990s determined that nearly 70,000 people were killed. By 2004 Toledo's popularity had plummeted.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1930–31	Luis Miguel Sánchez Cerro
1931	David Samanez Ocampo
1931–33	Luis Miguel Sánchez Cerro
1933–39	Oscar R. Benavides
1939–45	Manuel Prado Ugarteche
1945–48	José Luis Bustamante y Rivero
1948–56	Manuel A. Odría
1956–62	Manuel Prado Ugarteche
1962–63	Ricardo Pío Pérez Godoy
1963	Nicolás Lindley
1963–68	Fernando Belaúnde Terry
1968–75	Juan Velasco Alvarado
1975–80	Francisco Morales Bermúdez Cerruti
1980–85	Fernando Belaúnde Terry
1985–90	Alan García Pérez
1990–2000	Alberto Ken'ya Fujimori
2000–01	Valentín Paniagua Corazao
2001–	Alejandro Toledo Manrique

CONSTITUTION

According to the constitution of 1993, executive power is vested in the president, who is elected by an absolute majority for a five-year term with the possibility of one consecutive reelection. In 1996 the Congress reinterpreted the term limits, allowing President Fujimori to seek a third term in 2000. Two vice presidents are also popularly elected but have no constitutional functions unless the president is unable to discharge his duties. The president has the power to submit draft bills, review laws drafted by Congress and, if delegated by Congress, enact laws himself. He can dissolve the Congress in certain circumstances.

The principal executive body is the Council of Ministers, headed by a prime minister and appointed by the president. The prime minister does not exercise executive power. All presidential decree laws or draft bills sent to Congress must be approved by the Council of Ministers.

Voting is by secret ballot and compulsory for all citizens from 18 to 70. Members of the military may not vote.

PARLIAMENT

The legislative branch consists of the unicameral Democratic Constituent Congress (Congreso Constituyente Democrático), which has 120 members elected for five-year terms from lists of candidates supplied by the national parties. In addition to passing laws, Congress is responsible for passing the budget, approving loans and international treaties, and drafting and passing bills. The president can block legislation with which the executive branch does not agree. Congress convenes every year on July 28 and continues its sessions for 120 days.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Peru has numerous political parties. Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana (APRA) is a left-wing populist party; it has been the vehicle for radical dissent since 1924 and is also called the Peruvian Aprista Party (PAP). The Independent Moralizing Front (Frente Independiente Moralizador, FIM) is an organization of independent candidates formed in reaction to the exposure of ongoing government corruption. National Unity is a center-right party headed by Lourdes Flores. Perú Posible (PP) is a movement that was founded in 1995 to support the presidential candidacy of Alejandro Toledo. Popular Action (AP) is a liberal, pro-U.S. party founded as an alternative to the APRA. The Union for Peru (UPP) is a centrist party. Other parties include Solución Popular and Somos Peru.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For the purposes of local government, Peru is divided into 24 departments, 12 regions, and the constitutional province of Callao. Departments are further divided into 148 provinces and 1,662 districts.

Each department is headed by a prefect, each province by a subprefect, and each district by a governor. All territorial units are administrative subdivisions and have no local popular government. A reorganization law was promulgated in March 1987, under which Peru's 24 departments and one province were to be replaced by regions, with each given economic and administrative autonomy as part of an effort to decentralize government. In 2002 Peruvians voted for new regional presidents and other leaders. As of 2004 the authority that would be exercised by regional governments had not yet been clearly defined, but the national government had plans to give more powers to the regions over several years.

Amerindian communities have autonomous self-governing institutions with legal status but limited powers. There are about 5,000 such communities, all of which are entitled to elect and remove their own officials.

LEGAL SYSTEM

Peru's justice system is generally based on the Napoleonic Code. At the top is the Supreme Court, whose 16 members are appointed by the National Council of the Judiciary for permanent terms that end at age 70. The Constitutional Tribunal interprets the constitution on matters of individual rights. Superior courts in departmental capitals review appeals of decisions by lower courts. Courts of first instance are located in provincial capitals and are divided into civil, penal, and special chambers. The judiciary has created several temporary specialized courts to reduce the large backlog of cases pending final court action.

Civil crimes are tried in civilian courts, although military courts have broad powers over cases involving treason, terrorism, and narcotics trafficking. A system of public defenders exists but is inadequately supported. In accordance with the constitution, arrested persons are presumed innocent. Nevertheless, jails are clogged with large numbers of untried prisoners whose cases have not been adjudicated. A trial review system provides for closed judicial hearings, followed by public trials in superior court, for those held for probable cause at lower levels. The Supreme Court hears final appeals.

The constitution requires that persons arrested be arraigned within 24 hours, except in cases involving drug trafficking, terrorism, or espionage, for which the limit is 15 days. Arrested persons are entitled to have an attorney present when they make statements to the police. Habeas corpus is supported by the constitution and respected in practice; however, authorities can detain individuals indefinitely in areas where states of emergency are in effect.

The largest prisons are the centers of rehabilitation at Lurigancho and Callao; both facilities are severely overcrowded. The most dangerous criminals are sent to the penal island of El Fronton or the jungle prison of El Sepa. Female prisoners are confined at the women's prison in Chorrillos.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Peru's government generally respects the human rights of its citizens, but there are some serious violations. Police have been known to arrest and detain people arbitrarily, and torture and beatings occur with some regularity. Security forces occasionally harass witnesses to prevent them from filing charges. Prisoners suffer terrible conditions in jails, and there are often long delays in scheduling trials. The judicial system is notoriously inefficient. Though the government still occasionally threatens journalists, for the most part the press is free. There has been widespread violence against women and children, and both child labor and human trafficking are major problems.

FOREIGN POLICY

President Fujimori's top priority in foreign relations was repairing Peru's standing in the world financial community following the fiscal mismanagement and expropriation of foreign-owned assets by previous administrations. That task was set back with his self-coup, which entailed the dissolution of Congress, on April 5, 1992, which met with vigorous condemnation: The United States suspended most financial aid, as did Germany and Spain; Venezuela broke off diplomatic relations, and Argentina recalled its ambassador.

Fujimori worked to strengthen Peru's ties to Japan and other Asian nations. In 1996 the prime minister of Japan and the president of South Korea visited Peru. In the wake of the December 1996 siege by Tupac Amaru terrorists of the Japanese ambassador's residence in Lima, the Japanese and Peruvian governments consulted closely with regard to means of resolving the crisis. The Japanese prime minister Ryutaro Hashimoto visited Lima in April 1997 to express gratitude for the rescue operation eventually conducted by Peruvian security personnel.

Foreign relations improved as the government returned to democratic processes. Closer cooperation with the United States in fighting the war on drugs won Peru badly needed sponsorship in reintegrating itself into the world financial community: A program to encourage the growth of alternative crops reduced the coca acreage under cultivation by 40 percent from 1997 to 1999, and the military stepped up efforts to interdict narcotics trafficking. President Alejandro Toledo has given high priority to good relations with the United States, seeking support for efforts to encourage investment and reduce Peru's debt burden. In March 2002 President George W. Bush became the first sitting U.S. president to visit Peru.

Peru resolved a long-standing border dispute with Ecuador in 1998, signing a peace agreement that set a definitive border demarcation. As part of the agreement Peru ceded a small area, Tiwinza, to Ecuador. In 1999 Peru signed an agreement that ended a long-standing border dispute with Chile.

Peru is a member of the United Nations, the World Trade Organization, and the Asia Pacific Economic Conference and has participated in negotiations to create a free-trade area of the Americas. The United States and Peru have long had close relations and most recently have been collaborating on programs to stop drug trafficking.

DEFENSE

The defense structure is headed by the president. The line of command runs through the commanders of the three branches of the armed forces: the Ejército Peruano (army), Marina de Guerra (navy, naval air, marines, and coast guard), and Fuerza Aerea (air force). The Armed

Forces Joint Command is a planning body, the presidency of which rotates among the three services every year. Each branch of the armed forces has a chief of the general staff. The country is divided into five military regions, with headquarters at Piura, Lima, Arequipa, Puno, and Loreto. The navy is divided into a Pacific Fleet and an Amazon River Force. Internal security is supplied by both the military and the Peruvian National Police.

Military manpower is obtained through the conscription of all able-bodied males over the age of 18. The period of service is two years.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	177,000
Military Manpower Availability:	6,647,874
Military Expenditures \$million:	829.3
as % of GDP:	1.4
as % of central government expenditures:	8.6
Arms Imports \$million:	5
Arms Exports \$million:	5

ECONOMY

After several years of rapid growth and economic reforms in the 1990s, Peru's economy stagnated between 1998 and 2001. The economy recovered in 2002 under President Toledo and remained strong through 2004. Inflation and the deficit were under control, and foreign reserves grew.

The nation has been working to attract foreign and domestic investment, lowering trade barriers and eliminating restrictions on capital; Peru currently has one of the most open investment regimes in the world. Peru's main trading partners are the United States, Spain, the United Kingdom, Switzerland, China, Chile, Colombia, and Brazil. The country exports fish, copper, zinc, gold, petroleum, coffee, and clothing and imports machinery, vehicles, processed food, petroleum, and steel.

The government still needs a great deal of foreign investment to modernize the nation's economy. Unemployment is relatively high, and poverty is a major problem, and the state lacks revenues to invest in social services.

Among Peru's most lucrative products are cocaine base and high-purity cocaine. Though the government claims to have reduced coca cultivation by 70 percent since 1995, some 30,000 hectares are still devoted to growing the crop, and about 200,000 Peruvians work in the industry. No one knows exactly how much the cocaine industry is worth, but estimates range from \$300 to \$600 million a year.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion:	155.3
GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$:	5,600

GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 2.5
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 1.0
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 8
 Industry: 27
 Services: 65

Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 72
 Government Consumption: 10
 Gross Domestic Investment: 17.8

Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 12.3

Imports: 9.6

% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 0.8

% of Income Received by Richest 10%: 37.2

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
134.4	139.4	142.2	142.4	145.7

Finance

National Currency: Nuevo Sol (PEN)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = PEN 3.4126
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 21.5
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 4.25
 Total External Debt \$billion: 29.79
 Debt Service Ratio %: 20.84
 Balance of Payments \$million: -30
 International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 9.8
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 3.8

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 500
 per capita \$: 18.40
 Foreign Direct Investment \$billion: 1.38

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$billion: 13.6
 Expenditures \$billion: 14.6
 Budget Deficit \$billion: 1
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 8
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 5.1
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 0.36
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 27.7
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 74.1
 Total Farmland % of land area: 2.9
 Livestock: Cattle million: 5.05
 Chickens million: 95
 Pigs million: 2.88
 Sheep million: 14.05
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 10.2
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 8.78

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 8.64
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 5.2

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 7.29
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 9.94
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 377
 Net Energy Imports % of use: 23.2
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 6
 Production kW-hr billion: 21.7
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 20.2
 Coal Reserves tons billion: 1.17
 Production tons 000: 20.4
 Consumption tons million: 1.21
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: 8.7
 Production cubic feet billion: 15.5
 Consumption cubic feet billion: 15.5
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels million: 253
 Production barrels 000 per day: 94.1
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 161
 Pipelines Length km: 1,557

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 9.6
 Exports \$billion: 12.3
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 7.1
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): -0.6
 Balance of Trade \$million: -30

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
United States %	28.6	27.1
Spain %	10.0	—
Chile %	7.5	4.7
Brazil %	5.1	—
Colombia %	4.5	—
United Kingdom %	—	12.4
China %	—	7.7
Switzerland %	—	7.6
Japan %	—	4.4

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 78,230
 Paved %: 13.4
 Automobiles: 834,200
 Trucks and Buses: 508,000
 Railroad: Track Length km: 3,462
 Passenger-km million: 98
 Freight-km billion: 1
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 4
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 17.6
 Airports: 234
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 2.34
 Length of Waterways km: 8,808

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 931
 Number of Tourists from 000: 889
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 959
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 878

Communications

Telephones million: 1.84
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones million: 2.9
 Personal Computers million: 1.15
 Internet Hosts per million people: 2,359
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 102

ENVIRONMENT

Peru's greatest ecological challenge is the quality of its soil, which is poor outside of the fertile *montaña*. The rugged sierra supports relatively sparse plant life, and the dry, sandy reaches of the coastal plain support mainly desert vegetation. Both regions are periodically ravaged by El Niño, a reversal of atmospheric conditions occurring approximately every 10 years around Christmas time in which heavy rains flood the coastal desert and drought parches the sierra. Desertification is aggravated by agricultural inefficiency: In most smallholdings, crop rotation and fallowing are the only forms of conservation practiced, and overgrazing in the *costa* slopes has led to considerable soil erosion.

The need to sustain a growing population and garner export dollars has resulted in the largely uncontrolled exploitation of the Amazon region. Deforestation, some of it the result of illegal logging, is a growing problem. Colonists, miners, and multinational oil firms cleared an average 2,168 sq km (837 sq mi) of rain forest per year from 1990 to 1995. Oil and mineral extraction have also contaminated the Río Tigre and other rivers.

Also of concern is glacial melting in the Peruvian Andes. From 1972 to 1999 global warming melted some 12 billion cubic meters of snow, severely threatening future access to freshwater for drinking and irrigation.

Pollution is increasing, both in the air, especially in Lima, and in rivers and coastal waters, as a result of runoff from mining and from the poor management of municipal wastewater.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 51.0
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: -269
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 16
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 1.14

LIVING CONDITIONS

The water supply is unreliable and contaminated in many places; one-quarter of urban residents and as many as half of rural people lack both clean water and secure sewage systems. Though the wealthy live in modern homes with many amenities, many people live in shacks on the outskirts of cities or in structures made of wood and woven mats in the country. Public transportation is plentiful and cheap, but it is not always rapid or safe; armed robberies are known to occur on buses and trains.

HEALTH

The health of Peru's people has improved tremendously since the early 1990s, thanks in part to U.S. Agency for International Development (AID) programs designed to improve the economy by improving health. Since 1991, life expectancy has increased, and infant mortality has been cut in half. Almost all children under the age of one receive important vaccines; however, diseases such as cholera, hepatitis, malaria, rabies, and yellow fever still occur frequently. Most health-care facilities are located in urban areas; there are few clinics or medicines in rural areas. Poor people usually cannot afford to pay for medical care.

Health

Number of Physicians: 29,799
 Number of Dentists: 2,809
 Number of Nurses: 17,108
 Number of Pharmacists: —
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 117
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 31.94
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 410
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 4.4
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 93
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.5
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 89
 Measles: 95
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 62
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 81

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Peru has a variety of regional cuisines. Potatoes are a common ingredient, as are vegetables such as onions and tomatoes. Coastal people eat a good deal of seafood, including shrimp, squid, octopus, and mussels; *cebiche*, which is raw fish marinated in lemon juice, cilantro, chili, and onions, is a local specialty. Beef and chicken are common meats everywhere. People in the mountains still eat roast guinea pig, an Inca delicacy. *Sopa a la criolla* is a spicy

noodle soup with vegetables, beef, egg, and milk. People in the mountains eat mostly potatoes, beans, squash, corn, barley, and wheat, supplemented with wild fruits and nuts and animals they hunt.

Half of Peru's population is quite poor and subject to malnutrition and even starvation. Still, most Peruvians like to show hospitality to guests by serving them food.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 12.8

Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,600

Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 124.1

Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 122.2

STATUS OF WOMEN

Peru's constitution provides for equality between the sexes, and the 1995 amendments to the Employment Promotion Law, as well as other laws pertaining to marriage, divorce, and property rights, prohibit discrimination against women. In 1997 Congress passed a law mandating that all party candidate lists for congressional and municipal elections include at least 25 percent women.

The government actively promotes women's advancement. In 1993 the state created the Permanent Commission of the Rights of Women to confront domestic violence and other issues, and in 1995 Congress approved the creation of the Special Commission of Women, aimed at encouraging the participation of women in government and politics. Women's organizations have undertaken similar programs to identify female candidates, increase the number of female voters, prepare a women's political agenda, and train women elected to office. The government-supported Mibanco program provides credit to small businesses started by enterprising women.

Traditional assumptions and misconceptions still impede access by women to leadership roles in both the public and private sectors. Historically, women have suffered disproportionately from the country's pervasive poverty and unemployment; in the Americas, only Haiti and Bolivia have higher rates of maternal mortality, and one-fifth of the country's women have never attended school, three times the proportion of men. The government, with U.S. AID assistance, has established a National Network for Girls' Education in Peru, with the intent of convincing people that female education is important.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —

Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 18

Female Administrators and Managers %: —

Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 0.98

Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 37.2

WORK

The unemployment rate in metropolitan Lima in 2004 was a fair 9.6 percent, but there was widespread underemployment. Many poor rural people move to cities in the hope of finding paid employment. Child labor is a serious problem. Both children and adults live as scavengers, trying to make a living on the streets or by selling drugs, which is attractively lucrative; the coca industry employs a large number of Peruvians. Many people work in factories, making clothing for the U.S. market, or in industries such as petroleum refining. Commercial crops include coffee, cotton, and sugarcane; agricultural laborers often travel far from their homes to work on large commercial farms. Many rural people live as subsistence farmers, growing food, cutting firewood, weaving cloth, and raising animals to support their families.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 11,000,000

Female Participation Rate %: 31.8

Labor by Sector %:

Agriculture: 9

Industry: 18

Services: 73

Unemployment %: 9.6

EDUCATION

Education is free, universal, and compulsory for nine years, between the ages of six and 15, though in practice many children never attend school. The school year runs from March to December. The language of instruction is Spanish throughout. Schooling lasts for 11 years, as divided into six years of primary school, a basic or lower-secondary cycle of three years, and a specialized or upper-secondary cycle of two years. The primary curriculum emphasizes language, mathematics, health, nature, and social studies. Nearly all secondary schools are in urban localities. The basic cycle curriculum stresses literature, language, mathematics, fine arts, and physical education; students in the specialized cycle's humanities track study Peruvian history, political economy, and social science; those in the science track study biology, physics, chemistry, geometry, and trigonometry.

To enter a university a student must pass an entrance examination; most students who attempt these examinations do not pass. There are few spots for students, and competition is fierce. Wealthy families prefer to send their children to private universities, which have extremely high tuition. Lima's University of San Marcos was founded in 1551, making it the oldest university in South America.

Poor rural people like the idea of education, seeing it as a means for their children to improve their lives. As such, teachers are highly respected. In rural areas the

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local teacher may additionally function as a community leader. Most teachers are women.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 90.9
Male %: 95.2
Female %: 86.8
School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 14.0
First Level: Primary Schools: 46,652
Teachers: 147,432
Students: 4,317,368
Student-Teacher Ratio: 29.3
Net Enrollment Ratio: 99.9
Second Level: Secondary Schools: 8,085
Teachers: 114,363
Students: 2,235,524
Student-Teacher Ratio: 20.8
Net Enrollment Ratio: 68.9
Third Level: Institutions: —
Teachers: —
Students: 823,995
Gross Enrollment Ratio: 31.8
Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 3.0

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Although Peru's technological infrastructure is primitive, the telephone system is adequate, and the number of Internet users is rapidly increasing; almost three million people were using the Internet in 2003. The government wants to increase Peru's scientific and technological expertise as a means of reducing poverty, creating jobs, and strengthening democracy. In 2004 Peru hosted the first meeting of Ministers and High Authorities of Science and Technology, to which all members of the Organization of American States (OAS) were invited. The meeting emphasized the importance of scientific education for the entire region.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 229
Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 0.1
High-Tech Exports \$million: 27
Patent Applications by Residents: 48

MEDIA

The freedom of the press improved noticeably after President Fujimori was ousted. Fujimori insisted that journalists share the government's opinion and imprisoned journalists who disagreed with him. He also shut down radio programs that insulted the government. He bribed the owners of two major television stations to give him on-air support, the discovery of which added ammunition to the charges of those who wanted to end his regime.

Most of Peru's broadcasters and newspapers are privately owned. The state runs Televisión Nacional de Peru and Radio Nacional. There are many radio and television stations in Lima, and radio and regional newspapers are available in the countryside. Lima has many daily newspapers, including *Ojo*, *Gestión*, *El comercio*, and *La república*.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 57
Total Circulation 000: 570
Circulation per 1,000: 23
Books Published: 1,942
Periodicals: —
Radio Receivers 000: —
per 1,000: —
Television sets million: 3.7
per 1,000: 147

CULTURE

Quechua music is still popular in Peru; it is usually performed on panpipes, flutes, drums, rattles, and harps. Mestizo musicians add horns, violins, and guitars to the native ensemble. Pre-Columbian art consisted entirely of pottery, weaving, metalwork, and stone carving. After the Spanish arrived, artists began painting, developing a unique style that emphasized folklore. Peru has produced many well-known writers, including Mario Vargas Llosa, Sergio Bambarén, and César Vallejo. Peru's architecture shows a combination of Spanish style mixed with native Amerindian influences.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 687
Volumes: 5,802,000
Registered borrowers: —
Museums Number: 52
Annual Attendance: 794,000
Cinema Gross Receipts: —
Number of Cinemas: 148
Seating Capacity: —
Annual Attendance: 6,500,000

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

The Inca people lived in Peru in the 1400s and 1500s. They founded an empire centered in Cuzco stretching 2,500 miles down the Andes Mountains. They believed that particular places were spiritual centers; the tops of mountains were especially important to them, and they would leave small offerings to local deities while traveling. They worshipped the sun god Inti and built an elaborate gilded temple to the sun in Cuzco. They also practiced human sacrifice, selecting children they thought would

please the gods and killing them by strangulation or by hitting them on the head. These children were then left on the mountainside.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Peruvians love to listen to music and dance. Native music is popular, and large crowds attend performances of native music in cities and towns. Cities offer an array of urban activities, including cafés, nightclubs, discos, restaurants, and shopping areas. Many people like to go to movies. Religious and secular festivals are common events that involve all members of the community. One of the things Peruvians like best is simply spending time with friends and family, eating, drinking, and talking late into the night.

ETIQUETTE

Normal Western etiquette practices are standard in Peru. Tipping is customary in restaurants but not necessarily in taxis. Though Peruvian people are not always punctual, they do expect visitors to arrive on time. Peruvians consider it polite to offer a guest an item that he or she admires, and they may take offense if the guest refuses to accept the impromptu gift.

FAMILY LIFE

Peruvian households are typically large, including immediate family, grandparents, other relatives, and domestic servants. All families care for their own elderly and disabled members. Mestizo households are the largest and are often headed by women who organize family life and supervise servants. Quechua households are usually smaller, with a stronger emphasis on male dominance.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Most urban Peruvians dress in typical Western clothing. In the summer, many men wear open-necked shirts called *guayaberas*. Some Quechua still wear traditional handwoven clothes, though youth usually choose modern clothing instead.

SPORTS

Soccer and volleyball are the most popular sports in Peru, though people are beginning to play basketball and tennis, too. Horse racing, cockfighting, and bullfighting are popular spectator sports.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1945** Peru declares war on Axis powers; Peru becomes a charter member of the United Nations; José Luis Bustamante y Rivero of the National Democratic Front (NDF) coalition is elected president and NDF candidates sweep legislative elections.
- 1948** Bustamante is ousted in a right-wing military coup led by Manuel Odría; Odría outlaws opposition parties, dissolves labor unions, and imposes censorship.
- 1950** Odría is confirmed as president in an election in which his is the only name on the ballot.
- 1956** Opposition parties are legalized; in the first free election since 1948, former president Manuel Prado of the American Popular Revolutionary Alliance (APRA) becomes president; President Prado initiates numerous liberal reforms that, due to Peru's ongoing economic instability, are greeted with strikes and riots.
- 1960** Peru begins to nationalize its oil industry.
- 1962** In elections, none of the three major candidates wins enough votes, sending the choice of president to Congress; a military junta takes control of the government and installs General Ricardo Pío Pérez Godoy as president.
- 1963** The junta allows an election, which grants the presidency to former president Fernando Belaúnde Terry of the Popular Action Party; the APRA gains control of Congress.
- 1968** The government reaches a compensation agreement with the International Petroleum Company (IPC), a U.S. firm.
- 1969** Led by General Juan Velasco Alvarado, the military assumes control of government and suspends the constitution; Velasco's junta authorizes a program of land reform and seizes the assets of IPC, damaging Peru's relations with the United States.
- 1970** A major earthquake rocks northern Peru, killing 67,000 and leaving 600,000 homeless; the junta authorizes the nationalization of mines and private industries.
- 1972** An El Niño year seriously depletes anchovy supplies, crippling the fishing industry and hurting the national economy.
- 1973** Peru receives loans of \$470 million from the World Bank and \$30 million from the Inter-American Development Bank.
- 1975** Velasco is deposed in another military coup, led by General Francisco Morales Bermúdez; Morales schedules elections for 1980.
- 1978** Peru receives an International Monetary Fund (IMF) loan and institutes fiscal austerity measures; Morales summons the popularly elected

- Constituent Assembly to draft a new constitution and takes steps to encourage privatization and foreign investment.
- 1980** Former president Belaúnde wins the presidential election; the new constitution takes effect; Shining Path (Sendero Luminoso) and the Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement (MRTA), two extremist left-wing guerrilla groups, gain strength as the government cracks down on narcotics trafficking.
- 1985** In the midst of a severe economic and political crisis, voters oust President Belaúnde, electing Alan García Pérez of the APRA; García shocks the world financial community by announcing that Peru will spend no more than 10 percent of its export earnings to pay down its prodigious foreign debt.
- 1987** International groups refuse to provide additional financing to Peru.
- 1990** The annual rate of inflation reaches 3,000 percent; Alberto Fujimori of the Change 90 Movement is elected president.
- 1992** Shining Path leader Abimael Guzmán is captured; Fujimori dissolves Congress and sacks Supreme Court justices in a self-coup.
- 1993** A public referendum approves a new constitution expanding the powers of the president; the IMF restores Peru's borrowing rights; Shining Path car-bombs the U.S. embassy in Lima in July and kills 55 Ashaninka Indians in the Junín department in August.
- 1994** Fujimori's estranged wife, Susana Higuchi, announces she will run for president; Peruvians are allowed to invest in newly privatized state enterprises.
- 1995** President Fujimori wins a second term; fighting breaks out along an undemarcated area of the Ecuador-Peru frontier; Fujimori signs a blanket amnesty for all human rights abuses that may have been perpetrated by military and police members since 1980, provoking censure at home and abroad.
- 1996** In December, 14 MRTA rebels invade the Japanese ambassador's residence in Lima, taking hundreds of hostages.
- 1997** In April a commando attack ends the four-month embassy siege, rescuing 72 remaining hostages and killing all MRTA rebels; Congress passes legislation allowing Fujimori to run for a third term; after he dismisses three judges who rule the change unconstitutional, Fujimori's approval ratings drop to 20 percent.
- 1998** A return of the El Niño weather anomaly leaves 200 dead and 80,000 homeless and wreaks damages of \$700 million.
- 1999** Presidents Fujimori and Jamil Mahuad of Ecuador sign an agreement fixing a new border; the first strike since 1990 protests the government's failure to improve living standards; the last remaining commander of Shining Path, Oscar Ramírez Duránd, is captured in July.
- 2000** Fujimori is elected to a third term as president; a scandal erupts involving chief of intelligence Vladimiro Montesinos, and he is dismissed along with his alleged supporters in the military; while Fujimori is in Japan, opposition parties take control of Congress; Fujimori resigns as president, and elections are scheduled for 2001.
- 2001** Alejandro Toledo is elected president. Vladimiro Montesinos is arrested in Venezuela and extradited to Peru.
- 2002** President George W. Bush becomes the first sitting U.S. president to visit Peru. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission begins investigating atrocities supposedly committed during the 1980s and 1990s. Toledo attempts to privatize two state power companies but backs down after protests.
- 2003** The Truth and Reconciliation Commission determines that nearly 70,000 people were killed in clashes that took place during the 1980s and 1990s.
- 2004** Toledo's popularity declines. Construction begins on a gas pipeline between a jungle gas field and Lima.
- 2005** Nationalist army reservists attempt an uprising in the south of the country. Toledo declares a state of emergency in six central provinces after eight police officers are killed by Shinning Path guerrillas. Former President Fujimori is arrested in Chile.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Instituto Nacional de Estadística e Informática
<http://www.inei.gob.pe/>

PHILIPPINES

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of the Philippines (Republika ng Pilipinas)

ABBREVIATION

PH

CAPITAL

Manila

HEAD OF STATE & HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo (from 2001)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Democratic republic

POPULATION

87,857,473 (2005)

AREA

300,000 sq km (115,830 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Malay

LANGUAGES

Filipino (official), English (official), Tagalog, Cebuano, Ilocan, Hiligaynon, Bicolano, Waray-Waray, Kapampangan, Pangasinan

RELIGIONS

Roman Catholicism, Protestantism, Islam, Buddhism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Peso

NATIONAL FLAG

A white equilateral triangle at the hoist, with a blue stripe extending from the upper side and a red stripe from the lower

side. In the middle of the triangle is a bright yellow sunburst with eight rays (representing the eight provinces that rose in revolt against Spain in 1896). There is a star on each corner of the triangle, representing Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A shield with a central oval (or cartouche) on which appears the eight-rayed sunburst found also on the national flag. The shield outside the cartouche is divided into three sections: three gold stars appear on a white background in the upper segment; a gold lion on a red field and a gold eagle on a blue field appear on the lower-right and lower-left segments, respectively. Below the shield is the name of the republic in Filipino on a white banner.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"Land of the Morning"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day), February 25 (People Power Day), April 9 (Day of Valor), May 1 (Labor Day), June 12 (Independence Day), last Sunday of August (National Heroes' Day), September 11 (Barangay Day), September 21 (National Thanksgiving Day), December 30 (Rizal Day), December 31 (New Year's Eve), all major Catholic festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

June 12, 1898 (from Spain); July 4, 1946 (from United States)

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

February 2, 1987

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

The Philippine archipelago is located along the southeastern rim of Asia, forming a land chain between the Pacific Ocean on the east and the South China Sea on the west. The archipelago consists of some 7,100 islands and islets, of which only 700 are inhabited; 154 have areas exceeding 13 sq km (5 sq mi), and 11 have areas exceeding 2,590 sq km (1,000 sq mi). The 11 largest islands are Luzon (105,708 sq km; 40,814 sq mi); Mindanao (95,586 sq km; 36,906 sq

mi); Samar (13,079 sq km; 5,050 sq mi); Negros (12,704 sq km; 4,905 sq mi); Palawan (11,784 sq km; 4,550 sq mi); Panay (11,515 sq km; 4,446 sq mi); Mindoro (9,736 sq km; 3,759 sq mi); Leyte (7,213 sq km; 2,785 sq mi); Cebu (4,411 sq km; 1,703 sq mi); Bohol (3,864 sq km; 1,492 sq mi); and Masbate (3,269 sq km; 1,262 sq mi). These islands account for 95 percent of the land area, and Luzon and Mindanao together account for 65 percent.

Except for Luzon and Mindanao, the islands of the archipelago are the crests of submerged mountain ranges

Philippines



1884 Philippines

separated by shallow waters, except for the deeper Sulu Sea. Most of the islands have a simple north-to-south structural alignment. Another feature of the topography is its volcanism. The country has more than 47 volcanoes, of which a dozen are still active. The highest, Mount Apo (2,954 m; 9,690 ft), has three peaks, and Mount Mayon, the most famous, has a perfect cone rising 2,421 m (7,943 ft) above the Albay Gulf in southern Luzon; it has erupted 30 times since 1615. The mountain range culminates in Mount Polog (2,931 m; 9,613 ft) in northern Luzon. Mount Pinatubo, dormant since 1380, began erupting in the spring of 1991.

Luzon, Mindanao, and the Visayan Islands are generally considered as three separate geographical regions. Luzon, like Mindanao, is a series of peninsulas joined together by plateaus and lowland strips. It accounts for more than one-third of the national territory and is 400 km (250 mi) in length and between 120 and 160 km (75 and 100 mi) in width, being 222 km (138 mi) at its widest. The island has three north-to-south mountain ranges: the Sierra Madre, running close to the eastern shore; the Cordillera Central; and the Zambales Mountains. Between the Sierra Madre and the Cordillera Central is the Cagayan Valley, a rich agricultural region. West of the Cordillera Central lies the Central Luzon Plain, the country's largest single stretch of lowland. Mindanao has five major mountain systems and three great alluvial plains: the Agusan, Davao, and Cotabato valleys. The Cotabato lowlands, the scene of bloody conflicts between Moros and government forces, has extensive marshlands. The central mountain complex in Mindanao terminates in the northwest in the Bukidnon-Lanao highlands.

Geography

Area sq km: 300,000; sq mi 115,830

World Rank: 70th

Land Boundaries, km: 0

Coastline, km: 36,289

Elevation Extremes meters:

Lowest: Philippine Sea 0

Highest: Mount Apo 2,954

Land Use %

Arable Land: 19.0

Permanent Crops: 16.8

Forest: 19.4

Other: 44.8

Population of Principal Cities (2000)

Angeles	263,971
Antipolo	470,866
Bacolod	429,076
Bacoor	305,699
Baguio	252,386
Batangas	247,588
Biñan	201,186
Butuan	267,279

Cabanatuan	222,859
Cagayan de Oro	461,877
Cainta	242,511
Calamba	281,146
Cebu	718,821
Dasmariñas	379,520
Davao	1,147,116
General Santos	411,822
Iligan	285,061
Iloilo	365,820
Kalookan	1,177,604
Lapu-Lapu	217,019
Las Piñas	472,780
Lipa	218,447
Makati	444,867
Malabon	338,855
Mandaluyong	278,474
Mandaue	259,728
Manila	1,581,082
Marikina	391,170
Muntinglupa	379,310
Navotas	230,403
Parañaque	449,811
Pasay	354,908
Pasig	505,058
Quezon City	2,173,831
San Fernando	221,857
San Jose del Monte	315,807
San Pablo	207,927
San Pedro	231,403
Tagig	467,375
Tarlac	262,481
Valenzuela	485,433
Zamboanga	601,794

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

The Philippine archipelago lies entirely in the tropical zone. Most of the country, except along the east coast, has a summer season during April, May, and June and a season of heavy rains from June to October, although September and October are essentially transition months. The hottest months are April and May, but the seasonal variation between the hottest and coolest months is only 4.4°C (8°F). Temperatures are exceptionally uniform, with the annual average ranging from about 26°C to 28°C (79°F to 82°F). The only significant temperature variations are those that result from differences in altitude.

On the other hand, rainfall varies markedly as a result of differing exposure to the two major wind systems: the northeast monsoon in the winter and the southwest monsoon in the summer. The western sections of the country are generally the wettest, receiving from 2,030 to 3,550 mm (80 to 140 in) in the summer, while the east coast may receive up to 3,050 mm (120 in). Less rain, between 1,020 and 2,030 mm (40 and 80 in), is received in the Cagayan Valley in northern Luzon, the Cotabato and the Davao-Agusan valleys on Mindanao, and the central Visayan Islands.

The Philippines lies in the world's worst tropical cyclone belt. From 1900 until 1972 the Manila Weather Bureau recorded 1,533 typhoons, an average of 21 per year. They generally occur between June and November, although they have been reported during every month of the year.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature: 79°F to 82°F

Average Rainfall

Western section: 80 in to 140 in

Eastern section: 120 in

Cagayan Valley: 40 in to 80 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

The Philippines is home to lush vegetation and a profusion of animals. The most common trees are bamboo, mangrove, and palms, but there are over 10,000 plant species on the islands, including tropical hardwoods such as mahogany and many kinds of orchids and bougainvillea. Nearly half of the nation is still covered with native forests; much of the rest has been cut down by people practicing slash and burn agriculture or for timber. There are over 1,000 species of mammals, birds, and reptiles and a vast number of insect species. Notable animals include crocodiles, lizards, pythons, cobras and other snakes, peacocks, parrots, eagles, dwarf buffalo (tamaraw), and mouse deer. The oceans surrounding the islands are full of tropical fish, shellfish, sharks, swordfish, and dolphins.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 87,857,473

World Rank: 12th

Density per sq km: 273.3

% of annual growth (1999-2003): 2.2

Male %: 50.0

Female %: 50.0

Urban %: 58.5

Age Distribution %: 0-14: 35.4

15-64: 60.6

65 and over: 4.0

Population 2025: 118,686,000

Birth Rate per 1,000: 25.31

Death Rate per 1,000: 5.47

Rate of Natural Increase %: 2.0

Total Fertility Rate: 3.16

Expectation of Life (years): Males 67.03

Females 72.92

Marriage Rate per 1,000: 6.9

Divorce Rate per 1,000: —

Average Size of Households: 5.7

Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

The Philippines, in one sense, is a deeply fractionated and pluralistic society, with more than 50 ethnic groups; yet, in a more profound sense, Filipinos are imbued with a strong sense of national unity, stemming from a common cultural and racial history, a common religious faith, and a common language. The result has been cultural variety amidst national homogeneity. Although each group has a recognized core region, there is a fair amount of inter-spersion as a result of internal migrations. Furthermore, there are no exclusive ethnic neighborhoods, and there is readiness to adapt to prevailing local languages and social patterns. Inter-marriages among groups are frequent and unremarkable.

The racial homogeneity of the islands is rooted in the descent of the Filipinos from a small group of migrants from Southeast Asia, both Proto-Malay (Indonesian) and Deutero-Malay (southern Mongoloid), who pushed out earlier Negrito settlers who had found their way into the archipelago across the Borneo land bridge. Later, Indonesian, Chinese, Arab, and Spanish colonists added some variety to the racial stock but did not basically alter its composition. Today, ethnic Filipinos constitute 95 percent of the population (Christian Malays 91 percent and Muslim Malays 4 percent). Ethnic minorities make up only 5 percent of the population, of which the Chinese, the largest minority group, constitute one-third.

The Chinese are considered to be aliens, and they occupy an ambivalent position in society. While assimilated Chinese who have intermarried with Filipinos have been culturally accepted, ethnic Chinese without Philippine citizenship have been subjected to discrimination and restrictive legislation. Numbering 114,185 in 1973—only slightly greater than the estimated Chinese population of Manila in 1896—the Chinese community's cultural isolation and conspicuous economic success are resented by the majority. A 1974 presidential decree requiring the registration of all aliens was directed against the Chinese; by 1975 nearly 19,000 of them had filed applications for citizenship. In the early 2000s the Chinese population was estimated at one million, of which about 52 percent lived in Manila.

Americans form the second-largest foreign community. Other foreign groups are Spanish, Indian, British, and German.

LANGUAGES

The official languages of the Philippines are Filipino and English. There are also eight major dialects: Tagalog, Cebuano, Ilocan, Hiligaynon (Ilonggo), Bicolano, Waray-Waray, Kapampangan, and Pangasinan. English, introduced by the U.S. administration (against the wishes of President William McKinley), is the universal

language of government, mass communication, commerce, and higher education. For all practical purposes, the Philippines can be considered as an English-speaking country, with close to 52 percent of the population literate in that language. In several provinces the number of English speakers exceeds the number of Filipino speakers. Debates in Congress are usually conducted in English and are only later translated into Filipino by the Institute of National Language. Most of the Manila daily newspapers are published in English or in English and another language.

RELIGIONS

The Philippines is the only Asian country with a predominantly Christian population. In 1998, 83 percent of the population declared themselves Roman Catholics; other Christians numbered over five million, including almost two million Protestants. The largest religious minority, the Muslims, constituted about 5 percent of the population, with 3.4 million adherents. Animists, generally described as pagans, constitute about 0.7 percent of the population, Buddhists less than 1 percent.

Roman Catholicism, introduced in the 17th century, was accepted by the Filipinos with remarkable rapidity and soon became the national faith and an important element in the cohesiveness, continuity, and unity of Filipino culture. However, Roman Catholicism suffered a brief decline in the late 19th and early 20th centuries because of its association with Spanish colonial rule; the faith was forced to retreat further as it faced the onslaught of the nationalist Aglipayan movement and Protestant missions following the disestablishment of the church by the U.S. administration in 1902. By the 1930s, through a process of internal renewal, the Roman Catholic Church had regained most of its organizational strength and membership. Roman Catholicism also became identified with Filipino nationalism against both the United States and Japan. The church continues to exert a strong social and political influence. Although the separation of church and state was reaffirmed in the 1987 constitution, religious instruction in public schools is permitted.

Islam was introduced in the southern Philippines in the 14th century as a result of the expansion of Arab trade in Southeast Asia. Islam is practiced by some 14 different ethnic groups in the Philippines. The predominantly Muslim provinces are Mindanao and the Sulu and Tawi Tawi archipelagoes in the south. There are also 10 other provinces with sizable Muslim populations, each with its own imam. There are close to half a million Muslims residing in and around Manila.

Philippine Muslims, particularly the Tawsugs, are devoted to Islam to the point of fanaticism. The focal point of their faith is hostility to Christians, and they believe that anyone who kills a Christian will enter "heaven."

The reported Moro trait of running amok with the purpose of killing Christians is called *juramentado*.

Religious Affiliations

Roman Catholic	72,900,000
Protestant	7,900,000
Muslim	4,400,000
Buddhist and Other	2,600,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The first inhabitants of the Philippines probably arrived more than 300,000 years ago from Asia. Wave after wave of immigrants came to the islands, including Negritos, Malayans, and Indonesians. In 1380 Islam was introduced to the islands by a noted Arabian judge named Makdum. The first European contact came in 1521 when Ferdinand Magellan claimed the islands for Spain. Since that time the Philippines came under three colonial rulers: the Spanish, from the 1570s to the end of the Spanish-American War in 1898; the Americans, from 1898 to 1942 and from 1945 to 1946; and the Japanese, from 1942 to 1945. The islands were also briefly under British rule from 1762 to 1763.

Spanish rule was the longest and produced the most changes. The success the Spanish achieved in Hispanizing Filipino society was paralleled only by the rapidity with which Filipinos were converted to the Christian faith. Among the most significant and enduring results of Spanish rule were the introduction of the concept of private property (replacing the traditional communal ownership of land), the creation of a judicial organization and legal processes based on Spanish law, and the establishment of an administrative organization that retained traditional units at the local level. U.S. colonial policy, on the other hand, recognized the need to prepare Filipinos for self-government and therefore addressed a wide range of political, administrative, social, and economic reforms. Some 440 laws were adopted to initiate and hasten the process of modernizing the country. The temporal power of the Roman Catholic Church was greatly reduced, and the Philippines became a secular state. Government administration was strengthened and centralized, roads and public services were improved, educational facilities were expanded, the judicial system was reorganized (although Spanish civil law was retained), a constabulary was created as the national law enforcement agency, English was introduced as the language of education and administration, and Filipino participation was secured in the political and legislative process through the authorization of an elected assembly. The stability and durability of these reforms resulted partly from the favorable response of Filipinos to these innovations, as aided by an acute awareness of their own self-interest.

Nevertheless, the nationalist movement continued to press for full independence. As a transitional stage prior to the total independence that would come 10 years later, the Commonwealth of the Philippines was established under President Manuel Quezon in 1935. However, Japan conquered the islands in late 1941 and remained in control until October 1944. When Manila fell to U.S. forces in February 1945, the Philippine government-in-exile headed by Sergio Osmena (who succeeded President Quezon on his death) was reinstated. Osmena was subsequently defeated by the Liberal Party candidate Manuel Roxas in an election. On July 4, 1946, the Republic of the Philippines was proclaimed as an independent sovereign state, with Roxas as its first president.

During the first 20 years of independence the nation was led by a series of one-term presidents from either the Liberal or Nationalist parties. Political parties were based on patronage rather than ideology. Ferdinand Marcos defeated the reformist president Diosdado Macapagal in the 1965 elections. From that date until his ouster in 1986, Marcos dominated Philippine politics, ruling as a virtual dictator. In an attempt to crush his opponents, he declared martial law in 1972 and had them arrested. Martial law was lifted in most of the Philippines in 1981. That year Marcos was elected to a new six-year term in an election boycotted by the opposition and marred by massive fraud.

During the 1980s Marcos began relaxing his grip on the political process. The opposition was able to unify, and the leading dissident, Benigno Aquino, returned from exile in 1983. However, he was immediately assassinated; the crime generated a political crisis and served as a focal point in the opposition's launching a campaign to oust Marcos. Strikes and demonstrations followed the assassination, and demands increased for Marcos's resignation. At the same time, the economy began to collapse, and foreign capital began to flee the country. Under pressure from the United States, Marcos moved up the next presidential election from 1987 to 1986. The opposition united behind Corazon Aquino, the widow of Benigno Aquino. Amid allegations of massive fraud, Marcos declared himself the winner. Aquino then launched a campaign of civil disobedience, which, backed by the army, led to Marcos's downfall in February 1986. Aquino was sworn in as president, and the following year the nation approved a new, liberal constitution.

Aquino survived several attempted military coups, the most serious occurring in 1989, when members of two elite military units in collusion with officers loyal to Marcos attempted to overthrow her government. She was able to reintroduce an element of constitutionality into the political process but was unable to solve many of the nation's serious problems, including an armed rebellion waged by Communist and Muslim secessionist guerrillas. Aquino failed to develop an adequate land reform pro-

gram and was unable to induce foreign capital to return to the Philippines.

The volcanic explosion of Mt. Pinatubo, which destroyed the United States' Clark Air Base, brought an end to strong U.S. ties in 1991; around that time the Philippine Senate refused to extend the lease on the Subic Bay Naval Station. The following year, Defense Minister Fidel Ramos succeeded Aquino as president. In 1996 the government signed a peace accord with the Moro National Liberation Front, ending more than 24 years of fighting. The government agreed to autonomy on many issues, but still conducts military operations in the area. In 1998 Ramos was replaced by Joseph Estrada. In 2000 Estrada was impeached by the House of Representatives and convicted in the Senate of bribery, corruption, the betrayal of public trust, and the violation of the constitution. Following tumultuous demonstrations for and against Estrada, he was arrested, and Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo was installed as president.

Early in her presidency, Macapagal-Arroyo suspended military operations against the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and pursued a policy of reconciliation with the group. The MILF was seeking an expansion of the Muslim autonomous area. In August 2001 the two sides signed a cease-fire agreement, and peace negotiations continued, with Malaysia acting as intermediary. Meanwhile, the government continued its military crackdown on the more radical Abu Sayyaf group, which was seeking an independent Islamic state and was linked to terrorist activities such as kidnappings and bombings. In the 2001 elections the People Power Coalition, supported by Macapagal-Arroyo, won 12 out of 24 seats in the Senate.

Macapagal-Arroyo was reelected in 2004. The main concerns of her administration were alleviating poverty and reducing the nation's debt, as well as fighting crime; she lifted a moratorium on the death penalty in 2004. She supported U.S. President George W. Bush's war on terror in the Middle East and Afghanistan. Within the Philippines, a conflict with Muslim separatists on the island of Mindanao continued, as did the government's efforts to eradicate the Abu Sayyaf group on Jolo.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1946–48	Manuel Roxas
1948–53	Elpidio Quirino
1953–57	Ramon Magsaysay
1957–61	Carlos P. Garcia
1961–65	Diosdado Macapagal
1965–86	Ferdinand E. Marcos
1986–92	Corazon C. Aquino
1992–98	Fidel V. Ramos
1998–2001	Joseph Ejercito Estrada
2001–	Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo

CONSTITUTION

The political and governmental system of the Philippines entered a new era with the ouster of Ferdinand Marcos and the inauguration of Corazon Aquino as president in February 1986. Within a month, Aquino abolished the National Assembly, which had been dominated by Marcos supporters, abrogated the 1973 constitution, and claimed all legislative powers for herself. She announced a new “freedom constitution,” under which she would hold power until a new charter was written and submitted to a referendum and legislative elections were held. Under the proclamation, the government’s aims were described as reorganizing the government, restoring democracy, reviving the economy, recovering the ill-gotten wealth of Marcos and his allies, protecting basic rights, wiping out corruption, restoring peace and order, and affirming civilian supremacy over the military. The proclamation retained most of the provisions of the 1973 constitution, including the bill of rights. Aquino also abolished the post of prime minister.

The new constitution, ratified by national referendum on February 2, 1987, supplanted the freedom constitution. It provides for a directly elected president, serving a single six-year term, who is head of state, chief executive of the republic, and commander in chief of the armed forces. The president has the power to veto legislative bills but must sign them if two-thirds of Congress has approved them.

The vice president may be a member of the cabinet and succeeds to the presidency in the event of a death or resignation.

Legislative power is vested in the bicameral Congress, consisting of a Senate and House of Representatives. The former is composed of 24 members who are directly elected for six years and may not serve more than two consecutive terms. The House has a maximum of 250 members, of whom 200 are directly elected and 50 are nominated by the president from among the urban poor, peasantry, women, and youth. Members cannot serve more than three consecutive terms.

The Supreme Court is composed of a chief justice and 14 associate justices. They are appointed by the president with the consent of the Commission on Appointments for terms of four years. The president is specifically prevented from imposing martial law for a period greater than 60 days without the approval of Congress. The constitution guarantees social justice and human rights, renounces war as an instrument of national policy, and reasserts civilian authority over the military. Other provisions include the abolition of the death penalty, the prohibition of abortion, the authorization of local autonomy for Muslim-dominated areas, a “nuclear-free” policy, and legislative concurrence for the leasing of Philippine territory to foreign powers.

Suffrage is universal. The voting age under the 1987 constitution is 18 (as compared to 21 under the 1935

constitution), but the proclamation establishing the *barangays*, or local citizens’ assemblies, lowered the voting age to 15. Voting is compulsory, and absence from the polling place is a punishable offense.

PARLIAMENT

The national legislature is the bicameral Congress of the Philippines, consisting of the upper Senate and the lower House of Representatives on the U.S. model. The upper house consists of 24 at-large members who serve no more than two six-year terms, half of the body being elected every three years. The lower house consists of 207 members directly elected from legislative districts, plus a maximum of 43 members elected through a party-list system incorporating registered national, regional, and sectoral parties or organizations. In 2004 there were 24 sectoral-party representatives elected in addition to the 207 district representatives. The constitution limits the lower house to 250 members. Each voter casts a ballot for both a district representative and a party-list group. All representatives serve for three years, with a two-term limit.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Before 1972 the Philippine political system was dominated by two political parties: the Nationalists and the Liberals. Both were mass parties, virtually identical in ideologies and modes of operation. There were a number of minor parties, all of them short-lived. Both major parties were essentially patronage parties—less instruments of sociopolitical change than vehicles through which maximum personal benefits could be obtained. They functioned as mutual aid groups cemented by patron-client relationships at every level and expectations of pork-barrel benefits. Both leaders and followers readily switched from one party to another, and no stigma was attached to turncoats.

The Nationalist Party, to which President Marcos belonged at the time of his election, represented the right-wing element and the Liberal Party the left-wing element of the former Partido Nacionalista. In 1978 Marcos’s party was renamed the New Society Movement, the opposition coalition the People’s Force Party. A cautious return to politics was permitted during the 1978 legislative elections and also after the end of martial law in 1981. In February 1980 representatives of eight opposition groups formed a loose coalition, the United Democratic Organization (UNIDO), which was reorganized in April 1982 as the United Nationalist Democratic Organization, a 12-party alignment that retained the former acronym. With the murder of the opposition leader Benigno Aquino, anti-Marcos forces began to coalesce under the UNIDO banner.

President Macapagal-Arroyo is the head of the National Union of Christian Democrats (Lakas ng EDSA, or Lakas), which led the People Power Coalition to victory in the 2001 elections. As of 2004 Lakas led the Sunshine Coalition, which included the Nationalist People's Coalition, the Liberal Party, and several other major and minor parties. The Struggle of Filipino Democrats (Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino, LDP) party led the opposition bloc.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For purposes of local government, the Philippines is divided into 79 provinces and 116 chartered cities. Provinces are governed by appointed officials known as governors. Chartered cities, each headed by a mayor, are independent of provincial governments.

Municipalities, also administered by mayors, have less autonomy than chartered cities and are under the control of the provincial government. Municipal districts are territorial units in areas inhabited by non-Christians. The lowest and the most numerous territorial units are the *barangays*, also known as barrios until 1974. *Barangays* are located in wards and divisions of cities, municipalities, municipal districts, and chartered cities. Each *barangay* is run by a council headed by a captain.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The legal system is based on Spanish law as modified by Anglo-American law. The judiciary is headed by the Supreme Court, comprising a chief justice and 14 associates. It can declare a law or treaty unconstitutional by the concurrent votes of the majority sitting. There is an intermediate appellate court consisting of a presiding justice and 49 associate justices.

Below the court of appeals, the country is divided into regional trial courts, each with a presiding regional trial judge. There is a municipal court for each city and a justice of the peace for each municipality. The Supreme Court may designate certain branches of the regional trial courts to handle certain cases that do not fall under the jurisdiction of quasi-judicial bodies and agencies.

If a defendant cannot afford counsel, the court will appoint a lawyer. Private and government legal assistance is available to indigents, and there are lawyers' organizations that provide assistance to alleged national security offenders. Because of case backlogs, a shortage of judges, and the practice of hearing cases concurrently, trials in civilian courts often take two or three years; subversion and rebellion trials have frequently lasted longer. Trial by jury is not a part of Philippine jurisprudence. Questions of law and fact, including determinations of guilt or innocence, are all resolved by the presiding judge.

In July 1985 Islamic sharia courts were established in the southern Philippines under a February 1977 presidential decree. They are presided over by three district magistrates and six circuit judges.

HUMAN RIGHTS

In terms of political and civil rights, the Philippines is classified as a free country.

With the fall of Marcos, the Philippines entered a period of restoring human rights. Habeas corpus was restored by Aquino in one of her first acts, and all political detainees were released despite objections from the military. There are no reports of Marcos's supporters being muzzled or of any large-scale reprisals against the "New Society" power bases.

The 1987 constitution guarantees the rights to life, liberty, and property, the rights of assembly in public places and of access to official information on public matters, and the freedoms of speech, abode, and travel. The freedoms of the press and of petition to the government are guaranteed, as is the right to form trade unions. Free access to the courts is also guaranteed by the constitution, which empowers the Commission on Human Rights to use legal measures to protect the rights of people and to investigate allegations of violations of human rights. The commission may also advise Congress on measures to promote human rights.

Despite these guarantees, the Philippines has suffered from many human rights problems. The police forces have been known to arrest people arbitrarily and to torture or kill suspects without trial. Prison conditions are harsh, and there are long delays before trials. The court system is notoriously corrupt. The government does not allow absentee voting, so expatriates are effectively disenfranchised. Discrimination against ethnic minorities and women, child abuse and child labor, and trafficking in women and children as sex slaves are serious problems.

FOREIGN POLICY

Filipino foreign policy is essentially low-key, and while supporting and following the United States in broad policy areas, the nation has never been embroiled in serious disputes with any country. However, uncertainty about the U.S. role in Southeast Asia after the Vietnam War spurred the Philippines to greater independence. The 1947 treaty with the United States provided for the U.S. use of six military installations, including Clark Air Base and the Subic Bay Naval Station, but all bases have since been closed. In 1998 a new treaty, called the Visiting Forces Agreement, was signed, permitting the U.S. military certain rights. In 2002 U.S. and Filipino military forces launched joint exercises as part of the war on

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international terrorism. President Macapagal-Arroyo has maintained close relations with the United States and wants to strengthen bilateral ties between the two nations. In 2002–03 the United States launched a major military effort to eliminate terrorism from the Philippines and improve the Filipino military.

Within Asia, the Philippines has maintained amicable relations with most of its neighbors. It belongs to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the ASEAN Regional Forum, and the Asia Pacific Economic Conference. In 1995 the Philippines and Vietnam signed an agreement for the orderly repatriation of Vietnamese refugees who did not qualify to seek asylum. There are periodic tensions with the China over the Spratly Islands, but in 1999 both countries agreed to exercise restraint.

DEFENSE

The Department of National Defense directs the Armed Forces of the Philippines. The Department of the Interior and Local Government directs the civilian Philippine National Police. The defense structure is headed by the president as the commander in chief of the armed forces. The chain of command runs through the minister of national defense to the chief of staff, who presides over the General Military Council. The bulk of the army is deployed in two recently established commands, CENCOM (Cotabato and Lanao provinces, in Mindanao) and SOWESCOM (Zamboanga Province, on Mindanao, and Sulu).

Military manpower is obtained through voluntary enlistment. All Filipino males are required to register for conscription upon reaching the age of 18. Certain inducted men are mobilized in special units called Kamagong (after a native hardwood), which are available for active service on short notice.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 150,000
Military Manpower Availability: 20,131,179
Military Expenditures \$million: 805.5
as % of GDP: 1.0
as % of central government expenditures: —
Arms Imports \$million: 8
Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

The Philippines has seen tremendous economic progress since the end of the Second World War. The country was quite wealthy during the 1960s and 1970s but suffered a recession in the 1980s, which was made worse by political instability during the Aquino administration. President

Ramos introduced numerous economic reforms during the 1990s that increased foreign investment and business growth, but the Asian financial crisis slowed development in 1997 and 1998.

Growth was strong between 1999 and 2004. President Arroyo's skilled economic team liberalized the rules regulating foreign businesses, improved the regulation of banking and securities, and promoted electronic commerce. The nation does still suffer from some fiscal problems; the peso weakened against the dollar in 2003, and unemployment was relatively high. Government debt is high, and the collection of taxes has fallen, harming the nation's ability to face crises.

The most important industries are agriculture, industry, cloth and clothing manufacture, and the manufacture of electronics and automobile parts. The Philippines also has good mineral resources and natural gas reserves, but as of the early 2000s these were not a major source of income. Agriculture is a weak economic sector, with low returns and poor efficiency. Forestry is suffering from the effects of years of uncontrolled logging and slash-and-burn agriculture. Destructive fishing measures have harmed fisheries. Industry is concentrated in urban areas and does not benefit rural areas.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 430.6
GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 5,000
GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 4.3
GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 2.0
Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
Agriculture: 14.8
Industry: 31.9
Services: 53.2
Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
Private Consumption: 71
Government Consumption: 13
Gross Domestic Investment: 17.0
Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 38.63
Imports: 37.5
% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 2.3
% of Income Received by Richest 10%: 31.9

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
135.1	141.0	149.6	154.2	159.0

Finance

National Currency: Philippine Peso (PHP)
Exchange Rate: \$1 = PHP 56.0399
Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 519.8
Central Bank Discount Rate %: 5.53
Total External Debt \$billion: 55.6
Debt Service Ratio %: 13.77
Balance of Payments \$billion: 3.6
International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 13.3
Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 5.5

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 737
 per capita \$: 9.10
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 319

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$billion: 12.22
 Expenditures \$billion: 15.84
 Budget Deficit \$billion: 3.62
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 14.8
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 4.4
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 0.2
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 14.5
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 126.8
 Total Farmland % of land area: 19.1
 Livestock: Cattle million: 2.6
 Chickens million: 105
 Pigs million: 12.5
 Sheep 000: 30
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 15.9
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons million: 2.47

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 18.45
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 5.0

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 10.25
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 29.1
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 377
 Net Energy Imports % of use: 47.8
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 13.4
 Production kW-hr billion: 45.6
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 42.4
 Coal Reserves tons million: 366
 Production tons million: 1.9
 Consumption tons million: 5.7
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: 3.8
 Production cubic feet billion: 70.6
 Consumption cubic feet billion: 70.6
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels million: 152
 Production barrels 000 per day: 26
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 338
 Pipelines Length km: 135

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 37.5
 Exports \$billion: 38.63

Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 4.8
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 4.0
 Balance of Trade \$billion: 3.6

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Japan %	20.4	15.9
United States %	19.4	20.1
Singapore %	6.8	6.7
South Korea %	6.4	—
Taiwan %	5.0	6.9
China %	4.8	5.9
Hong Kong %	4.3	8.5
Netherlands %	—	8.1
Malaysia %	—	6.8

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 202,124
 Paved %: 9.5
 Automobiles: 2,401,900
 Trucks and Buses: 291,700
 Railroad: Track Length km: 897
 Passenger-km million: 93
 Freight-km million: 63
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 419
 Total Deadweight Tonnage million: 6.44
 Airports: 255
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 14.2
 Length of Waterways km: 3,219

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 1.9
 Number of Tourists from million: 1.8
 Tourist Receipts \$billion: 1.55
 Tourist Expenditures \$billion: 0.99

Communications

Telephones million: 3.31
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones million: 15.2
 Personal Computers million: 2.2
 Internet Hosts per million people: 438
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 40

ENVIRONMENT

The Philippines faces a number of environmental problems that have been brought on by economic development and a growing population. Uncontrolled deforestation in watershed areas is caused by clearing for development and the use of the forest to promote economic growth; this clearing has led to soil erosion. In the urban area of Manila, the air and water quality are poor. Increased emissions and a growing urban population are further taxing a

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system that wasn't able to handle its previous population base. Along the coast, increased settlement in mangrove swamps is threatening important fish breeding grounds and coral reefs.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 19.4
Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: -89
Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 4
Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 1.01

LIVING CONDITIONS

The Philippines is a very crowded nation and is growing more so; population growth there is the fastest in Asia, and the population may double between 2000 and 2030. Most Filipino homes are fairly simple and small. Only wealthy people can afford large Western-style homes with modern amenities. Public transportation is cheap, and much of it is provided by jeepneys, small trucks decorated with paintings, flowers, and other items. Some taxis are actually small motorcycles with sidecars. In some remote areas the main means of transportation are horse-drawn carts, bicycles, and feet.

HEALTH

Although the state does provide some health services, the majority of health facilities are private and are thus limited to those who can pay for them. Most Filipinos see doctors only as a last resort and use traditional remedies as alternatives. The government has implemented childhood vaccination programs and provides nutritional supplements for small children and nursing mothers. The incidence of tropical diseases such as malaria, typhoid, and dengue fever has fallen, though they still occur. Gastrointestinal diseases are fairly common. Life expectancy is slightly below 70 years.

Health

Number of Physicians: 91,408
Number of Dentists: 44,129
Number of Nurses: 347,349
Number of Pharmacists: 47,463
Physician Density per 100,000 people: 116
Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 23.51
Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 200
Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 2.9
Health Expenditures per capita \$: 28
HIV Infected % of adults: < 0.1

Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:

DPT: 79

Measles: 80

Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 73

Access to Improved Water Source %: 85

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Malnutrition is a serious health problem, particularly in more remote areas. Even where people have enough calories, they do not always get enough varied nutrients in their diets.

Filipino cuisine blends Malay, Spanish, Chinese, American, and Arab culinary traditions. Rice is the ubiquitous staple food and appears at all meals and in desserts. People supplement rice with vegetables, meat, and salted or smoked fish. Seasonings include garlic, vinegar, coconut milk, ginger, chili peppers, and soy sauce. Chinese noodles are popular, as are snacks such as spring rolls. People like to eat snacks in the morning and afternoon; common snacks include ice cream, rice cakes, coconut, *halo-halo* (a combination of shaved ice, gelatin, custard, fruit, and coconut milk), and *gina-taan* (fruit cooked with coconut milk). Fruit juices and fruit shakes are common drinks, as are drinks made with green lemons. Many people like to have alcoholic drinks with their afternoon snacks.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 22.3

Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,360

Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 134.8

Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg:
167.3

STATUS OF WOMEN

In the Philippines, women enjoy full voting privileges and have the right to own and inherit property. They are prominent in society and represented in large numbers in business and in professions such as law, medicine, education, and journalism. They are also active in politics and are well represented in both national and local governments as well as within the political opposition. In addition to the presidency, numerous posts within the judicial and executive branches of the government are held by women. Nevertheless, many women are still second-class citizens because of cultural limitations and the relations between husbands and wives. Women's occupations are generally limited to health care, education, food processing, garment manufacture, and the pharmaceutical industry.

The Catholic Church is extremely powerful in the Philippines and categorically opposes birth control, one

of the reasons the birth rate is so high. The government does not want to antagonize the church and so has taken no steps to reduce fertility.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 15
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.01
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 41.1

WORK

Over one-third of the labor force is employed in agriculture, including fishing and forestry. Many people engage in subsistence agriculture, either exclusively or in addition to producing cash crops such as coconut; coconut oil is a major export. Another 16 percent of the workforce is occupied in industry, especially in the manufacture of textiles, clothing, and electronics, while nearly half work in services. The government provides all workers a retirement pension starting at age 60.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 35,860,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 38.3
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 36
 Industry: 16
 Services: 48
 Unemployment %: 11.7

EDUCATION

Schooling is free, universal, and compulsory for six years, from the ages of seven to 13. Attendance at primary school is 93 percent. People value education highly, and families will often do whatever it takes to pay for school for their children. Instruction begins in the local language, then gradually shifts to Filipino and English. Most Islamic children get religious education at madrassa schools, where they study the Koran.

Most secondary schools are private, usually run by religious groups. About three-quarters of Filipino children begin secondary school, though many drop out before graduation. Secondary school lasts up to four years, depending on whether or not students want to attend university or a vocational college.

In order to enter university, students must pass the National College Entrance Examination. Most universities and colleges are private. About one-quarter of Filipinos attain higher education. Most university students

are female, and women earn the majority of advanced degrees. There are also adult-education classes in literacy, health, agriculture, and occupational skills.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 92.6
 Male %: 92.5
 Female %: 92.7
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 12.0
 First Level: Primary Schools: 35,671
 Teachers: 362,431
 Students: 12,826,218
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 35.4
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 93.0
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 5,880
 Teachers: 151,750
 Students: 5,816,699
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 38.3
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 56.5
 Third Level: Institutions: 975
 Teachers: 99,015
 Students: 2,467,267
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 31.1
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 3.2

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The Philippines has a good, modern telephone system and millions of cellular telephones. In 2002 some 3.5 million people were using the Internet. The government's Department of Science and Technology sponsors research and education in an effort to improve the nation's technological expertise. Weather forecasting and improving the living conditions of the poor are key projects.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$billion: 23.9
 Patent Applications by Residents: 154

MEDIA

Journalists and broadcasters in the Philippines enjoy freedom of expression, as guaranteed by the 1987 constitution. There are numerous newspapers and magazines published in the country. Television is a popular form of entertainment, and many households have cable television. Television broadcasting is dominated by a few large networks, including the private ABS-CBN and GMA Network and the state-owned IBC. Many networks broadcast programming in local languages. There are numerous radio stations throughout the nation. The Philippine Broadcasting Service (PBS) runs 31 stations emphasizing news. The commercial Radio Mindanao Network oper-

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ates about 40 stations. Most media outlets are controlled by a few large companies and wealthy families.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 42
Total Circulation million: 4.7
Circulation per 1,000: 66
Books Published: 1,380
Periodicals: 47
Radio Receivers 000: —
per 1,000: —
Television sets million: 8.2
per 1,000: 110

CULTURE

Filipino culture blends the practices of some 60 ethnic groups with Spanish, Muslim, and American influences. Artists have long created objects from bamboo, coconut, or pineapple leaves, rattan, abaca fiber, and cotton; baskets, wood carvings, and clay pottery are all typical items. The Ifugao tribe are especially skilled at making jewelry, and Muslims make excellent bronze and brass items.

The nation is home to a wide variety of musical styles from its many different ethnic groups. Traditional instruments include bamboo nose flutes, gongs, violins strung with human hair, lutes, and xylophones. Most children study music; the violin and the piano are popular instruments.

The Philippines have produced a number of writers who have worked in English and Tagalog. Nick Joaquin and José Garcia Villa are well-known modern poets. Popular theatre forms include puppet shows and *zarzuela*, a kind of satire originally aimed at the Spanish occupation.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 501
Volumes: 587,000
Registered borrowers: 299,676
Museums Number: 61
Annual Attendance: —
Cinema Gross Receipts: —
Number of Cinemas: —
Seating Capacity: —
Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

The Philippines has a long tradition of myths, folk tales, and epic poems. The nation's many ethnic groups have retained their native practices and beliefs, many of which are related to human relationships with nature and the seasons. Recently, Filipinos have been reviving traditional theatre, literature, and love songs. Folk dancing is still quite popular, and folk dance groups have recently revived

traditional forms. The *tinikling* is a dance that depicts the behavior of birds in the rice fields. The migration of birds and the harvest are common subjects of dances and folktales. The Kalinga people of Bontoc were traditionally headhunters, but they no longer practice that art.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Filipinos love to spend time with family and friends. Teenagers belong to groups of friends called *barkadas* and conduct all their social activities with one another; they even invent individual slang dialects. Many people enjoy playing tabletop games such as chess, checkers, dominoes, and mah-jongg. Within the cities there are bars, restaurants, discos, and shopping areas.

Outdoor recreation is extremely popular. People go swimming in pools or at the beach. Diving and snorkeling are excellent. There are places to go hiking, trekking, and spelunking, and climbing Mt. Pinatubo is a popular activity for tourists.

ETIQUETTE

Filipinos always use a formal form of address with new acquaintances and do not use first names until they have known someone for a long time. Titles such as "doctor" or "attorney" are very important. Many people have multiple first names and nicknames, and it is important to ask someone how they would like to be addressed. Though punctuality is important in business matters, at social occasions people are expected to arrive late.

FAMILY LIFE

The extended family is extremely important in the Philippines, and people extend family ties further through the creation of godparents. Relatives usually live near one another, and children usually stay with their parents until they marry. When a couple marries, it is not unusual for some of their single brothers and sisters to move in with them. The father is considered the head of the household, though the mother takes care of all practical organization and financial arrangements. Women keep their own property after marriage and often earn money through jobs outside the home. Children are expected to help take care of the home at a young age.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Most people dress in typical Western attire, wearing light casual clothing at all times because of the hot weather.

Long pants and skirts are appropriate for business occasions. Men sometimes wear an embroidered shirt called a *barong tagalog* instead of jacket and tie.

SPORTS

Basketball is the most popular sport, particularly among men and boys. Games at the Aranet Coliseum in Quezon City attract huge crowds of spectators. Boxing is also popular. Many people like to play jai alai, which is similar to lacrosse, and *sipa*, a version of volleyball played with a rattan ball. Cockfighting is extremely popular among men, who gamble on it every weekend. *Kali* is an indigenous martial art that involves the use of sticks and knives.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1946 The Philippines becomes an independent republic, with Manuel Roxas as president.
- 1947 The Philippines signs the Military Bases Agreement with the United States.
- 1948 President Roxas dies and is succeeded in office by Elpidio Quirino.
- 1950 The communist Hukbalahap movement collapses, as its leadership is captured.
- 1953 Ramon Magsaysay is elected to the presidency on the Nationalist Party ticket.
- 1954 The Philippines joins the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO).
- 1955 The Laurel-Langley Agreement is signed with the United States, providing for certain tariff preferences.
- 1957 Magsaysay dies in an air crash and is succeeded in office by Vice President Carlos P. Garcia.
- 1961 Diosdado Macapagal is elected president over the incumbent Garcia.
- 1965 Ferdinand E. Marcos is elected president, defeating the incumbent Macapagal.
- 1969 Marcos is reelected president and becomes the first Philippine president to be sworn in for a second time. The rebel group New People's Army (NPA) is founded.
- 1972 Marcos imposes martial law, citing both internal and external dangers; all opposition leaders are arrested; the media are shut down; the constitution is suspended, and the Congress is dissolved.
- 1973 A new constitution is approved in a national referendum proposing a return to a parliamentary form of government. President Marcos assumes the additional post of prime minister. Moro insurgency in the south intensifies.
- 1976 President Marcos announces the suspension of operations against the MILF. Pact is signed with Libya granting partial autonomy to southern areas with Moro majorities.
- 1977 The Philippines drops its claim on Sabah. A proposal for the establishment of an autonomous Muslim region in the south is defeated, as most Muslims boycott the polls.
- 1978 In national elections Marcos's New Society Movement claims to have won all 200 seats in the interim National Assembly, while the opposition People's Force Party charges electoral fraud. The Philippines occupies Spratly Islands. Marcos is sworn in as prime minister as the new Congress convenes.
- 1979 In a partial relaxation of martial law, 1,602 prisoners are released, and the power of military courts is curtailed.
- 1980 Marcos's party wins local elections, but the results are clouded by charges of fraud, some of them acknowledged by Marcos; Benigno Aquino, the government's principal opponent, is released from prison; government attempts to patch up differences with the Catholic clergy. The government orders the arrest of 30 opposition figures, including the exiled Aquino, following a series of terrorist attacks.
- 1981 Marcos lifts martial law but retains martial law decrees. Marcos is reelected to another six years in office. Finance Minister Cesar Virata is appointed prime minister.
- 1982 Opposition parties merge into the United National Democratic Organization (UNIDO) under Salvador Laurel.
- 1983 Opposition leader Benigno Aquino is shot dead at Manila Airport on return from exile in the United States, and his assassin is shot dead by the military. Commission of inquiry concludes that the assassination was masterminded by the army. Chief of Staff Gen. Fabian Ver is relieved of his position and is indicted for the crime. United States and Philippines sign accord renewing U.S. rights to naval bases until 1988.
- 1984 In parliamentary elections, opposition parties win 59 out of 183 elective seats. Over 100 people are believed to have been killed in election-related clashes. Post of vice president is restored following referendum.
- 1985 Growing domestic unrest and international pressure force Marcos to call an early presidential election in 1986. Supreme Court acquits the 26 accused in the killing of Benigno Aquino's assassin. General Ver is reinstated as chief of staff.
- 1986 In presidential elections, marred by fraud and violence, President Marcos declares himself winner, and Congress ratifies his election. Opposition presidential candidate Corazon Aquino contests

the decision and declares herself winner. The defense minister and long-time ally Juan Ponce Enrile and the chief of staff Fidel Ramos defect to the Aquino forces. International and domestic outrage over election fraud force Marcos to flee to the United States hours after his formal inauguration. Aquino is sworn in as president with Salvador Laurel, her running mate, as vice president. President Aquino dissolves Congress and the constitution until a new constitution is drafted and ratified. Philippine government launches effort to uncover and reclaim hidden Marcos millions abroad. A 50-member constitutional commission is appointed to draft a new constitution. Aquino fires Defense Minister Enrile. Twice in two weeks the army chief of staff Gen. Fidel Ramos prevents Enrile loyalists from carrying out a planned coup.

- 1987** The electorate approves a new constitution. Aquino supporters capture 80 percent of the seats in the House of Representatives. An attempted coup led by Col. Gregorio Honasan is foiled by troops loyal to Aquino.
- 1988** Candidates supporting President Aquino capture a majority of seats in provincial and local balloting.
- 1989** Members of two elite army units, in collusion with Marcos loyalists, stage a coup, which is suppressed after six days.
- 1990** Aquino survives a coup by dissident soldiers on Mindanao.
- 1991** Mount Pinatubo erupts after being dormant since 1380. The United States evacuates military personnel from nearby Clark Air Force Base.
- 1992** Aquino decides against reelection. Fidel Ramos is elected president in a strong field that includes Imelda Marcos.
- 1994** Parliamentary elections give President Ramos governing control. Ramos declares a cease-fire and amnesty for insurgents.
- 1997** The Philippine economy is weakened by the Asian economic crisis.
- 1998** President Ramos decides against reelection. Joseph Estrada, a popular actor, is elected president.
- 2001** Joseph Estrada is ousted from government under allegations of corruption. Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo is sworn in as president. The Moro Islamic Liberation Front says that it is ready to hold talks with the government and declares a cease-fire. Estrada is charged with plundering more than \$80 million from state funds while in office. He is arrested.
- 2002** U.S. and Filipino military forces launch joint exercises close to the stronghold of the rebel Abu

Sayyaf, which the United States believes has links to Osama bin Laden. Islamic militants are blamed for several bomb blasts in Manila and Zamboanga.

- 2003** The government signs a cease-fire with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front. Soldiers from the national army stage a mutiny in Manila.
- 2004** Arroyo is reelected as president. The country withdraws troops from Iraq. Hundreds of people die in a typhoon.
- 2005** Government troops and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front engage in fighting, breaking the 2003 cease-fire.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- National Statistics Office
<http://www.census.gov.ph/>
- Government Website
<http://www.neda.gov.ph/>

POLAND

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Poland (Polska Rzeczpospolita)

ABBREVIATION

PL

CAPITAL

Warsaw

HEAD OF STATE

President Lech Kaczyński (from 2005)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Kazimierz Marcinkiewicz (from 2005)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Socialist democracy; republic

POPULATION

38,635,144 (2005)

AREA

312,685 sq km (120,728 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Polish

LANGUAGE

Polish

RELIGION

Roman Catholicism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Zloty

NATIONAL FLAG

Two horizontal stripes, the upper white and the lower red

NATIONAL EMBLEM

An ornate silver eagle with a gold crown on a red shield

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Jeszcze Polska nie Zginela” (Poland Is Not Yet Lost)

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day), Easter Monday, May 1 (Labor Day), May 3 (Constitution Day), May 9 (Victory Day), July 22 (National Liberation Day), August 15 (Assumption), November 1 (All Saints' Day), November 11 (Independence Day), December 25–26 (Christmas)

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

November 11, 1918

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

October 17, 1997

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Poland, in eastern Europe, is bounded on the north by the Baltic Sea and Russia (Kaliningrad), on the east by Lithuania, Belarus, and Ukraine, on the south by Slovakia and the Czech Republic, and on the west by Germany. Poland has a total area of 312,685 sq km (120,728 sq mi), extending 689 km (428 mi) east to west and 649 km (403 mi) north to south. Its total land boundary length is 2,897 km (1,797 mi) in length, while the coastline is 788 km (489 mi).

The capital is Warsaw, situated on both banks of the Vistula (Wisła) River, south of the influx of the Narew River.

On the map, Poland appears as an unbroken plain between the Baltic Sea in the north and the Carpathian Mountains in the south. However, the land shows great

complexity and variety, especially in east-to-west bands, accounting for wide variations in land utilization and population density. The southern foothills and mountains contain most of the country's fertile soils and thus have the greatest population density. The fertility of the soils and the density of population proportionately decline toward the north.

Most of Poland lies in the northern European plain, which extends from the North Sea coast of the Netherlands to the Ural Mountains, separating Europe from Asia. The only highlands are in the far south and southwest, where Poland shares the Carpathian and the Sudeten mountains with the Czech Republic and Slovakia. The average elevation is 173 m (567 ft). More than 90 percent of the national territory lies below 300 m (984 ft) and only 3 percent, chiefly in the south, rises above 500 m (1,640 ft). Rysy, the highest peak at 2,499 m (8,197 ft), is

Poland



on the Slovak border in the Tatra Range of the Carpathians. Six other peaks on the Polish side exceed 1,900 m (6,232 ft). The Sudeten Mountains are lower, with only one peak over 1,600 m (5,248 ft). The lowest land in the country is just south of the Gulf of Gdańsk, where some 60 sq km (23 sq mi) lie below sea level.

Geography

Area sq km: 312,685; sq mi 120,728
 World Rank: 68th
 Land Boundaries, km: Belarus 407; Czech Republic 658; Germany 456; Lithuania 91; Russia 206; Slovakia 444; Ukraine 526
 Coastline, km: 491

Elevation Extremes meters:

Lowest: near Raczki Elblaskie -2

Highest: Rysy 2,499

Land Use %

Arable Land: 45.9

Permanent Crops: 1.1

Forest: 29.7

Other: 23.3

Population of Principal Cities (2002)

Białystok	291,383
Bydgoszcz	373,804
Czstochowa	251,436
Gdańsk	461,334
Gdynia	253,458
Gliwice	203,814
Katowice	327,222
Kielce	212,429
Kraków	758,544
Łódź	789,318
Lublin	357,110
Poznań	578,886
Radom	229,699
Sosnowiec	232,622
Szczecin	415,399
Toruń	211,243
Warsaw	1,671,670
Wrocław	640,367

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

For much of the year the climate is continental, as dominated by high-pressure polar air masses, with a moderating influence of maritime weather from western Europe. These air masses are stronger in winter than in summer. There are long periods of fog, frequent precipitation, and high humidity. It is less humid when the polar high-pressure systems dominate, when it can be extremely cold.

Summer, from June through August, has frequent showers and thunderstorms, although humidity is generally lower than in winter; it is warm and dry when south and southeast winds dominate. Weather varies widely during spring and autumn. Winter cold may linger until early April. Early autumn is usually bright, clear, and crisp, although by November weather may turn unpleasant, rainy, and cold. Winters are usually snowy, but times of first and last snows, as well as the season's duration, vary from year to year.

Mean temperatures range between 8°C and 19°C, with marked seasonal variations among regions. The Baltic coastal areas have warmer winters and cooler summers than interior regions. The greatest differences between average winter and summer temperatures occur in the southeast, near the Ukrainian border. The growing season is approximately 40 days longer in the southwest than in the northwest.

Precipitation averages 500 to 650 mm (20 to 25 in) annually over most of the plains, a little higher in the southern uplands, and up to 1,300 mm (50 in) at isolated places in the mountains. Only small areas receive less than the national average, the largest of these being the city of Szczecin, the Ukrainian border, and a corridor along the Vistula from Warsaw to the sea. Throughout the country, summer precipitation is double that of winter.

Climate and Weather

Temperature Range: 46°F to 67°F

Mean Temperature: 45°F

Annual Rainfall

Lowlands: 19.5 in

Highlands: 53 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

The majority of Poland's land has been used for agriculture for centuries. Almost one-third of the land is covered with forests, much of it protected in national parks. Mushrooms grow wild in some forests, and people pick them to eat or sell. The Białowieza Forest in the eastern part of the country contains many old trees and is home to numerous woodland creatures, including moose, red deer, elk, brown bears, wild cats, hares, and the only remaining herd of European bison. Lynx and marmot live in the mountains in the southern part of the country. Numerous bird species thrive in Poland, including the beloved stork.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 38,635,144

World Rank: 32nd

Density per sq km: 124.7

% of annual growth (1999-2003): -0.2

Male %: 48.5

Female %: 51.5

Urban %: 61.7

Age Distribution %: 0-14: 16.7

15-64: 70.3

65 and over: 13.0

Population 2025: 37,350,000

Birth Rate per 1,000: 10.78

Death Rate per 1,000: 10.01

Rate of Natural Increase %: 0.0

Total Fertility Rate: 1.39

Expectation of Life (years): Males 70.3

Females 78.76

Marriage Rate per 1,000: 5.0

Divorce Rate per 1,000: 1.2

Average Size of Households: 3.6

Induced Abortions: 123

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Poland emerged from World War II as an ethnically homogenous nation; as of 2002 ethnic Poles constituted nearly 97 percent of the population. Poles are descended from various Slavic tribes who settled in and around the area of present-day Poland well before the eighth century. Regional distinctions among Polish peasants in dialect, dress, manner, and custom very roughly follow old tribal traditions. Many old tribal names persist in modified form.

Between the two world wars ethnic minorities made up 30 percent of the population. They included Germans, Jews, Ukrainians, Belarusians, and Lithuanians, few of whom shared the national faith of Roman Catholicism or spoke the Polish language as their mother tongue. The number of Germans was variously estimated at 741,000 (according to Poles) and 1.7 million (according to Germans). After World War II the majority of the German population inhabiting areas incorporated into Poland immigrated to Germany. Those who did not were objects of discrimination in the years following the war. During Communist rule many Poles living in the Silesia region claimed their German heritage in order to leave Poland for Germany.

After the eastern provinces were acquired by the Soviet Union in 1945, about 300,000 Belarusians lived in Poland. Never as nationalistic as Ukrainians, they showed less dissatisfaction with their minority status, although they became much more conscious of it following the creation of independent Belarus.

The largest minority group in interwar Poland, the Ukrainians, were found chiefly in the southeastern provinces, where they constituted a majority in the rural areas, although major cities such as L'viv were predominantly Polish. In 1945 the number of Ukrainians dropped to some 100,000 as a result of border changes.

There were more than 3.5 million Jews in Poland before World War II; they constituted more than 10 percent of the national population and had been an important social element in Poland since medieval times. For centuries they found Poland a refuge from the persecutions inflicted on them in western Europe. They were granted full rights, but anti-Semitism existed and was harsh at times.

The whole Jewish community faced extermination during World War II and Nazi occupation. Only individuals survived ghettos, forced labor, and concentration camps. Poland was where the Nazis first introduced their policy of racist extermination.

By the end of World War II the number of Jews in Poland had dropped dramatically, and those who had survived often chose to emigrate to Israel or to the United States. The last huge wave of emigration was spurred in 1968 by the anti-Semitic policies of the Communist government.

An estimated 30,000 Roma live in Poland. Other small minorities include scatterings of Lithuanians, Russians, Belarusians, Czechs, Slovaks, and Muslims of Tatar origin.

LANGUAGES

The Polish language belongs to the western branch of the Slavic language group, in which it is the third-most spoken, after Russian and Ukrainian. Although it is related to all Slavic languages, it is not well understood by other Slavic peoples, including Czechs and Slovaks. Poles use the Latin alphabet, a result of early conversion to Roman Catholicism.

Standard literary Polish had its origin in the speech of the upper classes of the 16th century. At the time of the Reformation the first written Polish literature came about, and there was a flowering of literary and secular language at that time. When Poland ceased to exist as an independent state in the 19th century, language became one of the hallmarks of Polish national identity, along with the Roman Catholic religion.

Polish has several dialects. The most divergent from the standard is Kashubian; the other five dialects are Great Polish, Kuyavian, Little Polish, Silesian, and Mazovian. Minority languages are rarely employed in public.

In 1999 the Polish parliament issued a law regarding the protection of the Polish language in reaction to the dynamic "McDonaldization" of the Polish language, as connected with the massive inflow of Western popular culture and new technology.

RELIGIONS

In terms of its influence on national life, Poland is perhaps the most Catholic country in the world, surpassing Ireland, Italy, and Spain. Polish Catholics loved having their native son Pope John Paul II in the Vatican. Poles have been predominantly Roman Catholic since the 10th century, and the Catholic Church dominated Poland's political and cultural scene over the following millennium; even the spread of the Reformation and the toleration of Protestants in the 16th and 17th centuries did not endanger its position. In the 19th century, when Poland was divided between Russia, Prussia, and Austria, the Catholic religion became a tool and a symbol of resistance against the first two occupants. Thereafter the church remained a guardian of the national flame. Catholic faith and ritual are not merely theological traditions but also a part of the national heritage. When Poland regained its independence after World War I, the church regained its place of honor in the political system as well.

After World War II the new Communist leaders initially pursued a moderate and conciliatory policy. How-

ever, in 1948, feeling secure and in control, Communists staged an unprecedented attack on the church. In 1950 a church-state agreement was signed: In return for the Vatican's recognition of the new Polish borders and the church hierarchy's submitting to the new state laws, the government agreed not to interfere with public worship, Catholic associations, and newspapers. This situation lasted for three years, at which point authorities staged new attacks on the church's dominance. The situation improved with the end of the Stalinist regime and the so-called thaw of 1956, but the Communist authorities never granted full freedom of worship. Catholics were limited in their practices, and those who held high positions in the government, the party, the army, or police were prosecuted. Many had to hide their religious beliefs.

With the election of Cardinal Karol Wojtyła to the papal throne, Polish Catholicism gained strength and experienced a renaissance. The modern-day proportion of practicing Catholics among the population is greater in Poland than in any other European country. With 95 percent of Poles baptized, an estimated 75 percent of the population are practicing. In all, there are more than 20,000 priests, 4,500 members of religious orders, and 80 bishops serving 36 million adherents. Also, there are 46 priest seminaries enrolling close to 5,000 students.

In Poland the pressures of secularization, urbanization, and the spread of secular education were offset by the attachment to the church as the embodiment of the nation and as a bulwark against all kinds of repression. In fact, the cumulative frustrations of life under the Communist regime reinforced adherence to the church. Paradoxically, the freedom Poland has enjoyed since 1989 has led to the weakening of the national position of the church and the strengthening of secularization processes.

Catholicism in Poland is less rooted among the intelligentsia and white-collar professionals. Historically, the religion has tended to be more mystical than intellectual, and its chief feature is the cult of Mary, whose shrine in Czstochowa is the spiritual center of Poland, reflecting the simple, direct, and uncomplicated faith of the people. Present-day church-state relations are very good and are regulated by laws and a concordat with the Vatican. In 1990 religion returned to schools after being banned from the classroom. Parents and older children have the right to decide whether they will attend religion or ethics classes.

The autocephalous Orthodox Church of Poland traces its origin to the 10th century. By the 2000s it was reduced to 10 percent of its former size due to the border changes implemented after World War II. Of the various Protestant denominations, only about one-third are recognized as churches, with the others considered "religious organizations." Upper Silesia is the most Protestant part of the country. The largest Protestant body is the Lutheran Church, followed by the Reformed Church and the United Evangelical Church. There are several

non-Roman Catholic churches, the largest being the Old Catholic Mariavite Church, founded in 1906. Of the non-Christian religions, Judaism is the most important. In all, non-Roman Catholics constitute only 5 percent of Poland's population. Religious toleration is granted by the Polish constitution.

Religious Affiliations

Roman Catholic	36,700,000
Eastern Orthodox, Protestant, and Other	1,900,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The ancestors of modern Poles were the West Slavs who lived in the Oder and Vistula valleys. In the seventh century these tribes coalesced. The Polanie tribe led by Duke Mieszko (r. 960–92) united several other Slavic groups to form the nucleus of the Polish state. Responding to the challenge from Germans, Mieszko sealed an alliance with neighboring Bohemia and accepted Catholicism. This event linked the destiny of Poland with that of western Europe rather than with that of the Orthodox east. Mieszko's policies were upheld by his son, Bolesław the Brave (992–1025), who in 1000 concluded an agreement with Holy Roman Emperor Otto III, organizing Polish dioceses under the jurisdiction of an archiepiscopal see at Gniezno, thus removing Poland from the orbit of Catholic German expansion. Bolesław, who in 1025 took the title of king, deeded his country to the pope.

The chieftains of the more powerful clans formed the nucleus of Poland's knightly estate, which gradually emerged at the end of the 15th century as a noble class, the *szlachta*. Among the *szlachta*, the wealthier families qualified in the 17th and 18th centuries as magnates. The nobility in Poland grew in numbers, by the end of the 15th century composing 10 percent of the population. The nobles from the 16th to the 18th centuries constituted the "nation" proper, and only they enjoyed political rights.

The descendants of Bolesław III (1102–38) were locked in a fratricidal struggle that enabled the Germans to seize Polish lands with impunity and the pagan Prussians to threaten Mazovia. In 1228 Mazovia's Duke Konrad called for aid from the Teutonic Knights, who thereupon established an autonomous state on Prussian lands. Meanwhile the Tatars, swarming across Russia and Kiev, menaced Poland but were stopped in 1241 at the battle of Legnica. This chapter of troubles ended with the unification of Poland under Kazimierz III, "the Great" (1333–70). A brilliant administrator, he fostered trade, reformed the currency, protected the Jews, codified the law, and founded the university of Kraków.

In its struggle against the Teutonic Knights, who controlled most of the southeastern shores of the Baltic Sea,

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Poland found an ally in Lithuania. To cement this alliance, the ruler of Poland, Jadwiga, was married to Grand Duke Jagiello of Lithuania, and the latter was baptized, taking the name of Władysław II (1386–1434). The union of Poland and Lithuania bore fruit when their combined armies defeated the Teutonic Knights at the battle of Grunwald in 1410. The Thirteen Years' War ended with the Treaty of Toruń of 1466, dividing Prussian territory between royal Prussia (Polish) and ducal Prussia.

The Polish monarchy emerged from the war against the Teutonic Knights much debilitated. To secure the military aid of the nobles, King Kazimierz IV (1447–92) had to agree to the Statutes of Nieszawa (1454), regarded as Poland's Magna Carta, in which he pledged to make no laws or binding decisions without the nobles' consent. With the privileges granted to the nobility earlier, which gave them personal and property immunity and tax and economic privileges, the nobles gained a status theretofore unknown in western Europe.

The late 15th and 16th centuries have been called Poland's golden age, as associated with the developments of culture, science, and political freedom. The first Sejm, or Diet, was convened in 1493. According to the *nihil novi* constitution adopted by the Sejm in 1505, all legislation thereafter required parliamentary assent. Political freedom was paralleled by religious tolerance also unequaled in Europe. While fierce persecutions and religious wars were waged elsewhere, Poland was "a state without stakes" and a recognized "heaven for heretics." Protestantism was an aristocratic and urban phenomenon in Poland and never touched the life of the masses. By the mid-17th century the nobility, with very few exceptions, had returned to Roman Catholicism.

Religious toleration was extended to Jews as well. The great influx of Jews had begun in the 14th century, when persecution drove thousands from western Europe (especially Germany). Local princes granted Jews privileges starting in 1274. King Kazimierz III extended these privileges to all Jews of Poland, granting them the status of "servants of the Treasury." Jews were granted charters of self-government among their own communities under the protection of the Crown. Their number grew from about 50,000 in 1500 to about 1.5 million in 1650.

Various threats posed to the Baltic states and to Ruthenia persuaded Lithuania and Poland to seek closer ties. The Protocol of Lublin in 1569 established the formal union of Poland and Lithuania under the Polish Crown. The union had a common diet and common foreign policy but separate civil and military administrations.

Since the death of the last king of the Jagiellon dynasty, Polish kings were chosen in popular elections. The first elected kings were all nonnative: Henryk Walezy, French (1573–74); Stefan Batory, Transylvanian (1575–1632); and Zygmunt III Waza (1587–1632). Waza moved the capital of Poland from Kraków northeastward

to Warsaw to improve his line of communications with Lithuania and Sweden. His continuous efforts to recover the Swedish Crown drew Poland into a disastrous conflict with the rising power of Sweden. After an invasion in 1655, Swedish troops occupied half of the kingdom; the war ended in 1660.

For three centuries the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and Muscovy had been in direct conflict. Beset by the Swedish invasion of Poland in 1655, the Commonwealth struck a compromise with Muscovy, to which it lost Ukraine in the 17th century. In addition to the loss of prestige and territory, Poland was left prostrate by the wars, with its best farmland devastated and its grain trade ruined. The election of Jan III Sobieski (1674–96) seemed to augur a revival in Poland's fortunes, but only briefly. The power of the nobles rendered the "royal republic" weak, relative to the rise of the autocratic kingdoms of Russia, Prussia, and Austria. The weakness of the political system made Poland vulnerable to foreign intervention. Bribery and corruption were rampant, and the country as a whole was without fiscal management.

Jan III Sobieski's successor, a Saxon prince named August II, got Poland involved in a war against Sweden, wherein most military action took place on Polish territory. After the death of August II, the late king's heir, August III (1733–63), was elected king with Russian help. The Russian invasion of Poland touched off a general European conflict, often referred to as the War of the Polish Succession (1733–35). Peace left August III on the throne but was otherwise advantageous to the Bourbons. During the reign of the Saxon kings there was virtually no central government, and the magnates, abetted by the foreign powers, ruled their small fiefdoms much as they willed. Shifting political alliances were managed by powerful families of magnates: Potockis, Radziwills, and "the Familia" (Czartoryskis).

By the time of the death of Peter the Great in 1762, Poland was virtually a Russian satellite state. Catherine II of Russia and Frederick II of Prussia agreed on the election of Stanisław II (1764–95). Before his ascent, an attempt was made to introduce reforms that would limit the *liberum veto* and introduce a ministerial government appointed by the Crown. The opposition nobles, fearing a strong central government, appealed for Russian intervention to protect their liberties; Russia was happy to do so. The patriotic nobles then joined together in the Confederation of Bar to mount an armed resistance to Russian occupation. The rising was suppressed after four years, when Frederick II proposed a partition of Poland among Austria, Prussia, and Russia that would put an end to Poland's anarchy.

In the first partition of 1772 Poland was compelled to give up nearly one-third of its territory and one-half of its resources and population. The partitioning powers also imposed on Poland a new constitution, which vested

executive authority in the council of the Sejm, elected by the delegates. The shock of the partition galvanized the Poles into a series of reforms embodied in the constitution of May 3, 1791. That document converted Poland into a hereditary monarchy with a cabinet of ministers responsible to the Sejm, nullified the anarchic *liberum veto*, and introduced the principle of majority rule. Serfdom was limited, as the first step toward its abolition. Cities once again became self-governing, and townsmen were enfranchised. State finances were reorganized, and the royal army was modernized. A modern secular school system was introduced.

The possibility of a resurgent Poland threatened Catherine II, and she found an opportunity to strike again when a group of reactionary magnates opposed to the progressive reforms formed the Confederation of Targowica and petitioned her for aid. With this semblance of legality, Catherine ordered 100,000 of her troops to march into Poland in May 1792. Joined by Prussia, they executed the second partition of Poland. The combined armies of Prussia and Russia crushed a popular uprising led by Tadeusz Kościuszko (1794). The failure of the insurrection was followed by the third partition of Poland in 1795, which erased Poland from the map of Europe, and the abdication of Stanisław II a year later. The once-proud Commonwealth ceased to exist.

At the time of Poland's disappearing from the map, the star of Napoleon was rising in France. The Polish Legion followed Napoleon in his campaigns in Italy, Spain, Egypt, and Haiti—as well as when his army entered Polish lands in 1806. A part of the Treaty of Tilsit agreed to the creation of an independent Polish state, designated the Duchy of Warsaw. The duchy fielded an army of 100,000 Poles for the ill-fated Russian campaign, of whom three-fourths perished.

After Napoleon's defeat at Waterloo, the Duchy of Warsaw was swept away at the Congress of Vienna, which confirmed the partition of Poland. Out of the remnants of the duchy, Czar Alexander I created the small Kingdom of Poland (Congress Kingdom) and made the city of Kraków and its environs a free republic. Poles were not appeased by such token acts of benevolence and wanted nothing short of the expulsion of the Russians. In November 1830 a military insurrection led by junior officers broke out in Warsaw and quickly spread to other garrisons. It ended in utter defeat.

Ruthless Russification followed. The Congress Kingdom was made an integral part of the Russian Empire and was ruled directly by a government department in St. Petersburg. Martial law was imposed, the use of Polish in schools was prohibited, the Polish universities were closed, civil rights were curtailed, Polish units were integrated into the Russian army, and the Catholic Church was singled out for harsh treatment. Defeat and oppression combined to set off the so-called Great Emigra-

tion, in which more than 10,000 Poles, the flower of the country's intelligentsia, departed. Official Russian policy softened after the accession of Alexander II in 1855, but the proposed conscription of Poles into the Russian army in January 1863 set off a new insurrection. Lacking the army that had defied the Russians in 1830, the insurrection consisted of a series of small-scale guerrilla activities that were doomed from the start. It was the last Polish attempt at armed opposition until 1914.

For the next half century the national mood was one of silent resignation to and acceptance of the Russian yoke. Many sought an outlet for their creative energies in "organic labor"—support of internal economic and social reconstruction. Changes in the moral and intellectual climate were promoted by the rapid industrial development of Russian Poland. When Poland was included in the Russian tariff system in 1851, its industry gained favored access to a huge market. Poland became the most important industrial region in the Russian Empire.

Austrian Poland, or Galicia, was economically the most backward of all Polish lands. Yet, despite limited economic progress, the Austrian Poles won important political privileges. After a defeat by Prussia in 1866, the Austrian government needed to secure greater political support from its Slavic subjects. Poles were introduced into the political administration, and a provision was made for seating local assemblies after the establishment of the Dual Monarchy of Austria-Hungary in 1867. Polish delegates exercised a key role in the Vienna parliament, where no party had an absolute majority. Galicia became an important artistic and cultural region centered in Kraków and L'viv.

Prussian Poland experienced the most oppressive rule of all. Eastern Pomerania was incorporated directly into the Kingdom of Prussia in 1815 as a province of West Prussia, but Posnania was recognized as a semiautonomous grand duchy under Prussian sovereignty. This limited autonomy was curtailed after 1827, and in 1848 the grand duchy was abolished and became a Prussian province. A Germanization campaign was launched as part of Bismarck's effort to rid Germany of all un-German elements, particularly Slavs. Courts and schools were conducted exclusively in German. Poles were subject to legal discrimination and economic pressures.

Polish Catholics responded by redoubling their religious and national zeal. Turning their energy to the economy, they achieved commanding positions in the industrial and agricultural sectors. The Poznań area became the richest and economically the most highly developed of all Polish lands. German efforts to colonize their Polish dominions failed because of Polish resistance.

At the outbreak of World War I, Poland was a major battleground. Warsaw was under German occupation between 1914 and 1915; both Austrian and Russian armies carried out scorched-earth strategies during their

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withdrawals. By 1916 a total of two million Poles were fighting on both sides, and Polish war casualties exceeded 450,000. After Russia signed the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk with Germany in 1918, ending its participation in the war, Poles turned to the Allies for support. In 1917 Polish exile leaders formed a National Committee in Paris. In 1918 the U.S. president Woodrow Wilson, prompted by his friend pianist Ignacy Jan Paderewski, proclaimed his Fourteen Points, the 13th of which stated that an independent Poland should be erected with access to the sea and political independence.

Inside Poland an anti-Russian independence movement took shape under Józef Piłsudski, which movement, with the collapse of the Central Powers, quickly organized a Polish government at Warsaw. Poland declared independence on November 11, 1918. The first order of the day was the demarcation of boundaries, but these were not settled until 1923, after several uprisings, military campaigns, and plebiscites. Poland adopted a democratic constitution in March 1921. Based on the French model, the nation installed a parliamentary system in which executive authority was vested in a government responsible to a bicameral legislature comprising the Sejm and the Senate. The presidency was weak and mainly ceremonial, in an apparent move to curb Piłsudski's power.

The parliamentary electoral system encouraged a multiplicity of parties. About 30 parties contested elections in 1920, and about 15 regularly won parliamentary seats. Changes of government were frequent. There were 15 short-lived cabinets between 1918 and 1926. From 1921 to 1926 the country was plagued by economic problems, including massive unemployment, inflation of food items approaching 1,200 percent, and the plummeting value of the Polish mark. Efforts to foster a recovery were dealt a death blow by the tariff war with Germany that erupted in 1925, affecting one-quarter of all Polish trade. A financial panic ensued.

The breakdown of the economy and the parliamentary process prompted Piłsudski to leave the sidelines and mount a coup d'état in 1926. He seized control after several days of street fighting and forced the resignation of both the prime minister and the president. Piłsudski refused the presidency, instead establishing himself as a virtual dictator. His authoritarian government operated under the facade of a democratic government, and he retained the post of a minister of war in successive cabinets. Piłsudski refused to consider one-party rule and relied for organizational support in legislation on the political alliance called the Nonparty Bloc for Cooperation with the Government (BBWR). His regime was supported by the army, the political left, and trade unions. However, he offered no political program beyond cleansing (*sanacja*) and the introduction of better public administration. With the help of a large group of technocrats, the Piłsudski regime carried out a modest economic recovery. The

government took an active role in stimulating economic growth through public investment, central planning, and state participation in vital industries and services.

BBWR members introduced legislation that led to the promulgation of a new constitution in 1935. The main feature of the 1935 constitution was the shift of executive authority from the legislature to the presidency. The army came directly under the command of the president and was independent of civilian control. The office was designed with Piłsudski in mind, but he died in 1935, and there was no potential successor of equal stature to replace him.

Poland had followed a conciliatory policy toward Germany during the early 1930s. As the threat of German expansion increased, the nation shifted to an independent policy, trying to maintain a balance between its two historic enemies, the Soviet Union and Germany. The German absorption of Czech lands foreshadowed Poland's destruction. In 1939 Poland accepted a British guarantee of its independence and forged a military alliance with Great Britain. Adolf Hitler believed that this pact was a bluff and countered it with a secret pact with Joseph Stalin calling for the dismemberment of Poland.

On the morning of September 1, 1939, Germany attacked Poland. Britain and France lived up to their treaties, declaring war against Germany on September 2, but did not react in the field. Soviet forces invading Poland on September 17 met hardly more than token resistance. Germany and the Soviet Union then partitioned Poland.

The period from 1939 to 1945 was the most tragic in the history of Poland. In those years more than six million Poles died, or about 15 percent of the prewar population. Of those six million, about 700,000 died in war-related actions and reprisals, and tens of thousands perished from starvation and other hardships. From the beginning the Nazis pursued a ruthless policy of genocide. For Hitler, Poland was a reservation, a vast labor camp. About one million Poles were deported, and another 2.5 million were sent to labor camps in Germany. The Russians were equally brutal; they deported some 1.5 million Poles to labor camps in Siberia, and about 4,250 Polish officers were executed and buried in a mass grave in the Katyn Forest near Smolensk.

A Polish government-in-exile was set up in 1939, with General Władysław Sikorski as prime minister. By 1945 Poles constituted the fourth-largest Allied contingent in Europe. Polish cryptanalysts were responsible for breaking the German code "Enigma," thus enabling the Allies to read the orders sent by Hitler to his field commanders. On the eastern front, the Kremlin had formed a front group, the Union of Polish Patriots, which grew by 1944 to field-army strength under the command of Gen. Zygmunt Berling. In Poland two underground armies, the Home Army and the People's Army, constantly harassed the Germans and on the eve of the liberation of Warsaw

led the ill-fated Warsaw Uprising. Following the liberation of Poland by the Red Army, the Communist-backed Polish Committee of National Liberation (PKWN) proclaimed itself as the sole legal authority in liberated areas, as led by two longtime Communists, Władysław Gomułka and Bolesław Bierut.

The Poland that emerged from the war was a different country. As per decisions made by the Allies at Yalta and Potsdam, Poland's new western frontier lay along the Oder and Neisse rivers, adding more than 100,000 sq km of German territory, including Silesia and Pomerania and the southern portion of East Prussia. At the same time Poland was forced to cede to the Soviet Union 180,000 sq km, including Vilnius and L'viv, and to Czechoslovakia the part of Cieszyn Silesia seized in 1938. As a result of these territorial adjustments, Poland's physical center moved westward, as accompanied by a large-scale transfer of population.

According to the Yalta agreement Poles were to hold democratic elections with the participation of politicians from both Poland and the Polish government-in-exile in London. Yet it was the Red Army, together with the Soviet secret police, that dictated the rules. In 1946 a referendum concerning nationalization, land reform, and the structure of legislative power was held. Communist politicians, along with their mentors in Moscow, wondered how far they could go in manipulating voting results; the referendum, by and large falsified and forged, proved a success for the new regime. By 1947 the Polish Workers' Party (Polish Communist Party) could stage elections to the parliament, and the leftist alliance won by a great majority. Full power was in Communist hands, backed by the Soviet secret police and Soviet and Polish armies.

The following years saw a great effort by the Polish people to rebuild their nation after the disaster of the Second World War. Warsaw, which had almost been wiped off the earth by the Nazis, became a symbol of new times and the rebuilding of the state. The economic situation was harsh, but people worked with enthusiasm. At the same time Poland, like other countries in the Soviet bloc and under Moscow's pressure, refused any assistance from the "imperialist" world (i.e., rejected the Marshall Plan). Politically, a hard, totalitarian line was established. With the Communist Party leading every domain of life, most other parties were abolished (with the exception of two functioning under Communist leadership), opposition politicians were sent to jail, and public trials were held in which Polish patriots were accused of collaborating with the Nazis as well as with the CIA, MI6, and the like. Thousands were imprisoned, many receiving death sentences.

Polish life did not improve with Stalin's death in 1953; only in 1956, following changes in the Soviet Union, did the situation start to change. After several demonstrations, and at the time of the Hungarian uprising, Polish

Communists were allowed to politically and socially liberate their country. Władysław Gomułka, the prominent Communist leader who had been arrested in the 1940s by his colleagues, left prison to become the first secretary of the Communist Party. The liberalization of political terror became known as the 1956 thaw.

Gomułka's policies did not seriously alter the state of affairs in Poland. He was faithful to Moscow and afraid of any radical economic reform. Although Stalinist terror was gone, the nation was still under the strict control of the Communist Party. The years 1968 and 1970 saw dramatic demonstrations against the Communist regime in Poland: In March 1968 students protested; many of them were thrown out of universities, along with their professors. Anti-Semitic hysteria followed, resulting in thousands of Jews being forced to leave Poland. In December 1970, when workers in Gdańsk protested, the party employed the police and the army. Many people were arrested, while others were killed, and Gomułka was forced to give up his seat to Edward Gierek.

Gierek introduced considerable changes in state (and party) policy. Poland was opened up to foreigners, and many Poles were allowed to travel abroad. Economically, Gierek encouraged the growth of consumption, finding funds with which to do so in foreign banks. Shops filled up with hitherto unavailable jeans, clothes, tape recorders, and other luxury goods. Poland started to produce large numbers of small cars for working-class people. All this was done, however, without the necessary economic calculus and mechanisms. In the mid-1970s the welfare myth collapsed, as Poland had to start paying back its debts. The government announced price rises in 1976, and strikes followed. Once more, riot police were called in, and workers were beaten up and arrested. No major changes followed.

The same pattern repeated itself in the summer of 1980: rises in food prices, demonstrations, and strikes. Following long negotiations with the party, strikers were allowed to form independent labor unions, with the appropriate agreements signed in August 1980. In effect, a huge labor union—"Solidarity"—was called to life. The leader of the strike in the Gdańsk shipyard, Lech Wałęsa, became its president, and Solidarity soon boasted almost 10 million members. The party appeared to have lost all its power, yet on December 13, 1981, the first secretary of the party and prime minister General Wojciech Jaruzelski introduced martial law. Solidarity was illegalized and its leaders arrested; almost 10,000 people were imprisoned.

The following years showed that neither the party nor the illegal Solidarity had enough force to take full control, and in 1989 both sides decided to start a dialogue. A roundtable discussion took place wherein all vital issues were discussed by the members of the government, the party, and the opposition. In June semifree parliamentary elections took place. The elections were an unquestioned

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success for Solidarity, revealing that the Communist Party had very limited backing in Poland. While Gen. Jaruzelski was elected president, in the summer Tadeusz Mazowiecki became the first non-Communist prime minister in central Europe after 1945. In January 1990 “shock therapy” economic reform was implemented, introducing a market economy in Poland. One month later the Polish United Workers’ Party (Poland’s Communist Party) dissolved itself, thus ending the Communist era in Polish history. At the end of 1990 the first free and democratic elections in postwar Poland took place, and Lech Wałęsa was elected president.

The 1990s saw steady growth and economic improvement. In 1997 Poland’s gross domestic product (GDP) surpassed the 1989 figure, and macroeconomic indicators remained promising. Growth was not always reflected in peoples’ individual situations, however, especially with the slow rise in salaries and very high unemployment. The former Communists established a new party, the Democratic Left Alliance (SLD), which became the country’s ruling party. Both President Alexander Kwaśniewski, elected president for the second time in 2000, and Marek Belka, who became prime minister in 2004, are members of the SLD.

In the early 2000s Poland was struggling to maintain its market economy and to improve the standard of living of its people. It joined the European Union in 2004 but faced massive modernization efforts in bringing itself in line with EU standards, particularly in the areas of agricultural subsidies and governmental corruption. The Roman Catholic Church was deeply involved in political discourse, raising concerns about the corruption of moral values due to the nature of modern life.

The SLD was defeated in parliamentary elections in 2005 by the conservative Law and Justice (PiS) and the PiS candidate Lech Kaczyński won presidential elections.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

President

1989–90	Wojciech Jaruzelski
1990–95	Lech Wałęsa
1995–2005	Aleksander Kwaśniewski
2005–	Lech Kaczyński

CONSTITUTION

Poland has a proud tradition of parliamentary governance. Poles cite 1493 as the year of the conception of their Sejm (parliament). Efforts were undertaken in the 18th century to reform and strengthen the Sejm, but the modern government act—the Constitution of May 3, 1791—never really had a chance at life due to the partitions of Poland. After World War II Poland found itself

under the full control of the Soviet Union, which instituted the Soviet model.

Dramatic changes took place after 1989, and a political contract was reached at a roundtable discussion. The National Assembly’s lower, legislative chamber (the Sejm) and upper, advisory chamber (the Senate) were organized. Also, the office of the president of Poland was established. These changes were confirmed in the 1997 constitution.

Poland is a democratic state. The National Assembly designates the prime minister, who is nominated by the president. The council of ministers reports to the Sejm, at the same time directing the work of various ministries and branches of state administration.

The president of Poland is elected in general elections for a five-year term. The president has legislative initiative and the power of a suspending veto toward laws issued by the National Assembly. The president also nominates ministers recommended by the prime minister. The president can, under specific circumstances, dismiss the parliament and order new elections (as Wałęsa did in 1993). He is the commander in chief of the army, nominates the government, and may declare a state of emergency.

The voting age is 18. Suffrage is universal.

PARLIAMENT

Poland’s National Assembly consists of two chambers whose members are elected for four-year terms through universal, equal suffrage and secret ballot. The lower Sejm is the main legislative body, comprising 460 deputies. The upper Senate consists of 100 deputies. The Sejm is the supreme organ of state power; it legislates law, adopts resolutions, and exercises control over executive and administrative bodies. The Sejm elects from among its members the speaker, deputy speakers, and committees. The Sejm’s deliberations are public. The Senate reviews the legislative work of the Sejm and may propose changes. It also has legislative initiative.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Changes in 1989 enabled the forming and registering of political parties, which was theretofore impossible. The new, temporary law made it so easy to register a party that the register in the Warsaw court soon counted over 350 political parties. Regulations of 1998–99 greatly reduced the number of significant parties represented in the National Assembly. In the 2005 elections only parties that won at least 5 percent of the total vote could enter parliament.

The Democratic Left Alliance (Sojusz Lewicy Demokratycznej, SLD) was founded by activists from the former Communist Party; it was the ruling party up to 2005, when it was soundly defeated in elections by Law and Justice (PiS), a center-right party. Other parties with

representation in parliament are the Citizen's Platform (PO), Self-Defense (SO), the Polish Peasant Party (PSL), the Polish Social Democratic Party (SDPL), the League of Polish Families (LPR), and the Labor Union (UP).

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Poland is divided into 16 *województwa*, or provinces: Dolnoslaskie, Kujawsko-Pomorskie, Lodzkie, Lubelskie, Lubuskie, Malopolskie, Mazowieckie, Opolskie, Podkarpackie, Podlaskie, Pomorskie, Slaskie, Swietokrzyskie, Warminsko-Mazurskie, Wielkopolskie, and Zachodniopomorskie. The country is further divided into *powlats* and communes, each with their own locally elected officials.

LEGAL SYSTEM

Polish law is based on a mixture of continental (Napoleonic) civil law and Marxist legal theory. The government is gradually phasing out the old Communist laws as it increases democracy. Laws are systematized in various codes. Judicial decisions are not regarded as a source of law, although Supreme Court decisions do influence lower court decisions.

Justice is administered by a hierarchy of independent courts consisting of district courts, provincial courts, and the Supreme Court. The courts have limited judicial review of legislative acts, although the Constitutional Tribunal's rulings on laws are final. Parties may appeal the decisions of Polish courts to the European Court of Justice in Strasbourg. The judiciary is independent, though it is also inefficient.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Poland has seen tremendous changes in the exercise of human rights and freedom since 1989. Amnesty International lists Poland as among the countries where human rights are fully observed and there is political and economic freedom.

Censorship has ended. There is no monitoring of mass media as a state policy. Mail and telephones may be monitored only with the special permission of the public prosecutor's office. There is freedom of speech, although one is not allowed to propagate fascism or racism.

There is freedom of association and assembly, and it is possible to organize and register various organizations and societies as well as political parties. Permits are required to hold public meetings, but in most cases they are granted if they do not interfere with everyday life. Freedom of religion is actively enjoyed by Poles in both theory and practice. There are no legal restrictions on

travel within Poland and abroad, although housing problems often make travel difficult.

The office of ombudsman was created in 1987. The ombudsman is the highest authority in the state representing citizens and acting on behalf of their constitutional rights before all state offices and agencies. Anyone may appeal to the ombudsman's office if he believes his citizen's rights were broken. The ombudsman is elected to the office by the National Assembly for a four-year term.

In 2001 Poland began permitting citizens to apply to see the files kept on them by the secret police during the Communist era.

FOREIGN POLICY

The most important feature of Poland's foreign policy after 1989 has been its independence of other states and governments. Following its breakaway from the dissolving Soviet bloc (including from the Warsaw Pact and the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, or COMECON), Poland's foreign policy became oriented around sustaining good relations with neighbors, both old and new, and establishing strong ties with the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and the European Union. Under the leadership of Minister of Foreign Affairs Krzysztof Skubiszewski and his successors, Poland managed to cast off its image as a Soviet agent. In modern times, the nation is active in all international organizations and bodies. Poland's military cooperation with western Europe and the United States was strengthened with its accession to NATO in 1999 and its active cooperation with the pact during the war in Yugoslavia. Poland joined the European Union in May 2004. It is also a member of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

Poland has very good relations with the Czech, Slovak, and Hungarian republics; after some minor problems, good relations were established with Lithuania. Relations with Belarus, on the other hand, are tense due to Belarusian domestic policy, in particular the lack of freedom of speech, the lack of democratic elections, and the prosecution of opposition. After the economic crisis in Russia and minor setbacks in mutual relations, both countries appear to be working toward better and closer cooperation.

The United States and Poland have had amicable relations since 1989. Poland supports the American military presence in Europe and has supported various U.S. operations in the Middle East. In 2003 Poland took over the leadership of about 9,000 troops in south-central Iraq; the government intended to withdraw those troops in 2005.

DEFENSE

Poland has a large military; the armed forces claimed almost 185,000 members in 2003. All males must serve a

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12-month period in the military. The nation is working to modernize equipment and restructure organization to conform to NATO standards, but it is hampered by budget constraints. Poland's top national security goal is to integrate its military with the forces of other EU and NATO nations.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 184,400
Military Manpower Availability: 9,673,712
Military Expenditures \$billion: 3.5
 as % of GDP: 1.71
 as % of central government expenditures: 5.2
Arms Imports \$million: 420
Arms Exports \$million: 89

ECONOMY

The Polish economy has undergone tremendous change since 1990, when what had been a centrally administered socialist economy was converted to a market economy. The United States and other Western nations supported Poland's efforts to cultivate free enterprise by lowering trade barriers, providing aid, and reducing debt. The economy grew rapidly in the 1990s, and Poland was taken off U.S. Agency for International Development assistance in 2000. Growth was slower in the early 2000s, and the nation suffered severe unemployment (20 percent in 2003). Still, the government has kept inflation at bay with tight monetary policy, and improved productivity in the private sector has helped. The state has privatized more than half of the formerly state-run industries. Foreign investors consider Poland a good business prospect because of its growth potential, its large domestic market, its EU membership, and its political stability.

Industry accounted for 31 percent of GDP in 2003, services for 66 percent. The main industries are iron and steel, coal mining, machine building, shipbuilding, food and beverage processing, textiles, and glass. One-third of Poland's exports go to Germany.

As of 2005 agriculture employed 16 percent of the workforce but brought in only 3 percent of GDP; the majority of farming households did not produce any commercial crops. The nation must face the necessity of withdrawing subsidies from unproductive farms, as the European Union is unwilling to pay for them.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 463
GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 12,000
GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 2.8
GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 3.1

Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:

Agriculture: 2.9
Industry: 31.3
Services: 65.8

Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:

Private Consumption: 65
Government Consumption: 18
Gross Domestic Investment: 18.4

Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 75.98

Imports: 81.61

% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 3.2

% of Income Received by Richest 10%: 24.7

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
165.3	182.1	192.1	195.7	197.1

Finance

National Currency: Zloty (PLN)

Exchange Rate: \$1 = PLN 3.7

Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 133.6

Central Bank Discount Rate %: 5.75

Total External Debt \$billion: 99.15

Debt Service Ratio %: 6.54

Balance of Payments \$billion: -3.831

International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 31.7

Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
3.4

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$billion: 1.2

per capita \$: 31.20

Foreign Direct Investment \$billion: 4.12

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year

Revenues \$billion: 44.52

Expenditures \$billion: 54.93

Budget Deficit \$billion: 10.41

Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 2.9

Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 0.9

Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 9.8

Irrigation, % of Farms having: 0.7

Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 108.6

Total Farmland % of land area: 45.5

Livestock: Cattle million: 5.28

Chickens million: 49

Pigs million: 18.1

Sheep 000: 340

Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 28.8

Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 255

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 32.2
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 10

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 76.5
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 87.3
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 2.26
 Net Energy Imports % of use: 10.7
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 29.3
 Production kW-hr billion: 134
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 117
 Coal Reserves tons billion: 24.4
 Production tons million: 178
 Consumption tons million: 149
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: 5.9
 Production cubic feet billion: 197
 Consumption cubic feet billion: 479
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels million: 96
 Production barrels 000 per day: 24.8
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 383
 Pipelines Length km: 1,772

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 81.61
 Exports \$billion: 75.98
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 7.7
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 4.0
 Balance of Trade \$billion: -3.831

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Germany %	24.4	32.3
Italy %	8.5	5.8
Russia %	7.7	—
France %	7.1	6.1
China %	4.3	—
United Kingdom %	—	5.0
Netherlands %	—	4.5
Czech Republic %	—	4.1

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 364,697
 Paved %: 68.3
 Automobiles: 10,503,100
 Trucks and Buses: 2,062,900
 Railroad: Track Length km: 23,852
 Passenger-km billion: 20.8
 Freight-km billion: 47.8
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 7
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 228
 Airports: 123
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 5.1
 Length of Waterways km: 3,997

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 13.7
 Number of Tourists from million: 38.7
 Tourist Receipts \$billion: 4.7
 Tourist Expenditures \$billion: 3

Communications

Telephones million: 12.3
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones million: 17.4
 Personal Computers million: 5.48
 Internet Hosts per million people: 20,834
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 232

ENVIRONMENT

Due to the lack of environmental policy prior to 1989 and the outdated and run-down industrial equipment still in use, the Polish environment is devastated. Though conditions have improved somewhat since the days of the Communists, major problems persist. Coal-fired power plants produce significant sulfur dioxide emissions, which cause acid rain, which in turn damages the forests. The water supply is polluted with industrial and municipal wastes. The country does not have a good system of disposing of hazardous wastes.

The country has passed strict laws regulating air, water, and soil pollution, but these often go ignored; government officials are reluctant to fine polluting factories because they are producing goods that the economy badly needs. Polish people are generally not well educated on the topic of the environment, and there is no arguing with the fact that stemming pollution will be expensive. Nevertheless, Poland will have no choice but to bring facilities up to EU standards, which will decrease future pollution.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 29.7
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: 18
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 27
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 404,284
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 7.8

LIVING CONDITIONS

Poland has a moderately high standard of living, though not as high as in western European nations; many poverty-stricken Poles wish their personal living standards were higher. Cities are fairly modern, though they are also polluted. The cost of living has gone up in recent years but is still low compared to Germany and other Western neighbors. Businesses are beginning to accept

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credit cards. Housing is in short supply, and many people live in fairly crowded conditions. Public transportation is widely available and inexpensive. More people are driving their own automobiles, though gasoline supplies and spare parts are not always available and cars are vulnerable to theft.

HEALTH

The government has been reforming the national health-care system, which has resulted in significant financial pressures. Despite such difficulties, Poles still have a good system of nationalized health care and are generally quite healthy. Life expectancy was over 74 years in 2004; infant mortality was low. Population growth has stabilized, with births and deaths nearly equal. Alcoholism is a problem.

Health

Number of Physicians: 85,031
Number of Dentists: 11,758
Number of Nurses: 189,632
Number of Pharmacists: 22,161
Physician Density per 100,000 people: 220
Hospital Beds per 1,000: 4.9
Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 8.51
Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 13
Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 6.1
Health Expenditures per capita \$: 303
HIV Infected % of adults: 0.1
Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
DPT: 99
Measles: 97
Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: —
Access to Improved Water Source %: —

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Polish food is filling, as based on potatoes, dumplings, and meat. The main vegetables are cabbage and sauerkraut, beets, and wild mushrooms. Typical spices include caraway seeds, dill, and marjoram. Most people eat three meals: breakfast (followed by a midmorning snack), a large lunch after work, and a small supper in the evening. People drink tea with nearly every meal. Vodka is a popular alcoholic beverage, as is beer.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 0.8
Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 3,370
Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 152.6
Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 147.3

STATUS OF WOMEN

Polish women do not as yet play an active role in public life, reflecting history rather than ideology. They enjoy full citizen rights and in the eyes of the law are equal with men. Due to the nation's Communist heritage, the majority of women have to work, as one parent's wages are not sufficient to support a family. In reality, the social, professional, and work status of women is lower than that of men. It is harder for women to find jobs, and their wages are usually lower than those of men in equal positions. Unemployment is also higher among women. There are far fewer women than men among managers of private and state companies and in politics. Gender studies are only now being introduced to universities, and very slowly. Feminist movements are very small and not visible.

Poland has liberal maternity and child-care leave policies. Abortion is illegal, except when pregnancy is caused by rape or endangers a woman's life.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 20
Female Administrators and Managers %: —
Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.0
Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 47.7

WORK

Poland's people had some difficulty adjusting to the market economy, losing their guaranteed jobs and pensions. One-fifth of citizens of working age can find no employment. About 16 percent of Poles work as subsistence farmers, growing food for their personal consumption. Many of these farmers will be forced to do something else in the near future, as the government's restructuring the agricultural sector to conform to EU expectations will probably end the family farm as the basis for traditional society. Younger people tend to move to the cities to look for work, further abandoning the country's agricultural roots. Some 29 percent of Poles worked in industry in 2002, while over half worked in services, including government, education, and medicine.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 17,020,000
Female Participation Rate %: 46.5
Labor by Sector %:
Agriculture: 16.1
Industry: 29.0
Services: 54.9
Unemployment %: 19.5

EDUCATION

In September 1999 Poland initiated educational reform. The eight-four system (eight years of primary school and four of secondary) was discarded in favor of a six-three-three system (six years of primary school, three of middle school, and three of high school). Primary school consists of six classes. The first three teach general knowledge, while the following three teach subjects grouped in discipline blocks. After graduation from primary school, all children study in a three-year gymnasium. The final stage of school education is carried out in three-year general or professional high schools.

The formal introduction of the new system will end in 2006, when the students who started the first gymnasium study in 1999–2000 will graduate from high school. After graduating from high school, students may continue education in one of over 90 state universities (including all types of schools) or in one of over 200 private universities.

Children start school at age seven, although they do have a year of introductory class when six.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 99.8
 Male %: 99.8
 Female %: 99.7
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 15.1
 First Level: Primary Schools: 19,823
 Teachers: 289,113
 Students: 3,221,253
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 11.1
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 98.0
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 1,705
 Teachers: 300,973
 Students: 2,248,392
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 13.2
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 90.8
 Third Level: Institutions: 179
 Teachers: 87,857
 Students: 1,906,268
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 59.5
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 5.6

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

In 2003 Poland's telephone system was in the process of being privatized. It was at that time underdeveloped and outmoded, and people had to wait months to have telephone lines installed. Cellular telephone operators were stepping into the breach, and there were already one-third more cellular telephones than land lines in the country. About nine million people were using the Internet.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 1,473
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 0.59

High-Tech Exports \$billion: 1.33
 Patent Applications by Residents: 2,324

MEDIA

The Polish press is free and diverse, and Poland has the largest broadcasting market in eastern Europe. The two state-owned television stations, Telewizja Polska (TVP) and TV Polonia, command the largest audiences, but there are also several commercial channels and a digital pay-TV station, Cyfra+. Cable and satellite television make foreign programming available to Poles. Radio has become less important in recent years, but there are still about 200 stations in the country, and more than half the population listen to the state-owned station Polish Radio.

Over 300 newspapers are published in Poland, although fewer than 30 percent of Poles read them. Most newspapers are privately owned, many of them by foreign companies. The *Fakt* tabloid was the biggest seller as of 2004.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 42
 Total Circulation million: 3.93
 Circulation per 1,000: 102
 Books Published: 19,192
 Periodicals: 24
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets million: 15
 per 1,000: 387

CULTURE

For most of the 20th century Polish culture was dominated by Communism and Socialist Realism. Realism informed all art forms, including painting, architecture, music, and literature; the Jewish author Isaac Bashevis Singer is one of the best-known artists of this period.

Following the fall of Communism, artists created new cultural sensibilities. Modern artists include the composer Henryk Górecki and the writer Ryszard Kapuściński. Music is increasingly popular, and the major cities host various musical festivals every year, such as the Music in Old Krakow Festival and the Wroclaw Cantans oratorio festival in Wrocław. Warsaw has a thriving music and theater scene, and the town of Gdynia holds an annual film festival.

Roman Catholic celebrations are extremely important in Polish culture. Christmas and Easter are the biggest celebrations, although every Sunday is an event.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 9,046
Volumes: 135,378,773
Registered borrowers: 7,331,957
Museums Number: 525
Annual Attendance: 19,642,000
Cinema Gross Receipts national currency million: 337.5
Number of Cinemas: 695
Seating Capacity: 211,000
Annual Attendance: 27,516,000

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Poles have kept many of their folk traditions despite years of Communist suppression of native culture. Individual towns have their own folklore and folk dances, which are often the bases for local festivals. Many folk customs revolve around Christmas Eve, when it is said that animals can talk and people can see into the future. Grinding poppy seeds on Christmas Eve is said to help a girl marry quickly, and eating a large dinner could ensure a happy future.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Polish people enjoy going out in the evening to eat, drink, and be entertained; concerts, plays, and movies are all popular forms of entertainment. Local festivals occur throughout the year, particularly in the early summer and early fall. People love to go hiking, especially on marked routes in the mountains. In the summer, sailing on the Masurian lakes is extremely popular. In the winter, Poles enjoy skiing in the Carpathians.

ETIQUETTE

Poles expect punctuality. They generally address one another by title and surname unless they are very familiar. When entering a business meeting, it is appropriate to give business cards to and shake hand with everyone present; men sometimes kiss the hands of women. Guests often bring flowers when visiting friends; it is rude to bring an odd number of flowers.

FAMILY LIFE

Most Polish families are small; the average woman had 1.4 children in 2004. Traditional family patterns were broken up by Communist rule as well as by the current tendency for young people to leave the countryside and move to the city. Couples are required to attend premarital counseling before marrying. Divorce is difficult; courts do not allow

people to divorce without serious attempts to save the marriage, and the church does not allow divorced people to participate in sacraments. Due to crowded living conditions and economic constraints, divorced couples occasionally find it impossible to obtain separate living quarters and must remain in the same apartment.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Poles wear typical Western clothing. Work clothing is fairly formal—dresses or skirts for women and suits and ties for men.

SPORTS

Poles engage in a variety of sports. Soccer is the most popular spectator sport, and people also play basketball, sail, fish, play golf, and participate in other activities, such as martial arts. Poland has always sent teams of athletes to the Olympics; historically, Polish athletes have performed quite well, especially in boxing, fencing, weightlifting, and track and field. The country typically performs best in the Summer Olympics.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1945** Provisional Government of National Unity is installed.
- 1947** In forged elections, held under strict police and army control and terror, Communist regime wins 80 percent of the vote; Bolesław Bierut is named president and Józef Cyrankiewicz prime minister. The Constitutional Act is passed as an interim constitution. Władysław Gomułka is demoted.
- 1948** Polish Workers' Party merges with Polish Socialist Party to form Polish United Workers' Party (Communist Party).
- 1949** Poland joins COMECON. The Sovietization of every domain of life takes place. Numerous opposition activists are arrested and often sentenced to death. Church-state conflict erupts as the Vatican excommunicates Communist activists.
- 1952** New constitution is promulgated.
- 1953** Stefan Cardinal Wyszyński, Poland's primate, is jailed.
- 1956** Bierut dies. Riots break out in Poznań in June. Gomułka is restored as first secretary in fall. Soviet troops stop outside Warsaw and do not interfere. The liberalization of life is referred to as the "thaw of 1956."
- 1968** Student and university demonstrations and riots occur. Government anti-Semitic campaign

- drives thousands of Jews to emigrate. Polish army joins Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia.
- 1970** Bloody riots in Gdańsk bring Gomułka down. Gierek, who replaces Gomułka, launches crash programs to industrialize the country through massive borrowing from the West.
- 1976** Food crisis triggers new riots. Forming of the first “formal” opposition groups (Komitet Obrony Robotników, KOR).
- 1980** Unrest sparked by rising prices and falling wages leads to wave of strikes, in particular at the Lenin Shipyard in Gdańsk. Gierek concedes to workers’ demands enumerated in the Gdańsk Agreement. Workers form a decentralized independent trade union, Solidarity, led by a 38-year-old electrician, Lech Wałęsa. Gierek is replaced by Stanisław Kania.
- 1981** As the political and economic crisis deepens, Gen. Wojciech Jaruzelski (first secretary of the party, prime minister, and minister of war) proclaims martial law. Solidarity is outlawed, and thousands of activists are interned. Military Council for National Salvation takes over the government.
- 1985** Jaruzelski resigns as prime minister to become chairman of Council of State. Zbigniew Messner is named prime minister.
- 1987** Government fails to win national referendum on political and economic reform.
- 1988** Messner is forced to resign and is replaced by Mieczysław F. Rakowski.
- 1989** A roundtable discussion between Communists and opposition leaders brings about a political contract, and Solidarity is effectively legalized. In first semifree parliamentary elections in 40 years Solidarity sweeps the polls, winning 99 of 100 seats in the Senate and all 161 (out of 460) open seats in the Sejm. Jaruzelski is elected president, but his nominee fails to form the government. Tadeusz Mazowiecki, from Solidarity, is elected prime minister, the first non-Communist prime minister in eastern Europe since the end of World War II.
- 1990** Polish United Workers’ Party is dissolved and replaced by Social Democracy of the Polish Republic. Solidarity is split into pro-Wałęsa and pro-Mazowiecki factions. Wałęsa wins the first general presidential election. Mazowiecki resigns as prime minister.
- 1991** First free parliamentary elections since World War II take place. Over 30 parties make it to the parliament.
- 1993** Hanna Suchocka’s government, coformed by Solidarity, is brought down by Solidarity deputies. Wałęsa dissolves the National Assembly, and the ensuing elections are won by Social Democrats and the Peasant Party. Some 30 percent of votes are cast for parties that fail to pass the necessary threshold. Social Democrats (former Communists) form the government with the Peasant Party. Solidarity finds itself a nonparliamentary opposition.
- 1995** Presidential elections are won by the leader of Social Democrats, Aleksander Kwaśniewski, who defeats Lech Wałęsa by fewer than 600,000 votes.
- 1997** Parliament promulgates new constitution. Parliamentary elections produce a major victory for the Solidarity-formed party Electoral Action Solidarity (Akcja Wyborcza Solidarnosc, AWS). AWS, together with Freedom Union (Unia Wolności, UW), forms a new government under Jerzy Buzek as prime minister.
- 1999** The government introduces four major reforms: to the administrative system, social security, health, and education. Poland joins NATO.
- 2000** The ruling AWS-UW coalition breaks up as Poland prepares for presidential elections. Kwaśniewski wins presidential elections, garnering 53 percent of valid votes cast in the first round of elections.
- 2001** The Democratic Left Alliance (SLD) emerges as the largest party in national elections. It forms a coalition government with the Polish Peasant Party, and SLD leader Leszek Miller becomes prime minister.
- 2002** The European Union invites Poland to become a member in 2004.
- 2003** The SLD ejects the Polish Peasant Party from its coalition after the latter fails to vote with the government on a tax issue. Poles vote in favor of EU membership.
- 2004** Poland joins the European Union. Miller resigns as prime minister; Marek Belka succeeds him.
- 2005** The conservative Law and Justice (PiS) party wins parliamentary elections; PiS candidate Lech Kaczyński wins presidential elections.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Polish Official Statistics
<http://www.stat.gov.pl/english/index.htm>
- Polish World
<http://www.polishworld.com>

PORTUGAL

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Portugal (República Portuguesa)

ABBREVIATION

PT

CAPITAL

Lisbon

HEAD OF STATE

President Jorge Sampaio (from 1996)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister José Sócrates (from 2005)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Parliamentary democracy

POPULATION

10,566,212 (2005)

AREA

92,391 sq km (35,672 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Portuguese

LANGUAGE

Portuguese

RELIGION

Roman Catholicism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Euro

NATIONAL FLAG

A green field at the hoist and a red field at the fly, with the red area two-thirds as wide as the green area. At the junction of the two is the national coat of arms in yellow, red, blue, and white.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

An armillary sphere, an ancient navigation instrument rendered in gold, is the background. On the white central escutcheon is the Cross of Redemption, made up of five small blue shields, each displaying a pattern of five white dots, or roundels, representing the wounds of Christ. The red border around the central escutcheon is decorated with seven gold castles.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“A Portuguesa” (The Portuguese)

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year’s Day), April 25 (Freedom Day), May 1 (Labor Day), June 10 (Portugal Day), October 5 (Implantation of the Republic), December 1 (Restoration of Independence), all major Christian festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

1143

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

April 25, 1976; revised 1982, 1989, 1992, 1997, 2001, and 2004

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Portugal is one of the smallest countries in Europe as well as the most westerly country of continental Europe, occupying the greater portion of the western littoral of the Iberian Peninsula. Its total land area is 92,391 sq km (35,672 sq mi), including the Azorean archipelago of nine islands, 1,287 km (800 mi) west of Portugal with an area of 2,300 sq km (888 sq mi), and Madeira and Porto Santo, 966 km (600 mi) southwest of Portugal with an area of 798 sq km (308 sq mi). Portugal proper extends 561 km (349 mi) north to south and 218 km (135 mi)

east to west. Its total land boundary is 1,214 km (754 mi), shared with Spain, and there are 1,793 km (1,114 mi) of Atlantic coastline.

The capital is Lisbon (Lisboa), on the estuary of the Tejo. It is the country’s largest port and largest city; Greater Lisbon accounts for more than 20 percent of the national population. The second-largest city, Porto, has the distinction of having given its name to the whole country.

For a small country Portugal has a variety of topographical features and soils. The most striking differences are between the north and south, with the Rio Tejo, Por-

Portugal



tugal's largest river, forming a convenient dividing line between the hilly to mountainous regions of the north and the rolling plains of the south. The major geographic regions correspond to the six provinces that existed from the Middle Ages to the 19th century.

The Minho is the historic cradle of Portugal. The beautiful river valleys of the Lima, Cavado, and Tamega cross the Minho from northeast to southwest, providing some of the finest scenery in Europe. The Serra do Geres area is known as Portuguese Switzerland. Although the soil is not very fertile, the high rainfall allows intensive cultivation.

Tras-os-Montes (literally, "across the mountains") is the northeasternmost area of Portugal. The region may be divided into two distinct climatic and geographic parts: the northern *terra fria* (cold land), an extension of the Castilian Plateau, with low rainfall and rocky terrain; and the *terra quente* (hot land), which has a more temperate and Mediterranean climate.

The central area south of the Douro, the second-largest river, and north of the Tejo is the Beira. It is dominated by Coimbra, an ancient town on the Rio Mondego. The northern part of Beira Baixa is a dry and windswept region. The Serra da Estrela (the Mountain Range of the Star), rising to 1,981 m (6,500 ft), splits the region in two. Coastal Beira (Beira Litoral) is one of the most fertile regions in the country.

The region of Estremadura includes the Tejo estuary, the capital city of Lisbon, and the important Tejo valley area known as Ribatejo. To the northwest of Lisbon and behind the Costa do Sol lies the Serra de Sintra, an area of considerable natural beauty celebrated by Shelley and Byron.

The Alentejo (literally, the land across the Tejo) is a vast area of gently rolling hills, generally rising to about 183 m (600 ft). It is a poor and sparsely populated region with low rainfall, virtually no natural vegetation, and infertile soils made more desolate by long, hot summers.

The Algarve, the southernmost region, was the last area to be recaptured from the Moors and retains a distinct flavor and identity. It is separated from the Alentejo by two mountain ranges: the Serra de Monchique in the west and the Serra de Caldeirao in the east. Its California-like weather permits sea bathing from March through September and accounts for its popularity with tourists.

The Madeiran archipelago consists of Madeira, 55 km (34 mi) long and 23 km (14 mi) wide, as well as the island of Porto Santo and the uninhabited Desertas and Selvagens. On the main island the land rises sharply from the coast to a height of 1,861 m (6,106 ft) at Pico Ruivo.

The Azorean archipelago is a volcanic mountain chain of nine islands divided into three groups: São Miguel and Santa Maria to the east; Terceira, Pico, Faial, São Jorge, and Graciosa in the center; and Flores and Corvo to the northwest. Thermal springs are features on the largest

island, São Miguel, on which the capital, Ponta Delgada, is located.

There are several zones of intense seismic activity as well as major geological faults in Portugal. The largest zones are concentrated in the Algarve, the greater Lisbon area, and the Rio Tejo estuary as far as Benavente. A disastrous earthquake on November 1, 1755, killed an estimated 20,000 people and caused extensive damage in Lisbon, Setúbal, Lagos, Portimão, and Faro. Severe earthquakes have also occurred in the Azores.

Geography

Area sq km:	92,391; sq mi 35,672
World Rank:	109th
Land Boundaries, km:	Spain 1,214
Coastline, km:	1,793
Elevation Extremes meters:	
Lowest:	Atlantic Ocean 0
Highest:	Ponta do Pico 2,351
Land Use %	
Arable Land:	21.8
Permanent Crops:	7.8
Forest:	40.1
Other:	30.3

Population of Principal Cities (2001)

Lisbon	556,797
Porto	262,928
Vila Nova de Gaia	287,597

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Portugal has two climatic zones: the northern and the southern, with the Tejo River as the boundary. Within these two zones are climatic subregions. The northern climatic zone has an average annual rainfall of 1,000 mm (39 in), varying from 1,000 to 1,800 mm (39 to 70 in) in Braga to 500 to 1,000 mm (20 to 39 in) in coastal Coimbra. Its temperatures are considerably lower than those in the south. Winter snowfall is common in the Serra da Estrela and the Serra do Gerez, but warm and humid Atlantic air currents tend to temper the cold along the northern coast. Mean temperatures at Braga (191 m; 627 ft) range from 9°C (48°F) in February to 18°C (65°F) in August. Viana do Castelo, on the coast, has virtually the same temperature range.

The northern interior is shielded from Atlantic influences by the mountains. The plateau of Braganca is bleak and windswept, while Vila Real, the center of the port wine region, has summer temperatures exceeding 38°C (100°F). Normal precipitation in the northern interior at Mirandela is barely 25 mm (1 in) in July and little more than 75 mm (3 in) in January. The usual temperature range, between 4°C (39°F) in January and 24°C (75°F) in August, contrib-

1918 Portugal

utes less to the harshness of life in the region than do the constant winds and lack of rainfall. The winter winds are southerly or easterly, and in the summer they bring the dust of the Spanish *meseta* and North Africa.

Southern Portugal has a Mediterranean climate, with low annual rainfall and mainly sunny days. The Algarve receives rain only in the late fall and winter, while the summer drought reflects the influence of the Azorean high-pressure system. At Caldas de Monchique (203 m; 666 ft) the temperature is 10°C (50°F) in January and the rainfall 200 mm (8 in), but in July the temperature is 24°C (75°F) and the rainfall 2.5 mm (0.1 in).

The climate of the Azores is moderate, but the winter months can be rainy and unpleasant, with gale-force winds. There are considerable variations in annual rainfall between the eastern and western islands of the archipelago. Flores averages 1,500 mm (60 in) of rainfall annually, whereas São Miguel registers only 750 mm (29 in).

Madeira has a mild, semitropical climate.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature

Northern Coastal Region from Porto to Lisbon: 48°F to 65°F
Northern Interior: 40°F in January to 75°F in August
Southern Portugal: 50°F to 75°F
Azores: 50°F to 80°F

Average Rainfall

Northern Coastal Region: 39 in
Braga: 12 in
Viana de Castelo: 9 in
Northern Interior: 1 in to 3 in
Southern Portugal: 0.1 in to 8 in
Azores: 29 in to 60 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Portugal has lush vegetation. The northern portion is covered with forests and has long been used to grow grapes, potatoes, rye, and corn. The central and southern regions are drier but also support a number of trees, including almond, fig, olive, orange, and cork trees, and grape vines. The valley of the Douro River is especially known for its fine grapes. Most animals are domesticated, including sheep and cattle, especially bulls raised for bullfighting. The Azores and Madeira are well known for their bird life. Whales live in the waters around the Azores.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 10,566,212
World Rank: 76th
Density per sq km: 114.1
% of annual growth (1999-2003): 0.6
Male %: 48.5

Female %: 51.5

Urban %: 53.0

Age Distribution %: 0-14: 16.6
15-64: 66.3
65 and over: 17.1

Population 2025: 10,806,000

Birth Rate per 1,000: 10.82

Death Rate per 1,000: 10.43

Rate of Natural Increase %: 0.0

Total Fertility Rate: 1.47

Expectation of Life (years): Males 74.25

Females 81.03

Marriage Rate per 1,000: 5.4

Divorce Rate per 1,000: 2.7

Average Size of Households: 3.1

Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

The Portuguese are among the most homogeneous populations in Europe, with no national minorities. Racially, the Portuguese are descended from a historical mixture of ethnic groups, including Celts, Phoenicians, Greeks, Carthaginians, Romans, Vandals, Arabs, and Berbers.

There are an estimated 100,000 persons of mixed race among the refugees from African colonies, including 20,000 from Cape Verde. No racial problems have been reported between these immigrants and other residents in recent years. About 100,000 gypsies also live there, maintaining their own subculture.

LANGUAGES

The national language of Portugal is Portuguese. Mirandese is also an official language, spoken locally. Portuguese is one of the major languages of the world, spoken by more than 180 million people on four continents, including 163 million in Brazil. The Portuguese language arose in the 12th century as a synthesis of the Galego-Portuguese of the Christian north and the Morabic-Lusitanian of the Muslim south. Within modern Portuguese there are four principal dialects: the northern, or Interamense, in the Minho and Tras-os-Montes; the central, or Beirão, in the Beiras; the southern in the rest of the mainland, including Lisbon; and the insular in Madeira, the Azores, and Brazil. Portuguese is a distinct Romance language, also containing 500 words of Arabic origin. While Portuguese is spoken in Europe only by Portuguese nationals, another two million people north of the border, in Spain, speak Galego, a dialect of Portuguese.

RELIGIONS

The history of Portugal is bound with that of the Roman Catholic Church, and there are scarcely any historical events or movements lacking some religious content.

Missionaries accompanied Portuguese explorers on their voyages of discovery and played a crucial role in securing colonial lands. The state repaid this support by sharing wealth and, to some extent, political power with the church hierarchy. This beneficial symbiosis persisted well into the mid-18th century. Strong anticlerical sentiments surfaced in the late 1700s, however, and persisted through the second decade of the 20th century, challenging and debilitating church authority. Anticlericalism reached its acme during the early decades of the 20th century. Yet extreme measures eventually antagonized an essentially conservative people and led to popular reaction, and during the Salazar years, from 1932 to 1968, the church was restored to its former status.

On the basis of census figures and baptismal records, Portugal is an overwhelmingly Catholic country. The proportion of Catholics is among the highest in Europe, around 94 percent. The pervasive influence of the church is attested to by the physical layout of almost every village and town, with churches located in town centers or on hilltops in proximity to and in full view of villages.

Just as there are no ethnic minorities, there are no religious minorities of any size or consequence. Protestants constitute less than 0.8 percent of the population. The number of Jews—remnants of a once-flourishing Jewish community from pre-Inquisition times—is only a few hundred at most. Portuguese without religion constitute the largest non-Catholic minority, limited almost entirely to the south.

Religious Affiliations

Roman Catholic	9,900,000
Protestant and Other	630,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The history of Portugal, known as Lusitania to the ancients, began in 1139, when the independent kingdom of Portugal was founded by Afonso I, with the capital at Porto, from which the name of the country is derived. In previous centuries, the Lusitanians had been successively overrun by the Celts, Romans, Visigoths, and Moors. Within 50 years of the Moorish conquest early in the eighth century, the Christian kings of Asturias-León had retaken Braga, Porto, Viseu, and Guimarães in the Douro-Minho region. For the next 200 years this region became the buffer zone between the Moors and the Christians. As the Christians extended their reconquest, or Reconquista, this buffer zone was organized as the *Provincia Portucalense* (province of Portugal), a term first recorded in 883 to designate the Douro-Minho region. In 1096 King Alfonso VI of Castile-León gave hereditary titles to the counties of Portugal and Coim-

bra as a dowry to the crusader Henry of Burgundy on his marriage to the king's favorite but illegitimate daughter, Teresa. Their son Afonso Henriques (1128–85) made war on the Moors and defeated them at Ourique (ca. 1139), an event celebrated in Portuguese history and legend. During the next 150 years the dynasty that Afonso Henriques founded built a firm foundation for a strong kingdom. With the aid of foreign mercenaries, in 1147 Afonso Henriques captured Lisbon, which in 1298 became the royal capital. The Algarve fell in 1249 to Afonso III (1246–79), completing the Portuguese phase of the Reconquista. King Diniz (1279–1325) introduced Portuguese as the official language in place of Latin and imposed the use of Portuguese on the south. Portugal's borders with Castile were stabilized after 1295, although the threat of war with the stronger Spanish kingdom was a constant concern for Portuguese kings.

An alliance with the English, sealed by the Treaty of Windsor of 1386, was the cornerstone of Portuguese foreign policy for the next 500 years. The alliance was strengthened through the marriage of Philippa, daughter of John of Gaunt, to King João I. Philippa became the mother of an extraordinary line of royal princes who led Portugal into its golden age: King Duarte; Pedro the regent; Antonio the Crusader; João II; and Dom Henrique, better known as Henry the Navigator.

Overseas expansion was an extension of the Reconquista and its crusading impulses; Portugal became the first European nation to extend its territory outside the Continent. The campaign put the Portuguese in control of most of Morocco's western coastline by the end of the 15th century. Prince Henry the Navigator (1394–1460), who masterminded the early explorations, prodded his mariners to explore beyond Cape Bojador on the western coast of Africa, then thought to be the outer boundary of the knowable world. Portuguese sailors reached Madeira in 1420 and the Azores by 1427. In 1434 Gil Eanes rounded Cape Bojador and on succeeding voyages explored the mouth of the Gambia River and reached the Cape Verde Islands. Under João II (1481–95), exploration and trade became the dominant themes of Portuguese efforts. In 1484 the Portuguese rejected Christopher Columbus's recommendation for a westward approach to the Indies and committed themselves to an eastern route by rounding Africa. Between 1482 and 1484 Diego Cão explored the mouth of the Congo and the coast of Angola. Bartholomeu Dias rounded the Cape of Good Hope in 1487. The crowning achievement came in 1497 when Vasco da Gama rounded the Cape of Good Hope and sailed up the coast of Mozambique to Mombasa, in modern-day Kenya, and from there across the Indian Ocean to the Malabar coast of India. On his third voyage to India, in 1503, da Gama broke Arab power in the East with a telling defeat and confirmed Portugal as the dominant power in the Indian Ocean in the early 16th century.

1920 Portugal

In 1494 the Treaty of Tordesillas divided the New World between Portugal and Spain, Spain laying claim to regions to the west of a specified longitudinal line and Portugal to the east of it. In 1500 the fleet of Pedro Álvares de Cabral, bound for India, was blown off course and made landfall in Brazil—which lay on the Portuguese side of the line. He took possession of the new country, Portugal's only territory in the New World.

The task of creating the Portuguese Empire in the East fell to Afonso d'Albuquerque, viceroy of the East from 1509 until his death in battle in 1515. He was perhaps the single greatest strategic planner in the history of European imperialism. With his center of operations in Goa, India, which was captured in 1510, he constructed a string of military and commercial bases. In quick succession his forces seized Ormuz and Muscat to control the mouth of the Persian Gulf and established bases at Malacca, Sumatra, Timor, the Moluccas, and Ceylon. In 1513 the Portuguese were present in Canton and obtained commercial rights and later sovereignty in the enclave of Macao.

The first half of the 16th century saw the zenith of Portugal's seaborne empire under Manuel I (1495–1521) and his successors. In addition to power, the spice trade brought enormous profits to the court and the nobility. Rather than stimulate the domestic economy, however, overseas trade tended to depress it, as far cheaper colonial goods were imported into the country. Profits from the trade in sugar and spices dropped sharply after the middle of the 16th century. The quality of Portuguese technology eroded, and Portugal could not build ships fast enough to replace the ones lost at sea and to meet the needs of increased competition.

The final blow came when King Sebastião (1557–78) was defeated and killed by the Moors at Alcazarquivir. The royal house of Aviz survived him by only two years. For the next 60 years Portugal was under the Hapsburgs, beginning with Philip II of Spain.

There was considerable popular resistance to Hapsburg rule. Catalonia rebelled in 1640, and Portugal followed suit when required to assist Philip IV against the Catalans. The Duke of Bragança, the nominal commander of the Portuguese forces, was elevated by the nobles as João IV, and the union with Spain was effectively ended. The House of Bragança ruled the country during the 17th and 18th centuries as absolute monarchs after the manner of Louis XIV of France.

Despite the loss of much territory under Hapsburg rule, at the end of the 17th century Portugal was the pivot of three large empires: in Asia, where it retained Goa, Macao, and Timor; in Africa, where Mozambique and Angola had developed from small trading stations into large provinces, and where Cape Verde and Guinea-Bissau were under Portuguese rule; and in South America, where Brazil was the jewel of the Portuguese Crown. The discovery of gold in Brazil in 1687 financed Portugal's baroque flowering in the early 18th century.

Under José the Reformer (1750–77) the direction of government was vested in the hands of the remarkable Sebastião José de Carvalho e Melo (1699–1782), later the marquis de Pombal. Pombal became the veritable dictator of Portugal, running the most authoritarian regime known in 18th-century Europe. Pombal's dominance was reinforced by his rebuilding of Lisbon after the disastrous earthquake of November 1, 1755, in which 60,000 Portuguese died and the city was almost razed to the ground. Pombal also undertook restructuring of the state administration and economy. He launched the first official move in Portuguese history against the church, which had opposed his reforms. The Jesuits were expelled, and most church property was confiscated.

During the Napoleonic Wars the royal family—Maria I (1777–1816) and her son João VI (1816–34)—took refuge in Brazil, where a government-in-exile was established under British protection. After the British had liberated Portugal from the French, the royal family continued to live in Brazil as the head of the United Kingdom of Portugal, Brazil, and the Algarve. Discontent with this arrangement in Portugal led to the constitution of 1822, calling for a limited monarchy and a strong central government. João VI returned from Brazil, leaving his heir Dom Pedro behind. Dom Pedro, with British support, declared Brazil an independent state and took the title of emperor. On the death of João VI in 1826, Portuguese traditionalists supported the claims of Dom Miguel, the younger son of João VI. Pedro thereupon returned to Lisbon, where, backed by the army, he replaced the 1822 constitution with the Charter of 1826, which returned executive authority to the king. After the charter was adopted, Pedro returned to Brazil, setting off a fresh series of succession struggles that eventually ushered in Portugal's second anticlerical period.

The Bragança dynasty ended in 1910 with a revolution led by republicans. Manuel II (1908–10) fled with his royal family to England. The constitution of 1911, which formally inaugurated the Republic of Portugal, abolished the monarchy and provided for a parliamentary system of government, with executive authority vested in a cabinet and a president. The dominant party in the new Cortes, the representative assembly, was the Democratic Party, led by Afonso Costa, an uncompromising anticlericalist and radical. Catholic opposition, fueled by the apparitions of the Virgin Mary at Fátima in 1917, high inflation, poor harvests, and the economic strain of World War I bedeviled the government and destabilized the country. A wave of terrorism swept the cities, and between 1910 and 1926 there were 45 governments and 18 military coups.

In 1926 a military coup in Braga brought in Antonio de Oliveira Salazar, an economics professor and former seminarian, first as finance minister and later as prime minister. The period of military rule was brought to an end by the adoption of a new constitution establishing the New State (*Estado Novo*), in theory a corporate state

representing interest groups rather than individuals. Salazar's was a low-keyed, personalist rule without party or extensive ideology. A devout Catholic, Salazar also brought Portugal back into the Catholic fold and healed the divisions caused within Portuguese society by generations of anticlericalism.

Portugal remained neutral during World War II but extended moral and material support to the Allies. The taint of the Salazar regime's association with Fascism nonetheless kept the country from being admitted to the United Nations until 1955. On the other hand, North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) membership was extended from the beginning of the Atlantic Alliance in 1949. Portugal held on to its overseas colonies even as other European powers relinquished theirs, but in 1961 India successfully invaded Goa and incorporated Portugal's several Indian enclaves. The early 1960s witnessed popular uprisings against Portuguese rule in its three mainland African territories: Angola, Mozambique, and Portuguese Guinea.

Ill health forced Salazar to step aside in 1968 in favor of Marcello Caetano. However, popular weariness with the fighting necessary to contain the wars of liberation in Africa—and their debilitating effect on the Portuguese economy—prompted the military to depose Caetano in a nonviolent coup on April 25, 1974. The right of the overseas colonies to self-determination was recognized, and between 1974 and 1976 all were granted independence except Portuguese Timor, which was overrun by Indonesia, and Macao, which Portugal retained; in 1976 Madeira and the Azores were granted autonomous status. After two more years and a number of further coup attempts, a new, more democratic Portuguese constitution entered into force. The army chief of staff, António Ramalho Eanes, ran successfully for president, and a government led by the Socialist Party (PSP), under Mário Soares, took the reins of government.

Following the adoption of a revised constitution in 1982, the military's role in overseeing governmental affairs ended with the abolition of the Council of the Revolution. A grand coalition of the PSP and Social Democratic Party (PSD), formed under Soares in 1983, came to an end when the PSD, under its new leader, Aníbal Cavaco Silva, succeeded in setting up a minority government in 1985. Cavaco Silva guided Portugal into the European Community in 1986, privatized some state industries, and attempted a controversial revision of labor laws in the name of improving the business climate. In 1995, following several years of economic stagnation, the PSP won elections under António Guterres, a moderate Socialist. Guterres prepared the country to take part in the European Union's Economic and Monetary Union (EMU), primarily by shrinking its perennial budget deficits; Portugal joined the first stage of EMU in 1999. Toward the end of 1999, Portugal ceded its last overseas territory, Macao, to China; that same year the United Nations se-

cured the independence of East (formerly Portuguese) Timor from Indonesia.

In 2001 Prime Minister Guterres resigned after his Socialist Party suffered unexpectedly heavy losses in local council elections. Following general elections in March 2002, Social Democrat leader José Manuel Durão Barroso formed a center-right coalition government, promising cuts in corporate taxes and public spending. Barroso resigned on July 5, 2004, to take over the presidency of the European Commission, and the center-right Social Democrat Pedro Santana Lopes took over as prime minister. Lopes and his administration resigned on December 11, 2004, but stayed on to maintain the government until the February 2005 elections. Those elections resulted in the election of the Socialist candidate José Sócrates. Sócrates took office planning to bring the budget deficit under control and stem unemployment while simultaneously increasing economic growth.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1983–85	Mário Soares
1985–95	Aníbal Cavaco Silva
1995–2002	António Guterres
2002–04	José Manuel Durão Barroso
2004–05	Pedro Santana Lopes
2005–	José Sócrates

CONSTITUTION

Portugal is governed by the constitution of 1976 as amended multiple times, most recently in 2004. Amendments have placed the military under civilian control, reduced the president's power, privatized national firms and the media, and laid the foundation for creating a liberal democracy.

The government has four branches: the president, the government (the prime minister and Council of Ministers), the parliament (the Assembly of the Republic), and the judiciary. The president is elected to a five-year term by direct, universal suffrage; the voting age is 18. The president can confirm or dismiss the prime minister, confirm the Council of Ministers, veto legislation, and declare war. The president is also commander in chief of the armed forces.

The prime minister heads the government. The assembly nominates the prime minister, who must be confirmed by the president. The prime minister then selects the Council of Ministers, which is composed of six civilian officers, former presidents, five members chosen by the president, and five members chosen by the Assembly of the Republic. The Council of Ministers advises the president and creates a governing platform, which must be approved by the Assembly.

1922 Portugal

The Azores and Madeira are constitutionally autonomous.

PARLIAMENT

The national legislature is the unicameral Assembly of the Republic (*Assembleia da República*), consisting of up to 230 members elected to four-year terms by popular vote. The president is allowed to dissolve the Assembly and call for new elections.

POLITICAL PARTIES

The Portuguese Socialist Party (*Partido Socialista Português*, PSP) is the descendant of Socialist Action, founded in 1964 by exiled Socialist militants led by Mário Soares. The PSP is the best-organized and the most highly structured of the larger parties. Formerly similar to the left wings of most western European social democratic parties, in 1992 the PSP took a centrist approach, stressing markets and privatization as well as social equity. The party draws wide support from the working class, the urban middle class, and many professionals but has never been able to make much headway into the Catholic north. The Socialists have held the presidency since 1986, first under Soares and then under Sampaio.

The Social Democratic Party (*Partido Social Democrático*, PSD) is the largest of the opposition parties. Originally known as the Popular Democratic Party, it originally favored the nationalization of critical industries but had moved decidedly rightward by 1976. The PSD is a conservative party representing mostly the heavily Catholic northern region. Like other European liberal parties, the PSD generally favors private enterprise. In foreign affairs, it is pro-West and anglophile.

The Portuguese Communist Party (*Partido Comunista Português*) consistently drew 10 to 15 percent of the votes in every election from 1974 to the late 1980s, whereupon it began to slip and sought allies. In 1987 the Communists formed an electoral alliance with the Greens and the Democratic Intervention called the Unified Democratic Coalition. The Communists have cooperated to some degree with the current Socialist government.

The People's Party (*Partido Popular*), the main Christian Democratic party of Portugal, was formed under the rubric Social Democratic Center after the 1974 coup by officials in the precoup regime. Its political policies are based on the social doctrines of the Catholic Church. It has been in and out of governments since 1975 and in recent years has been marked by opposition to further integration into the European Union.

Minor parties include the Popular Monarchist Party, the pensioners' National Solidarity Party, the Green Ecologist Party, and the rightist Christian Democratic

Party. Three parties on the far left, the (Marxist) Popular Democratic Union, the Revolutionary Socialist Party, and Politics XXI formed a coalition called the Left Bloc, winning three parliamentary seats in 2002.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Portugal has a strong national government, and regional and local governments do not have much autonomous power. The three principal levels of local administration are districts (*distritos*), municipalities (*concelhos*), and parishes (*freguesias*). Additional administrative units known as wards (*barrios*) are placed between parishes and municipalities in Lisbon and Porto. There are 18 districts, each headed by a governor, a district council, and a district committee.

The Azores and Madeira have the status of autonomous regions, and each has its own popularly elected regional assembly and its own regional government.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The Portuguese legal and judicial system is based on Roman civil law as influenced by the French model. The system distinguishes between civil (commercial), criminal, military, labor, administrative, and fiscal law. There are two parallel court systems: the courts of justice system, with trial and appellate jurisdiction over civil and criminal cases, and the special courts system, which is outside the formal court system, with equivalent jurisdiction over military, labor, administrative, fiscal, and other cases.

The constitution guarantees judicial independence in stipulating that judges cannot be removed by the government. Matters of constitutionality are determined by a constitutional tribunal whose members are chosen by the Assembly of the Republic. Judges are appointed by the Higher Council of Judicature, a body comprising the president of the Supreme Court of Justice and the presidents of the appeals courts.

The court system is multitiered. Justices of the peace and municipal courts are at the lowest level. Above are the district courts in each of the 171 judicial districts. They have original jurisdiction in both criminal and civil cases and appellate jurisdiction over municipal court decisions. The appeals courts occupy an intermediate position between the district courts and the Supreme Court of Justice. The appeals court may sit in full or be divided in sections. The highest court is the Supreme Court of Justice, in Lisbon. Its jurisdiction is confined to matters of law in both civil and criminal cases. It is headed by a chief justice or president. The court can function either as a single body or in three chambers, each with five judges. Its members are appointed with lifetime tenure.

The special courts system covers military, labor, administrative, and fiscal justice, as well as traffic offenses and violations of food and drug regulations.

HUMAN RIGHTS

The human rights situation in Portugal has been stable since 1976, when the new constitution came into force. An ombudsman, elected by the assembly to serve a five-year term, is Portugal's chief human rights officer. Any citizen may apply to him or her for relief. The majority of the more than 3,500 complaints received annually deal with alleged bureaucratic lapses.

No person may be detained in jail for more than 48 hours after arrest unless a prosecuting judge orders preventive detention, which is limited to a maximum of four months for each crime. However, because of backlogs in the judicial system, detention beyond four months is not unusual. Portugal holds no political prisoners; nevertheless, radical leftists claim that certain persons imprisoned for participation in terrorist organizations have been political prisoners, including the 64 found guilty of membership in FP-25 (the Popular Front of April 25) and sentenced to prison terms in 1987. Human rights organizations have taken a dim view of Portugal's generally inhumane prison conditions and beatings of prisoners or those detained.

The freedoms of speech and the press are guaranteed by the constitution and monitored by the Council of Social Communication, which serves as a watchdog to protect the media from government interference. Fascist organizations are prohibited by law.

Workers are free to strike and to organize unions; they have protested against the alleged use of child labor in factories in the north.

The civil code provides for full legal equality for women. Some human trafficking in women and foreign laborers has been a problem.

FOREIGN POLICY

With the December 1999 handover of Macao to Chinese sovereignty, Portugal completely liquidated its former empire, once the third largest in the world, after those of Great Britain and France. Since the maintenance of the empire was one of the key tenets of the Salazar regime, its abandonment represented a 180-degree turn for Portuguese policy and helped Portugal to emerge from its isolation and reestablish healthy relations with both the Third World (including former colonies) and Western allies. Also in 1999, Portugal won a hard-fought foreign policy victory when, following years of bloody repression, Indonesia gave up its claim to the former Portuguese colony of East Timor and withdrew its army, paving the way

for the territory's eventual independence. There are a few residual problems with former colonies, notably the unending Angolan civil war and Portugal's inability to mediate a lasting settlement there. One of the stated purposes of Portuguese foreign policy is to "serve as a kind of a bridge between the industrialized powers and the Third World," a role for which it is uniquely equipped because of both history and geography. Portugal maintains ties to its former colonies through the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Peoples.

Like Brazil, Spain is often referred to as a sister nation by the Portuguese because of strong historical, religious, and cultural ties. Nonetheless, a desire to maintain separateness from Spain has traditionally led Portugal to look to Britain for political support and to France for cultural inspiration. After the restoration of democracy in both Iberian countries by the late 1970s, new ties had to be forged by the pair, which were both struggling to disentangle themselves from Fascist pasts. Most significant, Spain and Portugal gained accession to the European Community simultaneously, in 1986; subsequently, their interests within the European Union have frequently aligned regarding Middle Eastern or African policy.

Portugal remains a firm supporter of NATO and has participated in peacekeeping activities in the Balkans. It has a close relationship with the United States. By treaty, the United States enjoys refueling rights at Lajes Air Base in the Azores.

Portugal is keenly interested in European integration. The nation has held the presidency of the European Union twice.

DEFENSE

In numbers the military shrunk from 230,000 at the start of the 1970s to about 60,000 in 1999. Its role has been transformed from that of defending a far-flung empire to one only slightly removed from that of the police.

The constitution of 1976, as modified in 1982, depoliticized the army and placed it under the Supreme Council of National Defense. The president, however, remains the commander in chief.

The organizational basis of the army is territorial. There are four military regions in continental Portugal and independent territorial commands in the Azores and Madeira. Commanders of military regions are usually brigadier generals or senior colonels directly responsible to the chief of staff.

The navy was reorganized after 1974: It was given a new command structure, placing the chief of staff over 24 tactical and support commands. A separate air force was not established until 1952.

Portugal was an early partner in NATO. Its main contribution to the alliance has been the grant of the Azores base at Lajes, which has proved invaluable to the

1924 Portugal

United States. In the early years of the coup, relations between Portugal and its allies were uneasy. Portugal was for a time excluded from NATO intelligence reports and absented itself from the NATO Nuclear Planning Group. After 1977 Portugal gradually reestablished links and created a NATO brigade in 1978. In 1980 the army again participated in NATO exercises and was readmitted to the Nuclear Planning Group. NATO has Atlantic naval command bases in both Lisbon and Madeira, and Germany has an air force training base at Beja. Since Portugal's primary defense role today is giving support to NATO and the defense arm of the European Union through maritime and antisubmarine patrol and airbase facilities, modernization efforts have focused on the navy and the air force.

Recruitment is by selective conscription, the current term being 16 months in the army or up to 24 months in the navy or air force. Women serve as enlistees and attend the army, navy, and air force academies. Compulsory military service was ended in September 2004.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 92,600
Military Manpower Availability: 2,435,042
Military Expenditures \$billion: 3.5
 as % of GDP: 2.3
 as % of central government expenditures: 5.3
Arms Imports \$million: 68
Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

Portugal has made a great deal of economic progress since the end of authoritarian rule in 1974, when the nation was decidedly underdeveloped. At that time the government implemented an income equalization program and nationalized major sectors of the economy, in attempts to end family monopolies. The economy had grown tremendously by 1986, when Portugal joined the European Community. Most of the state-owned industries were once again privatized in 1989, and the nation deregulated the energy, telecommunications, and financial industries.

Growth was strong through most of the 1990s, as assisted by foreign investments creating new industries—such as in automobiles and their components, machinery, and electrical goods—as well as boosting certain customary trades, like glass, ceramics, and food processing. Growth fell in the early 2000s, and as of 2002 Portugal's gross domestic product (GDP) was still only 70 percent of that of the leading nations of the European Union. Some of its industries, such as the manufacture of clothing and shoes, are suffering from competition from developing nations. The poor educational system has not helped Portugal's quest for growth.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 188.7
GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 17,900
GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 1.6
GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 1.0
Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 5.9
 Industry: 30.2
 Services: 63.9
Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 60
 Government Consumption: 21
 Gross Domestic Investment: 22.3
Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 37.68
Imports: 52.1
% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 3.1
% of Income Received by Richest 10%: 28.4

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
110.7	113.9	118.9	123.1	127.1

Finance

National Currency: Euro (EUR)
Exchange Rate: \$1 = EUR 0.886
Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: —
Central Bank Discount Rate %: 3.0
Total External Debt \$billion: 274.7
Debt Service Ratio %: —
Balance of Payments \$billion: -8.12
International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 5.25
Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 2.1

Official Development Assistance

Donor ODA \$million: 271
 per capita \$: 25.60
Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 967

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
Revenues \$billion: 74.38
Expenditures \$billion: 79.86
Budget Deficit \$million: 5.48
Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 5.9
Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2002) %: 1.9
Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 8.49
Irrigation, % of Farms having: 24.0
Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 104.0
Total Farmland % of land area: 21.8
Livestock: Cattle million: 1.39
 Chickens million: 35
 Pigs million: 2.3
 Sheep million: 5.5
Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 8.74
Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 208

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 17.3
Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 1.1

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 1.35
Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 19.6
Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 1.9
Net Energy Imports % of use: 86.2
Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 10.4
Production kW-hr billion: 43.3
Consumption kW-hr billion: 42.2
Coal Reserves tons million: 40
Production tons million: —
Consumption tons million: 6.3
Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
Production cubic feet billion: —
Consumption cubic feet billion: 109
Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
Production barrels 000 per day: 3.8
Consumption barrels 000 per day: 342
Pipelines Length km: 8

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 52.1
Exports \$billion: 37.68
Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2002): 3.7
Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2002): 3.6
Balance of Trade \$billion: -8.12

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Spain %	30.0	23.9
Germany %	14.6	14.8
France %	9.8	13.2
Italy %	6.4	4.8
United Kingdom %	4.9	10.3
Netherlands %	4.7	—
United States %	—	5.7
Belgium %	—	4.4

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 17,135
Paved %: 86.0
Automobiles: 5,537,100
Trucks and Buses: 1,828,100
Railroad: Track Length km: 2,850
Passenger-km billion: 3.9
Freight-km billion: 2.5
Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 114
Total Deadweight Tonnage million: 1.24
Airports: 65
Traffic: Passenger-km million: 12.1
Length of Waterways km: 210

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 11.7
Number of Tourists from million: —
Tourist Receipts \$billion: 7.89
Tourist Expenditures \$billion: 3.25

Communications

Telephones million: 4.28
Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
Cellular Telephones million: 9.34
Personal Computers million: 1.4
Internet Hosts per million people: 32,753
Internet Users per 1,000 people: 341

ENVIRONMENT

Portugal's primary environmental battles are fought over the effects of soil erosion, air pollution resulting from automobile exhaust and industrial/power plant emissions, and the fouling of coasts by marine contamination. The conservation of maritime resources is a vital concern to a nation heavily dependent on its fisheries. Three of Portugal's fish species have been listed as endangered, as have several species of birds and mammals.

Air pollution and acidification are particular problems in the populated coastal plain stretching from Lisbon to Braga, which also has the greatest concentration of industry. The largest sources of water pollution are the food-processing industry, the paper industry, chemicals, textiles, and cattle ranching. Soil degradation has been caused by the alteration of natural drainage systems; the Alentejo region is the most affected. Portugal is especially vulnerable in this respect because so little of its soil is conducive to cultivation to begin with.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 40.1
Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: 57
Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 5
Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 131,200
CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 5.85

LIVING CONDITIONS

For the most part, Portuguese living conditions are modern and comfortable. On the negative side, air pollution in urban areas is a problem. Although the bus system is efficient and inexpensive, the train system is slow. Gasoline is expensive. On the whole, the cost of living in Portugal is lower than that in neighboring European countries.

HEALTH

For the most part, Portuguese people enjoy good health. Life expectancy is 77.5 years. The government has provided basic health care for all citizens since 1990. All citizens are guaranteed paid leave for illness or maternity, and the state provides old-age pensions and family allowances. In addition to public clinics and hospitals, there are many private health-care providers for those who can pay for their care.

Health

Number of Physicians: 32,498
 Number of Dentists: 4,370
 Number of Nurses: 37,477
 Number of Pharmacists: 8,056
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 324
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 5.05
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 5
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 9.3
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 1,092
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.4
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 99
 Measles: 96
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: —
 Access to Improved Water Source %: —

FOOD AND NUTRITION

The Portuguese eat a great deal of seafood. Popular fish dishes include *pasties de bacalhau* (dried cod cakes), *sardinhas assadas* (sardines grilled over charcoal), *bife de atum* (tuna steak), and *linguado grelhado* (grilled sole). Common vegetables include cabbage, kale, and potatoes, sometimes cooked together in a soup called *caldo verde*. People often finish a meal with sweet custard tarts called *pasties de nata*. Portugal has many good wines, but it is best known for the sweet, fortified wine called port.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 132.1
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 313.4

STATUS OF WOMEN

Women's emancipation in Portugal happened piecemeal over the course of the 20th century, except during the long period of dictatorship, which stalled all such progress. Even the dictatorial regime could not entirely hold back the waves of social change sweeping through Europe in the 1960s, however, and in 1968 women were

granted political rights on par with those of men except at the local level. Full equality under law was granted in the democratic constitution of 1975, which bars discrimination and protects women's rights to job opportunities and career advancement. In order to vitalize these guarantees in everyday affairs, Maria de Lurdes Pintassilgo, who became the country's first female prime minister, founded the Commission on the Status of Women; in 1977 this commission was upgraded to a government department. Its activity contributed to the passage of further legislation, in 1978 spelling out a woman's equal conjugal rights and authority, in 1979 further defining workplace rights, and in 1984 permitting abortion under certain conditions for the first time.

By the early 1990s slightly more than half those enrolled in higher education were female, and women participated in a number of professions, among them teaching and research at universities, law, and medicine. The economic growth the country enjoyed from the late 1980s onward boosted the fortunes of working-class women. Women represented 54.7 percent of the non-agricultural labor force in official statistics in 2004 and had garnered 19 percent of the seats in the Assembly.

Women can now receive integrated family-planning services at public health centers, and the government is under obligation to promote information on such services. Contraceptives are readily obtained, and abortion is now legal during the first trimester. Fertility, historically much slower to decline in Portugal than in other parts of Europe, has fallen steeply in recent times, from 2.2 children per woman in 1980 to just 1.5 in 2004.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 19
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.0
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 46.9

WORK

Many Portuguese people work in factories, producing textiles or clothing, paper products, cement, cork products, fertilizer, and other items. Many people on the coasts are employed by the tourism industry or in fishing; tourism is also important in the major cities. About 10 percent of the workforce is employed in agriculture, especially in the production of grapes and wine. Over half of the workforce belongs to labor unions.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 5,480,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 44.2

Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 10
 Industry: 30
 Services: 60
 Unemployment %: 6.5

EDUCATION

Portugal's educational system is adequate but has yet to become as good as it needs to be to help the nation take its place among the top-earning countries of Europe. Education is free for all children and mandatory between the ages of six and 15. Preschool is free for all children ages three to six, but preschools are scarce in some areas. The Ministry of Education formulates curricula for elementary and secondary schools. Instruction is in Portuguese, and students begin studying either English or French around the age of 10. There are both vocational and general secondary schools; students who want to go to university choose the general course. Students who choose vocational studies often leave school at 15 to go work.

Private schools are common, especially those run by the Catholic Church. The state provides subsidies to private schools. Private schools may teach religion, but public schools may not.

Portugal has several state-owned and private universities, as well as many regional polytechnic institutes, where students can prepare for specific jobs.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 93.3
 Male %: 95.5
 Female %: 91.3
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 16.1
 First Level: Primary Schools: 12,069
 Teachers: 69,578
 Students: 769,910
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 11.1
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 99.8
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 663
 Teachers: 89,586
 Students: 682,145
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 8.9
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 84.5
 Third Level: Institutions: 273
 Teachers: —
 Students: 396,601
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 53.1
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 5.9

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Portugal has an advanced telecommunications system, with state-of-the-art telephone lines and several million Internet users. The nation has growing computer, pharmaceutical, and automotive sectors as well as a substantial electronics industry.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 1,754
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 0.93
 High-Tech Exports \$billion: 2.34
 Patent Applications by Residents: 185

MEDIA

Most of Portugal's newspapers are published in Lisbon and Porto. *Diário de notícias*, Lisbon's oldest newspaper, was founded in 1864. Most newspapers are privately owned. There are a number of newspapers and magazines published by the Catholic Church and by political parties. The most important news agency is Agência Lusa de Informação. Two other local bureaus are Agências Europeias de Imprensa and Agência de Representações Dias da Silva. Various foreign agencies have Lisbon desks as well.

Most radio and television stations are privately owned, and many people watch international channels via cable and satellite. Public broadcasting has been the subject of some debate; as of 2005 it still existed. Public television is run by RTP-Radiotelevisão Portuguesa, public radio by RDP-Rádiodifusão Portuguesa. The Catholic Church runs the popular Radio Renascença.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 28
 Total Circulation million: 1.03
 Circulation per 1,000: 102
 Books Published: 2,186
 Periodicals: 242
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets million: 5.6
 per 1,000: 567

CULTURE

Portugal's culture combines Catholic and Moorish influences, most of which combined during the 16th century. Festivals honoring saints' days are extremely important to many people. Local architecture is covered with Moorish motifs, with the occasional surrealist twist; elaborate spirals, turns, and interwoven twists decorate many buildings, along with nautical images reflecting the country's seafaring past. The Portuguese tiles called *azulejos* are created using a technique learned from the Moors.

Portugal also has strong literary and musical traditions. The musical form known as fado is characterized by sad songs of the sort that would have been sung by 16th century sailors far from home. Portuguese literature also dates from that time. Gil Vicente and Luís de Camões were major poets from the 1500s, while Fernando Pessoa

1928 Portugal

is considered by many to be the most important Portuguese literary figure of the 20th century.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 304
Volumes: 8,964,570
Registered borrowers: 4,216,523
Museums Number: 134
Annual Attendance: 2,886,000
Cinema Gross Receipts national currency billion: 10.5
Number of Cinemas: 537
Seating Capacity: 143,040
Annual Attendance: 15,200,000

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Folk culture plays an important role in the lives of Portuguese people, especially those in rural areas, but also urban dwellers. Folk music and recreational practices are still common in the countryside, and rural people especially enjoy folk dancing. The festivals honoring saints have combined Catholic beliefs with pagan customs, such as the practice of giving away lupine seeds at the festival of Amarante, which was originally part of a pagan festival and is now part of the festival honoring the saint who helps single women find husbands. There are many shrines to saints in the countryside; the shrine at Fatima is one of the most important, commemorating the site where three shepherd children saw a vision of the Virgin Mary.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Portuguese people spend a great deal of time in cafés, meeting friends and spending time with relatives while drinking coffee, wine, and other drinks and eating snacks. Dance clubs are extremely popular; discos usually open at midnight and close at dawn. People also enjoy going to movies. In the summer, the beaches offer swimming, surfing, and sailing.

ETIQUETTE

Social hierarchy is very important in Portugal, both within the family and in society. People respect authority and always treat those senior to them with respect. Generally, one person in a group will make all decisions with little regard for the opinions of other group members. People do not address one another by their first names until they have been invited to do so; otherwise, they use the titles *senhor*, *senhora*, or *doutour* for anyone with a university degree. Close friends and relatives

greet one another with hugs or kisses. Dinner manners are fairly formal, and it is customary to bring a gift for the hostess when dining in someone's home; if the guest does not bring a gift that night, it is proper to send the hostess flowers the next day.

FAMILY LIFE

The Portuguese are still quite traditional in their attitudes toward family. Children typically live with their parents until they marry. Extended family ties are still important to the Portuguese, and it is common for grandparents, aunts, and uncles to participate in the raising of children. Women care for their aging parents, and it is rare for anyone to place an elderly relative in a nursing home. Divorce became legal for all in 1974. Traditional gender roles have been changing as more women enter the workforce, and children are feeling less bound by family pressure.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Most Portuguese people dress in typical Western clothing. A few people in the countryside still wear traditional garb: Men wear baggy pants and shirts with berets, and women wear long dresses with shawls. Some rural people wear dark clothing every day, saving their brightly colored costumes for festivals and weddings.

SPORTS

Soccer is the most popular sport; people like to watch it both live and on television. Track and field, roller hockey, and automobile racing are also common spectator sports. Tourists especially like Portugal's many excellent golf courses. Some people enjoy hunting for game birds.

There is bullfighting in Portugal; unlike in Spain, it is illegal for bullfighters to kill the bulls.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1940** A concordat with the Vatican reestablishes state aid to religious education.
- 1949** Portugal becomes a charter member of NATO.
- 1951** Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea are made provinces of Portugal.
- 1961** Indian government troops seize Goa; a rebellion against Portuguese rule arises in Angola, to be followed by uprisings in Mozambique and Guinea.
- 1970** Salazar dies and is replaced by Marcello José das Neves Caetano.

- 1974 The Armed Forces Movement removes Caetano from office and sets up a pro-republican junta under António de Spínola; Portuguese Guinea gains independence as Guinea-Bissau.
- 1975 Mozambique and Angola declare independence; Portugal abandons Timor, which is invaded by Indonesia a year later; Spínola is replaced by Francisco da Costa Gomes, who appoints as prime minister Vasco Gonçalves with his Marxist government program.
- 1976 General António Ramalho Eanes is elected president; the Socialists (PSP), led by Mário Soares, win a plurality in the Assembly.
- 1978 Soares resigns as his coalition government collapses.
- 1979 Francisco Sá Carneiro of the conservative Social Democrats (PSD) becomes prime minister.
- 1980 Sá Carneiro and his minister of defense are killed in a plane crash.
- 1982 A new constitution abolishes the military Council of the Revolution, completing the transition to civilian government.
- 1983 Soares returns as prime minister at the head of a grand coalition with the Social Democrats.
- 1984 The radical group Forças Populares de 25 Abril undertakes numerous terrorist activities; more than 40 are arrested, including Lieutenant Colonel Otelo Saraiva de Carvalho.
- 1985 The PSP/PSD coalition falls apart; after new elections, the Social Democrats form a coalition led by Aníbal Cavaco Silva.
- 1986 Soares is elected president, succeeding Eanes; Portugal joins the European Community.
- 1987 Cavaco Silva and the PSD gain an absolute majority in elections.
- 1989 Fire destroys the old Chiado district in Lisbon; amendments to constitution remove vestiges of Marxist ideology.
- 1991 Soares is reelected president in spite of accusations of corruption against his party; the PSD retains its absolute majority in parliamentary elections.
- 1995 Cavaco Silva resigns as prime minister; his successor also resigns in a dispute with Soares; legislative elections install the Socialist Party (PS) as a minority government; the new Socialist premier, António Guterres, presents budgetary cuts designed to align Portugal with the EU's Economic and Monetary Union criteria.
- 1996 Jorge Sampaio, a Socialist, wins the presidency.
- 1999 Portugal enters the first stage of the EMU.
- 2001 Jorge Sampaio is reelected president. After the Socialist Party suffers heavy losses in local council elections, Prime Minister Guterres resigns, and the parliament is dissolved.
- 2002 After general elections, Social Democrat leader José Manuel Durão Barroso forms a center-right coalition government. The euro becomes Portugal's currency.
- 2003 Forest fires destroy large areas of woodlands.
- 2004 Barroso resigns as prime minister and is replaced by Pedro Santana Lopes. Lopes resigns in December.
- 2005 The Socialists win the general elections in February. José Sócrates becomes prime minister.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Instituto Nacional de Estatística
<http://www.ine.pt/>

QATAR

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

State of Qatar (Dawlat Qatar)

ABBREVIATION

QA

CAPITAL

Doha

HEAD OF STATE & HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Emir Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani (from 1995)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Absolute monarchy; constitutional emirate

POPULATION

863,051 (2005)

AREA

11,437 sq km (4,416 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Arab, Pakistani, Indian, Iranian

LANGUAGES

Arabic (official), English, Farsi

RELIGION

Islam

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Qatari rial

NATIONAL FLAG

Maroon field covering about three-fourths of the flag, separated by a vertical serrated line from a white vertical stripe at the hoist.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A local sailing boat and coastal scene flanked by two crossed swords are shown within a circular border, white at the top and maroon at the bottom. The name of the state appears in Arabic in the white portion.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Qatar National Anthem”

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

February 22 (Emir’s Succession Day), September 3 (Independence Day), various Islamic festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

September 3, 1971

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

June 8, 2004

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Qatar, on a peninsula projecting northward into the Persian Gulf from the Arabian mainland, covers an area of 11,437 sq km (4,416 sq mi), extending 161 km (100 mi) north to south and 89 km (55 mi) east to west. It shares its land border with Saudi Arabia. The total length of the Persian Gulf coastline is 563 km (349 mi). The state also has sovereignty over a number of islands, of which Hawar and Halul are the most important.

The terrain is flat, barren, stony, and sandy. The land rises from the east to a low plateau to the center and north, pitted with scores of shallow depressions. The southern base of the peninsula is covered by extensive salt flats.

Geography

Area sq km: 11,437; sq mi 4,416

World Rank: 157th

Land Boundaries, km: Saudi Arabia 60

Coastline, km: 563

Elevation Extremes meters:

Lowest: Persian Gulf 0

Highest: Qurayn Abu al-Bawl 103

Land Use %

Arable Land: 1.6

Permanent Crops: 0.3

Forest: 0.1

Other: 98.0

Population of Principal Cities (1997)

Ar-Rayyan

161,453

Doha

264,009

Qatar



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CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Temperatures range from 6°C (42.8°F) in January to 48°C (118.4°F) in July. Humidity is oppressive along the coast. Annual rainfall ranges between 25 mm (1 in) and 210 mm (8.5 in).

Climate and Weather

Temperature Range
 January: 42.8°F
 July: 118.4°F
 Average Rainfall: 1 in to 8.5 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Almost no plants grow in Qatar, which is mostly desert. A few camels live there, but the majority of animals are desert birds such as the houbara and small desert creatures such as scorpions, crickets, lizards, geckos, grasshoppers, sand cats, and bats. Herds of Arabian oryx once lived on the peninsula, but they are now gone; the government has implemented a program to breed new oryx.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005:	863,051
World Rank:	154th
Density per sq km:	56.7
% of annual growth (1999-2003):	2.7
Male %:	65.3
Female %:	34.7
Urban %:	93.3
Age Distribution %:	
0-14:	23.7
15-64:	72.9
65 and over:	3.4
Population 2025:	1,154,000
Birth Rate per 1,000:	15.54
Death Rate per 1,000:	4.61
Rate of Natural Increase %:	1.1
Total Fertility Rate:	2.87
Expectation of Life (years):	
Males	71.15
Females	76.32
Marriage Rate per 1,000:	2.9
Divorce Rate per 1,000:	0.7
Average Size of Households:	6.4
Induced Abortions:	—

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Only one-fifth of the people living in Qatar are actual natives; some 80 percent of residents are guest workers from other nations. While 40 percent of the population is Arab, only half of these are native Qataris; the rest are Arabs from Egypt, Palestine, Iraq, Oman, and Jordan. Some 36 percent of the population is South Asian, evenly divided between Indians and Pakistanis. About 10 percent is Iranian. In 2001 about 6,000 U.S. citizens lived in Qatar.

As strict Wahhabis, Qataris are more conservative than neighboring Bahrainis or Abu Dhabians, and Qatari attitudes toward foreigners are, accordingly, molded by traditional attitudes of distrust. Economic recession in the 1980s prompted a resurgence of negative sentiment against foreigners.

LANGUAGES

The official language is Arabic, and the spoken dialect is Gulf Arabic as influenced by Farsi.

English is widely understood, especially in the business community and among the bureaucrats. It is taught as a second language in secondary schools.

RELIGIONS

Islam is the official religion, and most Qataris belong to the puritanical Sunni Wahhabi sect. The smaller Shia community is of Iranian origin. Christians are tolerated, and private Christian worship is permitted. Public worship of non-Islamic faiths, however, is prohibited, as is proselytizing by non-Muslims.

Religious Affiliations

Muslim	820,000
Other	40,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

While the Qatar peninsula was inhabited during the Stone Age, there is little archaeological evidence that there were any permanent inhabitants from ancient to modern times. The nation is the only one in the region that shows no Portuguese influence, which is remarkable since the Portuguese were active in most of the Middle East in the 16th century.

Once dominated by Bahrain, Qatar became part of the Ottoman Empire in 1872. Turkish occupation ended at the beginning of World War I, and in 1916 Qatar signed an agreement with Great Britain under which Britain would furnish protection in return for control over Qatari foreign affairs. In 1971 the relationship between Britain and Qatar ended by mutual agreement following the British decision to withdraw its forces from the Persian Gulf states. Qatar declared independence in September 1981.

The following year, Sheikh Khalifa bin Hamad al-Thani, the prime minister and heir apparent, deposed his cousin, Sheikh Ahmad bin Ali, in a bloodless coup approved by the royal family. He ruled the country until June 1995, when he was unexpectedly deposed by his son Hamad, until then the crown prince and defense minister, in another bloodless coup. Sheikh Hamad has earned the respect of foreign leaders for his reforms of Qatari society, including the lifting of censorship and the returning of funds his father was thought to have appropriated from petroleum revenues.

In March 1999 the country held its first elections to the Central Municipal Council, which has consultative powers aimed at improving municipal services. The historic event had low voter turnout, but did include women in the voting. That same year the emir had a committee begin drafting a permanent constitu-

tion, which Qatari voters approved nearly unanimously in 2003. The 2003 elections for the Central Municipal Council were notable in that they resulted in the election of a female candidate. In August 2003 the emir surprised his subjects by removing the rank of crown prince from his older son, Prince Jassim, and bestowing it on his younger son, Prince Tamim.

Qatar's new constitution was issued in June 2004. It was expected to gradually come into effect in 2005, along with the first real parliamentary elections to be held in the country.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

Emir

1960–72 Ahmad ibn 'Ali al-Thani
1972–95 Khalifa bin Hamad al-Thani
1995– Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani

CONSTITUTION

Qatar is an absolute emirate in the medieval sense of the term. An effort to clothe this absolutism in constitutional form was made through the Basic Law of 1970, which created for the first time a Council of Ministers and the Majlis ash-Shura (National Advisory Council). The emir, the head of state and head of government, also holds the portfolios of prime minister and defense minister and dominates the cabinet, which merely carries out his decrees. Of the 14 members of the cabinet, eight belong to the ruling al-Thani family.

Qatar's political institutions blend the characteristics of a traditional Bedouin tribal state and of a modern bureaucracy. There are no political parties or organized opposition to the government, and the emir exercises all executive and legislative powers. His autocratic rule, however, is checked to some extent by entrenched local customs. Interlocking family networks and the recognized right of citizens to submit appeals or petitions personally to the emir provide effective if informal avenues for the redress of grievances and also serve to limit abuses. The custom of rule by consensus leads to extensive consultations among the emir, leading merchants, religious leaders, and other notables on important policies. For the most part, women play no role in public life. However, women had the right to vote in the country's first elections to the Central Municipal Council.

Under Qatar's Basic Law of 1970 the emir must be chosen from among and by the adult males of the al-Thani family. This takes place with the consent of notables and religious leaders, according to established custom. There are no serious challenges to this arrangement, and in the foreseeable future effective political power will remain in the hands of the emir, his family, and the local notables.

Qatar's political situation is gradually changing. In 1999 Emir Hamad issued a decree forming a committee to draft a permanent constitution. A total of 96.6 percent of Qatari voters approved the new constitution in 2003, which came into force on June 8, 2004.

PARLIAMENT

The Qatari legislature is the Majlis ash-Shura, or National Advisory Council, with 35 members. The last legislative election for this body, which has little power or influence, was held in 1970; since that time, members of the Council have had their terms extended every four years. The National Advisory Council has little effective power or influence. The 2004 constitution provides for a new body, a 45-member Consultative Council. The public will elect two-thirds of its members, and the emir will appoint the rest.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Political parties are not permitted to operate legally in Qatar.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Local government is the responsibility of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs, which has divided the country into ten municipalities: Ad Dawhah, Al Ghuwayriyah, Al Jumayliyah, Al Khawr, Al Wakrah, Ar Rayyan, Jarayan al-Batinah, Madinat ash-Shamal, Umm Sa'id, and Umm Salal.

In 1999 the nation introduced a Central Municipal Council, which consults with officials providing municipal services. In the 2003 elections, one of the elected candidates was a woman.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The foundations of the legal system are the sharia (traditional Islamic law) and the Basic Law of 1970. The latter provides for an independent judiciary with five secular courts—two criminal courts, one civil court, one labor court, and one appeals court—and religious courts. Except for security cases, most disputes are judged before either a civil court or a sharia court. Most commercial litigation involving expatriates takes place before a civil court. The sharia courts administer criminal and family law and may, if one party requests, take jurisdiction in business cases. Although the judiciary is nominally independent, most judges are expatriates holding residence permits granted by the civil authorities and thus hold their positions at the government's pleasure. A new judiciary law issued in 2003 creates a single court of appeals,

the Court of Cassation, that hears appeals from both the civil and Islamic court systems.

HUMAN RIGHTS

In terms of civil and political rights Qatar is classified as a partly free country. It is difficult to apply modern standards of human rights to a traditional and authoritarian emirate such as Qatar, where political and social values are still bound by historic paternalism. There is an absence of freedom in all areas of public life, and citizens have no power to change their government, yet the lack of freedom does not create a climate of oppression, nor do the people yearn for a different social order; because the whole political and tribal structure is sanctioned by Islam, there is an immutability about it. Indeed, within the context of Arab culture, authority seems to flow smoothly through the traditional channels, and democratic concepts such as elections, constitution, and suffrage seem foreign and irrelevant. Within the limitations of a conservative society, people enjoy many of the freedoms associated with constitutional democracies.

The courts provide free and public trials. There is no prepublication censorship, and the few publications that exist accept government guidelines voluntarily. On the other hand, there have been sketchy reports of torture in security-related cases in the past, and many expatriate detainees complain of abuse. There is no organized labor movement, and strikes are not permitted. The predominant alien community is excluded from all political rights. There have been documented cases of the government restricting the freedoms of speech, assembly, association, and religion, though the government has been working to ease restrictions on the practice of religion. Women's rights remain seriously restricted. The abuse of domestic servants is a problem.

FOREIGN POLICY

In 1981 Qatar joined Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates in establishing the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) for joint action in military and economic matters. However, GCC unity has been periodically threatened by territorial disputes between Qatar and Bahrain and between Qatar and Saudi Arabia. The dispute with Bahrain concerns a small uninhabited island, Fasht al-Dibal, in the Persian Gulf. Tensions escalated in 1996 to the point where observers suggested that military action was possible. The dispute was concluded in 2001 by a ruling from The Hague, stating that Bahrain would keep the main Hawar Island and drop other territorial claims, while Qatar would keep specific maritime areas.

A dispute with Saudi Arabia over border demarcation simmered from 1992 to 1999, during which Qatar boycotted several GCC meetings, but since 1999 relations between the two countries have been amicable. Qatar, along with other GCC members, denounced the 1991 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and participated in allied air and ground military actions. Qatar also called for improved relations with Iran as a means of promoting regional stability. However, the nation later adopted a more lenient stance toward Iraq, calling for the lifting of UN sanctions for humanitarian reasons.

Qatar and the United States have had close relations since the early 1970s. The two nations coordinate diplomatic initiatives, work to increase security in the Persian Gulf, and enjoy close economic ties. Many of Qatar's young people go to the United States to study.

DEFENSE

The defense structure is headed by the emir, who is also the defense minister. The defense establishment is commanded almost exclusively by the members of the al-Thani royal family. As the supreme commander, the emir is assisted by the Defense Council and the commander of the Internal Security Organization. The total strength of the armed forces, staffed through voluntary enlistment, is 7,000.

Qatar has defense pacts with the United States, the United Kingdom, and France. By treaty obligations, Britain has been the traditional supplier of military hardware to Qatar. British supplies include combat aircraft and coastal patrol boats. Qatar has been actively involved in the collective defense of the Gulf Cooperation Council and collaborated with the United States during both wars with Iraq. The nation is host to the U.S. Central Command Forward Headquarters.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	12,400
Military Manpower Availability:	302,873
Military Expenditures \$million:	723
as % of GDP:	10
as % of central government expenditures:	—
Arms Imports \$million:	10
Arms Exports \$million:	—

ECONOMY

The oil industry was responsible for Qatar's transformation from one of the world's poorest countries in 1973 to one of the richest in 2004. Oil has given Qatar a per capita GDP three-fourths that of the leading western European industrial countries. Oil accounts for more than 30 percent of gross domestic product (GDP), roughly

80 percent of export earnings, and 70 percent of government revenues. Proved oil reserves of over 15 billion barrels should ensure continued output at current levels until 2023, and Qatar's proved reserves of natural gas exceed 900 trillion cubic feet, more than 5 percent of the world total and the third-largest supply in the world. The production and export of natural gas are becoming increasingly important. Long-term goals feature the extraction of off-shore petroleum and the diversification of the economy. Qatar has a large refinery, a fertilizer plant, a steel plant, and a petrochemical plant.

The United States is closely aligned with Qatar's oil industry, supplying most of the nation's equipment and helping develop infrastructure in the North Field. European and Japanese firms are also co-owners of many petroleum projects.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 19.49
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 23,200
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: —
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: —
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:

Agriculture: 0.3
 Industry: 58.2
 Services: 41.5

Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 16
 Government Consumption: 20
 Gross Domestic Investment: 22.9

Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 15
 Imports: 6.15

% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: —
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: —

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
113.3	115.7	117.7	119.3	120.5

Finance

National Currency: Qatari Riyal (QAR)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = QAR 3.64
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 11.3
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: —
 Total External Debt \$billion: 18.62
 Debt Service Ratio %: —
 Balance of Payments \$million: 5.187
 International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 2.8
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
 3.0

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 2
 per capita \$: 3.20
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: —

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: 1 April–31 March
 Revenues \$billion: 10.17
 Expenditures \$billion: 7.61
 Budget Surplus \$million: 2.56
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 0.3
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: —
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 0.46
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 61.9
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 50
 Total Farmland % of land area: 1.7
 Livestock: Cattle 000: 10
 Chickens million: 4.5
 Pigs 000: —
 Sheep 000: 200
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters 000: —
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 6.9

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: —
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 10

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 67.3
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 17.6
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 29.8
 Net Energy Imports % of use: –360.8
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 1.9
 Production kW-hr billion: 9.3
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 8.6
 Coal Reserves tons million: —
 Production tons million: —
 Consumption tons million: —
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: 910
 Production cubic feet trillion: 1
 Consumption cubic feet billion: 396
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: 15.2
 Production barrels million per day: 1.07
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 45
 Pipelines Length km: 702

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 6.15
 Exports \$billion: 15
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —
 Balance of Trade \$million: 5.187

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
United States %	12.2	—
Japan %	10.5	46.0
Germany %	9.6	—
United Kingdom %	8.0	—
Italy %	7.4	—
United Arab Emirates %	6.7	—
Saudi Arabia %	5.9	—
South Korea %	5.0	18.5
Singapore %	—	9.5

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 1,230
Paved %: 90.0
Automobiles: 199,600
Trucks and Buses: 92,900
Railroad: Track Length km: —
Passenger-km million: —
Freight-km million: —
Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 22
Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 773
Airports: 4
Traffic: Passenger-km million: 8.6
Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 76
Number of Tourists from 000: —
Tourist Receipts \$million: —
Tourist Expenditures \$million: —

Communications

Telephones 000: 184.5
Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.00
Cellular Telephones 000: 376.5
Personal Computers 000: 110
Internet Hosts per million people: 256
Internet Users per 1,000 people: 146

ENVIRONMENT

Qatar's greatest environmental problems are limited freshwater resources and dependency on desalination for potable water. Sandstorms and rainstorms are both problems; winter rainstorms in particular force many roads to close.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 0.1
Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: —
Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 1
Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 69.56

LIVING CONDITIONS

The citizens of Qatar enjoy one of the highest standards of living in the world. The vast majority of Qataris live in Doha, the capital city, a safe and modern place. Most families live in their own homes. The government provides housing for all citizens as well as for foreign workers. Many people have their own cars; women are permitted to drive. Traffic conditions can be alarming at times. A few people still live a nomadic existence in the desert, moving their tents from place to place. One of the biggest impediments to perfect living conditions is the climate; during the summer, temperatures can be as high as 122 degrees, with 90 percent humidity.

HEALTH

Qatar's people are very healthy. The Ministry of Health provides health and dental care to all citizens and residents; while care is free for citizens, foreigners must pay for some procedures. Private health care is also available to those who choose to pay for it. Most medical professionals are foreigners, though Qataris are beginning to fill such positions themselves. Fertility is relatively high, at almost three children per women in 2004, and as a result Qatar's population is quite young.

Health

Number of Physicians: 1,310
Number of Dentists: 220
Number of Nurses: 2,917
Number of Pharmacists: 530
Physician Density per 100,000 people: 221
Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 18.61
Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 7
Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 3.1
Health Expenditures per capita \$: 935
HIV Infected % of adults: 0.09
Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
DPT: 92
Measles: 93
Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 100
Access to Improved Water Source %: 100

FOOD AND NUTRITION

The staples of the Qatari diet are rice, bulgur, flat bread, olives, cheese, yogurt, dates, and the meat of lambs, sheep, and camels. Many kinds of seafood are available in Doha, and there are a number of foreign restaurants, including Western fast food and Indian and Pakistani restaurants. Spiced Turkish coffee is ubiquitous. As Qatar does not forbid alcohol, some people drink it, though devout Muslims do not.

Breakfast is usually quite early, served around dawn. Lunch is the largest meal of the day. Dinner is served late and is usually a small, light meal. Most Qataris eat with their hands, holding a piece of bread in the right hand and using it to scoop up food.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: —
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: —

STATUS OF WOMEN

In conservative Qatari society, women remain in a subordinate position; they are largely relegated to roles as mothers and homemakers, although some are now finding jobs in education, medicine, and the news media. Their activities are still bound by a number of social customs and quasi-legal restrictions, such as veiling, and they continue to face widespread discrimination. For example, women do not regularly receive the overseas university scholarships available to males, and their employment, while tolerated, is discouraged beyond such fields as nursing, teaching, and home economics. Public life is a male sphere for the most part. Expatriate women find it easier to obtain jobs or to own and manage a business than do their Qatari counterparts.

On the other hand, mandatory schooling for girls and the opening of employment opportunities for women in medicine and education represent shifts in attitude, as does the fact that a slowly expanding number of women are allowed to go abroad for university studies. There are signs that as more Qatari women receive education, they will press for the relaxation of some of the restrictions from their country's tribal past. Women are allowed to drive automobiles. A female candidate was elected to the Central Municipal Council in 2003.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: —
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.02
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 15.2

WORK

Most of Qatar's work is performed by foreign nationals, who work as doctors, nurses, teachers, and domestic servants; in the oil industry; and in any other capacity that Qataris cannot fill themselves. The government has

instituted a program of "Qatarization," which requires joint ventures and government employers to put Qataris in positions of authority whenever possible. Increasing numbers of Qataris are being educated abroad and return home to take important jobs formerly held by foreign residents.

The Qatari workday revolves around the heat. Work begins early in the morning. Most people take a break after lunch before returning to work in the late afternoon, when the heat lessens.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 140,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 17.9
 Labor by Sector %: —
 Unemployment %: 2.7

EDUCATION

Schooling is free but neither universal nor compulsory. The state provides students with free books, stationery, clothing, food, pocket money, and transportation.

Schooling consists of six years of primary school, three years of intermediate school, and three years of secondary school, for a total of 12 years. Boys and girls have separate facilities. The academic year runs from September to June. The medium of instruction is Arabic, but English is taught as a second language in secondary grades. Increasing attention is being paid to training teachers.

All of the children at the preprimary level and 7 percent of the children at the primary level are enrolled in private schools, including *kuttabs*, or traditional Muslim schools. Curricula in public and private schools conform to Arab League standards. The UN Development Programme Regional Training Center at Doha has 500 artisan and technical students.

In 1976 the teacher-training college established with the help of the UN Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization was upgraded, becoming the University of the Lower Gulf, with additional faculties for civil aviation, science, engineering, and administration. The university is divided into male and female campuses, each with its own facilities; as of 2004 there were more female students than male. All Qatari students who qualify are provided with state scholarships for higher education abroad.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 82.5
 Male %: 81.4
 Female %: 85.0
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 13.1

(continues)

Education (*continued*)

First Level: Primary Schools: 169

Teachers: 5,684

Students: 66,473

Student-Teacher Ratio: 11.7

Net Enrollment Ratio: 94.5

Second Level: Secondary Schools: 123

Teachers: 5,111

Students: 51,331

Student-Teacher Ratio: 10.2

Net Enrollment Ratio: 82.3

Third Level: Institutions: 1

Teachers: 650

Students: 7,826

Gross Enrollment Ratio: 22.1

Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: —

Books Published: 209

Periodicals: —

Radio Receivers 000: —

per 1,000: —

Television sets 000: 510

per 1,000: 866

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Qatar's government has been encouraging the development of science and technology, with enthusiastic support from the United States and other Western nations interested in the nation's vast oil reserves. In 2003 and 2004 the state built the Qatar Science and Technology Park, which had offices for Microsoft, Shell Oil, ExxonMobil, and other large high-tech companies. The nation has a modern telephone system and increasing Internet use; 126,000 Qataris were using the Internet in 2003.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —

Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —

High-Tech Exports \$million: 0.002

Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

Al-Jazeera, the pan-Arab satellite television station, broadcasts from Qatar. Launched in 1997, it has become well-known around the world as the most outspoken channel in the Arab world, as well as for its thorough coverage of the Iraq conflict that began in 2003. The station is careful not to criticize the Qatari royal family or government and is also known to treat Saudi Arabia with some deference.

Qatar's government ended media censorship in 1995, and the local press generally operates free from government interference. *Al-Watan* is the main Arabic daily newspaper. *Gulf Times* and the *Peninsula* are both printed in English. The main radio station is the state-run Qatar Broadcasting Service.

Media

Daily Newspapers: —

Total Circulation 000: —

Circulation per 1,000: —

CULTURE

Qatar's culture is based on Bedouin nomadic traditions. Poetry and singing are the most developed art forms, partly because nomads did not have to carry them. Bedouin weaving is excellent, and Qatar artisans are known for their rugs, cushions, tents, and saddlebags. Qatar's cloth was once held to be the best in the Arab world; tradition says that Mohammed likes garments made from Qatari cloth. Qatar is also famous for its embroidery and its elaborate gold jewelry, including giant bracelets and necklaces.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —

Volumes: —

Registered borrowers: —

Museums Number: —

Annual Attendance: —

Cinema Gross Receipts: —

Number of Cinemas: —

Seating Capacity: —

Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Qatar's folkloric tradition comes from the Bedouin culture. Folk singers and storytellers are popular entertainers at weddings and other festivals, performing ancient songs and reciting old stories. On Friday afternoons in Doha people go to watch traditional dances, such as the *ayyala*, a depiction of a battle performed to drums, tambourines, and cymbals.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Doha is a fairly quiet city, without much in the way of recreation. The waterfront area, called the Corniche, is a pleasant place to walk or picnic while watching the water; boat races are held there. The city has a popular amusement park called Aladdin's Kingdom. Wealthy Qataris sometimes drive to oases to camp in tents for the weekend, reliving the nomadic lifestyle.

ETIQUETTE

Hospitality is one of the most important virtues to Arabs, and Qataris are known for welcoming visitors enthusiastically. Male guests are received by male family members in the *majlis*, or reception area; female guests go to a different part of the house to visit the women of the family. This sexual segregation extends to all areas of life, including mosques, office buildings, shops, and elevators.

FAMILY LIFE

Though Qataris now usually live in individual houses that contain only immediate family, most people still think of themselves first and foremost as members of a clan and a larger tribe. People usually marry within their tribe, and most marriages are arranged. The groom's family must pay a bride-price to the bride's family before the wedding. Weddings are elaborate many-day affairs, with separate festivities for men and women. Family members are loyal to one another, and it is considered proper for children to care for their aging parents rather than allow them to be cared for by the government.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Most Qatari adults are covered with cloth from head to foot. Women wear a long black coat called a *darraa*, and on their heads and faces they wear a *hejab*, which exposes only the eyes, nose, and mouth; they often wear Western clothes underneath those garments. Girls veil themselves starting at age seven. Men wear a long white coat called a *thobe*, with loose trousers underneath and a headdress called a *gutra*, tied on with a length of black rope.

SPORTS

Falconry is a traditional sport popular among nomads and the wealthy. People also like participating in or watching boat, horse, and camel racing. Soccer is extremely popular, and Doha has 14 soccer stadiums. International sporting events hosted by Qatar include car races, golf and tennis tournaments, and the Qatar International Desert Marathon.

CHRONOLOGY

1971 Qatar declares independence as the United Kingdom withdraws from the Persian Gulf region, ending treaty obligations to Trucial Oman; an Anglo-Qatari treaty of friendship and cooperation is signed; Qatar becomes a member of the United Nations.

- 1972** In a bloodless coup, Emir Sheikh Ahmad ibn 'Ali al-Thani is overthrown by his cousin and prime minister, Sheikh Khalifa bin Hamad al-Thani.
- 1973** The Qatar riyal replaces the Qatar/Dubai riyal as the national currency; the Qatar Monetary Agency is established as the central bank.
- 1974** In line with Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) policy, Qatar acquires 60 percent of the assets of Qatar Petroleum Company and Shell Company of Qatar.
- 1975** Qatar begins negotiations for total takeover of Qatar Petroleum Company and Shell Company of Qatar, in line with OPEC policy.
- 1976** Qatar joins fund to aid Egypt, following visit by President Anwar Sadat.
- 1978** Qatar's economic development plans are reported to be slowing down as a result of shortages of skilled manpower and transportation bottlenecks.
- 1979** Qatar breaks with Egypt over the latter's peace treaty with Israel.
- 1981** Qatar joins the Gulf Cooperation Council.
- 1986** A territorial dispute with Bahrain nearly escalates to war.
- 1987** A Qatari freighter is damaged by Iranian forces. Diplomatic relations with Egypt are reestablished.
- 1988** Qatar establishes diplomatic relations with China and the Soviet Union.
- 1990** Emir agrees to the deployment of Arab and Western forces on Qatar soil following the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.
- 1991** Qatar sends ground troops to Saudi Arabia to back U.S.-led UN forces during the Persian Gulf War; Qatar and Bahrain submit their territorial dispute to the International Court of Justice (ICJ).
- 1995** Sheikh Hamad deposes his father, Sheikh Khalifa.
- 1996** An attempted coup is suppressed.
- 1997** Sheikh Hamad endorses legislation granting both men and women the right to vote for and stand for election to the Central Municipal Council, whose role will be to advise the sheikh.
- 1999** Elections are held for the Central Municipal Council; Sheikh Hamad appoints a committee to draft a constitution providing for an elected parliament.
- 2001** The ICJ settles the territorial dispute between Qatar and Bahrain.
- 2002** The United States develops its al-Udeid air base in preparation for war with Iraq.
- 2003** The U.S. Central Command base in Qatar coordinates the U.S. campaign in Iraq. Voters approve a new constitution. The emir names his younger son, Prince Tamim, as crown prince.

1940 Qatar

2004 Former Chechen president Zelimkhan Yanderbiyev dies in an explosion in Doha, resulting in deteriorating relations between Russia and Qatar. Qatar's first constitution is made official.

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OFFICIAL PUBLICATIONS

Qatar. *Annual Statistical Abstract; Economic Survey of Qatar* (annual); *Qatar Year Book*

CONTACT INFORMATION

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Amiri Diwan
<http://www.diwan.gov.qa/>
- Qatar Ministry of Foreign Affairs
<http://www.mofa.gov.qa/>

ROMANIA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Romania (România)

ABBREVIATION

RO

CAPITAL

Bucharest

HEAD OF STATE

President Traian Băsescu (from 2004)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Călin Popescu-Tăriceanu (from 2004)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Parliamentary democracy

POPULATION

22,329,977 (2005)

AREA

237,500 sq km (91,699 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Romanian, Hungarian, German

LANGUAGES

Romanian, Hungarian

RELIGIONS

Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Leu

NATIONAL FLAG

Tricolor of blue (left), yellow, and red vertical stripes of equal width

NATIONAL EMBLEM

The central element of Romania's coat of arms is a gold eagle with a cross in its beak, symbolizing courage, determination, power, and grandeur. The shield upon which it is placed is blue, symbolizing the sky. In its talons, the eagle holds a scepter and a saber. On the eagle's chest is a quartered shield with the symbols of the historical provinces of Wallachia, Moldavia, Transylvania, Banat, and Crisana, as well as two dolphins symbolizing the country's Black Sea coast.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"Awake, Romanians!"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

May 1 (Labour Day), December 1 (National Day), various Christian festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

July 13, 1878

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

December 8, 1991; revised October 29, 2003

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Located in southeastern Europe, Romania has a total land area of 237,500 sq km (91,699 sq mi) and borders the Black Sea, between Bulgaria and Ukraine. With a total of 2,508 km (1,558 mi) of land boundaries, Romania is bordered by Bulgaria, Hungary, Moldova, Serbia and Montenegro, and Ukraine. Romania controls the most traversable land routes between the Balkans, Ukraine, and Moldova.

Romania has 225 km of coastline. The terrain is composed of several topographical features: the Transylvanian Basin, which is separated from the Plain of Moldova, to the east, by the Carpathian Mountains and from the Walachian Plain, to the south, by the Transylvanian Alps.

The highest elevation is found at Moldoveanu, at 2,544 m (8,344 ft). All of Romania's rivers drain into the Black Sea, with almost all first joining the Danube. Romania has more than 2,500 lakes, but most are small, and in sum they occupy a mere 1 percent of the surface area.

Geography

Area sq km: 237,500; sq mi 91,699

World Rank: 78th

Land Boundaries, km: Bulgaria 608; Hungary 443; Moldova 450; Serbia and Montenegro 476; Ukraine 531

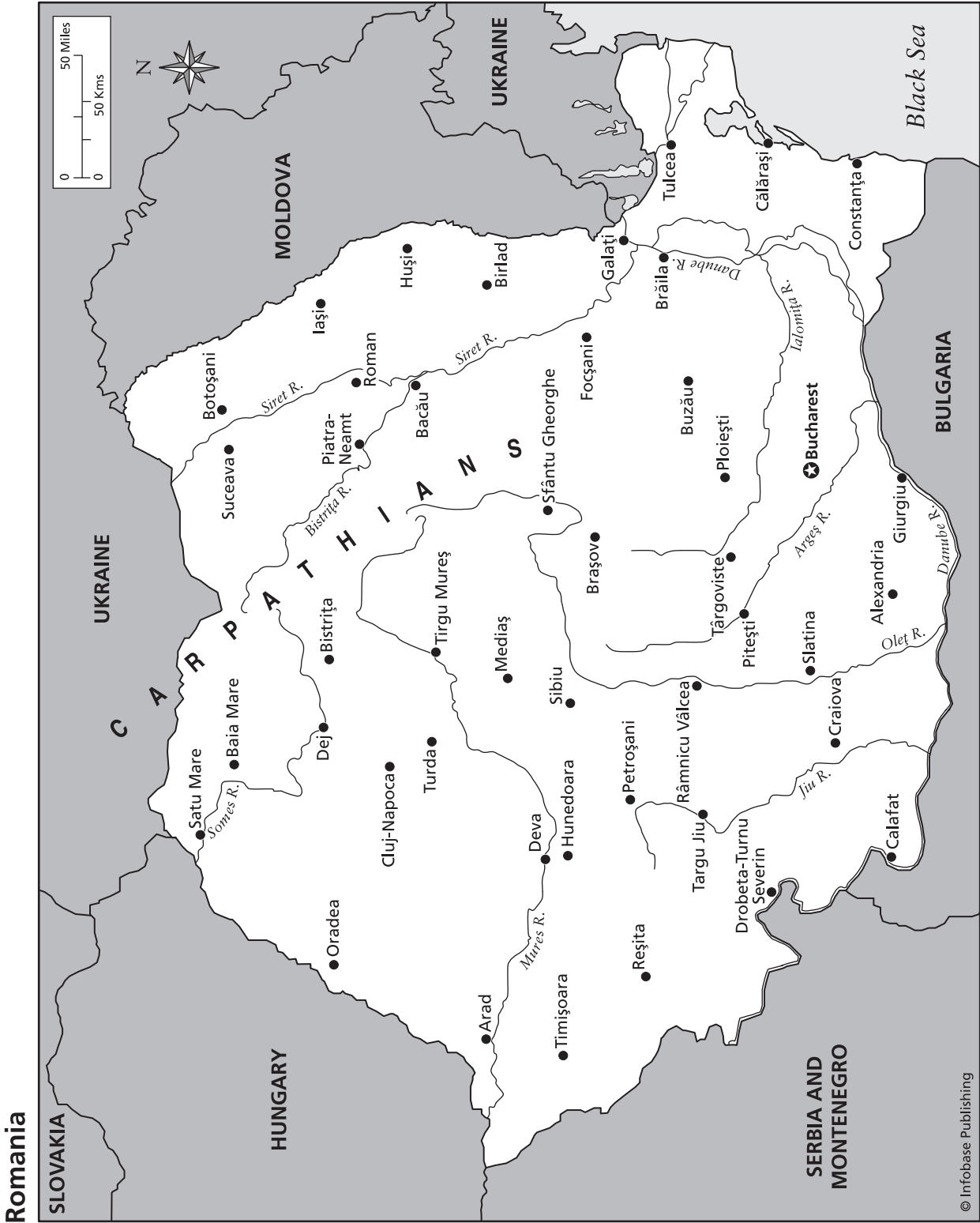
Coastline, km: 225

Elevation Extremes meters:

Lowest: Black Sea 0

Highest: Moldoveanu 2,544

(continues)



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Geography

Land Use %

Arable Land:	40.8
Permanent Crops:	2.3
Forest:	28.0
Other:	28.9

Population of Principal Cities (2002)

Brăila	216,292
Braşov	284,596
Bucharest	1,926,334
Cluj-Napoca	317,953
Constanta	310,471
Craiova	302,601
Galati	298,861
Iaşi	320,888
Oradea	206,614
Ploieşti	232,527
Timişoara	317,660

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Romania has a continental climate characterized by cold winters and hot summers. Weather and rainfall are dictated by the high-pressure systems that predominate over Russia and north-central Asia; only infrequently and briefly does Mediterranean weather prevail in the area. Winters are long and cold, with frequent fog and snow. Summers tend to be sunny and hot with comfortable levels of humidity, as the Carpathians confine humid air masses from the Atlantic to the western parts of the country. The mountains also prevent the movement into Transylvania and the western regions of both hot air masses in the summer, from the south, and cold, dry air masses in the winter, from the east. Consequently, precipitation is much higher, on average, on the Transylvanian Plateau and in the mountains than on the plateaus and plains to the east and south of the Carpathians. The Carpathian barrier also affects the distribution of temperatures, moderating the continental climate in the western regions. The Transylvanian Plateau rarely experiences the extremes of heat that occur on the Walachian Plain. Bucharest, inland on the southern lowland, is one of the warmest places in summer. In the eastern lowlands and along the Black Sea the moderating effects of sea winds make for slightly warmer winters. There are no places where summer temperatures are oppressively high or winter temperatures intolerably low.

As in many other areas in the Balkans, weather conditions are modified by local winds, such as the *crivat*, an easterly cold wind, and the *austru*, which brings dry air from the Mediterranean to the southwest in the summer.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature

Bucharest: January 27°F July 73°F

Average Rainfall: 28 in

Mountains: 50 in

Walachia: 20 in

Transylvanian Plateau: 20 in to 30 in

Bucharest: 23 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Because of its geography, Romania has a high degree of biodiversity and a number of relatively intact ecosystems, including forests, steppe grasslands, wetlands, and alpine and subalpine regions. The nation has about 3,700 species of higher plants, 4 percent of which are endemic. The alpine and subalpine forests consist primarily of conifer, while the forests at lower elevations consist primarily of broad-leafed species, including spruce, fir, oak, common ash, maple, poplar, and willow. The most important mammal species include brown bear, lynx, and wolf; Romania is home to 40 percent of Europe's wolf population and 60 percent of its brown bear population. There are nearly 34,000 animal species in Romania.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 22,329,977

World Rank: 49th

Density per sq km: 94.6

% of annual growth (1999-2003): -0.7

Male %: 48.7

Female %: 51.3

Urban %: —

Age Distribution %:

0-14:	15.9
15-64:	69.5
65 and over:	14.6

Population 2025: 21,260,000

Birth Rate per 1,000: 10.7

Death Rate per 1,000: 11.74

Rate of Natural Increase %: -0.1

Total Fertility Rate: 1.36

Expectation of Life (years): Males 67.86

Females 75.06

Marriage Rate per 1,000: 5.9

Divorce Rate per 1,000: 1.5

Average Size of Households: 3.1

Induced Abortions: 247,608

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

While Romanians compose 89 percent of the population, virtually every ethnic group in Eastern Europe is represented in the country. The largest minorities are Hungarians (Magyars), at 6.6 percent; Gypsies (Roma), at 2.5 percent;

1944 Romania

and Germans and Ukrainians, at 0.3 percent each, followed by Russians, Bulgarians, Czechs, Slovenes, Slovaks, Serbs, Croats, Tatars, Turks, and Jews; taken together, these groups represent less than 2 percent of the population.

The origin of the Romanians is subject to two differing interpretations. The Romanians contend that they are descended from the Dacians, a people possibly related to the Vlachs, who lived in the area before the Common Era. Conquered by the Romans, they were gradually integrated into Roman culture, preserving their language until the 10th century.

The second interpretation, developed by Hungarian historians, denies that the Dacians ever returned to Transylvania and the other regions that today make up Romania. This theory holds that after the Dacians left in the third century, the region was not settled by any group until the 10th century, when the Magyars moved in from the west.

LANGUAGES

The national language is Romanian, a Romance language derived from Latin; between 85 and 90 percent of the modern Romanian vocabulary is composed of Latin word elements. Romanian has also been influenced by contact with other languages, including Albanian, Slavonic, Hungarian, Greek, and Turkish. Slavonic is the most-used language for loan words. Hungarian is the principal minority language.

RELIGIONS

Romania is a predominantly Eastern Orthodox country. Adherents constitute 87 percent of the total population, followed distantly by Protestants, at 6.8 percent, and Catholics, at 5.6 percent.

Tradition holds that Christianity was introduced to Romania by the apostle Andrew and by the beginning of the third century had firmly established itself. Romanians were certainly among those martyred as part of the persecutions ordered by Emperor Diocletian.

Religious Affiliations

Eastern Orthodox	19,430,000
Protestant	1,520,000
Catholic	1,250,000
Other	89,300
Unaffiliated	44,700

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Romania emerges in recorded history as a region occupied by a tribe called the Dacians, whose expansionist

tendencies brought them into contact with the conquering Romans early in the Common Era.

Dacia flourished under the Romans, but under the steady predations of barbaric tribes from the east. Emperor Aurelian abandoned the region in 270 C.E., essentially leaving it to its own devices. Very little is known of the events that took place during the next 700 years, other than the fact that a Latin-speaking tribe known as the Vlachs occupied the area. Under their tutelage, the land was divided into Walachia and Moldavia, which became two separate principalities.

In the 15th and 16th centuries Walachia and then Moldavia were forced to yield sovereignty to the Turks, then sweeping across eastern Europe. For the next 300 years Romania became another vassal state of the Ottoman Empire.

Following the 1826–28 Russo-Turkish War, Russian armies occupied Walachia and Moldavia and began a period of enlightened rule that helped to lay the foundations of the modern Romanian state. In 1878 the country's full independence was recognized in the Treaty of Berlin, and three years later the Kingdom of Romania was formally proclaimed, with Prince Charles of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen acceding to the throne as King Carol I.

Romania entered World War I on the Allied side. After a series of reverses of fortune at the hands of the Central Powers, the nation was forced to sign an armistice and surrender territory. When the victorious Allies and the Central Powers concluded an armistice in 1918, Romania's prewar borders were restored.

The years leading up to World War II were marked by intense political instability. King Carol II first assumed the throne then vacated it, only to resume rule against a backdrop of increasingly Fascist activity, which culminated in the appearance of the quasi-military Iron Guard and its leader, a fanatical nationalist named Cornelius Codreanu. There followed an almost unending series of attempted coups and countercoups, palace intrigue, street demonstrations, and provocative acts of violence. Amid this political turmoil and social chaos, an attempt was made to suppress the Iron Guard, and Codreanu was shot.

Hitler's ascendancy in Germany as well as the Soviet Union's expansionist policies created a maelstrom of political instability in Romania, and Fascist, nationalist, and other conservative forces induced the country to form a close political, economic, and military partnership with Germany; Romanian gasoline fueled German tanks, while Romanian combat troops fought alongside German soldiers in the Soviet Union.

With the defeats and protracted retreats of the German, Italian, and Romanian armies in the Soviet Union between 1943 and 1945, the Soviet armies swept into Romania and demanded its surrender. The Romanians were forced to reenter the war on the side of the Allies and accepted the occupation of their country until a peace treaty

could be signed. At this time the Romanian Communist Party asserted itself and began the process of taking over the reins of power.

In 1965 Nicolae Ceaușescu assumed power. His years of rule were marked by patterns of brutality and corruption unmatched anywhere in the Soviet sphere of influence. In 1989, as Communist governments were toppling across Europe, Romania, too, found itself unable to hold back growing domestic pressure for reform. A difference, however, lay in Romania's power structure. Unable or unwilling to view the changes sweeping across eastern Europe as inevitable, Ceaușescu embarked on a policy of repression, culminating in an order to fire on unarmed students in a street demonstration in the winter of 1989. News of the killing of hundreds of protesters enraged the nation and catalyzed dissent on a massive scale. Widespread opposition became apparent when a progovernment demonstration held in the capital as ordered by Ceaușescu turned into a loudly anti-Ceaușescu protest.

Ceaușescu and his wife subsequently fled the city, only to be captured by soldiers loyal to the revolutionary movement taking hold in Romania. A quick trial followed, and Ceaușescu and his wife were found guilty of corruption and were immediately executed. Ion Iliescu became the interim president, and a new constitution was adopted in 1991. A period of turmoil followed, and in September 1992 general elections were held.

In 1992 President Iliescu was reelected, but his popularity eroded as a result of deepening economic woes. Emil Constantinescu won a decisive 53.5 percent victory in the 1996 presidential election. In the legislative balloting, the Democratic Convention won a plurality in both the Senate and Chamber of Deputies. Victor Ciorbea then headed a new coalition government as prime minister until 1998, when Radu Vasile replaced him. In 1997 the former king Mikhail returned to Romania, with his citizenship reinstated by the Ciorbea government. In 2000 Iliescu was returned to power, winning 67 percent of the votes cast in runoff elections. In 2004 Romania was admitted to the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), and that same year the nation's leadership formally admitted Romanian complicity in the Nazi holocaust of World War II. Late in the year centrist Traian Băsescu was elected president, and the European Union signed a treaty paving the way for Romanian admission to the European Union in 2007.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1965–89	Nicolae Ceaușescu
1990–96	Ion Iliescu
1996–2000	Emil Constantinescu
2000–04	Ion Iliescu
2004–	Traian Băsescu

CONSTITUTION

The most recent Romanian constitution was ratified on October 29, 2003. Romania is a multiparty republic. The principal institutions of the central government are the parliament, the State Council, the office of president of the republic, the Council of Ministers, and the court system. The president was originally elected by popular vote for a four-year period; the term has been increased to five years.

The president designates the leader of the majority party in the parliament to become prime minister. The prime minister in turn appoints a council of ministers. The choices of prime minister and the council of ministers must be voted on by parliament.

PARLIAMENT

Romania is a parliamentary democracy with a bicameral parliament composed of an upper house, the Senate, and a lower house, the Chamber of Deputies. The Senate has 137 seats, the Chamber of Deputies 332, both with members elected by direct popular vote through proportional representation to serve four-year terms.

POLITICAL PARTIES

There are over 200 political parties in Romania. Between 1996 and 1999 the principal government body was an eight-party coalition called the Democratic Convention, which included the Christian and Democratic National Peasants' Party, the National Liberal Party, the Romanian Ecologist Party, the Romanian Ecologist Movement, and the Hungarian Democratic Union. In 2000 parliamentary elections the Social Democratic Party of Romania, composed of conservative Communists who had supported the revolt against Ceaușescu, won the greatest number of seats, though not a majority. Its leader, Ion Iliescu, became president and formed a minority government. In 2004 the greatest number of seats were won by a coalition between the Social Democrats and the Humanist Party and by a similar coalition between the National Liberal and Democratic parties. Major opposition parties currently include the Greater Romania Party and the Democratic Union of Hungarians in Romania. The Communist Party remains proscribed.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Under 1968 reorganization law, Romania is divided into 41 *judets*, or counties, and 263 independent municipal administrations. Local councils function in all smaller towns, and there are approximately 2,685 communes in rural areas. Deputies to the councils are elected for four-

year terms, except for in communes, where the term is two years. Each council delegates its administrative powers to an executive committee and a number of permanent committees. The chairman of the executive committee is the equivalent of a mayor. Since executive committees meet only once a month, day-to-day affairs are conducted by even smaller bodies, standing bureaus.

LEGAL SYSTEM

Like most continental countries, Romania follows the civil law system. The judiciary and the legal system are governed by the 1991 constitution as well as the 1968 Law on the Organization of the Court System, which assigned overall responsibility to the Ministry of Justice and its six directorates. Under the constitution, the Supreme Court is subordinate to the parliament, which appoints justices for four-year terms. The Supreme Court functions principally as an appeals court, but, in certain matters specified by law, it may act as a court of first instance. It may also issue directives on legal and constitutional issues for the guidance of lower courts and administrative agencies. Subordinate courts include *judet* courts and the municipal court of Bucharest. Each court is presided over by a panel of two judges and three lay jurors known as people's assessors, and decisions are made by majority vote. At the bottom tier are the lower courts, presided over by panels composed of one judge and two people's assessors. General supervision over the application of the law and the initiation of criminal proceedings is exercised by the office of the prosecutor general, who is elected by parliament for four-year terms. Subunits of the office of prosecutor general exist in every judicial district.

HUMAN RIGHTS

The 1991 Romanian constitution incorporates the UN's Declaration of Human Rights as the central tenet regarding the rights and freedoms of the nation's citizens. Thus, the constitution proclaims the rights to life and personal privacy and the freedoms to associate, of expression and conscience, of movement, and from torture and arbitrary arrest and imprisonment.

In practice, following the years of secret police brutality under Nicolae Ceaușescu, there has been profound improvement in the administration of justice and internal security and in the handling of such issues as political expression and dissent.

FOREIGN POLICY

Romania's current foreign policy concerns essentially revolve around four principal themes: membership in

NATO, future accession into the European Union, various multilateral cooperation agreements (with Ukraine, Moldova, Hungary, Austria, Greece, and Turkey), and involvement in developing economic and political structures in southeastern Europe.

The only significant international dispute currently involving Romania is with Ukraine and concerns the continental shelf of the Black Sea, under which significant gas and oil deposits may exist. The two nations agreed in 1997 to undergo a two-year negotiating period, after which either party could refer the dispute to the International Court of Justice. That dispute had not been resolved by 2005.

DEFENSE

The Romanian military is composed of the army, navy, air and air defense forces, paramilitary forces, and civil defense. Some 200,000 annually reach the military age of 20. Estimates in 2005 held that just over five million males ages 15 to 49 were available, while just over five million were fit for military service.

Military expenditures were \$985 million, or 2.5 percent of gross domestic product (GDP), in 2002.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	177,100
Military Manpower Availability:	5,061,984
Military Expenditures \$million:	985
as % of GDP:	2.47
as % of central government expenditures:	8.6
Arms Imports \$million:	46
Arms Exports \$million:	22

ECONOMY

Romania, one of the poorer countries in the Balkans, is still continuing a difficult transition to a market-based economy. The country's principal industries include mining, timber, construction materials, metallurgy, chemicals, machine building, food processing, and petroleum production and refining. After the collapse of the Soviet bloc in 1989–91, Romania was left with an obsolete industrial base and a pattern of industrial capacity wholly unsuited to its needs. For the next few years the country lagged behind most of its neighbors in the pace of restructuring.

In 1997 Romania embarked on a comprehensive economic reform program. As a result, the private-sector share of GDP rose to an estimated 58 percent and inflation fell from 151 percent to 45 percent. Nevertheless, GDP fell by 6.6 percent, and the unemployment rate hovered at 8.8 percent. In 1998 GDP shrank further, by 7.3 percent.

Romania edged closer and closer to defaulting on its international debts, the nation's foreign exchange reserves dwindled sharply, and the leu lost more than half its value against the dollar.

In the summer of 1999 Romania claimed that the war over Kosovo was costing the nation \$50 million weekly because of lost trade and higher transportation charges. To try to attract foreign aid and investment, Romania passed strong banking-reform and economic restructuring laws. The country sought a moratorium on international debts similar to those offered to other Balkan states, including Albania and Macedonia. A persisting problem was Romania's unenviable record for failing to implement promised reforms. Without such reforms, Romania appeared to be forced to forgo hundreds of millions of dollars in international loans and billions in private investment, all of which could have dramatically transformed the economy.

The European Union ranks Romania last among enlargement candidates, and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development rates Romania's transition progress as the region's worst. Still, in 2000 the country emerged from a punishing three-year recession thanks to strong demand in EU export markets, and the government elected that year promised to promote economic reform; Bucharest hoped to receive financial and technical assistance from international financial institutions as well as Western governments. The government elected in 2004 promised to further speed the pace of economic reforms. Growth since 2001 has held above 4 percent, and reforms led the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to approve standby credit that the nation hopes it will not have to use. Meanwhile, the European Union agreed in principle to admit Romania by 2007. Currently, the poverty rate, inflation, and unemployment remain high.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion:	171.5			
GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$:	7,700			
GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %:	2.8			
GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %:	3.5			
Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:				
Agriculture:	13.1			
Industry:	33.7			
Services:	53.2			
Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:				
Private Consumption:	66			
Government Consumption:	16			
Gross Domestic Investment:	23.3			
Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports:	23.54			
Imports:	28.43			
% of Income Received by Poorest 10%:	2.4			
% of Income Received by Richest 10%:	27.6			
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)				
1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
820.4	1,195	1,607	1,969	2,270

Finance

National Currency:	Leu (ROL)
Exchange Rate: \$1 = ROL	33,260
Money Supply Stock in National Currency trillion:	107.6
Central Bank Discount Rate %:	—
Total External Debt \$billion:	24.59
Debt Service Ratio %:	10.38
Balance of Payments \$billion:	–3.631
International Reserves SDRs \$billion:	9
Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:	9.6

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million:	601.2
per capita \$:	27.70
Foreign Direct Investment \$billion:	1.84

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year:	Calendar Year
Revenues \$billion:	22.1
Expenditures \$billion:	23.2
Budget Deficit \$billion:	1.1
Tax Revenues as % of GDP:	—

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %:	13.1
Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %:	1.9
Number of Tractors per hectare arable land:	1.8
Irrigation, % of Farms having:	31.1
Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare:	34.7
Total Farmland % of land area:	40.9
Livestock: Cattle million:	3.19
Chickens million:	75
Pigs million:	5.15
Sheep million:	7.5
Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million:	14
Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000:	16.2

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion:	16.1
Industrial Production Growth Rate %:	4

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million:	26.7
Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million:	34.5
Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million:	1.54
Net Energy Imports % of use:	23.2
Electricity Installed Capacity kW million:	22.4
Production kW-hr billion:	53.6
Consumption kW-hr billion:	47.0
Coal Reserves tons billion:	1.6
Production tons million:	33.6
Consumption tons million:	36.3

(continues)

Energy *(continued)*

Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: 3.6
 Production cubic feet billion: 470
 Consumption cubic feet billion: 646
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels million: 956
 Production barrels 000 per day: 114
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 277
 Pipelines Length km: 2,427

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 28.43
 Exports \$billion: 23.54
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 14.0
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 12.2
 Balance of Trade \$million: –3.631

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Italy %	19.6	24.3
Germany %	14.9	15.7
Russia %	8.3	—
France %	7.3	7.4
United Kingdom %	—	6.7
Turkey %	—	5.1

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 198,755
 Paved %: 50.4
 Automobiles: 3,226,000
 Trucks and Buses: 504,000
 Railroad: Track Length km: 11,385
 Passenger-km billion: 8.5
 Freight-km billion: 15.2
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 34
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 510
 Airports: 61
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 1.59
 Length of Waterways km: 1,731

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 3.2
 Number of Tourists from million: 5.8
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 400
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 448

Communications

Telephones million: 4.3
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones million: 6.9
 Personal Computers million: 2.1
 Internet Hosts per million people: 2,275
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 179

ENVIRONMENT

The issue of greatest environmental concern in 1999 was the potentially lethal regional impact of NATO's bombing of Serbia. A team of United Nations chemical and biological experts were dispatched to the Danube River to intensively investigate the toxic effects of industrial runoff from damaged plants. The investigation aimed to ascertain the range of damage across the whole Balkan region, including Romania.

Romania has also been concerned with the potential decline of Danube delta biodiversity and has received international financial aid to measure and then find ways to reduce airborne chemical pollutants in industrial emissions.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 28.0
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: 15
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 5
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 38,395
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 3.84

LIVING CONDITIONS

Analyses of the living conditions in Romania paint a contradictory picture: On the one hand, the country is blessed with a wealth of natural resources, including timber, minerals, and metals; on the other, it has lacked the capital to exploit those resources. The country has great natural beauty, with forests, mountains, quaint towns, historic architecture, seaside resorts, and the like, but the country was environmentally ravaged under Communism, and the mass migration of people from villages to cities led to the creation of enormous rings of bland, soulless apartment buildings with few amenities. Romanians place a great deal of emphasis on the family, but widespread poverty has led to large numbers of abandoned children living in orphanages, many with AIDS. The nation has a literacy rate of over 98 percent, but it remains one of the poorest European nations. While Romania has had a turbulent and even tragic history since World War II, many observers note the sense of resolve and optimism with which Romanians look forward to a future of democracy and economic prosperity.

HEALTH

Romania's health-care system ranks in the middle of the world's nations. Life expectancy in 2003 was just over 70 years, ranking 115th in the world; the infant mortality rate in 2001 was just under 19 deaths per 1,000 live births, ranking 129th, but had risen to over 26 deaths per 1,000

live births by 2005. Annual spending per person on health care in 2002 was estimated at \$128, ranking 74th. While medical care improved after the fall of Communism, doctors and up-to-date facilities and equipment remain in short supply, and many doctors trained in Romanian medical schools leave for better pay and facilities in other countries.

Health

Number of Physicians: 42,339
 Number of Dentists: 5,057
 Number of Nurses: 90,316
 Number of Pharmacists: 1,490
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 189
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: 7.5
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 26.43
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 49
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 6.3
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 128
 HIV Infected % of adults: < 0.1
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 97
 Measles: 97
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 51
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 57

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Only about 1 percent of Romanian children under the age of five are underweight, according to a 2000 UN Children's Fund report, ranking the nation among the healthiest in the world in that respect.

Romanian cooking is a blend of Turkish, Russian, Serbian, Hungarian, and western European influences. The primary staple is *mamaliga*, a cornmeal mush served in many different ways, usually as a side dish. The primary meat consumed is pork; most villagers raise several pigs for their own consumption. Another popular meat dish is *mititei*: small broiled sausages. In general, Romanians enjoy a wide variety of dishes and desserts, especially at the main midday meal.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 0.7
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 3,280
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 209.9
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 198.3

STATUS OF WOMEN

The socialist plan for the emancipation of women aimed to eliminate the "barbarously unproductive, petty, nerve-racking drudgery" of their lives. The subservience of women was to be ended through the establishment of the

complete equality of the sexes before the law, and women were to become economically independent through employment outside the home. However, despite the theoretical commitment of socialism to eradicating sexual inequality, working women continued to bear the burdens of caring for children, home, and husband. Romanian men, in rural and urban settings alike, have continued to insist on women performing the roles traditionally associated with being wife and mother.

Despite such gendered resistance, by the 1980s illiteracy among females was virtually eliminated. With government encouragement, female enrollment in primary education became proportionate to their numbers, and women's access to higher education also increased considerably.

Following a commitment assumed at the United Nations Beijing Conference, in 1995 the Romanian government set up a department for the advancement of women, with the main priorities of empowering women and ensuring their equal participation in political, economic, and social decision-making structures. The agency dedicated itself to improving women's economic situations and access to the labor market; combating violence against women; and bettering their state of health. The agency has strongly advocated introducing and integrating gendered perspectives as permanent indicators in designing, implementing, and evaluating policies and programs.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 11
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.0
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 45.3

WORK

In 2004 the Romanian labor force numbered 9.7 million, with agriculture employing 31.6 percent, industry 30.7 percent, and services 37.7 percent. Unemployment has remained relatively high, currently at 6.3 percent. Per capita GDP in 2004 was closing in on \$8,000, but 44.5 percent of the population lived below the poverty line. Although two out of five Romanians are agricultural workers, they contribute only about 13 percent to GDP, suggesting that the sector is inefficient; the government has made efforts to return the nation to its former status as a breadbasket for Europe. Major crops include wheat, corn, barley, sugar beets, sunflower seeds, potatoes, grapes, eggs, and sheep. Major industries include textiles, footwear, light machinery, auto assembly, mining, timber, construction materials, metallurgy, chemicals, food processing, and oil refining.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 9,660,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 44.8
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 31.6
 Industry: 30.7
 Services: 37.7
 Unemployment %: 6.3

Students: 1,638,142
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 12.8
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 80.0
 Third Level: Institutions: 63
 Teachers: 28,674
 Students: 582,221
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 30.4
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 3.3

EDUCATION

The oldest school in Romania, the school at the monastery at Cenadul Vechi, dates from the 11th century. The first school to give instruction in Romanian was founded in 1522 at Cimpulung, in Walachia. By the 18th century schools were under the administration of local communities rather than churches. The Proclamation of 1838 at Islaz declared that education was to be equal for both boys and girls. The University of Bucharest opened with three faculties in 1860. Legislation in 1864 made four-year primary education free and compulsory and determined that secondary and higher education would last for seven and three years, respectively.

The 10-year compulsory education program begun in 1978 comprises three levels: a primary four-year program, a four-year gymnasium program, and a two-year program constituting the first cycle of the lyceum. Graduates then proceed to the two-year second cycle of the lyceum before enrolling in institutions of higher education. Children begin preschool or kindergarten at age three and the first grade at age six. Most students complete school at 18. The academic year runs from September through July. Vocational schools offer *maistri* (apprentice) education in courses lasting from a year to a year and a half in day schools or two years in night schools. Higher education has expanded greatly since the fall of Communism. In 1989 there were 30 higher-education institutions; by the turn of the century there were 49 public and 89 private higher-education institutions. The academic year is divided into two semesters, and attendance is mandatory. Overall responsibility for education at all levels is vested in the Ministry of Education and Instruction, as assisted by a number of committees and councils, such as the Congress of Education and Instruction.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 98.4
 Male %: 99.1
 Female %: 97.7
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 12.4
 First Level: Primary Schools: 13,963
 Teachers: 58,978
 Students: 1,028,697
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 17.4
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 88.5
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 1,276
 Teachers: 176,247

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Two major institutions sponsor and fund scientific and technological research in Romania. One is the Romanian Academy, the nation's center for academic research, with a library of over seven million volumes. The other is the Romanian Research and Education Ministry. The nation has at least 25 other agencies that fund research in various areas, from agriculture and fisheries to chemistry, medicine, communications, the environment, and the like.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 879
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 0.38
 High-Tech Exports \$million: 530
 Patent Applications by Residents: 1,486

MEDIA

Although the constitution provides for the freedom of expression and prohibits censorship, it limits the bounds of free expression by prohibiting "defamation of the country" and "offense to authority." The amended 1996 Penal Code rectified many of the shortcomings of the former Communist code. However, the recent code retained jail terms for libel, and many suits are brought against journalists under these provisions. The prohibition of "defamation of the nation" and "of public officials" is used to harass and punish journalists who seek to root out corruption in high places. Independent media have continued to grow in the post-Communist era; in the early 2000s, more than 100 private television stations and more than 100 private radio stations were broadcasting nationwide. Independent stations have enlarged their coverage through over-the-air, cable, and satellite transmissions.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 145
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: 7,874
 Periodicals: 320
 Radio Receivers million: 8
 per 1,000: 358
 Television sets million: 7
 per 1,000: 312

CULTURE

The earliest Romanian literature consisted of ballads and folklore; the legend of Dracula is perhaps the most famous element of the country's folkloric tradition. With the official introduction of the Roman alphabet in the 19th century, the nation underwent a renaissance of literary output. The most famous writer of Romanian heritage, although he lived in France, was Eugene Ionescu (1912–1994), best known for such absurdist dramas as *The Bald Soprano* and *The Rhinoceros*. The nation's most famous modern artist is Constantin Brancusi (1876–1957), who created abstract sculptures in wood and metal. In the performance arts, Romania is best known for its folk music and folk dancing. The national dance is the *hora*, a circle dance performed on special occasions such as festivals, and there are many other regional folk dances.

Under Communism the state provided support for artists, but they were heavily censored and often had to disguise political themes in their work. Since the fall of Communism government funding for the arts has declined, but artists have gained considerably more artistic freedom.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number:	2,919
Volumes:	48,895,000
Registered borrowers:	2,142,000
Museums Number:	412
Annual Attendance:	16,331,000
Cinema Gross Receipts national currency billion:	46.38
Number of Cinemas:	331
Seating Capacity:	129,000
Annual Attendance:	4,196,000

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

In Romanian mythology the god Dionysius was born in Romania, and Jason searched for the Golden Fleece in the region. Dacian mythology included a number of gods, such as Gebeleizis, the ultimate heavenly god; Bendis, the goddess of the moon; and Vesta, the god of flames. The Dacians' mythical holy place was the mountain Kogaion. More familiar internationally are folkloric traditions surrounding vampires; one tradition has that a clan of vampires descended from Judas Iscariot, the biblical betrayer of Jesus Christ. The most famous of the vampires is Dracula, thought by some to have been King Vlad III, "the Impaler," believed to have been responsible for 100,000 deaths. In Romania a version of the legend of "Little Red Riding Hood" was a prominent story about werewolves. According to priests, the color red referred to the girl's blood, shed when the wolves attacked her; the legend accounts for the redness of the moon during a lunar eclipse, God's signal that people should repent from evil.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

One popular form of entertainment is the "promenade"; villagers stroll up and down the streets on Saturday or Sunday afternoons, chatting with acquaintances, shopping, and enjoying coffee and dessert at open-air restaurants. With the spread of television, many people enjoy Western programming. Major forms of entertainment for many Romanians involve the nation's rich folk heritage, including dancing and music, textile work, wood carving, and whittling. Nearly every village has a musical group that performs at festivals, weddings, and the like.

ETIQUETTE

Visitors to Romania are struck by the warmth and hospitality of the people. Greetings tend to be formal but warm, and younger people are respectful of elders. Men continue to treat women in traditional ways, tipping hats, giving up seats, and kissing their hands.

FAMILY LIFE

Family life in Romania has traditionally centered around the church. In the past, marriages were arranged, and the bride's family was expected to provide a substantial dowry. Weddings were formal and highly elaborate affairs. Under Communism, state efforts to reduce the influence of the church included the requirement that weddings take place in civil ceremonies in order to be legal. On the other hand, abortion and birth control were outlawed, and women were encouraged to have five or more children. In recent years, certain traditions have become less prevalent, though weddings remain elaborate. Housing shortages have made multigenerational families living under one roof the norm. As such, the size of families has reduced in recent years; in 2004 the fertility rate was just 1.36 children per woman.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

While most Romanians have adopted Western-style dress, traditional dress can still be seen. Among women, elaborately embroidered blouses are common. Traditional dress among men includes white pants, long white shirts, leather belts, leather moccasins, and rounded, narrow-brimmed hats.

SPORTS

As in much of Europe, soccer is the most popular sport, for both spectators and participants. Also popular are

1952 Romania

tennis, volleyball, rugby, boxing, and basketball. The two most famous names in Romanian athletics are the tennis champion Ilie “Nasty” Năstase, who was known for his volatile temper and irreverence, and the gymnast Nadia Comaneci, who received seven perfect 10s—the first ever perfect score in women’s Olympic gymnastic competition—in the 1976 Summer Olympics. The nation’s best Olympic performance came in 1984 in Los Angeles, when Romania won 20 gold and 12 silver and bronze medals. A traditional game played in Romania is oina, which is similar to baseball.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1940** Romania loses Bessarabia and northern Bukovina to the Soviet Union, northern Transylvania to Hungary, and southern Dobruja to Bulgaria; General Ion Antonescu forces King Carol II to abdicate and assumes power, crushing the Fascist Iron Guard.
- 1941** An ally of Germany, Romania declares war on the Soviet Union; thousands of Jews are massacred.
- 1942** Romania suffers heavy losses in the Battle of Stalingrad.
- 1944** Soviet troops storm Romania; Carol II’s son King Michael dismisses Antonescu; Romania surrenders to the Soviet Union and declares war on Germany.
- 1945** The Soviet Union begins its postwar occupation of Romania and installs a Communist government under Petru Groza.
- 1946** Elections controlled by the Communist Party produce large majorities for Communist candidates; opposition is suppressed, and opposition leaders are imprisoned.
- 1947** Under the Paris Peace Treaty, Transylvania is the only lost territory Romania reclaims; King Michael abdicates, and a People’s Republic is proclaimed.
- 1948** A Soviet-style constitution is promulgated; Romania joins the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (COMECON), a Soviet trade group.
- 1949** Forced collectivization of agriculture is begun.
- 1950** The United Nations General Assembly charges Romania with systematically violating the human rights provisions of the Paris Peace Treaty.
- 1952** A new constitution is proclaimed; Communist Party leader Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej becomes prime minister.
- 1953** Soviet leader Joseph Stalin dies, and Soviet-Romanian relations begin to cool.
- 1955** Romania joins the Warsaw Pact, an Eastern Bloc foil to NATO.
- 1958** Soviet occupation forces withdraw.
- 1962** The government announces the successful absorption of the nation’s arable land.
- 1963** Romania rejects COMECON’s economic integration plan, which had cast Romania as merely the association’s supplier of raw materials.
- 1965** Gheorghiu-Dej dies, and Nicolae Ceaușescu replaces him as Communist Party leader; a new constitution is proclaimed asserting Romania’s independence from Soviet authority.
- 1968** Ceaușescu denounces the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia.
- 1969** A visit from President Richard Nixon cements friendly relations with the United States.
- 1970** Romania signs a treaty of friendship with Hungary.
- 1971** Ceaușescu visits China, opening trade with that country; Ceaușescu begins a strict campaign to enforce Communist Party orthodoxy.
- 1972** Romania joins the IMF and the World Bank.
- 1975** Ceaușescu becomes president.
- 1976** Romania and the United States sign a 10-year economic pact; Romania signs a trade agreement with the European Economic Community; Yugoslavia and Romania sign a hydroelectric agreement.
- 1977** Bulgaria and Romania sign a hydroelectric agreement; Ceaușescu reorganizes the government and the Communist Party.
- 1980** Romania denounces the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.
- 1985** Ceaușescu establishes severe austerity measures, which cause widespread food shortages and power cuts; antigovernment sentiments escalate.
- 1987** Antigovernment demonstrations in Brasov are brutally suppressed.
- 1988** The government announces a forced resettlement program that calls for the elimination of 8,000 villages.
- 1989** Ceaușescu is overthrown in Christmas Revolution and is executed along with his wife Elena; Ion Iliescu heads a caretaker government.
- 1990** Multiparty elections in May confirm Iliescu as president, and his National Salvation Front (NSF) wins the most seats in parliament, with Peter Roman as prime minister; antigovernment demonstrations continue; Roman’s government dissolves; Theodor Stolojan forms a new NSF coalition and imposes economic austerity measures; the pro-market economy faction of the NSF breaks off to form the Democratic National Salvation Front (DNSF).
- 1991** COMECON collapses, as the Soviet Union dissolves; in the wake of attacks, thousands of ethnic Roma (Gypsies) flee to Germany; in a national

- referendum, voters approve a new democratic constitution.
- 1992** DNSF candidates win the most seats in parliament, and Nicolae Vacaroiu becomes prime minister; Iliescu is reelected president; Germany repatriates 43,000 refugees to Romania.
- 1993** Clashes between ethnic Romanians and ethnic Germans and Hungarians break out in Transylvania; Romania becomes an associate member of the European Union.
- 1994** Romania joins NATO's Partnership for Peace.
- 1996** In legislative elections a coalition of opposition parties, including the Democratic Convention of Romania (DCR) and the Social Democratic Union (SDU), defeats the ruling Party of Social Democracy of Romania (PSDR; formerly the DNSF), prompting the first peaceful transfer of power under the 1991 constitution; the DCR's Victor Ciorbea becomes prime minister; Emil Constantinescu, of the DCR, is elected president.
- 1997** Romania improves historically tense relations with Hungary and resolves a territorial dispute with Ukraine; as the economy stagnates, the planned privatization of state-run facilities stalls.
- 1998** Radu Vasile, of the DCR, forms a new government coalition; the government announces plans to close more than 150 unprofitable state businesses; 10,000 striking miners march on Bucharest in protest; Vasile resigns, and National Bank governor Mugur Isarescu is named prime minister.
- 1999** Romania backs NATO action against Serbia.
- 2000** Elections return the PSDR's Iliescu to the office of president; the PSDR forms a minority government under Adrian Nastase.
- 2001** A law aimed at returning property that was nationalized during the Communist era is approved by parliament.
- 2004** Romania is admitted to NATO; Iliescu formally admits Romanian complicity in the Nazi holocaust of World War II; Traian Băsescu is elected president, surprisingly defeating the incumbent prime minister Nastase; European Union agrees in principle to admit Romania in 2007.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Embassy of Romania (Washington, D.C.)
<http://www.roembus.org>

RUSSIA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Russian Federation (Rossiyskaya Federatsiya)

ABBREVIATION

RU

CAPITAL

Moscow

HEAD OF STATE

President Vladimir Putin (from 2000)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Mikhail Fradkov (from 2004)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Constitutional democracy

POPULATION

143,420,309 (2005)

AREA

17,075,200 sq km (6,592,734 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Russian

LANGUAGE

Russian

RELIGION

Orthodox Christianity

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Ruble

NATIONAL FLAG

Three horizontal bands of white (top), blue, and red

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A golden double eagle on a red heraldic shield. The eagle holds a scepter and an orb in its talons. On the eagle's chest is a smaller red shield with the image of a horseman thrusting a dragon with a spear.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"Russia, Our Sacred Power" (Hymn of the Russian Federation)

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day), January 7 (Russian Orthodox Christmas Day), February 23 (Defenders of the Motherland Day), March 8 (International Women's Day), May 1–2 (Labor Day), May 9 (Victory Day), June 12 (Russia Day), November 7 (Day of Accord and Reconciliation), December 12 (Constitution Day)

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

August 24, 1991

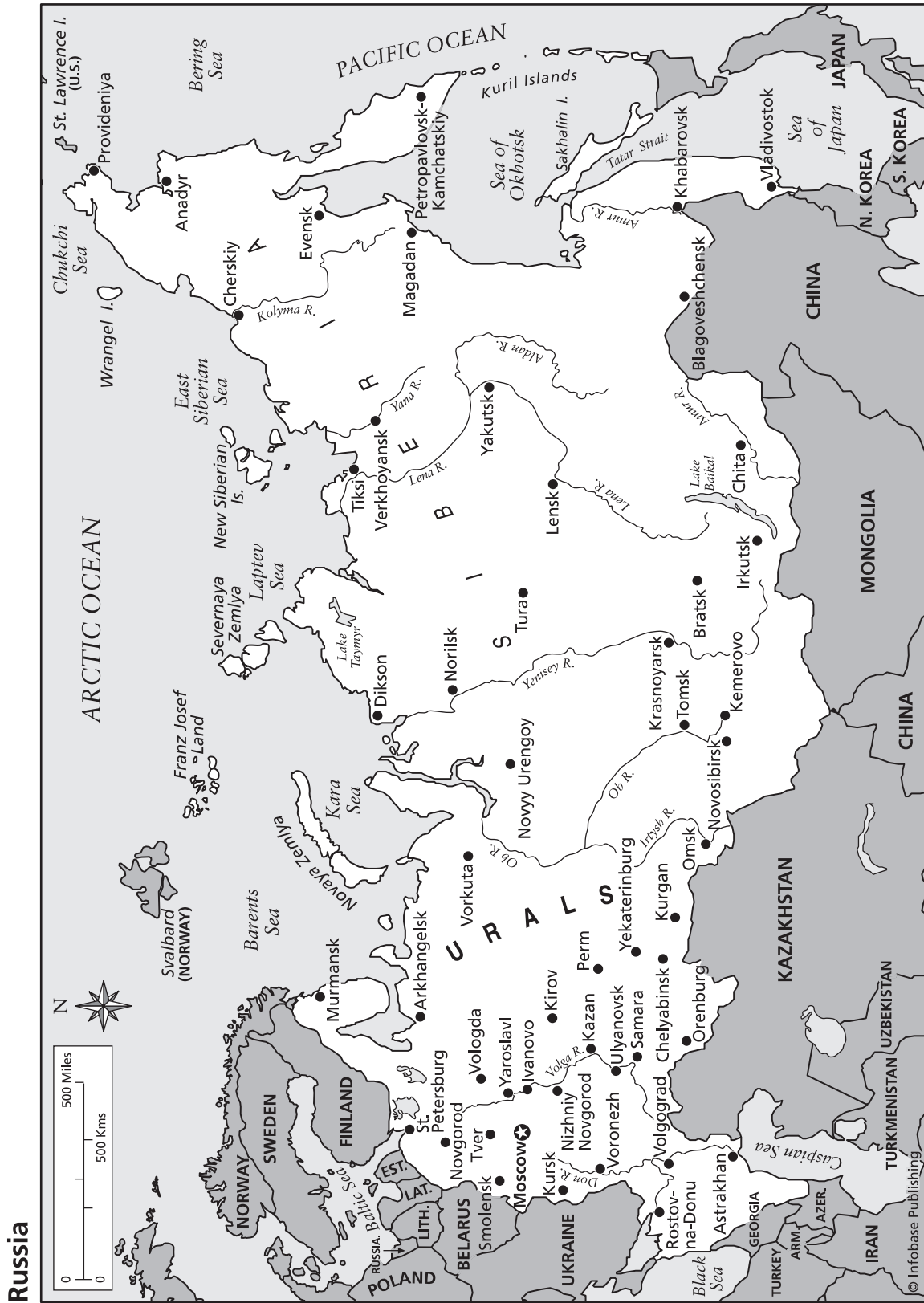
DATE OF CONSTITUTION

December 12, 1993

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Russia is the largest nation in the world in geographic terms, containing about one-eighth of the world's total inhabited land area. Russia spans two continents, Europe and Asia, and borders three oceans, the Arctic, Atlantic, and Pacific. Russia is a northern country, with most of its land closer to the North Pole than to the equator. The terrain varies from rolling hills and plains to rugged mountains and arctic tundra. Many areas remain isolated and unsettled, especially in eastern Siberia. Much of the population, industry, and agriculture are concentrated in the western, European areas.

In total, Russia covers some 17,075,200 sq km (6,592,734 sq mi). It has the world's longest land borders, which extend 20,017 km (12,438 mi). Russia borders Azerbaijan, Belarus, China, Estonia, Finland, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Mongolia, North Korea, Norway, Poland, and Ukraine. The nation has 37,653 km (14,538 mi) of coastline, bordering 13 seas along with the three oceans. Russia is separated from the United States by the 86 km (54 mi) of the Bering Strait. The westernmost piece of Russian territory is the Kaliningrad enclave, which is isolated from the rest of the federation by the independent Baltic states; the easternmost point is Ratmanova Island, in the Bering Strait. Some 9,000 km



(5,625 mi) separate the two points. From north to south, some 3,800 km (2,375 mi) separate Novaya Zemlya, in the arctic circle, from the Caspian Sea. The highest point in the nation is Mt. El'brus, with an elevation of 5,633 m (18,469 ft). The lowest point is the Caspian Sea, at 28 m (92 ft) below sea level.

There are extensive plains and low hills west of the Ural Mountains region in the western part of Russia. The Urals serve to separate west and east, and on the eastern side of the mountains the terrain becomes host to large coniferous forests and tundra in the Siberian region. The Urals extend 2,200 km (1,375 mi) from north to south, and the continental divide continues for another 1,375 km (860 mi). The southern area in the west is marked by the uplands, steppes, and mountains of the Caucasus region. Almost the entire coast is above the arctic circle, and only the port of Murmansk, which is influenced by the waters of the Gulf Stream, remains ice free year-round.

The nation has thousands of lakes and rivers, and some 79,400 sq km (30,656 sq mi) of Russia's total surface area is water. Of these water systems, 84 percent are located east of the Urals. Some 40 rivers whose length exceeds 1,000 km (625 mi) are in the east. The three main rivers that drain Siberia to the north are the Irtysh-Ob, Yenisey, and Lena. Other major river systems in the region include the Pechora, North Dvina, and Amur. Three major systems drain European Russia: The Dnieper originates near Moscow and flows through Belarus and Ukraine. The Don starts in central Russia and flows past Moscow to the Sea of Azov and the Black Sea. The Volga, the largest of Europe's river systems, travels southward to the Caspian Sea. The largest lakes in European Russia are Ladoga, Onega, Peipus, and Rybinsk. The largest freshwater lake in the nation is Lake Baikal, which is also the world's deepest freshwater lake, with a depth of 1,713 m (5,616 ft).

Russia possesses an enormous quantity and quality of natural resources. The nation produces almost 20 percent of the world's oil and natural gas and has the largest natural gas reserves. The federation also has immense reserves of iron ore, chromium, tin, nickel, copper, lead, tungsten, diamonds, phosphates, and gold. In addition, the conifers of Siberia account for one-fifth of the world's timber. However, the climate and poor soil of much of the nation make it unsuitable for agriculture, and 10 percent of the total area is essentially swampland.

Russia is in the midst of a number of territorial disputes. There are boundary disagreements with each of the Baltic republics. Japan disputes Russian control over a number of islands occupied by the Soviet Union at the end of World War II. The Caspian Sea boundaries and maritime claims between Russia and Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, and Turkmenistan remain unresolved. Finally, Russia and Norway are engaged in a dispute over maritime rights in the Barents Sea.

Geography

Area sq km:	17,075,200; sq mi 6,592,734
World Rank:	1st
Land Boundaries, km:	Azerbaijan 284; Belarus 959; China 3,645; Estonia 294; Finland 1,340; Georgia 723; Kazakhstan 6,846; North Korea 19; Latvia 217; Lithuania 227; Mongolia 3,485; Norway 196; Poland 206; Ukraine 1,576
Coastline, km:	37,653
Elevation Extremes meters:	Lowest: Caspian Sea -28 Highest: Gora El'brus 5,633
Land Use %	Arable Land: 7.3 Permanent Crops: 0.1 Forest: 50.4 Other: 42.2

Population of Principal Cities (2002)

Astrakhan	504,501
Barnaul	600,749
Chabarovsk	583,072
Chelyabinsk	1,077,174
Irkutsk	593,604
Izhevsk	632,140
Kazan	1,105,289
Krasnodar	646,175
Krasnoyarsk	909,341
Lipetsk	506,114
Moscow	10,126,424
Naberezhnye Chelny	509,870
Nizhny Novgorod	1,311,252
Novokuznetsk	549,870
Novosibirsk	1,425,508
Omsk	1,134,016
Orenburg	549,361
Penza	518,025
Perm	1,001,653
Rostov-na-Donu	1,068,267
Ryazan	521,560
Saint Petersburg	4,159,635
Samara	1,157,880
Saratov	873,055
Simbirsk	635,947
Tolyatti	702,879
Tyumen	510,719
Ufa	1,042,437
Vladivostok	594,701
Volgograd	1,011,417
Voronezh	848,752
Yaroslavi	613,088
Yekaterinburg	1,293,537

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

The climate in Russia ranges from temperate to arctic. There are really only two seasons: a short summer and a long, harsh winter. Seasonal change is usually abrupt. In the south along the Black Sea, winters are of short duration and summers are warm. In Siberia the winters are frigid, and permafrost covers the land; in some regions the per-

mafrost is 610 m (2,000 ft) deep. Summers in the region are cool at best. In general, snow covers much of the nation for at least half the year. While the climate is continental, the mountain ranges in the south and east block the moderating influences of the Indian and Pacific oceans, and the north is exposed to the harsh impact of arctic systems. In the winter, powerful high-pressure systems cause winds to blow from Siberia, bringing cold air streams. In the summer, low-pressure systems bring northerly winds.

Some areas in Russia have more temperate climates. The enclave of Kaliningrad on the Baltic Sea has a more moderate climate similar to that of northern European nations. In the Far East the climate is monsoonal, while the southern band of territory around the Black Sea has a subtropical climate. Temperatures in Russia range from highs of up to 38°C (100°F) in the south in summer to -43°C (-45.4°F) in Siberia in winter. The average temperature in the more populous west is 0°C (32°F).

Precipitation is fairly constant across the nation. The main differences are between the monsoonal areas of the Far East, which receive 1,000 mm (40 in) annually, and the southern regions, which receive between 200 and 400 mm (8 and 16 in).

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperatures: January

Batumi: 32°F
 Moscow: 9°F to 21°F
 Arkhangelsk: 2°F to 9°F
 Verkhoyansk (Siberia): -90°F
 Yakutsk: -95°F to -90°F

Mean Temperatures: July

Arctic Coast: 32°F
 Moscow: 55°F to 76°F
 Arkhangelsk: 51°F to 64°F

Average Rainfall

Moscow: 21 in
 Eastern Siberia: 8 in to 10 in
 Western Russia: 25 to 30 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

There are four major vegetation zones in Russia: One is the treeless tundra of the arctic, where biodiversity is low. Noteworthy animals include polar bears, caribou, lemmings, and musk ox. The second is the taiga region just south of the Arctic Ocean, which contains the great conifer forest and 3,000 known species of vascular plants. Additionally, the taiga region is home to Amur tigers, Amur leopards, musk deer, Himalayan bears, and brown bears. The steppes of European Russia consist principally of grassland, with some forest. Wildlife includes sheep, bears, ibexes, gazelles, wolves, furry marmots, lynx, elk, deer, and moose. Finally, the steppes and deserts of central Asia are arid. In all, Russia is home to

about 11,000 species of vascular plants, 320 mammals, 730 birds, 75 reptiles, 30 amphibians, 400 sea fish, and 270 freshwater fish.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 143,420,309

World Rank: 8th

Density per sq km: 8.5

% of annual growth (1999-2003): -0.5

Male %: 46.2

Female %: 53.8

Urban %: 73.3

Age Distribution %: 0-14: 14.6

15-64: 71.3

65 and over: 14.2

Population 2025: 130,535,000

Birth Rate per 1,000: 9.8

Death Rate per 1,000: 14.52

Rate of Natural Increase %: -0.5

Total Fertility Rate: 1.27

Expectation of Life (years): Males 60.55

Females 74.04

Marriage Rate per 1,000: 7.0

Divorce Rate per 1,000: 5.3

Average Size of Households: 3.2

Induced Abortions: 2,766,362

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Ethnic Russians make up the overwhelming majority of the total population, at around 80 percent. The primary ethnic minorities are Tatars (3.8 percent), Ukrainians (2 percent), Bashkirs (1.2 percent), Chuvash (1.1 percent), Chechens (0.9 percent), and Armenians (0.8 percent). Other minor groups include Avars, Belarusians, Germans, Jews, Kazakhs, Mari, Moldavians, and Udmurts. Except in the northern Caucasus and some areas of the Volga basin, Russians form the largest population in all regions.

Ethnic Russians are descended from the East Slavs, one of three groups that formed from the original Slavic people in the seventh century. The other groups were the West Slavs, who became Poles, Czechs, and Slovaks, and the South Slavs, who are modern-day Bulgarians, Croats, Serbs, and Slovenes. Besides the Slavic peoples (Russians, Ukrainians, and Belarusians), there are three main ethnic groups in Russia: the Altaic group, who speak Turkic languages and are represented by the Balkars, Bashkirs, Buryats, Chuvash, Evenks, and Yakuts; the Finnic peoples, or Uralics, who include the Karelians, Komi, Mari, Moldavians, and Udmurts; and the Caucasus, comprising over 30 subgroups, of which the largest are the Adyghs, Chechens, Cherkess, Ingush, and Dagestani.

In addition to the Russians, there are more than 100 ethnic minorities in the federation. There are 21 ethnic

republics within the federation, with each of these bodies designated for a minority group. The total population among the republics is 24 million. However, even within these territories ethnic Russians have a large presence. Russians constitute the largest single body in all but eight republics, and they account for more than half the populace in nine of the territories. There are also 10 autonomous regions whose existence is based on the presence of at least one ethnic group. These include a Jewish autonomous province and provinces for small, indigenous minority groups such as the Buryats and Permyaks. Soviet efforts to collectivize indigenous people led several tribal groups, including the Evenks, to the verge of extinction.

Following the dissolution of the Soviet Union, many ethnic groups endeavored to gain increased autonomy and even independence. Chechnya's efforts to gain full independence provide one example of this trend; other groups, such as the Tuva, Chuvash, and Tatars, have made unilateral moves to increase local control. Many ethnic groups face discrimination from Russians, especially Muslims.

LANGUAGES

Russian is the dominant language in the federation and is spoken by three-quarters of the population. Russian is Slavic, as are other languages spoken in the nation, such as Ukrainian and Belarusian. Other language groups include Turkic, Caucasian, Finno-Ugric, Eskimo, Yiddish, and Iranian. Some 12 percent of the population use a language other than Russian as their primary means of communication (80 percent of whom are non-Slavic citizens of the federation).

For centuries the Russians have attempted to use language as a unifying factor, within first the czarist empire and later the Soviet Union. During Communist rule, territories within the Soviet Union were forced to adopt Russian as the language of education, government, and industry. Nonetheless, especially in remote regions of the nation, minority groups continued to use their own languages alongside Russian. In many areas proficiency in Russian remained low in spite of decades of official policy.

After the demise of Communism, Russian remained the sole language of public administration, the military, and the scientific and technical community. Higher education is also conducted in Russian. Only two school systems are permitted to use non-Russian curriculums: those of the Bashkirs and the Tatars.

The constitution grants citizens the right to choose their language for communication and education. While these guarantees have little significance in areas dominated by ethnic Russians, minority groups' movements to increase local autonomy have led to the revival of many languages, with ethnic republics declaring their native

tongues equal in status to Russian. As such, the use of local language has become a symbol of autonomy from Moscow.

RELIGIONS

Eastern Orthodox Christianity is the primary religion in Russia. Under czarist rule, Orthodoxy was one of the pillars of the state. Later, despite the facts that under Communism atheism was promoted and the government attempted to erode church power, one-third of Russians still held allegiance to some form of religion. Following the end of Communist rule, the state took steps to reinforce the primacy of the church in the face of competition from other faiths. In particular, Russia's religious laws have elevated Orthodoxy, Judaism, Islam, and Catholicism over other faiths. By 1996, 18 regions of the federation had enacted legislation to restrict the activities of non-Orthodox religious groups in their territory; however, the constitution does guarantee freedom of religion. Since the end of Communist rule, thousands of churches, synagogues, mosques, and other religious buildings have been reopened or restored for use.

Islam is the second-most prevalent religion, and 10 percent of the population are Muslim. Concerned over the potential spread of radical Islam, Russian leaders have supported secular leaders in the former states of the Soviet Union and have taken steps to minimize the power of religious leaders within Russian republics with large Muslim communities.

Russia has also supported Orthodox nations abroad. While the promotion of Orthodoxy is not an official component of the nation's foreign policy, Russia's championing of Orthodox states such as Serbia and Armenia has led it to oppose international efforts to mediate conflicts and impose sanctions on those states for violations of international norms.

Judaism is in decline in the federation as a result of emigration, while many Protestant denominations have expanded their numbers.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In 862 the East Slavs came under the protection of a Viking group known as the Varangians whose king, Rurik, founded the first recorded dynasty in Russian history. This dynasty ruled the region for 700 years. A capital was established in Kiev, and the kingdom expanded and built numerous trading centers. In the 10th century the Kievan prince Vladimir accepted the Orthodox faith, and Kiev became Christian.

The Kievan state went into decline as successive invasions from Asia battered the kingdom. In 1240 the Mongol Golden Horde destroyed Kiev and established

sovereignty over most of Russia. Although the Mongols initially laid waste to much of the land, they later established a system of indirect rule that lasted for some 200 years. Under Mongol rule, the Russian territories were principalities ruled by native Russians who held allegiance to the Mongols. In 1325 the prince of Moscow, Ivan I, convinced the khan to name him a grand prince. This marked the emergence of Moscow as the seat of power in Russia. Moscow also became the seat of the metropolitan of the Russian Orthodox Church, and Ivan's son acquired the title of Prince of All the Russias. In 1380 the Mongols suffered a major defeat at the battle of Kulikovo by a Russian army led by the prince of Moscow.

In 1462 Ivan III, "the Great," came to power, and during his 43-year reign he greatly expanded the size of Muscovy and ended Mongol suzerainty. Ivan III was the first to use the title of czar. Ivan's grandson, Ivan IV, "the Terrible," came to the throne when he was three and dominated Russian history throughout the 16th century. He curbed the power of the gentry, or boyar class, and reformed the legal and religious codes of the country. Ivan later went insane and unleashed a reign of terror on Russia. He annihilated entire cities suspected of disloyalty and killed one of his sons. His surviving son, Fyodor, died without his own heir; this ended the Rurik dynasty and initiated a struggle for the Crown that became known as the Time of Troubles (1605–13). During this period Polish forces conquered Moscow, but the interregnum was ended in 1613 when Mikhail Romanov was elected czar, beginning the 300-year rule of the Romanovs.

While the early Romanovs were weak leaders, Peter I, "the Great," greatly expanded the power of the throne and instituted reforms that brought Russia closer to the West. Peter came to power in 1682, and for 40 of the 42 years that he reigned Russia was at war. He ended Sweden's hegemony over northern Europe and conquered areas of the Ottoman Empire. The reform-minded czar moved the capital to St. Petersburg in order to be closer to the West and revised the calendar and alphabet.

Following Peter the Great, Catherine the Great, a German princess who had married Peter's grandson, emerged as the next distinguished ruler of Russia. Under her reign, the empire acquired Ukraine, Belorussia, and the Crimea. Her son Paul was murdered in a palace revolt, and his son, Alexander I, became czar. Alexander sponsored a number of liberal reforms and led Russia in its defeat of Napoleon. After his death, a liberal rebellion known as the Decembrist Uprising became a symbol for later revolutionaries. The next czar, Nicholas I, endeavored to suppress liberal ideas and launched the disastrous Crimean War, which ended in a defeat for Russia in 1855. His successor, Alexander II, attempted to initiate pragmatic reforms, including the abolition of serfdom in 1861. He continued the expansion of Russia and adopted other reforms to the judicial system and the military. Alexander II was assassinated in 1881.

The last two czars, Alexander III and Nicholas II, were reactionary and sought to preserve imperial power in the face of growing industrialization and calls for democratization. A major revolution in 1905 was sparked when imperial troops opened fire on unarmed demonstrators in a massacre known as Bloody Sunday. The uprising was also fueled by Russia's major defeat in the Russo-Japanese War, which ended in 1904. Although the rebellion was put down, Nicholas agreed to the establishment of a legislature known as the Duma. Limited reforms were instituted, but imperial power remained supreme, and in 1914 the nation was drawn into World War I.

Russian troops won significant victories against the Austrians and Turks, but as the war dragged on the Germans inflicted crushing defeats on the Russians. Meanwhile, the monarchy lost support as a result of the war and the influence of Grigori Rasputin on the royal family. A new revolution broke out in 1917, and the czar was forced to abdicate. A provisional, democratic government was formed, but it was immediately opposed by the Communist Soviet Council of Workers and Soldiers' Deputies. The Germans secretly transported the prominent Communist revolutionary Vladimir Lenin into Russia, and in November 1917 the Bolsheviks, a minority Communist group led by Lenin, were able to seize power from the provisional government.

Lenin consolidated power by dissolving the Constituent Assembly, which had been elected to draft a new constitution, and initiating a revolutionary purge of the elements of both the old regime and the prodemocracy groups. Lenin ended Russian participation in World War I through the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, in which Russia surrendered one-third of its territory and one-quarter of its population. There followed a period of civil war as "White" anti-Communist revolutionaries fought against the Bolsheviks. Not until 1922 did the Bolsheviks formally establish the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). All political parties other than the Communist Party were outlawed, and so-called enemies of the state were purged.

Lenin died unexpectedly from a stroke in 1922. He was succeeded by Josef Stalin, who seized power from Lenin's heir-apparent, Leon Trotsky. Stalin had Trotsky murdered in Mexico in 1940. Stalin's administration of the Soviet Union was marked by extreme tyranny, and he unleashed the bloodiest reign of terror in Russian history. In the 1920s and 1930s millions of kulaks, or wealthier farmers, who opposed agricultural collectivization were killed, as were any officials whom Stalin perceived as threatening. Many of the original Bolsheviks and military officers from the revolution were purged. During Stalin's reign, some 15 to 20 million Russians and eastern Europeans were executed or died in labor camps in Siberia.

In 1939 Stalin signed a nonaggression pact with Adolf Hitler, dividing Poland and eastern Europe between the two nations. However, Hitler invaded Russia in 1941

in the bloodiest campaign of World War II. Although the Germans drove deep into the USSR, they were unable to capture Moscow as the Russian winter set in. Military support from the United States and Great Britain, Russia's enormous population, and Stalin's willingness to absorb casualties reversed the German advances, and in 1943 the Russians inflicted a major defeat upon the invaders at Stalingrad. By 1945 the Soviets had conquered many of the eastern European nations and had advanced into Berlin. Stalin was then able to gain concessions from the Allies allowing him to retain most of Eastern Europe as satellite states following the war. By the end of World War II, the Russians counted some 20 million dead.

Stalin's antidemocratic efforts in Eastern Europe led to the promulgation of the Truman Doctrine, while specific events such as the Berlin Blockade prompted the formation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) by the United States and the nations of western Europe in 1949. That same year the Soviets tested their first atomic weapon. With the advent of the Korean War in 1950, the cold war patterns of hostility between the United States and the USSR had become entrenched.

Stalin's death in 1953 led to a relaxation of the harshness of Soviet rule and a brief thaw in relations with the West. Nikita Khrushchev became the Soviet leader and initiated a de-Stalinization program in 1956. However, the formation of the Warsaw Pact in 1955, along with the Soviet invasion of Hungary to crush that nation's liberal revolution, revealed the limits of Soviet openness. Relations with China deteriorated during the 1960s, and there was open fighting along the Sino-Soviet border.

Khrushchev's greatest test came in 1962 with the Cuban Missile Crisis. A Soviet effort to station missiles in Cuba was blocked by the United States, and for a period of days the world stood at the brink of nuclear war. Khrushchev ultimately backed down, and his perceived "weakness" led to his forced retirement in 1964. He was replaced by Leonid Brezhnev.

Brezhnev adopted a hard-line stance, reinvigorating the cold war rivalry. In 1968 the Soviet Union intervened in Czechoslovakia to overthrow a liberal government. However, in 1972, Brezhnev accepted U.S. president Richard M. Nixon's overtures regarding Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT), and a period of detente was initiated. In 1977 a new constitution was promulgated, and Brezhnev became the head of state. The SALT II Treaty was signed in 1979, but the period of detente ended when the Soviets invaded Afghanistan. In response, the United States boycotted the 1980 Moscow Olympics. A year later Polish shipbuilders began protests aimed at increasing basic freedoms.

Brezhnev died in 1982, and Yuri Andropov assumed power. Just two years later Andropov was dead; he was replaced by Konstantin Chernenko. Chernenko died in 1985 and was replaced by the younger, reform-minded politician Mikhail Gorbachev. Gorbachev initiated a se-

ries of reforms known as glasnost and perestroika that were designed to ease tensions in foreign affairs and to reorient the Soviet economy by promoting openness. In 1989 the Soviets withdrew from Afghanistan, and Gorbachev met with the pope. The following year independence movements in the Baltic republics led to the deployment of troops, although Soviet forces were being withdrawn from other Soviet satellite nations.

In 1991, after a failed coup attempt, Gorbachev lost power, as the Soviet Union disintegrated. Boris Yeltsin, who was elected president of Russia in 1991, banned the Communist Party, and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) was formed as a means to preserve ties among the former Soviet states.

A new constitution was promulgated in 1993, and Russia's first free parliamentary elections were held on December 12. Yeltsin was reelected president in 1996, but a severe economic crisis and a rebellion in Chechnya seriously eroded his popularity. In 2000 Vladimir Putin became Russia's second democratically elected president. Putin moved to strengthen ties with the West by, for example, agreeing with the United States to a new round of sharp nuclear arms cuts in 2002 and also agreeing to forge closer ties with NATO.

Putin's principal problems in the early 2000s were the terrorism and unrest prevalent in portions of the federation. In October 2002 Chechen rebels seized a movie theater in Moscow and held 800 people hostage, and in December that year terrorists attacked the headquarters of the Moscow-backed Chechen government. A number of suicide bombings took place in 2003, with such attacks continuing through 2005, the most serious of which was a hostage massacre at a school in Beslan. In March 2005 Russia announced that Russian forces had killed Chechen rebel leader Aslan Maskhadov.

Following Putin's reelection as president in 2004, the United States and other western democracies began to voice concerns about a number of antidemocratic moves by Putin. Among these was his imprisonment of the billionaire oligarch Mikhail Khodorkovsky on charges of tax evasion. Critics charged that Putin's actions against Khodorkovsky were motivated primarily by the latter's support for opposition political groups.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1917–22	Vladimir Lenin
1922–53	Josef Stalin
1953–64	Nikita Khrushchev
1964–82	Leonid Brezhnev
1982–84	Yuri Andropov
1984–85	Konstantin Chernenko
1985–91	Mikhail Gorbachev
1991–2000	Boris Yeltsin
2000–	Vladimir Putin

CONSTITUTION

The current Russian constitution was adopted in 1993. It established a democratic, federative form of government. In addition to the national government, regional governments have varying degrees of autonomy, ranging from autonomous republics and independent cities to provinces and territories essentially controlled by Moscow.

The federal government is divided into three branches: executive, legislative, and judicial. The head of the executive is the president, who is elected for a four-year term. Despite the democratic nature of the regime, patronage and favored political relationships remain prevalent. The nation's first president was Boris Yeltsin, who was elected in 1991. The head of the government is the prime minister. Under Russian law the president has extensive power. He appoints the prime minister and other government ministers and can dissolve parliament and issue decrees, which carry the weight of law. The president is also nominally in charge of both foreign and domestic policy, although the prime minister actually oversees policy implementation. While in office, Yeltsin expanded the power of the presidency and weakened the office of the prime minister. This trend has continued under Yeltsin's successor, Vladimir Putin. Working for the president is the Presidential Administration, which drafts decrees and serves as the staff for both the president and government. There is also the Security Council, which controls most aspects of foreign and defense policy. There is no vice president or equivalent. Should the sitting president die in office or become incapacitated, then the prime minister becomes acting president until a new leader can be chosen, which must occur within three months. In addition to the prime minister, 40 cabinet members make up the government.

The parliament is a bicameral legislature that contains an upper house, the Federation Council, and a lower house, the Duma. Members of the Federation Council are appointed by regional governments to serve four-year terms. There are two members for each of the 89 regional governments. In the Duma, members are elected to serve four-year terms through a mix of direct and proportional voting.

The judicial branch has the power of judicial review, and the highest courts are the Constitutional Court, the Supreme Court, and the Superior Court of Arbitration. All judges are appointed by the president, as subject to confirmation by the legislature.

PARLIAMENT

Russia is a federation with a legislative assembly and strong presidential system. The parliament is a bicameral chamber known as the *Federalnoye Sobraniye*, or Federal Assembly. The substantive powers of the president mean that the role

of the legislature is somewhat curtailed. For instance, the president can disregard votes of no confidence in the government. The upper house of the parliament is the Federation Council. The council has 178 members, two for each regional government in the federation. The members of the council are the top executive and legislative officials of the regional governments and serve four-year terms. The Federation Council has a number of duties, including confirming presidential appointees for certain positions, such as federal judges or members of the Supreme Court, and the approval of treaties. However, it has considerably less power than the lower house. Council bills must be approved by the lower house, which can bypass the council with a two-thirds vote.

The lower house is known as the State Duma, or simply the Duma. It has 450 members chosen through a combination of direct election and proportional voting to serve four-year terms. Half of the deputies are elected from single-member districts, while the remainder are chosen by party lists. Parties must gain at least 5 percent of the vote in order to be represented on the national lists. The Duma is responsible for initiating laws and approving the budget. The president may suspend the Duma, while the body must approve the president's nominees for prime minister before they can take office. Unlike politics in most of the West, party politics are weak in the Duma, with many members remaining outside formal parties. For instance, following the 2003 legislative elections there were 65 independents in the Duma. Politics are often marked by shifting alliances, and many members of the Duma avoid party affiliation out of the concern that it would prevent them from serving in future governments by identifying them too strongly with one faction. Personal loyalty and interaction remain key components of Russian legislative politics.

POLITICAL PARTIES

There are a total of 269 registered political parties in the federation. However, in 1999 only 11 parties met the threshold of 5 percent required for representation in the Duma, and in 2003 just four parties met the threshold. These included the centrist United Russia Party; the Communist Party of the Russian Federation, the nationalist successor to the Russian Communist Party; the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia, a hard-line, ultranationalist, antireform party; and the new Motherland Bloc, or *Rodina*, which combines nationalism with leftist economics.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The Russian Federation grants varying degrees of autonomy to the different regional and local governments. There are 89 different administrative territories. Within

the federation, there are 21 autonomous republics, 49 oblasts (provinces), six *kraya* (territories), 10 *okruga* (autonomous regions), and one autonomous oblast. In addition, the cities of Moscow and St. Petersburg have the same status as oblasts. These classifications underwent little change in the transition away from Communism, although the autonomous republic of Chechnya-Inghushetiya was split into the two republics of Chechnya and Inghushetiya.

Population and location are the main determinants of a region's designation. In some instances, efforts have been made to give ethnically distinct peoples their own regional governments. The largest geographic bodies are in Siberia, the single greatest body being the Republic of Yakutia. The smallest territory is the Kaliningrad Oblast, located in northeastern Europe and separated from Russia by Poland and the Baltic states. The most populous area is the Moscow Oblast. The smallest unit of government in Russia is the rayon, which is roughly the same as a county.

Many regional governments have had considerable success in negotiating bilateral treaties between themselves and the federal government and thereby increasing their local power. Moscow has signed such treaties with oblasts, republics, and territories, including Tatarstan, Kaliningrad, Krasnodar, Sverdlovsk, and Orenburg. These agreements cover areas such as the budget and control over natural resources.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The constitution established an independent judiciary that has review of legislative acts. The judiciary is divided into three court systems: general, arbitral, and constitutional. General courts cover most areas of jurisprudence. Civil and criminal cases are tried by primary courts, while appeals are handled by regional and high courts. The general court system's lowest level is the municipal court; these courts serve both cities and regional bodies and try some 90 percent of cases. Regional courts are the main appellate courts, with the Supreme Court as the highest body regarding general law. Lower-court decisions may be immediately appealed. Business and commercial issues are subject to the arbitral courts, where the right of appeal also exists. The highest court in this system is the High Court of Arbitration. Constitutional matters are overseen by the Constitutional Court.

Judges are appointed by the president, as subject to confirmation by the Federal Council. Although the judiciary is nominally independent, judges face pressure and coercion from local governments and law enforcement officials. In an effort to overcome this situation, in 1996 general courts were separated from the Ministry of Justice, which also oversees the police, and placed under the auspices of the Judicial Department, which is supervised by the Supreme Court. Federal budget cuts have also affected the ability of the courts to function.

Under Russian law the accused have the right to trial and legal counsel. The court is supposed to appoint a lawyer if the defendant cannot afford one; however, limited resources have curtailed this right. Legislation passed in 1993 and 1994 also established the right to trial by jury in certain cases, but only nine of the federation's 89 regional governments have adopted the practice.

HUMAN RIGHTS

The 1993 constitution grants Russian citizens a variety of civil rights and liberties. Russians are guaranteed the freedoms of speech, the press, religion, and assembly and freedom from discrimination based on ethnicity or gender. The constitution also provides for an independent judiciary. In 1997 the Duma created the position of human rights ombudsman to overview human rights issues and review complaints against the government.

In general, the human rights record of the federal government has been uneven. Moscow has acknowledged that police and prison officials have beaten and tortured prisoners, and the number of prisoners killed by these illegal activities ranges from 10,000 to 20,000 annually. Hazing, or *dedovshchina*, in the military is also a significant problem that has caused accidental deaths and a high suicide rate among soldiers. The president and government have supported human rights initiatives in theory but have not implemented notable reforms to correct problems. There is also a disconnect between the federal government, which is more supportive of civil rights and liberties, and regional and local governments, which tend to be far more repressive.

While Russian citizens are guaranteed freedom of movement within the federation, a number of republics and other regional governments have instituted pass laws restricting freedom of travel. Many local governments also require citizens to register to work within seven days of moving to an area. On the national level, the government has denied travel visas to citizens who have had access to state secrets.

Regional governments have also enacted laws severely curtailing the freedoms of religion and the press. Certain ethnic minorities, especially Muslims, face a variety of discriminatory practices. This problem has been compounded by terrorist activities related to the civil war in Chechnya. Many ethnic Chechens and related ethnic groups have been subject to police harassment and employment-related discrimination in the European areas of Russia.

FOREIGN POLICY

In the immediate post-Communist era, Russian foreign policy was pro-Western. Moscow endeavored to join

many Western institutions and to recast others, such as the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), in order to play a more pivotal role in these bodies. These strategies were essentially successful, as Russia joined the G8 group of industrial nations, became a member of the Council of Europe, and became a part of NATO's Partnership for Peace program. Russia supported the West during the Gulf War and was generally supportive in the Balkan crisis. In the aftermath of the cold war, Russia worked closely with the United States to cut nuclear weapons stores and improve security at nuclear facilities. Freed from ideological constraints, Russia has been able to develop relations with cold-war adversaries such as Japan, Taiwan, and South Korea.

One benefit of generally pro-Western policy has been substantial foreign aid from Western states, although many policy makers in Moscow assert that the West has not done its share to aid Russia in its economic and political transformation. Nonetheless, the West has given Russia some \$125 billion in economic loans and direct aid, including a \$4.5 billion aid program instituted in 1999. Western aid has come with strings attached, forcing the Russian government to enact unpopular economic reforms and creating a backlash against Moscow's reliance on assistance. Many in Russia opposed Moscow's Western orientation during the Yeltsin era and have called for a more Eurasianist foreign policy, which would balance the federation's interests in Europe with those in Asia. One offshoot of such lobbying was the effort by the Yeltsin government to improve relations between Russia and China.

One goal of Russian policy has been to maintain influence in regions traditionally controlled by Moscow, including the so-called near and abroad areas on Russia's borders, in which 25 million ethnic Russians still reside. The most significant of these regions are eastern Europe and central Asia. The first attempt to maintain influence, the formation of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), failed to live up to expectations, as many former Soviet states either refused to join the CIS or simply pursued relations with other centers of power. Nonetheless, Russia still gives extensive support to pro-Moscow governments on its borders—even stationing troops in several independent states. Moscow has worked specifically to reintegrate states such as Ukraine and Belarus into its sphere of influence.

There is also much support for more assertive foreign policy in regions such as the Balkans. Russian support for Serbia, the prime manifestation of this stance, led to disagreements with the West over NATO action in Kosovo in the spring of 1999. Russia has also pursued its own policy toward states such as the Islamic Republic of Iran and continued to sell nuclear technology to that nation in the face of substantial U.S. criticism. Because of its need for foreign currency, Russia has also aggressively sold arms to developing nations.

Efforts by Chechens and other groups within Russia to gain independence have led to sharp disagreements with the West over regional military action. Moscow has utilized Western institutions in efforts to resolve the Chechen conflict while vigorously condemning Western criticism of its military campaigns. Russia has continued to oppose NATO expansion to the states of the former Warsaw Pact.

Since becoming president of Russia in March 2000, Vladimir Putin has focused on enhancing Russia's international status, such as by strengthening Russia's influence with its immediate neighbors, the Middle East, and the European Union. Russia has firmly supported the United States throughout the war on international terrorism but was one of the most vocal opponents of the U.S.-led war in Iraq in 2003.

DEFENSE

Following the end of the cold war, the Russian military underwent extensive downsizing and reform. Present reform plans call for the reduction of the manpower of the armed forces by one-third and the reorganization of units to improve mobility. The federation has one of the largest armies in the world, with over 1.3 million personnel. Conscription is mandatory for males age 18 and older, but many Russians are able to avoid service through a variety of exemptions. Women who have special skills, including medical, may volunteer for service. The length of service is two years. All males are liable for military service until age 50; as such, the reserves number 20 million. The military is divided into the army, navy, air force, air defense force, and strategic rocket command. The army numbers some 670,000; the navy, 200,000; the air force, 130,000; the air defense force, 200,000; and the strategic rocket force, 100,000.

Besides being large, the Russian military is also technologically powerful. Russia possesses the world's second-most powerful nuclear force, behind the United States. The air force has more than 2,100 combat aircraft, and the navy has 150 surface craft and 183 submarines, including those equipped with submarine-launched ballistic missiles. The army is deployed in eight military districts and 14 army commands. The major naval forces include the Northern Fleet, headquartered at Severomorsk; the Baltic Fleet, based in Kaliningrad; the Black Sea Fleet, which is jointly controlled by Russia and Ukraine; the Caspian Flotilla, which is under Russian command but includes forces from Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan; and the powerful Pacific Fleet, which is headquartered at Vladivostok but also includes forces stationed in the Indian Ocean.

Deep military cutbacks have significantly eroded the effectiveness of the Russian military. Salaries are extremely low, prompting many soldiers and sailors to seek second jobs or to sell military equipment. Housing and

medical benefits have been curtailed to the point that as many as one-third of the military do not have housing. In addition, almost half of the military units are understaffed or are staffed by personnel untrained in their current assignments. During the Chechen conflict of 1994–96, the poor performance of the army exposed many of the nation's military problems.

Russia maintains significant deployments of troops outside of the federation, including in Armenia, Georgia, Moldova, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Kazakhstan. There are also small deployments in Vietnam, Cuba, Syria, and Mongolia. In addition, Russia has provided troops for a variety of UN peacekeeping missions, including those in Angola, Bosnia, Croatia, Haiti, Kuwait, Rwanda, and Macedonia.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 1,369,700
 Military Manpower Availability: 35,247,049
 Military Expenditures \$billion: 19.7
 as % of GDP: 4.3
 as % of central government expenditures: 18.8
 Arms Imports \$million: 170
 Arms Exports \$billion: 6

ECONOMY

Russia had a difficult transition from a command to a free-market economy, and numerous reforms are still necessary for the nation to become truly capitalist. The transition has been marked by double-digit declines in gross domestic product (GDP) and double-digit unemployment and inflation. Efforts at privatization have been marred by corruption and popular resistance to job losses. A thriving underground economy persists and keeps significant economic activity outside of the mainstream. The nation's economy is dependent on foreign investment and loans from international agencies. However, this dependency has been beneficial in that it has promoted the implementation of tariff reform and trade liberalization. Military exports continue to be a major source of trade revenues.

Services now account for over 60 percent of the federation's economy, and tourism in particular has become an important source of foreign currency. Manufacturing occupies one-third of the economy; the main industries are machine tools, aircraft, mining, road and rail transport, communications and electronic equipment, farm and transportation equipment, and energy production. Russia's main exports are petroleum, natural gas, wood, metals, chemicals, and both military and civilian manufactured goods. Major imports include machinery and equipment, consumer goods, medicine, foodstuffs, and metal products. The federation's main trade partners are the EU nations, the United States, Japan, Ukraine, China, and many states of the former Soviet Union. The

end of collectivized agriculture initiated a miniboom in that sector, as farms returned to private ownership and became much more efficient and profitable.

The Russian economy had rebounded by 1999 and in 2003 had its fifth consecutive year of growth, averaging 6.7 percent per year, as buoyed by competitive boosts from the weak ruble and a surging trade surplus fueled by rising world oil prices. Real fixed-capital investment has risen 10 percent per year, and personal incomes have risen 12 percent per year, while foreign debt has declined from 90 percent of GDP to just 28 percent. These improvements have raised business and investor confidence over Russia's prospects in its second decade of transition.

Still, serious problems persist. Russia remains heavily dependent on exports of commodities, particularly oil, natural gas, metals, and timber, which account for more than 80 percent of exports, leaving the country vulnerable to swings in world prices. Russia's agricultural sector remains beset by uncertainty over landownership rights, which has discouraged needed investment and restructuring. Other threats are negative demographic trends, as fueled by low birthrates and a deteriorating health situation—including an alarming rise in AIDS cases—that have contributed to a nearly 2 percent drop in the population since 1992. Russia's industrial base is increasingly dilapidated and must be replaced or modernized if the country is to achieve sustainable economic growth. Other problems include widespread corruption, capital flight, and brain drain.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$trillion: 1.408
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 9,800
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 6.7
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 7.2
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 4.9
 Industry: 33.9
 Services: 61.2
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 49
 Government Consumption: 17
 Gross Domestic Investment: 19.1
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 162.5
 Imports: 92.91
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 5.9
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 47.0

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
—	—	—	—	—

Finance

National Currency: Russian Ruble (RUR)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = RUR 29.1
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency trillion: 2.18
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 16.0
 Total External Debt \$billion: 169.6

Debt Service Ratio %: 8.31
 Balance of Payments \$billion: 46.04
 International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 73.2
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
 11.5

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$billion: 1.25
 per capita \$: 8.80
 Foreign Direct Investment \$billion: 8

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$billion: 106.4
 Expenditures \$billion: 93.33
 Budget Surplus \$billion: 13.07
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 4.9
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2002) %: 11.0
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 0.52
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 3.7
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 11.9
 Total Farmland % of land area: 7.3
 Livestock: Cattle million: 24.8
 Chickens million: 340
 Pigs million: 16
 Sheep million: 14.5
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 168.5
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons million: 3.33

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: —
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 6.4

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent billion: 1.02
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 603.8
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 4.19
 Net Energy Imports % of use: -67.4
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 208
 Production kW-hr billion: 915
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 860
 Coal Reserves tons billion: 173
 Production tons million: 294
 Consumption tons million: 255
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet quadrillion: 1.68
 Production cubic feet trillion: 22.4
 Consumption cubic feet trillion: 15.3
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: 60
 Production barrels million per day: 9.3
 Consumption barrels million per day: 2.6
 Pipelines Length km: 75,539

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 92.91
 Exports \$billion: 162.5
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 7.7
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 10.5
 Balance of Trade \$billion: 46.04

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Germany %	14.0	7.8
Belarus %	8.6	5.7
Ukraine %	7.7	5.7
China %	5.8	6.2
United States %	5.2	4.6
Kazakhstan %	4.7	—
Italy %	4.2	6.3
France %	4.1	—
Netherlands %	—	6.5
Switzerland %	—	4.4

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 537,289
 Paved %: 67.4
 Automobiles: 22,342,300
 Trucks and Buses: 4,331,100
 Railroad: Track Length km: 87,157
 Passenger-km billion: 152.9
 Freight-km trillion: 1.51
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 1,194
 Total Deadweight Tonnage million: 5.5
 Airports: 2,586
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 49.9
 Length of Waterways km: 96,000

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 7.9
 Number of Tourists from million: 20.3
 Tourist Receipts \$billion: 5.4
 Tourist Expenditures \$billion: 11.7

Communications

Telephones million: 35.5
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones million: 17.6
 Personal Computers million: 13
 Internet Hosts per million people: 3,911
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 42

ENVIRONMENT

With the breakup of the Soviet Union, Russia was able to avoid responsibility for many of the environmental problems caused by Soviet policies and the presence of Soviet troops in the nations of eastern and central Europe.

These problems ranged from the cleanup associated with the Chernobyl disaster to groundwater and soil pollution caused by discharges at Soviet military facilities. Russia itself faces enormous ecological problems as a result of 70 years of Communist-enforced industrialization and collectivization.

Moscow has classified some 40 percent of Russian territory as being under ecological stress. Even excluding areas contaminated by radioactive waste, there are 56 areas identified as environmentally degraded. The nation continues to be impacted by acid rain and smog produced by inefficient, coal-burning electric plants. Other older industrial plants further add to air pollution. Numerous areas around the federation have contaminated soil and water from overfertilization and the use of dangerous pesticides. Soil erosion is also a problem in agricultural regions. Many of the nation's waterways are essentially environmentally "dead," as heavy pollution and industrial discharge have destroyed most plant and animal life. Radioactive waste contaminates many sites, and radioactive materials and toxic chemicals have caused numerous health problems for those exposed. Following the Chernobyl disaster, 37 million Soviets were exposed to radioactive fallout. The Soviet Union was also responsible for dumping two-thirds of all radioactive materials ever dumped into the sea; only in 1994 did Russia agree to stop dumping nuclear waste into the Sea of Japan. Russia's problems are exacerbated by the remoteness of many contaminated areas and efforts by the Soviet government to hide areas impacted by ecocide.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 50.4
Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: 135
Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 9
Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 1,484,991
CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 9.86

LIVING CONDITIONS

The collapse of Communism left behind a legacy of corruption, inefficiency, environmental depredation, and nepotism. A common saying during the Communist regime was "We pretend to work and they pretend to pay us." The transition to a freer society and more market-based economy proved difficult. The withdrawal of state-funded benefits and guaranteed employment left many Russians poor; in 2004 the poverty rate was 25 percent and the unemployment rate was 8.3 percent, with considerable underemployment. Health care remains relatively poor, and the nation has lacked to funds to repair its crumbling infrastructure, including roads and bridges. Wages in the military average

about \$3.50 a month. The nation is torn by ethnic tensions and terrorist violence, especially in the Caucasus Mountain region. Alcoholism continues to be a major social problem, and crime, including rampant prostitution, has been on the rise.

HEALTH

The quality of health care in Russia is uneven. Life expectancy at birth is about 67 years. The infant mortality rate is just over 15 deaths per 1,000 live births. AIDS has become a growing problem; in 2001, 1.1 percent of the adult population had the disease, but that figure is likely to have increased in subsequent years. There are enormous discrepancies between the health status of men and that of women. While the life expectancy for women is over 73 years, that for men is less than 63 years; 77 percent of women reach age 65, but only 46.4 percent of men do. Poverty, poor living conditions, inadequate sanitation, and environmental damage have variously led to rising rates of tuberculosis, hepatitis, and sexually transmitted diseases, especially among those who cannot afford medical care.

Health

Number of Physicians: 604,365
Number of Dentists: 46,209
Number of Nurses: 1,140,048
Number of Pharmacists: 10,215
Physician Density per 100,000 people: 417
Hospital Beds per 1,000: 10.8
Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 15.39
Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 67
Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 6.2
Health Expenditures per capita \$: 150
HIV Infected % of adults: 1.1
Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
DPT: 98
Measles: 96
Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 87
Access to Improved Water Source %: 96

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Nutrition in Russia is generally good. Only about 1 percent of Russian children under the age of five are underweight, making Russia one of the leading nations in the world in that respect. The main staples are bread and potatoes, and Russians consume large quantities of carrots, cabbage, beets, onions, and garlic. Meats of various kinds are also important; there is a saying that starvation means having no bread, while poverty means having no *kolbasa*, a hard sausage. Dairy products are also important, as are fruits and desserts. The most common beverage is hot tea, along with vodka.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 3.6
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,900
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 155.0
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg:
 137.7

STATUS OF WOMEN

Women in Russia continue to face a variety of obstacles and discrimination; Russian society remains strongly traditional. Many of the Soviet social programs that benefited women were maintained under the Russian government, but funding shortages curtailed their effectiveness. Women are represented in a variety of fields, including medicine, education, and economics, but they are underrepresented in the upper management of these fields. In general, most women are employed in low-paying service jobs. Women also face disparities in income.

The overall decline in the family has also affected the status of women in the country. The divorce rate has dramatically increased since the breakup of the Soviet Union, leaving many women destitute and dependent on minimal child allowances. Various crimes against women have also increased.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 10
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.0
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 50.1

WORK

In 2003 the Russian labor force numbered nearly 72 million, with an unemployment rate of about 8.3 percent. About 12.3 percent were employed in agriculture (contributing just 4.9 percent to GDP, suggesting the inefficiency of the agricultural sector), 22.7 percent in industry (as marked by a 6.4 percent industrial growth rate in 2004), and 65 percent in services. Per capita GDP in 2004 was just under \$10,000. Major agricultural crops include grain, sugar beets, sunflower seeds, vegetables, fruits, beef, and milk. As a large and populous country, Russia supports a wide range of industries; major industries include petroleum and mining.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 71,830,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 49.1

Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 12.3
 Industry: 22.7
 Services: 65.0
 Unemployment %: 8.3

EDUCATION

Under Soviet rule, conformity was the rule in education. In 1992, after the demise of the Soviet Union, a new education law was enacted, the basis of which was the removal of central control over education. This meant that ethnic republics were able to develop new curricula emphasizing local culture and history. In addition, a basic change in teaching philosophy was envisioned whereby students would be taught objectively and exposed to alternative worldviews. Efforts were undertaken to establish adult education and worker-retraining programs.

Preschools are widespread in Russia, and approximately 70 percent of children attend some 60,000 of them. In addition there are over 70,000 primary and secondary schools. Including the nation's institutions of higher learning, Russia's educational system encompasses 27 million students. The system suffers from a number of problems, including overcrowding, teacher shortages, and antiquated facilities. As a result, many local systems have adopted schedules that allow for two or three shifts of students per day.

Students may attend preschool until age seven then attend elementary school. A 1994 education law lowered the terminal age of compulsory education from 17 to 15. Secondary schools offer a variety of curricula, including those designed to prepare students for university and those designed to prepare students for specific career paths. Many of the federation's universities and institutions of higher learning are located in urban areas. There are 569 postsecondary schools, including 333 universities. In addition to universities, institutes offer students training in specific careers such as law or medicine. Meanwhile, polytechnics offer a variety of programs, but without the concentration of the institutes.

State education is free, but a number of private schools have been established. There are approximately 300 private schools serving 20,000 students. These schools cater to the more affluent, Western-oriented families.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 99.6
 Male %: 99.7
 Female %: 99.5
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 13.3
 First Level: Primary Schools: 70,200
 Teachers: 328,373
 Students: 5,554,607
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 16.9
 Net Enrollment Ratio: —

(continues)

Education *(continued)*

Second Level: Secondary Schools: (included in first level)

Teachers: —

Students: 13,369,909

Student-Teacher Ratio: —

Net Enrollment Ratio: —

Third Level: Institutions: 569

Teachers: 575,446

Students: 8,022,791

Gross Enrollment Ratio: 69.8

Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 3.1

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Russia has approximately 1,000 research labs and 700 engineering centers. These organizations employ about 400,000 scientists and teachers. Scientific research, much of it for military applications, was heavily funded during the Soviet era, but after the fall of Communism funding dried up, and scientists now rely on funding from private and foundation sources. Meanwhile, many research facilities in such areas as physics, chemistry, and mathematics went out of business due to lack of funds.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 3,494

Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 1.25

High-Tech Exports \$billion: 5.33

Patent Applications by Residents: 24,049

MEDIA

Following the demise of the Soviet Union, the press in Russia gained considerable freedom. Government officials and public figures became the frequent targets of a vocal and reformist press. However, many media outlets are still dependent upon state support and are therefore subject to pressure from the government. The media has also been criticized for failing to adopt the objective styles of Western journalism and blurring the line between reporting and editorializing. In 1999 there were estimated to be over 300 daily newspapers and over 10,000 periodicals in Russia. The most significant of these include *Pravda*, *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, and the weekly *Argumenty i fakty*. Several government organs also have high circulations.

Some 50 million Russians listen to regular radio broadcasts. Two state-controlled broadcast systems, the Federal Television and Radio Service and the All-Russian Television and Radio Company, provide almost all domestic radio programming. The main foreign language service is the Voice of Russia, which provides programming in 30 languages, ranging from English to Japanese to Farsi. In 2003 one of the main television station, TV-6, closed, officially for financial reasons.

Television programming has grown increasingly diversified. The medium has also grown in popularity and has become the chief news source for most Russians. Unlike radio, television stations have been privatized, although the state still owns a significant percentage of the companies. There are four major networks and some 400 regional stations.

Russian culture continues to be drawn in two opposing directions: westward and eastward. Western popular culture, including music, literature, and cinema, remain popular among more affluent groups. However, traditionalists and many in the poorer classes still favor traditional elements of Slavic culture, and the notion of Pan-Slavism remains strong.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 333

Total Circulation 000: —

Circulation per 1,000: —

Books Published: 36,237

Periodicals: 10,188

Radio Receivers 000: —

per 1,000: —

Television sets million: 62

per 1,000: 421

CULTURE

Under Communism artists were supported by the state, but they had little creative freedom, as the state saw art as a way to convey political messages. With the fall of Communism, financial support for artists greatly diminished, but artists gained considerably more artistic freedom.

The 19th century is generally regarded as the high point of Russian art, especially literature. Beginning with the poet Alexander Pushkin, the author of *Eugene Onegin*, and continuing with fiction writers such as Michael Lermontov, Nikolai Gogol, Ivan Turgenev, Fyodor Dostoevsky, and Leo Tolstoy, as well as the playwright Anton Chekhov, Russians produced some of the world's great classic literature. In the 20th century the best-known writer was Alexander Solzhenitsyn, who opposed the Communist state. In the graphic arts Russia is best known for its elaborate religious art, much of it dating back to the 10th century. In the performance arts Russians have been world leaders, especially such names as Pyotr Tchaikovsky, Modest Mussorgsky, Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov, Sergei Rachmaninoff, Sergei Prokofiev, Igor Stravinsky, and Dmitri Shostakovich in classical music and Sergei Diaghilev, Vaslav Nijinsky, Anna Pavlova, Rudolph Nurieyev, and Mikhail Baryshnikov in ballet.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number:	48,560
Volumes:	716,337,440
Registered borrowers:	50,498,500
Museums Number:	—
Annual Attendance:	—
Cinema Gross Receipts national currency million:	311.9
Number of Cinemas:	1,416
Seating Capacity:	613,000
Annual Attendance:	19,054,000

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Russia's epic songs, known as *byliny*, date back to the 15th century and earlier. These songs feature characters such as Svyatogor the giant and Volkh Vseslavich, a character who can change himself into an animal. Folktales feature such evil characters as the witch Baba Yaga and the dragon Koshchey the Immortal.

Russia originated a major Christmas tradition in St. Nicholas, named for St. Nicholas of Myra, the nation's patron saint. The legend holds that in the 10th century, when Prince Vladimir proclaimed Christianity the official religion, he named St. Nicholas the protector of the poor and oppressed. The fame of St. Nicholas spread, and in time people honored him in the church on Christmas Eve. The tradition of gift giving, however, is traced back to Babushka, meaning "grandmother," who gave gifts to children at Christmas. The legend has that Babushka gave wrong directions to the magi who were on their way to Bethlehem to see the Christ child. Babushka then set out to find the magi, but, failing to do so, traveled about giving gifts to children.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Rather than succumbing to the cold that locks in the country much of the year, Russians embrace the climate and have become outdoor enthusiasts. Many people can be found playing chess or musical instruments in public parks even during the coldest weather. Russians are also sports enthusiasts, with as many as one-fourth of Russians taking part in some sort of organized sports activity, including tennis, skiing, ice skating, gymnastics, and acrobatics. Chess is almost a national pastime, and the nation's chess masters occupy a high place in Russian society. Thousands of Russian children have attained the International Chess Federation's rank of chess master. Russians are very proud of their high culture, and such activities as attending the ballet are commonplace, even among ordinary people, in a nation where the word *uncultured* has long been an insult.

ETIQUETTE

One of the most common standards of etiquette has to do with how to address others. Russians use a formal second-person plural form of *you* to address elders (except for their grandparents and parents), as well as persons of higher social status, casual acquaintances, and strangers; they use an informal second-person singular to address family members, close friends, and colleagues of equal status. Also, it is expected that one address a stranger or casual acquaintance with the full name and patronymic, a kind of "middle name" formed from the person's father's first name. Thus, a man named Sergei who is the son of Pavel would be addressed as Sergei Pavlovich; a woman named Anna who is the daughter of Pavel would be addressed as Anna Pavlovna.

Because Russians lived for so long under authoritarian rulers, they make wide distinctions between public and private behavior. In public, Russians tend to be reserved and formal; in private, they are much warmer and more cordial.

War veterans, especially those who fought in the Second World War, are accorded special status and often wear their medals on public occasions. Along with pregnant women and the handicapped, they are given preferential seating on public transportation.

FAMILY LIFE

Most Russians choose their own marriage partners. Weddings are often elaborate affairs conducted in Eastern Orthodox churches, although the Soviet regime encouraged civil marriages. Because of housing shortages, many young married couples live with parents, especially the widowed parents of one spouse. In multigenerational homes, grandmothers are often the primary child-care givers. While the Soviet regime rewarded women for bearing many children, and families were often quite large, in more recent years the birthrate has fallen; in 2004 it was 1.3 children per woman, and with an overall birthrate of 10 per 1,000 population, combined with a death rate of 15 per 1,000 population, Russia experienced a population decline of 0.45 percent in 2004.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Russians place great emphasis on appearing in public well groomed and in neat clothing. Russians typically do not have extensive wardrobes, preferring instead a few articles of clothing of high quality. Most Russians dress in Western style, although traditional clothing can be seen in the countryside or on special occasions. Many people wear fur during the harsh winters, not out of fashion considerations but to stay warm; most wear the *shapka*, a fur

1970 Russia

hat with ear flaps. A common article of clothing worn by women is the babushka (Russian for “grandmother”), a large scarf or kerchief worn on the head and tied under the chin.

SPORTS

Russians are avid sports participants. Sports are part of the curriculum at elementary schools, and students who show promise are often sent to sports-oriented schools around age 10 or 11, where they undergo rigorous scientific training. As a result, Russians have excelled in a wide variety of sports, including gymnastics, figure skating, basketball, ice hockey, and many others, and regularly place near the top of the medals list in Olympic competition; under the Soviet regime, when the Soviet Union included not only Russia but what are now other nations, they consistently outperformed every other nation in the world. Russians have been particularly strong in ice dancing and pairs ice skating in world competition, regularly taking gold medals.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1945** Germany is defeated by an Allied coalition that includes the Soviet Union, United States, and Great Britain; Soviets seize control of most of eastern and central Europe.
 - 1947** The Communist Information Bureau is founded in response to the Truman Doctrine.
 - 1948** Stalin breaks with Josip Broz Tito, of Yugoslavia, and blockades Berlin.
 - 1949** Soviets test atomic bomb; Council for Mutual Economic Assistance is founded.
 - 1950** Korean War begins.
 - 1953** Stalin dies; Nikita Khrushchev becomes head of party; test of hydrogen bomb takes place.
 - 1955** Warsaw Pact is formed.
 - 1956** De-Stalinization begins; Soviet Union invades Hungary to crush liberal revolution.
 - 1960** Sino-Soviet conflict flares into open.
 - 1962** Cuban Missile Crisis occurs.
 - 1964** Khrushchev is forced to retire; Leonid Brezhnev assumes power.
 - 1968** Warsaw Pact intervenes in Czechoslovakia to restore hard-line Communist rule.
 - 1972** U.S. president Richard M. Nixon visits Moscow; Strategic Arms Limitation Talks are held.
 - 1977** New constitution is promulgated; Brezhnev becomes head of state.
 - 1979** SALT II is signed; Soviet troops invade Afghanistan.
 - 1980** The United States leads a boycott of the Moscow Olympics.
 - 1981** Polish crisis begins.
 - 1982** Brezhnev dies; Yuri Andropov assumes power.
 - 1984** Andropov dies; Konstantin Chernenko becomes leader of USSR.
 - 1985** Chernenko dies and is replaced by Mikhail Gorbachev.
 - 1986** Gorbachev initiates glasnost and perestroika reform efforts.
 - 1989** Soviet forces withdraw from Afghanistan; Gorbachev meets with Pope John Paul II in first-ever visit by Soviet leader to the Vatican.
 - 1990** Lithuania declares independence but is blocked by Moscow; Soviet troops begin withdrawal from Eastern Europe; private property is legalized.
 - 1991** Attempted coup against Gorbachev fails; Soviet Union breaks apart as republics declare their independence; Boris Yeltsin, leader of reform movement, is elected president of Russia on June 12, 1991. Yeltsin bans the Russian Communist Party; the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) is created as a means to maintain ties between states of the former Soviet Union.
 - 1993** New constitution is promulgated; first free parliamentary elections take place.
 - 1996** Yeltsin is reelected president of Russia.
 - 1998** Soviet troops invade Chechnya in an effort to end independence; the campaign results in heavy losses and international condemnation for human rights abuses.
 - 1999** Severe economic crisis cripples Russia's economy.
 - 2000** Vladimir Putin is elected president.
 - 2001** Putin supports the United States in its military campaign against the Taliban and al-Qaeda, the organization that led the terrorist attacks against the United States on September 11, 2001, leading to closer cooperation between Russia and the West.
 - 2002** Rome Declaration creates NATO-Russia Council, with Russia to play a limited role in NATO. Chechen terrorists seize a Moscow movie theater and hold 800 patrons hostage.
 - 2005** Terrorists seize control of a school in Beslan, holding 1,200 students and teachers hostage. In a bloody resolution to the situation, approximately 330 people are killed, half of them children.
- Russia announces that Russian forces killed the Chechen rebel leader Aslan Maskhadov in a military operation.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Russian Statistical Agency
<http://www.gks.ru/eng/default.asp>
- Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the United Nations
<http://www.un.int/russia/>

RWANDA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Rwanda (République Rwandaise; Repubulika y'u Rwanda)

ABBREVIATION

RW

CAPITAL

Kigali

HEAD OF STATE

President Paul Kagame (from 2000)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Bernard Makuza (from 2000)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Republic

POPULATION

8,440,820 (2005)

AREA

26,338 sq km (10,169 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Hutu, Tutsi

LANGUAGES

French, English, Kinyarwanda, Kiswahili

RELIGIONS

Animism, Christianity

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Rwandan franc

NATIONAL FLAG

The top half is blue, with a golden sun with 24 rays in the top right-hand corner; the bottom half is divided into a top yellow horizontal stripe and a bottom green stripe.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A green ring with a knot tied at the lower end of the ring. On the top is the inscription "Repubulika y'u Rwanda," and below is the motto *Ubumwe, unurimo, gukunda igibugu* (Unity, Work, Patriotism). Inside the ring are arranged the Sun, sorghum and coffee, a basket, a cog wheel, and two shields.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"Rwanda Nziza" (Our Rwanda)

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 28 (Proclamation of the Republic), May 1 (Labor Day), July 1 (Independence Day), July 4 (Liberation Day), August 15 (National Peace and Unity Day), September 25 (Kamparampaka Day), October 26 (Armed Forces Day), December 10 (Human Rights Day), various Christian festivals, including All Saints' Day, Christmas, Whitmonday, Assumption, Ascension, Pentecost Monday

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

July 1, 1962

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

May 26, 2003

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Rwanda, a landlocked country in east-central Africa, has an area of 26,338 sq km (10,169 sq mi), extending 248 km (154 mi) northeast to southwest and 166 km (103 mi) southeast to northwest. The total length of the international boundary is 893 km (555 mi), shared with four countries: Uganda, Tanzania, Burundi, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

Rwanda is divided into six topographical regions, from west to east: the narrow Great Rift Valley, sloping

sharply to Lake Kivu; the volcanic Virunga Mountains, with their highest peak, snowcapped Mount Karisimbi (4,519 m; 14,826 ft), towering over the high lava plains of northwestern Rwanda; the steep north-south slopes of the Congo-Nile divide, averaging 40 km (25 mi) in width; the ridgeline of the Congo-Nile divide, with an average elevation of 2,750 m (9,000 ft); the central plateau east of the mountains, covered by rolling hills; and the savannas and swamps of the eastern and southeastern border areas, including the vast Kagera National Park, which covers one-tenth of the nation's land area. Most

Rwanda



of Rwanda is 900 m (3,000 ft) above sea level; the central plains have an average elevation of 1,932 m (4,700 ft).

Geography

Area sq km: 26,338; sq mi 10,169
 World Rank: 144th
 Land Boundaries, km: Burundi 290; Democratic Republic of the Congo 217; Tanzania 217; Uganda 169

Coastline, km: 0
 Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Rusizi River 950
 Highest: Volcan Karisimbi 4,519
 Land Use %
 Arable Land: 40.5
 Permanent Crops: 12.2
 Forest: 12.4
 Other: 34.9

Population of Principal Cities (2002)

Gitarama	84,669
Kigali	603,049

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Although only two degrees south of the equator, Rwanda has a relatively pleasant tropical climate. The country has two dry seasons: the short, in January and February, and the long, lasting from June through September. There are two wet seasons: from October to December and from March through May. The capital, Kigali, has an average temperature of 19°C (66°F) during the wet months, with slightly higher averages during the dry months. Westward, toward Lake Kivu, the weather is much cooler, with night temperatures dropping to freezing at higher elevations. Eastward, temperatures increase to an average of 32.2°C (90°F).

The highest rainfall, over 1,750 mm (70 in), is received in the west, decreasing to 1,000 to 1,400 mm (40 to 55 in) in the central uplands and 750 mm (30 in) in the northeast and east.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature: 66°F to 90°F

Average Rainfall

West: 70 in

Central Uplands: 40 in to 55 in

Northeast and East: 30 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Rwanda used to be covered with extensive forests, but woodlands are now concentrated primarily in the western mountains, especially in the area surrounding Lake Kivu. The principal tree species found in these forests are oil palms, acacia, and eucalyptus. Kagera National Park is home to lemurs, antelopes, leopards, wild boars, crocodiles, hippopotamuses, and elephants. In northern Rwanda, around the Virunga Mountains, can be found approximately half of the world's surviving mountain gorillas.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 8,440,820

World Rank: 88th

Density per sq km: 340.3

% of annual growth (1999-2003): 2.8

Male %: 49.7

Female %: 50.3

Urban %: 6.6

Age Distribution %:

0-14:	41.9
15-64:	55.5
65 and over:	2.6

Population 2025: 13,141,000

Birth Rate per 1,000: 40.6

Death Rate per 1,000: 16.32

Rate of Natural Increase %: 2.4

Total Fertility Rate: 5.49

Expectation of Life (years): Males 45.92

Females 48.03

Marriage Rate per 1,000: —

Divorce Rate per 1,000: —

Average Size of Households: 4.7

Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

The African population of Rwanda is relatively homogeneous, with the Hutu composing about 84 percent of the population. The only other major ethnic group is the Tutsi, whose numbers have markedly declined since the massacres of 1994, during which some one million people, mainly Tutsi, were killed. Today, the Tutsi are believed to constitute 15 percent of the population. The Twa, a tribe of pygmy hunters and perhaps descendants of the earliest-known inhabitants of the region, account for most of the remainder of the population.

Though differing markedly in physical features, the Hutu and Tutsi share the same language, kinship and clan systems, and religious values. Until independence in 1962, the Tutsi were the feudal masters of the country, organized under a *mwami* (king). Racially, the Hutu belong to the Bantu family. Approximately 45 percent of all Tutsi reside in the central region of the country near Nyanza, the former capital of the Tutsi kings.

Ethnic aliens include some 3,000 Asians, of whom Indians, Pakistanis, and Arabs form the major groups. Almost all aliens are engaged exclusively in trade; in general they have not suffered from the kind of discrimination that Asians have been subjected to in other African countries. The European population has not numbered more than 2,000 in recent years; Belgians constitute 60 percent of this number.

LANGUAGES

The official languages of Rwanda are French, English, and Kinyarwanda. The latter is a Bantu language spoken by all Rwandans. French is spoken by an increasing number of educated Rwandans; the country's major periodicals are published in French, and the main language of broadcasting is French. Kiswahili is also widely spoken, particularly in commercial areas.

RELIGIONS

The majority of Rwandans follow traditional religions built around the concept of a supreme spirit called Imana. Christianity, introduced by Catholic missionaries in the 19th century, spread rapidly and now claims

93 percent of the population. Though Christianity was accepted with relative ease, adherence to church dogma is flexible and in some cases is combined with elements of traditional practice. According to official figures, Catholics constitute 56.5 percent of the population, as organized into one archdiocese and four dioceses. The Protestant population is estimated at 37 percent, as divided among a number of denominations. Protestant influence and activities have never been significant and during recent years have declined.

Religious Affiliations

Roman Catholic	4,770,000
Protestant	2,190,000
Adventist	940,000
Muslim	390,000
Indigenous Beliefs	10,000
None	145,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Precolonial Rwanda was a highly centralized kingdom presided over by Tutsi kings who hailed from one ruling clan. The king ruled through three categories of chiefs: cattle chiefs, land chiefs, and military chiefs. The chiefs were predominantly, but not exclusively, Tutsi, especially the cattle and military chiefs. While the relationship between the king and the rest of the population was unequal, the relationship among the ordinary Hutu, Tutsi, and Twa was one of mutual benefit mainly through the exchange of labor. A clientele system called *ubuhake* permeated the entire society.

Rwanda, together with Urundi (now Burundi), became a German colony in 1885, when it was designated as a German sphere of interest at the Congress of Berlin. But not until nine years after the conference did the first European official reach Rwanda—Count G. A. von Gotzen, who later became governor of German East Africa; Rwanda was in fact one of the last regions of Africa to be penetrated by Europeans. German rule was indirect, exercised through the *mwami*, or Tutsi king, who in turn used the German presence to strengthen his own authority and extend it throughout the territory. At its height, the German administration consisted of only five officials and about 166 soldiers.

Rwanda fell to Belgian troops in 1916 and in 1923 became a mandated territory of the League of Nations under Belgian supervision. Belgian administration followed the German pattern of relying on the *mwami* and the Tutsi aristocracy. In 1925 Rwanda and Burundi, as Ruanda-Urundi, were joined in an administrative union with the Belgian Congo. In 1946 Rwanda-Burundi was made a Trust Territory under the United Nations. Under pressure from the UN Trusteeship Council, the first

popular representative institutions were introduced in the country in 1952.

During the 1950s Hutu resistance to the monarchy increased, culminating in 1959 in a revolt that ended the monarchy and forced many Tutsi to flee. The Party for Hutu Emancipation (Parmehutu), led by Grégoire Kayibanda, won electoral victories in 1959 and proclaimed a republic in January 1961. Because the United Nations did not recognize the 1959 elections, new ones took place in September 1961. Parmehutu again won an overwhelming victory, and Kayibanda was designated president.

The main legacy of Belgian rule was the restoration of the Hutu majority to its rightful role in national life. The administrative, educational, and legal machinery survived the transfer of power almost intact, and French remained the official language of Rwanda, along with Kinyarwanda.

Racial tension continued after independence, with serious tribal warfare breaking out in 1963. Parmehutu consolidated its position during the decade, and in 1973 the existing constitution, which barred Kayibanda from seeking another term, was altered to permit the continuation of his regime. The move increased tribal hostilities. With the prospect of civil war looming, a bloodless coup took place in July 1973.

The new government, led by Maj. Gen. Juvénal Habyarimana, suspended portions of the constitution, dissolved the legislature, and installed a civilian-military government with a centralized system of administration. Three years later the regime formed the National Revolutionary Movement for Development (MRND), the country's sole legal power. Its goal was to eradicate ethnic conflict and promote national unity. A new constitution was adopted by referendum in 1978, and Habyarimana was confirmed president for another term. Single-party legislative elections were held in 1981, 1983, and 1988. Habyarimana won a fourth term as president in 1988.

Despite MRND assertions regarding the promotion of national unity, a policy of discrimination against Tutsi continued, and in September 1990 Rwanda once again faced a Hutu-Tutsi confrontation. Between 5,000 and 10,000 long-exiled Tutsi, calling themselves the Rwandese Patriotic Front (RPF), crossed the border from Uganda in an effort to topple Habyarimana's government. In October the rebels agreed to a cease-fire and an offer from Habyarimana to start talks.

On June 8, 1991, the president signed a new constitution that provided for multiparty politics. After a long period of negotiations between the government of Rwanda and the RPF that took place in Arusha, Tanzania, the Arusha Peace Agreement was signed on August 4, 1993. The agreement called for UN peace-keeping forces to be stationed in Rwanda. In April 1994 President Habyarimana and Burundian president Cyprien Ntaryamira were killed when their plane was

shot down near Kigali; responsibility for the attack was never established. In the three months following the assassinations, between 500,000 and one million Rwandans, mainly Tutsi, were killed in what UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali eventually called genocide against the Tutsi by the Hutu-dominated Rwandan Army. The United Nations peacekeeping force, lacking a mandate to protect civilians, abandoned Kigali, the capital, prompting the RPF to renew their military campaign. Attempts to mediate a cease-fire failed as the RPF captured Kigali on July 4, 1994. Retaliatory violence by Tutsi claimed several thousand lives, including that of the Roman Catholic archbishop of Kigali. Meanwhile, over three million refugees fled to Tanzania and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

A cease-fire was finally declared in July, and on July 19 an RPF-backed government was established. Members of the National Assembly were nominated by the RPF and seven other political parties, including the Liberal, Social Democratic, and Christian Democratic parties and the Republican Democratic Movement. Pasteur Bizimungu, a moderate Hutu, became president and another Hutu, Faustin Twagiramungu, prime minister. But the real power lay in the hands of the Tutsi defense minister, Maj. Gen. Paul Kagame.

On November 8, 1994, the UN Security Council established an international criminal tribunal to prosecute those responsible for genocide. In 1995 Tutsi troops massacred 2,000 Hutu at the Kibeho refugee camp. This action, universally condemned, slowed the voluntary return of Hutu from the DRC and led to the resignation of Prime Minister Twagiramungu; he was replaced by Pierre-Celestin Rwigema in a new cabinet in which Tutsi occupied all important positions. Prosecution for crimes during the civil war continued in 1999 both within Rwanda and at the UN-sponsored tribunal in Arusha. In an act that strained relations with the Vatican, the Rwandan police arrested Roman Catholic bishop Augustin Misago for alleged complicity in the killing of 20,000 people. In 1999 Rwanda opened its first official genocide memorial. The government also announced plans to change several national symbols, including the flag and the national anthem, widely associated with extremist Hutu nationalism. The new national symbols were introduced on January 1, 2002. In 2000 the Tutsi takeover of Rwanda was completed when General Kagame succeeded Bizimungu, who had served as a figurehead in the administration, as president.

In 2003 the voters approved a new constitution, whose primary purpose was to prevent another genocide by banning the incitement of racial hatred. That year, too, Paul Kagame won the first presidential election since 1994, and his party won an absolute majority in parliament. In 2005 the major Hutu rebel group announced that it was ending its armed struggle.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1962–73	Grégoire Kayibanda
1973–94	Juvénal Habyarimana
1994	Théodore Sindikubwabo
1994–2000	Pasteur Bizimungu
2000–	Paul Kagame

CONSTITUTION

On May 5, 1995, the Transitional National Assembly adopted a constitution that included elements of the constitution of June 18, 1991, as well as provisions of the 1993 Arusha peace accord and the November 1994 multiparty protocol of understanding. The document created the post of prime minister, limits the president to two five-year terms in office, and provides for multiparty politics, freedom of the press, and separate executive, judicial, and legislative branches.

In 2003 voters overwhelmingly approved a new constitution that gave primacy to human rights, eliminated references to ethnicity, and included specific provisions to prevent genocide. Additionally, the document provides for a bicameral legislature, codifies a system of checks and balances, and, in an effort to distribute power, requires that the prime minister and president be members of different political parties. It also offers specific provisions for parliamentary and presidential elections.

PARLIAMENT

Before the constitution of 1991 the national legislature was the unicameral National Development Council (Conseil pour le Développement National), elected for five-year terms by universal suffrage. It had a membership of 70, elected by voters from among 140 candidates nominated by the MRND. The National Development Council showed keen interest in financial questions, suggested modifications to some proposed legislation, and developed specialized committees to facilitate its work but did not venture to initiate legislation on its own.

In 1994 a transitional legislative body was formed pending the permanent resolution of the Hutu-Tutsi conflict. Called the Transitional National Assembly, it had 70 members filling predetermined shares of seats: The Rwandese Patriotic Front, Republican Democratic Movement, Liberal Party, and Social Democratic Party had 13 seats each; the Christian Democratic Party and Rwandan Patriotic Army six seats each; and the Rwandan People's Democratic Union, Rwandan Socialist Party, and Islamic Democratic Party two seats each. Although the 2003 constitution called for a bicameral parliament, the National Assembly, with 80 seats in 2005, has remained the nation's legislative body.

POLITICAL PARTIES

The original distribution of the nation's parliamentary seats was determined by the peace accords and did not reflect the voter strength of the nation's multiple parties. In 2003, however, elections reflected voter preferences. The parties represented in parliament include the Rwandese Patriotic Front (RPF), the Social Democratic Party (PSD), and the Liberal Party (PL). Other parties include the Christian Democratic Party (PDC), the Islamic Democratic Party (PDI), and two parties that are officially banned: the Democratic Republican Movement (MDR) and the Party for Democratic Renewal.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For purposes of local government Rwanda is divided into 12 provinces. Each province is headed by a prefect appointed by the president. The former tribal divisions are organized into subunits called districts, which are further divided into municipalities, made up of sectors, which in turn are made up of cells. Districts function as the basic political and administrative units; each is administered by an elected communal council and an elected mayor.

LEGAL SYSTEM

Rwandan jurisprudence is based on Belgian procedures and precedents and is largely codified. Uncodified customary law is administered in certain jurisdictions.

The judicial structure is headed by the Supreme Court, with a president and six justices, which serves as both a constitutional court and an appellate court. The Supreme Court's Department of Courts and Tribunals supervises the work of all lower courts, while the Court of Accounts acts as an audit review and accounting office. The Supreme Court sits in the ancient Tutsi capital of Nyabisindu.

The three lower jurisdictions are 10 courts of first instance (one in each prefecture); courts of appeal in Kigali, Nyabisindu, and Ruhengeri; and cantonal, or communal, courts, which dispense justice according to traditional law. In addition, there are a number of police courts. Both cantonal and police courts try only minor cases and do not maintain records of cases tried.

The judiciary is statutorily independent and expected to apply the penal code impartially, but the president names and dismisses magistrates.

HUMAN RIGHTS

In terms of civil and political rights Rwanda is classified as an unfree country, with a rating of six in political rights

and five in civil rights, on a scale in which one is the highest and seven the lowest.

Rwandans are subject to some interference in their private lives, following practices inherited from the former monarchy, which ruled the country for several hundred years. Police are normally required to have warrants before entering private residences. Using the pretext of checking required documentation, however, police authorities can gain unwarranted entry into homes. A person can move out of his home commune only with the permission of the mayor of the commune into which he wishes to move. The government can bar a person from specific employment, though not all employment. People must carry identification cards.

There are few channels of public expression, but limited criticism is tolerated and sometimes even encouraged. Freedom of religion and assembly also are generally respected as long as they are exercised cautiously so as to avoid government disapproval. Internal freedom of movement is restricted to discourage rural migration and the right to vote.

The right to unionize and the right to strike are granted in the constitution, but there is no national union, and no strikes have been reported.

The aftermath of the 1994 civil war continued to take its toll on the Rwandan peoples, especially the Hutu, through the early 2000s, with the theater of operations extended to include the Democratic Republic of the Congo, whence Rwandan troops were not withdrawn until 2004. Through a reign of terror the postwar Tutsi government succeeded in suppressing the Hutu insurgency in the northeast by pushing the rebels into the Congo. The security forces responsible for killings were the Rwandan Patriotic Army (RPA) and the Gendarmerie, made up largely of RPA recruits. The torture of prisoners is common and widespread and prison conditions are harsh. The prison population is reported to be about 120,000, and nearly 5,000 new prisoners are added to the rolls annually. Over 15,000 prisoners made forced confessions in order to obtain reduced sentences. The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) established in Arusha, Tanzania, to try those responsible for the 1994 genocide, convicted a number of former Hutu ministers and military leaders, including Eliezer Niyitegeka, Casimir Bizimungu, Omar Serusagho, Ignace Bagilishema, Kibuye Clement Kayishema, Georges Rutaganda, and Pauline Nyiramasuhuko.

FOREIGN POLICY

The Tutsi government of Rwanda has carried the war against the Hutu beyond national borders. At first the administration supported the government of the DRC, hoping that a federal victory there would enable Rwanda to close the rear bases of Hutu guerrillas as well as the

1978 Rwanda

camps where they sought refuge. However, relations between Kigali and Kinshasa deteriorated as the DRC president Laurent-Désiré Kabila distanced himself from Tutsi influence. Thereupon the Tutsi turned on Kabila and joined rebels against his regime. Meanwhile, the Banyamulenge Tutsi carved up large portions of eastern DRC in order to destabilize the Kabila regime and also create a greater Rwanda. To the north, relations with Uganda deteriorated as Tutsi made military inroads there. In 2004 Rwanda withdrew its forces from the DRC; however, despite the presence of UN peacekeepers in Rwanda, localized violence continued to spill over the borders into the DRC, Burundi, and Uganda.

DEFENSE

The Rwandan defense structure is headed by the president, who also is the defense minister and the commander in chief. Military manpower is provided by voluntary enlistment. The total strength of the armed forces in 2003 was 61,000; there are 1,200 paramilitary forces.

Although the army is staffed almost entirely with Rwandans, Belgian advisers are attached to most units. The deterrent capability of the armed forces is undermined by a number of factors, including the country's landlocked position and faltering economy.

Apart from military equipment and training, Belgian military aid continues at the rate of about \$250,000 annually. In 2003 the country spent \$50 million, or 3.2 percent of gross domestic product (GDP), on the military.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 61,000
Military Manpower Availability: 2,004,750
Military Expenditures \$million: 50.1
as % of GDP: 3.2
as % of central government expenditures: —
Arms Imports \$million: 14
Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

Rwanda is a rural country with about 90 percent of the population engaged in (mainly subsistence) agriculture. It is the most densely populated country in Africa, is landlocked, and has few natural resources and minimal industry. The primary exports are coffee and tea. The 1994 genocide decimated Rwanda's fragile economic base, severely impoverishing the population—particularly women—and eroding the country's ability to attract private and external investment. However, Rwanda has made significant progress in stabilizing and rehabilitating its economy. GDP has rebounded, and inflation has been curbed. In 1998 Rwanda signed an Enhanced Struc-

tural Adjustment Facility agreement with the IMF, and in 2000 it was approved for IMF–World Bank Heavily Indebted Poor Country debt relief. Rwanda has also embarked upon an ambitious privatization program with the World Bank. Continued growth depends on the maintenance of international aid levels and the strengthening of world prices of coffee and tea, but high military expenditures cause tension with international donors and lending agencies.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 10.43
GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 1,300
GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 6.6
GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 3.6
Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
Agriculture: 41.1
Industry: 21.2
Services: 37.7
Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
Private Consumption: 92
Government Consumption: 10
Gross Domestic Investment: 20
Foreign Trade \$million: Exports: 69.78
Imports: 260
% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 4.2
% of Income Received by Richest 10%: 24.2

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
124.7	130.1	133.9	137.2	146.8

Finance

National Currency: Rwandan Franc (RWF)
Exchange Rate: \$1 = RWF 605
Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 82.3
Central Bank Discount Rate %: 14.5
Total External Debt \$billion: 1.3
Debt Service Ratio %: 9.96
Balance of Payments \$million: –212.5
International Reserves SDRs \$million: 184.9
Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
7.0

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 331.6
per capita \$: 39.50
Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 4.7

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
Revenues \$million: 354.5
Expenditures \$million: 385
Budget Deficit \$million: 30.5
Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 41.1
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 8.3
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 0.01
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 0.43
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 13.7
 Total Farmland % of land area: 45.2
 Livestock: Cattle 000: 815
 Chickens million: 1.2
 Pigs 000: 180
 Sheep 000: 260
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 5.5
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 7.6

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 184.3
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 7.0

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 15
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 193
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 24
 Net Energy Imports % of use: —
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: 31
 Production kW-hr million: 96
 Consumption kW-hr million: 140
 Coal Reserves tons million: —
 Production tons million: —
 Consumption tons million: —
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: 2
 Production cubic feet billion: —
 Consumption cubic feet billion: —
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
 Production barrels 000 per day: —
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 5
 Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$million: 260
 Exports \$million: 69.78
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 13.4
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): -2.5
 Balance of Trade \$million: -212.5

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Kenya %	23.3	—
Germany %	7.3	4.7
Belgium %	6.4	—
Uganda %	6.3	—
France %	4.9	—
Indonesia %	—	39.4
China %	—	4.2

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 12,000
 Paved %: 8.3
 Automobiles: 10,700
 Trucks and Buses: 16,300
 Railroad: Track Length km: —
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: —
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: —
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: —
 Airports: 9
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: —
 Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 113
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 29
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 33

Communications

Telephones 000: 23.2
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.09
 Cellular Telephones 000: 134
 Personal Computers 000: —
 Internet Hosts per million people: 177
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 3

ENVIRONMENT

Rwanda's greatest environmental threat is the rapid deforestation caused by the cutting of timber for fuel. Additionally, the country's agricultural lands are exhausted because of soil erosion and poor farming techniques. Wildlife has been threatened by increased poaching in recent years.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 12.4
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: -15
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 8
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 0.07

LIVING CONDITIONS

Living conditions in Rwanda are generally difficult, with 60 percent of the population living below the poverty line in 2001 and per capita GDP amounting to just \$1,300. Even these numbers hide wide gaps between rich and poor. Wealthier Rwandans in the cities enjoy modern, Western-style houses with running water, electricity, and other amenities. In contrast, poorer rural

1980 Rwanda

people live in mud-walled houses without utilities and often walk long distances to obtain water from springs or streams. The nation has only 996 km (619 m) of paved roads in an area about the size of Massachusetts. Ethnic violence continues to be a major social problem. Although the government has taken major steps to curb such violence, tension between Tutsi and Hutu still exists, and most Hutu do not trust the Tutsi-dominated government. Many young people are drawn from the villages to the cities, where they cannot find employment and gravitate to hate groups.

HEALTH

The quality of health care in Rwanda is extremely low, which is not surprising in a nation where annual per capita health expenditures are just \$11. Life expectancy at birth was under 47 years in 2005. The infant mortality rate was a very high 91 deaths per 1,000 live births, and only 31 percent of births are attended by trained medical personnel. AIDS is a major problem, with over 5 percent of the adult population living with the disease and 22,000 deaths from it in 2003. Other major health problems are high mortality rates from intestinal diseases (which caused over 36 percent of deaths in the late 1990s) and malaria, with over 6,500 new cases per year.

Health

Number of Physicians: 155
Number of Dentists: 4
Number of Nurses: 1,735
Number of Pharmacists: 11
Physician Density per 100,000 people: 1.9
Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 91.23
Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 1,400
Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 5.5
Health Expenditures per capita \$: 11
HIV Infected % of adults: 5.1
Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
DPT: 96
Measles: 90
Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 41
Access to Improved Water Source %: 73

FOOD AND NUTRITION

The state of nutrition in Rwanda is generally poor. Between 1998 and 2003 the United Nations estimated that 7 percent of children under the age of five were severely underweight. The Rwandan diet is high in starches; staples include beans, plantains, and sorghum, along with potatoes, sweet potatoes, corn, and manioc. Vegetables include carrots and cabbage, and pineapples, mangoes, and avocados are occasionally consumed. Most Rwan-

dans eat little meat. The meat that is consumed is primarily goat, especially in rural areas; in the cities, beef is somewhat more common, and throughout the country mutton has gained in popularity. Fish, especially tilapia and catfish, are also more commonly eaten than they were in the past. Traditionally, Rwandans did not eat in public except on ceremonial occasions, but this taboo has been disappearing, and restaurants have become more common.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 36.8
Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,020
Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 33.9
Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 192.6

STATUS OF WOMEN

Women perform most of the nation's agricultural labor and have benefited less than men from social development. Despite the language in the constitution, women's rights to property are limited, and women are not treated equally in divorce proceedings. Moreover, women have fewer chances for education, employment, and promotion, often because men prefer them to remain in uneducated, traditional roles at home. Family planning services remain inadequate—only about 13 percent of Rwandan women use birth control—but are improving. There are virtually no day-care services for children of mothers who wish to work. Few organizations promote women's interests. Women play a marginal role in political life.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 49
Female Administrators and Managers %: —
Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 0.98
Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: —

WORK

The Rwandan labor force consisted of about 4.6 million people in 2000. About 90 percent were employed in agriculture, mostly subsistence agriculture, with the sector contributing only about 41 percent of GDP. The most common crops are coffee and tea, followed by bananas, beans, sorghum, potatoes, and livestock. Rwandans also make pyrethrum, an insecticide made from chrysanthemums. The small industrial sector makes cement, agricultural products, beverages, soap, furniture, shoes, plastics, textiles, and cigarettes.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 4,600,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 50.2
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 90
 Other: 10
 Unemployment %: —

EDUCATION

The national literacy rate is just over 70 percent (76 percent for males and 65 percent for females). These numbers have been steadily improving in recent years.

In principle, education is free, universal, and compulsory for eight years, from ages seven to 15. Only about one-fifth of all primary schools and a few secondary schools belong to the public school system; the rest are government-approved Roman Catholic or Protestant mission schools.

Schooling consists of 14 years, as divided into eight years of primary school and six years of secondary school. Primary education is divided into two cycles: a *premier* cycle of four years, known as the literacy cycle, in which subjects are taught in Kinyarwanda, and the *deuxième* cycle of two years, in which subjects are taught in French. Attrition is heavy at the primary level, and only 25 percent of students advance as far as the fourth grade. Fewer still reach the secondary system, which is divided into two cycles: a three-year *tronc commun d'orientation*, structured as a general orientation course, and three-year *moyennes générales*, leading to the university level. Some 30 percent of all boys study in private religious institutions, known as seminaries, where the courses revolve around Greek and Latin.

The academic year runs from September to July. The medium of instruction, except in the first cycle of primary school, is French. The curricula are derived from the National Catholic Federation of Intermediate Education of Belgium, though some Africanization of school texts has occurred.

Almost 63 percent of primary-school teachers are insufficiently qualified and in fact have no educational training. At the secondary level the country relies heavily on Belgian, Canadian, and French teachers. There are three types of teacher-training institutions: *écoles des moniteurs auxiliaires* for boys and *écoles de monitrices auxiliaires* for girls, both offering two-year courses; *écoles normales inférieures*, which offers five-year courses; and *écoles normales moyennes*, which offer seven-year courses. Teacher trainees account for 38 percent of secondary-school enrollment.

Technical and vocational students account for about 59 percent of upper-secondary-school enrollment. Two-year and four-year programs are offered in technical and vocational subjects at the postprimary level.

The educational system is under the control of the Ministry of National Education.

The National University of Rwanda at Butare was established in 1963 by the government and the Roman Catholic Dominican Order of Canada as an autonomous, public institution. About two-thirds of the university staff are Belgian or Canadian.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 70.4
 Male %: 76.3
 Female %: 64.7
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 8.6
 First Level: Primary Schools: 1,710
 Teachers: 27,319
 Students: 1,636,563
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 59.9
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 86.7
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: —
 Teachers: 7,058
 Students: 146,122
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 20.7
 Net Enrollment Ratio: —
 Third Level: Institutions: —
 Teachers: 1,348
 Students: 20,393
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 2.5
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 2.8

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Rwanda has two government-funded research institutes, the Institut de Recherche Scientifique et Technologique (IRST) and the Institut des Sciences Agronomiques du Rwanda (ISAR), conducting research in livestock and agriculture. The IRST has about 20 permanent researchers, only one with a doctorate. The ISAR has about 55 researchers, only two with doctorates. At higher-education institutions, research is hampered by lack of funding, equipment, and personnel.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: 1.3
 Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

One daily newspaper is published in the country, and there are 8 nondaily newspapers and periodicals. The major newspapers include the *New Times*, a private, progovernment paper published in English; the *Rwanda Herald*, also private and published in English; *Rwanda Newslines*, in English; and *Umesesco*, published in Kinyarwanda. *Kinyarwamanteka* is a biweekly business magazine. The Ministry of Information publishes *La relève*, a French monthly

1982 Rwanda

focusing on politics, economics, and culture. Censorship is generally informal and light and is exercised through the Ministry of Information. The national news agency is Agence Rwandaise de Presse (ARP); Reuters is represented in the capital.

The state-controlled Radio Rwanda is operated by Radiodiffusion de la République Rwandaise. Additionally, there are two private radio stations. Rwanda's only television station is government owned. The British Broadcasting Corporation broadcasts from Kigali.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 1
Total Circulation: 600
Circulation per 1,000: 0.09
Books Published: —
Periodicals: 8
Radio Receivers 000: —
per 1,000: —
Television sets 000: 1
per 1,000: 0.1

CULTURE

As a poor nation, Rwanda provides little funding for the arts. The only nationally supported organization is a dance troupe based in Nyanza. The nation has little in the way of a modern literary tradition, and its graphic arts consist primarily of decorative arts such as pottery and basket making. Dance and music, however, have a rich tradition. In the royal court, young Tutsi men were trained in a type of dance called *intore*, and schools and national dance companies have preserved the tradition in modern times. The Twa people, especially, have a respected tradition of music played on indigenous musical instruments.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 1
Volumes: 25,400
Registered borrowers: 1,371
Museums Number: —
Annual Attendance: —
Cinema Gross Receipts: —
Number of Cinemas: —
Seating Capacity: —
Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Rwanda has an oral tradition rich with legends, poetry, and stories. Historically and through the early 20th century the king was regarded as sacred and was said to have special powers. Associated with the king were specialists who preserved the nation's oral culture, rituals, and his-

tory. After the Belgians deposed the non-Christian king and replaced him with his Christian son, it became feared in the following years and decades that traditions would die out, mainly because there were no more royal specialists to preserve them. Accordingly, scholars in Europe and in Rwanda began to record historical and sacred texts. Many of these have to do with rituals employed for making rain, stopping rain during floods, ensuring that cattle reproduce and bees produce honey, and winning battles.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Nearly every Rwandan has a radio, and television ownership has increased, though it remains marginal. Rwandans enjoy listening to music, especially American rock, reggae, and pop music from Kenya and the DRC. More affluent Rwandans can afford VCRs, and video rental stores have popped up in urban areas. Another popular form of entertainment is participation in ritual occasions, such as weddings, where celebrations will include both traditional and contemporary forms of music and dance.

ETIQUETTE

Traditionally, Rwandan culture was very hierarchical, and the nation's etiquette reflects this. Greetings are required, particularly in rural areas. A common form of greeting between close friends or persons of equal status involves placing the left hand on the other's hip and the right hand on the other's shoulder in a kind of embrace while brushing the heads together, first on one side, then on the other. Shaking hands is also common, and when shaking hands with someone of higher status or rank, it is customary to place the left hand on one's own right arm as a mark of deference. Visiting friends and relatives is an important sign of respect, and those who fail to do so are regarded as suspicious.

FAMILY LIFE

Traditionally, marriages were arranged by the prospective groom's and bride's fathers, who would meet, often several times, to discuss the matter, with the groom's father bearing gifts (usually beer). This tradition has largely disappeared, although gaining family approval is still regarded as important. Rwandans place great value on children, so families tend to be large. The nation's birth rate per 1,000 population in 2004 was over 40, and the fertility rate that year was 5.5 children per woman. Typically, the chief domestic unit is the nuclear family, although it is not uncommon for other relatives to reside together. Rwandan society is very much patrilineal,

and those who can trace ancestry back five or six generations through the male line form kinship units called *umuryango*, in which the eldest male wields considerable influence.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

During colonial times Rwandans stopped wearing traditional clothing made of animal skins and pounded bark cloth and adopted Western clothing. Tailors in Rwanda can provide new clothing for the elite, but most Rwandans wear imported secondhand clothing.

SPORTS

As in most African nations, soccer is the most popular sport. Soccer leagues exist throughout the country, including one for women in the capital, and from a very young age children play soccer with balls made up of rolled-up banana leaves. In 1997 the Rwandan national team won the championship of the Confederation of East and Central African Football Associations, the first tournament held in Rwanda after the 1994 civil war. Also popular are running and wrestling. Rwanda's first sports publication, *Rwand champions*, appeared in 2004.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1962 Rwanda becomes independent, with Grégoire Kayibanda, leader of Parmehutu, as president. New constitution is promulgated.
- 1963 Tutsi malcontents launch an invasion of Rwanda but are repelled; in retaliation, over 12,000 Tutsi are massacred by Hutu, while uncounted Tutsi flee the country.
- 1964 The economic union of Rwanda and Burundi is terminated; Rwanda introduces its own national unit of currency, the Rwandan franc.
- 1969 Kayibanda is reelected to a second four-year term.
- 1973 As a fresh wave of Hutu-Tutsi conflict threatens to engulf the country, Kayibanda is toppled in a swift bloodless coup led by Maj. Gen. Juvénal Habyarimana; the constitution of 1962 is partially suspended, and the National Assembly is dissolved.
- 1974 At the Bujumbura Conference the heads of Zaïre, Burundi, and Rwanda agree to concerted action in defense and economic affairs.
- 1975 Habyarimana launches Mouvement Révolutionnaire National pour le Développement (MRND) as the sole political party.
- 1979 Rwanda hosts Franco-African summit meeting.
- 1982 Uganda expels over 45,000 Rwandan Tutsi.
- 1983 The National Development Council is established as the national legislature, with limited powers. Habyarimana is reelected to another term as president.
- 1988 Single-party legislative balloting is conducted. Habyarimana is reelected president.
- 1990 Between 5,000 and 10,000 rebel Tutsi invade Rwanda from neighboring Uganda; Habyarimana and the rebels agree to a cease-fire.
- 1991 The president signs a new constitution that permits multiparty politics; Habyarimana promises to discuss a timetable for elections.
- 1994 An estimated one million Rwandans are killed in Hutu-orchestrated genocide.
- 1996 UN forces leave Rwanda.
- 1997 Over 300 Tutsi are killed in a refugee camp as ethnic conflict continues.
- 1998 Rwanda gets involved in the second DRC war to deal with insecurity caused by Hutu militia groups, the Interahamwe, with the DRC government supporting the Interahamwe.
- 1999 The Lusaka Cease-Fire Agreement, to end the second DRC war, is signed.
- 2000 President Pasteur Bizimungu resigns, and Major General Paul Kagame is sworn in as the fifth president of Rwanda.
- 2003 Voters approve a new constitution. Paul Kagame wins the first presidential election since 1994; his party wins an absolute majority in parliament.
- 2005 The major Hutu rebel group announces that it is ending its armed struggle.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

Embassy of Rwanda
1714 New Hampshire Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20009
Phone: (202) 232-2882 Fax: (202) 232-4544

INTERNET RESOURCES

- Republic of Rwanda—Official Site
<http://www.rwanda1.com>
- Embassy of the Republic of Rwanda
<http://www.rwandemb.org/english/welcome.html>

SAINT KITTS AND NEVIS

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Federation of Saint Kitts and Nevis

ABBREVIATION

KN

CAPITAL

Basseterre

HEAD OF STATE

Queen Elizabeth II, represented by Governor-General Sir Cuthbert Montroville Sebastian (from 1996)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Denzil Douglas (from 1995)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Parliamentary democracy

POPULATION

38,958 (2005)

AREA

261 sq km (101 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Black

LANGUAGE

English

RELIGION

Christianity

UNIT OF CURRENCY

East Caribbean dollar

NATIONAL FLAG

A broad, yellow-edged, black diagonal stripe (from the lower hoist to the upper fly) bearing two five-pointed white stars, separates a green triangle in the upper left and a red triangle in the lower right.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A shield flanked by two seabirds and displaying a ship at the lower end. The national motto, "Country above self," appears on a scroll at the bottom.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"O Land of Beauty"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

May 1 (Labour Day), September 19 (Independence Day), Whitmonday, Queen's Birthday, Prince of Wales's Birthday, Christmas, Carnival Day

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

September 19, 1983

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

September 19, 1983

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Roughly shaped like an exclamation mark, Saint Kitts and Nevis lies in the northern part of the Leeward Islands in the eastern Caribbean, with Saba and St. Eustatius to the northwest, Barbuda to the northeast, and Antigua to the southeast. Saint Kitts and Nevis are volcanic islands separated by a channel known as the Narrows, some 3.2 km (2.0 mi) wide. Saint Kitts is roughly oval, some 37 km (23 mi) long and 168 sq km (65 sq mi) in area. It is centered on a mountain range, the highest point of which is Mount Liamuiga (1,156 m; 3,792 ft). Nevis is 93 sq km (36 sq mi) in area.

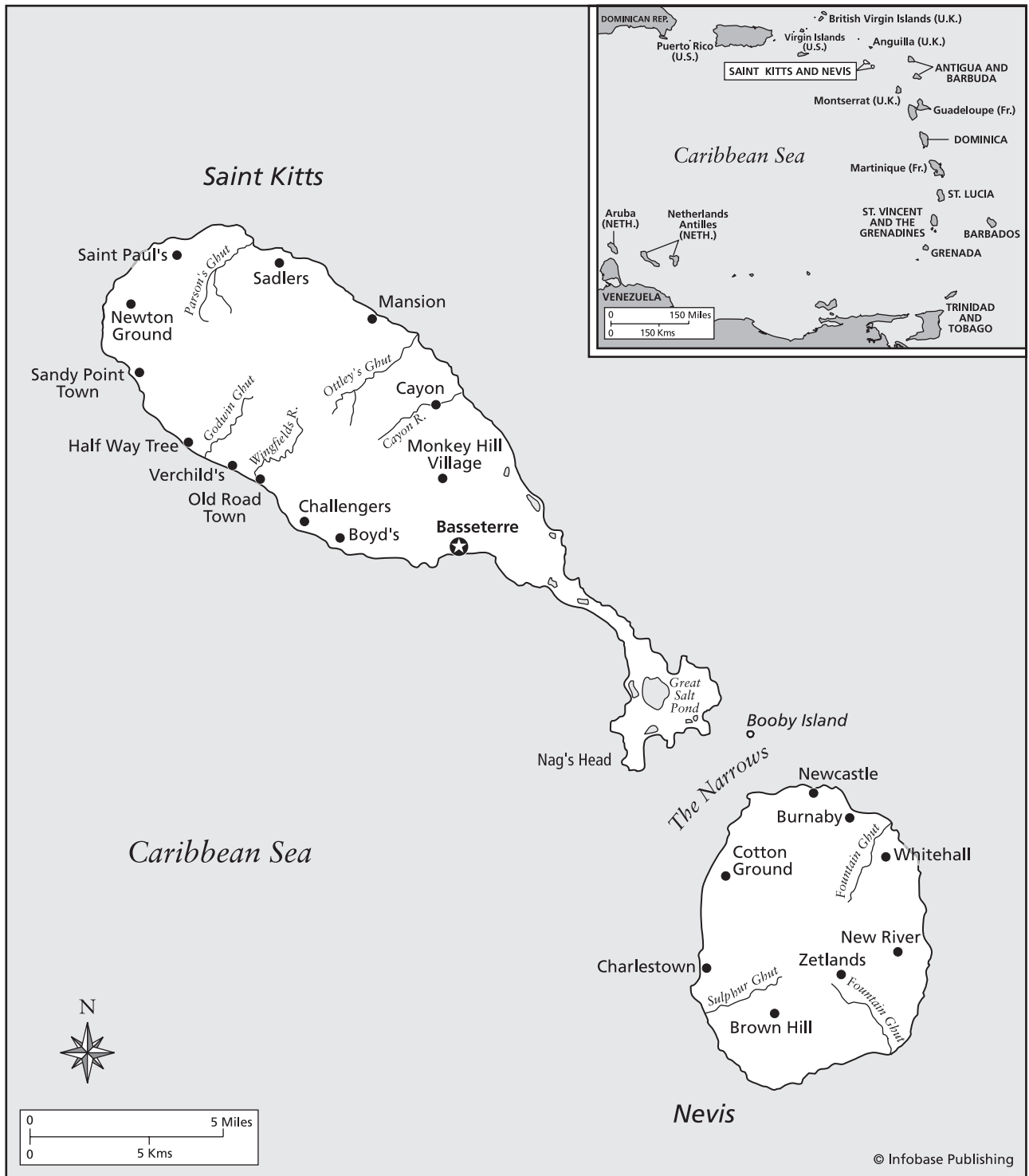
Geography

Area sq km: 261; sq mi 101
World Rank: 186th
Land Boundaries, km: 0
Coastline, km: 135
Elevation Extremes meters:
Lowest: Caribbean Sea 0
Highest: Mount Liamuiga 1,156
Land Use %
Arable Land: 19.4
Permanent Crops: 2.8
Forest: 11.1
Other: 66.7

Population of Principal Cities (2001)

Basseterre 13,220

Saint Kitts and Nevis



CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Because the islands are set in the path of the northeasterly trade winds, the climate is remarkably equable even by Caribbean standards. There is a steady cooling breeze

most of the year. The highest recorded temperature in the 20th century was 92°F (33.3°C); the lowest, 62°F (16.7°C). Humidity is low; there is no rainy season as such, the average annual rainfall being 1,400 mm (55 in) on Saint Kitts and 1,200 mm (48 in) on Nevis.

Climate and Weather

Temperature Range: 62°F to 92°F
 Average Rainfall
 Saint Kitts: 55 in
 Nevis: 48 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

About 11 percent of Saint Kitts and Nevis is covered by forest, nearly equally divided between rain forest, moist forest, and dry forest. Small wetlands areas can be found on both islands, and both have unspoiled beaches and coral reefs. Various species of palms are the principal species of trees, especially in the moist forests. Cedars are common at lower elevations. Lizards, geckos, and bats are the most common endemic mammal species; most high mammals, such as deer, mongoose, and rats, were introduced to the islands by colonists.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 38,958
 World Rank: 186th
 Density per sq km: 129.8
 % of annual growth (1999-2003): 3.0
 Male %: 49.7
 Female %: 50.3
 Urban %: 34.7
 Age Distribution %: 0-14: 28.0
 15-64: 63.7
 65 and over: 8.3
 Population 2025: 46,500
 Birth Rate per 1,000: 18.12
 Death Rate per 1,000: 8.47
 Rate of Natural Increase %: 1.0
 Total Fertility Rate: 2.33
 Expectation of Life (years): Males 69.31
 Females 75.16
 Marriage Rate per 1,000: 8.1
 Divorce Rate per 1,000: —
 Average Size of Households: 3.7
 Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

The population is almost entirely of black African descent, with small populations of British, Portuguese, and Lebanese.

LANGUAGES

English is the official language.

RELIGIONS

The bulk of the population belongs to the Anglican community, with six other Protestant denominations and the Roman Catholic Church also represented.

Religious Affiliation

Anglican	19,799
Roman Catholic	3,560

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The original inhabitants of the islands of Saint Kitts and Nevis were Arawak and Carib Indians. Saint Kitts (the Carib name of which was Liamuiga, "Fertile Isle") was the first of the West Indian islands to be settled by the British. Sir Thomas Warner and his followers landed at the Old Roadstead in 1623; in the course of time they sent expeditions to nearby islands. Thus Saint Kitts acquired the title "Mother Colony of the West Indies." At one time there were French settlements at the two ends of the island, but the whole island was ceded to Great Britain by the Treaty of Versailles in 1783. Nevis was settled by the British in 1628, and although it came under French and Spanish attack in the 17th and 18th centuries, it remained one of the most prosperous islands in the Antilles until the mid-19th century. In 1816 St. Christopher (as Saint Kitts was called at the time), Nevis, Anguilla, and the British Virgin Islands were united under the administration of a captain-general and a governor in chief. The first three territories formed the Leeward Islands Federation in 1871 and became a member of the West Indies Federation in 1958, remaining so until the federation's dissolution in 1962. In 1960 each member of the British Leeward Islands Federation received a new constitution. Following the abortive East Caribbean Federation, St. Christopher-Nevis-Anguilla attained associated statehood in 1967. The legislative council was replaced by the House of Assembly; the administrator became the governor; and the chief minister and leader of the Labour Party, Robert Bradshaw, became the first premier.

Anguilla rebelled against the arrangement and was formally separated from the group in 1980. The nearly 30-year rule of the Labour Party was broken in 1980 when the People's Action Movement (PAM) and the Nevis Reformation Party (NRP) formed a coalition government after winning five of nine seats in the House of Assembly. The coalition government under Kennedy Alphonse Simmonds, the PAM leader, led the nation to independence under a federal constitution on September 19, 1983. The following year the PAM/NRP coalition increased its majority in the House of Assembly, winning six of eight seats on Saint Kitts and all three seats on Nevis. It lost one seat on Nevis in 1989.

The election of 1993 yielded four seats each to PAM and the Saint Kitts-Nevis Labour Party (SKNLP), even

1988 Saint Kitts and Nevis

though the SKNLP won 54 percent of the vote, while PAM received only 41 percent. In the 1995 election the SKNLP won seven out of 11 seats in the National Assembly, ending 15 years of government by the PAM. Labour leader Denzil Douglas was installed as the head of the new government. In 1997 Nevis legislators launched a referendum on secession from Saint Kitts, but in 1998 they failed to achieve the necessary majority. In the 2000 parliamentary elections the SKNLP was able to gain one additional seat, then holding eight out of 11 parliamentary seats. In 2004 Douglas won a third term as prime minister. In legislative elections that year, the SKNLP won seven seats.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

Prime Minister

1967–78 Robert L. Bradshaw

1978–79 Paul Southwell

1979–80 Lee Moore

1980–95 Kennedy A. Simmonds

1995– Denzil L. Douglas

CONSTITUTION

Saint Kitts and Nevis is a constitutional federation, with the British monarch represented by a governor-general serving as the head of state and a prime minister serving as the head of government and of the cabinet of ministers. Nevis has a deputy governor-general. The constitution also accords Nevis the right of secession from Saint Kitts if a bill to that effect is approved by two-thirds of the elected legislators and endorsed by two-thirds of the voters in a national referendum. Saint Kitts has a premier and deputy premier in the cabinet.

Constitutional changes require the approval of a two-thirds majority of elected representatives, while certain other entrenched provisions must receive approval of two-thirds of the valid votes in a national referendum in order to be changed.

PARLIAMENT

The unicameral House of Assembly consists of 11 elected representatives (eight from Saint Kitts and three from Nevis), plus three appointed members, dubbed senators. Members serve five-year terms.

Suffrage is universal over age 18.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Of the more than half dozen political parties in Saint Kitts and Nevis, the largest is the Labour Party (SKNLP). The second largest party in terms of seats in the current legis-

lature is a coalition called the Concerned Citizens' Movement. Additional parties include the Nevis Reformation Party and the People's Action Movement (PAM).

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For purposes of local administration Saint Kitts is divided into nine parishes, Nevis into five parishes. The Saint Kitts parishes are Christ Church Nichola Town, St. Anne Sandy Point, St. George Basseterre, St. John Capisterre, St. Mary Cayon, St. Paul Capisterre, St. Peter Basseterre, St. Thomas Middle Island, and Trinity Palmetto Point. The Nevis parishes are St. Thomas Lowland, St. George Gingerland, St. James Windward, St. John Figtree, and St. Paul Charlestown.

Nevis has an assembly consisting of five elected and three nominated members. In addition, the governor-general appoints a premier and two other members of the Nevis assembly to serve as the Nevis administration.

LEGAL SYSTEM

Justice is administered by the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court, based in St. Lucia. This court consists of the Court of Appeal and the High Court. One of the seven puisne judges of the High Court presides over the Court of Summary Jurisdiction in Saint Kitts. District magistrate courts deal with petty offenses and minor civil actions. Certain types of appeal can be brought before the British Privy Council. The judiciary is highly regarded, and trials are fair, speedy, and efficient.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Saint Kitts and Nevis has a good human rights record. British legacies in law, freedom of speech, religion, and the exercise of political rights are carefully maintained.

FOREIGN POLICY

Saint Kitts and Nevis is a member of the Commonwealth, the Organization of American States, the Association of Caribbean States, the Caribbean Community and Common Market, and the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States. The nation receives special aid from the United Kingdom and the United States. Its only dispute is one over maritime boundaries with Venezuela.

DEFENSE

A small army was disbanded by the government in 1981. The army's functions were absorbed by the Volunteer

Defense Force and a special tactical unit of the Royal Saint Kitts and Nevis Police Force.

ECONOMY

The economy of Saint Kitts and Nevis is in a transitional stage. The nation has traditionally depended on the growing and processing of sugarcane; decreasing world prices hurt the industry in the early 2000s. Tourism, export-oriented manufacturing, and offshore banking activity have since assumed larger roles. Most food is imported. The government has undertaken a program designed to revitalize the faltering sugar sector. It is also working to improve revenue collection in order to better fund social programs.

In 1997 some leaders in Nevis were urging separation from Saint Kitts on the basis that Nevis was paying far more in taxes than it was receiving in government services, but the vote on secession failed in August 1998. In late September 1998 Hurricane Georges caused approximately \$445 million in damages and limited gross domestic product (GDP) growth for the year. Further, the terrorist attacks on the United States in 2001 slowed travel and cut government revenues. In 2003 the opening of a 1,000-bed hotel began to bring in much-needed revenue. After a particularly bad harvest in 2005 the government decided to close the sugar industry.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$million: 339
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 8,800
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 2.6
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: –0.5
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 3.5
 Industry: 25.8
 Services: 70.7
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 59
 Government Consumption: 19
 Gross Domestic Investment: —
 Foreign Trade \$million: Exports: 70
 Imports: 195
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: —
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: —

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
100.0	102.1	111.2	115.0	119.5

Finance

National Currency: EC Dollar (XCD)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = XCD 2.7
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency million: 149.3
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 6.5
 Total External Debt \$million: 171

Debt Service Ratio %: 34.89
 Balance of Payments \$million: —
 International Reserves SDRs \$million: 64.7
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 1.7

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 28.5
 per capita \$: 609.50
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 52.7

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$billion: 89.7
 Expenditures \$billion: 128.2
 Budget Deficit \$million: 38.5
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 3.5
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: –1.2
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 2.21
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: —
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 242.9
 Total Farmland % of land area: 19.4
 Livestock: Cattle 000: 4.3
 Chickens 000: 60
 Pigs 000: 4
 Sheep 000: 14
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters 000: —
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons: 355

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 28.4
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: —

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: —
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 34
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 847
 Net Energy Imports % of use: —
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: 20
 Production kW-hr million: 100
 Consumption kW-hr million: 93
 Coal Reserves tons million: —
 Production tons million: —
 Consumption tons million: —
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
 Production cubic feet billion: —
 Consumption cubic feet billion: —
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
 Production barrels per day: —
 Consumption barrels per day: 710
 Pipelines Length km: —

1990 Saint Kitts and Nevis

Foreign Trade

Imports \$million: 195
Exports \$million: 70
Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): -4.4
Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): -1.1
Balance of Trade \$million: —

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
United States %	37.1	62.4
Italy %	16.6	—
Trinidad and Tobago %	10.9	—
United Kingdom %	6.8	15.6
Denmark %	5.5	—
Canada %	4.5	9.0
Germany %	—	4.2

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 320
Paved %: 42.5
Automobiles: 7,700
Trucks and Buses: 3,900
Railroad: Track Length km: 50
Passenger-km million: —
Freight-km million: —
Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: —
Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: —
Airports: 2
Traffic: Passenger-km 000: —
Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 68
Number of Tourists from 000: —
Tourist Receipts \$million: —
Tourist Expenditures \$million: —

Communications

Telephones 000: 23.5
Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
Cellular Telephones 000: 5
Personal Computers 000: 9
Internet Hosts per million people: 1,309
Internet Users per 1,000 people: 257

ENVIRONMENT

Saint Kitts and Nevis shares many environmental concerns with other small, developing nations. Chief among these concerns are deforestation and soil erosion. Additionally, as an island nation the country is particularly concerned with the adverse impact of development on beaches and reefs. Finally, the disposal of increasing amounts of sew-

age and solid waste is a growing concern. The nation has protected 10 percent of its land as wildlife refuge.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 11.1
Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: —
Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 10
Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 2.43

LIVING CONDITIONS

Living conditions are generally good. The islands enjoy spectacular weather year-round. Tropical diseases have been largely eradicated. Nearly the entire population has access to clean drinking water and sanitation facilities. The islands have a good road network, though drainage ditches called *ghauts* can be problematic for motorists. Most homes are made of concrete block and wood, and most islanders own the land they live on. The islands' dependence on the sugar trade cause ups and downs in the economy. The nation is vulnerable to drug smugglers who use the islands as transshipment points.

HEALTH

Health conditions are generally good. Life expectancy at birth in 2004 was over 72 years. The infant mortality rate, once disturbingly high, has fallen to below 15 deaths per 1,000 live births, and virtually 100 percent of births are attended by trained medical personnel. There are three hospitals on Saint Kitts and one on Nevis, both staffed primarily by British and Canadian doctors. In 2002 the country spent about \$467 per person on health care, ranking a respectable 34th in the world on health-care expenditures.

Health

Number of Physicians: 51
Number of Dentists: 8
Number of Nurses: 216
Number of Pharmacists: —
Physician Density per 100,000 people: 118
Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 14.49
Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: —
Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 5.5
Health Expenditures per capita \$: 467
HIV Infected % of adults: —
Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
DPT: 99
Measles: 98
Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 96
Access to Improved Water Source %: 99

FOOD AND NUTRITION

In the early 1990s the islands suffered from high rates of malnutrition, but conditions have since improved markedly. Rice, peas, plantains, and yams are dietary staples, and soups made with beans, pumpkin, or fish are common. For seasoning, lime juice and hot pepper sauces are commonly used. Fried chicken is popular, and while the islanders do consume fish, goat and mutton are the most common animal proteins. The most popular beverage is the beer made at the islands' own brewery, though rum and soft drinks are also favored.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 80.4
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 142.8

STATUS OF WOMEN

Like most former British colonies, women hold equal status with men under the law. They participate in all sectors of the economy and are active in politics. The Bureau of Women's Affairs monitors women's rights and problems and is active in programs that promote positive change in the status of women. On the other hand, there is no domestic violence legislation, and violence against women is a widespread problem.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 0
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.0
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: —

WORK

In 1995 the labor force consisted of just over 18,000 people. In 2002 per capita GDP was \$8,800. In 1997 the country estimated unemployment to be 4.5 percent, but others estimate the rate to be much higher, perhaps over 20 percent. Roughly one-third of the population is engaged in agricultural work, primarily in the sugar industry. Wages are low, and the country has often had to import workers from other countries to work in the cane fields, where the labor is grueling. Many people have two or more sources of income, working for wages in the tourist or sugarcane industries while fishing or selling produce from garden plots. An ongoing problem is that many young people look forward to leaving the islands to

gain an education and work in white-collar jobs abroad, usually in the United States, Canada, or England, resulting in a brain drain.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 18,170
 Female Participation Rate %: —
 Labor by Sector %: —
 Unemployment %: 4.5

EDUCATION

Education is free, universal, and compulsory for nine years, between ages five and 14. Schooling lasts for 13 years, as divided into seven years of primary school, four years of lower-secondary school, and two years of upper-secondary school. During the 1980s the government stressed vocational training at all levels in an effort to meet the needs of a growing service-oriented economy.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 97
 Male %: 97
 Female %: 98
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 15.9
 First Level: Primary Schools: 31
 Teachers: 368
 Students: 6,401
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 17.4
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 100
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 7
 Teachers: 417
 Students: 4,221
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 10.1
 Net Enrollment Ratio: —
 Third Level: Institutions: 1
 Teachers: —
 Students: —
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: —
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 3.2

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Saint Kitts and Nevis supports little scientific research on its own. Most research is in the field of agriculture and conservation and is supported by Caribbean-wide organizations that maintain research stations on the islands. Some of these organizations include the Caribbean Agricultural Information Service, the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute, the Caribbean Agricultural and Science Technology Networking System, the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture, and the Caribbean Conservation Association.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
High-Tech Exports \$000: 50
Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

The only daily newspaper is the *Sun Saint Kitts/Nevis*. Additionally, the major political parties and labor unions publish weekly or biweekly newspapers. The largest of these is the *Labour Spokesman*, published by the Saint Kitts and Nevis Trades and Labour Union. The *Democrat* is the People's Action Movement opposition weekly.

There are commercial radio and television stations and a privately operated religious radio station. The government owns and operates a television station.

There are two libraries.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 1
Total Circulation 000: —
Circulation per 1,000: —
Books Published: —
Periodicals: —
Radio Receivers 000: —
per 1,000: —
Television sets 000: 10
per 1,000: 256

CULTURE

Saint Kitts has a theater group, and on Nevis the Drama and Cultural Society presents plays and other events at a theater in Charlestown. In 1996 the country held its first annual Saint Kitts Music Festival, which featured gospel music and reggae and was attended by 15,000 people. Nevis has produced one famous artist, Dame Eva Wilkin, whose work—primarily depictions of flowers, landscapes, and island people—is displayed at the Eva Wilkin Gallery on Nevis and is known throughout the world.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 2
Volumes: —
Registered borrowers: —
Museums Number: —
Annual Attendance: —
Cinema Gross Receipts: —
Number of Cinemas: —
Seating Capacity: —
Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Folkloric traditions on the islands derive primarily from African traditions. Although most of the people are Protestants, there remains an undercurrent of belief in obeah, an African-influenced form of witchcraft.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

A large segment of the population takes an intense interest in cricket matches, especially when local teams play teams from other Caribbean nations. Music is an important form of recreation, with reggae, string-band, dance, and steel-drum music all immensely popular. Other forms of recreation involve folk arts and crafts, including traditional dances, the production of wall hangings and batik clothing, and pottery.

ETIQUETTE

Saint Kitts and Nevis has a relaxed, informal culture. People often greet each other by “bumping,” meaning that they bump together closed fists. At the same time, British models of decorum and respectability are important on the islands, a feature that is reflected in the dress of the people.

FAMILY LIFE

Marriages on the islands are typically not arranged, so spouses are freely chosen. Because so many islanders leave to live and work in the United States, Canada, and England, only later returning to the islands, mixed marriages have become more and more common. After marriage, a couple generally resides with the parents of one of the spouses, but the goal is to quickly find a separate residence. Family ties are generally strong, even between those who remain on the islands and those who live abroad. Educated people who earn decent salaries abroad typically send money home, and some observers note that it is likely that more money is sent in than is actually earned on the islands. Family ties remain close through frequent visiting.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

The people of Saint Kitts and Nevis take enormous pride in their personal appearance. It is unthinkable to go out without clean and well-pressed clothing, even for casual occasions; in fact, dress tends to be even more formal on the weekends than during the workweek. Children wear

uniforms to school, men wear dress shirts with ties, and women wear dresses and only rarely slacks.

SPORTS

Cricket is the national game of Saint Kitts and Nevis, and it has been said that the country virtually shuts down when local teams take part in important matches with Caribbean neighbors. The islands have produced world-class cricket players, including Luther Kelly, Derrick Parry, and Elquemendo Willet. Also popular are soccer and horse racing, and major racing events are held on most major holidays.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1983** The nation's first constitution proclaims the Federation of St. Christopher and Nevis; St. Christopher and Nevis becomes a member of the Commonwealth, with a local governor-general representing the British monarch.
- 1984** St. Christopher and Nevis becomes a member of the Organization of American States; in House of Assembly elections, the ruling coalition of the People's Action Movement (PAM) and the Nevis Reformation Party (NRP) is returned to power with a decisive victory; Kennedy Simmonds of PAM is named prime minister.
- 1988** The country is officially renamed the Federation of Saint Kitts and Nevis.
- 1989** The ruling PAM-NRP coalition returns to power after losing one seat in House of Assembly elections; Kennedy Simmonds is reelected prime minister; Hurricane Hugo strikes the islands.
- 1990** The economy of Saint Kitts and Nevis continues to recover from the damage caused by Hugo.
- 1995** Reports that drug smuggling activity is taking place on the islands raises scandal; the government calls early elections; the Labour Party gains control of the government, taking seven of the 11 seats in the assembly, Labour Party leader Denzil Douglas becomes prime minister.
- 1996** Cuthbert Sebastian is appointed governor-general.
- 1997** Political leaders from Nevis sponsor a bill to secede from the federation, charging that the federal government neglects Nevis's economy and infrastructure.
- 1998** A popular referendum proposing the secession of Nevis fails to gain the required two-thirds majority, leaving the federation intact; Hurricane Georges strikes Saint Kitts and Nevis, destroying 85 percent of buildings and causing \$445 million in damage.
- 2000** The Labour Party wins a majority of seats in the National Assembly; Denzil Douglas begins a second term as prime minister; the G8 club of industrialized nations names Saint Kitts and Nevis as one of 15 countries permitting money laundering.
- 2004** Douglas wins third term as prime minister. Efforts on Nevis to secede from Saint Kitts continue.

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- Saint Kitts and Nevis.** *Annual Digest of Statistics; St. Christopher and Nevis—Recent Economic Developments* (IMF Staff Country Report), 2000

CONTACT INFORMATION

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3216 New Mexico Avenue NW
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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Official Website of the Government of Saint Kitts and Nevis
<http://www.stkittsnevis.net>

SAINT LUCIA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Saint Lucia

ABBREVIATION

LC

CAPITAL

Castries

HEAD OF STATE

Queen Elizabeth II, represented by Governor-General Perlette Louisy (from 1997)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Kenny Davis Anthony (from 1997)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Parliamentary democracy

POPULATION

166,312 (2005)

AREA

616 sq km (238 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Black

LANGUAGES

English (official), French patois

RELIGION

Christianity

UNIT OF CURRENCY

East Caribbean dollar

NATIONAL FLAG

A blue field bearing in its center an isosceles triangle; the lower portion of the isosceles triangle is a gold equilateral triangle rising from the common base, while the upper portion is black, with the two upper sides of the isosceles triangle edged in white.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A cross of sugarcane divides a shield into quarters showing Tudor roses and fleurs-de-lis. An African stool appears in the middle of the cross. The shield is flanked by two parrots with outstretched wings, and a torch appears in the crest. The national motto, "The land, the people, the light" is on a scroll at the bottom of the emblem.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"Sons and Daughters of Saint Lucia"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 and 2 (New Year's Days), February 22 (Independence Day), May 1 (Labor Day), June 14 (Queen's Birthday), August 3 (Emancipation Day), October 5 (Thanksgiving Day), December 13 (Saint Lucia Day), Good Friday, Easter Monday, Whitmonday, Corpus Christi, Christmas, Boxing Day

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

February 22, 1979

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

February 22, 1979

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Saint Lucia lies in the Windward Islands group in the Caribbean, between Martinique and St. Vincent. The land area is 616 sq km (238 sq mi), extending 43 km (27 mi) north to south and 22 km (15 mi) east to west. The total length of the coastline is 158 km (98 mi).

The island is of volcanic formation and is relatively hilly, the highest peak, Morne Gimie, being 950 m (3,116 ft). The Pitons, two conical mountains, rising 798 m (2,619 ft) and 750 m (2,461 ft), are prominent landmarks. They were declared a UN Educational, Sci-

entific, and Cultural Organization world heritage site in 2004.

A number of small rivers flow outward from the central highlands, the principal ones being Dennery Fond, Piaye, Doree, Canaries, and Roseau and Marquis.

Geography

Area sq km: 616; sq mi 238
World Rank: 176th
Land Boundaries, km: 0
Coastline, km: 158
Elevation Extremes meters:

Saint Lucia



Lowest: Caribbean Sea 0
 Highest: Mount Gimie 950
 Land Use %
 Arable Land: 6.6

Permanent Crops: 23.0
 Forest: 14.8
 Other: 55.6

Population of Principal Cities (2001)

Castries	12,439
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CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Saint Lucia has a tropical climate tempered by sea winds. The mean temperature is 28°C (79°F), with a dry season lasting from January to April and a rainy season from May to August. Annual rainfall is 1,500 to 3,500 mm (60 to 138 in), depending on altitude.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature: 79°F
Average Rainfall: 60 in to 138 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Saint Lucia was originally covered with rain forest, but the British colonial administration cut down most of the trees for timber. Now only about 15 percent of the island is forested, most of it in nature reserves. Rain-forest trees include the *chatagnier* and *gommier* (gum tree). Other common plants include cacti, hibiscus, orchids, bromeliads, lianas, and heliconia.

The island has no large mammals. The native agouti, a rodent, and introduced mongoose are abundant. Other animals include bats, lizards, tree frogs, the Saint Lucia parrot, the Saint Lucian oriole, the purple-throated Carib hummingbird, and several kinds of snakes, such as boa constrictors and the poisonous fer-de-lance. The island is surrounded by marine reserves that protect coral and marine animals; it is illegal to remove any creature from these reserves.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 166,312

World Rank: 174th

Density per sq km: 263.3

% of annual growth (1999-2003): 1.1

Male %: 49.2

Female %: 50.8

Urban %: 38.6

Age Distribution %: 0-14: 30.3

15-64: 64.6

65 and over: 5.2

Population 2025: 209,000

Birth Rate per 1,000: 20.05

Death Rate per 1,000: 5.12

Rate of Natural Increase %: 1.5

Total Fertility Rate: 2.21

Expectation of Life (years): Males 70.05

Females 77.42

Marriage Rate per 1,000: 3.0

Divorce Rate per 1,000: 0.3

Average Size of Households: 4.0

Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Saint Lucians are mainly of black African descent; 90 percent of the population is black. Few Caribs, the original inhabitants of the island, have survived. About 6 percent of Saint Lucians are of mixed race, while 3 percent are East Indian. Less than 1 percent of the population is of European descent.

LANGUAGES

The official language is English. However, a large proportion of the population speak a French-based patois.

RELIGIONS

Saint Lucia is predominantly Roman Catholic. Castries is an archbishopric with a native Saint Lucian as archbishop. The government gives annual grants to the three leading denominations: Catholic, Anglican, and Methodist.

Religious Affiliations

Roman Catholic	150,000
Anglican	5,000
Protestant	12,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The first inhabitants of Saint Lucia were the Arawak Indians, who probably arrived in order to escape their enemies the Carib Indians. Some vestiges of their agricultural traditions and industry have been found; however, little is known of their history on the island.

The first known European settlement of Saint Lucia was by 67 Englishmen in 1624, an attempt believed to have failed. In 1639 Sir Thomas Warner was granted a commission for the colonization of the island, but the entire colony of some 400 people was wiped out in 1640. The French established a colony in 1651; their occupancy was not seriously challenged until 1664, when 1,000 Barbadians and Caribs invaded the island and took it without any resistance. This event marked the beginning of a struggle between the French and the British for possession of the island that lasted for over a century, with the British eventually gaining control.

Representative government was introduced in the dependency in 1924. Until 1959 the colony was a mem-

ber of the Windward Islands. It joined the West Indies Federation in 1958 and remained a member until the dissolution of the federation in 1962. In 1967 Saint Lucia became one of the West Indies Associated States, with a governor, prime minister, and House of Assembly replacing the administrator, chief minister, and Legislative Council, respectively. In 1975 the Associated States agreed that they would seek independence individually. Following a constitutional conference held in London in 1978, Saint Lucia proclaimed its independence in 1979.

The years immediately following independence were marked by political instability and civil unrest as the two predominant parties—the United Workers' Party (UWP) and the Saint Lucia Labour Party (SLP)—vied for power. Upon independence in February 1979, John Compton, head of the long-dominant UWP, assumed the office of prime minister. He was succeeded by Allan Louisy, whose SLP won a landslide victory in the July election. As a result of conflict with a radical faction of his party, Louisy resigned in 1981 in favor of the centrist Winston Cenac. He, in turn, was forced to step down in 1982, and the governor-general appointed Michael Pilgrim to head an all-party administration prior to general elections in which Compton's UWP won a decisive victory. Compton won reelection in 1987 and again in 1992. He retired in 1996 and was succeeded by Vaughan Lewis. In 1997 elections the SLP returned to power under Kenny Anthony.

Anthony won a second term in 2001, with the SLP taking 14 of the 17 contested parliamentary seats; the UWP took the remaining seats. Anthony's administration has faced rising crime and high unemployment in Saint Lucia, as well as economic pressure due to the European Union's ending preferential treatment for former colonies in the banana market. The nation has been diversifying its economy but is still heavily dependent on agriculture. The banana market was severely harmed by Tropical Storm Lili in 2002. In 2003 the parliament passed controversial new legislation legalizing abortion in some cases and making the spread of "false news" a criminal act punishable by imprisonment. It also amended the constitution to introduce a pledge of loyalty to the nation in place of the former oath of allegiance to the British monarch.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

Prime Minister

1979	John Compton
1979–81	Allan Louisy
1981–82	Winston Cenac
1982–96	John Compton
1996–97	Vaughan Lewis
1997–	Kenny Anthony

CONSTITUTION

Under the constitution of 1979, Saint Lucia is a parliamentary democracy with the Queen of England as the titular head of state, as represented locally by a governor-general. The governor-general is appointed by the Queen on the advice of the prime minister. The governor-general, in turn, can appoint the prime minister, deputy prime minister, and other ministers. The prime minister is usually the leader of the majority party in parliament. The governor-general may remove a prime minister from office if a resolution of no confidence is passed in the House of Assembly and the prime minister does not resign within three days or advise the dissolution of the national legislature. The cabinet consists of the prime minister, other ministers, and the attorney general as an *ex officio* member.

The voting age is 18. Suffrage is universal.

PARLIAMENT

The bicameral national legislature consists of an appointed Senate and an elected House of Assembly, both with a normal term of five years, subject to dissolution.

The Senate comprises 11 members: six appointed on the advice of the prime minister, three on the advice of the leader of the opposition, and two after consultation with religious, economic, and social groups.

The House of Assembly consists of 17 members. Its members are elected to five-year terms by popular vote from single-member constituencies. Only the House of Assembly may introduce money bills, and the power of the Senate to delay legislation is restricted.

The leader of the opposition is appointed by the governor-general. Appointments to various public bodies (such as the Public Service Commission, the Integrity Commission, and the Teaching Commission), as well as the designation of a parliamentary ombudsman, require consultation with the leader of the opposition.

POLITICAL PARTIES

The ruling Saint Lucia Labour Party (SLP) is a socialist party founded in 1946. The United Workers' Party (UWP) is a right-wing party; it won three seats in the 2001 elections. Parties without parliamentary representation include the National Alliance (NA), the Saint Lucia Freedom Party (SFP), and Sou Tou Apwe Fete Fini (STAFF).

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Saint Lucia is divided into 11 administrative districts, or quarters: Anse-la-Raye, Castries, Choiseul, Dauphin,

1998 Saint Lucia

Dennery, Gros-Islet, Laborie, Micoud, Praslin, Soufriere, and Vieux-Fort. Additionally, there are 20 rural community councils. The Castries Town Council, raised to the status of a mayoralty in 1966, enjoys almost full autonomy.

With the exception of the Castries Town Council, which has been a wholly elected body since 1836, all local government bodies have both elected and nominated members. Elected members serve for three-year terms, while nominated members are appointed by the governor-general on the advice of the minister of community development.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The judiciary is composed of multiple district courts and a high court. Appeals go to the Eastern Caribbean Court of Appeals, which has jurisdiction over several Caribbean islands, and ultimately to the Privy Council in London.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Saint Lucia's human rights situation is good. The constitutional guarantees of rights are effectively safeguarded by the fact that the West Indies Court of Appeals has a reputation for impartiality. There is no censorship, and the rights of speech, assembly, and press are unrestricted. Long years of experience with English common law left an open political system that permits change and voter participation in the political process. Nevertheless, there have been a few problems, including long delays in trials and sentencing, police brutality, and violence against women and children.

FOREIGN POLICY

Saint Lucia's primary goal in foreign policy is to encourage other nations to help its economy develop. It is a member of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) and the Caribbean Community as well as the Organization of American States, the United Nations, and the Commonwealth. Saint Lucia backed U.S. efforts to restore democracy in Haiti and has worked with neighboring islands and the United States on policies to end drug trafficking.

Saint Lucia especially wants to strengthen ties with the United States in order to expand its economic base. The United States has been providing economic assistance through the U.S. Agency for International Development, the World Bank, and the Caribbean Development Bank. About 30 Peace Corps volunteers work in Saint Lucia. American soldiers have helped the island develop its security forces and coast guard.

DEFENSE

Saint Lucia has no internal defense force, as it receives the protection of U.K. military guarantees. A regional defense pact with eight other Caribbean nations provides for joint coast guard operations, military operations, and disaster contingency plans. The Saint Lucia Police provide internal security.

ECONOMY

Saint Lucia's economy has traditionally been tied to agriculture, principally the production of bananas, which has made it quite vulnerable to price fluctuations and natural disasters. Tropical Storm Lili devastated the banana industry in 2002, destroying half the crop and obliterating entire plantations. The European Union's decision to eliminate preferences for crops from former colonies has also hurt the banana market.

The island has been attempting to diversify its economy to earn money from enterprises other than bananas. It has attracted foreign investment and businesses; offshore banking has been especially successful. Tourism has also been quite successful, with some 650,000 tourists visiting the island in 2002. Saint Lucia has the most diverse manufacturing sector in the eastern Caribbean, producing clothing, electronics, corrugated cardboard, beverages, and processed limes and coconuts.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$million:	866
GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$:	5,400
GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %:	0.2
GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %:	-0.9
Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:	
Agriculture:	7
Industry:	20
Services:	73
Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:	
Private Consumption:	57
Government Consumption:	23
Gross Domestic Investment:	—
Foreign Trade \$million: Exports:	66
Imports:	267
% of Income Received by Poorest 10%:	—
% of Income Received by Richest 10%:	—

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)				
1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
104.2	107.7	111.8	111.9	113.7

Finance

National Currency:	East Caribbean Dollar (XCD)
Exchange Rate:	\$1 = XCD 2.7
Money Supply Stock in National Currency million:	388
Central Bank Discount Rate %:	6.5
Total External Debt \$million:	214

Debt Service Ratio %: 7.4
 Balance of Payments \$million: —
 International Reserves SDRs \$million: 106
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 3

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 14.8
 per capita \$: 92.30
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 32

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$billion: 141.2
 Expenditures \$billion: 146.7
 Budget Deficit \$million: 5.5
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 7
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: –12.0
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 3.65
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 16.7
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 335.8
 Total Farmland % of land area: 6.6
 Livestock: Cattle 000: 12.4
 Chickens 000: 240
 Pigs 000: 15
 Sheep 000: 12.5
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters 000: —
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 1.6

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 28.9
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: –8.9

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent 000: —
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 115
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 731
 Net Energy Imports % of use: —
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: 66
 Production kW-hr million: 269
 Consumption kW-hr million: 250
 Coal Reserves tons million: —
 Production tons million: —
 Consumption tons million: —
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
 Production cubic feet billion: —
 Consumption cubic feet billion: —
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
 Production barrels 000 per day: —
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 2.4
 Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$million: 267
 Exports \$million: 66
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): –0.6
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 2.3
 Balance of Trade \$million: —

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
United States %	37.7	23.8
Trinidad and Tobago %	17.2	4.5
United Kingdom %	7.7	45.2
Venezuela %	7.0	—
Antigua and Barbuda %	—	5.6
Dominica %	—	5.4

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 1,210
 Paved %: 5.2
 Automobiles: —
 Trucks and Buses: —
 Railroad: Track Length km: —
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: —
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: —
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: —
 Airports: 2
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: —
 Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 277
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: —
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: —

Communications

Telephones 000: 51.1
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.09
 Cellular Telephones 000: 14.3
 Personal Computers 000: 24
 Internet Hosts per million people: 247
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 78

ENVIRONMENT

Saint Lucia suffers from growing deforestation and soil erosion in the northern region. In addition, inadequate solid- and liquid-waste management systems threaten water supplies. The island has several designated nature preserves, both on land and in the sea. The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries oversees a national biodiversity program.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 14.8
Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: -1
Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 2
Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 2.1

LIVING CONDITIONS

Saint Lucians are relatively poor. Houses are typically small and prone to destruction by hurricanes. Very few of the island's roads are paved; urban traffic is bad, and the road structure is poorly organized. Most people get around on public transportation, which consists mainly of minivan buses. Travel on and off the island is accomplished by airplane or boat; there are frequent flights to and from New York, Miami, Toronto, and London.

The nation has recently improved its infrastructure with regard to sewage, communications, water supply, and port facilities.

HEALTH

Health conditions are good. Life expectancy in 2004 was over 73 years. Fertility is a moderate 2.2 children per woman. Infant mortality is low. The islanders do not generally suffer from tropical diseases, though schistosomiasis (bilharzia) is a problem, affecting people who swim or wade in contaminated freshwater.

Health

Number of Physicians: 749
Number of Dentists: 9
Number of Nurses: 331
Number of Pharmacists: —
Physician Density per 100,000 people: 518
Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 13.53
Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: —
Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 5.0
Health Expenditures per capita \$: 229
HIV Infected % of adults: —
Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
DPT: 90
Measles: 90
Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 89
Access to Improved Water Source %: 98

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Saint Lucians eat a great deal of seafood, including conch, lobster, shrimp, and various locally caught fish. Salted fish is also common. Fresh fruits and vegetables

include bananas, breadfruit, coconuts, guavas, mangoes, papayas, passion fruit, pineapples, cassava, and sweet potatoes. Many dishes are spiced with an extremely hot sauce made from the scotch bonnet pepper. People use this sauce on melons, sweet potatoes, fish, fried plantain, callaloo stew, breadfruit, and nearly any other food. Local rum is a popular drink, and beer is brewed locally. The island has many restaurants and fast-food establishments.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —
Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 107.6
Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 287.7

STATUS OF WOMEN

There are no legal restrictions on the role of women in Saint Lucia. Although the more traditional household role is the predominant one for the nation's women, they are well represented in government and the professions. As more women take advantage of public schooling and other government programs, the participation of women in other sectors of society is expected to increase.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 11
Female Administrators and Managers %: —
Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: —
Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 48.5

WORK

Unemployment is fairly high, at 20 percent in 2003. More than one-fifth of the workforce is employed in agriculture, particularly in the banana business, though people also grow coconuts, vegetables, citrus fruits, root crops, and cocoa. Many families have plots of land that they use for subsistence agriculture, growing food for themselves and raising livestock. Many people work in fishing. About one-quarter of the workforce is employed in industry, especially in factories producing clothing and other products. Services employ slightly more than half of the workforce; tourism is an especially important source of employment. Foreign companies are also important employers; companies locate in Saint Lucia because the workforce is fairly well educated and can handle jobs in banking and other areas.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 43,800
 Female Participation Rate %: —
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 21.7
 Industry, Commerce, and Manufacturing: 24.7
 Services: 53.6
 Unemployment %: 20

EDUCATION

Primary education is free and compulsory for 10 years, from ages five to 15, and is provided in over 90 state-aided schools. Schooling lasts for 12 years, as divided into seven years of primary school, three years of the first secondary cycle, and two years of the second secondary cycle. An educational complex at Morne Fortune provides industrial, technical, and teacher training while also serving as a branch of the University of the West Indies.

Although the government has been emphasizing education in recent years, the system does not yet meet the nation's needs. The adult literacy rate is only 67 percent. About 80 percent of urban children and 75 percent of rural ones attend some school, but dropouts are common. Nevertheless, a sizable portion of the population is reasonably well educated and can perform skilled jobs.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 67
 Male %: 65
 Female %: 69
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 12.5
 First Level: Primary Schools: 88
 Teachers: 1,103
 Students: 24,573
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 22.3
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 99.4
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 14
 Teachers: 794
 Students: 12,662
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 16.4
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 76.1
 Third Level: Institutions: 1
 Teachers: —
 Students: —
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 1.4
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 7.7

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Saint Lucia is the headquarters of the Eastern Caribbean Telecommunications authority, which has worked to liberalize telecommunications in the Caribbean. The local telephone system is adequate, and there is international service by Intelsat from Martinique. In 2002 there were about 51,000 telephone lines and 14,300 cellular tele-

phones in the country. About 13,000 people were using the Internet.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: 0.822
 Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

Saint Lucia has good press freedom, and the media publishes a variety of viewpoints, though some fear that a 2003 law making the publication of "false news" a crime may hamper media freedom. The island has two newspapers that appear three times a week—the *Voice* and the *Star*—and several weekly papers. The government-run radio station is Radio Saint Lucia (RSL), which broadcasts in English, French, and the French patois. Radio Caribbean International is a private station owned by the French CIRTES; it broadcasts in English and the French patois. Other commercial stations include Radio 100, which broadcasts news and entertainment, and Hot FM, which plays music and broadcasts news; the latter is affiliated with Helen Television Systems, one of the nation's private television stations. There are two other major television stations, and many households also have cable service.

There is a free public library, administered by the Central Library at Castries.

Media

Daily Newspapers: —
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: —
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets 000: 56
 per 1,000: 368

CULTURE

Saint Lucian culture combines African, West Indian, French, and British influences. Most people love music, especially Caribbean styles such as calypso. The poet Derek Walcott won the 1992 Nobel Prize in Literature.

Saint Lucians celebrate many festivals throughout the year. Carnival, just before Ash Wednesday, is one of the most important, featuring costumes, parades, and band competitions. The Saint Lucian Jazz Festival attracts musicians from all over the world. The Atlantic Rally for

2002 Saint Lucia

Cruisers is a yacht race that starts in the Canary Islands and finishes in Saint Lucia in December.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 1
Volumes: —
Registered borrowers: —
Museums Number: —
Annual Attendance: —
Cinema Gross Receipts: —
Number of Cinemas: —
Seating Capacity: —
Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Folk dancing is quite popular, and there are regular folk dancing competitions featuring participants dressed in traditional national costumes. African traditions are still a major element of Saint Lucian culture, and African folktales, often with local twists, are still told.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Saint Lucia offers a variety of outdoor recreational possibilities. All beaches are public, so locals can visit them along with international tourists. Swimming, windsurfing, snorkeling, diving, and sailing are all popular water sports. There are pleasant hikes in the interior of the island, especially on public lands. People enjoy going out dancing, listening to music, and drinking rum. There is good shopping in the markets in Castries.

ETIQUETTE

Tipping is not customary; a service charge is usually added to the bills at hotels and restaurants. Some visitors complain that employees in stores and other businesses are rude.

FAMILY LIFE

Many Saint Lucian women have children without being married, and it is not uncommon for both men and women to have several children with different partners. Female-headed households are common. Even in homes with two adults, married or not, the two adults may not both be the biological parents of all the children in the house. Relatives often help mothers raise their children and perform other household tasks. Domestic violence is fairly common. The government has been trying to en-

courage family planning and the sensible consumption of alcohol in an effort to improve family conditions.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Most people wear casual clothing made of light fabrics such as cotton. People are relatively conservative in their dress and do not wear swimsuits or revealing attire away from the beach. Some tourist resorts have more formal dress codes.

SPORTS

The government has invested a good deal of public money in sporting facilities as part of an effort to improve the foreign investment climate. The Saint Lucia Tourist Board has been encouraging athletes to visit and arranged for a rugby festival to be held there in 2005. Cricket is extremely popular, as is soccer.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1979** Saint Lucia becomes an independent member of the Commonwealth, with John Compton as prime minister. In general elections the Saint Lucia Labour Party (SLP) wins an upset victory; Allan Louisy is named prime minister.
- 1981** Prime Minister Louisy is forced to resign when George Odlum and 12 other SLP members vote against the government. Winston Cenac, the attorney general, is named prime minister with a parliamentary majority of one. Odlum and two others form a new party, the Progressive Labour Party (PLP).
- 1982** Cenac resigns, and Michael Pilgrim of the PLP forms an all-party caretaker government pending elections. In general elections the United Workers' Party (UWP) wins 14 of 17 seats in the House of Assembly. John Compton takes office as prime minister. Sir Allen Lewis is appointed governor-general following the dismissal of Boswell Williams.
- 1983** Saint Lucia, as a member of the OECS, participates in the U.S.-led invasion of Grenada.
- 1984** Prime Minister Compton leads a trade mission to the Far East.
- 1987** John Compton is reelected prime minister. Governor-General Lewis retires and is succeeded by Vincent Floissac.
- 1989** Floissac is succeeded by Sir Stanislaus A. James as governor-general.
- 1990** Tropical Storm Klaus hits, causing extensive damage to the banana crop, the country's principal industry.

- 1997** Kenny Anthony is elected prime minister, ending 15 years of government leadership by Compton and the UWP. Perlette Louisy is selected as governor-general.
- 2001** Anthony wins second term as prime minister.
- 2002** Tropical Storm Lili strikes the island, destroying half the banana crop and many banana plantations.
- 2003** Parliament replaces the oath of allegiance to the British monarch with a pledge of loyalty to Saint Lucia. Parliament passes new criminal laws legalizing abortion in some circumstances and proscribing the spread of false news.
- 2004** Anthony announces that he will run for prime minister for a third time in the next general election.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Government of Saint Lucia
<http://www.stlucia.gov.lc/>

SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

ABBREVIATION

VC

CAPITAL

Kingstown

HEAD OF STATE

Queen Elizabeth II, represented by Governor-General Sir Frederick Nathaniel Ballantyne (from 2002)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Ralph Gonsalves (from 2001)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Parliamentary democracy

POPULATION

117,534 (2005)

AREA

389 sq km (150 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Black, mixed

LANGUAGES

English (official), French patois

RELIGION

Christianity

UNIT OF CURRENCY

East Caribbean dollar

NATIONAL FLAG

Three vertical bands of blue (left), gold, and green with three green diamonds arranged in a V in the gold band, which is twice the width of each of the other bands

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A base of green with a fire burning on an ancient altar between the figures of Peace and Justice dressed in azure, the figure on the left holding an olive branch and the figure on the right kneeling on the right knee to make sacrifices on the altar. On the crest is a sprig of the cotton plant, and on a scroll at the bottom is the national motto, *Pax et justitia* (Peace and justice).

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“St Vincent, Land So Beautiful”

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year’s Day), January 22 (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Day), Good Friday, Easter Monday, first Monday in May (Labour Day), Whitmonday, second Monday in July (CariCom Day), Tuesday in mid-July (Carnival), first Monday in August (August Monday), October 27 (Independence Day), December 25 (Christmas), December 26 (Boxing Day)

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

October 27, 1979

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

October 27, 1979

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

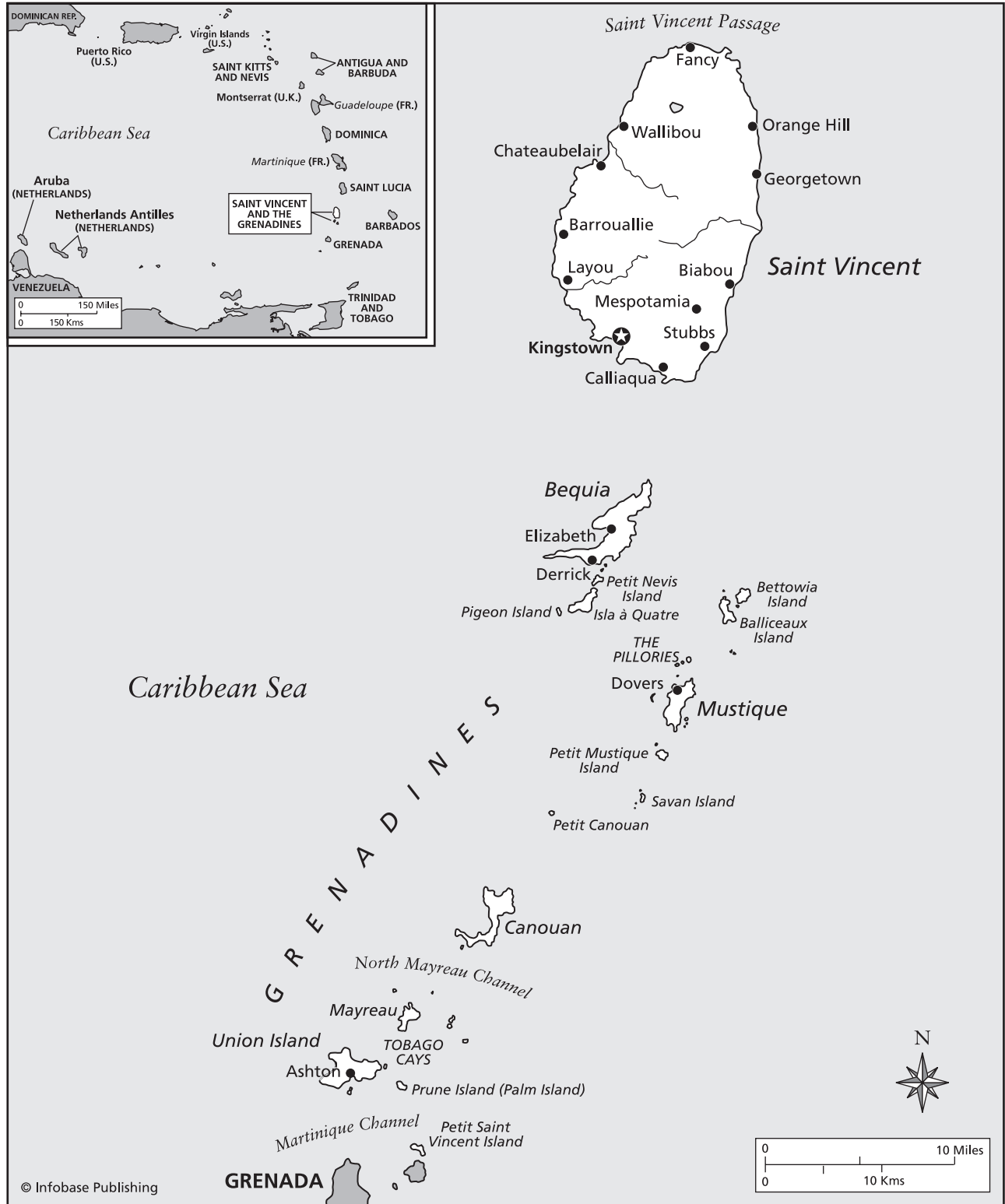
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines lies in the Lesser Antilles at the lower end of the Caribbean chain of Windward Islands, some 98 km (60 mi) north of Grenada and 160 km (100 mi) west of Barbados.

Saint Vincent is a small, green island, only 29 km (18 mi) long and 18 km (11 mi) wide, with a total land area of 347 sq km (134 sq mi). The length of the coastline is 84 km (52 mi). Down its whole length the island is dominated

by a volcanic range of mountains, with four peaks almost equidistant from one another: Soufrière, Richmond, Grand Bonhomme, and St. Andrew. The land slopes gently to the coast on the east, in contrast to the rugged terrain on the west. There are many fast-flowing rivers.

The Grenadines are a chain of islets between St. Vincent and Grenada. All of them have white beaches noted for their intense beauty and coral reefs, with enclosed bays that are ideal for underwater sports. The larger of the Grenadines are Bequia, Canouan, Mustique, and

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines



Union, while among the smaller are Mayreau, Palm (or Prune), Baliceaux, Bettowia, and Isle à Quatre. Many of the islets are privately owned, and most of them are unin-

habited; only twelve or so serve as permanent homes for humans. The total land area of the country is 389 sq km (150 sq mi).

2006 Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

Geography

Area sq km: 389; sq mi 150
World Rank: 182nd
Land Boundaries, km: 0
Coastline, km: 84
Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Caribbean Sea 0
 Highest: Soufrière 1,234
Land Use %
 Arable Land: 18.0
 Permanent Crops: 18.0
 Forest: 15.4
 Other: 48.6

Population of Principal Cities (2000)

Kingstown	16,209
-----------	--------

Density per sq km: 279.9
% of annual growth (1999-2003): -0.5
Male %: 51.0
Female %: 49.0
Urban %: 58.1
Age Distribution %: 0-14: 27.1
 15-64: 66.5
 65 and over: 6.4

Population 2025: 118,300
Birth Rate per 1,000: 16.34
Death Rate per 1,000: 6.0
Rate of Natural Increase %: 1.0
Total Fertility Rate: 1.85
Expectation of Life (years): Males 71.78
 Females 75.51
Marriage Rate per 1,000: 4.7
Divorce Rate per 1,000: 0.4
Average Size of Households: 3.9
Induced Abortions: —

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

The climate is tropical, with average temperatures of 18 to 32°C (64 to 90°F). From January to June the northeasterly trade winds predominate, and temperatures are equable. The rainy season is from May to November, when the rainfall ranges from 1,500 mm (60 in) to 3,750 mm (150 in). The central mountains experience the heaviest rainfall. Saint Vincent lies just inside the Caribbean hurricane belt but has seldom suffered much damage.

Climate and Weather

Temperature Range: 64°F to 90°F
Average Rainfall: 150 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Saint Vincent is heavily forested with domestic banana trees, coconut palms, arrowroot, and indigenous rain-forest flora. Most of the Grenadines are dry and have only scrubby vegetation.

The national bird is the Saint Vincent parrot, which is endangered. Many other species of tropical birds, such as the whistling warbler, also live in the rain forest. Mammals include the manicoú, a kind of opossum, and agouti. There are three species of snakes, all nonvenomous. Sea-birds such as boobies, frigate birds, ospreys, and pelicans visit the islands. Within the sea is a variety of tropical fauna, including sea urchins, turtles, and tropical fish.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 117,534
World Rank: 175th

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

The original inhabitants of the island were the Caribs, who have disappeared as a distinct group through natural disasters, forced expulsion, and intermarriage with blacks; Caribs now make up only 2 percent of the population. The first foreigners to successfully settle on the island were African slaves who survived a shipwreck in 1675; they mixed with Carib society and produced mixed-race descendants known as Black Caribs. Subsequent ships added to the black population, and now the majority of the population is either black (66 percent) or mixed (19 percent). After the abolition of slavery in 1838, Portuguese workers from Madeira and indentured laborers from India were imported, adding further variety to the ethnic composition; about 6 percent of the population is East Indian. A small portion of the population is white; many of these whites are wealthy foreigners who have purchased individual islands or who live on their yachts, in contrast to the generally poor native population.

LANGUAGES

The official language is English, which is spoken with varying levels of fluency by almost all Vincentians. A French patois, which mingles French, Spanish, and African languages, is used on some Grenadine islands.

RELIGIONS

The Anglican, Methodist, Roman Catholic, and Seventh-Day Adventist churches are all represented on the island, in addition to a host of smaller groups and cults. The Anglican bishop of the Windward Islands resides in St. Vincent.

Religious Affiliations

Anglican	55,200
Methodist	32,900
Roman Catholic	15,300
Other	14,100

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Saint Vincent was settled around 5000 B.C.E. by the peace-loving Ciboney Indians. The Arawaks also settled there and were dominant when the war-like Caribs took control of the island. Saint Vincent was discovered by Columbus in 1498 but remained in the possession of the Carib Indians until 1627, when the King of England granted the island to the earl of Carlisle, who did not occupy it and allowed the grant to lapse. In 1675 a Dutch slave ship, wrecked off Bequia, brought the first Africans, who intermarried to foster the Black Caribs, whose descendants live there today.

In 1779 Saint Vincent was captured by the French, but the island was restored to Great Britain under the terms of the Treaty of Versailles in 1783. For the next 13 years the French and their Carib allies tried to wrest possession from the British, without success, although in 1795 the French and Caribs overran the island and murdered all the British colonists. In 1797 the Caribs were expelled to the island of Roatan, near the Gulf of Honduras. Along with other nearby British territories, St. Vincent was administered by the governor of the Windward Islands until 1959. From 1958 to 1962 it was a member of the West Indian Federation. Upon the failure of negotiations to form the East Caribbean Federation, St. Vincent, along with other British colonies in the region, became one of the West Indies Associated States, with full internal self-government, in 1967. The Legislative Council was renamed the House of Assembly, the administrator became the governor, and the chief minister was restyled the premier.

Following the constitutional conference of 1978, the country was granted full independence as St. Vincent and the Grenadines on October 27, 1979. As a result of the transition, the former governor, Sir Sydney Gun-Munro, became governor-general, and the premier, Milton Cato, became prime minister. Cato remained in office following the victory of his Saint Vincent Labour Party (SVLP) in December elections. That month the government quelled an uprising on Union Island by Rastafarians attempting to secede. The SVLP was defeated in the 1984 elections by the New Democratic Party (NDP), led by James F. Mitchell, who became prime minister. The NDP, which won elections again in 1989, remained in office by winning 12 of 15 elective seats in 1994 but saw its majority dwindle to eight in 1998. In 2001 the NDP gained only three parliamentary seats, while the Unity Labour Party (ULP), successor to the SVLP, won 12. Ralph Gonsalves became prime minister. He was reelected in 2005.

The nation spent the early 2000s trying to diversify its economy in the wake of the European Union's decision to phase out preferential treatment for banana growers in former colonies. The government has been working to end drug trafficking and money laundering. Gonsalves wants to end customs and immigrations restrictions in the region and supports a political union of Caribbean nations.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

Prime Minister

1956–67	Ebenezer Joshua
1967–72	Milton Cato
1972–74	James Fitz-Allen Mitchell
1974–84	Milton Cato
1984–2000	James Fitz-Allen Mitchell
2000–01	Arnhim Eustace
2001–	Ralph Gonsalves

CONSTITUTION

Saint Vincent is a parliamentary democracy within the Commonwealth, with the Queen of England as head of state, as represented on the island by a governor-general appointed by the monarch. The prime minister is the head of government; the governor-general appoints the prime minister, historically selecting the leader of the majority party in parliament. The governor-general also appoints a deputy prime minister, following the advice of the prime minister. In the tradition of countries following the Westminster system, the governor-general can remove the prime minister from office if a resolution of no confidence is passed by the House of Assembly and the prime minister does not resign within three days or advise the governor-general to dissolve the house. The cabinet consists of the prime minister, six other ministers, and the attorney general as an ex officio member.

Suffrage is universal for all citizens 18 years of age and older.

PARLIAMENT

The national legislature is the 21-member unicameral House of Assembly, consisting of 15 representatives and six senators. The senators are appointed by the governor-general—four on the advice of the prime minister and two on the advice of the leader of the opposition. The term of the House is five years. The representatives are elected to five-year terms through popular vote from single-member constituencies. The prime minister is allowed to call elections at any time, regardless of whether a five-year term is up.

2008 Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

The leader of the opposition is appointed by the governor-general; the former's position and responsibilities are set forth in the constitution.

POLITICAL PARTIES

The current ruling party is the Unity Labour Party (ULP), a moderate social democratic party that was founded in 1994 by the merger of the Movement for National Unity and the St. Vincent Labour Party. The New Democratic Party (NDP) also has representation in parliament. Other parties include the National Reform Party (NRP), People's Progressive Movement (PPM), Progressive Labor Party (PLP), and United People's Movement (UPM).

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For purposes of local government the island of Saint Vincent is divided into five local parishes: Charlotte, St. George, St. Andrew, St. David, and St. Patrick. The Grenadines make up a sixth parish under the control of the prime minister's office.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The legal system is based on British common law. The system is headed by the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court (locally called the Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Supreme Court), which includes the Court of Appeals and the High Court, one of whose judges is resident on Saint Vincent and presides over a court of summary jurisdiction. The islands are divided into three magisterial districts: The first is at Kingstown; the second covers Georgetown, Biabou, Mesopotamia, and Colonarie; and the third covers Layou, Chateaubelair, Calliaqua, and the Grenadines. The court of last resort is in London, at the judicial committee of Her Majesty's Privy Council.

HUMAN RIGHTS

The human rights situation in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines is good. British rule left a deep impression on the political and legal systems, which specifically respect the integrity of the person and guarantee fair trial, due process, freedom from arbitrary arrest, and other civil practices. Although there is unfettered participation in the political processes, political parties function actively only during elections; at other times the government tends to neglect opposition viewpoints. There is no form of censorship or government interference in media activities. There have been some reports of police vio-

lence and poor prison conditions, and the court system is overburdened. There is some violence against women and children.

FOREIGN POLICY

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines has close ties with its neighbors, including the United States and other Caribbean nations. It is also friendly with Canada and the United Kingdom. It is a member of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) and the Caribbean Community as well as the United Nations, the Association of Caribbean States, the Organization of American States, and the Commonwealth of Nations. It supported UN efforts to restore Haiti's democratically elected government and has also maintained close ties with Cuba, which provides health-care aid and scholarships to Vincentians.

The United States has supported Vincentian efforts to improve the nation's economy and has provided military assistance for construction and humanitarian projects. The two nations have been working to stop the cultivation and shipment of marijuana.

DEFENSE

Saint Vincent has no standing army. A regional defense pact with eight other Caribbean nations provides for joint coast guard operations, military exercises, and disaster contingency plans. The only security force is the Saint Vincent Police, which includes a small coast guard and a small paramilitary special forces unit.

ECONOMY

Saint Vincent is a lower-middle-income country, with a free-market economy in which the private sector is dominant. The government is trying to diversify the economy in order to make the nation less dependent on the world banana market.

Agriculture is the dominant sector of the economy, with bananas and arrowroot serving as the primary cash crops. Bananas are by far the most important crop, employing 60 percent of the workforce and producing half of export income. Agriculture is vulnerable to weather and seasonal price fluctuations; tropical storms periodically wipe out large portions of crops. The service sector is next in importance, as based primarily on a growing tourist industry that suffered from low numbers of arrivals following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, in the United States. There is a small manufacturing sector, principally consisting of food processors and factories producing cement, furniture, clothing, and starch. The nation has a small offshore banking sector, which

has recently adopted international regulatory standards; in 2003 Saint Vincent and the Grenadines was removed from a list of nations believed to be accommodating money launderers.

Marijuana is Saint Vincent's most lucrative illegal crop. The islands are commonly used as a transshipment point for illegal drugs being moved from South America to the United States and other markets. The government is trying to eliminate this sector of the economy.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$million: 342
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 2,900
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 2.1
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 2.6
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 10
 Industry: 26
 Services: 64
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 61
 Government Consumption: 21
 Gross Domestic Investment: —
 Foreign Trade \$million: Exports: 38
 Imports: 174
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: —
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: —
 CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
108.2	108.4	109.3	110.2	110.5

Finance

National Currency: East Caribbean Dollar (XCD)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = XCD 2.7
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency million: 282
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 6.5
 Total External Debt \$million: 167.2
 Debt Service Ratio %: 6.67
 Balance of Payments \$million: —
 International Reserves SDRs \$million: 50.4
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
 –0.4

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 6.33
 per capita \$: 58.00
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 37.7

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$billion: 94.6
 Expenditures \$billion: 85.8
 Budget Surplus \$million: 8.8
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 10
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 0.3
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 1.14
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 7.1
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 304.7
 Total Farmland % of land area: 18.0
 Livestock: Cattle 000: 5
 Chickens 000: 125
 Pigs 000: 9.2
 Sheep 000: 12
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters 000: —
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 43.9

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 20.3
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: –0.9

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 2
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 62
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 567
 Net Energy Imports % of use: —
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: 16
 Production kW-hr million: 89
 Consumption kW-hr million: 83
 Coal Reserves tons million: —
 Production tons million: —
 Consumption tons million: —
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
 Production cubic feet billion: —
 Consumption cubic feet billion: —
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
 Production barrels 000 per day: —
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 1.2
 Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$million: 174
 Exports \$million: 38
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 1.3
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): –1.3
 Balance of Trade \$million: —

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
United States %	41.2	13.3
Trinidad and Tobago %	20.7	11.1
United Kingdom %	7.3	29.3
Barbados %	—	11.2
Saint Lucia %	—	10.3
Antigua and Barbuda %	—	7.2

2010 Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 829
Paved %: 70.0
Automobiles: 9,900
Trucks and Buses: 400
Railroad: Track Length km: —
Passenger-km million: —
Freight-km million: —
Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 657
Total Deadweight Tonnage million: 9
Airports: 6
Traffic: Passenger-km 000: —
Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 79
Number of Tourists from 000: —
Tourist Receipts \$million: —
Tourist Expenditures \$million: —

Communications

Telephones 000: 27.3
Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.09
Cellular Telephones 000: 10
Personal Computers 000: 14
Internet Hosts per million people: 34
Internet Users per 1,000 people: 60

ENVIRONMENT

The biggest environmental problem in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines is the pollution of shorelines and coastal waters by waste from pleasure boats and land facilities. In some areas pollution is so bad that swimming is impossible. As tourism continues to play a critical role in the development of the nation, the country must address its impact on coasts and manage its increased disposal needs.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 15.4
Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: —
Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 1
Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 311.4
CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 1.44

LIVING CONDITIONS

Most families live in houses they have built themselves; the houses are usually small, sometimes with only two rooms. Almost all houses have running water and electricity, which is a recent development. Freshwater has historically been in short supply, and most homes still collect rainwater in barrels and buckets. Despite the polluted

condition of the oceans around the islands, the freshwater is safe to drink in most areas.

Saint Vincent has numerous buses, which are inexpensive and efficient. Bequia also has public buses and trucks. The only way to travel between most islands is by boat.

HEALTH

The nation has a thorough system of health care provided by the government at hospitals and community health centers. Health care for children, prenatal and postnatal care, and family-planning services are all provided free of charge. People must pay small fees for other services; fees are set on a sliding scale based on income. The government also provides some dental care, and immunizations are part of the public health program. Life expectancy in 2004 was over 73 years. On average, each woman has 1.85 children; this low fertility rate is the result of a family planning program implemented by the government in 1974. The government is concerned about the spread of HIV/AIDS due to high rates of sexual activity among young people.

Health

Number of Physicians: 101
Number of Dentists: 6
Number of Nurses: 276
Number of Pharmacists: —
Physician Density per 100,000 people: 88
Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 14.78
Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: —
Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 5.9
Health Expenditures per capita \$: 180
HIV Infected % of adults: —
Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
DPT: 99
Measles: 94
Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 98
Access to Improved Water Source %: 96

FOOD AND NUTRITION

People in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines eat a great deal of locally caught seafood, including conch, lobster, whelk, shrimp, and various fish; salted fish is quite popular. There are many fresh fruits and vegetables, especially breadfruit, sweet potatoes, pumpkins, bananas, coconuts, and Saint Vincent oranges. (Breadfruit has been grown on the island since 1793, when Captain Bligh, later of *Bounty* fame, brought it back from Tahiti.) The national dish is breadfruit and fried jackfish. Other typical dishes include pumpkin soup, a stew called callaloo, and pig-foot souse. People also eat some East Indian dishes, such as roti. Arrowroot is used as a thickener in desserts. Common drinks

include tea, coffee, hot chocolate, fish-broth tea, and cocoa tea. Rum is the most popular alcoholic beverage.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 111.8
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 124.7

STATUS OF WOMEN

The role of women in society is not restricted by law, but custom dictates that most Vincentian women center their lives around the home. Many observers expect that as women take greater advantage of public education programs, health facilities, and family planning, they will participate in larger numbers in the nation's economic, professional, and political life.

Violence against women has been a problem. Minibus drivers are notorious for harassing young female passengers. In 2005 the government called for an end to violence against women.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 23
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: —
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: —

WORK

A substantial portion of the Vincentian workforce grows bananas. Most families own a plot of land and use it for subsistence farming, growing their own crops and raising livestock; they may also grow bananas and sell them in Kingstown. Fishing is an important local industry, and some people work in tourism. Unemployment is a serious problem; the rate was 15 percent in 2001. Women and teenagers have particular difficulty finding work for pay. Poor levels of education make the problem of unemployment particularly difficult to solve, as the workforce on the whole lacks the skills to do many jobs.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 67,000
 Female Participation Rate %: —
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 26
 Industry: 17
 Services: 57
 Unemployment %: 15

EDUCATION

Primary education is free but not compulsory. The duration of schooling is 14 years, as divided into seven years of primary school, five years of lower secondary school, and two years of upper secondary school. The school year runs from September through July. The medium of instruction is English throughout. Parents must buy uniforms and books for their children, and textbooks and sporting equipment are sometimes hard to find. Overcrowding is a problem. About 25 percent of children leave school before finishing primary school because they must work to support their families.

Fewer than 60 percent of the nation's children attend any kind of secondary school. Facilities include a technical college, a nursing school, and a teacher-training college. The government offers advanced training in agriculture and vocations. Students who want a university education must go abroad. Cuba offers university scholarships to some Vincentian students; others go to Canada, the United States, or the United Kingdom.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 96
 Male %: 96
 Female %: 96
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: —
 First Level: Primary Schools: 65
 Teachers: 1,061
 Students: 18,629
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 17.6
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 90.0
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 21
 Teachers: 490
 Students: 7,909
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 19.6
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 57.7
 Third Level: Institutions: —
 Teachers: —
 Students: —
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: —
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 10.0

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The telephone system on Saint Vincent is adequate. There is VHF/UHF radiotelephone service between Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. The country recently added SHF radiotelephone service to Grenada and St. Lucia, and there is access to the INTELSAT earth station in Martinique through St. Lucia. In 2002 the nation had nearly 30,000 telephone lines and about 10,000 cellular telephones. About 7,000 people were using the Internet. Technological development is somewhat hampered by the low level of education that prevails throughout the islands.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 0.15
High-Tech Exports \$million: —
Patent Applications by Residents: —

Museums Number: —
Annual Attendance: —
Cinema Gross Receipts: —
Number of Cinemas: —
Seating Capacity: —
Annual Attendance: —

MEDIA

The constitution guarantees freedom of the press, and Vincentian publications openly criticize the government. All print publications are privately owned. The *Herald* is a daily newspaper. There are several weekly publications, including the *News*, *Searchlight*, and the *Vincentian*, which is published by the Vincentian Publishing Company. The national radio station is the National Broadcasting Corporation of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, which provides local programming in addition to transmitting BBC news; it is partly funded by the government. There are several private radio stations. The only television station is SVG Television, operated by the Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Broadcasting Corporation.

Media

Daily Newspapers: —
Total Circulation 000: —
Circulation per 1,000: —
Books Published: —
Periodicals: —
Radio Receivers 000: —
per 1,000: —
Television sets 000: 26
per 1,000: 230

CULTURE

Local culture mixes the cultures of the Black Caribs, West Africa, France, and Britain. Many islanders are expert boat-builders, constructing full-size and miniature boats as an art form. Music is extremely important, and no social occasion is complete without live music. Musical styles include calypso, reggae, steel band, soca, and big drum. Big-drum music is played on large drums that were originally carved from trees but are now usually made from rum kegs. Big-drum singers are usually women who wear full skirts and headdresses and sing songs that are full of satire and social commentary. The island's most famous musician is the poet and trumpeter Shake Ellsworth Keane.

The islands are known for attracting the world's rich and famous people. The island of Mustique is particularly famous for its celebrity visitors and property owners.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 1
Volumes: 280,000
Registered borrowers: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Telling folktales and local myths is local tradition and an important part of community life. People admire skilled storytellers. Many folktales, such as Anansi tales, come from Africa and feature trickster animals that constantly outwit one another. Local versions of these tales add local details to the old stories.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Kingstown is the biggest urban center and attracts many visitors on weekends. People go to the markets to sell produce, shop, and meet friends. Discos are very popular, especially with young people. Men gather at local rum shops to drink, socialize, and play dominoes.

Water sports are popular with both locals and tourists. Swimming, windsurfing, snorkeling, and scuba diving are all excellent, though water pollution is increasingly a problem. The islands attract yacht owners from all over the world. Hiking on the islands is also pleasant.

ETIQUETTE

People follow typical Western rules of behavior. Vincenians are quite friendly and outgoing. It is considered acceptable for merchants to approach potential buyers to offer them their wares; the prospective buyer is expected to politely decline the goods if he or she does not want them.

FAMILY LIFE

Family arrangements are typically loose. Though some people marry, many do not, and it is not uncommon for men and women to live in separate houses. People may have children with multiple partners. Women have traditionally been the mainstays of households; almost 40 percent of families are headed exclusively by women, and even when a man is present, the mother of the family is still quite important. Women raise children, tend the family garden, do household chores, and care for elders. Older children and relatives are expected to help with household work, especially looking after babies and young children. Teenage pregnancy is not as common as

it was in the 1970s, but it is still not unusual for teenage girls to have children.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Most people wear casual Western clothing. The climate is hot, so people usually dress in light cotton garments. It is considered improper to wear bathing suits away from the beach. Some establishments catering to tourists have more formal dress codes.

SPORTS

Cricket and soccer are the most popular sports with people of all ages, both as participants and as spectators. Vincentian cricket players are often chosen to play on the West Indian team. Other popular sports include basketball, volleyball, karate, tae kwon do, and table tennis. The government's Ministry of Sports has been trying to develop the nation's sporting facilities and to encourage people to participate in sports.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1979** Saint Vincent and the Grenadines becomes fully independent as a special member of the Commonwealth. In House of Assembly elections Prime Minister Milton Cato's Saint Vincent Labour Party (SVLP) wins 11 of 13 seats. The government quells an uprising on Union Island organized by the Rastafarian cult, which, among other things, worships the former emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia.
- 1984** In general elections the New Democratic Party (NDP), led by James F. Mitchell, wins nine of 13 House of Assembly seats while the SVLP wins only four. Cato steps down, and James F. Mitchell takes office as prime minister.
- 1989** The NDP takes all elective seats in the House of Assembly. James Mitchell retains the prime ministership.
- 1990** Work begins on an airport on Bequia that, when completed in 1992, will make the island accessible by air for the first time.
- 1994** The NDP holds onto 12 seats in the House, and Mitchell is again selected as prime minister.
- 1997** Charles Antrobus is appointed governor-general.

- 1998** The NDP, headed by James Mitchell, narrowly wins a fourth term.
- 2001** The Unity Labour Party, successor to the SVLP, wins 12 seats in the House of Assembly, and Ralph Gonsalves becomes prime minister.
- 2002** Governor-general Charles Antrobus dies.
- 2003** Saint Vincent and the Grenadines joins the Non-Aligned Movement of developing nations and is removed from the list of nations facilitating money laundering.
- 2005** Ralph Gonsalves wins a second term as prime minister.

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- Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.** *Digest of Statistics* (annual); *Population and Housing Census* 1991

CONTACT INFORMATION

Embassy of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
 3216 New Mexico Avenue NW
 Washington, D.C. 20016
 Phone: (202) 364-6730 Fax: (202) 364-6736

INTERNET RESOURCES

- Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Department of Tourism
<http://www.svgtourism.com/>

SAMOA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Independent State of Samoa (Sa'oloto Tuto'atasi o Samoa)

ABBREVIATION

WS

CAPITAL

Apia

HEAD OF STATE

King Malietoa Tanumafili II (from 1963)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Sailele Malielegaoi Tuila'epa (from 1998)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Constitutional monarchy

POPULATION

177,287 (2005)

AREA

2,944 sq km (1,137 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Samoan

LANGUAGES

Samoan, English

RELIGION

Christianity

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Tala

NATIONAL FLAG

Red field with a blue quarter on the hoist bearing the five white stars of the Southern Cross

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A shield displaying the constellation of the Southern Cross on a blue field, from which sprouts a brown palm tree with green fronds against a white background broken by wavy green lines. The device is encircled by a stylized wreath and is crested by a cross. On a scroll at the bottom is the national motto, *Fa'avae i le Atua Samoa* (May God be the foundation of Samoa).

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"The Flag of Freedom"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (National Day), April 25 (ANZAC Day), June 3, 4, and 5 (Independence Days), December 26 (Boxing Day), various Christian and Western festivals, including Good Friday, Easter Monday, Whitmonday, Christmas

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

January 1, 1962

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

January 1, 1962

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Samoa lies in the Pacific Ocean 2,574 km (1,600 mi) northeast of Auckland, New Zealand, and consists of two large islands, Upolu and Savai'i, and the smaller islands of Apolima, Fanuatapu, Manono, Namua, Nuusafee, and Nuutele. Only the two large islands of Upolu and Savai'i, separated by 18 km (11 mi), are inhabited. The total land area is 2,944 sq km (1,137 sq mi), extending 150 km (93 mi) east-southeast to west-northwest and 39 km (24 mi) north-northeast to south-southwest. The nation's total coastline is 403 km (250 mi).

The islands are of volcanic origin, and the coasts are surrounded by coral reefs. There are many dormant volcanoes; the most recent period of volcanic activity was be-

tween 1905 and 1911. Rugged mountain ranges form the core of both Savai'i (1,709 sq km; 660 sq mi) and Upolu (1,113 sq km; 430 sq mi). The highest elevations are 1,857 m (6,094 ft) on Savai'i and 1,099 m (3,608 ft) on Upolu. Because of large areas laid waste by lava flows on Savai'i, that island supports fewer people than the smaller Upolu.

Geography

Area sq km: 2,944; sq mi 1,137

World Rank: 165th

Land Boundaries, km: 0

Coastline, km: 403

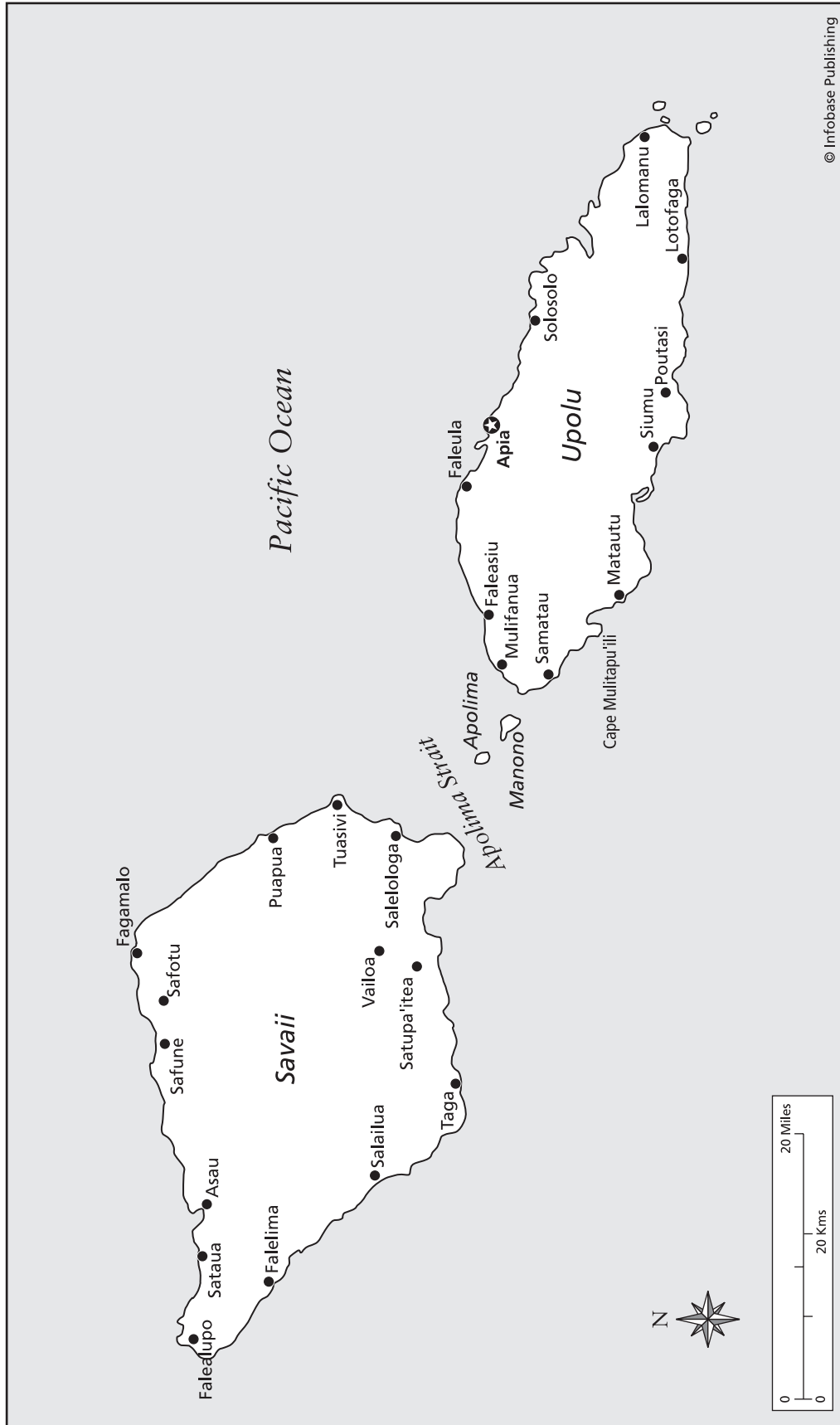
Elevation Extremes meters:

Lowest: Pacific Ocean 0

Highest: Mauga Silisili 1,857

(continues)

Samoa



Geography *(continued)*

Land Use %

Arable Land:	21.2
Permanent Crops:	24.4
Forest:	37.1
Other:	17.3

Death Rate per 1,000: 6.54

Rate of Natural Increase %: 0.9

Total Fertility Rate: 3.01

Expectation of Life (years): Males 67.93

Females 73.65

Marriage Rate per 1,000: 5.2

Divorce Rate per 1,000: —

Average Size of Households: 7.8

Induced Abortions: —

Population of Principal Cities (2001)

Apia	38,836
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CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Samoa has a tropical climate with two seasons: dry from May to October and wet from November to April. The hottest month is December, the coldest July. The mean daily temperature is 27°C (80°F). The average rainfall is 2,870 mm (113 in) per year, of which two-thirds falls during the wet season. Although Samoa lies outside the normal track of hurricanes, there are occasional severe storms.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature: 80°F

Average Rainfall: 113 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

The flora of Samoa consists of tropical rain forest in three broad types: lowland forest (the most extensive), montane forest, and cloud forest. Samoa has 536 species of flowering plants, 28 percent of them endemic. There are also 228 species of fern. Samoa has 37 native species of land birds, only four of which were introduced. There are various species of pigeons, rails, ducks, swamp hens, thrushes, and doves, as well as the Samoan flying fox. There are also nine species of reptiles, including geckos, skinks, and boas.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 177,287

World Rank: 173rd

Density per sq km: 62.9

% of annual growth (1999-2003): 1.1

Male %: 58.2

Female %: 41.8

Urban %: 22.8

Age Distribution %: 0-14: 27.2

15-64: 66.4

65 and over: 6.4

Population 2025: 177,500

Birth Rate per 1,000: 15.95

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Samoans constitute nearly 93 percent of the population; the remaining 7 percent consist of mixed whites and Polynesians and fewer than 1,000 Europeans.

The Samoans belong to the Polynesian race, which came to the islands in migratory waves over 2,000 years ago. Samoans are the second-largest branch of the Polynesian race, after the Maori, of New Zealand.

LANGUAGES

The official languages are Samoan and English. Samoan, a Polynesian dialect, is spoken universally. It is a vowel language, containing 10 distinct vowel sounds but only a few consonants. In some words the vowel sounds are doubled or even tripled, resulting in *aaa's* and *eee's* in the same word. English is taught in schools and is used in administration and commerce; most Samoans are familiar with English.

RELIGIONS

As in race and language, there is considerable homogeneity in the religious backgrounds of Samoans. Nearly 99.7 percent are Christians, and 50 percent belong to the London Missionary Society, now known there as the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa. The Roman Catholic and Methodist churches each have about 20 percent membership. Religious observance is strong among all groups.

Religious Affiliations

Christian 176,800

Other 500

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The most likely origins of the Samoan people, like other Polynesians, is that they migrated from the East Indies, the Malay Peninsula, or the Philippines. Samoans in fact believe that they are the cradle of Polynesian culture, a

race of people created by the god Tagaloa while he was conceiving the world. Trading ships often stopped on the islands as they were sailing the spice route. Much early contact was bloody, as the Samoans wanted to keep foreigners out.

More permanent contacts between Samoa and the West came through the London Missionary Society, a branch of which was established in Apia in 1832. Between 1847 and 1861 representatives of Germany, the United Kingdom, and the United States were stationed in Apia, where they became actively involved in intrigues and civil wars among the various paramount tribal chiefs. By a series of conventions signed in 1900, Samoa became a German protectorate. On the outbreak of World War I in 1914, New Zealand occupied the islands, administering them from 1919 to 1946 as a mandate of the League of Nations. From 1927 to 1936 the New Zealand administration faced a serious challenge from a nationalistic organization known as Nau, which orchestrated a movement for civil independence.

In 1946 the League of Nations mandate was converted into a trusteeship agreement, under which New Zealand was committed to the promotion of Samoan self-government. An indigenous cabinet was introduced in 1959, and in 1960 the constitution of the Independent State of Western Samoa was adopted. In a plebiscite held under UN supervision in 1961, an overwhelming majority approved full independence, which was granted in 1962.

At independence Fiamē Mata'afa Mulinu'u became prime minister. His government lasted until 1970, when it was replaced by one led by Tupua Tāmasese Lealofi. Mata'afa regained power in 1973 and served until his death in 1975, when he was again replaced by Tāmasese. The following year Tāmasese lost the general election to Tupuola Tāisi Efi, the first prime minister not to come from one of the four leading families. Efi retained power following the 1979 general election.

Until 1979 there were no political parties in Western Samoa. In that year Va'ai Kolone organized the kingdom's first political party, the Human Rights Protection Party (HRPP), which won 22 of 47 seats in the Legislative Assembly in the 1982 elections. Following legal wrangles, Kolone turned over party leadership to Tofilau Eti Alesana, who led the HRPP to a landslide 31–16 victory in the 1985 elections. Meanwhile, the pro-private enterprise Labor Party was formed in 1981, while former prime minister Tupuola Efi organized the Christian Democratic Party (CDP). HRPP dissidents and the CDP toppled the government of Alesana in December 1985 and reinstated Va'ai Kolone as prime minister. In 1988 Alesana became prime minister once again.

In a popular referendum held in 1991 universal suffrage was adopted for all persons over 21, although only chiefs were eligible as candidates. In 1997 the name of the country was changed from Western Samoa to Samoa.

The next year Prime Minister Tofilau Eti, who had held office from 1982, resigned in favor of his deputy, Sailele Malielegaoi Tuila'epa. In 2001 Tuila'epa was elected to a second term in a close election, and the HRPP won 28 seats in the 49-seat parliament. In 2002 New Zealand formally apologized to Samoa for its poor treatment of Samoans during colonial times.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

Prime Minister

1962–70	Fiamē Mata'afa Mulinu'u
1970–73	Tupua Tāmasese Lealofi
1973–75	Fiamē Mata'afa Mulinu'u
1975–76	Tupua Tāmasese Lealofi
1976–82	Tupuola Tāisi Efi
1982–85	Tofilau Eti Alesana
1985–88	Va'ai Kolone
1988–98	Tofilau Eti Alesana
1998–	Tuila'epa Sailele Malielegaoi

CONSTITUTION

The constitution of 1962 established a British or Westminster-style parliamentary democracy. It provides for a head of state, known as *ao o le malo*. The present head of state is the scion of an old royal line and holds the position for life, but future heads of state will be elected by the Legislative Assembly for five-year terms. Although the constitution does not make it mandatory, future heads of state will be selected from among the holders of the four paramount titles. The cabinet, introduced in 1959, is headed by a prime minister, who is the head of government and is appointed by the head of state; the cabinet includes nine ministers collectively responsible to the Legislative Assembly. The prime minister requires the confidence of the assembly, although he and the cabinet are not necessarily dismissed when he loses that confidence, as there is no conventional party structure and such a dismissal would be contrary to traditional Samoan concepts of government. Decisions of the cabinet are subject to review by the Executive Council, a joint body composed of the head of state, the prime minister, and the cabinet. The council does not formulate policy but issues regulations and makes important appointments. Suffrage is universal for Samoan citizens at the age of 21.

The main element of Samoan stability is the conservative character of the political system, which is moderately representative while preserving older traditions. Decision making at the political level is dominated by the concept of consensus, described as essential to the *fa'a Samoa* (Samoan way). The Samoan political and social systems interact at every level. Samoan society is composed of a number of extended families (*aiga*),

whose heads bear the official title of *matai*. The number of such patriarchs is not fixed because as new extended families are formed, new titleholders are created. This exclusive *matai* group functions as the reservoir from which Samoan political leadership is always drawn. Traditionally, *matai* have the authority to impose their views on other members of the extended family. However, they also have well-defined responsibilities, and they may be removed if they do not meet these responsibilities. Apart from *fa'a Samoa*, there are no other political ideologies strong enough to influence voters. There have been moves toward universal suffrage and a reduction of *matai* powers. In 1985 the number of *matai* was increased by one-third to 16,000. Currently, two special representatives are chosen through universal adult suffrage by persons, principally Europeans, outside the *matai* system.

PARLIAMENT

The unicameral Legislative Assembly (Fono) is elected for five-year terms and consists of 49 members, of whom 47 are elected from territorial constituencies by the *matai*; the remaining two members are elected by universal suffrage by persons outside the *matai* system, such as persons of mixed white and Polynesian descent and Europeans with Samoan citizenship.

POLITICAL PARTIES

There are two major political parties and several smaller parties in Samoa. The largest is the Human Rights Protection Party (HRPP), which was the country's first political party in 1979. The other large party is the Samoa National Development Party, formed in 1988 as a coalition of several independent groups and the Christian Democrats. These two parties controlled 30 and 13 seats, respectively, after the 2001 general election.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

There is no formal system of local government; apart from an administrative officer on Savai'i, there is no administrative corps at the district level. Administrative districts drawn up in 1956 are used mainly as units for the operation of health, agriculture, police, and educational services. There are 11 such districts.

The basic territorial units are the *nu'u* (village) and *pitonu'u* (subvillage). The governing body of the *nu'u* is the *fono*, or *fono a faipule*, whose members are the *matai*. The chief of the *fono* is the *ali'i*, while the executive agent is the *tulafale* (orator). The frequency of meetings of the *fono* may vary from weekly to a few times a year.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The legal system is based on English common law, with elements of Samoan customary law.

The judiciary is headed by the Supreme Court, consisting of a chief justice and a junior judge appointed by the head of state, who acts on the advice of the prime minister. Appeals from the Supreme Court lie with the Court of Appeal, consisting of the chief justice and three other justices. The subordinate courts are the magistrate's courts. The highest magistrate's court consists of a magistrate and two senior judges assisted by seven junior judges. The Land and Titles Court has jurisdiction in disputes over land and succession to Samoan titles.

The Judicial Service Commission is composed of the chief justice, the attorney general, and some other person nominated by the minister of justice. The commission advises the head of state on the appointment, promotion, and transfer of judges (except the chief justice).

The corrections system consists of two penal institutions: a conventional prison at Tafa'igata, near Apia, and a prison farm at Vaia'ata, on Savai'i. The average prison population is 200.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Although Samoa is described as only a partly free country, human rights there are well secured, both by constitution and by custom. The political system is traditionally elitist, but this has not polarized society, and there are no deep divisions between the power holders and the powerless. The judiciary is independent, and the legislature is not entirely a rubber stamp of the executive.

FOREIGN POLICY

Samoa has diplomatic relations with two dozen countries, but most embassies servicing the nation are located in New Zealand. Indeed, the country's nearest important neighbor is New Zealand, with which relations have been cordial, although the legal status of Samoans living in New Zealand has sometimes been a thorny issue.

DEFENSE

Samoa has no defense forces. New Zealand is responsible for the country's defense under the 1962 Treaty of Friendship. In 2004 Australia announced that it would contribute \$7 million to help train Samoan security forces.

ECONOMY

The economy of Samoa has traditionally been dependent on development aid, private family remittances from overseas, and agricultural exports. The country is vulnerable to devastating storms. Agriculture furnishes a substantial portion of exports, including coconut cream, coconut oil, and copra. Outside of a large automotive wire harness factory, the manufacturing sector mainly processes agricultural products. Tourism is an expanding sector, accounting for 15 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) in 2000; about 92,000 tourists visited the islands in 2003. The Samoan government has called for the deregulation of the financial sector, the encouragement of investment, and continued fiscal discipline. Observers point to the flexibility of the labor market as a basic strength for future economic advances. Foreign reserves are in a relatively healthy state, external debt is stable, and inflation is low. Real growth in 2002 was 5 percent.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 1
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 5,600
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 4.2
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 3.1
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 14
 Industry: 23
 Services: 63
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 106
 Government Consumption: 29
 Gross Domestic Investment: —
 Foreign Trade \$million: Exports: 14
 Imports: 113
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: —
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: —

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
	115.4	116.5	121.0	130.8	131.0

Finance

National Currency: Tala (SAT)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = SAT 2.9732
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency million: 118
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: —
 Total External Debt \$million: 197
 Debt Service Ratio %: 5.79
 Balance of Payments \$million: —
 International Reserves SDRs \$million: 79.3
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
 4.0

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 33
 per capita \$: 185.60
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: —

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$billion: 105
 Expenditures \$billion: 119
 Budget Deficit \$million: 14
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 14
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2002) %: -3.7
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 0.16
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: —
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 58.3
 Total Farmland % of land area: 21.2
 Livestock: Cattle 000: 29
 Chickens 000: 450
 Pigs 000: 201
 Sheep 000: —
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters 000: 131
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 12.4

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 40.3
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 2.8

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 3
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent 000:
 51
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 294
 Net Energy Imports % of use: —
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: 26
 Production kW-hr million: 104
 Consumption kW-hr million: 97
 Coal Reserves tons million: —
 Production tons million: —
 Consumption tons million: —
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
 Production cubic feet billion: —
 Consumption cubic feet billion: —
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
 Production barrels per day: —
 Consumption barrels per day: 970
 Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$million: 113
 Exports \$million: 14
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2000): 2.6
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2000): 31.3
 Balance of Trade \$million: —

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
New Zealand %	20.0	—
Fiji %	17.7	—
Australia %	15.5	65.2
Japan %	12.0	—
Taiwan %	10.6	—
United States %	4.8	4.8
Singapore %	4.5	—
Indonesia %	—	15.0

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 790
Paved %: 42.0
Automobiles: —
Trucks and Buses: —
Railroad: Track Length km: —
Passenger-km million: —
Freight-km million: —
Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 1
Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 8
Airports: 4
Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 306
Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 92
Number of Tourists from 000: —
Tourist Receipts \$million: —
Tourist Expenditures \$million: —

Communications

Telephones 000: 11.8
Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.04
Cellular Telephones 000: 2.7
Personal Computers 000: 1.2
Internet Hosts per million people: —
Internet Users per 1,000 people: 23

ENVIRONMENT

Deforestation is the greatest environmental challenge faced by Samoa; the country has lost about 80 percent of its lowland rain forest during the 3,000 years in which humans have inhabited the islands, and environmental watchdog groups predict that at the current rate, all lowland forests could be gone in the early 21st century. The country also suffers from growing problems regarding sewage disposal in urban areas. Increased agricultural activity has led to increased soil erosion as well as the pollution of water resources by runoff from fertilizer and pesticides. A further problem has been the decline of the fish population in surrounding waters. The government has been active in trying to address these concerns before they become crises.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 37.1
Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: -3
Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 2
Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 0.81

LIVING CONDITIONS

Living conditions in Samoa are difficult to describe. On the one hand, the nation would seem to be somewhat poor, with a per capita GDP of \$5,600 in 2002. Sources of income are limited, and the country depends heavily on foreign aid and money sent by Samoans living and working overseas. Still, Samoans have ample food supplies, and the way of life is relaxed and easygoing. Housing is comfortable, with a blend of European-style homes and traditional thatched-roof, open-air homes built on volcanic boulder formations. The social order is maintained through strong village politics. The major social problem is out-migration by those seeking better economic opportunities in American Samoa and in the United States. The net migration rate is nearly -12 per 1,000 population.

HEALTH

The state of health care in Samoa is reasonably good. In 2005 life expectancy at birth was 70.7 years. The infant mortality rate was nearly 28 deaths per 1,000 live births. Samoans follow parallel health-care systems: They believe that certain illnesses can be identified as *ma'i Samoa*, or Samoan illnesses that are best treated by traditional practitioners. Other illnesses are *ma'i papalagi*, or European illnesses best treated by modern Western practitioners and methods.

Health

Number of Physicians: 120
Number of Dentists: 30
Number of Nurses: 346
Number of Pharmacists: 5
Physician Density per 100,000 people: 70
Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 27.71
Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 130
Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 6.2
Health Expenditures per capita \$: 88
HIV Infected % of adults: —
Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
DPT: 94
Measles: 99
Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 100
Access to Improved Water Source %: 88

FOOD AND NUTRITION

The state of nutrition in Samoa is generally good. In 2002 an estimated 4.2 percent of infants were of low birth weight. In 1999 the prevalence of underweight children under five was just 1.9 percent; of stunting, 4.2 percent; and of wasting, 0.9 percent. Indeed, overweight and obesity are bigger problems; that same year about 3.8 percent of children were overweight, and 2.8 percent were regarded as obese. Staples in the Samoan diet are many and varied. Animal protein sources include pork, chicken, crab, lobster, and fish. Vegetables include cabbage and lettuce as well as root vegetables such as yams and taro. Samoans consume large amounts of bananas and breadfruit, and coconut is used to make a sauce used as a condiment. Samoans perceive the eating of coconut meat as a sign of poverty, so they avoid it.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 75.8
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 193.3

STATUS OF WOMEN

The Ministry of Women's Affairs oversees and helps ensure the rights of women. As in much of the world, women are underrepresented in government. The 12-member cabinet has one female member, and women hold three of 49 seats in the Legislative Assembly, primarily because only *matai* can run, and traditionally most *matai*—about 95 percent—have been men. The first female attorney general was appointed in 1997. While the law generally prohibits the abuse of women, social custom permits their physical abuse within the home. In some cases, "extreme abuse" and domestic violence are punished by village councils. Tradition and custom also discourage the reporting of rapes, but rape cases that reach the courts are punished severely, and convicted offenders are given stiff sentences.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 6
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.0
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: —

WORK

In 2000 the Samoan labor force was estimated at 90,000. Estimates hold that about 70 percent of the labor force

works in agriculture and industry, while the remaining 30 percent are employed in services. Agriculture contributes about 14 percent to GDP, industry 23 percent, and services 63 percent. Major agricultural products include coconuts, bananas, taro, yams, coffee, and cocoa. Major industrial products include processed food, building materials, and automotive parts. There is substantial underemployment in Samoa, prompting many younger persons to leave the nation to seek better economic opportunities overseas.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 90,000
 Female Participation Rate %: —
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture and Industry: 70
 Services: 30
 Unemployment %: —

EDUCATION

Samoa has not introduced universal, free, compulsory education. Nevertheless, the literacy rate is nearly 100 percent. Schooling lasts for 14 years, as divided into seven years of primary school, four years of lower secondary/middle school, and three years of upper secondary school. However, village schools provide only four years of primary schooling. The curriculum and textbooks are similar to those used in New Zealand.

The Samoan school year is the calendar year. The language of instruction is Samoan in primary schools and English in secondary schools; as such, most Samoan children are bilingual. Almost all Samoan teachers in the public school system hold teacher's certificates. There are 205 schools in Samoa; 166 of these—141 primary and 25 secondary schools—are operated by the government, and the rest are mission schools.

In 1988 Samoa opened a national university, with a total of 325 students. As of 2001 there were about 2,000 students, while more than 200 Samoan students were enrolled in foreign universities, primarily in the United States, Australia, and New Zealand.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 99.7
 Male %: 99.6
 Female %: 99.7
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 11.8
 First Level: Primary Schools: 205
 Teachers: 1,166
 Students: 29,203
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 25.1
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 94.9

(continues)

Education *(continued)*

Second Level: Secondary Schools: (included in first section)

Teachers: 1,064
 Students: 22,185
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 20.9
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 61.0

Third Level: Institutions: —

Teachers: 140
 Students: 1,179
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 6.5

Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 4.8

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Samoa conducts little scientific and technological research. The Samoa Science Foundation is a private, nonprofit organization that solicits donations from Samoans and from overseas to promote the teaching of science in the schools. Major efforts have been undertaken to develop computer capabilities in schools. The Global Volcanism Project operates throughout the region to study volcanic activity. The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, and Meteorology supervises limited research in these areas, and the University of South Pacific's Department of Agriculture operates extension services in Samoa.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —

Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —

High-Tech Exports \$000: 101

Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

The merger of the *Samoa News* with the *Samoa Times* in 1994 led to the formation of the country's first daily paper. A second daily is the *Samoa Observer*. All papers are published in English and Samoan.

There is no domestic news agency. Overseas news is obtained through the New Zealand Press Association, which has a part-time correspondent in Apia.

The government-controlled Samoan Broadcasting Service operates a medium-wave transmitter in Apia. Programs are provided in Samoan and English. There are three private radio stations, providing popular and "easy listening" music. Local television service is provided by the state-run Televisi Samoa. Some 60 percent of the population is within range of transmitters in American Samoa.

The Nelson Memorial Library in Apia has some 61,000 volumes.

Media

Daily Newspapers: —

Total Circulation 000: —

Circulation per 1,000: —

Books Published: —

Periodicals: —

Radio Receivers 000: —

per 1,000: —

Television sets 000: 10

per 1,000: 56

CULTURE

Samoa, formerly called Western Samoa, differs from American Samoa in that the latter has adopted many features of American popular culture, such as music, while in Samoa traditional songs, which tell stories about Samoan history and traditions, have retained their popularity. Another important aspect of Samoan cultural heritage is the love of traditional Polynesian dancing. Among women, dance movements are intended to tell stories. Men engage in traditional fire dancing and knife dancing, which take great acrobatic skill. The arts of oratory are also emphasized, largely because of the political structure of the nation and its emphasis on the negotiation skills of senior village leaders. These leaders speak a special *matai* language used on ceremonial occasions. The art of tattooing is highly developed, and many Samoans have elaborate tattoos.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 1

Volumes: 61,000

Registered borrowers: —

Museums Number: —

Annual Attendance: —

Cinema Gross Receipts: —

Number of Cinemas: —

Seating Capacity: —

Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Although Samoa is overwhelmingly Christian, the *matai* are regarded as responsible for preserving Samoan folklore and history. Perhaps one reason that Samoans so readily adopted Christianity is that the traditional Samoan creation myth, involving the creator god Tagaloa, is similar to that of Christianity. One traditional story told throughout Samoa is that of a "wild man" named Malua. Malua was likely an indentured worker who escaped and is said to haunt the islands, stealing cattle and kidnapping children. One figure who has achieved near-folkloric status is the Scottish writer Robert Louis Stevenson, who lived in Samoa at the end of his life and is buried there.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Traditional dancing and music are important forms of recreation in Samoa. Women act out impromptu stories with their hands in a kind of dance called the *siva*, and men and women dance the *sa sa* to the beating of a wooden mallet. A favorite pastime is dominoes. Folk arts and crafts are also forms of recreation. Women weave ornaments, fans, baskets, and mats and produce tapa cloth from the bark of mulberry trees, decorating it with unique geometrical designs. Men are known for wood carving, especially the carving of animals and of bowls for drinking kava, an intoxicating root beverage.

ETIQUETTE

Although Samoans are friendly to outsiders, the nation's cultural traditions, especially as they impact social relations, can be perplexing. The nation is steeped in its traditions, and the social order is very hierarchical. Thus, numerous customs dictate behavior in politics, religion, and social interactions. The chief, or *matai*, is the head of an extended family called an *aiga*, and each member of this clan is expected to maintain a sense of honor and social standing. The *matai* ensures that people follow customs. The everyday greeting in Samoa is "*Talofa*," but greetings on more formal occasions are elaborate.

FAMILY LIFE

Young, unmarried women are frequently chaperoned, and it is extremely difficult to arrange a sexual liaison with an unmarried woman. This has given rise to a custom called "sleep crawling," by which a man waits until his love interest's family has gone to sleep, then crawls on all fours into her house, where the woman might either ask him to leave or welcome his advances.

Family life revolves around the extended family, which forms a kind of clan (*aiga*) ruled by a (usually) male elder. These clans are typically associated with rights in land, which Samoans inherit from their parents' clan. Each person may choose to live with a particular *aiga*, depending on its status and resources. These clans further consist of resident and nonresident members. Resident members live in groups of households and are responsible for working the land. They have full rights in the *aiga*. Nonresident members may work in one of the cities and return to the village for certain occasions. These members have rights, but not full rights, in *aiga* activities.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Large numbers of Samoans have elaborate tattoos, considered an important traditional art form. While dress has some Western characteristics, Samoans have adapted such dress to their needs. Women typically wear skirts with long blouses that match, or dresses called *puletasi*. Men and children wear a wraparound skirt called a lavalava. It is not uncommon to see a man wearing a lavalava with a Western-style sport shirt. Civil servants wear dark uniforms.

SPORTS

The most popular game in Samoa is cricket. However, as the Samoans have done with so many Western institutions and cultural traditions, they have adapted cricket to their interests, playing not with a flat bat but with a three-sided bat that looks somewhat like a war club. Also, teams are larger, consisting of from 30 to 40 players per side. Wrestling, boxing, and rugby are also popular. American football has gained in popularity, and Samoan high schools have become prime recruiting grounds for U.S. university football programs because of the size, strength, and single-minded dedication of Samoan football players.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1962** Following a UN-supervised plebiscite in which Samoans vote in favor of full independence, Western Samoa becomes the first Pacific island trust territory to achieve nationhood.
- 1963** The joint *ao o le malo* Tupua Tamasese Meaoli dies, and Malietoa Tanumafili becomes sole head of state.
- 1970** Western Samoa joins the Commonwealth. Following legislative assembly elections, Tupua Tamasese Lealofi is elected prime minister, replacing Fiame Mata'afa.
- 1973** Fiame Mata'afa returns as prime minister.
- 1975** Fiame Mata'afa dies, and Lealofi is chosen to serve as prime minister for the remaining months of Mata'afa's term. Western Samoa signs the Lomé Convention.
- 1976** Tupuola Taisi Efi becomes the nation's first commoner to be elected prime minister. Western Samoa joins the United Nations. Diplomatic ties are established with the Soviet Union.
- 1977** Western Samoa receives a development loan from the World Bank.
- 1982** The islands' first political party, the Human Rights Protection Party (HRPP), is formed and

2024 Samoa

- wins a plurality of 22 seats in the legislative assembly. HRPP leader Tofilau Eti Alesana forms a government.
- 1985** HRPP captures 31 of 47 legislative assembly seats in general elections. In December Va'ai Kolone, with the backing of HRPP dissidents and the Christian Democratic Party, recaptures the leadership of the HRPP, ousting Tofilau Eti, and is installed as prime minister.
- 1988** Tofilau Eti Alesana becomes prime minister once again.
- 1990** Cyclone Ofa hits, destroying houses and crops and disrupting transport, power, and water services.
- 1991** Universal suffrage replaces election by family heads.
- 1996** The HRPP captures 24 of 49 assembly seats and retains its plurality majority.
- 1997** The country is renamed the Independent State of Samoa.
- 1998** Prime Minister Tofilau Eti Alesana resigns due to poor health, and Sailele Malielegaoi Tuila'epa is named prime minister.
- 2000** Two former cabinet ministers are sentenced to death for assassinating a fellow minister; however, the death sentences are commuted.
- 2001** Prime Minister Tuila'epa is reelected.
- 2002** The prime minister of New Zealand formally apologizes to Samoans for mistreatment during the colonial era on the 40th anniversary of Samoan independence.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Samoa Government
<http://www.govt.ws>

SAN MARINO

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Most Serene Republic of San Marino (Serenissima Repubblica di San Marino)

ABBREVIATION

SM

CAPITAL

San Marino

HEAD OF STATE

Captains regent, reappointed every six months

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

No formal head of government; secretary of state for foreign and political affairs functions as head of government

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Parliamentary democracy

POPULATION

28,880 (2005)

AREA

61.2 sq km (23.6 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Italian

LANGUAGE

Italian

RELIGION

Roman Catholicism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Euro

NATIONAL FLAG

Two horizontal bands of equal width, sky blue below and white above, with the national emblem centered between

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A blue heart-shaped shield displaying three black-and-white towers, each on its own green mountain peak and topped with a white ostrich plume. The gold-framed shield is flanked by branches of oak and laurel with a white ribbon scroll tying them together and proclaiming in gold letters the national motto, *Libertas*. The emblem is topped with the gold and red jeweled coronet of the dukes of Urbino.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Onore a Te, Onore, o Antica Repubblica” (Honor to you, honor, o ancient republic)

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

February 5 (National Day), March 5 (Anniversary of the Arengo), April 1 (Investiture of the captains regent), July 28 (Fall of Fascism), September 3 (Anniversary of the Foundation of the Republic), October 1 (Investiture of the captains regent), all major Christian festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

301

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

October 8, 1600

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

San Marino is the third-smallest country in Europe, with an area of 61.2 sq km (23.6 sq mi), extending 13.1 km (8.1 mi) northeast to southwest and 9.1 km (5.7 mi) southeast to northwest. It is a landlocked state completely surrounded by Italy, with a total boundary length of 39 km (24 mi). San Marino is about 24 km (15 mi) southwest of Rimini, between the province of Emilia-Romagna and the region of the Marches.

The capital is San Marino, which rests just below the summit of Mount Titano (755 m; 2,476 ft). Commer-

cial activity is centered on Borgo Maggiore, some 183 m (600 ft) below San Marino and connected to it by a 2.4 km (1.5 mi) winding road. Serravalle/Dogano is the only other substantial town.

The republic is topographically coextensive with Mount Titano, which has three pinnacles, each crowned by old fortifications, one on the north by a castle and the other two by towers. The summit of Mount Titano commands a panoramic view of the Adriatic, only 19 km (12 mi) away. The only agricultural land is at the base of the mountain.

San Marino



Geography

Area sq km: 61.2; sq mi 23.6
 World Rank: 189th
 Land Boundaries, km: Italy 39
 Coastline, km: 0
 Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Torrente Ausa 55
 Highest: Monte Titano 755
 Land Use %
 Arable Land: 16.7
 Permanent Crops: 0.0
 Forest: —
 Other: 83.3

Population of Principal Cities (1996)

San Marino	2,294
Serravalle/Dogano	4,802

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

In common with northeastern Italy, San Marino has a mild climate, although the temperatures in winter may drop below freezing and in summer may go up to a maximum of 26°C (79°F). Annual rainfall averages 760 mm (30 in).

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature
 Summer: 79°F
 Winter: 32°F
 Average Rainfall 30 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

As a very small country that has been settled for centuries, San Marino has little in the way of natural ecosystems. The mountain slopes are covered with hardwood forests consisting primarily of elms, maples, pines, oaks, and olive trees, as well as lavender, strawberries, myrtle, and evergreen shrubs. Common fauna include foxes, hares, hedgehogs, martens, deer, and weasels. Commonly seen birds include falcons, nightingales, orioles, goldfinches, and linnets.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 28,880
 World Rank: 189th
 Density per sq km: 463.0
 % of annual growth (1999-2003): —
 Male %: 47.9
 Female %: 52.1
 Urban %: 88.9

Age Distribution %:	0–14:	16.7
	15–64:	66.5
	65 and over:	16.9

Population 2025: 34,500
 Birth Rate per 1,000: 10.18
 Death Rate per 1,000: 8.07
 Rate of Natural Increase %: 0.2
 Total Fertility Rate: 1.33
 Expectation of Life (years): Males 78.13
 Females 85.43

Marriage Rate per 1,000: 7.2
 Divorce Rate per 1,000: 1.4
 Average Size of Households: 2.6
 Induced Abortions: 1

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

The Sammarinese are a composite of Mediterranean, Alpine, Adriatic, and Nordic ethnic types. They resent being called Italians, who are considered foreigners. Physically, however, they are indistinguishable from the average Italian.

LANGUAGES

The official language is Italian. Nearly every Sammarinese speaks at least one other language.

RELIGIONS

San Marino is believed to have been founded by a Christian stonecutter named Marinus in the fourth century as a haven for persecuted Christians. The population is almost entirely Catholic, with 12 parishes: eight in the diocese of Montefeltro and four in the diocese of Rimini. There is no specific treaty between San Marino and the Holy See, and relations between church and state are governed by tradition.

Religious Affiliations

Roman Catholic	28,000
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HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

San Marino is the oldest republic in the world, having been founded, according to tradition, in the fourth century by St. Marinus. Its recorded history begins in the ninth century, when the famous monastery was built. A small community gathered around the monastic house and soon acquired the institutional characteristics of a state. Because of the poverty of the region and the difficult terrain, it remained undisturbed by the swirling storms of war and civil unrest that raged all around throughout the Middle Ages. Its independence was confirmed by Pope Paul II in 1549 and by Pope Clement II in 1740. Napoleon allowed San Marino to retain its liberty; the Sammarinese are believed to have declined his offer to augment their territory on the ground that only their smallness and poverty helped to preserve their independence. San Marino and Italy entered into a customs union in 1862. A treaty of friendship, first concluded in 1897, has been renewed periodically since then.

During Mussolini's rule in Italy between 1922 and 1943, San Marino adopted a Fascist government. Despite its claim of neutrality, it was bombed by Allied planes in 1944. The Communists and left-wing Socialists were in power from 1954 to 1973, when they were displaced by a centrist coalition. In the 1990s, after a series of permutations and combinations, the Christian Democrats and Socialists managed to gain a working majority in the Grand and General Council. In 2000 the Socialists withdrew from the coalition, and a new multiparty coalition led by the Christian Democrats assumed power. In 2003 the three main political parties formed a coalition and called for reforms in electoral law.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

Two captains regent are reappointed every six months.

CONSTITUTION

San Marino has an unusual form of government, which dates from the 11th century. Executive authority is exercised by the 11-member Congress of State (Congresso di Stato), which is composed of nine members chosen by the members of the Grand and General Council and two heads of state known as captains regent (*capitani reggenti*), one of whom represents the city of San Marino and the other the countryside. These officials are elected for six-month periods of office, beginning April 1 and October 1 of every year. Their functions are largely honorary, although they preside over the meetings of the Council and the Congress. They can propose legislation and represent the republic in foreign relations. The captains regent are assisted by two secretaries of state (of foreign affairs and internal affairs) and additional secretaries with specific portfolios. The secretary of state for foreign affairs has come to assume the status of a prime minister.

PARLIAMENT

The legislature is the Grand and General Council (Consiglio Grande e Generale), a unicameral body of 60 members elected for a five-year term by direct popular vote. The captains regent serve as the presiding officers.

The Council is elected by universal adult (age 18) suffrage under a system of proportional representation. Only since 1960 have women been allowed to vote, and only since 1974 have they been able to run for office. Legislation may be contested through referenda.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Six political parties won seats in the 2001 elections. The largest of these is the San Marino Christian Democratic Party (PDCS), with more than 2,000 members, founded in 1948; the PDCS won 25 of the 60 seats in the legislature in 2001. The next-largest party, occupying 15 seats, is the San Marino Socialist Party (PSS), which merged with the United Socialist Party in 1990. The third-largest party is the Party of Democrats, a social-democratic party that won 12 seats in 2001. The fourth-largest party, occupying five seats, is the Popular Alliance of San Marino Democrats (APDS), which seeks constitutional and social reforms. The other parties to win seats were the San Marino Communist Refoundation Party and the San Marino National Alliance.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For purposes of local administration San Marino is divided into nine castles, corresponding to the original parishes.

Each castle is governed by a castle captain, who holds office for two years, and an Auxiliary Council, which holds office for five years.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The judicial system consists of civil and criminal courts and a superior court, but most criminal cases are tried before Italian magistrates. The highest appellate court is the Council of Twelve, chosen for six-year terms from members of the Grand and General Council. San Marino was the first country to abolish capital punishment, in 1847.

HUMAN RIGHTS

All basic human rights are legally guaranteed and respected in practice. The international watchdog group Freedom House gives San Marino a rating of one (the highest rating on a scale from one to seven) for both civil and human rights.

FOREIGN POLICY

San Marino has been a member of the United Nations since 1992. Its relations with Italy, raised to an ambassadorial level in 1979, are governed by a series of treaties and conventions, including a customs union. Although proudly independent, San Marino is generally viewed as an appendage of the Italian Republic. San Marino is a strong ally of the United States and has generally been supportive of U.S. policies, though the country is officially neutral and has not gone to war since the 15th century.

DEFENSE

Although there is no compulsory military service, the San Marino militia technically consists of all able-bodied citizens between ages 16 and 55, with the exception of students and teachers. The militia is maintained mainly for ceremonial display and limited police assistance. In 2000–01 the country spent \$700,000 on the Volunteer Military Force.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	—
Military Manpower Availability:	—
Military Expenditures \$million:	0.7
as % of GDP:	—
as % of central government expenditures:	—
Arms Imports \$million:	—
Arms Exports \$million:	—

ECONOMY

The gross domestic product (GDP) of San Marino in 2001 was estimated at \$940 million, or \$34,600 per capita. National accounts are not maintained, and estimates are available only irregularly. The principal sources of national income, apart from farming, are tourism, the sale of postage stamps, and remittances from Sammarinese living abroad. Italy pays the republic a small subsidy. Real growth in 2001 was estimated at 7.5 percent. Unemployment is low, and the country has essentially no external debt.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$million: 940
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 34,600
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (2000–2002) %: 2.5
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: —
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:

Agriculture: —
 Industry: —
 Services: —

Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:

Private Consumption: 45
 Government Consumption: 14
 Gross Domestic Investment: —

Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: —

Imports: —

% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: —

% of Income Received by Richest 10%: —

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1990 = 100)

1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
137.1	139.8	143.0	147.6	152.5

Finance

National Currency: Euro (EUR)

Exchange Rate: \$1 = EUR 0.886

Money Supply Stock in National Currency million: 351.6

Central Bank Discount Rate %: 3.08

Total External Debt \$billion: —

Debt Service Ratio %: —

Balance of Payments \$million: —

International Reserves SDRs \$million: —

Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 3.3

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: —

per capita \$: —

Foreign Direct Investment \$million: —

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year

Revenues \$million: 400

Expenditures \$million: 400

Budget Deficit \$million: 0

Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: —

Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: —

Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: —

Irrigation, % of Farms having: —

Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: —

Total Farmland % of land area: —

Livestock: Cattle million: —

Chickens million: —

Pigs 000: —

Sheep 000: —

Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters 000: —

Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: —

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: —

Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 6.0

Energy (See Italy)

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: —

Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: —

Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: —

Net Energy Imports % of use: —

Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: —

Production kW-hr billion: —

Consumption kW-hr billion: —

Coal Reserves tons million: —

Production tons million: —

Consumption tons million: —

Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —

Production cubic feet billion: —

Consumption cubic feet billion: —

Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —

Production barrels 000 per day: —

Consumption barrels 000 per day: —

Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade (See Italy)

Imports \$billion: —

Exports \$billion: —

Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —

Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —

Balance of Trade \$million: —

Major Trading Partners (See Italy)

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
— %	—	—

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 220

Paved %: 100

Automobiles: —

(continues)

Transportation *(continued)*

Trucks and Buses: —
 Railroad: Track Length km: —
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: —
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: —
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: —
 Airports: —
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: —
 Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 41
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: —
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: —

Communications

Telephones 000: 20.6
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones 000: 16.8
 Personal Computers 000: 22.1
 Internet Hosts per million people: 61,045
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 495

ENVIRONMENT

San Marino has few environmental issues of its own making. Its environmental concerns are of an international nature, and the republic has signed various agreements regarding desertification, air pollution, and climate change. The country has one of the oldest laws, dating to 1245, for the preservation of forested areas.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: —
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: —
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: —
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: —

LIVING CONDITIONS

Living conditions in San Marino are of high quality, and the country has few of the social problems that beset larger, more complex nations. The nation provides comprehensive health care, the literacy rate is 96 percent, the government maintains full-employment policies, and incomes are high. Further, income is relatively evenly distributed, so there is little sense of class in San Marinese society. The nation consists primarily of small mountain towns and villages, with housing made of tile, brick, and stone, all centered around central town piazzas.

HEALTH

The state of health care in San Marino is very good. Life expectancy at birth in 2005 was 81.6 years; for females, it is over 85 years. The infant mortality rate was just 5.7 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2005. The state provides health care for all citizens at private clinics and a public hospital, although for certain conditions, patients must seek health care outside the nation's borders.

Health

Number of Physicians: 58
 Number of Dentists: —
 Number of Nurses: 117
 Number of Pharmacists: 12
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 251
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 5.73
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: —
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 7.7
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 2,475
 HIV Infected % of adults: —
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 96
 Measles: 91
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: —
 Access to Improved Water Source %: —

FOOD AND NUTRITION

San Marinese cuisine is Mediterranean and resembles that of surrounding Italy, especially the nearby Romagna region. A staple is homemade pasta. Typical national dishes include *nidi di rondine* (literally, "swallow's nest"), which is beef, cheese, ham, and tomato sauce served on pasta. Other popular dishes include *pasta e cece*, a soup made with chickpeas and flavored with rosemary and garlic, and *faggioli con le cotiche*, a bean soup made with bacon rind traditionally served at Christmastime. Rabbit is also commonly eaten. San Marino is known for two types of wine: a hearty red called Sangiovese and a dry white called Biancale.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: —
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: —

STATUS OF WOMEN

The law provides for the full equality of women in the workplace and also guarantees their protection from spousal abuse. However, one law discriminates against women

in stipulating that a woman who marries a foreigner cannot transmit citizenship to her spouse or children, while a man who marries a foreigner can in fact do so.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 17
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: —
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 41.9

WORK

In 1999 the labor force of San Marino numbered about 18,500. About 1 percent were employed in agriculture, producing such commodities as wheat, corn, grapes, olives, beef, pork, and cheese. About 42 percent of the labor force was employed in industry, producing textiles, leather goods, ceramics, electronics, cement, and wine. The remainder, 57 percent, were employed in services, primarily banking and tourism. Unemployment is low—just 2.6 percent in 2001—because the government adopts policies designed to ensure that anyone who wants a job can obtain one. A major portion of San Marino's revenue comes from the sale of collectible postage stamps and coins.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 18,500
 Female Participation Rate %: —
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 1
 Industry: 42
 Services: 57
 Unemployment %: 2.6

EDUCATION

Primary education is compulsory for all children up to age 14, with the pattern of instruction following the Italian curriculum. Primary education lasts for five years. Secondary education lasts for eight years, as divided into cycles of three and five years. Students who wish to pursue higher education do so outside of San Marino, primarily in Italy.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 96
 Male %: 97
 Female %: 95
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: —
 First Level: Primary Schools: 14
 Teachers: 233
 Students: 1,249
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 5.4
 Net Enrollment Ratio: —

Second Level: Secondary Schools: —

Teachers: —
 Students: 988
 Student-Teacher Ratio: —
 Net Enrollment Ratio: —

Third Level: Institutions: —

Teachers: —
 Students: 942
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: —

Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: —

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Because of its small size and lack of a university, San Marino does not by itself have an infrastructure that supports scientific research. Those interested in pursuing careers in science obtain higher education outside of San Marino and work where research facilities are available.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: —
 Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

The republic had three daily newspapers in 1998; most publishing efforts are undertaken by major political parties.

Radio Titano, a private broadcaster, is the nation's only radio station. San Marino RTV is government run and operates both a radio and a television station. Televisione Italiana broadcasts a daily information bulletin about the republic under the title *Notizei di San Marino*.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 3
 Total Circulation 000: 1.8
 Circulation per 1,000: 62.3
 Books Published: —
 Periodicals: 8
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets 000: 23
 per 1,000: 875

CULTURE

The Sammarinese are proud of their cultural heritage, particularly in being the world's oldest republic and in having what is probably the world's oldest national anthem. The nation has a rich tradition in the visual arts. It

supports a number of museums that house paintings dating from the baroque period and the Renaissance by artists such as Guercino and Bernardo Strozzi. The Church of St. Francis dates to the 14th century and is itself a kind of museum that houses significant artwork. Additionally, the country takes pride in its public monuments and outdoor sculptures. The tourist industry has created a large market for San Marino's ceramics, sandstone carving, jewelry, leather goods, textiles, tile work, and other arts and crafts. Many collectors regard San Marino's stamps and coins as works of art.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: 622
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: 3
 Seating Capacity: 1,901
 Annual Attendance: 75,970

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Because of its close historic ties with Italy, the nation's folklore and mythology is largely of Italian origin. One mythological element unique to San Marino regards Mount Titano, which is named after the Titans: The Titans were figures from Roman mythology who attempted to dethrone the god Jupiter by stacking mountains one atop the other to reach the heavens.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

The Sammarinese enjoy the Italian game of boccie, a type of lawn bowling that can be played on any flat surface. They also enjoy visiting museums as well as attending plays, movies, and concerts. A popular form of entertainment is simply strolling the streets and enjoying the country's many outdoor cafés.

ETIQUETTE

The Sammarinese are little different from Italians in standards of etiquette. In large part because of the tourist trade, they are accustomed to foreign visitors and are extremely open and friendly with them; they are animated in conversation and warm and hospitable in offering greetings. From an early age Sammarinese children are taught to maintain great respect for the elderly.

FAMILY LIFE

The extended family played a more prominent role in earlier years, when the economy of San Marino was more agricultural, than after the Second World War, when the country became more industrialized. In modern times the primary domestic unit is the nuclear family, although elderly parents who can no longer care for themselves often move in with their adult children, and younger people typically continue to live with their parents until they complete higher education and form families of their own. Publicly supported child care is available for any child under the age of five. The divorce rate in San Marino is low. In 2001 there were 7.2 marriages and just 1.4 divorces per 1,000 population. The average household size that year was 2.6 people.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

The Sammarinese wear modern Western-style clothing, although traditional clothing can be seen on ceremonial occasions. Part of the nation's ceremonial tradition is a corps of flag bearers that wear black boots, brightly colored tights, and loose-fitting, colored shirts.

SPORTS

Traditionally, the Sammarinese have excelled at marksmanship of various kinds, including archery and pistol and rifle shooting. Other common sports include swimming and deep-sea diving in the Adriatic Sea, tennis, basketball, and soccer. While soccer is very popular, San Marino has not competed well against European opponents. In 2004 the country's national team recorded its first-ever international soccer victory, beating Liechtenstein 1–0. The San Marino Grand Prix, a Formula One auto race, is held in Italy because San Marino does not have a suitable racetrack.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1945** Communist-Socialist coalition begins 12-year rule.
- 1957** Defections from the Communist Party bring a Christian Democrat–Socialist coalition to power for 21 years.
- 1978** Communist-Socialist coalition is formed again, as Christian Democrats leave office.
- 1982** Franchise is extended to Sammarinese women who marry foreigners and to foreign nationals resident in San Marino for over 30 years.
- 1986** Following financial scandals involving Socialists, the Christian Democrats and Communists form their first political coalition.

- 1992 San Marino joins the United Nations. A coalition of Christian Democrats and Socialists gains power.
- 2000 Socialists withdraw from the government.
- 2001 A coalition led by Christian Democrats assumes power.
- 2003 The three main political parties form a coalition and call for reforms in electoral law.

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- USA International Business Publications. *San Marino Country Study Guide*. 2004.

OFFICIAL PUBLICATIONS

San Marino. *Bollettino di Statistica* (quarterly); *Censimento generale della popolazione*, 1979; *International Monetary Fund Selected Issues and Statistical Appendix*, 2001

CONTACT INFORMATION

Consulate of San Marino
1899 L Street NW, Suite 1200
Washington, D.C. 20036
Phone: (202) 223-3517

INTERNET RESOURCES

- San Marino
<http://www.sanmarinosite.com/>

SÃO TOMÉ AND PRÍNCIPE

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe (República Democrática de São Tomé e Príncipe)

ABBREVIATION

ST

CAPITAL

São Tomé

HEAD OF STATE

President Fradique de Menezes (from 2001)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Maria do Carmo Silveira (from 2005)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Republic

POPULATION

187,410 (2005)

AREA

1,001 sq km (387 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Black

LANGUAGE

Portuguese

RELIGION

Roman Catholicism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Dobra

NATIONAL FLAG

A red isosceles triangle, with the base at the hoist, from which horizontal stripes of green, yellow, and green run to the fly. On the larger yellow middle stripe are two black stars.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

Two parrots holding a teardrop-shaped orange shield, on which appears a cocoa tree; the shield is surmounted by a blue star. A yellow banner with the name of the republic appears at the top, and one with the national motto, *Unidade, disciplina, trabalho* (Unity, discipline, work), appears at the bottom.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Independência Total”

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

February 3 (Martyrs’ Day), May 1 (Labour Day), July 12 (Independence Day), September 6 (Armed Forces Day), September 30 (Agricultural Reform Day), various Christian festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

July 12, 1975

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

September 10, 1990

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

São Tomé and Príncipe, in the Gulf of Guinea off the coast of Gabon, has an area of 1,001 sq km (387 sq mi), of which around 85 percent is on São Tomé. In addition to the main islands, there are two small islets: Rolas, crossed by the equator, and Pedras Tinhosas. The total coastline of the nation is 209 km (130 mi).

Both main islands are active volcanoes and have many craters and lava flows. The highest point on São Tomé rises 2,024 m (6,640 ft); there are 10 peaks over 1,067 m (3,500 ft). Príncipe, with a larger plateau area than São Tomé, rises 948 m (3,110 ft).

Geography

Area sq km: 1,001; sq mi 387

World Rank: 169th

Land Boundaries, km: 0

Coastline km: 209

Elevation Extremes meters:

Lowest: Atlantic Ocean 0

Highest: Pico de São Tomé 2,024

Land Use %

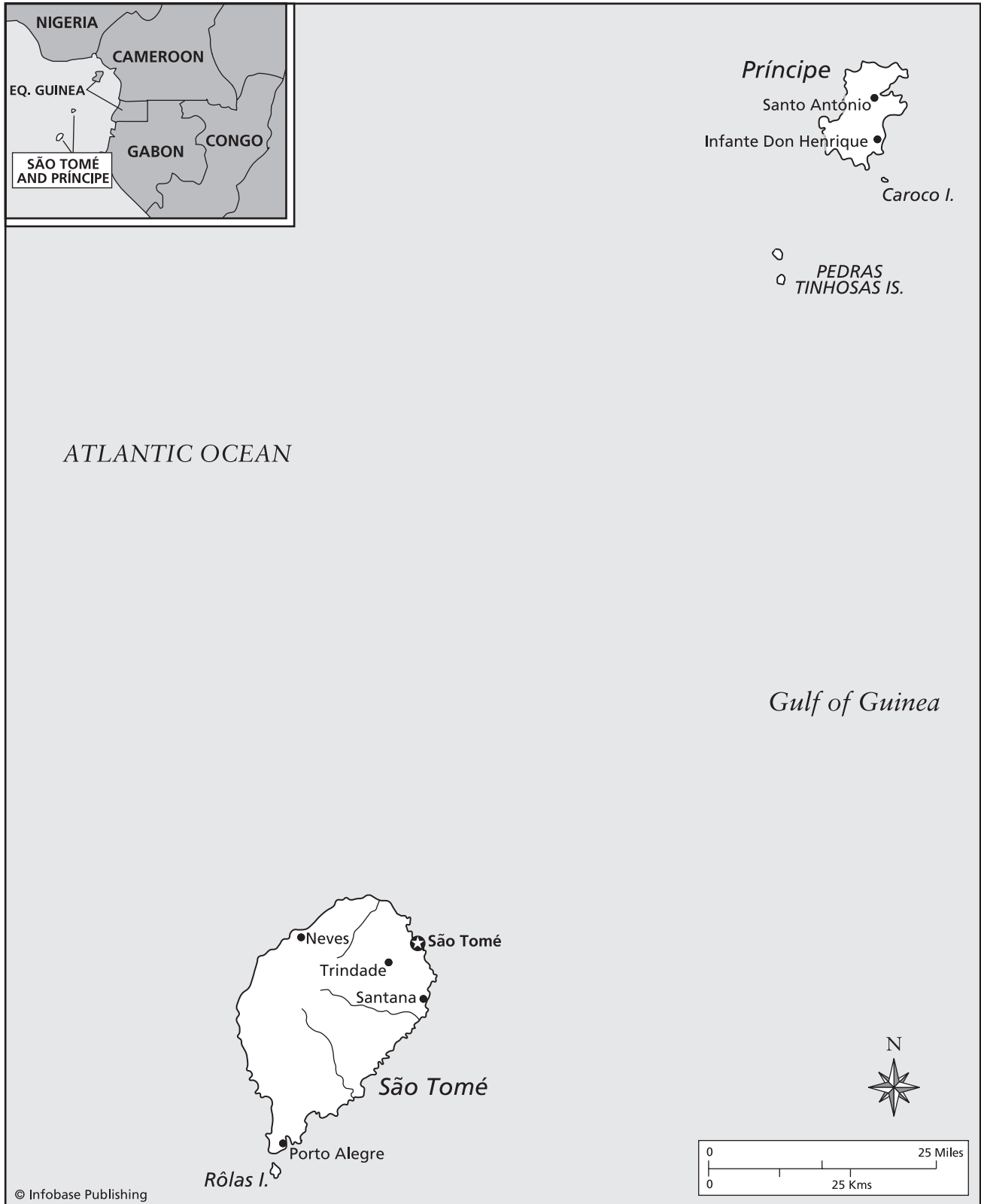
Arable Land: 6.3

Permanent Crops: 49.0

Forest: 28.1

Other: 16.6

São Tomé and Príncipe



Population of Principal Cities (2001)

São Tomé

49,957

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

The islands have a tropical climate moderated by altitude and the cold Benguela Current. The dry season lasts from June to September, the wet season from October to May. There are four climatic zones on both islands: the hot and humid northeastern lowlands, with about 1,000 mm (40 in) annual rainfall; the plateau above 400 m (1,300 ft), where the temperature is lower and the annual rainfall ranges from 3,800 to 5,000 mm (150 to 200 in); regions over 600 m (2,000 ft), where the temperature is still lower and the nights are cold and mist is common; and the southeastern lowlands, where there is no dry season. Temperatures average 26.6°C (80°F) on the coast and 20°C (68°F) on the plateau.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature

Coastal Areas: 80°F

Plateau: 68°F

Average Rainfall

Northeastern Lowlands: 40 in

Plateau: 150 in to 200 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

A wide variety of plants and animals flourish in São Tomé's tropical climate. Trees include rosewood, mahogany, teak, walnut, oak, and okoume; there are also many species of orchids and ferns. Over 75 percent of the terrain is still covered with native forest, and the nation has resisted the temptation to export its tropical hardwoods.

The forests are home to many animal species, including several species endemic to the islands, their uniqueness a result of the nation's remoteness. Bird life is especially notable; São Tomé itself is home to 16 endemic bird species, including the giant sunbird and dwarf olive ibis. The island also harbors the endemic *Thyrophorella thomensis* snail. Mammals include the African civet, the black rat, and the mona monkey; these animals were introduced by colonists and now threaten native bird species. Whales, dolphins, and sea turtles inhabit the nearby oceans.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 187,410

World Rank: 172nd

Density per sq km: 163.9

% of annual growth (1999-2003): 2.1

Male %: 49.2

Female %: 50.8

Urban %: 49.0

Age Distribution %: 0-14: 47.6

15-64: 48.6

65 and over: 3.9

Population 2025: 328,800

Birth Rate per 1,000: 40.8

Death Rate per 1,000: 6.68

Rate of Natural Increase %: 3.4

Total Fertility Rate: 5.71

Expectation of Life (years): Males 65.43

Females 68.59

Marriage Rate per 1,000: —

Divorce Rate per 1,000: —

Average Size of Households: 4.0

Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

The Santomean population is predominantly African, although there are scattered traces of racial admixture. The islands were probably inhabited by fishermen from West Africa long before the first Europeans landed, in the second half of the 15th century. Genoese, Spanish, and French immigrants settled on the islands around 1485, and in the late 15th century the Portuguese settled convicted and exiled Jews there. There are several ethnic categories within the black population. Along the southeastern coast of São Tomé lives a group called Angolares, believed to be descendants of Angolan slaves. There are also *mestiços* (of mixed white and African ancestry), *forros* (descendants of freed slaves), *serviçals* (contract workers from Cape Verde, Mozambique, and Angola), and *tongas* (children of *serviçals* born in São Tomé and Príncipe). There are also a few Europeans, mainly of Portuguese origin.

LANGUAGES

The official language is Portuguese.

RELIGIONS

The country is almost 100 percent Christian. The dominant religion is Roman Catholicism. São Tomé is the seat of a suffrage see under the archdiocese of Luanda in Angola. In addition to Roman Catholicism, the two other large sects are Evangelical Protestants and Seventh-Day Adventists.

Religious Affiliations

Christian	150,000
Other	37,500

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Portuguese explorers discovered the islands in 1470–71 and claimed that they were uninhabited. São Tomé and Príncipe's colonial history begins in 1485, with the islands claimed as a concession, or *donatario*, by the Portuguese adventurer João de Paiva. For many years the islands served as slave stations between Congo and Portugal. By the 16th century flourishing sugarcane plantations had been established on the islands with the help of plantation slaves "recruited" from other Portuguese colonies. By the early 1900s São Tomé had become the largest producer of cocoa in Africa, but not until 1906, when Henry Nevins described the inhumane conditions on the cocoa plantations in *A Modern Slavery*, was there a call for reform. Despite these oppressive conditions, São Tomé and Príncipe did not witness a guerrilla struggle against the Portuguese on the scale of other African colonies.

Negotiations toward independence were carried out between Lisbon and the Movement for the Liberation of São Tomé and Príncipe (Movimiento de Libertação de São Tomé e Príncipe, MLSTP), the members of which the Portuguese government recognized as the only official spokespeople for the colony. At independence in 1975, Manuel Pinto da Costa, the head of the MLSTP, became the nation's first president. He quickly consolidated power around the office of president, abolishing the prime ministership in 1978. Initially, da Costa's government had a Marxist orientation, but by the mid-1980s it began moving toward the denationalization of industry and the establishment of free enterprise. Da Costa survived two coup attempts: In March 1978 foreign mercenaries organized from Gabon attempted to overthrow the government, and another attempt was made in 1988 when Cape Verdeans and Angolans trained in South Africa unsuccessfully attempted to seize police headquarters.

In 1987 da Costa announced major constitutional changes providing for the direct election of the president and the National Assembly. Three years later the nation approved a new constitution, as proposed by the MLSTP central committee, that provided for the establishment of a multiparty system, limited the president's tenure in office, and permitted independents to participate in elections to the legislature; the January 1991 multiparty elections were the first held in São Tomé since it gained independence from Portugal in 1975. The ruling MLSTP won only 21 seats, while the main opposition, the Democratic Convergence Party, won 33, seizing the majority. The Democratic Coalition won the remaining seat.

Miguel Trovoada, an ex-premier as well as a former political exile, won the first free presidential elections, held in March 1991. He ran unopposed: In the week before the vote, da Costa and a third candidate withdrew from the campaign. In 1995 a group of Cuban-trained rebel soldiers stormed the presidential palace and took

President Trovoada prisoner, later releasing him after they were granted amnesty. Trovoada was reelected for a second term in 1996. In 2001 Fradique de Menezes, a wealthy cocoa exporter and the leader of the centrist Independent Democratic Action Party, won the presidential election. Legislative elections held in March 2002 were inconclusive, with no party winning a parliamentary majority.

Menezes's regime suffered a great deal of turmoil in the early 2000s. He went through several prime ministers and cabinet members, and his government was briefly toppled by a military coup in July 2003. His main concerns have been to reduce the nation's isolation and spur economic growth. The nation's hopes have been pinned primarily on the oil industry; Menezes invited the United States to open a naval base in the country in order to protect oil interests, and in 2005 São Tomé and Príncipe signed an offshore oil exploration and production agreement with Nigeria and international oil companies.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

President	
1975–91	Manuel Pinto da Costa
1991–2001	Miguel Trovoada
2001–	Fradique de Menezes

CONSTITUTION

Under the constitution, which came into force in September 1990, executive power is vested in a president who is elected directly for a five-year term through universal suffrage. The president, who is limited to two successive terms, is accountable to the National Assembly. The president appoints a prime minister, who is head of government.

Legislative power is vested in the National Assembly, whose 55 members are directly elected for four-year terms through universal suffrage.

The judiciary is headed by a Supreme Court staffed by judges appointed by the National Assembly.

The voting age is 18. Suffrage is universal.

PARLIAMENT

The national legislature is the unicameral National Assembly, consisting of 55 members elected for four-year terms. The 1990 constitution provides for the direct popular election of members. The Assembly meets in ordinary sessions twice a year. Among its powers are the election or the dismissal of the president of the republic. The Assembly may delegate some of its legislative powers to the Council of Ministers. Between the ordinary ses-

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sions of the Assembly, its powers and functions are assumed by the 11-member Permanent Commission. The president of the Assembly is the second-ranking officer in the country and takes over upon the incapacity or death of the president.

POLITICAL PARTIES

The nation's two ruling parties are the Movement for the Liberation of São Tomé and Príncipe–Social Democratic Party (MLSTP-PSD), which won 24 seats in the 2002 parliamentary elections, and the Force for Change Democratic Movement, which won 23 seats. The Ue-Kedadji Coalition holds 8 seats, and there are several other smaller parties.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The country is made up of seven municipal districts, six on São Tomé and one encompassing Príncipe. Each district has a governing council that has some autonomous decision-making power. Regional elections occur every five years.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The legal system is based on Portuguese and customary law. The judiciary is headed by the Supreme Court, whose members are appointed by the National Assembly. The judiciary was formerly answerable to the National Assembly but became independent under the 1990 constitution.

The constitution does not address the right to a public trial, but there have been instances of public trials of persons accused of common crimes in recent years. Criminal trials are occasionally reported on by the local media. In most cases, however, common criminals are simply given hearings and sentenced by judges.

HUMAN RIGHTS

São Tomé and Príncipe is a multiparty democracy where basic human rights are generally respected. Elections are fair, and voter participation exceeds 80 percent on average. The principal human rights problems arise from the inefficient judicial system, harsh prison conditions, and limited worker rights. Judges are poorly paid and sometimes accept bribes. The shortage of judges and lawyers causes long delays in bringing cases to trial and hinders the investigation of criminal cases.

There have been some cases of domestic violence and child abuse. Child labor has been widespread, and working conditions on some plantations have been harsh.

FOREIGN POLICY

Relations with Portugal and Portuguese-speaking colonies in Africa dominate the foreign policy of São Tomé and Príncipe. After a many-year rift with Portugal, a bilateral cooperation agreement was signed, followed by a fishing pact with the European Union. Portugal and the Netherlands are the country's leading trade partners in imports and exports, respectively. Relations with African neighbors, such as Gabon, Angola, and the Republic of the Congo, are amicable.

The nation has recently been strengthening ties with both Europe and the United States. The United States has provided São Tomé and Príncipe with various assistance programs, such as one establishing a radio transmitter station on São Tomé allowing the island to broadcast to much of the African continent.

DEFENSE

São Tomé and Príncipe has a small army, coast guard, presidential guard, and national guard. The minister of national defense and internal affairs supervises the military and the police as well as immigration matters. International donors furnish money to pay soldiers and improve their living conditions.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	1,000
Military Manpower Availability:	33,438
Military Expenditures \$million:	0.7
as % of GDP:	0.8
as % of central government expenditures:	—
Arms Imports \$million:	—
Arms Exports \$million:	—

ECONOMY

São Tomé and Príncipe is a poor country, with a per capita gross domestic product (GDP) of \$1,200. The nation has historically emphasized the production of cash crops; as a result, the country imports 90 percent of its food. Cocoa was the major crop during São Tomé and Príncipe's colonial period and remains the mainstay of the economy. Since independence, the production of the crop has deteriorated as a result of drought, disease, soil depletion, and poor management. Cocoa prices rose in 2003 and brought the nation some welcome export earnings. The nation has virtually no manufacturing or fuel resources and is of no strategic importance.

Over the years, São Tomé and Príncipe has been unable to service its external debt and has had to depend on concessional aid and debt rescheduling. The nation benefited from \$200 million in debt relief ex-

tended in December 2000 under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries program.

The government is attempting to increase revenues by developing the tourist industry and offshore oil production. The island has wonderful natural attractions, but tourists have so far hesitated to visit due to the lack of infrastructure and fears of malaria. In 2005 the nation signed an agreement with Nigeria and various oil companies to explore oil resources in the Gulf of Guinea and produce petroleum if possible. Oil has the potential to bring the country millions of dollars in revenues.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$million:	214
GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$:	1,200
GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %:	3.6
GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %:	1.5
Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:	
Agriculture:	16.5
Industry:	15.4
Services:	68.1
Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:	
Private Consumption:	80
Government Consumption:	25
Gross Domestic Investment:	31.5
Foreign Trade \$million: Exports:	6.7
Imports:	41
% of Income Received by Poorest 10%:	—
% of Income Received by Richest 10%:	—
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)	
1999	2000
2001	2002
2003	
—	—

Finance

National Currency:	Dobra (STD)
Exchange Rate:	\$1 = STD 10,020
Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion:	108.6
Central Bank Discount Rate %:	15.5
Total External Debt \$million:	318
Debt Service Ratio %:	24.55
Balance of Payments \$million:	–31.5
International Reserves SDRs \$million:	17.3
Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:	14.0

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million:	37.7
per capita \$:	239.40
Foreign Direct Investment \$million:	10

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year:	Calendar Year
Revenues \$million:	27.94
Expenditures \$million:	43.91
Budget Deficit \$million:	15.97
Tax Revenues as % of GDP:	—

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %:	16.5
Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %:	3.2
Number of Tractors per hectare arable land:	1.79
Irrigation, % of Farms having:	18.5
Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare:	—
Total Farmland % of land area:	7.3
Livestock: Cattle 000:	4.3
Chickens 000:	350
Pigs 000:	2.2
Sheep 000:	2.6
Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters 000:	9
Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000:	3.5

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million:	2.6
Industrial Production Growth Rate %:	—

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent 000:	1
Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent 000:	32
Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000:	206
Net Energy Imports % of use:	—
Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000:	10
Production kW-hr million:	17
Consumption kW-hr million:	16
Coal Reserves tons million:	—
Production tons million:	—
Consumption tons million:	—
Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion:	—
Production cubic feet billion:	—
Consumption cubic feet billion:	—
Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion:	—
Production barrels per day:	—
Consumption barrels per day:	610
Pipelines Length km:	—

Foreign Trade

Imports \$million:	41
Exports \$million:	6.7
Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003):	12.6
Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003):	12.7
Balance of Trade \$million:	–31.5

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Portugal %	49.8	—
Germany %	11.6	7.8
Italy %	5.7	—
Belgium %	5.0	4.9
Netherlands %	4.2	43.1
Canada %	—	15.8
Philippines %	—	6.9
France %	—	4.1
United Kingdom %	—	4.0

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Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 320
Paved %: 68.1
Automobiles: —
Trucks and Buses: —
Railroad: Track Length km: —
Passenger-km million: —
Freight-km million: —
Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 15
Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 97
Airports: 2
Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 14
Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 8
Number of Tourists from 000: —
Tourist Receipts \$million: —
Tourist Expenditures \$million: 2

Communications

Telephones 000: 7
Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.17
Cellular Telephones 000: 4.8
Personal Computers 000: —
Internet Hosts per million people: 5,704
Internet Users per 1,000 people: 80

ENVIRONMENT

Until recently, the government of São Tomé and Príncipe paid little attention to its environmental policies. Despite this neglect, the country's resources are relatively well preserved, though deforestation and soil erosion are both problems. The government has established policies to create some protected national lands and to locate fuels other than wood.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 28.1
Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: —
Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 0
Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 0.59

LIVING CONDITIONS

Costs are low. Many people use U.S. dollars as currency in addition to the local dobra. Most of the year is uncomfortably hot and humid. The electrical supply is unreliable. Roads on the islands are about two-thirds paved but in bad condition, which makes driving slow.

São Tomé has ample public transportation in the form of shared taxis and some buses. Príncipe is much smaller, so its only public transportation is a minibus; most people get around the island by walking. Connections between the two islands are infrequent, though there are daily flights between São Tomé and the mainland. Most consumer goods must be imported, and supplies are sometimes low.

HEALTH

Health care in São Tomé and Príncipe has some room for improvement. Life expectancy is 67 years, and the infant mortality rate is relatively high, at 43 deaths per 1,000 births in 2005. Fertility is very high, at 5.7 children per woman in 2005. The nation does immunize most of its children against major diseases. Malaria, schistosomiasis, and hepatitis occur with some frequency. Malaria is a particularly bad problem; most people do not have access to treated mosquito nets or antimalarial drugs. The water supply is contaminated in some areas, though most of the population now has access to clean water. Most people do not have access to adequate sanitation facilities.

Health

Number of Physicians: 63
Number of Dentists: 7
Number of Nurses: 171
Number of Pharmacists: 2
Physician Density per 100,000 people: 47
Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 43.11
Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: —
Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 11.1
Health Expenditures per capita \$: 36
HIV Infected % of adults: —
Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
DPT: 94
Measles: 87
Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 24
Access to Improved Water Source %: 79

FOOD AND NUTRITION

São Tomé and Príncipe has its own culinary traditions, and locals have been reluctant to embrace Western food, especially fast food. Islanders eat a great deal of fish and tropical fruit, including bananas, pineapples, and avocados. Bread from local bakeries is eaten with many meals. Canned food imported from Portugal rounds out many diets; the nation has devoted so much of its land to cocoa production that it cannot feed itself and must import a large percentage of its food.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 103.2
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 190.7

STATUS OF WOMEN

Violence against women is common. Although women have legal recourse against abuse, many are reluctant to bring legal action against their spouses and are unwilling to take domestic disputes outside the family. Women suffer societal discrimination in education and the professions. The female literacy rate is only 62 percent, as compared to 85 percent for males. In 2002, the nation saw the appointment of its first female prime minister, Maria das Neves.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 9
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: —
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: —

WORK

Most islanders work in subsistence agriculture and fishing. The nation suffers a shortage of skilled workers. Some agricultural workers are employed on plantations, growing cocoa, bananas, coconuts, cinnamon, coffee, and other products; working conditions and pay are often deplorable. The nation has a small manufacturing sector that produces textiles, soap, beer, and timber as well as processed fish products. About 14 percent of children between five and 14 work.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: —
 Female Participation Rate %: —
 Labor by Sector %: —
 Unemployment %: —

EDUCATION

São Tomé and Príncipe does not have a strong educational system, which impedes its efforts to develop economically. The literacy rate is an estimated 79.3 percent. Schooling is universal, free, and compulsory in principle for six years, between ages six and 12. Schooling lasts for 11 years total, as divided into four years of primary school, two years of lower secondary school, and five years of upper secondary school.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 79.3
 Male %: 85.0
 Female %: 62.0
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 9.6
 First Level: Primary schools: 64
 Teachers: 881
 Students: 28,780
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 32.7
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 97.1
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: —
 Teachers: —
 Students: 7,327
 Student-Teacher Ratio: —
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 28.9
 Third Level: Institutions: —
 Teachers: 27
 Students: 183
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 1.0
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: —

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The nation has minimally adequate telephone facilities; in 2003 there were about 7,000 telephone lines and 4,800 cellular telephones in use on the islands. About 15,000 people were using the Internet. The sporadic supply of electricity impairs the introduction and use of technology.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: —
 Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

The constitution guarantees the freedom of the press, and the news media has generally found this to be provided in practice. Opposition parties are given free air-time on radio and television, and journalists regularly criticize the government. *Diário de república* is the main Portuguese-language daily in São Tomé; there are three other newspapers.

The government controls the nation's only radio and television stations, Radio Nacional de São Tomé e Príncipe and Televisão Santomense. Private broadcasting is legal, but as of 2004 there were no private broadcasters. Closed-circuit television is available in limited areas.

In 1985 the Angola News Agency joined with Radio Nacional de São Tomé e Príncipe to form a national news agency, STP/Press. No books are published locally. The largest library is the Henriques da Silva Municipal Library, with over 4,000 volumes.

Media

Daily Newspapers: —
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: —
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets 000: 33
 per 1,000: 229

CULTURE

Culture combines Portuguese and African influences. Music blends African and Latin rhythms and styles. Gilberto Gil Umbelina is the most famous musician. The capital city has several theatre companies. Architecture in the capital has many examples of colonial style buildings, with high ceilings and wooden adornments, and of traditional wooden houses built on stilts.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Santomeans have maintained their folkloric traditions for generations, memorizing stories and spending hours spinning them out in “slow shows.” Stories come from Africa and have local twists to them. Saints’ festivals are a unique form of folk culture, featuring traditional dances such as the *danço congo*.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Though there is not a great deal of nightlife, people enjoy watching plays and theatrical performances or listening to live music. Shopping is available at local markets, where people go to visit friends as well as buy and sell goods. Possibilities for outdoor recreation include diving, snorkeling, and deep-sea fishing. Hiking and bird-watching are popular terrestrial activities.

ETIQUETTE

Locals take life slow, and they do not like to be told to hurry. People are generally friendly and calm. Residents

expect tips from visitors; 10 to 15 percent is standard. People bargain about most prices, especially in local markets.

FAMILY LIFE

Most families have large numbers of children, some of whom are obliged to work to help support their parents and siblings. Only about 70 percent of all births are registered with the government. Many men must leave the country to find work, so about 35 percent of mothers are virtually single. The government helps single mothers send their children to school; children who lose both parents typically move in with relatives, so there is a low incidence of orphans without responsible adults.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Most people wear light, casual clothing. Local children often swim naked, but adult visitors are expected to wear swimsuits on the beach.

SPORTS

São Tomé and Príncipe has had a national soccer team since 1975, affiliated with the international governing body FIFA since 1986.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1975** São Tomé and Príncipe achieves full independence, with Manuel Pinto da Costa as president. The National Assembly approves new constitution.
- 1978** The government puts down a coup staged by former health minister Carlos da Graça.
- 1979** Angolan troops are called in to support the government against agitators; Prime Minister Miguel Trovoada is arrested for backing coups.
- 1982** Defense Minister Danial Daio is arrested. President takes over defense portfolio.
- 1984** Da Costa declares São Tomé and Príncipe to be nonaligned.
- 1986** Two opposition groups, the União Democrática Independente de São Tomé e Príncipe and the Frente de Resistência Nacional de São Tomé e Príncipe, form a coalition and demand democratic elections.
- 1987** The MLSTP central committee announces major constitutional changes, providing for the direct election of the president and the legislature.
- 1990** São Tomé and Príncipe adopts a new constitution, providing for the establishment of a multiparty system.

- 1991** The ruling MLSTP is defeated in multiparty legislative elections. Da Costa announces his retirement. Miguel Trovoada is elected president in the nation's first free presidential elections.
- 1994** The MLSTP/Social Democratic Party coalition wins 27 of 55 seats in the National Assembly.
- 1996** President Trovoada is reelected to a second term.
- 2001** Fradique de Menezes, leader of the centrist Independent Democratic Action Party, is elected president.
- 2002** In legislative elections, no single party wins an absolute majority. President Menezes appoints Gabriel da Costa prime minister, then replaces him with Maria das Neves. Menezes announces that the United States will open a naval base in São Tomé to protect the nation's oil interests.
- 2003** A military coup topples the government; Menezes comes to an agreement with the coup leaders and grants them amnesty. Oil companies bid on ocean areas controlled by São Tomé, spawning hopes for millions of dollars in license fees.
- 2004** The president and prime minister argue about control of the oil deals. Menezes fires das Neves and replaces her with Damião Vaz d'Almeida.
- 2005** São Tomé and Príncipe formalizes an oil exploration agreement with Nigeria and international oil firms. The government and prime minister resign; Maria do Carmo Silveira becomes the new prime minister.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

São Tomé and Príncipe Permanent Mission to the United Nations
400 Park Avenue, 7th Floor
New York, N.Y. 10022
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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Consulate of São Tomé and Príncipe in Atlanta
<http://www.saotome.org/>

SAUDI ARABIA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (Al-Mamlakah al-‘Arabiyah as-Sa’udiyah)

ABBREVIATION

SA

CAPITAL

Riyadh

HEAD OF STATE & HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

King Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz al-Saud (from 2005)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Absolute monarchy

POPULATION

26,417,599 (2005)

AREA

1,960,582 sq km (756,985 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Arab

LANGUAGE

Arabic

RELIGION

Sunni Islam

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Saudi riyal

NATIONAL FLAG

A green field, with the creed of Islam, “There is no god but Allah; Muhammad is the messenger of Allah,” in white Arabic script in the upper center; beneath the script is a white saber.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

Two stylized gold scimitars crossed below the base of a tall palm tree

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Aash al-Maleek” (Long live our beloved king)

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

September 23 (National Day, Unification of the Kingdom Day), various Islamic festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

September 23, 1932

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

None; 1993 Basic Law outlines government’s rights and responsibilities

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Saudi Arabia occupies about four-fifths of the Arabian Peninsula, covering an area of 1,960,582 sq km (756,985 sq mi). The total length of the coastline is 2,640 km (1,640 mi). Saudi Arabia shares 4,431 km (2,753 mi) of international borders, with Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, and Yemen.

There are five main geographic regions: The Red Sea escarpment consists of Hejaz to the north and Asir to the south. The central plateau, the Nejd, extends to the Tuwaiq Mountains and beyond. The sand desert of Dahana separates the Nejd from eastern Arabia, and the sand desert of Nefud separates the Nejd from northern Arabia. South of the Nejd is the largest purely sand desert in the world, the forbidding Rub al-Khali.

Saudi Arabia has no permanent rivers or bodies of water.

Geography

Area sq km: 1,960,582; sq km sq mi: 756,985

World Rank: 14th

Land Boundaries, km: Iraq 814; Jordan 744; Kuwait 222; Oman 676; Qatar 60; United Arab Emirates 457; Yemen 1,458

Coastline, km: 2,640

Elevation Extremes meters:

Lowest: Persian Gulf 0

Highest: Jabal Sawda’ 3,133

Land Use %

Arable Land: 1.7

Permanent Crops: 0.1

Forest: 0.7

Other: 97.5



fied with the power of the House of Saud. Declaration of oneself as a Muslim is a prerequisite for citizenship.

A number of Shiite Muslims, estimated at around 25 percent of the population, constitute a religious minority subject to social and economic discrimination; in the wake of the Iranian revolution they have been periodically subjected to surveillance and limitations on travel abroad. Some of the sect's members have been arrested without charge and detained, occasionally for many months. For security reasons the government does not permit Shia public processions marking Ashura, the holiest of the exclusively Shia holidays. The Shiites are free to adjudicate exclusively intra-Shiite disputes within their own legal tradition, but Shiite judges receive no stipends or salaries from the government. Likewise, the government provides no financial support for the Shia religious establishment and does not permit the construction of Shia mosques. In recent years authorities have made efforts to redress Shiites' complaints about economic underdevelopment in their areas. Nevertheless, most Shiites continue to live under conditions notably poorer than those of their Sunni compatriots.

Non-Muslim religious services are not permitted. Saudi customs officials prevent the importation of non-Islamic religious materials. Foreign nationals practice their religions only in discreet, private gatherings, as large gatherings or elaborate organizational structures are likely to attract official attention and may lead to the deportation of leaders. Islam exercises a pervasive influence on the lives of all Saudi Arabians: All public and private acts are judged in terms of their appropriateness or inappropriateness in light of Islamic precepts. Islam also colors all national policies; Prince Faisal declared in 1962 that the government would adopt every means necessary to spread, strengthen, and promote Islam by word and by deed.

Religious Affiliations

Muslim	1,960,000
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HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Saudis, and many other Arabs and Muslims as well, trace much of their heritage to the birth of the prophet Muhammad in 570 c.e. The time before Islam is generally referred to as "the time of ignorance," reflecting the belief that God had not yet sent the Arabs a prophet.

Muhammad was born in Mecca at a time when the city was establishing itself as a trading center; the city was also an important religious center and place of pilgrimage for Arab sects even before the rise of Muhammad. For the residents of Mecca, tribal connections were the most important part of the social structure. Muhammad was

born into the Quraysh, which had become the city's leading tribe because of its involvement with water rights for pilgrimages. By the time of Muhammad, the Quraysh had become active traders as well, having established alliances with tribes all over the peninsula, permitting them to send their caravans to Yemen and Syria. Accordingly, in many ways the Quraysh represented the facilitators and power brokers for the new status quo in Arabian society.

By his death in 632, Muhammad enjoyed the loyalty of almost all of Arabia. The peninsula's tribes had tied themselves to the Prophet with various treaties, though not necessarily becoming Muslim. The Prophet expected certain others, particularly pagans, to submit to Islam but allowed Christians and Jews to keep their faith provided they paid special taxes as a penalty.

Within the following century Arabs conquered most of the southern Mediterranean countries as well as Mesopotamia and Persia. However, as Islam expanded beyond Arabia's borders, the peninsula itself declined in importance and for many centuries became no more than a province of caliphates located in Damascus, Baghdad, Cairo, and Constantinople. Nevertheless, Arabia was considered the homeland of the Arabs because Islam's two holiest cities were located there, and an annual pilgrimage, or hajj, to Mecca was an imperative for the devout Muslim. During the various struggles for religio-political supremacy in Damascus and later in Baghdad, Mecca and Medina became contested sites, and both cities were virtually destroyed in the tumult that ensued.

Al-Saud originated in Ad-Diriyah, in the center of the Nejd, close to the modern capital of Riyadh. Around 1500 ancestors of Saud ibn Muhammad took over a number of date groves, one of the few forms of agriculture the region could support, and settled there. Over time the area developed into a small town, and the clan that would become al-Saud came to be recognized as its leaders. The rise of al-Saud is closely linked with Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab (d. 1792), a Muslim scholar whose ideas form the basis of the Wahhabi movement. He grew up in Uyaynah, an oasis in the southern Nejd, where with his grandfather he studied Hanbali Islamic law, one of the strictest Muslim legal schools.

When Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab arrived in Ad-Diriyah, al-Saud was ready to support him. In 1744 Muhammad ibn Saud and Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab swore a traditional Muslim oath in which they promised to work together to establish a state run according to Islamic principles. Until that time al-Saud had been accepted as conventional tribal leaders whose rule was based on long-standing but vaguely defined authority. Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab offered the Saudi clan a clearly defined religious mission to which to contribute their leadership and upon which they might base their political authority.

The puritanical Wahhabi movement was launched in the Nejd region of central Arabia in the 18th century. By

1765 most of the Nejd had been conquered, as followed by Riyadh and the Rub al-Khali in 1792, the Burayami Oasis in 1803, Mecca in 1801, and Medina in 1805. The Ottoman government asked its viceroy in Cairo, the formidable Muhammad Ali, to put down the Saudi insurrection, which he did with typical thoroughness. When Muhammad Ali withdrew his occupation forces in 1840, the Saudis embarked on a reconquest of their possessions. Under Faysal (1843–67), Saudi control was reasserted over the Nejd, Al-Hasa, and Oman, with Riyadh as their capital. Throughout the remainder of the 19th century the Saudi forces were on the retreat, and internal intra-family squabbles opened the door for a rival clan, the Ibn Rashids, to gain control of the Nejd and conquer Riyadh. The Saudi family fled to Kuwait in 1891. In 1902 Abdul Aziz, a grandson of Faysal, known to history as Ibn Saud, drove Ibn Rashid out of Riyadh after a decisive battle. By 1913 Al-Hasa was again under Saudi control. In 1915 Ibn Saud signed a treaty with the British placing his external relations under British control in return for a subsidy. In 1919, at the end of World War I, warfare broke out between the Saudis and Husayn, the sharif of Mecca. Husayn was defeated, and Ibn Saud annexed Asir, but in 1924 Husayn proclaimed himself caliph and again challenged the Saudis. In response, the Saudis captured Al-Taif, Mecca, and Medina, and in 1925 Ibn Saud entered Jidda. Through a new treaty with the British, the 1915 treaty was annulled, and the independence of Saudi possessions was recognized. In 1932 the various possessions of Ibn Saud were consolidated into the kingdom of Saudi Arabia. With the discovery of oil in the 1930s, Saudi Arabia became the wealthiest Arab nation in the world.

Ibn Saud remained in power until his death in 1953. All subsequent rulers of Saudi Arabia have been sons of Ibn Saud. The kingdom has remained an absolute monarchy, with no legislature or political parties. In March 1975 King Faisal ibn Abdul Aziz (a son of Ibn Saud) was assassinated by one of his nephews and was immediately succeeded by Khalid, hitherto the crown prince. King Khalid died in June 1982 and was succeeded by King Fahd.

The Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990 thrust Saudi Arabia into its gravest crisis since Ibn Saud united the kingdom in 1932. The exiled emir of Kuwait, along with hundreds of thousands of Kuwaitis, took refuge in Saudi Arabia. With Iraqi troops on the Saudi border, King Fahd, in an unprecedented move, invited both Western and Arab forces to deploy in the kingdom in support of Saudi defense forces; Saudi Arabia was also quick to help foreign governments cover the cost of sending troops to the kingdom. After six weeks of fighting in early 1991, Iraq was defeated.

The Persian Gulf War stimulated some pressure for political change within the kingdom, including demands for greater freedom for women. Toward the end of 1990 King Fahd had promised to revive long-delayed plans for radical reform of the political system; in 1992 King Fahd

issued royal decrees creating the country's first written rules of governance and providing for the formation of national and provincial consultative councils. In 1995, in the most sweeping ministerial shakeup in two decades, the king appointed young Western-educated technocrats to replace aging family members. In 1997 the membership of the Consultative Council was expanded from 60 to 90 members. The role of the council has gradually expanded as it has gained experience.

The terrorist attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001, complicated U.S.-Saudi relations because 15 of the 19 hijackers were Saudis and because Osama bin Laden himself, the leader of the terrorist group that carried out the attacks, is also a Saudi. In the years that followed Saudi Arabia was the site of numerous terrorist attacks, as the nation tried to take an active role in the international war on terrorism. On the other hand, the nation refused to allow the United States to use its bases in the 2003 war in Iraq. In 2005 Saudi Arabia held its first-ever municipal elections.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1932–53	Abdul Aziz ibn Saud
1953–64	Saud bin Abdul Aziz al-Saud
1964–75	Faisal bin Abdul Aziz al-Saud
1975–82	Khalid bin Abdul Aziz al-Saud
1982–2005	Fahd bin Abdul Aziz al-Saud
2005–	Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz al-Saud

CONSTITUTION

Saudi Arabia has no formal constitution. However, in early 1992 King Fahd became the first Saudi monarch to compile various regulations into a single document called the main code (*nizam*), or Basic Law. Promulgated as a royal decree, this document codified bureaucratic procedures and prohibits government agencies from arbitrarily arresting citizens or violating their privacy. Although the Basic Law is not a formal constitution, it fulfills some of the same purposes of such a document. However, the Basic Law lacks any explicit clause guaranteeing the basic rights of citizens to freedom of belief, expression, assembly, or political participation. Therefore, law remains the expression of the will of the monarch as limited by tribal customs and Islamic laws, which are embodied in the sharia. All power is vested in the king, the head of state, who combines religious and political powers as both imam and king and tribal and military powers as both sheikh of sheikhs and commander in chief. This power is modified only by the requirement that his acts conform to the sharia and that he retain the consensus of the royal family, the ulema (religious council), and the sheikhs. Legislation is by royal decree or, in minor mat-

ters, by ministerial regulation. The chief mufti and the other muftis, interpreters of religious laws, are constantly consulted on all political and social issues and have power to impose a number of restrictions. Certain noble families—such as the Jiluwis—also wield considerable influence on the government.

By convention the king is chosen from among the sons of Abdul Aziz, who themselves have preponderant influence on the choice. Senior religious scholars and other princes also have a voice. The king serves concurrently as prime minister, the head of government. Officials from the highest levels down maintain contact with citizens by regularly holding open-door audiences. There are no elected assemblies or political parties, and non-religious public assemblies and demonstrations are not permitted. The legitimacy of the regime rests on its perceived adherence to the defense of Islam, particularly the austere Hanbali school of Islamic jurisprudence. Rulers and ruled share a respect for laws believed to be divinely inspired and ancient customs that call for authority based on consensus in government, internal social cohesion, and private economic enterprise. Social custom mandates the separation of the sexes.

The king rules the country in secular and religious matters within limits established by religious law, tradition, and the need to maintain consensus among the ruling family and religious leaders. The king's legitimacy is based on his descent, his selection by consensus, his adherence to the tenets of Islam, and his perceived concern for the welfare of the nation. With the consent of other senior princes, the king appoints the crown prince, who is the first deputy prime minister. All other ministers are appointed by the king. They in turn appoint subordinate officials with cabinet concurrence. There were no elected officials in Saudi Arabia prior to the 2005 municipal elections, in which women were not allowed to participate as either candidates or electorate.

Traditionally, public opinion has been expressed through client-patron relationships and interest groups such as tribes, families, and professional hierarchies. The open-door audience (*majlis*) remains the primary forum for expression or grievance. Subjects typically raised at a *majlis* are complaints about bureaucratic dilatoriness or insensitivity, requests for redress or assistance, or criticism of particular acts of government affecting personal or family welfare. Broader political concerns—Saudi social, security, economic, or foreign policy—are not considered appropriate and are seldom raised. The king meets weekly with religious leaders; this informal consultative means of ascertaining public opinion has limitations. Participation by women in the process is severely restricted. Rural-urban migration has weakened tribal and familial links. Citizens are not directly able to change policies or officials through the *majlis* system, which is largely a forum in which grievances are aired and favors sought.

Assisting the king as head of state and prime minister is the royal cabinet, which was formally established in 1958.

Saudi Arabia has had a fairly stable government during the past 50 years. Transitions of power from King Saud to King Faisal, from King Faisal to King Khalid, and from King Khalid to King Fahd were smooth.

PARLIAMENT

Saudi Arabia has no parliament. There is a 150-member Consultative Council, which plays no decisive role, though its role has expanded over the years. The only other power group is the ulema, or council of Muslim theologians, who serve as the guardians of orthodoxy and who express approval or disapproval by issuing a fatwa, or canonical ruling. The real power of the ulema has waned in recent years, as it has been overruled on some occasions. In 1992, as part of the enactment of the Basic Law, the ulema was expanded from 24 to 90 members. While the body can suggest courses of action, its recommendations are not binding in any manner.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Political parties are not legally permitted to function in the country. The clandestine Green Party of Saudi Arabia was created in 2001 to espouse worldwide green-party concerns.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Through the provincial regulations of 1963 the kingdom was divided into five provinces (*mintaqat*), subdivided into districts, further subdivided into *raiz* or *markez* (sub-districts); as of 2005 there were 13 provinces. Each province is administered by a governor-general (*bakem*), each district by a governor, and each subdistrict by a headman. Provincial councils composed of not more than 30 members are elected for two-year terms by tribal chiefs. In municipalities local councils assist chief administrative officers. Authority over tribes is indirect and is exercised through sheikhs, some of whom are semiautonomous. Tribal government is conducted through the *majlis*. The central government's control over local government is maintained through territorial emirs. Tribal loyalty is reinforced through a system of subsidies.

LEGAL SYSTEM

Justice is administered in accordance with the Koran and Islamic sharia, as supplemented by decree law. Some of

the penalties specified in the sharia are extremely severe, including stoning, mutilation, and lashing. The 1977 beheading of a princess of the Saudi royal house for adultery vividly illustrated both the severity of the sharia as interpreted by the Wahhabis and its application to all citizens without discrimination. The right of habeas corpus is not recognized. In 2002 a new criminal justice system came into force, banning torture and giving criminal suspects the right to legal representation.

At the apex of the judicial system is the Judicial Supervisory Committee, consisting of a president and three members. Below are three tiers of courts: the courts of appeal or cassation, the Mahkamat al-Sharia al-Koubra, and the Mahkamat al-Omour al-Mostajalah. The grievance board of the Council of Ministers functions as the final arbiter in cases of decree law.

The grievance board arbitrates claims against the state. The president and vice president of the board are experienced jurists; they are aided by board members with expertise in administrative, contract, corruption, civil-service, and forgery legislation. The president is directly responsible to the king, and the members of the board are guaranteed considerable independence. The board has vigorously wielded powers granted by a 1983 decree to call erring officials to account.

HUMAN RIGHTS

In strict terms of civil and political rights Saudi Arabia is classified as not free; however, the nation is a good example of one that, within the context of a traditional value system, adheres to many of the standards of a free society. Saudi justice may appear harsh by Western standards, but it is neither capricious nor cruel. On the other hand, the Saudi sense of justice and fairness is extremely intense, and occasional instances of torture, the amputation of hands, capital punishment for adultery, and public flogging are regarded not as inhumane but as divinely ordained. In all cases, the law follows the sharia closely. People can be imprisoned for nonpayment of debts; there is no habeas corpus, and arrestees are held for weeks pending trial. As long as they are found in the sharia, no rules are regarded as draconian or uncivilized. Most trials are open, and defenders are assisted by counselors or sometimes, in the case of non-Arab-speaking persons, interpreters. People have the right to appeal, even to the king. Indeed, as in other tribal societies, the king is expected to receive any petition or listen to any complaint that a subject may wish to present. On the other hand, political activities and organizations as such are banned as subversive. The press is not formally censored but remains within safe bounds through the exercise of sound journalistic instinct. When a newspaper oversteps these bounds, as happens on occasion, it simply fails to appear for a period of time. Criticism does

appear in newspaper pages, but it is respectful, even deferential, and is smothered in the ornate and adulatory prose that Arabs love so much. Pictures are regarded as anti-Islamic, so some papers appear as sheets of unrelieved text.

FOREIGN POLICY

After the 1950s Saudi Arabia emerged as the leading conservative power in the Arab world. It has tried to halt the spread of republican ideas and to shore up like-minded monarchies. In the 1970s the nation became a prime mover in the pan-Islamic movement and subsequently used its wealth to mediate in disputes such as the Lebanese civil war and the Iran-Iraq War. As an influential Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) member, Saudi Arabia has a restraining influence on the more radical members who want to cut production and hike prices as a means of pressuring the West to capitulate on major issues, such as those involving Israel. Although opposed to U.S. positions with regard to Israel, Saudi Arabia has been a consistent friend of the United States and one of its top customers for arms and armaments.

During the Iran-Iraq conflict, tensions rose between Iran and Saudi Arabia. In 1987 a major confrontation at Mecca's Grand Mosque resulted in the deaths of 400 Iranian pilgrims. Following Iran's call for the immediate "uprooting" of the Saudi royal family, Saudi Arabia became the first Arab nation to sever diplomatic relations with Iran. These relations were restored in 1991 following the rise of more moderate leadership in Iran.

Saudi Arabia's greatest foreign crisis came about following Iraq's invasion of Kuwait (and implicit threat to invade Saudi Arabia). The conflict caused a rupture in relations with a number of Muslim allies, such as Jordan, Yemen, and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). Saudi Arabia played a pivotal role in the Desert Storm phase of the conflict by allowing sorties from its airfields. Since then the nation has remained a reliable ally in allowing the establishment of U.S. bases on Saudi soil, buying U.S. commercial airliners, resuming aid to the PLO as an inducement to its joining Middle East peace talks, and persuading the Gulf Cooperation Council to drop its boycott of companies doing business with Israel.

In 2001 Saudi Arabia, one of only three countries to have recognized the Taliban as the legitimate government of Afghanistan, agreed to cut all diplomatic relations with the country. Saudi Arabia also pledged to aid the U.S.-led coalition against international terrorist networks. In 2003, however, the nation did not allow the United States to use its bases to launch military operations against Iraq.

DEFENSE

The defense structure is headed by the king, who is also commander in chief of the National Guard, or the White Army.

Armed forces service is voluntary, and recruits enlist for three-year terms. Recruiting for the regular armed forces is done nationally, while recruitment for the National Guard is done on a tribal basis.

The strength of the armed forces was 215,000 in 2002 (including 10,000 in the National Guard's regular forces). The nation spent \$18 billion, a high 10 percent of gross domestic product (GDP), on the military.

The Saudis built up their defense capabilities through the end of the 20th century, buying sophisticated equipment, armament, and other military hardware, most of which may not be in operation for many years still to come because of a lack of skilled manpower. It is not clear whether this buildup has been designed for use against Israel or against potential dissidents at home. If the present pace of arms purchases continues, it is expected that the Saudi armed forces will be among the most effective in the Middle East.

The National Guard consists of 10,000 regular tribal enlistees along with 20,000 reserves and 26,000 tribal levies equipped with antitank weapons and armored cars. The National Guard is distinguished by its special loyalty to the Saud royal family. Military officers are trained at the Royal Military College, at Riyadh. Advanced training is provided in war colleges in the United Kingdom and the United States.

Saudi Arabia is a major recipient of U.S. military aid. The United States has maintained a military mission in the nation and, following the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, stationed 100,000 troops in the country, though these troops had largely been withdrawn by 2003.

Saudi Arabia has formed a multinational arms consortium with Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, and Qatar for defense production. Ammunition, small arms, and rockets are manufactured at the El Kharj arsenal, which is staffed by U.S. and German experts.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 215,000
 Military Manpower Availability: 7,648,999
 Military Expenditures \$billion: 18
 as % of GDP: 10
 as % of central government expenditures: —
 Arms Imports \$million: 487
 Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

The Saudi Arabian economy is based on oil, with strong government controls over major economic activities.

Saudi Arabia has the largest reserves of petroleum in the world (25 percent of the proved total), ranks as the largest exporter of petroleum, and plays a leading role in OPEC. The petroleum sector accounts for roughly 75 percent of budget revenues, 45 percent of GDP, and 90 percent of export earnings. About 40 percent of GDP comes from the private sector. Roughly 5.5 million foreign workers play an important role in the Saudi economy, especially in the oil and service sectors. Saudi Arabia was a key player in the successful efforts of OPEC and other oil-producing countries to raise the price of oil in 1999–2000 to its highest level since the Gulf War through reduced production. In 1999 the government announced plans to begin privatizing electricity companies, following the ongoing privatization of the telecommunications company. The government is expected to continue calling for private-sector growth to lessen the kingdom's dependence on oil and increase employment opportunities for the swelling Saudi population. Shortages of water and rapid population growth will constrain government efforts to increase self-sufficiency in agricultural products.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 310.2
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 12,000
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 2.4
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: –0.3
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 4.2
 Industry: 67.2
 Services: 28.6
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 32
 Government Consumption: 26
 Gross Domestic Investment: 17.2
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 113
 Imports: 36.21
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: —
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: —

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
99.6	98.4	97.3	97.6	98.2

Finance

National Currency: Saudi Riyal (SAR)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = SAR 3.745
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 223
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: —
 Total External Debt \$billion: 34.35
 Debt Service Ratio %: —
 Balance of Payments \$billion: 51.5
 International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 17.7
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
 0.8

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 21.9
 per capita \$: 1.00
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: —

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$billion: 104.8
 Expenditures \$billion: 78.66
 Budget Surplus \$billion: 26.14
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 4.2
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 1.8
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 0.28
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 42.7
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 105.9
 Total Farmland % of land area: 1.7
 Livestock: Cattle 000: 306
 Chickens million: 135
 Pigs 000: —
 Sheep million: 7
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters 000: —
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 62

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 21.8
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 2.8

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 485
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 117
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 5.1
 Net Energy Imports % of use: -266.2
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 23.8
 Production kW-hr billion: 129
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 120
 Coal Reserves tons million: —
 Production tons million: —
 Consumption tons million: —
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: 235
 Production cubic feet trillion: 2
 Consumption cubic feet trillion: 2
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: 262
 Production barrels million per day: 10.4
 Consumption barrels million per day: 1.67
 Pipelines Length km: 5,068

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 36.21
 Exports \$billion: 113
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2002): -2.8
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2002): 3.3
 Balance of Trade \$billion: 51.5

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
United States %	9.3	20.7
Japan %	7.6	15.4
Germany %	7.3	—
United Kingdom %	6.1	—
China %	4.4	5.5
France %	4.1	—
South Korea %	—	9.8
Taiwan %	—	4.5
Singapore %	—	4.2

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 152,044
 Paved %: 29.9
 Automobiles: 7,046,000
 Trucks and Buses: —
 Railroad: Track Length km: 1,392
 Passenger-km million: 224
 Freight-km million: 938
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 64
 Total Deadweight Tonnage million: 1.96
 Airports: 201
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 20.8
 Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 7.5
 Number of Tourists from million: 7.9
 Tourist Receipts \$billion: 3.4
 Tourist Expenditures \$billion: 7.4

Communications

Telephones million: 3.5
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones million: 7.24
 Personal Computers million: 3
 Internet Hosts per million people: 603
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 57

ENVIRONMENT

Saudi Arabia's harsh desert climate underscores the chief environmental concern: the supply of freshwater. With no permanent freshwater sources, the country has had to rely on the desalination of seawater to support the growing population. In addition, coastal waters suffer from environmental damage caused by frequent oil spills.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 0.7
 Forest Change (1990–2000) hectares 000: —
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 37
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 18.06

LIVING CONDITIONS

The standard of living in Saudi Arabia is relatively high. Per capita GDP in 2004 was \$12,000, although much of the nation's wealth is concentrated in the hands of a few royal families, and unemployment is a high 25 percent. The state provides free education and medical care. Literacy rates have steadily risen to nearly 79 percent, and although they remain higher for men (85 percent) than for women (71 percent), the gap has been diminishing. Oil revenues have enabled the country to establish an extensive road system that reaches every part of the kingdom, modern port cities, 72 airports with paved runways, and a modern telecommunications system. Because punishments are severe, violent crime is rare, although incidents of terrorist bombings have risen in the 21st century.

HEALTH

Health care is reasonably good. In 2005 life expectancy at birth was over 75 years, and the infant mortality rate was under 14 deaths per 1,000 live births. About 91 percent of births are attended by trained medical personnel. Nearly 100 percent of the population has access to sanitation facilities. The nation maintains a network of modern Western clinics and hospitals, although many wealthy Saudis continue to receive specialized medical care in Europe and the United States.

Health

Number of Physicians: 31,896
 Number of Dentists: 3,672
 Number of Nurses: 69,421
 Number of Pharmacists: 5,420
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 140
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 13.24
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 23
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 4.3
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 345
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.01
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 95
 Measles: 96
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities (Urban) %: 100
 Access to Improved Water Source (Urban) %: 97

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Some observers have noted increases in the consumption of foods rich in sugar as well as of meat and other foods high in saturated fats, leading to the increased incidence of heart disease, cancer, obesity, diabetes, gallstones, and other chronic diseases. Medical researchers are puzzled that the rate of prostate cancer has remained

low, in light of the connection between higher-fat diets and that disease.

Saudi food tends to be spicy. A major staple is flat, unleavened pita bread, which accompanies nearly every meal. Saudis also consume large amounts of chickpeas, in the form of hummus, lentils, rice, and cracked wheat. Beef is rarely served, but chicken and lamb are common; pork is forbidden under Islamic law. The main meal is served at midday and typically consists of soup, vegetables, and kebabs. Saudi Arabia strictly forbids the consumption of alcohol, for Muslims and non-Muslims alike.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 3.5
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,840
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 148.7
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 189.4

STATUS OF WOMEN

Due to orthodox religious beliefs and traditional social practices, women do not enjoy equality with men. By Koranic precept, a daughter's share of an inheritance is less than that of a male offspring. Women are obliged to demonstrate legally specified grounds for divorce, whereas men may divorce without such grounds. In sharia courts, the testimony of one man is equal to that of two women. Women may not drive motor vehicles, and there are restrictions on their use of public facilities when men are present. By custom, women do not travel alone. They are restricted to reserved women's sections on urban buses. Women may travel abroad only with the written permission of their nearest male relative. Employment opportunities for Saudi women either in the civil service or with public corporations are extremely limited; in practice their employment is largely restricted to the teaching and health-care professions. In public, women are required to dress with extreme modesty. Free but segregated education through the university level is not available to Saudi women.

On the progressive side, the number of civil service jobs available to women (in segregated offices) has increased somewhat. Polygamy is becoming less common, particularly among younger Saudis; this may be due in part to economic factors. In October 1999, 20 women attended the session of the Consultative Council for the first time. Still, in 2000 Amnesty International described the country's treatment of women, particularly foreign domestic workers, as "untenable" by any legal or moral standards. In 2003 women were among 300 Saudi intellectuals who signed a petition calling for far-reaching government reforms. In the 2005 municipal elections—the nation's first ever—women were not allowed to participate.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 0
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 0.96
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 14.5

WORK

The Saudi labor force numbered about 6.6 million in 2004, though many workers were nonnationals, so the rate of unemployment is high, at about 25 percent. About 12 percent were employed in agriculture, producing wheat, barley, tomatoes, melons, dates, citrus, mutton, chickens, eggs, and dairy products, primarily in irrigated regions. About 25 percent of the labor force is employed in industry, primarily oil production and refining, including the production of petrochemicals, but also in cement, construction, fertilizers, and plastics. The remaining 63 percent are employed in services. The government has been trying to wean the nation from its near total dependence on the oil industry by encouraging new businesses through no-interest loans. Many such businesses are located in industrial "cities" (what would be called industrial parks in the United States), which have been created near sources of raw materials and transportation networks.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 6,620,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 20.2
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 12
 Industry: 25
 Services: 63
 Unemployment %: 25

EDUCATION

Public education is free but not compulsory at all levels, and grants are provided for poorer children. Schooling consists of 12 years, of which the first, or elementary, level lasts six years, the intermediate level three years, and the secondary level three years. Islamic emphasis is strong at all levels. In a few schools the first two or three years are coeducational, but after age nine girls attend segregated schools and wear veils in public.

Vocational schooling is organized in two cycles of three years each: intermediate and secondary.

The academic year runs from September to May. The language of instruction is Arabic. English is the most commonly taught second language.

The three government bodies that administer education are the Ministry of Education; the Office of the Grand Mufti, which oversees female education; and the

Supreme Educational Council, which formulates educational policy and administers the educational budget. The country is divided into 23 educational districts for purposes of administration.

Higher education in Saudi Arabia is provided by at least seven universities: King Saud University, in Riyadh; Imam Muhammad bin Saud Islamic University, in Riyadh; the Islamic University at Medina; King Abdul Aziz University, in Jidda; King Faisal University, in Dammam; King Fahd University of Petroleum and Minerals, in Dhahran; and Umm al-Qura University, in the Holy City of Makkah.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 78.8
 Male %: 84.7
 Female %: 70.8
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 9.6
 First Level: Primary Schools: 11,217
 Teachers: 198,181
 Students: 2,342,214
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 11.8
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 54.4
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 6,346
 Teachers: 171,280
 Students: 1,927,009
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 11.7
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 52.7
 Third Level: Institutions: 777
 Teachers: 23,359
 Students: 525,344
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 25.4
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: —

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The Saudi Arabian National Center for Science and Technology was established in 1977. Its goals were to harness science and technology "for the developmental needs of the kingdom," foster applied research, manage science and technology manpower, develop scientific policy, award scholarships and grants, and coordinate research and development among government, the universities, and other organizations. In 1985 the facility was renamed the King Abdul Aziz City for Science and Technology.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: 23.7
 Patent Applications by Residents: 61

MEDIA

There are some 11 major daily newspapers in Saudi Arabia, three of which are published in English. The largest

weekly is the Ministry of Information's English-language bulletin. Most newspapers depend on state subsidies in the form of duty-free newsprint and advertising.

There is no official censorship, but any publication that offends the state or Islam or praises, or even mentions, Israel is immediately suspended.

The national news agency is the Saudi News Agency, founded in 1970.

Broadcasting is a state monopoly under the direction of the Saudi Arabian Broadcasting Service, a department of the Ministry of Culture and Information. Several other radio stations broadcast religious and educational programming. There are two television channels, one in English, the other in Arabic.

Media

Daily Newspapers: —
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: 3,780
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets million: 5.5
 per 1,000: 263

CULTURE

Islam discourages both music and dance, so the primary means of cultural expression in Saudi Arabia is literature, especially poetry. Much of this literature is written in classic Arabic, but much is also written in colloquial forms of the language. Poetry is often recited on public and ceremonial occasions, such as weddings. What little there is in the way of graphic arts tends to be composed of abstract or geometrical shapes (since Islam forbids depiction of the human form) or to come in the form of folk arts, such as weaving, furniture making, and the like.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 80
 Volumes: 1,883,120
 Registered borrowers: 6,500
 Museums Number: 1
 Annual Attendance: 40,000
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Saudi Arabia shares much of its folklore and mythology with surrounding Islamic countries, but some of the na-

tion's stories are unique because they focus on the holy city of Mecca. One story tells of the creation of Mecca: Allah laid out the city and then created the rest of the world around it. Allah made angels from light; from fire he made jinn, or Muslim spirits. Much of the rest of the creation myth is very similar to that of the Judeo-Christian tradition. Allah created Adam from clay and then created Eve for Adam. He ordered the angels to bow to Adam, but one refused, to become Iblis, or Satan. Iblis then tempted Eve in the garden of paradise, leading to the fall of humankind.

An ancient wise man named Lukman, "the Aesop of the Arabs," was the source of many proverbs and sayings, such as "He who does good has good done unto him" and "Walk quietly, lower your voice, for the voice of the jackass is the loudest and most ugly of voices."

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Saudi Arabia strictly enforces the tenets of Islam, so there is little of what in the West would be called entertainment. For example, there are no movie theaters, and music and dance are strongly discouraged. Radio and television broadcasts are closely screened for violations of sexual propriety or religious unorthodoxy. Most recreation tends to be private, although Saudis enjoy camping and walking in the nation's network of national and local parks. Some Saudis enjoy water sports in the Red Sea or the Persian Gulf.

ETIQUETTE

Traditionally, Saudi Arabia was a tribal culture, so the notion of taking a strong interest in relatives, especially those through the male line, is ingrained. Saudis place a great deal of emphasis on hospitality and generosity toward guests and others. Greetings are detailed and elaborate and include inquiries about the other's family. It is considered rude to ask personal questions, and it is rude to directly refuse a request from others. Sexual modesty is highly valued. Men, for example, greet one another with handshakes and frequently with kisses on the cheek, but a man would never greet an unrelated woman with a kiss. Similarly, it would be inappropriate for a man to ask another man directly about the welfare of his wife. Most social interactions tend to take place in groups of people of the same gender and similar age.

FAMILY LIFE

Traditionally, most Saudi marriages were arranged by parents, usually between first cousins in the father's line;

the couple would not even meet until the wedding. In modern times, many marriages are still arranged, but the couple's parents tend to take a less obvious role in doing so. Marriage is regarded as a necessary part of life, and most people marry. Divorce is difficult for women but easy for men, and men will commonly remarry. Traditionally, the bride would live with her husband in the husband's father's household and was often dominated by her mother-in-law, but this practice, too, has changed in modern times, with more couples establishing their own residences. Women remain very restricted socially. They do not congregate with men who are not close relatives, travel alone, or drive. Women who attend university must watch lectures given by men on closed-circuit television.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Most Saudis wear traditional clothing. Women are covered entirely and wear a head covering such as a *shayla*, a scarf held in place with a hat often decorated by jewelry. Most Saudi women adorn their clothing with sequins, coins, colored thread, or appliqués. Men wear ankle-length robes, usually in earth tones or white. On their heads they wear a *ghutra*, a folded cotton square worn over a skullcap.

SPORTS

Saudis enjoy volleyball, basketball, tennis, and soccer, the national game. In 1984 the Saudi National Football (Soccer) Team won the Asian Cup, and that year the Saudis competed in the Olympics for the first time. Also popular are the traditional sports of horse and camel racing, and the King's Camel Race draws upwards of 2,000 competitors and tens of thousands of spectators. Hunting with falcons or dogs remains a popular traditional sport, and the saluki hunting dog is one of the world's oldest breeds. Responsible for the development of sport in Saudi Arabia is the General Presidency of Youth Welfare, which provides facilities for training and competition in 12 integrated sports "cities" throughout the kingdom; as of 2005 three more such cities were under construction. Similar, but smaller, such establishments are found in sports centers in smaller towns and sports clubs in rural areas.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1945** Saudi Arabia joins the Arab League.
- 1949** United States establishes an embassy in Jidda.
- 1951** Saudi Government Railroad connecting Dammam and Riyadh is completed.
Ministry of the Interior is established.
Saudi Arabia is included in the Military Assistance Act and Point-Four Program in return

- for granting the United States usage rights at the Dhahran airfield for five years.
- 1952** Saudi Arabian Monetary Agency is established.
- 1953** Council of Ministers is established.
King Saud dies; his son Saud bin Abdul Aziz al-Saud succeeds him as king.
- 1955** Clashes with United Kingdom occur over Buraimi Oasis.
- 1956** Diplomatic relations with United Kingdom and France are broken over British and French invasion of Egypt and the Buraimi dispute.
- 1957** "Kings' Alliance" is formed with Jordan's Hussein and Iraq's Faisal.
Riyadh University is founded.
- 1958** Crown Prince Faisal is appointed prime minister and virtual ruler.
Cabinet is established on modern lines.
- 1960** Faisal is ousted from post as prime minister; King Saud reassumes reins of power.
Saudi Arabia becomes founding member of OPEC.
Saudi riyal is devalued.
- 1961** Islamic University is founded in Medina.
Supreme Planning Council is established.
- 1962** In major cabinet reshuffle, Faisal returns to power as deputy prime minister; he proposes a basic constitutional law.
Saudi Arabia sides with royalists in Yemeni civil war and breaks with United Arab Republic over Egyptian military aid to the council with Jordan against Egypt (Taif Pact).
Slavery is officially abolished.
Red Crescent Society is founded.
General Petroleum and Mineral Organization is founded.
Dhahran air base is taken over from United States.
Social Security Administration is established.
- 1963** Provincial regulations are promulgated.
Saudis and Egyptians reach agreement calling for disengagement in Yemen.
Ties with United Kingdom are resumed.
- 1964** King Saud is deposed and replaced as king by Faisal.
The joint Saudi-Kuwait neutral zone is partitioned.
- 1965** Khalid is named crown prince.
Border with Qatar is delimited.
Saudi Arabian Government Television Service is launched.
- 1967** King Abdul Aziz University is founded in Jidda.
- 1968** Continental shelf agreement is concluded with Iran.
- 1969** Saudi Arabia sponsors Islamic summit meeting at Rabat, Morocco, following fire in al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem.

- 1970** Islamic Secretariat is established at Jidda. Saudi Arabia signs pact ending Yemeni civil war and recognizes Yemen.
- 1973** In retaliation against U.S. military aid to Israel, Saudi Arabia joins other OPEC members in hiking the price and cutting the production of oil.
- 1974** Saudi Arabia increases its share of the concessions and assets of the Arabian American Oil Company (ARAMCO) to 60 percent under an interim agreement.
- 1975** King Faisal is assassinated; Crown Prince Khalid succeeds him as king, and Prince Fahd is named crown prince.
- 1978** U.S. President Jimmy Carter announces plans to sell Saudi Arabia 60 F-15 fighter-bombers.
- 1979** Members of a fanatical fundamentalist Muslim sect known as the Safiyeen Salfiyeen take over the Grand Mosque at Mecca; most of the attackers are killed or taken alive after two weeks of fighting; Saudi Arabia takes steps to improve its military readiness against similar threats in the future; Saudi Arabia cuts diplomatic ties and aid to Egypt in protest after Egypt and Israel sign a peace treaty.
- 1980** Saudi Arabia assumes full control of ARAMCO.
- 1981** Saudi Arabia concludes treaty with Iraq partitioning the neutral zone.
- 1982** King Khalid dies; he is succeeded as monarch by Crown Prince Fahd.
- 1984** A series of attacks on Saudi Arabian oil tankers in the Gulf by warring Iraqi and Iranian aircraft leads to urgent commissioning of improved defense systems from the United States.
- 1985** The Iranian-based al-Jihad group claims responsibility for two bomb explosions in Riyadh, causing increased hostility between the two countries.
- 1986** After serving for 24 years as minister of petroleum and mineral resources, Sheikh Ahmad Zaki Yamani is dismissed from office by King Fahd.
- 1987** More than 400 die when Iranian Shiite pilgrims clash with Saudi police; Saudi Arabia resumes diplomatic relations with Egypt.
- 1988** The disclosure that Saudi Arabia had taken delivery of an unspecified number of Chinese medium-range missiles provokes threats by Israel of a preemptive strike on the missile base at al-Kharj.
- 1989** Iran boycotts the hajj because of Saudi Arabia's refusal to abandon the quota system restricting the number of pilgrims. Saudi Arabia recognizes the Afghan Mujaheddin government-in-exile, formed following the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan. King Fahd signs a nonaggression pact with Iraq.
- 1990** King Fahd blasts the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait as "the most vile aggression known to the Arab nation in its modern history"; U.S., Egyptian, Moroccan, Pakistani, and Syrian troops land in Saudi Arabia; Saudi Arabia gives refuge to Kuwait's exiled emir as well as 350,000 Kuwaiti refugees; Iraqi troops build up at the Saudi border; King Fahd invites Western and Arab forces to deploy in the kingdom in support of Saudi defense forces; diplomatic ties are restored with the USSR and China; Taiwan breaks ties with Saudi Arabia.
- 1991** The Persian Gulf War is fought from January 16 to February 27; Iraq is defeated, and its leader, Saddam Hussein, retreats to Iraq with his troops; Iraq breaks ties with Saudi Arabia; King Fahd criticizes Jordan for supporting Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.
- 1992** King Fahd establishes political reforms, including a bill of rights and a consultative council to advise the king.
- 1993** King Fahd introduces the Basic Law, which articulates the government's rights and responsibilities; the consultative council holds its first meeting.
- 1994** PLO leader Yasser Arafat and King Fahd discuss peace in the Middle East; Saudi Arabia opposes an OPEC proposal to decrease oil production in an effort to raise oil prices.
- 1995** King Fahd suffers a stroke, and his half brother, Crown Prince Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz, formally acts on his behalf; following months of intermittent border fighting, Yemen and Saudi Arabia agree to negotiate their long-standing border disagreement.
- 1996** Terrorists bomb U.S. military housing near Dhahran, killing 19 and injuring 300.
- 1998** Saudi Arabia begins oil extraction in a region claimed by the United Arab Emirates, straining mutual relations.
- 1999** Reversing its earlier position, Saudi Arabia successfully leads an OPEC proposal to decrease oil production for one year, raising world oil prices; Saudi Arabia cuts production by 7 percent; the Consultative Council is opened to women, and women hold 20 of the council's 90 seats.
- 2000** Yemen and Saudi Arabia settle their border disagreement.
- 2002** On March 28 the Arab League adopts its first Pan-Arab initiative for peace in the Middle East; the initiative is based on a proposal by Crown Prince Abdullah. It offers Israel security and normal relations in exchange for a withdrawal from occupied Arab territories, the creation of an independent Palestinian state, with

2058 Saudi Arabia

- East Jerusalem as its capital, and the return of refugees.
- 2002** New criminal justice system is created, banning torture.
- 2003** Suicide bombers kill 35 at a housing complex for Westerners in Riyadh.
- 2005** Saudi Arabia conducts its first-ever municipal elections. King Fahd dies. He is succeeded by Crown Prince Abdullah. Saudi Arabia becomes a member of the World Trade Organization.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Ministry of Information
<http://www.saudinf.com/index.htm>
- The Saudi Arabia Information Resource
<http://www.saudinf.com/main/010.htm>

SENEGAL

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Senegal (République du Sénégal)

ABBREVIATION

SN

CAPITAL

Dakar

HEAD OF STATE

President Abdoulaye Wade (from 2000)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Macky Sall (from 2004)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Republic under multiparty democratic rule

POPULATION

11,126,832 (2005)

AREA

196,190 sq km (75,749 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Wolof, Pular, Serer, Jola, Mandinka

LANGUAGES

French (official), Wolof

RELIGION

Islam

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Communauté financière d'Afrique franc

NATIONAL FLAG

A tricolor of green (left), yellow, and red vertical stripes, with a green star at the center of the yellow stripe

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A shield divided into vertical halves, one side in red displaying a gold lion and the other side in yellow displaying a baobab tree; below the tree is a wavy green line representing the Senegal River. The shield is enclosed within black-and-white palm branches opening at the top to frame a green star. From the wreath is suspended the white jeweled National Order of the Republic and a white ribbon entwined among the branches bearing the motto *Un peuple, un but, une foi* (One people, one goal, one faith).

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"Pluck Your Koras, Strike the Balafons"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day), April 4 (National Day), May 1 (Labor Day), four Islamic holidays, various Christian holidays including Christmas, Assumption, All Saints' Day, Ascension, Easter Monday, Whitmonday

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

April 4, 1960

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

March 3, 1963; revised 1991, 1995, 2001

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Senegal is the westernmost country in Africa, situated on the continent's western bulge, with a total land area of 196,190 sq km (75,749 sq mi), extending 690 km (429 mi) southeast to northwest and 406 km (252 mi) north-east to southwest. Its Atlantic coastline stretches 531 km (330 mi). Senegal shares its total international boundary of 2,640 km (1,639 mi) with five countries: Mauritania, Mali, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, and the Gambia, a narrow enclave within Senegal centered around the Gambia River.

Senegal constitutes the western segment of the broad savanna that extends across Africa at the southern edge of the Sahara. Variations in elevation are minor, and contrasts among the six primary geographical regions are not sharp. The six regions are the Senegal River Valley, the Coastal Belt, the Western Plains, the Ferlo, Casamance, and the East.

The floodplain of the Senegal River is broken by many marshes and branching channels. Where the river approaches the sea, its various channels form an extensive network in a wide area resembling a delta. In the middle reach of the valley above Dagana is Île à Morfil, a nar-

Senegal



row island between channels, several hundred kilometers long. The Coastal Belt, north of Cap Vert Peninsula, is covered by small swamps or pools separated by dunes, often as high as 30 m (100 ft). This belt, extending 24 km (15 mi) inland, is known as Cayor. Among the dunes are freshwater swamps that are transformed into green oases in the summer. South of Dakar the Coastal Belt narrows into a maze of meandering creeks, channels, and flats. The Western Plains extend southeastward from Thies to Koalack and consist, in the summer, of dry, barren land, which springs to life with the rains, turning into green farmlands. The Ferlo is an inland continuation of the Western Plains and is semidesert. The Casamance is the region south of the Gambia, encompassing the Casamance River. The East is a plain extending southeastward from the Ferlo to the borders of Mali and Guinea and consists of poor, seasonal pastureland.

Geography

Area sq km: 196,190; sq mi 75,749
 World Rank: 85th
 Land Boundaries, km: Gambia 740; Guinea 330; Guinea-Bissau 338; Mali 419; Mauritania 813
 Coastline, km: 531
 Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Atlantic Ocean 0
 Highest: near Nepen Diakha 581
 Land Use %
 Arable Land: 12.8
 Permanent Crops: 0.2
 Forest: 32.2
 Other: 54.8

Population of Principal Cities (2002)

Dakar	1,983,093
Kaolack	172,305
Mbour	153,503
Rufisque	179,797
Saint-Louis	154,555
Thiès	237,849
Ziguinchor	153,269

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Senegal has a varied climate. The northern coast is cooled by the prevailing northeasterly trade winds and the Canary Current. The Casamance, in the south, lies on the fringe of the tropical monsoon area. The rest of the country has a predesert Sudanese climate, with the northern part having semidesert Sahelian conditions. There are two well-defined seasons: the dry season and the rainy season, the latter of which extends from June to October in the Sahelian zone, from May to October in the Sudanese zone, and from May to December in the Casamance. Dakar, on the coast, has a mean maximum temperature of 27°C (81°F) in January and 33°C (91°F) in August and a

mean minimum temperature of 18°C (64°F) in January and 25°C (77°F) in August. Temperatures rise rapidly inland, reaching over 37.8°C (100°F).

Rainfall is subject to wide seasonal variations. Average annual precipitation varies from 1,000 mm (40 in) in the north to 1,500 mm (60 in) in the south and 500 mm (20 in) in the east. Senegal, among the other Sahelian countries, is periodically affected by serious drought. The cumulative effects of these droughts made the early 1970s, particularly 1973, a period of unprecedented disaster, irreparably damaging the nation's ecology.

Winds of gale strength occur at the beginning and end of the rainy season. Known as *tornades*, they are accompanied by thunder, lightning, and squalls.

Climate and Weather

Temperature Range
 Dakar: January 64°F to 87°F
 August: 77°F to 91°F
 Inland: 92°F to 100°F
 Average Rainfall
 North: 40 in
 South: 60 in
 East: 20 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Most of Senegal's terrain is savanna, as covered with grasses, acacia, various species of bushes, and baobab trees. The size of the tropical forest has diminished and is today limited to the Casamance region, where common species of flora include *fromagers*, *palmers*, coconut palms, and mango trees. Mangroves are present on the banks of the Sine-Saloum and the Casamance; large numbers of oysters attach themselves to the roots of the mangroves. The more wooded southern part of the country is home to big game such as lions, elephants, and antelopes, as well as various species of monkeys. In the more desertified north can be found warthogs, jackals, and tortoises. Fish species near the coastline include swordfish, marlin, barracuda, and carrague.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 11,126,832
 World Rank: 73rd
 Density per sq km: 53.2
 % of annual growth (1999-2003): 2.5
 Male %: 49.2
 Female %: 50.8
 Urban %: 49.6
 Age Distribution %: 0-14: 42.8
 15-64: 54.1
 65 and over: 3.0

(continues)

Population Indicators (*continued*)

Population 2025:	17,080,000
Birth Rate per 1,000:	35.21
Death Rate per 1,000:	10.6
Rate of Natural Increase %:	2.4
Total Fertility Rate:	4.75
Expectation of Life (years):	Males 55.04
	Females 58.52
Marriage Rate per 1,000:	—
Divorce Rate per 1,000:	—
Average Size of Households:	8.7
Induced Abortions:	—

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

As in other African countries, the ethnic configuration of Senegal is diverse. The Wolof, Serer, and Diola are primarily Senegalese tribes, while other groups are branches of larger communities originating in the northwestern quarter of the country that are more evenly dispersed. The Wolof are the largest group and dominate the political and economic life of the country; they represent 43 percent of the population and the majority in most major cities. Through a long process of assimilation they have incorporated many of the cultural traits of their neighbors and, in turn, have influenced others. The Serer are the largest non-Muslim group and are traditionally divided into several groups speaking mutually unintelligible languages, including Serer-Sine and Serer-Non. Most Serer are cultivators in the Sine-Saloum region, although a few of the better educated, such as former president Léopold Sédar Senghor, have made significant contributions to national life. The Fulani and the related Toucouleur are mostly stock raisers and cultivators, but because of their dispersion, Islamic fundamentalism, and resistance to modernization, they participate less than others in national politics or the national economy. The Diola are the people of the Casamance and are divided into at least seven linguistic subgroups. The Mandingo and the Bambara are ethnically related, but the former are Muslims, while the latter are mainly animists. The Lebou, who live along the coast, have a number of cultural and social traits in common with the Wolof and Serer.

The largest single non-African group is the French; their continued presence is encouraged by Senegal's being one of the most Francophile nations in Africa; the number of Frenchmen has decreased by only 26 percent since independence in 1960. The second-largest alien group is the Lebanese, most of whom are small-scale commercial middlemen. Relations between the Senegalese and the French are amicable and in some cases warm, and the Senegalization of the economy has not been seen by the French as a threat. On the other hand, the Lebanese have often been accused of economic ex-

ploitation and have been subjected to periodic outbursts of animosity.

LANGUAGES

The official language is French, although only a small minority, estimated at no more than 12 percent, is literate in the language.

The major indigenous languages are Wolof, Serer, Pulaar (the mother tongue of the Fulani and Toucouleur), Diola, Mandingo, and Sarakole. All these languages are members of the Niger-Congo linguistic family.

The national lingua franca is Wolof, which is spoken by over 80 percent of the population either as their mother tongue or as an acquired language. Competing with Wolof in the south are the two dialects of Diola: Fogny and Casa. About 2 percent of the population, including the Maures, speak Arabic, and Pulaar is sometimes written with an Arabic script.

RELIGIONS

Senegal has no state religion, but it is one of the most Islamized nations in West Africa, with 94 percent of the population adhering to one of two sects: Sunni and Shia. In addition, most Senegalese Muslims belong to one of three Islamic brotherhoods, with 57 percent belonging to the Tidjani, 26 percent to the Mouridia, and 16 percent to the Qadiriyyah. These brotherhoods are not separated by doctrinal differences but share a common Sufi-type mystical approach to religious activity and emphasize various spiritual disciplines.

Christianity, introduced around 1845, is followed by only 5 percent of the population, mainly the Serer and the Diola, but Christians are found among almost every ethnic group. The European and Lebanese minorities are almost entirely Christian. Most Christians are Roman Catholics, who number about half a million, as distributed among seven dioceses. There also are a few thousand Protestants. Although outnumbered by Muslims in the general population, Christians are heavily represented in the government, commerce, and education and occupy many important public positions.

Animists constitute about 1 percent of the population. Most of the smaller ethnic groups and, among the larger ethnic groups, the Serer and the Diola, follow traditional religions. Common elements in indigenous religions include beliefs in intermediary spirits, sacrifices, witches, fertility rites, and magic.

Religious Affiliations

Muslim	10,459,000
Indigenous Beliefs	111,000
Christian	556,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The early history of Senegal can be traced back to the eighth century, when the region was part of the Ghana Empire. When the empire waned, Senegal became part of the Djolof kingdom. The kingdom flourished between the Senegal River and Dakar during the 13th and 14th centuries.

Senegal's contacts with Europeans began with the Portuguese in the middle of the 15th century. The French arrived in the 17th century; Saint-Louis was established as a fortified trading post in 1659. French rule was largely confined to trading posts until its expansion under the Second Empire during the governorship of Gen. Louis Faidherbe. French control was consolidated and extended under the Third Republic. From 1871 on, Senegal regularly sent a deputy to the French legislature, and municipalities were established in Saint-Louis, Dakar, Gorée, and Rufisque. In 1895 Dakar became the administrative capital of the newly created Federation of French West Africa (*Afrique Occidentale Française*).

Senegal was the only French colony where the policy of assimilation was applied to a relatively large segment of the population; it was also the only African colony in which the French made a determined effort to educate the natives. In addition, the French introduced social institutions that brought about fundamental changes in the Senegalese way of life.

Senegal's first tentative step toward self-government was the establishment in 1919 of the Colonial Council, part of whose membership was elected. In 1946 limited suffrage was granted, and a territorial assembly was set up. Universal suffrage was granted in 1957. In 1958 Senegal accepted the new French constitution and became an autonomous republic within the French Community. From 1959 until 1960 Senegal was a member of the short-lived Mali Federation.

Senegal seceded from the federation in June 1960 and proclaimed itself the Republic of Senegal in September. Initially, the government was organized under a parliamentary system with Léopold Sédar Senghor, the leader of the country's strongest political party, the Senegalese Progressive Union, serving as president. His political rival, Mamadou Dia, served as prime minister. Two years later, following an alleged coup, Senghor established a presidential form of government under tight control. Dia was arrested and imprisoned but released in 1974. Opposition parties were prohibited, and the country effectively became a one-party state. Senghor and his party won all elections from 1963 to 1978.

Political discontent grew during the 1960s, culminating in a general strike by trade unions and a strike at the University of Dakar in 1968. In response to demands for reform, the post of prime minister was reinstated in 1970, and a limited number of political parties were legalized during the decade.

Senghor resigned as president in 1980. He was succeeded by the prime minister, Abdou Diouf. Political liberalization continued, and by 1981 most restrictions on political parties had been lifted. However, political coalitions continued to be prescribed. Diouf abolished the office of prime minister in 1983.

Opposition to the government, attributed to worsening economic conditions and economic austerity measures, grew again during the 1980s. Student unrest became serious in 1985 and 1987. Workers and trade unions pushed for changes in labor laws, and the police went on strike in 1987.

Demands for greater local autonomy came to a head in the province of Casamance in 1982 and 1983, where the Diola were involved in clashes with the police. Despite moves toward provincial autonomy, sporadic unrest continued. However, the opposition was unable to take advantage of this political unrest. Attempts at unifying the diverse parties were unsuccessful, and the ban on coalitions limited their action. In 1985 five parties tried to form an alliance, but it was banned and their leaders arrested. Three years later the opposition parties threatened to boycott elections unless steps were taken to prevent ballot rigging, but Diouf refused to instigate reform. Opposition leaders declared the election results fraudulent; they were arrested and charged with threatening the security of the state. More than two months of urban unrest followed the election. In an attempt to defuse the crisis, Diouf announced a reduction in the prices of basic foodstuffs and promised plans to create 2,000 jobs. He also began talks with the opposition. However, these broke off without agreement. Unrest remained a problem.

In 1982 plans to merge Senegal and the Gambia were announced, and the Confederation of Senegambia was formed. In September 1989 the confederation was dissolved.

The 1990s were marked by increasing violence in the Casamance region over the possibility of secession. The fighting between the government and rebels increased after the reelection of Diouf in 1993. A cease-fire was declared in July, and by 1994 peace and tourists (a major source of revenue) returned to the region. Political and economic unrest persisted in other parts of the country, however. When the government devalued the currency in 1994, angry mobs marched on the presidential palace. According to some reports, six guards were hacked to death by the protesters. The opposition leader, Abdoulaye Wade, was arrested and accused of conspiracy.

The 2000 presidential election pitted the incumbent President Diouf against Wade. After two rounds of balloting Wade emerged victorious. While the transition went smoothly, violence in the Casamance region increased after Wade took office. In January 2001 a new constitution was approved by public referendum; a coalition led by Wade's Senegalese Democratic Party won a

strong majority in parliamentary elections held in April. In September 2002 more than 1,800 people were killed when the Joola ferry capsized off the Gambian coast; later that year, Wade dismissed the prime minister and the rest of the government, allegedly over the government's handling of the disaster. In 2003 the leader of the Casamance Movement of Democratic Forces (MFDC) claimed that the secessionist war was over, and in 2004 the government and the MFDC signed a pact to end secessionist violence.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1960–80 Léopold Sédar Senghor
1980–2000 Abdou Diouf
2000– Abdoulaye Wade

CONSTITUTION

The legal basis of the government of Senegal is the constitution of 1963, as amended subsequently in 1991, 1995, and 2001. The constitution established a strong presidential form of government. The prime minister is appointed by the president. The constitution provides explicit guarantees for a broad range of civil liberties and human freedoms.

The president is elected by universal direct suffrage for five years, although the 2000 election was held under the old constitution, which called for seven-year terms. Thus, the first new election under the new constitution will not take place until 2007. Among the president's extraordinary powers are the proclamation of an emergency, during which he may rule by decree and submit draft laws to referendum with the consent of the president of the National Assembly and of the Supreme Court. The president may not veto legislation, but he may ask the National Assembly to reconsider an act it has passed, in which case it must be passed again by a three-fifths majority before it becomes law. The Secretariat General, attached to the presidency, has emerged during the years of presidential rule as a major organ of the government; the Secretariat General includes the High Council of the Judiciary, the High Council for National Defense, the Inspectorate General, and the Fiscal Control Office.

The Council of Ministers comprises ministers and state secretaries. Each minister is assisted by a personal cabinet of five civil servants. The ministers are divided into departments or services, and these are divided into divisions or bureaus. Legislative power is vested in the National Assembly, a unicameral body elected by universal direct suffrage. The judicial system is headed by the Supreme Court, whose justices are appointed by the president, as advised by the Superior Court of Magistrates.

Suffrage is universal for all adults over the age of 18. Elections are usually uncontested.

PARLIAMENT

The National Assembly is a unicameral body consisting of 120 members elected for five-year terms by direct, universal adult suffrage. Half of the members are elected by region and half by proportional representation from a national slate.

The National Assembly holds two regular sessions per year. The budget is debated in the first session. No ordinary session lasts longer than two months. Legislation may be initiated either by the president or by the National Assembly. Draft legislation is reviewed by standing committees, and there is an executive committee known as the bureau, which is headed by the president of the National Assembly. Both bills introduced by members (called *propositions de loi*) and bills introduced by the executive (called *projets de loi*) are referred to standing committees before being debated on the floor. The legislative powers of the National Assembly may be delegated to the president or suspended only during states of siege or states of emergency or when the independence and territorial integrity of the nation are threatened.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Senegal has a multiparty political system with several strong parties. The Socialist Party of Senegal (PSS), under Abdou Diouf, dominated the legislature in the 1980s and 1990s. In the 2000 elections a coalition led by the Senegalese Democratic Party (PDS) won 89 of 120 seats in the Assembly; this centrist labor party was founded by Abdoulaye Wade in 1974.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For purposes of local government the country is divided into four levels of units—regions, departments, arrondissements (or districts), and villages—with parallel units, or municipalities, in urban areas. The Cap Vert region, containing the capital district, is considered a separate unit.

Each of the 11 regions is headed by a governor, who is assisted by two deputy governors, one for administration and the other for coordination of economic development. The regions are subdivided into 30 departments, each headed by a prefect. Almost all administrative activities take place at the departmental level or lower. The prefect is also responsible for maintaining law and order and has plenary police powers. Departments are divided into 320 arrondissements or districts, each headed by a

chief or subprefect. Like the prefect, the subprefect has investigative and police powers. Each *arrondissement* is made up of 100 to 600 villages, under the nominal authority of village chiefs.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The legal system is based on French civil law. Senegal has an active, independent, and well-trained judiciary that is constitutionally independent of the executive, the legislature, and the military. Court officials are trained lawyers who have completed a number of years of required apprenticeship. Trials are open to the public, and defendants have the right to defense counsel, many of whom are very skilled and aggressive in the protection of their clients. Ordinary courts hold hearings that are presided over by panels of judges and, in the case of criminal charges, include a jury. There are three categories of courts: the High Court of Justice, security (“political”) courts, and military courts. There are four superior courts: the High Council of the Magistrature, which determines the constitutionality of civil laws and international agreements; the 16-member High Court of Justice, elected by the National Assembly from among its own members; the Supreme Court; and the Court of State Security.

HUMAN RIGHTS

In terms of civil and political rights, Senegal is classified as a partly free country.

Senegal is a model African state in terms of human rights practices, although theoretically it is only a partial democracy. Partly because of President Senghor’s guiding hand and intellectual stature and partly because of strong francophone influences, Senegal has not been subjected to ordeals of dictatorship, as many of its sister African republics have been. The nation has at the same time achieved a record of political stability unequalled in West Africa. Constitutional freedoms exist not only on paper but also in practice. In the National Assembly the opposition is vehement and courageous. The judiciary has demonstrated its independence by overturning government decrees. In openly contested local elections, the opposition is able to unseat government candidates. The income tax structure is progressive and does not favor the entrenched rich and privileged. There is no discrimination based on race, ethnic origin, or religion. Further, Senegal has taken an active role in human rights in Africa. In 1979 Senghor submitted a proposal for the creation of a human rights commission as part of the Organization of African Unity, now the African Union. Africa’s first institute for human rights education began work in Dakar in 1979. President Wade is committed to democratization, although the watchdog group Reporters without Borders

saw some signs of increasing media censorship in 2003, principally in connection with the Casamance issue.

FOREIGN POLICY

Senegal is the showcase of French culture in West Africa, and relations with France are as close as they were before independence. At the same time, Senegal places great importance on regional cooperation with African countries. Senegal has generally maintained a conservative posture in African affairs. For example, it has opposed the Cuban presence in Angola and other African countries and Libyan interference in sub-Saharan Africa. Relations with Angola and Libya as well as Algeria were mended in the mid-1980s.

Senegal’s most prominent regional interest lays in the Gambia, the English-speaking enclave in the middle of the nation. An effort to establish a Senegambia confederation never got off the ground because of Gambian suspicions.

Border disputes with Mauritania and Guinea-Bissau flared intermittently in the 1990s. The dispute with Mauritania was fueled by charges of the persecution of blacks by the Moorish elite in Mauritania and by the expulsion of Moors from Dakar; Nouakchott accused Senegal of aiding antigovernment rebels, while Dakar charged Mauritania with arming Casamance separatists. The border dispute with Guinea-Bissau led to clashes in 1991 amid reports that Guinea-Bissau was also supporting the Casamance rebels. However, these disputes were resolved by the mid-1990s, and Senegal now enjoys improved relations with its neighbors. Nonetheless, both the Gambia and Guinea-Bissau continue to deal with refugees, arms smuggling, and ongoing border violence.

DEFENSE

The defense structure is headed by the president as commander in chief of the armed forces. He is assisted by the Supreme Defense Council, whose other members include the secretary general of the office of the president, the prime minister, the minister of state for the armed forces, the chief of staff of the armed forces, and the ministers of foreign affairs, interior, and finance.

Military manpower is obtained through voluntary enlistment. Although a conscription service period of two years is provided for by law, in practice it has not been implemented.

The total strength of the armed forces in 2003 was 18,600. In 2004 the country spent \$107.3 million, or about 1.5 percent of gross domestic product (GDP), on the military.

Under the Accord on Cooperation in Matters of Defense, France is accorded base rights and transit

2066 Senegal

and flyover privileges, while Senegal receives military training and equipment grants. Dakar is the headquarters for France's Zone d'Outre-Mer 1, and a permanent French garrison of 1,500 men remains there, guarding the airfield and certain key installations. This force is said to be ready for deployment anywhere in Africa and is also available to assist the government in maintaining internal security. The naval units of this force are two coastal escorts; the air force units have six transports.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 18,600
Military Manpower Availability: 2,183,343
Military Expenditures \$million: 107.3
 as % of GDP: 1.5
 as % of central government expenditures: 9.7
Arms Imports \$million: —
Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

In 1994 Senegal undertook a bold and ambitious economic reform program with the support of the international donor community. This reform began with the 50 percent devaluation of the CFA franc, which is widely used in francophone West Africa and is linked at a fixed rate to the French franc. Government price controls and subsidies were steadily dismantled. After seeing its economy contract by 2.1 percent in 1993, Senegal made an important turnaround, thanks to the reform program, with real growth in GDP averaging 5 percent annually from 1995 to 2003. Growth for 2003 was estimated at 5.5 percent. Annual inflation was pushed down to 0 percent in 2003, and the fiscal deficit was cut to less than 1.5 percent of GDP. Investment rose steadily, from 13.8 percent of GDP in 1993 to 20.4 percent in 2004. As a member of the West African Economic and Monetary Union, Senegal is working toward greater regional integration, with a unified external tariff. Senegal realized full Internet connectivity in 1996, creating a miniboom in information technology-based services. Private activity now accounts for 82 percent of GDP. On the negative side, Senegal faces deep-seated urban problems of chronic unemployment, juvenile delinquency, and drug addiction.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 18.36
GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 1,700
GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 4.7
GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 2.2
Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 15.9
 Industry: 21.4
 Services: 62.7

Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:

Private Consumption: 75
Government Consumption: 15
Gross Domestic Investment: 20.1

Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 1.374

Imports: 2.128

% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 2.6

% of Income Received by Richest 10%: 33.5

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
106.5	107.2	110.5	113.0	113.0

Finance

National Currency: CFA Franc (XOF)
Exchange Rate: \$1 = XOF 581.2
Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 564
Central Bank Discount Rate %: 4.5
Total External Debt \$billion: 3.476
Debt Service Ratio %: 23.42
Balance of Payments \$million: –518.8
International Reserves SDRs \$million: 626
Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 0.8

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 450
 per capita \$: 43.90
Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 78.3

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
Revenues \$billion: 1.572
Expenditures \$billion: 1.627
Budget Deficit \$million: 55
Tax Revenues as % of GDP: 17.1

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 15.9
Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 4.7
Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 0.03
Irrigation, % of Farms having: 2.8
Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 13.6
Total Farmland % of land area: 12.8
Livestock: Cattle million: 3.1
 Chickens million: 46
 Pigs 000: 315
 Sheep million: 4.7
Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 6
Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 376

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 831.5
Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 4.7

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 1
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 1.2
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 120
 Net Energy Imports % of use: 43.4
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: 235
 Production kW-hr billion: 1.52
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 1.41
 Coal Reserves tons million: —
 Production tons million: —
 Consumption tons million: —
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet billion: 106
 Production cubic feet billion: 1.77
 Consumption cubic feet billion: 1.77
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels million: 700
 Production barrels 000 per day: —
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 32.2
 Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 2.128
 Exports \$billion: 1.374
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 3.3
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): –2.0
 Balance of Trade \$million: –518.8

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
France %	24.9	12.2
Nigeria %	12.2	—
Thailand %	6.7	—
Spain %	4.3	5.0
India %	—	13.0
Mali %	—	9.5
Italy %	—	8.5
Côte d'Ivoire %	—	5.4

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 14,576
 Paved %: 29.3
 Automobiles: 193,000
 Trucks and Buses: 79,000
 Railroad: Track Length km: 906
 Passenger-km million: 105
 Freight-km million: 345
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: —
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: —
 Airports: 20
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 572
 Length of Waterways km: 1,000

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 427
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 210
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 112

Communications

Telephones 000: 228.8
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.20
 Cellular Telephones 000: 575.9
 Personal Computers 000: 220
 Internet Hosts per million people: 60
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 20

ENVIRONMENT

Senegal's environmental challenges are similar to those of many of its neighbors. The land suffers from soil erosion caused by deforestation and poor agricultural techniques. The deforestation and soil erosion contribute to growing desertification. In addition, Senegal's wildlife is endangered by poaching and overfishing.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 32.2
 Forest Change (1990–2000) hectares 000: –45
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 11
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 6,642
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 0.44

LIVING CONDITIONS

Economic reforms instituted in the 1990s produced a higher standard of living for many Senegalese, especially in comparison with their neighbors. For example, while Senegal had a per capita GDP of \$1,700 in 2004, neighboring Guinea-Bissau's was just \$700. Still, 54 percent of the population was living below the poverty line in 2001. In some areas, such as Dakar, many people live in modern homes with plumbing and electricity. In the rural areas, on the other hand, most people live in mud brick homes with thatched roofs and dirt floors, and many homes are partially finished, as people build them in stages as they can afford to do so; water has to be gathered from communal wells and carried in pails to homes. Senegal has a good road system: At independence, the nation had just 765 km (475 mi) of paved roads, but as of 2000 there were over 4,000 km (2,500 mi) of paved roads. The most common means of transportation is the bush taxi.

HEALTH

The state of health care in Senegal is generally poor, which is not surprising in a nation where about \$27 per person per year is spent on health care. In 2004 life expectancy at birth was below 57 years; the infant mortality rate was 55.5 deaths per 1,000 live births, and just 50 percent of births were attended by trained medical personnel. AIDS is a significant problem: In 2003, 0.8 percent

of the adult population was living with the disease, and there were 3,500 deaths. Also problematic is malaria, with nearly 12,000 new cases each year, and diseases such as intestinal parasites, hepatitis, trachoma, and tuberculosis are common, largely because just half the population has access to adequate sanitation facilities.

Health

Number of Physicians: 625
 Number of Dentists: 100
 Number of Nurses: 1,843
 Number of Pharmacists: 225
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 7.5
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 55.51
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 690
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 5.1
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 27
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.8
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 73
 Measles: 60
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 52
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 72

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Nutrition is poor in Senegal. Between 1995 and 2001, 14 percent of children under the age of five were moderately underweight, and an additional 4 percent were severely underweight. Some 8 percent suffered from moderate to severe wasting, 19 percent from moderate to severe stunting. The basic staples in Senegal are rice, beans, peanuts, sorghum, millet, and corn. The national dish is *tiébou dienn*, or, in Wolof, *chep-bu-jen*, which is a fish stew cooked with various vegetables, garlic, and spices and served on rice. The most common meat is chicken. People eat with their right hands from a communal dish; it is generally regarded as ill-mannered to look at others while they eat.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 24.4
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,260
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 160.5
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 55.6

STATUS OF WOMEN

Women are active participants in the political process, and several parties, including the dominant Socialist Party, have sections promoting women's rights. However, traditional values, both societal and religious (chiefly Islamic), have limited women's access to certain types of employment and higher education. Still, there are no le-

gal hindrances to advancement for women, and they are present in respectable numbers in the governmental and private sectors. Women, including several professors at the University of Dakar, are prominent among Senegal's intellectual elite. Senegal also has several organizations actively promoting women's rights, including the Federation of Women's Rights. The federation has ties to a number of women's groups in Africa and, since 1979, has been a sister organization of the National Council of Negro Women in the United States.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 19
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 0.68
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: —

WORK

The labor force in 2003 numbered 4.65 million, with the unemployment rate in 2001 approaching 50 percent. About 70 percent of the labor force is involved in agriculture, about half of that number in subsistence agriculture. Major crops include peanuts, millet, corn, sorghum, rice, vegetables, cattle, poultry, and fish. Key problems for Senegal's agricultural industry are periodic severe droughts and a lack of arable land, which constitutes only about 13 percent of the nation's land area. A small industrial sector, which contributes about 21 percent to the nation's GDP, is engaged in food processing, phosphate mining, fertilizer production, oil refining, and construction materials. Services, including tourism, contribute 63 percent of GDP.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 4,650,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 43.2
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 70
 Other: 30
 Unemployment %: 48

EDUCATION

Education is free, universal, and compulsory for six years, between ages six and 12.

Schooling lasts for 13 years total, as divided into six years of elementary education, four years of middle school, and three years of upper secondary school. The curriculum is based on the French model, with African elements added.

The school year runs from October to June. The language of instruction is French, but secondary students are

required to learn either English or Arabic as a second language. Elementary school teachers are trained at normal schools, secondary teachers at the Higher Teacher Training School.

There are two types of vocational training schools: The first, called training centers (*centres de formation*), offer a three-year program leading to a certificate; the second, called technical agent schools (*écoles d'agents techniques*), offer a four-year program leading to a diploma. Shorter programs are offered by the National Center of Professional Courses.

The educational system is administered by four government departments: the Ministry of National Education, the Ministry of Technical Education and Vocational Training, the Ministry of Popular Education, and the Ministry of Youth and Sports.

Higher education is provided by the University of Dakar and the University Gaston Berger, of Saint-Louis, a second national university established in 1990, with France meeting half the cost.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 40.2
Male %: 50.0
Female %: 30.7
School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: —
First Level: Primary Schools: 2,454
Teachers: 26,325
Students: 1,287,093
Student-Teacher Ratio: 48.9
Net Enrollment Ratio: 57.9
Second Level: Secondary Schools: 359
Teachers: 10,749
Students: 284,788
Student-Teacher Ratio: 27.1
Net Enrollment Ratio: —
Third Level: Institutions: 2
Teachers: —
Students: —
Gross Enrollment Ratio: —
Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 3.2

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

As a relatively poor nation, Senegal engages in little scientific and technological research. At the University of Dakar, funding for such research is limited. What research is conducted through the universities, under government sponsorship, or by international organizations focuses primarily on agriculture; there is also an oceanographic institute.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
High-Tech Exports \$million: 36.3
Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

Five daily newspapers were published in Dakar as of 1998. *Le soleil* is owned by the PSS, and *Le democrat* is a monthly published by the PDS. Major French dailies, such as *Le monde*, *Le figaro*, and *France-soir*, are available in Dakar on the day of publication. There were some 139 periodicals and nondaily publications.

The national news agencies are Agence de Presse Sénégalais and the Pan-African News Agency. Foreign agencies represented in Dakar include AFP, Reuters, UPI, AP, ITAR-TASS, Novosti, ANSA, and DPA.

The Office de Radiodiffusion-Télévision du Sénégal operates both radio and television broadcasting as an autonomous public body. It provides just one television channel. Additionally, Senegal has five private radio stations.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 5
Total Circulation 000: —
Circulation per 1,000: —
Books Published: —
Periodicals: 139
Radio Receivers million: 1.4
per 1,000: 126
Television sets 000: 375
per 1,000: 41

CULTURE

Senegal has a long tradition of oral literature. The nation's first leader after independence, Léopold Senghor, was himself a poet and philosopher and one of the guiding lights behind the negritude movement, oriented around boosting pride in Africa's cultural heritage. More recently, the nation has produced prominent filmmakers such as Safi Faye and Ousmane Sembene. Traditional music is performed with the *kora*, a stringed calabash instrument, and many modern musical groups have adapted Senegalese traditional music to modern forms such as rap. Griots, traditional bardic storytellers, perform this type of music to narrate stories about Senegal's past and its traditions. One popular performer is Youssou N'dour, who has collaborated with Western performers such as Paul Simon and Branford Marsalis.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 12
Volumes: 267,000
Registered borrowers: 7,103
Museums Number: 8
Annual Attendance: 55,000
Cinema Gross Receipts: —
Number of Cinemas: —
Seating Capacity: —
Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Much of Senegal's folklore and mythology is connected with its religious traditions. While the country is largely Muslim, the people have incorporated traditional animistic beliefs into their religious outlook. For example, many Wolof wear protective amulets to protect them from evil spirits. Traditionally, the Wolof also carried small bags called gris-gris filled with protective medicines and herbs; they now carry verses of the Koran in the bags.

Senegal has a long tradition of oral storytellers called griots. These figures are similar to the minstrels of the Middle Ages. Using props, song, narration, and musical instruments, they perform works that preserve the nation's culture and history.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

The Senegalese pursue many forms of recreation, including folk dancing, theatrical performances, and music. These activities are common in cities such as Dakar, but in rural areas Muslim leaders often discourage music and dance. Listening to the radio is commonplace, and several radio stations broadcast popular music such as hip-hop. Sports, movies, video rentals, and films have grown in popularity, again especially in the cities. Many older men play checkers. Another popular form of entertainment is simply visiting friends and family, and unannounced visits are not regarded as ill-mannered; what would be ill-mannered would be to allow visitors to leave without serving a meal, or at least tea.

ETIQUETTE

As in many Muslim and African countries, greetings are an important part of social interactions, and they can often last for protracted periods of time, with inquiries about the health and well-being of the other person as well as of that person's family—all interspersed with comments in praise of Allah, the Muslim deity. In Dakar, the French custom of kissing another on the cheek is common, but in the villages hand shaking is more common; however, men and women do not shake each other's hands. Great respect is accorded those of higher social standing, and girls still curtsy to their elders. Pointing is considered rude, although it is acceptable to point with the tongue. Many friends and people who belong to extended clans carry on joking relationships, called "dialogue," that consist of putdowns about such matters as the other's intelligence or cleanliness.

FAMILY LIFE

In the rural areas of Senegal, marriages are still arranged. The man's father usually appoints a go-between to de-

termine if the woman he has chosen is suitable. If she is, the man's father approaches the woman's father to discuss the matter, usually bearing a gift. If the woman's parents accept the gift, that means they agree to the marriage. Among the Wolof, a matrilineal group, the brother of the prospective groom's mother approaches the prospective bride's family. After marriage, the wife is likely to live with her husband's family in the same compound, with the nuclear family as the key domestic unit. Families in Senegal tend to be large; in 2005 there were over 35 births per 1,000 population, and the fertility rate that year was nearly five children per woman.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

In the cities, the Senegalese wear Western-style clothing, and great value is placed on having a neat and groomed personal appearance. Women generally wear dresses, while men wear shirts and trousers. Few people wear shorts, which are reserved for children; few women wear pants, and fewer still wear jeans. Traditional dress includes the boubou, a cotton tunic, often elaborately embroidered, with openings under the arms, which men wear over pants and women wear over a sarong. Women devote considerable time to tying matching turbans or scarves on their heads.

SPORTS

A traditional sport among the Wolof is *laamb*, which is translated as "fight" and refers to a form of wrestling. Such a match is an elaborate event, with singers, storytellers, and dancers all on hand to comment on the fight and praise the contestants. Modern sports that are popular include basketball, track and field, and soccer. In 2002 the Senegalese national soccer team advanced to the quarterfinals in World Cup play and returned home to a heroes' welcome; even the president and prime minister joined the throng greeting the team at the airport.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1960** Senegal withdraws from the Mali Federation and declares its independence. Léopold Senghor is elected president and Mamadou Dia prime minister.
- 1962** Dia leads abortive coup against Senghor; with the help of the army, Senghor arrests Dia; office of prime minister is abolished.
- 1963** New constitution is promulgated.
- 1968** Senghor declares an emergency in the wake of student riots.
- 1970** Electorate approves new constitutional amendment by overwhelming vote; Abdou Diouf is named to the re-created post of prime minister.

- 1973** Catastrophic drought strikes the Sahel. Senegal breaks domestic relations with Guinea and Israel. The Senegalization of employment is adopted as official policy.
- 1974** Parti Démocratique Sénégalais (PDS) is formed as the first legal opposition since 1964.
- 1975** All political prisoners are released under a general amnesty; three political parties are authorized, representing the right, center, and left, respectively.
- 1978** Léopold Senghor is reelected president with 82 percent of the national vote; the opposition PDS gains 17 of 100 seats in the National Assembly. President Senghor attends the summit of reconciliation at Monrovia with Guinea and Liberia.
- 1981** President Senghor steps down and names Prime Minister Abdou Diouf as his successor. On the request of President Sir Dawda Jawara of the Gambia, Senegal sends troops to Bathurst to quell a military coup. The Gambia and Senegal agree on a confederation of two states, known as Senegambia, with a common president, military forces, and monetary institutions. In a major cabinet reshuffle, Diouf drops two cabinet ministers: Adrien Senghor, the ex-president's nephew, and Louis Alexandrenne, the powerful planning minister.
- 1982** The Confederation of Senegambia comes into effect.
- 1983** In his first presidential election, Diouf wins an easy victory and carries his PSS to a dominant position in the National Assembly, with 111 of 120 seats. Prime Minister Habib Thiam is demoted to president of the National Assembly and is later forced to vacate that post as well.
- 1984** Casamance separatists battle police, claiming 24 lives in one of the most violent civil disturbances in the country's history.
- 1985** Opposition parties attempt to unify, forming the Senegalese Democratic Alliance, which is banned.
- 1988** Diouf is reelected, and his party wins a majority of seats in the National Assembly; urban violence erupts as a result of declining economic conditions and charges of election irregularities.
- 1989** Relations between Senegal and Mauritania reach a crisis in a dispute over farming rights along the two countries' border; the attempted Senegambia union is dissolved.
- 1990** Ethnic violence continues against Senegalese in Mauritania and against Mauritians in Senegal, as the border war between the two countries continues; Senegal sends troops to back U.S.-led UN forces in the Persian Gulf.
- 1991** Senegal and the Gambia sign a treaty of cooperation.
- 1993** Diouf is elected to a third term as president; anti-government demonstrations turn violent, and a state of emergency is briefly declared to restore order.
- 1998** Casamance separatists suspend violence as parliamentary elections take place; opposition members charge election fraud when Socialist Party candidates win a large majority; separatist activities resume; parliament passes a law making Diouf president for life.
- 2000** On his fifth attempt, Abdoulaye Wade of the Democratic Party is elected president, breaking 40 years of Socialist Party rule; Diouf relinquishes control peacefully; Senegal and Guinea-Bissau agree to cooperate to restore peace along the common border, particularly in the Casamance region; the government attempts to negotiate peace with Casamance separatists.
- 2001** A new constitution is approved by public referendum. The Democratic Party wins an overwhelming majority in parliamentary elections.
- 2002** In September, more than 1,800 people are killed when the Joola ferry capsizes off the Gambian coast; later that year, Wade dismisses the prime minister and the rest of the government, allegedly over the government's handling of the disaster.
- 2003** The leader of the Casamance Movement of Democratic Forces (MFDC) says that the secessionist war is over.
- 2004** The government and the MFDC sign a pact to end secessionist violence.

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OFFICIAL PUBLICATIONS

- Senegal.** *Recensement de la Population et de l'Habitat 2001; Situation économique du Sénégal* (annual)

CONTACT INFORMATION

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- République du Sénégal (in French)
<http://www.primature.sn/>

SERBIA AND MONTENEGRO

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Serbia and Montenegro (Srbija i Crna Gora)

ABBREVIATION

CS

CAPITAL

Belgrade

HEAD OF STATE & HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

President Svetozar Marović (from 2003)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Republic

POPULATION

10,829,175 (2005)

AREA

102,350 sq km (39,517 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Serb, Albanian, Montenegrin, Hungarian

LANGUAGES

Serbian, Albanian

RELIGIONS

Orthodoxy, Islam

UNITS OF CURRENCY

Dinar (legal tender in Serbia and Kosovo), euro (legal tender in Montenegro and Kosovo, de facto currency in Serbia)

NATIONAL FLAG

Tricolor of blue (top), white, and red horizontal stripes

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A red shield containing a two-headed silver eagle behind a quartered shield containing the national symbols of Montenegro (the golden lion of the Petrovic dynasty) and of Serbia (four fire steels).

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Hej Sloveni” (O Slavs)

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year’s Day), February 15 (Serbia National Day), April 27 (Constitution Day), May 1 (Labour Day), May 9 (Victory Day), November 29 (Communist Yugoslavia Day), various Orthodox holidays

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

April 27, 1992

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

February 4, 2003

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Serbia and Montenegro is located in southeastern Europe, on the Balkan Peninsula. The nation has a total land area of 102,350 sq km (39,517 sq mi). Serbia accounts for 83 percent of the total territory. Serbia and Montenegro’s greatest distances are 465 km (289 mi) from the northwest to the southeast and 400 km (249 mi) from the southwest to the northeast. The nation shares its total boundary length of 2,246 km (1,396 mi) with seven neighbors: Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Macedonia, Albania, Croatia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina. The total Adriatic coastline is 199 km (124 mi). The capital is Belgrade.

Geographically, Serbia and Montenegro are very different. On the north of Serbia there are the Pannonian

plains, rich and fertile land up to 100 m (328 ft) above sea level. The central part of Serbia, Sumadija, is characterized by hills and mountains that terminate in the southwest with Mount Kopaonik, which reaches 2,017 m (6,617 ft). The eastern part of Serbia is marked by the Carpathian Mountains, with the highest peak, Stara Planina, reaching 2,167 m (7,109 ft). Situated in the south is the Metohija Basin, which finishes with the Prokletije Mountains, which have the highest peak in all of Serbia and Montenegro: Djeravica (2,656 m; 8,714 ft). The Kosovo Basin lies to the east of Metohija.

Montenegro is largely mountainous, especially along the borders with Kosovo and Albania. The highest peak in Montenegro is Bobotov Kuk, at 2,522 m (8,274 ft). In the southwest the Adriatic Sea binds Montenegro. Near the coast is Lake Skadarsko Jezero (Scutari), the largest

Serbia and Montenegro



lake in the country. Its surface area is 369.7 sq km (142.7 sq mi). The Skadarsko Jezero is shared with Albania.

Most of the nation's drainage belongs to the Danubian system and after that to the Black Sea. The most im-

portant rivers are the Danube, Drina, Sava, Tisa, Great Morava, and Tara. The Tisa and the Danube are connected with the Grande Canal, which is 123 km (76.4 mi) long.

Geography

Area sq km: 102,350; sq mi 39,517
 World Rank: 106th
 Land Boundaries, km: Albania 287; Macedonia 221; Bosnia and Herzegovina 527; Bulgaria 318; Croatia 266; Hungary 151; Romania 476
 Coastline, km: 199
 Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Adriatic Sea 0
 Highest: Daravica 2,656
 Land Use %
 Arable Land: 33.4
 Permanent Crops: 3.2
 Forest: 28.3
 Other: 35.1

Population of Principal Cities (2002)

Belgrade	1,120,092
Kragujevac	146,373
Niš	173,724
Novi Sad	191,405
Podgorica	136,473
Priština	165,844
Prizren	107,614

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Serbia and Montenegro has a continental climate, with hot summers and cold winters. Only the southern part of Montenegro and the coastal zone have a Mediterranean climate, with dry, hot summers and mild, rainy winters. The northern part of Yugoslavia, Vojvodina, also has hot summers, with temperatures up to 40°C (104°F), and cold winters, when the temperature drops to -20°C (-10°F). The average temperature in Belgrade in July is 21°C (69°F), in January 0°C (32°F). The average temperature in Podgorica is 27°C (81°F) in July and 6°C (43°F) in January. Summer temperatures in the mountains are cooler, and winters are characterized by heavy snowfall.

Precipitation in Serbia ranges between 560 and 1,900 mm (22 and 75 in). Montenegro's mountainous areas receive one of the highest levels of rainfall in Europe. The annual precipitation at Crkvice, in the Gulf of Kotor, is 4,930 mm (194 in).

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature: July 64°F to 66°F
 January: 36°F to 37°F
 Belgrade: January 27°F to 37°F
 July: 61°F to 84°F
 Average Rainfall: 39 in to 79 in
 Belgrade: 24.6 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Serbia and Montenegro is covered with forests, which vary in type by region. The Dinaric Alps are home to

giant pine trees, while linden trees are more common in the Fruska Gora mountains. Many species of herbs and medicinal plants, such as mint and chamomile, grow wild. Animals include foxes, lynx, wild boars, deer, marten, woodpeckers, nightingales, and partridges. Many of the nation's animals fled to Bulgaria during the war, but they are gradually returning.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 10,829,175
 World Rank: 74th
 Density per sq km: 79.45
 % of annual growth (1999-2003): -0.1
 Male %: 49.2
 Female %: 50.8
 Urban %: 52.0
 Age Distribution %: 0-14: 18.1
 15-64: 66.9
 65 and over: 15.0
 Population 2025: 10,642,000
 Birth Rate per 1,000: 12.12
 Death Rate per 1,000: 10.49
 Rate of Natural Increase %: 0.2
 Total Fertility Rate: 1.67
 Expectation of Life (years): Males 72.15
 Females 77.51
 Marriage Rate per 1,000: 5.4
 Divorce Rate per 1,000: 0.8
 Average Size of Households: 3.6
 Induced Abortions: 58,739

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Serbia and Montenegro is a multinational state with 37 different nationalities, most of which have historically had difficulty getting along. Most of the population is of South Slavic origin. The largest ethnic groups are Serbs (62 percent), followed by Albanians (16 percent), Montenegrins (5 percent), and Hungarians (3 percent). Serbs are the largest ethnic group in Serbia (constituting almost two-thirds of the population), while Montenegrins are the majority in Montenegro (62 percent). More than 90 percent of Albanians live in the province of Kosovo, and most of the Hungarians live in the province of Vojvodina. Smaller ethnic communities, such as those of Slovaks, Romanians, Valachians, and Germans, are concentrated in Vojvodina and in eastern Serbia. Turks live primarily in Kosovo, as do Egyptians and Gorrans. The Muslim population is concentrated in the southwestern part of Serbia called Sandzak.

The ethnic composition of the nation has been in flux for some years. During the years of war, Serbs from other former Yugoslav republics immigrated to Serbia, while resident Bosnians and Croats fled the country. Serbian police expelled ethnic Albanians from Kosovo

in 1999, but those Albanians returned after North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) forces entered Serbia. Ethnic tensions between Serbia and Montenegro continue.

LANGUAGES

The official language of Serbia and Montenegro is Serbian. The Serbian language belongs to the Southern Slavic subgroup of the Slavic group of the Indo-European family of languages. Serbs and Montenegrins speak different variants of the Serbian language. The variant used in Serbia is called *ekavica*, and the variant used in Montenegro is called *ijekavica*. National minorities speak their own languages. Albanians use the Albanian language, which is also derived from the Indo-European family of languages (the so-called Satemic or Thracillyrian language). Hungarians speak the Hungarian language, which belongs to the Finno-Ugric group of the Uralic family of languages.

Two types of alphabetic script are in use. Serbian-speaking peoples use primarily the Cyrillic alphabet, a script developed in the ninth century by the Orthodox missionary brothers Saint Cyril and Saint Methodius. The Cyrillic alphabet is mostly in use among Orthodox peoples. The Latin alphabet is in use among other ethnic and religious communities, such as Catholics or Protestants, including Croats and Hungarians, as well as among Albanians and Muslims.

RELIGIONS

The predominant religion in Serbia and Montenegro is Orthodox Christianity, which is adhered to by 65 percent of the population. The Serbian Orthodox Church was the main church in Serbia and Montenegro until 1993, when the autonomous Montenegro Church was established. Most Albanians are Muslims, of the Sunni branch. The Muslim population (19 percent) is concentrated in Kosovo, as well as in the Sandzak region. Roman Catholics (5 percent) and Protestants (1 percent) are concentrated in Vojvodina Province, where most Catholic and Protestant Hungarians live. Some Albanians in Kosovo are Catholics. A small Jewish community also exists.

Religious Affiliations

Orthodox	7,039,000
Muslim	2,057,500
Roman Catholic	433,000
Protestant	108,500
Other	1,191,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Yugoslavia that existed until early 2003 was the third state in history with the same name. The first state called Yugoslavia was proclaimed on December 1, 1918, as the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes. Its name was changed to the Kingdom of Yugoslavia in 1929. It had 12 million inhabitants and covered an area of 247,542 sq km (95,576 sq mi). The second state bearing the name Yugoslavia was proclaimed on November 29, 1943, as the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia, which was ruled by a Communist regime. Its population was nearly 24 million, and it covered an area of 255,804 sq km (98,766 sq mi). The most recent Yugoslavia was proclaimed on April 27, 1992, as the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. It consisted of the Republic of Serbia and the Republic of Montenegro. It encompassed 40 percent of the area and 45 percent of the population of the former Yugoslavia.

The South Slavic population inhabiting Serbia and Montenegro converted to Christianity in the eighth and ninth centuries. In the 12th century two kingdoms were established: Zeta (on the territory of today's Montenegro) and Raska (today's Serbia). Stephen Nemanja was the founder of the Serbian royal dynasty and the king who united the two kingdoms in the 12th century. His youngest son, Rastko, became the first Serbian archbishop in the independent Serbian archbishopric. Subsequently, he was canonized as St. Sava. After him, Serbian Orthodoxy is also known as St. Sava Orthodoxy (Svetosavlje).

From the 14th century Turks occupied all of the Serbian territory, although the tiny principality of Montenegro was never fully subdued. The first Serbian uprising occurred in 1804, as led by Djordje Petrovic, who was known as Black George (Karadjordje), the second in 1814, as led by Milos Obrenovic. Serbia was fully recognized as an independent state in 1878 by the Congress of Berlin. In 1882 Milan Obrenovic took the title of king and declared Serbia a kingdom. Montenegro was ruled by the Petrovic-Njegos family, and in 1878 the Congress of Berlin made it an independent state. In 1910 Prince Nikola I Petrovic-Njegos took the title of king.

After the First World War, on December 1, 1918, Montenegro became a part of the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. Serbia's King Alexander I (Karadjordjevic) ruled the first Yugoslavia until he was assassinated in 1934 in Marseilles, France. Germany attacked Yugoslavia on April 6, 1941, and after just 11 days Yugoslavia capitulated. Peter II, the successor of Alexander I, left the country and went with the government to London. During the war two guerrilla groups were formed: Chetniks and partisans. The first group was the so-called royal army, under the command of Colonel Dragoljub-Draza Mihailovic. The second group was under the command of the Communist leader Josip Broz Tito. Tito's forces defeated the Chetniks and together with the Russian Red Army liberated Yugoslavia. The monarchy was

abolished, and on October 29, 1945, the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia was proclaimed; Tito became the Yugoslavian president. The country was to become one of the satellites of the Soviet Union, but Tito split from Stalin in 1948 to preserve Yugoslavia's independence while remaining a Communist state.

After the break with Stalin, Tito proclaimed reforms and decentralized administration. Yugoslavia was a federation of six republics—Croatia, Montenegro, Serbia, Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Macedonia—along with the two provinces in Serbia: Kosovo and Vojvodina. Relationships between the federal state and the republics eventually led to conflicts. The 1974 constitution gave equal rights of sovereignty to the federal state and to each of the six republics. Yugoslav leadership tried to solve the economic problems the country faced in the 1980s through massive foreign borrowing. Disagreement on how to resolve economic discrepancies between the richer western part of the country and poorer east led to political conflicts, which in turn led to the disintegration of Yugoslavia.

As of 1989 Yugoslavia witnessed the rise of ethnic tensions, which quickly turned into violent civil war that was largely engineered by the Serbian leader Slobodan Milosevic. In 1991 Slovenia, Croatia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina declared their independence from Yugoslavia; Macedonia followed suit in 1992. On April 27, 1992, Serbia and Montenegro established the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, a country that was not formally recognized by the United Nations.

In 1999 the Serbian police and the Yugoslav army began crackdowns on ethnic Albanian rebels in the Serbian provinces of Kosovo and Metohija. Hundreds of thousands of Albanians were forced to leave their homes. In March 1999 NATO forces began massive air strikes against Serbian forces; after 78 days the Serbian forces and Yugoslav army withdrew from Kosovo and Metohija, and NATO soldiers under the UN flag came in.

In March 2002 Serbia and Montenegro reached an agreement signed by the Montenegrin president Milo Đukanović and Yugoslav president Vojislav Koštunica to create a loose union to be called Serbia and Montenegro. The EU-negotiated accord radically restructured Yugoslavia, with both republics gaining greater autonomy. The republics planned to vote on full independence after at least three years of unified government. Although parliaments in both republics signed the agreement, Prime Minister Filip Vujanović of Montenegro and various ministers resigned in April over the independence issue.

The new state of Serbia and Montenegro came into existence in February 2003, when the Yugoslav parliament approved the new constitutional charter. The two states both experienced some difficulty in creating their own governments, with a series of inconclusive elections occurring in each of them. Vujanović became president of Montenegro in May 2003, but Serbia did not manage

to elect a president until Boris Tadić won the election in June 2004. The assassination of the Serbian prime minister in March 2003 was a major disruption to the new government, which immediately cracked down on organized crime.

The leadership of both states has been plagued by allegations of war crimes committed in the 1990s. Serbia indicted Milosevic in 2003 and began the process of trying suspects of war crimes in 2004.

Ethnic tension has remained a major problem, as has the legal status of Kosovo. Many ethnic Albanians live in Kosovo and want to see their state become independent of Serbia. Ethnic violence between Serbs and Albanians was a regular problem in the early 2000s. The fate of the union as a whole was in some doubt in early 2005. Montenegro's leaders disliked ties to Serbia, which has had more economic difficulties, and suggested that the two republics end the union ahead of schedule. Serbia's leaders did not agree to such action. Serbia's president has supported European integration but has not received sufficient support from the citizenry.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

President

2003– Svetozar Marović

CONSTITUTION

Serbia and Montenegro declared themselves the successor to the former Yugoslavia in 1991 and adopted the constitution of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in 1992. Under this constitution each of the two republics had its own president, parliament, and constitution.

In March 2002 Serbia and Montenegro agreed to abolish the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and create a new union, called Serbia and Montenegro. Under the EU-negotiated accord, Serbia and Montenegro share defense and foreign policies and a seat at the United Nations but maintain separate economies, currencies, and customs services. The Constitutional Charter for the new state was ratified on February 4, 2003.

The nation has a federal president who functions as the chief of state and head of government. The president is elected by parliament to a four-year term. The president of Yugoslavia, Vojislav Koštunica, ceased to hold office when the position was terminated with the election of Svetozar Marović as president of Serbia and Montenegro.

The Council of Ministers acts as the cabinet. There are five ministries: foreign affairs, defense, international economic relations, internal economic relations, and protection of human and minority rights. The president and two ministers come from one member state, and the other three ministers come from the other. The presi-

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dent proposes candidates for ministries, who must then be approved by the parliament. Ministers serve four-year terms.

The legislative branch is filled by a unicameral parliament. The Federal Court has an equal number of judges from each republic and fulfills both constitutional and administrative functions.

According to the Constitutional Charter, the union was to remain in place for at least three years, whereupon the republics could vote on whether to stay together or separate. In early 2005 Montenegro's leaders wrote to the Serbian leadership suggesting that the union be ended early because it was inefficient and expensive to run. The Serbian leadership rejected this proposal.

PARLIAMENT

The Republic of Serbia and the Republic of Montenegro each have their own parliaments through which internal matters are handled. Each of these parliaments supplies members to a unicameral federal Parliament. The federal Parliament has 126 seats—91 for Serbia and 35 for Montenegro. These seats were originally filled with nominees selected by the two state parliaments. The most recent constitution called for general elections to be held in 2005 to choose elected representatives.

POLITICAL PARTIES

The political climate has been tumultuous since the republic was founded in 2003. The main Serbian parties are the Serbian Radical Party (SRS), the Democratic Party of Serbia (DSS), the Democratic Party (DS), the G17 Plus, the Serbian Renewal Movement in coalition with New Serbia (SPO-NS), and the Serbian Socialist Party (SPS).

Parties from Montenegro include the Democratic Party of Socialists (DPS), the Socialist People's Party (SNP), the Social Democratic Party (SDP), and the Liberal Party of Montenegro (LSCG).

Kosovo has numerous political parties participating in local elections. In 2004 the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK) won 46 percent of the vote, while the Democratic Party of Kosovo (PDK) came in second. The LDK later formed a coalition with the Alliance for the Future of Kosovo (AAK).

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Serbia and Montenegro consists of the two republics of Serbia and Montenegro and two nominally autonomous provinces, Kosovo and Vojvodina. Both republics have their own constitutions, presidents, parliaments, and governments. The Serbian parliament is the unicameral Na-

tional Assembly, with 250 seats. The president of Serbia is Boris Tadic, of the Democratic Party. The parliament of Montenegro is the unicameral National Assembly, with 85 seats. Montenegro's president is Filip Vujanović. Both republics are divided into regions and communes, which handle local affairs.

The status of Kosovo was not defined as of early 2005. The region is legally part of Serbia and Montenegro but exists as an independent protectorate of the United Nations. Kosovo's politicians established a coalition government in March 2002, and the United Nations has assisted the state in creating internal ministries. Kosovo held its own parliamentary elections in 2004.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The constitutional charter created the Court of Serbia and Montenegro, which functions as the highest legal authority of the nation. It can invalidate Serbian or Montenegrin laws and regulations that violate the constitutional charter and national laws. The court contains an equal number of judges from Serbia and Montenegro. The Parliament appoints judges to six-year terms. The court sits in Podgorica.

HUMAN RIGHTS

The human rights record in Serbia and Montenegro has been relatively good since the departure of Milosevic, and the government has been moving ahead with the prosecution of war crimes, though there are still many problems. The police forces have arrested people arbitrarily, and there have been reports of torture and lengthy detention. Trials are lengthy, and the judiciary does not cooperate well with other branches of the government. Organized crime is still a viable presence. There were some suggestions that the government overreacted to the assassination of Serbian Prime Minister Zoran Djindjic in 2003 in declaring a state of emergency, which resulted in police brutality, torture, and the arrests of several thousand citizens.

Ethnic violence and discrimination remain significant problems. Human trafficking and violence against women and children have continued to occur.

FOREIGN POLICY

The Yugoslavia of the 1990s was fairly isolated in the world, with few other nations recognizing its existence. This ended in 1999, just before NATO bombings, when the United States and numerous other nations reestablished diplomatic relations. The nation of Serbia and Montenegro is a member of the United Nations, the Or-

ganization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and other organizations, including the Council of Europe. It has expressed interest in joining NATO's Partnership for Peace. It depends on a large amount of foreign aid, much of which has been contingent on its cooperation in the prosecution of war criminals.

DEFENSE

National defense is provided by the Army of Serbia and Montenegro, which has a ground force, naval forces, an air force, and a civil defense force. The ground army handles both internal security and border issues. Citizens must perform nine months compulsory service upon reaching the age of 19.

Since the assassination of Djindjic the Ministry of Defense has been attempting to reform the military to move the nation closer to integration in Europe and the Atlantic region. The government has dismissed many officers and has made the military subordinate to the civilian defense minister. It has also disbanded the Red Berets, a paramilitary unit of the old secret police.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 109,200
 Military Manpower Availability: 2,389,729
 Military Expenditures \$million: 654
 as % of GDP: 4.0
 as % of central government expenditures: 10.2
 Arms Imports \$million: —
 Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

Serbia and Montenegro are struggling to rebuild their economy, which was devastated during the 1990s by mismanagement under Milosevic, NATO air strikes, and extended economic sanctions. The coalition government began stabilizing the economy in 2000 with help from the World Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. Montenegro handles its own internal economic policies, using the euro instead of the Serbian dinar. Kosovo also functions autonomously but requires a great deal of international assistance. The economy is still awaiting large-scale privatization. A lack of foreign investment, uncertainty over property rights, and high unemployment (of approximately 30 percent) are major obstacles to economic growth.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 26.27
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 2,400

GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (2000–03) %: 4.4
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (2000–03) %: 4.6
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 15.5
 Industry: 27.6
 Services: 56.9

Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 69
 Government Consumption: 28
 Gross Domestic Investment: 14.4
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 3.245
 Imports: 9.538
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: —
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: —

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1997 = 100)

1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
129.9	188.2	349.3	661.0	770.0

Finance

National Currency: New Yugoslav Dinar (YUM), Euro (EUR)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = YUM 59.1929 = EUR 0.886
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: —
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: —
 Total External Debt \$billion: 12.97
 Debt Service Ratio %: 17.22
 Balance of Payments \$billion: –3.008
 International Reserves SDRs \$million: —
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
 8.8

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$billion: 1.3
 per capita \$: 162.50
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 1.36

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$billion: 9.773
 Expenditures \$billion: 10.46
 Budget Deficit \$million: 687
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: 22.8

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 15.5
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: —
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: —
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: —
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: —
 Total Farmland % of land area: —
 Livestock: Cattle million: 1.8
 Chickens million: 21.1
 Pigs million: 3.33
 Sheep million: 1.65
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 3.2
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 3.8

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Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: —
Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 1.7

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 9.9
Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 14
Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 1.3
Net Energy Imports % of use: 32.7
Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 9.6
 Production kW-hr billion: 31.7
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 32.4
Coal Reserves tons billion: 17.9
 Production tons million: 39.46
 Consumption tons million: 39.62
Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: 1.7
 Production cubic feet billion: 21
 Consumption cubic feet billion: 21
Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels million: 77.5
 Production barrels 000 per day: 14
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 67
Pipelines Length km: 393

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 9.538
Exports \$billion: 3.245
Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 8.5
Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 15.4
Balance of Trade \$billion: –3.008

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Germany %	18.6	17.4
Italy %	16.1	31.5
Austria %	8.5	6.2
Slovenia %	6.6	4.0
Hungary %	5.8	—
Bulgaria %	4.6	—
France %	4.6	6.0
Greece %	4.5	5.9

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 45,290
 Paved %: 62.4
Automobiles: 1,481,400
Trucks and Buses: 330,500
Railroad: Track Length km: 4,380
 Passenger-km billion: 1.2
 Freight-km billion: 2.3
Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 2
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: —
Airports: 44
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 1.1
Length of Waterways km: 587

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 448
Number of Tourists from 000: —
Tourist Receipts \$million: 77
Tourist Expenditures \$million: —

Communications

Telephones million: 2.6
Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.01
Cellular Telephones million: 3.6
Personal Computers 000: 290
Internet Hosts per million people: 1,866
Internet Users per 1,000 people: 78

ENVIRONMENT

Air, soil, and drinking-water pollution in Serbia and Montenegro are very high, due to heavy industrialization. In Montenegro, sewage runoff from tourist areas has polluted coastal waters. The nation was long one of the most important European centers of biodiversity, containing a variety of plant and animal life, but the heavy bombing in 1999 was fairly destructive to the environment. According to the Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe, based in Szentendre, Hungary, NATO bombings caused high levels of pollution around the main military targets, particularly chemical industry plants. More than 1,000 tons of ethylene dichloride and nearly 1,000 tons of hydrogen chloride spilled from the Pancevo petrochemical complex into the Danube. Vinyl chloride monomers reached a concentration ten thousand times greater than the acceptable level. Scientists anticipate serious effects on human health, including the longer-term effects of toxic, carcinogenic substances and radiation.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 28.3
Forest Change (1990–2000) hectares 000: —1
Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 4
Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 98,696
CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 3.72

LIVING CONDITIONS

About half the people in Serbia and Montenegro live in rural areas, half in urban. Rural people live in small houses with yards. In the cities most people live in high-rise apartments. Many buildings were destroyed during the war, and housing is in short supply. The transition from state-owned housing to private property ownership has been difficult. The cost of living in most of the nation is low compared to that in western Europe, though

coastal Montenegro can be quite expensive. Trains and buses are slow but fairly inexpensive.

HEALTH

Health in Serbia and Montenegro has improved tremendously since the 1930s, when the people of Yugoslavia were some of the unhealthiest in Europe, as the Communists modernized the health care system and provided medical insurance for everyone. The individual republics administer their own health-care systems. Life expectancy in 2005 was almost 75 years. The biggest health problems are now cancer and circulatory diseases caused by smoking and pollution.

Health

Number of Physicians: —
 Number of Dentists: —
 Number of Nurses: —
 Number of Pharmacists: —
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: —
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 12.89
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 11
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 8.1
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 120
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.2
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 89
 Measles: 87
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 87
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 93

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Food in Serbia and Montenegro is heavy on potatoes, meat, and dairy products. For breakfast many people eat bread or pastries with butter, cheese, jam, sausages, eggs, sour cream, and yogurt. Lunch is the largest meal of the day, with the evening meal usually lighter. Main dishes include soups, grilled meat, sauerkraut or cabbage, and salads. Cooking has been influenced by that of Greece, Turkey, and Hungary, and people eat many ethnic dishes, such as moussaka, goulash, and shish kebabs. Alcoholic beverages such as wine, beer, and plum brandy are very popular.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 10.5
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,750
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 92.9
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg:
 178.5

STATUS OF WOMEN

Women gained an unprecedented level of equality under the Yugoslav government during the 20th century; women in Serbia and Montenegro are fully integrated into the labor force, working in all the professions and in governmental positions. Nevertheless, women still suffer some discrimination and are typically expected to do most child care and housework. The law requires that women be paid equal wages for equal work, but in practice women are paid less than men on average. Women in rural areas and minority communities tend to have less freedom to work and control property than women in cities. Some rural and minority husbands tell their wives how to vote in elections. Human trafficking in sex slaves is a major problem.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 8
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: —
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 44.9

WORK

About half the country is still rural and predominantly agricultural; crops include grains, fruits, vegetables, tobacco, olives, and livestock. Industry brings in about 28 percent of GDP, employing people to build vehicles and weapons, produce consumer goods such as textiles, and work in metallurgical facilities. Many people in Serbia and Montenegro are unable to find jobs. A large proportion of the workforce is employed by state-owned corporations or the government, and they are extremely resistant to the privatization of the economy. Ethnic tensions remain a problem in the workplace, and some groups, such as Albanians and Serbs, do not like to work with one another.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 3,200,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 43.1
 Labor by Sector %: —
 Unemployment %: 30

EDUCATION

The Communist government built up a comprehensive, modern system of public education, with compulsory primary school, instruction in minority languages for minority students, several tracks of secondary education, and free university tuition. Since the creation of the new

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republic, Serbia and Montenegro have each run their own educational systems. Each state has a wide variety of educational institutions and universities, though many of them suffer from a lack of funding due to the poor state of the economy. International donors have been furnishing educational aid. Literacy is high.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 93.0
Male %: 97.2
Female %: 88.9
School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 12.8
First Level: Primary Schools:
Teachers: 19,204
Students: 379,575
Student-Teacher Ratio: 19.8
Net Enrollment Ratio: 76.0
Second Level: Secondary Schools:
Teachers: 55,916
Students: 494,279
Student-Teacher Ratio: 13.6
Net Enrollment Ratio: 83.0
Third Level: Institutions:
Teachers: 11,639
Students: 208,689
Gross Enrollment Ratio: 36.0
Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 3.3

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The nation's infrastructure declined during the 1990s due to war and neglect. Since the creation of the new republic, both the state and private individuals have been attempting to rebuild facilities up to modern standards. Each republic is attempting to increase the implementation of information technology in an effort to improve economic possibilities. Both Serbia and Montenegro have universities and technical institutes that teach engineering and scientific topics. The nation still lacks a full telecommunications system. In 2003 there were about 2.6 million telephone lines and 3.6 million cellular telephones in operation. Only about 847,000 people were using the Internet, though local Web sites had begun to appear rapidly.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 1,330
Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
High-Tech Exports \$million: —
Patent Applications by Residents: 507

MEDIA

The Serbian news media has enjoyed an unprecedented level of freedom since the ouster of Milosevic. Although journalists still censor themselves to some degree, gov-

ernment restrictions are gone. Some publications and radio stations are outspoken and opinionated on matters of government and ethnicity. Numerous private television stations and perhaps 1,000 new radio stations sprang up in 2003–04, enough to crowd the airwaves; many of these were not likely to survive for long. The state-run television and radio stations are still on the air, and the government is working to develop these into public service enterprises. There are numerous private daily and weekly publications.

Montenegro has historically had a freer press than Serbia. It has had 10 or more privately run publications and broadcasters competing successfully with the state's media outlets, Montenegrin TV and Radio. The journalist Dusko Jovanovic was murdered in May 2004, after he had suggested that the Montenegrin government was corrupt and criticized Montenegrin independence.

In Kosovo, a UN commission has been creating a journalists' code of conduct in an effort to prevent the media from stirring up ethnic hatred and violence. The UN-sponsored Blue Sky Radio broadcasts impartial news reports. International groups have been aiding the development of independent media.

Media

Daily Newspapers: —
Total Circulation 000: —
Circulation per 1,000: —
Books Published: 5,367
Periodicals: —
Radio Receivers 000: —
per 1,000: —
Television sets million: 2.95
per 1,000: 277

CULTURE

The people of Serbia and Montenegro love attending cultural events, and the country has many regularly occurring festivals and fairs. Belgrade has theater, jazz, film, and classical-music festivals. Montenegro hosts various summer festivals and music festivals. An agricultural fair and a children's poetry festival take place in Novi Sad. The Dragacevo Trumpet Festival occurs in Fuca every August. Writers', musicians', and artists' communities have all been reinvigorated since the end of Communism.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 689
Volumes: 13,270,114
Registered borrowers: 5,763,898
Museums Number: —
Annual Attendance: —

Cinema Gross Receipts national currency million: 64.7
 Number of Cinemas: 165
 Seating Capacity: 70,500
 Annual Attendance: 3,867,000

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

The Communists attempted to repress folk culture and religion, but since independence the people have embraced traditional culture with enthusiasm. In truth, folk music and art have never disappeared from Serbia and Montenegro. Local people have played the *gajde* bagpipes for perhaps 1,600 years. Gypsies still perform their traditional songs and dances. Albanians in Kosovo play Arabic instruments to produce a Turkish sound. Painters employ folk motifs in their art, and writers have used folktales in their work. St. Sava, the son of Serbia's first king, from the 1200s, is revered as one of the founders of the Serbian nation.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

People in Serbia and Montenegro love outdoor recreation, such as hiking, white-water rafting, fishing, camping, bicycling, and jogging. Most cities have outdoor paths where people can walk or bicycle amid attractive surroundings. Skiing and other winter sports are extremely popular. Montenegro's beaches attract many residents during the hot summer months.

Urban recreational facilities, including restaurants, bars, and shops, were somewhat disrupted by the years of civil war, and as of 2005 the nation was still working on rebuilding its infrastructure. Locals spend their free time sharing coffee at home or in cafés, watching television, listening to the radio, visiting museums or attending concerts, and reading books and newspapers.

ETIQUETTE

Local people readily invite guests to their homes. When a guest visits a home, the hosts will immediately offer a glass of *rajka* (plum brandy) or coffee. They will often continue to offer food and drink even if a guest declines them. At work, employees hesitate to criticize their superiors publicly, instead trying to communicate concerns indirectly through third parties.

FAMILY LIFE

In the past 50 years households in Serbia and Montenegro have transformed from large extended-family groups

living together under the leadership of an older man to smaller nuclear families with fewer children. In 2004 the average woman had about 1.7 children. Gender roles changed during Communism, and it is now common for women to work outside the home, though they usually still handle most household responsibilities. Families remain loyal to their relatives, and most older people live with family members who care for them. The godparent relationship remains strong.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

People in Serbia and Montenegro dress in typical European clothing. Most people dress up for work; jeans are not acceptable. Men usually wear suits, and women wear dresses or skirts.

SPORTS

The people of Serbia and Montenegro love to play sports. Most communities and schools organize sporting activities and provide facilities for children and the general public. Soccer, hockey, and basketball are extremely popular spectator sports, and many local players have been drafted by teams in the United States. Athletes from the former Yugoslavia have participated in most Olympic sports and have brought home many medals.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1945** Josip Broz Tito leads the Partisans to victory against the Axis powers; the Russian army and Partisans liberate Belgrade; Communists conduct mass executions in Belgrade.
- 1946** Communists take power, a new constitution is promulgated, and the country's name is changed to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.
- 1948** Tito breaks with Stalin, resulting in Yugoslavia's expulsion from the Communist Information Bureau and boycotts by other communist countries.
- 1953** Tito becomes president of Yugoslavia, a post he holds for the next 27 years.
- 1961** Yugoslavia, India, Indonesia, Ghana, Guinea, and Egypt form the Movement of Non-Aligned Nations, a loose association of states with no formal connection with the United States or the USSR during the cold war.
- 1963** The country is renamed the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.
- 1974** A new constitution proclaims Tito president for life and grants full autonomy to each of six republics within Yugoslavia.

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- 1980** Tito dies, and executive power is transferred to a collective presidency.
- 1989** Serbia, under President Slobodan Milosevic, proclaims a new constitution for Yugoslavia and suspends the autonomy of Vojvodina and Kosovo.
- 1991** Slovenia votes for secession in the first free multiparty elections in Yugoslavia and declares independence; Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Macedonia also proclaim independence. War erupts in Croatia between Serbs, backed by the Yugoslav military, and Croats.
- 1992** Civil war erupts in Bosnia and Herzegovina among ethnic Serbs, ethnic Croats, and Bosnian Muslims. Serbia and Montenegro, the remaining states of Yugoslavia, consolidate as the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) and adopt a new constitution. Slobodan Milosevic is re-elected president of Serbia, and Dobrica Cosić is elected the first president of the FRY. The United Nations imposes sanctions and excludes the FRY from its General Assembly. Albanian parties in Kosovo organize illegal elections and elect Ibrahim Rugova as president of Kosovo.
- 1993** Dobrica Cosić is dismissed and replaced by Zoran Lilic; in response to the worst inflation in its history, the FRY adopts the new dinar; opposition leader Vuk Drašković and his wife are beaten and arrested following public protest.
- 1994** Milosevic severs Serbia's links with Bosnian Serbs when they reject a peace proposal; Yugoslavia introduces the "super dinar" in its ongoing fight against hyperinflation.
- 1995** The presidents of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, and Serbia sign a peace accord in Dayton, Ohio, ending the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina; the resettlement of 650,000 Serb refugees from Croatia to Kosovo increases racial tensions in the ethnically Albanian region.
- 1996** Kosovo rebels begin a campaign of violence against Serbian police and civilians; the United Nations lifts sanctions against Yugoslavia.
- 1997** Milo Đukanović is elected president of Montenegro, and Slobodan Milosevic is elected president of Yugoslavia; after three months of demonstrations, Milosevic recognizes opposition victory in major Serbian cities and acknowledges Milan Milutinović as the elected president of Serbia.
- 1998** Momir Bulatovic, an ally of Milosevic, is elected prime minister of Montenegro despite widespread opposition; Montenegro refuses to recognize the federal government. The Albanian separatist group Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) attempts to unify Kosovo with Albania; violence escalates as Serbian police attempt to regain regional control. The United Nations again imposes economic sanctions against Yugoslavia for humanitarian violations.
- 1999** The Yugoslav army and Serbia's police forces pursue ethnic Albanian rebels in Kosovo, forcing hundreds of thousands of Albanians to flee; after 78 days of massive air strikes by NATO, Serbian and Yugoslav forces withdraw from Kosovo. Albanians in turn engage in the ethnic cleansing of almost all remaining Serbs in Kosovo. The International Crime Tribunal for Yugoslavia levels charges of war crimes against humanity upon Slobodan Milosevic of Yugoslavia, Milan Milutinović of Serbia, and other Yugoslavian ministers.
- 2000** Milosevic is ousted in national election and replaced as president by Vojislav Koštunica. Milosevic is arrested.
- 2001** Milosevic is handed over to the International Court of Justice at The Hague.
- 2002** Serbia and Montenegro reach an EU-negotiated agreement to abolish the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and replace it with a loose union to be called Serbia and Montenegro. The republics will be allowed to vote on full independence in three years; Montenegrin Prime Minister Filip Vujanović resigns over the independence issue.
- 2003** Serbia and Montenegro's federal Parliament approves the Constitutional Charter for the union of the two republics. The Parliament elects Svetozar Marović as national president. Serbian prime minister Zoran Djindjic is assassinated. Filip Vujanović is elected president of Montenegro in the third attempt at an election. Milosevic is indicted for murder. Serbia's elections fail to produce a president or parliament; coalition talks begin.
- 2004** Vojislav Koštunica becomes Serbia's prime minister, at the head of a Socialist-center-right coalition. A war crimes trial begins in Belgrade. Serbs and ethnic Albanians fight in Mitrovica. Boris Tadic, of the Democratic Party, is elected president of Montenegro.
- 2005** Serbian border guards shoot an Albanian youth trying to cross the border with Macedonia, sparking protests from ethnic Albanians. Montenegro's leaders write to Serbia's to suggest ending the union early; Koštunica rejects the idea.
- 2006** Milosevic is found dead in his cell in the Hague.

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Serbia and Montenegro. *Poptis stanovisva, domacinstava, stanova I poljoprivrednih gazdnstava 1991 godine* (Census of population, households, housing, and agricultural holdings 1991)

CONTACT INFORMATION

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Serbia and Montenegro Official Web Site
<http://www.gov.yu>

SEYCHELLES

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Seychelles (Repiblik Sesel; République des Seychelles)

ABBREVIATION

SC

CAPITAL

Port Victoria

HEAD OF STATE & HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

President James Michel (from 2004)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Republic

POPULATION

81,188 (2005)

AREA

455 sq km (176 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Creole

LANGUAGES

Creole, English, French

RELIGION

Christianity

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Seychelles rupee

NATIONAL FLAG

Five oblique bands of blue, yellow, red, white, and green radiating from the bottom of the hoist side.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A shield on which the principal element is a cinnamon tree, with a ship and a mountain in the background and a giant tortoise in the foreground. The shield is flanked by two swordfish, and a flying bird appears above. On a banner on the bottom is the national motto in Latin, *Finis coronat opus* (The end crowns the work).

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Koste Seselwa” (Come Together All Seychellois)

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year’s Day), May 1 (Labor Day), June 29 (National Day, Independence Day), various Christian festivals, including Easter, Corpus Christi, Assumption, All Saints’ Day, Immaculate Conception, Christmas

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

June 29, 1976

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

March 26, 1979; revised 1991 and 1993

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

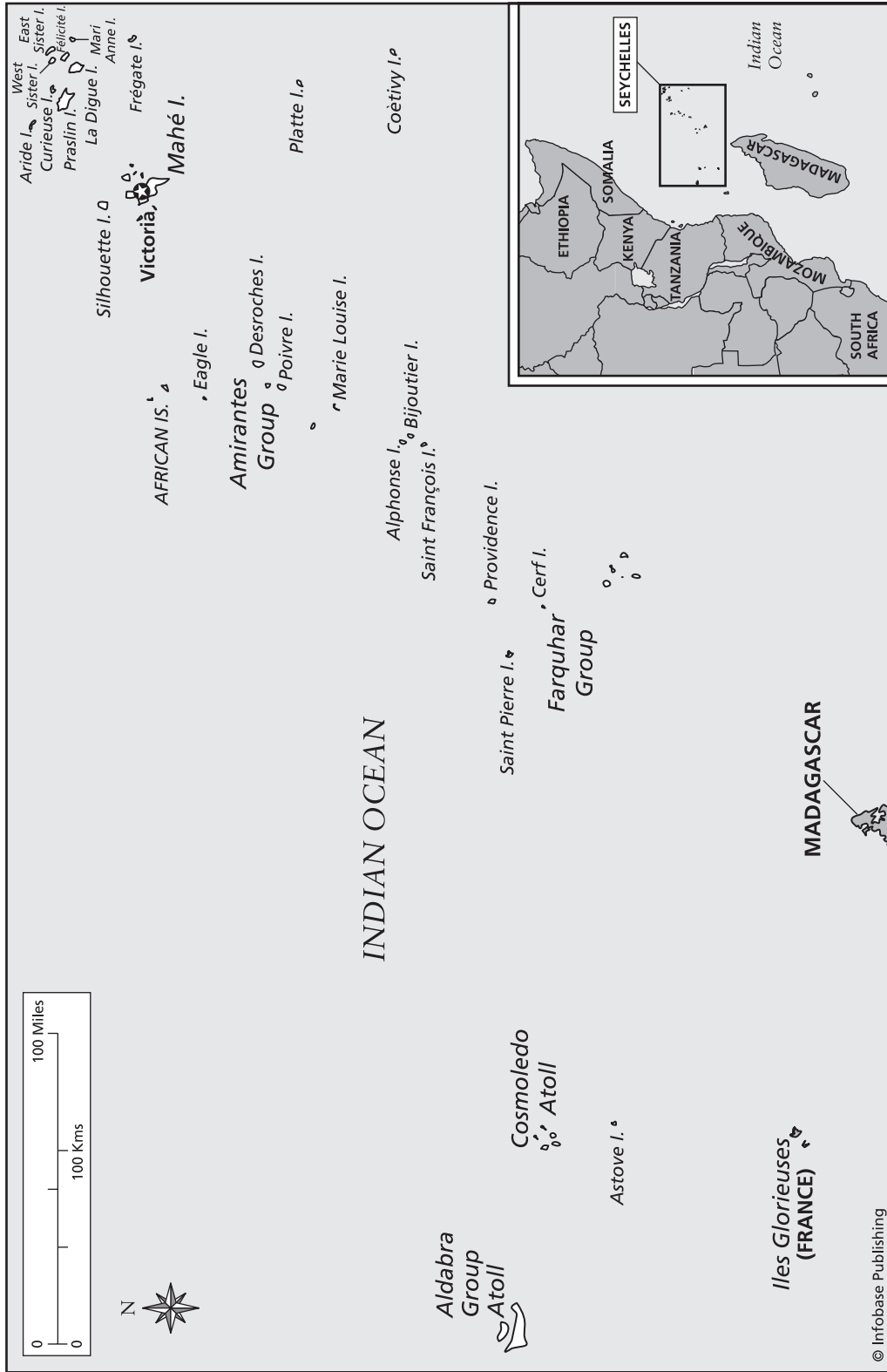
Seychelles consists of the Seychelles Archipelago, a group of some 115 islands widely scattered in the western Indian Ocean, and a number of other island groups, the southernmost of which is 209 km (130 mi) north of Madagascar. Of these islands, 83 have geographical names, and 33 are permanently inhabited. The total land area of the country is 455 sq km (176 sq mi). Mahé, the principal island, is 1,600 km (1,000 mi) off the coast of Kenya and extends 27 km (17 mi) north to south and 11 km (7 mi) east to west, with a coastline of 127 km (79 mi). The total length of the coastline of all the islands is 491 km (305 mi).

The Seychelles islands are generally divided into two groups, of which the granitic islands total 40 and

the coralline islands the remainder. The granitic islands rise above the sea, forming peaks or ridges, while the coralline islands are low-lying, rising only a few feet above the surface of the sea. Besides Mahé, whose land area of 142 sq km (55 sq mi) accounts for one-third of the national territory, the other islands form two principal groups: Praslin, La Digue, Felicité, East Silver, West Silver, Curieuse, and Aride; and Silhouette and North Island. The most easterly island is Frégate, the most southerly is Platte, and the most northerly are Bird and Denis.

Most of Mahé is mountainous; in general the hills rise abruptly from the sea. The highest peaks are Morne Seychellois (905 m; 2,968 ft) and Trois Frères (728 m; 2,390 ft). Towering and rugged crests, cliffs, and boul-

Seychelles



ders contribute to the great natural beauty of the island. Many waterfalls descend from the heights to the white, sandy beaches, which are fronting flats of coral and shell known locally as plateaus. After Mahé, the three largest islands are Praslin, with a maximum elevation of 384 m (1,260 ft); La Digue, with a maximum elevation of 358 m (1,175 ft); and Silhouette, with a maximum elevation of 754 m (2,473 ft). The distance from Mahé to the island farthest from the main group is 1,014 km (630 mi).

Geography

Area sq km: 455; sq mi 176
 World Rank: 179th
 Land Boundaries, km: 0
 Coastline, km: 491
 Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Indian Ocean 0
 Highest: Morne Seychellois 905
 Land Use %
 Arable Land: 2.2
 Permanent Crops: 13.3
 Forest: 66.7
 Other: 17.8

Population of Principal Cities (2002)

Port Victoria	24,970
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CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Although Seychelles lies close to the equator, the climate is equable and healthy because of the maritime influence. The hot season lasts from October to April, the cool season from May to September. Temperatures at sea level are fairly constant, at about 26.6°C (80°F) throughout the year, and rarely exceed 29.4°C (85°F). At higher elevations, temperatures are proportionately lower, falling to 16°C (61°F) at night.

The southeasterly monsoon blows from May to October, during the dry season, while the west-northwesterly monsoon blows from December to March, bringing frequent and heavy rains. The average rainfall on the coast is 2,280 mm (90 in); it increases to about 3,040 mm (120 in) at elevations of up to 183 m (660 ft) and to about 3,810 mm (150 in) at higher levels.

Seychelles lies outside the cyclone belt, and such storms are rarely encountered.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature
 Coastal Regions: 80°F to 85°F
 Average Rainfall
 Coastal Region: 90 in
 Inland Higher Elevations: 120 in to 150 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

The nation's plateau area has been restored to forest, with species such as the mapou, the Indian mulberry, and the *bwa sousouri*. This area is home to numerous birds, including shearwaters and terns. Along the coasts can be found habitat made up of vegetation such as *vouloutye* and *bwa matlo*, in which five of Seychelles' 11 endemic bird species can be found, including robins, sunbirds, fodies, pigeons, and warblers. Cousin Island is the most important nesting site in the Indian Ocean for turtles, and the island is also home to various species of geckos, tortoises, and skinks. The island has the highest density of lizards in the world. On Bird Island, a giant land tortoise named Esmeralda is the largest such tortoise in the world, at 304 kg (670 lbs). At over 200 years old, the tortoise is thought to be the world's oldest living creature.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 81,188
 World Rank: 180th
 Density per sq km: 185.9
 % of annual growth (1999-2003): 1.2
 Male %: 48.2
 Female %: 51.8
 Urban %: 66.1
 Age Distribution %: 0-14: 26.4
 15-64: 67.4
 65 and over: 6.2
 Population 2025: 88,100
 Birth Rate per 1,000: 16.22
 Death Rate per 1,000: 6.34
 Rate of Natural Increase %: 1.0
 Total Fertility Rate: 1.75
 Expectation of Life (years): Males 66.41
 Females 77.4
 Marriage Rate per 1,000: 10.7
 Divorce Rate per 1,000: 1.4
 Average Size of Households: 4.8
 Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Seychelles has a relatively homogeneous population, in which persons of mixed African and European origin, called Creoles, compose the majority. There is a small white group claiming pure French ancestry, and there are also more recent white arrivals, most of whom are retired British colonial administrators.

Alien minorities include Indians and Chinese, both of whose numbers are very small. The Indians have resisted assimilation, while the Chinese have married freely with the Creoles.

LANGUAGES

The official languages are French, English, and Creole, which is the mother tongue of 91 percent of the Seychellois. It is a colorful language based on a simplified French syntax and enriched by many African loanwords.

RELIGIONS

Almost all native Seychellois are Christians, with some 87 percent Roman Catholic and 7 percent Anglican. Hinduism, Islam, and Buddhism are practiced mainly by Asian immigrants, accounting for just over 4 percent of the population.

The cathedral of the Seychelles Catholic diocese is in Port Victoria, on Mahé. Most of the Catholic clergy are foreign. The church has considerable social influence and a virtual monopoly over education. Despite the lasting influence of the René regime's socialist bent, there has remained complete freedom of religion.

Religious Affiliations

Roman Catholic	70,250
Anglican	5,500
Other Christian	2,000
Other	3,250

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The French first claimed Seychelles (then uninhabited) in 1756, naming it after their finance minister, Vicomte de Sechelles. Colonization began in 1768, when a party of 22 Frenchmen arrived with slaves. Between 1793 and 1813 the French and the British fought for control of the islands, and twice—in 1794 and 1804—the French were forced to yield. The islands were eventually ceded to Great Britain under the terms of the 1814 Treaty of Paris. Thenceforth the islands were administered from Mauritius as a dependent colony. With the abolition of slavery in 1834, many of the French landowners departed, taking their slaves with them; this population loss was offset by the arrivals of thousands of liberated slaves as well as Indian and Chinese indentured laborers. In 1903 the islands became a British crown colony no longer subordinate to Mauritius. However, the British presence on the islands never consisted of more than a handful of civil servants, and the Seychellois continued to remain culturally more French than English.

The progress of Seychelles toward self-government began in 1888, when a legislative council and an executive council were created. The first popular elections were held in 1948, universal adult suffrage was introduced in 1967, and a house assembly, cabinet, and prime minister

were named in 1975. Independence was achieved in 1976, when Seychelles became a republic within the Commonwealth. At that time the United Kingdom transferred the islands of Aldabra, Farquhar, and Desroches from its Indian Ocean Territory to Seychelles. Control of the Chagos Archipelago atoll of Diego Garcia, the site of a controversial joint U.S.-U.K. base in the Indian Ocean, remained in the hands of the United Kingdom.

At independence in 1976, the former chief minister James R. Mancham became president, and the leader of the opposition, France Albert René, became prime minister. The following year Mancham was deposed in a near-bloodless coup that made René head of state. In 1979 he was confirmed in office, and he was reelected again in 1984 and 1989; he received a reported 92.8 percent of the vote in 1984 after the passage of an ordinance under which those who failed to vote lost their right to public assistance.

The number of coups and attempted coups that occurred following independence reflect Seychelles' deep-seated political instability. One year after independence President Mancham was deposed. In 1979 René announced the discovery of an antigovernment plot that he maintained was sponsored by the exiled president and a group of South African mercenaries; two years later he discovered a more serious plot led by Michael Hoare, a mercenary with a history of involvement in African destabilization efforts. An internal mutiny by some members of the armed forces in 1982 was also put down, with the assistance of Tanzanian troops then in Seychelles. (In 1984 all Tanzanian troops were removed by mutual agreement.) The British police discovered a plan to overthrow the Seychelles government in 1987. France Albert René was again reelected president in 1993, 1998, and 2001. In 2002 René's People's Progressive Front won the parliamentary elections, but the opposition party, the Seychelles National Party, increased its representation from one to 11 seats. In 2004 René stepped down and handed the presidency to his vice president, James Michel. In December 2004 the tsunami that devastated much of the region caused widespread damage to three of the nation's islands.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1976–77	James R. Mancham
1977–2004	France Albert René
2004–	James Michel

CONSTITUTION

The constitution of 1979 made Seychelles a socialist state and declared the Seychelles People's Progressive Front (SPPF) the one legal party. Under its provisions the

president is elected by popular vote for a five-year term; he may be elected for a maximum of three consecutive terms. He appoints an advisory council of ministers. The unicameral legislature, the National Assembly, is elected for a five-year term. The president appoints the judiciary on the advice of a judicial tribunal. Modifications to the constitution adopted in 1991 and 1993 legalized additional political parties.

PARLIAMENT

The unicameral National Assembly has 25 directly contested seats along with nine seats allocated on a proportional basis to parties winning at least 10 percent of votes. The term of parliament is five years. Suffrage is universal at the age of 17.

POLITICAL PARTIES

The four major political parties are the Democratic Party, founded in 1992 as the successor to the Seychelles Democratic Party, which ruled from 1970 to 1977; the Mouvement Seychellois pour la Démocratie, founded in 1992, which is the smallest of the four; the Seychelles National Party, which grew out of a number of opposition parties to adopt its current name in 1995; and the Seychelles People's Progressive Front, the party that took power in 1978 and ruled as the sole party from 1978 to 1991.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Until 1968 there were district-level governments on the islands of Mahé, Praslin, La Digue, and Silhouette. Local government was abolished in 1971, and the functions of the district councils were taken over by the national government. There remain, however, 23 administrative districts.

LEGAL SYSTEM

Seychelles' legal system is a blend of French and English codes. The civil and commercial codes are French. The criminal law was French until 1952, when the British system was introduced.

There are three court levels: the Court of Appeal, the Supreme Court, and the magistrate courts. The Court of Appeal hears appeals from the Supreme Court in both civil and criminal cases, while the Supreme Court hears appeals from the magistrate courts. The president of the Court of Appeal and the chief justice of the Supreme Court are appointed by the president on the advice of the public service commission. Nonpolitical prisoners are granted fair public

trials. Most judges are aliens, mostly British, on short-term contracts. Appellate judges come once a year from Britain. Except for in security cases, judges have exhibited considerable independence from both the executive and legislative branches of the government.

Defendants in nonpolitical cases (both civil and criminal) have access to counsel and have enjoyed speedy and fair trials. The right to trial is patterned in large measure on English common law, although there is also heavy influence from Napoleonic law.

HUMAN RIGHTS

In terms of political and civil rights, Seychelles is classified as an unfree nation. In practice, however, a considerable degree of freedom is enjoyed by the people, especially since the end of one-party rule in 1993.

Still, the judiciary lacks the power to protect individuals against abuses by the state. Political prisoners are denied legal representation and have been held without being formally arraigned or tried. Emergency powers permit detention without trial if the president signs a detention order. The police have broad powers of search, seizure, and arrest without warrant; these powers, however, have been used very sparingly. Released political prisoners have complained of the intimidating surveillance of their homes. For the Seychellois, antigovernment statements can result in imprisonment; for expatriates such would mean expulsion on 24 hours' notice and without explanation.

FOREIGN POLICY

The principal objectives of Seychelles' foreign policy following independence were the return of a number of small islands and island groups that were administered since 1965 as part of the British Indian Ocean Territory along with the designation of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace. The 1995 closing of a U.S. space tracking station on the island of Mahé cost the Seychelles government about \$4.5 million a year in rent. Relations with South Africa were soured because of the coup attempt staged by South African mercenaries, but by 1992 relations had noticeably improved. Seychelles is a founding member of the Indian Ocean Commission, whose other members are Madagascar, Mauritius, Comoros, and Reunion. In 1995 Seychelles drew international criticism for securing the passage of a constitutional amendment that, in return for an investment of \$10 million, would provide immunity to money launderers, drug smugglers, and other criminals. Relations with the United States were strained further after the issuance of a U.S. State Department report criticizing Seychelles' human rights record and the pervasive corruption of René's one-party rule. In 2003 the nation

withdrew from the Southern African Development Community and closed three diplomatic missions.

DEFENSE

In 2003 the Seychelles People's Defence Forces was composed of about 800 army personnel, including 300 in the presidential protection unit. The army has one infantry battalion and two artillery elements. Paramilitary forces include a national guard consisting of 1,000 people and a coast guard estimated at 250 and divided into two divisions, the naval wing and the security, or infantry, division. In 2004 military expenditures totaled \$12.3 million, or about 1.8 percent of gross domestic product (GDP).

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	800
Military Manpower Availability:	21,612
Military Expenditures \$million:	12.3
as % of GDP:	1.8
as % of central government expenditures:	4.3
Arms Imports \$million:	—
Arms Exports \$million:	—

ECONOMY

Seychelles is one of the lower-middle-income countries of the world, with a free-market economy in which the dominant sector is private.

Since independence Seychelles has moved away from a subsistence economy to one increasingly dependent on upscale tourism, and it has increased its per capita output about sevenfold, to about \$7,600 per year. The government is also attempting to diversify by modernizing and expanding the fishing and forestry industries.

The vulnerability of the tourist sector was illustrated by the sharp drop in revenues first in 1991–92 due largely to the Persian Gulf War and again after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. Although the industry rebounded each time, the government has recognized the need to continually upgrade the sector in the face of stiff international competition. Other issues facing the government are the curbing of the budget deficit and further privatization of public enterprises; public debt in 2003 was 129 percent of GDP. Growth slowed in 1998–2000, due to sluggish tourist and tuna sectors, and in 2002 it was just 1.5 percent. Tight controls on exchange rates and the scarcity of foreign exchange have hindered short-term economic prospects. The black-market value of the Seychelles rupee is half the official exchange rate; without a devaluation of the currency the tourist sector should remain sluggish, as vacationers seek cheaper regional destinations such as Comoros, Mauritius, and Madagascar.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$million:	626
GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$:	7,800
GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %:	-0.1
GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %:	-1.2
Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:	
Agriculture:	2.8
Industry:	28.7
Services:	68.9
Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:	
Private Consumption:	45
Government Consumption:	29
Gross Domestic Investment:	39.5
Foreign Trade \$million: Exports:	256.2
Imports:	393.4
% of Income Received by Poorest 10%:	—
% of Income Received by Richest 10%:	—

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
108.6	115.4	122.2	122.5	126.5

Finance

National Currency:	Seychelles Rupee (SCR)
Exchange Rate:	\$1 = SCR 5.85
Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion:	1.66
Central Bank Discount Rate %:	1.0
Total External Debt \$million:	218.1
Debt Service Ratio %:	13.63
Balance of Payments \$million:	-98.42
International Reserves SDRs \$million:	67.4
Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:	5

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million:	9.2
per capita \$:	110.10
Foreign Direct Investment \$million:	58

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year:	Calendar Year
Revenues \$million:	318.3
Expenditures \$million:	298.5
Budget Surplus \$million:	19.8
Tax Revenues as % of GDP:	26.1

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %:	2.8
Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %:	2.5
Number of Tractors per hectare arable land:	4.0
Irrigation, % of Farms having:	—
Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare:	17.0
Total Farmland % of land area:	2.2
Livestock: Cattle 000:	1.4
Chickens 000:	520
Pigs 000:	18.5
Sheep 000:	—
Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters 000:	—
Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000:	63.4

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 162.6
Industrial Production Growth Rate %: —

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent 000: —
Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 261
Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 3.2
Net Energy Imports % of use: —
Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: 28
Production kW-hr million: 160
Consumption kW-hr million: 150
Coal Reserves tons million: —
Production tons million: —
Consumption tons million: —
Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
Production cubic feet billion: —
Consumption cubic feet billion: —
Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
Production barrels 000 per day: —
Consumption barrels 000 per day: 4
Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$million: 393.4
Exports \$million: 256.2
Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 8.1
Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 3.4
Balance of Trade \$million: –98.42

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Saudi Arabia %	15.7	—
South Africa %	10.8	—
Spain %	10.4	—
France %	9.7	31.6
Italy %	9.2	14.5
Singapore %	7.1	—
United Kingdom %	6.7	38.8
Germany %	—	7.5

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 373
Paved %: 84.5
Automobiles: 6,400
Trucks and Buses: 2,200
Railroad: Track Length km: —
Passenger-km million: —
Freight-km million: —
Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 5
Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 63.5
Airports: 15
Traffic: Passenger-km million: 1.4
Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 132
Number of Tourists from 000: 53
Tourist Receipts \$million: 242
Tourist Expenditures \$million: 44

Communications

Telephones 000: 21.7
Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.15
Cellular Telephones 000: 54.5
Personal Computers 000: 13
Internet Hosts per million people: 3,252
Internet Users per 1,000 people: 144

ENVIRONMENT

Over 40 percent of all land in Seychelles is protected as public sanctuaries, making the nation one of the most protected in the world. However, the country still has problems regarding coastal erosion and the loss of arable lands as water levels rise. The government is well aware of its challenges and has committed time and resources to secure solutions.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 66.7
Forest Change (1990–2000) hectares 000: —
Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 43
Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 2.8

LIVING CONDITIONS

In many respects, living conditions in Seychelles are reasonably good. The climate is moderate and healthful, the rates of infectious disease are low, the government provides reasonably good health-care services, the people eat a healthful diet, and the government's human rights record has improved since the early 1990s. Nonetheless, problems such as poverty and lack of education remain. The isolation of the islands leads to a measure of boredom, especially among younger people, and rates of juvenile delinquency, alcoholism, and domestic abuse remain high, while drug abuse has been increasing. Another problem for many is the islands' informal but powerful caste system, with whites and "near whites" controlling power and influence; among the black population, skin tone determines social status, with lighter-skinned people enjoying more prestige.

HEALTH

Health care in Seychelles is good. Life expectancy at birth in 2005 was almost 72 years overall, more than 77

years for women. The infant mortality rate was under 16 deaths per 1,000 live births, a figure down sharply from 50 in recent years. The islands enjoy a healthful climate, so such diseases as malaria, yellow fever, sleeping sickness, and cholera have largely been eliminated—or never took hold on the islands in the first place. Still, hookworms and tapeworms among children remain problems. The government provides health-care services, and there is a hospital in Port Victoria, although people needing specialized care must find it in other countries.

Health

Number of Physicians: 100
 Number of Dentists: 9
 Number of Nurses: 354
 Number of Pharmacists: 4
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 132
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 15.53
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: —
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 5.2
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 425
 HIV Infected % of adults: —
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 99
 Measles: 99
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 100
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 87

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Standards of nutrition in Seychelles are quite high. Between 1990 and 1998, among children under the age of five only 6 percent were moderately underweight, 0 percent severely underweight. Just 2 percent of children suffered from moderate to severe wasting, just 5 percent from moderate to severe stunting. The nation's diet, rich in fish, lentils, and fruits, is healthful. The dietary staple is rice, though equally important is fish, which the Seychellois consume at a rate of some 15 pounds per person per month. Cuisine is a blend of French, Indian, Chinese, and English styles, creating a unique, hot and spicy creole style.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 110.0
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 133.5

STATUS OF WOMEN

Women enjoy high status in what is an essentially matriarchal Seychellois society. Women have the same legal, political, economic, and social rights as men. Many senior

government officials, up to and including ministers of the administration, are women.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 29
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.01
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: —

WORK

The most recent estimate holds that the size of the labor force is roughly 31,000. Traditionally, Seychelles relied on a plantation-based economy, but agriculture has declined, such that only 10 percent of workers are employed in agriculture. More than two-thirds of the labor force is employed in the public sector, including government and state-owned enterprises. In 2001 tourism, employing nearly 30 percent of the labor force, accounted for nearly 13 percent of GDP; industry, including commercial fishing, accounted for nearly 29 percent of GDP.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 30,900
 Female Participation Rate %: —
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 10
 Industry: 19
 Services: 71
 Unemployment %: —

EDUCATION

The national literacy rate was 91 percent in 2004. Schooling lasts for 13 years, as divided into nine years of primary school, two years of lower-secondary or middle school, and two years of upper-secondary school. Primary schooling is free and compulsory. The school system consists of 24 primary schools, nine secondary schools, one vocational and technical school, and one teacher-training school. Of the primary schools, the vast majority are run by bodies aligned with the Roman Catholic Church, the Church of England, or the Seventh-Day Adventist Church. All private schools receive state aid. The voluntary National Youth Service, launched in 1981, now provides secondary education to most children between ages 15 and 17.

The school year runs from January through December. The language of instruction is English in the upper grades, French in the middle grades, and Creole in the lower grades.

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Seychellois pursuing higher studies in fields other than education have to go abroad. The government provides scholarships for higher studies in Commonwealth countries.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 58
Male %: 56
Female %: 60
School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 13.7
First Level: Primary Schools: 27
Teachers: 693
Students: 9,623
Student-Teacher Ratio: 13.9
Net Enrollment Ratio: —
Second Level: Secondary Schools: 20
Teachers: 540
Students: 7,525
Student-Teacher Ratio: 13.9
Net Enrollment Ratio: 99.9
Third Level: Institutions: —
Teachers: —
Students: —
Gross Enrollment Ratio: —
Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 5.2

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

As a very small nation with no university, Seychelles sponsors little scientific and technological research on its own. However, the nation's location and unique ecosystems have drawn international researchers in such areas as marine biology, botany, ornithology, and geology, and numerous books are available about the birds, fish, seashells, and other inhabitants and elements of the islands' natural environment.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 18
Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 0.11
High-Tech Exports \$million: —
Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

Seychelles has five daily newspapers, including the *Seychelles Nation*; also well circulated is an opposition weekly titled *Regar*.

The government controls the major newspapers in the country as well as all radio and television broadcasting. The Catholic Church publishes an increasingly lively paper, *Echos des îles*, which is not subject to government control or censorship, though there is some self-censorship because the government frequently sues the press for

libel. Foreign broadcasts are widely listened to and are uncensored. Except for opposition material, foreign publications, including those critical of the government, have been imported and sold without hindrance.

Seychelles Agence de Presse is the national news agency.

The Seychelles Broadcasting Corporation broadcasts in English, French, and Creole. The Far East Broadcasting Association, a Christian missionary outreach, operates FEBA Seychelles, broadcasting in 12 languages and on nine frequencies beamed to South Asia, including India, as well as the Middle East and eastern and southern Africa.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 5
Total Circulation 000: 46
Circulation per 1,000: 567
Books Published: —
Periodicals: —
Radio Receivers 000: —
per 1,000: —
Television sets 000: 16
per 1,000: 214

CULTURE

Seychelles has little in the way of a written literary tradition apart from records of oral legends and folktales, although one modern poet, Antoine Abe, has achieved some renown. The main forms of cultural expression are music and dance, which blend African, French, and Asian styles into a unique style. Drums, violins, and accordions have often been used as accompaniment, although the acoustic guitar has become more popular. Common dances include a French import, the *contredanse*, which was brought to the islands by early colonists. Also popular are the *sokoué*, a type of masked African dance in which performers depict trees, animals, and birds, and the *moutia*, which features uninhibited body, especially hip, movements. Folk arts and crafts are widely practiced and include landscape painting, sculpture, wood carving, jewelry, and batik cloth making.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
Volumes: —
Registered borrowers: —
Museums Number: —
Annual Attendance: —
Cinema Gross Receipts: —
Number of Cinemas: —
Seating Capacity: —
Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Seychelles has a rich tradition of proverbs, songs, fables, and storytelling; folkloric traditions are often practiced at night around bonfires. One of the most prominent folk performances is the *moutia*, an African slave dance with storytelling that began when the islands were a French colony. The usual pattern of the *moutia* was for two male performers to begin with a dialogue on the day's work; women would then join in, to the accompaniment of chanting and singing. The dance would use characteristically African hip movements and rhythms, while drummers beat on coconut trunks covered with animal skins. Many of these performances offered satirical social commentary.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

The Seychellois often gather in the evening to play cards, checkers, dominoes, and backgammon or to dance and play music. Television and video rentals have also become popular, and listening to music on the radio is commonplace.

ETIQUETTE

The Seychellois are generally regarded as easygoing, relaxed, and informal. Rarely do people dress formally (except when they attend church), and impromptu social gatherings, where dance and music are enjoyed, are common. Greetings tend to be simple, and inquiring about another's health or welfare is avoided because doing so is considered to bring bad luck. Interpersonal relations on the islands are governed in part by an informal caste system, where people are identified by the color and tone of their skin, ranging from *ble* (blue) to *bla-rose* (white-pink), that is, from dark plantation workers to white European landowners. While such distinctions are not officially recognized, people respond to one another in a manner based on skin color, which generally determines one's place in the social order.

FAMILY LIFE

Family life tends to be fluid in Seychelles. A large proportion of children—between 50 and 75 percent—are born out of wedlock, and many people engage in sexual relationships outside of formal marriage. Many engage in serial monogamy, with the domestic unit consisting of the woman, her current partner, her children, and often children from previous relationships. This practice is more common among the lower classes; among the upper

classes, traditional marriage is the norm. The culture is strongly matriarchal, so women control the family budget and expenditures, and the man, regarded as a breadwinner, may have little role in the rearing of children. Women frequently bring their own property into marriage, and they retain that property in the event of divorce. The fertility rate is quite low by African standards: In 2005 there were just 1.75 children born per woman.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Most Seychellois dress in clothing similar to that worn in the United States. When attending church or other special events, people tend to dress up, but for everyday wear, and even in the workplace, clothing is informal. Women tend to wear smocks or African sarongs, sandals, and straw hats. Men wear trousers and loose-fitting short-sleeved shirts. Shorts are also frequently worn because of the tropical climate.

SPORTS

The most popular sports in Seychelles, both for spectators and participants, are basketball and especially soccer. While the islands offer a wide range of water sports—including swimming, diving, sailing, windsurfing, and water skiing—these sports tend to be enjoyed more by tourists and the leisure classes.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1976** Following the London Constitutional Conference, Seychelles is granted independence as a republic within the Commonwealth, with James R. Mancham as president; the United Kingdom transfers the Aldabra, Desroches, and Farquhar islands of the British Indian Ocean Territory to Seychelles.
- 1977** President Mancham is ousted in a coup led by Prime Minister France Albert René, who assumes the presidency.
- 1979** New constitution is promulgated. France Albert René is elected president, and a new National Assembly is elected. Violent demonstrations against a proposed compulsory national youth service force the government to revise the plan.
- 1981** South African mercenaries attempt an unsuccessful coup.
- 1983** Elections are held for the National Assembly. Seychelles joins Madagascar and Mauritius in setting up the Indian Ocean Commission.
- 1984** In the presidential election, the sole candidate France Albert René is reelected.

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- 1987** British police uncover a plot to overthrow the Seychelles government.
- 1989** René is accorded a third term as president.
- 1991** Constitutional changes legalize the formation of additional political parties.
- 1993** A new constitution is adopted. René is elected president against two opponents.
- 1998** René is reelected.
- 2001** René is reelected president, receiving 54.2 percent of the vote.
- 2002** René's People's Progressive Front wins the parliamentary elections, but the opposition party, the Seychelles National Party, increases its representation from one to 11 seats.
- 2004** René steps down and hands the presidency to his vice president, James Michel.
In December a tsunami devastates much of the region, causing widespread damage to three of the nation's islands.

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- Seychelles.** *National Development Plan, 1990–94; Statistical Abstract* (annual); *1997 Census Report; Statement and Strategy on Social Development for Seychelles beyond 2000*

CONTACT INFORMATION

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Ministry of Foreign Affairs
<http://seychelles.diplomacy.edu>
- U.S. Department of State
<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/6268.htm>

SIERRA LEONE

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Sierra Leone

ABBREVIATION

SL

CAPITAL

Freetown

HEAD OF STATE & HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah (from 1996)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Constitutional democracy

POPULATION

6,017,643 (2005)

AREA

71,740 sq km (27,699 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Mende, Temne, Limba

LANGUAGES

English (official), Krio, Mende, Temne

RELIGIONS

Islam, animism, Christianity

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Leone

NATIONAL FLAG

Tricolor of green (top), white, and blue horizontal stripes

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A shield held by gold lions rampant standing on a grassy green mound bearing on a white scroll the national motto, "Unity, freedom, justice." On the shield, flanked by two palm trees, a lion crouches on a green field beneath a serrated border, and above the notches of the border three torches burn against a white background; below the lion are alternating blue and white wavy lines.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"High We Exalt Thee, Realm of the Free"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day), April 19 (Republic Day, National Day), April 27 (Independence Day), various Christian and Islamic festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

April 27, 1961

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

October 1, 1991, amended 2001

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Sierra Leone is a loosely circular-shaped country in the southwestern part of West Africa, with an area of 71,740 sq km (27,699 sq mi). Its greatest distance north to south is 338 km (210 mi); that east to west, 304 km (189 mi). The total length of the Atlantic coastline is 402 km (250 mi). Sierra Leone's total international land border of 958 km (595 mi) is shared with two countries: Guinea (652 km; 405 mi) and Liberia (306 km; 190 mi).

Sierra Leone is divided topographically into four regions: the interior plateaus and mountains, the interior low plains, the coastal swamplands, and the Sierra Leone peninsula. In the east and northeast, plateaus rise sharply in a flight of steps to mountains such as the Tingi Hills

and the Loma Mountains, which reach 1,948 m (6,391 ft), one of the highest points in West Africa. Below these hills are the Nimini and Sula mountains and the Gola, Gori, and Jojina hills. The plateaus and the mountains encompass nearly half of the country. Between the highlands and the coastal swamps are rolling lowlands up to 96 km (60 mi) broad, covered in the northeastern part by swampy grasslands known as *bolilands*. The coastal swamplands sit on a plain with an average width of 32 km (20 mi) that stretches along the coastline, as marked by numerous estuaries and peninsulas. The Sierra Leone peninsula, on which Freetown, the capital, is situated, is a central mountainous area with a maximum elevation of nearly 900 m (2,960 ft), with a strip of flatland running around the base of the mountains.

Sierra Leone



Geography

Area sq km: 71,740; sq mi 27,699
 World Rank: 116th
 Land Boundaries, km: Guinea 652; Liberia 306
 Coastline, km: 402
 Elevation Extremes meters:

Lowest: Atlantic Ocean 0
 Highest: Loma Mansa (Bintimani) 1,948
 Land Use %
 Arable Land: 7.0
 Permanent Crops: 0.9
 Forest: 14.7
 Other: 77.4

Population of Principal Cities (2004)

Bo	167,144
Freetown	786,900
Kenema	137,696

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

As in all tropical countries, the climate is marked by sharp alterations between wet and dry seasons. The wet season lasts from May to October, the dry season from November to April. The coastal regions receive the highest annual rainfall, of over 5,080 mm (200 in), while Freetown receives an average of 3,810 mm (150 in). Rainfall decreases inland toward the north, with Kabala averaging 2,160 mm (85 in). The rainiest months are July, August, and September.

Both temperature and humidity are consistently high throughout the country, with maximum diurnal variations of up to 16.6°C (61.9°F) in the interior. The mean temperature in the interior and coastal lowland plains is 26.6°C (80°F), while the eastern plateau region has a mean of 25°C (77°F).

The prevailing wind systems are the southwestern monsoons in the wet season and the hot and dry harmattan, which blows from the northeastern Sahara.

Climate and Weather
Mean Temperature

Interior and Coastal Lowlands: 80°F
 Eastern Plateau: 77°F

Average Rainfall

Coastal Region: 200 in
 Freetown: 150 in
 Kabala in the North: 85 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Sierra Leone is home to 2,090 species of higher plants, 147 species of mammals, 172 species of birds, 67 species of reptiles, 35 species of amphibians, and 99 species of fish. In the northern part of the country, savanna, with shrubs and grassland, is dominant. In the southeast, dense forests of teak, mahogany, and palm predominate and provide habitat for such species as monkeys, chimpanzees, porcupines, pygmy hippopotamuses, elephants, antelopes, and crocodiles. Sierra Leone has a number of distinctive bird species, including the Rufous fishing owl, the Gola malimbe, and the white-necked picathartes.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 6,017,643
 World Rank: 102nd
 Density per sq km: 74.5

% of annual growth (1999-2003): 2.0

Male %: 48.2

Female %: 51.8

Urban %: 38.7

Age Distribution %: 0-14: 44.7

15-64: 52.0

65 and over: 3.3

Population 2025: 9,140,000

Birth Rate per 1,000: 42.84

Death Rate per 1,000: 20.61

Rate of Natural Increase %: 2.3

Total Fertility Rate: 5.72

Expectation of Life (years): Males 40.13

Females 44.98

Marriage Rate per 1,000: —

Divorce Rate per 1,000: —

Average Size of Households: 6.6

Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Sierra Leone is an ethnic mosaic of 18 groups, of whom two—the Mende and Temne—constitute about 60 percent of the population, while a third, the Limba, constitute nearly 10 percent of the population. The major ethnic groups also have ecological zones in which they have established their dominance.

The dominant factor in interethnic relations is competition between northern and southern peoples, especially among the Temne and Mende. Historic divisions and rivalry between Creoles and non-Creoles have lost much of their edge as the influence of Creoles has declined. Despite economic tensions, interethnic relations are characterized by a lack of the virulence common in other African countries. Politically, the Sierra Leone People's Party is a Mende organization, while the ruling All People's Congress is a Temne-Creole-Limba alliance.

Ethnic alien groups include both Africans and non-Africans. Among African aliens the largest community is Liberian, comprising about 67,000 refugees. There also are about 4,000 Lebanese—who began migrating to the country in the 1890s and came to dominate commerce and trade—500 Indians, and 2,000 Europeans.

LANGUAGES

The official language of Sierra Leone is English, though its use is restricted to administrative, business, and technical communications.

The most widespread lingua franca is Krio, the mother tongue of the Creoles. Krio is based on a pidgin English core with essentially African syntax and words borrowed from English, Portuguese, and African languages. However, Krio has no standardized orthography. It is a first language for only about 10 percent of the population but is understood by 95 percent.

Of the African languages, only Mende, Temne, and Vai exist in written form. Mende and Temne are written in the Roman alphabet, with the addition of a few specially devised letters to accommodate African sound patterns.

RELIGIONS

Generally speaking, over 30 percent of Sierra Leoneans follow traditional religious beliefs, 60 percent adhere to Islam, and 10 percent are Christian. Islam is strongest in the north among the Mandinka, Fula, and Vai, while Christianity is strongest in coastal areas among the Creoles, Sherbro, and Mende.

Christian influence in Sierra Leone transcends religion and extends to politics, education, and health services. Both Anglicans and Roman Catholics have archbishoprics in Freetown.

Most Sierra Leonean Muslims are Sunni. The Ahmadiyya, a militant Muslim sect of Pakistani origin, is active in the country.

Religious Affiliations

Muslim	3,610,000
Indigenous Beliefs	1,810,000
Christian	600,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Bulom people were probably the earliest inhabitants of Sierra Leone; they were joined in the 15th century by the Mende and Temne. The history of the country's poetic name of Sierra Leone dates to 1462, when a Portuguese explorer, Pedro da Cintra, sailed down the coast of West Africa and saw the long range of mountains of what is now known as the Freetown Peninsula. As a result of the topographic configuration and climatic conditions experienced by the explorer at the time, he called the lands Sierra Lyoa, meaning "lion mountains." In the 16th century an English sailor called it Sierra Leoa, by the 17th century it was Sierra Leona, and by 1787 the region saw the first of several British administrations under the Sierra Leone Company. Through the years of British colonization the original name was modified, becoming Sierra Leone, the name by which the country is known today.

Before the area was discovered by Europeans, the original local name for what is now Freetown was Romarong, meaning "the place of the wailers," so called because of the constant weeping and screaming of victims of storm and cross-current disasters at the mouth of the Sierra Leone River. (Interestingly, when the Portuguese sailor Pedro da Cintra named the country, he deviated

little from the nature-based naming notions of the indigenous people.)

The colony of Sierra Leone was founded by British philanthropists in the late 18th century as a home for freed African slaves. From 1791 to 1808 it was administered by the Sierra Leone Company; it was transferred to the British Crown in 1808. In 1896 a British protectorate was declared over the hinterland, or mainland. Sierra Leone became independent in 1961.

Sierra Leone is among the few countries of Africa that have retained Western traditions in their political and economic systems. The major legacies of British rule—the English language, legal system, and educational and administrative structures—have been preserved almost intact. Following independence, political leadership was left in the hands of the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP), which was led by Sir Milton Margai until 1964 and then by his half-brother Sir Albert M. Margai until 1967. Both served as prime minister. Attempts by the SLPP to impose a one-party system were successfully resisted by the All People's Congress (APC), headed by Siaka P. Stevens; in 1967 the APC won a majority of seats in the House of Representatives, and Stevens was appointed prime minister. He was prevented from assuming office, however, by a coup that installed Lt. Col. Andrew Juxon-Smith as leader of a National Reformation Council (NRC). The council suspended the constitution and dissolved the political parties. In 1968 a group of junior officers, the Anticorruption Revolutionary Movement, overthrew the NRC and restored civilian government, with Stevens as prime minister.

Instability and insecurity characterized the Stevens regime. There were attempted coups in 1971 and again in 1975. In 1970 the government banned a new opposition party, the United Democratic Party, and arrested its leaders. Three years later general elections were held in which there were many irregularities. Official intimidation contributed to an SLPP boycott of the event. Following the election, in which the APC won all but one of the seats, Sierra Leone became a de facto one-party state; it was officially declared so under the 1978 constitution.

Stevens retired in 1985, naming Maj. Gen. Joseph Saidu Momoh his successor. Momoh's assumption of power was greeted favorably by Sierra Leoneans troubled by endemic economic problems and government corruption. However, Momoh's largely ineffective attempts to deal with these problems caused his popularity to wane, and there was an unsuccessful coup in 1986.

Early in 1991 the Liberian civil war spilled over into Sierra Leone. As government forces fought back Liberian guerrillas, a Sierra Leonean rebel group, the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), sprang up to take territory of its own, and a brutal civil war ensued. A new constitution, which provided for the restoration of a plural political system, was adopted in 1991.

In 1992 Captain Valentine Strasser ousted Momoh and replaced the government with a military junta. He announced the installation of a transitional government that would lead until the restoration of civilian government, which would occur by January 1996. In fact, Strasser was replaced in a bloodless coup led by his defense minister, Brigadier Julius Maada Bio, in January 1996, allegedly to prevent efforts by Strasser to remain in power. Presidential and legislative elections indeed took place in February, as monitored by international observers. Some 27 people were killed during the elections; the killings were generally attributed to efforts by the RUF to disrupt the electoral process. The reconstituted SLPP won 36.1 percent of the votes cast in the legislative elections, while its presidential candidate, Ahmed Tejan Kabbah, received 35.8 percent of votes to win the presidential election.

On May 25, 1997, Kabbah was ousted in a coup led by Major Johnny Paul Koroma. International efforts to restore Kabbah to power led to his return from exile in March 1998. A year later he signed a peace agreement with the RUF leader Foday Sankoh, outlining a transitional government that would include several RUF members. However, the peace agreement collapsed in May 2000, following the RUF's abduction of 500 UN peacekeeping troops. By the spring of 2001 more than 12,000 peacekeeping troops were stationed in Sierra Leone. In January 2002 the war was declared over, and the United Nations announced that the disarmament of combatants was complete. That year, too, Kabbah won a landslide victory, with his party securing a majority in the parliament. In 2004, war-crimes trials began, and the first local elections in more than three decades were held. In September 2004 the United Nations turned control of the capital over to local forces.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1961–64	Milton Margai (prime minister)
1964–67	Albert M. Margai (prime minister)
1967–85	Siaka P. Stevens (prime minister)
1985–92	Joseph Saidu Momoh (prime minister)
1992–96	Valentine Strasser (junta leader)
1996	Julius Maada Bio (coup leader)
1996–97	Ahmed Tejan Kabbah (president)
1997–98	Johnny Paul Koroma (coup leader)
1998–	Ahmed Tejan Kabbah (president)

CONSTITUTION

Under tremendous popular pressure, the government of Maj. Gen. Joseph Saidu Momoh drafted a new constitution that was approved by referendum on August 30, 1991. The 1991 constitution provided for the formation of political parties and created a unicameral 80-

member legislature. The constitution also established a president who would serve as both head of state and head of government. However, before elections could be held, Momoh was overthrown by Capt. Valentine Strasser. Strasser himself was overthrown by Brig. Gen. Julius Bio, who promised to bring about civilian government. Elections for 68 of the 80 seats were held in February 1996; the other 12 seats are filled to represent the 12 provincial districts. Voting is universal at the age of 18. In the 1996 elections Ahmad Tejan Kabbah was elected president. Rebel conflict in 1997 forced him to flee the country, and he was not reinstated until 1998, when West African peacekeepers restored some national stability. UN peacekeepers remained in the country, and elections were again held in May 2002. The number of legislative seats filled through general elections was increased to 112.

PARLIAMENT

The parliament, the House of Representatives of Sierra Leone, consists of 124 members, 112 of whom are elected by popular vote and 12 of whom are paramount chiefs chosen in separate elections. Members serve terms of five years and are elected by universal suffrage.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Sierra Leone is a multiparty state. In the 2002 elections 11 parties registered to participate. The most dominant party is the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP), which won over 70 percent of the vote in the most recent elections. Only the All People's Congress and the Peace and Liberation Party also hold seats—27 and two, respectively.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For administrative purposes, Sierra Leone is divided into three provinces and one area. The provinces are further divided into districts. The 12 districts are divided into some 148 chiefdoms, each under the control of a paramount chief and a council of elders known as the tribal authority. Of these chiefdoms, 143 can raise and disburse funds; maintain law, order, and public health; operate local courts and the local police force; and allocate land.

The Western Area has a slightly different regional administrative setup. Therein, Freetown has a city government with an elected city council, aldermen for each of the city's wards, permanent committees, and an elected mayor. Outside Freetown, the Western Area is administered by rural area councils, rural district councils, and village communities, in descending order.

LEGAL SYSTEM

Sierra Leone has retained the English legal system, which it inherited during colonial days. Most of the judges and lawyers are trained in England.

The court system consists of five levels. The Supreme Court, Court of Appeal, and high courts in Freetown and in the provinces constitute the superior courts. Below this level the country is divided into 12 judicial districts, one for each province and nine for the Western Area. At least one magistrate's court is found in each district. Local courts, formerly called native courts, are located at the chieftaincy level.

The independence of the judiciary is guaranteed by the constitution. All judges have tenure and may be removed only by a two-thirds vote of the House of Representatives. All judges are appointed by the president on the advice of the prime minister, but magistrates and other court officers are appointed on the advice of the judicial service commission.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Sierra Leone was once hailed as a model African democracy. However, its history did not live up to that billing. The country developed into a one-party state where no legal opposition existed. The constitutions of 1961, 1971, and 1978 each represented a step in the direction of a controlled democracy where the interests of the ruling party were supreme. In recent years civil war marred the civil rights record of the country, which struggled to establish a stable democracy. In 1999 Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) and RUF forces killed thousands of unarmed civilians, including many women and children, in the east and north of the country. While the exact number of those killed remains unknown, as many as 4,000 men, women, and children suffered mutilation, through crude amputations of hands, arms, legs, lips, or ears; others suffered lacerations and gunshot wounds. Survivors of attacks recounted that many others from their villages had been killed or had fled into the bush, where many died of their injuries. In January 2002 the Kabbah government and the United Nations agreed to set up a war-crimes tribunal.

FOREIGN POLICY

Sierra Leone's civil war impeded the elaboration of coherent domestic and foreign policies. The country has maintained good relations with the West, especially the United Kingdom. It also maintains diplomatic relations with the republics of the former Soviet Union, as well as with China, Libya, and Iran. In 2003 the country received about \$60 million in aid from the United States for development and health education, especially for combating AIDS.

DEFENSE

The defense structure is headed by the president, who is also the commander in chief and the minister of defense. Military manpower is provided through voluntary enlistment. In 2003 armed forces personnel totaled about 13,000. During the civil war, which lasted for most of the 1990s, various unofficial military groups existed alongside the Sierra Leone army. The largest was the Sierra Leone Civil Defence Force, which was formed to help protect civilians from rebel atrocities. In 2004 the country spent \$13.2 million, or about 1.7 percent of gross domestic product (GDP), on the military.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	13,000
Military Manpower Availability:	1,110,077
Military Expenditures \$million:	13.2
as % of GDP:	1.7
as % of central government expenditures:	—
Arms Imports \$million:	—
Arms Exports \$million:	—

ECONOMY

Sierra Leone has substantial mineral, agricultural, and fishery resources. However, the economic and social infrastructure is not well developed, and serious social disorders continue to hamper economic development. The resurgence of internal warfare in 1999 brought a substantial drop in GDP. Still, by 2003 economic growth was estimated at 6.5 percent. An estimated two-thirds of the working-age population engages in subsistence agriculture. Manufacturing consists mainly of the processing of raw materials and light manufacturing for the domestic market. Bauxite and rutile mines were shut down by civil strife, but plans were made to reopen them. The major source of hard currency is found in the mining of diamonds, the large majority of which are smuggled out of the country. The fate of the economy will depend on the maintenance of peace and the continued receipt of substantial aid from abroad.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion:	3.335
GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$:	600
GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %:	2.5
GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %:	0.5
Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:	
Agriculture:	49
Industry:	30
Services:	21
Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:	
Private Consumption:	85
Government Consumption:	10
Gross Domestic Investment:	—

Foreign Trade \$million: Exports: 49
Imports: 264
% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 0.5
% of Income Received by Richest 10%: 43.6

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
257.2	255.1	260.4	251.8	271.0

Finance

National Currency: Leone (SLL)
Exchange Rate: \$1 = SLL 2,347.94
Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 247.5
Central Bank Discount Rate %: —
Total External Debt \$billion: 1.5
Debt Service Ratio %: 10.9
Balance of Payments \$million: —
International Reserves SDRs \$million: 32.1
Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 1.0

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 297
per capita \$: 55.70
Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 3.14

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: July 1–June 30
Revenues \$million: 96
Expenditures \$million: 351
Budget Deficit \$million: 255
Tax Revenues as % of GDP: 6.8

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 49
Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 2.9
Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 0.02
Irrigation, % of Farms having: 5.0
Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 0.56
Total Farmland % of land area: 7.5
Livestock: Cattle 000: 400
Chickens million: 7.5
Pigs 000: 52
Sheep 000: 375
Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 5.5
Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 83

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 37
Industrial Production Growth Rate %: —

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: —
Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 154
Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 34
Net Energy Imports % of use: —
Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: 128
Production kW-hr million: 250
Consumption kW-hr million: 230
Coal Reserves tons million: —
Production tons million: —
Consumption tons million: —
Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
Production cubic feet billion: —
Consumption cubic feet billion: —
Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
Production barrels 000 per day: —
Consumption barrels 000 per day: 6.7
Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$million: 264
Exports \$million: 49
Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 11.4
Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 34.3
Balance of Trade \$million: —

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Germany %	23.2	13.3
United Kingdom %	9.8	4.5
Côte d'Ivoire %	7.3	—
France %	7.2	—
United States %	5.3	4.4
Netherlands %	5.2	—
Ukraine %	4.5	—
Belgium %	—	58.6

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 11,300
Paved %: 8.0
Automobiles: 20,100
Trucks and Buses: 15,800
Railroad: Track Length km: —
Passenger-km million: —
Freight-km million: —
Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 2
Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 8.8
Airports: 10
Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 74
Length of Waterways km: 800

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 37
Number of Tourists from 000: 13
Tourist Receipts \$million: —
Tourist Expenditures \$million: 37.7

Communications

Telephones 000: 24
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.03
 Cellular Telephones 000: 67
 Personal Computers 000: —
 Internet Hosts per million people: 46
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 1.3

ENVIRONMENT

Sierra Leone suffers from rapid population growth, which has put stress upon natural resources. The overharvesting of timber for fuel and construction materials, the expansion of grazing, and the use of slash-and-burn agricultural techniques has led to deforestation and rapid declines in the quality of the soil. The nearly 10 years of civil war took their toll on the land as well, through deforestation and contamination.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 14.7
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: -36
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 4
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 0.11

LIVING CONDITIONS

Living conditions in Sierra Leone are generally difficult. In 2004 per capita GDP was a mere \$600, making Sierra Leone one of the poorest nations in Africa and indeed the world. Because a large proportion of the population is engaged in subsistence agriculture, it is difficult to arrive at accurate figures for poverty and unemployment, but some estimates hold that fully two-thirds of the population live below the poverty line. Making matters worse are wide disparities in income: The poorest decile receive just 0.5 percent of the nation's income, while the richest decile receive over 43 percent. Life expectancy is low, death rates are high, and only about one-third of the population is literate.

HEALTH

The state of health care in Sierra Leone is extremely poor. The nation spends just \$6 per person per year on health care. Life expectancy at birth in 2005 was just 42.5 years, among the lowest in the world. The infant mortality rate was an astonishing 144 out of 1,000 live births, one of the highest rates in the world (third only to Angola and Afghanistan). Only about 42 percent of births are attended by trained medical personnel. An enormous problem in Sierra Leone is AIDS: In 2001, 7 percent of the adult

population—about 170,000 people—were living with the disease, which that year claimed 11,000 lives.

Health

Number of Physicians: 300
 Number of Dentists: 16
 Number of Nurses: 1,355
 Number of Pharmacists: —
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 7.3
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 143.64
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 2,000
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 2.9
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 6
 HIV Infected % of adults: 7.0
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 70
 Measles: 73
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 39
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 57

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Nutrition in Sierra Leone is generally poor. Between 1995 and 2003, some 9 percent of children under the age of five were severely underweight, while an additional 18 percent were moderately underweight. Some 10 percent of children suffered from moderate to severe wasting, 34 percent from moderate to severe stunting. The predominant staple is rice, which is eaten at virtually every meal, usually with sauces made from various vegetables (such as eggplant, tomatoes, okra, hot peppers, cassava leaves, potato leaves, and onions) as well as from peanuts, fish, and sometimes beef and chicken. Another staple is *foo-foo*, a paste made from cassava tubers that are pounded into flour and covered with a spicy sauce.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 50.1
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 1,980
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 107.5
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 77.0

STATUS OF WOMEN

Women in Sierra Leone are guaranteed equal rights by the constitution. In practice, access to education remains more limited for women than for men. Still, gradual improvements have been made since independence. The status of women varies substantially among different parts of the country in that it depends on the cultural values of individual tribal groups. In some areas of the nation women have been elected to the prestigious position of paramount chief. In other areas, this would simply not

happen. In the modern sector women are prominent in the professions, and one woman has served as a Supreme Court justice. The political sphere continues to be overwhelmingly male dominated.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 15
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 0.64
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: —

WORK

It is estimated that about two-thirds of the nation's workers are involved in agriculture, primarily subsistence agriculture, growing such crops as coffee, cocoa, peanuts, and vegetables. The nation's small industrial sector employs about 15 percent of the labor force, primarily in mining but also in oil refining and small-scale manufacturing for domestic consumption; significant revenue has come from mines for rutile, a titanium ore, and although these were shut down during the civil war, plans were made in 2003 to reopen them. The remaining 18 percent or so of the labor force is employed in services.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 1,369,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 37.2
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 67
 Industry: 15
 Services: 18
 Unemployment %: —

EDUCATION

Sierra Leone has not yet introduced free, universal, and compulsory education. Schooling consists of 14 years divided into seven years of primary school, five years of lower secondary school, and two years of upper secondary school, the latter for those who wish to pursue higher studies. The academic year runs from September to July. The medium of instruction at all levels is English.

Christian missionary schools account for significant proportions of enrollment: 78 percent at the primary level and 87 percent at the secondary level. The Muslim Ahmadiyya movement also runs secondary schools.

Only about 60 percent of primary-school teachers and 52 percent of secondary-school teachers are qualified. Non-Sierra Leoneans constitute 10 to 15 percent of teachers in secondary schools and over 36 percent of university teachers; non-Sierra Leonean teachers include

volunteers from Britain and Canada and members of the U.S. Peace Corps. The state of education in Sierra Leone was put in flux because of the civil war. Many schools that were damaged or shut down were beginning to reopen in the early 2000s. In 1996 primary-school enrollment was about 367,000; by 2000 that figure had climbed to over half a million; at the secondary level enrollment increased from about 21,000 to over 130,000.

The University of Sierra Leone, established in 1966, comprises two campuses: Fourah Bay College, in Freetown, and Njala University College, in Njala.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 31.4
 Male %: 45.4
 Female %: 18.2
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 6.8
 First Level: Primary Schools: 1,643
 Teachers: 14,875
 Students: 554,308
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 37.3
 Net Enrollment Ratio: —
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 167
 Teachers: 5,840
 Students: 134,113
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 26.6
 Net Enrollment Ratio: —
 Third Level: Institutions: 2
 Teachers: 1,198
 Students: 9,041
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 2.2
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 3.7

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

As an extremely poor nation, Sierra Leone supports little in the way of scientific and technological research. The University of Sierra Leone, the first university in West Africa, suffers from a lack of funds and decaying facilities. Education in Sierra Leone emphasizes vocational and technical training for purposes of economic development. Organizations such as the International Education and Resource Network attempt to teach computer and other skills to young people displaced by the civil war. The nation's Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Forestry conducts some research in these areas, as does the University of Sierra Leone, but the number of researchers employed is small.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: 0.96
 Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

The daily press includes one government-owned newspaper, the *Daily Mail*, published in Freetown; in actuality it appears irregularly. Dozens of additional newspapers and periodicals are printed, primarily in Freetown.

The national news agency is the Sierra Leone News Agency. ITAR-TASS, UPI, Xinhua, and AFP are the only foreign news agencies with bureaus in Freetown.

The Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service operates Radio Sierra Leone. Over 60 percent of programs are in English; the rest are in Mende, Temne, Krio, and Limba. The network regularly carries commercial advertising. Television broadcasting is also offered by the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service, which serves the Freetown area with one channel.

Media

Daily Newspapers: —
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: —
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets 000: 62
 per 1,000: 13

CULTURE

Most artists in Sierra Leone are self-supporting because of a lack of government funds. The nation has a long tradition of oral storytelling, and even today there are those, affectionately called “liars,” who can make a living as storytellers. Syl Cheney-Coker achieved international repute with the novel *The Last Harmattan of Alusine Dunbar*. Graphic arts are limited primarily to folk arts and crafts, such as tie-dyeing, textiles, wood carving, and basket making. Dance is an important part of the nation’s culture, and the nation’s National Dance Troupe is internationally famous. During the 19th century Creoles tended to prefer “high” culture and rejected African Creole culture as uncivilized, but more recently there has been a revival of indigenous culture, especially through poets such as Thomas Decker, who writes in Krio.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 1
 Volumes: 46,000
 Registered borrowers: 11,500
 Museums Number: 19
 Annual Attendance: 178,000
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Traditionally, Creoles used ancestral folktales to teach children about their traditions, values, and folkways. A chief character in many of these folktales is the Spider, who often gets himself into difficulties as a result of his tricks.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Watching television and listening to the radio have become more prevalent activities in recent decades. Other favorite pastimes include checkers and other board games and the exchanging of visits with friends. Many towns have a market day, when people dress up and attend not only to buy and sell produce and crafts but also to socialize and trade gossip. Among girls, hair braiding provides hours of entertainment.

ETIQUETTE

Sierra Leoneans are thought of as warm and hospitable people who often carry on teasing and joking relationships with one another, often as accompanied by hand shaking and slapping. Elders are accorded great respect, and greetings between people tend to be elaborate. Because a major form of entertainment is visiting family and friends, often unexpectedly, great value is placed on being a good host or hostess and providing visitors with food and drink. In Sierra Leone, it is considered polite for a dinner guest to leave some food on the plate.

FAMILY LIFE

Among Creoles, marriage is often seen as a relationship not just between the spouses but also between their two families, so marriages still tend to be arranged, or at least encouraged, when parents find a suitable mate of the right social class for their son or daughter. In many of the nation’s cultures, the groom pays a bride-price, usually a mix of money and something like fine cloth. In modern times, more-educated Sierra Leoneans are more likely to choose their own spouses.

The basic domestic unit tends to be the extended family, especially in rural areas, where polygyny is still common, although in the cities and among Christians monogamous relationships are far more typical. Families tend to be large: In 2004 the fertility rate was 5.7 children per woman, and the overall birthrate was 43 per 1,000 population. However, the high infant mortality rate and rate of death of children under five keep families somewhat smaller than these numbers might suggest. Large

families, especially in rural areas, are seen as a means to provide enough hands to perform farmwork and also as a means to forge alliances with other families when children are of marriageable age.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Sierra Leoneans generally dress in modern, Western-style clothing. During the colonial period Creoles in particular imitated the dress of the European colonists and were often given clothing by them. Upper-class Creoles placed great emphasis on looking respectable and on following the latest fashions from Europe. In modern times clothing tends to be more casual, especially among the young, although older people dress more conservatively, with men in suits and women in dresses.

SPORTS

Throughout most of Africa soccer is the national passion, and Sierra Leone is no exception. Virtually every city has its own teams, as do schools, and children play soccer, often barefoot, wherever they can find open space. The Canadian organization Right to Play has set up sports camps in Sierra Leone to provide recreational outlets for younger people displaced by the civil war as well as for child soldiers who had previously known little but violence. While Sierra Leone has not fared well at the Olympics in recent years, the efforts of its team, which trains with virtually no equipment and in secondhand sneakers, were seen as rays of hope and courage during the civil war years.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1961** Sierra Leone becomes an independent country within the Commonwealth of Nations, with Milton Margai as prime minister.
- 1962** In first national elections, Margai's Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) wins a plurality and forms a government with independents' support.
- 1964** Milton Margai dies and is succeeded as prime minister by his half-brother, Albert Margai.
- 1967** In second national elections, the opposition All People's Congress (APC), led by Siaka Stevens, wins a plurality; Stevens is sworn in as prime minister; Brig. David Lansana declares martial law and prevents Stevens from taking office; Lansana is ousted within two days by a group of officers opposed to both Margai and Stevens; Col. Andres Juxon-Smith is named leader of the new junta, which names itself the National Reformation Council.
- 1968** Soldiers' revolt led by Private Morlai Kamara and Warrant Officer Alex Conteh restores John Bangura as army head and Siaka Stevens as prime minister.
- 1969** SLPP leaders are arrested in the wake of widespread riots.
- 1970** The newly formed United Democratic Party is banned and its leaders arrested in the wake of widespread riots in the north.
- 1971** Under a new constitution Sierra Leone becomes a republic within the Commonwealth, with Stevens as president. Army units attempt to kill Stevens; Commander Bangura is tried and executed after loyal army units suppress coup.
- 1973** Sierra Leone and Liberia join in the Mano River Union. SLPP boycotts national elections, citing APC's terror tactics.
- 1975** Christian Kamara-Taylor is named prime minister. House of Representatives passes motion calling for a one-party state.
- 1976** Stevens is reelected president.
- 1977** In elections to the House of Representatives, the APC wins 74 seats and the SLPP 15 seats.
- 1978** Constitutional referendum approves new constitution under which the APC became the sole legal political party; President Stevens is reelected for another seven-year term; Kamara-Taylor becomes first vice president.
- 1980** Sierra Leone hosts Organization of African Unity summit conference at Freetown, at a cost of 123 million leones.
- 1982** Elections are held for the House of Representatives.
- 1983** Tribal violence erupts in Pujehan District, leading to the arrest of hundreds.
- 1984** First Vice President Kamara-Taylor resigns.
- 1985** President Stevens steps down and nominates Gen. Joseph Saidu Momoh as his successor; Momoh is installed as president.
- 1987** Momoh declares state of economic emergency and issues stringent regulations against government corruption and the smuggling of essential commodities such as diamonds. An aborted coup is linked to disenchantment with the government's antismuggling campaign.
- 1989** The APC adopts a code of conduct for political leaders and public servants in an effort to eradicate corruption.
- 1990** A number of political groups and organizations call for a return to a multiparty system, but Momoh opposes the idea. Several thousand Liberian refugees fleeing civil war enter Sierra Leone. Under the auspices of the Economic Community of West African States, West Afri-

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- can leaders agree to send a peacekeeping force to intervene in the Liberian civil war.
- 1991** Civil war is waged by the Revolutionary United Front against the government.
- 1994** Fighting in the northern town of Kambia produces 30,000 refugees.
- 1996** The RUF announces a two-month cease-fire following elections in order to negotiate with President Kabbah.
- 1997** President Kabbah is overthrown by a military junta led by Major Johnny Paul Koroma.
- 1998** A Nigerian-led force attacks the military junta and forces the return of President Kabbah from exile in Guinea.
- 1999** The Lomé Peace Accord, between the rebel AFRC and the government, is signed in July.
- 2000** Several hundred UN peacekeeping troops are taken hostage by the rebels.
- 2002** The Kabbah government and the United Nations agree to set up a war-crimes tribunal. The first elections since the end of the civil war are held in May; Kabbah is elected president by a landslide, and his party secures a majority in the parliament.
- 2004** War-crimes trials begin. The first local elections in more than three decades are held. The United Nations hands control of the capital over to local forces.
- 2005** UN peacekeeping troops leave the country.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Sierra Leone
<http://www.sierra-leone.org>

SINGAPORE

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Singapore (Republik Singapura)

ABBREVIATION

SG

CAPITAL

Singapore

HEAD OF STATE

President Sellapan Rama Nathan (from 1999)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong (from 2004)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Parliamentary republic

POPULATION

4,425,720 (2005)

AREA

693 sq km (268 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Chinese

LANGUAGES

English, Mandarin Chinese, Tamil, Malay

RELIGIONS

Buddhism, Taoism, Islam, Hinduism, Christianity

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Singapore dollar

NATIONAL FLAG

Two stripes, red at the top and white at the bottom. On the red stripe, near the hoist, are a white crescent, opening to the fly, and five white stars.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A shield with five stars arranged in a circle over an upturned crescent moon. The shield is flanked by a lion (the name Singapore in Sanskrit means “the lion city”) and a black-striped gold tiger. Beneath the device is a blue scroll with gold letters proclaiming the national motto, *Majulah, Singapura* (Onward, Singapore).

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Long Live Singapore”

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year’s Day), May 1 (Labour Day), August 9 (National Day), also various Buddhist, Chinese, Hindu, Muslim, and Christian festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

August 9, 1965

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

June 3, 1959 (as amended in 1965 and 1991)

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Singapore is an island city-state located in Southeast Asia off the southern tip of the Malay Peninsula. It consists of the island of Singapore and some 60 smaller adjacent islets, with a total land area of 693 sq km (268 sq mi), of which Singapore Island comprises 542.6 sq km (209.5 sq mi). Singapore has a total coastline of 193 km (120 mi) and is connected to the southern tip of Malaysia by a road and rail causeway 1.2 km (.75 mi) in length across the narrow Johore Strait. The island is separated from Indonesia by the Strait of Malacca and the Singapore Strait, among the busiest sea passages in the world. The land area of Singapore is being constantly expanded by an ambitious program of land reclamation. The capital, the city of Singapore, officially covers an area of 60 sq km (23.2 sq mi), but the entire

republic is one large metropolis. The islands are generally flat and low. The highest point, Bukit Timah, has an elevation of only 166 m (544 ft).

Geography

Area sq km: 693; sq mi 268

World Rank: 174th

Land Boundaries, km: 0

Coastline, km: 193

Elevation Extremes meters:

Lowest: Singapore Strait 0

Highest: Bukit Timah 166

Land Use %

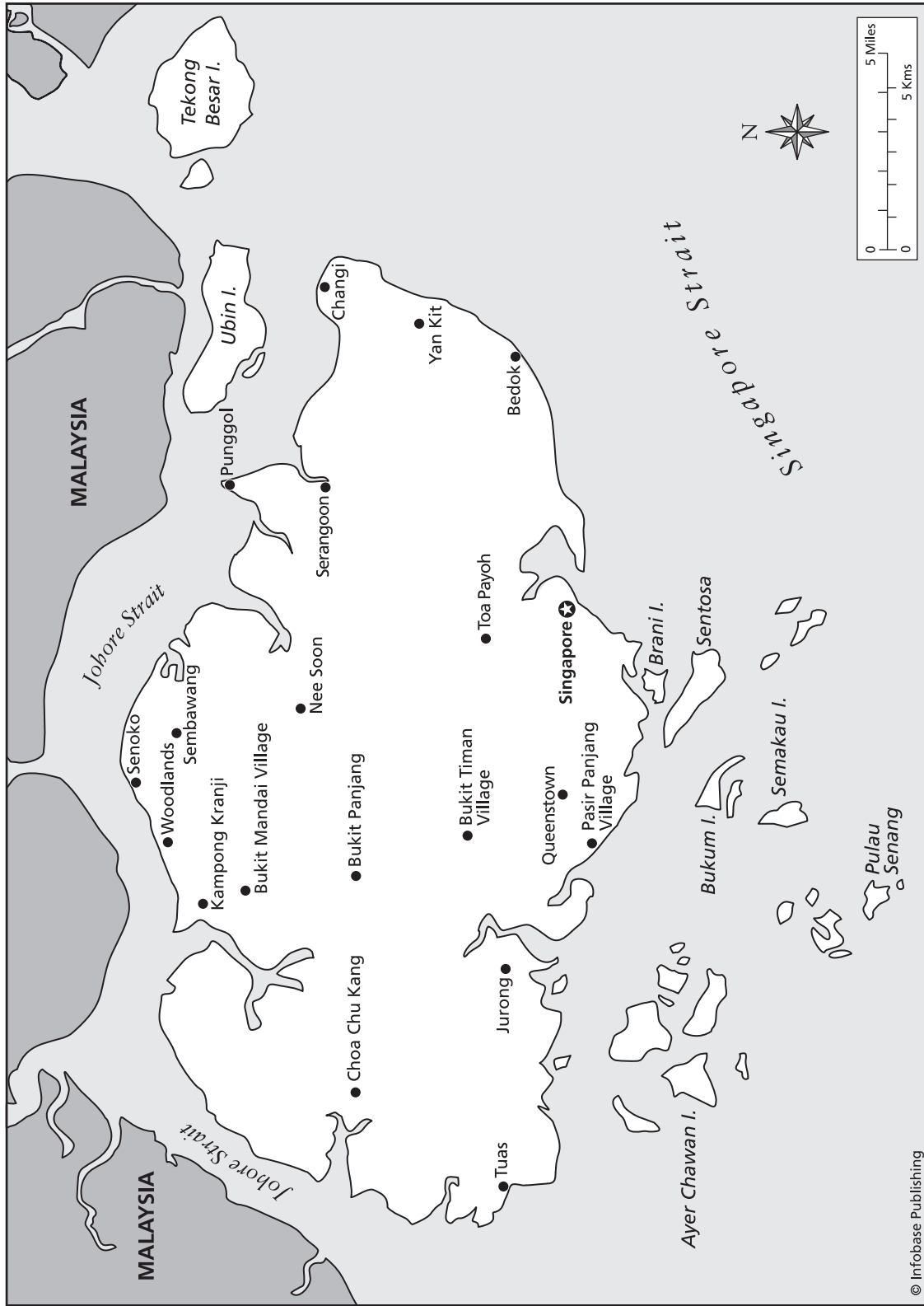
Arable Land: 1.6

Permanent Crops: 0.0

Forest: 3.0

Other: 95.4

Singapore



Population of Principal Cities (2002 est.)

Singapore	4,163,700
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CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Located less than two degrees latitude north of the equator, Singapore has a hot, humid, tropical climate. The range of temperature variations is slight; the average daily maximum is 30.6°C (87°F), the average minimum 24°C (75°F). Sea breezes and constant humidity keep temperatures relatively moderate. Rainfall, averaging about 2,410 mm (95 in) annually, is distributed fairly evenly throughout the year, with rain falling on at least 180 days in a given year. Serious floods are common during the north-east monsoon, while the southwest monsoon is usually accompanied by violent squalls. Nonetheless, Singapore is dependent on neighboring Malaysia for some two-thirds of its water supply.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature: 75°F to 87°F
Average Rainfall: 95 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Singapore was once covered with jungles and swamps but is now almost entirely urban, such that most of its native plants and animals are gone. The city has planted decorative trees in strategic locations. The remaining animals are mostly birds, reptiles such as lizards and snakes, and insects.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 4,425,720
World Rank: 118th
Density per sq km: 6,343.3
% of annual growth (1999-2003): 1.6
Male %: 49.0
Female %: 51.0
Urban %: —
Age Distribution %: 0-14: 16.0
15-64: 75.9
65 and over: 8.1
Population 2025: 5,101,000
Birth Rate per 1,000: 9.49
Death Rate per 1,000: 4.16
Rate of Natural Increase %: 0.5
Total Fertility Rate: 1.05
Expectation of Life (years): Males 79.05
Females 84.39
Marriage Rate per 1,000: 5.6
Divorce Rate per 1,000: 0.7
Average Size of Households: 4.2
Induced Abortions: 13,734

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Singaporeans belong to one of three major ethnic groups: Chinese, Malay, and Indian. The racial proportion of roughly 77 percent Chinese, 14 percent Malay, and 8 percent Indian has remained fairly stable over the years, although none of the three main communities is homogeneous. Although ethnic differences persist, relations between the major groups are fairly harmonious, and the government has successfully managed to quell any divisiveness. Multiracialism has been stressed as a national value, and a Singaporean national identity has evolved that has no ethnic frame of reference. Other ethnic groups (1.4 percent) include sizable British and U.S. communities, mainly businesspeople and their families.

LANGUAGES

Malay is the official and national language. Other official languages are Mandarin Chinese, Tamil, and English. English is the main medium for government, business, and industry and is the primary language of instruction in schools. The government has stressed the importance of developing bilingualism.

RELIGIONS

Singapore is a completely secular state, and religious affiliations are not recorded in the census. Nevertheless, most of the Chinese are Buddhists, though some are Confucianists or Taoists. The Indians are Hindus and Sikhs, and the Malays, Pakistanis, and Bangladeshis are Muslims. There are sprinklings of Christians in the Chinese and Indian communities, whereas the Eurasians and Europeans are overwhelmingly Christian. The rapidly growing total of Christians is now almost 15 percent of the population. Singapore is the seat of an Anglican diocese and a Roman Catholic archdiocese.

Religious Affiliations

Buddhist	1,881,000
Taoist	376,000
Muslim	708,000
Christian	619,500
Other	841,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Singapore was an almost uninhabited island when Sir Stamford Raffles established a trading station for the British East India Company there in 1819. Five years later the island was ceded outright to the company by the sultan of Johore and was incorporated with Malacca and

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Penang to form the Straits Settlements, which became a Crown colony in 1867.

With the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 and the coming of steamships, prosperity grew rapidly in Singapore, as symbolized in part by the construction of miles of wharves. Exports of tin and rubber made Singapore one of the world's greatest ports. With its excellent harbor and strategic location, the city became a flourishing commercial center.

After World War I, the British developed a large naval base on the island that became a symbol of British power in Southeast Asia. Singapore was captured by the Japanese in 1942 and recaptured by the British in 1945. In 1946 Singapore was detached from the Straits Settlements to become a separate Crown colony. The British were concerned that Singapore's largely Chinese population would be a source of possible conflict with the Malays across the strait. In 1959 Singapore became a fully internally self-governing state, in 1963 joining the new Federation of Malaysia. The federation was an uneasy one, and Singapore and Malaysia terminated the union in 1965. In December the Republic of Singapore was officially proclaimed, with a president as constitutional head of state.

By 1971 the British had ended their military presence in Southeast Asia; the Anglo-Malayan Treaty, which had committed Britain to the defense of the region, was terminated and replaced by a five-power defense arrangement, among the United Kingdom, Australia, Malaysia, New Zealand, and Singapore. Singapore began to take a more active role in regional diplomacy and became a leader in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

Politics in Singapore have been dominated by the People's Action Party (PAP), initially led by Lee Kuan Yew, who served as prime minister from the time Singapore achieved internal self-government in 1959 to November 1990. Through its control of parliament, where it still held all but a handful of seats through the 2001 elections, the PAP has been able to mold the nation around its beliefs. Becoming increasingly intolerant of dissent, in the 1980s the Lee government passed amendments to the Parliament Act that enabled parliament to imprison, fine, or expel members who abused their privileges and also adopted the Newspaper and Printing Presses Act, which permitted the government to restrict the sale of foreign publications that it considered to be interfering in domestic affairs. In 1989 parliament adopted legislation abolishing an individual's right to appeal to the privy council in cases brought under the Internal Security Act. Under both Lee and his 1991 successor, Goh Chok Tong, the government directed a program of economic growth designed to promote sophisticated, capital-intensive industries. The program gave Singapore one of the highest per capita gross domestic product (GDP) figures in Asia.

Singapore held its first presidential elections in 1993, and Ong Teng Cheong of the PAP became Singapore's first directly elected president. In 1999 Ong, who chose not to seek a second term as president, was succeeded by Sellapan Rama Nathan, who became president without an election after being declared the only candidate eligible to run. Lee Hsien Loong became prime minister in 2004. He pledged to open up Singaporean society, possibly by removing some of the restrictive rules that constrain behavior.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

President

1965–70	Inche Yusuf bin Ishaq
1970–81	Benjamin Henry Sheares
1981–85	Chengara Veetil Devan Nair
1985–93	Wee Kim Wee
1993–99	Ong Teng Cheong
1999–	Sellapan Rama Nathan

Prime Minister

1965–90	Lee Kuan Yew
1990–2004	Goh Chok Tong
2004–	Lee Hsien Loong

CONSTITUTION

The Republic of Singapore is a republic within the Commonwealth. In form, the structure of government established by the constitution is a parliamentary democracy based on the British tradition, but in substance and practice Singapore is an authoritarian and paternalistic state in which opposition is barely tolerated and in which the People's Action Party (PAP) has assumed a preemptive role.

The legal basis of government is the charter called the Singapore (Constitution) Order in Council, 1959, under which Singapore became a self-governing colony. The transition to a republic was accomplished through two amendments.

The head of state is the president, elected since 1991 by popular vote for a six-year term. The presidency is a primarily ceremonial office, although the president is vested with the power to appoint the prime minister and dissolve parliament, as well as with limited responsibility over civil service appointments and government and statutory board budgets. By convention the prime minister is the leader of the majority party in parliament, and he, along with all cabinet ministers, is responsible to the parliament. The second most powerful office is that of the deputy prime minister, who is also appointed by the president.

The cabinet is composed of members of parliament appointed by the president, on the advice of the prime minister. Led by the prime minister, the cabinet is responsible for all government policies and day-to-day administration.

The 21-member presidential council, chaired by the chief justice, examines material of racial or religious significance, including legislation, to see whether it differentiates between racial or religious minorities or contains provisions inconsistent with the fundamental liberties guaranteed by the constitution.

Elections are held every five years. Suffrage is universal and compulsory for citizens age 21 and older.

PARLIAMENT

The parliament is an 84-member unicameral body elected by direct compulsory universal suffrage for five-year terms. Parliament convenes at least once a year, and discussions are conducted in any of the four languages: English, Mandarin Chinese, Tamil, and Malay. All bills passed by parliament require the immediate assent of the president.

Most of the members of parliament are elected to represent single-member constituencies or in some cases group-representation constituencies. In the latter, parties provide teams of three to six candidates, one of whom must belong to a minority race. This ensures that candidates must contest the election as a multiracial party and that minority races will always be represented in parliament. Singapore's constitution also provides for the appointment of up to three nonconstituency members of parliament from among the opposition political parties; the objective is to ensure that there will be a minimum number of opposition representatives in parliament.

In 1991 a constitutional provision was made for the appointment of up to nine nominated members of parliament, to ensure a wider representation of views. These officials are appointed by the president for terms of two years on the recommendation of a special select committee of parliament chaired by the speaker.

POLITICAL PARTIES

The People's Action Party (PAP) has been the ruling party since 1959 and has held the majority of seats in parliament since 1966. The only other parties with any parliamentary representation are the Workers' Party (WP) and the Singapore People's Party (SPP), each of which has one representative. Other parties include the Democratic Progressive Party, the National Solidarity Party, the Singapore Democratic Alliance, the Singapore Democratic Party, the Singapore Justice Party, and the Singapore National Malay Organization.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Singapore has no local government. There are two intermediary institutions at the local level that serve as

pipelines between the people and the government: the citizens' consultative committees in each district and the 172 management committees of the community centers run by the People's Association, a statutory body headed by the prime minister. Each citizens' consultative committee is headed by a civil servant who reports to the prime minister's office.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The Singaporean legal system is based on English common law. At the apex of the judiciary is the Supreme Court, with three chambers: the High Court, the Court of Appeal, and the Court of Criminal Appeal. The High Court exercises original civil and criminal jurisdiction in appeals from the subordinate courts (10 magistrate's and six district courts). An appeal from the High Court goes to the Court of Criminal Appeal or the Court of Appeal, or, in certain cases, to the Privy Council in the United Kingdom.

Judges of the High Court are appointed by the president on the advice of the prime minister and may not be removed from office except on the recommendation of an independent tribunal of judges. Subordinate judges are appointed by the president on the recommendation of the chief justice.

The Criminal Procedures Code provides that a charge against a defendant must be read and explained to him or her as soon as it is framed by the magistrate. The accused has the right to be defended by an attorney. Individuals are tried by a magistrate or judge and do not have the right to trial by jury. In most cases defendants may appeal the verdicts to higher courts.

The right to a fair public trial is one of the strongest features of Singapore's human rights picture. The judicial system operates in accordance with the basic tenets, practices, and precedents of British jurisprudence. The rights of the defendant are ensured at every stage. The courts are independent of the executive and the military. Appeals, except in cases brought under the Internal Security Act, are made to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Singapore has been described as a bureaucratic state under one-party rule. On the positive side, it has succeeded in providing an efficient and incorruptible government, stability, and economic prosperity, along with minor elements of participatory democracy. It has also created a national image and a set of national values that emphasize austerity, discipline, and unity. The strategy has been to speed up the orderly march of progress through the elimination of divisive and unproductive partisan politics and other forms of dissent.

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In terms of civil and political rights, Singapore is classified as a partly free country. Political power is concentrated in one party. The government exhibits characteristics of democracy and authoritarianism. The government has many powers to limit citizens' rights and block political opposition, using internal security laws to have political dissidents held indefinitely without trial. The use of preventive detention is common; although there have been no terrorist incidents in recent years, the government cites the threat of insurgency and the possibility of renewed communal conflict to justify preventive detention. The government also occasionally uses punishments such as caning. Freedom of speech and of the press are limited, and the government does not hesitate to use defamation lawsuits to suppress dissenting viewpoints. The government also limits the freedoms of assembly and association. Foreign workers are occasionally victims of abuse. Violence against women and children and human trafficking are problems.

FOREIGN POLICY

A member of the Commonwealth, Singapore is also an influential member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the Asia Pacific Economic Conference (APEC). As a nation dependent almost entirely on a healthy economy, Singapore has reached out to a variety of possible trading partners; it has become a prime mover in Asia-Europe meetings. At the same time, strong and moralistic federal policies, as well as a lack of toleration for political opposition, have earned Singapore's government sharp international criticism, including some from the United States.

As a tiny island nation, Singapore is susceptible to crises that develop in larger neighbors, especially Indonesia, another Muslim country. Friction in all sorts of areas (like trade and communications) with the closest neighbor, Malaysia, has cropped up frequently.

Singapore has participated in international peace-keeping exercises in Kuwait, Angola, Namibia, Cambodia, and East Timor. The nation sent a naval ship and an air transport plane to the Persian Gulf in 2003. The United States and Singapore have a bilateral free-trade agreement that went into effect in 2004.

DEFENSE

The defense structure is headed by the president. The line of command runs through the minister of defense, who is a civilian, to the senior officer of the armed forces, who holds the rank of brigadier and heads the General Staff division. The army is the largest of the services; the navy patrols the nation's waters and shipping lanes. The Armed Forces Council, a civilian body, determines military policy.

Military manpower is obtained through compulsory national service, in effect since 1967. All male citizens are called up for 24 months' full-time military duty at age 18. Citizens may volunteer for the armed forces at the age of 16.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 168,800
Military Manpower Availability: 1,215,568
Military Expenditures \$billion: 4.47
as % of GDP: 4.9
as % of central government expenditures: —
Arms Imports \$million: 121
Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

Singapore has one of the highest GDPs in Asia, and its residents enjoy among the highest standards of living in the world. The nation's economy is based largely on international trade and finance. It has an honest government free of corruption, a highly skilled and industrious workforce, a solid infrastructure, and an ideal location for international trade.

Singaporean industries manufacture drilling equipment and rigs for offshore oil operations, and the nation is one of the world's leading refiners of petroleum. Manufacturing employs 18 percent of the workforce and, along with other industry, constitutes 33 percent of GDP. Leading industries are transport equipment and electronic products. Most manufactured goods are exported. More than 100 commercial banks operate in Singapore; most are foreign owned. Alongside its rapid growth in manufacturing and world status in banking, Singapore remains one of the world's largest ports in annual tonnage.

Singapore's government has played a major role in the nation's economic development. The government holds about 75 percent of all land and is the chief supplier of surplus capital. Increasingly, however, extensive government intervention in the economy has eased. Reliance on market forces, the privatization of formerly federal enterprises, and greater support for private business have become official policies. The government's \$1 billion Technopreneurship Investment Fund is designed to attract to Singapore venture companies and people who can assess and value start-up ventures and share the risk of backing promising ideas.

The government promotes high levels of savings and investment through a mandatory savings scheme and spends heavily in education and technology. It also owns government-linked companies, particularly in manufacturing, that operate as commercial entities. As Singapore looks to a future increasingly marked by globalization, the country is positioning itself as the region's financial and high-tech hub.

The economy suffered from the global recession and technology slump of 2001–03. The government has been working to cut costs for foreign businesses in the face of rising wages, lowering taxes and reducing rents. Singapore signed free-trade agreements with Japan in 2002 and with the United States the following year.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 120.9
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 27,800
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 3.6
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 1.9
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 0.0
 Industry: 32.6
 Services: 67.4
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 43
 Government Consumption: 13
 Gross Domestic Investment: 27.4
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 174
 Imports: 155.2
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: —
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: —
 CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
103.2	104.6	105.6	105.2	105.7

Finance

National Currency: Singapore Dollar (SGD)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = SGD 1.6338
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 38.7
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: —
 Total External Debt \$billion: 19.4
 Debt Service Ratio %: —
 Balance of Payments \$billion: 8.8
 International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 95
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 1.7

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 7.1
 per capita \$: 1.70
 Foreign Direct Investment \$billion: 11.4

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: April 1–March 31
 Revenues \$billion: 17.05
 Expenditures \$billion: 18.45
 Budget Deficit \$billion: 1.4
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 0.0
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 3.8
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 6.5
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: —
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 2,418
 Total Farmland % of land area: 1.5
 Livestock: Cattle: 200
 Chickens million: 2
 Pigs 000: 250
 Sheep 000: —
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters 000: —
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 7.8

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 23.9
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 11.1

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: —
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 17.3
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 4.2
 Net Energy Imports % of use: 99.8
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 7.7
 Production kW-hr billion: 30.5
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 29.9
 Coal Reserves tons million: —
 Production tons million: —
 Consumption tons million: —
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
 Production cubic feet billion: —
 Consumption cubic feet billion: 42
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
 Production barrels 000 per day: —
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 746
 Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 155.2
 Exports \$billion: 174
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —
 Balance of Trade \$billion: 8.8

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Malaysia %	16.8	15.8
United States %	14.1	14.3
Japan %	12.0	6.7
China %	8.7	7.0
Taiwan %	5.1	4.7
Thailand %	4.3	4.3
Hong Kong %	—	10.0
South Korea %	—	4.2

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Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 3,130
Paved %: 100
Automobiles: 425,700
Trucks and Buses: 138,600
Railroad: Track Length km: —
Passenger-km million: —
Freight-km million: —
Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 923
Total Deadweight Tonnage million: 36.4
Airports: 10
Traffic: Passenger-km million: 75.6
Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 5.7
Number of Tourists from million: 4.2
Tourist Receipts \$million: —
Tourist Expenditures \$million: —

Communications

Telephones million: 1.9
Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
Cellular Telephones million: 3.5
Personal Computers million: 2.6
Internet Hosts per million people: 109,547
Internet Users per 1,000 people: 522

ENVIRONMENT

Singapore is a small nation and lacks both land and fresh-water. The lack of land makes it difficult for the nation to dispose of wastes. Other environmental problems are industrial pollution and seasonal smoke that drifts to Singapore from forest fires in Indonesia. Deforestation is a serious problem. Most of the original rain forest is now scrubland, if not covered by apartment blocks; the remainder, about 3 percent of the national area, is managed by the Nature Reserves Board. The greatest density of rain forest is found in the Bukit Timah Nature Reserve.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 3.0
Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: —
Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 2
Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 32,250
CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 14.7

LIVING CONDITIONS

Singapore is a clean modern city. Most people live in high-rise apartments, many of them owned by the Housing Development Board. Individuals must apply to the

government to get apartments, and strict rules regulate who is eligible. Public transportation is excellent and inexpensive; there are buses, subways, and taxis. The Singapore airport is considered one of the best and most modern airports in the world. Traffic can be bad.

HEALTH

The people of Singapore are quite healthy. Life expectancy is over 81 years. The government provides health care for citizens, deducting money from paychecks and placing it in funds that cover medical care and act as savings schemes for education, housing, and retirement. There are both public and private hospitals and clinics, and the quality of care is very good. Many people still consult Chinese medical practitioners as well as Western-style doctors; the government regulates these practitioners through its Traditional Chinese Medicine Unit.

Health

Number of Physicians: 5,747
Number of Dentists: 1,087
Number of Nurses: 17,398
Number of Pharmacists: 1,141
Physician Density per 100,000 people: 140
Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 2.29
Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 30
Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 4.3
Health Expenditures per capita \$: 898
HIV Infected % of adults: 0.2
Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
DPT: 92
Measles: 88
Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 100
Access to Improved Water Source %: 100

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Singaporeans have access to a plethora of Asian cooking styles, including Chinese, Malay, Indian, and Peranakan food. The city is full of hawker centers, with food stalls selling different styles of food. Common dishes include Chinese dim sum, Malaysian *satay*, Indian curries, and *otak-otak*, which is fish mixed with coconut milk, wrapped in coconut leaves, and grilled over charcoal. The British also influenced Singaporean cuisine. The drink called the Singapore Sling was invented in Singapore in 1915 at the Raffles Hotel.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —
Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: —
Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: —

STATUS OF WOMEN

Women generally enjoy equal rights, primarily under the 1969 Women's Charter and the constitution. Women have voting rights and the right of equality of economic opportunity under the law. Women occupy 103 of 495 senior-level positions in the civil service but none of the top 29 positions. Following the 1997 election, there were only two female members of parliament, both belonging to the People's Action Party; by 2004 there were 15 women in 94 parliamentary seats. Female incomes in 1995 remained only 59 percent of male incomes, though both groups were earning higher incomes than in previous years. Shortages of workers have led the government to encourage women to work.

Singaporean women do not have equal rights with men in the transmission of citizenship to their children. A Singaporean woman married to a foreigner cannot pass citizenship to children born outside the country, although a Singaporean male can in fact do so. Additionally, the wife of a Singaporean male can receive permanent resident status and citizenship based on the marriage, whereas the husband of a Singaporean woman cannot.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 16
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.0
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 47.8

WORK

The Singaporean work ethic is strong, and most people work long hours out of a genuine desire to excel. Unemployment is low, at 3.4 percent in 2004. Most residents are well educated and capable of performing highly technical tasks. About half the workforce is employed in services, especially banking, financial services, and business. The manufacturing sector employs about 18 percent of the workforce; factories produce such goods as electronics, chemicals, and rubber products. Clothing is also a major export. Oil refining is an important industry, and Singaporeans process the oil drilled by several nearby countries, including Malaysia, Brunei, Indonesia, and nations in the Middle East. The main port employs many people to manage the huge volume of cargo that passes through Singapore every day. Tourism is also an important employer.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 2,180,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 38.6

Labor by Sector %:
 Manufacturing: 18
 Construction: 6
 Transportation and Communication: 11
 Financial, Business, and Other Services: 49
 Other: 16
 Unemployment %: 3.4

EDUCATION

Primary education is free and compulsory. Schooling lasts for 12 years, as divided into six years of primary school, four years of lower secondary school, and two years of upper secondary school. Over 92 percent of the population can read and write.

Primary and secondary education is available in the four official languages of Malay, Mandarin, Tamil, and English. In 1978, as part of a policy of bilingualism, examinations in English and Mandarin became compulsory for pupils seeking to enter secondary education. In 1987 English became the medium of instruction in all schools.

The new education system allows less-able pupils to complete their education over a longer period of time, if they so choose. After three years' primary education, pupils are tracked into a bilingual course (six years), an extended bilingual course (eight years), or a monolingual course (eight years). Secondary-school streamlining depends on the results of the Primary School Leaving Examinations.

Singapore has begun to invest heavily in computers for education, with the goal of providing one computer for every two students, allowing pupils access to the Internet through a multimedia network.

The National University of Singapore was founded in 1980. There are also Nanyang Technological University, Singapore Management University, four polytechnics, and 14 junior colleges.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 92.5
 Male %: 96.6
 Female %: 88.6
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: —
 First Level: Primary Schools: 199
 Teachers: —
 Students: —
 Student-Teacher Ratio: —
 Net Enrollment Ratio: —
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 178
 Teachers: —
 Students: 173,007
 Student-Teacher Ratio: —
 Net Enrollment Ratio: —
 Third Level: Institutions: 7
 Teachers: —
 Students: —
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: —
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: —

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Singapore has invested a great deal of money in developing itself as a high-tech electronics center. It produces computer equipment, general electronics, and technology for the petroleum industry. The Singapore Science Park, founded in 1981, houses many research institutes and technology corporations. In 2003 Singapore opened Biopolis, a center for biomedical research near the Singapore Science Park; the nation's hope is that Biopolis will become a world-class research hub.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 4,352
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 2.15
 High-Tech Exports \$billion: 71.4
 Patent Applications by Residents: 511

MEDIA

Singapore's media is highly regulated and often censored. Singapore's leaders generally acknowledge the absence of a free press, but they claim that this intolerance of full freedom of speech is only part of a broad philosophy that places self-discipline and civil order above such freedom. Singapore Press Holdings, a private corporation with close ties to the government, publishes nearly all newspapers and periodicals. Most radio and television stations are run by MediaCorp, which is owned by a state investment agency. Citizens are not allowed to own satellite dishes and so are unable to view programming from other countries.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 9
 Total Circulation million: 1.1
 Circulation per 1,000: 273
 Books Published: —
 Periodicals: 3
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets million: 1.2
 per 1,000: 341

CULTURE

The Singapore Symphony Orchestra performs about 110 concerts each year; the Singapore Lyric Theatre presents both popular musicals and opera. Some 40,000 students each year take examinations for the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music. The Singapore Dance Theatre is known for its wide repertoire of classical and contemporary dance fusing Eastern and Western elements.

Several Singaporean artists have achieved international repute. The visual arts community is active in

organizing cultural exchanges and group exhibitions to showcase their work overseas. A notable overseas exhibition to seven cities was organized in China in 1995. The growth of the film industry in Singapore has been highlighted by the Singapore International Film Festival, which grew from a 50-film event in 1968 to a 200-film festival with an audience of 47,000 in 1997.

Significant in the realm of literature was the introduction of three new awards by the Malay Language Council of Singapore in 1993.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: 10
 Annual Attendance: 4,282,000
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: 80
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: 18,128,000

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Singapore has numerous myths and legends similar to those from Malaysia and influenced by the many Chinese immigrants; some people worry that the nation is losing its native culture to Westernization, so schools teach some legends to young children. One story involves the naming of Singapore: A king who traveled to the island saw a magical creature with golden eyes, a white neck, a red body, and a large mane. He learned that the animal was called a "singa" and named the island after it.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Singapore is a modern city with vibrant recreational offerings, from shopping to fine dining. The markets and shops in Chinatown and Arab Street attract many visitors. Sentosa Island has museums, beaches, sporting facilities, aquariums, walks, rides, restaurants, and campgrounds. When people go out at night, they may go to restaurants, bars, or lounges where they sing karaoke. Popular activities include kite flying, top spinning, dragon-boat races, and bird-singing competitions, in which bird owners enter their musical pets. Festivals occur nearly every month, with each ethnic group celebrating its own holidays.

ETIQUETTE

Singaporean social behavior is complicated by the many restrictive social laws that have been passed by the gov-

ernment. Among illegal behaviors are littering, chewing gum or smoking in public, using a toilet without flushing it, and bringing durians (foul-smelling fruit) on the subway. Most people use only their right hands for social interaction and eating because of the presence of Muslims and Indians. People always remove their shoes when entering homes or places of worship. It is considered rude to point the bottoms of one's feet at someone else. Chinese rules of etiquette are immensely complicated, and a non-Chinese visitor should always obtain advice from a Chinese person when encountering a potentially difficult situation.

FAMILY LIFE

Women are marrying later and delaying childbearing, although one incentive toward marrying is a law prohibiting single women from qualifying for their own apartments before the age of 35. Arranged marriages are still common, and interracial marriages occur frequently. Singaporean families tend to be very small. Most households consist of parents with one or two children. In 2005 the fertility rate was a very low 1.05 children per woman. Alarmed by the low birthrate, the government has recently changed its family planning messages; it formerly encouraged people to stop at two children but now suggests that they have three or more if they can afford to do so. Parents still value male children more highly and will often throw a party to mark the birth of a son.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Singaporeans dress in typical Western clothing, for the most part attiring themselves well and neatly. They tend to disapprove of people who wear untidy or revealing clothing or who have disreputable or disheveled appearances. People of Chinese descent avoid dressing in all white or all black, which are colors used for mourning.

SPORTS

Singapore has numerous sporting facilities and many national sports associations. The government encourages all citizens to participate in sports so as to keep fit. Soccer is the most popular sport, and the Singaporean national team vies with Malaysian states for the Malaysia Cup. People also play cricket, rugby, lawn bowling, tennis, and field hockey, which were introduced by the British. Traditional games include *sepak raga*, which involves kicking a rattan ball, and *carom*, an Indian game that resembles billiards. Many people practice martial arts such as tai chi, *qi gong*, and *si lat*.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1959** Singapore promulgates its first constitution and becomes a self-governing state in the Commonwealth of Nations; Lee Kuan Yew of the People's Action Party (PAP) becomes prime minister, and parliament elects Inche Yusuf bin Ishaq as president.
- 1963** Singapore amends the constitution to join with Sarawak, North Borneo (later called Sabah), and the Federation of Malaysia to form Malaysia.
- 1965** Singapore leaves Malaysia to form its own republic.
- 1971** Benjamin Henry Sheares becomes president; Singapore joins an anti-Communist defense alliance with Australia, the United Kingdom, Malaysia, and New Zealand.
- 1981** President Sheares dies; parliament names Chengara Veetil Devan Nair president.
- 1985** Wee Kim Wee becomes president.
- 1990** Singapore extends diplomatic recognition to China; Prime Minister Lee resigns.
- 1991** The PAP wins 77 out of 81 parliamentary seats in national elections, making Goh Chok Tong the new prime minister.
- 1993** Ong Teng Cheong, a deputy of Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong, becomes Singapore's first directly elected president, winning 57.4 percent of the vote; observers suggest that the 40.4 percent election pull of a self-declared weak candidate indicates increasing public dissatisfaction with the long-ruling PAP.
- 1994** Singapore's strong criminal laws draw international attention when an American expatriate is sentenced to imprisonment and caning (a sentence President Clinton called "extreme"), a Dutch engineer is hanged for trafficking in heroin, and several people are convicted and fined for publishing estimates of economic growth before they were officially released.
- 1995** A trader for Barings Bank causes operational losses of over \$1 billion on the Singapore International Monetary Exchange; Barings collapses and the trader is arrested.
- 1996** The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development reclassifies Singapore as a "more advanced developing economy," only one step below "developed" status; at the first Asia-Europe meeting in March, delegates propose an Asia-Europe Foundation, to be based in Singapore.
- 1997** The PAP overwhelmingly wins reelection to power, capturing two of the four former opposition seats in parliament, but PAP tactics, especially with regard to opposition leaders,

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provoke international criticism; Singapore begins to feel the effects of the Asian financial crisis when nearby trading nations (accounting for more than 25 percent of foreign trade) are badly hurt.

- 1998** Despite its economic strength, Singapore is deeply affected by the Asian financial crisis, but the nation begins a recovery toward year-end; fearing an influx of refugees as a result of the Indonesian crisis, Singapore steps up military patrols of its borders.
- 1999** With an upturn in the economy, Singapore continues to liberalize important sectors, including banking and finance; when President Ong Teng Cheong announces that he will not seek a second six-year term, the ambassador-at-large Sellapan Rama Nathan is elected, without a ballot.
- 2001** The first legally sanctioned demonstration outside an election campaign is held in April in support of the opposition leader J. B. Jeyaretnam. In early elections held on November 4, the PAP wins 82 of 84 seats in parliament.
- 2002** Singapore and Japan sign a free-trade agreement.
- 2003** The infectious SARS breaks out in Singapore. Singapore signs a free-trade agreement with the United States. Biopolis, a \$500 million research center, opens.
- 2004** Lee Hsien Loong becomes prime minister.
- 2005** Singapore and Malaysia settle a border dispute.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Statistics Singapore
<http://www.singstat.gov.sg>

SLOVAKIA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Slovak Republic (Slovenská Republika)

ABBREVIATION

SK

CAPITAL

Bratislava

HEAD OF STATE

President Ivan Gašparovič (from 2004)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Mikuláš Dzurinda (from 1998)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Parliamentary democracy

POPULATION

5,431,363 (2005)

AREA

48,845 sq km (18,860 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Slovak, Hungarian

LANGUAGES

Slovak (official), Hungarian

RELIGIONS

Roman Catholic, Protestant, Greek Catholic

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Slovak koruna

NATIONAL FLAG

Three equal horizontal bands of white (top), blue, and red, superimposed by the Slovak cross in a shield centered on the hoist side; the cross is white centered on a background of red and blue.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

The national emblem of Slovakia is a shield with the white cross of Lorraine on a blue mount composed of three hills against a red background. The Lorraine cross symbolizes three important saints: St. Benedict, St. Constantine, and St. Method. The hills are taken from the coat of arms of Hungarian kings (where they are green) and represent the three mountains of Tatra, Matra, and Fatra.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Lightning Flashes over the Tatra”

NATIONAL HOLIDAY

January 1 (New Year’s Day), January 6 (Epiphany), May 1 (Labor Day), July 5 (Cyril and Methodius Day), August 29 (Slovak National Uprising), September 1 (Slovak Constitution Day), November 17 (Struggle for Freedom and Democracy Day), December 24–25 (Christmas), various Christian holidays

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

January 1, 1993

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

September 1, 1992; fully effective January 1, 1993; amended 1998, 2001

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

The Slovak Republic is a landlocked country in central Europe. It has a total area of 48,845 sq km (18,860 sq mi), including 45 sq km (17 sq mi) of water. The nation borders Austria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, and Ukraine. The capital is Bratislava, which lies on the Danube. The highest point in Slovakia is Gerlachovsky, at 2,655 m (8,711 ft), and the lowest point is on the Bodrok River, at 94 m (308 ft).

The Carpathians extend into northern Slovakia, starting near the Danube as the Little Carpathian Range.

This joins with the White Carpathians, the Javorniky Mountains, and the Bezkydy Mountains to form the first Carpathian bow. The mildly elevated ranges are dissected by numerous river valleys and passes. The Orava and Vah valleys separate the outer Carpathians from the inner crystalline zone. Several intermontane basins—the Lip-tov, Turiec, Poprad, and Honrad—divide the Carpathians into fragments. The High and Low Tatra Mountains have atypical alpine landscapes. They extend in a narrow ridge along the Polish border and are a popular summer resort. The highest peak in the country—Gerlachovsky—is in this ridge. The tree line is at about 1,500 m (4,922 ft). An



icecap extended into this area during glacial times, leaving pockets that became mountain lakes. The southern part of the Carpathian bow is defined by fractures marked by the volcanic hills of the Slovak Ore Mountains, which are characterized by steep slopes. Finally, a more typical region is formed by the Slovak lowlands on the northern fringes of the Danube basin, known as the Little Alföld, and parts of the Great Alföld to the east, where the Ipel and Košice basins are much smaller.

The Danube is the main river and has several major tributaries, including the Vah, Nitrah, Hron, Ipel, and tributaries of the Tisza, of which the Hornad is the most important. As it leaves Bratislava, the Danube divides into two channels, the Danube proper and the Little Danube.

Geography

Area sq km: 48,845; sq mi 18,860
 World Rank: 126th
 Land Boundaries, km: Austria 91; Poland 444; Czech Republic 215; Hungary 677; Ukraine 97
 Coastline, km: 0
 Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Bodrok River 94
 Highest: Gerlachovsky 2,655
 Land Use %
 Arable Land: 30.2
 Permanent Crops: 2.6
 Forest: 45.3
 Other: 21.9

Population of Principal Cities (2003)

Bratislava	425,533
Košice	235,281

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Slovakia is under the influence of the continental weather system predominant in eastern Europe. Winters are fairly cold, cloudy, and humid; high levels of humidity and cloud cover tend to be more prevalent in the valleys and areas of lower elevation. The mountains are snow covered from early November through April, with some locations registering deep accumulations. Summers are generally pleasant, and at lower elevations frosts are rare between the beginning of April and the end of October.

The mean average temperature nationwide ranges from 6°C to 10°C (43°F to 50°F). The lowlands are warmer than the western parts of the country. Spring is usually cooler than fall. Rainfall increases to the east, and the maximum rainfall occurs in the summer, although the Danubian plains receive a second pattern of higher rainfall in October. Although the western part of the nation receive less precipitation overall, seasonal distribution of rain makes the region more arable.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature
 July: 70°F
 January: 30°F
 Average Rainfall: 19.3 in
 High Tatras: 80 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Some 45 percent of Slovakia, especially the mountainous part, is still covered in forests—mostly spruce and beech, with some larch, maple, pine, and oak. Other areas were formerly forested, but centuries' worth of humans have gradually cut down many of the nation's trees. The High Tatras are home to wolves, bears, lynxes, chamois, mink, marmots, and otters; these animals also live in some national parks. Numerous deer live throughout the country. Birds include wild geese, eagles, vultures, partridges, ducks, storks, pheasants, and grouse.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 5,431,363
 World Rank: 109th
 Density per sq km: 110.5
 % of annual growth (1999-2003): 0.0
 Male %: 48.5
 Female %: 51.5
 Urban %: 58.0
 Age Distribution %: 0-14: 17.1
 15-64: 71.0
 65 and over: 11.9
 Population 2025: 5,459,000
 Birth Rate per 1,000: 10.62
 Death Rate per 1,000: 9.43
 Rate of Natural Increase %: 0.1
 Total Fertility Rate: 1.32
 Expectation of Life (years): Males 70.52
 Females 78.68
 Marriage Rate per 1,000: 4.7
 Divorce Rate per 1,000: 2.0
 Average Size of Households: 4.0
 Induced Abortions: 17,382

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Ethnic Slovaks account for some 85 percent of the population. Hungarians make up the largest minority group, with some 10 percent of the total citizenry; other minorities include Germans, Czechs, Poles, Ruthenians, and Ukrainians, with none of their populations amounting to more than 0.3 percent of the total. There exists a substantial Romany, or Gypsy, community, constituting around 2 percent of the population.

Relations between Slovaks and Hungarians have been tense owing to the history of the two peoples; the majority of Hungarians live close to the border with Hungary. Along with the Hungarians, groups such as the Ruthenians are requesting greater resources for education, media, and cultural development. These minority groups especially feel discrimination in the political sphere.

LANGUAGES

Slovak is the official language of the republic. However, all of the ethnic groups tend to speak their own languages within their own communities, and as such Hungarian is the second-most widely spoken language. In 1994 a law was passed making Hungarian an official language in those areas where Hungarians account for 20 percent or more of the population, but restrictions on this act were later passed.

There exist a variety of regional Slovak dialects that can be broadly divided into western, central, and eastern versions. Recently, English and German have become popular as second languages, with English especially prevalent in universities.

RELIGIONS

Christianity was first propagated by German Catholic missionaries, and later by Orthodox Slav missionaries. Catholicism remains the most popular religion in the republic, accounting for some 60 percent of the nation's people. Almost 10 percent of Slovaks identify themselves as atheists. The various Protestant sects account for 8 percent of the population, Orthodox Christians 4 percent. Lutheranism is the dominant Protestant sect, followed by the Hussite Church.

Religious Affiliations

Roman Catholic	3,275,000
Atheist	527,000
Protestant	456,000
Orthodox	222,500
Other	950,500

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The earliest inhabitants of the present Slovak lands were Celtic tribes such as the Contini who settled in the eastern parts of the nation around 500 B.C.E. The Celts were displaced by German tribes, including the Quadi. The Germans were in turn dislodged, and the area fell under Slav domination in the fifth century. The sixth century witnessed the onslaught of the Avars, a pastoral people

speaking a Ural-Altai language. They were repelled by the Samo, who unified the Slav tribes and in 625 established the Samo Empire, which lasted until 658 as the first Czechoslovak polity. Early in the ninth century the Moravian Empire emerged, within which German missionaries began to spread Christianity.

The Moravian Empire disintegrated with the Magyar invasions. The Czech tribes broke away and swore allegiance to the Franks, while the Slovaks remained under Magyar rule for successive centuries. Magyar authority over Slovakia was greatly augmented as a result of the influx of Magyar refugees following the defeat of the Hungarian armies by the Ottomans at Mohacs in 1526. Slovakia remained part of the greater Hungarian Empire, which was absorbed into the Austrian Empire in the 1800s. The Hungarians attempted a campaign of Magyarization to suppress the cultural identities of the various ethnic minorities within their territory. However, during the 19th century there was a Slovak revival. A Slovak literary language was developed by a Jesuit priest, Anon Bernolak. Meanwhile, the Protestant Slovaks adopted a different literary language, combining elements of Czech grammar with the central Slovak dialect.

The major political event of the 19th century was the Revolution of 1848, which was crushed by imperial forces. Absolutism was restored under the Hapsburg emperor Franz Josef (1848–1916).

The establishment of the Dual Monarchy and the reconfiguration forming the Austro-Hungarian Empire did not bring any concessions to the Slovaks, who lacked the political clout generally given to the Czechs. When World War I began, both the Czechs and the Slovaks intensified their efforts to break away from the empire. Czech and Slovak leaders joined together to establish the Czech National Council and set up centers of resistance in Vienna, Prague, Budapest, and Bratislava. In the fall of 1918 the Allies recognized the council as the government of an independent republic. At the Paris Peace Conference the Allies approved the establishment of the Czechoslovak Republic, encompassing Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia, Slovakia, and Ruthenia.

Czechoslovakia was officially founded on October 28, 1918. A new constitution was adopted, and a national assembly and president were elected. Czech and Slovak were recognized as the national languages, and special protections were granted to minorities. In an effort to defuse potential separatist movements, the national government was set up as highly centralized, and provincial assemblies were given only nominal powers.

Between 1918 and 1938 Czechoslovakia had relatively stable governments, but there soon emerged a struggle between the national government and the Sudeten Germans. A strong sense of German nationalism among the minority fueled the rise of the Sudeten Nazi Party, which supported Adolf Hitler's Pan-Germanism.

After Hitler's annexation of Austria on March 13, 1938, Czechoslovakia became the next target. Hitler wished to use the Sudetenland as a bridgehead for further expansion into eastern Europe. Neither Great Britain nor France desired war and capitulated to Hitler's demands at the Munich Conference for the swift return of the Sudetenland to Germany. The Munich Agreement stripped Czechoslovakia of 38 percent of Bohemia and Moravia; the nation also yielded 11,882 sq km (4,586 sq mi) to Hungary and part of the region of southern Tesin to Poland. Meanwhile, encouraged by Hitler, both Slovakia and Ruthenia asserted their independence. In November 1938 a new republic was established, as consisting of three autonomous units: Bohemia-Moravia, Slovakia, and Carpatho-Ukraine, as sub-Carpathian Ruthenia was renamed. Hitler completed his conquest of the republic on March 15, 1939, when he forced the Czechoslovak government to capitulate and become a German protectorate.

German rule was moderate at first but, following student demonstrations in November 1939, became brutal under the direction of the notorious Reinhard Heydrich and, after his assassination, Gen. Kurt Daluge. A government-in-exile was established in London, and Czech and Slovak resistance was active throughout the war.

The postwar settlement resulted in numerous boundary and population changes. Ruthenia was ceded to the Soviet Union, and all Sudeten Germans were expelled under harsh conditions. Territory that had been ceded to Poland was returned, and the nation engaged in a population exchange with Hungary.

In 1946 a Communist-led coalition government assumed power following elections in which the Communists polled 38 percent of the vote. In 1948 the Communists staged a coup and charged the non-Communist political parties with subversion. All non-Communists were purged from the government, which began nationalizing private industry. A new constitution was enacted, and the provinces of Bohemia, Moravia, and Slovakia were replaced by 19 administrative provinces. Numerous arrests, confiscations, and executions occurred as the Communists sought to enhance their power. There were also restrictions placed on churches, and church property was confiscated.

In 1950 the government banned all books published in Czechoslovakia before 1948. That same year all monastic houses were seized, and a new criminal code was adopted. A year later there were mass purges. In 1960 a new constitution was adopted, and the nation's name was changed to the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic.

However, in 1968 pro-reform Communists gained power, and Alexander Dubček was named the first secretary. The so-called Prague Spring saw the initiation of a series of reforms, but the Soviet Union responded by organizing an invasion of the nation by its Warsaw Pact

allies. Thousands were executed or exiled, and Dubček was replaced by Gustáv Husák.

The reform spirit remained strong, and in 1977 a group of dissidents and reform-minded intellectuals issued Charter 77. These efforts culminated in 1989 with Husák's resignation, and the so-called Velvet Revolution led to the demise of the Communist Party. Playwright Václav Havel became president, and a non-Communist cabinet took power. The following year the Communists were defeated in national elections, and Havel was re-elected president.

In 1992 a leftist government came to power in Slovakia. The new government pressed for a dissolution of Czechoslovakia; the eventual result was the break-up of the nation in the so-called Velvet Divorce. That year a new constitution was adopted by the Slovaks, and elections under the new basic law were held in 1994. The new nation applied for membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and the European Union and in 1994 joined NATO's Partnership for Peace program. Elections in 1998 gave the center-left Movement for a Democratic Slovakia the most seats, but a centrist coalition government was formed by the Slovak Democratic Coalition. In May 1999 the country held its first direct presidential elections, and pro-Western candidate Rudolf Schuster became president. That year parliament passed a law giving minority languages more recognition.

The government spent the early 2000s improving state administration and negotiating Slovakia's entry into NATO and the European Union. Parliament amended the constitution in 2001 and created eight new regional parliaments in 2002, pursuant to constitutional amendments and EU membership requirements. Mikuláš Dzurinda won a second term as prime minister in 2002, and his center-right coalition government remained in power.

At the end of 2002 the European Union invited Slovakia to join. Citizens voted in favor of doing so, and in May 2004 Slovakia and nine other states became new EU members. The nation also joined NATO in March of that year. In April 2004 Ivan Gašparovič was elected president. His government has faced continuing difficulties with regard to Hungarians and Romanians, who have suffered discrimination at the hands of ethnic Slovaks and high levels of unemployment. The state has been attempting to restore economic prosperity by reforming state programs such as pensions and benefits, which changes may lead to the desired effects but have thus far proved unpopular with the Slovak people.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

President	
1993–98	Michal Kováč
1999–2004	Rudolf Schuster
2004–	Ivan Gašparovič

Prime Minister

1993–94 Vladimír Mečiar

1994 Jozef Moravčík

1994–98 Vladimír Mečiar

1998– Mikuláš Dzurinda

CONSTITUTION

After the Velvet Divorce, in which Czechoslovakia broke into two nations, the new Slovak Republic adopted a constitution on September 1, 1992, that went into effect in January 1993. The constitution established a parliamentary democracy, with both a president and prime minister and a unicameral legislature. The constitution was changed in September 1998 to allow the direct election of the president. The president appoints the prime minister, who heads the government; the prime minister is usually the leader of the majority party in parliament. The president also names the cabinet, with the advice of the prime minister. There is also an independent judiciary, which is headed by the Supreme Court. All Slovak citizens who are at least 18 years old are eligible to vote.

The constitution was further amended in 2001 so that Slovakia could apply for EU and NATO membership. The amended constitution decentralized power by increasing the power of the state audit office. In addition, it introduced greater recognition of minority rights and increased the independence of the judiciary.

PARLIAMENT

The nation's parliament is a unicameral chamber known as the Slovak National Council. There are 150 representatives who are chosen by popular election and serve four-year terms. Voting is proportional, and parties must pass a 5 percent threshold in order to gain seats in parliament. The leader of the majority party in parliament serves as prime minister.

POLITICAL PARTIES

The governing coalition formed in 2002 includes the Slovak Democratic and Christian Union (SDKÚ), the Party of the Hungarian Coalition (SMK), the Christian Democratic Movement (KDH), and the New Citizens Alliance (ANO). The opposition parties include the Movement for a Democratic Slovakia–People's Party (HZDS-ĽS), Direction (SMER), the Slovak Communist Party (KSS), Free Forum, and People's Union.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The Slovak Republic is divided into eight administrative regions; within these regions are 79 districts. The na-

tional government is highly centralized, and the regions are directly responsible to Bratislava. The national parliament appoints regional governments. While districts are under the direct control of regions, district governments are chosen through direct elections by the citizens.

LEGAL SYSTEM

Fundamental rights are guaranteed by the constitution, and the legal system is based on Austro-Hungarian codes. In addition, there are still modified elements of Marxist-Leninist legal theory within the system. The court system includes regional, district, and military courts. The highest court is the Supreme Court. Constitutional matters are decided by a constitutional court, which has 13 judges. In 2002 parliament created an 18-member Judicial Council that nominates all judges; the president then chooses judges from among those nominees. The Judicial Council also appoints Disciplinary Senates to handle charges of judicial misconduct.

HUMAN RIGHTS

The constitution guarantees basic civil liberties, but many minorities have perceived erosions of liberties in relation to the relatively high degree of autonomy they enjoyed while citizens of Czechoslovakia. Discrimination is common against Romany communities, and victims have claimed that judges have been too lenient in sentencing those convicted of racial violence and other discriminatory acts. In particular, there have been reports of Romany women being sterilized without consent and also of skinheads attacking Romanies and other minorities. Violence against women and children and human trafficking are problems.

FOREIGN POLICY

Since independence, Slovakia has pursued a policy oriented toward closer integration with western Europe, although Westernization efforts have proceeded more slowly in Slovakia than in the Czech Republic. Slovakia finally joined the European Union and NATO in 2004; the nation also belongs to the United Nations, the World Trade Organization, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and the Visegrád 4, which includes Hungary, Poland, and the Czech Republic. Slovakia and the Czech Republic have shared a Customs Union since 1993, allowing the free flow of goods and services between the two countries. While overall relations have been cordial between the two nations of the former Czechoslovakia, there remain differences arising from the division of resources.

Tensions between Slovakia and Hungary have persisted over the treatment of ethnic Hungarians in the republic and over the Hungarian-controlled Gabickovo Dam, which diverts water from the Danube. Ties between Slovakia and the United States have been especially close since the election of a pro-Western government in 1998. The United States has given Slovakia millions of dollars since 1990 for the building of democracy and a free-market economy, and the U.S. Department of Defense has been helping the nation rebuild its military.

DEFENSE

As of 2003 Slovakia's armed forces numbered about 22,000 personnel, in Land, Air, and Air Defense forces and various special-forces regiments. All 18-year-old males must serve in the armed forces for six months; both men and women can volunteer at 17. The nation is planning a transition to a slightly smaller all-volunteer professional force by 2007. The Slovak people think highly of their military.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 22,000
 Military Manpower Availability: 1,351,848
 Military Expenditures \$million: 406
 as % of GDP: 1.89
 as % of central government expenditures: —
 Arms Imports \$million: 27
 Arms Exports \$million: 47

ECONOMY

Slovakia has had a difficult transition from a central-command to a free-market economy. Unemployment and corruption have been persistent problems for the post-cold war governments, and exports have significantly declined as the nation's traditional markets, including Russia and the Ukraine, have endured their own economic problems. Services now account for the majority of jobs, followed by industry (including construction) and agriculture. The main industries are metal products, mining, electricity, gas, coke, oil, machinery, textiles, chemicals, and paper and printing. Weapons manufacturing was a major industry during the cold war, but the industry declined dramatically following the dissolution of the USSR. The main exports are machinery and transport equipment, manufactured goods, and chemicals. Agriculture remains a significant component of the Slovak economy. The country imports large quantities of oil, natural gas, and machinery. The nation's main trade partners are Germany, the Czech Republic, Russia, and Italy.

Slovakia suffered record account deficits in 2001 and 2002, but debts dropped precipitously in 2003, and growth was strong in 2003 and 2004. Foreign direct investment has increased, largely because of favorable tax treatment. The banking sector is controlled mostly by foreign concerns, and most of the enterprises formerly owned by the government have been completely privatized. The biggest thorn in the side of the economy is unacceptably high unemployment. Inflation, the budget deficit, and the weak health-care system are other problems.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 78.89
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 14,500
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 3.2
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 3.2
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 3.5
 Industry: 30.1
 Services: 66.4
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 56
 Government Consumption: 20
 Gross Domestic Investment: 24.0
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 29.24
 Imports: 29.67
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 5.1
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 18.2

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
132.5	148.4	159.3	164.6	178.6

Finance

National Currency: Slovak Koruna (SKK)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = SKK 32.25
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 354
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 6.0
 Total External Debt \$billion: 19.54
 Debt Service Ratio %: 6.87
 Balance of Payments \$billion: -1.4
 International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 11.7
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 7.5

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 160
 per capita \$: 29.70
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 571

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$billion: 15.44
 Expenditures \$billion: 16.7
 Budget Deficit \$million: 1.26
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: 16.8

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 3.5
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 2.0
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: —
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: —
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: —
 Total Farmland % of land area: 30.2
 Livestock: Cattle 000: 645
 Chickens million: 5.6
 Pigs million: 1.44
 Sheep 000: 316
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 6.36
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 2.6

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 6.35
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 5.1

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 6.1
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 18.4
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 3.4
 Net Energy Imports % of use: 64.1
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 7.8
 Production kW-hr billion: 30.5
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 24.0
 Coal Reserves tons million: 190
 Production tons million: 3.75
 Consumption tons million: 9.6
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet billion: 500
 Production cubic feet billion: 7.5
 Consumption cubic feet billion: 270
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels million: 9
 Production barrels 000 per day: 1
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: —
 Pipelines Length km: 449

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 29.67
 Exports \$billion: 29.24
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 10.6
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 6.8
 Balance of Trade \$billion: -1.4

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Germany %	27.4	36.7
Czech Republic %	18.3	13.0
Russia %	10.8	—
Austria %	6.6	9.7
Italy %	5.6	5.3
Poland %	4.1	4.6
United States %	—	4.6
Hungary %	—	4.1

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 42,970
 Paved %: 87.7
 Automobiles: 1,326,900
 Trucks and Buses: 174,300
 Railroad: Track Length km: 3,661
 Passenger-km billion: 26.8
 Freight-km billion: 11.0
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 24
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 63.2
 Airports: 34
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 94
 Length of Waterways km: 172

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 1.4
 Number of Tourists from 000: 408
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 876
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 662

Communications

Telephones million: 1.3
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.12
 Cellular Telephones million: 3.7
 Personal Computers million: 1.3
 Internet Hosts per million people: 16,495
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 253

ENVIRONMENT

Since the end of the cold war, public concerns over environmental damage from chemical and manufacturing plants have steadily increased. Major environmental issues include damage to forests from acid rain and heavy air pollution from metallurgical plants. Air pollution in particular has produced health risks for urban populations. There is also concern over the lasting impact of the Gabickovo Dam, which diverts water from the Danube.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 45.3
 Forest Change (1990–2000) hectares 000: 18
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 25
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 45,011
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 6.57

LIVING CONDITIONS

About 40 percent of Slovaks live in the countryside, usually in small houses with gardens. The rest live in cities in apartments, though many city dwellers also own country homes, visiting them on weekends and holidays and using the land to grow vegetables for their own consumption.

The cost of living has increased since the end of Communism, which has caused difficulty for many people. Bratislava is by far the most expensive part of the country. Public transportation via trains and buses is widely available and inexpensive, with buses costing more than trains. Many people travel by motorcycle or bicycle. Air pollution is a problem in the cities.

HEALTH

Slovakia has both public and private health facilities. The country has struggled to find the money to pay public health doctors, and the pharmaceutical distribution system sometimes breaks down because the government does not pay pharmacists. Respiratory diseases caused by smoking and air pollution, high cholesterol, and alcoholism are the biggest health problems. Lyme disease occurs occasionally. Life expectancy is over 74 years. Fertility is low, with about 1.3 children born per woman in 2005.

Health

Number of Physicians: 17,556
 Number of Dentists: 2,378
 Number of Nurses: 39,428
 Number of Pharmacists: 2,605
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 325
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: 7.8
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 7.41
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 3
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 5.9
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 265
 HIV Infected % of adults: < 0.1
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 99
 Measles: 99
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 100
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 100

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Slovak cuisine is based around potatoes, dumplings, and rice, with meat or sausage, thick sauce, and boiled vegetables or sauerkraut. Cheese, butter, and eggs also appear on the table frequently. Salt, bacon, and caraway seeds are the predominant spices, and paprika is popular in the south, near Hungary. Typical dishes include *kapustnica*, or cabbage soup with pork sausage, and *bryndzov halusky*, or potato dumplings topped with sheep cheese. Sweets include honey cakes and dumplings stuffed with cherries or apples. Breakfast is usually coffee and a pastry. Lunch is usually the largest meal of the day. Dinner is often a light, cold meal. Slovaks drink a great deal of wine, and the Tokaj region is particularly noted for its fine vintages. Beer is also well liked.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 5.1
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 3,100
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 128.2
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 124.3

STATUS OF WOMEN

Since the fall of Communism the status of women has generally improved. Women are equal under the law and have the same rights to property and inheritance as men. However, the nation suffers from many of the problems associated with the transformation to a market economy. Poverty has significantly increased among single mothers, and many families have seen real declines in their living standards. Women earn on average 30 percent less than men. Child-care centers, which were once free, closed in large numbers after privatization. Women are often the victims of domestic violence; Romany women and other ethnic minorities are especially vulnerable to violence and rape, and there have been reports of Romany women being surgically sterilized without their consent. Prostitution has dramatically increased. Human trafficking in female sex slaves is a major problem.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 17
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.0
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 52.1

WORK

Unemployment is a major problem; the unemployment rate was 13.1 percent in 2004. About 29 percent of the workforce is employed in industry, producing metal and metal products, gas, coke, oil, nuclear fuel, machinery, textiles, and various other items. Food processing, such as brewing beer or making cheese, is an important industry. Some 56 percent of workers are employed in services. Agriculture now employs less than 6 percent of the workforce. Students often get summer jobs on farms.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 2,200,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 47.6
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 5.8
 Industry: 29.3
 Construction: 9.0
 Services: 55.9
 Unemployment %: 13.1

EDUCATION

The state has compulsory education for children ages six to 14. Primary education involves grades one through five. After primary school, students may choose one of three educational paths: vocational or technical schools; gymnasia, which offer general education in preparation for university; and teacher training. There are also some conservatories for students who want to specialize in the arts. Students are instructed in Slovak and are required to study two foreign languages in addition to their mother tongue; English and German are the most popular choices.

When students finish gymnasium, they take a written examination to enter university. The oldest college in Slovakia is Comenius University, in Bratislava, which was founded in 1467. In total there are 14 institutions of higher education, including technical schools. Universities offer many programs for older adults who want to continue their studies.

Education

Literacy Rate %: —
 Male %: —
 Female %: —
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 13.7
 First Level: Primary Schools: 2,485
 Teachers: 14,877
 Students: 284,312
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 19.1
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 87.0
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 190
 Teachers: 52,626
 Students: 456,029
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 12.7
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 86.6
 Third Level: Institutions: 14
 Teachers: 13,166
 Students: 152,182
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 32.1
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 4.0

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Slovakia has been gradually improving its telecommunications systems, adding digital equipment and fiber-optic cable to its telephone networks. The country is slowly privatizing the industry and reducing the waiting period between applying for and receiving a telephone line. Cellular telephones are increasingly popular; in 2003 some 3.7 million cellular telephones were in operation. About 1.4 million people were using the Internet.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 1,707
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 0.58
 High-Tech Exports \$million: 716
 Patent Applications by Residents: 276

MEDIA

Many new publications and broadcast enterprises have appeared in Slovakia since 1990. The country now has several private daily publications, hundreds of nondailies and periodicals, and over 20 private radio stations competing with the five national networks run by the public Slovak Radio. Major dailies include *Pravda*, *Nový čas*, and *Sme*. The *Slovak Spectator* is an English-language weekly.

Slovak TV, the public television station, operates two national networks but has declined in popularity as private stations have begun competing with it. TV Markiza is the most popular commercial station. Many people watch cable or satellite television; Czech and Hungarian channels are particularly popular.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 16
 Total Circulation 000: 705
 Circulation per 1,000: 131
 Books Published: 3,153
 Periodicals: 435
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets million: 2.25
 per 1,000: 418

CULTURE

After years of domination by the Hungarians, Austrians, and later the Communists, Slovakia experienced a cultural revival in the wake of the end of the cold war. The literary tradition of the 19th century has been resurrected, and the works of such figures as the poet Pavol Országh Hviezdoslav have been reissued. Famous musicians include Johann Nepomuk Hummel, Alexander Moyzes, Edita Gruberova, and Lucia Poppov. Traditional holidays such as various saints' days, along with a new generation of festivals, including the Bratislava Jazz Days and the Bratislava Lyre rock festival, that have been added to the folk festivals people have long held, provide opportunities for cultural enrichment throughout the year.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 2,696
 Volumes: 18,819,020
 Registered borrowers: 725,993
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts national currency million: 160.3
 Number of Cinemas: 335
 Seating Capacity: 95,344
 Annual Attendance: 3,029,534

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

The Slovaks held on to their ancient folk traditions during Hungarian and Communist rule, and in modern times folk practices are still an important part of village life. Traditional folk costumes and instruments, including the shepherd's flute and bagpipes, remain integral parts of Slovak culture, especially in the eastern portion of the nation. Each town and region has its own dancing styles; there are wedding dances, shepherds' dances, and dances performed by men on their way to join the army. Every summer dancers from all over the country participate in the Vychodna Folklore Festival.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Slovaks enjoy outdoor recreation. In the winter they travel to the Tatras for skiing and other cold-weather sports; the Poprad Tatry region can be covered with snow for more than six months a year and has been a popular destination for athletes since 1909. In the summer, people return to the mountains for hiking, camping, and fishing in the rivers and lakes.

ETIQUETTE

When two people shake hands, it is important for flesh to touch flesh, so Slovaks always remove their gloves; failure to do so is an insult. Many Slovaks in urban areas speak German or English in addition to Slovak; though some people speak Russian, many Slovaks look with disfavor on that language. Slovaks love to use titles when addressing one another. Relationships are built on trust and socializing, and when Slovaks get together they always spend some time talking and perhaps drinking plum brandy; if they must discuss business, they wait until a good personal relationship has been established. Within companies, one person at the top usually makes or approves all decisions.

FAMILY LIFE

Rural Slovaks live more traditional lifestyles than urbanites. Women in the country are more likely to be housewives, caring for the home and children and doing farmwork; urban women typically work outside the home. Day-care facilities have dwindled since the end of Communism, which has made life harder for families with two working parents. Many young Slovak couples live with one or the other's parents for the first few years of marriage, saving money to buy their own home. Though modernity has changed some aspects of family life, Slovaks still value extended family and like to socialize with relatives.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Slovaks dress in typical Western clothing. Many people own traditional clothing that they wear for weddings and festivals; styles vary by region, but most are variations on the theme of a white shirt with embroidery.

SPORTS

Sports are an important part of Slovak life. All students participate in physical education and sports in school. Ice hockey is extremely popular, and the Slovak national team has done well in international competitions, including the Olympics; many Slovaks play for North American hockey teams. Soccer is popular in the summer. Other popular sports include basketball, volleyball, baseball, tennis, skiing, snowboarding, ice skating, swimming, and windsurfing. The Slovak athlete Michal Martikán won gold at the 1996 Olympic Games in white-water slalom canoe.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1945** Post-World War II peace settlements result in the expulsion of Sudeten Germans and Hungarians from Czechoslovakia, territory losses to Russia, and the acquisition of land from Poland.
- 1946** After elections in which they received 38 percent of the vote, the Communists establish a coalition government.
- 1948** A Communist coup results in the purge of all non-Communists from the government and numerous arrests and executions; the government begins to nationalize private land and industry.
- 1949** Council for Mutual Economic Assistance is formed; government places restrictions on churches and confiscates church property; thousands are arrested in purges.
- 1950** Government bans all books published in Czechoslovakia before 1948; most monastic houses are confiscated; new criminal code is passed.
- 1951** In mass purges, members of the Party Central Committee are arrested, tried, and executed.
- 1960** New constitution is promulgated; the official name of the state is changed to Czechoslovak Socialist Republic.
- 1968** Pro-reform communists gain power; Alexander Dubček is named first secretary; the Prague Spring witnesses a series of reforms that end the more ruthless aspects of the Communist regime; in response, the Soviet Union organizes an invasion of Czechoslovakia by its Warsaw Pact allies. Thousands are arrested, executed, or exiled. Dubček is replaced by Gustáv Husák.

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- 1977 A group of dissidents and intellectuals issues Charter 77.
- 1989 Husák resigns, and the Communists give up power in what is known as the Velvet Revolution; human rights activist and playwright Václav Havel becomes president, and a new, non-Communist-controlled cabinet is sworn in.
- 1990 In general elections the Communists are soundly defeated, and Havel's party, Civic Forum, captures 170 seats in the National Assembly, as compared to the 47 won by the Communists; Havel is reelected president.
- 1992 A leftist government comes to power in Slovakia; Czechoslovakia dissolves into two nations, the Czech Republic and Slovakia, in the Velvet Divorce; a new constitution is established.
- 1994 The first parliamentary elections are held under the new constitution; Slovakia joins NATO's Partnership for Peace program in the hope of eventually gaining membership in the alliance.
- 1995 Slovakia applies for membership in the European Union.
- 1998 In elections, the Movement for a Democratic Slovakia gains the most seats, while the government that is formed is led by the Slovak Democratic Coalition. The constitution is changed to allow for direct presidential elections.
- 1999 Rudolf Schuster wins the country's first direct presidential elections.
- 2001 The constitution is amended so that Slovakia can apply for EU membership; amendments also decentralize power, make the judiciary more independent, give more recognition to minority rights, and increase the power of the state audit office. The parliament votes in favor of joining NATO.
- 2002 Eight new regional parliaments are created as per EU membership requirements. Mikuláš Dzurinda wins a second term as prime minister. The European Union invites Slovakia to join in 2004.
- 2003 Slovaks vote in favor of joining the European Union.
- 2004 Slovakia gains NATO and EU membership. Ivan Gašparovič is elected president.
- 2005 The parliament signs the proposed EU constitution.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic
<http://www.statistics.sk>
- Embassy of the Slovak Republic (Washington, D.C.)
<http://www.slovakemb.com>

SLOVENIA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Slovenia (Republika Slovenija)

ABBREVIATION

SI

CAPITAL

Ljubljana

HEAD OF STATE

President Janez Drnovšek (from 2002)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Janez Janša (from 2004)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Parliamentary democracy

POPULATION

2,011,070 (2005)

AREA

20,273 sq km (7,827 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Slovene

LANGUAGES

Slovene, Hungarian, Italian

RELIGION

Roman Catholicism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Tolar

NATIONAL FLAG

Three equal horizontal bands of white (top), blue, and red, with the Slovenian national emblem on the upper hoist side of the flag centered in the white and blue bands.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A shield with the image of Triglav, Slovenia's highest peak, in white against a blue background at the center. Beneath are two wavy blue lines depicting seas and rivers, and above are three six-sided stars arranged in an inverted triangle as taken from the coat of arms of the counts of Celje, the greatest Slovene dynastic house of the late 14th and early 15th centuries.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"My Friends, the Vines Have Produced Again Sweet Wine, Which Enlivens Our Veins"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day), February 8 (Prešeren's Day), April 27 (Day of Uprising against Occupation), May 1 (Labour Day), June 25 (Statehood Day), October 31 (Reformation Day), November 1 (Remembrance Day), December 25 (Christmas), December 26 (Independence Day), various Christian festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

June 25, 1991

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

December 23, 1991

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Slovenia is located in southeastern Europe, bordering Austria, Croatia, Italy, Hungary, and the Adriatic Sea. It has a total area of 20,273 sq km (7,827 sq mi). Its total coastline is only 46.6 km (29.1 mi) long, while its total land boundaries stretch 1,334 km (833.8 mi). The capital and largest city is Ljubljana, which is located in the center of the nation. Other major cities include Maribor, Celje, Kranj, and Koper.

The geography of Slovenia is varied. Mountains in the north rise to over 2,500 m (8,200 ft), while in the

southeast are wide plateaus more than 1,000 m (3,280 ft) high. The south and southwest are marked by the Karst region of limestone caves and the short Adriatic coastline; the east contains rolling hills. The Dinaric Alps divide the southern, coastal region from the central lowland areas and the more rugged northeast. Along the Adriatic coast the terrain is marked by coastal plains and sandy beaches. Most of the rest of the nation is mountainous, with deep valleys, rivers, and broad plateaus. Much of Slovenia is covered by dense forests. Along the border with Italy is an Alpine mountain region. The highest peak is Mt. Triglav, with an elevation of 2,864

Slovenia



m (9,390 ft). The longest river is the Sava, which flows for 221 km (138 mi) through Slovenia. There are over 200 lakes in the nation, the largest of which is Cerknica, which has an area of 26 sq km (10 sq mi). The rugged nature of the terrain and the numerous rivers have created abundant waterfalls, some 300 in total, with the highest, at Cedca, falling some 130 m (426 ft).

Of special note is the Karst region, in the hinterlands of the Bay of Trieste, a limestone area of sinks, caves, and underground caverns. The Karst begins where Ljubljana intersects the Alpine region. The land is fairly desolate,

with poor pastures and windswept hills and plateaus, as most water is absorbed into the underground network of streams. The area contains the world's largest sinkhole and numerous underground rivers and caves.

Geography

Area sq km: 20,273; sq mi 7,827

World Rank: 150th

Land Boundaries, km: Austria 330; Croatia 670; Italy 232; Hungary 102

Coastline, km: 46.6

Elevation Extremes meters:	
Lowest:	Adriatic Sea 0
Highest:	Triglav 2,864
Land Use %	
Arable Land:	8.6
Permanent Crops:	1.5
Forest:	55.0
Other:	34.9

Population of Principal Cities (2002)

Ljubljana	258,873
Maribor	93,847

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

The climate of Slovenia varies along the topographical divisions. The coastal areas have a warm Mediterranean climate, while the interior areas have a continental, sub-Alpine climate, with mild to hot summers. The Alpine regions have cool summers and cold winters. The annual precipitation ranges from less than 610 mm (24 in) in the coastal and continental areas to over 3,200 mm (130 in) in the mountains, mainly due to heavy snowfall in the winter. The average temperature varies from region to region, with these differences most pronounced in the summer. In January, in the mountains the average temperature is below 0°C (32°F), while the temperature ranges from 0 to 2°C (32 to 36°F) in the interior and from 2 to 4°C (36 to 39°F) on the coast. In July, the average temperature ranges from 20 to 22°C (68 to 72°F) in the interior and from 22 to 24°C (72 to 74°F) in the east, although it is much cooler in the mountains.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature	
July:	72°F
January:	31°F
Average Rainfall: 24 in	

FLORA AND FAUNA

Slovenia is one of the greenest countries in Europe. More than half of the land is covered in forests, while farmland, vineyards, orchards, pastures, and fields cover about 43 percent. Almost 3,000 plant species, some of them endemic, grow in Slovenia. Triglav National Park contains a large number of endemic flowering plants.

Animals also thrive in the country. Large mammals include lynx, bear, boar, deer, and chamois. The so-called human fish, *Proteus anguinus*, lives in Karst caves. Rare species include the scarab beetle, dormice, the moor tortoise, and the cave hedgehog.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005:	2,011,070
World Rank:	142nd
Density per sq km:	99.2
% of annual growth (1999-2003):	0.1
Male %:	48.7
Female %:	51.3
Urban %:	50.8
Age Distribution %:	0-14: 14.0
	15-64: 70.6
	65 and over: 15.4
Population 2025:	1,908,000
Birth Rate per 1,000:	8.95
Death Rate per 1,000:	10.22
Rate of Natural Increase %:	-0.1
Total Fertility Rate:	1.24
Expectation of Life (years):	Males 72.42
	Females 80.1
Marriage Rate per 1,000:	3.5
Divorce Rate per 1,000:	1.2
Average Size of Households:	3.1
Induced Abortions:	7,327

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Slovenes, ethnically a Slavic group, make up some 92 percent of the population, making Slovenia a highly homogeneous nation. The largest minority groups in the country are Croats, with about 1 percent of the population; Serbs, with 0.5 percent; Hungarians, with 0.4 percent; and Bosnians, with 0.3 percent. Many of the Croats, Serbs, and Bosnians are refugees from the various ethnic conflicts in the former Yugoslavia. There are also Italians and other groups in the country who have been granted the status of indigenous minorities and receive special political and cultural concessions.

LANGUAGES

Over 92 percent of the population speaks Slovene, which is the nation's official language. Although Slovene is a Slavic language, it uses the Latin alphabet and is quite distinct from Serbo-Croatian, which is spoken by 6.2 percent of the nation. English, Italian, and German are common second languages.

RELIGIONS

There is no state religion in Slovenia, and the constitution guarantees freedom of religion. The dominant religion is Christianity, with some 70 percent of the nation identifying themselves as Roman Catholic. The Lutherans make up the largest Protestant denomination, with 1 percent of the population. The largest non-Christian faith is Islam,

also with 1 percent of the population. Some 4 percent of Slovenes identify themselves as atheists, 23 percent as adherents of other religions. Foreign missionaries are allowed to move about and operate freely and unhindered in the country.

Religious Affiliations

Roman Catholic	1,423,800
Lutheran	20,100
Muslim	20,100
Atheist	86,500
Other	460,500

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The capitol of Slovenia, Ljubljana, was founded as the Roman town of Emona during the first century c.e. Slavs began settling in the area that is now Slovenia at the end of the sixth century in an effort to escape pressure from the Avars. In the seventh century Western Slavic tribes formed an alliance with the duchy of Carantania and began centuries of orientation to the West. In 745 Carantania became part of the Frankish Empire, and the Slavs of the region were converted to Christianity and gradually lost their independence. There was a brief period of independence under the leadership of Prince Kocelj, who established a Slovene state in Lower Pannonia (869–874). During this period there was increased use of the Slovene language, and the Freising Manuscripts, the oldest written documents in Slovene, were recorded. Slovenia gradually fell under Austrian domination, and by the 14th century all of Slovenia was part of the Hapsburg Empire.

In spite of Hapsburg domination, the Slovene language survived, and the people resisted efforts at Germanization. In 1584 the Bible was translated into Slovene. Napoleon attempted to break the region away from Austria in 1809 when he established the Illyrian provinces from areas of Slovenia and Croatia. Ljubljana was the capital of the provinces. The territory reverted to Austria in the wake of Napoleon's defeat. During the revolutions of 1848 Slovenian intellectuals began calling for a united, independent nation. By the 1860s nationalist parties had formed to work toward independence.

In 1917 the Declaration of Corfu called for the creation of a Yugoslav state. Following World War I, Slovenia became independent of Austria, but it was then incorporated into the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, with Prince Aleksandar Karadjordjevic as sovereign. In 1929 the name of the country was changed to Yugoslavia. After the Germans invaded in 1941, Slovenes mounted widespread resistance to occupation. By 1943 the Communists had gained a leading role within the resistance movement. Fighting between the Germans and partisan units continued until the end of the war.

At the end of the war, in 1945, Josip Broz Tito became premier of Yugoslavia. That same year collectivization began with restrictions on land ownership, and in 1946 the government began nationalizing businesses and corporations.

Unlike the other Communist states of Europe, Tito endeavored to develop a policy of nonalignment for Yugoslavia, with ties to neither Moscow nor the West. Tito was elected president of the country in 1953. Throughout the post–World War II era, ethnic tensions persisted between the various groups in Yugoslavia. Through an effort to reduce these tensions, the Communist League was formed in 1969. Purges were conducted two years later, wherein supporters of free-market reforms were removed from the government. This was followed by the 1974 revision of the constitution to establish a collective presidency in order to grant greater power to the individual regions.

The stability that marked Yugoslav history in the post–World War II era began to erode after the death of Tito in 1980. With the end of the cold war, several groups asserted their independence. Among them, the General Assembly of Slovenia declared its right to secede. In 1990 Slovenia and Croatia held their first multiparty elections in 50 years, and a referendum in Slovenia called for independence. This was followed by a brief war with Serbia, after which independence was recognized and a new constitution was adopted.

In 1992 Slovenia was recognized by the European Union and joined the United Nations. The country joined several other international institutions, including the Partnership for Peace initiative, which was established by the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), and the World Trade Organization. Slovenia entered into negotiations with the European Union regarding membership in 1995, signing an association agreement in 1996. In 1999 Slovenia allowed NATO to use its airspace during the bombings of Kosovo and Serbia under the Partnership for Peace program.

During the early 2000s the government focused on integrating Slovenia more fully into Europe. Prime minister Janez Drnovšek was elected president in 2002. The following year Slovenian voters approved of joining both NATO and the European Union, and the nation became a formal member of both associations in 2004. Janez Janša, of the Slovenian Democratic Party, was elected prime minister in late 2004. His administration pledged to increase privatization and to reduce the costs of government preparatory to the adoption of the euro as the national currency.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

President

1990–2002 Milan Kučan

2002– Janez Drnovšek

Prime Minister	
1990–92	Lojze Peterle
1992–2000	Janez Drnovšek
2000	Andrej Bajuk
2000–02	Janez Drnovšek
2002–04	Anton Rop
2004–	Janez Janša

CONSTITUTION

Slovenia is a parliamentary democracy. The constitution was adopted on December 23, 1991, following the brief struggle for independence from Yugoslavia. The head of state is the president, who is elected for a five-year term and can serve only two terms in succession. The president is commander in chief of the military. The head of the government is the prime minister, who is elected for a four-year term by the National Assembly. The cabinet or council of ministers is made up of the prime minister and 21 cabinet ministers, including three without portfolios. These ministers are nominated by the prime minister and approved by the parliament. The nation's parliament is a bicameral body with a legislative chamber, the National Assembly, and a consultative body, the National Council. The National Assembly is the nation's highest legislative authority. The elected National Council serves in an advisory role and may propose laws to the Assembly. Members of the National Council represent specific legal, economic, professional, and trade interests.

The constitution established an independent judiciary, and constitutional issues are overseen by the Constitutional Court. Suffrage is universal for those over the age of 18 and for employed 16- and 17-year-olds. The constitution provides for direct democracy through referendums and popular initiatives. Referendums can be presented to the populace for approval. Parliament must call for a referendum if requested by at least 20 deputies. In addition, initiatives to amend the constitution can be put on ballots if sponsors are able to collect the signatures of at least 30,000 voters.

PARLIAMENT

Slovenia has a bicameral legislature made up of the 90-member National Assembly and the 40-member National Council. Representatives in the Assembly are elected for four-year terms; 40 are directly elected, while 50 are elected on a proportional basis. Members of the Council are elected for five-year terms and represent various interests; there exist four members to represent employers, four for farmers, four for small businesses and the self-employed, six for nonprofit organizations, and 22 for localities. Members of the Council may also

be members of the Assembly or hold a government post. Elections for the Assembly and Council are held in alternate years.

The Assembly has almost complete control over the legislative process. The Council essentially serves as an advisory body, although it may propose legislation in certain areas. The Council can also review the decisions of the Assembly. The leader of the majority faction in the Assembly is usually chosen to be the prime minister and lead the government.

POLITICAL PARTIES

The great number of political parties in Slovenia has fostered the need for governments to be formed by coalitions, even of parties diametrically opposed to each other, as in 1996, when a leftist party joined with a conservative, rural party to establish the government. Parties include the pensioner-backed Democratic Party of Retired People of Slovenia (DeSUS), the center-left Liberal Democracy of Slovenia (LDS), New Slovenia (NSi), the center-left Slovene Democratic Party (SDS), the conservative, rural Slovene People's Party (SLS), the Slovene Youth Party (SMS), and the United List of Social Democrats (ZLSD), a successor to the Communist Party.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

There are 193 local administrative units, including 182 municipalities, called *občine*, and 11 urban municipalities, known as *mestne občine*. The national government has engaged in a broad program of devolution, whereby political power is being returned to local communities, which have the authority to tax and are subject to referendums and initiatives.

LEGAL SYSTEM

Slovenia has an independent judiciary. The highest judicial body is the Supreme Court; the lower court system is divided into local and district courts. Supreme Court judges are elected by the National Assembly after nomination by the Judicial Council. There is also the Constitutional Court, which decides issues related to the constitution; its nine judges are nominated by the president and elected by the National Assembly. Individual judges hold their positions for life, although there is an age limit, and are constitutionally independent. The Judicial Council is composed of six sitting judges elected by their peers and five justices nominated by the president and approved by the parliament.

The legal system is based on the concept of civil law. All defendants are innocent until proven guilty and have

the right to due process and a fair trial. Court proceedings are open, and there is a right to appeal.

HUMAN RIGHTS

The constitution and laws of Slovenia provide for civil rights and liberties. The constitution forbids arbitrary arrest and self-incrimination and provides for the freedoms of privacy, speech, assembly, religion, and movement. In addition, authorities must provide written charges within 24 hours of arrest. There is a government ombudsman who deals with human rights and citizenship cases. The Hungarian and Italian minorities in Slovenia have special statuses and are constitutionally guaranteed representation in the National Assembly. The court system has a well-developed appeals process. The constitution also specifically provides for the right of political asylum, and since 1991 Slovenia has taken in some 16,000 refugees from conflicts in the former Yugoslavia.

For the most part, the human rights situation in Slovenia is good. There are some cases of police brutality and media self-censorship. Violence against women and human trafficking are problems.

FOREIGN POLICY

When Slovenia declared independence from Yugoslavia in 1990, the nation's first priority was to gain international recognition; only after a 10-day war in 1991 did the nation gain formal independence. A year later Slovenia was recognized by the European Union and became a member of the United Nations. After gaining independence from Yugoslavia, Slovenia endeavored to develop a market economy and integrate itself into the institutions of the West, including the European Union and NATO, both of which the nation joined in 2004. Successive governments sought to distance themselves from the former Yugoslavia and return to the nation's traditional Western orientation. Slovenia and Italy are negotiating to resolve property and minority issues dating from World War II. Slovenia also has a maritime dispute with Croatia over access to the Adriatic Sea.

Slovenia was a founding member of the World Trade Organization in 1994 and joined NATO's Partnership for Peace program. Slovenia provided troops for the NATO peacekeeping mission in the former Yugoslavia and has worked to preserve stability in Bosnia. The United States has supported Slovenia's efforts to develop democracy and a market economy; the two nations have collaborated on a variety of endeavors.

One of the nation's pressing issues regards the status of some 18,000 undocumented non-Slovenian residents, who were in Slovenia when independence was declared

but lost all records when they did not take Slovenian citizenship. In 2004 voters rejected a law that would have restored their rights.

DEFENSE

As of 2004 the nation was in the process of reorganizing the Slovene Armed Forces, transforming them from conscription-based defense forces to professional, combat-ready forces that could participate in NATO activities. Conscription ended in 2003, and compulsory reserve service will end by 2010. The armed forces consist of a fully professional motorized infantry brigade and two cadre/reserve-force mechanized brigades, a small air force, and a naval attachment with one coastal patrol boat. In 2003 the military comprised about 11,000 soldiers and 12,000 reservists.

In 1994 Slovenia joined NATO's Partnership for Peace initiative, and the country has participated in NATO-led peacekeeping operations in the former Yugoslavia. Slovenia has been the recipient of significant military aid, in the form of both finances and training, from Western nations such as the United States and Germany.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	11,000
Military Manpower Availability:	496,929
Military Expenditures \$million:	370
as % of GDP:	1.7
as % of central government expenditures:	3.7
Arms Imports \$million:	14
Arms Exports \$million:	—

ECONOMY

Slovenia was the most prosperous of the Yugoslav republics. Since independence, the nation has made substantial progress in reorienting its economy toward free-market capitalism. Slovenia has the highest gross domestic product (GDP) of all the transition economies of eastern Europe. Successive governments have pursued policies of economic openness and have endeavored to keep inflation and labor costs low in order to attract international firms. Much of the economy was privatized in 2002–03, and the budget deficit had dropped to 1.6 percent of GDP by 2003; growth was 3 percent. Unemployment has decreased, and foreign investment has increased, partly due to structural reforms that encourage foreign companies to locate in Slovenia. Remaining issues include corruption and the close relationship between the government, the central bank, and businesses.

The service sector is the largest single aspect of the economy; financial service firms have done especially

well in Slovenia. Industry and construction account for one-third of GDP. The government has encouraged the establishment and growth of mid- and high-technology firms in an effort to maintain an employment base. The nation's main industries are ferrous metallurgy and mill products, aluminum production, lead and zinc smelting, electronics, trucks, textiles, chemicals, and machine tools. Agriculture, forestry, and fishing constitute 3 percent of GDP. The country has sought to capitalize on natural resources to develop a thriving tourist trade. Slovenia's main exports include manufactured goods, machinery and transport equipment, chemicals, and foodstuffs; the main imports are machinery and transport equipment, manufactured products, chemicals, and fuels. Slovenia's main trade partners are Germany, Italy, France, Austria, Croatia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 39.41
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 19,600
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 3.5
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 3.4
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:

Agriculture: 3
 Industry: 36
 Services: 61

Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:

Private Consumption: 54
 Government Consumption: 20
 Gross Domestic Investment: 24.9

Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 14.97

Imports: 16.07

% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 3.9

% of Income Received by Richest 10%: 23.0

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
136.4	148.5	161.0	173.0	182.7

Finance

National Currency: Tolar (SIT)

Exchange Rate: \$1 = SIT 195.1

Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 768

Central Bank Discount Rate %: 7.25

Total External Debt \$billion: 14.65

Debt Service Ratio %: —

Balance of Payments \$million: -51.64

International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 8.3

Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
 3.3

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 65.9

per capita \$: 33.10

Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 337

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year

Revenues \$billion: 13.36

Expenditures \$billion: 13.99

Budget Deficit \$million: 630

Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 3

Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: -2.2

Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: —

Irrigation, % of Farms having: 1.5

Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 416.0

Total Farmland % of land area: 8.4

Livestock: Cattle 000: 450

Chickens million: 5

Pigs 000: 621

Sheep 000: 94

Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 2.6

Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 3

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 6.6

Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 3.9

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 2.6

Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million:
 6.5

Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 3.24

Net Energy Imports % of use: 51.4

Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 2.66

Production kW-hr billion: 13.7

Consumption kW-hr billion: 10.9

Coal Reserves tons million: 303

Production tons million: 4.6

Consumption tons million: 5.8

Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —

Production cubic feet billion: —

Consumption cubic feet billion: 36.7

Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —

Production barrels per day: 20

Consumption barrels 000 per day: 52

Pipelines Length km: 11

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 16.07

Exports \$billion: 14.97

Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 6.1

Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 5.7

Balance of Trade \$million: -51.64

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Germany %	19.3	23.2
Italy %	18.3	13.2
France %	10.0	5.7
Austria %	8.6	7.3
Croatia %	—	9.0
Bosnia and Herzegovina %	—	4.2

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 20,250
 Paved %: 100
 Automobiles: 896,700
 Trucks and Buses: 54,300
 Railroad: Track Length km: 1,201
 Passenger-km million: 749
 Freight-km billion: 3.02
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 23
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: —
 Airports: 14
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 678
 Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 1.4
 Number of Tourists from million: 2.1
 Tourist Receipts \$billion: 1.4
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 809

Communications

Telephones 000: 812
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones million: 1.7
 Personal Computers 000: 650
 Internet Hosts per million people: 22,620
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 373

ENVIRONMENT

Much of Slovenia's waterways have significant pollution. The Sava River is contaminated with domestic and industrial waste. Coastal waters are polluted with heavy metals and toxic chemicals from industrial production. Extensive damage to forested areas has been caused by acid rain produced by sulfur dioxide emissions from chemical and manufacturing plants. Pollution is an especially significant concern in light of the growing tourist market in Slovenia.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 55.0
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: 2
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 7
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 40,378
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 7.34

LIVING CONDITIONS

The cost of living is substantially lower in Slovenia than in neighboring Italy and Austria, though prices have risen steadily as the economy has improved. Gasoline prices are relatively low for Europe, and traffic is light. There is a thorough bus network, with frequent departures, and some slower train service. Most housing is modern and comfortable.

HEALTH

Slovenia has good health overall. Life expectancy is over 76 years, and infant mortality is quite low. HIV/AIDS has not yet become a major problem. There are both public and private health-care facilities. Many Slovenians like to go to spas for health treatments and relaxation.

Health

Number of Physicians: 4,361
 Number of Dentists: 1,178
 Number of Nurses: 14,245
 Number of Pharmacists: 776
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 219
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: 5.2
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 4.45
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 17
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 8.3
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 922
 HIV Infected % of adults: < 0.1
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 92
 Measles: 94
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: —
 Access to Improved Water Source %: —

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Slovenian food resembles that of Austria, Hungary, and northern Italy. It is heavy, with plenty of meat, beans, and potatoes but few vegetables and fruits. People eat sausage, Wiener schnitzel, goulash, other paprika-flavored stews, strudel, potato dumplings, risotto, and ravioli. Pastries called *burek* are popular snacks; they can be filled with meat, cheese, or fruit such as apples. Alcoholic beverages include locally brewed beers, a brandy called *zganje*, and excellent red and white wines.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 2.5
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 3,080
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 137.1
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 222.5

STATUS OF WOMEN

Slovenian women are guaranteed equal protection under the constitution. The prime minister's office even has an agency whose function is to promote the participation of women in politics. The level of violence and discrimination against women is relatively low, and women are common in both government and industry, although in overall terms they remain most prominent in lower-paying jobs. In rural areas, discrimination is much more common in both the economic sector and in the areas of household work and family care. Marriage and divorce laws are based on the concept of the equality of both genders.

Prostitution occurs frequently, and in some cases women have been sold as sex slaves by human traffickers.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 12
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.0
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 47.4

WORK

The unemployment rate was 11.3 percent in 2003 but was down to 6.4 percent in 2004; the government was attempting to lower this figure by encouraging foreign investment. Slovenians are quite prosperous, with a per capita GDP of \$19,600 in 2004. The workforce is well educated and industrious. Services employ a large proportion of workers, in banking, education, medicine, the government, and other areas. Industry brought in over one-third of GDP in 2004; industrial workers are employed in manufacturing electronics, trucks, electric power equipment, textiles, chemicals, and metal products. Some Slovenians still work in agriculture, growing grapes for wine, wheat, potatoes, and other crops as well as raising livestock.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 870,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 46.4
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 6
 Industry: 40
 Services: 54
 Unemployment %: 6.4

EDUCATION

The educational system in Slovenia is similar to those in most European nations. Primary education covers ages

seven through 15; at 15 students may pursue a vocational path or enter the gymnasium for preparation for university. Each path is further subdivided. Those students who pursue a vocational path may attend either a two- or four-year secondary technical school. Students who attend gymnasium can obtain either a general certificate or a scientific/technical degree. Higher education in Slovenia is protected by the constitution, and academic freedom is respected in the nation's two universities. In addition, there are 36 other institutions of higher education. The Higher Education Act of 1994 converted the nation's two-year higher education institutes into three-year facilities, and several of the larger bodies were broken up into smaller institutions.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 99.7
 Male %: 99.7
 Female %: 99.6
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 15.9
 First Level: Primary Schools: 850
 Teachers: 6,883
 Students: 86,021
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 12.5
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 93.1
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 224
 Teachers: 16,949
 Students: 133,619
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 13.0
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 92.7
 Third Level: Institutions: 38
 Teachers: 3,120
 Students: 99,214
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 66.1
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: —

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The Ministry of Higher Education, Science, and Technology is responsible for establishing national policy on scientific and technological matters. The ministry wants to increase the amount of science education and improve the nation's technological infrastructure to allow Slovenia to compete with other Western nations. The telecommunications infrastructure was good as of 2003; there were over 800,000 telephone lines and 1.7 million cellular telephones in use, and 750,000 people were using the Internet.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 2,364
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 1.53
 High-Tech Exports \$million: 719
 Patent Applications by Residents: 332

MEDIA

There are several major dailies and weekly publications in Slovenia. The major print media are all private, but the major radio and television broadcasters are government owned. There is a mix of public and private television and radio stations. The main television stations are the public RTV Slovenia and the commercial Kanal A and Pop TV. All major towns and villages have access to radio and television. There is also an Italian-language television station and numerous Hungarian-language radio stations. Most of the prominent minority groups have newspapers printed in their native languages. About two-thirds of Slovenes have access to foreign broadcasts through satellite and cable television.

While there is freedom of the press, years of government- and self-censorship and new political pressures have combined to continue to influence reporting on domestic issues. By law, stations are required to provide free air time to politicians running for office.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 5
 Total Circulation 000: 335
 Circulation per 1,000: 168
 Books Published: 3,450
 Periodicals: 200
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets 000: 720
 per 1,000: 362

CULTURE

Slovenia's most famous writer is France Prešeren, an early-19th-century poet who wrote nationalist lyric poems that raised Slovenian national consciousness. Many of Slovenia's buildings and parks were designed in the first half of the 20th century by the architect Jože Plečnik, whose face has since been placed on one of the Slovenian banknotes. The artists' cooperative IRWIN and the multimedia group Neue Slowenische Kunst have produced a great deal of postmodern painting and sculpture since the 1980s. Punk music was extremely popular in the 1970s and 1980s.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 60
 Volumes: 6,797,284
 Registered borrowers: 461,287
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts national currency million: 856.7
 Number of Cinemas: 85
 Seating Capacity: 24,000
 Annual Attendance: 1,965,000

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

The ancient Slavs believed that a three-headed god, the ruler of heaven, earth, and the underworld, inhabited the three-pronged Mt. Triglav. This mountain became a symbol of Slovene national identity, and for centuries people made pilgrimages there to confirm their patriotism. Slovenes were heavily influenced by Greek and Roman mythology; for example, they believed that the horse Pegasus was the first discoverer of the Slatina spring.

Slovenia lost many of its folk traditions in the years following World War II and under Yugoslav domination. Recent musicians such as the group Trutamora Slovenica have been reviving folk musical styles. Most towns and villages celebrate their own folk music festivals every year.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

The capital city, Ljubljana, is an attractive town with many centuries-old buildings, parks, walkways along the river, museums, and a large university. There are restaurants, bars, discos, theaters, cinemas, and places to hear live music. Tivoli Park contains a recreational center with a skating rink, swimming pools, bowling alleys, and tennis courts. The small Adriatic coast has some pleasant beaches. The Julian Alps are a popular site for hiking, trekking, and viewing Lake Bohinj. The Škocjan Caves contain stalactites, stalagmites, bats, and 250 types of plants and receive many visitors every year. There are spas in Rogaška Slatina and vineyards in the Haloze Hills and the Jeruzalem-Ljutomer region.

ETIQUETTE

Rules of etiquette in Slovenia are similar to those in Germany and Austria. When entering or leaving a room, it is polite to shake hands with everyone; men shake the hands of women first. Businesspeople always hand out business cards when meeting others. Titles such as "doctor" or "professor" are very important and always used. People are extremely friendly, and it is acceptable to smile and say hello to strangers.

FAMILY LIFE

Slovenians may legally marry at the age of 18. The number of marriages occurring every year has been dropping steadily since 1990, as more couples are choosing to live together without marrying. Divorces have increased. Most families are quite small, and few women choose to have more than one child.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Slovenians dress in typical Western clothing. They are fairly conservative, especially in business settings, and ostentatious or excessively colorful clothing is frowned upon.

SPORTS

Soccer is the most popular sport in Slovenia. The national team plays other European nations, and most towns and villages have their own local teams. Slovenians also engage in sports such as basketball, volleyball, hockey, golf, tennis, and swimming. In the winter many people ski. Sports are administered at the national level by the Ministry of Education and Sport.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1945** Josip Broz Tito becomes premier and defense minister of liberated Yugoslavia; the process of collectivization begins with restrictions on land ownership.
- 1946** Nationalization law is implemented that gives the government control of most commercial companies.
- 1948** Tito breaks with Moscow and embarks on a policy of nonalignment.
- 1953** Tito is elected president of Yugoslavia.
- 1969** League of Communists is formed in an effort to bring the ethnic and national groups in Yugoslavia together.
- 1971** Prominent politicians and public officials are purged for their support of the free market.
- 1974** The constitution is revised to establish a collective presidency.
- 1980** Tito dies.
- 1989** General Assembly of Slovenia declares right to secede from Yugoslavia.
- 1990** Slovenia and Croatia hold their first multiparty elections in over 50 years; in a referendum the Slovenian people vote for independence.
- 1991** After a brief war Slovenia gains its independence from Yugoslavia; new constitution is adopted.
- 1992** Slovenia is recognized by the European Union; Slovenia becomes a member of the United Nations; the first free elections for parliament take place.
- 1994** Slovenia joins Partnership for Peace; the republic becomes a founding member of the World Trade Organization; Slovenia and Croatia reach an agreement to decommission a nuclear power facility on the countries' shared border.
- 1995** The European Union and Slovenia begin negotiations on EU membership; Slovenia reaches an agreement with Italy regarding compensation for property confiscated from Italians who fled Slovenia after World War II.
- 1996** Slovenia becomes an associate member of the European Union; national elections in November result in a 45–45 split between center-left and center-right coalitions in the National Assembly.
- 1997** In January the center-left coalition gains a narrow majority, and Janez Drnovšek of the Liberal Democracy of Slovenia is reelected prime minister; in November President Milan Kučan is elected to a third term.
- 2000** Drnovšek loses a no-confidence vote in April; Andrej Bajuk becomes prime minister; elections in October are won by Drnovšek, who regains power at the head of a four-party coalition.
- 2002** Slovenia is invited to join NATO and the European Union. Prime Minister Drnovšek wins the presidency.
- 2003** Slovenes vote in favor of NATO and EU membership.
- 2004** Slovenia joins NATO and the European Union. A right-wing referendum rejects a law that would have restored rights to nationals of other former Yugoslav republics. The Slovenian Democratic Party wins a majority in the general elections, and Janez Janša becomes prime minister; he forms a coalition government.
- 2005** Slovenia's National Assembly ratifies the EU constitution.

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Slovenia. *Statistopis Republike Slovenija* (Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Slovenia)

INTERNET RESOURCES

- Bank of Slovenia
<http://www.bsi.si>

CONTACT INFORMATION

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SOLOMON ISLANDS

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Solomon Islands

ABBREVIATION

SB

CAPITAL

Honiara

HEAD OF STATE

Queen Elizabeth II, represented by Governor-General Nathaniel Waena (since 2004)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Allan Kemakeza (since 2001)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Parliamentary democracy tending toward anarchy

POPULATION

538,032 (2005)

AREA

28,450 sq km (10,985 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Melanesian

LANGUAGES

English (official), Melanesian pidgin

RELIGION

Christianity

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Solomon Islands dollar

NATIONAL FLAG

Light blue (upper left) and green fields separated by a narrow yellow stripe running diagonally from the lower hoist to the upper fly; five white stars in an X pattern are found in the blue section near the hoist.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A shield in the center of the emblem shows an eagle and two frigate birds in the upper one-third and indigenous weapons and two turtles in the lower two-thirds. An alligator and a shark flank the shield; a canoe and a shining sun are above; and a stylized frigate bird and a scroll with the national motto, "To lead is to serve," are below.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"God Save Our Solomon Islands"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day), July 7 (Independence Day), December 25 (Christmas), most Christian festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

July 7, 1978

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

July 7, 1978

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

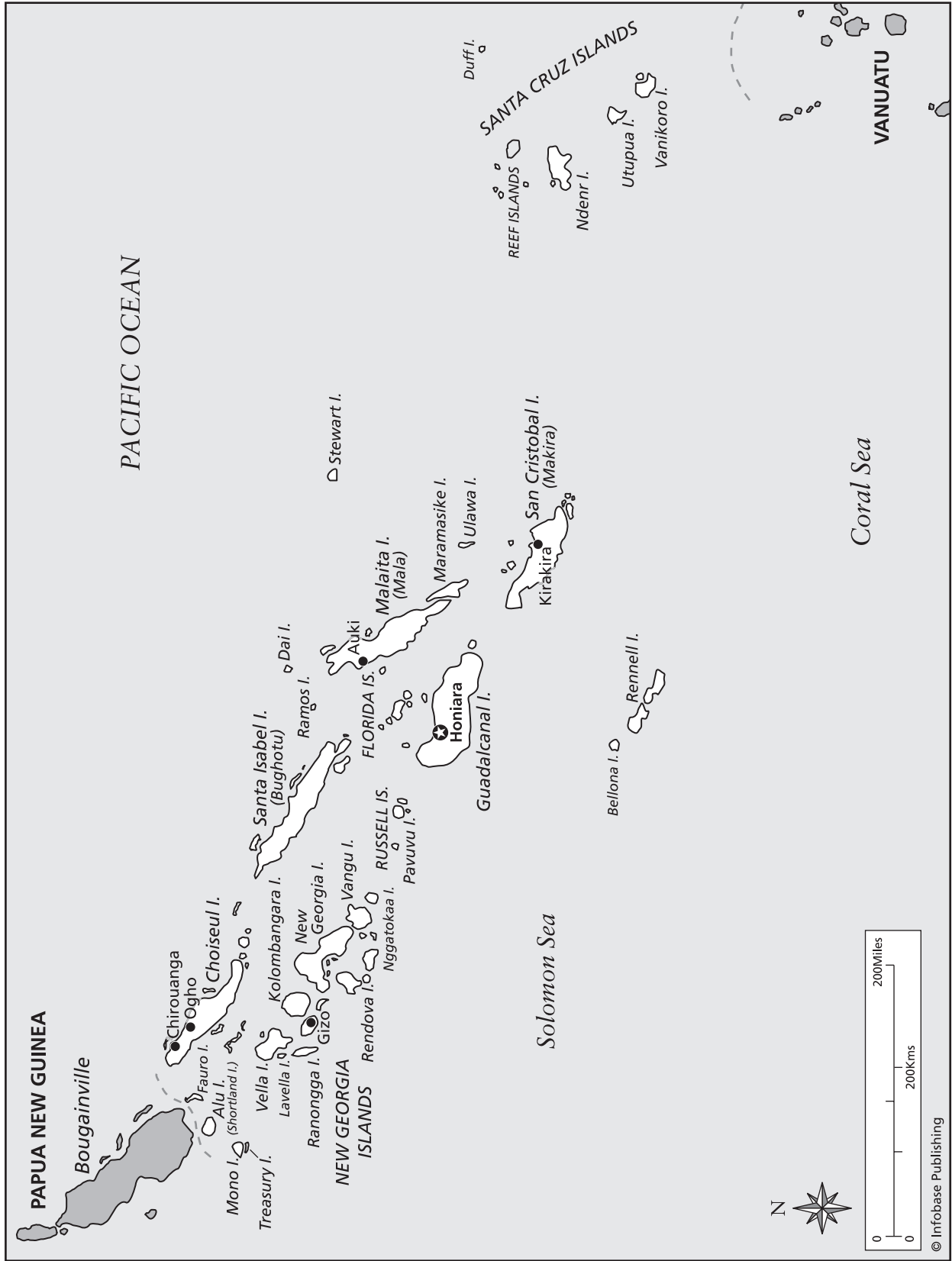
The Solomon Islands comprises a double chain of high continental islands formed from the exposed peaks of the submerged mountain chain that extends from Bougainville to northern Vanuatu. The total area is 28,450 sq km (10,985 sq mi), and the total coastline is 5,313 km (3,300 mi).

The largest island in the group is Guadalcanal, the fabled site of one of the fiercest battles in World War II; its area is 6,475 sq km (2,500 sq mi). Only five other

islands are large enough to be named on most maps: Choiseul, New Georgia, Santa Isabel, Malaita, and San Cristobal.

Almost all of the larger islands are volcanic in origin and are covered with steaming jungles and mountain ranges intersected by narrow valleys. The highest peak is the 2,447 m (8,026 ft) Mount Makarakomburu. Guadalcanal also contains the nation's only extensive alluvial plains. Most rivers are short and narrow and nonnavigable except by canoe. Most of the smaller islands are raised coral or low atolls.

Solomon Islands



Geography

Area sq km: 28,450; sq mi 10,985
 World Rank: 140th
 Land Boundaries, km: 0
 Coastline, km: 5,313
 Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Pacific Ocean 0
 Highest: Mount Makarakomburu 2,447
 Land Use %
 Arable Land: 0.6
 Permanent Crops: 2.0
 Forest: 90.6
 Other: 6.8

Population of Principal Cities (1999)

Honiara	49,107
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CLIMATE AND WEATHER

The Solomon Islands lies wholly within the tropics, such that the country's climate is uniformly hot and humid, as tempered by continual sea breezes. Temperatures rarely exceed 29.4°C (85°F) or drop below 21.1°C (70°F); the typical variation may be only a degree or two all year long. There are no true changes of season; rather, the year is divided into seasons of greater and lesser rainfall, the former occurring between November and March and the latter from April to November. During the drier season the islands are cooled by southwesterly trade winds. The annual mean rainfall is about 3,050 mm (120 in), although the city of Honiara receives only 2,290 mm (90 in). During the rainy season the islands are subject to typhoons with the capacity for much destruction.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature: 70°F to 85°F
 Average Rainfall: 120 in
 Honiara: 90 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

There are about 4,500 species of plants in the archipelago, including 230 types of orchids and the poisonous nalato plant. The Solomons are covered with rain forests; about 10 percent of these forests have been cut down by the timber industry, but the government has introduced a reforestation program in an effort to prevent total deforestation. There are coconut trees, mangroves, and scrubby bushes.

The islands are full of animal life, including many species of insects, lizards, snakes, turtles, and crocodiles. Mammal species are fairly small; the largest mammals are the wild pigs. The waters surrounding the Solomons contain some of the most beautiful underwater scenery and

marine life in the world, including many types of tropical fish, sharks, whales, and dugongs.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 538,032
 World Rank: 159th
 Density per sq km: 16.3
 % of annual growth (1999-2003): 2.8
 Male %: 50.7
 Female %: 49.3
 Urban %: 21.4
 Age Distribution %: 0-14: 41.9
 15-64: 54.9
 65 and over: 3.2
 Population 2025: 815,600
 Birth Rate per 1,000: 30.74
 Death Rate per 1,000: 3.98
 Rate of Natural Increase %: 2.7
 Total Fertility Rate: 4.04
 Expectation of Life (years): Males 70.16
 Females 75.28
 Marriage Rate per 1,000: —
 Divorce Rate per 1,000: —
 Average Size of Households: 5.8
 Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Melanesians constitute 93 percent of the population. Minority groups include Polynesians (4 percent), Micronesians (1.5 percent), Caucasians (0.8 percent), Chinese (0.3 percent), and others (0.4 percent). Generally, the inhabitants of the high islands are Melanesians, while those on the outliers are predominantly Polynesian.

LANGUAGES

The official language of the Solomon Islands is English, but the lingua franca of the marketplace is a Melanesian pidgin; only about 2 percent of the people can speak standard English. The various islanders speak over 120 Melanesian languages and dialects, all of which are derived from the Austronesian linguistic family. In the interior regions the Melanesian languages give way to earlier and more primitive Papuan languages.

RELIGIONS

Fully 95 percent of the population is Christian, with the Anglican, Roman Catholic, Methodist, and Baptist churches dominant. In certain parts, particularly in the interiors, people have retained varying degrees of adherence to traditional religions.

Because Christian missionaries were responsible for introducing literacy, medicine, crafts, technology, and other aspects of Western civilization to the islands, the Christian influence is pervasive and deeply interwoven into every facet of national life.

Religious Affiliations

Anglican	242,100
Roman Catholic	96,800
United (Methodist/Presbyterian)	64,600
Baptist	48,400
Seventh-Day Adventist	37,700
Other Protestant	26,900
Indigenous Beliefs	21,500

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

There is archaeological evidence that inhabitants first arrived on the Solomon Islands nearly 30,000 years ago. Organized agricultural settlements date back more than 6,000 years. For more than 5,000 years the islands were settled by a vast array of peoples, including Polynesians, Lapitas, and Melanesians. The settlements were also subject to frequent attacks by Tongan and Tokelauan peoples. In 1568 the Spanish explorer Don Alvaro de Mendaña y Neyra sighted a large island and called it Santa Isabel. He fought with the locals for food and gold and eventually returned to Peru. By 1570 the islands were being referred to as Yslas de Salomon, in reference to the biblical king Solomon. In 1595 Mendaña finally raised enough funds for another voyage to the islands, where he established a short-lived colony.

For nearly 150 years the islands were free from further European influence because of poor mapping. In 1767 the British captain Philip Cartaret rediscovered the Solomons, and they were subsequently used as whaling and trading stops for Europeans and Americans. Conflict grew between islanders and traders; the islands gained a reputation for being inhospitable, as whites were often killed on sight.

The northern Solomon Islands became a German protectorate in 1885, while the southern Solomon Islands came under the hegemony of the United Kingdom in 1893. Germany ceded most of its possessions in this region to the United Kingdom between 1898 and 1900, and the whole territory, called the British Solomon Islands Protectorate, was placed under the jurisdiction of the Western Pacific High Commission, which had its headquarters at Fiji and was represented locally by a resident commissioner. World War II brought the islands into contact with both Japan and the United States, who became locked in mortal combat on Guadalcanal. The widespread destruction caused by the war fostered strong anti-European sentiments, which led to the development

of pro-independence political movements, such as the "Marching Rule" in Malaita.

The territory's first step toward self-government was the establishment of executive and legislative councils in 1960. A new constitution was promulgated in 1970, and the nation's first general elections were held that year. A second constitution, adopted in 1974, created a single legislative assembly of 24 members, who chose a chief minister with the right to appoint his own council of ministers. In 1975 the country's name was officially changed from the British Solomon Islands Protectorate to the Solomon Islands. A year later the country achieved internal self-government, as followed by full independence in 1978.

At independence, Peter Kenilorea, the chief minister, was designated prime minister. The national parliament overwhelmingly reelected him in 1980. In 1981, however, parliament approved a motion of no confidence and chose Solomon Mamaloni as prime minister. Kenilorea was reinstated after the general elections in 1984 resulted in the formation of a coalition government. He was forced to resign in 1986 amid accusations of misappropriating typhoon relief funds. The national assembly then chose Deputy Prime Minister Ezekial Alebua to replace him. Following the 1989 elections, the legislature reinstated Mamaloni as prime minister.

Mamaloni formed his third government in 1994, when Francis Billy Hilly was forced to resign after one year in office. In 1997 Bartholomew Ulufa'alu was elected prime minister. Six months of ethnic tension led the government to declare a state of emergency in 1999; the Isatabu Freedom Fighters (IFF) had been leading a campaign to drive settlers from Malaita Island, off the main island of Guadalcanal. Ulufa'alu was forced to resign, and in June 2000 Manasseh Sogavare was elected prime minister. In February 2001 the Mauru peace agreement, aimed at ending years of fighting, was signed by both the IFF and the Malaita Eagle Force. However, the peace agreement was threatened in September 2001 when the IFF leader Selwyn Sake was murdered. In 2001 Allan Kemakeza was elected prime minister.

International donors urged Kemakeza to restore law and order to the nation, but in 2002 the situation descended into anarchy. International peace monitors left the country, and the tribal warlord Harold Keke, leader of the Isatabu Freedom Movement, ordered the murder of member of parliament Father Augustine Geve. The nation was in shambles by June 2003, when Kemakeza asked Australia and New Zealand for military help.

The next month Australian soldiers arrived on the islands. They captured Harold Keke, quelled widespread violence, collected weapons, and arrested numerous rebel commanders; in November, Australia declared the islands back in order. Nevertheless, as of 2005 the Solomon Islands faced a difficult future. Timber, the nation's main export, remained vulnerable to price fluctuations and sustained deforestation, and the country lacked the finances

needed to develop the infrastructure and attract tourists. The security situation, meanwhile, remained unstable.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

Prime Minister

1978–81	Peter Kenilorea
1981–86	Solomon Mamaloni
1986–89	Ezekial Alebua
1989–93	Solomon Mamaloni
1993–94	Francis Billy Hilly
1994–97	Solomon Mamaloni
1997–2000	Bartholomew Ulufa'alu
2000–01	Manasseh Sogavare
2001–	Allan Kemakeza

CONSTITUTION

Under the constitution of 1978, which took effect upon independence, the Solomon Islands is a constitutional monarchy, with the British sovereign as titular head of state, represented on the islands by a governor-general, who is required to be a citizen of the country. The governor-general is appointed for a term of five years on the advice of the national parliament. The governor-general appoints the 20 members of the cabinet, choosing them from members of parliament on the advice of the prime minister. The prime minister is the head of government; he or she is elected by parliament but is usually the leader of the majority party. Each ministry is headed by a cabinet member.

Suffrage is universal for all Solomon Islanders over age 18. An electoral commission oversees electoral rolls and ensures free elections.

The constitution provides for the gradual devolution of power to proposed provincial governments and the incorporation of traditional leadership structures within the government. The details of such decentralization have not yet been worked out.

PARLIAMENT

The unicameral national parliament is a 50-member body elected by popular vote from single-member constituencies to four-year terms. The parliament may be dissolved by majority vote among its members before the end of a term. Parliament selects the governor-general, who serves a five-year term.

Only Solomon Islanders can own land. When the Solomon Islands became independent, citizenship was granted to all members of native tribes. Resident expatriates, such as the Chinese and Kiribatians, may become naturalized citizens.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Political party membership in the Solomon Islands is fluid, with large numbers belonging to nondescript independent parties. The two largest organizations are the People's Alliance Party (PAP), founded in 1977, which advocates the establishment of a federal republic, and the Solomon Islands Alliance for Change Coalition (SIACC). Other parties include the People's Progressive Party (PPP) and the Solomon Islands Labor Party (SILP).

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For purposes of local government the country is divided into nine provinces—Central, Choiseul, Guadalcanal, Isabel, Makira, Malaita, Temotu, Western, and Rennell and Bellona—and one capital territory, Honiara.

The provinces are divided into area councils, which are governed by elected councils. Honiara is governed by the Honiara Town Council.

All areas except Tikopia, Anuta, and the small outlying Reef Islands are under the authority of their own local councils. Choiseul, Santa Isabel, Malaita, San Cristobal, and Guadalcanal have islandwide councils, while others administer subdistricts. Members of these councils are elected by universal adult suffrage. Malaita and Honiara have town councils with wider ranges of powers and responsibilities.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The judicial system is three tiered, with the High Court at the top. Magistrate courts have both civil and criminal jurisdiction. Local courts, each comprising a president and a panel of judges drawn from the village or subdistrict, deal with indigenous customs and litigation concerning customary rights to land.

The chief of police is also the superintendent of prisons and in this capacity runs the islands' four penitentiaries. The largest is the central prison at Honiara; smaller prisons, called district prisons, are established at the headquarters of the other police divisions. Penal policies are oriented toward rehabilitation rather than punishment and emphasize adult and vocational training. The average prison population rarely exceeds a few hundred.

HUMAN RIGHTS

In terms of civil and political rights, the Solomon Islands is classified as a free country. For the most part the government respects the human rights of citizens, although there is some violence and discrimination against women.

Until the eruption of armed conflict between Guadalcanalese and Malaitan militants, no violations of human rights had been reported in the country. Democratic institutions and practices seem to have struck firm roots, and there are no restrictions on the freedoms of speech, press, religion, and assembly. Preventive detention does not exist, and habeas corpus is honored in practice.

The armed conflict between Malaitan and Guadalcanalese militants led to a serious deterioration of the human rights situation. Many current and former police officers, many believed to be from two national police units dominated by Malaitans, sided with armed Malaitan political groups, and police and militants from both sides committed numerous human rights abuses, including killings, abductions, torture, rape, forced displacement, looting, and the burning of homes. Militants prevented Red Cross officials and volunteers from taking food and medical supplies to rural clinics, leaving 60,000 persons without access to medical care, nutritional supplements, and fuel.

FOREIGN POLICY

The Solomon Islands retains close links with Britain, Australia, New Zealand, and Japan. Regionally, Honiara has been a strong supporter of the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone and an opponent of "French imperialism." The United States and the Solomon Islands have had diplomatic relations since 1978. Both nations are members of the South Pacific Commission and the South Pacific Regional Environmental Program. The United States grants \$18 million per year to the tuna fishing industry.

Since 1990 one of the principal concerns of the Solomon Islands has been the insurrection in Papua New Guinea's province of Bougainville, whose people are ethnically akin to Solomon Islanders. Papua New Guinea had accused Bougainvillean rebels of using the Solomon Islands as a conduit for arms and as a safe haven. In 1992 the Solomon Islands protested when Papua New Guinean military units crossed into Solomon territory on search-and-destroy missions and abducted villagers. Tensions eased in 1996 with the signing of a border treaty, and in 2004 the two nations regularized border operations.

DEFENSE

The Solomon Islands has no defense force, as the nation is under the protection of UK military guarantees. There is a small civilian police force responsible for domestic security and law enforcement. The United States carries out regular exercises in the Solomons and provides military training to national security officials.

ECONOMY

The Solomon Islands has very few sources of income and a per capita gross domestic product (GDP) of \$1,700. Three-quarters of the workforce are engaged in agriculture and fishing, mostly at the subsistence level, effectively earning no income at all. Until 1998 the nation's largest source of income was tropical timber, which grows wild, but timber prices have dropped in recent years, and forests are becoming overexploited. Other cash crops are copra and palm oil. Fisheries have great potential for growth, although a Japanese fish cannery operating in the Solomons closed in 2000 due to fears of ethnic violence. The plant reopened under local management but had not resumed tuna exports as of 2005. Possible alternative sources of income include mined gold; other mineral resources, such as lead, zinc, and nickel; and tourism. The scuba diving industry brings in substantial income, but growth in tourism has been hampered by the lack of infrastructure and transportation.

In general, severe ethnic violence, the closing of key business enterprises, and an empty government treasury have led to a continuing economic downslide. Deliveries of crucial fuel supplies (including those for electrical generation) by tankers have become sporadic because of the government's inability to complete payments and also because of attacks against ships. Telecommunications are threatened by the lack of technical and maintenance staff, many of whom have left the country. The Asian economic crisis of the early 2000s hit the nation hard, particularly devastating the timber industry. The government was insolvent in 2002, and by mid-2003 the disintegration of law and order had nearly destroyed the entire economy. In the summer of 2003 Australian soldiers entered the country as part of an effort to restore order and resume basic services. The government reassessed its budget and priorities so as to put the nation's economy back on track. The Solomon Islands receives economic aid from Australia, New Zealand, the European Union, Japan, and China.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$million:	800
GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$:	1,700
GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %:	-4.1
GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %:	-6.7
Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:	
Agriculture:	42
Industry:	11
Services:	47
Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:	
Private Consumption:	48
Government Consumption:	32
Gross Domestic Investment:	—
Foreign Trade \$million: Exports:	74
Imports:	67

% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: —

% of Income Received by Richest 10%: —

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
135.8	146.7	157.0	167.8	184.9

Finance

National Currency: Solomon Islands Dollar (SBD)

Exchange Rate: \$1 = SBD 7.4847

Money Supply Stock in National Currency million: 331

Central Bank Discount Rate %: —

Total External Debt \$million: 180.4

Debt Service Ratio %: 2.53

Balance of Payments \$million: —

International Reserves SDRs \$million: 36

Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 10

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 60.2

per capita \$: 131.90

Foreign Direct Investment \$million: —

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year

Revenues \$million: 49.7

Expenditures \$million: 75.1

Budget Deficit \$million: 25.4

Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 42

Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: —

Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 0.05

Irrigation, % of Farms having: —

Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: —

Total Farmland % of land area: 0.6

Livestock: Cattle 000: 13.5

Chickens 000: 230

Pigs 000: 69

Sheep 000: —

Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters 000: 692

Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 31

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: —

Industrial Production Growth Rate %: —

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: —

Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 57

Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 127

Net Energy Imports % of use: —

Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: 12

Production kW-hr million: 32

Consumption kW-hr million: 30

Coal Reserves tons million: —

Production tons million: —

Consumption tons million: —

Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —

Production cubic feet billion: —

Consumption cubic feet billion: —

Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —

Production barrels 000 per day: —

Consumption barrels 000 per day: 1.2

Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$million: 67

Exports \$million: 74

Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —

Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —

Balance of Trade \$million: —

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Australia %	28.0	—
Singapore %	21.1	5.7
India %	5.2	—
New Zealand %	4.7	—
Fiji %	4.2	—
Papua New Guinea %	4.0	—
China %	—	25.2
South Korea %	—	18.2
Japan %	—	13.8
Philippines %	—	8.4
Thailand	—	6.3

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 1,360

Paved %: 2.5

Automobiles: —

Trucks and Buses: —

Railroad: Track Length km: —

Passenger-km million: —

Freight-km million: —

Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: —

Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: —

Airports: 33

Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 55

Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 21

Number of Tourists from 000: —

Tourist Receipts \$million: 10

Tourist Expenditures \$million: 11

Communications

Telephones 000: 6.6
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.06
 Cellular Telephones 000: 1
 Personal Computers 000: 18
 Internet Hosts per million people: 740
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 4.1

ENVIRONMENT

The Solomon Islands lacks a coherent system of protected areas and has poorly enforced environmental legislation. Chief among concerns is the rate of deforestation caused by the logging industry; the government is attempting to reform timber-harvesting policies to allow for the sustainable harvesting of trees. The nearly 1,000 islands that make up the country are home to a wide variety of species that are threatened by an increasing population and the exploitation of natural resources. The United States has been supporting the nation's efforts to protect biodiversity by establishing local conservation areas and protecting reefs as part of the International Coral Reef Initiative.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 90.6
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: -4
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 0
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 0.39

LIVING CONDITIONS

The Solomon Islands is a very poor nation; most people still live in primitive conditions. They cut down trees to build their houses, grow their own food in gardens, and make their own clothing from plants. Some houses are basic huts with leaf walls. Many people still travel by canoe or dugout. There are very few roads on the islands, and most of them are unpaved. Water supplies can be contaminated, and people must boil water to be sure it is safe to drink.

HEALTH

Despite the poverty of the nation, health conditions are fairly good. Life expectancy is quite high, at almost 73 years, and infant mortality is relatively low, at 21 deaths per 1,000 live births. The average woman gives birth to more than four children. Endemic tropical diseases include malaria, yellow fever, tetanus, typhoid, hepatitis A, and polio. Some strains of malaria are resistant to chloroquine. Solomon Islanders still use local plants as medicines.

Health

Number of Physicians: 54
 Number of Dentists: 26
 Number of Nurses: 338
 Number of Pharmacists: 28
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 13
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 21.29
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 130
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 4.8
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 29
 HIV Infected % of adults: —
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 71
 Measles: 78
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 31
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 70

FOOD AND NUTRITION

People eat a great deal of fish, along with fresh fruit and vegetables. Common starches are sweet potato, taro, cassava, and rice. Poi is fermented taro root, eaten as porridge or as a starch with fish. Mud crab is a local delicacy. Meat is rare and expensive, though people do raise pigs. Coconut milk straight from the coconut is a popular beverage. Imported canned food is available but expensive.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 85.0
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 57.2

STATUS OF WOMEN

Women suffer from low social status as a result of centuries of subjugative tribal traditions. Nominally, women have equal legal rights, but traditional culture has hampered their moving into leadership roles. There are no women in senior governmental positions or in the national parliament, although women are involved in politics and have run for national office. Violence against women is a major problem that is still often ignored or considered a family matter; women rarely bring accusations of violence to court because their male relatives refuse to allow it. Women have begun organizing themselves into groups to speak out against mistreatment.

The Solomon Islands has one of the highest rates of population growth in the world. The government is committed to the promotion of family planning and the gradual reduction of the rate of population growth. A voluntary planned parenthood association has been funded, with government approval.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 0
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: —
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: —

WORK

Three-quarters of Solomon Islanders are farmers and fishermen. They mostly grow, hunt, and gather their own food and do not use money very often. About 5 percent of workers are employed in industry. Some islanders work in forestry, although this industry has been suffering in recent years. Others process tuna fish or work in mines. About 20 percent of the workforce is employed in services, including the tourist industry. Unemployment is high, and young people have difficulty finding jobs that provide decent income.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 26,840
 Female Participation Rate %: 47.8
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 75
 Industry: 5
 Services: 20
 Unemployment %: —

EDUCATION

Education is not compulsory, and most schools charge nominal fees. Schooling lasts for 11 years, as divided into six years of primary, three years of middle, and two years of secondary education. Primary education is mostly provided by state schools but was pioneered by Christian missions; churches play a more significant role in secondary education. Provincial secondary schools (formerly new secondary schools) provide practical education, mainly in agriculture. The school year runs from January through December. The language of instruction is English.

Schools lack teachers and supplies, especially in remote areas. About 85 percent of children attend elementary school, but only 14 percent continue on to secondary school. Illiteracy is high.

Scholarships are provided by the government for higher education overseas. In 1977 the University of the South Pacific opened a center in Honiara.

Education

Literacy Rate %: —
 Male %: —
 Female %: —

School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 8.7

First Level: Primary Schools: 520

Teachers: —

Students: 55,093

Student-Teacher Ratio: —

Net Enrollment Ratio: 85

Second Level: Secondary Schools: 23

Teachers: —

Students: —

Student-Teacher Ratio: —

Net Enrollment Ratio: 14

Third Level: Institutions: 1

Teachers: —

Students: —

Gross Enrollment Ratio: —

Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 3.4

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The Solomon Islands is still fairly primitive technologically. Many areas have no electricity, and a fair proportion of people are illiterate, which makes computerization problematic. In 2002 there were only 6,600 telephone lines and 1,000 cellular telephones in use, and only about 2,200 people used the Internet. There are no telecommunications facilities in some areas, and international calls require the use of satellite services. Violence and disorder in the early 2000s only worsened the telecommunications infrastructure, as services were discontinued due to lack of staff and the nonpayment of bills.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —

Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —

High-Tech Exports \$million: —

Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

Radio is the most important form of media in the Solomon Islands, due both to widespread illiteracy and the remoteness of many habitations. The Solomon Islands Broadcasting Corporation (SIBC) provides a public radio service, mainly in pidgin English, with some broadcasts in standard English. The Australian government has given some equipment to the SIBC and has sponsored programming promoting peace and an end to ethnic violence. There is no television service based within the islands, though some satellite channels reach them. The *Solomon Star* is the only daily newspaper. There are a few other weekly and monthly publications.

Freedom of the press improved in the early 2000s, due partly to Australia's efforts to restore peace to the country. Militia leaders had been known to threaten journalists, but they have recently been punished by imprisonment, which has led to better working conditions for journalists.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 1
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: —
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets 000: 7
 per 1,000: 16

CULTURE

Solomon Islanders maintain many cultural traditions and have not been excessively influenced by outside sources. Local musicians play traditional music on bamboo pipes, which are either tied together in sets or played alone as flutes. Musicians also use bamboo as a percussion instrument, hitting it with a piece of rubber to produce interesting sounds. Custom dancing, the traditional folk dance form, is still performed frequently at festivals, with dancers attired in the full regalia of grass skirts and shell jewelry. Wood carving is a common craft; carvers produce a variety of objects, such as miniature canoes and bowls.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Though Christianity is the predominant religion, most Solomon Islanders still follow traditional beliefs as well; many believe in magic. Most people believe that dead people's spirits live on in sharks, birds, or reptiles, and living relatives will not eat whatever kind of animal houses a known spirit for a specified period of time. Many people worship sharks, and the people in the Laulasi and Busu islands used to hand-feed them; such hand-feeding no longer occurs, but local boys still ride sharks around as part of a ritual. Islanders living in villages hold regular festivals, with dancing, songs, and stories about hunting, war, agriculture, or nature.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

The city of Honiara and a few other towns have restaurants, bars, cafés, and shops. Visitors to the Solomon

Islands usually come to scuba dive or snorkel; beautiful coral reefs and World War II wrecks make for some of the best diving in the world. There are many outdoor activities to do on land, too, such as hiking, mountain climbing, caving, and mountain biking.

Public holidays are occasions for parades, sporting events, and custom dancing, the local folk dance form. Whitmonday, the Queen's birthday, and Independence Day are major national celebrations. Each province has its own provincial holiday.

ETIQUETTE

The Solomon Islanders observe a complex assortment of taboos. Property rights are extremely important; most land and the plants on it belong to someone, and so it is usually inappropriate to simply pick fruit that appears to be growing wild. Property rights can apply to the ocean as well. It is considered improper for a woman to stand higher than a man or for a man to place himself below a woman. In some areas it is taboo to wear certain colors. Most locals understand that visitors do not know the social rules and will usually forgive unwitting breaches of etiquette.

Tipping is not done because the recipient of the tip would feel obligated to return a favor to the tipper. Bargaining is not customary.

FAMILY LIFE

Every island and clan has its own rules regulating marriage, children, and land ownership. Ancestors exert influence over the living even after death, and families continue to acknowledge the presence of their dead relatives. Generally, a tribe owns land communally, and families within the tribe share its produce. Relatives live in neighboring houses and share all their possessions in addition to assisting one another with jobs such as raising children. Within families, women generally have lower status than men.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Many Solomon Islanders still wear traditional dress, especially for festivals. Garments include grass skirts and very brief loincloths, shell jewelry, and elaborate head-dresses. Despite the fact that islanders sometimes wear very little clothing, visitors are expected to dress modestly, with their legs mostly covered.

SPORTS

The Solomon Islands does not have many facilities for playing Western sports, but the nation does have an

Olympic Committee and trains athletes in sports such as soccer, tennis, basketball, track, and volleyball.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1978** The Solomon Islands becomes an independent state within the Commonwealth; the legislative assembly becomes the national parliament, and the chief minister, Peter Kenilorea, is named the nation's first prime minister.
- 1980** The Solomon Islands holds its first postindependence elections to the national parliament.
- 1981** Solomon Mamaloni is chosen to succeed Peter Kenilorea as prime minister because of a realignment of independent members.
- 1983** The East Kwaio Council of Chiefs declares Malaita independent.
- 1984** Peter Kenilorea forms a new coalition government upon the fall of the Mamaloni government.
- 1986** Ezekial Alebua becomes prime minister.
- 1989** Solomon Mamaloni regains the office of prime minister.
- 1990** Mamaloni resigns from the People's Alliance Party and appoints five members of the opposition to his cabinet.
- 1994** Moses Pitakaka becomes governor-general.
- 1995** The central bank suspends the payment of interest and principal on government bonds and treasury bills.
- 1997** Bartholomew Ulufa'alu becomes prime minister as the head of a coalition government.
- 1999** State of emergency is declared in June after six months of ethnic tension.
- 2000** Manasseh Sogavare is elected prime minister.
- 2001** In February the Mauru peace agreement is signed by the Isatabu Freedom Fighters and the Malaita Eagle Force; in September, IFF leader Selwyn Sake is murdered, threatening the peace agreement.
Allan Kemakeza is elected prime minister.
- 2002** Lawlessness increases, and tribal warlords begin destroying the government.
- 2003** Prime Minister Kemakeza asks Australia for assistance in restoring order. Australian peacekeepers arrive and remove warlord Harold Keke, leader of the Isatabu Freedom Movement, from power. In November peacekeepers declare the Weather Coast safe.

- 2005** Warlord Harold Keke goes on trial for murdering a member of parliament, Father Augustine Geve, in 2002.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Ministry of Commerce
<http://www.commerce.gov.sb/>

SOMALIA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Somalia (Soomaaliya)

ABBREVIATION

SO

CAPITAL

Mogadishu

HEAD OF STATE

President Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed (from 2004)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Ali Mohammed Ghedi (from 2004)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Transitional, parliamentary national government

POPULATION

8,591,629 (2005)

AREA

637,657 sq km (246,199 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Somali

LANGUAGES

Somali (official), Arabic, Italian, English

RELIGION

Sunni Islam

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Somali shilling

NATIONAL FLAG

A light blue field with a five-pointed white star in the center

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A light blue shield with a gold border displays a large white five-pointed star in the center; leopards poised on a design of crossed spears and palm branches paw the sides of the shield.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Long Live Somalia”

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year’s Day), May 1 (Labour Day), June 26 (Independence Day), July 1 (Foundation of the Republic Day), October 21–22 (National Day, Anniversary of the 1969 Revolution), various Islamic festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

July 1, 1960

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

September 23, 1979

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Somalia, on the Horn of Africa in East Africa, has an area of 637,657 sq km (246,199 sq mi), extending 1,847 km (1,148 mi) north-northeast to south-southwest and 835 km (519 mi) east-southeast to west-northwest. The total coastline, on the Gulf of Aden to the north and the Indian Ocean to the east, is 3,025 km (1,880 mi) in length. Somalia shares its international borders of 2,340 km (1,454 mi) with three neighbors: Kenya, Ethiopia, and Djibouti. All borders are arbitrary lines drawn during colonial times and ignore ethnic bound-

aries; none of these borders has been formally accepted by Somalia.

The capital is Mogadishu. Other major urban centers are Marka, Berbera, Kismaayo, and Hargeysa, the former capital of British Somaliland.

Topographically, there are four natural divisions: the Guban; the northern highlands; the Ogo, including the Mudug Plain; and the Somali Plateau, including the Hand. In general, there is only limited contrast among these regions. The country has only two permanent rivers, the Juba and Shabele, both originating in the Ethiopian Highlands and flowing into the Indian Ocean.

Somalia



Geography

Area sq km: 637,657; sq mi 246,199
 World Rank: 41st
 Land Boundaries, km: Djibouti 58; Ethiopia 1,600; Kenya 682
 Coastline, km: 3,025
 Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Indian Ocean 0
 Highest: Shimbiris 2,416
 Land Use %
 Arable Land: 1.7
 Permanent Crops: 0.0
 Forest: 12.0
 Other: 86.3

Population of Principal Cities (2004 est.)

Berbera	200,000
Hargeysa	750,000
Mogadishu	2,450,000

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Somalia has a generally arid and tropical climate, as determined principally by the northeast and southwest monsoonal winds. There are two wet seasons: the *gu*, beginning in March and extending into May and sometimes June; and the *dayr*, the shorter wet season in October and November. June to August is the hottest season of the year, when temperatures may soar to 48.9°C (120°F). The temperatures are moderated along the coast by cooling sea breezes. The average mean temperatures range from 29.4°C to 40.6°C (85°F to 105°F) in the north and from 18.3°C to 40.6°C (65°F to 105°F) in the south. Most of the country receives less than 500 mm (20 in) of rain annually.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature
 North: 85°F to 105°F
 South: 65°F to 105°F
 Average Rainfall: 20 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Somalia has several different climate zones with different flora and fauna. Parts of the northern mountains are wet enough for cedar, frankincense, and myrrh trees to grow and for agriculture to be supportable. The Ogaden Plateau is covered with tall, thorny grass. The area between the Juba and Shabele rivers is farmland, supporting bananas, sorghum, corn, and millet. The rest of the country is arid savanna, with some deep-rooted acacia trees.

Animals on the savanna include zebras, gazelles, antelopes, wild asses, rhinoceroses, giraffes, warthogs, lions,

and leopards. There are many bird species, including bustards, storks, and eagles. The coastal waters harbor crocodiles and many fish species. The dry areas are home to scorpions and snakes.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 8,591,629
 World Rank: 87th
 Density per sq km: 15.3
 % of annual growth (1999-2003): 3.3
 Male %: 50.0
 Female %: 50.0
 Urban %: 28.9
 Age Distribution %: 0-14: 44.5
 15-64: 52.9
 65 and over: 2.6

Population 2025: 14,862,000
 Birth Rate per 1,000: 45.62
 Death Rate per 1,000: 16.97
 Rate of Natural Increase %: 2.9
 Total Fertility Rate: 6.84
 Expectation of Life (years): Males 46.36
 Females 49.87

Marriage Rate per 1,000: —
 Divorce Rate per 1,000: —
 Average Size of Households: 4.9
 Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Somalia has one of the most homogeneous populations in Africa, with 85 percent of its people belonging to Hamitic stock and only 1 percent to Bantu stock. As a result of intermixture, 98 percent of the people are considered ethnic Somalis. The Somalis are united by language, culture, and religion as well as common descent. All Somalis trace their origin to two brothers, Samaal and Saab, who are said to have been members of the Arabian tribe of Quraysh, to which Muhammad belonged. The descendants of these two brothers constitute six clan-families, or tribes: The Dir, Darod, Isaq, and Hawiye make up an estimated 75 percent of the population and belong to the Samaal line. The Ralianweyn and Digil belong to the Saab line. The Samaal are nomadic or seminomadic pastoralists, while the Saab are farmers and sedentary herders.

Relationships among clans and subclans are based on the principle of contracts (*beers*). Clans are usually associated with given territory, as defined by circuits of nomadic migration; the territories of neighboring clans tend to overlap, resulting in conflicts. Clans have ceremonial heads known as *soldaans* (sultans), or *bokors*, but their internal affairs are managed by informally constituted councils known as *shirs*, of which all adult males are members. Interlineage or interclan alliances are known

as *dia*-paying groups, or groups that accept the burden of paying blood compensation (*dia*) for homicide. Traditionally, every Somali belongs to a certain *dia*-paying group, of which there are over 1,000 in the republic. These groups also are important social and economic units and function as mutual-aid associations and political blocs.

There also are a number of generally despised groups that are believed to have inhabited the country before the arrival of the Somalis. Known as Sab among the Samaal and as Bon among the Saab, they follow so-called inferior occupations such as hunting, blacksmithing, weaving, tanning, and shoemaking. The most numerous of these groups are the Midgaan, Yibir, Tumul, Dardown, Gaggab, and Madarrala. Along the Indian Ocean coast and in the valleys of the Juba and Shabele rivers are groups known as *habasho*, who are believed to be descendants of black slaves. Many of these groups, such as the Gobawein, Helai, Tunni Torre, Shidle, Rer Issa, Kabole, Makanne, and Gosha, have been partially Somalized.

LANGUAGES

The national and official language is Somali, a Cushitic language with dialectal differences that follow clan divisions. Of the several dialects, the most widely used is Common Somali, which is spoken by Somalis not only within Somalia but also in Ethiopia, Kenya, and Djibouti. Other dialects are regional, such as Central Somali and Coastal Somali, but all dialects are mutually intelligible. Until the 1970s Somali was a purely oral language, with no script of its own. In 1972 a written form of Somali with a script based on the Latin alphabet was adopted as the official language. Most Somalis have some knowledge of Arabic, which is the language of religion, and educated Somalis have some familiarity with Italian, English, and Swahili.

RELIGIONS

The state religion is Islam in its Sunni form, which is adhered to by some 98 percent of the population. Although freedom of religion is the state policy, Christian schools have been closed since 1972, and Christians are not permitted to proselytize. Most Somalis belong to any one of four brotherhoods, or religious orders (called *tariqa* in Arabic, from *tariq*, meaning “way” or “path”): Qadiriyyah, Salihyyah, Ahmadiyyah, and Rifaiyyah.

Religious Affiliations

Sunni Muslim	8,420,000
Other	172,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The ancient Egyptians knew the region that now includes Somalia as Punt, and the inhabitants were referred to as the Black Berbers. The first known use of the term Somali was recorded in the 15th century. For five centuries (from the second to seventh centuries c.e.) much of the area came under the rule of the Ethiopian kingdom of Aksum. By the ninth century Arabs and a few Persians had established a number of coastal towns, from Zeila in the north to Brava in the south. In the southern interior negroid peoples had settled as cultivators along the Juba and Shabele rivers.

Also in the south were bands of hunters and gatherers who were racially akin to the San. Much of southern and central Somalia and parts of northern Somalia were inhabited by the Galla, who call themselves Oromo.

The process of the conversion of the Somali to Islam began sometime in the ninth and 10th centuries through the Arab impact on coastal areas. By the 12th century the ancestors of many of the clan-families, like the Dirs, Bimals, and Darods, were established, but the movements of specific clans and lineages continued into the 19th century. The heads of these clan-families were sometimes referred to as sultans. By the early 15th century the Muslim emirate of Adale, part of the Arab state of Ifat, was strong enough to attack Abyssinia, under the leadership of Ahmed Gran. The defeat of Gran by the Abyssinians led to a period of turmoil, which saw the rise to prominence of more clan-families, like the Rahanwein and Digil, as well as confederations like Ajuran.

Britain, France, and Italy began to dominate the region in the 19th century. British authority in Somalia dates from the period 1884–86, when the British signed a number of protectorate treaties with Somali chiefs in the northern areas. From 1899 to 1920 British rule was constantly challenged by the jihad, or holy war, waged by Mohammed bin Abdullah (better known in the West as “the Mad Mullah”). Italian entry into Somalia began in 1889, when the Somali sultans of Obbya on the Indian Ocean coast and Alula on the Gulf of Aden accepted the protection of Italy in return for annual payments. That same year Italy leased the ports on the Benadir coast (from Adale to Brava), partly through a sublease from the Imperial British East Africa Company and partly through a direct 25-year lease from the owner of the coast, the sultan of Zanzibar.

Direct administrative control of the territory known as Italian Somaliland was not established until 1908. The Italian colony was enlarged as a result of a 1925 treaty that transferred the region between the Juba River and the Kenyan frontier to Italy. Italian Somaliland came under British control in 1941 and remained so until 1950, when it became a UN trust territory. In the summer of 1960 both British Somaliland and Italian Somaliland became independent, thus enabling the two territories to

join in the united Somali Republic on July 1, 1960. On the same day Aden Abdullah Osman was elected the new republic's first president.

During the 1960s the Somali Youth League (SYL), a pro-Western party, dominated the country's politics. Dr. Abdirashid Ali Shermake, formerly prime minister, was elected president in June 1967; in October 1969 he was assassinated, and six days later the army seized control in a coup.

Power was assumed by the commander in chief of the armed forces, Major General Mohammed Siad Barre. The 1960 constitution was suspended, all political parties were abolished, and the country's name was changed to the Somali Democratic Republic. The People's Assembly was dissolved and replaced with the Supreme Revolutionary Council (SRC), with Siad Barre as its chair. Siad Barre declared Somalia a socialist state in 1970; he dissolved the SRC and transferred its power to the newly formed Somali Revolutionary Socialist Party (SRSP) in 1976. All members of the SRC became members of the ruling party's central committee, while Siad Barre became the secretary-general of the SRSP. His rule was marked by the lack of political freedom and the widespread toleration of corruption.

A longtime territorial dispute erupted again in 1977, when Somalia launched an attack on Ethiopia to enforce its claims to the Ogaden Plateau. Ethiopia, with Soviet and Cuban aid, defeated the Somalian army in 1978. Later that year a military coup in Somalia was attempted but crushed; political unrest grew. Economic stagnation, growing indebtedness, and continued drought added to Siad Barre's problems in the 1980s, leading to clamp-downs on human rights and frequent government reshuffles. Increasing dissident attacks prompted Siad Barre to declare a state of emergency and reinstate the SRC from 1980 to 1982.

A new constitution approved in 1979 provided for a people's assembly of 177 members, which, at its first session in January 1980, elected Siad Barre as president of the republic. The constitution was amended in 1984, and in 1986 Siad Barre was reelected as president. In January 1987 Siad Barre appointed a prime minister for the first time, Lt. Gen. Muhammad Ali Samatar.

In 1988 Somalia concluded a nonaggression pact with Ethiopia. Consequently, two dissident groups that had maintained bases in Ethiopia—the Somali Democratic Salvation Front (SDSF) and the Somali National Movement (SNM)—were forced out. Their response was to launch a full-scale invasion of their own country. The fighting escalated into a civil war; a third rebel group, the United Somali Congress (USC), led by Mohammed Farah Aidid, joined the fighting.

The three rebel groups, each drawing its membership from a regional clan, loosely allied themselves in 1990. They accused the Siad Barre regime of being repressive and corrupt and criticized Siad Barre for stockpiling the government almost exclusively with members

of his own clan (whose numbers made up 1 percent of Somalia's population). Civilians were slaughtered by both the government and rebel groups. By 1990 an estimated 50,000 to 60,000 civilians had been killed by Siad Barre's armed forces alone. Over half a million refugees had fled the country, which slipped into a devastating famine.

In 1990 the United States cut off all military and financial aid to Somalia. Later that year 114 prominent political intellectuals and traditional elders called for the resignation of Siad Barre and signed a manifesto calling for free elections and human rights. They were arrested and brought up on capital charges but were found not guilty and released. In 1991 northern Somalia withdrew from the ongoing conflict, declaring itself the independent Republic of Somaliland and electing Mohammed Haji Ibrahim Egal as president in 1993.

In 1992 the United Nations involved itself in the Somalia conflict, first by imposing an arms embargo, then by sending 500 UN Operation for Somalia (UNOSOM) peacekeeping troops. The humanitarian operation was expanded in December as the Unified Task Force (UNITAF), a force with members from 21 nations led by 1,800 U.S. troops; UNITAF comprised 33,000 troops by 1993. At that point the United Nations changed its mission's focus from strictly peacekeeping to rebuilding; hence, it replaced UNITAF with UNOSOM II, an operation that was given the additional mandate of rebuilding the country's infrastructure and resettling refugees. After 18 U.S. soldiers were killed in a clash with Aidid's forces in Mogadishu, the United States withdrew its forces from the UN operation. Although Aidid and his rival Ali Mahdi signed a peace accord in Nairobi, Kenya, that year, little came of it. Nonetheless, the United Nations withdrew the remainder of its troops from Somalia in 1995 under the protection of U.S. forces. Rival clans agreed to another cease-fire in 1996, but that, too, proved abortive.

In 1997 the 41-member National Salvation Council was assembled to draft a new national charter and put together a national reconciliation conference, although Hussein Aidid, the country's most powerful clan leader, refused to recognize the group's legitimacy. The council agreed to reestablish a presidential council, prime minister, and parliament within three years. By late 1999 there was little indication that this deadline would be met, and fighting continued. However, in August 2000, after three months of talks in neighboring Djibouti, delegates to a national reconciliation conference elected the businessman Abdiqasim Salad Hassan as Somalia's first civilian president since the overthrow of the central government nearly 10 years earlier. In October, the new prime minister of Somalia, Ali Khalif Galaydh, announced his government.

The new cabinet consisted of 25 ministers, all of them men drawn from Somalia's different clans. In April 2001 Somali warlords, backed by Ethiopia, announced their intention to form a national government within six

months, in direct opposition to the country's transitional administration. In May 2001 dozens of people were killed in fighting between the militia led by Aidid and transitional government forces.

In the period of uncertainty that ensued after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, the United Nations and the European Union evacuated foreign aid workers from Somalia. In addition, the United States froze the funds of Somalia's main bank, Al-Barakaat, for suspected links to the al-Qaeda terrorist network, threatening the country with economic collapse.

Somalia had no real government between 2001 and 2004. The transitional government was supposed to unite the country and install a new form of government, but that did not happen. Eventually, after many rounds of talks in Kenya, the leading politicians and warlords signed a deal to create a new parliament. In October 2004 the new parliament elected Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed as president, with Ali Mohammed Ghedi as prime minister. The new administration faced a nation that had no government offices or civil service and was still plagued by rival warlords and clan fiefdoms. Yusuf Ahmed appointed a cabinet that contained several powerful warlords among its members. Yusuf Ahmed and his government remained in exile in Kenya during his first months in office, waiting for security guarantees from Mogadishu. They finally met in Somalia for the first time in February 2006. Heavy fighting between rival militia continued in Mogadishu.

The Republic of Somaliland continued to operate as an independent country and was relatively stable during the 1990s and early 2000s, despite the fact that the rest of the world declined to acknowledge its independence.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

(Note: As of 1991 no single head of state has earned undisputed international recognition.)

1960–67	Aden Abdullah Osman Daar
1967–69	Abdirashid Ali Shermake
1969–91	Mohammed Siad Barre
1991–95	Ali Mahdi Muhammad
1995–96	Mohammed Farrah Aidid
1996–98	Hussein Aidid
1998–2000	none
2000–04	Abdiqasim Salad Hassan
2004–	Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed

CONSTITUTION

In effect, Somalia has been stateless, with no functioning government or constitution, since the ouster of Mohamed Siad Barre on January 27, 1991.

In 1997 the country's 26 major clans, including those of the rivals Hussein Aidid, son of Mohammed Aidid, and

Ali Mahdi Mohammed, signed the so-called Cairo Declaration, providing for a 13-person council of presidents, a prime minister, a 189-seat parliament, and a general election within three years. A 41-member National Salvation Council was established to draft a new national charter and put together a national reconciliation conference.

Finally, in August 2000, after three months of talks in neighboring Djibouti, delegates to the national reconciliation conference elected businessman Abdiqasim Salad Hassan as Somalia's first civilian president since the overthrow of the central government nearly 10 years earlier. A transitional 245-seat parliament was also named.

In October 2000 the new prime minister of Somalia, Ali Khalif Galaydh, announced his government. The new cabinet had 25 ministers, all of whom were men drawn from Somalia's different clans. Galaydh said he had named a government of reconciliation that would not use force to implement its agenda, which entailed disarming clan militias.

The transitional government was supposed to have created a new constitution by 2003. That did not happen, and president Abdullahi took office in 2004 without the benefit of a functioning constitution.

PARLIAMENT

The unicameral People's Assembly, or Golaha Shacbiga, has not functioned since 1991. In August 2000 a transitional 275-seat parliament was inaugurated in neighboring Djibouti following a new round of peace talks. Four large clan groups—the Darod, Digil-Mirifle, Dir, and Hawiye—each received 61 seats, and the other 31 seats were divided among minority clans.

POLITICAL PARTIES

There are no formal political parties in the country; instead, numerous clans and subclans contend for power on a regional basis.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Somalia is divided into 18 regions, each of which formerly had its own government. In the early 2000s local government was in the hands of clan leaders and did not answer to the national government, which was in disrepair. In some areas there was nothing resembling regional government.

LEGAL SYSTEM

Throughout the 1990s and early 2000s there was no functioning legal system in the country. Legal disputes are settled by clan elders following Islamic sharia law. There are secular courts in some areas.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Somalia's human rights situation has been very poor for some years. Fighting among rival clans and factions resulted in the death, dislocation, and starvation of tens of thousands of Somalians in the 1990s. Political violence and banditry have been endemic since the ouster of Siad Barre in 1991. Kidnappings, especially of foreign aid workers for ransom, remains common. The absence of a formal legal system has meant that criminals and political dissidents have had little recourse to legal representation. The right to privacy is nonexistent, and there have been reports of forced, or "slave," labor being used in the agricultural sector. There are occasional public whippings and stonings. The abuse of women and children is common. Ethnic and religious discrimination occur frequently. Child labor and human trafficking are both problems.

FOREIGN POLICY

Somalia has had not a formal coordinated foreign policy since 1991, the year Siad Barre was ousted. Individual clans were either working with or fighting against UN forces brought into the country to restore order between 1992 and 1995. Because the country has had no recognized government, there have been few foreign diplomatic missions active in the country as of the latter half of the 1990s. Although Somalia had no diplomatic representation abroad through the end of the 1990s, the country began to break out of its isolation late in 2000 with the election of a civilian government aimed at reconciliation. The northern Republic of Somaliland spent the turn of the century seeking international recognition with little success.

The United States never formally severed diplomatic relations with Somalia, but the absence of a real government made it impossible to maintain strong formal ties. The American government retains informal contact with various Somali entities.

DEFENSE

Since the collapse of the government in 1991 the country has lacked an organized national defense force. Protection of territory is left to individual clan militias. The unrecognized republics of Somaliland and Puntland have their own security and police forces.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 50,000
 Military Manpower Availability: 1,787,727
 Military Expenditures \$million: 18.9
 as % of GDP: 0.9
 as % of central government expenditures: —
 Arms Imports \$million: —
 Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

Even before the civil war that began in the 1990s Somalia was one of the world's poorest and least developed nations. Per capita gross domestic product (GDP) was estimated at \$600 in 2004, although all facts and figures are vague estimates at best. The country has few resources. Its economy is mainly pastoral and agricultural, with live-stock, mostly camels, cattle, sheep, and goats, representing the main form of wealth. A small fishing industry is active in the north of the country, though it is hampered by poaching. The national infrastructure, poor before the start of the civil war, deteriorated in the 1990s, and most roads are impassable on a long-haul basis. The country had little industry before 1991, and virtually nothing new has been established since then. The small industrial sector accounts for 10 percent of GDP. Several international oil companies have prospected off the Somali coast, but development has been stalled by the civil war. Meanwhile, in the northern Republic of Somaliland, the European Union agreed in 1996 to finance the reconstruction of the port of Berbera.

Despite the unrest, Somalia's economy has continued to function after a fashion, at least on a local level. There is no formal banking, so ad hoc currency exchangers have cropped up throughout the country. The cellular telephone industry has thrived, and Somalia has some of the lowest rates for international telephone calls within Africa. Mogadishu has a market with a tremendous variety of goods for sale. Militias offer security services, and hotels still operate.

Ongoing civil disturbances in Mogadishu and outlying areas have interfered with any substantial economic advances and with international aid arrangements.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 4.597
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 600
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: —
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: —
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 65
 Industry: 10
 Services: 25
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 72
 Government Consumption: 9
 Gross Domestic Investment: —
 Foreign Trade \$million: Exports: 79
 Imports: 344
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: —
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: —

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
—	—	—	—	—

Finance

National Currency: Somali Shilling (SOS)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = SOS 11,000
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: —
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: —
 Total External Debt \$billion: 3
 Debt Service Ratio %: —
 Balance of Payments \$million: —
 International Reserves SDRs \$million: —
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: —

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 175
 per capita \$: 18.20
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 1

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: —
 Revenues \$billion: —
 Expenditures \$billion: —
 Budget Deficit \$million: —
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 65
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: —
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 0.16
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 18.7
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 0.48
 Total Farmland % of land area: 1.7
 Livestock: Cattle million: —
 Chickens million: —
 Pigs 000: —
 Sheep 000: —
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 10.3
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 18

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: —
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: —

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: —
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: —
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: —
 Net Energy Imports % of use: —
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: 79
 Production kW-hr million: 245
 Consumption kW-hr million: 228
 Coal Reserves tons million: —
 Production tons million: —
 Consumption tons million: —

Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet billion: 200
 Production cubic feet billion: —
 Consumption cubic feet billion: —
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
 Production barrels 000 per day: —
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 4.8
 Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$million: 344
 Exports \$million: 79
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —
 Balance of Trade \$million: —

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Djibouti %	30.1	—
Kenya %	13.7	—
India %	9.7	11.7
Brazil %	5.7	—
Oman %	4.6	8.1
United Arab Emirates %	4.5	34.3
Yemen %	—	20.6
China %	—	5.6
Nigeria %	—	4.1

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 22,100
 Paved %: 11.8
 Automobiles: —
 Trucks and Buses: —
 Railroad: Track Length km: —
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: —
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: —
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: —
 Airports: 60
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: —
 Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: —
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: —
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: —

Communications

Telephones 000: 100
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones 000: 35
 Personal Computers 000: 50
 Internet Hosts per million people: 0.5
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 10

ENVIRONMENT

The main environmental issues in Somalia have been the constant threat of famine, especially as caused by the civil war, and recurring droughts, dust storms, deforestation, overgrazing, soil erosion, pest and locust infestation, and desertification. Freshwater contamination is another hazard.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 12.0
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: -77
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 1
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: —

LIVING CONDITIONS

Living conditions are quite primitive in many areas. The country lacks roads and public transportation as well as reliable electricity and anything resembling an infrastructure. Many people use camels for transportation. Most Somalians live in the countryside, where they can farm and raise animals. Settlements grow up around wells; water is in short supply and is increasingly contaminated. Some people live in collapsible huts made of wood and animal skins, with grass mats placed on the floor. Others live in one-room mud huts with thatched roofs; a metal roof is a sign of wealth. In the cities people live in more modern housing, with Arabic or Western furniture. Many buildings suffered damage during the years of fighting. Crime is a major problem in some areas.

HEALTH

Health conditions are poor. The state health-care system was destroyed by the war, and hospitals still lack supplies and staff. Most people go to traditional healers, for treatments such as cauterization, scarification, bloodletting, and teeth pulling, or visit exorcists, who use dances and songs to drive out evil spirits. The infant mortality rate is high, and life expectancy is only about 48 years. Fertility is extremely high, with each woman bearing nearly seven children. Women often suffer injuries or die during childbirth, partly due to the custom of female genital mutilation. Only 1 percent of the population is infected with HIV/AIDS. Diseases such as cholera and malaria are common.

Health

Number of Physicians: 310
 Number of Dentists: 15
 Number of Nurses: 1,486
 Number of Pharmacists: 8

Physician Density per 100,000 people: 4
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 116.7
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 1,100
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 2.6
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 6
 HIV Infected % of adults: 1.0
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 40
 Measles: 40
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 25
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 29

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Malnutrition is a major problem. Many people do not have nearly enough food or clean water.

Somalia cannot produce a wide variety of food, so Somali cuisine uses just a few main ingredients. Flat bread, rice, noodles, cereal, and porridge made from millet or cornmeal are staples. These starches are supplemented with salad, beans, fruit, and the occasional meat. Milk is an important component of the diet; people drink the milk from camels, sheep, and goats. Fermented camel milk turns into a kind of yogurt called *jinow*. People make butter by shaking milk, turning it into liquid ghee so that it will keep in the hot climate. Spiced tea is a popular drink. Pork and alcohol are forbidden by Islamic rules.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 1,600
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: —
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: —

STATUS OF WOMEN

Women suffered disproportionately during the Somali civil war. Somalia's patriarchal culture remains overwhelmingly traditional, as based around extended clan families and subservient roles for women. Polygyny is permitted. Under the tradition of blood compensation, those found guilty in the death of a woman must pay only half as much to the aggrieved family as if the victim had been a male. Long-established practices such as female circumcision remain prevalent; the Somali version, infibulation, is particularly devastating. Abortion is illegal in Somalia. Women are expected to show modesty and shame, and wives are supposed to follow behind their husbands, with their children behind them.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: —

Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: —
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: —

WORK

Almost three-quarters of the Somali population engage in subsistence agriculture, living off the land primarily through pastoral nomadism. Clans have long-developed herding routes that distribute the use of water sources. All family members help care for animals, with boys feeding and milking camels and girls tending goats and sheep.

The remaining workers are employed in various services and industries, such as sugar refining and textiles, though most of these enterprises were destroyed in the years of fighting. Somalia's labor force is largely unskilled and uneducated. Wages are very low, and people who work for wages must often work two jobs. Family members run many small businesses. Women constitute one-third of the workforce, and many of them own their own businesses.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 3,700,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 43.4
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 71
 Industry and Services: 29
 Unemployment %: —

EDUCATION

In Somalia prior to 1991, eight years of primary education were compulsory for children between the ages of six and 14, although most children did not attend; nomadic herders found it especially difficult to get their children to school. Following the ouster of Siad Barre in 1991, the country's education system collapsed. By 2001 an estimated 62 percent of the adult population was considered illiterate. Only a few schools were operating within the country by the late 1990s, most of which were run by Islamic aid groups. Among the children who do attend school, two-thirds are male. Somalia has one university: the Somali National University, in Mogadishu, which opened in 1970.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 37.8
 Male %: 49.7
 Female %: 25.8
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: —
 First Level: Primary Schools:
 Teachers: —
 Students: —
 Student-Teacher Ratio: —
 Net Enrollment Ratio: —

Second Level: Secondary Schools:

 Teachers: —
 Students: —
 Student-Teacher Ratio: —
 Net Enrollment Ratio: —

Third Level: Institutions:

 Teachers: —
 Students: —
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: —

Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: —

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Most of Somalia has no technological infrastructure, and public telecommunications were almost completely destroyed during the years of fighting. Surprisingly, however, urban telecommunication remained strong during the war, through numerous wireless service providers and inexpensive international telephone services. As of 2002 some 89,000 people were using the Internet.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: —
 Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

Because of the country's low literacy rate, newspapers—usually short photocopies of a few pages—play a secondary role to radio broadcasts. Most major clans control at least one broadcast outlet. Religious organizations also run radio stations, the most important of which is Holy Koran Radio. Radio Mogadishu, the Voice of the Masses of the Somali Republic—the former government-run Radio Mogadishu—is in the hands of Aidid's clan. Several private television stations broadcast in Somalia; people can view CNN and Al-Jazeera on the Somali Television Network (STN). The unrecognized republics of Somaliland and Puntland have their own television and radio stations.

Media

Daily Newspapers: —
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: —
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets 000: 140
 per 1,000: 14

CULTURE

Somalis have long been famous for their oral poetry. Many people still memorize centuries-old poems, and poetic skill is important in social interactions. The government has traditionally employed poets to praise its actions, and opposition parties employ poets to criticize the government. Clans use poetry to negotiate with one another and resolve differences. Men and women have separate poetic traditions. Both sexes compete in poetry contests. Famous Somali writers include the poet and playwright Mohamamed Warsame Ibrahim and the novelist Nurudin Farah.

Somalis love music. The native style combines Arabic and African techniques and instruments, which include trumpets, lutes, and lyres. Maryam Mursal is a famous musician. Somali crafts include wood carvings, baskets, and leather bags and dagger sheaths. Somali women paint intricate designs on one another's hands and feet using henna or *khidaab*.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
Volumes: —
Registered borrowers: —
Museums Number: —
Annual Attendance: —
Cinema Gross Receipts: —
Number of Cinemas: —
Seating Capacity: —
Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Folklore survives through oral tradition, and many Somalis can still recite ancient poems telling stories of clans and wars. Somalis still adhere to their ancient belief system, which includes the worship of ancestors, holding ceremonies and offering gifts to the spirits of dead relatives to get them to help the living. Clan leaders are widely believed to have the ability to curse enemies. Somalian Muslims believe in evil spirits such as *jinn* and *zar*, which can make people sick or crazy. People afflicted with the evil eye may be treated by an exorcist. Many wear amulets containing verses from the Koran as protection or treatment for illness.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Somalis love to talk with one another. They view conversation as an art form and judge others based on wit and eloquence. Relatives and friends spend their free time visiting one another to talk and drink tea. The sexes usually do not mingle. Women entertain one another in the

home, scenting their hair over incense burners while they talk. Men go to coffee shops to drink tea, play chess, and chew khat, a mild stimulant. Families like to sit outside at night to listen to folktales and songs.

ETIQUETTE

Somalis use humor as a means of saving face; the best way to avoid insult or embarrassment is to make a joke of the situation. They value verbal eloquence. Because most people are Muslims, they observe many Islamic rules of behavior. Men and women do not touch one another or make too much eye contact. People use their right hands to eat.

FAMILY LIFE

The clan is the most important social structure in Somali life. Most marriages are arranged with a view to lineage and the exchange of a bride-price. Men may have multiple wives. Divorce and remarriage are common, and women can keep their possessions after divorce. Though fathers are titular and economic leaders, mothers function as the managers of household affairs. Women feel free to speak their minds to their husbands. Most people live with or near extended family.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Urban Somalians generally wear Western clothing. Most people, however, still dress in traditional styles. Women wear full-length dresses called *guntiino*, which are similar to Indian saris. Married women cover their heads with scarves. Clothing is usually colorful. Women paint their hands and feet with intricate patterns, using henna or *khidaab* as dyes. Men wear cotton cloths tied like sarongs and cover their heads with a cap called a *benadirya kufia*.

SPORTS

Soccer and basketball are the most popular sports in Somalia. Most families cannot afford balls, so children play with whatever objects they can find. Other popular games include volleyball and table tennis. Boys play more sports than girls, who have more household duties.

CHRONOLOGY

1960 British Somaliland and Italian Somaliland become independent and unite as the Somali Republic on July 1, 1960; Aden Abdullah Osman is elected president.

- 1967** Dr. Abdirashid Ali Shermake, a former prime minister, is elected president.
- 1969** Shermake is assassinated; six days later the army seizes power in a coup led by Major General Mohammed Siad Barre; as chair of the Supreme Revolutionary Council (SRC), Siad Barre suspends the constitution, abolishes political parties, and changes the country's name to the Somali Democratic Republic.
- 1970** Siad Barre declares Somalia a socialist state.
- 1974** A drought lasting through 1975 results in widespread famine.
- 1976** Siad Barre dissolves the SRC and transfers control to the new Somali Revolutionary Socialist Party (SRSP), with Barre as secretary general.
- 1977** Somalia attacks Ethiopia to claim sovereignty over the Ogaden region.
- 1978** As aided by the USSR and Cuba, Ethiopia repels Somali forces; refugees seek asylum in Somalia.
- 1979** A new constitution creates a People's Assembly of 177 members.
- 1980** The People's Assembly elects Siad Barre as president of the Republic of Somalia; Siad Barre puts down an attempted military coup; in the face of increasing social unrest, Siad Barre declares a state of emergency and reinstates the SRC until 1982.
- 1981** Somalia grants the United States use of the Berbera military base, formerly Soviet, in return for military and humanitarian aid.
- 1986** Siad Barre is reelected.
- 1987** Siad Barre appoints a prime minister for the first time, Lieutenant General Muhammad Ali Samatar.
- 1988** Somalia concludes a nonaggression pact with Ethiopia; Somali dissident groups respond by launching a full-scale invasion, beginning a civil war in Somalia.
- 1991** Siad Barre is ousted; the northern part of the country declares itself an independent republic, the Republic of Somaliland.
- 1992** The United Nations imposes an arms embargo on Somalia and sends 500 UNOSOM troops; in December the larger UNITAF replaces UNOSOM.
- 1993** UNITAF contingent reaches a high of 33,000 troops; UNOSOM II, an armed humanitarian force, replaces UNITAF; 18 U.S. soldiers are killed in a clash with Aidid's forces in Mogadishu; Mohammed Ibrahim Egal is elected president of the Republic of Somaliland.
- 1994** U.S. forces withdraw from the UN's Somalia operation; Aidid and his rival Ali Mahdi sign a peace accord in Nairobi, Kenya, but fighting continues.
- 1995** Siad Barre dies in exile in Nigeria; the United Nations withdraws all troops from Somalia in February.
- 1996** Aidid, Ali Mahdi, and other clans' members agree to yet another cease-fire in Nairobi; fighting continues.
- 1997** A 41-member National Salvation Council is established to draft a new national charter and put together a national reconciliation conference; the Republic of Somaliland announces a three-year interim constitution and reelects Mohammed Ibrahim Egal as the territory's president.
- 1998** The Puntland region, in northern Somalia, declares independence.
- 2000** In August, delegates to a national reconciliation conference elect Abdiqasim Salad Hassan as Somalia's first civilian president in nearly 10 years; in October, the new prime minister of Somalia, Ali Khalif Galaydh, announces his government, drawn from numerous Somali clans.
- 2001** Dozens are killed in fighting between the militia led by the warlord Hussein Aidid and the transitional government forces. Following the terrorist attacks of September 11, the United Nations and European Union evacuate foreign aid workers from Somalia. The United States also freezes the funds of Somalia's main bank, Al-Barakaat, for suspected links to the al-Qaeda terrorist network.
- 2002** Warlords in the southwest declare independence and form a regional government. Dahir Riyale Kahin becomes president of the unrecognized Republic of Somaliland after the death of Mohammed Ibrahim Egal. Some 21 warring factions sign a cease-fire and agree to participate in peace talks.
- 2003** Riyale Kahin is elected president of the unrecognized Republic of Somaliland.
- 2004** The warlords sign a peace agreement in Kenya and agree to set up a new parliament. Fighting continues. The new transitional parliament is inaugurated in August and elects Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed president in October. A tsunami in the Indian Ocean hits the Somali coast, displacing tens of thousands of people.
- 2006** The transitional parliament meets in Somalia for the first time.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Somalia Page
http://www.sas.upenn.edu/african_studies/country_specific/somalia.html
- SomaliNet
<http://somalinet.com/>

SOUTH AFRICA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of South Africa (Republiek van Suid-Afrika; IRiphabliki yase Ningizimu Afrika)

ABBREVIATION

ZA

CAPITALS

Pretoria (administrative), Cape Town (legislative), Bloemfontein (judicial)

HEAD OF STATE & HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

President Thabo Mbeki (from 1999)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Parliamentary democracy

POPULATION

44,344,136 (2005)

AREA

1,219,912 sq km (471,008 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Black, white, mulatto

LANGUAGES

Afrikaans, English, Ndebele, Northern Sotho, Southern Sotho, Swazi, Tsonga, Tswana, Venda, Xhosa, Zulu

RELIGIONS

Christianity, animism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Rand

NATIONAL FLAG

Two equal-width horizontal bands of red (top) and blue separated by a central green band which splits into a horizontal Y, the arms of which end at the corners of the hoist side, embracing a black isosceles triangle from which

the arms are separated by narrow yellow bands; the red and blue bands are separated from the green band and its arms by narrow white stripes.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

At the base of the coat of arms is the motto *!ke e: /xarra //ke* (Diverse people unite), written in the Khoisan language in a green arc, from which extend two symmetric pairs of elephant tusks pointing upwards. Within the tusks are two sheaves of wheat, which in turn frame a gold shield. The shape of the shield makes reference to a drum and contains two human figures from Khoisan rock art; the figures face one another in greeting and in unity. Above the shield are placed a crossed spear and knobkerrie. Above is a protea plant, the petals of which are rendered in a triangular pattern reminiscent of African crafts. A secretary bird with uplifted wings is placed above the protea, with the flower forming the bird's chest. A rising sun is placed between the wings of the bird.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

A combination of "Nkosi sikelel' iAfrika" and "Die Stem van Suid-Afrika" (The call of South Africa)

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day), March 21 (Human Rights Day), day after Easter Monday (Family Day), April 27 (Freedom Day), May 1 (Labour Day), June 16 (Youth Day), August 9 (National Women's Day), September 24 (Heritage Day), December 16 (Day of Reconciliation), December 25 (Christmas), December 26 (Day of Goodwill), all major Christian festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

May 31, 1910

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

December 10, 1996

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

South Africa is located at the southern end of the African continent, with a total land area of 1,219,912 sq km (471,008 sq mi). Extraterritorial holdings included in the total area are two small islands—Prince Edward and Marion—south-

east of the African mainland. Entirely bounded by South Africa is Lesotho, with a boundary length of 909 km (565 mi); the remainder of South Africa's land boundaries total 3,953 km (2,456 mi). A number of small landforms off the southwestern coast include Dassen, Robben, and Bird Islands, among which only Robben Island is inhabited.

South Africa



The country's general physiography is characterized by a broad, centrally depressed plateau edged by a prominent escarpment overlooking marginal slopes that descend to the eastern, southern, and western coasts. The mountainous edges of the plateau extend in a sweeping arc from the country's northeastern tip to its southwestern extremity. Collectively, these edges are known as the Great Escarpment, probably the nation's most fundamental topographical feature.

The Great Escarpment runs almost unbroken from the Zambezi River in Zimbabwe around the southern

edge of the continent and arcs northward, following the western edge of the landmass through Namibia and into Angola. In South Africa the escarpment lies from 55 to 240 km (34 to 149 mi) behind the coastline and has a variety of local names. To the east and southeast it is known as the Drakensberg Mountains. Traced westward through the Cape Province, it becomes the Stormberg, Suurberg, Sneeuwberg, Nuweveld Reeks, and Roggeveldberge. The escarpment attains its most majestic form in the great wall of the Natal Drakensberg, along the Lesotho border between Mont-aux-Sources in the north and

Xalanga Peak in the south. In many places the scarp face is vertical, fully 2,000 m (6,562 ft) from foot to crest. The highest points in the country occur in this stretch: Njesuthi Mountain (3,408 m; 11,178 ft) Champagne Castle (3,376 m; 11,077 ft), Giant's Castle (3,313 m; 10,870 ft), and Mont-aux-Sources (3,299 m; 10,824 ft). The highest point in all of southern Africa, Thabana Ntlenyana (3,482 m; 11,424 ft), is not on the escarpment itself but on an obscure plateau block in Lesotho. The Natal Drakensberg is such a formidable wall that in the 250 km (155 mi) between Oliviershoek and Qachas Nex, it is dissected by only a single pass. West of Sneeuwberg there is a gap of 80 km (50 mi) in the escarpment, but the Nuweveld rises again after Beaufort West and continues into Namaqualand as the Roggeveld.

Lack of water is the principal characteristic of the country's hydrology. Worldwide, 31 percent of all rain returns to the sea as river discharge, but only 9 percent does so in South Africa. The chief reason for this is the high rate of evaporation, which is to be expected in such a sunny country. In certain areas the loose, sandy soil and the nature of surface cover further restrict runoff. The combined runoff of all South African rivers amounts to 54 billion cu m (1,907 trillion cu ft), only half that of the Zambezi and roughly equal to that of the Nile, at Aswan, and the Rhine, at Rotterdam. The eastern plateau slopes, covering 12 percent of the area, account for some 40 percent of total runoff, most of which is distributed over a large number of small and strongly dissected river basins, thus limiting its potential use. The Orange River system drains almost the entire interior plateau, or 47 percent of the total land area, but accounts for only 22 percent of total runoff. Truly perennial rivers exist over one-quarter of the surface, chiefly in the southern and southwestern cape and on the eastern plateau slopes. Rivers flowing periodically—that is, which are stationary during the dry season—are found over a further quarter of the surface. Over the entire western interior, rivers are episodic—that is, they flow only sporadically, after infrequent storms, with their beds dry for the rest of the year. In the absence of lakes or permanent snowfields to stabilize water flow, even perennial rivers flow irregularly and according to rainfall. Further, most South African rivers carry heavy loads of silt. The Orange carries more silt to the sea than any other African river, including the Nile, which has a water discharge five times as large.

The Great Escarpment divides the South African river system into two groups: the plateau rivers and those of the marginal areas. The large interior plateau surface is drained by the northern Limpopo and the central Orange river systems as well as the latter's tributary, the Vaal. In contrast, the marginal zones below the Great Escarpment are drained by numerous smaller, intermittent streams. The Orange is the giant among South African rivers. Almost the entire plateau south of the Vaal-Limpopo divide—which runs east to west along the Witwatersrand—is drained by the Orange and its tributaries. From the Mont-aux-Sources area it runs 2,250

km (1,398 mi) east to west to the Atlantic. Its major tributaries are the Caledon and the Vaal, the latter of which is actually longer and drains a much larger area than the main Orange headstream but contributes only 40 percent of the combined volume. Some 32 km (20 mi) beyond Kakamas the Orange plunges 147 m (482 ft) over Augrabies Falls to enter the final desolate stretch of its gorge tract. Of the marginal river basins the largest is the Tugela, in Natal, which rises only a few hundred meters from the Orange on the Mont-aux-Sources plateau, plunging almost immediately over a spectacular 600 m (1,969 ft) fall to the foot of the escarpment. From there it runs to the Indian Ocean, a mere 250 km (155 mi) to the east. Despite its short course and small drainage basin of 29,000 sq km (11,194 sq mi), the Tugela has a larger volume than the Vaal. In southern Cape Province the mountains have caused the main streams to adopt a trellis drainage pattern. The major rivers in this area are the Gamtoos, Gouritz, Breede, and Olifants.

With the exception of Lake Fundudzi in the Southpansberg, there are no true lakes of any size in the country. The "lakes" at the Wilderness on the southern coast and at St. Lucia; Sibayi; and Kosi, on the Zululand coast, are all really freshwater lagoons. Innumerable pans are found in a wide belt from Northern Cape Province to the southern section of the former Transvaal Province. Pans are shallow stretches of water usually found on flat ground and varying in size from a few thousand square meters to hundreds of square kilometers. The largest, Groot Vloer, is 64 km (40 mi) long and a maximum of 40 km (25 mi) wide.

Geography

Area sq km:	1,219,912; sq mi 471,008
World Rank:	24th
Land Boundaries, km:	Botswana 1,840; Lesotho 909; Mozambique 491; Namibia 967; Swaziland 430; Zimbabwe 225
Coastline, km:	2,798
Elevation Extremes meters:	
	Lowest: Atlantic Ocean 0
	Highest: Njesuthi 3,408
Land Use %	
	Arable Land: 12.1
	Permanent Crops: 0.8
	Forest: 7.3
	Other: 79.8

Population of Principal Cities (1996)

Benoni	365,467
Bloemfontein	333,769
Boksburg	260,905
Cape Town	2,415,408
Durban	2,117,650
East London	212,323
Johannesburg	1,480,530
Krugersdorp	203,168
Newcastle	219,682
Pietermaritzburg	378,126

(continues)

Population of Principal Cities *(continued)*

Port Elizabeth	749,921
Pretoria	1,104,479
Soweto	1,098,094
Tembisa	282,272
Vanderbijlpark	253,335
Vereeniging	346,780
Welkom	203,296

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Climatically, South Africa is the least typically African of African countries and is more similar to California and Mediterranean countries. Its climate is influenced by its subtropical location, on either side of latitude 30° south, and the wide expanses of ocean on three sides. More immediately apparent are the effects of the warm Agulhas and cold Benguela currents along the eastern and western coasts, respectively. Even more significant is the nation's location within the subtropical belt of high pressures. Because eastern coast air masses are warmer, they tend to be less stable and more likely to give rise to abundant rain. Moist, warm Indian Ocean air masses are in fact the chief sources of rain for most of the country. Over the western coast, on the contrary, air masses are chilled at their base by the cold Benguela waters, producing an upper air inversion that discourages rain formation.

Common weather patterns vary among regions. The interior plateau and the eastern plateau slopes have summer rain and are dry in winter. The opposite conditions prevail in the Western Cape and adjacent areas, where summers are hot, dry, and rainless. In winter, when the high-pressure belt has shifted to the north, an inflow of cool, humid, subpolar air brings showery cold weather and often snow on the cape ranges. Occasionally, if the cold air mass behind the cold front is sufficiently deep and unstable, it may succeed in surmounting the Great Escarpment itself, producing a sudden cold snap over the interior, with snow on the highlands.

On the whole, South Africa is a dry country. It has average annual rainfall of 450 mm (18 in), as against a world mean of 860 mm (34 in). A total of 21 percent of the country receives less than 200 mm (8 in) annually, 48 percent between 200 and 600 mm (8 and 24 in), and only 31 percent over 600 mm (24 in). Less than 65 percent of the land receives the minimum of 500 mm (20 in) required for successful dry-land farming.

Like other countries in similar latitudes, South Africa is periodically ravaged by severe and prolonged droughts. The greater part of the country was drought stricken from 1960 to 1966 and again from 1980 to 1984, while the rainless years of the early 1930s are still well remembered. Droughts often end in severe floods; the eastern seaboard has been the scene of some of the worst floods. In August 1970 large areas of East London were devastated when more than 450 mm (18 in) of rain fell over a period of 24 hours.

Temperatures show three main features: First, they tend to be lower than in other countries in similar latitudes, reflecting the influence of the plateau. Second, despite a latitudinal span of 13 degrees, mean annual temperatures are remarkably uniform throughout the country. The third feature is the contrast between the eastern and western coast temperatures, with the mean annual figures for Durban and Port Nolloth differing by a full 7°C (12.6°F).

Wind directions over the interior in winter clearly reflect the dominating influence of the continental anticyclone. In the eastern Transvaal region, directions are predominantly easterly, in the central Transvaal northeasterly, in the central interior northerly, and in the western and southern interior northwesterly or westerly. Along the coast, the prevailing winds always blow parallel to the coastline. Gale-force winds are frequent on all coastlines. Velocities in the interior are generally lower. Dust devils are common in the interior on hot summer days. Tornadoes are rare, however, averaging perhaps five a year.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature

Cape Town: 62.6°F

Pretoria: 63.5°F

Transvaal Lowveld: 73.9°F

Sutherland in the Roggeveld Mountains: 54.3°F

Average Rainfall: 18.6 in

Cape Town: 20 in

Durban: 39.7 in

Pretoria: 30.9 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

South Africa has some of the world's most spectacular plants and animals. Some areas are covered in wildflowers; the Cape Floral Kingdom is particularly rich in flowers. The northern part of the country is covered in savanna grasses, along with thorn trees and acacias. Some forest remains in the northeast and along the southern coast.

Animals include elephants, black and white rhinoceroses, giraffes, cheetahs, hippopotamuses, crocodiles, ostriches, bustards, flamingos, weaver birds, and tiny creatures such as pygmy shrews. Many of these animals live in national parks, where they are protected.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 44,344,136

World Rank: 26th

Density per sq km: 37.7

% of annual growth (1999-2003): 1.8

Male %: 48.5

Female %: 51.5

Urban %: 59.2

Age Distribution %:	0–14:	30.3
	15–64:	64.5
	65 and over:	5.2
Population 2025:	39,906,000	
Birth Rate per 1,000:	18.48	
Death Rate per 1,000:	21.32	
Rate of Natural Increase %:	–0.3	
Total Fertility Rate:	2.24	
Expectation of Life (years):	Males 43.47	Females 43.06
Marriage Rate per 1,000:	3.3	
Divorce Rate per 1,000:	0.8	
Average Size of Households:	4.6	
Induced Abortions:	28,978	

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

South Africa is home to several ethnic groups. Blacks make up 75.2 percent of the population, whites 13.6 percent, mulattoes (often still referred to as “coloured”) 8.6 percent, and Indians 2.6 percent. The major groups are not homogeneous. Blacks include Ndebele, Swazi, Xhosa, Zulu, Sotho, Tsonga, and Venda. Those of mixed race include Cape Coloureds, Griquas, and Cape Malays. Among whites, Afrikaners and Germans predominate.

LANGUAGES

There are eleven official languages in South Africa: Afrikaans, English, Ndebele, Northern Sotho, Southern Sotho, Swazi, Tsonga, Tswana, Venda, Xhosa, and Zulu. In 2000 there were about 2.5 million more Afrikaans speakers than English speakers and, further, most mulattoes speak Afrikaans as their first language. The State Language Services, a division of the Department of National Education, is responsible for implementing multilingualism. In addition, terminology work is performed by the Terminology Bureau.

Among the nine officially recognized Bantu languages, Zulu, Xhosa, Swazi, and Ndebele represent the Nguni group, while the others represent the groups so named. In addition to these, there are numbers of smaller language clusters or dialects. Some 12 such interrelated language clusters form the Nguni group, 11 the Sotho group, and four the Tsonga group. Despite phonetic and grammatical differences within these language groups, they are mutually intelligible, and speakers converse with one another without serious difficulty. However, this is not true with regard to the various speakers of the main language groups.

RELIGIONS

The religious affiliations of South Africans are associated with ethnic backgrounds, but the links are neither

simple nor uniform. While the intensity of participation varies a good deal, relatively few claim no religious affiliation at all. There are religious dimensions to all social and political issues and moral implications to every challenge to the established order.

Christianity has made steady progress since the 19th century. Nearly 73 percent of the population are professing Christians, including 93 percent of whites, 90 percent of mulattoes, 70 percent of blacks, and 8 percent of Asians. Almost all Afrikaners belong to one of the Dutch Reformed churches or the Apostolic Faith Mission. Most English-speaking Europeans are members of the Anglican, Methodist, Presbyterian, or Catholic churches, living mainly on the eastern coast or in Natal. Although 90 percent of mulattoes speak Afrikaans, only 31 percent are Dutch Reformed, while 41 percent belong to English-speaking churches. Among blacks, independent churches claim the allegiance of 18 percent, while 52 percent remain attached to historic churches. Lutherans claim the highest percentage of black membership, with 85 percent; Methodists claim black membership of 79 percent; Catholics, 72 percent; Anglicans, 57 percent; Congregationalists, 55 percent; and Dutch Reformed, 30 percent.

Black indigenous religious systems have persisted, although in vastly changed environments, as they do not have the social structures and linkages that formerly supported them. Only parts of these religions, different in emphasis, are significant today. For example, rituals directed toward spirits involved lineages, and others required the performance of chiefs in their priestly roles; in modern black societies, lineages are less cohesive, and chiefs no longer have the same status, such that rituals have fallen into disuse or are masked in Christian rites. Traditionally, a particular indigenous religious system was specific to each section of officially recognized ethnolinguistic categories. All were concerned primarily with the invocation and appeasement of spirits, whether benevolent or malevolent. The core of such practices were connected with both the spirits of ancestors and the structure of the social order. The wrath of ancestors, who were characterized as capricious, jealous, and easily offended, was held responsible for all kinds of afflictions. Diviners were often called upon to determine the nature of complaints and specify remedies. There was a good deal of variation from one group to another as to the depth of genealogy specifically invoked. There are two classes of rituals: kinship rituals, in which the congregation is a family group, and communal rituals, performed to guarantee the welfare of a chiefdom or tribe as a whole. Witchcraft and sorcery are also widely prevalent and represent some of the oldest beliefs of all African religions. The universality of these two practices accounts for the power of a class of parapriests, including herbalists, sorcerers, witches, and diviners.

Religious Affiliations

Christian	30,154,000
Muslim	887,000
Hindu	665,000
Indigenous Beliefs/Animist	12,638,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In the late Stone Age, about 10,000 years ago, the San and the Khoikhoi (also known as Bushmen and Hotentot, respectively) roamed South Africa as hunters and gatherers. The ancestors of the Bantu speakers, moving southward from the Congo region, entered the area around the Zambezi River at the beginning of the Common Era and around 400 c.e. established the Zimbabwe state. Before 500 they crossed the Limpopo, settling in the eastern portion of what became Transvaal Province. Around 1300 the ancestors of the Nguni, especially the Swazi, Xhosa, and Zulu, crossed the Limpopo and drove out the earlier inhabitants, such as the Khoi, south and west while absorbing others. In time, the Nguni absorbed all of modern South Africa south of the Limpopo to the Great Kei River and between the Drakensberg Mountains and the Indian Ocean. The forward elements of the Nguni reached the Great Fish River by 1500. When the Portuguese arrived in 1488 they found dense Nguni settlements, but the arrival of the Westerners halted any further Nguni advance.

In the early months of 1488, four years before the discovery of America, the Portuguese explorer Bartolomeu Dias, in command of two caravels, discovered what is now the Cape of Good Hope and rounded the southernmost tip of the African continent, an event that may be said to mark the beginning of the Republic of South Africa. As the Dutch, English, and French set up chartered companies of shareholders to exploit the East Indies trade, the bay under Table Mountain, at the cape, acquired a new importance. Only in 1652, however, was the first European settlement founded, by Jan van Riebeeck on behalf of the Dutch East India Company. After 1671 the small Dutch community, confined until then to the cape peninsula, began a process of expansion that was not arrested until well into the 19th century, when the limits of present-day South Africa were reached. The number of colonists increased after 1688, when French Huguenots followed German and Dutch settlers. By 1713 most of the indigenous Khoi inhabitants had been wiped out by an epidemic of smallpox, while the San, the other black tribe, was decimated in frontier warfare. As the population increased, more and more land was needed. The hardier pioneers piled their belongings into wagons and trekked to new sites with greener pastures. Thus they came to be called Trekboers, or "wandering farmers," a term that came to be accepted particularly in its shortened form of Boer as a title of honor by all frontiersmen. Also at this

time, colonists came to think of themselves as Afrikaners rather than Dutch. All assisted immigration from Europe was stopped in 1707, and from then on the white population increased only very slowly. Meanwhile, the Boers advanced, reaching the vanguard of the Bantu peoples at the Fish River by 1770. Over the course of the next century there were nine wars between the two groups, until by the mid-1850s the whites had obtained a bridgehead across the Orange River.

In 1795 the government of the prince of Orange in the Netherlands was replaced by a French-imposed republic that sided with France in the war against Britain. With the assent of the deposed prince, British forces occupied the Dutch cape possessions, ending 143 years of rule by the Dutch East India Company. The advent of the British affected South African history in various ways, first because of the anglicization policy of the new rulers, second through the altered composition of the white population, and third through increasing social and political conflicts between the Boers and the British.

Meanwhile, events on the eastern frontier led to a dramatic northward spread by the Boers to the interior. After 1835 the whites crossed the Orange River and the Highveld Plateau south and north of the Vaal River northward to the Limpopo River, westward to the Kalahari semidesert, and eastward to Natal, where in 1824 a small group of pioneer English traders had settled at the port now called Durban. This migration, called the Great Trek, was started in 1834 by Boer frontier farmers, the Voortrekkers, to put distance between themselves and the British government. A crucial point in the deterioration of relations between the British and the Boers was the abolition of slavery and the establishment of equality between blacks and whites before the law. The Coloured Labour Ordinance of 1820 ended legal guarantees for the continued availability of cheap labor, thus hurting the economic position of whites. The emancipation of all slaves in the British Empire in 1833 came as a great blow to the Boers; the abolition of slavery and the Master and Servant Ordinance of 1841 brought financial ruin to a number of cape farmers. Further, Boer hopes of taking advantage of new lands were dashed when the British government decided to restore land annexed between the Great Fish and Great Kei rivers back to the Xhosa. The Boers were also smarting under the cultural and legal impact of British rule. English had become the medium of instruction in schools and the language of the courts, while the common-law system and its procedures were superimposed on the earlier Roman-Dutch legal system.

The Boer flight from the cape was as much an attempt to escape from all governmental authority as from British rule in particular. Trekking in groups that had been depopulated by wars with the black nations, the Voortrekkers established their first major settlement at Winburg in an area ceded to them by an ally, the chief of a small Sotho tribe. The first Boer republic was that of Natal. It

lasted only four years before it was annexed by the British in 1843. Another party of Trekboers crossed the Vaal River and then descended into the Lowveld, where they established a new republic, Transvaal, with its capital at Lydenburg.

The British authorities, who continued to regard the Voortrekkers as British subjects, had a tenuous alliance with the Griquas and the Sotho and Pondo tribes but finally proclaimed the Orange River Sovereignty in 1848, bringing the entire region up to the Vaal River under their control. The Boers and the Griquas were to have limited self-government, with elected legislative councils under British resident commissioners.

From the 1850s the British policy changed to one of jettisoning rather than acquiring new territories. Recognizing the need to come to terms with the Boers, they signed the Sand River Convention in 1852, allowing for the independence of the Boer state across the Vaal. Although many Boers living in the Orange River Sovereignty were prepared to retain links with the Cape Colony, the British remained unwilling to shoulder the financial burden of defending the territory. In a convention signed in Bloemfontein in 1854, the British literally thrust independence upon the land between the Orange and the Vaal, which then became the independent Boer republic of the Orange Free State (OFS). The events set in motion by the Great Trek had, in the space of 20 years, balkanized South Africa into two Boer republics, one north and one south of the Vaal River, and two British colonies, Cape and Natal.

The spectacular discoveries of diamonds in Griqualand West between 1867 and 1871 led to another shift in British policy. In an effort to end disputes between the Boers and Griqua and Tswana chiefs over the mineral-rich territory, Britain annexed Griqualand in 1871 and Transvaal in 1877. The Boers thereupon took up arms and in the ensuing First War of Independence defeated the British at the battle of Majuba Hill.

The next two decades of South African history were dominated by two men: Paul Kruger, who became president of Transvaal in 1883, and Cecil Rhodes, who became prime minister of Cape Colony in 1890. Rhodes was an empire builder bitterly opposed to Kruger, whose independent Transvaal he saw as the main obstacle to a united South Africa under British rule. Rhodes used British subjects—the so-called Uitlanders—in the abortive Jameson raid of 1895–96 to overthrow the Kruger government. Even after Rhodes's exit in 1895, tensions continued to mount, principally over the status and political rights of British subjects in Witwatersrand, and erupted into the Anglo-Boer War (or Second War of Independence), which broke out on October 11, 1899. Britain's war on "Krugerism" lasted 32 months and ended with Boer defeat and the signing of the Treaty of Vereeniging on May 31, 1902. The cost of the war was high. As a result of the British scorched-earth policy, every farmstead in the

two Boer republics lay in ruins; 26,000 Boer women and children perished in concentration camps; and the Boers lost 6,000 fighting men, the British 7,792.

The peace treaty required the surrender of all Boer forces in return for the promise of internal self-government and financial compensation to the Boers for their losses. Britain also agreed not to extend the franchise to blacks.

Upon the fall of the Conservative government in Westminster in 1905, the new cabinet of the Liberal Party, which had all along opposed the war, set out to gain the friendship of the Boers. Responsible government was granted to both Transvaal and the OFS, with purely white electorates; the new governments came into being in 1907. Two former generals of the Boer army, Louis Botha and Jan Smuts, were the principal political leaders of the Transvaal. The pro-Afrikaner party also won the 1908 elections in Cape Colony. These three colonies supported the call for the Union of South Africa, seeking Afrikaner strength through unity; Boer leaders ironically came out in favor of a strong unitary state in the hope of assuring their dominance. A national constitutional convention met in 1908 and 1909, and a new constitution was approved by it and enacted by the British Parliament in September 1909. The new constitution provided for a strong parliamentary government, with only two clauses of the document protected from alteration by a simple majority vote of the new legislature: The first guaranteed legal equality between the English and Afrikaans languages, while the second offered weak protection of the franchise of the "coloureds" (mulattoes) and relatively few blacks in the Cape but did not extend the electoral rolls to cover any nonwhite voters in other provinces.

The new Union of South Africa came into being on May 31, 1910, as a dominion of the British Empire, with the four provinces of Cape, Natal, Orange Free State, and Transvaal. The first elections under the new constitution were held in 1911. The Afrikaner parties of the four provinces had merged to form the South African Party (SAP), under Botha and Smuts, which won the elections. Another Boer general, J. B. M. Hertzog, was initially included in the cabinet but broke away from it in 1912 to form the National Party. The principal British-oriented opposition parties were the Unionist and Labour parties.

Botha was prime minister from 1911 to 1919, and his administration was marked by the rise of political consciousness among blacks, who were almost completely excluded from the political process. The first successful acts of civil disobedience and passive resistance carried out by Mohandas Gandhi, as leader of the indigenous community in India, served as an example for blacks in South Africa. The period was also marked by growing Afrikaner support for hard-core nationalists under Hertzog. In 1912 the South African National Congress was founded, led by J. L. Dube, a minister, and K. I. Seme.

During World War I both Botha and Smuts led South Africa on the British side and seized the neighboring German colony of South-West Africa. Most Afrikaners found this action distasteful; Boer commandos, with a strength of some 12,000 men, rebelled when Botha ordered them to invade the German colony. The rebellion petered out by 1915, and most of its leaders, including Gen. Christian de Wet, were captured. South Africa became a charter member of the League of Nations in 1919 and was assigned South-West Africa to administer as a mandated territory. Botha died in 1919 and was replaced by Smuts as prime minister. A strike by white mine workers against the recruitment of blacks led to the defeat of the South African Party at the polls in 1924. Hertzog became prime minister, leading a Nationalist and Labour coalition. The primary goals of the new government were to create a state-owned steel industry as a first step toward economic independence from Britain, improve the position of white workers, and establish the bases for ultimate political independence by adopting a national flag and a national anthem. Such developments were inspired by the activities of a semisecret Afrikaner organization, the Broederbond. In 1931 the British Parliament passed the Statute of Westminster, relaxing controls over the administration of the Union of South Africa.

The Labour Party left the government coalition in 1928, and in the ensuing elections the Nationalists won again. For the first time racial issues were introduced in such a way as to polarize the nation and capitalize on the traditional fears of white voters. The Nationalist platform called for permanent *basskap* (white dominance). After the elections, the Union parliament diluted the mulatto vote by extending the white franchise to women and removing all property qualifications for white voters.

The idea of a united national government had been put forward by Judge Thielman Roos, and, fearing a loss at the polls in 1934, Hertzog seized upon the idea and invited Smuts into a coalition government as deputy prime minister. There were misgivings on both sides over what was known as the fusion, later institutionalized as the United South African National Party (UP), founded in 1934. The SAP ceased to exist, although a small number of Smuts's supporters left to form the Dominion Party. The original National Party was kept alive by Daniel F. Malan. In the amicable general election of 1934 the main parties did not oppose one another, and Hertzog emerged with a majority of 138 members and was opposed by only six members. With such a solid majority, the UP was able to initiate a series of legislative measures aimed against blacks. The Representation of Natives Bill removed black voters from the common roll in Cape Province, while the Native Land and Trust Bill authorized an increase in native reserves to 13 percent. Both bills were strongly opposed by blacks. In the 1938 elections the UP won a large majority, although Malan's National Party greatly increased its electoral strength.

Hertzog attempted to keep the union neutral upon the outbreak of World War II, but the majority in parliament supported Smuts and took the country into war with Germany on the side of Britain, a step strongly opposed by the right wing of the UP as well as the National Party. The latter was heavily pro-Nazi and attracted by Hitler's ideology of racial superiority as well as his enmity toward Britain. Other pro-Nazi Afrikaner groups openly worked for a German victory and sabotaged official war efforts. These included the Handhewersbond (literally, "mountaineer's league"), organized on the Brown Shirt model; the New Order; and the Ossewa-Brandwag (ox-wagon guards), among whose members was Johannes B. Vorster, a future prime minister.

Wartime elections in 1943 again returned the UP to power with a large majority, but Malan's National Party was rapidly gaining by playing upon white fears of black encroachment. The National Party offered voters a new policy to ensure continued white dominance, as expounded by Hendrik F. Verwoerd, the editor of the leading Nationalist newspaper, and presented by P. O. Sauer. Called "apartheid," the Sauer report called for the rigid and legalized separation of the races. The program paid off when the National Party catapulted into power after the 1948 elections with an eight-seat majority. The National Party remained in office for four decades, first under Malan and later under other hard-line leaders such as Johannes Strijdom, Hendrik F. Verwoerd, Johannes Vorster, and Pieter Botha.

The next two decades were marked by the largest and harshest corpus of racial laws passed by any legislature in modern times. In the very first year of the Nationalist government, interracial marriages were declared illegal, and sexual relations between whites and nonwhites were made punishable by up to seven years in prison. Blacks were deprived of all protection under unemployment insurance laws, and the Natives Representative Council was abolished. The Population Registration Act of 1950 provided for the classification by race of the entire South African population. These designations, based on family history, appearance, and social acceptance, determined an individual's status in all areas of public life. The Group Areas Act of 1950 demarcated residential and business areas in all cities on the basis of race. Under the Suppression of Communism Act of 1950, black political organizations were banned as "subversive." The 1951 Bantu Authorities Act reinstated the hierarchy of tribal organizations in order to tribalize black political institutions. In 1951 colored voters were removed from the common roll, and all public amenities were racially segregated. The 1953 Bantu Education Act removed black education from the Department of Education and placed it under the Department of Native Affairs. Black children were henceforth to receive an education markedly different from and inferior to that given to white

children. The 1956 Industrial Conciliation Act reserved entire professions to whites.

Shortly after the death of Prime Minister Strijdom in office in 1958, Verwoerd, the foremost exponent of apartheid, became prime minister. One of his first acts was to lead his country out of dominion status and establish the Republic of South Africa. South Africa withdrew from the Commonwealth in 1961 and became more isolated on the international front. The controlling white population became increasingly concerned about their safety and survival as more and more European powers pulled out of Africa in the 1960s and 1970s; South Africa often engaged in military activity that it saw as preventative in countries like Lesotho, Angola, and Namibia.

Growing violence within South Africa's townships in the 1980s, international isolation, and economic sanctions brought an end to the presidency of Pieter Botha and saw the installation of Frederik Willem de Klerk, a reformist, as president in 1989. De Klerk followed a path of reform that included the lifting of almost all apartheid regulations and the release of political prisoners. Among those released was African National Congress (ANC) leader Nelson Mandela, who was elected president in 1994 in the country's first openly multiracial elections. Later that year South Africa rejoined the Commonwealth.

The country had its share of political intrigue and adjustment to the new social order but, generally speaking, made the transition well. In 1999, five years after the country's first election, the second presidential elections were held, and Thabo Mbeki became president. Mbeki, also of the ANC, replaced the retiring Mandela. Mbeki was reelected in 2004.

AIDS came to the political forefront around 2000. Mbeki has come under criticism for his reluctance to admit an established link between HIV and AIDS, but his government has gradually implemented measures to provide antiretroviral drugs to South Africans who need them. Other intentions of the Mbeki administration include fighting poverty, reducing crime, and stimulating the economy.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

President

1961–67	Charles Robberts Swart
1967–68	Jozua François Naudé (acting)
1968–75	Jacobus Johannes Fouché
1975–78	Nicolaas Johannes Diederichs
1978	Marais Viljoen (acting)
1978–79	Balthazar Johannes Vorster
1979–84	Marais Viljoen
1984–89	Pieter Willem Botha
1989–94	Frederik Willem de Klerk
1994–99	Nelson Mandela
1999–	Thabo Mbeki

CONSTITUTION

The constitution of the Republic of South Africa was approved by the Constitutional Court (CC) on December 4, 1996, signed by President Mandela on December 10, 1996, and took effect on February 4, 1997. Certain provisions regarding the national executive and parliament from the 1993 constitution remained in place until April 30, 1999. The constitution was drawn up by the Constitutional Assembly and reaffirms South Africa as a constitutional and republican state.

Government is structured at the national, provincial, and local levels. The powers of the lawmakers (legislative authorities), governments (executive authorities), and courts (judicial authorities) are separate from one another. The president is the head of state and head of government. He or she is elected by the National Assembly from among its members and leads the country in the interest of national unity and in accordance with the constitution and the law. The cabinet consists of the president as head of the cabinet, a deputy president, and ministers. The president appoints the deputy president and ministers, assigns their powers and functions, and may dismiss them. The president may select any number of ministers from among the members of the National Assembly and may select no more than two ministers from outside the Assembly.

PARLIAMENT

The legislative structure of South Africa consists of two separate bodies. The National Assembly contains 400 members directly elected through universal suffrage by all citizens age 18 and over. Half of the members are selected from provincial lists, the other half from national lists. Members of the Assembly serve five-year terms. The second body is the National Council of Provinces, which is composed of 90 indirectly elected representatives from the country's 10 geopolitical subdivisions. The Council has special powers to protect regional interests, such as preserving the languages and traditions of ethnic minorities.

The legislature meets for a single six-month session that begins in late January. Additional ad hoc sessions may be called if circumstances dictate the need. Most legislation is introduced into the National Assembly by the responsible minister, deputy minister, or a member of the relevant portfolio committee. Only the minister of finance may introduce money bills into the assembly. After the Assembly has acted, bills then proceed to the National Council of Provinces, which may alter bills. Once five delegations from among the nine provinces approve measures, they are adopted. A mediation committee is used to resolve any conflicts between the Assembly and Council on bills.

POLITICAL PARTIES

South Africa has numerous active political parties. The African National Congress (ANC) won a majority of the seats in parliament in the first free elections in 1994 and has been the ruling party since then. The ANC had been the traditional party of opposition and was allied with the South African Communist Party and the Congress of South African Trade Unions. The Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) is a moderate party that espouses self-help and self-reliance and a more decentralized approach to South Africa's problems. The New National Party (NNP) is a right-of-center party that seeks a smaller, more effective government than that proposed by the ANC. In November 2001 the ruling ANC and the New National Party announced a merger. The Democratic Alliance (DA) was formed from the merger of the Democratic Party and the Freedom Alliance. Other parties include the African Christian Democratic Party, the Pan-Africanist Congress, and the United Democratic Movement.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The country is now divided into nine provinces: Eastern Cape, Free State, Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, Mpumalanga, North West, Northern Cape, Limpopo, and Western Cape. These provinces are represented at the federal level in the National Council of Provinces. Additionally, the provinces have their own constitutions to address local matters. There are more than 680 metropolitan, town, and rural councils.

LEGAL SYSTEM

South African law is derived from English common law and Roman-Dutch law. Judicial authority in South Africa is vested in the courts, which are independent and subject only to the constitution and the law. Most cases go before one of the many magistrates courts and high courts. The Constitutional Court is the highest court interpreting constitutional issues. The Supreme Court of Appeal is the highest court for matters that do not involve the constitution. The Department of Justice, under the auspices of the national government, is responsible for the administration of the courts.

HUMAN RIGHTS

While the creation of the government that ended apartheid was a large step in rectifying South Africa's most blatant human rights violations, the country has not had a smooth transition to a more open and free society. There are still many documented cases of human rights activists,

lawyers, and members of official investigation bodies being subjected to malicious prosecutions, death threats, or physical attacks as a result of their work.

Police use excessive force, and some people have died in police custody or in prison. The court system is overburdened, and accused people must wait long periods of time for trials. Discrimination against women and minorities, violence against women and children, child labor, and human trafficking are serious problems. The country still suffers from vigilante violence and mob justice.

FOREIGN POLICY

The dismantling of apartheid in 1991 yielded significant diplomatic gains for Pretoria, both within Africa and globally. Most Western nations terminated their economic sanctions and restored normal trade relations with South Africa, and President Mandela made a number of symbolic visits to world capitals to signify South Africa's status as a free society and nation. In 1994 South Africa reentered the international community from which it had been excluded as a pariah during the apartheid era. It rejoined the Commonwealth after a break of 33 years and later became the 53rd member of the Organization of African Unity, which was succeeded by the African Union. At the same time, the United Nations lifted its long-standing suspension of South Africa's participation in the General Assembly.

Having rejoined the international community, South Africa has become a leader in African affairs. Mandela exercised South Africa's influence in mediation efforts in such countries as Lesotho, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Sierra Leone, and the nation remains an important force for good in the African continent. Mandela strengthened South Africa's relations with not only Western nations but also Communist countries and anti-Western regimes such as Libya, Iraq, and North Korea.

The United States and South Africa once again enjoy close relations. The U.S. Agency for International Development and the Peace Corps provide assistance to the country. The two nations are working together to fight terrorism and HIV/AIDS.

DEFENSE

The South African National Defense Force handles both external and domestic security; it comprises an army, a navy, an air force, and medical services. The South African Police Service has primary responsibility for internal security. The two units share responsibility for border control. The Directorate of Special Operations, called the Scorpions, fights organized crime and corruption. People can volunteer for military service at the age of 18. The National Defense Force was deemed completely integrated by 2003.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 55,700
 Military Manpower Availability: 10,354,769
 Military Expenditures \$billion: 3.172
 as % of GDP: 1.5
 as % of central government expenditures: 5.1
 Arms Imports \$million: 13
 Arms Exports \$million: 23

ECONOMY

South Africa has many natural resources, including valuable metals, a good infrastructure, a thriving stock exchange, and excellent financial, legal, energy, transport, and communications sectors. Despite these advantages, the country's growth has not been strong; gross domestic product (GDP) growth was only 1.9 percent in 2003, though this is expected to improve. Unemployment is high, and crime is a major problem. Foreign investors are reluctant to locate their businesses in a nation where over 20 percent of adults are infected with HIV.

South Africa's government has accepted free-market principles, and in some areas the economy rivals that of other developed nations. The mining of gold, platinum, coal, and chromium brings in sizable income. The chemical industry, automobile assembly, iron and steel production, and other industries are also successful. Services regarding transportation and telecommunications are well developed.

Income distribution is still extremely uneven, and many blacks cannot find jobs. Half the population lives below poverty; most of those people are black. Racial cooperation is much better than it was in 1990, but whites still have a greater share of the nation's wealth. The prevalence of HIV is likely to have an extreme effect on the economy; some experts estimate that it could cost the nation 17 percent in GDP growth by 2010.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 491.4
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 11,100
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 2.7
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 0.9
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 3.6
 Industry: 31.2
 Services: 65.2
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 61
 Government Consumption: 19
 Gross Domestic Investment: 16.7
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 41.97
 Imports: 39.42
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 1.1
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 45.9

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
131.3	138.3	144.9	157.8	167.3

Finance

National Currency: Rand (ZAR)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = ZAR 6.4597
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 375
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 8.0
 Total External Debt \$billion: 27.01
 Debt Service Ratio %: 4.3
 Balance of Payments \$billion: –2.48
 International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 6.16
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 4.5

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 625
 per capita \$: 13.60
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 820

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: 1 April–31 March
 Revenues \$billion: 47.43
 Expenditures \$billion: 52.54
 Budget Deficit \$billion: 5.11
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: 25.1

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 3.6
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 2.0
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 0.49
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 9.5
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 65.4
 Total Farmland % of land area: 12.2
 Livestock: Cattle million: 13.6
 Chickens million: 145
 Pigs million: 1.62
 Sheep million: 29.1
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 30.6
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 770

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 27.5
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 5.5

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 173
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 133
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 2.6
 Net Energy Imports % of use: –29.1
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 40.5
 Production kW-hr billion: 202.6
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 189.4

(continues)

Energy *(continued)*

Coal Reserves tons billion: 54.6
 Production tons million: 245
 Consumption tons million: 172
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet billion: 1
 Production cubic feet trillion: 1.3
 Consumption cubic feet trillion: 1.3
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels million: 15.7
 Production barrels 000 per day: 195
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 469
 Pipelines Length km: 847

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 39.42
 Exports \$billion: 41.97
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 2.5
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 2.6
 Balance of Trade \$billion: -2.48

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Germany %	16.6	7.9
United Kingdom %	8.5	12.2
United States %	8.3	12.0
Japan %	6.0	8.9
China %	5.9	4.6
Saudi Arabia %	5.2	—
France %	5.0	—
Italy %	—	4.3
India %	—	4.2

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 275,971
 Paved %: 20.9
 Automobiles: 3,966,300
 Trucks and Buses: 2,248,100
 Railroad: Track Length km: 22,298
 Passenger-km billion: 3.9
 Freight-km billion: 106.8
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 2
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 37
 Airports: 728
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 22.9
 Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 6.4
 Number of Tourists from million: 3.8
 Tourist Receipts \$billion: 3.7
 Tourist Expenditures \$billion: 2.3

Communications

Telephones million: 4.8
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.15
 Cellular Telephones million: 16.9
 Personal Computers million: 3.3
 Internet Hosts per million people: 6,509
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 70

ENVIRONMENT

South Africa faces a number of environmental challenges, perhaps the largest of which is the lack of important arterial rivers or lakes. The lack of water resources means that extensive water conservation and control measures are needed to meet growing water usage, which threatens to outpace supply. In addition to shortages of water, the water itself has increasing levels of pollutants from agricultural runoff and urban discharge. Other problems include increasing air pollution in urban areas, resulting in acid rain. The country is also facing soil erosion and desertification because of a number of factors, including poor agricultural practices, the lack of water, and the loss of trees and scrubs.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 7.3
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: -8
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 6
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 181,284
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 7.44

LIVING CONDITIONS

Living conditions vary widely by ethnic group and level of income. Whites are generally the richest South Africans and have high standards of living, with modern houses, good education, servants, and amenities. Blacks can be very poor indeed, living in shantytowns that lack running water and electricity. Mulattoes and Asians are usually better off than blacks but not as wealthy as whites.

South Africa's public transportation system is somewhat slow and expensive. Most of the nation's transportation involves the use of private automobiles. Many blacks use the complicated public taxi system to get to and from their jobs.

HEALTH

South Africa has a public health-care system administered at the provincial level. Since 1994 all ethnic groups have received the same level of care. The government provides free health care for children under six and pregnant

women, free school lunches for poor children, and community health centers for use by all. Most wealthy people have private health insurance. Most medical facilities are in the cities or near game parks, beaches, and other areas that attract visitors, and rural areas are underserved. Many rural blacks still use traditional medicine.

AIDS is a major problem. Over one-fifth of adults were infected with HIV in 2005. In some areas over 35 percent of women of childbearing age are infected; they can pass the virus on to their babies, and they often die before their children are grown. It is possible that by 2010, over one million South Africans will be sick with AIDS, and some five to seven million people will have already died of the disease. The government has begun efforts to stem the tide of AIDS infections by providing antiretroviral drugs to pregnant women and to patients at public hospitals.

Health

Number of Physicians: 30,740
 Number of Dentists: 4,648
 Number of Nurses: 172,338
 Number of Pharmacists: 10,742
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 69
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 61.81
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 230
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 8.7
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 206
 HIV Infected % of adults: 21.5
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 94
 Measles: 83
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 67
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 87

FOOD AND NUTRITION

The staple of black South African cuisine is a maize-meal porridge called *pap*, which resembles couscous. It is eaten for breakfast with milk and sugar and for other meals with vegetable or meat stews. White South Africans tend to eat common British foods, including meat or sausage, fried fish, boiled vegetables, and fried potatoes. Malaysian spices sometimes enhance dishes. People drink beer and brandy as well as locally made wines, which are becoming known throughout the world. Blacks drink a sorghum beer called *umqombothi*.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 187.2
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 75.1

STATUS OF WOMEN

Women's access to human rights in South Africa is complicated by high levels of violence, poverty, and racism and general societal inequality between men and women. Although South Africa has one of the most progressive constitutions in the world, women still face the challenge of translating these legal rights into reality. There are epidemic proportions of violence against women; rape is extremely common, and a number of women are killed every year by their husbands or partners.

Poverty affects rural and black women in particular. Women-headed rural households are the poorest in South Africa, experiencing a 30 percent higher poverty rate than male-headed households. Overall, women have reduced abilities to take part in decisions that affect their daily lives, including national processes such as elections, especially where traditional practices limit women to the roles of wife and mother. Women suffer discrimination in the workplace and in economic transactions. On the positive side, women occupy a full third of parliamentary seats.

Female genital mutilation has decreased in recent years and now only occurs in a few isolated areas.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 33
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.01
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: —

WORK

Unemployment was 26 percent in 2004. The lack of jobs is particularly problematic for young black males, many of whom are uneducated and lack skills; even the ones who finish school have difficulty finding decent employment. Blacks are more likely to work difficult jobs for low pay, such as mining. Many black people must commute to nearby cities to work manufacturing jobs, spending several hours in transit. Black families often supplement their income by selling sundries from their homes. Women make up less than 40 percent of the workforce but perform the bulk of agricultural work.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 16,630,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 38.4
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 30
 Industry: 25
 Services: 45
 Unemployment %: 26.2

EDUCATION

The South African Schools Act passed in 1996 provides for compulsory education for children between the ages of seven and 15 years of age and also for public and independent schools. Schools were segregated under apartheid, but such is no longer the case, and the educational system is coming to grips with racial integration. Some white families still refuse to allow their children to attend school with blacks, sending their children to private school instead. De facto segregation occurs simply because racial groups remain concentrated in particular areas.

Pupils enroll for three years of junior primary education at the beginning of the year in which they turn seven. Basic learning activities during this phase involve learning to read, write, and calculate, developing language proficiency, and studying one foreign language. During the three-year senior primary phase, learning activities focus on reading and oral proficiency in both the mother tongue and second language, mathematics, history, geography, general science, and a skill such as needlework, woodwork, or art.

Learners enter further education and training after the completion of the compulsory phase of education at grade nine. This education and training may consist of the equivalents of grades 10 to 12 in the school system or the national-certificate levels one to three in technical colleges. At the end of grade 12 of the senior secondary phase, pupils write a public examination on a minimum of six subjects to obtain a senior certificate. The examination in each subject is conducted at three levels—higher, standard, and lower grade. The country has an extensive system of universities and vocational schools that are largely built upon British and European models.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 86.4
 Male %: 87.0
 Female %: 85.7
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 13.1
 First Level: Primary schools: 22,260
 Teachers: 211,014
 Students: 7,465,728
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 35.4
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 89.0
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: —
 Teachers: 146,485
 Students: 4,108,709
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 29.4
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 65.5
 Third Level: Institutions: —
 Teachers: 40,800
 Students: 675,160
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 15.1
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 5.3

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

South Africa has the most advanced telecommunications system in Africa, with fiber-optic cable, local wireless local loops, and radio-telephone services. In 2002 over three million people were using the Internet. The South African Society for Science and Technology Advancement works to increase the understanding of science, engineering, and technology through educational programs, contests, and research projects in biotechnology, genetic engineering, and other subjects.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 192
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 0.67
 High-Tech Exports \$million: 908
 Patent Applications by Residents: 184

MEDIA

South Africa has more publications and broadcasters than any other African country. The constitution guarantees the freedom of the press, and journalists work without restrictions. Newspapers criticize the government regularly and with impunity.

The South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) is the state radio and television broadcaster. It operates three television stations, two pay-television channels, and over 30 radio stations in 11 languages. There are several other television stations. Since radio was deregulated in 1996, there have been explosions of new radio stations throughout the country.

Among the country's many print publications, the *Star* is Johannesburg's oldest newspaper, while *Beeld* is the oldest Afrikaans daily.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 16
 Total Circulation million: 1.12
 Circulation per 1,000: 25
 Books Published: 5,418
 Periodicals: 261
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets million: 5.5
 per 1,000: 138

CULTURE

South Africa has been inhabited for millennia. Cave paintings done by San bushmen date back 26,000 years. More modern painting includes wall murals and landscapes influenced by Dutch traditions.

Music is an extremely important art form. South African singers perform a type of music called *isicathamiya*, which originated in the mines, where workers would entertain themselves after work by singing and dancing in a subtle way, so as not to disturb security guards. Miners brought the singing style home with them and eventually began competing with one another. Ladysmith Black Mambazo is one of the most famous and successful of these singing groups.

During apartheid, blacks were forbidden to practice traditional art forms and in some cases were jailed for producing or owning paintings. The white government destroyed some areas that were havens for artists, such as Cape Town's District Six and Johannesburg's Sophiatown.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
Volumes: —
Registered borrowers: —
Museums Number: —
Annual Attendance: —
Cinema Gross Receipts: —
Number of Cinemas: —
Seating Capacity: —
Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

South Africa has a variety of folkloric traditions among its many ethnic groups. Some originated with bushmen and were adapted by Hottentots or Zulus; some come from the Dutch. Bushmen tell stories that depict themselves as members of the earliest race of humans, who lived in the area before other tribes arrived. Many of the black tribes believe in a world of spirits, sometimes led by a supreme spirit, that is full of influence by dead ancestors. Blacks still make ritual offerings to the spirit world to persuade the spirits to treat them kindly and bring them good fortune.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

South Africa's cities are modern and offer a variety of entertainment options, including restaurants, bars, discos, museums, and shopping. South Africans love to go to movies. They also like to go out to listen to music and dance.

The climate and landscape make outdoor recreation appealing. People go to the beach to swim, surf, windsurf, and snorkel. Scuba diving is very good off the coast. The national parks are excellent places to hike and view wild animals.

ETIQUETTE

Tipping 10 to 15 percent is expected in most situations. South African naming conventions are complicated and vary according to ethnic group. It is usually not necessary to use titles such as "Doctor" when addressing people, and it is considered rude to address a woman as "Miss." Firm handshakes are an important part of greetings. Blacks use the "African handshake," in which they slip their free hand over the other person's thumb, but whites do not use this practice. Eye contact is important when speaking to someone. Pointing or putting one's hands in one's pockets is considered rude. Men generally go ahead of women when walking through a doorway.

FAMILY LIFE

Family life varies according to ethnic group. South Africa's immigrant populations, especially Indians and whites, generally adhere to the customs of their nations of origin. Blacks and mulattoes, especially those in rural areas, adhere to local traditional practices. Extended families and clans are important, and people know and live with large groups of relatives. Marriage is seen as a bond between families, not just between a man and a woman. Polygamy is practiced in some areas.

AIDS is a major problem and is affecting family structures. Young adults are dying at an alarming rate, leaving orphans who are unable to care for themselves and often lack relatives willing to take them in. The country is expected to have some 1.6 million AIDS orphans by 2008.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

In the cities and much of the countryside people wear Western clothing. In some rural areas people still wear the traditional clothing associated with their ethnic groups. Businessmen wear long-sleeved shirts and ties and women wear dresses or skirts. Winters are cool enough to require sweaters. Women avoid wearing low-cut or revealing clothing. Most people wear safari boots; athletic shoes are only acceptable during exercise or sports.

SPORTS

Most South Africans were forbidden to play particular sports during apartheid, but since apartheid's end sports have served to bring different ethnic groups together. Soccer, cricket, and rugby are the most popular sports, along with cycling, surfing, sailing, running, tennis, field hockey, and squash. The Rugby World Cup was held in South Africa in 1995, and the national team won the

event. The government is working to improve sporting facilities and make them available to all citizens.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1961** South Africa becomes a republic and leaves the Commonwealth. Charles R. Swart steps down as governor-general and is named state president.
- 1966** Prime Minister Hendrik F. Verwoerd is assassinated and is succeeded in office by Johannes B. Vorster.
- 1967** Jozua Naudé is elected acting state president.
- 1968** Jacobus Fouché is elected state president. Christiaan Barnard performs world's first heart transplant.
- 1971** Parliament passes Black States Constitution Act.
- 1974** South African army starts recruiting blacks into its service.
- 1975** Nicolaas Diederichs is elected state president.
- 1976** Violent racial riots erupt in the black township of Soweto and are put down after much bloodshed. Transkei becomes the first "independent" homeland.
- 1977** The black activist leader Steve Biko dies in police custody. Bophuthatswana is granted "independence."
- 1978** Vorster is elevated to the state presidency, and Pieter W. Botha replaces him as prime minister. Conservative leader C. P. Mulder is disgraced in "information scandal."
- 1979** Marais Viljoen is elected acting state president. Venda is granted "independence."
- 1981** Ciskei is granted "independence."
- 1984** New constitution adopts state presidential form of government; office of prime minister is abolished; Botha is elected first state president under the new constitution; separate houses of parliament are established for "coloureds" and Indians. Bishop Desmond Tutu is awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.
- 1985** Botha announces limited reform of apartheid, including repeal of the Mixed Marriage Act and the Immorality Act and amendment of the Prohibition of Political Interference Act. Continued racial violence forces the government to ban press and television coverage of anti-apartheid demonstrations. United States announces limited sanctions against South Africa.
- 1987** Military coup topples government in Transkei.
- 1988** Military coup in Bophuthatswana is crushed by Pretoria. Government announces new curbs on 17 leading black opposition groups. South Africa celebrates the 500th anniversary of the landing of Portuguese explorer Bartolomeu Dias at the Cape of Good Hope.
- 1989** State president Botha suffers stroke and is incapacitated; following long power struggle Botha resigns; Frederik de Klerk is elected National Party leader and state president. Amenities Act is repealed, and beaches are opened to all races. Johannesburg, East London, Durban, and other cities desegregate buses and pools.
- 1990** ANC leader Nelson Mandela is released from prison.
- 1992** A referendum by white voters overwhelmingly approves the government's plan to remove apartheid.
- 1993** Mandela and de Klerk are jointly awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.
- 1994** Country holds its first fully inclusive multiracial elections, with Mandela elected president. De Klerk becomes a vice president.
- 1996** The new constitution is fully instituted. De Klerk and the cabinet resign the day after the constitution is approved.
- 1997** Race riots take place in Johannesburg suburbs among mulattoes who think blacks are being favored by the new government.
- 1999** Thabo Mbeki replaces Nelson Mandela as head of the ANC and is elected president of South Africa.
- 2001** Some 39 multinational pharmaceutical companies withdraw from their legal battle to stop South Africa from importing generic AIDS drugs. The High Court rules that pregnant women must be given AIDS drugs to protect their babies. The ruling ANC and the New National Party announce a merger.
- 2002** Dr. Wouter Basson, also known as Dr. Death, is acquitted of murder and conspiracy; the ANC condemns the verdict. The constitutional court orders the government to pay for AIDS drugs at public hospitals. Right-wing extremists detonate bombs in Soweto and Pretoria.
- 2003** The prominent anti-apartheid activist Walter Sisulu dies. The government approves a nationwide AIDS prevention program.
- 2004** The ANC wins 70 percent of votes in April elections. Mbeki wins a second term as president. Public workers strike over pay.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- South African Reserve Bank
<http://www.resbank.co.za>
- Statistics South Africa
<http://www.statssa.gov.za>

SPAIN

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Kingdom of Spain (Reino de España)

ABBREVIATION

ES

CAPITAL

Madrid

HEAD OF STATE

King Juan Carlos I (from 1975)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero (from 2004)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Constitutional monarchy

POPULATION

40,341,462 (2005)

AREA

504,782 sq km (194,896 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Iberian, Celtic

LANGUAGES

Spanish (official), Catalan, Galician, Basque, Aranese

RELIGION

Roman Catholicism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Euro

NATIONAL FLAG

Three horizontal stripes, the middle yellow one equal in height to the two red stripes combined, with the national coat

of arms on the hoist side of the yellow band; the coat of arms includes the royal seal framed by the Pillars of Hercules, which are the two promontories (Gibraltar and Ceuta) on either side of the eastern end of the Strait of Gibraltar.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

An ornately crowned shield with quarters representing the kingdoms united to create the Spanish nation; Castile and León are represented by gold castles on red and red royal lions on white, respectively. Aragon's red and yellow vertical stripes bear Spain's national colors. Navarre features golden chain nets, also against red. The lower tip of the shield bears a symbolic image: against a white background between green leaves is a red pomegranate, whose Spanish name is *granada*, the state it represents. The two silver Pillars of Hercules, both capped with royal crowns, flank the emblem as symbols of Gibraltar and Punta Leona, which guard the Spanish Straits. The red ribbons draping the columns read *Plus ultra* (More beyond).

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"Marcha Real Granadera" (March of the grenadier)

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day), Good Friday, May 1 (Labor Day), August 15 (Assumption), October 12 (National Day), December 8 (Immaculate Conception), December 25 (Christmas), all major Catholic festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

1492

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

December 6, 1978

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Spain is the third-largest country in Europe, occupying the greater part of the Iberian Peninsula, which it shares with Portugal. Including the Balearic Islands and the Canary Islands, Spain covers an area of 504,782 sq km (194,896 sq mi), extending 1,085 km (764 mi) east to west and 950 km (590 mi) north to south. Spain's coastline extends 4,964 km (2,914 mi).

The capital and largest city is Madrid, on the Manzanares River, close to the nation's geographical center. Barcelona is Spain's second-largest city, followed by Valencia, Seville, and Zaragoza.

Peninsular Spain consists of a central plateau known as the Meseta, which is enclosed by high mountains on the northern, southern, eastern, and part of the western sides. Topographically, Spain is divided into four parts. The north and northwest is a temperate region comprised

Spain



of Galicia and the provinces adjacent to the Bay of Biscay. Marginal mountain ranges characterize the coastal region. The Cordillera Cantábrica range extends across the country parallel to the Bay of Biscay and descends

into it. Generally, peaks in this range rise from 2,150 m to 2,450 m (7,000 ft to 8,000 ft), with a major pass between Santander and Valladolid and another between Oviedo and León.

The Pyrenees are a notable part of Spain's region of mountain ranges. They extend for about 420 km (260 mi) between the Bay of Biscay and the Mediterranean. The Spanish-French border connects six of the highest peaks in the Pyrenees. Three of these peaks on the Spanish side exceed 3,350 m (11,000 ft), with Pico de Aneto reaching 3,403 m (11,165 ft). The mountains along the northern two-thirds of Spain's Mediterranean coast are less spectacular. The Andalusian Mountains (Sistema Penibético) extend into the lower Mediterranean region and southern Spain, from Valencia Province to Gibraltar. The most impressive part of the Andalusian range is the Sierra Nevada, and its highest peak, Mulhacén (3,478 m; 11,411 ft), is the highest point on the Iberian Peninsula.

A third region is the vast tableland of the Meseta, which dominates central Spain from the Cordillera Cantábrica in the north to the Sierra Morena in the south and from the Portuguese border in the west to the Sistema Ibérico range in the east. The northern portion of the Meseta includes most of the Río Duero basin and extends over the flatter lands of León and Old Castile. The southern portion of the Meseta covers the Río Tajo and Río Guadiana basins, extending over most of Extremadura, New Castile, northern Murcia, and Andalusia.

Higher land in western Spain marks the region between the basins of three large rivers. This region includes the Cordillera Carpetvetónica, Toledo Mountains, and Sierra Morena in northern Andalusia; it also comprises the Río Ebro valley and the basin of the Guadalquivir in the southwestern Andalusian plain. The lower Guadalquivir valley is marshy and frequently saline, although some of Spain's best agricultural areas are found around Seville. The Ebro basin in the northeast, which resembles the Meseta, is also part of this region.

Spain has some 1,800 rivers and streams, although many of the riverbeds are dry most of the year. The high mountain ranges divert rain-bearing weather systems from the interior of the peninsula. Most of the land slopes to the west and drains toward the Atlantic. The Ebro, rising in the Pyrenees, is the only major river flowing into the Mediterranean. The Meseta and surrounding mountains nearly all drain to the Atlantic via four major rivers: the Duero, Tajo, Guadiana, and Guadalquivir. The first three of these drain nearly half the country; nevertheless, the Guadalquivir is the country's most important river since it drains the Andalusian plain and reaches the Gulf of Cádiz, making Seville the only inland port. Other major rivers include the Río Ebro, whose basin covers one-sixth of Spain, and the Río Miño, which rises in Galicia and flows south and southwest to the Atlantic.

Geography

Area sq km: 504,782; sq mi 194,896

World Rank: 50th

Land Boundaries, km: Andorra 63.7; France 623; Gibraltar 1.2; Portugal 1,214; Morocco 15.9

Coastline, km: 4,964

Elevation Extremes meters:

Lowest: Atlantic Ocean 0

Highest: Pico de Teide (Tenerife) on Canary Islands 3,718

Land Use %

Arable Land: 26.1

Permanent Crops: 9.9

Forest: 28.8

Other: 35.2

Population of Principal Cities (2003)

La Coruña	243,902
Alicante	305,911
Badalona	214,440
Barcelona	1,582,738
Bilbao	353,567
Córdoba	318,628
Elche	207,163
Gijón	270,875
Granada	237,663
Las Palmas	377,600
L'Hospitalet	246,415
Madrid	3,092,759
Málaga	547,105
Móstoles	201,789
Murcia	391,146
Oviedo	207,699
Palma de Mallorca	367,277
Santa Cruz de Tenerife	220,022
Sevilla	709,975
Valencia	780,653
Valladolid	321,143
Vigo	292,566
Vitoria-Gasteiz	223,257
Zaragoza	626,081

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Spain has three climatic zones: maritime in the north and northwest, continental in the interior, and Mediterranean along the Mediterranean coast.

In the maritime zone the winters are mild, the summers cool, with relatively little temperature variation from season to season. There is also adequate and well-distributed rainfall. In the continental zone the temperatures vary greatly, both daily and seasonally. The winters are raw and cold, and the summers are hot; rainfall is generally restricted to brief periods in the spring and fall. In the Mediterranean zone the temperatures vary considerably, but less so than in the interior. Winters are mild and sometimes rainy, summers are dry and sunny, and rains may be torrential in the spring and fall.

July and August are the hottest months. The north and northwest and high terrain in mountainous areas average below 20°C (68°F) in summer. Valencia and Barcelona, on the Mediterranean coast, average 25°C (77°F) and 24°C (75°F) in the hottest months. The average

July–August temperature in Madrid—as typical of the entire Meseta—is 26°C (75°F). The coldest months are December and January, when the average temperature is 10°C (50°F) in La Coruña, 4°C (40°F) in Madrid, 10°C (46°F) in Valencia, and 9°C (48°F) in Barcelona.

Only the north and northwest, which receive 890 mm (35 in) or more of precipitation annually, are considered rainy areas. Precipitation in the Meseta ranges from 300 to 630 mm (12 to 25 in). The largest area of very low precipitation—under 380 mm (15 in)—is on the leeward side of the Sistema Penibético range.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature

Summer: Madrid 78°F

Valencia 77°F

Barcelona 75°F

La Coruña 65°F

Winter: La Coruña 50°F

Madrid 40°F

Barcelona 48°F

Average Rainfall: North and Northwest 35 in

Southern Coastal Belt 16 in to 31 in

Inland 25 in to 35 in

Leeward side of the Sistema Penibético 15 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Spain has several different types of vegetation, as varying by climate. Wet areas have beech and oak forests; dry areas are home to cork trees, holm oaks, and dry, thorny scrub. Coastal areas intersperse cork and oak trees with conifers such as larch and Scotch pine. The Mediterranean coast has some prickly pear and aloe plants.

Spain's animals have been hunted for so long that many species have disappeared completely. Remaining animals include deer, chamois, ibex, wolves, genets, red squirrels, and various snakes and lizards. Some 25 species of birds of prey breed in Spain, and many water birds live in the wetlands. Barbary macaques live on Gibraltar.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 40,341,462

World Rank: 29th

Density per sq km: 82.3

% of annual growth (1999-2003): 0.6

Male %: 49.0

Female %: 51.0

Urban %: 76.3

Age Distribution %: 0–14: 14.4

15–64: 68.0

65 and over: 17.6

Population 2025: 39,578,000

Birth Rate per 1,000: 10.1

Death Rate per 1,000: 9.63

Rate of Natural Increase %: 0.0

Total Fertility Rate: 1.28

Expectation of Life (years): Males 76.18

Females 83.08

Marriage Rate per 1,000: 5.1

Divorce Rate per 1,000: 1.0

Average Size of Households: 3.5

Induced Abortions: 63,756

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Although the Spanish people may appear to be a monolithic ethnic group, strong ethnic differences have persisted. These ethnic divisions are deeply rooted in history and represent the different nationalities that were unified in the 16th century. In fact, separatist movements, particularly the Basque movement, have become a key feature of life in present-day Spain. Divisions are also fueled by the existence of four different languages—Basque, Catalan, Galician, and the Aranese dialect of Occitan—in addition to Castilian. Catalans compose some 17 percent of the population and, like the Basques, give primary loyalty to members of their ethnic group. The different ethnic groups deeply resent the Castilian control of the government and the institutions of the Spanish state.

The ethnic differentiation of modern Spain began after the Reconquest, when Granada was recaptured from the Moors in 1492. Paradoxically, the process of unification intensified regionalization and the convergence of regional and ethnic loyalties.

Of the several major Spanish ethnic groups, the best known are the Basques, who have waged an often violent struggle for a separate status or even separation in the face of repression, which has at times come through outright force. The Basques make up 2 percent of the population and live in the region in and around the Pyrenees that straddles the border between France and Spain, comprising four provinces in Spain and three in France. The Basque country is heavily industrialized and contains most of Spain's steel and shipbuilding industry. Though a small minority, the Basques resisted assimilation with increasing militancy in the latter decades of the 20th century. They have felt threatened by heavy influxes of immigrants from other regions and official pressures to adopt Spanish as the medium of instruction and the language of communication.

Other groups, constituting less than 1 percent of the Spanish population, include Jews and Roma (Gypsies). In addition, large numbers of North African workers came to Spain in the mid-1900s.

LANGUAGES

The official and national language is Spanish, the third-most important language in the world after English and Mandarin

Chinese in terms of number of speakers. The standard form of Spanish is known as Castilian, which is used by about 74 percent of the population as their mother tongue and by the rest of the nation as a second language. Castilian has three dialects: Aragonese, Leonese, and Andalusian.

Catalan, Galician, Basque, and Aranese are all co-official languages in certain communities. Catalan, spoken by more than six million people, is the mother tongue of Catalonia, the cultural region that extends along the Valencia coast to historic Roussillon in France, inland to Andorra, and to Alghero in Sardinia; Catalonia also includes the Balearic Islands. Since the 1960s the Catalan separatist movement has promoted the widespread use of the language in literature. In contrast, Galician is losing ground to Castilian even in most areas of Galicia itself. Similarly, use of the Basque language has been declining even as Basque militancy has risen; thus, few Basques are literate in their own language, which may become a dead language within the next century.

RELIGIONS

Spain is one of the most Catholic countries in Europe, with 94 percent of the population nominally Catholic; for much of its history Spain recognized Roman Catholicism as the official state religion. Catholic dominance began when it became the state religion and continued through the Reconquest and the expulsion of the Moors and Jews in 1492. The church's power was further consolidated by the colonization of Spanish America in the 16th and 17th centuries, as inspired in large part by the Inquisition. In the 18th and 19th centuries the prestige and influence of the church declined, although Catholicism remained the religion of most Spaniards. Under Franco's regime, from 1939 to 1975, the church once more played a vital role in government and society and was recognized as the official religion.

The constitution of 1978 disestablished Catholicism as Spain's official religion, though it recognized the church's leading role in society. Also therein, freedom of religion was guaranteed to the followers of all faiths.

The Catholic Church in Spain is linked to the Vatican by a hierarchy of archdioceses, dioceses, and parishes under the authority of the archbishop of Toledo, the primate of Spain. The church's presence is strongest in education, with some 4,300 Catholic educational institutions, including trade schools, and four Catholic universities.

Muslims constitute the largest religious minority (1.2 percent), composed largely of immigrants and workers from North Africa. Protestants represent another small religious group (less than 1 percent).

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The history of the Iberian Peninsula may be traced back to the Paleolithic age. The earliest people left a remarkable legacy in the cave paintings at Altamira, which date from 15,000 to 25,000 years ago. Spain's recorded history begins with the arrival of the Celts, Iberians, and Basques. Over a span of 2,000 years the peninsula was overrun by four invaders: Carthaginians, from the sixth to the second century B.C.E.; Romans, from 133 B.C.E. to the fifth century C.E.; the Visigoths, from the fifth century to 711 C.E.; and the Arab-Berbers, who established a Muslim (Moorish) kingdom in Spain around the seventh century and ruled the region as part of a vast Islamic empire for nearly 800 years.

Resistance to Muslim rule began in the ninth century and became the dominant theme of medieval Spanish history. In the centuries that followed the Muslims were pushed back bit by bit, until Toledo was reconquered in 1085, and Arab forces were finally decisively defeated in the battle of Las Navas de Tolosa in 1212. Seville was recaptured in 1248, and in 1492 the last Muslim stronghold, Granada, fell. The Reconquest was complete, and for the first time in its history Spain was united, through the marriage of Isabella of Castile and Ferdinand of Aragón. The Catholic monarchs gave Muslims the choice of exile or conversion to Christianity, which became the official state religion in 1525. Religious uniformity was enforced by the Inquisition.

In 1492, the same year that Granada fell, Christopher Columbus took possession of the Americas in the name of the Catholic monarchs of Spain. Ferdinand and Isabella were the last native dynasty. Their successors, the Hapsburg monarchs, ruled over a vast domain that included the Netherlands, the Hapsburg Empire, Naples, the Americas, and the Philippines. The Hapsburgs drew Spain into European dynastic wars for the next 200 years.

Spain's Golden Age was in the 16th century, when the nation's culture and power reached their heights and Spain became the preeminent country in Europe. Spanish fleets defeated the Turks at Malta (1565) and at Lepanto (1572), preventing the Mediterranean from falling under their control. Spain was also the military, diplomatic, and spiritual standard-bearer of the Counter-Reformation.

The defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588 marked the beginning of Spain's decline as a great power. The 17th century saw the beginning of a long struggle over succession to the Spanish Hapsburgs when that dynasty ended with the death of Charles II. The War of the Spanish Succession was fought by several European powers on more than one continent; the conflict ushered in a long period of political instability that ended, though only briefly, in 1807 when Napoleon conquered Spain.

Spain's 19th-century history opened with the revolution and the successful struggles for independence in most of its American colonies, ending with the losses of

Religious Affiliations

Roman Catholic	37,920,000
Other	2,420,000

Cuba, the Philippines, and Puerto Rico in the Spanish-American War in 1898. For most of this period the monarchists and radical Republicans engaged in a struggle over control of the Spanish government.

Spain remained neutral in World War I but in the postwar period engaged in extensive military action in order to maintain possession of its colonial territory in Morocco. Primo de Rivera established a military dictatorship in Spain in 1923 but was driven from office by King Alfonso XIII in 1930. The following year the king was forced to abdicate, and a republic replaced the monarchy. Under the republic, the disestablishment of the Catholic Church and secularization of schools caused deep political polarization. The 1936 electoral victory of the Popular Front government, a left-wing coalition of Communists, Socialists, and anarchists, led to the Spanish civil war, through which Francisco Franco and the nation's military forces ended the republic, establishing a dictatorship in 1939. The bloody civil war resulted in over 600,000 casualties, huge losses of property, and the destruction of much of the nation's economy.

Spain remained neutral during World War II. Although Franco sympathized with the Axis powers, which had supported his side in the civil war, his nation's weakness required neutrality. In the postwar years and until 1975 Franco's regime was viewed by many nations as a remnant of the Axis dictatorships and was isolated for a time from world affairs. Spain was not admitted to the United Nations until 1955.

To many Spaniards living in the decades after the civil war, Franco represented stability and peace after years of instability and bloodshed. Franco consolidated his power with the support of the military and the Catholic Church. In 1947 the Law of Succession made Spain a monarchy once more, though the future king was not to take the throne until the end of Franco's regime. The economy was perhaps the central concern of the nation. With the help of an International Monetary Fund stabilization plan, Spain began to open up to foreign investment and trade. The United States provided significant economic and military aid, in part because of the prolonged cold war with the Soviet Union. Tourism from European nations and the United States both strengthened the economy and helped end Spain's isolation.

By the 1960s Spain was no longer an agrarian nation, instead becoming a modern industrialized power. During the 1960s and 1970s the growth of the middle class and Franco's continued hold on power reflected the rapid development of the economy. In 1969 Franco and the Cortes (parliament) designated Prince Juan Carlos as future king and head of state, ensuring a peaceful transition of power. When Franco died in 1975, Juan Carlos became king and ruler of Spain, and free elections for parliament were held in 1977. King Juan Carlos I and the new prime minister, Adolfo Suárez, undertook a series of moves to liberalize the nation after Franco. A new constitution drafted by the

Cortes was approved by Spanish voters and took effect in 1978. In 1980 the Basque country and Catalonia were granted home rule, although terrorist activities continued in those regions.

In the 1980s and 1990s, under its monarchy, Spain played a greater role in world affairs, joining the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) in 1982 and the European Community in 1986. The Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE) held electoral majorities in the Cortes almost continually from 1982 to 1996, as led by Prime Minister Felipe González Márquez. During the 1990s, under González, the country's economic growth accelerated, despite some downturns and spikes in unemployment, and Spain's prosperity continued.

After nearly a decade in power the PSOE began to lose its luster and experienced a sharp drop in popularity. In 1993 the party lost its majority in parliament but managed to hold on to power with the support of independents. Buffeted by Basque terrorism and flagrant corruption at the highest levels of government, the Socialists were ousted in 1996. José María Aznar López, the leader of the conservative Popular Party, swept into power at the head of a coalition. In 1998 the Basques finally agreed to end their terrorist campaign against Spain, but the cease-fire was ended in 1999. Aznar's Popular Party won 183 seats in the 350-seat Congress of Deputies in the 2000 general elections. After the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington, D.C., in 2001, Aznar aligned Spain's policy with that of the United States, sending 1,300 soldiers to Iraq to serve with multinational forces.

In March 2004 José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, the leader of the PSOE, won a surprise victory in the presidential election; just three days before the election several commuter trains in Madrid were bombed by terrorists, killing nearly 200 people, which cast a shadow on the elections. Aznar's government blamed the Basque separatist group Euskadi Ta Askatasuna (ETA, "Basque Homeland and Liberty"), but it was later established that an Islamic group related to al-Qaeda was responsible. Zapatero called the U.S. war in Iraq a disaster and quickly withdrew Spain's troops from Iraq. Zapatero announced that his first priority would be to fight terrorism. His other goals were to increase economic growth, improve social welfare, simplify taxation, and encourage compromise with nationalist groups within Spain.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

President	
1976–81	Adolfo Suárez González
1981–82	Leopoldo Calvo-Sotelo Bustelo
1982–96	Felipe González Márquez
1996–2004	José María Aznar López
2004–	José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero

CONSTITUTION

Spain is a constitutional monarchy built on foundations laid by Francisco Franco. The constitution of 1978 provided for the transition and continued evolution of the Spanish state. However, it is not a document that expresses broad principles; rather it deals with basic issues in ambiguous and even contradictory language.

The executive consists of the king, who is head of state; the prime minister (officially known as the “president”); and the Council of State (the cabinet). The crown is hereditary, descending through sons in order of seniority or, if there are no sons, through daughters. The king’s powers are specified in detail; they include convening and dissolving the Cortes, calling elections and referendums, proposing the prime minister for the approval of the Cortes—and dismissing him—and commanding the armed forces.

The powers of the prime minister and the Council of State are regulated by organic law as well as Article 97 of the constitution. Cabinet meetings are held in closed sessions every two weeks. In addition, the prime minister meets more frequently with an inner cabinet. The Council of State makes decisions in common, and ministers share collective responsibility. As of 2005 there were 17 ministers in the council.

Three of the most controversial constitutional issues relate to the army, the church, and the economic system. Article 8 suggests the special mission for the armed forces of “guaranteeing the sovereignty and independence of Spain and of defending its territorial integrity and the constitutional order.” Roman Catholicism is established as a state religion, but the state is required to “take the religious beliefs of the Spanish people into account” and to “cooperate with the Catholic Church and other confessions.” Articles dealing with the economy aim to please advocates of both free enterprise and socialism. The constitution’s most unambiguous provisions relate to basic freedoms, which are spelled out in detail. The sensitive issue of regional autonomy is covered in a number of articles.

PARLIAMENT

The national legislature is the bicameral Cortes Generales (General Courts). The lower house, the Congress of Deputies, has 350 members directly elected for four-year terms through proportional representation from 50 provinces. The upper house, the Senate (Senado), has 259 members, of which 208 are directly elected for four-year terms by a simple plurality vote and 51 are appointed to four-year terms by the regional legislatures.

The powers of the Senate are subordinated to those of the Congress of Deputies, which can override a Senate vote by a simple majority. Because the Senate gives

greater weight to rural communities, it is generally more conservative than the Congress.

The constitution provides for referendums under two conditions: through a popular initiative of at least 500,000 signatures and through the authorization of the Congress. In addition, the constitution may be amended by a three-fifths majority in each of the chambers of the Cortes.

Members of the Cortes enjoy judicial immunity from prosecution and may not be recalled. Expulsion is possible only upon judicial sentence, but indictment and prosecution require the authorization of the particular house.

Each house determines its own rules of procedure. There are two sessions of the Cortes each year, the first from September through December and the second from February through June. All parliamentary work is guided by the president of each chamber.

All legislative bills are automatically referred to committees. Private members also have the right to introduce legislation, though most private bills die in committee. Members may propose amendments to any bill within 10 days of its publication, but amendments to reduce revenue or increase public expenditures require governmental approval.

Parliamentary control over the executive is exercised principally through questions and interpellations. Parliament can also set up committees of inquiry. Motions of censure against the government must be proposed by one-tenth of the total membership. Article 82 of the constitution permits decree laws during states of emergency but limits the duration of such periods.

Each province has a minimum of two deputies, with the remainder allocated in proportion to population. Parties are required to win at least 3 percent of the vote in any given province to win a seat in that province. In elections to the Congress of Deputies the voter may indicate preference only for a list of candidates. For the Senate, voters mark their preferences for individual candidates, with the four candidates receiving the highest number of votes in each province and autonomous city declared winners. Suffrage is universal at age 18.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Although Spain has hundreds of national and regional parties, political life revolves around two major parties: the conservative Popular Party (PP) and the leftist Socialist Workers’ Party (Partido Socialista Obrero Español, PSOE). In the 2004 elections 88 percent of the seats went to those two parties. Nevertheless, regional parties wield considerable influence on electoral outcomes even when they do not gain many seats. The most important of these regional parties represent Valencians, Catalans, Basques, Galicians, and Canarians.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The constitution of 1978 modified Spain's long tradition of centralized government in authorizing the formation of regional governments, known as autonomous communities. In accordance with the constitution, 17 autonomous regions have been established. The federal government continues to grant more powers to regional governments, which will eventually will all of their own education, health-care, and other social programs.

The government of the autonomous regions is based around legislative assemblies elected by universal suffrage and proportional representation. In each region, a president is elected by the assembly from among its members, and a governing council has executive and administrative functions.

The 1978 constitution established full local government at the municipal level as well. Both mayors and municipal councils are popularly elected. Still, certain legacies of centralized control have endured. The central government controls the preparation of municipal budgets and restricts the use of local taxing powers. The consequent chronic shortage of funds has increased local dependency on the Ministry of Finances.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The basis of Spanish law is the Civil Code, modeled after the Napoleonic Code. The jury system is not used in the criminal justice system. Prosecutors and defense attorneys present their cases directly to a judge or judges.

There are five levels of regular courts sitting in both criminal and civil cases. At the lower level are more than 9,000 municipal courts, rural district courts, and justice-of-the-peace courts. At the next level are 600 courts of original jurisdiction, each presided over by a single judge, whose most important functions are to act as courts of instruction in regard to more serious crimes.

Each of the 50 provinces has a provincial high court primarily concerned with criminal indictments forwarded from courts of original jurisdiction. These high courts also investigate charges against municipal and provincial officials and hear civil appeals. At the next level Spain is divided into 15 judicial districts, each with a district court. They are courts of final appeal in all but the most serious cases and deal primarily with civil law. The highest court in the land is the Supreme Court of Justice, presided over by a chief justice appointed by the head of state for a six-year term. The Supreme Court has regulatory and disciplinary authority over the lower courts and is empowered to impeach judicial officers. Its jurisdiction extends to civil and criminal cases involving high government officials.

HUMAN RIGHTS

The Spanish constitution of 1978 guarantees its people all fundamental freedoms. Most charges of abuses of human rights have occurred in connection with antiterrorist laws designed to curb violence associated with the Basque and Catalan separatist movements. Suspected terrorists have been arbitrarily detained and have waited long periods of time for trials. Investigations of abuses by security forces are prolonged, and punishments are usually light.

Racial discrimination is not considered a serious problem in Spain because relatively few nonwhites reside there. Nevertheless, Arabs from North Africa, illegal aliens from Argentina and Chile, farm workers from West Africa, and Roma and other immigrants often complain of bias caused by racist attitudes.

Women have been the victims of violence and discrimination. Human trafficking in sex slaves and prostitution have been problems.

FOREIGN POLICY

Within a decade of Franco's death in 1975, Spain, once a pariah among Western nations, became fully rehabilitated, and the diplomatic isolation of the Franco years ended. Spain was admitted to the Council of Europe in 1977 and became a member of NATO in 1982; although the Socialist Workers' Party had long campaigned against Spain's membership in NATO, in a national referendum in 1986 voters favored membership by a majority of 53 percent. That same year Spain joined the European Community, now the European Union, and completed its return to normal diplomatic relations by establishing ties with Israel and Albania.

Spain maintains a deep interest in Latin America, where its foreign policy emphasizes the common linguistic, religious, ethnic, cultural, and historical ties that bind the region to Spain. These ties have been strengthened by visits to the region by King Juan Carlos I and Spanish prime ministers. Spain has also maintained congenial relations with the Arab world, relinquishing its claim to Spanish Sahara, now Western Sahara, in 1976, though retaining its interest in the area, which is disputed by Morocco and Mauritania.

Spain established good relations with the United States in the decades following World War II. The cold war hastened Spain's rehabilitation with respect to American foreign policy, beginning with \$1 billion in foreign and military aid and the establishment of American bases in 1953. Spain's admission to NATO was followed by a treaty of friendship in 1982, renewed in 1989 and revised in 2003, that authorizes the continued use of American air bases at Torrejón, Zaragoza, and Morón de la Frontera as well as the U.S. naval base at Rota.

Spain has paid particular attention to its relations with the Arab world since 2001. It has been involved in the territorial dispute between Western Sahara and Morocco and has been instrumental in dialogues between Arab nations and Europe. It has been increasing contacts with sub-Saharan Africa. Al-Qaeda is known to operate cells in Spain and is suspected to have detonated bombs in Madrid in March 2004.

DEFENSE

The 1978 constitution redefined the role and status of the military in Spanish society. The government has taken a number of steps to reassert civilian control over the armed forces, including a reduction in their size.

Spain maintains an army, a navy, an air force, and marines. The king is the supreme commander of the armed forces. Each service has its own staff and ministry. The ministers and chiefs of staff of the services, the chief of the supreme staff, the prime minister, and other co-opted ministers and officials form the National Defense Junta.

Internal security is provided by the National Police, the Civil Guard, and regional police forces.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 224,000
 Military Manpower Availability: 9,366,588
 Military Expenditures \$billion: 9.9
 as % of GDP: 1.2
 as % of central government expenditures: 3.8
 Arms Imports \$million: 97
 Arms Exports \$million: 124

ECONOMY

In the latter half of the 20th century Spain evolved from a rural agricultural nation into an urban industrial power. Spain's mixed capitalist economy of industries and services was freed of many government regulations, and major state-owned sectors were returned to private ownership.

Spain's gross domestic product (GDP) grew on average almost 5 percent between 1986 and 1990, and business investment increased by over 10 percent annually. Economic growth slowed in 1992, however, and joblessness increased sharply, to nearly 22 percent. Prime Minister Aznar took office in 1996 determined to reverse this economic decline and in large measure proved successful. By 2003, GDP growth had climbed to 2.4 percent, inflation had declined to 3 percent, and unemployment had fallen to 10.4 percent of the workforce, all reasonable numbers in light of the weak European economy.

Aznar's economic policies increased the deregulation and privatization of the economy, with the goal of meeting the strict fiscal requirements for membership

in the European Monetary Union and introducing the single European currency, the euro, in Spain; the euro was adopted in 1999. The government then made further progress in changing labor laws and reforming pension schemes. Zapatero took office in 2004 intending to reduce government interference in business and end tax fraud but also to reintroduce some of the labor market regulations that Aznar's government had removed.

Spain's leading industries are textiles, apparel and footwear, metals and metal manufactures, chemicals, shipbuilding, automobiles, machine tools, and tourism. Its major agricultural products include grains, vegetables, olives, wine grapes, sugar beets, and citrus. The majority of the nation's foreign trade is carried out with members of the European Union. Adjusting to the monetary and other economic policies of an integrated Europe—and further reducing unemployment—will pose challenges to Spain in the early 21st century.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 937.6
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 23,300
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 3.1
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 2.5
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 3.5
 Industry: 28.5
 Services: 68.0
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 57
 Government Consumption: 18
 Gross Domestic Investment: 25.4
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 172.5
 Imports: 222
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 2.8
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 25.2
 CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
110.0	113.8	117.9	121.5	125.2

Finance

National Currency: Euro (EUR)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = EUR 0.886
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: —
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 3.0
 Total External Debt \$billion: 771.1
 Debt Service Ratio %: —
 Balance of Payments \$billion: –30.89
 International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 17.5
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 3.2

Official Development Assistance

Donor ODA \$billion: 1.33
 per capita \$: 33.00
 Foreign Direct Investment \$billion: 25.5

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$billion: 383.7
 Expenditures \$billion: 386.4
 Budget Deficit \$billion: 2.7
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 3.5
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: –1.0
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 6.9
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 20.2
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 157.2
 Total Farmland % of land area: 27.5
 Livestock: Cattle million: 6.5
 Chickens million: 128
 Pigs million: 24
 Sheep million: 24
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 16.1
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons million: 1.15

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 103.6
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 3.0

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 29.8
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 110.6
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 2.75
 Net Energy Imports % of use: 75.9
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 50.4
 Production kW-hr billion: 229.0
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 218.4
 Coal Reserves tons million: 728
 Production tons million: 24.3
 Consumption tons million: 50.7
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet billion: 90
 Production cubic feet billion: 18
 Consumption cubic feet billion: 725
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels million: 158
 Production barrels 000 per day: 24
 Consumption barrels million per day: 1.56
 Pipelines Length km: 730

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 222
 Exports \$billion: 172.5
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 5.1
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 7.1
 Balance of Trade \$million: –30.89

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
France %	16.8	19.3
Germany %	16.7	12.0
Italy %	9.1	9.8
United Kingdom %	6.6	9.4
Netherlands %	4.9	—
Portugal %	—	9.7
United States %	—	4.1

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 664,852
 Paved %: 99.0
 Automobiles: 18,150,800
 Trucks and Buses: 4,161,100
 Railroad: Track Length km: 14,268
 Passenger-km billion: 19.2
 Freight-km billion: 11.75
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 182
 Total Deadweight Tonnage million: 2.16
 Airports: 156
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 54
 Length of Waterways km: 1,045

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 52.5
 Number of Tourists from million: 4.1
 Tourist Receipts \$billion: 46.0
 Tourist Expenditures \$billion: 10.5

Communications

Telephones million: 17.6
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones million: 37.5
 Personal Computers million: 8.0
 Internet Hosts per million people: 26,200
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 243

ENVIRONMENT

Spain confronts several major environmental problems. Spain's large cities suffer from air pollution that exceeds the average in western Europe. Sewage and water treatment facilities are inadequate, and raw sewage along with offshore oil and gas production contribute to the severe pollution of the Mediterranean. The ever-increasing amounts of nitrogen fertilizers used by farmers threaten river water purity in many areas. The entire nation suffers from poor water quality and a general lack of water. Tourism, a pillar of the economy, has led to beach erosion and environmental stress, particularly along the Mediterranean coast, where nearly half the urban population lives. Other problems include deforestation and desertification in the countryside.

Government programs instituted to address these environmental issues are relatively recent and, for the most part, inadequate for the nation's needs. One notable success, however, is the government's reforestation program, which has promoted soil conservation and increased timber production.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 28.8
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: 86
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 8
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 374,588
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 6.99

LIVING CONDITIONS

Spain is a modern, developed nation with a high standard of living. People have comfortable homes with ample furniture and modern amenities. Public transportation is widely available. Costs are lower than in European neighbors, though housing prices rose substantially in 2003 and 2004. Theft is a problem, especially in areas frequented by tourists. Air pollution is a major problem in cities.

HEALTH

Health is quite good in Spain. Life expectancy is over 79 years, and the infant mortality rate is only about 4.4 deaths per 1,000 births. Fertility is very low, at 1.3 children per woman in 2005; as such, population growth has slowed to a near standstill, and the population as a whole is aging. In 2001, 0.7 percent of the population was infected with HIV.

Health

Number of Physicians: 130,300
 Number of Dentists: 17,538
 Number of Nurses: 147,500
 Number of Pharmacists: 31,200
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 320
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: 4.1
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 4.42
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 4
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 7.6
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 1,192
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.7
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 98
 Measles: 97
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: —
 Access to Improved Water Source %: —

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Spain has tremendously varied cuisine and some very skilled cooks. *Tapas*, snacks served with drinks, are very popular. Well-known dishes include *gazpacho* (cold tomato and vegetable soup), *paella* (a rice and fish dish), and *chorizo* sausage. *Churros* are fried dough sticks that many people eat for breakfast with coffee. Spanish wines are excellent.

The main meal of the day is served between 1:30 and 4 p.m. People eat their evening meal quite late, around 10 or 11 p.m.; this meal is usually lighter than lunch.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 98.2
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 266.2

STATUS OF WOMEN

The constitution provides for equal rights for all citizens, and in recent years women have moved toward equality under the law. Fair numbers of women are now in the workforce—women accounted for 38 percent of all workers in 2003. Women received 57 percent of university degrees in 1997. Nevertheless, discrimination in the workplace and in hiring persists. Women's salaries remain 27 percent lower than men's, and women are more apt to have temporary or part-time jobs than men. The female unemployment rate, at about 30 percent in 1997, is roughly double that of male workers. Despite a 1989 law barring sexual harassment in the workplace, such practices are still often reported, and very few are brought to trial.

Domestic violence and general violence against women is a major problem. The government has introduced programs to prevent domestic violence and provides shelters for battered women.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 36
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.0
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 40.7

WORK

Almost two-thirds of Spain's workforce is employed in services. About 30 percent work in manufacturing, mining, and construction, producing textiles, footwear, food and beverages, chemicals, ships, automobiles, and metal products. Only 5 percent work in agriculture, producing

wine, olives, grains, vegetables, fruits such as oranges, and some meats. Unemployment has been fairly high, at 10.4 percent in 2004, but the government has pledged to find more jobs for its people.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 19,330,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 37.8
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 5.3
 Manufacturing, Mining, and Construction: 30.1
 Services: 64.6
 Unemployment %: 10.4

EDUCATION

Education is compulsory and begins at age six and continues until age 14. The eight-year primary school program is followed by four years of secondary school, either academic high school leading to university entrance or vocational school leading to a job. The academic year runs from October to July, with a long summer vacation. Some 70 percent of students attend public schools and universities, while the other 30 percent attend private institutions, which receive government subsidies and are for the most part operated by the Catholic Church. Spain has many universities and technical colleges offering instruction in all major fields.

The Ministry of Education nominally oversees all schools and universities, but the Organic Law of 1984 transferred real control over education to the autonomous regions. One notable result has been the teaching of Basque, Catalan, and other vernacular languages in Spanish schools.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 97.9
 Male %: 98.7
 Female %: 97.2
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 16.2
 First Level: Primary Schools: 16,540
 Teachers: 179,324
 Students: 2,488,319
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 13.9
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 99.7
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 25,775
 Teachers: 274,801
 Students: 2,642,361
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 11.1
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 95.6
 Third Level: Institutions: 1,415
 Teachers: 136,436
 Students: 1,840,607
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 61.9
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 4.5

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Spain has a modern technological infrastructure. In 2003 there were 17.6 million telephone lines and 37.5 million cellular telephones in use, and nearly 10 million people were using the Internet. Broadcast media are increasingly using digital equipment. Spanish universities such as the Mediterranean University of Science and Technology are doing cutting-edge research and education. Spanish scientists and engineers have collaborated with European colleagues on a variety of enterprises since the 1980s; topics include genomics, space exploration, the synchrotron light source, and technology for cleaning up oil spills.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 2,036
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 1.03
 High-Tech Exports \$billion: 8.9
 Patent Applications by Residents: 4,330

MEDIA

The constitution of 1978 protects press freedom. Although Spain has a huge variety of print publications and media outlets expressing a full range of views, some people are concerned about the government's influence on the media, especially in public broadcasting.

The government operates several radio and television networks. In addition, three regional television stations were set up by a 1983 law, and three privately run television channels were authorized by the Cortes in 1987. Cable and satellite television is expanding rapidly, and several digital channels have been launched. The government hopes to end analog television transmission by 2010. Favorite television shows include soap operas and reality shows.

Spain has dozens of newspapers. *El país*, *La vanguardia*, *El mundo*, and *ABC* are some of the nation's most influential newspapers. The state-run news wire service is EFE. Europa Press and Vasco Press are private news services.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 87
 Total Circulation million: 4
 Circulation per 1,000: 98
 Books Published: 59,174
 Periodicals: 11
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets million: 22
 per 1,000: 555

CULTURE

Spain has a rich and varied culture that is the product of millennia of occupation and colonization by different peoples, from the Romans to the Arabs. Famous Spanish artists include El Greco, Diego Velázquez, Francisco Goya, Pablo Picasso, and Salvador Dalí. Authors include Miguel de Cervantes, who wrote the famous epic *Don Quixote*; Adelaida Garcia Morales; Montserrat Roig; and Camilo José Cela, who won the 1989 Nobel Prize for Literature. Architectural styles have long been original, especially Islamic and Gothic structures. Famous filmmakers include the surrealist Luís Buñuel and the Oscar-winner Pedro Almodóvar. The guitar was invented in Spain through the adding of a sixth string to the Arab lute, and Spanish guitarists have long been among the best musicians in the world.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number:	4,519
Volumes:	38,203,128
Registered borrowers:	7,317,696
Museums Number:	610
Annual Attendance:	13,987,000
Cinema Gross Receipts national currency billion:	82.5
Number of Cinemas:	3,354
Seating Capacity:	—
Annual Attendance:	131,348,000

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

The Spanish consider flamenco the main expression of their folklore. Flamenco includes dancing, music, and folk poems, as accompanied by colorful costumes. The form seems to have risen from a combination of Arabic, Jewish, and Roma cultures. Bullfighting is another folk custom that has become a major tourist attraction in modern times.

Spain is believed to have ancient connections with Celtic peoples in Scotland and Ireland. Similar stone carvings exist in both places, and Irish myth tells of people traveling from Spain to settle in Ireland.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Spain has an immense array of entertainment possibilities, including restaurants, bars, discos, shopping, museums, archaeological sites, and medieval castles. Skiing and hunting are both common outdoor activities. The Mediterranean coast is a popular vacation destination for people from all over Europe, who come to enjoy the beaches, water, and nightlife.

ETIQUETTE

Service charges are usually added to restaurant bills, so tipping is unnecessary, though people usually leave the small change left over from paying the bill. Spaniards shake hands with everyone in a group when entering or leaving a room. Family members hug and kiss one another. Spaniards tend to value close, personal relationships and like to establish friendships before discussing business. Lateness to meetings is typical; southern Spaniards tend to be later than northern ones. It is appropriate to bring a gift when visiting a home. *Machismo* is still prevalent, despite the growing equality of women, and a man will almost never allow a woman to buy him a meal.

FAMILY LIFE

Marriage rates have declined in Spain, as in the rest of western Europe, and in the early 2000s it was becoming increasingly common for couples to live together without marrying. Contraceptives were banned under Franco, but since they were legalized in 1978 Spaniards have made good use of them: Families are now very small; most couples have one child, or at most two. A 2004 law reducing the time it takes to get a divorce from two years to 10 weeks worried conservatives and the Catholic Church, who feared that the concepts of marriage and family were disintegrating. The majority of Spaniards like the ideas of liberalizing divorce and making gay marriage and abortion legal; in 2005 the country became the third in the world to legalize same-sex marriage.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Spaniards dress in typical Western clothing; they like to dress well and fashionably. Service in some establishments varies according to attire, with the best-dressed people receiving the best service. Adults do not wear shorts, athletic shoes, or sandals away from the beach or playing field. Nice shoes are particularly important. Spanish people favor dark colors in the winter.

SPORTS

Spaniards play the full range of Western sports, both recreationally and professionally. Soccer is by far the most popular. There are many soccer leagues throughout the country; in the Golden League, various cities sponsor teams that compete against one another. Golf is increasingly popular, and Spanish golf clubs host international tournaments such as the Ryder Cup. Spain has also produced numerous professional tennis players and has be-

come a favored training ground for professional players from other countries.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1939** Francisco Franco becomes dictator of Spain in the wake of the bloody civil war that began in 1936; hundreds of thousands of “anti-Spain” dissidents are imprisoned, and as many as 37,000 are executed in vindictive purges over the next four years.
- 1941** Through 1945 Spain rides out World War II as a neutral power but sends 40,000 troops to fight the Soviet Union.
- 1952** Agricultural and industrial production, devastated by the civil war, finally return to pre-civil war levels.
- 1953** Spain agrees to allow the establishment of U.S. military bases in exchange for aid.
- 1955** Spain is admitted to the United Nations.
- 1957** After two years of demonstrations by students and labor groups, Franco conducts a major cabinet reorganization, allowing for greater business and labor representation.
- 1958** Coal-worker strikes prompt the government to grant workers the right to negotiate wages and working conditions with their employers; Spain ends its occupation of Spanish Morocco.
- 1959** Franco approves a financial austerity plan to strengthen the currency.
- 1962** The tourism industry begins to surge amidst a general economic upturn; Franco declares martial law after strikers and dissidents assert liberal demands.
- 1966** Reformist legislation expands the freedom and influence of the press.
- 1968** Spain relinquishes control of its West African colony of Spanish Guinea, which declares independence as Equatorial Guinea.
- 1969** The ailing Franco recognizes Juan Carlos, the heir to the Spanish throne, as his legal successor.
- 1970** Trials of members of the ETA garner international condemnation of Basque terrorist tactics.
- 1973** Franco turns over the office of prime minister to Admiral Luis Carrero Blanco in June; in December Blanco is assassinated by the ETA; Carlos Arias Navarro assumes the premiership.
- 1974** Arias Navarro announces liberalization policies, including the legalization of political parties, which had been outlawed since 1939.
- 1975** Five Basque terrorists are executed despite vigorous international protests; Franco dies; the constitutional monarchy is restored, with Juan Carlos I as king.
- 1976** Premier Arias Navarro steps down at the request of King Juan Carlos I; Adolfo Suárez González, a onetime minister under Franco, becomes prime minister; Suárez champions the Law for Political Reform, which allows for the election of the Cortes through universal suffrage.
- 1977** Suárez legalizes the Communist Party despite opposition by the military; Spain holds free parliamentary elections.
- 1978** Referendum endorses a democratic constitution.
- 1981** Suárez resigns as prime minister; during the inauguration of Leopoldo Calvo-Sotelo Bustelo, of the Union of the Democratic Center (UDC), an attempted military coup fails thanks to the diplomatic skill of King Juan Carlos.
- 1982** Shortly before October elections, a coup plot is discovered, and four military officers are arrested in connection with the plot; the Socialist Workers’ Party (PSOE) comes to power, with Felipe González Márquez as prime minister; Spain joins NATO; separatist Basques continue their campaign of terrorism.
- 1986** Spain joins the European Community; elections confirm González and the PSOE.
- 1988** With unemployment at 19 percent, the workers’ commissions call a general strike to protest the government’s economic policies.
- 1991** Spain’s limited support of UN forces in the Persian Gulf War inspires massive demonstrations by pro-neutralist Spaniards.
- 1992** Expo ’92 and the Barcelona Olympic Games give Spain’s economy a boost.
- 1993** In elections, González and the PSOE remain in office but must form a coalition government.
- 1996** The conservative Popular Party comes to power, with José María Aznar as president; the terrorist group ETA refuses to comply with the government’s demand for a permanent cease-fire, leading to stalled negotiations on Basque independence.
- 1997** Aznar’s deficit-reduction budget comes into effect, paving the way toward euro currency adoption in 1999; ETA terrorists kidnap a minor member of Aznar’s Popular Party, killing him when their demands are not met; millions of Spanish march in protest of the ETA’s violence.
- 1998** ETA agrees to a unilateral cease-fire in return for the transfer of 21 offshore Basque prisoners to the Spanish mainland.
- 1999** ETA announces that it will end its cease-fire.
- 2000** Aznar and his Popular Party are reelected in a landslide victory.
- 2001** Britain and Spain agree to reach a deal on the future status of Gibraltar by the summer of 2002.

2200 Spain

- 2002** The euro becomes the national currency. Spain assumes the rotating presidency of the European Union for six months. Spain and Morocco dispute ownership of Perejil Island.
- 2003** Spain bans the Basque separatist group Batasuna.
- 2004** Terrorists blow up several trains in Madrid, killing 191 people; an Islamic group with ties to al-Qaeda is blamed. In elections held only three days after the bombings, José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero wins the presidency.
- 2005** Spanish voters approve the EU constitution. The country becomes the third in the world to legalize same-sex marriage.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- National Institute of Statistics
<http://www.ine.es/>
- Sí, Spain
<http://www.sispain.org/>

SRI LANKA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka (Sri Lankā Prajathanthrika Samajavadi Janarajaya)

ABBREVIATION

LK

CAPITALS

Colombo (executive), Sri Jayawardenepura Kotte (legislative)

HEAD OF STATE

President Mahinda Rajapakse (from 2005)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Ratnasiri Wickremanayake (from 2005)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Parliamentary democracy

POPULATION

20,064,776 (2005)

AREA

65,610 sq km (25,332 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Sinhalese, Tamil, Moor

LANGUAGES

Sinhala (official and national), Tamil (national), English

RELIGIONS

Buddhism, Hinduism, Christianity, Islam

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Sri Lankan rupee

NATIONAL FLAG

Two narrow green and orange vertical stripes on the left side, with a yellow lion carrying a sword in its upraised right front paw against a dark red background occupying the rest of the flag. A golden bo leaf is found in each corner of the red field. The flag is bordered by a yellow band, with a vertical yellow band separating the green and orange stripes from the dark red background.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

The main symbols in the national emblem are the *punkalasa* (a filled vessel), a heraldic lion within the *palapeti vataya* (a lotus petal border), and the *dhammachakka* (the wheel of Buddhist doctrine). The sun and moon appear on either side of the filled vessel.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Hail, Hail, Motherland”

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year’s Day), February 4 (Independence Day), May 22 (National Heroes’ Day), April 13 (Sinhala New Year’s Day), April 14 (Tamil New Year’s Day), May 1 (May Day), Christmas, Good Friday, Easter, Poya holidays every lunar month on the day of the full moon, Maha Sivaranthri, Tamil Thai Pongal, Deepavali, Ramadan, Id-ul-fitr, Milad-un-nabi, Id-ul-Azha

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

February 4, 1948

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

August 31, 1978

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Sri Lanka, a pear-shaped island in the Indian Ocean, is 804 km (500 mi) north of the equator and separated from the Indian mainland by 29 km (18 mi) at the closest point. Sri Lanka is often referred to as the Resplendent Isle or the Isle of Delight. It has a total area of 65,610 sq km (25,332 sq mi) and a total coastline of 1,340 km (832 mi). The longest distance north to south is 435 km (270 mi), that east to west 225 km (140 mi).

Sri Lanka has two geographical regions. A flat or gently rolling plain, occupying four-fifths of the country, makes up the entire northern half of the island and continues around the coast of the southern half. The south-central part is hilly and mountainous, ranging from 900 to 2,100 m (3,000 to 7,000 ft) above sea level, with two abruptly ascending platforms flanking the Uva Basin, the Hatton Plateau, the Kandy Plateau, the Knuckles Group, and the Piduru Ridges.

Sri Lanka



There are 16 significant rivers, of which the longest are the Mahaweli Ganga (332 km; 206 mi) and the Aruvi Aru (167 km; 104 mi).

Geography

Area sq km: 65,610; sq mi 25,332

World Rank: 119th

Land Boundaries, km: 0

Coastline, km: 1,340

Elevation Extremes meters:

Lowest: Indian Ocean 0

Highest: Pidurutalagala 2,524

Land Use %

Arable Land: 13.9

Permanent Crops: 15.7

Forest: 30.0

Other: 40.4

Population of Principal Cities (2001)

Colombo	642,163
Dehiwala-Mount Lavinia	209,787
Jaffna	145,600
Moratuwa	177,190
Negombo	121,933
Sri Jayawardenepura	115,826

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Sri Lanka has a generally uniform tropical climate, with little variation in daily or seasonal temperature. Humidity is high throughout the year, frequently around 90 percent. The average annual temperature for the whole country ranges from 26.7°C to 28.3°C (80°F to 83°F). The highest temperature recorded is 36.7°C (98°F), in the region around Trincomalee. The island has two monsoon seasons, from the southwest in May and from the northeast in November. The dry zone, in the north, the central plain, and the southeastern plain, receives 1,270 to 1,900 mm (50 to 75 in) of rainfall annually, while the wet zone, in the southwestern plain and southwestern uplands, receives 2,540 to 5,080 mm (100 to 200 in) per year. Two small arid zones, stretching from Puttalam to Jaffna and from Tangalla to Pottuvil, receive some 630 to 1,260 mm (25 to 50 in) per year.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature: 80°F to 83°F

Average Rainfall

North (Central Plain and Southeastern Plain): 50 in to 75 in

Southwestern Plain and Southwestern Uplands: 100 in to 200 in

Arid region (Puttalam to Jaffna and Tangalla to Pottuvil): 25 in to 50 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Most of Sri Lanka is covered in rain forest, with teak, ebony, and silkwood trees present. Orchids grow wild. The drier northern part of the country has grasslands and shrubs. Stunted forests and rhododendrons grow in the highlands. Many animals inhabit the island, including elephants, wild boars, deer, sloth bears, leopards, monkeys, crocodiles, turtles, and snakes. Migratory birds stop in Sri Lanka between January and April. Flamingos are one of the most noticeable bird species.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 20,064,776

World Rank: 53rd

Density per sq km: 297.6

% of annual growth (1999-2003): 1.4

Male %: 49.0

Female %: 51.0

Urban %: 21.1

Age Distribution %:	0-14:	24.5
	15-64:	68.3
	65 and over:	7.2

Population 2025: 22,594,000

Birth Rate per 1,000: 15.63

Death Rate per 1,000: 6.49

Rate of Natural Increase %: 0.9

Total Fertility Rate: 1.85

Expectation of Life (years): Males 70.6

Females 75.86

Marriage Rate per 1,000: 9.7

Divorce Rate per 1,000: —

Average Size of Households: 4.6

Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Sinhalese, the ethnic majority (74 percent), form a fairly homogeneous group, though they are sometimes divided on the basis of geography and culture into the low-country Sinhalese and the Kandyan Sinhalese. The next most populous group is the Sri Lankan Tamils (18 percent), who have never been fully assimilated into the social or cultural mainstream. Moors constitute about 7 percent of the population, while Burghers and Malays form smaller ethnic groups. Some thousands of Veddahs, the original inhabitants of Sri Lanka, survive in Uva and the north-central areas.

The caste system is reportedly breaking down among Buddhists, but it remains important when marriages are arranged and continues to be widely observed among Hindu Tamils. Members of virtually all of Sri Lanka's ethnic minorities occupy prominent positions in all walks

of public and private life, but since independence the Sinhalese majority has steadily strengthened its position of influence in most sectors of society.

LANGUAGES

Sinhala and Tamil are the official languages, as spoken by about 74 percent and 18 percent of the population, respectively. The government commonly employs English, and about 10 percent of the population speak it well.

RELIGIONS

Buddhists constitute 70 percent of the population, Hindus 15 percent, Muslims 7 percent, and Christians 8 percent. Buddhism in its Theravada form is the religion of most of the Sinhalese, Hinduism that of the Tamils, and Islam that of the Moors and Malays. The constitution makes no reference to an official religion. However, Buddhism is generally identified with Sinhalese nationalism and the Sinhala language. Christianity cuts across ethnic lines, with about 1.6 million followers, most of them descendants of converts to Roman Catholicism from the Portuguese era.

Though Sri Lanka is officially secular, since the advent of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party there has been increasing Buddhization of public life. Buddhist observances and activities are promoted through official participation and in some cases receive public funds. The Buddhist clergy is also becoming increasingly politicized. There is no discrimination against religious minorities, but a number of recent reforms have worked against the Christian minority, such as the abolition of Sundays as weekly rest days and the nationalization of Christian missionary schools.

Religious Affiliations

Buddhist	14,045,000
Hindu	3,010,000
Muslim	1,405,000
Christian	1,605,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

As early as the sixth century B.C.E. Sri Lanka's first settlers, the Veddahs, a dark, nomadic "pygmy" people, occupied the region. During the fourth century B.C.E., a number of Sinhalese kingdoms existed. In the third century Buddhism was introduced to the region by Mahinda, the son of the Indian Mauryan emperor Ashoka. The region was subject to constant invasion and had any number of claimants to power over the course of the next millen-

nium. In 1070 King Vijayabahu drove out the Indians and established the capital at Polonnaruwa. The new kingdom prospered, especially under King Parakramabahu; however, it fell to Indians again in 1215 and remained under Indian control for the next 300 years.

Sri Lanka was under the control of three major Western colonial powers from the mid-16th century to the mid-20th century. The Portuguese were in control of coastal Sri Lanka for nearly 150 years, beginning in 1505. The Dutch supplanted them beginning in 1658 and were, in turn, supplanted by the British, who were successful in bringing the entire country under their control. British rule was relatively benevolent, compared to that of the Dutch and the Portuguese; by permitting indigenous participation in the governmental process, through the Donoughmore Constitution of 1931 and the Soulbury Constitution of 1946, the British prepared Sri Lankans for eventual self-government. Ceylon, as Sri Lanka was originally called, became an independent nation within the Commonwealth in 1948. After independence, political power oscillated between the United National Party (UNP), a moderate pro-Western party, and the Sri Lankan Freedom Party (SLFP), a nationalist party that stressed nonalignment, Buddhism, and democratic socialism. Ceylon was governed from independence until 1956 by the UNP, under the leadership of first Don Stephen Senanayake, then his son Dudley Senanayake, and finally Sir John Kotalawela.

The SLFP, under Solomon Bandaranaike, came to power in 1956 following a campaign in which it demanded that Sinhala be made the country's sole official language. The SLFP's aggressively Sinhalese program was met with a wave of Tamil civil disobedience, which, in turn, generated violent anti-Tamil programs. Bandaranaike, attempting to work out a compromise between the two factions, was assassinated in 1959 by a militant monk who felt he had betrayed the Sinhalese cause. Bandaranaike was eventually succeeded by his wife, Sirimavo R. D. Bandaranaike, who pursued an increasingly nationalist, anti-Western program.

The UNP won the 1965 election under the leadership of Dudley Senanayake, who modified the strict language policy of the SLFP. Economic issues—especially inflation and unemployment—dominated the 1970 campaign, which was won by the United Front, composed of the SLFP, the former Trotskyist Lanka Sana Samaja Party (LSSP), and the Communist Party. In 1971 a radical Sinhalese group, the Maoist Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP), launched an abortive revolt that was quickly suppressed by the army.

The United Front government proclaimed a new constitution in 1972 that declared the nation a republic and changed its name to Sri Lanka. Although much of the government economic program was implemented, the various elements of the front quarreled over the pace

of nationalization, and by 1977 LSSP and Communist Party members had been removed from the government.

Following an extremely bitter campaign in 1977, the UNP won an unprecedented victory over the SLFP, capturing 142 out of 168 seats in the legislature. The National Assembly adopted a constitutional amendment providing for a presidential system on the French model, and Junius R. Jayewardene was sworn in as president in 1978. He was reelected in 1982. That year the term of the National Assembly (by then renamed the Parliament), due to expire in 1983, was extended to 1989 through a constitutional amendment.

During the 1980s politics was dominated by the conflict between the Sinhalese majority in the south and the Tamil minority in the north. In 1983 a state of emergency was declared in an attempt to contain the Tamil rebellion. The level of violence escalated in the mid-1980s, and by 1987 the militant Tamil groups, primarily the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and the Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF), had fought government forces to a standstill.

India, concerned that the revolt might spread to the Tamils in southern India, persuaded the Sri Lankan government to sign an agreement allowing Indian forces to disarm the rebels in return for political reform in Tamil areas. Initially, several rebel groups cooperated with the Indians, but violent opposition to the agreement grew in the south, leading to a resurgence of the extremist JVP. The agreement split the UNP, and Prime Minister Ranasinghe Premadasa won the 1988 presidential election, barely avoiding a runoff. The UNP maintained a majority in the 1989 legislative elections but with fewer than the two-thirds majority necessary for implementing constitutional changes.

India and Sri Lanka ended a protracted dispute over the withdrawal of Indian troops in September 1989. The deadline for withdrawal was December 1989, but changes in the Indian government resulted in delays, and the last troops were not withdrawn until March 1990.

The JVP insurgency was crippled in 1989 when the government killed or arrested all its leaders. For the next three years the country was plunged into a reign of terror in which 30,000 to 60,000 people were murdered. A breakaway Tamil group declared an independent homeland, and fighting between internal combatants continued until 1995, when the parties agreed to a truce. The truce was short-lived, however, and the government retook the Jaffna Peninsula by force. Despite overwhelming numbers, the government was unable to end the violence.

The country continued to move between truce and warfare into 2002. The government and the Tamil Tigers finally signed a cease-fire agreement in February, and the state spent most of the year decommissioning weapons, re-opening roads, and engaging in talks with the rebels. The situation appeared to be on its way to resolution when the two sides agreed to a power-sharing deal in December.

Yet in April 2003 the Tamil Tigers pulled out of the peace talks, claiming that they were being marginalized.

President Kumaratunga found herself in the midst of a political crisis that resulted in her suspending Parliament and dismissing three ministers. Parliament quickly reopened, but talks with the Tigers were still suspended. In April 2004 Kumaratunga's party won only 105 of 225 parliamentary seats, short of a majority. The rebels continued to agitate; a renegade Tamil Tiger commander, Karuna, went underground with his supporters after splitting off from the main rebel group, and in July a suicide bomber hit Colombo, raising fears of renewed terrorism. The year 2004 ended on a particularly disheartening note after a massive tsunami hit the coastline, killing more than 38,000 people in Sri Lanka alone and leaving many thousands homeless. In mediated talks in Geneva in early 2006 the Tamil Tigers and the government reaffirmed the 2002 cease-fire.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

President

1972–78	William Gopallawa
1978–89	Junius Richard Jayewardene
1989–93	Ranasinghe Premadasa
1993–94	Dingiri Banda Wijetunge
1994–2005	Chandrika Kumaratunga
2005–	Mahinda Rajapakse

Prime Minister

1970–77	Sirimavo Ratwatte Dias Bandaranaike
1977–78	Junius Richard Jayewardene
1978–89	Ranasinghe Premadasa
1989–93	Dingiri Banda Wijetunge
1993–94	Ranil Wickremasinghe
1994–2000	Sirimavo Ratwatte Dias Bandaranaike
2000–01	Ratnasiri Wickremanayake
2001–04	Ranil Wickremasinghe
2004–05	Mahinda Rajapakse
2005–	Ratnasiri Wickremanayake

CONSTITUTION

The constitution of May 22, 1972, was amended by the National Assembly on October 4, 1977, and promulgated on September 7, 1978. The constitution incorporates a chapter dealing with fundamental rights and a chapter on principles of state policy. These principles include the establishment of Buddhism as the "foremost" religion and Sinhala as the official language, the progressive advancement of socialist democracy, and the abolition of social and economic privileges.

The amended constitution established a strong presidential form of government on the French model. The president is the head of state, and the presidential term of

office is six years. He may serve no more than two terms. The president has the power to appoint and dismiss members of the cabinet, including the prime minister, and to dissolve Parliament.

Sri Lanka was the first country in Asia to adopt universal suffrage for both men and women over age 21 (later reduced to 18).

PARLIAMENT

Legislative power is vested in the Parliament, a 225-seat unicameral body elected for a six-year term through universal suffrage in a system of modified proportional representation. There are no by-elections; successors to members of the Parliament leaving before general elections are appointed by the head of the party that nominated the outgoing member. The Parliament has supreme legislative authority;

Under the 1972 constitution the National Assembly, renamed the Parliament in 1978, is the supreme instrument of legislative, executive, and judicial powers. The president cannot veto legislation. The legislature can remove the president through a two-thirds vote following a finding of misconduct by the Supreme Court. Laws passed by the Parliament are also not subject to judicial review, although there is a provision for a constitutional court to determine whether a provision in a bill is inconsistent with the constitution.

Members of the Parliament are required to take an oath of loyalty to the unified state of Sri Lanka under a 1983 constitutional amendment.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Since 1947 political power has alternated between the two principal parties, the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP), which also operates as the center of an alliance called the People's Alliance (PA), and the United National Party (UNP). The UNP is a right-wing party that appeals to the upper-middle class and noncommunal groups. The SLFP/PA leans more toward the left and espouses a bigger role for the state. By 1977 each party had held power for a total of 15 years. In the 2004 elections, the SLFP won 105 parliamentary seats, the UNP 82. The remaining seats went to an assortment of minor parties.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Sri Lanka is divided into eight provinces: Central, North Central, North Eastern, North Western, Sabaragamuwa, Southern, Uva, and Western. There has been talk of dividing North Eastern into two provinces, Northern and Eastern. Each province is led by an elected council and

a governor appointed by the president. Councils share power with the central government on matters such as education, health, social services, rural development, agriculture, security, and taxation.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The administration of justice is based on Roman-Dutch civil law, the British common law tradition, and three customary codes—Sinhalese, Tamil, and Muslim. Sinhalese law is also known as Kandyan law, Tamil law as Desawalamai law. Criminal law comes mainly from the British tradition. Family and inheritance law comes from local practices.

At the apex of the court system is the Supreme Court, with a chief justice, 10 puisne judges, and a commissioner of assizes, who enjoys the same rights and powers as a Supreme Court judge. There also exist a Court of Appeal and a High Court. For judicial administration the country is divided into five judicial circuits, and each circuit is subdivided into districts and divisions, the former with district courts and the latter with magistrates' courts. Lower courts include courts of requests, municipal courts, and rural courts. At the lowest level are conciliation boards that try minor civil and criminal cases. Court systems and court procedures were simplified and standardized by the 1973 Administration of Justice Law.

The constitution guarantees the independence of the judiciary, and lawyers and judges are held in high esteem. Members of the court are appointed by the president.

HUMAN RIGHTS

In terms of civil and political rights, Sri Lanka is classified as a partially free country.

Sri Lanka has been under democratic governments continuously since independence, but pressures on the political system have been intense because of Tamil uprisings. An extremely militant minority of Tamils, a well-directed leftist alliance, and an entrenched Buddhist right-wing group have brought Sri Lanka to the brink of totalitarianism a number of times. There have been cases of arbitrary imprisonment, disappearance, torture, and rape of women in police custody. Some civilians have died in fighting between the military and the LTTE. The government has interfered with privacy rights and with freedom of the press.

Violence against women and human trafficking in women and children are problems.

FOREIGN POLICY

The island's major foreign policy orientation is toward India. The relationship between the two countries is compli-

cated by the fact that the Tamils (a people of Indian origin related to the Tamils of South India) have been waging a bitter struggle for independence over the course of several decades. Although the Indian government is officially neutral in this struggle, it is suspected that the principal guerrilla group, the LTTE, receives clandestine help from its ethnic kinsmen across the straits. The ongoing civil war has not only cost Sri Lanka billions in physical losses but has also turned international public opinion against the nation on account of the serious violations of human rights, assassinations, bombings, and extrajudicial killings.

In world diplomacy, Sri Lanka has been active with the Non-Aligned Movement and has promoted sovereignty and growth in the developing world. It has friendly relations with the United States, which has given the country more than \$1.6 billion since 1948.

DEFENSE

Sri Lanka has an army, navy, air force, and police force. Total membership in 2003 was over 240,000, all volunteers. The police force controls internal security and participates in occasional military operations against the LTTE. The rest of the military has been primarily occupied in dealing with LTTE terrorism. There is also a 20,000-member Home Guard that supplies security in the villages near the war zone. The defense structure is headed by the president, and the line of command runs through the minister of defense.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 240,900
 Military Manpower Availability: 4,933,217
 Military Expenditures \$million: 514.8
 as % of GDP: 2.6
 as % of central government expenditures: —
 Arms Imports \$million: 8
 Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

Since 1977 Sri Lanka's government has moved away from state control of the economy and has enthusiastically privatized, deregulated, and encouraged foreign investment. The economy has recovered from a crisis in 1999 and 2000. Relative peace in 2003 allowed the economy to grow, though continued political uncertainty and disasters such as major floods have impeded development. The 2004 tsunami was somewhat devastating to the economy, especially on the local level; the country has received billions of dollars in aid to assist in recovery from the disaster.

As of 2004 the most active economic sectors were textile and clothing manufacture, food processing, in-

surance, banking, and telecommunications. Textiles and garments accounted for 63 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) in 2003. Plantation crops such as tea are becoming less important.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 80.58
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 4,000
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 3.7
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 2.3
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 19.1
 Industry: 26.2
 Services: 54.7
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 71
 Government Consumption: 13
 Gross Domestic Investment: 22.4
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 5.306
 Imports: 7.265
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 3.5
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 28.0
 CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
145.4	154.4	176.3	193.1	205.3

Finance

National Currency: Sri Lankan Rupee (LKR)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = LKR 101.194
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 139
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 15.0
 Total External Debt \$billion: 10.85
 Debt Service Ratio %: 7.75
 Balance of Payments \$million: –587.3
 International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 1.56
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 5.8

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 671.9
 per capita \$: 34.90
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 229

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$billion: 3.34
 Expenditures \$billion: 4.686
 Budget Deficit \$billion: 1.346
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 19.1
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 1.4
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 1.15

(continues)

Agriculture *(continued)*

Irrigation, % of Farms having: 33.3
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 310.3
 Total Farmland % of land area: 14.2
 Livestock: Cattle million: 1.15
 Chickens million: 9.8
 Pigs 000: 70
 Sheep 000: 9
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 6.4
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 307

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 2.5
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 7.1

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 268
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 3.52
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 188
 Net Energy Imports % of use: 44.3
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 2.1
 Production kW-hr billion: 6.38
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 5.93
 Coal Reserves tons million: —
 Production tons million: —
 Consumption tons million: —
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
 Production cubic feet billion: —
 Consumption cubic feet billion: —
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
 Production barrels 000 per day: —
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 73.4
 Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 7.265
 Exports \$billion: 5.306
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 5.6
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 6.9
 Balance of Trade \$million: –587.3

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
India %	16.1	4.8
Hong Kong %	8.4	—
Singapore %	7.8	—
Japan %	6.7	—
China %	4.9	—
South Korea %	4.2	—
Taiwan %	4.1	—
United Kingdom %	4.1	12.5
Malaysia %	4.1	—
United States %	—	34.6
Germany %	—	4.5

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 11,650
 Paved %: 95.0
 Automobiles: 386,600
 Trucks and Buses: 255,300
 Railroad: Track Length km: 1,449
 Passenger-km billion: 4.08
 Freight-km million: 131
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 23
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 173
 Airports: 14
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 6.33
 Length of Waterways km: 160

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 501
 Number of Tourists from 000: 561
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 692
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 462

Communications

Telephones 000: 881
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones 000: 932
 Personal Computers 000: 325
 Internet Hosts per million people: 94
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 10

ENVIRONMENT

Sri Lanka has suffered from a series of environmental problems common to developing nations. As land has been cleared for agricultural and other purposes, deforestation and soil erosion have increased. The country has witnessed a growing threat to its unique animal life from poachers. Freshwater is being polluted by industrial waste and raw sewage. Largely unregulated mining activities are increasing pollution and threatening coastal areas. The nation is prone to flooding and natural disasters such as the 2004 tsunami.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 30.0
 Forest Change (1990–2000) hectares 000: –35
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 15
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 88,943
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 0.55

LIVING CONDITIONS

Sri Lanka is a relatively poor nation, and the civil war has harmed the infrastructure. Many areas have been dangerous due to sporadic fighting. The electrical supply is unre-

liable and many people do not have access to clean water. Public transportation consists of overcrowded buses and slow trains. Traffic is unpredictable and dangerous. In the cities Sri Lankans live in high-rise apartments; in the countryside houses are made of mud with thatched roofs. The tsunami of December 2004 destroyed many homes, and the island has been slow to recover.

HEALTH

Sri Lanka provides free health care to its people, though some citizens choose to pay for private care. Both Western and Ayurvedic medicine are widely available. Life expectancy is high, at 73 years, and the infant mortality rate is low, with fewer than 15 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2004. Common diseases include cholera, malaria, dengue fever, and hepatitis. The HIV infection rate has so far been quite low, but some cases have appeared, probably as caused by foreign tourists visiting prostitutes.

Health

Number of Physicians: 7,963
 Number of Dentists: 461
 Number of Nurses: 14,716
 Number of Pharmacists: 830
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 43
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 14.35
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 92
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 3.7
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 32
 HIV Infected % of adults: < 0.1
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 99
 Measles: 99
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 91
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 78

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Rice is the staple of Sri Lankan cuisine and can appear at every meal; it comes in white and red varieties and can be cooked in water, milk, coconut milk, or meat stock. People make pancakes out of rice flour, topping them with eggs, honey, or yogurt. Many Sri Lankans are vegetarian. Common foods include curry, lentils, vegetables, fruits, fish, and chicken. Sri Lankan food can be very spicy. A popular alcoholic beverage is toddy, made from palm-tree sap.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 21.9
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,360

Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 145.2

Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 75.3

STATUS OF WOMEN

Women have equal rights under the law, including equal property and inheritance rights. Still, the various ethnic and religious groups have their own "personal" laws, which place some limitations on women. Some Tamil families believe women should not be seen working in public. Some Muslim women are discouraged from seeking higher education or employment. One important result of the plantation workers' strike in 1984 was the adoption of equal wages for men and women in that sector. The Ministry of Labor is reportedly considering equalizing wages in all organized sectors of the economy. Women fill important posts in the civil service, the professions, and business, but the majority are found in manual or semiskilled jobs. Women vote in large numbers but otherwise play a more limited role than men in the political process. Sri Lankans are proud that they had the world's first woman prime minister, Sirimavo Bandaranaike. In 1983 the president created the Ministry of Women's Affairs and Teaching Hospitals and gave the minister, a woman, cabinet rank.

Women are still expected to play the main role in caring for homes and families and as such have a great deal of power within the household. Fertility is low; in 2004, each woman bore an average of 1.85 children.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 5
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.0
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 43.2

WORK

Most Sri Lankans are not overly poor; per capita GDP was about \$4,000 in 2004, although as late as 1997 about 22 percent of the population was estimated to be living below the poverty line. Unemployment was 7.8 percent in 2004. About 38 percent of the workforce is employed in agriculture, 45 percent in services, and the rest in industry. Tea is one of Sri Lanka's most important agricultural products, for which most of the work must be laboriously performed by hand; in general, agriculture is still mostly done by hand and with the assistance of water buffaloes. Industries include rubber processing, clothing manufacture, and petroleum refining. Women make up over one-third of the labor force, with many working in formerly male-dominated professions. About 800,000 Sri Lankans work abroad, most of them in the Middle East; these expatriates send home about \$1 billion annually.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 7,260,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 36.1
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 38
 Industry: 17
 Services: 45
 Unemployment %: 7.8

EDUCATION

In theory, schooling is free, universal, and compulsory for 10 years, from ages five to 15. Large proportions of children of both sexes attend school, though dropout rates are high for the children of poor parents. The academic year begins in January and is divided into three terms. The medium of instruction is Sinhala or Tamil, depending on the region, but English is a compulsory second language from the third primary grade onward. Religion is a compulsory subject. Children wear uniforms and treat their teachers with great formality.

Sri Lanka has 12 state-run universities. Students must pass a national entrance examination before attending; the pass rate is about 15 percent. The nation also has technical and vocational colleges, teacher-training colleges, and institutes offering certification in a variety of fields.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 92.3
 Male %: 94.8
 Female %: 90.0
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: —
 First Level: Primary Schools: 9,648
 Teachers: 75,312
 Students: 1,764,300
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 23.4
 Net Enrollment Ratio: —
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 5,771
 Teachers: 119,653
 Students: —
 Student-Teacher Ratio: —
 Net Enrollment Ratio: —
 Third Level: Institutions: 8
 Teachers: —
 Students: —
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: —
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: —

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Sri Lanka's technological infrastructure is hampered by a sporadic electricity supply. Telephone services are inadequate, especially in rural areas, but the government has privatized the national telephone company and hopes

that this will result in improvements. The Internet is becoming an increasingly important source of information, and most Sri Lankan newspapers now have online editions.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 197
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: 19
 Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

Sri Lanka has a variety of news media, public and private, broadcasting and publishing in all major languages. Though prepublication censorship does not exist, a copy of every newspaper, book, and periodical published in Sri Lanka has to be deposited with the registrar of newspapers, while film, concert, and theater productions require official permits. Despite this, government restrictions on the press and media have decreased, and both newspapers and broadcasters regularly criticize the government and debate politics. There have been some threats against journalists, especially in the east.

In 2004 there were eight privately run television stations and more than a dozen private radio stations. The Sri Lankan Broadcasting Corporation runs two television stations and broadcasts radio programming in Sinhala, Tamil, and English.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 12
 Total Circulation 000: 536
 Circulation per 1,000: 29
 Books Published: 4,655
 Periodicals: 36
 Radio Receivers million: 4.3
 per 1,000: 215
 Television sets million: 1.9
 per 1,000: 102

CULTURE

Sri Lankan culture combines Buddhist and Hindu traditions, with some remnants of Dutch and British colonialism. The island is covered with Buddhist sculptures and pagodas called *stupas*. Art forms include metalwork, weaving, pottery, and wood carving. Sri Lankan gem carvers are world renowned. Sinhalese dancing is characterized by acrobatic moves and narrative symbolism. Devil dancing is a dance style used to exorcise demons. The drum is the most important musical instrument.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number:	650
Volumes:	—
Registered borrowers:	197,200
Museums Number:	—
Annual Attendance:	—
Cinema Gross Receipts:	—
Number of Cinemas:	—
Seating Capacity:	—
Annual Attendance:	—

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Storytelling is a common recreational activity in rural areas. Both children and adults enjoy listening to folktales, which usually have some moral or religious lesson. Folk dramas include masked plays depicting folktales, dancing, drumming, and exorcisms.

The Sacred Bo-Tree in Anuradhapura, Sri Lanka's first capital, is believed to have been grown from the tree under which Buddha received enlightenment. The Buddha's right collarbone is said to reside in the Thuparama Dagoba.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Sri Lankans love to visit friends and relatives and receive visitors in their homes. Men and women usually go into separate rooms, women to talk and weave baskets, men to play bridge. Children play games such as cat's cradle, dice, and simple board games. Television is very popular. Schools serve as community entertainment centers, hosting sporting events and performances of plays, music, and folk dramas. In the cities, people go to bars, restaurants, discos, and movies. People who live near the ocean enjoy going to the beach.

ETIQUETTE

Sri Lankans value politeness, gentleness, and restraint. They remove their shoes when entering shrines and temples. The standard greeting consists of placing the palms together in front of the chest and saying "*Ayubowan*," which means "long life" in Sinhalese. Most people eat with their fingers, using their right hands.

FAMILY LIFE

Sri Lankans love their children, holding celebrations to mark milestones in children's lives and diligently attending school performances and sporting events. Family ties are quite strong, and it is common for extended families

to live near one another, sometimes in compounds that include several houses. Though the husband is considered the head of the household, the wife is often in charge of finances and has the last word on who her children marry. Marriages are usually arranged by parents.

Most Sri Lankans belong to castes, into which they are born, but castes do not have the same socially stratifying effect that they do in India.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Men wear Western clothing in the cities, while in the countryside they dress in sarongs. Women wear Indian saris or skirts called *redde*. Clothing is often brilliantly colored.

SPORTS

Cricket is the most popular sport, and the players on the national team have the status of heroes. Other sports include soccer, volleyball, and *elle*, a game similar to baseball. Schools sponsor sporting events, and many children play on teams. Horse racing is a popular spectator sport, and many Sri Lankans enjoy betting on races.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1947** United National Party (UNP) wins the country's first election; Don Stephen Senanayake becomes first prime minister. Ceylon Independence Act is passed.
- 1948** Ceylon Independence Act comes into force; Ceylon becomes a dominion within the Commonwealth. Soulbury Constitution of 1946 is adopted as constitution of Ceylon.
- 1949** Indian Tamils are disenfranchised. Royal Ceylon Army is organized. Rupee is devalued. Central Bank is established.
- 1950** Colombo Plan for Cooperative Economic Development in South and Southeast Asia is launched. Royal Ceylon Navy and Royal Ceylon Air Force are organized.
- 1951** Solomon Ridgeway Dias Bandaranaike founds the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP).
- 1952** Prime Minister Don Stephen Senanayake dies and is succeeded in office by Dudley Senanayake.
- 1953** Dudley Senanayake retires; Sir John Lionel Kotalawela becomes prime minister and leader of the UNP.
- 1955** The UNP loses in general elections; the SLFP forms a coalition government under Bandaranaike. Ceylon is admitted to the United Nations.

- 1956** SLFP wins elections. Sinhala is proclaimed the official language of Ceylon.
- 1957** Great Britain begins phased withdrawal from naval base at Trincomalee.
- 1958** Tamil-Sinhalese language riots occur; "reasonable" use of Tamil is permitted in administration and education.
- 1959** Coalition government is dissolved. Bandaranaike is assassinated by a Buddhist monk; Wijeyananda Dahanayake forms a new cabinet.
- 1960** Dahanayake dissolves the National State Assembly; the UNP wins 50 seats in the general elections and, as the largest legislative group, forms a new government, under Dudley Senanayake. Senanayake's government falls; in fresh elections the SLFP is returned to power, under Sirimavo Bandaranaike. Most of the private denominational schools are nationalized.
- 1961** Sinhala is made the sole official language.
- 1962** William Gopallawa is named the new governor-general. Expropriation of U.S. oil companies' distribution facilities leads to suspension of U.S. aid under the Hickenlooper Amendment.
- 1963** Barter agreement is reached with People's Republic of China.
- 1964** Agreement is reached with India (Sirimavo-Shastri Accord) over status of Indian Tamils in Ceylon.
- 1965** In general elections the UNP is returned to power, under Dudley Senanayake.
- 1966** Use of Tamil for official purposes is permitted in Tamil-speaking areas. Army chief Richard Udugama is arrested in coup attempt.
- 1967** Rupee is devalued.
- 1970** SLFP wins landslide victory in general elections; Sirimavo Bandaranaike heads coalition cabinet with Trotskyite and Communist support. U.S. Peace Corps and Asia Foundation programs are terminated.
- 1971** The Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) leads a nationwide uprising that is suppressed within weeks.
- 1972** The nation adopts new constitution and is proclaimed a republic within the Commonwealth. Ceylon is renamed Sri Lanka. All existing universities are amalgamated as the University of Sri Lanka. Ceilings of 10.11 ha (25 acres) of paddy land and 20.23 ha (50 acres) of other land are placed on all landholdings under new Land Reform Act. Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) is formed to counter rising Sinhala nationalism.
- 1973** Press Council is established as a statutory body; public body takes over majority ownership in Associated Newspapers group.
- 1974** Accord is reached with India over Kachchativu Islands in Palk Strait; India agrees to take back more Indian Tamils.
- 1975** All plantations and domestic banks are nationalized. Trotskyites leave the cabinet.
- 1977** Increasing defections erode the SLFP's strength in the National Assembly. New Leftist Front is formed by Trotskyites and Communists. Prime Minister Sirimavo Bandaranaike and her SLFP are swept out of power in general elections; Junius Richard Jayewardene, leader of the UNP, which wins 139 of 166 seats in the National Assembly, is sworn in as prime minister. In post-election Tamil-Sinhalese riots, 54 people die; nearly 15,000 Tamils flee homes under attack by Sinhalese. Constitution is amended to establish a strong presidential form of government.
- 1978** Under new constitutional amendment, Jayewardene becomes president; Premadasa is named prime minister; National Assembly is renamed as Parliament.
- 1979** State of emergency is declared in Jaffna as Tamil violence escalates.
- 1980** Commission probing abuse of power under Bandaranaike from 1970 to 1977 suspends her civil rights for seven years.
- 1981** As Sinhalese-Tamil relations worsen, the government declares a state of emergency for five days.
- 1982** Jayewardene calls for early presidential elections after Parliament amends the constitution, permitting him to do so. Jayewardene is reelected with 53 percent of the vote. A new state of emergency is declared, as armed Tamil insurrection leads to breakdown of law and order in the north.
- 1983** Term of Parliament is extended for another six years, until 1989, under a national referendum. In by-elections the UNP wins 14 of 18 contested seats. Leftist parties are banned. TULF members boycott and are ousted from Parliament. Parliament passes anti-separatism amendment to the constitution, under which those who espouse the breakup of Sri Lanka lose their civil rights. The state of emergency is ended.
- 1984** All-Party Conference convenes to resolve Tamil separatist demands but is abandoned in December after failing to reach agreement. Government restricts movement of Tamils across Palk Strait.
- 1985** Sri Lanka joins the South Asian Regional Conference.
- 1986** Tamils blow up a plane at Colombo airport.
- 1989** Premadasa becomes president, and Dingiri Banda Wijetunge becomes prime minister; Indian

- troops increase the speed of their withdrawal from Sri Lanka.
- 1990** India withdraws the last of its troops from Sri Lanka.
- 1993** President Premadasa is assassinated on May 1; Chandrika Kumaratunga is elected president.
- 1994** The People's Alliance ends the 17-year rule of the United National Party.
- 1995** A cease-fire fails to hold, as Tamil rebels set off bombs in Colombo in protest of the government's plan to divide the nation into autonomous zones.
- 1998** Fighting between the government and Tamil rebels continues.
- 1999** Norway offers to mediate a round of Sri Lanka-Tamil Tiger peace talks; Chandrika Kumaratunga is reelected president.
- 2000** In elections People's Alliance maintains control of Parliament by a narrow majority; Sinhalese-Tamil violence continues; former president Bandaranaike dies of natural causes and is widely mourned in a state funeral; Sri Lanka bans all live radio and television broadcasts.
- 2001** Parliament is suspended by President Kumaratunga hours before a no-confidence vote, which her minority government was not expected to win. On December 9 the United National Party narrowly wins the parliamentary election.
- 2002** The government and Tamil Tigers sign a permanent cease-fire agreement. During the year, weapons are decommissioned, roads reopen, flights resume, and the government lifts its ban on Tamil Tigers. In December, the government and rebels agree to share power.
- 2003** The Tamil Tigers stop participating in peace talks. President Kumaratunga suspends Parliament after disagreement over the peace process.
- 2004** The Tamil Tiger leader Karuna leads a split in the rebel movement and goes underground. Kumaratunga's party wins 105 seats in parliamentary elections. A suicide bomb is detonated in Colombo. In December a tsunami kills more than 38,000 people and leaves many more homeless.
- 2005** Mahinda Rajapakse is elected president. Ratnasiri Wickremanayake is appointed prime minister.

- 2006** Tamir Tigers and the government reaffirm 2002 cease-fire agreement.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Sri Lanka Department of Elections
<http://www.slections.gov.lk>

SUDAN

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of the Sudan (Jumhuriyat as-Sudan)

ABBREVIATION

SD

CAPITAL

Khartoum

HEAD OF STATE & HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Gen. Omar Hasan Ahmad al-Bashir (from 1989)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Military dictatorship with progovernment parliament

POPULATION

40,187,486 (2005)

AREA

2,505,810 sq km (967,493 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Blacks, Arabs

LANGUAGES

Arabic (official), Nubian, Ta Bedawie, English

RELIGIONS

Sunni Islam, animism, Christianity

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Sudanese dinar

NATIONAL FLAG

Horizontal red (top), white, and black stripes, with a green triangle extending from the staff to one-third of the flag's length

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A lammergeier, or desert hawk, with stylized wings, shown between two scrolls, both with writing in Arabic; the upper scroll reads "Victory to our cause," the lower the state's official name

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"Nahnu Jund Allah Jund al-Watan" (We Are the Army of God and of Our Land)

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (National Day, Independence Day), March 3 (Unity Day), April 6 (Uprising Day), July 1 (Decentralization Day), December 25 (Christmas), various Islamic festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

January 1, 1956

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

April 12, 1973; suspended following coup of April 6, 1985; interim constitution of October 10, 1985, suspended following coup of June 30, 1989; new constitution implemented June 30, 1998, partially suspended December 12, 1999 by President Bashir

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Sudan is the largest country in Africa and lies across the middle reaches of the Nile River. With an area of 2,505,810 sq km (967,493 sq mi), it is slightly over one-quarter the size of the United States. Sudan has a coastline of 853 km (530 mi) and shares its international land boundary of 7,687 km (4,776 mi) with nine neighbors: Egypt, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Uganda, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Central African Republic, Chad, and Libya.

The capital is Khartoum. Along with Omdurman and Khartoum North, the capital city forms an urban

complex that serves as the main industrial, commercial, and communications center.

Sudan has three distinct physical regions. Most of the country is made up of a flat plain extending some 800 to 950 km (500 to 600 mi) east to west and more than 1,600 km (1,000 mi) north to south. The heart of this region is the confluence of the Blue Nile and White Nile rivers, especially the broad wedge of land between the two rivers south of Khartoum. In the southern part of this region, permanent swamplands, known as the Sudd, cover an area of 80,450 sq km (31,426 sq mi). The northern quarter of the country is covered by the Libyan and Nubian deserts. Four mountain zones constitute the third region.

Sudan



The country's vast areas of contrasting terrain are linked together by the Nile River. The White Nile enters Sudan from Uganda and is fed by a number of tributaries draining the southwest. The Blue Nile rises in the Ethiopian Highlands and joins the White Nile at Khartoum.

Geography

Area sq km: 2,505,810; sq mi 967,493

World Rank: 10th

Land Boundaries, km: Central African Republic 1,165; Chad 1,360; Democratic Republic of the Congo 628; Egypt 1,273; Eritrea 605; Ethiopia 1,606; Kenya 232; Libya 383; Uganda 435

(continues)

Geography *(continued)*

Coastline, km: 853
Elevation Extremes meters:
Lowest: Red Sea 0
Highest: Kinyeti 3,187
Land Use %
Arable Land: 6.8
Permanent Crops: 0.2
Forest: 25.9
Other: 67.1

Population of Principal Cities (1993)

Kassala	234,622
Khartoum	947,483
Khartoum North	700,887
Nyala	227,183
Omdurman	1,271,403
Port Sudan	308,195
Al Ubayyid	229,425
Wad Medani	211,362

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Sudan has a wide range of tropical, continental climates. The dry season ranges from three months in the humid south to nine months in Khartoum. In the north, high temperatures are common throughout the year. The mean daily maximum reaches about 40°C (104°F) in Khartoum in May and June, with a high of 47.8°C (118°F). In the south, mean maximums are only slightly lower in the hot months of February and March. January, the coolest month, has a mean maximum of 32.2°C (90°F) in the north. In the south the rainy season produces over 1,270 mm (50 in) of rainfall. Levels of rainfall are reduced to 380 to 760 mm (15 to 30 in) in the central area and to 130 to 250 mm (5 to 10 in) in the Khartoum region. Much of the northern desert area receives only a few scattered showers each year, and northern border areas may not receive any rain at all during some years.

Climate and Weather

Temperature Range
Summer: 104°F to 118°F
Winter: 90°F
Average Rainfall
South: 50 in
Central Region: 15 in to 30 in
Khartoum: 5 in to 10 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

The southern part of Sudan is wetter than the north and is covered with lush tropical vegetation and forests. Vegetation follows the Nile north through the swampy Sudd region. The Nile is the main source of water in many of

the more arid parts of the country. The northern portion is very dry, featuring desert plants. People in the northern desert areas depend on the annual haboob winds to blow rain in from the Congo River basin, an unpredictable and unreliable phenomenon. Most of Sudan's large animals live in the southern portion, where the climate is similar to that of Kenya; species include elephants, rhinoceroses, hippos, lions, leopards, giraffes, zebras, antelopes, monkeys, and crocodiles.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 40,187,486
World Rank: 30th
Density per sq km: 14.1
% of annual growth (1999-2003): 2.1
Male %: 50.5
Female %: 49.5
Urban %: 38.9
Age Distribution %:
0-14: 43.2
15-64: 54.5
65 and over: 2.4
Population 2025: 61,339,000
Birth Rate per 1,000: 35.17
Death Rate per 1,000: 9.16
Rate of Natural Increase %: 2.6
Total Fertility Rate: 4.85
Expectation of Life (years): Males 57.33
Females 59.8
Marriage Rate per 1,000: —
Divorce Rate per 1,000: —
Average Size of Households: 5.3
Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Ethnically, Sudan is fragmented into all of 56 ethnic groups and 597 subgroups, but the basic division of the country is into the Arab north and the black African south. About one-third of the people of Sudan are Arabs, although the term "Arab" is used loosely, as indeed throughout the Middle East, to cover Arabized inhabitants who may only speak Arabic. Their historical position as conquerors and their concentration in the more developed regions have made the Arabs the dominant group in national affairs, and Sudan is officially considered an Arab country.

The Nubians, who constitute the next major ethnic element, are the oldest settlers of the land. They include the northern Maha, the Danagla, the Gerkid, and the Midob. Most of the people of southern Sudan are called Nilotics because of their association with the Nile. The Dinka are the largest Nilotic group, constituting 11.5 percent of the total population and 41 percent of the southern regional population in the 1983 census. Interethnic relations are colored by historic conflict between Arabs and blacks. Southern Sudan was one of the principal catch-

ment areas of the Arab slave trade, and memories of Arab indignities and slave raids linger in the south. Islam, with its strong assimilationist tendencies, poses a continuing threat to the fragile social structure of the black tribes.

LANGUAGES

Over 115 languages are spoken in Sudan, including 12 major ones. No single language is understood by all Sudanese. Arabic is used by slightly less than half the population and has been the official language since 1956, although it is spoken by less than 1 percent of the population in the southern region. English is recognized as a working language in the south. The major vernaculars in the south are Dinka, Nuer, Lango, Zande, and Moru-Madi.

RELIGIONS

Sunni Islam, introduced in the 14th century, is the official religion and is followed by about 70 percent of the population, particularly in the north. Except among Arabs, Islam has not totally displaced vestiges and observances of older traditional forms. The roughly four million people in the southern provinces adhere mainly to indigenous, animistic beliefs and have long resisted the call of Islam. Christianity is followed by approximately 5 percent of the population, mostly among the Dinka in the south.

Religious Affiliations

Sunni Muslim	28,131,000
Indigenous Beliefs	10,047,000
Christian	2,009,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Egyptian dominance of northern Sudan began around 2755–2255 B.C.E., when the country was known as Nubia, or the Land of Cush. It proved to be a rich source of trade and plunder for Egypt, with goods such as gold, ebony, and ivory, as well as slaves, bought and sold or stolen. By 1570 B.C.E. Nubia had been reduced to the status of an Egyptian province.

A Nubian revolt in the eighth century B.C.E. ended Egyptian rule and led to a series of independent kingdoms. The Romans invaded in 23 B.C.E. and annexed a large part of present-day Sudan. From the 16th century C.E. onward, Turkish influence grew stronger under the Ottomans, and Islam gained a firm hold as the most popular religion. In 1822 Egypt won a great victory, and Nubia once again became an Egyptian province, known as Egyptian Sudan.

Sudan was effectively under British rule (though technically an Anglo-Egyptian condominium) from 1899 to 1956. Yet not until 1916, when the last stronghold of Mahdism was taken, was the country completely pacified. The “colony” was administered by a governor-general appointed by the khedive of Egypt on the recommendation of the British government. However, in reality Egyptian participation in the government was nonexistent and was only maintained until the end for diplomatic and political convenience and to prevent a popular revolt. The British nature of rule became more obvious after 1924, when all Egyptian civil servants were evacuated. British colonial policy had three objectives: to encourage tribalism as an alternative to nationalism, to detach the southerners from Arabic and northern influences, and to prevent a linkup of Egyptian and Sudanese nationalists. The British were successful in the last only; Sudan decisively rejected union with Egypt and unilaterally became independent in 1956.

Independence was marred by a war of secession that erupted in the south in 1955. The civil war, which pitted the Arab and Islamic north against the black, mainly Christian and animist south continued into the 1990s. The multiparty parliamentary government that led the nation at independence was overthrown in a 1958 army coup led by Lt. Gen. Ibrahim Abboud. Six years later the military regime collapsed in a wave of strikes and riots, clearing the way for a second period of parliamentary politics (1965–69), which lasted until Jaafar Muhammad al-Nemieri’s 1969 coup.

After an initial two-year “radical” period, Sudan under al-Nemieri pursued a policy of reconciliation at home and abroad. A new constitution was promulgated in May 1973, recognizing the Sudan Socialist Union (SSU) as the only legal political organization. In 1983 al-Nemieri introduced Islamic (sharia) law.

Al-Nemieri survived unsuccessful coup attempts in 1971 and 1976 but was overthrown in 1985 by Gen. Abdul Rahman Swar al-Dahab following food riots and a general strike in Khartoum. A transitional military council governed until the return of civilian rule in 1986. Elections were held in 1986 but were canceled in the rebel-controlled south. Sadiq al-Mahdi was elected prime minister of a coalition government composed of the Umma and Democratic Unionist parties. The coalition proved fragile, and the government failed to adequately address the challenges presented by a ruined economy and the continuing civil war. The civil war escalated in 1986–87, and in 1987 a state of emergency was declared following demonstrations and strikes in protest of food price increases. Al-Mahdi was overthrown in 1989 in a military coup led by Brig. Omar Hasan Ahmad al-Bashir. Despite international attempts to mediate the civil war, peace talks stalled as a result of the government’s determination to apply sharia to the south. The government survived two coup attempts in 1990. In 1991 the government passed a law applying sharia in the north but not in the south.

In 1993 the Government Revolutionary Command Council, which had ruled since the 1989 coup, dissolved itself after appointing al-Bashir president, and a year later the government agreed to hold elections in two years' time. Elections were held in 1996, but no political parties were allowed. Hoping to end fighting in the south, the government signed a peace agreement with five of six southern rebel groups in 1997. However, the Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA), the main rebel force, was not included in the pact. Meanwhile, the United States slapped economic sanctions on Sudan, claiming that the government supported terrorism, and a year later fired missiles at a Khartoum factory supposedly making chemical weapons; Sudan denied the charges. By 1999 the government had ended its ban on political opposition within the country, and the United States decided to at least partially lift sanctions, allowing for the greater importation of food and medical supplies. The 2000 elections were boycotted by Sudan's main opposition parties. As a result, al-Bashir was reelected with 86.5 percent of the vote. In 2001 the Sudanese government accepted a Libyan-Egyptian initiative to end the civil war that called for reforms and a national reconciliation conference, and in January 2002 the SPLA and the Sudanese government signed a landmark peace agreement providing for a six-month renewable cease-fire in the Central Nuba Mountains.

Fighting broke out in the western Darfur region in early 2003, as sparked by rebels who claimed to want greater autonomy than the government and the southern rebels appeared likely to offer. Over the next two years over 1.5 million people fled their homes. Many thousands were killed by pro-Arab militias called *janjaweed*, who were carrying out a program of ethnic cleansing against blacks, while many more women were raped by Arabs who wanted them to bear Arab children. Starvation and disease became major problems, leading to the deaths of many of the refugees who were not killed by soldiers. Living conditions fell for all Sudanese, and the conflict spilled over into neighboring Uganda, Libya, and Egypt.

The government and the rebels signed a peace deal in January 2005 that was hoped would end the 21 years of civil war between the Islamic north and the black south. The United Nations issued a report at that time accusing the militias and the government of continuing to systematically abuse civilians in Darfur; with over 10,000 people murdered each month through mid-2005, the international community widely recognized the acts carried out by the militias and the government as genocide.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

Head of State

1965–69 Ismail al-Azhari

1969–85 Jaafar Muhammad al-Nemieri

1985–86 Abdul Rahman Swar al-Dahab

1986–89 Ahmad al-Mirghani

1989– Omar Hasan Ahmad al-Bashir

CONSTITUTION

In 1996 President al-Bashir handily won the first elections in Sudan since the 1989 coup, capturing 75.8 percent of the vote. However, no opposition political parties were permitted to formally contest the election, and international observers dismissed the poll as less than free and fair. A 1998 national referendum saw the overwhelming passage of a new constitution (with 96 percent voting in favor), which was meant to be the first step in the return of the country to civilian rule and multiparty democracy. The constitution establishes Islamic law as the national standard but also guarantees more religious freedom than previously. Under the constitution's terms, executive power would be vested in a council of ministers, which would be appointed by the president but be responsible to the new National Assembly. The new constitution was partially suspended by al-Bashir on December 12, 1999.

PARLIAMENT

The Majlis Watani, or unicameral National Assembly, has 360 members, with 270 directly elected for four-year terms and the rest indirectly elected by a national conference of interest groups known as the National Congress. In the 1996 elections no political parties were allowed to formally participate, but the Assembly is dominated by the National Islamic Front and other fundamentalist Islamic groups. Al-Bashir dissolved the National Assembly in December 1999 following a power struggle with the Assembly speaker. The 2000 elections were boycotted by Sudan's main opposition parties.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Political parties were banned in 1989, but under the 1998 constitution and also a new law adopted in 1999, the government allowed "political associations" to be formed as a prelude to a return to a multiparty system. Elections in 2000 were boycotted by Sudan's main opposition parties. The largest and most powerful organization is the National Congress, which represents the "legal front organization" of the banned National Islamic Front (Muslim Brotherhood) political party—the dominant force in the government. There are over 20 minor progovernment parties.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

In February 1994 Sudan adopted a federal system that divided the country into 26 states, each administered by a

governor with the assistance of between five and six ministers per state. All states are economically dependent on the central government.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The judiciary is largely subservient to the government. The chief justice of the Supreme Court is appointed by the president. The judicial system includes four types of courts: regular criminal and civil courts, security courts led by both military and civilian judges, military courts, and tribal courts. The legal system is based on a mixture of English common law and religious law. In 1991 the country enacted a new penal code based on Islamic sharia law, instituting harsh punishments such as stonings and amputations. The government officially exempts the 10 southern states, whose populations are non-Muslim, from the application of sharia, but the 1991 law leaves open the possibility of sharia being introduced in the south.

HUMAN RIGHTS

In terms of civil and political rights, Sudan is classified as an unfree country. The government's human rights record remains extremely poor. Security forces routinely torture criminal suspects and political dissidents, and there is little access to fair trials or judicial representation. Severe restrictions are placed on the freedoms of assembly and the press, though there were some indications that these restrictions would be eased in the 21st century. While religious freedom is supposedly guaranteed by the 1998 constitution, in practice Islam is the only religion that is tolerated. Since 1995 there has been the systematic demolition of Christian schools and prayer centers under the pretext that they fell where government officials had planned highways.

Atrocities have been committed by all sides throughout the civil war, especially by the *janjaweed* in the Darfur region through 2005; their actions, which have included mutilation, murder, rape, and the destruction of entire villages, have been deemed outright genocide. The principal insurgent faction, the Sudan People's Liberation Army, is known to have executed prisoners, looted villages, raped women, and kidnapped women and children—sometimes for sale into bondage.

FOREIGN POLICY

Following the 1989 revolution, Sudan abandoned its pro-Western foreign policy in favor of nonalignment. However, by the end of the 1990s the nation was left with few close allies due to border disputes, links to global terrorism, and support of antigovernment rebels in Eritrea, Egypt, and Uganda. Sudan broke diplomatic relations

with Uganda and Eritrea in the 1990s but had restored them by the end of the decade. The country's regional and international stature was damaged when it sided with Iraq during the Persian Gulf War in 1991, which alienated Western donor countries and further crippled the war-ravished economy, and when it played a role in a failed assassination attempt against Egyptian leader Hosni Mubarak in 1995, for which the United Nations imposed economic sanctions. Sudan's strongest allies remained Iran and Libya, the latter proposing a political and economic union in 1995. By 2000 the United States, despite the easing of some sanctions, still labeled Sudan a "state of concern" because of its support for terrorism and led opposition within the United Nations that cost Sudan a temporary seat on the Security Council.

As of 2005 Sudan's position in world affairs was especially tense. The nation has tried to solidify ties to other Arab countries, especially since 2000, raising concerns in the United States and the European Union, which hope to stifle Islamic terrorism. The United States and United Nations have strongly disapproved of Sudan's actions in the civil war, and the massacre of civilians in Darfur has been widely labeled genocide. Pressure from the international community and the UN Security Council helped drive the government and the SPLA to sign a Comprehensive Peace Agreement on January 9, 2005.

DEFENSE

The Sudan People's Armed Forces include a standing army, navy, and air force, which had about 100,000 members in 2004. The country also maintains civilian militia called the Popular Defense Forces and numerous police forces. Sudan's military equipment is outdated, and the nation has been unable to procure new equipment since the United States ended assistance in 1989. Military service is compulsory for males from the age of 18, and service is three years. Sudan's soldiers have committed many abuses against civilians, during the civil war and in the Darfur region, without repercussions from leadership.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	114,500
Military Manpower Availability:	8,291,695
Military Expenditures \$million:	587
as % of GDP:	3.0
as % of central government expenditures:	—
Arms Imports \$million:	57
Arms Exports \$million:	—

ECONOMY

Although Sudan has many natural resources that could be exploited, its economy in early 2005 was in a terrible state.

2220 Sudan

Perhaps four million people were displaced and living as refugees. The government was still heavily involved in the economy, though it was making small efforts toward liberalizing trade. Infrastructure was devastated by the war, and transportation and irrigation remained major problems.

Agriculture employs four-fifths of the workforce and contributes about 40 percent of gross domestic product (GDP), but frequent droughts impair the country's ability to depend on its crops. As a result, Sudan is a net importer of food. The few cash crops include cotton and gum arabic; people grow wheat, sesame seeds, and peanuts for domestic consumption. Sudan exports many camels and sheep to other Arab nations, especially Egypt and Saudi Arabia.

Sudan has very little industry, though there are some factories producing civilian and military vehicles. Oil production has some potential. There are signs that the Upper Nile region may contain vast petroleum deposits, which could turn around Sudan's economy. As of 2003 oil was already bringing in nearly \$2 billion annually. In order to pull itself out of its economic slump, Sudan will need continued infusions of foreign aid, especially in order to manage its enormous foreign debt of about \$21 billion.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 76.19
GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 1,900
GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 6.2
GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 4.0
Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:

Agriculture: 38.7
Industry: 20.3
Services: 41.0

Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:

Private Consumption: 83
Government Consumption: 6
Gross Domestic Investment: 16.0

Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 3.395
Imports: 3.496

% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: —
% of Income Received by Richest 10%: —

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
341.4	399.8	463.8	—	525.5

Finance

National Currency: Sudanese Dinar (SDD)
Exchange Rate: \$1 = SDD 257.91
Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 458
Central Bank Discount Rate %: —
Total External Debt \$billion: 21
Debt Service Ratio %: 1.3
Balance of Payments \$million: –763.6
International Reserves SDRs \$million: 847
Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 9.0

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 621
per capita \$: 18.50
Foreign Direct Investment \$billion: 1.35

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
Revenues \$billion: 3.057
Expenditures \$billion: 2.965
Budget Surplus \$million: 92
Tax Revenues as % of GDP: 6.4

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 38.7
Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2002) %: 7.4
Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 0.07
Irrigation, % of Farms having: 11.7
Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 4.28
Total Farmland % of land area: 6.8
Livestock: Cattle million: 38.3
Chickens million: 37
Pigs 000: —
Sheep 000: 47
Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 19.4
Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 59.6

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 1.43
Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 8.5

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 10.5
Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 2.16
Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 68
Net Energy Imports % of use: –57.8
Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: 728
Production kW-hr billion: 2.47
Consumption kW-hr billion: 2.3
Coal Reserves tons million: —
Production tons million: —
Consumption tons million: —
Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: 3
Production cubic feet billion: —
Consumption cubic feet billion: —
Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels million: 563
Production barrels 000 per day: 343
Consumption barrels 000 per day: 91
Pipelines Length km: 2,365

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 3.496
 Exports \$billion: 3.395
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 44.2
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): –1.2
 Balance of Trade \$million: –763.6

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Saudi Arabia %	16.3	17.1
China %	14.2	40.9
United Kingdom %	5.0	—
Germany %	4.9	—
India %	4.2	—
France %	4.1	—
United Arab Emirates %	—	5.4

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 11,900
 Paved %: 36.3
 Automobiles: 46,000
 Trucks and Buses: 60,500
 Railroad: Track Length km: 5,995
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: —
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 2
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 27
 Airports: 75
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 767
 Length of Waterways km: 4,068

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 52
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: —
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: —

Communications

Telephones 000: 900
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.03
 Cellular Telephones 000: 650
 Personal Computers 000: 200
 Internet Hosts per million people: —
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 7.5

ENVIRONMENT

The country suffers from a chronic shortage of potable water and is plagued by severe soil erosion and encroaching deserts. The country's once-thriving wildlife population has been reduced to dangerously low levels because of poaching and excessive hunting, which have been enabled by the proliferation of arms from the country's civil war.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 25.9
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: –959
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 5
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 0.17

LIVING CONDITIONS

Sudan's average standard of living has fallen since 2003, when the fighting began in Darfur. There is not enough water or food for the population. Housing styles vary by ethnic group and location, but people typically live in round huts with thatched roofs. Through 2005 many blacks lived in fear of being driven from their homes by Arab militias. The infrastructure is in tatters, with a lack of electricity and few roads or railroads. The thousands of people who have died as a result of the atrocities in Darfur have left a profound gap in society. Widows and orphans are common.

HEALTH

Sudan suffers from serious health problems, not the least of which are injuries caused by fighting. There are no doctors, nurses, medicines, or clinics in many rural areas. The war has led to the closure of many medical facilities; the ones that remain open are typically controlled by militias. Life expectancy in 2005 was 58.5 years, and the infant mortality rate was 62.5 deaths per 1,000 live births. Fertility is high, with each woman bearing almost five children. Most women use midwives to assist with births. HIV/AIDS is a growing problem: In 2001 about 2.3 percent of the population was infected. Other common diseases are malaria, sleeping sickness, tuberculosis, and dysentery.

Health

Number of Physicians: 4,973
 Number of Dentists: 218
 Number of Nurses: 26,730
 Number of Pharmacists: 311
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 16
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 62.5
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 590
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 4.9
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 19
 HIV Infected % of adults: 2.3
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 50
 Measles: 57
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 34
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 69

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Food is a major preoccupation for many Sudanese people, especially refugees from the violence in Darfur. Malnutrition is common and causes health problems, especially among children.

Sudanese cuisine is built around wheat and sorghum, which are often made into breads or pancakes. Millet porridge is a common breakfast food. There are many Arab dishes, such as the flat bread *kbubz* and the fava bean puree *fool medamas*. People eat beef, lamb, and chicken, which are often made into a stew with tomatoes, onions, and garlic. For dessert, fresh fruits and custards are popular. Coffee and tea are ubiquitous; Sudanese coffee is brewed in a special pot and flavored with cloves and spices. Non-Islamic Sudanese enjoy drinking wine made from dates and honey, a clear liquor distilled from dates called *aragi*, and a locally brewed beer called *merissa*. Muslims do not drink alcohol or eat pork.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 26.5

Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,360

Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 132.1

Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 58.2

STATUS OF WOMEN

Although men and women retain traditional roles within Sudanese society, women are active in the professions and in higher education; still, they remain underrepresented in both. Some aspects of the law and traditional societal views foster discrimination against women. For example, a daughter inherits only half of what a son would receive from parents. Separate educational facilities for men and women are the rule.

In urban areas females drive automobiles and work in offices with men, although a 2000 law issued by the governor of Khartoum forbids women to work in public places. In urban parts of the north women often wear the Arabic female wrapping, or chador, over Western clothing. Sudanese women participate in both national and international forums. In rural areas men and women work side by side, although a division of labor exists.

Violence against women remains a serious problem, and there have been credible reports of women being sold as laborers and domestic servants. Female genital mutilation, though illegal, is widely practiced throughout much of Sudan.

Many black women have reported being raped by Arab militias, often while Arab women cheer on the men. This has reportedly been done to dehumanize black women and humiliate black men, as well as to force black women to bear Arab children. There have also been cases

of black women being made sex slaves for the Arab militias. Women are often afraid to report rapes for fear of being ostracized by their own societies. They also run the risk of being imprisoned for becoming pregnant outside of marriage.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —

Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 10

Female Administrators and Managers %: —

Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 0.85

Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 18.9

WORK

About 80 percent of Sudanese work as farmers or raise livestock. Most families have small farms on which they grow millet, fruits, and vegetables for personal consumption; women do most of the work on these home farms. The government operates some large farms in central Sudan that produce cotton, gum arabic, and other crops. In the cities, some people work in government offices, schools, and businesses. Some people sell handicrafts and food in local markets. Many young people have moved from the countryside to Khartoum seeking work, but jobs are scarce and wages low. Families often depend on relatives working in other countries to send home money.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 11,000,000

Female Participation Rate %: 30.3

Labor by Sector %:

Agriculture: 80

Industry and Commerce: 7

Government: 13

Unemployment %: 18.7

EDUCATION

During the 1990s the Sudanese government transformed the public educational system from one that taught a Western curriculum and emphasized English into one that teaches an entirely Arabic-language, Islamic curriculum. All courses are based on the Koran. The people in the south have resented the Arabization of schools, which has been a contributing factor in the years of war.

Many schools have been closed due to warfare, and school attendance has dropped to about 45 percent of children at the primary level. Parents must pay fees to send their children to school, which adds to the difficulty of doing so. Sudan's literacy rate is relatively low, at around 61 percent.

Most of the nation's colleges and universities are in the north. In the past, women attended universities and entered professions along with men, but most university studies have been disrupted by fighting.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 61.1
 Male %: 71.8
 Female %: 50.5
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 5.1
 First Level: Primary Schools: 12,187
 Teachers: 105,142
 Students: 3,028,127
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 28.8
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 45.8
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 2,578
 Teachers: 50,578
 Students: 1,262,425
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 25.5
 Net Enrollment Ratio: —
 Third Level: Institutions: 24
 Teachers: 4,486
 Students: 204,114
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 6.8
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: —

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Sudan lacks even basic technological infrastructure, including roads and electricity. The telephone system is adequate by regional standards, and the government is expanding it. In 2003 there were about 900,000 telephone lines and 650,000 cellular telephones, which are rapidly growing in popularity. About 300,000 people were using the Internet.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 278
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: 3.7
 Patent Applications by Residents: 2

MEDIA

All major media in Sudan are government owned. The government controls all television and radio broadcasts, and the main television station, Sudan TV, employs a permanent military censor. The government also controls radio broadcasts. Privately owned television and radio stations are not permitted, although the government does jointly own a cable service with private investors. There are broadcasts from foreign stations, such as BBC World Service and Radio Monte Carlo, and some opposition groups broadcast into Sudan from abroad.

There are a few private newspapers and publications that have slightly more freedom to publicize a variety of views, but the government still censors their content. Major dailies include *al-Ra'y al-Amm*, *al-Ayam*, and *Al-wan*. The *Khartoum Monitor* is a privately owned English-language paper.

Media

Daily Newspapers: —
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: —
 Periodicals: 11
 Radio Receivers million: 13.3
 per 1,000: 461
 Television sets million: 5
 per 1,000: 173

CULTURE

Sudanese people love music. Local styles blend Arabic lyrics and melodies with African rhythms. Poetry is considered an important art form. Famous poets include Taban Lo Liyong and SIRR Anai Kelueljang. Tayeb Salih is a popular novelist. Decorative arts include carvings in ebony or ivory and elaborate daggers and sheaths. Calligraphy is popular.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: 7
 Annual Attendance: 221,000
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Many Sudanese still practice ancestor worship and animism. Ancestors are believed to influence the weather, the outcome of war, and other aspects of life. The tribes that raise cattle, such as the Nuer and the Dinka, attach spiritual importance to their animals, naming them and killing them according to ritualistic rules.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Men and women often socialize separately, especially in Islamic and urban areas. Women receive their friends at

home, while men go out to meet friends. Rural men meet in huts called *dirwanya*.

The sexes do get together for traditional dances, especially in the south, where sex segregation has not been nearly as strict as in the Islamic regions. Fishing and hunting are popular outdoor activities, though they are often done more out of necessity than for sport.

ETIQUETTE

Hospitality is extremely important in Sudan. When Sudanese people receive visitors, they immediately offer their guests tea or fruit juices. Meals are usually eaten around low tables covered with several stews, which people scoop up with pieces of flat bread. Tea and coffee are served with ritualistic flair, and hosts will sometimes light incense to honor visitors.

FAMILY LIFE

Family life varies according to culture. Traditionally, most Sudanese maintain close ties with extended family and keep track of their genealogy through several generations. Family status among herders depends on the size of the herd. People still follow practices such as paying for brides with cattle. Ethnic groups have begun mixing in urban areas, which has changed family structures. Some Arabized tribes practice polygamy.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Islamic Sudanese dress in Arabic style, with turbans, robes, long-sleeved tunics called *djellabas*, and sandals. Women cover their heads and take care to dress modestly.

SPORTS

Sudanese people love soccer, and the nation has produced some of Africa's best players. Basketball and volleyball are also popular. Men enjoy wrestling and a form of traditional fighting done with shields and sticks.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1954** The first elected, all-Sudanese government assumes office.
- 1955** Southern army units mutiny against the "Sudanization" program; United Kingdom and Egypt withdraw their troops; sidestepping the scheduled plebiscite, the parliament declares Sudan an independent state.

- 1956** Egypt and the United Kingdom recognize the Republic of Sudan; the Arab League and United Nations extend membership to the nation.
- 1958** Umma Party wins a parliamentary majority in February; in November the military overthrows the government, as led by Lieutenant General Ibrahim Abboud; Abboud dismisses parliament, declares martial law, suspends the constitution, and appoints himself prime minister.
- 1964** Abboud resigns, and a supreme council of state assumes control of Sudan; parliamentary government resumes.
- 1969** Colonel Jaafar Muhammad al-Nemieri seizes power in an army coup, which rules by revolutionary council.
- 1972** Al-Nemieri is elected president.
- 1973** Al-Nemieri promulgates a new constitution.
- 1978** Al-Nemieri is reelected president.
- 1983** Elected to a third term as president, al-Nemieri announces a replacement of the penal code with Islamic sharia law.
- 1985** In the aftermath of food riots, al-Nemieri is ousted in a bloodless coup led by General Abdul Rahman Swar al-Dahab.
- 1986** Civilian rule is restored, bringing Sadiq al-Mahdi to power as prime minister; elections in the south are cancelled, as the civil war there intensifies.
- 1987** As demonstrations over soaring food prices increase, al-Mahdi declares a state of emergency.
- 1989** Brigadier Omar Hasan Ahmad al-Bashir assumes power in a coup.
- 1991** Sharia law is imposed in northern Sudan; Sudan sides with Iraq in the Persian Gulf War.
- 1992** A transitional National Assembly is created, to be replaced by an elected Assembly in 1996.
- 1993** The Government Revolutionary Command Council, which had ruled since the 1989 coup, dissolves itself after appointing al-Bashir president.
- 1994** Eritrea severs diplomatic relations with Sudan; the government agrees to hold elections in two years' time.
- 1995** Sudanese agents stage a failed assassination attempt against Egyptian leader Hosni Mubarak.
- 1996** The first elections since the 1989 coup take place, but political parties are not allowed; UN resolution condemns and imposes sanctions on Sudan for participation in the assassination attempt against Mubarak.
- 1997** The government signs a peace agreement with five of six southern rebel groups, but the influential SPLA is not included in the pact; Sudan protests Eritrea's occupation of Sudanese territory to the United Nations; the United States

- imposes sanctions against Sudan, claiming the country supported international terrorism.
- 1998** A new constitution is adopted in a national referendum; famine grips much of country; following bombings of U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, the United States launches a missile attack against an alleged chemical weapons factory in Sudan.
- 1999** The government allows registration of political associations, ending a 10-year ban; the United States eases sanctions, allowing for greater importation of food and medical supplies.
- 2000** Sudan and Eritrea agree to restore diplomatic relations; United States declares Sudan a "state of concern" because of its support for terrorism; presidential and legislative elections are boycotted by Sudan's main opposition parties.
- 2001** The Sudanese government accepts a Libyan-Egyptian initiative to end the civil war, with the initiative calling for reforms and a national reconciliation conference; the UN Security Council lifts the sanctions it had imposed in 1996 over the alleged harboring of those suspected of attempting to assassinate President Mubarak, of Egypt; the United States imposes sanctions on Sudan due to its record with regard to human rights violations and terrorism.
- 2002** The SPLA and the Sudanese government sign a landmark peace agreement providing for a six-month renewable cease-fire in the Central Nuba Mountains.
- 2003** Rebels in Darfur rise up, claiming that the government is neglecting the region.
- 2004** The national army goes to Darfur to put down the rebellion. Civilians flee to Chad. Progovernment Arab *janjaweed* militias carry out systematic killings and rapes of black Africans. U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell calls these abuses genocide.
- 2005** The government and southern rebels sign an agreement to end the civil war, promising to share power and implement a permanent cease-fire. Genocide continues in Darfur.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- The Sudan Page
<http://www.sudan.net>

SURINAME

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Suriname (Republiek Suriname)

ABBREVIATION

SR

CAPITAL

Paramaribo

HEAD OF STATE & HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

President Runaldo Ronald Venetiaan (from 2000)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Constitutional democracy

POPULATION

438,144 (2005)

AREA

163,270 sq km (63,039 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Hindustani, Creole, Javanese, black, Amerindian, Chinese, white

LANGUAGES

Dutch (official), English, Sranang Tongo (Taki-Taki), Hindustani, Javanese

RELIGIONS

Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, indigenous beliefs

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Surinamese dollar

NATIONAL FLAG

Five horizontal stripes, of green (top), white, red, white, and green, with the green stripes twice the height of the white stripes and the red stripe twice the height of a green stripe; in the center of the red stripe is a five-pointed yellow star.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

Two Amerindian warriors flank an oval shield divided vertically into two halves. On the left appears a sailing ship on an ocean, on the right a palm tree. In a green diamond in the center is a five-pointed yellow star. The shield and the two Amerindians stand on a scroll proclaiming the national motto: *Justitia, pietas, fides* (Justice, piety, faith).

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“God Be with Our Suriname”

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year’s Day), February 25 (Revolution Day), May 1 (Labor Day), July 1 (National Union Day), November 25 (Independence Day), various Christian, Hindu, and Islamic festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

November 25, 1975

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

September 30, 1987

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Suriname, on the northeastern coast of South America, has a total land area of 163,270 sq km (63,039 sq mi) and is the smallest independent nation on the continent. Suriname extends 662 km (411 mi) northeast to southwest and 487 km (303 mi) southeast to northwest. The Atlantic coastline stretches 386 km (240 mi).

Suriname shares its total international land border of 1,707 km (1,061 mi) with three countries: French Guiana, Brazil, and Guyana. Suriname claims an area within French Guiana between the Litani and Maroni rivers

(both headwaters of the Lawa) as well as an area within Guyana between the New and Kutari rivers (both headwaters of the Courantyne).

The capital is Paramaribo. Much smaller cities are Nieuw Nickerie and Lelydorp.

The land is divided into four distinct natural regions: a coastal belt, an intermediate plain, a region of mountainous rain forest, and a high savanna in the southwest. The coastal belt, beyond which early settlers seldom penetrated, covers about 16 percent of the national territory and is approximately 15 km (10 mi) wide on the eastern border, broadening to about 80 km (50

Suriname



mi) to the west. Most of the region is at sea level, and diking is necessary to utilize the land. The intermediate plain runs to the edge of the vast rain forest and is about 50 to 65 km (30 to 40 mi) wide. The mountainous rain forest region, rising gradually to an elevation of 1,230 m (4,034 ft) at Juliana Top, makes up about 75 percent of the national territory and has been only partially explored. The central chain of the Van Asch-Van Wijk range runs south to the Tumac-Humac Mountains on

the Brazilian border, with the Wilhelmina and Kayser ranges on the west and the Orange Mountains on the east.

Numerous rivers dissect the land, all interconnected by a remarkable system of channels. The principal rivers are the Courantyne, Nickerie, Coppename, Saramacca, Suriname, Commewijne, and Marowijne. The largest lake is the Professor Doctor Engineer W. J. van Blommestein Meer.

Geography

Area sq km: 163,270; sq mi 63,039
 World Rank: 90th
 Land Boundaries, km: Brazil 597; French Guiana 510; Guyana 600
 Coastline, km: 386
 Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: coastal plain -2
 Highest: Juliana Top 1,230
 Land Use %
 Arable Land: 0.4
 Permanent Crops: 0.1
 Forest: 90.5
 Other: 9.0

Population of Principal Cities (1996)

Paramaribo	222,843
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CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Suriname has a tropical climate characterized by high rainfall and equable temperatures, with a narrow seasonal range moderated by the northeasterly trade winds on the coast and the modestly high altitudes in the interior. There are four seasons, none of which is completely wet or dry. The mainly dry seasons are from August to November and from February to April, while the mainly wet seasons are from April to August and from November to February. Rainfall varies from east to west, with annual averages of 2,200 mm (86.6 in) in Paramaribo, 1,970 mm (77.6 in) in Nickerie, 2,230 mm (87.8 in) in Commewijne, 2,160 mm (85 in) in Saramacca, 2,220 mm (87 in) in the middle Suriname River region, and 1,640 mm (64.6 in) in Coronie.

The daytime temperature range is between 23°C (73°F) and 31°C (88°F), with an annual mean of 27°C (81°F). The diurnal variation is slight, at about 4°C (7.2°F).

Suriname lies outside the Caribbean hurricane zone and does not experience destructive wind systems.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature: 81°F
 Average Rainfall
 Paramaribo: 86.6 in
 Nickerie: 77.6 in
 Commewijne: 87.8 in
 Saramacca: 85 in
 Suriname River region: 87 in
 Coronie: 64.6 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Most of Suriname's interior is dense rain forest that has remained largely undisturbed by humans. The nation contains some of the richest biodiversity on the planet.

Animals species include the blue poison dart frog, the cock-of-the-rock, 650 bird species (including weaver birds and colonial nesting birds), howler monkeys and other monkey species, deer, tortoises, and innumerable other creatures. The jungles are home to wide varieties of vegetation, including cacti, bromeliads, and rare orchid species. More than 1,450 plant species have been collected in the Brownsberg Nature Park alone.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 438,144
 World Rank: 163rd
 Density per sq km: 2.8
 % of annual growth (1999-2003): 1.0
 Male %: 51.0
 Female %: 49.0
 Urban %: 74.1
 Age Distribution %: 0-14: 29.6
 15-64: 64.2
 65 and over: 6.2
 Population 2025: 435,200
 Birth Rate per 1,000: 18.39
 Death Rate per 1,000: 7.16
 Rate of Natural Increase %: 1.1
 Total Fertility Rate: 2.34
 Expectation of Life (years): Males 66.75
 Females 71.27
 Marriage Rate per 1,000: 4.9
 Divorce Rate per 1,000: 0.9
 Average Size of Households: 3.9
 Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Suriname has one of the most varied ethnic configurations in the Western Hemisphere, with at least eight groups, including indigenous Amerindians, represented in the population.

Creoles are persons of mixed European and African descent. The Hindustani, also referred to as East Indians, are descendants of immigrants who arrived from northern India in the late 19th century. The Javanese are descendants of indentured estate laborers brought from Indonesia. The nation's blacks, sometimes called "Bush Negroes," are descended from Maroons, African slaves brought to South America in the 17th and 18th centuries who escaped to the interior and thrived there. The shrinking Amerindian community includes the Arawak, Carib, and Warrau tribes, who live along the riverbanks and on the coastal plains, and the Trios, Akurios, and Wyanas, who live along the upper reaches of the rivers. There are also a few Chinese and white people. The Asian Indians, with a history of high fertility rates, have increased their proportion in the population and have replaced the Creoles as the largest group.

Within this ethnic quilt, interethnic relations are fairly harmonious.

LANGUAGES

The official language is Dutch. The other main languages are English, Hindustani (a dialect of Hindi) and Javanese. Additionally, the majority speaks a pidgin English, or creole, called Sranang Tongo, also known as Taki-Taki. French, Spanish, and Chinese are also spoken.

RELIGIONS

Religious affiliations generally reflect ethnicity. Creoles are either Roman Catholic or Protestant, Asian Indians are either Hindu or Muslim, and Indonesians are Muslim. The majority of blacks follow traditional religions.

Both the Roman Catholic and Moravian churches have bishoprics in Paramaribo.

There is complete freedom of religion in Suriname.

Religious Affiliations	
Hindu	120,000
Protestant	110,400
Roman Catholic	99,900
Muslim	85,900
Indigenous Beliefs	21,900

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Suriname's earliest inhabitants were of course Amerindian peoples; Europeans did not arrive until the 17th century, when several countries sought to establish trading posts and settlements. Suriname was alternately a British and Dutch colony—it was exchanged by the British in 1667 for New Amsterdam, now New York—until it was definitively awarded to the Netherlands through the 1815 Treaty of Vienna. The colony's economy depended on large sugar plantations, for which labor was provided by African slaves. Following the abolition of slavery in 1863, laborers from India, the Dutch East Indies, China, and Portugal emigrated to Suriname. Many settled permanently, giving the country the diverse racial character that remains today.

In 1954 Suriname gained full autonomy in domestic affairs in partnership with the Netherlands. The nation achieved full independence in 1975. At independence, Suriname was a parliamentary republic, led by Johan Ferrier as president and Henck Arron as prime minister. In 1980 the government was overthrown in a military coup led by the army chief of staff, Desiré "Desi" Bouterse. Parliament was dissolved and the constitution suspended.

From 1980 until the early 1990s the armed forces were heavily involved in Surinamese politics. Bouterse ruled from 1980 to 1987 through a series of appointed governments. A civilian cabinet was appointed in 1982, but the army remained in effective control. That year, faced with political unrest, the army killed 15 leading citizens. In response, the United States and the Netherlands suspended all aid. Following the emergence of a guerrilla movement in 1986, the government declared a state of emergency in eastern and southern Suriname. Reports that civilians were massacred by government troops in search of guerrillas led to further protests by the Netherlands and the United States.

Growing political pressure forced Bouterse to return the country to civilian rule in 1987. Elections were held that year, and an anti-Bouterse coalition, the New Front for Democracy, won 80 percent of the vote and gained 40 of the 51 seats in the newly constituted National Assembly. In 1988 the Assembly unanimously elected Ramseswank Shankar president and Henck Arron prime minister. Bouterse remained commander in chief of the armed forces and the leader of a military council formed to oversee the transition to democracy. In 1990 Bouterse's second in command led a bloodless coup that ousted President Shankar.

In May 1991 national elections were held that were widely seen as a referendum on military involvement in politics. The New Front for Democracy won 30 of the 51 seats in the National Assembly; the military-supported National Democratic Party (NDP) won 12 seats, while the Democratic Alternative '91 (DA '91) won nine seats. With no party either able to form the two-thirds majority needed to pick a president on its own or willing to form a working coalition, a special people's assembly was convened and selected the New Front for Democracy's Ronald Venetiaan as president.

Venetiaan moved quickly, as supported by the Netherlands and the United States, to amend the 1987 constitution to strip the military of its power. Bouterse made threatening statements in response but ultimately resigned as military commander in order to lead the NDP. Venetiaan also worked toward rapprochement with the guerrillas in the interior, with partial success.

Venetiaan's unwillingness to come to terms with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) regarding a structural adjustment package, for fear of alienating those in his coalition whose constituents depended on trade protections, led the Dutch to continue to suspend economic aid. Even so, the Venetiaan administration embarked on an austerity program along IMF lines, yielding short-term distress. Throughout 1993–95, living conditions deteriorated, inflation rose to triple digits, and youth unemployment neared 75 percent. Meanwhile, Bouterse conducted antigovernment demonstrations, and his party's popularity soared. Amsterdam quietly resumed aid to the government. This stabilized the economic situation

enough for the NF to win the largest number of seats in the 1996 election, but with no party gaining a majority, another people's assembly was formed, this time choosing the NDP's Jules Wijdenbosch as president.

Wijdenbosch had promised to keep Bouterse out of his government, but in 1997 he named the former ruler to his advisory Council of State; around the same time the Dutch government obtained an arrest warrant for Bouterse from Interpol on charges of drug trafficking. Bouterse was dismissed from the Council in 1999.

The 2000 elections returned Venetiaan to the presidency, with a New Front majority in the Assembly. In taking office, Venetiaan faced the consequences of Wijdenbosch's free-spending regime, including high inflation, a huge bureaucracy, a devalued currency, and a devastated health-care system. He announced an austerity program, as he had in his first term, and the economic situation had greatly improved by 2004. That year he replaced the Surinamese guilder with the new Surinamese dollar, in an effort to restore confidence in the national currency. He was reelected in 2005.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

President

1975–80	Johan Henri Eliza Ferrier
1980–82	Hendrick Rudolf Chin A Sen
1982–88	Lachmipersad Frederick Ramdat Misier
1988–90	Ramsewak Shankar
1990–91	Johannes Samuel Petrus Kraag
1991–96	Runaldo Ronald Venetiaan
1996–2000	Jules Albert Wijdenbosch
2000–	Runaldo Ronald Venetiaan

CONSTITUTION

The original constitution of 1975 was suspended in August 1980, following the overthrow of the elected government that February. In 1982, an interim president was appointed by the National Military Council, and martial law was imposed, although a predominantly civilian cabinet was appointed. The National Assembly was created in January 1985 to prepare a new constitution. The draft constitution was approved by the National Assembly in March 1987 and by 93 percent of the voters in a national referendum that September.

Executive authority is vested in the president, who is elected for a term of five years by two-thirds of the National Assembly. If no candidate wins votes from two-thirds of the National Assembly, a people's assembly is formed from all national, regional, and municipal representatives and delegates, from among which whomever receives a majority vote wins. The president, who is head of state and head of government, chairs the Council of

State, which advises the government on policy and supervises the execution of the decisions of the National Assembly. The president appoints the cabinet (Council of Ministers) from among the members of the National Assembly. The vice president is the prime minister and head of the cabinet. He is responsible to the president. There is no provision for removing a president from office unless he resigns.

Legislative power is exercised by the 51-member National Assembly. The judiciary is composed of the Court of Justice and three cantonal courts. The voting age is 18, and suffrage is universal.

PARLIAMENT

Suriname's legislative body is the 51-member National Assembly, which is elected for a five-year term by universal suffrage through proportional representation. The Assembly elects the president and vice president. In a situation where no party's candidate can muster support from a two-thirds majority in the Assembly, a special people's assembly is convened, as consisting of the members of the National Assembly plus representatives from local and district councils, to vote for a president by simple majority. The National Assembly is fairly strong relative to the executive branch. In addition to presidential selection, electoral law and constitutional amendments require two-thirds majorities; other legislation needs only an ordinary majority to pass.

POLITICAL PARTIES

The political-party situation in Suriname is fluid. The constant has been the National Democratic Party (NDP), the party founded by the former military ruler Desiré Bouterse. After the NDP won the 1996 presidential vote, its chief rival, the New Front for Democracy alliance, split into its constituent parties, some of which joined the government in coalition, including the largely Javanese Party for National Unity and Solidarity and part of the predominantly Indian Progressive Reform Party. The other parties from the alliance—the mainly Creole Surinamese National Party, the Suriname Labour Party, and the rump of the Progressive Reform Party—reconstituted the New Front (NF) and, together with a small Javanese party, won the 2000 elections. Several groups won small numbers of Assembly seats in 2000, notably the Democratic National Platform 2000 and the Democratic Alternative '91.

Insurgency outfits of note are the Surinamese Liberation Army (SLA), led by Ronnie Brunswijk, and the Amerindian Tucayana Amazonica, which was originally armed by Bouterse's military regime to combat the blacks of the SLA.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For the purposes of local government Suriname is divided into 10 districts, each governed by a district commissioner appointed by the president along with representatives from the central ministerial departments in the district. The 10 districts are the urban district of Paramaribo and the districts of Wanica, Commewijne, Marowijne, Saracca, Coronie, Nickerie, Brokopondo, Para, and Sipaliwini. The administration remains fairly centralized, but some legislative functions have been devolved to district and local councils, including the right to a say in national and regional development policies.

The district councils report to the central government. Local councils are elected through proportional representation, and district council seats are assigned to parties on the basis of their share of total local council seats in the district.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The legal system is based on Dutch civil law. The judiciary is headed by the Court of Justice (Supreme Court), with six judges nominated for life by the president in consultation with the National Assembly. There are three subordinate courts, known as cantonal courts.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Suriname's brief history as an independent nation has featured two military coups, and unresolved issues relating to abuses by those regimes still hang over the country. A 1992 amnesty law pardoned both soldiers and guerrillas for crimes committed between 1985 and 1992, except for those crimes deemed to be "against humanity."

The most egregious example of political violence occurred in December 1982, when 15 prominent opposition leaders were killed while in the custody of Bouterse's military government. No one was ever brought to trial for those killings. Chronic battling between the army and insurgents in the backcountry, particularly in the 1980s and early 1990s, involved abuses on all sides but most disturbingly by the military. The most serious allegation, in a case that has not been resolved, is that the army massacred some 50 blacks, including women and children, at a settlement called Moiwana in November 1986. The Inter-American Court of Human Rights has pursued several cases against the former military regime, but the government has not always complied with the court's judgments.

Human rights groups have been allowed to function freely for the most part, though with little active cooperation from the government, which has hoped to

avoid stirring up trouble. The administration of Ronald Venetiaan successfully resisted pressure to set up a truth commission to look into past human rights abuses. The succeeding government of Jules Wijdenbosch acceded to the demands of rights groups and set up a five-member committee, but it was later revealed that the committee chairman had close ties to Bouterse, damaging confidence in its ability to conduct a fair investigation.

Since the reestablishment of civilian rule, rights and freedoms enumerated in the constitution generally appear to have been respected. Citizens now vote freely, and there has been peaceable transition from one civilian government to another. There is freedom of speech, press, and religion, although news outlets still practice a certain degree of self-censorship. Unions are allowed to work freely, and strikes are permitted, except by civil servants (who in fact constitute about half the working population and who strike even in defiance of the law).

There are ongoing problems with societal discrimination against women, Amerindians, and the descendants of Maroons. The justice system is overwhelmed and inefficient. Police and prison guards still abuse those in custody, and prisons are overcrowded and offer poor living conditions. The law allows for the police detention of suspects for 14 days before formal charges must be brought, and judges may authorize further detention for up to 164 days. There is a separate court system governing the military.

When the National Democratic Party gained the presidency in 1996, human rights groups and others expressed skepticism about its commitment to respecting human freedoms, owing to its association with Bouterse and the military. However, civilian control over the military grew considerably, and outside monitors' worst fears were not realized during Wijdenbosch's term, which ended in 2000.

FOREIGN POLICY

The main issues in Suriname's foreign relations are the long-standing border disputes with French Guiana and Guyana and economic and political ties with the Netherlands. In 1975 the Netherlands offered a \$1 billion loan to Suriname, to be provided in three stages over 10 to 15 years. This aid was suspended in 1982 following the execution of opposition leaders. In 1988 an agreement was reached for the resumption of aid, but this was held up again by a second military coup and then by the successor civilian government's refusal to negotiate an IMF agreement. The withholding of Dutch aid was a serious blow to the economy.

A rapprochement of sorts took place between Amsterdam and the Venetiaan government as the 1996 elections loomed, which threatened to restore to power Bouterse's

party. Once the NDP did in fact win, with Bouterse becoming a member of the Council of State, relations with the Netherlands became further strained; the Dutch later formally accused Bouterse of drug trafficking and sought his arrest.

Suriname and Guyana agreed on a joint commission to resolve their territorial dispute, concerning about 15,400 sq km (6,000 sq mi) in the Courantyne River basin, but this has made little headway. In 2000 Suriname's navy forced a foreign oil prospector that had been granted a concession by Guyana to operate in disputed waters to dismantle its rig. Relations between France and Suriname have been tense over the border dispute in the region east of the Litani River and over cross-border incursions by Surinamese rebels seeking sanctuary in French Guiana. In 2004 the United Nations created a tribunal to resolve this dispute.

Suriname and the United States are party to various agreements and treaties covering aviation, consuls, economic and technical cooperation, extradition, judicial assistance, maritime affairs, mutual security, postal matters, telecommunications, trade and commerce, and visas. Since the restoration of civilian rule, Suriname has maintained generally friendly relations with Washington, cooperating with U.S. offers to train military personnel and antinarcotics police. Suriname depends on American firms for foreign investment and more than 30 percent of its imports.

Suriname joined the United Nations in 1975. It is a member of nine UN organizations as well as the International Bauxite Association, the Group of 77 non-aligned nations, the Association of Caribbean States, and the Organization of American States. Suriname enjoys preferential trade privileges for some of its exports to the European Union under the Lomé Convention. In 1995 the nation became a full member of the Caribbean Community and Common Market.

DEFENSE

Suriname has a national army controlled by the minister of defense and a civil police force controlled by the minister of justice and police. As of 2003 there were about 1,800 members in the armed forces, most of them light infantry security forces. The Suriname constitution provides for equal representation for all ethnic groups in the armed forces, the terms of service being voluntary. The Netherlands and the United States have provided assistance in training, while China has donated some military equipment and logistical material.

Military Expenditures \$million: 7.5

as % of GDP: 0.7

as % of central government expenditures: —

Arms Imports \$million: —

Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

Suriname's economy is heavily dependent on bauxite, which is refined into alumina and aluminum for export. The bauxite industry accounts for approximately 77 percent of export earnings. Other exports include rice, bananas, shrimp, and timber. The country is a minor oil producer and has the potential to generate much more, though some of that potential depends on the outcome of the border dispute with Guyana. The nation also has considerable hydroelectric resources. The government has been eyeing the tropical hardwoods in the rain forests, but environmentalists and human rights activists have been protesting moves in this direction. Tourism could be an attractive growth sector, but as of 2005 the potential for ecotourism remained largely untapped due to lack of infrastructure.

Until 1982 Suriname was a relatively prosperous country as a result of its metals exports and generous aid from the Netherlands, which amounted to about \$950 million between 1975 and 1982. When Dutch aid was halted in 1982, however, the economy went into a tailspin. In 1983 Suriname was forced to draw on its foreign reserves to finance an escalating budget deficit and costly capital expenditure programs. By 1984 the country's total nongold reserves, which had stood at \$207 million in 1981, had slumped to \$18.7 million. An IMF loan of \$300 million was withdrawn in February 1984 after the government rescinded proposed tax increases that were built into the IMF package. A drop in world bauxite prices that started in the late 1970s and continued until late 1986 also damaged the economy. This was followed by the outbreak of a guerrilla insurgency in the interior. The guerrillas targeted the economic infrastructure, crippling the important bauxite sector and shutting down other export industries. These problems created both high inflation and high unemployment.

The New Front government of Ronald Venetiaan elected in 1991 made a pact with guerrillas and embarked on a stabilization program along the lines of IMF demands. There were large budget cuts, the liberalization of price controls and trade restrictions, and a sharp devaluation that unified the currency rate and curbed the black market. This, along with a resumption of Dutch assistance and a commitment to support the currency by backing it with locally produced gold, restored price stability, but at a huge short-term cost in terms of job losses and attendant social ills (including increased crime and spreading child malnutrition in the capital). Unemployment ap-

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 1,800

Military Manpower Availability: 111,582

proached 75 percent of the under-30 population by 1995, and protests against the government mounted.

The recovery of aluminum and alumina prices in the mid-1990s helped get a general economic recovery under way. However, the 1996 election brought in a National Democratic Party government determined to cast off the constraints of IMF-style macroeconomic discipline and raise public sector wages, borrowing, and social spending. A new surge of inflation, combined with slumping exports, prompted strikes and demonstrations in 1998. In 1999 the estimated fiscal deficit was 11 percent of gross domestic product (GDP). The government sought to cover this deficit through monetary expansion, which led to a dramatic increase in inflation and exchange-rate depreciation. Venetiaan implemented an austerity program when he took office in 2000, reducing spending and raising taxes, which improved economic conditions to the point where the Dutch government agreed to resume aid, allowing the nation to obtain international development financing. The nation's GDP grew 5 percent in 2003, and Suriname has the potential to improve its economy if it can rein in inflation and further develop the bauxite and gold industries.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 1.885
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 4,300
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 2.5
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 1.5
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 13
 Industry: 22
 Services: 65
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 24
 Government Consumption: 7
 Gross Domestic Investment: —
 Foreign Trade \$million: Exports: 495
 Imports: 604
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: —
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: —

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
—	—	—	—	—

Finance

National Currency: Surinamese Dollar (SRD)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = SRD 2.7336
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency million: 546.2
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: —
 Total External Debt \$million: 321
 Debt Service Ratio %: —
 Balance of Payments \$million: —
 International Reserves SDRs \$million: 94.7
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 23

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 10.9
 per capita \$: 24.90
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: —

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$million: 400
 Expenditures \$million: 440
 Budget Deficit \$million: 40
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 13
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2002) %: 5.2
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 2.33
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 76.1
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 98.2
 Total Farmland % of land area: 0.4
 Livestock: Cattle 000: 137
 Chickens million: 3.8
 Pigs 000: 24.5
 Sheep 000: 7.7
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters 000: 198
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 19.1

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 62.8
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 6.5

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 776
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 668
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 1.56
 Net Energy Imports % of use: —
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: 389
 Production kW-hr billion: 1.96
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 1.82
 Coal Reserves tons million: —
 Production tons million: —
 Consumption tons million: —
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
 Production cubic feet billion: —
 Consumption cubic feet billion: —
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
 Production barrels 000 per day: 9.5
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 10.9
 Pipelines Length km: 51

Foreign Trade

Imports \$million: 604
 Exports \$million: 495
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2002): –1.2
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2002): 7.6
 Balance of Trade \$million: —

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
United States %	31.6	24.4
Netherlands %	18.7	4.4
Trinidad and Tobago %	11.1	—
China %	6.9	—
Japan %	6.4	—
Norway %	—	19.2
Belgium %	—	13.1
France %	—	10.6
Iceland %	—	4.8
Italy %	—	4.6

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 4,492
 Paved %: 26.0
 Automobiles: 61,400
 Trucks and Buses: 23,500
 Railroad: Track Length km: —
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: —
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 1
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 1.2
 Airports: 46
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 889
 Length of Waterways km: 1,200

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 58
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 42
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 67

Communications

Telephones 000: 79.8
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones 000: 168.1
 Personal Computers 000: 20
 Internet Hosts per million people: 41
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 46

ENVIRONMENT

Owing to Suriname's small population (in a country little larger than the U.S. state of Georgia) and the concentration of human development in the coastal belt,

vast swaths of the interior are both inaccessible and relatively pristine. Some 90 percent of the country is covered by forest, and 80 percent of the land is primary tropical forest.

In 1993, desperate for foreign investment, the government asked Asian companies to bid on logging concessions. Three were to be granted rights to large tracts, potentially amounting to 25 to 40 percent of the country's land area, in the east-central and west-central parts of the country, to the south of where any previous logging activity had taken place. The environmental records of these firms at home and elsewhere caused international ecology-minded groups to voice concerns. New roads would have to be built into the interior, opening up the way for further degradation. The hilliness of these areas means that logging could result in serious erosion. There is also apprehension about disrupting the way of life of the 10,000 or so Amerindians and black descendants of Maroons in the forest.

Objections to projected logging deals found a domestic voice as well, resulting in years of delay. In 1997 the newly elected Wijdenbosch administration declared that it would grant logging concessions of up to 125,000 hectares only per company, instead of the one million originally proposed.

Beyond logging, illegal gold mining causes environmental damage in isolated areas. Trade in endangered species of plants and animals has been brought under control, at least officially so, through 1980s legislation requiring dealers to have export licenses and permits from the Convention on Trade in Endangered Species. Nongovernmental organizations hope to steer Suriname away from destructive logging contracts and toward sustainable development through a process known as "biodiversity prospecting."

In 1998 the government announced that Conservation International would help the nation set aside 1.6 million hectares of virgin rain forest, amounting to 10 percent of the country's land area, as a protected reserve.

Although Suriname is not prone to violent tropical storms, the coastal regions are low-lying and subject to periodic flooding from frequent, heavy rains.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 90.5
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: —
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 12
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 4.98

LIVING CONDITIONS

Suriname is a poor country; in 2002, 70 percent of the population lived below the poverty line. People inhabit-

ing the interior live in primitive conditions, with some residing in wooden houses raised up on stilts to avoid floods. The city of Paramaribo has homes made of brick and wood, the latter of which is vulnerable to termites. Some urban housing is inadequate, and a housing deficit in the capital is exacerbated by the in-migration of rural people. Over one-quarter of Surinamese lack access to safe drinking water, and about 12 percent lack access to sanitary waste disposal systems. There are buses and taxis in the cities. Access to the interior is limited; the region is often best reached by river.

HEALTH

Life expectancy in Suriname is 69 years. The infant mortality rate is under 24 deaths per 1,000 live births. In 2004, each woman had an average of 2.3 children; with the fairly low fertility rate and limited immigration, Suriname's population is growing quite slowly. The government furnishes some health services but does not have enough money to create effective programs, so malnutrition and afflictions such as worms, respiratory infections, and gastrointestinal diseases are fairly common. Endemic diseases include malaria, dengue fever, typhoid, cholera, and rabies.

Health

Number of Physicians: 191
 Number of Dentists: 4
 Number of Nurses: 688
 Number of Pharmacists: —
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 45
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 23.57
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 110
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 8.5
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 188
 HIV Infected % of adults: 1.7
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 74
 Measles: 71
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 93
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 92

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Surinamese cuisine combines aspects of Indian, Indonesian, Creole, and Chinese cooking. Rice and noodles are ubiquitous starches; cassava and flat Indian breads are also common. People eat a great deal of fish. Beans, peanuts, chicken, eggs, vegetables, and fresh fruits are also part of the diet. People like to drink fruit juices, beer, and *sap*, a thick fruit syrup mixed with water or poured over ice.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 10.6
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,630
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 129.1
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 138.6

STATUS OF WOMEN

Traditional social and cultural attitudes still present obstacles to the advancement of women in the worlds of politics and business. Most people still consider it inappropriate for women to be involved in politics, and women seeking public office are disadvantaged. Nevertheless, women occupy one-fifth of the seats in the National Assembly, and President Wijdenbosch chose a female minister of regional development.

Domestic violence, a problem that transcends socioeconomic status, has largely been neglected by the government. Nor are there laws to protect women against sexual exploitation. There have been reports of trafficking in women as sex slaves.

Women experience discrimination in terms of both pay and access to jobs, and, here again, the government has taken little action. The government-run National Women's Center deals with women's issues but is understaffed and underfinanced. Women's rights groups are active and have been somewhat more effectual than the government in redressing grievances.

Girls have the same access to education as boys and are not treated differently at school.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 20
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: —
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 32.9

WORK

The unemployment rate was 17 percent in 2000. About half the workforce is directly or indirectly on the government payroll. Civil servants are among the better-paid employees, and President Venetiaan gave them a large pay raise in 2002. Agriculture employs a large number of people, in the production of export crops such as rice, bananas, and vegetables. Some people work as miners, especially of bauxite. Women are typically paid less than men for the same jobs. The most educated citizens have left the country to live abroad, especially in the Netherlands, where there are greater opportunities for high-paying work and where the military is not likely to oppress them.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 104,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 34.5
 Labor by Sector %: —
 Unemployment %: 17

EDUCATION

Education is free, universal, and compulsory, in principle, for six years, between the ages of six and 12. The school year runs from September to August. The language of instruction is Dutch. Total schooling lasts for 11 or 12 years, as divided into six years of primary school and either six years of general academic secondary school, leading to the university level, or five years of specialized secondary school, leading to a certificate. Private schools account for more than half of enrollment. Three-quarters of school-age children are engaged in primary or secondary education, and literacy is high. Some children in rural areas, however, lack transportation or nearby facilities. Families must pay certain fees for schooling, which presents a problem for some parents.

Higher education is provided by the University of Suriname, in Paramaribo, and by technical and vocational colleges.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 93
 Male %: 95
 Female %: 91
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 12.5
 First Level: Primary Schools: 280
 Teachers: 3,324
 Students: 64,659
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 19.5
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 97.0
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 100
 Teachers: 2,714
 Students: 23,034
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 15.1
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 63.7
 Third Level: Institutions: 1
 Teachers: 550
 Students: 5,186
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 12.2
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: —

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Suriname has good international telecommunications capabilities. In 2003 there were almost 80,000 telephone lines and about 170,000 cellular telephones in use; some 20,000 people were using the Internet. Suriname has plentiful and inexpensive electricity thanks to the hydroelectric dam built by Alcoa at Afobaka. In 2005 the Alcoa Foundation announced that it would invest more

than \$100,000 over four years to strengthen research capabilities in the Department of Geology and Mining at the University of Suriname, allowing students to earn master's degrees and doctorates.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: 0.52
 Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

Suriname has two daily newspapers, *De ware tijd* and *De west*, both published in Dutch. In addition, the Catholic and Moravian churches publish small weekly newspapers that often carry articles critical of the government. The Lutheran and Reformed churches publish a combined monthly journal. The government itself publishes a twice-weekly information bulletin, and the civil servants' union puts out a bulletin at irregular intervals.

The national news agency is Surinaams Nieuws Agentschap. Foreign news bureaus are represented in Paramaribo by Inter Press Service of Italy.

The government-owned Stichting Radio Omroep Suriname operates a medium-wave transmitter and an FM transmitter at Paramaribo, which broadcast in Dutch, Hindustani, Javanese, and English. There are several commercial radio stations broadcasting in Dutch and other languages.

Television, introduced in 1968, is operated by two government-owned commercial networks: Surinaamse Televisie Stichting has a main transmitter at Paramaribo, with relay stations at Moengo and Brokopondo, broadcasting in Dutch, English, and local languages; Algemene Televisie Verzorging has some programming in Spanish and Portuguese, in addition to the aforementioned languages.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 2
 Total Circulation 000: 28
 Circulation per 1,000: 67
 Books Published: 47
 Periodicals: 9
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets 000: 100
 per 1,000: 241

CULTURE

Suriname does not have a thriving cultural scene, partly because many of the most educated citizens spend much of

their time in the Netherlands. Artistic practices stem from the traditions of the different ethnic groups. The Amerindians and descendants of Maroons in the forests still create sculptures and wood carvings, as they have for centuries. Blacks perform dances accompanied by drummers. The Indonesian community enjoys *gamelan* music and Javanese dancing. The Hindu population celebrates Holi Phagwah, the Hindu New Year, in March or April. Muslims celebrate Islamic festivals, such as Ramadan and 'Id al-Fitr.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 1
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: 17,056
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: 1
 Seating Capacity: 790
 Annual Attendance: 103,626

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Suriname has a mix of mythologies and folkloric traditions due to its ethnic diversity, including elements from India, Indonesia, and Africa. Many people combine traditional African practices such as obeah and *winti* with Christian worship. Indonesian puppet shows portray traditional Javanese myths.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Paramaribo has restaurants serving a variety of ethnic cuisines. People enjoy sitting at sidewalk cafés to drink, eat, and watch passersby. There is some modest nightlife. There is a market on the Waterkrant boulevard near the river. Tourists come to the country to explore the pristine rain forest, especially in Brownsberg Nature Park.

ETIQUETTE

Surinamese shake hands when greeting one another, even if they meet several times a day. Bargaining is a tradition, in markets, hotels, and elsewhere. Fares for buses and shared taxis may be negotiated. It is appropriate to tip 10 percent in restaurants and to round up a taxi fare.

FAMILY LIFE

Women are expected to take on the roles of wife and mother, handling all of the housework and child care.

Many poor families cannot afford to adequately feed their children. Extended families play important roles in family life, as people rely on their relatives for assistance with food, child care, and other endeavors. The age of marriage is low: 13 years for girls and 14 years for boys. Because children learn Dutch when they go to school, they sometimes become alienated from their parents, who may only speak other languages.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

For the most part Surinamese dress in casual, Western-style clothing. They dress up for formal occasions, however, and do not always approve of shorts or T-shirts. Women typically dress in cotton dresses and scarves. People from different ethnic groups sometimes wear clothing associated with those groups, such as Javanese sarongs.

SPORTS

Suriname does not have a well-developed sports infrastructure. Some sporting facilities are available to wealthy people; Paramaribo has places to play tennis and golf or go swimming. Surinamese athletes have taken part in international competitions in sports such as badminton and have participated in the Summer Olympics since 1968.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1941** American company Alcoa begins mining and processing bauxite in eastern Dutch Guiana.
- 1954** Dutch Guiana becomes self-governing.
- 1975** Dutch Guiana achieves independence as Republic of Suriname, under Prime Minister Henck Arron.
- 1980** Army chief of staff Desiré Bouterse overthrows government.
- 1982** Army tortures and kills 15 opposition leaders; Netherlands cuts off aid in response.
- 1985** Military allows National Assembly to meet and political parties to form.
- 1986** Surinamese Liberation Army, led by Ronnie Brunswijk, starts guerrilla war in name of restoring constitutional rule.
- 1987** New constitution is approved; civilian government is restored under leadership of Front for Democracy and Development.
- 1988** Ramsewak Shankar is elected president by National Assembly.
- 1990** Bouterse overthrows Shankar government.
- 1991** New civilian government is organized; Ronald Venetiaan is elected president at head of New Front for Democracy coalition.

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- 1992** Government secures passage of constitutional reforms dispensing with the military's role in politics; tenuous peace agreement is reached with insurgent groups in the interior; Netherlands agrees to resume its aid package only on the condition that Venetiaan's government sign an agreement to implement an IMF structural adjustment program.
- 1993** Bouterse resigns as military commander to lead his party, the National Democratic Party, and is replaced by a civilian-appointed chief; Venetiaan begins an austerity regime, conforming to the principles of a structural adjustment program but without reaching a formal IMF agreement.
- 1994** Crime and youth unemployment soar; Bouterse leads antigovernment demonstrations, some of which turn violent; Suriname Liberation Front overwhelms a hydroelectric plant south of Paramaribo, taking 30 hostages; Netherlands resumes its funding program.
- 1996** New elections result in the New Front falling short of a majority; a people's assembly elects NDP's Jules Wijdenbosch president.
- 1997** Wijdenbosch names Bouterse to the Council of State; Netherlands obtains warrant from Interpol for Bouterse's arrest on drug trafficking charges; coup plot is foiled in October, resulting in arrest of 17 people.
- 1998** Widespread strikes take place in protest of Wijdenbosch's trade and exchange-rate policies; many call for the president's resignation.
- 1999** Wijdenbosch dismisses Bouterse from the Council of State; a parliamentary motion of no confidence in the president passes, but he refuses to resign.
- 2000** Elections return Ronald Venetiaan to the presidency, and the New Front gains a majority in the National Assembly.
- 2002** The state-owned banana company closes, a victim of low prices.
- 2004** In an effort to restore economic confidence, the state replaces the Surinamese guilder with the Surinamese dollar as the unit of currency. The United Nations sets up a tribunal to resolve the border dispute between Suriname and Guyana. The government announces that Bouterse will stand trial for killing political opponents in 1982.
- 2005** Venetiaan is reelected president.

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Suriname. *General Population Census 2003; Statistisch Jaarboek van Suriname; Suriname—Statistical Annex* (IMF Staff Country Report), 1996

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Statistical Economic and Social Research and Training Center for Islamic Countries: Suriname
<http://www.sesrtcic.org/members/sur/surhome.shtml>
- Surinam.net
<http://www.surinam.net>

SWAZILAND

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Kingdom of Swaziland (Umboso weSwatini)

ABBREVIATION

SZ

CAPITALS

Mbabane (administrative), Lobamba (royal and legislative)

HEAD OF STATE

King Mswati III (from 1986)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Absalom Themba Dlamini (from 2003)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Constitutional monarchy

POPULATION

1,173,900 (2005)

AREA

17,363 sq km (6,704 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Swazi

LANGUAGES

Siswati, English

RELIGIONS

Zionism, Roman Catholicism, Islam

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Lilangeni

NATIONAL FLAG

Five horizontal stripes—blue (top), yellow, crimson, yellow, and blue, with the blue stripes approximately three times

the height of the thin yellow stripes and the crimson stripe approximately equal to the height of all the other stripes combined—with a black-and-white shield, two silver-tipped gold spears, and a tasseled staff superimposed on the crimson stripe

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A bright blue shield displaying the insignia of the Masotja Regiment: an oval, black-and-white inner shield with pointed ends, silver-tipped gold spears, and a tasseled staff. The shield is flanked by a lion (representing the king, the *ngwenyama*) and an elephant (representing the queen mother, the *indovuzaki*). The emblem is crested by a Masotja headdress made of otter skin and adorned with the green tail feathers of the *lisakabuli* (widow) bird. The national motto, *Siyinqaba* (We are the fortress), is written on a scroll at the base.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Nkulunkulu Mnikati Wetibusiso temaSwati” (O God, Bestower of the Blessings of the Swazi)

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year’s Day), April 25 (National Flag Day), second Monday in June (Commonwealth Day), second Monday in July (Umhlanga, or Reed Dance Day), July 22 (King’s Birthday), September 6 (Somhlolo, or Independence Day), Good Friday, Holy Saturday, Easter Monday, Christmas, Boxing Day; Incwala Day, an annual ceremony roughly translated as the Feast of the First Fruits, is held in December or January.

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

September 6, 1968

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

November 14, 2003; not in force as of March 2005

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Landlocked Swaziland, in southern Africa, has an area of 17,363 sq km (6,704 sq mi), extending 176 km (109 mi) north to south and 135 km (84 mi) east to west. Swaziland shares its international boundary of 535 km (332 mi) with two neighbors: South Africa and Mozambique.

Swaziland is topographically part of the South African Plateau and is generally divided into four well-defined regions of nearly equal breadth. From the High Veld in the west, averaging 1,050 to 1,200 m (3,500 to 3,900 ft) in elevation, there is a steplike descent eastward through the Middle Veld (450 to 600 m; 1,475 to 1,970 ft) to the Low Veld (150 to 300 m; 490 to 980 ft). To the east of the

Swaziland



Low Veld is the Lubombo Plateau (450 to 825 m; 1,475 to 2,700 ft), which separates the country from the Mozambique coastal plain.

Swaziland is well watered, with four large rivers flowing eastward across the nation into the Indian Ocean. These are the Komati and Umbeluzi rivers in the north, the Great Usutu River in the center, and the Nggwavuma River in the south.

Geography

Area sq km: 17,363; sq mi 6,704
 World Rank: 153rd
 Land Boundaries, km: Mozambique 105; South Africa 430
 Coastline, km: 0
 Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Great Usutu River 21
 Highest: Emlembe 1,862
 Land Use %
 Arable Land: 10.4
 Permanent Crops: 0.7
 Forest: 30.4
 Other: 58.5

Population of Principal Cities (1997)

Manzini	25,571
Mbabane	57,992

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Swaziland as a whole is a subtropical country, but the climate varies sharply from region to region. The High Veld has a humid, near-temperate climate, with average annual rainfall of 1,000 to 2,300 mm (40 to 90 in), while the Middle Veld and the Lubombo Plateau are subtropical and somewhat drier, with 900 to 1,150 mm (35 to 45 in) of rainfall, and the Low Veld is tropical and semiarid, with 500 to 900 mm (20 to 35 in) of precipitation. Mean annual temperatures range from 15.6°C (60°F) in the High Veld to 22.2°C (72°F) in the Low Veld. There are frequent frosts during the cool season (June to August) and occasional snow on the high peaks.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature
 High Veld: 60°F
 Low Veld: 72°F
 Average Rainfall
 High Veld: 40 in to 90 in
 Middle Veld and Lubombo Plateau: 35 in to 45 in
 Low Veld: 20 in to 35 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Swaziland has a surprisingly large number of ecological zones for such a small country. There are hardwood forests

in the highlands to the west; swamps, savanna, and subtropical woodlands in the east; rain forest in the northwest; and patches of *finbos*, or “fine bush,” throughout. Animals include black and white rhinoceroses, elephants, lions, hippopotamuses, and crocodiles. There are hundreds of species of birds. The country has managed its natural resources well, and animal populations are large and healthy, especially in the Mlilwane Wildlife Sanctuary.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 1,173,900
 World Rank: 150th
 Density per sq km: 64.3
 % of annual growth (1999-2003): 2.2
 Male %: 50.0
 Female %: 50.0
 Urban %: 27.4
 Age Distribution %: 0–14: 40.6
 15–64: 55.6
 65 and over: 3.8
 Population 2025: 1,009,000
 Birth Rate per 1,000: 27.72
 Death Rate per 1,000: 25.26
 Rate of Natural Increase %: –0.1
 Total Fertility Rate: 3.7
 Expectation of Life (years): Males 37.18
 Females 34.07
 Marriage Rate per 1,000: —
 Divorce Rate per 1,000: —
 Average Size of Households: 5.7
 Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

The population is less heterogeneous than that of other countries in sub-Saharan Africa. Of the black African population, which makes up 97 percent of the total population, the large majority are Swazi. Others belong to the Zulu, Tsonga, and Shangaan tribes.

The Swazi call themselves Bantu Bakwa Ngwane, or People of Ngwane. The clans of Swaziland are divided into three groups: the Bemdzabuko, or the true Swazi; the Emakhandzambili, or the forerunners; and the Emafikem Amuva, or the latecomers.

Ethnic minorities include Europeans (Afrikanders, Britons, and Portuguese), other non-Africans, and “Eurafricans” (as mulattoes are called in Swaziland).

LANGUAGES

The official and national language is Siswati, a Nguni language related to Zulu, but English is a co-official language and the effective language of administration, commerce, and education.

RELIGIONS

Swaziland is home to many different religious beliefs, with considerable mixing of practices. About 40 percent of Swazis describe themselves as Zionist, following a mixture of Christianity and indigenous animism. The traditional religions ascribe a special spiritual role to the king. Tribal festivals such as Umhlanga (Reed Dance) and Incwala are celebrated throughout the country.

Some 20 percent of Swazis are Roman Catholic. A number are Protestant, including Anglicans and Methodists. The Swaziland Conference of Christian Churches represents 24 denominations and three organizations. Both the Roman Catholic and the Anglican churches have bishoprics in the country, the former at Manzini and the latter at Mbabane.

Perhaps 10 percent of Swazi are Muslim. The remainder practice the Baha'i, Mormon, and Jewish faiths, as well as others.

Religious Affiliations	
Zionist	470,000
Roman Catholic	235,000
Muslim	120,000
Other	350,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The history of the people who have settled Swaziland is relatively recent. While human remains have been found that date back more than 100,000 years, the Dlamini king, Ngwane III, did not lead his people south and around the Pongola River until the middle of the 18th century. Ngwane is considered the first king of the Swazi people. Under pressure from the Zulu, Sobhuza I, who succeeded Ngwane III, moved the center of the kingdom to the Ezulwini Valley.

The earliest contact between Swaziland and a Western power took place in the 1840s, when King Mswati II appealed to the British for help against the Zulu. In 1877, after the United Kingdom temporarily annexed Transvaal, the kingdom's northern, eastern, and western borders were demarcated. In 1894, as a result of the Anglo-Transvaal Agreement, Swaziland came under Boer protection. Yet after the Boer War, fought from 1899 to 1902, Swaziland returned to the British fold as a high commission territory. The relationship between the British Crown and Swaziland was defined by the order-in-council of 1903. The first constitutional talks on self-government were held in London in 1964, and on September 6, 1968, Swaziland became an independent nation within the Commonwealth.

Since independence Swaziland has had a relatively stable government. The two reigning monarchs of the

postindependence period, King Sobhuza II (1968–82) and King Mswati III (1986–), contrived to centralize power in the traditional office of king. At independence King Sobhuza II became head of state. Prince Makhosini Dlamini, a member of the royal family and also head of the Imbokodvo National Movement, a royalist party, was appointed prime minister by the king. A nominated Senate and elected House of Assembly formed the legislative branch of government, which exercised little real power. The king ruled with the Liqoqo, the Supreme Council of State.

In 1973, in response to a parliamentary motion, Sobhuza repealed the constitution, banned all political activity, and took over all executive, legislative, and judicial power. The Ngwane National Liberatory Congress, the leading opposition party, was banned in 1975.

A new constitution was promulgated in October 1978. It provided for an advisory bicameral parliament (Libandla) consisting of a 20-member Senate and a 50-member House of Assembly, with both bodies indirectly elected. Elections later in the month put in place an 80-member electoral college, which chose from among its numbers 10 senators and 40 members of the House. The king appointed an additional 10 members each to the Senate and the House.

King Sobhuza died in August 1982, leaving an underage heir. A power struggle ensued in the Liqoqo between traditionalist and modernists that ended with the triumph of the former. In 1983 conservative Prince Bhekimpi Dlamini replaced Prince Mabandla Dlamini as prime minister, and Ntombi, the mother of the crown prince, replaced Queen Mother Dzeliwe as regent. All opposition to the dismissal of Dzeliwe was suppressed. The coronation of the crown prince was moved up three years, and in April 1986 Prince Makhosetive was crowned King Mswati III.

Once in power, Mswati moved to eliminate opposition and consolidate power. He dissolved the Liqoqo, appointed a new prime minister, Sotsha Ernest Dlamini, and announced that he would rule by decree until the adoption of a new constitution and the holding of new elections. In 1987 Prince Bhekimpi and Prince Mfanasibili were among 12 prominent persons charged with treason and sedition in the removal of Dzeliwe. The following year 10 of them were sentenced to jail terms of three to 15 years, although in July 1988 all but Prince Mfanasibili were released. Opposition leaders continued to criticize the king and the government. As a result Mswati agreed to the first direct elections of a majority of the members of the House of Assembly in 1993. New elections were held in 1998, when candidates for the House of Assembly competed on a nonparty basis. The elections were boycotted by prodemocracy forces and labor unions, who criticized the general lack of reform and progress.

The government made half-hearted efforts at reform in the early 2000s but accomplished little. The king appointed a team to draft a new constitution, which went before the parliament in 2003, but as of 2005 the document

had still not been adopted. Meanwhile, the king's powers increased, and political opposition was silenced, as were contrary views in the media. The king has met with severe criticism for spending much of the nation's money on such items as a new jet and new houses for his many wives. His activities have been sharply juxtaposed with famine and AIDS, which have devastated much of the population.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1968–82	King Sobhuza II
1982–83	Queen Dzeliwe (regent)
1983–86	Queen Ntombi (regent)
1986–	King Mswati III

CONSTITUTION

Swaziland was established as an independent constitutional monarchy within the Commonwealth on September 6, 1968. The original constitution recognized the king of Swaziland as head of state and provided for an advisory bicameral parliament composed of a nominated Senate and an elected House of Assembly.

In 1973 King Sobhuza II repealed the constitution, banned all opposition political activity, and personally assumed all executive, legislative, and judiciary powers.

In October 1978 a new constitution was promulgated, although it was never formally presented to the people. The new constitution served to confirm the king's powers and set up a carefully controlled electoral system. The king exercises executive power through the prime minister and a cabinet of ministers, all of whom he appoints. The Liqoqo (the Supreme Council of State) was until May 28, 1986, a recognized segment of the executive branch. At that time it was dissolved by King Mswati III as a means to consolidate his power.

An elected bicameral parliament (Libandla) acts as the legislative branch of government. It consists of the Senate, with 10 indirectly elected members, and the House of Assembly, with 55 elected members.

The judiciary branch has a High Court, which is presided over by a chief justice. Each of the four administrative districts has subordinate courts. There is a Court of Appeals in the capital. Traditional Swazi courts exercise exclusive jurisdiction in cases of Swazi law and custom. Their jurisdiction in civil and criminal matters is limited, however, and is nonexistent for nonnationals.

The government proposed a new constitution in 2003, which was signed into law in August 2005. Some critics argued that the new constitution would make the king more powerful, while others argued that it would make him less powerful by introducing divisions. The constitution maintains a ban on political parties.

PARLIAMENT

The bicameral parliament of Swaziland is almost inconsequential. The lower house, the House of Assembly, currently has 65 members, of which 55 are directly elected and 10 are appointed. The upper body, the Senate, has 30 members, of which 10 are indirectly elected and 20 are appointed by the king. All legislators serve five-year terms.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Political parties are not permitted in Swaziland, having been banned in 1973.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For purposes of local government, Swaziland is divided into four districts: Hhohho, Lubombo, Manzini, Shishelweni. Each district is governed by an administrator appointed by the king. There is a parallel system of tribal government, which includes the king and his councilors; traditional chiefs ruling the nation's 55 *tinkhundia*, or tribal districts; and a system of traditional courts.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The Swazi legal system is an amalgam of South African Roman-Dutch law (as introduced by the Boers) and Swazi traditional law.

The judiciary consists of the Court of Appeals, the High Court, and various subordinate magistrates' courts. The head of state appoints members of the Court of Appeals and the High Court. The justices of the Court of Appeals all resigned in December 2002 to protest the government's refusal to abide by their rulings in two important cases. In the High Court, meanwhile, the chief justice also resigned, and the state removed two other justices.

Parallel to the modern judicial structure is a traditional structure consisting of traditional courts and 40 regional councils. The 17 traditional courts, including two lower courts of appeal and a higher court of appeal, dispense customary law. Subordinate courts are presided over by magistrates, one in each of the four administrative districts. All judges are nominated by the king.

HUMAN RIGHTS

In terms of political and civil rights, Swaziland is classified as a partly free country.

Starting in late 2002 the government interfered with the independence of the judiciary, refusing to accept rulings by the Court of Appeals and removing justices from the High Court. The king also interfered

with the workings of the parliament. Freedom of speech is not guaranteed by law, and the government has been limiting press freedom, having announced new censorship rules.

There is no organized political opposition. The concept of such opposition runs counter to traditional Swazi ideas of monarchical rule.

FOREIGN POLICY

Swaziland's foreign policy is oriented toward its immediate neighbors, South Africa and Mozambique; the nation maintains close relations with South Africa in particular as a result of not just geographic proximity but also administrative tradition and economic dependency. More than 95 percent of Swaziland's imports come from South Africa, and a substantial portion of the nation's income is derived from Swazis employed in South Africa. In 1989 South Africa formally agreed to transfer the KaNgwane homeland to Swaziland. Relations with Mozambique were strained in 1997 when Swaziland claimed Mozambique's Maputo Province.

Swaziland belongs to the United Nations, the African Union, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, and the Southern African Development Community. The nation has had good relations with the United States since 1968, receiving assistance through the U.S. Agency for International Development, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Peace Corps, African Development Foundation, Department of Defense, and Department of Labor. The United States has been particularly involved in efforts to slow the spread of HIV/AIDS.

DEFENSE

Swaziland's armed forces are called the Umbutfo Swaziland Defense Force, which has an army and an air wing. The defense structure is headed by the king as the commander of the Royal Defense Forces, which consist of *emabutfo* (singular: *libutfo*) regiments, which are organized according to tribal—not modern—lines. Members of the *emabutfo* serve as royal warriors, and their loyalty is to the king as a person.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 3,000
 Military Manpower Availability: 248,676
 Military Expenditures \$million: 40.5
 as % of GDP: 1.4
 as % of central government expenditures: —
 Arms Imports \$million: 1
 Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

Swaziland is relatively prosperous for an African nation. Although an estimated 80 percent of the population works in subsistence agriculture, most households have at least one wage earner. The crown holds about 60 percent of the nation's territory in the trust of the Swazi nation, while foreigners own most of the rest of it. Foreigners run the majority of the nation's businesses, which include coal and diamond mining, sugar production, and lumber and wood pulp production. Pineapple, cotton, and citrus fruit are lucrative export crops, although soft-drink concentrate is the largest export earner. Mining has declined in importance in recent years.

The government is trying to improve the climate for foreign investment. The nation has close economic ties with South Africa, which purchases 60 percent of Swaziland's exports and supplies 95 percent of imports. Industrial firms have begun locating at an industrial estate near Manzini, where they produce garments, textiles, and other goods. Tourism brought in 256,000 visitors in 2002. On the negative side, the population has been growing too rapidly for job growth to keep up, and AIDS is becoming a major problem.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 6.018
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 5,100
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 2.6
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 0.4
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 16.1
 Industry: 43.4
 Services: 40.5
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 76
 Government Consumption: 19
 Gross Domestic Investment: 23.6
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 0.9
 Imports: 1.14
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 1.0
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 50.2

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
130.8	146.7	155.4	174.1	186.8

Finance

National Currency: Lilangeni (SZL)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = SZL 6.4597
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 1.05
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 8.0
 Total External Debt \$million: 320
 Debt Service Ratio %: 1.57
 Balance of Payments \$million: –82.4
 International Reserves SDRs \$million: 264
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
 5.4

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 27
 per capita \$: 24.50
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 43.5

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: April 1–March 31
 Revenues \$million: 494.6
 Expenditures \$million: 552.7
 Budget Deficit \$million: 58.1
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: 26.7

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 16.1
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: -0.1
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 2.22
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 36.8
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 39.3
 Total Farmland % of land area: 10.4
 Livestock: Cattle 000: 580
 Chickens million: 3.2
 Pigs 000: 30
 Sheep 000: 27
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters 000: 890
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons: 70

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 451
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 3.7

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: —
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: —
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: —
 Net Energy Imports % of use: —
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: 131
 Production kW-hr million: 350
 Consumption kW-hr million: 960
 Coal Reserves tons million: 229
 Production tons 000: 320
 Consumption tons 000: 320
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
 Production cubic feet billion: —
 Consumption cubic feet billion: —
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
 Production barrels 000 per day: —
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 3
 Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 1.14
 Exports \$billion: 0.9
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 4.0
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 1.7
 Balance of Trade \$million: -82.4

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
South Africa %	95.6	59.7
European Union %	0.9	8.8
Japan %	0.9	—
Singapore %	0.3	—
United States %	—	8.8
Mozambique %	—	6.2

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 3,107
 Paved %: —
 Automobiles: 41,500
 Trucks and Buses: 51,800
 Railroad: Track Length km: 301
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: 746
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: —
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: —
 Airports: 18
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 68
 Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 256
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 31
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 34

Communications

Telephones 000: 46.2
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.05
 Cellular Telephones 000: 88
 Personal Computers 000: 30
 Internet Hosts per million people: 1,193
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 23

ENVIRONMENT

Swaziland's environmental problems include a limited supply of potable water, the overhunting of wildlife, and soil erosion caused in part by overgrazing. Droughts occur frequently, forcing the nation to depend on emergency food aid. The soil has become depleted from years of agriculture. Floods occasionally devastate the countryside.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 30.4
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: 6
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 3
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 0.36

LIVING CONDITIONS

The administrative capital of Mbabane is modern and has a large shopping mall and other outlets. On the whole, Swaziland has good roads and railroads. Most Swazis, however, live in rural areas in primitive conditions and are plagued by chronic poverty. Food shortages are common. Traditional rural houses are round structures made of sticks and mud.

HEALTH

HIV/AIDS is a major problem for Swaziland, and HIV has been spreading rapidly through unsafe sexual practices and promiscuity. Almost 40 percent of the population was infected with the virus in 2003, which the United Nations cited as the highest rate in the world. The nation's life expectancy has been falling because of AIDS, and by 2005 the figure was under 36 years. Fertility is not as high as in other African nations; in 2005 each woman had an average of 3.7 children. The infant mortality rate is high, at 69 deaths per 1,000 live births, and has been increasing. Malaria and schistosomiasis are common. The government does not provide much in the way of health care because it "lacks resources"—many of which are usurped by the king—and the burden of the population and disease is too great.

Health

Number of Physicians: 184
 Number of Dentists: 20
 Number of Nurses: 3,345
 Number of Pharmacists: 46
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 18
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 69.27
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 370
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 6.0
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 66
 HIV Infected % of adults: 38.8
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 95
 Measles: 94
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 52
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 52

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Acquiring adequate food is problematic for many Swazis. Frequent droughts and other difficulties associated with the growing of crops have led the country to depend on foreign food aid.

The staple food is maize, which is usually made into porridge. Most rural Swazis supplement maize porridge with vegetables and milk. People eat some meat, mostly beef, and occasionally serve porridge with meat stew. Beer is brewed locally from sorghum or maize.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 19.0
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,570
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 114.1
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 84.6

STATUS OF WOMEN

The ability of Swazi women to deal with the problems of a developing society is hampered by both legal and cultural constraints, as traditional values remain major influences on the roles of women. Since men are away from their homesteads working much of the time, women perform most agricultural tasks and have virtually all responsibility for child rearing and domestic chores. However, they are not given the authority to make crucial decisions, spend in order to acquire additional capital, or try new approaches. Women are in some cases not legally equal to men, and a married woman is virtually a minor; she is not responsible for contracts she signs, and she cannot own or inherit property under normal circumstances. She must obtain her husband's permission to borrow money, leave the country, or, often, take a job. A divorced woman has no right to the custody of her children, although she may nevertheless have to care for them with no support from the father. A small but growing number of women are beginning to participate in social, economic, and political life outside of the traditional fields of teaching, nursing, and clerical work. Women have equal access to schools and constitute about half the student body nationwide.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 11
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.03
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 31.3

WORK

About 80 percent of Swazis are subsistence farmers and live-stock herders. Cattle are among the most important symbols of wealth and status, though people are becoming increasingly willing to sell them for profit. A few people work in mining, commercial agriculture, and manufacturing, and overall the number of people working in the formal economy is increasing rapidly. Indeed, the population is growing too fast for the economy to keep up, and the unemployment rate is very high, at 34 percent in 2000. Some men go to South Africa to work in mines. Native Swazis are gradually starting to open their own businesses.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 383,200
 Female Participation Rate %: 36.4
 Labor by Sector %: —
 Unemployment %: 34.0

EDUCATION

Swaziland has not yet introduced universal, free, and compulsory education. Schooling lasts for 12 years, as divided into seven years of primary school, three years of middle school, and two years of secondary school. The majority of primary and secondary schools are run by missions, with grants from the government. The school year runs from January to December. The language of instruction is Siswati in the lower primary grades and English from the middle primary grades on. About 83 percent of students who finish primary school progress to secondary school, and the government is working to reduce the dropout rate. Parents must pay school fees and contribute to building funds, although the government provides free textbooks and assists destitute and orphaned children with costs.

Swaziland has one university, the University of Swaziland, with campuses in Mbabane, Luyengo, and Kwaluseni. A very small number of Swazi students continue on to higher education in foreign institutions. Most of those who study abroad go to either the United States or the United Kingdom.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 81.6
 Male %: 82.6
 Female %: 80.8
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 9.6
 First Level: Primary Schools: 535
 Teachers: 6,727
 Students: 209,037
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 31.1
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 75.3

Second Level: Secondary Schools: 165

Teachers: 3,903

Students: 61,604

Student-Teacher Ratio: 16.1

Net Enrollment Ratio: 32.4

Third Level: Institutions: 1

Teachers: 337

Students: 5,369

Gross Enrollment Ratio: 4.7

Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 7.1

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Swaziland's communications infrastructure is relatively modern but not advanced. In 2003 there were 46,200 telephone lines and 88,000 cellular telephones in operation in the country; 27,000 people were using the Internet. Cities are the centers of technology, with Internet cafés and other modern facilities available. The University of Swaziland offers a program for teachers in information technology as part of an effort to introduce computer education in schools.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —

Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —

High-Tech Exports \$million: 3.9

Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

The state controls most of the media. Journalists are not allowed to criticize the government, and most media representatives censor content themselves to avoid getting into trouble. Swazi TV and the Swaziland Broadcasting and Information Service, which runs three radio stations, are both operated by the government. The only radio station not run by the government is the U.S.-based evangelical Christian station Trans World Radio. The main daily newspapers are the privately owned *Times of Swaziland* and the *Swazi Observer*.

Media

Daily Newspapers: —
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: —
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets 000: 110
 per 1,000: 112

CULTURE

Much of Swazi culture centers on tribal unity. People frequently congregate for celebrations and sacred ceremonies that emphasize oneness and the importance of the king. Women and men dance together wearing traditional costumes. The most important festival is Incwala, the “first fruits” ceremony, which occurs in December or January. Men make pilgrimages from the Indian Ocean to the king’s palace in Lobamba, bringing offerings of plants, river water, and ocean foam; the king concludes the ceremony by dancing in front of the people and eating a pumpkin, to symbolize the readiness of the new year’s crops. In August or September people celebrate Umhlanga, in which young unmarried women go to the queen mother’s house to perform upkeep and offer themselves as potential royal brides.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Swazis still maintain oral traditions, passing stories down from one generation to the next. Grandmothers are usually the ones to tell tales in the evenings before bedtime. One famous tale is an account of how the rock rabbit failed to get its tail in refusing to attend the tail-distribution event. Folklore plays an important part in traditional ceremonies.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

For Swazi people, entertainment often takes the form of attending traditional festivals to dance and sing. The cities have some restaurants and shopping facilities, including the Swazi Plaza in Mbabane and local markets. There are various possibilities for outdoor recreation, including horseback riding, trekking, white-water rafting, mountain biking, and wildlife safaris. The city of Lobamba has a National Museum, which includes a model of a traditional village with beehive houses.

ETIQUETTE

Swazis observe elaborate rules of etiquette around the king. When greeting the king, they keep their eyes cast

downward and clasp their right forearms with their left hands before offering their right hands to shake.

FAMILY LIFE

In many Swazi families, men leave home to work, and women function as heads of households, raising children, growing food, and making daily decisions. AIDS is transforming the shape of families, killing young adults and leaving many orphans and elders unable to care for themselves. The king is notable for his family practices; Swazi kings traditionally have multiple wives and many children. The current king has nine wives, and his father was said to have had 100 wives and 600 children.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Although Western clothing has become common, Swazis frequently wear traditional garb for ceremonies. The king in particular wears colorful traditional robes and animal skins. Warriors wear loincloths made of leopard skins and carry spears. Women dress in colorful sarongs, with shell rattles on their ankles.

SPORTS

Swazis play a variety of sports, including soccer, boxing, track, and volleyball. The national soccer team competes against teams from South Africa, Lesotho, and other neighboring countries. The queen mother has introduced a Special Olympics program to allow disabled people to participate in sports.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1968** Swaziland gains independence following successful talks in London.
- 1972** Nation holds first parliamentary elections; the royalist Imbokodvo National Movement wins, while the opposition gains three seats.
- 1973** King Sobhuza II declares constitution unworkable and voids it. Royal Defense Forces are reactivated.
- 1974** Royal Constitutional Commission concludes study for new constitution. Swaziland introduces new national currency, the lilangeni.
- 1976** Prince Maphevu Dlamini is named prime minister, replacing Prince Makhosini Dlamini. Swaziland establishes diplomatic relations with Mozambique.
- 1979** Prime Minister Maphevu Dlamini dies and is succeeded in office by Mabandla Dlamini.

- 1982** King Sobhuza dies. Power of head of state is transferred to Queen Mother Dzeliwe, who is named regent. In power struggle in the Liqoqo, traditionalists gain the upper hand.
- 1983** Prime Minister Prince Mabandla Dlamini, head of a liberal faction, is dismissed and replaced by the conservative Prince Bhekimpi Dlamini. Queen regent is presented with document transferring most of her power to the Liqoqo and the "authorized person." On her refusal to sign, she is ousted in favor of Ntombi, the mother of the heir apparent. Prince Gabeni, who championed the cause of Dzeliwe, is dismissed from his post as minister of home affairs. Ntombi is installed as regent.
- 1984** Prime Minister Bhekimpi Dlamini arrests the "Gang of Four," the ministers of foreign affairs and finance and the chiefs of the army and police, for plotting against the state. Prince Sozisa Dlamini, head of the Liqoqo, is dismissed. Agreement is reached with South Africa on trade representation for Swaziland at Pretoria.
- 1986** Prince Makhosetive is installed as King Mswati III.
- 1987** King Mswati III dissolves parliament in September—one year early. In November, elections are held, the government is reorganized, and a treason trial involving 12 former leaders begins. Princes Mfanasibili and Bhekimpi Dlamini are among those tried.
- 1988** In March, 10 of the accused are found guilty and sentenced to prison terms. In July, all except Prince Mfanasibili are freed. Prince Mfanasibili is sentenced to an additional six-year prison term.
- 1989** Four workers are injured by police gunfire during a riot over pay at the Havelock asbestos mine.
- 1990** Police seize a large arms cache in Manzini, arresting two South Africans and one Swazi.
- 1993** A majority of the House of Assembly is directly elected for the first time.
- 1995** The National Assembly and the homes of the deputy prime minister and the vice chancellor of the University of Swaziland are burned in student riots.
- 1996** Sibusiso Barnabas Dlamini is appointed prime minister.
- 1997** The heads of Mozambique and South Africa hold talks with the king on further democratization in Swaziland.
- 1998** Opposition groups boycott elections to the House of Assembly, protesting lack of reform progress.
- 2001** In an effort to stop the spread of AIDS, the king forbids men to sleep with teenage girls for the next five years. The king appoints a team to draft a new constitution.
- 2002** People starve after a drought harms crops. The United Nations sends food aid. King Mswati buys a \$45 million jet.
- 2003** Prodemocracy activist Obed Dlamini wins a seat in parliament in the general elections.
- 2004** Drought continues, and the prime minister declares a humanitarian crisis. Swaziland records the world's highest rate of HIV infection. The king plans to build new homes for some of his wives.
- 2005** King Mswati signs a new constitution.

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- Swaziland.** *Annual Statistical Bulletin; Report on the 1986 Swaziland Population Census; Swaziland—Recent Economic Developments* (IMF Staff Country Report), 1997

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Washington, D.C. 20008
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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Swaziland Official Government Website
<http://www.swazi.com/government>
- The Swazi Observer
<http://www.observer.org.sz/index.asp>
- Swaziland on the Internet
<http://www.realnet.co.sz>

SWEDEN

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Kingdom of Sweden (Konungariket Sverige)

ABBREVIATION

SE

CAPITAL

Stockholm

HEAD OF STATE

King Carl XVI Gustaf (from 1973)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Göran Persson (from 1996)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Parliamentary democracy, constitutional monarchy

POPULATION

9,001,774 (2005)

AREA

449,964 sq km (173,731 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Swedes, Finns, Sami

LANGUAGES

Swedish (national), Romani, Yiddish, Finnish, Sami, Meänkieli

RELIGIONS

Church of Sweden, Roman Catholicism, Pentecostalism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Krona

NATIONAL FLAG

A yellow cross with an extended right horizontal on a blue field

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A main shield quartered by a gold cross whose arms taper toward the center. Panels alternately display three jeweled gold crowns on blue and a gold, crowned lion on diagonal blue and silver stripes, the emblem of the Folkung dynasty. A small heart shield superimposed at the center of the cross combines the symbols of the Vasa dynasty and the ruling Bernadottes; the charges include a gold urn displayed against a silver band on a red field, a gold eagle on a blue field with silver stars, and a silver twin-turreted castle on a blue background. Gold, crowned lions flank the main shield, which is topped by a royal crown and encircled by the cherub-decorated collar of the Order of the Seraphim, its medal suspended below. Red bunting and another royal crown appear above the entire motif.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Du Gamla, Du Fria” (Thou Ancient, Thou Free)

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year’s Day), May 1 (May Day), June 6 (Flag Day), Saturday falling between June 20 and 26 (Midsummer Day), all major Christian festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

June 6, 1523

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

January 1, 1975

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Located in northern Europe, Sweden is the largest of the Scandinavian nations. It is also one of Europe’s northernmost nations, with some 15 percent of its territory within the arctic circle. Its total area is 449,964 sq km (173,731 sq mi); of this, some 411,406 sq km (158,844 sq mi) are land, and 38,558 sq km (14,887 sq mi) are water. Sweden has some 96,000 lakes and 3,218 km (2,000 mi) of coastline. There are also a number of islands; the two largest are Gotland, with a coastline of 400 km (249 mi), and Öland,

with a coastline of 72 km (45 mi). The nation is bordered on the north and northeast by Finland; on the east by the Gulf of Bothnia; on the southwest by the Baltic Sea; on the southeast by the Øresund, the Kattegat, and the Skagerrak; and on the west by Norway. One of the most significant geographic features of the nation is its length. While the nation extends only 499 km (310 mi) from east to west, it stretches 1,574 km (984 mi) from north to south. The nation has no outstanding border disputes.

Stockholm is the capital, with a population 1.87 million when including suburbs; the city is located on an in-

Sweden



let of the Baltic Sea. The second- and third-largest cities are Göteborg and Malmö, respectively. There are nine other cities with populations of over 100,000.

Sweden has many geographic features similar to those of its sister state of Norway, but the land is lower and less dissected; the terrain is mostly flat or dominated by rolling lowlands, although there are major mountains in the west, along the Norwegian border. There are four major topographical divisions. The broad Baltic slopes from the lower reaches of the Dal River northward are known as Norrland. This region constitutes three-fifths of the country and consists of rolling landscapes of hills and mountains. Many of the nation's main resources, including iron and other ores, are located in Norrland. The second region is central Sweden, which is a shatter zone of lakes and plains. This area is faulted with pronounced depressions. The wooden highlands region of Småland in the south is the third region. The fourth region is in the southernmost part of the nation and is known as Scania, a continuation of the fertile plains of Denmark and northern Germany.

The border between Norway and Sweden is demarcated by the Scandinavian mountain range, which has peaks that rise some 1,000 to 2,000 m (3,000 to 7,000 ft) above sea level. The nation's main rivers originate from these peaks. The highest point in Sweden is Kebnekaise, at 2,111 m (6,924 ft), in the western highlands of Norrland. Much of the Swedish landscape is dominated by coniferous forests, which are blended in southern Sweden with such deciduous trees as birch and aspen. Several major rivers in the Norrland region bisect the country from the Norwegian frontier to the Gulf of Bothnia; these include the Gotä, Dal, Angerman, Ume, and Lule. Ice fields dominate the north. Since the Ice Age the land in northern and central Sweden has been rising, in some places up to 0.9 m (3 ft) per century.

Geography

Area sq km: 449,964; sq mi 173,731

World Rank: 54th

Land Boundaries, km: Finland 614; Norway 1,619

Coastline, km: 3,218

Elevation Extremes meters:

Lowest: reclaimed bay of Lake Hammarsjön -2.4

Highest: Kebnekaise 2,111

Land Use %

Arable Land: 6.5

Permanent Crops: 0.0

Forest: 65.9

Other: 27.6

Population of Principal Cities (2004)

Göteborg	481,410
Malmö	269,142
Stockholm	765,044
Uppsala	182,076

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Swedish weather is affected by both the Arctic zone and the Atlantic zone, the latter with its warm Gulf Stream. Because of Gulf Stream influences, the nation enjoys a more favorable climate than its northern location might otherwise suggest. Stockholm's temperatures average -3°C (26°F) in February and 18°C (63°F) in July. There is wide climatic divergence between northern Norrland and southern Sweden. Most of Norrland has a winter of seven months and a summer of less than three, while Scania, in the south, has a winter of two months and a summer of more than four. Even the short northern summers are marked by relatively high temperatures.

Annual rainfall is heaviest, at 580 mm (23 in), in the southwest and along the border with Norway, while the average for Lapland is only 300 mm (12 in). The maximum rainfall occurs in the late summer, the minimum in early spring. There is considerable snowfall in the north, where snow remains on the ground for half the year, such that most ports on the Gulf of Bothnia remain snow-bound throughout the winter.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature

Stockholm: February 26°F

July 55° to 70°F

Göteborg: February 27°F to 35°F

July 56°F to 69°F

Average Rainfall

Southwest and along the Norwegian border: 23 in

Lapland: 12 in

Stockholm: 22.4 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

The northern 60 percent of the country is covered with forests of fir, birch, and pine. Farther south, forests contain deciduous trees such as maple, beech, and oak underpinned with berry bushes and mushrooms. The arctic areas support a few birch and willow trees and mosses and lichens.

Sweden is home to many species of large mammals, including moose, deer, fox, lynx, and brown bear. There are a few wolverines left, but they have become endangered as a consequence of their habit of preying on livestock. There are various species of birds, such as woodpeckers and kingfishers. Salmon and trout populate the streams and rivers.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 9,001,774

World Rank: 84th

Density per sq km: 21.8

% of annual growth (1999-2003): 0.2	
Male %: 49.5	
Female %: 50.5	
Urban %: 83.3	
Age Distribution %:	0-14: 17.1
	15-64: 65.5
	65 and over: 17.4
Population 2025: 9,316,000	
Birth Rate per 1,000: 10.36	
Death Rate per 1,000: 10.36	
Rate of Natural Increase %: 0.0	
Total Fertility Rate: 1.66	
Expectation of Life (years): Males 78.19	
	Females 82.74
Marriage Rate per 1,000: 4.3	
Divorce Rate per 1,000: 2.4	
Average Size of Households: 2.1	
Induced Abortions: 33,365	

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Until the end of World War II, Sweden was a very homogeneous nation. Almost the entire population was ethnically Swedish, with two major exceptions: the Finnish-speaking people of the northeast and the Sami, also referred to as Lapps. However, in the postwar period Sweden has acquired some one million aliens from various ethnic groups.

This alien population constitutes some 12 percent of the total population. Of the resident aliens, or first-generation immigrants, the overwhelming majority are from EU nations. Finns make up the largest single group, as followed by Danes, Norwegians, and Germans. The need for workers has prompted the immigration of large numbers of Yugoslavs, Turks, and Greeks.

The largest non-Swedish indigenous ethnic group is the Sami. This group has inhabited Sweden since pre-Christian times. The area of Sami settlement extends over the entire Scandinavian arctic region, stretching over the mountain districts on both sides of the Swedish-Norwegian border. The Sami remain agricultural, with many dependent on reindeer breeding. The total Sami population is estimated to be 85,000, of whom 17,000 live in Sweden.

LANGUAGES

The national language is Swedish, a North German branch of the Germanic languages and the Nordic language with the largest number of speakers. Swedish is also the second official language of Finland, where it is spoken by about 300,000 ethnic Swedes. English is required as a second language in all schools and is widely spoken throughout the nation.

The language of the Sami belongs to the Finno-Ugric group.

RELIGIONS

Christianity was introduced into Sweden in the 10th century by English missionaries. Although there is no official religion, the nation is overwhelmingly Christian, with some 98 percent of the population belonging to some branch of the faith. The Reformation swept through Sweden in the 1500s, and the Lutheran Church became the dominant denomination. Evangelical Lutheranism, under the auspices of the Church of Sweden, is practiced by 87 percent of the population. Under a 1995 law the church and government became separate in 2000, although the state still provides some monetary support.

In addition to the main Lutheran church, there are a number of other denominations. Roman Catholics constitute some 1.5 percent of the population. There is also a small, but growing, Pentecostal movement that makes up some 1 percent of the population. With the influx of Turks and Muslims from the former Yugoslavia, there is a small Islamic community. There is also a small Jewish community.

Religious Affiliations

Lutheran	7,830,000
Other	1,170,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The earliest humans in Sweden probably crossed into the country via a land bridge from Denmark. During the Iron Age the area remained dominated by Denmark, and cattle and stock raising became increasingly important. Beginning around 500 C.E. the Sami population was driven north by Germanic expansion. Central and southern Sweden came to be ruled by a Germanic people known as the Svear. From 800 to 1050 the region was dominated by the Vikings. The Svea kingdom established a capital in Gamla, in Uppsala, and developed regular trade with Russia.

In 829 the German bishop Ansgar introduced Christianity into Sweden. However, pagans rebelled against the new religion and exiled him from Svealand. Sweden was united into a single kingdom dominated by Svealand, with Skara an autonomous province and with an elected king. In 1250 Stockholm became the capital of the kingdom. During the 12th and 13th centuries Swedes engaged in a series of crusades, spreading Christianity to present-day Finland.

Norway and Sweden were joined in 1319 under the infant king Magnus VII, but Waldemar IV, the king of Denmark, overran the southern part of Sweden. By the 1397 Union of Kalmar all of Scandinavia was united under the Danish throne. Sweden resisted the union, and after a century of conflict the state elected Gustavus Vasa

(Gustaf I) to the throne. Gustavus laid the foundations for the modern Swedish state by establishing a hereditary monarchy, making Lutheranism the state religion, and creating a modern army and navy. His successors expanded the empire by incorporating Estonia and parts of eastern Europe. The reign of Gustavus Adolphus (1611–32) is considered the golden age of Sweden. The nation rose to become one of the great powers of the day. Gustavus Adolphus created one of the first modern European armies and one of the first modern governmental administrations. His intervention in the Thirty Years' War assured the survival of Protestantism. Following his reign, Sweden was the hegemonic power in the Baltic region. Through the Peace of Bromsebro, Sweden regained the Danish-controlled areas of southern Sweden, and through the Treaty of Westphalia (1648) Sweden gained Pomerania and Bremen.

The reign of Charles XII, "the Great," marked the end of the Swedish ascent, as the monarch's military exploits drained the limited resources of the nation. Following a series of wars against a coalition of Russia, Denmark, Poland, and Saxony, Sweden was left exhausted. The 1721 Peace of Nystad reduced the country to a second-rate power. Russia regained Livonia, Estonia, and areas of Finland; Russia gained other Finnish areas in 1743 and the whole nation in 1809, following the War of Finland. In reaction to perceived abuses of power, the monarchy became an essentially ceremonial position in 1756. In 1772, however, Gustav III initiated a coup to restore the power of the monarchy, and in 1789 he managed to abolish the state council and restore absolutism.

Throughout the 18th century the kingdom was torn by internal dissent between the pro-French faction (the Hats) and the pro-Russian faction (the Caps). From 1751 to 1814 the throne was occupied by the House of Oldenburg-Holstein-Gottorp, although in 1809 a new constitution ended the autocracy. In 1810 one of Napoleon's marshals, Jean-Baptiste Jules Bernadotte (1764–1844), gained the throne. In 1814 Bernadotte brought his adopted nation over to the side of the Allies, against Napoleon. This marked the last full-scale war fought by Sweden. In 1818 Bernadotte adopted the title Carl XIV Johan. From 1814 to 1905 Sweden and Norway were united under one crown.

In the 19th century Sweden laid the foundations of its modern liberal democracy, which would be dominated by the Social Democratic Party (SDP). In 1842 public education was established. In 1845 property rights were extended to women, and parliament was reformed in 1866. Although Sweden had established some minor colonies in the 1700s, the nation remained aloof from the European scramble for colonies during the height of imperialistic expansion in the 1800s. Sweden also remained neutral during the conflicts of the 1800s and the two world wars. When Prussia attacked Denmark

in 1864, parliament refused to back the monarch's call to support their Nordic neighbor. From 1873 to 1914 Sweden, Denmark, and Norway were joined in a postal and monetary union.

Domestic reforms dominated Swedish politics through the 1920s and 1930s. Women were granted the right to vote in 1921, and the death penalty was abolished. In time, the eight-hour work day and mandatory two-week paid vacations were introduced, and a national pension plan was established. Sweden remained neutral during World War II but was criticized for trading with Germany during the conflict.

In 1949 parliament passed a new Freedom of the Press Act, greatly expanding media freedoms. The following year King Gustav V died, after a nearly 50-year reign; he was succeeded by Gustav VI Adolf. Reforms in the nation continued in 1951, as religious laws were relaxed, members of the church were allowed to resign, and other basic religious freedoms came into being. Six years later women were allowed to be ordained for the first time.

In 1971 the Riksdag, the Swedish parliament, became a unicameral body. King Gustav VI Adolf died in 1973 and was succeeded by his grandson Carl XVI Gustav. The next year the Riksdag passed the new Instrument of Government, which withdrew the main political powers of the monarchy—including the right to form the cabinet. Throughout the 1970s Sweden was one of the most socially progressive nations in western Europe. In 1976 ethnic minority groups were granted special rights to maintain their own languages and cultures, and in 1979 a referendum banned the use of nuclear energy.

Swedish politics were marred by the assassination of Prime Minister Olof Palme by an unknown assailant in 1986. That year the nation also faced contamination from the nuclear accident in the Ukraine, which led to the government-mandated slaughter of reindeer and restrictions on the consumption of various plants and foodstuffs.

In 1994 a national referendum supported Swedish entry into the European Union, and in 1995 Sweden gained EU membership. In 2000 the Riksdag voted to eventually hold a national referendum to put the choice of adoption of the euro to the public.

Göran Persson, of the Social Democratic Party, was elected to a third consecutive term as prime minister in 2002. He organized a minority government supported by the Greens and the Left Party. His foreign minister, Anna Lindh, strongly supported the adoption of the euro as Sweden's currency, despite rampant opposition. She was murdered in September 2003, just before the referendum vote on the issue. In the referendum, a large majority voted against adopting the single European currency; as of 2005 Sweden was one of three EU member states not using the euro.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

Monarch

1907–50	Gustav V
1950–73	Gustav VI Adolf
1973–	Carl XVI Gustav

Prime Minister

1969–76	Olof Palme
1976–78	Thorbjörn Fälldin
1978–79	Ola Ullsten
1979–82	Thorbjörn Fälldin
1982–86	Olof Palme
1986–91	Ingvar Carlsson
1991–94	Carl Bildt
1994–96	Ingvar Carlsson
1996–	Göran Persson

CONSTITUTION

Sweden is a constitutional monarchy, although the powers of the king are largely ceremonial. The power to govern rests with the prime minister and cabinet, who are dependent on the support of a unicameral legislature known as the Riksdag. The constitution is based on the theory of the separation of powers, but contemporary practice reflects more of a fusion of powers. The cabinet has influence over the Riksdag but is not as powerful as its counterparts in other European states. The Riksdag has considerable autonomy. The judiciary is independent, but there is no tradition of judicial review. The governmental administration is semiautonomous and is not subject to detailed and direct control by the ministry.

Although there is no explicit bill of rights, there is great concern for due process, and the rights of Swedish citizens are clearly implicit in many legal provisions.

At 100 pages, the constitution is quite lengthy. It is highly specific, covering many laws that are dealt with in ordinary statutes in most other nations. The constitution can be easily amended, either formally or informally, and this has been done more than 300 times. There are four separate documents: the Instrument of Government, which was passed in 1974 as based on similar documents adopted in 1634, 1720, 1772, and 1809; the Riksdag Act of 1974, which updated the 1866 act; the Act of Succession of 1810, amended in 1979, which is the shortest of the four documents and details the line of succession; and the Freedom of the Press Act, which was first passed in 1766 and has been amended several times, most recently in 1949.

The current monarch is Carl XVI Gustav, who came to power in 1973. The Act of Succession makes the monarchy hereditary. The heir apparent is the firstborn child, whether male or female. The present heir is Princess Victoria Ingrid Alice Désirée Bernadotte. The monarch holds little significant political power but is the ceremonial

head of the nation. Real power rests with the prime minister and the cabinet. Cabinet ministers are usually members of parliament. Governmental functions are carried out by 13 ministries, or departments, and 200 agencies, many of which are semiautonomous and report directly to the prime minister. The major check on governmental power is the Parliamentary Standing Committee, which annually inspects governmental programs to ensure constitutional compliance. Established in 1809, the office of the ombudsman serves as a check on public administration and guards against unresponsiveness to the interests of the general public.

Suffrage is universal for those citizens over the age of 18. In addition, resident aliens may vote if they have resided in Sweden for at least three years.

PARLIAMENT

Since 1971 Sweden has had a unicameral legislature known as the Riksdag. The bicameral system was abolished by constitutional amendment in 1969. In the Riksdag there are 349 deputies who serve four-year terms. Representation is based on the performance of parties in proportional elections, in which the parties must gain at least 4 percent of the vote to be represented. Single-member districts account for 310 of the seats, with the remaining 39 seats split among the parties with the largest numbers of surplus votes. The Riksdag meets annually in two sessions, one in spring and one in autumn.

The majority of legislative work is done through a system of standing committees.

The parliament elects the prime minister and may propose votes of censure against members of the government. This can lead to the resignation of the individual member or of the entire government.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Sweden has historically had a two-party system, with the moderates and conservatives forming one bloc and the socialists and Communists the other. The two groups are essentially evenly matched. The Social Democratic Party (SDP) is the largest single party in Sweden and has dominated Swedish politics for most of the century. While the SDP has collaborated with the Communists, its ideology is based less on Marxism and more on traditional liberal economic theories such as those espoused by John Kenneth Galbraith and Gunnar Myrdal. Women are broadly represented in the Riksdag, holding some 45 percent of seats in 2005.

Other parties that won seats in the 2002 elections are as follows: the center-left Center Party, formerly the Agrarian Party, which is the main coalition partner with the SDP; the moderate, center-right Christian Demo-

cratic Party; the environmental Green Party; the Left Party, formerly the Communist Party; the moderate/conservative Liberal Party, the main rival to the SDP; and the conservative Moderate Party, which has promoted economic liberalization and entry into the European Union and other Western institutions. There are also a number of minor or regional parties that lack parliamentary representation.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

There are three basic forms of local government. The largest units are counties, which are led by elected governors. There are 21 counties, and the independent cities of Stockholm, Göteborg, and Malmö each have the same status as a county. While governors serve as representatives of the national government, county councils (*landsting*) operate in an autonomous manner and are primarily concerned with local issues. The next unit of local government is the municipality, of which there are 289 of various types; these are divided into cities, rural communes, market boroughs, and historical municipalities. The Church of Sweden's parishes form a third unit of local government. These parishes coexist within the other two forms of local governance.

The basic powers of the local governments are outlined in the 1977 Local Government Act. Local governments have the right to conduct their own affairs in almost complete autonomy, provided that their actions do not conflict with any national law or encroach upon the jurisdiction of other governments. Governments are funded mainly by local taxes and by subsidies from the national government. Localities employ some one million employees and oversee public education, social welfare policies, public health care, care for the elderly, public transportation, and fire services.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The nation's legal system is based on civil law, although it is influenced by customary law. Sweden accepts compulsory jurisdiction from the International Court of Justice, with some reservations. Civil and criminal law are based on the National Law Code of 1734, which has been heavily amended. Swedish law does not have the large body of codification that the French and German models do and relies less on case law than do the American or British systems. Hence, the system occupies a position midway between the continental European and Anglo-American systems.

Sweden has a three-tiered hierarchy of courts, comprising district courts, intermediate courts of appeal, and the Supreme Court. There are 100 district courts, each presided over by a single professional judge who is often

assisted by a panel of lay assessors. There are six courts of appeal. Approximately 10 percent of district-court cases are appealed to the intermediate courts, which are presided over by three to four judges. The Supreme Court is the highest legal body in the nation. Therein, a special panel of three justices determines whether or not to hear cases. If accepted, cases are then brought before the full bench of five justices.

There are also a number of special courts in Sweden. These include the administrative courts and the Supreme Administrative Court, the Labor Court, the Insurance Court, and the Supreme Rent Court. The number of attorneys per capita is low in Sweden as compared with other industrialized nations. Publicly funded law offices exist in each county. The death penalty is forbidden by the constitution.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Respect for human rights is a basic value within Sweden's social and political system. Swedes enjoy all civil liberties, including the freedoms of speech and press, peaceful assembly and association, religion, and movement. Ombudsmen serve as official government monitors of individual rights. As in other Nordic countries, women enjoy full equality with men in public life, and their rights in the workplace are protected by the equality ombudsman.

Some human rights organizations, such as the Swedish section of Amnesty International, have complained of violations, particularly with respect to refugees seeking asylum who are denied entry at the border. There are some charges that policemen use excessive force in making arrests. Persons considered to be dangerous may be held for up to six hours without charges. The time between arrest and arraignment before a magistrate is set at a maximum of five days. Bail does not exist, but suspects who are not considered to be dangerous or likely to flee may be released until their trial date. Public defenders are available for cases where the accused may face six months or more of prison. There has been a dramatic increase in the use of electronic surveillance equipment, including wiretaps, in recent years.

Of particular concern are the rights of the Sami and occasional accusations of racism. In 1985 the UN Human Rights Commission commented that Sweden lacked forceful legislation against racism. In response, in 1986 the nation appointed a special ombudsman to monitor racism and discrimination.

FOREIGN POLICY

The main components of Swedish foreign policy are a strong defense, as backed up by self-sufficiency in military equipment and strategic supplies; support for multilateral

disarmament, a comprehensive nuclear weapons freeze, and the strengthening of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty; respect for human rights and self-determination movements; specific support for the Palestinians; support for sustainable economic development in less-developed nations and a new international economic order; and the promotion of Nordic cooperation and unity.

The keystone of Swedish foreign policy is neutrality, with the nation officially defined as “alliance-free in peace and noninvolved in war.” Though Sweden’s policy of neutrality is not codified, successive governments have constantly reaffirmed it and refused to form alliances that could lead to war. Sweden avoided involvement in both world wars and, overall, has sidestepped entanglements in foreign alliances since 1814. Since the end of the Napoleonic Wars the nation has maintained a realistic international role as a minor power, in keeping with its resources, and has devoted its energies to internal development. Sweden initially chose not to join the European Economic Community, despite the considerable advantages that membership would have brought.

Sweden does not equate neutrality with isolationism. In 1946 it joined the United Nations, and Swedish troops have participated in more UN peacekeeping missions than forces from any other nation. The nation joined the European Union in 1995 (though not without misgivings) and belongs to the Partnership for Peace, which operates under the auspices of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO). Sweden has been a staunch promoter of Nordic integration. It was one of the founding members of the Nordic Council and has supported regional economic integration.

DEFENSE

Authority over security matters is jointly exercised by the king and the Riksdag, although actual constitutional control is vested in the parliament’s Permanent Defense Committee. The prime minister serves as chairman of the National Defense Council as the supreme commander. Policy decisions are executed by the Total Defense Staff Committee on the civilian side and by the supreme commander on the military side. Sweden is divided into three military command areas, with each headed jointly by a commanding general and a civilian commissioner. The National Board of Economic Defense coordinates efforts to maintain self-sufficiency in military equipment and to stockpile arms. It also promotes the Swedish arms industry.

All male citizens must perform compulsory military service upon reaching the age of 19. The length of service ranges from seven to 17 months, depending on branch and position. After leaving full-time service, men remain members of the reserves until age 47. Two years after leaving service, reserve members receive refresher training.

The Swedish army has not seen combat since 1814, although military units have served in a variety of UN peacekeeping missions. In 1999 Sweden had troops serving in 11 different UN missions. Sweden receives no foreign military aid, and there are no foreign military bases on the nation’s soil. Sweden softened its neutrality in joining NATO’s Partnership for Peace program and becoming an associate member of the defense-oriented Western European Union.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	63,200
Military Manpower Availability:	1,838,427
Military Expenditures \$billion:	5.729
as % of GDP:	1.7
as % of central government expenditures:	4.7
Arms Imports \$million:	23
Arms Exports \$million:	186

ECONOMY

As a result of the nation’s neutrality, Sweden avoided the economic hardships brought on by the two world wars and the cold war and has maintained one of the highest standards of living in the world. While one of the most socialist nations in Europe, Sweden has effectively utilized the free market to uphold a sound economy. Despite the mixed economy and heavy tax burden, 90 percent of businesses are privately owned.

The nation has a highly skilled and mobile workforce and a modern, high-tech infrastructure. Increasingly high unemployment and inflation clouded the otherwise strong economy at the end of the 20th century, but the nation joined the European Union in 1995 and has reaped the economic benefits of membership. The government has been committed to fiscal discipline, which resulted in a budget surplus in 2001, although that surplus fell precipitously during the economic downturn of 2002. Growth was slow in 2003.

Agriculture accounts for only about 2 percent of the economy, while services account for 69 percent and manufacturing 29 percent. Sweden’s major industries are iron and steel production, the manufacture of precision equipment, automobiles, military equipment, and wood-pulp and paper products. The nation’s main exports are machinery, motor vehicles, paper products, wood and paper, iron and steel, and chemicals; its main imports are machinery, petroleum, chemicals, motor vehicles, foodstuffs, and clothing. Sweden’s most significant trading partners are Germany, the United Kingdom, Denmark, France, Norway, Finland, the Netherlands, Belgium, and the United States.

Sweden’s government has tried to persuade the populace to adopt the euro as the national currency, but many people are concerned about the effect this would have on

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national sovereignty. In a 2003 referendum on the matter, a large majority rejected the proposed adoption of the continentwide currency.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 255.4
GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 28,400
GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 2.7
GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 2.5
Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:

Agriculture: 2
Industry: 29
Services: 69

Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
Private Consumption: 46
Government Consumption: 28
Gross Domestic Investment: 15.8

Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 121.7
Imports: 97.97

% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 3.7
% of Income Received by Richest 10%: 20.1

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
101.4	102.3	104.8	107.1	109.1

Finance

National Currency: Swedish Krona (SEK)
Exchange Rate: \$1 = SEK 7.3489
Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: —
Central Bank Discount Rate %: 2.0
Total External Debt \$billion: 66.5
Debt Service Ratio %: —
Balance of Payments \$billion: 24.08
International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 18
Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 0.7

Official Development Assistance

Donor ODA \$billion: 1.7
per capita \$: 188.90
Foreign Direct Investment \$billion: 3.27

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
Revenues \$billion: 201.3
Expenditures \$billion: 199.6
Budget Surplus \$billion: 1.7
Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 2
Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 2.4

Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 6.16
Irrigation, % of Farms having: 4.3
Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 100.0
Total Farmland % of land area: 6.5
Livestock: Cattle million: 1.6
Chickens million: 6
Pigs million: 1.9
Sheep 000: 450
Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 67.3
Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 300.6

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 40.4
Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 5.5

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 26.0
Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 42.0
Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 4.72
Net Energy Imports % of use: 36.5
Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 33.6
Production kW-hr billion: 143
Consumption kW-hr billion: 138
Coal Reserves tons million: 1
Production tons million: —
Consumption tons million: 3.6
Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
Production cubic feet billion: —
Consumption cubic feet billion: 34.5
Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
Production barrels 000 per day: —
Consumption barrels 000 per day: 345
Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 97.97
Exports \$billion: 121.7
Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 5.2
Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 3.4
Balance of Trade \$billion: 24.08

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Germany %	18.7	10.0
Denmark %	9.0	6.4
United Kingdom %	8.0	7.8
Norway %	8.0	8.4
Netherlands %	6.8	4.9
Finland %	5.6	5.7
France %	5.5	4.9
Belgium %	4.2	4.5
United States %	—	11.5

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 213,237
 Paved %: 78.6
 Automobiles: 4,042,800
 Trucks and Buses: 769,600
 Railroad: Track Length km: 11,481
 Passenger-km billion: 8.8
 Freight-km billion: 79.5
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 205
 Total Deadweight Tonnage million: 1.88
 Airports: 254
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 11.7
 Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 7.63
 Number of Tourists from million: 12.6
 Tourist Receipts \$billion: 6.55
 Tourist Expenditures \$billion: 9.37

Communications

Telephones million: 6.58
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones million: 7.95
 Personal Computers million: 5.56
 Internet Hosts per million people: 105,003
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 569

ENVIRONMENT

Sweden has long been at the forefront of environmental awareness and was one of the first European nations to develop a national park system to protect wilderness, establishing its first parks in 1910. Efforts to curb auto emissions and industrial discharge have been very successful, such that over half of all air pollution is a result of foreign emissions crossing into Swedish territory.

In 1999 Sweden adopted a new environmental code. This act replaced 15 different environmental laws with a single, comprehensive law that set concrete goals for the following 20 to 25 years. The legislation aims to cut pollution, encourage recycling and the use of low-energy resources, and preserve biologically diverse resources and areas.

The Green Party, which is popular with young people, supports a variety of environmental agendas, such as the elimination of nuclear energy and the introduction of environmentally friendly energy sources. The Greens oppose EU membership because they believe it detracts from Sweden's environmental autonomy. Since joining the European Union, Sweden, alongside Austria and Finland, has worked to strengthen EU environmental policy.

In addition to internal issues, Sweden has assumed a leading role in global environmental issues, working

within the framework of both regional and global institutions on environmental policy. The 1992 Rio Conference on Environment and Development was the result of a Swedish initiative. The nation has endeavored to use the Convention on Transboundary Air Pollution to combat regional acid rain.

The main environmental concerns in Sweden center around the damage to groundwater and soil produced by acid rain, as primarily caused by pollution from industrial plants and coal-burning energy plants. The reduction of pollution of the waters of the North and Baltic seas is also a major priority.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 65.9
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: 1
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 9
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 103,913
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 5.29

LIVING CONDITIONS

Sweden has a very high standard of living, with many services provided by the state. Consequently, the cost of living is fairly high. Housing is comfortable and modern. Most people live in apartment buildings that include gardens and playgrounds. Families take long summer vacations. The state provides day care for small children. A wide variety of foodstuffs and consumer goods is available. Roads are of high quality. There is an efficient public transportation system.

HEALTH

Sweden has one of the highest life expectancies in the world, at over 80 years in 2004. The nation has an infant mortality rate below three deaths per 1,000 live births. Fertility is low; in 2005 each woman had 1.66 children on average. The national health service covers all residents; individual counties and municipalities handle the details of delivering health care to their respective residents. Patients pay small fees to see doctors or receive prescriptions. Dental care is free for those under 19 and subsidized for everyone else. Children can receive free eye examinations and subsidized corrective lenses. The state provides allowances to people who must stay home due either to their own illness or to that of a family member.

Health

Number of Physicians: 26,979
 Number of Dentists: —
 Number of Nurses: 86,512

(continues)

Health *(continued)*

Number of Pharmacists: 5,317
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 305
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: 3.6
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 2.77
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 2
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 9.2
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 2,489
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.1
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 98
 Measles: 94
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 100
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 100

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Swedes eat a great deal of fish and potatoes. Fish may be smoked, pickled, or cooked. Also eaten are yogurt and soft cheeses, hot and cold cereals, crisp breads, pancakes, and eggs. Meat features heavily in the Swedish diet; popular forms include meatballs, cold smoked ham and reindeer, roasted meat, hot dogs, and sausages. The smorgasbord is a buffet of assorted hot and cold foods. Swedes drink coffee with every meal. Aquavit, a spirit made from potatoes, is a popular drink on festive occasions.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 103.2
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 186.5

STATUS OF WOMEN

Women in Sweden have the same legal protections as men, and Swedish society has made great strides toward gender equality. Some 45 percent of parliamentary seats are held by women, and service by women in all levels of government is common; half of the members of the government are female. Likewise, almost half of the workforce is female, and efforts have been undertaken to erase workplace inequality. In 1980 legislation was passed against discrimination in the workplace on the basis of sex. In 1995 court cases upheld the principle of equal pay for equal work. In addition, the National Labor Market Board offers programs specifically geared toward worker training and retraining for women. The Labor Ministry operates programs to educate employers about sexual harassment and encourage businesses to intervene in such cases, lest they be forced to pay damages to victims. There is also a national officer, the equality ombudsman, who investigates gender discrimination cases.

Since 1994 the government has provided electric alarms and bodyguards for victims of domestic abuse, and

both the national and local governments fund shelters for abused women. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has granted funds to international organizations to fight trafficking in women.

When a child is born, its parents are entitled to a full year of paid leave, which they can divide between them. Both sexes may work three-quarters time for reduced pay if they have children under the age of eight. In the home, Swedish women still do more housework and child care than men, though men help.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 45
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.0
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 50.9

WORK

Most Swedes work in services, although some are employed in manufacturing. The nation produces cars, steel, weapons, furniture, and various other products for export. The unemployment rate was less than 6 percent in 2004. The Swedish workweek is limited to 35 or 40 hours, and all workers are guaranteed five weeks' paid vacation. All people receive extensive welfare benefits at all stages of employment, along with a pension upon retirement. Such provisions do not come cheap; Swedes pay some of the highest taxes in the world. Women participate in all areas of the workforce. The Sami people of the north still live by herding reindeer and fishing, though their ability to do so has been limited by deforestation and the law.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 4,460,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 48.0
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 2
 Industry: 24
 Services: 74
 Unemployment %: 5.6

EDUCATION

Sweden has a long and rich educational tradition. The first university in Sweden was founded in Uppsala in 1477; this was also the first university in the Nordic countries. The first grammar schools were established soon after the Reformation, in 1571. By the 17th century the major secondary academic institution, the gymnasium, was in place.

Unlike many European nations, Sweden chose to break down the distinction between the college preparatory school (the gymnasium) and the vocational school. Preschool education is common, and primary school is divided into three levels, each of which is three years in duration: junior, intermediate, and senior. Courses in English as a second language are compulsory from grade three or four onward. There are nationalized tests, and Sweden has one of the lowest pupil-teacher ratios in the world, with 11 pupils per teacher at the secondary level.

Private schools account for only about 2 percent of the student population.

The higher education system in Sweden encompasses not only traditional universities but also business, professional, and technical schools. The Higher Education Act of 1977 reorganized higher education into five broad areas, including technology, administration and economics, medicine and health, teaching, and culture and information. All 50 institutions of higher education in Sweden are regulated by the National Board of Universities and Colleges. All institutions are state run, and employees are granted civil-servant status.

The cost of early education is split between municipalities and the national government. Postsecondary students receive state subsidies, regardless of income, which include both grants and no-interest loans. Higher education is financed entirely by the central government through block grants.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 99.0
 Male %: 99.0
 Female %: 99.0
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 19.1
 First Level: Primary Schools: 4,900
 Teachers: 69,256
 Students: 774,888
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 11.2
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 99.7
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 629
 Teachers: 72,132
 Students: 659,597
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 12.7
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 99.5
 Third Level: Institutions: 50
 Teachers: 36,413
 Students: 414,657
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 83.4
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 7.7

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Sweden is very advanced in the sciences and technology. Swedish scientists and engineers have produced many advances in computer technology, telecommunications, industrial processes, and electricity. Dynamite was invented

by Alfred Nobel, the founder of the Nobel Prize. The Swedish government spends large amounts of money on medical research. The telecommunications infrastructure is excellent for both domestic and international purposes. Use of the Internet is widespread.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 5,171
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 4.27
 High-Tech Exports \$billion: 12.7
 Patent Applications by Residents: 9,443

MEDIA

Swedes are among the most avid readers in the world. Some 90 daily newspapers are published in the nation, along with many weekly and monthly publications. Most Swedish households read at least one daily newspaper. Press ownership is diverse and falls into three categories: private, foundation, and organizational. The government provides subsidies to all newspapers.

Most television and radio broadcasting was once public, but many private stations have appeared since the mid-1990s. Two-thirds of Swedish households have cable or satellite television services. The nation is in the process of converting all television broadcasts to digital and plans to finish by 2008. Commercial radio was legalized in 1993, and there are now nearly 100 private stations, many of them consolidations of multiple regional stations.

The nation has a unique perspective on the press, which is considered to be a public utility. All disputes between labor and management are subject to arbitration in order to avoid interruptions. Sweden was the first nation in the world to establish the principle of freedom of the press. In 1766 the parliament adopted the Freedom of the Press Act as part of the constitution, and new regulations have been put in place to account for broadcast media. One of the main principles of Swedish press law is unlimited access to public documents. This gives all citizens, even aliens, the right to obtain documents from a state agency regardless of whether the documents concern him or her personally.

State support for the press is both direct and indirect. The government exempts the press from some corporate taxes and the national sales tax. The government also provides loans and subsidies for both print and broadcast media. Subsidies are administered by the Press Subsidies Board.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 90
 Total Circulation million: 3.63
 Circulation per 1,000: 410

(continues)

Media *(continued)*

Books Published: 12,547
 Periodicals: 71
 Radio Receivers million: 25.3
 per 1,000: 2,810
 Television sets million: 4.9
 per 1,000: 551

CULTURE

Sweden has produced numerous authors, including August Strindberg, Pär Fabian Lagerkvist, Vilhelm Moberg, and Astrid Lindgren, the creator of Pippi Longstocking. The Swedish film industry has been known for its innovation since the 1920s; famous film personalities have included Ingrid Bergman, Ingmar Bergman, and Greta Garbo. The government subsidizes cultural events and activities such as opera, theater, art exhibits, and the restoration of historic buildings. Artistic products include ceramics, glass, textiles, and functionalist furniture. Many Swedes like music and participate in choirs and instrumental ensembles. Swedish rock groups such as ABBA and Ace of Base have had their moments of international fame.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 289
 Volumes: 44,102,000
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: 167
 Annual Attendance: 12,192,000
 Cinema Gross Receipts national currency billion: 1.11
 Number of Cinemas: 1,167
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: 15,800,000

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

In ancient times, people in what is now Sweden believed in the Norse gods, who included Odin, Thor, Frigga, Freya, and the trickster Loki. People told stories about the deities' adventures with one another and with giants, dwarfs, and various monsters.

The Swedish state supports the preservation of folk traditions and crafts, and the country has hundreds of folk dancing clubs. Folk music is traditionally performed on harps, violins, dulcimers, zithers, and concertinas.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Sweden offers a variety of entertainment possibilities, including bars, restaurants, discos, shopping, museums, and cultural activities. The country has numerous medieval

ruins, which are popular sites for visits. Hiking and camping in national parks are popular summer activities. A law gives hikers the right to walk, camp, or swim on private property as long as they do no damage. People also enjoy sailing, kayaking, white-water rafting, canoeing, hunting, and fishing.

ETIQUETTE

Swedish society is very egalitarian. Swedes typically address one another by first name. There is usually no obvious social hierarchy, and most decisions are made by consensus. People speak directly to one another and do not usually touch while talking. When shaking hands, it is appropriate to remove gloves first. Punctuality is extremely important, and lateness is considered rude.

FAMILY LIFE

Swedes are marrying less and less, choosing instead to cohabit outside of wedlock; about half of all children are born to parents who are not married. The law guarantees common-law couples almost all the rights accorded to married ones, so there is little legal incentive to marry. Most families have only one or two children. Families with children tend to socialize with one another. Large numbers of Swedes, particularly older women, live alone.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Swedish people usually dress well and conservatively, avoiding flashy clothing or anything else that might make them stand apart from everyone else.

SPORTS

Swedes love skiing, both downhill and cross country. They also like ice skating, ice hockey, and ice fishing. They sometimes play a sport called bandy, which is similar to ice hockey. In the summer, they go cycling, hiking, and play soccer and other sports. Orienteering is popular; in July, thousands of people compete in a national orienteering competition called the O-Ringen. Tennis has gained in popularity since the 1970s, when Björn Borg began winning Wimbledon. Most Swedes belong to health or sports clubs.

CHRONOLOGY

1939 Through 1945, Sweden remains neutral during World War II.

- 1949** The Riksdag passes the new Freedom of Press Act.
- 1950** King Gustav V dies after a reign of nearly half a century; Gustav VI Adolf ascends the throne.
- 1951** Members of the Church of Sweden are allowed to resign from church; basic religious freedom are established.
- 1958** Women are allowed to be ordained in the Church of Sweden.
- 1971** The Riksdag becomes unicameral.
- 1973** King Gustav VI Adolf dies, and his grandson Carl XVI Gustav ascends the throne.
- 1974** The Riksdag passes the new Instrument of Government and the Riksdag Act; the king loses political influence, including the right to form the cabinet.
- 1976** Ethnic minority groups are given special constitutional rights to maintain their own languages, cultures, and traditions.
- 1979** A referendum is passed banning nuclear energy.
- 1986** Prime Minister Olof Palme is assassinated by unknown parties; nuclear radiation from Ukraine is discovered in northern Sweden, leading to the slaughter of reindeer and restrictions on plant consumption.
- 1994** National referendum supports Swedish entry into the European Union.
- 1995** Sweden joins the European Union.
- 1996** Social Democrat Göran Persson becomes prime minister.
- 1998** Following a general election, Persson forms a minority government, as supported by the former Communists.
- 1999** Sweden chooses not to participate in the January 4 adoption of the euro, the EU's unitive currency.
- 2000** The Riksdag votes to hold a national referendum putting the choice of adoption of the euro to the public.
- 2001** Sweden takes over six-month presidency of the European Union.
- 2002** Göran Persson wins a third term as prime minister.
- 2003** Foreign Minister Anna Lindh is murdered. Swedish voters defeat a proposal to adopt the euro as the national currency.
- 2004** Lindh's murderer confesses and is sentenced to life in prison.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Statistics Sweden
<http://www.scb.se/eng/index.asp>

SWITZERLAND

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Swiss Confederation (Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft; Confédération Suisse; Confederazione Svizzera; Confederaziun Svizra; Confoederatio Helvetica)

ABBREVIATION

CH

CAPITAL

Bern

HEAD OF STATE & HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

The nominal title of president is held on a rotating basis by one of the seven members of the Swiss Federal Government for a one-year period.

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Federal republic; parliamentary democracy

POPULATION

7,489,370 (2005)

AREA

41,290 sq km (15,942 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

German, French, Italian, Romansh

LANGUAGES

German, French, Italian, Romansh

RELIGIONS

Catholicism, Protestantism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Swiss franc

NATIONAL FLAG

An equilateral white cross on a red background, with each arm of the cross one-sixth longer than its width

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A white cross on a red field, the original emblem of the Schwyz Canton, from which the name Switzerland is derived

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Swiss Psalm”

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year’s Day), August 1 (National Independence Day), all major Christian festivals

DATES OF INDEPENDENCE

August 1, 1291 (foundation of Swiss Confederation); September 22, 1499 (Swiss Confederation becomes independent from Holy Roman Empire)

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

May 29, 1874; revised 1998; entered into force January 1, 2000

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

A landlocked country in west-central Europe, Switzerland has a land area of 41,290 sq km (15,942 sq mi), extending 164 km (102 mi) north to south and 220 km (137 mi) east to west. Its total boundary length of 1,852 km (1,151 mi) is shared with five countries: Germany, Liechtenstein, Austria, Italy, and France.

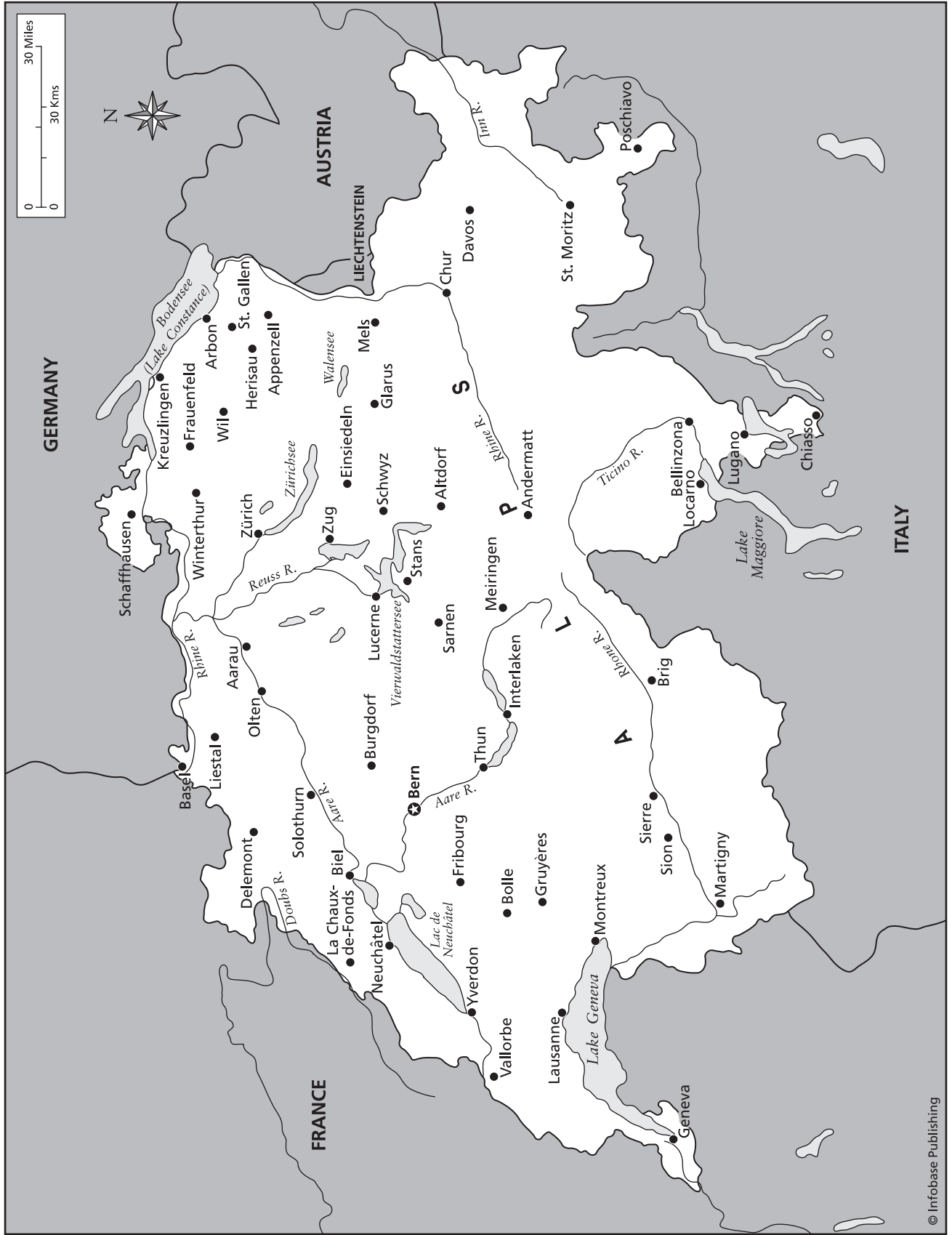
Switzerland forms part of the Alpine arc that stretches almost 1,000 km (622 mi) from Nice in the French Maritime Alps to Vienna in the Austrian Alps. Topographically, the country is divided into three regions: the Jura Mountains, in the northwest, making up 10 percent of the territory; the Alps, in the south, covering 60 percent of the territory; and the Central Plateau, or Mittelland,

covering 30 percent of the territory and including the fertile plains and rolling hills between the Alps and the Jura.

Switzerland contains the central part of the Alps, roughly one-fifth of the total range. The massif is divided by the Rhône and upper Rhine valleys lengthwise and the Reuss and Ticino valleys crosswise, creating three groups of ranges. The highest peak in Switzerland is Dufourspitze, at 4,634 m (15,200 ft). The Alpine landscape is rich and varied; glacial and fluvial erosion have carved out valleys, terraces, and peaks whose continuing evolution makes the Alps a constantly changing region.

The Jura Mountains have a much less complex structure than the Alps. The Jura Mountains have a mean altitude of 700 m (2,297 ft), with some peaks rising to about

Switzerland



2266 Switzerland

1,600 m (5,250 ft) and the range's highest peak, Mount Trendre, in the Vaud Jura, reaching 1,679 m (5,509 ft). The Jura can be roughly divided into three types of mountains: the Folded Jura in the south, and the Jura Plateau and the Jura Tables in the north and the east.

Switzerland is part of three main river basins. Two-thirds of the country is drained by the Rhine into the North Sea; 18 percent is drained by the Rhone into the Mediterranean; and 10 percent is drained by the Swiss tributaries of the Po, such as the Ticino and the Adige, into the Adriatic. Also, less than 5 percent of the land is drained by the Inn, a tributary of the Danube, which flows into the Black Sea.

Lakes are a striking feature of the Swiss landscape; no part of the country is farther than 15 km (9.3 mi) from a lake. The major lakes are at the foot of the Jura Mountains and the Central Plateau. Lake Geneva (Lake Lemman), lying on the Swiss-French border and covering an area of 581 sq km (224 sq mi), is the largest, while Lake Neuchâtel, with an area of 215 sq km (83 sq mi), is the largest entirely within Switzerland.

All the lakes on the Central Plateau between Lakes Constance and Geneva were formed during the ice ages, when depressions and basins were formed by glacial ice or moraines. The Swiss Alps have more glaciers—some 3,000 sq km (1,158 sq mi) in all—than the rest of the range. Although some of the glaciers are still advancing, the majority have been retreating during the past century.

Geography

Area sq km: 41,290; sq mi 15,942

World Rank: 132nd

Land Boundaries, km: Austria 164; France 573; Italy 740; Liechtenstein 41; Germany 334

Coastline, km: 0

Elevation Extremes meters:

Lowest: Lake Maggiore 195

Highest: Dufourspitze 4,634

Land Use %

Arable Land: 10.4

Permanent Crops: 0.6

Forest: 30.3

Other: 58.7

Population of Principal Cities (2002)

Basel	165,051
Bern	122,707
Geneva	177,535
Lausanne	116,332
Zürich	342,518

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Because of Switzerland's central position, its climate is influenced by all four main European air currents: the

Atlantic, the eastern continental, the northern subpolar, and the southern Mediterranean. These external factors, along with the varied relief of the country itself, with sudden transitions from mountain to plateau, give rise to many local and regional microclimates.

In general, Switzerland has more rain- and snowfall than most of the rest of Europe, although the amount varies from region to region. The level of precipitation in the interior Alpine region, for example, contrasts sharply with that in the exterior regions. In the Monte Moro Pass, where a ridge of the Alps acts as a trap, precipitation reaches monsoon proportions, amounting to 4,000 mm (156 in) or more annually, while in the Stalden area, only 40 km (25 mi) away, precipitation amounts to no more than 520 mm (20 in). Average annual temperatures range from 7°C (45°F) on the plateau to 1.6°C (35°F) in the mountains. South of the Alps, the canton of Ticino has a warm, moist Mediterranean climate, and frost is almost unknown.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature

Plateau: 45°F

Mountains: 35°F

Geneva Winter: 29°F to 39°F

Summer: 58°F to 77°F

Average Rainfall

Montreaux: 51 in

Lugano: 69 in

Rochers-de-Naye: 82 in

Monte Generoso: 82 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

About 30 percent of Switzerland is covered in forests, with conifers such as spruce, fir, pine, and larch in the mountains and deciduous trees such as oak and beech lower down, along with bushes and scrub. Alpine meadows are famous for their wildflowers, including edelweiss, gentian, poppies, valerian, and columbine. Palm trees grow on the shores of Lake Lugano. Much of the land has been taken over by agriculture or livestock grazing. Wild animals include ibex, chamois, and marmot, which live in the mountains. Foxes, deer, and rabbits are still plentiful, while wolves and bears are nearly extinct. Switzerland has many species of birds, but their numbers are dwindling, and many are faced with extinction.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 7,489,370

World Rank: 92nd

Density per sq km: 185.8

% of annual growth (1999-2003): 0.7

Male %:	49.2
Female %:	50.8
Urban %:	67.5
Age Distribution %:	
0–14:	16.6
15–64:	68.0
65 and over:	15.4
Population 2025:	7,774,000
Birth Rate per 1,000:	9.77
Death Rate per 1,000:	8.48
Rate of Natural Increase %:	0.1
Total Fertility Rate:	1.42
Expectation of Life (years):	Males 77.58
	Females 83.36
Marriage Rate per 1,000:	5.5
Divorce Rate per 1,000:	2.2
Average Size of Households:	2.2
Induced Abortions:	—

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

The Swiss are not a homogeneous people. Rather than a melting pot, Switzerland is an ethnic salad bowl where each of the four ethnic groups that make up the population—German, French, Italian, and Romansh—have retained their individualities. The dominant group is the German-speaking Alemanni, who constitute about 65 percent of the population. The French-speaking Swiss, also called Romans, constitute about 18 percent. The Italians are concentrated exclusively in Ticino, where they constitute 90 percent of the population; nationwide they make up only 10 percent. The Romansh speakers were originally Celts; they are now concentrated in Grisons and constitute just 1 percent of the population. Switzerland has attracted large numbers of immigrants who come to take the menial jobs the Swiss do not want.

LANGUAGES

Switzerland is a quadrilingual nation, reflecting its quadriethnic composition. The four official languages are German, French, Italian, and Romansch. The language boundaries are fairly simple and distinct, except for small German-speaking enclaves of Bernese Anabaptists in the generally French-speaking Jura.

Within each language group are dialect groups, each with its own territorial imperatives. There are fewer dialects in French-speaking cantons, as the old Franco-Provençal idioms died out many years ago. In the Ticino and southern Grisons valleys, Italian is the official language, but in rural areas Lombard dialects may still be heard. The widest variety of dialects is found in German-speaking Switzerland, more a geographical than a linguistic phenomenon. Each major canton, including Bern, Basel, and Zurich, has its own dialect, while isolated villages and valleys cling to their own highly distinctive idioms.

Romansh, or Rhaeto-Roman, was adopted in 1938 as the fourth national language. It has five distinct dialects. Romansh is an endangered language and may become extinct within the next century.

RELIGIONS

Since 1970 Catholicism has become the religion of the majority of people. About 46 percent of Swiss are Roman Catholic; 40 percent are Protestant; 5 percent follow other religions, such as Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Judaism; and 9 percent have no religion. Population movements have changed traditional configurations; the historically Protestant cities of Bern, Vaud, Zurich, and Basel are becoming increasingly Catholic, while the Catholic strongholds of Fribourg, Valais, and Tessin are becoming more Protestant.

The principal Protestant body is the Federation of Protestant Churches, which comprises 18 cantonal reformed churches, including the Free Church of Geneva and the Evangelical Methodist Church. Each cantonal church is autonomous, there being no single national church. The legal status of these churches varies; some have concordat relations with the state, some are state churches, and others are entirely independent. The churches also display surprising diversity in liturgy and constitution.

Under the Swiss constitution, it is the duty of the federal government to legislate for its member cantons on matters concerning church-state relations and also to maintain religious liberty and peace. According to the constitution, cantons may freely determine their relationships with churches. Separation of church and state is followed by Geneva and Neuchâtel, though incompletely. The Catholic and Reformed churches are officially recognized by the constitutions or legislations of all cantons, with the exception of Basel Town (which recognizes the Reformed Church only) and Tessin (which recognizes the Catholic Church only). The Christian Catholic Church, a schismatic offshoot of the Roman Catholic Church that does not acknowledge papal infallibility, is juridically recognized in the cantons of Zurich, Bern, Lucerne, Soleure, Basel, St. Gallen, and Argovie. State departments of religion exist in a few cantons. More generally, the cantonal departments of justice deal with church-related issues.

Religious Affiliations

Roman Catholic	3,452,600
Protestant	2,995,700
Other	374,500
None	666,500

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The first known inhabitants of Switzerland (or Helvetia, as it was known in antiquity) were the Helvetii, a Celtic tribe conquered by Julius Caesar in 58 B.C.E. Helvetia was one of the more prosperous provinces of the Roman Empire for over 200 years. However, on the heels of the Barbarian invasions of the Roman Empire, the region was occupied by the Alemanni, a Germanic tribe, in 250 C.E. and by the Burgundians in 433. In turn, the Alemanni and the Burgundians were defeated in 496 and 534, respectively, by the Franks, who incorporated the region into the Frankish Empire. It was at this time that the major cities, such as Zurich and Lausanne, were founded and Christianity was introduced.

In 1032, with the Frankish kingdom in decline, Switzerland became part of the Holy Roman Empire, and in the 13th century it came under the house of Hapsburg. Revolts by several cantons against the harsh Hapsburg rule led to the “eternal alliance” among the three forest cantons of Schwyz, Uri, and Unterwalden on August 1, 1291. The Hapsburgs thereupon invaded the three provinces but were repulsed. Within the next 38 years the confederation was joined by five other cantons: Lucerne, Zurich, Glarus, Zug, and Bern. All these allies were called the Schwyzer, after the largest canton. Switzerland gained four victories over Austria, in 1386, 1388, 1476, and 1499, and also defeated Charles of Burgundy and gained complete independence by the Treaty of Basel in 1499 with the Holy Roman Empire. The country’s struggle for independence was led by a number of real and legendary heroes, such as William Tell, Arnold von Winkelried, and Nikolaus von der Flue. By 1513 Aarga, Thurgau, Fribourg, Solothurn, Basel, Schaffhausen, and Appenzell joined the federation, bringing the number of units to 13. Swiss sovereignty crossed south of the Alps into Ticino, controlling many of the vital mountain passes linking southern and northern Europe.

The Reformation era witnessed a prolonged internal struggle between the Catholic and Protestant cantons, the latter led by Ulrich Zwingli in Zurich and John Calvin in Geneva. As the Catholic cantons allied themselves with Savoy and Spain, Switzerland was caught in the vortex of the Thirty Years’ War (1618–48). The Treaty of Westphalia, ending that war, also granted Switzerland formal recognition of independence by all European powers.

Catholic-Protestant religious disputes dragged on in Switzerland in the Villmergen wars of 1656 and 1712. At this time the Catholic cantons were sucked into a dangerous alliance with France, which could have split the confederation beyond repair had matters truly come to a head, but the Catholic factions reluctantly agreed to religious freedom. To this conflict was added a number of abortive risings in Geneva and Vaud against oligarchic control. The oligarchies were swept from power as the shock waves of the French Revolution hit the country. In

1798 the Helvetic Republic was proclaimed, and during the Napoleonic era Switzerland became an appendage of the French Republic.

The 1815 Congress of Vienna reconstituted the Swiss Federation as an independent nation with 22 cantons and recognized its neutrality. Switzerland, however, did not remain immune to the liberal movements of the time, and under their goading progressive governments were established in many cantons. In 1848 a new federal constitution was promulgated in the middle of the Sonderbund War, in which the Catholic cantons attempted to secede from the federation. The secessionist movement was overcome, however, and the foundations of modern Switzerland were firmly established.

The pressure for social and economic reforms provided common ground on which the various opposition groups could unite against the liberal regime. In 1869 the Democrats won the constitutional battle in Zurich. Henceforth the government would be elected directly by the people, and all parliamentary bills would be submitted to popular vote. The success of the Democrats in the cantons made a revision of the federal constitution essential; in 1874 the new federal constitution was promulgated.

Between 1914 and 1918 Switzerland came close to violating its much vaunted neutrality. German-speaking Switzerland was pro-Germany. Swiss industry profited during the war, but the rewards did not filter down to the working classes. In general, economic life in the interwar years was marked by a slow rate of growth and a shift away from production toward services. Switzerland faced much heavier foreign pressure during the Second World War than it had during the first. After the fall of France in 1940 the Swiss Confederation was surrounded by the Axis powers.

Following the war, Switzerland did not join the United Nations but did assume an active role in the UN’s specialized agencies and programs, and Geneva became the organization’s European headquarters. The country also remained reserved in the face of European integration efforts and did not become a member of the Council of Europe when it was first founded in 1949. Instead, in 1960 Switzerland joined other countries not a part of the European Economic Community to form the European Free Trade Area (EFTA), which would not strive for ultimate political union. In 1986, over 75 percent of the electorate voted against Swiss entry into the United Nations, a rejection to be interpreted less as a well-defined stand on foreign policy than as a reaction to diffuse fears of losing autonomy and an expression of general unease. In the same year the Swiss Federal Assembly approved a series of measures aimed at curbing the influx of Tamils, Turks, and Africans into the country and making political asylum more difficult to obtain. When participation in the European Economic Area (EEA) was defeated by a small margin in 1992, the motives were much the same. Switzerland saw the appointment of its first woman presi-

dent in 1999, when Ruth Dreifuss was installed as head of state.

In 2001, moves to open talks about joining the European Union were rejected by voters. However, the Swiss parliament did vote in favor of UN membership. In 2002 a narrow majority of voters approved of joining the United Nations.

The right-wing Swiss People's Party (SVP), which campaigned against foreigners and the European Union, took the largest block of seats in parliament in the 2003 elections, winning 28 percent of total votes. As such, the party took the one of the governmental seats away from the centrist Christian Democrats, changing the shape of Swiss politics for the first time since 1959. Some observers saw in this a rightward shift in Swiss attitudes, as also marked by votes against making naturalization easier and against granting new rights to the disabled.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

President

1995	Kaspar Villiger
1996	Jean-Pascal Delamuraz
1997	Arnold Koller
1998	Flavio Cotti
1999	Ruth Dreifuss
2000	Adolf Ogi
2001	Moritz Leuenberger
2002	Kaspar Villiger
2003	Pascal Couchepin
2004	Joseph Deiss
2005	Samuel Schmid
2006	Moritz Leuenberger

CONSTITUTION

Switzerland is a federal state with strong regional governments, as centered in the nation's 26 cantons. Cantons hold all powers not given to the national government. The federal government consists of a seven-member executive called the Federal Council, a bicameral legislature called the Federal Assembly, and a judiciary. The three branches' powers are completely separate.

The seven-member Federal Council holds executive authority. Its members are elected to four-year terms by the Federal Assembly. Every year the Federal Assembly elects a president and vice president from among the seven members of the Federal Council; the vice president usually becomes president the following year. From 1959 until 1993 the Federal Council was constituted according to the "magic formula," in which two representatives came from the Christian Democrats, two from the Social Democrats, two from the Free Democrats, and one from the Swiss People's Party. In 2004 the composition

changed, with the Swiss People's Party taking a seat away from the Christian Democrats. Federal councilors are supposed to act jointly, not individually. Each councilor heads one of the seven governmental departments.

The Swiss people hold ultimate authority on national matters. The Federal Assembly must put all proposed laws up for national vote, by referendum; if the voters do not approve, the proposal does not become law. Voters constantly propose referenda on new laws, which the nation then votes upon. Voters can also try to change the constitution through popular initiative. The voting age is 18.

PARLIAMENT

The Swiss Federal Assembly is the most powerful branch of the government. It elects the members of the Federal Council and every year chooses a president and vice president from among them. The Assembly has two houses with equal powers: the National Council and the Council of States. The Council of States has 46 members, two from each of 20 cantons and one from each of 6 "half cantons," all of whom are directly elected by majority voting within the cantons. The National Council has 200 members directly elected in each canton through proportional representation. Representatives from both houses serve four-year terms. Each house can introduce legislation. The executive cannot veto laws, and the judiciary is not allowed to review them for constitutionality. The Assembly can be dissolved after the adoption of a popular initiative calling for the complete revision of the constitution.

POLITICAL PARTIES

The Swiss party system has remained relatively unchanged since 1959. There are three bourgeois center-right parties and one left-of-center party. These four parties are the Radical Democratic Party, the Christian Democratic People's Party, the Swiss People's Party, and the leftist Social Democratic Party. The majority of Swiss voters belong to one of these parties. In addition, as in most multiparty nations, there are a number of smaller political parties, including a growing Green Party.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Switzerland is divided into 26 cantons, which handle their own internal affairs. Each canton has a republican form of government headed by a collegiate executive called the government council or council of state. At the cantonal level, too, coalitions and annual changes in presidency are the rule. The numbers of council members are constitutionally fixed and vary from five to nine. Cantonal parliaments are also elected by the people (in the two

Appenzells by male voters only). Party strengths are so stable that newspapers use the term “landslide” for fractional parliamentary changes.

Because cantons administer both federal and cantonal laws, their administrative machinery is overburdened. About 3,000 general-purpose local government units—communes—share this burden. They have substantial financial resources, including income tax, company tax, wealth tax, and fees and loans, with no ceilings on their rates. Some communes are as large as Zurich, with about 500,000 inhabitants, while others are very small, with fewer than 50 inhabitants. The legislative and executive bodies are the communal assemblies (communal parliaments in the case of larger communes) and executive councils, respectively. The responsibilities of the communes are wide ranging, encompassing public utilities; the administration of public properties such as forests, bridges, and tolls; schools; police and fire services; health; and civil defense. The communes also collect direct and indirect taxes.

Between the commune and the canton are political units known as urban districts (*bezirke*), which are sometimes referred to as administrative districts.

LEGAL SYSTEM

Most judicial matters are handled at the cantonal level, with each canton having its own civil and criminal courts and procedures. The only exception to this is the Federal Tribunal, which hears appeals of civil and criminal cases from cantonal courts and reviews cantonal decisions involving federal law. The Federal Tribunal has 30 full-time and 30 part-time judges elected to six-year terms by the Federal Assembly. The legal system is based on civil law, as influenced by customary law. Most law is codified in the Civil Law Code, the Penal Code, and the Code of Obligations (which includes the laws of contracts, sales, torts, and other commercial matters).

HUMAN RIGHTS

Switzerland has no significant human rights problems. The constitution guarantees all basic freedoms and provides safeguards for the rights of citizens.

Freedom from arbitrary arrest, detention, or exile is provided by law. A detained person may not be held for more than 24 hours without a warrant of arrest issued by a magistrate. A suspect may be detained with a warrant until an investigation is completed, but the length of the investigative detention is subject to review by higher judicial authorities. Bail or release on personal recognizance is granted except in the most unusual circumstances. There is no summary exile. All trials are held in public. Minor cases are tried by single judges, difficult cases by

panels of judges, and murders and other serious crimes by public juries.

An independent press, an effective and independent judiciary, and a functioning democratic political system combine to ensure freedom of speech and press. Groups labeled as subversive do not have this freedom, but no such group is so designated at the present time. While police permits are required for holding public meetings or demonstrations, such permits are rarely refused. Like many other western European countries, Switzerland adheres to a narrow definition of the eligibility criteria for asylum. Although traditionally a haven for refugees, the nation passed laws limiting the influx of foreigners in 1987 and refused to relax naturalization laws in 2004.

FOREIGN POLICY

Historically, Switzerland has prided itself on its neutrality, which has saved the country from the devastations of numerous European and world wars. The nation also avoids foreign military alliances. Switzerland maintains diplomatic relations with many countries and has often been used as a neutral ground for international negotiations. It joined the United Nations in 2002, after years of participating in various UN activities, and also belongs to the World Trade Organization, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the Council of Europe, and many other organizations. It does not, however, belong to the European Union.

Switzerland has been involved in many humanitarian activities intended to facilitate world peace. The nation participated in UN sanctions against Iraq and the Taliban and has furnished military observers and medical teams for many UN operations. Switzerland has had good relations with the United States since the early 1800s, and the two nations cooperate economically as part of the U.S.-Swiss Joint Economic Commission.

DEFENSE

Switzerland has traditionally been a nation of citizen soldiers, with all male citizens conscripted to serve 15 weeks at the age of 19 and then periodically called back into service over the next 22 years to log a total of 300 days of service. In 2003 the nation passed a law to drastically reduce the size of the army, from 524,000 to 220,000, and lower the military budget; this process began in 2004. Some “single-term conscripts” will now serve out their entire 300 days of active duty at once, while other soldiers’ terms of service will be reduced to 260 days. Soldiers between the ages of 30 and 37 will be assigned to civil protection duties.

Switzerland has four army corps and an air force, all equipped with modern, well-maintained gear. The armed forces have a permanent professional staff of about 3,600

but no full-time active combat units; still, units can mobilize completely within 72 hours. Women are now allowed to volunteer for the armed forces and may join combat units, though they may not use weapons for purposes besides self-defense.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 27,500
 Military Manpower Availability: 1,707,694
 Military Expenditures \$billion: 2.548
 as % of GDP: 1.0
 as % of central government expenditures: 5.5
 Arms Imports \$million: 41
 Arms Exports \$million: 35

ECONOMY

Switzerland is very prosperous, with a gross domestic product (GDP) of \$251.9 billion and a per capita GDP of \$33,800 in 2004. Unemployment is low, and the workforce is well educated and diligent. Growth was negative in 2003, at -0.5 percent, due mainly to the slowness of the economy throughout Europe. Although Switzerland is not a member of the European Union and has no intention of joining in the near future, it has brought many of its economic practices in line with EU practices to make doing business with EU countries easier. Commercial law is clearly defined, trade policies are liberal, and the government is fiscally conservative.

Switzerland is particularly known as a safe haven for foreign investors, with discreet bankers and a stable currency. The nation also makes a tidy income from the precision-machinery and electronics industries. Tourism is another important sector of the economy, with a well-developed infrastructure and a year-round supply of visitors.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 251.9
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 33,800
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 1.2
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 0.5
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 1.5
 Industry: 34.0
 Services: 64.5
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 59
 Government Consumption: 14
 Gross Domestic Investment: 20.4
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 130.7
 Imports: 121.1
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 2.6
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 25.2
 CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
102.2	103.8	104.8	105.5	106.1

Finance

National Currency: Swiss Franc (CHF)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = CHF 1.2435
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 237
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 0.11
 Total External Debt \$billion: —
 Debt Service Ratio %: —
 Balance of Payments \$billion: 40.95
 International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 45.6
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 0.9

Official Development Assistance

Donor ODA \$billion: 1.1
 per capita \$: 146.90
 Foreign Direct Investment \$billion: 17.5

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$billion: 131.5
 Expenditures \$billion: 140.4
 Budget Deficit \$billion: 8.9
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: 10.2

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 1.5
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: —
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 27.4
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 5.8
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 227.5
 Total Farmland % of land area: 10.3
 Livestock: Cattle million: 1.57
 Chickens million: 7.5
 Pigs million: 1.54
 Sheep 000: 441
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 4.8
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 2.7

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: —
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 4.7

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 10.7
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 25.4
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 3.51
 Net Energy Imports % of use: 56.0
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 15.6
 Production kW-hr billion: 63.5
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 54.5
 Coal Reserves tons million: —
 Production tons 000: —
 Consumption tons 000: 170

(continues)

Energy *(continued)*

Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
 Production cubic feet billion: —
 Consumption cubic feet billion: 107
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
 Production barrels 000 per day: —
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 264
 Pipelines Length km: 94

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 121.1
 Exports \$billion: 130.7
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2002): 4.6
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2002): 3.2
 Balance of Trade \$billion: 40.95

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Germany %	32.3	20.8
France %	10.8	8.7
Italy %	10.7	8.3
United States %	5.5	11.3
Netherlands %	5.0	—
Austria %	4.2	—
United Kingdom %	4.1	4.9

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 71,212
 Paved %: 100
 Automobiles: 3,701,100
 Trucks and Buses: 332,500
 Railroad: Track Length km: 4,533
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: —
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 23
 Total Deadweight Tonnage million: 1.05
 Airports: 65
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 26.7
 Length of Waterways km: 65

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 6.87
 Number of Tourists from million: 11.4
 Tourist Receipts \$billion: 9.75
 Tourist Expenditures \$billion: 8.34

Communications

Telephones million: 5.42
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.15
 Cellular Telephones million: 6.17
 Personal Computers million: 5.16
 Internet Hosts per million people: 89,096
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 341

ENVIRONMENT

Like many postindustrial nations, Switzerland's environment is largely affected by vehicular emissions and acid rain, which constitute growing concerns in major urban areas. Open-air burning adds to air pollution. The increased use of fertilizers and associated runoff also raise about some water resources. The nation has suffered serious losses of biodiversity due to widespread development and agriculture. Switzerland is party to a number of international environmental treaties and conventions, including the Kyoto Protocol.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 30.3
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: 4
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 29
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 5.44

LIVING CONDITIONS

The vast majority of Swiss live in cities. The cost of living is high, and housing is in short supply, which forces young people to share small apartments. Homes have a variety of modern amenities. Swiss people keep their homes and yards very neat, with fences and window boxes full of flowers. The public transportation system is thorough, clean, reliable, and efficient, and roads are in excellent condition.

HEALTH

Health care is administered at the cantonal level. Most Swiss hospitals are publicly funded by the cantons, although there are also a few private clinics. All Swiss citizens pay for state health insurance, and most people end up spending about 10 percent of their income on health care, including insurance premiums, doctors' fees, and medicines. Health care is subsidized for the poor. Coverage for alternative medical practices such as homeopathy, massage, and acupuncture is available for an additional premium. The Swiss have one of the highest life expectancies in the world, at over 80 years, and an infant mortality rate below five deaths per 1,000 live births.

Health

Number of Physicians: 25,216
 Number of Dentists: 3,468
 Number of Nurses: 59,833
 Number of Pharmacists: 4,450
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 352

Hospital Beds per 1,000: 17.9
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 4.39
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 7
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 11.2
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 4,219
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.4
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 95
 Measles: 82
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 100
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 100

FOOD AND NUTRITION

The Swiss eat a great deal of dairy products and meat. Swiss cheeses such as Gruyère and Emmentaler (commonly referred to as Swiss cheese) are popular, as are cheese dishes such as fondue and raclette. There are many varieties of sausages, and people also eat veal, pork, and fish. Pastries and chocolate are commonly eaten for dessert. Each canton has its own specialties, as derived from the ethnic group that composes the majority of its population. Beer is a popular drink, and people also like tea, coffee, and hot chocolate.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 111.4
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 189.1

STATUS OF WOMEN

Switzerland was one of the last countries in Europe to grant women the right to vote. Only in 1971 were women permitted full political equality with men at the federal level, and the progress of women toward full political equality at all levels has been relatively slow. Women's representation in parliament has climbed steadily, from 21 percent in 1997 to 25 percent in 2005.

A certain degree of inferiority remains inherent in the world of work. Women are paid less than men; women's salaries generally amount to two-thirds of men's salaries. During times of recession women are the first to be laid off. Discrimination against women in the workplace is one of the major concerns of the Swiss Commission on Women. Many women do not bother going to work at all, largely because there is little day care available.

The position of women in civil law is also inferior. The Swiss Civil Code of 1912, which still regulates the status of women to a degree, contains a number of provisions reflecting the conditions of an earlier era. The code's financial provisions are particularly disadvantageous to wives. Most of these limitations were rectified through constitutional amendments in 1985. The law of

employment does not provide for any special status for women, except in regard to pregnancy.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 25
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.0
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 46.9

WORK

Switzerland has very low unemployment, at 3.4 percent in 2004. Almost 70 percent of Swiss work in services, especially banking, financial services, and insurance. Tourism also employs many people year-round. Another 26 percent work in industry, manufacturing machinery, watches, scientific instruments, and other products. The Swiss are known for their diligence and skill in precision work. They generally take pride in their jobs, seldom missing workdays. All workers receive four weeks of paid vacation yearly. Disagreements between workers and employers are typically settled through negotiation, and strikes are rare. Trade unions and professional associations have a great deal of political influence.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 3,770,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 40.7
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 4.6
 Industry: 26.3
 Services: 69.1
 Unemployment %: 3.4

EDUCATION

Each canton has its own education system and its own curriculum. Teaching is done in the language of the individual canton. Kindergartens are provided for five- and six-year-olds. All children are required to attend primary school between the ages of seven and 15 or 16, depending on the canton. After primary school, students may continue on to secondary school, called gymnasium, or serve a two to four-year apprenticeship in a trade. Students who attend gymnasium specialize in particular academic subjects. All gymnasium students are required to study a foreign language.

After graduating from gymnasium, a student may go to one of Switzerland's 10 universities or two institutes of technology. The level of study at these institutions is very high.

The Swiss value education to a great degree. Literacy is near universal. Most adults continue to study subjects

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of interest, as encouraged by employers and financed by educational organizations. Language study is especially popular.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 99.0
Male %: 99.0
Female %: 99.0
School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 15.9
First Level: Primary Schools: —
Teachers: 39,363
Students: 536,423
Student-Teacher Ratio: 13.6
Net Enrollment Ratio: 98.9
Second Level: Secondary Schools: —
Teachers: 47,990
Students: 375,424
Student-Teacher Ratio: 11.5
Net Enrollment Ratio: 87.0
Third Level: Institutions: —
Teachers: 37,692
Students: 185,965
Gross Enrollment Ratio: 48.7
Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 5.8

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Switzerland is extremely advanced in matters of science and technology. Swiss watches and clocks are prized the world over. The nation has two institutes of technology that produce excellent scientists and engineers. The telecommunications system is excellent and extensive. In 2002 there were over five million telephone lines in the country, along with 2.5 million Internet users. Cellular telephones are growing in popularity, with over six million of them in use in 2003.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 3,594
Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 2.57
High-Tech Exports \$billion: 20.5
Patent Applications by Residents: 7,977

MEDIA

Switzerland has a high-quality and diversified press, reflecting the nation's high literacy and affluence. There is complete press freedom. Most newspapers and other print publications are published only in particular linguistic regions, and as a result most have small circulations and concentrate on local news. Political and religious groups also publish newspapers and magazines. One of the most prestigious newspapers is the German-language *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, founded in 1780.

The Swiss Broadcasting Corporation dominates television and radio broadcasting, operating 18 radio stations and seven television stations. There are some private regional television and radio stations, and many Swiss people watch cable and satellite broadcasts from France, Germany, and Italy.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 104
Total Circulation million: 2.67
Circulation per 1,000: 372
Books Published: 18,273
Periodicals: 120
Radio Receivers 000: —
per 1,000: —
Television sets million: 3.7
per 1,000: 494

CULTURE

The Swiss enjoy cultural events, and the country hosts various such events every year, including international book fairs, music and jazz festivals, contemporary art fairs, and film festivals. The country has nearly 500 museums and publishes over 15,000 books a year. Famous writers and scholars from Switzerland's past include Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Jacob Burckhardt, Johanna Spyri, Johann David Wyss, Max Frisch, Carl Gustav Jung, and Jean Piaget. The Swiss architect Le Corbusier was famous in the 1920s and 1930s. Artists have included Paul Klee, Alberto Giacometti, and Jean Tinguely.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 44
Volumes: 27,970,709
Registered borrowers: —
Museums Number: 419
Annual Attendance: 7,607,000
Cinema Gross Receipts national currency million: 204.2
Number of Cinemas: 384
Seating Capacity: 230,800
Annual Attendance: 15,427,961

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

The Swiss love their folk culture and maintain customs such as yodeling, alpenhorn playing, embroidery, folk singing, and folk dancing. Folk festivals include a shooting contest for teenagers in Zurich and an onion market in Bern. Between March and October farmers hold contests among their cows to find herd leaders; these are called *combats de reines*, or "combats of queens." The story of William Tell, the 13th-century woodsman who shot an apple off his son's head, is still

popular and is reenacted every summer in the Rügen Woods, near Interlaken.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Swiss cities offer a plethora of restaurants, bars, discos, hops, museums, and cultural events. The country has many tourist attractions, such as the Château de Chillon. Many Swiss men belong to guilds, which in the past were associated with particular professions but are now mainly social or political clubs. Membership is by invitation only. The Swiss love hiking in the countryside, and the nation has more than 50,000 km (31,000 mi) of footpaths designated for walkers. Citizens also enjoy riding trains or driving through the beautiful mountain scenery and visiting picturesque towns such as Lucerne.

ETIQUETTE

The Swiss are fairly formal and address one another by title and surname unless they are very familiar. It is now common practice to use the titles *Frau*, *Madame*, or *Signora* with all adult women, regardless of marital status. Tipping is not necessary, as most restaurants, bars, and taxis automatically charge for service.

FAMILY LIFE

Most Swiss have small families; in 2004 the fertility rate was 1.42 children per woman. The number of couples living together without marrying has been increasing steadily, and the average age of marriage is rising. Also, more people are divorcing now than in the past. Children expect their parents to support them until they finish their university studies. Day care is not widely available, and most women stay home to raise their children, although more young women today want careers.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

The Swiss dress well but conservatively, avoiding flashy or ostentatious clothing or jewelry. Cleanliness and neatness is important. Businesspeople usually dress formally, in suits for both sexes; women may wear pants.

SPORTS

The federal government provides financial support for sports under a 1972 law, all schools provide physical education, and the country has many sports associations, such

as the large Swiss Association for Football and Athletics. People engage in a wide variety of sporting activities, including soccer, basketball, ice hockey, swimming, sailing, and bicycling. The nation is full of world-class ski slopes that are packed in the winter. The tennis players Martina Hingis and Roger Federer each became number one in the world rankings. During the Swiss Alpine Herdsmen's Festival in Interlaken, men participate in *schwingen*, a kind of wrestling, and in boulder-throwing contests. Another traditional sport is *hornussen*, a team sport played with long metal rods, wooden shields, and a disc called a *hornus*.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1945** World War II ends, Switzerland having successfully maintained its historic neutrality while serving as a safe haven for political refugees during the war; Switzerland rejects membership in the United Nations on the grounds that certain UN provisions would compromise its neutrality but accepts permanent observer status and takes part in neutral UN efforts.
- 1948** Switzerland becomes a member of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (now the World Trade Organization); Switzerland joins the Organization of European Economic Co-operation.
- 1959** Switzerland becomes a founding member of the European Free Trade Association.
- 1963** Switzerland joins the Council of Europe.
- 1971** Women's right to vote and to stand for office is accepted at the federal level; a constitutional article regarding the protection of the environment is accepted.
- 1973** Constitutional restrictions on Jesuits and Roman Catholic monasteries are removed; the economy slows into a recession; Switzerland and the European Community sign a 20-year treaty establishing a duty-free trade area for industrial goods.
- 1974** Voters reject a referendum that would have granted special economic powers to the confederation.
- 1976** The shrinking economy has eliminated more than 400,000 jobs since 1973; Switzerland establishes an unemployment insurance fund.
- 1978** A referendum creates the canton of Jura, a francophone enclave formerly part of the canton of Bern.
- 1981** The constitution is amended to provide equal rights for women.
- 1984** Elizabeth Kopp is inducted as the first female member of the Federal Council.
- 1986** Voters reject an initiative on Swiss membership in the United Nations by a margin of three to one.

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- 1989** Elizabeth Kopp resigns after she is implicated in a money-laundering scheme.
- 1990** Kopp is acquitted of the alleged violations.
- 1991** Switzerland achieves the industrial world's highest per capita income.
- 1992** Switzerland becomes a member of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank; voters reject a referendum to join the European Community.
- 1993** Voters approve referenda to use casino gambling revenues to fund social security and to make the Swiss tax structure more like that of European Community member countries.
- 1994** A constitutional amendment makes it illegal to discriminate on the basis of race, to disseminate racist propaganda, or to deny the occurrence of the Nazi Holocaust; voters reject a referendum to allow Swiss military participation in UN peacekeeping missions.
- 1995** Under pressure from Jewish groups, the Swiss Banking Association (SBA) agrees to look for unclaimed bank accounts belonging to victims of the Holocaust.
- 1996** The SBA turns up \$30 million in funds of suspected Holocaust victims; Jewish groups object, asserting that such funds should amount to billions of dollars.
- 1997** Facing threats of international sanctions, the Swiss government proposes establishing a \$4.7 billion fund, the interest of which would compensate Holocaust victims and survivors of other human rights abuses; the proposal faces strong domestic opposition.
- 1998** Swiss banks agree to pay \$1.25 billion directly to Holocaust survivors.
- 1999** Ruth Dreifuss takes office as Switzerland's first female president and first Jewish president; the anti-immigrant People's Party places second in Federal Council elections, gaining 23 percent of the vote, but its leader, Christoph Blocher, is not granted a cabinet post.
- 2001** Moves to open talks about joining the European Union are rejected by voters. Parliament votes in favor of UN membership. A proposal to eliminate the nation's army is rejected in a referendum.
- 2002** UN membership is accepted by a narrow majority of voters. Voters approve a measure to decriminalize abortion during the first 12 weeks of pregnancy and reject a measure that would have made abortion laws stricter.
- 2003** Citizens vote in favor of military cuts and against new rights for the disabled, car-free Sundays, and the abolition of nuclear power. The right wing Swiss People's Party wins 28 percent of

the vote and takes the largest chunk of parliamentary seats. The Federal Assembly grants the Swiss People's Party a second seat in the seven-seat Federal Council, taking a seat away from the Christian Democrats.

- 2004** Switzerland signs an agreement with the European Union allowing the taxation of Swiss accounts held by EU members. Voters reject a law that would have made naturalization easier and approve a law allowing scientific research on embryonic stem cells.
- 2005** Citizens approve laws extending rights to same-sex couples, banning use of genetically modified crops, and joining Schengen and Dublin agreements of the EU.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Embassy of Switzerland (in Washington, D.C.)
<http://www.swissemb.org>
- Swiss Federal Statistical Office
<http://www.statistik.admin.ch>

SYRIA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Syrian Arab Republic (Al Jumhuriya al-‘Arabiya as-Suriya)

ABBREVIATION

SY

CAPITAL

Damascus

HEAD OF STATE

President Bashar al-Assad (from 2000)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Muhammad Naji al-Otari (from 2003)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Republic under military regime

POPULATION

18,448,752 (2005)

AREA

185,180 sq km (71,498 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Arab

LANGUAGE

Arabic

RELIGIONS

Islam, Christianity

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Syrian pound

NATIONAL FLAG

Three horizontal stripes of red (top), white, and black, with two small green five-pointed stars in a horizontal line centered in the white band

NATIONAL EMBLEM

An erect golden falcon with outstretched wings, its head and beak facing to its left. Its body is represented as a shield, on which the motif of the flag is displayed vertically. At the feet of the eagle are crossed stalks of grain, beneath which is a scroll reading, in Arabic, “The Syrian Arab Republic.”

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Protectors of the Homeland, Peace Be Upon You”

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year’s Day), February 22 (Unity Day), March 8 (1963 Revolution Day), April 17 (Independence Day, Evacuation Day), May 1 (Labor Day), May 6 (Martyrs’ Day), October 6 (Anniversary of 1973 War), various Islamic festivals, Easter and Christmas according to both Western and Eastern Orthodox reckoning

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

April 17, 1946

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

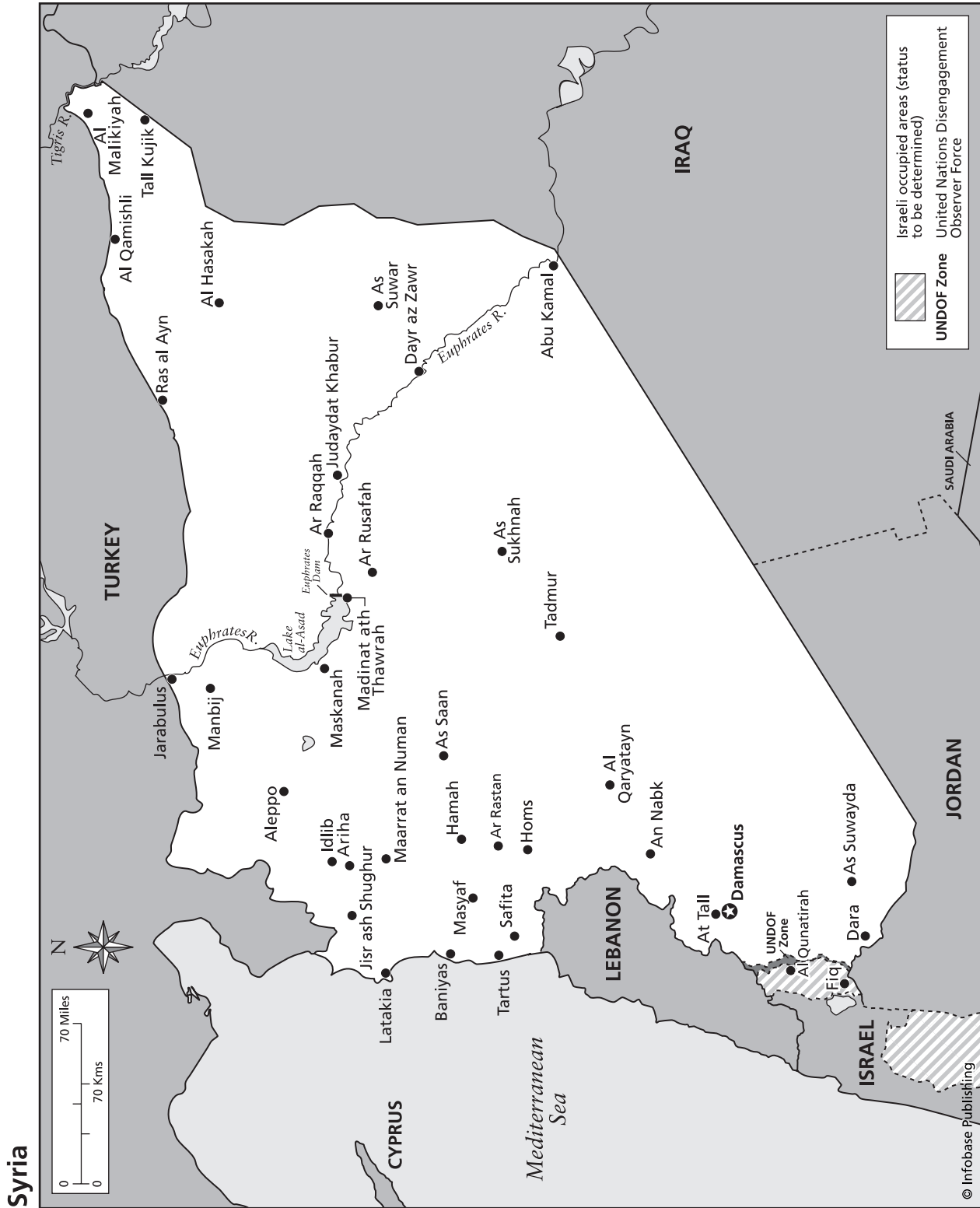
March 13, 1973

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Syria is located in southwest Asia and is bounded by Turkey to the north, Lebanon and the Mediterranean Sea to the west, Israel and Jordan to the south, and Iraq to the east. The total land area is 185,180 sq km (71,498 sq mi) of which around 20 percent has been properly surveyed. The length of the Mediterranean coastline is 193 km (120 mi).

The frontiers of Syria are largely artificial. The 822 km (510 mi) border with Turkey is defined by a railway line, while the 76 km (47 mi) border with Israel includes the demilitarized zone and the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights.

Geographically, Syria consists of four main zones. A narrow coastal plain stretches from the Turkish border to Lebanon. Its maximum width is 32 km (20 mi), but it practically disappears in some places where the mountains meet the sea. The second zone is a series of mountains opening out fanlike from the southwest; Jabal Ansariyeh (the Anti-Lebanon range) has Mount Hermon, the highest peak in Syria at 2,814 m (9,230 ft), and the Jabal al-Shaykh descends to the Hawran Plateau. To the southeast of this plateau lies the Jabal Druze range, home of the Druze. The third zone lies east of the mountain ranges, a high plateau that slopes southeast and contains the fertile regions of Aleppo, Homs, Hama, the valley of the Buqaa, the Ghab depression, and the portion of



the Jazirah district between the Tigris and the Euphrates. The fourth zone, south of this region and separated from it by a low chain of mountains, is the barren desert region known as the Hamad, covering one-third of the country's total land area.

Syria's most important waterway is the Euphrates River, flowing diagonally across the country for some 644 km (400 mi) and providing more than 80 percent of the nation's water resources. The Orontes is the next major river; though shallow, nonnavigable, and subject to destructive flash floods, it is a valuable source of irrigation.

Geography

Area sq km: 185,180; sq mi 71,498
 World Rank: 86th
 Land Boundaries, km: Iraq 605; Israel 76; Jordan 375; Lebanon 375; Turkey 822
 Coastline, km: 193
 Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: near Lake Tiberias -200
 Highest: Mount Hermon 2,814
 Land Use %
 Arable Land: 25.2
 Permanent Crops: 4.4
 Forest: 2.5
 Other: 67.9

Population of Principal Cities (1994)

Aleppo (Halab)	1,582,930
Damascus (Dimashq)	1,394,322
Hamah	264,348
Hims	540,133
Latakia	311,784
Ar Raqqa	165,195

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

On the coastal strip winters are mild, but humidity is high in the summer. The temperatures ranges from 0.5°C (33°F) to 34.8°C (95°F). The mountain regions have moderate summers, with temperatures ranging from 3.5°C (38°F) to 38°C (100°F). The interior plateaus have very hot summers, with temperatures ranging up to 42.2°C (108°F), but the winters are cold, with frost on many nights. The Hamad region has a true desert climate, with temperatures in July exceeding 43.3°C (110°F) and severe sandstorms occurring during February and May. The coolest month in all regions is January, while the hottest months are July and August. The average annual rainfall is 3,050 mm (10 in), with great variations between regions. In general, rain is heaviest in the west and north, with the mountains receiving annual precipitation of up to 1,010 mm (40 in), mainly between November and May. The interior plateau receives less than 2,030 mm (8 in) of rain annually. The southeastern desert receives only half of that amount; in some years it receives no rain at all.

Climate and Weather

Temperature Range: 33°F to 95°F
 Mountain Regions: 38°F to 100°F
 Interior Plateau High: 108°F
 Hamad Region High: 10°F
 Average Rainfall: 10 in
 Mountain Region: 40 in
 Interior Plateau: 8 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Though Syria was once covered with forests, the land is now almost entirely devoted to agriculture. A scattering of wild firs, yews, and lime trees remain. Otherwise, plants are cultivated species such as olive, fig, citrus, and banana trees; grapevines; and date palms. Bulbs such as irises and tulips grow wild, and the Damascene rose grows in the Damascus area. Wildlife is scarce. At one time animals such as wolves, bears, foxes, badgers, hyenas, jackals, wild boar, and deer roamed the land, but in modern times the majority of animals are domesticated camels, goats, and donkeys.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 18,448,752
 World Rank: 55th
 Density per sq km: 94.6
 % of annual growth (1999-2003): 2.4
 Male %: 51.2
 Female %: 48.8
 Urban %: 50.1
 Age Distribution %: 0-14: 37.4
 15-64: 59.3
 65 and over: 3.3
 Population 2025: 26,548,000
 Birth Rate per 1,000: 28.29
 Death Rate per 1,000: 4.88
 Rate of Natural Increase %: 2.3
 Total Fertility Rate: 3.5
 Expectation of Life (years): Males 68.75
 Females 71.38
 Marriage Rate per 1,000: 10.2
 Divorce Rate per 1,000: 0.8
 Average Size of Households: 6.2
 Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

The Syrian government does not officially recognize ethnic communities. Nevertheless, ethnicity is the most important factor in Syrian political and social life. Although more than 90 percent of the people are Arabs, they do not constitute a unified or monolithic force because of internal divisions. Distinctions with regard to language, religion, region, and race cut across Syrian society, pro-

ducing a large number of separate communities, each with its own system of shared values and loyalties. There are also further divisions into villagers and townsmen and into settled people and nomads. Although there is a vague commitment to the general idea of Arab unity, primary loyalties are to family, clan, tribe, and sect. Ethnic minorities derive their strengths from their concentration in certain regions or domination of certain occupations. Over 90 percent of non-Arabs are clustered in the northern part of Aleppo Governorate and in the Jazirah region in the northeast. Non-Arabs also live in partial isolation in their own villages or clusters of villages or in ethnic quarters in towns and cities.

Although the vast majority of Syrian Arabs are Sunni Muslims, the term Arab may also be loosely applied to Christians, Ismailis, Druze, Alawis, Shiites, Palestinian refugees, and Bedouins. The government's policy of Arabization has tended to reinforce the broader identification of all these communities as a single group.

The Kurds, who constitute roughly 9 percent of the population, are a fiercely independent people, most of whom arrived as refugees from Turkey between 1924 and 1938. They are still being assimilated into Arab society; increasing numbers have adopted Arabic speech and dress.

The Armenians form the largest unassimilated group in Syria. Adamantly dedicated to the maintenance of Armenian identity, they have found themselves threatened by the Arabism of Syrian rulers and have emigrated in large numbers to foreign countries. Minor ethnic groups include Turkomans, Circassians, Assyrians, and Jews. Both the Turkomans and Circassians, being Sunni Muslim, are being gradually assimilated and may eventually cease to be distinct groups. The Assyrians, on the other hand, are Nestorian Christians who fled persecution in Iraq in 1933. Syrian Jews publicly dissociate themselves from Zionism and Israel but are nevertheless looked upon with suspicion as possible traitors.

There is a Palestinian community of some 400,000, predominantly refugees from the Arab-Israeli wars. Palestinians are free to choose their places of residence and occupation, and they occupy several senior positions in the Syrian bureaucracy. They are issued special Palestinian travel documents by the government in lieu of Syrian passports. They may not acquire citizenship or vote in Syrian elections, however.

Syrians are traditionally xenophobic and are particularly hostile toward Americans, whom they consider pro-Zionist. Russians and eastern Europeans form the largest and most influential foreign communities in Damascus.

LANGUAGES

The official language of Syria is modern standard Arabic, a literary derivation of classical Arabic. Dialects of spoken

Arabic vary widely throughout the Arab world; the Syrians speak the dialect known as Syrian Arabic, which is common to Syria, Lebanon, and parts of Jordan and Iraq. The majority of Kurds speak Kurdish, an Indo-European language written in the Arabic and Latin alphabets; the majority of Armenians speak Armenian, an Indo-European language with a highly developed literature; and the majority of Assyrians speak Syriac, a form of the ancient Aramaic language.

Most Syrians speak a Western language in addition to Arabic. French is the most common; most educated Syrians are as fluent in French as in Arabic, and it is taught as a compulsory second language in all schools from the intermediate level onward. English is coming into increasing use.

RELIGIONS

Unlike most Arab states, Syria has no official religion, though the 1973 constitution prescribes Islamic law as the source of Syrian jurisprudence and requires that the president be a Muslim. The 1950 constitution guaranteed freedom of belief for all theistic religions. In matters of personal status, minority religions are allowed to follow their own legal systems. Although all religions theoretically enjoy equal status before the law, Islam is the most favored. The condition of non-Muslim minorities, particularly Christians and Jews, has steadily deteriorated. Tens of thousands of Christians are believed to have immigrated to Western countries since 1960. In 1967 all Christian schools were nationalized.

Muslims constitute almost 90 percent of the population, and this percentage is growing as a result of their higher birth rate. Of the Muslims, 74 percent are members of the Sunni sect, while the rest are Alawi, Druze, or members of other sects. Christians, divided among a number of denominations, form an estimated 10 percent of the populace. Two tiny minorities, the Yazidis and the Jews, together make up less than 0.5 percent.

About 90 percent of Sunni Muslims are Arabs, while the remainder are Kurds, Circassians, and Turkomans. The Alawis, historically also known as Nusayris (which eventually became an epithet), form the largest religious minority, practicing a Shiite form of Islam with Christian and pagan elements. With the rise of President al-Assad, an Alawi, they have achieved considerable power and prestige in the army and government.

The Christian community is composed of three religious traditions: the Western Roman Catholic and Protestant churches; the Eastern Churches, including the autonomous Greek Orthodox churches, the Nestorian Church, and the Monophysite Syrian Jacobite and Armenian churches; and the Uniate churches in communion with Rome. The largest denomination is the Greek Orthodox Church, also known as the Melkite Church; the second

largest is the Armenian Orthodox, or Gregorian Church. With the exception of the Armenians, most Christians are Arabs, and they have participated in nationalist movements out of proportion to their actual numbers.

The Jews, numbering several thousand, are officially described as *musawiyin* (followers of Moses) rather than as *yahudin* (Jews), since the latter is a pejorative term applied to Israelis. Nevertheless, they remain objects of suspicion and hostility and are under constant surveillance.

There are about 12,000 Yazidis, also known as devil worshippers, in the Jazirah and Aleppo regions.

Religious Affiliations

Sunni Muslim	13,652,000
Alawite, Druze, and Other Muslim	2,951,800
Christian	1,844,900

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Syria, which historically included Jordan, Israel, and Lebanon as well as the area now known as Syria, has a history that dates back to earliest times of civilization. The remains of Ebla, discovered a few years ago on Tel Mardikh, south of Aleppo, confirm the fact that a prosperous kingdom existed in the second half of the third millennium B.C.E. The finds at Tel Hariri Marie, on the Euphrates River, have furnished valuable information about the ancient history of Syria and its relations with the kingdoms of Mesopotamia. Ancient Syria was the target of more powerful neighboring kingdoms. The Akkadians controlled Syria after defeating the kingdom of Ebla in 2250 B.C.E., and the Egyptians sought to rule the entirety of Syria in the second millennium B.C.E.

In 637 C.E. Damascus fell to the Arabs. During the succeeding centuries, most Syrians were converted to Islam, and Arabic became the national language. Damascus was the capital of the Arab empire under the Umayyad caliphs, but the Abbasids moved the capital to Baghdad, reducing Syria to provincial status. Thereafter Syria fell prey to a succession of invaders, including the Christian Byzantines and Crusaders as well as the Muslim Seljuks and Ayyubids, the latter a Kurdish dynasty of which Saladin was a member. During the 13th century the Mongol hordes frequently invaded Syria, leaving trails of death and destruction. For the next 200 years parts of Syria were under the control of the Mamluks, who ruled from Egypt through local governors. In 1516 the Ottoman forces of Sultan Selim I defeated the Mamluks, and for the next four centuries Syria was a part of the Ottoman Empire. After World War I, Emir Faisal, the son of Sherif Husayn, of Mecca, was proclaimed king of Syria by a congress, but the French, who had received both Syria and Lebanon under the 1920 Agreement of San Remo, established themselves as masters of Syria.

From 1920 to 1946 Syria was under French rule, which was considered oppressive. The franc became the base of the Syrian economy, which was managed by French bankers. The French language became compulsory in schools, and the French controlled nearly every feature of Syrian life. A quarter century of such rule left politically minded Syrians with strong antagonism to France. Independence was declared in September 1941 and fully achieved in April 1946. In 1948 Syria left the franc bloc, and French influence declined steadily thereafter. Hostility toward France became more marked as France became a major supplier of military equipment to Israel and later joined Great Britain in the 1956 invasion of Egypt. Relations between the two countries improved following de Gaulle's tilt toward the Arab side in 1967. The principal legacy of French rule is the French language, which is spoken fluently by most educated Syrians and remains the major channel of communication between Syria and the West.

Throughout the early years of independence, weak parliamentary governments alternated with unstable military regimes. Syria merged with Egypt in 1958 to form the United Arab Republic but seceded in 1961 to reestablish the independent Syrian Arab Republic.

In 1963 a military junta supported by the Baath Party assumed power, and that party has dominated Syrian politics ever since. The Arab Socialist Renaissance Party (the Arabic *ba'ath* meaning "renaissance" or "rebirth") was established in 1953. The party's philosophy stresses social and economic reform, land redistribution, Pan-Arabism, and the relationship between Arabism and Islam. Internal disputes within the party, between the civilian, Marxist, "progressive" faction and the more pragmatic, military-dominated "nationalist" faction, culminated in a coup in 1970 that brought the nationalist Hafez al-Assad to power. Al-Assad's rise to power was accompanied by the growing political and economic prominence of his own Alawi community, a minority Muslim sect in northwestern Syria that constituted less than one-fifth of the population. Tensions between Alawis and the Sunni Muslim majority led to insurgency between 1976 and 1982, when Sunni fundamentalists, known as the Muslim Brotherhood, frequently attacked urban centers. In 1982 the brotherhood staged an open insurrection at Hama, which the al-Assad government was able to suppress only with a brutality that led to the destruction of one-fourth of the city.

During the mid-1970s and 1980s Syria became increasingly involved in Lebanon, which it traditionally considered part of Syria. It intervened militarily in 1976 at the height of the Lebanese civil war in an effort to maintain order between the various Lebanese factions and the Palestine Liberation Organization. Syria intervened again in 1987 in an effort to end the fighting in Beirut.

Syria's relations with the Arab world were strained by its perceived support for terrorism and its outright support of Iran during the Iran-Iraq War, in the 1980s, while its relations with the United States were strained because

of its opposition to Israel's presence in Lebanon in the beginning of that decade. Increasing hostility to Syrian politics left the nation isolated in the mid-1980s. During the Persian Gulf War, Syria finally aligned itself with the majority of the international community, participating in the U.S.-led, UN-sponsored coalition against Iraq. Hafez al-Assad was reelected in both 1991 and 1999; in 2000 he died after a long illness and was succeeded as president by his son Bashar al-Assad.

The government seemed to relax in the days just after Hafez al-Assad's death. Bashar al-Assad began his rule as a reformist open to new ideas. He released hundreds of political prisoners and removed some restrictions on the media, allowing public criticism of the government.

The Baath Party, the Alawi minority, and the army disliked these changes and soon forced the government to resume its old ways. During the early 2000s Syria became increasingly isolated in the international community, which accused the republic of supporting terrorist insurgents in Iraq and censured its years of military presence in Lebanon. By 2005, the United States had imposed economic sanctions on Syria, and the United Nations had called for an end to the Syrian military presence in Lebanon. Following the February assassination of the popular former Lebanese prime minister Rafik Hariri, pressure brought on by peaceful civic actions collectively referred to as the Cedar Revolution led to the complete withdrawal of Syrian troops from Lebanon on April 26, 2005.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

Note: Does not include acting presidents.

1943–49	Shukri al-Kuwatli
1949	Husni az-Zaim
1949–51	Hashim al-Atassi
1951–53	Fawzi as-Silu
1953–54	Adib ash-Shishakli
1954–55	Hashim al-Atassi
1955–58	Shukri al-Kuwatli
1958–61	Gamal Abdal Nasser (president of United Arab Republic)
1961–63	Nazim al-Kudsi
1963	Louai al-Atassi
1963–66	Amin al-Hafez
1966–70	Nureddin al-Atassi
1970–71	Ahmed Khatib
1971–2000	Hafez al-Assad
2000–	Bashar al-Assad

CONSTITUTION

The present constitution of Syria was approved by referendum in 1973. The 157-article constitution defines

Syria as a “socialist popular democracy,” with a planned socialist economy. Under the constitution the head of state is the president, who is also the commander in chief, the secretary-general of the socialist Baath Party, and the president of the National Socialist Front coalition. The principles of the Baath Party are written into the constitution, which also provides for a People's Council and a Council of Ministers. Although Islam is not the official state religion, the constitution contains two concessions to the religious establishment: The president of the republic is required to be a Muslim, and Islamic law is recognized as the principal source of legislation.

The constitution vests supreme power in the president, who is elected for a seven-year term by universal suffrage. He has the rights to appoint or dismiss the vice president, the prime minister, and state officials; to declare war and states of emergency; and to amend the constitution. He also has the rights to convene and dissolve the People's Council, to issue laws and ordinances when the council is not in session, and to veto legislation, although the veto may be overridden by the People's Council during a second review. The constitution requires that the president be a member of the regional command of the Baath Party and that presidential acts conform to Baath principles.

The constitution provides for popular and direct elections to the People's Council on the basis of universal suffrage over age 18. The first general election to the council under the constitution was held in 1973.

PARLIAMENT

The legislature of Syria is the People's Council, a directly elected unicameral body consisting of 250 members serving four-year terms. Among the powers delegated to the People's Council by the constitution are the rights to monitor the actions of cabinet ministers and to withdraw its confidence from an individual minister or from the cabinet as a whole.

Candidates for parliament are selected by the ruling Baath Party and, in theory, by the other parties that are part of the National Progressive Front coalition. Personal loyalty to the regime and the president are necessary qualifications. Opposition lists of independent candidates have been offered but until recently have rarely been considered.

POLITICAL PARTIES

All political parties are included in the governing National Progressive Front, founded by Hafez al-Assad in 1972. The ruling Baath Party, formally known as the Regional Command of the Arab Socialist Renaissance Party, is the Syrian branch of an international Arab move-

ment founded in 1953 through the merger of Akram al-Hourani's Syrian Socialist Party and the Arab Resurrection Party of Michel 'Aflaq and Salah al-Din al-Bitar. The party set forth a pan-Arab, Marxist, secular ideology, with the motto "Unity, Freedom, Socialism." The Baathism of Hafez al-Assad differs in methodology and attitude from that of Aflaq and Bitar, emphasizing democratic centralism and pragmatism. Never forming a mass popular movement, Baathists infiltrated and indoctrinated the armed forces and seized full power in 1963. The party has dominated the political system since then.

There are several other Syrian political parties, including the Socialist Unionist Democratic Party, the Syrian Communist Party, the Unionist Socialist Party, the Arab Socialist Unionist Movement, the Syrian Arab Socialist Party, and the Syrian Social Nationalist Party.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Syria is divided into 14 governorates, or *muhafazat*. The city of Damascus is an independent municipality with the status of a governorate. Each governorate is divided into administrative districts known as *manatik*, which in turn are divided into localities known as *nawabi*. The smallest unit of local administration is the village, headed by a *mukhtar*.

Popular government at the governorate level is vested in provincial assemblies, of whose members three-fourths are elected and one-fourth are appointed by the Ministry of Interior and the governor. Nomadic tribes usually govern themselves, with the *shaykh* (sheikh), or chief, acting as the government's principal representative in fiscal and legal matters.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The constitution specifies that the source of Syrian jurisprudence is the Islamic sharia, but in many areas the sharia is so antiquated that it has been superseded by French civil, commercial, and criminal codes, as well as some Ottoman law. Under the constitution the judiciary is theoretically independent, and the appointment, transfer, and dismissal of judges is in the hands of the High Judicial Council. The court system is headed by the Court of Cassation, under which there are 30 courts of appeal in 30 prefectures, each presided over by three judges. At the next lower level are 110 summary courts presided over by judges of the peace. At the base of the system are 41 first instance courts, each with one judge. Religious courts handle family law matters. There are also juvenile courts and personal status courts for Muslims, Druze, and non-Muslim communities, such as Catholics, Armenians, and Jews. Criminal cases with no political implications are conducted according to the

French legal code. Defendants are entitled to legal representation of their choice.

HUMAN RIGHTS

In terms of civil and political rights, Syria is ranked as an unfree nation.

Under Hafez al-Assad, Syria enjoyed its longest period of stable rule since independence. Despite this stability, Syria experienced considerable internal strife, which culminated in serious domestic violence in 1979–80. Persons charged with security or political offenses fall under the jurisdiction of the military courts or the state security court. Under this system the accused have no recourse to habeas corpus and may not choose their lawyers. All court sessions are closed.

The government interferes with the private lives of its citizens in a number of ways. Electronic surveillance is believed to be widespread. Intelligence organizations maintain networks of guards to protect officials and important buildings, as well as to monitor the activity of people living in associated neighborhoods. The postal system censors the mail, although not every letter or package is checked. Private schools are carefully inspected by the government and follow the governmental curriculum. Although the legal system provides safeguards, including the requirements of arrest and search warrants before police are allowed to enter private homes, regulations under the state of emergency currently in effect suspend such safeguards in security-related cases.

Emigration and foreign travel are discouraged. Exit visas are difficult to obtain and are often subject to the posting of large bonds.

In November 2000 President Bashar al-Assad ordered the release of 600 political prisoners. However, despite the relaxation of restrictions associated with the presidential succession, Syrians continue to be denied civil and political rights.

Violence and discrimination against women are problems.

FOREIGN POLICY

The three constants in Syrian foreign policy are opposition to Israel, Arab nationalism, and independence from, and defiance of, the West. In pursuit of these goals, Syria has antagonized not merely Western powers but many Arab nations as well.

Under Hafez al-Assad, Syria gained a reputation for being a difficult and intransigent power, somewhat ruthless as an enemy and untrustworthy as a friend. Al-Assad's only true success (from the Syrian standpoint) was his intervention in Lebanon, which converted the latter country into a vassal state. In 1991 Presidents al-Assad and

Elias Hrawi of Lebanon signed a historic treaty that called for Syrian withdrawal from Lebanon. Although Syria was invited to participate in peace talks with Israel, al-Assad always balked at doing so. The two sides have disagreed on the extent and timing of an Israeli pullout from the Golan Heights, permanent security arrangements, and the future of Jewish settlers in that territory. Syria finally withdrew its troops from Lebanon in April 2005.

Although both Syria and Iraq were Baathist in ideology, they largely remained implacable antagonists because of personality clashes between Saddam Hussein and Hafez al-Assad. In the Iran-Iraq War, Syria supported Iran, and Syria contributed troops to the U.S.-led coalition that drove Iraqi forces from Kuwait in 1991. In 2001 Prime Minister Mohammed Miro made the first official Syrian visit to Iraq since ties were severed between the two nations over Syria's support of Iran in the Iran-Iraq War. Syria gave qualified support to the interim Iraqi government in 2004 and promised to make its border secure, although later that year the United States accused Syria of permitting Islamic militants and weapons to enter Iraq, thwarting peace efforts.

Suspected Syrian participation in international terrorist activity dates from 1986, when the nation was accused of involvement in a bombing at London Heathrow Airport. As a result, Syria has been ostracized by Western nations, particularly the United States; President George W. Bush eventually included Syria in his "axis of evil" in 2002. The United States has imposed sanctions on Syria for supporting terrorism and in 2005 withdrew its ambassador from Damascus.

DEFENSE

Syria has one of the largest armed forces in the Middle East. The defense structure is headed by the president of the republic, who is also the commander in chief. Military service is compulsory and is required of every Syrian citizen by the constitution. Upon completion of the mandatory conscript term of 30 months, every soldier joins the reserve for 18 years. The total strength of the active armed forces was about 427,000 in 2003. The bulk of the Syrian army is stationed on the three hostile borders, with Israel, Iraq, and Jordan.

Syria's military receives considerable financial aid from Persian Gulf Arab states. The nation formerly acquired most of its equipment from the Soviet Union and since 1990 has had some difficulty updating its weapons and vehicles. The nation is known to be attempting to acquire weapons of mass destruction.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 427,000
Military Manpower Availability: 4,356,413

Military Expenditures \$million: 858
as % of GDP: 5.9
as % of central government expenditures: —
Arms Imports \$million: 15
Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

Syria's predominantly statist economy is on a shaky footing because of Damascus's failure to implement extensive economic reforms. The dominant agricultural sector remains underdeveloped, with roughly 80 percent of agricultural land still dependent on rain-fed sources. Although the nation has sufficient water supplies in the aggregate at normal levels of precipitation, the great distances between major water supplies and population centers pose serious distribution problems. The water problem is exacerbated by rapid population growth, industrial expansion, and increased water pollution.

Private investment is critical to the modernization of the agricultural, energy, and export sectors. Oil production is leveling off, and efforts on behalf of the non-oil sector to penetrate international markets have fallen short. Syria's inadequate infrastructure, outmoded technological base, and weak educational system make it vulnerable to future shocks and hamper competition with neighbors such as Jordan and Israel. Poverty is a major problem, with one-fifth of the population living below the poverty line. Unemployment was 20 percent in 2002.

The government recognizes the need to open the economy to additional domestic and foreign investment. It has passed laws allowing private banks to operate in the country, but as of 2004 the private banking sector was not well developed.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 60.44
GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 3,400
GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 1.8
GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: -0.7
Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
Agriculture: 25
Industry: 31
Services: 44
Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
Private Consumption: 59
Government Consumption: 13
Gross Domestic Investment: 16.3
Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 6.086
Imports: 5.042
% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: —
% of Income Received by Richest 10%: —

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
109.4	105.4	101.3	104.3	105.4

Finance

National Currency: Syrian Pound (SYP)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = SYP 11.225 (official), 52.8 (urban market)
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 494.7
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 5.0
 Total External Debt \$billion: 4
 Debt Service Ratio %: 2.98
 Balance of Payments \$billion: 1.1
 International Reserves SDRs \$million: —
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 2.1

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 160.3
 per capita \$: 9.20
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 150

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$billion: 6.58
 Expenditures \$billion: 9.45
 Budget Deficit \$billion: 2.87
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 25
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: -1.2
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 2.26
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 24.6
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 70.3
 Total Farmland % of land area: 25.0
 Livestock: Cattle 000: 880
 Chickens million: 30
 Pigs 000: —
 Sheep million: 13.5
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters 000: 50.4
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 15.2

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 5.48
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 7.0

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 35.5
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 17.1
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 1.03
 Net Energy Imports % of use: -103.3
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 6
 Production kW-hr billion: 24.5
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 22.8
 Coal Reserves tons million: —
 Production tons million: —
 Consumption tons million: —

Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: 8.5
 Production cubic feet billion: 205
 Consumption cubic feet billion: 205
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: 2.5
 Production barrels 000 per day: 535
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 279
 Pipelines Length km: 2,183

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 5.042
 Exports \$billion: 6.086
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 10.6
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 5.1
 Balance of Trade \$billion: 1.1

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Italy %	7.7	13.5
China %	7.6	—
Germany %	7.4	16.5
Turkey %	4.5	5.1
France %	4.4	6.3
United Arab Emirates %	—	8.6
Lebanon %	—	7.7

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 45,697
 Paved %: 14.2
 Automobiles: 193,500
 Trucks and Buses: 348,700
 Railroad: Track Length km: 2,711
 Passenger-km million: 307
 Freight-km billion: 1.5
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 120
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 636.6
 Airports: 92
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 1.6
 Length of Waterways km: 900

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 2.79
 Number of Tourists from million: 3.93
 Tourist Receipts \$million: —
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: —

Communications

Telephones million: 2.1
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones 000: 400
 Personal Computers 000: 330
 Internet Hosts per million people: 0.6
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 12

ENVIRONMENT

Like many arid Middle Eastern countries, Syria suffers from growing desertification, as caused by a number of factors, including rapid deforestation, the overgrazing of livestock, and soil erosion. The dumping of raw sewage and wastes from petroleum refinement pollutes the country's already inadequate water supply. Finding enough potable water for the population will be increasingly difficult in the near future.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 2.5
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: —
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: —
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 3.35

LIVING CONDITIONS

Syria has a relatively high standard of living. City dwellers typically live in apartments that they own. People in the countryside have houses with courtyards, though villagers are usually poorer than urban residents. Most homes have electricity and indoor plumbing. A number of Syrians can afford vacation homes on the beach or in the mountains. The train system is modern and efficient, and bus services are also good. Roads are excellent, although gasoline is quite expensive. Poverty is a problem for some people, as is overcrowding caused by rapid population growth; this growth has put particular strain on the nation's water supply, some of which is polluted.

HEALTH

Syria's government provides free public health care, and there is also a private health-care system for those who wish to pay for it. The government requires most doctors and dentists to spend some time working in underserved rural areas; doctors are allowed to work in both the public and private systems, which is usually necessary for them because government pay is low. Syria's population is growing rapidly, and the average age is fairly young. Life expectancy is high, at over 70 years in 2005. Smoking is one of the country's biggest health problems, and the government is trying to limit smoking.

Health

Number of Physicians: 23,742
 Number of Dentists: 12,206
 Number of Nurses: 32,938
 Number of Pharmacists: 8,862
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 140

Hospital Beds per 1,000: 1.4
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 29.53
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 160
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 5.1
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 58
 HIV Infected % of adults: < 0.1
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 99
 Measles: 98
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 77
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 79

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Syrians eat a typical Middle Eastern diet, built around flat bread, rice, vegetables and salads, beans and lentils, olives, cheese, yogurt, and fruit. Many dishes are dips that people scoop up with pieces of bread; popular dips include hummus, a puree of chickpeas and tahini, and baba ghanoush, a puree of eggplant and tahini. Falafel, fried balls of ground chickpeas, are a popular snack. Common meats are chicken, lamb, and sheep; Muslim Syrians do not eat pork. Street vendors sell *shawarma*, sliced roasted lamb served in flat bread. Garlic, olive oil, and tahini are common seasonings. People eat pastries or fruit for dessert. Fresh fruit drinks and drinks combining fruit juice with milk are very popular; Syrians love very sweet drinks and foods. People drink strong coffee or tea with every meal.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 3.8
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 3,050
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 169.3
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 167.6

STATUS OF WOMEN

The equality of women in Syria is guaranteed by the constitution. Women participate extensively in the workforce, particularly in Damascus, and a women's union works to expand the participation of women in all sectors of society, utilizing the media and a network of chapters throughout the nation to convey its message. At the same time, traditional religious law continues to apply in matters of personal status; particularly among the majority Muslim population, this continues to limit women's rights in matters such as marriage, divorce, and inheritance. Less than one-third of members of the workforce are women, and few of them hold positions of authority.

In general, women are not considered the equals of men, and they do not socialize with men except within the family. Men have a prickly sense of "family honor" and are known to defend it by killing wives and daughters; this is commonly done if the woman has been raped, which defiles that family honor. In such instances, the

women are not given the chance to defend themselves, and the men who commit the actual crimes are rarely punished. The penal code actually exempts men who kill or injure women caught committing adultery or performing illegitimate sexual acts with another person.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 12
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 0.96
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 18.2

WORK

Syria's main exports are oil, cotton, textiles, fruits, vegetables, and grains. Almost one-third of the workforce is employed in the agricultural sector, which brought in 25 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) in 2003. Petroleum is a major industry, and many people also work in silk and cotton cloth production, food processing, and phosphate mining. The government encourages the manufacture of Syrian handicrafts such as jewelry and carpets. A lack of electricity is a problem for many factories. Services generate 44 percent of GDP; service workers include doctors, teachers, and government officials.

As Syria's population has grown, it has become increasingly difficult for people to find gainful employment; in 2002 one-fifth of Syrian workers could not find jobs. Salaries are low. Many workers must have more than one job to support their families.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 5,120,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 27.9
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 30
 Industry: 27
 Services: 43
 Unemployment %: 20

EDUCATION

Schooling is universal, compulsory, and free from ages six to 11, and textbooks are free in primary schools. In all, schooling consists of six years of primary school; three years of intermediate school, both general and vocational; and three years of secondary school, both general and vocational. The academic year runs from September to May. The school week is six days long. The medium of instruction is Arabic, but both French and English are taught as second languages. Because of severe overcrowding, many schools must teach their students in two shifts, half in the morning and half in the afternoon.

There are not enough places for all young people at secondary schools, so students must pass an examination to enter them. While there are both general and vocational secondary schools, most Syrian students avoid the vocational track. At the end of secondary school, students must pass another examination. Higher education is provided by four universities: the University of Damascus (also known as the Syrian University), the University of Aleppo, the University of Latakia, and the University of Homs (the Baath University). There are also agricultural and technical colleges. Tuition is low, but classes are overcrowded, and facilities are poor; students who can afford to do so usually attend foreign universities.

Syria's educational system has made great strides since 1980, and literacy has improved tremendously. As of 2003 almost 77 of the population was literate, although many more men than women can read. Illiteracy is a bigger problem in rural areas.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 76.9
 Male %: 89.7
 Female %: 64.0
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: —
 First Level: Primary Schools: 10,564
 Teachers: 120,884
 Students: 2,904,569
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 24.0
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 97.9
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 2,526
 Teachers: 62,816
 Students: 1,010,157
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 17.9
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 42.9
 Third Level: Institutions: —
 Teachers: —
 Students: —
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: —
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: —

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Syria suffers from unpredictable electrical supplies, which impedes the use of technology. In 2002, with slightly more than two million telephone lines in the country, the telephone system was barely adequate; the government was in the process of upgrading to digital signals and fiber-optic cables. That year there were also about 400,000 cellular telephones in use, and perhaps 220,000 people were using the Internet.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: 4.85
 Patent Applications by Residents: 249

MEDIA

The Syrian press has functioned as a mouthpiece of the government. On foreign issues and matters relating to domestic security, the media adhere to governmental guidelines. Foreign-language publications are not generally censored, but articles that criticize the republic are removed. Arabic-language publications from outside the country are banned when they present viewpoints opposed to those of the government. Although there was a moment of press freedom following Bashar al-Assad's election in 2000, with several new private publications appearing, the Baath Party quickly reined in added freedoms. Bashar has called for freer Internet access, but the government blocks access to opposition Web sites and Israeli material.

Both radio and television are run by the state. Some Syrians can view foreign television networks through satellite receivers. The government has set rules for licensing private radio stations but still bans news and political commentary.

Media

Daily Newspapers: —
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: —
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets million: 1.07
 per 1,000: 68

CULTURE

Syrian culture is influenced by Islamic and Arabic traditions, although the landscape is dotted with the remains of Greek, Roman, Byzantine, European, and Muslim visitors from past centuries. Visual arts do not depict living beings and are instead concentrated around calligraphy and geometric patterns as well as architecture. Bedouins make decorative knives, silver jewelry, and cloth. Syria was the site of a burst of classical Arab poetry during the 10th century; the Koran and *Al-Mu'allahaat* were written then.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 114
 Volumes: 365,000
 Registered borrowers: 617,812
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Syria is one of the oldest continuously inhabited places in the world. Humans lived there about 6,000 years ago, and early Syrians invented an alphabet, studied astronomy, and invented stories about the stars. The city of Aleppo, Arabic for "fresh milk," obtained its name because Abraham supposedly milked his cow there. The Greeks and Romans contributed their own mythological traditions. The famous collection of stories *The Book of One Thousand and One Nights* was written in Syria, assembling folktales from several centuries of Arab culture.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Syrians enjoy socializing with friends and families, spending time talking and drinking coffee and tea. Family meals can last for hours. Women usually entertain one another at home, while men go out to coffeehouses, where they smoke water pipes and play cards or chess. Older men go to bathhouses called hammam. Young men spend hours driving around in cars. Families go on walks together, lingering in parks or getting ice cream. Mountain resorts are popular destinations in good weather.

ETIQUETTE

Syrians, like all Arabs, value hospitality highly, and it is not unusual for a visitor to receive an invitation to a meal or a cup of tea. Hosts give their guests the best portions of any meal and insist that guests eat a great deal of food; it is considered high praise of the host for the guest to consume everything on the table. If a guest does not want more food, he should leave food on his plate to avoid having it refilled. People use their right hands to eat.

FAMILY LIFE

Family is extremely important to Syrians. Several generations typically live together, and the elderly are treated with great deference. Children are valued highly, and parents are often identified by the name of their eldest son. Most people want several children; in 2005 Syrian women bore an average of 3.5 children each. Parents are heavily involved in their children's marriages, and even if they do not actually arrange the marriage, children cannot wed unless both sets of parents agree to the match. Among some groups, first cousins are considered the ideal marriage partners. The groom usually pays a bride-price to his bride's family.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Syrians value a neat appearance and usually dress in their best clothes for going out in public. Western clothing is typical. Women dress very modestly, always covering their heads.

SPORTS

Syria's most popular sport is soccer. Men and boys play soccer for fun, sometimes in the streets, and the national team draws huge audiences both live and on television. Cycling and mountain biking are popular. A Syrian athlete won the gold medal in the heptathlon in the 1996 Summer Olympics. Syrian women traditionally have not played sports, but more women and girls are now competing in soccer, basketball, and other sports.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1946 French evacuate Syria. Independent Syrian Republic is proclaimed, with Shukri al-Kuwatli as president and Khalid al-Azm as premier.
- 1948 Syrian troops invade Israel and share Arab defeat. Syria leaves the franc zone.
- 1949 Husni az-Zaim seizes power in the first of a series of army coups. Az-Zaim is overthrown after four and one-half months by another army coup, under Sami Hinnawa, who is then unseated by Adib ash-Shishakli; civilian government is allowed to continue, under Hashim al-Atassi as president. Women vote for the first time in national elections.
- 1950 New constitution is promulgated by constituent assembly.
- 1951 Conflict between the army and the civilian government leads to a showdown in which ash-Shishakli seizes absolute power, abolishes all political parties, and dissolves the chamber of deputies. Fawzi as-Silu is appointed by ash-Shishakli as premier.
- 1952 Arab Liberation Movement is founded by ash-Shishakli as the nation's sole political party.
- 1953 Syrians approve new constitution by referendum, making Syria a presidential republic, with Shishakli as president. Martial law is imposed, as Druze revolt against the government. Baath Party is founded.
- 1954 Ash-Shishakli is ousted in country's fourth coup. Constitution of 1950 is restored; new civilian government is formed, with Hashim al-Atassi returning as president.
- 1955 Syria and Egypt agree to the creation of a joint military command, with headquarters at Damascus. Shukri al-Kuwatli succeeds Atassi as president.
- 1956 Anglo-French invasion of Suez swings Syria into the Soviet camp; Syrian troops put oil pipelines out of order; Syria breaks off relations with Britain and France. Oil is found at Karachuk field. USSR offers to supply arms.
- 1957 Baathists and Communists win elections. Syria sides with left-wing forces in political crisis in Jordan. U.S. Sixth Fleet is ordered to the eastern Mediterranean to avert possible Syrian military intervention in Jordan; Syria withdraws forces from Amman.
- 1958 Syria and Egypt announce the creation of the United Arab Republic through a union of the two countries; union is confirmed by a plebiscite; Gamal Abdal Nasser is elected first president of union. Akram Howrani and, later, Abdul Hamid Sarraj become chairmen of the executive council for the Syrian province.
- 1960 Syrian opposition to the union grows as Nasser attempts to complete the integration of the two countries.
- 1961 United Arab Republic is dissolved following coup in Damascus; Syria rejoins United Nations. Conservatives win elections; Nazim al-Kudsi is elected president, with Maruf Dawalibi as prime minister.
- 1962 Brief army coup succeeds in holding power for 12 days; al-Kudsi regime is restored.
- 1963 The government, weakened and demoralized by internal and external dissent, is swept out of power by Baathist coup; a National Revolutionary Command Council is formed as the supreme ruling body, with a Baathist-dominated cabinet headed by Salah al-Bitar. Pro-Nasserists are expelled from the cabinet and the army; attempted Nasserist revolt is crushed. Amin al-Hafez emerges as the strong man and chairman of the Presidential Council.
- 1964 Provisional constitution is announced, making Syria a "socialist people's democratic republic." Banks and industrial enterprises are nationalized. Al-Hafez is elected head of state.
- 1966 Extremist wing of the Baath Party, led by Salah al-Jadid and Nureddin al-Atassi, topples al-Hafez. Yusuf Zeayen is appointed prime minister.
- 1967 Arab-Israeli war breaks out; Israel overruns the Golan Heights and occupies the town of Quneitra; Syria breaks off diplomatic relations with the United States and the United Kingdom.
- 1970 Moderate wing of the Baath Party led by Lt. Gen. Hafez al-Assad seizes power and ousts al-Jadid and al-Atassi; al-Assad assumes post of premier, with Ahmed Khatib as president. Oil pipeline

- passing through Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon is sabotaged.
- 1971** Under a provisional constitution, al-Assad is elected president for a seven-year term, with Abdul Rahman Khulayfawi as premier. People's Council is established as the national legislature. Federation of Arab Republics is formed, with Syria, Egypt, and Libya as members. Syria accedes to the Tripoli Charter States Alliance.
- 1972** Assad forms the National Progressive Front, an alliance of left-wing political parties dominated by the Baath Party. Mahmoud al-Ayyoubi is named prime minister.
- 1973** New constitution is promulgated. The National Progressive Front gains absolute majority in People's Council in new elections.
- 1975** Diplomatic relations with United States and United Kingdom are restored.
- 1976** Al-Ayyoubi resigns as prime minister and is replaced by Khulayfawi. Syria intervenes by force in the Lebanese civil war.
- 1977** President al-Assad denounces Egyptian President Anwar Sadat's visit to Jerusalem and declares a national day of mourning; Egypt breaks relations with Syria and recalls ambassador.
- 1978** Running as the only candidate, al-Assad is re-elected president for a second seven-year term by 99.9 percent of the electorate; Prime Minister Khulayfawi is replaced by Mohammed Ali al-Halabi. Al-Assad is reelected president. Soviet Union agrees to step up arms flow. Egypt cuts diplomatic ties.
- 1979** Some 60 Alawi army cadets are gunned down by Sunni fanatics; Alawi-Sunni clashes erupt in major cities. Al-Assad vows to suppress the Muslim Brotherhood. Army moves into northern Syria to quell mass violence.
- 1980** Relations with Iraq worsen as personal animosity between President al-Assad and President Saddam Hussein of Iraq intensifies; Iraq cuts diplomatic ties; Syria moves to the brink of war with Jordan but yields to Saudi mediation. Syria and the Soviet Union sign 20-year treaty of friendship calling for stronger military as well as political and economic ties. Libya proposes merger with Syria; Syria and Libya rally behind Iran in its war with Iraq. Abdul Rauf al-Kassem is named prime minister, replacing al-Halabi.
- 1981** Elections to the People's Assembly are held in which the National Progressive Front wins all seats.
- 1982** A Muslim Brotherhood uprising in Hama is brutally suppressed.
- 1983** Syria helps anti-Yasser Arafat faction of Palestine Liberation Organization oust him from Syria. Al-Assad suffers a heart attack and is hospitalized for months.
- 1985** Al-Assad is reelected for a third seven-year term in office.
- 1986** In general elections the Baath Party and other members of the National Progressive Front win 152 of 195 parliamentary seats. Jordan appoints its first ambassador to Syria since 1980. In the United Kingdom a Jordanian is convicted for planting a bomb on an Israeli airliner in London. Syrian diplomats are accused as coconspirators.
- 1987** Abu Nidal's Fatah Revolutionary Council is closed in Damascus, and many of its members are exiled. A reconciliation is reported between Presidents al-Assad and Hussein. A government reshuffle follows the resignation of Prime Minister Abdul Rauf al-Kassem, whose administration is accused of inefficiency and corruption.
- 1989** Diplomatic relations are reestablished with Egypt.
- 1990** President al-Assad's visit to Moscow confirms the continuing strength of the Syria-Soviet relationship. Kuwait's exiled leader, Crown Prince Sheikh Saad al-Abdullah as-Salim as-Sabah, is warmly received in Damascus. The Syrian defense of Saudi Arabia following the incursion of Iraq into Kuwait leads to President al-Assad's first meeting with President George H. W. Bush. Progress is seen in Syria's relations with Britain.
- 1994** Syria offers to normalize relations with Israel in exchange for the Golan Heights.
- 2000** President Hafez al-Assad dies and is succeeded by his son, Bashar.
- 2001** Syria wins a two-year seat on the UN Security Council. Pope John Paul II visits Syria. Syrian troops leave Beirut and move to other parts of Lebanon in reaction to criticism of Syria's presence in Lebanon. Prime Minister Mohammed Miro makes the first visit to Iraq since ties were severed between the two nations over Syria's support of Iran in the Iran-Iraq War in the 1980s.
- 2002** U.S. Undersecretary of State John Bolton claims that Syria is acquiring weapons of mass destruction; U.S. President George W. Bush includes Syria in his "axis of evil."
- 2003** The United States threatens economic sanctions if Syria aids fugitive Iraqis and develops chemical weapons. President al-Assad appoints Mohammed Naji al-Otari as prime minister of his new reformist government. Israel launches an air strike against a Palestinian camp near Damascus.
- 2004** Al-Assad visits Turkey. The United States imposes economic sanctions on Syria for supporting terrorism. The United Nations tells Syria to withdraw its security forces from Lebanon.

2005 The United States withdraws its ambassador from Beirut, claiming that Syria is influencing Lebanon. Syria withdraws all troops from Lebanon.

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Syria. *General Census of Housing and Inhabitants*, 1981; *Statistical Abstract* (annual)

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Syria-Net
<http://www.syria-net.com>

TAIWAN

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of China (Zhonghua Minguo)

ABBREVIATION

TW

CAPITAL

Taipei

HEAD OF STATE

President Chen Shui-bian (from 2000)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Premier Su Tseng-chang (from 2006)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Parliamentary democracy

POPULATION

22,894,384 (2005)

AREA

35,980 sq km (13,892 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Chinese

LANGUAGES

Mandarin (official), Min, Hakka

RELIGIONS

Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, Christianity

UNIT OF CURRENCY

New Taiwan dollar

NATIONAL FLAG

Red, with a dark blue rectangle in the upper hoist-side corner bearing a white sun with 12 triangular rays

NATIONAL EMBLEM

The white sun from the flag within a blue circle

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“San Min Chu-i” (Three Principles of the People)

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (Founding Day of the Republic of China), October 1 (Republic Day, anniversary of the 1911 Xinhai Revolution)

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

January 1, 1912

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

January 1, 1947; amended 1992, 1994, 1997, 1999, and 2000

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Taiwan, officially the Republic of China, consists of the island of Taiwan, about 115 miles off mainland Asia; a few small offshore islands; and the larger Pescadores Islands, a group of 64 islands. The capital is Taipei, in the north of the extremely mountainous Taiwan. High and rugged mountains occupy more than half of the island, extending in a north-south direction from the northern tip to the southern extremity. In the far north is a short range of volcanic origin called Tatun Shan, which rises to over 1,220 m (4,000 ft). In the central range there are more than 60 peaks with elevations of over 3,050 m (10,000 ft). The highest of these, Yu Shan, 3,952 m (12,963 ft) high, lies near the geographical center of the island. On the east coast the central range drops precipitously to the Pacific Ocean. In the west the high mountains are succeeded by

foothills that gradually give way to flat alluvial plains broken up by short mountain streams and rivers. Taiwan lies within the Pacific earthquake belt, and over 200 shocks are recorded each year.

Geography

Area sq km: 35,980; sq mi 13,891

World Rank: 134th

Land Boundaries, km: 0

Coastline, km: 1,566

Elevation Extremes meters:

Lowest: South China Sea 0

Highest: Yu Shan 3,952

Land Use %

Arable Land: 24.0

Permanent Crops: 1.0

Forest: 55.6

Other: 19.4

Taiwan



Population of Principal Cities (2004)

Chi-lung	392,337
Chunghe	408,126
Chungli	346,144
Feng-shan	333,474
Hsinchu	386,950
Hsinchuang	386,941
Kao-hsiung	1,512,677
Pan-chiao	541,512
Sanchung	384,092
Taichung	1,021,292
Tainan	754,917
Taipei	2,622,472
Taoyuan	368,765

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

The climate is subtropical, except for that of the extreme southern tip, which is tropical. Average annual temperatures vary from 21.8°C (71.2°F) in Taipei in the north to 24.6°C (76.2°F) on the Hengchun Peninsula in the south. The island receives abundant rainfall, with a mean annual average of over 2,540 mm (100 in). Much of this rain is brought by the northeast monsoon, which ordinarily blows from November through March, and by the southwest monsoon, which ordinarily blows from May through September. The island lies within the typhoon belt and receives an average of 3.6 typhoons per year, usually between May and November.

Climate and Weather

Average temperature
January (lowland): 61°F in the north and 68°F in the south
July: 82°F (north and south)
Average rainfall: 101 in
Middle of the western coast: 50 in
Exposed mountain slopes: 250 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Native vegetation has mostly disappeared from the lower coastal areas, but many of the island's plants have been protected by inaccessibility. Taiwan's mountains are covered with cyprus forests, with a few camphor trees left. Animal species include the Formosan black bear, the Formosan sika deer and the Formosan landlocked salmon. The country has six national parks and 67 reserves, along with tough preservation laws, created in an effort to combat rampant environmental destruction and the extinction of both animals and plants.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 22,894,384
World Rank: 48th

Density per sq km: 621.0
% of annual growth (2000-2005): 0.8
Male %: 51.2
Female %: 48.8
Urban %: 75.0
Age Distribution %:
0-14: 20.1
15-64: 70.6
65 and over: 9.3
Population 2025: 24,636,000
Birth Rate per 1,000: 12.7
Death Rate per 1,000: 6.2
Rate of Natural Increase %: 0.6
Total Fertility Rate: 1.57
Expectation of Life (years): Males 74.49
Females 80.28
Marriage Rate per 1,000: —
Divorce Rate per 1,000: —
Average Size of Households: 3.6
Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Almost all Taiwanese are Chinese, but there is a loose distinction between the descendants of those who were natives of the island before 1945, who constitute 84 percent of the population, and mainlanders who migrated from China along with the Kuomintang (KMT), constituting 14 percent. The descendants of natives, also simply called Taiwanese, trace their descent from immigrants from Fujian and Guangdong provinces in southern China. They form several distinct groups: The Hakka are descendants of refugees and exiles from Guangdong who came to Taiwan before the 19th century. The more numerous Fujians are descendants of people from Fujian who immigrated to Taiwan in the 18th and 19th centuries. About 2 percent of the population are aborigines, primarily of Indonesian descent or Malay origin, in central and eastern Taiwan. They are divided into some eight major tribes, of which the Ami, Atayal, Paiwan, and Bunan account for 88 percent and the Puyuma, Rukai, Tsou, and Yami account for 12 percent.

LANGUAGES

Although all Taiwanese Chinese use the same written language, spoken dialects are mutually unintelligible. The three major dialect groups are Min, Hakka, and Mandarin. Min and Hakka are spoken by Chinese whose ancestors came from China before 1949. Mandarin is the dialect of those who came after the Communist takeover of mainland China. Min is the mother tongue of the majority of the people and is a variant of the Amoy dialect in southern Fujian and of the Swatow dialect in north-eastern Guangdong and on Hainan Island. Min Nan, or Southern Min, speakers are the majority in the western plains and in the north; the Taiwanese language is a form of Min Nan. Hakka is spoken by a minority in the north-

west and to the east and south of the mountains. Mandarin is spoken by about 70 percent of the population, including many Min Nan and Hakka speakers. It is the official language and benefits from government programs oriented around its use. The aboriginal inhabitants of the island speak several Malayo-Polynesian languages.

RELIGIONS

The traditional religions of Taiwan are Confucianism and Buddhism. A person may simultaneously subscribe to Confucianism, folk Taoism, animism, and Buddhism without formally belonging to any one of them. About half the population do not subscribe to any organized religion, but even those without formal affiliations are influenced by the Confucian value systems, rituals, and philosophical points of view. The principal values associated with Confucianism are filial piety as expressed through ancestor worship, *jen* (meaning love, benevolence, and humanity), and *li* (encompassing ceremonies, rituals, and good manners). Confucianism prescribes proper ethical and moral conduct for relations at all levels: between parents and children, siblings, emperors and their subjects, and friends. Among organized religions, Buddhism exerts the most influence, and millions of people who may not belong to Buddhist sects adhere to some form of Buddhist doctrine. Buddhist monasteries and temples are also centers of learning.

Folk Taoism is the third-largest religious tradition in Taiwan. Taoism is not an organized religion. Taoist priests do not play an important role in the religious lives of the people, and beliefs are passed on informally within the family. Taoists do not gather in congregations for worship, nor do they have fixed centers of worship. The most important ceremony revolves around processions carrying the statues of particular deities.

Christianity is a more recent phenomenon in Taiwan and has met with only limited success. English and Canadian Presbyterians were the first to evangelize the island, and as a result Presbyterians constitute the largest Protestant group. Roman Catholics are slightly fewer than Protestants, but they are equally active in educational and medical activities.

Religious Affiliations

Buddhist/Confucian/Taoist	21,291,800
Christian	1,030,200
Other	572,400

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Before the Chinese settlement of Taiwan, the island was occupied by aborigines of Indonesian or Malay descent.

The earliest Chinese settlements in Taiwan date from the seventh to the 10th centuries under the Tang dynasty. Under the Ming dynasty (1368–1644) Japanese pirates and Chinese outlaws displaced the aboriginal tribes from the coastal areas in the west and north. The modern history of Taiwan may be said to have begun from this time.

In 1517 Portuguese explorers sighted the island and named it Ilha Formosa, or “beautiful island.” The Dutch who came after the Portuguese captured the Pescadores in 1622 and used them as a base for controlling trade in the Far East. In 1624 the Dutch were persuaded by the Chinese to move their base of operations to Formosa. The Dutch thereupon built two forts, Zeelandia and Providentia, in the southwest. Meanwhile, the Spanish seized Keelung in the north in 1626 and extended their sway by capturing Tanshui. The Japanese settlers withdrew in 1628 under the policy of national seclusion adopted by the Tokugawa shogunate. The Dutch drove out the Spanish in 1656 and brought the entire island under their control.

Dutch rule lasted for only five years, as in 1661 Ming forces led by Cheng Cheng-kung routed them. Ming rule came to an end in 1682, when the new Manchu emperors invaded the island and annexed it as a part of Fujian Province, of China. From 1683 to 1886 Taiwan, as Formosa was renamed in Chinese, was totally Sinoized, as Chinese colonists drove the aboriginals into the mountains or assimilated them into Chinese society. Imperial control over the island was slight, however, and the unchecked corruption of local officials met with armed rebellions from the local populace. To bring the island more closely into the imperial administrative system, it was made a province in 1886.

At the conclusion of the Sino-Japanese War of 1895 Taiwan was ceded to Japan. Japanese rule was consolidated over the early years of the 20th century, despite armed resistance from the native Chinese and aboriginals. The Japanese era was marked by the introduction of Japanese as the national language, general Japanization, rapid industrialization, and the development of agriculture and transportation. With the defeat of Japan at the end of World War II in 1945, the island reverted to China under the Potsdam Declaration.

When the Communists took over mainland China in 1949, Kuomintang (Nationalist) forces under Chiang Kai-shek were pushed back to Taiwan. When it became evident that further defense of the mainland was impossible, the Nationalist government and many of its best troops were transported from China, and the seat of the Republic of China was set up in Taipei. In the following decades the KMT entrenched itself as a political party, and when Chiang Kai-shek died in 1975, his son, Chiang Ching-kuo, took up the mantle as the leader of the party and nation.

Meanwhile, the legal status of China became a cold war issue and nearly led to war between the United States and China under the Eisenhower administration. The

Republic of China was ousted from the Chinese seat at the United Nations and the Security Council in 1971. In 1972 the United States abandoned its two-China policy, voting in favor of the resolution to unseat the Republic of China and award the seat to the People's Republic of China. Nevertheless, Taiwan maintained an unofficial presence in Washington. In 1988 Chiang Ching-kuo died and was succeeded by the Taiwanese-born Lee Teng-hui.

Direct, if limited, relations with the mainland were initiated in 1989. Taiwan attended a series of meetings in Beijing, also participating in the 1990 Asian Games there, and began investing in mainland industries. Reformers within the KMT urged the abandonment of the "one China" policy in favor of a divided nation model. In 1993 formal contacts were established when a Taiwanese group met with the mainland's nonofficial Association for Relations across the Straits. In 1997 the Dalai Lama visited Taiwan, leading to a storm of protests from Beijing. In 2000 the KMT was dislodged from its status as the ruling party when its candidate was defeated in the presidential election by Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) candidate Chen Shui-bian. A year later the KMT also lost its majority in parliament to the DPP.

The KMT and DPP spent the early 2000s with a fairly precise balance of power, neither one able to wrest control of the country for itself. Though Chen Shui-bian won a second term as president in 2004, his party's coalition lost the parliamentary majority it had won in the previous election. Chen refused to accept China's claim that Taiwan belonged to it, and he campaigned on a pro-independence platform, but he toned down his rhetoric in the face of substantial opposition to Taiwanese independence, promising that he would not declare independence if China did not attack. The United States maintained its own "one China" policy, refusing to recognize Taiwan as a sovereign nation (while continuing to sell it weapons). The Taiwanese people remained divided, some favoring close ties with China and some favoring independence in various forms, some more radical than others.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1948–49	Chiang Kai-shek
1949–50	Li Tsung-jen
1950–75	Chiang Kai-shek
1975–78	Yen Chia-kan
1978–88	Chiang Ching-kuo
1988–2000	Lee Teng-hui
2000–	Chen Shui-bian

CONSTITUTION

Taiwan is governed under the provisions of the 1947 constitution (as amended in 1992, 1994, 1997, 1999, and

2000), which was promulgated before the Communist takeover of mainland China. The constitution was initially administered by the first National Assembly, which was elected on the mainland in 1947 to oversee presidential elections and amendments to the constitution. The members of the first National Assembly technically held office until they were forced to "retire" in 1991. The second National Assembly consisted of 325 members elected in 1991. It amended the constitution in 1994 to allow for the direct election of the president and vice president. The body has the authority to amend the constitution, impeach the president, and ratify some presidential appointments. The National Assembly voted in 2000 to allow their terms of office to expire without new elections to choose replacements.

The government is based on a five-power system that has the major features of both cabinet and presidential government. The president is elected by popular vote for a term of four years, with eligibility for a second term. The vice president is elected on the same ticket. The first direct elections were held in 1996.

The special feature of the constitution is the establishment of the system of five branches known as *yuans*: the Executive Yuan, Legislative Yuan, Judicial Yuan, Examination Yuan, and Control Yuan. The president has authority over the five *yuans*. The Executive Yuan is the administrative branch and consists of the Executive Yuan Council, ministries, commissions, and 19 subordinate bodies, including the Directorate of the Budget. The Examination Yuan conducts examinations for entry into public service and deals with civil-service personnel. The Control Yuan is a body elected by local councils to investigate the work of the Executive Yuan and the ministries and executives. It meets once a month and comprises 29 members serving six-year terms.

PARLIAMENT

According to the constitution, the Legislative Yuan is the highest legislative body in the nation. It has 225 elected seats: 168 by popular vote, 41 on the basis of proportion of islandwide votes received by participating political parties, eight by overseas voters, and eight by the aboriginal population. At least 11 seats are reserved for women. The term of legislative office is four years.

The Legislative Yuan sits in session twice a year: from February to the end of May and from September until the end of December. Emergency sessions may also be held. The Legislative Yuan sits twice a week while in session.

POLITICAL PARTIES

The Chinese Nationalist Party, or Kuomintang (KMT), created by Chiang Kai-shek and supported by Sun Yat-

sen, was until 1999 the dominant political party. Its traditional structure was similar to that of the Communist Party, with a National Congress, a Central Committee, and party cells. It suffered a major split in 1993 when a new alliance emerged within the party, with most of the younger reform-minded members withdrawing to launch the New Party. The KMT still maintains that Taiwan is part of the People's Republic of China.

In the 1990s the chief opposition party, the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), gradually took a majority of the seats in the Legislative Yuan. In the 2004 elections the DPP took 89 seats, the KMT 79. The DPP's members are mostly native Taiwanese, and the party maintains that Taiwan is a country independent of China.

The People First Party (PFP), also made up of former KMT members, formed an alliance called the Pan-Blue Coalition with the KMT and the New Party in 2000. The Taiwan Solidarity Union (TSU) formed in 2001 under the leadership of former president Lee Teng-hui. The TSU wants to change Taiwan's name and replace the 1947 constitution with a completely new one. It is allied with the DPP in the Pan-Green Coalition.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Taiwan is divided into 18 counties, five municipalities, and two special municipalities (Taipei and Kaohsiung). As of 1998, all counties and cities were directly administered by the Executive Yuan.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The Judicial Yuan is the highest judicial organ of the state. It is headed by a president and vice president appointed by the president of the republic with the consent of the National Assembly. The four organs of the Judicial Yuan are the Council of Grand Justices, the Supreme Court, the Administrative Court, and the Committee on the Discipline of Public Functionaries. The Council of Grand Justices is charged with the responsibility of interpreting the constitution and arriving at uniform interpretations of laws and decrees. It has 15 members appointed by the president for nine-year terms.

The Chinese system of justice is based on trials in three grades of courts. The Supreme Court is the highest tribunal and consists of a number of civil and criminal divisions, each of which is formed by a presiding judge and four associate judges. The Supreme Court has no original jurisdiction but hears appeals and sets guidelines. Below are the high courts and the district courts. The district courts, found at the municipal and county levels, handle civil and criminal cases of the first instance, and the provincial-level high courts hear appeals against the judgments of the district courts and also certain cases of

first instance. In addition, there is an administrative court charged with the adjudication of disputes between citizens and the state.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Taiwan's human rights record has been good in recent years. The government no longer uses wiretaps to spy on citizens. There have been, however, other complaints of governmental infringement on citizens' privacy. Prisons are overcrowded, and police are known to abuse detainees on occasion. Workers' rights are not always well protected. Discrimination against aborigines and women, violence against women, child prostitution, and human trafficking in women and children are all problems.

FOREIGN POLICY

Taiwan's foreign policy is affected by the fact that many countries refuse to recognize it as a sovereign nation. In early 2005 Taiwan had diplomatic relations with 25 countries. The United States, following the lead of the People's Republic of China, insists that it can maintain relations with only one China and so officially recognizes only the government of mainland China and considers Taiwan part of that nation. The United States has maintained unofficial relations with Taiwan since 1979, when President Jimmy Carter signed the Taiwan Relations Act, and has long sold defensive military equipment to Taiwan. The United States does not support Taiwanese independence and wants Taiwan and China to resolve their differences in accordance with the "one China" policy.

Taiwan has not had a seat in the United Nations since 1971, when the People's Republic of China replaced it there. The government has been cultivating ties with various nations and has been lobbying to be admitted to the United Nations.

China and Taiwan continue to have tense relations. China has missiles aimed at the island and claims the right to use force against Taiwan should the island declare independence.

DEFENSE

Taiwan has a large military for its size. All males between 19 and 35 years of age must serve in the armed forces for 18 months, an obligation that will be shortened to 12 months in 2008. The defense force's priority is defending the island from mainland China. The United States has sold Taiwan some weapons, and the republic has recently begun procuring weapons from other nations as part of a program of military self-reliance.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 370,000
 Military Manpower Availability: 6,583,604
 Military Expenditures \$billion: 7.574
 as % of GDP: 2.7
 as % of central government expenditures: 16.8
 Arms Imports \$million: —
 Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

Taiwan is an economic success story. It has transformed itself from the agricultural nation it was in the 1940s to a world player in the high-technology market. In the 1960s the government encouraged foreign investors to build factories that could make use of Taiwan's inexpensive labor supply. As the economy grew and the Taiwanese currency became more valuable, the nation shifted its focus to developing the service sector and building technology-intensive products for export, with companies that had used cheap Taiwanese labor moving their operations to Southeast Asia and mainland China. By the early 2000s Taiwan was one of the world's leading exporters of computer equipment.

In late 2004 Taiwan was a creditor economy, with reserves of \$175 billion. The republic suffered from a brief economic downturn between 2001 and 2003, as exacerbated by the outbreak of SARS, but recovered in 2004, with growth of 5.9 percent.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 528.6
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 23,400
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2002) %: 3.1
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: —
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 1.8
 Industry: 30.3
 Services: 67.9
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: —
 Government Consumption: —
 Gross Domestic Investment: 11.9
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 143
 Imports: 119.6
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 6.4
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 41.1

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
—	—	—	—	—

Finance

National Currency: New Taiwan Dollar (TWD)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = TWD 34.418
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: —
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: —

Total External Debt \$billion: 53.44
 Debt Service Ratio %: 15.0
 Balance of Payments \$billion: 28.6
 International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 175.2
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: -0.3

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: —
 per capita \$: —
 Foreign Direct Investment \$billion: 3.27

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: July 1–June 30
 Revenues \$billion: 56.58
 Expenditures \$billion: 69.21
 Budget Deficit \$billion: 12.63
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 1.8
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: —
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: —
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: —
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: —
 Total Farmland % of land area: 24.0
 Livestock: Cattle million: —
 Chickens million: 378
 Pigs 000: —
 Sheep 000: —
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters 000: 49
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons million: 1.09

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: —
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 8.4

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: —
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: —
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: —
 Net Energy Imports % of use: —
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 29.6
 Production kW-hr billion: 151
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 141
 Coal Reserves tons million: 1.1
 Production tons million: —
 Consumption tons million: 55.8
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: 2.7
 Production cubic feet billion: 30
 Consumption cubic feet billion: 287
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels million: 4
 Production barrels 000 per day: 3.8
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 896
 Pipelines Length km: 3,400

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 119.6
 Exports \$billion: 143
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —
 Balance of Trade \$billion: 28.6

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Japan %	24.2	9.2
United States %	16.1	20.5
China %	7.1	25.3
South Korea %	6.9	—

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 34,901
 Paved %: 89.6
 Automobiles: 4,716,200
 Trucks and Buses: 832,500
 Railroad: Track Length km: 1,108
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: —
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 142
 Total Deadweight Tonnage million: 6.3
 Airports: 39
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: —
 Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 2.6
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$billion: 3.7
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: —

Communications

Telephones million: 12.5
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones million: 16
 Personal Computers million: —
 Internet Hosts per million people: —
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 507

ENVIRONMENT

Water pollution from raw sewage and industrial pollutants is a major problem that is regulated by the 1974 Water Pollution Control Act. Despite the existence of this law, there have been cases of the drinking water supply becoming contaminated. Air pollution is also a problem, though all factories are required to comply with air- and water-quality standards and to have antipollution devices installed. In the 1980s emission standards were set for

automobiles, and in 1987 an islandwide pollution monitoring system was established. The island has low-level radioactive waste that must be disposed of. There have been reports of trade in endangered species. The main responsibility for implementing environment policy lies with the Environment Protection Agency. Wildlife management is the function of the National Wildlife Protection Association.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 55.6
 Forest Change (1990–2000) hectares 000: —
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 8
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 10.2

LIVING CONDITIONS

Taiwan has one of the highest population densities in the world, and as such it can be extremely crowded, especially in cities. Families typically live in close quarters, and most people are accustomed to a bare minimum of personal space. Housing is modern, and most people own various amenities, such as televisions. Public transportation is cheap and efficient; there are both train and bus services. Drinking water is contaminated in some areas.

HEALTH

Taiwanese people are covered by a national health-insurance scheme; the costs are divided between employees, employers, and the government. Local health stations provide services in rural mountainous areas and on the outlying islands. Medical and dental facilities are of high quality and modernity and are inexpensive for a developed country. Many people use traditional Chinese medicine in addition to Western techniques and drugs. Practices such as tai chi, *qi jong*, and acupuncture are widely used by people who want to increase their longevity. Life expectancy is quite high, at 77 years, and the infant mortality rate is very low.

Health

Number of Physicians: 31,532
 Number of Dentists: 9,206
 Number of Nurses: 58,974
 Number of Pharmacists: 17,655
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 138
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: 5.9
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 6.8
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 10
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: —
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: —

(continues)

Health *(continued)*

HIV Infected % of adults: —
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: —
 Measles: —
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: —
 Access to Improved Water Source %: —

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Food is a major part of social life, and Taiwanese frequently get together over food and drink. Rice is the ubiquitous starch and appears at all meals. Most Taiwanese food is like that of mainland China, with meat and vegetable stir-fries, fried rice, fish, vegetables, and snacks such as spring rolls. Fruit is commonly served for dessert. Unusual ingredients such as bear organs appear on the table from time to time; they are typically eaten for medicinal reasons. Festivals have special snacks associated with them; people eat moon cakes during the Moon Festival, red turtle cakes on birthdays, and rice dumplings during the Dragon Boat Festival. Tea accompanies all meals, and Taiwanese take pains to brew their tea correctly, according to the type of leaves.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: —
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: —

STATUS OF WOMEN

Violence against women is a serious problem, and domestic violence is widespread. The Women's Development Committee has claimed that 35 percent of married women are victims of spousal abuse, and domestic-violence hotlines have handled 17,000 cases over the past decade. Because of strong social pressures, many women do not report incidents of abuse to the police. In 1998 the Legislative Yuan passed new legislation requiring all city and county governments to set up domestic-violence prevention and control centers. The centers provide victims with protection, shelter, legal counseling, and other services around the clock. Rape also remains a serious problem, with as many as 7,000 incidences every year. Legalized prostitution has been discontinued, but there are still reports of young women entering into prostitution voluntarily as well as of child prostitution. There are also credible reports of women being shipped to the island by human traffickers to work as prostitutes.

The law prohibits gender-based discrimination, and portions of the legal code that discriminated against

women have been revised. Thus, wives are no longer required to adopt their husbands' last names, and fathers no longer have priority in child-custody disputes. However, a wife may not legally own property that she acquired before marriage. There is no equal employment rights law, and women do not commonly receive maternity leave, nor do they receive equal pay for performing the same work as men. The government is addressing the problem of sexual harassment.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 22
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: —
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: —

WORK

Taiwanese people are known for their diligence and willingness to work long hours. The workweek was formerly six days long but has been shortened to five days. Unemployment is quite low, at 5 percent in 2003, and at times Taiwan has even suffered from labor shortages. As a result of its economic success, Taiwan has very little poverty and a high per capita income, representing a major transformation from the nation's poverty-stricken agricultural state in the years before World War II. Most Taiwanese work in industry or services. Industrial products include electronics, refined petroleum, textiles and clothing, iron and steel, cement, machinery, and processed food. Fewer than 10 percent of workers are now employed in agriculture.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 10,080,000
 Female Participation Rate %: —
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 7.5
 Industry: 35.2
 Services: 57.3
 Unemployment %: 5.0

EDUCATION

Taiwanese children attend six years of compulsory primary school. Four-fifths of students attend three more years of school, through then ninth grade. The government pays for these first nine years. Students who want to enter secondary school must pass an examination, as must those who want to enter university three years later. Higher education is provided by nine national universities and 15 colleges. The Academia Sinica is the highest academic institution in Taiwan; it consists of 13 institutes

whose academicians (*yuan-shih*) carry on programs of scientific research.

Taiwanese people take education very seriously. Children do homework every night, as well as during summer vacation, and parents check and sign homework before children turn it in to their teachers. Teachers are highly respected.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 96.1
 Male %: —
 Female %: —
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: —
 First Level: Primary Schools: 2,638
 Teachers: 63,972
 Students: 1,912,791
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 29.9
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 99.9
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 1,028
 Teachers: 81,965
 Students: 1,350,974
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 16.5
 Net Enrollment Ratio: —
 Third Level: Institutions: 158
 Teachers: —
 Students: 1,270,194
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: —
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 6.1

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Taiwan is an advanced, modern nation. It is one of the world's top producers of computer equipment and electronics. The telecommunications infrastructure is completely digital and thoroughly modern. Cellular telephones are ubiquitous, and in 2003 nearly nine million people were using the Internet.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 2.1
 High-Tech Exports \$billion: 78.4
 Patent Applications by Residents: 500

MEDIA

Taiwan's media is very free and very competitive. The country has about 350 privately owned newspapers, over 150 radio stations, and more than 100 television stations, all of which express a range of views with impunity. Though laws ostensibly prohibit criticizing Communism or promoting Taiwanese independence, they are not usually enforced. The government is actively removing government controls from broadcast media and has introduced new public television stations.

Prior to the easing of long-standing restrictions in 1997, the total number of newspapers was limited to 31, nearly half of which were owned either by the government or by the Kuomintang, with the remainder controlled by individuals with close KMT ties. In 1988 the government announced that it would accept applications for new papers for the first time since 1951 and would increase the page limit from 12 to 24, although it would remain illegal for journalists to advocate Communism or support Taiwanese independence.

Some political influence over the electronic media still exists, particularly with regard to television. The KMT continues to be one of the largest shareholders in three of the five islandwide broadcast television stations. However, the existence of over 100 television stations, some of which carry programs openly hostile to the ruling party, has greatly diminished the importance of KMT control over broadcast television stations. The government has abolished the Publications Law, which had empowered the police to seize or ban printed material that was seditious, treasonous, sacrilegious, interfered with the lawful exercise of public functions, or violated public order or morals. The closest thing to a censor in the media is the Government Information Office, which has the right to screen materials before publication or sale, but this right is rarely enforced.

Media

Newspapers: 602
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: 38,581
 Periodicals: 4,405
 Radio Receivers million: 8.8
 per 1,000: 386
 Television sets million: 1.1
 per 1,000: 48

CULTURE

Taiwanese culture shares many traits with Chinese culture. Taiwan has a form of traditional opera very similar to that of China, with colorful costumes and an evocative atmosphere. Taiwanese music features Chinese gongs, trumpets, flutes, and string instruments. Taiwanese artists create calligraphy, sculpture, cloisonné, lacquer painting, embroidery, and other art forms like those in China. Taiwanese people also create art by cutting paper or tying cords into elaborate patterns.

Taiwanese puppetry has evolved into an art form separate from the Chinese version, and Taiwanese puppeteers use shadow puppets in addition to marionettes. Traditional Taiwanese dances include the dragon dance and the lion dance.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Many Taiwanese worship folk deities along with practicing Buddhism and Taoism and following the tenets of Confucianism. These folk gods and goddesses traveled from mainland China with immigrants in past centuries and were adapted and incorporated into Taiwanese society and the particular needs of time and place. Folk gods and goddesses are welcome in Buddhist temples, such that, for example, people may worship the Buddhist goddess Kuan Yin and the Taiwanese sea goddess Matsu in the same temple.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Taiwan's cities have many entertainment options, including shopping, restaurants, clubs, and discos. Families usually spend weekends together, often going to the country for picnics. Many cities and towns have night markets that attract crowds of people who come to shop, eat, and socialize. Older men spend their free time sitting in groups on the street or in temples and drinking tea. Older women play a great deal of mah-jongg.

Taiwan offers plenty of outdoor recreation. People go hiking in the mountains and swimming and surfing at the beaches. Though snow skiing is usually impossible, many Taiwanese enjoy grass skiing.

ETIQUETTE

Emotional restraint is highly valued, and Taiwanese rarely show strong emotions. Displaying anger is considered weak and rude. Saving face is important, and in social interactions Taiwanese people are supposed to allow one another to save face even in adversity. Exchanging gifts and favors are a large part of maintaining face. Taiwanese people smile when they are embarrassed, as a way of offering an apology for their behavior.

Taiwanese people are very suspicious about death and avoid symbols associated with it. They do not talk about death, they do not wear white, and they avoid anything that comes in sets of four, a number associated with death.

FAMILY LIFE

Confucian traditions dictate Taiwanese attitudes toward family life. Family reputation is extremely important, and the behavior of one family member reflects on all others. Families tend to keep personal matters private and hide their opinions of one another when in public. Older people outrank younger ones, and men outrank women. Men are considered the heads of families, though their primary duty is always toward their parents. Wives are supposed to be subservient to their husbands and their mothers-in-law. Most people have few children, and it is common for three or more generations to live together.

Taiwanese people list their last names first. Women sometimes keep their maiden names after marriage.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Taiwanese people dress in typical Western clothing. They value neatness and sometimes choose expensive designer clothes to impress one another. They remove their shoes when entering homes or temples. Sandals are considered rural attire and are not allowed in some establishments.

SPORTS

Taiwanese people play many sports, including soccer, baseball, softball, basketball, ping-pong, and badminton. Many people belong to health clubs and exercise at gyms or go to parks to do aerobics, jog, or practice folk dancing. Martial arts such as kung fu and tai chi are very popular.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1945** At the end of World War II, the island is returned to China under the Potsdam Agreement. The KMT establishes full control.
- 1949** The KMT, expelled from mainland China by the Communists, flees to Taiwan and establishes its capital in Taipei under the name of the Republic of China, with Chiang Kai-shek as president.
- 1954** United States and Taiwan conclude mutual defense treaty.
- 1971** Taiwan is expelled from the United Nations, and its seat is awarded to the People's Republic of China.
- 1975** Chiang Kai-shek dies and is replaced as president by his son, Chiang Ching-kuo.
- 1979** United States severs diplomatic relations and annuls defense pact with Taiwan, as normal diplomatic relations are restored between Beijing and Washington.
- 1987** Martial law is lifted, press restrictions are lifted, and opposition parties are legalized.

- 1988** President Chiang Ching-kuo dies and is succeeded by Taiwanese-born Lee Teng-hui.
- 1991** Lee Teng-hui declares an end to civil war with mainland China. Constitution is amended. KMT wins landslide victory in elections to parliament.
- 1993** Cooperative pact is signed with China.
- 1996** Lee Teng-hui is elected president in the first-ever democratic election.
- 2000** The KMT candidate is defeated in presidential election, marking the end of an era. Chen Shui-bian becomes president. Chang Chun-hsiung is sworn in as prime minister.
- 2001** The Dalai Lama meets with President Chen during a visit that is opposed by China. Despite protests by China, the United States sells Taiwan submarines, warships, and antisubmarine aircraft. Taiwan test-fires its Patriot antimissile defense system. At the same time, China carries out military exercises simulating an invasion of Taiwan. Taiwan lifts its ban on direct trade with China, which had been in effect for nearly 50 years. The KMT loses its majority in parliament.
- 2002** Taiwan officially enters the World Trade Organization, just after mainland China.
- 2003** Taiwan suffers many cases of the SARS virus. Taipei 101, said to be the world's tallest building, is unveiled. Parliament approves a bill allowing a referendum on independence from China if China attacks.
- 2004** Chen Shui-bian wins a second term as president and promises that he will not try to force the independence and sovereignty issues. The KMT pro-China alliance wins a slight majority in the December parliamentary elections.
- 2005** On the Lunar New Year, airplanes fly between Taiwan and China for the first time since 1949. Taiwan condemns a Chinese law giving China the right to use force against Taiwan if Taiwan declares itself independent. KMT leader Lien Chan visits Communist Party leaders in China for the first meeting between party leaders since 1949.
- 2006** The government dissolves the National Unification Council, established in 1990 to promote unification with mainland China.

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Taiwan. *Industry of Free China* (monthly); *The Republic of China Yearbook*; *Social Indicators of the Republic of China* (annual); *Statistical Abstract* (annual); *Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of China*; *Taiwan Statistical Data Book* (annual); *1990 Census of Population and Housing*

CONTACT INFORMATION

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Government Information Office, Republic of China
<http://www.gio.gov.tw/>
- Directorate-General of Budget, Accounting and Statistics
<http://www.dgbasey.gov.tw/>
- National Statistics of Taiwan, the Republic of China
<http://www.stat.gov.tw>

TAJIKISTAN

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Tajikistan (Jumhurii Tojikiston)

ABBREVIATION

TJ

CAPITAL

Dushanbe

HEAD OF STATE

President Emomali Sharipovich Rakhmonov (from 1992)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Okil Okilov (from 1999)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Republic

POPULATION

7,163,506 (2005)

AREA

143,100 sq km (55,251 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Tajik, Uzbek, Russian

LANGUAGES

Tajik (official), Russian

RELIGION

Sunni Islam, Shia Islam

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Tajikistani Somoni

NATIONAL FLAG

Three horizontal stripes of red (top), white, and green, with the white stripe one and one-half times the height of either of the other stripes; a stylized gold crown surmounted by a semicircle of seven five-pointed gold stars is found in the center of the white stripe.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

The national coat of arms consists of the crown-and-stars motif from the flag, in dark red. Behind, a sun rises over mountains, recalling the Pamirs and other mountains. The crown is situated over a rising yellow sun and an open Koran and flanked by wreaths of cotton and wheat bound by a banner with the colors of the flag.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Surudi Milli”

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year’s Day), March 8 (International Women’s Day), May 1 (Labor Day), May 9 (Victory Day), September 9 (Independence Day), November 6 (Constitution Day), November 9 (National Reconciliation Day), various Muslim festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

September 9, 1991

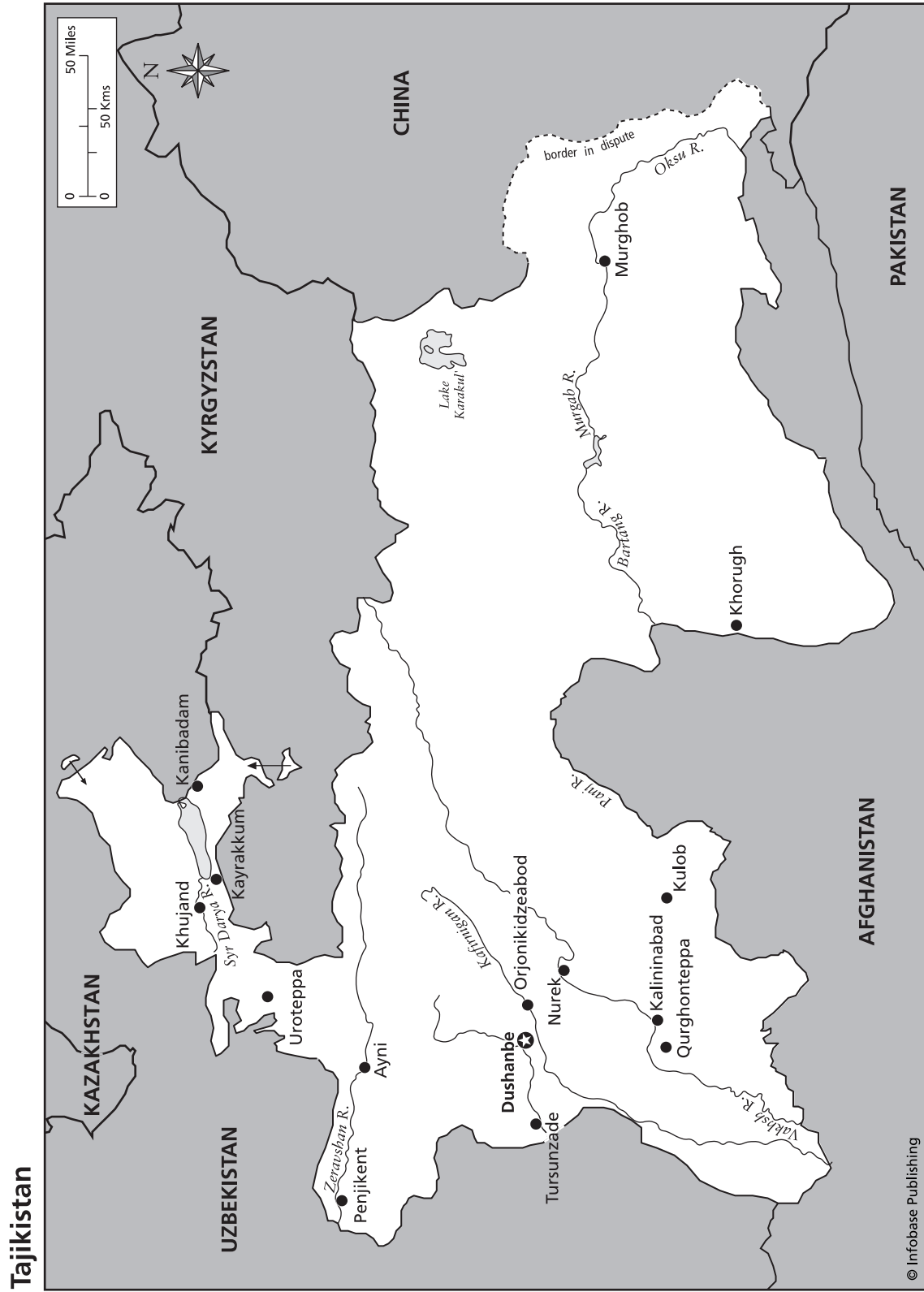
DATE OF CONSTITUTION

November 6, 1994

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Tajikistan is located in central Asia between Uzbekistan and China. The capital, Dushanbe, is located in the western part of the country. Parts of the Pamir and Trans Alai mountain systems cross the country in the east, including the highest and third-highest mountain peaks in the former Soviet Union, Ismail Samani Peak (7,495 m; 24,584 ft) and Lenin Peak (7,134 m; 23,400 ft), respectively. Massive

ranges that form parts of the Tian Shan mountain system occupy the northern and central parts of the nation. The southeast is occupied by an arid plateau. The only extensive low districts are Fergana Valley, in the north, and the hot, dry Gissar and Vakhsh valleys in the southeast. The chief rivers are the Panj, Amu Darya, Syr Darya, and Zeravshan. The Panj River separates southern Tajikistan from northern Afghanistan. Most of the population is concentrated in the narrow intermontane valleys.



Geography

Area sq km: 143,100; sq mi 55,251
 World Rank: 92nd
 Land Boundaries, km: Afghanistan 1,206; China 414; Kyrgyzstan 870; Uzbekistan 1,161
 Coastline, km: 0
 Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Syr Darya 300
 Highest: Qullai Ismail Samani 7,495
 Land Use %
 Arable Land: 6.6
 Permanent Crops: 0.9
 Forest: 2.8
 Other: 89.7

Population of Principal Cities (2002 est.)

Dushanbe	575,900
Khujand	147,400

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

The climate is semiarid to polar in the Pamir and Tien Shan mountains. The mean temperature is 30°C (86°F) in July and 0°C (32°F) in January. Rainfall averages only 122 mm (4.8 in). Dust storms strike the plains in the summer, filling the air with dust for several days at a time.

Climate and Weather

Mean temperature
 July: 86°F
 January: 32°F
 Average Rainfall: 4.8 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Tajikistan's mountains are covered with forests of larch, juniper, and Tian Shan spruce as well as with meadows where wildflowers bloom in the spring. The lowlands are mostly grassy plains. Animal species include snow leopards, ibex, brown bears, wolves, lynx, wild boars, pikas, and marmots. Birds of prey such as eagles and lammergeiers live in the mountains. Streams are full of trout.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 7,163,506
 World Rank: 95th
 Density per sq km: 44.8
 % of annual growth (1999-2003): 0.6
 Male %: 49.7
 Female %: 50.3
 Urban %: 27.6
 Age Distribution %:
 0-14: 38.5
 15-64: 56.7
 65 and over: 4.8

Population 2025: 11,042,000
 Birth Rate per 1,000: 32.58
 Death Rate per 1,000: 8.39
 Rate of Natural Increase %: 2.4
 Total Fertility Rate: 4.05
 Expectation of Life (years): Males 61.68
 Females 67.59
 Marriage Rate per 1,000: 3.5
 Divorce Rate per 1,000: —
 Average Size of Households: 6.1
 Induced Abortions: 35,709

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Ethnic Tajiks constitute 65 percent of the population, Uzbeks (mainly in the northwest) about 25 percent. The Russian population has been declining since 1990 due to emigration and now makes up only 3.5 percent of the total.

LANGUAGES

The official language is Tajik, an Indo-European language related to Farsi and Pashto. Russian is a co-official language, while Uzbek is spoken by the Uzbek minority. Some Tajik vocabulary words are borrowed from Russian, Arabic, and Uzbek; its alphabet is rendered in Cyrillic characters.

RELIGIONS

Almost all Tajiks and Uzbeks are Sunni Muslims of the Hanafi sect, although south of the Pamirs the Ismailis (Shia) are more numerous. Most of the Russians belong to the Russian Orthodox Church.

Religious Affiliations

Sunni Muslim	6,089,000
Shia Muslim	358,200
Other	716,400

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Tajiks are probably descended from the inhabitants of ancient Sogdiana. The territory was under Persian control from the sixth century B.C.E. until 329 B.C.E., when it was conquered by Alexander the Great. For the next two centuries it was part of the Greek-Bactrian kingdoms of central Asia. The Greeks were displaced by the Kushans, whose rule lasted for several centuries. Arabs conquered the region in the eighth century C.E. and introduced Islam. From then on a number of kingdoms succeeded one another in central Asia: those of the Samanides, Ghaznavids, Kharakhanids, Ghorids, Karaki-

tai, and Khwarazmites. The territory was conquered by the Mongols in the 13th century and incorporated into the khanate of Bukhara in the 16th century. By the 19th century the Tajiks were divided among several weak khanates and thus easily fell prey to advancing czarist armies in the 1880s and 1890s. Bukhara and Samarkand were incorporated into Russia in 1868. In 1917 the Tajiks overthrew Russian rule, but the Red Army reestablished control in 1921. Tajikistan was made an autonomous republic within Uzbekistan in 1924 and a constituent republic of the USSR in 1929.

Following the implosion of the Soviet Union in 1991 Tajikistan declared its independence within the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) under President Rakhmon Nabiyev. In 1992 a series of dismissals of members of the administration led to violent protests, which continued throughout the year, leading Nabiyev to secure legislative approval for a six-month period of direct presidential rule. The government and the opposition reached a power-sharing arrangement that was not accepted by prodemocracy rebels. President Nabiyev was forced to resign and was replaced by Akbarsho Iskandarov. However, pro-Nabiyev forces recaptured the capital, drove out Iskandarov, and installed Emomali Rakhmonov as president. Concurrently, the presidential system was scrapped in favor of a parliamentary system. In 1993 Russia sent a CIS peacekeeping force to Tajikistan to maintain the fragile peace and to keep the warring factions apart. Eventually, opposition groups were banned, many opposition leaders went into exile, and the government regained control over most of the country. Nevertheless, conflict continued in the border region, with pro-Islamic forces receiving aid from Afghan guerrillas and Iran. In 1994 the first post-civil war presidential election resulted in 58 percent of the votes giving the presidency to Rakhmonov. In the 1995 legislative elections former Communists won one-third of the seats. In 1997 Rakhmonov and the opposition leader Sayed Abdullah Nuri signed a peace agreement in Moscow officially ending the civil war. The agreement provided for the legalization of opposition parties, the return of refugees and Afghan-based guerrillas, the integration of the latter in the regular army, and the allocation of five seats in the cabinet to opposition leaders. Still, sporadic fighting continued in border areas. In 1999 Rakhmonov was reelected president, winning 96 percent of the vote, but Western observers criticized the elections as undemocratic. A new bicameral parliament was set up in 2000.

In 2001 the leaders of Russia, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan launched the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) to fight militancy and promote trade investments. That year Tajikistan continued sparring with warlords, and three senior government officials were assassinated. Neighboring Afghanistan was a major problem, and Tajikistan was quick

to offer support to the United States after the terrorist attacks of September 11.

In 2003 Tajik voters approved a referendum that, among other things, would allow President Rakhmonov to run for two more terms after his term ending in 2006. Opposition parties were very critical of the referendum, which grouped many measures together in a single package and which was voted on by a largely ill-informed populace. The government persisted in efforts to suppress Islamic insurgencies and terrorism and maintained close relations with Russia, allowing the nation to open a military base in Dushanbe in 2004.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1991	Rakhmon Nabiyev
1991	Akbarsho Iskandarov (acting)
1991–92	Rakhmon Nabiyev
1992	Akbarsho Iskandarov (acting)
1992–	Emamoli Rakhmonov

CONSTITUTION

The first constitution of independent Tajikistan was ratified in 1994; Tajikistan was the last of the former Soviet republics in central Asia to enact its own constitution. The document defines Tajikistan as a democratic, unitary, and secular state. The president is elected for a maximum of two consecutive seven-year terms and is vested with extraordinary powers to appoint the prime minister as well as judges and other senior state and regional officials. Constitutional amendments passed in 2003 allow Rakhmonov to be elected to two more seven-year terms after the close of his term in 2006. Despite having a constitution, Tajikistan is an authoritarian state that maintains the Soviet traditions of intolerance of opposition, a weak legislature, and a subordinate judiciary. As part of the peace accords that ended the civil war, members of the opposition hold nearly one-third of all high-level positions in the government.

Tajikistan is still developing its integrated government and political process. The voting age is 18, and suffrage is universal. The elections of 1999 and 2000 were considered unfair and flawed but were also peaceful.

PARLIAMENT

A new bicameral Supreme Assembly (Majlisi Oli) was set up in 2000, in which the Assembly of Representatives (Majlisi Namoyandogan) has 63 members and the National Assembly (Majlisi Milliy) 33, all serving five-year terms. The members of the Assembly of Representatives are elected by popular vote. Eight members of the Na-

tional Assembly are appointed by the president, while the remaining 25 are selected by local deputies. Because the presidency is all-powerful, the legislature plays a subservient role in the government.

POLITICAL PARTIES

The Tajik political system is still evolving, as former and present Communists still dominate the government. The People's Democratic Party of Tajikistan (PDPT) won a majority of parliamentary seats in the 2000 election, while the Tajik Communist Party (CPT) won one-fifth of the votes. The opposition is divided between the Islamic fundamentalist parties and the Socialist and secular parties; opposition parties include the Islamic Rebirth Party, the Democratic Party (DPT), the Social Democratic Party (SDPT), and the Socialist Party (SPT).

In February 2005 the PDPT solidified its hold on the government, winning almost all of the seats in the Assembly of Representatives, leaving just a few for the Communist and Islamic parties. Western observers criticized the election for being unfair.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Administratively, Tajikistan is divided into three provinces, or oblasts (*viloyatho*)—Sughd, Khatlon, and Karotegin—and one autonomous province (*viloyati mukbtur*)—Gorno-Badakhshan. The area surrounding the capital, Dushanbe, is administered separately.

LEGAL SYSTEM

There are courts at the national, regional, district, and city levels. National and regional courts are essentially appellate courts. The system suffers from a lack of trained lawyers and judges and also from the pressures exerted by political factions and armed paramilitary groups. Trials are public, and defendants in criminal cases have the right to appointed counsel. As per the 1994 constitution, a constitutional court has been established.

HUMAN RIGHTS

The legacy of the civil war still clouds the human rights situation in Tajikistan, which has a generally poor human rights record. Some regions in the country remain effectively outside government control, while in others true government control exists only by day or at the sufferance of local military commanders. Many of these commanders are involved in crime and corruption and commit serious human rights abuses. Members of the security forces are

responsible for killings, torture, extortions, looting, and the arbitrary arrest and detention of civilians. Lengthy pretrial detention remains a problem. The government continues to severely restrict the freedoms of speech and of the press and denies the opposition access to state-run radio and television. The government also restricts the freedoms of assembly and association by exercising strict control over political organizations and by hindering the registration of opposition parties. Violence against women, child labor, and human trafficking in sex slaves have all been problems. In 2003 parliament abolished the death penalty for women, and the following year it imposed a moratorium on the death penalty without restriction.

FOREIGN POLICY

Neighboring Afghanistan is Tajikistan's primary security concern, though relations between the two countries have improved since the Taliban was ousted. Threats from the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, a Taliban ally, have decreased greatly. Trafficking in Afghan heroin and opium remains a problem and spreads corruption, crime, and HIV/AIDS.

Relations with Russia have remained close since independence, with Russia taking the majority of responsibility for the security of the Tajik-Afghan border; Russian troops form the bulk of the CIS troops patrolling there. Although Tajikistan is a secular state trying to contain the spread of Islamic fundamentalism within its borders, it has tried to foster good relations with Iran. Postindependence relations between Tajikistan and Uzbekistan have been complicated by the persecution of ethnic Tajiks in Uzbekistan. Tajik nationalists have made territorial claims on historic Uzbek cities, such as Samarkand and Bukhara. In 1998 Tajikistan accused Uzbekistan of complicity in the failed November revolt in Khujand. At the same time, Tajikistan is dependent on Uzbekistan for almost all overland traffic and trade.

The United States and Tajikistan have good relations, and the United States is committed to helping Tajikistan develop its government and economy. Tajikistan was quick to offer support for the U.S.-led war on terrorism in Afghanistan. The nation opened an embassy in Washington, D.C., in 2004.

DEFENSE

Tajikistan began developing its own defense force after gaining independence from the Soviet Union in 1991. All males must serve two years in the military upon reaching the age of 18. In 2003 the military comprised about 7,200 troops. A border guard of mostly Russian troops and international peacekeeping forces numbering about 25,000 are also stationed in the country; most of the "Russian"

troops are in fact local Tajik soldiers. In 2004 Russia opened a military base in Dushanbe and took control of a former Soviet space-monitoring center in Nurek.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 7,200
 Military Manpower Availability: 1,556,415
 Military Expenditures \$million: 35.4
 as % of GDP: 3.9
 as % of central government expenditures: —
 Arms Imports \$million: —
 Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

Tajikistan is the poorest of the former Soviet republics, and its economy was hard hit by the civil war that followed independence. Continuing problems include weak government, high unemployment, poverty, and lack of structural reform. The transition from a state-controlled to a market-based economy has been slow, but the nation hopes that the continued privatization of medium and large businesses will help the economy grow. The country remains dependent on aid from Russia and the United States.

The failure of the economic system has been accompanied by a rise in narcotics trafficking from Afghanistan and other forms of corruption. There is a flourishing criminal sector controlled by warlords.

Most of the workforce is engaged in agriculture, part of which remains collectivized. Government revenue remains dependent on state-controlled cotton production. The small industrial sector is dominated by aluminum production. Only 7 percent of the land is arable, and mineral resources are limited.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 7.95
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 1,100
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 8.3
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 7.7
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 23.7
 Industry: 24.3
 Services: 52.0
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 73
 Government Consumption: 9
 Gross Domestic Investment: 22.0
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 1.13
 Imports: 1.3
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 3.2
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 25.2

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
—	—	—	—	—

Finance

National Currency: Tajikistani Somoni (TJS)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = TJS 2.9705
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency million: 222.2
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 15.0
 Total External Debt \$million: 888
 Debt Service Ratio %: 7.72
 Balance of Payments \$million: –52
 International Reserves SDRs \$million: 111
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 8

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 144
 per capita \$: 22.90
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 31.7

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$billion: 311.2
 Expenditures \$billion: 321.5
 Budget Deficit \$million: 10.3
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: 8.3

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 23.7
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 8.4
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 2.15
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 68.0
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 30.0
 Total Farmland % of land area: 6.6
 Livestock: Cattle million: 1.14
 Chickens million: 1.69
 Pigs: 500
 Sheep million: 1.61
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters 000: —
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons: 324

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 258
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 8.2

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 1.27
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 2.82
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 447
 Net Energy Imports % of use: 59.0
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 4.44
 Production kW-hr billion: 14.2
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 14.4
 Coal Reserves tons million: —
 Production tons 000: 22
 Consumption tons 000: 133

(continues)

2310 Tajikistan

Energy *(continued)*

Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
Production cubic feet billion: 1.8
Consumption cubic feet billion: 45.9
Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
Production barrels per day: 250
Consumption barrels 000 per day: 14.3
Pipelines Length km: 38

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 1.3
Exports \$billion: 1.13
Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 9.2
Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 6.2
Balance of Trade \$million: –52

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Russia %	17.8	8.2
Uzbekistan %	13.4	11.3
Kazakhstan %	9.7	—
Ukraine %	6.3	—
Azerbaijan %	6.3	—
United States %	5.8	—
Turkey %	4.3	7.7
Latvia %	—	13.1
Switzerland %	—	11.5
Norway %	—	9.9
Iran %	—	7.9
Italy %	—	6.6
Hungary %	—	4.4

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 27,767
Paved %: —
Automobiles: 117,100
Trucks and Buses: 16,800
Railroad: Track Length km: 482
Passenger-km million: 42
Freight-km billion: 1.09
Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: —
Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: —
Airports: 55
Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 864
Length of Waterways km: 200

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 4
Number of Tourists from 000: 2.7
Tourist Receipts \$million: —
Tourist Expenditures \$million: —

Communications

Telephones 000: 242.1
Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.01
Cellular Telephones 000: 47.6
Personal Computers 000: —
Internet Hosts per million people: 9.6
Internet Users per 1,000 people: 0.6

ENVIRONMENT

Since the time of Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev, increased irrigation to support agricultural activity has resulted in harmful levels of soil salinity. The nation's water supply is threatened by pollution and inadequate sanitation facilities. Some 18 percent of the country's total land area is protected, but several mammal and bird species remain endangered.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 2.8
Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: 2
Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 18
Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 0.64

LIVING CONDITIONS

Some 60 percent of Tajiks live in abject poverty. Water supplies are polluted, and poor sanitation is a problem. The weather also poses difficulties, with extremely hot summers and winters so cold that much of the country can be shut down. Public transportation is minimal, as supplied mainly by bus. Gasoline is very expensive, and spare auto parts are scarce. Costs are unpredictable, and cash flow is minimal. Some areas are dangerous due to the presence of drug smugglers and armed men.

HEALTH

Tajikistan's health-care system is inadequate. Health care is no longer free. The life expectancy is under 65 years, and the infant mortality rate is more than 110 deaths per 1,000 live births. Low birth weights and malnutrition are common. Fertility is high, with each woman having more than four children on average in 2004; as such, the median age of the population is very low, at less than 20 years, and over 38 percent of the population is 14 or younger. Common diseases include hepatitis, typhoid, cholera, and diphtheria, as well as malaria in the south.

Health

Number of Physicians: 13,393
 Number of Dentists: 1,051
 Number of Nurses: 26,887
 Number of Pharmacists: 680
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 218
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: 6.4
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 110.76
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 100
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 3.3
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 6
 HIV Infected % of adults: < 0.1
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 82
 Measles: 89
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 53
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 58

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Most Tajiks cannot afford meat, so their diet is based mainly around vegetables. Beans, chickpeas, milk, and eggs are common ingredients. People eat soups containing milk, beans, and herbs; porridges made of chickpeas; ravioli filled with eggs; and curds mixed with herbs. Flat bread is a typical accompaniment to most meals. When meat is available, it is usually mutton. Malnutrition is a problem for many people; some one-third of children are malnourished. The government has worked with international aid organizations to institute school lunch programs.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 60.7
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 1,790
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 153.5
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 103.8

STATUS OF WOMEN

Domestic violence is a common problem in Tajikistan, and there are currently no legal remedies for it. In many cases, young women are abducted, raped, and further forced to marry their abductors. There are no special police units to handle rape cases, which are fairly widespread. In rural areas, women can be harassed by conservative Muslims for not wearing attire deemed proper. Polygamy is illegal but widely practiced, as is prostitution. Many women and children have been victims of human traffickers.

Though women have equal rights with men in the workplace in principle, in practice they are paid less and are statistically more likely to be poor than are men. On the other hand, mothers are given three years' maternity leave and monthly subsidies for each child. Girls have fewer educational opportunities than boys. The government and

various local women's groups and nongovernmental organizations are working to improve the status of women.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 13
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.0
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 52.3

WORK

Unemployment is extremely high; the unemployment rate was estimated to be 40 percent in 2002. The people who do have jobs are primarily employed in the growing of cotton, in the country's limited industrial sector, or in the government. Illegal narcotics traffickers and warlords tend to have incomes much higher than those of the majority of the population. Some children work, voluntarily or forcibly.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 3,187,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 45.5
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 67.2
 Industry: 7.5
 Services: 25.3
 Unemployment %: 40

EDUCATION

The educational system follows the former Soviet model. Education is free and compulsory between the ages of seven and 16. In practice, however, the law is not enforced, and many children do not receive the full compulsory education. The public school system suffers from a severe lack of resources. Parents who can afford to do so send their children to private school or hire tutors. Among poorer families, many children drop out of school to help out at home. Some areas maintain the old Soviet practice of closing schools and making students work in the cotton fields at harvest time. There are 10 schools of higher education, including the universities of Dushanbe and Khujand.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 99.4
 Male %: 99.6
 Female %: 99.1
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 11.3
 First Level: Primary Schools: 3,400
 Teachers: 31,080
 Students: 694,930
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 22.4
 Net Enrollment Ratio: —

(continues)

Education *(continued)*

Second Level: Secondary Schools: —
 Teachers: 54,913
 Students: 922,795
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 17.3
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 83.3
 Third Level: Institutions: —
 Teachers: 6,472
 Students: 97,466
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 16.4
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 2.8

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Tajikistan's telecommunications infrastructure is poorly developed and ill maintained. Many towns have no telephone service. In 2002 there were about 240,000 telephone lines and 48,000 cellular telephones in operation. Only about 4,000 people were using the Internet.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: 37.1
 Patent Applications by Residents: 40

MEDIA

Despite relaxations of restrictions on the press instituted immediately after independence, the press remains largely government controlled, and journalists face great pressure to censor their content. There are over 200 registered newspapers, none of them dailies, including *Narodnaya gazeta* (People's gazette), the Russian-language government organ; *Jumburiyat* (Republic), in Tajik; *Khalk ovozi* (People's voice), in Uzbek; and *Galos Tajikistana* (Voice of Tajikistan), in Russian. The domestic news agency, Khover, is the successor to the Tajik Telegraph Agency. The state-owned Tajik Radio and Tajik Television broadcast from Dushanbe, in Russian and Uzbek as well as Tajik. There are more than 30 local and regional private television stations and several private radio stations.

Media

Daily Newspapers: —
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: 150
 Periodicals: 200+
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets million: 2
 per 1,000: 328

CULTURE

Under the Soviets, Tajiks were forced to give up their traditional culture and assume a new set of cultural practices, which led to some excellent opera, ballet, and dramatic productions. The novelist Sadridin Aini became famous for his efforts to eliminate all Islamic and Arabic traces from the Tajik language. Tajiks have been trying to re-create their national culture since independence. The most popular writer at the beginning of the 21st century was Taimur Zulfikarov, who imitated the ancient Persian writing style, as patterned on such 10th century Persian writers as Abu Ali ibn Sina and Rudaki.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 1,994
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: 172
 Seating Capacity: 39,000
 Annual Attendance: 416,000

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Tajikistan, like other central Asian nations, wants to revive its folklore. The nation sponsors folklore clubs and encourages the teaching of folklore in schools. Scholars at Tajikistan's universities have been studying the folk traditions of the ethnic Tajiks.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

There is not a great deal to do in Tajikistan. Dushanbe has some markets where people sell a variety of goods and two museums, as well as a theater. Local markets provide places for people to shop and socialize. Trekking in the mountains attracts some foreign tourists, although certain areas are too dangerous for visitors. As of 2005 Tajikistan had not yet developed its entertainment infrastructure but had elaborate plans to build hotels, mountain chalets, sports centers, aqua parks, and entertainment centers.

Most entertainment revolves around rituals and parties celebrating various events, which are affairs for family and friends. Such celebrations feature dancing, drinking, toasts, and speeches.

ETIQUETTE

As a rule, Tajiks do not tip and may even be offended by offers of tips, as the practice goes against Islamic tradi-

tions of hospitality. Bargaining is appropriate at bazaars and markets but not usually in shops. At a meal, the oldest man at the table tears up and distributes the round flat bread; it is very rude to discard bread on the ground or throw it away. Blowing one's nose in public is also considered rude, though spitting is acceptable.

FAMILY LIFE

Women's rights are protected in marital and family matters, but in practice women often do not inherit as much as men, and some women are forced to marry much older men. Polygamy still occurs. Rural women tend to marry younger, have larger families and be less educated than urban women. Tajik families in general tend to be large, and the country as a whole has a large number of children. Most mothers stay home to care for their houses and offspring. Girls often leave school after the first eight years to help their families.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Tajik women wear long colorful dresses with head scarves and striped trousers. Men wear high boots, long quilted jackets, and embroidered caps. Western clothing is becoming popular.

SPORTS

Soccer is a popular sport. There were some professional Tajikistani players during the Soviet era, and some of them are still playing on the national team. The nation has had an Olympic committee since 1992.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1929** Tajikistan becomes a constituent republic of the Soviet Union.
- 1989** Rastokhez ("Revival") Popular Front is established, and Tajik is declared official language.
- 1991** President Kakhar Makhamov is forced to resign after supporting failed anti-Gorbachev coup in Moscow. Independence is declared. Tajikistan joins the Commonwealth of Independent States. Rakhmon Nabiyev is elected president.
- 1992** Violent demonstrations by Islamic and prodemocracy groups force Nabiyev to resign. Civil war between pro-Nabiyev and anti-Nabiyev forces claims 20,000 lives. Emomali Rakhmonov, a pro-Nabiyev Communist, takes over the government as president.
- 1993** Government forces regain most of the western part of the country. CIS forces are drafted to

patrol the Tajik border with Afghanistan, the base of Islamic rebel forces.

- 1994** Cease-fire ends the civil war. Rakhmonov is elected president in an election marked by fraud. A new constitution is promulgated.
- 1995** Renewed fighting flares up near the Afghan border.
- 1996** Rebels capture many towns in the southwest. The United Nations arranges cease-fire between factions.
- 1997** Four-stage peace plan is signed. Rakhmonov is seriously injured in a grenade attack.
- 1998** Rakhmonov announces a general amnesty for opposition leaders in exile; rebels are crushed in the north.
- 1999** Rakhmonov is returned to the presidency in an election that is widely criticized as fraudulent.
- 2000** A new bicameral parliament is set up in March; a new national currency is introduced.
- 2001** Deputy Interior Minister Habib Sanginov is assassinated; China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan launch the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, promoting trade in the region. Tajikistan is granted World Trade Organization observer status. Following the September 11 attacks on the United States, Tajikistan offers support to the U.S.-led antiterrorism coalition that invades Afghanistan.
- 2002** Tajikistan doubles its guards on the Afghan border to prevent the entry of al-Qaeda members.
- 2003** Numerous Islamic militants are sentenced to death or prison for murder and kidnapping during the 1990s civil war. Russian President Vladimir Putin visits and promises to increase Russian military assistance. A referendum vote allows Rakhmonov to run for two more consecutive terms as president after his term ends in 2006.
- 2004** Russia opens a military base in the capital and takes over a former Soviet space-monitoring center. Opposition leader Mahmadrusi Iskandarov is arrested in Moscow; Tajik authorities claim that he is involved in terrorism and corruption.
- 2005** A car bomb blows up in Dushanbe, possibly a terrorist attack. The ruling party wins a large majority in parliamentary elections, which international observers claim are flawed.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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Washington, D.C. 20037
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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Embassy of Tajikistan to the United States
<http://www.tjus.org/>
- Eurasianet: Tajikistan Resource Page
<http://www.eurasianet.org/resource/tajikistan/>

TANZANIA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

United Republic of Tanzania (Jamhuri ya Muungano wa Tanzania)

ABBREVIATION

TZ

CAPITAL

Dar es Salaam; legislative offices have been transferred to Dodoma, which is scheduled to become the new capital

HEAD OF STATE

President Jakaya Kikwete (from 2005)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Edward Lowassa (from 2005)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Republic

POPULATION

36,766,356 (2005)

AREA

945,087 sq km (364,898 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Sukuma, Haya, Nyakusa, Nyamwezi, Chagga

LANGUAGES

Kiswahili, English, Arabic

RELIGIONS

Christianity, Islam, animism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Tanzanian shilling

NATIONAL FLAG

Diagonal black band running from the lower corner of the hoist to the upper corner of the fly, flanked by thin yellow bands, separating a green triangular field at the upper left from a blue triangular field at the lower right.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A native shield divided horizontally into four parts: from top to bottom, a flashing red torch on a yellow field; the national flag; crossed war axes and spears in gold on a red background; and wavy blue and white lines. The shield is flanked by a barefoot youth and a girl wearing an orange head scarf, each supporting an elephant tusk, standing on a mound representing Mount Kilimanjaro. The national motto, *Uhuru na umoja* (Freedom and unity), appears at the base on a white ribbon in red-gold letters.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"Mungu Ibariki Afrika" (God Bless Africa)

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day), January 12 (Zanzibar Revolution Day), February 5 (Chama Cha Mapinduzi Day), April 26 (National Day, Union Day), May 1 (Labor Day), July 7 (Saba Saba Day, Foundation of the Independence Movement Day), August 8 (Peasants' Day), December 9 (Republic Day), Christmas, Good Friday, Easter Monday, Boxing Day, three Islamic festivals

DATES OF INDEPENDENCE

December 9, 1961 (Tanganyika); December 10, 1963 (Zanzibar)

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

April 25, 1977; revised 1984

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Tanzania is in East Africa, south of the equator, and includes the islands of Mafia, Pemba, and Zanzibar. The nation occupies an area of 945,087 sq km (364,898 sq m), extending 1,233 km (760 mi) north to south and 1,191 km (740 mi) east to west. Zanzibar is separated from the mainland by a channel 36 km (22.5 mi) across at its narrowest point and has an area of 1,658 sq km (640 sq mi).

To the northeast, some 40 km (25 mi) away, is the island of Pemba, with an area of 984 sq km (380 sq mi). The total length of Tanzania's coastline is 1,424 km (884 mi), of which that of Zanzibar is 212 km (132 mi), that of Pemba 177 km (110 mi), and that of Mafia 113 km (70 mi). Tanzania shares its international land boundary of 3,861 km (2,399 mi) with eight countries: Uganda, Kenya, Mozambique, Malawi, Zambia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Burundi, and Rwanda.

Tanzania



The topography of the country is determined by the Great Rift Valley, which runs through the middle of the country from north to south. As defined by this valley, the major physical regions are the Western Rift, the Central Plateau, Lake Victoria basin, the Eastern Rift and mountains, the Eastern Plateau, and the coastal belt and islands. The greater part of the country consists of the Central Plateau, with elevations of 1,000 to 1,400 m (3,500 to 4,500 ft). The nation's mountain systems are grouped mainly along the Eastern Rift. Its western wall comprises the Kondoa and Mbulu ranges, the Gogoland Hills, the Mpwapwa Mountains and the Southern Highlands. The northern part of the Eastern Rift contains the Winter

Highlands, including the volcanic region comprising Mount Loolmalsin, Ngorongoro Crater, and Mount Lengai, one of the most famous game preserves in the world. Within the lower part of the rift lies Olduvai Gorge, where, according to paleontologist Louis Leakey, the earliest forms of man originated. In the Northern Highlands are two of the highest peaks in Africa: Mount Kilimanjaro (5,895 m; 19,336 ft) and Mount Meru (4,566 m; 14,980 ft). Toward the south is a dry steppe merging into the Masai Steppe, part of the Eastern Plateau. The north-eastern part of the Masai Steppe is bounded by the Pare and Usambara mountains, cut by deep, broad valleys. In the south are the Livingstone Mountains, the Kipengere

Range, the Poroto Mountains, Mount Rugwe, and, farther west, the Ufipa Highlands and the isolated Uluguru Mountains. In Songea District lies another range, the Matengo Highlands.

The coastal belt is 15 to 65 km (10 to 40 mi) wide, broader in the center and narrower to the north and south. The coast contains numerous coral reefs and shifting sandbars.

Zanzibar is a low-lying coral island covered by bush and grass plains. The highest point on the island is Masingini Ridge (104 m; 340 ft). Siniongoni, the highest point on Pemba, is 95 m (311 ft) above sea level.

Geography

Area sq km: 945,087; sq mi 364,898

World Rank: 31st

Land Boundaries, km: Burundi 451; Democratic Republic of the Congo 459; Kenya 769; Malawi 475; Mozambique 756; Rwanda 217; Uganda 396; Zambia 338

Coastline, km: 1,424

Elevation Extremes meters:

Lowest: Indian Ocean 0

Highest: Mount Kilimanjaro 5,895

Land Use %

Arable Land: 4.5

Permanent Crops: 1.1

Forest: 43.9

Other: 50.5

Population of Principal Cities (2002)

Arusha	270,485
Dar es Salaam	2,336,055
Mbeya	230,318
Morogoro	206,868
Mwanza	209,806
Zanzibar	205,870

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Tanzania has a tropical, equatorial climate modified by altitude. Broadly, the country is divided into three climatic zones: the northern coastal belt, from Dar es Salaam to the Kenya border; the region around Lake Victoria; and the interior plateau and southern coastal belt. In general, temperatures are lower than those of other countries in similar latitudes. The mean daily maximums range between 22.2°C and 32.2°C (72°F and 90°F). The north has two distinct wet seasons: a longer one from March to May and a shorter one from November to December. The rest of the country has only one rainy season, from November to April or May. The overall rainfall is not of great quantity. About half the country receives 760 mm (30 in) annually, the maximum being recorded at Lake Nyasa (2,540 mm; 100 in) and the minimum in parts of the Central Plateau and the Masai Steppe (510 mm; 20 in).

The prevailing winds are the southeasterly trade winds from November to March and the northeasterly trade winds from April through October.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature

Northern Coastal Belt from Dar es Salaam to the Kenya border:

72°F to 90°F

Lake Region: 63°F to 82°F

Interior Plateau and Southern Coastal Belt: 60°F to 83°F

Average Rainfall

Northern Coastal Belt: 20 in to 30 in

Eastern Lake Region: 30 in to 40 in

Western Lake Region: 80 in to 90 in

Lake Nyasa Region: 100 in

Interior Plateau: 30 in to 40 in

Pemba Island: 80 in

Zanzibar Island: 60 in to 80 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Tanzania is world famous for its large mammal life, which attract tourists interested in wildlife safaris. Serengeti National Park is home to large herds of gazelles, antelopes, wildebeests, and zebras. Other animals in game preserves as well as other areas include elephants, lions, rhinoceroses, hippopotamuses, chimpanzees, crocodiles, buffalo, and hunting dogs. Most of the large animals migrate to Kenya during the winter months, between June and September.

Most of the country's plants are savanna grasses and bushes that can survive in an arid climate. In the drier areas only desert plants grow.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 36,766,356

World Rank: 33rd

Density per sq km: 40.6

% of annual growth (1999-2003): 2.2

Male %: 49.5

Female %: 50.5

Urban %: 32.3

Age Distribution %: 0-14: 44.0

15-64: 53.4

65 and over: 2.6

Population 2025: 53,015,000

Birth Rate per 1,000: 38.16

Death Rate per 1,000: 16.71

Rate of Natural Increase %: 2.1

Total Fertility Rate: 5.06

Expectation of Life (years): Males 44.56

Females 45.94

Marriage Rate per 1,000: —

Divorce Rate per 1,000: —

Average Size of Households: 5.2

Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Black Africans, who form 99 percent of the population, are divided into over 130 groups, each with its own physical and social characteristics and languages. These tribes have been broadly categorized into five ethnic families: Bantu, Nilotic, Nilo-Hamitic, Khoisan, and the unclassified Iraqw, the latter comprising Iraqw, Gorowa, Burungi, and others. About 95 percent of Tanzanians are classified as Bantu, a blend of Hamitic and African stocks. Bantu tribes range in membership from a few thousand to more than one million, the latter population found among the Sukuma. The Nyamwezi, Ha, Makonde, Gogo, Haya, Chagga, and Hehe each number more than 250,000. The only tribe of Nilotic origin is the Luo. The Nilo-Hamites are generally grouped into two clusters: the Masa and Tātog. Scattered throughout the north-central region of the country are small groups of Bushmen-like people.

The population of the offshore islands is equally heterogeneous. The African population is composed of the indigenous Watumbatu, Wahadimu, Wapemba, and others belonging to 50 mainland tribes. Non-Africans belong primarily to a group called the Shirazi, who consider themselves descendants of immigrants from Shiraz, in Iran, although they show evidence of mixed descent.

Ethnic aliens belong to one of three groups: Asians, from the Indian subcontinent; Arabs; and Europeans. The cultural and economic influences of these groups far exceed their numbers, although their position is increasingly insecure in a nation that has adopted Africanization as an official ideology. Apart from some ill will toward Asians for their exclusivity, there is no discrimination against any foreign group.

LANGUAGES

The official language and the lingua franca is Swahili, more properly referred to as Kiswahili, which is spoken as a mother tongue by a large number of inhabitants. Kiswahili is basically a Bantu language in structure and origin, but its vocabulary is drawn from a variety of sources, particularly Arabic and English. The form of Kiswahili spoken in Zanzibar is known as Kiunguja. English enjoys the status of a co-official language, but its use is restricted to the educated elite.

More than 100 African languages are spoken in the country. These languages belong to four groups: Bantu, Nilo-Hamitic, Nilotic, and Khoisan. The Bantu languages belong to the Congo-Kordofanian language family; the Nilo-Hamitic and Nilotic languages to the Nilo-Saharan language family; and the Khoisan languages to the Khoisan language family, which includes languages spoken by the San and Khoikhoi peoples of southern and southwestern Africa. All these languages are mutually unintelligible, but dialects within the same

language may be intelligible to a degree. In general, Bantu languages are agglutinative, their syntax being formed by adding prefixes and suffixes to various roots. The languages of the Iraqw, Gorowa, and Burungi tribes have not been classified.

Within the Asian community a number of languages are spoken, including Hindi, Punjabi, and Urdu. Most Asians also speak English and Kiswahili.

RELIGIONS

About 35 percent of Tanzanians adhere to tribal religions. Another 35 percent are Muslim, and 30 percent are Christian. The population of Zanzibar is almost entirely Muslim.

Tribal religions have their strongest hold in rural Tanzania. Although each tribe has its own set of practices, there are certain common denominators, such as belief in a high god whose common name, Mulungu, is often also used interchangeably for "sky" or "sun." Most religious activities center on ancestral spirits, rites of passage, witchcraft, and sorcery. Although there is no priesthood as such, there are religious specialists in all tribes who are concerned with the performance of rituals and with divination.

Christianity is the most recently adopted religion, as first introduced by French Catholic missionaries in the 1860s. Lutherans followed in the 1880s, Moravians in the 1890s, and Mennonites and Seventh-Day Adventists after World War I. By informal agreement the Catholics and the Protestants concentrated their activities in different areas. The Catholic Church has two apostolic administrations. Both archdioceses, the Eastern Province at Dar es Salaam and the Western Province at Tabora, are headed by native Africans. The church runs 26 general hospitals, schools, and adult-education centers; five newspapers; book-publishing houses; and radio programs. More than seven Protestant denominations are represented in the country, of which the largest are the Lutherans, Baptists, Moravians, and Presbyterians. The Christian Council of Tanzania is composed of 17 member bodies. Ecumenism appears to be on the increase, with both Catholics and Protestants cooperating in a number of areas of mutual concern. Although Africanization of the clergy has made considerable progress, there are no independent African churches or messianic movements, as in other countries of the continent. Many Tanzanian Christians practice a form of Christianity in which residual elements of former religious traditions persist, and there is unorthodox flexibility in beliefs and practices, particularly in the areas of charms and taboos.

Muslims are concentrated on the offshore islands; in the coastal region; around the towns of Kondoa, Singida, Tabora, and Kigomai; and along the Ruvuma River. There are three distinct ethnic groups among Muslims:

Arabs, Indo-Pakistanis, and Africans. The nature of religious beliefs among these groups varies from the strict and exclusive Islam of Arabs and Indo-Pakistanis to the blend of Islam and tribalism practiced by Africans. With few exceptions, both Arab and African Muslims are Sunni. Two elements that make Islam compatible with African traditions are its approval of polygamy and its belief in the existence of spirits.

Hinduism, Sikhism, and Buddhism are represented by small groups of Indians.

Religious Affiliations	
Indigenous Beliefs	12,868,000
Muslim	12,868,000
Christian	11,030,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

If anthropologists Mary and Louis Leakey are right, Tanzania's Olduvai Gorge is where the human species originated. There is evidence that the original inhabitants of the country were hunter-gatherers in the late Stone Age. They were displaced by successive waves of Cushitic, Bantu, and Nilotic peoples. By the seventh century the region was under the control of the Arabian Ausan and later the Himyarites. For the next 500 years there were prosperous Arabian and Persian colonies along the coast. Inter-marriage between the natives and Arabs or Persians led to the creation of the Swahili peoples and language. Zanzibar was completely Islamized by the ninth or 10th century. The first European expedition to reach the East African coast was that of the Portuguese explorer Vasco da Gama, in 1498. Subsequently, a number of Portuguese posts were established on that coast. Within a century the Portuguese hegemony was supplanted by Ibadhi Arabs of Oman, whose Ya'aruba imam Saif bin Sultan established undisputed Muslim control over the region. Yet during the 18th century the Ya'aruba imams declined in Oman, and the Masrui, a local Omani tribe, proclaimed their independence. Omani influence was revived around 1822 by Sayyid Sa'id bin Sultan, who united Zanzibar and Pemba under the Al Bu Sa'id dynasty and made the islands the capital of a vast empire that included Oman, Zanzibar, and the East African coast inland to the Great Lakes and the Congo. Sa'id bin Sultan is best remembered for introducing the clove tree to the region. Around 1857 the first Europeans to explore the East African interior, Richard F. Burton and John Hanning Speke, reached the dominion of the sultan in search of the source of the White Nile.

Tanganyika, as mainland Tanzania came to be known, came under German influence in 1884–85 after Karl Peters concluded treaties with the chiefs of the interior on behalf of the German East Africa Company. In 1890 Germany and the United Kingdom partitioned the

territory, establishing a British zone of influence in the Upper Nile, Zanzibar, and Pemba, while Tanganyika and Ruanda-Urundi together became German East Africa. The British took over Tanganyika during World War I and administered the region after the end of the war as a mandate of the League of Nations. The main goals of the colonial administration were to develop political institutions and to promote intertribal cooperation. The first organized nationalist movement appeared in Tanganyika in 1954. It took only seven more years for Tanganyika to receive its independence and one additional year to become a republic. Zanzibar became independent in 1963.

Following an armed uprising by African nationalists in 1964, the Arab-dominated government of Zanzibar was deposed and a republic proclaimed. The two countries combined in 1964 to form the United Republic of Tanganyika and Zanzibar. The nation was renamed the United Republic of Tanzania later that year.

Tanzania's 20th-century history was dominated by Julius Nyerere, who as leader of the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU) led the nation to independence and served as its first president. Nyerere effectively established a one-party state in 1965, although TANU and the Afro-Shirazi Party merged to form the Revolutionary Party of Tanzania (CCM) in 1977. Nyerere also experimented with cooperative forms of economic development, issuing the Arusha Declaration of 1967, which drew up plans for the development of rural communities known as *ujamaa* villages. These were to be the basic blocks of his form of African socialism. The government also aimed to either take control of the principal means of production or invest control of economic resources in cooperatives run by the workers themselves. Peasants proved reluctant to adopt collectivization, however, and the government was forced to use coercive methods of resettlement. Almost 10 million people lived in *ujamaa* villages by 1975, such that Nyerere could claim that "villagization" had been a success. Yet workers did not produce as efficiently as was hoped, and consequently, Nyerere's policies worsened the country's economic problems.

Nyerere was reelected in 1965, 1970, 1975, and 1980. He stepped down, as he had promised, in 1985 but remained chairman of the CCM until 1990, when the handpicked succeeding president Ali Hassan Mwinyi assumed the post. Mwinyi had been serving as the president of Zanzibar and vice president of Tanzania; running as the sole candidate for office, he received 92 percent of the vote in the 1985 election. Mwinyi pursued a more pragmatic policy than Nyerere, with the two men differing over the propriety of Mwinyi's moves toward a more market-oriented economy and away from Nyerere's *ujamaa* brand of socialism.

Mwinyi's elevation to the presidency temporarily stemmed secessionist sentiments in Zanzibar. But by 1987 an open rift had developed between the Muslim leaders in Zanzibar and the mainland CCM party. Mwinyi was re-

elected in 1990, with John Malecela as vice president. In 1992 the president signed a bill legalizing multiparty elections. In 1993 Zanzibar was forced to withdraw its membership in the Organization of the Islamic Conference; the affair highlighted the continuing debate over the respective roles of the two regions as well as a growing schism between Christians and Muslims, which was evidenced by the anti-Muslim rhetoric of the increasingly popular Democratic Party leader, Rev. Christopher Mtikila, and the activities of the militant Council for the Dissemination of the Koran (Balukta) in Tanzania. In 1995 the National Assembly approved a constitutional amendment that reduced Zanzibar's influence in the national government by specifying that the island's president would no longer automatically be a union vice president. In the nation's first multiparty presidential and legislative elections in 1995 CCM candidate Benjamin William Mkapa won handily, with 61.8 percent of the vote, and the CCM garnered 186 of 232 elective Assembly seats. Of the 13 opposition parties, only four gained legislative representation. Mkapa was reelected president in 2000, winning 72 percent of the vote. In March 2001 the CCM and the main opposition party in Zanzibar, the Civic United Front, agreed to form a joint committee to restore calm to the island.

Mkapa maintained an anticorruption reputation through the early 2000s, despite accusations leveled at some of his colleagues. His overall accomplishments included liberalizing Tanzania's economy, to the praise of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and forming a customs and trade union with Uganda and Kenya. He stepped down as president at the end of 2005. Jakaya Kikwete won the presidential elections.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1964–85	Julius Nyerere
1985–95	Ali Hassan Mwinyi
1995–2005	Benjamin William Mkapa
2005–	Jakaya Kikwete

CONSTITUTION

In 1979 a new Tanzanian constitution was promulgated by the Revolutionary Council after being approved by the ruling CCM party. Major revisions were approved in 1984. Executive power is vested in the president, the head of state, who is nominated by the CCM and elected through universal adult suffrage for a five-year term. The president and vice president are elected on the same ballot. The president chooses his cabinet, including the prime minister, from among members of the National Assembly. The president has no legislative powers; if any bill from which he has withheld his assent should be passed again by the National Assembly by a two-thirds

majority, he is required to give his assent within 21 days or dissolve the Assembly, in which latter case he must also run for reelection to be eligible to remain president.

The constitution stipulates the legislative supremacy of the National Assembly and states that the president has no power to legislate without recourse to that body. Should the president dissolve the National Assembly for overriding his veto, he is obliged to run for reelection to be eligible to remain president. In practice, the National Assembly is generally subservient to the president.

Zanzibar has its own president and House of Representatives for dealing with matters internal to Zanzibar. In 1985, for the first time the majority of Zanzibar's representatives were elected directly, albeit within the one-party structure. This marked a sharp break from the past, as all but 10 of the members had been elected through district and regional "revolutionary committees" or had been directly or indirectly appointed by the Zanzibar president. Under the terms of the revised constitution, the Zanzibar House of Representatives consists of 50 directly elected members, 10 members appointed by the president of Zanzibar, five ex officio members, 15 women in specially reserved seats, and an attorney general appointed by the president.

PARLIAMENT

The Tanzanian National Assembly is a unicameral legislature elected for five-year terms. Of its 274 seats, 232 are directly elected, 37 are held by nominated women, and five are filled by the Zanzibar government. The National Assembly has six standing committees: Finance and Economics, Political Affairs, Public Accounts, Social Services, Standing Orders, and General. In addition to enacting laws that apply to the entire United Republic of Tanzania, the Assembly enacts some laws that apply only to the mainland.

Zanzibar has a regional legislature, an 81-member House of Representatives. Legislators are directly elected by universal suffrage to five-year terms.

POLITICAL PARTIES

While the country is a multiparty state, the legislature is dominated by the Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM, Revolutionary Party). Other parties include the Civic United Front (CUF), the Chama Cha Demokrasia na Maendeleo (CHADEMA), the unregistered Democratic Party, the Tanzania Labor Party (TLP), and the United Democratic Party (UDP).

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For the purposes of local government, Tanzania is divided into 26 regions: 21 on the mainland, three on Zanzibar,

and two on Pemba. Each region is administered by a regional commissioner appointed by the central government; regional commissioners are concurrently members of the National Assembly. The regions are divided into districts, each under an area commissioner. District and town councils handle government at the local level.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The legal system is a blend of English common law, Islamic law, African customary law, and German civil law. In Zanzibar the Islamic element predominates, but on the mainland it has only limited juridical status.

The judicial system is headed by the High Court, consisting of a chief justice and 14 judges. The Court of Appeal, formed in 1979, hears civil and criminal appeals, as presided over by the chief justice and four judges of appeal. District courts are found in each district and are presided over by a resident magistrate or a district magistrate. The subordinate courts are the primary courts, presided over by primary court magistrates. There is also a commercial court, which was established in 1999.

The president appoints justices to the High Court and the Court of Appeal. The chief justice appoints all other judges.

Although an independent judiciary is constitutionally mandated, some members of the legal community, including judicial officers, have complained that the legal system is being corrupted through bribery. Although allegations remain largely undocumented, there is at least one confirmed report of a magistrate demanding a bribe to issue a court order. There have been no suggestions that the Court of Appeal and the High Court are corrupt.

HUMAN RIGHTS

The government's human rights record is poor, and older problems are compounded by newer ones. Although the 1995 multiparty elections represented an important break with one-party rule, elections have been marred by serious abuses and limitations on civil liberties.

Police often harass and intimidate members of the political opposition. Extrajudicial killings and the mistreatment of suspects are common practices. In Zanzibar there have also been reports of torture and floggings. Arbitrary arrest and detention, and prolonged detention, continue to plague the criminal justice system. The judiciary is corrupt and inefficient and does not provide fair or expeditious trials.

The government does not respect citizens' privacy rights and severely limits the freedoms of speech and the press as well as those of association, assembly, and movement. The government obstructs the formation of domestic human rights groups.

Violence and discrimination against women are prevalent. The abuse of children, female genital mutilation, and child prostitution remain problems. There are some instances of forced labor, and there have been reports of trafficking in children.

FOREIGN POLICY

Under Julius Nyerere, Tanzania was one of the frontline African states vigorously opposed to colonialism and racialism. For many decades Tanzania has given asylum to political refugees and various liberation groups headquartered in Dar es Salaam. Relations with Britain were severed from 1965 to 1968 to protest British Rhodesian policy, and relations with the United States have been similarly strained from time to time over U.S. African policy. The high point of Tanzanian foreign relations was the successful campaign to topple Uganda's Idi Amin in 1978. The situation placed Tanzania on the moral high ground as a foe of both black and white dictators and as a champion of human rights on a continent descending into lawlessness. Tanzania also stood up against the Tutsi ruler of Rwanda bent on expelling and murdering Hutu refugees. Tanzanian efforts to impose regional sanctions on Burundi helped to reduce the scope of the bloodbath, and diplomatic relations with Rwanda were resumed in 1999. Relations with Kenya deteriorated in the early 1980s with the collapse of the East African Community, but they have improved since then.

Overall, Tanzania has good relations with its neighbors. In 2002–04 Tanzania created a customs union with Uganda and Kenya; the union took effect in January 2005 and is expected to lead to complete integration in the region. The nation also has close relations with the United States, which relations became even closer after terrorists bombed the U.S. embassy in Dar es Salaam in 1998. The U.S. Agency for International Development gives Tanzania substantial annual contributions.

DEFENSE

The Tanzanian People's Defense Force includes an army, a naval wing, and an air defense command. The defense structure is headed by the president, who also exercises operational control over the armed forces. The entire military establishment is nominally commanded by the chief of staff, but in practice his authority is limited to the mainland; Zanzibar's forces are commanded by a senior colonel in Zanzibar.

Citizens may volunteer to serve in the military at the age of 15. The conscription of men occurs when they reach the age of 18 or finish secondary school and is for a term of two years.

The Tanzanian armed forces had their finest moment with the successful invasion of Uganda and overthrow of

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Idi Amin in 1979. As the first such military operation in modern African history, it helped to establish the superiority of the Tanzanian armed forces in relation to those of its East African neighbors. The army has improved its firepower and logistical reach and has also acquired the capability to perform sustained operations.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 28,400
Military Manpower Availability: 7,422,869
Military Expenditures \$million: 20.6
 as % of GDP: 0.2
 as % of central government expenditures: —
Arms Imports \$million: —
Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

Tanzania remains one of the world's poorest countries, with a per capita gross domestic product (GDP) of only \$700 in 2004. The government has been gradually liberalizing the economy to introduce free-market principles and encourage local entrepreneurship and foreign investment. To this end, it has discontinued most price controls, restructured the financial sector, liberalized trade and marketing rules, and freed up interest rates. In 2003 the government negotiated a new Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility. Despite these efforts, Tanzania has tremendous foreign debt and remains dependent on external donors; it qualifies for debt relief under the Highly Indebted Poor Countries initiative.

Agriculture is the largest sector of the economy, employing four-fifths of workers and accounting for 43 percent of GDP. Cash crops include coffee, tea, cotton, cashews, cloves, sisal, and pyrethrum. The transport and sale of agricultural products is extremely inefficient.

About 17 percent of GDP comes from industry. The main activities include agricultural processing and raw material production. Power shortages make it difficult for factories to operate with regularity. In 2001 a sizable gold mine opened near the town of Mwanza, making Tanzania the third-largest gold producer in Africa.

Zanzibar's local government has done a better job of liberalizing the economy than has the mainland. Historically, Zanzibar has earned most of its income from the production and export of cloves, but the clove market has declined in recent years, so the island is now emphasizing tourism. The government has plans to make the port of Zanzibar a free port.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 23.71
GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 700

GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 5.8
GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 3.5
Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:

Agriculture: 43.2
Industry: 17.2
Services: 39.6

Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:

Private Consumption: 80
Government Consumption: 6
Gross Domestic Investment: 16.2

Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 1.248

Imports: 1.972

% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 2.8

% of Income Received by Richest 10%: 30.1

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
170.9	181.0	190.3	199.0	207.9

Finance

National Currency: Tanzanian Shilling (TZS)

Exchange Rate: \$1 = TZS 1,089.33

Money Supply Stock in National Currency trillion: 1.11

Central Bank Discount Rate %: 12.34

Total External Debt \$billion: 7.321

Debt Service Ratio %: 5.84

Balance of Payments \$million: –327.4

International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 2.02

Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
5.4

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$billion: 1.67

per capita \$: 46.50

Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 248

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: July 1–June 30

Revenues \$billion: 1.985

Expenditures \$billion: 2.074

Budget Deficit \$million: 89

Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 43.2

Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 4.4

Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 0.19

Irrigation, % of Farms having: 3.3

Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 1.79

Total Farmland % of land area: 4.5

Livestock: Cattle million: 17.8

Chickens million: 30

Pigs 000: 455

Sheep million: 3.52

Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 23.6

Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 324

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 685
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 8.4

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 276
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 1.56
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 44
 Net Energy Imports % of use: 7.3
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: 620
 Production kW-hr billion: 2.91
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 2.75
 Coal Reserves tons million: 220
 Production tons 000: 10
 Consumption tons 000: 10
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet billion: 800
 Production cubic feet billion: —
 Consumption cubic feet billion: —
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
 Production barrels 000 per day: —
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 17
 Pipelines Length km: 866

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 1.972
 Exports \$billion: 1.248
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 9.4
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 4.0
 Balance of Trade \$million: –327.4

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
South Africa %	13.1	—
China %	8.8	5.2
India %	6.6	10.2
Zambia %	5.4	—
United Arab Emirates %	5.4	—
United States %	4.8	—
United Kingdom %	4.8	5.3
Kenya %	4.3	4.8
Netherlands %	—	6.8
Japan %	—	6.1
Germany %	—	4.4

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 88,200
 Paved %: 4.2
 Automobiles: 35,600
 Trucks and Buses: 98,800
 Railroad: Track Length km: 3,690
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: —

Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 11
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 31
 Airports: 123
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 136
 Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 550
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 441
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 361

Communications

Telephones 000: 149.1
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones 000: 891.2
 Personal Computers 000: 200
 Internet Hosts per million people: 151
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 6.8

ENVIRONMENT

Tanzania suffers from a number of environmental problems, including deforestation and desertification. Associated with these is soil erosion, which has been exacerbated by drought in recent years. The coral reefs that line much of the coast are threatened by overfishing, which is destroying marine habitats. The nation's wildlife is threatened by illegal hunting and the persisting ivory trade, which targets elephants and rhinos.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 43.9
 Forest Change (1990–2000) hectares 000: –91
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 38
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 35,155
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 0.13

LIVING CONDITIONS

The standard of living in Tanzania is low. Electricity is unreliable and not universal. Not everyone has ready access to water, and water supplies are often contaminated. Roads are in poor condition, and drivers are sometimes reckless, leading to numerous accidents. There are trains and buses, but buses are not permitted to travel at night.

HEALTH

Tanzania has both public and private health facilities. Government facilities in particular suffer from a lack of

funding, which makes it difficult to get basic supplies. Most hospitals are concentrated in the cities, and rural people often cannot get adequate health care. There is a shortage of doctors, which is partially remedied by the presence of trained health workers and traditional healers. Overall, health conditions are not good. Endemic diseases include malaria, sleeping sickness, measles, tuberculosis, dysentery, yellow fever, cholera, schistosomiasis, and typhoid. HIV/AIDS is a growing problem; in 2002 almost 9 percent of the adult population was infected. Life expectancy is only about 45 years, and the infant mortality rate is quite high, at just under 100 deaths per 1,000 live births. On average, each woman has slightly more than five children.

Health

Number of Physicians: 822
 Number of Dentists: 216
 Number of Nurses: 13,292
 Number of Pharmacists: 365
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 2.3
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 98.54
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 1,500
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 4.9
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 13
 HIV Infected % of adults: 8.8
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 95
 Measles: 97
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 46
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 73

FOOD AND NUTRITION

The staple starch is a stodgy, solid paste called *ugali*, which is made from maize, millet, sorghum, or cassava flour. Along with *ugali*, people usually eat a stew with vegetables, meat, or fish. On the coast, seafood is popular and common, and rice is the preferred starch; a common coastal dish is pilau, or rice flavored with cinnamon. Cloves and coconut milk are other common flavorings. In the highlands people eat plantains. Barbecued meats are a popular food in restaurants; beef, chicken, goat, and lamb all appear on menus. A variety of starches go into homemade alcoholic beverages; *mbege* is made from millet and bananas. Tea is the ubiquitous drink and is always offered to guests.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 44.0
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 1,920
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 114.2
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 57.5

STATUS OF WOMEN

For most of Tanzania's ethnic groups, women's traditional role has been that of mother and field laborer, and women are still underrepresented in government, the professions, and skilled occupations. Social limitations on the roles women play are generally more pervasive on Zanzibar than on the mainland. Women in many parts of the country continue to suffer discriminatory restrictions on inheritance and ownership of property because of concessions to custom and Islamic law. In many areas these laws dictate that daughters receive smaller shares of their father's property than do sons. Although the practice is declining, female circumcision is still performed by a minority among approximately 20 of the country's 120 mainland ethnic groups. Despite obstacles, the government has made progress in attaining equality for women, especially in urban areas, where traditional values have a weaker hold on the population. The Union of Women of Tanzania, a wing of the ruling CCM party, is dedicated to the eradication of inequality for women in all spheres of society. Women have been encouraged to take an active role in politics. Using its powers of direct appointment, the government has ensured that about 20 percent of the membership of village councils is female.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 21
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 0.95
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: —

WORK

Most Tanzanians work as farmers, the majority of them in subsistence agriculture. Some farmers work for pay, producing cash crops such as coffee, tea, cashews, fruits, and spices. Subsistence farmers sell surplus crops at local markets. They may supplement their income by making craftwork, fishing, or selling snacks and sundries to passersby. A few people work in factories or mines. Most Tanzanians are unskilled or semiskilled.

Child labor is very common. Many children, especially girls, must leave school to care for younger siblings, farm, or obtain paying jobs.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 19,000,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 49.0
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 80
 Industry and Services: 20
 Unemployment %: —

EDUCATION

Education is theoretically free, universal, and compulsory for seven years, from ages seven to 14. In all, schooling lasts for 13 years, as divided into seven years of primary school, four years of middle school, and two years of secondary school. The primary grades are called standards, while the middle and secondary grades are called forms. The curriculum has been diversified through a growing emphasis on nonacademic subjects and has been Africanized through the incorporation of purely African materials. The school year runs from November to September. The language of instruction is Kiswahili, except in 12 schools for foreign children. English is taught as a subject beginning in standard one (first grade).

All Tanzanian students must pay at least some school fees and buy school uniforms. Dropout rates are high, and only about 3 percent of children attend secondary school. There are not many secondary schools in the country, and students who do attend must often live far away from their immediate families. Students who want to attend university must complete six years of secondary school and pass two examinations. The country has six universities, including the National University of Dar es Salaam, the University of Zanzibar, and the Open University of Tanzania, the latter established expressly to provide distance education. The nation also has many vocational centers to train people with incomplete educations.

Secondary, vocational, and teacher-training schools are administered directly by the Ministry of Education; primary schools are administered by local authorities. Primary education was nationalized in 1969, while private secondary schools continue to function as subject to government supervision.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 78.2
Male %: 85.9
Female %: 70.7
School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 6.5
First Level: Primary Schools: 10,892
Teachers: 112,860
Students: 5,981,338
Student-Teacher Ratio: 53.0
Net Enrollment Ratio: 68.8
Second Level: Secondary Schools: (included in First Level)
Teachers: —
Students: 323,318
Student-Teacher Ratio: —
Net Enrollment Ratio: 3.0
Third Level: Institutions: 4
Teachers: 2,249
Students: 31,049
Gross Enrollment Ratio: 0.9
Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: —

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Tanzania's technological infrastructure is inadequate, but the government is taking steps to improve it. Unreliable electrical supply and the widespread lack of education among the populace hamper efforts to improve technology. As of 2003 there were about 150,000 telephone lines and almost 900,000 cellular telephones operating in the country. Only about 250,000 people were using the Internet.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
High-Tech Exports \$million: 3.24
Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

Since the introduction of multiparty government in the mid-1990s, Tanzania's media has developed rapidly. There are hundreds of newspapers and other publications. The government-owned *Daily News* is the nation's oldest newspaper. Television was not introduced until 1994, but several stations are now broadcasting. In 2001 the state launched its own television station, *Televisheni ya Taifa*. Radio is still the main broadcast medium, and there are dozens of private radio stations. Television is enjoyed predominantly in urban areas. Zanzibar has separate media policies and does not allow private newspapers or broadcasters, though many residents can pick up mainland broadcasts and read mainland newspapers.

Media

Daily Newspapers: —
Total Circulation 000: —
Circulation per 1,000: —
Books Published: —
Periodicals: —
Radio Receivers million: 14.7
per 1,000: 406
Television sets 000: 690
per 1,000: 21

CULTURE

Tanzanian culture blends the practices of many African ethnic groups with Arab, Indian, and European influences. Tanzanian music is very popular throughout East Africa; Remmy Ongala is the most famous Tanzanian musician. On Zanzibar, people still practice the sung poetry style called *taraab*. There are many traditional dance styles, including a belly dance called *chakacha* and another

women's dance called *lelemama*, which showcases elaborate hand movements.

Tanzanian craftspeople produce a variety of artistic objects, including carvings of wood, ivory, and ebony and Masai shields and spears. The Stone Town of Zanzibar features architecture decorated with elaborate Islamic-style carvings. Tanzanian writers have contributed to the corpus of Swahili literature, and filmmakers such as Flora M'mbugu-Schelling have advanced local filmmaking.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number:	1
Volumes:	428,000
Registered borrowers:	114,415
Museums Number:	—
Annual Attendance:	—
Cinema Gross Receipts:	—
Number of Cinemas:	—
Seating Capacity:	—
Annual Attendance:	—

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Many Tanzanians still practice traditional religions, which involve ancestor worship, rituals marking transitions through life, witchcraft, and sorcery. Masked dances are important parts of rituals. People believe that spirits called *majini* can take possession of living humans. Many tribes believe in a god called Mungu, who is a kind of sky or sun deity. Masai priests claim to have descended from a man named Kindong'oi, who as a child was sent down to earth by the god Engai and raised by Masai warriors.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Tanzanians like to spend time visiting friends and relatives and drinking coffee and tea while talking. Families enjoy going on picnics or to the beach. Many people play a board game called *bao*, in which players try to capture their opponents' markers. Dar es Salaam is a large city, with shopping, restaurants, and other entertainment possibilities. Outdoor activities include wildlife safaris, climbing Mount Kilimanjaro, sailing, and water sports.

ETIQUETTE

Most Tanzanians eat two meals a day. Before and after a meal diners wash their hands in a bowl of water that is passed around the table. In Zanzibar, hosts present their guests with cloves upon arrival; the guests chew the cloves before eating dinner.

FAMILY LIFE

In most of Tanzania's ethnic groups men and women occupy separate spheres, women doing all the household work and farming and men considering themselves the "heads" of the household. Most people live near relatives and help out family members with raising children. Elders are held in high esteem, and children are expected to obey all adults. Girls typically marry in their early teens, and arranged marriages are fairly common. Women are considered adults after marriage, especially after giving birth. It is common for Tanzanians to address women by the name of their first children; for example, if a woman's first child is named "Ali," her neighbors may call her "Mama Ali." Under traditional rules, inheritance could go through female lines, but in modern times many groups, as influenced by Christianity and Islam, have limited inheritance to male lines.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Western apparel has become increasingly common. Women are expected to dress modestly. Tanzanian women wear long dresses, Indian saris, or the traditional dress called the *kanga*. Muslim women cover their heads with scarves; this is especially common in Zanzibar. Adults never wear shorts in towns. Women do not typically wear pants.

SPORTS

Soccer is the most popular spectator sport, and most boys and men play recreationally. Girls play netball, which is similar to basketball. Both sexes run races, and Tanzania has produced many world-class runners.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1961** Tanganyika gains full internal self-government, with Julius Nyerere as prime minister; the former National Legislative Council becomes the National Assembly. Tanganyika becomes a fully independent republic.
- 1962** Nyerere takes office as president, defeating his only rival, Zuheir Mtemwu, by an overwhelming majority in the first elections held on the basis of universal adult suffrage. Regional commissioners are appointed.
- 1963** Zanzibar gains full independence.
- 1964** Some 600 armed insurgents overthrow the government of Zanzibar and install in its place a revolutionary council headed by Abeid Karume. Tanganyika and Zanzibar unite to form Tanzania.

- nia. The Tanganyika Rifles 1st Battalion rises in mutiny and seizes Dar es Salaam; the mutiny is quelled with the help of British troops.
- 1965** An interim constitution is proclaimed for the United Republic of Tanzania; the constitution establishes the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU) as the sole legal political party and an integral part of the government. Diplomatic relations with Britain are broken over Rhodesia issues.
- 1966** The Tanzanian shilling is introduced as the national currency, replacing the East African shilling.
- 1967** The East African Community (EAC) is formed as a common market, with Uganda, Kenya, and Tanzania as members. Nyerere issues the Arusha Declaration, defining *ujamaa*-oriented socialism as the national goal.
- 1968** Kiswahili becomes the sole official language and the medium of instruction in primary schools. Diplomatic relations with Britain are restored.
- 1969** All primary schools are nationalized.
- 1970** University College, in Dar es Salaam, is founded. Nyerere is reelected president.
- 1972** Vice President Abeid Karume is assassinated. Armed followers of Milton Obote, the deposed president of Uganda, invade Uganda from Tanzania but are repulsed.
- 1975** TanZam rail line, built with Chinese aid, is opened for traffic.
- 1977** TANU and SP merge to form the Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM, Revolutionary Party of Tanzania). Edward Sokoine is named prime minister. Border with Kenya is closed, as the EAC disintegrates in a welter of recriminations.
- 1978** Ugandan forces occupy the Kagera salient, advancing as far south as the Kagera River; Tanzania counterattacks with 40,000 troops, including Ugandan dissidents; after a six-month campaign the invaders rout Idi Amin's forces and occupy Kampala; Amin flees Uganda.
- 1980** Nyerere is reelected president in national elections. Zanzibar is granted a new constitution, under which it elects its own president.
- 1981** Tanzanian troops are withdrawn from Uganda.
- 1983** The Human Resources Deployment Act authorizes the government to round up vagrants and unemployed people and forcibly resettle them in productive sectors. Kenya and Tanzania reach accord on distribution of EAC assets and border issues.
- 1984** Prime Minister Edward Sokoine is killed in an auto accident; Salim Ahmed Salim is named prime minister.
- Vice President Aboud Jumbe, president of Zanzibar, resigns and is replaced by Ali Hassan Mwinyi. Constitution is amended, reducing the number of presidential terms for Nyerere's successors to two and creating two vice presidents.
- 1985** The National Assembly amends the Preventive Detention Act of 1962, removing many potential abuses. Julius Nyerere steps down from the presidency, and Ali Hassan Mwinyi is elected to the office by an overwhelming 92 percent vote in national elections; Mwinyi names Joseph S. Warioba as prime minister.
- 1990** Nyerere steps down as chairman of the CCM and is succeeded by Mwinyi.
- 1991** A presidential commission recommends the creation of a multiparty system.
- 1992** Opposition parties are legalized.
- 1993** Regional parliaments for Zanzibar and mainland Tanzania are established; refugees arrive from Burundi.
- 1994** Hutu-Tutsi violence in Rwanda prompts some 700,000 refugees to flee to Tanzania.
- 1995** Multiparty elections are held, with the ruling CCM winning 214 seats in the Assembly; CCM's Benjamin Mkapa is elected president. As violence resumes in Burundi, additional refugees seek asylum in Tanzania, bringing the number of Burundian refugees to about 60,000.
- 2000** President Mkapa is reelected; reports of election irregularities on Zanzibar are investigated.
- 2001** The ruling CCM and the main opposition party in Zanzibar, the Civic United Front, agree to form a joint committee to restore calm to the islands. Tanzania opens a huge gold mine near Mwanza. Tanzania, Uganda, and Kenya create a regional parliament to handle trade and immigration issues.
- 2002** Nearly 300 people die in a train wreck. The president buys a jet costing \$21 million.
- 2004** Tanzania, Uganda, and Kenya form a customs union to promote regional trade.
- 2005** President Mkapa retires and CCM candidate Jakaya Kikwete is elected president.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Bank of Tanzania
<http://www.bot-tz.org>

THAILAND

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Kingdom of Thailand (Raja-anachakra Thai)

ABBREVIATION

TH

CAPITAL

Bangkok

HEAD OF STATE

Bhumibol Adulyadej, King Rama IX (from 1946)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra (from 2001)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Constitutional monarchy

POPULATION

65,444,371 (2005)

AREA

514,000 sq km (198,455 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Thai

LANGUAGE

Thai

RELIGION

Theravada Buddhism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Baht

NATIONAL FLAG

A wide blue horizontal center stripe flanked by two white and then two red stripes at the top and at the bottom

NATIONAL EMBLEM

Known as the Krut, the national emblem represents Garuda, the winged creature of Hindu mythology used as a mount by Vishnu, one of the gods in the Hindu pantheon. The bird appears with a human torso wearing a gold headdress and the ritual mask of Asian demons.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Thailand Is the Unity of Thai Blood and Body”; the royal anthem, “Sanrasorn Phra Barami” (Anthem eulogizing his majesty), is also sung at all public functions.

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year’s Day), April 6 (Chakri Day), April 13 (Songkran, Thai New Year’s Day by the Maha Sakaraj calendar), May 5 (Coronation Day), August 12 (Queen’s Birthday), October 23 (King Chulalongkorn Memorial Day), December 5 (King’s Birthday, National Day), December 10 (Constitution Day)

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

Never under foreign rule

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

October 11, 1997

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Thailand, in the middle of mainland Southeast Asia, has a total land area of 514,000 sq km (198,455 sq mi), extending 1,555 km (966 mi) north to south and 790 km (491 mi) east to west. Its total coastline, on the Gulf of Thailand and the Andaman Sea, extends 3,219 km (2,000 mi). The land area includes numerous offshore islands, the largest of which is Phuket, at the northern end of the Strait of Malacca. Thailand shares its international boundary of 4,932 km (3,062 mi) with four

neighbors: Myanmar (Burma), Malaysia, Cambodia, and Laos.

The heart of Thailand is the central valley, dominated by the Chao Phraya River and watered by an extensive network of canals. It stretches from the foothills of northern mountains at Uttaradit to the Gulf of Thailand and is flanked on the west by the Bilaukthang Range and on the east by the Khorat Plateau. The central valley, which constitutes 22 percent of the national territory, is about 482 km (300 mi) from north to south, with an average width of 160 to 240 km (100 to 150 mi).

Thailand



The northeastern Khorat Plateau region, constituting one-third of the national territory, is an undulating tableland about 122 to 213 m (400 to 700 ft) above sea level to the north and 61 m (200 ft) above sea level to the

south. It is rimmed on the south by the Phanom Don-grak Mountains, along the Cambodian border, and on the west by the Phetchabun Mountains. Much of the land is poor and consists of sandstone and saline soil.

The northern and western mountain regions are a series of parallel mountain ranges separated by deep and narrow alluvial valleys. These ranges have an average elevation of 1,585 m (5,200 ft) and contain the highest peak in the country, Doi Inthanon (2,576 m; 8,449 ft). The notorious Death Railway, built by the Japanese during World War II, ran through the Three Pagodas Pass, one of the few natural gaps through this region.

The small southeastern coast region, on the Gulf of Thailand, is a lush, fertile plain separated by low mountains from the central valley.

The southern peninsular region is a long sliver of land extending from Myanmar to Malaysia that is no wider than 19 km (12 mi) in some places near the Isthmus of Kra. South of the isthmus, Thailand widens to include the full width of the peninsula, facing the Andaman Sea on the west and the Gulf of Thailand on the east. A series of north-to-south parallel ridges divides the peninsula into a narrow, swampy, indented western coastal plain and a broad, smooth eastern coastal plain.

Geography

Area sq km:	514,000; sq mi:	198,455
World Rank:	49th	
Land Boundaries, km:	Myanmar 1,800; Cambodia 803; Laos 1,754; Malaysia 506	
Coastline, km:	3,219	
Elevation Extremes meters:		
	Lowest:	Gulf of Thailand 0
	Highest:	Doi Inthanon 2,576
Land Use %		
	Arable Land:	29.4
	Permanent Crops:	6.5
	Forest:	28.9
	Other:	35.2

Population of Principal Cities (2000)

Bangkok	6,320,174
Nakhon Ratchasima	204,391
Nonthaburi	291,307
Samut Prakan	378,694
Udon Thani	220,493

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Thailand has a tropical climate dominated by monsoons. In most regions there are four distinct seasons: the dry season, from January through February; the hot season, from March through May; the rainy season, from June through October; and the cool season, from November through December.

For most of Thailand the temperature rarely falls below 13°C (55°F) or goes above 35°C (95°F), although there are occasional recordings above 37.8°C (100°F). The mean temperature is considerably lower in the dry season.

About 90 percent of precipitation falls during the wet monsoon season, from June to October, but some parts of peninsular Thailand receive rain during all seasons. The amount of precipitation varies from between 1,020 mm (40 in) and 1,520 mm (60 in) in the northern highlands, central lowlands, and Khorat Plateau to between 2,030 mm (80 in) and 3,050 mm (120 in) in the western mountains and the southern peninsula.

Twice a year, toward the end of the dry and rainy seasons, Thailand experiences typhoons of considerable violence. Thunderstorms are common between May and October in the north and between March and November in the south.

Climate and Weather

Temperature Range:	55°F to 95°F
	Bangkok: 83°F
Average Rainfall	
	Northern Highlands: 40 in to 60 in
	Western Mountains and Southern Peninsula: 120 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Some 25 percent of the country is covered by rain forest, whereas just a quarter century earlier half of the country was rain forest. Though logging was banned by the government in 1989, much of the damage had already been done. Forests consist of hardwoods such as teak. Rubber trees are not indigenous; rather, they were brought from Brazil over a century ago. Native to Thailand and the rest of Southeast Asia are bamboo, rattan, palms, and ferns. Orchids are very abundant. About 20 percent of the land is covered in grass, shrubs, or swamps, and lotuses and water lilies grow thickly in the latter.

With the shrinking of the rain forests, natural habitat has been lost for the once-large elephant population, which has also been diminished by poaching. At one time numbering in the hundreds of thousands, elephants now number only about 5,000. A system of national parks and wildlife sanctuaries has preserved some of the rain forest and has also provided a safe haven for elephants as well as tigers, leopards, and the Asiatic black bear. The tapir and rhinoceros have also become endangered with the reductions in the amount of forestland. Monkeys, however, are still numerous, as is avian life, including orange-bellied leaf birds, purple swamp hens, and painted storks. Reptiles and amphibians, including lizards, frogs, toads, water snakes, the king cobra, and crocodiles, are abundant, but overfishing has depleted stocks of freshwater and marine fish and crustaceans. The silk industry in Thailand is strong, as supported by several species of wild and domesticated silkworms. Insect life is plentiful, including the malaria-carrying mosquito, white ants, and moths.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005:	65,444,371
World Rank:	19th
Density per sq km:	121.4
% of annual growth (1999-2003):	0.7
Male %:	49.5
Female %:	50.5
Urban %:	31.1
Age Distribution %:	
0-14:	23.9
15-64:	68.6
65 and over:	7.5
Population 2025:	70,524,000
Birth Rate per 1,000:	15.7
Death Rate per 1,000:	7.02
Rate of Natural Increase %:	0.7
Total Fertility Rate:	1.88
Expectation of Life (years):	
Males:	69.39
Females:	73.88
Marriage Rate per 1,000:	5.8
Divorce Rate per 1,000:	—
Average Size of Households:	3.8
Induced Abortions:	—

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Thailand is one of the most cohesive and integrated societies in Southeast Asia, with over 75 percent of the population composed of Thai stock. The Central Thai, or Thai Bhak Klang, formerly known as the Siamese, form the largest component of this majority. Their cultural and social patterns have set nationwide standards. There are three other major Thai groups: the Thai Isan, or Thai Lao, of the northeastern region, who are distinguished from the Central Thai by food habits and their use of the Lao language; the Thai Yuan, also known as Lana Thai, or Yonock, of the northern region, who have been independent of Central Thai control for centuries; and the Thai Pak Tai of the southern region, along the Isthmus of Kra, whose physical features reveal Malay admixtures. There are three minor Thai groups: the Phu Thai, an agricultural people of the northeast; the Lu, or Lue, whose ancestors are believed to have emigrated from Yunnan, in China; and the Shans, also called Ngiaw, Thai Yai, Thai Long, or Great Thai, who are ethnically related to the Shans of Myanmar.

The Chinese are the largest ethnic minority, constituting 14 percent of the population as a whole and 33 percent of the population of Bangkok. The Chinese moved into Thailand in large numbers for hundreds of years, until immigration quotas were enforced in 1948.

The second-largest minority are the Thai Malay, or Thai Islam, a Malayo-Polynesian group separated from the Thai by religion, race, and, to some extent, language. They reside for the most part in the four provinces of the southern region: Pattani, Yala, Narathiwat, and Satun. They have proved highly resistant to assimilation and

have sometimes been implicated in secessionist movements. In the 1980s they were estimated to number between 600,000 and 800,000.

Under the general category of hill tribes, there are at least eight major groups and nearly 20 minor ones. The best known of these tribes is the Miao (also Hmong or Mong), an opium-growing tribe in the northern region divided into the Blue Miao, White Miao, and Gua M'ba Miao. They revolted unsuccessfully against the government in 1967. The other hill tribes are the Soai or Kui, Mon, Lawa, Yao, Akha, Lahu, and Lisu. Sometimes included in this category are the Karens, a Tibeto-Burmese people.

Even before the present influx of refugees from the Indochinese peninsula there were large Laotian, Cambodian, and Vietnamese communities in Thailand. The Khmer, or Cambodian, minority live in provinces east and southeast of Bangkok and in the southern Khorat Plateau, once a Cambodian territory. The Vietnamese in northern and northeastern Thailand are a much smaller group. More-recent ethnic alien groups include Indians and Pakistanis, who have no fixed niche in Thai society.

There is a large Western community in Bangkok.

LANGUAGES

The official language of Thailand is Thai, which in its various dialects is the mother tongue of 80 percent of Thai peoples. Its linguistic affinities have not been established, but most linguists assign it to the Chinese-Tai branch of the Sino-Tibetan family of languages.

Thai has four dialectal forms, of which Central Thai is the official standard and the language of the media. Central Thai and Lao are mutually intelligible. The other dialects of Thai are Kham Muang and Southern Thai, also called Tamprue.

English is the universal second language. In many private schools it is taught from the elementary grades onward, while in public schools it is taught as a compulsory foreign language. English is used extensively, particularly by the Thai elite and businessmen. Many official documents are published in both Thai and English. Bangkok has two English newspapers.

RELIGIONS

The state religion is Buddhism in its Theravada or Hinayana form, which is professed by 95 percent of the population. Religion is perhaps the most pervasive and visible force in Thai life, and temples—known as *wats*—dot the landscape, as Buddhist festivals do the calendar. The number of monks in the population has led to the description of the country as “the land of the yellow robes.”

Thai Buddhism is an amalgam of pre-Buddhist Hindu beliefs and practices and animist spirit worship interwoven with Buddhist theology and rituals. Popular religious beliefs and institutions have changed little over the centuries. Cosmological and astrological concepts pervade not only religious but also social and economic life.

Buddhism in Thailand has an elaborate ecclesiastical structure. That structure is headed by the supreme patriarch of the Sangha, whose title is *sakala sanghaparinaya-aka somdech phra sangharaja*. With a membership of over 250,000, the Sangha, or the order of Buddhist monks, is the nearest thing to a clergy that Buddhism has. The patriarch, who is appointed by the king, presides over the supreme council, Mahathera Samagom, which has both judicial and legislative functions.

The king is required by the constitution to be a practicing Buddhist. The affairs of the Sangha are regulated by the Department of Religious Affairs in the Ministry of Culture. The state is closely involved in the promotion of Buddhism, and relations between the two are defined in the Buddhist Order Act of 1962. The government is the legal owner of all *wat* lands, administers religious education, and operates a large Buddhist publishing house. The monarch himself maintains 115 royal *wats* and two ecclesiastical colleges.

Minority religious groups constitute an estimated 5 percent of the population, but they have contributed little to Thai cultural traditions. The Chinese practice a traditional mixture of Mahayana Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, and ancestor worship. Muslims constitute almost 4 percent of the population, and the vast majority are the ethnic Malay of the southern region; the remainder are Pakistanis in urban centers and ethnic Thais who practice what is known as Thai Islam in rural areas of the central region. The government provides financial assistance to Thai Muslims for their annual pilgrimage to Mecca. The head of the Muslim establishment, the *chularajamontri*, has a semiofficial status. Most of the Indians are Hindus.

Although Christianity was introduced into Thailand as early as 1511, it has met with only modest success in winning converts. The size of the Christian community is estimated at 330,000, including Catholic Chinese, Vietnamese, and Laotians. The Catholic Church, accounting for the large majority of the Christian population, has two archdioceses, in Bangkok and Sakonnakohn. The Church of Christ in Thailand, the major Protestant denomination, has over 140 congregations; independent Protestant denominations have an additional 180. Christian missions have played an influential role in the Westernization of Thailand; Catholic missions run 125 schools and six hospitals, and Protestants operate 50 schools and 10 hospitals.

Christian	327,200
Hindu	65,400
Other	392,600

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The original inhabitants of present-day Thailand were the Tai, a people racially related to the Chinese who migrated from south China to mainland Southeast Asia. By the first century c.e. they had entered the valley of the Chao Phraya River, defeated and dispersed the earlier Khmer and Mon settlers, and established the Tai Kingdom. By the middle of the 14th century the Tai, known as Siamese to the Mon and Khmer, had expanded their presence at the expense of the Lao, Burmese, and Khmer. In the central Chao Phraya valley they adopted many of the features of the Mon, especially adherence to Theravada Buddhism. According to tradition, Tai chieftains overthrew the Khmer at Sukothai, the capital of Angkor's province, and established the first Tai kingdom. The Thai traditionally regard the founding of this kingdom as marking their emergence as a distinct nation; it was in Sukothai, the cradle of Thai civilization, that they took the name Thai (rather than Tai). The greatest king of Sukothai was Ramkhamhaeng (Rama the Great, r. 1277–1317). He is credited with devising the Thai alphabet and bringing the Chinese artisans who developed the ceramic industry that was the mainstay of the Thai economy for 500 years. Sukothai remained a powerful state until 1378, when it was overcome by the Thai king of the city of Ayutthaya, Rama Thibodi (r. 1350–69). In 1360 Rama Thibodi declared Theravada Buddhism the official religion of the land. He also adopted the Dharmashastra, the Hindu legal code. By the end of the 14th century Ayutthaya was the strongest power in Southeast Asia.

The first contact with Europeans came in 1511, when Ayutthaya received a diplomatic mission from the Portuguese. Five years later Ayutthaya and Portugal concluded a treaty granting the Portuguese trading rights. A similar treaty was concluded with the Dutch in 1592. During the reign of King Narai commercial ties were forged with the Japanese, Dutch, English, and French. As influenced by his foreign minister, the Greek adventurer Constantine Phaulkon, Narai and his son were reported to have become Christians. In retaliation, the Buddhist clergy and Thai nobles instigated General Phra Phetracha to kill the royal heir along with a number of Christian missionaries. The arrival of English warships sparked a massacre of more Europeans. Phetracha seized the throne, expelled all foreigners, and ushered in a 150-year period during which Thailand was walled off from the West.

In 1767 the Thai territory was invaded by three Burmese armies that converged on Ayutthaya. After two years of siege, the city capitulated and was burned. The Thai made a rapid recovery under a brilliant military

Religious Affiliations

Buddhist	62,172,000
Muslim	2,486,900

leader, Phraya Thaksin (r. 1767–82), who quickly reorganized an army and drove out the Burmese conquerors. After assuming the royal title, he moved the capital to Thon Buri, a fortress town across the river from modern Bangkok. By 1776 Thaksin had reunited the Thai kingdom and annexed Chiang Mai, in the north. Eventually, Thaksin developed delusions of divinity and was deposed and executed. The Thai throne fell to Chao Phraya Chakri, one of Thaksin's generals, who assumed the throne as Rama I (r. 1782–1809). He founded the present Thai ruling house and moved the throne to Bangkok. The Chakri dynasty brought the kingdom the political stability necessary for transition to the modern age. The third king of this dynasty, Mongkut (Rama IV, r. 1851–68), is the Thai king best known in the West, through the book *Anna and the King of Siam*. During his reign as well as that of his son, Chulalongkorn (Rama V, r. 1888–1910), Thailand emerged from feudalism and entered the modern world. A cabinet of foreign advisers was formed, commercial treaties of friendship were signed with Britain (1855) and with the United States and France (1856), the power of the nobles was curtailed, slavery was abolished, and the legal system was brought into conformity with Western standards. However, royal rule continued to be an absolute monarchy until it was transformed into a constitutional monarchy through a bloodless revolution in 1932. That year a permanent constitution was promulgated, providing for a quasi-parliamentary regime in which an executive would share power with a unicameral legislature, half of whose members would be elected through limited suffrage, the other half appointed. The first parliamentary elections were held in 1933. From 1932 through the 1940s Thai politics was dominated by Pridi Phanomyong and Phibun Songkhram. At the start of World War II, Thailand, after annexing Burmese and Malayan territories, signed an alliance with Japan and declared war on the United States and the United Kingdom. After the war Thailand became an ally of the United States.

Following World War II Pridi Pramroj, of the Free Thai Movement, came into power and led the first post-war government. However, his rule was soon undermined, and in 1947 he fled to Beijing. Phibun once again seized power and remained in control for a decade, until Field Marshal Sarit Thanarat assumed effective control in 1957. He appointed a constituent assembly in 1959 but ruled through martial law until his death in December 1963. Sarit was succeeded by Gen. Thanom Kittikachorn, who assumed the position of prime minister. In June 1968 a constitution was promulgated, but an increase in Communist insurgency efforts and internal political conflict led to the dissolution of the National Assembly, the annulment of the constitution, and the imposition of martial law. In 1973 rioting students brought about the fall of the government. Dr. Sanya Dharmasakti took on the leadership of the interim government.

A new constitution promulgated in October 1974 legalized political parties. Free elections for the House of Representatives were held in January 1975, and a coalition government was formed, with Seni Pramroj, the leader of the Democrat Party, in control. By March the coalition had been dissolved by a no-confidence vote. Power was juggled back and forth several times during 1975 and 1976 between Seni and his younger brother, Kukrit Pramroj, until October 6, 1976, when Admiral Sangad Chaloryu led a military coup that ousted Seni. On October 22 King Bhumibol approved the establishment of a military-rule government under the leadership of the former Supreme Court justice Thanin Kraivichien.

One year later, on October 20, 1977, the military assumed power and appointed Gen. Kriangsak Chomanan prime minister. Kriangsak maintained a tentative hold on power under a new constitution adopted December 18, 1978. His power to appoint the upper house of the National Assembly outweighed the overwhelming plurality of votes won by Kukrit's Social Action Party (SAP) on April 22, 1979. However, economic problems threatened his leadership, and in February 1980 he resigned. Gen. Prem Tinsulanond was named prime minister. Prem became the longest-serving prime minister at the end of 1982, having remained in office for 33 months. In the parliamentary election held April 18, 1983, no single party won a clear majority, and Prem remained the leader of a non-partisan four-party coalition government.

An attempted coup took place on September 9, 1985, while Prem and the armed forces commander, Gen. Arthit Kamland-Ek, were out of the country. Former prime minister Kriangsak was subsequently arrested and implicated for his alleged involvement. A premature election was held on July 27, 1986, because of dissension within the SAP, the largest of the coalition parties. A new four-party coalition government was created on August 11, with Prem continuing as leader.

On April 19, 1988, in the face of a no-confidence vote, Prem scheduled an election for July 24. Once again, no single party won an overall majority, and a new six-party government was formed. Surprisingly, Prem refused the position of leadership, and Maj. Gen. Chatichai Choonhavan, head of the plurality Thai Nation Party, was appointed prime minister.

Chatichai's leadership philosophy emphasized the transformation of Southeast Asia from a "battlefield into a marketplace." He broke with the tradition of his predecessors and actively promoted improved relations with Thailand's neighbors Laos, Vietnam, and Cambodia. Tension between Chatichai and the minister of foreign affairs, Siddhi Savetsila, who was also the leader of the Social Action Party, led to a near crisis in the coalition in March 1989. However, discussions between the leaders of the SAP and Thai Nation resolved the crisis, and the stability of the coalition was maintained.

Chatichai's government was ousted by the military in a bloodless coup in February 1991. The regime, led by the armed forces' supreme commander, Gen. Sunthorn Kongsompong, announced that the country would be ruled by a "National Peace and Order-Keeping party, consisting of army, navy, air force, police and civilians." The 1978 constitution was abolished, and martial law was imposed. The regime also banned political meetings of more than five persons and dissolved both houses of parliament.

The coalition government lasted until May 1995, when it collapsed under pressure from land-reform scandals. Banharn Silpa-Archa was then appointed prime minister; he lasted just over a year. He was replaced by the former general and deputy prime minister Chavalit Yongchaiyudh, who lasted until late 1997, when he was replaced by Chuan Leekpai. Compounding the problems of political instability were growing economic problems. In August 1997 the International Monetary Fund (IMF) stepped in with a bailout package of austerity measures. The measures seemed to have the desired effect of curbing Thailand's free fall; however, fully rebuilding the country's economy would be a major challenge.

In January 2001 the first general elections were held under the reformist 1997 constitution. The populist Thai Love Thai (TRT) party became the first party in Thailand's history to secure a simple majority in parliament. They were joined by political allies, including the Chart Thai and Khwam Wang Mai (New Aspiration) parties, in making Thaksin Shinawatra of the TRT the new prime minister. Troubles beset the billionaire politician at the outset of his rule, as he was accused by an anticorruption commission of concealing his assets. If convicted, he would have been banned from politics for five years. Thailand's high court, however, cleared him in a close decision in 2001.

Shinawatra's new government began a program of privatizing a number of state-owned companies and also pursued a heavy-handed crackdown on the drug trade, in which 2,000 suspects were killed in 2003 alone. In 2004, attacks by Muslim separatists in Thailand's three southern provinces reawakened the secessionist movement there. Muslims, who are in the majority in the southern provinces, have complained of discrimination in education and employment. The situation worsened as a result of the excessive responses of the Thai police and military. Almost 100 protestors died, many of suffocation, while in police custody following a rally in October 2004.

In December 2004 areas of southern Thailand along the coast were devastated by the huge Indian Ocean tsunami. Over 5,000 people, many of them foreign tourists, died, infrastructure was destroyed, and the fishing and tourist industries were hard hit.

In March 2005, after a landslide election victory by his TRT party, Thaksin Shinawatra was elected to a second four-year term by the Thai House of Representatives.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

	Prime Minister (except as noted)
1944–45	Khuang Aphaiwong
1945	Tawee Boonyaket
1945–46	Seni Pramroj
1946	Khuang Aphaiwong
1946	Nai Pridi Phanomyong
1946–47	Luand Thamrong Nawasawat
1947–48	Khuand Aphaiwon (interim)
1948–57	Phibun Songkhram
1957	Pote Sarasin
1958	Thanom Kittikachorn
1959–63	Sarit Thanarat
1963–73	Thanom Kittikachorn
1973–75	Sanya Dharmasakti Thammasak
1975	Seni Pramroj
1975–76	Kukrit Pramroj
1976	Seni Pramroj
1976–80	Sangad Chaloryu (chairman, National Administrative Reform Council)
1976–77	Thanin Kraivichien
1977–80	Kriangsak Chomanan
1980–88	Prem Tinsulanond
1988–91	Chatichai Choonhavan
1991	Sunthorn Kongsompong (chairman, National Peace-Keeping Council)
1991–92	Anand Panyarachun
1992	Suchinda Kraprayoon
1992	Meechai Ruchupan (acting)
1992	Anand Panyarachun
1992–95	Chuan Leekpai
1995–96	Banharn Silpa-Archa
1996–97	Chavalit Yongchaiyudh
1997–2001	Chuan Leekpai
2001–	Thaksin Shinawatra

CONSTITUTION

The modern constitutional history of Thailand begins with the constitution of 1932, which has been replaced by 12 other constitutions, most recently in 1997. The only principle common to all these constitutions has been the inviolability of the monarch, the head of state. Successive changes of government have not diminished the role of the monarchy as the most visible symbol of national unity. The monarch also provides the imprimatur of legitimacy to both civilian and military administrations in appointing the prime minister on the advice of the National Assembly and in acting as the head of the Thai armed forces. At the same time, his effectiveness in influencing the composition and policies of the government is limited. In other words, the monarchy has a more symbolic than political role.

Despite the constitutional facade, Thailand was ruled from 1932 to 1997, except for brief, intermittent periods,

by military strongmen supported by an elite and conservative oligarchy. The main organs of government are the cabinet and the 14-member Privy Council, which advises the king. Together they formulate policy.

Under the 1997 constitution, as under its predecessors, the most important government office is that of the prime minister, the head of government, who is the chief executive and leader of the ruling party. He also supervises the office of the royal household and heads the National Economic Development Board, the National Security Council, and the National Research Council. Under military governments he is also the commander of one of the branches of the armed forces. All laws and royal decrees must be countersigned by him. He presides over cabinet meetings and controls their agendas. In a national emergency he has unlimited powers over national security and the economy. He makes all appointments and conducts all investigations in the name of the king.

The cabinet consists of the prime minister, two deputy prime ministers, and 12 ministers. Under each ministry are a number of quasi-autonomous statutory agencies, each headed by a director-general appointed by the king with the approval of the prime minister. Within these departments are divisions and sections as well as provincial and district offices. The country's bicameral National Assembly (Rathasapha) consists of the Senate (Wuthisapha), a 200-member elected body wherein members serve four-year terms, and the House of Representatives (Sapha Phuthaen Ratsadon), which currently has 500 members elected by popular vote to serve four-year terms.

PARLIAMENT

Under the old constitutional order the Senate represented the entrenched interests of the military and oligarchy. Their seats were appointed. However, with the 1997 changes to the constitution the 253-member body was converted to a 200-member body elected for terms of four years. The House of Representatives has 500 seats, with members elected for four-year terms through universal suffrage. The National Assembly has limited powers. Perhaps its most important relevance is that the prime minister and the government are formed out of the majority of the body.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Following the military coup in February 1991, all political meetings of more than five people were banned. However, with the promulgation of the new constitution, political parties were once again authorized. Dozens of parties stood for elective office in 1992, and more than 10 were represented in the Assembly. The current four largest parties are the Democratic Party (Phak Prachatipat),

the Thai Nation Party (Phak Chart Thai), the Great People Party (Phak Machacon), and the populist Thai Love Thai (Thai Rak Thai, TRT) party, which was formed in 1999 by business tycoon Thaksin Shinawatra. In the 2001 elections the TRT became the first party in Thailand's history to secure a simple majority; in the 2005 elections it repeated this accomplishment, winning 377 of the 500 seats in the House of Representatives.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For the purposes of local government Thailand is divided into 76 provinces, each under the control of a governor. These provinces are further divided into 744 districts and 81 subdistricts, over 7,255 communes, and about 70,000 villages. Local government bodies have very little autonomy and are only units of the national government. However, there are no central government officials below the district level. *Kammans*, heads of communes, are chosen from among the headmen of the constituent villages; *phuyai bans*, heads of villages, are chosen by the villagers for fixed terms of five years, although they tend to remain in office until death or retirement.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The criminal justice system provides for three levels of courts: courts of first instance, the Court of Appeal, and the Supreme Court. The courts of first instance are divided into five categories: *sarn kwaeng* (magistrate courts of small causes), *sarn kadee dek lae yaochon* (juvenile courts), *sarn paeng* (civil courts with two judges), *sarn aya* (criminal courts), and *sarn changwad* (provincial courts). The Sarn Uthorn (Court of Appeals) is composed of a chief judge and 51 other judges and comprises 17 divisions. The Supreme Court consists of a president and 21 judges. The courts are supervised and their integrity ensured by the Judicial Service Commission, composed of 11 members. Thailand's civil and criminal codes follow western European models. The constitution guarantees all citizens access to the courts and also to lawyers during trial. Except in cases of crimes in progress, arrest warrants are generally required, and specific charges must be brought against those detained within a limited time period. Suspects frequently spend long periods in detention before trial because of heavy case backlogs, and trials often take years to complete. Still, defendants generally receive adequate due process rights at trial.

HUMAN RIGHTS

In terms of civil and political rights, Thailand is considered a partly free nation.

Thailand has a mixed track record with regard to human rights, just as it has a mixed form of government. The nation is a military dictatorship that is also a constitutional monarchy and a modified democracy. Although restrictive and undemocratic laws remain on the statute books, they are only lightly enforced. The main problems seem to come not so much from official policies as from venal and insensitive officials.

Police officers kill a number of suspects during chase and apprehension, and security forces accused of extrajudicial killings are rarely prosecuted. Suspects are beaten to coerce confessions. Renewed international criticism of such practices arose as a result of the 2003 crackdown on the drug trade, in which 2,000 suspects were killed in a matter of months, and in the 2004 detention of suspected Islamic militants from the south of the country. An ingrained culture of corruption in the civilian bureaucracy undermines the rule of law and encourages illegal activities such as gambling, tax evasion, smuggling, and prostitution. Police are notably lax in enforcing laws against vice, as a result of which Thailand leads the world in forced prostitution and the trafficking of women and children. Societal discrimination against indigenous people and religious and ethnic minorities persists. Many of Thailand's estimated one million members of hill tribes, who live mainly in the north, have never been fully integrated into society. Reportedly, roughly half of hill-tribe members lack citizenship, rendering them ineligible to vote, own land, or be covered under labor laws and making it harder for them to gain access to education and health care.

FOREIGN POLICY

Thailand was firmly aligned with the United States after World War II and was a signatory of the now-defunct Southeast Asia Treaty Organization. As a corollary the nation has been antagonistic to its three Communist neighbors, Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos, and also to Myanmar (which is still officially recognized by the United States as Burma). Relations have been complicated by the presence of Cambodian and Laotian refugees and the question of their repatriation.

Since the end of the war in Vietnam and Cambodia, Thailand has embarked on a program of mending fences with its neighbors. In 1994 the Australian-financed Friendship Bridge across the Mekong was finally opened, providing the first such connection between Thailand and Laos. In 1996 a border-trade agreement was signed with Myanmar, and in 2001 Prime Minister Thaksin visited Myanmar to discuss drugs and border tensions, leading to a normalization of the relationship between the two countries. Still, relations with Myanmar were strained in 2002, following a border incident, and with Cambodia in 2003, following remarks by a Thai actress that Cambodia's Angkor Wat temple complex was stolen from Thailand.

Thailand is a member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the World Trade Organization (WTO).

DEFENSE

The Thai defense structure is headed by the king, who is also commander in chief of the armed forces. Real control, however, is exercised by the prime minister and the minister of defense. The line of command runs through the supreme commander of the armed forces to the commanders in chief of the three armed services. Defense policy is determined by the National Security Council, which is presided over by the prime minister, while budget allocations, mobilization, training, and deployment are supervised by the Defense Council.

The Thai have no firm military tradition despite the fact that throughout history they have waged a constant struggle to maintain their freedom and national identity. The military establishment had no professional capability until 1950, when the United States undertook a military assistance program to modernize the nation's armed forces. Since then the combat-worthiness, morale, and logistical reach of the Thai forces have become at least equal to those of its sometimes hostile neighbors Cambodia and Laos. Most of the Thai forces are deployed on the eastern border, where they are engaged in a drawn-out struggle with guerrillas supported by the Communist regimes across the border.

The military, over 425,000 strong in 2003, comprises the Royal Thai Army, Royal Thai Navy (including the Royal Thai Marine Corps), and Royal Thai Air Force. Compulsory service of two years begins at age 21; volunteers may join at 18. Military spending in 2003 totaled \$1.827 billion, or 1.8 percent of gross domestic product (GDP).

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	427,200
Military Manpower Availability:	14,984,000
Military Expenditures \$billion:	1.827
as % of GDP:	1.8
as % of central government expenditures:	—
Arms Imports \$million:	163
Arms Exports \$million:	5

ECONOMY

After enjoying the world's highest economic growth rate from 1985 to 1995—averaging almost 9 percent annually—increased speculative pressure on Thailand's currency in 1997 led to a crisis that uncovered financial sector weaknesses and forced the government to float the baht. Long pegged at 25 to the dollar, the baht reached its low-

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est point of 56 to the dollar in January 1998, and the economy contracted by nearly 10 percent that year. Thailand entered a recovery stage in 1999, with the economy expanding by 4.2 percent, and grew about the same amount in 2000, largely due to strong exports—which increased about 20 percent in 2000. An ailing financial sector and the slow pace of corporate debt restructuring, combined with a softening of global demand, slowed 2001 GDP growth to 2.1 percent. Beginning in 2002, however, domestic stimulus and export revival fueled better performance, with real GDP growth at 6.8 percent in 2003. Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra has embarked on a campaign of privatization of some government industries.

The Indian Ocean tsunami that hit the coast of Thailand in December 2004 was a tragedy not only in terms of human lives lost but also in its negative effects on the tourist and fishing trades.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 524.8

GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 8,100

GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 4.7

GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 4.0

Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:

Agriculture: 9.0

Industry: 44.3

Services: 46.7

Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:

Private Consumption: 56

Government Consumption: 11

Gross Domestic Investment: 22.5

Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 87.91

Imports: 80.84

% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 2.8

% of Income Received by Richest 10%: 32.4

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
121.2	123.1	125.1	125.9	128.2

Finance

National Currency: Baht (THB)

Exchange Rate: \$1 = THB 40.222

Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 869

Central Bank Discount Rate %: 2.75

Total External Debt \$billion: 50.59

Debt Service Ratio %: 7.97

Balance of Payments \$billion: 6.736

International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 41

Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 2.8

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 294.7

per capita \$: 4.80

Foreign Direct Investment \$billion: 1.95

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: October 1–September 30

Revenues \$billion: 30.86

Expenditures \$billion: 31.94

Budget Deficit \$billion: 1.08

Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 9.0

Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 4.6

Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 1.39

Irrigation, % of Farms having: 25.6

Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 107.2

Total Farmland % of land area: 31.1

Livestock: Cattle million: 5

Chickens million: 170

Pigs million: 7.16

Sheep 000: 42

Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 27.9

Fisheries: Total Catch tons million: 3.57

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 49.7

Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 8.5

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 34.2

Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 65.7

Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 1.07

Net Energy Imports % of use: 45.6

Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 20.8

Production kW-hr billion: 96.8

Consumption kW-hr billion: 90.2

Coal Reserves tons billion: 1.4

Production tons million: 21.8

Consumption tons million: 28.1

Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: 13.3

Production cubic feet billion: 685

Consumption cubic feet billion: 904

Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels million: 583

Production barrels 000 per day: 259

Consumption barrels 000 per day: 851

Pipelines Length km: 265

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 80.84

Exports \$billion: 87.91

Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 8.2

Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 10.7

Balance of Trade \$billion: 6.736

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Japan %	23.6	13.9
China %	8.6	7.3
United States %	7.6	15.9
Malaysia %	5.8	5.4
Singapore %	4.4	7.2
Taiwan %	4.1	—
Hong Kong %	—	5.1

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 57,403
Paved %: 98.5
Automobiles: 3,259,500
Trucks and Buses: 4,580,000
Railroad: Track Length km: 4,071
Passenger-km billion: 10.4
Freight-km billion: 3.9
Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 386
Total Deadweight Tonnage million: 3.1
Airports: 109
Traffic: Passenger-km million: 48.3
Length of Waterways km: 4,000

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 10.1
Number of Tourists from million: 2.2
Tourist Receipts \$billion: 10.4
Tourist Expenditures \$billion: 4.05

Communications

Telephones million: 6.62
Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
Cellular Telephones million: 26.5
Personal Computers million: 2.46
Internet Hosts per million people: 1,585
Internet Users per 1,000 people: 107

ENVIRONMENT

Thailand suffers from a number of environmental problems, including air pollution from vehicular emissions and water pollution from organic and factory wastes. Additionally, there is a growing rate of deforestation, and wildlife populations are threatened by illegal hunting.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 28.9
Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: -112
Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 19
Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 3.27

LIVING CONDITIONS

The United Nations 2004 Human Development Report listed Thailand 76th out of 177 countries in terms of life expectancy, education, and standard of living. The average Thai's life expectancy in 2005 was 71.6 years, while literacy stood at 92.6 percent in 2002, with 73 percent of eligible students enrolled in primary, secondary, and tertiary schools. Per capita GDP was \$8,100 in 2004. Overall, living conditions in Thailand are average for the East Asia and Pacific region.

The great majority of Thais, some 69 percent, live in rural areas, while the only major urban center, Bangkok, had a population of over six million. Some of the amenities that are more common in cities, such as health care, clean water, sanitation, and electricity, have been developed in the countryside as well, making life easier for the rural population. Housing in the countryside consists largely of wood or thatch houses built on stilts and clustered together in villages or strung out along rivers or canals. The space under houses is well used: People often sit there during the heat of the day doing small chores, and some farm animals may also be kept there. Rice farming is the traditional occupation, and much of life is geared around the rhythm of the planting seasons and the Buddhist holy days.

Rapid urbanization and industrialization are changing the Thai way of life. Consumerism has taken the place of tradition for many eager to buy brand-name products. Housing values are quickly rising. Takeout food is as prevalent in Bangkok as in New York. The traffic in the capital not only costs commuters hours each day but also creates noise pollution and a real health hazard in smog.

HEALTH

The father of the present king studied at Harvard Medical School and consequently introduced Western medicine to Thailand. Today, the country has both government-subsidized health-care facilities and hospitals, where fees are charged according to patients' incomes, and private practices and hospitals, where the physicians set fees. In rural areas, public health centers offer primary care. As of 2004 there was an average of 30 physicians per 100,000 people. Almost all births are attended by trained health-care providers. The infant mortality rate in 2005 was 20.5 deaths per 1,000 live births. Thais also use many traditional forms of healing, including roots, herbs, and massage, called *nuat boraan*.

Air pollution in Bangkok is a major contributor to health problems, as is smoking. As of 2000, 44 percent of males smoked. Malaria and tuberculosis still affect the population; in 2000 there were 130 cases of malaria per 100,000 people, and in 2002 there were 179 cases of tuberculosis per 100,000 people. HIV/AIDS is also on the

rise; the 2003 prevalence rate was 1.5 percent. That year 58,000 died of HIV/AIDS and over half a million were living with the disease. SARS and deadly avian flu have also been found in the country. Waterborne diseases have been reduced through more modern sanitation. As of 2002, 99 percent of the population had access to improved sources of sanitation, 85 percent to safe drinking water. The government provides routine vaccines. In 2003, immunization rates for year-old children were high: 99 percent for tuberculosis, 97 percent for polio, 96 percent for DPT, and 94 percent for measles. Public expenditures on health care in 2002 totaled 3.1 percent of GDP.

Health

Number of Physicians: 18,140
 Number of Dentists: —
 Number of Nurses: 97,515
 Number of Pharmacists: —
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 30
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 20.48
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 44
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 4.4
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 90
 HIV Infected % of adults: 1.5
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 96
 Measles: 94
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 99
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 85

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Rice is the major staple of Thai cooking. In fact, as with the Chinese, in Thai the verb “to eat” is literally “to eat rice,” or *kin khao*. The finest Thai rice is *khao hawm mali* (jasmine rice). In the north and northeast *khao niaw* (sticky rice) is common. Thai meals are normally served family style. Each person is given a plate of rice, and three or four meat or vegetable dishes are placed in the center of the table. Each person takes a helping from one dish at a time and eats it with the rice.

Thai cuisine is spicy and flavorful, as seasoned with garlic and chili, lime juice, lemongrass, and fresh coriander. Other typical ingredients include galangal root, basil, ground peanuts, tamarind juice, ginger, coconut milk, and fish sauce or shrimp paste. Typical main dishes include hot and sour fish stew, green and red curries, various soups, and noodle dishes. Thai food is served with a variety of condiments and dipping sauces.

Snacks and appetizers include fried peanuts, chicken, chopped ginger, peppers, and slices of lime. *Yum* (mixed hot and sour salad) is another popular dish, with many variants. There is a wide variety of fruit available, either fresh or juiced. Sugarcane juice, beer, tea, and rice whiskey are favorite drinks.

Nutrition is generally adequate in Thailand, though between 2000 and 2002 about 20 percent of the population was considered undernourished.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 19.8
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,480
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 122.3
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 129.9

STATUS OF WOMEN

The status and roles of women have continued to progress at a moderate but noticeable pace over recent years. For the most part, women have equal legal rights in Thailand, with specific guarantees of property and divorce rights, and there are no allegations that these rights are denied. Women are not, however, permitted to fully participate in Buddhist religious institutions or to become monks. They are well represented in the labor force and are becoming increasingly well represented in professional positions, particularly those in the commercial sector. Women make up more than half of university graduates in Thailand and are increasingly often entering the professions, but they continue to face discrimination by private employers in hiring and wages.

Thailand does have limitations on women serving in the armed forces, and in rural areas sex stereotypes exist with respect to occupational and social roles. Such barriers are being modified as mass communications bring modern role models to even the most remote communities. In 1980 a group called Friends of Women was founded to advance the cause of women's rights in Thailand. Their efforts have been aided by other groups, with some focusing on issues such as the exploitation of women as prostitutes.

Women vote in numbers equal to men and participate fully in the political process. There are several female members of the national legislature. However, women are underrepresented in national politics and in high government positions.

Some 200,000 or more Thai women work as prostitutes, many of them being trafficked to cities from their villages and working under debt bondage, as forced to repay loans by traffickers to their parents. Traffickers go largely unpunished as a result of bribery. Domestic violence is on the increase in Thailand.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 9
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.0
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 46.9

WORK

The workforce in 2004 totaled 36.4 million, almost half of whom were engaged in agriculture. Thailand is a major exporter of rice, and many are employed in rice cultivation. Other products include tapioca, corn, sugar, rubber, coconuts, and soybeans. Fisheries also employ large numbers. Another 14 percent worked in industry, while 37 percent were employed in the service sector. Industries include tourism, textiles and garments, agricultural processing, beverages, tobacco, cement, light manufacturing, electric appliances and components, computers and parts, integrated circuits, furniture, and plastics. Thailand is the world's second-largest tungsten producer and third-largest tin producer. The unemployment rate in 2004 was only 1.5 percent.

The organized labor movement remains weak and divided in Thailand. Less than 2 percent of the work force is unionized. Unions can bargain collectively on behalf of workers, but in practice private employers generally set wages. Employers regularly violate labor laws, including those related to child labor (15 is the minimum legal work age), workplace safety standards, and minimum wage. The workweek is set at 48 hours. Poor children in urban areas sell newspapers and small jasmine wreaths on the streets. Some survive by finding sanctuary in Buddhist temples, becoming temple boys who eat and sleep there and help with chores.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 36,430,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 47.0
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 49
 Industry: 14
 Services: 37
 Unemployment %: 1.5

EDUCATION

Schooling is free, universal, and compulsory for seven years, from ages seven to 14. Total schooling lasts for 12 years, as divided into six years of elementary and primary education (*prathom*) and six years of secondary education (*matthayom*). Primary education is divided into two cycles: a lower cycle of three years and an upper cycle of three years. Nearly 11 percent of primary students and 32 percent of secondary students are enrolled in private schools. Coeducation is the exception rather than the rule and is discouraged by the state. The language of instruction is Thai, but English is taught as a compulsory second language in the secondary grades.

There has long been a shortage of teachers in rural elementary schools, as caused by poor salaries and urban migration. Nearly one-third of rural teachers lack diplomas.

Vocational education is offered in 172 vocational institutes. There has been a recent trend toward comprehensive schools that offer both academic and vocational training. Nearly 15.5 percent of secondary-school students are enrolled in the vocational stream.

Higher education is provided in 16 public universities and a plethora of technical schools. Among them are the Asian Institute of Technology, Chiang Mai University, Chulalongkorn University, Kasetsart University, Khonkaen University, King Mongkut's Institute of Technology, Mahidol University, Silpakorn University, Srinakharinwirot University, and Thammasat University. In addition, there are over a score of private colleges.

The government spent 5.2 percent of GDP on education in 2000.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 92.6
 Male %: 94.9
 Female %: 90.5
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 12.5
 First Level: Primary Schools: 34,412
 Teachers: 295,484
 Students: 6,109,642
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 20.7
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 85.0
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: (included in First Level)
 Teachers: 215,798
 Students: 4,754,611
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 24.9
 Net Enrollment Ratio: —
 Third Level: Institutions: 102
 Teachers: 65,548
 Students: 2,205,581
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 37.7
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 5.2

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Much of the research in Thailand is coordinated by various government ministries. The Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives has numerous departments for its varied activities. The Department of Agriculture conducts research in areas such as agricultural chemicals, rubber, rice, and entomology through its divisions and institutes. Likewise, the Department of Fisheries, the Department of Forestry, and the Department of Livestock all manage numerous research projects. The Ministry of Science, Technology, and Energy conducts biotechnology research through its Genetic Engineering Center.

Numerous institutions of higher education also have research centers. These include Chiang Mai, Chulalongkorn, Khonkaen, Kasetsart, Mae Joe Agricultural, and Mahidol universities, which focus on agricultural, veterinary, and food-processing research. The country has a

distinct shortage of trained engineers in high technology, however.

Between 1994 and 1997 an average of 21 percent of students enrolled in higher education were in math, engineering, or science programs. There were 289 researchers per million population as of 2002, with research and development expenditures totaling 0.24 percent of GDP.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 289

Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 0.24

High-Tech Exports \$billion: 18.2

Patent Applications by Residents: 1,117

MEDIA

Thailand has dozens of daily newspapers, most of which are published in Bangkok, and many are linked by common ownership. The *Bangkok Post* and the *Nation* are the major English-language dailies, while the *Daily News* and *Thai Rath* are the major Thai-language dailies.

While the press is privately owned and there is no pre-publication censorship, the media are always under pressure to conform to government-established guidelines. However, there is lively criticism of government policies within the framework of the regulations, and wide latitude is permitted in reporting nonpolitical news. In general, Thai print media are among the healthiest in Asia. Newspapers freely report allegations of official corruption and human rights abuses, although several journalists have been jailed in recent years on libel charges filed by politicians. Journalists also practice some self-censorship when reporting on the monarchy and national security issues.

There is no national news agency. Some 22 foreign news agencies, three radio services, eight television services, and three photographic agencies are represented in Bangkok, including AP, UPI, AFP, Reuters, and ITAR-TASS.

Radio broadcasting is a state monopoly. Most of the numerous radio stations are owned by the government, either directly or indirectly through the Royal Thai Army, the office of the prime minister, the Public Relations Department, the Ministry of Education, the national Police Department, and the Royal Household.

Television, introduced in 1955, is operated by Television of Thailand. In addition, the Thai Television Company (a commercial concern with state participation), the Royal Thai Army, and two smaller companies also operate networks, some in color. Broadcast media tend to be less outspoken than their print counterparts. ITV, a major television network, has become more muted since a company owned by Thaksin family members, Shin Corporation, increased its ITV ownership stake to 50 percent in 2000. A series of media reforms underway are aimed at

reducing military interest and influence in the media and opening up more opportunities to the private sector.

In 2004 the international media watchdog group Reporters without Borders ranked Thailand 59th out of 167 countries in its press freedom index.

The government does not restrict Internet use. As of 2003 there were over six million Internet users and 26 million cellular telephone users.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 34

Total Circulation million: 11.8

Circulation per 1,000: 197

Books Published: 8,142

Periodicals: —

Radio Receivers 000: —

per 1,000: —

Television sets million: 16.7

per 1,000: 274

CULTURE

Thailand's twin threads of monarchy and religion are woven throughout every aspect of Thai cultural life. Masked drama, or *khon*, of the royal court, is the most stylized and visual of Thai performing arts. Episodes from the Indian epic the *Ramayana*, or *Ramakien* in Thai, are the only content for such *khon* performances, which involve elaborate silk costumes, masks, dance, and musical accompaniment (all of which are considered sacred). Some clowns and comic incidents are added to attract audiences. Shadow-puppet theater, *nang talung*, is also popular in the south.

Classical Thai music takes inspiration from Chinese, Japanese, Indian, and Indonesian music. The traditional Thai orchestra is composed of woodwind, string, and percussion instruments. There are three orchestral types: *pi phat*, which are used at court ceremonies and in the theater; *kruang sai*, which perform at village festivals; and *mabori*, which accompany vocalists. The *khaen*, a mouth-organ instrument made of tubes of bamboo, is over three millennia old. There are several forms of classical dance in Thailand. Most are part of drama presentations, such as the tale of the epic journey of Prince Rama in his search for his beloved Princess Sita, who was abducted by the demon Ravana.

At times the monarchy and religion join forces. The royal palace often sponsors state ceremonies marking important times in the Buddhist calendar. One such state function is the *kathina*, or robe-offering, ceremony, marking the end of monastic retreat, or *vassa*. Religion has had a strong influence on Thai art, such as the sculpture of Buddhist images. Traditional Thai architectural is best represented by temple compounds, or *wats*. Wood is usually the basic construction material, with walls made of bricks and plaster. Gilding, glass mosaic, gold leaf, porcelain, stucco, lacquer, and inlaid mother-of-pearl all serve as ornamental devices.

Thai folk literature is primarily based on oral tradition. Most early literature was written by monks and the Thai court elite. The oldest and greatest epic is the 15th-century *Thao Hung Khun Cheung*, a poem of about 20,000 lines telling the story of a legendary hero.

Training in traditional Thai fine arts, such as music and drama, is offered at Bangkok's Silpakorn University. The Royal Institute, the Siam Society, and the National Museum, all located in Bangkok, also help to preserve traditional Thai culture.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 375
 Volumes: 1,599,000
 Registered borrowers: 30,530
 Museums Number: 119
 Annual Attendance: 1,103,000
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Thai folklore tradition is a mixture of indigenous myth and Buddhist teachings. The original pre-Buddhist creation myth features the sky god Than, who created everything on earth from a gourd; when he broke this open, five different types of humans entered the earth, and Than taught them how to survive. Rice figures strongly in such early myths. The spirit of rice is Mae Phosop, and human greed was supposedly responsible for reducing the size of the original rice seed. Trickster tales feature Si Thanonchai, who survives misadventures with kings and monks. Mae-nam, the great holy river of central Thailand, is ruled by "the Mother of the Waters," the goddess Djaio Phraya.

From Hindu myth comes the *naga*, a serpent-god and ruler of the netherworld who possesses immense wealth. In Thailand, the *naga* is often sculpted in temples as a dragon with five heads. It is the symbol of Narayana.

Proverbs are integral to the Thai folklore tradition. Some typical proverbs include "Bald people can always find a comb," "Life is so short we must move very slowly," "With one stump you can't make a good fire," "Wait until the tree has fallen before you jump over it," and "At high tide the fish eat ants; at low tide the ants eat fish."

Astrology still plays an important part in Thai life.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

At the local level traditional Thai theater, dance, and music are dying out. Such events are now staged for the elite few. The vast majority of the population take their enter-

tainment instead from television and movies. Soap operas are particularly popular. The cult of stardom is found in Thailand, as it is in many other countries. Movie stars and popular singers take on major celebrity status.

In the cities, karaoke bars, discos, and cinemas all supply entertainment, while in rural areas entertainment is of a simpler nature. Kite-flying contests are held between February and April, when winds are strong and farmers have some free time after harvesting the rice. People also enjoy flying kites in parks on the weekends. Male kites, called *chulas*, are large and difficult to maneuver, while female kites, *pakpaos*, are smaller and more graceful. The male kites chase the female kites, and the females try to elude them or bring them down.

Children have their own favorite games. Girls play a game with small stones that is similar to the game of jacks. Children also play *mon sorn pha*, a skipping game, and *pio*, which is similar to Red Rover.

ETIQUETTE

The typical Thai greeting is *wai* (pronounced "why"). This is accompanied by a physical gesture of hands at chest level, palms together, and a bow. A greeting with a kiss is not usual, though handshakes are generally acceptable. Greetings with monks never include physical touching.

Shoes should be removed before entering temples or homes. The head is the most revered part of the body, and it is therefore considered rude to pat or touch it, even with infants. Feet, being the lowliest part of the anatomy, should not be prominently displayed. Punctuality is observed in matters of propitious cosmological or astrological moments, less so in social and business situations. Eating is done Western style, but with fork and spoon used simultaneously. The fork is held in the left hand, while the spoon is held in the right and is used for cutting food (with its side). The fork then pushes food onto the spoon.

FAMILY LIFE

A typical rural family includes grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, and sometimes distant relatives. The Thais believe that these "stem" families, as they are called, promote courtesy, tolerance and mutual respect. Urban families share these values, although they may not live with their extended families. Children are brought up to respect their parents, teachers, and the elderly. The avoidance of conflict is considered very important in Thai culture.

Until marriage, the young usually live with their parents. Most young people seek the approval of their parents and relatives when choosing marriage partners. A

member of the prospective groom's family will formally ask for the bride's hand. After the marriage has been registered at the local district office, a ceremony is held to bless the couple. Some couples do not have ceremonies; instead, they live together without registering a marriage. Traditionally, the groom moves to the home of the wife's family, but this tradition has changed over the years. Families, once large, have also changed with the times; the norm is one to two children in cities, perhaps more in rural areas, with a 2004 fertility rate of 1.9 children per woman. In rural areas women play active parts not only in the home but also in the rice fields and in the community. Divorce is not uncommon and requires only mutual consent or proof of desertion.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

As with much of the world, the clothing in Thailand is a mixture of Western styles and local traditional attire. The hot, humid climate is perfect for sandals and T-shirts. Jeans are also popular. Schoolchildren often wear shorts as part of their uniform.

The *pha sin*, or *pha thung*, the most typical traditional garment for women, is a long tube of material worn from waist to ankles. Men wear the knee-length *phakhaoma*, a strip of material that can also double as a belt, towel, or head cloth.

SPORTS

Thai kickboxing is a very popular spectator sport and is regularly televised. Boxers can attack their opponents with feet, knees, or elbows or a combination of them. Such matches are accompanied by the gongs and drums of a *pi phat* orchestra. Another popular game is *takraw*, in which a woven rattan ball is kept in the air using any part of the body except the hands.

More-international sports such as badminton and soccer are widely enjoyed and draw large crowds. The national soccer team competes in the Asian Cup, ASEAN Championship, Tiger Cup, and King's Cup, and the matches of Thailand's domestic professional league are followed closely by fans. Tennis has also gotten a boost since the appearance on the men's professional tour of Paradorn Srichaphan, who was ranked as high as ninth in the world in 2003.

CHRONOLOGY

1946 Nai Pridi Phanomyong's party wins national elections; Khuang Aphaiwon is elected prime minister but later resigns; Pridi is elected prime minister.

King Ananda Mahidol (Rama VIII) dies under mysterious circumstances; his brother Bhumibol Adulyadej is proclaimed king.

Pridi resigns and is succeeded as prime minister by Luand Thamrong Nawasawat.

1947 Military strongman Luang Phibun Songkhram returns to power in a bloodless coup; Pridi is exiled; Khuand is reelected prime minister.

1948 Phibun replaces Khuand as prime minister.

1949 Pridi leads unsuccessful coup and later flees to Beijing.

Siam is discarded as the official name of the country, and the name Thailand is restored.

1951 Phibun is kidnapped by naval malcontents, but the uprising is quelled by loyal army and air force units.

Phibun is ousted by Sarit Thanarat and Phao Siyanon but is reinstated after 10 days.

1952 Anti-Communist Activities Act is passed by National Assembly.

1954 Thailand signs the Southeast Asia Collective Defense Treaty, establishing SEATO, with headquarters at Bangkok.

1955 The Seri Manang Khasila party is victorious in elections.

1957 Sarit replaces Phibun as virtual dictator; new government is formed by Pote Sarasin, former secretary-general of SEATO; Sarit organizes a new party, Phak Chat Sangkhom (National Socialist Party), under General Thanom Kittikachorn. Sarit, now a field marshal, assumes dictatorial powers, suspends the constitution, proclaims martial law, bans all political parties, dissolves the National Assembly, and arrests all leftist leaders. Thanom becomes prime minister.

1958 Thanom yields prime ministership to Sarit.

1959 Sarit proclaims new constitution.

1962 World Court rules in favor of Cambodia in Thai-Cambodian dispute over border temple.

1963 Sarit dies; Thanom succeeds him as prime minister.

1968 New constitution is proclaimed, the sixth since 1932.

1969 Elections are held under new constitution.

1971 Thanom proclaims martial law, citing Communist insurgency in the northeastern region.

1973 Mass student demonstrations against government lead to two days of street fighting in which at least 100 persons are killed; Thanom falls; the king appoints Sanya Dharmasakti Thammasak as prime minister; a 299-member interim National Assembly is elected.

United States begins closing air bases in Thailand.

1975 Kukrit Pramoj is elected prime minister and moves toward rapprochement with Beijing and

- Hanoi; diplomatic relations are established with China.
- 1976** U.S. bases in Thailand are phased out. Seni Pramoj replaces his brother Kukrit Pramoj as prime minister following national elections. Military junta under Admiral Sangad Chaloryu deposes Seni and suspends the National Assembly; new constitution is promulgated. Thanin Kraivichien is named prime minister and reverses the left-wing domestic and foreign policies of the former democratic administrations.
- 1977** Clashes occur on the Thai-Cambodia border, as relations between Thailand and its Communist neighbors deteriorate. Kraivichien is deposed by a moderate military group led by Kriangsak Chomanan, who is named prime minister; the new Revolutionary Council proclaims interim constitution and pledges return to civilian government by 1979.
- 1978** New constitution is promulgated.
- 1979** In first National Assembly elections since 1976, no party wins clear majority in the House of Representatives, but Kukrit Pramoj's Social Action Party wins the largest bloc of votes. Prime Minister Kriangsak visits Laos. Thailand condemns Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia.
- 1980** Kriangsak steps down in face of public criticism of his handling of the economy. Defense Minister Prem Tinsulanond is named prime minister.
- 1981** An abortive coup by disgruntled army colonels is foiled when the king publicly supports Prime Minister Prem. Social Action Party is brought into the government.
- 1983** National Assembly is dissolved. In new elections no party gains an absolute majority. Prem heads a coalition government. Amnesty is offered to outlawed Communists.
- 1985** A brief, unsuccessful military coup is led by Col. Manoon Roopkachorn.
- 1986** Following rumors of a possible coup, General Arthit is replaced as supreme commander of the armed forces by Gen. Chaovalit Yongchaiyut. House of Representatives is dissolved, and a general election for an enlarged House results in the Democrat Party winning 100 of 347 seats. Prem continues as prime minister and head of a coalition government.
- 1988** Prime Minister Prem calls for dissolution of the Assembly when faced with a vote of no confidence and schedules new election. No single group gains overall majority, and Maj. Gen. Chatichai Choonhavan, leader of the plurality Thai Nation Party, assumes post of prime minister as leader of a six-party coalition government. Military coup in Burma causes thousands of Burmese students to flee to Thailand. Thai government's involvement in repatriation of Burmese students is condemned by Amnesty International.
- 1989** General Chatichai meets in Bangkok with Vietnamese-backed Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen. Chatichai announces an end to all high-level contact between Thailand and Vietnam and renewed support for Cambodian government-in-exile.
- 1991** The government of Premier Chatichai is ousted by the military in a bloodless coup.
- 1992** Parliamentary elections take place but are widely believed to have been manipulated by the military; protests are brutally suppressed; the king appoints Anand Panyarachun to lead a caretaker government; new elections bring a five-party civilian coalition to power under Chuan Leekpai of the Democrat Party; during its tenure, the government spends heavily on infrastructure and maintains an 8 percent growth rate.
- 1995** Banharn Silpa-Archa of the Thai Nation Party becomes prime minister.
- 1996** A new constitution is drafted that will allow for greater separation of powers between the branches of the government; the New Aspiration Party wins elections led by Chavalit Yongchaiyudh.
- 1997** The king accepts the new constitution; the baht collapses under speculative pressure, spurring fiscal crisis that affects the entire Pacific Rim; the IMF and the United States agree to loans of \$4 billion to aid the Thai recovery; Chavalit resigns, and Chuan Leekpai returns to the office of prime minister.
- 1998** As part of its response to the economic crisis, the government attempts to repatriate illegal immigrants, including 60,000 refugees from Cambodia and 100,000 refugees from Myanmar; by midyear the economic recovery has begun to take effect.
- 2000** Human Rights Watch criticizes Thailand's forced repatriation efforts.
- 2001** The populist Thai Love Thai Party, under billionaire telecommunications tycoon Thaksin Shinawatra, wins a clear majority of seats in parliamentary elections.
- 2002** Myanmar briefly closes its border with Thailand as a result of shelling by Thai forces.
- 2003** Crackdown on the drug trade begins in February. In three months 2,000 suspects are killed in what human rights groups dub extrajudicial killings.
- 2004** Muslim separatists in the southern provinces begin a wave of attacks in January that last throughout the year. Martial law is declared.

2346 Thailand

The Indian Ocean tsunami hits Thailand in December, killing over 5,000 and causing millions of dollars of damage.

- 2005** In February elections the Thai Love Thai Party wins 375 seats in the House of Representatives, forming a one-party government. Violence breaks out in the south when Muslim separatists set off two bombs. Thaksin Shinawatra is elected to a second term by the House of Representatives.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- National Statistical Office Thailand
<http://www.nso.go.th/>
- Thailand Virtual Library
<http://www.nectec.or.th/>

TOGO

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Togolese Republic (République Togolaise)

ABBREVIATION

TG

CAPITAL

Lomé

HEAD OF STATE

President Faure Gnassingbé (from 2005)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Edem Kodjo (from 2005)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

One-party presidential regime

POPULATION

5,681,519 (2005)

AREA

56,785 sq km (21,925 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Ewe, Kabye

LANGUAGES

French (official), Ewe, Kabye, Mina

RELIGIONS

Animism, Christianity, Islam

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Communauté financière d'Afrique franc

NATIONAL FLAG

Five alternating horizontal stripes, three green and two yellow; in a red canton three stripes high at the upper hoist is a five-pointed white star

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A green shield in which the serif letters "RT" appear within a small yellow escutcheon decorated with two national flags. The escutcheon is flanked by two erect red lions, each carrying bow and arrow. The design is crested by a scroll proclaiming the national motto: *Travail, liberté, patrie* (Work, freedom, fatherland).

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"Salut à Toi, Pays de Nos Aïeux" (Hail to Thee, Land of Our Forefathers)

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day), January 13 (Liberation Day), April 27 (Independence Day, National Day), May 1 (Labor Day), November 1 (Memorial Day), Assumption, Ascension Day, Easter Monday, Whitmonday, Christmas

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

April 27, 1960

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

September 27, 1992

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Togo, in West Africa, has an area of 56,785 sq km (21,925 sq mi), extending 510 km (317 mi) north to south and 110 km (68 mi) east to west. Its coastline, on the Gulf of Guinea, stretches 50 km (31 mi). Togo shares its international border of 1,623 km (1,008 mi) with three neighbors: Benin, Ghana, and Burkina Faso.

The country consists primarily of two savanna plains separated by a southwest-to-northeast range of hills known as the Chaîne du Togo. From south to north the country is composed of six topographical regions: the sandy beaches, estuaries, and inland lagoons of the coastal

plain; the Ouatchi Plains in the immediate hinterland; the higher Mono River tableland; the Chaîne du Togo, which begins in Benin's Atakora Mountains and ends in Ghana's Akwapim Hills and where Togo's highest elevation is found, at Mont Agou (986 m; 3,234 ft); the northern sandstone Oti Plateau; and the northwestern granite regions in the vicinity of Dapango.

The Mono River basin and its affluents occupy the southern half of the country. Northern Togo is drained by the Oti, a tributary of the Volta, and the Kara and Mo rivers, which drain into the Oti. The only rivers whose mouths are in Togo are the Sio, or Chio, and Haho. Of the many inland lagoons, the largest is Lac Togo.

Togo



Geography

Area sq km: 56,785; sq mi 21,925
 World Rank: 122nd
 Land Boundaries, km: Benin 644; Burkina Faso 126; Ghana 877
 Coastline, km: 56
 Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Atlantic Ocean 0
 Highest: Mont Agou 986
 Land Use %
 Arable Land: 46.2
 Permanent Crops: 2.2
 Forest: 9.4
 Other: 42.2

Population of Principal Cities (2002 est.)

Lomé	726,000
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CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Togo is a tropical country. In the south there are two rainy seasons: from March to early July and from the end of September to early November. The north has only one rainy season, between April and July. The heaviest rainfall occurs in the mountains of the west, southwest, and center, while the coastal regions are essentially dry. Annual rainfall averages 1,020 mm (40 in) in the north and 1,790 mm (70 in) in the west, southwest, and center. Average temperatures range from 22°C to 35°C (72°F to 95°F). Temperatures increase inland from the coast. Northern Togo has a savanna climate with longer dry seasons.

Climate and Weather

Temperature Range: 72°F to 95°F
 Average Rainfall
 North: 40 in
 West, southwest, and center: 70 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

With two large savanna plains covering the country, much of the vegetation of Togo consists of savanna-type grasses and shrubs. During the rainy season the land is thick and green, browning during the dry season. Baobab trees are found on the southern plateau, while tropical forests cover river valleys and highland regions. Reed and mangrove swamps and lagoons can be found along the coastal zone.

Much of the large wildlife has been killed off in south and central Togo, while in the north elephants, lions, and leopards can still be found, though not in great numbers. Reserves, such as the Keran Forest Reserve in the north, are home to antelope, deer, and buffalo. Monkeys are still

common, and along rivers snakes, crocodiles, and hippopotamuses are found. Snakes heavily inhabit swamps in the coastal zone. Bird life is numerous and varied, and marine life includes red snapper, mackerel, bass, dorado, sole, and ray. Shrimp and lobster are caught along Togo's shoreline.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 5,681,519
 World Rank: 105th
 Density per sq km: 89.4
 % of annual growth (1999-2003): 2.8
 Male %: 49.2
 Female %: 50.8
 Urban %: 35.1
 Age Distribution %: 0-14: 43.2
 15-64: 54.2
 65 and over: 2.6
 Population 2025: 8,987,000
 Birth Rate per 1,000: 33.48
 Death Rate per 1,000: 11.8
 Rate of Natural Increase %: 2.7
 Total Fertility Rate: 4.61
 Expectation of Life (years): Males 50.64
 Females 54.7
 Marriage Rate per 1,000: —
 Divorce Rate per 1,000: —
 Average Size of Households: —
 Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Over 37 tribal groups make up Togo's heterogeneous ethnic configuration, and most of these have more in common with racial groups living outside the national borders than with other groups within the country. A major distinction is sometimes made between tribes of Sudanic origin inhabiting the northern areas and those of the Negroid type in the south. Non-Africans in the population include around 2,000 Europeans and some Lebanese.

In terms of ethnic and linguistic homogeneity, Togo ranks 27th in the world, with 29 percent homogeneity (on an ascending scale in which North and South Korea are ranked 135th, with 100 percent homogeneity, and Tanzania is ranked first, with 7 percent homogeneity).

LANGUAGES

The official language is French, which is also the language of commerce and the media.

More than 44 different dialects are spoken in Togo, of which the principal one in the south is the language of the Ewe. Ewe has many subdialects, such as Anlo, Mina (or Ge), and Ouatchi. There is a considerable body of

vernacular literature, especially in Anlo. Of the numerous languages spoken in the north, Kabye, Hausa, Twi, Dagomba, Tim, and Fongbi are the most widely used. Most of the traders in the major market towns use a form of pidgin English.

RELIGIONS

Approximately half of the Togolese adhere to some form of traditional religion, while Christians make up 30 percent of the population and Muslims 20 percent. There are over 5,400 mission centers under the Roman Catholic archdiocese of Lomé. There are 170 Protestant mission centers under the administrative control of a synodal council.

Religious Affiliations	
Indigenous Beliefs	2,898,000
Christian	1,648,000
Muslim	1,136,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The first inhabitants of the area that today makes up Togo were Ewe who left the Niger River region as early as the 11th century. There were also large migrations to the Togo region during the 18th and 19th centuries. From the west, people were forced to move from the Ashanti Kingdom and the Akwamu confederacy. From the east, the migration flowed from the Kingdom of Dahomey. Additionally, Togo was a part of the Slave Coast, a primary area of European slaving activities; small slave posts were established in that region in the 17th century, but most of the trade was conducted in Dahomey (now Benin) and the Gold Coast (now Ghana).

Togo was Germany's first African acquisition. In 1884 a treaty was signed between Gustav Nachtigal, a German explorer, and the chief of the tiny coastal village of Togo, on which basis the German flag was raised over the area and the German penetration of the hinterland began. At the Berlin Conference of 1884–85 the German occupation of Togo was acknowledged by France; the western borders were settled with the United Kingdom by the Treaty of Zanzibar of 1890 and the Treaty of Paris of 1897.

The German era falls into two periods: pacification, until 1900, and development, until 1914, when Germany tried to transform Togo into a *Musterkolonie* (model colony). The Germans went further than other Western powers in protecting the natives from non-African, especially Christian, influences. German rule ended in 1914 when French troops moved in from Dahomey and occupied Lomé. At the same time, British troops invaded

the colony from the Gold Coast. Togo was subsequently divided into French and British spheres of occupation. After World War I the Allies redrew the borders, with France occupying two-thirds of the country, and mandates were granted by the League of Nations over what came to be called British and French Togoland. Despite its brevity and certain harsh aspects, such as forced labor, the Togolese remembered German rule fondly and in the interwar period petitioned the League of Nations to return Togo to Germany.

Except for a brief period, French Togo was not part of French West Africa; from 1922 to 1934 the territory was under the direct control of the minister of Overseas France and between 1934 and 1936 it was merged with Dahomey as an economic measure. In 1945 the French Union was created, and Togo was given representation in the French National Assembly. Within the union Togo was classified as an associated territory rather than as a colony. In 1955 the passage toward autonomy was accelerated by the creation of the Autonomous Republic of the Togo. In 1956 a plebiscite in British Togo resulted in a 3–2 vote in favor of a merger with the Gold Coast, shattering Togolese hopes of an eventual union of the two territories under the control of Lomé.

French Togo became independent in 1960 following a UN-supervised election. Relations between France and its former colony have remained good despite Togo's gradual drift to the left since the rise to power of Gen. Gnassingbé Eyadéma.

Since independence Togo has suffered from prolonged instability. There have been several attempted coups, in 1966, 1970, 1977, 1978, and 1986, as well as two successful coups: in 1963, when the first president, Sylvanus Olympio, was assassinated; and in 1967, when Eyadéma seized power.

President Eyadéma proved to be one of the most durable political leaders in West Africa, remaining in power from 1967 to 2005. He maintained his power by dividing the opposition as well as through the murder of his political opponents. In 1991, following a two-year series of protests and strikes, he agreed to transfer power to a prime minister elected by a national conference. The conference thereupon stripped Eyadéma of all but ceremonial powers, elected Joseph Koffigoh as prime minister, and replaced the National Assembly with the interim High Council of the Republic (HCR). The HCR formally ousted Eyadéma, but troops loyal to the president arrested the prime minister. In 1992 the government agreed to a new presidential election, which was later abandoned because of an attempt to kill the opposition leader, Gilchrist Olympio. A new constitution was endorsed in a referendum, but the democratization process was halted when pro-Eyadéma troops seized the National Assembly and held 40 legislators hostage. A constitutional crisis followed, in response to which the United States suspended aid payments and Togolese labor unions launched a general strike. Nation-

wide clashes between prodemocracy demonstrators and government forces were sparked by rampages by pro-Eyadéma soldiers in which hundreds were killed. Negotiations in France between representatives of the president and the opposition failed to achieve any solution. In a disputed 1993 presidential poll, which was boycotted by the opposition and marked by fraud, Eyadéma was reelected. In a multiparty legislative election held in 1994, the opposition won 43 seats, while Eyadéma's Rally of Togolese People (Rassemblement du Peuple Togolais, RPT) won 35, but the progovernment Supreme Court invalidated many of the opposition's seats. By 1996 Eyadéma had regained the initiative and his former powers. In the 1998 presidential election, again marred by intimidation and violence, Eyadéma was credited with a vote share of 52 percent. In 1999 the charade continued when the RPT won 77 of 79 legislative seats in an election boycotted by the opposition. The president appointed Eugène Koffi Adoboli as prime minister.

Elections in 2002 were again boycotted by the opposition, and the RPT won more than two-thirds of the seats in the National Assembly. A presidential election was held in 2003, for which Gilchrist Olympio, the popular leader of the Union des Forces du Changement (UFC, Union of Forces for Change), was disqualified, as he was living in exile in France. Eyadéma, who had the constitution changed to eliminate term limits, was reelected, amid allegations of widespread vote rigging. In 2005 Eyadéma died. He was succeeded by his son, Fauré Gnassingbé, whom the military backed. According to the constitution the speaker of the Parliament was supposed to take over in case of the death of a president; the constitution was thus changed retroactively, and it was declared that Fauré Gnassingbé would serve out his father's term. However, faced with condemnation from the United Nations and from the African Union, as well as internal demonstrations and rioting, Gnassingbé instead called for an early election, in April 2005. It was later announced that he would stand for president in these elections, running against opposition candidate Emmanuel Bob-Akitani, of the UFC. The interim president was the deputy speaker of the National Assembly, Abbas Bonfoh. Fauré Gnassingbé won the April election, though international observers complained of election irregularities.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1960–63	Sylvanus Épiphanio Olympio (president)
1963	Emmanuel Bodjollé (chairman of Insurrection Committee)
1963–67	Nicolas Grunitzky (president)
1967	Kléber Dadjo (chairman of National Reconciliation Committee)
1967–2005	Gnassingbé Eyadéma (president)
2005–	Fauré Gnassingbé (president)

CONSTITUTION

The country has had five constitutions: the provisional constitution of 1960, which provided for a parliamentary form of government; the constitutions of 1961 and 1963, both providing for a strong presidential form of government; the 1979 constitution; and the most recent constitution, of 1992.

Adopted by national referendum, the 1992 constitution provides for a president who serves as the chief executive officer for a term of five years. Directly elected, the president selects the prime minister from among those elected to the unicameral legislature. Also elected by universal suffrage for a period of five years, the legislature consists of 81 members from multiple parties. The prime minister is charged with selecting the other members of the cabinet in order to form the government. In 2002 the National Assembly altered the constitution, eliminating a clause about presidential term limits.

PARLIAMENT

Under the 1992 constitution the single-chambered National Assembly is composed of 81 members who are popularly elected for five-year terms.

POLITICAL PARTIES

There are scores of political parties active in Togo. Most of these parties have little influence either in terms of following or at the polls. The largest of the parties is the Rassemblement du Peuple Togolais (RPT), which was the sole legal party from 1969 until 1991. The RPT controls over 90 percent of the seats in the National Assembly. The major opposition party is Union of Forces for Change (UFC), which boycotted the last parliamentary election, in 2002, but whose nominee, Emmanuel Bob-Akitani, won 34 percent of the votes in the 2003 presidential election and was in strong contention in the 2005 emergency election as well.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For the purposes of local government, Togo is divided into five administrative regions. These regions are further subdivided into 30 prefectures.

LEGAL SYSTEM

Togolese jurisprudence is based on French civil law and African customary law.

The judiciary is headed by the Supreme Court, located in Lomé, with four chambers: constitutional, ju-

dicial, administrative, and audit. Below the Supreme Court, criminal justice is administered by a *cour d'appel*, four *tribunaux correctionnels*, and eight *tribunaux de simple police*, while civil and commercial law is enforced by a *cour d'appel*, four *tribunaux de droit moderne*, and eight *tribunaux coutumiers de premier instance*. The State Security Court was established in 1970 to deal with crimes related to internal and external state security.

The Togolese legal system does not include the right of habeas corpus, nor does this right exist in practice. Detention without trial and administrative detention are used against those whom the government considers guilty of "crimes against the public trust" (i.e., corruption or political opposition thought to pose a security threat). Those held in administrative detention are usually not formally charged and cannot obtain redress through the courts. Preventive detention has no fixed term. Pretrial proceedings are sometimes protracted. When the defendant cannot afford the cost of an attorney, counsel is appointed by the government. An attorney is accorded permission to talk with the defendant. The courts are heavily influenced by the executive branch and cannot be said to operate independently.

No information is available on the nature of the penal system or on the number and location of penal institutions. Courts are understaffed and inadequately funded, pretrial detentions are lengthy, and prisons are severely overcrowded.

HUMAN RIGHTS

In terms of civil and political rights, Togo is classified as an unfree country.

Togo is a one-party authoritarian state. The adoption of the constitution of 1979 and the proclamation of the so-called Third Republic made no difference in the nature and philosophy of government. Security problems have frequently led to a siege mentality and periodic harsh repressions. Prison conditions are harsh and primitive, with forced marches and hard labor standard.

In 2000 the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity, now the African Union, launched an inquiry into allegations made by Amnesty International that Togo's armed forces executed hundreds of people during the run-up to the 1998 presidential election. In 2001 an international commission concluded that there were systematic human rights violations after the presidential election of 1998.

Legal procedures are still based on the French system and thus afford some semblance of due process. There are no media to speak of outside of government-owned publications. Security forces commit abuses with impunity, and illegal detention is common. Killings, arbitrary arrests, and torture continue.

FOREIGN POLICY

Togo is an authoritarian state in which foreign policy is determined on the basis of the president's whims and fancies. In 1994 Ghana and Togo were described as being close to war after Lomé accused Accra of aiding alleged anti-Eyadéma insurgents in an attack on the president's palace. Notwithstanding, relations between the two countries were restored within a year. Lomé's relations with France, soured by French decisions to suspend aid, also improved by 1995 when France forgave all Togolese debts. Building on a 1997 agreement with the signatories of the 1977 Nonaggression and Defense Agreement, Lomé issued a blueprint for the establishment of a Pan-African peacekeeping force. As part of this commitment, Togo sent 150 soldiers to Liberia in 2003 to bolster the West African peacekeeping force there.

DEFENSE

The defense structure is headed by the president, who holds the positions of commander in chief, minister of defense, chief of staff, and commander of the 1st Battalion of Togolese Infantry. As a result, the president has direct operational control of the armed forces, and there is no extended chain of command. As of 2001, the enlistment age was 18 for both voluntary and compulsory service.

The total strength of the armed forces (including the Gendarmerie) in 2003 was about 9,300. There are 1,550 personnel in paramilitary forces. In 2004 the defense budget was estimated at \$35.5 million, or 1.9 percent of gross domestic product (GDP). The Togolese armed forces have no offensive capability and have only limited defensive capability. The bulk of military aid and training has been obtained from France.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	9,300
Military Manpower Availability:	1,148,890
Military Expenditures \$million:	35.5
as % of GDP:	1.9
as % of central government expenditures:	—
Arms Imports \$million:	—
Arms Exports \$million:	—

ECONOMY

Togo is one of the low-income countries of the world, with a free-market economy dominated by the private sector. Per capita GDP was \$1,600 in 2004.

The economy is heavily dependent on agriculture, especially subsistence agriculture, which overall employs

65 percent of the labor force and accounts for almost 40 percent of GDP. Togo is self-sufficient in foodstuffs, except in conditions of drought. The primary agricultural exports are cocoa, coffee, and cotton, which account for 30 percent of export earnings.

Phosphate mining is Togo's most important industrial activity, providing 40 percent of total export exchange earnings. However, earnings in this vital industry fell by over 20 percent in 2002 because of power shortages and costs incurred developing new mining deposits. In 2003 Togo experienced 3.3 percent growth in real GDP; future economic progress depends heavily on several factors, including the privatization of industry, increased openness in government financial operations, progress toward legislative elections, and continued support from foreign donors.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 8.684
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 1,600
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 1.7
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: –1.1
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 39.5
 Industry: 20.4
 Services: 40.1
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 84
 Government Consumption: 11
 Gross Domestic Investment: 19.1
 Foreign Trade \$million: Exports: 663.1
 Imports: 824.9
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: —
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: —

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
114.3	116.5	121.1	124.8	123.6

Finance

National Currency: CFA Franc (XOF)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = XOF 581.2
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 148
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 4.5
 Total External Debt \$billion: 1.4
 Debt Service Ratio %: 1.94
 Balance of Payments \$million: –125.6
 International Reserves SDRs \$million: 204
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
 1.0

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 44.8
 per capita \$: 9.20
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 53.7

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$million: 239.2
 Expenditures \$million: 273.3
 Budget Deficit \$million: 34.1
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 39.5
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 1.7
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: —
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 0.68
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 6.8
 Total Farmland % of land area: 46.2
 Livestock: Cattle 000: 279
 Chickens million: 9
 Pigs 000: 320
 Sheep million: 1.85
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 5.86
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 22

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 163.3
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: —

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: —
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 381
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 81
 Net Energy Imports % of use: 29.8
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: 34
 Production kW-hr million: 100
 Consumption kW-hr million: 610
 Coal Reserves tons million: —
 Production tons million: —
 Consumption tons million: —
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
 Production cubic feet billion: —
 Consumption cubic feet billion: —
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
 Production barrels 000 per day: —
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 11.9
 Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$million: 824.9
 Exports \$million: 663.1
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 3.5
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): –0.9
 Balance of Trade \$million: –125.6

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
China %	24.7	8.1
France %	16.1	—
Malaysia %	5.3	—
Italy %	4.6	—
Germany %	4.6	—
United Kingdom %	4.3	—
Netherlands %	4.2	6.6
Thailand %	4.2	—
Belgium %	4.2	—
Burkina Faso %	—	16.0
Ghana %	—	14.7
Benin %	—	9.2
Mali %	—	7.5
Taiwan %	—	4.0

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 7,520
Paved %: 31.6
Automobiles: 51,400
Trucks and Buses: 24,500
Railroad: Track Length km: 568
Passenger-km million: —
Freight-km million: —
Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 2
Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 3.9
Airports: 9
Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 130
Length of Waterways km: 50

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 58
Number of Tourists from 000: —
Tourist Receipts \$million: 16
Tourist Expenditures \$million: 26

Communications

Telephones 000: 60.6
Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.10
Cellular Telephones 000: 220
Personal Computers 000: 160
Internet Hosts per million people: 14.4
Internet Users per 1,000 people: 37

ENVIRONMENT

Togo suffers from serious environmental problems, including rapid deforestation, a growing population whose incomes are tied to natural resources, and soil and coastal erosion. The once-dense forests of the country declined from 4,500 sq km (1,740 sq mi) in 1970 to 1,300 sq km (500 sq mi) in 1993. Since that time, considerable further cutting has occurred, for both lumber and fuel. There is no governmental or societal management of Togolese for-

ests, outside of the 11 percent of the country's land area that has been given protected status. The country suffers from growing urbanization without the water, waste, or land management needed to cope with the concentrated population.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 9.4
Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: -21
Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 11
Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 0.39

LIVING CONDITIONS

Togo is among the poorest countries in the world. The United Nations 2004 Human Development Report ranked Togo 143rd out of 177 countries in terms of life expectancy, education, and standard of living. The average Togolese's life expectancy in 2004 was under 53 years, while literacy stood at 60.9 percent in 2003, with 67 percent of eligible students enrolled in primary, secondary, and tertiary schools in 2002. Per capita GDP was \$1,600 in 2004. In general, life in Togo is difficult and, with the advent of an HIV/AIDS epidemic, relatively brief.

Rural living emphasizes the communal aspects of the village. Houses are built of various materials. Along the coast huts are roofed with coconut tree branches, while elsewhere in the south there are some simple square and rectangular cabins. Toward the north, houses are round and made of sun-dried clay or mud bricks, with mud plaster and straw roofs. As grouped together in a compound and enclosed by a fence, they are known as *soukлас*. Urban dwellings are made of cement blocks or bricks, with brick or iron-sheeted roofs.

About one-third of the population lived in urban areas as of 2002, with most of those living in the capital, Lomé, whose population was over 700,000. With rapid urbanization, there is inadequate housing, and many reside in shantytowns on the edges of urban areas, where there is little infrastructure such as electricity, running water, and sewage. In rural areas life is mainly agrarian and follows the rhythm of the seasons. Voodoo, or voodoo, is a very strong tradition in Togo and in neighboring countries, and much of domestic life is determined by its tenets.

HEALTH

Like other elements of life in Togo, health care is badly in need of an infusion of funds. The country is plagued by high incidences of malaria, tuberculosis, gastrointestinal

diseases, and HIV/AIDS, yet the medical delivery system is ill equipped to deal with these crises.

In 2002 only 51 percent of the population had access to improved water sources. In 2000 the malaria incidence rate was 7.7 percent. In addition to malaria, sleeping sickness, leprosy, and yellow fever are also problems for the population. HIV/AIDS has grown to near epidemic proportions in Togo, as it has in other African nations; as of 2003 there was a 4.1 percent prevalence rate, with 10,000 HIV/AIDS deaths, 100,000 people living with the disease, and 54,000 AIDS orphans. Antiretroviral drugs have not been readily available.

Infants traditionally experience low immunization rates. In 2003, 58 percent of one-year-olds were immunized for measles, 84 percent for tuberculosis, 64 percent for DPT, and 63 percent for polio. The 2004 infant mortality rate was almost 67 deaths per 1,000 live births. The death rate in 2004 was 11.8 deaths per 1,000 population.

Hospitals exist only in the leading towns. Between 1990 and 2003 there were six doctors per 100,000 population. Government expenditures on health care in 2002 totaled 5.1 percent of GDP. Many people go to neighboring Benin for hospital care.

In rural areas, large numbers still use traditional health-care methods; villages usually have someone who knows how to treat simple bone fractures, for example. Traditional cures are mixed with beliefs about magic, with fetishes and incantations used. Some herbal remedies may also be used.

Health

Number of Physicians: 265
 Number of Dentists: 25
 Number of Nurses: 782
 Number of Pharmacists: 141
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 5.7
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 66.61
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 570
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 6.9
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 91
 HIV Infected % of adults: 4.1
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 64
 Measles: 58
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 34
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 51

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Millet is the staple Togolese food and is generally served in a mixture of corn, plantains, yams, or manioc called *pâte*. *Ablo* is another millet paste, made with corn and sugar, while *monplé* is made with fermented corn. *Foufou*

is a ball of millet paste like a heavy dumpling. Nearly everything is served in a sauce. One of the more common meals is rice with peanut sauce, known as *riz sauce arachide*.

Specialties vary from region to region. Along the coast, *lamounou déssi*, or *sauce de poisson*, a fresh fish sauce, is popular. Other popular sauces include *aglam* (crab), *gboma* (spinach), *tomate* (tomato), *aubergine* and *épinard* (eggplant and spinach), *abobo* (snails), *egbo pinon* (smoked goat), *koklo mémé* (grilled chicken with chili sauce), and *koliko* (fried yams).

Popular drinks include palm wine and *tchakpallo* (fermented millet).

Nutrition is problematic in Togo. While starvation is atypical, undernourishment is common. Between 1999 and 2001, 26 percent of the population was undernourished.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 26.0
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,370
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 138.4
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 38.4

STATUS OF WOMEN

The economic and social rights of Togolese women are spelled out in the Family and Individual Code, which was adopted in 1980. Under this code, women's rights include ownership of property, control of all money earned, and maternity leave benefits. Article 88 of the Labor Code stipulates equal pay for equal work and qualifications for both sexes. Women dominate both local market activities and commerce with Togo's neighbors and often amass considerable wealth. Formal equality under the law and success in the local marketplace do not mean total equality for all women throughout Togo, however. Traditionally, laws place barriers in the paths of women seeking to break with custom. Civil law, for example, recognizes a woman's property rights, but customary law gives all property to the male in the event of separation or divorce. Economic conditions in rural areas often leave women with little time for anything other than carrying water, finding firewood, cooking, caring for the family, and raising food crops. The government has undertaken a campaign to make women throughout Togo aware of their expanded opportunities under the Family and Individual Code. The government's prioritized emphasis on developing water resources in rural areas should help to mitigate one of the most onerous burdens on rural women, that of carrying water over long distances. Domestic violence is on the increase in Togo, and though the government passed a law in 1998 banning female genital mutilation, it is still practiced in many locations.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 6
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 0.76
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: —

WORK

In 1996 the Togolese workforce numbered 1.74 million. Of these, 65 percent are employed in agriculture, many at the subsistence level. Cocoa is one of the largest cash crops. Other agricultural products include coffee, cotton, yams, cassava (tapioca), corn, beans, rice, millet, and sorghum. Fishing and raising livestock are also important areas of production. The service sector employs another 30 percent of the population, industry only 5 percent. Industrial activities and products include phosphate mining, agricultural processing, cement, handicrafts, textiles, and beverages.

Togo's constitution includes the right to form and join unions, except for "essential" workers. Only 20 percent of the labor force is unionized. Unions have the right to bargain collectively, but this right is restricted. The minimum work age is 14, but children as young as five work in private agriculture. The workweek is 72 hours, and the minimum wage in 2003 was \$20 to \$30 per month.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 1,740,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 40.0
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 65
 Industry: 5
 Services: 30
 Unemployment %: —

EDUCATION

The 2003 literacy rate was 60.9 percent, up from the rates of 51.7 percent in 1998 and 31.4 percent at the beginning of the 1980s. This improvement reflects the emphasis the government put on a literacy campaign at the beginning of the 1980s. The campaign suffered, however, as a result of the government's austerity measures. The proportion and absolute amount of the budget allocated to education has dropped; between 1999 and 2000 public expenditures on education equaled 4.4 percent of GDP, down more than a full percentage point from a decade earlier; by 2002 education expenditures were only 2.6 percent of GDP. In 1988 it was estimated that school attendance had dropped by almost 25 percent since 1983. There appeared to be improvement on this front in the 1990s: While net primary school enrollment in 1991 was 75 percent, in 2002 it was up to 91 percent.

Schooling lasts for 13 years, as divided into six years of primary school, four years of the lower secondary cycle, and three years of the upper secondary cycle. Christian mission schools account for nearly half of total enrollment.

The school year runs from October to June. The language of instruction is French, but prevailing vernaculars are used in preprimary and primary grades in rural schools, and proficiency in Ewe and Kabye is compulsory.

Higher education is provided by the University of Benin at Lomé, which also serves the Republic of Benin and Burkina Faso. Scholarships to French universities are available. Lomé also has colleges of administration, architecture, and urban planning.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 60.9
 Male %: 75.4
 Female %: 46.9
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: —
 First Level: Primary Schools: 3,283
 Teachers: 27,504
 Students: 975,063
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 35.5
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 91.2
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: —
 Teachers: 8,366
 Students: 243,590
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 31.2
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 26.6
 Third Level: Institutions: 1
 Teachers: —
 Students: 15,171
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 3.7
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 2.6

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Agricultural research is the primary focus of science and technology in the country. The Ministry of Agriculture sponsors research programs in crops, livestock, fisheries, forestry, and natural resources. The National Institute of Scientific Research, another scientific coordinating body, and several French research institutes have branches in the capital. There are pilot farm projects throughout the country. The University of Benin at Lomé has faculties of sciences and medicine and schools of engineering and agriculture. The institution pursues research in crops, forestry, livestock, and postharvest issues. There is another agricultural school at Kpalimé and a technical college at Sokodé.

Between 1994 and 1997, 11 percent of university students were enrolled in science, engineering, or math programs. Between 1987 and 1997 expenditures for research and development totaled 0.5 percent of GDP; 98 scientists and engineers and 63 technicians per million people were engaged in research and development.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 98
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: 2.45
 Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

Three daily newspapers, *La nouvelle marche* (circulation 10,000), *Togo press*, and *Journal officiel de la République du Togo*, are published in the country. They are owned by the government and are published in French. Privately owned newspapers, such as *Le regard* and *Le combat du peuple*, are published weekly. Most of the periodicals are published by the government, except for a few independent publications that are periodically subject to press control. In 2002 the National Assembly passed an amendment to the media bill that imposes heavy sentences for “defaming or insulting” any of the president, state institutions, the courts, the armed forces, and public administration bodies. Journalists are routinely harassed and even imprisoned for reporting information that the government deems seditious. In 2004 the international media watchdog group Reporters without Borders ranked Togo 75th among 167 nations in terms of press freedom.

The national news agency is Agence Togolaise de Presse. Both AFP and DPA have bureaus in Lomé. The principal book publisher is the state-owned Les Etablissements des Editions du Togo. Togo adheres to the Berne Convention.

The state-owned Radiodiffusion Télévision de la Nouvelle Marche and Radiodiffusion Kara broadcast in French and six vernaculars: Ewe, Hausa, Bassari, Moba, Cotocolis, and Cabrais. Television, introduced in 1973, is operated by Télévision Togolaise, with programs in French and the vernaculars.

There is no domestic film production. The largest libraries are the National Library of the Togolese Institute of Humane Sciences, with 5,600 volumes, and the library of the University of Benin in Lomé, with 5,000 volumes. There is only one museum in the country, with a reported annual attendance of 8,000.

As of 2003 there were 220,000 cellular telephone users and 210,000 Internet users.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 3
 Total Circulation 000: 10
 Circulation per 1,000: 2.2
 Books Published: 5
 Periodicals: 52
 Radio Receivers million: 1.5
 per 1,000: 263
 Television sets 000: 100
 per 1,000: 22

CULTURE

Togo is a land of many cultures. Its scores of ethnic groups each have distinctive tribal customs and cultural mores. Drumming and dance are important to almost all. The largest ethnic group, the Ewe, use drumming and dance as an integral part of community life and in pursuit of what is thought of as their collective destiny. Thus, everybody in a community participates in some way; nonparticipation amounts to self-excommunication from society and carries severe consequences. Most severe is the denial of a proper burial. The type of participation—drumming, dancing, or organizing—is dependent on rank in the tribe and age. Vodoun traditions also figure in many types of dances among various ethnic groups; trance dancing is still common. Traditional dances can be seen at celebrations such as harvest festivals and the Ekpe-Ekpe, the festival of the Guins, in September or late August. The African Ballet of Togo has aimed to popularize the finest traditional dances.

Like other African peoples, the Togolese have a strong oral tradition. The professional praise singers, or *djeli*, perform at funerals and social gatherings, reciting names and histories of past rulers. Literature, mostly in French, has emerged since independence largely among playwrights and novelists of the Ewe people.

Vodoun, incorporating an animist belief in the spirit in all things, is dominant in Togolese culture. Vodoun artifacts are for sale in bazaars, and local people engage in aspects of the belief system.

Rural architecture throughout the country is noted for its distinctive mud-plastered look. In 2004 the Koutammakou cultural landscape was listed as a World Heritage site; this area of northeastern Togo, which extends into neighboring Benin, is home to the Batammariba people, whose remarkable mud tower-houses have come to be seen as a symbol of Togo.

The French Cultural Center is located in Lomé, as are several other smaller cultural centers.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 23
 Volumes: 54,000
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

With the welter of ethnic groups constituting its population, Togo has numerous myths. Legions of gods and cult

figures exist. The Ewe, for example, have Anyiewo, the great snake, while the Basari have their great god Unumbotte.

More than half of the population is animist. In the south many people practice vodoun or cults based on the worship of major spirits such as Legba, Hebiesso, Dan, and Egou. Those initiated use a secret language and observe rigorously religious customs and taboos. During vodoun ceremonies, believers enter deep trances and communicate with spirits.

Proverbs also form a part of Togolese folklore. Some popular sayings include, "The tears running down your face do not blind you," "The strength of the elderly is in the ears and on the lips," and "When a mother has twins she must sleep on her back."

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

In Lomé the populace enjoy many Western-style forms of entertainment, including clubs and discos. Television and movies are also popular.

In the countryside entertainment and recreation revolve more around traditional activities, such as harvest festivals. Storytelling and singing are important traditions among all ethnic groups. The radio is a popular form of entertainment for people in all parts of the country. The West African game of *is warri* is enjoyed among the older generation.

ETIQUETTE

As throughout Africa, the right hand is used for greetings, offerings, and eating, while the left hand is taboo. Failing to greet or show respect to elders is considered a grave infraction of the etiquette code. Respect is demonstrated in numerous ways, including prostration.

FAMILY LIFE

Marriages are generally conducted within ethnic groups, and while formerly a bride price was always paid, that tradition is slowly dying out. Polygamy is relatively common. Roles are strictly established so that families can survive. Men traditionally work the fields or tend the livestock, while women take care of domestic chores. Children help to gather fuel and water and to watch over the family's animals. Women have no economic rights in divorce, and men control the earnings of their wives, who are increasingly entering the workforce in addition to being homemakers. Additionally, women have no rights to inheritance if their husband dies. All of this is traditional rather than legal, as a 1980 law forbids all such practices.

Family size is decreasing, though in 2004 the fertility rate was still 4.6 births per woman. Even though the death rate was 11.8 per 1,000 population, the infant mortality rate was 66.6 deaths per 1,000 live births, and life expectancy was only 52.6 years, the population growth rate was 2.27 percent in 2004.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

With dozens of ethnic groups and tribes making up the populace, there is no one physical look or attire. Generally, the people of the north have a more Sudanic appearance, while those in the south are more Negroid. Clothing varies from brightly colored wraps to grass skirts to elaborate feathered headpieces for ceremonies. Western-style clothing, including T-shirts, shorts, jeans, skirts, and blouses, can be seen alongside more traditional forms of dress.

SPORTS

Soccer is the most popular sport in Togo, with the national team playing in international competitions and ranked above several European teams in FIFA listings. There are several soccer leagues in the country. Togo's national team has qualified for the final stages of several African Nations Cup competitions. Several Togolese players earn a living as professional soccer players in Europe. The most successful of them is Bachirou Salou.

Wrestling is an important feature of cultural life amongst the Kabye people of northern Togo. A large number of people play basketball and handball, and the strong French influence has made cycling quite popular. Togo sent a small team to the 2004 Olympics, including participants in track and field events.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1960** Republic of Togo becomes a sovereign nation, with Sylvanus Olympio as president.
- 1963** Olympio is assassinated by military insurgents; Nicolas Grunitzky, exiled leader of the Togolese Party for Progress, returns to Togo at the request of insurgents and forms a government as president.
- 1966** Popular uprising by Olympio's supporters in Lomé is put down by the military.
- 1967** A plot led by Noe Kutuklui is foiled; the military decides that Grunitzky is a political liability and forces him to step down in favor of a military junta led by Kléber Dadjo and Étienne (latter Gnassingbé) Eyadéma; Eyadéma assumes su-

- preme power as president; the constitution and the National Assembly are suspended.
- 1969** Rassemblement du Peuple Togolaise (RPT) is founded.
- 1970** Anti-Eyadéma coup is uncovered, and plotters are arrested.
- 1972** National referendum approves indefinite continuation of the Eyadéma regime.
- 1974** Eyadéma launches cultural authenticity campaigns by renaming people and places. French-owned phosphate mines are nationalized.
- 1978** At West African summit meeting, Togo supports the Economic Community of West African States.
- 1980** Eyadéma proclaims Third Republic under a new constitution and has himself elected for another seven-year term.
- 1985** Multicandidate elections are held for the National Assembly.
- 1986** Eyadéma is reelected unopposed for another seven-year presidential term.
- 1987** Direct elections are allowed for local government bodies.
- 1990** Eyadéma is forced out of office by democratic reformers, who elect Joseph Kokou Koffigoh as prime minister.
- 1992** Eyadéma regains the presidency. Violent protests for democratic reforms ensue. A new multiparty constitution is adopted in September.
- 1994** Edem Kodjo is elected prime minister in multiparty elections.
- 1996** Kwassi Klutse is elected prime minister.
- 1998** Eyadéma is once again elected president, but observers from the United Nations and the United States say the vote was fraudulent.
- 2000** Following a no-confidence vote in parliament, Prime Minister Eugène Adoboli resigns. Agbeyome Kodjo is appointed prime minister.
- 2000** The United Nations and the Organization of African Unity launch an inquiry into allegations made by Amnesty International that Togo's armed forces executed hundreds of people during the run-up to the 1998 presidential election.
- 2001** An international commission concludes that there were systematic human rights violations after the presidential election of 1998.
- 2002** The National Assembly alters the constitution to allow Eyadéma to run for a third presidential term.
- In October opposition parties once again boycott parliamentary elections.
- 2003** Eyadéma wins the June presidential elections with 57 percent of the vote.
- 2004** In a move toward reconciliation, Eyadéma pardons 500 prisoners.
- 2005** Eyadéma dies in February, and his son Faure Gnassingbé is named by the army to succeed him.
- International pressure forces Gnassingbé to establish an interim president and schedule new presidential election in April.
- In March the opposition Union of Forces for Change nominates Emmanuel Bob-Akitani to run for president against Gnassingbé. After a bloody and contested election, in early May the Constitutional Court in Togo officially announces the victory of Gnassingbé, who becomes president. He appoints Edem Kodjo prime minister.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Republic of Togo
<http://www.republicoftogo.com/>

TONGA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Kingdom of Tonga (Pule'anga Fakatu'i 'o Tonga)

ABBREVIATION

TO

CAPITAL

Nuku'alofa

HEAD OF STATE

King Taufa'ahau Tupou IV (from 1965)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Fred Sevele (from 2006)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Constitutional monarchy

POPULATION

112,422 (2005)

AREA

748 sq km (289 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Polynesian

LANGUAGES

Tongan (official), English (official)

RELIGION

Christianity

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Pa'anga

NATIONAL FLAG

A red field with a red cross in a white canton on the hoist

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A quartered shield with an ornate yellow border backed by red and white national flags and surmounted by a crown within a garland. Within the four quarters appear, clockwise from the upper left, three six-pointed white stars on gold, a royal crown on red, three crossed white swords on gold, and a white dove on blue. A red cross on a six-pointed white star is centered in the design. At the bottom, in blue on a white scroll, is the national motto, *Ko e Otua mo Tonga ko boku tofi'a* (God and Tonga are my heritage).

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"O Almighty God Above, Thou Art Our Lord and Sure Defense"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day), May 4 (Crown prince's birthday), June 4 (Emancipation Day), July 4 (National Day, king's birthday), November 4 (Constitution Day), December 4 (Tupou I Day), December 25 (Christmas), various Christian festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

June 4, 1970

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

November 4, 1875; revised 1967

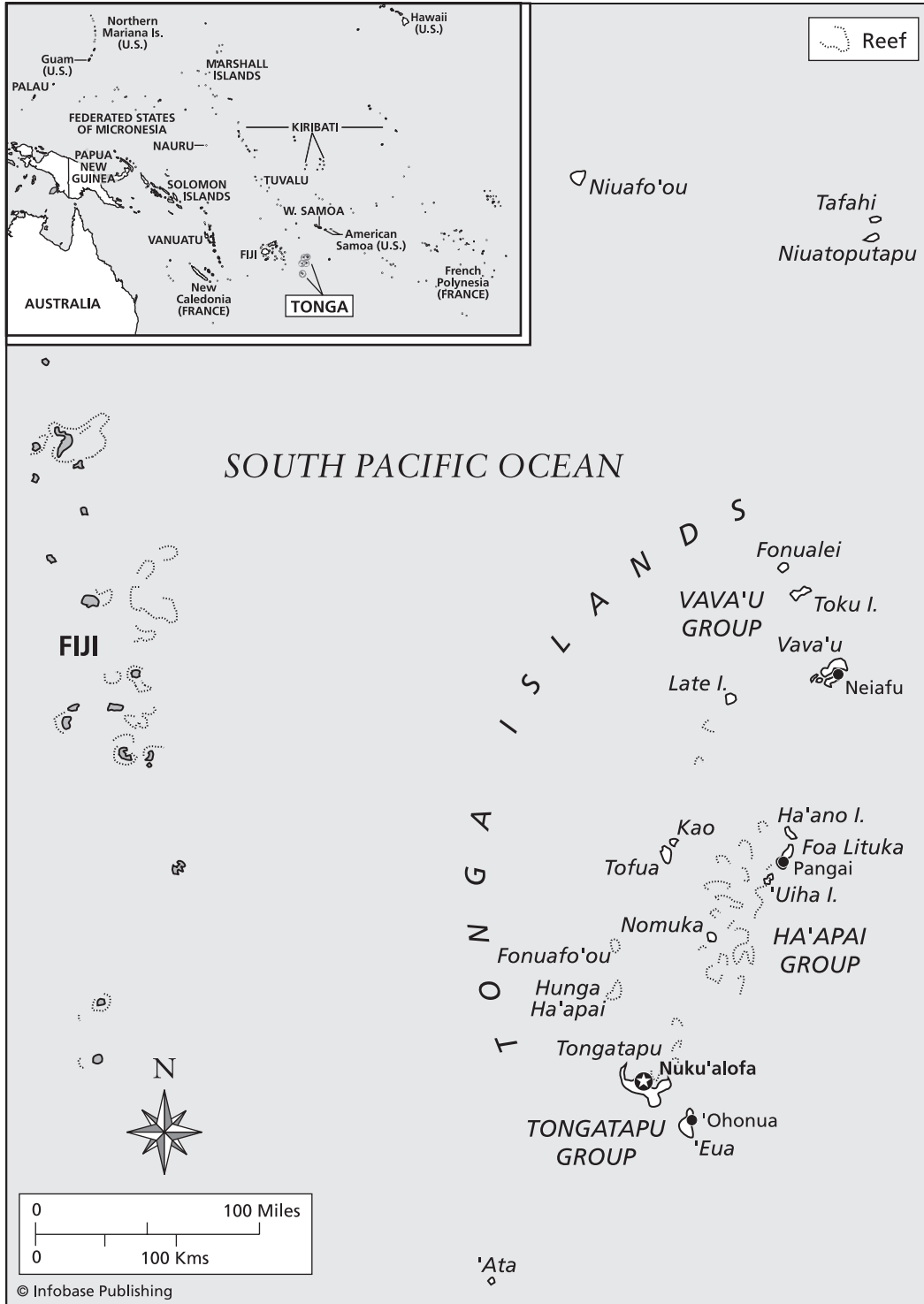
GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Tonga, an archipelago previously known as the Friendly Islands, is in the southwestern Pacific about 643 km (400 mi) southeast of Fiji and about 1,770 km (1,100 mi) northeast of Auckland, New Zealand. Tonga comprises 169 islands, of which only 36 are permanently inhabited. Including the Minerva Reefs, which the nation has claimed, the total land area is 748 sq km (289 sq mi).

The islands making up Tonga are dispersed in two parallel chains: volcanic to the west, with limestone formations superimposed on them, and uplifted coral for-

mations to the east. The islands fall into three latitudinal groups: the northern, or Vava'u, group, including Hunga, Kapa, and Vava'u; the central, or Ha'apai, group, which contains seven major islands; and the Tongatapu Group—the largest—on which the capital, Nuku'alofa, is located. Other major islands in the last group include 'Eua, Ata, Atata, Euaki, Kalaau, and Kenatea. Of the 36 islands in the Ha'apai group, only 20 are inhabited, and one is an active volcano containing a steaming lake. Of the 34 islands in the Vava'u group, 14 are uninhabited. Toward the east the islands are bordered by the Tonga Trench, an ocean formation over 11.2 km (7 mi) deep. Most of the

Tonga



uninhabited islands are active or extinct volcanic cones; at least one, Falcon, rises above sea level only during eruptions and disappears at other times.

Except for creeks on 'Eua and a stream on Niuatoputapu, there is no running water on the islands. Inhabitants rely on wells and stored rainwater.

Geography

Area sq km: 748; sq mi 289
 World Rank: 172nd
 Land Boundaries, km: 0
 Coastline, km: 419

(continues)

Geography *(continued)*

Elevation Extremes meters:	
Lowest:	Pacific Ocean 0
Highest:	on Kao Island 1,033
Land Use %	
Arable Land:	23.6
Permanent Crops:	43.1
Forest:	5.6
Other:	27.7

Population of Principal Cities (2005 est.)

Nuku'alofa	38,000
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CLIMATE AND WEATHER

The climate is subtropical, with a warm period from December to April and a cool period from May to November. The mean annual temperature varies from about 10°C (50°F) in winter to 32°C (90°F) in summer. Both temperature and rainfall increase from the south to the north. Most of the rainfall is concentrated from December to March. Average rainfall is 1,680 mm (66 in), with the least rainfall on Tongatapu and the most on Vava'u.

The prevailing winds are the southwesterly trade winds.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature	
Summer:	90°F
Winter:	50°F
Average Rainfall: 66 in	

FLORA AND FAUNA

Though quickly disappearing because of land clearance, the forests on islands such as 'Eua are original and contain a wide variety of trees. These include the coconut palm, the *ngatata*, the *toi*, mulberry, and the *tavahi*. Hibiscus and other tropical trees, bushes, and flowers are abundant on many of the islands.

The best know of Tonga's animal life is the fruit bat, commonly called the flying fox. It is found mainly on Tongatapu Island. Avian life is particularly varied. Land birds include owls, shrikes, cuckoos, starlings, doves, kingfishers, and swamp hens. 'Eua is home to the brilliantly colored blue-crowned lory and the red-breasted musk parrot. Shore birds include the long-billed curlew, golden plover, and reef heron. The waters of the Tonga archipelago are filled with fish, principal among which are the tuna and marlin.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005:	112,422
World Rank:	176th
Density per sq km:	141.0
% of annual growth (1999-2003):	0.6
Male %:	49.7
Female %:	50.3
Urban %:	33.5
Age Distribution %:	0-14: 36.2
	15-64: 59.6
	65 and over: 4.2
Population 2025:	150,800
Birth Rate per 1,000:	25.18
Death Rate per 1,000:	5.35
Rate of Natural Increase %:	2.0
Total Fertility Rate:	3.0
Expectation of Life (years):	Males 67.05
	Females 72.14
Marriage Rate per 1,000:	7.4
Divorce Rate per 1,000:	1.1
Average Size of Households:	6.3
Induced Abortions:	—

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

The population is extremely homogeneous, with native Tongans constituting 98 percent of the total. Caucasians and mixed Caucasians make up the remainder.

The Tongans are of almost pure Polynesian origin, with only traces of Melanesian traits. They are generally tall, large boned, and light skinned, with wavy or straight hair.

LANGUAGES

The official language is Tongan, properly called *Tongatapu*, a member of the Polynesian subfamily of the Malayo-Polynesian family of languages. Not until the 19th century did Tongan acquire a script, as a result of the efforts of Christian missionaries.

English, a co-official language, is extensively used. It is taught as a second language in schools, and all official publications are issued in both Tongan and English. In addition to being bilingual in these languages, Tongans are adept at learning other Polynesian languages, such as Hawaiian.

RELIGIONS

Almost all Tongans are professed Christians; there are virtually no vestiges of ancient indigenous religions. Most of the people belong to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, which claims approximately 43 percent of the population as adherents, or the Free Wesleyan Church of

Tonga, which claims approximately 27 percent. The Roman Catholic Church also has a strong following.

Religious Affiliations	
Free Wesleyan	30,000
Latter-Day Saints	49,000
other Christian	33,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Archaeological evidence indicates that the islands of Tonga were settled at least 500 years before the Common Era. However, little is known of the country's pre-European history. According to mythology, the great paramount chiefs, the Tu'i Tonga, were of divine origin, the descendants of the creator god Tangaloa 'Eitumatupu'a. The Tu'i Tonga were the supreme rulers, and their influence reached its height in the 13th century, when their domain covered part of the Lau Group in Fiji, Rotuma, Futuna, 'Uvea, Tokelau, Samoa, and Niue. The collapse of this empire dealt a severe blow to the power of the Tu'i Tonga. After a series of assassinations, the 24th Tu'i Tonga, Kau'ulufonuafekeai, created the new office of *hau*, or temporal ruler. The first *hau*, Mo'ungamotu'a, was a younger brother of the Tu'i Tonga; he founded the dynasty Tu'i Ha'atakalaua in the late 15th century. Later, in the 17th century, the sixth in his line created another dynasty, the Tu'i Kanokupolu. The administration of the duties of the three dynasties was carried out throughout the islands by close relatives, resulting in a period of peace and prosperity throughout the 16th and 17th centuries.

The Tongan archipelago was first visited by the Western world in the person of the Dutch explorer Abel Tasman in 1643. Continuous contact with Europeans began only in 1773, with the visit of Captain James Cook to the archipelago, which he named the Friendly Islands. With the conversion of Prince Taufa'ahau and his ascension to the throne as King George Tupou I, Christianity began to spread throughout the islands. Tonga came under British protection in 1900 with the signing of the Treaty of Friendship and Protection. Tonga retained its independence and autonomy, while the United Kingdom agreed to handle the nation's foreign affairs and guarantee security from external attack. Two more treaties were later signed, in 1958 and 1968, both of which reaffirmed Tonga's internal autonomy. Full independence, which came in 1970, involved few changes other than the addition of foreign affairs to the government's responsibilities. Strong links are maintained by independent Tonga with Britain, Australia, and New Zealand.

The present monarch, King Taufa'ahau Tupou IV, had been prime minister as of 1949 and ascended the throne in 1965. He appointed his brother, Prince Fatafahi Tu'ipelehake, as prime minister in 1965.

In the 1980s the king supported the French program for testing nuclear weapons in the Pacific and signed a friendship treaty with the United States permitting the passage of ships capable of carrying nuclear weapons.

Traditionalists have maintained control of the Legislative Assembly since independence. However, in 1986 members of the legislature were charged with the misuse of public funds, and in legislative elections the following year they were replaced by representatives severely critical of the government. After 1990 the prodemocracy movement headed by Akilisi Pohiva gained strength. In 1992 an unofficial convention was held to consider constitutional changes to the royalist government. In general elections in 1993 the reformists won six of the nine seats reserved for people's representatives in the legislature. In 1994 Tonga's first political party, the Tonga Democratic Party (subsequently renamed the People's Party) was founded by the prodemocracy movement. The party changed its name to the Human Rights and Democracy Movement (HRDM) in 1998. In the 1999 elections five prodemocracy members were elected to the Legislative Assembly.

In January 2000 King Taufa'ahau Tupou IV named to the prime ministership his youngest son, Prince Lavaka Ata 'Ulukalala, who became the fourth to hold the office since 1950. Financial scandal hit the island kingdom in 2001 when it was revealed that \$26 million, raised mainly through the sale of citizenship to residents of Hong Kong before the Chinese takeover, had disappeared. The king's official court jester, a former businessman from the United States, supposedly invested the money in a firm that went bankrupt. Legal wrangling continued for several years until a settlement was reached in 2004. The jester, Jesse Bogdonoff, agreed to pay \$1 million to Tonga, without admitting liability. The \$26 million represented half the country's annual budget.

In the 2002 general elections the HRDM won seven seats. The following year, despite heavy protests, the Legislative Assembly accepted a media operators bill, limiting media freedom. Amendments made to the constitution in 2003 also permitted the restriction of freedom of speech, a move that was used to silence publications critical of the government. However, parts of the amendments, as well as other restrictive media laws passed in 2003, were subsequently declared void. In 2005 the HRDM once again won seven of the nine seats open to the public in the general elections. Two of these legislators subsequently entered the cabinet, becoming the first commoners ever to do so. Following months of public protests demanding democratic reforms Fred Sevele became the first commoner to be appointed prime minister.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

- 1918–65 Queen Salote Tupou III
 1965– King Taufa'ahau Tupou IV

CONSTITUTION

Tonga is a hereditary constitutional monarchy governed by the constitution first promulgated in 1875 and little modified since then. Under this constitution the sovereign is the head of state and the head of government. He is assisted by the privy council, which consists of seven other members, including the prime minister, who is chosen by the king for a life term. The privy council advises the monarch on affairs of state and, between legislative sessions, makes ordinances that become law when confirmed by the Legislative Assembly. Lesser executive decisions are made by the cabinet, which consists of privy council members and is presided over by the prime minister. The governors of the Vava'u and Ha'apai island groups are members of the privy council and are responsible to it for the administration of the islands under their jurisdiction.

The Legislative Assembly is made up of the speaker, the cabinet members, nine nobles elected by the 33 Tongan nobles, and nine commoners elected by universal suffrage. Elections are held every three years, with the Legislative Assembly required to meet at least once each year.

The Supreme Court is presided over by the chief justice, who is resident in Tonga. The privy council acts as a court of appeal for the Supreme Court.

In 2003 clause 7 of the constitution, which guaranteed freedom of speech, was amended to limit press freedom. Legislation was also passed to regulate newspapers and, potentially, control their content.

PARLIAMENT

The unicameral Legislative Assembly is made up of nine nobles, who are elected by the 33 hereditary nobles of Tonga; nine people's representatives, elected through universal adult suffrage for a three-year term; the prime minister; and eight cabinet ministers. In addition, the governors of the Ha'apai and the Vava'u districts serve as ex officio members. The Legislative Assembly is presided over by a speaker appointed by the king from among the Assembly's members. Of the nine popularly elected members, three represent the Tongatapu district and two each the Ha'apai and Vava'u districts. Sessions must be held at least once every calendar year and generally last two or three months. Legislation is usually introduced by the government, and all privy council decrees must be confirmed by the Legislative Assembly. The king has the absolute right of veto.

Suffrage is limited to literate males who pay taxes and literate females over age 21. Women voted for the first time in 1960.

POLITICAL PARTIES

The only active political party is the Human Rights and Democracy Movement (HRDM), which was founded in 1994. The party was originally called the Tonga Democratic Party and subsequently renamed the People's Party; before the 1999 elections the party changed its name again. The HRDM is a prodemocracy movement that seeks increased political reforms and the further adoption of parliamentary government. In the 2005 elections the HRDM took seven of the nine people's seats.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For the purposes of local government Tonga is divided into three districts: Vava'u in the north, Ha'apai in the center, and Tongatapu in the south. The first two are administered by governors who are also members of the privy council. Town and district officials have been popularly elected since 1965.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The legal system is based on English common law.

The judiciary consists of the Supreme Court, the court of appeal, the land court, and magistrates' courts. There are eight magistrates' courts, from which appeals are heard by the Supreme Court. In cases that come before the Supreme Court, the accused or either party in a civil suit may choose a jury trial. Appeals from the Supreme Court are heard by the privy council sitting as a court of appeal.

Tonga's penal system consists of a prison at Huatolotoli, near Nuku'alofa, and three smaller jails, at Ha'apai, Vava'u, and Niuatoputapu. Prisoners sentenced to six months or more are incarcerated in Huatolotoli. Most prisoners are required to labor on public works.

HUMAN RIGHTS

In terms of civil and political rights Tonga is classified as a partly free country. The principal human rights abuses remain severe restrictions on the rights of citizens to change their government and discrimination against women. The constitution, dating from 1875, has been increasingly challenged by commoners who are disadvantaged by it, most dramatically by the November 1992 prodemocracy convention held in the capital and by the results of elections since 1993, in which reformists have consistently won a minimum of five of the nine seats reserved for commoners. More recently, in 2002 and 2005, reformists have won seven of the nine seats open to the public.

In 2003 the king's power was increased through a constitutional amendment and legislation limiting free speech, especially for the media.

FOREIGN POLICY

Tonga is a member of the Commonwealth, South Pacific Forum, Food and Agriculture Organization, United Nations, World Health Organization, and International Monetary Fund and is affiliated with the European Union. A new treaty was concluded with the United States in 1988 that superseded the 1888 treaty; the most important component of this new accord is a provision guaranteeing the transit of U.S. military vessels, including nuclear-armed craft, in the Tongan archipelago. Tonga shifted its diplomatic ties from Taiwan to China in 1999, resulting in a military aid package from the Chinese. In July 2001 annual discussions between Tonga and New Zealand led to the signing of a bilateral aid agreement, whereby Tonga would receive an allocation of \$2.3 million.

DEFENSE

The defense structure is headed by the king. The Tonga Defense Services (TDS) consist of the Royal Guard, the Royal Tongan Marines, the Maritime Force, and the police. A new Air Wing, subordinated to the Defense Ministry, is being developed. The Tonga Ministry of Defense has noted that "Military Operations Other Than War (MOOTW) have increasingly become common and demanding on the TDS." The enlistment age is 18; there are no statistics on the size or budget of the TDS.

ECONOMY

The fertile soil of most of Tonga's islands have led agriculture, including forestry and fishing, to be the most important sector of the economy, employing approximately 65 percent of the labor force and contributing 23 percent of gross domestic product (GDP). Coconuts and bananas have traditionally been the two major crops; vanilla beans were introduced in 1979 and have since become a third major crop. These three crops constitute two-thirds of exports. Tonga is not self-sufficient in food production and imports much of its food from New Zealand.

Manufacturing contributes about 4 percent to GDP, with most production concentrating on coconut processing plants. There has been steady growth and diversification in the manufacturing sector, with emphases on a variety of small-scale industries. The country established its first brewery in 1987 in a joint venture with the Swedish government.

Tourism is an important contributor of hard currency and, along with external aid and income received from Tongans working overseas, helps to offset a large trade deficit.

A financial setback was encountered in 2001 when it was discovered that \$26 million had disappeared from the state treasury, lost to supposed bad investments by the king's court jester, a former businessman from the United States. In 2002 Cyclone Waka hit the Vava'u islands in the north, causing \$50 million in damage to crops and property.

The monarchy is pursuing a policy of developing the private sector in the hope of attracting investment funds from abroad. Unemployment among the young remains high, as does the inflation rate, at 10.3 percent as of 2002.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$million: 244
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 2,300
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 2.8
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 2.2
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 23
 Industry: 13
 Services: 64
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 101
 Government Consumption: 22
 Gross Domestic Investment: —
 Foreign Trade \$million: Exports: 27
 Imports: 86
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: —
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: —

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
108.6	113.9	120.6	130.7	144.2

Finance

National Currency: Pa'anga (TOP)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = TOP 1.9716
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency million: 55.1
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: —
 Total External Debt \$million: 63.4
 Debt Service Ratio %: 5.75
 Balance of Payments \$million: —
 International Reserves SDRs \$million: 25.1
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
 10.3

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 27.5
 per capita \$: 270.50
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 2.7

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: July 1–June 30
 Revenues \$million: 39.9
 Expenditures \$million: 52.4
 Budget Deficit \$million: 12.5
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 23
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2002) %: 0.4
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 0.88
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: —
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: —
 Total Farmland % of land area: 23.6
 Livestock: Cattle 000: 11.3
 Chickens 000: 300
 Pigs 000: 81
 Sheep 000: —
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters 000: 2.1
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 4.8

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 6.3
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 8.6

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: —
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 36
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 357
 Net Energy Imports % of use: —
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: 8
 Production kW-hr million: 27
 Consumption kW-hr million: 25
 Coal Reserves tons million: —
 Production tons million: —
 Consumption tons million: —
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
 Production cubic feet billion: —
 Consumption cubic feet billion: —
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
 Production barrels per day: —
 Consumption barrels per day: 870
 Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$million: 86
 Exports \$million: 27
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —
 Balance of Trade \$million: —

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
New Zealand %	46.7	—
Fiji %	21.1	—
Australia %	10.3	—
United States %	6.7	24.9
Japan %	—	51.4
India %	—	4.1

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 680
 Paved %: 27.1
 Automobiles: 4,800
 Trucks and Buses: 4,400
 Railroad: Track Length km: —
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: —
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 29
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 200.8
 Airports: 6
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 14
 Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 37
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: —
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: —

Communications

Telephones 000: 11.2
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.05
 Cellular Telephones 000: 9
 Personal Computers 000: 2
 Internet Hosts per million people: —
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 26

ENVIRONMENT

The environment of Tonga is faced with the growing impact of tourism, which is leading to greater development in some areas. Additionally, there are signs of overfishing. The diminishing availability of land for agriculture has led to the introduction of chemical fertilizers and other harsh forms of farming, including continuous cropping. Additionally, there is increasing damage to coral reefs from starfish and from indiscriminate coral and shell collectors. Overhunting also threatens native sea turtle populations.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 5.6
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: —
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 28
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 1.21

LIVING CONDITIONS

The United Nations 2004 Human Development Report ranked Tonga 63rd out of 177 countries in terms of life expectancy, education, and standard of living. The average Tongan's life expectancy in 2005 was 69.5 years, literacy stood at 98.8 percent as of a 2002 estimate, and 82 percent of eligible students were enrolled in primary, secondary, and tertiary schools in 2002. Per capita GDP was \$2,300 in 2002. In general, Tonga ranks in the upper third of East Asian and Pacific countries in terms of quality of life.

About 67 percent of the population lives in rural areas and villages stretched over the nation's 169 islands. Each traditional Tongan village is loosely organized around a central, grassy area for public gatherings. A series of pathways link households, which are often traditional, made with reed sides and thatched roofs of sugarcane or coconut leaves. Posts for such traditional structures are made of ironwood, and in place of nails, braided cord is used to hold the structures together. More-modern wooden structures are becoming predominant, and in towns and cities bungalows and brick or concrete structures are found. The capital city, Nuku'alofa, had an estimated population of 38,000 in 2005; the city is on the island of Tongatapu, where some two-thirds of the population reside.

Water is a problem for the islanders. Only a few of the islands have streams; on most islands people must gather rainwater or dig wells. Tongan taxpayers are entitled to an allotment of land from the government. Each urban Tongan taxpayer receives an annual rent subsidy in lieu of this land allotment.

Christian missionaries have greatly changed the traditional way of life of the Tongans.

HEALTH

The health-care system in Tonga provides citizens with free medical care. As of 2004 there were an average of 34 physicians for 100,000 people. Between 1995 and 2003, 92 percent of births were attended by trained health-care providers; the infant mortality rate stood at 12.6 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2005. There is one government medical department hospital in each of Tongatapu, Vava'u, Ha'apai, and 'Eua, with several dispensaries.

As compared to other Pacific islands, Tonga has a good record in health care. There is no malaria or tropical disease. However, typhoid fever and dysentery are

problems. Tuberculosis is also a health risk; in 2002 there were 41 cases per 100,000 population. In 1999 there were 12 reported cases of HIV/AIDS and eight deaths from the disease.

The government spent 5.1 percent of GDP on health care in 2002 and is determined to commit higher percentages. As of 2002, 100 percent of the population had access to safe drinking water. Immunization rates are high, with routine vaccines financed by the government. In 2003 the measles and tuberculosis immunization rates for children under one year of age in 2003 were 99 percent; for DPT and polio they were 98 percent.

Some islanders resort to traditional methods of health care, making propitiations to ancient gods.

Health

Number of Physicians: 35
 Number of Dentists: 33
 Number of Nurses: 322
 Number of Pharmacists: 17
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 34
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 12.62
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: —
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 6.9
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 91
 HIV Infected % of adults: —
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 98
 Measles: 99
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 97
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 100

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Tongan food consists mostly of root vegetables such as taro and sweet potato, coconut products, fresh fruit, roasted suckling pig, chicken, corned beef, fish, and shellfish. The traditional Tongan feast is cooked in an underground oven, an *umu*, which method is common throughout Polynesia. Much of the food is imported from New Zealand.

Coconut juice is a popular drink, as are beer, coffee (which is locally grown), and kava, or *Piper methysticum*, a relaxant consumed throughout the Pacific.

There are no reported incidents of undernourishment on the island. In general, for islands, which naturally have restricted dietary variety, the nutritional level in Tonga is adequate.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: —
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: —

STATUS OF WOMEN

In Tonga's male-dominated society, women generally occupy subordinate roles. While the strong Polynesian cultural tradition has discouraged the rise of women to positions of leadership, some have become members of the legislature and have served in responsible positions in various occupations. However, few women participate in the formal labor force. Additionally, women cannot own land or hold titles of nobility.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 0
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.0
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: —

WORK

In 1996 the Tongan workforce was about 34,000 strong. Unemployment that year was over 13 percent, while agriculture employed almost two-thirds of laborers. Much of agriculture is done at the subsistence level. Major cash crops include squash, coconuts, copra, bananas, vanilla beans, cocoa, coffee, ginger, and black pepper. Fishing and tourism are the major industries. There are not many skilled jobs; unemployment is therefore greatest among the young, who are fresh out of school.

Workers gained the right to form unions under the 1963 Trade Union Act, but regulations on the formation of unions were never written, and there remained no unions as of 2003. The union act also provides workers with the right to strike; however, there as well regulations have never been formulated. Collective bargaining is permitted by law, but there was no record of it being utilized during 2003. There is no law against child labor, but it does not exist in the wage economy. The workweek is 40 hours, with a mandatory day of rest on Sunday. There is no established minimum wage.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 33,910
 Female Participation Rate %: —
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 65
 Other: 35
 Unemployment %: 13.3

EDUCATION

Education is universal and compulsory for all Tongans for eight years. Education is free in government schools;

mission schools charge small fees. Most primary schools are coeducational.

Schooling lasts for 13 years, as divided into six years of primary school, four years of middle school, and three years of secondary school. Selected students prepare for the New Zealand Secondary School Certificate examination.

The academic year runs from February to December. The language of instruction is Tongan, while English is also taught from the middle grades on.

The pupil-teacher ratio at the primary level was 22 to 1 in 2002. The literacy rate was 98.8 percent, and 82 percent of eligible students were enrolled in primary, secondary, and tertiary schools. Government expenditures on education totaled 4.9 percent of GDP and 13 percent of the total budget.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 98.8
 Male %: 98.7
 Female %: 98.9
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 13.5
 First Level: Primary Schools: 115
 Teachers: 773
 Students: 17,105
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 22.1
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 99.9
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 38
 Teachers: 993
 Students: 13,646
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 14.6
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 71.7
 Third Level: Institutions: 1
 Teachers: 72
 Students: 380
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 3.6
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 4.9

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Agricultural research is carried out through the Ministry of Agriculture and Forests, which employs a couple dozen researchers in crop production and yield. There are also two institutes of higher education. Hango Agricultural College, which is part of the Free Wesleyan Church Education System, offers diploma and certificate courses. The Tonga Maritime Polytechnical Institute is located in Nuku'alofa.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: —
 Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

Three nondaily newspapers are published, of which the *Tonga Chronicle*, an illustrated weekly issued by the government, has a significant circulation in Tongan and also in English. Various missions issue church newspapers periodically. There is no national news agency. In 2003 an online newspaper, *Matangi Tonga*, began posting articles in English.

The government-sponsored Tonga Broadcasting Commission operates a network in conjunction with Cable and Wireless, broadcasting in Tongan and English. There are two television channels.

Several unsuccessful attempts were made in 2003 to ban *Taimi 'o Tonga* (Times of Tonga), which is published in New Zealand but distributed in Tonga. The Supreme Court declared as unconstitutional related law changes made by King Taufa'ahau Tupou IV in the privy council. The government's response was to legislate general media controls and to amend clause 7 of the constitution, which guaranteed freedom of speech. Legislation was passed to regulate newspapers and potentially control their content. Reporters without Borders, an international media watchdog group, ranked Tonga 119th out of 167 nations worldwide in its 2004 press freedom index.

In 2004 there were 9,000 cellular telephone users and 2,900 Internet users in Tonga.

Media

Daily Newspapers: —
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: —
 Periodicals: 3
 Radio Receivers 000: 73.4
 per 1,000: 653
 Television sets 000: 6
 per 1,000: 61

CULTURE

Tongan dance blends legends and folktales that honor famous chiefs and historical events. Singing rather than musical instruments accompanies such dances, as is typical on many Pacific islands. Among other popular dances are the paddle dance, called *me'etu'upaki*; the *kailao*, a war dance; the *lakalaka*, a group action song performed while standing; the *ma'ulu'ulu*, an action song performed while seated; and the *tau'olunga*, an individual dance that is accompanied by singing. There is an annual National Music Festival in Tonga each June. Additionally, there is a ritual surrounding the consumption of the mildly narcotic kava drink, which comes from the root of the pepper plant. Such a ritual is also shared with other Pacific islands, including Samoa and Fiji.

Crafts are an important part of traditional Tongan culture. Basket weaving with palm leaves is a particular specialty, as is carving. Women also make tapa cloth from the inner bark of the paper mulberry.

Oral tales and folklore form another rich vein of cultural tradition.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Tongans have a rich body of folklore, mythology, oral history, and proverbs, much of which is extant in contemporary Tonga. The very name of the island is derived from myth; alternately, Tonga was the name of either the first woman on the island (Atu was the name of the first man) or the Polynesian southwest wind, the last of the winds to be brought under control by Maui, an offspring of the two original twins who created the universe. Maui is also credited with the creation of Tongatapu, the main Tongan island. Tonga-Hiti is the name of the Polynesian headache demon; Hikuleo is the Tongan god of the afterworld, dwelling in the land of the dead to the west; and Ahoeitu is the legendary first ruler of Tonga, the son of the sky god.

There is also a large body of stories that recount the various battles of cultural heroes from Tongan history. Many of these stories deal with the 19th-century king of Tonga, Taufa'ahau, and with his warlord and cousin, Tongapoteiki.

Proverbs form an integral part of the Tongan folkloric tradition. A favorite one, often repeated, is "Friendship is a furrow in the sand."

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Singing is still an important form of entertainment for Tongans. Radio and television are also popular, as are videos and DVD imports. American movie and rock stars are popular, especially with younger Tongans who wish to demonstrate their international outlook. Storytelling is a popular form of recreation in some of the more remote islands.

There are a number of traditional children's games, including *lanita*, a simplified form of cricket. Other games involve skill in tossing sticks of various sizes. Children's games usually stress cooperation.

ETIQUETTE

Dubbed the Friendly Islands by early explorers, Tonga maintains a sense of ease in its typical verbal greeting, *Malo e lelei*, "A warm welcome to the Friendly Islands." Lip touching was traditional between those of equal social class; if two were of unequal status, the inferior would kiss the hand of the other, or even the foot. However, in modern Tonga a handshake is the usual form of greeting.

Sundays are days for worship, as set aside by the constitution, and very little activity takes place on Sundays. In general, modest behavior is the norm on the islands, as mingled with a sense of cooperation and sharing.

FAMILY LIFE

Tongan life is centered on the extended family. Indeed, so central are the ideas of family and of communal life that children often grow up in several different households and call several different places home. Courtship in more traditional times was arranged by families and was dependent on caste. Virginity was a valuable asset in such times and has also been emphasized in Christian teachings on the islands. Feasts, put on by the bride's family, were the traditional wedding ceremony, but Tongans are now married in Christian ceremonies. Divorce, once only available to men, is now available to both men and women. Family size is shrinking; the fertility rate in 2004 was three children per woman.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Both Western and traditional attire are worn in Tonga. Traditional clothing for men is the *tupeno*, a wraparound cloth suitable for formal as well as leisurely occasions. Women wear the wraparound skirt called the *ngatu*, which goes to the ankles. Traditionally, this was made from *tapa*, material created from the inner bark of the paper mulberry or the breadfruit tree.

SPORTS

A holdover from colonial past, rugby is still popular among the Tongans. The Tonga Rugby Football Union fields a national team that takes part in regional tournaments through the Federation of Oceania Rugby Union.

The country also has national volleyball and surfing teams. Tonga's only athlete in the 2004 Athens Paralympic Games, 'Alailupe Valeti, placed 10th in the shot put. Basketball, boxing, cricket, and soccer are also popular sports in Tonga.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1965** Taufa'ahau Tupou IV becomes king.
- 1970** Tonga becomes a fully independent nation within the Commonwealth.
- 1972** Tonga claims the Minerva Reefs, some 482 km (300 mi) southwest of Nuku'alofa.
- 1975** Tonga signs the Lomé Convention.
- 1981** Legislative elections result in a surprise upset among people's representatives and new dominance by traditional conservatives.
- 1982** Cyclone Isaac causes substantial damage to all island groups, requiring emergency aid.
- 1986** Charges of the misuse of public funds are lodged against Legislative Assembly members.
- 1987** Elections of people's representatives to the Legislative Assembly are dominated by newcomers who are severe critics of the government.
- 1988** Tornado causes extensive damage in Nuku'alofa. Tonga signs friendship treaty with the United States allowing for the safe transit of U.S. ships, including those capable of carrying nuclear weapons, in Tongan waters.
- 1990** In general elections, Akilisi Pohiva and his reformist supporters win six of the nine seats reserved for people's representatives in the legislature.
- 1991** Baron Vaea becomes prime minister.
- 1992** Critics of Tonga's monarchical government organize a prodemocracy convention, which the monarchy boycotts.
- 1994** The prodemocracy movement founds the Tonga Democratic Party, Tonga's first political party.
- 1999** Tonga is granted membership in the United Nations; in general elections, prodemocratic candidates claim five of the nine elective seats in the Assembly.
- 2000** The king's youngest son, Prince Lavaka Ata 'Ulu-kalala, is appointed prime minister in January.
- 2001** A financial scandal involving the king's court jester and the disappearance of \$26 million shocks the nation.
- 2002** Vava'u islands in the north are struck by Cyclone Waka, which causes over \$50 million in damages but no loss of life. Seven of nine legislative seats open to the public are won by the HRDM, furthering the county's prodemocracy movement.

- 2003** Changes to the constitution are passed giving the king greater powers and restricting the media.
- 2004** Tonga's former court jester pays \$1 million to settle the dispute over his alleged misappropriation of funds.
- 2005** Elections again return seven HRDM candidates to the Legislative Assembly. For the first time, some of these enter the cabinet.
- 2006** Following protests demanding democratic reforms Fred Sevele becomes the first commoner to be appointed prime minister.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- The Government of the Kingdom of Tonga (official site)
<http://www.pmo.gov.to>

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

ABBREVIATION

TT

CAPITAL

Port-of-Spain

HEAD OF STATE

President George Maxwell Richards (from 2003)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Patrick Manning (from 2001)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Parliamentary democracy

POPULATION

1,088,644 (2005)

AREA

5,128 sq km (1,980 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Black, Indian

LANGUAGE

English

RELIGIONS

Christianity, Hinduism, Islam

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Trinidad and Tobago dollar

NATIONAL FLAG

A black band edged with white extending from the leftmost part of the upper border to the rightmost part of the lower border, on a red field

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A shield divided by an angled white border, with two gold hummingbirds in the black upper portion and three gold, white-sailed ships on a red background (representing the vessels of Christopher Columbus) in the lower and larger part. The shield is flanked on the left by a long-billed scarlet ibis standing on an island with three peaks (the trinity from which Trinidad derives its name) and on the right by a brown, white, and yellow strutting cocrico bird perched on an island representing Tobago. The device is crested by a gold queen's helmet with a red and white mantle, on which are placed a helmsman's wheel and a green palm tree. A scroll at the bottom proclaims the national motto, "Together we aspire, together we achieve."

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"Forged from the Love of Liberty"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day), March 30 (Spiritual Baptist/Shouter Liberation Day), May 30 (Indian Arrival Day), June 19 (Labour Day), August 1 (Emancipation Day), first Monday in August (Discovery Day), August 31 (Independence Day), September 24 (Republic Day), various Christian festivals, including Good Friday, Easter Monday, Boxing Day, Whitmonday, Corpus Christi, Christmas; one Hindu and one Islamic festival are also celebrated

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

August 31, 1962

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

August 1, 1976

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Trinidad and Tobago are the southernmost islands of the Lesser Antilles chain, in the Caribbean, and are separated from Venezuela by 11 km (7 mi) of the Gulf of Paria. The two islands cover an area of 5,128 sq km (1,980 sq mi). Trinidad, the larger of the islands, has an area of 4,828 sq km (1,864 sq mi); Tobago, 31 km (19 mi)

northeast of Trinidad, has an area of 300 sq km (116 sq mi). The country of Trinidad and Tobago also includes 16 smaller islands. The total length of the coastlines, on the Atlantic Ocean, the Caribbean Sea, and the Gulf of Paria, is 362 km (224 mi).

The most prominent natural features of Trinidad are the three east-to-west mountain ranges called the Northern, Central, and Southern ranges. The Northern Range,

Trinidad and Tobago



a rugged chain that is a continuation of the mountains of the Paria Peninsula of Venezuela, includes the highest point in the country, El Cerro del Aripo, with an elevation of 940 m (3,083 ft). Between the Northern and Central ranges is the broad Caroni Plain, and between the Central and Southern ranges are the Naparima and Nariva plains. There are extensive swamps and lagoons

along the eastern, southern, and western coasts. Tobago is geologically part of the Lesser Antilles and has an uneven terrain dominated by the Main Ridge, a series of volcanic mountains rising to 550 m (1,804 ft). The southwestern part of the island consists of an extensive coral platform. Tobago has a number of satellite islands, including Little Tobago and St. Giles.

2374 Trinidad and Tobago

Rivers are numerous on both islands. The longest on Trinidad are the Ortoire, flowing into the Atlantic in the south, and the Caroni, flowing into the Gulf of Paria in the north. On Tobago, the Courland runs westward into the Caribbean Sea. There are no natural lakes, but Trinidad has the world's largest natural asphalt bog, the 46-hectare (114-acre) Pitch Lake, on the southwestern coast at La Brea, containing 45 million tons of pure asphalt. The islands are geologically unstable, and earthquakes are common.

Geography

Area sq km: 5,128; sq mi: 1,980
World Rank: 163rd
Land Boundaries, km: 0
Coastline, km: 362
Elevation Extremes meters:
Lowest: Caribbean Sea 0
Highest: El Cerro del Aripo 940
Land Use %
Arable Land: 14.6
Permanent Crops: 9.2
Forest: 50.5
Other: 25.7

Population of Principal Cities (2000)

Chaguanas	67,433
Port-of-Spain	49,031
San Fernando	55,419

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Although Trinidad is in the tropics, its climate is moderated by the cooling effects of the trade winds and the marine environment. Climatically, the year is divided into two seasons: a dry season from January to May and a wet season from June to December. The mean temperatures are 27.8°C (82°F) in the daytime and 23.3°C (74°F) at night; the mean annual average temperature is 21°C (70°F). In Port of Spain, where the annual average temperature is 25°C (77°F), the variation between the warmest month (July) and the coldest month (January) is 19.4°C (35°F). The climate of Tobago is similar to that of Trinidad, although Tobago's temperature levels are generally lower because of the island's small size and greater exposure to trade winds.

The wettest months are June through November; rainfall, although occasionally heavy, is of short duration and is interspersed with periods of bright sunshine. In the Northern and Central ranges on Trinidad and on the main ridge of Tobago, rainfall ranges from 2,540 to 3,810 mm (100 to 150 in) annually, decreasing to 1,500 to 1,950 mm (59 to 77 in) on the western belt of Trinidad and 1,140 mm (45 in) on the coastal belt of Tobago. There are occasional droughts in the drier areas of both islands.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature: 74°F at night to 82°F in the daytime
Average Rainfall
Northern and Central ranges in Trinidad and on the main ridge in Tobago: 100 in to 150 in
Western belt of Trinidad: 59 in to 77 in
Coastal platform of Tobago: 45 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

While the flora and fauna of Trinidad resemble those of its mainland neighbor, Venezuela, Tobago's plant and animal life are more similar to those of the volcanic islands of the Lesser Antilles, of which it is a part. At higher elevations on both islands, rain-forest vegetation is found, including wildflowers, many flowering shrubs and trees, palms, giant aroids, and large broad-leaf varieties. The large flowering tree called the mountain immortelle colors the hillsides with its orange blossoms from January to May. Sugarcane is found in abundance on the central plains of Trinidad.

Animal life is varied. Monkeys inhabit the forests, and reptiles such as lizards, snakes, crocodiles, and turtles are also abundant. Bird life is rich on both islands; flamingos, egrets, and the scarlet ibis make Trinidad's Caroni Swamp bird sanctuary their home, and the greater bird of paradise has been introduced to Tobago. Other animals include the paca, the agouti (a rodent with rabbit-like features), the armadillo, a wild hog locally called the *quenck*, and a type of porcupine with a prehensile tail.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 1,088,644
World Rank: 151st
Density per sq km: 255.9
% of annual growth (1999-2003): 0.5
Male %: 51.5
Female %: 48.5
Urban %: 74.1
Age Distribution %: 0-14: 20.7
15-64: 71.0
65 and over: 8.3
Population 2025: 882,000
Birth Rate per 1,000: 12.81
Death Rate per 1,000: 9.37
Rate of Natural Increase %: 0.2
Total Fertility Rate: 1.75
Expectation of Life (years): Males 66.62
Females 71.3
Marriage Rate per 1,000: —
Divorce Rate per 1,000: —
Average Size of Households: 4.1
Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Trinidadian society is based on the complex interaction of as many as 13 ethnic groups, of which two predominate: blacks, the descendants of African slaves, and East Indians, the descendants of indentured laborers imported from India between 1845 and 1917. There also exist five groups of whites (foreign whites, or *bekes*; local whites, or French Creoles; Portuguese; Middle Easterners; and Spanish-speaking Venezuelans), three groups of mixed race, and one group of Chinese. On a different level are the 2,000 Caribs and Arawaks (both called Caribs), who represent the original Amerindian population; it is doubtful that they are unmixed. According to the official census of 1990, blacks constituted 43 percent of the population, East Indians 40 percent, whites 2 percent, Chinese 1 percent, and those of mixed race 14 percent. By 2000 this ethnic mix had altered somewhat, with East Indians in the majority at 40.3 percent, blacks at 39.5 percent, those of mixed race at 18.4 percent, Chinese at 1.2 percent, and whites down to 0.6 percent.

Ethnic differences are reinforced by occupational and geographic segregation. Most residential areas are divided into black, white, or East Indian districts. On Trinidad, blacks are concentrated in industrial urban areas in and around Port of Spain, San Fernando, Arima, and Pitch Lake and in the oil fields in the southwest. East Indians provide the bulk of rural agricultural labor, especially in the sugar belt in the west. Other non-Creole groups are generally urban. Those of French descent live in the north. On Tobago the bulk of the population is black.

LANGUAGES

The official language is English, but varieties of English are spoken throughout Trinidad and Tobago, ranging from the creole of the lower classes to the Standard English of the British upper classes. The most common form of English spoken on the islands is called Trinidad English, a creole that differs from Standard English in both the flexibility of pronunciation and the incorporation of African and other words; it is so different that some linguists classify it as a separate language.

One of the most interesting characteristics of Trinidad's language scene is the persistence of French and Spanish patois. The French patois, not readily intelligible to a Frenchman, is widely spoken, particularly in the rural areas north of Trinidad. French and Spanish have also influenced Trinidad English in its vocabulary, intonation, and tempo of speech.

The older East Indians still speak any one of numerous Indian languages, particularly Hindustani, also called Desi Bhasa, but the use of these languages is decreasing, and they may eventually die out.

RELIGIONS

About 44 percent of the population belongs to various Christian denominations, 24 percent are Hindu, 6 percent are Muslim, and 26 percent are other. The majority of the Christians are Roman Catholic (29 percent) or Anglican (11 percent), with the remainder belonging to smaller groups. There are both a Roman Catholic archbishopric and an Anglican bishopric at Port of Spain.

There are two sects of African origin: Shouter and Chango, the latter including a variant called Rada. The Shouters, who call themselves Spiritual Baptists, are a fundamentalist cult who place great emphasis on participatory and demonstrative worship, with hand clapping, singing, dancing, shouting, and trances. The Chango are marginally Christian, with most of their beliefs and practices, as well as their pantheon of gods, derived from African animism.

The constitution guarantees freedom of religion and also authorizes grants to religious organizations for ecclesiastical expenses. Under this provision, aid is extended to 16 religious groups.

Religious Affiliations

Roman Catholic	320,000
Hindu	259,100
Anglican	118,700
Muslim	63,100
Presbyterian	37,000
Other	290,700

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The indigenous inhabitants of Trinidad and Tobago were Arawak and Carib Indians. Trinidad was discovered by Christopher Columbus in 1498, but the Spanish ignored the islands and did not appoint a governor until 1552. Spanish rule over the next 268 years was uneventful except for skirmishes with the native Arawak Indians and raids by English buccaneers. In time the colonists established plantations and imported slaves from West Africa to work them. In 1797 a British expedition from Martinique captured Trinidad, which was formally ceded to the United Kingdom in 1802 by the Treaty of Amiens. Tobago, also discovered by Columbus in 1498, changed hands many times before coming under the British Crown in 1814. Tobago was at first ruled as a separate colony; during the 19th century it was under the administrative jurisdiction of Grenada. It became a Crown Colony in 1877 and was amalgamated with Trinidad in 1888. In 1958 Trinidad and Tobago formed the Federation of the West Indies together with Jamaica, Barbados, and the Windward and Leeward islands; Port of Spain was the capital. The federation collapsed in 1961.

Trinidad and Tobago was granted full independence within the Commonwealth in 1962. Dr. Eric Williams, founder and head of the People's National Movement (PNM), became prime minister. The first significant threat to Williams's government occurred in 1970, when a black-power movement organized by students of the University of the West Indies and supported by various dissident groups launched a series of disturbances, which they called "revolution." Some 10,000 persons joined a black-power march through Port of Spain, and more than 65,000 attended the funeral of a young student shot dead by a police officer. In response, Williams declared a state of emergency. Shortly thereafter a small army group mutinied and tried to organize a march on the capital but was foiled by the intervention of the coast guard. Political instability continued in 1971, when only 33 percent of registered voters participated in legislative elections and labor unrest prompted the reimposition of the state of emergency.

In 1976 a new constitution came into effect, making Trinidad and Tobago a republic, with a president replacing the governor-general. After a long struggle, Tobago was granted limited autonomy in 1980 with the formation of the Tobago House of Assembly.

Williams died unexpectedly in 1981 and was succeeded as prime minister and leader of the PNM by George M. Chambers. The PNM's uninterrupted control of the government ended in 1986 when, in response to the government's handling of a severe economic decline, a coalition of opposition groups, the National Alliance for Reconstruction (NAR), won a majority in the federal House. Arthur Napoleon Raymond Robinson, the leader of the coalition, succeeded Chambers as prime minister.

On July 27, 1990, a group of black Muslims, Jamaat al-Muslimeen, staged a coup attempt against Robinson. The group, which had little domestic support, acted because it thought that Robinson's economic austerity measures had impoverished and destroyed the country. The group took Robinson and several cabinet members hostage as the ministers were meeting in the parliament building. Reportedly, Robinson was shot in the leg after refusing to sign a letter of resignation. Robinson was freed on July 29, and the rebels surrendered the following day.

In the 1990 elections the PNM won 21 out of 37 seats in the legislature, enabling its leader, Patrick Manning, to become prime minister. In 1995 both leading parties were overtaken by scandals. In an effort to regain political momentum, Manning called early elections, in which the PNM and the United National Congress (UNC) won 17 seats each and the NAR only two seats. Thereupon, the UNC concluded a partnership agreement with the NAR, and Basdeo Panday was sworn in as the country's first prime minister of Indian descent. In the 2000 elections the UNC won 19 seats in parliament, while the PNM

gained 16 seats and the NAR one. In 2001 Panday called early elections when dissent within the UNC threatened its slim majority. The election yielded an unprecedented tie, in which the governing party and the main opposition party won 18 seats each. Patrick Manning was appointed prime minister.

The split in votes resulted in a deadlocked parliament, a situation that was alleviated by the 2002 elections, in which the PNM won a clear majority of 20 seats. In 2003 the electoral college elected Maxwell Richards to serve a five-year term as president. Manning's government faced economic setbacks when the state-owned sugar company closed down. Protestors took to the streets in 2005 to march against high levels of crime.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

Prime Minister

1961–81	Eric Eustace Williams
1981–86	George Michael Chambers
1986–91	Arthur Napoleon Raymond Robinson
1991–95	Patrick Augustus Mervyn Manning
1995–2001	Basdeo Panday
2001–	Patrick Augustus Mervyn Manning

CONSTITUTION

Trinidad and Tobago is a parliamentary democracy under the republican constitution of 1976. The constitution provides for a largely ceremonial president as head of state, a prime minister as the effective head of government, and a bicameral legislature. The principal provisions of the constitution are described as "entrenched," and the more important of these are described as "specially entrenched." The entrenched provisions relate to human rights, the prorogation of parliament, the appointment and dismissal of judicial and police officers, and the protection of pension rights. The specially entrenched provisions relate to parliament, elections, and amendments to the constitution.

The constitution provides for a bicameral legislature, with an elected House of Representatives and an appointed Senate. The president is elected by an electoral college of members of both the Senate and the House of Representatives. His term of office is five years. The prime minister is formally appointed by the president and is the leader of the party that commands the majority of the members of the House of Representatives. The prime minister chooses the ministers of the cabinet and allocates their portfolios. The cabinet also includes an attorney general appointed by the president on the advice of the prime minister.

The judiciary is headed by the chief justice and includes a Court of Appeal, High Court, and lower courts.

PARLIAMENT

Under the constitution of 1976, the bicameral national parliament comprises an appointed Senate and an elected House of Representatives. The Senate consists of 31 members appointed by the president for maximum terms of five years; 16 of the senators are named on the advice of the prime minister, six on the advice of the leader of the opposition, and nine at the president's discretion. The House of Representatives has 36 members directly elected for five-year terms. The House initiates money bills, while other bills may be initiated by either house.

Suffrage is universal over age 18. Elections are held every five years and are supervised by the Elections Commission, comprising a chairman and two to four other members. The members of the Elections Commission are also members of the Boundaries Commission.

POLITICAL PARTIES

As of 2002 the largest political parties in Trinidad and Tobago included the People's National Movement (PNM), which was founded in 1956 as a moderate nationalist and conservative party and held 20 of the 36 House seats; the United National Congress (UNC), a social-democratic party that was formed in 1989 out of the United Labour Front and held 16 seats in the House; and the National Alliance for Reconstruction (NAR), which was formed in 1983 as a coalition of moderate opposition parties. Additional parties, representing other elements of the political spectrum, include a union-oriented party (Movement for Social Transformation), the Citizen's Alliance, and a left-wing faction (National Joint Action Committee).

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Trinidad is divided into nine regional corporations, two city corporations, three municipal councils (or boroughs), and the internally autonomous Tobago. Municipalities have elected mayors and deputy mayors; councillors and aldermen serve for three-year terms. In each county council are one councillor for each electoral district and two aldermen; one alderman is elected from all the qualified persons in the electoral area and another from qualified persons who are members of village councils in the electoral area. The chairman and vice chairman of the county councils are elected annually, while councillors and aldermen serve three-year terms.

The counties of Trinidad are in turn subdivided into 30 wards. One ward encompasses all of Tobago, which is subdivided into nine parishes.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The legal system of Trinidad and Tobago is based on English common law.

The Supreme Court consists of the High Court and the Court of Appeal. The High Court comprises a chief justice and 10 junior judges; the Court of Appeal has a chief justice and five other judges.

The lower judicature is headed by a chief magistrate, under whom are seven magisterial districts—St. George West, St. George East, Eastern Counties, Caroni, Victoria, St. Patrick, and Tobago—each presided over by a senior magistrate. There are also 18 stipendiary magistrates presiding over petty civil courts.

An unusual constitutional feature is the right of appeal to the Privy Council in the United Kingdom in grave civil or criminal cases.

There are three prisons in the country: the Royal Gaol, in Port of Spain; the island prison on Carrera Island; and Golden Grove Prison, near Arouca. Capital punishment was reinstated in 1999.

There is a large backlog of cases awaiting trial, many of them over five years old. As of 2003 an estimated 20,000 cases were awaiting trial.

HUMAN RIGHTS

As in many other former British colonies, democracy took firm root in Trinidad and Tobago. As multiracial, multireligious, and multilingual, the country is a stable, multiparty parliamentary democracy with a good track record in human rights. The judiciary is independent, the economy is based on free enterprise with mixed ownership of major sectors, the tax system is progressive, elections are based on universal adult suffrage, and fair elections are held regularly. The constitutional guarantees of fundamental rights and freedoms are generally observed in practice, as are the constitutional prohibitions of cruel and inhuman punishment, torture, and invasion of the home. Political participation is open to all citizens and is reinforced by the freedoms of speech, press, and assembly. In May 1999 the government withdrew as a state party from the American Convention on Human Rights, which prohibits countries from extending the death penalty beyond those crimes for which it was in effect at the time of the treaty's ratification. There were more than 100 prisoners on death row as of 2005.

FOREIGN POLICY

Trinidad and Tobago was the first Commonwealth country to be admitted to the Organization of American States. The nation's anticolonial but democratic and pro-Western foreign policy is oriented chiefly toward the

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Western Hemisphere and includes active participation in the Caribbean Community. Port of Spain's objections to the U.S. invasion of Grenada cooled relations with the United States and eastern Caribbean states for a time. Diplomatic relations were established with the Soviet Union and China in 1974, and a broad trade agreement was signed with China in 1984. Trinidad cooperates with the United Kingdom and United States in monitoring drug trafficking in the region. In 1997 a long-simmering dispute erupted with Venezuela over oil drilling in the straits separating the two countries. Boundary disputes exist with two other countries, Barbados and Guyana.

DEFENSE

The Trinidadian armed forces have no offensive capability. In fact, the lack of a purposeful mission is cited as one of the causes for low morale and restiveness in the army.

Military aid has been received exclusively from the United Kingdom. In 2003 the size of the military was 2,700 active personnel. The military is all volunteer; 18 is the minimum age for enlistment. In 2003 military expenditures were \$66.7 million, or 0.6 percent of gross domestic product (GDP).

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 2,700
Military Manpower Availability: 293,094
Military Expenditures \$million: 66.7
 as % of GDP: 0.6
 as % of central government expenditures: —
Arms Imports \$million: —
Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

Trinidad and Tobago has earned a reputation as an excellent investment site for international businesses. Successful economic reforms were implemented in 1995, and foreign investment and trade are flourishing. Persistently high unemployment remains one of the chief challenges of the government. The petrochemical sector has spurred growth in related sectors, reinforcing the government's commitment to economic diversification. Tourism is growing, especially in the pleasure-boat sector. Trinidad and Tobago is the leading Caribbean producer of gas and oil. A rise in violent crime has hurt the country's economic growth, but the government is attempting to get control of that situation. Sugarcane, once one of the major industries, suffered a setback in 2003 with the closure of the state-run Caroni plant and the losses of 8,000 jobs. Nevertheless, long-term economic prospects are good.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 11.48
GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 10,500
GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 6.1
GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 5.6
Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 2.7
 Industry: 47.0
 Services: 50.3
Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 55
 Government Consumption: 15
 Gross Domestic Investment: 19.4
Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 6.671
Imports: 4.65
% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: —
% of Income Received by Richest 10%: —

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
113.2	117.1	121.2	127.9	133.2

Finance

National Currency: Trinidad and Tobago Dollar (TTD)
Exchange Rate: \$1 = TTD 6.299
Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 7.83
Central Bank Discount Rate %: 7.25
Total External Debt \$billion: 2.94
Debt Service Ratio %: 3.57
Balance of Payments \$billion: 1.548
International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 2.26
Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
 3.3

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: —
 per capita \$: —
Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 615.5

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
Revenues \$billion: 3.25
Expenditures \$billion: 3.193
Budget Surplus \$million: 57
Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 2.7
Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 2.2
Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 3.6
Irrigation, % of Farms having: 3.3
Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 43.4
Total Farmland % of land area: 14.6
Livestock: Cattle 000: 29
 Chickens million: 28.2
 Pigs 000: 78
 Sheep 000: 7.1

Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters 000: 86.3
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 12.5

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 742.2
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 7.2

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 15.9
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 10.9
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 8.4
 Net Energy Imports % of use: -129.6
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 1.42
 Production kW-hr billion: 5.31
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 4.94
 Coal Reserves tons million: —
 Production tons million: —
 Consumption tons million: —
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: 25.9
 Production cubic feet billion: 536
 Consumption cubic feet billion: 397
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels million: 990
 Production barrels 000 per day: 124.2
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 29.0
 Pipelines Length km: 478

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 4.65
 Exports \$billion: 6.671
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 8.2
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 2.0
 Balance of Trade \$billion: 1.548

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
United States %	24.6	66.7
Venezuela %	12.0	—
Germany %	10.8	—
Spain %	7.0	—
Italy %	5.5	—
Brazil %	5.0	—
Jamaica %	—	5.7
France %	—	3.5

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 8,320
 Paved %: 51.1
 Automobiles: 229,400
 Trucks and Buses: 53,900
 Railroad: Track Length km: —
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: —

Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 6
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 3.6
 Airports: 6
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 2.87
 Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 384
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 402
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 208

Communications

Telephones 000: 325.1
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones 000: 361.9
 Personal Computers 000: 103.5
 Internet Hosts per million people: 7,351
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 127

ENVIRONMENT

Trinidad and Tobago suffers from a number of common regional environmental problems, including deforestation and increased water pollution from both chemical runoff and an inadequate sewage system. The development of natural resources, especially oil, has often left the country with increased pollution. Increased tourism threatens the country's coral reefs because of overfishing and the impact of divers and boats. The country has suffered increased land erosion, as much of the high-quality agricultural land has been developed for residential, commercial, and industrial uses.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 50.5
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: -2
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 2
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 20.45

LIVING CONDITIONS

The UN 2004 Human Development Report ranked Trinidad and Tobago 54th out of 177 countries in terms of life expectancy, education, and standard of living. The average Trinidadian's life expectancy in 2005 was 68.9 years, literacy stood at 98.6 percent as of 2003, and 64 percent of eligible students were enrolled in primary, secondary, and tertiary schools in 2002. Per capita GDP was \$10,500 in 2004. Overall, Trinidad and Tobago ranks in the upper third of Latin American and Caribbean countries in terms of quality of life.

At one time the traditional housing of Trinidadians consisted of mud and thatch. Nowadays, most homes are constructed of wood, with metal roofs. Indoor plumbing and electricity are standard, but with a housing shortage many city dwellers inhabit substandard slum housing and squatter sites. The Ministry of Housing and Settlements has been involved in a five-year plan to upgrade such residences and to construct simple concrete dwellings for low-income families. As of 2001 about three-fourths of the population lived in urban areas.

In general, the ethnically mixed society of Trinidad and Tobago is one of the most cosmopolitan in the Caribbean. As indentured Indians came to the islands to work on plantations, they gained the opportunity to become landowners. Many Indians live in rural communities, and farming is the group's main occupation, but many are taking up various other professions. Blacks are most heavily represented in urban areas. The offspring of African and European parents are culturally seen as black Trinidadians. Some mixed-race people are called French Creoles, although many families bear Spanish, Portuguese, Scottish, and English names.

HEALTH

A national health plan was instituted in 1967, creating a modern system with both public and private facilities. Public facilities deliver care free of charge or with minimum charge. The oil companies have their own clinics and medical services for their employees. With over 100 health centers, eight district hospitals, and two major government hospitals, the population is relatively well served. As of 2004 there were 79 physicians for every 100,000 people. The incidence rates of both malaria and tuberculosis have been reduced; in 2000 there was just one case of malaria per 100,000 people, while in 2002 there were 19 cases of tuberculosis per 100,000 population. Between 1995 and 2002, 96 percent of births were attended by trained health-care providers; the infant mortality rate in 2005 was 24.3 deaths per 1,000 live births.

With improved sanitation, health risks such as hookworm and dysentery have decreased. As of 2002, 91 percent of the population had access to safe water, 100 percent to adequate sanitation. The HIV/AIDS prevalence rate, however, is increasing; in 1999 it was 1.1 percent, while by 2003 it had grown to 3.2 percent. There were 1,900 deaths from HIV/AIDS in 2003, and 29,000 people were living with the disease. Smoking is another major health hazard. With 42 percent of males smoking in 2000, the incidence rates of heart problems and cancer are relatively high. Government expenditures on health care in 2002 were 1.4 percent of GDP. Part of this funding went to vaccines provided free of charge. As of 2003, 91 percent of one-year-olds were immunized against polio and DPT, and 88 percent were immunized against measles.

Health

Number of Physicians:	1,004
Number of Dentists:	107
Number of Nurses:	3,653
Number of Pharmacists:	—
Physician Density per 100,000 people:	79
Hospital Beds per 1,000:	—
Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births:	24.31
Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births:	160
Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP:	3.7
Health Expenditures per capita \$:	264
HIV Infected % of adults:	3.2
Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:	
DPT:	91
Measles:	88
Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %:	100
Access to Improved Water Source %:	91

FOOD AND NUTRITION

The food of Trinidad reflects the multiethnic population that settled the islands. French and African cooking come together in creole food. Typical of this tradition is *sans coché*, a stew containing pork, salted beef, pig's tails, onions, chives, and various other spices, served with dumplings. The Spanish influence can be seen in *pastilles*, minced-meat patties steamed in banana leaves. The East Indian influence is most strongly felt in the round Indian bread, *roti*, which is served at most meals and is used as a dipping tool for curries and other stews. Chinese and Amerindian foods are also prevalent.

A typical meal is the combination of spinach and crab called *callaloo*. Other favorites are curried crab and *coocoo*, a cornmeal and okra pie, and chicken *pelau*, with chicken in a spicy chili and coconut milk sauce. Seafood is a typical part of the Trinidadian diet, as are rice and vegetables of all sorts. The Sunday meal is the major culinary event of the week. Breakfasts usually consist of coffee or cocoa and bread. Lunch and dinner are the main meals.

As with many other Caribbean islands, Trinidad and Tobago has a long history of rum consumption. The sorrel flower yields a nonalcoholic drink, and ginger beer, or ginger ale, is also popular.

Nutrition is adequate in Trinidad and Tobago. Between 2000 and 2002, 12 percent of the general population was considered undernourished, while 7 percent of the under-five population was considered underweight between 1995 and 2002.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population:	11.9
Daily Available Calories per capita kcal:	2,720
Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg:	121.7
Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg:	91.3

STATUS OF WOMEN

Women enjoy equality under the law. Many have positions in the government, civil service, political-party leadership, business, and other professions, although their presence in these positions is not in proportion to their numbers in the population. Women serve in parliament, and women's groups are quick to speak out on women's rights. Violence against women, however, is extensive and remains a low priority for police and prosecutors.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 19
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.0
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 41.3

WORK

As of 2003 the labor force of Trinidad and Tobago numbered 590,000. Of these, 9.5 percent were engaged in agriculture, producing cocoa, sugarcane, rice, citrus, coffee, vegetables, and poultry. Industry—including manufacturing, mining, construction, and utilities—employed 26.4 percent of people, the service sector the remaining 64.1 percent. Despite large petroleum and tourism industries, unemployment was 10.4 percent in 2003. The nation's asphalt industry is one of its oldest. When the British explorer Sir Walter Raleigh was anchored in Trinidad in 1595, he used the asphalt from Pitch Lake to caulk his leaking ships.

The freedoms of association and assembly are respected. Labor unions are well organized, powerful, and politically active, although union membership has declined. The principal national labor federation is the Trinidad and Tobago Labor Congress. As of 2002, 25 to 30 percent of the workforce was organized into 19 labor unions. Strikes are legal and occur frequently. The minimum work age is 12; however, between the ages of 12 and 14 children are only allowed to work in family businesses. In 2005 the minimum wage was set at \$1.50 an hour. The usual workweek is 40 hours, and health and safety standards are generally observed.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 590,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 38.4
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 9.5
 Manufacturing, Mining, and Quarrying: 14.0
 Construction and Utilities: 12.4
 Services: 64.1
 Unemployment %: 10.4

EDUCATION

Education is free, universal, and compulsory for seven years, between ages six and 12.

Schooling lasts for 12 years, as divided into seven primary grades (known as standards), three years of secondary school (known as forms), and a two-year pre-university course known as the sixth form. Those completing the first five primary grades must take a common entrance examination. Those who are not admitted to secondary school take a two-year senior primary cycle or a five-year intermediate cycle.

The school year runs from September to July. The language of instruction is English throughout.

Primary school teachers are trained at three government and two private colleges. There is no institution for training secondary-school teachers.

About 41 percent of secondary-school enrollment is private. Vocational and technical programs offered in state as well as private institutions are two or three years in duration. Part-time schools make up half of the enrollment in the vocational stream.

The literacy rate in 2003 was 98.6 percent. Net enrollment in 2002 was 91 percent at the primary level, 72 percent at the secondary level. Public expenditures on education in 2002 totaled 4.3 percent of GDP.

Because Trinidad and Tobago claims the highest rate of literacy in the Caribbean and South America, adult education programs are oriented around subjects such as nutrition, culture, and handicrafts.

Both government and assisted schools (the latter owned and operated by voluntary agencies) are financed by the federal government.

Higher education is provided by the University of the West Indies at its St. Augustine campus, which has faculties of engineering, arts, and agriculture. John F. Kennedy College is a liberal arts school outside Port of Spain that was built with a grant from the U.S. Agency for International Development. The Trinidad and Tobago Hotel School offers courses for the hotel, catering, and travel industries, while the Eastern Caribbean Institute of Agriculture and Forestry trains students in ecological subjects. In 2002, 12,316 students were enrolled at universities and equivalent institutions.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 98.6
 Male %: 99.1
 Female %: 98.0
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 11.8
 First Level: Primary Schools: 475
 Teachers: 7,623
 Students: 141,036
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 18.5
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 90.6

(continues)

Education (*continued*)

Second Level: Secondary Schools: —

Teachers: 5,700

Students: 105,330

Student-Teacher Ratio: 18.9

Net Enrollment Ratio: 72.0

Third Level: Institutions: 1

Teachers: 969

Students: 12,316

Gross Enrollment Ratio: 8.9

Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 4.3

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Numerous publicly financed research projects are carried out by various government ministries. Primary among these is the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources, which operates research divisions in crops, animal health, fisheries, and forestry. The Institute of Marine Affairs, part of the Office of the Prime Minister, is responsible for fishery and natural resource research. The University of the West Indies has research faculties focusing on agriculture engineering as well as medical sciences and natural sciences.

Learned societies in Trinidad and Tobago include the Commonwealth Institute of Biological Control, the Agricultural Society of Trinidad and Tobago, the Tobago District Agricultural Society, the Pharmaceutical Society of Trinidad and Tobago, and the Sugar Manufacture Association of Trinidad and Tobago. As of 2001 there were 393 researchers per million population. Government expenditures on research and development totaled 0.1 percent of GDP in 2001. As of 1997 science and engineering students accounted for 41 percent of college and university enrollments.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 393

Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 0.1

High-Tech Exports \$million: 25.4

Patent Applications by Residents: 2

MEDIA

Four daily newspapers are published in the country. Six weeklies are also published, including one in Chinese.

The Trinidadian press has a long tradition of freedom. The media's boldness and irreverence have occasionally alarmed the authorities, but few government efforts have been made to muzzle it or make it subservient to the ruling party's interests. Press censorship laws have been enforced only sporadically. Until 1974 Prime Minister Williams conducted a campaign against the two

leading newspapers, the *Guardian* and the *Evening News*, both owned by Lord Roy Thomson, which resulted in his relinquishing ownership. Subsequent prime ministers have tried to bend the news to fit their political tastes, with little success. In 2002 Prime Minister Manning signed the Inter-American Press Association's declaration on press freedom. The international media watchdog group Reporters without Borders ranked Trinidad and Tobago 14th out of 167 countries in its 2004 press freedom index.

There is no national news agency.

There are two radio networks: The National Broadcasting Service, or Radio 610, with one FM and one medium-wave transmitter, broadcasts a home service in English for 119 hours a week; Radio Trinidad, a subsidiary of Radiodiffusion International, of London, with one FM and one medium-wave transmitter, broadcasts for 130 hours a week.

Television, introduced in 1961, is operated by the Trinidad and Tobago Television Company, which is state-owned and on the air for 73 hours a week. There are three stations. NBN, a public broadcaster that operated two TV and four radio stations, closed in 2005 after more than 40 years on the air. A new state-owned company, the Caribbean News Media Network, planned to start broadcasting later in 2005.

The largest library is the Central Library in Port of Spain. There are two other public libraries and one university library.

In 2002 there were about 362,000 cellular telephone users and 138,000 Internet users. The government makes no attempts to curtail access to the Internet.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 4

Total Circulation 000: —

Circulation per 1,000: —

Books Published: —

Periodicals: 6

Radio Receivers 000: —

per 1,000: —

Television sets 000: 435

per 1,000: 337

CULTURE

Calypso music, steel bands, and carnival are some of the cultural diadems Trinidad and Tobago has shared with the world. Steel drums, made from discarded oil drums, are an integral part of the pyrotechnics of carnival, celebrated in the days before Lent. The roots of calypso are also found in Trinidad, dating back to the time when slaves sang in their own languages or in patois and made fun of their masters; calypso lyrics still provide a medium for social satire. Two famous calypso musicians are Mighty Spar-

row and Lord Kitchener. Soca, which is derived from soul and calypso, is another well-known Trinidadian musical form. Similarly, the music of indentured servants from India, known as chutney music, has become popular.

Literature is another Trinidadian specialty. For a small country, it has turned out an amazing variety of world-class authors, including the brothers V. S. and Shiva Naipaul. V. S. Naipaul is a Nobel laureate, as is another longtime resident who was born in St. Lucia, Derek Walcott. Other writers of note are Samuel Selvon and C. L. R. James.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number:	18
Volumes:	246,000
Registered borrowers:	72,538
Museums Number:	—
Annual Attendance:	—
Cinema Gross Receipts:	—
Number of Cinemas:	—
Seating Capacity:	—
Annual Attendance:	—

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Much of the folklore of Trinidad and Tobago is African in origin and bears French, Spanish, and English influences. Folk traditions can be seen enacted during carnival, when costumed revelers assume the guise of staple mythological entities, including the devilish Diabla, similar to the Greek Circe, who attracts men and then transforms them into pigs. This Trinidadian devil woman is personified both as a crone and as a beautiful woman. Numerous folktales are told about Papa Bois, the most widely known of all Trinidadian folklore characters. He is the old man of the forest and is known by many names, including Maître Bois (master of the woods) and Daddy Bouchon (hairy man). Dressed as a deer or in ragged clothes, he is the protector of forest animals and trees. His son, Calaloo, fought a legendary battle with Man crab that is used in carnival themes.

Other major and minor characters in Trinidadian folklore include Mama Dlo, whose name is derived from the French *maman de l'eau*, which means “mother of the water”; a hideous creature, her lower half takes the form of an anaconda. She is sometimes thought to be the lover of Papa Bois. The Soucouyant, yet another spirit, takes the form of an old woman during the day and turns into a ball of fire at sundown, searching for victims from whom she steals blood. *Duennes*, or *douens*, the spirits of children who died before they were baptized, entice other children into the woods, where they abandon them. Ligahoo, also called Lagahoo or Loup Garou, is the shape-changing wolf man of Trinidadian lore. Witch tales also abound in the nation. Tobago has its own special tale of the African

witch Gang Gang Sara, as well as numerous mermaid and fairy maid (river spirit) tales.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Having a party, or *fête*, and hanging out, or “liming,” are two particularly Trinidadian forms of entertainment. Carnival in Trinidad is a celebration that goes beyond age or ethnic origin; it lasts two days and is looked forward to the entire year. The art of liming has gained new dimensions in Trinidad, where friends spend time at the beach, in bars, or on street corners. The term has become synonymous with loitering, and “No Liming” signs can be seen posted at many locations.

Music dominates much of leisure time in Trinidad, especially calypso and soca. Bands play at clubs, and people listen to their favorite groups on radio, tape, or CD.

Television is another favorite form of entertainment. Privately-run TV6 dominates ratings with its soap opera *Westwood Park*, which chronicles the lives of several wealthy Trinidadian families. Movies from India are also particularly popular.

ETIQUETTE

A casual way of life informs the system of etiquette in Trinidad and Tobago. Greetings can be very informal, including “Yo, what’s happening,” which was in use in the islands long before it became popular in North America. People generally nod or politely greet one another as they pass in the streets. Handshakes are typical, and kissing on the cheek is also a traditional greeting.

Such informality is lost when it comes to the use of more formalized forms of address. Titles are often used with names, and the use of first names is reserved for friends.

Dining is continental style, with both fork and knife used simultaneously.

FAMILY LIFE

Women wield a good deal of power in families of African descent but less in Indian families. In both, the extended family is important, and relations usually live close to one another. Children are valued, and strict discipline is common. Children typically live with their parents until they marry, and arranged marriages are common in all communities. Though divorce is legal, it is not socially acceptable. As of 1997 only one in 1,000 people were divorced. Families, once large, have become smaller in modern times. The 2004 fertility rate was 1.75 children per woman.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Western dress is usual for Trinidadians. Urban men often wear what is known as a shirt *jac*, a belted jacket accompanied by a scarf instead of a shirt. The Indian population tend to wear some traditional clothing, including turbans and saris.

During carnival the most flamboyant clothing is on display, with vibrant colors and myriad styles and fabrics. Feathers, shells, sequins, and even leaves are part of such costumes, as are body paint and glitter.

SPORTS

Trinidad and Tobago reveals its colonial roots in some of the sports still enjoyed. Perhaps the most important spectator sport is cricket; there are numerous local clubs as well as the all-Caribbean West Indies team, which competes with other Commonwealth teams. Trinidad and Tobago nationals, as part of the West Indies cricket team, have dominated the game of cricket internationally for years. Brian Lara, a Trinidadian who plays for West Indies, is one of the stars of Caribbean cricket, a leading batsman and runs scorer. Another athlete with an international reputation is Ato Boldon, of track and field fame; the sprinter is the winner of six world championship events and has been to four Olympic Games.

Other popular sports are soccer, rugby, volleyball, field hockey, horse racing, and boat racing. There are many beautiful golf courses on Trinidad.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1962 Following the breakup of the West Indies Federation, Trinidad and Tobago is granted independence, with Eric Williams as prime minister.
- 1965 The Trinidad and Tobago dollar is introduced, replacing the West Indian dollar.
- 1967 The United States returns the Chaguaramas naval base to Trinidad.
- 1970 Black power-inspired riots lead to the declaration of a state of emergency; radical armed forces units mutiny and try to march on the capital but are foiled by the coast guard.
- 1971 Opposition boycotts elections; as a result, the ruling People's National Movement (PNM) wins all seats in the House of Representatives.
- 1976 Trinidad and Tobago adopts a republican constitution; Governor-General Ellis Clarke becomes first president of the republic; in national elections the PNM gains 24 seats, thus retaining a solid majority.
- 1980 Tobago is granted internal autonomy and a parliament; in the first elections to the Tobago parliament the separatist Democratic Action Congress wins 54 percent of the vote and eight of 12 seats.
- 1981 Prime Minister Williams dies. George Chambers is named prime minister. In new legislative elections the PNM retains its majority in the House of Representatives.
- 1986 A. N. R. Robinson becomes prime minister.
- 1990 On July 27, members of the Muslim sect Jamaat al-Muslimeen stage a coup attempt against Robinson during which Robinson and several cabinet members are held hostage. Robinson is freed on July 29, and the rebels surrender the following day.
- 1992 The Muslim militants are granted amnesty by the government.
- 1993 Economic growth is spurred by the discovery of large supplies of natural gas.
- 1995 The United National Congress and the National Alliance for Reconstruction form a coalition government, with Basdeo Panday as prime minister, and the PNM officially becomes the opposition party.
- 1997 The PNM loses two additional seats as members of the party announce themselves as independents. Robinson is easily elected president.
- 1999 Trinidad and Tobago restores capital punishment.
- 2000 Panday wins another term in office after his UNC wins 19 of 36 seats in parliament.
- 2001 Early general elections yield an unprecedented tie, in which the governing party and the main opposition party win 18 seats each. The president appoints Patrick Manning prime minister.
- 2002 October elections give the PNM a clear majority of 20 seats in parliament.
- 2003 Opposition protestors take to the streets in May to protest high crime levels. The state-run sugar company, Caroni, closes its doors; 8,000 jobs are lost.
- 2004 A Trinidadian becomes the president of the newly formed Caribbean Court of Justice.
- 2005 The Manning government raises the minimum wage to \$1.50 an hour.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Central Statistical Office
<http://www.cso.gov.tt/>
- Central Bank of Trinidad and Tobago
<http://www.central-bank.org.tt>

TUNISIA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Tunisian Republic (El-Joumhouriyya et-Tounisiyya)

ABBREVIATION

TN

CAPITAL

Tunis

HEAD OF STATE

President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali (from 1987)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Mohamed Ghannouchi (from 1999)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Multiparty republic

POPULATION

10,074,951 (2005)

AREA

163,610 sq km (63,170 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Arab

LANGUAGES

Arabic (official), French

RELIGION

Sunni Muslim

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Dinar

NATIONAL FLAG

Red with a white circle in the middle bearing a red crescent facing a five-pointed red star

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A yellow shield divided into three parts shows a white-sailed full-rigged sailing vessel with flying red pennants in the top panel, balanced scales in the bottom-left panel, and a gold lion wielding a silver sword in the bottom-right panel. In the center a scroll proclaims in Arabic the national motto, "Order, freedom, justice." Above the emblem are a red crescent and star within a circle.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"Immortal and Precious the Blood We Have Shed"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day), January 18 (National Revolution Day), March 20 (Independence Day), April 9 (Martyrs' Day), May 1 (Labor Day), June 1 (National Day, Victory Day), June 2 (Youth Day), July 25 (Republic Day), August 13 (Women's Day), September 3 (Commemoration of September 3, 1934), October 15 (Evacuation of Bizerte), Christmas, various Islamic festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

March 20, 1956

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

June 1, 1959; amended 1988, 2002

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco form the Berber-influenced area of North Africa known as the Maghreb (west), and Tunisia is the smallest and easternmost of the three. It is bordered by Algeria to the west and Libya (which is sometimes also included in the Maghreb) to the southeast. Because the country has not been completely surveyed, there is disagreement on the total area, but official estimates place it at 163,610 sq km (63,170 sq mi). The nation has a total coastline of 1,148 km (713 mi), including offshore islands in the Mediterranean Sea. The

greatest distance north to south is 792 km (492 mi), that east to west 350 km (217 mi).

The boundaries with Algeria and Libya, largely undemarcated, run 965 km (600 mi) and 459 km (285 mi), respectively.

Tunisia has three distinct physical regions. In the north are the mountains of the Tell Atlas and the Dorsale, separated by the fertile valley of the Medjerda River. The Tell is generally divided into the coastal, central, and high Tells. South of the Dorsale ridge is a wide expanse of barren plateau, which the Tunisians call the center. Its western half is known as the high steppe

Tunisia



and its eastern half as the low steppe. Eastward, the low steppe gives way to the flat coastal plain of the Sahel, between the Gulf of Hammamet and the Gulf of Gabes. Southward, beyond the extensive salt lakes dominated by the Chott Djerid, lies the country's vast Saharan desert sector.

Geography

Area sq km: 163,610; sq mi 63,170
 World Rank: 89th
 Land Boundaries, km: Algeria 965; Libya 459
 Coastline, km: 1,148

(continues)

Geography *(continued)*

Elevation Extremes meters:

Lowest: Shatt al Gharsah -17

Highest: Jebel ech Chambi 1,544

Land Use %

Arable Land: 17.9

Permanent Crops: 13.7

Forest: 3.3

Other: 65.1

Population of Principal Cities (2001)

Ariana	205,940
Safaqis	263,840
Tunis	690,940

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Tunisia has two distinct Mediterranean-type seasons: a cool rainy season from October to April and a warm dry season from May to September. The temperatures in the Tell region vary between 5°C and 26°C (41°F and 79°F), with a mean of 17.8°C (64°F), while southern Tunisia experiences desert conditions, with temperatures rising to 40°C (104°F). Rainfall, concentrated during the winter months, is greatest to the north of the Dorsale, where it exceeds 460 mm (16 in) a year, reaching over 1,520 mm (60 in) in the Kroumirie Mountains, which form the wettest area in North Africa. South of the Dorsale rainfall is reduced to 200 to 400 mm (8 to 16 in) annually. In the southern desert rainfall is less than 350 mm (10 in) annually and occurs only at rare intervals.

Climate and Weather

Temperature Range

Tell Region 41°F to 79°F, Mean 64°F

Southern Tunisia High 104°F

Average Rainfall

North of the Dorsale 16 in

Kroumirie Mountains 60 in

South of the Dorsale 8 in to 16 in

Southern Desert 10 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Vegetation and animal life in Tunisia reflect the varying landscapes and extreme climatic variations. The country has numerous types of trees. In the Kroumirie Mountains, in the north, the cork oak is common. Other northern trees include pine and oak. In drier, hotter regions the jujube and gum tree predominate. In the central and southern steppes, esparto grass is the major vegetation.

Large forms of animal life include wild boar and wild sheep in the northern mountains and jackals and gazelles

in the steppes. Scorpions are found throughout the country, and cobras and horned vipers are among the poisonous snakes. Locusts are a crop nuisance in the south.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 10,074,951

World Rank: 80th

Density per sq km: 63.7

% of annual growth (1999-2003): 1.2

Male %: 50.5

Female %: 49.5

Urban %: 67.4

Age Distribution %: 0-14: 25.3

15-64: 68.1

65 and over: 6.6

Population 2025: 11,931,000

Birth Rate per 1,000: 15.5

Death Rate per 1,000: 5.09

Rate of Natural Increase %: 1.0

Total Fertility Rate: 1.75

Expectation of Life (years): Males 73.2

Females 76.71

Marriage Rate per 1,000: 6.4

Divorce Rate per 1,000: 0.9

Average Size of Households: 5.1

Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Though Tunisians are the most completely Arabized people of the Maghreb, persons of unmixed Arab blood have never constituted more than 10 percent of the population. Most Tunisians belong to mixed Arab-Berber stock. While elements of traditional Berber culture were adopted by the Arabs, the term Berber properly refers only to the few small, scattered communities that have completely rejected Arabization. The largest of these Berber communities are found in enclaves on the island of Djerba, in the Ksour Mountains, around Qafsah near the Libyan border, and in the mountains bordering Algeria. The ethnic composition of the Arab-Berber population has been only slightly affected as a result of Turkish and later French domination.

The country's Jewish population, numbering 60,000 in 1956, has declined to a few thousand, or less than 1 percent of the population. The French presence similarly eroded after the nationalization of French estates. Europeans are estimated to number no more than 50,000. The main non-French foreign communities are Greek and Italian.

LANGUAGES

Arabic is the official language, but French remains entrenched as the language most widely used by business-

people, the media, and even the government itself. About two million persons are estimated to have some knowledge of French, of whom about 15 percent are fluent. The native Berber language is no longer a written language and survives only among a small Berber-speaking minority.

RELIGIONS

Islam in its Sunni form is the state religion, and Muslims form about 98 percent of the population. There are small minorities of Christians and Jews. Carthage is a Roman Catholic archbishopric.

Despite the official status of Islam and the generally traditionalist character of Tunisian society, Habib Bourguiba, during his presidency, initiated a number of reforms in areas where Muslim religious injunctions and observances seemed to conflict with the secular needs of modern Tunisia. He was successful in abolishing polygamy, the use of the veil, and Muslim inheritance laws, but he was unsuccessful in his attempt to abolish the Ramadan fast.

While Islam is the state religion, the constitution guarantees religious freedom. Proselytizing for religions other than Islam, however, is prohibited.

Religious Affiliations

Muslim	9,873,000
Christian	101,000
Jewish and Other	101,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Tunisia was inhabited in antiquity by the seafaring Phoenicians. A wide-ranging mercantile state was founded at Carthage by the Phoenicians, whose great general Hannibal was the terror of Rome around 211 B.C.E. Carthage was eventually captured by Rome and burned to the ground in the Punic Wars in 146 B.C.E. The Romans subsequently rebuilt the city, making it one of the great cities of the ancient world. The decline of Roman Carthage was hastened by the invasions of the Vandals.

In the seventh century C.E. the region fell to Arab invaders, who Arabized and Islamized its inhabitants permanently. A series of Arab dynasties held sway over the country in the succeeding centuries: those of the Aghlabids (ninth century), Fatimids (10th century), Zirids (11th century), and Hafsids (13th to 16th centuries). The Hafsids made Tunisia one of the most flourishing regions in the Maghreb, as the Arabs called the western Mediterranean, and their power lasted until the arrival of the Ottomans in the 16th century.

The Ottomans ruled Tunisia through vassal rulers known as beys who were in power until 1957. The

beys were fiscally irresponsible and fell in debt to British, French, and Italian interests. To restore order, the French invaded Tunisia in 1881 and imposed a protectorate through the Treaty of Bardo and the Convention of La Marsa (1882), which allowed the beys to remain nominally in charge in return for the cession of power to the French. After a half century of French rule the nationalist movement within the country became more assertive. In 1934 Habib Bourguiba founded the Neo-Destour Party in order to seek autonomy. Little progress was made until World War II weakened the French position and France recognized Tunisia as a semiautonomous state. Yet the French continued to resist until 1956, when they finally yielded and recognized independent Tunisia.

Elections for a constitutional assembly were held shortly after independence, and Habib Bourguiba became prime minister. In 1957 the assembly abolished the monarchy and established a republic. A new constitution was promulgated two years later, establishing a presidential system. The first National Assembly was elected in November 1959, with the Neo-Destour Party the dominant force. The only parliamentary opposition came from the Parti Communiste Tunisien (PCT), which was outlawed in 1963. The Neo-Destour Party, renamed the Parti Socialiste Destourien (PSD) in 1964, was the only legal party from 1963 to 1981, although a one-party state was never institutionalized.

Led by Bourguiba, the government pursued a socialist program, collectivizing agriculture and expropriating foreign property. Bourguiba consolidated his power and ruthlessly suppressed opposition; in 1964 the PSD declared him president-for-life, a constitutionally dubious move that was validated only the following year when the National Assembly, all of whose members belonged to the PSD, voted to amend the constitution.

By the mid-1970s Bourguiba was over 70 and in failing health, and opposition groups were demanding greater political freedom. In 1978 the most influential unofficial opposition group, the Union Générale de Travailleurs Tunisiens (UGTT, General Union of Tunisian Workers), joined with the unemployed and major political dissidents in a general strike. Armed forces were called to intervene, and 51 people were killed. Some voting regulations were liberalized in 1979, but the government clung to the entrenched one-party system. Muslim fundamentalists proved a threat to the government during the early 1980s, when Bourguiba's refusal to deal with UGTT demands pushed many into the more fundamentalist Mouvement de la Tendance Islamique (MTI).

In 1981 Bourguiba announced his willingness to officially recognize other political parties provided that they rejected violence and religious fanaticism, and in July the PCT was granted official recognition.

Widespread rioting in January 1984 was set off by a 115 percent increase in the price of bread and the cessation of government food subsidies. Bourguiba's personal

intervention to cancel price increases reestablished peace. However, unrest continued into 1985, with students and Islamic militants holding strikes and demonstrations; the UGTT also became involved in calling a series of strikes. As a result, Habib Achour, the dominant UGTT leader, was sentenced to prison. By 1987 the government had forced the UGTT to support the PSD.

A general election for the National Assembly was held in 1986, in which the PSD won all 125 seats. In 1986 and 1987 the government took a hard-line stance against Islamic fundamentalism, sentencing four to death and imprisoning 22 others for a variety of offenses.

In November 1987 seven physicians declared Bourguiba unfit to govern because of senility and ill health. The constitution provided for the prime minister, Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, to assume the office of president. Hedi Baccouche was named prime minister.

The new administration adopted a policy of national reconciliation. The publication of opposition newspapers was once again allowed in 1987, and political and other detainees were released. In 1988 the name of the PSD was changed to the Rassemblement Constitutionnel Démocratique (RCD, Constitutional Democratic Rally), in line with the new government's moves toward democratic reform. That year the National Assembly instituted a multiparty system affording the legal recognition of other political parties, provided that they agreed to adhere to the constitution and avoid pursuing religious, racial, and linguistic objectives.

In July 1988 the National Assembly amended the constitution to abolish the post of president-for-life, providing for the president to be elected to no more than three consecutive five-year terms. The cabinet was reshuffled, with seven members from the Bourguiba regime dismissed; Hedi Baccouche remained the only significant representative from the earlier administration.

Legislative and presidential elections took place on April 2, 1989. Ben Ali was elected president for a five-year term, and the RCD won all 141 seats in the National Assembly, the number of seats having been increased from 125 to 141 in March. The electoral system, which had been reformed in December 1988, continued to favor the ruling party, such that even though the strongest opposition party, the MTI, by then renamed the Parti de la Renaissance, had won approximately 10 percent of the votes, it did not win any seats. The RCD denied any electoral misconduct. Local elections held in 1990 highlighted the growing tension between the government and the opposition: Opposition parties boycotted the elections, and the RCD won control of all but one of the 245 municipal councils.

In 1993 electoral law was changed to assure opposition parties representation in the general election. Regardless, the RCD won 98 percent of the vote, gaining 144 seats in the 163-member house, and President Ben Ali was reelected without challenge. In 1995 the RCD

won control of all 257 local councils in municipal elections. In 1999 Ben Ali was elected to the presidency for the third time.

On April 6, 2000, Bourguiba died at age 96. A seven-day period of mourning was declared, and thousands of mourners lined the route of his funeral procession. Tunisia condemned the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington, D.C., in 2001, and in 2002 the nation was the victim of such an attack itself when a truck bomb exploded outside a synagogue on the resort island of Djerba. Ben Ali called for an international conference on terrorism.

In 2002 Tunisian voters passed several constitutional amendments. One ended presidential term limits, allowing Ben Ali to seek a fourth term, while another called for the establishment of a second legislative body, the Council of Advisors, to balance power. In 2004 Ben Ali was again elected president, with 95 percent of the vote, amid charges of vote rigging and electoral fraud. Parliament established a second legislative body in July 2005.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

President

1957–87 Habib Ali Bourguiba

1987– Zine El Abidine Ben Ali

CONSTITUTION

The original constitution of the Republic of Tunisia, promulgated in 1959, was amended in 1988 and 2002. The document as amended in 1988 established the president as head of state, head of the executive branch of government, and commander in chief of the armed forces. He is elected by universal suffrage at the same time as the National Assembly, for a five-year term; he was to serve no more than three consecutive five-year terms. The president must be between 40 and 70 years of age. The president has the power to designate the prime minister and the Council of Ministers and to rule by decree when the National Assembly is not in session. He also has supreme military command and appoints all civil and military officials. Amendments in 2002 ended the term limit for the presidency and also provided for a second legislative house, the Council of Advisors, due to be established in 2005. The 2002 amendments also increased the age limit of the president to 75, expanded civil liberties, and guaranteed human rights.

The Tunisian judicial system is based on the French and Koranic systems. The Court of Cassation, in Tunis, serves as the nation's supreme court. The judicial system also comprises three courts of appeal, 13 courts of first instance, and 51 cantonal courts. The president appoints all judges.

PARLIAMENT

The National Assembly (Majlis al-Umma) is a unicameral body consisting in 2005 of 189 members elected by direct popular vote for five-year terms, coinciding with the presidential term. The National Assembly holds two annual sessions of three months' duration each. The real legislative work is done by four permanent committees—political, general legislative, economic and financial, and social and cultural—which remain in constant session. The president of the republic has the right to propose legislation. He also may decree laws when the National Assembly is not in session, but the Assembly must ratify them.

Ultimate control of legislation rests with the National Assembly Bureau, whose members are chosen by the Political Bureau of the ruling RCD party. No item can be placed on the National Assembly agenda until it has been discussed in committee. The National Assembly Bureau coordinates the work of the committees and decides which proposals shall pass out of committee to be considered in plenary session.

In 2002 a constitutional amendment provided for the establishment of a second legislative body, the Council of Advisors which was formed in July 2005.

POLITICAL PARTIES

The Constitutional Democratic Rally (Rassemblement Constitutionnel Démocratique, RCD) won 152 of 189 seats in the 2004 elections. The RCD is a West-leaning party that nominally espouses democracy but is largely undemocratic in its tactics. The Islamic opposition movement Al-Nahda was disbanded by the government in 1991. Currently, none of the other six legal political parties, including the Movement of Social Democrats (Mouvement des Démocrates Socialistes, MDS) and the Communism-oriented Al-Tajdid, threaten the control of the RCD. In the 2004 election the MDS won 14 seats, the socialist Popular Unity Party 11, the Arab-nationalist Unionist Democratic Union seven, Al-Tajdid three, and the Social Liberal Party two. The main opposition group, the Democratic Progressive Party, boycotted the vote, saying its participation would only legitimize what it termed a masquerade of democracy. Regardless of the outcome of elections, the law stipulates that 20 percent of National Assembly seats be allocated to opposition parties. The 37 seats allotted to the opposition parties in 2004 were done so according to the proportion of votes each party won; for example, while the MDS won only 4.6 percent of the vote, they were allotted 14 seats as the winningest opposition party.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Tunisia is divided into 24 administrative districts known as *wilayats*, or governorates. Each is named for the major

population center in the area. Each *wilayat* is headed by a *wayi*, or governor, who is appointed by the president. The *wilayats* are divided into *mutamadiyats*, or delegations, each administered by a civil servant called a delegate. The smallest unit of local administration is the *secteur*, formerly known as the *sheikhat*.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The Tunisian legal system is an amalgam of French, Islamic sharia, and executive laws. The whole body of Tunisian law has been codified and includes seven codes promulgated since independence. The most important of these codes is the Code of Personal Status, which secularized the legal system, raised the status of women, abolished polygamy, made divorce subject to court decisions, and raised the age of marriage.

At the head of the court system is the Court of Cassation, consisting of four chambers, each with a president, the first president being the chief justice. Immediately below are the three courts of appeal, in Tunis, Sousse, and Sfax. Courts of first instance are found in all principal administrative centers and constitute the third tier of the judicial system. At the base of the system are the cantonal (*nahiyah*) courts, which have taken the place of the old sharia courts. Special courts include boards of arbitration, realty courts, the High Court of Justice (to try cases of treason), the Security Court, and administrative courts.

The judiciary is not independent, as it is subject to the executive. Judges are appointed by the president on the recommendation of the Supreme Council of the Magistracy.

HUMAN RIGHTS

In terms of civil and political rights, Tunisia is classified as a partly free country. Citizens still do not have full political freedom. There are curbs on the press and on freedom of speech.

In the 1980s Tunisia made impressive strides toward achieving a more open and responsive society. All political prisoners were released, and some exiles were permitted to return. Efforts were made to ensure probity in the government. Trade union freedoms were restored, and students achieved national representation.

During the mid-1980s there was a loosening of controls over the media and over the rights of public assembly. The opposition and independent press continued to voice constant, if guarded, criticism.

Following the bloodless coup that deposed Bourguiba in 1987, the new administration adopted a policy of national reconciliation. One of the measures promulgated permitted the publication of opposition newspapers. However, human rights reports in 2000 charged that hu-

man rights defenders and their families were increasingly targeted, as were other activists, such as trade unionists and journalists, and government opponents and critics from across the political spectrum. Scores were arrested, and many were subjected to harassment and intimidation, were prevented from leaving the country, and had their communication lines intercepted and disrupted. Political trials grossly violated minimum standards for fairness. Reports of torture and ill-treatment during secret detention and in prisons continued to be received. At least one detainee was reported to have died in custody as a result of ill-treatment. No executions were reported. Human-rights reports have continued to make charges against the government regarding arbitrary arrest, harassment, and police brutality. The 2004 U.S. State Department report on human rights in Tunisia listed numerous incidents of such violations.

FOREIGN POLICY

Tunisia is a moderate Arab state and is generally pro-Western on most foreign policy issues, though it is officially nonaligned. Relations with Libya were ruptured in 1980 over the Libyan seizure of a southern town in Tunisia, as followed by the expulsion of Tunisian workers from Libya. Relations were patched up in 1989 at the time of the formation of the Arab Maghreb Union. The Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990 precipitated a change in Tunisia's hitherto pro-Western orientation: Tunisia condemned the U.S. deployment of troops in Saudi Arabia and the allied bombing of Iraq. Along with Algeria, Tunisia is engaged in a struggle with Islamic militants. In 1991 the nation broke relations with Sudan over Khartoum's support of terrorist groups. Under Ben Ali, Tunisia has aimed to maintain internal stability and regional security. It has actively worked to broaden the activities of the Arab Maghreb Union and strengthen relations with the West, and it supports the Middle East peace process. The Tunisian authorities, public, and press were unanimous in condemning the attacks on New York and Washington, D.C., on September 11, 2001. Good relations between Tunisia and the United States survived the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq in 2003. Relations with the country's number-two trading partner, Italy, have deteriorated over the issue of illegal immigration.

DEFENSE

The president of the republic heads the defense structure and is also the commander in chief of the armed forces. Manpower is provided by conscription at age 20, as followed by one year of active service. Volunteers can join at age 18. As of 2002 Tunisia had an army of 47,000 personnel, excluding paramilitary forces. The defense forces include a gendarmerie of 2,000.

Since 1960 the United States has been Tunisia's major arms supplier. Between 1966 and 1983 military aid from the United States consisted of \$319.5 million in loans and \$70.7 million in grants. A formal U.S. Military Assistance and Advisory Group was established in Tunis in 1968. Arms purchases in 1998 totaled \$40 million, of which \$8.6 million came from the United States. Military spending in 2001 was \$328 million, or 1.6 percent of gross domestic product (GDP).

Tunisia has no defense-related industries.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 47,000
 Military Manpower Availability: 2,441,741
 Military Expenditures \$million: 328
 as % of GDP: 1.6
 as % of central government expenditures: 5.8
 Arms Imports \$million: 7
 Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

Tunisia has a diverse economy, with important agricultural, mining, energy, tourism, and manufacturing sectors. Governmental control of economic affairs, while still heavy, has gradually lessened over the past decade, with increasing privatization, simplification of the tax structure, and prudence regarding debt. Real growth averaged 5.5 percent between 1996 and 2000, and inflation is slowing; increased tourism and trade have been key elements with regard to this steady growth. Tunisia's associative agreement with the European Union entered into force on March 1, 1998, becoming the first such accord between the European Union and a North African country to be activated. Under the agreement Tunisia will gradually remove barriers so as to increase trade with the European Union through 2008. Broader privatization, further liberalization of the investment code to increase foreign investment, and improvements in government efficiency are among future challenges. Economic growth slowed to 1.9 percent in 2002 as a result of drought and a falloff in tourism due to terrorism. Better weather conditions restored GDP growth to 6 percent in 2003 and 2004.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 70.88
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 7,100
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 4.6
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 3.4
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 13.8
 Industry: 31.8
 Services: 54.4

Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:

Private Consumption: 62
 Government Consumption: 16
 Gross Domestic Investment: 24.5

Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 9.926

Imports: 11.52

% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 2.3

% of Income Received by Richest 10%: 31.8

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
113.9	117.2	119.5	122.8	126.1

Finance

National Currency: Tunisian Dinar (TND)

Exchange Rate: \$1 = TND 1.2455

Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 7.26

Central Bank Discount Rate %: —

Total External Debt \$billion: 14.71

Debt Service Ratio %: 13.66

Balance of Payments \$million: 71.85

International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 2.9

Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 4.1

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 305.5

per capita \$: 30.90

Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 541

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year

Revenues \$billion: 6.799

Expenditures \$billion: 7.573

Budget Deficit \$million: 774

Tax Revenues as % of GDP: 20.6

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 13.8

Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 3.7

Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 1.27

Irrigation, % of Farms having: 7.8

Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 36.8

Total Farmland % of land area: 17.8

Livestock: Cattle 000: 760

Chickens million: 62

Pigs 000: 6

Sheep million: 6.85

Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 2.34

Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 98.7

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 4.46

Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 4.4

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 5.65

Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 7.0

Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 727

Net Energy Imports % of use: 16.1

Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 2.43

Production kW-hr billion: 10.5

Consumption kW-hr billion: 9.87

Coal Reserves tons million: —

Production tons 000: —

Consumption tons 000: 118

Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: 2.75

Production cubic feet billion: 79.5

Consumption cubic feet billion: 135

Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels million: 308

Production barrels 000 per day: 72.5

Consumption barrels 000 per day: 87.2

Pipelines Length km: 1,203

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 11.52

Exports \$billion: 9.926

Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 4.5

Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 4.8

Balance of Trade \$million: 71.85

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
France %	27.5	30.0
Italy %	20.8	23.3
Germany %	9.2	9.3
Spain %	5.7	5.3
Belgium %	—	4.3
Libya %	—	4.2

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 18,997

Paved %: 65.4

Automobiles: 552,900

Trucks and Buses: 281,500

Railroad: Track Length km: 2,152

Passenger-km billion: 1.27

Freight-km billion: 2.25

Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 12

Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 122.7

Airports: 30

Traffic: Passenger-km million: 2.5

Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 5.11

Number of Tourists from million: 2.27

Tourist Receipts \$billion: 1.94

Tourist Expenditures \$million: 355

Communications

Telephones million: 1.16
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.02
 Cellular Telephones million: 1.9
 Personal Computers 000: 400
 Internet Hosts per million people: 28
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 63

ENVIRONMENT

Tunisia suffers from a number of increasingly serious environmental problems, including threats to human health from poor toxic and hazardous waste-disposal techniques, water pollution produced by unprocessed sewage, and limited freshwater. In addition to these, the country's continued clearing of land for agriculture and development leads to soil erosion, deforestation, and desertification.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 3.3
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: 1
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 1
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 49,336
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 1.92

LIVING CONDITIONS

The UN 2004 Human Development Report ranked Tunisia 92nd out of 177 countries in terms of life expectancy, education, and standard of living. The average Tunisian's life expectancy in 2005 was almost 75 years, literacy stood at 74.2 percent as of 2003, and 75 percent of eligible students were enrolled in primary, secondary, and tertiary schools in the 2002. Per capita GDP was \$7,100 in 2004. Tunisia ranks about in the middle of Arab states in terms of quality of life.

Though Tunisians are almost all Muslims, they see themselves as more secular and liberal than their Arab neighbors. They absorb influences from abroad but consciously attempt not to allow Westernization to dominate their society. With an estimated 75 to 80 percent of the population in the middle class, Tunisia offers an alternative to kingdoms in the region where wealth is concentrated in the hands of the few. Most of the Tunisian population has access to good drinking water, and there is electricity in almost all homes. The ownership of consumer goods is on the rise. In 2003, 92 percent of households owned televisions, while 37.2 percent had landline phones and 18.8 percent owned cars.

Tunisia is increasingly becoming an urban nation. In 2003, 67.4 percent of the population lived in towns and cities. Tunisia has very little lumber, such that most

homes are built of stone, adobe, or concrete. Regardless of the materials used, facades tend to be similar: white walls and blue doors. Tunis, the capital, is crowded, as are the other Tunisian cities, due to rapid urbanization and the steadily growing middle class. Most single-family homes are small, and it is common for neighboring walls to touch each other. To make use of small building spaces, houses are several stories high, and flat rooftops become additional living spaces.

HEALTH

About 80 percent of all health care in Tunisia is free and administered through a pyramidal network of local clinics and small hospitals, regional hospitals, and specialized urban hospitals. The number of doctors in the country grew from 4,482 in 1991 to 6,459 in 2004, which was equal to about one doctor for every 1,400 people. Also as of 2004 there were about 26,000 nurses, 1,200 dentists and 1,600 pharmacists. Despite such impressive numbers, there remain regional shortages of medical providers, as most physicians practice in the cities, leaving rural areas understaffed.

Contagious diseases have largely been controlled in Tunisia. In 2002 there were 26 cases of tuberculosis per 100,000 people. About 260 AIDS cases were reported in 1996, a sharp increase from the 46 cases reported in 1994; by 2003 about 1,000 people were living with HIV/AIDS, and almost 200 died of the disease that year. Smoking is a major health risk among adult males, 62 percent of whom use tobacco. As of 2002, 82 percent of the population had access to safe drinking water, 80 percent to adequate sanitation.

The government finances routine immunizations. Immunization rates for children up to one year of age for 2003 were as follows: tuberculosis, 93 percent; diphtheria, pertussis, and tetanus, 95 percent; polio, 95 percent; and measles, 90 percent. The government supports a family-planning program. As of 2005 the crude birth rate and overall mortality rate were estimated at 15.5 and 5.1 per 1,000 people, respectively. About two-thirds of women used contraception between 1995 and 2003. The fertility rate in 2005 was 1.75 children per woman; the infant mortality rate was under 25 deaths per 1,000 live births. Government spending on health totaled 2.9 percent of GDP in 2002.

Health

Number of Physicians: 6,459
 Number of Dentists: 1,200
 Number of Nurses: 26,389
 Number of Pharmacists: 1,569
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 70
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —

Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 24.77
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 120
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 5.8
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 126
 HIV Infected % of adults: < 0.1
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 95
 Measles: 90
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 80
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 82

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Couscous is the most popular dish in Tunisia; steamed grains of semolina wheat serve as a bed for spicy vegetable or meat stews, with such a meal a staple for lunch or dinner. Lamb is a popular meat, served as cutlets or in shish kebabs. Seafood is plentiful and popular. *Chakachouka* is a Tunisian salad made of tomatoes, onions, peppers, and hard-boiled eggs. Another popular dish is *mechouia*, a combination of grilled tomatoes, peppers, and onions with olive oil, tuna fish, sliced hard-boiled eggs, lemon juice, and capers. Stews cooked in earthenware go by the name of *tajines*. Spinach *tajine* is particularly popular; others are made from chicken and even prunes.

Tunisians commonly drink strong Turkish coffee and sweet mint tea. Pork is forbidden by the Islamic religious code. Alcohol, usually also prohibited as such, is widely available, and Tunisia produces a number of good wines.

Nutrition is improving in Tunisia. Only 4 percent of children under five were underweight between 1995 and 2002. Iodized salt was used in 97 percent of households between 1997 and 2003.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 0.7
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 3,360
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 204.2
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 256.3

STATUS OF WOMEN

Legal equality between men and women is vigorously supported by the government. Equal rights in the areas of divorce and child custody, for example, are guaranteed by legislation. A small number of women serve in the government at all levels. Nevertheless, the centralized nature of decision making generally limits the influence of women at the national level. Despite the government's efforts, in many cases traditional practices keep women from fully attaining their legal rights, especially in rural areas.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 23
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 0.93
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 25.3

WORK

In 2003 the Tunisian labor force was over 3.5 million strong. About 55 percent of workers are employed in the service sector, 23 percent in industry, and 22 percent in agriculture. Industrial sectors include petroleum, mining (particularly phosphate and iron ore), tourism, textiles, footwear, agribusiness, and beverages, while agricultural products include olives, olive oil, grain, dairy, tomatoes, citrus fruit, beef, sugar beets, dates, and almonds. Tourism is one of the largest employment sectors. There is a distinct shortage of skilled labor in the country. The 2004 unemployment rate was 13.8 percent.

The constitution and the labor code provide workers with the right to organize and form unions, and the government generally respects these rights in practice. The General Union of Tunisian Workers (UGTT) is the country's only labor federation. Approximately 30 percent of the workforce belongs to the UGTT, including civil servants and employees of state-owned enterprises, and a considerably larger proportion of the workforce is covered by union contracts. The rights to collectively bargain and strike are observed. In 2004 minimum wages were \$173 per month in industry and \$5.94 per day in agriculture. The workweek is 48 hours, and the minimum age for employment is 16; however, children as young as 14 can work part-time in industry. In the agricultural sector 13 is the minimum working age.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 3,550,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 32.7
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 22
 Industry: 23
 Services: 55
 Unemployment %: 13.8

EDUCATION

Schooling is free but neither universal nor compulsory in primary and secondary schools. The academic year runs from October 1 to June 30. The language of instruction is Arabic for the first two years of primary school; thereafter both French and Arabic are used.

The school system is organized into three levels: elementary, intermediate (secondary), and higher. Since 1958 the traditional Koranic schools have been incorporated within the secular school system. The elementary level consists of six years of schooling. The secondary level is divided into an academically oriented seven-year program and a trade-oriented six-year program; both begin with a three-year lower cycle, as followed by a four-year upper cycle in the academic program or a terminal three-year cycle in the trade program. Overall, the secondary level consists of six tracks, of which four are general, one is commercial, and one is technical. Nearly 17 percent of secondary students are enrolled in the technical track. Private schools account for 1 percent of primary enrollment and 6 percent of secondary enrollment.

Adult education is emphasized as a development process. The Institute of Adult Education is charged with two programs: short-term literacy training and a continuing course of social education. Of the 316 literacy training centers, 172 are run by the army, which uses conscription to combat illiteracy.

Control of education is centralized with the state; all educational facilities are nationalized and integrated within a single system. A large corps of inspectors is charged with monitoring the school system to ensure conformity with officially established standards. Curricula are drawn up by technical committees appointed by the secretary of state for national education; textbooks are authorized and approved in a similar manner.

The tertiary level consists of four years of schooling in specialized academic or technical courses, as similar to the North American university system. Technical and vocational schools are also available. The country's oldest institution of higher learning is the University of Tunis. Two new universities were opened in Monastir and Sfax in 1986. French is used almost exclusively at the university level. In 2002 all higher-level institutions had over 263,000 students and almost 13,000 instructors.

The literacy rate was 74.2 percent in 2003. In 2002 net primary school enrollment was 97 percent, net secondary enrollment 65 percent. Public expenditures on education totaled 6.9 percent of GDP in 2001, or 18.2 percent of the nation's overall budget.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 74.2

Male %: 84.0

Female %: 64.4

School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 13.3

First Level: Primary Schools: 4,384

Teachers: 59,297

Students: 1,277,124

Student-Teacher Ratio: 21.5

Net Enrollment Ratio: 97.3

Second Level: Secondary Schools: 712

Teachers: 58,278

Students: 1,131,016

Student-Teacher Ratio: 20.1

Net Enrollment Ratio: 64.5

Third Level: Institutions: —

Teachers: 12,937

Students: 263,414

Gross Enrollment Ratio: 26.7

Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 6.9

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The Ministry of Agriculture administers several research institutes, including the Institut de la Recherche et de l'Enseignement Supérieur Agricole; Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique de Tunisie; and Institut National de la Recherche en Génie Rural, Eaux, et Forêt, which together carry out projects in crops, food technology, livestock, forestry management, and water-resource management. Additionally, the Secrétariat d'Etat à la Recherche Scientifique et la Technologie administers research institutes for fisheries, biotechnology, and arid-zone utilization technologies.

Medical research is conducted through the Pasteur Institute, founded in 1893. The University of Sciences, Technologies, and Medicine, in Tunis, has a comprehensive science program, and the University of Sfax has faculties of medicine and science. Between 1994 and 1997, 27 percent of university students were enrolled in science, mathematics, or engineering courses. In 2002 Tunisia had 1,013 scientific researchers per million people.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 1,013

Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 0.63

High-Tech Exports \$million: 244.1

Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

As of 2002 seven major daily newspapers were published in Tunisia, including *as-Sabab* (Arabic), *Assabafa/La Presse* (Arabic), *Le Renouveau* (French), *al-Amal* (Arabic), *La presse de Tunisie* (Arabic/French), *L'action* (French), and *Errai el-Am* (Arabic). The Arabic *ach-Chourouk* and the French *Le temps* are major weeklies. The daily press also consists of two organs of the government party, including *L'action*. The best known periodical is *Jeune Afrique*, which circulates widely in 10 African countries.

The national news agency is Tunis-Afrique Presse (TAP), a public corporation founded in 1961. Major foreign news bureaus in Tunisia include AFP, UPI, Reuters, and ITAR-TASS.

Broadcasting is a state monopoly controlled by Radiodiffusion Télévision Tunisienne (RTT), which operates stations at Djedeida, near Tunis; Sidi Mansour, near Sfax; Gafsa; and Monastir. In addition, three shortwave services (with 50 and 100 kw transmitters) are beamed throughout North Africa and the Middle East.

Television was introduced in northern and central Tunisia in 1966, with a transmitter at Jabal Zagħwan. By 1972 transmission spanned the country. RTT's seven main TV transmitters broadcast a national program, and a second channel was introduced in 1983. The two channels accepted advertising beginning in 1988. The nation's first independent television station was scheduled to begin broadcasting in 2005.

Though the freedoms of speech and the press are guaranteed, the government does not abide by the laws in question. It limits press freedom and intimidates journalists, editors, and publishers into practicing self-censorship. Security forces closely monitor press activity. The harassment of journalists by the government is common, and in rare cases security forces have used violence against them. The government routinely withholds press passes from journalists critical of the government and tightly controls the broadcast media, most of which it owns. Attempts at censorship extend to the foreign press, as well: Foreign periodicals critical of the government are not allowed inside the country, and government regulations require foreign correspondents to obtain written approval before videotaping any public area. Such policies earned Tunisia the ranking of 152nd out of 167 countries from Reporters without Borders, an international media watchdog group, in its 2004 press freedom index.

The government blocks access to a number of Internet sites, including nearly all sites belonging to domestic human rights, opposition, and Islamist groups, as well as many pornographic Web sites. In 2003 there were 630,000 Internet users and 1.9 million cellular telephone users in the country.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 7
 Total Circulation 000: 180
 Circulation per 1,000: 19
 Books Published: 1,260
 Periodicals: 29
 Radio Receivers million: 1.6
 per 1,000: 158
 Television sets million: 1.8
 per 1,000: 190

CULTURE

Tunisian culture bears a mixture of many influences. From the Roman past are ruins and well-preserved frescoes and mosaics from the houses of the wealthy. These can be

found in Tunis's Bardo Museum. The influence of Islam is everywhere to be seen in modern Tunisia, particularly in the architecture and rich ornamentation of the many fine mosques. The Turks left behind the culture of the bathhouse, and from the French came the high culture of painting and literature. Tunisia is something of an artistic corner in the African world, with modern galleries and a wide variety of contemporary artists, from the geometric forms of Hédi Turki to the Arabic calligraphy of Nja Mahdaoui. Other prominent Tunisian painters are Ammar Farhat and Jallah bin 'Abdallah. Tunisia has been a place of pilgrimage for European artists searching for the high contrast of North African sunlight. More than 50 Tunisian art galleries display the work of local and international artists alike.

Modern Tunisian literature includes work by such authors as the social essayist Tahar Haddad, the satirist Ali Douagi, and the poet Aboul Kacem Chabbi. Also prominent are the French-writing Albert Memmi, the author of *The Statue of Salt*, and Mahmoud Messadi, who writes in Arabic. Despite press censorship, Tunisian writers employ unique realism. Theater is also a popular art form, with the National Theater and the National Puppet Center primary among such cultural institutions.

Tunisian music ranges from the sad refrains of *malouf*, a traditional Arab style of music that is closely associated with Tunisia; to classical forms such as *nouba* (the oldest, of Andalusian origin), *chghoul*, and *bachraf* (of Turkish origin); to *foundou* and *zindali*, two main popular forms of music. The major music conservatory, the Rashidia Institute, in Tunis, preserves these musical forms as well as the European tradition.

Tunisian cinema has had some successes, such as *The Silence of the Palaces* and *A Summer in La Goulette*. Additionally, Tunisia has served as the location for major motion picture productions such as *The English Patient* and *Star Wars*. Tunisia is home to the Carthage International Film Festival.

Numerous other festivals, such as the Testour Malouf Festival (with traditional Andalusian *malouf* music), the Sousse International Cultural Festival, and the International Jazz Festival (in Tabarqah), blend music and the arts in a distinctly Tunisian manner. Other well-known museums include the Archaeological Museum of Carthage; the Museum of Kairouan, with its Islamic arts collection; and the Museum of El Jem, a Roman coliseum.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 280
 Volumes: 1,315,000
 Registered borrowers: 65,077
 Museums Number: 35
 Annual Attendance: 367,000
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Stories and legends of Muslim leaders form much of the folklore of Tunisia. Historical figures may have fought the Crusaders or Turkish invaders; often from religious backgrounds, these leaders were thought to be holy men who possessed a grace that allowed them to perform miracles. The graves of such holy men have become pilgrimage destinations.

Folktales in Tunisia also have religious significance, with many of them relating stories of the Prophet, Muhammad. Evil spirits are also a feature of Libyan and Arab folklore in general. These sprits, or jinn, are able to take on human form and need to be warded off by different methods, both religious and animistic. Under the leadership of the country's first president, Bourguiba, the belief in such legends and folklore was discouraged through efforts to create a modern secular state.

Many of Tunisia's traditional proverbs use metaphors of the Tunisian landscape. One rather jaundiced proverb about the difficulties of kin is "Relations are scorpions."

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Tunisia is a country rich in festivals, with themes varying from cinema to music to falconry. In cities, towns, and villages, sidewalk cafés are places where mostly men gather to socialize, play chess or dominoes, drink tea and coffee, smoke *chichas* (water pipes), and play cards. Unlike other Muslim countries, Tunisia allows alcohol, and there are bars. Evening entertainment may also consist of a visit to the cinema or an evening at home. Camel races and soccer matches are well attended.

Listening to the radio and watching television—even though the content of both is strictly controlled by the government—are popular. Along the coast, outings to the beach are common, as are water sports such as swimming and scuba diving. The public bathhouse, a holdover from the Ottoman occupation, is still popular among both men and women, who use it for socializing as well as hygiene.

ETIQUETTE

Shaking hands is the typical form of greeting in Tunisia. Men who have not met in a long time may exchange kisses on the cheeks, but this does not occur publicly between the sexes in this Muslim country. Titles, often French, are used for formal situations. The right hand is used for greetings and for eating.

Islam has numerous other taboos, most prominently with respect to food and drink. Though alcohol is available in Tunisia, pork is generally not eaten. Bread is considered sacred, and bread crumbs should not be brushed

off the table to the floor. Shoes are removed before entering a home or mosque, and the soles of neither shoes nor feet are shown to others. The North American thumbs-up gesture is rude in Muslim countries. The role of the female in Muslim society is generally a subservient one, and it is considered impolite to ask about female members of a family if the topic is not brought up by the male head of the household. Dining is continental style.

FAMILY LIFE

Kinship ties formed the basis of traditional Tunisian society. The extended family living in one household was the rule; male children would bring new brides to live in the homes of their parents. Children were the responsibility of the entire extended family, and marriages were strictly arranged. Such traditions have broken down in the modern world, especially with the moves toward a more secular state that began in 1957. Nowadays, nuclear families predominate, marriages are matters of choice between bride and groom, and the size of the family has shrunk. In 2005 the fertility rate was 1.75 children per woman.

The traditional female role has changed as well. Increasingly, Tunisian women work outside the home in addition to performing household duties. The government has recognized such changing roles through a series of laws allowing for more equality between the sexes—laws often ignored in more-traditional enclaves. New stresses put on the family have led to a high incidence of divorce: Almost half of Tunisian marriages end in divorce, an unusually high rate for a Muslim country.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Western-style clothing and traditional attire coexist in Tunisia; everything from suits to jeans are worn. In 2003, however, the government reinstated public decency laws from the 1940s, and authorities have actually detained young women for wearing jeans deemed too tight or revealing.

More traditional clothing is especially common in rural areas. Older village men often wear the fez-like *chebia* as well as the robe-like *jalabiyya*, along with baggy pants. Women's traditional clothing includes the *sifsari*, a long outer garment with loose folds that may cover Western-style dress worn underneath. Rural women often wear the loose head covering called the *mellia*.

SPORTS

The most popular modern sport in Tunisia is soccer. The national team has competed for the African Cup and the World Cup. The sport's popularity has in large part led to

widespread demand for satellite television, as fans wish to watch foreign competition. In addition to being a spectator sport, soccer is one of the most popular participatory games in the country.

Track and field has become increasingly popular, as well. Tunisian runners have achieved international renown in middle- and long-distance events. More Western-style sports, such as golf, windsurfing, and diving, have also become more commonly enjoyed, in part because of the tourist trade.

The traditional sport of wild boar hunting is found mostly in the dunes, hills, and mountains of the Tabarqah region, and camel races are well enjoyed, as witnessed during the Sahara Festival in January and December.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1955** France grants internal self-government.
- 1956** France grants full independence on March 20. Neo-Destour Party wins absolute majority in elections for a constitutional assembly, and Habib Bourguiba is appointed prime minister. Tunisia joins the United Nations.
- 1957** Bey of Tunis is deposed. Republic of Tunisia is proclaimed, with Bourguiba as the first president.
- 1958** Tunisia joins Arab League. Dinar is introduced as unit of currency. Central bank is established.
- 1959** Constitution of the republic is promulgated. National elections are held. Under the Code of Personal Status, polygamy is outlawed, the legal system is secularized, Muslim marriage and divorce laws are reformed, the status of women is raised, and the age of marriage is raised.
- 1960** Bourguiba makes an unsuccessful attempt to abolish the Muslim fast during Ramadan.
- 1961** University of Tunis is reorganized. Crisis occurs over Tunisian call for withdrawal of French forces from naval base at Bizerte. The 10-year prospective plan of development is launched.
- 1962** Relations with Algeria are suspended.
- 1963** Tunisia joins the Organization of African Unity.
- 1964** French evacuate Bizerte; all French-owned estates are nationalized. Dinar is devalued. Name of Neo-Destour Party is changed to Destourian Socialist Party at the so-called Congress of Destiny; new socialist program is adopted. National elections are held.
- 1965** Bourguiba calls for Arab negotiations with Israel; this counsel of moderation is rejected by Arab nations; Syria and Iraq break relations with Tunisia.
- 1966** Television is introduced. Oil is found at El Borma field.
- 1967** Ties are restored with Arab countries following Arab-Israeli Six-Day War.
- 1968** Students riot against U.S. and U.K. embassies.
- 1969** National elections are held. Ban Salah, the powerful minister of planning and finance, is dismissed.
- 1970** Hedi Nouria replaces Bahi Ladgham as prime minister. Treaty is concluded with Algeria.
- 1971** Ahmed Mesteri, minister of the interior, falls into disgrace and is dismissed.
- 1974** National elections are held; Bourguiba is elected president for life and given enlarged powers. Union with Libya is first proposed, then repudiated.
- 1978** UGTT-led general strike erupts into violent riots, the worst in the nation's history, in which more than 46 are killed. Habib Achour, secretary-general of the UGTT, is sentenced to 10 years in prison for his part in fomenting the strike.
- 1979** Arab League establishes new headquarters in Tunis, following expulsion of Egypt.
- 1980** Prime Minister Hedi Nouria leaves office on account of illness; moderate Muhammed Mzali is named to succeed him as prime minister and secretary-general of the ruling PSD.
- 1981** One-party political system ends, with three opposition parties accorded legitimacy.
- 1982** Diplomatic relations are reestablished with Libya.
- 1983** Tunisia signs Maghreb Fraternity and Cooperation Treaty with Algeria.
- 1984** Bread riots break out following steep hike in food prices; Bourguiba rescinds price increases.
- 1985** Libya expels Tunisian workers.
- 1986** Colonel (later General) Zine El Abidine Ben Ali is appointed minister of the interior. Four Islamic fundamentalists are sentenced to death.
- 1987** Tunisia severs diplomatic relations with Iran. More than 3,000 Islamic fundamentalists are detained. Ben Ali is appointed prime minister and secretary-general of PSD. Bourguiba is declared unfit to govern, and Ben Ali is sworn in as president. Policy of national reconciliation is undertaken.
- 1988** PSD's name is changed to Rassemblement Constitutionnel Démocratique (RCD) to reflect administration's support of democratic reform. Multiparty system is instituted by National Assembly. Constitutional amendments abolish the post of president-for-life and institute new regulations for presidential elections. Seven cabinet ministers from Bourguiba's regime are dismissed.
- 1989** Presidential and legislative elections take place on April 2. Ben Ali is reelected president. RCD wins all 141 legislative seats.
- 1990** Local elections are held; the RCD wins control of all but one of the 245 municipal councils; Presi-

2400 Tunisia

- dent Ben Ali voices disapproval of U.S. actions leading to the Persian Gulf War.
- 1994** Radical Islamic groups threaten Tunisian political stability. Ben Ali is reelected president.
- 1998** The European Union agrees to lower trade barriers with Tunisia.
- 1999** Ben Ali is reelected president.
- 2000** Bourguiba dies in April; thousands mourn his passing.
- 2001** Several high-profile human rights cases puts Tunisia in the international spotlight.
- 2002** In April, 19 are killed in a terrorist bombing on tourist island of Djerba; al-Qaeda claims responsibility. A referendum ends term limit for the presidency and calls for the creation of a second legislative house, the Council of Advisors.
- 2003** The decree banning the wearing of the *hijab*, or veil, first passed in 1981, is renewed. Human rights cases again focus international attention on Tunisian treatment of dissidents and opponents.
- 2004** Ben Ali wins a fourth term as president.
- 2005** Council of Advisors is established in July.

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Tunisia. *Annuaire statistique de la Tunisie; Recensement général de la population et des logements*, 1994; *Tunisia: Selected Issues* (IMF Staff Country Report), 2002

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- National Statistics Institute (French only)
<http://www.ins.nat.tn>
- Tunisia Online
<http://www.tunisiaonline.com>

TURKEY

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Turkey (Türkiye Cumhuriyeti)

ABBREVIATION

TR

CAPITAL

Ankara

HEAD OF STATE

President Ahmet Necdet Sezer (from 2000)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan (from 2003)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Republican parliamentary democracy

POPULATION

69,660,559 (2005)

AREA

780,580 sq km (301,382 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Turks

LANGUAGE

Turkish

RELIGION

Sunni Islam

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Turkish lira

NATIONAL FLAG

Large white crescent facing a star on a red field

NATIONAL EMBLEM

An elliptical red shield bearing the republic's name in gold at the top, with a white crescent beneath and a white star in the center

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"İstiklal Marsi" (The March of Independence)

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day), April 23 (National Sovereignty and Children's Day), May 1 (Spring Day), May 19 (Youth and Sports Day), August 30 (Victory Day), October 29 (Republic Day), various Islamic festivals, Seker Bayram, Kurban Bayram

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

October 29, 1923

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

November 7, 1982

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

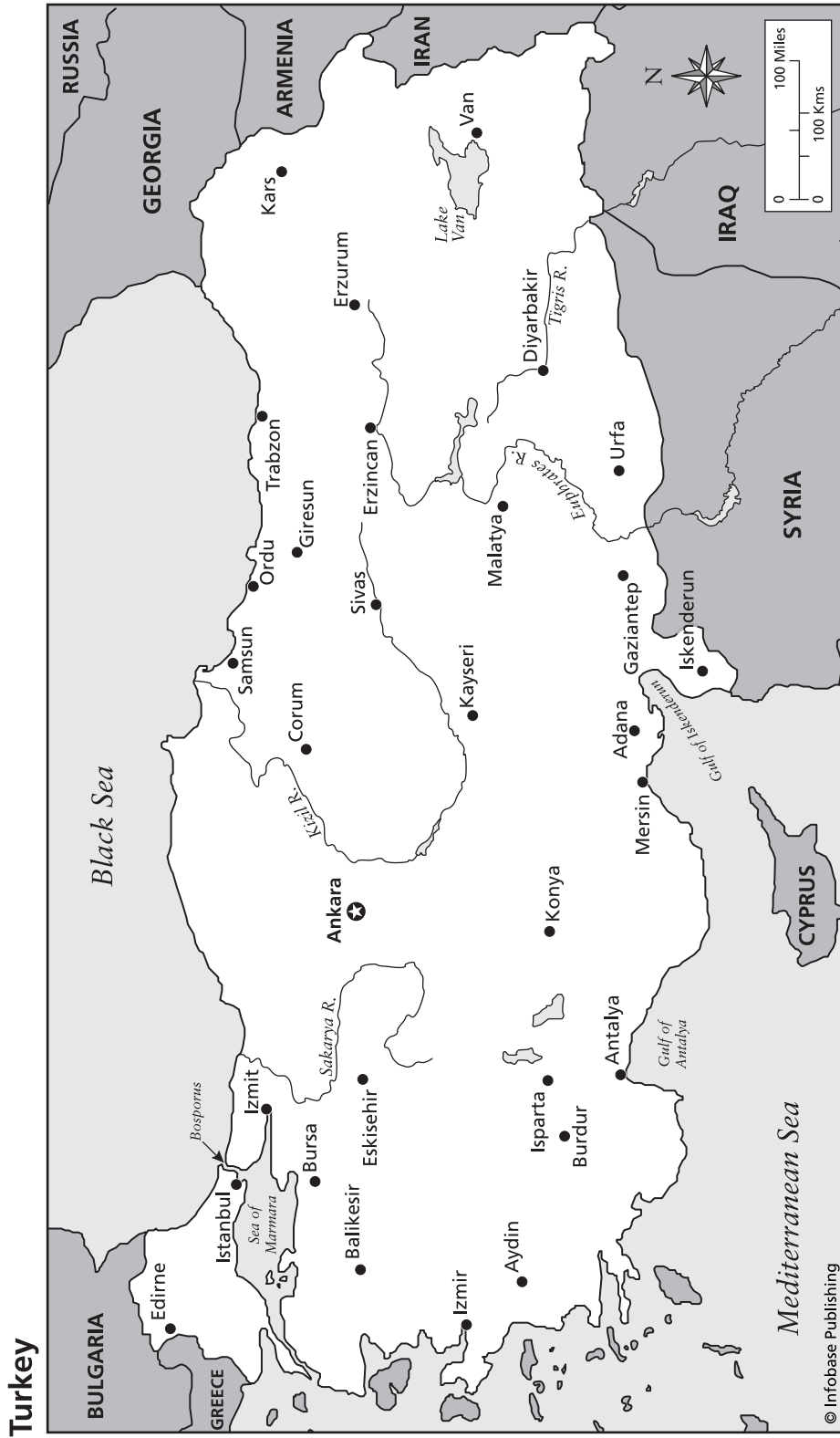
Turkey is the sixth-largest nation in Asia, occupying the landmass of the Anatolian Peninsula, in western Asia, together with the city of Istanbul and its Thracian hinterland, in southeastern Europe. The Asian and European portions of Turkey are divided by the Bosphorus Strait, the Sea of Marmara, and the Dardanelles Strait. Of its area of 780,580 sq km (301,382 sq mi), the vast majority is in Asia; the area in Europe is equal to 23,720 sq km (9,158 sq mi), or about 3 percent of the total. The total length of the coastline is 7,200 km (4,474 mi). Turkey shares its international border with eight nations: Bulgaria, Greece, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Iran, Iraq, and Syria.

Turkey is one of the most earthquake-prone regions of the world, with a major structural fault line running

from the Sea of Marmara eastward in the general direction of Ankara. Over 85 percent of the land is over 450 m (1,476 ft) in elevation, with a median altitude of 1,125 m (3,691 ft).

The capital is Ankara, with a 2000 population of 3.2 million. The commercial and intellectual center of Turkey is Istanbul (2000 pop. 8.8 million).

Turkey is divided into five physical regions. The heartland of the country is the Anatolian Plateau, an arid, steppelike region with limited rainfall and cold winters. The eastern highlands, constituting the entire eastern third of Turkey, are a vast stretch of wild, barren wasteland with higher elevations and a more severe climate. The productive regions of the country are the Aegean coastlands, which contain half the agricultural wealth in the broad, cultivated valleys of the Bursa Plains; the Plains



of Troy; Izmit Valley; the Mediterranean coastland; and the narrow coastal ribbon of the Black Sea region.

The longest river completely within Turkey is the Kizil Irmak, which runs 96 km (60 mi) east of Sivas and reaches the Black Sea at Bafra.

Geography

Area sq km: 780,580; sq mi: 301,382

World Rank: 37th

Land Boundaries, km: Armenia 268; Azerbaijan 9; Bulgaria 240; Georgia 252; Greece 206; Iran 499; Iraq 352; Syria 822

Coastline, km: 7,200

Elevation Extremes meters:

Lowest: Mediterranean Sea 0

Highest: Mount Ararat 5,166

Land Use %

Arable Land: 30.9

Permanent Crops: 3.3

Forest: 13.3

Other: 52.5

Population of Principal Cities (2000)

Adana	1,130,710
Ankara	3,203,362
Antalya	603,190
Bursa	1,194,687
Diyarbakir	545,983
Gaziantep	853,513
Istanbul	8,803,468
Izmir	2,232,265
Kayseri	536,392
Konya	742,690
Mersin	537,842

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Because of the proximity of mountain ranges to the coast and the great elevation of the interior plateaus, the Turkish climate is characterized by great extremes and wide temperature variations among regions and seasons—sometimes over 50°C (122°F). The coastal regions have a continental, temperate climate, with mild winters and moderately hot summers and a median of 19°C to 20°C (66.2°F to 68°F).

August is the hottest month, with a mean temperature of 28°C (82.4°F), and January the coldest, with a mean temperature of 8°C to 11°C (46.4°F to 51.8°F). In the interior plateaus, winters are cold, and frost occurs for more than 100 days a year. The summers are hot, with temperatures rising to 43°C (109.4°F). The climate of eastern Turkey is inhospitable, with bitter, cold winters and hot summers. Around the Aegean the summers are tempered by the northerly *meltemi*, or Etesian, wind. Rainfall, too, is variable. Winters are generally the wettest months on the coast. Rainfall averages 508 to 722 mm (20 to 30 in) annually along the Aegean and Mediterranean seas to over 2,540 mm (100 in) along the Black Sea. May is generally

the wettest month in the interior, where annual rainfall amounts to only 254 to 431 mm (10 to 17 in).

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature

Coastal Regions: 66.2°F to 68°F

Interior: 82.4°F in August to 46.4°F to 51.8°F in January

Summer High: 109.4°F

Average Rainfall

Along the Aegean and Mediterranean: 20 in to 30 in

Along the Black Sea: 100 in

Interior: 10 in to 17 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Turkey's flora is largely determined by its geography and climate. Along the coast of the Black Sea, where rainfall is relatively heavy and temperatures mild, trees such as the chestnut, oriental spruce, oak, fir, pine, and alder are common. Along the Mediterranean coast, myrtle, wild olive, pine, cypress, oak, and carob are typical. Shrub growth in the same region includes the laurel, holly, hazel, and rhododendron. There are deciduous forests along the coast. In the interior, where much of the land is steppelike and drier, much of the terrain is grassland. Some forests of cedar, beech, maple, and juniper also exist.

Animal life includes the beaver, marten, jackal, hyena, bear, deer, Turkish leopard, wolf, fox, boar, gazelle, and mountain goat. Domesticated animals include the Angora goat, camels, donkeys, horses, and other livestock. Game birds include the partridge, quail, snipe, woodcock, and wild goose. The country is also home to about 30 snake species.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 69,660,569

World Rank: 17th

Density per sq km: 91.9

% of annual growth (1999-2003): 1.6

Male %: 50.5

Female %: 49.5

Urban %: 64.7

Age Distribution %: 0-14: 26.0

15-64: 67.3

65 and over: 6.7

Population 2025: 82,205,000

Birth Rate per 1,000: 16.83

Death Rate per 1,000: 5.96

Rate of Natural Increase %: 1.1

Total Fertility Rate: 1.94

Expectation of Life (years): Males 69.94

Females 74.91

Marriage Rate per 1,000: 6.8

Divorce Rate per 1,000: 0.5

Average Size of Households: 4.5

Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

In terms of official policy, there are no ethnic minorities in Turkey, the only distinctions being those of language and religion. However, ethnic homogeneity has been the goal of Turkish administrations, and national identity is limited to ethnic Turks; thus, only a person who speaks Turkish as his primary language, follows Islam, and owes allegiance to the Republic of Turkey qualifies as a Turk.

Estimates of the number of Turks in the population vary, with some placing the proportion as high as 80 percent. The Kurds form by far the most significant minority, with an estimated population approaching 14 million in 2005. They have long demanded an autonomous state (along with Kurdish groups in Iraq and other neighboring countries) and have just as long been suppressed, often ruthlessly, by the Turks.

The Kurds are traditionally a mountain people, largely pastoral, but many have made the transition to settled village life. Government attempts to fully integrate them into national life have not been particularly successful.

Another important minority are the 900,000 Arabs concentrated along the Syrian border. Both the Kurds and the Arabs have historically engaged in smuggling across the Syrian (and to a lesser extent, the Iraqi) border.

There is also an interesting community known as the Donme, descendants of the Jewish followers of a false messiah, Sabbatai Zebi, from the 17th century. They consider themselves Muslims but are not accepted as such by the Turks in general.

Except for the Kurds and Arabs, no ethnic minorities number over 100,000. Deportations and periodic exchanges of population have eroded the Greek community, which now numbers only some 70,000. There are about the same number of Armenians, survivors of the Armenian massacres of the 19th and 20th centuries. About 38,000 Jews remain in the country, fewer than in 1948. The Greeks, Armenians, and Jews are concentrated in Istanbul.

LANGUAGES

The official language of Turkey is Turkish, which is spoken by about 90 percent of the population. The most basic of Kemal Atatürk's reforms was the Dil Devrimi, or language revolution, which produced a new, more practical and precise language. Dil Devrimi consisted of two elements: the introduction of a new alphabet and the purification of the vocabulary by purging it of Arabic and Persian words. The new Turkish alphabet is composed of Latin letters or variants, with one symbol for each sound in standard Turkish.

Minority languages include two Kurdish dialects, Arabic, Syriac, Greek, and Armenian. The latter two are protected under the Treaty of Lausanne, and Arabic is acceptable, but the use of the others is severely proscribed.

RELIGIONS

Turkey is officially a secular state, but about 99 percent of Turks are Sunni Muslims. The reforms of Atatürk essentially disenfranchised the Islamic governing structure and thereby separated religion and state.

Since the founding of the secular state, however, there has been a drift back toward Islam-state intercommunication. Under the constitution, all Muslim students are compelled to receive Islamic instruction. Other religious communities, including those who adhere to the Orthodox, Catholic, Jewish, and Protestant faiths can be found throughout the country.

Religious Affiliations

Muslim (mostly Sunni)	69,521,000
Other (mostly Christians and Jews)	139,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The land that is now Turkey was originally inhabited by Greeks, Armenians, and other peoples, and great civilizations flourished in the region both in antiquity and in the first millennium of the Common Era. First a part of the Hittite and Persian empires, it was later conquered by Alexander the Great and Hellenized until the first centuries C.E. The land was later incorporated into the Roman and, later, Byzantine empires, by the third century. The ancestors of modern Turks (which name appropriately means "robber" in Turkish) were Ural Altaic people from Central Asia whose marauding armies reached Asia Minor around 1000. In the battle of Manzikert (Malazgirt) in 1071, they defeated the Byzantines and began a slow process of conquest. They also expanded their hold over the land through the forcible conversion of the inhabitants to Islam. Known as Seljuk Turks from 1071 to 1243, they made their capital at Konya, in central Turkey. Their power was temporarily broken in the early 13th century by the Mongols, under Genghis Khan, but after the Mongols withdrew, the Turks' authority was revived under another branch called the Ottoman Turks (so called after their first chief, Osman).

In 1453 the Ottomans, under Mehmet II, conquered Constantinople, the jewel of the Byzantine Empire, after a long and bloody siege. Within the next 100 years they conquered Egypt, Syria, Greece, the Balkans, the Arabian Peninsula, North Africa, the islands of the Mediterranean, the Caucasus, and the Crimea. In 1517 the sultan assumed the title of caliph following the conquest of Egypt. At the zenith of their power, under Süleyman the Magnificent, the Turks were the terror of Europe and the scourge of the Christian world.

By the mid-19th century the process of imperial decline that began in the 17th century was hastened by the modernization of the empire, starting with the Imperial Rescript of 1839, under Sultan Abdul Mejid, and a body

of reforms known as the Tanzimat curbing the powers of the sultan. The Illustrious Rescript of 1856, which followed Turkey's defeat in the Crimean War, forced the sultan to ensure rights for non-Muslims. Sultan Abdul Hamid II introduced a constitution in 1876 but suspended it the following year. Thereafter the sultan continued to rule as the Sublime Porte, with no constitutional checks on his power.

In 1908 the Young Turks Revolution reinstated the constitution of 1876. In 1913 the Committee for Unity and Progress, led by Talat Pasha and Enver Pasha, of the Young Turks, seized effective control of the government from Sultan Mehmet V. During World War I Turkey joined the Central powers and declared war on the Allies. Defeated along with Germany, Turkey signed an armistice at Mudros in 1918. The Ottoman Empire ceased to exist: Turkey was stripped of all non-Turkish areas, and Asia Minor itself was divided among the Allied powers. In 1919 Greece, with Allied assistance, invaded Anatolia through Smyrna but was defeated by a resurgent Turkish army under Mustafa Kemal (known later as Atatürk, "Father of the Turks") in 1922. That year the sultanate was abolished and a secular Turkish state was established at Ankara. In 1923 Turkey negotiated the Treaty of Lausanne with the Allies, which recognized Turkish suzerainty over Asia Minor and a small portion of Thrace, including Istanbul. A republic was proclaimed, with Atatürk as president and Ankara as its capital, and in 1924 the caliphate was abolished.

Kemal Atatürk remained president of Turkey until his death in 1938. During his rule a number of reform policies were established that laid the foundations of the modern state. Among these were the secularization of the state (including the abolition of Islamic jurisdiction), the emancipation of women, the use of the Latin alphabet, the introduction of an industrial economy, and the encouragement of European culture and technology.

Turkey maintained the policies set for it by Kemal Atatürk and remained neutral during World War II. In 1960 a military coup overthrew the government and introduced a new constitution vesting power in the parliament. Throughout the 1960s and early 1970s a series of civilian governments, sometimes under the "guidance" of the military, assumed political control.

When widespread civil unrest erupted in 1978, the military imposed control and took over the running of the government. This continued on and off until the people overwhelmingly voted for a new constitution and decisively rejected further military rule in 1982. Through the 1980s and the end of the 1990s Turkey largely enjoyed the benefits of civilian administration. In 1993 Tansu Çiller became Turkey's first female prime minister, and in 1996 Necmettin Erbakan, leader of the Islamic Welfare Party, became Turkey's first Islamist leader since the country was founded in 1922. However, Erbakan was forced to resign by the military in 1997, and in 1998 the Turkish constitutional court outlawed the Islamic Welfare Party.

In 2001 the Turkish lira lost more than one-third of its value due to the fact that foreign investors pulled

out in fear of a government collapse. In October 2001 thousands of people demonstrated against an austerity plan backed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF). In 2002 Turkish women were granted full legal equality with men. Also in 2002 Islamism made a resurgence: The Islamist-based Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi, AKP) won a landslide election victory, and in 2003 its leader, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, became prime minister, nevertheless promising to maintain the secular principles of the constitution.

A conflict between the government and the Kurdistan Workers' Party (Partiya Karkerên Kurdistan, PKK) has gone on for over 20 years. The capture of the PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan in 1999 led to a ceasefire, but in 2004 the PKK, renamed the People's Congress of Kurdistan (Kongra Gelê Kurdistan, KGK), resumed its fight for an independent Kurdish homeland. In the two decades of fighting, over 30,000 people, mostly Kurds, have lost their lives. However, as part of its bid to join the European Union, the Turkish government lifted bans on education and broadcasting in Kurdish. Talks regarding EU membership began in October 2005.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

President (except as noted)

1923–38	Mustafa Kemal Atatürk
1938	Mustafa Abdülhalik Renda (acting)
1938–50	Mustafa İsmet İnönü
1950–60	Celâl Bayar
1960–61	Cemâl Gürsel (chairman, Committee of National Unity, MBK)
1961–66	Cemâl Gürsel
1966–73	Cevdet Sunay
1973	Tekin Arıburun (acting)
1973–80	Fahri Korutürk
1980	Ihsan Sabri Çaglayangil
1980–82	Kenan Evren (chairman, National Security Council, MGK)
1982–89	Kenan Evren
1989–93	Turgut Özal
1993	Hüsamettin Cindoruk (acting)
1993–2000	Süleyman Demirel
2000–	Ahmet Necdet Sezer

Prime Minister

1923–24	İsmet İnönü
1924–25	Ali Fethi Okyar
1925–37	İsmet İnönü
1937–39	Celâl Bayar
1939–42	Refik Saydam
1942–46	Şükrü Saracoğlu
1946–47	Mehmet Recep Peker
1947–49	Hasan Saka
1949–50	Semsettin Günaltay
1950–60	Adnan Menderes
1960–61	Cemâl Gürsel (chairman, Committee of National Unity, MBK)

1961–65	İsmet İnönü
1965	Suat Hayri Ürgüplü
1965–71	Süleyman Demirel
1971–72	Nihat Erim
1972	Suat Hayri Ürgüplü
1972–73	Ferit Melen
1973–74	Naim Talu
1974	Bülent Ecevit
1974–75	Sadi İrmak
1975–77	Süleyman Demirel
1977	Bülent Ecevit
1977–78	Süleyman Demirel
1978–79	Bülent Ecevit
1979–80	Süleyman Demirel
1980–83	Bülent Ulusu
1983–89	Turgut Özal
1989–91	Yıldırım Akbulut
1991	Mesut Yılmaz
1991–93	Süleyman Demirel
1993–96	Tansu Çiller
1996	Mesut Yılmaz
1996–97	Necmettin Erbakan
1997–99	Mesut Yılmaz
1999–2002	Bülent Ecevit
2002–03	Abdullah Gül
2003–	Recep Tayyip Erdoğan

CONSTITUTION

Under the provisions of the 1982 constitution, legislative power is vested in the Grand National Assembly. The 550-member body is elected through direct proportional representation for a five-year term. Executive power is exercised by the president, elected for a seven-year term, who appoints the prime minister and the Council of Ministers.

Philosophically, the constitution is the outgrowth of Atatürk's 1931 manifesto, which proclaimed the inviolability of the six fundamental "arrows of Kemalism": republicanism, nationalism, populism, statism, secularism, and reformism.

PARLIAMENT

The constitution of 1982 abolished the earlier bicameral legislature and replaced it with a single-chamber 400-member Grand National Assembly, later increased in stages to 550 members. The Grand National Assembly convenes on the first day of September and can adjourn itself—although the president can recall the Assembly if necessary.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Political parties in the Western sense made their first appearance in Turkey at the end of the 19th century. During

this period the graduates of modern schools, army officers, and civil servants pioneered political movements essentially aiming to prevent the further decline of the Ottoman Empire and introduce the principles of nationalism, freedom, and equality that had emerged in the West.

During the era of the Second Mesrutiyet (Second Constitutional Government) and thereafter, the Committee for Unity and Progress (İttihat ve Terakki) was the sole party. During the War of Independence the Republican People's Party (Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi, CHP) became the dominant sole party, and it remained in power through the advent of the multiparty system in 1946 until the election of the Democrat Party to office in 1950.

The competitive and pluralistic party system has been in operation in Turkey since 1946. The political parties are an indivisible and indispensable part of Turkish political life.

All citizens of Turkey over 18 years of age, with the exception of civil servants and members of the armed forces, may form and become members of political parties provided that they conform with related procedures. Prior permission for the formation of a political party is not required. Parties are allowed to function freely in accordance with the constitution.

According to the constitution, all citizens of age have the right to vote, to be elected, and to engage in political activities independently of or within a political party. Elections are held every five years.

In the 2002 elections the Islamist Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi, AKP) won 363 seats in the Grand National Assembly, while its nearest competitor, the social-democratic CHP, took 178, and non-partisans won 9. As of 2004 there were 13 main political parties and over two dozen minor Turkish and Kurdish parties in the nation.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For purposes of regional administration Turkey is divided into 81 *iller* (singular: *il*), or provinces, each under a provincial governor. The various subdivisions include counties, districts, and the smallest unit of administration, villages.

Each provincial and district capital, regardless of size, and town with more than 2,000 inhabitants is grouped into municipalities, run by mayors. At each level are elected representative assemblies with limited administrative powers.

LEGAL SYSTEM

Before the overthrow of the Ottoman Empire the Turkish legal system was based on Islamic religious authority. In 1923 a new code was introduced based on Western, particularly French, legal models.

The Turkish legal system consists of five higher courts and four types of lower courts. At the top sits the Constitutional Court, with members appointed by the president, which court reviews the constitutionality of laws. The highest administrative court is the Council of State, which considers the merits of draft legislation and government regulations. The Court of Appeals hears appeals from the lower courts. The Court of Jurisdictional Disputes settles disputes arising among civil, administrative, and military courts where jurisdictional issues have been raised. The State Security Court was established to prosecute offenses deemed threats to national interests.

The constitution expressly guarantees the independence of judges. The system of justice includes a bail procedure, and while there is no specific provision for habeas corpus, a right to speedy trial is included in the constitution. However, Turkish judicial procedures are not in fact speedy, defendants have been known to spend years in detention before their cases are finally addressed, and Turkish judges, many appointed by the president, can be influenced by the government. In 2004 the death penalty was banned in all cases.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Turkey's admission to the European Union has been delayed largely because of its poor record on human rights. This is the case despite the fact that the constitution expressly recognizes a number of universal rights, including freedom from forced labor, the right to liberty, the right to privacy, freedom of expression, freedom of conscience, and freedom from torture. This last right has been the focus of a great deal of international attention, especially in terms of Turkey's treatment of captured Kurds fighting for independence.

Indeed, Turkey's human rights record has earned the nation widespread negative publicity, such as when the Human Rights Commission of the Council of Europe accepted a case in 1985 brought by several European countries alleging that Turkey had violated the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights. The case was settled out of court when Turkey agreed to lift all martial law decrees within 18 months, introduce amnesty for political prisoners, and allow independent observers from the Council of Europe to monitor progress.

To a substantial extent, continuing government efforts to suppress the Kurds have been the primary source of Turkey's bleak human rights record. In 1989 Amnesty International issued a report claiming that more than 500 political prisoners had been tortured and that 250,000 people had been detained for political reasons since 1980. Although the organization reported some improvements in the late 1990s, torture remained widespread as of 2000. The armed conflict between government forces and the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) effectively came to an

end in 1999. Nevertheless, the repression of political parties and organizations in Kurdish southeastern Turkey continued unabated.

Since 2001 the Turkish government, under various leaders, has passed laws dealing with certain human rights issues, including the use of torture, violence against women, restrictions on free speech, and restrictions on the use of the Kurdish language. However, independent human rights organizations have noted that the implementation of such laws has not been consistent.

FOREIGN POLICY

Turkey's foreign policy followed both traditional and radical paths in the late 1990s. The nation's membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and full support of the bombing campaign against Serbia, its tacit support of Islamic regimes in the Caucasus, and its aggressive support of the Turkish enclave on Cyprus could all be considered aspects of traditional foreign policy. On the other hand, Turkey's recent economic, cultural, and military alliance with Israel, in the face of vehement criticism from Arabic neighbors, represents a fundamental shift in policy. Many see this as representative of Turkey's willingness to adopt an independent foreign policy when its interests are being served.

To some extent this foreign policy duality can also be seen in Turkey's approach to gaining admission to the European Union. While criticized for its less-than-stellar human rights record (which had to be improved to meet EU accession qualifications), Turkey in turn fiercely rejected such criticism, accusing Europeans of cynically adopting an anti-Islamic standard of behavior in order to isolate Turkey from the rest of Europe. Turkey refused to become a staging ground for U.S. troops during the 2003 Iraq invasion. Toward gaining EU membership, Turkey passed laws in 2003 and 2004 rectifying human rights violations and agreed to recognize Cyprus as an EU member.

Turkey's foreign economic relations also tend to be split along traditional and nontraditional lines. Turkey has bid to become the final outlet for a new oil pipeline from the Central Asian republics and has developed trade with a variety of regimes, some friendly, some hostile, around the globe.

Turkey joined NATO in 1952. The nation was an original signatory of the Baghdad Pact, an agreement on collective regional defense forged in 1955; the resulting alliance, renamed the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO) in 1959, had its headquarters in Turkey. Following the withdrawal of Iran and Pakistan, CENTO was dissolved in 1979.

Turkey and the United States are parties to 48 treaties and agreements, covering agricultural commodities, nuclear energy, aviation, defense, economic and technical cooperation, education, extradition, finance, investment

guarantees, judicial assistance, lend-lease, mutual security, narcotics, patents, the Peace Corps, postal matters, surplus property, taxation, trade and commerce, and visas.

Turkey is a founding member of the United Nations. It is also a member of 16 UN organizations and 39 other international organizations.

DEFENSE

Turkey's defense forces are commanded by the president of the republic, acting in his capacity as chief of staff. The command structure runs through the president to the prime minister and thence to the minister of defense and the chief of the general staff.

Manpower is provided through conscription. The total strength of the armed forces in 2003 was 664,800, making Turkey's one of the largest standing military forces in the world and second only to the United States among NATO members. Along with those of Israel, Turkey's armed forces are considered the best organized, the best led, and the best equipped in the Middle East. In 2003 the budget of the Defense Ministry was over \$12 billion, equaling about 5.3 percent of gross domestic product (GDP). The Turkish armed forces have started producing their own armaments. A 2003 law reduced the military's political role.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 664,800
 Military Manpower Availability: 16,756,323
 Military Expenditures \$billion: 12.155
 as % of GDP: 5.3
 as % of central government expenditures: —
 Arms Imports \$million: 504
 Arms Exports \$million: 61

ECONOMY

Covering an area only slightly smaller than Germany and France combined, Turkey has a population of over 69 million potential consumers. As situated in the region that has come to be known as the fertile crescent, Turkey is strategically positioned to take advantage of a growing network of economic interests stretching from the Middle East and the Black Sea region to the Turkic-speaking republics of Central Asia.

Since 1980 Turkey has had one of the fastest annual GDP growth rates in the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development; that rate exceeded 6 percent in most years between 1991 and 2000. The nation's GDP in 2004 was estimated at \$508.7 billion, with a per capita GDP of about \$7,400.

Turkey has been able to rapidly increase both its total exports—about half of which go to the European Union—and the share of manufactured goods it exports. The factors that have increased the competitive strength of

Turkish manufacturing are its abundant natural resources, its geographical proximity to export markets, developments in infrastructure and telecommunication systems, and the existence of a large domestic market. Manufacturing has achieved an annual average growth rate of 6 percent since 1990 and by 1998 was accounting for 20 percent of GDP. Turkey is the 12th-largest steel-producing country in the world, and steel has become Turkey's second-most important export product. Textiles and clothing have also become strong manufacturing sectors. The food industry, chemicals and plastics, glass, iron and steel, motor vehicles and parts, electrical and nonelectrical machinery, electronics, and furniture are also well-established sectors.

The country experienced a financial crisis in late 2000, including sharp drops in the stock market and foreign exchange reserves, but is recovering rapidly thanks to additional IMF support and the government's commitment to a specific timetable of economic reforms. Nevertheless, public-sector fiscal deficit has regularly exceeded 10 percent of GDP, partly as a result of interest payments, which accounted for more than 40 percent of central government spending in 2003. Inflation is beginning to come under control, falling to 9.3 percent in 2004. Foreign investment has not been strong, but proposed EU membership could reverse that trend.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 508.7
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 7,400
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 1.8
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 0.1
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 11.7
 Industry: 29.8
 Services: 58.5
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 67
 Government Consumption: 14
 Gross Domestic Investment: 17.3
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 69.46
 Imports: 94.5
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 2.3
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 30.7

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
1,020	1,580	2,440	3,536	4,430

Finance

National Currency: Turkish Lira (YTL)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = YTL 1,425,500
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency quadrillion: 14.8
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 43
 Total External Debt \$billion: 16.9
 Debt Service Ratio %: 20.3
 Balance of Payments \$billion: -15.3
 International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 33.8
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 9.3

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 165.8
 per capita \$: 2.40
 Foreign Direct Investment \$billion: 1.56

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$billion: 78.53
 Expenditures \$billion: 110.9
 Budget Deficit \$billion: 32.37
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 11.7
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: -0.6
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 3.74
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 18.3
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 67.2
 Total Farmland % of land area: 33.7
 Livestock: Cattle million: 9.8
 Chickens million: 250
 Pigs 000: 3
 Sheep million: 25
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 15.8
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 628

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 26.8
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 16.5

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 19.2
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 62.8
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 915
 Net Energy Imports % of use: 67.6
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 32.3
 Production kW-hr billion: 123
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 118
 Coal Reserves tons billion: 4.1
 Production tons million: 58.8
 Consumption tons million: 72.8
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet billion: 300
 Production cubic feet billion: 13
 Consumption cubic feet billion: 621
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels million: 300
 Production barrels 000 per day: 49.2
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 653
 Pipelines Length km: 3,562

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 94.5
 Exports \$billion: 69.46
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 9.3
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 8.0
 Balance of Trade \$billion: -15.3

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Germany %	12.9	13.9
Russia %	9.3	—
Italy %	7.1	7.4
France %	6.4	5.8
United States %	4.8	7.7
China %	4.6	—
United Kingdom %	4.4	8.8
Spain %	—	4.2

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 354,421
 Paved %: 41.6
 Automobiles: 4,600,100
 Trucks and Buses: 1,679,100
 Railroad: Track Length km: 8,671
 Passenger-km billion: 5.2
 Freight-km billion: 7.2
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 526
 Total Deadweight Tonnage million: 7.3
 Airports: 119
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 16.8
 Length of Waterways km: 1,200

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 13.3
 Number of Tourists from million: 5.9
 Tourist Receipts \$million: —
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: —

Communications

Telephones million: 18.9
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones million: 27.9
 Personal Computers million: 3
 Internet Hosts per million people: 5,099
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 79

ENVIRONMENT

Turkey is a signatory to the world's principal environmental agencies and has a strong interest in the work of regional environmental institutions. Turkey has received international financial aid for a number of environmental projects deemed crucial to further social development. Among these are projects aimed at improving water supply and quality and also sewage facilities. Another project is concentrated on reverting industrial-use land to a cultivable state. Thus, strip-mining operations, when terminated, would be covered up, resurfaced with top soil, reseeded, and thereby returned to agricultural purposes. Among major environmental concerns are air and water pollution, deforestation, and oil spills in the Bosphorus.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 13.3
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: 22
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 4
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 159,225
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 3.29

LIVING CONDITIONS

The UN 2004 Human Development Report ranked Turkey 88th out of 177 countries in terms of life expectancy, education, and standard of living. The average Turk's life expectancy in 2004 was 72.08 years, literacy stood at 86.5 percent as of a 2003 estimate, and 68 percent of eligible students were enrolled in primary, secondary, and tertiary schools in 2002. Per capita GDP was \$7,400 in 2004. While Turkey ranks about in the middle of all countries in terms of quality of life, it is the worst performer in south-eastern Europe.

A traditional village house in the interior of the country is often made of sun-dried brick or rough-hewn stone walls. Roofs are flat and used for storage, while floors are often compacted earth covered in carpets. Furnishing is quite simple and sparse. Along the Black Sea houses are more typically built of wood, while urban residences vary from simple houses to modern, centrally heated apartment buildings. Rapid urbanization since World War II has radically changed the lifestyle of Turks. As of 2000, 65 percent of the population lived in urban areas, up from 44 percent just two decades earlier. As such, there is an acute urban housing shortage; many take up residence in squatters' shantytowns, in temporary shelters called *gecekondu*. In the mid-1990s it was estimated that as many as half the country's urban dwellers lived in such makeshift structures. Major earthquakes in 1999 left close to one million people homeless; many of the residential buildings destroyed were substandard structures constructed without permits.

HEALTH

Medical treatment is free for those with financial need. As of 2004 there were 124 physicians for every 100,000 people. Roughly 81 percent of births are attended by trained health professionals. The infant mortality rate is 41 deaths per 1,000 live births. As of 1999 there were an estimated 2.6 hospital beds per 1,000 people. In 2002, 93 percent of the population had access to safe drinking water, 83 percent to adequate sanitation.

Malaria, once a major health problem, has been largely controlled, as has cholera. Tuberculosis, however, is coming back; in 1999 there were 38 cases of tuberculosis per 100,000 people, and just three years later that number had risen to 50 cases per 100,000. Immunization rates for children up to one year old in 2003 were as follows: tuberculosis, 89 percent; diphtheria, pertussis, and

tetanus, 68 percent; polio, 69 percent; and measles, 75 percent. By a 2001 estimate the HIV/AIDS incidence rate was below 0.1 percent. Smoking is a major health hazard for Turks, as tobacco consumption doubled between 1984 and 1995. Annual consumption per adult was about five pounds in 1995; in 2000, 65 percent of men and 24 percent of women smoked.

Total expenditures on health in 2002 totaled 6.5 percent of GDP.

Health

Number of Physicians: 86,000
 Number of Dentists: 15,866
 Number of Nurses: 162,597
 Number of Pharmacists: 22,922
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 124
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: 2.6
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 41.04
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 70
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 6.5
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 172
 HIV Infected % of adults: < 0.1
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 68
 Measles: 75
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 83
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 93

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Lamb is the favorite meat in Turkey; it is served skewered as a shish kebab or minced and grilled on a vertical spit as *döner kebab*. Other well-known dishes are *cerkes tavugu*, or chicken and walnuts, and *sigara boregi*, or cheese- and spinach-filled deep-fried pastries. Eggplant is a favorite vegetable, as served on its own or stuffed with lamb, onions, and tomatoes (*imam bayildi*). Appetizers, or meze, are also varied and delicious, from stuffed wine leaves to flaky dough rolled and stuffed with cheese (*börek*s).

Drinks include tea, *ayran* (a mixture of water and yogurt with a pinch of salt), Turkish coffee, *boza* (a traditional drink made from fermented bulgur wheat), beer, and raki, a licorice-flavored schnapps. Desserts are also plentiful, from baklava to rice pudding (*muhallabi*).

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 2.7
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 3,390
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 219.1
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 327.8

STATUS OF WOMEN

Women's issues have figured prominently in Turkey in recent years. In line with new women's rights protocols gain-

ing acceptance in the United Nations, Turkey has offered legislation, crafted by women legislators, legally eliminating all forms of discrimination in Turkish society. In 2002 a statute formally established that Turkish men were no longer necessarily regarded by law as the head of the family. The move gave women full equality with men 66 years after women's rights were first legally addressed.

Efforts are proceeding to extend compulsory education for women from five to eight years and to significantly improve the literacy rate among women, which was 78.7 percent in 2003.

In health matters, some remarkable progress has been made. The country's infant mortality rate was reduced from 169 deaths per 1,000 live births in 1965 to 41 in 2005. The Ministry of Justice has been making a determined attempt to eradicate the scourge of "honor killings," wherein a relative, believing a woman to have committed some dishonor on the family, will murder her and, traditionally, escape judicial sanction. In 2004 the government passed new laws regarding violence against women.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 4
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 0.95
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 20.6

WORK

In 2003 the Turkish labor force numbered over 25 million. Of these, 36 percent were employed in agriculture, producing tobacco, cotton, grain, olives, sugar beets, pulse, citrus, and livestock. About 23 percent were employed in industries, such as textiles, food processing, automobiles, mining (of coal, chromite, copper, and boron), steel, petroleum, construction, lumber, and paper. The largest segment of the workforce, over 41 percent, was engaged in the service sector. Tourism is increasingly a major source of income in Turkey. Traditional farming in rural areas involves the entire family, including the wife and children. The unemployment rate was 9.3 percent in 2004, with an additional 4 percent underemployed.

The rights of unionization and collective bargaining are recognized, although unions are required to obtain government permission to meet or hold rallies. Strikes are allowed, except in key industries and public services. As of 2002 about 13 percent of the total labor force was unionized. While the law prohibits children younger than 15 from working, child labor is widespread in Turkey. As many as one million children between the ages of 12 and 17 are employed, mostly in small-scale industry and agriculture. In 2004, the monthly minimum wage was set at \$328, and the workweek was 45 hours. Health and safety conditions

are legislated, but such laws are irregularly enforced; labor laws essentially affect only 12 percent of workers.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 25,300,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 38.9
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 35.9
 Industry: 22.8
 Services: 41.2
 Unemployment %: 9.3

EDUCATION

Education is free, universal, and compulsory from ages six to 14 for boys and six to 11 for girls. The academic year runs from September to June. The language of instruction is Turkish, except at the university level, where English is adopted in some colleges and courses. The limited use of Kurdish as a language of instruction in private schools was allowed as of 2002.

Overall schooling lasts for 11 years, as divided into primary and secondary sections. The primary section has two stages: lower and upper; the secondary section, lasting for six years, also has two components: middle school and lycée. Most students heading for university proceed through the lycée system.

Language instruction is compulsory in secondary schools. Technical education is offered through the secondary school system, and, in addition, there is a parallel stream of technical institutes and schools for those with inclinations toward technical careers.

There are 29 universities and more than 100 other institutions of higher learning in Turkey, and all but two are autonomous. There exists a long tradition of conflict between university students and the military.

Turkey's literacy rate in 2003 was 86.5 percent. Net primary enrollment stood at 86 percent in 2002, while secondary and tertiary enrollment sharply declined from that number. Just 68 percent of all eligible students were enrolled in primary, secondary, and tertiary schools in 2002. Government expenditures on education in 2001 equaled 3.7 percent of GDP.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 86.5
 Male %: 94.3
 Female %: 78.7
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 10.9
 First Level: Primary Schools: 49,240
 Teachers: —
 Students: 7,904,361
 Student-Teacher Ratio: —
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 86.4

(continues)

Education *(continued)*

Second Level: Secondary Schools: 10,689

Teachers: —

Students: 4,480,993

Student-Teacher Ratio: —

Net Enrollment Ratio: —

Third Level: Institutions: 817

Teachers: 76,090

Students: 1,918,483

Gross Enrollment Ratio: 28.1

Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 3.7

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, through its General Directorate for Agricultural Research, administers over a dozen separate research agencies studying everything from filed crops to food technology, plant protection, animal health, and fisheries. The University of Ankara has agricultural research departments, and the University of Istanbul has faculties for forestry research. The Scientific and Technical Research Council of Turkey coordinates scientific research in the nation, mainly through the Marmara Scientific and Industrial Research Institute, which conducts research on basic and applied sciences (including biotechnology) and industry. Turkey also has a nuclear research program. The Ankara Nuclear Research and Training Center, part of the Turkish Atomic Energy Authority, studies health physics, nuclear electronics, and plasma physics. The General Directorate of Mineral Research and Exploration conducts the Geological Survey and evaluates mineral resources.

Turkey has 29 universities offering courses in basic and applied sciences. Between 1994 and 1997, 22 percent of all students in higher education were enrolled in science, math, or engineering courses. In 2002, there were 345 researchers for every million people, and research and development expenditures equaled 0.7 percent of GDP.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 345

Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 0.66

High-Tech Exports \$million: 814.8

Patent Applications by Residents: 550

MEDIA

Though freedom of expression is guaranteed by the constitution, in practice Turkey's media have long been subjected to varying degrees of official pressure, ranging from censorship and outright banning to surveillance and arbitrary arrest. Freedom of the press is occasionally restricted, particularly for leftist or pro-Kurdish publications. Though the government passed important

freedom-of-expression laws in 2003 and allowed Kurdish-language broadcasts as of 2004, there is still a wide gap between what is stated law and what press control actually happens on the ground. In its 2004 index the international media watchdog group Reporters without Borders ranked Turkey 114th out of 167 countries in terms of press freedom.

Nevertheless, the media in Turkey is thriving. As of 1998 the country boasted 63 radio stations, six TV stations, and hundreds of newspapers and magazines. In 2004 there were about 300 private television stations and 1,000 private radio stations in addition to the state-run TRT. Among the more popular television networks are Star TV, Show TV, and Kanal D. The country's leading newspapers include *Milliyet*, *Sabah*, and *Hürriyet*, all based in Istanbul. Other influential publications include *Cumhuriyet* and the Kurdish-language *Azadi* and *Welat*.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 542

Total Circulation 000: —

Circulation per 1,000: —

Books Published: 2,920

Periodicals: 688

Radio Receivers million: 32.7

per 1,000: 470

Television sets million: 21.5

per 1,000: 328

CULTURE

With one foot in Europe and the other firmly in Asia, Turkey presents a country and culture that is a blending of ideas from East and West, a crossroads of beliefs and traditions. The remains of ancient Hittite, Roman, Byzantine, and Seljuk Turk cultures can be found throughout the land, and the imprints of Islam are everywhere to be seen, especially in mosques such as Hagia Sophia and the Blue Mosque in Istanbul. The high art of carpet weaving, with its intricate and subtle designs, has for centuries been a Turkish specialty, as has the carving of meerschaum pipes. With the formation of modern, secular Turkey under Atatürk, another cultural overlay was added. Looking toward Europe rather than the East, Atatürk encouraged painting, sculpture, literature, Western music, dance, and drama.

Traditional Turkish music, with its broad vocal range, complex harmonies, rapid turns from major to minor scales, and irregular rhythms, has a very distinctive sound to Western ears. Traditional instruments include the lute-like *tambur* and *ud* and the dulcimer, or *santour*. *Türkü* music is traditional folk music with a modern urban outlook. Folk dancing has long been a part of the cultural *mélange*, and each region of the country has its own unique traditions as well as its own unique traditional clothing to accompany such dancing. Another uniquely

Turkish cultural artifact is the shadow puppet play called *karagoz*, with puppets made of leather manipulated in front of a white screen, with backlighting used to create shadows on the screen.

Turkish painting found its roots in the miniatures of the Ottoman Empire. Modern practitioners of the idiom include the portrait and landscape painter Rahmi Pehlivanli. Literature has a long and rich tradition in Turkey, from the days of traveling bards to modern narrative fiction and poetry, much with nationalistic and naturalistic slants. Modern Turkish literature includes the work of novelists such as Orhan Pamuk and Latife Tekin. Filmmakers have also made an impact internationally, including the directors Yilmaz Güney, Tunç Basaran, Zülfü Livaneli, and Ömer Kavur.

The Turkish Ministry of Culture oversees the cultural scene in the country. There are music conservatories in Ankara, Istanbul, and Izmir, and the Academy of Fine Arts in Istanbul, the National Folklore Institute in Ankara, and the Turkish Folklore Society in Istanbul also help to preserve traditional culture. There are archaeological museums in Ankara, Istanbul, and Izmir, and the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Art is found in Istanbul.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number:	1,292
Volumes:	12,488,172
Registered borrowers:	406,169
Museums Number:	127
Annual Attendance:	5,376,000
Cinema Gross Receipts:	—
Number of Cinemas:	344
Seating Capacity:	118,000
Annual Attendance:	11,344,000

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Folktales are an integral part of Turkish folklore; some of these tales take more than a day to recite. One popular character in the oral tradition is Nasreddin Hoca (or Hoja), a comic figure thought to have been an actual sage and teacher in the 13th century. Nasreddin Hoca is at the center of many stories, all of them bearing a wry moral twist. Folktale heroes include the nomadic Dede Horkut as well as Koroglu, a sort of Turkish Robin Hood.

Traditional beliefs in the supernatural still inform modern Turkey. For example, charms used to ward off the evil eye can be seen in most cars and taxis.

Proverbs are another rich source of Turkish folklore. Popular sayings include “On a winter’s day, the fireside is a bed of tulips,” “The only head free of worries is that of a scarecrow,” and “If you dig a grave for your neighbor, measure it for yourself.”

Myth abounds in the Turkish land, which has known so many different cultures. Aka is the ancient mother

goddess of Turkey (also known as Cybele), while Ararat is the ancient creator goddess. Shahmeran is the goddess of wisdom, half snake and half female.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Modern urban Turkey has many of the same entertainments found in other urban centers of the West, although nightlife is a bit more staid because of the country’s Muslim orientation. When he was mayor of Istanbul in the 1990s, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, elected prime minister in 2003, banned alcohol in all official municipal buildings.

Both television and movies provide major entertainment sources for Turks, but one of the most lasting forms of entertainment and relaxation is the tradition of the steam bath, or *hamam*. Both men and women use the *hamam*, though separately. Turkish men still enjoy retiring to the all-male confines of a coffeehouse, *kiraathane*, or *köy odası*, where they play backgammon, drink tea, and smoke hookahs (water pipes).

ETIQUETTE

As with much of the eastern Mediterranean and southeastern Europe, Turkey has a tradition of head and hand gestures that prove confusing for Westerners. A sharp nod of the head upward, sometimes with a clicking of the tongue, means “no,” while an abrupt downward nod means “yes.” A head tilt, which can be mistaken for shaking the head, means “I don’t know” or “I don’t understand.” A hand wave, with the palm down, means “come here.”

Mastering such gestures is only the beginning of becoming literate in Turkish manners. The Turks have three ways of saying thanks: *sagol*, *tesekkür edermin*, and the French-derived *mersi*. The handshake is a usual form of greeting, but it should not be too firm. While men may hug and even exchange kisses with good friends upon greeting, this is not done between the sexes in public. Younger people show elders respect by standing when elders enter a room. Social distance is much closer in Turkey than in other Western countries. Dining is continental style, and the prohibitions of pork and alcohol are observed by strict Muslims. Shoes are generally removed before entering homes; the use of the right hand for giving and receiving is preferred.

FAMILY LIFE

Though the family is still at the center of Turkish social life, it is no longer the traditional male-run, patrilineal family of former times; especially with rapid urbaniza-

tion, customs have changed. The nuclear family is more typical in cities than the extended family of the rural household. While in traditional times sons lived with their wives and children in the family home until the death of their father, nowadays, even in rural areas, children generally set up their own homes after marriage. However, the sense of being responsible for those in one's family is maintained.

Arranged marriages with bride-prices were typical in traditional society. Such is still sometimes the case in rural villages but is no longer so in modern, urbanized Turkey. The size of the family has shrunk from the traditional five or six children. The fertility rate in 2004 was below two children per woman. Women, though given legal equality by Atatürk that was reaffirmed by a 2002 law, still find themselves in traditionally subservient positions in many families, especially rural ones. In the cities, women have moved into the professions alongside men, but many then end up working both in the home and at the workplace. The divorce rate in 2000 was 0.5 per 1,000 population; 6 percent of all marriages end in divorce.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Modern Western clothing has been the norm in Turkey since the republic was founded in the 1920s; fezzes and turbans were abolished by law in 1925. In rural areas the traditional baggy pants (*salvar*) can still be seen, though without the cummerbund and brightly patterned vest that once accompanied them. Rural women may still dress traditionally, identifying their marital status with their clothing. Many wear the traditional headscarf (the veil was never used by Turkish Muslim women). This traditional headscarf, the *charshaf*, was banned from the universities in 1988, but that action served only to make it a symbol of Islamic fundamentalism. As of 2004 as many as 65 percent of Turkish women covered their heads with scarves, although the academic headscarf ban was still in effect.

SPORTS

Turkey's national sport is soccer. There are 16 major soccer clubs and dozens of smaller clubs in the country. Teams such as Galatasaray and Fenerbahçe have competed in the European Cup. Between September and May fans gather at the major stadiums on weekends to cheer on their favorite teams and sometimes to engage in soccer hooliganism.

Wrestling, or *kirkpınar*, is another favorite sport. The country has sent traditional wrestling teams to the Olympics, but the domestic variety is distinctly Turkish: The players wear leather pants and cover their bodies with

olive oil to make it more difficult for their opponents to tackle them. Other popular sports include archery, hunting and shooting, car racing, swimming, and the traditional sport called *cirit*, in which the participant throws a javelin while on horseback.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1945** Turkey joins the United Nations.
- 1946** A faction of the Republican People's Party led by Adnan Menderes and Celâl Bayar forms the Democratic Party and wins 46 seats in the Grand National Assembly.
- 1950** The opposition Democratic Party wins an absolute majority in the country's first free elections. Adnan Menderes is elected prime minister and Celâl Bayar president. Turkey sends troops to Korea under UN command.
- 1952** Turkey becomes a member of NATO and provides military bases for NATO and the United States. Political violence increases.
- 1954** The Democratic Party retains a majority in national elections.
- 1955** Anti-Greek riots erupt in Istanbul over the Cyprus issue. Iraq and Turkey sign the Baghdad Pact, a mutual security treaty that later evolves into the Central Treaty Organization.
- 1957** The Democratic Party majority is reduced in parliamentary elections. Student unrest erupts; the government increasingly suppresses opposition.
- 1960** A military coup led by Gen. Cemâl Gürsel topples the Menderes government; Menderes and Bayar are placed under arrest. A provisional military government is formed under a Committee of National Unity. The Turkish lira is devalued.
- 1961** Menderes and two other cabinet members are convicted of misuse of power and hanged; Bayar is jailed. A new constitution is promulgated. Gürsel is elected president. In parliamentary elections the Republican People's Party, led by former president İsmet İnönü, wins the most seats and forms a coalition government with the Justice Party.
- 1962** The army attempts a coup.
- 1963** A second army coup attempt is unsuccessful.
- 1964** Turkey joins the Regional Cooperation for Development.
- 1965** İnönü resigns; Suat Hayri Ürgüplü forms an interim government. The Justice Party wins a clear majority in general elections, and its leader, Süleyman Demirel, heads a new government.
- 1966** Cevdet Sunay succeeds Gürsel as president.
- 1967** Pope Paul visits Istanbul.
- 1968** Television is introduced.

- 1969** The Justice Party retains a large majority in parliamentary elections.
- 1970** The Turkish lira is devalued.
- 1971** As political violence increases, the armed forces threaten to again intervene. Demirel steps down; Nihat Erim forms a nonparty government with military support. Martial law is proclaimed in 11 provinces, including Istanbul. The constitution of 1961 is amended to abridge freedom of association.
- 1972** Erim resigns; Suat Hayri Ürgüplü and Ferit Melen head brief governments.
- 1973** Fahri Korutürk is elected president on the 14th ballot to succeed Sunay. Melen resigns and is succeeded by Naim Talu. The National Assembly passes the Agrarian Reform Bill, setting ceilings on landholdings. A new bridge is opened over the Bosphorus. Opium cultivation is banned under an agreement with the United States. The military curtails its intervention in politics; martial law is lifted. In general elections the Republican People's Party gains a majority in the Assembly. Amnesty is granted to 50,000 political prisoners on the 50th anniversary of the republic.
- 1974** Republican People's Party leader Bülent Ecevit forms a coalition government. The ban on opium cultivation is removed. Turkey invades Cyprus and occupies one-third of the island to prevent a Greek takeover. The United States suspends military and economic aid to Turkey; Turkey closes U.S. military bases. Ecevit resigns as his coalition breaks up. Sadi Irmak forms a caretaker government.
- 1975** Süleyman Demirel returns to power, leading a right-wing coalition. The United States softens its sanctions on Turkey.
- 1977** The Republican People's Party emerges as the leading party in national elections. Bülent Ecevit forms a cabinet that lasts for 10 days. The Turkish lira is devalued for the fourth time. Demirel, of the Justice Party, forms a new cabinet but resigns by the end of the year.
- 1978** Ecevit is sworn in as prime minister for the third time. U.S. arms embargo is completely lifted. Turkey reopens U.S. military bases.
- 1979** In national elections, rightists win a clear lead. Ecevit resigns, and Demirel returns to the prime minister's office. The Turkish lira is devalued in a desperate move to shore up the economy.
- 1980** The Turkish military ousts the civilian government, suspends the Grand National Assembly, and imposes martial law. Chief of Staff Kenan Evren takes over as head of state and chairman of the new National Security Council. Retired admiral Bülent Ulusu is named prime minister. Ecevit and Demirel are arrested but later released, while right-wing extremist leaders are held. Strikes are banned. Turkey signs a new accord with the United States that gives Turkey controlling rights over U.S. bases in the country.
- 1982** A new constitution is approved by popular referendum.
- 1983** The ban on political parties is lifted; of the 15 new political parties that are established, three are permitted to contest legislative elections. The Motherland Party wins 211 of 400 seats in the new unicameral Grand National Assembly, and its leader, Turgut Özal, is named prime minister.
- 1984** The Motherland Party wins decisively in local elections. Northern Cyprus and Turkey exchange ambassadors. The separatist Kurdistan Workers' Party begins a campaign of guerilla violence.
- 1985** The European Economic Community imposes strict quotas on imports of low-priced textiles and clothing from Turkey.
- 1987** The Motherland Party wins 36 percent of the votes cast in the general election, and Turgut Özal forms a new, expanded cabinet.
- 1988** An assassination attempt on Özal is unsuccessful.
- 1989** Turkey's application to join the European Community is rejected. Özal succeeds Gen. Kenan Evren as president and appoints Yildirim Akbulut as prime minister.
- 1990** The Turkish government lifts its restrictions on the use of joint NATO bases in Turkey. Turkey complies with UN sanctions against Iraq and closes the pipeline at Kirkuk.
- 1991** Iraqi Kurd refugees fleeing the Persian Gulf War cross into Turkey. Mesut Yılmaz is named prime minister. The True Path Party, led by Süleyman Demirel, displaces the Motherland Party in parliamentary elections.
- 1992** Kurdish separatist violence escalates.
- 1993** Özal dies. Demirel becomes president. Tansu Çiller, the new leader of the True Path Party, becomes Turkey's first female prime minister.
- 1994** Çiller announces economic austerity plans intended to strengthen Turkey's weak economy.
- 1995** The Welfare Party, an Islamic party led by Necmettin Erbakan, wins the most votes in parliamentary elections, but other parties refuse to form a coalition with it because of its nonsecular platform. Thirty-five thousand Turkish troops cross into Iraq to engage in preemptive strikes on Kurdish guerilla strongholds.
- 1996** The Motherland and True Path parties form a coalition that soon dissolves. True Path joins a coalition with the Welfare Party, and Erbakan becomes the first Islamist leader of Turkey since the nation was founded in 1923.

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- 1997** The military compels Erbakan to resign. Yilmaz is named prime minister. The European Union denies Turkey's application for membership.
- 1998** The constitutional court outlaws the Welfare Party on the grounds that it threatens the secular nature of the nation. Former Welfare Party members form Virtue, another Islamist party. Yilmaz resigns amid scandal, and Ecevit heads a caretaker government.
- 1999** Abdullah Öcalan, leader of the Kurdistan Workers' Party, is captured. Elections give the most seats to the rightist Nationalist Action Party, but Ecevit forms a centrist coalition government excluding the party. A disastrous earthquake strikes western Turkey, killing at least 15,000 and injuring 30,000.
- 2000** Parliament elects as president Ahmet Necdet Sezer, the former chief justice of the constitutional court. Responding to Öcalan's call for a cease-fire, Kurdish rebels renounce violence and announce plans to empower Kurds through democratic means.
- 2001** Turkey recalls ambassador to France after French National Assembly recognizes the killings of Armenians under the Ottoman Empire as genocide. The Turkish lira loses more than one-third of its value due to foreign investors' fear of a government collapse. The Constitutional Court bans the main opposition party, the pro-Islamic Virtue Party. A new political party is formed in its place by members of the banned Virtue Party, called Saadet. Parliament adopts reforms that include outlawing capital punishment, except in times of war or for acts of terrorism, and allowing broadcasts in Kurdish.
- 2002** Turkish women are granted full legal equality with men. Parliament adopts further legal changes that are intended to improve the country's chances to join the European Union, but critics say that the changes still fall short of EU standards. In November, the Islamism-based Justice and Development Party (AKP) wins a landslide election victory.
- 2003** Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, head of AKP, becomes prime minister. Parliament decides not to allow the United States to use Turkey as a staging ground for the invasion of Iraq.
- 2004** Turkey bans the death penalty, an important step toward EU membership. The PKK, now called the People's Congress of Kurdistan, resumes its separatist insurgency. Turkish state television broadcasts its first Kurdish-language program as part of a reform package to win EU membership.
- 2005** EU membership talks begin in October. A new lira is introduced.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Ministry of Foreign Affairs
<http://www.mfa.gov.tr/>
- Republic of Turkey
<http://www.turkey.org/>
- State Institute of Statistics
<http://www.die.gov.tr/english/index.html>

TURKMENISTAN

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Turkmenistan (Türkmenistan Jumhuriyati)

ABBREVIATION

TM

CAPITAL

Ashgabat

HEAD OF STATE & HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

President Saparmurat Atayevich Niyazov (from 1990)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Modified dictatorship

POPULATION

4,952,081 (2005)

AREA

488,100 sq km (188,455 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Turkmen, Uzbek, Russian

LANGUAGES

Turkmen (official), Russian, Uzbek

RELIGIONS

Islam, Eastern Orthodoxy

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Turkmen manat

NATIONAL FLAG

Green field, with a claret vertical stripe in the leftmost third containing five white, black, and orange carpet guls (asymmetrical designs used in producing rugs), as associated with five different tribes, and a white crescent and five white stars near the top to the right of the guls

NATIONAL EMBLEM

At the center of the national emblem is a horse that represents the Akhal-Teke horses, a famous breed that comes from a stable outside of Ashgabat. Around the horse are five guls, rose-patterned medallions found in the center section of every Turkmen carpet. The patterns represent the five main tribes of Turkmenistan. On the outside border of the emblem, cotton is depicted. On the upper part of the outside border are a crescent that symbolizes Islam and five stars that symbolize the five provinces of the country.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Independent, Neutral, Turkmenistan State Anthem”

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

October 27 (Independence Day)

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

October 27, 1991

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

May 18, 1992

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Turkmenistan, one of the six *stans* (literally, “land of”) of Central Asia, borders the Caspian Sea between Iran and Uzbekistan. The capital city of Ashgabat is located in the southwestern part of the country, which is essentially a rolling desert lowland, 90 percent of which is occupied by the Karakum Desert. The population is concentrated in oases at the foot of the Kopet Dag Mountains in the south and the Murgab, Tejen and Amu Darya rivers. Less than 4 percent of the land is arable. The highest point is Gori Ayribaba (3,139 m; 10,296 ft).

Geography

Area sq km: 488,100; sq mi 188,455

World Rank: 51st

Land Boundaries, km: Afghanistan 744; Iran 992; Kazakhstan 379;

Uzbekistan 1,621

Coastline, km: 0

Elevation Extremes meters:

Lowest: Vpadina Akchanaya -81

Highest: Gori Ayribaba 3,139

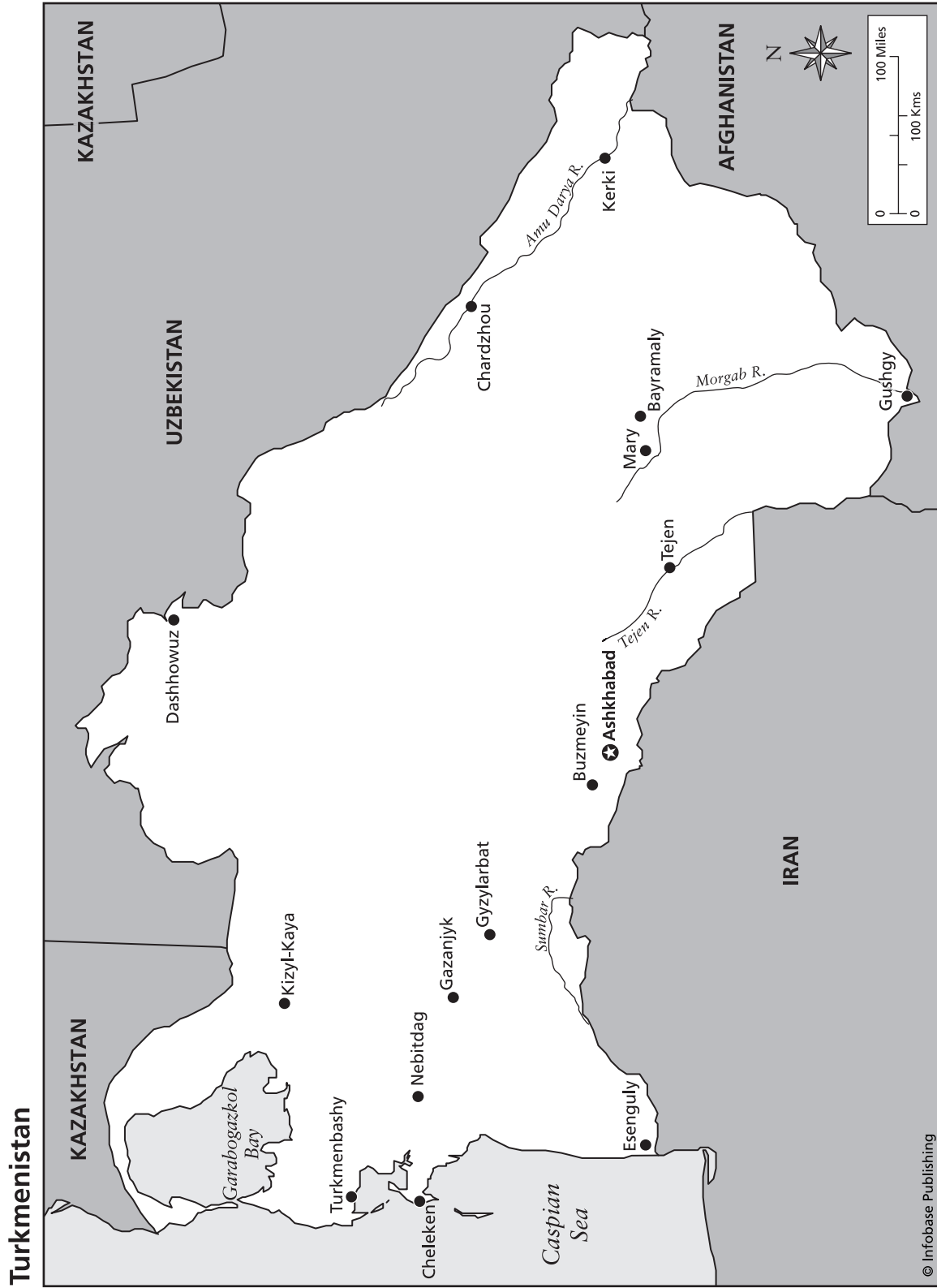
Land Use %

Arable Land: 3.7

Permanent Crops: 0.1

Forest: 8.0

Other: 88.2



Population of Principal Cities (1999 est.)

Ashkhabad	604,700
Dashhowuz	165,400
Turkmenabat	203,000

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

The climate is continental and arid. The mean temperature is 27.8°C (82°F) in July and -3.9°C (25°F) in January. Temperatures in the Karakum Desert may reach 50°C (122°F). Annual precipitation averages 100 to 200 mm (4 to 8 in) in the lowland and 400 mm (16 in) in the mountains.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature
January: 25°F
July: 82°F
Average Rainfall: 9.7 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

With over 90 percent of the land mass covered in desert, Turkmenistan presents the sparse vegetation characteristic of such arid locations. In mountain valleys are found figs, walnuts, wild grapes, and almonds. On the slopes of the Kopet Dag Mountains in the south, juniper and pistachio trees grow. Along riverbanks are stands of willow and black poplar as well as cane and reed.

Animal life does exist in the desert, including gazelles, wildcats, foxes, and tortoises. Mountain areas and plateaus are home to snow leopards, lynx, goats, and cheetahs. Wild boars, jackals, pink deer, and wild donkeys are also found in some plateau regions. Along the Caspian Sea, avian life is thick. Geese, ducks, and swans all make this area their winter home. The Caspian is also a rich source of roach, sturgeon, herring, and sprat.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005:	4,952,081
World Rank:	112th
Density per sq km:	10.4
% of annual growth (1999-2003):	1.6
Male %:	49.5
Female %:	50.5
Urban %:	44.8
Age Distribution %:	
0-14:	35.7
15-64:	60.2
65 and over:	4.1
Population 2025:	7,053,000

Birth Rate per 1,000:	27.68
Death Rate per 1,000:	8.78
Rate of Natural Increase %:	1.9
Total Fertility Rate:	3.41
Expectation of Life (years):	Males 58.02
	Females 64.93
Marriage Rate per 1,000:	5.4
Divorce Rate per 1,000:	1.1
Average Size of Households:	5.6
Induced Abortions:	—

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Turkmenistan has over 100 ethnic groups, of which Turkmen make up 75 percent. The larger minorities include Uzbeks (9 percent), Russians (7 percent), Kazakhs (2 percent), and Ukrainians (0.5 percent). Other groups include Azeris, Uighurs, Moldovans, Georgians, and Jews.

LANGUAGES

Turkmen is spoken by about 95 percent of the population, while Russian, spoken by about 38 percent, is also used in commerce and government. Turkmen is a Turkic language belonging to the Oghuz group. It is written in Cyrillic characters, but upon independence Latin script was introduced.

RELIGIONS

The religion of the majority is Sunni Islam blended with Sufi mysticism and shamanism. Most Russians belong to the Orthodox Church, although a few are Lutherans and Baptists. The many decades of Communist indoctrination affected the force of Muslim traditions in Turkmenian society, but there has been renewed interest in such traditions since independence.

Religious Affiliations

Muslim	4,407,000
Russian Orthodox	446,000
Other	99,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The region that is now Turkmenistan passed under the rule of a number of conquerors, including Bactrians, Parthians, and the Achaemenids, before the time of Alexander the Great, who conquered the region around 323 B.C.E. The Parthian Empire followed and lasted until 224 C.E., when Persians under the Sassanids seized the

territory. In the fifth century the region fell under new masters, beginning with the Ephthalites and followed by Tiu-chue nomads (sixth century) and Arabs (eighth century). Arabs introduced Islam, which took hold as the religion of the land. Turkmenistan passed under the control of the Samanids in the 10th century, who were in turn displaced by the Seljuks from the 11th century to the 13th century and later by the Mongols. Under the Mongols, from 1219 to 1221 Turkmenistan was split among the Golden Horde, the Chagatai Khanate, and the Hulaguid Khanate, of Persia. From the 13th to the 16th centuries Turkmenistan became a part of Tamerlane's empire. In the 16th century the region was once again divided between Bukhara and Persia. It was during this time that the course of the Amu Darya changed, and much of the land was claimed by desert. In the 17th century, as Russia began its great eastward expansion, Russian merchants traded extensively with Turkmen. Between 1865 and 1885 the czar began the direct annexation of the region, putting down heavy resistance by the tribes. By 1885 the entire region was annexed to Russia under the name of the Trans-Caspian District. Russia put down another revolt in 1916 before the Bolsheviks seized power. Resistance continued under the Bolsheviks until 1924, when the region was made part of the Trans-Caspian Republic. In 1925 it became a constituent republic of the Soviet Union under the present name. Throughout the Soviet period Turkmenistan was the poorest and least assimilated of the republics.

After the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991 Turkmenistan declared its independence under President Saparmurat Niyazov, who assumed the title of *turkmenbashi*, or "head Turkmen," and has remained in power since. The Supreme Soviet approved a new constitution in 1992. In 1999 Niyazov was made a virtual president-for-life. No opposition parties are officially registered, and political expression is effectively outlawed. Niyazov has fostered a Stalinist cult of personality around him. His birthday is an official holiday, and his statues appear in public squares throughout the country. The Human Rights Watch has called his regime "the most repressive and abusive" in the world.

Niyazov continued to consolidate power following a supposed assassination attempt in 2002. He reestablished repressive laws and arrested dozens of his most vocal critics on the pretext of national security. In 2003 he visited Russia and signed an agreement with the Russian company Gazprom through which Russia will buy 60 billion cubic meters of gas from Turkmenistan annually. At the same time Niyazov caused a row when he cancelled the dual citizenship agreement with Russia, which had been in force for a decade. Niyazov continues to hold an iron grip on Turkmenistan, though in 2005 he made the surprise announcement that a new presidential election would be held in 2009.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1991– Saparmurat Atayevich Niyazov

CONSTITUTION

The first postindependence constitution, of 1992, established a secular and democratic republic. The constitution provides for a strong executive by combining the offices of head of state and head of government. In practice, under Niyazov the presidency has become an autocratic institution without any restraining legal authority. The president has the power to personally issue laws, except those amending the constitution or revising the criminal code. He also appoints judges. The constitution made Turkmen the sole official language and guaranteed the right of private property. Although the 1992 constitution set a limit of two terms per president, President Niyazov's term was extended indefinitely in 1999.

PARLIAMENT

Turkmenistan has a bicameral parliament with two legislative bodies: the People's Council (Khalik Maslakhaty), with 110 members, and the Assembly (Majlis), with 50 members elected for five-year terms. The People's Council meets infrequently to debate major issues, while the Assembly is responsible for ordinary legislation. Members of the Assembly are generally elected unopposed, such that elections are a sham.

POLITICAL PARTIES

The Democratic Party of Turkmenistan (DPT) occupies a position analogous to that of the Communist Party in Soviet times. It is the successor to the Turkmen Communist Party, which was dissolved in 1991 and is described in official literature as the mother party. There are a number of unregistered parties, none of which have any legal standing. In both the 2003 elections for the People's Council and the 2004 Assembly elections all candidates belonged to the DPT.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Turkmenistan is divided into five provinces, or *welayatlar*. Within each province there are four levels of local government: From top to bottom, they are *welayets*, *shekbers*, *etraps*, and *ovs*. The first three have presidentially appointed executives called *vakils*. Each territorial unit has an elected council called a *gengeshchi* headed by an *archbyn*.

LEGAL SYSTEM

Under the Supreme Court are 61 district and city courts of first instance and six provincial courts. The Supreme Economic Court hears cases involving disputes between business enterprises and the government. The judiciary is technically independent but is in actuality subservient to the government. Judges are appointed by the president for five-year terms. There are no juries. The constitution guarantees basic rights to defendants, including those to public trial and to defense counsel, but such rights are normally abrogated in practice.

The constitution prohibits torture and cruel treatment in custody; however, according to the U.S. State Department, in 2004 there were credible reports that security officials tortured, routinely beat, and used excessive force against criminal suspects, prisoners, and individuals critical of the government.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Turkmenistan has made little progress in moving from a Soviet-era authoritarian style of government to a democratic system. The exemption of President Niyazov from term limits has essentially made him president-for-life, although he declared that a presidential election would be held in 2009. The Communist Party (renamed the Democratic Party) has retained its monopoly on power. The government has registered no new political parties and represses all political opposition. The government's human rights record is poor. Security forces under the Committee on National Security (formerly the KGB) commit serious human rights abuses, such as arbitrary arrest and detention, prolonged pretrial detention, unfair trials, and the mistreatment of suspects and prisoners. The government seriously restricts freedom of speech and does not permit freedom of the press. The government completely controls the media, censors all newspapers, and muzzles independent critics. There are restrictions on the practice of religion. Religious organizations are required to have at least 500 Turkmenians as members in a given locality to be legally registered. There are restrictions on travel abroad.

On the strength of a supposed (some say staged) assassination attempt in 2002, the Niyazov government cracked down on critics. Blaming the opposition for the attempt, Niyazov had former foreign minister Boris Shikhmuradov arrested. Shikhmuradov made a televised confession four days later that critics maintain had been coerced. He was sentenced to life in prison following what human rights groups condemned as a Soviet-style show trial. Two of the alleged conspirators received life sentences in absentia, while many other suspects were given lengthy prison sentences.

FOREIGN POLICY

Turkmenistan has close ties to its Muslim neighbors to the south, although the nation by no means subscribes to their Islamic fundamentalism. Foreign policy priorities are instead focused on economic issues, particularly as they relate to the marketing of enormous hydrocarbon reserves. There are frequent disputes with Russia and former Soviet states over pipelines carrying gas to Europe and Asia. There are disputes with Azerbaijan over the ownership of at least two Caspian oilfields. Another dispute with Uzbekistan relates to the Turkmenian diversion of water from the Amu Darya River for irrigation. In an effort to reduce dependence on Russia, Turkmenistan has tried to cultivate good relations with China, Turkey, the United States, and the European Union. The core of Turkmenian foreign policy is neutrality.

DEFENSE

In 2003 the Turkmenistan armed forces comprised about 29,000 active personnel, with about 2,000 heavy weapons in their arsenal. The army has the bulk of these forces, while about 3,000 serve in the air force. In 1999 the defense budget was \$90 million, or 3.4 percent of gross domestic product (GDP).

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	29,000
Military Manpower Availability:	1,132,833
Military Expenditures \$million:	90
as % of GDP:	3.4
as % of central government expenditures:	—
Arms Imports \$million:	—
Arms Exports \$million:	—

ECONOMY

Turkmenistan's economy is based on cotton and oil. One-half of the irrigated land is planted with cotton, such that the nation was at one time the world's 10th-largest producer. However, poor harvests since 2001 have led to a 46 percent decline in cotton exports. Turkmenistan also possesses the world's fifth-largest reserves of natural gas and substantial oil resources. The economy did well until 1993 because of higher prices for oil, but after 1994 Russia's refusal to export gas to hard currency markets and mounting debts to former Soviet states contributed to a sharp fall in industrial production and caused the budget to shift from a surplus to a deficit. The economy bottomed out in 1996, while the inflation rate continued to soar.

The authoritarian, tribal nature of the regime has worked against economic reform. Privatization goals

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have remained limited. In 1996 the government launched a modest stabilization program aimed at cutting budget deficits. Between 1998 and 2003 Turkmenistan suffered from the continued lack of adequate export routes for natural gas and from obligations on extensive short-term external debt.

While total exports have risen sharply because of higher international oil and gas prices, short-term prospects are discouraging because of widespread internal poverty and the burden of foreign debt. International Monetary Fund (IMF) assistance seems necessary, but the government has not yet been ready to accept IMF requirements. A 1999 deal to ship 20 billion cubic meters of natural gas through Russia's Gazprom pipeline helped alleviate the 2000 fiscal shortfall, but inadequate fiscal restraint and the tenuous nature of Turkmenistan's 2001 gas deals, combined with the continued lack of economic reform, will limit progress.

The situation improved somewhat as a result of a 2002 deal with Gazprom for the annual transport of 60 billion cubic meters of natural gas. The international community, including investors, took note of the country's cooperation in allowing for the transshipment of humanitarian aid to Afghanistan following the war there in 2002. All economic statistics are considered state secrets, so economic indicators are estimates only. Despite annual GDP growth rates of between 10 and 20 percent, one-third of the population still lives below the poverty line; estimates put the unemployment rate as high as 60 percent.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 27.6
GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 5,700
GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 18.4
GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 16.5
Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
Agriculture: 28.5
Industry: 42.7
Services: 28.8
Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
Private Consumption: 52
Government Consumption: 9
Gross Domestic Investment: 29.0
Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 4.0
Imports: 2.85
% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 2.6
% of Income Received by Richest 10%: 31.7

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
—	—	—	—	—

Finance

National Currency: Turkmen Manat (TMM)
Exchange Rate: \$1 = TMM 10,100
Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: —

Central Bank Discount Rate %: —
Total External Debt \$billion: 3.7
Debt Service Ratio %: 5.7
Balance of Payments \$million: 114
International Reserves SDRs \$million: —
Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 9.0

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 27.2
per capita \$: 5.60
Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 100

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
Revenues \$billion: 3.05
Expenditures \$billion: 3.05
Budget Deficit \$million: 0
Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 28.5
Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2001) %: 21.8
Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 2.7
Irrigation, % of Farms having: 94.0
Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 52.9
Total Farmland % of land area: 3.9
Livestock: Cattle 000: 860
Chickens million: 4.8
Pigs 000: 45
Sheep million: 6
Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 3.4
Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 12.9

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 1.16
Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 22

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 55.1
Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 16.0
Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 3.39
Net Energy Imports % of use: –223.1
Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 3.9
Production kW-hr billion: 10.2
Consumption kW-hr billion: 7.6
Coal Reserves tons million: —
Production tons million: —
Consumption tons million: —
Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: 50.5
Production cubic feet trillion: 1.7
Consumption cubic feet billion: 339

Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels million: 273
 Production barrels 000 per day: 168
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 78
 Pipelines Length km: 1,395

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 2.85
 Exports \$billion: 4.0
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 35.2
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 9.2
 Balance of Trade \$million: 114

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Russia %	14.0	—
Ukraine %	13.8	49.8
United States %	11.1	—
United Arab Emirates %	8.1	—
Turkey %	8.0	4.7
Germany %	6.8	—
France %	4.6	—
Iran %	—	17.2
Italy %	—	5.3

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 24,000
 Paved %: 81.2
 Automobiles: —
 Trucks and Buses: —
 Railroad: Track Length km: 2,440
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: —
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 7
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 8.3
 Airports: 53
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 1.6
 Length of Waterways km: 1,300

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: —
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: —
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: —

Communications

Telephones 000: 374
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones 000: 52
 Personal Computers 000: —
 Internet Hosts per million people: 106
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 1.6

ENVIRONMENT

The most significant environmental problems are the salinization of soil and water pollution. The water supply is contaminated by chemical contaminants from agricultural runoff. The problem is exacerbated by the lack of adequate sewage-treatment facilities. A large share of the Amu Darya's flow is diverted to irrigation, affecting the water supply to the Aral Sea. Disrupted water cycles have also affected the Garabogazol Aylagy, a lagoon-like appendage in the northwest that adjoins the Caspian Sea. Endangered species include eight mammals, nine birds, and one plant.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 8.0
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: —
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 4
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 7.45

LIVING CONDITIONS

The UN 2004 Human Development Report ranked Turkmenistan 86th out of 177 countries in terms of life expectancy, education, and standard of living. The average Turkmen's life expectancy in 2004 was over 61 years, literacy stood at 98 percent as of 2002, and 81 percent of eligible students were enrolled in primary, secondary, and tertiary schools in 2002. Per capita GDP was \$5,700 in 2004.

Such figures, however, do not reveal the fact that a full third of the population lives below the poverty line and over half the workforce is unemployed. Profits from the country's natural gas and oil reserves go to the ruling elite. Niyazov has been accused of accumulating a personal fortune of \$2.5 billion, which he keeps in offshore accounts.

Traditionally, Turkmens were nomadic and raised horses, but the years of Soviet domination destroyed such age-old practices. About half of modern Turkmen now live in urban areas in high-rise apartments. In the rural areas where the felt tent called the *gara oy*, or yurt, once held sway, Turkmenians now inhabit stationary houses most of the year and use yurts only for summer dwelling, following the herds, or for holidays. Under Soviet rule the nation was brought into the 20th century industrially and technologically, but, as in many other areas of the former Soviet Union, the infrastructure is badly in need of repair and an infusion of new funds, which the Niyazov dictatorship seems unwilling to provide. However, some improvements have been made regarding water supplies and sewage. As of 2002, 71 percent of the population had a safe water supply, and 62 percent had adequate sanitation; central heating and hot water are still luxury items.

HEALTH

Turkmenistan's health-care system was revamped in 2000 to provide more primary care. However, most of this investment was in infrastructure, with little devoted to the training or recruitment of professional health-care personnel. Both rural and urban health-care centers provide treatment, although in 2005 Niyazov suggested closing all hospitals other than those in capital. In a similar move, in 2004 the government dismissed 15,000 trained nurses and substituted them with untrained conscripts. In 2001 public expenditures on health care equaled 3 percent of GDP. As of 2004 there were 317 physicians for every 100,000 people. Just over 80 percent of routine vaccinations are covered by the government, and Turkmenistan leads Central Asian countries in infant immunization coverage. Immunization rates for one-year-old children in 2003 were 99 percent for tuberculosis and polio, 98 percent for DPT, and 97 percent for measles.

Turkmenistan was declared polio free as of 2002. In 2003 there were an estimated 200 people living with HIV/AIDS, and in 2004 there were fewer than 100 deaths from the disease. Despite the fact that 97 percent of births are attended by trained medical personnel, the infant mortality rate in 2004 was a relatively high 73 deaths per 1,000 live births.

Health

Number of Physicians: 13,946
 Number of Dentists: 1,004
 Number of Nurses: 27,252
 Number of Pharmacists: 1,554
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 317
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 73.08
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 31
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 4.3
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 79
 HIV Infected % of adults: < 0.1
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 98
 Measles: 97
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 62
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 71

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Traditional Turkmen cooking was and is often still done over a round clay oven called a *tamdyr*. The traditional flat bread was cooked on this, as were such meals as *dograma*, a soup thick with diced bread, lamb, onions, tomatoes, and spices, and porridge made with any of mung beans; cornmeal and pumpkin; or rice, milk, and yogurt. Meatless *plov* (pilaf) with dried fruit, herb-filled pastries, and cornmeal pancakes are other traditional dishes. Milk products come from cows, goats, sheep, and even camels,

which animals also provide meat. Soups and meat pies are typical fare. Hot green tea is served with most meals.

Nutritionally, the diet of Turkmenians leaves something to be desired. Between 1995 and 2002, 13 percent of children under five were underweight, and 22 percent of the same age group suffered from moderate to severe stunting in growth as a result of nutritional concerns. The government has, however, been committed to achieving universal salt iodization as an effective strategy for preventing iodine deficiency disorders since 1994.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 8.6
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,720
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 228.5
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 113.6

STATUS OF WOMEN

In Turkmenistan, women are routinely abused within the home, but the subject is taboo and is not mentioned in the media. Women have no legal recourse against domestic violence. Women are discouraged from working outside the home and are discriminated against in issues concerning inheritance and property rights. There is one legally registered women's group headed by the deputy chairperson of the Assembly and dedicated in honor of President Niyazov's mother. Women under the age of 35 are reportedly not eligible for exit visas unless they have at least two children.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 26
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.0
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: —

WORK

The Turkmenian labor force numbered over 2.3 million in 2003. Around 48 percent of workers are engaged in agriculture, with cotton the largest single crop. Industrial employment is under 14 percent of the total, with people working in the natural gas, oil, petroleum, textiles, and food-processing industries. The remaining 37 percent are employed in services. The 2004 unemployment rate was estimated at 50 percent in urban areas and 70 percent in rural areas.

The government-controlled Colleagues Union is the only central trade union permitted. There are no legal guarantees for workers to form or join unions or to strike,

although the constitution does not specifically prohibit these rights. Strikes in Turkmenistan are extremely rare. The minimum employment age is 16, though children as young as 10 are often employed for the cotton harvest; they are reportedly conscripted from schools for this purpose and inadequately compensated. The maximum workweek is 40 hours, and in 2004 the minimum wage in the state sector was insufficient to provide a decent standard of living.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 2,320,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 46.0
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 48.2
 Industry: 13.8
 Services: 37.0
 Unemployment %: 60

EDUCATION

Literacy in 1990 was 98 percent, a legacy of Soviet rule. This rate has supposedly stayed about the same since independence, according to census data. Education is state funded and compulsory for 10 years, from ages seven to 17. Teaching is in the Turkmen language except in a minority of schools. There are 15 institutions of higher learning, including Turkmen State University, in Ashgabat.

Since the mid-1990s, class sizes have increased rapidly, facilities have deteriorated, and funds for textbooks and supplies have decreased. Between 84 and 95 percent of children between the ages of seven and 16 attended school on a regular basis in 2004.

The amount of classroom time dedicated to learning Niyazov's personal testament, *Rukbnama*, has increased, and in 2004 *Rukbnama II* was introduced into the school curriculum, displacing standard subjects such as history and literature. A 2000 presidential decree reduced the number of teachers, and in 2004 the government continued to downsize secondary schools and limit courses taught in non-Turkmen languages.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 98
 Male %: 99
 Female %: 97
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: —
 First Level: Primary Schools: 1,900
 Teachers: —
 Students: —
 Student-Teacher Ratio: —
 Net Enrollment Ratio: —
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: —
 Teachers: —
 Students: —
 Student-Teacher Ratio: —
 Net Enrollment Ratio: —

Third Level: Institutions: 15
 Teachers: —
 Students: —
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: —
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: —

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The Ministry of Agriculture, through its Turkmenistan Agricultural Research Institute, administers research on crop production, particularly on aspects of cotton growth. As of 1997 there were 540 technicians employed full-time in such research. Additionally, the Turkmen Academy of Sciences has several institutes concerned with natural sciences and technology, and there are half a dozen independent institutes that conduct medical research. Faculties of physics, mathematics, and biology are found at Turkmen A. M. Gorkii State University, at Ashgabat, which is also home to the Turkmen Agriculture Institute, the Turkmen Polytechnic Institute, and the Turkmen State Medical Institute.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: 8.4
 Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

All media are strictly controlled by the government. The following newspapers are published in Ashgabat: *Vatan* (Motherland), in Turkmen; *Turkmenistan*, in Turkmen; *Ashgabat ashgamy*, in Turkmen; *Neitralnyi Turkmenistan* (Neutral Turkmenistan), in Russian; *Ashgabat*, in Russian; *Lebapskaya pravda*, in Russian and Turkmen; *Maryiskaya pravda*, in Turkmen and Russian; *Novosti Turkmenistana*, in Russian, English, and Turkmen; and *Syyasy sokkbedesh* (Political symposium). The domestic news agency is the Turkmen Press Agency. Turkmen Radio and Turkmen Television broadcast from Ashgabat in Turkmen and Russian.

Niyazov essentially uses the media as his propaganda tool. Reporters without Borders, an international media watchdog group, ranked Turkmenistan 164th out of 167 nations in terms of press freedom. As of 2002 there were 8,000 Internet users in the country, and in 2004 there were 52,000 cellular telephone users.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 2
 Total Circulation 000: 31.5
 Circulation per 1,000: 6.8
 Books Published: —

(continues)

Media *(continued)*

Periodicals: 22
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets 000: 870
 per 1,000: 198

Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

CULTURE

Literature, music, equine matters, and carpet making form a rich cultural mix that survived the displacement caused by Russian occupation and is to some extent enduring the mind-control policies of the Niyazov government, which has been in power since the fall of the Soviets.

The oral tradition of traveling bards and poets was very strong in Turkmenistan, giving way to the printed word only in the 1920s. One of the earliest recorded instances of the Turkmen lifestyle is the *Book of Dede Kor-kut*, a collection of epics and stories describing the way of life, religions, traditions, and social norms of the Oghuz Turks in Azerbaijan, Turkey, and Central Asia in the sixth and seventh centuries. Considered by many the father of Turkmen literature, the 18th-century poet Mahtum Quli (also Magtim Guli and Makhtumkuli) wrote of romance, Islam, and tribal unity. He continues to have an influence on the modern Turkmen literary scene. Other famous writers include the 19th-century authors and poets Kemine and Molapenes and the 20th-century writer and philosopher Abdulhekim Qulmuhammed-oghli.

Traditional music, employing instruments such as the two-stringed *dutar* and the fiddle-like *gyjak*, were used in service to the oral tradition. Songs of epic folktales and poetry were an important part of folk music tradition. Other songs celebrate labor, death, romance, and even fortune telling.

Suiting their nomadic lifestyle, the Turkmen devoted much of their culture to carpets, which became their one major form of furnishing. Turkmenian carpets are often called Bukharan carpets, after the location where many are sold; they can have as many as 37,000 knots per square yard and are alive with geometric designs in a distinctive dark red. The carpet ornamentation is distinctive for each Turkmen tribe and is created by the women of the tribe. The Ashgabat Carpet Museum has a wide selection for viewing.

Horse breeding was another main concern of Turkmen, especially of championship strains such as the Akhal-Teke, thought to be among the swiftest and strongest breeds in the world.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

The oral tradition of folktales found rich ground in the Turkmen tribes, each of which had its own distinct legends and heroes. Many of the tales have to do with tribal loyalty and survival in the desert climate. Heroes take up arms for their fellow tribesman or for the sake of romantic love. The most popular work of Turkmen folklore is the epic *Gyor-ogly*, about the brave character of heroes who love the motherland. Gyor-ogly and his 40 stout followers defend their country; they struggle fairly, and therefore, as a rule, they win.

Superstitions also form a part of Turkmen folklore. These entail lucky charms to avoid the evil eye, lucky days of the week, and evil omens. There are numerous proscriptions for pregnant women and for young children. Water also holds an almost spiritual position in this arid country.

Proverbs are another important aspect of the country's folklore. One of the most popular is "Bread is the king of everything," which is indicative of the harsh life led by the nomadic Turkmen.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Increasingly urbanized, Turkmen enjoy many of the same forms of entertainment as do citizens of the West. However, state-run television prescribes what can be seen, and although movies are popular, their content is also closely supervised. Urban dwellers enjoy spending time in the country during the summers or in suburban gardens during vacations.

Both urban and rural Turkmen enjoy entertaining at home. Many appetizer courses will be served, and hospitality is foremost. Horse riding is still a popular pastime for many. Puppet theaters offer a popular traditional form of entertainment; the Turkmen State Puppet-Show Theater in Ashgabat, modeled after a fairy-tale castle, is scheduled to open in late 2005. The theater is just one part of the giant World of Turkmen Tales Entertainment Park, a self-contained theme park/fairy-tale town complete with fake snowcapped mountains and artificial lakes on a 60-hectare oasis south of the capital.

ETIQUETTE

Respect for age, hospitality, and clan loyalty and identity are hallmarks of Turkmenian etiquette. There are three codified sources for this system: the customary law of

Turkmen, Islamic law, and rules for manners and behavior, called *edep*.

As in many Muslim countries, the right hand should be used for giving and receiving, shoes should be removed before entering mosques or homes, pork and alcohol are forbidden, and the thumbs-up sign popular in North America is considered a rude gesture.

FAMILY LIFE

By Turkmenian custom, or *turkmenbilik*, the family is extended, and the youngest son is responsible for the parents. He will usually live with the family in the parents' home. Rural families tend to be large, with six or seven children; those in cities are smaller. The fertility rate in 2004 was 3.4 children per woman. The extended family goes beyond three immediately related generations in times of need; thus, cousins will help out when relatives are building a house or applying for work. Arranged marriages are still common; however, even those forged by the brides and grooms themselves must receive the blessings of parents. A bride-price is still common among some tribes. It is usual for the bride to live with the groom's family after marriage. As of 1996, 18 percent of marriages ended in divorce. In 1998 there were 1.1 divorces per 1,000 people.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Unlike other Central Asian ethnic groups, the Turkmen have stuck to their traditional dress. Though Western dress, especially suit jackets and trousers (but not ties), is becoming more common in cities, many men, especially from older generations, still prefer the traditional baggy pants tucked into high riding boots; a white shirt, a colorful vest or silk jacket, and a tall sheepskin hat called a *telpek* complete the attire. Women in this Muslim country tend to avoid Western dress altogether. Traditional female attire includes long silk dresses in either deep red or maroon over striped trousers. A headscarf is typical for women; this headdress often has silver jewelry attached.

SPORTS

Soccer is the most popular Western sport, its popularity having grown since independence. The national team regularly competes in the Asia Cup. Valerii Nepomniachi is probably the most famous name in Turkmen soccer. With large segments of the rural population horse racing and riding remain among the most popular forms of sport; such events provide entertainment for city dwellers as well. In the spring and autumn races are held at the Hippodrome of Ashgabat. The Turkmenbashi Stud Farm,

just south of the capital, is where the famous Akhal-Teke horses are bred.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1925** Turkmenistan becomes a constituent republic of the Soviet Union.
- 1960** Through 1967, the Lenin "Karakum" Canal is built.
- 1985** Saparmurat Niyazov becomes Communist Party leader.
- 1991** Turkmenistan declares independence under Niyazov, later joining the Commonwealth of Independent States.
- 1992** New constitution is promulgated.
- 1993** New currency, the manat, is introduced.
- 1997** Private land ownership is legalized.
- 1998** Natural gas pipeline to Iran opens.
- 1999** Parliament votes Niyazov president-for-life.
- 2000** Niyazov announces that he will step down by 2010, after reaching the age of 70.
- 2001** Niyazov replaces ministers for foreign affairs and defense.
Niyazov completes his book of moral teachings, *Rukhnama*, intended as a sort of moral code for the Turkmen people. It becomes compulsory reading in the nation's schools.
- 2002** Niyazov renames the months of the year after himself, his mother, and his spiritual guide, Rukhnama. An assassination attempt on Niyazov of dubious nature fails, leading to a crack-down on the opposition, whose leader, Boris Shikhmuradov, is arrested and sentenced to life imprisonment.
- 2003** Niyazov cancels dual citizenship agreement with Russia.
- 2004** In parliamentary elections, no candidates oppose those of the country's single legal party, the Democratic Party of Turkmenistan.
- 2005** Turkmenistan is named among the 18 most repressive regimes in the world by the U.S.-based nongovernmental organization Freedom House. Niyazov makes a call for a new presidential election in 2009.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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2207 Massachusetts Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20008
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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Ministry of Communications of Turkmenistan
<http://www.mct.gov.tm>
- Turkmenistan Project
<http://www.eurasianet.org/turkmenistan.project>

TUVALU

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Tuvalu

ABBREVIATION

TV

CAPITALS

Funafuti (atoll), Vaiaku (village with government), Fongafale (village)

HEAD OF STATE

Queen Elizabeth II, represented by Governor-General Filoimea Telito (from 2005)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Maatia Toafa (from 2004)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Parliamentary democracy

POPULATION

11,636 (2005)

AREA

26 sq km (10 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Polynesian

LANGUAGES

Tuvaluan, English

RELIGION

Christianity

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Australian dollar

NATIONAL FLAG

Light blue field with the United Kingdom flag as a canton in the upper hoist and nine gold, five-pointed stars dispersed in the manner of the nine main atolls on the right

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A *maneaba* (Polynesian meetinghouse) is portrayed within a gold border of eight each of banana leaves and seashells, one for each inhabited island. At the bottom, in black lettering on a gold scroll, is the motto *Tuvalu mo te Atua* (With Tuvalu for God).

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“God Save the Queen”

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day), March 8 (Commonwealth Day), Good Friday, Easter Monday, June 14 (Queen's birthday), first Monday in August (National Children's Day), October 1 (Independence Day), November 8 (Prince of Wales's birthday), December 25 (Christmas), December 26 (Boxing Day)

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

October 1, 1978

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

October 1, 1978

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Tuvalu is a widely scattered group of nine islands (eight of which are inhabited) in the western Pacific, neighbored by Fiji to the south, Kiribati to the north, and the Solomon Islands to the west. The Tuvaluan islands are Funafuti, Nanumea, Nanumanga, Niulakita, Niutao, Nui, Nukufetau, Nukulaelae, and Vaitupu. The archipelago extends 560 km (350 mi) north to south and covers an area of 26 sq km (10 sq mi). The length of the coastline is about 24 km (15 mi).

Geography

Area sq km: 26; sq mi 10

World Rank: 190th

Land Boundaries, km: 0

Coastline, km: 24

Elevation Extremes meters:

Lowest: Pacific Ocean 0

Highest: 5

Land Use %

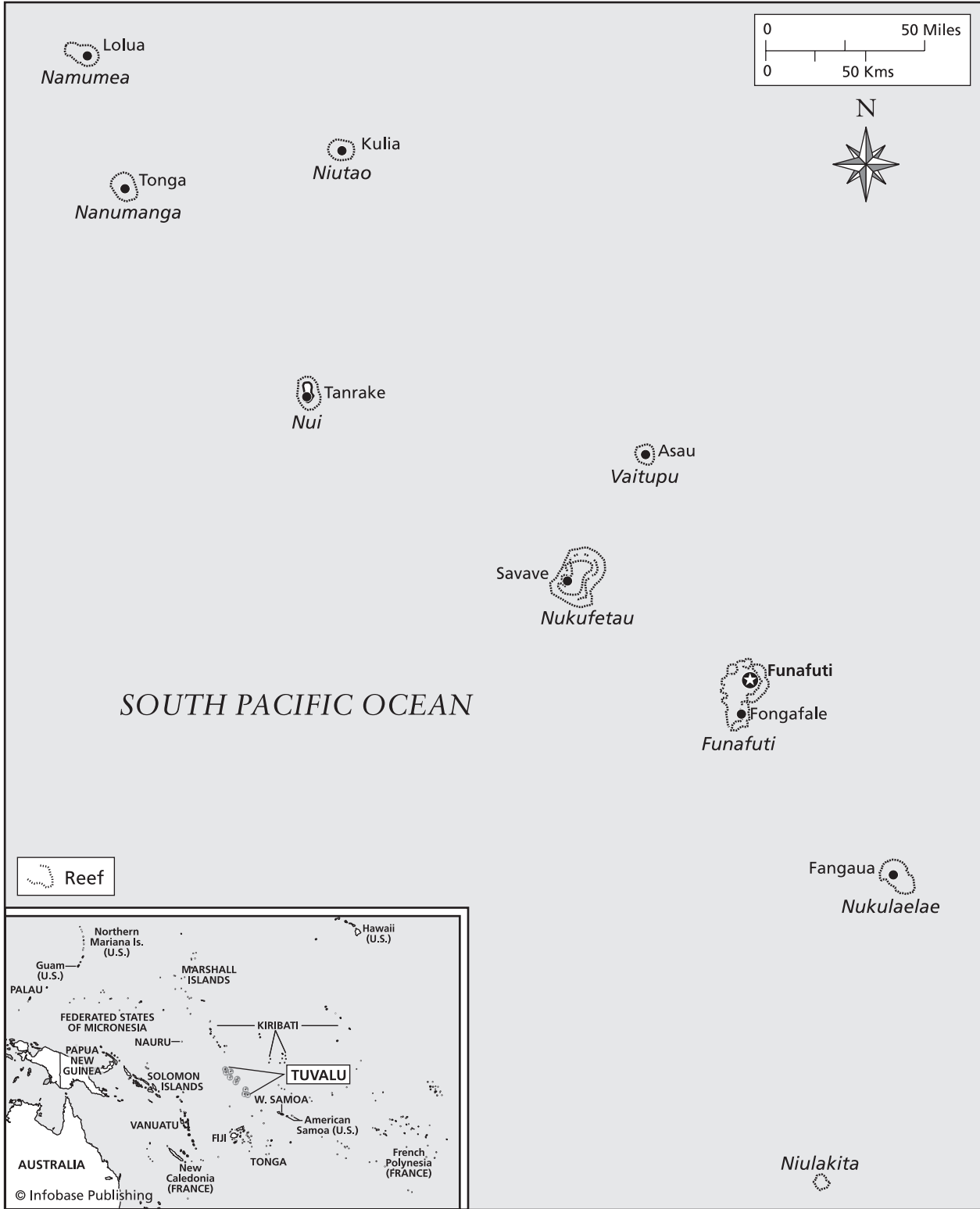
Arable Land: 0

Permanent Crops: 0

Forest: 0

Other: 100

Tuvalu



Population of Principal Cities (2004 est.)

Fongafale	4,740
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CLIMATE AND WEATHER

The climate is uniformly hot, seldom varying more than a degree or two from the mean annual temperature of 26.7°C (80°F). Most of the annual rainfall of 3,050 mm (120 in) is derived from cyclonic storms; the terrain is too low to provoke much precipitation from the clouds borne by the southeasterly trade winds.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature: 80°F
Average Rainfall: 120 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

There is scarce arable land and minimal agriculture on the islands of Tuvalu. However, coconut palms are numerous; bananas, breadfruit trees, pandanus, and taro also grow there. Of indigenous animals, the only mammal is the Polynesian rat. Butterflies are plentiful and varied, with almost two dozen species represented. Birds include terns and reef herons. Dogs, chickens, and pigs were all imported; there are now thousands of pigs on the islands. Fish life is plentiful in the surrounding oceans. Tuna is a major food source, and turtles are also caught. The coral reefs around the atolls are threatened by the spread of the crown-of-thorns starfish.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 11,636
World Rank: 192nd
Density per sq km: 447.5
% of annual growth (2000-2004): 1.1
Male %: 48.7
Female %: 51.3
Urban %: 57.0
Age Distribution %: 0-14: 30.8
 15-64: 64.1
 65 and over: 5.1
Population 2025: 15,800
Birth Rate per 1,000: 21.91
Death Rate per 1,000: 7.22
Rate of Natural Increase %: 1.5
Total Fertility Rate: 3.0
Expectation of Life (years): Males 65.79
 Females 70.33
Marriage Rate per 1,000: —
Divorce Rate per 1,000: —
Average Size of Households: 6.4
Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

The Tuvaluans are predominantly Polynesian; I-Kiribati, other Pacific peoples, and Europeans constitute less than 4 percent of the population.

LANGUAGES

English and Tuvaluan are the official and principal languages. On Nui, a Kiribati dialect is also spoken.

RELIGIONS

The population is almost entirely Christian, with about 97 percent belonging to the Church of Tuvalu, derived from the Congregationalist foundation of the London Missionary Society.

Religious Affiliations

Church of Tuvalu	11,290
Seventh-Day Adventist	160
Baha'i	120
Other	70

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

According to linguistic evidence, the history of the Tuvaluan people may be as lengthy as 2,000 years. However, local stories and genealogies go back only about 300 years. This later time frame postdates first European contact but predates strong European influence. It is generally believed that the earliest Tuvaluan ancestors came mostly from Samoa, Tonga, and Uvea. All of these settlers were Polynesians, with the exception of those on Nui, who are descendants of Micronesians from Kiribati.

In 1567 Alvaro de Mendana y Neyra, a Spanish explorer, became the first European to make contact with Tuvalu. He discovered, explored, and named a substantial part of the eastern half of the Solomon Islands. For more than two centuries the islands were relatively free of European influence. In the late 1700s Tuvalu became a stopping point for whalers, traders, and slave traders (especially from Peru). This continued until the London Missionary Society became active in the conversion of the islands' inhabitants in the 1860s. The islands came under the hegemony of the United Kingdom between 1850 and 1875, as the British tried to curb the activities of slave traders.

The islands were placed under the jurisdiction of the Western Pacific High Commission in 1875, and 17 years later they were linked administratively with the Gilbert Islands, now Kiribati, to the north. In 1916 the two groups were renamed the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Col-

ony, under the responsibility of the high commissioner for the western Pacific, represented locally by a resident commissioner. In 1974 the colony began the move toward self-government with the replacement of the legislative council by a House of Assembly and the election of a chief minister. In 1972 the British government appointed a commission to study the separatist claims of the Polynesian Ellice Islanders, who chafed under the domination of the Gilbert Islanders, whose population was Micronesian. On the basis of the commission's recommendations a referendum was held in the Ellice Islands in 1974, in which over 90 percent of the voters favored separate status. The islands became a separate British dependency in 1974 under the name of Tuvalu (an old local term meaning "eight standing together"), with a separate House of Assembly and a chief minister. An independence constitution was approved in London in 1978, and after a few months of guided internal self-government Tuvalu achieved independence in October 1978.

Upon independence Toalipi Lauti, chief minister at the time, became prime minister. Following the 1981 elections he was replaced by Dr. Tomasi Puapua. The main issue in the election was Puapua's decision to entrust most of the government's financial capital to a California businessman for investment in the United States; the money plus interest was reportedly returned to Tuvalu in 1984. In 1989 Puapua lost his office to Bikenibeu Paeniu, who promised to reduce Tuvalu's dependence on foreign aid and promote national unity. Toward this end, in 1990 Paeniu began efforts to establish a more open economy and to increase investment in the infrastructure, especially in the area of communications.

In 1993 Kamuta Latasi was elected prime minister. In 1998, following a nasty campaign, Bikenibeu Paeniu returned to office. However, he lost a vote of confidence in 1999 and was succeeded by Ionatana Ionatana. When Ionatana died in December 2000, Faimalaga Luka was elected prime minister, but he suffered a vote of no confidence in 2001 and was succeeded by Koloa Talake. After the 2002 elections Saufatu Sopoanga became prime minister, as followed in turn by Maatia Toafa in 2004.

The nation made international news when it leased its Internet domain suffix, ".tv" to a U.S. company, a deal worth \$50 million over 12 years, which provided enough funds for the country to apply for membership in the United Nations. In 2001 the tiny island nation again made international news: With its highest elevation just 4.5 m (15 ft) above sea level, Tuvalu is acutely aware of the dangers of global warming; the country therefore threatened to take legal action against the United States for failing to sign the Kyoto Protocol on global warming. The nation continues to campaign to have its population taken as an entire community by Australia or New Zealand when life becomes untenable because of high ocean levels. Scientists have forecast that the islands will be severely flooded by 2020 or 2030 and will have disappeared

from sight altogether by the end of the century. Nevertheless, construction proceeds in Tuvalu, fueled by the Internet domain name sale.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

Prime Minister

1978–81	Toalipi Lauti
1981–89	Tomasi Puapua
1989–93	Bikenibeu Paeniu
1993–96	Kamuta Latasi
1996–99	Bikenibeu Paeniu
1999–2000	Ionatana Ionatana
2000–01	Lagitupu Tuilimu (acting)
2001	Faimalaga Luka
2001–02	Koloa Talake
2002–04	Saufatu Sopoanga
2004–	Maatia Toafa

CONSTITUTION

Tuvalu is a constitutional monarchy, with the Queen of England, represented in the nation by the governor-general, as the head of state and with the leader of the majority in the unicameral legislature as the prime minister and head of government. The governor-general is required by the constitution to be a citizen of Tuvalu appointed on the recommendation of the prime minister. The cabinet consists of the prime minister and up to four other ministers appointed by the governor-general in consultation with the prime minister. The judiciary is composed of the High Court and magistrates' and island courts.

PARLIAMENT

The national legislature is the Fale I Fono, the Parliament (formerly the House of Assembly), consisting of 15 elected members, two each from the seven most populous and one from the least populous of the eight inhabited islands. The 15 seats were last contested in elections held on July 25, 2002. Only nonpartisans stood for election. There is universal suffrage for those over 18 years of age.

POLITICAL PARTIES

There are no formal political parties in Tuvalu.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Each of the eight inhabited islands has its own island council responsible for local government. Each council has six elected members. The councils are held in *manea-*

bas (Polynesian meetinghouses), which are large enough to sleep as many as 1,000 persons, which is necessary when an island's entire population comes together for the periodic communal feasts lasting several weeks.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The judicial system comprises eight island courts with limited jurisdiction and magistrate courts. Appeals from these courts lie with the High Court, which is presided over by the chief justice. Decisions can be further contested at the Court of Appeal in Fiji. In some cases the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in the United Kingdom serves as the ultimate court of appeal.

HUMAN RIGHTS

In terms of civil and political rights Tuvalu is classified as a free country. Tuvaluan society is egalitarian, democratic, and respectful of human rights. There are no human rights problems, and there are no local human rights groups.

FOREIGN POLICY

Tuvalu is a member of the Commonwealth, the South Pacific Commission, and the South Pacific Forum. Most of its contacts with other states are through representatives accredited to New Zealand or Fiji. It is one of the signatories of the South Pacific Forum's Treaty of Rarotonga, which declares the South Pacific a nuclear-free zone.

DEFENSE

Tuvalu has no defense force and has no military spending but is covered by British military guarantees in case of external attack. The nation does have a police force that includes a Maritime Surveillance Unit for search-and-rescue missions and surveillance operations.

ECONOMY

Tuvalu has a small free-market economy in which subsistence farming and fishing are the primary activities. There are no known mineral deposits on the islands, and the nation is too remote for the development of a tourist industry. The sale of stamps and coins, British aid, and worker remittances, particularly from those working in Nauru and Kiribati and on foreign ships, are major sources of revenue. As of 2003 many of the workers on Nauru were being repatriated as a result of the decline of the mining industry on that island.

The U.S. government is also a major source of revenue for Tuvalu, with 1999 payments from a 1988 treaty

on fisheries totaling about \$9 million, with the figure rising annually. In an effort to reduce its dependence on foreign aid, the government is pursuing public-sector reforms, including the privatization of some government functions and personnel cuts of up to 7 percent. Tuvalu began deriving revenue in 1998 from the use of its area code for 900 lines and in 2000 from the lease of its ".tv" Internet domain name. Royalties from such technological sources could raise gross domestic product (GDP) three-fold or more over the next decade. In 1999, with merchandise exports falling and financing reaching less than 5 percent of imports, continued reliance was placed on fishing and telecommunications license fees, remittances from overseas workers, official transfers, and investment income from overseas assets to cover the trade deficit. Partly fueled by the sale of the country's Internet domain name, real GDP growth in 2000 was 3 percent.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$million:	12.2
GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$:	1,100
GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %:	0.4
GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %:	—
Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:	
Agriculture:	—
Industry:	—
Services:	—
Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:	
Private Consumption:	89
Government Consumption:	53
Gross Domestic Investment:	—
Foreign Trade \$million: Exports:	1
Imports:	79
% of Income Received by Poorest 10%:	—
% of Income Received by Richest 10%:	—

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1990 = 100)				
1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
103.8	109.0	109.8	111.5	112.4

Finance

National Currency:	Australian Dollar (AUD)
Exchange Rate:	\$1 = AUD 1.5419
Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion:	—
Central Bank Discount Rate %:	—
Total External Debt \$billion:	—
Debt Service Ratio %:	—
Balance of Payments \$million:	—
International Reserves SDRs \$million:	—
Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:	5.0

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million:	10.6
per capita \$:	918.20
Foreign Direct Investment \$million:	—

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$million: 22.5
 Expenditures \$million: 11.2
 Budget Surplus \$million: 11.3
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: —
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: —
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: —
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: —
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: —
 Total Farmland % of land area: —
 Livestock: Cattle 000: —
 Chickens 000: 45
 Pigs 000: 13.5
 Sheep 000: —
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters 000: —
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons: 500

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: —
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: —

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: —
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: —
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: —
 Net Energy Imports % of use: —
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: —
 Production kW-hr billion: —
 Consumption kW-hr billion: —
 Coal Reserves tons million: —
 Production tons million: —
 Consumption tons million: —
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
 Production cubic feet billion: —
 Consumption cubic feet billion: —
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
 Production barrels 000 per day: —
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: —
 Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$million: 79
 Exports \$million: 1
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —
 Balance of Trade \$million: —

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Fiji %	43.1	8.4
Japan %	20.0	—
Australia %	10.6	—
Poland %	9.9	25.9
Germany %	—	34.6
Philippines %	—	12.5
Italy %	—	6.7
United Kingdom %	—	4.7

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 19
 Paved %: 100
 Automobiles: —
 Trucks and Buses: —
 Railroad: Track Length km: —
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: —
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 23
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 86
 Airports: 1
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: —
 Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 1.3
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: —
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: —

Communications

Telephones: 700
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones: —
 Personal Computers 000: —
 Internet Hosts per million people: —
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 112

ENVIRONMENT

The greatest environmental threat facing this small, underdeveloped country is its population growth, with centralization on the isle of Funafuti. The management of solid waste and associated threats to the water supply are directly related to the increasing and increasingly centralized population. Since 1980 the population of Funafuti has more than doubled. Of grave relevance is the rising of ocean levels as a result of global warming. Another major factor contributing to the gradual sinking of the island of Funafuti and the salinization of its freshwater source is airport construction, which has brought a sizable portion of the island's area within inches of sea level and has caused significant damage to the coralline base.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 0
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: —
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 110
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: —

LIVING CONDITIONS

Tuvalu has historically been considered among the least developed countries in the world, with many native traditions long remaining prominent. Although the *aliki*, or chiefs, ceased to lead society and were no longer thought to have direct connections with the all-powerful god or gods, customs such as the *pologa*, regarding the tasks that each family needs to perform to keep society together, remained in place. Families were known for special skills, such as building canoes or houses. Such skills were passed from father to son, and the sharing of such *pologa* was *tapu*, or taboo. The communal good was the most important thing in Tuvaluan society.

In the modern world, this social structure broke down through decades of missionary zeal and the advent of mass communications. With the windfall from the sale of the country's domain name to a California-based communications company, some of the last vestiges of traditional life were lost. The government invested \$10 million to pave the islands' 19 km (12 mi) of roads. Before 1999 there were four cars on the islands, and Tuvaluans walked or cycled everywhere. With the sudden influx of wealth, Tuvalu was flooded with cars and motorcycles, which has led to decreased exercise and an increase in diabetes. Many Tuvaluans eventually discovered that cars were expensive to maintain as well as unnecessary in their small island nation. Thus, a large portion of the central island is now filled with abandoned cars.

Housing on the islands typically consists of the *fale*, a rectangular structure made of timber posts from matured coconut stumps, which support a thatch roof. Flooring is made of loose coral or concrete covered by rough coconut-frond mats under fine pandanus mats. Homes are fitted with woven coconut-frond shutters that are lowered when it rains.

In 2005 life expectancy was 68 years. Adult literacy stood at 98 percent.

HEALTH

The major Tuvaluan hospital is on Funafuti; dispensaries staffed by paramedics are located on other islands. Medical care is free. As of 2004 there were 6 physicians servicing the islands. The population has generally been healthy, owing to a good basic diet and strong traditions regarding medicinal skills and natural remedies.

The sudden wealth gained in 2000 from the sale of the country's Internet domain name led to a motor revolution that was accompanied by a wave of imported foods. Many Tuvaluans, having given up their daily exercise, were suddenly introduced to obesity, high blood pressure, and diabetes.

As of 2002, 93 percent of the population had access to adequate drinking water, 88 percent to adequate sanitation. Immunization rates for one-year-olds are high, with the government supplying free vaccinations. In 2002 the immunization rates were as follows: tuberculosis, 99 percent; measles, 95 percent; and DPT and polio, 93 percent. In 2002 there were five cases of tuberculosis. The infant mortality rate in 2005 was 20 deaths per 1,000 live births. Public expenditures on health in 2001 totaled 2.9 percent of GDP.

Health

Number of Physicians: 6
 Number of Dentists: 2
 Number of Nurses: 29
 Number of Pharmacists: 1
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 57
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 20.03
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: —
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 2.9
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: —
 HIV Infected % of adults: —
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 93
 Measles: 95
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 88
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 93

FOOD AND NUTRITION

The traditional Tuvaluan diet is simple and healthy, consisting largely of taro, breadfruit, plantains, fish, crayfish, pork, chicken, and local vegetables such as *laulu* (spinach). Many dishes are prepared in coconut milk, *pi*, which is also a popular beverage. Tropical fruits like papaya and bananas are eaten. Foods are normally steamed or boiled in the *umu* (cooking house), a separate structure that contains an open fire, or roasted in ground ovens. Imported items such as flour, sugar, rice, salt beef, corned beef, and tea have made their way into the diet and are popular among those who can afford them.

Tuvaluans eat three meals a day. Breakfast often includes a cup of warm, fresh toddy made from coconut sap called *ssali kaleve*, which is a primary source of vitamin C. Sunday lunch is a time for socializing.

Nutrition is generally good, with only 5 percent of newborns underweight between 1998 and 2003. However, with the sudden windfall of earnings from the sale of the

country's Internet domain name the simple and healthy diet of the islanders was augmented by imported fast foods. Such foods, combined with reductions in exercise resulting from the purchase of cars, have led to increased obesity rates, high blood pressure, and the incidence of diabetes.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: —
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: —

STATUS OF WOMEN

Violence against women is rare. As in many traditional cultures, women occupy a subordinate role in society, but they are becoming more involved in the health and education professions. There are no female ministers in the government.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 0
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: —
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: —

WORK

According to a 2001 estimate the Tuvaluan labor force numbered 7,000. Many people work abroad as sailors or in phosphate mines and send remittances home. Others are employed locally in fisheries or in the small tourism industry. Still others are involved in agriculture, primarily coconut production. Between 60 and 70 percent of the population have lived on subsistence agriculture, but with arable land at a premium and increasing salinization a major problem, such a lifestyle is at risk.

As such a large proportion of the population lives on subsistence crops and fishing, unions are largely nonexistent on the islands, though they are provided for by law. The only registered trade union, the Tuvalu Seamen's Union, has approximately 600 members working on foreign merchant vessels. The minimum working age is 14; the workday is set at eight hours. In 2004 the minimum biweekly wage was \$91.65.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 7,000
 Female Participation Rate %: —
 Labor by Sector %: —
 Unemployment %: —

EDUCATION

Education is free, and almost all children receive primary education. Students requiring higher education go to Fiji or Kiribati. As of 2002 literacy stood at 98 percent, and the combined gross enrollment for primary, secondary, and tertiary schools was 67 percent. In 1990 government expenditures on education totaled 16.2 percent of the budget.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 98.0
 Male %: —
 Female %: —
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: —
 First Level: Primary Schools: 11
 Teachers: —
 Students: 1,427
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 25.0
 Net Enrollment Ratio: —
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 1
 Teachers: —
 Students: 912
 Student-Teacher Ratio: —
 Net Enrollment Ratio: —
 Third Level: Institutions: —
 Teachers: —
 Students: —
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: —
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: —

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

In 2001 the Australian government's overseas aid program commissioned a land- and sea-level monitoring station in Tuvalu to keep track of the effects of global warming on the islands. The Ministry of Commerce and Agriculture maintains a Division of Agriculture, which pursues very limited research projects in crop production.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: —
 Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

The constitution provides for the freedoms of speech and the press, and the government generally respects these rights in practice. The country's only newspaper is *Sikuleo o Tuvalu/Tuvalu Echoes*, published by the government's Broadcasting and Information Division on Funafuti. The paper, which is published in Tuvalu and English every two weeks, has a circulation of only several hundred.

Radio Tuvalu, which was privatized in 2001, broadcasts for 40 hours per week from Funafuti in both English and Tuvaluan. A government-run television station went off the air in 2001 due to a lack of funds but resumed broadcasting on a limited schedule in 2002. Most residents use satellite dishes to access foreign programs.

The country's only library is located on Funafuti.

The first Internet connection was made in 1999. There are no government restrictions on access, but service is largely limited to the capital due to cost and connectivity issues. As of 2002, there were 1,300 Internet users.

Media

Daily Newspapers: —
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: —
 Periodicals: 1
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets 000: —
 per 1,000: —

CULTURE

The traditional culture of Tuvalu is similar to that of other Polynesian societies, with music and dance, as well as storytelling and crafts, prominent. Two ancient forms of dance are the *fakanau* and *fakaseasea*, which both may commemorate the reign of a chief or praise certain outstanding figures for their skills in canoe building, fishing, or house building or for their wealth or bravery within the community. The *fakanau* has a tune in between speech and singing and a rhythm that is much quicker than that of the *fakaseasea*. The *fakaseasea*, said to be as old as the *fakanau* is sung much more slowly, to a harmonious tune, and has one or two performers dancing. When the missionaries arrived, they stifled the *fakanau*, whose movements they found to be sexually stimulating. These types of dancing are still performed by elders.

More modern forms of dance are the *fatele* and the *siva*. The *fatele* is a line dance performed by either men or women (most commonly young women) wearing pandanus leaf skirts, greenery, and flower garlands. Dancers tell stories with their body movements and are accompanied by onlookers who sing, clap, and beat wooden drums made from boxes or biscuit tins covered with mats. The *siva* is performed by young women who dance and sing as young men play the guitar and also sing.

The status of a composer or musician in traditional times was high; he was the one people turned to when they wanted to commemorate a special occasion or have a *fakanau* or *fakaseasea* performed for an outstanding figure in the community. Following the composition of the song

the composer himself would call his singing and dancing group to practice. Another type of singing was known as the *kupu*, which was mainly used to commemorate the good work of a deceased person. The timing of the *kupu* is like that of the *fakaseasea* but is accompanied by crying sounds. These dances and songs can still be seen in the annual feast of *fatele*.

The tradition of crafts is still alive on Tuvalu, from canoe carving to weaving with coconut fronds and pandanus leaves.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 1
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

The myths and legends of Tuvalu revolve around the founding and naming of the islands. Legend has that the founding ancestors of the main island of Funafuti were Telematua and his two wives, Futi (meaning "banana") and Tupu (meaning "holy" or "abundant"). The island is named after the wife Futi (*fina* is a feminine prefix). According to oral tradition, Funafuti was first inhabited by the porcupine fish whose offspring became men and women.

On most of the Tuvaluan islands people believe that the Eel and the Flounder were the creators of the islands. So strong is this belief that nearly all the islands regard the eel as *tapu*, or taboo, among edible fish. Tuvalu literally means "group of eight," and it is believed that a contested stone flattened Flounder and was later broken into eight pieces by Eel, signifying the eight inhabited islands of Tuvalu.

Similarly, the first people to settle on the sand banks now called Nanumea were two women named Pai and Vau. It is said that the neighboring islets were formed from the sand that fell out of the women's baskets after they had been sent away from Nanumea by the Tongan warrior Tefolaha, the ancestor of the people of Nanumea.

Nanumanga folktales concerning creation all state that in the beginning the heavens and earth were united, with various accounts of how they were separated. According to one account, Tepuhi, a spirit with the physical form of a sea serpent, lifted the heavens to their present positions. Finding that the earth was one massive stretch of land, he smashed it up and formed oceans and rivers between the pieces. Tepuhi, as the woman, and the earth, as the man, later spawned the human race.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Feature films are shown in those *maneaba*, or meetinghouses, equipped with generators or electricity. Increasingly, television has become a major source of entertainment, with satellite dishes providing access to foreign programming. Tuvaluans also enjoy dancing. Special occasions almost always include the traditional *fatele* or more modern *siva* dance. Young people enjoy the casual *tuisi* (“twist”) dances. *Te ano*, a local volleyball-like game, is also popular.

ETIQUETTE

The typical greeting is a handshake accompanied with the spoken *Taalofa!* (“Greetings”) for strangers. Relatives use a sniffing gesture, pressing their face to the other’s cheek and sniffing deeply. This is also used for departures and is considered a particularly affectionate manner in which to greet children. In instances where one sees the same person every day, the typical greeting is *E fano koe ki fea?* (“Where are you going?”) or *E aa koe na?* (“What are you doing” or “How are you?”). It is customary to remove shoes before entering houses or meeting places.

FAMILY LIFE

The Tuvaluan family is extended and patriarchal. The elderly are cared for by their children and often help raise their grandchildren. All family decisions must be approved by the elders. Older men are most involved in community discussions; otherwise their typical activity is to make *kolokolo*, or coconut-fiber string, for use around the home. Mothers are mainly responsible for disciplining children, although fathers take action in cases of serious misbehavior. Women cook, feed the livestock, make household items such as mats and thatched roof panels, see to the needs of the family, and work in the gardens. Men fish and are responsible for agriculture. Though many of the traditional family customs and alignments are disappearing in the modern age, many others still exist. For example, each family, or *solonga*, has its own task, or *pologa*, to perform for the community, such as fishing, building houses, or providing defense. The skills of a family are passed on from father to son. Family size is shrinking; the fertility rate in 2005 was three children per woman.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

The traditional bark cloth that was worn as a loincloth by men or as a waist cloth by women is seen only in tourist shops. Grass skirts are reserved for special dance occa-

sions. In modern times the typical attire is Western, but with vibrant colors. Flowers are often used to decorate women’s hair.

SPORTS

Sports popular in Tuvalu include soccer, basketball, cricket, and volleyball. Young people also play a traditional sort of volleyball called *te ano*, in which two teams line up facing one another. Competition begins with one member throwing the heavy ball toward the other team, who must hit it back with their hands. Points are scored if the opposite team lets the ball fall, and the first team to score 10 points wins.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1978** Tuvalu becomes an independent nation but retains status as a special member of the Commonwealth.
- 1979** Tuvalu and the United States sign a treaty of friendship by which the latter renounces claims to Tuvalu’s four southernmost atolls.
- 1981** Prime Minister Toalipi Lauti is replaced by Tomasi Puapua.
- 1985** Puapua is reelected prime minister.
- 1986** Sir Tupua Leupena succeeds Sir Fiatau Pentala as governor-general.
- 1989** Bikenibeu Paeniu is elected prime minister.
- 1993** Kamuta Latasi is elected prime minister.
- 1994** The Latasi government dismisses Governor-General Tomu Sione and appoints Manuella Tulaga in his stead.
- 1996** Latasi is defeated in a no-confidence vote, and Paeniu replaces him as prime minister.
- 1998** In a general election, Paeniu is chosen prime minister.
- 1999** Paeniu loses political support, and Ionatana Ionatana becomes his successor.
- 2000** The country sells its Internet domain suffix “.tv” to a U.S. company, thus generating enough money to apply to become a UN member. Tuvalu is admitted to the United Nations later in the year.
- 2001** Faimalaga Luka is elected prime minister. Tuvalu threatens to take legal action against the United States for failing to sign the Kyoto Protocol. Koloa Talake becomes prime minister after a vote of no confidence for Luka.
- 2002** Saufatu Sopoanga wins elections to become prime minister.
- 2003** Faimalaga Luka is confirmed as the new governor-general.

- 2004** Maatia Toafa becomes acting prime minister in August, following a vote of no confidence for Sopoanga. In October, Toafa is elected prime minister.
- 2005** Extreme high tides hit the capital, Funafuti. Luka steps down as governor-general, and Reverend Filoimea Telito is appointed the new governor-general.

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- Geddes, W. H., et al. *Atoll Economy: Social Change in Kiribati and Tuvalu*. Canberra, Australia, 1982.
- Sabatier, Ernest. *Astride the Equator*. New York, 1978.

OFFICIAL PUBLICATIONS

Tuvalu. *Tuvalu Country Profile, 2000; Census 2002*

CONTACT INFORMATION

Permanent Representative of Tuvalu to the United Nations
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New York, N.Y. 10017
Phone: (212) 490-0534 Fax: (212) 808-4975

INTERNET RESOURCES

- Constitution of Tuvalu
http://www.vanualu.usp.ac.fj/paclawmat/tuvalu_legislation/tuvalu_constitution.htm/
- Tuvalu Official Statistics Information
<http://www.spc.int/prism/country/tv/stats/>

UGANDA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Uganda

ABBREVIATION

UG

CAPITAL

Kampala

HEAD OF STATE & HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

President Yoweri Museveni (from 1986)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Nonparty republic

POPULATION

27,269,482 (2005)

AREA

236,040 sq km (91,135 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Baganda, Karamojong, Basoga, Iteso, Lango

LANGUAGES

English (official), Kiswahili, Luganda

RELIGIONS

Christianity, animism, Islam

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Ugandan shilling

NATIONAL FLAG

Six equal horizontal stripes of black (top), yellow, red, black,

yellow, and red; a small white disc in the center bears a representation of the Balearic crested crane, the national bird.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

An oval native shield, pointed at both ends, as flanked on one side by a red-crested white crane and on the other by a *kob* (a buck with a black coat and a white underbody), both standing on a grassy mound, with cotton and coffee growing on either side of a river. The black shield backed by black silver-tipped crossed warriors' spears contains three symbols: a bright sun in the center, a white royal drum with red decorations at the bottom, and horizontal blue and white wavy lines at the top, representing Lake Victoria. Beneath the device is a white scroll proclaiming the national motto, "For God and my country."

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"Oh Uganda, Land of Beauty"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day), January 25 (Proclamation of the Second Republic), May 1 (Labor Day), June 3 (Martyrs' Day), October 9 (National Day, Independence Day), December 26 (Boxing Day), various Islamic festivals, various Christian festivals, including Good Friday, Easter Monday, Christmas

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

October 9, 1962

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

October 8, 1995

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Landlocked Uganda is located in East Africa, straddling the equator, with a total area of 236,040 sq km (91,135 sq mi), including some 35,000 sq km (13,500 sq mi) of water and swamps. Uganda shares its total international border of 2,698 km (1,677 mi) with five neighbors: Sudan, Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). The borders were demarcated in the late 19th century by the United Kingdom, Germany, and Belgium, but some territory has since been ceded to Kenya.

The capital is Kampala, with a 2002 population of almost 1.2 million. The other major urban centers are Jinja, Lira, Gulu, Njeru, Mbale, and Entebbe; only Gulu has more than 100,000 residents. Topographically, the country is one vast plateau; there are no natural geographic regions. The northeastern highlands are separated from the Ruwenzori Mountains ("the mountains of the moon") by a low valley containing Lake George and the Kazinga Channel. Uganda is within the upper basin of the White Nile. The Victoria Nile runs from Lake Victoria at Jinja over Owen Falls north into Lake Kyoga. After Karuma Falls, the river follows a westward course over Murchison Falls into Lake

Uganda



Albert. From Lake Albert it runs as the Albert Nile, leaving Uganda at Nimule on the Sudan border. There are almost as many lakes as rivers in the country. Uganda shares Lakes Albert, Edward, and Victoria with neighbors, while Lakes Salisbury, Warnala, Kyoga, George, and Kwania are entirely within the country's borders.

Coastline, km: 0
 Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Lake Albert 621
 Highest: Margherita Peak, Mount Stanley 5,110
 Land Use %
 Arable Land: 25.9
 Permanent Crops: 10.7
 Forest: 21.3
 Other: 42.1

Geography

Area sq km: 236,040; sq mi 91,135
 World Rank: 80th
 Land Boundaries, km: Democratic Republic of the Congo 765; Kenya 933; Rwanda 169; Sudan 435; Tanzania 396

Population of Principal Cities (2002)

Gulu	119,430
Kampala	1,189,142

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Uganda has an equatorial climate, with temperatures moderated by altitude. In most of the country the main dry season occurs between November and March. Mean annual temperatures range between 20°C and 22°C (68°F and 72°F). Kampala has a January average of 22°C (72°F) and a July average of 20°C (68°F). Throughout the country July is the coolest month.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature

Kampala: July 68°F, January 72°F
Entebbe: July 70°F, January 72°F

Average Rainfall

Lake Victoria: 60 in to 70 in
Karamoja: 15 in to 35 in
Western region: 34 in to 40 in
Slopes of the Ruwenzori: 60 in to 80 in
Acholi-Kyogo: 35 in to 50 in
Ankole-Buganda: 40 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Though the southern regions of Uganda once held the most varied flora, natural vegetation has largely been replaced with cultivated fields, mainly of plantains. Patches of forest still remain, with the timber-rich *mvuli* tree present. Savannas take over in central and northern Uganda. The driest regions are in the steppes of the northeast, which area is largely treeless. Forestland was once thick near Lake Victoria and in the western highlands, but there, too, the land has given way to human depredation and elephant grass. Medium-elevation forests, on the other hand, still contain rich varieties of species. Uganda has huge areas of swamplands that include both papyrus and seasonal, grassy swamp.

Once widespread, large cats such as lions and leopards can now only be found in game preserves and national parks. Elephants, buffalo, antelopes, rhinoceroses, and giraffes are found in the north and in the west, while gorillas and chimpanzees are found only in the far west of the country. Zebras and antelopes roam the grasslands, while oryx and Grant's gazelles are found mainly in the northeast. Insect life is rich, including the malaria-carrying *Anopheles* mosquito and the tsetse fly. Bird life includes the national symbol, the crowned crane, as well as the weaver, shrike, heron, egret, stork, kite, pigeon, dove, kingfisher, and guinea fowl, among others. Crocodiles are found along the Nile, while fish include a type of tilapia, the Nile perch, lungfish, and tiger fish.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 27,269,482
World Rank: 41st

Density per sq km: 128.3

% of annual growth (1999-2003): 2.8

Male %: 50.0

Female %: 50.0

Urban %: 15.3

Age Distribution %:	0-14:	50.1
	15-64:	47.7
	65 and over:	2.2

Population 2025: 56,561,000

Birth Rate per 1,000: 47.39

Death Rate per 1,000: 12.8

Rate of Natural Increase %: 3.5

Total Fertility Rate: 6.74

Expectation of Life (years): Males 50.74

Females 52.46

Marriage Rate per 1,000: —

Divorce Rate per 1,000: —

Average Size of Households: 4.8

Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

The approximately 40 African tribes that make up Uganda's population are grouped according to language into four large categories: Bantu, Eastern Nilotic, Western Nilotic, and Central Sudanic. The numerically dominant Bantus live in the densely populated southern half of the country, the Eastern and Western Nilotics live north of Lake Kyoga, and the Central Sudanics inhabit the West Nile district. The Bantu speakers make up two-thirds of the population. The group is broadly classified into Eastern Lacustrine Bantu (including the Baganda, Gwe, Gisu, Nyuli, Samia, and Kenyi) and Western Lacustrine Bantu (including the Nkole, Toro, Nyoro, Kiga, Amba, and Konjo).

Western Nilotic speakers make up about 15 percent of the population and are often collectively referred to as the Luo. Eastern Nilotics make up 12 percent of the population and comprise four major tribes—the Karamojong, Dodoth, Jie, and Teso—and a number of minor tribes, such as the Kakwa, Sebei, Labwor, Nyakwai, Tepeth, Napore-Nyangea, and Teso. The Central Sudanics are represented by the Lugbara and the Madi, who together make up less than 5 percent of the population. Intertribal relations are conditioned by historic animosities and rivalries and the process of modernization has tended to reinforce these attitudes rather than soften them.

The Baganda are the largest single tribe or ethnic subgroup in the country, accounting for 17 percent of the population, as followed by the Karamojong at 12 percent, the Basoga at 8 percent, the Iteso at 8 percent, and the Lango at 6 percent.

LANGUAGES

The official language of Uganda is English, which is spoken by only about 5 percent of the population. Kiswahili

(also referred to as Swahili) has been selected as the national language and is designated to eventually supersede English. There are as many languages in the country as there are tribes, and the system of classification is the same for languages as for ethnic groups. Each language is generally unintelligible to speakers of other languages, and dialect differences exist within larger tribes. The two languages that have emerged as lingua franca are Luganda in the south and Kiswahili in the Lango, Acholi, and Teso areas. A considerable body of literature exists in Luganda.

RELIGIONS

Uganda has been the scene of intense Catholic and Protestant missionary activity since the 19th century and as such is one of the most Christianized countries in Africa, with 66 percent professing the Christian faith. Some 18 percent retain traditional African beliefs. Islam has experienced tremendous growth in recent years; about 16 percent of the population is Muslim, up from about 5 percent a few decades earlier. There is also a small Baha'i congregation. The Christians are almost evenly divided between the Roman Catholic and Protestant denominations. The largest Protestant denomination is Anglican (Episcopal). Other Protestant churches include the Methodist, Lutheran, Baptist, and Presbyterian churches. The first Christian missionaries, representing the Anglican Church Missionary Society, arrived in the country in 1877.

Religious Affiliations

Roman Catholic	9,000,000
Protestant	9,000,000
Muslim	4,360,000
Indigenous Beliefs	4,910,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Uganda's earliest inhabitants were Bushmanoid people. From the year 1000 the country was overrun by a series of invaders: first the Cushitic peoples, then Bantu speakers, and later Nilotic-speaking Sudanese people and Luo. In the 18th century, as the first Europeans reached the land, there were two kingdoms, Bunyoro-Kitara and Buganda. The earliest Christian missionaries were welcomed by the *kabaka* (king) of Buganda, Mutesa I (r. 1856–84). Mwanga, his son, persecuted the Christians; when he was driven out by the Muslims, he appealed to the very missionaries he had persecuted and was restored to the throne with their help.

Uganda was under British colonial rule from about 1888 to 1962. In 1888 the Imperial British East Africa Company was granted a charter to administer the British

sphere of East Africa, which was assigned to the United Kingdom through the Anglo-German Agreement of 1890. As the company was unable to mediate religious conflicts in the country or establish a sound administration, Britain's Parliament announced a protectorate over Buganda in 1894. The area of the protectorate was consolidated between 1894 and 1919. The only major challenge to its hegemony came in 1897, when Mwanga rose in revolt; he was quickly defeated, deposed, and replaced by his son Dawdi Chwa.

The British administrative system in the colony was based on the Uganda Agreement of 1900, signed between Britain's Special Commissioner Sir Harry Johnston and the chiefs of Buganda. Under this agreement Buganda was ruled indirectly by the British, who in turn used the Buganda leadership to extend British control. The agreement confirmed the privileged position of the Buganda tribe and the semi-independence of the Buganda kingdom. The agreement also established a system of land tenure under which half the land area was granted to chiefs and subchiefs as private holdings and the other half became British Crown land, with rights vested in the commissioner. In 1907 the commissioner became the governor. The first step toward self-government came in 1921, with the creation of a legislative council without African representation. Later constitutional evolution was marked by Bugandan attempts to ensure supremacy in the emerging Ugandan state. A British commission of inquiry accepted that Buganda should have federal status within an independent Uganda and that the other three kingdoms—Ankole, Bunyoro, and Toro—should enjoy quasi-federal status. Upon independence in 1962, the *kabaka* of Buganda, Sir Edward Frederick Mutesa Mutesa II, was elected president. Apolo Milton Obote, an advocate of centralism and the leader of the Uganda People's Congress (UPC), became prime minister. In 1966 Obote deposed the president, and over the next year he eliminated the ancient kingdom of Buganda's autonomous status. Three years later he banned all opposition parties and established a one-party state.

In 1971 Gen. Idi Amin, the commander in chief of the army and air force, deposed Obote. Amin had himself installed as president, suspended parts of the constitution, and dissolved the National Assembly. Over the next few years he began a reign of terror that destroyed the political and economic fabric of the country. The Asian population, which played an important role in commerce, was ordered to leave the country. Thousands of Amin's enemies met their deaths at the hands of extermination squads. Resistance to his regime grew during 1976 and 1977 as students and churches protested the regime's excesses. The economy collapsed, as many managers and workers were either forced out or left the country. Corruption was rampant. To divert the army, of whose support he was unsure, Amin declared war on Tanzania in 1978. The following year the Tanzanian army, with the

backing of Ugandan opposition groups, captured Kampala, and Amin fled.

Uganda long struggled with the legacies of the dictator Amin. The post-Amin period was marked by economic decline, political instability, a breakdown in the institutions of law and order, and generally inefficient administration. The rate of inflation soared to well over 100 percent; there was no foreign exchange, even to buy food; parts of the nation were severely affected by drought, producing near-famine conditions; acts of political violence and murder were commonplace; and the police and military created as much crime as they prevented. Indeed, many of these problems could be rightly blamed on the eight-year misrule of Amin, who virtually shattered the economy and the political cohesion of the country. The first and second post-Amin governments, headed by Yusuf Lule and Godfrey Binaisa, respectively, had only short lives; the 1980 elections that returned Milton Obote to the presidency brought the country full circle to the leadership that had been at the helm when Amin had come to power.

Elements of the Ugandan National Liberation Army (UNLA), led by senior military officers primarily from the Acholi ethnic group, overthrew the government of President Obote on July 27, 1985. An interim military government, as headed by a Military Council, was installed, with General Tito Okello Lutwa, the former chief of the defense forces, as head of state and Military Council chairman. Immediately after assuming power, the Military Council began appointing a broad-based civilian cabinet, comprising all major ethnic groups as well as representatives of the four political parties that had contested the disputed 1980 election. The council subsequently included members of four insurgent groups, though not Yoweri Museveni's National Resistance Army (NRA), which was dominated by Bantus, in particular the Banyankole. Museveni's NRA forces continued hostilities against the interim government but also agreed to enter into peace talks with the Military Council, to be held in Nairobi under the chairmanship of Kenyan President Daniel arap Moi. The talks culminated in a peace accord between Lutwa and Museveni, who agreed to join the government as vice chairman of the Military Council when the terms of the accord were implemented; however, further fighting took place. By early 1986 Museveni's army (mostly teenagers fanatically devoted to their leader) had taken over Kampala, driven out Lutwa, and installed Museveni as president and head of state.

Under Museveni, Uganda prospered, with peace returning to large swaths of the country for the first time in decades. Museveni eased government controls on the economy and encouraged foreign ownership and investment. A new constitution in 1995 set the country back on the road to a multiparty state. Political debate in the media became and has remained lively. Despite the good economic news, Uganda's support of Congolese rebels in

1998 and 1999 cost the country international support, and continued low-level insurgencies, as carried out by both the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), a cultlike group led by Joseph Kony based in Sudan, and the Allied Democratic Forces, a rebel Islamic fundamentalist group based in the west, prevented a full return to normalcy under Museveni in the 1990s.

In 2000 a national referendum reaffirmed popular support for Uganda's no-party political system. Museveni was reelected in 2001, despite claims that there was large-scale vote fraud. Discontent with the country's intervention in the Democratic Republic of the Congo's civil war and signs of corruption in the government also led to diminishing support for Museveni. By the end of 2003 Uganda's forces had been largely withdrawn from the DRC, but there was fighting in 2003 between the remaining Ugandan forces and Congolese rebels, and trouble on the home front ensued. Early in 2004 LRA rebels massacred about 200 civilians in northern Uganda, prompting a renewed government offensive that achieved some successes; late in 2004 there was a brief truce with the LRA, and talks were being held to end the insurgency. Amid such renewed activity, the death of the former dictator Idi Amin in a Saudi Arabian hospital in August 2003 was almost overlooked.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1963–66	Edward Mutebi Mutesa II (president)
1966–71	Apolo Milton Obote (president)
1971–79	Idi Amin (president)
1979	Yusuf Lule (president)
1979–80	Godfrey Lukongwa Binaisa (president)
1980	Paulo Muwanga (chairman of the Military Commission of the UNLF)
1980	Saulo Musoke, Polycarp Nyamuchoncho, and Yoweri Hunter Wacha-Olwol (Presidential Commission)
1980–85	Apolo Milton Obote (president)
1985	Basilio Olara Okello (chairman of the Military Council)
1985–86	Tito Okello Lutwa (chairman of the Military Council)
1986–	Yoweri Kaguta Museveni (president)

CONSTITUTION

The new constitution of 1995 extended the one-party "movement" form of government until the year 2000, when a national referendum on the establishment of a multiparty state was held; 52 percent of Ugandans voted to retain the country's no-party system of government rather than switch to a multiparty system. The constitution did away with the Military Council, which had gov-

erned the country since 1986, and established a powerful presidency and a popularly elected legislature. National elections took place in 1996 (on a nonparty basis) and were deemed free and fair by international observers. A presidential election was also held that year, with President Museveni winning 74.2 percent of the vote. Paul Ssemogerere, the leader of the Democratic Party, was second, with 23.7 percent. In 2001 Museveni was reelected, gaining 69.3 percent of the vote. Real political power resides in the office of the president and the cabinet rather than the National Parliament. Both the legislature and the president are elected for five-year terms. Suffrage is universal, and the legal voting age is 18.

PARLIAMENT

The National Parliament, the unicameral legislature re-established under the 1995 constitution, consists of 214 directly elected representatives as well as 78 nominated by legally established so-called special-interest groups and approved by the president. Members are elected to five-year terms. Seats allocated to special-interest groups include 53 for women, 10 for the army, five for the disabled, five for youth representatives, and five for labor and trade organizations. Debate within the National Parliament is lively, with criticism of government policy the norm. The last national elections were held in 2001, and the next are scheduled for 2006.

POLITICAL PARTIES

In 1986 the government suspended all political-party activity but stopped short of a formal ban on political parties. The constitution prohibits political parties from holding national conventions, issuing platforms, or endorsing candidates. Museveni's National Resistance Army, the political arm of which changed its name to "The Movement," is not formally considered to be a political party but rather a national movement that claims the loyalty of all Ugandans. It continues to dominate the National Parliament. In a national referendum held in 2000 voters chose to retain the country's no-party system of government. However, because of a boycott called by opposition parties, only a little over half of registered voters participated in the referendum. In the 2001 parliamentary elections, 214 members (out of 292) were directly elected without party labels in single-seat constituencies, while 78 were chosen by special-interest groups shortly before the election. In the 2001 presidential election there was a candidate from the socialist United People's Congress. The conservative Democratic Party of Uganda is another unofficial political party with a small following. A 2002 law sought to limit the activities of political parties.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

After years of political instability and civil war, there has been a resurgence of local government activity in Uganda. Museveni ordered the formation of resistance councils to fulfill government functions in areas under the NRA's control in the late 1980s; local councils replaced the resistance councils in 1996, and local government elections that returned localities to elected civilian government were held in 1997. The country comprises 56 administrative divisions.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The legal system is based on English common and customary law. The constitution provides for an independent judiciary, but the president exerts enormous legal and extralegal power over the judiciary, inhibiting its independence. The Supreme Court is the highest court in the land, as followed by the Court of Appeal, which also serves as a constitutional court adjudicating constitutional issues. Next in line are the High Court, then the chief magistrate's court, and finally local council, sub-county, parish, and village courts. The lower magistrate's courts have been a source of controversy because of their susceptibility to bribery and corruption. There is also an Industrial Court, which arbitrates labor disputes.

At times, the government liberally applies the charge of treason against nonviolent political dissidents. Local courts are subject to bribery and corruption. Prison conditions are difficult, especially in local jails.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Human rights issues have played a major role in Uganda's turbulent postindependence history. The depredations of the Amin years are well known and well documented. Chaos and widespread human rights violations continued during the 1980s. Under Museveni, Uganda has improved its human rights record considerably and is moving toward a multiparty democracy, though prohibitions remain on political activity and freedom of assembly in the 21st century. A 2002 bill, the Political Organizations Law, made it increasingly difficult for opposition parties to function in the country. Aside from a 2002 antiterrorism bill that imposes stiff penalties for the publishing of news that might incite terrorism, the media is relatively free and independent. There is general tolerance of religious beliefs.

Government forces have used excessive force against civilians and rebels in areas of unrest in the north and west, and police regularly use torture and other coercive methods against criminal suspects to extract confessions. Many suspects are held for indefinite periods without trial.

or communication with family or lawyers. Political opponents are harassed by overzealous government supporters and police. Prison conditions are harsh. More than 500 prisoners die annually as a result of poor diet, sanitation, and medical care. Rebel groups still active in the north and west have shown little respect for human life; the kidnapping of children and women is common, as is rape.

FOREIGN POLICY

The 1990s saw Uganda maintain uneasy relationships with most of its neighbors. Most disputes have centered around alleged support for antigovernment rebels. In 1998 Uganda and Rwanda sent troops into the Democratic Republic of Congo to aid rebels fighting the government of Laurent Kabila, which Uganda accused of aiding Ugandan rebels. After a year of fighting, Uganda and the DRC signed a cease-fire agreement in April 1999, ending Uganda's official support for Congolese rebel forces. However, relations have remained strained. In 2005 the DRC formally accused Uganda before the International Court in The Hague of invading its borders in 1999.

In 1995 Uganda suspended diplomatic relations with Sudan over that nation's support of the Lord's Resistance Army, also charging that Sudanese troops had crossed the border and bombed Ugandan villages and refugee camps in pursuit of Sudanese rebels. Despite a peace accord signed in 1996 and the restoration of diplomatic relations, the border region remained tense. In 1997 Sudan claimed to have killed hundreds of Ugandan soldiers who were allegedly aiding Sudanese rebels inside Sudan. Uganda and Sudan signed an agreement in 2002 attempting to deal with the LRA along both countries' borders.

Relations with Kenya, once badly bruised over allegations of rebel support, improved in the late 1990s to the point that both countries prepared to join Tanzania in a revival of the East African Economic Community. Kenya and Uganda are working together to stem cattle rustling and violence on behalf of the LRA along the border.

On the global stage, Uganda has maintained a relatively low profile, rebuilding its economic relationships with western Europe and the United States. In 1998 U.S. President Bill Clinton made an official two-day visit to Uganda, and U.S. forces have regularly trained with the Ugandan military. Uganda, which has in the past practiced a nonaligned foreign policy, retains close ties with both China and North Korea.

DEFENSE

The Uganda People's Defence Force (UPDF), numbering about 62,000 in 2003, is made of three wings: the army, an inland navy, and a small air wing. The size of the armed forces is down considerably from a decade earlier,

when troop strength stood at 90,000. Members are virtually all former guerrillas of the National Resistance Army. The UPDF proved itself in combat situations along the country's border and in the neighboring Democratic Republic of the Congo in the latter half of the 1990s. The UPDF participates in training activities for the African Crisis Response Initiative and has held joint exercises with U.S. forces. Some units receive training from the British armed forces. In 2004 military expenditures totaled about \$170 million, or 2.2 percent of gross domestic product (GDP).

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	61,800
Military Manpower Availability:	5,012,620
Military Expenditures \$million:	170.3
as % of GDP:	2.2
as % of central government expenditures:	13.0
Arms Imports \$million:	19
Arms Exports \$million:	—

ECONOMY

In the 1990s the economy prospered, with the government investing in the rehabilitation of infrastructure and improving incentives for production and foreign investment. The successful implementation of macroeconomic and structural reforms led to higher growth and moderate inflation. By the end of the 1990s real GDP growth was at 8.2 percent, and inflation, which was 240 percent in 1987, was down to 4.8 percent in 1998. A large-scale privatization plan launched in the early 1990s met with a fair amount of success. The sale of the state-owned Uganda Commercial Bank was a milestone. The industrial sector, which employs about 5 percent of the workforce, is being rehabilitated, and the production of building and construction materials such as cement and roofing sheets has grown dramatically. One promising sign is the revival of the East African Economic Community—an economic union with Kenya and Tanzania that will allow increased regional trade and more international investment in the region. With substantial natural resources, including fertile soils, regular rainfall, and large mineral deposits of copper and cobalt, the nation's long-term economic potential looks good. Agriculture remains the single largest sector of the economy, employing over 80 percent of the workforce.

In 2000 Uganda qualified for enhanced Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) debt relief worth \$1.3 billion and Paris Club debt relief worth \$145 million. These amounts combined with original HIPC debt relief add up to about \$2 billion. Growth for 2001–02 was solid, despite a continued decline in the price of coffee, Uganda's principal export. Solid growth of 4.4 percent in 2003 reflected an upturn in Uganda's export markets.

Despite general progress, Uganda remains one of the world's poorest countries, with per capita GDP at \$1,500 in 2004.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 39.39
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 1,500
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 6.2
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 3.2
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 35.8
 Industry: 20.8
 Services: 43.6
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 78
 Government Consumption: 16
 Gross Domestic Investment: 22.4
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 0.6217
 Imports: 1.306
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 4
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 21

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)				
1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
121.9	125.4	127.9	127.5	137.4

Finance

National Currency: Ugandan Shilling (UGX)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = UGX 1,810.3
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency trillion: 1.23
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 25.62
 Total External Debt \$billion: 3.865
 Debt Service Ratio %: 7.79
 Balance of Payments \$million: -590.8
 International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 1.08
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 3.5

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 959
 per capita \$: 38.00
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 194

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: July 1–June 30
 Revenues \$billion: 1.491
 Expenditures \$billion: 1.727
 Budget Deficit \$million: 236
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: 11.8

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 35.8
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 4.5

Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 0.09
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 0.13
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 1.8
 Total Farmland % of land area: 25.9
 Livestock: Cattle million: 6.1
 Chickens million: 33
 Pigs million: 1.71
 Sheep million: 1.15
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 38.9
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 227

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 538
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 5.6

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 143
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 614
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 27
 Net Energy Imports % of use: —
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: 280
 Production kW-hr billion: 1.93
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 1.62
 Coal Reserves tons million: —
 Production tons million: —
 Consumption tons million: —
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
 Production cubic feet billion: —
 Consumption cubic feet billion: —
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
 Production barrels 000 per day: —
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 9
 Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 1.306
 Exports \$billion: 0.6217
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 10.5
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 4.9
 Balance of Trade \$million: -590.8

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Kenya %	27.9	13.6
India %	8.0	—
United Arab Emirates %	7.4	—
South Africa %	6.9	—
United Kingdom %	5.9	—
China %	5.6	—
Japan %	5.1	—
United States %	4.6	—
Switzerland %	—	11.2
Netherlands %	—	9.8
Belgium %	—	8.6
France %	—	4.2

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 27,000
 Paved %: 6.7
 Automobiles: 54,200
 Trucks and Buses: 82,300
 Railroad: Track Length km: 1,241
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: 217
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: —
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: —
 Airports: 29
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 237
 Length of Waterways km: 300

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 254
 Number of Tourists from 000: 387
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 201
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: —

Communications

Telephones 000: 61
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.21
 Cellular Telephones 000: 776.2
 Personal Computers 000: 102.5
 Internet Hosts per million people: 99
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 4.6

ENVIRONMENT

Uganda is biologically rich because it lies at the conjunction of four vegetation regions: Lake Victoria in the south, the dry Sudanese extension in the north, the Somali-Masai region in the northeast, and the montane areas in the east. Formerly, wetlands occupied much of the country, but they are being drained indiscriminately, especially because they offer breeding grounds to malarial mosquitoes and bilharzia-carrying snails. What little forest remains is mostly in reserves and is diminishing as agriculture expands. Military conflicts and political instability have resulted in the cutting of lantana bushes, which help to keep tsetse fly populations down. The poaching of large game animals, many of which are endangered, is widespread.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 21.3
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: -91
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 26
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 0.07

LIVING CONDITIONS

The UN 2004 Human Development Report ranked Uganda 146th out of 177 countries in terms of life expectancy, education, and standard of living. The average Ugandan's life expectancy in 2005 was 51.6 years, literacy stood at 70 percent as of a 2003 estimate, and 71 percent of eligible students were enrolled in primary, secondary, and tertiary schools in 2002. Per capita GDP was \$1,500 in 2004. As citizens of one of the poorest countries in the world, the average Ugandan survives on about 75 cents a day. By a 2001 estimate, 35 percent of the population lives below the poverty line.

Thatched huts made of mud and wattle walls provide housing for most of the population, though styles of building vary from group to group. Corrugated iron is also used as a roofing material. In urban centers, where an estimated 15 percent of the population lived as of 2003, the use of sun-baked mud bricks, concrete blocks, and fired bricks was encouraged by the government. Rural life remains intensely tribal.

Often referred to as "the Pearl of Africa," Uganda is the source of the White Nile, the location of the Ruwenzori Mountains—"the mountains of the moon"—and home to the endangered mountain gorilla. As such, the country is attracting tourists once again, especially after 15 years of stable government.

HEALTH

Life in Uganda is short. In 2005 the average life expectancy was 51.6 years, and the infant mortality rate was high, at over 67 deaths per 1,000 live births. Despite government spending of 2.1 percent of GDP on health, the medical infrastructure is vastly understaffed. As of 2004 there were fewer than five physicians per 100,000 people; only 39 percent of births between 1996 and 2002 were attended by trained medical professionals. Access to safe drinking water is a major problem: As of 2002, only 56 percent of the population had access to a sustainable source of clean water.

Major diseases affecting Uganda include malaria, tuberculosis, and HIV/AIDS, which is locally called "slim disease." In 2000 there were 46 cases of malaria per 100,000 people; 2002 saw 550 cases of tuberculosis per 100,000 people. As of 2003 the HIV/AIDS prevalence rate was 4.1 percent; in 2001, 600,000 people were living with the disease, and 84,000 died of it. AIDS orphans are an increasing problem for Ugandan society. The government has maintained an active policy of public education; the daily newspaper, the *New Vision*, carries a regular column intended to educate the public. Smoking is another major health risk; as of 2000, 52 percent of men smoked.

Immunization rates for children under one year of age are rising; in 2003, 96 percent were immunized

for tuberculosis, 82 percent for polio and measles, and 81 percent for DPT. Child and infant mortality rates remain high as a result of malnutrition, diarrhea, and measles.

Health

Number of Physicians: 1,175
 Number of Dentists: 75
 Number of Nurses: 1,350
 Number of Pharmacists: 125
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 4.7
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 67.83
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 880
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 7.4
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 18
 HIV Infected % of adults: 4.1
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 81
 Measles: 82
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 41
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 56

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Ugandan staples include corn, cassava, plantains, and millet. Beans and maize meal form basic parts of many meals; maize-meal porridge is boiled until it solidifies and then cut into wedges. Meats include beef, goat, and mutton. Fish also provides protein for those living near rivers and lakes. Millet and sorghum are common grains available to communities throughout northern regions, where rainfall is insufficient for root crops such as cassava, manioc, and sweet potatoes. Root crops and plantains are staples in southern and eastern Uganda, where rain is plentiful. Plantains, or *matooke*, are served with a variety of sauces made of tomatoes, peanuts, mushrooms, and some form of protein, which might be meat, fish, or even grasshopper.

Many of the pastoral groups in the country rely on cattle for much of their food. These animals provide meat, butter, and milk. Milk is often eaten curdled or mixed with blood taken from the animal. *Pombe* is a locally made fermented banana beer, and *waragi* is the local millet-based alcohol.

Urban centers such as Kampala have wider varieties of food, including fruits and vegetables imported from neighboring countries.

The most serious obstacles to health arise from nutritional deficiencies, particularly among children. Between 1999 and 2001, 19 percent of the general population was undernourished, while between 1995 and 2002, 23 percent of children under five were considered underweight. The goiter rate was 75 per 100 school-age children in 1996.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 19.1
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,330
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 62.5
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 226.3

STATUS OF WOMEN

Women's roles in society remain clearly subordinate to those of men despite gains in both politics and business and a pledge by President Museveni to eliminate discrimination against women in official policy and practice. African customary laws still discriminate against women, especially in rural areas. In many regions women may not own or inherit property, and polygyny is legal. Men may "inherit" the widow of a deceased brother. Violence against women remains common. While women are not officially restricted from education or employment, their access to education has been declining, according to the UN Children's Fund. Families withdraw daughters rather than sons from school in times of economic hardship.

In the latter half of the 1990s women were given a higher profile in both the government and military but overall remained underrepresented in those areas. The government has set aside 53 seats for women in the 292-seat National Parliament.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 24
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 0.86
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: —

WORK

The Ugandan labor force in 2003 was over 12 million strong. Of these, 82 percent were involved in agriculture, 13 percent in services, and only 5 percent in industry. Coffee is the country's single largest agricultural product; others include tea, cotton, tobacco, plantains, cassava, potatoes, corn, millet, pulses, beef, goat, milk, poultry, and flowers. Fishing along the shores of Lake Victoria provides a living for many. Industries include sugar, brewing, tobacco, cotton textiles, and cement. Tourism is becoming an increasing source of income for the country. Essentially, Uganda is a land of subsistence agriculture and small-scale businesses; most Ugandans live outside the formal economy. There are no unemployment figures.

The National Organization of Trade Unions, the country's largest labor federation, is independent of the government and political parties. However, many so-called essential workers are barred from forming unions.

Strikes are permitted only after a lengthy reconciliation process. The normal workweek is 40 hours, but there is no established maximum workweek. Though the law provides for a minimum working age of 18, child labor is widespread, especially in agriculture. With half the country's population under 15, large numbers of children tend to be employed. A minimum wage of \$3.50 per month was set in 1984 but has never been widely enforced; subsequent negotiations have not altered the vastly out-of-date figure. The few occupational safety and health regulations established in Uganda are seldom enforced.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 12,410,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 47.1
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 82
 Industry: 5
 Services: 13
 Unemployment %: —

EDUCATION

Education, even at the primary level, is not compulsory. Less than 50 percent of age-eligible children were in primary school prior to 1997, when the government introduced a universal primary education program, giving free tuition to up to four children from any family. The program has had reasonable success attracting students. The seven-year primary-school education program begins at age six. Secondary school education is six years in duration, as consisting of periods of four and two years. About 30 percent of the adult population is considered to be illiterate.

The effects of the 1997 initiative have been encouraging. Whereas primary school enrollment was about 3.1 million in 1996, enrollment rose to 5.2 million in 1997, an increase of about 68 percent. Primary school enrollments have continued to increase, and in 2002 there were 7.3 million primary-school pupils, of whom 49 percent were female, in over 13,000 schools, with almost 140,000 teachers. Secondary-school enrollment that year was over 500,000 in over 2,000 schools, with nearly 30,000 teachers. Accordingly, government spending on education has increased. In 1990 public expenditures on education totaled 1.5 percent of GDP; the figure had risen to 2.5 percent by 2001.

Kampala's University College of East Africa became Makerere University in 1970. The institution has faculties in the arts, sciences, and agriculture and offers advanced diplomas in medicine, education, engineering, law, and veterinary science. Among other public and private universities are Mbale Islamic University and the Mbarara University of Science and Technology. Uganda has a number of religious colleges, five commercial colleges, and numerous technical, vocational, and teacher-training colleges.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 69.9
 Male %: 79.5
 Female %: 60.4
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 12.0
 First Level: Primary Schools: 13,000+
 Teachers: 139,484
 Students: 7,354,153
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 52.7
 Net Enrollment Ratio: —
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 2,000+
 Teachers: 30,963
 Students: 518,934
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 17.9
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 16.5
 Third Level: Institutions: —
 Teachers: 5,082
 Students: 74,090
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 3.2
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 2.5

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Several government agencies conduct essential research. The Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industries, and Fisheries, through its National Agricultural Research Organization, employs 185 full-time researchers in fields such as crops, livestock, forestry, and fisheries. Similarly, the Ministry of Water, Lands, and Environment, through its National Environmental Management Authority, pursues research in environmental protection. The Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife, and Antiquities has research centers for wildlife protection and forestry. The country's all-important coffee crop spawned the nonprofit research group Uganda Coffee Development Authority.

Research and training is carried out at several of the nation's colleges and universities. Makerere University has faculties of science, agriculture and forestry, technology, medicine, and veterinary science. Mbarara University of Science and Technology has faculties of medicine and science education.

Between 1994 and 1997 science and engineering students accounted for 15 percent of college and university enrollments. As of 2002 expenditures on research and development totaled 0.8 percent of GDP. As of 2001 there were 25 scientists per million people engaged in research and development.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 25
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 0.81
 High-Tech Exports \$million: 1.1
 Patent Applications by Residents: 2

MEDIA

Uganda has a relatively free and outspoken media, with independently run newspapers and broadcast outlets rivaling those controlled by the government. The *New Vision*, a government-funded daily, and the *Monitor*, an independently owned daily, each have fairly widespread circulation. The *Crusader*, another independently owned newspaper, gained considerable credibility in the late 1990s and was rapidly approaching the circulation of the leading two dailies. While the government controls the main television broadcast outlet as well as the largest radio network, Radio Uganda, it by no means holds a monopoly. Radio Uganda competes with 15 independently run stations and four local television stations, and an additional dozen private stations broadcasting by satellite compete with the government network. The government does require journalists to be licensed and to hold university degrees. The constitution provides for free speech and a free press; however, the government is said to at times restrict these rights in practice. The occasional use of sedition laws and the imprisonment of some members of the media have led to the general practice of self-censorship. Similarly chilling have been the provisions of the 2002 Suppression of Terrorism Bill. This law imposes stiff sentences for the publication of news that might promote terrorism, adding to self-censorship on the part of the media. Reporters without Borders, an international media watchdog group, ranked Uganda 86th out of 167 countries in terms of press freedom.

Internet access is widely available through at least three commercial service providers, though its cost remains prohibitive. As of 2003 there were 125,000 Internet users and 776,000 cellular telephone users.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 3
 Total Circulation 000: 63
 Circulation per 1,000: 2.7
 Books Published: 288
 Periodicals: 9
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets 000: 600
 per 1,000: 28

CULTURE

With its plethora of tribes and ethnic groups, Uganda presents a broad spectrum of cultural artifacts. Some commonality can be found, however, as with music. Songs relate people's histories or celebrate everyday tasks and rites of passage; such songs are passed down from one generation to the next. Similar instruments are found

throughout Uganda. The *ndigindi* is similar to the lyre; the *entongoli* resembles a harp; the *amadinda* is a type of xylophone; and the *lukeme* is a kind of thumb piano. An Acholi, Okot p'Bitek, was one of Uganda's most famous writers. His book *Song of Lawino* (1966) describes the stories told in Acholi songs.

Dance is also a traditional means of expression. Again, such dances vary from group to group and from region to region but are generally used for the same purposes: to celebrate rites of passage, family events, and routine rituals as well as for pure enjoyment. Courtship dancing is particularly important among the Karamojong and their neighbors. Among the Baganda, the small cowhide drum used for singing and dancing is a typical household possession. Pots become drums for the Banyankole people; a typical dance imitates the movements of a cow.

Arts and crafts are still vital in Uganda. Women can often be seen outside their huts weaving straw mats or baskets. Wood carving—from pipes to bowls—is also popular.

Theater has become an effective medium of education in the country, as used to treat topics from gender equality to sexually transmitted diseases. Numerous local companies exist in addition to the National Theatre in Kampala. The largest and most important museum in the country is the Uganda Museum, in Kampala. Others include those at the Murchison Falls and Queen Elizabeth national parks.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 25
 Volumes: 128,827
 Registered borrowers: 158,407
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Each of the country's tribes and ethnic groups has its own rich oral tradition of myths, legends, and proverbs. For the people of southern Uganda, the Lubaale is the pantheon of traditional gods. Jok is the god of the Alur tribesmen of Uganda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. For them, the world is full of spirits, or *djok*. When the Alur are in need of rain, they sacrifice a black goat to Jok. Similarly, Adroa is the primary god of the Lugbara, who also live in both the DRC and Uganda. Adroa has two aspects: good and evil. He is looked on as the creator of heaven and earth and is said to appear to a person who is about to die.

Tales and legends also often relate the exploits of actual folk heroes, such as Kintu, who was the first king of the Baganda.

Proverbs provide a means of teaching morals and values to the young. Examples of some typical Ugandan proverbs are “Caution is not cowardice; even the ants march armed,” “The hunter in pursuit of an elephant does not stop to throw stones at birds,” “The husband is always the last to know,” “The person who has not traveled widely thinks his or her mother is the best cook,” and “An only child is like a drop of rain in the dry season.”

Riddles also provide entertainment as well as learning experiences for the young. Examples of some Baganda riddles include, “He built a house with only one pole standing,” (the answer is “a mushroom”); “He has three legs,” (the answer is “an old man with his walking stick”), or “He goes on dancing as he walks,” (the answer is “a caterpillar”).

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Urban entertainment in Uganda has many elements of free-time activities in the West. Movies, television, nightclubs, bars, and concerts are all available in cities such as Kampala. In the countryside, where electricity is rarer, the possibilities are more limited. Radios are found everywhere, however, and musical programs provide entertainment for all, as do soccer broadcasts. Battery-powered traveling video booths bring movies and educational programs to the countryside. Community centers in villages will usually have a television around which locals can gather.

Traditional forms of entertainment are also maintained in rural areas. Ritual celebrations and festivals based on harvests or marriages and christening provide opportunities for singing and dancing.

ETIQUETTE

Ugandans have a plethora of greetings that vary depending on social status, age, time of day, and even the length of the coming social interaction. Not greeting someone is considered rude.

Some taboos prevalent in the rest of Africa also pertain to Uganda. Eating is often done with the hands, in which case the right hand is always used. It is considered impolite to offer or take things with the left hand. Public displays of affection are considered inappropriate.

FAMILY LIFE

Though much has changed in the traditional family paradigm in modern Uganda, the extended family as one

household continues to be the ideal. However, such living arrangements are not always feasible in urban areas. Polygamy, or more specifically polygyny, once widespread, has become less common. A marriage fee is typical, and it is usual to marry outside of one's extended family or clan (but not necessarily outside of the tribe). Children take the clan name of the father.

Family size is shrinking but still large by Western standards. The 2005 fertility rate was 6.7 children per woman; however, a correspondingly high infant mortality rate of 68 deaths per 1,000 live births brings the usual family size to about four or five children. Traditionally, women are in charge of maintaining the home and raising the children, while men work the fields.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Western-style clothing is becoming the norm in Uganda, though some groups maintain tradition styles as well. Baganda women typically wear a *busuuti*, a long, brightly colored cloth dress with a sash at the hips. Baganda men frequently wear the long white robe called the *kanzu*. The Bahima women of western Uganda wear full, broad cotton dresses, with floor-length shawls. Northern tribes, including the Karamojong, often wear cow skins. They also signify social status through the use of adornments such as feather plumes and large, coiled, copper necklaces and armlets.

SPORTS

Soccer is the country's most popular sport. The national league has avid fans, and Kampala has one of the largest stadiums in Africa. A sign of the country's colonial past is the continuing popularity of such typically British sports as rugby and cricket. Boxing and wrestling are also popular. Uganda develops some impressive talent in track and field. At the 1996 Summer Olympics, Uganda's Davis Kamoga won a bronze medal in the men's 400-meter race. Ugandans have won six Olympic medals overall since 1968.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1962** Uganda gains independence, with Milton Obote of the Uganda People's Congress (UPC) as prime minister and Sir Edward Frederick Mutesa II, of the Kabaka Yekka (KY) Party—formerly the *kabaka*, or king, of Buganda—as president.
- 1966** UPC cabinet members attempt a coup; Obote has them arrested, suspends the constitution, names himself president, and commands the army chief of staff Idi Amin to take control of the Buganda government.

- 1967** Obote adopts a new constitution for the country, abolishing Uganda's four kingdoms and consolidating their power in the central government.
- 1969** Obote survives an assassination attempt; the UPC is declared the only legal party.
- 1971** Idi Amin overthrows the government and conducts bloody purges of Obote supporters among the military, the cabinet, and the civilian population.
- 1972** Libya provides aid to Uganda; Amin departs from Uganda all Israelis as well as Indians, who had by and large controlled the country's commercial sector.
- 1973** The United States and the United Kingdom close formal diplomatic relations with Uganda.
- 1978** After several military units revolt, Amin orders an invasion of Tanzania to distract them.
- 1979** Tanzania retaliates, assisted by one Ugandan contingent loyal to Obote and another loyal to Yoweri Museveni, and defeats Amin in less than six months; Ugandans and Tanzanians loot the defeated territories, further damaging Uganda's already devastated economy.
- 1980** In national elections the UPC declares victory, with Obote installed as president despite charges of election fraud by the Democratic Party (DP).
- 1981** Museveni forms the insurgent National Resistance Army (NRA), based in Buganda; the government wages a bloody campaign to suppress the group.
- 1985** Soldiers of the Acholi ethnic group stage a coup, forcing Obote into exile; Tito Okello, an Acholi army officer, declares himself head of state.
- 1986** The NRA's political wing assumes control of the government, under Museveni, and creates a broad-based government consisting of DP and UPC as well as NRA members.
- 1990** Uganda allows Rwandans in the Ugandan army to overthrow the Rwandan government.
- 1991** The government launches a large-scale privatization campaign aimed at turning over hundreds of state-run enterprises to private investors.
- 1992** Museveni undertakes a program to cut the size of the national army and to return to civilian life the guerrillas of the NRA that brought him to power; the constitutional commission presents the first draft of a new Ugandan constitution.
- 1993** The government revokes the power of traditional tribal rulers in an attempt to centralize power and modernize the government.
- 1994** Two rebel groups, the Ugandan National Democratic Alliance and the Ugandan Federal Army, sign cease-fire accords with the government.
- 1995** A new constitution is adopted, replacing the ruling Military Council with an elected National Parliament and a popularly elected president; Uganda suspends diplomatic relations with Sudan over its support of rebel insurgents.
- 1996** Museveni wins the presidential election in a landslide; peaceful elections are held for the new National Parliament; Sudan and Uganda reestablish diplomatic relations; regional Presidents Moi of Kenya, Museveni of Uganda, and Benjamin Mkapa of Tanzania meet to formally inaugurate the Permanent Tripartite Commission for East African Cooperation.
- 1997** Local government elections take place for the first time in decades in a peaceful atmosphere; the government launches an initiative giving free primary education to four children from every family.
- 1998** Museveni conducts a major purge in the armed forces after allegations of an assassination plot against him come to light; Uganda sends troops into the Democratic Republic of the Congo in support of antigovernment rebels; U.S. president Bill Clinton visits Uganda, signaling acceptance of Museveni as the legitimate head of state.
- 1999** Eight foreign tourists are kidnapped and killed by Rwandan Hutu rebels in southwestern Uganda, crippling the country's tourist industry; Uganda and the DRC sign a cease-fire agreement, ending Uganda's official support of rebel forces there.
- 2000** An Ebola epidemic breaks out in Uganda, killing over 70; Allied Democratic Forces conduct guerrilla warfare in continued attempts to topple Museveni's government; a national referendum reaffirms popular support for the no-party system of government.
- 2001** Museveni is returned to office, purportedly winning 69 percent of the vote. NRA continues to dominate the National Parliament following elections.
- 2002** Sudan and Uganda sign an agreement to try and contain the rebel group Lord's Resistance Army. A strong offensive is mounted against the rebel faction. Uganda begins pulling troops out of the DRC.
- 2003** Last of Ugandan troops leave the DRC. Idi Amin dies in Saudi Arabia.
- 2004** LRA kills 200 at a displaced persons camp, sparking renewed fighting with the government. The government and LRA begin talks in an attempt to end the insurgency.
- 2005** Uganda rejects the DRC's allegations at the International Court in The Hague that it invaded the DRC in 1999. In December the Court rules in favor of the DRC.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- myUganda
<http://www.myuganda.co.ug/govt/>
- Uganda Bureau of Statistics
<http://www.ubos.org/>

UKRAINE

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Ukraine (Ukrayina)

ABBREVIATION

UA

CAPITAL

Kiev

HEAD OF STATE

President Viktor Yushchenko (from 2005)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Yuriy Yekhanurov (from 2005)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Emerging democracy

POPULATION

47,425,336 (2005)

AREA

603,700 sq km (233,090 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Ukrainian, Russian

LANGUAGES

Ukrainian, Russian

RELIGIONS

Ukrainian Orthodox, Ukrainian Catholic

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Hryvnia

NATIONAL FLAG

Two equal horizontal bands, of azure (top) and golden yellow

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A gold Trident of St. Volodymyr the Great on a blue shield

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“She ne Vmerla Ukrayina” (Ukraine’s Glory Has Not Perished)

NATIONAL HOLIDAY

August 24 (Independence Day)

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

December 1, 1991

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

June 28, 1996

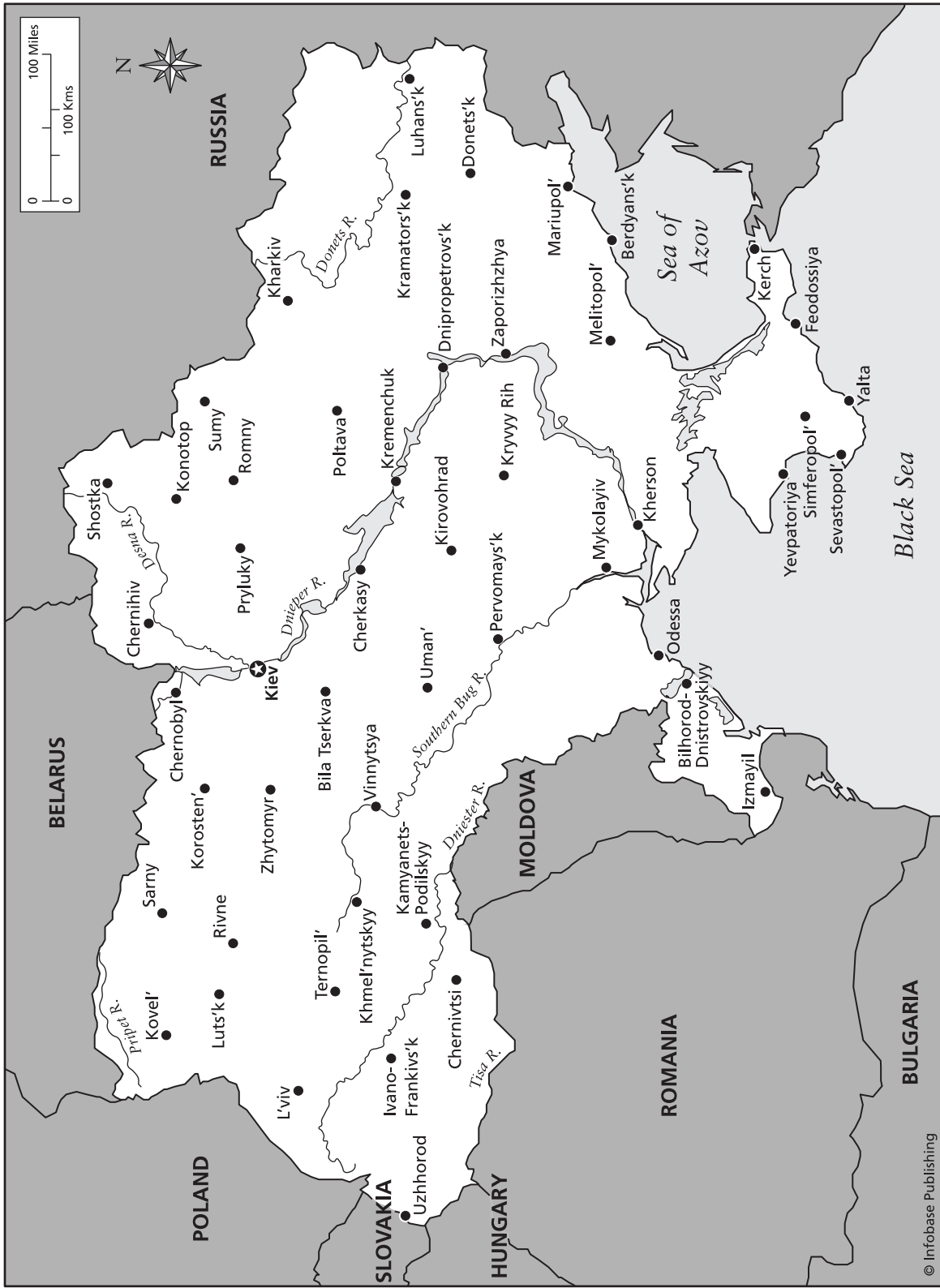
GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Situated north of the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov, Ukraine covers 603,700 sq km (233,090 sq mi). Known as the breadbasket of Europe, Ukraine is largely a flat, fertile plain, with over half the land suitable for agriculture. The country consists of six main regions: the Dnieper-Pripet Lowland, the Northern Ukrainian Upland, the Central Plateau, the Eastern Carpathian Mountains, the Coastal Plain, and the Crimean Mountains.

The Dnieper-Pripet Lowland is the northern part of the Ukraine that includes the basin of the Dnieper River, Ukraine’s longest; the Pripet River, which drains the western lowlands; and the city of Kiev. This once densely forested lowland is largely used as pasture for livestock. A low plateau in the northeastern por-

tion of the nation makes up the Northern Ukrainian Upland, which is used to grow wheat and sugar beets and raise livestock. There are large deposits of natural gas south of Kharkiv. The Central Plateau—Ukraine’s most productive farmland—extends from east to west across the country and is part of the Great European Plain. The eastern part of the plateau is the Donets Basin, or Donbass. Ukraine’s leading industrial region includes the cities of Donets’k, Gorlovka (also spelled Horlivka), and Luhans’k. The region also has large deposits of coal. The Eastern Carpathian Mountains rise in western Ukraine. The country’s highest peak, Mount Hoverla (also spelled Goverla), reaches 2,061 m (6,762 ft). The mountains have deposits of oil and natural gas. Along the Black Sea and Sea of Azov lies the Coastal Plain, which includes most of the Crimean

Ukraine



Peninsula. The coastline consists of moderately steep cliffs and shallow lagoons. This region is also the most arid. In the southern part of the Crimean Peninsula are the Crimean Mountains, which gradually rise from the north but slope steeply to the Black Sea in the south. The highest peak in the Crimeans is Roman-Kosh, which rises to 1,545 m (5,069 ft).

Geography

Area sq km: 603,700; sq mi 233,090
 World Rank: 43rd
 Land Boundaries, km: Belarus 891; Hungary 103; Moldova 939; Poland 526; Romania 531; Russia 1,576; Slovakia 97
 Coastline, km: 2,782
 Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Black Sea 0
 Highest: Hora Hoverla 2,061
 Land Use %
 Arable Land: 56.2
 Permanent Crops: 1.6
 Forest: 16.5
 Other: 25.7

Population of Principal Cities (2001)

Chernihiv	304,994
Dnipropetrovs'k	1,065,008
Donets'k	1,016,194
Kharkiv	1,470,902
Kherson	328,360
Kiev	2,611,327
Kyivvy Rih	668,980
Luhans'k	463,097
L'viv	732,818
Makiyivka	389,589
Mariupol'	492,176
Mykolayiv	514,136
Odessa	1,029,049
Poltava	317,998
Sevastopol'	342,451
Simferopol'	343,644
Vinnytsya	356,665
Zaporizhzhya	815,256

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Most of Ukraine has cold winters and warm summers that favor the growing of crops. Eastern Ukraine is slightly colder in winter and warmer in summer than western Ukraine. Temperatures in eastern Ukraine average about 19°F (−7°C) in January and 68°F (20°C) in July, while temperatures in the west average about 25°F (−4°C) in January and 64°F (18°C) in July. Precipitation ranges from about 30 in (760 mm) per year in the north to about 9 in (230 mm) in the south. Rainfall is highest in June and July. At higher elevations in the Carpathian and Crimean mountains the weather is colder and wetter.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature
 January: 21°F
 July: 66°F
 Average Rainfall: 27 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Ukraine is divided into three clear vegetative zones. In the north, in the region known as Polesye, heavy rainfall supports forests and woodlands of beech, alder, willow, poplar, beech, oak, elm, and pine. Much of this land has been cleared for agricultural purposes, as the black soil of Ukraine has long made the nation an agricultural powerhouse. The northern region also contains marshland, including parts of the vast Pripet Marshes, though the country is busily draining these marshes for more farmland. The middle of the country is a forest-steppe; agricultural land accounts for over two-thirds of this. The terrain gives way to true steppe farther south. There is alpine vegetation in the Carpathian and Crimean mountains.

Animal life includes fox, rabbit, wild boar, European bison, wolf, elk, deer, wild sheep, and marten. There are over 350 bird species found in the country, including the gull, partridge, owl, and numerous migratory birds. Fish include perch, sturgeon, carp, and bream.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 47,425,336
 World Rank: 25th
 Density per sq km: 83.5
 % of annual growth (1999-2003): −0.8
 Male %: 46.2
 Female %: 53.8
 Urban %: 67.1
 Age Distribution %: 0–14: 15.6
 15–64: 68.8
 65 and over: 15.6

Population 2025: 41,785,000
 Birth Rate per 1,000: 10.49
 Death Rate per 1,000: 16.42
 Rate of Natural Increase %: −0.6
 Total Fertility Rate: 1.4
 Expectation of Life (years): Males 61.6
 Females 72.38
 Marriage Rate per 1,000: 6.6
 Divorce Rate per 1,000: 3.8
 Average Size of Households: 3.2
 Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Ukrainians, a Slavic nationality with their own customs and language, make up 73 percent of Ukraine's popula-

tion. The Russians form the second-largest ethnic group, constituting 22 percent of the population. Other groups include Jews, Belarusians, Moldovans, Bulgarians, and Poles. Ukraine has tried to accommodate the cultural concerns of ethnic minority groups in education and other cultural areas.

LANGUAGES

Since 1990 the official language of the Ukraine has been Ukrainian. However, from the 1930s until the late 1980s the government of the Soviet Union forced Ukrainians to conduct business, educate, print newspapers, and broadcast television in Russian, such that many Ukrainians speak Russian better than they do Ukrainian. The government allows ethnic minorities to use their own languages in schools and other local affairs. Among the more often used minority languages are Romanian, Polish, and Hungarian.

RELIGIONS

Despite the decades of religious restrictions imposed by the Soviet Union, Ukrainians have maintained strong ties to organized religion. About 46 percent of all Ukrainians are Orthodox Christians who belong to either the Ukrainian Orthodox Church or the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church. The former was a branch of the Russian Orthodox Church until the early 1990s, while the latter was an independent Orthodox church that supported Ukrainian independence; the Autocephalous Church was banned in 1930 by Stalin but was reinstated in 1990. The second-largest denomination in the country is the Ukrainian Catholic Church, which is strongest in the west. Also known as Uniates or Greek Catholics, the Ukrainian Catholics celebrate the Orthodox Rite but recognize the authority of the Roman Catholic pope. There are small percentages of other Christian denominations, and about 1 percent of the population is Jewish by birth.

Religious Affiliations

Ukrainian Orthodox	20,870,000
Ukrainian Greek Catholic	2,850,000
Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox	810,000
Protestant, Jewish, None, Other	22,910,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Ukraine has historically been closely linked to Russia. A Slavic civilization called Rus developed around Kiev and at other points along river routes between the Baltic and Black seas during the ninth century. In 980 Kiev was con-

quered by Vladimir I (Volodymyr in Ukrainian), the ruler of the Russian city of Novgorod. Under his rule, the state became a significant European power. Around 988, when Vladimir converted to Orthodox Christianity, the country became Christian and fell under the cultural influence of the Byzantine Empire. The state collapsed in the 13th century, when the Tartars, a Mongol tribe, swept across the Ukrainian plains from the east and conquered the region. The state of Galicia-Volhynia, meanwhile, managed to stay independent and grew in importance in what is now western Ukraine.

In the mid-14th century, Lithuania seized Volhynia and Kiev, and the Polish kingdom gained control of Galicia. Under Polish and Lithuanian rule, Ukrainian peasants became serfs. By 1569 Poland ruled the entire region. Many discontented peasants joined bands of independent soldiers that became known as Cossacks, who occupied the territory that lay between the Poles and the Tatars. In 1648 the Cossack leader Bohdan Khmelnytsky led an uprising against Polish control. In an effort to gain foreign support, he formed a short-lived alliance with the czar of Russia in 1654, accepting his overlordship.

In 1667 Ukraine was divided between Poland and Russia. Poland gained control of lands west of the Dnieper River, while Ukrainian lands east of the Dnieper came under Russian protection. However, by 1764 Russia abolished Ukrainian self-rule. Beginning in 1772 the western regions of the Ukraine, including Galicia, were incorporated into the Austrian Empire.

During the following century Russia followed a policy of Russification, imposing the Russian language and culture on the Ukrainians. From 1863 to 1905 Ukrainian-language publications were banned. In Austrian-controlled Galicia, on the other hand, greater freedom was allowed, and Galicia became a major center of Ukrainian culture during the 1800s.

While the Bolsheviks established a Communist government in Russia, in 1918 the Ukrainians formed an independent, non-Communist country called the Ukrainian People's Republic. However, the republic was short-lived, and by 1920 Communist Russia had seized eastern and central Ukraine. The rest of Ukraine came under Polish, Czechoslovak, and Romanian control.

Ukraine became one of the four original republics of the Soviet Union in 1922. Although initially supportive of Ukrainian culture and the use of the Ukrainian language, under dictator Joseph Stalin the Soviet state began a renewed policy of Russification.

In the late 1920s and early 1930s the Communist government began a program of collectivization in which privately owned farms were combined into larger, state-run farms. Several hundred thousand Ukrainian farmers resisted the seizure of their land and were sent to prison labor camps in Siberia or Soviet central Asia. In 1932 and 1933 the Soviet government seized grain and food from

people's homes, causing a major famine. Between five million and 7.5 million Ukrainians died of starvation.

During World War II, from mid-1941 to mid-1944, Nazi Germany occupied Ukraine. German policies to exploit the region's resources and people to the fullest were implemented with exceptional brutality. About five million Ukrainian civilians, including 600,000 Ukrainian Jews, were killed during the war. By the end of World War II the Soviet Union had taken control of many parts of Ukraine that had belonged to Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Romania. In 1945 Soviet Ukraine became one of the original members of the United Nations. In 1954 Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev transferred control of the Crimea from Russia to Ukraine. For the next three decades many Ukrainians opposed Soviet control and the oppression of Ukrainian culture. The protest movement continued despite arrests and imprisonment.

In 1986 an explosion and fire at the nuclear power plant in Chernobyl, near Kiev, released large amounts of radioactive material into the atmosphere. Initial reports released by Soviet officials put the number of people who had died from the accident at 31 and claimed only 200 were seriously injured. However, by the early 1990s it had become clear that 6,000 to 8,000 people had died as a result of the explosion and its aftermath. The disaster also caused high rates of cancer and other illnesses in Ukraine, Belarus, and Russia, and there was long-term environmental impact on soil and water supplies.

In the late 1980s the Ukrainian nationalist movement gained strength. Citizens demanded more control over their government, economy, and culture. In July 1990 Ukraine's parliament declared Ukrainian sovereignty and the supremacy of Ukrainian law over Soviet law. When an August 1991 attempt by conservative Communists to overthrow a reform-minded Soviet government failed, the demands for self-rule increased. The Supreme Soviet passed a declaration of independence on August 24, 1991, around the same time that several other Soviet republics made similar declarations. In a referendum on December 1, over 90 percent of Ukrainians voted in favor of independence. Leonid M. Kravchuk, a former Communist official who became a Ukrainian nationalist and democrat, was elected president.

On December 25, 1991, the Soviet Union was dissolved. Ukraine and most of the other former Soviet republics created a loose association called the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) to deal with economic and military problems caused by the breakup. Many Ukrainians viewed the CIS as a temporary association, as they feared a commonwealth led by Russia would limit Ukrainian independence. There were tensions between the Ukraine and Russia over how much of the Soviet national debt each country would assume, how the Soviet Navy's Black Sea Fleet would be divided, and which country would have control of the Crimea.

In 1992 Ukraine and two other former Soviet republics with nuclear weapons—Belarus and Kazakhstan—agreed to eliminate all nuclear weapons on their territories within seven years. They also agreed to become parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, a UN treaty forbidding the spread of nuclear weapons; Ukraine ratified the treaty in 1994. In 1996 Ukraine completed the transfer of its short- and long-range nuclear weapons to Russia for destruction. Ukraine's last Soviet-era nuclear missile silo was destroyed in 2001.

In 1994 Leonid D. Kuchma was elected to succeed Kravchuk as Ukraine's president. In 1997 Ukraine and Russia reached an agreement to settle the dispute over the Black Sea Fleet: According to the terms of the agreement the Ukraine kept about one-fifth of the fleet, and Russia leased from Ukraine docking space for its ships at the port of Sevastopol, in Crimea. Shortly thereafter the two countries signed a treaty of friendship and cooperation, which was ratified by Russia's legislature in 1999. Kuchma was reelected president in November 1999. His reputation, however, was ruined when a critic of the government, the Internet journalist Georgiy Gongadze, was brutally murdered in 2000. This led to street protests and calls for Kuchma's impeachment, as most suspected he was involved in Gongadze's decapitation. The European Union looked into the case, and in 2002 a parliamentary commission seemed to find a connection to the president. More demonstrations followed, but Kuchma created a news blackout and temporarily weathered the storm.

Meanwhile, in 2001 Ukraine's parliament dismissed the government in a vote of no confidence. Prime Minister Viktor Yushchenko, who had come under attack for his economic reform program, was replaced by Anatoli Kinakh. In 2002 Kuchma fired Kinakh and installed Viktor Yanukovych. When Kuchma attempted to amend the constitution to allow for his presidential term to be extended, the opposition, including Yushchenko, decried the move in parliament. More mass demonstrations in 2002 protested Kuchma's presidency.

In 2004 the first round of presidential elections were held, leading to a runoff between Yushchenko and Kuchma's pick to succeed him, Yanukovych. During the campaign, Yushchenko was diagnosed with severe dioxin poisoning, which apparently was the result of a deliberate action on the part of one of his enemies. Fraud on a massive scale was alleged in the November victory of Yanukovych, sparking the largest peaceful protests in Ukrainian history, the so-called Orange Revolution. Ukraine's Supreme Court ruled the results invalid, and in a second runoff election the reformer Yushchenko won. In 2005 the Yushchenko government announced that the suspected killers of Gongadze were in custody and accused the former authorities of staging a cover-up.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

President

1991–94	Leonid Makarovich Kravchuk
1995–2005	Leonid Danylovych Kuchma
2005–	Viktor Andriyovych Yushchenko

CONSTITUTION

For nearly five years after gaining independence—from December 1991 to June 1996—Ukraine continued to be governed under a 1978 constitution that was not written to be implemented and that was subsequently modified piecemeal through a series of amendments and constitutional laws. The result was a patchwork constitutional order that left unresolved such fundamental issues as the relationships among the Rada (the legislative body), the prime minister, and the president. President Leonid Kravchuk and his successor, Leonid Kuchma, sought strong presidential powers in a new constitution but could not reach agreement with the Rada. At stake was whether the Rada should act as a parliament or a legislature—that is, whether executive power and legislative power would ultimately be in the hands of a prime minister and cabinet that depended upon the Rada, or whether Ukraine would essentially have a presidential-congressional system.

In April 1995 the Rada finally passed several of President Kuchma's proposals to strengthen the presidency pending the adoption of a new constitution. The Rada acceded to most of the proposals only after Kuchma threatened to convert the changes into referenda that the Rada knew the people would support. As a result of the changes the system became presidential-congressional by default. President Kuchma used the same threat of referendum in order to have a new constitution adopted that codified the changes to which the Rada had agreed; the new constitution took effect July 12, 1996.

The Ukrainian government features an executive branch headed by a president with strong powers and a legislative branch consisting of a national parliament. The president is elected directly to a five-year term by citizens 18 years old or older. The president is assisted by a cabinet, which the president appoints; a prime minister, also appointed by the president, heads the cabinet. Ukraine's parliament, officially called the Supreme Rada, is the nation's lawmaking body. It has 450 members directly elected to four-year terms.

PARLIAMENT

The Rada is a unicameral legislature comprising 450 delegates, half of whom are elected from single-member districts and half through proportional representation. Election is by all citizens aged 18 and over. The turn-

out rate in a given election must exceed 50 percent in order for the results to be valid. There are 24 permanent commissions, or standing committees, in which most of the details of legislation are reviewed. Because there is no strong and stable party structure, the well-defined committees are essential for successful legislative practice. As parties have grown in stability and force, the process of selecting chairs and members of key committees has more closely reflected that growth.

POLITICAL PARTIES

There are over 50 political parties registered in Ukraine, but only a dozen or so have significant size and influence. The main differences between parties regard their pro-Communist or anti-Communist stances. The center, once very weak, has gained strength since the 2002 elections. Over 40 parties took part in the 2002 parliamentary elections, most working temporarily in blocs.

On the left are the Communist Party of Ukraine (the successor to the old Communist Party and the nation's largest party), the Socialist-Peasant Party (adhering to a revisionist Marxism that recognizes private property and private business but holds that business activity, especially that of large enterprises, should be controlled by the state), the Social-Democratic Party United (a moderate socialist party), and the Agrarian Party/Rural Party (which focuses on defending collective farms).

On the right are the Rukh (a strong right-center party that is strongest in western Ukraine) and the Ukrainian Republican Party (which is moderately conservative and strongly supportive of Ukrainian independence).

Viktor Yushchenko's bloc, Our Ukraine (Nasha Ukrayina, NU), a coalition of 10 centrist parties, won 112 seats in the 2002 parliamentary elections. The Communist Party took 66 seats, while the more conservative For United Ukraine bloc won 102. Nonpartisan candidates took 95 seats.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Ukraine is divided into 24 oblasts of approximately equal size and the Autonomous Republic of Crimea. Crimea has its own parliament and certain rights as an autonomous republic. The cities of Kiev and Sevastopol also have oblast status for historical reasons. The largest city of a given oblast is the oblast center, and the oblasts are named after these cities (as with L'viv Oblast, Donetsk Oblast, and so on). Only Transcarpathia (Zakarpattia), centered in Uzhgorod, and Volyn, centered in Luts'k, do not follow this principle. The capital of Crimea is Simferopol.

Each oblast and Crimea is divided into between 11 and 27 *raions*; the population of *raions* range between 100,000 and 300,000. Larger cities have the same status

as *raions* within oblasts and are called “cities of oblast subordination.” *Raions* are divided into towns (townships) and villages. Towns are usually somewhat larger than villages and have some nonagricultural industries, while villages are completely agricultural. Large cities may be divided into city districts, also called *raions*, with populations between 70,000 and 300,000. Local councils are elected by the populations of villages, towns, and cities to four-year terms. Terms are concurrent, and all local council members come up for election at once. City mayors are elected by the entire electorates in cities. According to 1994 legislation, mayors must receive more than 50 percent of votes cast.

LEGAL SYSTEM

Ukraine’s highest court is the Supreme Court, which consists of 18 members. Six of the members are appointed by the president, six by the Rada, and six by a panel of judges. The Supreme Court decides questions about the constitutionality of laws. In 2001 the judiciary adopted a three-level court system, with *raion* courts and oblast courts in addition to the Supreme Court. According to the 1996 constitution, the judiciary is funded by the Ministry of Justice so as to free the courts from executive influence. However, such influence can and has been exerted, as the executive branch oversees the financing of the Ministry of Justice.

Ukraine’s Supreme Court did demonstrate its independence from the executive branch in 2004 by invalidating the election results because of fraud and calling for a second runoff election.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Ukraine has a mixed human rights record; through the end of the 20th century there was limited progress in some areas, but serious problems persisted. Members of the military beat and killed conscripts during violent hazing incidents, and there were reports of possibly politically motivated killings. Police and prison officials regularly beat detainees and prisoners, and there were numerous instances of torture, sometimes resulting in death. There were instances of arbitrary arrest and detention; lengthy pretrial detention in very poor conditions was common, and detainees often spent months in pretrial detention for violations that involved little or no prison time under conviction. Long delays in trials were a problem. Prison conditions were harsh and life threatening.

The government has rarely punished officials who have committed abuses. The Security Service of Ukraine, police, and Prosecutor’s Office have drawn domestic and international criticism for their failure to take adequate action to curb institutional corruption and abuse in the government. Many high-profile corruption cases have been

dropped, ostensibly because of a lack of incriminating evidence. Anticorruption legislation has been enforced selectively, mostly against government opponents and low-level officials. Political interference and corruption have affected the judicial process. The judiciary is overburdened, inefficient, and lacks sufficient funding and staff. These factors have undermined citizens’ right to a fair trial.

The citizens’ right to change their government peacefully, formerly restricted, demonstrated new strength in the repeated runoffs and final result of the presidential election of 2004. Improvements in Ukraine’s human rights record are expected under the reform-minded President Yushchenko.

FOREIGN POLICY

Ukraine insisted upon independence that it would be a nuclear-free power, although a substantial portion of the former Soviet nuclear arsenal was located within the nation’s borders. In 1994 Ukraine concluded a tripartite agreement with Russia and the United States by which it divested itself of all nuclear warheads, handing them over to Russia in return for \$1 billion from the United States.

Independent Ukraine’s relations with Russia have been complicated by the status of Crimea and the ownership of the former Soviet Union’s Black Sea Fleet, based in Sevastopol. Most of the boundaries with Russia were agreeably demarcated by 2004, except for the boundary through the Sea of Azov and Kerch Strait. Ukraine was formally admitted to the Council of Europe in 1995 and became a full member of the Central European Initiative in 1996. In 1997 Russia and Ukraine signed a 10-year friendship treaty settling the long-standing disagreement over the Black Sea Fleet and recognizing Crimea and the city of Sevastopol as Ukrainian territory. In 1997 Ukraine signed a cooperation charter with the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) establishing a special relationship, short of membership, entailing the exchange of military missions and the establishment of a joint commission through which Ukraine may consult with NATO if under external threat. Subsequently, Ukraine condemned NATO aggression against Serbia. In 1997 Ukraine agreed to shut down the Chernobyl plant after being pledged \$900 million by Western nations in compensation; the plant was finally closed in 2000. In 2005 Ukraine and NATO agreed upon reforms that would need to be in place for the country to become a full NATO member by 2008. EU membership will be a possibility for the country by 2015.

DEFENSE

While the 1996 constitution bans the stationing of foreign troops on Ukrainian soil, Ukraine and Russia have signed an agreement that permits Russia to maintain its Black Sea

naval force with installations in the Ukraine. The defense of Ukraine is conducted by a large, multifaceted force. Conscription for a period of 18 months is still practiced, which gives the country an abundant supply of trained men. In 2000 total military strength was over 420,000 personnel. The army consisted of more than 187,000 soldiers organized into a number of brigades and divisions. There are three commands: the Ministry of Defense, Western Operations Command, and Southern Operations Command. All of the military's hardware is Soviet made. Ukrainian navy personnel numbered 7,000, including a naval aviation force. The air force consisted of more than 2,000 Soviet aircraft commandeered by Ukraine. The total manpower of the air force was more than 120,000.

By 2002 Ukrainian military personnel had been reduced to just over 400,000, with a budget of \$617.9 million, or 1.4 percent of gross domestic product (GDP). Ukrainian troops took part in the war in Iraq from 2003 to 2005.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 403,000
 Military Manpower Availability: 11,067,239
 Military Expenditures \$million: 617.9
 as % of GDP: 1.4
 as % of central government expenditures: —
 Arms Imports \$million: —
 Arms Exports \$million: 234

ECONOMY

After Russia, the Ukrainian republic was by far the most important economic component of the former Soviet Union, producing about four times the output of the next-ranking republic. Its fertile black soil generated more than one-quarter of Soviet agricultural output, and its farms provided substantial quantities of meat, milk, grain, and vegetables to the other republics. Likewise, its diversified heavy industry supplied equipment and raw materials to industrial and mining sites in other Soviet regions. On the other hand, Ukraine has depended on imports of energy, especially natural gas.

Shortly after the implosion of the USSR in December 1991 the Ukrainian government liberalized most price controls and erected a legal framework for privatization, but widespread resistance within the government and the legislature soon stalled reform efforts and led to some backtracking. Loose monetary policies led to hyperinflation in late 1993. After his 1994 election, President Kuchma pushed economic reforms, maintained financial discipline, and tried to remove almost all remaining controls over prices and foreign trade. However, widespread corruption marked his presidency, and the onset of the financial crisis in Russia dashed Ukraine's hopes of expe-

riencing its first year of economic growth in 1998 due to a sharp fall in export revenue and reduced domestic demand. By 1999 output had fallen to less than 40 percent of 1991 levels. The government did not prove able to significantly decrease its huge backlog of wage and pension arrears. Despite increasing pressure from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to accelerate reform, substantial economic restructuring failed to occur, largely because of resistance in the Communist-dominated Rada to further privatization.

While GDP grew by 12 percent in 2004, the economy remained burdened by a lack of transparency and by the presence of the unofficial cash economy, which accounted for a significant proportion of real income. Wage arrears did decrease, partly because of election-year politics. With the election of Yushchenko as president in 2004, international investors may be less reluctant to put funds into the country.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 299.1
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 6,300
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 5.9
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 6.7
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 18.0
 Industry: 45.1
 Services: 36.9
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 54
 Government Consumption: 20
 Gross Domestic Investment: 18.8
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 32.91
 Imports: 31.45
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 3.7
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 23.2

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1992 = 100)
 1998 1999 2000 2001 2002
 527,662 647,356 829,931 929,180 936,218

Finance

National Currency: Hryvnia (UAH)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = UAH 5.3192
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 53.1
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 7
 Total External Debt \$billion: 16.37
 Debt Service Ratio %: 5.47
 Balance of Payments \$billion: 4.584
 International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 6.7
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
 12.0

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 323
 per capita \$: 6.70
 Foreign Direct Investment \$billion: 1.42

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$billion: 13.57
 Expenditures \$billion: 12.26
 Budget Surplus \$billion: 1.31
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 18.0
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 1.6
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 1.24
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 6.8
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 18.1
 Total Farmland % of land area: 56.2
 Livestock: Cattle million: 7.71
 Chickens million: 121.4
 Pigs million: 7.32
 Sheep 000: 899
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 13.2
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 296

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 9.53
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 16.5

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 85
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 146
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 2.98
 Net Energy Imports % of use: 45.3
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 54
 Production kW-hr billion: 177
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 156
 Coal Reserves tons billion: 37.6
 Production tons million: 63.5
 Consumption tons million: 67.1
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: 39.6
 Production cubic feet billion: 690
 Consumption cubic feet trillion: 3.03
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels million: 395
 Production barrels 000 per day: 86.8
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 415
 Pipelines Length km: 4,540

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 31.45
 Exports \$billion: 32.91
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 7.3
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 4.7
 Balance of Trade \$billion: 4.584

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Russia %	31.9	17.4
Germany %	11.9	—
Turkmenistan %	5.8	—
Turkey %	—	7.1
Italy %	4.5	5.7

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 169,679
 Paved %: 96.8
 Automobiles: 5,312,600
 Trucks and Buses: —
 Railroad: Track Length km: 22,473
 Passenger-km billion: 52.7
 Freight-km billion: 177.5
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 201
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 710
 Airports: 656
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 1.58
 Length of Waterways km: 1,672

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 6.33
 Number of Tourists from million: 9.27
 Tourist Receipts \$billion: 1
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 794

Communications

Telephones million: 10.8
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones million: 4.2
 Personal Computers million: 0.95
 Internet Hosts per million people: 1,989
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 80

ENVIRONMENT

The greatest environmental issue facing the Ukraine is the lingering contamination by radiation that resulted from the 1986 Chernobyl nuclear power plant accident in the north-east. Otherwise, there are inadequate supplies of potable water throughout the country. Growing deforestation, especially in the north, is cause for concern, as trees are cut for fuel and land-clearing purposes. In urban areas, there is increased air and water pollution from industrial output.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 16.5
 Forest Change (1990–2000) hectares 000: 31
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 3
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 445,758
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 6.92

LIVING CONDITIONS

The UN 2004 Human Development Report ranked Ukraine 70th out of 177 countries in terms of life expectancy, education, and standard of living. The average Ukrainian's life expectancy in 2005 was 66.9 years, literacy stood at 99.7 percent in 2003, and 84 percent of eligible students were enrolled in primary, secondary, and tertiary schools in 2002. Per capita GDP was \$6,300 in 2004. Overall, Ukraine ranked in the upper half of central and eastern European countries.

Collectivization during the Soviet period largely destroyed small farming in Ukraine. About two-thirds of the population now live in urban areas, most of which are wanting in infrastructure, from housing to roads. About one-third still lives in villages and on farms and are mostly involved in agriculture. Wealth is largely concentrated within the political elite and among directors of both the state-dominated and newly privatized economic sectors.

Ukraine has experienced declines in population since independence, partly because of the return of some ethnic Russians to Russia and also because of low birth and fertility rates. In 2005 the birth rate per 1,000 people was 10.5, while the death rate was 16.4. Net migration that same year was -0.39 people per 1,000. As of 2003, 29 percent of the population was living below the poverty line.

HEALTH

A major health problem for Ukraine continues to be the long-term effects of the 1986 Chernobyl disaster. Rates of various forms of cancer are much higher in areas near the site; about 6.7 million people were exposed to radiation fallout, which has led to a 10-fold increase in thyroid cancer among children in affected areas. Every year the Ukrainian government sends groups of young people with radiation sickness to Europe, North America, or the Caribbean for several months to reduce the levels of radiation in their bodies. Cardiovascular and respiratory diseases, cancer, traumas, and accidents are other major causes of illness and death. HIV/AIDS has made significant inroads in the population. In 1999, the number of people living with HIV/AIDS was estimated to be about 240,000, and AIDS deaths were estimated at 4,000; HIV prevalence was 1 percent among adults. By 2001 there were 11,000 AIDS deaths, and by 2003 the prevalence rate had reached 2 percent. Smoking is also a major health risk; an estimated 43 percent of deaths of middle-aged males are due to lung cancer or tuberculosis.

The medical infrastructure has suffered throughout the transition from the Communist to a free-market system. As of 2004 there were 297 physicians per 100,000 people, and virtually 100 percent of births were being at-

tended by trained health providers. Nevertheless, hospital infrastructure and equipment remains outdated. Once free to all, health care now comes at a substantial cost; public spending on health care was drastically reduced from an estimated 10 percent of GDP in 1992 to 3.3 percent in 2002. Immunization rates remain high; rates for one-year-olds in 2002 were 98 percent for tuberculosis and 99 percent for measles. In 2002, 99 percent of the population had access to improved sanitation, while 98 percent had access to improved water sources. The infant mortality rate in 2004 was 20 deaths per 1,000 live births.

Health

Number of Physicians:	146,582
Number of Dentists:	19,275
Number of Nurses:	377,376
Number of Pharmacists:	—
Physician Density per 100,000 people:	297
Hospital Beds per 1,000:	8.7
Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births:	20.34
Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births:	35
Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP:	4.7
Health Expenditures per capita \$:	40
HIV Infected % of adults:	1.4
Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:	
DPT:	97
Measles:	99
Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %:	99
Access to Improved Water Source %:	98

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Ukrainian food is generally heavy in carbohydrates and meats. Potatoes, beets, and cabbage are standard vegetables. Popular dishes include cabbage rolls, called *holubtsi*; stuffed peppers and tomatoes; dumplings, called *varenyky* or *pyrohy*, made with flour and stuffed with any of cheese, meat, vegetables, fruit, or jam and served with sour cream; and borscht, a soup made with beets and meat.

Breads and pastries are also Ukrainian specialties. At Ukrainian weddings it is traditional to offer *korovai*, a special bread built up to form a tall cylinder. *Kolac* is a Christmas bread made with sour cream and honey, and at Easter there is a special egg bread called *paska*, which is often shaped into a cross. Ukrainians are famous for another Easter tradition: decorated eggs called *pysanky*.

The major alcoholic drink is vodka (the name of which is derived from *voda*, meaning "water"), distilled from rye, wheat, or potatoes. Kvass is a drink made from fermented mixed cereals.

Nutrition, aside from the large intake of fats and carbohydrates, is generally good. Undernourishment rates are low. However, only one-third of the population uses iodized salt, and there is the continued risk of radiation contamination in food supplies.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 3.0
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,830
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 166.1
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 133.2

STATUS OF WOMEN

Violence against women in Ukraine is very pervasive. Surveys by women's groups indicate that 10 to 15 percent of women have been raped and 25 percent have been physically abused. Hotlines, shelters, and other means of practical support for victims of abuse are nonexistent, and violence against women does not receive media coverage. Ukraine is an important source of girls and women trafficked to western Europe and the Middle East for sexual exploitation and prostitution. An April 1998 amendment to the criminal code imposes harsh penalties for trafficking in women, as well as for pornography, but the law is rarely enforced. There is widespread sexual harassment in the workplace, including coerced sex. Though men and women have equal legal access to job opportunities, women are much more likely to be laid off than men; they constitute about 60 percent of the unemployed population. About 15 percent of working women are engaged in hazardous jobs. Few women attain top managerial positions in the either the state or private sector.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 5
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.0
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 53.6

WORK

In 2003 the Ukrainian labor force numbered over 21 million. As of 1996, 24 percent were employed in agriculture, producing grain, sugar beets, sunflower seeds, vegetables, beef, and milk; 44 percent were involved in the service sector; and 32 percent were employed in industries such as coal, electric power, ferrous and nonferrous metals, machinery and transport equipment, chemicals, and food processing. The aerospace industry is still important to Ukraine: The country launched its first satellite in 1995. The official 2004 unemployment rate was 3.5 percent, but the International Labor Organization estimated the unemployment rate to be 9 or 10 percent. The government rate does not take into account the large numbers of unregistered and underemployed workers.

Ukraine is still in flux, changing over from the command-and-control economy of the Soviet years to a

free-enterprise system. Dislocations have been severe as a result of breakups of state-run and state-owned industries and collective farms. Trade unions function, but strikes and protests are infrequent. Union leaders have been subject to government harassment and sometimes threats. However, changes adopted in 2003 to the Law on Trade Unions granted unions the status of legal entities, requiring only that they supply a notification of registration, as opposed to requiring approval by a government ministry. By the end of 2003 there were 106 registered trade unions, including 42 traditional and 64 new trade unions. The minimum work age is 16, the workweek is 40 hours, and the minimum wage as of 2005 was \$49 per month. As much of employment in Ukraine is unofficial, however, labor laws do not affect the majority of workers.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 21,110,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 48.8
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 24
 Industry: 32
 Services: 44
 Unemployment %: 9.5

EDUCATION

Ukrainian law requires children to attend school for 11 years, from seven to 18 years of age. After the ninth grade students may continue with a general academic program or enroll in technical or trade schools to complete their education. Ukraine has about 250 schools of higher education, including nine larger universities, the best known being Kiev State University, Lviv State University, and Kharkiv State University. The country enjoys a literacy rate of almost 100 percent. Great emphasis is put on education; about 15 percent of the population has a college or technical degree. Public expenditures on education in 2002 totaled 5.4 percent of GDP, and 84 percent of eligible students were enrolled in primary, secondary, and tertiary schools in 2002.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 99.7
 Male %: 99.8
 Female %: 99.6
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 13.4
 First Level: Primary Schools: 21,900
 Teachers: 102,581
 Students: 1,960,512
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 19.1
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 84.3

(continues)

Education *(continued)*

Second Level: Secondary Schools: —
Teachers: 367,389
Students: 4,497,864
Student-Teacher Ratio: 13.1
Net Enrollment Ratio: 84.6
Third Level: Institutions: 255
Teachers: 177,644
Students: 2,296,221
Gross Enrollment Ratio: 61.8
Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 5.4

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The Ministry of Agriculture, through the Ukraine Academy of Agricultural Sciences, administers 51 research institutes, with 7,000 employees pursuing diverse agricultural research projects, from crop production to food processing. Other agricultural research is carried out by institutes of higher education, such as the National Agrarian University, Bilotserkivsky State Agrarian University, Dnipropetrovsk State Agrarian University, and several others.

Additional scientific research in engineering, chemical engineering, and biological science is carried out by the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences and the 66 scientific and technical research institutes attached to it. The Ukrainian Academy of Medical Sciences has six research institutes.

Higher education in the sciences is available at 92 universities, polytechnics, and institutes. Between 1987 and 1997, science and engineering students accounted for 42 percent of university enrollment. As of 2002, 1,749 scientists and engineers per one million people were engaged in research and development, and research-and-development investment equaled 1.2 percent of GDP.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 1,749
Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 1.16
High-Tech Exports \$million: 572
Patent Applications by Residents: 7,234

MEDIA

The Ukraine has a very active and relatively free press, with more than 2,600 newspapers and periodicals registered. In addition to the vast amount of printed material, there are more than 400 broadcast radio stations and 33 television stations. Ukraine has a very active Internet service provider network, and there were more than 900,000 Internet users in 2002.

Among the leading daily papers are *Fakty i komentari*, *Silski visti*, *Vecherniye vesti*, *Kievskiy vedomosti*,

Segodnya, and the English-language *Kyiv Post* and *Den*. The online *Ukrayinska pravda* also has some English-language pages. Though often accused of self-censorship, the Ukrainian press came into its own during the 2004 Orange Revolution, and even the government-run television networks allowed opposition voices to be heard. The media are climbing out of many years of government control and muzzling. Reporters without Borders, an international media watchdog group, ranked Ukraine 139th out of 167 nations worldwide in its 2004 index of press freedom.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 61
Total Circulation million: 8.68
Circulation per 1,000: 175
Books Published: 6,282
Periodicals: 2,606
Radio Receivers 000: —
per 1,000: —
Television sets million: 22
per 1,000: 433

CULTURE

Ukrainian literature dates back to medieval Slavic chronicles, including *Povist vremennykh lit* (Tale of Bygone Years) and the 12th-century *Slovo o polku Ihrevim* (The Tale of Ihor's Armament). The 18th-century poet and philosopher Hryhorii Skovoroda was one of the first major artists to write in Ukrainian, while the 19th-century writer Taras Shevchenko was a nationalist dedicated to freeing his country from Russian rule. His use of the national language ushered in a golden age of Ukrainian letters. The Ukrainians claim the famous writer Nikolai Gogol as their own, and in the 20th century writers such as Ivan Franko and Vasyl Stus led the way in Ukrainian literature.

Traditional Ukrainian music also has literary roots. The oral traditions of *bylyny*, or epic narrative poems, and *dumas*, which were long lyrical ballads glorifying the exploits of the Cossacks, found their way into song. The *kobzar*, or wandering minstrels of the 16th and 17th centuries, sang of the heroic exploits of the Cossacks. Their name came from the lutelike instrument they used for accompaniment; this instrument was later replaced by the *bandura*, a larger instrument with up to 45 strings. As *bandura* choirs became popular, the instrument became the national symbol. In the realm of classical music, the well-known 19th-century composer Mykola Lysenko based much of his piano works on Ukrainian folk songs. Among his operatic work is *Taras Bulba*.

Architecture and painting often had religious significance, from the wooden, onion-domed churches of the countryside to larger urban cathedrals. Iconic paint-

ing was the primary visual art until secular painting took over in the 17th century. Shevchenko, a nationalist poet, was also a painter and engraver who created a new style with his realistic pictures of Ukrainian life and the Ukrainian landscape. Among the Ukrainian artists known in the West are Alexis Gritchenko, whose work ranged from cubism to expressionism, and the painter and engraver Jacques Hnizdovsky, who developed a simplified style of realism. In sculpture, Alexander Archipenko was a pioneer in cubism; his later work in constructivism and expressionism made him a major 20th-century artist.

Ukrainian theater originated in the 17th century with dramatizations of religious stories and historical dramas. During the Soviet period, theater, like many other art forms, went underground or into hibernation, but following independence a vital theater scene once again came to predominate, with over 60 professional theaters in the country. Ukrainian film has achieved some marked successes. Major directors include Oleksander Dovzhenko.

Ukrainian folk art includes embroidery, wood carving, ceramics, and weaving, all highly developed, with stylized ornamentation representing many regional styles.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number:	19,079
Volumes:	301,780,420
Registered borrowers:	17,291,800
Museums Number:	140
Annual Attendance:	32,700,000
Cinema Gross Receipts national currency million:	48
Number of Cinemas:	—
Seating Capacity:	—
Annual Attendance:	—

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Pre-Christian myths and folk beliefs form a rich vein in Ukrainian folklore. Among early south Slavic gods shared with Russians and Poles is Dazbog, the sun god and the son of the god Svarog. Khors is a sun god who was worshipped in Kievan Rus during the 10th century, while Mokos is the goddess of the earth. Many pre-Christian traditions were later incorporated into Christian ceremonies; thus, *pysanky*, or Ukrainian Easter eggs, actually date back to pre-Christian times, when they were believed to have magical powers. With Christianity the *pysanky* took on a spiritual, religious meaning and began to be decorated with crosses, geometric designs, and miniature churches.

Legends form another part of Ukrainian folklore. As part of the oral tradition, legends are passed on from generation to generation and include tales of the founding of the city of Kiev by the three brothers Kyi, Scheck, and Khoryv and their sister, Lybed. Other tales speak of the deeds of the heroic Cossacks, while still others deal

with the magical weed called *yevshan zillia*, which has the power to bring lost ones back home. The dragon slayer Kyrylo Kozhumiaka, who supposedly saved Kiev, still entertains Ukrainian children, as do tales of the Ukrainian Robin Hood, Oleksa Dovbush, who operated in the Carpathian Mountains.

Ukrainian proverbs teach homely lessons of virtue and the joy of the hearth. One famous proverb relates, “He is guilty who is not at home”; the virtues of common sense are prized in “Your head is not only for putting a hat on”; and the eternal competition between virtue and vice is seen in “The church is near, but the way is icy. The tavern is far, but I will walk carefully.”

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Ukrainians partake of the usual recreational pastimes of people in western Europe and North America. Television and movies are important outlets for the largely urban population. Nightclubs and discos attract the young; cafés are important meeting places. Many play chess, a very popular game in Ukraine.

Cultural activities are also a way of life, especially in cities like Kiev, with its National Fine Arts Museum, Taras Shevchenko Museum, National Museum of Decorative Arts, and many other galleries. Drama and music abound. The Shevchenko National Opera Company, Ivan Franko National Theater, State Operetta, and other groups and venues present opera and ballet performances. Such cultural outlets are not confined to the capital: Lviv’s Ivan Franko Opera and Ballet Theater, Ukrainian Drama Theater, Philharmonic Society, National Museum, and Historical Museum all bring high culture to that city. With regard to traditional culture, many Ukrainians join folk dance groups, performing dances such as the *hopak* and *arkan* in traditional costumes. Circuses are also popular, as is camping in the Carpathians during the summer months and vacations at the Black Sea and in the Crimea.

ETIQUETTE

Greetings are typically done with strong handshakes, and sometimes with hugs and three kisses on the cheek. The typical verbal greeting is “*Drobryden*,” or “Good day.” It is also usual to shake hands upon departure. Dining is performed continental fashion, with fork and knife used simultaneously. Generally a formal people, Ukrainians use last names until friendship is established, and first names can then be used. Some typical North American gestures are rude and offensive in Ukraine. Thus, the “OK” sign of thumb and forefinger joined in a circle, as well as a closed-fist gesture of defiance, should be avoided.

FAMILY LIFE

The strong ties of family survived the Soviet period, during which the state attempted to supersede such bonds. Family arrangements tend to be nuclear, especially in the cities, as the size and availability of housing makes other setups impractical. Matriarchy had a long tradition in Ukraine, but years of occupation brought about subservient roles for women; men are the breadwinners, while women run the home and may also hold outside employment when possible or necessary. Family size has shrunk in Ukraine. One or two children is the norm; the fertility rate in 2005 was 1.4 children per woman. With the death rate higher than the birth rate, and with negative immigration, the population of Ukraine has been declining since the early 1990s. The marriage ceremony is still an elaborate affair, but marriages themselves are ending in divorce much more frequently than ever before; as of 1996 almost two-thirds of all marriages ended in divorce.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Western dress is typical in Ukraine, where people are every bit as fashion and label conscious as western Europeans. Traditional costumes are worn only on special holidays or by members of folkloric groups while performing. Costumes vary by region, but all have the intricately beautiful and colorful embroidery typical of the nation.

SPORTS

The most popular Ukrainian sport is soccer, in which Kiev Dynamos has ranked as one of Europe's top teams for decades. Basketball, volleyball, table tennis, horse racing, and ice hockey are other popular spectator and participatory sports. Wintertime skiing in the Carpathians is well enjoyed. Ukraine has won hundreds of team and individual gold medals at the Olympics, with the nation providing the strongest competition in gymnastics and track and field. Ice-skaters such as Viktor Petrenko and Oksana Baiul have helped to give figure skating mass appeal worldwide.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1991** The Soviet Union dissolves, and the Ukraine enters into the Commonwealth of Independent States, with Leonid Kravchuk as president.
- 1992** Ukraine agrees to eliminate all of its nuclear weapons within seven years.

- 1994** Leonid Kuchma is elected president. Ukraine signs the UN Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.
- 1996** The new constitution is formally adopted and goes into effect. Ukraine transfers nuclear weapons to Russia for destruction.
- 1997** Ukraine and Russia agree on the division of the Black Sea Fleet, with the Ukraine keeping about one-fifth of the fleet.
- 1998** The Communist Party receives 24.7 percent of the vote in March elections, securing 115 seats in parliament.
- 1999** Viktor Yushchenko becomes prime minister. Kuchma is reelected president.
- 2000** Chernobyl nuclear power plant is shut down, 14 years after the April 1986 disaster. Journalist Georgiy Gongadze, critic of the government, is murdered.
- 2001** Anatoli Kinakh is appointed prime minister.
- 2002** Kuchma fires Kinakh and replaces him with Viktor Yanukovych. Citizens form mass protest when an ad hoc commission finds links between Kuchma and the murder of Gongadze.
- 2003** In more mass protests, citizens demand Kuchma's resignation. Ukraine sends troops to Iraq.
- 2004** The presidential election is initially, and fraudulently, won by Yanukovych, which foments the nonviolent Orange Revolution. A second runoff sees the election of Yushchenko, who promises to bring true democracy to the country.
- 2005** Yushchenko's government announces that Gongadze's killers are in custody.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Embassy of Ukraine
<http://www.ukremb.com>
- National Bank of Ukraine
<http://www.bank.gov.ua/>
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs
<http://www.mfa.gov.ua/eng/>
- State Statistics Committee of Ukraine
<http://www.ukrstat.gov.ua/>

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

United Arab Emirates (Al-Imārāt al-‘Arabīyah al-Muttahidah)

ABBREVIATION

AE

CAPITAL

Abu Dhabi

HEAD OF STATE

President Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahayan (from 2004)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum (from 2006)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Confederation of absolute monarchies

POPULATION

2,563,212 (2005)

AREA

82,880 sq km (32,000 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Arab, Indian, Pakistani, Iranian

LANGUAGE

Arabic

RELIGION

Sunni Islam

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Emirati dirham

NATIONAL FLAG

A vertical red stripe on the hoist and three equal horizontal stripes, of green (top), white, and black, on the right

NATIONAL EMBLEM

An outstretched falcon with an Arab dhow displayed in a red disk within a chain of eight links on its chest. The name of the country in Arabic appears below.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Arabic Emirati Tahiat Alalam”

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year’s Day), August 6 (Accession Day), December 2 (Independence Day), various Islamic festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

December 2, 1971

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

December 2, 1971

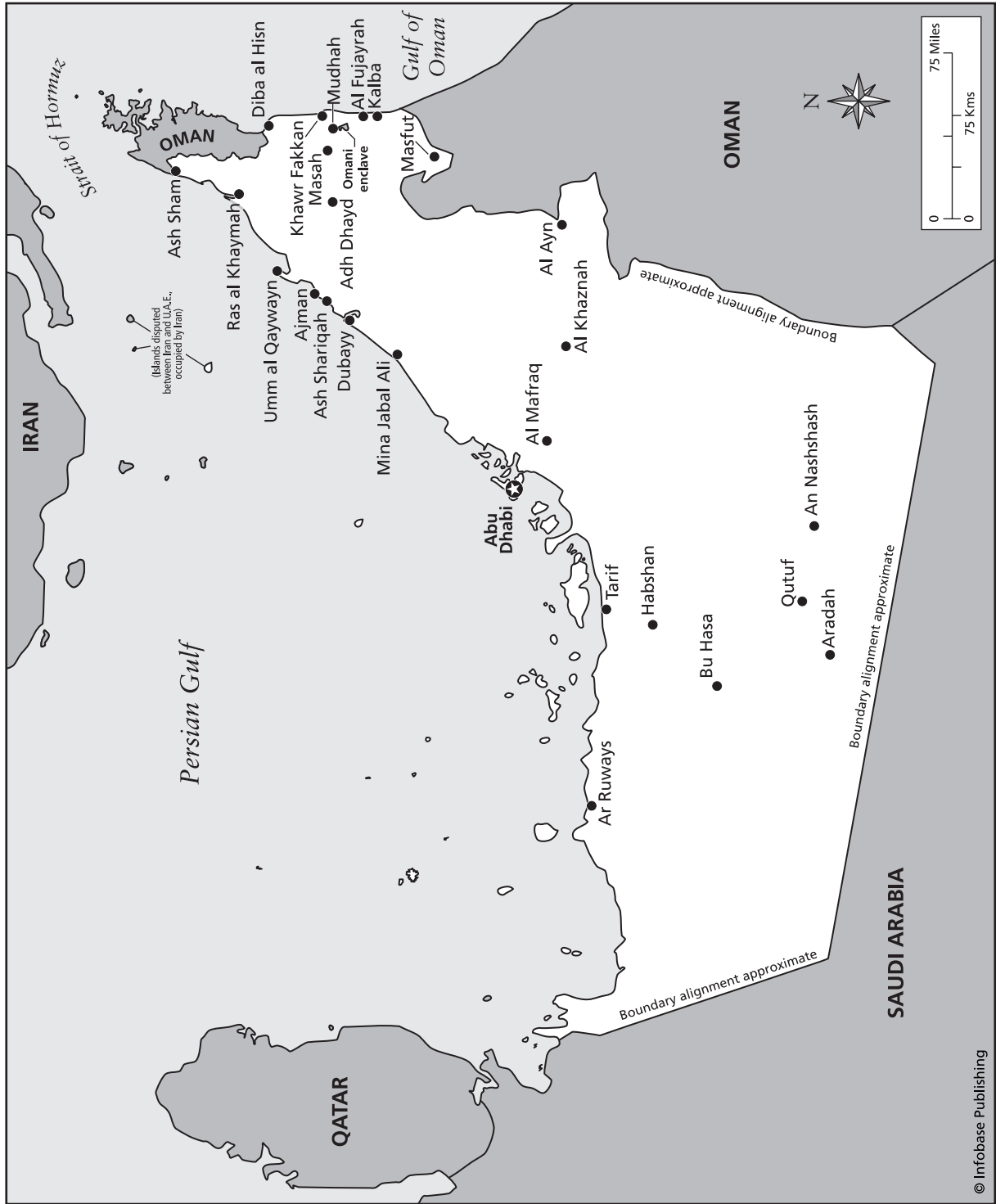
GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) lies on the southeastern end of the Arabian Peninsula, extending from Ash Sham to Khor al-Odeid. Formerly known as the Trucial Sheikdoms, Trucial Coast, Trucial Oman, and Trucial States, the nation consists of seven emirates (with rough area figures): Abu Dhabi (67,340 sq km; 26,000 sq mi), Dubayy (3,885 sq km; 1,500 sq mi), Ras al Khaymah (1,683 sq km; 650 sq mi), Al Fujayrah (1,166 sq km; 450 sq mi), Umm al Qaywayn (777 sq km; 300 sq mi), Ash Shariqah (2,590 sq km; 1,000 sq mi), and Ajman (259 sq km; 100 sq mi). Disputed and undefined boundaries make the geographical extent of the region difficult to define precisely, but the current accepted figure is

82,880 sq km (32,000 sq mi), including a number of sandbars and islands, of which the largest are Dalma, Al Ghubbah, Abu Musa, Az Zarqa, Das, and Mubarak. The greatest distance northeast to southwest is 544 km (338 mi), that southeast to northwest 361 km (224 mi).

The UAE is an arid and inhospitable desert. The coast is characterized by shallow seas, coral reefs, sandbars, and islets. Inland the coastal plain gives way to rolling sand dunes, with occasional tiny oases fed by shallow groundwater. The coastal plain is bounded on the west by an immense *sabkha*, or salt flat, extending southward for nearly 112 km (70 mi) and merging with the vast wastes of the Rub al Khali desert. Toward the east, as the desert reaches the Musandam Peninsula, the foothills of the Western Hajar Mountains begin to rise in places to 2,500 m (8,000

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ft), while their spurs run down in steep cliffs to the shore, except for at small embayments, as at Al Fujayrah. A cluster of oases known as the Liwa form an arc along the southern edge of the sandy desert. On the eastern coast a fertile strip known as the Batinah Coast runs between the mountains and the sea and continues into Oman.

Geography

Area sq km: 82,880; sq mi 32,000
World Rank: 113th
Land Boundaries, km: Oman 410; Saudi Arabia 457
Coastline, km: 1,318
Elevation Extremes meters:
Lowest: Persian Gulf 0
Highest: Jabal Yibir 1,527
Land Use %
Arable Land: 0.6
Permanent Crops: 2.3
Forest: 3.8
Other: 93.3

Population of Principal Cities (2003 est.)

Abu Dhabi	552,000
Ajman	225,000
Al Ayn	348,000
Ash Shariqah	519,000
Dubayy	1,171,000
Ras al Khaymah	102,000

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

The United Arab Emirates has an arid, subtropical climate. Average maximum temperatures in July and August, the summer months, run over 48°C (118.4°F), while average minimum temperatures in the winter months of January and February are between 10°C (50°F) and 14°C (57°F). Humidity exceeds 85 percent on the coast during summer. Rainfall is slight and erratic, usually falling in January and February. Average annual rainfall varies between 25 mm (1 in) and 125 mm (5 in), with the upper limits received by the eastern mountains. Rain tends to fall in short, torrential outbursts, flooding the wadis. Droughts are frequent. The scarcity of rainwater is compounded by the limited supply of groundwater, which is generally confined to oases.

The main wind is the *sharqi*, a humid southeastern wind that blows along the western coast, making the summer heat oppressive.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature
Summer: 118.4°F
Winter: 50°F to 57°F
Average Rainfall: 1 in to 5 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Vegetation is scarce in the UAE's desert climate, consisting mostly of low shrub growth. However, after the winter rains the desert comes alive for a brief flowering. In Abu Dhabi millions of trees have been planted, mostly dwarf mangrove. Around the oases are found date palms and alfalfa as well as some fruit trees, such as mangoes.

Animal life includes the fox, jackal, wildcat, lynx, and wolf. Domesticated animals include goats, sheep, and camels. Over 250 species of birds have been sighted in the nation. Some of the larger birds are the eagle, buzzard, falcon, kite, and owl, in addition to game birds such as ducks and geese. Gulls and terns are found along the coast, and the coastal waters are home to tuna, grouper, mackerel, and the occasional shark and whale.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 2,563,212
World Rank: 136th
Density per sq km: 48.3
% of annual growth (1999-2003): 7.1
Male %: 59.0
Female %: 41.0
Urban %: 84.6
Age Distribution %: 0-14: 25.3
15-64: 71.1
65 and over: 3.6
Population 2025: 3,270,000
Birth Rate per 1,000: 18.78
Death Rate per 1,000: 4.26
Rate of Natural Increase %: 1.5
Total Fertility Rate: 2.94
Expectation of Life (years): Males 72.73
Females 77.87
Marriage Rate per 1,000: —
Divorce Rate per 1,000: —
Average Size of Households: 6.8
Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Ethnically, the Emirati population is a mosaic reflecting the country's need for foreign labor in the rapidly growing economic and social-services sectors. The dominant strain is Adnani, or northern Arabs, who constitute 10 percent of the population in Abu Dhabi and 25 percent nationwide. There are significant numbers of blacks, recalling the region's prominence in the slave trade in the 18th and 19th centuries.

Three major ethnic groups—Iranians, Indians, and Pakistanis—constitute more than half of the population; almost all of them are foreign-born and recent arrivals. There are also groups of non-Emirati Arabs, such as Pal-

estinians, Egyptians, Iraqis, and Lebanese, throughout the country. The immigrant population is concentrated in the towns along the coast, particularly Abu Dhabi and Dubayy.

Historically, the UAE's indigenous population has tolerated, and even welcomed, outsiders and has displayed a freedom from the xenophobia common in many Arab countries. Nevertheless, there has been increasing concern about the numerical strength of immigrants and some resentment of their growing economic power.

LANGUAGES

The official language of the UAE is Arabic. Gulf Arabic is akin to the Arabic of Saudi Arabia and Iraq while different from the Arabic spoken in Egypt and Lebanon.

English is universally understood among the commercial and administrative elite and is taught as a second language in secondary schools.

RELIGIONS

Islam is the state religion, and the majority of both the indigenous people and immigrants are Sunni Muslims. Shiite Muslims are found in Dubayy but not in numbers to challenge Sunni dominance.

Toleration, remarkable by Arab standards, is extended to Christians of all denominations, and some churches, missions, and schools are permitted to function openly. Religious hostility is exercised only against Jews, whose small communities have virtually disappeared.

Religious Affiliations

Shia Muslim	410,000
Sunni Muslim	2,050,000
Christian, Hindu, Other	100,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

As early as the third millennium B.C.E. a small trading culture emerged along the Persian Gulf in the area that is now the United Arab Emirates. By the sixth century B.C.E. trade had expanded as far as China; the prosperity of the region attracted the Persian empires, which took control of the area and the extensive maritime trade around that time. Arab tribes introduced Islam to the region in the early seventh century C.E.

The trading power of the region later attracted the colonial powers of Portugal, Holland, and Britain. Long a center of refuge for piracy, the emirates of the Persian Gulf entered into a series of agreements with Great Britain during the 19th century that established a "perpetual

maritime truce" in the area. Consequently, the area formerly known as the Pirate Coast came to be known as the Trucial Coast, the emirates as the Trucial States.

The Trucial States became a British protectorate in 1892, surrendering control of external affairs to Britain but maintaining paternalistic, autocratic rule by sheikhs in the domestic arena. In 1968 Britain announced its intention to withdraw from the area and encouraged the formation of the Federation of Arab Emirates, which were to include the seven Trucial States plus Qatar and Bahrain. Qatar and Bahrain withdrew in 1971, and Abu Dhabi, Dubayy, Ash Shariqah, Ajman, Umm al Qaywayn, and Al Fujayrah formed the United Arab Emirates. Ras al Khaymah joined in 1972.

Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahayan, of Abu Dhabi, became president of the UAE at independence. Sheikh Rashid, of Dubayy, was vice president from independence as well as prime minister from 1979 until his death in 1990; he was replaced by Sheikh Maktoum bin Rashid Al Maktoum, of Dubayy. Zayed was a major force in maintaining the federation, as a result of both his own commitment to an integrated approach toward development and Abu Dhabi's prominence in the federation. Abu Dhabi is the largest of the sheikhdoms in terms of both territory and population. Since the discovery of petroleum, Abu Dhabi and Ash Shariqah, and to a lesser degree Dubayy, have changed dramatically. Oil wealth led to rapid modernization as well as advances in medicine and education. The contrasts between the three wealthy sheikhdoms and the other four remains significant, although Zayed's commitment to integrated growth lessened the gap through the end of the 20th century. Political power is in the hands of the dynastic rulers who govern the UAE through a supreme council. Within the individual emirates the governments maintain their monarchal character.

The UAE played a strong role in the defense of Kuwait in 1990–91. Like Kuwait, the UAE had been threatened by Saddam Hussein because of its levels of oil production. As part of the U.S.-led offensive, the UAE allowed for the stationing of troops within its borders in addition to contributing manpower to the international force. In the late 1990s the country suffered some economic hardship, as world oil prices plummeted. However, the situation improved after hitting a nadir in 1998. Although the UAE did cooperate with the United States in freezing the assets of organizations and individuals suspected of supporting terrorism following the September 11, 2001, attacks on New York and Washington, D.C., the nation opposed U.S.-led military intervention in Iraq in 2003. With oil prices at record highs in 2005, the UAE economy was running at high speed.

Sheikh Zayed was reelected every five years until his death in 2004, when his son Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahayan became president.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

President

1971–2004 Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahayan
2004– Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahayan

CONSTITUTION

The UAE's provisional constitution of 1971 established the Supreme Council of Rulers as the highest organ of government; the presidency and Council of Ministers as the executive; the Federal National Council as the legislature; and the Federal Supreme Court as the height of the judiciary. Under the constitution considerable powers remain reserved to each emirate, including control over mineral rights, taxation, and police powers. There has been, however, slow but persistent growth in federal powers. A significant portion of the oil revenues of the three oil-producing emirates goes to the UAE's central budget. There has been growing integration of defense forces, communication facilities, and courts. In 1975 a committee was appointed to draft a permanent federal constitution; however, the following year the Federal National Council decided to extend the provisional constitution for five years, and over the past 25 years the constitution has periodically been extended further. In 1976 the constitution was amended to give the federal government the exclusive right to levy armed forces.

The principal federal institution is the Supreme Council of Rulers, which is composed of the rulers of the seven emirates and is charged with the formulation and supervision of all state policies, the ratification of federal laws, and preparation of the federal budget. All important decisions require the votes of at least five members, including the rulers of Abu Dhabi and Dubayy. The president and vice president are elected for a period of five years and may be reelected.

The president, the head of state, is assisted by the Council of Ministers, which is presided over by the prime minister, the head of the government. The member states are represented in the cabinet in proportion to their size and importance.

Because the country is a federation of seven independent-minded emirates, the federal UAE government has always been weak. Disagreements among the individual emirates over such important economic issues as the creation of a central bank and immigration and labor laws, as well as over other political and defense matters, have sapped the effectiveness of the federal government. National economic planning and coordination have also been hampered.

Emirate rulers are accessible to any subject who has a problem or a request. In a given emirate the choice of a new ruler falls to the ruling family, which is supposed to

choose its most capable and respected eligible member. In practice, to avoid the violent succession disputes that were common in the past, primogeniture has become increasingly common. The political dominance of the ruling families is intertwined with their substantial involvement and influence in economic life. The ruling families and their close allies control and profit from petroleum production and, along with important merchant families, have a major stake in the UAE's commercial life.

Overall, the UAE has had a stable government reinforced by economic prosperity. In the absence of representative institutions and political parties, there is no forum for political expression. Pockets of dissidence, however, exist. In 1972–73 a number of army officers and civil servants were arrested as subversives. Supporters of the National Front for the Liberation of the Occupied Arabian Gulf and other leftist organizations are known to be active, particularly in Abu Dhabi.

PARLIAMENT

Under the constitution of 1971 the legislature is the 40-member Federal National Council, a purely consultative assembly of delegates appointed by the rulers of the constituent states for two-year terms. There are eight delegates from each of Abu Dhabi and Dubayy; six from each of Ash Shariqah and Ras al Khaymah; and four from each of Al Fujayrah, Ajman, and Umm al Qaywayn.

The nation has never held elections, for which there are no constitutional provisions. Consequently, there is no suffrage.

POLITICAL PARTIES

No political parties are permitted to function in the UAE. The major illegal opposition is the National Front for the Liberation of the Occupied Arabian Gulf, which until 1975 was actively supported by the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (South Yemen). This support was withdrawn in 1975 following the normalization of relations between the UAE and South Yemen. Since then the National Front has ceased to be a threat in the UAE.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

All the principal population centers of the emirates have their own appointed municipal governments. These include Abu Dhabi, Al Ayn, Dubayy, Ras al Khaymah, Al Fujayrah, Ajman, and Umm al Qaywayn. In addition, tribes have their own traditional councils, known as *majlis* and *amiri diwans*.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The constitution of 1971 set up the Federal Supreme Court and federal primary tribunals as the first step toward the unification of the separate legal and judicial systems. The Federal Supreme Court consists of a chief justice and a maximum of five judges, all of whom are appointed by presidential decree. The constitution guarantees the independence of the judiciary.

The traditional emirate courts, which dispensed justice according to Islamic sharia (religious law), were brought under the administrative control of the Federal Ministry of Justice. A modern code of law was drafted for Abu Dhabi, which also has a Ruler's Court presided over by a professional judge. In other emirates the courts are presided over either by a *qadi*, or Islamic jurist, or by the ruler himself. The court systems in Dubayy and Ras al Khaymah function independently of the federal system.

There are no jury trials. Criminal courts based on European models function alongside the Islamic courts. Crimes and penalties are defined by law—civil or religious—and the accused are presumed innocent until found guilty. In sharia courts, counsel is not permitted, and definitions of crimes and penalties are drawn from religious sources.

HUMAN RIGHTS

In terms of political and civil rights the UAE is classified as a partly free country; citizens cannot change the government.

The UAE's egalitarian Islamic and Bedouin traditions shape its outlook on human rights and political organization. In some emirates, particularly Abu Dhabi, criminal cases are tried in sharia courts, which apply traditional and harsh procedures and penalties. Muslims may be flogged for drunkenness or for violating the Ramadan fast, although all capital sentences must be personally approved by the ruler. Prolonged detention without trial is rare. Although no public-defender system exists, defendants may be represented by counsel of their choice in state, civil, and criminal courts. Mild criticism of the government is generally tolerated, but "irresponsible" opposition is discouraged. Newspapers that deviate from official guidelines are suspended. All books, films, and periodicals are subject to censorship if they contain materials considered pornographic, politically subversive, or derogatory of Islam and Arabs. Visits by foreign journalists require official permission. There are no political parties or popularly elected legislatures. Expatriates, who constitute the numerical majority, are expected to refrain from political activity and are, further, not permitted to organize.

FOREIGN POLICY

The United Arab Emirates has had border disputes with many of its neighbors, especially Saudi Arabia and Oman, as well as Iran. The dispute with Iran involved the island of Abu Musa, while the dispute with Saudi Arabia and Oman concerned Abu Dhabi, including the potentially oil-rich Buraimi Oasis, which is located at the junction of the three states; the latter dispute is now dormant.

In 1981 the UAE joined five neighbors—Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia—in establishing the Cooperative Council of the Arab Gulf States (now the Gulf Cooperation Council, GCC). The GCC became a significant military shield for the peninsula in the wake of the Iraqi aggression against Kuwait in 1991. The UAE cooperated with the coalition forces during the Desert Storm operation, which concluded with Iraq's defeat. The UAE contributed more than \$3 billion to the Persian Gulf War but restored diplomatic relations with Iraq in 1998. Relations with Iran worsened following the Iranian occupation of Abu Musa in 1971. In 1994 the UAE became the fourth GCC country to conclude a military cooperation pact with the United States; it also has an agreement with France and the United Kingdom for military consultation in the event of aggression in the region. The UAE did not support the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq in 2003 but did beforehand call for Iraqi President Saddam Hussein to step down to avoid war. In 2003 a boundary agreement was signed with Oman to clear up lingering disputes.

DEFENSE

The defense structure of the federation is headed by the president, who is the chairman of the Defense Council. In 1976 the armed forces of the UAE were unified under a single central command known as the General Command of the Armed Forces, with three military regions—Western, Central, and Northern—and with a General Staff Command. The unified nature of the military high command is largely a fiction, however, for rivalries among sheikhs have continued unabated. For all practical purposes, each of the three major military regions, centered in Abu Dhabi, Dubayy, and Ras al Khaymah, retain full operational independence. The al-Yarmuk Brigade consists of federal forces, and the National Guard is located in Ash Shariqah and Umm al Qaywayn. The line of command runs from the president as the supreme commander through the deputy supreme commander and the defense minister to the chief of staff.

In 2003 the total personnel strength of the armed forces was 50,500. Defense spending in 2000 was about \$1.6 billion, or 3.1 percent of gross domestic product (GDP). Equipment is mostly British, but some hardware is obtained from France, the United States, and Italy. Ini-

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tially, personnel were also mostly British, but assistance is now received from South Asia and other Arab countries. About 40 percent of manpower is provided by local recruitment; another 30 percent comes from Muscat and Oman; and the rest comes from India, Pakistan, and Iran. British officers and noncommissioned officers continue to be employed in the higher echelons.

The deterrent capability and combat-worthiness of the UAE's armed forces have not been tested in the field except briefly in 1990–91, during the Persian Gulf War. Both the navy and the air force have been built up at an accelerated pace but remain heavily dependent on overseas personnel and equipment.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 50,500
Military Manpower Availability: 653,181
Military Expenditures \$billion: 1.6
 as % of GDP: 3.1
 as % of central government expenditures: —
Arms Imports \$million: 922
Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

The UAE has an open economy with a high per capita income and a sizable annual trade surplus. The nation's wealth is based on oil and gas output (which contribute about 33 percent of GDP), and the fortunes of the economy fluctuate with the prices of those commodities. Since 1973, the UAE has undergone a profound transformation, from an impoverished region of small desert principalities to a modern state with a high standard of living. At present levels of production, oil and gas reserves should last for over 100 years. The government has increased spending on job creation and infrastructure expansion and is opening up utilities to greater private-sector involvement.

The UAE is one of the few countries in the region to have diversified its economy beyond dependency on the petroleum sector, having built a leading free-trade zone in Dubai and a major manufacturing center in Ash Shariqah, as well as having invested resources to develop its profile as a leading center for tourism in the region.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 63.67
GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 25,200
GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2002) %: 5.5
GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2002) %: –1.3
Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 4.0
 Industry: 58.5
 Services: 37.5

Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:

 Private Consumption: 48
 Government Consumption: 17
 Gross Domestic Investment: 20.8

Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 69.48

Imports: 45.66

% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: —

% of Income Received by Richest 10%: —

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1990 = 100)

1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
137.9	140.9	142.8	146.8	151.1

Finance

National Currency: Emirati Dirham (AED)

Exchange Rate: \$1 = AED 3.6725

Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 47

Central Bank Discount Rate %: —

Total External Debt \$billion: 5.9

Debt Service Ratio %: —

Balance of Payments \$billion: 6.3

International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 14.9

Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
 3.2

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 5.2

 per capita \$: 1.30

Foreign Direct Investment \$million: —

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year

Revenues \$billion: 23.68

Expenditures \$billion: 25.45

Budget Deficit \$billion: 1.77

Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 4.0

Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: —

Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 0.51

Irrigation, % of Farms having: 28.6

Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 466.7

Total Farmland % of land area: 0.9

Livestock: Cattle 000: 115

 Chickens million: 13

 Pigs 000: —

 Sheep 000: 570

Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters 000: —

Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 98

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: —

Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 4.0

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 154
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 38.7
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 13.5
 Net Energy Imports % of use: -294.1
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 5.82
 Production kW-hr billion: 37.7
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 35.1
 Coal Reserves tons million: —
 Production tons million: —
 Consumption tons million: —
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: 212
 Production cubic feet trillion: 1.53
 Consumption cubic feet trillion: 1.28
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: 97.8
 Production barrels million per day: 2.76
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 430
 Pipelines Length km: 2,936

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 45.66
 Exports \$billion: 69.48
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —
 Balance of Trade \$billion: 6.3

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
China %	10.4	—
India %	8.3	—
Japan %	7.2	28.5
Germany %	6.6	—
France %	6.4	—
United Kingdom %	6.2	—
United States %	6.0	—
Italy %	4.1	—
South Korea %	—	9.5
Thailand %	—	5.9

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 1,088
 Paved %: 100
 Automobiles: 794,100
 Trucks and Buses: 477,900
 Railroad: Track Length km: —
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: —
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 56
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 740
 Airports: 35
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 33.1
 Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 5.87
 Number of Tourists from million: —
 Tourist Receipts \$billion: 1.44
 Tourist Expenditures \$billion: 3.96

Communications

Telephones million: 1.14
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones million: 2.97
 Personal Computers 000: 450
 Internet Hosts per million people: 21,958
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 433

ENVIRONMENT

The UAE has among the world's highest levels of carbon dioxide emissions. The overpumping of ground water has brought rises in soil salinity levels. The emirates do not have any environmental legislation, although the government has begun to establish national parks to protect threatened fauna, such as the peregrine falcon, gray wolf, Arabian oryx, Arabian tahr, green sea turtle, and desert monitor.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 3.8
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: 8
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 0.3
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 18.14

LIVING CONDITIONS

The UN 2004 Human Development Report ranked UAE 49th out of 177 countries in terms of life expectancy, education, and standard of living. The average Emirati's life expectancy in 2005 was over 75 years, and literacy stood at 77.9 percent in 2003, with 68 percent of eligible students enrolled in primary, secondary, and tertiary schools in 2002. Per capita GDP was \$25,200 in 2004. Overall, the UAE ranked near the top of Arab states in terms of quality of life. Education was the weakest single indicator in its rankings.

Modern amenities are recent innovations for most Emiratis. Before the discovery and production of oil, conditions were very basic, with no electricity, running water, or proper sanitation. Infrastructure, including roads, telephones, medical care, and educational facilities, was largely nonexistent. Now, most citizens of the UAE occupy modern homes and drives large cars on multilane highways. The modern world and its conveniences co-

exist with more traditional life, such that, for example, a street market, or souk, might stand next to a modern shopping mall. The crime rate is extremely low. Much of the menial work is done by the legions of foreign workers. Almost 90 percent of the population now lives in towns and cities.

HEALTH

Medical services are free to nationals, and there are modern hospitals and medical facilities in Dubayy, Abu Dhabi, and other cities. As of 2004 there were 202 trained physicians per 100,000 people, and almost the entire population had access to affordable essential drugs. Professionals attended 96 percent of births between 1995 and 2002; the infant mortality rate was a low 14.5 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2005.

Health in the UAE is generally good. Tuberculosis and malaria are relatively minor health problems. Smoking is low among men and women. Immunization rates for one-year-olds are high: In 2003, 98 percent were immunized for tuberculosis, 94 percent for measles, DPT, and polio. As of 2002, 100 percent of the population had access to adequate sanitation facilities. In 2001 public expenditures on health care equaled 2.6 percent of GDP.

Health

Number of Physicians: 5,825
 Number of Dentists: 954
 Number of Nurses: 12,045
 Number of Pharmacists: 1,086
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 202
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 14.51
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 54
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 3.1
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 802
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.18
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 94
 Measles: 94
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 100
 Access to Improved Water Source %: —

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Staples of the Emirati diet include fish, lamb, chicken, rice, and beans of various sorts; fava beans and chickpeas are favorites for making dips or spreadable pastes such as *fuul*, falafel, and hummus. Flat pita bread is often consumed, with pastes generally served on such bread. A favorite dish made from chicken or lamb is *shwarma*. Typical spices include coriander, cardamom, turmeric, and saffron; lemons are often used for seasoning as well.

Macbous is another favorite meal, made of rice and meat seasoned with spices, onions, tomatoes, and dried lemon.

Sweets and desserts are made from dates, sesame seeds, peanuts, honey, and sugar. Confections include *al-halwa*, *al-jibeet*, and *kul wiskut*. Alcoholic beverages are not consumed. Drinks include coffee and tea.

In general, nutrition is adequate in the UAE, although between 1995 and 2003, 14 percent of children under five suffered from moderate to severe undernourishment, 17 percent from moderate to severe stunting.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 2.0
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 3,180
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 139.9
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 335.7

STATUS OF WOMEN

Traditional conservatism and strong family pressures, as evidenced in the still-honored tradition of girls marrying in their early teens, have prevented many female citizens from continuing their education beyond the primary level. This lack of education has in turn limited women's roles in the economic and cultural life of the country. The number of Emirati women in the workforce is minimal.

The government is now encouraging women to pursue their education, and they are beginning to find employment in the news media and government offices as well as in the traditionally accepted fields of health and education. Women are permitted to drive automobiles and may appear in public unveiled. Women remain underrepresented in government, although there have been signs of limited openings, with women receiving appointments at various levels of the government in 2003.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 0
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.08
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 14.4

WORK

The UAE labor force numbered over 2.3 million in 2004. However, much of this workforce was nonnational, as foreign workers make up about 80 percent of the population. The overwhelming majority of workers, 78 percent

in 2000, are employed in the service sector. Agriculture accounted for only 7 percent of the labor force, with output of dates, vegetables, watermelons, poultry, eggs, and dairy products. Industries, including petroleum, fishing, petrochemicals, aluminum, construction materials, boat building, handicrafts, and pearling, accounted for the remaining 15 percent of the workforce. In 2001 unemployment stood at 2.4 percent. In the smaller emirates that have no oil, goat herding, fishing, and farming are major occupations.

The UAE has no labor unions, although the government has mediated labor disputes. Foreign nationals are generally not offered labor protections, although in 2003 the government issued a ban on the long-standing practice whereby employers forced foreign employees to surrender their passports as a condition of employment. The minimum work age is 15, while the standard workweek is 48 hours. The workday for businesses and some industries is often broken up, with long two- or three-hour lunch breaks; work is then continued into the early evening hours. There is no minimum wage. Though occupational health and safety standards exist, they are seldom observed.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 2,360,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 14.5
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 7
 Industry: 15
 Services: 78
 Unemployment %: 2.4

EDUCATION

Education is free, universal, and compulsory, in principle, for six years, between ages six and 12. School uniforms, books, equipment, and transportation are also free. Overall, schooling consists of six years of primary school, three years of middle school, and three years of secondary school, for a total of 12 years. The academic year runs from September to June. The medium of instruction is Arabic, but English is taught in secondary grades. As in the rest of the Gulf countries, the majority of schoolteachers are Egyptian, Lebanese, or Palestinian.

Special adult education is provided for adults at 26 centers.

United Arab Emirates University, the country's first university, opened in Abu Dhabi in 1976; as of 2004 it had 15,000 students. Higher Colleges of Technology were established in 1988; located in Abu Dhabi, Dubayy, Ash Shariqah, Al Ayn, Ras al Khaymah and Al Fujayrah, these colleges prepare nationals for professional and technological careers in both the public and private sectors. Since

their foundation, the colleges have grown significantly, with staff and student populations increasing by about 30 percent each year.

Despite these advances, literacy still stood at only 77.9 percent in 2003, and in 2002 just 68 percent of eligible students were enrolled in primary, secondary, and tertiary schools.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 77.9
 Male %: 76.1
 Female %: 81.7
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 12.1
 First Level: Primary Schools: 512
 Teachers: 16,323
 Students: 248,370
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 15.2
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 83.1
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: —
 Teachers: 20,078
 Students: 271,767
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 13.6
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 71.0
 Third Level: Institutions: 4
 Teachers: 2,948
 Students: 63,419
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 34.7
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 1.6

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries has nine research centers employing over 100 full-time researchers in areas from crop production to livestock management to fishery preservation. The government of Abu Dhabi maintains the Environmental Research and Wildlife Development Agency, which pursues similar research. Much of the nation's petroleum technology has come from abroad, although in the 1980s the UAE began a training program to avoid reliance on foreign technicians.

UAE University has faculties of sciences, engineering, agricultural sciences, medicine, and health sciences. Ajman University College of Science and Technology was founded in 1988; Etisalat College of Engineering, at Ash Shariqah, in 1989; and the Higher College of Technology at Abu Dhabi in 1988. Between 1987 and 1997 science and engineering students accounted for 24 percent of college and university enrollments.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: 16.8
 Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

Around nine daily newspapers are published in the UAE; there are also three major nondailies, of which the most widely read is the *Gulf Weekly Mirror*, which is published in English in Bahrain, and eight major periodicals. Official gazettes are published by the governments of Abu Dhabi and Dubayy. Ash Shariqah and Ras al Khaymah have monthly publications in Arabic. Among private dailies are the Dubayy-based *al-Bayan*, the *Khaliq Times*, and the *Gulf News*.

The official news agency is the Emirates News Agency, founded in 1977. There is a small book-publishing industry, which does not adhere to any copyright convention.

Abu Dhabi Radio and UAE Radio and Television each broadcast one service in Arabic and one in English. Radio Ras al Khaymah has one medium-wave transmitter. Radio Ash Shariqah has two stations, one in English and the other in Arabic. Capital Radio is an English-language FM music and news service based in Abu Dhabi.

The UAE Television Service operates a color television network, with transmitters in Dubayy and Abu Dhabi. Numerous other private broadcasters have entered the market since 2000. Dubayy has plans to become a regional and international center for television and media services; the Electronic Commerce and Media Zone Authority was created in 2000 to attract regional and international media outlets. Emirate Dubayy TV is a pan-Arab broadcaster, as is MBC, with its Al-Arabiya news channel.

The UAE constitution provides for freedom of speech, but there is strong regulatory and political control of media content. A 1988 law requires that publications be licensed and outlines acceptable subjects of reporting. Foreign publications are censored before distribution. Journalists tend to practice self-censorship when reporting on such matters as government policy and ruling families. Reporters without Borders, an international media watchdog group, ranked UAE 137th out of 167 countries in its 2004 press freedom index.

Internet use in the UAE is extensive; in 2003 there were over 1.1 million users. Most of the population use cellular telephones.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 9
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: —
 Periodicals: 11
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets 000: 740
 per 1,000: 309

CULTURE

The culture of the UAE is Arabic in nature. Emirati folktales, storytelling, music, and dance are similar to those of other Arab nations. Islam has made a resurgence in the UAE, as it has in other Arab nations, and the faith's architecture and devotional precepts color much of modern cultural life. Tribal identities also figure in the cultural mix.

Traditional musical forms feature a steady drumbeat, provided by the *tubool*, accompanied by such ancient string instruments as the oud and *rebaba* and such wind instruments as the flutelike *nai* and the *mizmar*. Among notable traditional dances is the battlelike *ayyala*, reflecting the chivalric traditions of Arabs. Emirati folk art includes baskets made of palm tree fronds, called *al-khoos*. Wool from sheep is woven into colorful fabrics, to be used for pillowcases, covers, blankets, carpets, and bags.

The Zayed Center for Heritage and History is an official cultural research institution that was founded in 1999 to foster the study of tradition and history. The Al-'Ayn Museum houses archaeological artifacts. There are local museums in Dubayy, Al Fujayrah, and Ash Shariqah; Ash Shariqah is also home to archaeological, historical, Islamic, and science museums.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: 3
 Annual Attendance: 244,000
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Many legends and folktales deal with the adventures of the Prophet, Muhammad, while others retell other parts of the Koran. Daily life in the UAE before the advent of oil is celebrated in numerous folk songs. Pearl diving was once the major occupation of residents of Abu Dhabi; thus, one song tells of how women worried while their husbands, sons, and fathers were away for months on end during the pearl-diving season.

Numerous pre-Islamic gods and goddesses were worshipped throughout the Arabian peninsula; Islamic teachings have totally replaced such earlier traditions.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Television and movies are popular forms of entertainment for Emiratis. To the local channels can be added

numerous pan-Arab networks received by satellite. Movies are shown in a plethora of languages, from Arabic to Hindi to English, reflecting the diverse population. Videos and DVDs are available but are often censored. Sporting events such as soccer and camel racing provide diversions. Diving and snorkeling are possible in the Gulf waters, and riding clubs provide an important form of recreation for a large segment of the population. There are a number of theme parks in and around Dubayy.

ETIQUETTE

Much of the etiquette of the UAE is similar to that of other Arab and Muslim countries. The handshake is a typical form of greeting, though not usual between men and women. Shoes should be removed before entering homes and mosques. The use of the left hand for eating or for giving or receiving is taboo, as is showing the soles of one's feet to others. Food taboos include prohibitions against pork (even soccer balls must be made from a material other than pigskin) and alcohol.

FAMILY LIFE

Intensely tribal, Emiratis still maintain the extended family as the core social unit. Marriages are often arranged, and a bride-price, or *mabr*, is paid: The *muqaddam* is paid before the wedding to allow for the purchase of a trousseau, while the *muta'akbir* is a pledge from the groom for support in case of divorce. Polygamy is legal, and a man may have up to four wives. Divorce is a fairly simple procedure: The father takes children over five, while the mother takes younger children and generally returns to her parents' home until she remarries. The divorce rate in 1996 was 0.87 per 1,000 people.

Women are increasingly taking a larger role in UAE society, having become better educated and more represented in the professions than in many other Arab countries. The size of the family has shrunk since traditional times; as of 2005 the fertility rate was just under three children per woman.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Traditional Arab dress is usual for Emiratis. For men, this consists of an ankle-length robe called the *dishdasha*, or *kandura*, made of white or off-white cotton. The *ghutra*, a piece of cloth worn on the head and held in place with a piece of woven rope called an *'aqal*, is also usual. The *bisht*, a full-length cloak, is worn for more formal occasions. Some women prefer to wear Western fashions, but the majority, when in public, still wear the full-length black robe or cloak called the *abaya*.

SPORTS

The most popular spectator sport in UAE is camel racing, which continues to attract large crowds. No betting is allowed at camel races, though prize racers can sell for hundreds of thousands of dollars. Horse racing is also a popular sport. Sand skiing is another typical desert sport.

Ironically, in light of its desert location, the UAE has three ice-skating rinks as well as a championship-level 18-hole grass golf course in Dubayy, home of the Dubayy Desert Classic golf tournament. Dubayy also hosts a major international tennis tournament as well as tournaments in cricket, rugby, volleyball, and soccer.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1971 United Kingdom withdraws its forces from the Persian Gulf region and ends treaty obligations with the Trucial States. Six of the Trucial States—Abu Dhabi, Dubayy, Ash Shariqah, Ajman, Umm al Qaywayn, and Al Fujayrah—federate themselves as a sovereign and independent nation. Provisional constitution of UAE is promulgated. Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahayan, of Abu Dhabi, is elected president.
- 1972 Ras al Khaymah joins UAE. Sheikh Khalid, of Ash Shariqah, is killed in coup led by his cousin Sheikh Saqr; UAE forces capture the rebels and install Khalid's brother Sheikh Sultan as emir.
- 1973 The dirham is adopted as the national currency; Currency Board is established as UAE's central bank. Hundreds of alleged subversives belonging to the National Front for the Liberation of the Occupied Arabian Gulf are arrested.
- 1974 Accord is reached with Saudi Arabia over border disputes relating to the Buraimi Oasis; diplomatic relations are established with Saudi Arabia.
- 1975 A committee is appointed to draft a permanent constitution.
- 1976 University of Abu Dhabi is established. As a further step toward integration, the separate emirate defense forces are unified into a single central command, with three military regions.
- 1977 Abu Dhabi is chosen as the headquarters of the newly established Arab Monetary Fund.
- 1979 Prime Minister Sheikh Maktoum bin Rashid al-Maktoum is replaced by Sheikh Rashid bin Said al-Maktoum. Egypt severs diplomatic relations with UAE.
- 1980 In Iraq-Iran War, UAE cautiously sides with Iraq.
- 1981 UAE joins the Gulf Cooperation Council.
- 1982 The UAE runs its first budget deficit.

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- 1986** The provisional federal constitution is renewed for another five years.
- 1987** Accusing his brother, Sheikh Sultan bin Muhammad, of fiscal mismanagement, Sheikh Abd al-Aziz seizes power in Ash Shariqah. The Supreme Council reinstates Sheikh Sultan bin Muhammad and decrees that Sheikh Abd al-Aziz should be crown prince and deputy ruler, with control over the emirate's financial affairs. The countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council discuss negotiations with Egypt for aid in light of potential Iranian aggression. The UAE restores diplomatic relations with Egypt.
- 1988** Egypt and the UAE sign trade agreements.
- 1990** Sheikh Sultan bin Muhammad removes his brother as crown prince. Following Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, the UAE grants allied forces the right to use its bases.
- 1991** The UAE sends ground troops to join the 28-nation allied coalition in the Persian Gulf War.
- 1995** The UAE signs a defensive pact with France, which supplies most of its arms.
- 1998** World oil prices fall, creating economic concerns for the government, as 70 percent of revenues come from oil proceeds. UAE restores diplomatic relations with Iraq, which had been severed at the outbreak of the Persian Gulf War.
- 2001** The government orders financial institutions to freeze the assets of 62 individuals and organizations suspected by the United States of funding terrorist organizations.
- 2002** The president's son Khalifa makes an official state visit to Tehran to help normalize the situation between the UAE and Iran, after a decade of strained relations over disputed boundaries.
- 2003** The UAE and Oman sign and ratify a comprehensive agreement to delimit their common border.
- 2004** President Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahayan dies. He is succeeded by his eldest son, Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahayan.
- 2005** In late April the Abu Dhabi Securities Market hits a record high of 6,112.98 points.
- 2006** Prime Minister Sheikh Maktoum dies. He is succeeded as prime minister and ruler of Dubayy by his brother Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum.

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OFFICIAL PUBLICATIONS

United Arab Emirates. *United Arab Emirates—Recent Economic Developments* (IMF Staff Country Report), 1999; *Central Bank of UAE Report* (annual); *Statistical Yearbook* (Abu Dhabi)

CONTACT INFORMATION

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Country and People of UAE
<http://www.hejleh.com/countries/uae.html>
- Government of the United Arab Emirates
<http://www.government.ae/gov/>
- United Arab Emirates Home Page
<http://www.emirates.org>
- UAE Interact
<http://www.uaeinteract.com/>

UNITED KINGDOM

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

ABBREVIATION

UK

CAPITAL

London

HEAD OF STATE

Queen Elizabeth II (from 1952)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Tony Blair (from 1997)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Constitutional monarchy

POPULATION

60,441,457 (2005)

AREA

244,820 sq km (94,525 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Anglo-Saxon, Celtic, Scot

LANGUAGE

English

RELIGIONS

Protestantism, Catholicism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

British pound

NATIONAL FLAG

The Union Jack, a combination of the banners of England (St. George's flag, a red cross with extended horizontals on a white field), Scotland (St. Andrew's flag, a white saltire cross on a blue field), and Ireland (St. Patrick's flag, a red saltire cross on a white field)

NATIONAL EMBLEM

In the royal arms, the four quarters of the shield contain two repetitions of the arms of England (three golden lions on red); the pacing red lion of Scotland surrounded by a twin-bordered frame inset, with fleurs-de-lis and other decorations (known as a double "tressure"), on a gold background; and a silver-stringed gold harp on a bright blue field, representing Northern Ireland. Wales is not represented on the shield. The shield is encircled by the blue ribbon of the Order of the Garter, bearing in gold the French-language motto *Honi soit qui mal y pense* (Shame on him who thinks evil of it). The royal British lion and the silver Scottish unicorn support the design on either side. When the arms are displayed in "full achievement," the crest is a gold helmet mantled in white and gold on which rests the imperial state crown, which is gold, red, and jeweled and bears an ermine headband. Topping the crown is a small gold lion, also crowned, facing outward. Beneath the arms is the royal motto in gold letters on a white scroll, in French: *Dieu et mon droit* (God and my right).

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"God Save the Queen"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day), May 1 (Labour Day), Easter Monday, second Saturday in June (Queen's official birthday), December 25 (Christmas), December 26 (Boxing Day), all major Christian festivals; in Scotland, January 12 (Boxing Day); in Northern Ireland, March 17 (St. Patrick's Day), July 12 (Commemoration of the Battle of the Boyne)

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

None

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

None

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

The United Kingdom is located off the northwestern coast of Europe between the Atlantic Ocean on the north and northwest and the North Sea on the east. It is separated from the continent by the Strait of Dover and the English Channel, 34 km (21 mi) wide at its narrowest point, and

from the Irish Republic by the Irish Sea and St. George's Channel. Its total area of 244,820 sq km (94,525 sq mi) is shared by four constituent units: England (approx. 130,400 sq km; 50,350 sq mi), Wales (20,800 sq km; 8,000 sq mi), and Scotland (78,800 sq km; 30,500 sq mi)—forming Great Britain—and Northern Ireland (14,100 sq km; 5,450 sq mi), on the island of Ireland. There are also sev-

United Kingdom



eral island groups and hundreds of small single islands, of which the best known are the Orkney Islands, the Shetland Islands, the Outer Hebrides, Skye, Mull, Arran, the Isle of Man, the Isles of Scilly, and the Channel Islands. From the southern coast of England to the north of Scotland is some 1,000 km (622 mi), and the maximum width of Great Britain is under 500 km (311 mi). No location in Great Britain is more than 120 km (75 mi) from tidal water. The prime meridian, longitude 0°, passes through Greenwich, near London.

The total boundary includes a coastline of 12,429 km (7,723 mi) and a land boundary with the Irish Republic of 360 km (224 mi). The seas surrounding the British Isles are shallow, usually less than 90 m (295 ft), because the islands lie on the continental shelf. To the northwest, the sea floor plunges abruptly to 900 m (2,953 ft).

The capital is London, in southeastern England, occupying both sides of the Thames River. An ancient city, London was first settled by the Romans in 43 c.e.; in 2001 the population was almost 7.2 million. With 970,000 inhabitants, Birmingham is the United Kingdom's second-largest city and the industrial capital of central England. Liverpool is the chief port for Atlantic trade. Other major industrial centers include Manchester, Bristol, and Leeds. Glasgow is Scotland's largest city, followed in size by Edinburgh, the capital. Cardiff is the capital of and largest city in Wales and is one of the world's largest coal-shipping ports. Belfast is the capital of and largest city in Northern Ireland.

Most of England consists of low plains and rolling downs, particularly in the south and southwest, where the land does not rise higher than 305 m (1,000 ft). The major hill regions are in the north, west, and southeast. These include the Pennine Range, which originates in Scotland and runs southward, and the Midlands, a plains region with low, rolling hills and fertile valleys. The eastern coast is low-lying, with much of it less than 5 m (15 ft) above sea level. The highest point in England is Scafell Pike (978 m; 3,210 ft). The longest rivers are the Severn (338 km; 210 mi) and Thames (322 m; 200 mi). Other rivers include the Humber, Tyne, Tweed, Avon, and Mersey.

Scotland has three distinct topographical regions: the Northern Highlands, occupying almost the entire northern half of the country and containing the highest point in the British Isles, Ben Nevis (1,343 m; 4,406 ft); the Central Lowlands, containing the valleys of the Tay, Forth, and Clyde rivers; and the Southern Uplands, rising to their peak at Merrick (842 m; 2,764 ft), with moorland cut by many valleys and rivers. Scotland also has numerous deep lochs and wide firths.

Wales is a country of hills and mountains, with extensive tracts of high plateau and shorter stretches of mountain ranges deeply dissected by river valleys. The Cambrian Mountains occupy almost the entire area and contain Wales's highest point, Mount Snowdon (1,085 m;

3,560 ft). There are narrow coastal plains in the south and west and small lowland areas in the north.

Northern Ireland consists mainly of low-lying plateaus and hills, generally from 152 to 183 m (500 to 600 ft) high. The Mourne Mountains, in the southeast, include the highest point in the area, Slieve Donard (852 m; 2,796 ft). In a central depression lies Lough Neagh, the largest lake in the kingdom.

Geography

Area sq km: 244,820; sq mi: 94,525
World Rank: 76th
Land Boundaries, km: Ireland 360
Coastline, km: 12,429
Elevation Extremes meters:
Lowest: The Fens -4
Highest: Ben Nevis 1,343
Land Use %
Arable Land: 23.5
Permanent Crops: 0.2
Forest: 11.6
Other: 64.7

Population of Principal Cities (2001)

Belfast	277,391
Birmingham	970,892
Bradford	293,717
Bristol	420,566
Cardiff	292,150
Coventry	303,475
Edinburgh	430,082
Glasgow	629,501
Kingston upon Hull	301,416
Leeds	443,247
Leicester	330,574
Liverpool	469,017
London	7,172,091
Manchester	394,269
Sheffield	439,866
Stoke-on-Trent	259,252
Wolverhampton	251,462

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

The United Kingdom has a mild and temperate climate warmed by the North Atlantic Drift (a continuation of the Gulf Stream) and the prevailing southwestern winds. Daily weather is mainly influenced by depressions moving eastward across the Atlantic. The climate is subject to frequent changes but to moderate extremes; temperatures rarely range above 32°C (90°F) or below 10°C (50°F). Near sea level in the west, the mean annual temperature ranges from 8°C (46°F) in the Hebrides to 11°C (52°F) in the extreme southwest of England. The mean monthly temperature in the extreme north ranges from 3°C (37°F) in the winter to 11°C (52°F) in the summer.

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The annual average rainfall is over 1,600 mm (63 in) in the mountainous areas of the west and north but less than half that amount over central and eastern parts. Rain is fairly well distributed throughout the year, but on average March through June are the driest months, while September through January are the wettest. During May, June, and July, the months of longest daylight, the mean daily duration of sunshine varies from five hours in northern Scotland to eight hours on the Isle of Wight; during November, December, and January, the months of shortest daylight, the mean daily duration of sunshine varies from an hour and one-half in northern Scotland to two hours on the southern coast of England. Scanty sunshine combined with prevalent mists and fogs and frequent drizzles ensure the proverbial dreary English weather.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature

Shetland, in the North: 37°F to 52°F

Isle of Wight, in the South: 41°F to 61°F

Belfast: 34°F to 42°F

London: 30°F to 44°F

Average Rainfall

West and North: 63 in

London: 22.9 in

Belfast: 38.2 in

Cardiff: 41.9 in

stroyed much natural nesting habitat. Fish have become less abundant but still include trout, salmon, perch, pike, and roach. Coastal fishing grounds hold haddock, cod, herring, and plaice, among other species. There are over 21,000 species of insects in the United Kingdom.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 60,441,457

World Rank: 21st

Density per sq km: 246.3

% of annual growth (1999-2003): 0.2

Male %: 49.5

Female %: 50.5

Urban %: 88.9

Age Distribution %: 0-14: 17.7

15-64: 66.5

65 and over: 15.8

Population 2025: 63,819,000

Birth Rate per 1,000: 10.78

Death Rate per 1,000: 10.18

Rate of Natural Increase %: 0.1

Total Fertility Rate: 1.66

Expectation of Life (years): Males 75.94

Females 80.96

Marriage Rate per 1,000: 5.1

Divorce Rate per 1,000: 2.6

Average Size of Households: 2.4

Induced Abortions: 197,913

FLORA AND FAUNA

Once extensively wooded in oak and pine, the United Kingdom today has just over one-tenth of its land covered in woods, with much of the rest cleared for farmland. The forests that remain, except in the Highlands of Scotland and along the coasts, are mainly oak. On moorlands and heathlands (about one-quarter of the total area of the United Kingdom), heather, peat moss, bilberry, other types of arctic-alpine vegetation grow wild, but in these regions as well grazing and controlled burning have altered the ecosystem.

Most larger forms of wild mammalian life, such as wolves, wild boar, and reindeer, have long become extinct. Red deer and roe deer are still found in the Scottish Highlands and in Exmoor Forest. Foxes, badgers, otters, weasels, and other small carnivores are widespread in rural areas, as are rabbits, squirrels, mice, rats, numerous amphibians, and three species of snake, including the poisonous adder. All of the island of Ireland is free of snakes. As relatively limited as animal life is, avian life is varied and rich. The United Kingdom is a focal point of various migratory routes, and woodland and farmland, as well as suburban gardens, all offer nesting habitats for over 200 species of birds, including the chaffinch, starling, sparrow, and blackbird. Game birds include grouse, pheasant, and wild pigeons. The reclamation of marshland has de-

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

In the United Kingdom, the English constitute some 81.5 percent of the population, the Scottish 9.6 percent, the Irish 2.4 percent, the Welsh 1.9 percent, and the Ulster 1.8 percent. Most of the native-born inhabitants of the British Isles are descended from a succession of early peoples, including Celts, Anglo-Saxons, Teutons, Romans, Danes, Normans, and Pictish. The Welsh and the Irish are mainly Celtic; the English, Anglo-Saxon; and the Scots, Pictish.

Immigrants from Commonwealth nations or former British imperial possessions constitute approximately 2.8 percent of the population and account for the main ethnic minorities. The largest such groups are Indian, West Indian, Pakistani, and Bangladeshi. A sizable minority of this population was born in the United Kingdom (some 40 percent), and among second-generation immigrants, some 74 percent are of mixed ethnicity. The most dramatic difference between the white and minority communities is age: 42 percent of whites are under 30, compared with 60 percent of West Indians and 70 percent of those from the Indian Subcontinent. Ethnic minorities are more heavily concentrated in urban areas, especially London; overall, almost 70 percent of the minority community lives in metropolitan areas. Both Scotland and Northern

Ireland have very small ethnic minority populations (less than 0.8 percent of the total populations).

LANGUAGES

English is the official and national language and is spoken throughout the United Kingdom. It is descended from the German tongue spoken by the Anglo-Saxons in the fifth and sixth centuries, as subsequently influenced and modified by Latin, Norse, and Norman French. Next to Mandarin Chinese, English is the second-most widely spoken language in the world, and it is the most common second language. English is an official language in over 60 nations and has acquired the unofficial status of *lingua franca* of the modern world.

About 26 percent of the people of Wales speak Welsh, chiefly in the rural north and west. Legal measures adopted in the 1960s helped to revive the language, which is of Celtic origin and closely allied to Breton, spoken in Brittany, France. Welsh may be used alongside English in courts and schools. Some 80,000 Scots, mainly in western Scotland, still speak the Scottish dialect of Gaelic, and some Northern Irish speak the Irish form of the language. On the Isle of Man, the Manx variety of Celtic is used, and in the Channel Islands, some people still use a Norman French dialect. French remains the language of Jersey for official ceremonies.

RELIGIONS

Christianity is the dominant religion of the United Kingdom. The Anglican Communion is the established church and consists of four distinct churches: the Episcopal Church of Scotland, the Church of Ireland, the Church of Wales, and the Church of England. Some 25.8 million people are Anglican. The Church of England is the largest Anglican sect, with two main provinces, Canterbury and York, and 14,400 parishes in 43 dioceses. The archbishop of Canterbury is the primate of the Anglican Church, including all of its 40 ecclesiastical provinces and 390 dioceses in 120 nations. There are close ties between the Church of England and the government. For instance, the 26 senior bishops are entitled to sit in the House of Lords, and the monarch is the formal head of both the Church of England and the Church of Scotland (Presbyterian). The absence of a formal constitution has meant that church-state relations remain based on tradition and custom.

Although Catholicism in Great Britain was suppressed until the Catholic Emancipation Act of 1829, the denomination's followers now number 5.8 million. In England, most Catholics are concentrated in two geographic regions: London and Liverpool. In Scotland, Catholics are more dispersed and account for some 25 percent of the church-

going population. The Scottish Presbyterian Church is divided into 12 synods and 59 presbyteries, with some 1,000 parishes. There are approximately 800,000 Presbyterians in the United Kingdom. There is also a strong Methodist Church in the United Kingdom, with some 760,000 members in five denominations, the largest of which is the Methodist Church of Great Britain, which has more than 10,000 churches and chapels. The Baptist Church is divided into five different unions, with some 500 churches. The Baptist Union is the largest denomination. Fundamentalist or Pentecostal movements have had only minor success in the United Kingdom, although their numbers have grown in recent years.

While Christianity is the dominant religion, there are a number of religious minorities. Immigration has created a substantial non-Christian community. The Muslim community numbers 1.6 million, and there are some 360,000 Sikhs and 600,000 Hindus. The Jewish community numbers approximately 300,000.

After a long history of religious strife and repression, the 20th century witnessed the emergence of religious tolerance throughout the United Kingdom, with the notable exception of Northern Ireland. In general, although churches and clergy continue to receive tax concessions, and denominational schools are subsidized, religion has ceased to be a major issue in politics or public life.

Religious Affiliations

Christian	43,276,000
Muslim	1,632,000
Hindu	604,000
Sikh	363,000
Jewish	302,000
Buddhist	181,000
Other	181,000
Unaffiliated or None	13,902,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The first known settlers in Britain were Celts, who invaded and conquered England during the sixth century B.C.E. The islands' gold, tin, and pearl mines were known throughout Europe and probably prompted the invasion by Julius Caesar in 55 B.C.E. Roman rule lasted until the fifth century C.E.

The withdrawal of the Roman garrisons was followed by four centuries of internecine strife and external invasions. While the Celtic tribes fought among themselves, Scots and Picts raided from the north, while Angles, Jutes, and Saxons raided the eastern coasts. The Anglo-Saxons were able to establish permanent kingdoms, while the Celts retreated into the mountains of Wales, where they were united into a single kingdom in the 10th century by Howel the Good (Hywel Dda).

Meanwhile, under Alfred the Great (d. 901) the West Saxons (Wessex) came to dominate England, but a wave of Danish and other Norse invasions led to the establishment of a Danish kingdom under Canute II in 1017. Canute's line ended in 1042, when Edward the Confessor, of Wessex, ascended the throne. At Edward's death in 1066 there were three claimants to the throne. The victory of William the Conqueror, Duke of Normandy, at the battle of Hastings ended the Anglo-Saxon period and began Norman rule.

The next 400 years, until the rise of the Tudors in 1485, were marked by notable constitutional and legal advances, intermittent struggle with France, and efforts to unify the British Isles. Henry II, who ruled from 1154 to 1189 and was the first of the Angevin line, strengthened the power of the throne vis-à-vis the church and implemented numerous legal reforms. However, strife between the monarchy and the nobility led his son John to issue the Magna Carta in 1215, following his loss at the battle of Runnymede. A half century later the first Parliament was summoned in opposition to Henry III. The Magna Carta and Parliament helped establish checks on royal power and inaugurated the principle of representative government.

Edward I completed the conquest of Wales in 1282, when the last Welsh king, Llewelyn ap Gruffyd, was killed in battle. Scotland was united under Duncan and his sons Malcolm III and David I from 1034 to 1153. English efforts to conquer Scotland ended with Robert Bruce's victory over Edward II at Bannockburn in 1314 and a subsequent treaty in 1328. Anglo-French conflict culminated in the Hundred Years' War, which began in 1337. Therein, despite notable early victories, the English monarchy lost its main possessions in France. During this period England underwent a series of national traumas, including an outbreak of the bubonic plague and the 85-year civil war between the House of York and the House of Lancaster, known as the War of the Roses.

In 1485 the ascension of Henry VII, of the House of Tudor, marked the end of the civil war. By 1603, when the Tudor dynasty ended, England had been transformed. The defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588 marked the rise of the nation as the world's most powerful maritime force, and colonization efforts were undertaken around the world. Henry VIII (1509–1547) separated the English Church from Rome, and a golden age of literature flourished under Elizabeth I (1558–1603).

Elizabeth was succeeded by James VI, of Scotland, in 1603, who became James I, of the House of Stuart. The Catholicism of the Stuarts led to renewed civil war (1642–49) and the beheading of Charles I. A commonwealth was established under Oliver Cromwell, but the monarchy was restored after Cromwell's death and the ascension of Charles II in 1660. However, efforts to reassert royal authority failed when James II (1685–88) was overthrown and his daughter Mary II and her husband,

William of the House of Orange, were installed as monarchs.

In the 17th and 18th centuries England consolidated its maritime and commercial supremacy over continental powers such as France and the Netherlands. Following the Seven Years' War, England controlled most of North America and India. The Treaty for the Union of Scotland and England created a single monarchy in 1707, although Scottish resistance continued, most notably in Jacobite rebellions in 1715 and 1745. In 1714 George I, of the House of Hanover, grandson to James I, ascended the throne. During the reign of his grandson George III (1760–1820), England lost its 13 North American colonies through the Revolutionary War, which brought about the formation of the United States, but consolidated possessions in Canada and India and added new colonies in Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa. England also led the opposition to the French Revolution and emerged from the Napoleonic Wars as one of the great powers of Europe.

The 19th century marked the culmination of British imperial power. The industrial revolution made the country one of the wealthiest in the world and assured British commercial dominance for most of the century. Reforms ended slavery in the empire in 1832 and enfranchised the growing middle and working classes. Social and political reforms were also enacted. Finally, the century was marked by widespread emigration to the United States and areas of the empire, which contributed to the dispersion of British political, social, and legal customs.

The status of Ireland remained one of the most contentious issues in British politics throughout the 1800s. Although the 1800 Act for the Union of Great Britain and Ireland created the United Kingdom and granted Irish representation in Parliament, efforts for independence continued. The crisis worsened during World War I, and the 26 southern, and mainly Catholic, counties broke away in 1922 to form the Irish Free State, now the Irish Republic. Meanwhile, the six mainly Protestant counties in Ulster, in the north, remained part of the United Kingdom.

World War I was the first major blow to British imperial supremacy, destroying the carefully built balance of power in Europe. The fiscal and emotional costs of the war seriously eroded support among and the capability of the British people to maintain the empire. In 1931 the Statute of Westminster granted equal status to the self-governing dominions and introduced the concept of a commonwealth. In domestic politics, women gained suffrage in 1922, and the Liberal Party was gradually replaced by the Labour Party as the main liberal and anti-Tory party in the 1920s. Although the United Kingdom emerged from the shadow of the Great Depression in relatively better shape than its continental neighbors, neither its diplomacy nor its military might was sufficient to prevent the rise of Adolf Hitler.

During World War II the United Kingdom, under the inspired leadership of Winston Churchill, became one of the three main Allied powers, along with the United States and the Soviet Union. Alone among the major western European countries, the United Kingdom held out against Nazi Germany, even through one of the most devastating air campaigns staged against civilians, the Battle of Britain (an event that Churchill proclaimed Britain's "finest hour"). British troops also fought in the Pacific and were instrumental in the Allied victory in Europe. Still, Churchill and the Conservatives lost power in 1945 and were replaced by the Labour Party.

In the aftermath of World War II decolonization began, with India and Pakistan gaining independence in 1947, as followed a year later by Burma (Myanmar) and Ceylon (Sri Lanka) and in 1956 by Sudan. That year British troops withdrew from the Suez Canal zone following a failed invasion of the region. In 1960 Nigeria became independent, initiating the process of British withdrawal from southern and western Africa. By the 1970s most of the major colonies were independent. Following the death of George VI in 1952, his daughter Elizabeth ascended the throne as Elizabeth II.

In 1973, in a historic move, the United Kingdom ended its relative isolation from the rest of Europe and joined the European Community. The country's economy received a boost in 1975 when offshore oil in the North Sea began to be piped ashore. In 1979 Conservatives were returned to power under Margaret Thatcher, who became Europe's first female prime minister. Three years later Thatcher led the country to victory after Argentine forces invaded the Falkland Islands.

Unrest in Northern Ireland led the government to impose direct rule over the area in 1972; however, in 1985 the United Kingdom and the Irish Republic signed the Anglo-Irish Agreement, which provided for mutual consultations on the territory. Thatcher was reelected to a third term in 1987 and went on to become the kingdom's longest-serving prime minister since Lord Liverpool in the 19th century. Domestic discontent led Thatcher to be replaced by John Major in 1990.

In 1990 the United Kingdom participated in the U.S.-led coalition against Iraq in the Persian Gulf War. The "Chunnel" inaugurated direct ground transportation between the United Kingdom and France via a tunnel under the English Channel in 1994. The process of decolonization essentially ended in 1997 when Hong Kong reverted to Chinese control. Meanwhile, trouble was brewing in the country's royal family. The heir apparent, Charles, and his wife, Princess Diana, underwent a controversial divorce. In 1997 Diana was killed in a car crash in Paris, and her funeral in England attracted millions of mourners.

Major was defeated in 1997, as Tony Blair and the Labour Party were swept into office in a landslide elec-

tion victory. The Labour government initiated a program of devolution that granted Scotland and Wales limited self-government. In addition, in 1998 the Good Friday Peace Accords ushered in a truce in Northern Ireland and established a regional assembly, though with renewed unrest in 2002 this assembly was put on hold. In 1999 the House of Lords was reformed. That year the United Kingdom also participated in military action led by the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) against Serbia during the Kosovo crisis.

In 2001, Blair was reelected prime minister, as his Labour Party won another landslide victory, and the United Kingdom became one of the leading supporters of the U.S.-led military campaign in Afghanistan and the fight against international terrorism. The United Kingdom was also the major ally in the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq in 2003. Blair faced severe criticism at home from the general populace and from members of Parliament, who were deeply divided over such action. Scandal followed the invasion when a senior government scientist leaked information to the BBC regarding supposed falsified intelligence regarding Iraq's possession of weapons of mass destruction. When the government subsequently made the scientist's name public, he killed himself. A commission was established under Lord Hutton to investigate, and in 2004 the commission's report cleared the government of wrongdoing but criticized the BBC for faulty coverage. That year the Iraq Survey Group reported that Iraq had not in fact possessed weapons of mass destruction; nevertheless, Blair stood by his decision to take the country to war. Meanwhile, he faced criticism from within and without his party for failing to live up to election pledges to reform ailing social welfare systems, including health and education. In 2005 a controversial antiterrorism act was passed after historically long debate. On July 7, 2005, suicide bombers struck three trains and one bus in London's mass transit network, killing more than 50 people and injuring 700.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

Prime Minister

1940–45	Winston Churchill
1945–51	Clement Attlee
1951–55	Winston Churchill
1955–57	Anthony Eden
1957–63	Harold Macmillan
1963–64	Alec Douglas-Home
1964–70	Harold Wilson
1970–74	Edward Heath
1974–76	Harold Wilson
1976–79	James Callaghan
1979–90	Margaret Thatcher
1990–97	John Major
1997–	Tony Blair

CONSTITUTION

Among the major countries of the world, the United Kingdom, New Zealand, and Israel are the only ones without written constitutions. However, the U.K.'s constitution is unwritten only in the sense that the documents and practices upon which the country is based have not been brought together in a single inclusive statement. Government is highly unitary in that power radiates from a central sovereign body. The constitution is flexible in that no part of it is inviolate. Laws reflecting the structure and functions of government may be changed through the replacement of conventions or the passing of new laws.

The major elements constituting the unwritten constitution of the United Kingdom are historic documents, statute law, common-law decisions, judicial interpretations, conventions and customs, parliamentary procedures and privileges, and a few classic writings. Even if all of the relevant documents and acts of Parliament were brought together in a single document, they would still not make up a true constitution due to the myriad constitutional issues not dealt with.

The principal constitutional documents in this context are the Magna Carta (1215), the Petition of Right (1628), the Bill of Rights (1689), the Act of Settlement (1701), and the various Representation of the People Acts. These documents have mainly historical significance, while much of the current constitutional framework is derived from statute law, such as the Parliament Acts of 1911 and 1949. Conventions often define the political processes of Parliament. They are defined as established practices that, although without legal sanction, are followed to the extent that they acquire the character of binding precedents. Among the more important conventions are that the prime minister must be a member of the House of Commons and that the government must resign following a no-confidence vote.

The absence of a comprehensive bill of rights has meant that civil liberties are dependent upon statutes and judicial interpretation. Although the courts have no formal power of judicial review, they may shape the law through interpretation and by adding or subtracting from the scope of relevant legal provisions. In the 20th century the courts increasingly ruled that many ministerial acts were beyond the power conferred by law. Classic writings on constitutional practice fill the gaps not covered by common law, judicial interpretations, and conventions. For instance, Sir Thomas Erskine May's *Treatise on the Law, Privileges, Proceedings, and Usage of Parliament* is used by speakers of the House of Commons to resolve disputed points of procedure.

Two key concepts around which unwritten constitutional norms have evolved are the rule of law and parliamentary sovereignty. The rule of law is based on the principle that the constitution is not the origin of individual rights but merely the codification of those rights.

The rule of law implies that the government is not above the law and can only do what it has the legal power to do. Parliamentary sovereignty means that, unlike in countries where the legislature is subordinate to the constitution, the U.K. Parliament can legally pass any law it wishes, and no person or institution can override it. No existing laws are sacrosanct; they may be repealed or amended as Parliament pleases. Constitutionally, this makes the government in general and the prime minister in particular more powerful than their counterparts in western Europe or the United States.

The unwritten constitution of the United Kingdom is facing increasing pressure from several directions. Membership in the European Union requires that British courts accept the supremacy of EU statutes when they conflict with domestic parliamentary acts. In addition, there has been a devolution of parliamentary power to Wales and Scotland, which have established their own regional bodies. Finally, there has been increasing use of referendums, which bypass Parliament and appeal directly to the people for decisions.

The United Kingdom is a constitutional monarchy in that the sovereign "reigns but does not rule." The power of the Crown to act without consulting Parliament is called the "royal prerogative." In theory, the scope of this prerogative is vast. The monarch appoints the prime minister, summons and dissolves Parliament, opens and closes sessions of Parliament, and completes legislative processes with royal assent. Declarations of war, treaties, and the granting of self-government to dependent territories are executed by the Crown. The monarch appoints peers and bishops and is titular commander in chief of the military. As the head of the Commonwealth, the Crown is the symbol of unity and common bond among its members. In practice these powers are ceremonial. Yet, even as the monarch's powers have declined, the Crown has acquired broader significance in political culture. The royal family represents the traditions and heritage of the United Kingdom. In addition to serving as the sovereign of the United Kingdom, the monarch is the head of state of Antigua and Barbuda, Australia, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Canada, Grenada, Jamaica, Mauritius, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Saint Christopher and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, the Solomon Islands, and Tuvalu.

The Privy Council is the monarch's council of state, and all of its members are appointed by the Crown on the advice of the prime minister. Its constitutional functions are largely ceremonial. However, the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council is the country's highest legal body.

Succession to the Crown is limited to lineal Protestant descendants of Princess Sophia, the electress of Hanover and granddaughter of James I, of England. Sons have precedent over daughters in the line of succession, and the presumptive male heir is granted the title of Prince of Wales.

The government is made up of the prime minister, secretaries of state, ministers, ministers of state, junior ministers, and private parliamentary secretaries. While the size of the cabinet has remained fairly constant in the 20th century, with an average of 21 members, the size of the government has expanded dramatically, from 50 members in 1914 to over 100 in 2000. There is no statutory provision that members of the government must be members of Parliament.

The prime minister is not generally in charge of any department but holds the title of first lord of the treasury. The composition of the cabinet is left to the personal discretion of the prime minister, who also decides the agendas of all cabinet-level meetings. When there is disagreement, no vote is taken, and the cabinet always acts with collective responsibility and presents a united front. The prime minister's ability to dismiss, transfer, or force to resign members of the government lies at the root of his power. In addition, the prime minister's role as leader of his party while in office makes his position unassailable. The prime minister alone decides the timing of elections. The post also provides opportunities for patronage, as the prime minister controls the civil service.

PARLIAMENT

The Parliament of the United Kingdom is among the oldest representative assemblies in the world. It is a bicameral legislature with a lower chamber, the House of Commons, and an upper chamber, the House of Lords. The doctrine of the sovereignty of the Parliament holds that Parliament (consisting in sum of the monarch, the House of Commons, and the House of Lords) is the supreme lawmaking body. Parliament can legislate for the United Kingdom as a whole or for any of its constituent parts, including Crown dependencies. The Parliament of the United Kingdom is able to make or alter any law; the main action it cannot perform is limit the actions of future parliaments. The Parliament is also bound by the conventions and customs of the country's unwritten constitution, and as the United Kingdom is a member of the European Union, the U.K. Parliament must recognize the validity of EU legislation. The main function of Parliament is to pass laws, but it also has an oversight function, so as to ensure that the government implements policies. The legislative bodies further provide arenas for public debate and the pool from which the government is generally formed.

The speaker is the chairman of the House of Commons and acts as its representative in public ceremonies. The position is chosen through interparty agreement among senior representatives. Once chosen, the speaker remains in office throughout the life of the Parliament and is usually reelected without contest. Upon appointment the speaker ceases to be a party member. The

speaker's duties include deciding whether to allow debates on matters of urgency, accepting or rejecting motions for ending debates, certifying fiscal bills, and acting as an intermediary between the Parliament and the sovereign. The speaker may also sanction individual members for misconduct, imposing suspension or even, in theory, imprisonment.

Within the Parliament, party control is exercised by officers known as whips. Whips are responsible for ensuring party conformity on votes and the attendance of members for debates or votes. Whips also act as intermediaries between junior members and party leadership. The whips from each party work together to arrange parliamentary business.

The House of Commons is elected through universal adult suffrage and consists of 659 members, including the speaker. Of the members, 529 represent England, 40 Wales, 72 Scotland, and 18 Northern Ireland. Each member is elected from a single-member district for a five-year period, although early elections can be called at the discretion of the prime minister. In addition, elections may be delayed during periods of national crisis, as was the case during World War II. Each annual session of Parliament lasts approximately 160 to 170 days. During 20 of the days in session, the largest opposition party has the right to choose subjects for debate. Most of the major work in drafting legislation is performed by committees. Customarily, at least three committees are chaired by the opposition: the Public Accounts Committee, the Committee on the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administration, and the Statutory Works Committee.

The government controls as much as 50 percent of the time of the House of Commons, including question time, when members are free to ask questions, either orally or in writing, of the government. The prime minister regularly answers questions for 15 minutes on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and other ministers also present themselves.

The upper chamber of the Parliament is the House of Lords. It comprises hereditary nobles, or peers; life peers; two archbishops and 24 other senior bishops; and senior judges, known as law lords. The 1999 House of Lords Act reduced the number of hereditary peers to 92, such that the majority of peers are now life peers; overall, the size of the House of Lords was reduced from 1,200 seats in 1997 to 670 in 2000. There are no elections for the House of Lords, and, with the exception of bishops who retire, members serve for life. The senior figure is the lord chancellor, whose powers are quite limited compared with his counterpart in the Commons.

The House of Lords performs six main functions in Parliament: It exercises a delaying power, allowing the House of Commons to reconsider hasty or ill-considered legislation; revises bills passed by the Commons; initiates noncontroversial legislation; consolidates existing legislation into single statutes; examines delegated legisla-

tion; and holds general debates. In addition, the House of Lords is the country's highest legal body and hears final appeals for all civil cases in the United Kingdom and for all criminal cases in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland. The most substantial legislative power of the upper chamber is its delaying capability: The Lords may reject a motion from the Commons, which then must wait a year to resubmit it. If a motion is rejected a second time, it may be presented to the monarch for royal assent.

POLITICAL PARTIES

The United Kingdom has basically had a two-party system since the Whigs and Tories emerged in the late 17th century. They were replaced by the Liberals and the Conservatives after the Reform Act of 1832, and the Labour Party supplanted the Liberals in the early 1920s.

The Conservatives are the best-organized political group, with constituency committees in all districts and seven times as many full-time agents as the Labour Party. Under Thatcher the Conservative Party became an avowed defender of monetarist policies. Historically, its distinguishing characteristic has been its pro-free enterprise ideology and associated corollaries: lower taxes, the diminution of trade union power, privatization, harsher measures on immigration and crime, and import controls. As unionists, Conservatives are committed to the maintenance of British rule in Northern Ireland. In foreign affairs, the party is strongly pro-NATO and extends qualified support to the European Union. Predictably, Conservative support is strongest among the upper and middle classes, particularly professionals and office and clerical groups, among which its policies are very popular. The party also enjoys the support of members of established churches.

The Labour Party was formed in 1906 as the successor to the Labour Representation Committee, formed in 1900 by trade unions, the Independent Labour Party, and the Fabian Society, among other groups. Until it moved decisively to the left in the late 1970s, the Labour Party followed a policy of moderate socialism and reform. When Tony Blair took control of the party in 1994, he carried out drastic reorientation, firmly committing it to free-market economics and more than doubling its membership. In general, Labour membership is the mirror image of Conservative membership: Labour's strength lies disproportionately in the lower economic categories, among men, and in the younger age groups. It flourishes most in urban areas and in Catholic neighborhoods.

The Liberal Party was a shell of both the old party of the same name, which dominated 19th-century British politics, and the 17th-century Whigs, who played a large role in curbing royal absolutism. In 1981 the Liberal Party formed an alliance with the newly formed Social Democratic Party, running joint candidates in 1983

and 1987. The combined factions are now known as the Liberal Democrats, the third-strongest party.

The Social Democratic and Labour Party is the former moderate wing of the Labour Party, which formally broke away in 1981 when Michael Foot was elected president of the latter.

Parties in Northern Ireland operate in a different political climate and have managed to thrive despite sectarian strife. The Ulster Unionist Party, also known as the Official Unionist Party, is the largest and most powerful of the pro-British, Protestant, Orange parties. From 1921 until the introduction of direct rule from London, the Ulster Unionist Party provided all the governments of Northern Ireland and held the majority of the 52 seats in the old Stormont (parliament).

There are a number of other minor or regional parties, including the pro-nationalist, Catholic Sinn Féin; the pro-independence Scottish National Party; and the nationalist Welsh party Plaid Cymru.

In the 2005 parliamentary elections, Labour won 356 seats, with 35.2 percent of the vote, while the Conservatives took 198 seats, with 32.3 percent of the vote, and the Liberal Democrats won 62 seats, with 22 percent of the vote. Regional and special-interest parties won single-digit numbers of seats, with none earning more than 2.3 percent of the vote.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The United Kingdom has a complex system of local government, the main elements of which are as follows: local and regional offices of central government departments; nondepartmental public bodies, usually dealing with a specialized function, such as health; decentralized units of public corporations, such as gas or electric boards; autonomous or semiautonomous official organizations, such as the Youth Service Advisory Councils; and elected local governments. In England and Wales there are some 100,000 elected councillors serving on 8,000 councils, with staffs comprising over two million people. Together, elected local councils are responsible for 50 different services and account for one-quarter of all government expenditures.

The United Kingdom has a long tradition of local government, dating back to the Anglo-Saxon period. The 1972 Local Government Act reduced the number of counties to 47 in England and Wales and also created seven metropolitan counties, 26 districts, and three island areas. Within counties, which range in population from 100,000 to 1.5 million, there are 330 district councils. Within metropolitan counties, there are 36 metropolitan districts. At the smallest level of local government, some 11,000 parish councils in England and community councils in Wales have been retained. Of these, some 8,000 councils are elected.

Local councils consist of elected, unpaid councillors and are presided over by chairmen. In boroughs and cities, chairmen are normally known as mayors. Councillors are elected for four-year terms, and local areas are divided into divisions or wards for electoral purposes. Local governments serve a variety of functions, including protective (fire, police, consumer protection, and licensing), environmental (highways and planning), personal (education, housing, and social services), recreational (sports facilities, museums, and art galleries), and trading (markets and transportation) functions. Some services are mandatorily provided, such as education, while others are permissively allowed for, with local authorities given latitude regarding levels of expenditure. Funds are procured through a combination of government grants and local property taxes.

A major component of local-government policy under the Labour government of Prime Minister Tony Blair has been devolution, or the transfer of power from London to the component areas of the United Kingdom. By 1999 Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland had all been granted varying degrees of self-government through the establishment of national legislative bodies. Under the system of devolution, the U.K. Parliament has retained control over various features of policy, including defense, foreign policy, and social-security systems; national assemblies, meanwhile, have high degrees of autonomy over education, the environment, and culture.

A Scottish referendum in 1997 endorsed the creation of a semiautonomous Scottish Parliament; the 1998 Scotland Act created a 129-member body endowed with the power to control education, housing, transport, sports, certain legal issues, farming, and other concerns. The British Parliament retains power over employment and immigration. The Scottish executive is the government, comprising a first minister, two Scottish law officers, and the departmental ministers. Acts of the Scottish Parliament must still receive royal assent. Scotland is divided into nine regions and three island areas, with 53 local districts and 1,250 community councils.

Devolution in Wales was initiated in 1998, when Parliament passed the Government of Wales Act, which established a National Assembly. Since 1999 the Welsh National Assembly has had power over issues ranging from agriculture and education to culture and the promotion of the Welsh language. There remains a secretary of state for Wales in the U.K. government, whose functions are to coordinate policies between Parliament and the Welsh National Assembly and to shepherd legislation through Parliament that relates to Wales. The secretary has the right, upon approval, to transfer funds from the U.K. treasury to the Welsh National Assembly and may participate in plenary sessions of the Assembly but may not vote. The Welsh continue to elect members to the U.K. Parliament, and measures passed by that body remain law in Wales.

In Northern Ireland there are 26 district councils responsible for local environmental and certain other services. Through the 1998 Good Friday Agreement, a Northern Ireland Assembly was created. In theory, the Assembly has control over six governmental departments that previously controlled the territory: Agriculture, Environment, Education, Economic Development, Health and Social Services, and Finance and Personnel. The Assembly has 108 members, and the government is presided over by a first minister. After a suspension in 2000, the Assembly was reconvened. One of its main accomplishments has been to provide the means for participation in government by both Protestants and Catholics, including the political wing of the IRA, Sinn Féin. In the wake of renewed unrest in Northern Ireland in 2002, the Assembly was again suspended, with its duties taken over by the secretary of state.

LEGAL SYSTEM

Although the United Kingdom is a unitary state, England and Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland each have different legal systems and courts.

The basis for English and Welsh law is common law, legislation, and EU law. A peculiarity of the English legal system is the division of lawyers into barristers and solicitors. Barristers have passed the “bar” and usually appear only in superior courts, though they have the right to appear in all courts. They generally do not communicate with the public but are briefed by solicitors. Solicitors qualify as lawyers by completing a period as an articled clerk and passing the Law Society examination. They have the right of audience only in magistrate courts, county courts, and the new Crown courts. Only a minority are engaged in advocacy by representing clients in court; most perform legal work that does not require appearances in court, such as the preparation of wills or mortgages.

The judicial system is characterized by high caseloads and the extensive influence of the courts. The courts have extensive jurisdiction, and judges have a great deal of independence. All judges are appointed for life and may be removed only by the consent of both houses of Parliament. Juries typically consist of 12 persons, although in county courts the number may vary from seven to 11. Juries are rare in civil cases.

Magistrate courts dispose of about 95 percent of criminal cases and conduct preliminary investigations into more serious offenses. There are about 700 magistrates courts and 27,710 magistrates, or justices of the peace. Cases involving people under the age of 17 are tried in juvenile courts. Crown courts deal with more serious trials and take place before juries; there are 90 such courts. Appeals from the Crown courts are heard by the High Court of the Court of Appeal. Appeals from the High

Court and county courts are heard in the Court of Appeal (Civil Division) and may go on to the House of Lords, the final court of appeals. The judges in the House of Lords are the nine lords of appeal in ordinary.

In 2003 the post of lord chancellor was abolished. The second-oldest office in Britain, after the monarchy, this position combined a legislative seat in the House of Lords, a senior executive position in the cabinet, and a powerful judicial position as, effectively, the top judge in the country. As such, it was deemed to constitute a serious breach of the separation of powers.

With certain limitations, the United Kingdom accepts the jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice.

The legal system in Northern Ireland is similar to that in England and Wales but has its own High Court of the Justiciary, which is the high civil court, and the appellate Court of Appeal; together, these two courts constitute the Supreme Court of Judicature of Northern Ireland. The House of Lords remains the final appellate court.

In Scotland, the High Court of the Justiciary tries capital crimes, while sheriff's courts are concerned with less serious offenses. The High Court is both a trial court and an appellate court, and there is no appeal to the House of Lords. Criminal cases are heard before 15-member juries. District court judges are lay justices of the peace, and local authorities may appoint up to one-quarter of their otherwise elected membership. Civil cases in Scotland may be heard by the sheriff's courts or the Court of Sessions. Civil appeals may go to the House of Lords.

HUMAN RIGHTS

There are no fundamental rights in the United Kingdom in the legal or constitutional sense comparable to those enumerated in the U.S. Bill of Rights. Although some rights are enshrined in documents such as the Magna Carta and the 1689 Bill of Rights, these documents are concerned with specific grievances and do not issue broad declarations. Overall, the evolution of rights has been piecemeal and pragmatic.

Freedom of speech is one of the oldest rights. The major limitations on this freedom are the laws regarding libel and slander, including the use of insulting language in public. The Race Relations Act of 1965 makes it a criminal offense to stir up racial hatred in a public place by written or spoken words. While laws against blasphemy and obscenity remain in place, they have been liberalized.

The freedom to demonstrate peacefully and to assemble are respected with two major exceptions: Public meetings may not be held within 1.6 km (1 mi) of Parliament when it is in session, and the police have the power to change the route of a march or impose other conditions in order to prevent violence or clashes. Police are also obligated, however, to protect protestors from counter-

demonstrators. Meetings in public areas can be held only with prior permission, but such permission is generally granted. There have been no restrictions on the freedom of association since the repeal of the Combinations Act of 1824. Hence, groups such as the Communist Party and the Fascists were never banned in the United Kingdom. Religious freedom is well established. However, the monarch must be a Protestant, and the clergy may not become members of Parliament.

Quite distinct from civil rights are rights in relation to administrative acts. Such rights are less protected in the United Kingdom than they are in countries such as France and the United States. A UK subject has only limited means of appeal against perceived administrative wrongs, other than writing to his member of Parliament. There are administrative tribunals that hear appeals against ministry and agency decisions, but tribunal members are appointed by the minister concerned. There is also no formal right to privacy in the United Kingdom, although legislation does exist that protects certain aspects of private life, including mail and computer communications.

The British tradition in regard to civil rights holds that such rights inhere in individual citizens as subjects of the Crown. The object of establishing civil rights was to ensure that subjects are sufficiently protected against agents of the state and that the protection afforded is equal. The Race Relations Acts of 1965, 1968, and 1976 cover discrimination in public places and in tenancies, employment, services, unions, associations, and business leases. They also ban racially discriminatory advertising. The Commission for Racial Equality, established in 1976, has both an educational and legal role as the main civil rights oversight and enforcement agency.

The main focus of human rights concerns in the United Kingdom continues to be Northern Ireland, where, despite limited efforts at establishing genuine home rule, the Emergency Acts of 1978 and 1987 granted security forces broad powers, including the right to stop, search, and arrest on suspicion of involvement with terrorism. Trial by jury has been abolished for certain offenses, and human rights groups have criticized the use of rubber bullets, which can be lethal, by the military. Tensions have been exacerbated by the simmering conflict between the Catholic, pro-independence Irish Republican Army (IRA) and the mainly Protestant, pro-British Ulster Unionists.

The main oversight body for human rights in the United Kingdom is the parliamentary commissioner for administration (PCA), who serves as a national ombudsman. There also exist regional administrative and health commissioners. The PCA is a statutory officer, independent of the government, who investigates human rights violations. However, the office is prevented by law from investigating the armed forces, public corporations, and civil-service procedural complaints.

Human rights groups inside and outside of the United Kingdom decried a controversial antiterrorism act passed in 2005, providing for control orders for suspects, including placing them under effective house arrest.

FOREIGN POLICY

With the loss of its former imperial role, the United Kingdom had to make readjustments in its overseas relations after World War II. The transition was made more difficult by the concomitant downsizing of the country's traditional supremacy in the trading and maritime realms. The United Kingdom's fundamental principles of foreign policy are almost entirely of post-1945 vintage, although they reflect efforts both to establish new alliances and to salvage as much as possible from the past.

The dominant trend in British foreign policy through the end of the 20th century has been the Anglo-American alliance, or "special relationship." Forged during the world wars and reinforced by common values and language, this relationship led the United Kingdom to present a united front with the United States on almost all issues during the cold war, including U.S. nuclear strategy and arms control policies. The theme continued in the post-cold war era, albeit to a lesser degree, as the Labour government elected in 1997 forged closer ties with the European Union. Nonetheless, the United Kingdom has firmly supported NATO as the cornerstone of European security as a means of maintaining the U.S. military role in Europe, and it supported the U.S.-led military coalitions in the Persian Gulf War and in the former Yugoslavia. The United Kingdom has also supported NATO expansion. The Anglo-American alliance grew even stronger with Blair's persistent support of Washington's war on terror, which led to the invasion of Iraq in 2003.

Another building block of United Kingdom foreign policy has been the preservation of the Commonwealth. Since 1947 the United Kingdom has granted independence to some 50 nations. In 1997 the United Kingdom transferred control of Hong Kong back to China after negotiations ensured that the area would remain a semi-autonomous special region. As the 1982 war in the Falkland Islands against Argentina demonstrated, the United Kingdom remains willing to defend its dependent territories against conquest.

Although the Commonwealth has become a looser form of association, it remains the main vehicle by which the United Kingdom preserves its influence in former territories. The United Kingdom is the only nation besides the United States to station permanent military forces in the Persian Gulf (in its former colonies). The United Kingdom also provides substantial military assistance to other former colonies. Furthermore, the kingdom offers large amounts of foreign aid not only to many former

colonies but also to the lesser-developed nations of the world. There are several government agencies established for the sole purpose of providing economic, social, and scientific training and aid to lesser-developed nations.

A unique feature of the post-cold war era has been the slow integration of the United Kingdom into the European Union. Because of its pro-American policies, the nation was blocked by France from joining the organization in the 1960s. The United Kingdom eventually joined what was then the European Community in 1973. Since then, the United Kingdom has established itself as the main defender of national sovereignty within the organization. The country did not fully integrate into the European Community until 1992, has opted out of much EU social legislation, and refused participation in the European Monetary Union in 1999. The United Kingdom has, however, vigorously supported trade liberalization and the opening of markets and has championed reform of the Common Agricultural Policy. As prime minister, a major foreign policy goal of Tony Blair has been increased cooperation with the European Union and a greater leadership role for the United Kingdom within the organization. As such, he endorsed increased EU military cooperation and economic policies to bring the United Kingdom into the European Monetary Union. In 2005 the Blair government continued to indicate that certain economic criteria would have to be met before the nation would hold a referendum on the adoption of the euro.

DEFENSE

Constitutionally, the monarch is the head of the armed forces, and the services carry the word "Royal" in their titles. Political responsibility is vested in the prime minister and a chain of subordinate officials and agencies: the secretary of state for defense, the minister of state in the Ministry of Defense, three undersecretaries of state, the chief of the defense staff, and the three chiefs of staff. These officials together constitute the Defense Council. Day-to-day management of the army, navy, and air force is vested in the branches' respective boards in the Defense Council. The Chiefs of Staff Committee serves as the professional command agency.

The role of the U.K. military has declined dramatically since the liquidation of the empire, and a new round of downsizing occurred in the wake of the cold war; defense expenditures, personnel, and equipment have all been decreased. Besides the defense of Europe, to which the United Kingdom is committed through its membership in NATO, the only residual overseas defense obligations are those for Crown possessions, such as Gibraltar and the Falklands, and treaty commitments with former colonies in the Middle East and other areas, such as Belize and Cyprus.

In 2003 the United Kingdom expended 2.4 percent of its gross domestic product (GDP) on defense. The manpower of the military declined from 316,700 in 1988 to about 213,000 in 2003. There are some 113,900 troops in the Royal Army, 44,500 in the Royal Navy, and 52,500 in the Royal Air Force. The majority of cuts have been in the army, which lost 50 percent of its personnel in recent years and is now the smallest it has been since the 1700s. In 1998 the Labour government initiated the Strategic Defence Review (SDR), which outlined a major reorganization of the military, including further reductions in manpower and a greater focus on the acquisition of new equipment.

In spite of reductions, the United Kingdom still maintains one of the most powerful and technologically sophisticated militaries in the world, with advanced combat aircraft, missile systems, and naval units. Besides the United States, the United Kingdom has the world's most effective navy, the aircraft carrier arm of which provides the ability to deploy aircraft and reaction forces quickly. The Royal Navy also has nuclear submarines, which now form the basis for the kingdom's nuclear deterrence. The SDR changed the status of the nuclear forces, such that only one submarine armed with nuclear weapons (in 48 warheads) would be deployed at any given time. Three other submarines would be held in reserve, and the total number of nuclear warheads available would be less than 200. In 1998 the last air-dropped nuclear warheads were retired, ending the role of the Royal Air Force in nuclear deterrence.

From 2003, the United Kingdom has taken part in the invasion and occupation of Iraq, alongside its major ally, the United States.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 212,600
 Military Manpower Availability: 14,607,724
 Military Expenditures \$billion: 42.8
 as % of GDP: 2.4
 as % of central government expenditures: 6.3
 Arms Imports \$million: 555
 Arms Exports \$million: 525

ECONOMY

The United Kingdom is one of the world's most important economic hubs. It ranks among the top four economies in western Europe and is generally more free market than its counterparts, including France and Germany. Since the 1980s there has been a steady reduction of government involvement in the economy, and London has shed many government-owned industries and properties. While industry spurred economic growth in the 19th century, services have become a major component

of the U.K. economy, accounting for almost four-fifths of the workforce. (Industry now accounts for only about one-fifth of the labor force.) The service industry has met with notable success in banking, insurance, and general business services, and London remains one of the world's most important financial centers.

The major industries are machinery production, electronics, aircraft and ship building, chemicals, coal and petroleum, consumer goods, and agriculture. The North Sea oilfields have made the United Kingdom one of the few exporters of energy in western Europe. The kingdom's major trade partners include the United States, EU partners, and Japan. The main exports are manufactured goods, fuels, chemicals, food, beverages, and tobacco products, while the main imports are manufactured products, machinery, fuels, and foodstuffs. Prime Minister Tony Blair has adopted a wait-and-see attitude toward monetary integration with the European Union; as the economy is one of the strongest in Europe, critics of monetary union contend that the country should not fix what is not broken. Blair's support for the war in Iraq has continued to put pressure on defense spending.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$trillion: 1.782
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 29,600
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 2.5
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 2.3
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 1.0
 Industry: 26.3
 Services: 72.7
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 63
 Government Consumption: 21
 Gross Domestic Investment: 16.2
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 347.2
 Imports: 439.4
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 2.1
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 28.5

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
111.0	114.2	116.3	118.2	121.6

Finance

National Currency: British Pound (GBP)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = GBP 0.5462
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: —
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: —
 Total External Debt \$trillion: 4.71
 Debt Service Ratio %: —
 Balance of Payments \$billion: –33.46
 International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 35.15
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
 1.4

Official Development Assistance

Donor ODA \$billion: 4.2
 per capita \$: 69.50
 Foreign Direct Investment \$billion: 20.7

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: April 6–April 5
 Revenues \$billion: 834.9
 Expenditures \$billion: 896.7
 Budget Deficit \$million: 61.8
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 1.0
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 0.5
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 8.69
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 2.9
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 313.1
 Total Farmland % of land area: 23.9
 Livestock: Cattle million: 10.5
 Chickens million: 170
 Pigs million: 5.04
 Sheep million: 35.5
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 7.57
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 869

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 220.4
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 0.9

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 267
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 229
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 3.83
 Net Energy Imports % of use: -13.7
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 77
 Production kW-hr billion: 360.8
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 343.9
 Coal Reserves tons billion: 1.65
 Production tons million: 32.6
 Consumption tons million: 64.2
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: 20.8
 Production cubic feet trillion: 3.6
 Consumption cubic feet trillion: 3.3
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: 4.49
 Production barrels million per day: 2.08
 Consumption barrels million per day: 1.86
 Pipelines Length km: 6,420

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 439.4
 Exports \$billion: 347.2
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 3.1
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 5.3
 Balance of Trade \$billion: -33.46

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Germany %	13.0	10.7
United States %	9.2	15.0
France %	7.5	9.2
Netherlands %	6.6	6.1
Belgium %	5.0	5.2
Italy %	4.3	4.2
China %	4.2	—
Ireland %	—	6.8
Spain %	—	4.5

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 392,931
 Paved %: 100
 Automobiles: 25,822,000
 Trucks and Buses: 3,497,000
 Railroad: Track Length km: 17,186
 Passenger-km billion: 39.3
 Freight-km billion: 19.7
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 429
 Total Deadweight Tonnage million: 9.57
 Airports: 471
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 157
 Length of Waterways km: 3,200

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 24.8
 Number of Tourists from million: 61.5
 Tourist Receipts \$billion: 30.7
 Tourist Expenditures \$billion: 58.6

Communications

Telephones million: 34.9
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones million: 49.7
 Personal Computers million: 24
 Internet Hosts per million people: 56,231
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 414

ENVIRONMENT

The United Kingdom is party to almost all of the world's major environmental agreements. Nonetheless, it faces a host of ecological problems. There is significant air pollution as a result of sulfur dioxide emissions from coal-burning power plants. Many rivers in rural areas are heavily polluted by agricultural discharge, while industrial wastes have contaminated many waterways in urban areas, including the Thames River. The widespread disposal of sewage at sea or through pipelines has contaminated many coastal waters. Deforestation as a result of development continues. The number of threatened species has been lowered, but overfishing persists, and the

stocks of many species remain depleted. As of 2005 fox hunting was banned. On the positive side, the United Kingdom has managed to cut carbon dioxide emissions.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 11.6
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: 17
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 18
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 604,821
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 9.64

LIVING CONDITIONS

The UN 2004 Human Development Report ranked the United Kingdom 12th out of 177 countries in terms of life expectancy, education, and standard of living. The average Briton's life expectancy in 2005 was 78.4 years, and literacy stood at 99 percent in 2000. The percent of eligible students enrolled in primary, secondary, and tertiary schools in 2002 was the third highest in the world. Per capita GDP was \$29,600 in 2004.

The United Kingdom is an urban nation: As of 2000, almost 90 percent of the population lived in cities. Once a nation of small farmers and shopkeepers, the United Kingdom is now the service center of Europe, with only 1.5 percent of the population engaged in the highly centralized agriculture sector. Thus, the popular image of rural England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland is more fiction than fact. Britons visit the countryside rather than inhabit it. Despite trends toward privatization, basic social services, including health care, are provided through national plans, thus making life more secure for the employed. As of 2001 about one-third of residents in England and Wales lived in semidetached dwellings. Most of the U.K. population lives in houses; the rest occupy apartments, or flats. The availability of public transport, particularly in major cities, often makes car ownership optional.

HEALTH

The comprehensive National Health Service (NHS) provides health care free, or at reduced rates, to all residents of the United Kingdom. This care includes general medical, dental, optical, pharmaceutical, hospital, home, and preventive medical services. Most hospitals are NHS run. Public expenditures on health care are correspondingly high, equaling 6.4 percent of GDP in 2002, while private expenditures on health care equaled only 1.3 percent of GDP that year. As of 2004 there were 164 physicians per 100,000 people. The aging U.K. population has put stress on the NHS; there are often long waits for hospital rooms.

Primary causes of death include cardiovascular disease and cancer. The British diet, traditionally high in fat

and sugar, is partly to blame for health problems. Over half the population is overweight, and more than one-quarter of adults were smokers in 2000. The HIV/AIDS prevalence rate in 2001 was 0.2 percent. That year there were 34,000 people living with HIV/AIDS; fewer than 500 died from the disease in 2003. Access to proper sanitation and safe water supplies is available to 100 percent of the population. Immunization rates for one-year-old children in 2003 were not among the highest in Europe: 91 percent for DPT and polio and 80 percent for measles. The 2005 infant mortality rate was among the lowest in the world, at just over five deaths per 1,000 live births.

Health

Number of Physicians: 95,395
 Number of Dentists: 23,100
 Number of Nurses: 284,578
 Number of Pharmacists: 33,760
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 166
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: 4.1
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 5.16
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 13
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 7.7
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 2,031
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.2
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 91
 Measles: 80
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 100
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 100

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Unlike that in other European countries, food in the United Kingdom does not rely heavily on spices and herbs. Traditional cooking is of the sturdy but bland meat-and-potatoes sort. Mutton, lamb, and roast beef are popular, as is fish, especially cod and halibut. Typical dishes include fish and chips, Cornish pasties, Yorkshire pudding (which is not a dessert), steak and kidney pie, and the traditional breakfast of bacon, eggs, smoked fish, fried bread, stewed tomatoes, and beans. Marmalade and tea accompany such breakfasts. Haggis, or sheep innards boiled in the stomach, is a popular Scottish fare. In Wales, leeks and onions are used creatively in many dishes. Welsh rarebit, a cheese sauce over toast, is a typical appetizer.

The expansion of the empire added numerous dishes to the British diet, primary among them being curries of various sorts and Chinese food. Cheddar cheese is an English specialty. Afternoon teatime includes pastries such as scones and strawberries with clotted cream. Bread pudding, rice pudding, and lemon curd are popular desserts. Beers and ales of many sorts are the most popular alcoholic beverages, along with gin.

The British diet is heavy in fats and sugar and has led to cardiovascular problems as well as obesity. Undernourishment is not a problem.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 106.4
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 189.5

STATUS OF WOMEN

Measures introduced in the 1970s were designed to promote gender equality. Under the Sex Discrimination Act of 1975, discrimination on the grounds of sex is illegal in employment, training, education, housing, and services. The Equal Pay Act of 1970 gives women the right to pay equal to that of men doing the same or similar work; since 1984 women also get equal pay for work of equal value. Industrial courts or civil courts may adjudicate sexual discrimination suits and levy damages. The Equal Opportunities Commission, established in 1975, helps to enforce legislation, provides advice and assistance to victims of sexual discrimination, and reviews the working of legislation. In 1999 the Labour government enacted maternity-leave benefits and increased benefits for those with children. Women's interests at the cabinet level are overseen by a minister for women.

While women have made significant progress toward gender equality in the United Kingdom, a number of issues remain. Domestic violence continues to be problematic; a 1999 government report indicated that as many as one in four women were the victims of domestic abuse at some point in their lives. The government now provides shelters and offers free legal aid to battered women. The 1997 Protection from Harassment Act increased prison sentences for perpetrators of gender violence. Economic inequalities also continue. Women still earn only about 80 percent of the pay men receive in similar occupations.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 18
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.0
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 49.9

WORK

In 2004 the U.K. labor force numbered 29.8 million, of which the vast majority, almost 80 percent, were involved in the service sector. Just 1.5 percent work in agriculture

and fisheries, producing cereals, oilseed, potatoes, vegetables, cattle, sheep, poultry, and fish, while about one-fifth of the workforce was employed in industries. The unemployment rate in 2004 was under 5 percent.

Unions are relatively strong, and legal provisions are made for collective bargaining as well as striking. In 2004, 30 percent of the working population was unionized; in that respect, the public sector, with 60 percent union membership, was far stronger than the private sector, with only 19 percent of workers unionized. The minimum work age in industry is 16; 13 is the minimum work age in other occupations, while younger children must apply for work permits. The workweek is capped at 48 hours. In 2004 the minimum wage was between \$7.45 and \$8.82, depending on age. Though the minimum wage is not a livable wage, welfare benefits such as universal access to health care help to provide a reasonable standard of living. Safety and health regulations at work places are strictly regulated.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 29,780,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 44.1
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 1.5
 Industry: 19.1
 Services: 79.4
 Unemployment %: 4.8

EDUCATION

The British public educational system is based around comprehensive schools that offer both academic and vocational programs. Compulsory education begins at age five and continues until age 16. Parents have the right of school choice, including home schooling. The first stage of school is known as primary education and includes students from age five (four in Northern Ireland) through 11 (12 in Scotland). About 92 percent of students receive secondary education at comprehensive schools; the remainder attend secondary grammar schools after selective testing. Schools that receive public grants do not charge tuition at the elementary or secondary level, but vocational secondary schools do. English is the language of instruction, but Welsh is permitted as a core subject in Welsh-speaking schools. Local school boards determine the length of the academic year, which typically runs from September to July, as divided into three terms of 13 weeks each. In 1988 the Education Reform Act established a system of regular performance testing and a national curriculum.

There also exists a strong tradition of private, or independent, schools. Referred to as "public schools" in the United Kingdom, many of these institutions, including

2500 United Kingdom

the well-known Eton and Harrow, have long and distinguished histories. The main purpose of most of the private schools is to specifically prepare students for a university education. All students who wish to attend institutions of higher education must pass a series of examinations that includes tests on English, math, foreign language, and science. Secondary education is generally geared toward preparation for these exams.

There are 47 universities in the United Kingdom. Some institutions, such as Oxford and Cambridge, have 700-year histories and are regarded as being among the world's elite academic centers. Approximately 80 percent of funds for higher education come from the central government, while local governments contribute the remaining 20 percent. Students also pay a small fraction of the total. Almost half of students in higher education are engaged in postgraduate study. One educational innovation in the United Kingdom is the Open University, which offers a variety of full- and part-time degrees through new mediums, including televised, radio, and Internet courses. There are 30 polytechnics in England, offering specialized degrees. Scotland has 16 central institutions that fulfill a similar role.

Net primary enrollment of eligible students in 2002 was virtually 100 percent; net secondary enrollment that year was 95 percent. The government's commitment to education is high; literacy stands at 99 percent, and in 2001 government expenditures on education equaled 5.3 percent of GDP.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 99.0
Male %: 99.0
Female %: 99.0
School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: —
First Level: Primary Schools: 32,385
Teachers: 262,390
Students: 4,488,162
Student-Teacher Ratio: 17.1
Net Enrollment Ratio: 100
Second Level: Secondary Schools: —
Teachers: 483,846
Students: 4,404,569
Student-Teacher Ratio: 20.1
Net Enrollment Ratio: 95.2
Third Level: Institutions: —
Teachers: 101,040
Students: 2,287,833
Gross Enrollment Ratio: 64.3
Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 5.3

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The United Kingdom has a long history of scientific research and advance; from the steam engine to the discovery of DNA to the first cloning of a larger animal, the

nation has been at the international forefront of science and technology. The Royal Society and the British Association for the Advancement of Science, both in London, foster research in many scientific and technical areas. Research in high technology and biotechnology are carried out through government agencies and via private industry. A 1993 white paper from the government, "Realizing Our Potential," called for the creation of a technology-forecasting program to keep the country on the cutting edge of technological matters.

Numerous universities carry out research in topics from nuclear physics to medicine. Agricultural research is largely funded by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Food, which has research centers for studies in crop development and animal health. The Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council carries out research in related areas as well. The departments of agriculture in Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland also deal with research projects specific to their locales. Between 1994 and 1997, 29 percent of students in tertiary schools were enrolled in science, math, or engineering programs. In 2002 public expenditures on research and development equaled a high 1.9 percent of GDP.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 2,691
Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 1.88
High-Tech Exports \$billion: 64.5
Patent Applications by Residents: 33,671

MEDIA

The United Kingdom has one of the most vigorous media systems in the world. The per capita newspaper readership is surpassed only by that of Japan among developed nations. Political and cultural expression is unfettered and lively. Unlike those of the nation's European counterparts, the press in the United Kingdom does not receive subsidies or tax or postal concessions.

While ownership of the British press is concentrated in the hands of a relatively small number of large publishing groups, there are some 200 independent regional newspaper publishers. There are over 100 daily newspapers and some 470 nondailies in the United Kingdom. Three British newspapers, the *Times*, *Guardian*, and *Daily Telegraph* are considered to be among the most informative and best in the world. In contrast, a number of sensational dailies focus on tabloid journalism, including the *Star* and the *Sun*. The United Kingdom is one of the foremost book-publishing centers in the world, with an output of over 50,000 titles per year. Two public bodies—the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) and the Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA)—provide television and radio service throughout the kingdom.

The BBC also provides a world service. In addition, there are a number of independent television channels. In 1999 there were 78 broadcast stations and 869 repeaters. There were also 225 AM and 525 FM radio stations.

Reporters without Borders, a media watchdog group, ranked the United Kingdom 30th out of 167 nations in its 2004 index of press freedom. Although the BBC is publicly funded, its journalists typically have a free hand in reporting all news, even that unfavorable to the government. In 2004 the BBC was criticized in an inquiry into the suicide of a scientist involved in leaking information indicating that the government had embellished its case for war in Iraq. The subsequent Hutton inquiry exonerated the government and said that the most serious claims in the BBC report were unfounded. The corporation subsequently introduced new complaints procedures and guidelines for journalists.

Internet usage is high in the United Kingdom; in 2005, 52 percent of households were online.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 108
 Total Circulation million: 19.1
 Circulation per 1,000: 326
 Books Published: 110,965
 Periodicals: 467
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets million: 38.8
 per 1,000: 661

CULTURE

The United Kingdom is host to a mosaic of cultures. The predominant ones are English, Welsh, Scottish, and Northern Irish, but there is also a plethora of cultural traditions from immigrants from former colonies. Thus Afro-Caribbean, Asian, and Muslim traditions are added to the cultural mix.

The folk music of England, Scotland, and Northern Ireland has had a renaissance, as beginning in the 1960s. Ballads and laments, as well as jigs and reels for dancing, entered the world of popular music, as revived by modern groups for an international audience. Singers such as Sandy Denny and groups like Silly Wizard have recorded and performed the traditional music of the isles. Guitars, mandolins, fiddles, and various handheld percussion instruments accompany voices or create the pulsing rhythms of dance music. The Scots' bagpipes and martial air are also cultural shibboleths. The Welsh are known for their singing. The National Eisteddfod of Wales, a song and poetry contest, can be traced back to Cardigan in 1176. Classical music has found many masters in the various parts of the United Kingdom, including composers such as Henry Purcell in the baroque period and

Edward Elgar, Ralph Vaughan Williams, and Benjamin Britten in the 20th century. Classical dance is also part of the cultural heritage in England. Dancers such as Margot Fonteyn helped to make Sadler's Wells a world-class dance theater. Throughout the second half of the 20th century the United Kingdom was a leader in youth culture, from the days of the Beatles and the Rolling Stones to the punk era of the Sex Pistols.

The nation has made an incomparable contribution to the world of literature, from the national epic, *Beowulf*, to the works of the Englishman William Shakespeare, the Scot Robert Burns, the Welshman Dylan Thomas, and the Northern Irishman Seamus Heaney. The foundations of the novel are credited to the work of Daniel Defoe, Samuel Richardson, and Henry Fielding in the 18th century. Other writers of note include Charlotte and Emily Brontë, Charles Dickens, Jane Austen, William Blake, W. H. Auden, D. H. Lawrence, and a host of others, many of whom were Nobel laureates. British philosophers, from Thomas Hobbes to the transplanted Ludwig Wittgenstein, have also made major international contributions.

In the world of visual arts, painters from William Turner to Francis Bacon have achieved international repute. Their work, and that of other international artists, can be seen in the nation's many museums, including the National Gallery, the National Portrait Gallery, the Tate Gallery, and the Victoria and Albert Museum. Among the many libraries and museums of interest in Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland are the Royal Museum, the Museum of Scotland, and the Writers' Museum, in Edinburgh; the Museum of Scottish Country Life, in Glasgow; the National Museum of Wales, in Cardiff; and the Ulster Museum, in Belfast.

The British cinema and stage have contributed a host of famous actors, including Ralph Richardson, Laurence Olivier, Alec Guinness, John Gielgud, and, more recently, Hugh Grant and Kenneth Branagh. Among female leads have been Vivien Leigh, Julie Christie, Judi Dench, Kate Winslet, and Helena Bonham Carter. Well-known directors include Carol Reed, Alfred Hitchcock, David Lean, and, more recently, Ken Loach and Mike Leigh. London's West End is the equal of New York's Broadway as a theater center.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 208
 Volumes: 121,752,000
 Registered borrowers: 34,900,000
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: 2,019
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: 139,500,000

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Legends of heroic warriors and knights, tales of fairies and little people, and magical forests and streams are all part of the folklore and mythology of the United Kingdom. The legend of Robin Hood and his righteous outlaws of Sherwood Forest provide a rich strain for English folktales. Perhaps the strongest element in English folklore is the Arthurian legend, revolving around King Arthur and the knights of the Round Table. Arthur's territory was the southwest of England and parts of Wales, so Arthurian legends also inform Welsh folklore, as do tales of fairies and dragons, the latter of which is the Welsh national symbol. Another character in Welsh legend is Prince Madog ab Owain, who is said to have discovered America in the 12th century.

In addition to their border ballads and tales saluting the victories and defeats of brave countrymen fighting English invaders, the Scots have Gaelic songs that tell legends of warrior heroes battling Norsemen, magic rowan trees, and monstrous old women living in the sea. The Scots also have numerous tales of fairies and other supernatural forces. Perhaps the most famous character in Scottish folklore is the Loch Ness monster, a creature reportedly seen by hundreds but with no verifiable proof of its existence. The Northern Irish share many of the legends and myths of the Republic of Ireland, their folktales going back to the time of the Celtic kings and the druid priests. There are tales of the defender of Ulster, Cuchulain, as well as of Cormac mac Airt, Ireland's first king. Further staples of folklore are the love story of Diarmid and Grania and the adventures of Fionn mac Cumhail (roughly pronounced "Finn mac Cool").

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Chatting over a "jar" at the local pub or tavern is a favorite pastime in much of the United Kingdom. Television and movies provide other immensely popular escape outlets. Soap operas from England, such as *Coronation Street* and *EastEnders*, are appreciated throughout the country. Walking and hiking in the countryside are common forms of recreation. There are well-developed long-distance walking paths through each region.

The English, in particular, are avid anglers and enjoy fishing the country's many streams and rivers. Fishing is also a favored pastime in Scotland and Northern Ireland. Games such as darts and snooker are popular, as is gardening. More rural Wales relies upon community activities for recreation and entertainment; choral societies are popular, as are women's circles and young farmers' associations. Youth clubs often provide recreational opportunities. Rock climbing is well enjoyed in Wales, as are hunting and pony trekking.

ETIQUETTE

On the whole, Britons tend to be reserved and formal, while the Welsh have a reputation for being warmer than other groups in the United Kingdom. A handshake is typically used for greeting, along with "How do you do?" The handshake is used less in Scotland than in other regions of the United Kingdom. The use of first names is not as common as in North America, although British mores are changing in this regard, as a matter of business reality. Dining is performed continental style, with both fork and knife used simultaneously. Some physical gestures can be confusing. The "V" peace sign should be made palm out, if at all; otherwise it is an extremely rude gesture. Pointing with the finger is considered impolite; more typically one nods the head in a certain direction. Pub etiquette demands that one purchase a round of drinks for those with whom he or she is conversing.

FAMILY LIFE

The traditional family unit in the United Kingdom is the nuclear family. The size of families has been shrinking. The average household has only 2.4 members; the fertility rate in 2004 was 1.66 children per woman. In 2001 the number of divorces rose to 157,000, which was 2,000 more than in the previous year but 23,000 fewer than the peak, in 1993. In part this reflects the decrease in the annual number of marriages, as more couples choose simply to live together without the benefits of legal marriage. The crude divorce rate declined from 3.1 divorces per 1,000 population in 1993 to 2.6 in 2000. Throughout the United Kingdom the traditional male-dominated household is becoming less common; families are transforming into more cooperative arrangements, as more and more women enter not merely the workforce but also professions.

Some family differences can be seen among various segments of the United Kingdom. The Welsh are very family oriented, identifying themselves by that unit rather than by class, as do so many in England. More agrarian, the Welsh still have many of the traditions that reflect such a life. In farming communities, adult sons tend to stay at the family farm until marriage. A younger son generally inherits the farm.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Modern Western clothing is worn in the United Kingdom. For many years London was considered one of the fashion capitals of the West. The traditional garment of Scotland is the kilt. Not long ago men could still be seen on the streets of Edinburgh sporting their clan tartan. However, in the 21st century the kilt and its female coun-

terpart, the tartan skirt and white blouse with black vest or bodice, are generally reserved for special occasions. There are over 300 different tartan designs, each signifying a separate clan. Similarly, the tall black hats worn along with checked aprons over long dresses by Welsh women, as well as the breeches and striped vests worn over white shirts by men, are reserved solely for festivals. Traditional articles of clothing in Northern Ireland, such as tweed and hand-knit sweaters, have been incorporated into contemporary clothing as well.

SPORTS

Soccer is one of the most popular sports throughout the United Kingdom. Major teams compete not only regionally but also internationally. Some of the most famous British football clubs are Manchester United and London's Arsenal. Cricket, golf, rugby, tennis, and track and field are also favorites. The annual tennis tournament at Wimbledon draws international attention.

Regionally, golf is Scotland's second-most popular sport; the country that invented the game has over 400 courses. Rugby is another popular Scottish sport, as are tennis, lawn bowling, skiing, and curling. Rugby and hurling, a mix of field hockey and rugby, are played in parts of Northern Ireland, where horse racing is also popular. In Wales, rugby is the most popular sport, while soccer and pony racing are also favored.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1939** Alone among the major Western European powers, the British hold out against the Axis powers during World War II, through 1945, and are one of the three main powers in the Allied coalition, which defeats the Axis.
- 1945** The Labour Party wins general election, defeating the wartime government of Winston Churchill.
- 1947** Independence is granted to India and Pakistan.
- 1948** Independence is granted to Burma (now Myanmar) and Ceylon (now Sri Lanka).
- 1952** George VI dies and is succeeded by his daughter Elizabeth, as Elizabeth II.
- 1956** Britain and France undertake a successful invasion of the Suez Canal zone but are forced to withdraw as a result of U.S. pressure; Sudan is granted independence.
- 1960** Cyprus and Nigeria are granted independence.
- 1972** As unrest escalates into violence in Northern Ireland, direct rule is imposed by London.
- 1973** In a historic move, the United Kingdom joins the European Community; the Bahamas gain independence.
- 1975** Offshore oil, discovered in the North Sea in 1970, is piped ashore, signaling full-scale production.
- 1979** Conservatives return to power with a substantial majority under Margaret Thatcher, western Europe's first female prime minister.
- 1982** Argentine military forces invade the Falkland Islands; a British expeditionary force retakes the islands.
- 1985** The United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland sign the Anglo-Irish Agreement, providing for mutual consultations on the Northern Ireland question.
- 1987** Thatcher wins a third term and the following year becomes the longest serving prime minister since Lord Liverpool in the 19th century.
- 1990** Domestic discontent forces a change in the leadership of the Conservative Party; John Major becomes prime minister; United Kingdom participates in U.S.-led coalition against Iraq in the Persian Gulf War.
- 1994** The "Chunnel" inaugurates direct ground transportation between the United Kingdom and France via a tunnel under the English Channel.
- 1997** Labour wins general election, and Tony Blair becomes prime minister; Hong Kong reverts to Chinese control.
- 1998** Scotland and Wales are granted limited self-government; Good Friday Peace Accords initiate truce in Northern Ireland and call for establishment of regional assembly.
- 1999** House of Lords is reformed; United Kingdom participates in NATO-led military strike against Serbia during Kosovo crisis.
- 2001** Labour wins general elections in a landslide victory, and Blair wins a second term as prime minister; the United Kingdom becomes one of the strongest supporters of the U.S.-led fight against international terrorism and that nation's military campaign in Afghanistan.
- 2002** Queen Elizabeth celebrates her golden jubilee amid claims that she withheld vital information at the trial of a former butler of Princess Diana, her daughter-in-law who died in 1997; Prime Minister Blair receives criticism for not improving social services as he had promised when taking office in 1997.
- 2003** Amid huge countrywide protests, Blair champions the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq in March; British troops play an active role in the invasion and subsequent occupation; in August, a scandal emerges concerning the death of a government scientist at the center of a disagreement between the BBC and the government over claims that the government embellished the case for the Iraq war.

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- 2004** Lord Hutton, in charge of a commission examining the death of the government scientist, exonerates the government and criticizes the BBC; the Iraq Survey Group reports that Iraq had no weapons of mass destruction in the months before the U.S.-led invasion; Blair stands by his case for war.
- 2005** A controversial antiterrorism measure is passed; in July suicide bombers strike several trains and buses in London's mass transit system, killing more than 50 people and wounding 700.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Office for National Statistics
<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/>

UNITED STATES

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

United States of America

ABBREVIATION

US

CAPITAL

Washington, D.C.

HEAD OF STATE & HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

President George W. Bush (from 2001)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Parliamentary democracy

POPULATION

295,734,134 (2005)

AREA

9,631,418 sq km (3,718,690 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Anglo-Saxon, Hispanic, African American, Asian, German, Semitic, Italian, Slavic, Greek, Celtic, Amerindian

LANGUAGE

English

RELIGION

Christian

UNIT OF CURRENCY

U.S. dollar

NATIONAL FLAG

Thirteen alternate stripes, seven red and six white, with 50 five-pointed white stars placed in nine horizontal rows, alternately of six and five stars, against a blue field in the upper left canton

NATIONAL EMBLEM

The Great Seal has two sides: the face features an eagle with spread wings, legs, and tail feathers, and the other side bears a

pyramid with an eye at the summit. On the breast of the eagle is a shield made up of seven white and six red vertical stripes with a blue horizontal upper portion. In its claws the eagle grasps a green laurel branch and a sheaf of silver arrows. Its beak holds a golden scroll inscribed in black with the Latin motto *E pluribus unum* (One out of many). Above the eagle is a circular crest with an outer rim of 13 *pieces argent*, or silver buttons, and an inner gold border representing the sun emerging from clouds. On the circular badge that forms the heart of the design are 13 silver stars. On the emblem's reverse is a pyramid of 13 courses, or ascending blocks, shown in stone. On the top of this structure appears in a triangle the all-seeing eye of Providence. The upper motto, *Annuit coeptis*, is translated as "He [God] has favored [our] undertakings," while the lower motto, *Novus ordo seclorum*, is translated as "A new order of ages." At the base the year 1776 is marked in Roman numerals.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"The Star-Spangled Banner"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day), third Monday in January (Martin Luther King Jr. Day), third Monday in February (Presidents' Day), last Monday in May (Memorial Day), July 4 (Independence Day), first Monday in September (Labor Day), second Monday in October (Columbus Day), fourth Thursday in November (Thanksgiving Day), December 25 (Christmas)

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

July 4, 1776

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

March 4, 1789

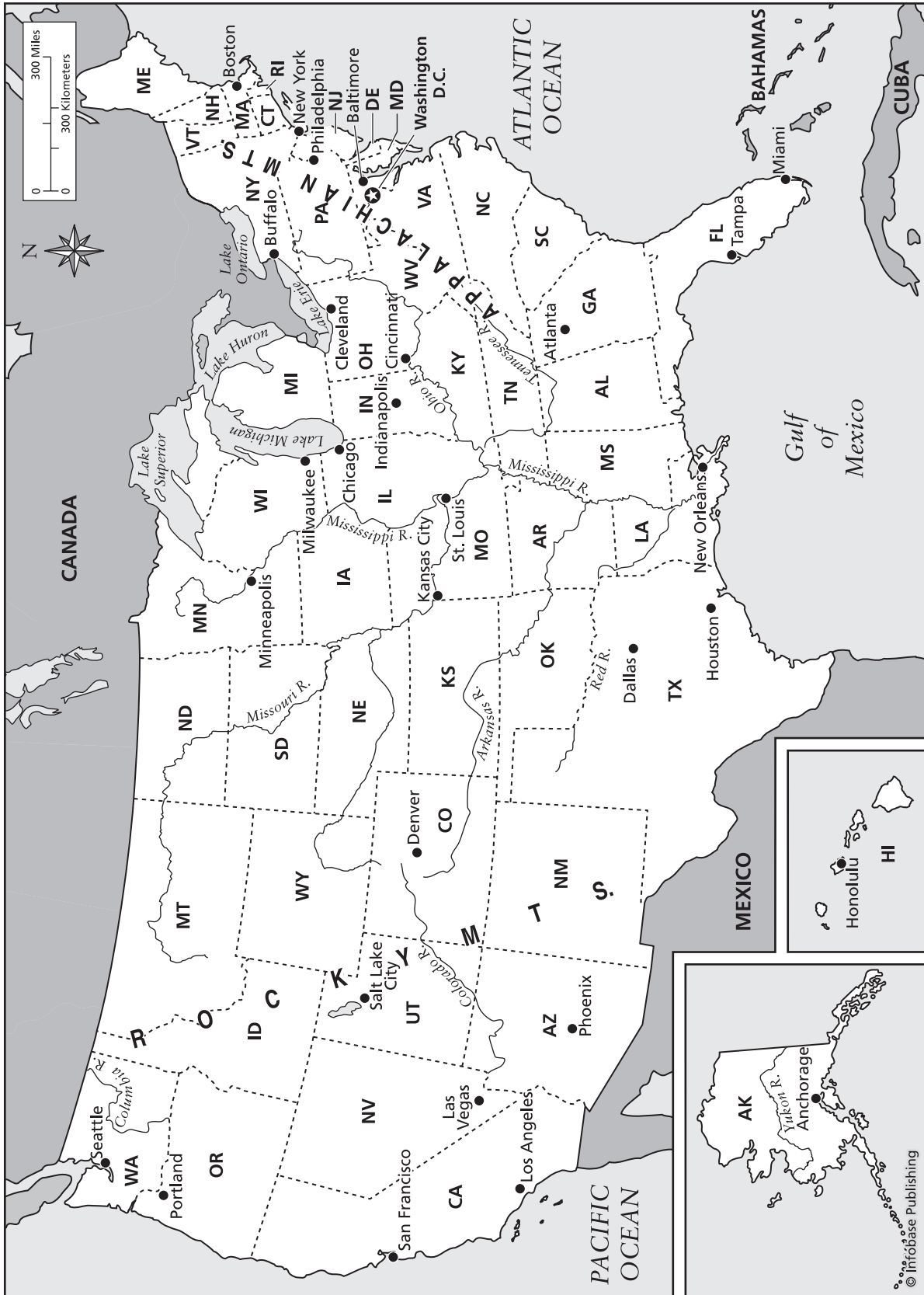
GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Located on the continent of North America, the United States is the third-largest country in the world, with a total area of 3,718,690 sq mi (9,631,418 sq km). The United

States comprises three physically separate territories: the coterminous United States, comprising 48 states; Alaska; and Hawaii.

The capital is Washington, D.C. (District of Columbia), on the eastern bank of the Potomac River. The

United States of America



United States has nine cities with over one million inhabitants: New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Houston, Philadelphia, Phoenix, San Diego, San Antonio, and Dallas.

The 11 topographical regions of the United States are largely determined by the mountain ranges that traverse the country from north to south. Almost half of the country consists of plains, including the vast central plain, the broad valleys of rivers such as the Sacramento and San Joaquin, and the Wyoming basin. About one-quarter of the country is made up of plateaus, including the Piedmont, Ozark, Appalachian, Columbia, and Colorado plateaus and the interior low plateaus. Mountains make up another quarter of the nation, including the major ranges of the Appalachian Mountains in the east and the Rocky Mountains in the west.

The Coastal Plain region extends along the Atlantic seaboard and the Gulf of Mexico coast, constituting about 10 percent of the nation's land area. The Coastal Plain is noted for its low elevation—more than half the plain is below 500 ft (152 m)—and includes extensive marshy tracts as well as numerous sandy beaches. The Black Belt, named for its characteristic soil, lies south of the eastern Gulf Coastal Plain and is one of most fertile areas of the region.

The Appalachian Mountain region stretches north to south along much of the eastern United States and comprises an area equal to that of the Coastal Plain. The Appalachian Mountains include the Piedmont, Blue Ridge, Valley and Ridge, and Appalachian plateaus; the Adirondack and New England provinces; and the St. Lawrence Lowland. Compared with the Rocky Mountains, in the west, the Appalachians are lower and more rounded. The Piedmont stretches from southernmost New York to Alabama. Blue Ridge province extends from Georgia to Pennsylvania, in places a single ridge but elsewhere a complex of closely spaced ridges. Valley and Ridge province extends the entire length of the Appalachian Mountains.

The Appalachian Plateau forms the western boundary of the Appalachian Mountains, reaching 3,000 ft (914 m) at the Allegheny Front and along the Hudson River Valley. The Adirondack Mountains, in northern New York State, have an overall domelike structure more than 100 mi (161 km) in diameter. New England is considerably more elevated, particularly the Green Mountains, in Vermont; the Hoosac Mountains, in Massachusetts; and the White Mountains, in New Hampshire and Maine. Principal lowlands and basins include Narragansett, Boston, Bangor Bowl, and Aroostook Plain. One characteristic feature of New England is the rocky coast.

The great central plain between the Appalachian Plateau and the Rocky Mountains includes the core Central Lowland, the Interior Low Plateaus, the Ozark Plateau, Ouachita province to the south, and the Great Plains to the west. The Central Lowland covers about 15 percent of the United States in 16 states. In the north are the

Great Lakes, in the south is the Till Plain, and farther to the northwest is the Small Lakes area; the effect of glaciation in this area is seen in the “10,000 lakes” of Minnesota. The Interior Low Plateaus include Lexington Plain and Nashville Basin and parallel the Appalachian Mountains, extending 600 mi (965 km) from Alabama to Ohio.

The Ouachita Mountains, in the central South, and the Ozark Plateau, in the central United States, have average elevations lower than that of the Appalachians. Surrounding these two areas are the Great Plains, which cover 12 percent of the country, including the semiarid part of the Interior Plains. At the northern part of the Great Plains is the Missouri Plateau, with numerous dome mountains rising up to 2,000 ft (610 m), of which the highest are the Black Hills. South of the Missouri Plateau is the High Plains section. To the west, the High Plains are separated from the Rocky Mountains by a basin known as the Colorado Piedmont. To the south is the Raton section, with high mesas, some as high as 7,000 ft (2,133 m). Parts of the High Plains are sandy, with extensive dunes.

The Rocky Mountains in their entirety are the backbone of the Western Hemisphere, stretching from Alaska to Patagonia. Within the United States, they constitute the Continental Divide, separating the Interior Plains from the Intermontane Plateaus and the Pacific Mountain systems. The Rocky Mountains contain three areas: Northern, Middle, and Southern. Together with the Wyoming Basin, they cover about 10 percent of the country.

The Rocky Mountains are characterized by high peaks, many over 14,000 ft (4,267 m); rugged relief; extensive forests; and spectacular scenery. The Middle Rockies include some of the most impressive mountains in the western United States. The Wyoming Basin is an elevated depression separating the Middle and Southern Rockies and consists of a series of basins, such as the Washakie Basin and the basins along the North Platte, Green, and Wind rivers. The valleys of the streams that flow eastward from the Rocky Mountains to the Missouri and Mississippi rivers are broad, steep sided, and shallow.

The Colorado Plateau, between the Rocky Mountains and the Basin and Range province, is one of the most colorful parts of the United States, with spectacular geological features. It is characterized by arid areas of bare rock, sparse vegetation, and brightly colored desert scenery. The general plateau surface is higher than 5,000 ft (1,524 m), and some peaks reach 11,000 ft (3,353 m). The high southwestern part of the plateau is referred to as the Grand Canyon section. The southern rim of the plateau is in New Mexico and western Arizona. At the western edge of the Colorado Plateau is the High Plateaus section.

Basin and Range province covers desert basins and ranges between the Colorado Plateau and the Columbia Plateau. The basins range in elevation from below sea level, as at Death Valley and the Salton Sea, to about

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5,000 ft (1,524 m). The area is characterized by colorful vegetation, a warm climate, and large numbers of lakes. The area includes the Great Basin, centered in Nevada; the Sonoran Desert, including the Mojave Desert, in southeastern California, and deserts in southwestern Arizona; and the Salton Trough, a depression occupied by the Gulf of California. Extending northwestward into California from this depression are three major faults: the San Andreas, San Jacinto, and Elsinore. The Sacramento Mountains form the eastern border of the Basin and Range province and adjoin the Great Plains.

The Columbia Plateau, in the northwestern part of the United States, is characterized by a semiarid climate and dry canyons. This plateau region is dominated by the Columbia and Snake rivers and their plains. The lowest part is Pasco Basin, in which the Columbia and Snake rivers join.

The Pacific Mountain system comprises some 200,000 sq mi (518,000 sq km) along the coast, extending east to the deserts in Basin and Range province and the Columbia Plateau. The Pacific Mountains are among the highest in the United States and include the Sierra Nevada, Klamath Mountains, Cascade Range, Oregon Coast Range, and Olympic Mountains.

Alaska is the largest state, with a land area about one-fifth of the other 49 states combined. Alaska is characterized by stark relief contrasts, from Mount McKinley, at 20,316 ft (6,194 m) the highest point in North America, to the Aleutian Trench, at 25,000 ft (7,600 m) below sea level the lowest point in North America.

Hawaii, in the mid-Pacific, consists of five principal islands and four smaller ones. The island of Hawaii, the most easterly and largest, has peaks of more than 13,000 ft (4,000 m). The islands are hilly and the coastlines mostly rocky and rough.

Geography

Area sq km: 9,631,418; sq mi 3,718,690
 World Rank: 3rd
 Land Boundaries, km: Canada 8,893; Mexico 3,141
 Coastline, km: 19,924
 Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Death Valley -86
 Highest: Mount McKinley 6,194
 Land Use %
 Arable Land: 19.1
 Permanent Crops: 0.2
 Forest: 24.7
 Other: 56.0

Population of Principal Cities (2003)

Akron (Ohio)	212,215
Albuquerque (N.M.)	471,856
Anaheim (Calif.)	332,361
Anchorage (Alaska)	270,951
Arlington (Tex.)	355,007

Atlanta (Ga.)	423,019
Aurora (Colo.)	290,418
Austin (Tex.)	672,011
Bakersfield (Calif.)	271,035
Baltimore (Md.)	628,670
Baton Rouge (La.)	225,090
Birmingham (Ala.)	236,620
Boston (Mass.)	581,616
Buffalo (N.Y.)	285,018
Chandler (Ariz.)	211,299
Charlotte (N.C.)	584,658
Chesapeake (Va.)	210,834
Chicago (Ill.)	2,869,121
Cincinnati (Ohio)	317,361
Cleveland (Ohio)	461,324
Colorado Springs (Colo.)	370,448
Columbus (Ohio)	728,432
Corpus Christi (Tex.)	279,208
Dallas (Tex.)	1,208,318
Denver (Colo.)	557,478
Detroit (Mich.)	911,402
El Paso (Tex.)	584,113
Fort Wayne (Ind.)	219,495
Fort Worth (Tex.)	585,122
Fremont (Calif.)	204,525
Fresno (Calif.)	451,455
Garland (Tex.)	218,027
Glendale (Ariz.)	232,838
Glendale (Calif.)	200,499
Greensboro (N.C.)	229,110
Henderson (Nev.)	214,852
Hialeah (Fla.)	226,401
Honolulu (Hawaii)	380,149
Houston (Tex.)	2,009,690
Indianapolis (Ind.)	783,438
Jacksonville (Fla.)	773,781
Jersey City (N.J.)	239,097
Kansas City (Mo.)	442,768
Las Vegas (Nev.)	517,017
Lexington-Fayette (Ky.)	266,798
Lincoln (Neb.)	235,594
Long Beach (Calif.)	475,460
Los Angeles (Calif.)	3,819,951
Louisville (Ky.)	699,017
Lubbock (Tex.)	206,481
Madison (Wis.)	218,432
Memphis (Tenn.)	645,978
Mesa (Ariz.)	432,376
Miami (Fla.)	376,815
Milwaukee (Wis.)	586,941
Minneapolis (Minn.)	373,188
Modesto (Calif.)	206,872
Montgomery (Ala.)	200,123
Nashville-Davidson (Tenn.)	544,765
Newark (N.J.)	277,911
New Orleans, (La.)	469,032
New York City (N.Y.)	8,085,742
Norfolk (Va.)	241,727
Oakland (Calif.)	398,844
Oklahoma City (Okla.)	523,303
Omaha (Neb.)	404,267
Paradise (Nev.)	207,000
Philadelphia (Pa.)	1,479,339
Phoenix (Ariz.)	1,388,416
Pittsburgh (Pa.)	325,337
Plano (Tex.)	241,991
Portland (Ore.)	538,544

Raleigh (N.C.)	316,802
Riverside (Calif.)	281,514
Rochester (N.Y.)	215,093
Sacramento (Calif.)	445,335
St. Louis (Mo.)	332,233
St. Paul (Minn.)	280,404
St. Petersburg (Fla.)	247,610
San Antonio (Tex.)	1,214,725
San Diego (Calif.)	1,266,753
San Francisco (Calif.)	751,682
San Jose (Calif.)	898,349
Santa Ana (Calif.)	342,510
Scottsdale (Ariz.)	217,989
Seattle (Wash.)	569,101
Stockton (Calif.)	271,466
Tampa (Fla.)	317,647
Toledo (Ohio)	308,973
Tucson (Ariz.)	507,658
Tulsa (Okla.)	387,807
Virginia Beach (Va.)	439,467
Washington, D.C.	563,384
Wichita (Kans.)	354,617

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

The United States has a series of climatic regions because of its vast size, each region with its own climatic determinants. The different regions illustrate the influence of various factors that control climate. Alaska illustrates the influence of latitude. St. Louis and Fort Yukon illustrate the effects of a continental climate, in which the variation in annual temperature is great. Differences between the Atlantic and Pacific coasts illustrate the effects of wind and ocean currents. Other major climatic influences are those of air masses: The continental polar air masses bring cold weather; the North Pacific delivers moist, cold air; and the South Pacific and Gulf of Mexico deliver warm, moist air.

Annual precipitation varies greatly from region to region. The Olympic Mountains, near Seattle, receive 140 in (3,556 mm) annually. At the other extreme, Death Valley, in California, receives 1.6 in (41 mm) annually. Similarly, temperatures vary greatly, ranging from a high of 134°F (57°C) in Death Valley to a low of -78°F (-61°C) in the Yukon Valley, in Alaska.

The eastern seaboard of the United States has a continental climate. With the exception of Florida, winters are cold, and summers are hot. Average mean temperatures vary considerably from north to south, as follows: Boston, 52°F (11°C); New York City, 55°F (13°C); Charlotte, N.C., 60°F (16°C); and Miami, 76°F (24°C). Along most of the Atlantic Coast annual precipitation is between 40 and 50 in (1,020 and 1,270 mm), increasing to 60 in (1,520 mm) in southern Louisiana and Florida and decreasing to 20 in (510 mm) along the Gulf Coastal Plain. Average annual snowfall along the eastern seaboard is highest on Long Island, New York, at 30 in (760 mm).

The climate of the central United States is continental, but temperature variations are extreme. Winters are cold, with frequent blizzards; summers are hot and subject to tornadoes. The climate is semiarid to the west and humid to the east. Average annual precipitation in the Great Plains is about 15 in (380 mm), increasing to 40 in (1,020 mm) in Ohio and 50 in (1,270 mm) in Tennessee. Most of the rainfall occurs during the growing season, which explains the agricultural productivity of the region.

The higher elevations of the Southern Rockies have an alpine climate. Average annual snowfall in the San Juan Mountains exceeds 240 in (6,100 mm). Along the eastern part of the Rockies, winter may suddenly turn mild because of westerly winds called chinooks. The Northern Rockies have a mild climate, with cooler summer temperatures and warmer winter temperatures than the Great Plains.

Much of the Colorado Plateau is arid, and summers are hot, winters cold. The Basin and Range province has a similar climate, with average annual precipitation in three-quarters of the area below 10 in (250 mm). The Columbia Plateau is semiarid and cool, with an average annual temperature of 50°F (10°C). The Pacific Coast experiences most of its rainfall during the fall, winter, and spring months; summers are dry. Westerly winds moderate temperatures in both summer and winter. Los Angeles, to the south, has an average annual temperature of 56°F (13°C) in January and 69°F (21°C) in July, while Seattle, to the north, averages 39°F (4°C) in January and 65°F (18°C) in July.

Alaska's climate near the coast is surprisingly mild, with average winter temperatures of about 32°F (0°C) and average summer temperatures of 50°F (10°C). The average annual precipitation is heavy, generally averaging 80 in (2,030 mm) or more. Inland, the climate becomes increasingly arctic.

Hawaii has a remarkably mild and stable climate. The mean January temperature in Honolulu is 73°F (23°C), and the July mean is 80°F (27°C). Rainfall is generally moderate, averaging 28 in (710 mm) per year.

Climate and Weather (°F, in)

	JANUARY MAXIMUM	JANUARY MINIMUM	JULY MAXIMUM	JULY MINIMUM	ANNUAL RAINFALL
Albuquerque, N.M.	46	24	91	66	8.4
Anchorage, Alaska	21	4	65	50	14.7
Atlanta, Ga.	52	52	87	71	47.2
Austin, Tex.	60	41	95	74	32.5
Birmingham, Ala.	57	36	93	71	53.1
Bismarck, N.Dak.	20	0	86	58	15.2
Buffalo, N.Y.	31	18	80	59	35.6
Chicago, Ill.	33	19	84	67	33.2
Des Moines, Iowa	29	11	87	65	30.5
Indianapolis, Ind.	37	21	86	64	39.2
Jacksonville, Fla.	67	45	92	73	53.6

(continues)

Climate and Weather *(continued)*

	JANUARY MAXIMUM	JANUARY MINIMUM	JULY MAXIMUM	JULY MINIMUM	ANNUAL RAINFALL
Kansas City, Kans.	40	23	92	71	34.2
Los Angeles, Calif.	64	45	76	62	12.8
Louisville, Ky.	44	27	89	67	41.4
Minneapolis, Minn.	22	2	84	61	24.9
Nashville, Tenn.	49	31	91	70	45.2
New Orleans, La.	64	45	91	73	53.7
New York, N.Y.	40	27	85	68	42.3
Oklahoma City, Okla.	46	28	93	72	30.9
Phoenix, Ariz.	64	35	105	75	7.8
Pittsburgh, Pa.	40	25	85	65	36.9
Portland, Maine	32	12	80	57	42.9
Portland, Ore.	44	33	79	56	37.2
Salt Lake City, Utah	37	18	94	60	14.1
San Francisco, Calif.	55	42	72	54	18.7
Seattle, Wash.	44	33	76	54	39.0
Washington, D.C.	44	30	87	69	40.8

FLORA AND FAUNA

The vast spaces of the United States allow for numerous vegetative zones. Over 7,000 species of flora have been recorded in the country. Forests predominate along the Pacific Coast, especially in the Northwest, where evergreens such as Douglas fir, redwoods, cedar, and pine, as well as deciduous trees such as alder and birch, grow densely. Eastern forests feature pine, spruce, beech, birch, oak, and maple, while oak, hickory, ash, maple, and walnut are found in the central hardwood forests, whose remnants are found in regions between Texas and Minnesota. Southern forests, along the Gulf coast, feature gum, sycamore, birch, hickory, and pine. Palm trees are found in California and Florida. Forests as such do not exist in the southwest, but large plants there include the giant cactus, or saguaro, and the Joshua tree. Among smaller trees and shrubs throughout the country are dogwood and hawthorn; numerous wildflowers grow across the United States, including the dandelion, forget-me-not, columbine, gentian, and aster. Grasslands cover much of the plains and interior plateaus, where rainfall is not significant enough to support forests. This vegetative zone stretches from the plains states into the eastern parts of Washington, Oregon, and California (though broken by the Rocky Mountains), and includes the cultivated grasslands of the prairies as well as the drier and lower grasslands of the southwest and southeast. True desert regions in the southwest and west have sagebrush, creosote, and saltbrush. Alpine tundra is found in parts of the country, especially in Alaska, while alpine vegetation can be found in the Rocky Mountains. In Hawaii, bamboo and ferns predominate, along with tropical flowers and nonnative sugarcane and pineapple.

Animal life is equally varied, though not as much so as before the arrival of the Europeans. Overhunting has eradicated many species, including the buffalo; settlement

patterns have disrupted what animal habitats remain; and the heavy use of pesticides has put many of the larger animals at the top of the food chain at risk. Still, there are over 400 mammal species present in the United States. Among the large mammals are deer, elk, moose, antelope, bighorn sheep, black bear, grizzly bear, and brown bear. Fur-bearing animals include mink, fox, raccoon, beaver, muskrat, opossum, woodchuck, hare, squirrel, and skunk. Bird life is plentiful, from migratory and game birds such as geese, pheasants, and ducks to seabirds such as gulls, terns, cormorants, and pelicans. Smaller birds include robins, sparrows, crows, meadowlarks, blue jays, Stellar's jays, robins, woodpeckers, hummingbirds, orioles, cardinals, and owls. The bald eagle is the national animal, and other larger birds such as buzzards are also found. Crocodiles inhabit the swamps of Florida. The rattlesnake is the most common poisonous snake, while the garter snake is the most common nonpoisonous reptile. Numerous species of lizards, including the Gila monster, are found. Freshwater fish include trout, perch, pike, catfish, and bass, while ocean fish include sea bass, snapper, cod, and flounder. Common shellfish include clams, mussels, oysters, crabs, and lobsters. Many animals, including the bald eagle, have become endangered species because of the incursion of man into their habitats.

POPULATION**Population Indicators**

Total Population 2005:	295,734,134	
World Rank:	3rd	
Density per sq km:	31.8	
% of annual growth (1999-2003):	1.1	
Male %:	49.2	
Female %:	50.8	
Urban %:	79.1	
Age Distribution %:	0-14:	20.6
	15-64:	67.0
	65 and over:	12.4
Population 2025:	349,666,000	
Birth Rate per 1,000:	14.14	
Death Rate per 1,000:	8.25	
Rate of Natural Increase %:	0.6	
Total Fertility Rate:	2.08	
Expectation of Life (years):	Males	74.89
	Females	80.67
Marriage Rate per 1,000:	7.5	
Divorce Rate per 1,000:	3.8	
Average Size of Households:	2.6	
Induced Abortions:	—	

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

When the United States was founded it was a relatively homogeneous nation. Aside from the immigrant English, African Americans, Amerindians, and sprinklings of other, non-English nationalities were part of the original

population. In modern times the population is one of the most ethnically diverse in the world and includes people from nearly every country.

In 2000 the largest group in the United States, whites, composed 69.1 percent of the population. Blacks made up 12.3 percent of the population, Hispanics 13.4 percent, Asians 3.6 percent, Amerindians 0.9 percent, and others the remainder.

Hispanics, who may be of any race, are the fastest-growing minority in the United States. In 1990 there were 22 million Hispanics in the country; by 1997 that number had increased to 29 million, and in 2003 the Hispanic population was estimated at fully 40 million.

LANGUAGES

The United States has no official language, but the national language is English, which is spoken by the great majority of people. English is the language of instruction in public schools, though Spanish is used as a second language in schools with large Hispanic enrollments. Similarly, while English is the language spoken in most homes, Spanish is spoken by 26.7 million U.S. residents.

In the 1980s and 1990s some argued that the English language was an important force in promoting national unity and advocated its adoption as the country's official language. A number of states passed laws according this status to English and limiting bilingual instruction in public schools.

RELIGIONS

According to a 2001 survey, approximately four-fifths of U.S. citizens are professed members of organized religious groups. Christians constituted the largest group, accounting for 76.7 percent of the total. Among Christians, Protestants were the most numerous, at 45.1 percent of the total; Roman Catholics were the second-largest denomination, with 24.5 percent; and other Christian denominations made up 7.1 percent. In order of size, the largest Protestant groups were Baptists, Methodists, Lutherans, and Presbyterians.

People of the Jewish faith constituted 1.4 percent of the population, Muslims 0.5 percent, and other religious faiths 1.8 percent. A total of 14.2 percent indicated they had no religion, while 5.4 percent refused to make any religious identification.

Muslim	1,479,000
Other	5,323,000
None	41,994,000
Unstated	15,970,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Before 1492 the area that is now the United States was occupied by hundreds of Amerindian tribes. While no documentary evidence of their political or social organization exists, Amerindian society is understood to have been quite complex, perhaps most notably within the Iroquois Confederacy, whose democratic government has been credited as a substantial influence on the U.S. Constitution.

The United States began its existence as a nation in 1783 after gaining independence from Great Britain in the Revolutionary War. The first constitution uniting the original 13 states was the Articles of Confederation, which established a weak central government with no powers to raise taxes or regulate commerce. The Articles proved ineffectual and were replaced in 1787 by the present Constitution, which created a strong central government separated into three branches: executive, legislative, and judicial. To balance the diminution of state powers, a Bill of Rights was added to the Constitution as its first 10 amendments in 1789. That same year George Washington became the first president of the United States.

The early years of the Republic were politically dominated by Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and James Madison. The domestic scene witnessed the establishment of the first national bank on Alexander Hamilton's initiative; the Whiskey Rebellion, which unsuccessfully challenged the new federal structure; and the conflict between Washington's Federalist Party and Jefferson's Democratic-Republican Party. The latter, led by Jefferson, was victorious in the presidential election of 1800. In 1803 President Jefferson negotiated the purchase from France of the Louisiana Territory, a vast tract extending from the Mississippi River to the Rocky Mountains.

The work of mapping and exploring this vast area was undertaken by Meriwether Lewis and William Clark. Madison's second term witnessed the outbreak of the War of 1812, with Great Britain, over the seizure of U.S. ships and the impressment of American sailors. The war ended in a standoff and was concluded by the Treaty of Ghent.

For the next few decades the United States was occupied primarily with domestic problems and westward expansion. The issue of slavery came to the forefront of national life beginning with the Missouri Compromise of 1820, which banned slavery in territories north of latitude 36°30'. In 1823 President James Monroe set forth the Monroe Doctrine, declaring the Western Hemisphere closed to further colonization by European nations.

The period from the end of Monroe's presidency to the Civil War was one of economic growth accelerated

Religious Affiliations

Protestant	133,376,000
Roman Catholic	72,455,000
Other Christian	20,997,000
Jewish	4,140,000

by the onset of the Industrial Revolution and technological advances. The economies of the South and the North began to diverge, the former remaining solidly agrarian, based on cotton, and the latter becoming rapidly industrialized. There was parallel growth in transportation, as led by the completion of railroads and canals linking the Midwest to the East. With the rise of an industrial workforce, the first labor unions were founded. Politically, the franchise was initially expanded to include all free white males. By the time of Andrew Jackson's election as president in 1828, the United States comprised 24 states, with a population of over 13 million.

In the 1840s the relentless westward expansion of the nation was achieved at the expense of Mexico. After American settlers in Texas revolted against Mexican rule and were later admitted to the Union, in 1845, U.S.-Mexican relations steadily worsened. In 1846 President James Polk declared war on Mexico and quickly achieved victory. Through the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, Mexico was forced to cede California, Nevada, Utah, and parts of present-day Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado, and Wyoming to the United States. In 1853 the United States acquired more territory from Mexico through the Gadsden Purchase, adding the balance of present-day southern Arizona and southern New Mexico. A dispute with Britain over the Oregon region was settled in 1846, establishing the 49th parallel as the boundary with Canada. The United States thus became a Pacific as well as an Atlantic power.

Territorial expansion worsened internal domestic divisions within the United States over the issue of slavery. The admission of California, where slavery was illegal, and the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854, which repealed the Missouri Compromise, split the nation on North-South lines. With the election of Abraham Lincoln in 1860 on the Republican ticket, the die was cast for many southerners; seven southern states withdrew from the Union and formed a separate government, the Confederate States of America, led by Jefferson Davis. When the Confederates opened fire on Fort Sumter in Charleston, South Carolina, on April 12, 1861, the Civil War began. Soon thereafter four more states joined the Confederacy.

The Civil War was a costly struggle that lasted four long years and resulted in 780,000 casualties. The immediate consequence of the war was the emancipation of those African Americans still enslaved. Their freedom was initially declared through Lincoln's 1863 Emancipation Proclamation and completed after the war through amendments to the Constitution.

President Lincoln was assassinated six days after the Civil War ended. His successors, Presidents Andrew Johnson and Ulysses S. Grant, presided over the Reconstruction era, from 1865 to 1877, but Congress wielded the real power in these years. Reconstruction failed to consolidate the gains of the Civil War for African Americans, however, and its end saw the gradual restoration of power to white southerners. The postwar decades also witnessed

the long, slow recovery of the southern states from the economic devastation of the Civil War. The South did not share in the extraordinary industrial expansion of the North in the last quarter of the 19th century, when great manufacturing plants were built, transcontinental railroads were laid, and enterprising Americans settled most of the West. Millions of emigrants also arrived from Europe, nearly all settling in the North or Midwest, increasing the nation's population to 76 million by 1900.

The half century following the Civil War marked a new phase of territorial expansion. In 1867 the United States purchased Alaska from Russia for \$7.2 million. In 1898 Hawaii was annexed after U.S. planters had helped establish a republic there. Victory over Spain in the 1898 Spanish-American War concretized the transformation of the United States into an imperialist nation, despite its anticolonial past; at the end of the war the Philippines, Puerto Rico, and Guam became U.S. territorial possessions. During President Theodore Roosevelt's first term the United States leased a canal zone in Central America, and in 1914, during President Woodrow Wilson's first term, the nation completed the Panama Canal, linking the Atlantic and Pacific oceans.

In 1917 the United States entered World War I on the side of the Allies, and more than two million American troops helped turn the war against Germany. President Woodrow Wilson played a central role in drafting the 1919 Treaty of Versailles, ending the war, although opposition in the Senate prevented the United States from ratifying the treaty. During the 1920s the nation followed a policy of isolationism and enjoyed prosperity under several Republican presidents.

The Roaring Twenties ended in the Great Depression, the worst disaster ever experienced by the U.S. economy. By 1933, 12 million Americans were out of work, and the economy was crippled. The election of President Franklin D. Roosevelt brought the New Deal to fruition in 1933. The federal government began assuming an activist role in economic affairs, launching relief measures and work projects and accepting deficit spending as a means of ensuring public welfare. The Social Security system, incorporating pensions and disability payments for workers as well as the right of labor to form unions, was also part of the New Deal legacy.

World War II brought an end to the Depression when Japan attacked the Pearl Harbor naval base in Honolulu, Hawaii, on December 7, 1941. U.S. forces fought World War II on three continents—Asia, Africa, and Europe—for the next four years, until Germany surrendered in May 1945. The war with Japan ended in August 1945 after the United States dropped the world's first atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. President Roosevelt, who had been elected to a fourth term in 1944, died in April 1945 and was succeeded by Harry Truman.

In the postwar years President Truman took strong steps to oppose the Soviet Union's expansion into East-

ern Europe and the Soviet policy of attempting to spread Communism around the globe. The 1947 Marshall Plan marked the start of the Truman Doctrine, which espoused the containment of Communism, such as by providing \$13 billion in economic aid to European nations to help them recover from the ravages of war. To further offset threats from the Soviet Union and its satellite nations in Eastern Europe, the United States and 11 other countries formed the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) in 1949. The two superpowers and their allies waged the cold war for several decades, until the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991.

The United States economy expanded in the 1950s, as prosperity returned and families built new homes in the growing suburbs. Dwight D. Eisenhower, the leader of the Allied forces in Europe in World War II, was elected president in 1952 and reelected in 1956. President John F. Kennedy took office in 1961 and narrowly avoided a nuclear war with the Soviet Union over its missile bases in Cuba.

During the post-World War II decades the lives of many groups in the United States changed in significant ways. African Americans waged a long and ultimately successful struggle to achieve equal rights as citizens; the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s resulted in the enactment of legislation outlawing segregation in public places and guaranteeing blacks suffrage and equal opportunities in employment. Hispanics and other minorities also waged successful campaigns for better housing, greater access to education, and improved working conditions. Women, too, began to question their traditional role as homemakers and to seek opportunities outside the home. They soon gained new job opportunities and helped end discrimination in hiring and promotion practices in the workplace.

In 1963, after Kennedy was assassinated, Lyndon B. Johnson became president. Johnson launched a “war on poverty” to provide education and health care for all Americans. His successful domestic agenda was overshadowed, however, by the Vietnam War. In this conflict the United States backed South Vietnam against the Communist North Vietnam. The number of American troops involved in the fighting escalated year after year, reaching 500,000 by 1967. Opposition to the war within the United States also increased each year; protests and riots caused President Johnson to decide not to run for reelection. In 1968 Richard M. Nixon was elected president, and he was reelected in 1972 in the largest landslide electoral victory. Nixon promised to end the war, yet the conflict continued and expanded into neighboring Asian countries. In 1973 the United States finally pulled its troops out of Vietnam. In 1974 President Nixon was forced to leave office because of the Watergate scandal, an illegal burglary of a Democratic Party office in Washington, D.C., that Nixon tried unsuccessfully to cover up.

President Jimmy Carter took office in 1977 but failed to win reelection after an oil embargo and high inflation

hurt the nation’s economy. In 1980 Ronald Reagan was elected president by a large margin and served two terms in office. President Reagan presided over a decade of prosperity and engineered a buildup of the nation’s defense system that contributed to the breakup of the Soviet Union. However, that buildup had substantial costs; the federal deficit ballooned under Reagan.

In 1988 George H. W. Bush became the first sitting vice president since Martin Van Buren in 1836 to win the presidency, defeating his Democratic opponent, Michael Dukakis. The Bush administration’s greatest achievement was rolling back Iraqi aggression against Kuwait in the Persian Gulf War. However, toward the end of Bush’s presidency the nation faced another economic recession, which led to a precipitous drop in his popularity and the eventual victory of Bill Clinton, governor of Arkansas, in the 1992 presidential election.

Clinton became the first Democrat in the White House in 12 years. Clinton’s initial popularity was clouded by a series of missteps, including disastrous attempts at health-care reform that met with such opposition that they had to be hastily abandoned. By early 1994 Clinton’s agenda had become increasingly hostage to the Whitewater scandal, which was to plague him for the rest of his tenure. The scandal related to the president’s dealings with a bankrupt Arkansas businessman linked to a failed property venture known as Whitewater, in which the Clintons had a substantial interest. At the president’s request, a special prosecutor was appointed to investigate the affair, which also became the subject of congressional hearings. To add to the president’s troubles, a former Arkansas State employee filed a sexual harassment charge against him.

This was the setting in which the Republicans swept into power in both houses of Congress in 1994, on the strength of a platform called Contract with America, which called for, among other things, a balanced-budget amendment to the Constitution, the presidential line-item veto of legislation, the denial of welfare benefits to minor mothers, and the introduction of term limits to legislators. Democrats successfully sabotaged most of these programs by discrediting the speaker, Newt Gingrich, and the others were terminated by presidential veto. Despite his looming troubles, Clinton was elected to a second term in 1996, but the Republicans managed to retain their control in both houses of Congress. Clinton’s second term was a travesty of a dignified presidency. The Whitewater investigation culminated in 1998 in a series of further and unrelated scandals, including sexual misconduct involving Monica Lewinsky, a 21-year-old White House intern. Apparent perjury on Clinton’s behalf with regard to that misconduct led to his impeachment in the House, the first such impeachment since Andrew Johnson. Clinton was later acquitted by the Senate. Despite these difficulties, the Clinton administration helped orchestrate one of the most prosperous decades since the 1960s. By

the end of his term of office, the deficit was under control, and the government was actually running a surplus. The Congressional Budget Office projected budget surpluses of \$5.6 trillion from 2002 to 2011.

For the 2000 presidential election, the Democrats nominated Vice President Al Gore as their standard-bearer, while the Republicans chose George W. Bush, the governor of Texas and son of the former president, as their nominee. In a close and bitter contest, George W. Bush won narrowly, after a 36-day cliff-hanger in which the Florida votes were tallied three or more times and the Supreme Court eventually intervened to determine the winner. The new Bush administration began in 2001 with a clearly defined conservative agenda, including a massive tax cut as the centerpiece and the rejection of international treaties such as the Kyoto Protocol, on greenhouse gas emissions, and the Antiballistic Missile Treaty.

On September 11, 2001, thousands were killed after three aircraft were hijacked and crashed into the World Trade Center, in New York, and the Pentagon, in Washington, D.C.; a fourth was downed in Pennsylvania as a result of a passenger rebellion. Osama bin Laden and his al-Qaeda organization were eventually determined to have masterminded the terrorist attack. Relying on an international coalition for political and military support, the Bush administration launched a campaign against terrorism and began a military offensive in Afghanistan, where Osama bin Laden was being sheltered by the Taliban regime.

Although major fighting in the Afghanistan campaign was brief, the allies proved unable to hunt down bin Laden. On the home front, legislative measures were taken to combat terrorism, including the creation of the cabinet-level Department of Homeland Security and the passage of the Patriot Act, a controversial measure giving the government sweeping new powers to fight terrorism; critics of the act have contended that it undermines due process and gives the government too much access to the private affairs of innocent citizens.

With the economy suffering and military spending increasing, Bush pushed through another tax cut in 2002. Corporate scandals also rocked the nation in 2002, prompting legislation necessitating the change of accounting practices. Internationally, though mop-up operations were still underway in Afghanistan, the White House turned its attention on Iraq and the weapons of mass destruction that its leader, Saddam Hussein, had purportedly built up. Bush took the case for invasion to the U.S. Congress, where he was given the authority to use force in Iraq if necessary. Despite massive protests at home and around the world, in March 2003 U.S. forces, along with a few coalition partners, including the United Kingdom, invaded Iraq. The war appeared to be over within a matter of weeks, but insurgency fighting continued from that time through mid-2006. Early in 2005 elections were held in Iraq, but the situation remained unstable, with attacks by insurgents occurring on a daily

basis. Soon after the invasion it became clear that there had been no weapons of mass destruction. Several agencies, including the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), took responsibility for faulty intelligence. Critics in turn blamed the White House for overemphasizing the threat as well as framing intelligence to justify the war the president knew he wanted to have. By that time, however, it was too late, as the country was engaged in an ongoing guerrilla conflict that had claimed the lives of over 2,300 American soldiers by mid-2006.

Meanwhile, Bush pressed his domestic agenda forward. Tax cuts in 2003 were scaled back to \$350 billion, still leaving a deficit of \$374 billion that year. The economy remained sluggish, and unemployment rose to over 6 percent, although by late 2003 the economy began to pick up.

John Kerry emerged as the Democratic candidate for president in 2004, and a rancorous campaign followed, with allegations about both men's military pasts. Kerry lost to Bush in November, with the incumbent taking 51 percent of the vote. The Republicans also won a clear majority of seats in both houses of Congress. Entering his second term, Bush made an overhaul of Social Security one of his priorities.

In August 2005 the city of New Orleans was flooded after Hurricane Katrina, the most destructive storm to hit the United States in decades, swept through gulf coast states. More than 1,600 people were killed and more than 1,800 were still missing in early 2006.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

Presidents

1933–45	Franklin D. Roosevelt
1945–53	Harry S. Truman
1953–61	Dwight D. Eisenhower
1961–63	John F. Kennedy
1963–69	Lyndon B. Johnson
1969–74	Richard M. Nixon
1974–77	Gerald R. Ford
1977–81	James E. Carter
1981–89	Ronald W. Reagan
1989–93	George H. W. Bush
1993–2001	William J. Clinton
2001–	George W. Bush

CONSTITUTION

The Constitution, signed in 1787, provides the foundation of the government of the United States. The principles on which the Constitution is based include the idea that people have certain inalienable rights, that government can exercise authority only with the consent of the people governed, and that the purpose of government is to serve and promote the welfare of the people.

A distinguishing feature is the separation of powers within the federal government, with a system of checks and balances that allows each of the three branches to have some authority with regard to the other two. Thus, for example, the president can veto laws and appoint federal judges, the Senate can confirm or deny judges and officials appointed by the president, and the courts can review laws and the legality of executive acts.

The Constitution is often referred to as a “living” document because it permits growth and change in the system of government. For example, the powers vested in the president and Congress are stated in broad generalities. In the centuries following its drafting, the Constitution has been adapted to changing needs and circumstances. Two means have been employed to accomplish this: amendments to the Constitution and judicial interpretations of the Constitution. The first 10 amendments to the Constitution, collectively called the Bill of Rights, were adopted in 1791, protecting the fundamental freedoms and rights of individual citizens. Since then 17 other amendments have been added. Constitutional interpretation is the second means used to adapt the Constitution to political realities. Much of this task falls to the Supreme Court, which hands down decisions that rule on the meanings of various provisions of the Constitution. The executive branch also plays a part by setting precedents in the discharge of its duties.

The president is both head of state and head of government, and the presidency operates on two levels: On one level the presidency is the symbol of the nation and the president is the country’s leader; on the other level the holder of office is the chief executive, the constitutionally prescribed manager of national affairs. As the former, the president’s authority and influence are virtually unlimited, and the office is as substantial as the incumbent wants it to be. As the latter, the president’s powers are quite circumscribed, both by the Constitution and by the principles of checks and balances. These limits change with circumstances and have expanded or contracted with each president. An activist president may also circumvent such checks for purely political ends.

Presidents are not only chief executives but also legislative leaders. In the 20th century, Theodore Roosevelt’s trust-busting, Franklin D. Roosevelt’s New Deal, and Johnson’s Great Society were all programs initiated by the president and not Congress. Typically, a president submits a package of legislation—usually 100 to 400 bills—to Congress designed to set forth and implement the administration’s major policies. Presidential programs are often based on campaign promises, but some are developed later to meet the nation’s needs. To exercise this legislative leadership, the president must work closely with Congress, which must pass the legislation required to enact the program. The president can also appeal to the public for support, as most postwar presidents have done.

The president uses powers granted by the Constitution in dealing with Congress, including the veto and

executive privilege. The president can use the veto to reject legislation passed by Congress, although Congress may override a veto if both houses then pass the bill again by a two-thirds majority. The veto is a potent weapon, since Congress seldom proves able to override this presidential action, as members of the president’s party typically align themselves with their figurehead. Executive privilege is invoked by presidents to withhold information from Congress. President Taft instituted the modern precedent with regard to that practice by claiming executive privilege when he felt that a congressional request for information was “incompatible with the public interest.” Later, President Kennedy invoked executive privilege to block congressional oversight of foreign policy, and Presidents Nixon, Clinton, and George W. Bush all claimed this privilege to stymie congressional investigations of major scandals or controversies in their administrations.

The president as head of the executive branch of government carries out his duties through departments. These departments of the federal government are headed by officials appointed by the president. The department heads are also members of the president’s cabinet. While the secretary of state, secretary of health and human services, and other department heads have important roles in carrying out administration policies, these cabinet members are seldom part of the inner circle of presidential advisers. Every modern president’s chief advisers have been close friends or political strategists who are members of the White House staff. The White House staff has grown rapidly in numbers and influence in recent decades, using polling and press conferences to gauge and mold public opinion in formulating administration policies and political strategies.

The Constitution vests the president “with general powers to conduct foreign relations.” Over the years, presidential leadership in foreign policy has grown dramatically, with Congress playing a minor, subordinate role in that respect. The president’s autonomy here is in sharp contrast to the power of the chief executive in domestic affairs. Thus, presidents often devote much of their time and attention to foreign affairs, where successes can yield more political capital and prestige. President Reagan, for example, focused much of his energy on defense strategies and strengthening the nation’s military power, which proved successful in hastening the collapse of the “evil empire” of Soviet Communism. Presidents Carter and Clinton showcased their efforts to bring peace to the Middle East by staging meetings at the White House and at Camp David with the leaders of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO).

The president’s role as the commander in chief of the nation’s armed forces reinforces presidential primacy in conducting foreign affairs. As commander in chief, the president may call upon the armed forces to implement actions taken in the interests of national security. These military actions are subject to *ex post facto* approval by Congress, which is almost routinely granted. For example,

in 1994 President Clinton dispatched troops to Haiti to restore the government that had been ousted in a military coup. The president also may send federal troops to any state to enforce the law or put down domestic violence. President Eisenhower ordered federal troops to Arkansas in 1957 to enforce school desegregation laws.

The Constitution provides that the vice president shall take office upon the death of a president. The vice president is elected with the president and serves the same four-year term. The vice president has few formal constitutional duties apart from presiding over the Senate and casting a tie-breaking vote. In all, 13 vice presidents have become president, five after serving their terms and eight upon the death of the president. George H. W. Bush was the first president since Martin Van Buren, in 1837, to win election as president immediately after serving as vice president. The Constitution does not provide guidelines for the exercise of presidential powers in the event of the president's disability. The 25th Amendment, adopted in 1967, remedied this omission by providing that when a president is unable to carry out the duties of office temporarily because of physical disability, the vice president becomes acting president for the duration of the president's disability.

The Constitution provides for the impeachment of the president, who may be removed from office if convicted of treason, bribery, other high crimes, or misdemeanors. The House of Representatives may bring impeachment proceedings against a president by a majority vote. If the House passes a bill of impeachment, the Senate then tries the president, with the chief justice presiding in place of the vice president. A two-thirds vote in the Senate is required for conviction. No president has been impeached, convicted, and then removed from office. Andrew Johnson was impeached but escaped conviction by one vote in 1868. Richard Nixon resigned the presidency in 1974 rather than face a possible impeachment trial after Watergate. Bill Clinton was the first elected president to be impeached; however, the Senate failed to convict him, and he filled out the remainder of his term.

PARLIAMENT

The Constitution invests legislative power in the Congress, which is composed of two bodies: the upper Senate and the lower House of Representatives. The Senate has 100 members, two from each of the 50 states, elected for six-year terms, with one-third elected every two years. The House of Representatives has 435 members divided among the states in proportion to population; each state must have at least one representative.

The powers of Congress are set out in detail in the Constitution. At first the House tended to overshadow the Senate, but as the nation grew, the smaller Senate rapidly gained in influence and prestige. The Senate has

the right to "advise and consent," giving it leverage in government that the House does not have. Conversely, the House has the sole right to originate all revenue bills and bills appropriating money for the government. Both the Senate and the House have a great deal of autonomy, and this freedom from executive control enables Congress to assert its powers. However, since the underlying principle of the Constitution is not so much separation of powers as separation of institutions that are sharing power, Congress and the president are always competing for power.

The "business of Congress," it has been said, is to make laws. The lawmaking powers of Congress include taxation, borrowing, foreign and interstate commerce, naturalization, bankruptcy, coinage, weights and measures, the post office, patents, copyrights, maritime and international law, and regulation of the armed forces. To carry out its legislative duties, Congress deals with over 10,000 bills each year. A bill may originate in either the House or the Senate, as introduced by a member of that body. However, all appropriation bills must be introduced in the House. Upon introduction, in both bodies bills are referred to the appropriate committees, where they are in the hands of the committee chair. The chair has the right to send the bill to subcommittee, pigeonhole or kill the bill, or expedite it. If the chair decides to move the bill along, the committee then holds hearings on the bill.

The step after hearings is called the markup, in which the subcommittee debates the bill, considers amendments to it, and then votes on it. If the bill is passed, it goes to the full committee, where the process is repeated. If the committee passes the bill, it is then sent to the full house for consideration.

If the Senate version differs from the House version of a bill, conference committees with members from both bodies reconcile the differences, usually in secret sessions. The conference committees then report back the agreed-upon bill to their respective houses, and the bill is usually accepted in floor votes. A measure passed by both houses in its final form then goes to the president for signature.

Much of the work of Congress is done through committees. Three of the major House committees are Ways and Means, which deals with taxes; Appropriations; and Rules. An important element in committee work is the concept of seniority. Seniority is the rank accorded members by the length of their continuous service in the House or Senate. Committee chairs and memberships are selected primarily according to seniority.

POLITICAL PARTIES

The United States has a strict biparty political system, which in large measure explains its political stability. Third parties appear primarily in the political lexicon and rarely on ballots, particularly for elections to the highest

offices. Further, the two parties themselves have not suffered permanent splits or breakaways since the mid-19th century, such that the political landscape is less cluttered in the United States than in any other major Western democracy. Nevertheless, the division between the two parties is so fluid that turncoats do not receive the opprobrium they do in most other countries. Party ideologies are not set in concrete and may shift and evolve in response to circumstances, though within historic limits. Party labels do not necessarily concern voters, who may vote for whomever they please even when formally enrolled in a certain party. Cross-party voting is frequent and courted by both parties. The lack of partisan spirit is both a cause and result of a deeper malaise—voter apathy that leads half the electorate to abstain from voting even in the presidential elections because they do not have a real choice of candidates. Another frequent cause for low voter turnout is the fact that with only two candidates, even slight differences in pre-election polling results can lead many to believe that their votes won't change the outcome of the election.

Party organizations to a large extent only on paper. National and state committees come to life primarily at election times, then vanishing from public sight. At higher levels, a party committee's primary task is to negotiate patronage assignments when the party is in power. The national committees—the Democratic National Committee and the Republican National Committee—are relatively powerless entities. Their primary function is to make rules for national conventions and to coordinate fund raising. The committees have no role in policy making and do not issue instructions to party officeholders. The president of a committee is the front man for the dominant faction within the party, but he is expected to show no favoritism to any of the party's numerous luminaries. His task is purely administrative, and more often than not, most Americans do not even know his name.

The Democratic Party was founded in 1828 and as such is the oldest political party in the world. It held its first presidential nominating convention in 1832. Despite its early start, the party, then consisting mostly of proslavery southerners, was almost wiped out by the Civil War and did not become a major force in U.S. politics until the presidency of Franklin D. Roosevelt, who rallied a coalition consisting of southern whites, farmers, blacks, Jews, other ethnics, labor, the poor, and the unemployed. The coalition began to disintegrate in the 1960s in response to civil rights legislation, rising urban crime, welfare and Social Security costs, and budget deficits; it was a coalition of interests and not of ideology and thus unraveled quickly under pressure. Under Clinton, the Democratic coalition gained new life as it expanded to embrace minority voices in American society. Clinton proved adroit at taking the Democratic Party further to the center, co-opting traditional Repub-

lican issues such as economic growth and security. Rapid gains among minority groups, however, have not been large enough to offset the steady erosion of white-male and middle-class support. The decline of labor unions has also cut off a once strong and predictable source of Democratic backing.

The Republican Party was founded in 1854 as a coalition of Whigs and antislavery Democrats. It gained its first electoral success in 1860 when a dark horse named Abraham Lincoln won the White House on the Republican ticket. The Civil War and the subsequent rout of the southern Democrats made the U.S. government a virtual Republican monopoly for 70 years after 1861, with the exceptions of the one term of Andrew Johnson (1865–1869), a Democrat, and the two terms each of Grover Cleveland and Woodrow Wilson. During that same period Republicans controlled the House for 50 years and the Senate for 54. After the ascendancy of the New Deal, Republicans fell into such disarray that few expected the party to survive. It did survive, however, and has managed to capture the White House five times since 1968, even riding out the Watergate debacle.

As of the early 21st century, Republicans have been no more organized than Democrats but have given the appearance of being more united. Although there is a minor liberal Republican wing, the so-called Nelson Rockefeller bloc, it has not diluted the party's official positions on national issues. The party has been consistently probusiness, proreligion, and promilitary, and each of these stances has helped it to win a loyal constituency of supporters. The support of evangelical Christians has been a major factor in recent Republican electoral successes; perhaps evidence of the importance of this line of support is the fact that the two most recent Democratic presidents have been staunch southern Baptists. Republicans have made few attempts to woo blacks or organized labor, and the ill-will has generally been mutual, although George W. Bush has placed African Americans in high-profile cabinet and White House positions. The party's free-market philosophy expresses itself most clearly in opposition to government regulation in particular and large government in general. There is an undercurrent of libertarianism in some of its evolving ideology. Appeals to flag and country have been recurring themes in Republican Party platforms. The party's greatest political success has been destroying the Democratic Party in the South. In the 2000 presidential elections the entire South, excluding Florida but including states like West Virginia and Arkansas, voted solidly for Bush. In the 2004 elections similar support was manifested for the Republicans.

A strong third party has yet to develop in the United States. With winner-take-all elections, such parties have been considered spoilers, eating away at the bases of either the Republicans, as did Ross Perot in 1992, or the Democrats, as did Ralph Nader in 2000, thereby swinging elections to the other major party.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The United States comprises 50 states, each headed by an elected governor and a two-house legislature (except Nebraska). The states are autonomous within their own territories and spheres of government. The 10th Amendment reserves to the states those powers not granted to the federal government and not denied to the states.

The political system of the United States is based on federalism, but in practice the states are clearly subordinate to the national government. The Constitution grants Congress the power to make all laws that are “necessary and proper” to carry out its duties and establishes the supremacy of federal laws. The evolution of state-federal relations has been characterized, however, by a growing partnership based on the flow of funds from Washington, D.C., to the states and lower units of government.

The Constitution does not mention local governments, which throughout the states include four major units: counties, townships, municipalities, and special districts. Their powers and status are determined by the state in which they are located.

The county is the most inclusive unit in all but three states. The county is the most important form of rural local government, although there are urban and semiurban counties. A typical county government has at least 10 elected local officials, including treasurer, surveyor or engineer, assessor, superintendent of schools, recorder of deeds, county clerk, sheriff, attorney, clerk of court, and coroner.

Municipalities, called by a variety of names—cities, villages, or boroughs—are the most important general-purpose units of local government. Although not as large as counties, municipalities exercise more powers and provide a greater variety of services.

Townships, sometimes referred to simply as towns, exist in 21 states, largely in the central, north-central, and southeastern sections of the nation. Established primarily to serve rural communities, most still fulfill this function, except in New England, where they increasingly function like municipalities.

Like counties, cities vary widely in size and population. There are three basic forms of city government: mayor-council, commissioner, and council-manager. The principal local government spheres of responsibility are police, fire protection, education, health, welfare, public utilities, public works, and recreation. Although these spheres are broad and varied, local governments do not necessarily enjoy corresponding arrays of powers, nor do they generally have sufficient financial resources. They depend on property taxes, sales taxes, business taxes, and income from fees, fines, and licenses.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The Supreme Court is the nation’s highest judicial body, as headed by the chief justice and eight associate justices.

Justices on the Court are appointed by the president for life but must be confirmed by the Senate. Cases come to the Supreme Court in one of three ways: certification, appeal, or certiorari. In the first category, a court of appeals certifies that the case involves a question of federal law that can be resolved only by the high court. Appeals from the decisions of the highest state courts are the most common route. Many other cases are brought to the Supreme Court by writ of certiorari.

Agreeing to hear a case is a matter of the Court’s discretion. The justices vote on whether to hear each case the Court may consider, with four votes required for the issue of a certiorari. The decisions of the Court are binding legal precedents on all lower courts. However, the Court itself may overturn its own decisions through later rulings.

The most important function of the Supreme Court is to interpret the Constitution, a power known as judicial review. This power enables the Court to nullify state laws and acts of Congress that violate the Constitution. However, it exercises this power of judicial review with great restraint.

Congress has established two levels of federal courts, under the authority granted it by article 3 of the Constitution. At the lower level are district courts, one for each of the 89 judicial districts in the nation. Federal district judges are appointed by the president and may be removed only by impeachment. Above the district courts are federal courts of appeal, organized into 12 circuits, which hear cases appealed from the district courts. The jurisdiction of the federal court system includes cases involving bankruptcy, admiralty, patents, and violations of federal law. The federal court system also includes specialized federal courts, such as the tax court and the court of military appeals.

The court system in each state includes the state supreme court as the highest judicial authority, often consisting of seven judges. In 39 states there are appellate courts to which appeals from trial courts are taken. All states also have general trial courts that hear serious criminal cases, civil cases, divorces and other family-law matters, and complaints for injunctions. State, district, or municipal courts adjudicate traffic violations and minor criminal matters. Most states also have separate probate courts to hear matters relating to the administration of estates and juvenile crime.

As many judges are appointed by the executive branch, there is the risk that these appointments will be political in nature and that ideology might overtake jurisprudence. Throughout the 1990s and into the 2000s, both parties in Congress have refused to approve many of the presidents’ nominees for various judgeships, either by straight vote or by filibuster. In 2005 the ruling Republicans threatened to pass a bill ending the filibuster if Democrats did not approve the president’s candidates.

HUMAN RIGHTS

The Bill of Rights, the first 10 amendments to the Constitution, is the national charter of freedom. The Bill of Rights underscores the basic principle of the Declaration of Independence: that the purpose of government is to protect the rights of individuals. These rights include the freedoms of speech, religion, and assembly and the freedom from unreasonable search and seizure. The Bill of Rights also protects the rights of persons accused of crimes, including the right to a fair and speedy trial, the right to a jury trial in civil cases, and protection against excessive bail and fines or cruel and unusual punishment. The evolution of human rights in the United States has consisted of the application of the Bill of Rights to specific governmental actions or social issues.

The growth of individual rights has been slow and incremental. Thus, the right to vote, which was limited to white males with property in 1787, has been extended through five amendments. The 14th and 15th Amendments removed racially discriminatory practices. The 19th Amendment extended the right to vote to women. The 24th Amendment banned the use of a poll tax as a prerequisite for voting in federal elections, and the 26th Amendment lowered the voting age to 18.

Equal protection under the law is a right guaranteed by the 14th Amendment to the Constitution, with its greatest significance being protection against racially discriminatory treatment. The Supreme Court based its 1954 ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education* on this guarantee, holding racial segregation in public schools unconstitutional. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 banned racial discrimination in all public facilities; this law also created the Office of Equal Opportunity to enforce an end to job discrimination based on race, gender, or place of national origin. Other federal legislation guarantees women equal rights on the job and forbids discriminatory treatment in hiring and promotion. In 1990 Congress passed the Americans with Disabilities Act, banning discrimination against handicapped persons and extending to them many protections and the right to access public facilities.

Following the terrorist attacks of 2001, the Patriot Act was passed, giving the government new powers of surveillance and investigation, which critics argue erode due process protections and give the executive branch too much power. Muslims in the United States, in particular, have complained of racial profiling since 2001. The use of special military tribunals has come under international criticism, as have the abuses of prisoners held by the United States in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Cuba.

FOREIGN POLICY

With the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the United States became the world's sole superpower. After the cold

war ended, the nation decreased its spending on defense, but this "peace dividend" proved illusive. The 1990s saw the United States assume the role of policing world trouble spots. When Iraq invaded Kuwait in 1990 and became a threat to Saudi Arabia and the stability of peace in the Middle East, the United States led UN forces against the Iraqi army, compelling it to withdraw from Kuwait.

The Persian Gulf War of 1991 was part of an ongoing effort by the United States to secure peace in the Middle East. A major goal of President Clinton's foreign policy was to end the enmity between Arab nations and Israel that has existed since Israel's creation in 1948. American diplomatic initiatives in the mid-1990s led to Israel's recognition of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and negotiations toward an independent Palestinian state. In 1999 Syria and Israel met for the first time in Washington, D.C., to discuss a peace settlement.

In 1999, after Serb forces began a campaign of violence to force ethnic Albanians in Kosovo to leave their land, the United States launched air attacks against Serbia. Although many ethnic Albanians later returned to Kosovo, the centuries-old religious and ethnic divisions in the province remained.

Mediating peace in Northern Ireland was a major goal in U.S. foreign policy. President Clinton worked closely with the British and Irish prime ministers to end violence in Northern Ireland. After several years of negotiations, in 1999 a coalition government including both Protestants and Catholics was formed there.

The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation has remained an important instrument of American foreign policy. To strengthen the stability of the former Communist countries of eastern Europe, in 1997 the United States and its NATO allies invited Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic to join. At the same time, western European countries had less need to rely on NATO after the end of the cold war and thus asserted more-independent foreign policy stances. The European Union, composed of many NATO nations, has formed a strong and impressive trade bloc whose goal of strengthening its member nations' economies has included measures restricting trade with the United States to protect European farmers and businesses.

In 2001, after the terrorist attacks in New York City and Washington, D.C., the United States began a military campaign in Afghanistan, where Osama bin Laden, believed to have led the attack, was being sheltered by the Taliban regime. In 2003 the Bush White House pursued a go-it-alone policy regarding Iraq, a country believed to have a large storehouse of weapons of mass destruction. The United States invaded that country with little international support, reversing over 50 years of cooperative foreign policy vis-à-vis European allies. In dealing with North Korea, which actually has nuclear arms, the Bush White House has pursued a policy of multilateral diplomacy with other countries in the region.

DEFENSE

The president is commander in chief of the armed forces and directs defense policy and decisions through the secretary of defense, who heads the Department of Defense, often referred to simply as the Pentagon, which houses its offices. Operational command is vested in the Joint Chiefs of Staff, whose chair is appointed by the president.

The three branches of the armed services are the army, navy, and air force. Service in the armed forces is voluntary, and persons 18 years old or older are eligible. The armed services maintain bases in the United States and overseas.

The army is the largest of the services, with over 485,000 total personnel in 1997. That year the navy numbered 413,000 and the air force 384,000. The marines, a part of the navy, comprised over 173,000 active duty personnel. In all, men and women in the armed forces totaled 1,480,000 in 2003.

The United States spent \$278 billion in 1998 on defense, or 3.8 percent of gross domestic product (GDP), which was significantly less than the percentage spent in the cold war years of the 1980s. By 2004 military expenditures had grown to \$371 billion, or 3.3 percent of GDP. A heavy reliance on high technology in the modern military has not always proven to be the best choice. Fighting a low-tech insurgency conflict, as in Iraq, has shown that having bodies on the ground is more vital than having smart bombs. In that conflict, reserve forces and National Guard troops have had to play major roles in order to keep troop strength at sufficient levels. As a result of the high demands placed on existing troops, recruitment rates have sharply declined for all three services.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 1,480,000
 Military Manpower Availability: 67,742,879
 Military Expenditures \$million: 370.7
 as % of GDP: 3.3
 as % of central government expenditures: —
 Arms Imports \$million: 515
 Arms Exports \$billion: 4.38

ECONOMY

The United States has the strongest and most technologically advanced economy in the world. In 2004 GDP was \$11.75 trillion, with a per capita GDP of \$40,100, among the highest for major industrialized nations. U.S. corporations have been at the leading edge of the worldwide technology revolution. American businesses play dominant roles in the fields of computers, telecommunications, medicine, and aerospace and military equipment and are the leaders in developing the new "global economy," based on multinational corporations, the Internet, and international investment capital. At the same time, the United States remains the world's leading agricultural and food exporter.

In the capitalist U.S. economy the private sector is dominant, with individuals and private enterprise making most decisions affecting the economy and the government taking only a limited, largely regulatory role.

The years from 1994 to 2000 represented one of the longest periods of prosperity in the nation's history. The stock market advanced to all-time highs, and nearly half of the population, directly or indirectly through employer-sponsored retirement plans, shared in these historic market returns. Worker productivity reached all-time highs, the inflation rate remained low, and unemployment stayed below 4 percent during most of this period.

The economy's successful performance was marred only by disparities in income distribution. In the years since 1975, including the booming 1990s, most gains in household income went to the top 20 percent of the population. Even in many middle-class families, both spouses held jobs, largely to earn enough income to participate in the nation's prosperity. Growth weakened in the fourth quarter of 2000 and through the first half of 2001.

Following the terrorist attacks in September 2001, the economy took a sharp downturn. Beforehand the boom economy had already been slowing, as the high-tech bubble burst, and the stock market, severely overvalued by speculative technology stocks, tumbled downward. By the end of 2002 there were signs of recovery, but the stock market continued to stagnate. With the invasion of Iraq, the economy turned around somewhat, and the stock market once again reached healthy levels. Unemployment, however, has stayed over 5 percent. Long-term problems include inadequate investment in economic infrastructure, the rapidly rising medical and pension costs of an aging population, sizable trade and budget deficits, and the stagnation of family income in the lower economic groups.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$trillion: 11.75
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 40,100
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 2.8
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 1.7
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 0.9
 Industry: 19.7
 Services: 79.4
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 70
 Government Consumption: 16
 Gross Domestic Investment: 15.7
 Foreign Trade \$trillion: Exports: 0.795
 Imports: 1.476
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 1.8
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 30.5
 CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
109.3	113.0	116.2	118.0	120.7

Finance

National Currency: U.S. Dollar (USD)
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency trillion: 1.65
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 2.0
 Total External Debt \$trillion: 1.4
 Debt Service Ratio %: —
 Balance of Payments \$billion: -646.5
 International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 39.7
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
 2.5

Official Development Assistance

Donor ODA \$billion: 6.9
 per capita \$: 23.30
 Foreign Direct Investment \$billion: 39.9

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: October 1–September 30
 Revenues \$trillion: 1.862
 Expenditures \$trillion: 2.338
 Budget Deficit \$billion: 476
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 0.9
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2001) %: 6.1
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 2.73
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 12.6
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 109.6
 Total Farmland % of land area: 19.2
 Livestock: Cattle million: 94.9
 Chickens billion: 1.97
 Pigs million: 60.4
 Sheep million: 6.09
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 448
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 5.43

Manufacturing

Value Added \$trillion: 1.423
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 4.4

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent billion: 1.73
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent billion:
 2.22
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 7.8
 Net Energy Imports % of use: 27.3
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 905
 Production kW-hr trillion: 3.92
 Consumption kW-hr trillion: 3.74
 Coal Reserves tons billion: 275.1
 Production tons billion: 1.105
 Consumption tons billion: 1.102

Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: 189
 Production cubic feet trillion: 18.7
 Consumption cubic feet trillion: 21.9
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: 21.9
 Production barrels million per day: 7.7
 Consumption barrels million per day: 20.4
 Pipelines Length km: 244,620

Foreign Trade

Imports \$trillion: 1.476
 Exports \$billion: 795
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2002): 1.4
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2002): 6.3
 Balance of Trade \$billion: -646.5

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Canada %	17.1	23.0
China %	13.7	4.3
Mexico %	10.4	13.6
Japan %	8.8	6.7
Germany %	5.2	—
United Kingdom %	—	4.4

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 6,393,603
 Paved %: 65.4
 Automobiles: 221,821,000
 Trucks and Buses: 8,607,000
 Railroad: Track Length km: 228,464
 Passenger-km billion: 8.97
 Freight-km trillion: 2.19
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 486
 Total Deadweight Tonnage million: 14.6
 Airports: 14,857
 Traffic: Passenger-km billion: 1.01
 Length of Waterways km: 41,009

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 40.4
 Number of Tourists from million: 54.2
 Tourist Receipts \$billion: 99.8
 Tourist Expenditures \$billion: 80.6

Communications

Telephones million: 181.6
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones million: 158.7
 Personal Computers million: 190
 Internet Hosts per million people: 389,918
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 538

ENVIRONMENT

The movement to protect the environment in the United States began in the 1960s, after writers and environmentalists like Rachel Carson demonstrated the damage being caused by the pollution of the nation's air and waters. Congress then passed the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, and other major legislation and gave strong enforcement powers to a new federal agency, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

Although the country has adopted strict controls on air pollution, its vast size and industrial might still make it a major contributor to greenhouse emissions. Nearly 22 percent of the carbon dioxide released from burning fossil fuels throughout the world originates in the United States. Despite this troubling fact, the United States has not yet joined with the 150 other nations that signed the Kyoto Protocol, which was introduced in 1997 to reduce such emissions.

The pollution of rivers and streams from solid-waste disposal and from the runoff of pesticides and fertilizers has been notably reduced by federal and state environmental laws. An important step here came in 1980 when Congress created the Superfund to regulate, oversee, and if necessary fund the cleanup of hazardous waste sites.

Protecting the habitat of plants and animals is another environmental issue that has been addressed by the nation. The Endangered Species Act of 1966 established a policy to reduce deforestation, prevent the loss of wetlands, and safeguard against urban encroachment in certain regions. The federal government has set aside numerous locations as wilderness areas and national parks.

Global warming has been a growing concern in recent decades, both within the government and among the public. The EPA has thus created a Climate Change Division to study and monitor the impact of this environmental threat. Recent efforts to combat global warming, especially as through the Kyoto Protocol, have been stymied in part by the Bush White House's refusal to admit the conclusiveness of scientific evidence regarding the humankind-produced causes of global warming.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 24.7
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: 388
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 23
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 1,968,196
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 19.85

LIVING CONDITIONS

The UN 2004 Human Development Report ranked the United States eighth out of 177 countries in terms of life expectancy, education, and standard of living. The aver-

age American's life expectancy in 2005 was 77.7 years, and literacy stood at 97 percent in 1999. The percent of eligible students enrolled in primary, secondary, and tertiary schools in 2002 was the 16th-highest in the world, at 92.3 percent. Per capita GDP was \$40,100 in 2004.

As of 2001, four-fifths of Americans lived in urban and suburban areas. Life in the United States tends to be faster than that in other countries of the world. Cities in particular feel the jab of its pace, with cars dominating the cityscape. Except for major urban areas like New York, Chicago, and Boston, most American cities have relatively poorly developed mass-transit systems. Thus, rush hour traffic is a major problem across the country, even in suburban areas. The United States is a nation of cars and as such also of roads and freeways. As of 2001 there were over 230 million registered vehicles and over four million mi (6.4 million km) of roads.

The single-family dwelling remains the dream of most Americans, and the vast majority of homes are single units. Real estate, however, reached speculative highs in 2004 and 2005, with median home prices in some areas of the West and East reaching \$600,000. In contrast, the vast American middle class has dwindled in size since the 1960s, especially with manufacturing jobs lost to lower-wage countries. Though the United States maintains one of the highest standards of living in the world, its population is one of the most hard-pressed in terms of working conditions. Many maintain more than one job to make ends meet. With no national health insurance, medical care is also a major concern for working Americans; if jobs are lost, so are medical benefits. Poverty remains a problem, as an estimated 12 percent of the population live below the poverty line. As of 2001 about 3.5 million people experienced temporary or prolonged periods of homelessness each year.

HEALTH

U.S. medical treatment is among the best in the world. However, the United States is the only industrialized nation not to have a national health plan. Instead, the nation relies on private insurance plans, most of which are tied to jobs. Thus, employers are required to provide health benefits to workers employed over half-time. As a result, many Americans are given 49 percent employment or less by employers who wish to avoid having to offer insurance plans. Health maintenance organizations, offering widely managed medical plans, are the most common form of health coverage.

As of 2004 over 45 million Americans lacked health coverage. Medicare, for the elderly, and Medicaid, for the impoverished, help to bridge the gap. A prescription plan was added to Medicare in 2004. The cost of health care in general is skyrocketing. Public expenditures on health care in 2002 were 6.6 percent of GDP, and private expen-

ditures were even higher, at 8 percent. As of 2004 there were 549 physicians for every 100,000 people, and almost all births were attended by health professionals. However, the United States continues to have one of the highest infant mortality rates among developed countries; in 2005 the rate was 6.5 deaths per 1,000 live births.

Cardiovascular diseases are the most significant cause of illness and death, followed by cancer, in both men and women; diet and lack of exercise are largely to blame for the former. The entire population has access to safe water and proper sanitation. In spite of health warnings, about one-quarter of men and women are smokers. The prevalence rate of HIV/AIDS among adults was 0.6 percent in 2003. That year there were 14,000 deaths from and 950,000 people living with the disease. With the government paying for just over half of routine immunizations, rates of immunization for one-year-olds are not as high as in other developed countries. In 2003, immunization rates were 91 percent for polio, 93 percent for measles, and 96 percent for DPT. Overweight and obesity are major problems in the United States, leading to diabetes and heart problems.

A major overhaul of the health delivery system, especially in light of escalating medical costs, is imperative. Medicare payments have regularly lagged behind rising hospital costs, and Medicaid funding is in jeopardy as a result of both massive tax cuts and increased defense spending.

Health

Number of Physicians: 1,564,400
 Number of Dentists: 168,000
 Number of Nurses: 2,201,800
 Number of Pharmacists: 196,100
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 549
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: 3.6
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 6.5
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 17
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 14.6
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 5,274
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.6
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 96
 Measles: 93
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 100
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 100

FOOD AND NUTRITION

The food of the United States represents a smorgasbord of cultural influences, from meat-and-potatoes style Anglo-American cuisine to Asian, Mexican, Italian, and Cajun dishes. Regional specialties include shellfish and chowders in the Northeast, where baked beans and corn are also favorites. Southern cooking emphasizes fish, ham, wild game, and barbecued ribs, often served with hominy

grits. In Louisiana spicy Cajun food is found, while the West Coast is noted for the fresh local foods that make up so-called California cuisine, which is heavy on fish and vegetables and prepared in a straightforward manner. Food in the Midwest is deeply influenced by the northern European roots of many of the region's inhabitants, as heavy on cheese, eggs, and dairy products as well as stews and roasted meats. Throughout the United States the standard restaurant fare of steak and a baked potato is still popular. As the nation is the birthplace of such fast-food chains as McDonalds, in accordance with the accelerated pace and carelessness of American life, fast food is particularly popular. Cookies, cakes, pies, and puddings are typical desserts, as is ice-cream. Favorite beverages include tea, coffee, juice, wine, and beer. California is a major producer of quality wines. Microbreweries exist around the country, producing wide ranges of premium beers and ales. Bourbon is the American contribution to the whiskey family.

Undernourishment is not generally a problem in the United States; instead, reliance on processed, fatty foods and fast foods is a major concern. Over one-third of Americans are overweight, and 30 percent are obese, which state leads to numerous health risks. Among children, 13 percent are overweight.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 112.5
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 238.0

STATUS OF WOMEN

Until recent decades, women in the United States did not enjoy equal rights in voting, in the workplace, or in other areas of society. The women's rights movement, strengthened in the 1960s, successfully demanded legal equality with men. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 barred discrimination on the basis of gender as well as race, color, or national origin. In 1966 the National Organization for Women was founded to increase women's political power and influence. Although the effort to add the Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution in 1972 failed to win approval, the following decades brought significant gains in the status of women.

Women have made important advances in business, education, and the professions. Women have also served in prominent positions in Congress, the Supreme Court, the cabinet, and other high government posts. Businesses are hiring growing numbers of women at every level, from factory workers to chief executive officers. Yet, despite these gains, women still have not achieved full equality. In 1999 the average wage for women was

only 76.5 percent of the amount paid to men for the same job. Even women who hold major managerial posts have complained of discrimination, noting the perpetuation of a male-defended “glass ceiling” limiting their salaries and possibilities of advancement.

In 1973 the Supreme Court ruled in a 5–4 decision that states could not ban abortions. Many women considered this a step toward equality, and for a variety of reasons abortion has become a divisive social and political issue.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 15
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.0
 Women’s Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 48.8

WORK

In 2004 the American labor force numbered 147.4 million, including those unemployed but seeking work. Of these, by far the smallest group, at 0.7 percent of the workforce, were those working in agriculture, forestry, and fishing. Manufacturing, extraction, transportation, and crafts accounted for 22.7 percent of workers, sales and office workers 25.5 percent, other service workers 16.3 percent, and managerial, professional, and technical workers 34.9 percent, constituting the largest segment. The unemployment rate in 2004 was 5.5 percent. The leading industries include petroleum, steel, motor vehicles, aerospace, telecommunications, chemicals, electronics, food processing, consumer goods, lumber, and mining.

Income varies widely, depending on region and type of work. In 2003 the national average wage was \$15.27 per hour for nonagricultural workers, with an average workweek of 33.8 hours. Unions have never been strong in the United States, but in the past decades membership numbers have dropped even further. In 2002 only 13.2 percent of wage and salary workers were union members, whereas in 1983 union membership was 20.1 percent. In 2002 there were 34 national labor unions with over 100,000 members, the largest being the National Educational Association, with 2.7 million members as of 2003. The most important union of organized workers is the American Federation of Labor–Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL–CIO), whose affiliated unions had 13 million members as of 2003, down from 14.1 million members in 1992. The largest industrial unions are the United Auto Workers and the Teamsters. The right to strike is restricted under the Taft–Hatley legislation, which stipulates that strikes in so-called essential segments of the economy can be delayed by 90 days for the national interest. Almost half the states have right-

to-work laws, which forbid making union membership a condition of employment. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration monitors workplace safety. The minimum wage in 2005 was \$5.15, not enough to support a person working full time. The minimum work age is 14, the maximum workweek 40 hours.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 147,400,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 46.6
 Labor by Sector %:
 Farming, Forestry, and Fishing: 0.7
 Manufacturing, Extraction, Transportation, and Crafts: 22.7
 Managerial, Professional, and Technical: 34.9
 Sales and Office: 25.5
 Other Services: 16.3
 Unemployment %: 5.5

EDUCATION

Every child in the nation is entitled to a free public education for 12 years. In most public school systems, many children also attend preschool and kindergarten classes. Education is the responsibility of each state and is administered by school boards elected by the voters in each school district.

Primary education may consist of six or eight grades, six grades being more common. Students receive their primary education in elementary school, usually from ages six through 12. The middle school—generally grades seven and eight and possibly also nine—is a transitional school that serves the needs of early adolescents, from ages 12 through 15. Secondary school education begins most commonly at grade nine or 10, depending on whether the school plan is 6–3–3 or 8–4. Most secondary students will have completed their minimum years of compulsory education before graduating from high school. More than three-quarters of students remain in school until they receive their high school diploma at the end of grade 12.

There are three main types of institutions of higher education in the United States. Community colleges offer associate degrees in art or science after two years of study. Public and private colleges and universities offer bachelor of arts or science degrees after four years of study. Graduate education confers master’s and doctorates to students who complete postbachelor study and research. College enrollment increased rapidly between 1980 and 1992, from 12 million to over 14.5 million. In the following years, approximately 15 million students were enrolled in higher education each year.

During the 1990s and into the 2000s there have been attempts at changing the basic educational system. The voucher system is one such plan, whereby parents would receive allowances from public funds if they chose

to place their children in private schools. Critics of this plan contend that only the wealthy would be able to fully afford the accoutrements, including transportation costs, of such private schooling and that the poor would be left behind in underfunded public schools. In 2002, net primary enrollment stood at 92 percent, secondary enrollment 88 percent. In 2001 public expenditures on education equaled 5.7 percent of GDP. The literacy rate among adults was 97 percent in 1999.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 97.0
 Male %: 97.0
 Female %: 97.0
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 15.7
 First Level: Primary Schools: 85,393
 Teachers: 1,677,417
 Students: 24,848,518
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 14.8
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 92.4
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: —
 Teachers: 1,599,303
 Students: 23,854,458
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 14.9
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 88.4
 Third Level: Institutions: 5,758
 Teachers: 1,167,305
 Students: 16,611,711
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 83.2
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 5.7

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The United States has been at the forefront of technology and science since the Second World War. Nuclear research led to the deadly attacks on Japan, with the Manhattan Project and tests in Los Alamos having been carried out during that war. The cold war period led to further scientific military advances, many of which have had everyday applications. The Internet has been one such beneficial by-product. The exploration of space and the work of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration helped to make possible the modern communication age, employing satellites for the rebroadcast of radio signals and allowing for the advent of mobile phones, among other things. The technology revolution of the 1980s was an American export, with firms such as Apple and IBM pioneering the home computer, and others such as Microsoft creating software platforms through which computers could operate.

The Academy of Sciences and the National Institutes of Health (NIH) both sponsor research in a number of fields. Cancer and AIDS research in particular are funded by the NIH. Land-grant colleges across the country carry out research in agriculture. U.S. biotechnology and pharmaceutical research, some done with public funding, also

lead the world. As of 1999 there were 4,526 researchers for every million people. Research and development expenditures equaled 2.7 percent of GDP in 2002.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 4,526
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 2.66
 High-Tech Exports \$billion: 160.2
 Patent Applications by Residents: 198,339

MEDIA

The United States has the largest press in the world, with almost 1,500 daily newspapers. The aggregate circulation of these papers was approximately 56 million copies in 2000, or 196 copies per 1,000 people. The *Wall Street Journal* had the widest national distribution, followed by *USA Today*, the *New York Times*, and the *Los Angeles Times*, all of which enjoyed circulations of over one million. Suburban newspapers composed more than 50 percent of the daily press, while the number of weeklies declined. Press ownership, once dominated by family enterprises, is now largely held by corporations or parts of chains.

Over 21,000 periodicals were published in 1997, ranging from specialized journals to major news magazines. *Time* had a circulation of 4.1 million copies per week, *Newsweek* 3.2 million. The largest mass-circulation publications were the weekly *TV Guide*, which reached an audience of 13.2 million, and the monthly *Reader's Digest*, with a circulation of 15.1 million.

Two of the world's largest news agencies are American: the Associated Press (AP) and United Press International (UPI). The AP is the largest of all global news-gathering organizations.

In 1997 the nation had 3,701 commercial radio AM broadcasting stations and 4,665 FM stations. The four major television networks are ABC, CBS, NBC, and Fox, which have more than 1,000 affiliated or network-owned stations. The Corporation for Public Broadcasting and its PBS television arm and NPR radio system provide commercial-free broadcasting on a wide variety of topics. Cable television has grown rapidly in recent decades, with more than 100 cable networks now broadcasting programs over cable or satellite services. The most popular of these include the all-news CNN, the entertainment channel HBO, and MTV, the pioneer of music television.

Freedom of speech and the press is guaranteed in the constitution. On the whole, the press is free from political control. However, in the years after the 2001 terrorist attacks there was a distinct lack of questioning regarding the government agenda in its war on terrorism. Specifically, little interrogative skepticism was shown with regard to the White House's claims that Iraq held

weapons of mass destruction. During the invasion of Iraq in 2003, the government allowed only certain journalists to be “embedded” with troops, a situation that critics say hampered not only journalists’ news-gathering ability but also their objectivity. Reporters without Borders, a media watchdog group, ranked the United States 23rd among 167 nations in its 2004 press freedom index.

Technological advances have enlarged the definition of traditional media. In 2003 there were 158.7 million cellular telephone users in the United States, while in 2002 there were 159 million Internet users.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 1,476
 Total Circulation million: 55.95
 Circulation per 1,000: 196
 Books Published: 68,175
 Periodicals: 21,000+
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets million: 233
 per 1,000: 844

CULTURE

The United States can truly be spoken of as a melting pot, and this is nowhere better seen than in the culture of the land. From African Americans comes the blues, which evolved from southern spirituals and work songs with the accompaniment of instruments that were sometimes homemade. Many blues musicians migrated north to St. Louis and Chicago, and their style changed as they began recording. Similarly, jazz music was born in New Orleans as a blend of African, European, and local creole musical styles. Black jazz musicians also moved north, to Chicago and New York, where their new style was eventually taken up by white musicians as well. Jewish immigrants, including George and Ira Gershwin, were particularly important to the development of the lyrics and melodies of American musical theater and popular songs. The blues went on to have a great influence on the creation of rock and roll, the most popular musical genre of the late 20th century. Elvis Presley, one of the earliest rock-and-roll stars, became an international symbol of that musical form. Rap and hip-hop, the latest of popular music trends, are also mainly driven by black artists. Elsewhere, a distinctly American form of classical music has evolved, from the works of Aaron Copeland to Philip Glass.

In visual arts, the United States was at the forefront for much of the second half of the 20th century. After World War II the focus of the international art world shifted from Paris to New York, where a group of young American painters, including Jackson Pollock, Mark Rothko, and Willem de Kooning, were creating the first distinct American painting style, abstract expressionism.

Later, the world of art reacted to omnipresent mass media with the send-ups of advertising and mass-produced objects by Andy Warhol and other pop artists. Warhol’s various versions of the original *Campbell’s Soup Can* are now American icons.

The United States has fielded a wide assortment of authors and poets writing on distinctly American aspects and perceptions of life. These authors have included Mark Twain, Walt Whitman, Herman Melville, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Emily Dickinson, Henry James, and Edith Wharton and in the modern era such luminaries as William Faulkner, Ernest Hemingway, F. Scott Fitzgerald, John Steinbeck, Jack Kerouac, Arthur Miller, Saul Bellow, John Updike, and Toni Morrison, many of whom are Nobel Prize winners.

Perhaps the most ubiquitous American cultural creation and export is Hollywood. As the movie capital of the world, Hollywood helped to pioneer the studio system, which made blockbusters possible. From *Birth of a Nation* to *Gone with the Wind* to *Star Wars*, the U.S. movie industry has captured the worldwide market. Television is another American specialty; shows from *The Simpsons* to *The Sopranos* can be seen around the globe.

Such mainstream cultural artifacts do not take into account the quieter cultural achievements of Amerindians, whose connection to the earth and the rhythms of the seasons are evident in their artwork and crafts. Hispanic have also established a distinct culture in parts of the United States, with mariachi music and more popular and contemporary forms of balladeering and song.

Major art collections can be found at museums around the country, including New York’s Metropolitan Museum of Art, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, and Museum of Modern Art (of which there is also one in San Francisco); the Getty Museum, in Los Angeles; and other regional museums in major cities. The Smithsonian Museum, in Washington, D.C., has a huge collection of industrial and technological artifacts.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: 4,609
 Annual Attendance: 352,736
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: 31,640
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: 1,465,000,000

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

American folklore includes myths, legends and tall tales. Various Amerindian tribes had numerous origin myths. The Thunder Bird myth is one of the most widespread

among Amerindians, with the giant bird most often representing a nature deity. Coyote often serves as the creator in myths, or perhaps as a trickster; Raven plays this role for Pacific Northwest tribes. From Hawaii comes Polynesian myths, including that of Hawai'iiki, the fabled original homeland of the Hawaiians and probably of all Polynesians. The myth of Sasquatch, or the bigfoot, is more modern; it deals with a large apelike animal, serving as a sort of missing link, reported to have been seen throughout the forests of the Northwest. Sasquatch is the American version of the yeti, or abominable snowman, of Himalayan legend.

Legends often feature historical figures, many of whom are figures from the founding of the nation. There are tales of George Washington as a boy confessing to cutting down a cherry tree, of Benjamin Franklin discovering the wonders of electricity with his kite, and of Paul Revere riding his horse to warn of the British invasion. Tales of the West are also numerous. Explorers, pioneers, and gunfighters from Davy Crocket to Daniel Boone, Billy the Kid, and Wyatt Earp all make for stirring legends as well as Hollywood action films.

Among tall tales are the stories of the planting wizard Johnny Appleseed; the giant lumberjack Paul Bunyan and his enormous blue ox, Babe; and Pecos Bill, a cowboy who could lasso a tornado.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Television is perhaps the number one free-time activity for most Americans. As of 2001 there were 2.4 televisions per household, and in a given home the television is on for about eight hours per day. Viewing averages range from three hours daily for teens to five hours daily for women over 18. The average home has access to 75 channels; many people gear their schedules around their favorite shows—or make sure to videotape them. Movies are also extremely popular. In 1999 the average annual movie attendance rate was 5.2 times per individual.

Americans are also active, as athletics and physical exercise occupy many people's free time. Popular activities range from basketball to tennis, jogging, cycling, swimming, golf, hiking, surfing, and sailing. A visit to the neighborhood gym or fitness center is often as much a social outing as a physical one. It has been estimated that 40 percent of Americans play a sport at some level.

With more and more states instituting lotteries to help finance education, and with Native Americans allowed to have casinos on reservation land, Americans are increasingly turning to gambling as a free-time activity. Visits to theme parks, including Disneyland, Disney World, and the many Six Flags amusement parks, are also popular, as are vacations to the natural wonders of the United States, including Yellowstone National Park, the

Grand Canyon, and the beaches of the Atlantic and Pacific oceans.

Many Americans follow professional sports, watching games either on television or in person and tracking the progress of their favorite teams in newspapers or online.

ETIQUETTE

In general, Americans have a relaxed system of etiquette. Not as formal as Europeans, they employ outgoing physical gestures, such as the slap on the back, to show conviviality. A firm handshake is the typical greeting, and questions such as "What do you do?" are considered polite icebreakers, whereas in other countries inquiries about one's job might seem impolite. Also, Americans tend to use first names immediately upon meeting others. Social distance, on the other hand, is greater than in other countries. Dining is essentially done with one hand only: the knife is used to cut and then placed back on the dish or table, with the fork then shifted to the dominant hand. The female title "Ms." (used when a woman's marital status is either unknown or irrelevant) is typically used in formal or public situations, instead of either "Miss" (for the unmarried) or "Mrs." (for the married), unless the woman makes a preference clear.

FAMILY LIFE

Most first marriages are contracted when couples are in their 20s. The divorce rate for first marriages is high: Over 50 percent end in divorce. In 2003, the divorce rate was 3.8 per 1,000 population, while the marriage rate was 7.5 per 1,000. Marriage itself is going through a transformation in the United States. Many heterosexual couples simply live together without the legal benefits of marriage, while there is a substantial movement among not just gays and lesbians but the population at large to make homosexual marriage legal. As of 2005, only Massachusetts allowed same-sex marriage; some states have legalized "civil unions" for same-sex couples, while others have passed laws specifically prohibiting such unions, and the issue has sparked contentious social debate. Another social issue that remains divisive is abortion, which was legal as of 2005 but had the potential to be proscribed, pending future appointments to the Supreme Court. It is estimated that for every 100 live births there are 37 abortions.

Family size has steadily shrunk in the United States, though not as drastically as in some western European countries. The usual family size is three to four persons per household; the fertility rate in 2004 was 2.1 children per woman. Birth rates are higher among Hispanics than whites. Also, as in much of the rest of the developed world, women have left behind the stereotyped role of mother

and homemaker to take their place alongside men in the workplace and the professions. This has drastically altered the mechanics of family, with many children forced to engage in after-school activities, attend day care, or come home to an empty house (and remain unsupervised) until a parent arrives home from work.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Dress is generally more casual in the United States than in other developed countries, and, further, dress is more casual on the West Coast than on the East Coast. Business dress remains typically conservative: suits for both men and women. Casual dress includes jeans and T-shirts, which have become ubiquitous all over the world. There are some regional differences in attire: What might be termed the traditional western costume—boots, blue jeans, work shirt, and cowboy hat—is still worn by working men in many parts of the West. Tattoos and body piercings have become commonplace, and not just among youth. Many youths and men and some women wear baseball caps. Prominent logos are typical on clothing and sports shoes, and designer names serve as status symbols for many.

SPORTS

The most popular sports in the United States are American football (as opposed to soccer, which is referred to as football everywhere else in the world), basketball, and baseball. These three sports each have championships that command large television audiences. Football's Super Bowl attracts even nonfans to see the halftime shows as well as the commercials being aired for the first time during the game. The National Basketball Association's playoffs and Major League Baseball's World Series are also major sporting events.

Other popular spectator sports include ice hockey, golf, and tennis. Recently, the United States initiated a professional soccer league and has become more competitive in World Cup competition. Most sports are participatory as well as spectator sports, though participation drops sharply beyond the well-organized high school and college levels. Many enjoy hunting and fishing or activities such as bowling and billiards.

CHRONOLOGY

1945 President Franklin D. Roosevelt dies and is succeeded in office by Vice President Harry S. Truman; the United States drops the world's first atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki; World War II ends; the United States becomes a charter member of the United Nations.

- 1947** Truman Doctrine pledges U.S. aid for nations threatened by Communism; the cold war between Western powers and the Soviet Union begins in earnest.
- 1948** Soviets blockade all ground traffic from West Germany to Berlin, and airlifts begin; Congress passes the Marshall Plan; Truman wins an upset victory over Republican candidate Thomas E. Dewey.
- 1949** The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation is formed; the Soviet Union ends its blockade of Berlin; Truman announces the Point Four aid program for less-developed countries.
- 1950** North Korea attacks South Korea, and the United States intervenes on behalf of South Korea; when U.S. forces advance into North Korea, China comes to the aid of North Korea, repelling U.S. forces; Senator Joseph McCarthy begins his attacks on government members for treason and for "coddling" Communism.
- 1951** Truman dismisses the army's General Douglas MacArthur, still in Korea, for proposing that the United States attack China.
- 1952** Dwight D. Eisenhower, of the Republican Party, is elected president, breaking a 20-year Democratic hold on the presidency.
- 1953** The Korean War ends, as an armistice is negotiated at the 38th parallel.
- 1954** U.S. Supreme Court rules that segregation in public schools is unconstitutional; the United States explodes the first hydrogen bomb; the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) is formed; the Central Intelligence Agency helps to overthrow Guatemala's leftist government.
- 1955** Middle East Treaty Organization is formed.
- 1957** The Soviet Union launches Sputnik into space, beginning the space race; the Eisenhower Doctrine commits the United States to assisting anti-Communist Middle East countries.
- 1959** Communist ideologue Fidel Castro captures power in Cuba.
- 1960** The Soviet Union shoots down U.S. U-2 spy plane; Democrat John F. Kennedy wins the White House in a close race with Richard M. Nixon, a Republican.
- 1961** Kennedy launches the abortive Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba; Kennedy proposes the Alliance for Progress for Latin America; the Peace Corps begins operations; Soviets build the Berlin Wall.
- 1962** In the Cuban missile crisis, the United States blockades Cuba and compels Soviets to withdraw their missiles.
- 1963** The Atomic Test-Ban Treaty is signed; Kennedy is assassinated, and Vice President Lyndon B. Johnson succeeds to the presidency.

- 1964** Congress passes the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, committing the United States to the defense of South Vietnam; Congress passes the Civil Rights Act.
- 1965** The United States begins bombing North Vietnam and sends U.S. land forces to South Vietnam; President Johnson is reelected.
- 1968** Civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. is assassinated; Senator Robert F. Kennedy is assassinated; Richard M. Nixon is elected president over Democratic candidate Hubert H. Humphrey; the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty is signed.
- 1969** U.S. astronaut Neil Armstrong lands on the moon.
- 1970** The Senate repeals the Gulf of Tonkin resolution; the U.S. invasion of Cambodia sparks widespread protests, which intensify after National Guard soldiers kill four students at Kent State University, in Ohio.
- 1972** President Nixon visits Beijing, beginning a normalization of relations with China after more than two decades of hostility; Nixon wins reelection in a landslide over George S. McGovern; police arrest five men who had broken into the Democratic Party's national headquarters at the Watergate complex in Washington, D.C.
- 1973** Belligerents in Vietnam sign a peace agreement; the United States and China informally resume diplomatic relations; Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries quadruples oil prices; over Nixon's veto, Congress passes the War Powers Resolution, which limits presidential authority to send troops into combat without congressional consent; Vice President Spiro T. Agnew resigns under threat of indictment and is replaced by Gerald R. Ford, the first vice president to be chosen under the 1968 Presidential Succession Act.
- 1974** As the Watergate affair becomes a major national crisis, Nixon resigns office in disgrace; Ford becomes president, with Nelson A. Rockefeller as vice president.
- 1975** South Vietnam collapses and a unified Vietnam is established; Cambodia falls to the Khmer Rouge.
- 1976** Democrat Jimmy Carter is elected president.
- 1977** President Carter signs Panama Canal treaties, promising to relinquish control of the Canal Zone in 2000 and reserving the right to intervene to protect the canal's neutrality.
- 1978** The former enemies Israel and Egypt reach a "framework for peace" at Camp David; the shah is overthrown in Iran; a Soviet-inspired coup occurs in Afghanistan.
- 1979** The United States officially recognizes the People's Republic of China and breaks off diplomatic relations with Taiwan; in retaliation against U.S. actions in support of the shah, Islamic militants seize the U.S. embassy in Tehran, taking 53 Americans hostage.
- 1980** Protesting Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, the United States embargoes shipments of feed grains and high technology to the Soviet Union and boycotts the Moscow Summer Olympics; Ronald Reagan, of the Republican Party, defeats Jimmy Carter in the presidential election.
- 1981** U.S. hostages in Tehran are freed moments after Reagan takes office; Reagan announces a plan to rebuild U.S. military power.
- 1983** Terrorists in Beirut kill 241 U.S. Marines; U.S. forces invade Grenada and depose its Marxist government.
- 1984** Reagan is reelected with the second-largest electoral college margin in U.S. history; U.S. Marines are withdrawn from Lebanon; Congress cuts off military assistance to Nicaraguan contras.
- 1987** Congress holds hearings on the Iran-Contra scandal, exposing White House involvement in illegal shipments of arms to Iran and of arms and money to the Nicaraguan contra guerrillas.
- 1988** Vice President George H. W. Bush is elected president.
- 1991** The Soviet Union collapses.
- 1991** Bush assembles a UN force to expel Iraqi forces from Kuwait in the Persian Gulf War.
- 1992** The United States and Russia sign a treaty formally ending the cold war; Bill Clinton, of the Democratic Party, is elected president.
- 1994** Congress narrowly passes a bill to cut \$500 billion from the deficit over five years; independent counsel investigates whether Clinton committed any wrongdoing by investing in Whitewater, a real-estate development, when he was governor of Arkansas; in legislative elections, the Republican Party wins control of both houses of Congress.
- 1996** Two partial federal government shutdowns take place after Clinton and Congress fail to agree on a budget; welfare-reform and minimum-wage-increase bills are approved; federal spending remains within budgeted projections for the first time since 1969; Clinton is reelected.
- 1998** The Whitewater investigation concludes without producing charges against Clinton; independent counsel charges that Clinton lied under oath about an extramarital affair; voting along party lines, Congress impeaches Clinton, making him the first elected president in U.S. history to be

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- impeached; Republicans lose seats in legislative elections.
- 2000** In February, the economy surpasses its previous record for the longest uninterrupted economic expansion in U.S. history; after a close race and confusion over the proper counting of votes in the state of Florida, Republican candidate George W. Bush, son of former president George H. W. Bush, becomes president.
- 2001** In response to the terrorist attacks on New York City and Washington, D.C., the United States leads a military campaign in Afghanistan, as backed by an international coalition; Enron, a giant energy company, is declared bankrupt in December after massive false accounting is revealed.
- 2002** A second major round of tax cuts is pushed through Congress, despite increased military spending requirements for what the Bush administration terms the “war on terror”; Department of Homeland Security is signed into law in November.
- 2003** Space shuttle *Columbia* breaks up upon reentering earth’s atmosphere, killing all seven astronauts aboard; the United States and several allies, including the United Kingdom, invade Iraq, accusing the Iraqi leader, Saddam Hussein, of stockpiling weapons of mass destruction; no such weapons are found after the conflict ends; insurgency efforts, however, continue; in August, the biggest power blackout in North American history hits cities in the north and east.
- 2004** Saddam Hussein is captured in Iraq, while weapons of mass destruction remain undiscovered; a Senate report declares that the United States and its allies went to war in Iraq on “flawed” information; Bush wins the presidential election with 51 percent of the popular vote.
- 2005** President Bush is sworn into his second term of office; he proposes an overhaul of Social Security to avert a predicted shortfall in coming decades.
More than 1,600 people die and the city of New Orleans is flooded when Hurricane Katrina, one of the most destructive storms in U.S. history, sweeps through golf coast states.

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<http://www.fedstats.gov/>
- Supreme Court of the United States
<http://www.supremecourtus.gov/>
- U.S. Census Bureau
<http://www.census.gov>
- U.S. Government Legislative Branch
<http://thomas.loc.gov/home/legbranch/legbranch.html>

URUGUAY

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Eastern Republic of Uruguay (República Oriental del Uruguay)

ABBREVIATION

UY

CAPITAL

Montevideo

HEAD OF STATE & HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

President Tabaré Ramón Vázquez Rosas (from 2005)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Constitutional democracy

POPULATION

3,415,920 (2005)

AREA

176,220 sq km (68,039 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Europeans of Spanish or Italian descent

LANGUAGE

Spanish

RELIGION

Roman Catholicism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Uruguayan peso

NATIONAL FLAG

Nine horizontal stripes of alternating color, five white and four blue, with the Sun of May, a golden sun with 16 rays, of

which eight are wavy and eight straight, in a white canton on the upper hoist side

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A quartered elliptical badge on which are displayed, clockwise from the upper left, golden scales of justice on a blue field; the green cerro, or mountain island of Montevideo, over a blue-and-white wavy sea, with a white sky; a brown longhorn bull on a blue field; and a golden stallion on a white field. The badge is flanked by olive and laurel branches tied at the base with a light blue ribbon. A golden Sun of May rises over the top.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Orientales, la Patria o la Tumba” (Easterners, Our Country or Death)

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year’s Day), January 6 (Epiphany), April 19 (Landing of the 33 Patriots), May 1 (Labor Day), May 18 (Battle of Las Piedras), June 19 (Birthday of General Artigas), July 18 (Constitution Day), August 25 (National Day, Independence Day), October 12 (Discovery of America Day), All Souls’ Day (November 2), December 8 (Blessing of the Waters), December 25 (Christmas), also Carnival Week (February/March) and Tourist Week (Holy Week)

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

August 25, 1828

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

November 27, 1966; effective February 1967; suspended June 27, 1973; constitutional reforms approved by plebiscite November 26, 1989, and January 7, 1997

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Uruguay is in the southeastern part of the South American continent, east of the Uruguay River, with a total land area of 176,220 sq km (68,039 sq mi). Its Atlantic coastline stretches 660 km (410 mi). Uruguay shares its international land boundary of 1,564 km (972 mi) with two neighbors: Argentina and Brazil.

Southern Uruguay is an extension of the Argentine pampas and northern Uruguay an extension of the basaltic plateau of Brazil. In between, the country consists of a

rolling plateau whose most prominent features are ranges of low hills known as *cuchillas*, none of which is over 500 m (1,600 ft). The two major *cuchillas* are Cuchilla Grande and Cuchilla de Haedo.

Uruguay can claim only partial title to the river that bears its name, while the Río de la Plata, to the southwest, is actually an estuary of the Atlantic Ocean (and is considered by many nations as an international waterway). The longest of the internal rivers is the Río Negro, which rises in Brazil and bisects the country as it flows southward to join the Río Uruguay. The Río Negro’s main tributary is

Uruguay



the Río Yi, which rises in the Cuchilla Grande. Among the rivers flowing east is the Río Cebollatí, which flows into the country's largest lake, Laguna Merín.

Land Use %	
Arable Land:	7.4
Permanent Crops:	0.2
Forest:	7.4
Other:	85.0

Geography

Area sq km: 176,220; sq mi 68,039
 World Rank: 88th
 Land Boundaries, km: Argentina 579; Brazil 985
 Coastline, km: 660
 Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Atlantic Ocean 0
 Highest: Cerro Catedral 514

Population of Principal Cities (2004)

Montevideo	1,269,648
Salto	99,072

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Weather conditions in Uruguay are uniformly temperate, but the absence of high relief causes some variations. The average temperature in June, the coolest month, is about 10°C (50°F), while the average in January, the warmest month, is 23°C (74°F). Rainfall, evenly distributed throughout the year, averages 1,090 mm (36 in), varying from 910 mm (30 in) in Punta del Este to 1,270 mm (50 in) in Artigas, the northernmost department.

The prevailing wind systems are the *zonda*, a hot wind blowing from the north in summer, and the *pampero*, a chilly wind blowing from the south in the winter.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature

June: 50°F

January: 74°F

Average Rainfall: 36 in

Punta del Este: 30 in

Artigas: 50 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Basically an extension of the pampas, or prairies, of Argentina, much of the landmass of Uruguay is covered in tall grass. However, this open grazing land has gradually been lost to enclosed pasturage, with vegetation cultivated rather than wild. The very little forestland that exists is found mainly along rivers and streams; alder and ombú, a rather short and treelike plant, are the major flora of these forests. Other tree species include acacia, pine, poplar, willow, eucalyptus, carob, and quebracho, a hardwood. Palm trees are also indigenous. Smaller plants include myrtle, rosemary, verbena, and myrtle.

Much of the eastern region of the country is void of large animal life. Pumas and jaguars can be found in remote locations. Animals that are more widespread include armadillos, foxes, deer, otters, nutrias, wildcats, and numerous types of rodents. Venomous spiders are relatively common, and some venomous snakes are also present. Bird life is particularly varied, including the ovenbird, partridge, crow, quail, hummingbird, and cardinal on the plains. At lagoons can be found birds such as the swan, royal duck, and *aveztruz*, a small ostrich. Cranes, white herons, and flamingos are also relatively common. Fish species include the pompano and salmon.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 3,415,920

World Rank: 128th

Density per sq km: 19.3

% of annual growth (1999-2003): 0.5

Male %: 48.7

Female %: 51.3

Urban %: 91.9

Age Distribution %: 0-14: 23.2

15-64: 63.6

65 and over: 13.2

Population 2025: 3,675,000

Birth Rate per 1,000: 14.09

Death Rate per 1,000: 9.06

Rate of Natural Increase %: 0.5

Total Fertility Rate: 1.91

Expectation of Life (years): Males 72.92

Females 79.45

Marriage Rate per 1,000: 4.2

Divorce Rate per 1,000: 2.0

Average Size of Households: 3.3

Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

The Uruguayan population is predominantly European, as fed by successive waves of immigrants from almost all European countries in the 19th century. Criollos, descendants of Spanish settlers generally found in the northern interior, constitute the core ethnic group. There is very little to distinguish criollos from later immigrants, particularly Italians, who form the next most prevalent subgroup in the population. Approximately 54 percent of the European majority is of Spanish origin, while 22 percent is of Italian origin. Other Europeans represented in the population are French, German, British, and Sephardic and Ashkenazic Jews. Small colonies of Slavs, Armenians, Lebanese, and Syrians also contribute to the ethnic variety.

Through intermarriage and deliberate extermination, the pure-blooded Amerindian community has become practically extinct. Some of their ethnic characteristics survive in the mestizo population, which represents about 8 percent of the total population and is concentrated in the northern interior. The mestizos are descendants of the nomadic Charrúa and Chana tribes.

During the late 18th and 19th centuries blacks constituted as much as 20 percent of the population, but their numbers have dwindled. By the end of the 20th century blacks, including mulattoes, constituted some 4 percent of the population.

LANGUAGES

Spanish, the official language, is spoken by virtually all Uruguayans. The Spanish spoken in Uruguay is almost identical to that of Buenos Aires, called *porteño* or Río Platense. The accent is characterized by the linguistic trait known as *yeísmo*, in which vowels are thickened, a marked deviation from classical Spanish. The language also includes words and idioms derived or borrowed

from the many immigrant communities as well as from Quechua and Guaraní. Near the northern Brazilian border, over 70 percent of the inhabitants are bilingual in Spanish and Portuguese, and in some border towns Portuguese is spoken exclusively. This bilingualism has fostered a border dialect called *dialecto fronterizo*, in which Portuguese and Spanish elements are combined.

English is the most popular second language, having displaced French, which was the traditional language of the elite before World War II.

RELIGIONS

Uruguay is perhaps the most secularized nation in Latin America as a result of the unremitting anticlerical efforts of the Colorado Party, which dominated Uruguayan politics for nearly a century. Church and state were separated by the constitution of 1919, culminating the campaign for secularization waged by the Uruguayan social reformer and president José Batlle y Ordóñez. While the church was allowed to retain its ecclesiastical properties, religious instruction is not permitted in public schools, divorce is legal, and civil marriages are compulsory.

Nevertheless, Roman Catholicism remains the national religion, and the imprint of religious beliefs remains strong, especially in the interior. The ratio of priests to laity is high compared to that in other Latin American countries, but over half of all priests live in Montevideo, and many of the interior rural settlements may be visited by priests only once or twice yearly.

About 2 percent of the population is Protestant, as divided among nearly 25 different sects and denominations. Protestant faiths also have high minister-to-laity ratios, and nearly half of adherents attend church on Sundays. Although Protestant missionary efforts suffer from associations with foreign countries, Protestantism has developed significant appeal among the middle and lower classes.

Since the Second Vatican Council, relations between Catholics and Protestants have been harmonious. Jews, estimated to number 34,000, constitute the second-largest religious minority.

Religious Affiliations

Roman Catholic	2,254,500
Protestant	68,300
Jewish	34,200
Nonprofessing or Other	1,058,900

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The earliest inhabitants of Uruguay were the Charrúa and Chana Indians, estimated to number between 5,000 and 10,000 upon the arrival of the Europeans. The earliest

European settlers were Jesuit and Franciscan missionaries. From 1680, when the Portuguese founded Colonia de Sacramento as a rival to Buenos Aires on the eastern bank of the Río de la Plata, to 1828, when Uruguay achieved independence, the country was a battleground between Argentina and Brazil. Uruguay eventually became part of the new viceroyalty of Buenos Aires, established in 1776. In 1815 José Gervasio Artigas declared Uruguay's independence, but the next year the country was invaded by Brazil. After a four-year struggle Uruguay was annexed to Brazil as Cisplatine Province. In 1825 Juan Antonio Lavalleja secretly returned to Uruguay from Argentina at the head of the so-called 33 Immortals and resumed the struggle for independence. That struggle ended in 1828 with a peace treaty in which Uruguay's independence was acknowledged by both Argentina and Brazil.

Uruguay has a long democratic tradition and one of the oldest political party systems in the world; the Colorado and Blanco parties trace their origins to the early 19th century. For nearly a century the Colorados held power, with the Blancos in opposition. The foundations of modern Uruguay were laid during the presidencies of José Batlle y Ordóñez (1903–07, 1911–15), who initiated an extensive welfare program and the development of a mixed economy. The Colorados lost power in 1958 but regained control in 1966.

Beginning in the 1950s the economy entered a period of decline from which it had yet to recover as of the early 2000s. Prolonged inflation, economic stagnation, and political corruption contributed to the rise in the 1960s of a leftist urban terrorist group known as the Tupamaros. The army was used to combat the Tupamaros, and by 1972 they had been neutralized. Disgusted with the inability of civilian governments to deal with Uruguay's problems, the military began to actively intervene in politics for the first time in the 20th century: In 1973 the legislature was dissolved and all leftist political parties outlawed. In 1975 all remaining parties were proscribed, and in 1976 the president was deposed and virtually all prominent political figures were stripped of their political rights for 15 years. Repression was severe, and the torture of political prisoners was common.

In an attempt to institutionalize and legitimize its rule, the military proposed a new constitution in 1980 that would give it a legal veto over all major public policies. The ban on political activity was partially lifted, and the document was presented for ratification in a national plebiscite in November 1980. Despite government harassment, elements of long-suppressed political parties defeated the measure. Stunned by the defeat, the military retained control of the government but began negotiations with major parties to allow the gradual liberalization of the political process. A transitional president was installed in 1981, and legislative and presidential voting was held in November 1984. The moderate Colorado candidate Julio María Sanguinetti Coirolo took office in 1985. Among his first acts were the

release of all political prisoners and the granting of amnesty to former military and police officials accused of human rights violations, in an effort to restore national unity.

The 1989 presidential and government elections resulted in a victory for the Blanco Party—its first since 1962. The party did not achieve a majority in congress, however, and president-elect Luis Alberto Lacalle de Herrera was forced to forge an agreement with the Colorado Party, receiving support for economic reform in return for the appointment of four Colorado members to the Council of Ministers.

In 1994 the Colorado Party returned to power under Julio María Sanguinetti. Given the narrow legislative majority held by his party, Sanguinetti installed a coalition government. In November 1999 Jorge Batlle Ibañez, also of the Colorado Party, was elected president, though he faced a strong challenge from the Broad Front's Tabaré Vázquez, the former leftist mayor of Montevideo.

The economy was a major concern during the term of Batlle Ibañez. From the late 1990s the country's economy had been particularly set back by crises in the economies of its major trading partners, Brazil and Argentina. Several years of recession turned into a severe crisis in 2002, and a general strike was called to protest government policies. In 2003 Batlle Ibañez announced that the government would compensate the families of victims of the 1976–85 military dictatorship as well as the families of the guerrilla groups that opposed it.

In 2004 Uruguay's economic difficulties played a part in Tabaré Vázquez's emerging victorious in the presidential election, with a runoff proving unnecessary. Vázquez became the first leftist president in Uruguayan history, and his Broad Front coalition won majorities in both legislative houses. Shortly after being sworn in in 2005, Vázquez signed an energy-cooperation deal with his Venezuelan counterpart, Hugo Chavez; renewed diplomatic relations with Cuba, which had been severed in 2002; completed agreements on human rights with Argentine leader Nestor Kirchner; and held talks with Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva. Uruguay became the fifth Latin American nation to move to the left in recent years.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

President

1967	Óscar Diego Gestido Pose
1967–72	Jorge Pacheco Areco
1972–76	Juan María Bordaberry Aroceno
1976	Pedro Alberto Demicheli Lizaso (acting)
1976–81	Aparicio Méndez Manfredini
1981–85	Gregorio Conrado Álvarez Armellino
1985	Rafael José Addiego Bruno (acting)
1985–90	Julio María Sanguinetti Coirolo
1990–95	Luis Alberto Lacalle de Herrera
1995–2000	Julio María Sanguinetti Coirolo

2000–05 Jorge Luis Batlle Ibañez
2005– Tabaré Ramón Vázquez Rosas

CONSTITUTION

Since independence Uruguay has had five constitutions: those of 1830, 1917, 1934, 1952, and 1967. While the presidency remained in place, the country was governed by decree by the senior officers of the armed forces from 1973 through 1984. In 1985 the country returned to a presidentially directed, unitary state, with a bicameral legislature.

Executive power is vested in the president, who is assisted by a vice president and an appointed cabinet of 12 members. The president is elected by universal suffrage for a term of five years.

Legislative power is vested in a bicameral congress. Suffrage is universal over age 18, and the government maintains the National Civic Register, listing all eligible voters.

In accordance with a 1984 agreement between the government and the military, the commanders of the army, navy, and air force participate in the advisory National Defense Council, which also includes the president, vice president, and defense, foreign, and interior ministers. The council's actions are subject to the approval of the legislature. Other provisions of the 1984 act require the president to appoint military commanders from a list presented by the armed forces, limit the scope of military justice to crimes committed by members of the armed forces, and preclude the declaration of a state of siege without legislative approval.

PARLIAMENT

Under the constitution of 1967 and reforms of 1989 and 1997, the congress, called the General Assembly, consists of a 30-member Chamber of Senators and a 99-member Chamber of Representatives.

Both senators and representatives are directly elected for five-year terms. The senators are elected through a system of proportional representation. Elections are conducted under the supervision of the Electoral Court, which consists of nine members, five of whom are designated by the General Assembly by a two-thirds majority, four by the General Assembly as party representatives.

The functions of the General Assembly include the election of the members of the Supreme Court and the Electoral Court.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Uruguay has a vigorous multiparty political system that has been dominated by two traditional parties: the radical, anticlerical, liberal Colorado Party and the relatively

conservative Blanco, or National, Party. (Both parties derive their names from the colors of their flags in the 1836 civil war.) Neither the Colorados nor Blancos are disciplined political groups in the conventional sense but rather are broad alliances, called *lemas*, of factions called *sublemas*. Each *sublema* has its own leaders and organizational structure but presents a united front with other *sublemas* at election times. The Colorado Party was in power from 1865 to 1958 and is identified with the social-welfare system, secularism, and urban cosmopolitanism that distinguish modern Uruguay.

The Blanco Party represents conservative, rural, and clerical elements and also favors a more isolationist foreign policy. For the greater part of the 20th century the Blanco Party functioned as a loyal opposition. It held power only briefly, from 1958 to 1962 and from 1989 to 1994.

The Broad Front, a coalition of left and center-left parties, was founded in 1971. (It regrouped as the Progressive Encounter Coalition in 1994 but reassumed its original name in the late 1990s.) In the 2004 elections the Broad Front swept the presidency and both houses of the General Assembly, taking 50.7 percent in the initial presidential election (making a runoff unnecessary). The Broad Front won 52 seats in the Chamber of Representatives and 16 in the Chamber of Senators. The Colorado Party won 10 representatives' seats and three senators' seats, while the Blancos took 36 representatives' seats and 11 senators' seats. The Independent Party won one representative's seat. The next elections are scheduled for 2009.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For purposes of local government Uruguay is divided into 19 departments.

Under the constitution of 1967 each department is administered by an *intendente*, who serves as the mayor of the capital city of the department and governor of the rest of the territory. *Intendentes* are elected by direct popular vote for five-year terms and can be reelected only once. Each department has a unicameral legislature, the departmental junta, with 31 members elected for four-year terms. Towns outside departmental capitals have local five-member juntas.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The Uruguayan legal system is based on Spanish civil law. The judiciary is headed by the Supreme Court, which has general administrative control over the entire judicial system and the power to declare laws unconstitutional. Under the constitution the Supreme Court has five judges appointed for 10-year terms by a two-thirds vote among

the full membership of the General Assembly. Judges are eligible for reelection only after five-year intervals.

Under the Supreme Court are four appellate courts, three for civil cases and one for criminal cases, all in Montevideo and each with three judges. These courts hear appeals from a series of lawyer-courts, or *juzgados letrados*, presided over by lawyer-judges, or *jueces letrados*. These include 36 courts sitting in Montevideo and departmental courts in the capitals of each of the 19 departments. The Montevideo courts include 18 courts of first instance, three financial courts, five criminal instruction courts, six crime courts, three juvenile courts, and one customs court. Each of the 224 judicial divisions of the country has a justice-of-the-peace court.

Full autonomy within the judiciary returned with the election of the Sanguinetti government, when military officers who had been appointed to the Supreme Court or the higher appellate courts retired from their posts. According to the constitution of 1967, all trials shall be public, and trials by commission or in absentia are prohibited. Each trial must be opened by a public statement of the charge by a public prosecutor or complaining witness. Uruguayan legal tradition calls for judges, without the use of juries, to hand down decisions on the basis of written summaries not available to the public.

The judiciary is relatively independent, but escalating crime, particularly street violence and organized crime, has led to severe backlogs. Suspects under arrest often spend more time in jail awaiting trial than they would were they to be convicted and serve the maximum sentence for their crime.

HUMAN RIGHTS

In terms of civil and political rights, Uruguay is classified as a free country.

Uruguay's political transition in the mid-1980s brought with it dramatic improvements in the area of human rights. Accusations of political killings, torture, and disappearances ceased. Restrictive laws and acts passed under military rule were repealed, and the constitution of 1967, which guarantees habeas corpus and freedom from arbitrary arrest, was reinstated. Congress set up commissions to handle issues of restitution for those who had lost their jobs because of political activities and to investigate violations of human rights that occurred during the military regime. In general, Uruguayans enjoyed a freedom and openness in political life that they had not experienced since the late 1960s, and they responded with high levels of civic consciousness and political involvement. The Transparency Law, which went into effect in 1999, criminalizes a broad range of potential abuses of power by governmental officeholders, including the laundering of funds related to public corruption cases.

FOREIGN POLICY

Uruguay is a founding member of the Organization of American States, the Latin American Free Trade Association, and other hemispheric organizations. In 1991 Uruguay became a full member of Mercosur, the Southern Cone Common Market, along with its neighbors Brazil and Argentina. Disputes with Brazil over regional free trade and with Argentina over specific human rights issues festering since the 1970s dominated Uruguayan political debate in 2003.

DEFENSE

The Uruguayan defense structure is headed by the president as commander in chief.

There is no conscription. Military manpower is obtained through the voluntary enlistment of males between the ages of 18 and 45, who serve for one or two years.

Since the 1870s the Uruguayan armed forces have not participated in any military action. Their present strength is designed only for domestic peacekeeping, as the nation does not face any foreseeable external threats.

Uruguay's defense production is limited to naval supplies. Defense spending in 2004 was \$258 million, or 2 percent of gross domestic product (GDP). Troop strength in 2003 was around 25,000 active personnel.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 24,900
 Military Manpower Availability: 764,408
 Military Expenditures \$million: 257.5
 as % of GDP: 2.0
 as % of central government expenditures: —
 Arms Imports \$million: 11
 Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

Uruguay's economy is characterized by an export-oriented agricultural sector, a well-educated workforce, relatively even income distribution, and high levels of social spending. After averaging growth of 5 percent annually in 1996–98, in 1999–2000 the economy suffered from lower demand in Argentina and Brazil, which together account for over one-quarter of Uruguay's exports. Despite the severity of the trade shocks and ensuing recession, Uruguay's financial indicators remained more stable than those of its neighbors, reflecting its solid reputation among investors and its investment-grade sovereign bond rating—one of only two in Latin America. Challenges for the government of President Jorge Batlle Ibañez included expanding trade ties beyond

Mercosur trade partners and bolstering competitiveness by increasing labor market flexibility and reducing the costs of public services. By 2002, with cumulative GDP having dropped 20 percent in the previous four years, the economic downturn had turned into a severe crisis; banks were closed for a time, and intervention by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) was necessary to halt a major run on the nation's currency.

The economy grew by about 10 percent in 2004 as a result of high commodity prices for Uruguayan exports, the weakness of the dollar against the euro, growth in the region, low international interest rates, and greater export competitiveness. The new leftist president, Tabaré Vázquez, immediately proposed new welfare measures and shored up relations with other left-leaning neighboring countries upon taking office in 2005.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 49.27
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 14,500
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: –3.2
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: –3.8
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 7.9
 Industry: 27.4
 Services: 64.8
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 73
 Government Consumption: 12
 Gross Domestic Investment: 9.6
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 2.2
 Imports: 2.071
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 3.7
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 25.8
 CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
180.0	188.6	196.8	224.3	267.8

Finance

National Currency: Uruguayan Peso (UYU)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = UYU 28.704
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 14.3
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 316.01
 Total External Debt \$billion: 12.8
 Debt Service Ratio %: 23.05
 Balance of Payments \$million: 181.8
 International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 2.08
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
 7.6

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 16.8
 per capita \$: 5.00
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 274.6

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$billion: 3.332
 Expenditures \$billion: 3.787
 Budget Deficit \$million: 455
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 7.9
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 0.4
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 2.54
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 13.5
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 99.2
 Total Farmland % of land area: 7.4
 Livestock: Cattle million: 11.7
 Chickens million: 13.3
 Pigs 000: 240
 Sheep million: 9.78
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 6
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 108.8

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 2.11
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 22.0

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 743
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 2.2
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 654
 Net Energy Imports % of use: 50.6
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 2.1
 Production kW-hr billion: 9.1
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 7.2
 Coal Reserves tons million: —
 Production tons 000: —
 Consumption tons 000: 2.6
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
 Production cubic feet billion: —
 Consumption cubic feet billion: 0.7
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
 Production barrels 000 per day: —
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 31
 Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 2.071
 Exports \$billion: 2.2
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): –3.3
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): –7.8
 Balance of Trade \$million: 181.8

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Argentina %	21.3	6.4
Brazil %	17.1	19.4
United States %	12.3	18.0
China %	6.9	—
Russia %	5.1	—
Germany %	—	6.6

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 8,983
 Paved %: 90.0
 Automobiles: 652,000
 Trucks and Buses: 56,000
 Railroad: Track Length km: 2,073
 Passenger-km million: 9
 Freight-km million: 239
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 11
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 10.3
 Airports: 64
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 577
 Length of Waterways km: 1,600

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 1.42
 Number of Tourists from 000: 495
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 406
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 236

Communications

Telephones 000: 946.5
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones 000: 652
 Personal Computers 000: 370
 Internet Hosts per million people: 25,653
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 117

ENVIRONMENT

Uruguay has been working with Brazil to monitor and minimize transboundary pollution caused by Brazilian border-region power plants. The waterways of the country are threatened by pollution from meat-packing and tannery industry operations and inadequate waste disposal.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 7.4
 Forest Change (1990–2000) hectares 000: 50
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 0
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: 16,362
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 1.63

LIVING CONDITIONS

The UN 2004 Human Development Report ranked Uruguay 46th out of 177 countries in terms of life expectancy, education, and standard of living. The average Uruguayan's life expectancy in 2005 was 76.1 years, and literacy stood at 98 percent in 2003. The nation's percent of eligible students enrolled in primary, secondary, and tertiary schools in 2002 was the 39th highest in the world, at 85 percent. Per capita GDP was \$14,500 in 2004.

As of 2000, 92 percent of Uruguay's population lived in urban areas. Montevideo is the largest city and the capital; its 2004 population was about 1.27 million. There, high-rise apartments dominate the skyline, though many people live in small houses and squatter settlements around the outskirts.

Agriculture is the main source of employment for those living in the country, mostly on large-scale farms called *estancias*. The gauchos, or cowboys who tend the herds of cattle, tend to live in simple communal housing on the farms where they work. Others have simple lodging in the countryside, mostly made of adobe. Though income distribution and the disparity between rich and poor is not as extreme in Uruguay as it is elsewhere in South America, there are still large disparities between the urban and rural populations.

HEALTH

Uruguay is known as having become the first "welfare state" in Latin America, with well-organized health, social security, and public education. With declining revenues, the largely publicly funded health-care system has added a significant private aspect in the form of *mutuales*, or private health plans. Life expectancy is high, at 76.1 years in 2005, and the infant mortality rate is relatively low for the region, at 12 per 1,000 live births in 2005. The ratio of doctors to the population is good, at 365 per 100,000 in 2004. In 2002, 98 percent of the population had access to safe drinking water and 94 percent had adequate sanitation.

The major causes of death are heart diseases, cancer, and digestive disorders. Degenerative diseases rank higher as a cause of death in Uruguay than in most other Latin American countries. Tuberculosis, once a leading cause of death, has almost been eradicated. On the other hand, about one-third of men smoke, leading to respiratory and heart problems as well as increased rates of cancer. The 2001 HIV/AIDS prevalence rate was 0.3 percent, with fewer than 500 deaths from the disease. In 2002, 99 percent of children under one were immunized for tuberculosis, 91 percent for measles. Total expenditures on health care are high, at 10 percent of GDP in 2003.

Health

Number of Physicians:	12,384
Number of Dentists:	3,936
Number of Nurses:	2,880
Number of Pharmacists:	—
Physician Density per 100,000 people:	365
Hospital Beds per 1,000:	—
Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births:	11.95
Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births:	27
Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP:	10.0
Health Expenditures per capita \$:	361
HIV Infected % of adults:	0.3
Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:	
DPT:	91
Measles:	95
Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %:	94
Access to Improved Water Source %:	98

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Meat is not only an export staple but also a dietary staple. Beef is the primary meat, with the typical beef platter, *parrillada*, the national dish. Grilled steak is called *churrasco*. The steak sandwich, *chivito* (topped with bacon, eggs, cheese, tomatoes and lettuce), is also popular, as are *olímpicos* (club sandwiches) and *húngaros* (spicy sausages wrapped in hot dog rolls). Barbecuing or grilling is a favorite mode of preparation. Pastas are eaten, a signature of the Italians who form part of the ethnic mix. Stews are also popular.

Drinks include black tea and herb tea, or yerba maté, as well as wine and beer. *Clericó* is a mixture of white wine and fruit juice, and *medio y medio* is part sparkling wine and part white wine.

Undernourishment is not a concern in the country, although the heavy reliance on red meat is problematic, as such a diet has been associated with higher rates of certain health problems, including heart disease.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population:	3.6
Daily Available Calories per capita kcal:	2,850
Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg:	146.1
Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg:	133.3

STATUS OF WOMEN

Women in Uruguay are accorded equality before the law. They attend the University of the Republic and pursue professional careers in large numbers. Women have served in the cabinet, on the Supreme Court, and in the diplomatic corps, including at the ambassadorial level. Some barriers to equality still exist as a result of traditional social patterns and restricted employment opportunities. Pay is not always equal for men and women,

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especially for lesser-skilled workers in the private sector. Uruguay is a signatory to the 1948 InterAmerican Convention on Political Rights for Women but has not yet acceded to the 1953 UN Convention on Political Rights of Women. Violence against women, much of it domestic, remains a problem.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 12
Female Administrators and Managers %: —
Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.01
Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 46.3

WORK

In 2004 the Uruguayan labor force numbered 1.56 million, 14 percent of whom were employed in agriculture, raising rice, wheat, corn, barley, and livestock. Another 16 percent were employed in industries such as food processing, electrical machinery, transportation equipment, petroleum products, textiles, chemicals, and beverages. The majority of workers, 70 percent, were employed in the service sector, which contributed 64.8 percent of GDP in 2004. The 2004 unemployment rate was 13 percent.

The constitution allows for the rights of collective bargaining and striking. Unions are well organized and politically powerful. Strikes are sometimes marked by violent clashes and sabotage. The minimum age of employment is 15 and is generally recognized, except in the informal sector—which is not an inconsiderable part of the workforce, as estimated by some to be 40 percent of the total employed. The standard workweek is 48 hours in industry and 44 in commerce. Health and safety conditions in regulated industries and businesses are generally observed. The minimum wage in 2004 was \$49 per month.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 1,560,000
Female Participation Rate %: 42.6
Labor by Sector %:
Agriculture: 14
Industry: 16
Services: 70
Unemployment %: 13

EDUCATION

Education is free, universal, and compulsory for nine years, from ages six to 15. The school year runs from March to late November or early December. The medium of instruction is Spanish throughout.

Schooling lasts for 12 years, as divided into a primary cycle of six years, a general secondary cycle of three years, and a university-preparatory cycle of three years. Terminal six-year primary schooling is offered only in a few rural schools, which are in most cases simple one-room facilities where all age groups are taught simultaneously. Dropping out and grade repetition are frequent in the lower grades. Secondary education is administered by the National Council of Secondary Education and is offered in three types of schools: *liceos*, or general secondary schools, offering academic courses leading to the *bachillerato* certificate; pilot secondary schools, with five-year curricula generally patterned on that of the United States, where the fifth year involves specialization in a technical or vocational field; and technical and vocational secondary schools.

Technical and vocational education is centralized under an autonomous agency called the Labor University. Labor University programs are generally two or three years in duration, and completion of these programs does not lead to true university enrollment. There is also a small church-run secondary vocational system.

Public education is financed by the national budget, but in each department educational administration is vested in the *governor* or *intendente*. Each level of education is under the immediate control of one of four autonomous agencies: the National Council of Primary and Normal Instruction, the National Council on Secondary Education, the National Council of Vocational and Technical Training, and the University of the Republic.

Higher education is provided free by the University of the Republic at Montevideo. Catholic University is a private institution of higher education. In 2002 net primary enrollment was 90 percent, net secondary enrollment 73 percent. Public expenditures on education in 2002 totaled 2.6 percent of GDP.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 98.0
Male %: 97.6
Female %: 98.4
School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 14.9
First Level: Primary Schools: 2,423
Teachers: 17,235
Students: 364,858
Student-Teacher Ratio: 21.2
Net Enrollment Ratio: 90.4
Second Level: Secondary Schools: 348
Teachers: 18,426
Students: 303,904
Student-Teacher Ratio: 18.0
Net Enrollment Ratio: 73.2
Third Level: Institutions: 2
Teachers: 11,989
Students: 98,520
Gross Enrollment Ratio: 37.4
Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 2.6

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Much of the research and development conducted in Uruguay concerns agriculture. The Ministerio de Ganadería, Agricultura y Pesca administers research in animal health, fisheries, crops, wool, and sheep, while the University of the Republic focuses on crops and livestock; the university also has faculties in science, engineering, medicine, and chemistry. The UN Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization Regional Office for Science and Technology in Latin America and the Caribbean is located in Montevideo, as are societies such as the Pediatrics Society, the Association of Uruguayan Engineers, and the Chemical and Pharmaceutical Association. The Institute of Higher Studies and the Higher Institute of Electrical Engineering, Electronics, and Computing offer other technical courses. Between 1994 and 1997 science and engineering students accounted for 29 percent of college and university enrollments. As of 2002 there were 370 scientific researchers per million people.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 370
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 0.24
 High-Tech Exports \$million: 15.6
 Patent Applications by Residents: 44

MEDIA

Five major daily newspapers are published in Uruguay: *El país*, *El observador*, *La república*, *El telegrafico*, and *Ultimas noticias*. There is no national news agency.

Broadcasting is partly private and partly public. The government service, SODRE, is on the air for 15 hours a day. Over 75 percent of programming is locally produced. Radio broadcasts are devoted to information, culture, religion, commercials, and entertainment. The state-run sound broadcasting system is one of the most powerful in South America.

Television, introduced in 1956, now reaches nearly 90 percent of the population. There are three networks—SAETA, Teledoce, and the government-owned SODRE—with four commercial stations in the capital, each broadcasting for 15 hours daily, and 16 stations in the provincial capitals. As of 2005 the country was served by over 100 radio stations and 20 television stations.

Freedom of speech and the press are guaranteed by the constitution but are subject to qualifications with regard to inciting violence or “insulting the nation.” Reporters without Borders, an international media watchdog group, ranked Uruguay 45th out of 167 nations in its 2004 press freedom survey.

In 2002 there were 652,000 cellular telephone users and 400,000 Internet users.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 5+
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: 674
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets million: 1.76
 per 1,000: 531

CULTURE

Uruguay has a long tradition of music, literature, and visual arts. Though it originated in Argentina, the musical and dance style known as the tango also has deep roots in Uruguay. One of the most famous tangos, *La Cumparsita*, from 1917, was written by the Uruguayan composer Gerardo Matos Rodríguez. Another popular musical form is *candombe*, a blend of African and South American rhythms that inspires carnival dancing. In the *payada*, a song contest, two singers accompanied by guitars take turns improvising lyrics to the same melody.

José Enrique Rodó, perhaps the nation's best-known writer, was a modernist whose 1900 novel *Ariel* still inspires young writers with its advocacy of upholding spiritual over materialistic values and resisting cultural dominance by Europe and the United States. Florencio Sánchez was a playwright from the turn of the 20th century whose plays dealing with social problems are still performed. More contemporary is the work of Mauricio Rosencof, a former Tupamaros member tortured by the government. One of the best-known contemporary writers is Eduardo H. Galeano, author of the 1980s trilogy *Memory of Fire*.

In the visual arts, the 19th-century painter Juan Manuel Blanes, whose canvasses depicted historical scenes, was the first Uruguayan to find a widespread audience. The work of Pedro Figari, a painter of rural scenes, has received international attention; another well-known contemporary painter is Leandro Silva Delgado. Uruguay has a growing film industry, with films such as 2000's *Days with Ana*, by Marcelo Bertalmio, reaching an international audience. The annual International Film Festival of Uruguay is held in Montevideo.

Montevideo is home to major cultural institutions such as the National Library and museums of art and history. The capital city also hosts a National Theater, two symphony orchestras, and a ballet.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: 19
 Annual Attendance: 17,000

(continues)

Cultural Indicators *(continued)*

Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Legends and proverbs make up most of Uruguay's tradition of folklore. Prominent among legends is that of the naming of the country's capital city. According to the story, a sailor serving Ferdinand Magellan on his first visit to the region in 1520 saw a hill on the horizon and shouted out, "*Monte vide eu,*" or, "I see a hill." The name, transposed to Montevideo, stuck.

Popular Uruguayan proverbs include, "Words fly, writing endures," and, similarly, "The wind carries away words and feathers." Other proverbs are "The cats want shoes and the mice want trousers," (that is, people want what they cannot have), "Weeds never die out," and "Singing drives troubles away."

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Uruguay has hundreds of miles of pristine beaches, and many urban Uruguayans travel to the coast on weekends to relax after the week's work. Camping is also popular.

As with other countries around the world, television has become one of the mainstays of entertainment. Movies are well attended, and dining out with friends over a leisurely meal is a typical form of entertainment. Montevideo in particular has a nightlife as varied as any Western capital, with clubs, restaurants, cinemas, concert halls, and theaters.

The most important festival of the year is carnival, held the week before Lent.

ETIQUETTE

As in much of South America, formality in social situations is usual. People should be addressed by their full name and title unless one is invited to do otherwise. A firm handshake is the typical greeting. Friends and relatives often embrace upon meeting. Uruguay's Italian influence can be seen in certain greetings and leave-takings. Some friends kiss on the cheeks, Italian style, when greeting and departing, and a typical goodbye is the Italian *ciao* or *addio* instead of the Spanish *adios*. Dining is performed continental style, with the fork in the left hand and the knife in the right. Social distance is much closer than in North America.

FAMILY LIFE

Some of the reforms passed in the country in the early 20th century dealt with the family. As such, women have long had a more equal position in Uruguay than in the rest of Latin America. In 1907 divorce due to spousal abuse was made legal; divorce is now available to women regardless of reason. In 1998 the divorce rate was two per 1,000 people. Marriages are civil affairs; church weddings may also be held but are not required. Though largely Catholic, Uruguay has distinct legal separation of church and state, which has carried over into other aspects of life. Birth control is common in urban areas, and Uruguayan families tend to be smaller than those in other South American countries. In 2005 the fertility rate was 1.9 children per woman.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Dress is typically Western in Uruguay, except for among gauchos, who often wear the traditional outfit of baggy pants (*bombachas*), wide-brimmed hat, woolen poncho, and leather boots.

SPORTS

Soccer, called *fútbol*, is both the national sport and national obsession. The nation has twice won the World Cup, in 1930 and 1950. The national team took the gold medal in the 1924 Paris Olympics. For a small country, Uruguay has turned out a dazzling array of top-notch stars, many of whom are recruited by teams around the world.

Other popular spectator sports include boxing, rugby, basketball, horse racing, rodeos, and polo. Participatory sports such as fishing, cycling, and tennis are also common.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1945** Uruguay declares war on Germany.
- 1947** Tomas Berreta is elected president on the Colorado ticket. Berreta dies and is succeeded in office by Vice President Luis Batlle y Barres.
- 1951** Andrés Martínez Trueba is elected president on the Colorado ticket.
- 1952** The presidency is replaced by a nine-man council known as the Colegiado, with an annually rotating presidency.
- 1955** Luis Batlle y Barres is named chairman of the Colegiado.
- 1956** Albert F. Zubaira is named chairman of the Colegiado.

- 1958** In a historic upset the Blancos win power for the first time in the 20th century; Luis Alberto de Herrera, the 80-year-old Blanco leader, is named chairman of the Colegiado but dies within five weeks of taking office; Martín R. Etchegoyen assumes leadership of the Blanco Party and the state.
- 1960** Benito Nardone is named chairman of the Colegiado.
- 1961** Eduardo Victor Haedo is named chairman of the Colegiado.
- 1962** Faustino Harrison is named chairman of the Colegiado.
- 1963** Daniel Fernández Crespo is named chairman of the Colegiado.
- 1964** Luis Giannattasio is named chairman of the Colegiado.
- 1965** Washington Beltrán is named chairman of the Colegiado.
- 1966** Alberto Heber Usher is named chairman of the Colegiado.
In a national referendum the people vote to abandon the Colegiado and restore the presidency.
- 1967** The Colorados win a decisive victory and return to office under the leadership of Oscar Gestido. Gestido dies and is succeeded in office by Vice President Jorge Pacheco Areco. The Tupamaros launch their insurgency.
- 1972** José María Bordaberry Aroceno, the Colorado candidate, is elected president.
- 1973** Bordaberry suspends the constitution and all political activity; the General Assembly is replaced by the Council of State.
- 1976** The military ousts Bordaberry and promises a return to civilian government within 15 years; Vice President Alberto Demicheli is named provisional president. Newly established Council of the Nation, functioning as an electoral college, elects Aparicio Méndez Manfredini as president for a five-year term.
- 1977** Supreme Court is replaced by the Ministry of Justice.
- 1978** Gen. Gregario Alvarez is named commander in chief and head of the ruling junta, in effect becoming ruler of the country.
- 1980** Military-inspired constitutional proposals are defeated in national referendum; Lt. Gen. Luis V. Queirolo is named head of the ruling junta.
- 1981** Gregorio Conrado Álvarez Armellino is named transitional president by the Council of the Nation.
- 1982** In nationwide balloting to select delegates to a constitutional convention, antimilitary delegates win a 5 to 1 majority.
- 1983** Upon return to civilian rule, the military initiates talks with the Multipartidaria that break down over the extent of military oversight.
- 1984** Blanco leader Wilson Ferreira Aldunate is arrested upon his return from exile. Agreement is reached between the Multipartidaria and the military on the basic law governing the restoration of civilian rule.
- 1985** President Álvarez resigns in February, naming Supreme Court president Rafael Addiego Bruno as interim president. In national elections Colorado candidate Julio María Sanguinetti Coirolo is elected president, and his party wins a slim plurality in the General Assembly; Sanguinetti is inaugurated as president. All political prisoners are released; censorship is lifted; all restrictions imposed by the military on labor unions, the judiciary, and the University of the Republic are removed.
- 1986** President Sanguinetti signs legislation offering amnesty for all military and police personnel accused of human rights violations.
- 1987** The government reaches an accord with commercial bank creditors on external debt. A campaign is launched for a referendum on the amnesty law.
- 1989** A referendum supports the amnesty law. Industrial unrest follows price increases. The Blanco Party wins the legislative and presidential elections.
- 1990** The government initiates an IMF-approved program of austerity to reduce inflation.
- 1994** After a single term by the National Party's candidate Luis Alberto Lacalle, Julio María Sanguinetti is once again elected president.
- 1999** Jorge Batlle Ibañez, of the Colorado Party, is elected president.
- 2000** A special commission launches an investigation to ascertain the fate of the 160 people who disappeared during the military dictatorship of the 1970s and 1980s.
- 2001** An outbreak of hoof-and-mouth disease seriously disrupts Uruguay's exportation of beef, a mainstay of the economy.
- 2002** Uruguay severs diplomatic relations with Cuba. An economic crisis requires emergency measures; banks are closed for a week in August; a general strike is called to protest economic measures taken by the government.
- 2003** World Bank approves \$250 million loan. In a referendum voters reject plans to open up the state oil monopoly to foreign investment.
- 2004** Tabaré Ramón Vázquez Rosas, a leftist politician, wins the presidential election.
- 2005** Vázquez announces a welfare package to help deal with growing poverty.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Embassy of Uruguay
<http://www.embassy.org/uruguay>

UZBEKISTAN

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Uzbekistan (O‘zbekiston Zuhurijati)

ABBREVIATION

UZ

CAPITAL

Tashkent

HEAD OF STATE

President Islam A. Karimov (from 1990)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Shavkat Mirziyayev (from 2003)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Authoritarian state

POPULATION

26,851,195 (2005)

AREA

447,400 sq km (172,741 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Uzbek, Tajik

LANGUAGES

Uzbek (official), Russian, Tajik

RELIGIONS

Sunni Islam, Eastern Orthodoxy

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Uzbekistani som

NATIONAL FLAG

Three equal horizontal bands of light blue (top), white, and light green, as separated by red fimbriations, with a white crescent moon and 12 white stars in the hoist-side third of the blue band

NATIONAL EMBLEM

The national emblem presents the image of the rising sun above a flourishing valley flanked by a garland of wheat sheaves on the right side and branches of cotton with open cotton bolls on the left. A blue eight-pointed star is placed at the top of the emblem, symbolizing the unity of the republic. The crescent and star inside the eight-pointed star are the sacred symbols of Islam. The legendary bird Semurg, with outstretched wings, is placed at the center of the emblem as the symbol of national renaissance. Beneath the composition is the name of the republic written in Uzbek on a ribbon bearing the colors of the national flag.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Stand Tall, My Free Country, Good Fortune and Salvation to You”

NATIONAL HOLIDAY

September 1 (Independence Day)

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

September 1, 1991

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

December 8, 1992

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Uzbekistan occupies the south-central portion of central Asia; its land area is 447,400 sq km (172,741 sq mi), making it the third largest of the five central Asian republics. It spans 1,425 km (891 mi) from east to west, and the greatest north-south distance is 930 km (581 mi). Part of the nation’s area is taken up by the Aral Sea. Uzbekistan has a long boundary of 2,203 km (1,377 mi) with Kazakhstan, to the north and northwest. Its borders with Kyrgyzstan (1,099 km; 687 mi) and Tajikistan (1,161 km; 726 mi), to the east and southeast, respectively, are extremely

convoluted. Two tiny enclaves of Uzbekistani territory are entirely surrounded by Kyrgyzstan. There is a short boundary (137 km; 86 mi) with Afghanistan, to the south, and a much longer one (1,621 km; 1,013 mi) with Turkmenistan, to the southwest. The Afghan border and parts of the Turkmen border are marked by the Amu Darya River, which flows into the Aral Sea. Uzbekistan’s other major river, the Syr Darya, also flows into the Aral.

The capital of and largest city in Uzbekistan is Tashkent, with a 1999 population of 2.14 million.

About four-fifths of Uzbekistan’s territory consists of plains (primarily the Turanian lowland east of the Aral



Sea), taking in the greater part of the Kyzylkum Desert (one of the largest in the world), the dry deltas of the Zarafshan and Kashka-Dar'ya rivers, and the plain of the Amu Dar'ya. To the far west, in the Karakalpak Autonomous Region, is the undulating Ustiurt Plateau, with elevations of 200 to 250 m (660 to 820 ft). On the eastern frontier and in the south are foothills and some mountainous areas, spurs of the Hissar-Alai and Tien Shan ranges; interspersed among these are a number of valleys and hollows, the most important of which is the Ferghana Valley, along the Syr Dar'ya River. Elevations in the Tien Shan and Hissar-Alai ranges exceed 4,000 m (13,120 ft); Uzbekistan's highest peak, Adelunga Toghi, rises 4,301 m (14,107 ft). The Turkestan Range of the Hissar-Alai imposes a separation between the Ferghana Valley and the Golodnaya steppe/piedmont from the rest of Uzbekistan. The high mountains of eastern Uzbekistan are prone to seismic disturbances.

All of Uzbekistan's rivers are part of either the Syr Dar'ya or Amu Dar'ya river systems. However, most of the Syr Dar'ya's tributaries actually fail to reach it, as their waters are taken for irrigation to the point of drying them up. Glaciers of the Pamir Mountains and Alai and Turkestan ranges are the source of many of the country's rivers. Aside from the Aral Sea, which was the world's fourth largest inland sea prior to its desiccation, there are a few lakes, the largest of which is Aydarkul, and a number of small reservoirs.

Geography

Area sq km: 447,400; sq mi 172,741
 World Rank: 55th
 Land Boundaries, km: Afghanistan 137; Kazakhstan 2,203; Kyrgyzstan 1,099; Tajikistan 1,161; Turkmenistan 1,621
 Coastline, km: 0
 Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: Sariqarnish Kuli -12
 Highest: Adelunga Toghi 4,301
 Land Use %
 Arable Land: 10.8
 Permanent Crops: 0.8
 Forest: 4.8
 Other: 83.6

Population of Principal Cities (1999 est.)

Andizhan	323,900
Bukhara	237,900
Namangan	376,600
Samarqand	362,300
Tashkent	2,142,700

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Uzbekistan's climate is continental, with a long, dry, hot summer; a cool, damp autumn; and a fairly cold win-

ter without much snowfall. In the southern reaches of the country winter lasts just two months or less; in the most northerly and upland sections it can last for five months. The average January temperature in Termez, along the southern Afghan border, is 3°C (37°F), but on the Ustiurt Plateau, in the northwest, it is below -10°C (14°F). The average July temperature ranges across the country from 25°C to 31°C (77°F to 88°F). Summer temperatures can climb as high as 42°C (108°F) in the plains and foothills, while a low of -37°C (-35°F) was recorded at the Churuk weather station, on the Ustiurt.

The plains receive the smallest amount of rainfall, just 80 to 90 mm (3 to 3.5 in) per year, with the Kyzylkum Desert being the driest area. In the mountains, yearly rainfall can average from 890 mm (35 in) to 1,000 mm (39 in) or more. The soil of the plains is quite fertile but requires intensive irrigation for crops and pasture. Uzbekistan's inefficiency in the use of irrigation, combined with poor choices of (especially thirsty) crops to cultivate under the dictates of socialist production quotas, have caused the country's severe and persistent water shortages.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature
 January: 37°F
 July: 90°F
 Average Rainfall: 1.6 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

With 80 percent of the landmass covered in lowland plains, desert sedge and grass are the principal forms of vegetation. Forests cover only 5 percent of the country, primarily in the hills and highlands. In the plains and deserts predominant animals include rodents, wolves, foxes, and less-common antelopes and gazelles. Higher in the mountains, lynx, wolves, bears, boars, Siberian goats, and deer are found, though environmental depredation has greatly reduced wildlife numbers in general.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 26,891,195
 World Rank: 42nd
 Density per sq km: 61.8
 % of annual growth (1999-2003): 1.2
 Male %: 49.5
 Female %: 50.5
 Urban %: 36.7
 Age Distribution %: 0-14: 33.5
 15-64: 61.7
 65 and over: 4.8
 Population 2025: 36,947,000
 Birth Rate per 1,000: 26.22

(continues)

the government claimed were the work of Muslim fundamentalists.

Overall, the Islamic revival in Uzbekistan is too diverse in nature to be viewed through the lens of fundamentalism. While the nation's Muslim community tends to be more pious than those elsewhere in central Asia, interests extend across a range of Islamic practices, from Saudi-style strictness of observance (generally referred to as Wahhabism) to mystic Sufism.

Although Uzbekistan protects freedom of conscience, it does not allow proselytizing, and this has led to friction with some Protestant and Korean churches, with some missionaries put behind bars.

Religious Affiliations

Muslim	23,629,000
Eastern Orthodox	2,417,000
Other	806,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Islam arrived early in central Asia, and as far back as the ninth century cities in modern-day Uzbekistan became centers of religious and scientific learning in Arabic and Persian. The region gained fame for the cities that served as outposts along the Silk Road in medieval times, but it remained politically fragmented throughout, except for an interval following the Mongol conquest. Genghis Khan's second son, Chagatai, ruled over south-central and east-central Asia, and by the end of the 14th century dominion over these lands had passed to Tamerlane, who based himself in Samarqand.

Following Tamerlane's death in 1405, his empire split up. The central Asian portions were absorbed into a number of khanates that strove for local supremacy even as the region's prosperity waned, a function of global trade patterns' shifting from a caravan base to maritime shipping routes. The area that lay along the courses of the Amu Dar'ya and Syr Dar'ya rivers had sunk into obscurity by the 19th century, when the Russians began to take an imperial interest. Having seized control of the Kazakh steppes by midcentury, the Russians moved in on the three principal khanates to the south: Kokand and Bukhara were conquered or became Russian protectorates from 1865 onward, and Khiva followed suit in the early 1870s.

The Russians built a rail line from the northern Caspian through Samarqand and Tashkent to the Ferghana Valley, and they redirected agricultural production to emphasize the growing of cotton to supply Russia's textile industry. They established Tashkent as an important center of commerce, industry, and administration. Yet in many regards Russian rule was mostly an urban overlay that, outside of the Russification of a small, educated elite, had little impact on traditional culture or day-to-day life.

Soon after the Bolshevik Revolution, once the Communists had established full control over the old czarist empire, defeating a guerrilla band known as Basmachi, in 1924 Uzbekistan was created as a Soviet Socialist Republic. The new political entity originally extended to Tajikistan, which split off to form its own republic in 1929, but did not include Karakalpak, a part of the Kazakh autonomous republic that was transferred to Uzbekistani jurisdiction when Kazakhstan became a full-fledged republic in 1936. The borders of the new republic cut across traditional khanate boundaries and incorporated into Uzbekistan a large number of speakers of Tajik, a non-Turkic language related to Persian, who were grouped around their historic centers of Bukhara and Samarqand, giving rise to irredentist feelings that remain in modern times. Otherwise, apart from festering disputes in the fertile Ferghana Valley area, the parameters of the new territory were largely accepted, and the Soviets began to promote a distinct, language-based Uzbek national identity.

In large part, this new identity was forged through education. The schools allowed for the molding of good Soviet citizens and rewrote history and revamped culture to serve the state's socialist ideology. Women were educated equally, ordered to stop wearing the veil, and encouraged to find work outside the home. Muslim schools, courts, and mosques were shut down, and the traditional elite and independent thinkers were co-opted, jailed, killed, or driven into exile.

Official "Soviet" culture (which was primarily Russian in form and practice) was reinforced by the migration of large numbers of Slavs to Uzbekistan to take up administrative and skilled professional posts. The World War II era saw the deportation of ethnic groups considered "enemy peoples" by Stalin to the central Asian republics.

Industrial estates were established with little regard for integration into the republic's economy; rather, they supplied the needs of the larger state. They were also largely staffed with migrants from the European part of the Soviet Union. Agricultural development, like industrial development, served Moscow's rather than local interests. The amount of land under cultivation for cotton doubled between 1960 and 1990, which reduced Uzbekistan's ability to feed itself and depleted the water supply to the extent that the Aral Sea dried up to one-third of its original volume.

After a series of embezzlement scandals within the Communist Party of Uzbekistan in the 1980s, party leadership was assumed by Islam Karimov in 1989. When the Soviet Union suffered a coup attempt in August 1991, Uzbekistan hesitated at first to condemn it, but having done so it was then quick to declare its own independence, confirmed by referendum in December, and Karimov was elected the new country's first president by the Supreme Soviet. The Communist Party, which dominated the legislature in no small part because the primary opposition

front, the Birlik (Unity) Movement, had been banned, took on a new identity as the People's Democratic Party of Uzbekistan (PDPU).

The Supreme Soviet adopted a new constitution in December 1992, setting up a powerful head of state, who is also in charge of the executive branch, and a weak unicameral legislature. In the mid-1990s Uzbekistan became involved in the affairs of its war-torn southern neighbors, briefly supporting the ethnic Uzbek warlord Rashid Dostam in Afghanistan until his faction collapsed and offering to guarantee the peace settlement forged in 1997 in Tajikistan. With opposition heavily restricted, the PDPU dominated the 1994 parliamentary elections and subsequently pushed through a referendum extending Karimov's term to 2000. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) voiced its disapproval of Uzbekistan's lax monetary policies by suspending a \$180 million loan in 1997. That year there was a major crackdown on Wahhabi fundamentalists in the Ferghana Valley; two years later a series of explosions in Tashkent was blamed on both the opposition in general and fundamentalists in particular by the president. Karimov was overwhelmingly reelected in 2000 in a vote widely condemned by observers as unfair.

In 2001 the leaders of Russia, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan launched the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) to fight militancy and promote trade investments. Following the September 11 attacks on the United States, Uzbekistan joined the international fight against terrorism and allowed the United States to use its air bases for action in Afghanistan. In a 2002 referendum Karimov won support for extending the presidential term from five to seven years, to 2007. Critics saw this as a simple attempt on Karimov's behalf to continue his presidency.

In 2003 the banned Birlik Movement, along with another opposition party, the Erk (Freedom) Democratic Party, were allowed to hold public meetings for the first time in over a decade, but in the 2004 parliamentary elections those parties remained barred from participation; only candidates from parties supporting the president were allowed to participate. A wave of new terrorist violence in 2004 included shootings and bombings in Tashkent and Bukhara in March and suicide bombings against the U.S. and Israeli embassies in Tashkent in the summer. The government pursued a crackdown on Islamic groups such as the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, an armed group seeking the overthrow of Uzbekistan's secular government and its replacement with an Islamic state.

Despite the government's close ties to Washington vis-à-vis terrorism, Uzbekistan failed to win U.S. certification for aid in 2004. That same year the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development announced that it would cut aid because of the country's poor record with regard to economic reform and human rights.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

President

1990– Islam A. Karimov

CONSTITUTION

Uzbekistan is operating under a constitution adopted in December 1992 that set up a strong presidential system. There is a bicameral Supreme Assembly (Oliy Majlis) whose 250 members are elected for five-year terms. The president can be elected to two consecutive terms and serves seven years per term, as increased from five by a 2002 referendum. The highest court is the Supreme Court, whose membership is determined by the Supreme Assembly. There is also a constitutional court, which, beyond its normal duties, has the power to approve the president's decision to dissolve the legislature.

Although the republic makes a claim to being a parliamentary democracy, the Supreme Assembly voted early on to ban the popular Birlik Movement, the president's chief opposition. In the December 1994 parliamentary elections, only two parties supporting the president were permitted to run. The new Assembly called a referendum that resulted in delaying the presidential election until 2000 and allowing Karimov to run again.

The constitution guarantees freedom of worship, which is generally respected, and freedom of the press, which is not. Although the document forbids censorship, the government practices it systematically. Suffrage is universal, and the voting age is 18.

PARLIAMENT

The country has a bicameral legislature, the Supreme Assembly (Oliy Majlis), with 250 members elected for five-year terms. The upper Senate consists of 100 members, 84 of whom are elected by regional governing councils to serve five-year terms and 16 of whom are appointed by the president. The lower Legislative Chamber has 120 members elected through universal suffrage to serve five-year terms. In reality the Assembly has only weak powers; although the constitution enumerates much broader powers, the president and his office control the nature, direction, and timing of legislation. The legislature can be dissolved by the president, as subject to the approval of the constitutional court.

The most recent parliamentary elections, in December 2004 and January 2005, were criticized by international observers for failing to meet standards of fairness, as opposition parties such as the Birlik Movement were barred from participation.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Parties in Uzbekistan are not allowed to operate freely; those that are not banned outright are subject to manipulation by the executive. The party identified closely with the president has been the People's Democratic Party of Uzbekistan (PDP), but President Karimov resigned as party chairman in mid-1996, soon after seeking to create a more robust opposition. Nevertheless, parties with official recognition are essentially all creatures and supporters of the Karimov regime: the Uzbekistan Liberal Democratic Party, the Adolat (Justice) Social Democratic Party, the Fidokorlar National Democratic Party (also known as the Self-Sacrificers Party, which absorbed the conservative opposition Vatan Taraqqiyoti, or Fatherland Progress Party), and the Milly Tiklanish (Democratic National Rebirth) Party.

The Birlik (Unity) Movement, a nationalist party that was instrumental in helping bring about the country's independence, has been banned from participating in elections ever since. The Erk (Freedom) Democratic Party, originally an offshoot from Birlik, is similarly barred from contesting elections, as are the Islamic Renaissance Party and Adolat (a conservative Islamic party not to be confused with the Adolat Social Democratic Party).

In the 2004 parliamentary elections for the 120-seat Legislative Chamber, the Uzbekistan Liberal Democratic Party won 41 seats, the PDP 28, the Self-Sacrificers 18, and other smaller pro-presidential parties the remainder. No one opposing the president was allowed to run for office.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The Republic of Uzbekistan comprises the autonomous republic of Karakalpak, the city of Tashkent, and 12 *viloyatlar*, or oblasts, which are further divided into 156 districts with 123 towns and 1,245 villages. Provincial authority is vested in *khokims* (governors), who are "recommended" by the state president. Towns and villages have elected councils that are still called soviets.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The judicial system in Uzbekistan is little changed from the Soviet system of jurisprudence it inherited. The highest court in the land is the Supreme Court, whose members are chosen by the Supreme Assembly on the president's recommendation and who can be removed only with the Assembly's consent. The Supreme Court is nominally independent of the government, as prescribed in the constitution; in reality, for any case with a political aspect, the Court is subservient to the president. A constitutional court interprets legislation's accordance with

the republic's constitution. Additionally, there is a high economic court. Karakalpak has its own Supreme Court. Lower courts, including economic courts, are organized by oblast, district, and town.

Most cases are heard before a judge aided by two "citizen advisers" who have no special competence in the law. Cases involving what are regarded as state or military secrets are shielded from press and public scrutiny.

Police routinely physically abuse and torture suspects to extract confessions, which are accepted by judges as evidence and often serve as the sole bases for convictions. Law-enforcement authorities reportedly often plant narcotics, weapons, and banned religious literature on suspected members of Islamic groups or political opponents to justify their arrest. Executions are regarded as state secrets, and relatives are sometimes not informed until months after executions have occurred.

HUMAN RIGHTS

The regime of President Islam Karimov has been one of the most authoritarian among the Soviet successor states. He has made little attempt to "depersonalize" his own rule and put executive authority on a firm institutional basis supported by genuine popular legitimacy, nor is there any other institution in the state in a position to restrain the president's power.

Although the government has registered more than 200 nongovernmental organizations, including the Soros Foundation and a branch of Human Rights Watch/Helsinki, it refuses to allow the independent Human Rights Society of Uzbekistan to function. The regime has appointed a human rights ombudsman and in 1996 set up a National Human Rights Center; that year the regime allowed an international conference on human rights to take place in Tashkent.

The main opposition political grouping, the Birlik Movement, though nationalist in nature, has been barred from participation as subversive. Islamic parties and organizations have also been banned. Imams (religious sages) who are independent of the official spiritual directorate (*muftiat*) have been tossed into prison, kept there beyond the terms of their sentences, and excluded from any amnesties.

Ethnic strife is a sensitive topic. The government has banned the group Samarqand, which is devoted to the expression of Tajik culture. Tajiks protest having the Uzbek language and literature forced on their children at school and are unhappy about the lack of opportunities for higher education in their own tongue. Russians are also dissatisfied with what they feel is second-class status in independent Uzbekistan and have "voted with their feet," emigrating in large numbers, especially prior to 1994.

In 2004 the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development cut aid to Uzbekistan in response to its

poor human rights record, in particular the refusal of the government to condemn the use of torture.

FOREIGN POLICY

Uzbekistan's primary concern in its first decade as an independent state has been instability among its neighbors and the potential for contagion from their crises. Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Afghanistan all have substantial Uzbek populations, and all have been involved in domestic strife.

Tajikistan's civil war drew in Uzbekistan's military in 1992–93. Uzbekistan agreed to police Tajikistan's airspace and to supplement Russian troops called in to maintain a cease-fire that extended for four years before a peace treaty was signed, with Tashkent as a guarantor.

Concerns about fundamentalism and the welfare of Uzbek minorities have also driven President Karimov's Afghanistan policy. As long as there was active resistance to the Taliban from an Uzbek militia based in Mazar-i-Sharif, a short drive from the Uzbek border, Karimov responded, even though there was little he could do other than offer moral support and supply arms under the table, ultimately to little effect. After the September 11, 2001, attacks on the United States, Uzbekistan joined the international fight against terrorism and allowed the United States to use its air bases for action in Afghanistan.

Uzbekistan sees itself as a pillar of regime stability with regard to Kyrgyzstan, since it has some influence over what takes place in the parts of that country with large Uzbek populations, namely, the Ferghana Valley. The Kyrgyz themselves feel more comfortable relying on Kazakhstan and Russia for protection, illustrating one aspect of the competition between Karimov and Kazakhstan's Nursultan Nazarbayev for influence in the rest of central Asia. Still, both states realize the value of cooperation: They remain natural trading partners, and each can counterbalance the occasionally overweening influence of Russia by relying on the other. Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan set up the Central Asian Union in 1994, so as to link the economies of the signatory states. Since 1996 the Central Asian Union's Interstate Council has worked to increase trade, ease the flow of labor and capital, share water resources, and assemble the heads of state to discuss political and military issues. In 2002 Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan settled a long-standing border dispute. In 2004 the Turkmen and Uzbek presidents signed a friendship declaration and agreement regarding water resources.

Russia is both a rival thwarting Uzbek pretensions to regional dominance and a useful counterweight to Kazakhstan. Uzbekistan was quick to remove itself from the integrated military structure of the Russian-led Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) but remained an enthusiastic participant in the organization in other respects (namely, mutual security and economic cooperation). Notwithstanding the break with the Russian mon-

etary system that occurred when Uzbekistan set up its own currency in 1993, Tashkent seemed reconciled to the inevitability of its continued dependence on Moscow as a guarantor of regional stability and a source of trade and assistance—at least until its 1999 decision to withdraw from the CIS collective-security arrangement signaled a distancing from Russian foreign policy. Turkish-Uzbekistani relations, following an initial spurt of enthusiasm based on the notion of a pan-Turkic culture, have settled into a more pragmatic mode, based partly on the recognition that centuries of separate histories have given each country a very different set of traditions, values, and cultures. Moreover, it became clear that Turkey did not wield enough influence in the economic sphere to supplant Russia as the regional hegemon. Still, Uzbekistan joined the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) conceived by Turkey, Iran, and Pakistan as a way to construct ties to the emerging states of central Asia.

Relations with Iran are friendly, but Uzbekistan is wary of the Tehran regime's theocratic nature, preferring more secular models from the Islamic world, like Egypt and Turkey. Tashkent has approached Saudi Arabia and Pakistan with similar caution. Iran has been a significant investor in energy extraction, roads, and railways, and Tehran took the same dim view of the Taliban in Afghanistan as did Tashkent, but the two countries backed opposite sides in the Tajik civil war.

Karimov's relations with the Western world have never been as full or as warm as he would like. The United States and Europe have supported Turkey's efforts to engage the central Asian region, as a way to offset Russian influence and keep fundamentalism at bay, while Washington has made known its displeasure with Karimov's authoritarianism and his regime's persistent human rights violations. Relations improved after Uzbekistan joined the antiterrorism campaign led by the United States in Afghanistan, and in 2002 the United States earmarked \$100 million in aid for Uzbekistan.

DEFENSE

Gradually, all Russian forces have been transferred from Uzbekistan's territory, and there has been a deliberate policy fostering an indigenous officer corps to take military responsibility as Slavic officers retire or migrate elsewhere.

Uzbekistan has the largest armed forces in central Asia and showed its willingness to wield them in the case of the Tajikistan civil war. Nonetheless, Uzbekistan's military doctrine, as spelled out in its 1992 Law on Defense, is purely defensive in nature. In fact, the role of the Uzbekistani military is tacitly understood to be primarily internal security, while Russia guarantees the inviolability of the country's borders. Uzbekistan belongs to the Commonwealth of Independent States and has signed a

collective defense treaty with five other CIS states but has opted out of that organization's integrated military structure. In 1994 Uzbekistan became a member of the Partnership for Peace, operated through the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO).

The president of the republic is commander in chief, and Karimov has exercised his authority in delineating military policy and making key appointments. Operational control is assumed by the chief of staff, who is responsible to the minister of defense. The military budget for 1997 was about \$200 million; the standing army in 2003 numbered 72,000. About 70 percent of the army's manpower is provided through conscription; the rest are professionals. The age for conscription is 18, and draftees serve 12 months.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 72,000
 Military Manpower Availability: 6,340,220
 Military Expenditures \$million: 200
 as % of GDP: 2.0
 as % of central government expenditures: —
 Arms Imports \$million: 5
 Arms Exports \$million: 510

ECONOMY

With less of an industrial infrastructure in place at the time of the breakup of the Soviet Union, Uzbekistan suffered a much smaller economic contraction than did a number of the other former Soviet republics. The country is still heavily dependent on agriculture, which registered 38 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) in 2003, and especially on cotton. Mining, manufacturing, construction, and energy together contributed 26.3 percent of GDP, while services, primarily governmental, accounted for the remaining 35.7 percent.

Uzbekistan's industrial base has traditionally rested on the exploitation and processing of its natural resources. The country is self-sufficient in terms of energy, having enough oil and gas to become a minor exporter of hydrocarbon fuels, and there are small coal deposits. About 15 percent of the country's energy needs are met through hydroelectric power. Uzbekistan has important gold deposits and has made deals with Western mining firms to exploit them. Other minerals present in commercially extractable quantities are copper, iron ore, lead, zinc, silver, fluorite, tungsten, molybdenum, and uranium.

Manufacturing has clustered around Tashkent and in the Fergana Valley, where "prestigious" foreign investments such as auto assembly have been attracted. Tashkent and its environs account for one-third of the country's industrial production, most prominently the Chkalov aircraft factory. The principal industries are

mineral processing and metalworking, oil refining, machine building (particularly of agricultural equipment), fertilizer, textiles, rugs, and food processing. Manufacturing output declined by 6 percent annually (in real-value terms) between 1990 and 1996, but by the end of this period the decline appeared to have been arrested.

In 1993 Uzbekistan abandoned its attempts to stay in the ruble zone and devised its own currency, the som. The introduction of the som was accompanied by a burst of hyperinflation (1,568 percent in 1994) as the new currency slumped in value; the rate of price increases was brought down to double digits by 1997. Privatization gathered little momentum in the early years of independence, with the exception of agricultural smallholdings, housing, and retail establishments, but by the end of 1996 the government had nearly completed its program of small-scale privatization of industrial and commercial enterprises and was ready to contemplate similar treatment for medium- and large-scale businesses. Beyond the inflation crisis of 1994–95, the country suffered two discrete setbacks before the close of the decade: A poor cotton harvest in 1996 left the government short of revenue and forced to print money, driving down the value of the som and causing numerous foreign investors to pull up stakes and leave, and the Russian financial meltdown of the summer of 1998 also adversely affected the health of the Uzbekistan economy. A growing debt burden and persistent inflation led to stagnant growth in 2001, with little improvement in 2002. However, the 2004 rate of real GDP growth was 4.4 percent. In 2003 the government accepted the obligations of article 8 under the IMF, providing for full currency convertibility. However, strict currency controls and the tightening of borders have lessened the effects of convertibility and have led to shortages that have further stifled economic activity.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 47.59
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 1,800
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 4.2
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 2.9
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 38.0
 Industry: 26.3
 Services: 35.7
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 60
 Government Consumption: 20
 Gross Domestic Investment: —
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 3.7
 Imports: 2.82
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 3.6
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 22.0

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
—	—	—	—	—

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Finance

National Currency: Uzbekistani Som (UZS)
Exchange Rate: \$1 = UZS 1,020
Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: —
Central Bank Discount Rate %: —
Total External Debt \$billion: 4.351
Debt Service Ratio %: 19.62
Balance of Payments \$million: 461.9
International Reserves SDRs \$million: —
Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 3.0

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 194
per capita \$: 7.60
Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 70

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
Revenues \$billion: 2.457
Expenditures \$billion: 2.482
Budget Deficit \$million: 25
Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 38.0
Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 4.0
Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 3.8
Irrigation, % of Farms having: 88.7
Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 160.2
Total Farmland % of land area: 10.8
Livestock: Cattle million: 5.4
Chickens million: 15
Pigs 000: 90
Sheep million: 8.8
Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters 000: 25
Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 7.1

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 762
Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 6.2

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 60.7
Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 53.7
Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 2.15
Net Energy Imports % of use: -7.8
Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 11.7
Production kW-hr billion: 45.4
Consumption kW-hr billion: 43.4
Coal Reserves tons million: —
Production tons million: 3.0
Consumption tons million: 2.9

Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: 33.1
Production cubic feet trillion: 2.23
Consumption cubic feet trillion: 1.6
Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels million: 297
Production barrels 000 per day: 156
Consumption barrels 000 per day: 157
Pipelines Length km: 869

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 2.82
Exports \$billion: 3.7
Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): -0.3
Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): -3.2
Balance of Trade \$million: 461.9

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Russia %	26.4	21.2
South Korea %	10.8	—
Germany %	9.4	—
China %	8.3	14.0
Kazakhstan %	6.0	—
Turkey %	6.0	6.3
Ukraine %	—	7.0
Tajikistan %	—	5.8
Bangladesh %	—	4.2

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 81,600
Paved %: 87.3
Automobiles: —
Trucks and Buses: —
Railroad: Track Length km: 3,950
Passenger-km million: 2
Freight-km million: 16
Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: —
Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: —
Airports: 226
Traffic: Passenger-km million: 3.84
Length of Waterways km: 1,100

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 231
Number of Tourists from 000: 400
Tourist Receipts \$million: 48
Tourist Expenditures \$million: —

Communications

Telephones million: 1.72
Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.01
Cellular Telephones 000: 320.8
Personal Computers 000: —
Internet Hosts per million people: 39
Internet Users per 1,000 people: 18

ENVIRONMENT

Soil and water are severely degraded all across Uzbekistan. The single-minded concentration on meeting Soviet production quotas for cotton, a crop requiring large amounts of water, led to the removal of so much water from the Amu Dar'ya and Syr Dar'ya river systems that the Aral Sea dried up to about one-third of its former size, an unmitigated disaster. Fisheries were depleted, climate variations in the area surrounding the Aral became more extreme and generally harsher, more dust storms occurred, and soil salinity increased. The crisis forced Uzbekistan to search for Western assistance regarding smarter irrigation techniques and cooperative water allocation and management solutions with neighboring central Asian states. One of the Soviet Union's chemical weapons test sites was Vozrozhdeniye Island, in the Uzbekistani portion of the Aral Sea; desiccation has caused this island, replete with dangerous pollutants, to become linked to the mainland by a narrow causeway, allowing infected animals to intermingle with animals on the shores of the Aral Sea.

Other environmental problems derive from the lack of sewage systems; the unchecked use of pesticides, fertilizers, and herbicides; industrial and mining discharges; and the burning of fossil fuels. Underground sources of freshwater are nearly all polluted, as are rivers and canals. Industrial activity, power generation, and similar activities are responsible for putting several million tons of pollutants into the republic's skies each year. Health problems associated with or aggravated by air and water pollution include typhoid, paratyphoid, hepatitis, cholera, intestinal diseases, and various forms of cancer, dysentery, dystrophy, and anemia. There is a general retardation of children's physical development, and life spans are sharply reduced in areas close to metal-processing plants, toxic waste sites, and the Aral Sea.

Environmental depredations have also taken their toll on the country's wildlife and biological diversity. To combat ecological destruction, the Uzbekistani government has protected 5 percent of the nation's territory.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 4.8

Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: 5

Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 5

Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —

CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 4.81

LIVING CONDITIONS

The UN 2004 Human Development Report ranked Uzbekistan 107th out of 177 countries in terms of life expectancy, education, and standard of living. The aver-

age Uzbek's life expectancy in 2005 was 64.2 years, and literacy stood at 99.3 percent in 2003. The percent of eligible students enrolled in primary, secondary, and tertiary schools in 2002 was the 61st highest in the world, at 76 percent. Per capita GDP was \$1,800 in 2004. In general, the quality of life in Uzbekistan stood the country near the bottom of the rankings for central Asia and eastern Europe.

Uzbekistan is a largely rural country; in 2003, 37 percent of the population lived in urban areas, while the rest occupied small villages and towns in the vast central plains. The typical Uzbek home has two or three rooms. Outside the home there is often a large eating and resting platform known as the *sura*. Shaded by lattices, the *sura* provides a cool location during the summer. A kitchen area of most homes is a separate unit with a large hearth where all the cooking is done. While eating, the family may sit on a low *stupa*, or bedlike structure, and women are often separated from men, especially in rural areas.

According to a 2004 estimate, 28 percent of the population lived below the poverty line, and since independence a sharp increase in the inequality of income distribution has hurt the lower ranks of society.

HEALTH

Medical services in the cities have suffered since the collapse of the centralized Soviet system. Medical care is still free of charge, and as of 2004 there were 293 doctors for every 100,000 people, but the infrastructure is poor, and services have deteriorated. In 1991, one-quarter of the population was hospitalized annually; this figure was halved by 1998. A series of health-care reform objectives set in 2000 included improved quality of overall services, specifically in the areas of maternal and child health; the promotion of privatization; and cost containment. In rural areas, clinics are mostly staffed by medical assistants. Between 1995 and 2002, 96 percent of births were attended by health-care professionals, but the infant mortality rate in 2005 remained a high 71.1 deaths per 1,000 live births. As of 2002 only 57 percent of the population had access to adequate sanitation, 89 percent to safe drinking water.

As of 2003 the government financed 77 percent of all routine immunizations. That year the immunization rates for one-year-old children were 98 percent for tuberculosis and DPT and 99 percent for polio and measles. Major causes of death are communicable diseases, cardiac problems, and birth or prenatal complications. In 2000 one-half of the male population smoked. The HIV/AIDS incidence rate in 2003 was less than 0.1 percent; that year 11,000 were living with the disease and fewer than 500 died from it. Public health expenditures for 2002 were 2.5 percent. Many people in rural areas still rely on herbal medicine and traditional cures and healers.

Health

Number of Physicians: 73,041
 Number of Dentists: 5,283
 Number of Nurses: 252,430
 Number of Pharmacists: 673
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 289
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: 5.3
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 71.1
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 24
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 5.5
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 21
 HIV Infected % of adults: < 0.1
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 98
 Measles: 99
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 57
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 89

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Uzbek food has similarities with that of the Middle East in its use of spices such as coriander, cumin, and hot red pepper. Like Middle Eastern cuisine, that of Uzbekistan relies heavily on rice, yogurt, and grilled meats, especially lamb and mutton. Typical dishes include a dish of homemade noodles and mutton called *lagman*, a broth of meat and pastry called *d'ighbman*, a vegetable and beef stew known as *dymlama*, and *plov*, which is rice with chicken or mutton, vegetables, quinces, and spices. Pilafs, kebabs, noodles, pasta, and various sorts of breads and pastries are typical in the north, while in the south the food is distinguished by fancy desserts and pastries. Tea is the typical beverage, usually as served without milk. Despite Islamic restrictions on alcohol, most Uzbeks drink, and vodka, a holdover of Russian domination, is the drink of choice.

Undernourishment is a problem. From 1999 to 2001, 26 percent of the general population were undernourished, and from 1995 to 2002 about 19 percent of children younger than five were considered underweight.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 26
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,370
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 169.0
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 142.9

STATUS OF WOMEN

From the standpoint of women's rights, Soviet rule was something of a golden age compared to what followed. With traditional attitudes reemerging, women were the first to get laid off when companies needed to rid themselves of excess labor. Female unemployment thus runs far ahead of male unemployment, and various obstacles stand in the way of career advancement. The percentage

of female public officials plunged from 36 percent under the Soviet quota system of the 1980s to 6 percent in the mid-1990s, although there were 13 women at the ministerial level in 1997. In 2004 only 7.2 percent of Legislative Chamber members were women. Women in Uzbekistan run a greater risk of impoverishment, all the more so if they are divorced, widowed, or single mothers. All these conditions are found with greater intensity in rural areas. Women also suffer more from health problems related to pollutants; the mortality rate among women and children in Karakalpak is one of the highest in all the former Soviet states.

Women have responded to the limitations on their professional horizons by founding and participating in nongovernmental organizations, in many of which family issues figure strongly. In response to a challenge from President Karimov to become more involved in economic development, female citizens formed the Business Women's Association of Uzbekistan in 1991, training women to start their own small businesses and developing skills that will make them professionally competitive. The Women's Resource Center tries to combat the passivity that keeps women subdued in traditional society and family life through research and social action.

Family planning is regarded as alien to the sensibilities of Muslim society. A UN Development Program project on family planning was altered for Uzbekistan so as to instead deal with victims of domestic violence. Nonetheless, the government has recognized the need for family planning, and the Ministry of Health is training physicians to provide such services. The proportion of women using contraceptives has risen in recent years from 3 to 14 percent.

Victims of domestic violence are discouraged from pressing charges against their perpetrators, who rarely face criminal prosecution. According to a 2003 Human Rights Watch report, *maballa* committees enforce government policy to prevent divorce by frequently denying battered wives access to the police or courts and holding them responsible for the abuse they experience. The trafficking of women abroad for prostitution remains a serious problem.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 18
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.0
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 41.5

WORK

The labor force of Uzbekistan numbered 14.64 million in 2004, 44 percent of whom were employed in agriculture, 20 percent in industry, and 36 percent in services. According to government figures, the unemployment rate

in 2004 was 0.6 percent, but outside estimates place the actual rate at around 10 percent and underemployment as high as 20 percent.

The labor code adopted in 1992 recognizes the right of all workers to voluntarily create and join unions, which may in turn associate with international affiliations. However, the Council of the Federation of Trade Unions is dependent on the state, and no genuinely independent union structures exist. Organized strikes are extremely rare, though in 2003 and 2004 there were reports of worker unrest and shutdowns in certain industries. The minimum working age is 14, and between that age and 18 children are allowed to work only 20 hours weekly, though in rural areas this is often disregarded, as children of all ages help with the cotton harvest; a 2000 report estimated that 22.6 percent of children between five and 14 were working part-time in family-run businesses and farms. The maximum workweek is 41 hours, and the minimum wage in 2004 was \$6.53 a month. Laws regarding worker health and safety are often disregarded.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 14,640,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 46.9
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 44
 Industry: 20
 Services: 36
 Unemployment %: 0.6 (official); 10.0 (estimated)

EDUCATION

Education is universal, state provided, and compulsory through the teenage years. Preschool programs are run by local governments, state enterprises, rural collectives, and certain social service organizations. Primary education covers four years, with children beginning school at age six. Secondary school is divided into two cycles, with the first lasting five years and the second two years. In 2002 there were 6.3 million students in primary and secondary schools; the 200,000 or so in vocational schools were specializing in industry, construction, commerce, agriculture, communications, legal studies, or economics. Separate from the technical schools are secondary-level "colleges" preparing pupils for careers in teaching, the arts, or medicine. The Ministry of Education oversees the specialized secondary schools and institutions of higher education, of which there were 53 in 1993, with nearly 400,000 students enrolled.

The Uzbekistani education system has gradually moved away from its Soviet basis. Already in the years just prior to the Soviet Union's dissolution, 76.8 percent of pupils were educated in the Uzbek language, while only 15 percent had Russian-language instruction. Other languages used are Kazakh, Karakalpak, Tajik, Turk-

men, and Kyrgyz. With assistance from Saudi Arabia, the Wahhabi sect set up a system of madrassas (Muslim religious schools) to provide free private education, and a 5,000-seat university was planned for the city of Margilan before the government issued a blanket ban on private education. Under government auspices, plans for an Islamic university in Tashkent were launched in 1999.

As of 2003 the official literacy rate was a high 99.3 percent of adults. Enrollment is also relatively high; in 2002, 76 percent of eligible primary, secondary, and tertiary school students were enrolled.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 99.3
 Male %: 99.6
 Female %: 99.0
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 11.6
 First Level: Primary Schools: 9,300
 Teachers: —
 Students: 2,513,342
 Student-Teacher Ratio: —
 Net Enrollment Ratio: —
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: —
 Teachers: —
 Students: 3,793,976
 Student-Teacher Ratio: —
 Net Enrollment Ratio: —
 Third Level: Institutions: 58
 Teachers: 24,545
 Students: 393,910
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 15.7
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: —

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The Cabinet of Ministers, through the Scientific Production Center of Agriculture, runs 19 research institutes employing almost 3,000 researchers. These institutes pursue diverse research-and-development programs, from general crop propagation and veterinary science to special projects on cotton and irrigation. Departments of physical-mathematical sciences, mechanics, control processes, information technology, chemical-technological sciences, earth sciences, and biological sciences are found at Tashkent's Uzbek Academy of Sciences. Other institutes also conduct research in technology, natural sciences, and medicine. There are 23 colleges and universities that offer scientific and technical training. As of 2001, 1,754 scientists and engineers per million people were engaged in research and development.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 1,754
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: —
 Patent Applications by Residents: 717

MEDIA

The constitution bans censorship, but in practice President Karimov has tolerated no independent viewpoints in newspapers or broadcasting, and publications in the Uzbek, Russian, and Tajik languages have all been censored. Journalists who go beyond the implicit bounds have been fined, expelled, threatened, and on occasion beaten or killed. Nevertheless, at times Karimov himself has criticized the media for its uniformity and lack of debate or genuine analysis of political and economic issues; in this spirit the regime allowed an independent journal to start up in January 1997—only to close it down five weeks later. In 2002 prepublication censorship was ended, but journalists are still prone to self-censorship. The nongovernmental organization Reporters without Borders has rated Uzbekistan, along with Turkmenistan, as having one of the worst climates for journalism, based on the number of reporters killed, assaulted, or thrown in prison; the depth of censorship; restrictions on the operations of foreign media; state monopolies in broadcasting; and the general absence of independent media. In 2004 the group rated Uzbekistan 142nd out of 167 countries in its press freedom index.

In 1997 there were 495 newspapers printed in Uzbekistan, 385 in the Uzbek language. Other newspapers and periodicals were published in Russian, Kazakh, Tajik, Korean, Arabic, English, and Karakalpak. Major Uzbek-language newspapers are *Khalk suzi*, *Uzbekiston ovozi*, *Toshkent khakikati*, and *Uzbekiston adibivoti va san'ati*. Major Russian-language papers are *Golos Uzbekistana*, *Narodnoye slovo*, *Pravda vostoka*, and *Biznes-vestnik vostoka*. News agencies are the Information Agency of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Jokhon) and the Uzbek Information Agency.

Television is dominated by Uzbek Television, the state-run service, which has local programming and relays some programs from Russia and other countries. Kamalak Television is a state-private venture providing alternative programming. The government does not allow for independent broadcasting inside the country, although Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty functions without interference. The state-owned Uzbek Radio broadcasts in numerous languages. A variety of foreign channels are widely available through cable.

Uzbek literature was severely affected by the Stalinist purge of the 1930s and did not start to recover until the 1980s. Uzbek writers have emphasized purifying the Uzbek language and removing Russian elements.

In 2003 there were 320,800 cellular phone users, and in 2005 there were 715,000 Internet users.

Media

Daily Newspapers: —
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —

Books Published: 1,003
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets million: 6.7
 per 1,000: 280

CULTURE

Uzbekistan is at the crossroads of central Asia, and as such its culture has been shaped by many forces, from the days of the Silk Road to the high-water mark of Islamic centers at Samarqand and Bukhara and on to the days of the Mongols and the empire of Tamerlane. Great mosques, minarets, and mausoleums, all with fine interior craftsmanship, can be found in the major cities. Calligraphy was an early art form, along with the traditional lacquer painting of miniatures from scenes of royal life and the Koran. The latter have been revived in the late 20th and early 21st centuries by modern painters using papier-mâché.

The territory now encompassing Uzbekistan was the home of an amazing array of medieval scholars, poets, and scientists, including the scholar al-Biruni, who lived in the 11th century and produced a series of geographic works about India; the astronomer and mathematician Ulugh Beg, who founded a famous observatory in Samarqand; and the 15th-century scholar, poet, and writer Ali Shir Nava'i, who greatly advanced Uzbek literature—he is sometimes called the Shakespeare of Uzbekistan—and was also a talented artist and composer. *Baburname* (The memoirs of Babur) is another benchmark of Uzbek literature; Babur (1483–1530) founded the Mughal Empire and became its first emperor, and he is respected as a soldier and statesman by modern Uzbeks.

Modern poets and prose writers have included 'Abdalrauf Fitrat, Sadriddin Ayni, and Abdullah Qadiri, each of whom was bilingual in Uzbek and Tajik. Socialist realism took over during the Soviet period, but since independence newer voices, including Razzaq Abdurashid, Abduqahhar Ibrahim, Jamal Kamal, and Erkin Wahid, all born in the 1930s, and Rauf Parfi, Halima Khudayberdiy, Muhammad Ali, Sharaf Bashbek, and Mamadali Mahmud, born in the 1940s, have found wider audiences.

Classical Uzbek music employs instruments such as the *doira*, a tambourine-drum, and the stringed *rubob* and *dutor*, which accompany a single singer in a wailing sort of song. More modern music blends traditional styles with rock rhythms.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —

Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Historical legends inform much of Uzbek folklore. These involve the doings of conquerors from Alexander the Great, who in the fourth century B.C.E. married the daughter of a local leader near Samarqand on his way to deal with India, to Tamerlane, the Turkic Mongol who formed an empire of devastation in the 14th century, himself ruling from Samarqand. Stories abound of his cruelty, collecting mountains of heads during his conquests.

Uzbekistan is particularly rich in proverbs. Some of the more popular include “If you have peace in your land, you will have health in your hand,” “He who eats, works, he who starves, shirks,” “Wisdom, so says every sage, does not depend on greater age,” “Good breeding and good grace are not sold in the marketplace,” “Upon our friends our strength depends,” and “Who speaks a little knows a lot, and when he speaks, it’s with great thought.”

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Uzbeks still enjoy a traditional form of verbal entertainment in which two competitors take on a topic and respond to one another’s comments with witty remarks. The one who first stumbles in forming a comeback phrase loses. These matches are called *payr* contests, and the audience decides who fails to respond in a timely manner. Other forms of entertainment include tight-rope walking and *gap*, a custom wherein men meet with old friends to eat, play games of cards or bingo, and generally socialize, helping one another with personal problems.

Especially in urban areas and towns, movies and television are popular. The country receives numerous channels via cable. The most popular types of movies are action and martial arts. Many films are imported from India. Much of the television content is censored.

ETIQUETTE

Greetings tend to be long and involved discussions of health and work. A typical initial greeting is the Islamic “*A-salaam a-laykum*” (Peace be with you), to which the response is “*W-laykum o a-salaam*” (And also with you). First names are often used accompanied with “*Uzbark*,” meaning brother or sister. A handshake is also usual upon greeting.

As in other Muslim countries, shoes should be removed before entering a home or mosque, and the soles of the feet should never be exposed to another, which is considered insulting. In more traditional situations, men and women are seated separately. Also, among more traditional Muslims, the left hand, considered unclean, is never used for giving or receiving or for eating.

FAMILY LIFE

Families tend to be extended, with two to four generations living under one roof. Families are still large by Western standards, with an average of three to four children. The 2004 fertility rate was just under three children per woman. Women, once powerful under the Soviet system, have been essentially relegated to the home since independence. Divorce is strongly discouraged, even in instances of spousal abuse.

Weddings, called *kelin toi*, are major events in Uzbekistan. Dowries are paid to brides, while in turn the bride’s family is expected to foot the bill for the elaborate wedding ceremony, a status symbol among Uzbeks; where families in the West save for years to send their children to college, in Uzbekistan they save to make sure the offspring have fine weddings. The brides often moves into the groom’s family home, where the couple remains until they have children of their own. Women and girls eat apart from the male members of the family.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Both traditional and Western clothing are worn in Uzbekistan. Men typically wear the *doppilar*, or *dopy*, a square, black skullcap often embroidered with ornate patterns that indicate place of birth and other family ties as well as social status. These can be worn along with Western-style suits, long tunics and broad pants, or the shepherd’s quilted robe, called a *chopan*. Women also wear a mix of Western and traditional clothing. Traditional dress may consist of a white headscarf and colorful print dresses in tie-dye patterns, sometimes with trousers of the same material and pattern underneath. Another holdover from traditional times for women is the wearing of braids. A married woman indicates her status by sporting one or two braids, while unmarried women and girls have more. Contrary to Western styles for women, eyebrows that grow together are considered a plus.

SPORTS

Soccer is the most popular recreational and spectator sport in Uzbekistan. Tennis is a recent addition as a spectator sport; the Yunusabad sport and recreation complex

is the venue for the President's Cup of Uzbekistan, an annual international tennis competition. Numerous satellite and challenger tournaments, just below the major professional tennis tournament level, are also held in the country. Table tennis was made popular during the Soviet era and remains so among a wide assortment of people. Uzbek wrestling is called *kurash*. A local variant of polo, popular in many central Asian countries, involves groups of hundreds or even thousands of riders who try to get the carcass of a goat to the opponent's goal.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1940** Many European workers and ethnic minorities are deported from the country during World War II.
- 1959** Through 1982, under the leadership of Sharif Rashidov, the Communist Party of Uzbekistan secretary, the republic achieves a degree of de facto autonomy; corruption and nepotism flourish.
- 1986** Nearly entire Communist Party leadership is purged over corruption charges.
- 1989** Under pressure from nationalists, Uzbekistan Supreme Soviet declares Uzbek the republic's official language. Riots occur in Ferghana Valley between Uzbeks and Meskhetian Turks.
- 1991** As Soviet Union breaks up, independent Republic of Uzbekistan is proclaimed. Communist Party reorganizes itself as People's Democratic Party of Uzbekistan (PDPU), and its leader, Islam Karimov, is elected president.
- 1992** Uzbekistan, as member of Commonwealth of Independent States, signs CIS collective security agreement. Supreme Soviet adopts new constitution.
- 1993** Regime clamps down on opposition parties and independent press. Government introduces new currency, the som.
- 1994** Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan form Central Asian Union. PDPU wins strong majority in parliamentary elections in which opposition participation is strictly limited.
- 1995** Referendum approves extension of Karimov's term to 2000.
- 1996** Legislature bans political parties based on religion or ethnicity.
- 1997** IMF suspends \$180 million loan program to Uzbekistan. Defeat of General Rashid Dostam in Afghanistan prompts Uzbekistan to fortify its southern border. Crackdown on Wahhabi sect in Namangan leads to hundreds of arrests. Tashkent agrees to act as a guarantor of Tajikistan's peace accord.
- 1999** Explosions rip through downtown Tashkent, killing around 15. Uzbekistan decides to withdraw from CIS collective security treaty.
- 2000** Karimov wins reelection in a vote near-universally denounced as undemocratic. Regime executes six men found guilty in Tashkent bombings.
- 2001** Leaders of Russia, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan launch the Shanghai Cooperation Organization to fight militancy and promote trade investments. Uzbekistan joins the international fight against terrorism and allows the United States to use its air bases for action in Afghanistan.
- 2002** The United States earmarks \$100 million in aid for Uzbekistan for its support of the U.S.-led campaign in Afghanistan. In a referendum, Karimov wins support for extending the presidential term from five to seven years.
- 2003** Opposition Birlik and Erk movements hold congresses in May and June, their first in over a decade. In December, President Karimov fires his long-standing prime minister, Otkir Sultonov, citing the country's poorest-ever cotton harvest, and appoints Shavkat Mirziyayev in his place.
- 2004** A wave of terrorist shootings kills 47 in March. Suicide bombers target U.S. and Israeli embassies in Tashkent in July. Parliamentary elections are held, from which opposition parties are banned.
- 2005** In May troops open fire on anti-government protesters in the city of Andijan killing an estimated 400 to 1,000 people.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Republic of Uzbekistan
<http://www.uzbekistan.org/>
- Welcome to Uzbekistan
<http://www.gov.uz/>

VANUATU

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Vanuatu

ABBREVIATION

VU

CAPITAL

Port-Vila

HEAD OF STATE

President Kalkot Mataskelekele (from 2004)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Ham Lini (from 2004)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Parliamentary democracy

POPULATION

205,754 (2005)

AREA

12,200 sq km (4,710 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Melanesian

LANGUAGES

Bislama, English, French

RELIGION

Christianity

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Vatu

NATIONAL FLAG

A horizontal gold Y with black borders dividing fields of dark red at the top and mint green at the bottom; the black triangle between the arms of the Y based on the hoist contains two crossed *namele* ferns within a circular boar's tusk, all gold.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A native Vanuatuan in traditional dress stands at the base of a mountain; behind him are two crossed green *namele* ferns and a black circular boar's tusk, and on a scroll below is the national motto, *Long God Yumistanap* (Let us stand firm in God).

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"Yumi, Yumi, Yumi" (We, We, We)

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day), July 30 (Independence Day), November 29 (Unity Day), December 25 (Christmas), all major Christian festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

July 30, 1980

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

July 30, 1980

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Vanuatu is a chain of 13 large and about 70 small islands stretching from south of the Solomon Islands to east of New Caledonia. The islands of the Y-shaped archipelago, whose open end is to the north, have a total land area of 12,200 sq km (4,710 sq mi) and a total coastline of 2,528 km (1,570 mi). The 13 large islands are Vanua Lava, Banks, Espiritu Santo, Maewo, Pentecost, Aoba, Malakula, Ambrym, Epi, Efate, Erromango, Tanna, and Aneityum; these islands are all quite mountainous and contain extensive rain forests. The other islands are of the coral atoll type. There are at least three active volcanoes: Tanna, Ambrym, and Lopevi.

Geography

Area sq km: 12,200; sq mi 4,710

World Rank: 156th

Land Boundaries, km: 0

Coastline, km: 2,528

Elevation Extremes meters:

Lowest: Pacific Ocean 0

Highest: Mount Tabwemasana 1,877

Land Use %

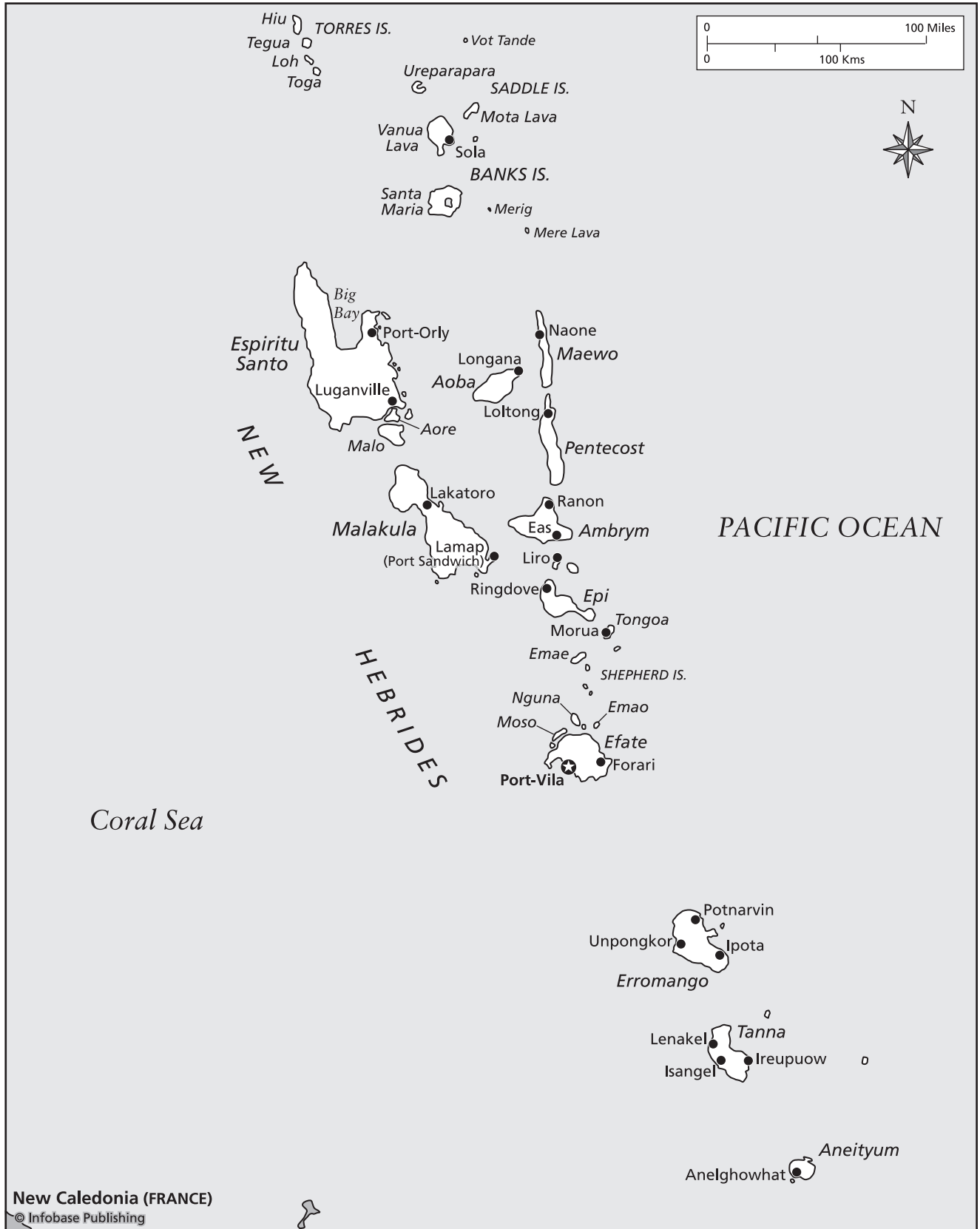
Arable Land: 2.5

Permanent Crops: 7.4

Forest: 36.7

Other: 53.4

Vanuatu



Population of Principal Cities (1999)

Port-Vila	29,356
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CLIMATE AND WEATHER

The climate is quite hot and humid. Port-Vila, the capital, on the island of Efate, has average year-round humidity of 83 percent and average annual rainfall of about 2,300 mm (90 in). The winter months are fairly cool. The archipelago lies within a cyclone zone and suffers cyclone damage at least once or twice a year.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature: 50°F to 85°F
Average Rainfall: 90 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Many of Vanuatu's islands are covered with forests of sandalwood, kauri pine, banyan, coconut, and other trees typical of the region. There are over 1,000 plant species growing on the islands, over 150 of them endemic. Most of the forests are relatively untouched because the terrain makes logging difficult.

Vanuatu's most spectacular fauna lives underwater. There are myriad coral reefs inhabited by tropical fish, rays, sharks, and other marine life. Many birds inhabit the islands, such as the incubator bird, which buries its eggs in warm volcanic mud.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 205,754
World Rank: 171st
Density per sq km: 17.2
% of annual growth (1999-2003): 2.4
Male %: 51.2
Female %: 48.8
Urban %: 21.7
Age Distribution %: 0-14: 33.3
 15-64: 63.1
 65 and over: 3.6
Population 2025: 263,300
Birth Rate per 1,000: 23.06
Death Rate per 1,000: 7.9
Rate of Natural Increase %: 1.5
Total Fertility Rate: 2.77
Expectation of Life (years): Males 61.0
 Females 64.05
Marriage Rate per 1,000: —
Divorce Rate per 1,000: —
Average Size of Households: 5.1
Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Some 95 percent of Vanuatuans are Melanesian. Melanesians are an amalgam of Negritoid, Ainoid, and Veddoic stock, though Negritoid physical characteristics predominate. The remaining 5 percent of the population are French, Vietnamese, Chinese, or of other Pacific races.

LANGUAGES

Vanuatu is a former British and French condominium; both English and French are official languages and widely spoken in the country, with English having a slight edge in degree of use. Bislama, a pidgin dialect, is also constitutionally recognized as an official language, and efforts are being made to give Bislama equal status with English and French as a medium of instruction. Over 100 other Melanesian languages and dialects are spoken on the various islands, but many of these languages are dying out.

RELIGIONS

Nearly 90 percent of Vanuatuans are Christians of one of more than almost 80 denominations. Presbyterians form the largest denomination, followed by Roman Catholics and Anglicans. Both the Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu and the Roman Catholic diocese are based in Port-Vila. About 7.6 percent of the population still practice indigenous religions. A number of people on Tanna observe the practices of the Jon Frum Cargo cult, which originated in the early 1900s as based on the mythical Jon Frum, who the locals hoped would deliver them from missionaries and Europeans in general.

Religious Affiliations

Presbyterian	75,500
Anglican	30,900
Roman Catholic	30,900
Indigenous Beliefs	15,600
Seventh-Day Adventist	12,800
Church of Christ	7,800
Other	32,300

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The oldest known settlement in Vanuatu, on Maewo Island, dates back more than 4,000 years. The islands have seen streams of immigrants and conquerors, all of whom have influenced the development of the culture. The first European to see the islands was the Portuguese navigator Pedro Fernández de Quirós, in 1606. Others eventually followed, including Captain James Cook in 1774. The islands became important ports during the slave trade, and their

supply of sandalwood and whales made them economically significant. Missionaries also flocked to the region.

The New Hebrides islands, as they were first named by the colonial powers, were governed from 1906 as an Anglo-French condominium, under which each power was responsible for its own citizens and conducted administration in its own language. The first representative assembly was not convened until 1974, but thereafter the country made quick strides toward full independence, following a timetable drawn up by the British and the French. In 1979 a government of internal autonomy was formed under Father Walter Lini, who was the leader of the most prominent political party, the Vanua'aku Pati (VP). As the date of independence drew closer, separatist movements became more militant; one, led by Jimmy Stevens on Espiritu Santo, established a provisional government until suppressed by British, French, and Papua New Guinean troops. Unrest did not delay the end of British and French joint rule, and the new nation of Vanuatu, independent within the Commonwealth, came into being on July 30, 1980.

Father Lini became prime minister, and the former deputy chief minister George Kaloa, who assumed the surname Sokomanu (literally, "leader of thousands"), took over the largely ceremonial post of president.

The first postindependence election, held in November 1983, returned the Lini government to office. Shortly thereafter President Sokomanu pled guilty to charges of late payment of road taxes and resigned from office. Nevertheless, he was reelected president in March 1984.

Lini was once again returned to office in the parliamentary elections of November 1987, but the VP's share of votes fell below 50 percent for the first time, while the opposition Union of Moderate Parties (UMP) received 42 percent of the vote, up from 33 percent in 1983. Following the elections, Barak Tame Sope, secretary-general of the VP, challenged Lini unsuccessfully for the presidency of the party. In May 1988, after the government's decision to abolish a local land corporation that had been the source of Sope patronage led to rioting, Sope was charged with fomenting the disturbance; he was dismissed from the cabinet and removed from his VP post. He and four other VP members officially resigned from the party in July. Subsequently, the "Gang of Five" was removed from Parliament for shifting their party alliances, which they were precluded from doing under the 1983 Vacation of Seats Act. In protest, 18 members of the UMP boycotted Parliament, and they, too, were expelled from office for violating the parliamentary ban on three consecutive absences. In October 1988 the Vanuatu Court of Appeal reinstated the Gang of Five, declaring their ouster unconstitutional, but upheld the removal of the 18 UMP members.

President Sokomanu dissolved Parliament in December 1988 and set up an interim government, with Sope as its leader. In response, Lini had Sokomanu and Sope arrested for treason. Later in December the Supreme Court ruled Sokomanu's actions unconstitutional

because they had been taken without the advice of the prime minister and without the support of two-thirds of the Parliament. Sokomanu was dismissed as president in January 1989 and replaced by Fred Timakata. Sokomanu was later convicted of seditious conspiracy and incitement to mutiny and was sentenced to six years' imprisonment. Meanwhile, Sope and UMP leader Maxime Carlot were given five-year prison sentences for conspiracy and treason. All three convictions were overturned in April 1989 by the International Commission on Jurists, from Tonga, Papua New Guinea, and Vanuatu, citing insufficient evidence.

The 1990s saw continued instability. In 1996 a paramilitary group called the Vanuatu Mobile Force attempted to overthrow the government. Scandal followed, with members of the government alleged to have been party to massive banking fraud. In 1997 the country restructured its economy with help from the Asian Development Bank.

In 1997 elections President Jean-Marie Leye was defeated. The new government proved to be unstable, and in late 1999 Father John Bani became president, Barak Sope prime minister. That year Pentecost Island was hit by an earthquake and a tidal wave, which caused extensive damage.

In 2001 Barak Sope lost a vote of no confidence in the parliament, and Edward Natapei became prime minister. He was replaced in July 2004 by the UMP's Serge Vohor, who had twice before served in that capacity. Also at that time, Kalkot Mataskelekele was elected president. Vohor immediately upset the government by attempting to shift Vanuatu's diplomatic recognition of China to Taiwan, supposedly without consulting the cabinet. He lost a vote of no confidence that December and was replaced by Ham Lini.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

Prime Minister

1980–91	Walter Hadye Lini
1991	Donald Kalpokas
1991–95	Maxime Carlot Korman
1995–96	Serge Rialuth Vohor
1996	Maxime Carlot Korman
1996–98	Serge Rialuth Vohor
1999–2001	Barak Tame Sope
2001–04	Edward Nipake Natapei
2004	Serge Rialuth Vohor
2004–	Ham Lini

CONSTITUTION

Under the constitution that took effect at independence in 1980, Vanuatu is a parliamentary democracy whose

head of state is a largely ceremonial president. The president is named by an electoral college made up of Parliament and the presidents of the regional councils; he serves a five-year term. The head of government is the prime minister, who is elected by Parliament from among its members by secret legislative ballot; the leader of the majority party or coalition is usually chosen. The prime minister appoints other ministers, all of whom must be members of the legislature. The number of ministers, including the prime minister, is not to exceed one-quarter the number of parliament members.

The voting age is 18. Suffrage is universal.

PARLIAMENT

The national legislature is the Parliament, which consists of 52 members elected by popular vote for a four-year term. It can be dissolved before the end of the term by a three-quarters quorum of parliamentary members or by an order from the president on the prime minister's advice. There is also a Council of Chiefs (Malvatu Mauri), which advises the government on cultural matters.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Political associations are fluid. Traditionally, people have divided along linguistic lines. The parties with the largest blocks of parliamentary representation as of 2004 were the National United Party (NUP), the Union of Moderate Parties (UMP), and the Vanua'aku Pati (VP, Our Land Party). Other parties include the Jon Frum Movement, the Melanesian Progressive Party, the Vanuatu Republican Party, and the Greens. A number of parliamentary members are independent.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For purposes of local government the country is divided into six administrative regions known as island councils: Malampa, Penama, Sanma, Shefa, Tafea, and Torba. These councils have considerable autonomy.

LEGAL SYSTEM

A united legal system is being created from the former French and British systems.

The judiciary includes a four-member Supreme Court, with the chief justice appointed by the president, following consultation with the prime minister and the opposition leader, and three other judges taken from other Pacific nations, with the requirement that they be qualified to practice law in Vanuatu; the speaker of Parliament, the president of the Council of Chiefs, and the

presidents of the regional councils are each responsible for naming one of the three other justices. The Supreme Court has unlimited jurisdiction in cases of civil and criminal proceedings. The Court of Appeal is composed of two or more Supreme Court justices sitting together. Parliament has the authority to establish village and island courts where necessary.

HUMAN RIGHTS

The government generally respects human rights. The major problems are poor prison conditions, a slow judicial process, some press restrictions, and traditional social norms that tolerate violence against women.

FOREIGN POLICY

Vanuatu was not admitted to the United Nations until 1981, but at independence it became a member of the Commonwealth as well as the francophone Agence de Coopération Culturelle et Technique (ACCT). As of 2004 the nation had diplomatic relations with over 65 countries. Regionally, it is a member of the South Pacific Commission, South Pacific Forum, Asian Development Bank, and Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. It maintains no embassies abroad. Vanuatu is an outspoken member of the left-leaning Melanesian Bloc, which opposes nuclear testing and colonialism. The bloc has a tendency to vote with radical third-world nations, although it generally supports France on many issues.

Australia, the United Kingdom, France, and New Zealand furnish the majority of aid, though other nations and organizations also provide some development assistance. The United States and several other countries send volunteers.

DEFENSE

Vanuatu has no regular military forces, though it does have a police force and a paramilitary force of about 300 that is responsible for the nation's security. During the short-lived revolt on Espiritu Santo, the government called in first British and French troops and later Papua New Guinean troops for military assistance. Australia provides a great deal of military aid, training troops and furnishing patrol boats.

ECONOMY

Vanuatu's economy is based mainly on agriculture, with two-thirds of the population farming or fishing in some way. Many people support themselves through subsis-

tence farming. Cash crops include copra (which accounts for 35 percent of export income), cocoa, kava, timber, and beef. The nation also brings in some income through tax sheltering and offshore financial services, hosting about 2,000 registered financial institutions. In 2002 the nation took steps to stop money laundering. Tourism is the fastest-growing sector of the economy, having brought in 40 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) in 2000, but is vulnerable to the weather and natural disasters.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$million: 580
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 2,900
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 0.0
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: -2.4
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 26
 Industry: 12
 Services: 62
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 48
 Government Consumption: 26
 Gross Domestic Investment: —
 Foreign Trade \$million: Exports: 26.6
 Imports: 138
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: —
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: —

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)				
1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
107.2	109.3	112.0	116.1	118.4

Finance

National Currency: Vatu (VUV)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = VUV 111.79
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 12.3
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 6.5
 Total External Debt \$million: 83.7
 Debt Service Ratio %: 1.22
 Balance of Payments \$million: —
 International Reserves SDRs \$million: 38.8
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
 3.1

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 32.4
 per capita \$: 154.30
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 19

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$million: 52.6
 Expenditures \$million: 54.3
 Budget Deficit \$million: 1.7
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: 19.6

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 26
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2001) %: -0.6
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 0.25
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: —
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: —
 Total Farmland % of land area: 2.5
 Livestock: Cattle 000: 150
 Chickens 000: 340
 Pigs 000: 62
 Sheep 000: —
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters 000: 119
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 17.1

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 9.5
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 1.0

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent 000: —
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 29
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 142
 Net Energy Imports % of use: —
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW 000: 12
 Production kW-hr million: 43
 Consumption kW-hr million: 40
 Coal Reserves tons million: —
 Production tons million: —
 Consumption tons million: —
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
 Production cubic feet billion: —
 Consumption cubic feet billion: —
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
 Production barrels 000 per day: —
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 0.57
 Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$million: 138
 Exports \$million: 26.6
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): —
 Balance of Trade \$million: —

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Taiwan %	34.6	—
Australia %	15.5	—
Japan %	10.7	7.4
Singapore %	8.0	—
New Zealand %	6.0	—
Fiji %	4.6	—
Thailand %	—	46.3
Malaysia %	—	18.1
Belgium %	—	5.3
Indonesia	—	5.3

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 1,070
 Paved %: 23.9
 Automobiles: 3,000
 Trucks and Buses: 4,000
 Railroad: Track Length km: —
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: —
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 52
 Total Deadweight Tonnage million: 1.56
 Airports: 30
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 223
 Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 53
 Number of Tourists from 000: 12
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 58
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: —

Communications

Telephones 000: 6.5
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.25
 Cellular Telephones 000: 7.8
 Personal Computers 000: 3
 Internet Hosts per million people: 2,488
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 36

ENVIRONMENT

Like many other island nations in the South Pacific, the country of Vanuatu faces growing environmental impact from its burgeoning population. Growth is of particular concern in the two most urban areas, Port-Vila and Luganville, where poor waste management threatens groundwater purity. Most of the population does not have reliable access to safe drinking water. Deforestation is a potential problem, though Vanuatu's trees are somewhat protected by the steep terrain.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 36.7
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: 1
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 0
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 0.41

LIVING CONDITIONS

About 80 percent of the population lives in isolated villages, farming the land. In rural areas people often trade pigs and other items instead of paying for goods with money; pigs are seen as a form of both currency and prestige. Most con-

sumer goods are imported and therefore expensive. While there is no formal public transportation, taxis, jeeps, and minibuses carry passengers for fees. There are paved roads on Efate and Santo, but these are full of potholes, and the roads on other islands are unpaved and prone to becoming impassible in rainy weather. Transportation between islands is by boat or plane and can be irregular.

HEALTH

Life expectancy is fairly low, at 62.5 years in 2005. The infant mortality rate is high, with over 55 deaths for every 1,000 live births. Each woman had an average of 2.8 children in 2004. The population is growing fairly rapidly, straining the nation's ability to provide services for its people.

Health

Number of Physicians: 20
 Number of Dentists: —
 Number of Nurses: 428
 Number of Pharmacists: —
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 11
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 55.16
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 130
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 3.8
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 44
 HIV Infected % of adults: —
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 49
 Measles: 48
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: —
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 60

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Most people grow their own staple foods, which include yams, manioc, and taro root. To supplement these starches, islanders raise other vegetables and fruits, along with pigs, chickens, and cattle; forage for wild fruits and vegetables; and hunt wild animals such as flying fox and fish. The national dish is *laplap*, a mixture of taro, yam, or manioc paste and grated coconut and wild spinach. *Nalot* is a combination of banana or breadfruit, taro, and coconut. People also eat typically French cuisine, such as croissants, escargots, and frog legs. Kava, made from an herb that reduces anxiety, is the national drink.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: —
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: —
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 90.4
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 141.4

STATUS OF WOMEN

Women have equal legal rights, but traditional culture has hampered their moving into leadership roles. The only female candidate for Parliament in 1983 was defeated by a small margin. Several women hold senior positions in the government bureaucracy. Marie-Noelle Ferrieux-Patterson, Vanuatu's first ombudsman, was instrumental in issuing reports criticizing the government's financial misdeeds. Myriam Abel, the director of public health, was elected to the executive of the World Health Organization in 2002, becoming the first female Pacific Islander to attain that position. Still, most women are considered inferior to men and have far fewer opportunities, especially in education. The government runs a family-planning service as part of a UN-sponsored family health project. The birth rate has dropped substantially, from 5.5 children per woman in 1990 to 2.8 in 2004.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 4
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: —
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: —

WORK

Most people in Vanuatu work in agriculture, either surviving as subsistence farmers or growing cash crops such as coconut. The country has a very small amount of industry. A total of 30 percent of the workforce is employed in services, particularly financial services and tourism.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: —
 Female Participation Rate %: —
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 65
 Industry: 5
 Services: 30
 Unemployment %: —

EDUCATION

The national literacy rate is 53 percent; more men than women are literate.

Education is neither universal nor compulsory, and although it is government provided, a nominal fee is charged. Schooling lasts for 13 years, as divided into six years of primary school, four years of middle school, and

three years of secondary school. English and French are the main languages of instruction. The school year lasts from February through December.

A regional University of the South Pacific center, financed by the New Zealand government, was opened in Port-Vila in the late 1980s.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 53.0
 Male %: 57.0
 Female %: 48.0
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 9.4
 First Level: Primary Schools: 272
 Teachers: 1,241
 Students: 36,482
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 29.4
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 94.1
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: —
 Teachers: 364
 Students: 8,680
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 27.1
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 27.5
 Third Level: Institutions: 1
 Teachers: 27
 Students: 675
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 4.0
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 11.0

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Vanuatu lacks technological infrastructure. Many islanders still use conch shells as part of a primitive "telephone" system. In 2003 there were about 6,500 telephone lines and 7,800 cellular telephones operating on the islands. About 7,500 people were using the Internet.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$000: 22
 Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

The single government newspaper, *Vanuatu Weekly*, founded in 1980 and based in Port-Vila, is published in Bislama, English, and French. There are several privately owned papers published on varying schedules.

The government-owned broadcasting station is Radio Vanuatu, which broadcasts in English, French, and Bislama. There is one television station, Television Blong Vanuatu, which is operated by the Vanuatu Broadcasting and Television Corporation. BBC World Service broadcasts are available on FM.

Media

Daily Newspapers: —
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: —
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets 000: 2
 per 1,000: 12

CULTURE

Vanuatu is home to a variety of cultures, due to the fractured nature of the landscape and islands that have separated groups of islanders from one another. The population includes both Melanesian and Polynesian peoples, whose cultures have been mingled with those of the French and British as well.

Music is extremely popular throughout the archipelago, and there are a number of different musical instruments on the different islands. The slit-drum called the *tamtam* is used in most ceremonies. People play panpipes, conch shells, three-holed flutes, and long carved pipes. On Ambrym artists draw pictures in the sand, depicting scenes from legends or leaving messages for one another. Sculptors create shapes out of stone, wood, tree ferns, and coral. Some artists carve magic stones from pumice, but these are kept hidden. Body and rock painting are common art forms, and tattooing still occurs, though it has become less common.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: —
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Most islanders still hold traditional beliefs, despite years of missionary presence. The creator god is called Tahara, and the people believe that the world is full of demons and other spirits that can affect natural events such as volcanic eruptions and storms. People often hold ceremonies and dances depicting mythical events. They use the word *tabu* to describe anything that is sacred. The Jon Frum Cargo cult is an important part of social life on the island of Tanna, and every February the people there celebrate Jon Frum Day. Tanna is also the site of a

traditional clan alliance dance called the *toka*. Land diving is a traditional fertility rite on Pentecost Island; men tie vines to their ankles and dive off high platforms to the ground, brushing the earth with their hair to make it fertile.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Most of Vanuatu's population is rural and isolated, so entertainment is strictly local. People hold ceremonies and musical performances with dancing. They enjoy drinking kava, which is said to relieve stress and anxiety. In the north, islanders engage in ceremonies from the *nimangki* system, in which they publicly give away their goods and slaughter pigs. Tourists come to the islands to scuba dive, snorkel, and engage in various other water sports. Trekking is popular. In Port-Vila there are discos, bars, casinos, and golf courses.

ETIQUETTE

The people of Vanuatu do not bargain and consider it offensive if a buyer proposes a price other than the one asked by the seller. Tipping is also not customary, as it imposes an obligation on the person receiving the tip. Different tribes have different rules of behavior; for example, in some tribes men and women drink kava together, but in others kava drinking has become such a male-only ritual that women dare not even look in the direction of men drinking kava lest they be beaten.

FAMILY LIFE

People on Vanuatu keep careful track of lineage, and most know their family history many generations back. Family practices vary by region and tribe. In some tribes women have very low status, but in others they are equal to men. Relatives such as uncles are important to children, and boys often train with their uncles prior to being circumcised in a manhood ceremony.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Most women wear loose dresses of colorfully patterned cotton, called island dresses or Mother Hubbard dresses; they decorate these elaborately with ribbons and lace. Recently, some women have begun wearing pants and board shorts, to the dismay of some religious leaders; rules of modesty dictate that women must cover their legs, especially their thighs, though bare breasts are acceptable. Men wear mostly casual, Western-style cloth-

ing, though they wear traditional costumes and body paint for ceremonies.

SPORTS

Sports have been developed in Vanuatu since about 1980, when Kalman Kiri took over the leadership of the Vanuatu Football Federation. At that time there were almost no resources available for sports; since then Vanuatu has developed soccer teams, joined FIFA, been recognized by the International Olympic Committee, and hosted international soccer championships. A variety of sports are now available, and Vanuatu sent a team of athletes to the 2004 Olympic Games, in Athens.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1980** Vanuatu becomes an independent republic, as the Anglo-French condominium is terminated. Jimmy Stevens, backed by an American right-wing organization known as the Phoenix Foundation, leads a secessionist uprising on Espiritu Santo and proclaims an independent republic; the revolt is suppressed with the help of British, French, and Papua New Guinean troops.
- 1982** The vatu is introduced as national currency, replacing the Australian dollar.
- 1983** The Land Leasing Act provides security for agricultural tenants. Vanuatu establishes diplomatic relations with Cuba. In elections to parliament, the Vanua'aku Pati gains 24 seats and the Union of Moderate Parties 12.
- 1984** George Sokomanu pleads guilty to charges of late payment of road taxes and resigns as president. He is reelected in March.
- 1986** Opposition to government policies results in formation of three new political parties: the National Democratic Party, the New People's Party, and the Vanuatu Labor Party.
- 1987** Lini is reelected prime minister in November. Parliamentary seats are increased to 46.
- 1988** Barak Tame Sope is charged with instigating serious rioting in Port-Vila, resulting in one death and several injuries. Sope is dismissed from the Council of Ministers. He and four others resign from the VP and are dismissed from parliament. A total of 18 UMP members boycott three successive parliamentary sittings and are expelled from Parliament. Sokomanu dissolves Parliament and installs Sope as interim prime minister. Sokomanu and Sope are arrested, charged with treason, convicted, and sentenced to prison.
- 1989** International Commission of Jurists overturns convictions of Sokomanu and Sope. Fred Timakata is named president.
- 1990** Lini proposes a major review of the constitution, in particular, a reexamination of the relationships between central and local government and between the government and the churches.
- 1994** Jean-Marie Leye Manatawa is elected president.
- 1998** Donald Kalpokas becomes prime minister of a coalition government between the VP and National United Party (NUP).
- 1999** Father John Bani becomes president, Barak Sope prime minister.
- 2001** Sope loses a vote of no confidence in Parliament, and Edward Natapei becomes prime minister.
- 2002** Sope is sentenced to three years in prison for forging government guarantees worth 46 million Australian dollars but is released three months later for health reasons. Several police officials are found guilty of mutiny.
- 2003** The Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development removes Vanuatu from its list of uncooperative tax havens.
- 2004** Serge Vohor is elected prime minister. Vohor attempts to form an agreement with Taiwan, shifting Vanuatuan diplomatic recognition from China to Taiwan. Vohor is ousted by a vote of no confidence. Ham Lini becomes prime minister.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Government of Vanuatu
<http://www.vanuatugovernment.gov.vu/>
- Port Vila Press
<http://www.news.vu/en/>

VATICAN CITY

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Vatican City State (Status Civitatis Vaticanae; Stato della Città del Vaticano)

ABBREVIATION

VA

CAPITAL

Vatican City

HEAD OF STATE

Pope Benedict XVI

HEADS OF GOVERNMENT

Secretary of State Angelo Cardinal Sodano (from 1990); Governor Edmund Cardinal Szoka (from 2001)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Elective monarchy

POPULATION

921 (2005)

AREA

0.44 sq km (0.17 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Italian, Swiss

LANGUAGES

Latin (official), Italian

RELIGION

Roman Catholicism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Euro

NATIONAL FLAG

Two vertical stripes, yellow at the hoist and white at the fly. On the white field in yellow are the crossed keys of St. Peter surmounted by the triple papal tiara.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

The white papal tiara, or triple crown, bejeweled and topped with a gold cross. Crossed in saltire below the tiara are large ornate keys, one silver and the other gold, with a red cord joining their bases.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"Pontifical March"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

All major Christian festivals; coronation day of the reigning pontiff; days when public consistory is held

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

February 11, 1929

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

August 15, 1967; various apostolic constitutions have been issued by various popes.

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Located in Rome, Vatican City is the smallest state in the world. It has a roughly triangular area of 0.44 sq km (0.17 sq mi), or 44 ha (109 acres), lying on the western bank of the Tiber River to the west of the Castel Sant'Angelo. On the west and south it is bounded by the Leonine Wall. Vatican City comprises the following buildings and landmarks: St. Peter's Square; St. Peter's Basilica, the largest Christian church in the world, in a quadrangular area north of the square containing administrative buildings and Belvedere Park; the pontifical palaces to the west of Belvedere Park; and the Vatican

Gardens, which occupy about one-third the total area. Outside the Vatican proper, the pontiff exercises extraterritoriality over a number of churches and palaces in Rome, notably the Lateran Basilica and Palace, in the Piazza San Giovanni; the Palace of San Callisto, at the foot of Janiculum Hill; and the basilicas of Santa Maria Maggiore and San Paola Fuori le Mura. Extraterritoriality outside the city of Rome extends to the papal villa and its environs (almost 40 ha; 99 acres), at Castel Gandolfo, and to the area (about 420 ha; 1,037 acres) at Santa Maria di Galeria, some 19 km (12 mi) from Rome, the site of the Vatican radio station established in 1957. Vatican City State has no rivers or hills.

Vatican City State



CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Winters are mild, with only rare snow, and temperatures average 7°C (45°F). Summer temperatures are high during the day, but the evenings are cool. The average temperature in July is 24.4°C (76°F). Most of the rain falls in winter and in the months of October and November.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature
 Winter: 45°F
 Summer: 76°F

FLORA AND FAUNA

Vatican City is entirely urban. It has no wild flora and fauna aside from vermin and birds. The Vatican Gardens make up one-third of the state's territory. They date back to medieval times and are full of trees, bushes, and fountains.

POPULATION

The official population of the Vatican City proper as of 2005 was 921. Most of the state's approximately 3,000 lay workers are Italian citizens who live outside the Vatican.

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

The resident population is predominantly Italian. The official hierarchy includes representatives of most of the world's major ethnic groups. Of note are the members of the Swiss Guard, recruited from among Swiss Catholics.

LANGUAGES

The official language of Vatican City is Latin, but Italian is the working language of the people. French and various other languages are also spoken.

RELIGIONS

The Vatican is the center of the Roman Catholic Church, also called the Universal (the English meaning of the Greek word *katholikos*) and Apostolic Church, which was founded in the first century by the apostle Peter. Vatican City may also be referred to as the Holy See, the official name for the ecclesiastical seat of the Roman Catholic Church, which effectively rules Vatican City State. Most residents are ordained Catholic priests or monastics.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Vatican City State is the remnant of the medieval Papal States, which at various times included large areas in Italy and even parts of southern France.

Between the 1850s and the 1870s, during the course of the unification of Italy, most of the papal domain fell into the hands of the House of Savoy, and Rome itself fell in 1870. In May 1871 the Italian government promulgated the Law of Guarantees, defining the status of the papacy. Among other things, the law declared the person of the pope to be inviolate, guaranteed him full liberty in his religious functions and in the conduct of diplomatic relations, awarded him an annual indemnity in lieu of the income lost when the Papal States were annexed, and affirmed his extraterritorial jurisdiction over the Vatican and papal palaces. Pius IX refused to accept the law or the monetary allowance, and he as well as his successors described themselves as "prisoners of the Vatican." Until 1919 Catholics were prohibited from participating in the Italian government.

The so-called Roman Question was settled on February 11, 1929, through the conclusion of the three Lateran Treaties between the Italian state and the Vatican. The first treaty recognized the full sovereignty of the Vatican and established its territorial extent; the second was a concordat establishing the Roman Catholic Church as the state church of Italy; and the third awarded the Holy See 750 million lire in cash and one billion lire in interest-bearing state bonds in lieu of all financial claims against

Italy. The constitution of the Italian Republic, adopted in 1947, substantially reaffirmed the Lateran Treaties.

Beginning with the reign of Pope John XXIII and the convening of the Second Vatican Council, in 1962, the Vatican underwent a remarkable revolution, transforming the nature and bases of its authority. Through a process of *aggiornamento* (renewal), the Holy See moved in several different directions to adapt its ancient message to the modern world. The Vatican demolished barriers that excluded other Christian denominations as well as non-Christian faiths; it also, without compromising its doctrinal integrity, modernized the ecclesiastical structures, cut doctrinal deadwood, and broadened the church's appeal to include workers, the downtrodden, and the oppressed.

The major events in the reign of Pope John Paul II were the assassination attempt against him in 1981; the fall of Communism in Poland and in the rest of Europe, in which he played a part; and his visit to the Holy Land in 2000, a Holy Year. One of the most traveled popes, he visited over 120 countries, as he tried to restore the church's relations with other Christian denominations as well as with the Jews. He enlarged the College of Cardinals to nearly 200 members, and he canonized hundreds of new saints. He was known throughout the world for his conservative views on church doctrine. Pope John Paul II died on April 2, 2005, and was succeeded by Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, who became Pope Benedict XVI.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

Pope	
1939–58	Pius XII
1958–63	John XXII
1963–78	Paul VI
1978	John Paul I
1978–2005	John Paul II
2005–	Benedict XVI

CONSTITUTION

The term "Holy See" most accurately refers to the authority and sovereignty vested in the pope to direct the Roman Catholic Church and function as the church's central government. The Holy See has a legal personality equivalent to that of a state and can enter into and maintain diplomatic relations with other states. Vatican City State was created in 1929 to provide a territorial identity for the Holy See in Rome. Vatican City is recognized as a national territory by international law, while the Holy See functions as an international diplomatic presence.

The apostolic constitution of 1967 (*Regimini Ecclesiae Universae*) serves as the constitution of Vatican City State and retains the form of an absolute monarchy. Supreme executive, legislative, and judicial powers are vested

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in the pope, who is elected for life and serves concurrently as bishop of Rome, supreme pontiff of the Universal Church, primate of Italy, archbishop and metropolitan of the province of Rome, sovereign of Vatican City State, and vicar of Christ. In administration the pope is assisted by the Pontifical Commission for Vatican City State.

The College of Cardinals assists the pope in administering church affairs. Until the reign of Pope John XXIII the number of cardinals was limited by tradition to 70, but since then it has risen steadily, reaching a record of 194 in 2003 and settling at 182 by 2005. The cardinals are divided into three orders: cardinal bishops (including cardinals of the patriarchal sees of the Eastern Rite), cardinal priests, and cardinal deacons. Since 1970 only cardinals under 80 years of age have had the right to participate in the election of the pontiff, and since 1973 the number of cardinals with that right has been limited to 120.

The Roman Curia acts as a papal court and as the principal administrative body of the church. The Secretariat of State, led by the cardinal secretary of state, presides over a section for general affairs and a section for relations with other states.

PARLIAMENT

The unicameral Pontifical Commission for Vatican City State handles internal administration.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Does not apply.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Does not apply.

LEGAL SYSTEM

There are three tribunals for religious cases. The Apostolic Penitentiary determines questions of penance and absolution from sin. The Roman Rota deals with marital issues and is also competent to handle appeals of any decisions from lower ecclesiastical courts. The Supreme Tribunal of Apostolic Signature hears appeals from the Roman Rota, but only in exceptional cases. A tribunal of first instance handles minor cases within the Vatican territory.

In 1917 the first legal code, the Code of Canon Law (*Codex Juris Canonici*), was devised for the Catholic Church. In 1963 a pontifical commission was appointed to recommend possible reforms, and in 1981 the commission submitted 1,752 proposals. Revisions have included a reduction in the number of cases meriting excommu-

nication and a general relaxation of penalties, with an increased emphasis on lay participation. The new code was ratified by Pope John Paul II and came into force in November 1983.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Human rights are not an issue in Vatican City State; they are fully respected in practice.

FOREIGN POLICY

The Vatican's foreign relations are primarily based on its status as the Holy See rather than on its status as a sovereign entity. As the latter, its activities are governed by the Lateran Treaties, which enable it to enter into international agreements and bilateral diplomatic relations. The Vatican has diplomatic relations with over 100 countries (including Protestant countries, such as the United Kingdom, Denmark, Norway, and Sweden, as well as the United States, which has a majority Protestant population) and permanent observer status within the United Nations. In addition to being a spiritual leader, Pope John Paul II was probably one of the most influential and best-known statesmen in the modern world. John Paul II enhanced the Vatican's international profile by embarking on over 100 foreign trips during his reign and was described as "the most peripatetic pope in history."

In 1984 negotiations were concluded on a new concordat governing relations between Italy and the Vatican. The agreement provided for the abandonment of Roman Catholicism as Italy's state religion as well as of mandated religious instruction in public schools but extended the continued recognition of church weddings and of full freedom in Catholic schools. The Vatican was credited with hastening the widespread collapse of Communism, especially in Poland. In 1988 the pope met with President Mikhail Gorbachev, of the Soviet Union, in a historic prelude to the establishment of official contacts in 1990. By 1992 diplomatic relations had been reestablished with all former Soviet countries. Similarly, relations with Mexico, broken off in 1861, were normalized in 1992 following the deletion of anticlerical clauses in that country's constitution. As a result of the changes, the Catholic Church was authorized to own property and run schools, while priests and nuns were enfranchised and permitted to wear clerical garb in public.

Pope John Paul II made historic gestures of reconciliation toward Jews in general and to Israel in particular. In 1994 formal Vatican-Israeli relations were established. The pope met with the chief rabbi of Rome in 1986 and the chief rabbi of Israel's Ashkenazi Jews in 1993. To counter the appearance of any pro-Israeli bias, relations were also established with the Palestine Liberation Orga-

nization (PLO) and Jordan. The Vatican also insisted on its right to be consulted in any settlement regarding the future of Jerusalem. In 2000 the pope visited the Holy Land, symbolically including the Holocaust Memorial in his itinerary. He also defied left-wing criticism in granting audiences to such controversial figures as Kurt Waldheim and Jörg Haider, both of Austria. The Vatican was staunchly opposed to the U.S.-led war in Iraq in 2003.

In global policy, the Vatican has called for the rescheduling of Third World debts, just access to affordable housing for the poor, and land reform and has condemned the widening gap between rich and poor nations. At the same time, however, John Paul II's pontificate proved divisive to many of the world's Catholics due to his pronouncements on birth control, stem-cell research, divorce, and the marriage of priests.

DEFENSE

The defense of Vatican City is the responsibility of Italy. Swiss Papal Guards are posted at the entrances to the Vatican to provide security for the pope.

ECONOMY

The Holy See has a noncommercial economy. The pontificate owns a vast collection of priceless works of art. The state supports itself through the sale of postage stamps, tourist mementos, and publications as well as fees charged for admission to museums. The church also owns real estate and various other investments that bring in substantial income and receives contributions from Roman Catholic dioceses around the world.

ENVIRONMENT

As a small, independent nation surrounded by a large metropolitan area, the Vatican's environment is largely shaped by Rome, which has poor air quality and suffers from all the problems that afflict large cities, with antiquated systems for dealing with pollution.

LIVING CONDITIONS

The standard of living in the Holy See is comparable to that of surrounding Rome. The city has modern amenities and comfortable living quarters for its residents.

HEALTH

The Vatican has its own medical staff and sophisticated medical equipment. Pope John Paul II was diligently cared for in the time leading up to his death.

FOOD AND NUTRITION

There are cooks and dining facilities within Vatican City for the use of the pope and other members of the church hierarchy. Residents also eat in the many restaurants in surrounding Rome.

STATUS OF WOMEN

A number of nuns live in Vatican City.

The Vatican has tremendous power to affect national and international policies related to the status of women. Since the 1980s the Vatican has taken the position that all forms of artificial contraception are wrong and that abortion should not be performed under any circumstances. The Holy See does not allow divorced Catholics to remarry within the church. These positions have resulted in many nations' governments passing laws limiting contraception and restricting divorce. The Vatican also refuses to consider ordaining female priests. On the positive side, the Vatican has sponsored many efforts to improve the lots of women and children around the world.

WORK

The permanent residents of the Vatican are mostly ecclesiastics who pray, say Mass, and handle church business. Members of the Swiss Guard lead the lives of soldiers. The 3,000 or so lay workers who commute daily to the Vatican perform necessary services such as housekeeping, cooking, and the administration of tourist facilities; their income is comparable to that of equivalent workers in Rome.

EDUCATION

As the major center for higher Catholic education, the Vatican is the site of some of the world's most ancient and best-known seminaries. Some of the more important institutions, all prefixed by the word "Pontifical," are the Gregorian University, the Biblical Institute, the Institute of Oriental Studies, the Lateran Athenaeum, the Institute of Christian Archaeology, and the Institute of Sacred Music.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Vatican City has modern telecommunications facilities and its own Internet system. The telephone system is tied into that of Italy.

MEDIA

The Vatican maintains one of the most advanced media systems in the world. Its official newspaper is *L'osservatore*

romano, founded in 1861, which is published daily in Italian; it contains information about Vatican ceremonies, international events, and the pope's schedule. *Acta apostolicae sedis*, founded in 1909, is the Holy See's official bulletin and is issued monthly and on special occasions. The Central Statistics Office publishes *Annuario pontificio*, an annual record. The apostolic news agency is AIF, founded in 1926. Book publishing is handled by three firms.

Radio Vatican, founded in 1931, is situated within Vatican City at Santa Maria di Galeria. The station operates an all-day service in 40 languages on a variety of channels. Centro Televisivo Vaticano is the agency responsible for the production and distribution of Catholic television programs.

CULTURE

Vatican City houses one of the most extensive and valuable collections of art in the world. Its holdings include the Sistine Chapel, with its elaborately painted ceiling and *The Last Judgment*; numerous works of Egyptian, Assyrian, Greek, Roman, and Etruscan art; paintings by Raphael, Leonardo da Vinci, and other Renaissance artists; and a collection of classical statues in the Pio-Clementine Museum. St. Peter's Basilica and Square are architectural masterpieces.

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

The Vatican's museums store a vast quantity of artifacts related to mythologies from different regions of the world, including Assyria, Egypt, Greece, Rome, South America, Africa, and the Pacific Islands. The Holy See itself has long been the subject of mythology and folklore, from the sex lives of popes to alleged papal associations with Nazis and the Mafia.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

The church celebrates religious ceremonies throughout the year. Christmas and Easter attract the largest crowds. The pope himself usually says Christmas Mass. The pope usually gives public audiences once a week. Residents of Vatican City have access to Rome's many entertainment possibilities.

ETIQUETTE

Residents of the Vatican generally observe standard European rules of etiquette. Conduct during Mass and Communion is governed by a complex set of rules.

FAMILY LIFE

There are no families in Vatican City.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Most of the Holy See's permanent residents are ecclesiastics who wear priestly or monastic garments appropriate to their calling. Members of the Swiss Guard wear colorful uniforms that have not changed in centuries. Visitors to Vatican City are expected to dress appropriately; shorts and bare shoulders are not allowed inside St. Peter's Basilica. People attending Vatican ceremonies dress very formally; men wear white ties and tails, and women wear long-sleeved, high-necked long black dresses with mantillas.

SPORTS

The Vatican itself does not have sporting facilities, and its residents do not play sports for the most part. Pope John Paul II, a former athlete, set up a Vatican Sports Department in 2004, hoping to use sports as a way to evangelize and instruct youth in the ways of the church. He particularly wanted the department to encourage honest sportsmanship and end the doping scandals that have plagued professional sports in recent years.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1958** Pope Pius XII dies; Pope John XXIII is elected.
- 1962** Pope John XXIII convenes historic Vatican II for reform and renewal.
- 1963** John XXIII dies; Paul VI is elected pope.
- 1974** Italian referendum approves divorce despite church opposition.
- 1978** Paul VI dies; his successor, John Paul I, dies within a month of election; John Paul II, the first non-Italian in centuries to be elected pope, is installed in St. Peter's chair.
- 1981** John Paul II survives an assassination attempt.
- 1983** Pope approves revision of the Code of Canon Law.
- 1984** Italy and the Vatican sign new concordat, under which Roman Catholicism ceases to be the state religion in Italy.
- 1987** The failure of Banco Ambrosiano involves the Vatican in the worst financial scandal in Italian history.
- 1993** The Holy See establishes diplomatic relations with Israel.
- 1998** John Paul II celebrates 20 years as head of the Roman Catholic Church.

- 2000 The pope visits the Holy Land.
- 2001 John Paul II appoints 44 new cardinals, bringing the total to 184 and increasing the proportion of cardinals from developing countries to 41 percent.
- 2002 The pope summons U.S. cardinals to the Vatican to discuss mounting charges of sexual abuse by priests.
- 2003 The pope names 31 new cardinals, bringing the total to 194.
- 2005 John Paul II dies on April 2. Benedict XVI is installed as pope.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Apostolic Nunciature of the Holy See
<http://www.vatican.va>

VENEZUELA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela (República Bolivariana de Venezuela)

ABBREVIATION

VE

CAPITAL

Caracas

HEAD OF STATE & HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

President Hugo Chávez Frías (from 1999)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Federal republic

POPULATION

25,375,281 (2005)

AREA

912,050 sq km (352,143 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, Arab, German, African, Amerindian, mestizo

LANGUAGE

Spanish

RELIGION

Roman Catholicism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Bolívar

NATIONAL FLAG

Tricolor of yellow (top), blue, and red horizontal stripes. An arc of seven white stars appears in the middle of the blue

stripe, and the national emblem appears on the hoist side of the yellow stripe.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A shield divided into three parts, two upper and one lower. In the upper left is a sheaf of 20 stalks of grain arranged in a fan against a red background. In the upper right are a trophy of arms and national flags against a yellow background. In the bottom half is a white stallion prancing on green ground against a blue sky. On the top of the shield are two cornucopias, their stems crossed in saltire. An elaborate yellow, red, and blue ribbon tied at the base proclaims *19 de abril de 1810, independencia* (the date of independence); *20 de febrero de 1859, federación* (the date of the federation of Venezuela—until 1953 the nation was known as the United States of Venezuela); and *República de Venezuela*.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Gloria al Bravo Pueblo” (Glory to the Brave People)

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year’s Day), April 19 (First Step to Independence), May 1 (Labour Day), June 24 (Army’s Day and the Battle of Carabobo Day), July 5 (Independence Day), July 24 (Birthday of Simón Bolívar), October 12 (Columbus Day), all major Catholic festivals, including Epiphany, St. Joseph’s Day, Assumption, All Saints’ Day, Immaculate Conception, Ascension, Corpus Christi, and Holy Week

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

July 5, 1811

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

December 30, 1999

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Venezuela is located on the northern coast of South America, with an area of 912,050 sq km (352,143 sq mi), extending 1,487 km (924 mi) west-northwest to east-southeast and 1,175 km (730 mi) north-northeast to south-southwest. The national territory includes 72 islands in the Antilles, the largest of which is Margarita, in the Nueva Esparta group. The length of the coastline is

2,800 km (1,738 mi). Venezuela shares its international land border with three neighbors: Guyana, Brazil, and Colombia.

Venezuela is divided topographically into four regions: the Maracaibo Lowlands, Northern Mountains, Orinoco Lowlands, and Guyana Highlands.

The Maracaibo Lowlands comprise some 51,800 sq km (20,000 sq mi) of coastal plains embracing Lake Maracaibo. The region, which also includes the Paraguaná

Venezuela



Peninsula, is delimited on the west by the Sierra de Perija (also known as the Serranía de los Motilones) and on the south and east by the Cordillera de Mérida and the Segovia Highlands. The Northern Mountains, which are sometimes called the Venezuelan Andes, extend from the western Colombian border (south of the Maracaibo Lowlands) in an arc toward the coast and then on to the Paria Peninsula in the east. The mountains are an extension of the Eastern Cordillera of the Andes, which divides near San Cristóbal into the Sierra de Perija and the Cordillera de Mérida. The latter broadens northward to form the Segovia Highlands. Between the Cordillera de Mérida and the Colombian Andes is the Táchira Gap, which links Colombia and Venezuela. At Pico Bolívar

the Cordillera de Mérida reaches the highest elevation in the country (5,007 m; 16,423 ft). This range is interrupted by the Yaracuy Gap, beyond which is the coastal range. The coastal range comprises two parallel series of mountains. The fertile valleys between these two ranges contain some of the country's largest cities, including Caracas, Maracay, and Valencia. One part of the coastal range terminates at Cape Codera; the continuation of the other beyond Barcelona is called the Eastern, or Cumaná, Highlands.

The Orinoco Lowlands are the great plains that extend from the Colombian border south of the Andes to the Atlantic, as bounded by the Northern Mountains and the Orinoco River. This region, covering nearly

259,000 sq km (100,000 sq mi), is also called the *llanos*, or plains, and consists of pastureland, forests, sandy tablelands, and swamps.

The Guyana Highlands, constituting some three-fifths of the national territory, principally consists of plateaus between the Brazilian border and the Orinoco River. The region includes the Gran Sabana in the southeast, a 36,000 sq km (14,000 sq mi) plateau covered with grass and scrub from which emerge massive flat-topped bluffs, some of them 2,750 m (9,000 ft) above sea level. The Río Churun tumbles over an opening in these cliffs to create Angel Falls, with its drop of 978 m (3,212 ft) the highest in the world. The Guyana Highlands form one of the least-explored regions in the world.

There are more than 1,000 rivers in the country. About four-fifths of the country is drained by the Orinoco River, the world's eighth-largest river and South America's second largest, after the Amazon. Rising in the Parima Mountains near the Brazilian frontier, the Orinoco is 2,815 km (1,750 mi) long and 21 km (13.5 mi) across at its widest point. The river, along with its 436 tributaries, is connected to the Amazon by a channel, the Casiquiare, which joins up with the Río Negro. The major tributaries of the Orinoco are the Apure and Caroní. Among the rivers flowing from the Northern Mountains into Lake Maracaibo and the Caribbean Sea are the Tuy and the Unare.

Lake Maracaibo is the largest lake in South America and is accessible to ocean shipping. Of the hundreds of other lakes in the country, only Lake Valencia is geographically significant.

Geography

Area sq km: 912,050; sq mi 352,143

World Rank: 32nd

Land Boundaries, km: Brazil 2,200; Colombia 2,050; Guyana 743

Coastline, km: 2,800

Elevation Extremes meters:

Lowest: Caribbean Sea 0

Highest: Pico Bolívar (La Columna) 5,007

Land Use %

Arable Land: 3.0

Permanent Crops: 1.0

Forest: 56.1

Other: 39.9

Population of Principal Cities (2001 est.)

Barcelona	328,000
Barquisimeto	811,000
Caracas	1,836,000
Ciudad Guayana	629,000
Maracaibo	1,609,000
Maracay	394,000
Maturín	325,000
Petare	369,000
Turmero	306,000
Valencia	1,196,000

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Venezuela lies entirely within the tropic zone; climatic variations are determined primarily by elevation. The rainy months are customarily referred to as winter, the remainder of the year as summer.

Based on altitude Venezuela is divided into four climatic regions: The *tierra caliente* comprises the coastal plains, the central prairies, the valleys and deltas of the Orinoco, and the jungles, with elevations of less than 800 m (2,600 ft). Average temperatures in this zone range from 24.4°C to 34.4°C (76°F to 96°F). The *tierra templada* comprises the lower mountain slopes and plateaus between 800 and 2,000 m (2,600 and 6,500 ft), where the average temperatures range between 10°C and 25°C (50°F and 77°F). Caracas is located in this zone. The *tierra fría* is the subalpine zone of the mountains, with elevations from 2,000 to 3,000 m (6,500 to 9,800 ft) and temperatures below 23.9°C (75°F) throughout the year. The *páramos* is above the timber line, where the temperature seldom rises above 14.4°C (58°F).

The rainy season lasts from May through November. The average annual rainfall varies from 1,400 mm (55 in) in the Andes to 760 mm (30 in) in Caracas and 280 mm (11 in) at La Guaira, on the coast. The heaviest rainfall occurs in the south and southeast, the least on the Paraguaná Peninsula.

Venezuela lies to the south of the customary path of hurricanes, and cyclones are therefore infrequent. Prevailing trade winds exert a significant influence on climatic conditions. These winds include the *barines* from the northwest, the *calderetes* from the south, and a Caribbean wind called the Red Wind of Coro.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature

Tierra Caliente: 76°F to 96°F

Tierra Templada: 50°F to 77°F

Tierra Fría: < 75°F

Páramos: < 58°F

Average Rainfall

Andres: 55 in

Caracas: 30 in

La Guaira: 11 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Venezuela has a huge variety of flora and fauna to accompany its diverse array of landscapes. The area around the Orinoco River is rain forest, inhabited by anacondas, crocodiles, piranhas, monkeys, and numerous other animal species. The llanos are covered with grasses and are home to capybaras, jaguars, anteaters, howler monkeys, and numerous domestic cattle. The Andes Mountains are covered with cloud forests that grow below the snow line; highland

meadows called *páramos* contain unique plant species. The *tepuys*, or rock formations, in the southeast are home to unique, extremely specialized insects. The coral reefs off the coast harbor tropical fish and other marine life.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005:	25,375,281
World Rank:	45th
Density per sq km:	29.1
% of annual growth (1999-2003):	1.8
Male %:	50.5
Female %:	49.5
Urban %:	86.9
Age Distribution %:	
0-14:	29.9
15-64:	65.0
65 and over:	5.1
Population 2025:	32,061,000
Birth Rate per 1,000:	18.91
Death Rate per 1,000:	4.9
Rate of Natural Increase %:	1.4
Total Fertility Rate:	2.26
Expectation of Life (years):	
Males:	71.27
Females:	77.58
Marriage Rate per 1,000:	2.9
Divorce Rate per 1,000:	0.7
Average Size of Households:	5.3
Induced Abortions:	—

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Since 1926 ethnic background has been excluded from the census questionnaire, so the country's ethnic composition can only be determined in approximate terms. The population is a combination of European, indigenous, and African peoples, with a large percentage of mixed-race individuals; those of mixed European and Amerindian ancestry are called *mestizos*. Amerindians occupy a special niche in the national ethnic structure, although their culture and ancestral lands are under relentless assault from encroaching modernization. In the most egregious cases, indigenous people have been killed by miners and even agents of the national government while trying to preserve the integrity of their lands.

The Amerindian population is divided into around 30 recognized groups. Estimates of their total number have ranged from 210,000 to 315,000. About half of these come from four groups: the Guajiro, Warao, Pemón, and Yanomami, with the first two being by far the most prominent. Other tribes are the Achagua, Arawak, Caberre, Caracas, Chaima, Chake, Cumanagoto, Gandule, Guahibo, Guayupe, Jirajira, Karinya, Makiritare, Marakapan, Mariche, Motilonos, Omegua, Otomac, Palenque, Paria, Piaroa, Quiriquire, Saliva, Teques, Timote, Tumuzu, and Zorca. They are primarily concentrated in Amazonas State, although smaller numbers are to be

found in the states of Zulia, Bolívar, Apure, and Sucre. A few groups have adopted Roman Catholicism, but otherwise the Amerindians have retained their traditional culture. The 1961 constitution defined the government's responsibilities toward indigenous peoples and extended to them special protection. Hugo Chávez's regime greatly extended Amerindian rights through the promulgation of a new constitution.

The number of aliens legally residing in the country is estimated at more than one million. These include Colombians, Spaniards, Italians, and Portuguese.

LANGUAGES

The official language is Spanish, which is spoken by virtually the entire population outside of isolated Amerindian groups, who speak as many as 170 languages and dialects. Most indigenous languages belong to one of three linguistic groups—Chibcha, Cariban, and Arawak—but some are of unknown origin. The Spanish of Venezuela is characterized by certain idiomatic expressions. The country absorbed a fair number of Italian and Portuguese speakers over the post-World War II period. Additionally, Spanish speakers from other countries, notably Colombia and the Dominican Republic, bring their own unique forms of the language.

RELIGIONS

About 96 percent of the population are baptized Catholics, and Roman Catholicism functions as the national religion, although there is no constitutional provision for a state religion. Relations between state and church are harmonious and are reinforced by a number of common activities. Through a special division of the Ministry of Justice, the government contributes to certain church operating expenses, such as the salaries of the hierarchy and the construction and repair of religious buildings. The church also has a dominant position in education and the media. There are several Catholic radio and television stations, and the church's daily newspaper, *La religión*, is a fixture in Caracas. The government also supports and finances the church's mission work among Amerindians. As in other parts of Latin America, the church's growing social consciousness and concern for the problems of injustice and economic disparities have led it to adopt a progressive stand on many political issues.

Religious minorities include Protestants, who as a result of active proselytizing among the urban poor now make up some 2 percent of the population, and several thousand Jews. A few indigenous groups still practice ancestral religions. Religious syncretism is far less common in Venezuela than in the Caribbean islands or in Latin American countries with larger Amerindian populations.

Religious Affiliations

Roman Catholic	24,360,000
Protestant	507,500
Other	507,500

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Not a great deal can be said with certainty about the prehistoric indigenous populations of Venezuela. They were hunter-gatherers, agriculturalists, and city dwellers who formed a diverse constellation of small bands of unrelated peoples. Never did Venezuelan territory see the rise of a prominent culture or empire such as that of the Incas. One of the most prevalent Amerindian groups was the Timoto-Cuica, whose agrarian society was based in the Andes. The coastal populations of Amerindians were displaced over the years by Caribs and Arawaks from the Caribbean islands. Tribes centered in the llanos of the east and the Maracaibo basin, in the west, tended to be nomadic.

Venezuela was under Spanish rule from 1498, when it was discovered by Christopher Columbus on his third voyage. The country received its name, meaning “little venice,” because the native huts built on stilts over the water reminded Alonso de Ojeda, who sailed into the Gulf of Venezuela in 1499, of the Italian city. From 1528 until 1546 the territory was under the control of the Welsers, a German banking firm, in settlement of a debt owed by Charles I of Spain (Holy Roman Emperor Charles V). Amerindian resistance to Spanish rule continued until 1580, when the natives were decimated by smallpox. After two unsuccessful revolts against Spain, Francisco de Miranda, “El Precursor,” the leader of the Congress of Cabildos, declared the independence of the country in 1811 only to be overthrown by royalist factions, captured, and sent to die in a dungeon in Cádiz. The cause of independence was taken up by Simón Bolívar, who issued his famous declaration calling for a war to the death against all Spaniards. In 1813 Bolívar entered Caracas as “the Liberator” and established the Second Republic.

The Second Republic was also short-lived, and in 1814 Bolívar was driven out of the country by the royalists. After regrouping his forces in Haiti, Bolívar launched a new attack on eastern Venezuela and, with the help of José Antonio Páez, freed part of the country and proclaimed the Third Republic at Angostura in 1819. The end of the war of independence came with Bolívar’s decisive victory at Carabobo in 1821; the death toll in the 10-year war was over 300,000, representing one-third of the population. The Cúcuta Congress proclaimed the union of Venezuela and Colombia in the Republic of Gran Colombia, but the new republic disintegrated in a power struggle between Páez, the military commander of the Venezuela region, and Francisco de Paula Santander, the Colombian leader. In 1829 Páez declared Venezuela an independent state.

Until the late 1950s Venezuela experienced considerable political instability and long periods of authoritarian rule by members of the armed forces. Democratic governments were incapable of legitimizing their authority and inevitably broke down. The overthrow of General Marcos Pérez Jiménez in 1958 paved the way toward the creation of a viable democratic system that witnessed peaceful transfers of power and effective competition between government and opposition parties.

The return to democracy in 1958 was marked by the election of Rómulo Betancourt, the leader of the Democratic Action (Acción Democrática, AD) party. Under his direction and that of his successor, Raúl Leoni, Venezuela made considerable economic progress while combating Cuban-supported subversive efforts. Differences among the AD leadership led to the election of Christian Democrat Rafael Caldera Rodríguez in 1968. Although Caldera’s program was substantially that of the AD, he faced opposition in the AD-dominated Congress, which facilitated the victory of Carlos Andrés Pérez in 1973. Pérez nationalized the petroleum and iron industries and developed plans for the equalization of petroleum revenues. His administration came to be seen as dishonest, and consequently, the AD candidate was defeated by the Christian Democratic candidate, Luís Herrera Campíns, in 1978.

During Herrera’s tenure Venezuela found itself flush with revenues deriving from the worldwide oil shortage; as a member of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), Venezuela benefited tremendously. However, the temptation for the government to spend wildly on various projects led it to borrow heavily on international markets, notwithstanding its windfall; meanwhile, the influx of oil money lifted the value of the local currency, the bolivar, making economic life harder for nonfuel exporters. Venezuela remained a very oil-dependent economy, and when prices slid away from their all-time high in the early 1980s, the country’s economic problems began. Soaring global interest rates caught Venezuela, along with most Latin American countries, as the state had taken on huge debt obligations, which now threatened to overwhelm its capacity to service the debt. Each round of belt-tightening conducted under Herrera and then his AD successor, Jaime Lusinchi, to get the budget deficit under control provoked protests from students, unions, and other quarters.

In 1988, in an atmosphere of dissatisfaction, Carlos Andrés Pérez won a second term by evoking the high points of his first, when times had been better and economic nationalism had been riding high. The constraints of Venezuela’s debt crisis forced Pérez to turn quickly from populist slogans to an orthodox economic program sponsored by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which included reducing the subsidies that kept gas prices artificially low. The price hikes sparked riots in Caracas, resulting in more than 300 deaths in clashes with police.

Pérez had to retract certain measures, but the incident increased popular disaffection with the political system, which encouraged a set of junior military officers led by Hugo Chávez Frías to attempt a coup in February 1992. Though the coup was unsuccessful, its leader became a hero to many of those with the least to lose. The abortive putsch redoubled criticism of Pérez's program; when this was compounded with renewed accusations of personal corruption (which eventually sent him to jail), the president was forced to resign early.

After a short caretaker period, new elections, in which many abstained, brought in another returning president, Rafael Caldera, who ran as an independent populist with an honest reputation. Before long his administration had to confront a severe banking crisis, following the collapse of Banco Latino; the state eventually needed to bail out a large portion of the financial system. Though Caldera had run on an anti-IMF platform, he, too, was compelled to negotiate an agreement to win an essential standby loan. The administration's austerity measures initially touched off new violence, to which it reacted by temporarily suspending certain basic constitutional rights. After floundering early, Caldera managed to muddle through by running affairs on the basis of broad consensus, meting out blame and pain. The latter was exacerbated in 1998 by drops in oil prices to lows not seen in many years.

Disgust with traditional politicians allowed another independent populist candidate, Hugo Chávez, the one-time coup plotter, to convincingly win the 1998 presidential election. Chávez promised sweeping reforms and began implementing them as soon as he secured power. A constituent assembly was convened to rethink the entire structure of government, eclipsing the existing Congress and judicial institutions, and draw up a new constitution. The open-ended nature of the assembly's authority (as well as that of the president) alarmed many, but overwhelming popular support rendered opposition futile. The new draft constitution, featuring a unicameral legislature and a presidency with unprecedented powers, was approved by referendum in December 1999, clearing the way for the old Congress and soon afterward the constituent assembly to go out of business. Elections were held for the new National Assembly in May 2000; parties supporting Chávez won by large margins, and the president succeeded in getting reelected.

Chávez proceeded to implement unorthodox policies and alienate the middle and upper classes through bitter speeches. In December 2001 the oil-industry workers' union and many large business organizations staged a massive strike. In April 2002, another massive strike was organized, and Chávez was forced to resign by military high-command rebels, who were backed by the United States, and was taken into military custody. However, Chávez returned to office on April 14, after the collapse of the interim government. At the end of

the year the Venezuelan economy ground to a halt, as opposition leaders instigated another general strike. With the oil industry not functioning, the entire country suffered fuel shortages, and shops, schools, offices, and factories were forced to close until the strike ended in February 2003.

The opposition spent much of 2003 collecting signatures demanding a referendum on Chávez's rule. Meanwhile, progovernment and antigovernment clashes led to many violent deaths and injuries. In June 2004 election officials agreed to hold the referendum in question, which asked voters whether Chávez should be allowed to serve the two and one-half years remaining in his term; in August the people voted in favor of Chávez's staying in office. In January 2005 Chávez took advantage of his mandate to sign a land bill that would divide up the country's large estates and redistribute land to the poor, a move that did not endear him to his ranching opponents.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

1945–48	Rómulo Betancourt
1948	Rómulo Gallegos
1948–50	Carlos Delgado Chalbaud
1950–52	Germán Suárez Flamerich
1952–58	Marcos Pérez Jiménez
1958–59	Wolfgang Larrazábal
1959	Edgard Sanabria
1959–64	Rómulo Betancourt
1964–69	Raúl Leoni
1969–74	Rafael Caldera
1974–79	Carlos Andrés Pérez
1979–84	Luis Herrera Campíns
1984–89	Jaime Lusinchi
1989–93	Carlos Andrés Pérez
1993–94	Ramón José Velásquez
1994–99	Rafael Caldera
1999–	Hugo Chávez Frías

CONSTITUTION

The legal basis of the Venezuelan government is the constitution of 1999, the nation's 27th, which came into effect at the beginning of 2000.

The executive branch is headed by the president, who is elected for a six-year term and may be reelected. The president wields considerable powers in practice, such as conducting foreign relations, convening extraordinary sessions of the National Assembly, and administering national finance. The president has the right to introduce bills and defend them before the parliament. As the commander in chief of the armed forces, the head of state is charged with the defense of the national territory. The

most important power available to the chief executive is that of declaring a state of emergency (or state of siege) and suspending constitutional guarantees in the event of a national crisis. The declaration of a state of emergency must be subsequently authorized by the National Assembly, or by its steering committee, when the parliament is not in session, within 90 days. The only clear constitutional checks on presidential power are parliamentary approval of the budget and control over declarations of states of emergency. The 1999 constitution provides for a weak vice presidency.

As head of government the president presides over the Council of Ministers. Ministers are appointed and removed by the president but are at least in theory accountable to the National Assembly, before which they may be called upon to explain their policies.

In addition to the executive branch, the constitution created four other branches. The legislative branch is filled by the unicameral National Assembly. The judicial branch is headed by the Supreme Tribunal of Justice. The citizens' branch consists of a prosecutor general, an ombudsman (or "defender of the people"), and a comptroller general; these individuals are allowed to challenge government actions that they believe illegal or unconstitutional. The electoral branch consists of the National Electoral Council, the five members of which are elected to seven-year terms by the National Assembly and are responsible for organizing all elections.

Suffrage is universal and compulsory over age 18. The penalty for not voting is the loss of certain civil rights, but these penalties have not been strictly enforced.

PARLIAMENT

Since 2000 Venezuela has had a 165-seat unicameral legislature, the National Assembly, with lawmaking powers and the authority to approve or reject the government's budget. In other ways, its scope of authority is restricted to questioning government ministers on policy matters. Constituents are given the power to "deselect" parliamentary representatives by referendum, and parliamentary authority may be further curtailed by another "citizen's power" provision permitting the popular override of legislation via referendum. Parliamentary representatives are elected on the basis of a system of proportional representation; voters cast their ballots for lists rather than candidates. Voting is conducted using colored ballot slips, enabling illiterate citizens to exercise their franchise. Each party is preassigned a specific color, such that in practice voters choose colors in the act of voting. The electoral process instituted in 2000 has been widely seen as a way to marginalize the parties that have traditionally been dominant—Democratic Action and the Christian Democratic Party—and produce a majority in support of the president, Hugo Chávez.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Until the late 1990s Venezuelan politics revolved around two parties. The senior and larger of the two traditional parties is Acción Democrática (AD, Democratic Action). The AD was founded in 1936 as a militant revolutionary party, but by the 1990s it was associated with the corruption of Presidents Jaime Lusinchi and Carlos Andrés Pérez. The other formerly dominant party is the Comité de Organización Política Electoral Independiente (COPEI), also known as the Christian Democratic Party, a moderately conservative and Catholic-oriented party founded in 1946. These two parties now form the core of the opposition, along with a minor party called Justice First.

In 2000 Hugo Chávez's populist party, Movement for the Fifth Republic (Movimiento V República, MVR), took a majority of parliamentary seats. The other notable progovernment party is the Movement toward Socialism (Movimiento al Socialismo, MAS).

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For administrative purposes Venezuela is divided into 23 states, the federal district, and a federal dependency consisting of 72 Caribbean islands. The states are subdivided into 156 districts, which are in turn divided into 613 municipalities.

The constitution describes the states as "autonomous and equal political entities," but despite its federal form (until 1953 the Republic of Venezuela was called the United States of Venezuela), the government is unitary in structure and authority. Until 1989 the 20 state governors were appointed by the president and thus functioned as agents of the central government. The first-ever direct elections of state governors were held in December 1989. The states have only restricted financial powers and are dependent on the central government for most of their revenues.

Popular representative institutions at the local level include the unicameral state legislatures and, at what is in effect the county level, district councils. The district councils, whose membership varies according to the size of the district, are headed by elected chairs holding office for one-year terms. Council members are elected at the same time as national officials for five-year terms. Similarly, municipalities have elected mayors and municipal councils. These councils have no decision-making powers but function as instruments for the implementation of the decisions of the central government.

LEGAL SYSTEM

Venezuelan law is derived from Napoleonic and Italian sources. The judiciary is headed by the Supreme Court, the composition of which was expanded to 32 justices by a 2004

constitutional amendment. The Supreme Court has broad powers of judicial review and constitutional interpretation.

Below the Supreme Court, the country is divided into judicial districts that roughly correspond to the states. Each judicial district has a superior court composed of either one or three judges. Other judicial bodies within each judicial district include courts of instruction, district courts, municipal courts, and courts of first instance. The Ministry of Justice names judges to the lower courts. Historically, judges have always had fixed rather than lifetime tenures, which underscores their political subordination to the executive branch. This condition appears likely to continue, notwithstanding the president's stated desire for a court system independent of politics.

There also exist special courts: military tribunals, fiscal (tax and customs) tribunals, and juvenile courts. Although Venezuela is a federal state, there is no parallel state court system.

The conduct, efficiency, and independence of the judiciary are supervised by the Council of the Judiciary. The death penalty was abolished in 1863.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Venezuela's human rights record has been poor in recent years. The police force reportedly has connections with vigilante death squads that have murdered hundreds of people all over the country. Criminal suspects have "disappeared," and investigations of disappearances have been slow. Security officers have tortured and abused detainees. Prison conditions are terrible, with severe overcrowding, violence, and harsh treatment of prisoners. Police officers who have abused civilians have typically done so with impunity.

The government has limited numerous civil liberties. It has wiretapped private citizens. Government criticisms of the opposition, the church, the media, labor unions, and other entities have been taken as tacit permission to take violent acts against those entities. The state has forced news media to broadcast Chávez's speeches and other programming favorable to the government.

Violence and discrimination against women remain a problem. Child abuse, child labor, discrimination against indigenous people, and the abuse of laborers are all common. There have been some reports of human trafficking, but the government has been attempting to end this practice by eliminating corruption among immigration officials.

FOREIGN POLICY

Venezuela has been working to integrate its political and economic policies with those of the rest of the hemisphere. It has worked with other Latin American states on ending corruption, integrating energy policy, and expanding trade throughout the region. It is a member of

the United Nations and the Organization of American States and an associated member of Mercosur. It has assisted Haiti as part of a UN program and has tried to persuade Cuba to end its isolation.

Border disputes with Colombia and Guyana are a chronic problem. Venezuela claims three-quarters of Guyana's territory, which situation the United Nations has been trying to resolve since 1987. Venezuela and Colombia each claim certain parts of the Gulf of Venezuela, and bilateral commissions are working on this dispute as well.

The United States and Venezuela had close ties for years, and the United States has remained the nation's most important trading partner, both in imports and exports. Venezuela is one of the top four U.S. oil suppliers and in the past received substantial U.S. assistance in fighting the narcotics trade and money laundering. However, following revelations with regard to U.S. support for the failed coup of 2002, which support was traced as far as the White House, Venezuela has substantially distanced itself from the United States, as facilitated by rises in oil prices and increased ties with other leftist Latin American nations as well as anti-American nations the world over.

DEFENSE

The Venezuelan defense structure is headed by the president. The chain of command runs through the minister of defense, who is generally the chief of the joint staff, although in 2001 a civilian was appointed minister of defense, becoming the first nonmilitary defense minister in decades. Military policy is formulated by the National Council of Security and Defense, which functions outside the chain of command.

The Venezuelan armed forces are among the most modern and professional in Latin America. Conscription is mandatory by law but is rarely enforced; only 10 percent of those eligible are drafted each year. The selective service period is two years. The total strength of the armed forces, not counting the national guard, was over 105,000 in 2003. The 1999 constitution gave the armed forces a new role in economic development, and several military officers are now serving as senior government officials. Almost all military aid, including equipment and counterinsurgency training, has historically been obtained from the United States, but high oil prices have recently allowed Chávez to refuse U.S. assistance.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	105,300
Military Manpower Availability:	6,236,012
Military Expenditures \$billion:	1.687
as % of GDP:	1.5
as % of central government expenditures:	7.1
Arms Imports \$million:	50
Arms Exports \$million:	—

ECONOMY

Venezuela's economy recovered in 2004 after two years of deep recession. This recovery was mainly produced by increases in world oil prices. Petroleum remains Venezuela's biggest economic asset, accounting for one-quarter of gross domestic product (GDP) and four-fifths of export income. Almost 60 foreign companies are involved in the oil sector. Chávez passed a new law in 2001 making the oil industry the domain of the Venezuelan state. In 2002–03 the oil industry came to a halt, as oil workers went on strike, which led to nearly half of state oil workers being fired.

Venezuela opposes the proposed Free Trade Agreement of the Americas, preferring to form a South American bloc to negotiate with the United States. Manufacturing recovered in 2004 after a recession. Manufactured goods include steel, aluminum, textiles and clothing, tires, fertilizer, automobiles, and food and beverages. Export crops include rice, fish, tobacco and cigarettes, coffee, cocoa, and tropical fruits. Venezuela must import about two-thirds of its food, mainly from the United States.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 145.2
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 5,800
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: –3.7
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: –5.4
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 0.1
 Industry: 46.5
 Services: 53.4
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 64
 Government Consumption: 8
 Gross Domestic Investment: 12.9
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 35.84
 Imports: 14.98
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 0.8
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 36.5

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
503.2	584.7	658.0	805.6	1,056

Finance

National Currency: Bolivar (VEB)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = VEB 1,891.3
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency trillion: 19.1
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 28.5
 Total External Debt \$billion: 33.29
 Debt Service Ratio %: —
 Balance of Payments \$billion: 14.59
 International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 15.5
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
 22.4

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 82.2
 per capita \$: 3.20
 Foreign Direct Investment \$billion: 2.52

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$billion: 26.91
 Expenditures \$billion: 30.7
 Budget Deficit \$billion: 3.79
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 0.1
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: –0.2
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 2.01
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 17.7
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 123.0
 Total Farmland % of land area: 2.8
 Livestock: Cattle million: 15.9
 Chickens million: 125
 Pigs million: 2.95
 Sheep 000: 825
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 4.97
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 533

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 7.3
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 12.3

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 209.5
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 54.3
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg million: 2.2
 Net Energy Imports % of use: –289.1
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 21.2
 Production kW-hr billion: 87.0
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 80.9
 Coal Reserves tons million: 528
 Production tons million: 10.0
 Consumption tons million: 0.91
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: 148
 Production cubic feet trillion: 1.1
 Consumption cubic feet trillion: 1.1
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: 77.8
 Production barrels million per day: 2.6
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 400
 Pipelines Length km: 7,360

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 14.98
 Exports \$billion: 35.84
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): –5.2
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): –6.9
 Balance of Trade \$billion: 14.59

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
United States %	33.2	58.7
Colombia %	5.7	—
Brazil %	5.0	—
Germany %	4.0	—
Netherlands Antilles %	—	4.1
Canada %	—	2.5

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 96,155
 Paved %: 33.6
 Automobiles: 1,372,000
 Trucks and Buses: 1,108,000
 Railroad: Track Length km: 682
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: —
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 56
 Total Deadweight Tonnage million: 1.19
 Airports: 369
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 4.1
 Length of Waterways km: 7,100

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 337
 Number of Tourists from 000: 832
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 368
 Tourist Expenditures \$billion: 1.31

Communications

Telephones million: 2.84
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones million: 6.46
 Personal Computers million: 1.54
 Internet Hosts per million people: 1,391
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 50

ENVIRONMENT

Venezuela has a good reputation, at least by developing-country standards, for environmental stewardship. Consciousness of the importance of ecological issues was prevalent in the nation's political arena long before similar awareness was raised in many other Latin American countries. Venezuela had the first environmental ministry

in the region, created in 1977, and made its chief a cabinet member. Its Organic Law on the Environment unified existing legislation in the field, serving as a foundation upon which later laws could extend habitat protection, resource conservation, and the regulation of sanitation and industrial wastes, effluents, and emissions.

In spite of laws passed to control them, deforestation and water-purity maintenance problems remain paramount, as implementation is weak and the government has not actively sought partnerships with nongovernmental organizations and private business to compensate for its own budgetary shortcomings. Venezuela, along with Costa Rica, is foremost among third-world nations in the proportion of territory marked for natural protection or preservation. Nevertheless, swathes of woodland are disappearing at a rate of up to 2,600 sq km (1,000 sq mi) a year, which causes erosion into rivers. The country suffered the disappearance of more than 1.1 percent of its forest cover annually, more than double the pace in Brazil, between 1980 and 1995. The government has frozen some logging permits and replanted certain areas, but the response has been inadequate in relation to the scale of the situation. The pollution of waterways as a result of oil production and transport is an ever-present concern; mining and industrial chemicals have also fouled streams, lakes, and coastal waters. Sewage and other types of runoff typical of urban areas have contaminated Lago de Valencia and Lake Maracaibo. Smog is a local hazard in cities and around power plants and other industrial facilities.

Certain zones are seismically active or are subject to flooding, mudslides, and rockslides; in 1999 extensive flooding and mudslides killed tens of thousands in Vargas State and neighboring areas. Other parts of the country are afflicted by drought in some years.

Venezuela has 35 national parks and over 200 protected areas in all, for a total of 64.4 million ha (159 million acres), or 70 percent of national territory, in natural reserves; 8.3 million ha (20.5 million acres) are classified as international biosphere reserves. The largest national park is Canaima, in the Guyana Highlands, encompassing Angel Falls and Mount Roraima. Thanks to the country's wide variations in elevation and rainfall patterns, wildlife and plant life are diverse. The inaccessibility of much of the wilderness helps to protect wildlife, but many animal and plant species are endangered or threatened. Irresponsible mining operations are a particular threat to rain-forest ecosystems.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 56.1
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: –218
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 70
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 6.49

LIVING CONDITIONS

Venezuelan living conditions range from very comfortable to very poor. People in cities live in apartment buildings and housing developments. Many poor people cannot afford to pay rent and so live in shantytowns called *ranchos* on the outskirts of cities. The *ranchos* usually have no electricity, running water, or sewers. In the mountains, people live in houses made of adobe bricks. Coastal people often build their houses on stilts. The indigenous Yanomami live in large circular houses called *yano*, which may contain up to 100 families. Most public transportation is by bus, which is comfortable, efficient, and cheap. Caracas is the only city with a subway. Traffic is unpredictable and can be dangerous; many people die in automobile accidents every year. The nation's road system is inadequate and poorly maintained.

HEALTH

Venezuela has a combination of public and private health facilities. Public hospitals often suffer from a lack of funds and supplies, so wealthy people often choose to go to private hospitals, especially if they have private health insurance. The nation has a shortage of nurses and doctors, most of whom prefer to stay in the cities, leaving rural areas underserved. Indigenous people use various plants and herbs to heal illnesses, and their ingenuity has been noted by Western doctors and drug manufacturers, who have traveled to the rain forest to investigate their methods. A successful immunization program has greatly reduced the incidence of diseases such as measles. Common diseases include malaria, dengue fever, yellow fever, hepatitis, and malaria. HIV/AIDS is beginning to be a problem. Life expectancy in 2005 was over 74 years.

Health

Number of Physicians: 48,000
 Number of Dentists: 13,680
 Number of Nurses: 15,020
 Number of Pharmacists: —
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 194
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 22.2
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 96
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 4.9
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 184
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.7
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 68
 Measles: 82
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 68
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 83

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Corn and wheat are the staple grains and are used to make pancakes called *arepas*, pastries called empanadas, and cheese-filled pancakes called *cachapas*. Meat and locally caught fish appear at many meals, as do black beans and plantains. Fruit is a popular snack; common fruits include mangoes, watermelons, papayas, pineapples, strawberries, bananas, oranges, guavas, avocados, and indigenous fruits such as *mammnes*. People drink a great deal of fruit juice, sucking the juice straight from coconuts or blending fruits into milkshakes called *batidos*. Many desserts also feature fruits. Custards made with egg are popular. Beer and *chichi*, made from fermented corn or rice, are typical alcoholic beverages. Coffee is served with most meals.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 17.3
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,280
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 113.1
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg:
 150.0

STATUS OF WOMEN

The liberal climate that prevailed after democracy was instituted in 1958 and the economy prospered from the 1960s through the 1980s was a boon for women's freedom. A school of thought holds that the shallow roots of Roman Catholicism among much of the population—in contrast to the deeper roots in next-door Colombia—have greatly allowed for the quick progress women have made. Today, about as many women as men are enrolled in higher education. According to a UN Human Development Report, around half as many women as men were in the paid labor force in 1995; women accounted for only 22.9 percent of administrators and managers but fully 57.1 percent of professional and technical workers. As of 2003, 36 percent of workers were female. Women have held executive positions in private enterprise, political parties, labor unions, local government, the judiciary, and the cabinet. A former Miss Universe and mayor of Chacao, Irene Sáez, was for a time the leading presidential contender in the 1998 campaign, though she eventually dropped far behind her two chief opponents. Women's groups are active in many policy pursuits, from women's welfare and health to legislative reform; tangible gains include a rise in the number of public day-care facilities.

Women's wages are on average 25 percent lower than men's. Venezuela's oil-fed relative prosperity notwithstanding, the nation is among those in the Western Hemisphere with the highest proportion of women in poverty.

There is a high illiteracy rate among single mothers, only about half of whom are gainfully employed. In 1998 the Congress set new penalties for violence against women, directing that these crimes should be prosecuted as a priority before all others, but the fact that the legislature needed to take this step is telling.

Government-funded maternal health programs reach a mere 14 percent of the population; partly as a consequence, maternal mortality rates are fairly high, at 96 deaths per 100,000 childbirths. Family planning became a national priority under the first administration of Carlos Andrés Pérez in the 1970s, and the church did not stand in the way of an extensive network of subsidized hospitals and clinics offering counseling and services. The average number of children per family had dropped to less than 2.3 by 2004, from close to six just two decades earlier. Abortion is still illegal except in cases in which the mother's life is at risk.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 10
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 1.02
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 41.5

WORK

Almost two-thirds of Venezuelans work in services; another quarter work in industry, while agriculture employs only about 13 percent of the workforce. The country supports many professionals, including doctors, lawyers, and teachers. The government employs 5 percent of the workforce. Although oil refining brings in the largest portion of Venezuela's GDP, the industry employs only about 2 percent of the workforce. Many industrial workers belong to trade unions, which have successfully campaigned for safe working conditions, a 40-hour workweek, and overtime pay. The cities have a number of residents working in the informal economy for long hours and low pay. Unemployment is high, at 17 percent in 2004. Almost half of the population lived below the poverty line in 1997.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 12,250,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 35.7
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 13
 Industry: 23
 Services: 64
 Unemployment %: 17.1

EDUCATION

Venezuela's constitution guarantees free education for all citizens. In the 1970s and 1980s Venezuela spent more than 15 percent of its revenue on education, resulting in one of the highest literacy rates in South America. Public education declined somewhat in the 1990s, as the economic crisis forced cutbacks, but literacy was still over 93 percent in 2003.

Children are required to attend school between the ages of six and 14. Many attend preschool or kindergarten before beginning primary school. All children wear uniforms. Most students attend school in shifts, either morning or afternoon, which makes the most of educational resources. Some poor children cannot attend school because they must work.

Secondary school is not mandatory, but attendance is still high. There are two kinds of secondary schools: diversified schools that offer studies in the humanities and sciences and specialized schools that provide technical education.

Venezuela has many institutions of higher education. The best known of the universities is Caracas's Central University of Venezuela, which has trained much of the nation's political elite. Others of note are the private Rafael Urdaneta University, in Maracaibo, and Andrés Bello Catholic University, in Caracas, and the public University of the Andes, in Mérida; Zulia University, in Maracaibo; Central-Western University, in Barquisimeto; Carabobo University, in Valencia; and Eastern University, with campuses in five different eastern states. There is a business school in Caracas: the Institute for Higher Studies in Administration. The government will pay for students to study abroad if they promise to return to Venezuela.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 93.4
 Male %: 93.8
 Female %: 93.1
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 11.8
 First Level: Primary schools: 15,894
 Teachers: —
 Students: 3,449,984
 Student-Teacher Ratio: —
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 90.8
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 1,621
 Teachers: —
 Students: 1,809,368
 Student-Teacher Ratio: —
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 59.2
 Third Level: Institutions: 99
 Teachers: 53,590
 Students: 668,109
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 40.3
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: —

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Venezuela's Ministry of Science and Technology is responsible for national scientific policy and development. The national government was in the process of adopting open-source software in early 2005 as part of a policy of national scientific independence and refusal to depend on privately owned software. The nation has a modern and expanding telecommunications system. In 2002 there were nearly three million land-based telephone lines and over 6.4 million cellular telephones in use. About 1.3 million people were using the Internet.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 222
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: 0.44
 High-Tech Exports \$million: 130
 Patent Applications by Residents: 56

MEDIA

Venezuela's press was considered one of the freest in Latin America until the 1990s, when the country's economic and social problems began to affect the climate for reporting. Under Rafael Caldera, defamation laws and codes of journalistic conduct were used to try to control what was printed in papers, and the outright intimidation of journalists occurred with far more frequency. The new constitution enshrines a "right of reply" for government officials and a "right to truthful information," both of which are viewed as intending to cow an independent press. Most of the print media are in private hands, and there is no lack of vigorous journalistic opposition to the regime, but journalists complain that the government is hostile and intimidating. The government passed a law in late 2004 prohibiting the broadcasting of inappropriate sex and violence; critics complain that this law was an attempt to prevent the media from criticizing the government.

The national news agency is the Agencia Bolivariana. Foreign news agencies represented in Caracas include AFP, ANSA, AP, DPA, EFE, IPS, ITAR-TASS, Prensa Latina, Reuters, RIA-Vesti, UPI, and Xinhua. Many newspapers and magazines are published throughout the nation.

Venezuela is one of the centers of the Latin American book industry, with some 21 principal publishing houses in Caracas and one in Valencia. The nation adheres to the Universal Copyright Convention.

The official broadcasting network, Radio Nacional de Venezuela, operates 15 stations, including AM, FM, and shortwave. Union Radio Noticias is a commercial news network. Television, introduced in 1952, is operated by the official Televisora Nacional, with its network Venezolana

de Televisión, and by several private stations. The private networks, particularly Radio Caracas Televisión and Venvisión, have been successful in exporting some of their programming to the rest of Spanish-speaking America and beyond. Globovisión is a 24-hour news channel.

Media

Daily Newspapers: —
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: 3,851
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers 000: 7.4
 per 1,000: 292
 Television sets million: 4.4
 per 1,000: 185

CULTURE

Venezuelan music blends African, European, and indigenous styles and comes in many regional varieties. Traditional instruments include maracas, harps, and a four-stringed guitar called a *cuatro*. Caracas and other cities have symphony orchestras that play classical music.

Venezuela has produced many famous artists and painters, including Armando Reverón, the "Hermit of Macuto." Jess Soto and Alejandro Otero are famous modern sculptors. Carlos Villanueva was an architect who designed many of the nation's buildings. Venezuela's different regions produce a variety of handicrafts, such as hammocks in the Amazon and saddles in the llanos.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 24
 Volumes: 2,235,000
 Registered borrowers: 31,930
 Museums Number: 133
 Annual Attendance: —
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: 284
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: 14,200,000

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Many of the indigenous people believe in spirits that inhabit natural objects, such as the forest, and work to live harmoniously with nature. Belief in witchcraft, or *brujería*, is common. Some Catholics combine their religion with a belief in Mara Lionza, the legendary daughter of a Spanish conquistador who is often depicted riding a tapir. She supposedly performs miracles and protects animals. Believers make an annual pilgrimage to her shrine in Yaracuy State.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Venezuelans spend much of their free time with family. Families especially like to go out to restaurants to meet other families. Venezuelan cities offer a wide range of entertainment possibilities, including bars, restaurants, cafés, discos, and shopping centers. Venezuelans love water sports such as waterskiing, swimming, fishing, scuba diving, snorkeling, and surfing. Other outdoor activities include hiking, trekking, caving, and rock climbing. Men like to play *bolas criollas*, or lawn bowling.

ETIQUETTE

Venezuelan relationships, business and social alike, are often cemented with dinners at restaurants; even if the dinner is business related, no one discusses business at the table. It is very rare for Venezuelans to invite people to their homes for a meal; when they do, the guest always brings a gift. Lunch is the main meal of the day, served between noon and 2 p.m., and may involve many courses. Dinner is served late in the evening, often lasting until midnight, and is usually lighter. Thank-you notes are essential after invitations to meals. Tipping at restaurants and in taxis is uncommon.

FAMILY LIFE

Venezuelans center their lives around their families. It is common for three or more generations to live together, with the older people looking after the young children. Elders are highly respected. Women commonly work outside the home. A certain amount of machismo is still present in the culture, and women are expected to care for the house, children, and elderly.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Venezuelans dress well and fairly conservatively. Men wear dark suits for business. Women consider it important to be elegant and well dressed, with makeup, jewelry, and high heels. Both sexes are very status conscious and favor designer goods such as expensive watches. People save their shorts and athletic shoes for exercise or the beach.

SPORTS

Baseball has been one of the most popular sports in Venezuela since it was introduced in 1895. Cities and towns play one another, and the winner of the national champi-

onship plays teams from the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, and Mexico in the Caribbean Series. Soccer is also popular, and increasing numbers of people are playing basketball and tennis. Horse racing and bullfighting are favorite spectator sports.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1941** Appointed parliament chooses Isaías Medina Angarita, the minister of war, to replace Eleazar López; Acción Democrática (AD) receives official recognition as party.
- 1943** An elected chamber of deputies is seated; Venezuela renegotiates terms of its agreements with foreign oil firms.
- 1945** Medina is overthrown in an army-inspired coup, which sets up a seven-man junta led by Rómulo Betancourt, the AD leader.
- 1946** Newly elected constituent assembly draws up nation's 25th constitution, which goes into effect in 1947.
- 1948** In free elections, Rómulo Gallegos is elected president; disgruntled army group deposes Gallegos; military triumvirate consisting of Carlos Delgado Chalbaud, Marcos Pérez Jiménez, and Luis F. Llovera Páez takes over the government.
- 1950** Delgado is assassinated in mysterious circumstances; Pérez Jiménez becomes virtual dictator.
- 1952** Pérez Jiménez holds sham plebiscite on his reelection and declares himself the winner.
- 1957** Pérez Jiménez holds another sham plebiscite on his reelection.
- 1958** Pérez Jiménez is overthrown by military junta led by Admiral Wolfgang Larrazabal.
- 1959** Rómulo Betancourt is elected president and forms a coalition government.
- 1960** Led by Venezuela, oil exporting nations form Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC).
- 1961** New constitution, the nation's 26th, is promulgated.
- 1963** Organization of American States charges Cuba with aggression against Venezuela; Raúl Leoni is elected president in nation's first peaceful transfer of power.
- 1968** Rafael Caldera, founder of Comité de Organización Política Electoral Independiente (COPEI), also known as the Christian Democratic Party, is elected president.
- 1973** Carlos Andrés Pérez, of the AD, is elected president; Venezuela joins Andean Common Market.
- 1976** All foreign mining companies are nationalized.

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- 1978** Luis Herrera Campíns, of COPEI, is elected president, vowing to institute an austerity program and reductions in the state's role in commerce and industry.
- 1980** Former president Pérez is censured by Congress for his role in a scandal involving the purchase of a Norwegian ship at an inflated price.
- 1983** Jaime Lusinchi, the AD candidate, is elected president.
- 1986** Lusinchi announces 21-point program of economic measures designed to deal with loss of oil revenues; government signs-debt rescheduling accord with creditor banks.
- 1988** Approximately 200,000 workers demonstrate in the capital to protest austerity programs; Carlos Andrés Pérez is elected president; Venezuela and Colombia agree to cooperate in suppressing drug traffic along their border.
- 1989** Nation's largest trade union organizes 24-hour general strike; rise in gas prices causes rioting, and 300 or more die in Caracas.
- 1990** Pérez promises to create a reserve in the Amazon for the threatened Yanomami Indians; Argelia Laya, a former guerrilla, is named head of left-wing Movement toward Socialism, becoming the first black and first woman to lead a major party.
- 1992** Junior military officers led by Colonel Hugo Chávez Frías mount an unsuccessful coup in February and are jailed; President Pérez forms government of national unity; second coup attempt takes place in November.
- 1993** Pérez resigns a half year ahead of schedule amid new allegations of corruption; presidential election in December is won by Rafael Caldera, who ran as an independent opposed to neoliberal economic policies, but the two traditional parties still dominate Congress.
- 1994** The "Group of Three"—Mexico, Colombia, and Venezuela—sign a 10-year trade liberalization pact; Banco Latino collapses, setting off a chain reaction of bank failures, and a state bailout becomes necessary; Caldera pardons Chávez and his fellow conspirators to placate the military; after certain price rises provoke violence, administration suspends six constitutional liberties until further notice; these are later restored.
- 1996** Caldera produces "Agenda Venezuela," a plan for economic restructuring to comply with IMF criteria for a standby loan.
- 1997** Venezuela and Colombia agree to strengthen military cooperation after a string of cross-border incidents involving Colombian guerrillas and paramilitary forces.
- 1998** Hugo Chávez wins presidency on an antiestablishment platform, promising to overturn institutions of Venezuelan political society.
- 1999** Chávez sponsors referendum that approves the seating of a constituent assembly to draw up a new constitution; Chávez supporters win nearly all constituent assembly seats; assembly approves a decree abolishing the existing governmental institutions; draft constitution is completed and is approved in December referendum; oil prices drop to lowest level in years, and economy contracts 7 percent over the full year; heavy rains in December cause massive mudslides that kill around 30,000 people in coastal regions north of the capital.
- 2000** New constitution comes into effect, providing for a strong presidency and unicameral legislature; old Congress is disbanded, as followed by constituent assembly; Chávez is reelected, with a strong majority in the new National Assembly.
- 2002** Venezuela's national currency, the bolivar, plummets 25 percent against the dollar after the government discontinues exchange-rate controls that had been in place for five years. On April 12 Chávez is forced to resign by military high-command rebels and taken into military custody; Chávez returns to office on April 14 after the collapse of the interim government; oil workers strike in December, demanding Chávez's resignation.
- 2003** Oil workers end their strike in February after nine weeks of fuel shortages and commercial inactivity; the opposition demands a referendum on Chávez's rule.
- 2004** Opposition supporters fight with Chávez supporters, leading to deaths and injuries; Chávez wins a referendum on whether he should stay in office for the rest of his term.
- 2005** Chávez signs a law eliminating large estates in an attempt to redistribute land to the poor; Venezuela and Colombia dispute the capture of a Colombian rebel leader in Venezuela.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Embassy of the Republic of Venezuela
<http://www.embavenez-us.org/>

VIETNAM

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Socialist Republic of Vietnam (Cong Hoa Xa Hoi Chu Nghia Viet Nam)

ABBREVIATION

VN

CAPITAL

Hanoi

HEAD OF STATE

President Tran Duc Luong (from 1997)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Phan Van Khai (from 1997)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

One-party Communist dictatorship

POPULATION

83,535,576 (2005)

AREA

329,560 sq km (127,243 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Vietnamese

LANGUAGE

Vietnamese

RELIGIONS

Mahayana Buddhism–Taoism, Cao Dai, Roman Catholicism, Theravada Buddhism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Dong

NATIONAL FLAG

A red field with a five-pointed gold star in the middle

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A gold five-pointed star on a circular red badge surrounded by golden ears of rice. At the base is an industrial cogwheel. A red ribbon draped around the device carries the name of the republic.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Tien Quan Ca” (Song of the Troops Advancing)

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year’s Day), February 3 (Foundation of the Communist Party), April 7 (Emperor Founder Hung Vuong), April 30 (Liberation of Saigon), May 1 (Labour Day), May 19 (Ho Chi Minh’s Birthday), May 28 (Buddha’s enlightenment), September 2 (Independence Day), September 3 (Anniversary of Ho Chi Minh’s death), December 25 (Christmas), various lunar calendar festivals, including Tet (lunar New Year), Buddha’s birthday

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

September 2, 1945; unification, July 2, 1976

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

April 15, 1992

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Vietnam, a long and narrow country located in Southeast Asia on the Indochinese Peninsula, has an area of 329,560 sq km (127,243 sq mi). The country is bordered by China to the north, Cambodia and Laos to the west, and the South China Sea to the east and south. The length of the coastline, excluding islands, is 3,444 km (2,140 mi).

Hanoi is the capital city. Other major cities are Ho Chi Minh City (formerly Saigon), Haiphong, Da Nang, and Long Xuyen.

Vietnam is divided into four geographic regions. The northwest is mountainous; the country’s highest peak, Fan Si Pan (3,144 m; 10,312 ft) is located near the Chinese border. East of the highlands are the Red River delta, along the Gulf of Tonkin, an arm of the South China Sea, and coastal plains that extend northeast and south. The Annamese Highlands and a coastal plain are located south of these areas. In the southern part of the country is the flat Mekong River delta. The country also includes several offshore islands.

The two major rivers are the Red River, 1,167 km (725 mi) long, in the north, and the Mekong River, 4,500 km (2,800 mi) long, in the south.

Vietnam



Geography

Area sq km: 329,560; sq mi 127,243
 World Rank: 65th
 Land Boundaries, km: Cambodia 1,228; China 1,281; Laos 2,130
 Coastline, km: 3,444
 Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: South China Sea 0
 Highest: Fan Si Pan 3,144
 Land Use %
 Arable Land: 20.0
 Permanent Crops: 6.0
 Forest: 30.2
 Other: 43.8

Population of Principal Cities (2003 est.)

Da Nang	590,800
Haiphong	646,400
Hanoi	1,834,300
Ho Chi Minh City	4,860,400

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

The climate of Vietnam ranges from tropical in the south to subtropical in the north. The northern regions have dry winters and wet summers, whereas the southern and central areas have climates more typical of tropical rain forests: Temperatures are high, and there is much rainfall. Average daily temperatures fluctuate around the country. In Hanoi, in the north, temperatures range from an average of 28°C (82°F) in June to 17°C (63°F) in January. In Ho Chi Minh City, in the south, temperatures range from 33.4°C (92°F) to 18°C (64°F). The typhoon season lasts from July through November.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature
 Hanoi: June 82°F, January 63°F
 Ho Chi Minh City: June 92°F, January 64°F
 Average Rainfall
 Hanoi: 72 in
 Hue: 81 in
 Ho Chi Minh City: 81 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Vietnam was once almost entirely covered in forest, but only about 30 percent of those forests now remain, and they are yet endangered by the growing population and the timber industry. The government has improved the situation somewhat since 1992 by banning the export of unprocessed timber, replanting trees, and sponsoring environmental education programs. The mountains are still mainly covered with forests, including many rare plants.

Vietnam's once profuse wildlife has also suffered from pollution, habitat destruction resulting from the

growing human population, and illegal hunting. Animal species include tigers, leopards, black bears, rhinoceroses, elephants, monkeys, crocodiles, and turtles. The world's rarest rhinoceros, the Java rhino, was discovered in 1990 in Nam Cat Tien National Park. The government's wild-life-protection programs have not been fully successful.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 83,535,576
 World Rank: 13th
 Density per sq km: 249.8
 % of annual growth (1999-2003): 1.2
 Male %: 49.5
 Female %: 50.5
 Urban %: 25.4
 Age Distribution %: 0-14: 27.9
 15-64: 66.3
 65 and over: 5.8
 Population 2025: 99,978,000
 Birth Rate per 1,000: 17.07
 Death Rate per 1,000: 6.2
 Rate of Natural Increase %: 1.1
 Total Fertility Rate: 1.94
 Expectation of Life (years): Males 67.82
 Females 73.6
 Marriage Rate per 1,000: 12.1
 Divorce Rate per 1,000: 0.5
 Average Size of Households: 4.8
 Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

The vast majority of the country's citizens, accounting for 87 percent of the population, are ethnic Vietnamese. Important minority ethnic groups are the Chinese, the Khmer, and a variety of ethnic groups living in the mountainous regions, sometimes collectively referred to as *montagnards*.

LANGUAGES

The official language is Vietnamese, a language derived from Chinese. The Europeans introduced a romanized script, Quoc Ngu, in the 17th century, and after further propagation by the French in the early 20th century the Vietnamese came to use the Quoc Ngu system for writing. Various ethnic languages are also spoken. The use of French, the colonial language, is discouraged; English is increasingly favored as a second language.

RELIGIONS

Vietnam has no official religion, and although official census data have four-fifths of the population adhering to no

religion, most Vietnamese follow a combination of Mahayana Buddhist and Taoist practices. Other significant religions are Theravada Buddhism and the newer faiths of Cao Dai, which is highly syncretic, and Hoa Hao, a Buddhist sect. There is a substantial Roman Catholic minority as well as a number of Protestants and Muslims.

Religious Affiliations

Buddhist	7,769,000
Catholic	5,597,000
Hoa Hao	1,253,000
Cao Dai	919,000
Protestant	418,000
Muslim	84,000
None	67,497,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The known history of Vietnam extends back to Paleolithic times. By about 1200 B.C.E. the area was already a center of wet-rice cultivation and bronze casting. According to Vietnamese tradition, the nation was founded by Hung Vuong, the first ruler of the semilegendary Hung dynasty (c. 2879–258 B.C.E.), of the kingdom of Van Lang. The Hung dynasty is supposed to have ruled Vietnam for 18 generations, during which period the people became skilled weavers and craftspeople. The Hung dynasty was overthrown in the third century B.C.E. by An Duong Vuong, the leader of the neighboring kingdom of Thuc. His rule was short-lived, as he was in turn overthrown by Chinese invaders; their leader combined his domain in southern China with the land he had conquered and named the combined territory Nam Viet. In 111 B.C.E. Vietnam was incorporated into China.

For the next thousand years, until 939, Vietnam was ruled by the Chinese, who attempted to inculcate in the citizens the Chinese way of life, including Chinese values, religion, political organization, and culture. However, the Vietnamese, especially in rural areas, retained their memories of and loyalty to their own language and customs.

The Vietnamese succeeded in driving out the Chinese in 939 and reestablished an independent nation, defeating Mongol armies led by Kublai Kahn in 1257, 1284, and 1287. The Chinese reasserted their influence early in the 15th century, as invited in by Vietnamese landowners threatened by peasant uprisings.

The division of Vietnam in the 18th century into two states, Tonkin in the north and Cochinchina in the south, permitted French political intervention and expansion in the region. Cochinchina became a French colony in 1867, and Annam, in central Vietnam, and Tonkin became French protectorates in 1883. Later, all three were merged with Laos and Cambodia to form French Indochina. Throughout French colonial rule, Vietnam was beset by strong nationalist and revolutionary move-

ments, some with religious overtones. With the collapse of France in 1940, the Vichy regime yielded Indochina to the Japanese, who set up a puppet administration under Bao Dai, the emperor of Annam. Following Japan's surrender, the League for the Independence of Vietnam (Viet Nam Doc Lap Dong Minh Hoi), commonly known as the Viet Minh, a nationalist coalition led by a Communist named Nguyen Ai Quoc—who had adopted the pseudonym of Ho Chi Minh in 1943—proclaimed the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in Hanoi in 1945. French resistance to the Viet Minh led to a war that lasted eight years and culminated in the siege of Dien Bien Phu. A cease-fire agreement signed at Geneva in July 1954 provisionally partitioned Vietnam along the 17th parallel, pending general elections in July 1956 to bring about the unification of the country.

These elections were never held, and in a referendum the south proclaimed itself the Republic of Vietnam, with Ngo Dinh Diem as president and the capital at Saigon. The anti-Communist regime in the south was opposed by a growing resistance movement composed of former members of the Viet Minh who became known as the Viet Cong. In 1961 the United States joined the war between north and south, eventually committing large ground forces on the side of the Saigon government. Diem was overthrown in 1963, and a series of short-lived military regimes followed. The United States carried out bombing attacks against the north from 1965 to 1968, but the bombings did not deter the Viet Cong from stepping up insurgent activity and gaining control of large areas in the south. Meanwhile, peace negotiations begun in 1969 between the Hanoi government and the United States (spurred by the failure of U.S. military policy and growing internal opposition to the unpopular war) led to the signing of the Paris Peace Agreement on January 27, 1973. The last of U.S. forces left South Vietnam on March 29, 1973; the final U.S. combat death toll in Vietnam was 46,079.

In spite of the peace agreement, the conflict dragged on for another two years, until the Hanoi-led National Liberation Front forces, in a massive offensive, swept through to the gates of Saigon. President Nguyen Van Thieu resigned and fled and was replaced by Gen. Duong Van Minh, who announced the Republic of Vietnam's unconditional surrender. The war that had raged for three decades had ended; in all, two million Vietnamese were killed, four million were maimed or injured, 57 percent of the population was rendered homeless, and most of the nation's cultivated areas were desolated.

Reunification was officially proclaimed in July 1976, and North Vietnam's Premier Phan Van Dong formed a government that included South Vietnamese representatives. In 1977 the regime began a rapid transition to socialism that resulted in the flight of hundreds of thousands. The rapid collectivization of agriculture was accompanied by a massive relocation program that affected millions and had disastrous effects on the economy.

Vietnam invaded Cambodia in late 1978, overthrowing the regime of Pol Pot and establishing a friendly government. China responded in early 1979 by launching a brief attack on northern Vietnam that served little purpose. Relations with China remained tense throughout the 1980s, with a series of border incidents culminating in China's three-day incursion into Vietnam in 1987. Vietnam withdrew the last of its troops from Cambodia in 1989.

Le Duan, the Communist Party leader since the death of Ho Chi Minh in 1969, died in mid-1986 and was replaced by Nguyen Van Linh. A reformist, Van Linh moved to deal with the country's economic problems by shifting the nation toward a more open economy. Among measures instituted were the encouragement of privately owned production, the opening of the country to foreign business, and the gradual abandonment of the relocation program.

Aiding in Vietnam's recovery, the United States agreed to lift its 19-year embargo on trade with its former enemy in February 1994, in recognition of Vietnam's efforts to return the bodies of U.S. soldiers killed during the war. In July 1995 the two nations resumed full diplomatic relations.

Tran Duc Luong, a former engineer, was named president by the National Assembly in September 1997, while Phan Van Khai was elected prime minister. In 2001 the Communist Party chose Nong Duc Mants as its new leader. In 2002 the National Assembly returned Tran Duc Luong and Phan Van Khai to power. Tran Duc Luong announced plans to make Vietnam a modern industrialized nation by 2020 and to fight corruption within the nation.

Vietnam and the United States further normalized relations in the early 2000s; a U.S. warship visited Ho Chi Minh City in 2003, and the following year the first U.S. commercial flight since the war landed in Ho Chi Minh City. In 2005 Prime Minister Phan Van Khai became the first Vietnamese leader to visit the United States since the end of the war. The country opened a stock exchange in 2000 and has been encouraging tourism and other forms of economic liberalization, although Communist leaders fear that such developments may weaken their power. As such, the government continues to monitor the press and crack down on media forms that could "poison" the minds of the Vietnamese.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

Prime Minister

1976–87	Pham Van Dong
1987–88	Pham Hung
1988–91	Do Muoi
1991–97	Vo Van Kiet
1997–	Phan Van Khai

CONSTITUTION

Vietnam is governed under the terms of the 1992 constitution. Under its provisions, the head of state is the

president, elected for a five-year term by the members of the unicameral National Assembly from among its members. The prime minister, who heads the government, is chosen by the president from among the members of the National Assembly. Deputy prime ministers, in turn, are appointed by the prime minister. The cabinet is appointed by the president according to proposals made by the prime minister and subject to approval by the National Assembly.

PARLIAMENT

The Vietnamese parliament, the National Assembly, is the highest legislative body in the country. Its 498 members are elected by popular vote for five-year terms. The legislature must approve all governmental appointments. Approximately 90 percent of Assembly members are members of the Communist Party of Vietnam; the other 10 percent belong to parties sanctioned by the Communist Party.

POLITICAL PARTIES

The only true political party in Vietnam is the Communist Party, which operates through its political organization, called the Vietnam Fatherland Front. Other parties exist in name only and are both sanctioned and controlled by the Communist Party.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Vietnam is divided into seven regions, which are further subdivided into 59 provinces and five municipalities—Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City, Can Tho, Da Nang, and Haiphong. Localities are administered by people's councils, from which people's committees are chosen to carry out executive functions.

LEGAL SYSTEM

Vietnam's legal system is based on French civil law and Communist legal theory. The country's first civil law code was approved by the National Assembly in 1995 and became effective in July 1996. The highest judicial body, whose members are appointed by the president, as subject to approval by the National Assembly, is the Supreme People's Court. Below this court are people's courts, military tribunals, and special tribunals. Judges for the lower courts are elected. The judiciary is still relatively weak, and the country has few lawyers. Trial procedures are still being developed.

The Supreme People's Office of Supervision and Control is charged with enforcing adherence to the law

and to the principles of the socialist government at all levels, from the various ministries to the ordinary citizen, and has the right to initiate public prosecution of alleged violators.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Human rights remain problematic in Vietnam, where the Communist Party controls the flow of communication and often acts in violation of basic principles of human freedom. Amnesty International reported that at least 56 prisoners of conscience and possible prisoners of conscience were in custody in 1998. These included persons imprisoned for following religious practices other than those sanctioned by the government, advocating social and economic change, and participating in demonstrations against alleged government corruption. The government has been particularly harsh in its treatment of religions other than Buddhism, and it has been criticized by the United Nations for its harsh discrimination against the Christian community, which has been subject to harassment and pressure to abandon its religious practices. As part of a continuing program of intimidation, Christian churches have been destroyed and Christian leaders have been subject to detention and house arrest. A UN investigation was stymied when the Vietnamese denied the investigator access to religious dissidents.

Although there has been some loosening in recent years, including several general amnesties that resulted in the freeing of thousands of political prisoners and other prisoners of conscience, the government still keeps tight control over political dissension and the flow of information. Some political protests are permitted, but their leaders are subject to harassment and sometimes arrest. Because the judicial system is dominated by appointed judges selected for their loyalty to the ruling regime, the legal system is inherently unfair and serves to reinforce government policy and control.

The government has committed numerous other human rights abuses. The police arbitrarily detain individuals, and detainees are often beaten or imprisoned for extended periods. Prisoners are forced to work without pay. Child labor and human trafficking are serious problems. There have been cases of women being sent to Taiwan for forced marriages.

FOREIGN POLICY

Vietnam has been renewing relations with the world's nations since the early 1990s in the hopes of attracting foreign capital and finding markets for its goods. Vietnam is a member of the United Nations and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. It enjoys good relations with France, its former colonial master, and has taken steps to

improve relations with other Southeast Asian countries, many of whom are major trading partners. Ending decades of bitterness, the United States lifted its trade embargo against Vietnam in February 1994, and in July 1995 the two nations resumed full diplomatic relations, after the Clinton administration certified that the Vietnamese had been helpful in recovering the remains of Americans missing in action since the Vietnam War. As a result, U.S. economic investment in Vietnam has grown, and U.S. tourism to Vietnam has increased.

Vietnam remains embroiled in complex disputes with Cambodia, China, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan, and possibly Brunei over the possession of the Spratly Islands. The nation is also under international pressure because of its role in the international drug trade: Vietnam produces poppies capable of yielding 20 metric tons of opium per year and may be a minor transit point for heroin en route to the United States and Europe. The nation may also be a small-scale producer of heroin.

DEFENSE

The People's Army of Vietnam consists of ground forces, a navy, a coast guard, and an air force. Conscription is for two years at the age of 18. In rural areas, military forces are the government's chief agents, providing public safety and all infrastructure functions.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	524,000
Military Manpower Availability:	21,341,813
Military Expenditures \$million:	650
as % of GDP:	2.5
as % of central government expenditures:	—
Arms Imports \$million:	7
Arms Exports \$million:	—

ECONOMY

After the end of the Vietnam War, the victorious north imposed its highly centralized system of economic planning on the south. However, in eventual efforts to fully restore the country's economy, which was devastated by the years of battle, Vietnam actively sought foreign investment and opened up the country to a more Western-style market economy. Even in agriculture, still the dominant market sector, farmers have been encouraged to abandon collective farming and to farm individually contracted plots of land. The economy has enjoyed boosts from oil-export revenue and the growth of tourism, which in 1997 added \$88 million to the economy. The growth of tourism, in particular the boom in the construction of hotels and other tourist facilities in the cities, has attracted much foreign capital.

2602 Vietnam

Despite the sizable economic growth of the 1990s, Vietnam is still a poor country, with a gross domestic product (GDP) of \$227.2 billion and a per capita GDP of \$2,700 in 2004. These figures mark improvements from the late 1990s, but there is a great deal of income disparity, and people in rural areas are much poorer than those in the cities. Vietnam's major trading partners are the United States, Japan, China, and Singapore. The country suffered following the collapse of the Soviet Union, which was a major benefactor, and from the overall decline in Asian economies in the mid-1990s. Administrative rigidities and a centralized decision-making structure have also impeded progress; the country's shift toward privatization has been slow, restricting opportunities for venture capitalists.

In July 2000 the United States and Vietnam signed a trade agreement in which the United States granted normal trade relations to Vietnam; the agreement entered into force in late 2001. The pact reduced tariffs on goods imported to the United States from Vietnam from 40 percent to 3 percent, allowed U.S. financial organizations to operate in Vietnam, and contained other provisions as well. The United States is assisting Vietnam in implementing reforms required by the agreement.

Agriculture remains the dominant market sector, employing approximately 63 percent of the labor force. The country's principal crops are rice, a staple of the diet; sugarcane; potatoes; and coffee and tea. Approximately 20 percent of the land is arable.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 227.2
GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 2,700
GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 6.5
GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 5.3
Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
Agriculture: 21.8
Industry: 40.1
Services: 38.1
Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
Private Consumption: 65
Government Consumption: 6
Gross Domestic Investment: 36.6
Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 23.72
Imports: 26.31
% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 3.6
% of Income Received by Richest 10%: 29.9

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
117.0	121.8	119.7	119.2	123.8

Finance

National Currency: Dong (VND)
Exchange Rate: \$1 = VND 15,746
Money Supply Stock in National Currency trillion: 125.3
Central Bank Discount Rate %: 4.8

Total External Debt \$billion: 16.55
Debt Service Ratio %: 3.3
Balance of Payments \$billion: –2.061
International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 4.12
Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %: 9.5

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$billion: 1.77
per capita \$: 21.80
Foreign Direct Investment \$billion: 1.45

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
Revenues \$billion: 10.66
Expenditures \$billion: 13.09
Budget Deficit \$million: 2.43
Tax Revenues as % of GDP: 16.4

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 21.8
Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 4.0
Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 2.43
Irrigation, % of Farms having: 33.7
Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 294.8
Total Farmland % of land area: 20.6
Livestock: Cattle million: 4.2
Chickens million: 177
Pigs million: 23.5
Sheep 000: —
Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 30.7
Fisheries: Total Catch tons million: 2.03

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 8.15
Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 16.0

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 33.3
Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 19.1
Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 241
Net Energy Imports % of use: –25.3
Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 6.25
Production kW-hr billion: 29.7
Consumption kW-hr billion: 27.6
Coal Reserves tons million: 165
Production tons million: 14.4
Consumption tons million: 9.1
Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: 6.8
Production cubic feet billion: 79.8
Consumption cubic feet billion: 79.8

Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels million: 600
 Production barrels 000 per day: 403
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 210
 Pipelines Length km: 3

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 26.31
 Exports \$billion: 23.72
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 16.9
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 17.6
 Balance of Trade \$billion: -2.061

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
China %	13.6	8.4
Japan %	11.5	13.7
Singapore %	11.5	4.8
Taiwan %	10.2	—
South Korea %	9.8	—
Thailand %	6.7	—
Hong Kong %	4.4	—
United States %	4.1	19.8
Malaysia %	4.1	—
Australia %	—	7.0
Germany %	—	5.7
United Kingdom %	—	4.6

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 93,300
 Paved %: 25.1
 Automobiles: —
 Trucks and Buses: 70,000
 Railroad: Track Length km: 2,600
 Passenger-km billion: 3.43
 Freight-km billion: 2.04
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 194
 Total Deadweight Tonnage million: 1.8
 Airports: 24
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 6.68
 Length of Waterways km: 17,702

Tourism

Number of Tourists to million: 1.6
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: —
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: —

Communications

Telephones million: 4.4
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.02
 Cellular Telephones million: 2.74
 Personal Computers 000: 800
 Internet Hosts per million people: 4.1
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 42

ENVIRONMENT

Vietnam is facing a number of serious environmental issues. Excessive logging and slash-and-burn agricultural practices have contributed to deforestation and the impoverishment of the soil. In addition, water pollution and overfishing pose threats to offshore fishing grounds. Groundwater contamination has limited the availability of safe drinking water, and the growing populations of Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City, along with growing industrialization, are increasing the air pollution in those cities.

Vietnam is a signatory to the Biodiversity, Climate Change, Desertification, Endangered Species, Environmental Modification, Hazardous Wastes, Law of the Sea, Ozone Layer Protection, Ship Pollution, and Wetlands treaties. It has signed but not ratified the Kyoto Protocol on Climate Change and the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 30.2
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: 52
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 3
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 0.73

LIVING CONDITIONS

Most Vietnamese are poor. Food shortages are common, and most people do not have access to adequate sanitation. There is ample public transportation, but much of it is slow, overcrowded, and unsafe. A common form of transport is by cyclo, or bicycle taxi. Traffic is bad and unpredictable. Most people still live in the countryside. Houses are made of bamboo, straw, and earth and roofed with clay tiles or corrugated metal; they are often built on stilts to avoid floods.

HEALTH

Vietnam does not have a thorough modern medical system. Rural areas lack facilities, supplies, and staff. Most patients must pay for their own care, which is unaffordable to many. People still use traditional remedies such as moxibustion and cupping. Numerous diseases are endemic, including hepatitis, dengue fever, malaria, rabies, typhoid, tuberculosis, and HIV/AIDS. Avian flu is a problem as well; influenza strains often begin in chickens and birds in the region. The government has limited fertility by fining couples who have more than two children, which had lowered the birthrate to 1.9 infants per woman by 2005. Life expectancy in 2005 was over 70 years.

Health

Number of Physicians: 42,327
 Number of Dentists: —
 Number of Nurses: 44,539
 Number of Pharmacists: 5,977
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 53
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 25.95
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 130
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 5.2
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 23
 HIV Infected % of adults: 0.4
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 99
 Measles: 93
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 41
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 73

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Rice is the staple of Vietnamese cuisine and may be eaten at every meal. Noodles are also popular; a noodle soup called *pho* is often eaten for breakfast. Other meals usually consist of rice served with many vegetables and small amounts of meat or fish. Soups are very common, and the national dish is a meat soup with rice noodles, coriander, ginger, anise, and pepper. Condiments include hot peppers, lemongrass, coriander, and *nuoc mam*, a salty fish sauce. Fruits are readily available. Peanuts and red watermelon seeds are popular snacks. People drink copious amounts of tea, with every meal as well as between meals. Lotus tea is a delicacy.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 18.5
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,540
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 186.7
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 132.1

STATUS OF WOMEN

A sizable majority of Vietnamese women have entered the labor force, but they continue to experience economic and social discrimination. Despite the government's promise of equality for women and constitutional promises of equal pay for equal work, women still occupy a subordinate role in the country's power structure, both governmental and economic. During the war years women held leadership positions in industry and government, but their role shrank in the postwar era. In rural areas women perform menial work for extremely low wages. Domestic violence is common. Prostitution is illegal but widely tolerated and is often an economic necessity for young women. Trafficking in sex slaves is a serious problem.

As called for by the United Nations after the Fourth UN Conference on Women, held in Beijing in 1995, the government of Vietnam submitted a national action plan whose goals were the expansion of economic and educational opportunities for women, the eradication of poverty, the improvement of health care, and the enhancement of women's leadership in all aspects of national life. The action plan pledged that all government agencies would work toward these ends. As such, opportunities for young women have increased recently, with greater numbers of women now participating in the civil service and private sector and attending universities.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 27
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: —
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 51.8

WORK

Most Vietnamese still work in agriculture; in 2000 about 63 percent of people worked as farmers, with the remainder employed in industry and services. Unemployment was officially only 1.9 percent in 2004, but underemployment is a problem. Many people must work two jobs to make ends meet, perhaps holding a poorly paid official job alongside freelance work or independent business. Employees are expected to be loyal and obedient. People generally find jobs by networking with family and friends, and employers rarely advertise jobs publicly. Economic pressures have forced many women to begin working outside the home.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 42,980,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 48.6
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 63
 Industry and Services: 37
 Unemployment %: 1.9

EDUCATION

Primary education is free and compulsory for children between the ages of six and 11. The estimated literacy rate in 2002 was 90 percent. The Communist Party still controls all education, and while the curriculum was Westernized under French rule, it now includes Vietnamese history, language, and literature. Children attend school for six half days per week. Schools are overcrowded and lack supplies.

The country has more than 100 institutions of higher learning, with the most important universities in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City. Spaces are limited, and admission is extremely competitive. The government has been trying to expand the vocational school system and add more university branches, but as of the early 2000s few students attained higher education because of the lack of space and financial limitations.

The Vietnamese believe that education is the key to a prosperous future and will do whatever it takes to educate their children. Teachers are treated with great respect, though they are still poorly paid, and parents ensure that children do their homework.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 90.3
 Male %: 93.9
 Female %: 86.9
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 10.6
 First Level: Primary schools: 13,092
 Teachers: 358,606
 Students: 8,841,004
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 24.7
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 94.0
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 6,298
 Teachers: 362,147
 Students: 8,955,994
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 25.6
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 65.3
 Third Level: Institutions: 104
 Teachers: 38,608
 Students: 797,086
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 10.0
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: —

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Vietnam's government is working hard to modernize its telecommunications system, which is nevertheless substandard for the region. The number and quality of telephone lines have been increased, and most of the country uses digital connections and fiber-optic or microwave radio relay networks. In 2003 there were about 4.4 million telephone lines and nearly 2.75 million cellular telephones in use in the country; cellular telephone use has been growing rapidly. Some 3.5 million people were using the Internet. The Ministry of Science, Technology, and Environment, in Hanoi, is in charge of formulating development strategies and plans for science, technology, and the environment.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: 145
 Patent Applications by Residents: 35

MEDIA

The Communist Party controls all media, with the assistance of the Ministry of Culture and Information. The government does not hesitate to shut down newspapers that go beyond what it considers "permissible" areas of reporting. Most people get their news from television, with Vietnam Television broadcasting nationally from Hanoi and numerous regional stations also in operation. Only senior governmental officials are allowed to receive satellite broadcasts from foreign countries, though some people can access CNN and other channels through cable. The state-run Voice of Vietnam broadcasts nationally in several languages, including English, French, and Russian. The government restricts Internet access. Several newspapers are published in the nation, the biggest of which is the Communist Party daily *Nhan dan*.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 5
 Total Circulation 000: 450
 Circulation per 1,000: 5.8
 Books Published: —
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets million: 14.5
 per 1,000: 184

CULTURE

Vietnam has been inhabited for several thousand years and has long-established cultural traditions. Literature, especially poetry, has been important since Vietnam was called Van Lang, meaning "literate country," 4,000 years ago. Famous modern writers include Bao Ninh and Nguyen Huy Thiep. Singing is very popular; people make up songs as they work in the fields and also enjoy listening to pop music. Traditional instruments include bamboo flutes, a 16-string zither called a *don tranh*, and a one-stringed bowed instrument called a *dan bau*. Traditional music is based on a five-note scale. Visual arts include woodblock printing, lacquer art, and mother-of-pearl inlays.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: 9
 Annual Attendance: 1,918,000
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

The four main mythical animals in Vietnam are the dragon, the unicorn, the turtle, and the snake. These animals appear on many older buildings. Most families have altars in their homes where they burn incense and leave offerings of food for their ancestors.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Vietnamese people generally get together in small groups to socialize; large parties are uncommon. Women visit one another to play cards or do embroidery. Men play cards, chess, or mah-jongg. Both sexes enjoy going to cafés. Few people in rural areas own television sets, but those who do may invite neighbors over to watch favorite shows. In the cities people go out to play video games, watch movies, or sing karaoke. Cities also have museums, shops, restaurants, gardens, and other facilities.

ETIQUETTE

Vietnamese, like most Asian peoples, value emotional control and look down on those who lose their tempers. They strive to always present a pleasant demeanor. It is rude to point the soles of one's feet at another person or at a shrine. It is proper to ask permission before photographing someone. Meals are formal occasions, and people follow strict rules of behavior, passing food dishes with both hands, trying some of every dish on the table, and never turning down second or third helpings. Guests are expected to bring gifts to their hosts.

FAMILY LIFE

Vietnamese people hold ancestors, both living and dead, in high esteem. Children are raised to believe that they owe everything to their parents and must respect all elders. Family roles have not changed much over the years, although warfare and Communism have altered some traditions. Men function as providers, and women are considered heads of the home. Wives are subservient to their husbands; widows are expected to allow their sons to become heads of the family. Wives must often care for their husbands' parents in addition to their own parents, their husbands, and their children. In rural areas women do most of the farmwork as well. Children are expected to help out at home, with older children watching younger ones.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Most Vietnamese men now wear Western clothing. Women also wear Western clothing, but many wear the

ao dai, a long top over loose trousers. Many office workers wear their *ao dai* to work, and the outfit is also standard attire for formal occasions. Young girls wear white, young unmarried women wear pastels, and older married women wear bright colors. Women are expected to be beautiful and refined, with elegant speech and delicate manners. Both men and women dress conservatively, especially when visiting temples and pagodas.

SPORTS

Soccer is the most popular sport in Vietnam. People also play volleyball, table tennis, and badminton; ride bicycles; and practice martial arts. The first Vietnamese to win an Olympic medal was Hieu Ngan Tran, who won a silver medal in women's tae kwon do in 2000. Many older people practice tai chi in the morning. For the most part, Vietnamese people do not exercise or engage in sports, and the country has few athletic facilities.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1945** When Japan surrenders to the Allies, Viet Minh forces led by Ho Chi Minh declare the independence of Vietnam, in the August Revolution; France later seizes control of Vietnam's southern provinces, beginning an eight-year conflict.
- 1950** The United States recognizes the government of Bao Dai in the south and provides military and economic aid to the French.
- 1954** Viet Minh forces attack Dien Bien Phu, capturing the French military outpost before peace negotiations in Geneva can begin; negotiations temporarily divide Vietnam along the 17th parallel, pending nationwide elections scheduled for 1956.
- 1955** As supported by the United States, Ngo Dinh Diem wins elections staged in South Vietnam to favor the Catholic and non-Communist vote.
- 1961** North Vietnam creates an armed wing, the National Liberation Front, known as the Viet Cong, whose aim is to topple Diem's government and establish a Communist government.
- 1963** South Vietnamese army dissidents kill Diem and overthrow his government.
- 1965** U.S. president Lyndon Johnson orders bombing of North Vietnam and sends U.S. combat troops to South Vietnam.
- 1968** North Vietnam launches the Tet Offensive, simultaneous attacks on most major South Vietnamese cities, damaging both U.S. confidence in victory and the grip of South Vietnamese President Nguyen Van Thieu.
- 1969** Ho Chi Minh dies, and Le Duan assumes leadership of North Vietnam's Communist Party.

- 1973** In the Paris Agreement, the United States agrees to withdraw combat troops from South Vietnam but provide military assistance to the south, while North Vietnam's Viet Cong is allowed a legal role in politics in the south.
- 1975** Communists seize power in Saigon, South Vietnam, in a military offensive; Cambodian troops seeking return of historic territory attack Vietnamese border villages.
- 1976** South and north are officially joined as the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.
- 1979** Vietnam overthrows the regime of Pol Pot in Cambodia and installs a Vietnamese government; China retaliates by attacking northern Vietnam.
- 1986** Le Duan dies; Vietnam begins withdrawal of its occupying forces in Cambodia, a process completed by 1990.
- 1995** Vietnam and the United States resume full diplomatic relations; Vietnam joins with non-Communist governments to form the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).
- 2000** Vietnam and the United States sign a trade agreement.
- 2002** The Communist Party orders the seizure and destruction of unauthorized books by leading dissidents; Russia hands back the Cam Ranh Bay naval base; the Communist Party wins the parliamentary elections; the National Assembly appoints Tran Duc Luong to a second term as president.
- 2003** Gangster Nam Cam and others are sentenced to death in a showcase trial; a U.S. warship docks in Ho Chi Minh City for the first time since the war.
- 2004** Avian flu kills more than 30 people; Nam Cam is executed; the first American commercial flight since the war lands in Ho Chi Minh City.
- 2005** Prime Minister Phan Van Khai becomes the first Vietnamese leader to visit the United States since the war.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Ministry of Foreign Affairs
<http://www.mofa.gov.vn/>
- United Nations Development Programme: Vietnam
<http://www.undp.org.vn/>

YEMEN

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Yemen (Al-Jumhuriyah al-Yamaniyah)

ABBREVIATION

YE

CAPITAL

Sanaa

HEAD OF STATE

President Ali Abdullah Saleh (from 1990)

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister Abdul Qadir Bajamal (from 2001)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Multiparty republic

POPULATION

20,727,063 (2005)

AREA

527,970 sq km (203,849 sq mi)

ETHNIC MAJORITY

Arab

LANGUAGE

Arabic

RELIGION

Islam

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Yemeni rial

NATIONAL FLAG

Three equal horizontal stripes of red (top), white, and black

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A golden eagle carrying in its claws a banner bearing the name of the republic in Arabic. On the eagle's chest is a shield depicting a golden wall with a coffee plant above seven wavy stripes. Flanking the eagle are golden flagstaffs with the national flag.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"Repeat, O World, My Song"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

May 22 (Day of National Unity), September 26 (Revolution Day), October 14 (National Day), November 30 (Independence Day), various Islamic festivals

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

May 22, 1990

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

May 16, 1991; amended September 29, 1994, and February 2001

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

The Republic of Yemen is situated in the southwestern corner of the Arabian Peninsula, just north of the passage between the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden. Its total area is 527,970 sq km (203,849 sq mi). The republic includes the 3,626 sq km (1,400 sq mi) island of Socotra and the smaller islands of Perim and Kamaran. Yemen's international land frontiers, with Oman and Saudi Arabia, are mostly undemarcated. The total length of the coastline is 1,906 km (1,183 mi).

Topographically, the country is divided into a littoral region, between 6.5 km (4 mi) and 64 km (40 mi) in width; a maritime range, with elevations between 300 and 600 m (1,000 and 2,000 ft); and a highland plateau, with eleva-

tions ranging from 1,500 to 2,400 m (5,000 to 8,000 ft), which falls steeply into the Rub' al-Khali desert region. An important feature is the Wadi Hadhramaut, a wide and imposing valley running parallel to the coast about 200 km (125 mi) inland. The broad upper and middle parts of the Hadhramaut are relatively fertile, but at its lower end it turns sharply to the south and becomes a narrow, barren gorge as it descends to the sea. The land is totally devoid of natural vegetation except for a light cover of thorn shrub.

The Tihamah, a sandy strip about 65 km (40 mi) in width, separates the Red Sea coast from the mountainous interior.

The abundant rains in the highlands produce flash-flood rivers, or wadis. To the northeast rise the tributaries of Wadi Najran, Wadi Dawasir, Wadi Bana, and Aden,



2610 Yemen

while Wadi Siham, Wadi Zabid, and Wadi Surdud flow into the Red Sea.

Geography

Area sq km: 527,970; sq mi 203,849
World Rank: 48th
Land Boundaries, km: Oman 288; Saudi Arabia 1,458
Coastline, km: 1,906
Elevation Extremes meters:
Lowest: Arabian Sea 0
Highest: Jabal an-Nabi Shu'ayb 3,760
Land Use %
Arable Land: 2.8
Permanent Crops: 0.2
Forest: 0.9
Other: 96.1

Population of Principal Cities (2004 est.)

Aden	580,000
Sanaa	1,748,000

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Temperatures are high throughout the country, except in the mountainous region, where winter temperatures hover near 0°C (32°F). The coastal region has a hot season lasting from April until October, with temperatures between 30°C (86°F) and 40°C (104°F), followed by a cooler season between October and April, when temperatures range from 20°C (68°F) to 30°C (86°F). Temperatures of up to 54.4°C (130°F) have been recorded in Aden. Humidity is very high, particularly at the beginning and end of the hot season. Rainfall, limited to the monsoon months of July and September, is sparse. The average rainfall is 76 mm (3 in) but there are marked regional variations. The Hadhramaut and the central highlands receive as much as 500 to 760 mm (20 to 30 in) per year, while the northern and eastern sections may receive rain only once every five or 10 years. Rainfall is unpredictable, and both drought and severe floods are common. The Tihamah Plain is characterized by heat, aridity, and high humidity.

Climate and Weather

Temperature Range
Coastal Region: Summer 86°F to 104°F, Winter 68°F to 86°F
Interior: 32°F to 98°F
Average Rainfall: 3 in
Hadhramaut and Central Highlands: 20 in to 30 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Yemen is a fairly dry place, though not nearly as dry as the rest of the Arabian Peninsula, and the combined effects of

farming and tree cutting have led to increased desertification. There are grasses and shrubs in the lowlands, mangroves along the coast, palms and acacias in the foothills, and tropical fruit trees in the mountains. Farmers grow vegetables, spices, sorghum, coffee, and khat. Almost no wild animals inhabit the country, aside from migratory birds who stop on their way to and from Africa. Camels are a common domestic animal.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 20,727,063
World Rank: 51st
Density per sq km: 36.3
% of annual growth (1999-2003): 3.0
Male %: 51.0
Female %: 49.0
Urban %: 24.7
Age Distribution %: 0-14: 46.5
15-64: 50.8
65 and over: 2.7

Population 2025: 39,644,000
Birth Rate per 1,000: 43.07
Death Rate per 1,000: 8.53
Rate of Natural Increase %: 3.5
Total Fertility Rate: 6.67
Expectation of Life (years): Males 59.89
Females 63.71

Marriage Rate per 1,000: —
Divorce Rate per 1,000: —
Average Size of Households: 5.6
Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Yemenis are almost entirely Semitic and, with the departure in 1948 of Yemenite Jews for Israel, almost entirely Arab, though inhabitants of the Tihamah belt show Negroid strains. Within the Arab community the historic divisions are between the Qahtani, or southern, Arabs and the Adnani, or northern, Arabs and between the Zaidi and Shafa'i tribes. The latter distinction is based on religious rather than ethnic factors, with the divisions and rivalries between the two tribes permitting only limited social cohesion. The Zaidis, who are Shiites, claim as their imam descendants of the Prophet Muhammad through his son-in-law Ali and Ali's grandson, Zaid. Zaidi tribes are concentrated in northern and eastern Yemen and in the central plateau. The Shafa'is, who are Sunnis, live along the Tihamah coast and in the southern region, where they form the local majority. The Shafa'is, unlike the Zaidis, are mainly town dwellers and are also much more active in the commercial professions.

The tribal configuration is extremely varied. There are an estimated 1,300 to 1,400 separate tribes organized in large confederations called *zei*.

The inhabitants of the island of Socotra differ from mainland Arabs and are believed to be a mixture of Greek, Portuguese, African, and Arab stock. The Mahara tribes of the eastern region are believed to be of Himyarite descent.

The population of Aden, unlike that of the hinterland, is diverse and contains many small ethnic communities. A large number of Indians, Pakistanis, and Somalis still live in the republic, but their numbers are decreasing every year. The once-flourishing British community has virtually disappeared.

LANGUAGES

The official and national language of Yemen is Arabic, which is spoken by all Yemenis. English is widely understood, particularly in Aden. The only two groups in the country who do not speak modern Arabic are the Socotrans and the Mahara tribes of the east. Both of them speak a variety of the ancient Himyarite language, which was spoken in pre-Islamic Arabia for many centuries.

RELIGIONS

Islam is the state religion and the religion of the vast majority of Yemenis. Members of the Zaidi sect, of the Shia branch, have historically enjoyed greater political influence than those of the Shafai sect, of the Sunni branch, although this distinction has often been as much based on geographical and tribal considerations as on sectarian grounds. For the most part, the two major Islamic communities coexist without friction and seek to minimize the significance of doctrinal differences. Muslim associations with ties to pan-Islamic or foreign organizations enjoy some degree of freedom, including the right to operate schools that are largely independent of the national education system.

Although almost all of the once-substantial Yemenite Jewish population has immigrated to Israel, the small number of Jews remaining live in peace with the Muslim majority. These Jews practice their religion freely and suffer no unusual economic hardships. They maintain only very limited contact with Jews abroad; communications between Yemenite Jews and their coreligionists and relatives in Israel are strictly proscribed.

There is no indigenous Christian population. Foreign Christians are allowed to conduct private services, although the establishment of churches is not permitted. Foreign clergy are not permitted into the country.

There is a small Ismaili community, numbering more than 400,000. The Ismailis follow the religious practices of the Shiites but differ in their devotion to Ismail, the seventh imam.

Religious Affiliations

Shafai (Sunni)	12,436,238
Zaidi (Shia)	7,254,472
Ismaili	414,541

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Yemen, known to ancient geographers as Arabia Felix, was the site of a series of kingdoms, including Saba, which prospered through trade in incense. From the second century B.C.E. to the sixth century C.E. the region was ruled by the Himyarites, racially akin to the Sabaeans, who introduced Judaism to the kingdom. The Himyarites were driven out by the Christian Ethiopians, who ruled until expelled by the Persians in 575. Yemen became entirely Muslim in the seventh century. The coastal areas were ruled by Sunni tribes of the Shafa'i rite, while the highlands were controlled by the Zaidis, a Shia sect. In the ninth century the Zaidi imam Yahya al-Hadi ilal Haqq founded a line of imams that survived until the mid-20th century.

During the Middle Ages Yemen was under the rule of a number of overlords: the Fatimid dynasty of Egypt (11th century), Saladin (from 1173), the Rasulid dynasty (1230–1500), and the Mamaluk dynasty of Egypt (from 1516). The first contact with the West was a Portuguese attack in 1513. In 1517 the Mamaluk governor surrendered to the Ottomans, who ruled all of Yemen until expelled from the interior around 1630 by the Zaidi imam, Qasim the Great. In the 19th century Wahhabis seized control until driven out by Muhammad Ali of Egypt, who restored the Zaidis. When the Egyptians left in 1840, the Zaidi imams acknowledged Ottoman suzerainty and agreed to pay a large tribute to Constantinople. In 1872 the Ottomans occupied Sanaa and remained there until the end of World War I.

North Yemen emerged from World War I as an independent kingdom. Army officers deposed the monarch in 1962 and proclaimed the Yemen Arab Republic, sparking six years of civil war in which Egyptian- and Soviet-backed republicans ultimately defeated Saudi-backed royalists. The 1970s were a period of political instability in which North Yemen saw two leaders assassinated and a civilian government overthrown by a military coup. Stability was restored following the election of Ali Abdullah Saleh as president in 1978. Saleh gradually introduced democratic institutions, culminating in the creation of an elected legislature, the Consultative Council, in 1988.

Meanwhile, South Yemen, formed out of the British colony of Aden and the British protectorate of South Arabia, won independence from Britain in 1967. It became the Arab world's only Marxist state, taking the name People's Democratic Republic of Yemen in 1970 and signing a 20-year friendship treaty with the Soviet Union in 1979 that allowed the stationing of Soviet troops on its soil. More than 300,000 South Yemenis fled to North Yemen

after independence, contributing to two decades of hostility between the two states that flared into warfare in 1972 and again in 1979.

South Yemen's first president, Qahtan ash-Sha'abi, resigned in 1969 and was replaced by Salem Rubayi Ali, who in turn was deposed and executed in 1978 by his radical rival Abdalfattah Isma'il. Isma'il resigned, ostensibly for reasons of ill health, in 1980 and went into exile in Moscow. He was replaced by the more moderate Ali Nasser Muhammad. Isma'il returned in 1985, but the following year Muhammad attempted to purge his rivals, killing Isma'il among others. Muhammad's opponents fought the purge, and after a week of heavy fighting in the capital, Muhammad fled to Ethiopia. Haydar Abu Bakr al-Attas, the former prime minister, became president.

During the 1970s and 1980s North and South Yemen, despite obvious ideological differences, made several attempts at unification. During 1989 progress dramatically increased, in part because of the economic problems of South Yemen, which had moved to end its isolation in the wake of the democratic reforms sweeping the Soviet bloc.

The two countries were formally united on May 22, 1990. Sanaa, the capital of the Yemen Arab Republic, became the political capital of the unified state, while the port of Aden, the former South Yemen capital, was proclaimed the economic capital. Saleh became the president of the new state, and Attas was named premier. Yemen's first constitution was promulgated in 1990. The first general elections were held in 1993, and the General People's Congress (GPC), the former ruling party of North Yemen, won a majority of the seats in parliament. The House of Representatives elected to retain Ali Abdullah Saleh as president. In 1994 Saleh and the former South Yemeni leader Ali Salim al-Biedh signed a peace agreement. Despite this agreement, fighting broke out again, escalating into a full-fledged war. Al-Biedh announced the south's secession from the union and the formation of a new democratic Republic of Yemen. However, in the fighting that ensued the southern forces were routed, and the secession was ended when the northern forces secured control of Aden. The 1990 constitution was amended to reflect the new realities of the state. In parliamentary elections in 1997 the GPC was returned to power. In 1999 the country held its first direct presidential election, in which Saleh was elected president.

In the early 2000s Yemen acquired a reputation as a safe haven for Islamic militants. The navy's USS *Cole* was badly damaged while docked in Aden in an al-Qaeda suicide attack in October 2000; a total of 17 crew members were killed, and 39 were injured. That same month a bomb exploded at the British embassy; it was detonated by four Yemenis who claimed the act to be a sign of solidarity with Palestinians. The Yemeni government responded to these attacks with a strict crackdown on suspected terrorists and terrorism networks. Further, following the attacks on Washington, D.C., and New York on Septem-

ber 11, 2001, Saleh visited the United States and promised Yemeni support for the war on terror; in return, the United States furnished Yemen with equipment and antiterrorism training. The nation expelled more than 100 Islamic scholars and suspected al-Qaeda members as part of a February 2002 crackdown on terrorism. An attack on the supertanker *Limburg* off the Yemeni coast in October 2002 was blamed on al-Qaeda; the men implicated in this attack were sentenced by Yemeni courts in 2004. In 2004 and 2005 the northern part of Yemen was plagued by fighting between government soldiers and rebels under the leadership of the dissident cleric Hussein al-Houthi.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

President

1990– Ali Abdullah Saleh

Prime Minister

1990–94 Haydar Abu Bakr al-Attas

1994 Muhammad Said al-Attar

1994–97 Abdul Aziz Abdul Ghani

1997–98 Faraj ibn Ghanem

1998–2001 Abd al-Karim Ali al-Iryani

2001 Abdul Qadir Bajamal

CONSTITUTION

The constitution of the united Republic of Yemen was approved by popular referendum in May 1991. The constitution provides for an independent, sovereign, unitary, and indivisible state and defines the Yemeni people as part of the "Arab Nation" and the Islamic world. Under the provisions of the constitution, a transitional period was established during which a presidential council exercised executive power. It consisted of the chairman and members of the Consultative Council and the chairman and members of the Presidium of the Supreme People's Council, the executive bodies of North and South Yemen. At independence, the legislatures of the two nations were combined into a 301-member House of Representatives.

Legislative power was originally vested solely in the House of Representatives, elected through universal suffrage for a term of six years. The number of legislators is not specified in the constitution. The constitution provided for the House to enact laws and decide the general policy of the state, in addition to adopting the general plan for economic and social development, the public budget, and its final statement. The legislature also acts as a check on the executive. Islamic law, or sharia, is the main source of legislation.

Executive power is exercised by a president who was originally elected by the House of Representatives for a five-year term but is now popularly elected for a seven-year term. The president appoints the prime minister. The real power of the government is vested in the prime minister

and his council, which has the power to call for general referenda; overall, the government forms general policy and oversees its implementation, appoints and removes high civilian and military officials, and declares states of emergency and general mobilization in accordance with the law.

The constitution provides for an independent judiciary, the composition of which is to be determined by future legislation.

In 2001 more than 70 percent of voters approved changes to the constitution in a referendum. The changes included an extension of the presidential term from five years to seven years and the creation of a bicameral legislature consisting of a Shura Council (with 111 members appointed by the president) and a House of Representatives (with 301 members elected by popular vote for six-year terms).

PARLIAMENT

Following the unification of Yemen in May 1990 the two countries' legislatures merged, pending the elections that were held at the end of the 30-month transition period that began in May 1991. The House of Representatives, originally the only parliamentary body, consists of 301 members.

In a popular referendum, voters approved a revised constitution in 2001, which included the creation of a bicameral legislature consisting of the 111-member Shura Council and the 301-member House of Representatives. The Shura Council's members are appointed by the president and serve concurrently with the president's seven-year term, while the House's members are popularly elected for six-year terms.

Under the constitution ratified in May 1991, Islamic law is the principal source of legislation. Legislative power is vested in the Shura Council and the House of Representatives. The parliament enacts laws and decides the general policies of the state. It also acts as a check on the executive branch.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Political parties in the traditional sense did not develop in North Yemen, where loyalties and alignments were determined by religious and tribal ties. Until 1989 the Yemen Socialist Party was the only legal party in South Yemen. Its organizational structure was modeled after the Soviet Communist Party; its left-wing ideology was closer to that of Moscow than to that of Peking. In 1989 the formation of opposition parties was legalized, and the Nasserite Unionist Organization was founded.

Since unification, approximately 30 political parties have formed, about 12 of which were still active in 2004. Among the most prominent are the General People's Congress (GPC), a broad coalition of supporters of Presi-

dent Saleh; the Yemeni Congregation for Reform (Islah), an Islamist political party that advocates reform based on Islamic law; and the Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP), the party of the former South Yemeni leader Ali Salim al-Biedh. While still in existence, the YSP has lost its political standing since the south lost the civil war.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The Republic of Yemen is divided into 19 governorates (*muhafaza*). The city of Sanaa is treated as another governorate for purposes of elections and administration.

The governorates are divided into districts (*qada*), which are in turn divided into sectors (*nabiyia*). At the lower level traditional structures prevail. There are no popular representative institutions at any of these levels, although under the constitution each administrative unit has to have an elected local council; each governorate has an appointed governor, and the districts into which the governorates are divided are also administered by appointed officials.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The constitution of Yemen provides for an independent judiciary that follows Islamic sharia law. The Supreme Court rules on the constitutionality of law and decides final appeals against sentences in civilian and criminal cases and cases of personal statutes, as well as appeals against sentences in administrative disputes and disciplinary actions. The Supreme Court also has the responsibility of deciding cases of conflict of competencies of judicial entities.

The constitution provides protection for the accused. No one can be arrested, searched, or detained unless caught in the act or unless an order has been issued by a judge or a prosecutor in accordance with the law. Physical and psychological torture are prohibited. No one may be forced to give a confession during an investigation. The accused has the right to remain silent and to speak only in the presence of an attorney. The constitution requires arraignment within 24 hours of arrest. Those arrested have the right to notify a designated person of the arrest or to have their relatives notified.

HUMAN RIGHTS

South Yemen was one of the Arab countries with the worst human rights records, but since unification conditions have improved. The constitution of the united Republic of Yemen provides for freedom of thought and expression "within the limitations of the law," protects the rights of the accused, and prohibits the use of torture. Those arrested are guaranteed the right to counsel and to speedy arraignment. Legislation enacted in 1990 provides for freedom of the press. The state guarantees all citizens equal political, economic, social, and cultural opportunities.

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Despite these guarantees, the military frequently monitors the activities of citizens, and arbitrary arrests and imprisonment are common. Prison conditions are poor, and pretrial detention is sometimes lengthy. The state intimidates journalists, limits freedom of religion, and occasionally restricts freedom of movement. Discrimination and violence against women and religious minorities are problems, as is child labor.

FOREIGN POLICY

Until the 1960s Yemen was isolated from the rest of the world and had meaningful contact only with Saudi Arabia. Since that time it has emerged from its isolation and joined various international organizations, including the United Nations, the Arab League, and the organization of the Islamic conference.

Yemen supported Iraq during the Gulf War and thereby incurred hostility from Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states. Riyadh withdrew the special privileges extended to Yemeni citizens in Saudi Arabia and expelled 700,000 Yemenis. However, relations with all neighbors had improved by the mid-1990s.

Saudi Arabia had preferred a divided Yemen, and therefore the union of the two Yemens was not relished. Border disputes with Saudi Arabia, dormant for many years, led to sporadic clashes in 1992, 1997, and 1998. In 2000 the two countries signed an International Border Treaty, ending 50 years of disputes. Yemen settled a dispute with Eritrea over the Hanish Islands in 1998.

When Yemen supported Iraq in 1991, the United States abruptly reduced its presence in the country and cut off most aid, although food aid continued through 2003 and medical aid through 2000. The United States supported unification in the 1994 civil war. In the early 2000s U.S.-Yemeni relations improved when Yemen lent support to the American war on terror and the United States resumed aid for literacy, Internet access, military training and equipment, and other purposes.

DEFENSE

Yemen's armed forces include an army with special forces, a navy with marines, an air force, and a republican guard. The nation has plans to establish a coast guard. All men must serve two years of compulsory service at the age of 18. The United States provides Yemen with several million dollars annually for military financing, assists with military training, and sells Yemen spare military parts. Yemen was deeply involved in American counterterrorism efforts in the early 2000s.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 136,700
Military Manpower Availability: 4,058,223

Military Expenditures \$million: 885.5
as % of GDP: 7.8
as % of central government expenditures: —
Arms Imports \$million: 30
Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

Yemen is one of the poorest nations in the Middle East. Its government has been working to integrate the two separate economic systems of the different Yemens, but it has been impeded by civil war, reductions in foreign aid, the return of nearly one million Yemenis from other Gulf states, and extremely rapid population growth. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank have been assisting Yemen in developing a plan to reform the economy by reducing the deficit, cutting subsidies, and reforming the civil service.

Yemen's most lucrative natural resource is petroleum, and the nation's prosperity has risen and fallen with the global price of oil. Most of the population, however, is employed in herding and agriculture. A high rate of unemployment and lack of an educated populace have hampered the country's ability to grow its economy.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 16.25
GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 800
GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 4.3
GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 1.2
Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
Agriculture: 15.5
Industry: 44.7
Services: 39.7
Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
Private Consumption: 64
Government Consumption: 16
Gross Domestic Investment: 16.1
Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 4.468
Imports: 3.734
% of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 3.0
% of Income Received by Richest 10%: 25.9

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
153.8	160.9	180.0	202.1	224.0

Finance

National Currency: Yemeni Rial (YER)
Exchange Rate: \$1 = YER 184.78
Money Supply Stock in National Currency billion: 347
Central Bank Discount Rate %: 13.13
Total External Debt \$billion: 5.4
Debt Service Ratio %: 3.95
Balance of Payments \$million: 369.9
International Reserves SDRs \$billion: 4.98
Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
12.2

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 243
 per capita \$: 12.70
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 114

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$billion: 4.251
 Expenditures \$billion: 4.568
 Budget Deficit \$million: 317
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 15.5
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 4.5
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 0.42
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 30.0
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 7.5
 Total Farmland % of land area: 2.9
 Livestock: Cattle million: 1.4
 Chickens million: 34.8
 Pigs 000: —
 Sheep million: 6.6
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters 000: 339
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 159

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 563
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 3.0

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 26.0
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million: 2.63
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 139
 Net Energy Imports % of use: -441.4
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 0.81
 Production kW-hr billion: 3.1
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 2.8
 Coal Reserves tons million: —
 Production tons million: —
 Consumption tons million: —
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: 16.9
 Production cubic feet billion: —
 Consumption cubic feet billion: —
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: 4
 Production barrels 000 per day: 448
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 78
 Pipelines Length km: 1,174

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 3.734
 Exports \$billion: 4.468
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 9.7
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): -0.2
 Balance of Trade \$million: 369.9

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
United Arab Emirates %	12.8	—
Saudi Arabia %	10.2	—
China %	9.0	33.5
France %	7.9	—
Kuwait %	4.4	—
United States %	4.4	—
India %	4.3	—
Turkey %	4.1	—
Thailand %	—	31.4
Singapore %	—	7.2
South Korea %	—	6.1

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 67,000
 Paved %: 11.5
 Automobiles: 347,000
 Trucks and Buses: 588,000
 Railroad: Track Length km: —
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km million: —
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: 5
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: 24.8
 Airports: 44
 Traffic: Passenger-km million: 1.6
 Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 76
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: —
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 136

Communications

Telephones 000: 542.2
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: —
 Cellular Telephones 000: 411.1
 Personal Computers 000: 145
 Internet Hosts per million people: 6.7
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 4.8

ENVIRONMENT

Largely underdeveloped, Yemen does not suffer from much pollution but has other serious environmental problems. Safe drinking water is not available in most areas, and wells are generally contaminated through sewage. The nation has little rainfall and little surface water. The ground water table has been falling for many years as a result of overuse. Land erosion is a serious problem, especially because the wadi (dry river bed) areas are subject to severe flooding that demolishes irrigation systems and washes away soil. The Tihamah, a hot and sandy semi-

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desert that separates the Red Sea coast from the generally less arid mountainous areas of the interior, is affected by soil salinization.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 0.9
Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: -9
Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: —
Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 0.48

LIVING CONDITIONS

The standard of living in Yemen is much lower than that in developed nations. Some 42 percent of the populace lives below the poverty line, and another 13 percent are just slightly above it. Per capita gross domestic product (GDP) was only about \$800 in 2004. Poverty is worse in rural areas than in cities. Potable water is in short supply. Most of the nations roads are unpaved. Buses and taxis serve as public transportation.

Yemeni people have historically been sedentary, unlike the nomads of neighboring states. Yemeni homes can be several stories high, with animals on the ground, reception rooms in the middle, bedrooms and kitchens above, and a room on the top floor for the man of the house to entertain his friends. Most houses are made of mud and brick, with thick walls and few windows; they are cool in the heat, warm in the cold, and easy to defend against attack. Attack and violence have been a part of life in many parts of Yemen, especially the north.

HEALTH

Life expectancy is fairly low, at slightly under 62 years in 2005, and the infant mortality rate is relatively high, at over 61 deaths per 1,000 live births. On average, Yemeni women have nearly seven children each. HIV/AIDS is beginning to appear; in 2001 some 0.1 percent of the population was infected.

Health

Number of Physicians: 4,078
Number of Dentists: 222
Number of Nurses: 8,342
Number of Pharmacists: 1,237
Physician Density per 100,000 people: 22
Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 61.5
Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 570
Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 3.7
Health Expenditures per capita \$: 23
HIV Infected % of adults: 0.1

Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:

DPT: 66

Measles: 66

Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 30

Access to Improved Water Source %: 69

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Nearly 8 percent of Yemenis, mostly in rural areas, cannot reliably acquire food for themselves and their families. The Yemeni diet is built around flat bread, rice, beans, and spices. Lamb and chicken are the main meats. Typical daily fare is *shurba*, a stew with lamb, lentils, or fenu-greek. The national dish is a stew of chickpeas, lentils, beans, spices, coriander, and meat, served over rice. Kebabs, grilled meat on skewers, are a popular snack. People drink small glasses of tea with mint with every meal. Coffee is usually heavily sweetened and flavored with ginger and other spices. Alcoholic beverages are illegal.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 35.9

Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,040

Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 159.4

Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 60.3

STATUS OF WOMEN

Living in a conservative Islamic society that remained largely isolated from the modern world prior to 1962, few Yemeni women are employed outside the home or play an active role in other aspects of public life. Education for women in significant numbers began only in the 1970s. The government is trying to expand their educational opportunities, but a lack of personnel continues to inhibit the opening of new schools and the staffing of existing institutions; additionally, traditional Islamic norms, more stringently followed in rural areas, as well as the considerable time expended by women in water and fuel collection, constrain female class attendance. Female literacy was only about 30 percent in 2003. Prevailing social norms frequently dictate that women defer to the guidance of their male colleagues and accept the close supervision of their activities by male relatives. Women seeking exit permits for travel outside the country are frequently asked to provide evidence that male relatives have no objection to their travel.

Despite these problems, Yemen has made some strides toward female equality. The government does not restrict women's access to employment. The nation was the first in the Arabian Peninsula to allow women to vote and to elect women to parliament. Its minister for human rights and its ambassador to the Netherlands have been women. In December 2004 Sanaa was the site of the first

Democratic Forum of Arab Women, which discussed the necessity of empowering women and involving women in decision making in Arab regimes.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 0
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 0.6
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 6.1

WORK

Most Yemenis work as subsistence farmers and herders, trading with one another for necessities. Less than one-quarter of the workforce is employed in industry, commerce, labor, services, and construction. Unemployment is high, at 35 percent in 2003.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 5,980,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 28.9
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: > 75
 Industry, Commerce, Labor, Services, and Construction: < 25
 Unemployment %: 35

EDUCATION

Yemen remains one of the most illiterate countries in the world, with the female literacy rate at 30 percent in 2003; the overall literacy rate was only 50 percent. Most primary education is provided at the *kuttab*, the traditional Islamic school for boys, where little is taught besides the Koran.

The government provides free, compulsory, and universal education for six years at the elementary level. In all, the secular school system provides a six-year primary course, a three-year intermediate course, and a three-year secondary course. The academic year runs from September through June. The medium of instruction is Arabic at all levels. In 2002, about 72 percent of children were attending primary school, 35 percent secondary school. Rapid population growth has made it difficult for the country to educate all of its children.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 50.2
 Male %: 70.5
 Female %: 30.0
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: —

First Level: Primary schools: 11,013

Teachers: —
 Students: 2,950,403
 Student-Teacher Ratio: —
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 71.8

Second Level: Secondary Schools: 1,224

Teachers: —
 Students: 1,364,129
 Student-Teacher Ratio: —
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 34.5

Third Level: Institutions: 2

Teachers: 5,218
 Students: 173,130

Gross Enrollment Ratio: 11.2

Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 9.6

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

As a nation that until recently existed in a pocket of medieval isolation, Yemen lacks a good technological infrastructure. As of the early 2000s the nation had yet to create a national telecommunications network. There were over half a million telephone lines and 411,000 cellular telephones functioning in 2002. Only about 100,000 people were using the Internet.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: —
 Patent Applications by Residents: —

MEDIA

The government's ministry of information controls all broadcasting and print journalism. The press is closely watched, and the government has prosecuted some newspapers that have dared to print political criticism.

Because many Yemenis are illiterate, radio is the most important source of news. Radio comes from the state-run Republic of Yemen Radio and also from stations in neighboring Oman and Saudi Arabia. The state also runs Republic of Yemen Television. The two main daily newspapers are *al-Thawrab* and *al-Ayyam*. English weeklies include the *Yemen Times* and the *Yemen Observer*. The national news agency is the Yemen News Agency, or Saba.

Media

Daily Newspapers: —
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: —
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers 000: —
 per 1,000: —
 Television sets million: 5
 per 1,000: 286

CULTURE

Yemen's culture is heavily Islamic and sex-segregated. Art forms include elaborately decorated silver daggers and intricate embroidery on clothing. Poetry is considered the highest literary form, and Yemenis admire the artful use of words. Lutes, lyres, drums, and other instruments are played, but sung poetry is the mainstay of Yemeni music. Singers perform different types of songs depending on the occasion, singing *balab* and *razfab* at weddings, *zamil* at large tribal gatherings, *dan* at smaller gatherings, and *mawlid* hymns of praise on religious occasions.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number:	—
Volumes:	—
Registered borrowers:	—
Museums Number:	—
Annual Attendance:	—
Cinema Gross Receipts:	—
Number of Cinemas:	—
Seating Capacity:	—
Annual Attendance:	—

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Yemen's different tribes still maintain old folk traditions. Each tribe has its own folk dancing style, many of which function as performances of stories. In some areas people dance with ibex horns, reenacting the ancient ibex-hunt ceremony, a ritual that was performed to bring rain. Styles of dress have long been used to express tribal unity.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

For diversion, most Yemenis chew khat, a mildly narcotic leaf; people gather in single-sex groups in the afternoon or evening and spend several hours stuffing khat leaves into their mouths and chewing on them. Khat is appreciated in that it raises blood pressure and encourages conversation. It can also suppress the appetite, which is important in a land without enough food.

ETIQUETTE

Yemenis do not tip in restaurants or hotels. Bargaining is not standard procedure in markets. Men and women do not mix in public, and a man who attempts to speak to or photograph a woman risks severe punishment. Yemenis are extremely hospitable to guests, even to their enemies, but they also consider it acceptable to greet visitors with gunshots.

FAMILY LIFE

Women devote their lives to their husbands and families. Yemenis tend to have many children; seven or eight children is not an unusual number for a married couple. However, large families create a financial burden for parents, who cannot afford to send their children to school. Tribal loyalties are very strong.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Yemenis dress according to Islamic law as they interpret it. Women cover themselves from head to foot in black, veiling their faces and refusing to speak to strange men, even hiding themselves when men appear, if possible. Men wear robes and turbans and usually appear in public heavily armed with daggers, swords, or machine guns. Yemeni clothing can be heavily decorated with jewels and embroidery.

SPORTS

Yemen does not have a high level of participation in sports. Soccer and boxing are popular with men and boys. Nas-eem Hamed is an international boxing champion. Yemeni women have traditionally not taken part in sports, largely because men want them to protect their modesty, but the government is beginning to encourage female athletic activity. The government has planned to build a women's sports hall in the capital, and the 2005 Asian Conference on Women and Sports was held in Sanaa in May.

CHRONOLOGY

(North Yemen from 1945)

- 1945** Yemen joins the Arab League.
- 1947** Yemen joins the United Nations.
- 1948** Imam Yahya is killed in coup; his son Saif al-Islam Ahmad succeeds as imam.
- 1955** A coup against the imam is suppressed; Yemen concludes aid agreement with the Soviet Union; imam appoints first royal cabinet.
- 1956** Yemen recognizes the People's Republic of China and obtains Chinese economic and technical assistance.
- 1958** Yemen joins Egypt and Syria in a confederation known as the United Arab States.
- 1959** The United States opens its first mission in Sanaa.
- 1961** The United Arab States is dissolved; Egypt launches propaganda campaign against the imam.
- 1962** Imam Ahmad dies and is succeeded by his son, Muhammad al-Badr; within weeks Brigadier Abdullah al-Salal leads successful coup and

- seizes power; Imam al-Badr escapes to the highlands, where he organizes a royalist army, and a civil war begins.
- 1963** The civil war becomes an international conflict, as Egyptian troops land in Yemen to aid the republican forces and the Saudis lend arms and equipment to the royalists.
- 1964** A new republican government is announced under a new constitution, with Hamud al-Jaifi as premier.
- 1965** Hassan al-Amri replaces al-Jaifi as premier but later yields office to Muhammad Ahmad Noman; Noman falls out of favor with the Egyptians, and al-Amri again becomes premier.
- 1966** Al-Amri is dismissed; al-Salal assumes the office of premier in addition to that of president.
- 1967** President Gamal Nasser and King Faisal, meeting in Khartoum, agree to a cease-fire in Yemen and a pullout of both Egyptian and Saudi Arabian forces; the withdrawal of Egyptian troops is followed by a coup in which al-Salal is overthrown, and Abd al-Aini becomes premier; Yemen breaks off diplomatic relations with the United States; Hassan al-Amri replaces al-Aini as premier.
- 1968** In fierce fighting the royalist forces lay siege to Sanaa but are repelled.
- 1969** Abdullah Kurshoumi is named premier.
- 1970** New constitution is promulgated; Mushin al-Aini is recalled to succeed Kurshoumi as premier.
- 1971** Yemen holds the first elections in its history under the new constitution.
- 1972** Diplomatic relations are resumed with the United States; fighting breaks out with the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen; a peace agreement and an agreement on the eventual unification of the two countries is signed in Cairo, but border incidents continue; al-Aini resigns and is succeeded in office by Abdullah al-Hajari.
- 1974** A new government under Premier Hassan Makki takes office; in a successful coup Ibrahim Muhammad al-Hamadi seizes power; the Revolutionary Command Council is established as the supreme state body under an amended constitution; al-Aini is recalled as premier.
- 1975** Abdul Aziz Abdul Ghani is named premier.
- 1977** President Ibrahim al-Hamadi and his brother are assassinated on the eve of their trip to South Yemen; new president, Lt. Col. Ahmed Hussein al-Ghashmi, escapes assassination attempt.
- 1978** President al-Ghashmi is killed when a bomb concealed in the briefcase of a visiting South Yemeni emissary explodes in his office; People's Council elects Ali Abdullah Saleh as president.
- 1979** South Yemen forces joined by the guerrilla forces of the National Democratic Front cross into Yemen and advance 30 miles; under a cease-fire arranged by the Arab League, South Yemen's troops withdraw; President Saleh and President Ismail of Southern Yemen meet in Kuwait and agree to a peaceful resolution of the conflict and the eventual reunification of the two countries; Saudi Arabia, angered by this conclusion, withholds military aid; Yemen turns to the Soviet Union, which begins delivery of planes and military equipment.
- 1982** Earthquake devastates large areas in Yemen; the General People's Congress is convened.
- 1983** President Saleh is reelected to another term; Abd al-Aziz Abd al-Ghani is reinstated as prime minister.
- 1984** A 20-year treaty is signed with the Soviet Union.
- 1988** General elections are held for the newly created Consultative Council, which replaced the appointed Constituent Assembly; Pres. Saleh is reelected; North and South Yemen establish a joint oil-exploration company.
- 1989** The leaders of Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, and North Yemen sign an agreement creating a regional common market, the Arab Cooperation Council; the governments of North and South Yemen announce joint approval of a draft constitution for a unified state.
- 1990** North Yemen and South Yemen merge into a single nation, the Republic of Yemen.
- (South Yemen from 1967)
- 1967** South Yemen gains independence from Britain, with Qahtan al-Shaab, leader of the National Liberation Front (NLF), as president of the republic.
- 1968** Following the Zingibar conference, conflict between the moderate and radical elements within the National Liberation Front intensifies; short-lived revolts and uprisings occur in the First, Third, Fifth, and Sixth governorates.
- 1969** Qahtan al-Shaab is ousted in a power struggle and replaced by Salem Rubayi Ali, leader of the pro-Moscow extremist faction.
- 1970** New constitution is promulgated; official name of the republic is changed to People's Democratic Republic of Yemen; 36 foreign firms are nationalized.
- 1971** Mohammed Ali Haithem resigns as prime minister and is replaced by Ali Nasser Mohammed Hasani.
- 1972** Border clashes with Yemen Arab Republic lead to intervention by the Arab League, which mediates a cease-fire; the two Yemens agree in principle on the concept of a united Yemen.
- 1973** South Yemen conducts its first official census; a seventh governorate is established at Thamoud.

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- 1975 The National Liberation Front, the Popular Vanguard Party, and the Democratic People's Union merge to form the National Front Political Organization.
- 1976 South Yemen, in dramatic reversal of policy, resumes diplomatic relations with Saudi Arabia and agrees to accept Saudi aid.
- 1977 South Yemen supports Ethiopia in the latter's war with Somalia over the Ogaden; Soviet arms are airlifted to Ethiopia via Aden.
- 1978 President Rubayi Ali is accused of complicity in the assassination of North Yemeni president Ahmed Hussein al-Ghashmi and is deposed, arrested, and shot by a firing squad; pro-Soviet triumvirate consisting of NLF secretary Abdul Fattah Ismail, Defense Minister Ali Antar, and Ali Nasser Mohammed Hasani seizes power; Hasani is named head of state; Ismail announces formation of a new Communist Party called the Vanguard Party.
- 1979 South Yemeni forces cross into North Yemen and seize three important towns; South Yemen withdraws forces from captured territory under truce arranged by Arab League; President Ismail meets with President Abdullah Saleh, of North Yemen, in Kuwait and agrees to peaceful negotiations leading to the eventual reunification of the two Yemens.
- 1980 President Ismail steps down, and Prime Minister Ali Nasser Mohammed Hasani assumes the presidency; guerrilla forces supported by South Yemen step up activity in North Yemen.
- 1981 South Yemen, Libya, and Ethiopia conclude Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation.
- 1982 The People's Democratic Republic of Yemen and Yemen Arab Republic agree to terms of truce between the two countries.
- 1983 Diplomatic relations with Oman are reestablished.
- 1986 President Hasani is ousted in a bloody power struggle, and the Moscow-backed Haydar Bakr al-Attas is installed as president.
- 1988 North and South Yemen establish a joint oil exploration company.
- 1989 The governorates of South Yemen and North Yemen announce joint approval of a draft constitution for a unified state.
- 1990 South Yemen and North Yemen merge into a single nation, the Republic of Yemen.
- (Republic of Yemen from 1990)
- 1990 North Yemen and South Yemen merge into a single nation, the Republic of Yemen; Gen. Ali Abdullah Saleh, president of North Yemen, becomes the first president. Haydar Abu Bakr al-Attas, president of South Yemen, is named premier; Yemen gives equivocal response to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait: It condemns the invasion but votes against a measure in the United Nations authorizing a multinational coalition to use force to remove Iraq from Kuwait; Yemen attempts to mediate the Persian Gulf crisis.
- 1991 Yemen condemns the UN coalition's offensive against Iraq; the people of Yemen ratify the new constitution by a large majority.
- 1993 In protest over the economic stagnation of south Yemen, Vice President al-Biedh withdraws from governmental activity and decamps to southern Yemen.
- 1994 Despite a Jordan-brokered peace deal between north and south, civil war breaks out in Yemen; after two months of fighting, government troops capture Aden, ending the conflict; parliament approves constitutional amendments; Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi is named vice president.
- 1995 An economic austerity program is implemented; Yemen and Saudi Arabia agree to negotiate their border dispute; Eritrea seizes the Hanish Islands in the Red Sea, claimed by Yemen.
- 1996 Yemen and Eritrea submit their territorial dispute for arbitration.
- 1997 President Saleh's General People's Congress retains power in legislative elections, which are boycotted by members of the opposition.
- 1998 Prime Minister Faraj ibn Ghanem resigns; Abd al-Karim Ali al-Iriyani is named prime minister; arbitration awards the two largest Hanish Islands to Yemen and the remainder to Eritrea; Eritrea and Yemen move to normalize mutual relations.
- 1999 In the first direct presidential elections, Saleh is reelected.
- 2000 Yemen and Saudi Arabia announce their boundary agreement; drought strikes Yemen; terrorists bomb the USS *Cole* in the harbor port of Aden, killing 17 and injuring 39 U.S. military personnel.
- 2001 Abdul Qadir Bajamal is named prime minister; Saleh visits the United States and assures President Bush that Yemen is a partner in the international fight against terrorism.
- 2002 Yemen expels more than 100 Islamic scholars as part of a crackdown on suspected al-Qaeda members; oil tanker *Limburg* is damaged in an attack off the coast of Yemen; al-Qaeda is blamed.
- 2003 The 10 suspects held in connection with the attack on the USS *Cole* escape from custody in Aden.
- 2004 Two militants implicated in the attack on the USS *Cole* are arrested; the court convicts 15 men of

terrorism in connection with the attack on the *Limburg*; dissident troops in the north under cleric Hussein al-Houthi fight government troops; the government troops kill Hussein al-Houthi.

- 2005 Fighting between rebels and government troops resumes in the north.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- National Information Center
<http://www.nic.gov.ye/>
- United States Embassy of the Republic of Yemen
<http://www.yemenembassy.org>

ZAMBIA

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Zambia

ABBREVIATION

ZM

CAPITAL

Lusaka

HEAD OF STATE & HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

President Levy Patrick Mwanawasa (from 2002)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Republic

POPULATION

11,261,795 (2005)

AREA

752,614 sq km (290,566 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Bemba, Tonga, Nyanja, Lozi

LANGUAGES

English (official), Bemba, Tonga, Nyanja, Lozi, Lunda, Kaonde, Luvale

RELIGIONS

Christianity, animism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Zambian kwacha

NATIONAL FLAG

Green field with a tricolor at the lower corner of the fly, under an orange flying eagle. The tricolor consists of red (left), black, and orange vertical stripes.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A shield made up of wavy, narrow, black and white vertical lines, called *pallets*, symbolizing Victoria Falls. The shield is flanked by an African man in a yellow bush shirt and shorts on the left and an African woman in a red traditional dress on the right. They stand on a green mound on which appear a small zebra (for game), shafthead (for mining), and ear of corn (for agriculture). Above the emblem an orange eagle is perched on a crossed pickax and mattocklike hoe. On a scroll on the base appears the national motto, "One Zambia, One Nation."

NATIONAL ANTHEM

"Stand and Sing for Zambia"

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year's Day), first Monday in May (Labour Day), May 24 (Commonwealth Day), May 25 (African Freedom Day), first Monday in July (Heroes' Day), first Tuesday in July (Unity Day), first Monday in August (Farmers' Day), August 9 (Youth Day), October 24 (National Day, Independence Day), December 26 (Boxing Day), various Christian festivals, including Good Friday, Easter Monday, Whitmonday, and Christmas

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

October 24, 1964

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

August 24, 1991

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

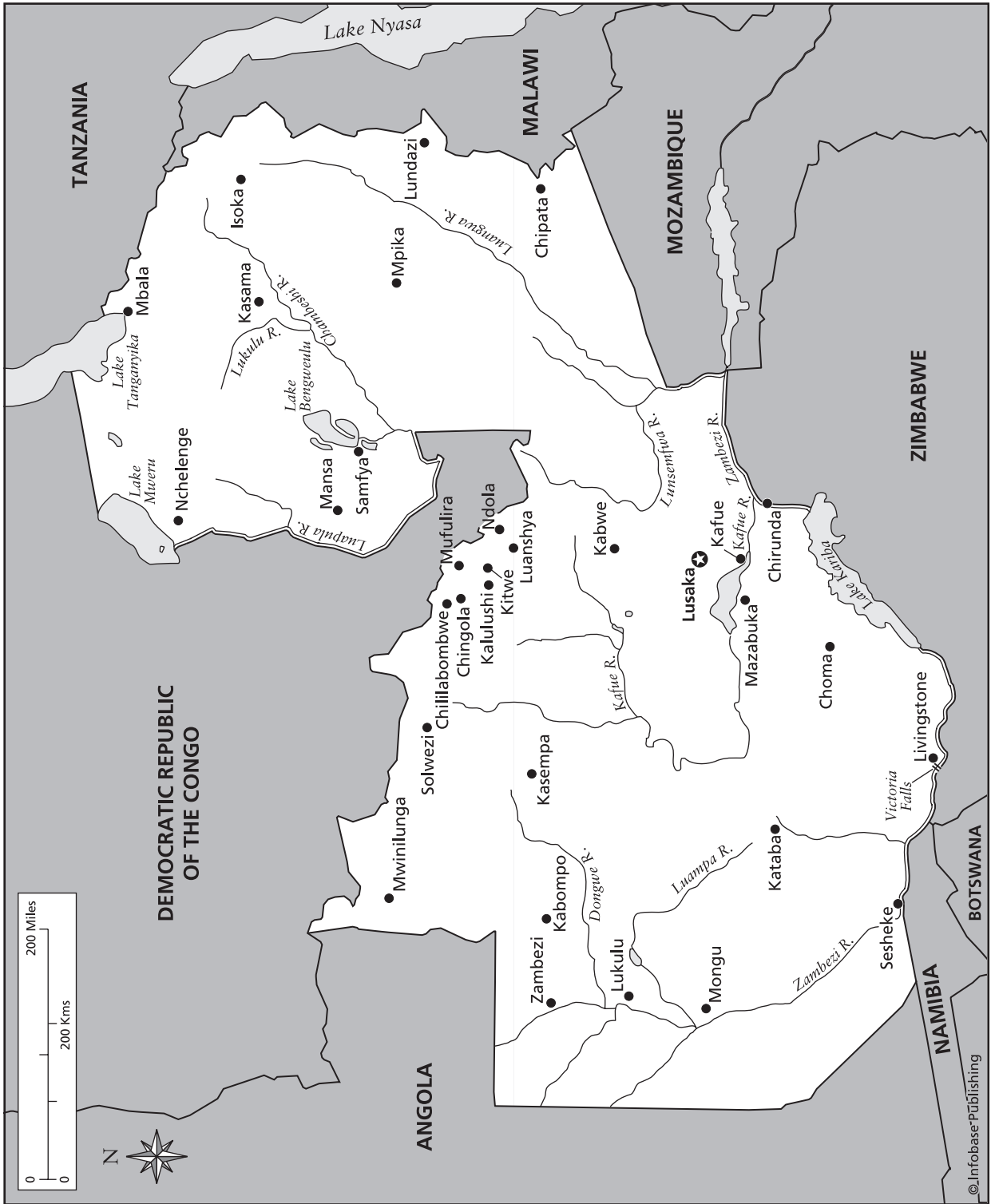
Zambia, a landlocked country in southern Africa, lies between the Zambezi River and the southern rim of the Congo basin, extending 1,206 km (749 mi) east to west and 815 km (506 mi) north to south, with a total land area of 752,614 sq km (290,566 sq mi).

Zambia shares its international boundary with eight countries: Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Namibia, Angola, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Tanza-

nia, and Malawi. The border with Tanzania is based on an agreement made between the United Kingdom and Germany in 1901. Except for the border with Zimbabwe, which follows the Zambezi River and Lake Kariba, most of the other borders are arbitrary lines reflecting territorial adjustments in colonial times. There are no current border disputes.

The capital is Lusaka. The other major urban centers are Kitwe, Ndola, Chingola, Mufulira, Luanshya, Kabwe, and Livingstone. The Zambian plateaus are a mosaic of

Zambia



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savannas, swamps, and deserts, with five distinct topographical regions: the central highlands, including the copper belt, which slope toward the Kafue River basin to the west and the Zambezi River valley to the east, with an average elevation of 1,230 m (4,000 ft); the western plains, consisting of the swamps of Barotseland, the flat Liuwa and Mulonga plains, and semiarid deserts; the Great Rift Valley, represented by the Luangwa River valley; the northwest, including the Bangweulu Swamp, which is part of the Luapula River basin; and the Mweru-Wantipa fault zone, between Lakes Mweru and Tanganyika.

The country's main drainage system is the Zambezi River, with its three tributaries, the Kabompo, Kafue, and Luangwa rivers. Near the city of Livingstone the Zambezi drops down at Victoria Falls, 107 m (350 ft) high and 1.6 km (1 mi) wide. At flood season the flow rate is 3,785,410 liters (one million gallons) per second. Downstream the river enters Lake Kariba, the world's largest man-made lake. The northern regions are drained by three rivers—the Chambesi, Luapula, and Luvua—all of which eventually flow into the Atlantic Ocean through the Congo River. Zambian rivers are noted for their great seasonal variations in flow and frequent rapids and falls.

There are three large natural lakes: Bangweulu, Mweru, and Tanganyika, all in the north. Of these, only Lake Bangweulu is entirely within the national territory.

Geography

Area sq km: 752,614; sq mi 290,566
World Rank: 38th
Land Boundaries, km: Angola 1,110; Democratic Republic of the Congo 1,930; Malawi 837; Mozambique 419; Namibia 233; Tanzania 338; Zimbabwe 797
Coastline, km: 0
Elevation Extremes meters:
Lowest: Zambezi River 329
Highest: in Mafinga Hills 2,301
Land Use %
Arable Land: 7.1
Permanent Crops: 0.0
Forest: 42.0
Other: 50.9

Population of Principal Cities (2000)

Kabwe	176,758
Kitwe	363,734
Lusaka	1,084,703
Ndola	374,757

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Zambia is part of a broad belt of temperate highlands, with a mild tropical climate. There are three sharply defined seasons: cool and dry from May to August, hot and dry from September to November, and warm and wet

from December to April. A second period of high temperatures occurs in April and May.

Temperatures are closely related to altitude. Nationwide, the temperatures range from 16°C to 27°C (60°F to 80°F) in the cool season and from 27°C to 38°C (80°F to 100°F) in the hot season. There are occasional frosts in winter.

The pattern of rainfall is fairly uniform. The northern parts of the plateau have annual precipitation of 1,000 to 1,400 mm (40 to 50 in). Precipitation decreases southward, to about 510 mm (20 in). Lusaka, in the middle, receives annual rainfall of about 760 mm (30 in). For one-third of the year, during the cool season, there is no rain in the country.

Heavy tropical storms occur at the start of the rainy season, and there are thunderstorms during October.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature
Summer: 80°F to 100°F
Winter: 60°F to 80°F
Average Rainfall
Northern Plateau: 40 in to 50 in
Lusaka: 30 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Zambia is rich in plant and animal life. Most of the country is covered in savanna woodland, with widely spaced deciduous trees and grasses and other plants growing beneath them. Baobab trees grow in dry areas, such as the Zambezi valley. Other vegetation includes teak, acacia, and thorn bushes. Animal species include elephants, hippopotamuses, buffalos, giraffes, zebras, lions, baboons, warhogs, honey badgers, mongooses, hartebeests, and weasels. The red lechwe, a type of antelope, is unique to Zambia. Birds include ostriches, starlings, woodhoopoes, and hornbills. The nation has 19 national parks and 33 game-management areas.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 11,261,795
World Rank: 71st
Density per sq km: 14.0
% of annual growth (1999-2003): 1.8
Male %: 49.7
Female %: 50.3
Urban %: 40.3
Age Distribution %: 0-14: 46.5
15-64: 51.1
65 and over: 2.4
Population 2025: 16,407,000
Birth Rate per 1,000: 41.38
Death Rate per 1,000: 20.23

Discontent with the Kaunda regime grew during the late 1980s as a result of desires and demands for democracy and the stringent economic measures needed to deal with massive foreign debt. The worst violence since independence erupted in 1990 over the doubling of prices for basic commodities. The waning of Kaunda's popularity was demonstrated still further when an inaccurate radio announcement that he had been overthrown brought thousands of cheering Zambians into the streets. Kaunda announced in June 1990 that he would hold a referendum on instituting a multiparty system but warned that such a system would exacerbate tribal divisions. Following increased political pressure, Kaunda said he would recommend the legalization of opposition parties and would schedule elections. In December he signed a constitutional amendment legalizing a multiparty system.

In the 1991 presidential election Frederick Chiluba won handily, with 74 percent of the vote, and his Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD) captured 125 out of 150 legislative seats; it was the most dramatic repudiation of a sitting president in any country in southern Africa and marked the definitive end of the Kaunda era in Zambian politics. The Chiluba administration faced a host of problems, not the least of which were defections within the MMD and antigovernment plots by Kaunda and other opposition leaders. In 1994 Kaunda was barred by a constitutional amendment from ever again running for the presidency, and the ban was subsequently upheld by the High Court. In the 1996 presidential and legislative elections Chiluba and the MMD again won in a landslide, capturing 69.5 percent of the vote and 131 out of 150 National Assembly seats, respectively. Tensions remained high, however, as the Chiluba administration, now under the direction of MMD hard-liners, tried to consolidate its hold over the country. In 1997 disgruntled army officers attempted to mutiny but were easily thwarted.

Elections in December 2001 saw Levy Patrick Mwanawasa, of the MMD, succeed to the presidency, despite charges of alleged fraud. His party secured 68 seats in the National Assembly, a figure much reduced from previous elections. Early suggestions that Mwanawasa was Chiluba's puppet soon disappeared, as Mwanawasa removed Chiluba's aides from the government and permitted investigations of corruption during Chiluba's administration. Chiluba was arrested and put on trial for corruption in 2003, and though many of those charges were dropped in September 2004, new charges were immediately brought against him.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

President

1964–91	Kenneth Kaunda
1991–2002	Frederick Chiluba
2002–	Levy Mwanawasa

CONSTITUTION

Zambia enacted a new constitution in 1991. The new constitution enlarged the National Assembly to a maximum of 158 members, established an electoral commission, and allowed more than one candidate to run for president, ending the monopoly of the United National Independence Party. A 1996 amendment imposed a two-term limit on presidents and required that all presidential candidates have two Zambian-born parents. The president functions as both head of state and head of government; he is elected to a five-year term by popular vote. The president chooses cabinet members from among the members of the National Assembly. The voting age is 18, and suffrage is universal.

PARLIAMENT

The Zambian National Assembly is a unicameral body currently consisting of 150 members, all of whom are elected through universal suffrage for five-year terms. A speaker is elected by the members from outside their own ranks. Although the supremacy of the National Assembly is built into the constitution, the legislature shares constitutional power with the judiciary and the executive. Among the Assembly's extensive powers are the rights to impeach the president, amend the constitution, challenge the constitutionality of any ordinance, and extend or revoke a presidentially imposed emergency. All bills receive three readings in the National Assembly; those that pass and receive the assent of the president become law.

The constitution also provides for a subordinate House of Chiefs, comprising three members from each of the nine provinces, for 27 members total. The House submits resolutions to be discussed in the National Assembly and considers matters referred to it by the president. Its constitutional role is purely advisory.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Until 1990 the United National Independence Party (UNIP) was the country's sole political party. It was formed in 1958 as a result of the withdrawal of Kenneth Kaunda, Simon Kapwepwe, and others from the older African National Congress, led by Harry Nkumbula. The UNIP led Zambia to independence in 1964 and ruled Zambia until 1991, when Frederick Chiluba came into power.

The political ideology of the UNIP is Zambian humanism as originally formulated by President Kaunda. Until the 1970s the party was held together by the momentum generated by its successful drive for national independence, but internal divisions, based not only on ethnic and regional rivalries but also on the political am-

bitions of the middle leadership, began to pose serious threats to its dominance.

After the replacement of Kenneth Kaunda by Frederick Chiluba as president of Zambia in 1991, there were a number of constitutional changes. Zambia is no longer a one-party state, and Zambian humanism was virtually abandoned after Kaunda's receding from the political scene.

The present system is a unitary republic, led by the Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD), which holds the largest block of parliamentary seats. The other political parties represented in the National Assembly are the United Party for National Development, the UNIP, the Forum for Democracy and Development, the Heritage Party, the Patriotic Front, and the Zambian Republican Party.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For purposes of local government, Zambia is divided into nine provinces, each under a minister of state of subcabinet rank. The provinces are Central, Copperbelt, Eastern, Luapula, Lusaka, Northern, North-Western, Southern, and Western.

Within the provinces are 35 districts and 113 local government units above the ward level, including 34 rural local authorities, 39 special areas, 24 township councils, eight mine township management boards, six municipal councils, and two city councils. The minister of state for each province serves as the link between the national and local governments. The administrative head in each province is the resident secretary, who is the senior civil servant in the province. District administrations are conducted by district governors.

The municipal and town councils are modeled on English boroughs and can levy taxes; manage housing projects; and control roads, water, power, town planning, and health facilities. Both urban and rural councils have appointed members, but the majority are elected on the basis of universal adult suffrage.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The basis of Zambia jurisprudence is English common law. Under the constitution of 1972 the highest court in the land is the Supreme Court, consisting of the chief justice and six lower judges appointed by the president. Below the Supreme Court is the High Court, consisting of the chief justice and 16 judges, which has unlimited jurisdiction in any criminal or civil proceedings. Resident magistrate's courts and local courts in various centers administer customary law. The independence and integrity of the judiciary are ensured by the Judicial Service Commission.

HUMAN RIGHTS

The government's human rights record is poor. Press freedom is severely restricted, and criticism of the government is generally not tolerated. Police officers torture and kill detainees and usually suffer no consequences from the government. Prison conditions are harsh, even life threatening, and lengthy detention is common. The police have broken up public demonstrations. Child abuse, violence and discrimination against women, and human trafficking all occur.

FOREIGN POLICY

Zambia has a long tradition of opposing white rule and advocating change in southern Africa. It supported the liberation movements in South Africa, Angola, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Namibia, and Angola, allowing liberation organizations to maintain headquarters in Zambia during the 1970s and 1980s. During the 1990s Chiluba actively sponsored peace talks in Angola and sent troops to UN peacekeeping initiatives in nearby countries. Zambia was the first African nation to participate in the International Tribunal's investigations of genocide in Rwanda. It also participated in the peace process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in the late 1990s.

Zambia belongs to the African Union, the Southern African Development Community, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, and the Non-Aligned Movement. It has close relations with the United States, which is providing aid in combating AIDS and limiting corruption. The U.S. Agency for International Development provided Zambia with \$50 million in assistance in 2003.

DEFENSE

The Zambian Defense Force includes an army, an air force, and the Zambian National Service, which primarily handles public works. The defense establishment is principally composed of ground troops, particularly infantry. The air force is essentially a supporting element without tactical combat capability. Army units are deployed along the rail line stretching from the northern to the southern border. The troops' primary mission is defense.

The defense structure is headed by the president, who is also commander in chief of the armed forces. A defense council consisting of civilian and military members formulates military policy. The armed forces do not have a general staff, but each branch has a commander who reports to the permanent secretary of defense. Military manpower is obtained through voluntary enlistment. The AIDS epidemic has devastated the armed forces.

The United Kingdom and China have been the principal sources of military assistance, with a large portion of arms purchased from or supplied by the Soviet Union.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel: 19,500
 Military Manpower Availability: 2,219,739
 Military Expenditures \$million: 106.8
 as % of GDP: 1.8
 as % of central government expenditures: —
 Arms Imports \$million: 1
 Arms Exports \$million: —

ECONOMY

Zambia's economy suffers serious problems. As of 2004, over 70 percent of the population lived in poverty, and AIDS was ravaging the populace, killing off many young, educated workers. The population is growing too rapidly for the economy to keep up; AIDS is slowing growth somewhat but presenting economic problems of its own. Unemployment and underemployment are high. Though Zambia was once a middle-income country, it has slid into poverty in the last two decades.

Zambia's economy is closely tied to the production of minerals, principally copper. Until the early 1970s a booming copper industry led rapid domestic development. However, after a subsequent decline in demand and prices the economy suffered from severe recession, with high unemployment, inflation, and foreign debt. Neglect of agriculture, drought, and ineffective economic policies, including food subsidies, have further increased economic difficulties. The government has been attempting to diversify the economy to reduce reliance on copper by promoting tourism, agriculture, gem mining, and hydropower.

During the last two decades Zambia has received \$4.2 billion in aid from international organizations and Western nations other than the United States, as well as \$466 million from the United States. Communist countries contributed \$533 million and the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries \$60 million. Chinese aid, the largest from any country, was in the form of a loan for the construction of the Tanzam Railway; the loan was an indirect one, consisting of Chinese goods whose sale proceeds were retained by the Zambian government, and Zambia has been unable to repay the loan. In late 2000 Zambia was determined to prove itself eligible for debt relief under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries initiative. In 2004 the government implemented an austerity program, increasing taxes and freezing civil service salaries, much to the annoyance of labor and civil servants.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 9.409
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 900
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 3.8
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: 1.9
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 14.9
 Industry: 28.9
 Services: 56.2
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 67
 Government Consumption: 15
 Gross Domestic Investment: 41.4
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 1.548
 Imports: 1.519
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 1.1
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 41.0

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
221.5	280.9	354.0	429.8	525.3

Finance

National Currency: Zambian Kwacha (ZMK)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = ZMK 4,778.9
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency trillion: 1.34
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 14.34
 Total External Debt \$billion: 5.353
 Debt Service Ratio %: 14.08
 Balance of Payments \$million: -181.4
 International Reserves SDRs \$million: 247
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
 18.3

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 560
 per capita \$: 53.80
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 100

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: Calendar Year
 Revenues \$billion: 1.129
 Expenditures \$billion: 1.307
 Budget Deficit \$million: 178
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: 18.4

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 14.9
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: 2.5
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 0.11
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 0.87

Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 12.4
 Total Farmland % of land area: 7.1
 Livestock: Cattle million: 2.6
 Chickens million: 30
 Pigs 000: 340
 Sheep 000: 150
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 8.05
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 69.2

Manufacturing

Value Added \$million: 473
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: 6.9

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent 000: 903
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million:
 1.26
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 119
 Net Energy Imports % of use: 4.9
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 1.79
 Production kW-hr billion: 7.75
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 5.46
 Coal Reserves tons million: 11
 Production tons 000: 210
 Consumption tons 000: 210
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
 Production cubic feet billion: —
 Consumption cubic feet billion: —
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
 Production barrels 000 per day: —
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 11
 Pipelines Length km: 771

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 1.519
 Exports \$billion: 1.548
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 7.3
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): 1.7
 Balance of Trade \$million: –181.4

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
South Africa %	50.3	13.2
Zimbabwe %	13.2	—
United Arab Emirates %	5.3	—
Tanzania %	—	14.1
China %	—	9.1
Japan %	—	7.9
Thailand %	—	7.9
Switzerland %	—	7.3
Belgium %	—	6.7
Malaysia %	—	4.0

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 91,440
 Paved %: 22.0
 Automobiles: —
 Trucks and Buses: —
 Railroad: Track Length km: 2,173
 Passenger-km million: 586
 Freight-km million: 702
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: —
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: —
 Airports: 109
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 16
 Length of Waterways km: 2,250

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: 578
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 149
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: 100

Communications

Telephones 000: 88.4
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.09
 Cellular Telephones 000: 241
 Personal Computers 000: 95
 Internet Hosts per million people: 167
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 6.1

ENVIRONMENT

Zambia has a poor environmental record. Its native fauna are increasingly endangered by poaching and habitat destruction. In 1970 there were 65,000 black rhinos; in 1999 there were fewer than 2,000. In the Luangwa valley, the elephant herd has been reduced from 86,000 to 30,000 in 10 years. There is widespread poaching for both ivory and rhinoceros horn. Other endangered animals include large cats and antelope.

Zambia is losing 0.5 percent of its woodlands each year to firewood and charcoal, forest fires (some of which are set deliberately to drive animals into traps), shifting cultivation, and the clearing of land for agriculture. Rapid destruction of the *miombo* woodland is a growing problem around towns. Herding is usually conducted through a free-range system under which cows are poorly fed and overcrowded, leading to land degradation. Air pollution and acid rain are common in mining regions. Water sources are increasingly polluted with chemicals and other contaminants, resulting in a lack of safe drinking water.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 42.0
 Forest Change (1990–2000) hectares 000: –851

(continues)

Environment (continued)

Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 41
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 0.18

LIVING CONDITIONS

Most Zambians are extremely poor; three-quarters of the population lives on less than one dollar per day. Deaths caused by AIDS leave gaps in society that are difficult to fill; many young professionals are among the victims. Water sources are contaminated with diseases such as schistosomiasis and cholera. Most rural homes have no electricity, and women must cook over wood or charcoal fires. Public transportation is slow and crowded. Roads are typically in poor condition.

HEALTH

AIDS is an extremely serious problem in Zambia. Between 100,000 and 200,000 people died of the disease in 2004, leaving about half a million children orphaned. Malaria, yellow fever, typhoid, sleeping sickness, river blindness, schistosomiasis, tuberculosis, meningitis, measles, and cholera are also common diseases. Life expectancy has dropped to below 40 years, and the infant mortality rate is nearly one death for every 100 live births. Each woman still has more than five children on average, which resulted in a population growth rate of 2.1 percent in 2005. Maternal mortality is very high, at 750 deaths per 100,000 births.

The government had plans to create a national health service at independence, but those plans have come to little fruition, and the nation still lacks health-care facilities, supplies, and personnel. Many people consult traditional healers for their ailments.

Health

Number of Physicians: 647
 Number of Dentists: 122
 Number of Nurses: 10,598
 Number of Pharmacists: 75
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 6.9
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 88.29
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 750
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 5.8
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 20
 HIV Infected % of adults: 16.5
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 80
 Measles: 84
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 45
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 55

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Malnutrition is a major problem for many people. A stiff maize-meal porridge called *nshima* is the staple food for most Zambians, who eat it at every meal. This porridge is supplemented with milk and sugar, beans, peanuts, fish, meat, or chicken. Other starches are millet, cassava, and sorghum. Common vegetables include tomatoes, onions, beans, okra, pumpkins, and cowpeas, as well as the green leafy tops of various plants such as pumpkin and cassava. Bananas and mangoes are typical fruits. People brew their own beer and also make a nonalcoholic drink called *umunkoyo*.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 49.3
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 1,900
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 148.3
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 33.7

STATUS OF WOMEN

Under statutory law, women are guaranteed full equality with men. Women increasingly participate in Zambia's social, economic, and political life. They hold senior positions in the party, the government, and the judiciary, and they are gaining increasing representation in the professions and higher education.

Nevertheless, the majority of Zambian women still occupy traditional roles and are severely disadvantaged in many areas of life. Customary law and practice continue to compete on a de facto basis in most rural areas with Zambia's constitution and codified laws. Some customary statutes place women in subordinate or unequal status with respect to property rights, inheritances, and marriage; women are typically not allowed to own property or use credit, while men are allowed to marry multiple wives. Widows are sometimes forced to engage in sex with their husbands' relatives as a ritual "cleansing." Widows often do not receive the property to which they are entitled because their husbands' relatives seize it, usually with impunity. Many men believe that they can cure AIDS by having sex with virgin girls. Both the government and nongovernmental organizations are working to improve conditions for women, partly from the need to stem the spread of AIDS.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 12
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: —
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: —

WORK

Most Zambians are subsistence farmers, raising food and animals for their own needs and bringing in little or no income, though they may sell or trade surpluses at local markets. Many people also work on commercial farms; roses are one of Zambia's biggest export crops.

Officially, in 2004 about 85 percent of the workforce was employed in some form of agriculture. The copper industry employs some people and in 2003 and 2004 was increasing output. Cobalt and emerald mining are growing industries, as is tourism. Women are guaranteed full equality in the workplace, and many run their own businesses or work in high positions in the government.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 4,630,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 43.0
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 85
 Industry: 6
 Services: 9
 Unemployment %: 50

EDUCATION

Fees were first introduced in primary education in the 1990s, and enrollment levels have since declined. Some 96 percent of children of primary school age attended school in the mid-1980s, but recently the figure has been below 70 percent. Fewer than 25 percent of eligible children attend secondary school, while child labor figures for this age group rose by about 150 percent, from 59,000 to 146,000, between 1991 and 1996. The quality of primary school education is falling, as well—a recent national survey found that 75 percent of children leave primary school illiterate. The government spends an estimated 2 percent of GDP on education and, while conceding that this is very low, blames the high cost of servicing the international debt, which has amounted to about 10 percent of GDP per year.

Another serious problem for the education sector is HIV/AIDS. Zambia's teachers are proving particularly susceptible, as many are young and are often moved from school to school—600 teachers died of AIDS in 1999, 1,000 in 1998, according to the government.

Zambia has two universities—the University of Zambia, in Lusaka, and Copperbelt University, in Kitwe—which have around 5,000 students each. There are also several polytechnics and technical schools. Only 2.4 percent of Zambians aged 20 to 24 are enrolled in higher education. The emphasis at this level remains on the scientific, medical, agricultural, and managerial subjects. Higher education is chronically underfunded, which leads

to periodic unrest among both students and teachers. The government is gradually replacing the state funding of tertiary education with private-sector sponsorship and income-generation schemes devised by the universities and colleges themselves.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 80.6
 Male %: 86.8
 Female %: 74.8
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 6.9
 First Level: Primary schools: 3,883
 Teachers: 40,488
 Students: 1,731,579
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 42.8
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 68.4
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: —
 Teachers: 9,875
 Students: 345,442
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 35.6
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 22.8
 Third Level: Institutions: —
 Teachers: —
 Students: 24,533
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 2.4
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 2.0

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Zambia has relatively good telecommunications facilities for a nation in sub-Saharan Africa. There are high-capacity microwave radio relay connects in most cities and large towns, and in 2003 there were over 88,000 telephone lines in operation. Over 68,000 people were using the Internet. Cellular telephones are growing in popularity; there are several service providers, and in 2003 there were about 241,000 cellular telephones in use.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: 55
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: 2.1
 Patent Applications by Residents: 8

MEDIA

It is relatively easy to set up a newspaper or radio station under Zambian law. A number of newspapers and radio stations sprang up with the advent of pluralism. Most radio and television stations are state run. The government prevents free reporting through the use of libel and security laws, such as a law making it illegal to defame the president. As a result, journalists do not report cases of governmental corruption.

Zambia has several newspapers, including the state-owned *Zambia Daily Mail*, *Times of Zambia*, and *Sunday Times of Zambia*. The *Post* is privately owned. There are also some publications owned by churches and religious groups.

There is one government-owned news agency, the Zambia News Agency. There is a state-owned public broadcasting service, Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation, which provides radio programs in English and several local languages, and a single television channel. Numerous private radio stations broadcast in Lusaka and other areas.

Media

Daily Newspapers: —
 Total Circulation 000: 228
 Circulation per 1,000: 22
 Books Published: —
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers million: 2
 per 1,000: 179
 Television sets million: 1.3
 per 1,000: 145

CULTURE

Every tribe has its own musical style, which is usually rhythmic and played on various types of drums, thumb harps such as the *kalimba* and *mbira*, and whistles or flutes. People usually dance to the music. Dances are considered ritual communications with the spirit world, and dancers wear costumes, masks, and body paint to emphasize their roles. Modern music is also popular, thanks in part to a 1976 law that requires 90 percent of the music played on the radio to be Zambian.

Visual arts include basketry, pottery, wood carving, and cloth dying. Schools have begun teaching traditional crafts to take advantage of the tourist desire for native souvenirs.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: —
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: —
 Museums Number: 6
 Annual Attendance: 175,000
 Cinema Gross Receipts: —
 Number of Cinemas: —
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: —

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Zambia's many different ethnic groups each have their own mythologies and traditional rituals. Most groups believe in a supreme being and in spirits of ancestors and

natural objects. Dead ancestors in particular are influential in the affairs of living family members. The Toka-Leya believe that ancestral spirits live near Victoria Falls and hold annual sacrifices for them. The Tonga believe that all people have guardians called *mizimu*. Traditional healers sometimes work by attempting to make evil spirits leave people or by sacrificing animals.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Lusaka is a big city with some entertainment options. In rural areas people enjoy playing music and dancing. Children and adults alike enjoy board games such as chess or *isolo* and sports such as soccer or netball. Tourists come to Zambia to see wildlife and visit Victoria Falls. Outdoor activities includes fishing, canoeing, rafting, hiking, rock climbing, and swimming.

ETIQUETTE

Hospitality is a virtue to Zambians, and they insist on feeding visitors. Before a meal, diners wash their hands; within a family, the father washes his hands first, then the mother, and then the children, from oldest to youngest. Guests are allowed to wash their hands first of all. Diners also wash their hands after the meal in the same fashion. At meals, people sit around a communal bowl of stiff *nshima* porridge, dipping into it with their right hands, rolling the porridge into a ball, and dipping the ball into sauces before eating it.

Tipping is illegal but is sometimes done. Bargaining is proper in markets but not in shops.

FAMILY LIFE

Most Zambian families are headed by mothers, and family structure is matrilineal. Extended family is important, and relatives will take care of one another's children if necessary. Before a couple can marry, the groom must pay a bride-price to the bride's parents. Because children are highly valued as insurance for the future, most parents want to have many children to ensure that some survive to adulthood. In the countryside the sexes eat separately, women eating with their daughters and youngest boys and men eating with their older sons. Women typically farm, raise children, and sell goods in the market, while men hunt, fish, and do the heavier farming jobs.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Dress in Zambia is fairly conservative. Women generally wear loose cotton dresses and avoid revealing clothing,

which can be considered provocative. Men wear long pants in cities; shorts are only considered appropriate in the countryside or on safaris. A tidy appearance is important, and untidiness can be taken to indicate low social standing. People avoid wearing clothing that could be taken as military, such as camouflage.

SPORTS

Soccer is the most popular sport. The players on the national team are national heroes, and every town and city has its own team. Tragically, the country lost 17 members of its World Cup team in a 1993 plane crash. Other popular sports include running, squash, rugby, golf, netball, tennis, and badminton. Zambia has produced some world-class boxers.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1964** Zambia, formerly known as Northern Rhodesia, becomes an independent republic, with Kenneth Kaunda, leader of the United National Independence Party (UNIP), as the first president.
- 1972** All parties but the UNIP are outlawed.
- 1975** Kaunda nationalizes all private land in a failed effort to improve agriculture.
- 1976** A railroad connecting Zambia to Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, is completed, increasing the profitability of copper exports.
- 1980** Kaunda provides aid to insurgents attempting to establish a black majority government in Rhodesia.
- 1990** After 27 years in power, Kaunda submits to popular protests, including food riots and a coup attempt, and allows multiparty elections.
- 1991** By a wide margin, elections bring to power the Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD), led by Frederick Chiluba.
- 1995** The four-year International Monetary Fund (IMF) Rights Accumulation Program is concluded.
- 1996** The government passes an amendment to the constitution restricting presidents to two terms and requiring candidates to be from families that have lived in Zambia for at least two generations, preventing Kenneth Kaunda from standing in presidential elections on both counts; the MMD and Chiluba are reelected.
- 1997** The IMF releases additional funds and resumes bilateral aid; the army attempts a coup, and Kaunda is arrested on suspicion of being involved.
- 1998** The MMD wins local elections; human rights groups cite the use of torture upon the 80 detainees awaiting trial on charges of attempting a coup; donors withhold \$530 million in government aid until the government lifts the state of emergency.
- 1999** The IMF pledges \$350 million over three years; a high court sentences 59 soldiers to death for treason for the failed coup attempt in 1997.
- 2000** Fighting between Angolan rebels and government forces spills into Zambian territory; in December, more than 60,000 refugees fleeing fighting in the Democratic Republic of the Congo move to Zambia in less than a week.
- 2001** Paul Tembo, a former campaign manager for Chiluba who joined the opposition, is murdered shortly before he is scheduled to testify against three ministers in a high-level corruption case.
- 2002** Levy Mwanawasa is sworn in as president despite protests over alleged fraud in the December 2001 elections; the government refuses to accept donations of genetically modified grains.
- 2003** Former president Chiluba is arrested and put on trial for corruption; the supreme court sentences 44 soldiers to death for their roles in the 1997 failed coup, but Mwanawasa commutes the sentences.
- 2004** The supreme court rejects the opposition's challenge to Mwanawasa's 2001 election.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- **Zambian National World Wide Web Server (Zamnet)**
<http://www.zamnet.zm>

ZIMBABWE

Basic Fact Sheet

OFFICIAL NAME

Republic of Zimbabwe

ABBREVIATION

ZW

CAPITAL

Harare

HEAD OF STATE & HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

President Robert Mugabe (from 1988)

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

Parliamentary democracy

POPULATION

12,746,990 (2005)

AREA

390,580 sq km (150,803 sq mi)

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Shona, Ndebele

LANGUAGES

English (official), Chishona, Sindebele

RELIGIONS

Syncretism (Christianity/animism), Christianity, animism

UNIT OF CURRENCY

Zimbabwe dollar

NATIONAL FLAG

Seven horizontal stripes of green, yellow, red, black, red, yellow, and green; on a white isosceles triangle with the hoist

as its base is a red star surmounted by a Zimbabwe bird in yellow.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

A green shield with a gray rock formation, representing the ruins of the ancient city of Great Zimbabwe, at the base and wavy, vertical blue and white lines in the top third; crossed behind the shield are a rifle and hoe, above is a red star surmounted by a Zimbabwe bird in yellow, below is an earthen mound, and to either side is a rearing kudu; at the base is a scroll bearing the national motto, *Unity, freedom, work*.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“Blessed Be the Land of Zimbabwe”

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1 (New Year’s Day), March 8 (International Women’s Day), March 18 (Thiupapo Day), April 18 (Independence Day), April 28 (Chimurenjo Day), May 1 (International Working Day), May 6 (Heroes’ Day), May 25 (African Liberation Day), June 1 (International Children’s Day), June 15 (Pakawira Day), August 8 (ZANU Day), August 9 (Nyadzonya Day), November 23 (Rededication Day), December 25 (Christmas), December 26 (Boxing Day)

DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

April 18, 1980

DATE OF CONSTITUTION

December 21, 1979; revised in 1987

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

Zimbabwe is a landlocked country in south-central Africa, between the Zambezi River to the north and the Limpopo River to the south, with an area of 390,580 sq km (150,803 sq mi). The total international border of 3,066 km (1,857 mi) is shared with four neighbors: Mozambique, South Africa, Botswana, and Zambia. Except for the border with Zambia, the boundaries were established during colonial rule. There are no current boundary disputes.

The capital is Harare, formerly Salisbury. Other principal population centers are Bulawayo and Chitungwiza.

A rolling plateau known as the veld covers most of Zimbabwe. The veld slopes gently downward, forming three distinct topographical regions: the High Veld, the Middle Veld, and the Low Veld. The High Veld’s relatively smooth terrain is frequently interrupted by rocky hills known as kopjes. Only one major river, the Sabi, originates in Zimbabwe. Drainage is principally provided by two rivers originating outside Zimbabwe: the Zambezi and Limpopo. In western Zimbabwe the Zambezi drops

Zimbabwe



over Victoria Falls, one of the most spectacular and largest falls in the world.

Land Use %
 Arable Land: 8.3
 Permanent Crops: 0.3
 Forest: 49.2
 Other: 42.2

Geography

Area sq km: 390,580; sq mi 150,803
 World Rank: 59th
 Land Boundaries, km: Botswana 813; Mozambique 1,231; South Africa 225; Zambia 797
 Coastline, km: 0
 Elevation Extremes meters:
 Lowest: junction of Runde and Save rivers 162
 Highest: Inyangani 2,592

Population of Principal Cities (2002)

Bulawayo	676,787
Chitungwiza	321,782
Harare	1,444,534
Mutare	153,000

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Zimbabwe lies within the southern intertropical zone, with four distinct climatic seasons: a warm rainy season from November to March, a transitional season during April and May, a cool and dry winter season from May to August, and a warm and dry season from August through October. Throughout most of the High Veld, the climate is generally pleasant, with daily maximum temperatures between 26.7°C and 32.2°C (80°F and 90°F) in summer and 12°C and 13°C (53.6°F and 55.4°F) in winter. Rainfall is the highest in the High Veld, which receives as much as 1,020 mm (40 in) annually.

Climate and Weather

Mean Temperature

High Veld: Summer 80°F to 90°F, Winter 53.6°F to 55.4°F

Low Veld: Summer 90°F to 100°F, Winter 64°F to 65°F

Zambezi and Limpopo Valley: High 100°F

Average Rainfall

High Veld: 40 in

Middle Veld: 16 in to 24 in

Low Veld: 12 in

FLORA AND FAUNA

Zimbabwe has a tremendous variety of plant and animal life. Vegetation includes the sausage tree, which grows sausage-shaped fruits that can cure basal-cell carcinoma. Much of the country is savanna grassland, or veld, with some areas of brush. The nation has several national parks, providing homes for animals such as elephants, lions, cheetahs, buffaloes, antelopes, jackals, hyenas, and monkeys. Rare species that live in Zimbabwe include the black and white rhino, the king cheetah, the Samango monkey, and the nyala.

POPULATION

Population Indicators

Total Population 2005: 12,746,990

World Rank: 66th

Density per sq km: 33.9

% of annual growth (1999-2003): 1.5

Male %: 50.5

Female %: 49.5

Urban %: 37.5

Age Distribution %:

0-14: 39.2

15-64: 57.1

65 and over: 3.7

Population 2025: 12,915,000

Birth Rate per 1,000: 29.74

Death Rate per 1,000: 24.66

Rate of Natural Increase %: 0.6

Total Fertility Rate: 3.54

Expectation of Life (years): Males 37.21

Females 36.11

Marriage Rate per 1,000: —

Divorce Rate per 1,000: —

Average Size of Households: 4.8

Induced Abortions: —

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Ethnically, Zimbabwe is composed of four distinct groups: black Africans, whites (commonly referred to as Europeans, irrespective of national origin), Asians (mainly East Indians), and people of mixed European-African or Indo-African origin. Blacks constitute 98 percent of the population, Indians and those of mixed race 1 percent, and whites less than 1 percent. The white population has been declining in recent years, as many whites have been leaving the country due to hostile measures taken by the Mugabe regime.

Most Africans belong to one of two major Bantu ethnic groups, Shona or Ndebele. Because of historical assimilation, ethnicity is largely determined by language. On this basis, about 82 percent of the population is Shona, 14 percent Ndebele, and 2 percent of smaller ethnic groups. The Shona occupied most of Zimbabwe until the mid-1800s. The Ndebele, called Matabele by British historians, are a pastoral and later a martial people related to the Zulu who invaded present-day Zimbabwe in the 19th century and subjugated the Shona. Under their king, Mzilikazi, the Ndebele were in the process of carving out a nation when the British arrived.

LANGUAGES

Africans speak the language or dialect of their tribe, particularly Chishona and Sindebele, as well as numerous other dialects. The tribal dialects are not mutually intelligible. English is the official language; it is used in education and in most newspapers and is spoken by an increasing number of Africans.

RELIGIONS

About 25 percent of Zimbabweans are Christian, while the majority follow traditional beliefs in some form, either exclusively (24 percent) or syncretically (about 50 percent), blending Christian and traditional tenets and practices. The trend among African Christians is toward attending independent and separatist churches presenting typically Africanized responses to biblical messages. The Asian population is divided roughly into Hindus and Muslims. There are Jewish congregations in Harare and Bulawayo. The remaining whites and people of mixed race are predominantly Christian.

Religious Affiliations

Syncretic (Christian/Indigenous Beliefs)	6,373,000
Christian	3,187,000
Indigenous Beliefs	3,059,000
Muslim and Other	127,000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Originally inhabited by the Shona people, the area now known as Zimbabwe was ruled by Ndebele conquerors when Cecil Rhodes and his British South Africa Company obtained in 1889 a royal charter for the exploration of mineral rights in what was then called Mashonaland. While the first British colonists, explorers, and missionaries had arrived in the 1850s, a massive influx began when Rhodes sent a group of settlers and founded the town of Salisbury. He later gained the right to distribute the land among settlers.

With the defeat of the Ndebele rulers (1893–97), Mashonaland became British territory under the name Rhodesia. In 1923 Southern Rhodesia was annexed by the Crown, and the colony received its first constitution. A decade later the government acquired the mineral rights to the territory from the British South Africa Company. From the beginning the white settlers made every effort to institutionalize their supremacy. The British government, however, retained certain powers to safeguard the rights of Africans.

In 1953 Southern Rhodesia joined with Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland in the short-lived Central African Federation. After the federation's demise in 1963, Southern Rhodesia began to seek independence, but the whites and blacks set different conditions, the latter insisting on African majority rule and the former on the continuance of the status quo. Meanwhile, Northern Rhodesia gained independence as Zambia in 1964.

After the breakdown of negotiations the government of Southern Rhodesia, led by Prime Minister Ian Smith, issued its Unilateral Declaration of Independence in 1965. Five years later, the nation now called Rhodesia declared itself a republic. Mounting international political pressure, including economic sanctions, as well as guerrilla activities led to a negotiated agreement on a new constitution. Elections supervised by the British colonial governor led to Robert Mugabe's Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) becoming the largest single parliamentary party. On April 18, 1980, the new state of Zimbabwe was born, with Rev. Canaan Banana as president and Robert Mugabe as prime minister.

President Mugabe dominated Zimbabwean politics during the 1980s, 1990s, and early 2000s. He has faced considerable opposition from expatriates as well as the international community for his efforts to promote black violence against white farmers. In 1997 Mugabe announced his intention to expropriate white-owned land, ignoring all constitutional guarantees erected at the time of independence.

His administration has been buffeted by legal setbacks and allegations of widespread corruption and human rights abuses. In February 2000 voters rejected a constitutional referendum that would have expanded Mugabe's powers. In legislative elections that June, ZANU won a narrow victory, but the opposition alleged voter intimidation.

In the presidential election of 2002 Mugabe won another term amid protest by the opposition and foreign observers, who alleged widespread ballot irregularities and violence by the ruling ZANU party. The Commonwealth suspended Zimbabwe for a year as a result of the election. The suspension was made indefinite in 2003, and in response Zimbabwe withdrew from the Commonwealth outright.

Zimbabweans have protested against Mugabe's rule by staging general strikes demanding his retirement, but the president has put them down with violence. Economic conditions deteriorated in the early 2000s, as Mugabe evicted white farmers from their land and gave the farms to blacks who lacked knowledge of farm administration. Inflation increased exponentially, and the nation suffered shortages of food and all basic goods. Mugabe's party once again won a majority in the 2005 elections, taking two-thirds of the parliamentary vote in an election that the opposition claimed was deeply flawed.

LIST OF MODERN RULERS

President

1980–87 Canaan Banana

1987– Robert Mugabe

CONSTITUTION

Under the terms of the independence constitution of 1980, Zimbabwe was a sovereign republic with a president as the ceremonial head of state and a prime minister, elected by the House of Assembly, as head of government. In 1987 the ceremonial presidency was replaced by an executive presidency; the post of prime minister was abolished and its functions assumed by the president.

The president, elected by popular vote, holds office for renewable terms of six years. The cabinet is composed of presidential appointees from the ruling party and is responsible to the House of Assembly.

The constitution can be amended by a two-thirds vote in the House of Assembly. The voting age is 18, and suffrage is universal.

PARLIAMENT

Under the original 1980 constitution, the parliament was bicameral, with a certain number of seats reserved for whites. Those reserved seats were abolished by the

Constitutional Amendment Act of 1987. In November 1989 the House of Assembly abolished the Senate; the single-chamber House of Assembly was then enlarged from 100 to 150 seats, with 120 elected, 10 appointed by traditional chiefs, 12 appointed by the president, and eight held by the provincial governors. All serve for five-year terms, unless parliament is dissolved. The Assembly elects a speaker from outside its membership and a deputy speaker from inside its membership. A proposed new constitution that would have further enlarged presidential powers was soundly defeated in a February 2000 referendum.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Until 2000 Zimbabwe was essentially a one-party state. From 1990 the party of Robert Mugabe, the Zimbabwe African National Union–Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF), held all but two or three seats in parliament. As early as 1984 ZANU dedicated itself to the victory of socialism over capitalism and the achievement of a one-party Marxist-Leninist state. ZANU became ZANU-PF when it absorbed the Zimbabwe African People's Union in 1987.

The situation changed dramatically in June 2000 when the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) won 57 of the 120 elective Assembly seats. Support from the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions was a key factor, but many different groups—black, white, regional, urban, business, financial, and agricultural—made MDC success possible.

Primary Zimbabwean opposition parties before 1999, many of whose members supported the MDC in 2000, were the Zimbabwe African National Union–Ndonga, Zimbabwe Unity Movement, Democratic Party, Forum Party of Zimbabwe, and United Parties.

ZANU-PF took two-thirds of the parliamentary seats in the 2005 election, which the opposition claimed was rigged.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For administrative purposes, Zimbabwe is divided into eight provinces and two cities with provincial status, each administered by a governor appointed by the president. The provinces are Manicaland, Mashonaland Central, Mashonaland East, Mashonaland West, Masvingo, Matabeleland North, Matabeleland South, and Midlands. In 2004 Mugabe's government granted the cities Harare and Bulawayo provincial status, a move that was somewhat controversial because there is no provision in the constitution for governors of cities.

Principal agencies of local government are city-municipalities and town-municipalities, each governed by a mayor and council. The councils have wide property-

taxing powers, making the municipalities entirely self-supporting. Smaller urban centers are governed by town management boards with less authority. Townships and rural areas have councils and boards. All chiefs and headmen are included in the councils, but the majority of the members are popularly elected. All township and rural area councils include chiefs and headmen who are appointed government officials.

LEGAL SYSTEM

The legal system is Roman-Dutch, as based on the prevailing system in South Africa in the 19th century. At the system's apex is the High Court, with two divisions. Judges are appointed by the president on the advice of the Judicial Service Commission.

The Appellate Court is the court of final review, hearing appeals from the General Division of the High Court as well as lower courts. The Appellate Court consists of the chief justice, the judge president of the division, and at least one judge of appeal. The General Division, also presided over by the chief justice, includes a number of lower-court judges. Below the High Court are four levels of magistrate courts presided over by the chief magistrate: regional, provincial, senior, and ordinary.

The judiciary has functioned independently of the government and has frequently ruled against the state on sensitive issues. Constitutional amendments restoring corporal and capital punishment were enacted in April 1991, despite fierce criticism from the judiciary and from human rights activists.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Zimbabwe has a very poor human rights record. The government claims to respect the 1980 constitution's provisions preserving multiracial democracy and the rights of property but has maintained the legal state of emergency originally proclaimed in 1960. The citizens do not have the ability to change their government because Mugabe maintains power through intimidation and violence. The government has made full use of its emergency powers in overriding constitutional guarantees of several basic human rights, including freedom from arbitrary arrest and the right to a prompt and fair trial. Emergency powers have also been used to detain without trial opponents of the government. The president manipulates the courts and refuses to abide by judicial decisions.

Government security forces, especially the police, have been responsible for a broad range of mistreatment of suspected dissidents, suspected dissident sympathizers, and minority party members at various government installations. Types of cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment have been reported, including torture.

Discrimination and violence against women are major problems, as are child abuse, child prostitution, and child labor.

FOREIGN POLICY

Upon gaining independence in 1980, Zimbabwe's government, headed by Robert Mugabe, established diplomatic relations with several Western countries and most African nations. It also formed ties with numerous revolutionary states, including the Soviet Union, China, North Korea, Iran, and Libya, and the Palestine Liberation Organization. Mugabe's policy of commitment to Marxist-Leninist principles and his long-term goal of effectively maintaining a one-party socialist state, despite the presence of nominally democratic institutions, have strained relations with Western countries.

Hostility to South Africa was a key component of Zimbabwe's foreign relations until major changes took place in South Africa's government under Nelson Mandela. While giving increasing attention to Zimbabwe's severe economic problems, the Mugabe government witnessed the breakup of the Soviet Union and its satellite empire and the displacement of Communism by capitalism in much of the world. Closer relations with Western nations, especially with the objective of obtaining foreign economic aid, then became the hallmark of Zimbabwean foreign policy.

President Mugabe's 1999 decision to send several thousand Zimbabwean soldiers to the Democratic Republic of the Congo to aid the government there was not popular, especially due to the additional strain it imposed on Zimbabwe's weak economy. The action was a factor in the February 2000 defeat of the draft constitution backed by the president.

Zimbabwe has historically had close relations with the United Kingdom, but these ties became strained in 2000 and were all but severed in 2003 when Zimbabwe responded to indefinite suspension from the Commonwealth by leaving the association entirely. Zimbabwe has come to blame its former ruler for its modern problems. Relations have historically been relatively close with the United States, but election irregularities and other troublesome aspects of Mugabe's rule eventually led the United States to impose economic sanctions, freezing Mugabe's assets and making business dealings with him illegal.

DEFENSE

The Zimbabwe National Army and Air Force, led by the Defense Ministry, handle external security and also assist the Zimbabwe Republic Police with internal law and order. The defense structure is headed by the president, who is also the titular commander in chief.

Military manpower is provided by voluntary military service. In 2003 Zimbabwe had an active duty force of about 51,000, including 4,000 men in the air force. The officer corps has traditionally been all white, but higher-ranking positions are gradually being taken over by black Africans.

Military Indicators

Total Active Duty Personnel:	50,800
Military Manpower Availability:	2,840,053
Military Expenditures \$million:	217
as % of GDP:	4.3
as % of central government expenditures:	—
Arms Imports \$million:	23
Arms Exports \$million:	—

ECONOMY

Zimbabwe has tremendous natural resources and great potential for economic growth with proper management. However, mismanagement, political turmoil, and a lack of infrastructure have prevented the economy from fulfilling its growth potential. The government has faced a wide variety of difficult economic problems as it has struggled to consolidate earlier moves to develop a market-oriented economy. Its involvement in the war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo drained hundreds of millions of dollars from the economy. Badly needed support from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has suffered delays in part because of the country's failure to meet budgetary goals. The economy contracted by about 35 percent between 2000 and 2004, and in early 2004 inflation climbed to 600 percent before settling at 300 percent.

Zimbabwe has huge mineral deposits, including chromite, coal, platinum, asbestos, copper, nickel, gold, and iron ore. Deposits of coal-bed methane gas could also be exploited. Mining accounts for only about 7 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) but a full 40 percent of exports; asbestos, nickel, and particularly gold are the major export minerals.

Agriculture employs almost two-thirds of the labor force but accounts for only 18 percent of GDP. Crop production has fallen precipitously in the wake of the government's seizure of almost all white-owned farmland. Cotton has become the main export crop, passing tobacco. The other principal cash crops are maize, sugar, wheat, soybeans, and coffee. Agriculture has been periodically affected by drought, which adversely influences both the quality and quantity of crops. In recent years the country has not grown enough food to support itself and has depended on imports and international food aid.

The industrial sector contributes approximately 24 percent of GDP and employs about 10 percent of the la-

bor force. Primary foreign-trade partners include South Africa, Zambia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and China.

The economy is being steadily weakened by excessive government deficits and AIDS, for which Zimbabwe has one of the highest rates of infection in the world. Per capita GDP, which is twice the average of the poorer sub-Saharan nations, will increase little if any in the near term, and the nation can expect to suffer continued frustrations in developing its agricultural and mineral resources.

Principal Economic Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity) \$billion: 24.37
 GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) \$: 1,900
 GDP Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: –4.9
 GDP per capita Average Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003) %: –6.5
 Origin of Gross Domestic Product %:
 Agriculture: 18.1
 Industry: 24.3
 Services: 57.7
 Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure %:
 Private Consumption: 67
 Government Consumption: 22
 Gross Domestic Investment: 9.9
 Foreign Trade \$billion: Exports: 1.409
 Imports: 1.599
 % of Income Received by Poorest 10%: 1.97
 % of Income Received by Richest 10%: 40.42
 CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1995 = 100)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
190.1	301.3	469.6	829.8	1,992

Finance

National Currency: Zimbabwean Dollar (ZWD)
 Exchange Rate: \$1 = ZWD 4,303.28
 Money Supply Stock in National Currency trillion: 2.09
 Central Bank Discount Rate %: 300
 Total External Debt \$billion: 4.086
 Debt Service Ratio %: —
 Balance of Payments \$million: –230.3
 International Reserves SDRs \$million: 82.9
 Average Annual Rate of Inflation/Consumer Price Index Growth Rate %:
 133

Official Development Assistance

ODA \$million: 186.4
 per capita \$: 14.20
 Foreign Direct Investment \$million: 20

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures

Fiscal Year: July 1–June 30
 Revenues \$billion: 1.325
 Expenditures \$billion: 1.593

Budget Deficit \$million: 268
 Tax Revenues as % of GDP: —

Agriculture

Agriculture's Share of GDP %: 18.1
 Average Annual Rate of Growth (1999–2003) %: –2.9
 Number of Tractors per hectare arable land: 0.75
 Irrigation, % of Farms having: 3.5
 Fertilizer Consumption kg/hectare: 34.2
 Total Farmland % of land area: 8.3
 Livestock: Cattle million: 5.76
 Chickens million: 22
 Pigs 000: 605
 Sheep 000: 610
 Forests: Production of Roundwood cubic meters million: 9.1
 Fisheries: Total Catch tons 000: 15.2

Manufacturing

Value Added \$billion: 2.04
 Industrial Production Growth Rate %: –7.8

Energy

Commercial Energy Production metric tons of oil equivalent million: 2.91
 Commercial Energy Consumption metric tons of oil equivalent million:
 3.94
 Commercial Energy Consumption per capita kg 000: 309
 Net Energy Imports % of use: 13.3
 Electricity Installed Capacity kW million: 1.88
 Production kW-hr billion: 6.73
 Consumption kW-hr billion: 9.81
 Coal Reserves tons million: 553
 Production tons million: 4.96
 Consumption tons million: 4.97
 Natural Gas Proven Reserves cubic feet trillion: —
 Production cubic feet billion: —
 Consumption cubic feet billion: —
 Crude Petroleum Reserves barrels billion: —
 Production barrels 000 per day: —
 Consumption barrels 000 per day: 21
 Pipelines Length km: —

Foreign Trade

Imports \$billion: 1.599
 Exports \$billion: 1.409
 Export Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): –3.9
 Import Volume % Annual Growth Rate (1999–2003): –6.2
 Balance of Trade \$million: –230.3

Major Trading Partners

	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
South Africa %	47.2	11.9
Democratic Republic of the Congo %	6.2	—
China %	4.4	3.4
Zambia %	—	6.3

Transportation

Roads Total Length km: 18,338
 Paved %: 47.4
 Automobiles: 567,000
 Trucks and Buses: 84,000
 Railroad: Track Length km: 3,077
 Passenger-km million: —
 Freight-km billion: 2.5
 Merchant Marine: No. of Vessels: —
 Total Deadweight Tonnage 000: —
 Airports: 404
 Traffic: Passenger-km 000: 674
 Length of Waterways km: —

Tourism

Number of Tourists to 000: —
 Number of Tourists from 000: —
 Tourist Receipts \$million: 44
 Tourist Expenditures \$million: —

Communications

Telephones 000: 300.9
 Cost of Local Calls 3 mins: \$0.04
 Cellular Telephones 000: 379.1
 Personal Computers 000: 620
 Internet Hosts per million people: 353
 Internet Users per 1,000 people: 39

ENVIRONMENT

Zimbabwe is mostly savanna (tropical grassland), with generous tree growth encouraged by the wet summers. The country has rich and diversified animal life. Game preserves are important, especially the Hwange National Park, which has some of the densest wildlife concentrations remaining in Africa.

Major problems are deforestation, air and water pollution, soil erosion, and land degradation. Toxic wastes and heavy metals from poor mining practices have begun to pollute the land and water. The black rhinoceros herd, once the largest in the world, has been drastically reduced by poachers. A total of 15 percent of the country is allocated for conservation, but overgrazing by large numbers of elephants is a problem.

Environment

Forest Area % of total land area: 49.2
 Forest Change (1990-2000) hectares 000: -320
 Nationally Protected Areas % of total land area: 15
 Emissions of Organic Water Pollutants kg per day: —
 CO2 Emissions per capita ton: 1.17

LIVING CONDITIONS

Living conditions grew suddenly worse in the early 2000s, as exacerbated by extraordinarily high inflation. Imported goods are expensive; Zimbabwe produces most of its own consumer needs, but they are often of low quality. Trains and buses are available, but service is slow and accidents are common. Fuel is in short supply and is expensive. People often pay truck drivers for transport from place to place.

HEALTH

HIV/AIDS is devastating the Zimbabwean population. The HIV infection rate was almost 25 percent in 2001, and 200,000 people died of the disease that year. Infections have increased since then, resulting in the loss of many of the nation's young people and the orphaning of thousands of children. Other common diseases include malaria, cholera, schistosomiasis, yellow fever, and rabies. Life expectancy is low, at less than 37 years, and the infant mortality rate is over 67 deaths per 1,000 live births. Fertility is lower than in neighboring countries; in 2004 each woman had an average of 3.5 children.

Health

Number of Physicians: 736
 Number of Dentists: 15
 Number of Nurses: 6,951
 Number of Pharmacists: 12
 Physician Density per 100,000 people: 5.7
 Hospital Beds per 1,000: —
 Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births: 67.69
 Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births: 1,100
 Total Health Expenditures as % of GDP: 8.5
 Health Expenditures per capita \$: 118
 HIV Infected % of adults: 24.6
 Child Immunization Rate % of children 12-23 months:
 DPT: 80
 Measles: 80
 Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities %: 57
 Access to Improved Water Source %: 83

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Zimbabwe has been unable to grow enough food for its people since the government seized all white-owned farms and turned them over to black Africans. Malnutrition is a major problem, and the country depends on food aid.

The staple of Zimbabwean cuisine is a stiff maize-meal porridge called *sadza*. This is often accompanied by some sort of meat, such as chicken, beef, crocodile, or wild game. Vegetables and fruits are not widely available. Coffee is usually instant; the nation grows coffee and tea but exports

most of it. At festive occasions people consume *chibuku*, an alcoholic beverage typically drunk from a shared bucket.

Food and Nutrition

Undernourished % of total population: 43.8
 Daily Available Calories per capita kcal: 2,110
 Amount of Cereal Available per person per year kg: 123.0
 Amount of Fruits and Vegetables Available per person per year kg: 20.8

STATUS OF WOMEN

Despite efforts to clarify and modernize the situation, the legal status of women in Zimbabwean society remains ambiguous. Discrimination in the workplace is illegal, but women are still concentrated in lower-paying jobs, and sexual harassment is common. In 1980 the government passed the Legal Age of Majority Act, which gave all women over age 18 equal legal rights, including the right to manage their own marriages and to own property apart from their husbands. The courts do not reliably uphold this law, however, and it is common for a husband's family to seize property from his widow, a problem worsened by the fact that most women do not know their rights under the law. The system of *lobola*, or bride-price, is still the norm, and the reality of equal rights remains elusive. Domestic violence is a major problem.

Until independence, African leaders opposed birth-control programs as efforts by the then-dominant white minority to restrict African growth while encouraging white immigration. This attitude has changed, and the Mugabe regime has called for the creation of a ministry to deal with the population explosion. Female genital mutilation is illegal and uncommon, though some tribes still practice its most extreme form.

Women

Women-headed Households %: —
 Seats Held in Parliament by Women %: 10
 Female Administrators and Managers %: —
 Ratio of Literate Women to Men Age 15 to 24: 0.97
 Women's Share of Wage Employment Non-agricultural %: 21.8

WORK

One of Zimbabwe's biggest economic problems is that there are almost no jobs. As of 2002 the unemployment rate was 70 percent, which corresponded to the 70 percent of the population living in poverty. Income distribution is extremely uneven; the richest 10 percent of the population earns about 40 percent of national income. Two-thirds of the population still support themselves through subsistence agriculture. Mining provides some jobs, as does tourism.

Employment and Labor

Labor Force Total: 4,230,000
 Female Participation Rate %: 44.0
 Labor by Sector %:
 Agriculture: 66
 Industry: 10
 Services: 24
 Unemployment %: 70

EDUCATION

Until independence there were two school systems, one for whites, Asians, and those of mixed race, the other for blacks. Education has been nonracial since 1976.

Free and compulsory primary education begins at age seven and lasts for seven years. Secondary education begins at 14 and lasts for six years. Finding qualified teachers is a major problem, as exacerbated by the exodus of white teachers following independence. The medium of instruction is English throughout. Four-fifths of Zimbabwean children attend primary school, two-fifths secondary school. Higher education is provided at the University of Zimbabwe, in Harare; the National University of Science and Technology, in Bulawayo; the Africa (Methodist) University, in Mutare; three technical institutes; and several teachers colleges.

Education

Literacy Rate %: 90.7
 Male %: 94.2
 Female %: 87.2
 School Life Expectancy years of formal schooling: 9.2
 First Level: Primary Schools: 4,633
 Teachers: 60,869
 Students: 2,399,250
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 39.4
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 79.9
 Second Level: Secondary Schools: 1,535
 Teachers: 31,957
 Students: 828,456
 Student-Teacher Ratio: 25.9
 Net Enrollment Ratio: 37.8
 Third Level: Institutions: 28
 Teachers: —
 Students: 60,221
 Gross Enrollment Ratio: 4.3
 Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP: 4.7

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Zimbabwe is attempting to improve its scientific infrastructure in providing advanced education at the new National University of Science and Technology and other institutions. The nation has a good electrical system, with power supplied by dams on the Zambezi River, though

power can wane in dry years. The telephone system was once one of the best in Africa but is now inadequate, and it is difficult to obtain new lines. In 2003 there were only about 300,000 telephone lines and 380,000 cellular telephones in use. In 2002 about 500,000 people were using the Internet.

Science and Technology

Scientists and Engineers in R&D per 1 million people: —
 Expenditures in R&D as % of GDP: —
 High-Tech Exports \$million: 20.8
 Patent Applications by Residents: 2

MEDIA

Zimbabwe has an extensive press and media system, but it is not known for its freedom. The country's only television station is run by the state-owned Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation (ZBC); the ZBC also runs the only four radio stations broadcast from within the country. The only news agency, the Zimbabwe Inter-Africa News Agency, is also state owned. The government publishes two of the three daily newspapers; the only private daily, the *Daily News*, is usually critical of the government and as a result often suffers from governmental interference.

Most people receive their news from radio. In addition to the ZBC broadcasts, there are two stations that broadcast into Zimbabwe from outside the country. SW Radio Africa broadcasts from London, while Voice of the People, set up with funding from the Soros Foundation and a Dutch nongovernmental organization, broadcasts from Madagascar.

Media

Daily Newspapers: 3
 Total Circulation 000: —
 Circulation per 1,000: —
 Books Published: —
 Periodicals: —
 Radio Receivers million: 4.6
 per 1,000: 362
 Television sets 000: 400
 per 1,000: 35

CULTURE

Zimbabweans love art and respect artists. The country supports a number of professional artists, such as the colony of artists at Tengenenge Farm. Art forms include carving, basketry, pottery, cloth weaving and decorating, and jewelry. Shona sculpture is particularly good, and some sculptors have sold their work all over the world.

Harare is a regional musical center, attracting musicians from South Africa and other nations. Traditional instruments include stone bells, thumb pianos called *mbiras*, and wooden xylophones called *marimbas*.

Cultural Indicators

Public Libraries Number: 6
 Volumes: —
 Registered borrowers: 18,000
 Museums Number: 9
 Annual Attendance: 162,000
 Cinema Gross Receipts national currency million: 2.3
 Number of Cinemas: 22
 Seating Capacity: —
 Annual Attendance: 1,200,000

FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

Folk traditions remain strong in Zimbabwe. Musicians at social events such as weddings and funerals perform songs telling African legends, complete with audience participation. Most Zimbabweans still follow traditional spiritual practices, often combining them with Christianity. Many people believe in a supreme being called Mwari and communicate with this deity through the oracle called the Voice of Mwari, a woman who lives in a cave and speaks to people. Ancestor worship is common.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

Zimbabweans enjoy going to festive gatherings to listen to or play music, sing, and dance. Men go to beer halls to socialize with friends while passing around a communal bucket of *chibuku* beer. The cities, especially Harare, are modern and semi-European, with restaurants, bars, shopping, and other recreational offerings. The country has ample outdoor recreational possibilities, and tourists come from all over the world to go on safaris and see Victoria Falls.

ETIQUETTE

Zimbabweans observe a fairly formal code of behavior. Young people respect their elders and never address them by first name only. Husbands and wives may address one another by title in public.

FAMILY LIFE

Zimbabwean families have gotten considerably smaller since the introduction of family-planning programs in

the early 1980s; fertility has dropped, from 6.5 children per woman in 1980 to 3.5 in 2005. This has resulted in a certain degree of improvement in quality of life for families, as there are fewer children to raise and educate. Most men approve of these changes. Men and women still occupy traditional gender roles, with men working for income and women caring for the home.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Most Zimbabweans dress in Western clothes; they take pride in their appearance, though many lack extensive wardrobes. Women cover their shoulders and thighs, and in general people do not wear shorts in public. People do not wear ragged clothing if they can help it. In 2005 the government unveiled a new national dress fabric, which incorporates all the colors of the Zimbabwean flag and symbolic animals.

SPORTS

Cricket and soccer are popular sports. The Zimbabwe Universities Sports Association was formed in 1999 to encourage the development of organized sports at regional universities. The country has sent teams to the Olympic Games since 1980; it sent several athletes to Athens in 2004, with participation in sports such as tennis, swimming, track and field, and shooting. Zimbabwe's minister of education, sports, and culture was barred from attending the Athens Olympics as part of EU sanctions for human rights violations.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1980** U.S. and U.K. representatives broker the Lancaster House peace agreement between the nation's white-ruled government and majority black population; in national elections, the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU), led by Robert Gabriel Mugabe, defeats its erstwhile military ally, the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU); the name of the country is changed from Rhodesia to Zimbabwe.
- 1985** In legislative elections, ZANU candidates sweep all regions but Matabeleland.
- 1986** Running unopposed in an allegedly unfair election, Mugabe is reelected prime minister.
- 1987** Prime Minister Mugabe has the constitution revised to make him president, expanding his role to both head of state and head of government.
- 1988** The ZAPU party merges into the ZANU party, creating the Zimbabwe African National Union–Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) in pursuance of the government's ultimate goal of creating a single-party socialist state; the law guaranteeing whites 20 seats in parliament is rescinded.
- 1990** Mugabe appoints the head of the former ZAPU party, Joshua Nkomo, as one of his two joint vice presidents; the government proclaims a program of land reform whereby half the land owned by white farmers will be redistributed among blacks.
- 1992** Zimbabwe suffers a drought.
- 1993** The government initiates a series of trade-liberalization measures meant to encourage foreign investment and meet the requirements of the IMF and the World Bank; Mugabe announces that the government will seize 70 commercial farms, breaking an earlier promise to take only derelict and underutilized farms and threatening foreign investment.
- 1993** The formation of the opposition Forum Party is announced, advocating a program of privatizing state-controlled companies.
- 1994** President Mugabe oversees the seizure of 17 productive farms without compensation, including that of opposition leader Ndabaningi Sithole.
- 1995** Opposition parties boycott the allegedly unfair legislative elections, and Mugabe's party, ZANU-PF, gains all but two seats in the House of Assembly; opposition leader Sithole is arrested; continuing drought produces food shortages, as the national debt nearly matches GDP.
- 1996** President Mugabe wins another six-year term, in an election with only one-third of those eligible voting; government employees wage a successful strike for higher pay.
- 1997** Scandals involving his family members discredit President Mugabe; the World Bank withdraws financial support; Mugabe demands that Britain, not Zimbabwe, compensate farmers whose land has been seized, a demand rejected by the British.
- 1998** Opposition to Mugabe's policies increases; high food and petroleum prices lead to demonstrations and riots, even while lavish pensions for the president and other government officials are announced; Mugabe sends troops to help fight rebels in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, a move with little domestic support.
- 1999** Critics of the Mugabe government are savagely mistreated; the IMF withholds grants; midyear inflation reaches 55 percent; a new opposition political party, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), is formed.
- 2000** The MDC wins a startling 57 seats in parliament, though between ZANU-PF victors and appointed positions Mugabe retains control of

93 seats; in a national referendum, voters reject proposals to expand Mugabe's powers and seize productive private farms; the government begins to arrest and otherwise harass opposition Assembly members.

- 2001** The MDC presses lawsuits alleging fraud and voter intimidation in the 2000 elections; the government demands the resignation of judges opposed to the land-reform seizures and expels foreign journalists.
- 2002** Parliament passes a law limiting the freedom of the media; the government takes over the farms owned by whites; in the presidential election, Mugabe wins another term amid protests by the opposition and foreign observers, who allege widespread ballot irregularities and violence by the ruling ZANU-PF; the Commonwealth suspends Zimbabwe for a year in protest of the election.
- 2003** Workers strike, and the government retaliates with arrests and beatings; MDC leader Morgan Tsvangirai is arrested and charged with treason; the Commonwealth extends Zimbabwe's suspension indefinitely, and Zimbabwe pulls out of the Commonwealth.
- 2004** Opposition leader Morgan Tsvangirai is acquitted of treason but faces more charges.
- 2005** The United States calls Zimbabwe an "outpost of tyranny"; the ruling party wins a majority of Assembly seats in the March elections amid opposition complaints of unfairness.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Parliament of Zimbabwe
<http://www.parlzim.gov.zw/>
- Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe
<http://www.rbz.co.zw>
- Zimbabwe Government Online
<http://www.gta.gov.zw/>

Comparative Statistics

COUNTRY	YEAR INDEPENDENCE	INFANT MORTALITY RATE PER 1000		AREA SQ KM (000)	POPULATION MILLION	GDP \$ BILLION	GDP \$ PER CAP	GDP ANNUAL GROWTH RATE % 1999-2003
		LIVE BIRTHS						
1. Afghanistan	1919	163.07		647.500	29.928	20.000	700	—
2. Albania	1912	21.52		28.748	3.563	16.130	4,400	7.1
3. Algeria	1962	31.00		2,381.740	32.531	196.000	6,000	3.8
4. Andorra	1288	4.05		0.468	0.070	1.300	19,000	—
5. Angola	1975	187.49		1,246.700	11.190	20.420	1,900	5.8
6. Antigua & Barbuda	1981	19.46		0.443	0.068	0.750	11,000	2.6
7. Argentina	1816	15.18		2,766.890	39.537	435.500	11,200	—
8. Armenia	1991	23.28		29.800	2.982	11.790	3,500	9.2
9. Australia	1901	4.69		7,686.850	20.090	571.400	29,000	3.3
10. Austria	1918	4.66		83.870	8.184	245.300	30,000	1.8
11. Azerbaijan	1991	81.74		86.600	7.911	26.650	3,400	11.0
12. The Bahamas	1973	25.21		13.940	0.301	5.049	16,700	2.4
13. Bahrain	1971	17.27		0.665	0.688	11.290	16,900	3.7
14. Bangladesh	1971	62.60		144.000	144.319	275.700	2,000	5.2
15. Barbados	1966	11.72		0.431	0.279	4.569	16,400	0.6
16. Belarus	1991	13.37		207.600	10.300	70.500	6,800	5.1
17. Belgium	1831	4.68		30.528	10.364	316.200	30,600	1.9
18. Belize	1981	25.40		22.966	0.279	1.280	4,900	7.5
19. Benin	1960	81.29		112.620	7.460	7.742	1,100	5.4
20. Bhutan	1910	100.44		47.000	2.232	2.700	1,300	7.1
21. Bolivia	1865	53.11		1,098.580	8.857	21.010	2,400	1.9
22. Bosnia and Herzegovina	1992	10.07		51.129	4.025	24.310	6,100	5.4
23. Botswana	1966	54.58		600.370	1.640	14.200	9,000	5.4
24. Brazil	1822	29.61		8,511.965	186.111	1,375.000	7,600	1.6
25. Brunei	1984	12.61		5.770	0.372	6.500	18,600	—
26. Bulgaria	1908	20.55		110.910	7.450	57.130	7,600	4.2
27. Burkina Faso	1960	92.94		274.200	13.925	14.550	1,100	5.0
28. Burundi	1962	64.39		27.830	6.370	3.780	600	0.9
29. Cambodia	1953	70.89		181.040	13.607	25.020	1,900	7.3
30. Cameroon	1960	64.87		475.440	16.380	27.750	1,800	4.5
31. Canada	1867	4.75		9,984.670	32.805	958.700	29,800	3.3
32. Cape Verde	1975	47.77		4.033	0.418	0.600	1,400	5.9
33. Cent. African Rep.	1960	87.33		622.984	3.799	4.183	1,100	-0.1
34. Chad	1960	93.13		1,284.000	9.826	10.670	1,200	5.6
35. Chile	1810	8.80		756.950	15.980	154.700	9,900	2.3
36. China	1523 B.C.E.	24.18		9,596.960	1,306.313	6,449.000	5,000	7.9
37. Colombia	1810	20.97		1,138.910	42.954	263.200	6,300	1.1
38. Comoros	1996	74.93		2.170	0.671	0.441	700	1.5
39. Congo, Dem Rep	1960	90.66		2,345.410	58.317	40.050	700	-0.9
40. Congo, Rep	1960	87.41		342.000	2.998	2.148	700	4.4
41. Costa Rica	1821	9.95		51.100	4.016	35.340	9,100	3.9
42. Côte d'Ivoire	1960	90.83		322.460	17.298	24.510	1,400	-1.2
43. Croatia	1991	6.84		56.542	4.495	47.050	10,600	3.2
44. Cuba	1902	6.33		110.860	11.346	32.130	2,900	4.0

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COUNTRY	YEAR INDEPENDENCE	INFANT MORTALITY		POPULATION MILLION	GDP \$ BILLION	GDP \$ PER CAP	GDP ANNUAL GROWTH RATE % 1999-2003
		RATE PER 1000 LIVE BIRTHS	AREA SQ KM (000)				
45. Cyprus	1960	7.18	9.250	0.780	14.820	19,200	3.9
46. Czech Republic	1993	3.93	78.866	10.241	161.100	15,700	2.3
47. Denmark	800	4.56	43.094	5.432	167.200	31,100	1.9
48. Djibouti	1977	104.13	23.000	0.476	0.619	1,300	2.2
49. Dominica	1978	14.15	0.754	0.069	0.380	5,400	-1.7
50. Dominican Rep	1844	29.37	48.730	8.950	52.710	6,000	4.2
51. Ecuador	1822	23.66	283.560	13.363	45.650	3,300	1.5
52. Egypt	1922	32.59	1,001.450	77.505	295.200	4,000	4.3
53. El Salvador	1821	25.10	21.040	6.704	30.990	4,800	2.3
54. Equatorial Guinea	1968	91.16	28.051	0.535	1.270	2,700	25.9
55. Eritrea	1993	47.41	121.320	4.561	3.300	700	0.8
56. Estonia	1991	7.87	45.226	1.332	17.350	12,300	4.8
57. Ethiopia	1000 B.C.E.	95.32	1,127.127	73.053	46.810	700	3.6
58. Fiji	1970	12.62	18.270	0.893	5.012	5,800	3.7
59. Finland	1917	3.57	338.145	5.223	142.200	27,400	2.6
60. France	843	4.26	547.030	60.656	1,661.000	27,600	2.2
61. Gabon	1960	55.35	267.667	1.389	7.301	5,500	0.9
62. Gambia	1965	73.07	11.300	1.593	2.560	1,700	4.7
63. Georgia	1991	18.59	69.700	4.677	14.450	3,100	5.2
64. Germany	1871	4.16	357.021	82.431	2,271.000	27,600	1.1
65. Ghana	1957	56.36	239.460	21.029	44.440	2,200	4.4
66. Greece	1830	5.53	131.940	10.668	213.600	20,000	4.0
67. Grenada	1974	14.62	0.344	0.089	0.440	5,000	3.2
68. Guatemala	1821	32.00	108.890	14.655	56.500	4,100	2.8
69. Guinea	1958	91.45	245.857	9.467	19.020	2,100	3.1
70. Guinea-Bissau	1974	107.15	36.120	1.416	1.063	800	0.8
71. Guyana	1966	33.26	214.970	0.765	2.797	4,000	0.7
72. Haiti	1804	73.45	27.750	8.121	12.300	1,600	0.5
73. Honduras	1821	26.47	112.090	6.975	17.550	2,600	2.3
74. Hungary	1918	8.57	93.030	10.006	139.800	13,900	4.0
75. Iceland	1944	3.31	103.000	0.296	8.678	30,900	3.2
76. India	1947	56.29	3,287.590	1,080.264	3,033.000	2,900	5.8
77. Indonesia	1945	35.60	1,919.440	241.973	827.400	3,500	3.4
78. Iran	1906	41.58	1,648.000	68.017	516.700	7,700	4.8
79. Iraq	1932	50.25	437.072	26.074	89.800	3,500	52.3
80. Ireland	1921	5.39	70.280	4.015	126.400	31,900	7.6
81. Israel	1948	7.03	20.770	6.276	129.000	20,800	2.1
82. Italy	1861	5.94	301.230	58.103	1,600.000	27,700	1.4
83. Jamaica	1962	16.33	10.991	2.731	11.130	4,100	1.3
84. Japan	660 B.C.E.	3.26	377.835	127.417	3,745.000	29,400	1.1
85. Jordan	1946	17.35	92.300	5.759	25.500	4,500	3.9
86. Kazakhstan	1991	29.21	2,717.300	15.185	118.400	7,800	9.0
87. Kenya	1963	61.47	582.650	33.829	34.680	1,100	1.1
88. Kiribati	1979	48.52	0.811	0.103	0.079	800	3.3
89. Korea, North	1945	24.04	120.540	22.912	29.580	1,300	—
90. Korea, South	1945	6.28	98.480	48.422	857.800	17,800	6.4
91. Kuwait	1961	9.95	17.820	2.335	41.460	19,000	0.0
92. Kyrgyzstan	1991	35.64	198.500	5.146	7.808	1,600	3.9
93. Laos	1949	85.22	236.800	6.217	11.280	1,900	5.8
94. Latvia	1991	9.55	64.589	2.290	26.530	11,500	6.4
95. Lebanon	1941	24.52	10.400	3.826	18.830	5,000	1.3
96. Lesotho	1966	88.75	30.555	1.867	5.892	3,200	2.4
97. Liberia	1847	161.99	111.370	3.482	2.903	900	4.4
98. Libya	1951	24.60	1,759.540	5.765	37.480	6,700	—
99. Liechtenstein	1806	4.70	0.160	0.033	0.825	25,000	—
100. Lithuania	1991	6.89	65.200	3.596	45.230	12,500	4.9
101. Luxembourg	1867	4.81	2.586	0.468	27.270	58,900	4.4
102. Macedonia	1991	10.09	25.333	2.045	14.400	7,100	1.7
103. Madagascar	1960	76.83	587.040	18.040	14.560	800	2.5
104. Malawi	1964	96.14	118.480	12.158	7.410	600	1.3
105. Malaysia	1957	17.70	329.750	23.953	229.300	9,700	5.3
106. Maldives	1965	56.52	0.300	0.349	1.250	3,900	6.1
107. Mali	1960	109.47	1,240.000	12.291	11.000	900	6.5

COUNTRY	YEAR INDEPENDENCE	INFANT MORTALITY		POPULATION MILLION	GDP \$ BILLION	GDP \$ PER CAP	GDP ANNUAL GROWTH RATE % 1999-2003
		RATE PER 1000 LIVE BIRTHS	AREA SQ KM (000)				
108. Malta	1964	3.89	0.316	0.398	7.082	17,700	2.7
109. Marshall Islands	1986	29.45	0.181	0.059	0.115	1,600	1.2
110. Mauritania	1960	70.89	1,030.700	3.086	5.195	1,800	4.6
111. Mauritius	1968	15.03	2.040	1.230	13.850	11,400	4.7
112. Mexico	1810	20.91	1,972.550	106.202	941.200	9,000	2.4
113. Micronesia	1986	30.21	0.702	0.108	0.277	2,000	1.8
114. Moldova	1991	40.42	33.843	4.455	7.792	1,800	3.8
115. Monaco	1861	5.43	0.002	0.032	0.870	27,000	—
116. Mongolia	1921	53.79	1,564.116	2.791	4.882	1,800	2.9
117. Morocco	1956	41.62	446.550	32.725	128.300	4,000	3.2
118. Mozambique	1975	130.79	801.590	19.406	21.230	1,200	7.4
119. Myanmar	1948	63.56	678.500	42.909	74.300	1,700	—
120. Namibia	1990	48.98	825.418	2.030	14.760	7,300	3.1
121. Nauru	1968	9.95	0.021	0.013	0.060	5,000	-0.1
122. Nepal	1775	66.98	140.800	27.676	39.530	1,500	3.7
123. Netherlands	1648	5.04	41.526	16.407	481.100	29,500	1.6
124. New Zealand	1907	5.85	268.680	4.035	92.510	23,200	3.8
125. Nicaragua	1838	29.11	129.494	5.465	12.340	2,300	3.5
126. Niger	1960	119.69	1,267.000	11.665	9.716	900	2.7
127. Nigeria	1960	98.80	923.768	128.771	125.700	1,000	4.1
128. Norway	1905	3.70	324.220	4.593	183.000	40,000	1.9
129. Oman	1650	19.51	212.460	3.001	38.090	13,100	3.6
130. Pakistan	1947	72.44	803.940	162.419	347.300	2,200	3.6
131. Palau	1994	14.84	0.458	0.020	0.174	9,000	0.4
132. Panama	1903	16.73	78.200	3.039	20.570	6,900	2.7
133. Papua New Guinea	1975	51.45	462.840	5.545	11.990	2,200	1.2
134. Paraguay	1811	25.63	406.750	6.347	29.930	4,800	0.6
135. Peru	1821	31.94	1,285.220	27.925	155.300	5,600	2.5
136. Philippines	1946	23.51	300.000	87.857	430.600	5,000	4.3
137. Poland	1918	7.36	312.685	38.635	463.000	12,000	2.8
138. Portugal	1143	5.05	92.391	10.566	188.700	17,900	1.6
139. Qatar	1971	18.61	11.437	0.863	19.490	23,200	—
140. Romania	1878	26.43	237.500	22.329	171.500	7,700	2.8
141. Russia	1991	15.39	17,075.200	143.420	1,408.000	9,800	6.7
142. Rwanda	1962	91.23	26.338	8.440	10.430	1,300	6.6
143. St. Kitts & Nevis	1983	14.49	0.261	0.038	0.339	8,800	2.6
144. St. Lucia	1979	13.53	0.616	0.166	0.866	5,400	0.2
145. St. Vincent	1979	14.78	0.389	0.117	0.342	2,900	2.1
146. Samoa	1962	27.71	2.944	0.177	1.000	5,600	4.2
147. San Marino	301	5.73	0.61	0.028	0.940	34,600	2.5
148. São Tomé & Príncipe	1975	43.11	1.001	0.187	0.214	1,200	3.6
149. Saudi Arabia	1932	13.24	1,960.582	26.417	310.200	12,000	2.4
150. Senegal	1960	54.12	196.190	11.126	18.360	1,700	4.7
151. Serbia-Montenegro	1992	12.89	102.350	10.829	26.270	2,400	4.4
152. Seychelles	1976	15.53	0.455	0.810	0.626	7,800	-0.1
153. Sierra Leone	1961	162.55	71.740	6.017	3.335	600	2.5
154. Singapore	1965	2.29	0.693	4.425	120.900	27,700	3.6
155. Slovakia	1993	7.41	48.845	5.431	78.890	14,500	3.2
156. Slovenia	1991	4.45	20.273	2.011	39.410	19,600	3.5
157. Solomon Islands	1978	21.29	28.450	0.538	0.800	1,700	-4.1
158. Somalia	1960	116.70	637.657	8.591	4.597	600	—
159. South Africa	1910	61.81	1,219.912	44.344	491.400	11,100	2.7
160. Spain	1492	4.42	504.782	40.341	937.600	23,300	3.1
161. Sri Lanka	1948	14.35	65.610	20.064	80.580	4,000	3.7
162. Sudan	1956	62.50	2,505.810	40.187	76.190	1,900	6.2
163. Suriname	1975	23.57	163.270	0.438	1.885	4,300	2.5
164. Swaziland	1968	72.92	17.363	1.173	6.018	5,100	2.6
165. Sweden	1523	2.77	449.964	9.001	255.400	28,400	2.7
166. Switzerland	1499	4.39	41.290	7.489	251.900	33,800	1.2
167. Syria	1946	29.53	185.180	18.448	60.440	3,400	1.8
168. Taiwan	1912	6.40	35.980	22.894	528.600	23,400	3.1
169. Tajikistan	1991	110.76	143.100	7.163	7.950	1,100	8.3
170. Tanzania	1961	98.54	945.087	36.766	23.710	700	5.8

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COUNTRY	YEAR INDEPENDENCE	INFANT MORTALITY		POPULATION MILLION	GDP \$ BILLION	GDP \$ PER CAP	GDP ANNUAL GROWTH RATE % 1999–2003
		RATE PER 1000 LIVE BIRTHS	AREA SQ KM (000)				
171. Thailand	1350	20.16	514.000	65.444	524.800	8,100	4.7
172. Timor-Leste	2002	47.41	15.007	1.040	0.370	400	-0.1
173. Togo	1960	62.20	56.785	5.681	8.684	1,600	1.7
174. Tonga	1970	12.62	0.748	0.112	0.244	2,300	2.8
175. Trinidad & Tobago	1962	25.81	5.128	1.088	11.480	10,500	6.1
176. Tunisia	1956	24.77	163.610	10.074	70.880	7,100	4.6
177. Turkey	1923	41.04	780.580	69.660	508.700	7,400	1.8
178. Turkmenistan	1991	73.08	488.100	4.952	27.600	5,700	18.4
179. Tuvalu	1978	20.03	0.026	0.011	0.012	1,100	0.4
180. Uganda	1962	67.83	236.040	27.269	39.390	1,500	6.2
181. Ukraine	1991	10.11	603.700	47.425	199.100	6,300	5.9
182. UAE	1971	14.51	82.880	2.563	63.670	25,200	5.5
183. United Kingdom	1066	5.16	244.820	60.441	1,782.000	29,600	2.5
184. United States	1776	6.50	9,631.418	295.734	11,750.000	40,100	2.8
185. Uruguay	1828	11.95	176.220	3.415	49.270	14,500	-3.2
186. Uzbekistan	1991	71.10	447.400	26.851	47.590	1,800	4.2
187. Vanuatu	1980	55.16	12.200	0.205	0.580	2,900	0.0
188. Vatican City	1929	—	0.440	0.092	—	—	—
189. Venezuela	1811	22.20	912.050	25.375	145.200	5,800	-3.7
190. Vietnam	1945	25.95	329.560	83.535	227.200	2,700	6.5
191. Yemen	1990	61.50	527.970	20.727	16.250	800	4.3
192. Zambia	1964	88.29	752.614	11.261	9.409	900	3.8
193. Zimbabwe	1980	52.34	390.580	12.746	24.370	1,900	-4.9

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